

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

1

TROILUS AND CRISEYDE

by

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Book III

BOOK III (61 pp)

Invocation to Love ¹

1. O blissful light, of which the beamès clear
Adorneth all the thirdè heaven fair;
O Sun's lief, O Jovè'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.

*beloved of the Sun
Pleasure / benign (one)
always ready to dwell
health
praised*

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

*influence, power
won't forbid
is worth [anything]*

3. You Jovè first to thilk affectès glad,
(Through which that thingès liven all and be),
Commeveden ³ and amorous him made

*You = Love
Impelled*

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 formès down him sent
 For love in earth, and whom you list he hent.

*mortals / pleased / always
 success or failure*

he took whomever you pleased

4. You fiercé Mars appeasen of his ire,
 And as you list you maken heartès digne;
 Algatès 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 joyè that he hath, your might it sends.

*You placate M.
 as you wish / worthy
 Always*

*You make them
 as a person inclines*

5. You holden regne and house in unity;
 You soothfast cause of friendship be also;
 You know all th'ilké covered quality
 Of thingès 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.

*kingdom
 true cause
 hidden nature
 wonder about
 how it happens that*

to fishtrap

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.

*lady b. = Venus
 On behalf of
 to tell
 that which*

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

*(May) you / feeling
 Infuse & let me show
 C = Muse of epic*

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

*right now
 to the glory
 (may) God*

End of the Proem

8. Lay all this meanwhile this sad Troilus
 Recording his lesson in this mannér,
 "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.

*On my faith
 complain
 behavior
 as best he can*

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."

*flutter
 sleeve
 May God heal
 to blame for*

10. Therewith it seemèd as he wept almost.
 "Ah! Ah!" quod Troilus, so ruefully,
 "Whe'r 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 handès 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 wouldè you beseech."

lifted himself up / then

*two
y. protection also*

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 smiten 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.

*became n. alive nor
embarrassment*

*blushed
intended to recite
out of his head*

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,¹
Or was too bold to sing a fool a mass;
But when his shame began somewhat to pass
His reasons, as I may my rhymès hold,
I will you tell as teachen bookès old.

*too grossly flattering ?
embarrassment*

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

*also shook
nicely modest / color*

*submissive manner
very first / escaped*

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

stopped

¹ 13.3: "Because he was not over-aggressive or overpowering".

The nexte word was: "God wot for I have
 As farforthly as I have had conning
 Been yourès all, God so my soulè save,
 And shall, till that I, woeful wight, be grave,¹
 And though I dare nor can unto you 'plain,
 I-wis I suffer not the lessè pain.

*God knows
 as far as I knew how*

*complain
 Indeed*

16. "Thus much as now, ah womanlikè wife!²
 I may out bring, and if this you displease
 That shall I wreak upon mine ownè 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 soonè that I die."³

wife = woman

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

*to pity
 would (turn)
 again & again*

before you go

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

I don't know

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.

"I, what!" quod he;¹ "that you have on him ruth
For God's love, and do him not to die."

*pity
don't cause him*

"Now then thus," quod she, "I would him pray
To tellen me the fine of his intent;
Yet wist I never well what that he meant."

*the goal
knew I never*

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

noble

look

taint

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

*sentence
your rule
your prohibition*

anything

21. "And I to be yours, very humble, true,
Secret, and in my painès patient,
And ever to desiren freshly new
To serven, and be ay like diligent,
And with good heart all wholly your talént
Receiven well, how sorè that me smart –
Lo, this mean I, mine ownè sweetè heart!"

*be always equally d.
your decision
however much it hurts*

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! ¹ *refuse*
 Now niecè mine, by natal Jovè's feast,
 Were I a god you shouldè starve as yern *die at once*
 That hearen well this man will nothing yern *desire*
 But your honoúr and see him almost starve *die*
 And be so loth to suffer him you serve." ²

23. With that she gan her eyen on him cast
 Full easily and full debónairly, *graciously*
 Avising her, and hièd not too fast *Reflecting & not hurrying*
 With ne'er a word, but said him softèly: *(to) him = Pandarus*
 "Mine honour safe, I will well truly, *(Provided that m.h.)*
 And in such form as he gan now devise, *as he just now said*
 Receiven him fully to my servíce; *him = Troilus*

24. "Beseeching him, for Godè's love, that he
 Would in honoúr of truth and gentleness,
 As I well mean, eke meanen well to me,
 And mine honoúr with wit and busyness *intelligence & care*
 Aye keep; and if I may do him gladness *Always guard*
 From hencéforth, i-wis I n'ill not feign:
 Now be all whole; no longer you ne 'plain. ³

25. "But natheless this warn I you" quod she,
 "A kingè's son although you be i-wis, *indeed*
 Yet you shall have no more sovereignty
 Of me in love than right in that case is; *than is proper*

¹ 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!"

² 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.

³ 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.

*I won't hesitate
 To get angry with
 according as you*

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

good health(?), joy (?)

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 bellè sound.¹

*hand (to pull rope)
 bell*

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.

soon

*I call on
 both of you / can walk
 when I say*

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."

win the prize

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.

to blind

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."

we should go

speak (in private)

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 abséncé
 Of her, in praising of her excellence,
 Her governance, her wit, and her mannér
 Commendeden, that it joy was to hear.

politely

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.

go

pass over

would gladly

Be free of / he wanted

talk

33. Elaine him kissed, and took her leavè blive,
 Deiphebus eke, and home went every wight,
 And Pandarus as fast as he may drive
 To Troilus then came as line aright,
 And on a pallet all that gladdè night
 By Troilus he lay with merry cheer

quickly

person

direct

straw bed

To tale, and well was them they were y-fere. ¹

To talk / together

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.

e. person was gone

delay

describe

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.

most dear

this year

grew

skill

since then

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

point / knowest

in a position

do you know why?

to play a game

again

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

a go-between

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) *you know well*
 So fully made thy gentleness to trust *my innocent niece*
 That all shall be right as thyselfen list. *you wish*

38 "But God that all wot, take I to witness *who knows all*
 That ne'er I this for covetisè wrought *didn't work for profit*
 But only for t'abridgè that distress *to lessen*
 For which well nigh thou diédst as me thought.¹ *were dying*
 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 *you know*
 Among the people, as who saith, hallowed is; *is honored*
 For that man is unborn, I dare well swear,
 That ever wistè that she did amiss:² *knew / did wrong*
 But woe is me that I that cause all this
 May thinken that she is my nicè dear,
 And I her eme, and traitor eke, y-fere.³

40. "And were it wist that I, through my engine, *known / management*
 Had in my niece y-put this fantasy
 To do thy lust and wholly to be thine, *do thy will*
 Why, all the worldè 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.

for- = totally

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 matter.
For skillful is, thou wost it well, my prayer.¹

*go a step further
once again
secrecy
betray*

reasonable

42. "And think what woe there hath betid ere this
For making of avauntès 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

*has happened
boasts*

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't thyself enough and wost
Against that vice, for to ben a labbe,
Al' said men sooth as often as they gab.

*you know
to prevent you being a blabber
Even if*

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

before this

Alas!

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 morè part, all is untrue
 That men of yelp an' it were brought to preeve.¹
 Of kindè, no avaunter is to 'lieve.

An' = if

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 secree,
 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.

*Boaster
 I put the case*

*Indeed / a boaster
 promise*

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 morè than mine oldè hat?
 No wonder is, so God me sendè heal,
 Though women dreaden with us men to deal.

call them

promised them

. G. help me

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

stupid fools

wise people

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: levè 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 truè 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.

my dear brother

be discreet

*start y. business
 before God*

wish

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 sendè death or soonè liss."

I know / by God

*You know also
 to settle the contract*

*And pray
 comfort soon*

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

*force of P's promise
 faint*

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

woods & hedges

*Re-clothe
 lively (person)*

Grew

52. And gan his look on Pandarus up cast
 Full soberly, and friendly on to see,
 And saidè: "Friend, in Aprilis the last,
 As well thou wost, if it remember thee,

you know

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;

How near

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 morè tell of this mattér
 That quakè now and no wight may us hear?

*You know / hesitated to
 no danger in telling you
 That I know / please
 would I dare
 tremble / nobody*

54. "But natheless, by that God I thee swear,
 That as Him list may all this world govèrn,
 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

*as he pleases
 even if
 early or late
 dare or know how to*

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

*end my life
 chained up
 Captive*

56. "And that thou hast so muchè 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 timès in a morning starve: *die*
 I can no morè, but that I will thee serve
 Right as thy knave, whither so thou wend, *slave / you go*
 For evermore unto my lifè's end.

57. "But here with all my heart I thee beseech
 That never in me thou deemè such follý *expect*
 As I shall say: methoughtè by thy speech,
 That this which thou me dost for company *out of friendship*
 I shoulde ween it were a bawdery. *think / pimping*
 I am not wood, al-if I lewèd be:¹ *not mad / stupid*
 It is not so! That wot I well, pardee. *know I*

58. "But he that goes for gold or for richesse, *wealth*
 On such messágè, call him what thee list; *errand / you please*
 And this that *thou* dost, call it gentillesse,
 Compassïon, and fellowship, and trust.
 Depart it so, for widè-where is wist *Distinguish / widely known*
 How that there is diversity required
 Betwixen thingès like, as I have lered.² *learned*

59. "And, that thou know I thinkè not, nor ween, *or suppose*
 That this service a shamè be or a jape, *or joke*
 I have my fairè sister Polyxene,
 Cassandra, Elaine, or any of the frape: *group*
 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. *alone (to arrange it)*

60. "But since that thou hast done me this servíce
 My life to save, and for no hope of meed, *reward*
 So for the love of God this great emprise *enterprise*
 Perform it out, for now is the most need; *Finish it*
 For high and low, withouten any dread, *big & small*

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."

wishes, instructions

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 pleasáncé,
He not forgot his goodè governance;

*pleased
make it better
dressed*

burned

self-control

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.

*rash d. & uninhited glance
truth to tell
couldn't know*

*every person
pretend*

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.

tell you about

64. N'ill I not swear, although he lay full soft,
That in his thought he n'as somewhat dis-eased,
Nor that he turnèd on his pillows oft,
And would of that him missèd 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)

to get on with it

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,
 Appointeden full warily in this need,
 So as they durst, how that they would proceed.

story

dared & wished

*Decided cautiously
 as much as t. dared*

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.¹

*it = their conversation
 secrecy
 figure out or suspect
 eavesdrop
 so dear*

to complete properly

67. But thilkè 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.

*that little / did
 spirit / always
 (to) her he knew*

*anything
 although*

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

*this story finish
 managed*

finished

*conduct himself
 manage better*

69. For why? She found him so discreet in all,
 So secret, and eke of such obeisáncè,
 That well she felt he was to her a wall
 Of steel, and shield from every displeasáncè,

respect

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 goodè governance,
 So wise he was, she was no more afeared.
 I mean as far as aught to be required.

*in his benign power
 afraid
 no more than necessary*

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.

*to fan
 constantly eager
 Was always pushing
 behaved better w'out doubt*

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.

*perhaps / w think
 repeat
 I think
 such distress
 to relate*

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

*I think
 he didn't want to*

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 speches to fulfill,
 That it befell right as I shall you tell,

*To get on with story
 peace & q.*

¹ 71-72: These two stanzas are a good example of the "prolixity" in this poem that Chaucer says at one point he ought to shun.

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 fairè niece and Troilus y-fere
 Thereas at leisure all this high mattér
 Touching their love were at the full upbound,
 Had, out of doubt, a time unto it found,

for the goal
together
Where
would be completed
Pandarus ... had ...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 shouldè nothing fail;¹
 And for to be in aught espiéd there,
 That, wist he well, an impossíble were.

spotted
he knew

76. Dreadless it clear was in the wind
 Of every 'pie and every lettè-game:²
 Now all is well, for all the world is blind
 In this mattèrè, bothè 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.

w&t = everyone
r. for building
know

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 aboutè this service —

planning
constantly
careful preparations
arranged an excuse

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* (1.7) 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 shouldeñ flee.
 And for-thy let him no man, God forbid,
 But pray Apollo helpen in this need.

*keep vigil
 by Apollo*

*lift the siege
 let = hinder*

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

*or two
 sky gave signs of*

the point

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.

*at once to jest
 accustomed / joke*

make him run after her

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 wouldè never comen where she were.

go

*promptly
 they agreed*

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.

And other of her women nine or ten;
 But who was glad now, who, as trowen ye *do you think*
 But Troilus? that stood and might it see
 Throughout a little window in a stew, *in a small room*
 Where he be-shut since midnight was, in mew, *cooped up*

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

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

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

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 bentè moonè with her hornès pale,
 Saturn and Jove in Cancer joinèd 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?"
- crescent moon*
Jupiter
pour
- What a time for!*
91. "But goodè 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 ownè house pardee,
 For by my truth, I say it not in game,
 To wend as now it were to me a shame."
- by God*
(for you) to go
92. Criseyde, which that could as muchè 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 grouch and then abide;
 For home to go it may not well betide."
- had as much sense*

I might as well
grumble & then stay
not really possible
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."
- beloved*
S. you wish / it's reasonable
stay

Indeed, thanks / then
truth
you're pleased to stay
94. Thus all is well; but then began aright
 The newè joy, and all the feast again;
 But Pandarus, if goodly had he might,
- if he'd had his way*

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 hiéd her to bed full fain,
 And said; "O Lord! this is a hugè rain,
 This were a weather for to sleepen in,
 And that I rede us soonè to begin. *hurried her / gladly*

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 *advise*
 Be warden of your women every one; *lodge you*
So that

96. "And in this middle chamber that you see
 Shall all your women sleepen well and soft,
 And there I said [you] shall yourselves be,
 And if you lien well to-night, come oft, *outer room*
 And careth not what weather is aloft.
 The wine anon, and when so that you lest,¹ *if you sleep well*
 So go we sleep, I trow it be the best." *We'll drink & when you wish*
I think

97. There is no morè, but hereafter soon *no more (to say)*
 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 *rained*
 And blew therewith so wonderfully loud,
 That well nigh no man hearen other could.³

98. Then Pandarus, her eme, right as him ought, *uncle*
 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."

Full glad unto her beddè's side her brought,
 And took his leave, and gan full low to lout,
 And said: "Here at this closet door without,
 Right overthwart, your women lien all,
 That whom you list of them you may her call."

*bow
 outside the room door
 across / all will lie
 So that / wish*

99. So when that she was in the closet laid,
 And all her women forth by ordinance
 A-beddè weren, there as I have said,
 There was no more to skippen nor to dance,
 But bidden go to beddè, with mischance,¹
 If any wight were stirring anywhere,
 And let them sleepen that a-beddè were.

*in the room in bed
 in an orderly way
 in bed*

anyone

100. But Pandarus, that well could each a deal
 The oldè dance, and every point therein,
 When that he saw that allè thing was well,
 He thought he would upon his work begin,
 And gan the stewè door all soft unpin,²
 And still as stone, withouten longer let,
 By Troilus adown right he him set.

*knew every bit of
 The old game (of love)*

*little room / unlock
 delay*

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

*to get to the point
 beginning & end*

go

nor half

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."

not a bit

*I'm betting
 or ruin everything*

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.

*surely
 better & better / die*

103. "And if I had, O Venus full of mirth!
 Aspéctès 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.

*in the wood
 Adonis / slain by boar*

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!

*took, fetched
 cape
 C = Venus / don't hinder
 Daphne*

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 viagé 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."

*angry
 this adventure / hateful
 the Fates*

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;
 But bide, and let me go before a lite;"
 And with that word he gan undo a trap,
 And Troilus he brought in by the lap.

*the blame (for what?)
 a little
 trapdoor
 sleeve (?)*

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

strong / sound

certainly / together

quickly / w/o delay

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

again quietly

Not a word

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

Bless me!

unknown to

Let me call someone

guess at

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

person / to suspect

I assure you

(under)mine

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."

Unwist right as I came so will I wend.

Unnoticed / leave

111. "Now, niece 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

*judge, think
 deceive
 her beloved
 make a fool of him
 a deception*

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 you n'ould
 Him never falsen while you liven should.

*The reason why
 You know / person
 Unique / & given your word
 his fault
 betray*

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 certáin³
 Save of myself, as wisly have I joy,
 And by the faith I owe Priam of Troy.

*bluntly
 by a private passage
 Unknown / person
 As surely*

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 causè why is this:

*If he isn't fully mad
 madness
 Unless*

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,¹
 For sorrow of which this night shall be his last."

*he's told by a friend
 a man called*

115. Criseyde which that all this wonder heard,
 Gan suddenly about her heartè cold,
 And with a sigh she sorrowfully answered:
 "Alas! I weened, who so that talès told,
 My dearè heartè wouldè me not hold
 So lightly false. Alas! conceitès wrong!
 What harm they do! for now live I too long.

grow cold

*I thought that whoever
 not think me
 wrong thoughts*

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

and betray T?

*certainly uncle / if I
 exonerate*

117. "O God," quod she, "that worldly seliness,
 Which clerkès callen false felicity,
 Y-medled is with many a bitterness!
 Full anguishous than is, God wot," quod she,
 "Condition of vain prosperity;
 For either joyès comen not y-fere,
 Or elsè no wight has them always here."²

*happiness
 clerics, scholars
 mingled
 painful*

*together
 nobody*

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 mutáble,
 Or wot it not—it must be one of tway.
 Now, if he wot it not, how may he say

O fleeting state

*he knows / changeable
 of two*

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?

*true joy and happiness
(he) who is*

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 selinessè be.
And if to lose his joy he sets a mite,
Then seemeth it that joy is worth but lite.

*happiness
low value
little*

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 misbelieved and envious follý,
Why hast thou made Troilus to me untriste,
That never yet a-guilt him that I wist."

*distrustful
offended him that I know of*

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

This is the situation

You know how it is

please

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, niecè mine, thus writen clerkès wise
That peril is with drecching in y-draw.¹
Nay, such abodès be not worth a haw.

*indeed
before God
a fine thing!*

hesitations / straw

123. "Niece, allè 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!

*did fall
 bless us / to-do
 bye-bye birdie!*

124. "And, niecè 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."

*If you allow
 you never held him dear
 now only 2 of us are here
 I know*

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 makè 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.

*so dear
 Upon my word*

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."

For no good reason

*bluntly, if you leave
 kindness nor*

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

stop his distress

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, niece mine, that ring must have a stone
 That mighten a dead man alive 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, time lost! well mayst thou cursen sloth.

Im sure

pity

129. "Wot you not well that noble and high corage
 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 fewè wordès white
 Another day, when that I might him find,
 But this thing stands all in another kind:

*Don't y. know / spirit
 nor stops for little (things)*

placate him / nice words

130 "This is so gentle and so tender of heart,
 That with his death he will his sorrows wreak.
 For trusteth well how sore 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 matter;
 For with one word you may his heartè steer.

*This (man)
 avenge
 no matter how badly he hurts*

And therefore

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

unknown

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.
 I will myself be with you all this night.
 You know eke how he is your owné knight
 And that by right you must upon him trist
 And I all prest to fetch him when you list."

Nor, by God

also

trust

ready / you wish

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

*plausible story
 truth on the face of it*

secret / safe

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

As surely

indeed gladly

stay or

In a dilemma

134. Quod Pandarus: "Yea, niece, will you hear?
 Dulcarnon callèd is "fleming of wretches";
 It seemeth hard, for wretches will not lere
 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."

learn

faults

weeds

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

uncle / wish

But before

trust

¹ 133.7 & 134.2: *dulcarnon* was the word for a notorious 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 pleasáncé,
 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."

*Good fortune
 receive him
 move
 sharp
 I praise thee*

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

*greeted
 blushed
 coherent*

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."

to joke

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 óbservance;
 But well find I she did him this pleasáncé,
 That she him kissed, although she sighèd sore,
 And bade him sit adown withouten more.

*in the way ...
 ...of doing his lover's duty*

w/o. more ado

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

Now make him sit

Upon your beddè's sidè there within
 That each of you the bet' may other hear." *better*
 And with that word he drew him to the fire
 And took a light and found his countenance *made a pretence*
 As for to look upon an old romance.

141. Criseyde that was Troilus' lady right,
 And clear stood in a ground of sikerness, *certainty*
 Al' thought she that her servant and her knight *Al(though)*
 Ne should of right no úntruth in her guess, ¹ *suspect*
 Yet natheless, considered his distress, *considering*
 And that love is in cause of such follý, *is the cause*
 Thus spoke she to him of his jealousy:

142. "Lo, heartè mine! as would the excellence
 Of love, against the which that no man may,
 Ne ought eke, goodly maken résistance, ² *nor, indeed, ought*
 And eke because I feltè well and saw *truly felt*
 Your greatè truth and service every day,
 And that your heart all mine was, sooth to sayn,—
 This drove me for to rue upon your pain; *to take pity*

143. "And your goodness have I found always yet,
 Of which, my dearè heart, and all my knight,
 I thank it you, as far as I have wit, *ability*
 Al' can I not as much as it were right;³ *Al(though) / as I should*
 And I, emforth my cunning and my might, *according to my ability*
 Have, and ay shall, how sorè that me smart, *always / however / hurt*
 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 dredèless 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.

doubtless / in trial

145. "My good heart mine, n'ot I for why ne how
 That Jealousy, alas! that wicked wiver,
 Thus causeless is copen 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!

*I don't know
 snake
 has crept
 remove
 a piece of him
 so worthy
 (may) Jove*

146 "But O thou Jove! O author of Natúre!
 Is this an honour to thy deity
 That folk unguilty suffer here injúre,
 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.

*injury
 complain
 Who allow undeserved jealousy*

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.

*bushel of
 God ... knows
 anger*

148. "But certain is, some manner jealousy
 Is éxcusáble more than some i-wis,¹

than others indeed

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 repressèd is,
 That it unnethès does or says amiss,
 But goodly drinketh up all his distress;
 And that excuse I for the gentleness.

*sense of right
 scarcely
 his = its (?)*

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

*some (jealousy) is / hatred
 overpowers his restraint*

*& great concern
 that causes*

150. "Of which I am right sorry but not wroth,
 But for my devoir and your heartès rest
 Whereso you list, by ordeal or by oath,¹
 By sort or in what wisè 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 morè do or say?"

*not angry
 out of duty
 Whatever you want
 By drawing lots
 have me killed*

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

thou knowest

covered

152. But now help God to quenchen 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 followeth green May.

(May) God help

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.

Men see alday, and readen eke in stories,
That after sharpè showers been victóries.¹

every day

153. This Troilus, when he her wordès heard,
Have you no care, him listè not to sleep,²
For it thought him no strokès of a yard
To hear or see Criseyde his lady weep,³
But well he felt about his heartè creep,
For every tear which that Criseyde astart,
The cramp of death to strain him by the heart.

that escaped C.

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 turned 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!"

*bad into
considered / he was finished
trick
Is no good / Alas!*

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;⁴
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."

*as good as dead
angry / lighten
God knows
known*

156. Therewith the sorrow so his heartè 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 astonèd and oppressèd were; ¹ *stunned*
 The feeling of his sorrow or his fear
 Or of aught else fled were out of town;
 Adown he fell all suddenly a-swown. *in a swoon*

157. This was no little sorrow for to see,
 For all was hushed and Pandare up as fast; *jumped up or spoke up*
 "O, niece, peace, or we be lost," quod he.
 Be not aghast." But certain at the last *afraid*
 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 saidè: "Niece, but you help us now, *Unless*
 Alas your ownè Troilus is lorn." *finished*
 "I-wis, so would I an I wistè how,
 Full fain," quod she. "Alas that I was born." *Indeed / if I knew how*
 "Yea, niece, will you pullen out the thorn
 That sticketh in his heartè," quod Pandàre. *Very gladly*
 "Say `All forgiven", and stint is all this fare" *this fuss will be over*

159. "Yea, that to me", quod she, "full lever were *more pleasing*
 Than all the good the sun aboutè goth;" *i.e. in all the world*
 And therewithal she swore him in his ear,
 "I-wis, my dearè heart ! I am not wroth,
 Have here my truth," and many another oath. *I swear*
 "Now speak to me, for it am I Criseyde;"
 But all for naught; yet might he not abraid. *awake*

160. Therewith his pulse and palmès of his hands
 They gan to frote, and wet his temples twain, *to rub / both temples*
 And to deliver him from bitter bonds
 She oft him kissed; and, shortly for to sayn,
 Him to revoked she did all her pain; *revive*

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,

And from / to awake

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?"

*better
embarrassed indeed
more fully awake*

behave so stupidly?

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 hearté'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.

*as she pleased
to cheer*

163. Quod Pandarus: "For aught I can espyen
This light nor I ne serven here of nought.¹
Light is not good for sickè 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 heartès of you tway."
And bore the candle to the chimeney.

eyes

*situation
two*

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

as she chose

person

165. But in effect she wouldè wit anon

wanted to know at once

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.

*exactly
 would suspect
 to test*

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 lookèd at the least;
 N'ot I not what (all dear enough a rush)
 As he that needès must a causè fish. ²

*command
 pretend

 I don't know / straw
 fish for a reason*

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."

*even if it were

 made

 act like a jealous child
 deserve to be spanked*

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."

*angry

 offend
 you want / at your mercy*

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 *mercy*
 That is to say, that I forgive all this,
 And evermore on this night you record, *remember*
 And be well 'ware you do no more amiss." *And take care*
 "Nay, dearè heartè mine! " quod he, "i-wis." *indeed*
 "And now," quod she, "that I have done you smart *caused you pain*
 Forgive it me, mine ownè sweetè 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, *determined*
 He her in armès fastè to him hent, *tightly squeezed*
 And Pandarus, with full good intent
 Laid him to sleep, and said: "If you be wise,
 Swooneth not now, lest morè folk arise."²

171. What might or may the silly larkè say
 When that the sparrow-hawk has it in his foot?
 I can no more but of these ilkè tway, *same two*
 (To whom this talè sugar be or soot) *sweet or bitter (like soot)*
 Though that I tarry a year, sometime I must
 After mine author tellen their gladness, *According to my*
 As well as I have told their heaviness.

172. Criseydè, which that felt her thus y-take, *seized*
 (As writen clerkès in their bookès old)
 Right as an aspen leaf she gan to quake
 When she him felt her in his armès fold;
 But Troilus all whole of carès cold,
 Gan thanken then the blissful goddès seven. *planetary influences*
 Thus sundry painès 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 armès gan her strain
 And said: "O sweet, as ever may I gon,
 Now you be caught, now is there but we twain
 Now yieldeth you, for other boote is none."
 To that Criseyde answered thus anon:
 "Ne haddè I ere now, my sweet heart dear
 Been yold, i-wis I werè not now here."

*As sure as I live
 we two
 other help
 promptly
 If I hadn't before now ...
 ... surrendered ...*

174. Oh, sooth is said that healèd for to be,
 As of a fever or other great sickness,
 Men mustè 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 áventure),
 That through a pain is founden all his cure.

175. And now sweetness seemeth morè sweet
 That bitterness assayèd was beforne:
 For out of woe in blissè 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.

*experienced
 float*

lovelorn

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 intentè wist,
 And as about a tree with many a twist
 Betrènt and writhes the sweetè woodèbine
 Gan each of them in arms the other wind.

worry

knew

entwines / honeysuckle

177. And as the new abashèd nightingale,
 That stinteth first, when she begins to sing,
 When that she heareth any herdè tale,
 Or in the hedges any wight stirring,

*just disturbed? always timid?
 stops
 herdsman talk
 anybody*

And after, siker doth her voice out ring ¹— *more firmly*
 Right so Criseyde, when that her dreadè stent, *stopped*
 Opened her heart, and told him her intent.

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

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 *and eagerly greeted*
 Her snowish throat, her breastès round and lite. *little*
 Thus in this heaven he gan him to delight
 And therewithal a thousand times her kissed,
 That what to do, for joy unnethe he wist. *he hardly knew*

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

181. “Benigné Love, thou holy bond of things,
 Whoso will love, and list thee not honoúr,
 Lo, his desire will flee withouten wings. *& will not honour thee*
 For, n’ouldest thou of bounty them succoúr ²

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 labour,
 Yet were all lost — that dare I well say, certes —
 But-if thy grace passèd our deserts.¹

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

Has helped / to die

*those bounds / surpass
 praise*

183. And therewithal Criseyde anon he kissed,
 Of which certáin she feltè no dis-ease,
 And thus said he: "Now would to God I wist,
 Mine heartè sweet, how I you mightè 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?"

*distress
 I knew*

on whom

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 heartè 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.

m. surpasses justice

*improve
 by serving you*

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,

*has made me to serve you
 steersman i.e. pilot*

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 minè ignorance
 I do no thing that you be díspleasance: *may displease you*

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

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

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

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,
Felten in love the greatè worthiness.

certainty

189. O blissful night! of them so long y-sought,
How blithe unto them bothè two thou were!
Why n'ad I such a one with my soul bought,
Yea, or but the least joyè that was there?¹
Away thou foulè Daunger and thou Fear! ²
And let them in this heaven's blissè dwell
That is so high that all ne can I tell.

How pleasing

190. But sooth is, though I cannot tellen all,
As can mine author of his excellence,
Yet have I said, and God toforn I shall,
In every thing all wholly his sentéce,
And if that I, at Lovè's reverence,
Have any word in ekéd for the best,
Do therewithal right as yourselves lest;

truth is

main idea

added any word

191. For minè wordès, here and every part,
I speak them all under correction
Of you that feeling have in lovè's art,
And put it all in your discretion
T' increase or maken diminution
Of my language; and that I you beseech.
But now to purpose of my rather speech.

192. These ilkè two, that be in armès left,
So loth to them asunder go it were,
That each from other wenden been bereft;
Or elsè, lo! this was their mostè fear,
That all this thing but nicè dreamès were,
For which full oft each of them said: "O sweet!

*so reluctant to part
thought they were robbed
greatest
only foolish dreams*

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 "*dangerous*", 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?"

Hold I? / dream it?

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

*looked so intently
turned
can it be ...
...true?*

didn't know

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

*caused me
nets*

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

cease

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.

*various
about this event*

*inscription
I know*

197. Lord! trow you that a covetous or a wretch
That blameth love, and holds of it despite,

*a greedy person
& despises it*

¹ 194: The metaphors in this stanza seem quite confused, but the meaning is reasonably clear.

That of those pence that he can mucker and catch *grab*
 Was ever yet y-given him such delight
 As is in love -- in one point, in some plight? *at any time, in any way?*
 Nay, doubtéless, for all so God me save,
 So perfect joy ne may no niggard have. *no miser*

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 folly; *a madness*
 But it shall fall them as I shall you redde, *(be)fall / tell you*
 They shall forego the white and eke the red, *wine (?), silver & gold (?)*
 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 earès all so long
 As haddè Midas, full of covetise,
 And thereto drunken had as hot and strong
 As Crassus did for his affectès wrong,¹
 To teachen them that they be in the vice,
 And lovers not, although they hold them nice.²

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

201. And evermore when that they fell to speak
 Of any thing of such a time agone,
 With kissing all that talè shouldè break, *would interrupt*

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 newè 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. *past woe*

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

203. But when the cock, common astrologer, *everyone's star-reader*
 Gan on his breast to beat and after crow;
 And Lucifer, the day's messenger, *L = Venus as morning star*
 Gan for to rise, and out her beams [to] throw,
 And eastward rose -- to him that could it know,
 Fortuna Major² — then anon Criseyde *a star group*
 With heartè sore to Troilus thus said:

204. "Mine heartè's life, my trust, all my pleasance!
 That I was born, alas! that me is woe,
 That day of us must make disseverance, *between us / parting*
 For time it is to rise and hence to go,
 Or elsè I am lost for evermo'. *evermore*
 O Night! alas! why n'ilt thou o'er us hove *hover*
 As long as when Alcmèna 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: Alcmèna, 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 *art created*
 At certain timès with thy darkè weed, *clothing*
 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, *oppress*
 That thou thus fleest and deignest us not rest. *don't allow us*
206. "Thou dost, alas! so shortly thine office,
 Thou rakel Night,¹ that God maker of kind, *quickly thy job*
 Thee for thine haste, and thine unkindè vice *hasty / of the natural world*
 So fast ay to our hemispherè bind,
 That never more under the ground thou wind;
 For now, for thou so hiest out of Troy *because you hurry*
 Have I foregone, thus hastily, my joy."
207. This Troilus, that with those wordès felt
 -- As thought him then, for piteous distress -- *it seemed to him*
 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 mannér: *to squeeze*
208. "O cruel Day! accuser of the joy *exposer*
 That Night and Love have stole and fast i-wrien, *covered*
 Accursèd be thy coming into Troy!
 For every bore has one of thy bright eyen: *every chink / eyes*
 Envious Day! what list thee so to spyen? *Why do you want to spy?*
 What hast thou lost? why seekest thou this place?
 There God thy light so quenchè, for his grace! *May God quench*

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, *Cruel*
 For many a lover hast thou slain, and wilt; *and will again*
 Thy poring in will nowhere let them dwell: *peering*
 What! profferest thou thy light here for to sell? *offerest*
 Go, sell it them that smallè sealès grave; ² *engrave*
 We will thee not; us needeth no day have." *We want*
210. And eke the sunnè Titan gan he chide, ³ *Tithonus*
 And said; "O fool! well may men thee despise,
 That hast all night the Dawning by thy side, *Aurora*
 And sufferest her so soon up from thee rise, *And (you) allow*
 For to dis-easen lovers in this wise; *to distress*
 What! hold your bed there, thou and eke thy Morrow; *Morning (Aurora)*
 I biddè God so give you bothè sorrow." *pray*
211. Therewith full sore he sighed, and thus he said:
 "My lady bright, and of my weal or woe *joy*
 The well and root! O goodly mine, Criseyde, *The source*
 And shall I rise, alas! and shall I go?
 Now feel I that mine heartè must a-two; *must (break) in 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, *situation / again*
 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: *soon unless I*
 How should I long, alas! from you sojourn? *stay away*

¹ 209.1: "How have these lovers offended thee?"

² 209.6: Craftsmen who do fine detailed engraving on small seals need good light.

³ 210.1: Titan is the sun. It would seem from the following lines that Titan is being confused with Tithonus, the mortal lover of the goddess of dawn, Aurora.

213. "But natheless, mine ownè lady bright!
 Yet were it so that I wist utterly *Yet if I knew*
 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, *I'd rather / two*
 Yet should I bet' endure all my pain." *better*
214. To that Criseyde answered right anon,
 And with a sigh she said: "O heartè dear!
 The game i-wis so far forth now is gone,
 That first shall Phoebus fallen from the sphere, *the Sun*
 And every eagle be the dove's fere, *companion*
 And every rock out of his placè start, *his = its*
 Ere Troilus go out of Cressid's heart.
215. "You be so deep within mine heartè grave, *engraved*
 That though I would it turn out of my thought,
 As wisly very God my soulè save,
 To dien in the pain I couldè not; ¹ *surely*
 And for the love of God, that us hath wrought, *under torture*
 Let in your brain no other fantasy
 So creepen, that it causè me to die. *may cause*
216. "And that you me would have as fast in mind
 As I have you, that would I you beseech,
 And if I wistè soothly that to find,²
 God might not one point of my joyès eche. *increase*
 But, heartè mine! withouten morè speech,
 Be to me true, or elsè were it ruth, *it would be a shame*
 For I am thine, by God and by my truth.
217. "Be glad forthy, and live in sikerness, *therefore / in certainty*

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 heartè bring to rest";
 And him in armès took, and often kissed.

*never before**glad*

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

*since**dressed**gracious**prepared to leave**safe*

219. To which no word for sorrow she answered,
 So sorè gan his parting her distraign,
 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 plesance,
 That it may never out of his rémembrance.

*distress**truth**back again where**never (go) out*

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

*close his eyes**burned**imagined*

221. And in his thought gan up and down to wind
 Her wordès all, and every countenance,
 And firmly impressen in his mind
 The leastè point that to him was pleasánce,
 And verily of thilkè rémembrance
 Desire all new him burned, and lust to breed

*review**look**at that memory*

Gan more than erst, and yet took he no heed.¹

more than before

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

*to treasure
lust = his passion (for her)
who had so favored her
again / sweetheart
place / delight him*

223. Pandar, which that a-morrow comen was
Unto his niece and gan her fair to greet,
Said: "All this night so rained it alas!
That all my dread is that you, nicè 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."

in the a.m.

*dream
kept me awake
I guess*

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."

*are you doing
better*

*this business
I guess / innocent words
very little*

225. With that she gan her facè 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.

*to cover
blushed in embarrassment*

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
 What! God forgave His death , and she also
 Forgave, and with her uncle gan to play,
 For other causè was there none than so.
 But of this thing right to the effect to go
 When timè was, home to her house she went,
 And Pandarus has fully his intent.¹

doesn't matter
to joke
nothing else to be done
To make a long story short

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

secretly sent for

greeted

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

And before / from

100 times

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

best of all
truth

river

an iota

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.

So totally

effort

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:

*given
 for ever*

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.

God knows, I'm pleased

*thou art brought
 Don't ruin it*

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

*therefore
 rash*

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 wordly joy holds not but by a wire;
 That proveth well -- it bursts alday so oft,
 Forthy is need to worken with it soft."

as great a skill

*every day
 Therefore... treat it gently*

235. Quod Troilus: "I hope, and God toforn,
 My dearè 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 heartè 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 gladdè night,
 And whereof first his heartè dread and how,
 And saidè: "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 morè 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 newè quality,
 Yea, all another than I did ere this."
 Pandárus answered and said thus, that "he
 That oncè may in heaven's blissè be,
 He feeleth other wayès, dare I lay,
 Than thilkè 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 mattér,
 And for to praisen unto Pandarus
 The bounty of his rightè lady dear,
 And Pandarus to thank and maken cheer:
 This tale was ay span-newè 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 Fortúne it would,
 Y-comen was the blissful timè 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, Criseyde 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.

*Where he first
 float
 praise*

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.

*kept / manner
 before / not tell
 to the point
 both wished*

241. Naught needeth it to you, since they be met,
 To ask of me if that they blithè 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.

*happy
 at first / better
 indeed / experienced*

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.

*to speak of
 describe
 each other's wishes
 surpasses*

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:

alas, the moment

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

*So sad they were / color
 they began / anew*

244. Quod Troilus "Alas! now am I ware
 That Pyroïs, and those swift steedès three
 Which that drawn 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."

*aware
 P = one of the sun's horses
 chariot
 short cut*

245. But needès day departen them must soon;
 And when their spechè done was and their cheer,
 They twin anon, as they were wont to do,
 And setten time of meeting eft i-fere.
 And many a night they wrought in this mannér:
 And thus Fortúna led a time in joy
 Criseyde and eke this kingè's son of Troy.

*day must separate
 & their goodbye's ?
 separate soon
 again together*

(for) a time

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,

In satisfaction

*clothes
 I assure you
 came naturally to him*

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.

*So that his fame & reputation
 for h. & generosity*

*judged
 is not*

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 Criseyde'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.

nature

as much as a knot

*tightly enmeshed & knit
 in any way*

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 mannér:

praise & long account

without doubt

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 hestès hath in heaven high, *commands*
 Love, that with a wholesome álliance
 Holds people joinèd as him list them gie, *pleases to guide*
 Love, that knitteth law of company, *of association*
 And couples doth in virtue for to dwell, *causes*
 Binds this accord that I have told and tell.

251. "That that the world with faith, which that is stable, *w. regularity*
 Diverseth so its stoundès concordng *Changes its seasons so smoothly*
 That elements that be so discordable *that are so discordant*
 Holden a bond perpetually during, *ever lasting*
 That Phoebus must his rosy day forth bring, *(So) that*
 And that the moon has lordship o'er the nights —
 All this does Love; ay heried be his mights! *ever praised*

252. "That that the sea, that greedy is to flow, *(The fact) that*
 Constraineth to a certain endè so *Restrains*
 His floodès, that so fiercely they ne grow
 To drenchen earth and all, for evermo', *To drown*
 And if that Love aught let his bridle go,
 All that now loves asunder shouldè leap,
 And lost were all that Love holds now to-heap. *together*

253. "So would to God that author is of kind,¹ *who made Nature*
 That with his bond Love of his virtue list *his power would choose*
 To circle heartès all and fast to bind,
 That from his bond no wight the way out wist, *no one / would know*
 And heartès cold them would I that he twist
 To make them love, and that list them ay rue *and always take pity*
 On heartès 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 allè needès for the townè's war
 He was — and ay — the first in armès dight,
 And certainly — but if that bookès err —
 Save Hector most y-dread of any wight;
 And this increase of hardiness and might
 Came him of love, his lady's thank to win,
 That alterèd his spirit so within.

*always first armed
 unless
 most feared by every (enemy)*

Came to him from love

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

didn't bother with

*cage
 greet*

256. And most of love and virtue was his speech,
 And in despite had he all wretchedness;
 And doubtèless no need was him beseech
 To honour them that haddè 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.

*in contempt all bad conduct
 (to) beseech*

*to help
 anyone did well
 knew*

257. For, sooth to say, he lost held every wight
 But if he were in Lovè's high service,
 I meanè 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.

*he thought everyone
 Unless he
 who rightfully ought
 speak
 so unusual
 his whole presentation
 or did*

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,

out of pride / to despise

*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 deigned me to guide,
 I can no more, but since that you will wend,
 You heried be for ay withouten end!

Venus

*9 muses
 choose to live
 me = the poet
 go (away)*

(May) you be praised

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 ownè lady sweet.

Although / mixed in

in pleasure

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."