Invocation to Love

1. O blissful light, of which the beamés clear
   Adorneth all the thirdé heaven fair; ¹
   O Sun's lief, O Jové's daughter dear,
   Pleasance of love, O goodly debonair,
   In gentle hearts ay ready to repair,
   O very cause of heal and of gladness,
   Y-heried be thy might and thy goodness.

2. In heaven and hell, in earth and salté sea
   Is felt thy might, if that I well discern,
   As man, bird, beast, fish, herb and greené tree
   Thee feel in timés with vapour etern. ²
   God loveth, and to lové will not wern;
   And in this world no livé créature
   Withouten love is worth or may endure.

3. You fiercé Mars appeasen of his ire,
   And as you list you maken heartés dign;
   Al gastés them that you will set a-fire
   They dreaden shame, and vices they resign;
   You do them courteous be, fresh and benign,

¹ In medieval astronomy Venus, to whom this invocation is addressed, occupied the third of the seven spheres. She is also, of course, the lover of Mars and goddess of love, the spirit of love that affects all things in Nature. Taken in part from Boccaccio, the invocation is ultimately derived from Boethius, the late classical / early medieval Christian philosopher who celebrated the power of Love (though not Venus) which holds all of God's creation together. Here Chaucer includes the good effects of venereal love.

² 2.3-4: "As man, bird etc... feel you in the seasons (times) with your eternal power (vapour)."
And high or low, after a wight intends, as a person inclines
The joyè that he hath, your might it sends.

4. Lay all this meanwhile this sad Troilus
Recording his lesson in this manner, On my faith
"My fay," thought he, "thus will I say and thus, complain
Thus will I plain unto my lady dear, behavior
That word is good, and this shall be my cheer,
This will I not forgetten in no wise."
God leave him worken as he can devise. as best he can

5. And, Lord! so that his heart began to quappe
Hearing her come, and short gan for to sigh; flutter
And Pandarus, that led her by the lap,
Came near, and gan in at the curtain peek,
And said: "God do boot on all the sick! sleeve
See who is here you comen to visit;
Lo! here is she that is your death to wit." May God heal
to blame for

6. Therewith it seemèd as he wept almost.
"Ah! Ah!" quod Troilus, so ruefully,
"Whe'r me be woe, O mighty God, thou wost: ^
Who is all there I see not truly."
"Sir," quod Criseyde, "'tis Pandarus and I."
"Yea, sweetè heart, alas! I may not rise
To kneel, and do you honour in some wise."

7. And dressed him upward; and she right tho
Gan both her handës soft upon him lay. lifted himself up / then
"O, for the love of God do you not so
To me!" quod she. "Eh! what is this to see!
Sir, come am I to you for causes tway,
First you to thank, and of your lordship eke
Continuance I wouldè you beseech."

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^ 6.3: "Whether I am sorrowful, O mighty God, thou knowest."
8. This Troilus, that heard his lady pray
Of lordship him, waxed neither quick nor dead,
Nor might one word for shame unto it say,
Although men should smitten off his head,
But Lord! so waxed he suddenly all red;
And, sir, his lesson that he wend to con
To prayen her, is through his wit y-run.

9. Criseyde all this espied well enough,
For she was wise, and loved him ne'er the less,
All n'ere he malapert nor made it tough,\(^1\)
Or was too bold to sing a fool a mass;
But when his shame began somewhat to pass
His reasons, as I may my rhymès hold,
I will you tell as teachen bookès old.

10. In changèd voice, right for his very dread,
Which voice eke quoke, and thereto his manner
Goodly abashed, and now his huè red,
Now pale, unto Criseyde his lady dear,
With look downcast and humbly yolden cheer,
Lo the alderfirste word that him astart,
Was twicè: "Mercy, mercy, my dear heart!"

11. And stint awhile, and when he might out bring,
The nexte word was: "God wot for I have
As farforthly as I have had conning
Been yourès all, God so my soulè save,
And shall, till that I, woeful wight, be grave,\(^2\)
And though I dare nor can unto you 'plain,
Iwis I suffer not the lessè pain."

12. Therewith his manly sorrow to behold
It might have made a heart of stone to rue,

\(^1\) 9.3: "Because he was not over- aggressive or domineering".

\(^2\) 11.5: "until I, unhappy man, am buried".
And Pândare wept as he to water would, would (turn)
And pokèd ever his niecè new and new, again & again
And saidè: "Woe-begone be heartès true;¹
For love of God make of this thing an end,
Or slay us both at once ere that you wend." before you go

13. "I? What?" quod she, "By God and by my truth
I wot not what you willè that I say," I don't know
"I, what!" quod he;² "that you have on him ruth
For God's love, and do him not to die." don't cause him
"Now then thus," quod she, "I will him pray
To tellen me the fine of his intent;
Yet wist I never well what that he meant." the goal

14. "What that I mean, O sweetè heartè dear!"
Quod Troilus, "O goodly fresh and free!
That with the streamès of your eyen clear
You woulden sometimes friendly on me see, look
And then agreen that I may be he,
Withouten branch of vice in any wise,
In truth always, to do you my servíce." taint

15. Quod Pandarus: "Lo, here a hard request
And reasonable a lady for to wern!³ refuse
Now niecè mine, by natal Jovè's feast,
Were I a god you shouldè starve as yern die at once
That hearen well this man will nothing yearn desire
But your honoúr and see him almost starve
die
And be so loth to suffer him you serve." ⁴

¹ 12.5: "True hearts are woebegone" i.e. afflicted with sorrow.
² 13.3: Pandarus is repeating Criseyde's exclamation in exasperated mockery.
³ 15.1-2: As in 13.3 above Pandarus is being mildly sarcastic: "This is a hard request and it would be reasonable for a lady to refuse it."
⁴ 15.3-7: "By Jupiter, if I were a god, you would die at once, for you hear clearly this man who wants nothing but your honor, and you see him almost dying, and yet you are reluctant to let him serve you."
16. With that she gan her eyen on him cast
   Full easily and full debónairly,
   Avising her, and hieéd not too fast
   With ne'er a word, but said him softély:
   "Mine honor safe, I will well truly,
   And in such form as he gan now devise,
   Receiven him fully to my servíce;
   graciously
   Reflecting & not hurrying
   (to) him = Pandarus
   (Provided that)
   as he just now said
   him = Troilus

17. "But natheless this warn I you" quod she,
   "A kingé's son although you be iwis,
   Yet you shall have no more sovereignty
   Of me in love than right in that case is;
   Ne will I not forbear if you do amiss
   To wrathen you, and while that you me serve
   Cherish you right after you deserve.
   indeed
   than is proper
   I won't hesitate
   To get angry with
   according as you

18. "And shortly, dearest heart, and all my knight!
   Be glad, and draweth you to lustiness,
   And I shall truly, with all my fullé might,
   Your bitter turnen all into sweetness.
   If I be she that may do you gladness;
   For every woe you shall recover a bliss."
   And him in arms she took and gan him kiss.
   good health(?), joy (?)

19. Fell Pandarus on knees, and up his eye
   To heaven threw, and held his handés high.
   "Immortal God," quod he, "that mayst not die
   (Cupid, I mean) of this mayst glorify;
   And Venus, thou mayst maken melody.
   Withouten hand, meseemeth that in town
   For this marvél I hear each bellé sound. ¹
   hand (to pull rope)
   bell

20. "But, ho! No more as now of this mattér,

Notice the persistent use of “serve” and “service” for the man’s relationship to the woman.

¹ 19.7: Stories of bells that rang out of their own accord at some remarkable event are common in medieval stories. (See Riverside edition, note to l. 188-9 for references). Pandarus is here clowning again.
For why these folk will comen up anon
That have the letter read.  Lo! I them hear.
But I conjúre thee, Créssida, and one
And two, thou Troilus, when thou mayest gon
That at my house you be at my warning
For I full well shall shapen your coming.

21.  And easeth there your heartès right enough
And let's see which of you shall bear the bell
To speak of love aright."  Therewith he laughed:
"For there you may have leisure for to tell."
Quod Troilus: "How longè shall I dwell
Ere this be done?"  Quod he: "When thou mayst rise
This thing shall be right as I you devise."

22.  With that Elaine and also Deiphebus
Then upward came right at the stair's end,
And, Lord! so then gan groanen Troilus,
His brother and his sister for to blend.
Quod Pandarus: "It time is that we wend;
Take, niecè mine, your leave at them all three,
And let them speak, and cometh forth with me."

23.  Now let her wend unto her ownè place,
And turné we to Troilus again,
That gan full lightly of the letter pace
That Deiphebus had in the garden seen;
And of Elaine and him he wouldè fain
Delivered be, and saidè that him lest
To sleep, and after tales have rest.

24.  Elaine him kissed, and took her leavè blive,
Deiphebus eke, and home went every wight,
And Pandarus as fast as he may drive
To Troilus then came as line aright,
And on a pallet all that gladèd night
By Troilus he lay with merry cheer
To tale, and well was them they were y-fere.¹

25. When every wight was voided but they two,
And all the doorès weren fast y-shut,
To tell in short, withouten wordès more,
This Pandarus withouten any let
Up rose, and on his bed's side him set,
And gan to speaken in a sober wise
To Troilus as I shall you devise.

26. "Mine alderlevest lord and brother dear,
God wot and thou, that it sat me so sore²
When I thee saw so languishing to-year,
For love, for which thy woe waxed always more,
That I with all my might and all my lore
Have ever sithen done my busyness
To bringen thee to joy out of distress.

27. "And have it brought to such plight as thou wost
So that through me thou standest now in way
To faré well -- I say it for no boast --
And wost thou why? -- For shame it is to say --
For thee have I begun a gamé play
Which that I never do shall eft for other
Although he were a thousandfold my brother. ³

28. "That is to say, for thee I am become
(Betwixen game and earnest) such a mean
As maken women unto men to come
All say I nought -- thou wost well what I mean --
For thee have I my niece (of vices clean)

¹ 24.7: “They were glad to be together.”

² 26.2: "God and you know I was so upset"

³ 27.7: In this and in the following stanzas Pandarus shows considerable unease at the role he has chosen to play. He fears for his own reputation (the noun and verb “pander” do come from his name), and he fears especially for Criseyde's reputation. Hence his demand for a promise of total secrecy.
29. "But God that all wot, take I to witness  
That ne'er I this for covetisé wrought  
But only for t'abridgè that distress  
For which well nigh thou dièdst as me thought.¹  
But, good brother, do now as thee ought  
For God's love, and keep her out of blame  
Since thou art wise, and save always her name.

30. "For well thou wost the name as yet of her  
Among the people, as who saith, hallowed is;  
For that man is unborn, I dare well swear,  
That ever wistè that she did amiss:²  
But woe is me that I that cause all this  
May thinken that she is my niecè dear,  
And I her eme, and traitor eke, y-fere.³

31. "And were it wist that I, through my engine,  
Had in my niece y-put this fantasy  
To do thy lust and wholly to thine,  
Why, all the worldé would upon it cry  
And say that I the worsté treachery  
Did, in this case, that ever was begun,  
And she for-lost, and thou right nought y-won.

32. "Wherefore, ere I will further go a pace,  
Yet eft I thee beseech and fully say

¹ 29.1-4: 'But I take to witness God, who knows all, that I have not done this out of love of gain (covetise), but only to help your distress from which I thought you were going to die.'

² 30.1-4: "For you know well that everyone agrees (who saith) she has an honorable name (name of her hallowed is.) There is no man alive who has ever known her to do wrong."

³ 30.7: "And I her uncle and betrayer at the same time." 'Traitor' makes sense here as Pandarus has some serious doubts about what he is doing to his niece. But Barney in Riverside (III, 273, n.) suggests that it is Chaucer's mistranslation of an Italian word meaning 'procurer', 'pimp', a pander in fact.
That privity go with us in this case
That is to say, that thou us never 'wray.
And be not wroth though I thee often pray
To holden secret such a high matíer.
For skillful is, thou wost it well, my prayer.¹

33. "O tongue, alas, so often herebefore
Hast thou made many a lady bright of hue
Say: 'Welaway the day that I was born!
And many a maiden's sorrow to renew
And for the moré part, all is untrue
That men of yelp an' it were brought to preeve.²
Of kindé, no avaunter is to 'lieve.

34. "For well I wot thou meanest well, pardee.
Therefore I dare this fully undertake;
Thou wost eke what thy lady granted thee
And day is set thy charters up to make.
Have now good night, I may no longer wake;
And bid for me, since thou art now in bliss,
That God me sendé death or soonè liss."

35. Who mighté tellen half the joy and feast
Which that the soul of Troilus then felt
Hearing the faith of Pandarus' behest,
His oldé woe that made his hearté swelt
Gan then for joy to wasten and to melt,
And all the riches of his sighês sore
At oncé fled, he felt of them no more.

36. And gan his look on Pandarus up cast
Full soberly, and friendly on to see,

¹ 32.7: "You know well that my request (prayer) is reasonable (skillful).

² 33.5-7: all is untrue ... 'lieve: "and all is untrue that men boast (yelp) of, if (an) it were brought to the proof. In the nature of things (of kinde), no boaster can be believed." Pandarus is here referring to the tendency some men to exaggerate and boast of their sexual conquests and thus embarrass the women who trust
And saidè: "Friend, in Aprilis the last,  
As well thou wost, if it remember thee,  
How nigh the death for woe thou foundest me,  
And how thou didest all thy busyness  
To know of me the cause of my distress;  

37.  "Thou wost how long I it forbore to say  
To thee that art the man that I best trust,  
And peril was it none to thee bewray,  
That wist I well; but tell me if thee list,  
Since I so loth was that thyself it wist,  
How durst I more tel of this matter  
That quaked now and no wight may us hear?  

38.  "But here with all my heart I thee beseech  
That never in me thou deem such folly  
As I shall say: methought by thy speech,  
That this which thou me dost for company  
I should see it were a bawdery.  
I am not wood, all-if I lewed be:  
It is not so! That wot I well, pardee.  

39.  "But since that thou hast done me this service  
My life to save, and for no hope of meed,  
So for the love of God this great emprise  
Perform it out, for now is the most need;  
For high and low, withouten any dread,  
I will always all thine hest keep.  

40.  Thus held them each of other well apaid,  
That all the world ne might it bet amend,  
And on the morrow, when they were arrayed  
Each to his own needes gan attend;
But Troilus, though as the fire he bred
For sharp desire of hope and of pleasance,
He not forgot his good governance;

41. But certain is (to purpose for to go)
That in this while, as written is in geste,
He saw his lady sometimes, and also
She with him spoke when that she durst and lest,
And by their both advice, as was the best,
Appointeden full warily in this need,
So as they durst, how that they would proceed.

42. But it was spoken in so short a wise,
In such await always, and in such fear,
Lest any wight divinen or devise
Would of them two, or to it lay an ear,
That all this world so lief to them ne were
As that Cupido would them gracé send
To maken of their speech aright an end.¹

43. But thilké little that they spoke or wrought
His wisé ghost took ay of all such heed,
It seeméd her he wisté what she thought
Withouten word, so that it was no need
To bid him aught to do or aught forbid,
For which she thought that love, al' come it late,
Of allë joy had opened her the gate.

44. And shortly of this process for to pace,
So well his work and wordés he beset,
That he so full stood in his lady's grace
That twenty thousand timës ere she let
She thankéd God she ever with him met;
So could he govern him in such service
That all the world ne might it bet devise;

¹ 42. 5-7: "There was nothing in the world they would rather have than that the god of love would graciously give them an opportunity to complete a proper conversation."
45. For why? She found him so discreet in all,
So secret, and eke of such obeisânce,
That well she felt he was to her a wall
Of steel, and shield from every displeasânce,
That to be in his goodê governance,
So wise he was, she was no more afeared.
I mean as far as aught to be required.

46. And Pandarus to quick always the fire
Was e'er alikê prest and diligent;
To ease his friend was set all his desire;
He shoved ay on; he to and fro was sent,
He letters bore when Troilus was absént,
That never man as in his friendê's need
Ne bore him bet than he withouten dread.

47. But to the great effect: then say I thus
That standing in concórd and in quiet
These ilkê two, Criseyde and Troilus
As I have told, and in this timê sweet
Save only often mightê they not meet
Ne leisure have their speeches to fulfill
That it befell right as I shall you tell,

48. That Pandarus that ever did his might
Right for the fine that I shall speak of here
And for to bringen to his house some night
His fairê niece and Troilus y-fere
Thereas at leisure all this high mattêr
Touching their love were at the full upbound,
Had, out of doubt, a time unto it found,

49. For he with great deliberation
Had everything that hereto might avail
Forecast and put in execution,
And neither left for cost nor for travail\(^1\) 
Come if them lest, them shouldē nothing fail; 
And for to be in aught espied there, 
That, wist he well, an impossible were. 

50. Now is there little more for to be done 
But Pandare up and, shortly for to sayn, 
Right soon upon the changing of the moon, 
When lightless is the world a night or twain, 
And that the welkin shope him for to rain, 
He straight a-morrow to his niecē went; \(^2\) 
You have well heard the fine of his intent. 

51. When he was come he gan anon to play, 
As he was wont, and of himself to jape, 
And finally he swore, and gan her say 
By this and that, she should him not escape, 
Nor longer do him after her to gape, 
But certainly that she must, by her leave, 
Come suppen in his house with him at eve. 

52. At which she laughed, and gan her fast excuse, 
And said: "It raineth, lo! how should I gon?" "Let be," quod he, "nor stand not thus to muse; 
This must be done, ye shall come there anon." 
So at the last hereof they fell at one, 
Or elsē -- soft he swore her in her ear -- 
He wouldē never comen where she were. 

53. Soon after this she unto him gan rown, 
And askēd him if Troilus were there. 
He swore her nay, for he was out of town, 

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\(^1\) 49.4-7: "and he spared neither cost nor trouble; let them come; nothing would be wanting. He knew that it was impossible for them to be discovered there". *Impossible* (l.7) seems to have a French stress. 

\(^2\) 50.2-6: "But Pandare up and ... went." This is an early instance of what became, as the OED puts it, "colloquial and dialectal" usage.
And saidè: "Niece, I posè that he were, You durstè never have the morè fear. For rather than men might him there espy Me lever were a thousandfold to die."

54. Naught list mine author fully to declare
What that she thought when that he said her so,
That Troilus was out of town y-fare,
And if he saidè thereof sooth or no;
But that without await with him to go
She granted him, sith he her that besought, And as his niece obeyèd as her ought.

55. But natheless yet gan she him beseech, Although with him to go it was no fear, For to beware of goosish people's speech,
That dreamen thingës which that never were, And well avisen him whom he brought there;
And said him: "Eme, since I must on you trist Look all be well; I do now as you list."

56. He swore her "Yes" by stockës and by stones, And by the godës that in heaven dwell, Or elsè were him lever soul and bones With Pluto King as deepè be in hell As Tantalus; what should I morë tell? When all was well he rose and took his leave, And she to supper came when it was eve

57. With a certain of her ownë men, And with her fairë niece Antigone, And other of her women nine or ten; But who was glad now, who, as trowen ye But Troilus? that stood and might it see Throughout a little window in a stew,

1 54.1: "My source (author) doesn't choose to say."
Where he be-shut since midnight was, in mew, cooped up

58. Unwist of every wight but of Pandare. Unknown to everyone
But to the point. Now when that she was come
With allè joy and allè friendès fare, in friendly fashion
Her eme anon in armès hath her nome, Her uncle / taken
And after to the supper all and some,
When as time was, full softly they them set.
God wot there was no dainty fare to fet.¹

59. And after supper gonnen they to rise, found a way
At easè well, with hearts full fresh and glad,
And well was him that couldè best devise
To liken her, or that her laughen made:²
He sang, she played; he told a tale of Wade;
But at the last, as every thing hath end,
She took her leave, and needès wouldè wend.³

60. But, O Fortúne! executrix of wyrds, minister of destinies
O influénces of these heavens high!
Sooth is that under God you be our hirds,
Though to us beastès be the causes wry;
This mean I now, for she gan homeward hie;
But execute was all beside her leave done / without her leave
The godès' will, for which she mustè bleve.⁴

61. The bentè moonè with her hornès pale, crescent moon
Saturn and Jove, in Cancer joinèd were, Jupiter
That such a rain from heaven gan avale pour

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¹ 58.7: "God knows there was no dainty food lacking."

² 59.3-7: "And he was glad he knew the best way to please her or make her laugh. ... He told a story about Wade", a character, mentioned occasionally in medieval literature but about whom almost nothing is now known. There is an obscure reference to his boat in the Merchant's Tale, 1424.

³ 59.7: "She said goodbye; she had to be on her way."

⁴ 60.6-7: "The will of the gods was done without her leave, and so she had to stay."
That every manner woman that was there
Had of that smoky rain a very fear;¹
At which Pandare then laughéd, and said then:
"Now were it time a lady to go hence?"

62. "But goodé niece, if I might ever please
You any thing, then pray I you," quod he,
"To do mine heart as now so great an ease
As for to dwell here all this night with me;
For why? This is your owné house pardee,
For by my truth, I say it not in game,
To wend as now it were to me a shame."

63. Criseydé, which that could as muché good
As half a world, took heed of his prayér,
And since it rained, and all was in a flood,
She thought: "As good cheap may I dwellen here,
And grant it gladly with a friendly cheer
And have a thank, as grouche and then abide;
For home to go it may not well betide.

64. "I will," quod she, "mine uncle lief and dear!
Since that you list; it skill is to be so.
I am right glad with you to dwellen here;
I saidé but in game that I would go."
"Iwis grand mercy niecé," quod he tho;
Were it in game or no, thee sooth to tell,
Now am I glad since that you list to dwell."

65. Thus all is well; but then began aright
The newé joy, and all the feast again;
But Pandarus, if goodly had he might,
He would have hiéd her to bed full fain,
And said; "O Lord! this is a hugé rain,
This were a weather for to sleepen in,

¹ 61.1-5: The torrential rain was supposedly caused by this particular planetary conjunction of the moon, Saturn and Jupiter in Cancer.
And that I redd us soonè to begin."

66. There is no morè, but hereafter soon
The voidè drunk and travers drawn anon,¹
Gan every wight that haddè naught to do
More in the place out of the chamber gone;
And evermore so sternly it ron
And blew therewith so wonderfully loud,
That well nigh no man hearen other could.²

67. Then Pandarus, her eme, right as him ought,
With women such as were her most about,
Full glad unto her beddè's side her brought,
And took his leave, and gan full low to lout,
And said: "Here at this closet door without,
Right overthwart, your women lyen all,
That whom you list of them you may her call."

68. So when that she was in the closet laid,
And all her women forth by ordinance
A-beddè weren, there as I have said,
There was no more to skippen nor to dance,
But bidden go to beddè, with mischance,
If any wight were stirring anywhere,
And let them sleepen that a-beddè were.

69. But Pandarus, that well could each a deal
The oldè dance, and every point therein,
When that he saw that allè thing was well,
He thought he would upon his work begin,
And gan the stewè door all soft unpin,³

¹ 66.2-4: "When the nightcap (voide) had been drunk and the curtain (travers) drawn, everyone who had no more business there left the room."

² 66.6-7: "The wind blew so extraordinarily loud that people could hardly hear each other speak."

³ 69.5: We left Troilus in the stew (a little room) at 57.4-7, there referred to as a mew.
And still as stone, withouten longer let,
By Troilus adown right he him set.

70. And, shortly to the point right for to gon,
Of all this work he told him ord and end,
And said: "Make thee ready right anon,
For thou shalt into heaven's blisse wend."
"Now blissful Venus! thou me gracé send,"
Quod Troilus, "for never yet no need
Had I ere now, ne halfendeal the dread."

71. Quod Pandarus: "Ne dread thee ne'er a deal,
For it shall be right as thou wilt desire;
So thrive I, this night I'll make it well,
Or casten all the gruel in the fire."
"Yet blissful Venus! this night me inspire,"
Quod Troilus, "as wis as I thee serve,
And ever bet and bet shall till I sterve."

72. Quod Pandarus: "Thou wretched mouse's heart,
Art thou aghast so that she will thee bite?
Why, don this furréd cloak upon thy shirt,
And follow me, for I will have the wite;
But bide, and let me go before a lite;"
And with that word he gan undo a trap,
And Troilus he brought in by the lap.

73. The sterné wind so loud began to rout
That no wight other's noisé mighten hear,
And they that layen at the door without
Full sikerly they slepten all ifere;
And Pandarus with a full sober cheer
Goes to the door anon withouten let
There as they lay, and softly he it shut;

74. And as he came againward privily
His niece awoke, and asketh: "Who goes there?"
"Mine own dear niecè," quod he, "it am I,
Ne wonder not, ne have of it no fear."
And near he came, and said her in her ear:
"No word, for love of God, I you beseech,
Let no wight rise and hearn of our speech.

75. "What! which way be you come? Ben'dícitee!"
Quod she. "And how, thus unwist of them all?"
"Here at this secret trappé-door," quod he.
Quod then Criseydé: "Let me some wight call."  
"Eh! God forbiddé that it should befall,"  
Quod then Pandáre, "that you such folly wrought
They mighten deeme thing they never thought.

76. "It is not good a sleeping hound to wake,
Nor give a wight a cause for to divine.
Your women sleepen all, I undertake,
So that for them the house men mighten mine,¹
And sleepen will till that the sunnè shine,
And when my tale y-brought is to an end,
Unwist right as I came so will I wend.

77. "Now, niecè mine, you shall well understand."
Quod he, "so as you women deeme all,
That for to hold in love a man in hand,
And him her lief and her dear heart to call,
And maken him a hoove above a caul--
I mean, as love another in meanwhile--
She doth herself a shame, and him a guile.²

78. "Now whereby that I tellen you all this
You wot yourself as well as any wight,
How that your love all fully granted is

1 76:4-5: "So that, as far as they are concerned, you could put mines under the house, and they would
still sleep till sunup."

2 77: This stanza says roughly: "All you women agree that it is a shameful trick in love to
deceive a man, and call him your beloved and sweetheart, making a fool of him while loving
another."
To Troilus, that is the worthiest knight,
One of this world, and thereto truth y-plight,
That but it were on him along, you n'ould
Him never falsen while you liven should.

79. "Now stands it thus, that since I from you went
This Troilus, right platly for to sayn,
Is through a gutter by a privy went
Into my chamber come in all this rain,
Unwist of every manner wight certáin
Save of myself, as wisly have I joy,
And by the faith I owe Priam of Troy.

80. "And he is come in such pain and distress,
That but he be all fully wood by this,
He suddenly must fall into woodness
But if God help; and causé why is this:
He says he told is of a friend of his,
How that you should love one that hatte Horaste,
For sorrow of which this night shall be his last."

81. Criseydé which that all this wonder heard,
Gan suddenly about her heart cold,
And with a sigh she sorrowfully answered:
"Alas! I weened, who so that talés told,
My dearé hearté wouldé me not hold
So lightly false. Alas! conceités wrong!
What harm they do! for now live I too long.

82. "Horaste, alas! And falsen Troilus?"
I know him not, God help me so,” quod she.
"Alas! what wicked spirit told him thus?
Now certês, eme, to-morrow an’ I him see,
I shall thereof as full excusen me
As ever woman did, if that him like.”
And with that word she gan full sore to sigh.

83. Quod Pandarus: "Thus fallen is this case."
"Why, uncle mine," quod she, "who told him this?
Why does my dearè heartè thus, alas?"
"You wot, yea, niecè mine," quod he, "what is.
I hope all shall be well that is amiss,
For you may quench all this if that you lest
And do right so, for I it hold the best."

84. "So shall I do tomorrow, iwis," quod she
"And God to-form, so that it shall suffice."
"Tomorrow! Alas, that were a fair!" quod he,
"Nay, nay! It may not standen in this wise.
For, niecè mine, thus writen clerkès wise
That peril is with drecching in y-draw.¹
Nay, such abodès be not worth a haw.²

85. "And, niecè mine (ne take it not agrief),²
If that you suffer him all night in this woe,
God help me so, you had him never lief,
That dare I say, now there is but we two.
But well I wot that you will not do so.
You be too wise to do so great folly
To put his life all night in jeopardy."

86. "Had I him never lief! By God, I ween³
You had never thing so lief," quod she.

¹ 84.6: "that danger is by delaying drawn in”, i.e. that delay involves danger.
² 85.1: ("Don't take this the wrong way").
³ 86.1-2: "I never loved him! By God, I am sure you never held anything so dear."
"Now by my thrift," quod he, "that shall be seen; 
For since you make this example of me 
If I all night would him in sorrow see 
For all the treasure in the town of Troy, 
I pray to God I never may have joy.

87. "Now look then, if you that be his love 
Shall put all night his life in jeopardy 
For thing of nought, now by that God above 
Not only this delay comes of folly 
But of malice, if that I shall not lie. 
What! platly, an' you suffer him in distress, 
You neither bounty do nor gentleness."

88. Quod then Criseydè: "Will you do one thing, 
And you therewith shall stint all his dis-ease? 
Have here and beareth him this bluè ring 
For there is nothing might him better please 
Save I myself, nor more his heart appease; 
And say to my dear heart that all his sorrow 
Is causéless; that shall be seen tomorrow."

89. "A ring!" quod he; "Yea! hazel woods you shake! 
Yea, niecè mine, that ring must have a stone 
That mighten a dead man alivè make. 
And such a ring, I trow, that you have none. 
Discretion out of your head is gone; 
That feel I now," quod he, "and that is ruth. 
Oh, timè lost! well mayst thou cursen sloth.

90. "Now have I told what peril he is in 

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1 89.1: "Hazel woods" is a favorite dismissive expression of Pandarus. See also V.57.1 and 142.5.

2 89.2-3: "The ring would have to have a (magic) stone that could make dead men come alive." Precious stones were supposed to have various magical powers. Books called "lapidaries" were devoted to the topic.
And his coming unwist to every wight
Ne pardee, harm may there be none, nor sin.
I will myself be with you all this night.
You know eke how he is your owné knight
And that by right you must upon him trist
And I all prest to fetch him when you list."

91. This accident so piteous was to hear
And eke so like a sooth at primé face
And Troilus her knight to her so dear,
His privy coming and the siker place,
That though that she did him as then a grace,
Considerèd all thingès as they stood,
No wonder is, since she did all for good.

92. "Then eme," quod she, "do hereof as you list,"
But ere he come I will up first arise,
And for the love of God, since all my trist
Is on you two, and you be bothè wise,
So worketh now, in so discreet a wise,
That I may honour have and he pleasánce,
For I am here all in your governance."

93. "That is well said," quod he, "my niecè dear!
There good thrift on that wisé gentle heart!
But lieth still, and taketh him right here,
It needeth not no farther for him start;
And each of you ease other's sorrows smart,
For love of God, (and, Venus, I thee hery)
For soon hope I that we shall all be merry."

94. This Troilus full soon on knees him set
Full soberly right by her bedd'ës head,
And in his bestè wise his lady gret;
But Lord! so she waxed suddenly all red,
Nay, though men shoulden smiten off her head

1 92.1: "Then, uncle," she said, "do as you wish about this."
She could not a word aright outbring
So suddenly, for his sudden coming.

95. But Pandarus that so well could feel
In everything, to play anon began
And said: "Niece, see how this lord can kneel.
Now for your truthè see this gentle man."
And with that word he for a cushion ran
And said: "Kneeleth now while that you lest
Where God your heartès bringë soon at rest."

96. Can I not say, for she bad him not rise,
If sorrow it put out of her rémembrance,
Or elsè that she took it in the wise
Of duëty as for his òbservance;
But well find I she did him this pleasànce,
That she him kissed, although she sighëd sore,
And bade him sit adown withouten more.

97. Quod Pandarus: "Now will you well begin
Now do him sittë, goodë niecë dear,
Upon your beddë's sidë there within
That each of you the bet may other hear."
And with that word he drew him to the fire
And took a light and found his countenance
As for to look upon an old romance.

98. Criseydë that was Troilus' lady right,
And clear stood in a ground of sikerness,
Al' thought she that her servant and her knight
Ne should of right no úntruth in her guess, ¹
Yet natheless, considered his distress,
And that love is in cause of such follý,
Thus spoke she to him of his jealousy:

¹ 98.3-6: "Although she thought that her "servant", her knight, should not even suspect her of unfaithfulness, yet nevertheless, considering that he was distressed and that love causes such follies, she spoke to him about his jealousy."
99. "Lo, heartè mine! as would the excellence
Of love, against the which that no man may,
Ne ought eke, goody maken résistance,¹
And eke because I feltè well and saw
Your greatè truth and service every day,
And that your heart all mine was, sooth to sayn,--
This drove me for to rue upon your pain;

100. "And your goodness have I found always yet,
Of which, my dearè heart, and all my knight,
I thank it you, as far as I have wit,
Al’ can I not as much as it were right;²
And I, emforth my cunning and my might,
Have, and ay shall, how soré that me smart,
Be to you true and whole with all my heart;

101. But certain is, some manner jealousy
Is excusáble more than some iwis, ³
As when cause is, and some such fantasy
With piety so well represséd is,
That it unneth does or says amiss,
But goodly drinketh up all his distress;
And that excuse I for the gentleness.

102. "And some’s so full of fury and despite
That it surmounteth his repressión;
But, heartè mine! you be not in that plight,
That thank I God, for which your passion

¹ 99.1-3: The syntax is a little unsatisfactory, but the meaning is reasonably clear: "because of the excellence of love which no one should resist ..."

² 100.3 ff: "I thank you as far as I know how, although I cannot as much as I should; and I, according to my ability and strength, have been and always will, however much it hurts me, be true to you ..."

³ 101: She says that some kinds of jealousy are more excusable than others: first, when there seems to be real cause; and second when such unwarranted feeling is repressed so that it rarely leads to inappropriate act or words, but swallows its pain; and that is excusable because of the self-control.
I will not call it, but illusion
Of abundance of love and busy cure, & great concern
That doth your heartè this dis-ease endure." that causes

104. With that a fewè brightè tearès new
Out of her eyen fell, and thus she said:
"Now God, thou wost, in thought nor deed, untrue
To Troilus was never yet Criseyde."
With that her head down in the bed she laid,
And with the sheet it wry, and sighèd sore,
And held her peace; not one word spoke she more.

105. And in his mind he gan the time a-curse
That he came there, and that he was y-born,
For now is wicked turnèd into worse,
And all that labour he had done befor
He wend it lost; he thought he n'as but lorn.
"O Pandarus!" thought he, "alas! thy wile
Serveth of naught, so welaway the while!
Is no good / Alas!

106. And therewithal he hung adown his head,
And fell on knees, and sorrowfully sighed.
What might he say? he felt he n'as but dead,
For wroth was she that should his sorrows light;

1 104.2: "You can be sure he did not want to sleep."

2 104.3-4: These lines appear to mean "It seemed to him that hearing Criseyde weep was not just like being beaten by the strokes of a rod, but .... "

3 106.4: "For she who was supposed to lighten his sorrow was angry."
But natheless when that he speaken might,  
Then said he thus: "God wot that of this game  
When all is wist, then am I not to blame."  

107. Therewith the sorrow so his heartè shut  
That from his eyen fell there not a tear,  
And every spirit his vigour eke in knit,  
So they astonèd and oppressèd were;¹  
The feeling of his sorrow or his fear  
Or of aught else fled were out of town;  
Adown he fell all suddenly a-swown.  

108. This was no little sorrow for to see,  
For all was hushed and Pandar up as fast;  
"O, niecè, peace, or we be lost," quod he.  
Be not aghast." But certain at the last  
For this or that he into bed him cast,  
And said: "O thief, is this a manè's heart?"  
And off he rent all to his barè shirt,  

109. And saidè: "Niecè, but you help us now,  
Alas your ownè Troilus is lorn."  
"Iwis, so would I an I wistè how,  
Full fain," quod she. "Alas that I was born."  
"Yea, niecè, will you pullen out the thorn  
That sticketh in his heartè," quod Pandáre.  
"Say `All forgiven', and stint is all this fare"  

110. "Yea, that to me", quod she, "full lever were  
Than all the good the sun aboutè goeth;"  
And therewithal she swore him in his ear,  
"Iwis, my dearè heart ! I am not wrotch,  
Have here my truth," and many another oath.  
"Now speak to me, for it am I Criseyde;"  
But all for naught; yet might he not afraid.  

¹ 107.3-7: Each of the three "spirits" in his body tightened up (knit) as if stunned, so that he had no feeling, and fainted. The three spirits were the "vital", the "animal", and the "natural."
111. Therewith his pulse and palmèes of his hands
They gan to frote, and wet his temples twain,
And to deliver him from bitter bonds
She oft him kissed; and, shortly for to sayn,
Him to revoken she did all her pain;
And at the last he gan his breath to draw,
And of his swoon soon after that a-daw,

112. And gan bet mind and reason to him take;
But wonder sore he was abashed iwis,
And with a sigh when he gan bet awake
He said: "O mercy, God! what thing is this?"
"Why do you with yourselfen thus amiss?"
Quod then Criseyde. "Is this a man's game?
What, Troilus! will you do thus for shame?"

113. And therewithal her arm o'er him she laid,
And all forgave, and oftentime him kissed.
He thankèd her, and to her spoke and said
As fell to purpose for his heartè's rest;
And she to that him answered as her lest,
And with her goodly words him to disport
She gan, and oft his sorrows to comfòrt.

114. Quod Pandarus: "For aught I can espyen
This light nor I ne serven here of nought."
Light is not good for sické folkè's eyen.
But, for the love of God, since you be brought
In thus good plight, let now no heavy thought
Be hanging in the heartès of you tway."
And bore the candle to the chimeneay.

115. Soon after this, (though it no needè were)
When she such oathès as her list devise
Had of him taken, her thoughtè then no fear
Nor cause eke none to bid him thence arise:

1 114.1-2: "As far as I can see, neither this light nor I are doing any good here."
Yet lesser thing than oathès may suffice
In many a case, for every wight I guess
That loveth well meaneth but gentleness.

116. But in effect she wouldé wit anon
Of what man, and eke where, and also why
He jealous was, since there was causé none,
And eke the signé that he took it by, ¹
She bade him that to tell her busily,
Or elsé, certain, she boré him on hand
That this was done of malice, her to fond.

117. Withouten moré, shortly for to sayn,
He must obey unto his lady's hest,
And for the lessé harm he musté feign;
He said her when she was at such a feast
She might on him have lookéd at the least;
N'ot I not what (all dear enough a rush)
As he that needs must a causé fish. ²

118. And she answered: "Sweet, al' were it so,
What harm was that, since I no evil mean?
For, by that God that wrought us bothé two,³
In allé things is mine intenté clean;
Such arguments ne be not worth a bean:
Will you the childish jealous counterfeit?
Now were it worthy that you were y-beat."

119. Then Troilus gan sorrowfully to sigh.
Lest she be wroth him thought his hearté died,

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¹ 116.4: "And what the evidence was."

² 117.6-7: "I don't know (what else he invented), none of it worth a rush (straw), like a man who must fish around for a reason."

³ 118.3: This is one of the comparatively few obtrusive Christian anachronisms that have found their way into the pagan milieu of the poem. See also just below 129.1-2 and 151.3-5. Also II.89.3 and V.154.5.
And said: "Alas! upon my sorrow's sick
Have mercy, O sweet hearte mine, Criseyde!
And if that in those wordes that I said
Be any wrong, I will no more trespass.
Do what you list; I am all in your grace."

120. And she answered: "Of guilt, misericord;\(^1\)
That is to say, that I forgive all this,
And evermore on this night you record,
And be well 'ware you do no more amiss."
"Nay, dearë hearte mine! " quod he, "i-wis."
"And now," quod she, "that I have done you smart
Forgive it me, mine ownë sweetë heart!"

121. This Troilus with bliss of that surprised
Put all in God's hand, as he that meant
Nothing but well, and, suddenly advised,
He her in armës fastë to him hent,
And Pandarus, with full good intent
Laid him to sleep, and said: "If you be wise,
Swooneth not now, lest morë folk arise." \(^2\)

122. What might or may the silly larkë say
When that the sparrow-hawk has it in his foot?
I can no more but of these ilkë tway,
(To whom this talë sugar be or soot)
Though that I tarry a year, sometime I must
After mine author tellen their gladness,
As well as I have told their heaviness.

\(^1\) 120.1: "For guilt (there is) mercy."

\(^2\) The presence of Pandarus throughout this scene has bothered many readers. We should, perhaps, remember the comparative lack of privacy even in large wealthy medieval households. Anthony Spearing points out that even in royal households in the early Middle Ages it was common for others to sleep in the royal bedroom. Of this scene he says: "The normality of a situation in which a bedroom, even that of a married couple, is shared by others must have made clarification unnecessary." (The Medieval Poet as Voyeur, p. 135).
123. Criseydé, which that felt her thus y-take, seized
(As writen clerkès in their bookès old)
Right as an aspen leaf she gan to quake
When she him felt her in his armès fold;
But Troilus all whole of carès cold,
Gan thanken then the blissful goddès seven.
Thus sundry painés bringen folk to heaven.

124. This Troilus in armès gan her strain
And said: "O sweet, as ever may I gon,
Now you be caught, now is there but we twain
Now yieldeth you, for other boote is none."
To that Criseydé answered thus anon:
"Ne hadd I ere now, my sweet heart dear
Been yold, i-wis I werè not now here."

125. Criseyde, all quit from every dread and teen
As she that just cause had in him to trust,
Made him such feast that joy it was to see,
When she his truth and clean intent wist,
And as about a tree with many a twist
Betrént and writhes the sweet woodébine
Gan each of them in arms the other wind.

126. And as the new abashéd nightingale,
That stinteth first, when she begins to sing,
When that she heareth any herdé tale,
Or in the hedges any wight stirring,
And after, siker doth her voice out ring--
Right so Criseyde, when that her dreadé stent,
Opened her heart, and told him her intent.¹

127. And right as he that sees his death y-shapen,
And dien must, in aught that he may guess,

¹ 126: Criseyde is compared to a singing nightingale which is easily startled from its singing by the sound of a herdsman speaking, or anything moving in the hedge, but which sings out unrestrained when she sees there is no danger.
And suddenly rescue doth him escapen, causes him to e.
And from his death is brought in sikerness,-- safety
For all this world in such present gladness
Was Troilus, and has his lady sweet.
With no worse hap God let us never meet! luck

128. Her armès small, her straighté back and soft,
Her sidès long, fleshly smooth and white
He gan to stroke, and good thrift bade full oft and eagerly greeted
Her snowish throat, her breastès round and lite.
Thus in this heaven he gan him to delight
And therewithal a thousand times her kissed,
That what to do, for joy unnethe he wist. he hardly knew

129. "Ah, for the love of God, my lady dear!
Since God hath wrought me for I shall you serve, has made me to serve you
As thus I mean that you will be my steer, steersman i.e. pilot
To do me live, if that you list, or starve,¹
So teacheth me how that I may deserve teach me (imper.)
Your thanks, that, through minè ignorance
I do no thing that you be displeasance: may displease you

130. "For certès, fresh womanly wife,²
This dare I say: that truth and diligence,
That shall you finden in me all my life.
Ne will I, certain, breaken your defence;³ your commands
And if I do, presént on in absénce,
For love of God, let slay me with the deed,
If that it like unto your womanhood." have me killed for if it please

¹ 129.2-5: "Since God has made me to serve you, I mean since he wants you to be my guide (steer) who will cause me to live or die (starve) as you choose, teach me ..."

² 130.1: Wife probably has as its primary meaning simply "woman", with strong overtones of the meaning "spouse". The ME spelling is "fresshe womanliche wif"; pronouncing the two final e's would give the two extra syllables needed to make up a pentameter line.

³ 130.4: "Nor will I, certainly, disobey your commands." defence is the French word meaning literally "prohibition".
131. "I-wis," quod she, "mine ownë heartë's list!
My ground of ease, and all mine heartë dear!
Grammmercy! for on that is all my trist:
But let us fall away from this mattër,
For it sufficeth this that said is here;
And at one word, withouten répentance,
Welcome my knight, my peace, my suffisance!"

132. Of their delight or joys one of the least
Were impossible to my wit to say,
But judgeth you that have been at the feast
Of such gladness, if that them list to play;
I can no more but thus: these ilkë tway
That night, betwixen dread and sikerness,
Feltë in love the greatë worthiness. ¹

133. O blissful night! of them so long y-sought,
How blithe unto them bothë two thou were!
Why n'ad I such a one with my soul bought,
Yea, or but the least joyë that was there? ²
Away thou foulë Daunger and thou Fear! ³
And let them in this heaven's blissë dwell
That is so high that all ne can I tell.

134. These ilkë two, that be in armës left,
So loth to them asunder go it were,
That each from other wenden been bereft;
Or elsë, lo! this was their mostë fear,

₁ 132-3: Once more, in these stanzas the narrator draws attention to his own lack of personal experience of the joys of love hence his inability to describe even the least of their joys.

₂ 133.3-4: "Why didn't I sell my soul for such a night or for the smallest joy they experienced?"

₃ 133.5: "Daunger" was the personification of that part of the lady's nature or training that urged her to be "daungerous", that is, to keep her lover at a distance. In the Romance of the Rose Daunger was portrayed as an ugly (foul) "churl".
That all this thing but nicè dreamès were, only foolish dreams
For which full oft each of them said: "O sweet! Hold I? / dream it?
Clip I you thus? Or else do I it meet?"

135. And, Lord! so he gan goodly on her see, looked so intently
That ne'er his look ne blentè from her face, turned
And said: "O my dear heartè! may it be can it be ...
That it be sooth? that you be in this place?" ...true?
"Yea, heartè mine! God thank I of his grace,"
Quod then Criseyde, and therewithal him kissed, didn't know
That where her spirit was for joy she n'ist.

136. Soon after this they spoke of sundry things, various
As fell to purpose of this áventure, about this event
And playing, interchangeden their rings, inscription
Of which I cannot tellen no scripture,
But well I wot a brooch gold and azure, I know
In which a ruby set was, like a heart,
Criseyde him gave, and stuck it on his shirt.

137. These ilkè two of whom that I you say, begun / relax
When that their heartès well assurèd were, each other
Then they began to speaken and to play,
And eke rehearsen how, and when, and where,
They knew them first, and every woe or fear
That passèd was; but all such heaviness,
I thank it God, was turnèd to gladness.

138. Reason will not that I speak of sleep, doesn’t go with
For it accordeth not to my mattér;
God wot they took of it full little keep,
G. knows / notice
But lest this night that was to them so dear
Ne should in vain escape in no mannér,
It was beset in joy and busyness
Of all that souneth into gentleness.¹ accords with

¹ 138.4-7: These four lines would appear to mean something like this: "But lest this night, so dear to them, should slip away from them, they packed it busily with joy of every kind that
139. But when the cock, common astrologer, everyone's star-reader 
Gan on his breast to beat and after crow;  
And Lucifer, the day's messenger, L = the morning star  
Gan for to rise, and out her beams to throw,  
And eastward rose -- to him that could it know, 
Fortuna Major \(^1\) -- then anon Criseyde  
With heartē sore to Troilus thus said:

140. "Mine heartē's life, my trust, all my pleasance! 
That I was born, alas! that me is woe,  
That day of us must make disseverance, between us / parting  
For time it is to rise and hence to go, 
Or elsē I am lost for evermo'. evermore  
O Night! alas! why n'il\(\)t thou o'er us hove hover  
As long as when Alcmena lay by Jove? \(^2\)

141. "O blackē Night! as folk in bookēs read,  
That shapen art by God this world to hide art created  
At certain timēs with thy darkē weed, clothing  
That under that men might in rest abide,  
Well oughten beasts to plain and folk thee chide, oppress  
That there as day with labor would us brest,  
That thou thus fleest and deignest us not rest. don't allow us

142. "Thou dost, alas! so shortly thine office,  
quickly / job

accorded with `gentleness'."

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\(^1\) 139.3-6: A rather pretentious "scientific" way, following the farmyard way, of saying that dawn was approaching in the east.

\(^2\) 140.6-7: Alcmena, the mother of Hercules, was one of Jove's many lovers. Jove made their love-night three times longer than usual.

Here begins the \(\textit{alba}\), a version of the dawn song where the lovers lament the coming of day to interrupt their joy. In this double \(\textit{alba}\) Criseyde complains against the Night for being too short; Troilus against the Day for coming too soon. This poetic genre goes back at least to Ovid, and was very popular in medieval French and German lyric verse, where it is known as \(\textit{aube, aubade}\) or \(\textit{tagelied}\).  
Act 3, Sc.5 of \textit{Romeo and Juliet} is part of this tradition. So is John Donne's poem "Busy Old Fool". See also below stanzas 174 to 176.
Thou râkel Night,¹ that God maker of kind, hasty / of the natural world
Thee for thine haste, and thine unkindé vice
So fast ay to our hemisphere bind,
That never more under the ground thou wind;
For now, for thou so hiest out of Troy because you hurry
Have I foregone, thus hastily, my joy."

143. This Troilus, that with those wordès felt
-- As thought him then, for piteous distress -- it seemed to him
The bloody tearès from his hearté melt,
As he that never yet such heaviness
Assayééd had out of so great gladness, ²
Gan therewithal Criseyde his lady dear
to squeeze
In armès strain, and said in this mannér:

144. "O cruel Day! accuser of the joy covered
That Night and Love have stole and fast i-wrien,
Accursèd be thy coming into Troy!
For every bore has one of thy bright eyen: every chink / eyes
Envious Day! what list thee so to spyen? Why do you want to spy?
What hast thou lost? why seekest thou this place?
There God thy light so quenché, for his grace! May God quench

145. "Alas! what have these lovers thee aguilt?³
Despitous Day! thine be the pain of hell, Cruel
For many a lover hast thou slain, and wilt;
Thy poring in will nowhere let them dwell:
What! profferest thou thy light here for to sell? and will again

¹ 142: "Because, hasty Night, you do your work in such a hurry, may God who made all of Nature, tie you because of that haste and unnatural vice, so tightly to our hemisphere that you may never again go under the earth. Now, because you are in such a hurry to be away from Troy, I have had to forego my joy."

² 143.4-5: As he ... sadness may mean "like a man who had never experienced such depression after such great joy."

³ 145.1: "How have these lovers offended thee?"
Go, sell it them that smallè sealès grave;¹
We will thee not; us needeth no day have."

146. And eke the sunnè Titan gan he chide,²
And said; "O fool! well may men thee despise,
That hast all night the Dawning by thy side,
And sufferest her so soon up from thee rise,
For to dis-easen lovers in this wise;
What! hold your bed there, thou and eke thy Morrow;
I biddè God so give you bothè sorrow."}

147. Therewith full sore he sighed, and thus he said:
"My lady bright, and of my weal or woe
The well and root! O goodly mine, Criseyde,
And shall I rise, alas! and shall I go?
Now feel I that mine heartè must a-two;
And how should I my life an hourè save,
Since that with you is all the life I have?

148. "What shall I do? for certè I n'ot how
Nor when, alas, I shall the timè see
That in this plight I may be eft with you,
And of my life God wot how shall that be,
Since that desire right now so burneth me
That I am dead anon but I return:
How should I long, alas! from you sojourn?

149. "But natheless, mine ownè lady bright!
Yet were it so that I wist utterly
That I your humble servant and your knight
Were in your heart y-set so firmly
As you in mine, the which thing truly
Me lever were than have these worldès twain,

¹ 145.6: Craftsmen who do fine detailed engraving on small seals need good light.

² 146.1: Titan is the sun. It would seem from the following lines that Titan is being confused with Tithonus, the mortal lover of the goddess of dawn, Aurora.
Yet should I bet endure all my pain."

150. To that Criseydë answered right anon,
And with a sigh she said: "O heartë dear! The game iwis so far forth now is gone,
That first shall Phoebus fallen from the sphere,
And every eagle be the dovë's fere,
And every rock out of his placë start,
Ere Troilus go out of Cressid's heart.

151. "You be so deep within mine heartë grave,
That though I would it turn out of my thought,
As wisly very God my soulé save,
To dien in the pain I couldë not; And for the love of God, that us hath wrought,
Let in your brain no other fantasy
So creepen, that it cause me to die.

152. "And that you me would have as fast in mind
As I have you, that would I you beseech,
And if I wist soothly that to find, God might not one point of my joyës eche.
But, heartë mine! withouten morë speech,
Be to me true, or else werë it ruth,
For I am thine, by God and by my truth.

153. "Be glad forthy, and live in sikerness,
Thus said I ne'er ere this, ne shall to mo';
And if to you it were a great gladness
To turn again soon after that you go,
As fain would I as you that it were so,
As wisly God mine heartë bring to rest"; And him in armës took, and often kissed.

1 151.1-4: "You are so deeply engraved in my heart that even if I wanted to erase you from my thoughts under the pain of torture, I could not, as sure as I hope God will save my soul."

2 152.3: "If I knew for certain that I would find that."
154. Against his will, sith it must needès be,
This Troilus up rose, and fast him clad,
And in his armès took his lady free
A hundred times, and on his way him sped,
And with such words as though his hearté bled,
He said: "Farewell, my dearé hearté sweet!
That God us granté sound and soon to meet."

155. To which no word for sorrow she answered,
So soré gan his parting her distrain,
And Troilus unto his palace fared,
As woebegone as she was, sooth to sayn,
So hard him wrung of sharp desire the pain
For to be eft there he was in pleasance,
That it may ne'er out of his rémembrance.

156. Returnèd to his royal palace soon,
He soft unto his bed gan for to shrink,
To sleepé long, as he was wont to do;
But all for naught; he may well lie and wink,
But sleep may there none in his hearté sink,
Thinking how she, for whom desire him brend,
A thousand fold was worth more than he wend.

157. And in his thought gan up and down to wind
Her wordès all, and every countenance,
And firmly impressen in his mind
The leasté point that to him was pleasánce,
And verily of thilké rémembrance
Desire all new him burned, and lust to breed
Gan more than erst, and yet took he no heed.¹

158. Creseydé also right in the samé wise
Of Troilus gan in her heart to shut

¹ 157.6-7: and lust ... heed: This has nothing to do with a desire (in Troilus) to produce progeny. The syntax is: "lust 'gan to breed (grow) more than before." The meaning of the last clause: and ... heed is obscure.
His worthiness, his lust, his deedês wise,
His gentleness, and how she with him met,
Thanking Love he so well her beset,
Desiring eft to have her heartê dear,
In such a plight that she durst make him cheer.¹

159. Pandar, which that a-morrow comen was
Unto his niece and gan her fair to greet,
Said: "All this night so rainêd it alas!
That all my dread is that you, niecê sweet!
Have little leisure had to sleep and meete.
All night," quod he, "hath rain so do me wake,
That some of us I trow their headês ache."

160. And near he came and said: "How stands it now
This merry morrow, niece, how can you fare?"
Criseydê answered: "Never the bet for you,
Fox that you be; God give your heartê care.
God help me so, you causêd all this fare,
Trow I," quod she, "for all your wordês white.
Oh, whoso sees you, knoweth you full lyte."

161. With that she gan her facê for to wry
With the sheet, and waxed for shame all red,
And Pandarus gan under for to pry
And saidê: "Niece, if that I shall be dead,
Here, have a sword, and smiteth off my head."
With that, his arm all suddenly he thrust
Under her neck, and at the last her kissed.

162. I pass all that which chargeth not to say
What! God forgave His death, and she also
Forgave, and with her uncle gan to play,
For other cause was there none than so.
But of this thing right to the effect to go
When time was, home to her hosue she went,

¹ 158.6-7: "Hoping to have her sweetheart where she could give him delight."
And Pandarus has fully his intent.¹

163. Now turnè we again to Troilus,
That restèless full long a-beddè lay,
And privîly sent after Pandarus
To him to come in all the hastè he may:
He came anon, not oncè said he nay,
And Troilus full soberly he gret,
And down upon the beddè's side him set.

164. This Troilus with all th' affection
Of friendly love that heartè may devise
To Pandarus on knees fell he adown;
And ere that he would of the place arise
He gan him thanken in his bestè wise
A hundred sithe; and gan the timè bless
That he was born, to bring him from distress.

165. He said; "O friend! of friends the alderbest
That ever was, the soothè for to tell,
Thou hast in heaven y-brought my soul at rest
From Phlegethon, the fiery flood of hell,
That though I might a thousand timès sell
Upon a day my life in thy service,
It mightè not a mote in that suffice.

166. "The sunnè, which that all the world may see,
Saw never yet (my life that dare I lay)
So inly fair and goodly as is she
Whose I am all, and shall till that I die;
And that I thus am hers, dare I well say,
That thankèd be the highè worthiness

¹ Some recent critics have seen more than hints of incest in stanzas 161 & 162. Certainly
the action of 161 seems odd, but Pandarus is not noted for his sensitivity and good taste. Reading
deliberate ambiguity into lines 162.1 & .7 and into a word like play (.3) could partly justify such
a suspicion which is, however, dismissed by the Riverside editor as "baseless & absurd." The
scene is not in Boccaccio, and stanza 162 is not in the Corpus MS, the source MS for both
Riverside and Windeatt's edition.
Of Love, and eke thy kindé busyness.

167. "Thus hast thou me no little thing y-give;  
For which to thee obligéd be for ay  
My life; and why? For through thy help I live,  
Or elséd dead had I been many a day."  
And with that word down in his bed he lay,  
And Pandarus full soberly him heard  
Till all was said, and then he him answered:

168. "My dearé friend! if I have done for thee  
In any case, God wot it is me lief,  
I am as glad as man may of it be,  
God help me so. But take it not agrief  
What I shall say. Beware of this mischief,  
That where as now thou brought art into bliss  
That thou thyself ne cause it not to miss.

169. "For of Fortuna's sharp adversity  
The worsté kind of ínfortune is this,  
A man to have been in prosperity,  
And it remember when it passéd is:  
Thou'rt wise enough; forthy do not amiss;  
Be not too rakel though that thou sit warm,  
For if thou be, certain it will thee harm."

170. Quod Troilus: "I hope, and God toforne,  
My dearé friend, that I shall so me bear  
That, in my guilt, there shall be nothing lorn,  
N'I n'ill not rakel for to grieven her.¹  
It needeth not this matter oft to steer,  
For, wistest thou my hearté well, Pandare,  
God wot, of this thou'dst little care."

171. Then gan he tell him of his gladdé night,  
And whereof first his hearté dread and how,  

¹ 170.4: N'I n'ill = nor will I. Notice the emphatic triple negative in the first half line.
And saidè: "Friend, as I am a true knight,
And by that faith I shall to God and you,
I owe
And ever the more
I had it never half so hot as now,
And ay the morè that desire me biteth
To love her best the more it me delighteth.

172. "I n'ot myself not wisly what it is,
But now I feel a newè quality,
Yea, all another than I did ere this."
Pandárus answered and said thus, that "he
other than
That oncè may in heaven's blisse be,
I bet
He feeleth other wayès, dare I lay,
that time / heard of it say."
Than thilké time he first heard of it say."

173. Soon after this, for that Fortùne it would,
Y-comen was the blissful timë sweet
That Troilus was warnèd that he should
Where he first
There he was erst, Criseyde his lady meet,¹
float
For which he felt his heart in joyè fleet,
praise
And faithfully gan all the goddès hery;
And let's see now if that he can be merry.

174. And holden was the form and all the wise
kept / manner
Of her coming, and eke of his also,
before / not tell
As it was erst, which needeth not devise;²
to the point
But plainly to th'effect right for to go:
both wished
In joy and surety Pandarus them two
A-beddë brought when that them bothè lest;
And thus they be in quiet and in rest.

175. But cruel day, so welaway the stound!
alas the moment
Gan for t'approach, as they by signès knew,
For which them thought they fellen deathè's wound:

¹ 173.3-4: "Troilus was told to meet his lady again at the same place as before," i.e. Pandarus's house.

² 174.1-3: "The arrangements for her arrival and for his were the same as before, which I don't need to tell you about."
So woe was them that changen gan their hue,
And day they gonnen to despise all new,
Calling it traitor, envious, and worse,
And bitterly the day's light they curse.¹

176. Quod Troilus "Alas! now am I ware
That Pyroïs, and those swift steedês three
Which that drawen forth the Sunnë's car
Have gone some by-path in despite of me,
And maketh it so soonê day to be;
And for the Sun him hasteth thus to rise
Ne shall I never do him sacrifice."

177. But needês day departen them must soon;
And when their speecê done was and their cheer,
They twin anon, as they were wont to do,
And setten time of meeting eft ifere.
And many a night they wrought in this mannér:
And thus Fortuna led a time in joy
Criseyde and eke this kingê's son of Troy.

178. In suffisance, in bliss, and in singings,
This Troilus gan all his life to lead;
He spendeth, jousteth, maketh eke feastings;
He giveth freely oft, and changeth weed;
He held about him always, out of dread,²

¹ 175.7 & 176: Another short alba follows where we are given only Troilus's words, not Criseyde's. In the earlier more elaborate one they both participate, Criseyde berating Night and Troilus Day. See above, III, st. 140 ff.

² 178.5-7: "I assure you (out of dread) he kept around him a company of people who were the finest that he could find, as was natural for him."

The good effect of human sexual love on a man's manners and military prowess mentioned here and earlier, and below in stanzas 184-187 was a commonplace of medieval romance. But this sentiment should be compared or contrasted with that of the final stanzas of the poem, as well as with the opening Invocation of Bk. III above, and with "Canticus Troili", immediately below.
A world of folk, as came him well of kind,
The freshest and the best that he could find,

179. That such a voice was of him and a steven
That it up rang unto the gate of heaven;
That as in love he was in such gladness
That there n'is lover in this world at ease
So well as he, and thus gan love him please.

180. The goodlihead or beauty which that kind
In any other lady had y-set,
Can not the mountance of a knot unbind
About his heart of all Criseyd’s net;
He was so narrow y-meshèd and y-knit
That it undone in any manner side
That will not be, for aught that may betide.

181. And by the hand full often he would take
This Pandarus, and into garden lead,
And such a feast and such a process make
Him of Criseyde, and of her womanhood,
And of her beauty, that withouten dread,
It was a heaven his wordès for to hear,
And then he wouldè sing in this mannér:

CANTICUS TROILI

182. "Love, that of earth and sea hath governance,
Love, that his hestès hath in heaven high,
Love, that with a wholesome álliance

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1 180. "The goodness or beauty that Nature had bestowed on any other woman could not untie a single knot in the net of his affection for Criseyde. He was so tightly enmeshed that there was no possibility that he could be untied in any way."

2 Troilus's hymn to love is based on Boethius's Consolations of Philosophy II, meter 8.
Holds people joinèd as him list them gie,  
Love, that knitteth law of company,  
And couples doth in virtue for to dwell,  
Binds this accord that I have told and tell.

183. "So would to God that author is of kind,\(^1\)  
That with his bond Love of his virtue list  
To circle heartès all and fast to bind,  
That from his bond no wight the way out wist,  
And heartès cold them would I that he twist  
To make them love, and that list them ay rue  
On heartès sore, and keep them that be true."

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184. In allé needès for the towné's war  
He was -- and ay -- the first in armès dight,  
And certainly -- but if that bookès err --  
Save Hector most y-dread of any wight;  
And this increase of hardiness and might  
Came him of love, his lady's thank to win,  
That alterèd his spirit so within.

185. In time of truce on hawking would he ride,  
Or elsè hunt the boar, bear, or lion,  
The smallè beastès let he go beside;  
And when that he came riding into town,  
Full oft his lady from her window down  
As fresh as falcon comen out of mew,  
Full ready was him goodly to salue.\(^2\)

186. And most of love and virtue was his speech,

---

\(^1\) 183. "I wish that God, who is the author of nature, would cause Love to use his power (virtue) to encircle all hearts and tie them fast so that no one would know the way out of that bond. And I wish that He would change cold hearts to make them love and take pity on suffering people, and that He would guard those people who are true (in love)."

\(^2\) See note on 178 above.
And in despite had he all wretchedness; in contempt all bad conduct
And doubtless no need was him beseech (to) beseech
To honour them that hadde worthiness,
And easen them that weren in distress;
And glad was he if any wight well fared to help
That lover was, when he it wist or heard. anyone did well

187. And though that he be come of blood royál
Him list of pride at no wight for to chase; out of pride / to despise
Benign he was to each in general,
For which he got him thanks in every place:
Thus would Love, (y-heried be his grace!) Love wished, praised be
That pride and envy, ire and avarice, (So) that anger
He gan to flee, and every other vice.¹

Here ends Book III

¹ 187.5-7: "This was the will of Love (may He be praised), so that he [Troilus] began to flee pride, envy, anger, avarice and every other vice."