TROILUS AND CRISEYDE

by

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

Book III
BOOK III (61 pp)

Invocation to Love

1. O blissful light, of which the beamês clear
   Adorneth all the thirdê heaven fair;
   O Sun's lief, O Jovê'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 saltê sea
   Is felt thy might, if that I well discern,
   As man, bird, beast, fish, herb and greenê tree
   Thee feel in timês with vapour etern. ²
   God loveth, and to lovê will not wern;
   And in this world no livê créature
   Withouten love is worth or may endure.

3. You Jovê first to thilk affectês glad,
   (Through which that thingês liven all and be),
   Commeveden ³ and amorous him made

---

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. Confusingly she is daughter of Jove and also the force that impels even him, in different disguises, to amorous adventures with mortals. The Christian God seems to be invoked also at 2.5. 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)."

³ You is Love, and Jove is the grammatical object of commeveden: “You impelled Jove ....”
On mortal thing, and, as you list, ay ye
gave him in love ease or adversity,
and in a thousand formés down him sent
for love in earth, and whom you list he hent.

4. You fiercè Mars appeasen of his ire,
and as you list you maken heartés digne;
Algate's them that you will set a-fire
They dreaden shame, and vices they resign;
You do them courteous be, fresh and benign,
and high or low, after a wight entends,
The joyë that he hath, your might it sends.

5. You holden regne and house in unity;
you soothfast cause of friendship be also;
you know all th'ilke covered quality
Of thingës which that folk on wonder so,
When they cannot construe how it may jo
She loveth him, or why he loveth her,
As why this fish, and not that, comes to weir.

6. You folk a law have set in universe,¹
(And this know I by them that lovers be),
That whoso striveth with you has the worse.
Now, lady bright, for thy benignity,
At reverence of them that serven thee,
Whose clerk I am, so teacheth me devise
Some joy of that is felt in thy service.

7. You in my naked hertë sentiment
Inhield, and do me show of thy sweetness.
Calliope, thy voice be now présënt,
For now is need: see'st thou not my distress,

¹ 6.1: “You have made a law in the world for people (folk)”
How I must tell anon-right the gladness
Of Troilus, to Venus’ herying?
To which gladness, who need hath, God him bring.¹

End of the Proem

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

9. And, Lord! so that his heart began to quappe
Hearing her come, and short gan for to sigh;
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!
See who is here you comen to visit;
Lo! here is she that is your death to wit."

10. Therewith it seemèd as he wept almost.
"Ah! Ah!" quod Troilus, so ruefully,
"Wher me be woe, O mighty God, thou wost: ²
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."

¹ 7.7: The syntax is: “To which gladness may God bring him who has need”

² 10.3: "Whether I am sorrowful, O mighty God, thou knowest."
11. And dressed him upward; and she right tho
Gan both her handës soft upon him lay.
"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 woldè you beseech."

12. 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 shouldè 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.

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

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

15. And stint awhile, and when he might out bring,

1 13.3: "Because he was not over-aggressive or overpowering". 
The next word was: "God wot for I have
As farforthly as I have had conning
Been yourês all, God so my soulé save,
And shall, till that I, woeful wight, be grave,¹
And though I dare nor can unto you 'plain,
I-wis I suffer not the lessé pain.

16. "Thus much as now, ah womanliké wife!²
I may out bring, and if this you displease
That shall I wreak upon mine owné life
Right soon I trow, and do your heart an ease,
If with my death your heart I may appease;
But since that you have heard me something say,
Now reck I never how sooné that I die." ³

17. Therewith his manly sorrow to behold
It might have made a heart of stone to rue,
And Pândare wept as he to water would,
And pokéd ever his niecê new and new,
And saidé: "Woe-begone be heartês true!;⁴
For love of God make of this thing an end,
Or slay us both at once ere that you wend."

18. "I? What?" quod she, "By God and by my truth
I wot not what you wille that I say." ⁵

¹ 15.5: "until I, unhappy man, am buried".
² 16.1: the manuscripts have "wommanliche wif" which would mean something like "very feminine woman" with wif retaining its old sense of "woman" rather than "spouse." The spousal claim may be stronger in 186 below where he uses the same expression again as they are making love.
³ 16: Troilus’s takes the abject attitude of a “servant,” a courtly lover, to the point of offering to kill himself.
⁴ 17.5: "True hearts are woebegone" i.e. afflicted with sorrow.
⁵ I don't know
"I, what!" quod he;¹ "that you have on him ruth pity
For God's love, and do him not to die." don't cause him
"Now then thus," quod she, "I would him pray the goal
To tellen me the fine of his intent; knew I never
Yet wist I never well what that he meant."

19. "What that I mean, O sweeté hearté dear!"
Quod Troilus, "O goodly fresh and free ! noble
That with the streamés of your eyen clear look
You wouldé sometimes friendly on me see,
And then agreën that I may be he, taint
Withouten branch of vice in any wise,
In truth always, to do you my service

20 "As to my lady right, and chief resort,²
With all my wit and all my diligence, sentence
And I to have, right as you list, comfórt, your rule
Under your yard equal to mine offence, your prohibition
As death, if that I breaken your defence,
And that you deigné me so much honoúr anything
Me to commanden aught in any hour,

21. "And I to be yours, very humble, true, be always equally d.
Secret, and in my painés patïent, your decision
And ever to desiren freshly new however much it hurts
To serven, and be ay like diligent,
And with good heart all wholly your talént
Receiven well, how soré that me smart –
Lo, this mean I, mine owne sweeté heart!"

22. Quod Pandarus: "Lo, here a hard request

¹ 18.3: Pandarus is repeating Criseyde's exclamation apparently in exasperated mockery.
² 20.1: "my supreme mistress & main interest."
And reasonable a lady for to wern!  
Now niecè mine, by natal Jovè's feast,  
Were I a god you shoulde starve as yern 
That hearen well this man will nothing yearn 
But your honoúr and see him almost starve 
And be so loth to suffer him you serve."  

22.1-2: As in 18.3 above Pandarus is being mildly sarcastic: "This is a hard request and it would be reasonable for a lady to refuse it!"

22.3-7: "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." Notice the persistent use of "serve" and "service" for the man’s relationship to the woman.

24.7: At this last line she seems to turn from Pandarus to address Troilus directly: “Be well; no need to complain further.”
Ne will I not forbear if you do amiss
To wrathen you, and while that you me serve
Cherish you right after you deserve.

26. "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.

27. Fell Pandarus on knees, and up his eye
To heaven threw, and held his handès 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

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

29. “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."

¹ 27.7: Stories of bells that rang out of their own accord at some remarkable event are known in medieval stories. (See Riverside edition, note to l. 188-9 for references). Pandarus is here clowning again.
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."

30. 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, niece mine, your leave at them all three,
And let them speak, and cometh forth with me."

31. She took her leave at them full thriftily,
As she well could, and they her reverence
Unto the fullè diden heartily,
And spoken wonder well in her absence
Of her, in praising of her excellence,
Her governance, her wit, and her manner
Commendeden, that it joy was to hear.

32. Now let her wend unto her ownè place,
And turnè we to Troilus again,
That gan full lightly of the letter pace
That Deíphebus 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.

33. Elaine him kissed, and took her live 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 gladè night
By Troilus he lay with merry cheer
To tale, and well was them they were y-fere. \(^1\)

34. 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.

35. "Mine alderlevest lord and brother dear,
God wot and thou, that it sat me so sore \(^2\)
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.

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

37. "That is to say, for thee I am become
(Betwixen game and earnest) such a mean
As maken women unto men to come

---

\(^1\) 33.7: "They were glad to be together."

\(^2\) 35.2: "God and you know I was so upset." *Brother* in line 1 is not to be taken literally.

\(^3\) 36.7: 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.
Al' say I nought — thou wost well what I mean —
For thee have I my niece (of vices clean)
So fully made thy gentleness to trust
That all shall be right as thyselfen list.

38. "But God that all wot, take I to witness
That ne'er I this for covetisé wrought
But only for t'abridgé that distress
For which well nigh thou dièst as me thought.¹
But, goodè 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.

39. "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 wisté 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

40. "And were it wist that I, through my engine,
Had in my niece y-put this fantasy
To do thy lust and wholly to be thine,
Why, all the worldé would upon it cry
And say that I the worstè treachery

¹ 38.1-4: "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 39.1-4: "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 39.7: "'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."
Did, in this case, that ever was begun,  
And she for-lost, and thou right nought y-won.  

41. "Wherefore, ere I will further go a pace,  
Yet eft I thee beseech and fully say  
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 mattér. 
For skillful is, thou wost it well, my prayer.\(^1\)

42. “And think what woe there hath betid ere this  
For making of avaunt as men read  
And what mischance in this world yet there is  
From day to day, right for that wicked deed.  
For which these wisè clerkès that be dead  
Have ever yet proverbèd to us young  
That firstè virtue is to keepè tongue.\(^2\)

43. “And n’ere it that I will as now t’abridge  
Diffusion of speech,\(^3\) I could almost  
A thousand oldè stories thee allege  
Of women lost through false and foolish boast.  
Proverbs can’st thyself enough and wost  
Against that vice, for to ben a labbe,  
Al’ said men sooth as often as they gab.

44. "O tongue, alas, so often herebefore  
Hast thou made many a lady bright of hue  
Say: ´Welaway the day that I was born!’  

---

\(^1\) 41.7: "You know well that my request (prayer) is reasonable (skillful )."

\(^2\) 42.7: The first requirement is to watch your tongue.

\(^3\) 43.1-2: “Were it not for the fact that I wish to reduce diffuseness of speech ...”
And many a maiden's sorrow to renew
And for the more part, all is untrue
That men of yelp an' it were brought to prove.¹
Of kind, no avaunter is to 'lieve.

45. “A vaunter and a liar is all one,
As thus: I pose a woman grantè me
Her love, and says that other will she none,
And I am sworn to holden it secrete,
And after I go tell it two or three.
I-wis I am a vaunter at the least,
And liar, for I breakè my behest.

46. “Now lookè, then, if they be not to blame,
Such manner folk: what shall I clepe them, what? —
That them avaunt of women, and by name,
That never yet behight them this nor that
Nor knew them more than mine old hat?
No wonder is, so God me sendè heal,
Though women dreaden with us men to deal.

47. “I say this not for no mistrust of you,
Ne for no wise man, but for foolès nice,
And for the harm that in the world is now,
As well for folly oft as for malice.
For well wot I, in wisè folk, that vice
No woman dreads, if she be well advised,
For wisè be by foolès’ harm chastised.²

¹ 44.5-7: *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 is to be believed (to 'lieve)." Pandarus is here referring to the tendency of some men to exaggerate and boast of their sexual conquests and thus embarrass the women who trust them.

² 47.7: “For wise people learn from the harm that comes to fools”
48. “But now to purpose: my dear brother dear
Have all this thing that I have said in mind,
And keep thee close, and be now of good cheer,
For at thy day thou shalt me true find.
I shall thy process set in such a kind,
And God to-forn, that it shall thee suffice.
For it shall be right as thou wilt devise.

49. “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 sende death or soon liss.”

50. Who mighte tellen half the joy and feast
Which that the soul of Troilus then felt
Hearing the faith of Pandarus' behest,
His oldë woe that made his heartë swelt
Gan then for joy to wasten and to melt,
And all the riches of his sighës sore
At oncë fled, he felt of them no more.

51. But right so as these holtës and these hayes,
That have in winter deadë been and dry,
Revesten them in greenë when that May is,
When every lusty liketh best to play:
Right in that selfë wise, sooth for to say,
Waxed suddenly his heartë full of joy,
That gladder was there never man in Troy.

52. And gan his look on Pandarus up cast
Full soberly, and friendly on to see,
And said: "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;

53. "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,¹
How durst I moré tell of this mattér
That quakè now and no wight may us hear?

54. “But natheless, by that God I thee swear,
That as Him list may all this world govérn,
And, if I lie, Achilles with his spear
Myn heartè cleave, al’ were my life etern,
As I am mortal, if I late or yern
Would it betray, or durst, or shouldè con,
For all the good that God made under sun

55. “That rather die I would and détermine,
As thinketh me, now stockéd in prison,
In wretchedness, in filth, and in vermin,
Captive to cruel King Agámemnon:
And this in all the temples of this town,
Upon the goddès all, I will thee swear;
To-morrow day, if that it liketh her.²

56. “And that thou hast so muché done for me,
That I ne may it never more deserve,
This know I well, al’ might I now for thee

¹ 53.5: "Since I was so reluctant that you should know."

² 55.7: Or “if it likes thee here “ or “ (to) hear.” All MSS agree in spelling the last word here, which can mean her, hear, or here. The difference is minimal.
A thousand times in a morning starve:  
I can no moré, but that I will thee serve  
Right as thy knave, whither so thou wend,  
For evermore unto my life's end.

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

58. “But he that goes for gold or for riches,  
On such messáge, call him what thee list;  
And this that thou dost, call it gentilesse,  
Compassion, and fellowship, and trust.  
Depart it so, for widé-where is wist  
How that there is diversity required  
Betwixen things like, as I have lered.\(^1\)

59. “And, that thou know I thinké not, nor ween,  
That this service a shamé be or a jape,  
I have my fairé sister Polyxene,  
Cassandra, Elaine, or any of the frape:  
Be she ne’er so fair or well y-shape,  
Tell me which thou wilt of every one  
To have for thine, and let me then alone.

60. "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,

\(^1\) 57.6: "I am not mad even if I am stupid."

\(^2\) 58: Troilus is making the distinction between things that are different but look similar.
I will always all thine hestès keep.  
Have now good night, and let us bothè sleep."

61. 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 ownè needès gan attend;  
But Troilus, though as the fire he brend  
For sharp desire of hope and of pleasánce,  
He not forgot his goodè governance;  

62  But in himself with manhood  gan restrain  
Each rakel deed and each unbridled cheer,  
That allè those that livèd, sooth to sayn,  
Ne should have wist by word or by mannér  
What that he meant as touching this mattér,  
From every wight as far as is the cloud  
He was, so well dissimulen he could.

63.  And all the while which that I you devise  
That was his life, with all his fullè might,  
By day he was in Mars’s high service,  
That is to say, in armès as a knight,  
And for the mostè part the longè night  
He lay and thought how that he mightè serve  
His lady best, her thank for to deserve.

64.  N’ill I not swear, although he lay full soft,  
That in his thought he n’as somewhat dis-eased,  
Nor that he turned on his pillows oft,  
And would of that him missed have been seised;¹  
But in such case men be not always pleased  
For aught I wot no morè than was he,  
That can I deem of possibility.

65.  But certain is (to purpose for to go)  

64.4: “and would rather have been in possession (seised) of what he lacked (missed)”
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,
Appointed full wary in this need,
So as they durst, how that they would proceed.

66. 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 grace send
To maken of their speech aright an end.  

67. But thilk little that they spoke or wrought
His wisè ghost took ay of all such heed,
It seemèd her he wistè 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 allè joy had opened her the gate.

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

69. 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,

\[1\] 66. 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."
That to be in his good governance,
So wise he was, she was no more afeared.
I mean as far as aught to be required.

70. And Pandarus to quick always the fire
Was e'er alikè 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 friendè's need
Ne bore him bet' than he withouten dread.

71. But now paraunter some man weenè would
That every word, or sound, or look, or cheer
Of Troilus that I rehearsen should
In all this while unto his lady dear.
I trow it were a long thing for to hear;
Or of what wight that stands in such disjoint
His wordès all, or every look, to point.

72. Forsooth, I have not heard it done ere this,
In story none, nor no man here, I ween;
And though I would, I couldè not, y-wis
For there was some epistle them between
That would, as says mine author, well contain
Nigh half this book, of which him list not write:
How should I then a line of it endite? 1

73. But to the great effect: then say I thus
That standing in concórd and in quiet
These ilkè two, Criseyde and Troilus
As I have told, and in this timè sweet
Save only often mightè they not meet
Ne leisure have their speeches to fulfill,
That it befell right as I shall you tell,
74. 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 faire niece and Troilus y-fere
Thereas at leisure all this high mattër
Touching their love were at the full upbound,
Had, out of doubt, a time unto it found,

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

76. Dreadless it clear was in the wind
Of every 'pie and every letté-game.²
Now all is well, for all the world is blind
In this mattër, bothé wild and tame.
This timber is all ready up to frame:
Us lacketh not but that we witen would³
A certain hour in which she comen should.

77. And Troilus, that all this purveyance
Knew at the full and waited on it ay,
Had hereupon eke made great ordinance
And found his cause, and thereto his array,
If that he were missed night or day
There-while he was abouté this service —

¹ 75.4-7: "and he spared neither cost nor trouble; let them come; nothing would be wanting. He knew well that it was impossible for them to be discovered there". *Impossible* (l.7) seems to have a French stress..

² 76.1-2: “The coast was absolutely clear of every gossip (*mag*pie) and spoil sport (*lette game").

³ 76.6: *we* and *us* are presumably Chaucer and his audience.
That he was gone to do his sacrifice, ¹

78. And must at such a temple alone wake,
Answered of Apollo for to be;
And first to see the holy laurel quake
Ere that Apollo speak out of the tree,
To tell him when the Greekès shoulden flee.
And for-thy let him no man, God forbid,
But pray Apollo helpen in this need.

79. 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 niec went; ²
You have well heard the fine of his intent.

80. 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.

81. 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 elsè soft he swore her in her ear —
He woulde never comen where she were.

¹ 77: Troilus’s cover story is that he has gone to pray to Apollo (in the public interest) and he should not be disturbed at his devotions.

² 79.2  & .6: *But Pandare up and ... went* This is an early instance of what became, as the OED puts it, "colloquial and dialectal" usage.
82. Soon after this she unto him gan rown,
And asked him if Troilus were there.
He swore her nay, for he was out of town,
And said: "Niece, I posè that he were,
You dursté never have the morè fear.
For rather than men might him there espy
Me lever were a thousandfold to die."

83. 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.

84. 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 thingés 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."

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

86. With a certain of her ownè men,
And with her fairè 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,
Where he be-shut since midnight was, in mew,

87. Unwist of every wight but of Pandare.
But to the point. Now when that she was come
With alle joy and alle friendés fare,
Her eme anon in armés hath her nome,
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

88. And after supper gonnen they to rise,
At ease well, with hearts full fresh and glad,
And well was him that could 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 needés wouldé wend. ³

89. But, O Fortúne! executrix of wyrds,
O influénces of these heavens high!
Sooth is that under God you be our hirds,
Though to us beastés be the causes wry;
This mean I now, for she gan homeward hie;
But execute was all beside her leave
The godés' will, for which she musté bleve.⁴

¹ 87.7: "God knows there was no dainty food lacking."
² 88.3-7: "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 88.7: "She said goodbye; she had to be on her way."
⁴ 89.6-7: "The will of the gods was done without her leave, and so she had to stay."
90. The benté mooné with her hornés pale,  
Saturn and Jove in Cancer joinéd were, \(^1\)  
That such a rain from heaven gan avale  
That every manner woman that was there  
Had of that smoky rain a very fear;  
At which Pandare then laughed, and saidè then:  
"Now were it time a lady to go hence?"

91. "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,  
By my truth, I say it not in game,  
To wend as now it were to me a shame."  

92. 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 grumble and then abide;  
For home to go it may not well betide."

93. "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 saidè but in game that I would go."  
"I-wis, grand mercy, niecè," quod he tho;  
Were it in game or no, thee sooth to tell,  
Now am I glad since that you list to dwell."

94. Thus all is well; but then began aright  
The newè joy, and all the feast again;  
But Pandarus, if goodly had he might,  

\(^1\) 90.1-5: The torrential rain was supposedly caused by this particular planetary conjunction of the moon, Saturn and Jupiter in Cancer.
He would have hièd her to bed full fain,
And said; "O Lord! this is a huge rain,
This were a weather for to sleepen in,
And that I rede us soonè to begin.

95. "And, niece, wot you where I will you lay?
For that we shall not lien far asunder,
And, for you neither shall, dare I say,
Hearen the noise of rainè nor of thunder,
By God right in my little closet yonder,
And I will in that outer house alone
Be warden of your women every one;

96. "And in this middle chamber that you see
Shall all your women sleepen well and soft,
And there I said [you] shall yerself be,
And if you lien well to-night, come oft,
And careth not what weather is aloft.
The wine anon, and when so that you lest,\(^1\)
So go we sleep, I trow it be the best."

97. There is no more, but hereafter soon
The voidè drunk and travers drawn anon,\(^2\)
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. \(^3\)

98. Then Pandarus, her eme, right as him ought,
With women such as were her most about,

\(^1\) 96.6: “We’ll drink the wine now and go to sleep when you’re ready.” It was a medieval custom to have a nightcap (the voide) of wine and spices & perhaps a small snack.

\(^2\) 97.2-4: "When the nightcap (voide) had been drunk and the curtain (travers) drawn, everyone who had no more business there left the room."

\(^3\) 97.6-7: "The wind blew so extraordinarily loud that people could hardly hear each other speak."
99. So when that she was in the closet laid,
   And all her women forth by ordinance
   A-beddë weren, there as I have said,
   There was no more to skippen nor to dance,
   But bidden go to beddë, with mischance,
   If any wight were stirring anywhere,
   And let them sleepe that a-beddë were.

100. But Pandarus, that well could each a deal
    The oldë dance, and every point therein,
    When that he saw that allë thing was well,
    He thought he would upon his work begin,
    And gan the stewë door all soft unpin,
    And still as stone, withouten longer let,
    By Troilus adown right he him set.

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

102. 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."

---

1 99:  Anyone making noise “was told to go to bed, for heaven’s sake (with mischance) ... and let people sleep!”

2 100.5: We left Troilus in the stew (a little room) at 86.4-7.
"Yet, blissful Venus! this night me inspire,"
Quod Troilus, "as wis as I thee serve,
And ever bet’ and bet’ shall till I starve.

103. "And if I had, O Venus full of mirth!
Aspécès bad of Mars or of Satúrn,¹
Or thou combust or let were in my birth,
Thy father pray all thilkè harm disturn
Of grace, and that I glad again may turn,
For love of him thou lovedest in the shaw,
I mean Adon, that with the bore was slaw.

104 “Jove, ekè for the love of fair Europe,²
The which, in form of bull, away thou fet;
Now help, O Mars, thou with thy bloody cope,
For love of Cypris thou me not ne let.
O Phoebus, think when Dane herselfen shut
Under the bark, and laurel waxed for dread,
Yet for her love, O help now at this need!

105. “Mercúry, for the love of Hersè eke,
For which Pallas was with Aglauros wroth,
Now help, and eke Diane, I thee beseech,
That this viagè be not to thee loth,
O fatal sisters, which, ere any cloth
Me shapen was, my destiny me spun:
So helpeth to this work that is begun.”

106. Quod Pandarus: "Thou wretched mouse's heart,
Art thou aghast so that she will thee bite?
Why, don this furréd cloak upon thy shirt,

---
¹ 103: The substance of this stanza is to ask Venus to undo any possible bad astrological influences directed at Troilus. The longwinded prayer shows off Chaucer’s control here, if not of narrative, of mythology and astronomy (all the planets/gods are mentioned). Troilus’s ineptitude is also on show.

² 104: In this stanza T. prays to various lover gods to help him: Jove, who loved Europa; Mars who loved Venus, Phoebus Apollo who chased Daphne (Dane) until she turned into a laurel to escape him.
And follow me, for I will have the wite; 
the blame (for what?)
But bide, and let me go before a lite;"
a little
And with that word he gan undo a trap, 
trapdoor
And Troilus he brought in by the lap. 
sleeve (?)

110. So that, as far as they are concerned, you could put mines under the house, and they 
would still sleep till sunup.

And follow me, for I will have the wite;  
the blame (for what?)
But bide, and let me go before a lite;"
a little
And with that word he gan undo a trap, 
trapdoor
And Troilus he brought in by the lap. 
sleeve (?)

107. The sternè wind so loud began to rout 
strong / sound
That no wight other's noisè mighten hear, 
And they that layen at the door without 
certainly / together
Full sikerly they sleepten all i-fere; 
And Pandarus with a full sober cheer 
quickly / w/o delay
Goes to the door anon withouten let 
Not a word
There as they lay, and softly he it shut;

108. And as he came againward privily 
again quietly
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." 
Not a word
And near he came, and said her in her ear: 
"No word, for love of God, I you beseech, 
Let no wight rise and hearen of our speech."

109. "What! which way be you come? Ben'dícitee!" 
Bless me!
Quod she. "And how, thus unwist of them all?"
unknown to
"Here at this secret trappè-door," quod he.
Let me call someone
Quod then Criseydè: "Let me some wight call." 
"Eh! God forbid that it should so befall," 
guess at
Quod then Pandáre, "that you such folly wrought 
They mighten deemen thing they never thought.

110. "It is not good a sleeping hound to wake, 
person / to suspect
Nor give a wight a cause for to divine. 
I assure you
Your women sleepeen all, I undertake, 
(under)mine
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,

¹ 110:4-5: "So that, as far as they are concerned, you could put mines under the house, and they 
would still sleep till sunup."
111. "Now, niecè mine, you shall well understand,"  
Quod he, "so as you women deemen 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.¹  
Unwist right as I came so will I wend.  

112. "Now whereby that I tellen you all this  
You wot yourself as well as any wight,  
How that your love all fully granted is  
To Troilus, that is the worthiest knight,  
One of this world, and thereto truth y-plight,  
That but it were on him along,²  
Him never falsen while you liven should.  

113. "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 ³  
Save of myself, as wisly have I joy,  
And by the faith I owe Priam of Troy.  

114. "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:  

¹ 111: '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."  

² 112.3-7: "that your love is fully granted and your word pledged (truth y-plight) to Troilus, the worthiest knight in the world, that unless he does something wrong (but it were on him along), you will never be unfaithful to him while you live."  

³ 113.5: "Unknown to any person certainly."
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."

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

116. "Horaste, alas! And falsen Troilus?
I know him not, God help me so," quod she.
"Alas! what wicked spirit told him thus?
Now certés, 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.

117. “O God,” quod she, “that worldly seliness,
Which clerkés callen false felicity,
Y-medled is with many a bitterness!
Full anguishous than is, God wot,” quod she,
“Conditïon of vain prosperity;
For either joyés comen not y-fere,
Or elsé no wight has them always here.  

118. “O brittle weal of man’s joy, unstable,
With what wight so thou be or how thou play,
Either he wot that thou, Joy, art mutable,
Or wot it not—it must be one of tway.
Now, if he wot it not, how may he say

___________

1 114.5-6: "He's been told by a friend that you are reputed to be in love with a man called Horaste."

2 For several stanzas Criseyde turns scholastic philosopher, out of tune with the moment and with her character. Troilus does the same later at even more length.
That he hath very joy and seliness,
That is of ignorance ay in darkness?

119. “Now, if he wot that joy is transitory,
As every joy of worldly thing must flee,
Then every time he has that in memóry,
The dread of losing maketh him that he
May in no perfect seliness be.
And if to lose his joy he sets a mite,
Then seemeth it that joy is worth but lite.

120. “Wherefore I will define in this mannér
That truly, for aught I can espy,
There is no very weal in this world here.
But, O thou wicked serpent jealousy,
Thou misbelievéd and envious folly,
Why hast thou made Troilus to me untriste,
That never yet a-guilt him that I wist.”

121. Quod Pandarus: "Thus fallen is this case."
"Why, uncle mine," quod she, "who told him this?
Why does my dear hearté thus, alas?"
"You wot, yea, niece 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."

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

123. “Niece, allé thing hath time, I dare avow,

¹ 122.6: "that danger is by delaying drawn in", i.e. that delay involves danger.
For when a chamber afire is, or a hall,
More need is it suddenly to rescue
Than to dispute and ask amongès all
How this candle in the straw is fall.
Ah! ben’citee! for all among that fare
The harm is done, and farewell fieldéfare!

124. "And, niecë mine (ne take it not agrief),"¹
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."

125. "Had I him never lief! By God, I ween²
You had never thing so lief," quod she.
"Now by my thrift," quod he, "that shall be seen;
For since you maké 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.

126. "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."

127. Quod then Criseydë: "Will you do one thing,
And you therewith shall stint all his dis-ease?
Have here and beareth him this bluë ring

¹ 124.1: ("Don’t take this the wrong way").
² 125.1-2: "I never loved him! By God, I am sure you never held anything so dear."
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 causeless; that shall be seen tomorrow."

128. "A ring!” quod he; "Yea! hazel woods you shake! ¹
Yea, niecè mine, that ring must have a stone
That mighten a dead man alivè make.²
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.

129. “Wot you not well that noble and high coráge
Ne sorrows not nor stinteth eke for lite?
But if a fool were in a jealous rage,
I would not set his sorrow at a mite,
But fief him with a fewe wordès white
Another day, when that I might him find,
But this thing stands all in another kind:

130 "This is so gentle and so tender of heart,
That with his death he will his sorrows wreak.
For trusteth well how sorè that him smart,
He will to you no jealous wordès speak.
And for-thy, niece, ere that his hearte break,
To speak yourself to him of this mattér;
For with one word you may his hearté steer.

131. "Now have I told what peril he is in
And his coming unwist to every wight

¹ 128.1: "Hazel woods" is a favorite dismissive expression of Pandarus, and seems to mean something like “Nuts!” See also V.73.1 and V. 168.5.

² 128.2-3: "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.
Ne (pardee) harm may there be none, nor sin. Nor, by God
I will myself be with you all this night. also
You know eke how he is your owné knight trust
And that by right you must upon him trist ready / you wish
And I all prest to fetch him when you list."

132. This accident so piteous was to hear plausible story
And eke so like a sooth at primé face truth on the face of it
And Troilus her knight to her so dear, secret / safe
His privy coming and the siker place,
That though that she did him as then a grace,
Considered all thingés as they stood,
No wonder is, since she did all for good.

133. Criseyde answered: “As wisly God to rest As surely
My soulé bring, so me is for him woe. indeed gladly
And, eme, y-wis fain would I do the best stay or
If that I haddè grace for to do so:
But whether that you dwell or for him go,
I am, till God me better mindé send,
At dulcarnon, right at my wittès end.¹ In a dilemma

134. Quod Pandarus: “Yea, niece, will you hear? learn
Dulcarion called is “fleming of wretches”; faults
It seemeth hard, for wretches will not lere weeds
For very sloth and other willful tecches:
This said by him that is not worth two fetches.
But you be wise, and that we have on hand
N’is neither hard nor skillful to withstand."

135. "Then, eme," quod she, "do hereof as you list,² uncle / wish
But ere he come I will up first arise, But before
And for the love of God, since all my trist trust

¹ 133.7 & 134.2: dulcarnon was the word for a notorius problem in Euclid which Pandarus or Chaucer confuses with still another one called fuga miserorum: putting the miserable (schoolboys) to flight, “fleming of wretches .”

² 135.1: "Then, uncle," she said, "do as you wish about this."
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."

136. "That is well said," quod he, "my niecè dear!
There good thrift on that wisè 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."

137. This Troilus full soon on knees him set
Full soberly right by her bedd’s head,
And in his bestè wise his lady gret;
But Lord! so she waxed suddenly all red,
Nay, though men shoulden smitten off her head
She couldè not a word aright outbring
So suddenly, for his sudden coming.

138. But Pandarus that so well couldè feel
In everything, to play anon began
And saidè: "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 saidè: "Kneeleth now while that you lest
Where God your heartès bringè soon at rest."

139. 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 duéty as for his òbservance;
But well find I she did him this pleasánce,
That she him kissed, although she sighèd sore,
And bade him sit adown withouten more.

140. Quod Pandarus: "Now will you well begin
Now do him sittè, goodè niecè 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.

141. 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:

142. "Lo, heartë mine! as would the excellence
Of love, against the which no man may,
Ne ought eke, goodly maken résistance, ²
And eke because I feltë well and saw
Your greatë truth and service every day,
And that your heart all mine was, sooth to sayn,—
This drove me for to rue upon your pain;

143. "And your goodness have I found always yet,
Of which, my dearë 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;³
And I, emforth my cunning and my might,
Have, and ay shall, how sorë that me smart,
Be to you true and whole with all my heart;

¹ 141.3-6: "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."

² 142.1-3: The syntax is a little unsatisfactory, but the meaning is reasonably clear: "because of the excellence of love which no one should resist ..."

³ 143.3 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 be, however much it hurts me, true to you ..."
144. "And dredéless that shall be found at preve:  
But, heartè mine! what all this is to sayn  
Shall well be told, so that you naught you grieve,  
Though I to you right on yourself complain,  
For therewith mean I finally the pain  
That holds your heart and mine in heaviness  
Fully to slay, and every wrong redress.

145. "My good heart mine, n’ot I for why ne how  
That Jealousy, alas! that wicked wiver,  
Thus causeless is cropen into you,  
The harm of which I wouldè fain deliver:  
Alas! that he all whole or of him sliver  
Should have his refuge in so digne a place!  
There Jove him soon out of your heart erase!  

146. "But O thou Jove! O author of Natûre!  
Is this an honour to thy deity  
That folk unguilty suffer here injûre,  
And who that guilty is all quit goes he?  
O were it lawful for to ’plain of thee,  
That undeservèd sufferest jealousy,  
Of that I would upon thee ’plain and cry.

147. "Eke all my woe is this, that folk now use  
To say right thus; ‘Yea, jealousy is love’,  
And would a bushel venom all excuse,  
For that a grain of love is on it shove,  
But that wot highè God that sits above  
If it be liker love or hate or grame,  
And after that it ought to bear its name.

148. “But certain is, some manner jealousy  
Is éxcusáble more than some i-wis,  

\[^{1}\]  
\[^{1}\] 148: 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; that is excusable because of the self-control.
As when cause is, and some such fantasy
With piety so well repressed is,
That it unneth does or says amiss,
But goodly drinketh up all his distress;
And that excuse I for the gentleness.

149. "And some’s so full of fury and despite
That it surmounteth his repressïon;
But, heartë mine! you be not in that plight,
That thank I God, for which your passion
I will not call it, but illusion
Of abundance of love and busy cure,
That doth your heartë this dis-ease endure.

150. "Of which I am right sorry but not wroth,
But for my devoir and your heartês rest
Whereso you list, by ordeal or by oath,¹
By sort or in what wis so you lest,
For love of God let prove it for the best,
And if that I be guilty, do me die;
Alas! what might I morë do or say?"

151. With that a fewë brightë tearês 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 sighëd sore,
And held her peace; not one word spoke she more.

152. But now help God to quenchën all this sorrow:
So hope I that He shall, for He best may;
For I have seen, on a full misty morrow
Follow full oft a merry summer’s day,
And after winter followëth green May.

¹ 150: She offers to prove her fidelity by any of the usual methods: “ordeal” — by enduring some terrible experience like carrying a red hot iron without harm, or by judicial oath, or drawing of lots.
153. This Troilus, when he her wordés heard,  
Have you no care, him listé not to sleep,  
For it thought him no strokés of a yard  
To hear or see Criseyde his lady weep,  
But well he felt about his hearté creep,  
For every tear which that Criseyde astart,  
The cramp of death to strain him by the heart.

154. And in his mind he gan the time a-curse  
That he came there, and that he was y-born,  
For now is wicked turnéd 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!"

155. 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;  
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."

156. Therewith the sorrow so his hearté shut  
That from his eyen fell there not a tear,

---

1 152: Another example of a stanza that might better have been omitted so that 153 could follow 151 immediately and effectively.

2 153.2: "You can be sure he did not want to sleep."

3 153.3-4: 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 .... "

4 155.4: "For she who was supposed to lighten his sorrow was angry."
And every spirit his vigour eke in knit,
So they astonéd and oppresséd 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.

156.3-7: 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."

157. This was no little sorrow for to see,
For all was hushed and Pandare 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 mannè’s heart?"
And off he rent all to his barè shirt,

158. And saidé: "Niecè, but you help us now,
Alas your owne Troilus is lorn."
"I-wis, so would I an I wisté 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"

159. "Yea, that to me”, quod she, "full lever were
Than all the good the sun abouté goth;"
And therewithal she swore him in his ear,
"I-wis, my deare heart ! I am not wroth,
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 abraid.

160. Therewith his pulse and palmês 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;

¹ 156.3-7: 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."
And at the last he gan his breath to draw,
And of his swoon soon after that a-daw,

161. And gan bet’ mind and reason to him take;
But wonder sore he was abashed i-wis,
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?"

162. And therewithal her arm o’er him she laid,
And all forgave, and oftentime him kissed.
He thanked her, and to her spoke and said
As fell to purpose for his heart’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 comfórt.

163. Quod Pandarus: "For aught I can espyen
This light nor I ne serven here of nought.¹
Light is not good for sické folkès eyen.
But, for the love of God, since you be brought
In thus good plight, let now no heavy thought
Be hanging in the heartés of you tway."
And bore the candle to the chimeney.

164 . Soon after this, (though it no needé were)
When she such oathés as her list devise
Had of him taken, her thoughté then no fear
Nor cause eke none to bid him thence arise:
Yet lesser thing than oathès may suffice
In many a case, for every wight I guess
That loveth well meaneth but gentleness.

165. But in effect she wouldé wit anon

¹ 163.1-2: "As far as I can see, neither this light nor I are doing any good here."
Of what man, and eke where, and also why
He jealous was, since there was causè none,
And eke the signè that he took it by, ¹
She bade him that to tell her busily,
Or elsè, certain, she bore him on hand
That this was done of malice, her to fond.

166. Withouten morè, shortly for to sayn,
He must obey unto his lady’s hest,
And for the lessè harm he mustè feign;
He said her when she was at such a feast
She might on him have looked at the least;
N’ot I not what (all dear enough a rush)
As he that needés must a causè fish. ²

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

168. Then Troilus gan sorrowfully to sigh.
Lest she be wroth him thought his heartè died,
And said: "Alas! upon my sorrow’s sick
Have mercy, O sweet heartè mine, Criseyde!
And if that in those wordès that I said
Be any wrong, I will no more trespass.
Do what you list; I am all in your grace."

¹ 165.4: "And what the evidence was."
² 166.6-7: "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."
³ 167.3: This is one of the comparatively few obtrusive Christian anachronisms that have found their way into the pagan milieu of the poem.
169. 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, dearē heartē mine! " quod he, "i-wis."  
"And now," quod she, "that I have done you smart  
Forgive it me, mine ownē sweetē heart!"

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

171. What might or may the silly larkē say  
When that the sparrow-hawk has it in his foot?  
I can no more but of these ilkē tway,  
(To whom this talē 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.

172. Criseydē, which that felt her thus y-take,  
(As writen clerkēs in their bookēs old)  
Right as an aspen leaf she gan to quake  
When she him felt her in his armēs fold;  
But Troilus all whole of carēs cold,  
Gan thanken then the blissful goddēs seven.  
Thus sundry painēs bringen folk to heaven.

\(^1\) 169.1: "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. Commentators say that in the early Middle Ages it was common for others to sleep even in royal bedrooms.
173. This Troilus in armes 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 Criseydë answered thus anon:
"Ne hadd I ere now, my sweet heart dear
Been yold, i-wis I werë not now here."

174. Oh, sooth is said that heal'd for to be,
As of a fever or other great sickness,
Men mustë drink (as men may often see)
Full bitter drink; and for to have gladness
Men drinken often pain and great distress:
I mean it here (as for this aventure),
That through a pain is founden all his cure.

175. And now sweetness seemeth morë sweet
That bitterness assayéd was beforne:
For out of woe in blisse now they fleet,
None such they felten since that they were born.
Now is this better than both two be lorn.
For love of God, take every woman heed
To worken thus, if it come to the need.

176. 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 intentë wist,
And as about a tree with many a twist
Betrent and writhes the sweetë woodèbine
Gan each of them in arms the other wind.

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

178. And right as he that sees his death y-shapen,  
And dien must, in aught that he may guess,  
And suddenly rescue doth him escapen,  
And from his death is brought in sikerness,—  
For all this world in such present gladness  
Was Troilus, and has his lady sweet.  
With no worse hap God let us never meet!  

179. Her armès small, her straightè back and soft,  
Her sidès long, fleshly smooth and white  
He gan to stroke, and good thrift bade full oft  
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.  

180. Then said he thus: “O Love, O Charity,  
Thy mother eke Cytherea the sweet  
After thyself, next herièd be she  
Venus mean I, the well willing planet  
And next that, Hymeaeus I thee greet  
For never man was to you goddès hold  
As I which you have brought from carès cold  

181. “Benignè Love, thou holy bond of things,  
Whoso will love, and list thee not honoúr,  
Lo, his desire will flee withouten wings.  
For, n’ouldest thou of bounty them succour  

---

1 177: 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.

2 181.4-5: “For if thou didst not wish (n’ouldest) of your bounty to help (succour) those who serve ...” In 181 & 182 Troilus turns Dantean & Boethian again.
That serven best and most always labouir,
Yet were all lost — that dare I well say, certes —
But-if thy gracë passëd our deserts.¹

182. “And for thou me (that couldë least deserve
Of them that numbered been unto thy grace)
Hast holpen where I likely was to starve, ²
And me bestowëd in so high a place,
That thilkë boundës may no blissë pace,
I can no more, but laud and reverence
Be to thy bounty and thine excellence.”

183. And therewithal Criseyde anon he kissed,
Of which certáin she felt no dis-ease,
And thus said he: "Now would to God I wist,
Mine heartë sweet, how I you mightë please.
What man,” quod he, “was ever thus at ease
As I, on which the fairest and the best
That ere I saw, deigneth her heart to rest?

184. "Here may men see that mercy passeth right;
Th’ experience of that is felt in me,
That am unworthy to so sweet a wight;
But heartë mine! of your benignity
So thinketh, that though I unworthy be,
Yet must I need amenden in some wise
Right through the virtue of your high service.

185. "Ah, for the love of God, my lady dear!
Since God hath wrought me for I shall you serve,
As thus I mean that you will be my steer,

¹ 181.7: “Unless your graciousness surpassed what we deserve”

² 182.1-5: “And because you (Love) have helped me (the least among those who deserve your grace) at a point where I was likely to perish (starve), and have put me in a place so high that no joy can pass its bounds ...”
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 miné ignorance \(may \ displease \ you\)  
I do no thing that you be díspleasance:

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

187. "I-wis,\(^4\), quod she, "mine owné hearté’s list! \(Indeed / desire\)  
My ground of ease, and all mine hearté dear! \(Many \ thanks / trust\)  
Grammmécry! for on that is all my trist:  
But let us fall away from this mattér, \(fulfillment\)  
For it sufficeth this that said is here;  
And at one word, withouten répentance,  
Welcome my knight, my peace, my suffisance!"

188. Of their delight or joys one of the least \(for \ my \ ability\)  
Were impossible to my wit to say,\(^4\)  
But judgeth you that have been at the feast \(if \ they \ chose \ to \ make \ love\)  
Of such gladness, if that them list to play; \(I \ know / same \ two\)  
I can no more but thus: these ilké tway

---

\(^1\) 185.2-5: "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 ..."

\(^2\) 186.1: *Wife* probably has as its primary meaning simply "woman", with strong overtones of the meaning "spouse" (see III, 16 above). 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.

\(^3\) 186.4: "Nor will I, certainly, disobey your commands." *defence* is the French word meaning literally "prohibition".

\(^4\) 188-89: 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.
That night, betwixen dread and sikerness,\nonly foolish dreams\nFelten in love the greaté worthiness.

189. O blissful night! of them so long y-sought,\nHow blithe unto them bothè two thou were!\nWhy n’ad I such a one with my soul bought,\nYea, or but the least joyé that was there?\nAway thou foulé Daunger and thou Fear! 2\nAnd let them in this heaven’s blissé dwell\nThat is so high that all ne can I tell.

190. But sooth is, though I cannot tellen all,\nAs can mine author of his excellence,\nYet have I said, and God toforn I shall,\nIn every thing all wholly his senténce,\nAnd if that I, at Lové’s reverencé,\nHave any word in ekèd for the best,\nDo therewithal right as yourselven lest;

191. For minè wordés, here and every part,\nI speak them all under correction\nOf you that feeling have in lové’s art,\nAnd put it all in your discretion\nT’ increase or maken diminution\nOf my language; and that I you beseech.\nBut now to purpose of my rather speech.

192. These ilkè two, that be in armès left,\nSo loth to them asunder go it were,\nThat each from other wenden been bereft;\nOr elsé, lo! this was their mosté fear,\nThat all this thing but nicè dreamès were,\nFor which full oft each of them said: "O sweet!

1 189.3-4: "Why didn’t I sell my soul for such a night or for the smallest joy they experienced?"

2 189.5: "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".
Clip I you thus? Or else do I it mete?"

193. And, Lord! so he gan goodly on her see,
That ne’er his look ne blenté from her face,
And said: "O my dear hearté! may it be
That it be sooth? that you be in this place?"
"Yea, hearté mine! God thank I of his grace,"
Quod then Criseyde, and therewithal him kissed,
That where her spirit was for joy she n’ist.

194. This Troilus full oft her eyen two
Gan for to kiss, and said; "O eyen clear!
It weren you that wroughté me such woe,
You humble nettés of my lady dear,
Though there be mercy written in your cheer,
God wot the text full hard is, sooth, to find;
How couldé you withouten bond me bind?" 1

195. Therewith he gan her fast in armés take,
And well a hundred timés gan he sigh,
Not such sorrowful sighs as men make
For woe, or elsé when that folk be sick,
But easy sighs, such as be to like,
That showed his affectïon within;
Of such sighs could he not belinne.

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

197. Lord! trow you that a covetous or a wretch
That blameth love, and holds of it despite,
That of those pence that he can mucker and catch
Was ever yet y-given him such delight
As is in love -- in one point, in some plight?
Nay, doubtless, for all so God me save,
So perfect joy ne may no niggard have.

198. They will say ‘Yes.’ But Lord, so that they lie!
Those busy wretches full of woe and dread
That callen love a woodness or follý;
But it shall fall them as I shall you redde,
They shall forego the white and eke the red,
And live in woe, there God give them mischance!
And every lover in his truth advance.

199. As would to God those wretches that despise
Service of love, had eares all so long
As haddē Midas, full of covetise,
And thereto drunken had as hot and strong
As Crassus did for his affectēs wrong, ¹
To teachen them that they be in the vice,
And lovers not, although they hold them nice.²

200. These ilkē two of whom that I you say,
When that their heartēs well assurēd were,
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 passēd was; but all such heaviness,
I thank it God, was turnēd to gladness.

201. And evermore when that they fell to speak
Of any thing of such a time agone,
With kissing all that tale shouldē break,

¹ *Midas* the legendary king who wanted everything he touched to turn to gold. *Crassus*: Defeated in battle, Crassus, a super-rich Roman had molten gold poured down his mouth (*hot and strong drink*). A truly awful fate to wish on anyone, especially for a trivial reason

² 199.7: Although they (*wretches*) consider them (*lovers*) to be foolish (*nice*).
And fallen in a newe joy anon,
And diden all their might, since they were one,
For to recover bliss and be at ease,
And passèd woe with joy [they] counterpoise.

202. Reason will not that I speak of sleep,
For it accordeth not to my mattér;
God wot they took of it full little keep,
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

203. But when the cock, common astrologer,
Gan on his breast to beat and after crow;
And Lucifer, the day’s messenger,
Gan for to rise, and out her beams [to] throw,
And eastward rose — to him that could it know,
Fortuna Major — then anon Criseyde
With hearté sore to Troilus thus said:

204. "Mine hearté’s life, my trust, all my pleasance!
That I was born, alas! that me is woe,
That day of us must make disseverance,
For time it is to rise and hence to go,
Or else I am lost for evermo’.
O Night! alas! why n’ilt thou o’er us hove
As long as when Alcmena lay by Jove? ³

¹ 202.4-7: 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 accorded with ‘gentleness’. "

² 203.3-6: Lucifer ... Fortuna Major: A rather pretentious "scientific" way, following the farmyard way, of saying that dawn was approaching in the east.

³ 204.6-7: Alcmena, the mother of Hercules, was one of Jove’s many lovers. Jove made their love-night three times longer than usual.
205. "O blackè Night! as folk in bookès read,
That shapen art by God this world to hide
At certain timès with thy darkè weed,
That under that men might in rest abide,
Well oughten beasts to plain and folk thee chide,
That there as day with labour would us brest,
That thou thus fleest and deignest us not rest.

206. "Thou dost, alas! so shortly thine office,
Thou rakeł Night,¹ that God maker of kind,
Thee for thine haste, and thine unkind
So fast ay to our hemispherè bind,
That never more under the ground thou wind;
For now, for thou so hiest out of Troy
Have I foregone, thus hastily, my joy."

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

208. "O cruel Day! accuser of the joy
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:
Envious Day! what list thee so to spyen?
What hast thou lost? why seekest thou this place?
There God thy light so quenchè, for his grace!

---

¹ 206: "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."

² 207.4-5: As he ... sadness may mean "like a man who had never experienced such depression after such great joy."
209. "Alas! what have these lovers thee aguilt? ¹
Despitous Day! thine be the pain of hell,
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?
Go, sell it them that smallè seals grave; ²
We will thee not; us needeth no day have."

210. And eke the sunnè Titan gan he chide,³
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."

211. 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 hearté must a-two;
And how should I my life an hourè save,
Since that with you is all the life I have?

212. "What shall I do? for certès I n’ot how
certainly I don’t know 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?"
213. "But natheless, mine owné 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,
Yet should I bet’ enduren all my pain."

214. To that Criseyd answered right anon,
And with a sigh she said: "O hearté dear!
The game i-wis so far forth now is gone,
That first shall Phoebus fallen from the sphere,
And every eagle be the dovè’s fere,
And every rock out of his placé start,
Ere Troilus go out of Cressid’l heart.

215. "You be so deep within mine hearté grave,
That though I would it turn out of my thought,
As wisly very God my soulé save,
To dien in the pain I couldé not; ¹
And for the love of God, that us hath wrought,
Let in your brain no other fantasy
So creepen, that it causé me to die.

216. "And that you me would have as fast in mind
As I have you, that would I you beseech,
And if I wisté soothly that to find,²
God might not one point of my joyèsc eche.
But, hearté mine! withouten moré speech,
Be to me true, or elsé were it ruth,
For I am thine, by God and by my truth.

217. "Be glad forthy, and live in sikerness,

¹ 215.1-4: "You are so deeply engraved in my heart that even if I wanted to erase you from my thoughts under the pain death from torture, I could not, as sure as I hope God will save my soul."

² 216.3: "If I knew for certain that I would find that."
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 hearte bring to rest”;
And him in armes took, and often kissed.

218. Against his will, sith it must needes be,
This Troilus up rose, and fast him clad,
And in his armes took his lady free
A hundred times, and on his way him sped,
And with such words as though his hearte bled,
He said: "Farewell, my dear hearte sweet!
That God us grante sound and soon to meet."

219. To which no word for sorrow she answered,
So sorè 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 pleasanse,
That it may never out of his rémembrance.

220. 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.

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

222. Criseyde also right in the samè wise
Of Troilus gan in her heart to shut
His worthiness, his lust, his deedès wise,
His gentleness, and how she with him met,
Thanking Love he so well her beset,
Desiring eft to have her heartè dear
In such a plight that she durst make him cheer.\(^2\)

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

224. And near he came and said: "How stands it now
This merry morrow, niece, how can you fare?"
Criseyde answered: "Never the bet' for you,
Fox that you be; God give your heartè care.
God help me so, you causèd all this fare,
Trow I," quod she, "for all your wordès white.
Oh, whoso sees you, knoweth you full lite."

225. With that she gan her face for to wry
With the sheet, and waxed for shame all red,
And Pandarus gan under for to pry
And saidè: "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.

\(^1\) 221.6-7: 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.

\(^2\) 222.6-7: "Hoping to have her sweetheart where she could give him delight."
226. I pass all that which chargeth not to say doesn’t matter
What! God forgave His death, and she also
doesn’t matter
Forgave, and with her uncle gan to play, to joke
For other causè was there none than so.
reading deliberate ambiguity into lines 226.1 & .7 and into a word like play (.3) could partly justify a determined reader in such a suspicion which is, however, dismissed by the Riverside editor as "baseless & absurd." The scene is not in Boccaccio, and stanza 226 is not in the Corpus MS, the source MS for both Riverside and Windeatt’s editions
nothing else to be done
But of this thing right to the effect to go To make a long story short
When timè was, home to her house she went,
And Pandarus has fully his intent.¹

227. Now turnè we again to Troilus,
That restless full long a-beddè lay,
And privily sent after Pandarus secretly sent for
To him to come in all the haste he may:
He came anon, not oncè said he nay,
And Troilus full soberly he gret, greeted
And down upon the beddè’s side him set.

228. This Troilus with all th’ affection
Of friendly love that heartè may devise And before / from
To Pandarus on knees fell he adown;
And ere that he would of the place arise
He gan him thanken in his bestè wise 100 times
A hundred sithe; and gan the timè bless
That he was born, to bring him from distress.

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

¹ Some recent critics have seen more than hints of incest in stanzas 225 & 226. Certainly the action of 225 seems odd, but Pandarus is not noted for his sensitivity and good taste. Reading deliberate ambiguity into lines 226.1 & .7 and into a word like play (.3) could partly justify a determined reader in such a suspicion which is, however, dismissed by the Riverside editor as "baseless & absurd." The scene is not in Boccaccio, and stanza 226 is not in the Corpus MS, the source MS for both Riverside and Windeatt’s editions.
230. "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
Of Love, and eke thy kindè busyness.

231. "Thus hast thou me no little thing y-give;
For which to thee obligèd be for ay
My life; and why? For through thy help I live,
Or elsè 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:

232. "My dearè 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.

233. "For of Fortúna’s sharp adversity
The worstè kind of infortune is this,
A man to have been in prosperity,
And it remember when it passed 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.

234. "Thou art at ease, and hold thee well therein,
For all so sure as red is every fire,
As great a craft is keepè well as win.
Bridle always thy speech and thy desire,
For worldly joy holds not but by a wire;
That proveth well -- it bursts alday so oft,
Forthy is need to worken with it soft."
235. Quod Troilus: "I hope, and God toforn,  
My dearē 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 heartē well, Pandare,  
God wot, of this thou wouldest little care."

before God
through my fault / lost
Nor will I be so rash as to
talk about
if you knew
God knows / worry

236. Then gan he tell him of his gladdē night,  
And whereof first his heartē dread and how,  
And saidē: "Friend, as I am a true knight,  
And by that faith I shall to God and you,  
I had it never half so hot as now,  
And ay the morē that desire me biteth  
To love her best the more it me delighteth."

dreaded
I owe
And ever the more

237. "I n’ot myself not wisly what it is,  
But now I feel a newē quality,  
Yea, all another than I did ere this."  
Pandārus answered and said thus, that "he  
That oncē may in heaven’s blisse be,  
He feeleth other wayēs, dare I lay,  
Than thilkē time he first heard of it say."

I really don’t know
other than
I bet
that time / heard of it

238. This is a word for all, this Troilus  
Was never full to speak of this mattēr,  
And for to praisen unto Pandarus  
The bounty of his rightē lady dear,  
And Pandarus to thank and maken cheer:  
This tale was ay span-newē to begin  
Till that the night departed them a-twin.  

n. surfeited w. speaking
always brand new
separated / in two

239. Soon after this, for that Fortūne it would,  
Y-comen was the blissful timē sweet  

wished it

¹ 235.4: N'I n’ill not = nor I won’t not. The emphatic triple negative would now be grammatically impossible.
That Troilus was warnèd that he should
There he was erst, Crisyde his lady meet,¹
For which he felt his heart in joyè fleet,
And faithfully gan all the goddès hery;
And let’s see now if that he can be merry.

240. And holden was the form and all the wise
Of her coming, and eke of his also,
As it was erst, which needeth not devise;²
But plainly to th’effect right for to go:
In joy and surety Pandarus them two
A-beddè brought when that them bothè lest;
And thus they be in quiet and in rest.

241. Naught needeth it to you, since they be met,
To ask of me if that they blith were,
For if it erst was well, then was it bet
A thousand fold, this needeth not inquire;
A-gone was every sorrow and every fear,
And both i-wis they had, and so they wend
As muchel joy as heart may comprehend.

242. This is no little thing of for to say,
This passeth every wit for to devise,
For each of them gan other’s lust obey.
Felicity, which that these clerkès wise
Commenden so, ne may not here suffice;
This joy ne may not written be with ink;
This passeth all that any heart may think.

243. But cruel day, so welaway the stound!
Gan for t’approach, as they by signès knew,
For which them thought they felten deathè’s wound:

¹ 239.3-4: "Troilus was told to meet his lady again at the same place as before," i.e. Pandarus’s house.

² 240.1-3: "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

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

245. But needes day departen them must soon; 
And when their speechè done was and their cheer, 
They twin anon, as they were wont to do, 
And setten time of meeting eft i-phere. 
And many a night they wrought in this manër: 
And thus Fortuna led a time in joy 
Criseyde and eke this kingë’s son of Troy.

246. 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 
A world of folk, as came him well of kind, 
The freshest and the best that he could find, 

¹ 243.7 & 244: Another short alba or aubade. In what follows 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. 204 ff.

² 246.5-7: Again out of dread does not mean “out of fear” but the lines say: ”I assure you, he kept around him a group of people who were the finest that he could find, as was natural for him (came him well of kind).”

The good effect of human sexual love on a man’s manners and military prowess mentioned here and earlier, and below in stanzas 254 &5 was a commonplace of medieval romance.
247. That such a voice was of him and a steven
Throughout the world, of honour and largesse,
That it up rang unto the gate of heaven;
And as in love he was in such gladness
That in his heart he deemèd as I guess
That there n’is lover in this world at ease
So well as he, and thus gan love him please.

248. 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 Criseydè’s net;¹
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.

249. 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 mannèr:

CANTICUS TROILI ²

¹ 248. "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. The substance of it is that Love holds all things working together: marriages, societies, the heavens, the oceans, everything. See also the Invocation at the opening of this book III.
250. "Love, that of earth and sea hath governance,
Love, that his hestês hath in heaven high,
Love, that with a wholesome alliance
Holds people joined 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.

251. "That that the world with faith, which that is stable,
Diverseth so its stoundês concoring
That elements that be so discordable
Holden a bond perpetually during,
That Phoebus must his rosy day forth bring,
And that the moon has lordship o’er the nights —
All this does Love; ay heried be his mights!

252. "That that the sea, that greedy is to flow,
Constraineth to a certain end so
His floodês, that so fiercely they ne grow
To drenchen earth and all, for evermo’,
And if that Love aught let his bridle go,
All that now loves asunder shoulde leap,
And lost were all that Love holds now to-heap.

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

\(^1\) 253. "I wish that God, who is the author of nature (kind), 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). "
254. In allé needés for the towné’s war
He was — and ay — the first in armés dight,
And certainly — but if that bookés 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.

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

256. And most of love and virtue was his speech,
And in despite had he all wretchedness;
And doubtéless no need was him beseech
To honour them that haddé worthiness,
And easen them that weren in distress;
And glad was he if any wight well fared
That lover was, when he it wist or heard.

257. For, sooth to say, he lost held every wight
But if he were in Lové’s high service,
I meané folk that ought it be of right;
And o’er all this so well could he devise
Of sentiment, and in so uncouth wise
All his array, that every lover thought
That all was well what so he said or wrought.

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

259. Thou lady bright, the daughter of Dione!  
Thy blind and winged son eke, Dan Cupide!  
You Sisters Nine eke, that by Helicon  
In hill Parnassus list for to abide,  
That you thus far have deignèd me to guide,  
I can no more, but since that you will wend,  
You heried be for ay withouten end!  

260. Through you have I said fully in my song  
Th’effect and joy of Troilus’s service,  
Al’ be that there was some dis-ease among,  
As to mine author listeth to devise;²  
My Thirde Book now end I in this wise,  
And Troilus in lust and in quiet  
Is with Criseyde, his owné lady sweet.

Here ends Book III

¹ 258.5-7: "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." More of the good effects of love; see second half of note to 246 above.

² 260.4: “As my source chooses to tell it.”