

**TROILUS AND CRISEYDE**

by

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**Book V**

## Book V

1. APPROACHEN gan the fatal destiny  
 That Jovè hath in disposition, *has contol of*  
 And to you, angry Parcae, sisters three, *the 3 Fates*  
 Committeth to do execution,<sup>1</sup>  
 For which Criseydè must out of the town, *must (go)*  
 And Troilus shall dwellen forth in pine *in torture*  
 Till Lachesis his thread no longer twine.
2. The golden tressèd Phoebus high aloft *the Sun*  
 Thrice had allè with his beamès clean  
 The snows melted,<sup>2</sup> and Zephirus as oft *west wind of Spring*  
 Y-brought again the tender leavès green  
 Since that the son of Hecuba the Queen *Troilus*  
 Began to love her first for whom his sorrow  
 Was all that she departen should a-morrow. *next day*
3. Full ready was at primè Diomede<sup>3</sup> *early in a.m.*  
 Criseyde unto the Greekès' host to lead;  
 For sorrow of which she felt her heartè bleed,  
 As she that n'istè what was best to rede. *didn't know / to do*  
 And truly, as men in bookès read,  
 Men wistè never woman have the care, *knew*  
 Nor was so loath out of a town to fare.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 1.1-4: "There began to approach the fatal destiny which Jove has control of, and which he delegates to the three Fates to carry out (*to do execution*).\" The three Parcae or Fates -- Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos -- spin (*twine*) the thread of human life and decide when it is to be cut.

<sup>2</sup> 2.1-5: A roundabout way of saying that it has been three years since Troilus fell in love with Criseyde whose impending departure was causing his present pain.

<sup>3</sup> 3.1: Diomede, a prominent Greek warrior, and the fourth major character in the story, arrives early in the morning (*at prime*) to escort Criseyde to the Greek camp.

<sup>4</sup> 3.6-7: "No one ever knew a woman who had so much sorrow (*care*) or was so reluctant to leave the town."

4. This Troilus withouten rede or lore, *plot or plan*  
 As man that hath his joyès eke forlore, *lost*  
 Was waiting on his lady evermore,  
 As she that was the soothfast crop and more *root & branch*  
 Of all his lust or joyès herebefore; *desire*  
 But Troilus, now farewell all thy joy!  
 For shalt thou never see her eft in Troy. *again*
5. Sooth is, that while he bode in this mannér *waited*  
 He gan his woe full manly for to hide,  
 That well unneth it seen was in his cheer,<sup>1</sup> *scarcely / behavior*  
 But at the gatè where she should out ride  
 With certain folk he hoved, her to abide, *lingered to wait for her*  
 So woe-begone, al would he not complain, *although he*  
 That on his horse unneth he sat for pain. *could barely sit*
6. For ire he quoke, so gan his heartè gnaw, *w. anger he shook*  
 When Diomede on horse gan him to dress, *to mount*  
 And said unto himself this ilkè saw: *these words*  
 "Alas! " quod he, "thus foul a wretchedness *he = Troilus*  
 Why suffer I it? why n'ill I it redress? *why don't I put it right?*  
 Were it not better at oncè for to die  
 Than evermore in languor thus to drye? *to suffer*
7. "Why n'ill I make at oncè rich and poor *Why don't I*  
 To have enough to do ere that she go?  
 Why n'ill I bring all Troy upon a roar?  
 Why n'ill I slay this Diomede also?  
 Why n'ill I rather with a man or two  
 Steal her away? why will I this endure?  
 Why n'ill I helpen to mine ownè cure?"
8. But why he would not do so fell a deed *terrible*  
 That shall I say, and why him list it spare: *he chose to refrain*  
 He had in heart always a manner dread  
 Lest that Criseyde, in rumour of this fare, *in chaos of the disturbance*  
 Should have been slain. Lo! this was all his care, *concern*

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<sup>1</sup> 5.3: "So that it was scarcely perceptible in his behavior."

And elsè, certain, as I saidè yore,  
He had it done withouten wordès more.

*otherwise / earlier  
would have done*

9. Criseydè, when she ready was to ride,  
Full sorrowfully she sighed, and said "Alas!"  
But forth she must for aught that may betide:<sup>1</sup>  
There is no other remedy in this case.  
And forth she rode full sorrowfully a pace;  
What wonder is though that her sorè smart  
When she forgoes her ownè dearè heart.

*suffers sorely  
o.d. heart = Troilus*

10. This Troilus in wise of courtesy,  
With hawk on hand, and with a hugè rout  
Of knightès, rode and did her company,  
Passing all the valley far without,  
And farther would have ridden out of doubt  
Full fain, and woe was him to go so soon,  
But turn he must, and it was eke to doon.<sup>2</sup>

*by way of  
crowd  
kept her company*

*doubtless  
v. gladly*

11. And right with that was Antenor y-come  
Out of the Greekès' host, and every wight  
Was of it glad, and said he was welcome;  
And Troilus, al n'ere his heartè light,  
He painèd him with all his fullè might  
Him to withhold of weeping at the least,  
And Antenor he kissed and made great feast.

*although his h. wasn't l.  
He forced himself  
keep from  
made v. welcome*

12. And therewithal he must his leavè take,  
And cast his eye upon her piteously,  
And near he rode, his causè for to make,  
To take her by the hand all soberly;  
And Lord! so she gan weepen tenderly,  
And he full soft and slily gan her say:  
"Now hold your day, and do me not to die."

*don't cause me to die*

13. With that his courser turnèd he about

*his horse*

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<sup>1</sup> 9.3: "But forth she must (go), no matter what happens."

<sup>2</sup> 10.5-7: "And he would very gladly (*full fain*) have ridden further -- no doubt about that -- and sad he was (*woe was him*) to go so soon, but he had to turn back; there was no way out of that."

With face pale, and unto Diomede  
 No word he spoke, nor none of all his rout,  
 Of which the son of Tydeus took heed,  
 As he that couldè more than the creed  
 In such a craft,<sup>1</sup> and by the rein her hent;  
 And Troilus to Troy homeward he went.

*i.e. Diomede*

*grasped*

14. This Diomede, that led her by the bridle,  
 When that he saw the folk of Troy away,  
 Thought: "All my labour shall not be on idle  
 If that I may, for somewhat shall I say,  
 For at the worst it may yet short our way;  
 I have heard said eke timès twicè twelve,  
 He is a fool that will forget himself."

*wasted*

*shorten*

15. But natheless this thought he well enough:  
 "That certainly I am abouten naught  
 If that I speak of love, or make it tough,  
 For doubtèless if she have in her thought  
 Him that I guess, he may not be y-brought  
 So soon away; but I shall find a mean  
 That she not wit as yet shall what I mean."

*I will get nowhere*

*a method  
 will not guess*

16. This Diomede, as he that could his good,  
 When timè was, gan fallen forth in speech  
 Of this and that,<sup>2</sup> and asken why she stood  
 In such dis-ease, and gan her eke beseech,  
 That if that he increasen might or eche  
 With any thing her easè, that she should  
 Command it him, and said he do it would.

*or add to  
 her comfort*

17. For truly he swore her as a knight  
 That there n'as thing with which he might her please  
 That he n'ould do his pain and all his might

*there was nothing ...  
 ... he wouldn't take pains*

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<sup>1</sup> 13.5-6: "Like a man that knew (*could*) more than the elementary stages (*creed*) in this business (*craft*) [of love]." That is, he was a practiced lover.

<sup>2</sup> 16.1-3: "like a man who knew what was best for himself, when the opportunity arose, he began to chat about one thing and another."

To do it, for to do her heart an ease,  
 And prayed her she would her sorrow appease, *assuage*  
 And said: " Iwis we Greekès can have joy  
 To honour you as well as folk of Troy."

18. He said eke thus: "I wot you thinketh strange *I know to you it seems*  
 (No wonder is) for it is to you new,  
 Th'acquaintance of these Trojans for to change  
 For folk of Greece, which that you never knew,  
 But wouldè never God, but if as true *God forbid*  
 A Greek you should among us allè find  
 As any Trojan is, and eke as kind.

19. "And by the cause I swore you, lo! right now  
 To be your friend, and help you to my might, *as best I can*  
 And for that more acquaintance eke of you  
 Have I had than another stranger wight,  
 So from this forth I pray you day and night  
 Commandeth me, how sore so that me smart, *however it pains me*  
 To do all that may like unto your heart:

20. "And that you me would as your brother treat,  
 And taketh not my friendship in despite;  
 And though your sorrows be for thingès great --  
 N'ot I not why but out of more respite <sup>1</sup> *I don't know / high regard*  
 Mine heart hath for t'amend it great delight,  
 And if I may your harmès not redress *cure*  
 I am right sorry for your heaviness. *sadness*

21. "For though you Trojans with us Greekès wroth *angry*  
 Have many a day been, always yet pardee *by God*  
 One god of Love in sooth we serven both: *in truth*  
 And for the love of God, my lady free, *my gracious lady*  
 Whom so you hate, as be not wroth with me, *Whomsoever / angry*  
 For truly there can no wight you serve

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<sup>1</sup> 20.4-7: "I don't know why (*N'ot I not why*), but out of high regard (*more respite*), I would be heartily pleased to improve things, and if I cannot cure your troubles, I am at least sorry for your sadness."

That half so loath your wrathè would deserve.<sup>1</sup>

*your anger*

22. "And n'ere it that we be so near the tent  
Of Calchas, which that see us bothè may,  
I would of this you tell all mine intent,  
But this ensealed is till another day.  
Give me your hand; I am and shall be ay,  
God help me so, while that my life may dure,  
Your own, aboven every creäture.

*And were it not  
who can see us*

*always  
may last*

23. "Thus said I ne'er ere now to woman born,  
For, God my heart as wisly gladden so,<sup>2</sup>  
I lovèd never woman herebeforn  
As paramour, ne never shall no mo';  
And, for the love of God, be not my foe,  
Al' can I not to you, my lady dear,  
Complain aright, for I am yet to lere.<sup>3</sup>

*never before now*

*Although  
to learn*

24. "And wonder naught, mine ownè lady bright,  
Though that I speak of love to you thus blive,  
For I have heard ere this of many a wight  
That lovèd thing he never saw his life;  
Eke I am not of power for to strive  
Against the god of Love, but him obey  
I will always, and mercy I you pray.

*so soon  
person  
(in) his life*

25. "There be so worthy knightès in this place,  
And you so fair, that ever each of them all  
Will painè him to standen in your grace;  
But might to me so fair a grace befall  
That me as for your servant you would call,  
So lowly nor so truly you serve  
Will none of them as I shall till I starve."

*so = such  
every one  
take pains / your favor*

*die*

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<sup>1</sup> 21.5-7: "And whomsoever you hate, do not be angry with me, because no one who wants to serve you would be half so unwilling as I to earn your anger."

<sup>2</sup> 23.2: "For, as surely as I hope God may gladden my heart, ..."

<sup>3</sup> 23.6-7: "although I cannot make my (love) complaint to you properly, my dear lady, because I am only a learner." Diomede, the practiced seducer, pretends he is a clumsy amateur.

26. Criseyde unto that purpose lite answered, *little*  
 As she that was with sorrow oppressèd so,  
 That in effect she naught his talès heard,  
 But here and there, now here a word or two;  
 Her thought her sorrowful heartè burst a-two,  
 For when she gan her father far espy  
 Well nigh down off her horse she gan to sye. *to sink*
27. But natheless she thankèd Diomedè  
 Of all his trávail and of his goodè cheer,  
 And that him list his friendship to her bid,  
 And she accepted it in good mannér,  
 And would do fain that is him lief and dear,  
 And trusten him she would, and well she might,  
 As saidè she, and from her horse she 'light. *his trouble*  
*he wanted to offer his f.*  
*with good grace*  
*would gladly do what pleased him*  
*alighted, dismounted*
28. Her father hath her in his armès nome, *taken*  
 And twenty times he kissed his daughter sweet,  
 And said: "O dearè daughter mine, welcome."  
 She said eke she was fain with him to meet,  
 And stood forth mutè, mild, and mansuete. *glad*  
*and meek*  
 But here I leave her with her father dwell,  
 And forth I will of Troilus you tell.
29. To Troy is come this woeful Troilus  
 In sorrow aboven allè sorrows smart,  
 With felon look and with face despiteous, *painful*  
 Tho suddenly down from his horse he start, *scowling / angry*  
 And through his palace with a swollen heart *There*  
 To chamber went; of no wight took he heed,  
 Ne none to him dare speak a word for dread.
30. And there his sorrows that he sparèd had *controled*  
 He gave an issue large, and "Death!" he cried, *gave full vent*  
 And in his throès frénetic and mad  
 He curseth Jove, Apollo, and Cupid,  
 He curseth Bacchus, Ceres, and Cyprid, *Cyprid = Venus*  
 His birth, himself, his fate, and eke Natúre,  
 And, save his lady, every creäture.

31. To bed he goes, and wallows there and turneth  
 In fury as does Ixion in hell,  
 And in this wise he nigh till day sojourneth,  
 But then began his heartè a lite unswell  
 Through tearès which that gonnen up to well,  
 And piteously he cried upon Criseyde,  
 And to himself right thus he spoke and said:

*(chained to a wheel)  
 till nearly day he remains  
 a little*

32. "Where is mine ownè lady lief and dear?  
 Where is her whitè breast? Where is it? Where?  
 Where be her armès and her eyen clear  
 That yesternight this timè with me were?  
 Now may I weep alonè many a tear,  
 And grasp about I may, but in this place  
 Save a pillow naught find I to embrace.

*beloved*

33. "How shall I do? When shall she come again?  
 I n'ot, alas! Why let I her to go?  
 As woulde God I had as then been slain!  
 O heartè mine, Criseyde! O sweetè foe!  
 O lady mine! That I love and no mo',  
 To whom for evermore mine heart I dow,  
 See how I die; you n'ill me not rescue!

*I don't know*

*endow*

34. "Who sees you now, my rightè lodèstar?  
 Who sits right now or stands in your preséncè?  
 Who can comfórten now your heartè's war,  
 Now I am gone? whom give you audience?  
 Who speaks for me right now in my abséncè?  
 Alas! no wight, and that is all my care,  
 For well wot I, as ill as I you fare.<sup>1</sup>

*guiding star*

*nobody*

35. "How should I thus ten dayès full endure  
 When I the firstè night have all this teen?  
 How shall she do eke, sorrowful creàture,  
 For tenderness how shall she eke sustain  
 Such woe for me? O! piteous, pale, and green,  
 Shall be your freshè womanlicè face  
 For languor ere you turn unto this place."

*vexation*

*For = because of  
 and sickly  
 womanly  
 From pain (of longing)*

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<sup>1</sup> 34.7: "I know well you are as badly off as I am."

36. And when he fell in any slumberings  
 Anon begin he wouldè for to groan,  
 And dreamen of the dreadfullestè things  
 That mightè be: as mette he were alone  
 In place horrible, making aye his moan,  
 Or meten that he was amongès all  
 His enemies, and in their handès fall.

*dream that he*

*Or dreamed*

37. And therewithal his body wouldè start,  
 And with the start all suddenly awake,  
 And such a tremor feel about his heart,  
 That of the fear his body wouldè quake,  
 And therewithal he would a noisè make,  
 And seem as though he wouldè fallè deep,  
 From high aloft; and then he wouldè weep,

38. And ruen on himself so piteously,  
 That wonder was to hear his fantasy;  
 Another time he wouldè mightily  
 Comfórt himself, and say it was folly  
 So causèless such dread and woe to drie,  
 And eft begin his asper sorrows new,  
 That every man might on his painès rue.

*And take pity*

*to suffer  
 his bitter  
 take pity*

39. Who couldè tell aright, or full describe  
 His woe, his plaint, his languor, and his pain?  
 Not all the men that have or be alive:  
 Thou, Reader, may'st thyself full well divine  
 That such a woe my wit cannot define;  
 On idle for to write it should I swink  
 When that my wit is weary it to think.

*In vain / I s. labor  
 My mind*

40. On heaven yet the starrès werè seen,  
 Although full pale y-waxen was the moon,  
 And whiten gan the horizontè sheen  
 All eastwards, as it is wont to do,  
 And Phoebus with his rosy cartè soon  
 Gan after that to dress him up to fare,  
 When Troilus hath sent after Pandare.

*the m. had grown  
 bright horizon*

*the Sun / chariot  
 got ready to go*

41. This Pándare, that of all the day befor  
 Ne might have comen Troilus to see,  
 Although he on his head it had y-sworn,  
 For with King Priam all the day was he,  
 So that it lay not in his liberty  
 Nowhere to go, but on the morrow he went  
 To Troilus, when that he for him sent;

*could not come  
 solemnly promised*

42. For in his heartè he could well divine  
 That Troilus all night for sorrow woke,  
 And that he wouldè tell him of his pine;  
 This knew he well enough withouten book,  
 For which to chamber straight the way he took,  
 And Troilus then soberly he gret,  
 And on the bed full soon he gan him set.

*could guess  
 he wanted to / agony*

*quietly greeted T*

43. "My Pandarus!" quod Troilus, "the sorrow  
 Which that I drye I may not long endure;  
 I trow I shall not liven till to-morrow;  
 For which I would always on áventure  
 To thee devisen of my sépulture  
 The form, and of my meuble thou dispone  
 Right as thee seemeth best is for to done:

*suffer  
 I think  
 in preparation  
 give instructions for my tomb  
 my goods / dispose*

44. "But of the fire and flame funereal  
 In which my body burn shall into gleed,  
 And of the feast and playès palestral  
 At my vigil I pray thee take good heed  
 That all be well, and offer Mars my steed,  
 My sword, my helm, and, levè brother dear,  
 My shield to Pallas give, that shineth clear.

*coals, ashes  
 funeral games*

*beloved brother*

45. "The powder to which my heartè burned shall turn,  
 That pray I thee thou take, and it conserve  
 In a vessel that men clepe an urn  
 Of gold, and to my lady that I serve,  
 For love of whom thus piteously I starve,  
 So give it her, and do me this pleasánce  
 To pray her keep it for a rémembrance.

*call*

*die*

46. "For well I feelè by my malady,

And by my dreamès now and yore ago,  
 All certainly that I must needès die;  
 The owl eke, which that hight Ascalapho,  
 Hath shriekèd after me these nightès two.  
 And, god Mercury, of me now woeful wretch  
 The soulè guide, and when thee list, it fetch."<sup>1</sup>

*in the past*

*which is called*

*when you please*

47. Pandáre answered and saidè: "Troilus,  
 My dearè friend, as have I told thee yore  
 That it is folly for to sorrow thus,  
 And causèless, for which I can no more.  
 But whoso will not trowen redde nor lore  
 I cannot see in him no remedy,  
 But let him worthen with his fantasy.

*in the past*

*heed advice & teaching*

*remain with*

48. "But, Troilus, I pray thee tell me now  
 If that thou trow ere this that any wight  
 Hath lovèd paramours as well as thou?  
 Yea, God wot, and from many a worthy knight  
 Hath his lady gone a fortnight  
 And he not yet made halvendel the fare.  
 What need is thee to maken all this care?

*believe that anyone*

*two weeks*

*half the fuss*

*this noise*

49. "Since day by day thou mayst thyselfen see  
 That from his lover or else from his wife  
 A man must twinnen of necessity.  
 Yea, though he love her as as his ownè life,  
 Yet n'ill he with himself thus maken strife;  
 For well thou wost, my levè brother dear,  
 That always friendès may not been y-fere.

*must part*

*you know*

*together*

50. "How do these folk that see their lovers wedded  
 By friendès' might, as it betides full oft  
 And see them in their spouses' bed y-bedded?  
 God wot, they take it, wisly, fair and soft.  
 For-why good hope holds up their heart aloft  
 And for they can a time of sorrow endure;  
 As time them hurt, a timè doth them cure.

*By family pressure*

*G. knows / indeed*

*Because*

*And because*

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<sup>1</sup> 46.6: Mercury assigned spirits their place after death. See below 261.7.

51. "So shouldest thou endure, and letten slide  
 The time, and fonden to be glad and light. *and try to be*  
 Ten days is not so long for to abide.  
 And since she thee to comen has behight *has promised*  
 She will her hest not broken for no wight; *promise / nobody*  
 For dread thee not that she n'ill finden way  
 To come again; my life that durst I lay. *dare I bet*
52. "Thy swevens eke and all such fantasy *dreams*  
 Drive out, and let them faren to mischance; *go to the devil*  
 For they proceed of thy meláncholy,  
 That doth thee feel in sleep all this penáncé. *causes you to feel*  
 A straw for all swevens' significance!  
 God help me so, I count them not a bean;  
 There wot no man aright what dreamés mean. *No man knows*
53. "For priestés of the temple tellen this,  
 That dreamés be the revelations  
 Of gods; and as well they tell, iwis, *indeed*  
 That they be infernál illusions.  
 And leeches ween that of complexions *doctors believe*  
 Proceeden they, or fast, or gluttony.<sup>1</sup>  
 Who wot in sooth thus what they signify? *Who knows in truth*
54. "Eke others say that through impressions  
 (As if a wight has fast a thing in mind), *a person*  
 That thereof cometh such avisions;  
 And others say, as they in bookés find,  
 That after timés of the year by kind *by kind = naturally*  
 Men dream, and that th' effect goes by the moon.  
 But 'lieve no dream, for it is nought to do. *believe / is worthless*
55. "Well worth of dreamés aye these oldé wives, *are for old wives*  
 And truly eke augury of these fowls; *soothsaying*  
 For fear of which men weenen lose their lives, *think they will*

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<sup>1</sup> 53: Medieval thinkers explained dreams in different ways. Clerical commentators acknowledged that dreams could be of divine origin, as with the Josephs of the Old and New Testaments, but warned that they could also be of diabolical origin. Physicians (*leeches*) held that dreams often came from the body's predominant "complexion" or "humor" of the moment, in this case melancholy; or that they came from eating or drinking too much or too little.

As raven's qualm or shrieking of these owles.  
 To trowen on it bothe false and foul is.  
 Alas! Alas! So noble a creätüre  
 As is a man, shall dreade such ordüre!

*croaking*  
*To believe in*

*rubbish*

56. "For which with all my heart I thee beseech  
 Unto thyself that all this thou forgive;  
 And rise up now withouten more speech,  
 And let us cast how forth may best be drive  
 This time, and eke how freshly we may live  
 When that she comes, the which shall be right soon.  
 God help me so, the best is thus to do.

*think / spent*

*This is the best thing to do*

57. "Rise, let us speak of lusty life in Troy  
 That we have led, and forth the timè drive,  
 And eke of timè coming us rejoice,  
 That bringen shall our blissè now so blive,  
 And languor of these twicè dayès five  
 We shall therewith so forget or oppress,  
 That well unneth it do shall us duress.

*pass the time*

*very soon*  
*10-day tedium*  
*or defeat*  
*scarcely bother us*

58. "This town is full of lordès all about,  
 And trucè lasteth all this meanè while;  
 Go we play us in some lusty rout,<sup>1</sup>  
 To Sarpedon, not hencè but a mile,  
 And thus thou shalt the time well beguile,  
 And drive it forth unto that blissful morrow  
 That thou her see that cause is of thy sorrow.

*pass*

*you (will) see*

59. "Now rise, my dearè brother Troilus!  
 For certès it no honour is to thee  
 To weep, and in thy bed to jouken thus,  
 For truly, of one thing trust to me,  
 If thou thus lie a day or two or three,  
 The folk will say that thou for cowardice  
 Thee feignest sick, and that thou dar'st not rise."

*to lie*

60. This Troilus answer'd; "O brother dear!  
 This knowen folk that have y-suffered pain,

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<sup>1</sup> 58.3: "Let's go amuse ourselves in some lively company."

That though he weep and makè sorrowful cheer  
 That feeleth harm and smart in every vein  
 No wonder is; and though I ever 'plain  
 Or always weep, I am nothing to blame,  
 Since I have lost the cause of all my game.

*my joy*

61. "But since of finè force I must arise,  
 I shall arise as soon as e'er I may,  
 And God, to whom mine heart I sacrifice,  
 So send us hastily the tenthè day,  
 For was there never fowl so fain of May  
 As I shall be when that she comes in Troy  
 That cause is of my torment and my joy.

*of necessity*

*bird so happy*

62. "But whither is thy redde," quod Troilus,  
 "That we may play us best in all this town?"  
 "By God, my counsel is," quod Pandarus  
 "To ride and play us with King Sarpedoun."  
 So long of this they speaken up and down  
 Till Troilus gan at the last assent  
 To rise; and forth to Sarpedoun they went.

*advice  
 find distraction*

63. This Sarpedoun, as he that honourable  
 Was e'er his life, and full of high largesse  
 With all that might y-servéd be on table  
 That dainty was, all cost it great richesse,  
 He fed them day by day, that such noblesse --  
 As saiden both the most and eke the least --  
 Was ne'er ere that day wist at any feast.

*hospitality  
 even if it cost  
 generosity*

*known*

64. Nor in this world there is no instrument  
 Delicious through wind or touch of chord,  
 As far as any wight hath ever went,<sup>1</sup>  
 That tonguè tell or heartè may record  
 But at that feast it was well heard accord;  
 Nor of ladies eke so fair a company  
 On dance ere then was never seen with eye.

*any person ... thought*

*in harmony*

65. But what avaieth this to Troilus,

---

<sup>1</sup> 64: *Went* might be the past participle of either *wenen*: think or *wenden*: go.

That for his sorrow nothing of it raught,<sup>1</sup>  
 But ever in one his heartè piteous *But continually*  
 Full busily Criseyde, his lady, sought?  
 On her was ever all that his heartè thought,  
 Now this, now that so fast imagining  
 That glad iwis can him no festying. *no festivity can gladden him*

66. These ladies eke that at this feastè be,  
 Since that he saw his lady was away,  
 It was his sorrow on them for to see, *to look*  
 Or for to hear on instruments so play;  
 For she that of his heartè bore the key  
 Was absent, lo! this was his fantasy,  
 That no wight shouldè maken melody.<sup>2</sup>

67. Nor there n'as hour in all the day or night,  
 When he was there as no man might him hear, *where no one could*  
 That he ne said, "O lovesome lady bright!  
 How have you farèd since that you were here?  
 Welcome iwis, mine ownè lady dear!"  
 But welaway! All this n'as but a maze; *alas / imagination*  
 Fortune his houve intended but to glaze.<sup>3</sup>

68. The letters eke that she of oldè time  
 Had him y-sent he would alonè read  
 A hundred sithe atwixen noon and prime,<sup>4</sup> *100 times between*  
 Refiguring her shape, her womanhood  
 Within his heart, and every word or deed  
 That passèd was; and thus he drove to an end  
 The fourthè day, and said that he would wend; *wished to leave*

69. And saidè: "Levè brother, Pandarus!  
 Intendest thou that we shall herè bleve *Dear brother stay*

---

<sup>1</sup> 65.2 : 'who because of his sorrow, cared nothing about it.'

<sup>2</sup> 66.5-7: Since his beloved was absent, he had the idea that nobody should make music.

<sup>3</sup> 67.7: Fortune just intended to give him a glass hood, i.e. to delude him.

<sup>4</sup> 68.3: *Betwixt noon and prime* could be a kind of inversion meaning "between about 9 a.m. and noon", or it could be literally between noon one day and 9 a.m. the next day, hence most of any 24-hour day.

Till Sarpedoun will forth congeyen us?  
 Yet were it fairer that we took our leave;  
 For God's love, now let us soon at eve  
 Our leavè take, and homeward let us turn,  
 For truly I will not thus sojourn."

*throw us out*

70. Pandarus answered: "Be we comen hither  
 To fetchen fire and runnen home again?  
 God help me so I can not tellen whither  
 We mighten go, if I shall soothly sayn,  
 Where any wight is of us morè fain  
 Than Sarpedoun; and if we hencè hie  
 Thus suddenly, I hold it villainy,

*more glad of us  
 hurry  
 bad manners*

71. "Since that we saiden that we wouldè bleve  
 With him a week, and now thus suddenly  
 The fourthè day to take of him our leave!  
 He wouldè wonder on it truly.  
 Let us hold forth our purpose firmly,  
 And since that you behighten him to bide  
 Hold forward now, and after let us ride."

*stay  
 promised to stay  
 Keep your word now*

72. This Pandarus with allè pain and woe  
 Made him to dwell; and at the weekè's end  
 Of Sarpedoun they took their leavè tho,  
 And on their way they speden them to wend.  
 Quod Troilus: "Now, Lord, me gracè send  
 That I may finden at my home-coming  
 Criseydè come." And therewith gan he sing.

*made him stay  
 prepared to leave*

73. "Yea, hazelwoodè!" thoughtè this Pandare,  
 And to himself full soberly he said:  
 "God wot, refreyden may this hot fare  
 Ere Calchas send to Troilus Criseyde!"  
 But natheless he japèd thus and played,  
 And swore iwis his heart him well behight  
 She wouldè come as soon as e'er she might.

*A likely tale!  
 t. hot affair will cool  
 joked  
 indeed / told him*

74. When they unto the palace were y-come  
 Of Troilus, they down off horse alight,  
 And to the chamber their way then have they nome,

*taken*

And until time that it began to night  
 They spoken of Criseyde the bright,  
 And after this, when that them bothe lest,  
 They speed them from the supper unto rest.

*to get dark*  
*"Cris-é-y-de": 4 syllables*  
*it pleased them both*

75. On morrow, as soon as day began to clear,  
 This Troilus gan of his sleep t'abraid,  
 And to Pandarus, his own brother dear,  
 "For love of God," full piteously he said,  
 "As go we see the palace of Criseyde,  
 "For since we yet may have no other feast,  
 So let us see her palace at the least!"

*In the morning*  
*to wake*

76. And therewithal his meinie for to blind  
 A cause he found into the town to go,  
 And to Criseyde's palace they gan wend;  
 But Lord! this silly Troilus was woe,  
 Him thought his sorrowful hearte burst a-two  
 For when he saw her doorès sparréd all  
 Well nigh for sorrow down he gan to fall.

*to deceive his household*  
  
*made their way*  
  
*barred*

77. Therewith when he was 'ware, and gan behold  
 How shut was every window of the place,  
 As frost him thought his hearte gan to cold,  
 For which with changéd deadly palè face  
 Withouten word he forth began to pace,  
 And, as God would, he gan so fast to ride  
 That no wight of his countenance espied.

*aware*  
  
*get cold*

78. Then said he thus: "O palace desolate! <sup>1</sup>  
 O house of houses whilom best y-hight!  
 O palace empty and disconsolate!  
 O thou lantern, of which quenched is the light!  
 O palace whilom day, that now art night!  
 Well oughtest thou to fall and I to die,  
 Since she is went that wont was us to gie.

*once called the best*  
  
  
  
*that once was day*  
  
*gone / used to guide*

---

<sup>1</sup> 78-9: Troilus's address is known as a "paraclausithyron", a convention of classical love poetry where the desolate lover addresses the beloved's house, especially the door. It extends to other places that bring up memories of the beloved. See M. Bloomfield's article in *NM* 73 (1972), 15-24.

79. "O palace whilom crown of houses all!  
 Enlumined with the sun of allè bliss,  
 O ring from which the ruby is out fall!  
 O cause of woe that cause hast been of liss!  
 Yet since I may no bet, fain would I kiss  
 Thy coldè doors, if I durst for this rout; <sup>1</sup>  
 And farewell shrine of which the saint is out!"

*once the crown*

*joy  
 no better, gladly*

80. Therewith he cast on Pandarus his eye  
 With changèd face, and piteous to behold,  
 And when he might his time aright espy,  
 Aye as he rode to Pandarus he told  
 His newè sorrow, and his joyès old  
 So piteously, and with so dead a hue,  
 That every wight might on his sorrow rue.

*Constantly*

*color  
 take pity*

81. From thencè forth he rideth up and down,  
 And every thing came him to rémembrance  
 As he rode forth by places of the town  
 In which he whilom had all his pleasánc:  
 "Lo! yonder saw I last my lady dance,  
 And in that temple with her eyen clear  
 Me caughtè first my rightè lady dear. <sup>2</sup>

82. "And yonder have I heard full lustily  
 My dearè heartè laugh, and yonder play  
 Saw I her oncè eke full blissfully,  
 And yonder oncè to me gan she say:  
 `Now goodè sweet, love me well, I pray,'  
 And yon so goodly gan she me behold  
 That to the death my heart is to her hold.

*sweet(heart)  
 yon(der) so lovingly  
 bound*

83. "And at the corner in the yonder house  
 Heard I mine alderlevest lady dear  
 So womanly with voice melodious  
 Singen so well, so goodly and so clear,

*dearest lady of all*

---

<sup>1</sup> 79.6: "If I dared in front of this crowd." No crowd has been mentioned. Perhaps it simply means "in public".

<sup>2</sup> 81.6-7: "My very dear lady first caught me with her bright eyes."

That in my soul methinketh yet I hear  
The blissful sound. And in that yonder place  
My lady first me took unto her grace."

*her favor*

84. Then thought he thus: "O blissful lord, Cupid,  
When I the process have in memory  
How thou me hast werreyed on every side,  
Men might a book make of it like a story.  
What need is thee to seek on me victory,  
Since I am thine and wholly at thy will?  
What joy hast thou thine ownè folk to spill?"

*attacked*

*victory over me*

*destroy*

85. "Well hast thou, lord, y-wroke on me thine ire,  
Thou mighty God, and dreadful for to grieve,  
Now mercy, lord, thou wost well I desire  
Thy gracè most of allè lustès leve.<sup>1</sup>  
And live and die I will in thy belief;  
For which I n'ax in guerdon but a boon,  
That thou me send again Criseyde soon.

*wreaked your anger*

*offend*

*knowest well*

*ask in return only one favor*

*send C. to me*

86. "Distreyn her heart as fastè to return  
As thou dost mine to longen her to see;  
Then wot I well that she will not sojourn.  
Now, blissful lord, so cruel thou ne be  
Unto the blood of Troy I prayè thee  
As Juno was unto the blood Thebane,<sup>2</sup>  
For which the folk of Thebès caught their bane."

*constrain*

*delay*

*their destruction*

87. And after this he to the gatès went  
There as Criseyde out rode a full good pace,  
And up and down there made he many a went,  
And to himself full oft he said: "Alas!  
From hencè rode my bliss and my solace;  
As wouldè blissful God now for his joy  
I might her see again come into Troy!"

*(city) gates*

*a turn*

*I wish to God*

---

<sup>1</sup> 85.3-4: *thou wost ... leve*: "You know well that of all my deepest desires (*lustès leve*) I want thy favor most."

<sup>2</sup> Juno was hostile to the people of Thebes because of Jove's infidelities with Theban women.

88. "And to the yonder hill I gan her guide,  
 Alas! and there I took of her my leave,  
 And yond I saw her to her father ride,  
 For sorrow of which my heartè shall to-cleave,  
 And hither home I came when it was eve,  
 And here I dwell, out cast from every joy,  
 And shall, till I may see her eft in Troy."

*escorted her**yonder  
split apart**again*

89. And of himself imaginèd he oft  
 To be defet and pale and waxen less  
 Than he was wont, and that men saiden soft,  
 "What may it be? Who can the soothè guess  
 Why Troilus hath all this heaviness?"  
 And all this n'as but his meláncholy,  
 That he had of himself such fantasy.

*disfigured / become thinner  
quietly**was nothing but*

90. Another time imaginen he would  
 That every wight that wentè by the way  
 Had of him ruth, and that they sayen should:  
 "I am right sorry Troilus will die;"  
 And thus he drove a day yet forth or tway,  
 As you have heard; such life right gan he lead  
 As he that stood betwixen hope and dread;

*every person  
Had pity**day or two*

91. For which he likèd in his songs to show  
 Th' encheason of his woe as he best might,  
 And made a song of wordès but a few,  
 Somewhat his woeful heartè for to light,  
 And when he was from every mannè's sight,  
 With softè voice he of his lady dear,  
 That absent was, gan sing as you may hear:

*The reason**lighten*Canticus Troili II <sup>1</sup>

92. "O star! of which I lost have all the light,  
 With heartè sore well ought I to bewail  
 That ever dark in torment, night by night,  
 Toward my death with wind in steer I sail,  
 For which the tenthè night, if that I fail

*wind astern*


---

<sup>1</sup> "Song of Troilus": For Troilus's earlier songwriting see Bk. I, 58 ff

The guiding to thy beamès bright an hour,  
My ship and me Charybdis will devour." <sup>1</sup>

*by an hour  
(whirlpool)*

93. This song when he thus sungen haddè, soon  
He fell again into his sighès old,  
And every night, as was his wont to do,  
He stood the brightè moon for to behold,  
And all his sorrow to the moon he told,  
And said: "Iwis, when thou art hornèd new <sup>2</sup>  
I shall be glad, if all the world be true.

*In truth*

94. "I saw thine hornès old eke by that morrow  
When hencè rode my rightè lady dear,  
That cause is of my torment and my sorrow,  
For which, O brightè Lucina the clear !  
For love of God run fast about thy sphere,  
For when thine hornès new begin to spring,  
Then shall she come that may my blissè bring."

*before that morning  
my v. dear lady*

*O moon bright*

95. The dayès more, and longer every night,  
Than they be wont to be, him thoughtè tho,  
And that the sunnè went his course unright,  
By longer way than it was wont to go;  
And said: "Iwis, me dredeth evermo'  
The sunnè's son, Phaethon, be alive,  
And that his father's cart amiss he drives."

*usually were / then  
wrongly*

*chariot*

96. Upon the wallès fast eke would he walk,  
And on the Greekès' host eke would he see,  
And to himself right thus then would he talk:  
"Lo! yonder is mine ownè lady free."  
Or elsè: "Yonder there the tentès be,  
And thencè comes this air that is so soot,  
That in my soul I feel it does me boote.

*look*

*gracious lady*

*tents*

*sweet*

*good*

---

<sup>1</sup> 92.7: Charybdis was the name of a monster and her whirlpool that Odysseus's ship had to avoid in order to survive.

<sup>2</sup> 93.6: "In truth, when there is a new moon". The crescent moon, waxing or waning (*hornes old*), is thought of as having horns. See also two references in the next stanza.

97. "And hardily this wind that more and more  
 Thus stoundémeal encreaseth in my face  
 Is of my lady's deepè sighès sore;  
 I prove it thus: for in no other space  
 Of all this town, save only in this place,  
 Feel I no wind that soundeth so like pain.  
 It says: `Alas! why twinnéd be we twain?'"

*surely  
 hour by hour*

*separated are we two*

98. This longè time he driveth forth right thus,  
 Till fully passéd was the ninthè night,  
 And ay beside him was this Pandarus,  
 That busily did all his fullè might  
 Him to comfórt and make his heartè light,  
 Giving him hope always the tenthè morrow  
 That she shall come and stinten all his sorrow.

*And always*

*day  
 stop*

99. Upon that other side eke was Criseyde  
 With women few among the Greekès strong,  
 For which full oft a-day "Alas!" she said,  
 "That I was born! Well may mine heartè long  
 After my death, for now live I too long;  
 Alas! and I ne may it not amend,  
 For now is worse than ever yet I wend.

*`long' is a verb  
 For death*

*I thought (it would be)*

100. "My father n'ill for nothing do me grace  
 To go again for aught I can him queme,  
 And if so be that I my termè pace  
 My Troilus shall in his heartè deem  
 That I am false, and so it may well seem;  
 Thus shall I have unthank on every side.  
 That I was born so welaway the tide!

*won't allow me  
 do to please him  
 miss the agreed day  
 think*

*blame  
 alas the hour!*

101. "And if that I me put in jeopardy  
 To steal away by night, and it befall  
 That I be caught, I shall be held a spy,  
 Or elsè, lo! this dread I most of all,  
 If in the handès of some wretch I fall  
 I n'am but lost, al' be mine heartè true.  
 Now mighty God thou on my sorrow rue!"

*me = myself*

*some ruffian  
 I'm as good as lost, although  
 take pity*

102. Full pale y-waxen was her brightè face,

*had become v. pale*

Her limbs lean, as she that all the day  
 Stood when she durst, and lookèd on the place  
 Where she was born, and where she dwelled had ay;  
 And all the night weeping, alas! she lay.  
 And thus despairèd out of allè cure,  
 She led her life, this woeful créature.

*dared  
 always*

103. Full oft a-day she sighed eke for distress,  
 And in herself she went aye portraying  
 Of Troilus the greatè worthiness,  
 And all his goodly wordès récording  
 Since first that day her love began to spring;  
 And thus she set her woeful heart afire  
 Through rémembráncé of that she gan desire.

*picturing*

*of what*

104. In all this world there n'is so cruel heart,  
 That her had heard complainen in her sorrow,  
 That n'ould have wopen for her painès smart,  
 So tenderly she wept both eve and morrow.  
 Her neededè no tearès for to borrow.  
 And this was yet the worst of all her pain,  
 There was no wight to whom she durst her 'plain.

*wept*

*no one / dared*

105. Full ruefully she lookèd upon Troy,  
 Beheld the towers high and eke the halls;  
 "Alas!" quod she, "the pleasance and the joy,  
 The which that now all turnèd into gall's,  
 Have I had oft within those yonder walls!<sup>1</sup>  
 O Troilus! what dost thou now?" she said;  
 "Lord, whether thou yet think upon Criseyde?"

*into bitterness*

*do you think?*

106. "Alas! I ne had trowèd on your lore,  
 And went with you, as you me redde ere this,  
 Then had I now not sighèd half so sore:  
 Who might have said that I had done amiss  
 To steal away with such one as he is?  
 But all too late cometh the letuary  
 When men the corpse unto the gravè carry.

*trusted your judgement  
 advised*

*medicine*

---

<sup>1</sup> 105.2-5: The original rhyming forms are: *halls / gall is / walls*.

107. "Too late is now to speak of this mattér.

Prudence, alas, one of thine eyen three

*3 eyes*

Me lackèd always ere that I came here;<sup>1</sup>

On time y-passèd, well remembered me;

*I could r. the past*

And present time eke could I well y-see;

But future time, ere I was in the snare,

*before / trap*

Could I not see. That causeth all my care.

108. "But natheless, betide what may betide,

*happen what may*

I shall to-morrow at night, by east or west,

Out of this host steal on some manner side,

*at some point*

And go with Troilus where as him lest;

*where he pleases*

This purpose will I hold, and this is best;

No force of wicked tonguès' janglery,

*No matter about*

For e'er on love have wretches had envy:<sup>2</sup>

109. "For whoso will of every word take heed,

Or rulen him by every wightès wit,

*everyone's judgement*

Ne shall he never thriven, out of dread,

*without doubt*

For that that some men blamen ever yet,

*that which*

Lo, other manner folk commenden it;

And as for me, for all such variance

Felicity clepe I my suffisance.

*Happiness is all I want (?)*

110. "For which, withouten any wordes mo'

To Troy I will, as for conclusion."

*will (go)*

But God it wot, ere fully monthès two

*G. knows, before*

She was full far from that intencion,

For bothè Troilus and Troyè town

Shall knotèless throughout her heartè slide,<sup>3</sup>

*smoothly*

For she will take a purpose to abide.

111. This Diomedè of whom you tell I 'gan,

*began*

Goes now within himself ay arguing,

*constantly*

---

<sup>1</sup> 107.2-3: Prudence has an eye on the future as well as the past and present. Criseyde has always lacked the ability to look at the future, she says.

<sup>2</sup> 108.7: "For wretched people have always shown envy of lovers."

<sup>3</sup> 110.6: *knotless*: like a thread that has no knot, and so slips out of a needle.

With all the sleight and all that e'er he can,  
 How he may best with shortest tarrying  
 Into his net Criseyde's heartè bring;  
 To this intent he couldè never fine;  
 To fishen her he laid out hook and line.

*cunning  
 with least delay*

*never give up*

112. But natheless well in his heart he thought  
 That she was not without a love in Troy,  
 For never sithen he her thencè brought,  
 Ne could he see her laugh or maken joy;  
 He n'ist how best her heart for to accoy;  
 "But for t' essay," he said, "it naught ne grieveth.<sup>1</sup>  
 "For he that naught assayeth, naught achieveth."

*lover  
 since*

*didn't know / to comfort*

*nothing venture, n. gain*

113. Yet said he to himself upon a night:  
 "Now, am I not a fool, that wot well how  
 Her woe for love is of another wight,  
 And hereupon to go essay her now?  
 I may well wit it will not be my prow,<sup>2</sup>  
 For wisè folk in bookès it express:  
 `Men shall not woo a wight in heaviness.'

*knows  
 for another man  
 try her  
 my good, advantage*

*a person in grief*

114. "But whoso mightè winnen such a flower  
 From him for whom she mourneth night and day,  
 He might well say he were a conqueror";  
 And right anon, as he that bold was ay,  
 Thought in his heart: "Happen what happen may,  
 Al' should I die, I will her heartè seek,  
 I shall no morè losen but my speech."

*always  
 Whatever happens  
 Even if*

115. This Diomede, as bookès us declare,  
 Was in his needès prest and courageous,  
 With sternè voice, and mighty limbs square,  
 Hardy and testive, strong and chivalrous  
 Of deedès like his father Tydeus;  
 And some men say he was of tonguè large,  
 And heir he was of Calydon and Arge.

*ready  
 brave & headstrong  
 was eloquent*

<sup>1</sup> 112.6-7: "It doesn't hurt to try (*to essay*); he who attempts nothing achieves nothing."

<sup>2</sup> 113.5: "I have good reason to think that it will not do me any good."

116. Criseydè meanè was of her statúre. *of average height*  
 Thereto so shaped of face, and eke of cheer, *manner*  
 There mighten be no fairer creäture;  
 And often timès this was her mannér  
 To go y-tressèd with her hairès clear  
 Down by her collar, at her back behind,  
 Which, with a thread of goldè, she would bind.
117. And, save her browès joinèden ifere,<sup>1</sup> *together*  
 There was no lack in aught I can espy;  
 But for to speaken of her eyen clear,  
 Lo! trully, they written that her saw,  
 That paradise stood formèd in her eye,  
 And with her richè beauty evermore  
 Strove love in her ay which of them was more. *always / greater*
118. She sober was, simple, and wise withal,  
 The best y-nourishèd eke that might be, *was serious / also*  
 And goodly of her speech in general, *well bred, well mannered*  
 Charitable, stately, lusty, free,<sup>2</sup>  
 Ne nevermore ne lackèd her pity,  
 Tender-heartèd, sliding of couráge;  
 But trully, I cannot tell her age.
119. And Troilus well waxen was in height, *well-grown*  
 And cóplete, formèd by proportiön  
 So well, that Kind it naught amenden might, *Nature couldn't improve*  
 Young, fresh, and strong, and hardy as lion,  
 And true as steel in each condition,  
 One of the best entechèd creäture *endowed*  
 That is or shall while that the world may dure. *may last*
120. And certainly in story it is found  
 That Troilus was never to no wight, *to nobody*  
 As in his time, in no degree secónd  
 In derring-do that longeth to a knight; *that pertains*

---

<sup>1</sup> 117.1: "And, except that her eyebrows were joined together" -- presumably a feature considered less than perfect.

<sup>2</sup> 118.4: "Loving (?), dignified, cheerful, generous."

Al' might a giant passen him of might <sup>1</sup>  
 His heart aye with the first and with the best  
 Stood peregal to dare do what him lest.<sup>2</sup>

121. But for to tellen forth of Diomedé,  
 It fell that after on the tenthé day  
 Since that Criseyde out of the city yede,  
 This Diomedé, as fresh as branch in May,  
 Came to the tenté there as Calchas lay,  
 And feigné him with Calchas have to doon,  
 But what he meant I shall you tellen soon.

*It happened  
 went*

*pretended he had business*

122. Criseyde, at shorté wordés for to tellé,  
 Welcomed him, and down him by her set,  
 As he was ethe enough to maken dwell;<sup>3</sup>  
 And after this, withouten longer let,  
 The spices and the wine men forth them fet,  
 And forth they speak of this and that y-fere,  
 As friendés do, of which some shall you hear.

*in short*

*easy / stay  
 delay  
 fetched  
 together*

123. He gan first fallen of the war in speech  
 Betwixen them and folk of Troyè town,  
 And of the siege he gan eke her beseech  
 To tell him what was her opinion;  
 From that demand he so descended down  
 To asken her if that her strangè thought  
 The Greekès' guise and workès that they wrought,

*talk about*

*she thought it strange  
 customs / did*

124. And why her father tarrieth so long  
 To wedden her unto some worthy wight.  
 Criseydé, that was in her painès strong  
 For love of Troilus her owné knight,  
 So farforth as she cunning had or might,  
 Answered him then, but as of his intent

*as best she could*

---

<sup>1</sup> 120.5: "Although a giant might surpass him in strength." The triple negative in 2-3, "never...no wight...no degree" is acceptable emphasis in Chaucer's English.

<sup>2</sup> 120.7: "Stood fully equal to dare do what he needed to do."

<sup>3</sup> 122.3: "It was easy enough to get him to stay."

It seemèd that she wist not what he meant.

*knew*

125. But natheless this ilkè Diomedè  
Gan in himself assure, and thus he said:

*same  
Grew confident*

"If I aright have taken on you heed,<sup>1</sup>  
Me thinketh thus, O lady mine Criseyde,  
That, since I first hand on your bridle laid,  
When I came out of Troyè by the morrow,  
Ne might I never see you but in sorrow.

*in the morning*

126. "I can not say what may the causè be,  
But if for love of some Trojan it were,  
The which right sorè would a-thinken me,  
That you for any wight that dwelleth there  
Shoulden spill a quarter of a tear,  
Or piteously your selfen so beguile,  
For dreadèless it is not worth the while.

*Unless  
trouble me deeply  
person*

*deceive  
without doubt*

127. "The folk of Troy, as who saith all and some,  
In prison be, as you your selfen see,  
From thencè shall not one alivè come  
For all the gold atwixen sun and sea;  
Trusteth well this, and understandeth me,  
There shall not one to mercy go alive,  
Al' were he lord of worldès twicè five.<sup>2</sup>

*as all agree*

*between*

*Even if*

128. "Such wreak on them, for fetching of Elaine,  
There shall be take, ere that we hencè wend,  
That Manes, which that goddès be of pain,  
Shall be aghast that Greekes will them shend;  
And men shall dread unto the worldè's end  
From hencèforth to ravish any queen,  
So cruel shall our wreak on them be seen.

*vengeance  
before we go  
gods of underworld  
G. w. put them to shame*

*carry off  
vengeance*

129. "And, but if Calchas lead us with ambáges,

*unless / ambiguities*

---

<sup>1</sup> 125.3: "If I have read you correctly."

<sup>2</sup> 127-133: "Even if he were master of ten worlds." In this speech Diomedè makes at greater length and much more forcefully Troilus's point of IV, st. 212-13, but the effect of Diomedè's speech on Criseyde is strikingly different.

That is to say, with double wordès sly,  
 Such as men clepe a word with two viságes, *call / faces*  
 You shall well knowen that I naught ne lie,  
 And all this thing right see it with your eye,  
 And that anon, you will not trow how soon; *shortly / believe*  
 Now taketh heed, for it is for to doon. *to be done*

130. "What! weenen you that your wise father would  
 Have given Antenor for you anon,  
 If he ne wisté that the city should  
 Destroyèd be? Why, nay, so may I gon. *I assure you*  
 He knew full well there shall not 'scapen one *escape*  
 That Trojan is, and for the greatè fear,  
 He durst not that you dwellèd longer there. *dared not (allow)*

131. "What will you more, O lovesome lady dear!  
 Let Troy and Trojans from your heartè pace;  
 Drive out the bitter hope, and make good cheer,  
 And clepe again the beauty of your face *call back*  
 That you with saltè tearès so deface,  
 For Troy is brought in such a jeopardy  
 That it to save is now no remedy.

132. "And thinketh well you shall in Greekekès find  
 A morè perfect love, ere it be night, *lover*  
 Than any Trojan is, and morè kind,  
 And bet to serven you will do his might; *better*  
 And if that you vouchsafe, my lady bright, *if you allow (it)*  
 I will be he to serven you myself,  
 Yea, lever than be king of Greeces twelve." *rather*

133. And with that word he gan to waxen red, *to blush*  
 And in his speech a little while he quoke, *shook*  
 And cast aside a little with his head,  
 And stint a while, and afterwards he woke, *paused / opened his eyes*  
 And soberly on her he threw his look, *seriously*  
 And said: "I am, al' be it you no joy,  
 As gentle man as any wight in Troy. *although it is not*  
*As well born as any person*

134. "For if my father, Tydeus," he said,  
 Y-livèd had, then I had been ere this

Of Calydon and Arge a king, Criseyde,  
 And so I hope that I shall yet, y-wis  
 But he was slain, alas! the more harm is,  
 Unhappily at Thebès all too rathe,  
 Polynices and many a man to scathe.<sup>1</sup>

*early  
 to the harm of*

135. "But heartè mine! since that I am your man,  
 And be the first of whom I seekè grace  
 To serven you as heartily as I can,  
 And ever shall while I to live have space,  
 So that, ere I depart out of this place,  
 You will me granten that I may to-morrow  
 At better leisure tell you of my sorrow."

*And (you) are (?)*

136. How should I tell his wordès that he said?  
 He spoke enough for one day at the most;  
 It provèd well; he spoke so that Criseyde  
 Granted on the morrow at his request  
 For to spoken with him at the least,  
 So that he would not speak of such mattér;  
 And thus she to him said, as you may hear,

*Provided that*

137. As she that had her heart on Troilus  
 So fast y-set that none might it arace,  
 And strangely she spoke, and saidè thus:  
 "O Diomedè! I love that ilkè place  
 Where I was born, and Jovè, of thy grace  
 Deliver it soon of all that doth it care!  
 God, for thy might so leave it well to fare!

*uproot  
 And distantly*

*all that troubles it  
 grant it do well*

138. "That Greekès would their wrath on Troyè wreak,  
 If that they might, I know it well iwis;  
 But it shall not befallen as you speak,  
 And God toforn! And further over this  
 I wot my father wise and ready is,  
 And that he me hath bought, as you me told,  
 So dear I am the more unto him hold.

*indeed*

*If it please God  
 I know*

*deeply beholden*

---

<sup>1</sup> 134: Tydeus supported the cause of Polynices against his brother Eteocles for control of Thebes. His death was a blow (*scathe*) to Polynices and many another man.

139. "That Greekès be of high condition  
I wot eke well, but certain, men shall find  
As worthy folk withinnè Troyè town,  
As cunning, and as perfect, and as kind,  
As be betwixen Orcades and Inde;  
And that you couldè well your lady serve  
I trow eke well, her thanks for to deserve.

*rank*  
*I know well also*

*Orkneys & India*

*I believe also*

140. "But as to speak of love, iwis," she said,  
"I had a lord to whom I wedded was,  
The whose mine heart was all till that he died;  
And other love, as help me now Pallas,  
There in my heartè n'is ne never was;  
And that you be of noble and high kindred  
I have well heard it tellen, out of dread.

*indeed*

*Athene*  
*isn't & never was*

*without doubt*

141. "And that doth me to have so great a wonder  
That you will scornè any woman so;  
Eke, God wot, love and I be far asunder;  
I am disposèd bet, so may I go,  
Unto my death to 'plain and maken woe:<sup>1</sup>  
What I shall after do I cannot say,  
But truly, as yet me list not play.

*And, God knows*  
*more disposed, I declare*

*I don't want to flirt*

142. "My heart is now in tribulation,  
And you in armès busy day by day;  
Hereafter, when you wonnen have the town,  
Paraunter then so it happen may  
That when I see what never yet I saw,  
Then will I workè what I never wrought;  
This word to you enough sufficen ought.

*Perhaps*

*did*

143. "To-morrow eke will I speaken with you fain,  
So that you touchen naught of this mattér,  
And when you list you may come here again;  
And ere you go, thus much I say you here,  
As help me Pallas with her hairès clear,  
If that I should of any Greek have ruth,  
It shouldè be your selfen by my truth.

*gladly*  
*Provided that*  
*you please*

*pity*

---

<sup>1</sup> 141.4-5: "I am more disposed, I promise you, to complain and lament until my dying day."

144. "I say not therefore that I will you love,  
 Ne say not nay, but, in conclusion,  
 I meanè well, by God that sits above."  
 And therewithal she cast her eyen down,  
 And gan to sigh, and said: "O Troyè town!  
 Yet bid I God in quiet and in rest  
 I may thee see, or do my heartè breste."

*eyes**pray I**make my h. burst*

145. But in effect, and shortly for to say,  
 This Diomedè all freshly new again  
 Gan pressen on, and fast her mercy pray;  
 And after this--the soothè for to say--  
 Her glove he took, of which he was full fain,  
 And, finally, when it was waxen eve,  
 And all was well, he rose and took his leave.

*to beg her favor**truth**very glad**evening came*

146. The brightè Venus followed and aye taught  
 The way where broadè Phoebus down alight,<sup>1</sup>  
 And Cytherea her car-horse overwraught  
 To whirl into the Lion if she might,  
 And Signifer his candles showeth bright,  
 When that Criseyde unto her beddè went  
 Within her father's fairè brightè tent;

*and showed**the Sun had set**C. reached over (or urged on)**belt of the zodiac*

147. Returning in her soul ay up and down  
 The wordès of this sudden Diomedè,  
 His great estate, and peril of the town,  
 And that she was alone, and haddè need  
 Of friendè's help, and thus began to breed  
 The causes why—the soothè for to tell—  
 That she took fully purpose for to dwell.

*Turning / constantly**His high rank**truth**decided to remain*

148. The morrow came, and ghostly for to speak,<sup>2</sup>  
 This Diomedè is come unto Criseyde;  
 And, shortly, lest that you my talè break,

*truly*


---

<sup>1</sup> 146: This is a roundabout way, dear to Chaucer, of saying that the evening star (Venus) had gone down after the Sun, and the moon (Cytherea) and the stars had risen full when Criseyde went to bed.

<sup>2</sup> 148.1: *ghostly for to speak*: Different editors and glossators explain this phrase with differences in detail but agreeing that it seems to mean "to tell the truth".

So well he for himselfen spoke and said,  
 That all her sorè sighs adown he laid;  
 And, finally, the soothè for to sayn,  
 He reft her of the greatest of her pain.

*laid (to rest)*

*relieved her*

149. And after this the story telleth us  
 That she unto him gave the fair bay steed  
 The which he once had won of Troilus,<sup>1</sup>  
 And eke a brooch (and that was little need)  
 That Troilus' was, she gave this Diomedè,<sup>2</sup>  
 And eke the bet from sorrow him to relieve,  
 She made him wear a pencil of her sleeve.

*the better  
 a pennant (made) from*

150. I find eke in the stories elsèwhere,  
 When through the body hurt was Diomedè  
 Of Troilus, then wept she many a tear  
 When that she saw his widè woundès bleed,  
 And that she took to keepen him good heed,  
 And for to heal him of his woundès smart,  
 Men say — I n'ot — that she gave him her heart.

*Of = By*

*to nurse*

*I don't know*

151. But truly the story telleth us  
 There madè never woman morè woe  
 Than she when that she falsèd Troilus;  
 She said: "Alas ! for now is clean y-go  
 My name in truth of love for evermo',  
 For I have falsèd one the gentilest  
 That ever was, and one the worthiest.

*completely gone*

152. "Alas! of me unto the worldè's end  
 Shall neither be y-written nor y-sung  
 No goodè word, for these books will me shend;  
 O rollèd shall I be on many a tongue;

*attack*

---

<sup>1</sup> 149.3: According to Benoit, Diomedè had captured a horse from Troilus in battle, had presented it to Briseyda / Criseyde, and had asked for it back when he in turn lost his own horse.

<sup>2</sup> 149.5: The brooch is, presumably, the one mentioned below (V, St. 238) where we are told that Troilus had given it to her on the morning she left Troy. Earlier, there is mention of a brooch which Criseyde gave to Troilus on their last night together. (III, st. 196 . )

Throughout the worldè shall my bell be rung,<sup>1</sup>  
 And women most will haten me of all;  
 Alas, that such a case me should befall!

153. "They will say, inasmuch as in me is,  
 I have them done dishonour, welaway!  
 Al' be I not the first that did amiss,  
 What helpeth that to do my blame away?  
 But since I see there is no better way,  
 And that too late is now for me to rue,  
 To Diomedè algate I will be true.

*alas!*  
*Although*

*repent*  
*at least*

154. "But Troilus, since I no better may,  
 And since that thus departen you and I,  
 Yet pray I God so give you right good day,  
 As for the gentilestè — truly —  
 That e'er I saw to serven faithfully,  
 And best can ay his lady's honour keep,"  
 (And with that word she burst anon to weep).

*you & I separate*

*always*

155. "And certès you ne haten shall I never,<sup>2</sup>  
 And friendè's love that shall you have of me,  
 And my good word, all should I liven ever;  
 And, truly, I would right sorry be  
 For to see you in adversity;  
 And guiltèless I wot well I you leave,<sup>3</sup>  
 And all shall pass, and thus I take my leave."

*certainly*

*if I should*

*I know*

156. But truly how long it was between  
 That she forsook him for this Diomedè,  
 There is no author telleth it I ween,  
 Take every man now to his bookès heed,  
 He shall no termè finden, out of dread,

*I think*

*time period*

---

<sup>1</sup> 152.1: The meaning of the line seems clear enough, even if it is hard to translate into modern English. The ringing of the bell may signify a number of negative things: the knell for one who has died or the bell rung to excommunicate by "bell, book and candle", or, stretching a little more, even the outcast leper's bell, which figures so strongly in Henryson's sequel.

<sup>2</sup> 155.1: "And certainly I shall never hate you."

<sup>3</sup> 155.6: Presumably *guiltless* applies to Troilus, though its placing makes that uncertain.

For though that he began to woo her soon,  
Ere he her won yet was there more to doon.

*he = Diomedes  
to be done*

157. Ne me not list this silly woman chide,  
Farther than that the story will devise;  
Her name, alas! is published so wide,  
That for her guilt it ought enough suffice;  
And if I might excuse her in some wise,  
For she so sorry was for her untruth,  
Iwis, I would excuse her yet for ruth.

*I don't want to rebuke*

*her unfaithfulness  
Indeed / pity*

158. This Troilus, as I before have told,  
Thus driveth forth as well as he hath might,  
But often was his heartè hot and cold,  
And namely that ilkè ninthè night  
Which on the morrow she had him behight  
To come again; God wot full little rest  
Had he that night; nothing to sleep him lest.

*manages*

*that very  
promised  
God knows  
cared*

159. The laurel-crownèd Phoebus with his heat  
Gan in his course, ay upward as he went,  
To warm of the east sea the wavès wet,  
And Nisus' daughter sung with fresh intent,<sup>1</sup>  
When Troilus his Pandare after sent,  
And on the wallès of the town they played,  
To look if they can see aught of Criseyde.

*God of sun  
ever higher*

*sent for  
passed the time*

160. Till it was noon they stooden for to see  
Who that there came; and every manner wight  
That came from far they saiden it was she,  
Till that they couldè knowen him aright:<sup>2</sup>  
Now was his heartè dull, now was it light;  
And thus bejapèd, stooden for to stare  
Aboutè naught, this Troilus and Pandare.

*every person*

*deluded  
for nothing*

---

<sup>1</sup> 159.4: The allusion is apt: the daughter of Nisus looking down from the walls of her father's fortress, fell in love with the enemy Minos, and betrayed the city to him. She was turned into the bird here mentioned. A version of the story is in Chaucer's **Legend of Good Women**, 1894 ff.

<sup>2</sup> 160.4: They think that everyone they see moving is Criseyde until they can see the person more closely. Troilus's spirits go up and down with every hope and disappointment.

161. To Pandarus this Troilus then said:

"For aught I wot before noon sikerly  
 Into this town ne cometh not Criseyde,  
 She hath enough to do hardily  
 To twinnen from her father, so trow I;  
 Her oldè father will yet make her dine  
 Ere that she go; God give his heartè pine!"

*I know / certainly*

*to escape / I guess  
 eat midday meal  
 misery*

162. Pandare answered: "It may well be, certáin,  
 And forthy let us dine, I thee beseech,  
 And after noon then may'st thou come again."  
 And home they go withouten morè speech,  
 And came again; but longè may they seek  
 Ere that they finden what they after gape;  
 Fortune them both y-thinketh for to jape.

*And therefore*

*intends to make fools of*

163. Quod Troilus: "I see well now that she  
 Is tarried with her oldè father so  
 That ere she come it will nigh even be.  
 Come forth, I will unto the gatè go;  
 These porters be uncunning evermo',  
 And I will do them holden up the gate  
 As naught ne were, although that she come late."<sup>1</sup>

*evening*

*gatekeepers are stupid  
 make them keep open*

164. The day goes fast, and after that came eve,  
 And yet came not to Troilus Criseyde.  
 He looketh forth by hedge, by tree, by greve,  
 And far his head over the wall he laid,  
 And at the last he turned him, and said:  
 "By God I wot her meaning now, Pandare;  
 Almost iwis all newè was my care."<sup>2</sup>

*grove*

*I know*

165. "Now doubtèless this lady can her good;  
 I wot she means to riden privily;  
 I commend her wisdom, by my hood;  
 She will not maken people nicèly

*knows what is right  
 I realize / incognito*

*foolishly*

---

<sup>1</sup> 163.7: *As naught ne were*: A difficult phrase which may mean "as if there were no reason not to keep it open," or "as if there were no war on." Neither seems altogether satisfactory.

<sup>2</sup> 164.7: "Indeed my worries almost came back."

Gaure on her when she comes, but softly  
 By night into the town she thinketh ride;  
 And, dear brother! think not long t'abide.

*Gape  
 intends to  
 to wait*

166. "We have naught elsè for to do iwis;  
 And Pandarus, now wilt thou trowen me,  
 Have here my truth, I see her! Yond she is!  
 Heave up thine eyen man. May'st thou not see?"  
 Pandarus answered: "Nay, so may I thee;  
 All wrong by God: what say'st thou man, where art?  
 What I see yond afar is but a cart."

*indeed  
 believe me  
 No, as I live!  
 art (thou)*

167. "Alas ! thou sayst right sooth," quod Troilus,  
 "But hardly it is not all for naught  
 That in mine heart I now rejoicè thus;  
 It is against some good, I have a thought,  
 Wot I not how, but since that I was wrought  
 Ne felt I such a comfort dare I say.  
 She comes to-night, my life that durst I lay."

*surely  
 It's a good sign, I think  
 was born  
 I dare bet*

168. Pandarus answered: "It may be, well enough."  
 And held with him of all that e'er he said,  
 But in his heart he thought, and soft he laughed,  
 And to himself full soberly he said:  
 "From hazelwood, where Jolly Robin played  
 Shall come all that that thou abidest here;  
 Yea, farewell all the snow of fernè year."

*And agreed  
 From never-never land  
 all you wait for  
 yesteryear*

169. The warden of the gates began to call  
 The folk which that without the gatès were,  
 And bade them driven in their beastès all,  
 Or all the night they must bileven there;  
 And far within the night, with many a tear,  
 This Troilus gan homeward for to ride,  
 For well he sees it helpeth not t' abide.

*stay  
 And late in  
 to wait*

170. But natheless he gladded him in this:  
 He thought he mis-accounted had his day,  
 And said: "I understood have all amiss,  
 For thilkè night I last Criseyde saw  
 She said: `I shall be here, if that I may,

*took comfort  
 miscalculated*

Ere that the moon, O my dear heartè sweet,  
The Lion pass out of this Ariete,'<sup>1</sup>

171. "For which she may yet hold all her behest."  
And on the morrow to the gate he went,  
And up and down, by east and eke by west,  
Upon the wallès made he many a went;  
But all for naught; his hope always him blent,  
For which at night in sorrow and sighs sore  
He went him home withouten any more.

*keep her promise*

*a turn  
blinded*

172. His hope all clean out of his heartè fled,  
He n'as whereon now longer for to hang,  
But for the pain him thought his heartè bled,  
So were his throès sharp and wonder strong;  
For when he saw that she abode so long  
He wist not what he judgen of it might,  
Since she hath broken what she him beight.

*has nothing*

*his pangs  
stayed  
he didn't know  
promised*

173. The third, the fourth, the fifth, the sixthè day  
After those dayès ten of which I told,  
Betwixen hope and dread his heartè lay,  
Yet somewhat trusting on her hestès old;  
But when he saw she would her term not hold,<sup>2</sup>  
He can now see no other remedy  
But for to shape him soonè for to die.

*promises*

*prepare himself*

174. Therewith the wicked spirit, (God us bless!)  
Which that men clepe the woodè Jealousy,  
Gan in him creep in all this heaviness,  
For which, because he wouldè soonè die,  
He n' ate nor drank for his meláncholy,  
And eke from every company he fled;  
This was the life that all this time he led.

*call the mad J.*

*he wanted to*

175. He so defet was that no manner man

*disfigured*

---

<sup>1</sup> 170.6-7: "Before the moon, leaving Aries, passes into Leo." These were in fact her words in IV, st 228. He thinks he might have miscalculated by a day.

<sup>2</sup> 173.5: "But when he saw she was not going to keep her promise."

Unnethès might him knowen where he went,  
 So was he lean and thereto pale and wan,  
 And feeble, that he walkèd by potent,  
 And with his ire he thus himselfen shent;  
 But whoso askèd him whereof him smart,  
 He said his harm was all about his heart.

*Scarcely  
 and also  
 with help  
 disappointment / tortured  
 what ailed him*

176. Priam full oft,<sup>1</sup> and eke his mother dear,  
 His brethren and his sisters, gan him frayn  
 Why he so woeful was in all his cheer,  
 And what thing was the cause of all his pain.  
 But all for naught; he n'ould his cause explain,  
 But said he felt a grievous malady  
 About his heart, and fainè would he die.

*ask  
 behavior  
 would gladly*

177. So, on a day he laid him down to sleep,  
 And so befell it that in sleep him thought  
 That in a forest fast he walked to weep  
 For love of her that him those painès wrought,  
 And up and down as he that forest sought,  
 He mett he saw a boar with tuskès great  
 That slept against the brightè sunnè's heat;

*one day  
 caused  
 He dreamed  
 slept in*

178. And by this boar, fast in her armès fold,  
 Lay kissing ay his lady bright Criseyde,  
 For sorrow of which, when he it gan behold,  
 And for despite, out of his sleep he braid,  
 And loud he cried on Pandarus, and said:  
 "O Pandarus! now know I crop and root;  
 I n'am but dead; there is no other boote.

*constantly  
 rage / he woke  
 top to bottom  
 as good as dead / cure*

179. "My lady bright, Criseyde, has me betrayed,  
 In whom I trusted most of any wight;  
 She elsèwhere hath now her heart apaid;  
 The blissful goddès thorough their greatè might  
 Have in my dream y-showèd it full right:  
 Thus in my dream Criseyde have I behold;"  
 And all this thing to Pandarus he told.

*person  
 set*

---

<sup>1</sup> 176.1: Priam, king of Troy, was Troilus's father.

180. "O my Criseyde! alas! what subtlety,  
 What newè lust, what beauty, what science,  
 What wrath, of justè cause, have you to me?  
 What guilt of me, what fell experience,  
 Hath from me reft, alas! thine ádverténcé? <sup>1</sup>  
 O trust! O faith ! O deepè ássurance!  
 Who hath me reft Criseyde, all my pleasance?"

*trickery*  
*knowledge*  
*what just anger*  
*bad*  
*robbed / love*

181. "Alas ! why let I you from hencè go?  
 For which well nigh out of my wit I braid;  
 Who shall now trow on any oathès mo"?  
 God wot I weened, O lady bright Criseyde,  
 That every word was gospel that you said:  
 But who may bet beguile, if that him list,  
 Than he on whom men weenen best to trist?<sup>2</sup>

*went*  
*trust any oaths more*  
*God knows I thought*  
  
*better / he chooses*  
*think most trustworthy*

182. "What shall I do, my Pandarus? Alas!  
 I feelè now so sharp a newè pain,  
 Since that there is no remedy in this case,  
 That bet were it I with mine handès twain  
 My selfen slew than alway thus to 'plain,  
 For through the death my woe should have an end,  
 Where every day with life myself I shend."

*better / two*  
  
*I destroy*

183. Pandarus answered and said: "Alas the while  
 That I was born! Have I not said ere this  
 That dreamès many a manner man beguile?  
 And why? For folk expounden them amiss.  
 How dar'st thou say that false thy lady is  
 For any dream, right for thine ownè dread?  
 Let be this thought: thou cans't no dreamès read."

*many kinds of men*  
  
*For = because of*  
*Accept this:*

184. "Paraunter where thou dreamest of this boar,  
 It may so be that it may signify

*Perhaps*

---

<sup>1</sup> 180: The syntax of this stanza is a little confusing. The first two lines "O my Criseyde ... science" and line 4 go with line 5 thus: "O my Criseyde! Alas! what subtlety / What new lust, what beauty, what knowledge (*science*)/ ... What guilt of mine, what bad experience,/ Has robbed (*reft*) me alas! of thy loving attention (*advertence*)?" Line 3 interrupts the normal order; it means "What real cause have you to be angry with me?"

<sup>2</sup> 181.6-7: "Who can better betray people, if he wants, than the one whom people think most trustworthy?"

Her father, which that old is and eke hoar,  
 Against the sunne lies, on point to die,  
 And she for sorrow 'ginneth weep and cry,  
 And kisseth him, where he lies on the ground:  
 Thus shouldest thou thy dream aright expound."

*and white-haired  
 in the sunlight*

185. "How mightè I then do," quod Troilus,  
 "To know of this, yea, were it ne'er so lite?"<sup>1</sup>  
 "Now says't thou wisely," quod this Pandarus.  
 "My redde is this, since thou cans't well endite,  
 That hastily a letter thou her write,  
 Through which thou shalt well bringen it about  
 To know a sooth where thou art now in doubt."

*little*

*advice / write*

*the truth*

187. "Thou hast not written her since that she went,  
 Nor she to thee; and this I durstè lay,  
 There may such causè be in her intent,  
 That hardely thou wilt thyselfen say  
 That her abode the best is for you tway.  
 Now write her then, and thou shalt feelè soon  
 A sooth of all. There is no more to do."

*dare lay (a bet)*

*Her delay*

*perceive*

*The truth*

188. Accorded be to this conclusion  
 (And that anon) these ilkè lordès two,  
 And hastily sits Troilus adown  
 And rolleth in his heartè to and fro  
 How he may best describen her his woe,  
 And to Criseydè, his own lady dear,  
 He wrote right thus and said as you may hear:

*Agreed  
 promptly / same 2*

#### TROILUS'S LETTER

189. "Right freshè flower, whose I have been and shall  
 Withouten part of elsèwhere service,"<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> 184.1-2: "What can I do, then, to find out even a little about this?"

<sup>2</sup> 189.2: "Without serving any other lady."

With heart and body, life, lust, thought, and all,  
 I woeful wight, in every humble wise  
 That tongue can tell or heartè may devise,  
 As oft as matter occupieth place,  
 Me recommend unto your noble grace.

*i.e. eternally*  
*(I) recommend myself*

190. "Liketh it you to witen, sweetè heart!<sup>1</sup>  
 As you well know, how longè time agone  
 That you me left in asper painès smart,  
 When that you went, of which yet bootè none  
 Have I none had, but ever worse begone  
 From day to day am I, and so must dwell  
 While it you list, of weal and woe my well.<sup>2</sup>

*in sharp bitter p.*  
*no relief*  
*worse off*

191. "For which to you with dreadful heartè true  
 I write, as he that sorrow drives to write  
 My woe, that every hour encreaseth new,  
 Complaining as I dare or can indite  
 And that defacèd is, that may you wite  
 That tearès which that from mine eyen rain,<sup>3</sup>  
 That woulden speak if that they could, and 'plain.

*filled w. dread*

*write*  
*may know*

192. "You first beseech I, that your eyen clear  
 To look on this defoulèd you not hold,<sup>4</sup>  
 And o'er all this that you, my lady dear  
 Will vouchèsafe this letter to behold,  
 And by the cause eke of my carès cold,  
 That slays my wit, if aught amiss m'astart,  
 Forgive it me, mine ownè sweetè heart!

*And also because*  
*anything wrong escapes me*

193. "If any servant dares or ought of right  
 Upon his lady piteously complain,  
 Then ween I that I ought to be that wight,

*any lover / can rightly*

*I think / that man*

---

<sup>1</sup> 190.1: "May it please you to hear ..." Standard opening for a letter in Chaucer's day. Apparently much of the rest of the letter also contains conventional tropes.

<sup>2</sup> 190.7: "While it pleases you, O my source (*well*) of joy and pain."

<sup>3</sup> 191.5: Presumably it is the letter that is "defaced" with the rain of tears.

<sup>4</sup> 192.1-2: "I first beg you not to consider your bright eyes clouded (*befouled*) by seeing this (letter)"

Considered this, that you these monthès twain  
 Have tarried where you saidè, sooth to sayn,  
 But ten days that you would in host sojourn.  
 But in two monthès yet you not return.

*Considering / two*  
*stay among the enemy*  
*you have not r.*

194. "But for as much as me must needès like  
 All that you list,<sup>1</sup> I dare not 'plain no more,  
 But humbly, with sorrowful sighès sick,  
 You write I mine unresty sorrows sore,  
 From day to day desiring evermore  
 To knowen fully, if your will it were,  
 How you have fared and done while you be there.

*(To) you I write / restless*

195. 'The whose welfare, and heal eke, God encrease  
 In honour such, that upward in degree  
 It grow always so that it never cease;  
 Right as your heart ay can, my lady free,  
 Devise, I pray to God so may it be.  
 And grantè it that you soon upon me rue  
 As wisly as in all I am you true.

*health*  
*(may) it grow*  
*Desire*  
*take pity*  
*As surely / to you*

196. "And if you liketh knowen of the fare  
 Of me, whose woe there may no wight describe,  
 I can no more, but chest of every care,<sup>2</sup>  
 At writing of this letter I was alive,  
 All ready out my woeful ghost to drive,  
 Which I delay and hold him yet in hand  
 Upon the sight of matter of your send.

*(wel) fare*  
*can (say)*  
*unhappy spirit*  
*sending, message*

197. "Mine eyen two, in vain with which I see,  
 Of sorrowful tearès salt are waxen wells;  
 My song in 'plaint of mine adversity,  
 My good in harm, mine ease eke waxen hell's,  
 My joy in woe, I can say now naught else  
 But turnéd is (for which my life I wary)

*have become*  
*in(to) / has become a hell*  
*in(to)*  
*I curse*

---

<sup>1</sup> 194.1-2: "But because I am obliged to be pleased by (*me must needs like*) all that you like (*list*)..."

<sup>2</sup> 196: This stanzas is, apparently, a tissue of medieval letter-writing conventions. *chest of*: container of, i.e. full of.

Every joy or ease in his contráry.<sup>1</sup>

*in = into*

198. "Which with your coming home again to Troy  
You may redress, and more a thousand sithe,  
Than e'er I had, increasen in me joy;  
For was there never heartè yet so blithe  
To have his life as I shall be, as swithe  
As I you see, and though no manner ruth  
Commovent you,— yet thinketh on your truth.

*times*

*as soon  
no kind of pity  
move you*

199. "And if so be my guilt has death deserved,  
Or if you list no more upon me see,  
In guerdon yet of that I have you served  
Beseech I you, mine ownè lady free,  
That hereupon you wouldè write to me  
For love of God, my rightè lodè-star,  
That death may make an end of all my war.

*if you wish  
In return  
noble*

*guiding star*

200. "If other cause aught doth you for to dwell,  
That with your letter you me recomfórt,<sup>2</sup>  
For though to me your absence is a hell,  
With patience I will my woe comport,  
And with your letter of hope I will disport:  
Now writeth, sweet! and let me thus not 'plain;  
With hope or death deliver me from pain.

*endure  
take comfort*

201. "Iwis, mine ownè dearè heartè true!  
I wot that when you next upon me see,  
So lost have I my heal and eke my hue,  
Criseyde shall not can knowen me;  
Iwis, mine heartè's day, my lady free!  
So thirseth aye mine heartè to behold  
Your beauty, that unneth my life I hold.

*my health & color  
not be able to*

*barely*

202. "I say no more, al have I for to say

*although*

---

<sup>1</sup> 197.4-7: "My good (is turned) into harm, my ease into hell. ... Every joy and ease is turned into its opposite--for which I curse my life." The ME spelling of rhyme words for lines 2, 4, 5 was: *welles, helle is, ellis*

<sup>2</sup> 200.1-2: "If any other reason makes you stay, assure me in your letter."

To you well morè than I tellen may;  
 But whether that you do me live or die,  
 Yet pray I God as give you right good day.  
 And fareth well, O goodly fair fresh May! <sup>1</sup>  
 As you that life or death me may command,  
 And to your truth ay I me recommend.

*you make me*

*I always*

203. "With healè such, that but you given me  
 The samè heal I shall no healè have:  
 In you lies, when you list that it so be,  
 The day in which me clothen shall my grave;  
 In you my life, in you might for to save  
 Me from dis-ease of all my paines smart:  
 And fare now well, my ownè sweetè heart!"

le vostre T."

*Yours, Troilus*

204. This letter forth was sent unto Criseyde,  
 Of which her answer in effect was this:  
 Full piteously she wrote again, and said  
 That all so soon as that she might iwis  
 She wouldè come, and mend what was amiss;  
 And, finally, she wrote and said him then  
 She wouldè come, yes, but she n'istè when.

*indeed*

*knew not*

205. But in her letter maden she such feast  
 That wonder was, and swore she loved him best,  
 Of which he found but bottomless behests.  
 But, Troilus, thou may'st now east and west  
 Pipe in an ivy leaf if that thee lest:  
 Thus goes the world. God shield us from mischance,  
 And every wight that meaneth truth advance! <sup>2</sup>

*protestations*

*empty promises*

*whistle in the wind*

206. Inceasen gan the woe from day to night  
 Of Troilus for tarrying of Criseyde,  
 And lessen gan his hope and eke his might,

---

<sup>1</sup> 202.5: *may*: perhaps here means "maiden", hardly appropriate in any strict sense for a widow who has also been Troilus's lover for three years. It may mean just "young woman" or possibly the month of May, a metaphor for her youthful freshness.

<sup>2</sup> 205.7 "And every person who wishes to advance the truth."

For which all down he in his bed him laid;  
 He n'ate, nor drank, nor slept, nor word he said,  
 Imagining ay that she was unkind,  
 For which well nigh he waxed out of his mind.

*Thinking always / unfaithful  
 nearly went mad*

207. This dream, of which I told have eke befor,  
 May never come out of his réembrance;  
 He thought ay well he had his lady lorn,  
 And that Jove of his highè purveyance  
 Him showéd had in sleep the significance  
 Of her untruth and his disáventure,  
 And that the boar was shown him in figúre;

*had indeed lost his l.  
 providence*

*bad fortune  
 as metaphor*

208. For which he for his sister Sibyl sent,  
 That calléd was Cassandra all about,  
 And all his dream he told her ere he stent,  
 And her besought assoilen him the doubt  
 Of the strong boar with tuskès stout;  
 And, finally, within a little stound  
 Cassandra gan him thus his dream expound.

*S = the prophetess*

*finished  
 asked her to resolve*

*time*

209. She gan first smile, and said: 'O brother dear,  
 If thou a sooth of this desirest know,  
 Thou must a few of oldè stories hear,  
 To purpose, how that Fortune overthrown  
 Hath lordès old; through which, within a throw,  
 Thou well this boar shalt know, and of what kind  
 He comen is, as men in bookès find.

*the truth*

*short time  
 what family*

210 'Diana, which that wroth was and in ire  
 For Greekes n'ouldè do her sacrifice,  
 Ne incense upon her altar set afire,  
 She, for that Greekès gan her so to despise,  
 Wreaked her in a wonder cruel wise.  
 For with a boar as great as ox in stall  
 She made up-fret their corn and vinès all.

*angry & furious  
 Because*

*Avenged herself*

*tear up*

211. 'To slay this boar was all the country raised,  
 Amongès which there came this boar to see,  
 A maid, one of this world the best y-praised;  
 And Meleager, lord of that country,

*called to arms*

He lovèd so this freshè maiden free,  
That with his manhood, ere he wouldè stent,  
This boar he slew, and her the head he sent;

*before he was done*

212. 'Of which, as oldè bookès tellen us,  
There rose a contek and and a great envy.  
And of this lord descended Tydeus  
By line, or elsè oldè bookès lie,  
But how this Meleager gan to die  
Through his mother, will I you not tell,  
For all too longè it were for to dwell."<sup>1</sup>

*strife*

*by his m's action*

213. She told eke how Tydeus — ere she stent —  
Unto the strongè city of Thebes,  
To claimè kingdom of the city went,  
For his fellow, daun Polynices,  
Of which the brother, daun Eteocles,<sup>2</sup>  
Full wrongfully of Thebes held the strength;  
This toldè she by process, all by length.

*before she (C) had done*

214. She told eke how Hemonides astart  
When Tydeus slew fifty knightès stout;  
She told eke all the prophecies by heart,  
And how that seven kingès with their rout  
Besiegeden the city all about,  
And of the holy serpent, and the well,  
And of the furies, all she gan him tell.<sup>3</sup>

*escaped*

*army*

215. Of Archemoris' burying, and the plays,  
And how Amphiorax fell through the ground,  
How Tydeus was slain, lord of Argayes,  
And how Ypomedon in little stound

*funeral games*

*short time*

---

<sup>1</sup> Chaucer might well have exercised the same discretion by omitting the following stanzas (and a paraphrase, which has been moved to an appendix); they "dwell" too long on material largely irrelevant to the story of T&C, and serve to slow up the progress of his own tale .

<sup>2</sup> 213: Eteocles refused to let his brother Polynices take his turn as ruler of Thebes. Polynices and his six allies, including Tydeus, attacked: the Seven against Thebes.

<sup>3</sup> 214: At this point in most manuscripts there is a Latin paraphrase of the **Thebaid**, book by book. See Appendix.

Was drowned, and dead Parthenope — of wounds,  
 And also how Capaneus, the proud,  
 With thunder-dint was slain, that crièd loud.

216. She gan eke tell him how that either brother,  
 Eteocles and Polynices also,  
 At a skirmish each of them slew other,  
 And of Argia's weeping and her woe,  
 And how the town was burnt she told eke tho;  
 And so descended down from gestès old  
 To Diomede, and thus she spoke and told:

*then  
 old stories*

217. "This ilkè boar betokens Diomede,  
 Tydeus' son, that down descended is  
 From Meleager, that made the boar to bleed,  
 And thy lady, where so she be iwis,  
 This Diomede her heart has and she his.  
 Weep if thou wilt, or leave, for out of doubt,  
 This Diomede is in and thou art out."

*this very boar*

*wherever / indeed*

218. "Thou sayst not sooth," quod he, "thou sorceress,  
 With all thy falsè ghost of prophesy!  
 Thou weenest been a great divineress;  
 Now see'st thou not this fool of fantasy  
 Paineth her on ladies for to lie? <sup>1</sup>  
 Away!" quod he, "there Jovè give thee sorrow!  
 Thou shalt be false, paraunter, yet to-morrow. <sup>2</sup>

*truth  
 spirit  
 You think you're  
 fanciful fool  
 exerts herself  
 may Jove*

219. "As well thou mightest lien on Alceste  
 That was of creäturès, but men lie,  
 That ever were, [the] kindest and the best,  
 For when her husband was in jeopardy  
 To die himself but if she wouldè die, <sup>3</sup>

*lie about  
 unless men lie*

*Unless she*

---

<sup>1</sup> 218.4-5: Troilus turns from Cassandra to rebuke himself for even consulting her, and then returns to accuse her of lying about ladies. *thou* in line 4 refers to Troilus himself while *thou* in .3 referred to Cassandra.

<sup>2</sup> 218.7: "You'll be (proved) wrong by the outcome tomorrow."

<sup>3</sup> 219: Admetus, husband of Alceste, would escape death if either of his parents or his wife was willing to die for him.

She chose to die for him and go to hell  
And starved anon, as us the bookes tell."

*And died then*

220. Cassandra goes; and he with cruel heart  
Forgot his woe for anger of her speech,  
And from his bed all suddenly he start,  
As though all whole him had y-made a leech <sup>1</sup>  
And day by day he gan enquire and seek  
A sooth of this with all his fullè cure;  
And thus he driveth forth his áventure. <sup>2</sup>

*anger at*

*physician*

*The truth / attention*

221. Fortune, which that permutation  
Of thingès hath (as it is her committed  
Through purveyance and disposition  
Of highè Jove,<sup>3</sup> as regnès shall ben flitted  
From folk to folk, or when they shall be smitted),  
'Gan pull away the feathers bright of Troy  
From day to day, till they be bare of joy.

*change*

*providence & appointment*

*kingdoms ... moved*

*stricken*

222. Among all this, the fine of the paródie <sup>4</sup>  
Of Hector gan approachen wonder blive;  
The Fatè would his soulè should ún-body,  
And shapen had a means it out to drive;  
Against which Fate him helpeth not to strive;  
But on a day to fighten gan he wend,  
At which, alas! he caught his lifè's end.

*end of life span*

*very quickly*

*leave his body*

*And had planned*

*he went*

223. For which methinketh every manner wight  
That haunteth armès oughtè to bewail  
The death of him that was so noble a knight.

*who honors chivalry*

---

<sup>1</sup> 220.4: "As if a physician (*leech*) had cured him."

<sup>2</sup> 220.7: Either "he endures (ME *drieth*) his fate" or "he pursues (ME *driveth*) his business." The same line occurs at the end of Book I.

<sup>3</sup> 221.1-5: Jove (Jupiter) has given to Fortune, under Providence, control over worldly change such as the transfer of kingdoms (*regnes*) from one people to another, or their destruction. The subject of 'gan (.6) is *Fortune* (.1) which was earlier portrayed as spinning a wheel but is here seen as plucking off the victim's feathers.

<sup>4</sup> 222.1: *parodie* is the French "periode", in this case the period or extent appointed by Fortune or one of the Fates for someone's life, here that of Hector, the major Trojan hero.

For as he drew a king by th'aventail,  
 Unware of this, Achilles through the mail  
 And through the body gan him for to rive;  
 And thus this worthy knight was brought of live.

*neck armor*  
*did pierce*  
*b. from life, i.e killed*

224. For whom, as olden bookès tellen us,  
 Was made such woe, that tongue it may not tell;  
 And namèly the sorrow of Troilus,  
 That next him was of worthiness the well.  
 And in this woe gan Troilus to dwell,  
 That, what for sorrow and love and for unrest,  
 Full oft a day he bade his heartè brest.

*especially*  
*the source*

*burst*

225. But natheless though he gan him despair  
 And dread ay that his lady was untrue.  
 Yet ay on her his heartè gan repair,  
 And, as these lovers do, he sought ay new  
 To get again Criseydè bright of hue,  
 And in his heart he went her éxcusing,  
 That Calchas causèd all her tarrying.

*always*  
*return*  
*again & again*

226. And often times he was in purpose great  
 Him selfen like a pilgrim to disguise  
 To see her; but he may not counterfeit  
 To be unknown of folkè that were wise,<sup>1</sup>  
 Nor find excuse aright that may suffice,  
 If he among the Greekès knowen were,  
 For which he wept full often many a tear.

227. To her he wrote yet often times all new  
 Full piteously — he left it not for sloth —  
 Beseeching her, that since that he was true,  
 That she would come again and hold her troth:  
 For which Criseyde upon a day for ruth,  
 (I take it so) touching all this mattér  
 Wrote him again, and said as you may hear:

*keep her promise*  
*pity*

---

<sup>1</sup> 226.3-6: He could not disguise himself well enough to deceive perceptive people, or think up a good enough story if he were to be caught in disguise among the Greeks.

## Criseyde's Letter

228. "Cupid's son, example of goodlihead,  
 O sword of knighthood, source of gentleness!  
 How might a wight in torment and in dread  
 And heal-less, as send you yet gladness?  
 I heartless, I sick, I in distress  
 Since you with me nor I with you may deal,  
 You neither may I send nor heart nor heal.<sup>1</sup>

*a person  
 unhealthy or unhealed  
 disheartened  
 meet*

229. "Your letters full, the paper all y-plainted  
 Conceivèd hath my heartè's pietee;  
 I have eke seen with tearès all depainted  
 Your letter, and how you requiren me  
 To come again, which yet ne may not be,  
 But why, lest that this letter founden were,  
 No mentïon ne make I now for fear.<sup>2</sup>

*complaining  
 Has stirred my h's pity*

230. "Grievous to me, God wot, is your unrest,  
 Your haste, and that the goddès' ordinance  
 It seemeth not you take it for the best,  
 Nor other thing is in your rémembrance,  
 As thinketh me, but only your pleasance;  
 But be not wroth, and that I you beseech,  
 For that I tarry is all for wicked speech.

*God knows  
 decision*

*pleasure*

*The reason I delay*

231. "For I have heard well moré than I wend  
 Touching us two, how thingès have y-stood,  
 Which I shall with dissimuling amend;<sup>3</sup>  
 And, be not wroth, I have eke understood  
 How you ne do but holden me in hand;  
 But now no force; I cannot in you guess  
 But allè truth and allè gentleness.

*knew*

*angry  
 you only deceive me  
 no matter*

---

<sup>1</sup> 228.7: "I can send you neither comfort (*heart*) nor cure (*heal*)" since, as she has said, she herself is heartless and sick.

<sup>2</sup> 229.6-7: She says she cannot give the reason for her delay lest the letter be incepted.

<sup>3</sup> 231-3: Having accused Troilus of thinking only of his own pleasure, she uses her real obsession with malicious rumor to pretend that she has heard stories about them both that she will have to put right by lying (*dissimuling*), and has even heard stories about his infidelity.

232. "Comen I will, but yet in such disjoint *difficulty*  
 I stand as now, that what year or what day  
 That this shall be, that can I not appoint; *I cannot say*  
 But in effect I pray you as I may  
 Of your good word and of your friendship ay, *always*  
 For truly while that my life may dure *may last*  
 As for a friend you may in me assure.

233. "Yet pray I you on evil you ne take *don't be offended*  
 That it is short which that I to you write;  
 I dare not where I am well letters make,  
 Ne never yet ne could I well endite. *write*  
 Eke great effect men write in place lite. *great matter / little space*  
 Th' intent is all, and not the letter's space, *length*  
 And fare now well; God have you in his grace!  
 Le vostre, C." *yours, C*

234. This Troilus the letter thought all strange  
 When he it saw, and sorrowfully he sighed;  
 Him thought it like the kalends of a change;<sup>1</sup>  
 But finally he full ne trowen might *could not fully believe*  
 That she ne would him holden what she hight,<sup>2</sup> *keep / promised*  
 For with full evil will list him to leave<sup>3</sup>  
 That loveth well, in such case, though him grieve.

235. But natheless, men say that at the last,  
 For any thing men shall the soothè see, *in spite of everything / truth*  
 And such a case betid, and that as fast, *happened*  
 That Troilus well understood that she  
 Was not so kind as that her ought to be;  
 And, finally, he wot now out of doubt *knows*

---

<sup>1</sup> 234.3: *Kalends* was the beginning of the month in the ancient Roman calendar. Hence her letter seems to mark the beginning of a change.

<sup>2</sup> 234.4-5: Probably the meaning is: "he couldn't really believe that she would break her promise." The double negative (*ne ... ne*) is a little ambiguous here.

<sup>3</sup> 234.6: Any of the three modern equivalents of ME *leve* will make some sense here. The meaning of the couplet appears to be that only with reluctance (*evil will*) will someone who deeply loves (another) believe / grant / leave in such a case, although it hurts him.

That all is lost that he has been about.

*worked for*

236. Stood on a day in his meláncoly  
This Troilus, and in suspiciõn  
Of her for whom he weenèd for to die,  
And so befell that throughout Troyè town,  
As was the guise, y-borne was up and down  
A manner coat armóur, as says the story,  
Before Deiphebe, in sign of his victóry.<sup>1</sup>

*thought he would*

*the custom*

*T's brother*

237. The whichè coat, as telleth Lollius,<sup>2</sup>  
Deiphebe it had y-rent from Diomedè  
The samè day; and when this Troilus  
It saw, he gan to taken of it heed,  
Avising of the length and of the breadth,  
And all the work; but as he gan behold,  
Full suddenly his heartè gan to cold,

*had torn*

*became cold*

238. As he that on the collar found within  
A brooch that he Criseydè gave that morrow  
That she from Troyè mustè needès twin,<sup>3</sup>  
In rémembrance of him and of his sorrow,  
And she him laid again her faith to borrow  
To keep it ay; but now full well he wist  
His lady was no longer on to trist.

*depart*

*gave her solemn pledge*

*always / knew*

*be trusted*

239. He goes him home, and gan full soonè send  
For Pandarus. And all this newè chance  
And of this brooch he told him ord and end,  
Complaining of her heartè's variance,  
His longè love, his truth, and his penance;  
And after Death, withouten wordès more,  
Full fast he cried, his rest him to restore.

*beginning & end*

*fickleness*

*suffering*

*for death*

---

<sup>1</sup> 236.6: "coat armor" like that captured by Deiphebus, was a cloth garment, often decorative, worn over armor.

<sup>2</sup> 237.1: Lollius is the author from whom Chaucer says he got the story of Troilus & Criseyde. No such author has been found.

<sup>3</sup> 238.2-3: "A brooch that he had given to Criseyde on the morning she had to leave Troy." No such gift is mentioned in the account of that morning earlier in Book V. But see V, 149.

240. Then spoke he thus: "O lady mine, Criseyde!  
 Where is your faith, and where is your behest? *promise*  
 Where is your love? Where is your truth?" he said.  
 "Of Diomedé have you now all this feast? *attention, pleasure*  
 Alas ! I would have trowéd at the least *have thought*  
 That since you would in truth not to me stand,  
 That you thus n'ould have holden me in hand. *wouldn't have deceived*
241. "Who shall now trow on any oathès mo' ? *trust / more*  
 Alas ! I never would have weened ere this *have thought*  
 That you, Criseydé, could have changéd so,  
 Ne but I had a-guilt and done amiss. *Unless I were guilty*  
 So cruel weened I not your hearté iwis<sup>1</sup>  
 To slay me thus. Alas, your name of truth  
 Is now fordone, and that is all my ruth. *ruined / regret*
242. "Was there no other brooch you list to let *could have used*  
 To feoffè with your newè love," quod he, *To present to*  
 "But thilkè brooch that I with tearès wet *that same*  
 You gave as for a rémembrance of me? *Gave you*  
 No other cause, alas ! ne hadden ye  
 But for despite, and eke for that you meant  
 All utterly to shoven your intent,
243. "Through which I see that clean out of your mind  
 You have me cast, and I ne can nor may  
 For all this world within mine hearté find  
 To unlove you a quarter of a day.  
 In cursed time I born was, welaway! *alas!*  
 That you that do me all this woe endure,  
 Yet love I best of any créature.
244. "Now God," quod he, "me senden yet the grace *May God send me*  
 That I may meeten with his Diomedé,  
 And truly, if I have might and space,  
 Yet shall I make, I hope, his sidès bleed:  
 Now God," quod he, "that oughtest taken heed  
 To further truth, and wrongès to punice, *punish*  
 Why n'ilt thou do a vengeance of this vice?

---

<sup>1</sup> 241.5: "I had not thought (*weened*) your heart was indeed so cruel."

245. "O Pandarus! that in dreams for to trust  
 Me blaméd hast, and wont art oft t'upbraid,  
 Now may'st thou see thyself, if that thee list,  
 How true is now thy niecè, bright Criseyde.  
 In sundry formès, God it wot," he said,  
 "The goddès shoven bothè joy and teen  
 In sleep, and by my dream it is now seen.

*ready to rebuke  
 if you wish*

and grief

246. "And certainly, withouten morè speech,  
 From hencèforth, as farforth as I may,  
 Mine ownè death in armès will I seek,  
 I reckè not how soonè be the day;  
 But truly, Criseydè, my sweet may!  
 Whom I have ay with all my might y-served,  
 That you do thus I have it not deserved."

*lady  
 always*

247. This Pandarus, that all these thingès heard,  
 And wistè well he said a sooth of this,  
 He not a word again to him answered  
 For sorry of his friend's sorrow he is,  
 And shaméd for his niece hath done amiss,  
 And stood astonéd of these causes tway  
 As still as stone; one word ne could he say.

*knew / truth*

*stunned by*

248. But at the lastè, thus he spoke and said:  
 "My brother dear! I may do thee no more;  
 What should I say? I hate iwis Criseyde,  
 And God wot I will hate her evermore;  
 And that thou me besoughtest do of yore,  
 Having unto mine honour nor my rest  
 Right no regard, I did all that thee lest.

*what you asked me*

*all that pleased you*

249. "If I did aught that mightè liken thee  
 It is me lief, and of this treason now,  
 God wot that it a sorrow is to me,  
 And dreadèless, for heartès ease of you,  
 Right fain I would amend it, wist I how.  
 And from this world Almighty God I pray,  
 Deliver her soon! I can no morè say."

*might please you  
 I'm glad*

*to ease your heart  
 V. gladly / if I knew how*

250. Great was the sorrow and plaint of Troilus,  
 But forth her coursè Fortune ay gan to hold,  
 Criseydè loves the son of Tydeus,  
 And Troilus must weep in carès cold:  
 Such is this world, who so it can behold;  
 In each estate is little heartè's rest;  
 God leve us for to take it for the best !

*kept her steady course  
 i.e. Diomedè*

*God grant*

251. In many a cruel battle, out of dread,  
 Of Troilus this ilkè noble knight  
 (As men may in these oldè bookès read)  
 Was seen his knighthood and his greatè might,  
 And dreadèless his ire both day and night  
 Full cruelly the Greekès ay a-bought,  
 And always most this Diomedè he sought.

*certainly*

*anger  
 constantly felt*

252. And often times I findè that they met  
 With bloody strokès and with wordès great,  
 Essaying how their spearès weren whet;  
 And God it wot with many a cruel heat  
 Gan Troilus upon his helm to beat:  
 But natheless Fortúne it naught ne would  
 Of other's hand that either dien should.

*Testing / sharp  
 rush*

253. And if I had y-taken for to write  
 The armès of this ilkè worthy man,  
 Then would I of his battailès endite.  
 But for that I to writè first began  
 Of his love, I have said as I can.  
 His worthy deedès, whoso list them hear,  
 Read Dares: he can tell them all y-fere.

*had undertaken  
 military feats  
 write*

*whoever wants to*

254. Beseeching every lady bright of hue,  
 And every gentil woman, what she be,  
 That, al be that Criseydè was untrue,  
 That for that guilt she be not wroth with me.  
 You may her guilt in other bookès see;  
 And gladlier I will writen, if you lest,  
 Penelope's truth and good Alceste.

*whoever she is  
 although  
 not angry*

*if you like*

255. I say not this all-only for these men,

But most for women that betrayèd be  
 Through falsè folk. God give them sorrow, Amen!  
 That with their greatè wit and subtlety  
 Betrayen you. And this comveveth me  
 To speak, and in effect you all I pray,  
 Beware of men and hearken what I say.

*moves me*

256. Go, little book, go little my tragedy,  
 Where God thy maker yet ere that he die  
 So send me might to make some comedy.<sup>1</sup>  
 But, little book, no making thou n'envy,  
 But subject be to allè poesy,  
 And kiss the steps where as thou seest pace  
 Virgil, Ovid, Homer, Lucan, Stace.<sup>2</sup>

*maker & he = Chaucer  
 give me strength  
 making = poetry*

*walk*

257 . And, for there is so great diversity  
 In English, and in writing of our tongue,  
 So pray I God that none miswritè thee,  
 Nor thee mis-meter for default of tongue;<sup>3</sup>  
 And read where so thou be, or elsè sung,  
 That thou be understood, God I beseech;  
 But yet to purpose of my rather speech.<sup>4</sup>

*thee = his poem*

*wheresoever*

258 . The wrath, as I began you for to say,  
 Of Troilus the Greekès boughten dear,  
 For thousandès his handès maden die,  
 As he that was withouten any peer,

*caused to*

---

<sup>1</sup> 256: Chaucer, the *maker*, i.e. the author of this "little book", hopes that God (a different Maker) will grant him the chance to write some comedy before he dies. The "Go, little book" is a formula for poetic closure derived probably from Ovid and other classical sources, and occurs also in Boccaccio, though Chaucer seems to have been responsible for its small vogue in England.

<sup>2</sup> 256.7: Chaucer puts himself in important company here: with Virgil, author of **The Aeneid**; Ovid, author of **The Art of Love** and **Metamorphoses**; Homer, author of **The Iliad** and **The Odyssey**; Lucan, author of **The Pharsalia**; Statius, author of **The Thebaid**. Most of these authors are mentioned by Boccaccio in the envoy to his **Filocolo**.

<sup>3</sup> 257.3-4: "And I pray God that no one miscopy you, or write you out unmetrically because of the deficiency of his dialect" (since there is the "diversity" in written English just mentioned).

<sup>4</sup> 257.7: "But to get to what I wanted to say."

Save Hector in his time, as I can hear;  
 But welaway! (save only Goddè's will)  
 Despitously him slew the fierce Achil.

*alas!*  
*A. slew him (Troilus)*

----

259. And when that he was slain in this mannér  
 His lightè ghost full blissfully is went  
 Up to the hollowness of the eighthè sphere,  
 In converse letting every element,<sup>1</sup>  
 And there he saw, with full avisèment,  
 Th'erratic stars, hearkening harmony,<sup>2</sup>  
 With soundès full of heavenish melody.

*spirit*  
*leaving below*  
*clear vision*

260. And down from thencè fast he gan advise  
 This little spot of earth that with the sea  
 Embracèd is, and fully gan despise  
 This wretched world, and held all vanity  
 In réspect of the plain felicity  
 That is in heaven above; and at the last  
 Where he was slain his looking down he cast.

*look closely at*  
  
*total happiness*

261. And in himself he laughed right at the woe  
 Of them that wepten for his death so fast,  
 And damnèd all our works that follow so  
 The blindè lust the which that may not last,  
 And shouldeñ all our heart on heaven cast;  
 And forth he wentè, shortly for to tell,  
 Where as Mercúry sorted him to dwell.

*so hard*  
*And rebuked*  
  
*Who should*  
  
*assigned*

262. Such fine hath, lo! this Troilus for love,  
 Such fine hath all his greatè worthiness,  
 Such fine hath his estate royál above,  
 Such fine his lust, such fine hath his noblesse.  
 Such fine hath this false worldè's brittleness!

*Such an end*

---

<sup>1</sup> 259.4: Troilus's soul is taken up to the heaven of the eighth sphere. *in converse letting*: the meaning of this phrase is obscure; it is generally glossed: "leaving below" or "leaving behind".

<sup>2</sup> 259.6: The *erratic stars* are the planets, and Troilus is listening to the music (*hearkening harmony*) of the spheres, in which the planets revolve.

And thus began his loving of Criseyde  
As I have told, and in this wise he died.

----

263. O youngè, freshè folkès, he or she!  
In which that love up groweth with your age,  
Repaireth home from worldly vanity,  
And of your hearts up casteth the visage  
To thilkè God that after his image  
You made, and thinketh all is but a fair  
This world that passeth soon as flowers fair,

*boy or girl*

*Turn back*

*just a show*

264. And loveth Him, the which that right for love  
Upon a cross, our soulès for to buy,  
First starved, and rose, and sits in heaven above;  
For He n'ill falsen no wight, dare I say,  
That will his heart all wholly on Him lay,  
And since He best to love is, and most meek,  
What needeth feignèd lovès for to seek?

*to redeem*

*First, died*

*won't deceive anyone*

*to Him devote*

265. Lo here, of pagans' cursed oldè rites;  
Lo here, what all their goddès may avail;  
Lo here, this wretched worldè's appetites;  
Lo here, the fine and guerdon of travail  
Of Jove, Apollo, Mars, of such rascaill;  
Lo here, the form of oldè clerkès' speech  
In poetry, if you their bookès seek.

*end & reward of work*

*ancient authors*

266. O moral Gower, this book I direct  
To thee, and to thee, philosophical Strode,<sup>1</sup>  
To vouchèsafe, where need is, to correct,  
Of your benignity and zealès good.  
And to that soothfast Christ, that starved on rood,  
With all my heart of mercy ever I pray;  
And to the Lord right thus I speak and say:

*To be good enough*

*faithful / died on the cross*

---

<sup>1</sup> 266.1-2: The poet Gower, and Strode, an Oxford philosopher, were friends of Chaucer. The request to correct his copy is probably a conventional compliment, but in the days before a writer had the opportunity to correct the final printer's page proofs, his work was at the mercy of every scribe who chose or was employed to copy it, so the request might not have been a mere gesture. For Chaucer's awareness of this, see stanza 257 just above, and for his exasperation at his own scribe Adam, see his short comic poem execrating Adam's errors.

267. Thou one and two and three, etern alive <sup>1</sup>  
 That reignest ay in three and two and one,  
 Uncircumscribed, and all may'st circumscribe,  
 Us from visible and invisible foes  
 Defend; and to Thy mercy everyone  
 So make us, Jesus, for thy mercy *digne*  
 For love of Maid and Mother thine benign. <sup>2</sup>  
 Amen.

*ever*  
*Unbounded*

*worthy*

**Here ends the book of Troilus and Criseyde**

For appendix, see next page

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<sup>1</sup> 267: The prayer is to the Holy Trinity, the three persons of the one God who reigns eternally: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The first three of these lines are a translation of Dante's *Paradiso* 14.28-30.

<sup>2</sup> 267.7: "Make us worthy of thy mercy, for love of your benign maiden-mother," the Virgin Mary. *Digne* can be pronounced "dine".

### Appendix

In most manuscripts the following summary of the Thebaid occurs after stanza 214 above

#### ARGUMENT OF THE TWELVE BOOKS OF STATIUS'S **THEBAID**

Associat profugum Tideo primus Polynicen.  
 Tidea legatum docet insidiasque secundus.  
 Tertius Hemoniden canit et vates latitantes.  
 Quartus havet reges ineuntes proelia septem.  
 Mox furie Lenne quinto narratur et anguis.  
 Archemori bustum sexto ludique leguntur.  
 Dat Graios Thebes, et vatem septimus umbris  
 Octavo cecidit Tideus, spes, vita Pelasgis.  
 Ypomedon nono moritur cum Parthenopeo.  
 Fulmine percussus decimo Capaneus superatur.  
 Undecimo sese perimunt per vulnera fratres.  
 Argeiam flentem narrat duodenus et ignem.

Translation -

Book I associates Tydeus and the exiled Polynices.  
 Book II: Tydeus as ambassador and the ambush [intended by Eteocles to kill him].  
 Book III: Hemonides (Maeon) and the prophecies of doom.  
 Book IV: The seven kings going into battle.  
 Then in Book V we are told about the Lemnian furies and the serpent  
 Book VI: We read of the cremation and funeral games of Archemorus.  
 Book VII delivers the Greeks to Thebes and the prophet (Amphiarus) to the shades.  
 Book VIII: Tydeus falls, the hope and life of the Pelasgians.  
 Book IX: Hippomedon dies with Parthenopaeus.  
 Book X: Capaneus, struck by a thunderbolt, is destroyed.  
 Book XI: The brothers [Eteocles and Polynices] fatally wound each other.  
 Book XII describes the grief of Argia and the funeral pyre [of Polynices].