

TROILUS AND CRESSIDA



BOOK I

1

THE double sorwe of Troilus to tellen,
That was the king Priamus sone of Troye,
In lovinge, how his aventures fellen
Fro wo to wele, and after out of joye,
My purpos is, er that I parte fro ye.
Thesiphone, thou help me for t'endyte
Thise woful vers, that wepen as I wrytel

2

To thee clepe I, thou goddesse of torment,
Thou cruel Furie, sorwing ever in payne;
Help me, that am the sorrowful instrument
That helpeth lovers, as I can, to pleyne!
For wel sit it, the sothe for to seyne,
A woful wight to han a dreary fere,
And, to a sorwful tale, a sory chere.

3

For I, that god of Loves servaunts serve,
Ne dar to Love, for myn unlyklinesse,
Preyen for speed, al sholde I therfor sterve,
So fer am I fro his help in derknesse;
But nathelees, if this may doon gladnesse
To any lover, and his cause awayle,
Have he my thank, and myn be this travayle!

4

But ye loveres, that bathen in gladnesse,
If any drope of pitee in yow be,
Remembreth yow on passed hevinesse
That ye han felt, and on the adversitee
Of othere folk, and thinketh how that ye
Han felt that Love dorste yow displese;
Or ye han wonne him with to greet an ese.

5

And preyeth for hem that ben in the cas
Of Troilus, as ye may after here,
That love hem bringe in hevене to solas,
And eek for me preyeth to god so dere,
That I have might to shewe, in som manere,
Swich payne and wo as Loves folk endure,
In Troilus unsely aventure.

6

And biddeth eek for hem that been despayred
In love, that never nil recovered be,
And eek for hem that falsly been aplayed
Thorough wikked tonges, be it he or she;
Thus biddeth god, for his benignitee,
To graunte hem sone out of this world to pace,
That been despayred out of Loves grace.

1

THE double sorrow of Troilus to tell,
Unhappy son of Priam, king of Troy,
And how he fared, when first in love he fell,
From woe to weal, then back again from joy,
Until we part my time I shall employ.
Tisiphone, now help me to endite
These woful lines, that weep e'en as I writel

2

On thee I call, Goddess malevolent,
Thou cruel Fury, grieving ever in pain!
Help me, who am the sorrowful instrument
That lovers use their sorrows to complain;
For truly this is not a saying vain,
A gloomy man should have a gloomy mate,
And faces sad, those who sad tales relate.

3

For I to serve Love's servants ever try,
Yet dare not seek, for my unlikeliness,
The aid of Love, although for love I die,
So far am I from prospect of success.
But yet if this may make the sorrows less
Of any lover, or may his cause avail,
The thanks be his and mine this toilsome tale.

4

But O ye lovers, bathed in bliss always,
If any drops of pity in you be,
Recall the griefs gone by of other days,
And think sometimes upon the adversity
Of other folk, forgetting not that ye
Have felt yourselves Love's power to displease,
Lest ye might win Love's prize with too great ease.

5

And pray for those who suffer in the plight
Of Troilus, as I shall tell you here,
Beseeching Love to bring them to delight;
And pray for me as well, to God so dear,
That I may have the skill to make appear,
In this unhappy tale of Troilus,
How dark may be love's ways and treacherous.

6

And pray for those that dwell in love's despair,
From which they never hope to be restored;
And pray for them who must the burden bear
Of slanderous tongue of lady or of lord;
Pray God that he the faithful may reward,
And to the hopeless grant a quick release
And bring them from unrest to lasting peace.

7
And pray for lovers all who are at ease,
That they may still continue to be so,
And pray that they their ladies still may please
And unto Love a reverent honor show;
For thus I trust my soul in truth shall grow,
Praying for those who Love's commands fulfill,
And setting forth their fates in all good will,

8

With pity and compassion in my heart,
As though I brother were to lovers all.
Now take, I pray, my story in good part;
Henceforth I shall endeavor to recall
What sorrows once on Troilus must fall
In loving Cressida, who first returned
His love, but for new love this old love spurned.

9

Well known the story, how the Greeks so strong
In arms, went with a thousand vessels sailing
To Troy, and there the Trojan city long
Besieged, and after ten years' siege prevailing,
In divers ways, but with one wrath unailing,
Avenged on Troy the wrong to Helen done
By Paris, when at last great Troy was won.

10

Now so it chanced that in the Trojan town,
There dwelt a lord of rank and high degree,
A priest named Calchas, of such great renown
And in all science such proficiency,
That he knew what the fate of Troy would be,
For at the shrine at Delphi he had heard
Phoebus Apollo's dire foreboding word.

11

When Calchas found his priestly computation
Confirmed the oracle Apollo spake,
That with the Greeks came such a mighty nation,
That in the end the city they would take,
He straight resolved the Trojans to forsake;
For by his divinations well he knew
That Troy was doomed, for all that Troy might do.

12

With stealth to leave the city he prepared,
For cunning plans he knew well to devise;
In secret to the Grecian host he fared,
Where they received him in most courtly wise,
As one of high distinction in their eyes;
For they had hope that by his priestly skill,
He might ward off their future harm and ill.

13

Great cry arose when it was first made known
Through all the town, and everywhere was told,
That Calchas had turned traitor and had flown,
And to the Greeks his faithless honor sold;
And every Trojan, both the young and old,
Declared that Calchas, with his wicked kin,
Deserved to burn alive for this great sin.

14

Now Calchas left behind him when he fled,
Innocent of this so false and wicked deed,
His daughter, who in grief her life now led,
For mortal fear she felt in her great need,
And had no one in Troy her cause to plead,

7

And biddeth eek for hem that been at ese,
That god hem graunte ay good perseveraunce,
And sende hem might hir ladies so to plesse,
That it to Love be worship and plesaunce.
For so hope I my soule best avaunce,
To preye for hem that Loves servaunts be,
And wryte hir wo, and live in charitee.

8

And for to have of hem compassioun
As though I were hir owene brother dere.
Now herkeneth with a gode entencioun,
For now wol I gon streight to my matere,
In whiche ye may the double sorwes here
Of Troilus, in loving of Criseyde,
And how that she forsook him er she deyde.

9

It is wel wist, how that the Grekes stronge
In armes with a thousand shippes wente
To Troye-wardes, and the citee longe
Assegeden neigh ten yeer er they stente,
And, in diverse wyse and oon entente,
The ravishing to wroken of Eleyne,
By Paris doon, they wroughten al hir payne.

10

Now fil it so, that in the toun ther was
Dwellinge a lord of greet auctoritee,
A gret devyn that cleped was Calkas,
That in science so expert was, that he
Knew wel that Troye sholde destroyed be,
By answer of his god, that highte thus,
Daun Phebus or Apollo Delphicus.

11

So whan this Calkas knew by calculinge,
And eek by answer of this Appollo,
That Grekes sholden swich a peple bringe,
Thorough which that Troye moste been for-do,
He caste anon out of the toun to go;
For wel wiste he, by sort, that Troye sholde
Destroyed been, ye, wolde who-so nolde.

12

For which, for to departen softly
Took purpos ful this forknowinge wyse,
And to the Grekes ost ful prively
He stal anon; and they, in curteys wyse,
Him deden bothe worship and servyse,
In trust that he hath conning hem to rede
In every peril which that is to drede.

13

The noyse up roos, whan it was first aspyed,
Thorough al the toun, and generally was spoken,
That Calkas traytor fled was, and allyed
With hem of Grece; and casten to ben wroken
On him that falsly hadde his feith so broken;
And seyden, he and al his kin at ones
Ben worthy for to brennen, fel and bones.

14

Now hadde Calkas left, in this meschaunce,
Al unwist of this false and wikked dede,
His daughter, which that was in gret penaunce,
For of hir lyf she was ful sore in drede,
As she that niste what was best to rede;

For bothe a widowe was she, and allone
Of any freend, to whom she dorste hir mone.

15

Criseyde was this lady name a-right;
As to my dome, in al Troyes citee
Nas noon so fair, for passing every wight
So aungellyk was hir natyf beautee,
That lyk a thing immortal semed she,
As doth an hevenish parfit creature,
That doun were sent in scorning of nature.

16

This lady, which that al-day herde at ere
Hir fadres shame, his falsnesse and tresoun,
Wel nigh out of hir wit for sorwe and fere,
In widewes habit large of samit broun,
On knees she fil biforn Ector a-doun;
With pitous voys, and tendrely wepinge,
His mercy bad, hir-selven excusinge.

17

Now was this Ector pitous of nature,
And saw that she was sorrowfully bigoon,
And that she was so fair a creature;
Of his goodnesse he gladed hir anon,
And seyde, "lat your fadres treson goon
Forth with mischaunce, and ye your-self, in
joye,
Dwellevh with us, whyl you good list, in Troye.

18

And al th'onour that men may doon yow have,
As ferforth as your fader dwelled here,
Ye shul han, and your body shal men save,
As fer as I may ought enquire or here."
And she him thonked with ful humble chere,
And ofter wolde, and it hadde ben his wille,
And took hir leve, and hoom, and held hir stille.

19

And in hir hous she abood with swich meynee
As to hir honour nede was to holde;
And whyl she was dwellinge in that citee,
Kepte hir estat, and bothe of yonge and olde
Ful wel beloved, and wel men of hir tolde.
But whether that she children hadde or noon,
I rede it nought; therefore I lete it goon.

20

The thinges fellen, as they doon of werre,
Bitwixen hem of Troye and Grekes ofte;
For som day boughten they of Troye it derre,
And eft the Grekes founden no thing softe
The folk of Troye; and thus fortune onlofte,
And under eft, gan hem to wheelen bothe
After hir cours, ay whyl they were wrothe.

21

But how this toun com to destrucioun
Ne falleth nought to purpos me to telle;
For it were here a long disgressioun
Fro my matere, and yow to longe dwelle.
But the Troyane gestes, as they felle,
In Omer, or in Dares, or in Dyte,
Who-so that can, may rede hem as they wryte.

22

But though that Grekes hem of Troye shetten,
And hir citee bisegede al a-boute,

For she a widow was without a friend
Who might bear aid and helpful counsel lend.

15

Cressida was the name this lady bore,
And in the Trojan city, to my mind,
Was none so fair, for in her beauty more
Angelical she seemed than human kind,
As though a thing immortal were combined
Of all of heaven's gifts of choicest worth,
And sent down here in scorn of our poor earth.

16

This lady could in no way close her ears
To her own father's evil deed and fame,
And driven near distracted by her fears,
In widow's sober habit dressed, she came
Before great Hector, where she doth proclaim
Her loyalty with tearful voice and eye,
And pleads for grace and treason doth deny.

17

Now Hector was a man of kindly heart,
And when he saw how great was her distress,
And then her beauty likewise played a part,
These words of comfort to her did address:
"About your father's wicked deeds, the less
That's said the better! But you yourself in
joy
Dwell here with us the while you will in Troy!

18

"And all respect that men owe unto you,
As though your father still were dwelling here,
That shall you have, and all regard that's due
Your person, I assure you without fear."
She humbly thanked him for these words of cheer,
And would have thanked him more had he desired,
And took her leave and to her home retired.

19

And there she dwelt with such a retinue
As fitting was for one of her high station,
And kept good house, as she was wont to do,
Enjoying love and honest reputation
As much as any in the Trojan nation;
But if she children had, I do not know,
I have not heard, and therefore let it go.

20

The fates of war were there exemplified
Between the Trojan and the Grecian forces,
For one day those of Troy were sorely tried,
But next the Greeks, for all their great resources,
Must yield; for Fortune hath uncertain courses,
And now her wheel goes up, and now goes down,
And now she wears a smile and now a frown.

21

But how this town came to its final end
Is not my purpose at this time to tell,
For much too far that lengthy tale would bend
Me from my point, and weary you as well;
But all the Trojan deeds, as there they fell,
Do Homer, Dares and Dictys all narrate,
For future time to read and contemplate.

22

Now though the Greeks the Trojan city hold,
Emprisoned by a siege set all around,

The Trojans still observe their customs old,
Honoring their gods with worshipping profound;
And of their relics one the most renowned
Was called Palladion, to which they prayed
In trust of heaven's protection and of aid.

23

And so it chanced when April heralds Spring,
And clothes the meadows with new pleasant green,
And when fresh flowers, white and red, now bring
Once more their fragrances so pure and clean,
The throngs of Trojan folk might then be seen,
All going forth Palladion's feast to hold,
According to their rites and customs old.

24

And to the temple in their very best,
The common folk came in from left and right,
And to Palladion themselves addressed;
And there came also many a lusty knight,
Many a lady fair and maiden bright,
All well arrayed, from greatest unto least,
In honor of the season and the feast.

25

Among the folk was Cressida that day,
All clothed in black, in widow's proper wise,
Yet as the alphabet begins with A,
So stood her beauty peerless in men's eyes;
And all folk gazed at her in glad surprise,
To see in her how fair the fairest are,
And under inky cloud, so bright a star

26

As was fair Cressida, so brightly shone
Her beauty there beneath her widow's weeds,
And yet she stood apart and all alone,
Behind the throng, which she but little heeds,
And by the door through which the crowd proceeds,
Quite simply dressed, but with the sprightly air
Of one who of herself can take good care.

27

Now Troilus, the leader of a band
Of youthful knights, went with them up and down
In this great temple, where on every hand
They eyed the beauties of the Trojan town;
For Troilus prized neither smile nor frown
Of one particular, and fancy free,
He praised or criticized impartially.

28

And as he roamed about, he kept an eye
On all the members of his retinue,
And if some knight or squire heaved a sigh,
Or longing glances towards some maiden threw,
Then he would smile and make a great ado,
And twit him thus, "God knows she sleepeth
blithe,
For all of thee, though thou shalt twist and writhe!

29

"The fashion of you lovers I have heard,
And heard of all your foolish gaits and ways,
And what great toils to win love are incurred,
In keeping it, what dangers and dismays,
For when your prey is lost, come woful days!
What fools ye be, and in your folly blind,
Who can no lesson in each other find."

Hir olde usage wolde they not letten,
As for to honour hir goddes ful devoute;
But aldermost in honour, out of doute,
They hadde a relik hight Palladion,
That was hir trist a-boven everichon.

23

And so bifel, whan comen was the tyme
Of Aperil, whan clothed is the mede
With newe grene, of lusty Ver the pryme,
And swote smellen floures whyte and rede,
In sondry wysew shewed, as I rede,
The folk of Troye hir observaunces olde,
Palladiones feste for to holde.

24

And to the temple, in al hir beste wyse,
In general, ther wente many a wight,
To herknen of Palladion the servyse;
And namely, so many a lusty knight,
So many a lady fresh and mayden bright,
Ful wel arrayed, bothe moste and leste,
Ye, bothe for the seson and the feste.

25

Among thise othere folk was Criseyda,
In widewes habite blak; but nathelees,
Right as our firste lettre is now an A,
In beautee first so stood she, makelees;
Hir godly looking gladede al the prees.
Nas never seyn thing to ben preysed derre,
Nor under cloude blak so bright a sterre

26

As was Criseyde, as folk seyde everichoon
That hir bihelden in hir blake wede;
And yet she stood ful lowe and stille alloon,
Bihidden othere folk, in litel brede,
And neigh the dore, ay under shames drede,
Simple of a-tyr, and debonaire of chere,
With ful assured loking and manere.

27

This Troilus, as he was wont to gyde
His yonge knightes, ladde hem up and doun
In thilke large temple on every syde,
Biholding ay the ladyes of the toun,
Now here, now there, for no devocioun
Hadde he to noon, to reven him his reste,
But gan to preyse and lakken whom him leste.

28

And in his walk ful fast he gan to wayten
If knight or squyer of his companye
Gan for to syke, or lete his eyen bayten
On any woman that he coude aspye;
He wolde smyle, and holden it folye,
And seye him thus, "god wot, she slepeth
softe

For love of thee, whan thou tornest ful ofte!

29

"I have herd told, pardieux, of your livinge,
Ye lovers, and your lewede observaunces,
And which a labour folk han in winninge
Of love, and, in the keping, which doutaunces;
And whan your preye is lost, wo and penaunces;
O verrey foles! nyce and blinde be ye;
Ther nis not oon can war by other be."

30

And with that word he gan cast up the browe,
Ascaunces, "lo! is this nought wysly spoken?"
At which the god of love gan loken rowe
Right for despyt, and shoop for to ben wroken;
He kiddle anon his bowe nas not broken;
For sodeynly he hit him at the fulle;
And yet as proud a pekok can he pulle.

31

O blinde world, O blinde entencioun!
How ofte falleth al th'effect contraire
Of surquidrye and foul presumpcioun;
For caught is proud, and caught is debonaire.
This Troilus is clomben on the staire,
And litel weneth that he moot descenden.
But al-day fayleth thing that foles wenden.

32

As proude Bayard ginneth for to skippe
Out of the wey, so priketh him his corn,
Til he a lash have of the longe whippe,
Than thenketh he, "though I prounce al biforn
First in the trays, ful fat and newe shorn,
Yet am I but an hors, and horses lawe
I moot endure, and with my feres drawe."

33

So ferde it by this fers and proude knight;
Though he a worthy kinges sone were,
And wende no-thing hadde had swiche might
Ayens his wil that sholde his herte stere,
Yet with a look his herte wex a-ferre,
That he, that now was most in pryde above,
Wex sodeynly most subget un-to love.

34

For-thy ensample taketh of this man,
Ye wyse, proude, and worthy folkes alle,
To scornen Love, which that so sone can
The freedom of your hertes to him thralle;
For ever it was, and ever it shal bifalle,
That Love is he that alle thing may binde;
For may no man for-do the lawe of kinde.

35

That this be sooth, hath proved and doth yit;
For this trowe I ye knowen, alle or some,
Men reden not that folk han gretter wit
Than they that han be most with love y-nome;
And strengest folk ben therwith overcome,
The worthiest and grettest of degree;
This was, and is, and yet men shal it see.

36

And trowelich it sit wel to be so;
For alderwysst han ther-with ben plesed;
And they that han ben aldermost in wo,
With love han been comforted most and esed;
And ofte it hath the cruel herte apesed,
And worthy folk maad worthier of name,
And causeth most to dreden vyce and shame.

37

Now sith it may not goodly be withstonde,
And is a thing so vertuouus in kinde,
Refuseth not to Love for to be bonde,
Sin, as him-selven list, he may yow binde.
The yerde is bet that bowen wole and winde

30

And with that word he lifteth up his brows,
As one should say, "Now is not this well spoken!"
And straight these vaunts the God of Love arouse
To wrath, of which he gives a dreadful token,
For now he shows his bow is far from broken,
And suddenly he hits him fair and full,
And all such peacocks' feathers he can pull.

31

O world so blind! O blind all man's contriving!
How often things fall out in ways contrary,
Through vain presumption and conceited striving!
The proud and humble both are caught unwary,
For Troilus, who now mounts up so airy,
Hath little thought of afterward descending;
But folly oft hath unexpected ending.

32

As Bayard, when he feels his oats, grows proud,
And dances and skips out of the travelled way,
Until the lash upon his flank cracks loud,
"Although I prance here first," he then doth say,
"A leader in the trace, and fat and gay,
Yet am I but a horse, and by the law
For horses made, I still must pull and draw."

33

So fared it with this rash and hardy knight,
Who was a king's son of most high degree,
For though he thought that nothing had the might
To curb the heart of such a one as he,
Yet with a look, no longer was he gay,
And he who stood but now in pride above
All men, at once was subject most to Love.

34

And now I bid you profit by this man,
Ye worthy folk, and wise and proud withal,
And scorn not Love, he who so lightly can
The freedom of rebellious hearts enthal;
For still the common fate on you must fall,
That love, at nature's very heart indwelling,
Shall bind all things by nature's might compelling.

35

That this is true hath oftentimes been proved,
For well you know, and in wise books may read,
That men of greatest worth have deepest loved,
And none so powerful in word or deed,
But he the greater power of love must heed,
For all his fame or high nobility;
Thus hath it been and ever shall it be!

36

And fitting is it that it should be so,
For wisest men have most with love been pleased,
And those that dwelt in sorrow and in woe,
By love have often been consoled and eased,
And cruel wrath by love hath been appeased;
For love lends lustre to an honorable name,
And saves mankind from wickedness and shame.

37

And since you may not justly love deny,
Then take it as a virtue of the mind,
Delay not long with loving to comply,
For love at last must all constrain and bind;
And better the rod that bends, by force inclined,

Than one that breaks; and therefore pray take heed
To follow love, that best can guide and lead.

38

But now to leave attendant thoughts withal,
And come to Priam's son, of whom I told,
And passing by all things collateral,
My proper tale hereafter I shall hold,
Both of his joy and of his cares so cold,
And all the business of this sad affair,
As I began, I shall to you declare.

39

Within the fane this knight his wit
displayed,
Wandering at will and scattering jokes about,
And idly here, now there, his gazing strayed
On ladies of the town and from without;
And thus his roving eye, by chance no doubt,
Passed o'er the crowd and reached the very spot
Where Cressida stood, and then no further got.

40

And suddenly amazement came unbidden,
As more intent he bent on her his eyes.
"O Jupiter," he thought, "where has she hidden,
Whose beauty, shining bright, revealed now lies?"
And then his heart began to swell and rise,
But sighing soft that not a soul could hear,
He straight again began to laugh and jeer.

41

Among the small, this lady seemed not small,
She had a figure of proportioned kind,
Yet not the slightest mannish or too tall,
For nature had her frame so well designed,
And all her motions showed so well her mind,
That men could tell, in such there would reside
Honor and dignity and woman's pride.

42

And Troilus, the more he saw, the more
Was pleased with all her form and features clear,
But still she kept her eyes upon the floor,
Except she let one scornful glance appear,
As much as "Well, why shouldn't I stand here?"
But soon her eyes again grew soft and bright,
Which seemed to Troilus a goodly sight.

43

From eyes to heart in Troilus there passed
So great a longing, through this vision bred,
That in his deepest soul, fixed firm and fast,
This lady's image love did now imbed;
And he who once had held so high his head,
Must now draw in his horns and hold him low,
As one who knows not where to turn or go.

44

Lo, he who ne'er before had known defeat,
And scorned all who in Love's dominion lie,
He little was aware that love its seat
Hath in the glance and beaming of the eye;
Yet suddenly he felt within him die
All haughtiness of heart, by looking hurt,
And bless'd be love, which can men thus convert!

45

Thus still he stood, where he could well behold
This one in black, who hath his heart enchained,

Than that that brest; and therfor I yow rede
To folwen him that so wel can yow lede.

38

But for to tellen forth in special
As of this kinges sone of which I tolde,
And leten other thing collateral,
Of him thenke I my tale for to holde,
Bothe of his joye, and of his cares colde;
And al his werk, as touching this matere,
For I it gan, I wil ther-to refere.

39

With-inne the temple he wente him forth
pleyinge,
This Troilus, of every wight aboute,
On this lady and now on that lokinge,
Wher-so she were of toune, or of withoute:
And up-on cas bifel, that thorough a route
His eye perced, and so depe it wente,
Til on Criseyde it smoot, and ther it stente.

40

And sodeynly he wex ther-with astoned,
And gan hire bet biholde in thrifty wyse:
"O mercy, god!" thoughte he, "wher hastow woned,
That art so fair and goodly to devyse?"
Ther-with his herte gan to sprede and ryse,
And softe sighed, lest men mighte him here,
And caughte a-yein his firste pleyinge chere.

41

She nas not with the leste of hir stature,
But alle hir limes so wel answeringe
Weren to womanhode, that creature
Was never lasse mannish in seminge.
And eek the pure wyse of here meninge
Shewede wel, that men might in hir gesse
Honour, estat, and wommanly noblesse.

42

To Troilus right wonder wel with-alle
Gan for to lyke hir mening and hir chere,
Which somdel deynous was, for she leet falle
Hir look a lite a-side, in swich manere,
Ascaunces, "what! may I not stonden here?"
And after that hir loking gan she lighte,
That never thoughte him seen so good a sighte.

43

And of hir look in him ther gan to quiken
So greet desir, and swich affecioun,
That in his hertes botme gan to stiken
Of hir his fixe and depe impressioun:
And though he erst hadde poured up and down,
He was tho glad his hornes in to shrinke;
Unnethes wiste he how to loke or winke.

44

Lo, he that leet him-selven so konninge,
And scorned hem that loves peynes dryen,
Was ful unwar that love hadde his dwellinge
With-inne the subtille stremes of hir yën;
That sodeynly him thoughte he felte dyen,
Right with hir look, the spirit in his herte;
Blessed be love, that thus can folk convert!

45

She, this in blak, lykinge to Troilus,
Over alle thing he stood for to biholde;

Ne his desir, ne wherfor he stood thus,
He neither chere made, ne worde tolde;
But from a-fer, his maner for to holde,
On other thing his look som-tyme he caste,
And eft on hir, whyl that servyse laste.

46

And after this, not fulliche al a-whaped,
Out of the temple al esiliche he wente,
Repenting him that he hadde ever y-japed
Of loves folk, lest fully the descente
Of scorn fille on him-self; but, what he mente,
Lest it were wist on any maner syde,
His wo he gan dissimulen and hyde.

47

Whan he was fro the temple thus departed,
He streyght anoon un-to his paleys torneth,
Right with hir look thurgh-shoten and thurgh-
darted,

Al feyneth he in lust that he sojorneth;
And al his chere and speche also he borneth;
And ay, of loves servants every whyle,
Him-self to wrye, at hem he gan to smyle.

48

And seyde, "lord, so ye live al in lest,
Ye loveres! for the conningest of yow,
That serveth most ententifich and best,
Him tit as often harm ther-of as prow;
Your hyre is quit ayein, ye, god wot how!
Nought wel for wel, but scorn for good servyse;
In feith, your ordre is ruled in good wyse!

49

In noun-certeyn ben alle your observaunces,
But it a sely fewe poyntes be;
Ne no-thing asketh so grete attendaunces
As doth your lay, and that knowe alle ye;
But that is not the worste, as mote I thee;
But, tolde I yow the worste poynt, I leve,
Al seyde I sooth, ye wolden at me greve!

50

But tak this, that ye loveres ofte eschuwe,
Or elles doon of good entencioun,
Ful ofte thy lady wole it misconstrue,
And deme it harm in hir opinioun;
And yet if she, for other enchesoun,
Be wrooth, than shalt thou han a groyn anoon;
Lord! wel is him that may be of yow oon!"

51

But for al this, whan that he say his tyme,
He held his pees, non other bote him gayned;
For love bigan his fetheres so to lyme,
That wel unnethe un-to his folk he feyned
That other besye nedes him destrayned;
For wo was him, that what to doon he niste,
But bad his folk to goon wher that hem liste.

52

And whan that he in chaumbre was allone,
He doun up-on his beddes feet him sette,
And first he gan to syke, and eft to grone,
And thoughte ay on hir so, with-uten lette,
That, as he sat and wook, his spirit mette
That he hir saw a temple, and al the wyse
Right of hir loke, and gan it newe avyse.

Yet made no sign, and never a man he told
Why thus in that one station he remained,
But cunningly his purpose he maintained,
And now and then his gaze elsewhere extended,
Then back again, until the service ended.

46

And afterward, not dead but deadly smitten,
Out of the temple quietly he went,
Regretting all his jests and jibes hard bitten
At those in love, and fearing the descent
Of scorn upon himself, should he repent;
But lest this change of heart his friends might know,
With fine pretence he covered up his woe.

47

When from the temple all the folk depart,
Home to the palace he doth take his way,
Shot to the center by Love's flying
dart;

But lest his manner may his state bewray,
He cultivates a bearing light and gay,
And at Love's servants still doth jest and smile,
Driven at last to such deceit and guile.

48

"Good Lord," he says, "you lovers are well paid!
See how the cleverest one among you all,
Whose duty is most faithfully displayed,
Must bear the whips and scorns that on you fall!
You get your pay, if pay one can it call,
Not good for good, but scorn for duty done;
In faith, your order is a goodly one!

49

"How vain are all your worship and your rites,
What small return you get for prayer or plea!
Your creed demands attendance days and nights,
No other asks such assiduity.
From folly love indeed is never free;
If I should tell all love's absurdities,
You'd call them slanders and base calumnies.

50

"But lo, the things you lovers oft eschew,
Or what you do with very best intent,
Your lady will be sure to misconstrue,
And say she knows it was not kindly meant,
Whatever cause she has for discontent —
Or none; she always holds the whip in hand.
How lucky they who join your happy band!"

51

But nevertheless, when he found good occasion,
He held his peace, the best thing he could do!
For Love had clipped his wings, and no evasion
Could help his case. Yet many a tale untrue
He told his friends why he from them withdrew,
Or if they noted his abstracted airs,
He told them just to mind their own affairs.

52

When in his room at last he was alone,
He sat down at the foot-end of his bed,
And first began to sigh and then to moan,
And then, through waking visions in his head
By fancy and imagination bred,
He dreamed he saw her near the temple door,
In form and shape as she had been before.

53

And then he made a mirror of his mind,
In which he saw her features all complete,
And thought perhaps occasion he might find
For such a lady's favor to compete,
And maybe might with her approval meet,
Or win from her at least sufficient grace
To grant to him a humble servant's place.

54

And he surmised the effort were not vain,
That in her goodly service he might spend,
And love for such a one, he dared maintain,
If it were known, all persons would commend,
Especially those whose hopes on love depend—
This was at first his line of argument,
Unwarned by any sign or sad portent.

55

The art of love thus minded to pursue,
He thought he would begin first secretly,
And hide his new endeavor from all view,
That friend nor foe the least of it might see,
But leave him chance for his recovery,
Recalling, too, that love too widely known,
Yields bitter fruit, though sweetest seed be sown.

56

Yet more than this—he gave much careful thought
On what to speak and when he should hold in,
And plans for leading her to love he sought,
And thought a poem straight he would begin
Upon his love, as aid her love to win;
For now his highest hope was set and bent
On ways to love—too late now to repent!

57

The content of this song when it was sung,
As given by my author Lollius,
Except for variation in the tongue,
Was word for word the song of Troilus,
And every word he sang exactly thus,
As I shall say, and as you now may hear,
If you will grant me your attentive ear.

THE SONG OF TROILUS

58

'If love is naught, O God, why feel I so?
If love is aught, what nature then hath he?
If love is good, whence cometh all my woe?
If love is bad, it seems then strange to me,
How every torment and adversity
That comes from love, itself with joy doth link,
For still I thirst the more, the more I drink.

59

"And if I burn but with my own desire,
Whence comes my lamentation and my
 plaint?
Why should I grieve, when I with grief conspire?
And why should I weary be, yet faint?
O living death! O grief so sweet and quaint!
How can it come that love should in me grow
Except that I consent it shall be so?"

60

"If I consent, with wrong I then complain!
Behold how to and fro I merely toss,

53

Thus gan he make a mirour of his minde,
In which he saugh al hoolly hir figure;
And that he wel coude in his herte finde,
It was to him a right good aventure
To love swich oon, and if he dide his cure
To serven hir, yet mighte he falle in grace,
Or elles, for oon of hir servaunts pace.

54

Imaginge that travaille nor grame
Ne mighte, for so goodly oon, be lorn
As she, ne him for his desir ne shame,
Al were it wist, but in prys and up-born
Of alle lovers wel more than biforn;
Thus argued he in his ginninge,
Ful unavyssed of his wo cominge.

55

Thus took he purpos loves craft to suwe,
And thoughte he wolde werken prively,
First, to hyden his desir in muwe
From every wight y-born, al-outrely,
But he mighte ought recovered be therby;
Remembering him, that love to wyde y-blowe
Yelt bittre fruyt, though swete seed be sowe.

56

And over al this, yet muchel more he thoughte
What for to speke, and what to holden inne,
And what to arten hir to love he soughte,
And on a song anoon-right to beginne,
And gan loude on his sorwe for to winne;
For with good hope he gan fully assente
Criseyde for to love, and nought repente.

57

And of his song nought only the sentence,
As writ myn autour called Lollius,
But pleynly, save our tonges difference,
I dar wel sayn, in al that Troilus
Seyde in his song; lo! every word right thus
As I shal seyn; and who-so list it here,
Lo! next this vers, he may it finden here.

58

"If no love is, O god, what fele I so?
And if love is, what thing and whiche is he?
If love be good, from whennes comth my wo?
If it be wikke, a wonder thinketh me,
When every torment and adversitee
That cometh of him, may to me savory thinke;
For ay thurst I, the more that I it drinke.

59

And if that at myn owene lust I brenne,
Fro whennes cometh my wailing and my
 pleynte?
If harme agree me, wher-to pleyne I thenne?
I noot, ne why unwery that I feynte.
O quike deeth, o swete harm so queynte,
How may of thee in me swich quantitee,
But-if that I consente that it be?"

60

And if that I consente, I wrongfully
Compleyne, y-wis; thus posseed to and fro,

Al sterelees with-inne a boot am I
A-mid the see, by-twixen windes two,
That in contrarie stonden ever-mo.
Allas! what is this wonder maladye?
For hete of cold, for cold of hete, I dye."

61

And to the god of love thus seyde he
With pitous voys, "O lord, now youre is
My spirit, which that oughte youre be.
Yow thanke I, lord, that han me brought to this;
But whether goddesse or womman, y-wis,
She be, I noot, which that ye do me serve;
But as hir man I wole ay live and sterve.

62

Ye stonden in hire eyen mightily,
As in a place un-to your vertu digne;
Wherefore, lord, if my servyse or I
May lyke yow, so beth to me benigne;
For myn estat royal here I resign
In-to hir hond, and with ful humble chere
Bicome hir man, as to my lady dere."

63

In him ne deynd sparen blood royal
The fyr of love, wher-fro god me blesse,
Ne him forbar in no degree, for al
His vertu or his excellent prowesse;
But held him as his thral lowe in distresse,
And brende him so in sondry wyse ay newe,
That sixty tyme a day he loste his hewe.

64

So muche, day by day, his owene thought,
For lust to hir, gan quiken and encrese,
That every other charge he sette at nought;
For-thy ful ofte, his hote fyr to cese,
To seen hir goodly look he gan to prese;
For ther-by to ben esed wel he wende,
And ay the neer he was, the more he brende.

65

For ay the neer the fyr, the hotter is,
This, trowe I, knoweth al this companye.
But were he fer or neer, I dar seye this,
By night or day, for wysdom or folye,
His herte, which that is his brestes yē,
Was ay on hir, that fairer was to sene
Than ever was Eleyne or Polixene.

66

Eek of the day ther passed nought an houre
That to him-self a thousand tyme he seyde,
"Good goodly, to whom serve I and
laboure,

As I best can, now wolde god, Criseyde,
Ye wolden on me rewe er that I deyde!
My dere herte, allas! myn hele and hewe
And lyf is lost, but ye wole on me rewe."

67

Alle othere dredes weren from him fledde,
Bothe of th'assege and his savacioun;
Ne in him desyr noon othere fownes bredde
But arguments to this conclusioun,
That she on him wolde han compassioun,
And he to be hir man, whyl he may dure;
Lo, here his lyf, and from the deeth his cure!

Within a boat upon the wayless main,
While vexing winds each other ever cross,
And leave me rudderless to stand at loss!
Alas, what sickness strange in me doth lie,
With chill of heat and heat of cold I die!"

61

Then to the God of Love anon he spake
With plaintive voice, "Thou, Lord, who solely hast
Taken my heart, and rightly dost it take,
I thank thee, Lord, for all that now hath passed!
For now that I have found my love at last,
My homage to her shall I ne'er deny,
But as her man, I still shall live and die!

62

"In her esteem thou hold'st a lofty place,
And for thy power such is rightly thine,
And therefore, Lord, turn not from me thy face,
But be thou gracious to me and benign;
For now my royal rank I all resign
Into her hands, and humbly standing here,
Become her man, and she my lady dear!"

63

No favor to his royal rank Love showed,
For from this flame no rank can ever save,
Nor parted from his customary mode,
For all he was a knight so bold and brave,
But held him in distress as thrall and slave,
And burned him in so many ways and new,
That sixty times a day he changed his hue.

64

So much from day to day his quickening thought
Now dwelt on her, and love thereby increase,
That every usual task he set at naught,
Yet often strove to make his burning cease
By sight of her, in hope to find release
From this uneasy burden that he bore—
But ever the nearer, ever he loved the more!

65

For ever the nearer, the hotter is the fire—
And this of course you know as well as I—
But were he farther off or were he nigher,
The eye of the heart that in the breast doth lie,
By day or night, with courage low or high,
Was still on her, with whom, she was so fair,
Helen nor Polyxena could compare.

66

And of the day there passed no single hour,
But to himself a thousand times he said,
"Thou good and gracious one, whom with all
power

I serve, some pity cast upon my head,
For with affliction I am nearly dead!
Dear heart, gone is my joy and gone my life,
Unless your pity end this mortal strife!"

67

All other thoughts from out his mind had fled—
The Greeks and all his warlike reputation;
Desire new no offspring in him bred,
But reasons leading to one consummation,
That she on him would show commiseration,
And as her man, let him through life endure—
O what a life, for death, O what a cure!

68

Not Hector's nor his other brothers' feats
Of arms, in many sharp attacks well proved,
Stirred him to such like charges or retreats;
Yet nevertheless, wherever peril moved,
There was he found, and as he fiercely loved,
So fiercely fought, such wondrous deeds achieving,
They seemed to men almost beyond believing.

69

But not for hatred of the Greeks he raged,
Nor yet to aid the rescue of the town,
But mightily in arms he battle waged
For this sole end, to cast opponents down
And win his lady's favor by renown;
And so his warlike valor shone so splendid,
That fear of death on all the Greeks descended.

70

And love that made him bold, made him to sleep
The less, and still his multiplying sorrow
Such hold upon his heart and soul doth keep,
It stood revealed with each returning morrow
Upon his face, and he was fain to borrow
The name of other ill, lest men might know
It was the fire of love that changed him so.

71

He said he had a fever, was not well,
Whatever shyness makes a man to say,
But to his lady not a word could tell,
Although perhaps she guessed it anyway;
The fact remained, he got but little pay
For all his service, since she gave no thought
To what he had or what he hadn't wrought.

72

And then there fell on him another woe
From which his troubled mind could not be freed,
The fear that she might love another so
That his poor suit she would in no wise heed;
But though the thought made him at heart to bleed,
Yet never a move, for all the world to win,
To make his sorrow known durst he begin.

73

But in his moments of relief from care,
Thus to himself he often would complain,
And say, "O fool, now art thou in the snare,
Who once did jest at love and all its pain!
Now art thou caught! Now go and gnaw thy chain!
Thou once wert wont that love to reprehend
From which thyself thou canst not now defend.

74

"What will now every lover say of thee,
If this be known, when thou art out of sight,
But laugh in scorn and say, 'Lo, there goes he
Who thought he dwelt alone on wisdom's height,
And held all lovers in such low despite!
But now, thank God, his place is in the dance
Of those whom Love delayeth to advance.'

75

"But O, thou woful Troilus, would God
(Since love thou must, by thy sad destiny)
That one who knows thy woe should hold the rod
O'er thee, although no pity in her be!
But cold in love thy lady is to thee,

68

The sharpe shoures felle of armes preve,
That Ector or his othere bretheren diden,
Ne made him only ther-fore ones meve;
And yet was he, wher-so men wente or riden,
Founde oon the best, and lengest tyme abiden
Ther peril was, and dide eek such travayle
In armes, that to thenke it was mervayle.

69

But for non hate he to the Grekes hadde,
Ne also for the rescous of the toun,
Ne made him thus in armes for to madde,
But only, lo, for this conclusioun,
To lyken hir the bet for his renoun;
Fro day to day in armes so he spedde,
That alle the Grekes as the deeth him dredde.

70

And fro this forth tho refte him love his sleep,
And made his mete his foo; and eek his sorwe
Gan multiplye, that, who-so toke keep,
It shewed in his hewe, bothe eve and morwe;
Therfor a title he gan him for to borwe
Of other syknesse, lest of him men wende
That the hote fyr of love him brende.

71

And seyde, he hadde a fever and fere amis;
But how it was, certayn, can I not seye,
If that his lady understood not this,
Or feyned hir she niste, oon of the tweye;
But wel I rede that, by no maner weye,
Ne semed it [as] that she of him roughte,
Nor of his payne, or what-so-ever he thoughte.

72

But than fel to this Troilus such wo,
That he was wel neigh wood; for ay his drede
Was this, that she som wight had loved so,
That never of him she wolde have taken hede;
For whiche him thoughte he felte his herte blede.
Ne of his wo ne dorste he not biginne
To tellen it, for al this world to winne.

73

But whanne he hadde a space fro his care,
Thus to him-self ful ofte he gan to pleyne;
He sayde, "O fool, now art thou in the snare,
That whilom japedest at loves payne;
Now artow hent, now gnaw thyn owene cheyne;
Thou were ay wont eche love rephende
Of thing fro which thou canst thee nat defende.

74

What wole now every lover seyn of thee,
If this be wist, but ever in thyn absence
Laughen in scorn, and seyn, 'lo, ther gooth he,
That is the man of so gret sapience,
That held us lovers leest in reverence!
Now, thonked be god, he may goon in the daunce
Of hem that Love list feblly for to avaunce!'

75

But, O thou woful Troilus, god wolde,
Sin thou most loven thurgh thy destinee,
That thou beset were on swich oon that sholde
Knowe al thy wo, al lakked hir pitee:
But al so cold in love, towardes thee,

Thy lady is, as frost in winter mone,
And thou fordoon, as snow in fyr is sone.

76

God wolde I were aryved in the port
Of deeth, to which my sorwe wil me lede!
A, lord, to me it were a greet comfort;
Then were I quit of languissing in drede.
For by myn hidde sorwe y-blowe on brede
I shal bi-japed been a thousand tyme
More than that fool of whos folye men ryme.

77

But now help god, and ye, swete, for whom
I pleyne, y-caught, ye, never wight so faste!
O mercy, dere herte, and help me from
The deeth, for I, whyl that my lyf may laste,
More than my-self wol love yow to my laste.
And with som frendly look gladeth me, swete,
Though never more thing ye me bi-hete!"

78

This wordes and ful manye an-other to
He spak, and called ever in his compleynte
Hir name, for to tellen hir his wo,
Til neigh that he in salte teres dreynete.
Al was for nought, she herde nought his pleynte;
And whan that he bithought on that folye,
A thousand fold his wo gan multiplye.

79

Bi-wayling in his chambre thus allone,
A freend of his, that called was Pandare,
Com ones in unwar, and herde him grone,
And sey his freend in swich distresse and care:
"Allas!" quod he, "who causeth al this fare?
O mercy, god! what unhap may this mene?
Han now thus sone Grekes maad yow lene?"

80

Or hastow som remors of conscience,
And art now falle in som devocioun,
And waylest for thy sinne and thyn offence,
And hast for ferde caught attricioun?
God save hem that bi-seged han our toun,
And so can leye our jolytee on presse,
And bring our lusty folk to holinesse!"

81

These wordes seyde he for the nones alle,
That with swich thing he mighte him angry
maken,

And with an angre don his sorwe falle,
As for the tyme, and his corage awaken;
But wel he wiste, as fer as tonges spaken,
Ther nas a man of gretter hardinesse
Than he, ne more desired worthinesse.

82

"What cas," quod Troilus, "or what aventure
Hath gyded thee to see my languisschinge,
That am refus of every creature?
But for the love of god, at my preyenge,
Go henne a-way, for certes, my deyenge
Wol thee disece, and I mot nedes deye;
Ther-for go wey, ther is no more to seye.

83

But if thou wene I be thus syk for drede,
It is not so, and ther-for scorne nought;

As frost is cold beneath the winter moon;
Like snow in flame, so thou must perish soon!

76

"Would God I were arrived safe in the port
Of death, to which my sorrow will me lead!
That were for me the best and last resort,
Then were I of all fear and longing freed!
But if my hidden sorrow men should heed,
I shall be marked and mocked a great deal more
Than any fool for folly famed before!"

77

"Now help, O God, and help, my lady sweet,
I am your prisoner caught and none so fast!
Have mercy now, and help me to defeat
This death! And I, until my days are past,
With more than life will love you to the last.
Now with some kindly glance my heart restore,
Although you never grant me favor more!"

78

These words, and more, within his room he spake,
And begged his lady, in his grief profound,
Some recognition of his love to make,
And wept salt tears in which he nearly drowned—
But all in vain, for not a single sound
She heard, not being present to do so,
Which made his griefs a thousandfold to grow.

79

Lamenting in his chamber thus alone,
A friend, whose name was Pandar, happened there,
And coming in by chance, he heard him groan,
And saw his friend in great distress and care.
"What ho, my friend!" he cried, "Why this despair?
What nasty trick does fortune on you serve?
Or have the naughty Greeks got on your nerve?"

80

"Or is remorse of conscience cause of this,
And have you turned reluctant and devout,
Repenting all that you have done amiss,
For fear your guilt at last will find you out!
God curse the Greeks who lie in siege about
Our town, and turn our joy into distress
By driving jolly folk to holiness!"

81

He spoke these words, as I them to you say,
That Troilus to anger might be
stirred,

And sorrow thus to anger giving way,
To deeds of courage once again be spurred;
For well he knew, and well all men have heard,
There was among the Trojans none more bold,
Or none whom men in higher honor hold.

82

"What chance," said Troilus, "what accident,
Hath led thee here to see my wretched state,
Where I deserted and alone lament?
But for God's sake, don't linger here too late,
But get thee gone, for surely my sad fate
Will be a painful sight, since I must die!
Then go, and let me here untroubled lie.

83

"But if you think that I am sick from fear,
It is not so, and therefore scorn me naught.

There's something else that touches me more near
Than anything the Greeks as yet have wrought,
And brings on me this sad and mortal
thought.

But though I may not now to thee confide it,
Please don't be vexed, 'tis best that I should hide it."

84

Then Pandar, yearning for this hapless youth,
Replied and said, "Alas, what can this be?
Good friend, if faithful love or constant truth
Now is or ever was twixt you and me,
Then do not treat me with such cruelty!
A confidential ear I'll gladly lend,
For don't forget that Pandar is your friend.

85

"And I will gladly share with you your pain,
If it turn out I can no comfort bring;
For 'tis a friend's right, please let me explain,
To share in woful as in joyful things.
Through true or false report, I still shall cling
To you in faith forever firm and fast;
So tell your woe, for tell you must at last."

86

Troilus heaved a deep and mournful sigh,
And said to him, "Perhaps it may be best
If with your friendly wish I should comply,
And tear my secret from my aching breast,
Though well I know you can bring me no rest.
But lest you think I have no trust in thee,
I'll tell thee, friend, just how it stands with me.

87

"Lo, Love, against which he who most defendeth
Himself, the more thereby his effort faileth,
This Love so far his rule o'er me extendeth,
That now my heart to death a straight course saileth!
Love-longing over me so deep prevaileth,
That here to die for Love were greater joy
Than be both King of Greece and King of Troy.

88

"In what I've said, methinks to you I've told
More than enough about my cause of woe.
But for the love of God, my care so cold,
Conceal it well! For what you only know,
If further spread, great harms might after grow.
Now go, and live in joy and happiness,
And let me die, abandoned to distress."

89

"To hide this from me was unkindly done,"
Pandar replied, "and it was most unwise,
For maybe you have set your heart on one
Of whom I might with profit you advise."
"Maybe indeed," cried he in great surprise,
"In love you never had the slightest chance,
How can you then another's love advance?"

90

"Now listen, Troilus," replied his friend,
"Perhaps I am a fool, yet it is so,
That folly oft can helpful counsel lend,
Whereby the wise the better way may know.
For I myself have seen a blind man go,
Where he would fall who sees both far and wide;
Sometimes a fool can be the safest guide.

Ther is a-nother thing I take of hede
Wel more than ought the Grekes han y-wrought,
Which cause is of my deeth, for sorwe and
thought.

But though that I now telle thee it ne leste,
Be thou nought wrooth, I hyde it for the beste."

84

This Pandare, that neigh malt for wo and routhe,
Ful often seyde, "allas! what may this be?
Now freend," quod he, "if ever love or trouthe
Hath been, or is, bi-twixen thee and me,
Ne do thou never swiche a crueltee
To hyde fro thy freend so greet a care;
Wostow nought wel that it am I, Pandare?

85

I wole parten with thee al thy payne,
If it be so I do thee no comfort,
As it is freendes right, sooth for to seyne,
To entreparten wo, as glad desport.
I have, and shal, for trewe or fals report,
In wrong and right y-loved thee al my lyve;
Hyd not thy wo fro me, but telle it blyve."

86

Then gan this sorwful Troilus to syke,
And seyde him thus, "god leve it be my beste
To telle it thee; for, sith it may thee lyke,
Yet wole I telle it, though myn herte breste;
And wel wot I thou mayst do me no reste.
But lest thow deme I truste not to thee,
Now herkne, freend, for thus it stant with me.

87

Love, a-yeins the which who-so defendeth
Him-selven most, him alder-lest avayleth,
With desespeir so sorwfully me offendeth,
That streyght un-to the deeth myn herte sayleth.
Ther-to desyr so brenningly me assayleth,
That to ben slayn it were a gretter joye
To me than king of Grece been and Troye!

88

Suffiseth this, my fulle freend Pandare,
That I have seyde, for now wostow my wo;
And for the love of god, my colde care
So hyd it wel, I tele it never to mo;
For harmes mighte folwen, mo than two,
If it were wist; but be thou in gladnesse,
And lat me sterve, unknowe, of my distresse."

89

"How hastow thus unkindly and longe
Hid this fro me, thou fool?" quod Pandarus;
"Paraunter thou might after swich oon longe,
That myn avys anon may helpen us."
"This were a wonder thing," quod Troilus,
"Thou coudest never in love thy-selven wisse;
How devel maystow bringen me to blisse?"

90

"Ye, Troilus, now herke," quod Pandare,
"Though I be nyce; it happeth ofte so,
That oon that exces doth ful yvele fare
By good counseyl can kepe his freend ther-fro.
I have my-self eek seyn a blind man go
Ther-as he fel that coude loke wyde;
A fool may eek a wys man ofte gyde.

91

A whetston is no kerving instrument,
And yet it maketh sharpe kerving-tolis.
And ther thou woost that I have ought miswent,
Eschewe thou that, for swich thing to thee scole is;
Thus ofte wyse men ben war by folis.
If thou do so, thy wit is wel biwared;
By his contrarie is every thing declared.

92

For how might ever sweetnesse have be knowe
To him that never tasted bitterness?
Ne no man may be inly glad, I trowe,
That never was in sorwe or som distresse;
Eek whyt by blak, by shame eek worthinesse,
Ech set by other, more for other semeth;
As men may see; and so the wyse it demeth.

93

Sith thus of two contraries is a lore,
I, that have in love so ofte assayed
Grevauces, oughte conne, and wel the more
Counsayllen thee of that thou art amayed.
Eek thee ne oughte nat ben yvel apayed,
Though I desyre with thee for to bere
Thyn hevry charge; it shal the lasse dere.

94

I woot wel that it fareth thus by me
As to thy brother Parys an herdesse,
Which that y-cleped was Oenone,
Wroot in a compleynt of hir hevynesse:
Ye sey the lettre that she wroot, y gesse?"
"Nay, never yet, y-wis," quod Troilus.
"Now," quod Pandare, "herkneith; it was thus.—

95

'Phebus, that first fond art of medicyne,'
Quod she, 'and coude in every wightes care
Remede and reed, by herbes he knew fyne,
Yet to him-self his conninge was ful bare;
For love hadde him so bounden in a snare,
Al for the daughter of the kinge Admete,
That al his craft ne coude his sorwe bete.'—

96

Right so fare I, unhappily for me;
I love oon best, and that me smerteth sore;
And yet, paraunter, can I rede thee,
And not my-self; reprove me no more.
I have no cause, I woot wel, for to sore
As doth an hawk that listeth for to pleye,
But to thyn help yet somewhat can I seye.

97

And of o thing right siker maystow be,
That certayn, for to deyen in the peyne,
That I shal never-mo discoveren thee;
Ne, by my trouthe, I kepe nat restreynce
Thee fro thy love, thogh that it were Eleyne,
That is thy brotheres wyf, if ich it wiste;
Be what she be, and love hir as thee liste.

98

Therefore, as freend fullich in me assure,
And tel me plat what is thyn enchesoun,
And final cause of wo that ye endure;
For douteth no-thing, myn entencioun
Nis nought to yow of reprehencioun

91

"A whetstone is no carving instrument,
And yet it maketh sharp the carving tool;
And if you see my efforts wrongly spent,
Eschew that course and learn out of my school;
For thus the wise may profit by the fool,
And edge his wit, and grow more keen and wary,
For wisdom shines opposed to its contrary.

92

"For how might sweetness ever have been known
To him who never tasted bitterness?
Felicity exists for those alone
Who first have suffered sorrow and distress;
Thus white by black, honor by shame's excess,
More brightly shines by what the other seems,
As all men see and as the wise man deems.

93

"By opposites does one in wisdom grow,
And though I have in love vain effort made,
Then all the better I thereby should know
To guide thee on thy path when thou hast strayed.
Spurn not with scorn, therefore, my proffered aid,
For I desire nothing but to share
Thy grief, and make it easier to bear.

94

"Indeed I am a quite good parallel
To what Oenone once, a shepherdess,
To your own brother Paris said so well,
Writing in grief of heart and heaviness;
You've seen the letter that she wrote, I guess?"
"No, that I haven't," answered Troilus.
"Then listen," Pandar said, "for it goes thus.

95

"'Excelling in the art of medicine,
Phoebus could rightly find for each disease
A cure, through herbs that he was well versed in;
But to himself his skill could bring no ease,
When love on him did violently seize
For old Admetus' daughter, king of Greece,
Nor all his art could bid his sorrows cease.'

96

"So goes it now, unhappily, with me.
I love in vain, that's why my heart is sore,
And yet it may be I can counsel thee
And not myself. Reprove me now no more;
I have no cause, I know, on high to soar,
As doth a hawk, when he would sport and play,
But still, that doesn't mean I've naught to say.

97

"And one thing you may count a certainty,
I'd rather die in great and mortal pain,
Than breathe a word of what you say to me;
You need not fear that I would you restrain,
Though it were Helen's love you sought to gain,
Your brother's wife; whatever be her name,
For me I'll let you love her all the same.

98

"In my good friendship you can rest secure,
If to me you will only plainly mention
The source of all the grief that you endure;
For do not think I have the least intention
To speak to you by way of reprehension

In this affair; for no one can prevent
A man from loving, ere his love is spent.

99

"That both of these are vices is well seen—
To trust all men or all men disbelieve;
But no vice enters in the golden mean.
'Tis right the word of some men to receive,
And for this cause, it should not thee aggrieve
To take me fully in thy confidence,
For I mean only good and no offence.

100

"Solomon saith, 'Take heed who stands alone,
For if he falls, there's none to help him rise.'
But since thou hast a friend, to him make known
Thy grief, for we can better ways devise
To win thy love in more effective wise
Than lie and weep, like Niobe the queen,
Whose tears remain in marble to be seen.

101

"So now give o'er this lachrymose distress,
Of things that lighten grief now let us speak,
For thus thy time of sorrow may seem less.
Take not delight in woe thy woe to seek,
For fools alone sorrow with sorrow eke,
Who when they fall in some mishap and grief,
Neglect to look elsewhere for their relief.

102

"Men say that 'Misery loves company,'
And this is by no means a saying vain,
But one in which we both ought to agree,
For both of us with right on love complain.
I am so full of sorrow, I maintain
Another single drop could find no place
To sit on me, because there is no space.

103

"I take it thou art not afraid of me,
Lest of thy lady I should thee beguile.
You know yourself I am not fancy free,
But serve a lady dear for this long while;
And since you need fear neither trick nor wile,
And if your trust and confidence I hold,
Tell me as much as I to you have told."

104

Troilus answered not a single word,
And still as death he lay, though could but hear,
Yet afterward he sighed, and then he stirred,
Which showed that he had lent attentive ear,
And then cast up his eyes, so that great fear
Had Pandar, lest in sudden frenzy falling,
His soul might flit away beyond recalling.

105

"Wake up," he cried, with voice both loud and sharp,
"Hast thou in sleep by lethargy been struck?
Or art thou like the ass that hears a harp,
And hears the sound, when men the harp-strings
pluck,
But from that sound no melody can suck
His heart to gladden in the very least,
Because he is a dull and brutish beast?"

106

Pandar from further speech with that refrained,
But not a word would Troilus reply,

To speke as now, for no wight may bireve
A man to love, til that him list to leve.

99

And witeth wel, that bothe two ben vyces,
Mistrusten alle, or elles alle leve;
But wel I woot, the mene of it no vyce is,
For for to trusten sum wight is a preve
Of trouthe, and for-thy wolde I fayn remeve
Thy wrong conceyte, and do thee som wight triste,
Thy wo to telle; and tel me, if thee liste.

100

The wyse seyth, 'wo him that is allone,
For, and he falle, he hath noon help to ryse';
And sith thou hast a felawe, tel thy mone;
For this nis not, certeyn, the nexte wyse
To winnen love, as techen us the wyse,
To walwe and wepe as Niobe the quene,
Whos teres yet in marbel been y-sene.

101

Lat be thy weping and thy drierinesse,
And lat us lissen wo with other speche;
So may thy woful tyme seme lesse.
Delyte not in wo thy wo to seche,
As doon thise foles that hir sorwes eche
With sorwe, whan they han misaventure,
And listen nought to seche hem other cure.

102

Men seyn, 'to wrecche is consolacioun
To have an-other felawe in his peyne';
That oughte wel ben our opinioun,
For, bothe thou and I, of love we pleyne;
So ful of sorwe am I, soth for to seyne,
That certeynly no more harde grace
May sitte on me, for-why ther is no space.

103

If god wole thou art not agast of me,
Lest I wolde of thy lady thee bigyle,
Thow wost thy-self whom that I love, pardee,
As I best can, gon sithen longe whyle.
And sith thou wost I do it for no wyle,
And sith I am he that thou tristest most,
Tel me sumwhat, sin al my wo thou wost."

104

Yet Troilus, for al this, no word seyde,
But longe he lay as stille as he ded were;
And after this with sykinge he abreyde,
And to Pandarus voys he lente his ere,
And up his eyen caste he, that in fere
Was Pandarus, lest that in frenesye
He sholde falle, or elles sone dye:

105

And cryde "a-wake" ful wonderly and sharpe;
"What? slombrestow as in a lytargye?
Or artow lyk an asse to the harpe,
That hereth soun, whan men the strenges
plye,
But in his minde of that no melodye
May sinken, him to glade, for that he
So dul is of his bestialitee?"

106

And with that Pandare of his wordes stente;
But Troilus yet him no word answerde,

For why to telle nas not his entente
To never no man, for whom that he so ferde.
For it is seyde, "man maketh ofte a yerde
With which the maker is him-self y-beten
In sondry maner," as thise wyse treten,

107

And namely, in his counseyl tellinge
That toucheth love that oughte be secree;
For of him-self it wolde y-nough out-springe,
But-if that it the bet governed be.
Eek som-tyme it is craft to seme flee
Fro thing which in effect men hunte faste;
Al this gan Troilus in his herte caste.

108

But nathelees, whan he had herd him crye
"Awake!" he gan to syke wonder sore,
And seyde, "freend, though that I stille lye,
I am not deef; now pees, and cry no more;
For I have herd thy wordes and thy lore;
But suffre me my mischef to biwayle,
For thy proverbes may me nought avayle.

109

Nor other cure canstow noon for me.
Eek I nil not be cured, I wol deye;
What knowe I of the quene Niobe?
Lat be thyne olde ensaumples, I thee preye."
"No," quod tho Pandarus, "therefore I seye,
Swich is delyt of foles to biwepe
Hir wo, but seken bote they ne kepe.

110

Now knowe I that ther reson in thee fayleth.
But tel me, if I wiste what she were
For whom that thee al this misaunter ayleth,
Dorstestow that I tolde hir in hir ere
Thy wo, sith thou darst not thy-self for fere,
And hir bisoughte on thee to han som routhe?"
"Why, nay," quod he, "by god and by my trouthe!"

111

"What? not as bisily," quod Pandarus,
"As though myn owene lyf lay on this nede?"
"No, certes, brother," quod this Troilus.
"And why?"—"For that thou sholdest never
spede."

"Wostow that wel?"—"Ye, that is out of drede,"
Quod Troilus, "for al that ever ye conne,
She nil to noon swich wrecche as I be wonne."

112

Quod Pandarus, "allas! what may this be,
That thou despayred art thus causelees?
What? liveth not thy lady? *benedicite!*
How wostow so that thou art gracelees?
Swich yvel is not alwey botelees.
Why, put not impossible thus thy cure,
Sin thing to come is ofte in aventure.

113

I graunte wel that thou endurest wo
As sharp as doth he, Ticius, in helle,
Whos stomak foules tyren ever-mo
That highte volturis, as bokes telle.
But I may not endure that thou dwelle
In so unskiful an opinioun
That of thy wo is no curacioun.

For never once the thought he entertained
To tell for whom he thus must weep and sigh;
For it is said, "Man makes the stick whereby
The maker himself is beaten in his turn";
This bit of wisdom from the wise we learn.

107

And specially he planned few confidences
In love, for love should grow in secrecy,
Since of itself love breaks through all defences,
If one should fail to guard it zealously.
And sometimes it is art to seem to flee
The thing which in effect one is pursuing;
Such thoughts was Troilus in mind reviewing,

108

When thus so loudly he heard Pandar cry
"Wake up!"; then he began to sigh full sore,
And said, "Good friend, although so still I lie,
I am not deaf! Now peace, and say no more,
For I have heard your wisdom and your lore.
Leave me in peace my mishap to bewail,
For all your proverbs may me naught avail.

109

"You cannot find a remedy for me;
Besides I want no cure. I want to die!
And what care I for your queen Niobe?
You've told enough of old wives' tales, say I."
"Well, then," said Pandar, "let me but reply,
That fools alone their woes and griefs enjoy
And shun the remedies they might employ.

110

"It seems to me you must have lost your reason!
But tell me this, if I her name but knew,
In all good faith and with no taint of treason,
Durst I then tell her in her ear for you,
What you yourself have not the nerve to do,
And beg of her some little sign to show?"
"No, no," cried Troilus, "I tell you no!"

111

"What," said Pandar, "not even if I tried
As though it were my own affair and need?"
"Most surely not" said Troilus replied.
"But why?" "Because you never could
succeed."

"How do you know?" "I know quite well indeed,"
Said Troilus, "when all is said and done,
She will by no such wretch as I be won."

112

"O well," said Pandar, "it may quite well be,
That without cause you are thus in despair.
For look, your lady is not dead, is she?
How can you tell beforehand how you'll fare?
Such evils are not oft beyond repair!
And why must you the worst always suppose,
Although the outcome you nor no one knows?

113

"I grant you well your grief is quite as sore
And sharp as that of Tityos in hell,
Whose heart continually the vultures tore,
According to the stories old books tell;
But still I can't permit you thus to dwell
Under the vain and baseless imputation
You've caught an ill for which there's no salvation.

114

"If you refuse to tell, just for faint heart,
And for your sloth and foolish wilfulness,
And will no slightest hint to me impart,
And why I should not help in your distress
You will not give a reason more or less,
But supine on your bed yourself you stretch—
I ask, what woman could love such a wretch?"

115

"And how can she account then for your death,
If you thus die, and she knows nothing why,
Except for fear you breathed your final breath
Because the Greeks about our city lie?
What figure will you cut in the world's eye?
Then she and all will say in scornful tones,
'The wretch is dead, the devil have his bones.'

116

"You may here weep alone and pray and kneel,
But if the one you love of this knows naught,
How can she make return that you can feel—
Unknown, unkissed and lost, who is unsought!
Lo, many a man his love hath dearly bought,
And twenty years opined were not too much
To win the right his lady's lips to touch.

117

"But should he therefore fall in dark despair,
Or as a recreant himself demean,
Or slay himself, because his lady's fair?
No, no, let love be ever fresh and green,
Let each forever cherish his heart's queen,
And think it is love's guerdon but to serve,
A thousandfold more than he doth deserve."

118

To these wise words then Troilus took heed,
And saw the state of mind that he was in,
And thought what Pandar said was true indeed,
That just to die would not his lady win,
But would be both unmanly and a sin,
And useless, too, in every jot and tittle,
Since of his woe she knew still less than little.

119

At this sad thought, he sighed both loud and long,
And said, "Alas, what's best for me to do?"
And Pandar answered him, "You can't go wrong
In telling me your story whole and true;
I give my word, within a day or two,
I'll bring you news, the best you ever got,
Or have me drawn and quartered on the spot."

120

"That's what you say," cried Troilus, "alas,
But saying so, that will not make it so!
For my affairs have come to such a pass
That I perceive that Fortune is my foe,
And all who up and down this wide world go,
Must take whatever Fortune shall decree,
For as she will, she plays with bound and free."

121

"So then," said Pandar, "Fortune is to blame
For your own feelings! Now at last I see!
But don't you know that Fortune is the same
To all alive, in varying degree?
But of one comfort you have certainty,

114

But ones niltow, for thy coward herte,
And for thyn ire and folish wilfulness,
For wantrust, tellen of thy sorwes smerte,
Ne to thyn owene help do businesse
As muche as speke a resoun more or lesse,
But lyst as he that list of no-thing recche.
What womman coude love swich a wrecche?"

115

What may she demen other of thy deeth,
If thou thus deye, and she not why it is,
But that for fere is yolden up thy breeth,
For Grekes han biseged us, y-wis?
Lord, which a thank than shaltow han of this!
Thus wol she seyn, and al the toun at ones,
'The wrecche is deed, the devel have his bones!'

116

Thou mayst allone here wepe and crye and knele;
But, love a woman that she woot it nought,
And she wol quyte that thou shalt not fele;
Unknowe, unkist, and lost that is unsought.
What! many a man hath love ful dere y-bought
Twenty winter that his lady wiste,
That never yet his lady mouth he kiste.

117

What? shulde he therfor fallen in despeyr,
Or be recreant for his owene tene,
Or sleen him-self, al be his lady fayr?
Nay, nay, but ever in oon be fresh and grene
To serve and love his dere hertes quene,
And thenke it is a guerdoun hir to serve
A thousand-fold more than he can deserve."

118

And of that word took hede Troilus,
And thoughte anon what folye he was inne,
And how that sooth him seyde Pandarus,
That for to sleen him-self mighte he not winne,
But bothe doon unmanhod and a sinne,
And of his deeth his lady nought to wyte;
For of his wo, god woot, she knew ful lyte.

119

And with that thought he gan ful sore syke,
And seyde, "allas! what is me best to do?"
To whom Pandare answerde, "if thee lyke,
The best is that thou telle me thy wo;
And have my trouthe, but thou it finde so,
I be thy bote, or that it be ful longe,
To peces do me drawe, and sithen honge!"

120

"Ye, so thou seyst," quod Troilus tho, "allas!
But, god wot, it is not the rather so;
Ful hard were it to helpen in this cas,
For wel finde I that Fortune is my fo,
Ne alle the men that ryden conne or go
May of hir cruel wheel the harm withstonde;
For, as hir list, she playeth with free and bonde."

121

Quod Pandarus, "than blamestow Fortune
For thou art wrooth, ye, now at erst I see;
Wostow nat wel that Fortune is commune
To every maner wight in som degree?
And yet thou hast this comfort, lo, pardee!

That, as hir joyes moten over-goon,
So mote hir sorwes passen everichoon.

122

For if hir wheel stinte any-thing to torne,
Than cessed she Fortune anon to be:
Now, sith hir wheel by no wey may sojorne,
What wostow if hir mutabiltee
Right as thy-selven list, wol doon by thee,
Or that she be not fer fro thyn helpinge?
Paraunter, thou hast cause for to singe!

123

And therfor wostow what I thee beseche?
Lat be thy wo and turning to the grounde;
For who-so list have helping of his leche,
To him bihoveth first unwrye his wounde.
To Cerberus in helle ay be I bounde,
Were it for my suster, al thy sorwe,
By my wil, she sholde al be thyn to-morwe.

124

Loke up, I seye, and tel me what she is
Anoon, that I may goon aboute thy nede;
Knowe ich hir ought? for my love, tel me this;
Than wolde I hopen rather for to spede."
Tho gan the veyne of Troilus to blede,
For he was hit, and wex al reed for shame;
"A ha!" quod Pandare, "here biginneth game!"

125

And with that word he gan him for to shake,
And seyde, "theef, thou shalt hir name telle."
But tho gan sely Troilus for to quake
As though men sholde han lad him in-to helle,
And seyde, "allas! of al my wo the welle,
Than is my swete fo called Criseyde!"
And wel nigh with the word for fere he deyde.

126

And whan that Pandare herde hir name nevene,
Lord, he was glad, and seyde, "freend so dere,
Now fare a-right, for Joves name in hevене,
Love hath biset thee wel, be of good chere;
For of good name and wysdom and manere
She hath y-nough, and eek of gentillesse;
If she be fayr, thow wost thy-self, I gesse.

127

Ne I never saw a more bounteous
Of hir estat, ne a gladder, ne of speche
A freendlier, ne a more gracious
For to do wel, ne lasse hadde nede to seche
What for to doon; and al this bet to eche,
In honour, to as fer as she may stretche,
A kinges herte semeth by hires a wrecche.

128

And for-thy loke of good comfort thou be;
For certainly, the firste poynt is this
Of noble corage and wel ordeynè,
A man to have pees with him-self, y-wis;
So oughtest thou, for nought but good it is
To loven wel, and in a worthy place;
Thee oughte not to clepe it hap, but grace.

129

And also thenk, and ther-with glade thee,
That sith thy lady vertuous is al,
So folweth it that ther is some pitee

For as all joys on earth are short and brief,
So time will bring for sorrow its relief.

122

"Because if Fortune's wheel should cease to turn,
Then Fortune she at once no more would be;
And since in no fixed place she may sojourn,
It may chance, by mere mutability,
Such good luck she hath now in store for thee,
And such a boon to thee she soon will bring,
That for the joy of it, thy heart shall sing.

123

"And therefore do you know what I advise?
Look up! Don't keep your eyes upon the ground!
The sick must first unto the doctor's eyes
Reveal in what respect he is unsound.
To Cerberus in hell may I be bound,
If my own sister were thy cause of sorrow,
For all of me, she should be thine tomorrow.

124

"If I had something clear on which to go,
I'd surely find the remedy you need.
At least say this, your lady do I know?
For if I do, the fight is on indeed!"
Then Troilus at heart began to bleed,
For he was hit, and blushed with rosy shame;
"Aha!" cried Pandar, "now I smell the game!"

125

And then his victim he began to shake,
And said, "You thief, her name you've got to tell!"
Then hapless Troilus, with many a quake,
As though his soul were being led to hell,
Murmured, "Of all my woe the source and well
Is Cressida—and now you know her name!"
And with these words, he almost died for shame.

126

When Pandar heard who was his lady love,
Then he was glad and said, "My friend so dear,
Now all goes well, for by great Jove above,
You're lucky in your choice. Be of good cheer!
Of fame, wisdom and virtue never fear
She hath enough, and also gentle ways;
Her beauty you know, and I need not to praise.

127

"She hath besides a free and open hand
With all she owns, is affable in speech,
And how to do things well doth understand,
Yet never doth in doing overreach,
But gracious are her manners all and each.
Such truth and honor in her heart abide,
A king's heart seems a poor thing there beside.

128

"Good reason now you have to be content,
For half the battle is already gained
When courage dull inaction doth prevent,
And peace of heart within has been attained;
For love with every good is deep ingrained
When it is set upon a worthy place,
It is no evil then, but heaven's grace.

129

"You have this reason to be glad besides,
That since your lady hath these virtues all,
Then pity, also, in her heart resides,

Among these other things in general,
But take thou heed, whatever may befall,
That thou dishonor not an honest name,
For virtue never lends itself to shame.

130

"However, let us not be too austere,
For thou hast set thy heart in right good place;
But truth to tell, I always had a fear
That Love to you would never show his face.
And know you why? Because such vile disgrace
You heaped on Love, and Love did'st even call
'Saint Idiot, the lord of lovers alle.'

131

"How often did you crack a foolish jest,
And say, 'Love's servants truly I disown,
For all are fools and God's apes at the best,
And some will munch their dreary food alone,
Lying abed with many a sigh and moan?'
White fever, you said, attacks the burning lover,
And often prayed such never might recover;

132

"And some, you said, lie shivering with the cold,
And on them turned your mockery full oft,
And laughed at those who fancied stories told
Of sleepless nights when they were resting soft.
With boasts, you said, they held their heads
aloft,

But for all that, must bend low at the last,
And many such like jests on love you passed.

133

"And you maintained that for the greater part,
All lovers loved but in a general way,
Because they thought it was the safer art
A dozen loves at one time to essay.
Now I might make such jests on you today,
But won't, because I'm quite convinced in mind
That you'll not be a lover of that kind.

134

"Now beat thy breast, and pray to God above,
'Thy mercy, Lord! For now I do repent
Of all I've said, and deeply now I love!'
Pray thus, that thus the God may now relent!"
"Ah, Lord," cried Troilus, "hear my lament,
Who pray to thee my jesting to forgive,
As I shall jest no more the while I live!"

135

"Well prayed," quoth Pandar. "Now it can be
said
Thou hast the God of Love in all appeased,
And since thou many a bitter tear hast shed,
And spoken things wherewith thy God is pleased,
I feel quite sure thou shalt in all be eased,
And she from whom arises all thy woe,
Through her thou shalt still further comfort know.

136

"For that same ground that bears the useless weed,
Bears also wholesome herbs, and quite as oft;
And where the rough and stinging nettles breed,
Waxes the rose, so sweet and smooth and soft;
And next the valley, lifts the hill aloft,
And after night, then comes the glad tomorrow,
And so is joy the after end of sorrow.

Amonges alle thise othere in general;
And for-ty see that thou, in special,
Requere nought that is ayein hir name;
For vertue streccheth not him-self to shame.

130

But wel is me that ever I was born,
That thou biset art in so good a place;
For by my trouthe, in love I dorste have sworn,
Thee sholde never han tid thus fayr a grace;
And wostow why? for thou were wont to chace
At love in scorn, and for despyt him calle
'Seynt Idiot, lord of thise foles alle.'

131

How often hastow maad thy nyce japes,
And seyde, that loves servants everichone
Of nyceete ben verray goddes apes;
And some wolde monche hir mete alone,
Ligging a-bedde, and make hem for to grone;
And som, thou seydest, hadde a blaunche fevere,
And preydest god he sholde never kevere!

132

And some of hem toke on hem, for the colde,
More than y-nough, so seydestow ful ofte;
And some han feyned ofte tyme, and tolde
How that they wake, whan they slepen softe;
And thus they wolde han brought hem-self
a-lofte,

And nathelees were under at the laste;
Thus seydestow, and japedest ful faste.

133

Yet seydestow, that, for the more part,
These lovers wolden speke in general,
And thoughten that it was a siker art,
For fayling, for to assayen over-al.
Now may I jape of thee, if that I shal!
But nathelees, though that I sholde deye,
That thou art noon of tho, that dorste I seye.

134

Now beet thy brest, and sey to god of love,
'Thy grace, lord! for now I me repente
If I mis spak, for now my-self I love':
Thus sey with al thyn herte in good entente."
Quod Troilus, "a! lord! I me consente,
And pray to thee my japes thou foryive,
And I shal never-more why! I live."

135

"Thow seyst wel," quod Pandare, "and now I
hope
That thou the goddes wratthe hast al apesed;
And sithen thou hast wepen many a drope,
And seyde swich thing wher-with thy god is plesed,
Now wolde never god but thou were esed;
And think wel, she of whom rist al thy wo
Here-after may thy comfort been al-so.

136

For tilke ground, that bereth the wedes wikke,
Bereth eek thise holsom herbes, as ful ofte
Next the foule netle, rough and thikke,
The rose waxeth swote and smothe and softe;
And next the valey is the hil a-lofte;
And next the derke night the glade morwe;
And also joye is next the fyn of sorwe.

137

Now loke that atempre be thy brydel,
And, for the beste, ay suffre to the tyde,
Or elles al our labour is on ydel;
He hasteth wel that wysly can abyde;
Be diligent, and trewe, and ay wel hyde.
Be lusty, free, persevere in thy servyse,
And al is wel, if thou werke in this wyse.

138

But he that parted is in every place
Is no-wher hool, as writen clerkes wyse;
What wonder is, though swich oon have no grace?
Eek wostow how it fareth of som servyse?
As plaunte a tre or herbe, in sondry wyse,
And on the morwe pulle it up as blyve,
No wonder is, though it may never thryve.

139

And sith that god of love hath thee bistowed
In place digne un-to thy worthinesse,
Stand faste, for to good port hastow rowed;
And of thy-self, for any hevinesse,
Hope alwey wel; for, but-if drerinesse
Or over-haste our bothe labour shende,
I hope of this to maken a good ende.

140

And wostow why I am the lasse afered
Of this matere with my nece trete?
For this have I herd seyde of wyse y-lered,
'Was never man ne woman yet bigete
That was unapt to suffren loves hete
Celestial, or elles love of kinde;
For-ty som grace I hope in hir to finde.

141

And for to speke of hir in special,
Hir beautee to bithinken and hir youthe,
It sit hir nought to be celestial
As yet, though that hir liste bothe and couthe;
But trewely, it sete hir wel right nouthe
A worthy knight to loven and cheryce,
And but she do, I holde it for a vyce.

142

Wherfore I am, and wol be, ay redy
To peyne me to do yow this servyse;
For bothe yow to plesse thus hope I
Her-afterward; for ye beth bothe wyse,
And conne it counseyl kepe in swich a wyse,
That no man shal the wyser of it be;
And so we may be gladed alle three.

143

And, by my trouthe, I have right now of thee
A good conceyt in my wit, as I gesse,
And what it is, I wol now that thou see.
I thenke, sith that love, of his goodnesse,
Hath thee converted out of wikkednesse,
That thou shalt be the beste post, I leve,
Of al his lay, and most his foos to-greve.

144

Ensample why, see now these wyse clerkes,
That erren aldermost a-yein a lawe,
And ben converted from hir wikked werkes
Thorough grace of god, that list hem to him drawe,
Than arn they folk that han most god in awe,

137

"But hold with nicely tempered hand thy bridle,
And think that all things have their proper tide,
Or else thy labor is but vain and idle;
He makes most speed who can his time abide,
Who planneth well before he doth decide;
Be strong and free, and if you persevere,
All will be well, as I have made it clear.

138

"A man divided in a dozen places
Is nowhere whole, philosophy doth show,
For his own labor he himself effaces.
Do you know how this is? Why, just as though
You plant a tree or herb where it should grow,
And on the morrow pull it up alive—
No wonder if it thus should never thrive.

139

"And since the God of Love hath love bestowed
On thee full worthy of thy worthiness,
Stand fast, for to a good port hast thou rowed.
Let not thy hope and courage e'er grow less,
For only some great lack or some excess,
Or overhaste, can make our labor vain,
Whereby our happy end we shall attain.

140

"And know you why I am so well inclined
In this affair with my dear niece to treat?
Because 'tis sad, with truth, of all mankind,
That never one dwelt on this earthly seat
But he must feel in some degree the heat
Of love, or earthly or celestial,
For love is planted in us one and all.

141

"As for this lady we have now in mind,
By reason of her beauty and her youth,
Celestial love is not so well designed,
Although she could love in that way forsooth;
But now it seems to me, to tell the truth,
She ought to love some good and worthy knight,
If she would do what's suitable and right.

142

"Therefore I am and will be ready still
To help you in whatever way I can,
For what I do hereafter surely will
Give pleasure to you both; and all our plan
We can so closely hide that never a man
Shall be the wiser in the least degree,
And so in fact, we shall be glad all three.

143

"And now there comes to me a right good thought,
And that it's good I'm sure you will confess
When all my meaning you have fully caught.
I think that since Love hath, in due process,
Converted thee from all thy wickedness,
That thou shalt be a pillar and a post
In his support, and grieve his foes the most.

144

"To prove my point, recall how those great clerks
Who most have erred against a certain law,
And are converted from their wicked works
By God's good grace that doth them to him draw,
Are just the ones who hold God most in awe,

And grow into his most believing band,
For they know best all error to withstand."

145
To all this preaching Troilus assented,
Accepting likewise Pandar's proffered aid;
Then waned the woes by which he'd been
tormented,

But hotter waxed his love; and then he made
Reply, with joyful heart, but manner staid,
"Now, blessed Venus, let me never die,
Till all thy words, O Pandar, fructify!"

146
"But friend, how shall my pain grow less acute
Till this is done? And also tell me first,
What thou wilt say of me and of my suit,
For I can look for nothing but the worst,
And all my hopes will like a bubble burst,
Since coming from her uncle, much I fear
That she to nothing of the sort will hear."

147
"Now, then," said Pandar, "what the need to worry
For fear the man might fall from out the moon!
Good Lord, why all this foolish fuss and hurry!
Your time will come, not right away, but soon.
I beg, for God's sake, grant me this one boon—
Let me alone! I know what's best to do!"
"All right," he said, "I leave it all to you."

148
"But listen, Pandar, one word ere you go!
Don't think that towards my lady I desire
The slightest impropriety to show,
Or to her harm in any way conspire;
For I would rather bear my sorrows dire
Than have her think it was not understood,
That all I mean is meant for her own good."

149
"And I your backer," Pandar laughed, "O fie!
No need to tell me this, for all say so!
I only wish that she were standing nigh
And hearing all you say. But I must go.
Adieu, be glad and see how things will grow!
In this affair, I'll take the strain and stress,
And yours be all the joy of my success."

150
Then Troilus began to swell and boast,
A friendly arm o'er Pandar's shoulders cast;
"A fig," he cried, "for all the Grecian host,
For God will help us Trojans to the last!
And here I swear, that ere my days are past,
Many a Greek through me shall suffer sore—
But such like boasting henceforth I deplore!"

151
"Now, Pandar, more than this I cannot say—
Be thou my guide, my confidant, my all,
My life and death both in thy hands I lay!
Help now!" "Yes, not in vain on me you call."
"May God reward you, let what may befall,
For all my fate on you doth now depend,
To make me live or meet my fatal end."

152
But Pandar, eager now his friend to serve,
To him in few and hasty words replied:

And strengest-feythed been, I understonde,
And conne an error alder-best withstonde."

145
Whan Troilus had herd Pandare assented
To been his help in loving of Criseyde,
Wex of his wo, as who seyth,
untormented,
But hotter wex his love, and thus he seyde,
With sobre chere, al-though his herte pleyde,
"Now blisful Venus helpe, er that I sterve,
Of thee, Pandare, I may som thank deserve."

146
But, dere frend, how shal myn wo ben lesse
Til this be doon? and goode, eek tel me this,
How wiltow seyn of me and my destresse?
Lest she be wrooth, this drede I most, y-wis,
Or nil not here or trowen how it is.
Al this drede I, and eek for the manere
Of thee, hir eem, she nil no swich thing here."

147
Quod Pandarus, "thou hast a ful gret care
Lest that the cherl may falle out of the mone!
Why, lord! I hate of thee thy nyce fare!
Why, entremete of that thou hast to done!
For goddes love, I bidde thee a bone,
So lat me alone, and it shal be thy beste."—
"Why, freend," quod he, "now do right as thee leste."

148
But herke, Pandare, o word, for I nolde
That thou in me wendest so gret folye,
That to my lady I desiren sholde
That toucheth harm or any vilenye;
For dredelees, me were lever dye
Than she of me ought elles understode
But that, that mighte sounen in-to gode."

149
Tho lough this Pandare, and anon answerde,
"And I thy borw? fy! no wight dooth but so;
I roughte nought though that she stode and herde
How that thou seyst; but fare-wel, I wol go.
A-dieu! be glad! god spede us bothe two!
Yif me this labour and this besinesse,
And of my speed be thyn al that swetnesse."

150
Tho Troilus gan down on knees to falle,
And Pandare in his armes hente faste,
And seyde, "now, fy on the Grekes alle!
Yet, pardee, god shal helpe us at the laste;
And dredelees, if that my lyf may laste,
And god to-for, lo, som of hem shal smerte;
And yet me athinketh that this avaunt me astertel"

151
Now, Pandare, I can no more seye,
But thou wys, thou wost, thou mayst, thou art all
My lyf, my deeth, hool in thyn honde I leye;
Help now," quod he. "Yis, by my trouthe, I shal."
"God yelde thee, freend, and this in special,"
Quod Troilus, "that thou me recomaunde
To hir that to the deeth me may comaunde."

152
This Pandarus tho, desirous to serve
His fulle freend, than seyde in this manere,

"Far-wel, and thenk I wol thy thank deserve;
Have here my trouthe, and that thou shalt wel
here."—

And wente his wey, thenking on this matere,
And how he best mighte hir besече of grace,
And finde a tyme ther-to, and a place.

153

For every wight that hath an hous to founde
Ne renneth nought the werk for to biginne
With rakel hond, but he wol byde a stounde,
And sende his hertes lyne out fro with-inne
Alderfirst his purpos for to winne.
Al this Pandare in his herte thoughte,
And caste his werk ful wysly, or he wroughte.

154

But Troilus lay tho no lenger down,
But up anon up-on his stede bay,
And in the feld he pleyde tho leoun;
Wo was that Greek that with him mette that day.
And in the toun his maner tho forth ay
So goodly was, and gat him so in grace,
That ech him lovede that loked on his face.

155

For he bicom the frendlyeste wight,
The gentileste, and eek the moste free,
The thristieste and oon the beste knight,
That in his tyme was, or mighte be.
Dede were his japes and his crueltee,
His heighe port and his manere estraunge,
And ech of tho gan for a vertu chaunge.

156

Now lat us stinte of Troilus a stounde,
That fareth lyk a man that hurt is sore,
And is somdel of akinge of his wounde
Y-lissed wel, but heled no del
more;

And, as an esy pacient, the lore
Abit of him that gooth aboute his cure;
And thus he dryveth forth his aventure.

HERE ENDETH THE FIRST BOOK

BOOK II

HERE BEGINNETH THE PROEM TO THE SECOND BOOK

1

Out of these blake wawes for to sayle,
O wind, O wind, the weder ginneth clere;
For in this see the boot hath swich travayle,
Of my conning that unneth I it stere:
This see clepe I the tempestous matere
Of desepyr that Troilus was inne:
But now of hope the calendes biginne.

2

O lady myn, that called art Cleo,
Thou be my speed fro this forth, and my
muse,
To ryme wel this book, til I have do;
Me nedeth here noon other art to use.
For-why to every lovere I me excuse,

"Farewell, thy thanks I doubt not to deserve!
Have here my pledge, thou shalt be
satisfied!"

Then forth upon his thoughtful way he hied,
Considering how he might find time and place
Vicariouly to win this lady's grace.

153

For any man who hath a house to found,
Runs not at once the labor to begin
With reckless hand, but first will look around,
And send his heart's line outward from within,
To see how best of all his end to win.
So Pandar in his contemplation thought,
And planned his work full wisely ere he wrought.

154

And Troilus, his sloth aside now laid,
Leaping upon his prancing gallant bay,
Upon the field the very lion played.
Woe to the Greek who met with him that day!
And in the town he made such fine display
Of goodly conduct, that in every place
All loved him who but looked upon his face.

155

For he became, as though but over night,
Most friendly, gentle, generous and free,
Most provident—in short the finest knight
That in his time or any time might be;
Gone now his jests, his boastful vanity,
His lofty ways and all his manner strange,
And all his vices into virtues change.

156

Now let us cease of Troilus to speak,
Who feels like one who has been wounded sore,
And from his wound still aching and still weak,
But grown more calm, though healed not thus the
more,
Submits in patience to the doctor's lore,
Who skilfully his ill investigates—
So Troilus the final end awaits.

1

Out of these billows black at last we sail,
O Wind, and now the breaking tempests clear!
In this wild sea my skill doth scarce avail
To save the boat that I attempt to steer,
This troubled sea, tempestuous and drear,
Of black despair that Troilus was in;
But lo, the kalends now of hope begin.

2

O lady mine, O Clío, glorious one,
Be thou henceforth my help, be thou my
muse,
To rhyme this book until the whole is done!
All other aid than thine I here refuse,
And therefore lovers all must me excuse,

If pure inventions I do not endite,
But only Latin into English write.

3
Then give me neither thank nor give me blame
For all this work, for meekly I deny
The fault, if anywhere my tale be lame,
For what my author sayeth, so say I.
And if unskilled in love my pen I ply,
No wonder that, for who would dare assert
A blind man should in colors be expert?

4
Remember in the forms of speech comes change
Within a thousand years, and words that then
Were well esteemed, seem foolish now and strange;
And yet they spake them so, time and again,
And thrived in love as well as any men;
And so to win their loves in sundry days,
In sundry lands there are as many ways.

5
If then the situation should arise,
That any captious lover in this place,
Who hears this tale, or reads it with his eyes,
How Troilus sued for his lady's grace,
Should think "I'd do not so in such a case,"
Or wonder at his words or at his acts,
He may—for me, I merely state the facts.

6
Travellers to Rome, as on their way they wend,
Hold not one path and not the self-same style;
And in some lands the game would quickly end,
If men made love as we do all the while,
As thus—so openly with glance or smile,
And visits, forms, and pretty speeches, too;
But when in Rome, do as the Romans do.

7
I doubt if in this land you could find three
Who'd act the same, if they in love should fall;
For what I like, to you may hateful be,
And yet we reach the same end, one and all,
Though some may carve on trees, some on a wall,
As it may chance.—But now where I began,
My story I must hasten as I can.

HERE ENDETH THE PROEM TO THE SECOND BOOK

HERE BEGINNETH THE SECOND BOOK

8
In May, mother of months, when all is gay,
When flowers, blue and white and red, now grow
Again, as winter's deadly hold gives way,
When balmy breezes o'er the meadows blow
And Phoebus with his brightest beams doth glow
In the white Bull, and of this month the third,
I now shall sing what great events occurred.

9
Wise Pandar then, for all his helpful speech,
Now felt, himself, the barb of love so keen,
That though he ne'er so well could others teach,
For thwarted love he turned a sickly green;
And all for nothing but this lover's spleen,
To bed he straightway went, and no time lost,
Where all the weary night he turned and tossed.

That of no sentement I this endyte,
But out of Latin in my tonge it wryte.

3
Wherefore I nil have neither thank ne blame
Of al this werk, but pray yow mekely,
Disblameth me, if any word be lame,
For as myn auctor seyde, so seye I.
Eek though I speke of love unfelingly,
No wonder is, for it no-thing of newe is;
A blind man can nat juggen wel in hewis.

4
Ye knowe eek, that in forme of speche is chaunge
With-inne a thousand yeer, and wordes tho
That hadden prys, now wonder nyce and straunge
Us thinketh hem; and yet they spake hem so,
And spedde as wel in love as men now do;
Eek for to winne love in sondry ages,
In sondry londes, sondry been usages.

5
And for-thy if it happe in any wyse,
That here be any lovere in this place
That herkeneth, as the story wol devyse,
How Troilus com to his lady grace,
And thenketh, so nolde I nat love purchace,
Or wondreth on his speche and his doinge,
I noot; but it is me no wonderinge;

6
For every wight which that to Rome went,
Halt nat o path, or alwey o manere;
Eek in som lond were al the gamen shent,
If that they ferde in love as men don here,
As thus, in open doing or in chere,
In visitinge, in forme, or seyde hir sawes;
For-thy men seyn, ech contree hath his lawes.

7
Eek scarsly been ther in this place three
That han in love seyde lyk and doon in al;
For to thy purpos this may lyken thee,
And thee right nought, yet al is seyde or shal;
Eek som men grave in tree, som in stoon wal,
As it bitit; but sin I have begonne,
Myn auctor shal I folwen, if I conne.

8
In May, that moder is of monthes glade,
That fresshe floures, blewe, and whyte, and rede,
Ben quike agayn, that winter dede made,
And ful of bawme is fletinge every mede;
Whan Phebus doth his brighte bemes sprede
Right in the whyte Bole, it so bitidde
As I shal singe, on Mayes day the thridde,

9
That Pandarus, for al his wyse speche,
Felte eek his part of loves shottes kene,
That, coude he never so wel of loving preche,
It made his hewe a-day ful ofte grene;
So shoop it, that him fil that day a tene
In love, for which in wo to bedde he wente,
And made, er it was day, ful many a wente.

10

The swalwe Proigné, with a sorwful lay,
Whan morwe com, gan make hir weymentinge,
Why she forshapen was; and ever lay
Pandare a-bedde, half in a slomeringe,
Til she so neigh him made hir chiteringe
How Tereus gan forth hir suster take,
That with the noyse of hir he gan a-wake;

11

And gan to calle, and dresse him up to ryse,
Remembringe him his erand was to done
From Troilus, and eek his greet emprise;
And caste and knew in good plyt was the mone
To doon viage, and took his wey ful sone
Un-to his neces paleys ther bi-syde;
Now Janus, god of entree, thou him gyde!

12

Whan he was come un-to his neces place,
"Where is my lady?" to hir folk seyde he;
And they him tolde; and he forth in gan pace,
And fond, two othere ladyes sete and she
With-inne a paved parlour; and they three
Herden a mayden reden hem the geste
Of the Sege of Thebes, whyl hem leste.

13

Quod Pandarus, "ma dame, god yow see,
With al your book and al the companye!"
"Ey, uncle myn, welcome y-wis," quod she,
And up she roos, and by the hond in hye
She took him faste, and seyde, "this night thrye,
To goode mote it turne, of yow I mette!"
And with that word she doun on bench him sette.

14

"Ye, nece, ye shal fare wel the bet,
If god wole, al this year," quod Pandarus;
"But I am sory that I have yow let
To herkenen of your book ye preysen thus;
For goddes love, what seith it? tel it us.
Is it of love? O, som good ye me lere!"
"Uncle," quod she, "your maistresse is not here!"

15

With that they gonnen laughe, and tho she seyde,
"This romaunce is of Thebes, that we rede;
And we han herd how that king Laius deyde
Thurgh Edippus his sone, and al that dede;
And here we stenten at these lettres rede,
How the bisshop, as the book can telle,
Amphiorax, fil thurgh the ground to helle."

16

Quod Pandarus, "al this knowe I my selve,
And al the assege of Thebes and the care;
For her-of been ther maked bokes twelve:—
But lat be this, and tel me how ye fare;
Do wey your barbe, and shew your face bare;
Do wey your book, rys up, and lat us daunce,
And lat us don to May som observance."

17

"A! god forbede!" quod she, "be ye mad?
Is that a widewes lyf, so god you save?
By god, ye maken me right sore a-drad,
Ye ben so wilde, it semeth as ye rave!
It sete me wel bet ay in a cave

10

The swallow Progne, at the break of day,
In song began her still renewed lament
For her changed shape, but still great Pandar lay
Abed, and half asleep, though night was spent,
Until her plaints, as back and forth she went,
How Tereus her sister hence did take,
Aroused the knight and brought him wide awake.

11

He called aloud, now ready to arise,
Bethinking he must carry out ere noon
For Troilus his promised enterprise,
Reflecting, too, there was a right good moon
For such attempt, and took his way full soon
Unto his niece's palace there beside—
Now Janus, god of doorways, be his guide!

12

When he had been admitted at the door,
"Where is my lady, pray?" he briskly said;
And in the wake of him who went before,
Straight to her marbled parlor he was led,
Where she sat listening, while her maidens read
Aloud to her the famous ancient rime
Of all the siege of Thebes to pass the time.

13

"Madam," said Pandar, "and all this company,
How do you do, so busy with your book!"
"Why, uncle, pray come in," responded she,
And up she rose and by the hand him took,
And said, "For three nights now—but let's not look
For bad luck just from that—I've dreamed of you,"
And led him to a chair with great to-do.

14

"Why, niece, your dreams foretell to you some good,
For one whole year, I reckon," he replied.
"But I'm extremely sorry that I should
Thus interrupt when you are occupied.
What is your book? You can in me confide!
Is it a tale of love? Come, let's draw near!"
"Uncle," she said, "your sweetheart isn't here!"

15

They laughed, and Cressida stopped to explain,
"This is the tale of Thebes wherein we read,
About King Laius, stricken down and slain
By Oedipus his son, and all that deed.
We were at these red letters, whence proceed
The lines about Amphiorax to tell,
Who sank down in the ground and into hell."

16

"O yes, I know all that," Pandar replied,
"And all the siege of Thebes and that affair;
In twelve big books it has been versified.
But what's the news? What gossip's in the air?
Put off your gear and show your face all bare!
Lay by your book and let us take this chance
To celebrate the May with song and dance."

17

"O God forbid!" she cried, "you must be mad!
Is that the way a widow should behave?
Indeed your style of speech is shocking bad,
And almost like a crazy man you rave;
For it would fit me better in a cave

To pray the saints and read their holy lives!
Let maidens go and dance, and youthful wives."

18

"Well, I could tell," said Pandar with a laugh,
"A tale to make you want to sport and play!"
"Now, uncle dear," she said, "don't tease and chaff,
But tell us, do! Have the Greeks gone away?
I wish the siege would end this very day."
"No, no," says he, "I give my sacred word,
This thing beats any news you've ever heard."

19

"Heavens alive!" cried she, "what thing is that?
Why won't you tell? Indeed, you stagger me!
I can't imagine, uncle, what you're at!
Some joke, perhaps, that I shall never see,
Till you yourself reveal the mystery.
This talk is too much for my feeble brain,
I can't pretend to follow—please explain."

20

"Well, no," he said, "I really wouldn't dare,
Because it's not a tale on which you'd thrive."
"And pray why not?" she asked. "You aren't fair!"
"Dear niece," he said, "if this news should arrive
Unto your ears, no prouder woman alive
There could be found in all the town of Troy,
And no exaggeration I employ!"

21

This made her wonder more and ever more,
And downward thoughtfully her eyes she cast,
For ne'er in her born days had she before
So longed, with longing deep and unsurpassed,
To know a thing, but sighed and said at last,
"Well, uncle dear, of course I shan't insist,
And you can tell me when and what you list."

22

And after that with pleasant conversation
And friendly gossip, both of man and maid,
They keep the ball of speech in brisk rotation;
And when in deeper things they start to wade,
As friends will do when they enough have played,
Of Hector's health, the wall of Troy, she speaks,
That rod of wrath upon the wicked Greeks.

23

"He's well," said Pandar, "well as any other,
Thank God, except upon his arm a scratch,
And also Troilus, his younger brother,
To wise and worthy Hector nigh a match,
Such equal virtues to his name attach;
In truth and gentle birth he is not less,
In wisdom, honor, and ample worthiness."

24

"Good faith!" cried Cressida, "that pleases me!
I don't know where you'd find a better twol
I think it is the finest thing to see
A king's son, who in arms so well doth do,
And he a gentleman, all through and through;
For strength and moral virtue one can find
Not often in a character combined."

25

"Indeed," said Pandar, "that's the simple truth!
For verily, these princes are a pair,
Hector and Troilus, for all his youth,

To bidde, and rede on holy seyntes lyves:
Lat maydens gon to daunce, and yonge wyves."

18

"As ever thryve I," quod this Pandarus,
"Yet coude I telle a thing to doon you pleye."
"Now uncle dere," quod she, "tel it us
For goddes love; is than th'assege aweye?
I am of Grekes so ferd that I deye."
"Nay, nay," quod he, "as ever mote I thryve!
It is a thing wel bet than swiche fyve."

19

"Ye, holy god!" quod she, "what thing is that?
What? bet than swiche fyve? ey, nay, y-wis!
For al this world ne can I reden what
It sholde been; som jape, I trowe, is this;
And but your-selven telle us what it is,
My wit is for to arede it al to lenat;
As help me god, I noot nat what ye mene."

20

"And I your borow, ne never shal, for me,
This thing be told to yow, as mote I thryve!"
"And why so, uncle myn? why so?" quod she.
"By god," quod he, "that wole I telle as blyve;
For prouder womman were their noon on-lyve,
And ye it wiste, in al the toun of Troy;
I jape nought, as ever have I joye!"

21

Tho gan she wondren more than biforn
A thousand fold, and doun hir eyen caste;
For never, sith the tyme that she was born,
To knowe thing desired she so faste;
And with a syk she seyde him at the laste,
"Now, uncle myn, I nil yow nought displese,
Nor axen more, that may do yow disese."

22

So after this, with many wordes glade,
And frendly tales, and with mery chere,
Of this and that they pleyde, and gunnen wade
In many an unkouth glad and deep matere,
As freendes doon, when they ben met y-fere;
Til she gan axen him how Ector ferde,
That was the tounes wal and Grekes yerde.

23

"Ful wel, I thanke it god," quod Pandarus,
"Save in his arm he hath a litel wounde;
And eek his fresshe brother Troilus,
The wyse worthy Ector the secounde,
In whom that every vertu list abounde,
As alle trouthe and alle gentillesse,
Wysdom, honour, fredom, and worthinesse."

24

"In good feith, eem," quod she, "that lyketh me;
They faren wel, god save hem bothe two!
For trewely I holde it greet deyntee
A kinges sone in armes wel to do,
And been of good condiciouns ther-to;
For greet power and moral vertu here
Is selde y-seye in o persone y-fere."

25

"In good feith, that is sooth," quod Pandarus;
"But, by my trouthe, the king hath sones tweye,
That is to mene, Ector and Troilus,

That certainly, though that I sholde deye,
They been as voyde of vyces, dar I seye,
As any men that liveth under the sonne,
Hir might is wyde y-knowe, and what they conne.

26

Of Ector nedeth it nought for to telle;
In al this world ther nis a better knight
Than he, that is of worthinesse welles;
And he wel more vertu hath than might.
This knoweth many a wys and worthy wight.
The same prys of Troilus I seye,
God help me so, I knowe not swiche tweye."

27

"By god," quod she, "of Ector that is sooth;
Of Troilus the same thing trowe I;
For dredelees, men tellen that he dooth
In armes day by day so worthily,
And bereth him here at hoom so gentilly
To every wight, that al the prys hath he
Of hem that me were levest preyed be."

28

"Ye sey right sooth, y-wis," quod Pandarus;
"For yesterday, who-so hadde with him been,
He might have wondred up-on Troilus;
For never yet so thikke a swarm of been
Ne fleigh, as Grekes fro him gonne fleen;
And thorough the feld, in every wightes ere,
Ther nas no cry but 'Troilus is there!'"

29

Now here, now there, he hunted hem so faste,
Ther nas but Grekes blood; and Troilus,
Now hem he hurte, and hem alle doun he caste;
Ay where he wente it was arayed thus:
He was hir deeth, and sheld and lyf for us;
That as that day ther dorste noon withstonde,
Why! that he held his bloody swerd in honde.

30

Therto he is the freendlieste man
Of grete estat, that ever I saw my lyve;
And wher him list, best felawshipe can
To suche as him thinketh able for to thryve."
And with that word tho Pandarus, as blyve,
He took his leve, and seyde, "I wol go henne":
"Nay, blame have I, myn uncle," quod she thenne.

31

"What eyleth yow to be thus wery sone,
And namelich of women? wol ye so?
Nay, sitteth down; by god, I have to done
With yow, to speke of wisdom er ye go."
And every wight that was a-boute hem tho,
That herde that, gan fer a-vey to stonde,
Why! they two hadde al that hem liste in honde.

32

Whan that hir tale al brought was to an ende
Of hire estat and of hir governaunce,
Quod Pandarus, "now is it tyme I wende;
But yet, I seye, aryseth, lat us daunce,
And cast your widwes habit to mischaunce:
What list yow thus your-self to disfigure,
Sith yow is tid thus fair an aventure?"

33

"A! wel bithought! for love of god," quod she,

That you might safely venture to compare,
So void of vice and full of virtues fair,
With any men that live beneath the sun,
So famous, too, for all that they have done.

26

"Of Hector there is nothing new to tell;
In all this world there is no better knight,
For of all good he is the fount and well,
One who excels in virtue more than might,
And yet stands strongest in all wise men's sight;
The same of Troilus I dare maintain,
In truth I know not such another twain."

27

"For Hector," answered she, "I quite agree,
And gladly think as well of Troilus,
For one hears every day how worthily
He bears himself in arms; so generous
He is at home, and ever courteous,
The highest priase and name he hath acquired
From those whose praise is most to be desired."

28

"Quite true, quite true," said Pandar in reply,
"For yesterday, as all the town agrees,
It was a sight to fill a wondering eye;
For never flew so thick a swarm of bees
As from him fled the Greeks with quaking knees,
And through the field in every person's ear
There was no cry but 'Troilus is here!'"

29

"Now here, now there, he hunted them so fast,
There was but Grecian blood and Troilus;
For all were crushed or on the ground were cast,
And everywhere you could express it thus,
He was their death, and shield and life for us.
And all that day no man durst him withstand,
The while he held his bloody sword in hand.

30

"And yet he is the friendliest of souls,
For all his rank, that ever I have seen;
And if he likes a man, he straight enrols
That one in friendly love both firm and keen."
With that he rose with brisk and serious mien,
Prepared to go, and said, "Now I must run
Along." "What for?" said she. "What have I done?"

31

"You really shouldn't be so quickly bored,
Especially with women. Must you go?
Sit down again, if you can time afford
About some business I would like to have you know."
The others all, on hearing her speak so,
Withdrew and at a distance took their stand,
And left them free for all they had on hand.

32

And when this consultation reached an end
And nothing seemed his going to prevent,
Said Pandar, "On my way now I must wend!
But first, let's dance, and pray won't you relent,
And put aside this sad habilitment?
Why dress yourself in this so mournful way,
When such good luck has chanced to you today?"

33

"O that reminds me," said she smilingly,

"Shall I not know the meaning of all this?"
 "No, I must think it over," answered he,
 "For I should never know a moment's bliss
 If I should tell and you took it amiss.
 And surely I had better far keep still
 Than tell the truest truth against your will."

34

"For niece, by great Minerva, the divine,
 And Jupiter, who makes the thunder sound,
 And Venus, goddess most especially mine,
 No other person on this world so round—
 Sweethearts excepted—have I ever found,
 That I love more than thee and least would grieve,
 And this I think you know and well believe."

35

"O surely, uncle," said she, "and I'm duly
 Grateful for all your long and friendly aid;
 To no one have I been beholden truly
 So much as you, and yet have less repaid;
 You have then little cause to be afraid
 That with intention I shall you offend,
 And if I have done so, I shall amend."

36

"But now, dear uncle, let me please beseech,
 And as I trust in you, let me insist,
 That you leave off this strange mysterious speech,
 And tell me clear and plain what'er you list."
 Then Pandar said, though first his niece he kissed,
 "I will with pleasure, Cressida my dear,
 But take it right, what I shall tell you here."

37

At that her eyes upon the ground she cast,
 And Pandar, with a little cough polite,
 Began, "Dear niece, lo, always at the last,
 Though some men think their style is stale and trite
 Unless with subtle artifice they write,
 Beneath their little tricks you always find
 The thing that from the first they had in mind."

38

"And since the point is always at the end,
 And since the end is here not hard to see,
 Why should I strive my story to extend,
 Between old friends like us, especially?"
 And pausing then as serious as could be,
 He gazed intent and long into her face,
 And said, "On such a mirror, heaven's grace!"

39

And to himself he thought, "If what I say
 Seems hard to understand or to believe,
 Then she will either no attention pay
 Or think that I have something up my sleeve;
 For simple minds fear all men will deceive,
 When they hear something hard to understand,
 And so I'll lead her gently by the hand."

40

His steady looking filled her with surprise,
 She wondered why he should be gazing so,
 And said, "Good Lord, don't eat me with your eyes!
 You've seen me many a time before, you know."
 "And better shall," he said, "before I go!
 But I was wondering if you were to be
 So fortunate, for now we soon shall see."

"Shal I not witen what ye mene of this?"

"No, this thing axeth layser," tho quod he,
 "And eek me wolde muche greve, y-wis,
 If I it tolde, and ye it toke amis.
 Yet were it bet my tonge for to stille
 Than seye a sooth that were ayeins your wille."

34

For, nece, by the goddess Minerve,
 And Juppiter, that maketh the thonder ringe,
 And by the blisful Venus that I serve,
 Ye been the womman in this world livinge,
 With-oute paramours, to my witinge,
 That I best love, and lothest am to greve,
 And that ye witen wel your-self, I leve."

35

"Y-wis, myn uncle," quod she, "grant mercy;
 Your frendship have I founden ever yit;
 I am to no man holden trewely
 So muche as yow, and have so litel quit;
 And, with the grace of god, emforth my wit,
 As in my gilt I shal you never offende;
 And if I have er this, I wol amende."

36

But, for the love of god, I yow beseche,
 As ye ben he that I most love and triste,
 Lat be to me your fremde maner speche,
 And sey to me, your nece, what yow liste":
 And with that word hir uncle anon hir kiste,
 And seyde, "gladly, leve nece dere,
 Tak it for good that I shal seye yow here."

37

With that she gan hir eyen down to caste,
 And Pandarus to coghe gan a lyte,
 And seyde, "nece, alwey, lo! to the laste,
 How-so it be that som men hem delyte
 With subtil art hir tales for to endyte,
 Yet for al that, in hir entencioun,
 Hir tale is al for some conclusioun."

38

And sithen th'ende is every tales strengthe,
 And this matere is so bihovely,
 What sholde I peynte or drawn it on lengthe
 To yow, that been my freend so feithfully?"
 And with that word he gan right inwardly
 Biholden hir, and loken on hir face,
 And seyde, "on suche a mirour goode grace!"

39

Than thoughte he thus, "if I my tale endyte
 Ought hard, or make a proces any whyle,
 She shal no savour han ther-in but lyte,
 And trowe I wolde hir in my wil bigyle.
 For tendre wittes wenen al be wyle
 Ther-as they can nat pleynly understonde;
 For-thy hir wit to serven wol I fonde"—

40

And loked on hir in a besy wyse,
 And she was war that he byheld hir so,
 And seyde, "lord! so faste ye me avyse!
 Sey ye me never er now? what sey ye, no?"
 "Yes, yes", quod he, "and bet wole er I go;
 But, by my trouthe, I thoughte now if ye
 Be fortunat, for now men shal it see."

41

For to every wight som goodly aventure
Som tyme is shape, if he it can receyven;
And if that he wol take of it no cure,
Whan that it cometh, but wilfully it weyven,
Lo, neither cas nor fortune him deceyven,
But right his verray slouthe and wrecchednesse;
And swich a wight is for to blame, I gesse.

42

Good aventure, O bele nece, have ye
Ful lightly founden, and ye conne it take;
And, for the love of god, and eek of me,
Cacche it anon, lest aventure slake.
What sholde I lenger proces of it make?
Yif me your hond, for in this world is noon,
If that you list, a wight so wel begoon.

43

And sith I speke of good entencioun,
As I to yow have told wel here-biforn,
And love as wel your honour and renoun
As creature in al this world y-born;
By alle the othes that I have yow sworn,
And ye be wrooth therfore, or wene I lye,
Ne shal I never seen yow eft with yē.

44

Beth nought agast, ne quaketh nat; wher-to?
Ne chaungeth nat for fere so your weye;
For hardely, the werste of this is do;
And though my tale as now be to yow newe,
Yet trist alwey, ye shal me finde trewe;
And were it thing that me thoughte unsittinge,
To yow nolde I no swiche tales bringe."

45

"Now, my good eem, for goddes love, I preye,"
Quod she, "com of, and tel me what it is;
For bothe I am agast what ye wol seye,
And eek me longeth it to wite, y-wis
For whether it be wel or be amis,
Sey on, lat me not in this fere dwelle":
"So wol I doon, now herkneth, I shal telle:

46

Now, nece myn, the kinges dere sone,
The goode, wyse, worthy, fresshe, and free,
Which alwey for to do wel is his wone,
The noble Troilus, so loveth thee,
That, bot ye helpe, it wol his bane be.
Lo, here is al, what sholde I more seye?
Doth what yow list, to make him live or deye.

47

But if ye lete him deye, I wol sterve;
Have her my trouthe, nece, I nil not lyen;
Al sholde I with this knyf my throte kerve"—
With that the teres braste out of his yēn,
And seyde, "if that ye doon us bothe dyen,
Thus gilteles, than have ye fisshed faire;
What mende ye, though that we bothe apeyre?

48

Allas! he which that is my lord so dere,
That trewe man, that noble gentil knight,
That nought desireth but your freendly chere,
I see him deye, ther he goth up-right,
And hasteth him, with al his fulle might,

41

"For every person hath his happy chance,
If good faith with his fortune he will hold.
But if he turns aside with scornful glance
When fortune comes, unwelcoming and cold,
Then for ill luck he may not fortune scold,
But his own sloth and feebleness of heart,
And he must take all blame from end to start.

42

"Good fortune, niece, hath lightly come thy way,
If thou wilt but accept it now as thine;
And for the love of God, without delay
Take hold of it, thy share do not decline.
But need I now say more along this line?
Give me your hand, for now it lies with you
To be the luckiest soul I ever knew.

43

"But let me speak again of my intention—
As I to you have often said before,
There is no living person I could mention
Whose honor and renown I cherish more;
By all the solemn oaths I ever swore,
If you are wroth at this, or think I lie,
I shan't have nerve to look you in the eye.

44

"Don't be so agitated! Pray, what for?
Don't look as though I meant some harm to you!
The worst is past and there is little more,
I've told the old and now must come the new.
Yet trust in me and you will find me true,
For never sure the least improper thing
Would I to your attention dare to bring."

45

"Now, uncle dear," she said, "for heaven's sake,
Hurry and tell me what it's all about,
For I am both so scared with fear I quake,
And eager, too, to have the whole thing out!
For be it thing of joy or thing of doubt,
Say on! This agony you must dispel!"
"So will I do," said Pandar, "listen well!

46

"Now, Cressida, my niece, the king's dear son,
The good, the wise, the worthy, fresh and free,
Who seeks the good and ever so hath done,
The noble Troilus so loveth thee,
That life or death for him you must decree.
So this is all! And as you shall reply,
Consider you will bid him live or die.

47

"But if you bid him die, you take my life,
For here this pledge, dear niece, I ratify,
That I will cut my throat with this my knife!"
And with these words and tears in either eye,
Pandar went on, "If both of us must die,
And guiltless both, 'twill be a sad affair,
And you alone the blame thereof must bear.

48

"Alas, that he who is my lord so dear,
That faithful man, that noble, gentle knight,
Who will to nothing but your welfare hear,
That I should see him perish in my sight,
And to his own destruction walk upright,

Hastening to a fate you might prevent!
Alas, that God such beauty to you sent!

49

"But if you will in careless cruelty
Insist that death at your hands he shall fetch,
A man of high and noble constancy,
As if he were some ordinary wretch,
I tell you all your beauty will not stretch
So far to make amends for such a deed—
And so, before it is too late, take heed!

50

"Woe to the precious gem that will not glow!
Woe to the herb that harms, but should work weal!
Woe to the power that will no mercy show!
Woe to the pride that treads all neath its heel!
And all ye fair, adorned with beauty's seal,
If therewith pity give not beauty worth,
'Twere pity you should dwell upon this earth!

51

"Now don't imagine any wrong I mean,
For I would rather thou and I and he
Were hanged, than I should be his go-between,
Or think of aught but what the world might see!
Remember who I am, for shame to me
As well as thee it were, should my endeavor
The least dishonor bring upon you ever.

52

"Of course you understand I would not bind
You to him in the very least degree;
But merely show yourself a little kind
And in such wise that he can plainly see,
Whereby at least his life assured will be.
Now here you have the whole of my intent,
And all I ever thought of ever meant.

53

"And sure there's nothing strange in this request,
And not a reason thereagainst to show.
Suppose the worst—that you are fearful lest
Some folk will talk, seeing him come and go.
But I can answer that, and will do so,
That every man, except the weak of mind,
Nothing but friendliness therein will find.

54

"For who supposes when he sees a man
Going to church, that he expects to eat
The images there! And think how well he can
Comport himself, so heedful and discreet,
A more considerate man you'll never
meet.

Besides he won't come here so frequently
But that the whole world might look on and see.

55

"Such friendship you will find in all this town—
A cloak, no doubt, if folk will use it so.
But as I hope to win salvation's crown,
I've given you the best advice I know.
You can, dear niece, alleviate his woe,
And if so be you can do nothing more,
His death, at least, will not lie at your door."

56

Cressida weighed these words, so doubtful wise,
And thought, "I'll see just what he's coming to!"

For to be slayn, if fortune wol assente;
Allas! that god yow swich a beautee sente!

49

If it be so that ye so cruel be,
That of his deeth yow liste nought to recche,
That is so trewe and worthy, as ye see,
No more than of a japere or a wrecche,
If ye be swich, your beautee may not strecche
To make amendes of so cruel a dede;
Avyement is good bfore the nede.

50

Wo worth the faire gemme vertueles!
Wo worth that herbe also that dooth no bote!
Wo worth that beautee that is routhelees!
Wo worth that wight that tret ech under fote!
And ye, that been of beautee crop and rote,
If therwith-al in you ther be no routhe,
Than is it harm ye liven, by my trouthe!

51

And also thenk wel, that this is no gaude;
For me were lever, thou and I and he
Were hanged, than I sholde been his baude,
As heye, as men mighte on us alle y-see;
I am thyn eem, the shame were to me,
As wel as thee, if that I sholde assente,
Thorough myn abet, that he thyn honour shente.

52

Now understond, for I yow nought requere
To binde yow to him thorough no beheste,
But only that ye make him bettre chere
Than ye han doon er this, and more feste,
So that his lyf be saved, at the leste
This al and som, and playnly our entente;
God helpe me so, I never other mente.

53

Lo, this request is not but skile, y-wis,
Ne doute of reson, pardee, is ther noon.
I sette the worste that ye dredden this,
Men wolden wondren seen him come or goon;
Ther-ayeins answer I thus a-noon,
That every wight, but he be fool of kinde,
Wol deme it love of freendship in his minde.

54

What? who wol deme, though he see a man
To temple go, that he the images eteth?
Thenk eek how wel and wysly that he can
Governe him-self, that he no-thing foryeteth,
That, wher he cometh, he prys and thank him
geteth;

And eek ther-to, he shal come here so selde,
What fors were it though al the toun behelde?

55

Swich love of freendes regneth al this toun;
And wrye yow in that mantel ever-mo;
And, god so wis be my savacioun,
As I have seyde, your beste is to do so.
But alwey, goode nece, to stinte his wo,
So lat your daunger sucred ben a lyte,
That of his deeth ye be nought for to wyte."

56

Criseyde, which that herde him in this wyse,
Thoughte, "I shal fele what he meneth, y-wis."

"Now, eem," quod she, "what wolde ye devyse,
What is your reed I sholde doon of this?"
"That is wel seyde," quod he, "certayn, best is
That ye him love ayein for his lovinge,
As love for love is skilful guerdoninge.

57

Thenk eek, how elde wasteth every houre
In eche of yow a party of beautee;
And therfore, er that age thee devoure,
Go love, for, olde, ther wol no wight of thee.
Lat this proverbe a lore un-to yow be;
'To late y-war,' quod Beautee, whan it paste;
And elde daunteth daunger at the laste.

58

The kinges fool is woned to cryen loude,
Whan that him thinketh a womman bereth hir hye,
'So longe mote ye live, and alle proude,
Til crows feet be growe under your ye,
And sende yow thanne a mirour in to pryē
In whiche ye may see your face a-morwe!
Nece, I bid wisshe yow no more sorwe."

59

With this he stente, and caste adoun the
head,
And she bigan to breste a-wepe anoon.
And seyde, "allas, for wo! why nere I deed?
For of this world the feith is al agoon!
Allas! what sholden straunge to me doon,
When he, that for my beste freend I wende,
Ret me to love, and sholde it me defende?"

60

Allas! I wolde han trusted, doutelees,
That if that I, thurgh my disaventure,
Had loved other him or Achilles,
Ector, or any mannes creature,
Ye nolde han had no mercy ne mesure
On me, but alwey had me in repreve;
This false world, alas! who may it leve?

61

What? is this al the joye and al the feste?
Is this your reed, is this my blisful cas?
Is this the verray mede of your behestes?
Is al this peynted proces seyde, alas!
Right for this fyn? O lady myn, Pallas!
Thou in this dredful cas for me purveye;
For so astonied am I that I deye!"

62

With that she gan ful sorwfully to syke;
"A! may it be no bet?" quod Pandarus;
"By god, I shal no-more come here this wyke,
And god to-forn, that am mistrusted thus;
I see ful wel that ye sette lyte of us,
Or of our deeth! Allas! I woful wrecche!
Mighte he yet live, of me is nought to recche.

63

O cruel god, O dispitouse Marte,
O Furies three of helle, on yow I crye!
So lat me never out of this hous departe,
If that I mente harm or vilanye!
But sith I see my lord mot nedes dye,
And I with him, here I me shryve, and seye
That wikkedly ye doon us bothe deye.

"Now, uncle," said she, "what would you advise?
In your opinion, what is best to do?"
"Well said," he answered, "now I'll tell you truel
Since love for love is but a fair return,
It were great wrong his proffered love to spurn.

57

"Remember time is wasting every hour
Some share of all the beauty now we see,
And thus, ere age shall all thy charms devour,
Go love, for old, none will have aught of thee!
This saying may a lesson to you be,
'It might have been,' said Beauty, beauty past,
For age will dull all edges at the last.

58

"The courtly fool is wont to cry aloud
When any woman holds her head too high,
'Long may you live and all ye beauties proud,
Til crowsfeet come to grow beneath your eye,
And in your mirror may you then descry
The face that you shall wear for many a morrow!
I hope and pray for you no greater sorrow!"

59

With these few words he stopped and bowed his
head,
While Cressida with weeping eyes replied:
"Alas, poor me! I wish that I were dead!
No honor in this world doth now abide;
For how shall I in strangers e'er confide,
When he who seemed to be my trusty friend
Would have me do what he should reprehend.

60

"In very deed and truth, I should have thought,
If I had loved, through chance unfortunate,
Him or Achilles or Hector, or shown aught
Of love to man of high or low estate,
Such conduct you would sternly reprobate,
And would me ever after discommend!
This faithless world, who may on it depend!

61

"Is this your fateful joy and happiness?
Is this your counsel, this my lucky chance?
Is this the care that you to me profess?
Is all thy pomp of speech and circumstance
But to this end? O Pallas, let thy glance
Now rest on me with sympathetic eye,
For I am so astounded I shall die!"

62

She paused and sighed with sorrow deep and sore,
And Pandar asked, "Is that all you can say?
Well, I'll be blessed if e'er again your door
I darken, if you doubt me in this way!
I see how little heed to us you pay,
Or to our death! Yet if it may but be
That he is saved, let fall what will on me!

63

"O cruel God, O most avenging Mars!
O Furies three of hell, on you I cry!
The door that to this house the entry bars
May I ne'er pass, if I meant harm thereby!
But since I see my lord and I must die,
Here let me say it with my final breath,
That wickedly you do us both to death.

64
 "But since it pleases you to see me dead,
 By Neptune, god of all the ocean free,
 From this time forth I scorn all daily bread
 Till with my eyes my own heart's blood I see,
 For I shall end my days as soon as he!"
 And then he started off like one distraught,
 But with restraining hand his cloak she caught,

65
 And though she almost passed away for fear,
 For she at best was easy to affright,
 At all the horrid things that she must hear,
 And saw how deadly earnest was the knight,
 And thought besides it maybe was all right,
 And that she might stir harm up all the more,
 Relenting just a bit and sighing sore,

66
 She thought, "How often comes catastrophe
 For love, and in such strange and dreadful way,
 That men will treat themselves with cruelty.
 And if here in my presence he should slay
 Himself, there'd be a frightful price to pay!
 What men would think of it, I do not know—,
 Perhaps I'd better go a little slow."

67
 Aloud with heartfelt sigh she then replied,
 "Ah, Lord, what trouble on me thou has laid!
 For my good name is periled on one side,
 And thereagainst my uncle's life is weighed.
 But for all that, perhaps with heaven's aid,
 Some way to save my name I can devise
 And your life, too." With that she dried her eyes.

68
 "The less of two misfortunes I must choose,
 Yet would I rather yield to Troilus,
 With honor, than my uncle's life to lose.
 Will you be satisfied to leave it thus?"
 "Indeed yes," Pandar smiled, victorious.
 "Well then," said she, "I'll see what I can do.
 I shall my heart against my will construe,

69
 "Yet will in no way raise his hopes too high,
 For love a man I neither can nor may
 Against my will, yet otherwise shall try
 Honorably to please him day by day;
 Nor had I once to all this thing said nay,
 Were not my head so full of fantasies;
 But stop the cause, you stop the whole disease!

70
 "But here I make a solemn protestation,
 That if you in this matter too far go,
 Then certainly, for your nor his salvation,
 Though both of you together die, and though
 Each man alive become my deadly foe,
 'Twill be the end of things twixt him and me."
 "O certainly," said Pandar, "I agree."

71
 "But tell me," said he, "can I trust in you
 That all that you have promised to me here,
 That all of this you faithfully will do?"
 "Why yes," she said, "why not, my uncle dear?"
 "And that you won't draw back from foolish fear

64
 But sith it lyketh yow that I be deed,
 By Neptunus, that god is of the see,
 Fro this forth shal I never eten breed
 Til I myn owene herte blood may see;
 For certayn, I wole deye as sone as he"—
 And up he sterte, and on his wey he raughte,
 Til she agayn him by the lappe caughte.

65
 Criseyde, which that wel neigh starf for fere,
 So as she was the ferfulleste wight
 That mighte be, and herde eek with hir ere,
 And saw the sorwful ernest of the knight,
 And in his preyere eek saw noon unright,
 And for the harm that mighte eek fallen more,
 She gan to rewe, and dradde hir wonder sore;

66
 And thoughte thus, "unhappes fallen thikke
 Alday for love, and in swich maner cas,
 As men ben cruel in hem-self and wikke;
 And if this man slee here him-self, allas!
 In my presence, it wol be no solas.
 What men wolde of hit deme I can nat seye;
 It nedeth me ful sleily to to playe."

67
 And with a sorwful syk she seyde thrye,
 "A! lord! what me is tid a sory chaunce!
 For myn estat now lyth in jupartye,
 And eek myn emes lyf lyth in balaunce;
 And nathelees, with goddes governaunce,
 I shal so doon, myn honour shal I kepe,
 And eek his lyf;" and stinte for to wepe.

68
 "Of harmes two, the lesse is for to chese;
 Yet have I lever maken him good chere
 In honour, than myn emes lyf to lese;
 Ye seyn, ye no-thing elles me requere?"
 "No, wis," quod he, "myn owene nece dere."
 "Now wel," quod she, "and I wol doon my payne;
 I shal myn herte ayeins my lust constreyne,

69
 But that I nil not holden him in honde,
 Ne love a man, ne can I not, ne may
 Ayeins my wil; but elles wol I fonde,
 Myn honour sauf, plese him fro day to day;
 Ther-to nolde I nought ones have seyde nay,
 But that I dredde, as in my fantasye;
 But cesse cause, ay cesseth maladye.

70
 And here I make a protestacioun,
 That in this proces if ye depper go,
 That certainly, for no savacioun
 Of yow, though that ye sterve bothe two,
 Though al the world on o day be my fo,
 Ne shal I never on him han other routhie."
 "I graunte wel," quod Pandare, "by my trouthe.

71
 But may I truste wel ther-to," quod he,
 "That, of this thing that ye han hight me here,
 Ye wol it holden trewly un-to me?"
 "Ye, doutelees," quod she, "myn uncle dere."
 "Ne that I shal han cause in this matere,"

Quod he, "to pleyne, or after yow to preche?"
 "Why, no, pardee; what nedeth more speche?"

72

Tho fillen they in othere tales glade.
 Til at the laste, "O good eem," quod she tho,
 "For love of god, which that us bothe made,
 Tel me how first ye wisten of his wo:
 Wot noon of hit but ye?" He seyde, "no."
 "Can he wel speke of love?" quod she, "I preye,
 Tel me, for I the bet me shal purveye."

73

Tho Pandarus a litel gan to smyle,
 And seyde, "by my trouthe, I shal yow telle.
 This other day, nought gon ful longe whyle,
 In-with the paleys-gardyn, by a welle,
 Gan he and I wel half a day to dwelle,
 Right for to speken of an ordonaunce,
 How we the Grekes mighte disavaunce.

74

Sone after that bigonne we to lepe,
 And casten with our dartes to and fro,
 Til at the laste he seyde, he wolde slepe,
 And on the gres a-doun he leyde him tho;
 And I after gan rome to and fro
 Til that I herde, as that I welk allone,
 How he bigan ful wofully to grone.

75

Tho gan I stalke him softly bihinde,
 And sikerly, the sothe for to seyne,
 As I can clepe ayein now to my minde,
 Right thus to Love he gan him for to pleyne;
 He seyde, "lord! have routhe up-on my peyn,
 Al have I been rebel in myn entente;
 Now, *mea culpa*, lord! I me repente.

76

O god, that at thy disposicioun
 Ledest the fyn, by juste purveyaunce,
 Of every wight, my lowe confessioun
 Accepte in gree, and send me swich penaunce
 As lyketh thee, but from desesperaunce,
 That may my goost departe away fro thee,
 Thou be my sheld, for thy benignitee.

77

For certes, lord, so sore hath she me wounded
 That stod in blak, with loking of hir yēn,
 That to myn hertes botme it is y-sounded,
 Thorugh which I woot that I mot nedes dyen;
 This is the worste, I dar me not bi-wryen;
 And wel the hotter been the gledes rede,
 That men hem wryen with asshen pale and dede.'

78

With that he smoot his heed adoun anoon,
 And gan to motre, I noot what, trewely.
 And I with that gan stille away to goon,
 And leet ther-of as no-thing wist hadde I,
 And come ayein anoon and stood him by,
 And seyde, 'a-wake, ye slepen al to longe;
 It semeth nat that love dooth yow longe,

79

That slepen so that no man may yow wake.
 Who sey ever or this so dul a man?'
 'Ye, frend,' quod he, 'do ye yow hedes ake

So that forever I shall have to prech?"

"Why no," she said, "what need of further speech?"

72

They talked of many things with right good cheer,
 Till finally she said, "Before you go,
 There's one thing, uncle, I should like to hear,
 How of this matter you came first to know.
 And is it spread abroad?" "By no means, no!"
 "Is he well versed," she asked, "in these affairs?
 Do tell—I might be taken unawares!"

73

Then Pandar answered with a little smile:
 "I see no reason why I shouldn't tell!
 The other day—'twas just a little while—
 Within the palace garden, near a well,
 Troilus and I in conversation fell
 About some new and promising design
 With which the Grecian force to undermine.

74

"And then we started in to jump and leap,
 And cast our darts in practice to and fro,
 Till Troilus said he would go and sleep,
 And laid him down where soft the grass doth grow,
 And I went farther off and left him so,
 Until as I was walking there alone,
 I heard him fearfully begin to groan.

75

"And then I stalked him softly from behind,
 And heard all he was saying, clear and plain,
 And just as I recall it now to mind,
 Of love he spoke, and this was his refrain:
 'O Lord, have pity now upon my pain!
 Though I have been a rebel in intent,
 Now, *mea culpa*, Lord I do repent!

76

"O God, who ever holdest in possession
 The ends of things, in justice all comprising,
 In thy good will accept my meek confession,
 And send me penance at thy own devising;
 Yet let not grief, from black despair arising,
 Exile my spirit far away from thee,
 But be my shield in thy benignity.

77

"For truly, Lord, the one who stood in black,
 So deeply with the glancings of her eye
 My heart on its foundations doth attack,
 I know that from the wound I'm doomed to die.
 And yet the worst is this, I can't reply,
 And hotter grow the glowing coals so red,
 When covered o'er with ashes pale and dead.'

78

"And then he laid his head upon the ground,
 And muttered something which I couldn't hear,
 And then I went away without a sound,
 So that I might pretend to re-appear,
 And soon came back again, and standing near,
 I cried 'Awake from out this slumber deep!
 It's plain that love cannot disturb your sleep!

79

"You sleep so sound I scarcely can you wake!
 Who ever saw, forsooth, so dull a man?'
 'Let lovers,' said he, 'love till their heads ache,

But let me get along as best I can!
And though his face was wan beneath its tan,
Yet he put on a cheerful countenance,
As though all ready for a song or dance.

80

"So it continued, till the other day
It chanced that I came wondering all alone
Into his chamber, and found him where he lay
Upon his bed, and man so sorely groan
I never heard, but why he thus should moan
I did not know, for soon as he saw me,
He stopped his lamentation suddenly.

81

"You well may think, this made me grow suspicious,
And drawing near, I found him weeping sore,
And as I hope for grace from acts flagitious,
I never saw a sight that touched me more;
With all my wit and all my wisest lore,
This man I scarcely from his death could keep,
And even now my heart for him doth weep.

82

"God knows, not since the day that I was born,
Had I such need to any man to preach,
Nor ever was there man so deeply sworn
Ere he would tell me who might be his leech!
But bid me not rehearse again his speech,
And all his melancholy words repeat,
Or I shall drop and faint here at your feet.

83

"To save his life, and with no other thought,
Except no harm to you, thus am I driven!
And for God's love, who all the world have
wrought,
See thou that life to both of us be given.
And now to you in full my heart I've shiven,
And since you see that it is pure and clean,
You know full well that I no evil mean.

84

"I pray to God, successful may you be,
Who such a fish hath caught without a net!
If you are wise, as you are fair to see,
Well in the ring then is the ruby set.
You two will make the best pair ever yet!
And heaven bless the day which well assures
That you are his as much as he is yours."

85

"Oho! I did not say that," answered she,
"Such talk as that will help things never a deal."
"O niece," said Pandar, "pray you, pardon me!
For though I merely spoke out as I feel,
I meant it well, by Mars with helm of steel!
So be not angry with me, dearest
niece!"

"O well," she said, "for this time, I'll make peace."

86

And then he took his leave and homeward bent
His way, with progress made well satisfied,
And Cressida got up and straightway went
Into her private chamber close beside,
And still as a stone, she sat her down and tried
Each word that he had said to bring to mind,
And all interpretations of them find.

For love, and lat me liven as I can.'
But though that he for wo was pale and wan,
Yet made he tho as fresh a contenance
As though he shulde have led the newe daunce.

80

This passed forth, til now, this other day,
It fel that I com roming al allone
Into his chaumbre, and fond how that he lay
Up-on his bed; but man so sore grone
Ne herde I never, and what that was his mone,
Ne wiste I nought; for, as I was cominge,
Al sodeynly he lefte his compleynge.

81

Of which I took somewhat suspecion,
And neer I com, and fond he wepte sore;
And god so wis be my savacion,
As never of thing hadde I no routhe more.
For neither with engyn, ne with no lore,
Unethes mighte I fro the deeth him kepe;
That yet fele I myn herte for him wepe.

82

And god wot, never, sith that I was born,
Was I so bisy no man for to preche,
Ne never was to wight so depe y-sworn,
Or he me tolde who mighte been his leche.
But now to yow rehersen al his speche,
Or alle his woful wordes for to sounen,
Ne did me not, but ye wol see me swowne.

83

But for to save his lyf, and elles nought,
And to non harm of yow, thus am I driven;
And for the love of god that us hath
wrought,
Swich chere him dooth, that he and I may liven.
Now have I plat to yow myn herte schriven;
And sin ye woot that myn entente is clene,
Tak hede ther-of, for I non yvel mene.

84

And right good thrift, I pray to god, have ye,
That han swich oon y-caught with-oute net;
And be ye wys, as ye ben fair to see,
Wel in the ring than is the ruby set.
Ther were never two so wel y-met,
Whan ye ben his al hool, as he is youre:
Ther mighty god yet graunte us see that houre!"

85

"Nay, therof spak I not, a, ha!" quod she,
"As helpe me god, ye shenden every deel!"
"O mercy, dere nece," anon quod he,
"What-so I spak, I mente nought but weel,
By Mars the god, that helmed is of steel;
Now beth nought wrooth, my blood, my nece
dere."

"Now wel," quod she, "foryeven be it here!"

86

With this he took his leve, and hoom he wente;
And lord, how he was glad and wel bi-gooun!
Crisseyde aroos, no lenger she ne stente,
But straught in-to hir closet wente anon,
And sette here down as stille as any stoon,
And every word gan up and down to winde,
That he hadde seyde, as it com hir to minde;

87

And wex somdel astonied in hir thought,
 Right for the newe cas; but whan that she
 Was ful avysed, tho fond she right nought
 Of peril, why she oughte afered be.
 For man may love, of possibilitee,
 A womman so, his herte may to-breste,
 And she nought love ayein, but-if hir leste.

88

But as she sat alone and thoughte thus,
 Th'ascry aroos at skarmish al with-oute,
 And men cryde in the strete, "see, Troilus
 Hath right now put to flight the Grekes route!"
 With that gan al hir meynce for to shoute,
 "Al go we see, caste up the latis wyde;
 For thurgh this strete he moot to palays ryde;

89

For other way is fro the yate noon
 Of Dardanus, ther open is the cheyne."
 With that com he and al his folk anoon
 An esy pas rydinge, in routes tweyne,
 Right as his happy day was, sooth to seyne,
 For which, men say, may nought disturbed be
 That shal bityden of necessitee.

90

This Troilus sat on his baye stede,
 Al armed, save his heed, ful richely,
 And wounded was his hors, and gan to blede,
 On whiche he rood a pas, ful softly;
 But swich a knightly sighte, trewely,
 As was on him, was nought, with-oute faile,
 To loke on Mars, that god is of batayle.

91

So lyk a man of armes and a knight
 He was to seen, fulfild of heigh prowess;
 For bothe he hadde a body and a might
 To doon that thing, as wel as hardinesse;
 And eek to seen him in his gere him dresse,
 So fresh, so yong, so weldy semed he,
 It was an heven up-on him for to see.

92

His helm to-hewen was in twenty places,
 That by a tissew heng, his bak bihinde,
 His sheld to-dasshed was with swerdes and maces,
 In which men mighte many an arwe finde
 That thirled hadde horn and nerf and rinde;
 And ay the peple cryde, "here cometh our joye,
 And, next his brother, holdere up of Troye!"

93

For which he wex a litel reed for shame,
 Whan he the peple up-on him herde cryen,
 That to biholde it was a noble game,
 How sobrelliche he caste doun his yën.
 Cryseyda gan al his chere aspyen,
 And leet so softe it in hir herte sinke,
 That to hir-self she seyde, "who yaf me drinke?"

94

For of hir owene thought she wex al reed,
 Remembre hir right thus, "lo, this is he
 Which that myn uncle swereth he moot be deed,
 But I on him have mercy and pitee";
 And with that thought, for pure a-shamed, she

87

And she was somewhat troubled at the thought
 Of all she'd heard and done, but still when she
 Had weighed it well, it seemed that there was naught
 To justify so great timidity;
 For though a man with love near bursting be,
 Nothing compels a woman to respond,
 Unless, indeed, she should of him grow fond.

88

And as she sat alone, reflecting thus,
 The noise arose of skirmishers without,
 And men cried in the street, "Lo, Troilus
 Hath put the coward Greeks to flight and rout!"
 And all her household ran up with a shout,
 "O let us see! Throw up the lattice wide!
 As he goes home, he through this street will ride!

89

"There is no other way here from the gates
 Of Dardanus where they've let down the chain."
 And then he came, with all his battle mates,
 All riding slowly in a double train;
 And that it was his lucky day 'twas plain,
 A day on which things turn out as they should,
 And even bad luck turns at last to good.

90

Troilus rode upon his good bay steed,
 All armed, except his head, in richest gear;
 The wounds upon his charger still did bleed,
 As slowly down the street the band drew near.
 O what a noble sight did then appear!
 Like Mars himself for battle all arrayed,
 Troilus led the warlike cavalcade.

91

He was the picture of a warrior knight,
 A man of greatest prowess in all ways,
 For bold in mind, he strove with equal might
 In deeds that won a universal praise.
 It was pure joy upon this knight to gaze;
 So fresh, so young, with such vitality,
 He was, in truth, a heavenly sight to see.

92

His helm was hacked in twenty different places,
 So that it hung by just a slender thread;
 His shield was cut by strokes of swords and maces,
 With arrows buried in it to the head,
 Where horn and sinew made for them a bed.
 And loud the people cried, "Here comes our joy,
 And with his brother, great defence of Troy!"

93

And Troilus a little blushed for shame,
 When thus he heard the people shout and cry;
 To watch him was as good as any game,
 How soberly he downward cast his eye;
 And Cressida, intent on all to spy,
 Felt in her heart a softly sinking motion,
 And sighed, "Has some one given me a potion?"

94

And at this thought she blushed a rosy red,
 Bethinking her, "This is the very he
 Who loves me so, so hath my uncle said,
 That he will die, unless help comes from me!"
 And then in modest fear that he might see,

She drew back from the casement window fast
As Troilus and all his people passed.

95

And then in mind she canvassed up and down
The count of all his gracious qualities,
And all his rank and all his great renown,
His wit, his figure, all his knightly case,
But that he loved her, most of all did please;
And then she said, "This man to death to do,
'Twere pity, if his mind and heart are true."

96

Now envious folk might make objection thus:
"This was a sudden love! How might it be
That she so quickly should love Troilus
At sight?" Why, such things happen frequently,
And if you doubt, just look about and see!
For all things slight beginnings first must know
Before to full completion they can grow.

97

For mark, not in the twinkling of an eye
She gave her love to him, but did incline
To like him first, and I have told you why,
And afterward, his qualities so fine
Made deepest love within her heart to mine,
And only then, for proper service done,
And not by sudden glance, her love was won.

98

Recall also that Venus, well arrayed,
Within her seventh house just then doth go,
With all kind aspects at that time displayed
To help poor Troilus in his deep woe;
And she was not in any case a foe
To Troilus from his first natal hour,
Whereby in love he had the greater power.

99

Let Troilus in peace his ways now go,
And let us turn to Cressida, shamefast
And pensive, sitting with her head bent low
And trying solitary to forecast
What courses she should follow at the last,
If Pandar persevering for his friend
Should push this suit unto the final end.

100

Then in her heart she started to debate
Of this affair, as I have to you told,
And over this and that to hesitate
Till she had twisted it in many a fold;
And now her heart was warm, now was it cold,
And some of what she thought I shall relate,
Though far too long were all of her debate.

101

And first she thought that Troilus she knew
At least by sight, and all about his birth,
So high she said, "Of course it would not do
To think of love, with one of such high worth,
But still 'twould be an honor, but in mirth
And in all innocence, for me to deal
With one like him, and mayhap for his weal.

102

"I don't forget he is my sovereign's son,
And since he seems in me to take delight,
If I all his advances harshly shun,

Gan in hir heed to pulle, and that as faste,
Why! he and al the peple for-by paste,

95

And gan to caste and rollen up and down
With-inne hir thought his excellent prowesse,
And his estat, and also his renoun,
His wit, his shap, and eek his gentillesse;
But most hir favour was, for his distresse
Was al for hir, and thoughte it was a routhe
To sleen swich oon, if that he mente trouthe.

96

Now mighte som envious jangle thus,
"This was a sodeyn love, how mighte it be
That she so lightly lovede Troilus
Right for the firste sighte; ye, pardee?"
Now who-so seyth so, mote he never thee!
For every thing, a ginning hath it nede
Er al be wrought, with-uten any drede.

97

For I sey nought that she so sodeynly
Yaf him hir love, but that she gan encline
To lyke him first, and I have told yow why;
And after that, his manhod and his pyne
Made love with-inne hir for to myne,
For which, by proces and by good servyse,
He gat hir love, and in no sodeyn wyse.

98

And also blisful Venus, wel arrayed,
Sat in hir seventhe hous of hevene tho,
Disposed wel, and with aspectes payed,
To helpen sely Troilus of his wo.
And, sooth to seyn, she nas nat al a fo
To Troilus in his nativitee;
God woot that wel the soner spedde he.

99

Now lat us stinte of Troilus a throwe,
That rydeth forth, and lat us tourne faste
Un-to Criseyde, that heng hir heed ful lowe,
Ther-as she sat allone, and gan to caste
Wher-on she wolde apoynte hir at the laste,
If it so were hir eem ne wolde cesse,
For Troilus, up-on hir for to presse.

100

And, lord! so she gan in hir thought argue
In this matere of which I have yow told,
And what to doon best were, and what eschue,
That plyted she ful ofte in many fold.
Now was hir herte warm, now was it cold,
And what she thoughte somewhat shal I wryte,
As to myn auctor listeth for to endyte.

101

She thoughte wel, that Troilus persone
She knew by sighte and eek his gentillesse,
And thus she seyde, "al were it nought to done,
To graunte him love, yet, for his worthinesse,
It were honour, with pley and with gladnesse,
In honestee, with swich a lord to dele,
For myn estat, and also for his hele.

102

Eek, wel wot I my kinges sone is he;
And sith he hath to see me swich delyt,
If I wolde utterly his sighte flee,

Paraunter he mighte have me in dispyt,
Thurgh which I mighte stonde in worse plyt;
Now were I wys, me hate to purchase,
With-uten nede, ther I may stonde in grace?

103

In every thing, I woot, ther lyth mesure.
For though a man forbode dronkenesse,
He nought for-bet that every creature
Be drinkelees for alwey, as I gesse;
Eek sith I woot for me is his distresse,
I ne oughte not for that thing him despyse,
Sith it is so, he meneth in good wyse.

104

And eek I knowe, of longe tyme agoon,
His thewes goode, and that he is not nyce.
Ne avauntour, seyth men, certein, is he noon;
To wys is he to do so gret a vyce;
Ne als I nel him never so cheryce,
That he may make avaunt, by juste cause;
He shal me never binde in swiche a clause.

105

Now set a cas, the hardest is, y-wis,
Men mighten deme that he loveth me:
What dishonour were it un-to me, this?
May I him lette of that? why nay, pardee!
I knowe also, and alday here and see,
Men loven wommen al this toun aboute;
Be they the wers? why, nay, with-uten doute.

106

I think eek how he able is for to have
Of al this noble toun the thriftieste,
To been his love, so she hir honour save;
For out and out he is the worthieste,
Save only Ector, which that is the beste
And yet his lyf al lyth now in my cure,
But swich is love, and eek myn aventure.

107

Ne me to love, a wonder is it nought;
For wel wot I my-self, so god me spede,
Al wolde I that noon wistē of this thought,
I am oon the fayreste, out of drede,
And goodlieste, who-so taketh hede;
And so men seyn in al the toun of Troye.
What wonder is it though he of me have joye?

108

I am myn owene woman, wel at ese,
I thanke it god, as after myn estat;
Right yong, and stonde unteyd in lusty lese,
With-uten jalousye or swich debat;
Shal noon housbonde seyn to me 'chek-mat!'
For either they ben ful of jalousye,
Or maisterful, or loven noveltye.

109

What shal I doon? to what fyn live I thus?
Shal I nat loven, in cas if that me leste?
What, *par dieux*! I am nought religious!
And though that I myn herte sette at reste
Upon this knight, that is the worthieste,
And kepe alwey myn honour and my name,
By alle right, it may do me no shame."

110

But right as whan the sonne shyneth brighte,

He might be angry with me, and with right,
Whereby I might fall in a still worse plight.
Would that be wise if I his hate incurred,
When I might have his love for just a word?

103

"In everything there should be moderation,
For though one might forbid all drunkenness,
One could not say that men through all creation
Should never drink—'twere folly, nothing less;
And since for me he feels all this distress,
No reason I should scorn him and despise,
That is, if he behaves in goodly wise.

104

"But well I know, and so does everyone,
That he in all affairs is most discreet,
And boaster, too, most surely he is none,
Nor idle tales or secrets would repeat;
But that's a point on which I need not treat,
For he shall have no chance to boast of me,
Or hold me by such bonds of secrecy.

105

"But now suppose the worst should come about
And men should gossip of his love for me,
Need that upon my name cast any doubt?
Can I stop him from that? Why, he is free!
I know, and every day I hear and see,
That men love women, yet no leave have they,
And when they want to stop, they can and may!

106

"Of course I know he is a splendid catch,
To get whom women all would do their best,
If no dishonor thereto did attach;
For he by far surpasses all the rest,
Save Hector only, who is worthiest,
And yet his life is subject to my glance!
But such is love, and such my lucky chance!

107

"That he should love me surely is no wonder,
For I am not so simple but I know
(Though naturally I say this only under
My breath) that I am fair, as women go,
Fairer than most, though I myself say so,
But plenty here in Troy will say the same;
If he thinks well of me, who can him blame?

108

"I am my master, too, here at my ease,
Thank God for that, and with a fair estate,
Right young and free to do just as I please,
With husband none to say to me 'Checkmate!'
Or worry me with troublesome debate.
For husbands all are full of jealousy,
And masterful, or hunting novelty!

109

"What should I do? Shall I not have some fun?
Shall I not even love, if so inclined?
Why not, I'd like to know! I'm not a nun!
What if my heart a resting place should find
Upon this knight, the best of all mankind,
If I preserve my honor and my name,
I see no cause in that of harm or blame!"

110

Now like the sun in March which shines out bright,

Though oft the March sun, too, doth hide his face,
For though the winds may put the clouds to flight,
Their courses soon again the clouds retrace,
So now a cloudy thought began to race
Across her heart, o'erspreading like a pall
Her sunny thoughts with shadowy thought withal.

111

The thought was this, "Alas, since I am free,
Should I now love and risk my happy state
And maybe put in bonds my liberty?
What folly such a course to contemplate!
Am I not satisfied to see the fate
Of others, with their fear and joy and pain?
Who loveth not, no cause hath to complain.

112

"For lovers ever lead a stormy life,
And have done so since loving was begun,
For always some distrust and foolish strife
There is in love, some cloud across the sun.
Then nothing by us women can be done,
But weep in wretchedness and sit and think,
'This is our lot, the cup of woe to drink!'

113

"And slanderous tongues, they are so very quick
To do us harm, and men are so untrue,
And once they're satisfied, they soon grow sick
Of ancient love and look for something new!
But when all's done, then what can women do!
These men at first their love like mad will spend,
But sharp attacks oft weaken at the end.

114

"Full often it hath been exemplified,
The treason that to women men will show;
And that's the end, when such a love hath died,
For what becomes of it, when it doth go,
No living creature on this earth can know,
For then there's nothing left to love or spurn;
What once was naught, to nothing doth return.

115

"And if I love, how busy must I be
To guard against all idle people's chatter,
And fool them that they see no fault in me,
For true or not, to them it doesn't matter,
If but their lying tales amuse or flatter;
For who can stop the wagging of a tongue,
Or sound of bells the while that they are rung!"

116

But when her cloudy thoughts began to clear,
She countered, "Nothing venture, nothing gain!
All things must have their price, or cheap or dear."
This thought brought dark forebodings in its train,
And hope and fear were linked in endless chain,
Now hot, now cold, and thus between the two
She started up, still doubtful what to do.

117

Down stairs along the garden paths she went,
And calling to her there her nieces three,
They rambled through the garden's whole extent,
Flexippe, Tarbe and Antigone,
A charming and a pleasant sight to see;
And others of her women came along,
And in the garden made a merry throng.

In March, that chaungeth ofte tyme his face,
And that a cloud is put with wind to flighte
Which over-sprat the sonne as for a space,
A cloudy thought gan thorough hir soule pace,
That over-spradde hir brighte thoughtes alle,
So that for fere almost she gan to falle.

111

That thought was this, "allas! sin I am free,
Sholde I now love, and putte in jupartye
My sikernesse, and thrallen libertee?
Allas! how dorste I thenken that folye?
May I nought wel in other folk aspye
Hir dredful joye, hir constreynt, and hir payne?
Ther loveth noon, that she nath why to pleyne.

112

For love is yet the moste stormy lyf,
Right of him-self, that ever was bigonne;
For ever som mistrust, or nyce stryf,
Ther is in love, som cloud is over the sonne:
Ther-to we wrecched women no-thing conne,
Whan us is wo, but wepe and sitte and thinke;
Our wreche is this, our owene wo to drinke.

113

Also these wikked tonges been so prest
To speke us harm, eek men be so untrewed,
That, right anoon as cessed is hir lest,
So cesseth love, and forth to love a newe:
But harm y-doon, is doon, who-so it rewe.
For though these men for love hem first to-rende,
Ful sharp beginning breketh ofte at ende.

114

How ofte tyme hath it y-knowned be,
The treson, that to womman hath be do?
To what fyn is swich love, I can nat see,
Or wher bicomth it, whan it is ago;
Ther is no wight that woot, I trowe so,
Wher it bycomth; lo, no wight on it sporneth;
That erst was no-thing, in-to nought it torneth.

115

How bisy, if I love, eek moste I be
To plesen hem that jangle of love, and demen,
And coye hem, that they sey non harm of me?
For though ther be no cause, yet hem semen
Al be for harm that folk hir freendes quemen;
And who may stoppen every wikked tonge,
Or soun of belles whyl that they be ronge?"

116

And after that, hir thought bigan to clere,
And seyde, 'he which that no-thing under-taketh,
No-thing ne acheveth, be him looth or dere."
And with an other thought hir herte quaketh;
Than slepeth hope, and after dreed awaketh;
Now hoot, now cold; but thus, bi-twixen tweye,
She rist hir up, and went hir for to pleye.

117

Adoun the steyre anoon-right tho she wente
In-to the gardin, with hir neces three,
And up and down ther made many a wente,
Flexippe, she, Tharbe, and Antigone,
To pleyen, that it joye was to see;
And othere of hir women, a gret route,
Hir folwede in the gardin al aboute.

118

This yerd was large, and rayled alle the aleyes,
And shadwed wel with blosmy bowes grene,
And benched newe, and sonded alle the weyes,
In which she walketh arm in arm bitwene;
Til at the laste Antigone the shene
Gan on a Trojan song to singe clere,
That it an heven was hir voys to here.—

119

She seyde, "O love, to whom I have and shal
Ben humble subgit, trewe in myn entente,
As I best can, to yow, lord, yeve ich al
For ever-more, myn hertes lust to rente.
For never yet thy grace no wight sente
So blisful cause as me, my lyf to lede
In alle joye and seurtee, out of drede.

120

Ye, blisful god, han me so wel beset
In love, y-wis, that al that bereth lyf
Imaginen ne cowde how to ben bet;
For, lord, with-outen jalousye or stryf,
I love oon which that is most ententyf
To serven wel, unwery or unfeyned,
That ever was, and leest with harm distreyned.

121

As he that is the welle of worthinesse,
Of trouthe ground, mirour of goodliheed,
Of wit Appollo, stoon of sikernesne,
Of vertu rote, of lust findere and heed,
Thurgh which is alle sorwe fro me deed,
Y-wis, I love him best, so doth he me;
Now good thrift have he, wher-so that he be!

122

Whom sholde I thanke but yow, god of love,
Of al this blisse, in which to bathe I ginne?
And thanked be ye, lord, for that I love!
This is the righte lyf that I am inne,
To flemen alle manere vyce and sinne:
This doth me so to vertu for to entende,
That day by day I in my wil amende.

123

And who-so seyth that for to love is vyce,
Or thraldom, though he fele in it distresse,
He outhur is envyouus, or right nyce,
Or is unmyghty, for his shrewednesse,
To loven; for swich maner folk, I gesse,
Defamen love, as no-thing of him knowe;
They speken, but they bente never his bowe.

124

What is the sonne wers, of kinde righte,
Though that a man, for feblesse of his yē,
May nought endure on it to see for brighte?
Or love the wers, though wrecches on it cryen?
No wele is worth, that may no sorwe dryen.
And for-thy, who that hath an heed of verre,
Fro cast of stones war him in the werre!

125

But I with al myn herte and al my might,
As I have seyde, wol love, un-to my laste,
My dere herte, and al myn owene knight,
In which myn herte growen is so faste,
And his in me, that it shal ever laste.

118

The place was large, and all the alleys railed,
And shaded well with flowery boughs, all green
With branches new, nor gravelled paths there failed
On which she walked, two nieces dear between,
The while Antigone, with cheerful mien,
Began to sing a Trojan lay, so clear
It was a heavenly joy her voice to hear:

119

"O God of Love, to whom I e'er have been
A humble subject, true in my intent
And will, through thee, O Love, I hope to win
What joy shall ever to my heart be sent!
For I opine that no one has been meant
By thy good grace a happier life to lead
Than I, whose joy by thee has been decreed.

120

"O blissful God, so happy is my state,
No creature on this earth, with creatures rife,
Could equal me in love or be my mate;
For Lord, with neither jealousy nor strife,
I love one who is eager with his life
To serve me, tireless and unrestrained,
And with a love by no dishonor stained.

121

"For he whose mastership I here confess,
The ground of truth and virtue's looking-glass,
Apollo for wit, the rock of steadfastness,
The root of good, whose joys all joy surpass,
Who makes all sorrow wither as the grass—
I love him best, and so doth he love me;
Success to him, whoever he may be!

122

"Whom should I thank but thee, thou God above,
That now to bathe in bliss I may begin?
Have here my thanks, O Lord, that I may love!
The happy life is this that I dwell in,
The refuge here from every vice and sin!
Such virtue loving to my heart doth lend
That day by day I feel my life amend.

123

"And anyone who says that love is wrong,
Or slavery, then he is nothing less
Than envious, or in his wit not strong,
Or lacking power to love for crustiness;
And folk who talk of hardship and distress,
But slander love and nothing of him know;
They talk, but they have never bent his bow.

124

"For is the sun the worse in its own right
Because some man, for weakness of his eye,
May not endure its radiance so bright?
Or love the worse, though some against it cry?
No weal is well that sorrow can outvie,
And people in glass houses should be wary,
And specially of throwing stones be chary.

125

"But I with all my heart and all my might,
As I have said, with loving unsurpassed
Will love my love, my true and precious knight,
To whom my soul hath grown so firm and fast,
And his to me, our love shall ever last;

Though once with love I dreaded to begin,
Now well I know no peril lies therein."

126

When thus her song to happy end she brought,
Cressida spoke up, "Dearest niece," she said,
"Pray tell me who this pleasant ditty wrought?"
She gave no name but answered thus instead,
"Madam, the goodliest maid and highest bred
Of all maids in this pleasant town of Troy,
Who lived her life in honor and in joy."

127

"So it would seem, to judge her by her song,"
Said Cressida, and therewith paused and sighed,
"I wonder, doth such joy in truth belong
In love as by such ditties seems implied?"
"O yes," Antigone with rapture cried,
"For all the folk that dwell in mortal state
The joy of love in full could not relate."

128

"But 'tis not every humble creature knows
The perfect bliss of love! Most surely not!
For foolish men will foolish things suppose;
Most think it's love if only they are hot!
But ask the saints if you would know the lot
Of those in heaven, for they alone can tell,
And ask the devil if it's foul in hell."

129

Cressida to this said nothing in reply,
Observing but, "It's getting on toward night,"
Yet all these words within her memory lie,
Imprinted on her heart all clear and bright;
And now indeed of love she feels less fright
Than she had done, for now love sits at ease
Within her heart, with greater power to please."

130

The crown of day and heaven's brightest eye,
The foe of night (I merely mean the sun),
Westward and downward now began to hie,
For he the course of one full day had run,
And all things bright were turning drear and dun
For lack of light, while stars came out in scores,
And Cressida betook herself indoors."

131

And when at length time came to go to bed
And all the folk had left the house who ought,
To go to sleep she felt inclined she said,
And soon her women to her bed her brought;
And there in silence lay she still and thought
And thought, but all her thoughts I can't delay
To tell, and you can guess them anyway."

132

Upon a cedar green a nightingale,
Under the chamber wall near where she lay,
Full loudly sang against the moonlight pale,
A song perhaps of love, as birds well may,
For love alone could make a song so gay;
And listening long, this loving song sank deep
Within her heart before she fell asleep."

133

And as she slept, she dreamed, and dreaming saw
A wondrous eagle, feathered snowy white,
And from her breast he tore with curving claw

Al dredde I first to love him to beginne,
Now woot I wel, ther is no peril inne."

126

And of hir song right with that word she stente,
And therewith-al, "now, nece," quod Criseyde,
"Who made this song with so good entente?"
Antigone answerde anoon, and seyde,
"Ma dame, y-wis, the godlieste mayde
Of greet estat in al the toun of Troye;
And let hir lyf in most honour and joye."

127

"Forsothe, so it semeth by hir song,"
Quod tho Criseyde, and gan ther-with to syke,
And seyde, "lord, is there swich blisse among
These lovers, as they conne faire endyte?"
"Ye, wis," quod fresh Antigone the whyte,
"For alle the folk that han or been on lyve
Ne conne wel the blisse of love discryve."

128

But wene ye that every wrecche woot
The parfit blisse of love? why, nay, y-wis;
They wenen al be love, if oon be hoot;
Do wey, do wey, they woot no-thing of this!
Men mosten axe at seyntes if it is
Aught fair in hevene; why? for they conne telle;
And axen fendes, is it foul in helle."

129

Criseyde un-to that purpos nought answerde,
But seyde, "y-wis, it wol be night as faste."
But every word which that she of hir herde,
She gan to prenten in hir herte faste;
And ay gan love hir lasse for to agaste
Than it dide erst, and sinken in hir herte,
That she wex somewhat able to converte."

130

The dayes honour, and the hevenes yē,
The nightes fo, al this clepe I the sonne,
Gan westren faste, and downward for to wrye,
As he that hadde his dayes cours y-ronne;
And whyte thinges wexen dimme and donne
For lak of light, and sterres for to appere,
That she and al hir folk in wente y-fere."

131

So whan it lyked hir to goon to reste,
And voyded weren they that voyden oughte,
She seyde, that to slepe wel hir leste.
Hir women sone til hir bed hir broughte.
Whan al was hust, than lay she stille, and thoughte
Of al this thing the manere and the wyse.
Reherce it nedeth nought, for ye ben wyse."

132

A nightingale, upon a cedre grene,
Under the chambre-wal ther as she lay,
Ful loude sang ayein the mone shene,
Paraunter, in his briddes wyse, a lay
Of love, that made hir herte fresh and gay.
That herkned she so longe in good entente,
Til at the laste the dede sleep hir hente."

133

And, as she sleep, anoon-right tho hir mette,
How that an egle, fethered whyt as boon,
Under hir brest his longe clawes sette,

And out hir herte he rente, and that a-noon,
And dide his herte in-to hir brest to goon,
Of which she nought agroos ne no-thing smerte,
And forth he fleigh, with herte left for herte.

134

Now lat hir slepe, and we our tales holde
Of Troilus, that is to paleys riden,
Fro the scarmuch, of the whiche I tolde,
And in his chambre sit, and hath abiden
Til two or three of his messages yeden
For Pandarus, and soughten him ful faste,
Til they him founde, and broughte him at the
laste.

135

This Pandarus com leping in at ones
And seide thus, "who hath ben wel y-bete
To-day with swerdes, and with slinge-stones,
But Troilus, that hath caught him an hete?"
And gan to jape, and seyde, "lord, so ye
swete!

But rys, and lat us soupe and go to reste";
And he answerde him, "do we as thee leste."

136

With al the haste goodly that they mighte,
They spedde hem fro the souper un-to bedde;
And every wight out at the dore him dighte,
And wher him list upon his way he spedde;
But Troilus, that thoughte his herte bledde
For wo, til that he herde som tydinge,
He seyde, "freend, shal I now wepe or singe?"

137

Quod Pandarus, "ly stille, and lat me slepe,
And don thyn hood, thy nedes spedde be;
And chese, if thou wolt singe or daunce or lepe;
At shorte wordes, thou shalt trowe me.—
Sire, my nece wol do wel by thee,
And love thee best, by god and by my trouthe,
But lak of pursuit make it in thy slouthe.

138

For thus ferforth I have thy work bigonne,
Fro day to day, til this day, by the morwe,
Hir love of frendship have I to thee wonne,
And also hath she leyd hir feyth to borwe.
Algate a foot is hameled of thy sorwe."
What sholde I lenger sermon of it holde?
As ye han herd bifore, al he him tolde.

139

But right as floures, thourgh the colde of night
Y-closed, stoupen on hir stalkes lowe,
Redressen hem a-yein the sonne bright,
And spreden on hir kinde cours by rowe;
Right so gan tho his eyen up to throwe
This Troilus, and seyde, "O Venus dere,
Thy might, thy grace, y-heried be it here!"

140

And to Pandare he held up bothe his hondes,
And seyde, "lord, al thyn be that I have;
For I am hool, al brosten been my bondes;
A thousand Troians who so that me yave,
Eche after other, god so wis me save,
Ne mighte me so gladen; lo, myn herte,
It spredeth so for joye, it wol to-sterete!

Her heart, and then she saw a stranger sight;
Where hers had been, he put his heart forthright,
At which no fear she knew, nor pain nor smart,
And forth he flew, with heart exchanged for heart.

134

So let her sleep, and let us now give heed
To Troilus, who to the palace rides
From that same skirmish on his prancing steed,
And to his chamber goes, and there abides,
But sends his courier, and two or three besides,
To look for Pandar, whom they straightway sought
And found and to the palace quickly
brought.

135

Pandar came running in at once and said,
"O what a day! What Trojan ever yet
Has had such storms of swords upon his head
As Troilus! It made you hot, I'll bet,"
And laughed and joking said, "Lord, how you
sweat!

But come, it's late, and time you should clean up."
"All right," said Troilus, "let's go and sup."

136

In haste they went, in haste they also supped,
Then back again and so prepared for bed,
Sending away all who could interrupt
The confidential things that might be said;
And Troilus, whose very heart-strings bled
Until he heard what news his friend would bring,
Cried out, "Now tell me, shall I weep or sing?"

137

"O hush!" said Pandar, "let me go to sleep!
And you do, too! You have no need to worry,
But choose if you will dance or sing or leep.
Just trust in me and don't be in a hurry.
To tell the truth, she's in as great a flurry
As you are in, and near as resolute,
If only you don't slacken in pursuit.

138

"For your affair I have so well begun
And carried on, that on this very day
Her loving friendship I for you have won
And her good faith against it she doth lay—
Your woe in one leg's crippled anyway!"
But why should I a longer discourse hold,
For all that you have heard, to him be told.

139

And as the flowers, closed by cold at night,
Hang drooping on their stalks all limp and low,
But straighten up against the sunshine bright
And in their proper way expand and grow,
Troilus lifted up his eyes just so
And said, "O precious Venus, goddess mine,
All honor to thy grace and power divine!"

140

To Pandar then he held out both his hands,
And said, "Good sir, all that I have is thine!
For I am healed, and broken are my bands!
A thousand Troys, if thousand Troys were mine,
Could not together happily combine
To give me such a joy, for lo, my heart
So swells, it seems in fragments it must part.

141
 "What shall I do? And how shall I survive?
 And when again shall I my sweetheart see?
 The tedious time away how shall I drive
 Until you bring back further news to me?
 'Tis easy quite to say 'Go slow,' but he
 That's hanging by the neck in mortal pain
 Has no desire hanging to remain."

142
 "Now, now," said Pandar, "by the love of Mars,
 You know that all things have their proper season,
 And that the night immediate action bars;
 But if you'll listen to a little reason,
 I'll go the earliest hour that she agrees on;
 In some things you must do just what I say,
 Or on some other man your charges lay."

143
 "For heaven knows, I ever yet have been
 Ready at call, nor ever to this night
 Have I held back, for though my wit be thin,
 I've done my best, according to my might.
 Do as I say, and it will be all right.
 But if you won't, to me it's all the same,
 Though in that case, I shall not bear the blame."

144
 "I know that thou art wiser far than I,
 But were I in the selfsame fix as thou,
 I know the very plan that I would try.
 With my own hand I'd go and write her now
 A letter, telling her exactly how
 The love of her had driven me near crazy.
 Now stir yourself and don't be slack or lazy."

145
 "And I myself will with your letter go,
 And at the time that I am with her there,
 In all your gear to make the bravest show,
 Upon your courser to her street repair,
 As though it were upon some chance affair,
 And you will find us at a window-seat,
 So shall I manage, looking in the street."

146
 "And if you want, give us a brief salute,
 But when you do, of course at me you'll glance,
 And then ride on, as though on some pursuit
 That called you hence. Don't stop, by any chance!
 Just take it steady, and on your way advance,
 And after you are gone, to her I'll turn
 And tell her things will make your ears both burn."

147
 "Respecting that letter, you are wise enough,
 Only I wouldn't write in too high style,
 Or spin fine arguments obscure and tough.
 Don't write too neat, and use a little guile—
 Let tear stains blot your words once in a while;
 But if you find a word you think is clever,
 Use it but once, don't harp on it forever!"

148
 "For though a harper were the best alive,
 And had the best harp in the world to play,
 And played it best with all his fingers five,
 If he but touched one string or sang one lay,
 However sharp his nails were filed away,

141
 But lord, how shal I doon, how shal I liven?
 Whan shal I next my dere herte see?
 How shal this longe tyme a-wey be driven,
 Til that thou be ayein at hir fro me?
 Thou mayst answer, 'a-byd, a-byd,' but he
 That hangeth by the nekke, sooth to seyne,
 In grete disese abydeyth for the peyne."

142
 "Al esily, now, for the love of Marte,"
 Quod Pandarus, "for every thing hath tyme;
 So longe abyd til that the night departe;
 For al so siker as thow lyst here by me,
 And god toforn, I wol be there at pryme,
 And for thy werk somewhat as I shal seye,
 Or on som other wight this charge leye."

143
 For pardee, god wot, I have ever yit
 Ben redy thee to serve, and to this night
 Have I nought fayned, but emforth my wit
 Don al thy lust, and shal with al my might.
 Do now as I shal seye, and fare a-right;
 And if thou nilt, wyte al thy-self thy care,
 On me is nought along thyn yvel fare."

144
 I woot wel that thow wyser art than I
 A thousand fold, but if I were as thou,
 God helpe me so, as I wolde outrely,
 Right of myn owene hond, wryte hir right now
 A lettre, in which I wolde hir tellen how
 I ferde amis, and hir besече of routhe;
 Now help thy-self, and leve it not for slouth."

145
 And I my-self shal ther-with to hir goon;
 And whan thou wost that I am with hir there,
 Worth thou up-on a courser right anoon,
 Ye, hardily, right in thy beste gere,
 And ryd forth by the place, as nought ne were,
 And thou shalt finde us, if I may, sittinge
 At som windowe, in-to the strete lokinge."

146
 And if thee list, than maystow us saluwe,
 And up-on me makē thy contenance;
 But, by thy lyf, be war and faste eschuwe
 To tarien ought, god shilde us fro mischaunce!
 Ryd forth thy wey, and hold thy governaunce;
 And we shal speke of thee som-what, I trowe,
 Whan thou art goon, to do thyne eres glowe!"

147
 Touching thy lettre, thou art wys y-nough,
 I woot thow nilt it digneliche endyte;
 As make it with thise argumentes tough;
 Ne scrivenish or craftily thou it wryte;
 Beblotte it with thy teres eek a lyte;
 And if thou wryte a goodly word al softe,
 Though it be good, reherce it not to ofte."

148
 For though the beste harpou upon lyve
 Wolde on the beste souned joly harpe
 That ever was, with alle his fingers fyve,
 Touche ay o streng, or ay o werbul harpe,
 Were his nayles poynted never so sharpe,

It shulde maken every wight to dulle,
To here his glee, and of his strokes fulle.

149

Ne jompre eek no discordaunt thing y-fere,
As thus, to usen termes of phisyk;
In loves termes, hold of thy matere
The forme alwey, and do that it be lyk;
For if a peyntour wolde peynte a pyk
With asses feet, and hede it as an ape,
It cordeth nought; so nere it but a jape."

150

This counseyl lyked wel to Troilus;
But, as a dreedful lover, he seyde this:—
"Allas, my dere brother Pandarus,
I am ashamed for to wryte, y-wis,
Lest of myn innocence I seyde a-mis,
Or that she nolde it for despyt receyve;
Thanne were I deed, ther mighte it no-thing
weyve."

151

To that Pandare answerde, "if thee lest,
Do that I seye, and lat me therwith goon;
For by that lord that formed est and west,
I hope of it to bringe answer anoon
Right of hir hond, and if that thou nilt noon,
Lat be; and sory mote he been his lyve,
Ayeins thy lust that helpeth thee to thryve."

152

Quod Troilus, "*Depardieux*, I assente;
Sin that thee list, I will aryse and wryte;
And blisful god preye ich, with good entente,
The vyage, and the lettre I shal endyte,
So spede it; and thou, Minerva, the whyte,
Yif thou me wit my lettre to devyse":
And sette him down, and wroot right in this
wyse.—

153

First he gan hir his righte lady calle,
His hertes lyf, his lust, his sorwes leche,
His blisse, and eek this othere termes alle,
That in swich cas these loveres alle seche;
And in ful humble wyse, as in his speche,
He gan him recomaunde un-to hir grace;
To telle al how, it axeth muchel space.

154

And after this, ful lowly he hir prayde
To be nought wrooth, though he, of his folye,
So hardy was to hir to wryte, and seyde,
That love it made, or elles moste he dye,
And pitously gan mercy for to crye;
And after that he seyde, and ley ful loude,
Him-self was litel worth, and lesse he coude;

155

And that she sholde han his conning excused,
That litel was, and eek he dredde hir so,
And his unworthinesse he ay acused;
And after that, than gan he telle his wo;
But that was endeles, with-outhen ho
And seyde, he wolde in trouthe alwey him holde;—
And radde it over, and gan the lettre folde.

156

And with his salte teres gan he bathe

His music would but make men dull and sad,
And only when he stopped would they be glad.

149

"And don't mix things that do not harmonize,
In love and medicine the same note strike,
But always use the style that best applies
To what you say, so that it seems life-like;
For if a painter painted finny pike
With asses' feet and headed them like apes,
He'd be no artist but a jack-a-napes."

150

Troilus thought this counsel very wise,
But timid lover that he was, replied,
"Pandar, alas, I see what you advise,
But I'm afraid to write, I must confide!
Such letters I have never seen nor tried,
And if she took amiss what I might say,
Goodnight for me—'twould be my fatal
day!"

151

"Don't balk," said Pandar, "go ahead and write,
And let me with your letter to her go,
And by the Lord and his eternal might,
I'll have an answer soon that I can show
From her own hand. But if you won't do so,
I give it up. And heaven help the chap
Who tries to help you out of your mishap!"

152

"O Lord," his poor friend answered, "I give in!
Since you insist, I'll get up now and write!
May God help you your journey's end to win,
When, as and if my letter I endite!
Minerva, O thou goddess fair and bright,
Grant me the wit my letter to devise!"
Then down he sat and wrote her in this
wise.

153

His only lady first he did her call,
Life of his heart, his joy, his sorrows' cure,
His bliss, and many other terms that all
Good lovers use their ladies to assure;
And then with humble words and with demure,
He begged that she would show to him some grace—
Of course to tell you all I haven't space.

154

Then next he begged in meek and humble fashion
That she would cast at least a pardoning eye
On what he dared to write, and said his passion
Left him no choice, except he wished to die,
Nor stopped with that at piling it on high;
Himself of small account he did profess,
And added that his deeds were worth still less,

155

And begged her to excuse his lack of skill,
And said it was because he feared her so,
And harped upon his subjugation still,
And on his sufferings too deep to show,
And said that they would even greater grow,
And then goodbye, with pledges new and old,
And so his letter ready was to fold.

156

The ruby in his signet with his tears

He bathes, and when he hath it neatly set
Upon the wax, its impress there appears;
A thousand times then he did not forget
To kiss his missive with his kisses wet,
And said, "O letter, what a joy for thee!
Tomorrow thou my lady dear shalt see."

157

The letter in the morning Pandar took
To Cressida, as soon as he could start.
"Are you awake," he cried, "let's have a look!"
And then he laughed and joked, and said, "My
heart

Remains so fresh, for all love makes it smart,
I cannot sleep on such a May-time morrow!
I have a jolly woe, a lusty sorrow!"

158

Cressida greeted him with some surprise,
Eager to know, but also with some fear
Why he came there, she questions and replies,
"What lucky wind has brought you over
here

So early in the morning, uncle dear?
Tell us your jolly woe and your mischance!
What progress are you making in love's dance?"

159

"As ever," he said, "I'm limping far behind!"
At which she laughed as if her heart would burst.
"I hope," said Pandar, "you will always find
Me cause for mirth! But listen to me first—
There's come a stranger to this town accursed,
A Grecian spy, and he great tidings brings—
I thought you'd like to hear about these things.

160

"Let's go into the garden, you and I,
I'll tell you privately this latest news."
Then arm in arm, down from her chamber high
They walk into the garden cool, and choose
A quiet path where no one hears or views
The things they say or do, and thus concealed,
Pandar the precious letter straight revealed.

161

"He who is altogether yours," said he,
"Petitions you most humbly for your grace,
And sends to you this letter here by me.
Regard it well at fitting time and place,
And with your pen some goodly answer trace,
For now I tell you once for all and plain,
He cannot longer live in so great pain."

162

The letter she beheld, but stood quite still,
And took it not, till anger drove out fear,
And then she loudly cried, "Nor script nor bill,
For love of God, bring never to me here
From such a source! And also, uncle dear,
For my good name have more regard, I pray,
Than for your friend. What need I further say?"

163

"Pray tell me, do you in your heart believe,
For all your guileful words and cunning speech,
That I could properly this note receive,
Or put in practice what you seem to preach,
And both of you so earnestly beseech,

The ruby in his signet, and it sette
Upon the wax deliverliche and rathe;
Ther-with a thousand tymes, er he lette,
He kiste tho the lettre that he shette,
And seyde, "lettre, a blisful destence
Thee shapen is, my lady shal thee see."

157

This Pandare took the lettre, and that by tyme
A-morwe, and to his neces paleys sterte,
And faste he swoor, that it was passed pryme,
And gan to jape, and seyde, "y-wis, myn
herte,

So fresh it is, al-though it sore smerte,
I may not slepe never a Mayes morwe;
I have a joly wo, a lusty sorwe."

158

Criseyde, whan that she hir uncle herde,
With dreedful herte, and desirous to here
The cause of his cominge, thus answerde,
"Now by your feyth, myn uncle," quod she,
"dere,

What maner windes gydeth yow now here?
Tel us your joly wo and your penaunce,
How ferforth be ye put in loves daunce."

159

"By god," quod he, "I hoppe alwey bihinde!"
And she to-laugh, it thoughte hir herte breste.
Quod Pandarus, "loke alwey that ye finde
Game in myn hood, but herkneth, if yow leste;
Ther is right now come in-to tounne a geste,
A Greek espye, and telleth newe thinges,
For which come I to telle yow tydings.

160

Into the gardin go we, and we shal here,
Al prevely, of this a long sermoun."
With that they wenten arm in arm y-ferre
In-to the gardin from the chaumbre down.
And whan that he so fer was that the soun
Of that he speke, no man here mighte,
He seyde hir thus, and out the lettre plighte,

161

"Lo, he that is al hoolly youre free
Him recomaundeth lowly to your grace,
And sent to you this lettre here by me;
Avyseth you on it, whan ye han space,
And of som goodly answer yow purchase;
Or, helpe me god, so pleylnly for to seyne,
He may not longe liven for his payne."

162

Ful dredfully tho gan she stonde stille,
And took it nought, but al hir humble chere
Gan for to chaunge, and seyde, "scrit ne bille,
For love of god, that toucheth swich matere,
Ne bring me noon; and also, uncle dere,
To myn estat have more reward, I preye,
Than to his lust; what sholde I more seye?"

163

And loketh now if this be resonable,
And letteth nought, for favour ne for slouthe,
To seyn a sooth; now were it covenable
To myn estat, by god, and by your trouthe,
To taken it, or to han of him routhe,

In harming of my-self or in reprove?
Ber it a-yein, for him that ye on level!"

164

This Pandarus gan on hir for to stare,
And seyde, "now is this the grettest wonder
That ever I sey! lat be this nyce fare!
To deethe mote I smiten be with thonder,
If, for the citee which that stondeþ yonder,
Wolde I a lettre un-to yow bringe or take
To harm of yow; what list yow thus it make?"

165

But thus ye faren, wel neigh alle and some,
That he that most desireth yow to serve,
Of him ye recche leest wher he bicomē,
And whether that he live or elles sterve.
But for al that that ever I may deserve,
Refuse it nought," quod he, and hente hir faste,
And in hir bosom the lettre down he thraste,

166

And seyde hir, "now cast it away anoon,
That folk may seen and gauren on us tweye."
Quod she, "I can abyde til they be goon,"
And gan to smyle, and seyde him, "eem, I preye,
Swich answer as yow list your-self purveye,
For trewely I nil no lettre write."
"No? than wol I," quod he, "so ye endyte."

167

Therwith she lough, and seyde, "go we dyne."
And he gan at him-self to jape faste,
And seyde, "nece, I have so greet a pyne
For love, that every other day I faste"—
And gan his beste japes forth to caste;
And made hir so to laughe at his folye,
That she for laughter wende for to dye.

168

And whan that she was comen in-to halle,
"Now, eem," quod she, "we wol go dyne anoon";
And gan some of hir women to hir calle,
And streight in-to hir chaumbre gan she goon;
But for hir businesses, this was oon
A-monges othere thinges, out of drede,
Ful prively this lettre for to rede;

169

Avysed word by word in every lyne,
And fond no lak, she thoughte he coude good;
And up it putte, and went hir in to dyne.
And Pandarus, that in a study stood,
Er he was war, she took him by the hood,
And seyde, "ye were caught er that ye wiste";
"I vouche sauf," quod he, "do what yow liste."

170

Tho wesshen they, and sette hem down and ete;
And after noon ful slely Pandarus
Gan drawe him to the window next the strete,
And seyde, "nece, who hath arayed thus
The yonder hous, that stant afor-yein us?"
"Which hous?" quod she, and gan for to biholde,
And knew it well, and whos it was him tolde,

171

And fillen forth in speche of thinges smale,
And seten in the window bothe tweye.
Whan Pandarus saw tyme un-to his tale,

And not wreck all my good repute and fame?
Take it away, I bid in heaven's name!"

164

"Why, Cressida," he said, "you are quite droll!
Is this the first you've heard of this, I wonder!
Let Jove to depths infernal damn my soul,
Or strike me down with sudden stroke of thunder,
If for the town whose walls we're sitting under,
A harmful word to you I'd ever carry!
Your conduct seems to me extraordinary!"

165

"But I suppose you think like all the rest,
That he deserves the least who most does try
To serve and aid you with his very best!
But though you reck not if he live or die,
And all my good intentions you deny,
You shan't refuse." And then he seized her gown
And in her bosom thrust the letter down.

166

"Now then," he said, "this note I dare you throw
Away, that folk may see your grand display!"
"O, I can wait," she said, "until you go!"
And then she smiled and added, "Uncle, pray,
Such answer as you will to him convey,
For truly, uncle, I shall write no letter."
"I'll dictate," said he, "if you think that's better."

167

She laughed at this and said, "Let's go and dine!"
And he agreed, assured the worst was past,
And said, "Dear niece, for love I peak and pine
So much, that every other day I fast!"
And told his jokes, some new, some old recast,
And made her laugh till she was out of breath.
And thought that she would laugh herself to death.

168

When they had come together to the hall,
"We'll dine," she said, "in just a minute or so,"
And her attendants coming at her call,
She said that to her room she'd have to go,
And there, as Pandar very well did know,
However pressing any other need,
Her letter first she would be sure to read.

169

She read it word by word and line by line,
And on the whole she thought it pretty good,
And put it up and then went in to dine.
Pandarus apart in deep reflection stood,
And she came up and took him by the hood,
"Aha," she said, "a penny for your thought!"
"Have what you will," he said, "I'm fairly caught!"

170

And then they washed and set them down to eat,
And after dinner, Pandarus with design,
Drew near the window looking on the street,
"Whose house is that," he asked, "decked out so fine,
A little further down across from thine?"
"Which house?" she answered, drawing near to see,
And knew it well, and told its history.

171

And there they stayed and talked of this and that,
Both sitting down within the window bay,
But after much such unimportant chat,

And when her women all were gone away,
Then Pandar turned and said, "Well, niece, I say,
How was the letter, good or just so-so?
How does he write? I'd really like to know."

172

At that she blushed a quick and rosy red,
But merely answered, "Hm! Of course you would!"
"Now you must write a fair reply," he said,
"I'll sew your letter up all tight and good,
Across the middle, if you say I should,
And if you want, just make your letter small,
But let your uncle fold and sew it all."

173

"Perhaps I might," she murmured soft and slow,
"But if I should, I don't know what to say!"
"O niece," said Pandar, "such things quickly grow!
At least your grateful thanks you can convey,
And say some words his trouble to repay.
Indeed it's only decent courtesy
To grant at least so much to him and me."

174

"O dear," she said, "I hope it's quite all right!
I never thought to write a man a letter,
It really puts me in a nervous fright!"
Into her room she went to work the better,
And there alone her heart she doth unfetter
Out of the prison of disdain a while,
Striving a fitting letter to compile.

175

And what she wrote, in brief I mean to tell,
So far as I have heard or understand;
She thanked him first that he of her thought well,
But said she really could not take in hand
A serious answer to his chief demand,
But as a sister, if she could him please,
She'd gladly do her best his heart to ease.

176

She closed it then, while Pandar mused alone,
Beside the window looking on the street,
And brought it in, and sat upon a stone
Of jasper by him on a cushion seat,
With beaten gold embroidered, fair and neat,
And said, "I've never done a harder thing
Than write this letter which to you I bring!"

177

With thanks he took the letter and replied,
"You know from things with heavy heart begun,
Come happy endings. Niece, you may take pride
That you by him have not been lightly won,
For in the tale of sayings true, the one
That says the truest runs, 'Impressions light
Are always lightly ready to take flight.'"

178

"But you have played the tyrant nigh too long,
And made your heart a hard thing to engrave;
So now relent and don't bear down too strong,
(Of course appearances we still must save),
And henceforth in a gentler way behave,
For manners cold and hard will soon or late
Turn every liking to dislike and hate."

179

And as they sat thus, friendly and confiding,

And saw wel that hir folk were alle awaye,
"Now, nece myn, tel on," quod he, "I seye,
How lyketh yow the lettre that ye woot?
Can he ther-on? for, by my trouthe, I noot."

172

Therwith al rosy hewed tho wex she,
And gan to humme, and seyde, "so I trowe."
"Aqyute him wel, for goddes love," quod he;
"My-self to medes wol the lettre sowe,"
And held his hondes up, and sat on knowe,
"Now, goode nece, be it never so lyte,
Yif me the labour, it to sowe and plyte."

173

"Ye, for I can so wryte," quod she tho;
"And eek I noot what I sholde to him seye."
"Nay, nece," quod Pandare, "sey not so;
Yet at the leste thanketh him, I preye,
Of his good wil, and doth him not to deye.
Now for the love of me, my nece dere,
Refuseth not at this tyme my preyere."

174

"*Depar-dieu*," quod she, "god leve al be wel!
God helpe me so, this is the firste lettre
That ever I wroot, ye, al or any del."
And in-to a closet, for to avyse hir bettre,
She wente allone, and gan hir herte unfettere
Out of disdaynes prison but a lyte;
And sette hir down, and gan a lettre wryte,

175

Of which to telle in short is myn entente
Th'effect, as fer as I can understonde:—
She thonked him of al that he wel mente
Towardes hir, but holden him in honde
She nolde nought, ne make hir-selven bonde
In love, but as his suster, him to plese,
She wolde fayn, to doon his herte an ese.

176

She shette it, and to Pandarus gan goon,
There as he sat and loked in-to strete,
And down she sette hir by him on a stoon
Of jaspre, up-on a quissshin gold y-bete,
And seyde, "as wisely helpe me god the grete,
I nevere dide a thing with more peyne
Than wryte this, to which ye me constreyn";

177

And took it him: he thonked hir and seyde,
"God woot, of thing ful ofte looth bigonne
Cometh ende good; and nece myn, Criseyde,
That ye to him of hard now ben y-wonne
Oughte he be glad, by god and yonder sonne!
For-why men seth, 'impressioun[es] lighte
Ful lightly been ay redy to the flighte.'"

178

But ye han played tyraunt neigh to longe,
And hard was it your herte for to grave;
Now stint, that ye no longer on it honge,
Al wolde ye the forme of daunger save.
But hasteth yow to doon him joye have;
For trusteth wel, to longe y-doon hardnesse
Causeth despyt ful often, for distresse."

179

And right as they declamed this matere,

Lo, Troilus, right at the stretes ende,
Com ryding with his tenthe some y-fere,
Al softly, and thiderward gan bende
Ther-as they sete, as was his wey to wende
To paleys-ward; and Pandare him aspyde,
And seyde, "nece, y-see who cometh here ryde!

180

O flee not in, he seeth us, I suppose;
Lest he may thinke that ye him eschuwe."
"Nay, nay," quod she, and wex as reed as rose.
With that he gan hir humbly to saluwe,
With dreedful chere, and ofte his hewes muwe;
And up his look debonairly he caste,
And beked on Pandare, and forth he paste.

181

God woot if he sat on his hors a-right,
Or goodly was beseyn, that ilke day!
God woot wher he was lyk a manly knight!
What sholde I drecche, or telle of his aray?
Criseyde, which that alle these thinges say,
To telle in short, hir lyked al y-fere,
His persone, his aray, his look, his chere,

182

His goodly manere and his gentillesse,
So wel, that never, sith that she was born,
Ne hadde she swich routhe of his distresse;
And how-so she hath hard ben her-biforn,
To god hope I, she hath now caught a thorn.
She shal not pulle it out this nexte wyke;
God sende mo swich thornes on to pyke!

183

Pandare, which that stood hir faste by,
Felte iren hoot, and he bigan to smyte,
And seyde, "nece, I pray yow hertely,
Tel me that I shal axen yow a lyte.
A womman, that were of his deeth to wyte,
With-oute his gilt, but for hir lakked routhe,
Were it wel don?" Quod she, "nay, by my
trouthe!"

184

"God helpe me so," quod he, "ye sey me sooth.
Ye felen wel your-self that I not lye;
Lo, yond he rit!" Quod she, "ye, so he dooth."
"Wel," quod Pandare, "as I have told yow thrye,
Lat be your nyce shame and your folye,
And spek with him in esing of his herte;
Lat nycetee not do yow bothe smerte."

185

But ther-on was to heven and to done;
Considered al thing, it may not be;
And why, for shame; and it were eek to sone
To graunten him so greet a libertee.
"For playnly hir entente," as seyde she,
"Was for to love him unwist, if she mighte,
And guerdon him with no-thing but with
sighte."

186

But Pandarus thoughte, "it shal not be so,
If that I may; this nyce opinioun
Shal not be holden fully yeres two."
What sholde I make of this a long sermoun?
He moste assente on that conclusioun

Lo, Troilus, along the lower end,
Came up the street with escort slowly riding,
And by this very house they must ascend
As to the palace on their way they wend.
Pandare at once beheld this fine array,
"Look, niece," he said, "who's riding up this way!

180

"Don't go away—he sees us I suppose—
'Twill look to him as though you feared pursuit!"
"No, no," she said, as red as any rose.
Troilus, riding by with grave salute,
And changing hue, and timidly and mute,
A gentle glance or two upon her cast,
Nodded to Pandar, and on his way he passed.

181

O Troilus, he was a goodly sight,
In goodly form he was that happy day!
He looked, and was in truth, a manly knight!
No need to stop and tell of his aray,
And only one small thing I need to say,
That Cressida was favorably impressed,
By person, manner, look, and all the rest.

182

So well indeed, and by his gentleness,
That never since the day that she was born,
She felt so deep for any man's distress
As now for him upon this fateful morn!
To tell the truth, she hath picked up a thorn
At which she may full long and vainly pull!
God grant all hearts with such thorns may be full!

183

And Pandar, who was standing there near by,
Began to strike, feeling the iron hot.
"Dear niece," he said, "I wish you would untie
For me this simple little lovers' knot!
If this man guiltless through some woman got
His death, because her heart was hardened so,
Were it well done?" "I'd say," she answered,
"no!"

184

"And you'd say right," with ardor Pandar cried,
"With proper spirit you are now imbued.
Lo, forth he rides!" Says she, "Well, let him ride!"
"O come," said Pandar, "don't be such a prude!
Enough of this reluctant attitude!
Give him a hopeful word just for a start,
This holding off but frets and grieves the heart!"

185

With that the argument was on again!
"With what you say," she said, "I can't agree;
"Just think how all of Troy would talk! And then,
It's far too soon to grant a liberty!"
To this alone she would consent, said she,
To love him at a distance, as she might,
If he could be content but with her
sight.

186

But Pandar thought, "O that will never do!
She must get over such a foolish notion;
This matter can't run on a year or two."
But for the present he was all devotion
And thought it best to raise no great commotion,

And seeing all was well, at fall of eve,
He rose and said goodby and took his leave.

187

And on his homeward way full fast he sped,
And felt for very joy his heart must daunce.
Troilus he found, extended on his bed,
Most lover-like, deep in a lover's trance,
Twixt hope of good and fear of evil chance,
And Pandar bursting in, began to sing,
A signal meaning, "Something good I bring."

188

"Who's buried here in bed," he cried, "so soon?"
A faint voice issued forth, "It's only me."
"Who? Troilus? Now by the sacred moon,"
Said Pandar, "get thee up and come and see
A wondrous charm that has been sent to thee,
To heal thee from all irksome grief and pain,
And make thee joyful, brisk and spry again."

189

"O yes, a miracle," said Troilus.
Then Pandar could no longer hold it back,
And said, "The Lord today hath favored us!
Bring here some light to look on all this black!"
Then joy and fear in turn made sharp attack
On Troilus, as he his letter read,
For in her words he found both hope and dread.

190

But in the end he took it for the best,
And thought that in her letter she had said
Some things at least on which his heart could
rest,
Although between the lines they must be read;
And so to optimistic views thus led,
And trusting, too, in Pandar as his friend,
His deep despair began a bit to mend.

191

And as we may ourselves on all sides see,
The more the wood or coal, the more the fire;
As with increase of probability
There often comes an increase of desire;
As oaks from acorns grow and mount up higher,
So now this lover's flame more brightly burned,
His head by just one little letter turned.

192

And so it came to pass that day and night,
Troilus began to hunger more and more,
And as his hope increased, with all his
might
He strove to put in practice Pandar's lore,
In writing to her of his sorrows sore;
Each day the effort new he made
In letters which by Pandar were conveyed.

193

To all proprieties he paid good heed
That to a lover in his case pertain;
And as the dice fell and as fate decreed,
His days were days of joy or days of pain,
Yet with his writing he did still proceed,
And echoing to the answers that he had,
His days took color, either glad or sad.

194

And Pandar ever was his great recourse.

As for the tyme; and whan that it was eve,
And al was wel, he roos and took his leve.

187

And on his wey ful faste homward he spedde,
And right for joye he felte his herte daunce;
And Troilus he fond alone a-bedde,
That lay as dooth these loveres, in a traunce,
Bitwixen hope and derk desesperaunce.
But Pandarus, right at his in-cominge,
He song, as who seyth, "Io! sumwhat I bringe."

188

And seyde, "who is in his bed so sone
Y-buried thus?" "It am I, freend," quod he.
"Who, Troilus? nay helpe me so the mone,"
Quod Pandarus, "thou shalt aryse and see
A charme that was sent right now to thee,
The which can helen thee of thyn accesse,
If thou do forth-with al thy businesse."

189

"Ye, through the might of god!" quod Troilus.
And Pandarus gan him the lettre take,
And seyde, "pardee, god hath holpen us;
Have here a light, and loke on al this blake."
But ofte gan the herte glade and quake
Of Troilus, whyl that he gan it rede,
So as the wordes yave him hope or drede.

190

But fynally, he took al for the beste
That she him wroot, for sumwhat he biheld
On which, him thoughte, he mighte his herte
reste,
Al covered she the wordes under sheld.
Thus to the more worthy part he held,
That, what for hope and Pandarus biheste,
His grete wo for-yede he at the leste.

191

But as we may alday our-selven see,
Through more wode or col, the more fyr;
Right so encrees of hope, of what it be,
Therwith ful ofte encreseth eek desyr;
Or, as an ook cometh of a litel spyr,
So through this lettre, which that she him sente,
Encresen gan desyr, of which he brente.

192

Wherfore I seye alwey, that day and night
This Troilus gan to desiren more
Than he dide erst, thurgh hope, and dide his
might
To pressen on, as by Pandarus lore,
And wryten to hir of his sorwes sore
Fro day to day; he leet it not refreyde,
That by Pandare he wroot somwhat or seyde;

193

And dide also his othere observaunces
That to a lovee longeth in this cas;
And, after that these dees turnede on chaunces,
So was he outhur glad or seyde "allas!"
And held after his gestes ay his pas;
And aftir swiche answeres as he hadde,
So were his dayes sory outhur gladde.

194

But to Pandare alwey was his recours,

And pitously gan ay til him to pleyne,
 And him bisoughte of rede and som socours;
 And Pandarus, that sey his wode peyne,
 Wex wel neigh deed for routhe, sooth to seyne,
 And bisily with al his herte caste
 Som of his wo to sleen, and that as faste;

195

And seyde, "lord, and freend, and brother dere,
 God woot that thy disece doth me wo.
 But woltow stinten al this woful chere,
 And, by my trouthe, or it be dayes two,
 And god to-forn, yet shal I shape it so,
 That thou shalt come in-to a certayn place,
 Ther-as thou mayst thy-self hir preye of grace.

196

And certainly, I noot if thou it wost,
 But tho that been expert in love it seye,
 It is oon of the thinges that furthereth most,
 A man to have a leysur for to preye,
 And siker place his wo for to biwreye;
 For in good herte it moot som routhe impresse,
 To here and see the giltles in distresse.

197

Paraunter thenkestow: though it be so
 That kinde wolde doon hir to biginne
 To han a maner routhe up-on my wo,
 Seyth Daunger, 'Nay, thou shalt me never winne;
 So reuleth hir hir hertes goost with-inne,
 That, though she bende, yet she stant on rote;
 What in effect is this un-to my bote?'

198

Thenk here-ayeins, whan that the sturdy ook,
 On which men hakketh ofte, for the nones,
 Receyved hath the happy falling strook,
 The grete sweigh doth it come al at ones,
 As doon these rokkes or these milne-stones.
 For swifter cours cometh thing that is of wighte,
 Whan it descendeth, than don thinges lighte.

199

And reed that boweth doun for every blast,
 Ful lightly, cesse wind, it wol aryse;
 But so nil not an ook whan it is cast;
 It nedeth me nought thee longe to forbyse.
 Men shal rejoysen of a greet emprise
 Acheved wel, and stant with-outen doute,
 Al han men been the lenger ther-about.

200

But, Troilus, yet tel me, if thee lest,
 A thing now which that I shal axen thee;
 Which is thy brother that thou lovest best
 As in thy verray hertes privetee?"
 "Y-wis, my brother Deiphebus," quod he.
 "Now," quod Pandare, "er houres twyes twelve,
 He shal thee ese, unwist of it him-selve.

201

Now lat me allone, and werken as I may,"
 Quod he; and to Deiphebus wente he tho
 Which hadde his lord and grete freend ben ay;
 Save Troilus, no man he lovede so.
 To telle in short, with-outen wordes mo,
 Quod Pandarus, "I pray yow that ye be
 Freend to a cause which that toucheth me."

And of his woes the sole recipient;
 In him he found a never-failing source
 Of aid, for Pandar could not rest content
 To see his friend so languish and lament,
 And ever in his mind he cast about
 To find some fruitful way to help him out.

195

"My lord and friend," he said, "and brother dear,
 It hurts me sore to see you take on so!
 But do look up and be of better cheer,
 For I've a little scheme I'd like to show,
 Which I devised a day or two ago,
 Whereby I'll bring you to a certain place,
 And in her presence you can plead your case.

196

"I have no doubt this point is known to you,
 But those who are expert in love declare
 There's nothing like a personal interview
 To help along a lagging love affair.
 Just make her of your state of mind aware,
 For every gentle heart it must impress
 To see and hear the guiltless in distress.

197

"Perhaps you think, 'Though it may well be so,
 That Nature doth constrain her to begin
 To have some sort of pity on my woe,
 Yet Will replies, 'Thou shalt me never win!'
 So doth her spirit rule her heart within,
 That though she bend, she stands firm on her root.
 What good, then, does all this to my poor suit?"

198

"But on the other hand, the sturdy oak,
 On which have been delivered many a blow,
 Receives at last the happy falling stroke,
 And all at once the whole tree down doth go,
 Like heavy rocks or millstones falling low;
 For things of weight come down with swifter flight
 When they descend, than do things that are light.

199

"A reed that lowly bows before the blast,
 After the wind again will lightly rise.
 But not so when an oak-tree down is cast—
 Of course you see what this exemplifies.
 One should take pleasure in an enterprise
 Of pith and moment placed beyond a doubt,
 Though it took time to bring it all about.

200

"Now, Troilus, I have a slight request,
 A little thing that I must ask of thee.
 Which of thy brothers dost thou love the best
 Within thy heart's most secret privacy?"
 "Deiphebus it is," at once said he.
 Said Pandar, "Ere another day shall end,
 Unwittingly he shall thee well befriend!"

201

"Leave it to me! I'll do the best I can!"
 Then to Deiphebus he took his way,
 Who was his lord and he his faithful man,
 And more than this, long-standing friends were they,
 And there arrived, he said his little say:
 "I beg of you, my lord, that you will be
 Friend to a cause that nearly touches me."

202
 "O quite!" Deiphebus replied. "You know,
 There's not a man within this mortal sphere
 To whom a favor I'd more gladly show,
 Troilus excepted, whom I hold most dear.
 But first perhaps you'd better let me hear
 What's weighing now so heavy on your mind,
 And then the remedy we'll try to find."

203
 Pandar his troubles thus doth then proclaim:
 "My lord, there is a lady here in Troy,
 My niece, and Cressida is her good name,
 Whom certain men are trying to annoy,
 And for themselves her property enjoy.
 It is for her your aid I now beseech,
 As I have told in plain and simple speech."

204
 "Is she," he asked, "this lady in distress,
 Of whom you speak in such a formal way,
 My old friend Cressida?" Said Pandar, "Yes."
 "Why, then," he cried, "there's nothing more to say!
 For you can count on me in any fray
 To champion her with sword or shaft or spear,
 And this I'll say for all her foes to hear."

205
 "But since you know the case, just tell me how
 And what to do." Said Pandar, "Well, let's see!
 If you, my gracious lord, would do me now
 The honor to request my niece that she
 Should come tomorrow, and here publicly
 Present her case, I'm sure her enemies
 Would hesitate to press their wicked pleas."

206
 "And one thing more you might consent to do—
 I wouldn't ask, except for her great need—
 If some of your brothers could be here with you,
 'Twould greatly help the case that she will plead
 To have them all in her support agreed.
 For with your aid and that of other friends,
 She'll check her foes and thwart their wicked ends."

207
 Deiphebus, who was by nature kind,
 And glad to be a friendly instrument,
 Replied, "It shall be done! And I can find
 A better plan, which should her well content!
 How would it be if I for Helen sent
 To join with us? I'm sure that she will come,
 And count for two, with Paris 'neath her thumb."

208
 "And Hector, who to me is lord and brother,
 No question but that he her friend will be!
 For I have heard him, one time and another,
 Commend her, and in such a high degree,
 That she will need no assiduity
 To win him to her side. Her only task
 Will be, whatever she may want, to ask."

209
 "And you yourself might speak to Troilus,
 On my behalf, and ask him here to dine."
 "O gladly," Pandar said, "I shall do thus!"
 He took his leave and straight as any line,
 He fastened forth to further his design,

202
 "Yis, pardee," quod Deiphebus, "wel thow wost,
 In al that ever I may and god to-fore,
 Al nere it but for man I love most,
 My brother Troilus; but sey wherfore
 It is; for sith that day that I was bore,
 I nas, ne never-mo to been I thinke,
 Ayeins a thing that mighte thee for-thinke."

203
 Pandare gan him thonke, and to him seyde,
 "Lo, sire, I have a lady in this toun,
 That is my nece, and called is Criseyde,
 Which som men wolden doon oppressioun,
 And wrongfully have hir possessioun:
 Wherfor I of your lorship yow biseche
 To been our freend, with-oute more speche."

204
 Deiphebus him answerde, "O, is not this,
 That thow spekest of to me thus straungely,
 Criseyda, my freend?" He seyde, "Yis."
 "Than nedeth," quod Deiphebus, hardly,
 "Na-more to speke, for trusteth wel, that I
 Wol be hir champion with spore and yerde;
 I roughte nought though alle hir foos it herde."

205
 But tel me, thou that woost al this matere,
 How I might best awaylen?" "Now lat see,"
 Quod Pandarus, "if ye, my lord so dere,
 Wolden as now don this honour to me,
 To prayen hir to-morwe, lo, that she
 Com un-to yow hir pleyntes to devyse,
 Hir adversaries wolde of hit agryse."

206
 And if I more dorste preye as now,
 And chargen yow to have so greet travayle,
 To han som of your bretheren here with yow,
 That mighten to hir cause bet avayle,
 Than, woot I wel, she mighte never fayle
 For to be helpen, what at your instaunce,
 What with hir othere freendes governaunce."

207
 Deiphebus, which that comen was, of kinde,
 To al honour and bountee to consente,
 Answerde, "it shal be doon; and I can finde
 Yet gretter help to this in myn entente.
 What wolt thow seyn, if I for Eleyne sente
 To speke of this? I trow it be the beste;
 For she may leden Paris as hir leste."

208
 Of Ector, which that is my lord, my brother,
 It nedeth nought to preye him freend to be;
 For I have herd him, o tyme and eek other,
 Speke of Criseyde swich honour, that he
 May seyn no bet, swich hap to him hath she.
 It nedeth nought his helpes for to crave;
 He shal be swich, right as we wole him have."

209
 Spek thou thy-self also to Troilus
 On my bihalve, and pray him with us dyne."
 "Sire, al this shal be doon," quod Pandarus;
 And took his leve, and never gan to fyne,
 But to his neces hous, as streight as lyne,

He com; and fond hir fro the mete aryse;
And sette him doun, and spak right in this wyse.

210

He seyde, "O veray god, so have I ronnel!
Lo, nece myn, see ye nought how I swete?
I noot whether ye the more thank me conne.
Be ye nought war how that fals Poliphete
Is now aboute eft-sones for to plete,
And bringe on yow advocacy's newe?"
"I? no," quod she, and chaunged al hir hewe.

211

"What is he more aboute, me to drecche
And doon me wrong? what shal I do, alas?
Yet of him-self no-thing ne wolde I recche,
Nere it for Antenor and Eneas,
That been his freendes in swich maner cas;
But, for the love of god, myn uncle dere,
No fors of that, lat him have al y-fere;

212

With-ouen that, I have ynough for us."
"Nay," quod Pandare, "it shal no-thing be so.
For I have been right now at Deiphebus,
And Ector, and myne othere lordes mo,
And shortly maked eche of hem his fo;
That, by my thirft, he shal it never winne
For ought he can, whan that so he biginne."

213

And as they casten what was best to done,
Deiphebus, of his owene curtasye,
Com hir to preye, in his propre persone,
To holde him on the morwe companye
At diner, which she nolde not denye,
But goodly gan to his preyere obeye.
He thonked hir, and wente up-on his weye.

214

Whanne this was doon, this Pandare up a-noon,
To telle in short, and forth gan for to wende
To Troilus, as stille as any stoon,
And al this thing he tolde him, word and ende;
And how that he Deiphebus gan to blende;
And seyde him, "now is tyme, if that thou conne,
To bere thee wel to-morwe, and al is wonne.

215

Now spek, now prey, now pitously compleyne;
Lat not for nyce shame, or drede, or slouthe;
Som-tyme a man not telle his owene peyne;
Bileve it, and she shal han on thee routhe;
Thou shalt be saved by thy feyth, in trouthe.
But wel wot I, thou art now in a drede;
And what it is, I leye, I can arede.

216

Thow thinkest now, 'how sholde I doon al this?
For by my cheres mosten folk aspye,
That for hir love is that I fare a-mis;
Yet hadde I lever unwist for sorwe dye.'
Now thenk not so, for thou dost greet folye.
For right now have I founden o manere
Of sleighte, for to coveren al thy chere.

217

Thow shalt gon over night, and that as blyve,
Un-to Deiphebus hous, as thee to pleye,
Thy maladye a-wey the bet to dryve,

To Cressida, whose dinner just was finished,
And straight began with ardor undiminished.

210

"O Lord," said he, "O what a way I've run!
Look, niece! Just gaze at what a sweat I'm in!
I hope I'll have your thanks for all I've done.
You know that Poliphete, that man of sin,
Is planning a new action to begin,
And open up fresh charges in your case?"
"I? No!" she cried, and grew pale in the face.

211

"What, will he never cease me to torment
And do me wrong? Alas, what shall I do!
For him alone I wouldn't care a cent,
But there's Antenor and Aeneas, too,
Both friends of his—in all, a wicked crew!
But I am weary, uncle, of this strife;
I'd give up all to have a peaceful life—

212

"A very little will suffice for us!"
"No, no," said Pandar, "I won't have it so!
But I've been talking with Deiphebus
And Hector, and with other lords you know,
And Poliphete will find in each a foe.
I pledge my word, this case he shall not win,
No matter when or what he may begin."

213

And as they sat considering this affair,
Deiphebus himself, most graciously,
In his own person came to see her there,
And ask the favor of her company
To dine next day. To this she did agree,
As proper was her lord thus to obey,
And he expressed his thanks and went his way.

214

Then Pandar left her with her thoughts alone,
For now on Troilus he must attend,
And while his friend sat still as any stone,
He told him all the tale from start to end,
How unawares Deiphebus would lend
His aid, and said to him, "Now if you can,
Is time to stir yourself and play the man!"

215

"Speak up tomorrow, beg, beseech and pray,
And don't hold back for fear or modesty!
The time has come when you must say your say.
Don't lose your nerve, and you'll see what you'll see,
For as they say, the truth shall make thee free!
But something seems to stick still in your mind,
And what it is, I'll wager I can find.

216

"Perhaps you think, 'How shall I do all this?
For by my looks the folk will soon espy
And quickly guess that something is amiss,
And than they should do so, I'd rather die!'
But this is folly, and I'll tell you why;
For I've a scheme, it's something really bright,
To keep you safely out of all men's sight.

217

"To your dear brother's house I bid you go,
And say that you have come a while to stay,
And that by illness you've been troubled so,

But think a change may drive it all away.
Then go to bed, and when they ask you, say
You feel too ill and weak to dine or sup,
But lie right there, and wait for what turns up.

218

"And say your fever is cotidian,
And daily comes and goes at its own pleasure;
Just play the invalid the best you can,
And sick he is whose grief is out of measure.
Go, now! The time is past for idle leisure;
It's nerve will win the day in this affair.
Just keep your head and say goodby to care."

219

"In truth," said Troilus, "there is no need
To counsel me a sickness to pretend,
For I am sick in very fact and deed,
So sick it well may be my fatal end."
"That's good," said Pandar, "no time need you
spend

On how to counterfeit the sick man's lot,
For one who sweats, is taken to be hot.

220

"Just hold you steady in your snug retreat,
And I the deer before your bow shall drive."
They parted then, though soon again to meet,
And each with other ready to connive.
Now Troilus is glad he is alive,
With Pandar's plan he is quite well content,
And to his brother's house at night he went.

221

With cordial welcome there he was received,
Deiphebus expressing sympathy,
And at his illness all were deeply grieved;
They covered him with bed-clothes carefully,
But still he seemed as sick as he could be;
He kept in mind what Pandar to him said,
And naught they did could budge him from his
bed.

222

Before they from the sick man's room descend,
Deiphebus requested him to do her right
And be to Cressida a help and friend,
And Troilus agreed with words polite,
And said he would with all his will and might—
Of all requests this was as needless one
As bid a wild man leap and jump and run.

223

Recalling next day where she was to dine,
Helen the queen, the famous and the fair,
Informally and some time after nine,
Doth to her kindly brother's house repair,
Just to a little family dinner there,
And took it as a usual event,
Though God and Pandar knew what it all meant.

224

Cressida, unsuspecting, brought along
Antigone and Tarbe, sisters two—
In fact the diners numbered quite a throng;
But I don't mean to pass here in review
The names of guests and all they say and do,
For you can guess their greetings and their chatter,
And we'll proceed to more important matter.

For-why thou semest syk, soth for to seye.
Sone after that, doun in thy bed hee leye,
And sey, thow mayst no lenger up endure,
And lye right there, and byde thyn aventure.

218

Sey that thy fever is wont thee for to take
The same tyme, and lasten til a-morwe;
And lat see now how wel thou canst it make,
For, par-dee, syk is he that is in sorwe.
Go now, farewell and, Venus here to borwe,
I hope, and thou this purpos holde ferme,
Thy grace she shal fully ther conferme."

219

Quod Troilus, "y-wis, thou nedeleez
Counseylest me, that sykliche I me feyne!
For I am syk in earnest, douteleez,
So that wel neigh I sterve for the payne."

Quod Pandarus, "thou shalt the better
pleyne,

And hast the lasse nede to countrefete;
For him men demen hoot that men seen swete.

220

Lo, holde thee at thy triste cloos, and I
Shal wel the deer un-to thy bowe dryve."
Therwith he took his leve al softly,
And Troilus to paleys wente blyve.
So glad ne was he never in al his lyve;
And to Pandarus reed gan al assente,
And to Deiphebus hous at night he wente.

221

What nedeth yow to tellen al the chere
That Deiphebus un-to his brother made,
Or his accesse, or his syklich manere,
How men gan him with clothes for to lade,
Whan he was leyd, and how men wolde him glade?
But al for nought, he held forth ay the wyse
That ye han herd Pandare er this
devyse.

222

But certeyn is, er Troilus him leyde,
Deiphebus had him prayed, over night,
To been a freend and helping to Criseyde.
God woot, that he it graunted anon-right,
To been hir fulle freend with al his might.
But swich a nede was to preye him thenne,
As for to bidde a wood man for to renne.

223

The morwen com, and neighen gan the tyme
Of meel-tyd, that the faire quene Eleyne
Shoop hir to been, an houre after the pryme,
With Deiphebus, to whom she nolde feyne;
But as his suster, hoonly, sooth to seyne,
She com to diner in hir playn entente.
But god and Pandare wiste al what this mente.

224

Come eek Criseyde, al innocent of this,
Antigone, hir sister Tarbe also;
But flee we now prolixitee best is,
For love of god, and lat us faste go
Right to the effect, with-oute tales mo,
Why al this folk assembled in this place;
And lat us of hir saluinges pace.

225

Gret honour dide hem Deiphebus, certeyn,
And fedde hem wel with al that mighte lyke.
But ever-more, "allas!" was his refreyn,
"My goode brother Troilus, the syke,
Lyth yet"—and therwith-al he gan to syke;
And after that, he peyned him to glade
Hem as he mighte, and chere good he made.

226

Compleyned eek Eleyne of his syknesse
So feithfully, that pitee was to here,
And every wight gan waxen for accesse
A leche anoon, and seyde, "in this manere
Men curen folk; this charme I wol yow lere."
But there sat oon, al list hir nought to teche,
That thoughte, best coude I yet been his leche.

227

After compleynt, him gonnen they to preyse,
As folk don yet, whan som wight hath bigonne
To preyse a man, and up with prys him reyse
A thousand fold yet hyer than the sonne:—
"He is, he can, that fewe lordes conne."
And Pandarus, of that they wolde afferme,
He not for-gat hir preysing to conferme.

228

Herde al this thing Criseyde wel y-nough,
And every word gan for to notifie;
For which with sobre chere hir herte lough;
For who is that ne wolde hir glorifye,
To mowen swich a knight don live or dye?
But al passe I, lest ye to longe dwelle;
For for o fyn is al that ever I telle.

229

The tyme com, fro diner for to ryse,
And, as hem oughte, arisen everychoon,
And gonne a whyl of this and that devyse.
But Pandarus brak al this speche anoon,
And seyde to Deiphebus, "wole ye goon,
If yourë wille be, as I yow preyde,
To speke here of the nedes of Criseyde?"

230

Eleyne, which that by the hond hir held,
Took first the tale, and seyde, "go we blyve":
And goodly on Criseyde she biheld,
And seyde, "Joves lat him never thryve,
That dooth yow harm, and bringe him sone of lyve!
And yeve me sorwe, but he shal it rewe,
If that I may, and alle folk be trewe,"

231

"Tel thou thy neces cas," quod Deiphebus
To Pandarus, "for thou canst best it telle."—
"My lordes and my ladies, it stant thus;
What solde I lenger," quod he, "do yow dwelle?"
He rong hem out a proces lyk a belle,
Up-on hir fo, that highte Poliphete,
So hēynous, that men might on it spete.

232

Answerde of this ech worse of hem than other,
And Poliphete they gonnen thus to warien,
"He honged be swich oon, were he my
brother;
And so he shal, for it ne may not varien."

225

Deiphebus his guests doth entertain
With most delicious foods, the very pick,
But now and then, "Alas," was his refrain,
"That Troilus in bed is lying sick!"
Yet to this theme he did not always stick,
But often spoke of things more bright and cheery,
To keep his honored guests from growing weary.

226

And Helen, too, was really very nice
In warm expression of her sympathy,
And each one had some medical advice
To give—"I think the best treatment would be"—
"This charm indeed I recommend to thee"—
But to this lore that one made no addition
Who thought, "'Tis I could be his best physician."

227

And then his praises they began to sing,
As folk will do when someone has begun;
A thousand variations there they ring
Upon this theme, and praise him to the sun,
"What he can do, there's mighty few have done!"
And all the flattering things of him they say,
Pandar confirms in most emphatic way.

228

Cressida heard, although she took no part,
And every syllable she kept in mind;
Though grave her look, she laughing was at heart,
For who alive would not great comfort find
To think she could about her finger wind
A knight like that! But now too long I dwell
And must proceed the end of this to tell.

229

The time came from the table to arise,
And thus they stood about, while each one spoke
By chance of one or other enterprise,
Till on the conversation Pandar broke
And said "Deiphebus, to all this folk,
May I now beg you somewhat to declare
Of Cressida's unfortunate affair?"

230

And Helen, holding Cressida's right hand,
Spoke first. "O, do!" with sympathy she cried,
As side by side together there they stand.
"By Jupiter, an evil fate betide
The wretches who to injure you have tried!
For sure, if I have anything to say,
They'll see good reason to regret the day."

231

"You state the case," remarked Deiphebus
To Pandar, "since you know it all so well."
"My lords and ladies all, it standeth thus,
No need," he said, "too long on it to dwell"—
Then rang them out a story like a bell
About this Poliphete, and made it stretch
So far, they felt like spewing on the wretch.

232

They all abused him, each worse than the other,
And right and left the scoundrel they did curse:
"He should and shall be hanged, were he my
brother!"
"And that's too good, if anything were worsel!"

But why should I a lengthy tale rehearse?
For each and all assured her in the end,
They'd do their best and be her staunchest friend.

233

"O Pandar," Helen said, "pray tell to us,
Is my good lord and brother—Hector, I mean—
Informed of this affair? And Troilus?"
"Why, yes," he said, "but that reminds me, queen!
It seems to me, if Troilus can be seen,
It might be best, that is, if all assent,
If she herself saw him before she went.

234

"For he will have the matter more at heart,
If he should know the lady in the case,
And by your leave, right for his room I'll start,
And let you know within a second's space,
If he can hear her story in that place."
And in he ran and whispered in his ear,
"God bless thy soul, I've brought thy pillow
here!"

235

This joke drew forth a smile from Troilus,
And Pandar, lacking cause for long delay,
Went back to Helen and Deiphebus,
And said, "If she can come now right away,
But with no crowd, then come, he says, she may,
And he will hear what it is all about,
As long as he is able to hold out.

236

"But since you know the chamber is but small,
And people crowding in might make it hot,
I would not have the blame on me to fall
That I had added to his heavy lot,
No, not for all the arms and legs I've got.
Perhaps we'd better try some other day;
But that, of course, is all for you to say.

237

"But still, I think 'twill be the better plan
For none to go in first except you two,
And maybe me, who in a second can
Rehearse her case better than she can do;
And when you leave him, she can follow you
And ask for his support at no great length—
I don't think this will overtax his strength.

238

"Then, too, since she is strange, he might exert
Himself for her, but not for his own kin,
Besides I'm almost sure he will revert
To secret plans for helping Troy to win
Her way from out the siege that we are in."
And all unwitting of his deep intent,
Without ado to Troilus they went.

239

And Helen, always gently soft and sweet,
Began with him to chat and lightly play,
And said, "O, we'll soon have you on your feet!
Now, brother, for my sake, be well, I pray!"
And on his shoulder doth her white arm lay,
And strives with gentle art as one who fain
Would somewhat ease him on his couch of pain.

240

"We've come," she said, "to ask some help from you,

What sholde I lenger in this tale tarien?
Pleynty, alle at ones, they hir highten,
To been hir helpe in al that ever they mighten.

233

Spak than Eleyne, and seyde, "Pandarus,
Woot ought my lord, my brother, this matere,
I mene, Ector? or woot it Troilus?"
He seyde, "ye, but wole ye now me here?
Me thinketh this, sith Troilus is here,
It were good, if that ye wolde assente,
She tolde hir-self him al this, er she wente.

234

For he wole have the more hir grief at herte,
By cause, lo, that she a lady is;
And, by your leve, I wol but right in sterthe,
And do yow wite, and that anon, y-wis,
If that he slepe, or wole ought here of this."
And in he lepte, and seyde him in his ere,
"God have thy soule, y-brought have I thy
bere!"

235

To smylen of this gan tho Troilus,
And Pandarus, with-oute rekeninge,
Out wente anon t'Eleyne and Deiphebus,
And seyde hem, "so there be no tarynge,
Ne more pres, he wol wel that ye bringe
Crisëyda, my lady, that is here;
And as he may endure, he wole here.

236

But wel ye woot, the chaumbre is but lyte,
And fewe folk may lightly make it warm;
Now loketh ye, (for I wol have no wyte,
To bringe in prees that mighte doon him harm
Or him disesen, for my bettre arm),
Wher it be bet she byde til eft-sones;
Now loketh ye, that known what to doon is.

237

I sey for me, best is, as I can knowe,
That no wight in ne wente but ye tweye,
But it were I, for I can, in a throwe,
Reherce hir cas, unlyk that she can seye;
And after this, she may him ones preye
To ben good lord, in short, and take hir leve;
This may not muchel of his ese him reve.

238

And eek, for she is straunge, he wol forbere
His ese, which that him thar nought for yow;
Eek other thing, that toucheth not to here,
He wol me telle, I woot it wel right now,
That secret is, and for the tounes prow."
And they, that no-thing knewe of this entente,
With-oute more, to Troilus in they wente.

239

Eleyne in al hir goodly softe wyse,
Gan him saluwe, and womanly to pleye,
And seyde, "ywis, ye moste alweyes aryse!
Now fayre brother, beth al hool, I preye!"
And gan hir arm right over his sholder leye,
And him with al hir wit to recomforte;
As she best coude, she gan him to disporte.

240

So after this quod she, "we yow biseke,

My dere brother, Deiphebus, and I,
For love of god, and so doth Pandare eke.
To been good lord and freend, right hertely.
Un-to Criseyde, which that certainly
Receyveth wrong, as woot wel here Pandare,
That can hir cas wel bet than I declare."

241

This Pandarus gan newe his tunge affyle,
And al hir cas reherce, and that anoon;
Whan it was seyde, sone after, in a while,
Quod Troilus, "as sone as I may goon,
I wol right fayn with al my might ben oon,
Have god my trouthe, hir cause to sustene."
"Good thrift have ye," quod Eleyne the quene.

242

Quod Pandarus, "and it your wille be,
That she may take hir leve, er that she go?"
"Or elles god for-bede," tho quod he,
"If that she vouche sauf for to do so."
And with that word quod Troilus, "ye two.
Deiphebus, and my suster leef and dere,
To yow have I to speke of o matere

243

To been avysed by your reed the better":—
And fond, as hap was, at his beddes heed,
The copie of a tretis and a lettre,
That Ector hadde him sent to axen reed,
If swich a man was worthy to ben deed,
Woot I nought who; but in a grisly wyse
He preyede hem anoon on it avyse.

244

Deiphebus gan this lettre to unfold
In ernest greet; so dide Eleyne the quene;
And rominge outward, fast it gan biholde,
Downward a steyre, in-to an herber grene.
This ilke thing they reddeden hem bi-twene;
And largely, the mountaunce of an houre,
They gonne on it to reden and to poure.

245

Now lat hem rede, and turne we anoon
To Pandarus, that gan ful faste pryde
That al was wel, and out he gan to goon
In-to the grete chambre, and that in hie,
And seyde, "god save al this companye!
Com, nece myn; my lady quene Eleyne
Abydeth yow, and eek my lordes twayne.

246

Rys, take with yow your nece Antigone,
Or whom yow list, or no fors, hardily;
The lasse prees, the bet; com forth with me,
And loke that ye thonke humbly
Hem alle three, and, whan ye may goodly
Your tyme y-see, taketh of hem your leve,
Lest we to longe his restes him bireve."

247

Al innocent of Pandarus entente,
Quod tho Criseyde, "go we, uncle dere";
And arm in arm inward with him she wente,
Avysed wel hir wordes and hir chere;
And Pandarus, in ernestful manere,
Seyde, "alle folk, for goddes love, I preye,
Stinteth right here, and softly yow playe.

My brother dear Deiphebus and I,
For love of—O, and so does Pandar, too,—
To be a friend to one whom we hold high,
To Cressida, who no one can deny
Has been much wronged, and Pandar over there,
Her case and situation can declare."

241

Then Pandar once again his tongue must file
To tell his tale convincingly yet brief;
When this was done, thinking a little while,
Troilus said, "When I have some relief,
Of all my duties that shall be the chief,
In Cressida's behalf to intervene."
"And all success to you!" replied the queen.

242

"Perhaps," said Pandar, "if you can her see
And say goodbye before she hence doth go"—
"O yes, of course she must," responded he,
"If she will be so good as to do so!"
Then turning, said, "To you I want to show,
Deiphebus and Helen, sister dear,
A matter of importance I have here,

243

"And ask you what course seems to you the better,"
And fished out from his bed a document,
And handed it, together with a letter
Which Hector to him recently had sent,
Whether a sentence of death he should prevent,
I know not whose, and with some agitation
He begged them give it their consideration.

244

Deiphebus first hastens to unfold
The letter, and then together with the queen
Downstairs he goes, a conference to hold,
And in a little quiet arbor green,
They talk the matter out themselves between
And for an hour's span, or less or more,
This document they read and on it pore.

245

So let them read, and let us turn again
To Pandar, now so jubilant to find
How well all went. He hastened out and when
He came into the room where they had dined,
He cried, "To all of you may heaven be kind!
But come, my niece, Queen Helen waits for you,
And both our gracious lords are waiting, too.

246

"Just take with you your niece Antigone,
Or whom you will—or rather come alone,
The less the crowd the better. Come now with me,
And when to them your gratitude you've shown,
With Troilus you briefly may condone,
And take your leave of him when you think best,
Though we must not disturb too long his rest."

247

Of Pandar's dark design all innocent,
Cressida said, "Come, uncle, let us go!"
And arm in arm out of the room they went,
With all decorum, dignified and slow,
And Pandar said, as they passed down the row,
"Good friends, your patience we shall not abuse,
If for a time yourselves you will amuse.

248
 "But don't forget what folk are there within
 And one of them, God help him, in what plight!"
 "Dear niece," he murmured in her ear, "begin
 But gently with this man and do him right,
 And by the Lord who grants us life and light,
 And by the crowning power of virtues twain,
 Let him not lie here in this mortal
 pain!

249
 "Defy the devil! Keep Troilus in mind,
 And in what state he lies! Don't sit so tight!
 A chance once lost, you never again will find.
 You'll both be glad when you give up the fight.
 There's no suspicion yet, however slight,
 About you two, and count it time well won
 When all the world is blind to what is done.

250
 "In hesitations, false starts and delays,
 Men read deep meanings from a wagging straw.
 For you at last are coming merry days,
 Yet you hold back and timidly withdraw,
 And of vain gossip stand in such great awe,
 You waste the time you never can recover.
 Have pity now upon this sorrowing lover!"

251
 But now I bid you, lovers far and near,
 Regard poor Troilus and his sad state,
 Who lay and all this whispering could hear,
 And thought, "O Lord, I soon shall know my fate,
 To live in love, or else to die in hate!"
 His time was come now for her love to pray,
 And, mighty God, what shall he do and say!

HERE ENDETH THE SECOND BOOK

BOOK III

HERE BEGINNETH THE PROEM TO THE THIRD BOOK

1
 O HAPPY light, of which the beams so clear
 Illume the third expanse of heaven's air,
 Loved of the sun, of Jove the daughter dear,
 O Love's Delight, thou goodly one and fair,
 In gentle hearts abiding everywhere,
 Thou primal cause of joy and all salvation,
 Exalted be thy name through all creation!

2
 In heaven and hell, on earth and salty sea,
 All creatures answer to thy might supernal,
 For man, bird, beast, fish, herb and leafy tree,
 Their seasons know from thy breath ever vernal.
 God loves, and grants that love shall be eternal.
 All creatures in the world through love exist,
 And lacking love, lack all that may persist.

3
 Mover of Jove to that so happy end,
 Through which all earthly creatures live and be,
 When mortal love upon him thou didst send,
 For as thou wilt, the power lies with thee

248
 Aviseth yow what falk ben here with-inne,
 And in what plyt oon is, god him amende!
 And inward thus ful softely biginne;
 Nece, I conjure and heighly yow defende,
 On his half, which that sowle us alle sende,
 And in the vertue of corounes tweyne,
 Slee nought this man, that hath for yow this
 peyne!

249
 Fy on the deve!l! thenk which oon he is,
 And in what plyt he lyth; com of anoon;
 Thenk al swich taried tyd, but lost it nis!
 That wol ye bothe seyn, whan ye ben oon.
 Secoundelich, ther yet devyneth noon
 Up-on yow two; com of now, if ye conne;
 Why! folk is blent, lo, al the tyme is wonne!

250
 In titering, and pursuite, and delays,
 The folk devyne at wagginge of a stree;
 And though ye wolde han after merye dayes,
 Than dar ye nought, and why? for she, and she
 Spak swich a word; thus lokd he, and he;
 Lest tyme I loste, I dar not with yow dele;
 Com of therfore, and bringeth him to hele."

251
 But now to yow, ye lovers that ben here,
 Was Troilus nought in a cankedort,
 That lay, and mighte whispringe of hem here,
 And thoughte, "O lord, right now renneth my sort
 Fully to dye, or han anoon comfort";
 And was the first tyme he shulde hir preye
 Of love; O mighty god, what shal he seye?

1
 O BLISFUL light, of whiche the bemes clere
 Adorneth al the thridde hevene faire!
 O sonnes leef, O Joves doughter dere,
 Pleasaunce of love, O goodly debonaire.
 In gentil hertes ay redy to reparaire!
 O verray cause of hele and of gladnesse,
 Y-heried be thy might and thy goodnesse!

2
 In hevene and helle, in erthe and salte see
 Is felt thy might, if that I wel descerne;
 As man, brid, best, fish, herbe and grene tree
 Thee fele in tymes with vapour eterne.
 God loveth, and to love wol nought werne;
 And in this world no lyves creature,
 With-outen love, is worth, or may endure.

3
 Ye Joves first to thilke effectes glade,
 Thorugh which that thinges liven alle and be,
 Comeveden, and amorous him made
 On mortal thing, and as yow list, ay ye

Yeve him in love ese or adversitee;
And in a thousand formes doun him sente
For love in erthe, and whom yow liste, he hente.

4

Ye fiersse Mars apeysen of his ire,
And, as yow list, ye maken hertes digne;
Algates, hem that ye wol sette a-fyre,
They dreden shame, and vices they resigne;
Ye do hem corteys be, fresshe and benigne,
And hye or lowe, after a wight entendeth;
The joyes that he hath, your might him sendeth.

5

Ye holden regne and hous in unitee;
Ye soothfast cause of frendship been also;
Ye knowe al thilke covered qualitee
Of thinges which that folk on wondren so,
Whan they can not construe how it may jo,
She loveth him, or why he loveth here;
As why this fish, and nought that, cometh to were.

6

Ye folk a lawe han set in universe,
And this knowe I by hem that loveres be,
That who-so stryveth with yow hath the werse.
Now, lady bright, for thy benignitee,
At reverence of hem that serven thee,
Whos clerk I am, so techeth me devyse
Som joye of that is felt in thy servyse.

7

Ye in my naked herte sentement
Inhelde, and do me shewe of thy swetnesse.—
Caliope, thy vois be now present,
For now is nede; sestow not my destresse,
How I mot telle anon-right the gladnesse
Of Troilus, to Venus herynge?
To which gladnes, who nede hath,
God him bringe!

HERE ENDETH THE PROEM TO THE THIRD BOOK

HERE BEGINNETH THE THIRD BOOK

8

Lay al this mene whyle Troilus,
Recordinge his lessoun in this manere,
"Ma fey!" thought he, "thus wole I seye and thus;
Thus wole I pleyne un-to my lady dere;
That word is good, and this shal be my chere;
This nil I not foryeten in no wyse."
God leve him werken as he gan devyse.

9

And lord, so that his herte gan to quappe,
Heringe hir come, and shorte for to syke!
And Pandarus, that ladde hir by the lappe,
Com neer, and gan in at the curtyn pyke,
And seyde, "god do bote on alle syke!
See, who is here yow comen to visyte;
Lo, here is she that is your deeth to wyte."

10

Ther-with it semed as he wepte almost;
"A ha," quod Troilus so rewfully,
"Wher me be wo, O mighty god, thou wost!
Who is al there? I see nought trewely."
"Sire," quod Criseyde, "it is Pandare and I."

Of ease in love or love's adversity,
And in a thousand forms is thy descent
On earth, in love to favor or prevent!

4

Fierce Mars for thee must subjugate his ire,
All hearts from thee receive their fates condign;
Yet ever when they feel thy sacred fire,
In dread of shame, their vices they resign,
And gentler grow, more brave and more benign;
And high or low, as each in his rank strives,
All owe to thee the joys of all their lives.

5

Houses and realms in greater unity,
And faith in friendship thou canst make to grow.
Thou understandest likings hard to see,
Which cause much wonder that they should be so,
As when in puzzlement, one seeks to know,
Why this loves that, why she by him is sought,
Why one and not the other fish is caught.

6

From thee comes law for all the universe,
And this I know, as all true lovers see,
That who opposeth, ever hath the worse.
Now, lady bright, in thy benignity,
Help me to honor those who honor thee,
And teach me, clerk of love, that I may tell
The joy of those who in thy service dwell.

7

True feeling in my naked heart infuse
That in my hands thy glory grow not less!
Calliope, thy voice let me now use,
For great my need! Now all my effort bless,
Who strive, in praise of Venus, this gladness
Of Troilus in fitting words to sing!
May God all lovers to such
gladness bring!

8

Now all this time poor Troilus still lay,
Conning his lesson most industriously;
"I think," he planned, "just so and so I'll say;
Thus will I lead her my deep love to see;
This word sounds good, 'twill help in some degree,
And this by all means I must not neglect"—
And so on, all to much the same effect.

9

Hearing her come, how he begins to quake,
And how he sighs, with sighings short and quick,
While Pandar by the sleeve his niece doth take,
And peeping at him through the curtains thick,
He cries, "Now, God have mercy on the sick!
See who has come a visit here to pay!
Behold the fatal cause of all this fray!"

10

With tearful weeping Pandar's eyes o'erflow,
"Oh, Oh!" groans Troilus, most groanfully,
"How bad I feel, O Lord, no one does know!
Who all is there? It's hard for me to see."
"O, sir," said Cressida, "Pandare and me."

"What, you, my dear! Alas that I can't rise
And do you honor in a fitting wise."

11

He raised him up, but she aſoonc drew nigh,
Her two restraining hands on him to lay.
"O, please," she cried, "for my sake please don't try!
(O, what was that I had in mind to say!)
Sir, here I come for two things, if I may,
To thank you first, then ask you as my lord
Your favor and protection to accord."

12

Hearing his lady to him humbly pray
For lordship, Troilus from shame near dead,
Had not a single word to her to say,
For he could think of none to save his head;
But suddenly he flushed a crimson red,
And all the clever things he'd counted on,
Fled from his mind, completely lost and gone.

13

Cressida understood this well enough,
For she was wise, and liked him none the less
Because he was not pert or quick and rough,
Nor yet so bold he lacked all humbleness.
But when his shame had passed its first excess,
His words, as in my way they can be told,
And as the old books say, I shall unfold.

14

With strange and trembling voice, from simple dread
Abashed, and blushing now from ear to ear,
But changing often too, now pale, now red,
To Cressida, his chosen lady dear,
Submissive standing at his side so near—
Lo, all he said when he his lips could part,
Was, twice, "O mercy, mercy, my sweetheart!"

15

He paused, and when he tried again at length,
His next word was, "God knows that I have been
All yours, with all I have of wit and strength,
And shall be yours, by him who saves from sin,
Until they dig my grave and put me in!
And though I'm slow of speech and hesitate,
My love by that you must not estimate.

16

"So much at present, O thou woman true,
I may declare, and if these words displease,
With my own life I'll make the payment due,
If by my death I may your wrath appease,
And bring your heart again to rest and ease.
For now that you have let me have my say,
I care not how or when I pass away."

17

Such manly sorrow in his bosom burned,
Tears from a heart of stone it would have drawn,
And Pandar wept as though to water turned,
And nudged his niece anon and yet anon,
And said, "Was ever man so woe-begone!
For God's sake, bring this matter to an end,
And slay us both, and on your ways then wend!"

18

"What's that?" cried she, "I know not for my part
Just what it is you're asking me to say!"
"What's that?" he said, "just show you have a heart,

"Ye, swete herte? allas, I may nought ryse
To knele, and do yow honour in som wyse."

11

And dressede him upward, and she right tho
Gan bothe here hondes softe upon him leye,
"O, for the love of god, do ye not so
To me," quod she, "ey! what is this to seye?
Sire, come am I to yow for causes tweye;
First, yow to thonke, and of your lorshipe eke
Continuauce I wolde yow biseke."

12

This Troilus, that herde his lady preye
Of lordship him, wex neither quik ne deed,
Ne mighte a word for shame to it seye,
Al-though men sholde smyten of his heed.
But lord, so he wex sodeinliche reed,
And sire, his lesson, that he wende conne,
To preyen hir, is thurgh his wit y-ronne.

13

Criseyde al this aspyede wel y-nough,
For she was wys, and lovede him never-the-lasse,
Al nere he malapert, or made it tough,
Or was to bold, to singe a fool a masse.
But whan his shame gan somewhat to passe,
His resons, as I may my rymes holde,
I yow wol telle, as techen bokes olde.

14

In chaunged vois, right for his verrey drede,
Which vois eek quook, and ther-to his manere
Goodly abayst, and now his hewes rede,
Now pale, un-to Criseyde, his lady dere,
With look down cast and humble yolden chere,
Lo, th' alderfirste word that him asterte
Was, twyes, "mercy, mercy, swete herte!"

15

And stinte a whyl, and whan he mighte out-bringe,
The nexte word was, "god wot, for I have,
As feythfully as I have had konninge,
Ben youre, also god my sowle save;
And shal, til that I, woful wight, be grave.
And though I dar ne can un-to yow pleyne,
Y-wis, I suffre nought the lasse payne.

16

Thus muche as now, O wommanliche wyf,
I may out-bringe, and if this yow displese,
That shal I wreke upon myn owne lyf
Right sone, I trowe, and doon your herte an ese,
If with my deeth your herte I may apese.
But sin that ye han herd me som-what seye,
Now recche I never how sone that I deye."

17

Ther-with his manly sorwe to biholde,
It mighte han maad an herte of stoon to rewe;
And Pandare weep as he to watre wolde,
And poked ever his nece newe and newe,
And seyde, "wo bigon ben hertes trewe!
For love of god, make of this thing an ende,
Or slee us bothe at ones, er that ye wende."

18

"I? what?" quod she, "by god and by my trouthe,
I noot nought what ye wilne that I seye."
"I? what?" quod he, "that ye han on him routhe,

For goddes love, and doth him nought to deye."
 "Now thanne thus," quod she, "I wolde him preye
 To telle me the fyn of his entente;
 Yet wiste I never wel what that he mente."

19

"What that I mene, O swete herte dere?"
 Quod Troilus, "O goodly fresshe free!
 That, with the stremes of your eyen clere,
 Ye wolde som-tyme freendly on me see,
 And thanne agreen that I may ben he,
 With-oute braunche of vyce in any wyse,
 In trouthe alwey to doon yow my servyse

20

As to my lady right and chief resort,
 With al my wit and al my diligence,
 And I to han, right as yow list, comfort,
 Under your yerde, egal to myn offence,
 As deeth, if that I breke your defence;
 And that ye deigne me so muche honoure,
 Me to comaunden ought in any houre.

21

And I to been your verray humble trewe,
 Secret, and in my paynes pacient,
 And ever-mo desire freshly newe,
 To serven, and been y-lyke ay diligent,
 And, with good herte, al holly your talent
 Receyven wel, how sore that me smerte,
 Lo, this mene I, myn owene swete herte."

22

Quod Pandarus, "lo, here an hard request,
 And resonable, a lady for to werne!
 Now, nece myn, by natal Joves fest,
 Were I a god, ye sholde sterve as yerne,
 That heren wel, this man wol no-thing yerne
 But your honour, and seen him almost sterve,
 And been so looth to suffren him yow serve."

23

With that she gan hir eyen on him caste
 Ful esily, and ful debonairly,
 Avysing hir, and hyed not to faste
 With never a word, but seyde him softly,
 "Myn honour sauf, I wol wel trewely,
 And in swich forme as he can now devyse,
 Receyven him fully to my servyse,

24

Biseching him, for goddes love, that he
 Wolde, in honour of trouthe and gentilesse,
 As I wel mene, eek mene wel to me,
 And myn honour, with wit and besinesse,
 Ay kepe; and if I may don him gladnesse,
 From hennes-forth, y-wis, I nil not feyne:
 Now beeth al hool, no lenger ye ne pleyne.

25

But thanne, this warne I yow," quod she,
 "A kinges sone al-though ye be, y-wis,
 Ye shul na-more have soverainetee
 Of me in love, than right in that cas is;
 Ne I nil forbere, if that ye doon a-mis,
 To wrathen yow; and whyl that ye me serve,
 Cherycen yow right after ye deserve.

26

And shortly, derē herte and al my knight,

Nor this poor creature pitilessly slay!"
 "Well, then," she said, "I'd ask him, if I may,
 To tell me clearly what he has in mind,
 For never yet his meaning could I find."

19

"Just what I have in mind, O sweetheart dear!"
 Cried Troilus. "That thou so fair to see,
 But with the beamings of thine eyes so clear
 Sometimes wilt turn a kindly gaze on me,
 And that, besides, to this thou wilt agree
 That I in root and branch, and every way
 In truth, may serve thee well from day to day,

20

"As rightful lady and my chief resort,
 With all my wit and all my diligence,
 And as you will, may have from you support,
 According as you judge my competence—
 Or death for any disobedience—
 And that this honor you to me will show,
 To seek my aid in all things high or low,

21

"And let me be your servant sworn and true,
 Humble and secret, patient in endeavor,
 Eager to find occasions fresh and new
 To serve, and in my service slacken never,
 And what you will and bid receiving ever
 With good intent, however sore I smart—
 Lo, this I have in mind, my own sweetheart!"

22

"Indeed," said Pandar, "that's a hard request,
 And something any lady would deny!
 My dearest niece, as I look to be blessed,
 If I were God, I'd let you pine and die,
 If honor, honor were your sole reply
 To such a man, so faithfully approved,
 By whom the hardest heart might well be moved!"

23

Though Cressida would not be pushed too fast,
 Yet in a manner not at all severe,
 A glance or two on Troilus she cast,
 And answered soberly and plain and clear,
 "Saving my honor, which I hold most dear,
 With all formalities observed and kept,
 This man into my service I accept,

24

"Beseeching him, for love of God, that he
 By all the truth and honor of his birth,
 As I mean well, may mean as well by me,
 And ever hold my honor at high worth.
 And if I may increase his joy and mirth,
 In all good will, I shall thereto assent;
 Take courage then, and cease your sad lament.

25

"But still this warning note I yet must sound—
 A king's son though you be in all men's sight,
 In love I shall be only so far bound
 As would in any case be just and right;
 And if you do amiss, I shall requite
 With blame, yet also as you knightly serve,
 Shall cherish you and praise as you deserve.

26

"In short, dear heart, and now my worthy knight,

Rejoice and put aside your fear and dread,
For truly I shall strive with all my might,
For bitter days to give you sweet instead,
And if through me to joy you can be led,
For each past woe you shall receive a bliss"—
And sealed her words with an embrace and kiss.

27

Fell Pandar on his knees, and up his eyes
To heaven cast, with hands extended high.
"Immortal God," he cried, "within the skies,
Cupid I mean, whom all men glorify,
And Venus, too, rejoice with melody!
Methinks in all the town, with no hand swinging,
To mark this miracle, the bells are ringing!

28

"But soft! we'll wait until another day,
Because Deiphebus will come back soon—
And hark, I hear them coming up this way.
But, Cressida, some morn or afternoon,
And Troilus, too, at season opportune,
A meeting at my house I shall arrange,
The remnant of your pledges to exchange.

29

"When you can ease your troubled hearts at leisure;
And let us see then which shall bear the bell
In boasts of love which love alone can measure,
For there you'll both have time your tale to tell."
"How long," asked Troilus, "am I to dwell
In this suspense?" "As soon as you get up,"
Said Pandar, "come to dine with me or sup."

30

With these words, Helen and Deiphebus
Appear, as they the topmost stairs ascend,
And now again deep groans from Troilus
Burst forth, as he bethinks him illness to pretend;
But Pandar says, "It's time for us to end
Our visit, niece, so take leave of all three,
And let them talk, and you come on with me."

31

She said goodbye in quite the proper way,
And they in turn, in polished manner, too,
The pleasant compliments of parting pay;
When she had left and closed the interview,
They still commended her with praises new,
Her wit, her charm and all her general style,
And Troilus listened with an inward smile.

32

Now to her palace let her wend her way
While we go back to Troilus in bed;
About the letter he had naught to say
That Helen and Deiphebus had read,
And wished that they would go, and soon he said
He thought perhaps it might for him be best
To try to sleep and get a little rest.

33

And Helen kissed him then and said goodbye,
Deiphebus likewise his leave must take;
But Pandar soon, as straight as he could fly,
Came back, a couch beside his friend to make,
And Troilus and he, both wide awake,
Through all that confidential night there lay,
For they had many pressing things to say.

Beth glad, and draweth yow to lustinesse,
And I shal trewely, with al my might,
Your bittre tornen al in-to swetnesse;
If I be she that may yow do gladnesse,
For every wo ye shal recovere a blisse";
And him in armes took, and gan him kisse.

27

Fil Pandarus on knees, and up his yēn
To hevne throw, and held his hondes hye,
"Immortal god!" quod he, "that mayst nought dyen,
Cupide I mene, of this mayst glorifye;
And Venus, thou mayst make melodye;
With-outen hond, me semeth that in towne,
For this merveye, I here ech belle sowne.

28

But ho! no more as now of this matere,
For-why this folk wol comen up anoon,
That han the lettre red: lo, I hem here.
But I conjure thee, Criseyde, and oon,
And two, thou Troilus, whan thou mayst goon,
That at myn hous ye been at my warninge,
For I ful wel shal shape your cominge;

29

And eseth ther your hertes right y-nough;
And lat see which of yow shal bere the belle
To speke of love a-right!" ther-with he lough.
"For ther have ye a layser for to telle."
Quod Troilus, "how longe shal I dwelle
Er this be doon?" Quod he, "whan thou mayst ryse,
This thing shal be right as I yow devyse."

30

With that Eleyne and also Deiphebus
Tho comen upward, right at the steyses ende;
And lord, so than gan grone Triolus,
His brother and his suster for to blende.
Quod Pandarus, "it tyme is that we wende;
Tak, nece myn, your leve at alle three,
And lat hem speke, and cometh forth with me."

31

She took hir leve at hem ful thriftily,
As she wel coude, and they hir reverence
Un-to the fulle didnen hardely,
And spoken wonder wel, in hir absence,
Of hir, in preysing of hir excellence,
Hir governaunce, hir wit; and hir manere
Commended, it joye was to here.

32

Now lat hir wende un-to hir owne place,
And torne we to Troilus a-yein,
That gan ful lightly of the lettre passe
That Deiphebus hadde in the gardin seyn.
And of Eleyne and him he wolde fayn
Delivered been, and seyde, that him leste
To slepe, and after tales have reste.

33

Eleyne him kiste, and took hir leve blyve,
Deiphebus eek, and hoom wente every wight;
And Pandarus, as faste as he may dryve,
To Troilus tho com, as lyne right;
And on a paillet, al that glade night,
By Troilus he lay, with mery chere,
To tale; and wel was hem they were y-fere,

34

Whan every wight was voided but they two,
 And alle the dores were faste y-shette,
 To telle in short, with-oute wordes mo,
 This Pandarus, with-uten any lette,
 Up roos, and on his beddes syde him sette,
 And gan to speken in a sobre wyse
 To Troilus, as I shal yow devyse.

35

"Myn alderlevest lord, and brother dere,
 God woot, and thou, that it sat me so sore,
 When I thee saw so languisshing to-yere,
 For love, of which thy wo wax alwey more;
 That I, with al my might and al my lore,
 Hath ever sithen doon my bisnesse
 To bringe thee to joye out of distresse;

36

And have it brought to swich plyt as thou wost,
 So that, thorough me, thou stondest now in weye
 To fare wel, I seye it for no bost,
 And wostow why? for shame it is to seye,
 For thee have I bigonne a gamen pleye
 Which that I never doon shal eft for other,
 Al-though he were a thousand fold my brother.

37

That is to seye, for thee am I bicomem,
 Bitwixen game and earnest, swich a mene
 As maken wommen un-to men to comen;
 Al sey I nought, thou wost wel what I mene.
 For thee have I my nece, of vyces clene,
 So fully maad thy gentillesse triste,
 That al shal been right as thy-selve liste.

38

But god, that al wot, take I to witnesse,
 That never I this for coveityse wroughte,
 But only for to abregge that distresse,
 For which wel nygh thou deydest, as me thoughte.
 But gode brother, do now as thee oughte,
 For goddes love, and keep hir out of blame,
 Sin thou art wys, and save alwey hir name.

39

For wel thou wost, the name as yet of here
 Among the peple, as who seyth, halwed is;
 For that man is unbore, I dar wel swere,
 That ever wiste that she dide amis.
 But wo is me, that I, that cause
 al this,

May thenken that she is my nece dere,
 And I hir eem, and traytor eek y-fere!

40

And were it wist that I, through myn engyn,
 Hadde in my nece y-put this fantasye,
 To do thy lust, and hoolly to be thyn,
 Why, al the world up-on it wolde crye,
 And seye, that I the worste trecherye
 Dide in this cas, that ever was bigonne,
 And she for-lost, and thou right nought y-wonne.

41

Wher-fore, er I wol ferther goon a pas,
 Yet eft I thee biseche and fully seye,
 That privetee go with us in this cas,
 That is to seye, that thou us never wreye;

34

When all had left the room except these two,
 And firmly shut and barred was every door,
 Their conversation they began anew,
 And Pandar left his couch upon the floor,
 And on the bed he sat, and now once more
 Began to speak in his accustomed way
 To Troilus, as I shall to you say.

35

"My lord most worshipful and brother dear,
 God knows, and thou, what pain and grief I bore
 To see thee languishing through all the year
 For love that ever the longer grew the more!
 Thus I with all my might and all my lore
 Did ever since my time for you employ
 To bring you back from sorrow into joy,

36

"And have so far my plannings carried out
 That you to gain your end are in good way.
 But there is nothing here to boast about,
 And know you why? With shame I must it say,
 For you I have begun a game to play,
 The like of which I'd do for no one other,
 Although he were a thousandfold my brother.

37

"That is to say, I've made myself for thee
 Half jest, half earnest, such a go-between
 As oft twixt man and maid the world doth see.
 You know yourself what kind of thing I mean;
 For thee I've made my niece, so pure and clean,
 Such confidence and trust on thee bestow
 That henceforth all just as thou wilt shall go.

38

"But God omniscient here I witness take,
 For private ends in this I have not wrought,
 But only strove thy sufferings to slake,
 Which well nigh fatal were, or so I thought.
 But, brother dear, remember that you ought,
 In every manner, keep her free from blame,
 And always strive to save her honest name.

39

"For well you know a woman's reputation
 Among the people is a sacred thing,
 And never man, I dare make affirmation,
 A charge of wrong on her could justly bring;
 But now the dreadful thought my heart doth
 wring,
 That she should be my niece, so dear to me,
 And I her uncle and her pimp should be.

40

"And were it known that I, through set design,
 Had put my dearest niece in such a way
 To follow thee and be all wholly thine,
 Why, all the world would cry aloud and say,
 That no such treachery for many a day
 Was in this fashion planned and done,
 And she be lost, and for thee nothing won!

41

"And so before a further step we take,
 No matter what befall, I ask again
 For secrecy, for hers and for my sake;
 Do not disgrace me in the eyes of men!

And be not wroth at me if now and then,
I beg for privacy in this affair,
For well you know how urgent is my prayer.

42

"And think what woes of old have come to pass
From boastful speech, and how today men lead
Their lives in griefs that burden and harass,
From hour to hour, for that same wicked deed.
And in the wisest clerks you well may read
This proverb, useful to the old and young,
'The highest virtue is to hold your tongue.'

43

"And if I would not now abbreviate
Diffusiveness in speech, I could almost
A thousand ancient tales to you relate
Of women lost through false and foolish boast.
Such proverbs you yourself must know a host;
All boastful blabbers are but fools forsooth,
Even if what they say seems like the truth.

44

"One tongue, alas, hath often made to mourn
And caused full many a lady bright of hue
To cry, 'Alas the day that I was born!'
And many a maid her sorrow to renew;
And yet the things are twisted all askew
Of which men boast, if they were brought to
proof;
Boasters by nature are from truth aloof.

45

"A boaster and a liar, all is one!
For now suppose a woman granteth me
Her love, as to no other she hath done,
And I am sworn to sacred secrecy,
And then I go and talk to two or three,
Then I'm a boaster and a liar both,
For I have broken all my plighted troth.

46

"You see right well how much they are to blame,
Such sort of folk—or scamps would be more pat—
Who boast of women, even by their name,
Who never promised them nor this nor that,
Nor knew them any more than my old hat!
I ask you, is it any wonder then
That women fear to get involved with men?

47

"I don't say this especially of you—
I hope you're not in need of all I've said.
I'm thinking of the harm that people do
By heedlessness, and not by malice led;
For well I know no woman need to dread
The vice of boasting in a man of sense;
The wise learn from the fools to shun offence.

48

"But to the point! Now my good brother dear,
Keep all these things that I have said in mind,
And ponder well. But now, be of good cheer,
And doubt not at the proper time to find
Me true, for I shall work in such a kind
That you therewith shall be well satisfied,
For all shall be as you yourself decide.

49

"I have no doubt of thy integrity,

And be nought wrooth, though I thee ofte prey
To holden secree swich an heigh matere;
For skilful is, thou wost wel, my preyere.

42

And thenk what wo ther hath bitid er this,
For makinge of avauntes, as men rede;
And what mischaunce in this world yet ther is,
Fro day to day, right for that wikked dede;
For which these wyse clerkes that ben dede
Han ever yet proverbed to us yonge,
That 'firste vertu is to kepe tonge.'

43

And, nere it that I wilne as now t'abregge
Diffusioun of speche, I coude almost
A thousand olde stories thee alegge
Of wommen lost, thorough fals and foles bost;
Proverbes canst thy-self y-nowe, and wost,
Ayeins that vyce, for to been a labbe,
Al seyde men sooth as often as they gabbe.

44

O tonge, alas! so often here-biforn
Hastow made many a lady bright of hewe
Seyd, 'welawey! the day that I was born!'
And many a maydes sorwes for to newe;
And, for the more part, al is untrew
That men of yelp, and it were brought to
preve;
Of kinde non avauntour is to leve.

45

Avauntour and a lyere, al is ony;
As thus: I pose, a womman graunte me
Hir love, and seyth that other wol she non,
And I am sworn to holden it secree,
And after I go telle it two or three;
Y-wis, I am avauntour at the leste,
And lyere, for I breke my biheste.

46

Now loke thanne, if they be nought to blame,
Swich maner folk; what shal I clepe hem, what,
That hem avaunte of wommen, and by name,
That never yet bihighte hem this ne that,
Ne knewe hem more than myn olde hat?
No wonder is, so god me sende hele,
Though wommen drede with us men to dele.

47

I sey not this for no mistrust of yow,
Ne for no wys man, but for foles nyce,
And for the harm that in the world is now,
As wel for foly ofte as for malyce;
For wel wot I, in wyse folk, that vyce
No womman drat, if she be wel avysed;
For wyse ben by foles harm chastysed.

48

But now to purpos; leve brother dere,
Have al this thing that I have seyde in minde,
And keep thee clos, and be now of good chere,
For at thy day thou shalt me trewe finde.
I shal thy proces sette in swich a kinde,
And god to-for, that it shall thee suffice,
For it shal been right as thou wolt devyse.

49

For wel I woot, thou menest wel, parde;

Therefore I dar this fully undertake.
 Thou wost eek what thy lady graunted thee,
 And day is set, the chartres up to make.
 How now good night, I may no lenger wake;
 And bid for me, sin thou art now in blisse,
 That god me sende deeth or sone lisse."

50

Who mighte telle half the joye or feste
 Which that the sowle of Troilus tho felte,
 Heringe th'effect of Pandarus bihest?
 His olde wo, that made his herte swelte,
 Gan tho for joye wasten and to-melte,
 And al the richesse of his sykes sore
 At ones fledde, he felte of hem no more.

51

But right so as these holtes and these hayes,
 That han in winter dede been and dreye,
 Revesten hem in grene, whan that May is,
 Whan every lusty lyketh best to pleye:
 Right in that selve wyse, sooth to seye,
 Wex sodeynliche his herte ful of joye,
 That gladder was ther never man in Troye.

52

And gan his look on Pandarus up caste
 Ful sobrely, and frendly for to see,
 And seyde, "freend, in Aprille the laste,
 As wel thou wost, if it remembre thee,
 How neigh the deeth for wo thou founde me;
 And how thou didest al thy businesse
 To knowe of me the cause of my distresse.

53

Thou wost how longe I it for-bar to seye
 To thee, that art the man that I best triste;
 And peril was it noon to thee by-wreye,
 That wiste I wel; but tel me, if thee liste,
 Sith I so looth was that thy-self it wiste,
 How dorste I mo tellen of this matere,
 That quake now, and no wight may us here?

54

But natheles, by that god I thee swere,
 That, as him list, may al this world governe,
 And, if I lye, Achilles with his spere
 Myn herte cleve, al were my lyf eterne,
 As I am mortal, if I late or yerne
 Wolde it biwreye, or dorste, or sholde conne,
 For all the good that god made under sonne;

55

That rather deye I wolde, and determyne,
 As thinketh me, now stokked in presoun,
 In wrecchednesse, in filthe, and in vermyne,
 Caytif to cruel king Agamenoun;
 And this, in alle the temples of this toun,
 Upon the goddes alle, I wol thee swere'
 To-morwe day, if that thee lyketh here.

56

And that thou hast so muche y-doone for me,
 That I ne may it never-more deserve,
 This knowe I wel, al mighte I now for thee
 A thousand tymes on a morwen sterve,
 I can no more, that that I wol thee serve
 Right as thy sclave, whider-so thou wende,
 For ever-more, un-to my lyves ende!

And therefore all this task I undertake.
 Thou knowest that thy lady grants to thee
 A day on which thy settlement to make!
 And now goodnight! I cannot keep awake.
 And pray for me, since heaven doth thee bless,
 God send me death, or make my sorrow less!"

50

Now who could tell one half the jubilation
 Which Troilus within his heart then felt,
 Hearing the end of Pandar's protestation!
 The wounds that grief unto his heart had dealt
 Began for joy to vanish and to melt,
 And all his multitude of sighings sore
 Dispersed and fled away forevermore.

51

As when the woods and hedges everywhere,
 Which through the winter waited dead and dry,
 Reclothe themselves in green, so fresh and fair,
 And all the folk rejoice with spirits high,
 The same thing now in him you might descry;
 His heart with joy to blossom so began
 That in all Troy there was no happier man.

52

Then Troilus his eye on Pandar cast,
 Most soberly, yet in a friendly way,
 And said, "O friend, remember April last,
 For I am sure you can't forget the day,
 How nearly mortal sorrow did me slay,
 And how you long and earnestly did press
 Me there to tell the cause of my distress?

53

"You know how long to speak I then forbore,
 Although you were the man I trusted best,
 And nothing hindered me then to declare
 The truth to you. Now tell me, I request,
 Since nothing of my love I then confessed,
 How durst I babble in the general ear,
 And tremble now, with no one by to hear?"

54

"But by the God omnipotent I swear,
 By him who deals to every man his fate,
 And if I lie, may not Achilles spare
 To cleave my heart, that I shan't divulgate,
 Though I should live forever, soon or late,
 A word of this, or hint to anyone,
 For all the gifts of God beneath the sun.

55

"The rather would I end my days withal,
 Fettered in prison cell would rather be,
 In wretchedness where filthy vermin crawl,
 In Agamemnon's harsh captivity;
 And this in all our temples faithfully,
 By all our Gods tomorrow I will swear,
 And you can go along and witness bear.

56

"That thou hast done so very much for me
 That all thy service I can ne'er repay,
 I understand quite well, although for thee
 I died a thousand times and more a day;
 But as thy slave, and what more can I say,
 Upon thy wish and will I shall attend,
 Till death shall bring my life unto its end.

57

"But let me now with all my heart beseech
That you assign me no such attribute,
As I might fairly gather from your speech,
That you supposed that all my honest suit
Was but a bawdy thing of ill repute.
I'm not a scholar, but I'm not a fool,
I've learned a thing or two outside of school.

58

"A man who this affair should undertake
For gold or profit, call him what you will!
But what you've done, you did for pity's sake,
Through goodness of your heart and not for ill.
Regard it so, for men of any skill
All know that the distinctions subtle are
Between two things a good deal similar.

59

"And here's another thing that I declare
To wipe from all your act the shameful blot;
Behold my sister Polyxena fair,
Cassandra, Helen, or any of the lot,
Though she be fair with never a stain or spot,
Just tell me which of these you'd like to be
Your very own, and leave the rest to me!

60

"But since thou hast helped me in this wise
To save my life, and not for hope of meed,
So, for the love of God, this great emprise
Carry thou out, for now there is much need;
In high and low, in every single deed
All thy commands I faithfully will keep,
And so good night, and let us go to sleep."

61

Thus each with other was well satisfied,
No better friends in all the world could be;
The next day, early up and dressed, each hied
Him to his regular activity;
And Troilus, although he longed to see
The one on whom depended all his joy,
Took heed all right precautions to employ,

62

And every reckless action to restrain
With manly will, and each unbridled look;
There was no man alive could entertain
The least suspicion, such good care he took
That none might nose him out by hook or crook.
He held himself as lonely as a cloud,
From policy, and not that he was proud.

63

And all this time of which I now relate,
He daily strove with valor and with might
The service high of Mars to cultivate
In deeds of arms befitting a true knight;
And on his couch when darkness followed light
He lay, and thought how he might serve
His lady best, and thus her thanks deserve.

64

I will not say, although his couch was soft,
That he in heart was fully at his ease,
Or that he turned not on his pillow oft,
Nor longed to grasp what was too far to seize.
Such lonely nights have little power to please—

57

But here, with al myn herte, I thee biseche,
That never in me thou deme swich folye
As I shal seyn; me thoughte, by thy speche,
That this, which thou me dost for companye,
I sholde wene it were a bauderye;
I am nought wood, al-if I lewed be;
It is not so, that woot I wel, pardee.

58

But he that goth, for gold or for richesse,
On swich message, calle him what thee list;
And this that thou dost, calle it gentillesse,
Compassioun, and felawship, and trist;
Depart it so, for wyde-where is wist
How that there is dyversitee requered
Bitwixen thinges lyke, as I have lered.

59

And, that thou knowe I thenke nought ne wene
That this servyse a shame be or jape,
I have my faire suster Polixene,
Cassandre, Eleyne, or any of the frape;
Be she never so faire or wel y-shape,
Tel me, which thou wilt of everichone,
To han for thyn, and lat me thanne allone.

60

But sin that thou hast don me this servyse,
My lyf to save, and for noon hope of mede,
So, for the love of god, this grete emprise
Parforme it out; for now is moste nede.
For high and low, with-outen any drede,
I wol alwey thyne hestes alle kepe;
Have now good night, and lat us bothe slepe."

61

Thus held him ech with other wel apayed,
That al the world ne mighte it bet amende;
And, on the morwe, when they were arayed,
Ech to his owene nedes gan entende.
But Troilus, though as the fyr he brende
For sharp desyr of hope and of plesaunce,
He not for-gat his gode governance.

62

But in him-self with manhod gan restreyne
Ech rakel dede and ech unbrydled chere,
That alle tho that liven, sooth to seyne,
Ne sholde han wist, by word or by manere,
What that he mente, as touching this matere.
From every wight as fer as is the cloude
He was, so wel dissimulen he coude.

63

And al the whyl which that I yow devyse,
This was his lyf; with al his fulle might,
By day he was in Martes high servyse,
This is to seyn, in armes as a knight;
And for the more part, the longe night
He lay, and thoughte how that he mighte serve
His lady best, hir thank for to deserve.

64

Nil I nought swerë, al-though he lay softe,
That in his thought he nas sumwhat disesed,
Ne that he tornede on his pilwes ofte,
And wolde of that him missed han ben sesed;
But in swich cas man is nought alwey plesed,

For ought I wot, no more than was he;
That can I deme of possibilitée.

65

But certeyn is, to purpos for to go,
That in this whyle, as writen is in geste,
He say his lady som-tyme; and also
She with him spak, whan that she dorste or leste,
And by hir bothe avys, as was the beste,
Apoynteden ful warly in this neede,
So as they dorste, how they wolde procede.

66

But it was spoken in so short a wyse,
In swich awayt alwey, and in swich
fere,
Lest any wyght divynen or devyse
Wolde of hem two, or to it leye an ere,
That al this world so leef to hem ne were
As that Cupido wolde hem grace sende
To maken of hir speche aright an ende.

67

But thilke litel that they speke or wroughte,
His wyse goost took ay of al swich hede,
It semed hir, he wiste that she thoughte
With-outen word, so that it was no neede
To bidde him ought to done, or ought forbede;
For which she thoughte that love, al come it late,
Of alle joye hadde opned hir the yate.

68

And shortly of this proces for to pace,
So wel his werk and wordes he bisette,
That he so ful stood in his lady grace,
That twenty thousand tymes, or she lette,
She thonked god she ever with him mette;
So coude he him governe in swich servyse,
That al the world ne mighte it bet devyse.

69

For-why she fond him so discreet in al,
So secret, and of swich obeïsaunce,
That wel she felte he was to hir a wal
Of steel, and sheld from every displeasaunce;
That, to ben in his gode governaunce,
So wys he was, she was no more afered,
I mene, as fer as oughte ben requered.

70

And Pandarus, to quike alwey the fyr,
Was ever y-lyke prest and diligent;
To ese his frend was set al his desyr.
He shoof ay on, he to and fro was sent;
He lettres bar whan Troilus was absent.
That never man, as in his freendes nede,
Ne bar him bet than he, with-outen drede.

71

But now, paraunter, som man wayten wolde
That every word, or sonde, or look, or chere
Of Troilus that I rehersen sholde,
In al this whyle, un-to his lady dere;
I trowe it were a long thing for to here;
Or of what wight that stant in swich disjoynte.
His wordes alle, or every look, to poynte.

72

For sothe, I have not herd it doon er this,
In storye noon, ne no man here, I wene;

So I've been told,—and so thought he maybe;
I note it as a possibility.

65

But this is sure, in order not to stray
Too far among reflections manifold,
He saw his lady, yet not every day,
And spoke with her, although too rash or bold
They neither were, and always strove to hold
Themselves in hand, for each one felt the need
With proper care and caution to proceed.

66

And when they spoke, they spoke so quick and
brief,
With great reserve and with oppressive fear,
(For folk are prone to jump at some belief,
And strain to gather something through the ear),
That all would think that nothing was so dear
To them as this, that Cupid should them send
An opportunity their speech to end.

67

But though they spake but little or spake naught,
His spirit was so tuned in every deed,
It seemed to her he knew of all her thought
Without a word, so that there was no need
To caution or for aught to intercede;
For so it seemed that love, though come so late,
To all their joy had opened up the gate.

68

In short, to bring the matter to a close,
So faithfully he did on her attend,
That high in his dear lady's grace he rose,
And twenty thousand times or more on end
She thanked the Lord that she had such a friend,
Who could conduct himself in all his ways
So well, he merited the highest praise.

69

In truth she found him so discreet withal,
So secret ever and obedient,
She felt he was to her a very wall
Of steel and shield from fear or discontent;
And when she saw how nicely all things went,
She felt she had no need to be so wary—
I mean, of course, no more than necessary.

70

And Pandar, ready still to feed the fire,
Was ever diligent and close at hand.
To please his friend was now his sole desire,
He urged him on, was ready at command
To carry letters, or for him to stand,
When Troilus was busy or away—
In short, the perfect confidant to play.

71

But if you think that I should now relate
Each word of Troilus, each hope and fear,
The little nothings, sweet and intimate,
That he meant only for his lady's ear,
I couldn't do it if I took a year;
To tell you every passage of his wooing
Would be a labor scarcely worth the doing.

72

I do not find that ever anyone
In telling such details has been minute—

'Twould be appalling if it were all done!
In letters thousands of verses I compute
They wrote, on which my author is quite mute;
He was too sensible and wise to try
To write all lovers say, and so am I.

73

But to the great result! As things stood thus,
These two in concord and in peace complete,
These lovers Cressida and Troilus,
Were well content in all this time so sweet,
Except that only rarely they could meet,
And had so little time their joys to tell,
I now proceed to say what next befell.

74

Good Pandar, striving still with all his might
To lead this matter to a happy end,
Thought how to bring unto his house some night
His niece so dear, and his still dearer friend,
That at their leisure they might there attend
To this great love by which they both were bound,
And finally a fitting time he found.

75

He made his plans with great deliberation,
Providing for all things that might avail
To help them realize their expectation,
However great the toil this might entail,
And worked it out so that it could not fail,
And that for anyone through it to see,
Would be a sheer impossibility.

76

To fool all folk his plan was well designed,
The spoil-sports and the gossips, all the same;
He had no doubts, for all the world is blind,
In such affairs, the wild ones and the tame!
And now the timbers ready are to frame!
There's nothing lacking now except to know
The hour at which to his house she should go.

77

And Troilus, who all this plotting knew,
And patiently in silent waiting lay,
Had also planned with care what he would do,
And also, for excuse, that he would say,
If he were not about some night or day,
That to a certain temple he would go,
His duty to the deity to show,

78

And solitary there would watch and wake,
If some sign from Apollo he might see,
Or might behold the holy laur shake,
Or hear Apollo speaking from the tree,
To tell him when the Greeks would homeward
flee;

And therefore let him as he will pretend,
And pray Apollo bring all to good end.

79

And now we're coming to the point right soon!
For Pandar up and with no great ado,
But when there was a changing of the moon
And lightless is the world a night or two,
And when the clouds foretold a rain in view,
To Cressida, his niece's house he went,
And you well know the whole of his intent.

And though I wolde I coude not, y-wis;
For ther was som epistel hem bitwene,
That wolde, as seyth myn auctor, wel contene
Neigh half this book, of which him list not wryte;
How sholde I thanne a lyne of it endyte?

73

But to the grete effect: than sey I thus,
That stonding in concord and in quiete
Thise ilke two, Criseyde and Troilus,
As I have told, and in this tyme swete,
Save only often mighte they not mete,
Ne layser have hir speches to fulfelle,
That it befel right as I shal yow telle,

74

That Pandarus, that ever dide his might
Right for the fyn that I shal speke of here.
As for to bringe to his hous som night
His faire nece, and Troilus y-fere,
Wher-as at leyser al this heigh matere,
Touching hir love, were at the fulle up-bounde,
Hadde out of doute a tyme to it founde.

75

For he with greet deliberacioun
Hadde every thing that her-to mighte avayle
Forn-cast, and put in execucioun,
And neither laft for cost ne for travayle;
Come if hem lest, hem sholde no-thing fayle;
And for to been in ought espyed there,
That, wiste he wel, an impossible were.

76

Dredelees, it cleer was in the wind
Of every pye and every lette-game;
Now al is wel, for al the world is blind
In this matere, bothe fremed and tame.
This timber is al redy up to frame;
Us lakketh nought but that we witen wolde
A certain houre, in whiche she comen sholde.

77

And Troilus, that al this purveyaunce
Knew at the fulle, and waytede on it ay,
Hadde here-up-on eek made gret ordenaunce,
And founde his cause, and ther-to his aray,
If that he were missed, night or day,
Ther-whyle he was aboute this servyse,
That he was goon to doon his sacrifice,

78

And moste at swich a temple alone wake,
Answered of Appollo for to be;
And first, to seen the holy laurer quake,
Er that Appollo spak out of the tree,
To telle him next whan Grekes sholden
flee;

And forthy lette him no man, god forbede,
But preye Appollo helpen in this nede.

79

Now is ther litel more for to done,
But Pandare up, and shortly for to seyne,
Right sone upon the chaunging of the mone,
Whan lightles is the world a night or tweyne,
And that the welken shoop him for to reyne,
He streight a-morwe un-to his nece wente;
Ye han wel herd the fyn of his entente.

80

Whan he was come, he gan anon to pleye
As he was wont, and of him-self to jape;
And fynally, he swor and gan hir seye,
By this and that, she sholde him not escape,
Ne lenger doon him after hir to gape;
But certeynly she moste, by hir leve,
Come soupen in his hous with him at eve.

81

At whiche she lough, and gan hir faste excuse,
And seyde, "it rayneth; lo, how sholde I goon?"
"Lat be," quod he, "ne stond not thus to muse;
This moot be doon, ye shal be ther anon."
So at the laste her-of they felle at oon,
Or elles, softe he swor hir in hir ere,
He nolde never come ther she
were.

82

Sone after this, to him she gan to rowne,
And asked him if Troilus were there?
He swor hir, "nay, for he was out of towne,"
And seyde, "nece, I pose that he were,
Yow thurfte never have the more fere.
For rather than men mighte him ther aspye,
Me were lever a thousand-fold to dye."

83

Nought list myn auctor fully to declare
What that she thoughte whan he seyde so,
That Troilus was out of town y-fare,
As if he seyde ther-of sooth or no;
But that, with-oute awayt, with him to go,
She graunted him, sith he hir that bisoughte,
And, as his nece, obeyed as hir oughte.

84

But natheles, yet gan she him biseche,
Al-though with him to goon it was no fere,
For to be war of goosish peples speche,
That dremen thinges whiche that never were,
And wel avyse him whom he broughte there;
And seyde him, "eem, sin I mot on yow triste,
Loke al be wel, and do now as yow liste."

85

He swor hir, "yis, by stokkes and by stones,
And by the goddes that in hevene dwelle,
Or elles were him lever, soule and bones,
With Pluto king as depe been in helle
As Tantalus!" What sholde I more telle?
Whan al was wel, he roos and took his leve,
And she to souper com, whan it was eve,

86

With a certayn of hir owene men,
And with hir faire nece Antigone,
And others of hir wommen nyne or ten;
But who was glad now, who, as trowe ye,
But Troilus, that stood and mighte it see
Thurgh-out a litel windowe in a stewe,
Ther he bishet, sin midnight, was in mewe,

87

Unwist of every wight but of Pandare?
But to the poynt; now whan she was y-come
With alle joye, and alle frendes fare,
Hir eem anon in armes hath hir nome,

80

When he arrived, in his accustomed way
He joked and jested at his own expense,
But finally he paused and made display
Of earnestness and of great exigence,
And said for no excuse and no pretence,
He'd let her off, but come she must that eve
To supper at his house by her good leave.

81

At this she laughed and in excuse replied,
"It's raining, look! So how then could I go?"
"That's nothing," said he. "Just let me decide.
You've got to come—I will not take a no!"
And so at last they left the matter so,
For he had whispered softly in her ear,
"Don't come if you won't, but for it you'll pay
dear!"

82

But she was not quite ready to give way,
And asked if maybe Troilus was there.
"O no," he said, "he's out of town today!
But, niece, I say, supposing that he were,
You have no slightest cause for fear or care,
Indeed a thousand times I'd rather die,
Than have folk on him at my house to spy."

83

Explicitly no one has set it down,
Just what she thought when Pandar told her so,
That Troilus was that day out of town,
If Cressida believed his tale or no;
But that she went with him to sup we know,
At least, as he so urgently besought,
No matter what she knew or what she thought.

84

But nevertheless she did again beseech,
Although to go she had no hesitation,
That he forget not foolish people's speech,
Who dream what never was in all creation,
And that he give this full consideration;
"For, uncle," said she, "since in you I trust,
Take heed, for follow where you lead I must."

85

To do all this he swore by sticks and stones,
And all the gods that high in heaven dwell,
Or let him be, said he, both skin and bones,
As deep as Tantalus in lowest hell
Where Pluto reigns! What is there more to tell?
All thus arranged, he rose and took his leave,
And she to supper came when it was eve,

86

Along with certain of her household men,
And with her charming niece Antigone,
And others of her women, nine or ten.
Who now was glad? Who other can it be
But Troilus, who stood where he could see,
Right through a little window in a room,
Where he till midnight hid in lonely gloom,

87

To all the folk save Pandar quite unknown?
But to the point! When she had come at last,
With all her friends, as I before have shown,
Her uncle with his arm about her cast,

Together with his guests to supper passed,
And when they all were seated happily,
The dainties served there were a sight to see.

88

When from the supper table they arose,
At ease in mind and heart was man and maid,
And each for her his freshest stories chose,
While Pandar his most sparkling wit displayed.
He sang; she played; he told the tale of Wade,
But everything at last must have an end,
And she prepared her homeward way to wend.

89

Thou Chance, executrix of each man's weird!
O Influences dwelling in the sky!
All under God, our fates by these are steered,
Though we poor brutes the cause cannot descry;
For though she said that homeward she would hie,
The Gods had willed it in another way,
And willy-nilly, there she had to stay.

90

The curving moon, with her two horns all pale,
And Saturn, Jove and Cancer so united
That all the rains of heaven now assail
The earth, and all these ladies were affrighted,
Who by the smoky rain were thus benighted;
But Pandar only laughed at them, and cried,
" 'Tis fine for ducks and ladies now outside!

91

"But now, good niece, I hope that you will please
Accept my humble hospitality,
As well for mine as for your greater ease,
And all remain here overnight with me.
Pray let my house for once your own house be;
For if you went out now, I'd feel to blame,
And take it as an insult and a shame."

92

And Cressida, who saw how matters stood
As well as anyone, had naught to say,
For since the flooding rain had come for good,
She thought, "I might as well, if I must stay,
Accept the matter in a cheerful way,
And have his thanks, as grumble and remain,
For home we cannot go just now, that's plain."

93

"That's very kind," she said, "my uncle dear,
And if you really wish, it shall be so.
We're glad to have the chance of staying here.
'Twas but a joke when I said I would go."
"I thank you, niece," he answered, bowing low,
"Joking or not, the simple truth to tell,
I am relieved that with me you will dwell."

94

So far, so good! Then they began anew
The conversation in a merry strain,
But Pandar kept the main point still in view,
And he to get them soon to bed was fain.
"Good Lord," he said, "this is a mighty rain!
It's just the weather for a good long sleep!
Let other things until tomorrow keep!

95

"And, niece, I have a place for you to stay,
Right here, where we shan't be too far asunder,

And after to the souper, alle and some,
Whan tyme was, ful softe they hem sette;
God wot, ther was no deyntee for to fette.

88

And after souper gonnen they to ryse,
At ese wel, with hertes fresshe and glade,
And wel was him that coude best devyse
To lyken hir, or that hir laughen made.
He song; she pleyde; he tolde tale of Wade.
But at the laste, as every thing hath ende,
She took hir leve, and nedes wolde wende.

89

But O, Fortune, executrice of wierdes,
O influences of this hevenes hye!
Soth is, that, under god, ye ben our hierdes,
Though to us bestes been the causes wrye.
This mene I now, for she gan hoomward hye,
But execut was al bisyde hir leve,
At the goddes wil; for which she moste bleve.

90

The bente mone with hir hornes pale,
Saturne, and Jove, in Cancro joyned were,
That swich a rayn from hevене gan avale,
That every maner womman that was there
Hadde of that smoky reyn a verray fere;
At which Pandare tho lough, and seyde thenne,
"Now were it tyme a lady to go henne!

91

But goode nece, if I mighte ever plesse
Yow any-thing, than prey I yow," quod he,
"To doon myn herte as now so greet an ese
As for to dwelle here al this night with me,
For-why this is your owene hous, pardee.
For, by my trouthe, I sey it nought a-game,
To wende as now, it were to me a shame."

92

Criseyde, whiche that coude as muche good
As half a world, tok hede of his preyere;
And sin it ron, and al was on a flood,
She thoughte, as good chep may I dwellen here,
And graunte it gladly with a freendes chere,
And have a thank, as grucche and thanne abyde;
For hoom to goon it may nought wel bityde.

93

"I wol," quod she, "myn uncle leef and dere,
Sin that yow list, it skile is to be so;
I am right glad with yow to dwellen here;
I seyde but a-game, I wolde go,"
"Y-wis, graunt mercy, nece!" quod he tho;
"Were it a game or no, soth for to telle,
Now am I glad, sin that yow list to dwelle."

94

Thus al is wel; but tho bigan aright
The newe joye, and al the feste agayn;
But Pandarus, if goodly hadde he might,
He wolde han hyed hir to bedde fayn,
And seyde, "lord, this is an huge rayn!
This were a weder for to slepen inne;
And that I rede us sone to biginne.

95

And nece, woot ye wher I wol yow leye,
For that we shul not ligen fer asonder,

And for ye neither shullen, dar I seye,
 Heren noise of reynes nor of thonder?
 By god, right in my lyte closet yonder.
 And I wol in that outer hous allone
 Be wardeyn of your wommen everichone.

96

And in this middel chaumbre that ye see
 Shul youre wommen slepen wel and softe;
 And ther I seyde shal your-selve be;
 And if ye liggen wel to-night, com ofte,
 And careth not what weder is on-lofte.
 The wyn anon, and whan so that yow leste,
 So go we slepe, I trowe it be the beste."

97

Ther nis no more, but here-after sone,
 The voydè dronke, and travers drawe anon,
 Gan every wight, that hadde nought to done
 More in that place, out of the chaumber gon.
 And ever-mo so sternelich it ron,
 And blew ther-with so wonderliche loude,
 That wel neigh no man heren other coude.

98

Tho Pandarus, hir eem, right as him oughte,
 With women swiche as were hir most aboute,
 Ful glad un-to hir beddes syde hir broughte,
 And took his leve, and gan ful lowe loute,
 And seyde, "here at this closet-dore withoute,
 Right over-thwart, your wommen liggen alle,
 That, whom yow liste of hem, ye may here
 calle."

99

So whan that she was in the closet leyde,
 And alle hir wommen forth by ordenaunce
 A-bedde weren, ther as I have seyde,
 There was no more to skippen nor to traunce,
 But boden go to bedde, with mischaunce,
 If any wight was steringe any-where,
 And late hem slepe that a-bedde were.

100

But Pandarus, that wel coude eche a del
 The olde daunce, and every poynt therinne,
 Whan that he sey that alle thing was wel,
 He thoughte he wolde up-on his werk biginne,
 And gan the stewe-dore al softe un-pinne,
 And stille as stoon, with-outen lenger lette,
 By Troilus a-doun right he him sette.

101

And, shortly to the poynt right for to gon,
 Of al this werk he tolde him word and ende,
 And seyde, "make thee redy right anon,
 For thou shalt in-to hevене blisse wende."
 "Now blisful Venus, thou me grace sende,"
 Quod Troilus, "for never yet no nede
 Hadde I er now, ne halvendel the drede."

102

Quod Pandarus, "ne drede thee never a del,
 For it shal been right as thou wilt desyre;
 So thryve I, this night shal I make it wel,
 Or casten al the gruwel in the fyre."
 "Yit blisful Venus, this night thou me enspyre,"
 Quod Troilus, "as wis as I thee serve,
 And ever bet and bet shal, til I sterve.

And where you shan't hear in the slightest way
 The noise of raining or the din of thunder.
 My little room will suit you to a wonder,
 And in that outer place alone I'll sleep,
 And watch and guard upon your women keep.

96

"And in this room between, that here you see,
 Shall all your women sleep both well and soft,
 And snug within, yourself alone shall be.
 And if you sleep well, come back soon and oft,
 No matter what the weather be aloft!
 Just one last drink! And when you feel inclined,
 Now all of you know just where your bed to find!"

97

The night cup to the company was passed,
 And all the curtains then were closely drawn,
 And so it was not long until the last
 Of all the folk from out the room had gone.
 But still the pelting rain kept on and on,
 And such a storm of wind blew all around,
 You could not hear a single other sound.

98

Fair Cressida was to her chamber brought,
 Together with a personal maid or two,
 And Pandar, doing all a good host ought,
 With many a bow, to her then said adieu,
 But added, "At this door not far from you,
 Your women will be lodged across the hall,
 And if you want them, you need only
 call."

99

So Cressida was safely tucked in bed,
 And all disposed of, just as Pandar planned,
 And I have carefully explained and said;
 If any then would tramp about, or stand
 And talk, the rest did scold and all demand
 That those who made the racket should keep still,
 And let the others sleep who had the will.

100

Now Pandar knew the game he had to play,
 And how to manage every point therein,
 And all in a preliminary way
 Now being well, was ready to begin;
 And first the little door he doth unpin,
 And entering there as still as any stone,
 By Troilus he sat him down alone.

101

And then he had a story to relate
 Of all these things, from very start to end.
 "Get ready," said he, "heaven's joys await
 On thee, if thou wilt but attend!"
 "Saint Venus," Troilus replied, "now send
 Thy aid, for never have I had such need,
 Nor ever felt such fright for any deed!"

102

Said Pandar, "Don't be in the least afraid,
 For all shall turn out just as you desire;
 Tonight I say your fortune shall be made,
 Or else tonight the fat be in the fire."
 "O blessed Venus, now my heart inspire,"
 Cried Troilus, "and in thy service high
 My time forever I shall occupy!

103

"And if there reigned, O Venus, queen of mirth,
Aspects of Saturn, or of Mars malign,
Or thou wert quenched or hindered at my birth,
Thy father pray that he this harm of mine
Will turn aside, and grant me joy divine,
For love of him for whom thou felt'st love's pain,
Adonis, by the fateful wild boar slain!

104

"O Jove, thou lover of Europa fair,
Who as a bull didst carry her away,
Now help! O Mars, who bloody cloak dost bear,
For love of Venus, hinder me not I pray!
O Phoebus, think how Daphne pined one day
Beneath the bark, and to a laurel grew,
And help me now, for love of her so true!

105

"O Mercury, I beg in Herse's name,
Though Pallas was against Aglauros set,
Now help! Diana, let not modest shame
Dissuade thee now to aid me and abet!
O Fatal Sisters, ere my nurse made yet
My swaddling clothes, my destiny ye spun,
So help me in this work that is begun!"

106

Said Pandar, "O, you chicken-hearted wretch!
Are you afraid because you think she'll bite?
Put something on—this over-cloak just fetch
Along, and follow me to see a sight!
But wait, I'll go ahead, to make all right!"
Then he undid a little secret door,
And Troilus waiting, he went on before.

107

The wind so roared and rumbled round about,
No other sound could anywhere be heard,
And those whose beds stood near the door without,
They slept and not a single person stirred,
For none had caught a whisper or a word.
Then Pandar found the door, without a light,
Where they all lay, and softly shut it tight.

108

He came again, quite still and stealthily,
But Cressida awoke and cried, "Who's there?"
"Dear niece," he softly said, "it's only me!
I hope I haven't given you a scare!"
And whispering low, he begged her to beware;
"No word," he said, "that curious folk can hear!
We don't want meddlers now to interfere!"

109

"How in the world," she asked, "did you get here,
And they not know a thing about it all?"
"At this trap-door," he answered, drawing near.
"Perhaps," said Cressida, "I'd better call."
"What, God forbid!" he answered still and small.
"If we by anyone should thus be caught,
They might think what they never would have
thought.

110

"Like sleeping dogs, you know—just let them sleep!
Don't ever give a chance for vague surmise.
Your women are in slumber sunk so deep,
You might pull down the town before their eyes,

103

And if I hadde, O Venus ful of mirth,
Aspectes badde of Mars or of Saturne,
Or thou combust or let were in my birthe,
Thy fader pray al thilke harm disturne
Of grace, and that I glad ayein may turne,
For love of him thou lovedest in the shawe,
I mene Adoon, that with the boor was slawe.

104

O Jove eek, for the love of faire Europe,
The whiche in forme of bole away thou fette;
Now help, O Mars, thou with thy bloddy cope,
For love of Cipris, thou me nought ne lette;
O Phebus, thenk whan Dane hir-selven shette
Under the bark, and laurer wex for drede,
Yet for hir love, O help now at this nede!

105

Mercurie, for the love of Hiers'e eke,
For which Pallas was with Aglauros wrooth,
Now help, and eek Diane, I thee biseke,
That this viage be not to thee looth.
O fatal sustren, which, er any clooth
Me shapen was, my desten'e me sponne,
So helpeth to this werk that is bi-gonne!"

106

Quod Pandarus, "thou wrecched mouses herte,
Art thou agast so that she wol thee byte?
Why, don this furred cloke up-on thy sherte,
And folowe me, for I wol han the wyte;
But byd, and lat me go bfore a lyte."
And with that word he gan un-do a trappe,
And Troilus he broughte in by the lappe.

107

The sterne wind so loude gan to route
That no wight other noyse mighte here;
And they that layen at the dore withoute,
Ful sikerly they slepten alle y-fere;
And Pandarus, with a ful sobre chere,
Goth to the dore anon with-outen lette,
Ther-as they laye, and softly it shette.

108

And as he com ayeinward prively,
His nece awook, and asked "who goth there?"
"My dere nece," quod he, "it am I;
Ne wondreth not, ne have of it no fere";
And ner he com, and seyde hir in hir ere,
"No word, for love of god I yow biseche;
Lat no wight ryse and heren of our speche."

109

"What! which wey be ye comen, *benedicite*?"
Quod she, "and how thus unwist of hem alle?"
"Here at this secree trappe-dore," quod he.
Quod tho Criseyde, "lat me som wight calle."
"Ey! god forbede that it sholde falle,"
Quod Pandarus, "that ye swich foly wroughte!
They mighte deme thing they never er
thoughte!

110

It is nought good a sleping hound to wake,
Ne yeve a wight a cause to devyne;
Your women slepen alle, I under-take,
So that, for hem, the hous men mighte myne;

And slepen wolen til the sonne shyne.
And when my tale al brought is to an ende,
Unwist, right as I com, so wol I wende.

III

Now nece myn, ye shul wel understonde,"
Quod he, "so as ye wommen demen alle,
That for to holde in love a man in honde,
And him hir 'leef' and 'dere herte'
calle,

And maken him an howve above a calle,
I mene, as love an other in this whyle,
She doth hir-self a shame, and him a gyle.

III

Now wherby that I telle yow al this?
Ye woot your-self, as wel as any wight,
How that your love al fully graunted is
To Troilus, the worthieste knight,
Oon of this world, and ther-to trouthe plyght,
That, but it were on him along, ye nolde
Him never falsen, whyl ye liven sholde.

III

Now stant it thus, that sith I fro yow wente,
This Troilus, right platly for to seyn,
Is thurgh a goter, by a privè wente,
In-to my chaumbre come in al this reyn,
Unwist of every maner wight, certeyn,
Save of my-self, as wisly have I joye,
And by that feith I shal Pryam of Troye!

III

And he is come in swich peyne and distresse
That, but he be al fully wood by this,
He sodeynly mot falle in-to wodnesse,
But-if god helpe; and cause why this is,
He seyth him told is, of a freend of his,
How that ye sholde love oon that hatte Horaste,
For sorwe of which this night shalt been his laste."

III

Criseyde, which that al this wonder herde,
Gan sodeynly aboute hir herte colde,
And with a syk she sorwfully answerde,
"Allas! I wende, who-so tales tolde,
My dere herte wolde me not holde
So lightly fals! alas! conceytes wronge,
What harm they doon, for now live I to longe!

III

Horaste! alas! and falsen Troilus?
I knowe him not, god helpe me so," quod she;
"Allas! what wikked spirit tolde him thus?
Now certes, eem, to-morwe, and I him see,
I shal ther-of as ful excusen me
As ever dide womman, if him lyke";
And with that word she gan ful sore syke.

III

"O god!" quod she, "so worldly selinesse,
Which clerkes callen fals felicitee,
Y-medled is with many a bitternesse!
Ful anguisshous than is, god woot," quod she,
"Condicioun of veyn prosperitee;
For either joyes comen nought y-fere,
Or elles no wight hath hem alwey here.

III

O brotel wele of mannes joye unstable!

And will sleep so until the sun shall rise;
And when I've told you what I have to say,
As silent as I came, I'll go away.

III

"Dear niece, I'm sure you quite well understand,
And all, I think, agree in this," he said,
"That if you have a certain man in hand,
Whose hopes with honeyed words you long have
fed,

And yet you set a fool's cap on his head,
I mean, with someone else you are too thick,—
Why, that's a shameful and a nasty trick.

III

"Now let me tell why I say this to you.
You know yourself as well as any wight,
That all your love is promised and is due
To Troilus, that good and noble knight,
And with such pledges you your faith did plight,
You never would your love to him deny,
Unless, indeed, the fault in him should lie.

III

"But here's the point, that since to bed I went,
This Troilus, with something on his brain,
Has by a gutter, through a secret vent,
Into my chamber come in all this rain,
Of course unknown to all, let me explain,
Save me alone in all the town of Troy,
I swear as I have hope of heaven's joy.

III

"Now he has come this night in such great grief
That I'm afraid lest he may lose his mind,
For he is hurt and wild beyond belief,
And now the reason for all this I find,
His faith in you a friend has undermined,
Who says you love a fellow named Horast,
For grief of which this night may be his last."

III

Cressida heard this tale with great surprise,
And therewithal she felt her heart grow cold,
And suddenly exclaimed, with tears and sighs,
"Alas, I thought, whatever tales were told,
My sweetheart would not me so lightly hold
For false! Alas, they'll drive me to my death,
These liars with their foul and poisoned breath!

III

"Horast! And me be false to Troilus!
Indeed I never knew him," answered she.
"Alas, what wicked spirit told him thus!
But Troilus tomorrow I shall see,
And from these charges I myself shall free,
In his and in the eyes of all good men,"
And thereupon she sighed and sighed again.

III

"O God," she cried, "these blessings temporal,
Which scholars falsely call felicity,
With bitterness are mingled and with gall!
God only knows what anguish then hath he
Who sees his empty joys before him flee!
For either joys arrive inopportune,
Or else they flit and vanish all too soon!

III

"O fickle fate! O worldly joy unstable!

Of men thou makest but a sport and play!
All know that they to hold their joy are able,
Or know it not—there is no other way.
Now if one knows it not, how may he say
That he of perfect joy perceives the spark,
If ignorance still leaves him in the dark?

119

"But if he knows that joy is transitory,
Since joy in every worldly thing must flee,
This troubling thought diminishes the glory
Of earthly joy, and so in such degree,
Imperfect must be his felicity;
If loss of joy he fears a jot or tittle,
This proves that earthly joy is worth but little.

120

"And so this problem I must thus decide,
That verily, for aught that I can see,
No perfect joy can in this world abide.
But O, thou viper, wicked jealousy!
O folly, faithless, envious of me!
Why hast thou bred in Troilus distrust,
And I in all things ever true and just!"

121

"You know," said Pandar, "that of Troilus"—
"Why, uncle dear," she cried, "who told him so?
Alas, why does my sweetheart treat me thus?"
"O, well," he said, "the way of the world, you
know.

But what's gone wrong, we'll make the right way
go.

The way to stop all this with you doth rest,
And everything will turn out for the best."

122

"So shall I do tomorrow," answered she,
"And in a way I'm sure will satisfy."
"Tomorrow?" he cried, "as well eternity!
No, no, we cannot let this thing slip by!
Old clerks have written in their wisdom high
That peril with delaying, strikes within.
No, such delayings are not worth a pin!

123

"There comes a fitting time for everything,
And when a room's afire or a hall,
It's better folk at once some help should bring,
Than stand and argufy amongst them all,
'How chanced this candle in the straw to fall?'
The harm is done the while they thus debate,
To lock the stable door is then too late.

124

"And niece, one thing I hope you'll let me say,
If all the night you leave him in this state,
Your love for him has been but vain display.
That's how it seems to me at any rate.
You can't abandon him to such a fate,
You know yourself, 'twould be the height of folly
To leave him in this dangerous melancholy."

125

"My love a vain display! You never loved
As I have loved," indignantly she cried.
"Well, that," he said, "remains yet to be proved!
But since by me you think you're justified,
I wouldn't let him in this sorrow bide,

With what wight so thou be, or how thou pleye,
Either he woot that thou, joye, art muable,
Or woot it not, it moot ben oon of tweye;
Now if he woot it not, how may he seye
That he hath verray joye and seliness,
That is of ignoraunce ay in derkenesse?

119

Now if he woot that joye is transitorie,
As every joye of worldly thing mot flec,
Than every tyme he that hath in memorie,
The drede of lesing maketh him that he
May in no parfit selinesse be.
And if to lese his joye he set a myte,
Than semeth it that joye is worth ful lyte.

120

Wherefore I wol deffyne in this matere,
That trewely, for ought I can espye,
Ther is no verray wele in this world here.
But O, thou wikked serpent Jalousye,
Thou misbeveled and envious folye,
Why hastow Troilus me mad untriste,
That never yet aglite him, that I wiste?"

121

Quod Pandarus, "thus fallen is this cas."
"Why, uncle myn," quod she, "who tolde him this?
Why doth my dere herte thus, alas?"
"Ye woot, ye nece myn," quod he,
"what is;

I hope al shal be wel that is
amis.

For ye may quenche al this, if that yow leste,
And doth right so, for I holde it the beste."

122

"So shal I do to-morwe, y-wis" quod she,
"And god to-forn, so that it shal suffice."
"To-morwe? alas, that were a fayr," quod he,
"Nay, nay, it may not stonden in this wyse;
For, nece myn, thus wryten clerkes wyse,
That peril is with drecching in y-drawe;
Nay, swich abodes been nought worth an hawe.

123

Nece, al thing hath tyme, I dar avowe;
For whan a chaumber a-fyr is, or an halle,
Wel help me so, ye sodeynly rescowe
Than to dispute, and axe amonges alle
How is this candel in the straw y-falle?
A! *benedicite!* for al among that fare
The harm is doon, and fare-wel felfefare!

124

And, nece myn, ne take it not agreef,
If that ye suffre him al night in this wo,
God help me so, ye hadde him never leef,
That dar I seyn, now there is but we two;
But wel I woot, that ye wol not do so;
Ye been to wys to do so gret folye,
To putte his lyf al night in jupartye."

125

"Hadde I him never leef? By god, I wene
Ye hadde never thing so leef," quod she.
"Now by my thrift," quod he, "that shal be sene;
For, sin ye make this ensample of me,
If I al night wolde him in sorwe see

For al the tresour in the toun of Troye,
I bidde god, I never mote have joye!

126

Now loke thanne, if ye, that been his love,
Shul putte al night his lyf in jupartye
For thing of nought! Now, by that god above,
Nought only this delay comth of folye,
But of malyce, if that I shal nought lye.
What, platly, and ye suffre him in distresse,
Ye nether bountee doon ne gentilesse!"

127

Quod tho Criseyde, "wole ye doon o thing,
And ye therwith shal stinte al his disese;
Have here, and bereth him this blewe ring,
For ther is no-thing mighte him bettre plesse,
Save I my-self, ne more his herte appese;
And sey my dere herte, that his sorwe
Is causeles, that shal be seen to-morwe."

128

"A ring?" quod he, "ye, hasel-wodes shaken!
Ye, nece myn, that ring moste han a stoon
That mighte dede men alyve maken;
And swich a ring, trowe I that ye have noon.
Discrecioun out of your heed is goon;
That fele I now," quod he, "and that is routhe;
O tyme y-lost, wel maystow cursen slouth!"

129

Wot ye not wel that noble and heigh corage
Ne sorweth not, ne stinteth eek for lyte?
But if a fool were in a jalous rage,
I nolde setten at his sorwe a myte,
But feffe him with a fewe wordes whyte
Another day, whan that I mighte him finde:
But this thing stont al in another kinde.

130

This is so gentil and so tendre of herte,
That with his deeth he wol his sorwes wreke;
For trusteth wel, how sore that him smerte,
He wol to yow no jalouse wordes speke.
And for-thy, nece, er that his herte breke,
So speke your-self to him of this matere;
For with o word ye may his herte sterve.

131

Now have I told what peril he is inne,
And his coming unwist is t' every wight;
Ne, pardee, harm may ther be noon ne sinne;
I wol my-self be with yow al this night.
Ye knowe eek how it is your owne knight,
And that, by right, ye moste upon him triste,
And I al prest to fecche him whan yow liste."

132

This accident so pitous was to here,
And eek so lyk a sooth, at pryme face,
And Troilus hir knight to hir so dere,
His privé coming, and the siker place,
That, though that she dide him as thanne a grace,
Considered alle thinges as they stode,
No wonder is, sin she dide al for gode.

133

Cryseyde answerde, "as wisly god at reste
My sowle bringe, as me is for him wol!
And eem, y-wis, fayn wolde I doon the beste,

I swear by Jove who in Olympus reigns,
No, not for all the gold that Troy contains!

126

"Now, look, if you who are his only love,
Shall put his life all night in jeopardy,
Just for a trifle, by the God above,
Both inconsiderate this act would be
And show in you a bad propensity.
If you abandon him, I'm frank to say,
Nor wisdom nor yet kindness you display."

127

"At least," said Cressida, "this can I do,
And that will bring him some relief and ease.
Convey to him this ring with stone of blue,
For there is nothing will him better please,
Except myself, or more his wrath appease,
And say to my sweetheart that all his sorrow
Is without ground, as he shall see tomorrow."

128

"O pshaw," said he, "a fig for all your ring!
The sort of ring he needs must have a stone
With power enough the dead to life to bring,
And such a ring, dear niece, you do not own.
Discretion from your head seems to have flown!
O time, O wasted opportunity,
O cursed sloth, O heedless sluggardy!

129

"Do you not know that men of courage high,
Feel strongly and are quick and sharp in action?
A fool in jealous rage one might pass by,
For shallow minds are shallow in distraction;
A few fair words will give them satisfaction,
They'll wait until you're ready to be kind,
But this is quite another thing, you'll find.

130

"This man is of such high and gentle heart,
His sorrows with his death he well may wreak;
Be sure, however sorely he may smart,
No jealous word to you he'll ever speak.
And now no further subterfuges seek,
Insist no longer on your wilful pride,
But say the word his heart to cheer and guide.

131

"I've told you now the peril he is in,
And not a soul of him has caught a sight.
Besides there need be neither harm nor sin,
For I shall be at hand through all the night.
You know he never will transgress his right,
And as your knight, you must in him confide.
I'll fetch him here as soon as you decide."

132

Now so distressing was all this to hear,
And seemed, besides, so likely on its face,
And Troilus, her knight, to her so dear,
So secret, too, his coming and the place,
That though there was a risk of some disgrace,
Considering everything, just how it stood,
No wonder if she took it all for good.

133

"God knows," said Cressida, "it makes me sad
To hear of my dear love's distress and woe;
To help him in his sorrow I'd be glad,

If what was best to do I could but know;
But whether you should stay or for him go,
I am, till heaven some direction send,
But at Dulcarnon, at my wits' last end."

134

"Dulcarnon"? said he, "let me tell you, dear,
That means, 'last hope of those of feeble mind.'
Such persons in their heads are never clear,
But stay for very sloth perversely blind,
And for such folk this saying is designed;
But you are wise, and what we have in hand,
Calls for no subtle wit to understand."

135

"Well, uncle," said she, "do as you think
best!

But let me first, before he comes, arise.
And since my trust in you two all doth rest,
And since you both are most discreet and wise,
I beg you will this matter so devise,
My honor and his wish to satisfy,
For everything in your hands now doth lie."

136

"Well spoken that," he said, "my niece so dear!
You've shown you have a wise and gentle heart!
But just lie still and let him come right here,
Your messages you can as well impart,
And may you ease each other's pain and smart.
And now at last, O Venus, praise to thee,
For soon some happy times we here shall see."

137

Troilus now beside his lady kneeling,
Full soberly beside his lady's bed,
Extends to her his greetings with such feeling,
She waxes all at once a rosy red;
She could not speak a word, to save her head,
On seeing him so sudden and unbidden,
Come from the place in which he had been hidden.

138

But Pandar always knew just what to do,
And now to break the ice, his jokes began,
And said, "See how this lord doth kneel to you!
Just rest your eyes upon this gentleman!"
And quickly then, he for a cushion ran,
And said, "Take this, and on it kneel your fill!
And may your hearts be purged of every ill!"

139

Just why she did not order him to rise,—
If sorrow drove the thought out of her mind,
I cannot say, or kneeling in this wise
She thought as manners only was designed,
But this I know, she was in so far kind,
That though she sighed, nevertheless she kissed
him

And to a seat beside her did assist him.

140

"All's ready now," said Pandar, "to begin!
That's right, dear niece, these curtains interfere,
Just let him sit upon your bed within;
It's easier so each other's words to hear."
Then he withdrew and left the way all clear,
And took a light and sat down by the fire,
As though to read he felt a great desire.

If that I hadde grace to do so.

But whether that ye dwelle or for him go,
I am, til god me better minde sende,
At Dulcarnon, right at my wittes ende."

134

Quod Pandarus, "ye, nece, wol ye here?
Dulcarnon called is 'fleminge of wrecches';
It semeth hard, for wrecches wol not lere
For verray slouthe or othere wilful tecches;
This seyde by hem that be not worth two fecches.
But ye ben wys, and that we han on honde
Nis neither hard, ne skilful to withstonde."

135

"Thanne, eem," quod she, "doth her-of as yow
list;

But er he come I wil up first aryse;
And, for the love of god, sin al my trist
Is on yow two, and ye ben bothe wyse,
So wirceth now in so discreet a wyse,
That I honour may have, and he plesaunce;
For I am here al in your governance."

136

"That is wel seyde," quod he, "my nece dere,
Ther good thrift on that wyse gentil herte!
But liggeth stille, and taketh him right here,
It nedeth not no further for him sterte;
And ech of yow ese otheres sorwes smerte,
For love of god; and, Venus, I thee herie;
For sone hope I we shulle ben alle merie."

137

This Troilus ful sone on knees him sette
Ful sobrely, right by hir beddes heed,
And in his beste wyse his lady grette;
But lord, so she wex sodeynliche reed!
Ne, though men sholden smyten of hir heed,
She coude nought a word a-right out-bringe
So sodeynly, for his sodeyn cominge.

138

But Pandarus, that so wel coude fele
In every thing, to pleye anon bigan,
And seyde, "nece, see how this lord can knele!
Now, for your trouthe, seeth this gentil man!"
And with that word he for a quissen ran,
And seyde, "kneleth now, whyl that yow leste,
Ther god your hertes bringe sone at reste!"

139

Can I not seyn, for she bad him not ryse,
If sorwe it putte out of hir remembraunce,
Or elles if she toke it in the wyse
Of duëtee, as for his observaunce;
But wel finde I she dide him this plesaunce,
That she him kiste, al-though she syked
sore;

And bad him sitte a-doun with-outen more.

140

Quod Pandarus, "now wol ye wel beginne;
Now doth him sitte, gode nece dere,
Upon your beddes syde al there withinne,
That ech of yow the bet may other here."
And with that word he drow him to the fere,
And took a light, and fond his contenance
As for to loke up-on an old romaunce.

141

Criseyde, that was Troilus lady right,
 And cleer stood on a ground of sikernesse,
 Al thoughte she, hir servaunt and hir knight
 Ne sholde of right non untrouthe in hir gesse,
 Yet nathelees, considered his distresse,
 And that love is in cause of swich folye,
 Thus to him spak she of his jelousye:

142

"Lo, herte myn, as wolde the excellence
 Of love, ayeins the which that no man may,
 Ne oughte eek goodly maken resistance;
 Ne eek bycause I felte wel and say
 Your grete trouthe, and servyse every day;
 And that your herte al myn was, sooth to seyne,
 This droof me for to rewe up-on your payne.

143

And your goodnesse have I founde alwey yit,
 Of whiche, my dere herte and al my
 knight,

I thonke it yow, as fer as I have wit,
 Al can I nought as muche as it were right;
 And I, emforth my conninge and my might,
 Have and ay shal, how sore that me smerte,
 Ben to yow trewe and hool, with al myn herte;

144

And dredelees, that shal be founde at preve.—
 But, herte myn, what al this is to seyne
 Shal wel be told, so that ye noght yow greve,
 Though I to yow right on your-self compleyne.
 For ther-with mene I fynallyn the peyne,
 That halt your herte and myn in hevinesse,
 Fully to sleen, and every wrong redresse.

145

My goode, myn, not I for-why ne how
 That Jalousye, allas! that wikked wivere,
 Thus causelees is crosen in-to yow;
 The harm of which I wolde fayn deliver!
 Allas! that he, al hool, or of him slivere,
 Should have his refut in so digne a place,
 Ther Jove him sone out of your herte
 arace.

146

But O, thou Jove, O auctor of
 nature,

Is this an honour to thy deitee,
 That folk ungiltif suffren here injure,
 And who that giltif is, al quit goth he?
 O were it leful for to pleyne on thee,
 That undeserved suffrest Jalousye,
 And that I wolde up-on thee pleyne and crye!

147

Eek al my wo is this, that folk now usen
 To seyn right thus, 'ye, Jalousye is Love!'
 And wolde a busshel venim al excusen,
 For that o greyn of love is on it shove!
 But that wot heighe god that sit above,
 If it be lyker love, or hate, or grame;
 And after that, it oughte bere his name.

148

But certeyn is, som maner Jalousye
 Is excusable more than som, y-wis.

141

And Cressida, assured that all was right,
 And that she stood on safe and solid ground,
 Yet thinking as her servant and her knight
 No lack of faith in her he should have found,
 Now felt herself constrained in duty bound,
 Though faithful love had caused this thing to be,
 To speak to him about his jealousy.

142

"Though love," she said, "should be of such a kind,
 That no true lover ever ought or may
 Encourage opposition in his mind,
 Yet still, because I've seen in every way
 Your faithfulness and service day by day,
 And that your heart was mine has been so plain,
 This led me to have pity on your pain.

143

"And since I've ever found you good and wise,
 For which, my precious heart and my true
 knight,

I thank you now as far as in me lies,
 Though not as much, perhaps, as were your right,
 Yet still according to my wit and might,
 Whatever grief hereafter may befall,
 My heart is yours and shall be all in all.

144

"And that, I'm sure, you do and will believe.
 To say this, sweetheart, goes against the grain,
 But you must not thereat too deeply grieve,
 Although I seem upon you to complain;
 For in the end this present grief and pain
 That holds your heart and mine in heaviness,
 I shall remove and every harm redress.

145

"But precious one, I know not how nor why
 That viper jealousy, insidious thief,
 Should thus into your bosom creep so sly,
 The which to both of us is cause of grief.
 Alas, that thou shouldst thus beyond belief
 Exalt low jealousy to such a place!
 May Jove such thoughts from out your heart
 erase!

146

"But O, thou Jove, from whom all things have
 life,

Is this an honor to thy deity,
 That guiltless folk should suffer here in strife
 And yet the guilty one all free goes he?
 O, were it lawful to complain on thee,
 This charge I'd bring against thy mighty name,
 Of causeless jealousy I bear the blame.

147

"Another shame is this, that folk abuse
 True love and say, 'Yea, jealousy is love!'
 A bushel of venom such folk will excuse
 If but a grain of love therein they shove.
 But God knows this, who lives and reigns above,
 If it be liker love or liker hate,
 And by its name we should it designate.

148

"Some sorts of jealousy, I will confess,
 Are more excusable than other kinds,

As when there's cause, or when folk long repress
Some harsh fantastic notion in their minds,
Which in expression no free outlet finds,
And on itself it thus doth grew and feed;
For such repression is a gentle deed.

149

"And some are filled with fury and despite
So full that it surpasses all restraint—
But, sweetheart, you are not in such plight,
Thank God, and all your grieving and your plaint,
I call it an illusive lover's taint
From love's excess, and from anxiety,
From which this long time you have not been free,"

150

"At which I grieve, but do no anger feel.
But now, if this will set your heart at rest,
Just as you will, by oath or by ordeal,
By lot, or any way you think the best,
I'm ready here to undergo the test.
If I am guilty, take my life away!
What more, alas, is there that I can say?"

151

Some tears with that, like shining drops of dew,
Fell from her eyes, but only two or three,
"Thou knowest, God, that Cressida untrue
To Troilus is not, nor e'er shall be!"
And then upon her couch she laid her head,
And sighing sore, covered it with the sheet,
And held her peace in silence quite complete.

152

May heaven bring relief for all this sorrow!
There's ground for hope, for such is heaven's way;
For I have seen on many a misty morrow
Following oft a merry summer's day,
And after winter, comes along the May.
'Tis known, and vouched for by authorities,
That storms are presages of victories.

153

Poor Troilus, when he heard how she spoke,
Imagine how her chiding words struck deep!
A heavy stick it was that struck this stroke,
To hear and see his lady-love thus weep;
The cramp of death he felt upon him creep,
And every tear he saw his lady shed,
Strangled his heart till it lay cold and
dead.

154

And mentally the hour he did curse
That he came there, or that when he was born!
For what was bad, was now turned into worse,
And for love's labors lost, he could but mourn,
And count him of all creatures most forlorn.
O Pandar, thought he, all thy cunning guile,
Has come to naught but this, alack the while!

155

At these sad thoughts he humbly hung his head,
And fell upon his knees and deeply sighed.
What could he say? All life from him had fled,
Her chiding words his grief so magnified,
But when he could, at last he thus replied:
"When all is known, I swear in heaven's name,
Then you will see that I am not to blame."

As whan cause is, and som swich fantasye
With pietee so wel repressed is,
That it unneth the dooth or seyth amis,
But goodly drinketh up al his distresse;
And that excuse I, for the gentillesse.

149

And som so ful of furie is and despyt,
That it sourmountheth his repressioun;
But herte myn, ye be not in that plyt,
That thanke I god, for whiche your passioun
I wol not calle it but illusioun,
Of habundaunce of love and bisy cure,
That dooth your herte this disese endure.

150

Of which I am right sory, but not wrooth;
But, for my devoir and your hertes reste,
Wher-so yow list, by ordinal or by ooth,
By sort, or in what wyse so yow leste,
For love of god, lat preve it for the beste!
And if that I be giltif, do me deye,
Allas! what mighte I more doon or seye?"

151

With that a fewe brighte teres newe
Out of hir eyen fille, and thus she seyde,
"Now god, thou wost, in thought ne dede untrewed
To Troilus was never yet Criseyde."
With that hir heed down in the bed she leyde,
And with the shete it wreigh, and syghed sore,
And held hir pees; not a word spak she more.

152

But now help god to quenchyn al this sorwe,
So hope I that he shal, for he best may;
For I have seyn, of a ful misty morwe
Folwen ful ofte a mery someres day;
And after winter folweth grene May.
Men seen alday, and reden eek in stories,
That after sharpe shoures been victories.

153

This Troilus, whan he hir wordes herde,
Have ye no care, him liste not to slepe;
For it thoughte him no strokes of a yerde
To here or seen Criseyde his lady wepe;
But wel he felte aboute his herte crepe,
For every teer which that Criseyde asterte,
The crampe of deeth, to streyne him by the
herte.

154

And in his minde he gan the tyme acurse
That he cam therē, and that he was born;
For now is wikke y-turned in-to worse,
And al that labour he hath doon biforn,
He wende it lost, he thoughte he nas but lorn.
"O Pandarus," thoughte he, "allas! thy wyle
Serveth of nought, so weylawey the whyle!"

155

And therewithal he heng a-doun the heed,
And fil on knees, and sorwfully he sighte;
What mighte he seyn? he felte he nas but deed,
For wrooth was she that shulde his sorwes lighte.
But nathelees, whan that he speken mighte,
Than seyde he thus, "god woot, that of this game,
Whan al is wist, than am I not to blame!"

156

Ther-with the sorwe so his herte shette.
That from his eyen fil ther not a tere,
And every spirit his vigour in-knette,
So they astoned and oppressed were.
The feling of his sorwe, or of his fere,
Or of ought elles, fled was out of towne;
And down he fel al sodeynly a-sowne.

157

This was no litel sorwe for to see;
But al was hust, and Pandare up as faste,
"O nece, pees, or we be lost," quod he,
"Beth nought agast"; but certeyn, at the laste,
For this or that, he in-to bedde him caste,
And seyde, "O theef, is this a mannes herte?"
And of he rente al to his bare sherte;

158

And seyde, "nece, but ye helpe us now,
Allas, your owne Troilus is lorn!"
"Y-wis, so wolde I, and I wiste how,
Ful fayn," quod she; "alas! that I was born!"
"Ye, nece, wol ye pullen out the thorn
That stiketh in his herte?" quod Pandare;
"Sey 'al foryeve,' and stint is all this fare!"

159

"Ye, that to me," quod she, "ful lever
Than al the good the sonne aboute gooth";
And therwith-al she swoor him in his ere,
"Y-wis, my dere herte, I am nought wrooth,
Have here my trouthe and many another ooth;
Now speek to me, for it am I, Criseyde!"
But al for nought; yet mighte he not a-breyde.

160

Therwith his pous and pawmes of his hondes
They gan to frote, and wete his temples tweyne,
And, to deliveren him from bittre bondes,
She ofte him kiste; and, shortly for to seyne,
Him to revoked she dide al hir payne.
And at the laste, he gan his breeth to drawe,
And of his swough sone after that adawe,

161

And gan bet minde and reson to him take,
But wonder sore he was abayst, y-wis.
And with a syk, whan he gan bet a-wake,
He seyde, 'O mercy, god, what thing is this?"
"Why do ye with your-selven thus amis?"
Quod tho Criseyde, "is this a mannes game?"
What, Troilus! wol ye do thus, for shame?"

162

And therwith-al hir arm over him she leyde,
And al foryaf, and ofte tyme him keste.
He thonked hir, and to hir spak, and seyde
As fil to purpos for his herte reste.
And she to that answerde him as hir leste;
And with hir goodly wordes him disporte
She gan, and ofte his sorwes to comforte.

163

Quod Pandarus, "for ought I can espyen,
This light nor I ne serven here of nought;
Light is not good for syke folkes yē.
But for the love of god, sin ye be brought
In thus good plyt, lat now non hevye thought

156

Though sorrow at his heart so sternly pressed,
There fell not from his eye a single tear,
His inmost nature was so strained and stressed
No movement of his spirit could appear;
Sensation now of sorrow or of fear
Or aught beside, all fled was out of town,
And in a swoon he suddenly fell down.

157

O, what a dreadful thing this was to see!
How still he lay, but Pandar got up fast,
"Hush, niece! Keep still or we are lost!" said he;
"Don't be afraid!" and took him at the last,
And tearing off his clothes, he quickly cast
Him in her bed. "O Cressida," he cried,
"Have you a human heart in your inside!"

158

"Dear niece, unless you try to help us now,
Your Troilus is ever lost and lorn."
"That would I gladly do if I knew how,"
She cried. "Alas that I was ever born!"
"There's naught to do except pull out the thorn
That sticketh in his heart," wise Pandar said.
"Say 'All's forgiven,' and raise him from the dead."

159

"That were to me," she said, "a thing more dear
Than all the gold the circling sun goes round."
And thereupon she swore him in his ear,
"By all the oaths by which I can be bound,
I am not angry,"—yet he made no sound.
"It's Cressida, O speak, my precious heart!"
But from his trance she could not make him start.

160

His wrists and palms they then began to chafe,
With water both his temples they did lave,
From out his bitter bonds to bring him safe,
And many a loving kiss to him she gave,
To call him from his lethargy so grave,
Until a breath he drew, and none too soon,
And so began to come out of his swoon.

161

And when some notice he began to take,
Full sore he was abashed and mortified,
And with a sigh, when he was quite awake,
"Where am I?" first with feeble voice he cried.
"What trouble for you all I've made," he sighed.
"O Troilus, now be a man!" said she.
"Why do you act like this? For shame on thee!"

162

Her arm around his neck she gently laid,
Forgiving him with many a soft embrace,
And his apologies he humbly made,
In manner fitting to the time and place.
These she received at once with right good grace,
And spoke to him so kindly and so well,
Her loving words his sorrow soon dispel.

163

"This candle and I, so far as I can spy,"
Said Pandar, "are no longer here required!
The light is harmful to a sick man's eye!
But now you have the chance so long desired,
Before the fleeting time shall be expired,

Let joy alone within your hearts abide,"—
And took his candle to the chimney-side.

164

At last this lady's mind was set and clear!
Since he all oaths she could or would devise
Had sworn to her and banished all her fear,
She saw no reason now to bid him rise.
Yet less than oaths quite often satisfies
In such a case as this, for every man
Who loveth well, will do the best he can.

165

At first she asked, insisting she would know,
What man, and where, and also why,
He jealous was, and no cause to be so,
And also all the signs he judged her by
She bade him tell and not a thing deny,
Or else, she said, she saw no other way,
She'd have to think a trick he tried to play.

166

And when he saw she would not be denied,
Or if she were, her doubts would be increased,
Choosing the lesser evil, he replied,
"It was," he said, "at such and such a feast"—
And thought she might have looked at him at
least—

O, I don't know, he said some thing or other,
'Twas all as well, one answer or another.

167

"My dearest heart," she said, "though it were true,
Why such an imputation must you draw?
For by the God above who made us two,
No harm in that I ever meant or saw!
Your vain suspicions are not worth a straw!
Such childish reasons scarce deserve the thanking,
You really ought to have a right good spanking!"

168

Then Troilus began again to sigh,
And new fears at his heart began to twine.
"Alas," he said, "my errors heavy lie
Upon my conscience, precious sweetheart mine,
But now all foolish thoughts I will resign,
And shall hereafter not again offend.
Do what you will—I'm yours unto the end!"

169

"True mercy," said she, "is not slow or strained,
Forgiven and forgotten be the past!
But let this night in mind be long retained;
Of jealous doubts, let this one be the last!"
"O yes, dear heart!" he promised quick and fast.
"And now," she said, "the pain I've given thee,
Sweetheart, I beg that you forgive it me!"

170

Troilus felt such glad relief at this,
With trust in God and in his lady's grace,
And courage drawn from his so sudden bliss,
He seized and held her in a close embrace.
And Pandar, feeling somewhat out of place,
Lay down to sleep and said, "If you are wise,
Don't swoon again, or others may arise!"

171

The helpless lark, what can it do or say
After the hawk hath caught it in his claw?

Ben hanginge in the hertes of yow tweye":
And bar the candel to the chimeneye.

164

Sone after this, though it no nede were,
Whan she swich othes as hir list devyse
Hadde of him take, hir thoughte tho no fere,
Ne cause eek non, to bidde him thennes ryse.
Yet lesse thing than othes may suffyse
In many a cas; for every wight, I gesse,
That loveth wel meneth but gentillesse.

165

But in effect she wolde wite anon
Of what man, and eek where, and also why
He jelous was, sin ther was cause noon;
And eek the signe, that he took it by,
She bad him that to telle hir bisily,
Or elles, certeyn, she bar him on honde,
That this was doon of malis, hir to fonde.

166

With-oute more, shortly for to seyne,
He moste obeye un-to his lady heste;
And for the lasse harm, he moste feyne.
He seyde hir, whan she was at swiche a feste
She mighte on him han loked at the
leste;

Not I not wat, al dere y-nough a risshe,
As he that nedes moste a cause fissue.

167

And she answerde, "swete, al were it so,
What harm was that, sin I non yvel mene?
For, by that god that boughte us bothe two,
In alle thinge is myn entente clene.
Swich arguments ne been not worth a bene;
Wol ye the childish jalous contrefete?
Now were it worthy that ye were y-bete."

168

Tho Troilus gan sorwfully to syke,
Lest she be wrooth, him thoughte his herte deyde;
And seyde, "allas! upon my sorwes syke
Have mercy, swete herte myn, Criseyde!
And if that, in the wordes that I seyde,
Be any wrong, I wol no more trespase;
Do what yow list, I am al in your grace."

169

And she answerde, "of gilt misericorde!
That is to seyn, that I foryeve al this;
And ever-more on this night yow recorde,
And beth wel war ye do no more amis."
"Nay, dere herte myn," quod he, "y-wis."
"And now," quod she, "that I have do yow smerte,
Foryeve it me, myn owene swete herte."

170

This Troilus, with blisse of that supprysed,
Put al in goddes hond, as he that mente
No-thing but wel; and, sodeynly avysed,
He hir in armes faste to him hente.
And Pandarus, with a ful good entente,
Leyde him to slepe, and seyde, "if ye ben wyse,
Swowneth not now, lest more folk aryse."

171

What mighte or may the sely larke seye,
Whan that the sparhawk hath it in his foot?

I can no more, but of this ilke tweye,
To whom this tale sucre be or soot,
Though that I tarie a yeer, som-tyme I moot,
After myn auctor, tellen hir gladnesse,
As wel as I have told hir hevnesse.

172

Criseyde, which that felte hir thus y-take,
As writen clerkes in hir bokes olde,
Right as an aspes leef she gan to quake,
When she him felte hir in his armes folde.
But Troilus, al hool of cares colde,
Gan thanken tho the blisful goddes sevene;
Thus sondry peynes bringen folk to hevne.

173

This Troilus in armes gan hir streyne,
And seyde, "O swete, as ever mote
I goon,

Now be ye caught, now is ther but we tweyne;
Now yeldeth yow, for other boot is noon."
To that Criseyde answerde thus anon,
"Ne hadde I er now, my swete herte dere,
Ben yolde, y-wis, I were now not here!"

174

O! sooth is seyd, that heled for to be
As of a fevre or othere greet syknesse,
Men moste drinke, as men may often see,
Ful bittre drink; and for to han gladnesse,
Men drinken often peyne and greet distresse;
I mene it here, as for this aventure,
That thourgh a peyne hath founden al his cure.

175

And now swetnesse semeth more swete,
That bitternesse assayed was biforn;
For out of wo in blisse now they flete.
Non swich they felten, sith they were born;
Now is this bet, than bothe two be lorn!
For love of god, take every womman hede
To werken thus, if it comth to the nede.

176

Criseyde, al quit from every drede and tene,
As she that juste cause hadde him to triste,
Made him swich feste, it joye was to sene,
Whan she his trouthe and clene entente wiste.
And as aboute a tree, with many a twiste,
Bitrent and wryth the sote wode-binde,
Gan eche of hem in armes other winde.

177

And as the newe abaysshed nightingale,
That stinteth first whan she beginneth singe,
Whan that she hereth any herde tale,
Or in the hegges any wight steringe,
And after siker dooth hir voys out-ringe;
Right so Criseyde, whan hir drede stente,
Opned hir herte, and tolde him hir entente.

178

And right as he that seeth his deeth y-shapen,
And deye moot, in ought that he may gesse,
And soodeynly rescous doth him escapen,
And from his deeth is brought in sikernesse,
For al this world, in swich present gladnesse
Was Troilus, and hath his lady swete;
With worse hap god lat us never mete!

Not otherwise it was with her that day;
Like it or not, this is all nature's law.
And though my tale throughout a year I draw,
Lo, I, as does my author, still must tell,
After their grief, their time of joy as well.

172

Cressida in his arms thus boldly taken,
As all wise clerkes have said in books of old,
Shook like an aspen leaf by breezes shaken,
As his strong arms about her body fold;
And Troilus, all freed of care so cold,
Gave thanks to those bright Gods, glorious seven—
In sundry ways thus folk are brought to heaven

173

Troilus in arms his love doth hold and strain,
And whispers, "Precious heart, now are you
caught!

In all the world there liveth but we twain!
Now you must yield, evasion helpeth naught!"
But of evasion she had little thought;
"Had I not yielded," said she, "sweetheart dear,
Before this night, I would not now be here!"

174

O true it is, before they can be cured,
Whether of fever or other great disease,
The sick must drink, for all they have endured,
Full bitter drink, and for their better ease,
Must oft partake of things that do not please.
All this to Troilus may be applied,
Who after pain is glad and satisfied.

175

And sweetness now seemed more than ever sweet,
For all the bitterness that went before;
And now the time goes by on winged feet,
In joy so great, it never could be more,
Or better pay for all the griefs they bore.
And here I beg that lovers all will heed
This good example at their time of need!

176

And Cressida, from fear and dread all free,
With faith and trust in him now absolute,
Made him such feast that it was good to see
Such faithful service bear such happy fruit.
And as the woodbine, growing near its root,
Doth clasp the tree with tendrils intertwined,
So they their arms about each other wind.

177

And like the hushed expectant nightingale,
Who ceases after she begins to sing
If sound of voices loud her ears assail,
Or in the hedges stirreth anything,
But then thereafter lets her song out-ring,
So Cressida, released from all her fear,
Opened her heart for him to look and hear.

178

And like the man who sees his death impending,
And die he must, for aught that he can tell,
Yet sudden rescue brings a happy ending,
And all the things he dreaded, turn out well,
So now to Troilus like fortune fell,
For now at last he hath his lady sweet—
God grant we may with no worse fortune meet!

179

Her slender arms, her back so straight and soft,
 Her yielding sides, so long and smooth and bright,
 He gently stroked, nor failed to note full oft
 Her snowy throat, her rounding breasts so white,
 Whereon he gazed in heavenly delight.
 Such joy he felt he scarce knew what to do,
 A thousand kisses seemed to him but few.

180

"O Love," exclaimeth he, "O Charity!
 Thy mother also, Citherea sweet,
 After thyself exalted may she be,
 O Venus, gracious planet, I repeat,
 And next to Venus, Hymen, I thee greet!
 For never man was to you Gods more bound
 Than I, who from my cares relief have found.

181

"O Love benign, thou holy bond of things,
 All they who seek thy grace, but scorn thy aid,
 Their love shall fly but feebly without wings.
 By thy goodwill man's fortune must be made;
 For faithful service ne'er so well displayed,
 Were all for naught, this dare I well assert,
 Did not thy gift surpass our poor desert.

182

"And since that I, who merited the least
 To win thy gracious favor and support,
 Have had my joys extended and increased
 And am exalted in such lofty sort
 That widest bounds to hold my joys fall short,
 What can I do, but words of reverent praise
 Unto thy bounty and thy goodness raise!"

183

His prayer he ended with a kiss or two,
 Which part of it at least was well received,
 And then he said, "I would to God I knew
 How you of every grief might be relieved!
 Was ever man," he said, "so little grieved
 As I, on whom the fairest and the best
 Deigneth her loving heart to bring to rest!"

184

"Here one may see that mercy passeth right,
 As my experience tells me feelingly,
 Who am unworthy of you, lady bright;
 But sweetheart mine, in your benignity,
 Believe that all unworthy though I be,
 Yet needs I must amend and still improve,
 But through the lofty virtue of my love.

185

"One favor more, dear heart, I beg beside,
 Since God hath wrought me but to do thy will,
 Be thou my ever-present, helpful guide,
 For thou hast power of good and power of ill.
 So teach me, sweetheart mine, that I may still
 Deserve thy thanks, and thy good counsel lend
 To save me from all acts that may offend.

186

"For truly, fairest of all womankind,
 This dare I say, that truth and diligence
 Through all my life thou shalt within me find;
 And if I sin with injury prepense,
 Present or absent, I shall waive defence,

179

His armes smale, hir streyghte bak and softe,
 Hir sydes longe, fleshly, smothe, and whyte
 He gan to stroke, and good thrift bad ful ofte
 Hir snowish throte, hir brestes rounde and lyte;
 Thus in this hevenc he gan him to delyte,
 And ther-with-al a thousand tyme hir kiste;
 That, what to done, for joye unnethe he wiste.

180

Than seyde he thus, "O, Love, O, Charitec,
 Thy moder eek, Citherea the swete,
 After thy-self next heried be she,
 Venus mene I, the wel-willy planete;
 And next that, Imenëus, I thee grete;
 For never man was to yow goddes holde
 As I, which ye han brought fro cares colde.

181

Benigne Love, thou holy bond of thinges,
 Who-so wol grace, and list thee nought honouren,
 Lo, his desyr wol flee with-outen winges.
 For, noldestow of bountee hem socouren
 That serven best and most alwey labouren,
 Yet were al lost, that dar I wel seyn, certes,
 But-if thy grace passed our desertes.

182

And for thou me, that coude leest deserve
 Of hem that nombred been un-to thy grace,
 Hast holpen, ther I lykly was to sterve,
 And me bistowed in so heyghe a place
 That thilke boundes may no blisse pace,
 I can no more, but laude and reverence
 Be to thy bounte and thyn excellence!"

183

And therwith-al Criseyde anon he kiste,
 Of which, certeyn, she felte no disese.
 And thus seyde he, "now wolde god I wiste,
 Myn herte swete, how I yow mighte plesse!
 What man," quod he, "was ever thus at ese
 As I, on whiche the faireste and the beste
 That ever I say, deyneth hir herte reste.

184

Here may men seen that mercy passeth right;
 The experience of that is felt in me,
 That am unworthy to so swete a wight.
 But herte myn, of your benignitee,
 So tehenth, though that I unworthy be,
 Yet mot I nede amenden in som wyse,
 Right thourgh the vertu of your heyghe servyse.

185

And for the love of god, my lady dere,
 Sin god hath wrought me for I shal yow serve,
 As thus I mene, that ye wol be my sterve,
 To do me live, if that yow liste, or sterve,
 So techeth me how that I may deserve
 Your thank, so that I, thurgh myn ignorance,
 Ne do no-thing that yow be displeaunce.

186

For certes, fresshe wommanliche wyf,
 This dar I seye, that trouthe and diligence,
 That shal ye finden in me al my lyf,
 Ne I wol not, certeyn, breken your defence;
 And if I do, present or in absence,

For love of god, lat slee me with the dede,
If that it lyke un-to your womanhede."

187

"Y-wis," quod she, "myn owne hertes list,
My ground of ese, and al myn herte dere,
Graunt mercy, for on that is al my trist;
But late us falle away fro this matere;
For it suffyseth, this that seyde is here.
And at o word, with-oute repentance,
Wel-come, my knight, my pees, my suffisaunce!"

188

Of hir delyt, or joyes oon the leste
Were impossible to my wit to seye;
But juggeth, ye that han ben at the feste
Of swich gladnesse, if that hem liste pleye!
I can no more, but thus thise ilke tweye
That night, be-twixen dreed and sikernesse,
Felten in love the grete worthinesse.

189

O blisful night, of hem so longe y-sought,
How blithe un-to hem bothe two thou were!
Why ne hadde I swich on with my soule y-bought,
Ye, or the leeste joye that was there?
A-wey, thou foule daunger and thou fere,
And lat hem in this hevene blisse dwelle,
That is so hegh, that al ne can I telle!

190

But sooth is, though I can not tellen al,
As can myn auctor, of his excellence,
Yet have I seyde, and, god to-for, I shal
In every thing al hoolly his sentence.
And if that I, at loves reverence,
Have any word in eched for the beste,
Doth therwith-al right as your-selven leste.

191

For myne wordes, here and every part,
I speke hem alle under correccioun
Of yow, that feling han in loves art,
And putte it al in your discrecioun
T' encrese or maken diminucioun
Of my langage, and that I yow bi-seche;
But now to purpos of my rather speche.

192

Thise ilke two, that ben in armes laft,
So looth to hem a-sonder goon it were,
That ech from other wende been biraft,
Or elles, lo, this was hir moste fere,
That al this thing but nyce dremes were;
For which ful ofte ech of hem seyde, "O swete,
Clippe ich yow thus, or elles I it mete?"

193

And, lord! so he gan goodly on hir see,
That never his look ne bleynte from hir face,
And seyde, "O dere herte, may
it be

That it be sooth, that ye ben in this place?"
"Ye, herte myn, god thank I of his grace!"
Quod tho Criseyde, and therwith-al him kiste,
That where his spirit was, for joye he niste.

194

This Troilus ful ofte hir eyen two
Gan for to kisse, and seyde, "O eyen clere,

And yield myself to thee at that same hour,
As humbly subject to thy womanly power."

187

"Enough," she cried, "O thou my richest treasure,
My ground of ease, and all I hold most dear,
I trust in thee beyond all bound and measure!
But let us talk no more of future fear,
There needs no more than thou hast promised here.
I am content, befall what may befall;
Welcome, my knight, my peace, my all in all!"

188

To tell the limits of their great delight
For me were sheer impossibility,
But all can guess who such a festal night
Have ever known, I trust, in some degree;
And of these lovers twain, I merely say to thee,
That night twixt joy and fear they realize
How love may be a serious enterprise.

189

O night of love, by them so long time sought,
So happy now at last in consummation,
With my own soul I gladly would have bought
The least division of its delectation!
Away now every check to inclination,
And let them in this bliss of heaven dwell,
Too great for mortal tongue to sing or tell.

190

But though I cannot tell you everything,
As might my author with his greater gift,
The burden of his song yet shall I sing,
And all his thought employ with proper thrift,
And if I've added to his general drift
In praise of love, I leave it in your hand,
Remove it from my tale or let it stand.

191

For all my words, in this and every part,
Are spoken under your correction all,
Who better know the secrets of the heart
Than I, and therefore I upon you call
To change or take away in general,
Such words as seem to you were best omitted;
But now to come back where our tale we quitted.

192

These two whom we have left in love's embrace,
Could not endure the thought of separation;
They scarce believed that they were in that place,
Or else were filled with fear and consternation
That all this night was but hallucination,
And oft they said, for doubt this was but seeming,
"O art thou there, or am I only dreaming?"

193

With such intentive look he on her gazed,
His eyes were fixed unmoving on her face;
"O sweetheart," he exclaimed, "the Gods be
praised,
And is it true that thou art in this place?"
"Yes, sweetheart mine, and all by heaven's grace!"
She says, and therewithal a kiss bestows,
That where his spirit is, he scarcely knows.

194

And he neglected not to kiss her eyes,
And when he did, he said, "O eyes so clear,

In you the cause of all my sorrow lies,
 Ye double weapons of my lady dear!
 Though mercy seemeth to be written here,
 The text, forsooth, is very hard to find.
 How is it, without bonds thou couldst me bind?"

195

Within his arms his lady he doth take,
 And full a thousand times he gently sighed,
 Not sighs of sorrow, such as sad men make
 From grief, or when by sickness they are tried,
 But easy sighs, which showed how satisfied
 He was, and how his love was deeply seated,
 Such sighs he drew, and oft and oft repeated.

196

And then they spoke of many varied things,
 As in this situation would arise,
 And playfully they interchanged their rings,
 But what the mottoes were, you may surmise;
 A brooch of gold, as azure as the skies,
 Set with a ruby heart, she gave him too,
 And pinned it to his shirt as love pledge true.

197

Do you suppose that any grasping wretch,
 Who chides at love and holds it in despite,
 From all the profit he from gold can fetch,
 Was ever so enriched with pure delight
 As these two knew, in measure infinite?
 Nay, they can never know, so God me save,
 Such perfect joy who niggardly behave.

198

And if they say they do, they merely lie,
 Those busy wretches, full of woe and dread;
 They call love madness and against it cry,
 But ever they in grief shall make their bed,
 Nor yet have joy of money, white nor red!
 So let them live in grief and in mischance,
 But lovers' joys may heaven still enhance.

199

Would God that all those wretches who despise
 The gentle works of love had ears as long
 As Midas had, that king so penny-wise;
 Or might be served with drink as hot and strong
 As Crassus drank, for deeds so harsh and wrong;
 For greed is vice, as all old stories show,
 And love is virtue, let who say no.

200

These happy two, whose joys I've been reporting,
 Who now at last in love were so secure,
 They fell to talking, and in playful sporting
 They told how, when and where they first were
 sure

They knew each other, and how they did endure
 The griefs now passed; for all that might annoy
 This night was turned at last to perfect joy!

201

If in their talk of joy they came abrupt
 On any woe of times now past and gone,
 With kisses all their tale they interrupt,
 And thus again to joy are brought anon.
 One thing alone their hearts were set upon,
 To free their joy from all its base alloys,
 And former grief with joy to counterpoise.

It were ye that wroughte me swich wo,
 Ye humble nettes of my lady dere!
 Though ther be mercy written in your chere,
 God wot, the text ful hard is, sooth, to finde,
 How coude ye with-ouen bond me binde?"

195

Therwith he gan hir faste in armes take,
 And wel an hundred tymes gan he syke,
 Nought swiche sorwful sykes as men make
 For wo, or elles whan that folk ben syke,
 But esy sykes, swiche as been to lyke,
 That shewed his affeccioun with-inne;
 Of swiche sykes coude he nought bilinne.

196

Sone after this they speke of sondry thinges,
 As fil to purpos of this aventure,
 And pleyinge entrechaungen hir ringes,
 Of which I can nought tellen no scripture;
 But wel I woot a broche, gold and asure,
 In whiche a ruby set was lyk an herte,
 Criseyde him yaf, and stak it on his sherte.

197

Lord! trowe ye, a covetous, a wrecche,
 That blameth love and holt of it despyt,
 That, of tho pens that he can mokin and kecche,
 Was ever yet y-yeve him swich delyt,
 As is in love, in oo poynt, in som plyt?
 Nay, doutelees, for also god me save,
 So parfyt joye may no nigard have!

198

They wol sey "yis," but lord! so that they lye,
 Tho bisy wrecches, ful of wo and drede!
 They callen love a woodnesse or folye,
 But it shal falle hem as I shal yow rede;
 They shul forgo the whyte and eke the rede,
 And live in wo, ther god yeve hem mischaunce,
 And every lover in his trouthe avaunce!

199

As wolde god, tho wrecches, that dispysse
 Servyse of love, hadde eres al-so longe
 As hadde Myda, ful of covetysse;
 And ther-to dronken hadde as hoot and stronge
 As Crassus dide for his affectis wronge,
 To techen hem that they ben in the vyce,
 And lovers nought, al-though they holde hem
 nyce!

200

Thise ilke two, of whom that I yow seye,
 Whan that hir hertes wel assured were,
 Tho gonne they to speken and to pleye,
 And eek rehercen how, and whanne, and where,
 They knewe hem first, and every wo and fere
 That passed was; but al swich hevynesse,
 I thanke it god, was turned to gladnesse.

201

And ever-mo, whan that hem fel to speke
 Of any thing of swich a tyme agoon,
 With kissing al that tale sholde breke,
 And fallen in a newe joye anon,
 And didn al hir might, sin they were oon,
 For to recoveren blisse and been at ese,
 And passed wo with joye countrepeyse.

202

Reson wil not that I speke of sleep,
For it accordeth nought to my matere;
God woot, they toke of that ful lital keep,
But lest this night, that was to hem so dere,
Ne sholde in veyn escape in no manere,
It was biset in joye and bisnesse
Of al that souneth in-to gentilnesse.

203

But whan the cok, comune astrologer,
Gan on his brest to bete, and after crowe,
And Lucifer, the dayes messenger,
Gan for to ryse, and out hir bemes throwe;
And estward roos, to him that coude it knowe,
Fortuna maior, than anoon Criseyde,
With herte sore, to Troilus thus seyde:—

204

“Myn hertes lyf, my trist and my plesaunce,
That I was born, alas! what me is wo,
That day of us mot make desseveraunce!
For tyme it is to ryse, and hennes go,
Or elles I am lost for evermo!
O night, alas! why niltow over us hove,
As longe as whonne Almena lay by Jove?

205

O blake night, as folk in bokes rede,
That shapen art by god this world to hyde
At certeyn tymes with thy derke wede,
That under that men mighte in reste abyde,
Wel oughte bestes pleyne, and folk thee chyde,
That there-as day with labour wolbe us breste,
That thou thus fleest, and deynest us nought reste!

206

Thou dost, alas! to shortly thyn offyce,
Thou rakel night, ther god, makere of kinde,
Thee, for thyn hast and thyn unkinde vyce,
So faste ay to our hemi-spere binde,
That never-more under the ground thou winde!
For now, for thou so hiest out of Troye,
Have I forgon thus hastily my joye!”

207

This Troilus, that with tho wordes felte,
As thoughte him tho, for piëtous distresse,
The bloody teres from his herte melte,
As he that never yet swich hevinesse
Assayed hadde, out of so greet gladnesse,
Gan therewith-al Criseyde his lady dere
In armes streyne, and seyde in this manere:—

208

“O cruel day, accusour of the joye
That night and love han stole and faste y-wryen,
A-cursed be thy coming in-to Troye,
For every bore hath oon of thy bright yē!
Envyous day, what list thee so spyen?
What hastow lost, why sekestow this place,
Ther god thy lyght so quenche, for his grace?

209

Allas! what han thise lovers thee agilt,
Dispitous day? thyn be the pyne of helle!
For many a love-re hastow shent, and wilt;
Thy pouring in wol no-where lete hem dwelle.
What proferestow thy light here for to selle?

202

You'll scarce expect that I should speak of sleep,
The topic seems, indeed, not pertinent.
A night of vigil they were glad to keep,
And lest this time, that so much to them meant,
Should slip away before they could prevent,
The happy hours were fully occupied
With all the gentle arts to love allied.

203

The cock, astrologer in his own way,
Began to beat his breast and then to crow,
And Lucifer, the messenger of day,
Began to rise and forth her beams to throw,
And eastward rose, as you perhaps may know,
Fortuna Major—for the night was fled,
And Cressida to Troilus thus said:

204

“Life of my heart, my trust and my delight,
That I was born, alas, to such a woe!
For we must part with parting of the night.
’Tis time that thou must rise and hence must go,
Or I am lost, and ever shall be so!
O night, why wilt thou not above us hover,
As long as when Jove was Almena’s lover?

205

“O night so black, as one in old books reads,
Thou wert designed by God this world to hide
At certain seasons with thy inky weeds,
That men might then in rest and peace abide;
Yet beasts may well lament and men may chide,
That though by toil through all the day distressed,
Away thou flee’st and grantest them no rest!

206

“Thou dost, alas, thy time too quickly waste,
O heedless night! The maker of mankind
Curse thee for thy unnecessary haste,
And to our hemisphere so firm thee bind,
Thy way below thou ne’er again shalt find!
For through thy heedless hieing out of Troy
Thus have we hastily foregone our joy!”

207

Troilus, too, at these sad bodings felt
The weight of heavy sorrow on him press;
His heart began in bloody tears to melt,
For never yet such grievous heaviness
He e’er had known or woe so comfortless;
And Cressida, his lady, he did take
Within his arms, and in this manner spake:

208

“O cruel day, denouncer of the joy
That night and love have stolen and concealed,
Accursed by thy coming into Troy,
For all to thy bright eyes is now revealed!
Envyous day, what wilt thy spying yield?
What hast thou lost, and hunt for in this place?
May God put out thy light in dark disgrace!

209

“Alas, with wrong thou chargest love of guilt,
Thou hateful day! May thine be all the pain of hell!
For many a lover hast thou slain, and wilt
Yet slay, for light grants them no place to dwell!
Why must thou proffer here thy light to sell?

Go sell to them who tiny seals engrave!
We want thee not, we need no daylight save!"

210

Titan, the sun, in like words did he chide,
And said, "O fool, well may men thee despise,
Thou hast all night fair Daybreak at thy side,
And yet permittest her so soon to rise
And so distress all lovers in this wise!
What, stay in bed, thou Titan, with thy
Morrow!
May heaven grant the both of you have sorrow!"

211

He sighed and said, for yet he was not done,
"My lady true, and of my weal and woe
The very root, thou fair and goodly one,
Must I arise? Alas, and must I so?
My heart is cleft in twain that I must go!
Since all the joy I have abides with you,
With my poor life what then is left to do?"

212

"What hope is left? In truth I know not how
Or when, alas, I may occasion see
To be again with thee as I am now!
God knows, 'twill be a heavy weird to dree!
And if desire now so tortures me,
I seem but dead till to thy arms I turn,
How shall I longer time from thee sojourn?"

213

"But nevertheless, my precious lady bright,
If I were sure beyond the slightest doubt,
That I, your servant and your faithful knight,
Within your heart were compassed round about
As you in mine, so naught can shut me out,
The world for me could hold no greater gain,
And that good thought would lighten all my pain."

214

To this fair Cressida replied anon,
And sighing said, "Beloved sweetheart dear,
The game in very truth is so far gone
That Phoebus first shall fall from out his sphere,
And doves and eagles as true friends appear,
And every rock from out its station start,
Ere Troilus from Cressida's poor heart!"

215

"Love doth thee in my heart so deep engrave,
That though I would expel thee from my thought,
As heaven's grace my weary soul shall save,
Though I should die, I could accomplish naught!
And for the love of him who hath us wrought,
Let no such fancy creep within your brain,
To cause me thus to perish with the pain."

216

"If you hold me as firmly in your mind
As I hold you, I'll be content and glad,
And if it turn out so, then I shall find
No further happiness for heaven to add!
But, love, let's talk no more of glad and sad,
Be true to me, there's nothing more to say,
For I am thine, forever and a day!"

217

"Be thus content, and cast away all fear!
Thou hast what ne'er shall have another man.

Go selle it hem that smale seles graven,
We wol thee nought, us nedeth no day haven."

210

And eek the sonne Tytan gan he chyde,
And seyde, "O fool, wel may men thee dispyse,
That hast the Dawing al night by thy syde,
And suffrest hir so sone up fro thee ryse,
For to disesen loveres in this wysce.
What! hold your bed ther, thou, and eek thy Mor-
we!

I bidde god, so yeve yow bothe sorwe!"

211

Therwith ful sore he sighte, and thus he seyde,
"My lady right, and of my wele or wo
The welle and rote, O goodly myn, Criseyde,
And shal I ryse, allas! and shal I go?
Now fele I that myn herte moot a-two!
For how sholde I my lyf an houre save,
Sin that with yow is al the lyf I have?"

212

What shal I doon, for certes, I not how,
Ne whanne, allas! I shal the tyme see,
That in this plyt I may be eft with yow;
And of my lyf, god woot how that shal be,
Sin that desyr right now so byteth me,
That I am deed anon, but I retourne.
How sholde I longe, allas! fro you sojourne?"

213

But natheless, myn owene lady bright,
Yit were it so that I wiste outrely,
That I, your humble servaunt and your knight,
Were in your herte set so fermely
As ye in myn, the which thing, trewely,
Me lever were than thisse worldes tweyne,
Yet sholde I bet enduren al my payne."

214

To that Criseyde answerde right anon,
And with a syk she seyde, "O herte dere,
The game, y-wis, so ferforth now is goon,
That first shal Phebus falle fro his spere,
And every egle been the dowyes fere,
And every roche out of his place sterte,
Er Troilus out of Criseydes herte!"

215

Ye be so depe in-with myn herte grave,
That, though I wolde it turne out of my thought,
As wisly verray god my soule save,
To dyen in the payne, I coude nought!
And, for the love of god that us hath wrought,
Lat in your brayn non other fantasye
So crepe, that it cause me to dye!"

216

And that ye me wolde han as faste in minde
As I have yow, that wolde I yow bi-seche;
And, if I wiste soothly that to finde,
God mighte not a poynt my joyes eche!
But, herte myn, with-oute more speche,
Beth to me trewe, or elles were it routhe;
For I am thyn, by god and by my trouthe!"

217

Beth glad for-thy, and live in sikernes;e;
Thus seyde I never er this, ne shal to mo;

And if to yow it were a gret gladnesse
To turne ayein, soone after that ye go,
As fayn wolde I as ye, it were so,
As wisly god myn herte bringe at reste!"

218

Agayns his wil, sin it mot nedes be,
This Troilus up roos, and faste him cledde,
And in his armes took his lady free
An hundred tyme, and on his way him spedde,
And with swich wordes as his herte bledde,
He seyde, "farewel, my dere herte swete,
Ther god us graunte sounde and sone to
mete!"

219

To which no word for sorwe she answerde,
So sore gan his parting hir destreyne;
And Troilus un-to his palays ferde,
As woo bigon as she was, sooth to seyne;
So hard him wrong of sharp desyr the peyne
For to ben eft there he was in plesaunce,
That it may never out of his remembraunce.

220

Retorned to his réal palais, sone
He softe in-to his bed gan for to slinke,
To slepe longe, as he was wont to done,
But al for nought; he may wel ligge and winke,
But sleep ne may ther in his herte sinke;
Thenkinge how she, for whom desyr him brende,
A thousand-fold was worth more than he wende.

221

And in his thought gan up and down to winde
Hir wordes alle, and every contenance,
And fermely impressen in his minde
The leste poynt that to him was plesaunce;
And verrayliche, of thilke remembraunce,
Desyr al newe him brende, and lust to brede
Gan more than erst, and yet took he non hede.

222

Criseyde also, right in the same wyse,
Of Troilus gan in hir herte shette
His worthinesse, his lust, his dedes wyse,
His gentillesse, and how she with him mette,
Thonkinge love he so wel hir bisette;
Desyryng eft to have hir herte dere
In swich a plyt, she dorste make him chere.

223

Pandare, a-morwe which that comen was
Un-to his nece, and gan hir fayre grete,
Seyde, "al this night so reyned it, alas!
That al my drede is that ye, nece swete,
Han litel layser had to slepe and mete;
Al night," quod he, "hath reyn so do me wake,
That som of us, I trowe, hir hedes ake."

224

And ner he com, and seyde, "how stont it now
This mery morwe, nece, how can ye fare?"
Criseyde answerde, "never the bet for yow,
Fox that ye been, god yeve your herte care!
God helpe me so, ye caused al this fare,
Trow I," quod she, "for alle your wordes whyte;
O! who-so seeth yow knoweth yow ful lytel!"

And if it be thy will, O sweetheart dear,
Come back again as soon as e'er you can,
Thy pleasure here shall be no greater than
My own, so may I hope for heaven's bliss!—"

218

So willy-nilly, since the day was near,
Troilus got up and dressed beside the bed,
And in his arms he took his lady dear,
A hundred times, ere on his way he sped,
And with a voice as though at heart he bled,
He cried aloud, "Farewell, my precious sweeting!
God grant us soon a safe and happy
meeting!"

219

To this no word for sorrow she replied,
And grief that thus they must be rent in twain;
And Troilus unto the palace hied,
As woe-begone as she, I dare maintain.
So heavy was the burden of the pain
Of joys remembered, but so sudden vanished,
He felt as one from heaven sternly banished.

220

He reached the palace as the daylight grew,
And softly to his bed he planned to slink
And sleep as late as he was wont to do—
But planned in vain, for not a single wink
Of sleep into his heart might gently sink,
For pondering she who now his life controlled
Was better than he guessed a thousandfold.

221

About his loving thoughts now twist and wind
Her every word and every loving glance,
Impressing clear and firm upon his mind
Each slightest point and circumstance;
And at the memory of his happy chance,
Love bursts anew in flames of high desire,
Though little feels he now the burning fire.

222

Cressida, also, in the selfsame wise,
The worth, the gaiety, and every deed
Of Troilus recalled before her eyes,
And all remembrances for him so plead,
That from this love she never can be freed;
She longs again to have him in such plight
That she alone may bring to him delight.

223

Now Pandar, seeing day was there at last,
Came to his niece, and fairly doth her greet.
"All night," he said, "it rained so hard and fast,
That I am dreadfully afraid, my sweet,
Your dreams will not be pleasant to repeat.
All night the rain kept me quite wide awake,
I greatly fear it's made our heads all ache."

224

Then he drew near and said, "How do you do
This sunny morn? How do you feel today?"
Cressida answered, "None the better for you,
Fox that you are! The Lord will you repay!
For you have managed things in your own way,
I now can see, for all your words so fair!
You fooled me well with your deceptive air!"

225

Cressida strove her blushing face to hide
Behind the sheet, and grew, for shame all red.
But Pandar underneath the bedclothes pried,
"Dear Cressida, if I must die," he said,
"Have here a sword and smite off my poor head!"
He thrust his arm beneath her neck to twist
The covers off, and then his niece he kissed.

226

No need to tell how they were reconciled!
If God forgave his death, then should not she
Forgive her uncle? Thus the time they whiled
Away in great amicability,
As good friends now as anyone could be,
Till in good time to her own house she went
And left her uncle very well content.

227

To Troilus let us now turn again,
Who long abed in wakeful tossing lay;
For Pandar soon he sent some of his men
To bid him hasten thither right away,
And Pandar came without a no or nay,
And greeting him in manner dignified,
Upon his bed he sat down at his side.

228

And Troilus, moved by the deep affection
Which for his friend within his heart now lies,
Falls on his knees in absolute subjection,
Nor from that humble place he will arise,
But thank with grateful thank he multiplies,
A thousand times, and oft the day doth bless
His friend was born to save him from distress.

229

"O friend," he said, "of friends the very best
That ever was or ever was heard tell,
Thou hast in heaven brought my soul to rest
From Phlegethon, the fiery flood of hell;
A thousand times a day if I should sell
Myself to serve and honor only thee,
Enough reward and pay it would not be.

230

"The sun, which moves above in all man's sight,
Saw never yet, this dare I will aver,
A fairer than my dearest lady bright,
And to my death I shall be bound to her;
The thanks for all this favor I refer
To Love, who honors me with kind assistance,
And also, Pandar, to thy wise persistence.

231

"What thou hast given is no little thing,
And I shall pay thee thanks forever and aye!
And why? Because thy faithful help did bring
Me back to life, who else were dead this day"—
And then upon his bed again he lay.
Soberly Pandar listened at his side
Till he was through, and thus replied:

232

"My dearest friend, if aught I've done for thee,
God knows it is to me a great relief,
And I'm as glad of it as you can be.
But now take heed that we come not to grief,
For there is danger still of this mischief,

225

With that she gan hir face for to wrye
With the shete, and wex for shame al reed;
And Pandarus gan under for to pry,
And seyde, "nece, if that I shal ben deed,
Have here a swerd, and smyteth of myn heed."
With that his arm al sodeynly he thriste
Under hir nekke, and at the laste hir kiste.

226

I passe al that which chargeth nought to seye,
What! God foryaf his deeth, and she al-so
Foryaf, and with hir uncle gan to pleye,
For other cause was ther noon than so.
But of this thing right to the effect to go,
Whan tyme was, hom til hir hous she wente,
And Pandarus hath fully his entente.

227

Now torne we ayein to Troilus,
That resteles ful longe a-bedde lay,
And prevely sente after Pandarus,
To him to come in al the haste he may.
He com anoon, nought ones seyde he "nay,"
And Troilus ful sobrelly he grette,
And down upon his beddes syde him sette.

228

This Troilus, with al the affeccioun
Of frendes love that herte may devyse,
To Pandarus on kneës fil adoun,
And er that he wolde of the place aryse,
He gan him thoken in his beste wyse;
A hondred sythe he gan the tyme blesse,
That he was born to bringe him fro distresse.

229

He seyde, "O frend, of frendes th' alderbeste
That ever was, the sothe for to telle,
Thou hast in hevne y-brought my soule at reste
Fro Flegiton, the fery flood of helle;
That, though I mighte a thousand tymes selle,
Upon a day, my lyf in thy servyse,
It mighte nought a mote in that suffyse.

230

The sonne, which that al the world may see,
Saw never yet, my lyf, that dar I leye,
So inly fair and goodly as is she,
Whos I am al, and shal, til that I deye;
And, that I thus am hires, dar I seye,
That thanked be the heighe worthinesse
Of love, and eek thy kinde bisnesse.

231

Thus hastow me no litel thing y-yive,
Fo which to thee obliged be for ay
My lyf, and why? for thorough thyn help I live;
For elles deed hadde I be many a day."
And with that word down in his bed he lay,
And Pandarus ful sobrelly him herde
Til al was seyde, and thanne he him answerde:

232

"My dere frend, if I have doon for thee
In any cas, god wot, it is me leef;
And am as glad as man may of it be,
God help me so; but tak now not a-greef
That I shal seyn, be war of this myscheef,

That, there-as thou now brought art in-to blisse,
That thou thy-self ne cause it nought to misse.

233

For of fortunes sharp adversitee
The worst kinde of infortune is this,
A man to have ben in prosperitee,
And it remembren, when it passed is.
Thou art wys y-nough, for-thy do nought amis;
Be not to rakel, though thou sitte warme,
For if thou be, certeyn, it wol thee harme.

234

Thou art at ese, and hold thee wel ther-inne.
For also seur as reed is every fyr,
As greet a craft is kepe wel as winne;
Brydle alwey wel thy speche and thy desyr.
For worldly joye halt not but by a wyr;
That preveth wel, it brest alday so ofte;
For-thy nede is to werke with it softe."

235

Quod Troilus, "I hope, and god toforn,
My dere frend, that I shal so me bere,
That in my gilt ther shal no thing be lorn,
N' I nil not rakel as for to greven here;
It nedeth not this matere ofte tere;
For wistestow myn herte wel, Pandare,
God woot, of this thou woldest litel care."

236

Tho gan he telle him of his glade night.
And wher-of first his herte dredde, and how,
And seyde, "freend, as I am trewe knight,
And by that feyth I shal to god and yow,
I hadde it never half so hote as now;
And ay the more that desyr me byteth
To love hir best, the more it me delyteth.

237

I noot my-self not wisly what it is;
But now I fele a newe qualitee,
Ye, al another than I dide er this."
Pandare answerde, and seyde thus, that he
That ones may in hevne blisse be,
He feleth other weyes, dar I leye,
Than thilke tyme he first herde of it seye.

238

This is o word for al; this Troilus
Was never ful, to speke of this matere,
And for to preysen un-to Pandarus
The bountee of his righte lady dere,
And Pandarus to thanke and maken chere.
This tale ay was span-newe to biginne
Til that the night departed hem a-twinne.

239

Sone after this, for that fortune it wolde,
I-comen was the blisful tyme swete,
That Troilus was warned that he sholde,
Ther he was erst, Criseyde his lady mete;
For which he felte his herte in joye flete;
And feythfully gan alle the goddes herie;
And lat see now if that he can be merie.

240

And holden was the forme and al the wyse,
Of hir cominge, and eek of his also,
As it was erst, which nedeth nought devyse.

That now that thou art settled in thy bliss,
Thyself may cause affairs to go amiss.

233

"Of fickle fortune's sharp adversities,
The very worst misfortune of them all,
Is this, to know and lose all joy and ease,
And have but bitter memories to recall.
Exert thy wisdom such fate to forestall;
Be not too rash, nor of thyself too sure,
Or harm will quickly come and long endure.

234

"Thou art at ease, and hold thee well therein,
For just as true that red is every fire,
To keep demands as much skill as to win.
Then bridle well thy speech and thy desire,
For worldly joys hang by a subtle wire,
And for sad proof, it breaketh quick and oft,
Wherefore the need to walk both light and soft."

235

"I hope," said Troilus, "before men's eyes,
Dear friend, that I such heed shall take,
That through my fault no danger shall arise,
And rashness I abjure for her dear sake.
You need not fear my promise I shall break,
If you but knew the secrets of my mind,
Then mighty little cause for fear you'd find."

236

And then he told him of his happy night,
And how at first he was afraid, and why,
And said, "I swear upon my honor bright
And by my faith in you and God on high,
I never knew what loving did imply;
For as my heart's desires rose in height,
The greater grew my love and my delight.

237

"To me myself it is a mystery,
For now I feel in me a nature new,
A thing that makes a different man of me."
And Pandar said, "Yes, I suppose it's true,
That he who once in heaven's bliss may be,
He feels it all in quite another way
Than when he knew it only by hear-say."

238

But now enough—though Troilus indeed
To speak of this doth never stop or tire,
And still to praise his lady would proceed,
Exalting all her bounty higher and higher,
And thanking Pandar all he could require,
Then in again bran-new he ever starts,
Until his friend at night homeward departs.

239

Soon after this, by great good luck, it fell
He had a chance his night-watch to repeat,
For Pandar came the happy news to tell,
That Cressida, his lady, he should meet.
How then his heart with sudden joy doth beat!
His thanks to all the Gods he then did pay,
And you can guess if he was glad and gay!

240

The manner of this meeting was again
Somewhat as I have told and as you know,
And so I shall not bother to explain,

But to the end now let us straightway go;
For Pandar still his faithful aid did show
And brought them to the place they liked the best,
And there they are in quiet and in rest.

241

You have no need, now they again are met,
To ask of me if they were happy there.
For what was good before, grows better yet
A thousandfold, with goodness still to spare.
And now they know no sorrow or no care,
For joy as great to them the kind Gods send
As any human heart may comprehend.

242

This is no trifling thing that now I say,
'Tis something no man's wit can all comprise;
For each to other's will doth so obey
That all the joys which ancient clerks so wise
Have praised, counted as nothing in their eyes;
Their joy may not be written down in ink,
For it surpasses all that heart may think!

243

But cruel day, alack the fateful hour,
Again returns, as they by signs well knew,
And they must yield to sorrow's greater power.
Full sad they were, full sad and pale of hue,
Revilng day with scornings ever new,
Calling it traitor, envious and worse—
O, bitterly the light of day they curse!

244

"Alas," said Troilus, "now is it plain
That Pyrois and his team-mates three,
Which draw the bright sun's chariot in their train,
Have gone some short cut in despite of me,
And that is why the night so soon doth flee;
And if the sun will hasten thus the day,
No offerings on his altar shall I lay."

245

But day must come, and they must separate,
And after all was said that could be said,
They finally submit to their sad fate,
Yet for a meeting set a time ahead;
And thus for many a night their lives they led
As Fortune gave to them this ample joy,
To Cressida and Troilus of Troy.

246

In great content, in sport and merry songs,
Troilus passes now his happy days.
He spends, he jousts, his feastings he prolongs,
Himself in gaudy garments he arrays,
He has a world of folk about always,
The freshest and the best that he can find,
As suiting one of his so noble kind.

247

Such name and fame of him now circulate
Throughout the world, his honor and largess,
It mounts and rings at heaven's very gate;
And through his love he knows so great gladness
That in his heart he ever doth profess,
No lover in the world is more at ease
Or hath a love with greater power to please.

248

Though other ladies were both fair and kind,

But plainly to the effect right for to go,
In joye and seurte Pandarus hem two
A-bedde broughte, whan hem bothe leste,
And thus they ben in quiete and in reste.

241

Nought nedeth it to yow, sin they ben met,
To aske at me if that they blythe were;
For if it erst was wel, tho was it bet
A thousand-fold, this nedeth not enquire.
A-gon was every sorwe and every fere;
And bothe, y-wis, they hadde, and so they wende,
As muche joye as herte may comprende.

242

This is no litel thing of for to seye,
This passeth every wit for to devyse;
For eche of hem gan otheres lust obeye;
Felicitee, which that thise clerkes wyse
Commenden so, ne may not here suffyse.
This joye may not writen been with inke,
This passeth al that herte may bythinke.

243

But cruel day, so wel-away the stounde!
Gan for to aproche, as they by signes knewe,
For whiche hem thoughte felen dethes wounde;
So wo was hem, that changen gan hir hewe,
And day they gonnen to dispyse al newe,
Calling it traytour, envyous, and worse,
And bitterly the dayes light they curse.

244

Quod Troilus, "allas! now am I war
That Pirus and tho swifte stedes three,
Whiche that drawn forth the sonnes char,
Han goon som by-path in despyt of me;
That maketh it so sone day to be;
And, for the sonne him hasteth thus to ryse,
Ne shal I never doon him sacrifysel!"

245

But nedes day departe moste hem sone,
And whanne hir speche doon was and hir chere,
They twinne anon as they were wont to done,
And setten tyme of meting eft y-fere;
And many a night they wroughte in this manere.
And thus Fortune a tyme ladde in joye
Criseyde, and eek this kinges sone of Troye.

246

In suffisaunce, in blisse, and in singinges,
This Troilus gan al his lyf to lede;
He spendeth, justeth, maketh festeynges;
He yeveth frely ofte, and chaungeth wede,
And held aboute him alwey, out of drede,
A world of folk, as cam him wel of kinde,
The fressheste and the beste he coude finde;

247

That swich a voys was of him and a stevene
Thorough-out the world, of honour and largesse,
That it up rong un-to the yate of hevene.
And, as in love, he was in swich gladnesse,
That in his herte he demede, as I gesse,
That there nis love in this world at ese
So wel as he, and thus gan love him plesse.

248

The godlihede or beautee which that kinde

In any other lady hadde y-set
Can not the mountaunce of a knot unbinde,
A-boute his herte, of al Criseydes net.
He was so narwe y-masked and y-knet,
That it undoon on any manere syde,
That nil not been, for ought that may betyde.

249

And by the hond ful ofte he wolde take
This Pandarus, and in-to gardin lede,
And swich a feste and swich a proces make
Him of Criseyde, and of hir womanhede,
And of hir beautee, that, with-outen drede,
It was a hevene his wordes for to dwelle;
And thanne he wolde singe in this manere:

250

"Love, that of erthe and see hath governaunce,
Love, that his hestes hath in hevene hye,
Love, that with an holsom alliaunce
Halt peples joyned, as him list hem gye,
Love, that knetteth lawe of companye,
And couples doth in vertu for to dwelle,
Bind this acord, that I have told and telle;

251

That that the world with feyth, which that is stable,
Dyverseth so his stoundes concordinge,
That elements that been so discordable
Holden a bond perpetuely duringe,
That Phebus mote his rosy day forth bringe,
And that the mone hath lordship over the nightes,
Al this doth Love; ay heried be his mightes!

252

That that the see, that gredy is to flowen,
Constreyneth to a certeyn ende so
His flodes, that so fersly they ne growen
To drenchen erthe and al for ever-mo;
And if that Love ought lete his brydel go,
Al that now loveth a-sonder sholde lepe,
And lost were al, that Love halt now to-hepe.

253

So wolde god, that auctor is of kinde,
That, with his bond, Love of his vertu liste
To cerclen hertes alle, and faste binde,
That from his bond no wight the wey out wiste.
And hertes colde, hem wolde I that he twiste
To make hem love, and that hem leste ay rewe
On hertes sore, and kepe hem that ben trewe."

254

In alle nedes, for the tounes werre,
He was, and ay the firste in armes dight;
And certeynly, but-if that bokes erre,
Save Ector, most y-drad of any wight;
And this encrees of hardinesse and might
Cam him of love, his ladies thank to winne,
That altered his spirit so with-inne.

255

In tyme of trewe, on haukinge wolde he ryde,
Or elles hunten boor, bere, or lyoun;
The smale bestes leet he gon bi-syde.
And when that he com rydinge in-to toun,
Ful ofte his lady, from hir window doun,
As fresh as faucon comen out of muwe,
Ful redy was, him goodly to saluwe.

Yet all the virtues in their natures set
About his heart one knot could not unbind
Of Cressida's so subtly woven net.
Enmeshed he was, and never shall he get
His freedom, nor a single part of it,
For no man's skill this net can e'er unknit.

249

And Pandar by the hand he oft would take,
And in the garden find a quiet place,
And such a glorious anthem there they'd make
Of Cressida and all her woman's grace,
And of the beauty of her form and face,
It was a heavenly joy his praise to hear,
And thus he sang unto his lady dear:

250

"O love, that dost the earth and sea control,
O Love, that dost command the heavens high,
O Love, of blessed harmony the soul,
All nations rest beneath thy guiding eye!
Thou with whose law societies comply,
Thou in whose virtue loving couples dwell,
O Love, bind this accord of which I tell!

251

"The world that stands so firm on its foundation,
With all its many harmonies diverse;
The elements with all their contentation,
Yet held in bonds that nothing can disperse;
Phoebus that doth the earth in light immerse;
The moon that hath the lordship over night—
All these depend on Love and on his might.

252

"The sea that never falters in its flowing,
Restraints its floods to such a certain end,
However fiercely tempests may be blowing,
To drown the earth it never can ascend;
If aught the bridle from Love's hand should rend,
All harmonies at once would burst asunder,
And scatter all that Love now holdeth under.

253

"God grant, the author of all natural kind,
That with the bond of Love he will consent
In circling love all hearts so firm to bind,
Escape therefrom no man shall e'er invent;
And loveless hearts, let them by Love be bent
To learn to love, and thus in pity grow,
But faithful hearts may Love keep ever so!"

254

In all events that at the siege occurred,
Troilus was ready now for fray or fight,
He was, indeed, unless the books have erred,
Save Hector, Troy's most celebrated knight,
And this increase of valor and of might,
All came from love, his lady's thanks to win,
Which thus had changed his heart and soul within.

255

In times of truce, a-hawking he would ride,
Or hunt the boar or lion or the bear;
From smaller beasts he always turned aside.
And when he on his homeward way would fare,
Ful oft his lady at her window there,
As fresh as falcon just freed of its hood,
Smiled salutations down from where she stood.

256

Now most of love and virtue was his speech,
And he despised all actions mean and low,
Nor failed to practice what some men but preach,
To honor those who first did honor show,
And comfort those in sorrow and in woe;
And when he heard that any man fared well
In love, such news he liked to hear and tell.

257

He held each man in estimation slight,
Unless he were engaged in love's emprise—
I mean the men who ought to be of right.
Love fancies he himself could well devise
And dress himself in such a dashing wise
That all the youth there in the city thought
That all was well, whate'er he said or wrought.

258

And though he was himself of royal race,
He treated no man with unkindly pride;
Benign he was to each in every place,
For which he won high praise on every side.
For love demanded by its native grace,
That he should shun all envy, pride and ire,
All avarice and other base desire.

259

O daughter to Dione, lady bright,
And Cupid, too, thy blind and winged son;
Ye sisters nine, who on Parnassus' height
Abide beside the fountain Helicon,
Thus far, with you to guide, my tale hath won!
And now since ye on other ways will wend,
Honor and praise be yours, world without end!

260

Your aid hath helped me in my song to tell
How Troilus to joy at last attained,
Though with his joy there was some grief as well,
Just as my author in his day explained.
My third book by your aid its end hath gained,
And Troilus we leave in peace and joy,
And Cressida, within the town of Troy.

256

And most of love and vertu was his speche,
And in despyt hadde alle wrecchednesse;
And doutelees, no nede was him biseche
To honouren hem that hadde worthinesse,
And esen hem that weren in distresse.
And glad was he if any wight wel ferde,
That lover was, when he it wiste or herde.

257

For sooth to seyn, he lost held every wight
But-if he were in loves heigh servyse,
I mene folk that oughte it been of right.
And over al this, so wel coude he devyse
Of sentement, and in so unkouth wyse
Al his array, that every lover thoughte,
That al was wel, what-so he seyde or wroughte.

258

And though that he be come of blood royal,
Him liste of pryde at no wight for to chase;
Benigne he was to ech in general,
For which he gat him thank in every place.
Thus wolde Love, y-heried be his grace,
That Pryde, Envy, Ire, and Avaryce
He gan to flee, and every other vyce.

259

Thou lady bright, the daughter to Dione,
Thy blinde and winged sone eek, daun Cupyde;
Ye sustren nyne eek, that by Elicone
In hil Parnaso listen for to abyde,
That ye thus fer han deynd me to gyde,
I can no more, but sin that ye wol wende,
Ye heried been for ay, with-outen ende!

260

Thourgh you have I seyde fully in my song
Th'effect and joye of Troilus servyse,
Al be that ther was som disese among,
As to myn auctor listeth to devyse.
My thridde book now ende ich in this wyse;
And Troilus in luste and in quiete
Is with Criseyde, his owne herte swete.

HERE ENDETH THE THIRD BOOK

BOOK IV

[PROEM]

1

Too short a fleeting time, alas the while,
Great joy endures, and Fortune wills it so,
Who truest seems when most she will beguile,
And most allures when she will strike a blow,
And from her wheel some hapless victim throw;
For when some wretch slips down and disappears,
She laughs at him and comforts him with jeers.

2

From Troilus she now began to turn
Her face, and paid to him but little heed;
She made his lady her true lover spurn,
And on her wheel she set up Diomed;
At which, in truth, my heart begins to bleed,

1

BUT al to litel, weylawey the whyle,
Lasteth swich joye, y-thonked be Fortune!
That semeth trewest, when she wol bygyle,
And can to foles so hir song entune,
That she hem hent and blent, traytour comune;
And when a wight is from hir wheel y-throwe,
Than laugheth she, and maketh him the mowe.

2

From Troilus she gan hir brighte face
Awey to wrythe, and took of him non hede,
But caste him clene oute of his lady grace,
And on hir wheel she sette up Diomed;
For which right now myn herte ginneth blede,

And now my penne, alas! with which I wryte,
Quaketh for drede of that I moot endyte.

3
For how Criseyde Troilus forsook,
Or at the leste, how that she was unkinde,
Mot hennes-forth ben matere of my book,
As wryten folk thorough which it is in minde.
Allas! that they shulde ever cause finde
To speke hir harm; and if they on hir lye,
Y-wis, hem-self sholde han the vilanye.

4
O ye Herines, Nightes doughtren three,
That endelees compleynen ever in pyne,
Megera, Alete, and eek Thesiphone;
Thou cruel Mars eek, fader to Quiryne,
This ilke ferthe book me helpeth fyne,
So that the los of lyf and love y-fere
Of Troilus be fully shewed here.

HERE ENDETH THE PROEM.

HERE BEGINNETH THE FOURTH BOOK

5
LIGGINGE in ost, as I have seyde er this,
The Grekes stronge, aboute Troye toun,
Bifel that, whan that Phebus shyning is
Up-on the brest of Hercules Lyoun,
That Ector, with ful many a bold baroun,
Caste on a day with Grekes for to fighte,
As he was wont to greve hem what he mighte.

6
Not I how longe or short it was bitwene
This purpos and that day they fighte mente;
But on a day wel armed, bright and shene,
Ector, and many a worthy wight out wente,
With spere in hond and bigge bowes bente;
And in the berd, with-oute lenger lette,
Hir fomen in the feld anon hem mette.

7
The longe day, with spere sharpe y-grounde,
With arwes, dartes, swerdes, maces felle,
They fighte and bringen hors and man to grounde,
And with hir axes out the braynes quelle.
But in the laste shour, sooth for to telle,
The folk of Troye hem-selven so misledden,
That with the worse at night homward they fledden.

8
At whiche day was taken Antenor,
Maugre Polydamas or Monesteo,
Santippe, Sarpedon, Polynestor,
Polyte, or eek the Trojan daun Ripheo,
And othere lasse folk, as Phebusoe.
So that, for harm, that day the folk of Troye
Dredde to lese a greet part of hir joye.

9
Of Pryamus was yeve, at Greek requeste,
A tyme of trewe, and tho they gonne trete,
Hir prisoner to chaungen, moste and leste,
And for the surplus yeven sommes grete.
This thing anon was couth in every strete,
Bothe in th'assege, in toun, and everywhere,
And with the firste it cam to Calcas ere.

And now my pen, with which I faltering write,
Trembles for fear of what I must endite.

3
How Cressida her Troilus forsook,
Or at the least, how she became unkind,
Henceforth must be the matter of my book,
As ancient records bring the tale to mind.
Alas, that ever they a cause should find
To speak her harm! But if the records lie.
Shame on the head of slanderers I cry!

4
Ye daughters of black night! Ye furies three,
Ye who lament in everlasting pain,
Megaera, Aleto and Tisiphone!
Thou cruel Mars, Quirinus' father, deign
To aid my fourth book to its end to gain
And tell how loss of love and loss of life
May be the final end of lovers' strife!

5
The Grecian hosts, as I before have told,
Still lay in siege about the Trojan wall;
And when within the Lion beams of gold
From Phoebus on the Lion's breast first fall,
Then Hector doth his barons to him call,
And plan to meet the Greeks in open fight,
And work such injury as there they might.

6
I do not know how long it was between
The day they made their plan and when they meant
To fight, but with their arms all bright and keen,
With spears in hand and great bows tautly bent,
Hector with many a worthy warrior went
Before the town, for battle ready set,
And on the field their foeman soon they met.

7
The whole long day with all spears sharply ground,
With arrowes, darts, with swords and heavy maces,
They fiercely fight, and horse and man confound,
While axes dash out brains and cleave men's faces;
But at the last the Trojan host retraces
Its steps, faltering where their captains led,
And in defeat at night they homeward fled.

8
That day Antenor yielded in the fight,
And Polydamas nor yet Menestheus,
Xanthippus, Sarpedon or Polynestor might,
Polites nor the Trojan Sir Ripheus
Withstand the Greeks, still less Sir Phebusoe,
And all his like; the harm that day done Troy
The city's hopes did very near destroy.

9
Thereafter the Greeks a truce agreed to make,
As Priam asked, the purpose to debate
Of changing prisoners in a give and take,
And for the surplus, money payments great.
This news at once began to circulate
Among both Greeks and Trojans far and near,
And very soon it came to Calchas' ear.

10

Assured that all was true as it was told,
 Into the Greek assembly Calchas pressed,
 Where sat the Grecian lords so wise and old,
 And took his rightful place among the rest,
 And solemnly he made them this request,
 That they would do him so much reverence
 To stop their noise and give him audience.

11

"My lords, I was a Trojan in past days,"
 He said, "as doubtless all of you know well,
 And know that Calchas merits Grecian praise,
 For I came here your troubles to dispel,
 And all your future conquest to foretell;
 For you shall surely burn the Trojan town,
 And all its walls the Greeks shall batter down.

12

"And how at last the Greeks shall win this prize
 And seize the town and conquest full achieve,
 You've heard me often in detail prewise;
 All this you know, my lords, as I believe,
 And how the Grecian fortunes to retrieve,
 I came in my own person here from Troy,
 On your behalf my knowledge to employ,

13

"Renouncing all my treasure, well content
 If I could but contribute to your ease.
 Thus all my goods I left with free consent,
 My only thought, my lords, was you to please;
 Nor grieve I now at loss of these,
 Nor shall I much be troubled at the cost
 If all my property in Troy is lost—

14

"Except a daughter, whom I left behind,
 Sleeping at home the night I slipped away.
 How could a father be so far unkind,
 So hard of heart! Rather than let her stay,
 Had I but dragged her forth in night array!
 And so, my lords, except you heed my sorrow,
 Methinks I ne'er shall see another morrow.

15

"And I so long, my lords, have held my peace,
 Because I saw no way to bring her here;
 But now or never must come her release,
 And soon I hope to see my daughter dear!
 To beg your aid before you I appear!
 Have pity on an old man in distress,
 For you are cause of all my heaviness.

16

"Trojans enough you have as captives caught,
 With one of these, if so your will it be,
 Redemption for my daughter may be bought.
 I beg you in your generosity,
 One of so many captives give to me!
 Why should you such a little thing refuse,
 Since all the town and folk are yours to choose?

17

"For here again I faithfully will swear,
 Just as Apollo hath it to me told,
 And as the stars above likewise declare,
 And auspices and auguries of old,
 I swear by all these signs so manifold,

10

When Calchas knew this tretis sholde holde,
 In consistorie, among the Grekes, sone
 He gan in thringe forth, with lordes olde,
 And sette him there—as he was wont to done;
 And with a chaunged face hem bad a bone,
 For love of god, to don that reverence,
 To stinte noyse, and yeve him audience.

11

Thanne seyde he thus, "lo! lordes myne, I was
 Trojan, as it is knowen out of drede;
 And if that yow remembre, I am Calkas,
 That alderfirst yaf comfort to your nede,
 And tolde wel how that ye sholden spede.
 For dredelees, thorough yow, shal, in a stounde,
 Ben Troye y-brend, and beten down to grounde.

12

And in what forme, or in what maner wyse
 This town to shende, and al your lust to acheve,
 Ye han er this wel herd it me devyse;
 This knowe ye, my lordes, as I leve.
 And for the Grekes weren me so leve,
 I com my-self in my propre persone,
 To teche in this how yow was best to done;

13

Haveinge un-to my tresour ne my rente
 Right no resport, to respect of your ese.
 Thus al my good I loste and to yow wente,
 Wening in this you, lordes, for to plese.
 But al that lose ne doth me no disese.
 Vouche-sauf, as wisly have I joye,
 For you to lese al that I have in Troye,

14

Save of a doughter, that I lafte, allas!
 Slepinge at hoom, whanne out of Troye I sterte.
 O sterne, O cruel fader that I was!
 How mighte I have in that so hard an herte?
 Allas! I ne hadde y-brought hir in hir sherte!
 For sorwe of which I wol not live to morwe,
 But-if ye lordes rewe up-on my sorwe.

15

For, by that cause I say no tyme er now
 Hir to delivere, I holden have my pees;
 But now or never, if that it lyke yow,
 I may hir have right sone, doutelees.
 O help and grace! amonges al this prees,
 Rewe on this olde caitif in destresse,
 Sin I through yow have al this hevinesse!

16

Ye have now caught and fettered in prisoun
 Trojans y-nowe; and if your willes be,
 My child with oon may have redempcioun.
 Now for the love of god and of bountee,
 Oon of so fele, allas! so yeve him me.
 What nede were it this preyere for to werne,
 Sin ye shul bothe han folk and toun as yerne?

17

On peril of my lyf, I shal not lye,
 Appollo hath me told it feithfully;
 I have eek founde it by astronomye,
 By sort, and by augurie eek trewely,
 And dar wel seye, the tyme is faste by,

That fyre and flaumbe on al the toun shal sprede;
And thus shal Troye turne in asshen dede.

18

For certeyn, Phebus and Neptunus bothe,
That makeden the walles of the toun,
Ben with the folk of Troye alwey so wrothe,
That thei wol bringe it to confusioun,
Right in despyt of king Lamecaudoun.
By-cause he nolde payen hem hir hyre,
The toun of Troye shal ben set on-fyre."

19

Telling his tale alwey, this olde greye,
Humble in speche, and in his lokinge eke,
The salte teres from his eyen tweye
Ful faste ronnen down by eyther cheke.
So longe he gan of socour hem by-seke
That, for to hele him of his sorwes sere,
They yave him Antenor, with-oute more.

20

But who was glad y-nough but Calkas tho?
And of this thing ful sone his nedes leyde
On hem that sholden for the tretis go,
And hem for Antenor ful ofte preyde
To brigen hoom king Toas and Criseyde;
And whan Pryam his save-garde sente,
Th'embassadours to Troye streyght they wente.

21

The cause y-told of hir cominge, the olde
Pryam the king ful sone in general
Let here-upon his parlement to holde,
Of which the effect rehersen yow I shal.
Th'embassadours ben answered for fynal,
Th'eschaunge of prisoners and al this nede
Hem lyketh wel, and forth in they procede.

22

This Troilus was present in the place,
Whan axed was for Antenor Criseyde,
For which ful sone chaungen gan his face,
As he that with tho wordes wel neigh deyde.
But nathelees, he no word to it seyed,
Lest men sholde his affeccoun espye;
With mannes herte he gan his sorwes drye.

23

And ful of anguish and of grisly drede
Abood what lordes wolde un-to it seye;
And if they wolde graunte, as god forbede,
Th'eschaunge of hir, than thoughte he thinges
tweye,

First, how to save hir honour, and what weye
He might best th'eschaunge of hir withstonde;
Ful faste he caste how al this mighte stonde.

24

Love him made al prest to doon hir byde,
And rather dye than she sholde go;
But resoun seyde him, on that other syde,
"With-oute assent of hir ne do not so,
Lest for they werk she wolde by thy fo,
And seyn, that thorough thy medling is y-blowe
Your bother love, there it was erst unknowe."

25

For which he gan deliberen, for the beste,
That though the lordes wolde that she wente,

That fire and flame on all the town shall spread,
And Troy shall turn to ashes, cold and dead.

18

"Phoebus on high, and watery Neptune, too,
Who gave its walls unto the Trojan town,
Are angry at the Trojan folk untrue,
And eager now to tear those same walls down;
Laomedon, who bore the royal crown,
Refused to pay to them their proper hire,
For which their city shall be burned with fire."

19

Rehearsing thus his tale, this old man gray
And feeble to the Greeks doth humbly speak,
With tears as salty as the ocean spray
Fast running down on either withered cheek.
So long he begs and earnestly doth seek,
That at the last, to stop his long lament,
To give to him Antenor they consent.

20

When thus the long debate was brought to close,
Calchas arrangements with the legates made
Whom for their embassy the Grecians chose,
To give Antenor and take back in trade
His daughter and King Thoas, as he prayed;
And when King Priam had safe-conduct sent,
To Troy the legates on their mission went.

21

The purpose of their embassy they told,
And Priam listened with attentive ear;
A parliament he bade the Trojans hold,
Which I but briefly need to dwell on here,
For with one voice the Trojans spoke out clear,
That they approved of this proposed exchange,
And all details were ready to arrange.

22

Now Troilus was present in the place,
When Cressida was being bargained for,
At which it might be gathered from his face
That this request had touched him deep and sore;
Yet he in silence this disaster bore,
And lest his speech his secret should reveal,
Manfully strove his sorrow to conceal.

23

Thus full of anguish and of ghastly fear,
He waited what the other lords would say,
And if from their debate it should appear,
That Cressida from Troy must go
away,

Two things he planned to do without delay,
Both save her honest name, and keep her still
In Troy, if strength availed thereto or skill.

24

For if she longer might not there abide,
Then naught was left for him except to die,
But Reason told him on the other side,
That first for her advice he must apply;
For if he brought her in the public eye,
She might complain his meddling had revealed
Their love, that otherwise had been concealed.

25

To this decision thus he came at last,
That if the lords decreed that she must go,

He would assent to any law they passed,
And then his lady seek and let her know,
And what she bade him do, he would do so,
Cost what it might in labor or in strife,
For what she willed, was dearer than his life.

26

Now Hector, who had heard the Greeks' demand,
For Cressida Antenor to restore,
Against this spoke and firmly took his stand:
"Sirs, she is not a prisoner of war!
I know not what you want this lady for,
But for my part, you can go back and tell
Your friends, we have no women here to sell!"

27

You can't imagine what a stir this made,
For all the folk blazed up like straw on fire;
Their luck against them in this matter played,
They got their wish and their confusion dire.
"Hector," they said, "what's this that you
require,

To shield this woman and cause us thus to lose
Antenor, whom you should the rather choose,

28

"Who is so wise and of such great renown,
And we have need of men, as you can see,
And he among the greatest in this town!
O Hector, let such foolish fancies be!
And Priam, king of Troy, hear our decree,
That we will have Antenor, yes or no,
And Cressida to her Greek friends may go!"

29

O Juvenal, how truly thou didst say,
The people never know for what they seek,
For what they want seems right in every way,
And clouds of error ever render weak
Their judgments, in whate'er they do or speak;
For though Antenor now had every voice,
In time the Trojans shall repent their choice.

30

For later his own city he betrayed!
Alas, they brought him back to Troy too soon!
O foolish world, with error over-laid!
Poor harmless Cressida they now repugn,
And now her song of joy must change its tune,
For now to have Antenor all are bound,
And she must go, declare both hare and hound.

31

And so it was decreed in parliament,
At end of much debate and wild uproar,
And thus announced there by their president,
Though Hector did this action much deplore;
But finally he could do nothing more,
For folk and all in this were quite agreed,
And by the parliament it was decreed.

32

Discussion ended, home the Trojans went,
And Troilus, as well, with footsteps slow,
And then about their tasks his men he sent,
While he into his chamber straight did go;
But first he told his men, to hide his woe,
That he would rest and sleep an hour or two,
And on his lonely bed himself he threw.

He wolde late hem graunte what hem leste,
And telle his lady first what that they mente.
And whan that she had seyde him hir entente,
Ther-after wolde he werken also blyve,
Though al the world ayein it wolde stryve.

26

Ector, which that wel the Grekes herde,
For Antenor how they wolde han Criseyde,
Gan it withstonde, and sobrelly answerde:—
"Sires, she nis no prisoner," he seyde;
"I noot on yow who that this charge leyde,
But, on my part, ye may eft-sone him telle,
We usen here no wommen for to selle."

27

The noyse of peple up-stirte thanne at ones,
As breme as blase of straw y-set on fyre;
For infortune it wolde, for the nones,
They sholden hir confusioun desyre.
"Ector," quod they, "what goost may yow en-
spyre,

This womman thus to shilde and doon us lese
Daun Antenor?—a wrong wey now ye chese—

28

That is so wys, and eek so bold baroun,
And we han nede of folk, as men may see;
He is eek oon, the grettest of this toun;
O Ector, lat tho fantasyes be!
O king Pryam," quod they, "thus seggen we,
That al our voys is to for-gon Criseyde";
And to deliveren Antenor they preyde.

29

O Juvenal, lord! trewe is thy sentence,
That litel witen folk what is to yerne
That they ne finde in hir desyr offence;
For cloud of errour lat hem not descerne
What best is; and lo, here ensample as yerne.
This folk desiren now deliveraunce
Of Antenor, that broughte hem to mischaunce!

30

For he was after traytour to the toun
Of Troye; alas! they quitte him out to rathe;
O nyce world, lo, thy discrecioun!
Criseyde, which that never dide hem skathe,
Shal now no lenger in hir blisse bathe;
But Antenor, he shal com hoom to tounne,
And she shal out: thus seyden here and howne.

31

For which delibered was by parlement,
For Antenor to yelden up Criseyde,
And it pronounced by the president,
Al-theigh that Ector "nay" ful ofte preyde.
And fynaly, what wight that it withseyde,
It was for nought; it moste been, and sholde;
For substaunce of the parlement it wolde.

32

Departed out of parlement echone,
This Troilus, with-outte wordes mo,
Un-to his chaumbre spedde him faste allone,
But-if it were a man of his or two,
The whiche he bad out faste for to go,
By-cause he wolde slepen, as he seyde,
And hastily up-on his bed him leyde.

33

And as in winter leves been biraft,
Eche after other, til the tree be bare,
So that ther nis but bark and braunche y-laft,
Lyth Troilus, biraft of ech wel-fare,
Y-bounden in the blake bark of care,
Disposed wood out of his wit to brede,
So sore him sat the chaunginge of Criseyde.

34

He rist him up, and every dore he shette
And windowe eek, and tho this sorweful man
Up-on his beddes syde a-doun him sette,
Ful lyk a deed image pale and wan;
And in his brest the heped wo bigan
Out-breste, and he to werken in this wyse
In his woodnesse, as I shal you devyse.

35

Right as the wilde bole biginneth springe
Now here, now there, y-darted to the herte,
And of his deeth roreth in compleyninge,
Right so gan he aboute the chaumbre sterte,
Smyting his brest ay with his festes smerte;
His heed to the wal, his body to the grounde
Ful ofte he swapte, him-selven to confounde.

36

His eyen two, for pitee of his herte,
Out stremeden as swifte wells tweye;
The heighe sobbes of his sorwes smerte
His speche him rafte, unnethes mighte he seye,
"O deeth, alas! why niltow do me deye?"
A-cursed be the day which that nature
Shoop me to ben a lyves creature!"

37

But after, whan the furie and the rage
Which that his herte twiste and faste threste,
By lengthe of tyme somewhat gan asswage,
Up-on his bed he leyde him doun to reste;
But tho bigonne his teres more out-breste,
That wonder is, the body may suffyse
To half this wo, which that I yow devyse.

38

Than seyde he thus, "Fortune! alas the whyle!
What have I doon, what have I thus a-gilt?
How mightestow for reuthe me bigyle?
Is ther no grace, and shal I thus be spilt?
Shal thus Criseyde away, for that thou wilt?
Allas! how maystow in thyn herte finde
To been to me thus cruel and unkinde?"

39

Have I thee nought honoured al my lyve,
As thou wel wost, above the goddes alle?
Why wiltow me fro joye thus deprive?
O Troilus, what may men now thee calle
But wrecche of wrecches, out of honour falle
In-to miserie, in which I wol biwayle
Criseyde, alas! til that the breeth me fayle?

40

Allas, Fortune! if that my lyf in joye
Displeded hadde un-to thy foule envye,
Why ne haddestow my fader, king of Troye,
By-raft the lyf, or doon my bretheren dye,
Or slayn my-self, that thus compleyne and crye,

33

And as the leaves in winter blow away,
By one and one, leaving the tree al bare,
And only bark and branch the winds withstay,
So now unhappy Troilus doth fare,
Close bound within the dismal bark of care,
And wild with fear lest he dare not refuse
The vote by which he Cressida must lose.

34

Then up he rose and fastened every door,
And window, too, and then this wretched man
Upon his bedside sat him down once more,
And sat as still as any image can,
And looked as wan, until his woe began
At last to break forth in a raging storm,
And how he acted, I shall you inform.

35

Not otherwise than as the fierce wild bull
Doth roar and leap and spring, when from his heart
The huntsman forth the fatal spear doth pull,
So Troilus doth from his bedside start,
And beat his breast, and here and yonder dart,
Striking his head full hard against the wall,
And to the floor his body oft doth fall.

36

His eyes for very sorrow turned to fountains,
From which the tears in double streamlets well,
And from his breast, as if from bursting mountains,
The sobs broke forth, scarce leaving breath to tell
His grief. "O death," he said, "thou traitor fell,
Why must I stay alive who curse the day
That I was born this hapless part to play!"

37

But when the fury and the blinding rage
Which thus his heart afflicted and oppressed,
With time began a little to assuage,
Upon his bed he laid him down to rest,
And now the flood of tears attained its crest;
It was a marvel that the body could
Endure the woe and grief in which he stood.

38

"O Fortune," he exclaimed, "alas the while!
What have I done? What crime have I committed?
How didst thou have the heart me to beguile?
Shall I by thee be evermore outwitted?
Must thou so strong 'gainst Cressida be pitted?
Alas, that thou, so cruel and unkind,
Shouldst towards me cherish such a hostile mind!"

39

"To honor thee do I not ever strive,
Above the other Gods and powers all?
Why dost thou of my blessing me deprive?
O Troilus, well may mankind thee call
Most wretched of all wretches, who dost fall
To such a depth, in which thou must bewail
Lost Cressida, till thy last breath shall fail.

40

"Fortune, alas, was it for my delight
In love that I have lost thy favor high?
Why didst thou not my father in despite
Deprive of life, or let my brother die,
Or me myself, who on thee thus do cry?"

I, cumber-world, whose happy days are sped,
Forever dying, yet never fully dead!

41-

"If Cressida alone to me were left,
I'd care not, Fortune, what course you might steer!
But of my love you have me now bereft,
For 'tis your way, to keep man still in fear,
To rob him of the one he holds most dear.
You prove your strength by wanton violence,
And thus I'm lost, all hopeless of defence.

42

"O Lord of love! O very God on high!
Thou knowest best my heart and all my thought;
What shall I do my life to occupy,
If I forego what I so dear have bought?
Since thou my love and me hast safely brought
Into thy hand, and both our hearts hast sealed.
How could thy act then ever be repealed?

43

"What shall I do? And shall I never master
The living torment and the cruel pain
Of this so unforeseen and great disaster?
Alone in solitude let me complain,
And never see it shine or see it rain,
But in the dark, like Oedipus of old,
Find both my life and sorrows manifold!

44

"O weary spirit, wandering to and fro,
When wilt thou seek elsewhere a place of rest
And let this body to destruction go?
O lurking soul, fly forth from out thy nest!
Abandon this sad heart and weary breast,
And follow Cressida, thy lady dear,
For now thy proper home no more is here.

45

"O weary eyes, since all your bliss and joy
Was but in Cressida's reflected light,
What will ye do, since I cannot employ
You as I would, but weep out all your sight?
Since she is quenched who was my lamp so bright,
From this time forth, my eyes are but in vain,
And all their virtue can me nothing gain.

46

"O Cressida, my sovereign lady dear,
Unto this grieving soul that thus doth cry,
Who shall give comfort when thou art not here?
Alas, no one! But when my heart shall die,
My spirit straight to thee alone shall fly,
To serve thee as thy everlasting slave,
While I shall lie forgotten in my grave.

47

"O all ye lovers, high upon the wheel
Of Fortune set in joy and bliss secure,
God grant that ye may find your love of steel,
And may your joyous life full long endure;
And when ye come upon my sepulture,
Remember that your comrade resteth there,
For I loved, too, though sorrow was my share.

48

"O, old, enfeebled, mis-behaving man—
Calchas I mean—what wickedness led thee
To leave thy Troy and join the Grecian clan?

I, combre-world, that may of no-thing serve,
But ever dye, and never fully sterve?

41

If that Criseyde allone were me laft,
Nought roughte I whider thou woldest me stere;
And hir, alas! than hastow me biraft.
But ever-more, lo! this is thy manere,
To reve a wight that most is to him dere,
To preve in that thy gerful violence.
Thus am I lost, ther helpeth no defence.

42

O verray lord of love, O god, alas!
That knowest best myn herte and al my thought,
What shal my sorwful lyf don in this cas
If I for-go that I so dere have bought?
Sin ye Cryseyde and me han fully brought
In-to your grace, and bothe our hertes seled,
How may ye suffre, alas! it be repeled?

43

What I may doon, I shal, why! I may dure
On lyve in torment and in cruel peyne,
This infortune or this disaventure,
Allone as I was born, y-wis, compleyne;
Ne never wil I seen it shyne or reyne;
But ende I wil, as Edippe, in derknesse
My sorwful lyf, and dyen in distresse.

44

O wery goost, that errest to and fro,
Why niltow fleen out of the wofulleste
Body, that ever mighte on grounde go?
O soule, lurking in this wo, unneste,
Flee forth out of myn herte, and lat it breste,
And folwe alwey Criseyde, thy lady dere;
Thy righte place is now no lenger here!

45

O wofulle eyen two, sin your disport
Was al to seen Criseydes eyen brighte,
What shal ye doon but, for my discomfort,
Stonden for nought, and wepen out your sighte?
Sin she is queynt, that wont was yow to lighte,
In veyn fro-this-forth have I eyen tweye
Y-formed, sin your vertue is a-weye.

46

O my Criseyde, O lady sovereignty
Of thilke woful soule that thus cryeth,
Who shal now yeven comfort to my peyne?
Allas, no wight; but when myn herte dyeth,
My spirit, which that so un-to yow hyeth,
Receyve in gree, for that shal ay yow serve;
For-tyh no fors is, though the body sterve.

47

O ye loveres, that heighe upon the wheel
Ben set of Fortune, in good aventure,
God leve that ye finde ay love of steel,
And longe mot your lyf in joye endure!
But whan ye comen by my sepulture,
Remembreth that your felawe resteth there;
For I lovede eek, though I unworthy were.

48

O olde unholsum and mislyved man,
Calkas I mene, alas! what eyleth thee
To been a Greek, sin thou art born Trojan?

O Calkas, which that wilt my bane be,
In cursed tyme was thou born for me!
As wolde blisful Jove, for his joye,
That I thee hadde, where I wolde, in Troye!"

49

A thousand sykes, hottere than the glede,
Out of his brest ech after other wente,
Medled with pleyntes newe, his wo to fede,
For which his woful teres never stente;
And shortly, so his peynes him to-rente,
And wex so mat, that joye nor penaunce
He feleth noon, but lyth forth in a trauunce.

50

Pandare, which that in the parlement
Hadde herd what every lord and burgeys seyde,
And how ful graunted was, by oon assent,
For Antenor to yelden so Criseyde,
Gan wel neigh wood out of his wit to breyde,
So that, for wo, he niste what he mente;
But in a rees to Troilus he wente.

51

A certeyn knight, that for the tyme kepte
The chaumbre-dore, un-dide it him anoon;
And Pandare, that ful tendreliche wepte,
In-to the derke chaumbre, as stille as stoon,
Toward the bed gan softly to goon,
So confus, that he niste what to seye;
For verray wo his wit was neigh awaye.

52

And with his chere and loking al to-torn,
For sorwe of this, and with his armes folden,
He stood this woful Troilus biforn,
And on his pitous face he gan biholden;
But lord, so often gan his herte colden,
Seing his freend in wo, whos hevinesse
His herte slow, as thoughte him for distresse.

53

This woful wight, this Troilus, that felte
His freend Pandare y-comen him to see,
Gan as the snow ayein the sonne melte,
For which this sorwful Pandare, of pitee,
Gan for to wepe as tendreliche as he;
And specheles thus been this ilke tweye,
That neyther mighte o word for sorwe seye.

54

But at the laste this woful Troilus,
Ney deed for smert, gan bresten out to rore,
And with a sorwful noyse he seyde thus,
Among his sobbes and his sykes sore,
"Lo! Pandare, I am deed, with-outen more.
Hastow nought herd at parlement," he seyde,
"For Antenor how lost is my Criseyde?"

55

This Pandarus, ful deed and pale of hewe,
Ful pitously answerde and seyde, "yis!
As wisly were it fals as it is trewe,
That I have herd, and wot al how it is.
O mercy, god, who wolde have trowed this?
Who wolde have wend that, in so litel a throwe,
Fortune our joye wolde han over-throwe?"

56

For in this world ther is no creature,

O Calchas, thou my fatal bane wilt be,
For thou wast born to be a curse to me!
O would that Jove would grant the happy hour
That thou wert here in Troy and in my power!"

49

A thousand sighs as hot as glowing embers
Forth from his breast in swift succession rise,
When thus his sorrows freshly he remembers;
And streams of burning tears break from his eyes,
The burden of his heart to signalize,
Till nature yielding to the heavy stress
Of grief, he lies in dim unconsciousness.

50

Now Pandar likewise at the parliament
Had heard what every lord and burgess said,
And how with one opinion they assent
That Cressida should to the Greeks be led,
And straightway he completely lost his head;
So shocked he was, his wits went all astray,
And off to Troilus he rushed away.

51

A certain knight who kept the chamber door
Permitted him to enter in the room,
And Pandar, weeping silently but sore,
Slipped in the chamber, dark as any tomb,
And to the bed he went in silent gloom,
So deeply agitated and dismayed,
One word he could not summon to his aid.

52

His heart by pity and compassion torn,
He stands, and on his breast his arms doth fold,
And gazes thus on Troilus forlorn,
Whose face a dreadful thing is to behold;
And Pandar feels his very heart grow cold
At sight of him thus prostrate in despair
Whose great affliction he would gladly share.

53

And Troilus, reviving when he felt
That Pandar was come there with sympathy,
Began like snow against the sun to melt,
And down their cheeks the tears ran copiously
Of these two comrades in adversity;
Yet speechless stood they there, these weeping two,
Nor yet had thought of anything to do.

54

But finally this woful Troilus,
Half dead with sorrow, burst out in a roar,
And with a strangely sounding voice spoke thus,
Mid sobs and moans and other noises more:
"The world hath nothing now for me in store!
Hast thou not heard how by parliament,
Away from Troy my Cressida is sent?"

55

And Pandar, ghastly now and pale of hue,
Most pitifully spoke and answered, "Yes!
Would God it were as false as it is true!
I've heard it all, and must it all confess!
This end, O how could any person guess!
Who would have thought with such a sudden fling
Fortune our joy to this sad end would bring!"

56

"In all this world no creature ever saw

Ruin so sudden and so undesigned,
 So strange and utterly beyond all law!
 But every accident can't be divined—
 So goes the world! This lesson here I find,
 Let no man think that he's exceptional,
 For Fortune will desert us one and all.

57

"But tell me why you thus beyond all reason
 Lament and lie upon your bed supine,
 For had you not your joy in its good season?
 Give thanks for joy, yourself to loss resign!
 But I that ne'er in love, as thou in thine
 Hast prospered, nor ever knew a friendly eye,
 'Tis I who might thus weep and wail and sigh!

58

"And here's another thing—I dare aver
 This town is full of ladies round about,
 Fairer indeed than any twelve like her;
 And if you want me, I can pick one out,
 Yes, more than one or two, without a doubt.
 Be glad, therefore, my own dear chosen brother,
 If she is lost, why, we can get another.

59

"The Lord forbid that you should never glance
 At things which have not been your chief delight!
 If one can sing, another well can dance!
 One may be fair, another gay and bright,
 And virtue lack of beauty may requite!
 Each by her excellences should be measured,
 For heron and falcon both are treasured.

60

"As Zanzis wrote, who was so very wise,
 A new love expediteth oft the old.
 Adapt yourself as new conditions rise,
 And ever on your heart maintain your hold;
 No fire so hot but time will make it cold;
 And since all pleasures are but accidental,
 New accidents are nothing detrimental.

61

"For just as sure as day comes after night,
 Some new love, some new task, or some new woe,
 Or even seldom having her in sight,
 These all assist affections old to go.
 And one of these you're bound to have, you know,
 For out of sight, she'll soon be out of mind,
 Whereby new comfort you shall quickly find."

62

These wise and cheering words good Pandar spoke
 To help his friend as helpless he there lay,
 As one who any measures would invoke,
 No matter how much nonsense he might say.
 But Troilus did slight attention pay
 To all this rigmarole or what it meant,
 In one and out the other ear it went.

63

At last he said, as on his arm he leaned,
 "This medicine and cure proposed by you,
 Were well enough if I were but a fiend!
 Be false to Cressida, to me so true!
 That's something, Pandar, I shall never do!
 But slay me rather here upon the spot
 Than I should add this shame to my sad lot.

As to my doom, that ever saw rue
 Straungere than this, thorough cas or aventure.
 But who may al eschewe or al devyne?
 Swich is this world; for-thy I thus defyne,
 Ne truste no wight finden in Fortune
 Ay proprete; hir yeftes ben comune.

57

But tel me this, why thou art now so mad
 To sorwen thus? Why lystow in this wyse,
 Sin thy desyr al holly hastow had,
 So that, by right, it oughte y-now suffyse?
 But I, that never felte in my servyse
 A frendly chere or loking of an yē,
 Lat me thus wepe and wayle, til I dye.

58

And over al this, as thou wel wost thy-selve,
 This town is ful of ladies al aboute;
 And, to my doom, fairer than swiche twelve
 As ever she was, shal I finde, in som route,
 Ye, oon or two, with-outen any doute.
 For-thy be glad, myn owene dere brother,
 If she be lost, we shul recovere another.

59

What, god for-bede alwey that ech plesaunce
 In o thing were, and in non other wight!
 If oon can singe, another can wel daunce;
 If this be goodly, she is glad and light;
 And this is fayr, and that can good a-right.
 Ech for his vertu holden is for dere,
 Bothe heroner and fauon for riverse.

60

And eek, as writ Zanzis, that was ful wys,
 "The newe love out chaceth ofte the olde";
 And up-on newe cas lyth newe avys.
 Thenk eek, thy-self to saven artow holde;
 Swich fyr, by proces, shal of kinde colde.
 For sin it is but casuel plesaunce,
 Som cas shal putte it out of remembraunce.

61

For al-so seur as day cometh after night,
 The newe love, labour or other wo,
 Or elles selde seinge of a wight,
 Don olde affeccious alle over-go.
 And, for thy part, thou shalt have oon of tho
 To abrigge with thy bittre peynes smerte;
 Absence of hir shal dryve hir out of herte."

62

Thise wordes seyde he for the nones alle,
 To helpe his freend, lest he for sorwe deyde.
 For douteles, to doon his wo to falle,
 He roughte not what unthrift that he seyde.
 But Troilus, that neigh for sorwe deyde,
 Tok litel hede of al that ever he mente;
 Oon ere it herde, at the other out it wente:—

63

But at the laste answerde and seyde, "freend,
 This lechecraft, or heled thus to be,
 Were wel sitting, if that I were a feend,
 To traysen hir that trewe is unto me!
 I pray god, lat this consayl never y-thee;
 But do me rather sterve anon-right here
 Er I thus do as thou me woldest lere.

64

She that I serve, y-wis, what so thou seye,
To whom myn herte enhabit is by right,
Shal han me holly hires til that I deye.
For, Pandarus, sin I have trouthe hir hight,
I wol not been untrew for no wight;
But as hir man I wol ay live and sterve,
And never other creature serve.

65

And ther thou seyst, thou shalt as faire finde
As she, lat be, make no comparisoun
To creature y-formed here by kinde.
O leve Pandare, in conclusioun,
I wol not be of thyn opinioun,
Touching al this; for whiche I thee biseche,
So hold thy pees; thou sleest me with thy speche.

66

Thow biddest me I sholde love another
Al freshly newe, and lat Criseyde go!
It lyth not in my power, leve brother.
And though I mighte, I wolde not do so.
But canstow playen raket, to and fro,
Netle in, dokke out, now this, now that, Pandare?
Now foule falle hir, for thy wo that care!

67

Thow farest eek by me, thou Pandarus,
As he, that whan a wight is wo bi-noon,
He cometh to him a pas, and seyth right thus,
'Think not on smert, and thou shalt fele noon.'
Thou most me first transmuwen in a stoon,
And reve me my passiounes alle,
Er thou so lightly do my wo to falle.

68

The deeth may wel out of my brest departe
The lyf, so longe may this sorwe myne;
But fro my soule shal Criseydes darte
Out never-mo; but doun with Proserpyne,
When I am deed, I wol go wone in pyne;
And ther I wol eternally compleyne
My wo, and how that twinned be we tweyne.

69

Thow hast here maad an argument, for fyn,
How that it sholde lasse payne be
Criseyde to for-noon, for she was myn,
And live in ese and in felicitee.
Why gabbestow, that seydest thus to me
That 'him is wors that is fro welle y-throwe,
Than he hadde erst non of that wele y-knowe?'

70

But tel me now, sin that thee thinketh so light
To chaungen so in love, ay to and fro,
Why hastow not don bisily thy might
To chaungen hir that doth thee al thy wo?
Why niltow lete hir fro thyn herte go?
Why niltow love an-other lady swete,
That may thyn herte setten in quiete?

71

If thou hast had in love ay yet mischaunce,
And canst it not out of thyn herte dryve,
I, that livede in lust and in plesaunce
With hir as muche as creature on-lyve,
How sholde I that foryete, and that so blyve?

64

"I'll serve her still, for all your worldly lore,
To whom my heart is bound by every right,
And shall do so until I breathe no more!
That humble faith which I to her did plight,
That shall I keep, and faith with faith requite;
As her true man I'll be forever bound,
And serve no other on this whole world round.

65

"But when you say that others you can find
As fair as she, compare her not, I pray,
With any creature formed of human kind!
And Pandar dear, I've only this to say
To your advice, and that is plainly, Nay!
And therefore I politely must request
That you will let these other ladies rest.

66

"You counsel me that I should love another,
And start afresh, and Cressida let go!
That lies not in my power, friend and brother!
And if I could, I never would do so.
And if you play the ball thus to and fro,
Now in, now out, now new love ousting old,
What claim on love can you expect to hold!

67

"Indeed what you have said seems thus to me,
As you should tell one sick with ills severe,
Who seeks your aid in his adversity,
'Don't think of pain, and pain will disappear,'—
As though a stone dwelt in my bosom here!
Against all feeling you must me insure
Before such medicine can work a cure.

68

"Let life from out this wretched breast depart,
And with my life, let thus my sorrows end,
Yet Cressida shall hold me, soul and heart,
And down with Proserpina I shall wend,
When heaven this relief to me shall send,
And there I will eternally complain
The bitter woe that cleft us two in twain!

69

"But for that argument of yours so fine,
That resignation lighter grief should be
Because my lady one time has been mine
And we have known the meaning of felicity—
What nonsense! Trulier once you said to me,
His lot is worse who out of joy is thrown
Than his who never any joy hath known.

70

"But tell me, since you take it thus so light,
To change your love and pass aye to and fro,
Why have you never exercised this right,
And left the one who brings you naught but woe?
If love comes light, it may as lightly go!
Why do you not hunt up another love,
And from your heart the cruel old one shove?

71

"If you, who never yet in love fared well,
Forth from your heart your old love cannot drive,
Can I, who once in heaven's joy did dwell
In bliss as great as any man alive,
Can I forget, though earnestly I strive?

O Pandar, tell me where you went to school,
Who argue thus so futilely by rule!

72

"'Tis nothing, Pandar, all that you have said!
I know quite well, whatever may befall.
My soul must now be numbered with the dead!
O death, thou certain end of sorrows all,
Come now, nor bid me oftener on thee call;
For blessed is the death so long time sought
By which an end to pain and grief is brought.

73

"Time was when life on earth to me was sweet,
And death a hateful need and danger dire,
But now his coming I would gladly greet,
For nothing in this world I more desire.
O death, O soul, with anguish set afire,
Let falling tears the flames of sorrow drench,
Or thy cold stroke this mortal fever quench.

74

"O thou, who slayest in such sundry ways,
Against men's wills, unsought, by day or night,
Grant this request to one who humbly prays:
Relieve this world of him who doth but blight
Existence with his sorrows infinite!
The time has come for me to leave this earth,
For fate hath made my life but little worth."

75

Salt tears the eyes of Troilus distil,
Like liquid from alembic falling fast,
And Pandar held his tongue and kept him still,
And downward to the ground his eyes he cast;
This silence, though, could not forever last,
And rather than his friend should pass away,
Pandar was minded something more to say.

76

"Good friend, since you thus dwell in great distress,
And since you find so much in me to blame,
Why don't you make an effort to redress
Your griefs, and strength and manhood thus
proclaim?

Take her by force and hold her so! For shame!
Or either let her go in peace elsewhere,
Or keep her here and banish all your care!

77

"Art thou in Troy, and dost thou lack the nerve
To take a woman who's in love with thee,
And would love more if thou more shouldst deserve?
A greater folly never did I see!

Get up at once, and let thy weeping be,
And show thou art a man, with manly powers,
You'll see that Cressida shall still be ours."

78

To these words Troilus made answer soft
And said, "In truth, my friend and brother dear,
All this I've thought myself, reflecting oft,
And more indeed than you've suggested here;
But many reasons thereagainst appear,
Which I will tell, if you good heed will pay,
And then your own opinion you may say.

79

"You know this town is now involved in war
Because a woman was borne off by force,

O where hastow ben hid so longe in muwe,
That canst so wel and formely arguewe?

72

Nay, nay, god wot, nought worth is al thy reed,
For which, for what that ever may bifalle,
With-outen wordes mo, I wol be deede.
O deeth, that endere art of sorwes alle,
Com now, sin I so ofte after thee calle;
For sely is that deeth, soth for to seyne,
That, ofte y-cleped, cometh and endeth payne.

73

Wel wot I, whyl my lyf was in quiete,
Er thou me slowe, I wolde have yeven hyre;
But now thy cominge is to me so swete,
That in this world I no-thing so desyre.
O deeth, sin with this sorwe I am a-fyre,
Thou outhur do me anon in teres drenche,
Or with thy colde strook myn hete quenche!

74

Sin that thou sleest so fele in sondry wyse
Ayens hir wil, unpreyed, day and night,
Do me, at my requeste, this serveyse,
Delivere now the world, so dostow right,
Of me, that am the wofulleste wight
That ever was; for tyme is that I sterve,
Sin in this world of right nought may I serve."

75

This Troilus in teres gan distille,
As licour out of alambyk ful faste;
And Pandarus gan holde his tunge stille,
And to the ground his eyen down he caste.
But nathelees, thus thoughte he at the laste,
"What, parde, rather than my felawe deye,
Yet shal I som-what more un-to him seye":

76

And seyde, "freend, sin thou hast swich distresse,
And sin thee list myn arguments to blame,
Why nilt thy-selven helpen doon redresse,
And with thy manhod letten al this
grame?

Go ravisse hir ne canstow not for shame!
And outhur lat hir out of toune fare,
Or hold hir stille, and leve thy nyce fare.

77

Artow in Troye, and hast non hardiment
To take a womman which that loveth thee,
And wolde hir-selven been of thyn assent?
Now is not this a nyce vanitee?
Rys up anon, and lat this weping be,
And kyth thou art a man, for in this houre
I wil be deed, or she shal bleven oure."

78

To this answerde him Troilus ful softe,
And seyde, "parde, leve brother dere,
Al this have I my-self yet thought ful ofte,
And more thing than thou devyest here.
But why this thing is laft, thou shalt wel here;
And whan thou me hast yeve an audience,
Ther-after mayst thou telle al thy sentence.

79

First, sin thou wost this town hath al this werre
For ravissing of wommen so by might,

It sholde not be suffred me to erre,
As it stant now, ne doon so gret unright.
I sholde han also blame of every wight,
My fadres graunt if that I so withstode,
Sin she is chaunged for the tounes goode.

80

I have eek thought, so it were hir assent,
To aske hir at my fader, of his grace;
Than thenke I, this were hir accusement,
Sin wel I woot I may hir not purchase.
For sin my fader, in so heigh a place
As parlement, hath hir eschaunge enseled,
He nil for me his lettre be repeled.

81

Yet drede I most hir herte to pertourbe
With violence, if I do swich a game;
For if I wolde it openly distourbe,
It moste been disclaundre to hir name.
And me were lever deed than hir defame,
As nolde god but-if I sholde have
Hir honour lever than my lyf to save!

82

Thus am I lost, for ought that I can see;
For certeyn is, sin that I am hir knight,
I moste hir honour lever han than me
In every cas, as love oughte of right.
Thus am I with desyr and reson twight;
Desyr for to distourben hir me redeth,
And reson nil not, so myn herte dredeth."

83

Thus wepinge that he coude never cesse,
He seyde, "allas! how shal I, wrecche, fare?
For wel fele I alwey my love encesse,
And hope is lasse and lasse alwey, Pandare!
Encessen eek the causes of my care;
So wel-a-vey, why nil myn herte breste?
For, as in love, ther is but litel reste."

84

Pandare answerde, "freend, thou mayst, for me,
Don as thee list; but hadde ich it so hote,
And thyn estat, she sholde go with me;
Though al this toun cryede on this thing by note,
I nolde sette at al that noyse a grote.
For when men han wel cryed, than wol they
roune;

A wonder last but nyne night never in toun.

85

Devyne not in reson ay so depe
Ne curteysly, but help thy-self anoon;
Bet is that othere than thy-selven wepe,
And namely, sin ye two been al oon.
Rys up, for by myn heed, she shal not goon;
And rather be in blame a lyte y-founde
Than sterve here as a gnat, with-oute wounde.

86

It is no shame un-to yow, ne no vyce
Hir to with-holden, that ye loveth most.
Paraunter, she mighte holden thee for nyce
To lete hir go thus to the Grekes ost.
Thenk eek Fortune, as wel thy-selven wost,
Helpeth hardy man to his emprise,
And weyveth wrecches, for hir cowardyse.

And as things stand, 'twould cause a great uproar,
If to such methods I should have recourse;
I'm sure 'twould be a very fruitful source
Of blame, if I my father's act withstood,
Since she's to be exchanged for Troy's own good.

80

"I've also thought, of course with her consent,
To ask my father for her as a favor,
But that to treason were equivalent,
For never would he in his duty waver,
Since in so high a public place he gave her
As parliament, and hath the edict sealed,
Which for his son could scarcely be repealed.

81

"And I'm afraid my lady 'twould disturb
If by such violence I should her claim;
The tongue of the world is very hard to curb,
And it might seem a slander on her name,
And I would rather die than cause her shame.
Her honor I hold dearer in my sight
Than anything beneath the heavens bright.

82

"All hope is lost, for aught that I can see!
For true it is, that as her faithful knight,
Her honor still my first concern must be;
Such service do I owe to her of right.
Desire and Reason in me ever fight;
Desire insists, Let force control the day,
But Reason counsels quite the other way!"

83

He wept as though his tears would never cease,
And said, "Alas, what course shall I pursue?
For all the while I feel my love increase,
And hope grow less and less, as it must do,
Since my distress itself doth still renew.
O heart, why will you not break in my breast!
Alas, a lover's heart hath seldom rest!"

84

"You may," said Pandar, "as far as I'm concerned,
Let your heart break! But were I in so deep,
A man like you, I'd take her, if it turned
The whole town topsy-turvy in a heap.
The more they talked, the stiller you could keep,
And to their hearts' content, just let them
shout,

For nine days always wears a wonder out.

85

"Don't get involved in reasonings too deep
Or precious. Help yourself the first of all!
If some must weep, then let the others weep!
You two are one, you need no aid to call;
Get up, she shall not go, whate'er befall!
For some small blame 'tis better to incur,
Than die here like a gnat and never stir.

86

"Don't call it force, but follow my advice;
Firm action I would call it at the most.
No doubt she'd think that you were over-nice
To let them send her to the Grecian host.
Remember, too, it is no idle boast
That fortune helps the brave in his emprise,
But from the coward wretch she ever flies.

87
 "Your lady may at first a little grieve,
 But peace with her you easily can make.
 To tell the truth, I can't at all believe
 That she the very least offence will take.
 Why then should you in fear and trembling quake?
 You know what Paris did—follow your brother;
 What's good for one, is good, too, for another.

88
 "And Troilus, this also here I swear,
 If Cressida, as we indeed suppose,
 An equal love and faith with you doth share,
 She'll thank you if she can escape her foes,
 No matter what disturbance from it grows;
 But on the other hand, if she abandons you,
 Then she is false and fickle, through and through.

89
 "Take courage then, recall you are a knight!
 True love, you know, hath no regard for law.
 Exhibit now your valor and your might,
 And stand not here in trembling and in awe,
 While griefs and fears your very vitals gnaw.
 Despise the world and all the planets seven,
 And if you die a martyr, go to heaven!

90
 "And for your aid, I'll faithfully stand by,
 With all my kin, throughout the country round,
 Though on the street like dogs we all shall lie,
 Stricken with many a wide and bloody wound;
 Whatever falls, your friend I shall be found.
 But if you'd rather die here like a wretch,
 Farewell, to hell the devil may you fetch!"

91
 These vigorous words made Troilus revive;
 "Enough," he cried, "I give my full assent.
 You need no further urge me on, or strive
 To speak in terms so stern and vehement.
 For here I tell you fully my intent:
 Abduct her, that is what I mean to do,
 But only so if she consents thereto."

92
 "Let that," said Pandar, "be as be it may!
 Have you inquiries of her ever made?"
 And Troilus could answer naught but "Nay."
 "Well, then," said Pandar, "why are you afraid?
 You don't know if she'd be at all dismayed
 To be abducted! Why then all this fear,
 Unless some angel told it in your ear?"

93
 "Get up, pretend that nothing has occurred,
 And wash your face, and on the king attend;
 He'll wonder why from you he hasn't heard.
 Yourself from all surmise you must defend,
 Or unexpected he may sometime send
 For you. In short, be glad, my brother dear,
 You really haven't anything to fear.

94
 "For I shall try to bring it so about,
 Tonight you'll see your lady in some way,
 And then you two can thresh the whole thing out,
 And you can tell from what she has to say,
 Just what part each of you must plan and play,

87
 And though thy lady wolde a litel hir greve,
 Thou shalt thy pees ful wel here-after make,
 But as for me, certayn, I can not leve
 That she wolde it as now for yvel take.
 Why sholde than for ferd thyn herte quake?
 Think eek how Paris hath, that is thy brother,
 A love; and why shaltow not have another?

88
 And Troilus, o thing I dar thee swere,
 That if Criseyde, whiche that is thy leef,
 Now loveth thee as wel as thou dost here,
 God helpe me so, she nil not take a-greef,
 Though thou do bote a-noon in this mischeef.
 And if she wilneth fro thee for to passe,
 Thanne is she fals; so love hir wel the lasse.

89
 For-thy tak herte, and thenk, right as a knight,
 Thourgh love is broken alday every lawe.
 Kyth now sumwhat thy corage and thy might,
 Have mercy on thy-self, for any awe.
 Lat not this wrecched wo thin herte gnawe,
 But manly set the world on sixe and seven;e;
 And, if thou deye a martir, go to hevене.

90
 I wol my-self be with thee at this dede,
 Though ich and al my kin, up-on a stounde,
 Shulle in a strete as dogges ligen dede,
 Thourgh-girt with many a wyd and bloddy wounde.
 In every cas I wol a freend be founde.
 And if thee list here sterven as a wrecche,
 A-dieu, the devel spede him that it recche!"

91
 This Troilus gan with tho wordes quiken,
 And seyde, "freend, graunt mercy, ich assente;
 But certaynly thou mayst not me so priken,
 Ne payne noon ne may me so tormente,
 That, for no cas, it is not myn entente,
 At shorte wordes, though I dyen sholde,
 To ravisshe hir, but-if hir-self it wolde."

92
 "Why, so mene I," quod Pandarus, "al this day.
 But tel me than, hastow hir wel assayed,
 That sorwest thus?" And he answerde, "nay."
 "Wher-of artow," quod Pandare, "than a-mayed,
 That nost not that she wol ben yvel apayed
 To ravisshe hir, sin thou hast not ben there,
 But-if that Jove tolde it in thyen ere?"

93
 For-thy rys up, as nought ne were, anoon,
 And wash thy face, and to the king thou wende,
 Or he may wondren whider thou art goon.
 Thou most with wisdom him and othere blende;
 Or, up-on cas, he may after thee sende
 Er thou be war; and shortly, brother dere,
 Be glad, and lat me werke in this matere.

94
 For I shal shape it so, that sikerly
 Thou shalt this night som tyme, in som manere,
 Com speke with thy lady prevely,
 And by hir wordes eek, and by hir chere,
 Thou shalt ful sone aparcyve and wel here

Al hir entente, and in this cas the beste;
And fare now wel, for in this point I reste."

95

The swifte Fame, whiche that false thinges
Egal reporteth lyk the thinges trewe,
Was thorough-out Troye y-fled with preste winges
Fro man to man, and made this tale al newe,
How Calchas doughter, with hir brighte hewe,
At parlement, with-oute wordes more,
I-graunted was in chaunge of Antenore.

96

The whiche tale anon-right as Criseyde
Had herd, she which that of hir fader roughte,
As in this cas, right nought, ne whanne he deyde,
Ful bisily to Juppiter bisoughte
Yeve him mischaunce that this tretis broughte.
But shortly, lest thise tales sothe were,
She dorste at no wight asken it, for fere;

97

As she that hadde hir herte and al hir minde
On Troilus y-set so wonder faste,
That al this world ne mighte hir love unbinde,
Ne Troilus out of hir herte caste;
She wol ben his, whyl that hir lyf may laste.
And thus she brenneth bothe in love and drede,
So that she niste what was best to rede.

98

But as men seen in tounce, and al aboute,
That wommen usen frendes to visyte,
So to Criseyde of wommen com a route
For pitous joye, and wenden hir delyte;
And with hir tales, dere y-nough a myte,
These women, whiche that in the cite dwelle,
They sette hem down, and seyde as I shal telle.

99

Quod first that oon, "I am glad, trewely,
By-cause of yow, that shal your fader see."
A-nother seyde, "y-wis, so nam not I;
For al to litel hath she with us be."
Quod tho the thridde, "I hope, y-wis, that she
Shal bringen us the pees on every syde,
That, whan she gooth, almighty god hir gyde!"

100

Tho wordes and tho wommannisshe thinges,
She herde hem right as though she thennes were;
For, god it wot, hir herte on other thing is,
Although the body sat among hem there.
Hir advertence is alway
elles-where;

For Troilus ful faste hir soule soughte;
With-uten word, alway on him she thoughte.

101

Thise women, that thus wenden hir to plese,
Aboute nought gonne alle hir tales spende;
Swich vanitee ne can don hir non ese,
As she that, al this mene while, brende
Of other passioun than that they wende,
So that she felte almost hir herte dye
For wo, and wery of that companye.

102

For which no lenger mighte she restreyn
Hir teres, so they gonnen up to welle,

And so decide what action seems the best.
Farewell, for at this point I pause and rest."

95

Swift Rumor, which repeateth untrue thinges
With equal speed as she repeateth true,
Had flown through Troy, with ever-ready wings,
From man to man, to tell this marvel new,
How Calchas' daughter, fair and bright of hue,
By sentence passed in highest parliament,
Forth to her ancient father should be sent.

96

To Cressida arrived this dreadful news,
But on her father she had little thought,
Except he could go hang when he might choose;
And Jupiter she earnestly besought
To curse the hour which this bad luck had brought;
But if the news that thus came to her ear
Were true or not, she dared not ask for fear.

97

For she had set her heart and mind
On Troilus long since, so firm and fast,
That all the world her love might not unbind,
Or Troilus from out her bosom cast,
For she was his, as long as life shall last.
And thus distracted both by love and terror,
She scarce could tell the truth apart from error.

98

It is the common custom in each land
For ladies to indulge in calls polite,
And now there came to Cressida a band,
Both glad and sad, as seemed to them but right;
And with their gossipings unwelcome quite,
These ladies, who in hapless Troy did dwell,
They sat them down and said as I shall tell.

99

"O, I'm so glad," the one of them doth cry,
"That now your father you so soon shall see!"
Another said, "Indeed, so am not I,
For all too little now in Troy she'll be!"
"Indeed I hope," the third one said, "that she
Shall bring us happy peace on every side,
And when she goes, may heaven be her guide!"

100

These words, and other female blandishments,
She hears, but in her thoughts they have no share;
Another picture quite her heart presents,
Although in body she is sitting there.
God knows her thought and mind are placed
elsewhere,
And Troilus alone her spirit sought,
For whom she had no words, but all her thought.

101

These ladies with no wish but how to please,
Their breath in idle gossiping expend,
Wherein poor Cressida can find no ease,
Nor with her burning heart thereto attend
Scarce long enough a courteous ear to lend;
She felt that she was ready to expire,
With all this talk that doth her bore and tire.

102

And in the end, she might no more restrain
Her tears, for upward they began to well

As signs of all the inward bitter pain
In which her wretched spirit now must dwell,
Reflecting from what heaven to what hell
She fallen was, since she hath lost the joy
That she had known with Troilus in Troy.

103

And all the silly fools that sat about
Supposed she wept and sighed so long and sore,
Because from Troy she soon must now set out,
And their society enjoy no more!
And all the ladies there, almost a score,
They saw her weep, and loved her tender heart,
And in the weeping all of them took part.

104

And all endeavored with her to condole,
But little knew the things of which she thought,
Or what alone could cheer her and console;
And to be glad they often her besought,
Which to her grief such mitigation brought
As for a splitting headache one might feel
If one were kindly rubbed upon the heel.

105

When they had said all they could think to say,
They took their leave and home departed all,
And Cressida, oppressed with sad dismay,
Into her chamber went from out the hall,
And like one dead, upon her bed doth fall,
Borne down by all this heavy weight of grief,
From which she saw no prospect of relief.

106

The bitter tears from out her eyes down pour,
Like April showers falling full and fast;
Her breast so white she beat, and evermore
She called on death to take her at the last,
Such heavy sorrow now her soul harassed,
Her lover lost, who was her only hope,
Forlorn in black despair so left to grope.

107

Her rippling hair, as golden as the sun,
She tore, and wrung her hands with fingers small,
But no relief from sorrow thus she won,
Nor yet from death, on whom she oft doth call;
Her hue so bright lay hidden neath a pall,
In testimony of this hard restraint,
And thus with sobs she uttered this sad plaint:

108

"Alas, sent forth from out my home and nation,
I, woful wretch, bereft of all delight,
And born beneath a cursed constellation,
Must now depart from my beloved's sight!
Woe worth the day, and specially the night,
When first I saw him with my eyes so plain,
Who causes me, as I cause him, such pain!

109

"What shall he do? And what indeed shall I?
How shall I now my life anew begin?
And O, dear heart, for whom I'd gladly die,
Who shall relieve the sorrow you are in?
O Calchas, father, thine is all this sin!
I curse the day my mother dear, Argive,
Brought me into this wretched world
alive!

That yeven signes of the bitter payne
In whiche hir spirit was, and moste dwelle;
Remembring hir, fro heven unto which helle
She fallen was, sith she forgoth the sighte
Of Troilus, and sorrowfully she sighte.

103

And thilke foles sittinge hir aboute
Wenden, that she wepte and syked sore
By-cause that she sholde out of that route
Depart, and never pleye with hem more.
And they that hadde y-knowen hir of yore
Seye hir so wepe, and thoughte it kindenesse,
And eche of hem wepte eek for hir distresse;

104

And bisily they gonnen hir conforten
Of thing, god wot, on which she litel thoughte;
And with hir tales wenden hir disporten,
And to be glad they often hir bisoughte.
But swich an ese ther-with they hir wroughte
Right as a man is esed for to fele,
For ache of heed, to clawen him on his hele!

105

But after al this nyce vanitee
They took hir leve, and hoom they wenten alle.
Crisseyde, ful of sorweful pitee,
In-to hir chaumbre up wente out of the halle,
And on hir bed she gan for deed to falle,
In purpos never thennes for to ryse;
And thus she wroughte, as I shal yow devyse.

106

Therwith the teres from hir eyen two
Doun fille, as shour in Aperill, ful swythe;
Hir whyte brest she bet, and for the wo
After the deeth she cryed a thousand sythe,
Sin he that wont hir wo was for to lythe,
She mot for-goon; for which disaventure
She held hir-self a forlost creature.

107

Hir ounded heer, that sonnish was of hewe,
She rente, and eek hir fingres longe and smale
She wrong ful ofte, and bad god on hir rewe,
And with the deeth to doon bote on hir bale.
Hir hewe, whylom bright, that tho was pale,
Bar witnes of hir wo and hir constreynte;
And thus she spak, sobbinge, in hir compleynte:

108

"Alas!" quod she, "out of this regioun
I, woful wrecche and infortunat wight,
And born in corsed constellacioun,
Mot goon, and thus departen fro my knight;
Wo worth, alas! that ilke dayes light
On which I saw him first with eyen tweyne,
That causeth me, and I him, al this payne!"

109

She seyde, "how shal he doon, and I also?
How sholde I live, if that I from him twinne?
O dere herte eek, that I love so,
Who shal that sorwe sleen that ye ben inne?
O Calkas, fader, thyn be al this sinne!
O moder myn, that cleped were Argive,
Wo worth that day that thou me bere on
lyve!

110

To what fyn sholde I live and sorwen thus?
 How sholde a fish with-oute water dure?
 What is Criseyde worth, from Troilus?
 How sholde a plaunte or lyves creature
 Live, with-oute his kinde noriture?
 For which ful oft a by-word here I seye,
 That, 'rotelees, mot grene sone deye.'

111

I shal don thus, sin neither swerd ne darte
 Dar I non handle, for the crueltee,
 That ilke day that I from yow departe,
 If sorwe of that nil not my bane be,
 Than shal no mete or drinke come in me
 Til I my soule out of my breste unshethe;
 And thus my-selven wol I do to dethe.

112

And, Troilus, my clothes everichoon
 Shul blake been, in tokeninge, herte swete,
 That I am as out of this world agoon,
 That wont was yow to setten in quiete;
 And of myn ordre, ay til deeth me mete,
 The observaunce ever, in your absence,
 Shal sorwe been, compleynte, and abstinence.

113

Myn herte and eek the woful goost ther-inne
 Biquethe I, with your spirit to compleyne
 Eternally, for they shul never twinne.
 For though in erthe y-twinne be we tweyne,
 Yet in the feld of pitee, out of peyne,
 That hight Elysos, shul we been y-fere,
 As Orpheus and Erudice his fere.

114

Thus herte myn, for Antenor, allas!
 I sone shal be chaunged, as I wene.
 But how shul ye don in this sorwful cas,
 How shal your tendre herte this sustene?
 But herte myn, for-yet this sorwe and tene,
 And me also; for, soothly for to seye,
 So ye wel fare, I recche not to deye."

115

How mighte it ever y-red ben or y-songe,
 The pleynte that she made in hir tongesse?
 I noot; but, as for me, my litel tonge,
 If I discreven wolde hir hevinesse,
 It sholde make hir sorwe seme lesse
 Than that it was, and childishly deface
 Hir heigh compleynte, and therfore I it pace.

116

Pandare, which that sent from Troilus
 Was to Criseyde, as ye han herd devyse,
 That for the beste it was accorded thus,
 And he ful glad to doon him that serveye,
 Un-to Criseyde, in a ful secree wyse,
 Ther-as she lay in torment and in rage,
 Com hir to telle al hoolly his message.

117

And fond that she hir-selven gan to trete
 Ful pitously; for with hir salte
 teres
 Hir brest, hir face y-bathed was ful wete;
 The mighty tresses of hir sonnish heres,

110

"To what end should I live and sorrow thus?
 Shall fishes without water long endure?
 What worth is Cressida if Troilus
 Is gone? For must not every plant procure
 Its proper food, existence to assure?
 Many a time I've heard the old wives say,
 'Withdrawn from earth, things green all pass away.'

111

"And now, since either sword or pointed dart
 Would be a rather cruel end for me,
 The day that I from Troilus depart,
 If simple grief my slayer will not be,
 From that day on, all food and drink I'll flee,
 Until my soul shall breathe its final breath,
 Starvation bringing me a welcome death.

112

"And Troilus, let me be dressed in black,
 In tokening, my precious sweetheart dear,
 That I am gone and never can come back,
 Who once was all your consolation here.
 And so I'll live, till I lie on my bier,
 As one from whom joy doth itself absent,
 In sorrow, solitude and deep lament.

113

"My heart and soul and all that dwells therein,
 Bequeathe I with your spirit to remain
 Eternally, for each is other's twin.
 And though on earth we parted were in twain,
 Yet in that blessed field, all freed from pain,
 Where Pluto rules, we shall together be,
 As Orpheus was with his Eurydice.

114

"Thus, sweetheart, by a stern decree of state,
 Troy must I leave and with the Greeks abide,
 And how canst thou survive this dreadful fate?
 Why should this grief your tender heart betide?
 But sweetheart mine, forget this woe so wide,
 And me as well! For truly I can say,
 If you are happy, let me go my way!"

115

Who might, as I cannot, the tale have sung
 Which plaintively she made of her distress?
 But as for me and for my feeble tongue,
 In that attempt, I'd have such slight success
 'Twould make her sorrows seem far less
 Than they should seem, and weakly would I show
 Her high lament, and so I let it go.

116

As emissary sent by Troilus
 To Cressida, as you have heard me say,
 And as before it was agreed on thus,
 The first step in the plans that they would lay,
 Came Pandar now, by some quite secret way,
 Prepared his message wholly to explain
 To her reclined upon her couch of pain.

117

Poor Cressida, she was a woful sight,
 Her breasts tear-stained with falling drops
 that made
 Their way unheeded down her cheeks so white!
 Her golden hair in bright disorder strayed

About her ears, escaped from out its braid,
Undoubted signal of the martyrdom
Of death, which none too soon for her may come.

118

At sight of him, she strove for shame anon
Her tearful face behind her arms to hide,
At which good Pandar was so woe-begone,
He scarcely in the chamber might abide,
At her sad look he was so horrified;
And now her flood of woe broke out anew
And by release a thousandfold it grew.

119

Then thus with words to sorrow she gave voice:
"My uncle Pandar, cause of causes first
That in the light of love I did rejoice,
My joy to sudden woe is now reversed!
Shouldst thou be welcomed here or be accursed,
Who thus hast guided me in love's emprise,
To end, alas, in this so wretched wise!

120

"Must love then end in woe? Yes, or men lie,
And every worldly joy, it seems to me,
For grief the place of joy must occupy!
And he who doubts if such the end must be,
Let him behold my grievous fate and see
How I from bad must ever pass to worse,
And thus am led my hateful birth to curse.

121

"Who looks at me, beholdeth sorrows all,
All pain, all torture, woe and all distress;
I have no need on other harms to call,
As anguish, languor, cruel bitterness,
Discomfort, dread, and madness more and less;
Methinks from heaven above the tears must rain
In pity for my harsh and cruel pain."

122

"I grant, dear lady, that your lot is hard,"
Said Pandar, "yet what do you plan to do?
For to yourself you should have more regard,
And not some vain and useless course pursue;
But now I want to say a word or two—
A message I must briefly now present
From Troilus, whose heart with pain is rent."

123

Her face she turned to him, so deathly pale,
It was a most distressing sight to see.
"Alas," she said, "can words for aught avail?
What can my precious sweetheart say to me
Since we are lost through all eternity?
Will he have news of all the tears I've shed?
They are enough, at least that can be said."

124

Her grief exacts from her a dreadful price,
She looks like one to her last bier consigned;
Her face, the image once of Paradise,
Is changed completely to another kind.
The play, the laughter men were wont to find
In her, and all her varied wit renewed,
Have fled, and left her mute in solitude.

125

About her eyes there stands a purple ring,
A silent token of her grief and pain,

Unbroyden, hangen al aboute hir cres;
Which yaf him verray signal of martyre
Of deeth, which that hir herte gan desyre.

118

Whan she him saw, she gan for sorwe anoon
Hir tery face a-twixe hir armes hyde,
For which this Pandare is so wo bi-goon,
That in the hous he mighte unneth e abyde,
As he that pittee felte on every syde.
For if Criseyde hadde erst compleyned sore,
Tho gan she pleyne a thousand tymes more.

119

And in hir aspre pleynte than she seyde,
"Pandare first of joyes mo than two
Was cause causinge un-to me, Criseyde,
That now transmuwed been in cruel wo.
Wher shal I seye to yow 'welcome' or no,
That alderfirst me broughte in-to servyse
Of love, allas! that endeth in swich wyse?

120

Endeth than love in wo? Ye, or men lyeth!
And alle worldly blisse, as thinketh me,
The ende of blisse ay sorwe it occupyeth;
And who-so troweth not that it so be,
Lat him upon me, woful wrecche, y-see,
That my-self hate, and ay my birthe acorse,
Feling e alwey, fro wikke I go to worse.

121

Who-so me seeth, he seeth sorwe al at ones,
Payne, torment, pleynte, wo, distresse.
Out of my woful body harm ther noon is,
As anguish, langour, cruel bitternesse,
A-noy, smert, drede, fury, and eek siknesse.
I trowe, y-wis, from hevener teres reyne,
For pittee of myn aspre and cruel payne!"

122

"And thou, my suster, ful of discomfort,"
Quod Pandarus, "what thenkestow to do?
Why ne hastow to thy-selven som resport,
Why woltow thus thy-selve, allas, for-do?
Leef al this wrecch and tak now hede to
That I shal seyn, and herkne, of good entente,
This, which by me thy Troilus thee sente."

123

Torned hir tho Criseyde, a wo makinge
So greet that it a deeth was for to see:—
"Allas!" quod she, "what wordes may ye bringe?
What wol my dère herte seyn to me,
Which that I drede never-mo to see?
Wol he have pleynte or teres, er I wende?
I have y-nowe, if he ther-after sende!"

124

She was right swich to seen in hir visage
As is that wight that men on bere binde;
Hir face, lyk of Paradys the image,
Was al y-changed in another kinde.
The pleye, the laughtre men was wont to finde
In hir, and eek hir joyes everychone,
Ben fled, and thus lyth now Criseyde allone.

125

About e hir eyen two a purple ring
Bi-trent, in sothfast tokninge of hir payne,

That to biholde it was a dedly thing,
For which Pandare mighte not restreyne
The teres form his eyen for to reyne.
But natheless, as he best mighte, he seyde
From Troilus thise wordes to Criseyde.

126

"Lo, nece, I trowe ye han herd al how
The king, with othere lordes, for the beste,
Hath mad eschaunge of Antenor and yow,
That cause is of this sorwe and this unreste.
But how this cas doth Troilus moleste,
That may non erthely mannes tonge seye;
For verray wo his wit is al aweye.

127

For which we han so sorwed, he and I,
That in-to litel bothe it hadde us slawe;
But thurgh my conseil this day, fynally,
He somwhat is fro weping now withdrawe.
And semeth me that he desyreth fawe
With yow to been al night, for to devyse
Remede in this, if ther were any wyse.

128

This, short and pleyne, th'effect of my message,
As ferforth as my wit can comprehende.
For ye, that been of torment in swich rage,
May to no long prologe as now entende;
And her-upon ye may answer he sende.
And, for the love of god, my nece dere,
So leef this wo er Troilus be here."

129

"Gret is my wo," quod she, and sighte sore,
As she that feleth dedly sharp distresse;
"But yet to me his sorwe is muchel more,
That love him bet than he him-self, I gesse.
Allas! for me hath he swich hevynesse?
Can he for me so pitously compleyne?
Y-wis, this sorwe doubleth al my peyne.

130

Grevous to me, god wot, is for to twinne,"
Quod she, "but yet it hardere is to me
To seen that sorwe which that he is inne;
For wel wot I, it wol my bane be;
And deye I wol in certayn," tho quod she;
"But bidde him come, er deeth, that thus me thre-
teth,
Dryve out that goost, which in myn herte beteth."

131

Thise wordes seyde, she on hir armes two
Fil gruf, and gan to wepe pitously.
Quod Pandarus, "allas! why do ye so,
Syn wel ye wot the tyme is faste by,
That he shal come? Arys up hastily,
That he yow nat biwopen thus ne finde,
But ye wol han him wood out of his minde!

132

For wiste he that ye ferde in this manere,
He wolde him-selve slee; and if I wende
To han this fare, he sholde not come here
For al the good that Pryam may despende.
For to what fyn he wolde anoon pretende,
That knowe I wel; and for-thy yet I seye,
So leef this sorwe, or platly he wol deye.

Wherein to gaze was a distressing thing,
And Pandar was unable to restrain
His tears, which from his eyes began to rain;
But still things couldn't last forever thus,
And soon he spoke to her for Troilus:

126

"You know, dear niece, that it is sadly true,
The king and other lords have thought it best
To take Antenor in exchange for you,
From which comes all this woe and this unrest;
And how all this doth Troilus molest,
It is beyond the power of human tongue
To tell, such deadly grief his heart hath wrung.

127

"For this we both have sorrowed, he and I,
And both have felt the pangs of mortal pain,
But through my counsel he at length doth try
Somewhat from useless weeping to abstain;
And now, it seems, that Troilus would fain
Be all night with you in convenient wise,
Some remedy to plan and to devise.

128

"Of this I've come you briefly to inform,
If I his message rightly comprehend,
And you, who now indulge in such a storm
Of grief, may wisely to his words attend,
And back to him a proper answer send;
But let me ask above all things, my dear,
Leave off these tears ere Troilus comes here."

129

"Great is my grief," she said, still sighing sore,
As one who felt the pangs of dire distress,
"Yet his great sorrow grieves me even more,
And by comparison, mine seems the less.
Alas, that love and woe together press
Upon his heart, where joy cannot remain!
The grief he feels doth double all my pain.

130

"God knows 'tis hard from him to separate,
But harder yet than this it is to know
That he is suffering in such sorrow great!
The thought alone the chill of death doth blow
Upon my heart and sorrows new there grow.
Then bid him come, or in his stead let
death

Drive out my soul and its last lingering breath!"

131

Burying her face within her arms, she gave
Herself again to tears most copiously.
"O now," said Pandar, "why can't you behave
More sensibly? A moment or two and he
Will come, and what a sight then will he see?
I would not have him find you thus in tears
'Twould add too much to all his other fears.

132

"For if he knew you took things in this way,
He'd kill himself, and so he must not know;
I'd never let him come here, night or day,
For all the wealth that Priam could bestow!
Were he here now, I know how things would go!
To what I say, I beg you then attend,
These tears and cries you must bring to an end.

133

"Strive rather now his sorrow to relieve
And not to magnify it, dearest niece;
Hard measures will not joy retrieve,
But soft and gentle ways will bring you peace.
What use are tears, though tears should never cease,
And you were drowned in them? Far better sure
Than tears are all the happy means of cure.

134

"Now, my advice is, when your plans are made,
Since you are wise and both of one assent,
Arrange for your departure to evade;
Or quick return, if that you can't prevent.
Women do best without long argument,
Let's see now what your woman's wit avails,
And I'll be there to help you when it fails."

135

"Go then," said Cressida, "and truly I
Shall do my best all weeping to restrain
While he is here, and earnestly shall try
To make him glad, and free him of his pain,
Through all his heart in every coursing vein.
If any salve for him I can discover,
I shall be found not lacking to my lover."

136

Then Pandar went, and Troilus he sought,
And found him in a temple all alone,
Weary of life and much in mind distraught,
And there he prayed and made his bitter moan,
And of his prayers, this was the constant tone,
That end of life might bring him end of grief,
For well he thought this was his sole relief.

137

And in his mind, the simple truth to tell,
He was so fallen in despair that day,
He thought no longer in this world to dwell,
And argued of it in the following way:
"I am," he said, "but done for, so to say;
For all that comes, comes by necessity,
Thus to be done for is my destiny.

138

"I must believe and cannot other choose,
That Providence, in its divine foresight,
Hath known that Cressida I once must lose,
Since God sees everything from heaven's height
And plans things as he thinks both best and right,
According to their merits in rotation,
As was arranged for by predestination.

139

"But still I don't quite know what to believe!
For there have been great scholars, many a one,
Who say that destined fate we must receive,
Yet others prove that this need not be done,
And that free choice hath been denied to none.
Alack, so sly they are, these scholars old,
I can't make out what doctrine I should hold!

140

"For some declare, what God perceives before,
(And God of course can never be misled)
All that must be, though men may it deplore,
Because foreordination hath so said;
Wherefore the thought still lingers in my head,

133

And shapeth yow his sorwe for to abregge,
And nought encesse, leve nece swete;
Beth rather to him cause of flat than egge,
And with som wysdom ye his sorwes bete.
What helpeth is to wepen ful a strete,
Or though ye bothe in salte dreynete?
Bet is a tyme of cure ay than of pleynte.

134

I mene thus; whan I him hider bringe,
Sin ye ben wysc, and bothe of oon assent,
So shapeth how distourbe your goinge.
Or come ayen, sone after ye be went.
Wommen ben wyse in short avysement;
And lat sen how your wit shal now awayle;
And what that I may helpe, it shal not fayle."

135

"Go," quod Criseyde, "and uncle, trewely,
I shal don al my might, me to restreyn
From weping in his sight, and bisily,
Him for to glade, I shal don al my peyne,
And in myn herte seken every veyne;
If to this soor ther may be founden salve,
It shal not lakken, certain, on myn halve."

136

Goth Pandarus, and Troilus he soughte,
Til in a temple he fond him allone,
As he that of his lyf no lenger roughte;
But to the pitouse goddes everichone
Ful tendrely he preyde, and made his mone,
To doon him sone out of this world to pace;
For wel he thoughte ther was non other grace.

137

And shortly, al the sothe for to seye,
He was so fallen in despeyr that day,
That outrely he shoop him for to deye.
For right thus was his argument alway:
He seyde, he nas but loren, waylawey!
"For al that comth, comth by necessitee;
Thus to be lorn, it is my destinee.

138

For certaynly, this wot I wel," he seyde,
"That for-sight of divyne purveyaunce
Hath seyn alwey me to for-gon Criseyde,
Sin god seeth every thing, out of doutaunce,
And hem desponeth, though his ordernaunce,
In hir merytes sothly for to be,
As they shul comen by predestinee.

139

But natheles, allas! whom shal I leve?
For ther ben grete clerkes many oon,
That destinee thorough argumentes preve;
And som men seyn that nedely ther is noon;
But that free chois is yeven us everichoon.
O, welaway! so sleye arn clerkes olde,
That I not whos opinon I may holde.

140

For som men seyn, if god seth al biforn,
Ne god may not deceyved ben, pardee,
Than moot it fallen, though men hadde it sworn,
That purveyaunce hath seyn bifore to be.
Wherfor I seye, that from eterne if he

Hath wist biforn our thought eek as our dede,
We have no free chois, as these clerkes rede.

141

For other thought nor other dede also
Might never be, but swich as purveyaunce,
Which may not ben deceived never-mo,
Hath feled biforn, with-outen ignoraunce.
For if ther mighte been a variaunce
To wrythen out fro goddes purveyinge,
Ther nere no prescience of thing cominge;

142

But it were rather an opinioun
Uncerteyn, and no stedfast forseinge;
And certes, that were an abusoun,
That god shuld han no parfit cleer witinge
More than we men that han doutous weninge.
But swich an errour up-on god to gesse
Were fals and foul, and wikked corsednesse.

143

Eek this is an opinioun of somme
That han hir top ful heighe and smothe y-shore;
They seyn right thus, that thing is not to come
For that the prescience hath seyn bfore
That it shal come; but they seyn, that therfore
That it shal come, therfore the purveyaunce
Wot it biforn with-outen ignoraunce;

144

And in this manere this necessitee
Retorneth in his part contrarie agayn.
For needfully bihoveth it not to be
That thilke thinges fallen in certayn
That ben purveyed; but nedely, as they seyn,
Bihoveth it that thinges, whiche that falle,
That they in certayn ben purveyed alle.

145

I mene as though I laboured me in this,
To enqueren which thing cause of which thing be;
As whether that the prescience of god is
The certayn cause of the necessitee
Of thinges that to comen been, pardee;
Or if necessitee of thing cominge
Be cause certeyn of the purveyinge.

146

But now ne enforce I me nat in shewing
How the ordre of causes stant; but wel wot I,
That it bihoveth that the bifallinge
Of thinges wist biforen certeynly
Be necessarie, al seme it not ther-by
That prescience put falling necessaire
To thing to come, al falle it foule or faire.

147

For if ther sit a man yond on a see,
Than by necessitee bihoveth it
That, certes, thyn opinioun soth be,
That wenest or conjectest that he sit;
And farther-over now ayenward yit,
Lo, right so it is of the part contrarie,
As thus; (now herkne, for I wol not tarie):

148

I seye, that if the opinioun of thee
Be sooth, for that he sit, than seye I this,
That he mot sitten by necessitee;

If God foreknows the thought and act of each
Of us, we have no choice, as scholars preach.

141

"For neither thought nor deed might ever be,
Or any thing, unless foreordination,
In which there may be no uncertainty,
Perceives it without shade of variation;
For if there were the slightest hesitation
Or any slip in God's foreordering,
Foreknowledge then were not a certain thing,

142

"But rather one would call it expectation,
Unsteadfast, not foreknowledge absolute;
And that, indeed, were an abomination,
For God's foreknowledge thus to substitute
Imperfect human doubts and mere repute;
In God such human error to imply
Were false and foul and cursed treason high.

143

"Then there is this opinion held by some.
Whose tonsured foreheads quite imposing shine;
They say whatever happens does not come
Because foreknowledge sees with fixed design
That come it must, but rather they incline
To say that come it will, and reason so,
That such foreknowledge doth but merely know.

144

"But there resides here a perplexity
That in some proper way must be explained,
That things that happen do not have to be
Merely because they may be foreordained;
Yet still this truth at least must be maintained,
That all the things that ever shall befall,
Must surely be ordained, both one and all.

145

"You see that I am trying to find out
Just what is cause and what is consequence.
Is God's foreknowledge cause beyond a doubt
As necessary in his plan prepense
Of all the human things we call events,
Or does necessity in them reside
And thus ordaining cause for them provide?

146

"I must confess I can't pretend to show
Just how the reasons stand, but this I'll say,
That every thing that happens, must do so,
And must have been foreknown in such a way
That made it necessary, though it may
Be that foreknowledge did not so declare
That it must happen, be it foul or fair.

147

"But if a man is sitting on a chair,
Then this necessity you can't evade,
That true it is that he is sitting there,
And thus a truthful judgment you have made;
And furthermore against this may be laid
A supplement to this and its contrary,
As thus—pray heed, and just a moment tarry.

148

"I say if that opinion which you hold
That he sits there is true, then furthermore
He must be sitting there, as I have told;

There's thus necessity on either score,
That he must sit, as we agreed before,
And you must think he does, and so say I,
Necessity on both of you doth lie.

149

"But you may urge, this man, he does not sit
Because your judgment on this may be true,
But rather, since he sat ere you thought it,
Your judgment from his sitting doth ensue;
But I say, though your judgment may be due
To his first sitting there, necessity
To judge and sit distributed must be.

150

"These arguments I think I may advance,
And make apply, for so it seems to me,
To God's foreknowledge and foreordinance,
In all the happenings that come to be.
And by these arguments you well may see,
That all the things that on the earth befall,
By plain necessity they happen all.

151

"Though things to come must all be foreordained,
Their cause therein you cannot simply find,
For these two points apart must be maintained,
But yet foreordinance cannot be blind,
And God must foreordain with truthful mind,
Or else whatever foreordained should be,
Would come to pass through blind necessity.

152

"But no more arguments I need display
To show that free choice is an idle dream.
Yet this, however, 'tis quite false to say,
That temporal things one should esteem
As cause of God's foreknowledge aye supreme;
From such opinion only errors grow,
That things that happen cause him to foreknow.

153

"I must suppose then, had I such a thought,
That God ordains each thing that is to come
Because it is to come, and for else naught!
Why, then, I might believe things, all and some,
From ages past, whate'er they issued from,
Are cause of God's high power that before
Hath known all things and nothing doth ignore!

154

"I have just one more point to add hereto,
That when I know that there exists a thing,
I know my knowing of that thing is true,
And so, whatever time to pass shall bring,
Those things I know must come; the happening
Of things foreknown ere their appointed hour,
Can be prevented by no human power.

155

"Almighty Jove, supreme upon thy throne,
O thou who knowst all things false and true,
In pity let me perish here alone,
Or Cressida and me no more pursue
With woe!" He paused, and scarcely was he through
With this request, when Pandar doth appear
Within the door, and speaks as you shall hear.

156

"Almighty Jove," he echoed, "on thy throne,

And thus necessitee in either is.
For in him nede of sitting is, y-wis,
And in thee nede of sooth; and thus, forsothe,
Ther moot necessitee ben in yow bothe.

149

But thou mayst seyn, the man sit not therfore,
That thyn opinion of sitting soth is;
But rather, for the man sit ther bifore,
Therefore is thyn opinion sooth, y-wis.
And I seye, though the cause of sooth of this
Comth of his sitting, yet necessitee
Is entrechaunged, bothe in him and thee.

150

Thus on this same wyse, out of doutaunce,
I may wel maken, as it semeth me,
My resoninge of goddes purveyaunce,
And of the thinges that to comen be;
By whiche reson men may wel y-see,
That thilke thinges that in erthe falle,
That by necessitee they comen alle.

151

For al-though that, for thing shal come, y-wis,
Therefore is it purveyed, certaynly,
Nat that it comth for it purveyed is:
Yet natheles, bihoveth it nedfully,
That thing to come be purveyed, trewely;
Or elles, thinges that purveyed be,
That they bityden by necessitee.

152

And this suffyseth right y-now, certeyn,
For to destroye our free chois every del.—
But now is this abusion to seyn,
That fallinge of the thinges temporel
Is cause of goddes prescience eternal.
Now trewely, that is a fals sentence,
That thing to come sholde cause his prescience.

153

What mighte I wene, and I hadde swich a thought.
But that god purveyth thing that is to come
For that it is to come, and elles nought?
So mighte I wene that thinges alle and some,
That whylom been bifalle and over-come,
Ben cause of thilke sovereyn purveyaunce,
That for-wot al with-outen ignoraunce.

154

And over al this, yet seye I more herto,
That right as when I woot ther is a thing,
Y-wis, that thing mot nedefully be so;
Eek right so, when I woot a thing coming,
So mot it come; and thus the bifalling
Of thinges that ben wist before the tyde,
They mowe not been eschewed on no syde."

155

Than seyde he thus, "almighty Jove in trone,
That wost of al this thing the soothfastnesse,
Rewe on my sorwe, or do me deye sone,
Or bring Criseyde and me fro this distresse."
And whyl he was in al this hevinesse,
Disputinge with him-self in this matere,
Com Pandare in, and seyde as ye may here.

156

"O mighty god," quod Pandarus, "in trone,

Ey! who seigh ever a wys man faren so?
 Why, Troilus, what thenkestow to done?
 Hastow swich lust to been thyn owene fo?
 What, parde, yet is not Criseyde a-go!
 Why lust thee so thy-self for-doon for drede,
 That in thyn heed thyn eyen semen dede?

157

Hastow not lived many a yeer biforn
 With-outen hir, and ferd ful wel at ese?
 Artow for hir and for non other born?
 Hath kind thee wroughte al-only hir to plesse?
 Lat be, and thenk right thus in thy disese:
 That, in the dees right as ther fallen chaunces,
 Right so in love, ther come and goon plesaunces.

158

And yet this is a wonder most of alle,
 Why thou thus sorwest, sin thou nost not yit,
 Touching hir goinge, how that it shal falle,
 Ne if she can hir-self distorben it.
 Thou hast not yet assayed al hir wit.
 A man may al by tyme his nekke bede
 Whan it shal of, and sorwen at the nede.

159

For-thy take hede of that that I shal seye;
 I have with hir y-spoke and longe y-be,
 So as accorded was bitwixe us tweye.
 And ever-mo me thinketh thus, that she
 Hath som-what in hir hertes prevetee,
 Wher-with she can, if I shal right arede,
 Distorbe al this, of which thou art in drede.

160

For which my counseil is, whan it is night,
 Thou to hir go, and make of this an ende;
 And blisful Juno, though hir grete mighte,
 Shal, as I hope, hir grace un-to us sende.
 Myn herte seyth, "certeyn, she shal not wende;"
 And for-thy put thyn herte a while in reste;
 And hold this purpos, for it is the beste."

161

This Troilus answerde, and sighte sore,
 "Thou seyst right wel, and I wil do right so";
 And what him liste, he seyde un-to it more.
 And whan that it was tyme for to go,
 Ful prevely him-self, with-outen nise,
 Un-to hir com, as he was wont to done;
 And how they wroughte, I shal yow telle sone.

162

Soth is, that whan they gonne first to mete,
 So gan the peyne hir hertes for to twiste,
 That neither of hem other mighte grete,
 But hem in armes toke and after kiste.
 The lasse wofulle of hem bothe niste
 Wher that he was, ne mighte o word out-bringe,
 As I seyde erst, for wo and for sobbinge.

163

Tho woful teres that they leten falle
 As bitre weren, out of teres kinde,
 For peyne, as is ligne-aloes or galle.
 So bitre teres weep nought, as I finde,
 The woful Myrrha through the bark and rinde.
 That in this world ther nis so hard an herte,
 That nolde han rewed on hir peynes smerte.

Who ever saw a grown man acting so?
 Can't you do something else than weep and moan?
 Why, Troilus, you are your own worst foe!
 Good heavens, Cressida may never go,
 So why afflict yourself with needless dread
 And almost cry your eyes out of your head?

157

"Recall how many years you've lived, dear brother,
 Without her, yet you got along with ease!
 You weren't made for her and nary other!
 There's plenty more who know the art to please.
 Among your helpful thoughts you might place these,
 That as the chance in dice falls when you throw,
 Just so in love, your pleasures come and go.

158

"But this to me is cause of great surprise,
 That you disturb your soul, and yet don't know,
 Touching her going, what in the future lies,
 Nor if she can't devise some way to throw
 Them off the track, and so not need to go;
 To meet the ax a man his neck may stretch,
 But why should that give pleasure to the wretch?

159

"And now I'll tell you what I have to say.
 I've been with her and told her your petition,
 As we agreed between ourselves today,
 And Troilus, I have a shrewd suspicion,
 That in her heart she's got a proposition,
 Though what it was she didn't fully mention,
 That will repay the carefullest attention.

160

"And so, if you'll take my advice, tonight
 Just go to her and bring this to an end,
 For blessed Juno, through her ample might,
 Shall, as I hope, her favor to us send.
 I'm quite convinced your lady will attend
 To this affair, so set your mind at rest,
 For all at last will turn out for the best."

161

Troilus replied, as Pandar reached the door,
 "Perhaps you're right, I might as well do so—"
 Although, of course, he said a great deal more,
 And when the time arrived for him to go,
 Most secretly, so not a soul should know,
 He came to her, as he was wont to do
 Their usual occupations to pursue.

162

And truly at the first, when there they meet,
 Sorrow about their hearts doth wind and twist,
 So neither may in words the other greet,
 But each in other's arms, each other kissed;
 Thus silently they keep this mournful tryst,
 For gathering woe in both their hearts so throbs,
 No words can find a place among their sobs.

163

The precious tears that there descend and fall
 Were bitter tears, of an unnatural kind,
 As though of aloes mingled or of gall.
 The woful Myrrha wept through bark and rind
 No tears like these, as I her story find.
 In all this world, no heart could be so hard
 For such despair to lack as deep regard.

164

But when their wandering weary spirits twain
Returned were to the hearts where they should
 dwell,
And long lament had lightened so their pain,
When, too, the bitter tears ebbed in their well,
And less the sorrows in their bosoms swell,
To Troilus then Cressida thus spoke,
With hoarse and halting voice that often broke:

165

"O Jove! O God! Thy mercy I beseech!
Help, Troilus!" And therewithal her face
Upon his breast she laid, bereft of speech,
Her woful spirit ready to retrace
Its course back to its starting place;
And thus she lies, her face all pale and green,
Though fairest once, and freshest to be seen.

166

And Troilus who doth her thus behold,
Calling her name to wake her from the dead,
And feeling all her limbs grow stiff and cold,
And both her eyes cast upward in her head,
This Troilus was filled with mortal dread,
And many a time her lips so cold he kissed,
And prayed the Gods with comfort to assist.

167

Her body on her couch he straightly laid,
For now her cheeks with life no longer glow;
Good reason now has he to be dismayed,
And now his song is but a song of woe.
For when he saw her lying speechless so,
With voice and tears and sobs together blended,
He cried, "Her sorrows are at last all ended!"

168

From loud lament he could not be restrained,
And wrung his hands and said what was to say,
And on his heaving breast the salt tears rained;
But finally his tears he wiped away,
And for her flitting soul he thus doth pray:
"O God, established on thy throne above,
Grant me that I shall follow soon my love!"

169

How cold she was, how robbed of all sensation,
Nor trace of tender breathing could he feel,
Which was for him the final declaration,
As there beside her he did sadly kneel,
That she had suffered now the last ordeal;
And so the body of his lady dear
He placed as one does bodies for the bier.

170

And after this, with sternly hardened heart,
His shining sword from out its sheath he drew,
To slay himself and from this life to part,
So that his soul might quickly hers pursue,
And both receive from Minos judgment due,
Since love and cruel fortune so decide
That he may in this world no longer bide.

171

His life resigned, he voiced his high disdain:
"O cruel Jove, and Fortune so adverse,
I can but say that falsely ye have slain
My love, and since ye can do nothing worse,

164

But whan hir woful wery gostes tweyne
Retorned been ther-as hem oughte dwelle,
And that som-what to wayken gan the
 peyne
By lengthe of pleynte, and ebben gan the well
Of hire teres, and the herte unswelle,
With broken voys, al hoors for-shright, Criseyde
To Troilus thise ilke wordes seyde:

165

"O Jove, I deye, and mercy I beseeche!
Help, Troilus!" And ther-with-al hir face
Upon his brest she leyde, and loste speche;
Hir woful spirit from his propre place,
Right with the word, alwey up poynt to pace.
And thus she lyth with hewes pale and grene,
That whylom fresh and fairest was to sene.

166

This Troilus, that on hir gan biholde,
Clepinge hir name, (and she lay as for deed,
With-oute answer, and felte hir limes colde,
Hir eyen throwen upward to hir heed),
This sorwful man can now noon other reed,
But ofte tyme hir colde mouth he kiste;
Wher him was wo, god and him-self it wiste!

167

He rist him up, and long streight he hir leyde;
For signe of lyf, for ought he can or may,
Can he noon finde in no-thing on Criseyde,
For which his song ful ofte is "weylaway!"
But whan he saugh that specheles she lay,
With sorwful voys, and herte of blisse al bare,
He seyde how she was for this world y-fare!

168

So after that he longe hadde hir compleyned,
His hondes wronge, and seyde that was to seye,
And with his teres salte hir brest bireyned,
He gan tho teres wpyen of ful dreye,
And pitously gan for the soule preye,
And seyde, "O lord, that set art in thy trone,
Rewe eek on me, for I shal folwe hir sone!"

169

She cold was and with-uten sentement,
For aught he woot, for breeth ne felte he noon;
And this was him a preignant argument
That she was forth out of this world agoon;
And whan he seigh ther was no other woon,
He gan hir limes dresse in swich manere
As men don hem that shul be leyd on bere.

170

And after this, with sterne and cruel herte,
His swerd a-noon out of his shethe he twichte,
Him-self to sleen, how sore that him smerte,
So that his sowe hir sowe folwen mighte,
Ther-as the doom of Mynos wolde it dighte;
Sin love and cruel Fortune it ne wolde,
That in this world he lenger liven sholde.

171

Thanne seyde he thus, fulfild of heigh desdayn,
"O cruel Jove, and thou, Fortune adverse,
This al and som, that falsly have ye slayn
Criseyde, and sin ye may do me no werse,

Fy on your might and werkes so diverse!
Thus cowardly ye shul me never winne;
Ther shal no deeth me fro my lady twinne.

172

For I this world, sin ye han slayn hir thus,
Wol lete, and folowe hir spirit lowe or hye;
Shal never lover seyn that Troilus
Dar not, for fere, with his lady dye;
For certeyn, I wol bere hir companye.
But sin ye wol not suffre us liven here,
Yet suffreth that our soules ben y-fere.

173

And thou, citee, whiche that I leve in wo,
And thou, Pryam, and bretheren al y-fere,
And thou, my moder, farewell! for I go;
And Atropos, make redy thou my bere!
And thou, Criseyde, o swete herte dere,
Receyve now my spirit!" wolde he seye,
With sword at herte, al redy for to deye.

174

But as god wolde, of swough therwith she abreyde,
And gan to syke, and "Troilus" she cryde;
And he answerde, "lady myn Criseyde,
Live ye yet?" and leet his sword doun glyde.
"Ye, herte myn, that thanked be Cupyde!"
Quod she, and ther-with-al she sore sighte;
And he bigan to glade hir as he mighte;

175

Took hir in armes two, and kiste hir ofte,
And hir to glade he dide al his entente;
For which hir goost, that flickered ay on-lofte,
In-to hir woful herte ayein it wente.
But at the laste, as that hir eyen glente
A-syde, anon she gan his sword aspye,
As it lay bare, and gan for fere crye,

176

And asked him, why he it hadde out-drawe?
And Troilus anon the cause hir tolde,
And how himself ther-with he wolde have slawe.
For which Criseyde up-on him gan biholde,
And gan him in hir armes faste folde,
And seyde, "O mercy, god, lo, which a dede!
Allas! how neigh we were bothe dede!"

177

Thanne if I ne hadde spoken, as grace was,
Ye wolde han slayn your-self anon?" quod she.
"Ye, douteless"; and she answerde, "allas!
For, by that ilke lord that made me,
I nolde a forlong wey on-lyve han be,
After your deeth, to han be crowned quene
Of al the lond the sonne on shyneth shene.

178

But with this selve sword, which that here is,
My-selve I wolde have slayn!"—quod she tho;
"But ho, for we han right y-now of this,
And late us ryse and streight to bedde go,
And therē lat us speken of our wo.
For, by the mortar which that I see brenne,
Knowe I ful wel that day is not fer henne."

179

Whan they were in hir bedde, in armes folde,
Nought was it lyk tho nightes here-biforn;

Your might and all your evil works I curse!
Ye shall naught in this coward fashion gain,
For death shall never separate us twain!

172

"Now all this world, since ye have slayn her thus,
I here renounce, and after her will hie;
No lover true shall say that Troilus
To share his lady's death did e'er deny.
Together to one fate we two will fly,
And since ye will not suffer us to live,
One stroke of death to our two spirits give!

173

"And O thou city, where I live in woe,
And Priam, and my brothers dwelling here,
And thou, my mother, farewell, for I go!
And Atropos, make ready now my bier!
And blessed Cressida, my sweetheart dear,
Receive my soul!"—he was about to say,
With sword at heart, prepared himself to slay,

174

But, thanks to God, she woke up from her swoon,
And drew a breath, and "Troilus!" she sighed,
And "Sweetheart, Cressida!" he answered soon,
"Are you alive?" and let his weapon slide;
"Yes, sweetheart, thanks to Venus!" she replied,
And therewithal a mighty sigh she heaved,
And Troilus now felt somewhat relieved.

175

He took her in his arms and kissed her oft,
To make her glad was now his sole intent,
Until her spirit, flickering aye aloft,
Again into its harbor softly went;
But then it chanced, her glances sidelong bent,
His sword upon the floor she did espy,
As it lay bare, which drew from her a cry.

176

She asked him why his sword he thus had drawn,
And Troilus the reason straightway told,
How he would slay himself therewith anon;
And she with wide eyes doth her knight behold
And him in arms most lovingly enfold;
"O mercy God! What an escape!" she cried,
"Alas, 'twere little but we both had died!"

177

"And if I hadn't spoken, by good chance,
You would have slain yourself with it?" asked she;
"Quite right!" he answered with a loving glance,
And she replied, "By Him who fashioned me,
I would not living on this planet be
After thy death, if I were crowned the queen
Of all the land the sun hath ever seen.

178

"But straight thy very bloody sword I'd seize
And after thee, myself I'd slay! But ho!
Enough of such sad possibilities!
Arise and straight to bed now let us go,
Where we can peacefully discuss our woe.
For by the night-light now so lowly burning,
I know the day is not far from returning."

179

Though in her bed reclined in love's embrace,
Unlike was this to nights that went before,

For sadly they behold each other's face
As though their joy was flown forevermore,
And their misfortune often they deplore.
But Cressida at last took things in hand,
And thus to him her thoughts she did expand:

180

"Lo, sweetheart, this you know most certainly,
That if a man does nothing but complain,
And seeks no way from trouble to be free,
That is but folly and increase of pain;
And since we've come together here, we twain,
To find a way out of the way we're in,
It seems to me, it's high time to begin.

181

"I'm but a woman, as of course you know,
But my opinion I will tell you free
And frank, just as it comes in its first glow,
That neither you nor I, it seems to me,
Need get excited in such high degree,
Because there must be some way of redress
For all this wrong that causes us distress.

182

"As it now stands, the thought that we most
hate,

The thought that robs us of all hope of bliss,
Is merely that we two must separate,
And all in all, there's nothing more amiss!
And what is then the remedy for this?
But that we manage soon again to meet!
That's all there is to it, my precious sweet!

183

"Now that I certainly can bring about,
To come back soon again if I must go,
Of this I do not have the slightest doubt,
For at the most within a week or so,
I shall be back, and now I shall you show,
Just briefly, and in simple words and few,
How I shall carry my proposal through.

184

"But I don't want to make a long discourse,
For time once lost cannot recovered be,
And if you'll only trust to my resource,
'Twill be the best, as soon I think you'll see.
And, sweetheart, pray you now, forgive it me,
If what I say, seems somewhat hard to you,
For truly, 'tis the best that we can do.

185

"So let me here most earnestly protest
That the intent of all that I shall say
Is but to show what I regard the best,
And I believe, in fact the only way
To help ourselves—and take it so, I pray!
But in the end, whatever you require,
That will I do—it is my sole desire.

186

"Now listen! You of course will understand,
I go away by act of parliament,
And both of us must yield to that command.
There is no earthly way to circumvent
This act, and thus we may as well assent,
And so with that, dismiss it from our mind
And look about some better way to find.

For pitously ech other gan biholde,
As they that hadden al hir blisse y-lorn,
Biwaylinge ay the day that they were born.
Til at the last this sorwful wight Criseyde
To Troilus these ilke wordes seyde:—

180

"Lo, herte myn, wel wot ye this," quod she,
"That if a wight alwey his wo compleyne,
And seketh nought how holpen for to be,
It nis but folye and encrees of peyne;
And sin that here assembled be we tweyne
To finde bote of wo that we ben inne,
It were al tyme sone to bigenne.

181

I am a womman, as ful wel ye woot,
And as I am avysed sodeynly,
So wol I telle yow, whyl it is hoot.
Me thinketh thus, that neither ye nor I
Oughte half this wo to make skilfully.
For there is art y-now for to redresse
That yet is mis, and sleen this hevinesse.

182

Sooth is, the wo, the whiche that we ben
inne,

For ought I woot, for no-thing elles is
But for the cause that we sholden twinne.
Considered al, ther nis no-more amis.
But what is thanne a remede un-to this,
But that we shape us sone for to mete?
This al and som, my dere herte swete.

183

Now that I shal wel bringen it aboute
To come ayein, sone after that I go,
Ther-of am I no maner thing in doute.
For dredeles, with-inne a wouke or two,
I shal ben here; and, that it may be so
By alle right, and in a wordes fewe,
I shal yow wel an heep of weyes shewe.

184

For which I wol not make long sermoun,
For tyme y-lost may not recovered be;
But I wol gon to my conclusioun,
And to the beste, in ought that I can see.
And, for the love of god, for-yeve it me
If I speke ought ayein your hertes reste;
For trewely, I speke it for the beste;

185

Makinge alwey a protestacioun,
That now these wordes, whiche that I shal seye,
Nis but to shewe yow my mocioun,
To finde un-to our helpe the beste weye;
And taketh it non other wyse, I preye.
For in effect what-so ye me comaunde,
That wol I doon, for that is no demaunde.

186

Now herkeneth this, ye han wel understonde,
My going graunted is by parlement
So ferforth, that it may not be with-stonde
For al this world, as by my jugement.
And sin ther helpeth noon avysement
To letten it, lat it passe out of minde;
And lat us shape a bettre wey to finde.

187

The sothe is, that the twinninge of us tweyne
Wol us disese and cruellliche anye.
But him bihoveth som-tyme na peyne,
That serveth love, if that he wol have joye.
And sin I shal no ferther out of Troye
Than I may ryde ayein on half a morwe,
It oughte lasse causen us to sorwe:

188

So as I shal not so ben hid in muwe,
That day by day, myn owene herte dere,
Sin wel ye woot that it is now a truwe,
Ye shul ful wel al myn estat y-here.
And er that truwe is doon, I shal ben here,
And thanne have ye bothe Antenor y-wonne
And me also; beth glad now, if ye conne;

189

And thenk right thus, 'Crisseyde is now agoon,
But what! she shal come hastily ayein";
And whanne, alas? by god, lo, right anon,
Er dayes ten, this dar I sauflly seyn.
And thanne at erste shul we been so fayn,
So as we shulle to-gederes ever dwelle,
That al this world ne mighte our blisse telle.

190

I see that ofte, ther-as we ben now,
That for the beste, our conseil for to hyde,
Ye speke not with me, nor I with yow
In fourtenight; ne see yow go ne ryde.
May ye not ten dayes thanne abyde,
For myn honour, in swich an aventure?
Y-wis, ye mowen elles lyte endure!

191

Ye knowe eek how that al my kin is here,
But-if that onliche it my fader be;
And eek myn othere thinges alle y-fere
And nameliche, my dere herte, ye,
Whom that I nolde leven for to see
For al this world, as wyd as it hath space;
Or elles, see ich never Joves face!

192

Why trowe ye my fader in this wyse
Coveiteth so to see me, but for drede
Lest in this toun that folkes me dispyse
By-cause of him, for his unhappy dede?
What woot my fader what lyf that I lede?
For if he wiste in Troye how wel I fare,
Us dedes for my wending nought to care.

193

Ye seen that every day eek, more and more,
Men trete of pees; and it supposed is,
That men the quene Eleyne shal restore,
And Grekes us restore that is mis.
So though ther nere comfort noon but this,
That men purposen pees on every syde,
Ye may the bettre at ese of herte abyde.

194

For if that it be pees, myn herte
dere,
The nature of the pees mot nedes dryve
That men moste entrecomunen y-fere,
And to and fro eek ryde and gon as blyve

187

"Of course it's true, the parting of us twain
Most dreadfully will both of us annoy;
But every lover must endure some pain,
Or he would not appreciate his joy.
And since I go no farther out of Troy
Then I can ride again in half a morrow,
There's not much reason here to grieve or sorrow.

188

"For sure the Greeks will not me so immure,
But day by day, my darling sweetheart dear,
(You know this truce for some time will endure),
Of all my doings you shall fully hear.
And ere the truce is o'er, I'll reappear;
If you will keep an eye on your demeanor,
You shall have me, and Troy shall have Antenor!

189

"And think, 'What though my Cressida is gone,
'Twill not be long before she's back again.'"
"But when, alas!" "I swear it, right anon,
Or maybe several days, or nine or ten.
And when I come, you'll be so happy then,
That we shall evermore together dwell,
In greater bliss than all the world can tell.

190

"You know with things arranged as they are now,
We're oft compelled our private life to hide,
And dare no trysts or conference allow—
A fortnight thus our patience oft is tried—,
And can't you then a mere ten days abide,
My honest reputation to insure?
Of course you can, or yet much more endure!

191

"And don't forget that all my kin are here,
Except my father, who of course is not,
And all my property, which I hold dear,
And thou, dearer than all the wealth I've got,
Whom I would not exchange for any lot
On all this earth, so wide as earth hath space,
I swear it in the sight of great Jove's face!

192

"Do you suppose my father, who is wise,
Desires to see me, but that he's afraid
Lest folk mistrust me here or me despise,
Because of all the trouble he has made?
But why should he suppose I need his aid?
If he knew how content I am in Troy,
He would his wits in other ways employ.

193

"You see, besides, how each day more and more
Men treat of peace, and everywhere they say
The Trojans will Queen Helen soon restore
And then the Greeks will quickly sail away,
And that will be for us a blessed day;
And so you may with ease of heart abide,
Because they treat of peace on either side.

194

"And when the peace shall come, my sweetheart
dear,
You know the town and place will be alive
With Grecian messengers who will come here,
And some will go and new ones will arrive,

As thicke as honey-bees about a hive,
And everyone will then be free to go
Wherever he will, and no one care or know.

195

"And even though the plans for peace fall through,
I must come back, for could I anywhere
Or either go or stay away from you?
And I could never stand it living there
Within a camp devoted to warfare;
And so if you regard what I have said,
I don't see why you need have any dread.

196

"But I've another plan that's sure to hold
If what I've spoken of should not suffice.
My father Calchas is now growing old,
And greed you know, is still an old man's vice.
And if I wanted to, I could entice
Him to our net, and I dare make the vaunt
That we shall have him doing what we want.

197

"'Tis hard, so doth the ancient proverb go,
To fill the wolf and hold intact the sheep,
Which is to say, that often men must throw
Away a part, if they the rest will keep.
With gold it's very easy to cut deep
Into the heart of him who's set on gain,
And what I plan to do, I'll now explain.

198

"The ready cash I have here in this town,
I'll take it to my father and I'll say,
'Tis sent to him by friends to salt it down
And keep it safe against a rainy day,
And that these friends most fervently do pray
Him send for more, and the first chance embrace,
Because this town is such a risky place.

199

"And what's to come shall be a huge amount—
So shall I say—and lest it be espied,
It must be sent by me on their account;
And then I'll show him, that if peace betide,
What friends I have at court on every side,
Who Priam's wrath will help to mitigate
And him in Trojan favor reinstate.

200

"So what for all the things I'll to him tell,
I'll so enchant him, as I said before,
He'll think he doth in heaven surely dwell.
That for Apollo, or for his clerkly lore,
Or for his calculations by the score!
Desire of gold shall so his priestcraft blind,
I shall him 'round my finger lightly wind.

201

"And if he puts to test by priestly skill
If I am lying, I'll pull him by the sleeve
And in his divinations doubt instil,
So that at last I'll lead him to believe
The oracles he wrongly doth receive.
The Gods all speak in amphibologies,
And twenty times more lies than truths in these.

202

"Fear made the Gods at first, so shall I say,
And now again that same fear in his heart

Alday as thikke as been flen from an hyve;
And every wight han libertee to bleve
Wher-as him list the bet, with-uten leve.

195

And though so be that pees ther may be noon,
Yet hider, though ther never pees ne were,
I moste come; for whider sholde I goon,
Or how mischaunce sholde I dwelle there
Among tho men of armes ever in fere?
For which, as wisly god my soule rede,
I can not seen wher-of ye sholden drede.

196

Have here another wey, if it so be
That al this thing ne may yow not suffice.
My fader, as ye knowen wel, pardee,
Is old, and elde is ful of covetyse.
And I right now have founden al the gyse,
With-oute net, wher-with I shal him hente;
And herkeneth how, if that ye wole assente.

197

Lo, Troilus, men seyn that hard it is
The wolf ful, and the wether hool to have;
This is to seyn, that men ful ofte, y-wis,
Mot spenden part, the remenaunt for to save.
For ay with gold men may the herte grave
Of him that set is up-on covetyse;
And how I mene, I shal it yow devyse.

198

The moeble which that I have in this toun
Un-to my fader shal I take, and seye,
That right for trust and for savacioun
It sent is from a freend of his or tweye,
The whiche freendes ferventliche him preye
To senden after more, and that in hye,
Why! that this toun stant thus in jupartye.

199

And that shal been an huge quantitee,
Thus shal I seyn, but, lest it folk aspyde,
This may be sent by no wight but by me;
I shal eek shewen him, if pees bityde,
What frendes that ich have on every syde
Toward the court, to doon the wrathe pace
Of Priamus, and doon him stonde in grace.

200

So, what for o thing and for other, swete,
I shal him so enchaunten with my sawes,
That right in hevne his sowle is, shal he mete!
For al Appollo, or his clerkes lawes,
Or calculinge awayleth nought three hawes;
Desyr of gold shal so his sowle blende,
That, as me lyst, I shal wel make an ende.

201

And if he wolde ought by his sort it preve
If that I lye, in certayn I shal fonde
Distorben him, and plukke him by the sleve,
Makinge his sort, and beren him on honde,
He hath not wel the goddes understonde.
For goddes spoken in amphibologyes,
And, for a sooth, they tellen twenty lyes.

202

Eek drede fond first goddes, I suppose,
Thus shal I seyn, and that his coward herte

Made him amis the goddess text to glose,
 When he for ferde out of his Delphos sterre.
 And but I make him sone to converte,
 And doon my reed with-inne a day or tweye,
 I wol to yow oblige me to deye."

203

And treweliche, as writen wel I finde,
 That al this thing was seyde of good entente;
 And that hir herte trewe was and kinde
 Towardes him, and spak right as she mente,
 And that she starf for wo neigh, whan she wente,
 And was in purpos ever to be trewe;
 Thus writen they that of hir werkes knewe.

204

This Troilus, with herte and eres spradde,
 Herde al this thing devysen to and fro;
 And verraylich him semed that he hadde
 The selve wit; but yet to lete hir go
 His herte misforyaf him ever-mo.
 But fynally, he gan his herte wreste
 To trusten hir, and took it for the beste.

205

For which the grete furie of his penaunce
 Was queynt with hope, and ther-with hem
 bitwene

Bigan for joye the amoureuse daunce.
 And as the briddes, whan the sonne is shene,
 Delyten in hir song in leves grene,
 Right so the wordes that they spake y-fere
 Delyted hem, and made hir hertes clere.

206

But natheles, the wending of Criseyde,
 For al this world, may nought out of his minde;
 For which ful ofte he pitously hir preyde,
 That of hir heste he might hir trewe finde.
 And seyde hir, "certes, if ye be unkinde,
 And but ye come at day set in-to Troye,
 Ne shal I never have hele, honour, ne joye.

207

For al-so sooth as sonne up-rist on morwe,
 And, god! so wisly thou me, woful wrecche,
 To reste bringe out of this cruel sorwe,
 I wol my-selven slee if that ye drecche.
 But of my deeth though litel be to recche,
 Yet, er that ye me cause so to smerte,
 Dwel rather here, myn owene swete herte!

208

For trewely, myn owene lady dere,
 Tho sleighes yet that I have herd yow stere
 Ful shaply been to failen alle y-fere.
 For thus men seyn, 'that oon thenketh the bere,
 But al another thenketh his ledere.'
 Your sire is wys, and seyde is, out of drede,
 'Men may the wyse at-renne, and not at-rede.'

209

It is ful hard to halten unspyesed
 Bifore a crepul, for he can the craft;
 Your fader is in sleighte as Argus yëd;
 For al be that his moeble is him biraft,
 His olde sleighte is yet so with him left,
 Ye shal not blende him for your womanhede,
 Ne feyne a-right, and that is al my drede.

Made him report their omens the wrong way,
 When he in fear from Delphi did depart.
 You'll see that I shall give him such a start
 That he will turn completely round about;
 Within a day or two, you'll find this out."

203

I can but think, as I it writen find,
 That all of this was said with good intent,
 And that her heart withal was true and kind,
 And what she said, all that she truly meant,
 And of her grief no part did she invent,
 And ever thought to him she would be true,
 But of her heart, not all of it she knew.

204

Poor Troilus, with heart and ears outspread,
 Drank in this tale of plotting to and fro,
 And almost was convinced by what she said,
 But nevertheless to let her from him go,
 That gave him many a pang of doubt and woe;
 But finally, against his better mind,
 He trusted her and all his doubts resigned.

205

The tempest of his grief somewhat abated,
 Despair gave way to hope, and new
 delight

Of love was for old sorrow reinstated;
 And as the birds against the sun so bright
 Sing on the branch, though hidden from all sight,
 So were their words to this so loving pair
 Songs of delight, their solace to declare.

206

Yet still the thought that Cressida must go,
 Troilus could not drive from out his mind,
 And all his words his dark forebodings show
 That truth in her he might not ever find;
 "If e'er to me," he said, "you are unkind,
 And if you come not on your day to town,
 Farewell my health, my honor and renown!"

207

"For just as sure as morrow's sun shall rise,
 If your returning you should long delay,
 No other refuge open to me lies,
 But black despair at once my heart will slay;
 And though the thought of death brings no dismay,
 Rather than such grief on us both should fall,
 Sweetheart, I beg, don't go away at all!"

208

"To tell the truth, my precious sweetheart dear,
 Those little tricks of yours of which you've told,
 They fill me not with hope, but ghastly fear.
 'The bear thinks one thing,' goes the saying old,
 'Although his leader other views may hold!'
 Your sire is wise, you must look out for it,
 'One may the wise outrun, but not outwit.'

209

"It's very hard to limp and not be spied
 Before a cripple—that's his specialty.
 In tricks your father sure is Argus-eyed,
 And though his gold took wings and forth did flee,
 His cunning still is left in full degree.
 You won't fool him, for all your woman's ways,
 And grave doubts in my mind you merely raise.

210

"I do not know if peace shall e'er be made,
But peace or no, it's really all the same,
For Calchas by his turning renegade
Hath so besmirched and so defiled his name,
He dare not come to Troy again for shame,
And so that plan, so far as I can see,
Is nothing but a pleasing fantasy.

211

"You'll see—your father shall you so persuade,
You'll marry there, for he knows how to preach;
For some fine Greek he'll have his plans well laid,
And carry you away with his soft speech,
Or make you wed by force, his end to reach;
And Troilus may then go hang forsooth,
For all his innocence and all his truth!

212

"Yet more—your father doth us all despise,
And says our city is but lost and lorn,
That from this siege we never shall arise,
Since all the Greeks most solemnly have sworn
We shall be slain, and down our walls be torn;
Such fearsome words he will unto you say,
That in the end among the Greeks you'll stay!

213

"And you will see so many a lusty knight
Among the Greeks, and of such mansuetude,
And each of them with heart and wit and might
To please you well abundantly imbued,
That soon you'll weary of the manners rude
Of simple Trojans, loosing from your mind
The bonds that our two hearts together bind.

214

"And this to me so grievous is to think,
That from my breast the very soul 'twill rend,
To lowest depths I feel my heart doth sink,
But at the thought that you from Troy will wend;
Against your father's cunning, heaven defend!
So if you go away, as I have said,
You may as well count me among the dead.

215

"So now, with humble, true and faithful heart,
A thousand times your pardon here I pray;
Regard the matter, sweetheart, from my part,
And do somewhat as I shall to you say,
And let us two in silence steal away;
Bethink 'tis naught but folly pure and plain,
To lose the great, some minor point to gain.

216

"I mean that since we may, ere break of day,
Steal forth and be together ever so,
What need for such uncertainty to stay,
If you hence to the Grecian army go,
Of your returning here again or no?
Why should we put in pawn a joy secure
For far-off prospects, doubtful and unsure?

217

"And now to speak of low, material things
Like money, each of us can take along
Enough to buy what pleasures money brings,
Till death shall take us with his power strong.
This do I urge, this choice cannot be wrong,

210

I noot if pees shal ever-mo bityde;
But, pees or no, for earnest ne for game,
I woot, sin Calkas on the Grekes syde
Hath ones been, and lost so foule his name,
He dar no more come here ayein for shame;
For which that weye, for ought I can espye,
To trusten on, nis but a fantasye.

211

Ye shal eek seen, your fader shal yow glose
To been a wyf, and as he can wel preche,
He shal som Greek so preyse and wel alose,
That ravisschen he shal yow with his speche,
Or do yow doon by force as he shal teche.
Ane Troilus, of whom ye nil han routhe,
Shal causeles so sterven in his trouthe!

212

And over al this, your fader shal despise
Us alle, and seyn this citee nis but lorn;
And that th'assege never shal aryse,
For-why the Grekes han it alle sworn
Til we be slayn, and doun our walles torn.
And thus he shal you with his wordes fere,
That ay drede I, that ye wol bleve there.

213

Ye shul eek seen so many a lusty knight
A-mong the Grekes, ful of worthinesse,
And eche of hem with herte, wit, and might
To plesen yow don al his besinesse,
That ye shul dullen of the rudenesse
Of us sely Trojanes, but-if routhe
Remorde yow, or vertue of your trouthe.

214

And this to me so grevous is to thinke,
That for my brest it wol my soule rende;
Ne dredeles, in me ther may not sinke
A good opinioun, if that ye wende;
For-why your faderes sleighte wol us shende.
And if ye goon, as I have told yow yore,
So think I nam but decd, with-oute more.

215

For which, with humble, trewe, and pitous herte,
A thousand tymes mercy I yow preye;
So reweth on myn aspre peynes smerte,
And doth somwhat, as that I shal yow seye,
And lat us stele away bitwixe us tweye;
And think that folye is, whan man may chese,
For accident his substaunce ay to lese.

216

I mene this, that sin we mowe er day
Wel stele away, and been to-gider so,
What wit were it to putten in assay,
In cas ye sholden to your fader go,
If that ye mighte come ayein or no?
Thus mene I, that it were a gret folye
To putte that sikernes in jupartye.

217

And vulgarly to speken of substaunce
Of tresour, may we bothe with us lede
Y-nough to live in honour and plesaunce,
Til in-to tyme that we shul ben dede;
And thus we may eschewen al this drede.

For everich other wey ye can recorde,
Myn herte, y-wis, may not ther-with acorde.

218

And hardily, ne dredeth no poverté,
For I have kin and freendes elles-where
That, though we comen in our bare sherte,
Us sholde neither lakke gold ne gere,
But been honoured whyl we dwelten there.
And go we anon, for, as in myn entente,
This is the beste, if that ye wole assente."

219

Criseyde, with a syk, right in this wyse
Answerde, "y-wis, my dere herte trewe,
We may wel stele away, as ye devyse,
And finde swiche unthrifty weyes newe;
But afterward, ful sore it wol us rewe.
And help me god so at my moste nede
As causeles ye suffren al this drede!

220

For thilke day that I for cherissching
Or drede of fader, or of other wight,
Or for estat, delyt, or for wedding
Be fals to yow, my Troilus, my knight,
Saturnes daughter, Juno, thorough hir might,
As wood as Athamante do me dwelle
Eternaly in Stix, the put of helle!

221

And this on every god celestial
I swere it yow, and eek on eche goddessé,
On every Nympe and deite infernal,
On Satyr and Fauny more and lesse,
That halve goddess been of wilderness;
And Attropos my threed of lyf to-breste
If I be fals; now trowe me if thow leste!

222

And thou, Simois, that as an arwe clere
Thorough Troye rennest ay downward to the see,
Ber witnessé of this word that seyde is here,
That thilke day that ich untrewé be
To Troilus, myn owene herte free,
That thou retorne bakwarde to thy welle,
And I with body and soule sinke in helle!

223

But that ye speke, away thus for to go
And leten alle your freendes, god forbede,
For any womman, that ye sholden so,
And namely, sin Troye hath now swich nede
Of help; and eek of o thing taketh hede,
If this were wist, my lif laye in balaunce,
And your honour; god shilde us fro mischaunce!

224

And if so be that pees her-after take,
As alday happeth, after anger, game,
Why, lord! the sorwe and wo ye wolden make,
That ye ne dorste come ayein for shame!
And er that ye juparten so your name,
Beth nought to hasty in this hote fare;
For hasty man ne wanteth never care.

225

What trowe ye the peple eek al aboute
Wolde of it seye? It is ful light to arede.
They wolden seye, and swere it, out of doute,

With any other plan or other plea,
I cannot in my heart or mind agree.

218

"Of poverty you need have not a fear,
For I have hosts of kin and friends elsewhere,
And though in our bare shirts we did appear,
In all their gold and gear they'd give us share,
And honor us the while we rested there.
So let us go, and go without delay,
I wait but till the happy word you say!"

219

Cressida paused, and said with many sighs,
"In very truth, my precious sweetheart true,
We might thus steal away, as you advise,
Or try some other thriftless plans and new,
But afterward we would it surely rue,
And let me say again, as I have said,
There is no ground for all your fear and dread.

220

"If it should come, at any day or hour,
Through fear of parent or of other wight,
For rank or pride or thought of marriage dower,
That I am false, my Troilus, my knight,
Let Juno, Saturn's daughter, through her might,
Send me, as mad as Athamas, to dwell
Eternally in Styx, the pit of hell!

221

"And this I swear, by every God supernal,
And swear it, too, by every bright Goddess,
By every Nymph and Deity infernal,
By every Faun and Satyr, more and less,
Those demi-gods that haunt the wilderness,
That Atropos may snip her fatal shears
If I am false or justify your fears!

222

"Thou, Simois, that like an arrow clear
Through Troy aye runnest downward to the sea,
Bear witness of the pledge that I speak here,
And on the day that I untrue shall be
To Troilus, who holds my heart in fee,
Flow backward to thy primal source and well,
And let me soul and body sink to hell!

223

"What you propose, to slip away and go,
And leave your friends, a lonely life to lead,
No woman should induce you to do so,
Especially as Troy hath now such need
Of help; and of another thing take heed,
If this were known, the state would have my life,
And death dishonored end all earthly strife.

224

"And if sometime the armies should make peace,
For wildest moments must give way to tame,
Your lamentations then would never cease,
Because you couldn't come back here for shame;
And so before you peril thus your name,
Be not too hot, or on rash action bent;
The hasty man must many times repent.

225

"What think you all the people round about
Would say of it? 'Tis easy to surmise!
They'd say, and think it true beyond a doubt,

Not love impelled you to such enterprise,
But lust and coward fear, and such like lies.
And thus were lost, sweetheart so dear,
Your honest name, which shines now bright and
clear.

226

"And also think a moment on my name,
Flourishing yet, but with how dark a blot
And with what stains it would be brought to
shame,

If I should flee to some forbidden spot;
Never till death should end my mortal lot
Could I again fair reputation win;
Thus were I lost, and lost in shame and sin.

227

"Let rashness then to reason make way here!
Men say, 'To patience comes the victory,'
And too, 'Who will be dear, he must hold dear.'
Thus make a virtue of necessity!
Be patient! Think that Fortune's lord is he
Who asks no help from her in his pursuits;
The coward wretch alone she persecutes.

228

"Believe, sweetheart, with perfect confidence,
Before Lucina, Phoebus' sister dear,
Her path beyond the Lion shall commence,
Without a doubt again I shall be here—
I mean that when the tenth day shall appear,
No power short of death can so prevail
To make me in my promised coming fail."

229

"So must it be," said Troilus at last,
"And since I must, I will await that day,
For well I see, time of debate is past!
But for the love of God, once more I pray,
Let us tonight in secret steal away,
Together forever, forever so at rest,
The counsels of the heart are ever best."

230

"O now," cried Cressida distressedly,
"Alas, you drive me wild with all your fears!
It seems you have but little trust in me,
And by your words it patently appears!
In Cynthia's name, so bright among the spheres,
Mistrust me not, for thou hast little reason
To lay against me any taint of treason.

231

"Bethink you well that often it is art
To lose some time a better time to gain,
And though we for a day or two must part,
I'm not yet lost, nor shall I lost remain,
And from such foolish thoughts, I beg, refrain.
Now trust in me and banish all this sorrow,
Or grief will end my days before tomorrow.

232

"For if you knew how much I am oppressed
By this, you'd cease your argument;
The very spirit weepeth in my breast
To hear you grieve and bitterly resent
That with the Greeks a few days must be spent!
Though I myself, did I not know the cure,
Such fate with fortitude could not endure.

That love ne droof yow nought to doon this dede,
But lust voluptuous and coward drede.
Thus were al lost, y-wis, myn herte dere,
Your honour, which that now shyneth so
clere.

226

And also thenketh on myn honestee,
That floureth yet, how foule I sholde it shende,
And with what filthe it spotted sholde
be,

If in this forme I sholde with yow wende.
Ne though I livede un-to the worldes ende,
My name sholde I never ayeinward winne;
Thus were I lost, and that were routhe and sinne.

227

And for-thy slee with reson al this hete;
Men seyn, "the suffraunt overcometh," pardee;
Eek "who-so wol han leef, he leef mot lete";
Thus maketh vertue of necessitee
By pacience, and think that lord is he
Of fortune ay, that nought wol of hir recche;
And she ne daunteth no wight but a wrecche.

228

And trusteth this, that certes, herte swete,
Er Phebus suster, Lucina the shene,
The Leoun passe out of this Ariete,
I wol ben here, with-outen any wene.
I mene, as helpe me Juno, hevenes quene,
The tenthe day, but-if that deeth me assayle,
I wol yow seen, with-outen any fayle."

229

"And now, so this be sooth," quod Troilus,
"I shal wel suffre un-to the tenthe day,
Sin that I see that nede it moot be thus.
But, for the love of god, if it be may,
So lat us stele prively away;
For ever in oon, as for to live in reste,
Myn herte seyth that it wol been the beste."

230

"O mercy, god, what lyf is this?" quod she;
"Allas, ye slee me thus for verray tenel
I see wel now that ye mistrusten me;
For by your wordes it is wel y-sene.
Now, for the love of Cynthia the shene,
Mistrust me not thus causeles, for routhe;
Sin to be trewe I have yow plight my trouthe.

231

And thenketh wel, that som tyme it is wit
To spende a tyme, a tyme for to winne;
Ne, pardee, lorn am I nought fro yow yit,
Though that we been a day or two a-twinne.
Dryf out the fantasyes yow with-inne;
And trusteth me, and leveh eek your sorwe,
Or here my trouthe, I wol not live til morwe.

232

For if ye wiste how sore it doth me smerte,
Ye wolde cesse of this; for god, thou wost,
The pure spirit wepeth in myn herte,
To see yow wepen that I love most,
And that I moot gon to the Grekes ost.
Ye, nere it that I wiste remedye
To come ayein, right here I wolde dyel

233

But certes, I am not so nyce a wight
That I ne can imaginen a way
To come ayein that day that I have hight.
For who may holde thing that wol a-way?
My fader nought, for al his queynte play.
And by my thrift, my wending out of Troye
Another day shal torne us alle to joye.

234

For-thy, with al myn herte I yow beseke,
If that yow list don ought for my preyere,
And for the love which that I love yow eke,
That er that I departe fro yow here,
That of so good a comfort and a chere
I may you seen, that ye may bringe at reste
Myn herte, which that is at point to breste.

235

And over al this, I pray yow," quod she tho,
"Myn owene hertes soothfast suffisaunce,
Sin I am thyn al hool, with-outen mo,
That whyl that I am absent, no plesaunce
Of othere do me fro your remembraunce.
For I am ever a-gast, for-why men rede,
That 'love is thing ay ful of bisy drede.'

236

For in this world ther liveth lady noon,
If that ye were untrewre, as god defende!
That so bitraysed were or wo bigoon
As I, that alle trouthe in yow entende.
And douteles, if that ich other wende,
I nere but deed; and er ye cause finde,
For goddes love, so beth me not unkinde."

237

To this answerde Troilus and seyde,
"Now god, to whom ther nis no cause y-wrye,
Me glade, as wis I never un-to Criseyde,
Sin thilke day I saw hir first with yē,
Was fals, ne never shal til that I dye.
At shorte wordes, wel ye may me leve;
I can no more, it shal be founde at preve."

238

"Graunt mercy, goode myn, y-wis," quod she,

"And blisful Venus lat me never sterve
Er I may stonde of plesaunce in degree
To quyte him wel, that so wel can deserve;
And whyl that god my wit wol me conserve,
I shal so doon, so trewe I have yow founde,
That ay honour to me-ward shal rebounde.

239

For trusteth wel, that your estat royal
Ne veyn delyt, nor only worthinesse
Of yow in werre, or torney marcial,
Ne pompe, array, nobley, or eek richesse,
Ne made me to rewe on your distresse;
But moral vertue, grounded upon trouthe,
That was the cause I first hadde on yow routhel!

240

Eek gentil herte and manhod that ye hadde,
And that ye hadde, as me thoughte, in despyt
Every thing that souned in-to badde,
As rudenesse and poeplish appetyt;

233

"But I am not of such a simple mind
That I can't ferret out some easy way,
A speedy time for my return to find,
For who can hold what hath a will to stray?
My father can't, whatever tricks he play!
And take it so, my going forth from Troy
But antecedent is to greater joy!

234

"With all my heart I therefore you beseech,
If anything you'll ever grant to me,
And for the love that we have each for each,
Ere from my presence you tonight must flee,
A smile upon your features I may see,
As cheering witness to my troubled breast
That once again our hearts in union rest.

235

"And finally," she said, "one thing I pray,
My soul's delight and only satisfaction,
Since I am wholly thine, while I'm away,
Seek not elsewhere for pleasure and distraction,
Nor let love grow oblivious from inaction!
For still I fear, since often it is said,
'In love there always lies a cause for dread.'

236

"This world cannot another lady show,
If thou shouldst be untrue (as God defend),
Who would be cast in deeper depths of woe,
Than I, who shall be true unto the end;
Should any fate like that on me descend,
I could not live, and till just cause you find,
I pray to God, be not to me unkind!"

237

"By all the Gods," cried Troilus, "above,
And all that dwell below this solid earth,
I've never swerved an instant in my love
From that first moment when it had its birth,
Nor ever shall I hold thee at less worth;
I can but say, to you I'm ever bound,
And truth thereof will in the end be found."

238

"Have all my thanks," she said, "O sweetheart
mine,

And blessed Venus, ere I end my days,
Fulfil in Cressida thy great design,
And quit him well who merits all my praise!
As long as soul with living body stays,
I shall so strive, so true you've ever been,
That love with lasting honor we shall win.

239

"Believe me well that neither vain delight,
Nor royal rank, nor yet the high respect
Of you in war, or in the tourney fight,
Nor pomp, nor wealth, nor dress, did aught affect
My heart, and thy sole image there erect—
No, moral virtue, firmly set and true,
That was the reason why I first loved you.

240

"The gentle heart and manhood that you had,
And nobly cherished, ever in despite
Of all things leaning to the low and bad,
All coarseness and all vulgar appetite,

So that your reason bridled your delyt—
For this I was above all others yours,
And shall be so, as long as life endures.

241

"Through length of years my love I'll not forsake,
Nor Fortune, mutable, shall e'er deface
My heart! But Jupiter, who well can make
The wretched glad, give us the happy grace
To meet again in ten nights in this place;
But now, alas, how swift the hour flies!
Farewell, dear heart, for now you must arise."

242

'Tis thus they end their long lamentings sad,
And kiss, and each in other's arms enfold;
But daylight breaks, and Troilus now clad,
Full sadly doth his lady's face behold,
As one who feels the breath of death so cold,
And with a grief that heavy on him bore,
Of last goodbyes he said to her a score.

243

I doubt if any head imagine can,
Or judgment weigh, or any tongue could tell
The cruel anguish of this woful man,
Surpassing all the torments dire of hell;
Since with his lady he no more may dwell,
His heart perturbed and dark with dread portent,
Forth from her chamber, silently he went.

HERE ENDETH THE FOURTH BOOK

BOOK V

HERE BEGINNETH THE FIFTH BOOK

1

THE end approacheth of the destiny
Which Jove so long hath had in preparation,
And you, O Parcae, angry sisters three,
He trusteth with the fatal consummation!
Now Cressida must suffer love's probation,
And Troilus to grief himself resign
While Lachesis his thread of life shall twine.

2

The gold-crowned Phoebus, high in heaven aloft,
Three times upon the earth below had seen
The molten snows, and Zephyrus as oft
Had brought again the tender leaflets green,
Since first the son of Hecuba the queen,
Began to cherish her for whom this sorrow
Had come, that she must leave him on the morrow.

3

Before the hour of nine came Diomedé,
With him now Cressida from Troy must go;
The sorrows of her suffering heart exceed
All sorrow she had ever thought to know;
Yet all this inner grief she may not show,
But forth from out the Trojan town must fare,
And all the weight of woe in silence bear.

4

And Troilus, a lost and wandering sprite,
From whose sad heart all happiness was fled,

And that your reason bryddled your delyt,
This made, aboven every creature,
That I was your, and shal, whyl I may dure.

241

And this may lengthe of yeres not for-do,
Ne remuable fortune deface;
But Juppiter, that of his might may do
The sorwful to be glad, so yeve us grace,
Er nightes ten, to meten in this place,
So that it may your herte and myn suffyse;
And fareth now wel, for tyme is that ye ryse."

242

And after that they longe y-pleyned hadde,
And ofte y-kist and streite in armes folde,
The day gan ryse, and Troilus him cladde,
And rewfulliche his lady gan biholde,
As he that felte dethes cares colde.
And to hir grace he gan him recomaunde;
Wher him was wo, this holde I no demaunde.

243

For mannes heed imaginen ne can,
Ne entendement considere, ne tonge telle
The cruel peynes of this sorwful man,
That passen every torment down in helle.
For whan he saugh that she ne mighte dwelle,
Which that his soule out of his herte rente,
With-uten more, out of the chaumbre he wente.

1

APROCHEN gan the fatal destinee
That Joves hath in disposicioun,
And to yow, angry Parcas, sustren three,
Committeth, to don execucioun;
For which Criseyde moste out of the toun,
And Troilus shal dwelle forth in pyne
Til Lachesis his threed no longer twyne.—

2

The golden-tressed Phebus heighe on-lofte
Thryës hadde alle with his bemes shene
The snowes molte, and Zephirus as ofte
Y-brought ayein the tendre leves grene,
Sin that the sone of Ecuba the quene
Bigan to love hir first, for whom his sorwe
Was al, that she departe sholde a-morwe.

3

Ful redy was at pryme Dyomedé,
Criseyde un-to the Grekes ost to lede,
For sorwe of which she felte hir herte blede,
As she that niste what was best to rede.
And trewely, as men in bokes rede,
Men wiste never womman han the care,
Ne was so looth out of a toun to fare.

4

This Troilus, with-uten reed or lore,
As man that hath his joyes eek forlore,

Was waytinge on his lady ever-more
 As she that was the soothfast trus and more
 Of al his lust, or joyes here-tofore.
 But Troilus, now farewell al thy joye,
 For shaltow never seen hir eft in Troye!

5

Soth is, that whyl he bood in this manere,
 He gan his wo ful manly for to hyde,
 That wel unnethe it seen was in his chere;
 But at the yate ther she sholde oute ryde
 With certeyn folk, he hoved hir t'abyde,
 So wo bigoon, al wolde he nought him pleyne,
 That on his hors unnethe he sat for payne.

6

For ire he quook, so gan his herte gnawe,
 Whan Diomede on horse gan him dresse,
 And seyde un-to him-self this ilke sawe,
 "Allas," quod he, "thus foul a
 wrecchednesse

Why suffre ich it, why nil ich it redresse?
 Were it not bet at ones for to dye
 Than ever-more in langour trus to drye?

7

Why nil I make at ones riche and pore
 To have y-nough to done, er that she go?
 Why nil I bringe al Troye upon a rore?
 Why nil I sleen this Diomede also?
 Why nil I rather with a man or two
 Stele hir a-way? Why wol I this endure?
 Why nil I helpen to myn owene cure?"

8

But why he nolde doon so fel a dede,
 That shal I seyn, and why him liste it spare:
 He hadde in herte alway a maner drede,
 Lest that Criseyde, in rumour of this fare,
 Sholde han ben slayn; lo, this was al his care.
 And elles, certeyn, as I seyde yore,
 He hadde it doon, with-outen wordes more.

9

Criseyde, whan she redy was to ryde,
 Ful sorfully she sighte, and seyde "allas!"
 But forth she moot, for ought that may bityde,
 And forth she rit ful sorfully a pas.
 Ther nis non other remedie in this cas.
 What wonder is though that hir sore smerte,
 Whan she forgoth hir owene swete herte?

10

This Troilus, in wyse of curteisye,
 With hauke on hond, and with an huge route
 Of knyghtes, rood and dide hir companye,
 Passinge al the valey fer with-oute.
 And farther wolde han riden, out of doute,
 Ful fayn, and wo was him to goon so smerte,
 But torne he moste, and it was eek to done.

11

And right with that was Antenor y-come
 Out of the Grekes ost, and every wight
 Was of it glad, and seyde he was welcome.
 And Troilus, al nere his herte light,
 He peyned him with al his fulle might
 Him to with-holde of wepinge at the leste,
 And Antenor he kiste, and made feste.

Had thoughts but of his lady, fair and bright,
 Who now as ever, was the fountain-head
 Of all his hope, the cure for all his dread.
 But Troilus, farewell to hope of joy,
 For thou shalt never seek her back in Troy!

5

And since he could do nothing now but wait,
 Full manfully he strove his grief to hide
 From curious eyes, and at the city gate,
 Whence forth upon her journey she should ride,
 He and her friends to do her honor bide,
 Though on his horse his seat he scarcely kept,
 For grief unknown, unspoken and unwept.

6

What anger at his heart began to gnaw
 When Diomede upon his steed drew near!
 But anger now must yield to higher law,
 Checked by his promised pledge, though not
 by fear.

"Alas," he sighed, "that I stand idle here!
 Were it not better death should end this anguish,
 Than evermore in lonely grief to languish?"

7

"Why do I not the world and all defy,
 And put a stop to this so hateful deed?
 Why do I not all Trojan power deny?
 Why do I not destroy this Diomede?
 And carry her away upon my steed?
 Why do I this misfortune so endure?
 Why do I not risk all for my own cure?"

8

But there was reason why he could not do
 These things, and must them sadly all resign;
 For in his heart the fear of danger grew,
 Not to himself, but fear lest any sign
 Of violence should make the Greeks combine,
 And in the wild disorder of the fray,
 His helpless lady they in wrath would slay.

9

Now Cressida is ready forth to ride,
 Though far more gladly she would stay than go;
 But to the Greeks she must whate'er betide,
 And to the world a willing face must show;
 Thus forth she paces, stately and slow,
 And who can wonder that her heart should grieve,
 Since all her love and joy she now must leave!

10

And Troilus by way of courtesy,
 With hawk on hand, and with an escort strong
 Of knights, this lady doth accompany;
 Across the valley rode the noble throng,
 And even farther Troilus did long
 To ride, but though it grieved him to do so,
 Return he must, he may no farther go.

11

For at that moment forth Antenor came
 From out the Grecian host, and those of Troy
 Rejoiced and greeted him with loud acclaim;
 And Troilus, though sharing not their joy,
 Took heed restraining caution to employ,
 And let no sign of sorrow mar his face,
 But met Antenor with a kind embrace.

12

Such greetings made, his leave he now must take;
On Cressida he cast his lingering eye,
And to her side his way doth sadly make,
And took her hand to say a last goodbye,
While she, alas, doth naught but weep and sigh;
One word he softly said beneath his breath,
"Now hold your day, on that hangs life and death!"

13

His courser then he wheeled and rode away,
With face all pale, and unto Diomed
No word did he or any Trojan say,
Of which the son of Tydeus took heed,
Who knew a thing or two not in the Creed;
He took the lady's bridle at his side,
While back to Troy lone Troilus must ride.

14

Now Diomed, who held her horse's bridle,
When all the folk of Troy had gone away,
Reflected, "All my labor shan't be idle,
If I have anything in this to say;
'Twill help at least at putting in the day.
I've heard it said, and read it in a book,
'He is a fool who doth himself o'erlook.'"

15

But Diomed was wise, with wit enough,
And mused, "I shall, I'm sure, accomplish naught
If I begin too soon, or treat her rough;
For if that man is dwelling in her thought
Whom I suppose, so soon he can't be brought
Out of her mind; but I shall find a way,
So she shan't guess what game I mean to play."

16

Then Diomed, attending at her side,
Remarked to her, she seemed a trifle sad,
And hoped she would not weary of the ride,
And anything she wanted, he'd be glad
To get for her, and do whate'er she bade,
For he was hers to order and command,
Till at her father's tent-door she should stand.

17

He swore upon his honor as a knight,
That nothing in the world would him more
please,
Than to exert himself with will and might
To add unto her pleasure and her ease,
And hoped she would grow gladder by degrees,
"Because," he said, "we Greeks will all enjoy
Your company as much as those of Troy.

18

"Just now," he said, "You feel a little strange—
No wonder, since it's all so fresh and new,
From Trojan friends to Grecian friends to change,
Who all as yet are quite unknown to you;
But take my word for it, that just as true
A Greek you shall among our people find
As any Trojan, and just as well inclined.

19

"And since your friend I'll be, forever steady,
As I have sworn, to help you all I can,
And since we're old acquaintances already,
And since you know me best of any man—

12

And therewith-al he moste his leve take,
And caste his eye upon hir pitously,
And neer he rood, his cause for to make,
To take hir by the honde al sobrelly.
And lord! so she gan wepen tendrely!
And he ful softe and sleighly gan hir seye,
"Now hold your day, and dooth me not to deye."

13

With that his courser torned he a-boute
With face pale, and un-to Diomed
No word he spak, ne noon of al his route;
Of which the sone of Tydeus took hede,
As he that coude more than the crede
In swich a craft, and by the reyne hir hente;
And Troilus to Troye homwarde he wente.

14

This Diomed, that ladde hir by the brydel,
Whan that he saw the folk of Troye awaye,
Thoughte, "al my labour shal not been on ydel,
If that I may, for somewhat shal I seye.
For at the worste it may yet shorte our weye.
I have herd seyde, eek tymes twyës twelve,
'He is a fool that wol for-yete himselve.'"

15

But natheles this thoughte he wel ynough,
"That certaynly I am aboute nought
If that I speke of love, or make it tough;
For douteles, if she have in hir thought
Him that I gesse, he may not been y-brought
So sone away; but I shal finde a mene,
That she not wite as yet shal what I mene."

16

This Diomed, as he that coude his good,
Whan this was doon, gan fallen forth in speche
Of this and that, and asked why she stood
In swich disese, and gan hir eek biseche,
That if that he encrese mighte or eche
With any thing hir ese, that she sholde
Comaunde it him, and seyde he doon it wolde.

17

For trewely he swoor hir, as a knight,
That ther nas thing with whiche he mighte hir
plese,
That he nolde doon his payne and al his might
To doon it, for to doon hir herte an ese.
And preyede hir, she wolde hir sorwe apese,
And seyde, "y-wis, we Grekes con have joye
To honouren yow, as wel as folk of Troye."

18

He seyde eek thus, "I woot, yow thinketh straunge,
No wonder is, for it is to yow newe,
Th'aqueintaunce of these Trojanes to chaunge,
For folk of Grece, that ye never knewe.
But wolde never god but-if as trewe
A Greek ye shulde among us alle finde
As any Trojan is, and eek as kinde.

19

And by the cause I swoor yow right, lo, now,
To been your freend, and helply, to my might,
And for that more aqueintaunce eek of yow
Have ich had than another straunger wight,

So fro this forth I pray yow, day and night,
Comaundeth me, how sore that me smerte,
To doon al that may lyke un-to your herte;

20

And that ye me wolde as your brother trete,
And taketh not my friendship in despyt;
And though your sorwes be for thinges grete,
Noot I not why, but out of more respyt,
Myn herte hath for to amende it greet delyt.
And if I may your harmes not redresse,
I am right sorry for your hevynesse.

21

And though ye Trojans with us Grekes wrothe
Han many a day be, alwey yet, pardee,
O god of love in sooth we serven bothe.
And, for the love of god, my lady free,
Whom so ye hate, as beth not wroth with me.
For trewely, ther can no wight yow serve,
That half so looth your wraththe wolde deserve.

22

And nere it that we been so neigh the tente
Of Calkas, which that seen us bothe may,
I wolde of this yow telle al myn entente;
But this enseled til another day.
Yeve me your hond, I am, and shal ben ay,
God help me so, whyl that my lyf may dure,
Your owene aboven every creature.

23

Thus seyde I never er now to womman born;
For god myn herte as wisly glade so,
I lovede never womman here-biforn
As paramours, ne never shal no mo.
And, for the love of god, beth not my fo;
Al can I not to yow, my lady dere,
Compleyne aright, for I am yet to lere.

24

And wondreth not, myn owene lady bright,
Though that I speke of love to you thus blyve;
For I have herd or this of many a wight,
Hath loved thing he never saugh his lyve.
Eek I am not of power for to stryve
Ayens the god of love, but him obeye
I wol alwey, and mercy I yow preye.

25

Ther been so worthy knyghtes in this place,
And ye so fair, that everich of hem alle
Wol peynen him to stonden in your grace.
But mighte me so fair a grace falle,
That ye me for your servaunt wolde calle,
So lowly ne so trewely you serve
Nil noon of hem, as I shal, til I sterve."

26

Criseide un-to that purpos lyte answerde,
As she that was with sorwe oppressed so
That, in effect, she nought his tales herde,
But here and there, now here a word or two.
Hir thoughte hir sorwful herte brast a-two.
For whan she gan hir fader fer aspye,
Wel neigh doun of hir hors she gan
to sye.

27

But natheles she thonked Diomede

I mean of course among the Grecian clan—,
I hope that you will always feel quite free,
In case of any need, to call on me.

20

"Regard me as your brother, let me pray,
And take my friendship kindly, as 'tis meant;
And if perhaps some griefs upon you weigh,
I know not why, but all my heart is bent
On aiding you, if you will but consent;
And if your troubles deep I can't amend,
For sympathy at least on me depend.

21

"You Trojans towards us Greeks are filled with hate,
But so in every case it need not be;
For Greeks and Trojans likewise venerate
The God of Love as their divinity.
Hate whom you will, but be not wroth with me,
For no man living, you may well believe,
If you were angry, would more deeply grieve.

22

"But now we're drawing near your father's tent,
Whose eyes, I have no doubt, are turned this way;
With what I've said, I now must be content,
And leave the rest until some other day.
Give me your hand! I am, and shall be aye,
So heaven help me, while my life shall last,
In friendship yours, forever firm and fast.

23

"Such words to woman never have I spoken,
For by my hope of earthly happiness,
No woman have I given any token
Of love, and shall hereafter give still less,
If with your friendship, you my soul will bless;
Forgive me if my thought I rudely blurt,
For in these matters I am not expert.

24

"And do not be surprised, my lady bright,
That thus I speak to you of love so soon;
For I have heard of many a noble knight
Who, sight unseen, hath sought the lover's boon;
Nor have I power in me to oppugn
The God of Love, but must his will obey,
And ever shall, and for your mercy pray.

25

"There are such knights, so worthy, in this place,
And you so fair, that they will one and all
Bestir themselves to stand high in your grace;
But if such fortune to my lot should fall,
That me your humble servant you will call,
I promise here that I will serve as true
And faithfully as any man can do."

26

This blarney Cressida but vaguely heard,
So grievously at heart she was oppressed,
Although she could not help but catch a word
Or two, which she thought briefly it were best
To answer, letting so the matter rest;
But when at last her father came in sight,
Down from her horse she almost slipped from
fright.

27

But still she spoke her thanks to Diomede

For all his trouble and his kindly care,
And for his proffered friendship, which indeed
She now accepted with a gracious air,
And hoped they'd meet again sometime somewhere,
And said she thought he was a trusty knight,
And down from off her horse did then alight.

28

Within his arms her father hath her taken,
And twenty times he kissed his daughter sweet.
"Welcome," he cried, "O daughter mine forsaken!"
And she, she said, was glad that they should meet
Again, and stood, submissive and discreet.
And here I leave her, her new life to lead,
For back to Troilus I now must speed.

29

To Troy this woful Troilus returned,
Sorrow of sorrows now his hapless lot;
With angry brow all dallying he spurned,
But down from his horse without delay he got,
And to his chamber hastened like a shot;
His comrades were afraid a word to say,
For he did slight attention to them pay.

30

To all the woes that he so long had checked,
He had at last a chance to give free rein;
He cursed the Gods for all his hopes thus wrecked,
Jove and Apollo and Cupid, time and again,
Ceres, Bacchus and Venus, with might and main,
His birth, himself, his fate, the world so blind,
And save his lady, all of human kind.

31

To bed he goes, and tosses there and turns,
As does Ixion, suffering deep in hell,
And through the sleepless night he there sojourns;
But then his heart a little doth unswell,
Relieved by floods of tears that upward well;
His lady he began now to invoke,
And to himself these sorrowing words he spoke:

32

"O where is now my lovely lady dear?
Where are her breasts so white, O where, O where?
Where are her arms and where her eyes so clear,
Which yesternight were solace to my care?
Now I must weep alone in dark despair,
And blindly grope, but nothing in this place,
Except a pillow, find I to embrace!

33

"What shall I do? When will she come again?
God knows, alas! Why did I let her go?
O, would that I had perished there and then!
O precious heart, O Cressida, sweet foe,
O lady mine, my weeping eyes o'erflow!
With all my life and soul I thee endow,
But though I die, you can not aid me now!

34

"Who looks upon you now, my bright lodestar?
Who maketh now to thee his compliments?
Who comforts you, away from me so far?
Now I am gone, whom give you audience?
Who troubleth now to speak in my defence?
Alas, no man! And though I grieve and pine,
As evil is your fortune as is mine!

Of al his travaile, and his goode chere,
And that him liste his friendship hir to bede;
And she accepteth it in good manere,
And wolde do fayn that is him leef and dere;
And trusten him she wolde, and wel she mighte,
As seyde she, and from hir hors she alighte.

28

Hir fader hath hir in his armes nome,
And tweynt y tyme he kiste his doughter swete,
And seyde, "O dere doughter myn, welcome!"
She seyde eek, she was fayn with him to mete,
And stood forth mewet, mildē, and mansuete.
But here I leve hir with hir fader dwelle,
And forth I wol of Troilus yow telle.

29

To Troye is come this woful Troilus.
In sorwe aboven alle sorwes smerte,
With felon look, and face dispitous.
Tho sodeinly down from his hors he sterte,
And thorough his paleys, with a swollen herte,
To chambre he wente; of no-thing took he hede,
Ne noon to him dar speke a word for drede.

30

And there his sorwes that he spared hadde
He yaf an issue large, and "deeth!" he cryde;
And in his throwes frenetyk and madde
He cursed Jove, Appollo, and eek Cupyde,
He cursed Ceres, Bacus, and Cipryde,
His burthe, him-self, his fate, and eek nature,
And, save his lady, every creature.

31

To bedde he goth, and weyleth there and torneth
In furie, as dooth he, Ixion, in helle;
And in this wyse he neigh til day sojorneth.
But tho bigan his herte a lyte unswelle
Thorough teres which that gonnen up to welle;
And pitously he cryde up-on Criseyde,
And to him-self right thus he spak, and seyde:—

32

"Wher is myn owene lady lief and dere,
Wher is hir whyte brest, wher is it, where?
Wher been hir armes and hir eyen clere,
That yesternight this tyme with me were?
Now may I wepe allone many a tere,
And graspe aboute I may, but in this place,
Save a pilowe, I finde nought t'enbrace.

33

How shal I do? Whan shal she com ayeyen?
I noot, alas! why leet ich hir to go?
As wolde god, ich hadde as tho be sleyn!
O herte myn, Criseyde, O swete fo!
O lady myn, that I love and no mo!
To whom for ever-mo myn herte I dowe;
See how I deye, ye nil me not rescowe!

34

Who seeth yow now, my righte lodesterre?
Who sit right now or stant in your presence?
Who can conforten now your hertes werre?
Now I am gon, whom yeve ye audience?
Who speketh for me right now in myn absence?
Alas, no wight; and that is al my care;
For wel wot I, as yvel as I ye fare.

35

How shulde I thus ten dayes ful endure,
Whan I the firste night have al this tene?
How shal she doon eek, sorwful creature?
For tendernesse, how shal she this sustene,
Swich wo for me? O pitous, pale, and grene
Shal been your fresshe womanliche face
For langour, er ye torne un-to this place."

36

And whan he fil in any slomeringes,
Anoon biginne he sholde for to grone,
And dremen of the dredfullest things
That mighte been; as, mete he were allone
In place horrible, makinge ay his mone,
Or meten that he was amonges alle
His enemys, and in hir hondes falle.

37

And ther-with-al his body sholde sterte,
And with the stert al sodeinliche awake,
And swich a tremour fele aboute his herte,
That of the feer his body sholde quake;
And therewith-al he sholde a noyse make,
And seme as though he sholde falle depe
From heighe a-lofte; and than he wolde wepe,

38

And rewen on him-self so pitously,
That wonder was to here his fantasyc.
Another tyme he sholde mightily
Conforte him-self, and seyn it was folye,
So causeles swich drede for to drye,
And eft biginne his aspre sorwes newe,
That every man mighte on his sorwes rewe.

39

Who coude telle aright or ful discryve
His wo, his pleynte, his langour, and his pyne?
Nought al the men that han or been onlyve.
Thou, redere, mayst thy-self ful wel devyne
That swich a wo my wit can not defyne.
On ydel for to wryte it sholde I swinke,
Whan that my wit is wery it to thinke.

40

On hevene yet the sterres were sene,
Al-though ful pale y-waxen was the mone;
And whyten gan the orisonte shene
Al estward, as it woned is to done.
And Phebus with his rosy carte sone
Gan after that to dresse him up to fare,
Whan Troilus hath sent after Pandare.

41

This Pandare, that of al the day biforn
Ne mighte have comen Troilus to see,
Al-though he on his heed it hadde y-sworn,
For with the king Pryam alday was he,
So that it lay not in his libertee
No-where to gon, but on the morwe he wente
To Troilus, whan that he for him sente.

42

For in his herte he coude wel devyne,
That Troilus al night for sorwe wook;
And that he wolde telle him of his pyne,
This knew he wel y-nough, with-oute book.
For which to chambre streight the wey he took,

35

"And how shall I for ten whole days survive,
If I the first night suffer all this pain?
And how shall she, my sweetheart, keep alive?
How shall her tender heart such woe sustain?
What sorry signs of grief must still remain
Imprinted on her fair and gracious face
Until time brings her back unto this place!"

36

And if he fell in any slumbering,
He did not cease to toss about and groan,
Or dream perhaps of some most dreadful thing,
As thus, that he must lie and ever moan,
Abandoned in some frightful place alone,
Or that he was among his foes withal,
And in their cruel hands about to fall.

37

And then convulsively he up would start,
And with the shock would suddenly awake,
While such a tremor ran throughout his heart,
The fear of it made all his body quake,
And horrid gasping sounds his breath would make.
For so it seemed, he fell from some high place,
Down to the lowest depths of endless space.

38

Upon his wretched state when he took thought,
His grief was greater than he well could bear,
But then he took himself in hand, and sought
To brighten up, and said he borrowed care,
And causeless was his grief and his despair,
Yet such devices brought but respite brief,
And hope soon yielded way to fear and grief.

39

O, who could all his woe relate,
His long-enduring sorrow and his pain?
Not all the men on earth incorporate!
Thus, reader, you will see why I refrain
To carry to its end this plaintive strain,
For how may this by my weak art be phrased,
When at the simple thought I stand amazed?

40

The stars still lingered in the morning sky,
But the horizon eastward glimmered gray,
And pale and thin the moon had climbed on high—
In short the dawn came in its usual way,
And Phoebus, ushering in the rosy day,
Brightened the eastern sky as up he went,
And Troilus for faithful Pandar sent.

41

Now Pandar, all the livelong day before,
Had found no chance to proffer sympathy,
Although he knew his friend was suffering sore,
Because all day about the court he had to be,
But now at his first moment's liberty,
He quickly came, responsive to command,
Prepared by his afflicted friend to stand.

42

For in his heart he readily could guess
How Troilus, awake all night, would look,
And how he longed his sorrows to confess—
He knew this well enough without the book!
So to his chamber straight his way he took,

And there most sombrely his friend he greeted
And by him on his bed himself he seated.

43

"My Pandar," then said Troilus, "the sorrow
Within my heart I may no more endure;
Today will be my last, or else tomorrow—
And of some final things I would make sure,
And most about my formal sepulture;
And will you please dispose of my estate,
As your good judgment may to you dictate.

44

"And of the fire and all the funeral flames,
To which my lifeless body thou shalt feed,
And of the feast and the palaestral games
To celebrate my wake, I pray take heed
That they be good; and offer Mars my steed,
My sword, my helmet, and, O brother dear,
My shield to Pallas give, the bright and clear.

45

"The powdered ash to which my heart shall
burn,
I pray thee take and let it be confined
Within the vessel which men call an urn,
One made of gold, which then shall be consigned
To my fair lady, thus to keep in mind
My love and death, and bid my lady dear
Preserve it as a final souvenir.

46

"For now I feel approach the mortal throes,
And by my dreams, both old and new, I know
My time on earth is drawing near its close;
Besides the boding owl, Ascapphilo,
Two nights hath shrieked for me, the third I go!
To thee, O Mercury, I now confide
My wandering soul, to be its final guide."

47

To this speech Pandar answered, "Troilus,
Dear friend, as I have told you oft before,
'Tis folly so, and most egregious,
To grieve, and now of this I'll say no more;
For he who heeds advice nor other lore,
He may for all that I shall say or do,
Alone in his own juice forever stew.

48

"But Troilus, I pray thee, tell me now,
Do you believe that any such delight
In love a living man hath known as thou?
Why, yes, God knows! And many a worthy wight
Has lacked his lady for a whole fortnight,
And hath not made one half the stir and fuss!
Why must you then be so tempestuous?

49

"For you yourself, on any day, may see,
How one must leave his lady-love or wife,
Through some compulsion or necessity,
Though she were dear to him as his own life,
Yet will not make such great to-do and strife;
For one takes such things as one takes the weather,
The best of friends can't always be together.

50

"And think upon the chaps whose loves are married
By force to other men, as happens oft,

And Troilus tho sobreliche he grette,
And on the bed ful sone he gan him sette.

43

"My Pandarus," quod Troilus, "the sorwe
Which that I drye, I may not longe endure.
I trowe I shal not liven til to-morwe;
For whiche I wolde alwey, on aventure,
To thee devysen of my sepulture
The forme, and of my moeble thou dispone
Right as thee semeth best is for to done.

44

But of the fyr and flaumbe funeral
In whiche my body brenne shal to glede,
And of the feste and playes palestral
At my vigile, I pray thee take good hede
That al be wel; and offre Mars my stede,
My swerd, myn helm, and, leve brother dere,
My sheld to Pallas yef, that shyneth clere.

45

The poudre in which myn herte y-brend shal
torne,
That preye I thee thou take and it conserve
In a vessel, that men clepeth an urne,
Of gold, and to my lady that I serve,
For love of whom thus pitously I sterve,
So yeve it hir, and do me this plesauce,
To preye hir kepe it for a remembraunce.

46

For wel I fele, by my maladye,
And by my dremes now and yore ago,
Al certainly, that I mot nedes dye.
The owle eek, which that hight Ascapphilo,
Hath for me shrighit alle thise nightes two.
And, god Mercurie! of me now, woful wrecche,
The soule gyde, and, whan thee list, it fecche!"

47

Pandare answerde, and seyde, "Troilus,
My dere freend, as I have told thee yore,
That it is folye for to sorwen thus,
And causeles, for whiche I can no-more.
But who-so wol not trowen reed ne lore,
I can not seen in him no remedye,
But lete him worthen with his fantasye.

48

But Troilus, I pray thee tel me now,
If that thou trowe, er this, that any wight
Hath loved paramours as wel as thou?
Ye, god wot, and fro many a worthy knight
Hath his lady goon a fourteenight,
And he not yet made halvendel the fare.
What nede is thee to maken al this care?

49

Sin day by day thou mayst thy-selven see
That from his love, or elles from his wyf,
A man mot twinnen of necessitee,
Ye, though he love hir as his owene lyf;
Yet nil he with him-self thus maken stryf.
For wel thow wost, my leve brother dere,
That alwey freendes may nought been y-fere.

50

How doon this folk that seen hir loves wedded
By freendes might, as it bi-tit ful ofte,

And seen hem in hir spouses bed y-bedded?
 God woot, they take it wysly, faire and softe.
 For-why good hope halt up hir herte on-lofte,
 And for they can a tyme of sorwe endure;
 As tyme hem hurt, a tyme doth hem cure.

51

So sholdestow endure, and late slyde
 The tyme, and fonde to ben glad and light.
 Ten dayes nis so long not t'abyde.
 And sin she thee to comen hath bihight,
 She nil hir hestes breken for no wight.
 For dred thee not that she nil finden weye
 To come ayein, my lyf that dorste I leye.

52

Thy swevenes eek and al swich fantasye
 Dryf out, and lat hem faren to mischaunce;
 For they procede of thy malencolye,
 That doth thee fele in sleep al this penaunce.
 A straw for alle swevenes signifaunce!
 God helpe me so, I counte hem not a bene,
 Ther woot no man aright what dremes mene.

53

For prestes of the temple tellen this,
 That dremes been the revelaciouns
 Of goddes, and as wel they telle, y-wis,
 That they ben infernals illusionis;
 And leches seyn, that of complexiouns
 Proceden they, or fast, or glotonye.
 Who woot in sooth thus what they signifye?

54

Eek othere seyn that thorough impressiouns,
 As if a wight hath faste a thing in minde,
 That ther-of cometh swiche avisiouns;
 And othere seyn, as they in bokes finde,
 That, after tymes of the yeer by kinde,
 Men dreme, and that th'effect goth by the mone;
 But leve no dreem, for it is nought to done.

55

Wel worth of dremes ay thise olde wyves,
 And trelweliche eek augurie of thise foules;
 For fere of which men wenen lese her lyves,
 As ravenes qualm, or shryking of thise oules.
 To trowen on it bothe fals and foul is.
 Allas, allas, so noble a creature
 As is a man, shal drede swich ordure!

56

For which with al myn herte I thee beseche,
 Un-to thy-self that al this thou foryive;
 And rys up now with-oute more speche,
 And lat us caste how forth may best be drive
 This tyme, and eek how freshly we may live
 When that she cometh, the which shal be right
 sone;
 God help me so, the beste is thus to done.

57

Rys, lat us speke of lusty lyf in Troye
 That we han lad, and forth the tyme dryve;
 And eek of tyme cominge us rejoye,
 That bringen shal our blisse now so blyve;
 And langour of these twyfes dayes fyve
 We shal ther-with so foryete or oppresse,
 That wel unnethe it doon shal us duresse.

And to a watchful husband's house are carried!
 Hard hit such lovers are, but take it soft,
 For hope survives to hold their hearts aloft;
 Their needful time of sorrow they endure,
 For time brings sorrow, and brings sorrow's cure.

51

"So take things as they come and let time slide,
 And cultivate a joyous heart and light!
 Ten days is not so long a time to bide.
 For her return she pledged her honor bright,
 And I am sure that she will come all right;
 You need not fear but she will find a way,
 I'm quite prepared my life on that to lay.

52

"And all your dreams and other such like folly,
 To deep oblivion let them be consigned;
 For they arise but from your melancholy,
 By which your health is being undermined.
 A straw for all the meaning you can find
 In dreams! They aren't worth a hill of beans,
 For no one knows what dreaming really means.

53

"Priests in the temples sometimes choose to say
 That dreams come from the Gods as revelations;
 But other times they speak another way,
 And call them hellish false hallucinations!
 And doctors say they come from complications,
 Or fast or surfeit, or any other lie,
 For who knows truly what they signify?

54

"And others say that through impressions deep,
 As when one has a purpose firm in mind,
 There come these visions in one's sleep;
 And others say that they in old books find,
 That every season hath its special kind
 Of dream, and all depends upon the moon;
 But all such folk are crazy as a loon!

55

"Dreams are the proper business of old wives,
 Who draw their auguries from birds and fowls,
 For which men often fear to lose their lives,
 The raven's croak or mournful shriek of owls!
 O why put trust in bestial shrieks and howls!
 Alas, that noble man should be so brash
 To implicate his mind in such like trash!

56

"And so with all my heart I thee besech,
 Against these melancholy thoughts to strive;
 And pray get up, I've ended now my speech,
 And let us plan something to help us drive
 Dull care away, and keep us both alive
 Till she returns, which won't be very
 long;
 To waste the time in moping is all wrong.

57

"Come, let us think of those good times in Troy
 That we have had, to pass the time away;
 And think, besides, of those we shall enjoy
 At some not very distant happy day.
 These twice five days we'll fill with sport and play,
 And so amuse ourselves with many things
 That time will fly on self-oblivious wings.

58

"This town is full of nobles here and there,
The truce will last, besides, for yet some while,
I say, let's straightway to Sarpedon fare,
The distance to his house is but a mile;
And there we can the time at ease beguile,
Until there rolls around that happy morrow
When she returns, whose absence is thy sorrow.

59

"Get up then, friend and brother Troilus,
For truly it is scarcely worthy thee,
Upon thy bed to weep and cower thus;
For one thing certain you can take from me,
If thus you lie a day or two or three,
The folk will say you have a coward's heart,
And but for fear you play the sick man's part."

60

"O brother dear," Troilus replied,
"They know, whose heavy hearts have suffered
pain,
When times of grief and sorrow shall betide
And deep affliction burns in every vein,
Then one cannot from cries of grief abstain;
And though I wept forever, I have good right,
For I have lost the source of all delight.

61

"But since I have to get up in the end,
I shall do so without too great delay,
And meantime pray that God will kindly send
As quickly as he can the glad tenth day!
For never was there bird as fain of May,
As I shall be when she comes back to Troy
Who causes all my grief as well as joy.

62

"But where do you suggest that we should go,
And where can we ourselves the best amuse?"
"My counsel is," said Pandar, "as you know,
To let Sarpedon counteract your blues."
After exchange of arguments and views,
Troilus at last thereto gave his assent,
And forth to good Sarpedon's house they went.

63

Sarpedon was a man in arms most able,
And famed throughout all Troy for living high;
And every costly dainty for the table
For daily entertainment he would buy,
And nothing to his guests he would deny,
Who always said, the greatest and the least,
They never had sat down to such a feast.

64

And in this world there was no instrument,
Sweet with the blast of air or touch of chord,
That skill of man could anywhere invent
For sounds that pleasure to the ear afford,
But it was heard around his festal board;
And ladies, too, to dance at his command
Were there, and ne'er was seen so fair a band.

65

But what avails all this to Troilus,
Whose inward grief absorbs his every thought
And rules his heart with will imperious!
His lady's memory he ever sought,

58

This town is full of lordes al aboute,
And trewes lasten al this mene while.
Go we pleye us in som lusty route
To Sarpedon, not hennens but a myle.
And thus thou shalt the tyme wel bigyle,
And dryve it forth un-to that blisful morwe,
That thou hir see, that cause is of thy sorwe.

59

Now rys, my dere brother Troilus;
For certes, it noon nonour is to thee
To wepe, and in thy bed to jouken thus.
For trewely, of o thing trust to me,
If thou thus ligge a day, or two, or three,
The folk wol wene that thou, for cowardyse,
Thee feynest syk, and that thou darst not ryse."

60

This Troilus answerde, "O brother dere,
This knowen folk that han y-suffred
peyne,
That though he wepe and make sorwful chere,
That feleth harm and smert in every veyne,
No wonder is; and though I ever pleyne,
Or alwey wepe, I am no-thing to blame,
Sin I have lost the cause of al my game.

61

But sin of fyne force I moot aryse,
I shal aryse, as sone as ever I may;
And god, to whom myn herte I sacrificse,
So sende us hastily the tenth day!
For was ther never fowl so fayn of May,
As I shal been, whan that she cometh in Troye,
That cause is of my torment and my joye.

62

But whider is thy reed," quod Troilus,
"That we may pleye us best in al this toun?"
"By god, my conseil is," quod Pandarus,
"To ryde and pleye us with king Sarpedoun."
So longe of this they spoken up and doun,
Til Troilus gan at the laste assente
To ryse, and forth to Sarpedoun they wente.

63

This Sarpedoun, as he that honourable
Was ever his lyve, and ful of heigh prowessse,
With al that mighte y-served been on table,
That deyntee was, al coste it greet richesse,
He fedde hem day by day, that swich noblesse,
As seyden bothe the moste and eek the leste,
Was never er that day wist at any feste.

64

Nor in this world ther is non instrument
Delicious, through wind, or touche, or corde,
As fer as any wight hath ever y-wente,
That tonge telle or herte may recorde,
That at that feste it nas wel herd acorde;
Ne of ladies eek so fayr a companye
On daunce, er tho, was never y-seyn with yë.

65

But what avayleth this to Troilus,
That for his sorwe no-thing of it roughte?
For ever in oon his herte piëtous
Ful bisily Criseyde his lady soughte.

On hir was ever al that his herte thoughte.
Now this, now that, so faste imaginige,
That glade, y-wis, can him no festeyinge.

66

These ladies eek that at this feste been,
Sin that he saw his lady was a-weye,
It was his sorwe upon hem for to seen,
Or for to here on instrumentz so pleye.
For she, that of his herte berth the keye,
Was absent, lo, this was his fantasye,
That no wight sholde make melodye.

67

Nor ther nas houre in al the day or night,
Whan he was ther-as no wight mighte him here,
That he ne seyde, "O lufsom lady bright,
How have ye faren, sin that ye were here?
Wel-come, y-wis, myn owene lady deer."
But welaway, al this nas but a mase;
Fortune his howve entended bet to glase.

68

The lettres eek, that she of olde tyme
Hadde him y-sent, he wolde allone rede,
An hundred sythe, a-twixen noon and pryme;
Refiguringe hir shap, hir womanhede,
With-inne his herte, and every word and dede
That passed was, and thus he droof to an ende
The ferthe day, and seyde, he wolde wende.

69

And seyde, "leve brother Pandarus,
Intendestow that we shul herẽ bleve
Til Sarpedoun wol forth congeyen us?
Yet were it fairer that we toke our leve.
For goddes love, lat us now sone at eve
Our leve take, and homward lat us torne;
For trewely, I nil not thus sojorne."

70

Pandare answerde, "be we comen hider
To fecchen fyr, and rennen hoorn ayeyn?
God helpe me so, I can not tellen whider
We mighten goon, if I shal soothly seyn,
Ther any wight is of us more fayn
Than Sarpedoun; and if we hennes hye
Thus sodeinly, I holde it vilanye,

71

Sin that we seyden that we wolde bleve
With him a wouke; and now, thus sodeinly,
The ferthe day to take of him our leve,
He wolde wondren on it, trewely!
Lat us holde forth our purpos fermely;
And sin that ye bihighten him to byde,
Hold forward now, and after lat us ryde."

72

Thus Pandarus, with alle peyne and wo,
Made him to dwelle; and at the woukes ende,
Of Sarpedoun they toke hir leve tho,
And on hir way they spedden him to wende.
Quod Troilus, "now god me grace sende,
That I may finden, at myn hom-cominge,
Criseyde comen!" and ther-with gan he singe.

73

"Ye, hasel-wode!" thoughte this Pandare,
And to him-self ful softly he seyde,

And longing such imagination wrought
Of this and that, his mind was never free
To take delight in this festivity.

66

The ladies, too, in throngs assembled there,
Since his was not, among the number gay,
Gave him no ease of heart, though all were fair;
And on sweet instruments to hear men play,
While she was absent who hath borne away
The key of his heart, to him seemed blasphemy,
And vain abuse of such sweet melody.

67

Nor was there hour of all the day or night
When he said not, though not to listening ear,
"O Cressida, my lovely lady bright,
How have you fared since you have not been here?
O welcome back, my precious lady dear!"
Vain words were these, except his breath to cool,
For he was doomed to be but fortune's fool!

68

And all the letters old that she had sent
To him, he read them when he was alone,
And all the morning period thus he spent,
And in his fancy now her beauty shone
Afresh, and in his mind he caught the tone
Of her dear voice; four days he managed so,
And then resolved back home at once to go.

69

"Pandar," said he, "what are you thinking about?
Do you intend to keep on staying here,
Until Sarpedon tells us to get out?
I'm sure 'twill more considerate appear
For us to go; and now as eve draws near,
Let's say goodbye, and homeward let us turn,
For I just cannot longer here sojourn."

70

"Did we come here," said Pandar, "fetching fire,
To turn and run straight home with it again?
What better place than this can you desire?
We're with the most hospitable of men,
Sarpedon will but take it sadly when
We go, and your so hasty attitude
Would be, I think, unpardonably rude.

71

"Because we said that we had come to stay
A week with him, and now in so great haste
And on the fourth day thus to go away
Would hurt his feelings and be shocking taste;
He has himself at our disposal placed,
And since we've promised here a week to bide,
We should do so, and homeward then may ride."

72

Thus Pandar, both with force and argument,
Held him until the week had reached its end;
Sarpedon then they thanked and homeward went,
For Troilus would not his stay extend.
"Now God," he said, "this favor to me send,
That Cressida will be my welcoming,
When I get home," and so began to sing.

73

"Yes, in your eye," was what wise Pandar thought,
And to himself he said, quite soft and low,

"O, you'll cool off, my boy, if I know aught,
Ere Calchas lets his daughter from him go!"
But still of confidence he made a show,
And said that something told him in his heart
That she would come as soon as she could start.

74

And when at eve they reached the palace gate,
Down from their horses quickly they alight,
And to the room of Troilus go straight,
And sit them down and talk till almost night,
Which talk was all of Cressida the bright,
And afterward, when so they felt inclined,
They went to bed, though first of course they
dined.

75

Next day, before the morning lights shone clear,
Troilus awoke, and leaping from his bed,
He routed Pandar out, his brother dear,
"For love of God," most plaintively he said,
"I cannot rest until I've visited
Her house, and though my eyes I cannot feast
On her, I can her palace see at least."

76

He found some way his household to mislead,
And he and Pandar to the town then go,
And to his lady's house at once proceed,
But, Lord, he only hastened to his woe!
He thought his heart with grief must overflow,
For when he saw the doors still bolted tight,
Upon his horse he scarce could sit upright.

77

For with one fatal glance his eyes behold
That shut is every window of the place,
And at the sight his heart like ice grows cold;
Without a word, and deadly pale of face,
Forth by the palace doth he madly race;
He spurs his horse and rides away full speed,
And of no man he takes the slightest heed.

78

"O palace desolate," he then began,
"O house, of houses once most dear to sight!
O palace, empty and accursed of man!
O lantern, wherein now is quenched the light!
O dwelling, once my day, now turned to night!
Why dost thou stand, while all my joys decay,
And she is gone, who was my hope and stay."

79

"O palace, once the crown of houses all,
Illumined with the sun of every bliss!
O ring, from which the ruby now doth fall!
O cause of woe, but cause of joy ere this!
Yet lacking better, fain now would I kiss
Thy doorways cold, if folk were not about!
Yet farewell, shrine, from which the saint is out!"

80

On Pandar then he cast his mournful eye,
With face all drawn and dreadful to behold,
And interrupted oft with many a sigh,
To him the devastating tale he told,
Of sorrow new and former joys grown old;
And pain sat on his countenance so grim,
No heart so hard but must have pitied him.

"God woot, refreyden may this hote fare
Er Calkas sende Troilus Criseyde!"
But natheles, he japed thus, and seyde,
And swor, y-wis, his herte him wel bihighte,
She wolde come as sone as ever she mighte.

74

Whan they un-to the paleys were y-comen
Of Troilus, they down of hors alighte,
And to the chambre hir wey than han they nomen.
And in-to tyme that it gan to nighte,
They spaken of Criseyde the brighte.
And after this, whan that hem bothe leste,
They spedde hem fro the soper un-to
reste.

75

On morwe, as sone as day bigan to clere,
This Troilus gan of his sleep t'abreyde,
And to Pandare, his owene brother dere,
"For love of god," ful pitously he seyde,
"As go we seen the paleys of Criseyde;
For sin we yet may have namore feste,
So lat us seen hir paleys at the leste."

76

And ther-with-al, his meynce for to blende,
A cause he fond in tounne for to go,
And to Criseydes hous they gonnen wende.
But lord! this sely Troilus was wo!
Him thoughte his sorweful herte braste a-two.
For whan he saugh hir dores sperred alle,
Wel neigh for sorwe a-down he gan to falle.

77

Therwith whan he was war and gan biholde
How shet was every window of the place,
As frost, him thoughte, his herte gan to colde;
For which with chaunged deedlich pale face,
With-outen word, he forth bigan to pace;
And, as god wolde, he gan so faste ryde,
That no wight of his contenance aspyde.

78

Than seyde he thus, "O paleys desolat,
O hous, of houses whylom best y-high,
O paleys empty and disconsolat,
O thou lantern, of which queynt is the light,
O paleys, whylom day, that now art night,
Wel oughtestow to falle, and I to dye,
Sin she is went that wont us was to gye!"

79

O paleys, whylom croune of houses alle,
Enlumined with sonne of alle blisse!
O ring, fro which the ruby is out-falle,
O cause of wo, that cause hast been of lisse!
Yet, sin I may no bet, fayn wolde I kisse
Thy colde dores, dorste I for this route;
And fare-wel shryne, of which the seynt is oute!"

80

Ther-with he caste on Pandarus his yē
With chaunged face, and pitous to biholde;
And whan he mighte his tyme aright aspye,
Ay as he rood, to Pandarus he tolde
His newe sorwe, and eek his joyes olde,
So pitously and with so dede an hewe,
That every wight mighte on his sorwe rewe.

81

Fro thennesforth he rydeth up and doun,
 And every thing com him to remembraunce
 As he rood forth by places of the toun
 In whiche he whylom hadde al his plesaunce.
 "Lo, yond saugh I myn owene lady daunce;
 And in that temple, with hir eyen clere,
 Me caughte first my righte lady dere.

82

And yonder have I herd ful lustily
 My dere herte laughe, and yonder pleye
 Saugh I hir ones eek ful blisfully.
 And yonder ones to me gan she seye,
 "Now goode swete, love me wel, I preye."
 And yond so goodly gan she me biholde,
 That to the deeth myn herte is to hir holde.

83

And at that corner, in the yonder hous,
 Herde I myn alderlevest lady dere
 So wommanly, with voys melodious,
 Singen so wel, so goodly, and so clere,
 That in my soule yet me thinketh I here
 The blisful soun; and, in that yonder place,
 My lady first me took un-to hir grace."

84

Thanne thoughte he thus, "O blisful lord Cupyde,
 Whanne I the proces have in my memorie,
 How thou me hast werreyed on every syde,
 Men mighte a book make of it, lyk a storie.
 What nede is thee to seke on me victorie,
 Sin I am thyn, and hooly at thy wille?
 What joye hastow thyn owene folk to spille?"

85

Wel hastow, lord, y-wroke on me thyn ire,
 Thou mighty god, and dredful for to greve!
 Now mercy, lord, thou wost wel I desire
 Thy grace most, of alle lustes leve.
 And live and deye I wol in thy bileve;
 For which I n'axe in guerdon but a bone,
 That thou Criseyde ayein me sende sone.

86

Distreyne hir herte as faste to retorne
 As thou dost myn to longen hir to see;
 Than woot I wel, that she nil not sojorne.
 Now, blisful lord, so cruey thou ne be
 Un-to the blood of Troye, I preye thee,
 As Juno was un-to the blood Thebane,
 For which the folk of Thebes caughte hir bane."

87

And after this he to the yates wente
 Ther-as Criseyde out-rood a ful good paas,
 And up and down ther made he many a wente,
 And to him-self ful ofte he seyde "allas!
 From hennes rood my blisse and my solas!
 As wolde blisful god now, for his joye,
 I mighte hir seen ayein come in-to Troye.

88

And to the yonder hille I gan hir gyde,
 Allas! and there I took of hir my leve!
 And yond I saugh hir to hir fader ryde,
 For sorwe of which myn herte shal to-cleve.
 And hider hoom I com whan it was eve;

81

And then distraught, he rode there up and down,
 And everything came back in memory
 As he rode by the places in the town
 In which he once had known felicity.
 "Lo, yonder last I did her dancing see!
 And in that temple by her eyes so clear,
 First was I caught by my own lady dear!

82

"And yonder once I heard her laugh so bright,
 And yonder once I saw her lightly play
 And never since have seen so goodly sight!
 And yonder once she came to me to say,
 'O sweetheart mine, now love me well, I pray!'
 And yonder such a loving glance she gave,
 The thought of it will cheer me in my grave.

83

"And at that corner house upon this street,
 I heard my most beloved lady dear,
 With woman's voice so gentle and so sweet,
 Singing withal so goodly and so clear
 That in my soul methinks I yet can hear
 The blissful sound! And in that yonder place
 My dearest lady did I first embrace!

84

"O Cupid," then he thought, "O blessed Lord,
 When all these things in memory I see,
 How thou against me on all sides hast warred,
 It seems just like a book of history!
 But yet, why seek a conquest over me,
 Since I am thine and wholly at thy will?
 What joy hast thou, thy subjects thus to kill?"

85

"Thou hast, O Lord, avenged on me thy ire,
 Thou God of might, and dangerous to grieve!
 Have mercy, Lord! Thou knowest I desire
 Nothing but thy good favor to receive;
 Living and dying I shall in thee believe,
 For all of which I beg a single boon,
 That thou wilt send me Cressida back soon.

86

"Constrain her heart as quickly to return
 As thou dost mine with longing her to see,
 Then well I know she will not long sojourn.
 Now, blessed Lord, show not such cruelty
 Unto the blood of Troy, perilled in me,
 As Juno showed unto the Theban race,
 Nor let me perish here in lone disgrace!"

87

Forth to the city's open gates he rode,
 Whence Cressida had started on her way,
 And up and down there many a time he strode,
 And often to himself "Alas!" did say,
 "'Twas here I lost my bliss that fatal day,
 And as she went, so may I have the joy
 To see her now come riding back to Troy.

88

"As far as yonder hill, I was her guide,
 And there I took of her my final leave,
 And there I saw her to her father ride,
 The thought of which my heart in two will cleave;
 And hither came I home when it was eve,

And here bereft of every joy I dwell,
And must so bide till time makes all things well."

89

Sick in his fancy, he imagined oft
That he was looking gaunt and pale and thin,
And that men noticed it and whispered soft,
"What can it be? What trouble is he in?
It must be bad, because he looks like sin!"
But this was all by melancholy bred,
Which spun such foolish fancies in his head.

90

At other times, in his fantastic brain,
He thought that every man along the way
Gave him such pitying looks as said quite plain,
"Poor Troilus, he's nearing his last day!"
'Twas so he passed his time in sad dismay,
And in these troubled days his life he led,
Still wavering in mind twixt hope and dread.

91

Some little joy he took in song to show
The reason for his grief, as best he might,
For heavy hearts when they in words o'erflow,
By such discharge may sometimes grow more light;
And so, when he was out of all men's sight,
With gentle voice unto his lady dear,
Though absent, yet sang as you shall hear:

92

"O star, now I have lost thy cheering light,
With grief unsending may I well bewail,
That in dark torment ever night by night
Toward certain death with favoring wind I sail!
And if the sacred tenth night there should fail
Thy beams to guide me through that fatal hour,
Charybdis shall my ship and me devour!"

93

When he had sung his song, thereafter soon
He fell again into his sighings old,
And every night he gazed upon the moon,
Shining with light so clear, but pale and cold,
And all his sorrow to the moon he told,
And said, "When thy two horns again are new,
I shall be glad, if all the world holds true.

94

"Thy horns were old upon that luckless morrow
When from this place rode forth my lady dear,
The cause of all my torment and my sorrow.
And O Lucina, bright and ever clear,
Run fast, I beg, about thy circling sphere,
For when thy horns anew begin to spring,
To Troy again my lady shall they bring."

95

The days stretched out, and longer every night
Seemed to this mind increasingly to grow,
And that the sun ran on his course unright,
By longer way than it was wont to go.
"In truth," he said, "I fear it must be so,
That Phaeton, son of the sun, alive,
Doth still amiss his father's chariot drive!"

96

And on the city's walls he oft would walk,
And gaze where he could see the Grecian host,
And to himself in this wise would he talk,

And here I dwelle out-cast from alle joye,
And shal, til I may seen hir eft in Troye."

89

And of him-self imagined he ofte
To ben defet, and pale, and waxen lesse
Than he was wont, and that men seyde softe,
"What may it be? who can the sothe gesse
Why Troilus hath al this hevinesse?"
And al this nas but his malencolye,
That he hadde of him-self swich fantasye.

90

Another tyme imaginen he wolde
That every wight that wente by the weye
Had of him routhe, and that they seyen sholde,
"I am right sory Troilus wol deye."
And thus he droof a day yet forth or tweye.
As ye have herd, swich lyf right gan he lede,
As he that stood bitwixen hope and drede.

91

For which him lyked in his songes shewe
Th'encheson of his wo, as he best mighte,
And make a song of wordes but a few,
Somwhat his woful herte for to lighte.
And whan he was from every mannes sighte,
With softe voys he, of his lady dere,
That was absent, gan singe as ye may here.

92

"O sterre, of which I lost have al the light,
With herte soor wel oughte I to bewaile,
That ever derk in torment, night by night,
Toward my deeth with wind in stere I sayle;
For which the tenthe night if that I fayle
The gyding of thy bemes brighte an houre,
My ship and me Caribdis wol devoure."

93

This song when he thus songen hadde, sone
He fil ayein in-to his sykes olde;
And every night, as was his wone to done,
He stood the brighte mone to beholde,
And al his sorwe he to the mone tolde;
And seyde, "y-wis, whan thou art horned newe,
I shal be glad, if al the world be trewe!

94

I saugh thyn hornes olde eek by the morwe,
Whan hennes rood my righte lady dere,
That cause is of my torment and my sorwe;
For whiche, O brighte Lucina the clere,
For love of god, ren faste aboute thy spere!
For whan thyn hornes newe ginne springe,
Than shal she come, that may my blisse bringe!"

95

The day is more, and lenger every night,
Than they be wont to be, him thoughte tho;
And that the sonne wente his course unright
By lenger wey than it was wont to go;
And seyde, "y-wis, me dredeth ever-mo,
The sonnes sone, Pheton, be on-lyve,
And that his fadres cart amis he dryve."

96

Upon the walles faste eek wolde he walke,
And on the Grekes ost he wolde see,
And to him-self right thus he wolde talke,

"Lo, yonder is myn owene lady free,
Or elles yonder, ther tho tentes be!
And thennes comth this eyr, that is so sote,
That in my soule I fele it doth me bote.

97

And hardely this wind, that more and more
Thus stoundemele encreseth in my face,
Is of my ladyes depe sykes sore.
I preve it thus, for in non othere place
Of al this toun, save onliche in this space,
Fele I no wind that souneth so lyk peyne;
It seyth, 'allas! why twinned be we tweyne?'"

98

This longe tyme he dryveth forth right thus,
Til fully passed was the nynthe night;
And ay bi-syde him was this Pandarus,
That bisily dide alle his fulle might
Him to comforte, and make his herte light;
Yevinge him hope alwey, the tenthe morwe
That she shal come, and stinten al his sorwe.

99

Up-on that other syde eek was Criseyde,
With wommen fewe, among the Grekes stronge;
For which ful ofte a day "allas!" she seyde,
"That I was born! Wel may myn herte longe
After my deeth; for now live I to longe!
Allas! and I ne may it not amende;
For now is wors than ever yet I wende.

100

My fader nil for no-thing do me grace
To goon ayein, for nought I can him queme;
And if so be that I my terme passe,
My Troilus shal in his herte deme
That I am fals, and so it may wel seme.
Thus shal I have unthank on every syde;
That I was born, so weylawey the tyde!

101

And if that I me putte in jupartye,
To stele away by nighte, and it bifalle
That I be caught, I shal be holde a spye;
Or elles, lo, this drede I most of alle,
If in the hondes of som wrecche I falle,
I am but lost, al be myn herte trewe;
Now mighty god, thou on my sorwe rewe!"

102

Ful pale y-waxen was hir brighte face,
Hir limes lene, as she that al the day
Stood whan she dorste, and loked on the place
Ther she was born, and ther she dwelt hadde ay.
And al the night wepinge, alas! she lay.
And thus despaired, out of alle cure,
She ladde hir lyf, this woful creature.

103

Ful ofte a day she sighte eek for destresse,
And in hir-self she wente ay portrayinge
Of Troilus the grete worthinesse,
And alle his goodly wordes recordinge
Sin first that day hir love bigan to springe.
And thus she sette hir woful herte a-fyre
Thorough remembrance of that she gan desyre.

104

In al this world ther nis so cruel herte

"Lo, yonder lies the one I love the most!
Lo, yonder the tent whence like a pining ghost,
There comes this sighing breeze so gently blowing,
New life upon my lifeless soul bestowing.

97

"And verily this wind, that more and more
Increases steadily upon my face,
Is from my lady's sighs, so deep and sore;
In proof of which, there is no other space
Of all this town, but only in this place
I feel a wind that soundeth so like pain;
It saith, 'Alas, why parted are we twain!'"

98

The tedious time he passes in this way
And thus survives until the last ninth night;
And Pandar still was his support and stay,
Striving with all his patience and his might
To cheer his friend and make his heart more light,
Feeding his hope that on the tenth tomorrow,
Cressida would come again and end his sorrow.

99

Now Cressida, upon the other side,
In exile lone among the Greeks must dwell,
And many a time a day, "Alas," she cried,
"That I was born! My wretched heart may well
Long for the tolling of my burial bell!
Alas, that fortune such hostility
Should single out to show to harmless me!

100

"My father will not grant me my request,
For anything that I can do or say,
And Troilus as treason self-confessed
Will take it, if too long from Troy I stay,
Nor could he see it any other way!
Thus shall I have the worst on every side,
Alas, that such fate should to me betide.

101

"And if the risky project I should try,
To steal away by night, then were I caught,
I should be taken surely for a spy;
Or else, indeed a still more dreadful thought
Into some ruffian's hands I might be brought.
So am I lost, whichever way I turn,
Nor find the peace for which my heart doth yearn!"

102

Now pale and wan had grown her lovely face,
Her body, too, with grief doth waste away;
From dawn to night she gazed upon the place,
Which was her home for many a happy day,
And all the sleepless night she weeping lay;
No remedy she knew for all her care,
And day and night were sunk in black despair.

103

In all this time she found her greatest ease
In keeping in her heart the image bright
Of Troilus, and his fair qualities
And all his goodly words she would recite
Since first she took him for her loving knight,
Cherishing in her woful heart the fires
Of love by such fond thoughts as love inspires.

104

In all this world so wide, no heart of stone

But must have melted at her grievous sorrow,
As there she wept, abandoned and alone;
At thought of Troilus at eye and morrow,
She had no need of others' tears to borrow,
And this was yet the worst of all her grief,
That she could tell no one for her relief.

105

With sad and mournful eyes she looked on Troy,
On every tower high and every hall.
"Alas," she said, "the pleasure and the joy
Which I have known within that city wall,
But now all turned to bitterness and gall!
O Troilus, what art thou doing now?
Art thou still faithful to thy lover's vow?"

106

"Would I had done as you did once require,
Had fled with you to some security,
Then would I not in lonely grief expire!
That it was right, O who would not agree
With such a one as Troilus to flee;
But when the corpse is ready to put in
The grave, too late to think of medicine!

107

"Too late, too late, the evil to repair!
Prudence, alas, one of thy triple eyes
I lacked in management of this affair!
Of time long past I was aware and wise,
And present things could at their value prize,
But future time, ere I was fairly caught,
I could not see, and so thus low am brought.

108

"But now I say, betide what may betide,
I shall tomorrow night, by hook or crook,
Steal from this camp, and when I get outside,
With Troilus I'll seek some happy nook
Where we can dwell; I care not how men look
At it, or how the gossips' tongues may wag.
True love they always in the mire will drag.

109

"If every gossip's word you were to heed,
Or rule yourself by other people's wit,
'Twould be a pretty life that you would lead;
Whate'er you do, some will find fault with it,
Yet others think it proper, right and fit;
And in such matters of dubiety,
My happiness will compensate for me.

110

"I know, then, now at last, what I shall do,
I'll go to Troy, and thus the matter end!"
But time would come, and ere a month or two,
When quite another way her mind would tend!
Troilus and Troy together she would send
Their way quite readily would let them slide,
And happily among the Greeks abide.

111

Now Diomedes, of whom I spoke before,
Hath still his mind intent upon one thing,
Which in his inmost heart he ever bore,
How he with some device encompassing,
Cressida's heart into his net might bring.
To catch this lady was his sole design,
And to this end he laid out hook and line.

That hir hadde herd compleynen in hir sorwe,
That nolde han wopen for hir peynes smerte,
So tendrely she weep, bothe eve and morwe.
Hir nedede no teres for to borwe.
And this was yet the worste of al hir peyne,
Ther was no wight to whom she dorste hir pleyne.

105

Ful rewfully she loked up-on Troye,
Biheld the toures heighe and eek the halles;
"Allas!" quod she, "the plesaunce and the joye
The whiche that now al torned in-to galle is,
Have I had ofte with-inne yonder walles!
O Troilus, what dostow now," she seyde;
"Lord! whether yet thou thenke up-on Criseyde?"

106

Allas! I ne hadde trowed on your lore,
And went with yow, as ye me radde er this!
Thanne hadde I now not syked half so sore.
Who mighte have seyde, that I had doon a-mis
To stele away with swich on as he is?
But al to late cometh the letuarie,
Whan men the cors un-to the grave carie.

107

To late is now to speke of this matere;
Prudence, allas! oon of thyn even three
Me lakked alwey, er that I cam here;
On tyme y-passed, wel remembred me;
And present tyme eek coude I wel y-see.
But futur tyme, er I was in the snare,
Coude I not seen; that causeth now my care.

108

But natheles, bityde what bityde,
I shal to-morwe at night, by est or weste,
Out of this ost stele on som maner syde,
And go with Troilus wher-as him leste.
This purpos wol I holde, and this is beste.
No fors of wikked tonges janglerie,
For every on love han wrecches had envye.

109

For who-so wole of every word take hede,
Or rewen him by every wightes wit,
Ne shal he never thryven, out of drede.
For that that som men blamen ever yit,
Lo, other maner folk commenden it.
And as for me, for al swich variaunce,
Felicitee clepe I my suffisaunce.

110

For which, with-uten any wordes mo,
To Troye I wol, as for conclusioun."
But god it wot, er fully monthes two,
She was ful fer fro that entencioun.
For bothe Troilus and Troye toun
Shal knotteles through-out hir herte slyde;
For she wol take a purpos for t'abyde.

111

This Diomedes, of whom yow telle I gan,
Goth now, with-inne him-self ay arguinge
With al the sleighte and al that ever he can,
How he may best, with shortest taryinge,
In-to his net Criseydes herte bringe.
To this entente he coude never fynde;
To fisshen hir, he leyde out hook and lyne.

112

But natheles, wel in his herte he thoughte,
That she nas nat with-oute a love in Troye.
For never, sithen he hir thennes broughte,
Ne coude he seen her laughe or make joye.
He niste how best hir herte for t'acoye.
"But for t'assaye," he seyde, "it nought ne greveth;
For he that nought n'assayeth, nought n'acheveth."

113

Yet seide he to him-self upon a night,
"Now am I not a fool, that woot wel how
Hir wo for love is of another wight,
And here up-on to goon assaye hir now?
I may wel wite, it nil not been my prow.
For wyse folk in bokes it expresse,
'Men shal not wowe a wight in hevinesse.'

114

But who-so mighte winnen swich a flour
From him, for whom she morneth night and day,
He mighte seyn, he were a conquerour."
And right anoon, as he that bold was ay,
Thoughte in his herte, "happe, how happe may,
Al sholde I deye, I wole hir herte seche;
I shal no more lesen but my speche."

115

This Diomedes, as bokes us declare,
Was in his nedes prest and courageous;
With sterne voys and mighty limes square,
Hardy, testif, strong, and chevalrous
Of dedes, lyk his fader Tideus.
And som men seyn, he was of tunge large;
And heir he was of Calidoine and Arge.

116

Criseyde mene was of hir stature,
Ther-to of shap, of face, and eek of chere,
Ther mighte been no fairer creature.
And ofte tyme this was hir manere,
To gon y-tressed with hir heres clere
Down by hir coler at hir bak bihinde,
Which with a threde of gold she wolde binde.

117

And, save hir browes joyneden y-fere,
Ther nas no lak, in ought I can espyen;
But for to speken of hir eyen clere,
Lo, trewely, they writen that hir syen,
That Paradys stood formed in hir yēn.
And with hir riche beautee ever-more
Strof love in hir, ay which of hem was more.

118

She sobre was, eek simple, and wys with-al,
The beste y-norissed eek that mighte be,
And goodly of hir speche in general,
Charitable, estatliche, lusty, and free;
Ne never-mo ne lakkede hir pitee;
Tendre-herted, slydinge of corage;
But trewely, I can not telle hir age.

119

And Troilus wel waxen was in highte,
And complet formed by proporcioun
So wel, that kinde it not amenden mighte;

112

But he was wary, since he surely thought
That she had left some love in Troy behind,
For ever since she from that town was brought,
She seemed to carry something on her mind,
Some loss to which she could not be resigned.
"But still," he said, "to try is worth the
pains,
For he who nothing ventures, nothing
gains."

113

And so he said unto himself one day,
"Now I am not a fool! I see well how
She's sad because her lover is away;
If I should be too brisk with her just now,
It wouldn't do; I must some time allow;
Wise folk in books this matter thus expresse,
'Do not make love to those in great distress.'

114

"But such a flower for yourself to win
From him for whom she mourneth night and day,
That were a conquest one might glory in!"
And boldly then, for he loved not delay,
"Let happen," he declared, "whatever may,
I'll try her out, and if she should refuse,
I've nothing but a little breath to lose."

115

This Diomedes, as all the books attest,
Was quick in action, also brave and bold,
And stern of voice, with mighty arms and chest;
For feats adventurous he was extolled,
High as his father Tydeus of old;
Some say his word could not be counted on,
This prince of Argos and of Calydon.

116

Cressida was in frame of even height,
And in her shape, her look and all her face,
No fairer creature ever blessed man's sight.
Following the custom of her time and place,
She wore her hair all braided in a lace,
Down by her collar at her back behind,
And with a thread of gold she did it bind.

117

Her curving brows beneath her forehead met,
And in all things men counted her most fair;
Her eyes within their frame were brightly set,
And all who saw her with one voice declare
That Paradise in truth was written there;
Beauty and love in her were so create,
That which the greater, one could but debate.

118

Sedate she was, simple and wise withal,
Instructed in the arts most carefully,
Goodly of speech, whatever might befall,
With kindly grace, both dignified and free;
Nor lacked her heart in sensibility
In all the things which sympathy engage,
But I regret I cannot tell her age.

119

And Troilus was more than middle height,
But well-proportioned and of figure neat;
In short, he seemed in everything just right,

Young, fresh, and quick as a lion on his feet,
And true as steel his heart within its seat;
He was with all the qualities-endowed,
That to our human nature are allowed.

120

In all the histories it is related
That Troilus was never in men's sight
In lower rank than with the highest rated,
In noble deeds pertaining to a knight;
Though not a giant in his body's might,
His heart was ever equal to the best,
In deeds that knightly competence attest.

121

But now let us return to Diomed.
The tenth day came since that sad parting day
When to the Greeks this lady he did lead,
And Diomed, fresh as the flowers in May,
Came to the tent where wise old Calchas lay,
And feigned that he had business with the priest,
But of his plans, the business was the least.

122

Now Cressida, in all things neat and nice,
Received him there, and bade him take a seat,
Nor had she any need to ask him twice;
And in the proper way a guest to treat,
Spices and wine she served in manner meet;
In friendly conversation then they fell,
A part of which I shall proceed to tell.

123

First of the war he then began to speak
Between the Greeks and the besieged in Troy,
And her opinion doth he humbly seek
What methods in the siege one should employ;
And then he asked her if she did enjoy
Her life among the Greeks, and if their ways
Seemed strange, and how she passed her days,

124

And why her father should delay so long
To marry her to some good worthy knight.
But Cressida, who felt the pain still strong
For absent Troilus, her heart's delight,
Gave answer to his questions as she might,
But of his deeper purpose and intent,
Perhaps she had no inkling what he meant.

125

But nevertheless the dauntless Diomed
Pressed bravely on, and this attempt essayed:
"If I have rightly of you taken heed,
Dear Cressida, I'm very much afraid,
Since hand upon your bridle first I laid,
When you came forth from Troy upon that morrow,
You have been sore oppressed by some deep sorrow.

126

"I cannot say just what the cause may be,
Unless perhaps some Trojan you hold dear,
Yet let me say, it truly would grieve me
If you for any Trojan, far or near,
Should ever spill a quarter of a tear,
Or let one from your face drive off the smile,
For, Cressida, it isn't worth the while.

127

"The Trojans, one might say, both all and some,

Yong, fresshe, strong, and hardy as lyoun;
Trew as steel in ech condicioun;
On of the beste enteched creature,
That is, or shal, whyl that the world may dure.

120

And certainly in storie it is y-founde,
That Troilus was never un-to no wight,
As in his tyme, in no degree secounde
In durring don that longeth to a knight.
Al mighte a geaunt passen him of might,
His herte ay with the firste and with the beste
Stod paregal, to durre don that him leste.

121

But for to tellen forth of Diomed:—
It fil that after, on the tenthe day,
Sin that Criseyde out of the citee yede,
This Diomed, as fresshe as braunche in May,
Com to the tente ther-as Calkas lay,
And feyned him with Calkas han to done;
But what he mente, I shal yow telle sone.

122

Criseyde, at shorte wordes for to telle,
Welcomed him, and down by hir him sette;
And he was ethe y-nough to maken dwelle.
And after this, with-outen longe lette,
The spyes and the wyn men forth hem fette;
And forth they speke of this and that y-fere,
As freendes doon, of which som shal ye here.

123

He gan first fallen of the werre in speche
Bitwixe hem and the folk of Troye toun;
And of th'assege he gan hir eek byseche,
To telle him what was hir opinioun.
Fro that demaunde he so descendeth doun
To asken hir, if that hir straunge thoughte
The Grekes gyse, and werkes that they wroughte?

124

And why hir fader tarieth so longe
To wedden hir un-to som worthy wight?
Criseyde, that was in hir peynes stronge
For love of Troilus, hir owene knight,
As fer-forth as she conning hadde or might,
Answerde him tho; but, as of his entente,
It semed not she wiste what he mente.

125

But natheles, this ilke Diomed
Gan in him-self assure, and thus he seyde,
"If ich aright have taken of yow hede,
Me thinketh thus, O lady myn, Criseyde,
That sin I first hond on your brydel leyde,
Whan ye out come of Troye by the morwe,
Ne coude I never seen yow but in sorwe.

126

Can I not seyn what may the cause be
But-if for love of som Trojan it were,
The which right sore wolde athinken me
That ye, for any wight that dwelleth there,
Sholden spille a quarter of a tere,
Or pitously your-selven so biglye;
For dredelees, it is nought worth the whyle.

127

The folk of Troye, as who seyth, alle and some

In preson been, as ye your-selven see;
For thennes shal not oon on-lyve come
For al the gold bitwixen sonne and see.
Trusteth wel, and understondeth me,
Ther shal not oon to mercy goon on-lyve,
Al were he lord of worldes twyë fyve!

128

Swich wreche on hem, for fecching of Eleyne,
Ther shal be take, er that we hennes wende,
That Manes, which that goddes ben of peyne,
Shal been agast that Grekes wol hem shende.
And men shul drede, un-to the worldes ende,
From hennes-forth to ravisshe any quene,
So cruel shal our wreche on hem be sene.

129

And but-if Calkas lede us with ambages,
That is to seyn, with double wordes slye,
Swich as men clepe a 'word with two visages,'
Ye shul wel knowen that I nought ne lye,
And al this thing right seen it with your yë,
And that anoon; ye nil not trowe how sone;
Now taketh heed, for it is for to done.

130

What wene ye your wyse fader wolde
Han yeven Antenor for yow anoon,
If he ne wiste that the citee sholde
Destroyed been? Why, nay, so mote I goon!
He knew ful wel ther shal not scapen oon
That Troyan is; and for the grete fere,
He dorste not, ye dwelte lenger there.

131

What wole ye more, lufsom lady dere?
Lat Troye and Troyan fro your herte pace!
Dryf out that bitter hope, and make good chere,
And clepe ayein the beautee of your face,
That ye with salte teres so deface.
For Troye is brought in swich a jupartye,
That, it to save, is now no remedye.

132

And thinketh wel, ye shal in Grekes finde
A more parfit love, er it be night,
Than any Troyan is, and more kinde,
And bet to serven yow wol doon his might.
And if ye vouche sauf, my lady bright,
I wol ben he to serven yow my-selve,
Ye, lever than be lord of Greces twelve!"

133

And with that word he gan to waxen reed,
And in his speche a litel wight he quook,
And caste a-syde a litel wight his heed,
And stinte a while; and afterward awook,
And sobrelieche on hir he threw his look,
And seyde, "I am, al be it yow no joye,
As gentil man as any wight in Troye.

134

For if my fader Tydeus," he seyde,
"Y-lived hadde, I hadde been, er this,
Of Calidoine and Arge a king, Criseyde!
And so hope I that I shal yet, y-wis.
But he was slayn, allas! the more harm is,
Unhappily at Thebes al to rathe,
Polymites and many a man to scathe.

Are prisoners, and never shall be free,
For out of Troy not one alive shall come,
For all the gold between the sun and sea;
You can take this for utter certainty,
No single one shall come from thence alive,
Although he were the lord of worlds twice five.

128

"The rape of Helen we shall so repay,
Ere we upon our homeward way shall wend,
The Manes, Gods of pain, shall be afraid
Lest Grecian wrath with theirs should e'er contend;
And men shall fear, until this world shall end,
Henceforth forever to abduct a queen,
Such vengeance on the Trojans shall be seen.

129

"For either Calchas tricks us with ambages,
That is, with words of double meaning sly,
Such as we call a word with two visages,
Or that I speak the truth, none can deny;
For all of this you'll see with your own eye,
And you shan't need to wait for many a moon,
Mind what I say, you'll be surprised how soon!

130

"Do you suppose your father, old and wise,
Would give Antenor for you in this war,
Unless he knew just how the matter lies,
And what fate for the Trojans is in store?
He knows full well that there is no hope for
A single Trojan, and so he didn't dare
To let you stay among them over there.

131

"What further can you ask, my lady dear?
Both Troy and Trojans from your heart erase!
Drive out this futile hope and make good cheer,
Restore again your beauty to its place,
Which with the salt of tears you now deface!
For Troy is brought at last to such a state,
To save her now, it is too late a date.

132

"Besides, you shall among us Grecians find
A love more perfect, and a truer knight
Than any Trojan is, and one more kind,
To honor you with all his strength and might;
If you will listen to me, lady bright,
Myself will be the man, and for the price,
A dozen Greeces I would sacrifice."

133

And with that word he blushed a bashful red,
And as he spoke, his voice trembled and shook,
The while he turned aside and bowed his head,
And paused, but soon new courage took,
And with a serious, but gentle look,
He said, "I am, though this gives you no joy,
As good a gentleman as dwells in Troy.

134

"For if my father Tydeus," he said,
"Had longer lived, I would have been ere this
Of Calydon and Argos king and head,
And shall be yet, unless my guess I miss.
But he was slain, and lost all earthly bliss,
At Thebes, where Polynices and his men
Good reason had to grieve in sorrow then.

135
 "But, lady dear, since now I am your man,
 And in my heart you hold the chieftest place,
 And I shall serve you every way I can,
 As long as I exist in time and space,
 So look upon me with a kindly face,
 And grant that I may come again tomorrow
 And tell you more at leisure of my sorrow."

136
 Why should I all his pretty speeches tell?
 He spoke enough for one day, that is sure,
 And what he said to her, he said so well,
 That her consent he doth at last procure
 To come again, though first she did adjure
 Him not to raise the topic he had broached,
 At which, no doubt, he felt himself reproached!

137
 But still her heart was set on Troilus,
 And his dear image she could not erase
 From out her mind, and so she answered thus:
 "O Diomede, I love that happy place
 Where I was born! May heaven in its grace
 Deliver it from out its sorry state
 And grant to hapless Troy a happy fate!

138
 "And that the Greeks on Troy their wrath would
 wreak,
 I know that very well! But after all,
 It may not happen as you say and speak,
 And God forbid that such thing should befall;
 I know my father did me to him call,
 And that he dearly bought me, as you say,
 And for all this, I shall him well repay!

139
 "And that the Greeks are men of high renown,
 I know that, too; but truly you shall find
 As worthy folk within the Trojan town,
 As able, too, as perfect and as kind,
 As any twixt the Orcades and Ind.
 And that some lady gladly would receive
 Your service, that I'm ready to believe.

140
 "But as for love," she said, and gently sighed,
 "I had a lord, and I his wedded wife,
 To whom my heart was pledged until he died;
 But other love than that in all my life
 There hath not been, nor shall I seek love's strife.
 And that you are of high and noble birth,
 That have I heard, and know you for your worth.

141
 "And for that reason now I wonder,
 That any woman you should trouble so!
 For love and I are very far asunder,
 And I am more inclined, as things now go,
 To spend my life in mourning and in woe,
 Though how my heart may change, I cannot tell;
 The future may, of course, my grief dispel.

142
 "But now I am afflicted and cast down,
 And you in arms are busy day by day;
 But later, when you Greeks have won the town,
 There's just a chance that then it happen may,

135
 But herte myn, sin that I am your man,
 And been the ferste of whom I seche grace,
 To serven you as hertely as I can,
 And ever shal, why! I to live have space,
 So, er that I departe out of this place,
 Ye wol me graunte, that I may to-morwe,
 At better leyser, telle yow my sorwe."

136
 What shold I telle his wordes that he seyde?
 He spak y-now, for o day at the meste;
 It preveth wel, he spak so that Criseyde
 Graunted, on the morwe, at his requeste,
 For to speken with him at the leste,
 So that he nolde speke of swich matere;
 And thus to him she seyde, as ye may here:

137
 As she that hadde hir herte on Troilus
 So faste, that ther may it noon arace;
 And straungely she spak, and seyde thus,
 "O Diomede, I love that ilke place
 Ther I was born; and Joves, for his grace,
 Delivere it sone of al that doth it care!
 God, for thy might, so leve it wel to fare!

138
 That Grekes wolde hir wraththe on Troye
 wreke,
 If that they mighte, I knowe it wel, y-wis.
 But it shal not bifallen as ye speke;
 And god to-for, and fether over this,
 I wot my fader wys and redy is;
 And that he me hath bought, as ye me tolde,
 So dere, I am the more un-to him holde.

139
 That Grekes been of heigh condicioun,
 I woot eek wel; but certein, men shal finde
 As worthy folk with-inne Troye toun,
 As conning, and as parfit and as kinde,
 As been bitwixen Orcades and Inde.
 And that ye coude wel your lady serve,
 I trowe eek wel, hir thank for to deserve.

140
 But as to speke of love, y-wis," she seyde,
 "I hadde a lord, to whom I wedded was,
 The whos myn herte al was, til that he deyde;
 And other love, as helpe me now Pallas,
 Ther in myn herte nis, ne never was.
 And that ye been of noble and heigh kinrede,
 I have wel herd it tellen, out of drede.

141
 And that doth me to han so gret a wonder,
 That ye wol scornen any womman so.
 Eck, god wot, love and I be fer a-sonder;
 I am disposed bet, so mote I go,
 Un-to my deeth, to pleyne and maken wo.
 What I shal after doon, I can not seye;
 But trewely, as yet me list not pleye.

142
 Myn herte is now in tribulacioun,
 And ye in armes bisy, day by day.
 Here-after, whan ye wonnen han the toun,
 Paraunter, thanne so it happen may,

That whan I see that I never er say,
Than wole I werke that I never wroughte!
This word to yow y-nough suffysen oughte.

143

To-morwe eek wol I speke with yow fayn,
So that ye touchen nought of this matere.
And whan yow list, ye may come here ayeyn;
And, er ye gon, thus muche I seye yow here:
As helpe me Pallas with hir heres clere,
If that I sholde of any Greek han routh,
It sholde be your-selven, by my trouthe!

144

I sey not therfore that I wol yow love,
Ne I sey not nay, but in conclusioun,
I mene wel, by god that sit above":—
And ther-with-al she caste hir eyen doun,
And gan to syke, and seyde, "O Troye toun,
Yet bidde I god, in quiete and in reste
I may yow seen, or do myn herte breste."

145

But in effect, and shortly for to seye,
This Diomede al freshly newe ayeyn
Gan pressen on, and faste hir mercy preye;
And after this, the sothe for to seyn,
Hir glove he took, of which he was ful fayn
And fynally, whan it was waxen eve,
And al was wel, he roos and took his leve.

146

The brighte Venus folwede and ay taughte
The wey, ther brode Phebus doun
alighte;

And Cynthea hir char-hors over-raughte
To whirle out of the Lyon, if she mighte;
And Signifer his candeles shewed brighte,
Whan that Criseyde un-to hir bedde wente
In-with hir fadres faire brighte tente.

147

Retorning in hir soule ay up and doun
The wordes of this sodein Diomede,
His greet estat, and peril of the toun,
And that she was allone and hadde nede
Of freendes help; and thus bigan to brede
The cause why, the sothe for to telle,
That she tok fully purpos for to dwelle.

148

The morwe com, and goostly for to speke,
This Diomede is come un-to Criseyde,
And shortly, lest that ye my tale breke,
So wel he for him-selve spak and seyde,
That alle hir sykes sore adoun he leyde.
And fynally, the sothe for to seyne,
He refte hir of the grete of al hir payne.

149

And after this the story telleth us,
That she him yaf the faire baye stede,
The which he ones wan of Troilus;
And eek a broche (and that was litel nede)
That Troilus was, she yaf this Diomede.
And eek, the bet from sorwe him to releve,
She made him were a pancel of hir sleve.

150

I finde eek in the stories elles-where,

If things turn out in unexpected way,
That I shall do what I ne'er thought to do,
And what I've said should be enough for you.

143

"Come back tomorrow, if you so desire,
But do not push this matter now too far.
Come when you want, if that's all you require!
But ere ye go, at least I'll say, you are,
So help me Pallas, gleaming like a star,
The one of all within the Grecian city
Who first could rouse my heart to throbs of pity.

144

"I do not say I promise what you seek,
Nor yet deny. So do not fret nor frown,
For thou hast need to fear no other Greek!"
Pausing at these concessions, she looked down
And deeply sighing said, "O Trojan town,
Pray God that thou shalt be in safety first,
Or else my wretched heart in grief shall burst!"

145

But Diomede was not all dismayed,
And brought forth arguments all fresh and new,
And with insistence for her favor prayed,
And thereupon, the most that he could do,
He took her glove, and called it love-pledge true,
And finally, when it drew on towards eve,
And all was well, he rose and took his leave.

146

Bright Venus soon appeared to point the way
Where Phoebus, wide and round, should doun
alight,

And now her chariot horses Cynthia
Whirls out of the Lion, driven by her might,
And Signifer displays his candles bright;
Then Cressida unto her nigh-rest went
Within her father's fair and shining tent,

147

Debating in her soul aye up and down
The words of this impetuous Diomede,
His high estate, the peril of the town,
Her loneliness and all her pressing need
Of friendly help, and thus began to breed
The reasons why, the simple truth to tell,
She thought it best among the Greeks to dwell.

148

The morrow came, and like a confessor
Came Diomede, who cunningly displayed
His arguments and added many more,
And such an all-persuasive case he made,
That her misgivings were almost allayed,
And finally, to state the matter plain,
She found in him a surcease from her pain.

149

And afterward, the story telleth us,
She gave him back the bay, the noble steed
Which once he won from hapless Troilus;
A brooch besides—and that was little need—
Her lover's gift, she gave to Diomede,
And as her knight she doth him now receive,
And made for him a pennant of her sleeve.

150

And elsewhere in the story it is told,

When deeply wounded once was Diomedé,
By Troilus, she wept tears manifold
When she beheld his wide wounds freshly bleed,
And in the care of him she took great heed,
And then, to heal his wound in every part,
Men say, men say she gave to him her heart.

151

And yet the story also telleth us,
No woman ever did so deep lament
For love betrayed as she for Troilus!
"Alas," she cried, "forever lost and spent
Is all my truth in love's high sacrament!
The gentlest man, the noblest ever made
Have I in falsehood wilfully betrayed!"

152

"Alas, of me unto the world's last end,
There shall be neither written nor yet sung
A kindly word! No one will me defend!
O rolled shall be my name on many a tongue,
Throughout the world my bell shall wide be rung,
And women will despise me most of all!
Alas, that such a fate on me should fall!"

153

"And they will say, in scorning of all this,
That I dishonored them, alack the day;
Though I were not the first that did amiss,
That will not wipe the blot of shame away!
But since what's done, must so forever stay,
And since my former guilt I can't undo,
To Diomedé at least I shall be true.

154

"But Troilus, since I can do no more,
And since our paths henceforth must separate,
May heaven to its favor thee restore!
O Troilus, the best and gentlest mate
Who e'er his heart to love did consecrate,
What other love can stand in thy dear stead!"
She broke down then, and bitter tears she shed.

155

"Of this I'm sure, that I shall hate you never,
A friend's love you shall have at least of me,
And my good word, though I should live forever!
And truly I should grieve if I should see
You ever fall into adversity.
That you are guiltless, no one need me tell!
God's will be done! And thus I say farewell!"

156

How long a time it was that lay between
Ere she forsook him for bold Diomedé,
No author tells, so far as I have seen,
And no man, let him ne'er so widely read,
Shall find a further record of this deed;
But Diomedé, though quick enough to woo,
Before he won her, had yet more to do.

157

Nor shall I now this woman further chide
Than from her simple story doth arise;
Her name, alas, is published far and wide,
Her guilt is plain enough to all men's eyes;
And if I could condone in any wise
Her deed, in pity's name I would assent,
For of her sin she did at least repent.

When through the body hurt was Diomedé
Of Troilus, tho weep she many a tere,
When that she saugh his wyde woundes blede;
And that she took to kepen him good hede,
And for to hele him of his sorwes smerte.
Men seyn, I not, that she yaf him hir herte.

151

But trewely, the story telleth us,
Ther made never womman more wo
Than she, when that she falsed Troilus.
She seyde, "allas! for now is clene a-go
My name of trouthe in love, for ever-mo!
For I have falsed oon, the gentleste
That ever was, and oon the worthiest!"

152

Allas, of me, un-to the worldes ende,
Shal neither been y-written nor y-songe
No good word, for thise bokes wol me shende,
O, rolled shal I been on many a tonge!
Through-out the world my belle shal be ronge;
And wommen most wol hate me of alle.
Allas, that swich a cas me sholde falle!

153

They wol seyn, in as muche as in me is,
I have hem doon dishonour, weylawey!
Al be I not the firste that dide amis,
What helpeth that to do my blame away?
But sin I see there is no better way,
And that to late is now for me to rewe,
To Diomedé algate I wol be trewe.

154

But Troilus, sin I no better may,
And sin that thus departen ye and I,
Yet preye I god, so yeve yow right good day
As for the gentleste, trewely,
That ever I say, to serven feithfully,
And best can ay his lady honour kepe"—
And with that word she brast anon to wepe.

155

"And certes, yow ne haten shal I never,
And freendes love, that shal ye han of me,
And my good word, al mighte I liven ever.
And, trewely, I wolde sory be
For to seen yow in adversitee.
And gileteles, I woot wel, I yow leve;
But al shal passe; and thus take I my leve."

156

But trewely, how longe it was bitwene,
That she for-sook him for this Diomedé,
Ther is non auctor telleth it, I wene.
Take every man now to his bokes hede;
He shal no terme finden, out of drede.
For though that he bigan to wowe hir sone,
Er he hir wan, yet was ther more to done.

157

Ne me ne list this sely womman chydé
Ferther than the story wol devyse.
Hir name, alas! is publissed so wyde,
That for hir gilt it oughte y-now suffyse
And if I mighte excuse hir any wyse.
For she so sory was for hir untrouthe,
Y-wis, I wolde excuse hir yet for routhe.

158

This Troilus, as I biforn have told,
Thus dryeth forth, as wel as he hath might.
But often was his herte hoot and cold,
And namely, that ilke nynthe night,
Which on the morwe she hadde him byhight
To come ayein: god wot, ful litel reste
Hadde he that night; no-thing to slepe him leste.

159

The laurer-crowned Phebus, with his hete,
Gan, in his course ay upward as he wente,
To warmen of th' est see the wawes wete;
And Nisus doughter song with fresh entente,
Whan Troilus his Pandare after sente;
And on the walles of the toun they pleyde,
To loke if they can seen ought of Criseyde.

160

Til it was noon, they stoden for to see
Who that ther come; and every maner wight,
That cam fro fer, they seyden it was she,
Til that they coude knownen him a-right,
Now was his herte dul, now was it light;
And thus by-japed stonden for to stare
About nought, this Troilus and Pandare.

161

To Pandarus this Troilus tho seyde,
"For ought I wot, bi-for noon, sikerly,
In-to this toun ne comth nought here Criseyde.
She hath y-now to done, hardily,
To winnen from hir fader, so trowe I;
Hir olde fader wol yet make hir dyne
Er that she go; god yeve his herte pyne!"

162

Pandare answerde, "it may wel be, certeyn;
And for-thy lat us dyne, I thee biseche;
And after noon than mayst thou come ayein."
And hoorn they go, with-oute more speche;
And comen ayein, but longe may they seche
Er that they finde that they after cape;
Fortune hem bothe thenketh for to jape.

163

Quod Troilus, "I see wel now, that she
Is taryed with hir olde fader so,
That er she come, it wol neigh even be.
Com forth, I wol un-to the yate go.
Thise portours been unkonninge ever-mo;
And I wol doon hem holden up the yate
As nought ne were, al-though she come late."

164

The day goth faste, and after that comth eve,
And yet com nought to Troilus Criseyde.
He loketh forth by hegge, by tree, by greve,
And fer his heed over the wal he leyde.
And at the laste he torned him, and seyde,
"By god, I woot hir mening now, Pandare!
Al-most, y-wis, al newe was my care.

165

Now douteles, this lady can hir good;
I woot, she meneth ryden prively.
I comende hir wysdom, by myn hood!
She wol not maken peple nyce
Gaure on hir, whan she comth; but softly

158

Poor Troilus, as I before have told,
Now lived along in any way he might,
But often was his heart now hot, now cold,
And most of all upon that last ninth night,
For still he hoped next day his lady bright
Would come again; but yet he had, God knows,
Throughout that wakeful night but slight repose.

159

Phoebeus, the laurel-crowned, now shinely
Upon his course aye higher upward went
To warm the wide waves of the eastern sea,
And Nisus' daughter sang the day's advent,
When Troilus his word for Pandar sent,
And on the city walls they walked about,
To keep for Cressida a far lookout.

160

Till noon they kept their place and looked to see
Who came, and every one, they said, as long
As he was far away, was surely she,
Till nearer view showed they were always wrong,
For she was never one in any throng;
And thus befooled, this fond expectant pair
Stand on the Trojan walls and vainly stare.

161

Said Troilus, "Unless she comes quite soon,
I must believe she couldn't get away
And won't arrive in town till afternoon.
No doubt she had enough to do and say
To get from under her old father's sway.
I think, perhaps, he wanted her to dine
Before she left, and she could not decline."

162

Pandar to this replied, "That may well be,
And let us do the same, I might suggest,
And then come back, to see what we can see."
So home they go and dine and briefly rest,
Then back again upon their hopeless quest.
They cannot see, for all their straining eyes,
That fortune hides from them a sad surprise.

163

"It looks," said Troilus, "as though something
Has happened, or else her father keeps her so
She can't arrive till nearly evening.
Come on, and to the city gates let's go!
These gatemen are such stupid dolts, you know,
They wouldn't hesitate to shut the gate
And keep her out, if she chanced to be late."

164

The day goes fast, night falls on land and sea,
And "Cressida, she cometh not," he said.
He gazes forth on hedge and grove and tree,
And from the city wall he hangs his head,
But still she tarries, still his hopes he fed.
"I know," he cried, "what she intends to do!
Almost I feared that she would prove untrue!"

165

"But now I know just what she doth intend—
She means to travel here incognito,
And her good sense therein I must commend.
She will not make herself a public show,
But quietly, and so that none may know,

By night into the town she means to ride,
And her good pleasure we must so abide.

166

"In fact there's nothing else that we can do.
But Pandar, look! What is it there I see?
She's come at last, it's too good to be true!
Lift up your eyes, old man! Is not that she?"
"Well, no," said Pandar, "sorry I can't agree!
You're wrong again, my boy, and for my part,
All I can see is some poor farmer's cart."

167

"Too true, it's but too true," said Troilus,
"But still I cannot think it's all for naught
That in my heart I feel uplifted thus.
Some good must be foreshadowed by my thought,
Since consolation comes to me unsought;
I never felt such comfort, truth to say,
And that she'll come tonight, my life I'll lay."

168

"It may be," answered Pandar, "well enough,"
Nor any of his empty hopes denied,
Though in his heart he thought it silly stuff,
And with straight face said to himself aside,
"You might as well give up and let things slide,
For all the good you'll get by waiting here.
Yes, farewell to the snows of yesteryear!"

169

The warden of the gates began to call
The folk without the fosses to prepare
To drive into the town their cattle all,
Or through the night they must remain out
there;
And in the dusk, with heart oppressed by care,
Troilus turns at last homeward to ride,
For now why should he longer there abide!

170

But still he took some hope in thinking this,
That he perhaps had counted wrong the day.
"I must," he said, "have taken her amiss,
For I recall I heard her that night say,
'I shall be back again, if so I may,
Before the silver moon, my own sweetheart,
Shall pass the Lion and from the Ram depart,'"

171

"And so it may yet turn out for the best."
And on the morrow, to the gate he went,
And up and down, to east and then to west,
Beyond the city walls his gaze he bent,
But nothing gained from weary time thus spent,
And so at night, when he could see no more,
He went back home in disappointment sore.

172

Now hope delusive took its final flight,
For all that he had sought had turned out wrong;
Upon his heart there fell a deadly blight,
So were his silent sorrows sharp and strong,
For when he saw she stayed away so long,
He dared not to himself or think or say
Why she should fail to keep her promised day.

173

The third, the fourth, the fifth, the sixth succeed,
Since the appointed ten days by had rolled,

By nighte in-to the toun she thenketh ryde.
And, dere brother, thenk not longe t' abyde.

166

We han nought elles for to doon, y-wis.
And Pandarus, now woltow trowen me?
Have here my trouthe, I see hir! yond she is.
Heve up thyn eyen, man! maystow not see?"
Pandare answerde, "nay, so mote I thee!
Al wrong, by god; what seystow, man, wher art?
That I see yond nis but a fare-cart."

167

"Allas, thou seist right sooth," quod Troilus;
"But hardly, it is not al for nought
That in myn herte I now rejoyse thus.
It is ayein som good I have a thought.
Noot I not how, but sin that I was wrought,
Ne felte I swich a confort, dar I seye;
She comth to-night, my lyf, that dorste I leye!"

168

Pandare answerde, "it may be wel, y-nough";
And held with him of al that ever he seyde;
But in his herte he thoughte, and softe lough,
And to him-self ful sobrely he seyde:
"From hasel-wode, ther Joly Robin pleyde,
Shal come al that that thou abydest here;
Ye, fare-wel al the snow of ferne yere!"

169

The wardein of the yates gan to calle
The folk which that with-oute the yates were,
And bad hem dryven in hir bestes alle,
Or al the night they moste bleven
there.

And fer with-in the night, with many a tere,
This Troilus gan hoomward for to ryde;
For wel he seeth it helpeth nought t' abyde.

170

But natheles, he gladded him in this;
He thoughte he misaccounted hadde his day,
And seyde, "I understonde have al a-mis.
For thilke night I last Criseyde say,
She seyde, 'I shal ben here, if that I may,
Er that the mone, O dere herte swete!
The Lyon passe, out of this Ariete.'

171

For which she may yet holde al hir biheste."
And on the morwe un-to the yate he wente,
And up and down, by west and eek by este,
Up-on the walles made he many a wente.
But al for nought; his hope alwey him blente;
For which at night, in sorwe and sykes sore
He wente him hoom, with-outen any more.

172

This hope al clene out of his herte fledde,
He nath wher-on now longer for to honge;
But for the peyne him thoughte his herte bledde,
So were his throwes sharpe and wonder stronge.
For when he saugh that she abood so longe,
He niste what he juggen of it mighte,
Sin she hath broken that she him bihighte.

173

The thridde, ferthe, fifte, sixte day
After tho dayes ten, of which I tolde,

Bitwixen hope and drede his herte lay,
Yet som-what trustinge on hir hestes olde.
But whan he saugh she nolde hir terme holde,
He can now seen non other remedye,
But for to shape him sone for to dye.

174

Ther-with the wikked spirit, god us blesse,
Which that men clepeth wode jealousye,
Gan in him crepe, in al this hevinesse;
For which, by-cause he wolde sone dye,
He ne eet ne dronk, for his malencolye,
And eek from every companye he fledde;
This was the lyf that al the tyme he ledde.

175

He so defet was, that no maner man
Unnethe mighte him knowe ther he wente;
So was he lene, and ther-to pale and wan,
And feble, that he walketh by potente;
And with his ire he thus him-selven shente.
And who-so axed him wher-of him smerte,
He seyde, his harm was al aboute his herte.

176

Pryam ful ofte, and eek his moder dere,
His bretheren and his sustren gonne him freyne
Why he so sorful was in al his chere,
And what thing was the cause of al his payne?
But al for nought; he nolde his cause pleyne,
But seyde, he felte a grevous maladye
A-boute his herte, and fayn he wolde dye.

177

So on a day he leyde him doun to slepe,
And so bifel that in his sleep him thoughte,
That in a forest faste he welk to wepe
For love of hir that him these peynes wroughte;
And up and doun as he the forest soughte,
He mette he saugh a boor with tuskes grete,
That sleep ayein the bright sonnes hete.

178

And by this boor, faste in his armes folde,
Lay kissing ay his lady bright Criseyde:
For sorwe of which, whan he it gan biholde,
And for despyt, out of his slepe he breyde,
And loude he cryde on Pandarus, and seyde,
"O Pandarus, now knowe I crop and rote!
I nam but deed, ther nis non other bote!

179

My lady bright Criseyde hath me bitrayed,
In whom I trusted most of any wight,
She elles-where hath now hir herte apayed;
The blisful goddes, through hir grete might,
Han in my dreem y-shewed it ful right.
Thus in my dreem Criseyde I have biholde"—
And al this thing to Pandarus he tolde.

180

"O my Criseyde, allas! what subtiltee,
What newe lust, what beautee, what science,
What wratthe of juste cause have ye
to me?

What gilt of me, what fel experience
Hath fro me raft, allas! thyn advertence?
O trust, O feyth, O depe as urance,
Who hath me reft Criseyde, al my plesaunce?

And hope and dread still battle for the lead,
Nor could he quite reject her pledges old;
But then he saw her word she would not hold,
And this last woe completely filled his cup,
And he had nothing now to keep his courage up.

174

The dark and wicked mood of jealousy,
Which drives men on until they grow insane,
Crept in his heart to keep grief company,
And from all food and drink he did abstain,
As one who on this earth would not remain;
A lonely, melancholy life he led,
And from companionship he turned and fled.

175

A sick man now, his body's powers fail,
He seems a stranger even to his friends;
So thin and gaunt, of face so wan and pale,
Upon a staff he weakly now depends,
For thus black care achieves its evil ends;
And if one asked him how it all did start,
He said he had some trouble with his heart.

176

Priam inquired, and so his mother dear,
His brothers and his sisters, too, did ask,
Why he should always be so sad and drear,
And for his good they took him oft to task;
But still his grief he ever sought to mask,
And said about his heart he felt such pain
As mortal body could not long sustain.

177

It chanced one day he laid him down to sleep,
And in his restless slumber, so he thought,
Within a wood he went to walk and weep,
For love of her who all this wrong had wrought,
And down a path, his eyes a vision caught;
A tusked boar appeared in his sad dreams,
Asleep and lying in the bright sunbeams,

178

And by this boar, whom in her arms she held,
Lay Cressida, kissing the fearsome beast.
And suddenly this vision strange expelled
All sleep, and from his dreaming thus released,
Troilus knew all hope for him had ceased.
"O Pandar," cried he, "now I know the worst!
I am a man abandoned and accursed!

179

"My lady Cressida hath me betrayed,
In whom was all my trust and my delight;
Her love she hath elsewhere conveyed!
The blessed Gods above through their great might
Have in my dreams revealed it to my sight!
Thus in my dreams I did my love behold—"

180

And all the tale to Pandar he then told.

"O Cressida, what baseless treachery,
What lust of heart, what beauty or what wit—,
What wrath with just cause have you felt
towards me?

What guilt in me, what thoughts or deeds unfit
Have caused thy heart away from me to flit?
O trust! O faith! O hopes that life inspire!
O who hath robbed me of my heart's desire!

181

"Alas, why did I ever let you go?
O, by what folly was I thus misled?
What faith on oaths can I henceforth bestow!
God knows I was convinced in heart and head,
That every word was Gospel that you said.
But treason oft doth show its hateful face
In those in whom the greatest trust we place.

182

"What shall I do? What now is left for me?
There falls on me anew so sharp a pain,
For which there can be found no remedy,
Better to kill myself with these hands twain
Than in this life of misery remain!
Death at the least a final peace will send,
But life is daily death that hath no end!"

183

Then Pandar answered him, "Alas the while
That I was born! Have I not said ere this,
That dreams all sorts of folk all times beguile?
And why? They all interpret them amiss!
To charge her false on dreams is cowardice,
Because your dreams rise only from your fear,
And what they mean, you never can make clear.

184

"This dream that you have had about a boar,
It well may be that it doth signify
Her father, old and of his head so hoar,
Who near his death doth in the warm sun lie,
While she for natural grief must weep and cry,
And kiss him as he lies there on the ground—
This is the way you should your dream expound."

185

"Perhaps," said Troilus. "I wish I knew
For certain how to judge my dream aright."
"I'll tell you then," said Pandar, "what to do!
Since you know well enough how to endite,
Bestir yourself and to your lady write.
I know no better way of finding out
The truth and freeing so your mind of doubt.

186

"That way you'll know just how things stand,
for better
Or worse; for if untrue she means to be,
She will not send an answer to your letter;
And if she writes, then you can quickly see
If she to come again to Troy is free,
And if she's let and hindered in some way,
She will explain it all as clear as day.

187

"You have not written her since forth she went,
Nor has she written you, and I dare say
Some little things her coming back prevent,
And when you know just what they are, you may
Decide she's acted in the wisest way.
Go then and write; of all plans that's the best
To ease your mind and set your doubts at rest."

188

Troilus to this advice can but agree,
For other plan he has none to propose,
Nor long delays, but sits down hastily,
Debating in his heart the cons and pros

181

Allas! why leet I you from hennes go,
For which wel neigh out of my wit I breyde?
Who shal now trowe on any othes mo?
God wot I wende, O lady bright, Criseyde,
That every word was gospel that ye seyde!
But who may bet bigylen, if him liste,
Than he on whom men wene with best to triste?

182

What shal I doon, my Pandarus, allas!
I fele now so sharpe a newe peyne,
Sin that ther is no remedie in this cas,
That bet were it I with myn hondes twyne
My-selven slow, than alwey thus to pleyne.
For through my deeth my wo sholde han an ende,
Ther every day with lyf my-self I shende."

183

Pandare answerde and seyde, "allas the whyle
That I was born; have I not seyd er this,
That dremes many a maner man bigyle?
And why? for folk expounden hem a-mis.
How darstow seyn that fals thy lady is,
For any dreem, right for thyn owene drede?
Lat be this thought, thou canst no dremes rede.

184

Paraunter, ther thou dremest of this boor,
It may so be that it may signifye
Hir fader, which that old is and eek hoar,
Ayein the sonne lyth, on poynt to dye,
And she for sorwe ginneth wepe and crye,
And kisseth him, ther he lyth on the grounde;
Thus shuldestow thy dreem a-right expounde."

185

"How mighte I thanne do?" quod Troilus,
"To knowe of this, ye, were it never so lyte?"
"Now seystow wysly," quod this Pandarus,
"My reed is this, sin thou canst wel endyte,
That hastely a lettre thou hir wryte,
Thorough which thou shalt wel bringen it aboute,
To knowe a sooth of that thou art in doute.

186

And see now why; for this I dar wel
seyn,
That if so is that she untrewed be,
I can not trowe that she wol wryte ayein.
And if she wryte, thou shalt ful sone see,
As whether she hath any libertee
To come ayein, or elles in som clause,
If she be let, she wol assigne a cause.

187

Thou hast not writen hir sin that she wente,
Nor she to thee, and this I dorste lene,
Ther may swich cause been in hir entente,
That hardely thou wolt thy-selven seye,
That hir a-bood the beste is for yow tweye.
Now wryte hir thanne, and thou shalt fele sone
A sothe of al; ther is no more to done."

188

Acorded been to this conclusioun,
And that anon, these ilke lordes two;
And hastely sit Troilus adoun,
And rolleth in his herte to and fro,

How he may best discryven hir his wo.
And to Criseyde, his owene lady dere,
He wroot right thus, and seyde as ye may here.

189

"Right fresshe flour, whos I have been and shal,
With-outen part of elles-where servyse,
With herte, body, lyf, lust, thought, and al;
I, woful wight, in every humble wyse
That tonge telle or herte may devyse,
As ofte as matere occupyeth place,
Me recomaunde un-to your noble grace.

190

Lyketh it yow to witen, swete herte,
As ye wel knowe how longe tyme agoon
That ye me lafte in aspre peynes smerte,
Whan that ye wente, of which yet bote noon
Have I non had, but ever wers bigoon
Fro day to day am I, and so mot dwelle,
While it yow list, of wele and wo my welle!

191

For which to yow, with dredful herte trewe,
I wryte, as he that sorwe dryfth to wryte,
My wo, that every houre encreseth newe,
Compleyninge as I dar or can endyte.
And that defaced is, that may ye wyte
The teres, which that fro myn eyen reyne,
That wolde speke, if that they coude, and pleyne.

192

Yow first biseche I, that your eyen clere
To look on this defouled ye not holde;
And over al this, that ye, my lady dere,
Wol vouche-sauf this lettre to biholde.
And by the cause eek of my cares colde,
That sleeth my wit, if ought amis me asterte,
For-yeve it me, myn owene swete herte.

193

If any servant dorste or oughthe of right
Up-on his lady pitously compleyne,
Than wene I, that ich oughthe be that wight,
Considered this, that ye these monthes tweyne
Han taried, ther ye seyden, sooth to seyne,
But dayes ten ye nolde in ost sojourne,
But in two monthes yet ye not retourne.

194

But for-as-muche as me mot nedes lyke
Al that yow list, I dar not pleyne more,
But humbly with sorwful sykes syke;
Yow wryte ich myn unreste sorwes sore,
Fro day to day desyring ever more
To knowen fully, if your wil it were,
How ye han ferd and doon, whyl ye be there.

195

The whos wel-fare and hele eek god encresse
In honour swich, that upward in degree
It growe alwey, so that it never cesse;
Right as your herte ay can, my lady free,
Devyse, I prey to god so mote it be.
And graunte it that ye sone up-on me rewe
As wisly as in al I am yow trewe.

196

And if yow lyketh knowen of the fare
Of me, whos wo ther may no wight discryve,

How he may best portray to her his woes,
And thus to Cressida, his lady dear,
He wrote this letter as follows here:

189

"Flower of my life, whom I do rightly call
Sole sovereign of my every act and deed,
With body and soul, with will and thought and all,
I, wretched man, answering every need
That tongue may tell or heart may ever plead,
As far as matter occupieth space,
I, wretched man, beseech of you your grace!

190

"And let me now recall, my own sweetheart,
How long a lonely time has passed away,
Since you left me, pierced with the bitter dart
Of pain, for which no help nor stay
Have I yet had, but ever worse from day
To day, and so must I forever dwell
Until you come my sorrow to dispel.

191

"With heart oppressed by fear, yet firm and true,
As one by need hard driven now I write,
And all my grief that ever grows anew,
With such skill as I have, I here endite,
And all these stains upon this parchment white
Are tears which from my eyes upon it rain,
And let them plead my sorrow not in vain!

192

"The first I beg is that with eyes so clear
You'll look at this, and hold it not defiled;
And yet again, that you, my lady dear,
Will read it with a gentle heart and mild.
And if my words should seem abrupt or wild,
Bethink that from my grief they all do start,
And so forgive them me, my own sweetheart.

193

"If any lover ever durst with right
Upon his lady chargefully complain,
Then surely I am that unlucky wight,
Considering how you have for these months twain
Delayed, although you said, time and again,
But ten days with the Greeks you would sojourn—
Yet in two months, you do not yet return.

194

"But since in all things I must to you yield,
I may say nothing further on this score,
Yet humbly and with sorrow unconcealed,
I here set forth all my affliction sore,
From day to day desiring ever more
To know in full how with the Greeks you fare,
And what you have been doing over there.

195

"Your health and fortune may the Lord increase,
And may your honor upward in degree
Advance, and in its growing never cease;
The hopes you cherish, every wish and plea,
The Gods grant them to you all utterly!
And may some pity thereamongst shine through
Towards me, thy faithful knight and ever true.

196

"And if you would know how in Troy I fare,
Whose griefs now at their pinnacle arrive,

I can but say, that borne upon by care,
The time I wrote this, I was yet alive,
Yet ready, too, with swift death to connive,
Which I hold off, and from me briefly fend,
Until I see what word to me you send.

197

"My eyes, now useless your fair face to see,
Of bitter tears are but two flowing wells,
My song is but of my adversity,
My happy heavens turn to bitter hells,
And no relief my weight of woe dispels;
I am my own accursed adversary,
And every joy turns into its contrary.

198

"But when you come back home again to Troy,
All this affliction you may soon redress,
For then indeed you shall revive my joy,
For never yet did heaven a heart so bless
As you shall mine, when all my long distress
Shall come to end; if not by pity stirred,
Stern duty bids you hold at least your word.

199

"But if I've earned this fate by doing wrong,
Or if my face you ne'er again will see,
In mere reward that I have served you long,
I beg that you will be both frank and free,
And quickly write and send word back to me
And tell me so, my only lodestar bright,
That I may end my life in death and night.

200

"Or if some other cause makes you to dwell,
Then in your letter make of this report,
For though to me your absence is a hell,
My woe to needful patience can resort,
And hope against my black despair retort.
Pray write then, sweet, and make the matter plain,
With hope, or death, deliver me from pain!

201

"But I must warn you, my own sweetheart true,
When you again your Troilus shall see,
So much has changed his frame and all his hue,
That Cressida shall scarcely know it's he.
In truth, light of my world, my lady free,
So thirsts my heart your beauty to behold,
My grasp on life I scarce can longer hold.

202

"I say no more, though more I well could write,
And still leave boundless volumes yet to say;
With life or death my love you may requite,
Yet heaven grant you joy in every way!
So fare thee well, my love, and have good day!
My life or death I take as you shall send
And to your truth myself I still commend,

203

"With such good will, that if you grant to me
The same good will, there's nothing else I crave;
For in you lies, if so you'll have it be,
The doom that men shall dig for me my grave,
Or in you lies the might my life to save,
And bid all grief and pain from me depart!
And now a last farewell, my own sweetheart!

Le vostre T."

I can no more but, cheste of every care,
At wrytinge of this lettre I was on-lyve,
Al redy out my woful gost to dryve;
Which I delaye, and holde him yet in honde,
Upon the sight of matere of your sonde.

197

Myn eyen two, in veyn with which I see,
Of sorweful teres salte arn waxen welles;
My song, in pleynte of myn adversitee;
My good in harm; myn ese eek waxen helle is.
My joye, in wo; I can sey yow nought elles,
But turned is, for which my lyf I warie,
Everich joye or ese in his contrarie.

198

Which with your cominge hoom ayein to Troye
Ye may redresse, and, more a thousand sythe
Than ever ich hadde, encresen in me joye.
For was ther never herte yet so blythe
To han his lyf, as I shal been as swythe
As I yow see; and, though no maner routhe
Commeve yow, yet thinketh on your trouthe.

199

And if so be my gilt hath deeth deserved,
Or if you list no more up-on me see,
In guerdon yet of that I have you served,
Biseche I yow, myn hertes lady free,
That here-upon ye wolden wryte me,
For love of god, my righte lode-sterre,
Ther deeth may make an ende of al my werre.

200

If other cause aught doth yow for to dwelle,
That with your lettre ye me recomforte;
For though to me your absence is an helle,
With pacience I wol my wo comorte,
And with your lettre of hope I wol desporte.
Now wryteth, swete, and lat me thus not pleyne;
With hope, or deeth, delivereth me from payne.

201

Y-wis, myn owene dere herte trewe,
I woot that, whan ye next up-on me see,
So lost have I myn hele and eek myn hewe,
Criseyde shal nought conne knowe me!
Y-wis, myn hertes day, my lady free,
So thursteth ay myn herte to biholde
Your beautee, that my lyf unnethe I holde.

202

I sey no more, al have I for to seye
To you wel more than I telle may;
But whether that ye do me live or deye,
Yet pray I god, so yeve yow right good day.
And fareth wel, goodly fayre fresshe may,
As ye that lyf or deeth me may comaunde;
And to your trouthe ay I me recomaunde

203

With hele swich that, but ye even me
The same hele, I shal noon hele have.
In you lyth, whan yow list that it so be,
The day in which me clothen shal my grave.
In yow my lyf, in yow might for to save
Me from disese of alle peynes smerte;
And fare now wel, myn owene swete herte!

Le vostre T."

204

This letre forth was sent un-to Criseyde,
Of which hir answer in effect was this;
Ful pitously she wroot ayein, and seyde,
That al-so sone as that she might, y-wis,
She wolde come, and mende al that was mis.
And fynally she wroot and seyde him thanne,
She wolde come, ye, but she niste whanne.

205

But in hir letre made she swich festes,
That wonder was, and swereth she loveth him best,
Of which he fond but botmelees bihestes.
But Troilus, thou mayst now, est or west,
Pype in an ivy leef, if that hee him leyde;
Thus gooth the world; god shilde us fro
mischaunce,
And every wight that meneth trouthe avauce!

206

Encrenen gan the wo fro day to night
Of Troilus, for tarynge of Criseyde;
And lessen gan his hope and eek his might,
For which al doun he in his bed him leyde;
He ne eet, ne dronk, ne sleep, ne word he seyde,
Imaginge ay that she was unkinde;
For which wel neigh he wex out of his minde.

207

This dreem, of which I told have eek biforn,
May never come out of his remembraunce;
He thoughte ay wel he hadde his lady lorn,
And that Joves, of his purveyaunce,
Him shewed hadde in sleep the signifaunce
Of hir untrouthe and his disaventure,
And that the boor was shewed him in figure.

208

For which he for Sibille his suster sente,
That called was Cassandre eek al aboute;
And al his dreem he tolde hir er he stente,
And hir bisoughte assoilen him the doute
Of the stronge boor, with tuskes stoute;
And fynally, with-inne a litel stounde,
Cassandre him gan right thus his dreem expounde.

209

She gan first smyle, and seyde, "O brother dere,
If thou a sooth of this desyrest knowe,
Thou most a fewe of olde stories here,
To purpos, how that fortune over-throwe
Hath lordes olde; through which, with-inne a
throwe,

Thou wel this boor shalt knowe, and of what kinde
He comen is, as men in bokes finde.

210

Diane, which that wrooth was and in ire
For Grekes nolde doon hir sacrificyse,
Ne encens up-on hir auter sette a-fyre,
She, for that Grekes gonne hir so dispyse,
Wrak hir in a wonder cruel wyse.
For with a boor as greet as ox in stalle
She made up frete hir corn and vynes alle.

211

To slee this boor was al the contree reysed,
A-monges which ther com, this boor to see,
A mayde, oon of this world the best y-preysed;

204

To Cressida this letter straight was sent,
To which her answer was to this effect:
Her long delay she sadly did lament,
And said that she would come when good prospect
She found, and what was wrong would all correct,
And finally she wrote and told him then
That she would come, O yes, but knew not when.

205

But still her letter seemed most cordial,
Though in the end he found it vague and cold,
And yet she swore she loved him best of all!
But Troilus, when all the tale is told,
Cressida hath left thee here the bag to hold!
Thus goes the world! God shield us from
disaster,

And of our fates may each of us be master!

206

The grief of Troilus grew greater night
And day, so long his lady from him stayed,
And feebler grew his hope and body's might,
For which upon his bed himself he laid,
Nor ate, nor drank, nor slept, nor speech essayed,
And thought upon the curse of fortune blind,
Until all reason fled from out his mind.

207

This dream, of which I have already told,
He never from his fancy could expel,
Nor could he doubt his lady had grown cold,
Nor yet that Jove had taken means to tell
By dreams, when heavy sleep upon him fell,
Of her untruth and his disastrous fate—
All which the boar was meant to indicate.

208

Then for his sister Sibly straight he sent,
Known also as Cassandra round about,
And told his dream to her just at it went,
And asked her to resolve his mind of doubt,
Concerning this great boar with tusks so stout;
And soon as she the meaning of it found,
She thus began his vision to expound.

209

Smiling a prophet's smile, "O brother dear,"
She said, "if you the truth will really know,
Then you must first a few old stories hear,
Which tell how fortune once did overthrow
Some lords of old, and thereby I shall
show

And tell you whence this boar, and of what kind,
As in the books the story you may find.

210

"Diana, filled with anger and with ire,
Because the Greeks withheld her sacrifice,
Nor on her altar set incense afire,
In vengeance made them pay a cruel price,
And this, in long and short, was her device,
She let a boar, as great as ox in stall,
Devour their growing corn and vines and all.

211

"To slay this boar the countryside was raised,
And thereamong came one, the boar to see,
A maiden whom all in that region praised;

And Meleager, lord of that country,
So loved this maiden, fair and fresh and free,
That into battle with this boar he went,
And killing it, its head unto her sent.

212

"From this, as ancient writers tell to us,
There rose a contest and a warfare high,
And from this lord descended Tydeus,
By line direct, as no one can deny;
But how this Meleager came to die
Through his own mother, that I shall not tell,
For on that tale it were too long to dwell."

213

How Tydeus made warfare Sibyl told,
At Thebes, that ancient city and so strong,
Maintaining that to Polynices bold,
The Theban city did by right belong,
And that Eteocles, his brother, wrong
Had done, in holding Thebes by strength—
All this she told to him and at great length.

214

She also told about Haemonides,
When Tydeus slew fifty knights so stout,
And told of all the wondrous prophecies,
And how the seven kings for Thebes set out,
And then besieged the city round about,
And of the holy serpent and the well,
And of the Furies, all this did she tell;

215

And Archemorus' death and funeral plays,
And how Amphiorax fell through the ground,
How Tydeus was slain and closed his days,
And also how Ipomedon was drowned,
And Parthenope final death wound found,
And how Capaneus, the strong and proud,
Was slain by stroke of thunder, sounding loud.

216

And then she told the tale how either brother,
Eteocles and Polynices true,
How each of them in skirmish killed the other,
And how Argia wept and made ado;
The burning of the town did she review,
And so descended down from stories old
To Diomedes, and of him thus she told.

217

"This boar you dreamed of stands for Diomedes,
Tydeus' son, of Meleager's line,
Who killed the boar and won fame by that deed;
Thy lady, if in fact she once was thine,
With Diomedes in love doth now combine;
Be glad or sad, but there can be no doubt,
This Diomedes is in and you are out."

218

"That isn't true," he cried, "thou sorceress!
False is the spirit of thy prophecy,
And all the priestly cunning you profess!
Your wickedness is plain and clear to see,
To stain a lady's name with falsity!
Away," he cried, "may Jove increase your sorrow,
For you are false today and false tomorrow!

219

"As well defame the beautiful Alceste,

And Meleagre, lord of that tree,
He loved so this fresshe mayden free
That with his manhod, er he wolde stente,
This boor he slow, and hir the heed he sente;

212

Of which, as olde bokes tellen us,
Ther roos a contek and a greet envye;
And of this lord descended Tydeus
By ligne, or elles olde bokes lye;
But how this Meleagre gan to dye
Thorough his moder, wol I yow not telle,
For al to long it were for to dwelle."

213

She told eek how Tydeus, er she stente,
Un-to the stronge citee of Thebes,
To cleyme kingdom of the citee, wente,
For his felawe, daun Polymites,
Of which the brother, daun Ethyocles,
Ful wrongfully of Thebes held the strengthe;
This tolde she by proces, al by lengthe.

214

She tolde eek how Hemonides asterte,
Whan Tydeus slough fifty knyghtes stoute.
She tolde eek al the prophesyes by herte,
And how that seven kinges, with hir route,
Bisegeden the citee al aboute;
And of the holy serpent, and the welle,
And of the furies, al she gan him telle.

215

Of Archimoris buryinge and the pleyes,
And how Amphiorax fil through the grounde,
How Tydeus was slayn, lord of Argeyes,
And how Ypomedoun in litel stounde
Was dreynt, and deed Parthonope of wounde;
And also how Capanneus the proude
With thonder-dint was slayn, that cryde loude.

216

She gan eek telle him how that either brother,
Ethyocles and Polimyte also,
At a scarmyche, eche of hem slough other,
And of Argyves wepinge and hir wo;
And how the town was brent she tolde eek tho.
And so descendeth down from gestes olde
To Diomedes, and thus she spak and tolde.

217

"This ilke boor bitokneth Diomedes,
Tydeus sone, that doun descended is
Fro Meleagre, that made the boor to blede.
And thy lady, wher-so she be, y-wis,
This Diomedes hir herte hath, and she his.
Weep if thou wolt, or leef; for, out of doute,
This Diomedes is inne, and thou art oute."

218

"Thou seyst nat soth," quod he, "thou sorceresse,
With al thy false goost of prophesye!
Thou wenest been a greet devyneresse;
Now seestow not this fool of fantasye
Peyneth hir on ladyes for to lye?
Away," quod he, "ther Joves yewe thee sorwe!
Thou shalt be fals, paraunter, yet to-morwe!

219

As wel thou mightest lyen on Alceste,

That was of creatures, but men lye,
That ever weren, kindest and the beste.
For whanne hir housbonde was in jupartye
To dye him-self, but-if she wolde dye,
She chees for him to dye and go to helle,
And starf anoon, as us the bokes telle."

220

Cassandre goth, and he with cruel herte
For-yat his wo, for angre of hir speche;
And from his bed al sodeinly he sterte,
As though al hool him hadde y-mad a leche.
And day by day he gan enquire and seche
A sooth of this, with al his fulle cure;
And thus he dryeth forth his aventure.

221

Fortune, whiche that permutacioun
Of thinges hath, as it is hir committed
Through purveyaunce and disposicioun
Of heighe Jove, as regnes shal ben flitted
Fro folk in folk, or whan they shal ben smitted,
Gan pulle away the fetheres brighte of Troye
Fro day to day, til they ben bare of joye.

222

Among al this, the fyn of the parodie
Of Ector gan approchen wonder blyve;
The fate wolde his soule sholde unbodie;
And shapen hadde a mene it out to dryve;
Ayeins which fate him helpeth not to stryve;
But on a day to fighten gan he wende,
At which, alas! he caughte his lyves ende.

223

For which me thinketh every maner wight
That haunteth armes oughte to biwayle
The deeth of him that was so noble a knight;
For as he drough a king by th'aventayle,
Unwar of this, Achilles through the mayle
And through the body gan him for to ryve;
And thus this worthy knight was brought of lyve.

224

For whom, as olde bokes tellen us,
Was maad swich wo, that tonge it may not telle;
And namely, the sorwe of Troilus,
That next him was of worthinesse welle.
And in this wo gan Troilus to dwelle,
That, what for sorwe, and love, and for unreste,
Ful ofte a day he bad his herte breste.

225

But natheles, though he gan him dispeyre,
And dradde ay that his lady was untrue,
Yet ay on hir his herte gan repeyre.
And as these lovers doon, he soughte ay newe
To gete ayein Criseyde, bright of hewe.
And in his herte he wente hir excusinge,
That Calkas causede al hir tarynge.

226

And ofte tyme he was in purpos grete
Him-selven lyk a pilgrim to disgyse,
To seen hir; but he may not contrefete
To been unknowen of folk that weren wyse,
Ne finde excuse aright that may suffyse,
If he among the Grekes knowen were;
For which he weep ful ofte many a tere.

Who was, unless all history doth lie,
Of human kind the truest and the best,
For when her husband was about to die,
Unless his place she would herself supply,
For him she chose to die and go to hell,
And in his stead, among the dead to dwell."

220

Cassandra goes, and he with hardened heart
At anger of her speech forgot his woe,
And from his bed now suddenly doth start,
As one who had been sick, but well doth grow;
For nothing now he cares except to know
The truth of what he must henceforth endure,
And in the truth to find his death or cure.

221

Fortune, controller of the permutation
Of things entrusted to her will and sway,
Yet subject to great Jove's administration,
Now making kingdoms slip and slide away,
And all things follow their appointed day,
Began to pluck the feathers bright of Troy,
And left both Troy and Trojans bare of joy.

222

Great Hector drew near to his period's end,
Which all too soon for Troy must now arrive;
Forth from his body fate his soul would send,
And sought a means upon its way to drive
It hence, against which he in vain might strive;
For into battle on a day he went,
Which ended only when his life was spent.

223

Now every man, it seems to me but right,
Who follows arms, should heartily bewail
The death of such a perfect noble knight!
As with his sword he did a king assail,
Achilles, unseen, pierced him through the mail,
And through his body drove the fatal dart
That stopped the beating of his knightly heart.

224

For this knight's death, so brave and generous,
The grief the Trojans felt no tongue can tell,
And least of all the grief of Troilus,
Who next to him was honor's source and well;
Such dark despair on Troilus now fell,
So utterly all joys his heart forsook,
For no day of relief he now doth look.

225

Nevertheless for all his grim despair,
For all his fear his lady was untrue,
Yet still his mind and thought turned ever there,
And like all lovers, still he sought anew
To justify his lady, bright of hue,
And to excuse her, he would often say,
That Calchas was the cause of this delay.

226

He even planned, should time and place permit,
To go and see her in a pilgrim's guise,
But feared he could not so well counterfeit,
That he might risk the test of searching eyes,
Nor find excuse for what men might surmise,
If he among the Greeks were ever caught,
And so he must relinquish this vain thought.

227
To Cressida he often wrote anew,
For not the faintest chance he would neglect,
Beseeching her that since he still was true,
His love, long proved, she should not thus reject;
And Cressida, for pity, I suspect,
Wrote him, as I shall tell, a parting word,
Which was the last he ever from her heard:

228
"Thou son of Cupid, model of all that's good,
Thou sword of knighthood, valor's primal source,
Pray how may she who long herself hath stood
In torment, sorrow from thy heart divorce?
Behold me, sad and sick, with no recourse,
Since you with me nor I with you may deal,
But helpless grief within me to conceal.

229
"Your letters ample and your paper complaints
Have deeply moved my heart to sympathy;
The stains of tears that broke their long restraints,
These have I seen, but what you ask of me,
To come to Troy, just now that cannot be,
Yet why, since someone may this letter seize,
I cannot here explain to you with ease.

230
"Grievous to me, God knows, is your unrest,
And what the Gods have ordered and ordained,
It seems you take it not as for the best,
And all the thought you have in mind retained
Is but of present pleasure unrestrained;
But for all that, I say 'tis only fear
Of wicked tongues that makes me linger here.

231
"For I have heard things much to my surprise,
Concerning you and me, and how we stand,
Which calls for cautious action and for wise;
And I have heard that you have merely planned
To hold me at your beck and your command;
But let that pass—I can but in you see
All truth, and gentleness and honesty.

232
"Yes, I will come! But times are out of joint,
And as things stand with me, what year or day
That this shall be, I cannot now appoint.
But still, whatever happens, let me pray
To have your goodwill and your friendship aye,
For truly while my living days endure,
My friendship to you I do here assure.

233
"And I must ask you that you do not take
It ill, if I so briefly to you write;
I dare not, where I am, distrust awake,
Nor ever had I skill well to endite.
Brief words may cover more than meets the sight.
The meaning counts, and not the letters' space.
So fare you well! God grant to you his grace!

La vostre C."

234
This letter Troilus thought rather strange,
And read it with a sad and thoughtful sigh,
For therein saw he many signs of change,

227
To hir he wroote yet ofte tyme al newe
Ful pitously, he lefte it nought for slouth,
Biseching hir that, sin that he was trewe,
She wolde come ayein and holde hir trouthe.
For which Criseyde up-on a day, for routhe,
I take it so, touchinge al this matere,
Wrot him ayein, and seyde as ye may here.

228
"Cupydes sone, ensample of goodlihed,
O swerd of knighthod, sours of gentillesse!
How mighte a wight in torment and in drede
And helelees, yow sende as yet gladnesse?
I hertelees, I syke, I in distresse;
Sin ye with me, nor I with yow may dele,
Yow neither sende ich herte may nor hele.

229
Your lettres ful, the papir al y-pleynted,
Conseyved hath myn hertes piëtee;
I have eek seyn with teres al depeynted
Your lettre, and how that ye requeren me
To come ayein, which yet ne may not be.
But why, lest that this lettre founden were,
No mencion ne make I now, for fere.

230
Grevous to me, god woot, is your unreste,
Your haste, and that, the goddes ordenaunce,
It semeth not ye take it for the beste.
Nor other thing nis in your remembraunce,
As thinketh me, but only your plesaunce.
But beth not wrooth, and that I yow biseche;
For that I tarie, is al for wikked speche.

231
For I have herd wel more than I wende,
Touchinge us two, how thinges han y-stonde;
Which I shal with dissimulinge amende.
And beth nought wrooth, I have eek understonde,
How ye ne doon but holden me in honde.
But now no fors, I can not in yow gesse
But alle trouthe and alle gentillesse.

232
Comen I wol, but yet in swich disjoynte
I stonde as now, that what yeer or what day
That this shal be, that can I not apoynte.
But in effect, I prey yow, as I may,
Of your good word and of your friendship ay.
For trewely, whyl that my lyf may dure,
As for a freend, ye may in me assure.

233
Yet preye I yow on yvel ye ne take,
That it is short which that I to yow wryte;
I dar not, ther I am, wel lettres make.
Ne never yet ne coude I wel endyte.
Eek greet effect men wryte in place lyte.
Th'entente is al, and nought the lettres space;
And fareth now wel, god have you in his grace!

La vostre C."

234
This Troilus this lettre thoughte al straunge,
Whan he it saugh, and sorrowfully he sighte;
Him thoughte it lyk a kalendes of chaunge;

But fynally, he ful ne trowen mighte
That she ne wolde him holden that she highte;
For with ful yvel wil list him to leve
That loveth wel, in swich cas, though him greve.

235

But natheles, men seyn that, at the laste,
For any thing, men shal the sothe sec;
And swich a cas bitidde, and that as faste,
That Troilus wel understood that she
Nas not so kinde as that hir oughte be.
And fynally, he woot now, out of doute,
That al is lost that he hath been aboute.

236

Stood on a day in his malencolye
This Troilus, and in suspicioun
Of hir for whom he wende for to dye.
And so bifel, that through-out Troye toun,
As was the gyse, y-bore was up and doun
A maner cote-armure, as seyth the storie,
Biforn Deiphebe, in signe of his victorie,

237

The whiche cote, as telleth Lollius,
Deiphebe it hadde y-rent from Diomed
The same day; and whan this Troilus
It saugh, he gan to taken of it hede,
Avysing of the lengthe and of the brede,
And al the werk; but as he gan biholde,
Ful sodeinly his herte gan to colde.

238

As he that on the coler fond with-inne
A broche, that he Criseyde yaf that morwe
That she from Troye moste nedes twinne,
In remembraunce of him and of his sorwe:
And she him leyde ayein hir feyth to borwe
To keep it ay; but now, ful wel he wiste,
His lady nas no lenger on to triste.

239

He gooth him hoom, and gan ful sone sende
For Pandarus; and al this newe chauce,
And of this broche, he tolde him word and ende,
Compleyninge of hir hertes variaunce,
His longe love, his trouthe, and his penaunce;
And after deeth, with-outen wordes more,
Ful faste he cryde, his reste him to restore.

240

Than spak he thus, "O lady myn Criseyde,
Wher is your feth, and wher is your biheste?
Wher is your love, wher is your trouthe?" he seyde;
"O Diomed have ye now al this feste!
Allas, I wolde have trowed at the leste,
That, sin ye nolde in trouthe to me stonde,
That ye thus nolde han holden me in honde!"

241

Who shal now trowe on any othes mo?
Allas, I never wolde han wend, er this,
That ye, Criseyde, coude han chaunged so;
Ne, but I hadde a-gilt and doon amis,
So cruel wende I not your herte, y-wis,
To sele me thus; allas, your name of trouthe
Is now for-doon, and that is al my routhe.

242

Was ther non other broche yow liste lete

Yet to himself continued to deny
That she her faith and name would stultify.
However much their ladies may them grieve,
That they are false, what lover can believe!

235

But ever must a time come at the last
When truth will out for every man to see;
For now the day approaches, sure and fast,
When Troilus must realize that she
Was not as constant as she ought to be,
And that the love and faith that seemed so sure,
Were not so true that they could long endure.

236

One day he stood in melancholy thought,
For now his doubts of her he could not down,
But still they came unchallenged and unsought,
When through the length of all the Trojan town,
As happened oft with trophies of renown,
Before Deiphebus for all to see
An armor cloak was born in victory.

237

This cloak, as Lollius explains to us,
Deiphebus had torn from Diomed
That day, and in the throng was Troilus,
Regarding it with keen attentive heed;
Its length, its breadth, the work on it, their meed
Of praise he gave to all, and taking hold
Of it, he saw what made his blood run cold.

238

For on the collar lay hid there within,
A brooch which he to Cressida had given
Ere she left Troy, and on her breast did pin,
In witness of his love with sorrow riven;
And she an equal faith to show had striven,
And pledged to keep it aye, but now he knew
That to her word and him she was untrue.

239

He hastened home and straight for Pandar sent,
Recounting to him all the sad details
About the fatal brooch and what it meant;
His lady's falsity he then bewails
Against which love nor honor aught avails,
For death alone can heal this wound so sore,
And peace unto his shattered heart restore.

240

"O Cressida," he cried, "O lady bright,
Where is your faith, where is your promised word!
Where are the love and truth that you did plight!
All these on Diomed are now conferred!
Allas, by shame you should have been deterred
From this, for though you might have been untrue,
No need was there such hateful deed to do!"

241

"What man shall ever trust in oaths again?
I never dreamed that thou couldst alter so,
O Cressida, unless it might be then,
If I the first inconstancy should show!
O that thy tender heart could deal such blow!
Allas, the hateful deed that thou hast done,
An evil eminence for thee hath won!"

242

"Was there no other brooch that you might use

With which your new love you might usher in,
But only that endeared one you must choose,
Which on your faithless breast I once did pin?
What end could you expect thereby to win,
Except with needless cruelty to tell
That in your heart I now no longer dwell?

243

"For now I see you utterly have cast
Me from your thought, and yet I cannot find
It in my heart, in spite of all that's passed,
To drive you for a moment from my mind!
O what a fate unnatural and blind,
That I must love the best on all this earth
The one who holds me of the slightest worth!

244

"O God above, this favor I request,
That I may meet, and soon, this Diomede,
For gladly would I try with him a test
Of strength and see his life's heart bleed!
O God, who ever dost and shouldst take heed
To further virtue and to punish wrong,
Take thou thy vengeance on him swift and strong!

245

"Thou, Pandar, who didst often fret and chide,
Because my dreams seemed credible to me,
O, would that more on them I had relied,
For now you see your niece's falsity!
In sundry ways both joy and misery
The Gods reveal in sleep for our behoof,
And here my dreams provide for this a proof.

246

"But now of this what need I further speak?
From this time forth I shall in warlike fray
My death embrace, in fight with any Greek,
And none too soon for me shall come that day!
But Cressida, whom I shall love for aye,
With one last word, I will myself defend,
My love hath merited a better end."

247

All these things Pandar heard and none denied,
For now the end was far too evident;
With only silence therefore he replied,
Sorrow for Troilus doth speech prevent,
And shame for Cressida's ill management;
Still as a stone he stood, nor answer made,
By grief and shame all utterly dismayed.

248

But at the last he spoke as best he could,
"My brother dear, I fear your trouble lies
Beyond my aid, and I am through for good
With Cressida, and her I now despise.
What I have done for you in this embrace,
Regarding not my honor nor my rest,
I did it, Troilus, all for the best.

249

"If anything I did still pleases thee,
Then I am glad, and for this treason now,
God knows it is a heavy blow to me.
If anything could ease your heart, I vow
That I would serve you, if I knew both how,
And as for Cressida, the while I live,
Her perjury I never shall forgive."

To feffe with your newe love," quod he,
"But thilke broche that I, with teres wete,
Yow yaf, as for a remembrance of me?
Non other cause, allas, ne hadde ye
But for despyt, and eek for that ye mente
Al-outrely to shewen your entente!

243

Through which I see that clene out of your minde
Ye han me cast, and I ne can nor may,
For al this world, with-in myn herte finde
T' unloven yow a quarter of a day!
In cursed tyme I born was, weylaway!
That ye, that doon me al this wo endure,
Yet love I best of any creature.

244

Now god," quod he, "me sende yet the grace
That I may meten with this Diomede!
And trewely, if I have might and space,
Yet shal I make, I hope, his sydes blede.
O god," quod he, "that oughtest taken hede
To fortheren trouthe, and wronges to punyce,
Why niltow doon a vengeance on this vyce?

245

O Pandare, that in dremes for to triste
Me blamed hast, and wont art ofte upbreyde,
Now maystow see thy-selve, if that thee liste,
How trewe is now thy nece, bright Criseyde!
In sondry formes, god it woot," he seyde,
"The goddes shewen bothe joye and tene
In slepe, and by my dreme it is now sene.

246

And certaynly, with-out more speche,
From hennes-forth, as ferforth as I may
Myn owene deeth in armes wol I seche;
I recche not how sone be the day!
But trewely, Criseyde, swete may,
Whom I have ay with al my might y-served,
That ye thus doon, I have it nought deserved."

247

This Pandarus, that alle these thinges herde,
And wiste wel he seyde a sooth of this,
He nought a word ayein to him answerde;
For sory of his frendes sorwe he is,
And shamed, for his nece hath doon a-mis;
And stant, astoned of these causes tweye,
As stille as stoon; a word ne coude he seye.

248

But at the laste thus he spak, and seyde,
"My brother dere, I may thee do no-more.
What shulde I seyn? I hate, y-wis, Criseyde!
And god wot, I wol hate hir evermore!
And that thou me bisoughtest doon of yore,
Havinge un-to myn honour ne my reste
Right no reward, I dide al that thee leste.

249

If I dide ought that mighte lyken thee,
It is me leef; and of this treson now,
God woot, that it a sorwe is un-to me!
And dredelees, for hertes ese of yow,
Right fayn wolde I amende it, wiste I how.
And fro this world, almighty god I preye,
Delivere hir sone; I can no-more seye."

250

Gret was the sorwe and pleynt of Troilus;
But forth hir cours fortune ay gan to holde.
Criseyde loveth the sone of Tydeus,
And Troilus mot wepe in cares colde.
Swich is this world; who-so it can biholde,
In eche estat is litel herthes reste;
God leve us for to take it for the beste!

251

In many cruel batayle, out of drede,
Of Troilus, this ilke noble knight,
As men may in these olde bokes rede,
Was sene his knighthod and his grete might.
And dredelees, his ire, day and night,
Ful cruelly the Grekes ay aboughte;
And alwey most this Diomed he soughte.

252

And ofte tyme, I finde that they mette
With bloody strokes and with wordes grete,
Assaying how hir speres weren whette;
And god it woot, with many a cruel hete,
Gan Troilus upon his helm to-bete.
But natheles, fortune it nought ne wolde,
Of othres hond that either deyen sholde.—

253

And if I hadde y-taken for to wryte
The armes of this ilke worthy man,
Than wolde I of his batailles endyte.
But for that I to wryte first bigan
Of his love, I have seyed as that I can.
His worthy dedes, who-so list hem here,
Reed Dares, he can telle hem alle y-fere.

254

Biseching every lady bright of hewe,
And every gentil womman, what she be,
That al be that Criseyde was untrewed,
That for that gilt she be not wrooth with me.
Ye may hir gilt in othere bokes see;
And gladlier I wol wryten, if yow leste,
Penelope's trouthe and good Alceste.

255

Ne I sey not this al-only for these men,
But most for women that bitraysed be
Through false folk; god yeve hem sorwe, amen!
That with hir grete wit and subtiltee
Bitrayse yow! and this commeveth me
To speke, and in effect yow alle I preye,
Beth war of men, and herkeneth what I seye!—

256

Go, litel book, go litel myn tregedie,
Ther god thy maker yet, er that he dye,
So sende might to make in som comedie!
But litel book, no making thou n'envye,
But subgit be to alle poesye;
And kis the steppes, wher-as thou seest pace
Virgile, Ovyde, Omer, Lucan, and Stace.

257

And for ther is so greet diversitee
In English and in wryting of our tonge,
So preye I god that noon miswryte thee,
Ne thee mismetre for defaute of tonge.
And red wher-so thou be, or elles songe,

250

This brought but slight relief to Troilus,
Whose final fortunes quickly now unfold.
Cressida loves the son of Tydeus,
And Troilus hath naught but comfort cold!
Such is the world! Wherever you behold,
The common state of man is one of woe,
And in the end we all must take it so!

251

In daily battles, as the days go by,
Doth Troilus, the noblest Trojan knight,
With courage by despair exalted high,
Exhibit all his valor and his might;
Now doth his wrath upon the Greeks alight,
But most of all he looked for Diomed,
For hate of him doth other hates exceed.

252

And oftentimes these two opponents met,
With bloody strokes and with exchange of speech;
Spear against spear they often thus did whet,
Yet neither pierced so deeply as to reach
The other's life, so matched was each to each;
This neat exchange blind fortune would not send
That either one the other's life should end.

253

And if my purpose here had been to write
The arms of Troilus, and not the man,
Then could I of his battles much endite;
But of his love I've told since I began,
And shall continue so, as best I can.
His deeds of arms, if you would of them hear,
Read Dares, where they all in full appear.

254

O gentle ladies all, so bright of hue,
Let me beseech, although it had to be
That I should write of one who was untrue,
Put not the blame for what she did on me,
For all the books tell her iniquity;
Penelope the true, if I but could,
I'd rather praise, or fair Alceste the good.

255

And O ye men, of you naught need be said,
Except that ladies men have oft betrayed!
Bad luck to them and curses on their head,
Who with feigned words and plots so subtly laid
On simple minds their evil tricks have played!
Beware of wiles, O ladies, and take heed,
What lesson in my story you may read.

256

Go, little book, my little tragedy!
God grant thy maker, ere his ending day,
May write some tale of happy poetry!
But, little book, of any poet's lay
Envy of heart here shalt thou not display,
But kiss the steps where pass through ages spacious,
Vergil and Ovid, Homer, Lucan and Statius.

257

And since there is so great diversity
In English, and in the writing of our tongue,
I pray to God that no man miswrite thee,
Or get thy meter wrong and all unstrung;
But everywhere that thou art read or sung,

I trust all men will take thee as they should—
But now to come back where my story stood.

258

The wrath of Troilus, as I have said,
The Grecian warriors had to pay for dear,
And hosts of Greeks his valiant hand struck dead;
Though in his time he was without a peer
Within the city, yet the fatal spear
Of bold Achilles, as the Gods had willed,
At early last this Trojan hero killed.

259

And when his final earthly breath he drew,
His spirit from his body lightly went,
And to the eighth sphere's hollow concave flew,
Leaving in convex every element,
And then he saw, in glorious ascent,
The wandering stars, and heard the harmony
Of all the spheres in heavenly melody.

260

And down from thence he cast his spirit's eyes
Upon this spot of earth, that with the sea
Is bound, and now doth heartily despise
This wretched world, with all its vanity,
In contrast with the joy in full degree
Of heaven above; and at the very last
His gaze where he was slain, he downward cast.

261

Silently he laughed to see the grief and woe
Of those who weep within this earthly space,
Renouncing all men's works, who only know
Those earthly joys which time shall soon efface;
In peace content with heaven's lasting grace,
His way he went, in rest no tongue can tell,
Where Mercury appointed him to dwell.

262

Thus ended, lo, the love of Troilus,
Thus ended, lo, this model of mankind;
His royal rank led to such end, and thus
Ended his high nobility of mind,
For this false world, so mutable and blind.
'Twas thus his love for Cressida began,
And thus until he died its full course ran.

263

Ye youth, so happy at the dawn of life,
In whom love springs as native to your days,
Estrange you from the world and its vain strife,
And let your hearts their eyes to him upraise
Who made you in his image! Give him praise,
And think this world is but a passing show,
Fading like blooms that all too briefly blow.

264

And love ye him who on the cross did buy
Our souls from timeless death to live for aye,
Who died and rose and reigns in heaven high!
Your deepest love his love will ne'er betray,
Your faith on him I bid you safely lay;
And since his love is best beyond compare,
Love of the world deny with all its care.

265

Here, lo, the vanity of pagan rites!
Lo, here, how little all their shrines avail!
Lo, here the end of worldly appetites!

That thou be understonde I god beseche!
But yet to purpos of my rather speche.—

258

The wraththe, as I began yow for to seye,
Of Troilus, the Grekes boughten dere;
For thousandes his hondes maden deadye,
As he that was with-outen any pere,
Save Ector, in his tyme, as I can here.
But weylaway, save only goddes wille,
Dispitously him slough the fiers Achille.

259

And whan that he was slayn in this manere,
His lighte goost ful blisfully is went
Up to the holownesse of the seventh spere,
In convers letinge every element;
And ther he saugh, with ful ayvsement,
The erratik sterres, herkeninge armonye
With sownes fulle of hevenish melodye.

260

And doun from thennes faste he gan avyse
This litel spot of erthe, that with the see
Enbraced is, and fully gan despyse
This wrecched world, and held al vanitee
To respect of the pleyne felicittee
That is in hevене above; and at the laste,
Ther he was slayn, his loking doun he caste;

261

And in him-self he lough right at the wo
Of hem that wepten for his deeth so faste;
And dampned al our werk that folweth so
The blinde lust, the which that may not laste,
And sholden al our herte on hevене caste.
And forth he wente, shortly for to telle,
Ther as Mercurie sorted him to dwelle.—

262

Swich fyn hath, lo, this Troilus for love,
Swich fyn hath al his grete worthinesse;
Swich fyn hath his estat real above,
Swich fyn his lust, swich fyn hath his noblesse;
Swich fyn hath false worldes brotelnesse.
And thus bigan his lovinge of Criseyde,
As I have told, and in this wyse he deyde.

263

O yonge fresshe folkes, he or she,
In which that love up groweth with your age,
Repeyreth hoom from worldly vanitee,
And of your herte up-casteth the visage
To thilke god that after his image
Yow made, and thinketh al nis but a fayre
This world, that passeth sone as floures fayre.

264

And loveth him, the which that right for love
Upon a cros, our soules for to beye,
First starf, and roos, and sit in hevене a-bove;
For he nil falsen no wight, dar I seye,
That wol his herte al hoolly on him leye.
And sin he best to love is, and most meke,
What nedeth feyned loves for to seke?

265

Lo here, of Payens corsed olde rytes,
Lo here, what alle hir goddes may availle;
Lo here, these wrecched worldes appetytes;

Lo here, the fyn and guerdon for travaille
Of Jove, Appollo, of Mars, of swich rascaille!
Lo here, the forme of olde clerkes speche
In poetrye, if ye hir bokes seche.—

266

O moral Gower, this book I directe
To thee, and to the philosophical Strode,
To vouchen sauf, ther nede is, to corecte,
Of your benignitees and zeles gode.
And to that sothfast Crist, that starf on rode,
With al myn herte of mercy ever I preye;
And to the lord right thus I speke and seye:

267

Thou oon, and two, and three, eterne on-lyve,
That regnest ay in three and two and oon,
Uncircumscript, and al mayst circumscryve,
Us from visible and invisible foon
Defende; and to thy mercy, everychoon,
So make us, Jesus, for thy grace, digne,
For love of mayde and moder thyn benigne! Amen.

Lo, here, how all the Gods at last shall fail,
Appollo, Jove and Mars and all the tale!
Lo, here the song that time hath held in fee,
Rescued from crumbling, grey antiquity!

266

O moral Gower, to thee this book I send,
And to thee, too, thou philosophical Strode,
And beg, if need be, ye will it amend.
And have my thanks, for all such care bestowed.
To Christ, the crucified, whose blood hath flowed
For us, for mercy now I humbly pray,
And to the highest Lord these words I say:

267

O Thou Eternal Three and Two and One,
Reigning forever in One and Two and Three,
Boundless, but binding all through Father and Son,
From foes unseen and seen deliver me;
And blessed Jesus, turn our love to thee,
And through thy maiden Mother, meek and mild,
Let all our hearts to thee be reconciled!

HERE ENDETH THE BOOK OF
TROIILUS AND CRESSIDA

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The Great Books

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