

Troilus & Criseyde

by

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c 1385 (a 1400)



DjVu Editions E-books



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Chaucer: Troilus and Criseyde

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Book I

The double sorwe of Troilus to tellen,
 That was the kyng Priamus sone of Troye,
 In louynge how his auentures fellen
 ffro wo to wele, and after out of ioie,
 My purpos is, er that I parte fro ye. 5
 Thesiphone, thow help me for tendite
 Thise woful vers that wepen as I write.

To the clepe I, thow goddesse of torment,
 Thow cruwel furie, sorwyng eue in peyne,
 Help me that am the sorwful instrument 10
 That helpeth loueres, as I kan, to pleyne;
 ffor wel sit it, the sothe for to seyne,
 A woful wight to han a drery feere,
 And to a sorwful tale a sory chere.

ffor I, that god of loues seruantz serue, 15
 Ne dar to loue, for myn vnliklynesse,
 Preyen for speed, al sholde I ther-fore sterue,
 So fer am I from his help in derknesse;
 But natheles, if this may don gladnesse
 To any louere and his cause auaille, 20
 Haue he my thonk, and myn be this trauaille.

But ye loueres that bathen in gladnesse,
 If any drope of pyte in yow be,
 Remembreth yow on passed heuynesse
 That ye han felt, and on the aduersite 25
 Of othere folk, and thynketh how that ye
 Han felt that loue dorste yow displese,
 Or ye han wonne hym with to grete an ese.

And preieth for hem that ben in the cas
 Of Troilus, as ye may after here, 30
 That loue hem bryng in heuene to solas;
 And ek for me preieth to god so dere
 That I haue myght to shewe in som manere
 Swich peyne and wo as loues folk endure,
 In Troilus vnsely auenture. 35

And biddeth ek for hem that ben despeired

In loue that neuere nyl recouered be,
 And ek for hem that falsly ben apeired
 Thorough wikked tonges, be it he or she;
 Thus biddeth god, for his benignite, 40
 So graunte hem soone owt of this world to pace,
 That ben despeired out of lous grace.

And biddeth ek for hem that ben at ese.
 That god hem graunte ay good perseueraunce,
 And send hem myght hire ladies so to plese 45
 That it to loue be worship and plesaunce;
 ffor so hope I my sowle best auaunce,
 To prey for hem that lous seruauantz be,
 And write hire wo, and lyue in charite,

And for to haue of hem compassioun, 50
 As though I were hire owne brother dere.
 Now herkneth with a good entencioun,
 ffor now wil I gon streght to my matere,
 In which ye may the double sorwes here
 Of Troilus in louynge of Criseyde, 55
 And how that she forsook hym er she deyde.

Yt is wel wist how that the Grekes stronge
 In armes with a thousand shippes wente
 To Troiewardes, and the cite longe
 Assegeden, neigh ten yer er they stente, 60
 And in diuerse wise and oon entente,
 The rauysshyng to wreken of Eleyne,
 By Paris don, they wroughten al hir peyne.

Now fel it so that in the town ther was
 Dwellynge a lord of gret auctorite. 65
 A gret deuyn that clepid was Calkas,
 That in science so expert was that he
 Knew wel that Troie sholde destroyed be,
 By answeere of his god that highte thus:
 Daun Phebus or Appollo Delphicus. 70

So whan this Calkas knew by kalkulynge,
 And ek by answer of this Appollo.
 That Grekes sholden swich a peple brynge
 Thorough which that Troie moste ben for-do,
 He caste anon out of the town to go; 75
 ffor wel wiste he by sort that Troye sholde

Destroyed ben — ye, wolde who-so nolde.

ffor which forto departen softly
 Took purpos ful this for-knowynge wise,
 And to the Grekes oost ful pryuely 80
 He stal anon; and they in curteys wise
 Hym diden bothe worship and seruyce,
 In trust that he hath konnyng hem to rede
 In euery peril which that is to drede.

The noise vp ros whan it was first aspied 85
 Thorough al the town and generaly was spoken
 That Calkas traitour fled was and allied
 With hem of Grece, and casten to be wroken
 On hym that falsly hadde his feith so broken,
 And seyden he and al his kyn atones 90
 Ben worthi for to brennen, felle and bones

Now hadde Calkas left in this meschaunce,
 Al vnwist of this false and wikked dede,
 His doughter, which that was in gret penaunce,
 ffor of hire lif she was ful sore in drede, 95
 As she that nyste what was best to rede;
 ffor bothe a widewe was she and allone
 Of any frend to whom she dorste hir mone.

Criseyde was this lady name al right —
 As to my doom in al Troies cite 100
 Nas non so fair, for passynge euery wight
 So aungelik was hir natif beaute
 That lik a thing in-mortal semed she,
 As doth an heuenyssh perfit creature
 That down were sent in scornynge of nature. 105

This lady which that alday herd at ere
 Hire fadres shame, his falsnesse and tresoun,
 Wel neigh out of hir wit for sorwe and fere,
 In widewes habet large of samyt broun,
 On knees she fil biforn Ector adown 110
 With pitous vois, and tendrely wepyng,
 His mercy bad, hir seluen excusynge.

Now was this Ector pitous of nature,
 And saugh that she was sorwfully bigon,
 And that she was so faire a creature; 115

Of his goodnesse he gladede hire anon,
 And seyde, "lat youre fadres treson gon
 fforth with meschaunce, and ye youre self in ioie
 Dwelleth with vs, whil yow good list, in Troie.

"And al thonour that men may don yow haue, 120
 As ferforth as youre fader dwelled here,
 Ye shul haue, and youre body shal men saue,
 As fer as I may ought enquere or here."

And she hym thonked with ful humble chere,
 And ofter wolde, and it hadde ben his wille. 125
 And took hire leue, and hom, and held hir stille.

And in hire hous she abood with swich meyne
 As til hire honour nede was to holde;
 And whil she was dwellynge in that cite
 Kepte hir estat, and both of yonge and olde 130
 fful wel biloued, and wel men of hir tolde —
 But whether that she children hadde or noon,
 I rede it naught, ther-fore I late it goon.

The thynges fellen as they don of werre
 Bitwixen hem of Troie and Grekes ofte; 135
 ffor som day boughten they of Troie it derre,
 And eft the Grekes founden no thing softe
 The folk of Troie; and thus fortune on lofte
 And vnder eft gan hem to whielen bothe
 Aftir hir cours, ay whil that thei were wrothe. 140

But how this town com to destruccion
 Ne falleth naught to purpos me to telle;
 ffor it were here a long digression
 ffro my matere and yow to long to dwelle;
 But the Troian gestes as they felle, 145
 In Omer or in Dares or in Dite,
 Who-so that kan may rede hem as they write.

But though that Grekes hem of Troie shetten
 And hir cite biseged al aboute,
 Hire olde vsage nolde they nat letten, 150
 As for to honour hir goddes ful deuoute;
 But aldirmost in honour, out of doute,
 Thei hadde a relik heet Palladion
 That was hire trist abouen euerichon.

And so bifel whan comen was the tyme
 Of Aperil, whan clothed is the mede
 With newe grene, of lusty Veer the pryme,
 And swote smellen floures white and rede,
 In sondry wises shewed, as I rede,
 The folk of Troie hire obseruaunces olde,
 Palladiones feste forto holde.

And to the temple in al hir beste wise
 In general ther wente many a wight
 To herkennen of Palladion the seruyce;
 And namely, so many a lusty knyght,
 So many a lady fressh and mayden bright,
 fful wel arayed, both moeste, mene, and leste,
 Ye, bothe for the seson and the feste.

Among thise othere folk was Criseyda,
 In widewes habit blak, but natheles,
 Right as oure firste lettre is now an A,
 In beaute first so stood she makeles;
 Hire goodly lokyng gladed al the prees.
 Nas neuere yet seyn thyng to ben preysed derre,
 Nor vnder cloude blak so bright a sterre,

As was Criseyde, as folk seyde euerichone,
 That hir behelden in hir blake wede;
 And yet she stood ful lowe and stille allone,
 Byhynden other folk in litel brede,
 And nei y the dore, ay vndre shames drede,
 Simple of atire and debonaire of chere,
 With ful assured lokyng and manere.

This Troilus, as he was wont to gide
 His yonge knyghtes, lad hem vp and down
 In thilke large temple on euery side,
 Byholding ay the ladies of the town,
 Now here, now there, for no deuocioun
 Hadde he to non to reuen hym his reste,
 But gan to preise and lakken whom hym leste.

And in his walk ful faste he gan to wayten
 If knyght or squyer of his compaignie
 Gan forto syke or lete his eighen baiten
 On any womman that he koude espye;
 He wolde smyle and holden it folye,

And seye hym thus, "god woot, she slepeth softe
ffor loue of the, whan thow turnest ful ofte. 195

"I haue herd told, perdieux, of youre lyuyng,
Ye loueres, and youre lewed obseruaunces,
And which a labour folk han in wynnyng
Of loue, and in the kepyng which doutaunces; 200
And whan youre prey is lost, woo and penaunces.
O veray fooles, nyce and blynde be ye;
Ther nys nat oon kan war by other be."

And with that word he gan caste vp the browe,
Ascaunces, "loo, is this naught wisely spoken?" 205
At which the god of loue gan loken rowe
Right for despit, and shop forto ben wroken:
He kidde anon his bowe nas naught broken,
ffor sodeynly he hitte hym atte fulle,
And yet as proude a pekok kan he pulle. 210

O blynde world, O blynde entencioun!
How often falleth al the effect contraire
Of surquidrie and foul presumpcioun!
ffor kaught is proud, and kau yt is debonaire: 215
This Troilus is clomben on the staire
And litel weneth that he moot descenden —
But alday failleth thing that fooles wenden.

As proude Bayard gynneth forto skippe
Out of the weye, so pryketh him his corn,
Til he a lasshe haue of the longe whippe, 220
Than thynketh he, "'though I praunce al byforn
ffirst 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."

So ferde it by this fierse and proude knyght: 225
Though he a worthy kynges sone were,
And wende no thing hadde had swich myght
A yeyns his wille that shuld his herte stere,
Yet with a look his herte wax a-ferre,
That he that now was moost in pride a-boue 230
Wax sodeynly moost subgit vnto loue.

fforthy ensample taketh of this man,
Ye wise, proude, and worthi folkes alle,

To scornen loue, which that so soone kan
 The fredom of youre hertes to him thralle — 235
 ffor euere it was and euere it shal byfalle
 That loue is he that alle thing may bynde
 ffor may no man fardon the lawe of kynde.

That this be soth, hath preued and doth yit;
 ffor this trowe I ye knowen alle or some: 240
 Men reden nat that folk han gretter wit
 Than they that han be most with loue ynome;
 And strengest folk bien ther-with ouerecome,
 The worthiest and grettest of degree —
 This was, and is, and yet men shall it see. 245

And trowelich it sit wel to be so,
 ffor alderwisest han ther-with ben plesed,
 And they that han ben aldermost in wo
 With loue han ben comforted moost and esed;
 And ofte it hath the cruel herte apesed, 250
 And worthi folk maad worthier of name,
 And causeth moost to dreden vice and shame.

Now sith it may nat goodly ben with-stonde,
 And is a thing so vertuouse in kynde,
 Refuseth nat to loue forto ben bonde, 255
 Syn as hym seluen liste he may yow bynde:
 The yerde is bet that bowen wole and wynde
 Than that that brest; and therefore I yow rede
 To folowen hym that so wel kan yow lede.

But forto tellen forth in special 260
 As of this kynges sone of which I tolde,
 And leten other thing collateral,
 Of hym thenke I my tale forth to holde,
 Both of his ioie and of his cares colde;
 And al his werk as touching this matere, 265
 ffor I it gan, I wol therto refere.

With-inne the temple he wente hym forth pleyinge,
 This Troilus, of euery wight aboute,
 On this lady, and now on that, lokyng,
 Where so she were of town or of with-oute; 270
 And vp-on cas bifel that thorough a route
 His eye percede, and so depe it wente,
 Til on Criseyde it smote, and ther it stente.

And sodeynly he wax ther-with astoned,
 And gan hir bet biholde in thrifty wise. 275
 "O mercy god," thoughte he, "wher hastow woned,
 That art so feyre and goodly to deuise?"
 Therwith his herte gan to sprede and rise,
 And softe sighed, lest men myghte hym here,
 And cau yt a yeyn his firste pleyinge chere. 280

She nas nat with the leste of hire statore,
 But alle hir lymes so wel answeyng
 Weren to wommanhode, that creature
 Was neuere lasse mannyssh in semyng;
 And ek the pure wise of hire meuyng 285
 Shewed wel that men myght in hire gesse
 Honour, estat, and wommanly noblesse.

To Troilus right wonder wel with alle
 Gan forto like hire meuyng and hire chere,
 Which somdel deignous was, for she let falle 290
 Hire look a lite a-side in swich manere
 Ascaunces, "what, may I nat stonden here?"
 And after that hir lokyng and she lighte.
 That neuere thoughte hym seen so good a syghte.

And of hire look in him ther gan to quyken 295
 So gret desire and swich affeccioun,
 That in his hertes botme gan to stiken
 Of hir his fixe and depe impressioun;
 And though he erst hadde poured vp and down,
 He was tho glad his hornes in-to shrinke; 300
 Unnethes wiste he how to loke or wynke.

Lo, he that leet hym seluen so konnyng,
 And scorned hem that loues peynes dryen,
 Was ful vnwar that loue hadde his dwellyng
 With-inne the subtile stremes of hire eyen; 305
 That sodeynly hym thoughte he felte deyen,
 Right with hire look, the spirit in his herte —
 Blissed be loue, that kan thus folk conuerte!

She, this in blak, likyng to Troilus
 Ouer al thing, he stood forto biholde; 310
 Ne his desire, ne wherfore he stood thus,
 He neither chere made, ne worde tolde;

But from a-fer, his manere forto holde,
 On other thing his look som tyme he caste,
 And efte on hire, while that the seruyse laste. 315

And after this, nat fullich al awhaped,
 Out of the temple al esilich he wente,
 Repentyng hym that he hadde euere i-iaped
 Of loues folk, lest fully the descente
 Of scorn fille on hym self; but what he mente, 320
 Lest it were wist on any manere syde,
 His woo he gan dissimilen and hide.

Whan he was fro the temple thus departed,
 He streght anon vnto his paleys torneth,
 Hight with hire look thorough-shoten and thorough-darted, 325
 Al feyneth he in lust that he soiourneth;
 And al his chere and speche also he borneth,
 And ay of loues seruantz euery while,
 Hym self to wrey, at hem he gan to smyle.

And seyde, "lord, so ye lyue al in lest, 330
 Ye loueres, for the konnyngeste of yow,
 That serueth most ententiflich and best,
 Hym tit as often harm ther-of as prow:
 Youre hire is quyt a yeyn, ye, god woot how,
 Nought wel for wel, but scorn for good seruyse; 335
 In feith, youre ordre is ruled in good wise.

"In noun-certeyn ben alle youre obseruaunces,
 But it a sely fewe pointes be;
 Ne no thing asketh so gret attendaunces
 As doth youre lay, and that knowe alle ye; 340
 But that is nat the worste, as mote I the;
 But tolde I yow the worste point, I leue,
 Al seyde I soth, ye wolden at me greue.

"But take this: that ye loueres ofte eschuwe,
 Or elles doon, of good entencioun, 345
 fful ofte thi lady wol it mysconstruwe,
 And deme it harm in hire oppynyoun;
 And yet if she, for other enchesoun
 Be wroth, than shaltow haue a groyne anon —
 Lord, wel is hym that may of yow ben oon!" 350

But for al this, whan that he say his tyme,

He held his pees, non other boote hym gayned;
 ffor loue bigan his fetheres so to lyme,
 That wel vnneth vn-til his folk he fayned
 That other besy nedes hym destrayned; 355
 ffor wo was hym, that what to doon he nyste,
 But bad his folk to gon wher that hem liste.

And whan that he in chambre was allone,
 He doun vp-on his beddes feet hym sette,
 And first he gan to sike and eft to grone, 360
 And thought ay on hire so with-outen lette,
 That as he sat and wook, his spirit mette
 That he hire sauý, and temple, and al the wise
 Right of hire look, and gan it newe a-vise.

Thus gan he make a mirour of his mynde, 365
 In which he saugh al holly hire figure;
 And that he wel koude in his herte fynde,
 It was to hym a right good auenture
 To loue swich oon, and if he dede his cure
 To seruen hir, yet myghte he falle in grace, 370
 Or ellis for oon of hire seruantes pace.

Imagenyng that trauaille nor grame
 Ne myghte for so goodly oon be lorn
 As she, ne hym for his desire no shame,
 Al were it wist, but in pris and vp born 375
 Of alle louers wel more than biforn —
 Thus argumented he in his gynnyng,
 fful vnauysed of his woo comyng.

Thus took he purpos loues craft to suwe,
 And thoughte he wolde werken pryuely, 380
 ffirst to hiden his desire in muwe
 ffrom euery wight yborn, al outrely,
 But he myghte ought recouered be therby,
 Remembryng hym that loue to wide yblowe
 Yelt bittre fruyt, though swete seed be sowe. 385

And ouere al this yet muchel more he thoughte
 What forto speke and what to holden inne,
 And what to arten hire to loue he soughte,
 And on a song anon right to bygynne,
 And gan loude on his sorwe forto wynne; 390
 ffor with good hope he gan fully assente

Criseyde forto loue and nought repente.

And of his song naught only the sentence,
 As writ myn auctour called Lollius,
 But plainly, saue oure tonges difference, 395
 I dar wel seyn in al that Troilus
 Seyde in his song, loo, euery word right thus
 As I shal seyn; and who-so list it here,
 Loo, next this vers he may it fynden here.

"If no loue is, O god, what fele I so? 400
 And if loue is, what thing and which is he?
 If loue be good, from whennes cometh my woo?
 If it be wikke, a wonder thynketh me,
 Whenne euery torment and aduersite
 That cometh of hym may to me sauory thinke, 405
 ffor ay thurst I the more that ich it drynke.

"And if that at myn owen lust I brenne,
 ffrom whennes cometh may waillynge and my pleynte?
 If harme a-gree me, wherto pleyne I thenne?
 I noot, ne whi vn-wery that I feynte. 410
 O quike deth, O swete harm so queynte,
 How may of the in me swich quantite,
 But if that I consente that it be?

"And if that I consente, I wrongfully
 Compleyne, i-wis; thus possed to and fro, 415
 Al sterelees with-inne a boot am I
 Amydde the see, bitwixen wyndes two,
 That inne contrarie stonden euere mo.
 Allas, what is this wondre maladie?
 ffor hete of cold, for cold of hete, I dye." 420

And to the god of loue thus seyde he
 With pitous vois, "O lord, now youre is
 My spirit, which that oughte youre be.
 Yow thanke I, lord, that han me brought to this;
 But wheither goddesse or womman, i-wis, 425
 She be, I not, which that ye do me serue;
 But as hire man I wol ay lyue and sterue.

"Ye stonden in hir eighen myghtily,
 As in a place vnto youre vertue digne;

Wherfore, lord, if my seruice or I 430
 May liken yow, so beth to me benigne;
 ffor myn estat roial I here resigne
 In-to hire hond, and with ful humble chere
 Bicome hir man, as to my lady dere."

In hym ne deyned spare blood roial 435
 The fyre of loue — the wherfro god me blesse —
 Ne him forbar in no degree for al
 His vertue or his excellent prowesse,
 But held hym as his thral lowe in destresse, 440
 And brende hym so in soundry wise ay newe,
 That sexti tyme a day he loste his hewe.

So muche, day by day, his owene thought
 ffor lust to hire gan quiken and encesse,
 That euery other charge he sette at nought;
 fforthi ful ofte, his hote fire to cesse, 445
 To sen hire goodly lok he gan to presse;
 ffor ther-by to ben esed wel he wende,
 And ay the ner he was, the more he brende.

ffor ay the ner the fire the hotter is —
 This, trowe I, knoweth al this compaignye; 450
 But were he fer or ner, I dar sey this:
 By nyght or day, for wisdom or folye,
 His herte, which that is his brestes eye,
 Was ay on hire, that fairer was to sene
 Than euere were Eleyne or Polixene 455

Ek of the day ther passed nou yt an houre
 That to hym self a thousand tyme he seyde,
 "Good goodly, to whom serue I and laboure
 As I best kan, now wolde god, Criseyde,
 Ye wolden on me rewe, er that I deyde; 460
 My dere herte, allas, myn hele and hewe
 And lif is lost, but ye wol on me rewe."

Alle other dredes weren from him fledde,
 Both of thassege and his sauacioun;
 Nyn him desire noon other fownes bredde 465
 But argumentes to his conclusioun,
 That she of him wolde han compassioun,
 And he to ben hire man while he may dure —
 Lo, here his lif, and from the deth his cure.

The sharpe shoures felle, of armes preue, 470
 That Ector or his other brethren diden,
 Ne made hym only therfore ones meue;
 And yet was he, where so men wente or riden,
 ffounde on the beste, and lengest tyme abiden
 Ther peril was, and dide ek swich trauaille 475
 In armes that to thenke it was merueille.

But for non hate he to the Grekes hadde,
 Ne also for the rescous of the town,
 Ne made hym thus in armes forto madde,
 But only, lo, for this conclusioun: 480
 To liken hire the bet for his renoun.
 ffro day to day in armes so he spedde,
 That the Grekes as the deth him dredde.

And fro this forth tho refte hym loue his slepe,
 And made his mete his foo, and ek his sorwe 485
 Gan multiplie, that, who-so tok kepe,
 It shewed in his hewe both eue and morwe;
 Therfor a title he gan him forto borwe
 Of other siknesse, lest men of hym wende
 That the hote fire of loue hym brende, 490

And seyde he hadde a feuere and ferd amys.
 But how it was, serteyn, kan I nat seye,
 If that his lady vnderstood nat this,
 Or feynede hire she nyste, on of the tweye;
 But wel I rede that by no manere weye 495
 Ne semed it as that she of hym roughte,
 Or of his peyne, or what so euere he thoughte.

But thanne felte this Troilus swich wo,
 That he was wel neigh wood — for ay his drede
 Was this, that she som wight hadde loued so 500
 That neuere of hym she wolde han taken hede,
 ffor which hym thoughte he felte his herte blede,
 Ne of his wo ne dorste he nat bygynne
 To tellen hir, for al this world to wynne.

But whan he hadde a space from his care, 505
 Thus to hym self ful ofte he gan to pleyne;
 He seyde, "O fool, now artow in the snare,
 That whilom iapedest at loues peyne;

Now artow hent, now gnaw thin owen cheyne;
 Thow were ay wont eche louere reprehende 510
 Of thing fro which thow kanst the nat defende.

"What wol now euery louere seyn of the
 If this be wist, but euere in thin absence
 Laughen in scorne and seyn, "loo, ther goth he
 That is the man of so gret sapience, 515
 That held vs loueres leest in reuerence.
 Now, thanked be god, he may gon in the daunce
 Of hem that loue list fiebli for to auance.

"But O thow woful Troilus, god wolde,
 Sith thow most louen thorough thi destine, 520
 That thow be-set were on swich oon that sholde
 Know al thi wo, al lakked hir pitee.
 But also cold in loue towards the
 Thi lady is as frost in wynter moone,
 And thow fordon as snow in fire is soone. 525

"God wold I were aryued in the porte
 Of deth to which my sorwe wol me lede.
 A, lord, to me it were a gret comfote —
 Than were I quyt of languisshyng in drede;
 ffor be myn hidde sorwe i-blowe on brede, 530
 I shal by-iaped ben a thousand tyme
 More than that fol of whos folie men ryme.

But now help, god, and ye, swete, for whom
 I pleyne, i-kaught, ye, neuere wight so faste —
 O mercy, dere herte, and help me from 535
 The deth, for I, while that my lyf may laste,
 More than my self wol loue yow to my laste;
 And with som frendly lok gladeth me, swete,
 Though neuere more thing ye me byheete."

Thise wordes, and ful many an other to, 540
 He spak, and called euere in his compleynte
 Hire name, forto tellen hire his wo,
 Til nei y that he in salte teres dreynte:
 Al was for nought, she herde nat his pleynte.
 And whan that he by-thought on that folie, 545
 A thousand fold his wo gan multiplie.

By-wayling in his chambre thus allone,

A frend of his that called was Pandare
 Com oones in vnwar and herd hym groone,
 And say his frend in swich destresse and care: 550
 "Allas," quod he, "who causeth al this fare?
 O mercy, god, what vnhap may this meene?
 Han now thus soone Grekes maad yow leene?"

"Or hastow som remors of conscience,
 And art now falle in som deuocioun, 555
 And wailest for thi synne and thin offence,
 And hast for ferde caught attricioun?
 God saue hem that biseged han oure town,
 That so kan leye oure iolite on presse,
 And bringe oure lusty folk to holynesse!" 560

Thise wordes seyde he for the nones alle,
 That with swich thing he myght hym angry maken,
 And with an angre don his wo to falle,
 As for the tyme, and his corage awaken;
 But wel he wist, as fer as tonges spaken, 565
 Ther nas a man of gretter hardinesse
 Thanne he, ne more desired worthinesse.

"What cas," quod Troilus, "or what auenture
 Hath gided the to sen me langwisshinge,
 That am refus of euery creature? 570
 But for the loue of god, at my preyinge,
 Go hennes away, for certes my deyinge
 Wol the disese and I mot nedes deye;
 Therefore go wey, ther is na more to seye.

"But if thow wene I be thus sik for drede, 575
 It is naught so, and therefore scorne nou yt;
 Ther is another thing I take of hede
 Wel more than aught the Grekes han yet wrought,
 Which cause is of my deth for sorowe and thought;
 But though that I now telle it the ne leste, 580
 Be thow nau yt wroth, I hide it for the beste."

This Pandare that neigh malt for wo and routhe
 fful ofte seyde, "allas, what may this be?
 Now frend," quod he, "if euere loue or trouthe
 Hath ben, or is, bitwixen the and me, 585
 Ne do thow neuere swich a crueltee
 To hiden fro thi frend so gret a care.

Wostow nau yt wel that it am I, Pandare?

"I wol parten with the al thi peyne,
 If it be so I do the no comfort, 590
 As it is frendes right, soth forto seyne,
 To entreparten wo as glad desport.
 I haue and shal, for trewe or fals report,
 In wronge and right i-loued the al my lyue:
 Hid nat thi wo fro me but telle it blyue." 595

Than gan this sorwful Troylus to syke,
 And seide hym thus, "god leue it be my beste
 To telle it the, for sith it may the like,
 Yet wol I telle it, though myn herte breste;
 And wel woot I thow mayst do me no reste; 600
 But lest thow deme I truste nat to the,
 Now herke, frend, for thus it stant with me.

"Loue, ayeins the which who-so defendeth
 Hym seluen most, hym alderlest auaylleth,
 With disespeyre so sorwfulli me offendeth, 605
 That streight vn-to the deth myn herte sailleth;
 Therto desire so brennyngly me assailleth,
 That to ben slayn it were a gretter ioie
 To me than kyng of Grece ben and Troye.

"Suffiseth this, my fulle frend Pandare, 610
 That I haue seyde, for now wostow my wo;
 And for the loue of god, my colde care
 So hide it wel, I tolde it neuere to mo;
 ffor harmes myghten folwen mo than two,
 If it were wist; but be thow in gladnesse, 615
 And lat me sterue, vnknowe, of my destresse."

"How hastow thus vnkyndely and longe
 Hid this fro me, thow fol?" quod Pandarus;
 "Peraunter thow myghte after swich oon longe
 That myn auys anoon may helpen vs." 620
 "This were a wonder thing," quod Troilus;
 "Thow koudest neuere in loue thi seluen wisse;
 How deuel maistow brynge me to blisse?'

"Ye, Troilus, now herke," quod Pandare;
 "Though I be nyce, it happeth often so 625
 That oon that excesse doth ful yuele fare

By good counseil kan kepe his frend ther-fro.
 I haue my self ek seyn a blynd man goo
 Ther as he fel that couthe loken wide;
 A fool may ek a wis man ofte gide. 630

"A wheston is no keruyng instrument,
 But yet it maketh sharppe keruyng tolis;
 And there thou woost that I haue au yt myswent,
 Eschuwe thou that, for swich thing to =e scole is;
 Thus often wise men ben war by foolys. 635
 If thou do so, thi wit is wel bewared;
 By his contrarie is euery thyng declared.

"ffor how myghte euere swetnesse han ben knowe
 To him that neuere tasted bitternesse?
 Ne no man may ben inly glad, I trowe, 640
 That neuere was in sorwe or som destresse;
 Eke whit by blak, by shame ek worthinesse,
 Ech set by other, more for other semeth,
 As men may se, and so the wyse it demeth.

"Sith thus of two contraries is o lore, 645
 I, that haue in loue so ofte assayed
 Greuances, oughte konne, and wel the more,
 Counseillen the of that thou art amayed;
 And ek the ne aughte nat ben yuel appayed,
 Though I desyre with the forto bere 650
 Thyn heuy charge; it shal the lasse dere.

"I woot wel that it fareth thus by me
 As to thi brother, Paris, an herdesse,
 Which that i-cleped was Oenone,
 Wrote in a compleynte of hir heuynesse; 655
 Yee say the lettre that she wrote, I gesse?"
 "Nay, neuere yet, ywys," quod Troilus.
 "Now," quod Pandare, "herkne, it was thus:

"'Phebus, that first fond art of medicyne,'
 Quod she, 'and couthe in euery wightes care 660
 Remedye and rede by herbes he knew fyne,
 Yet to hym self his konnyng was ful bare;
 ffor loue hadde hym so bounden in a snare,
 Al for the doughter of the kyng Amete,
 That al his craft ne koude his sorwes bete.' 665

"Right so fare I, vnhappyly for me;
 I loue one best, and that me smerteth sore;
 And yet, peraunter, kan I reden the,
 And nat my self — repreue me na more.
 I haue no cause, I woot wel, forto sore
 As doth an hauk that listeth forto pleye;
 But to thin help yet somewhat kan I seye.

670

"And of o thing right siker maistow be,
 That certein, forto dyen in the peyne,
 That I shal neuere mo discoueren the;
 Ne, by my trouthe, I kepe nat restreyne
 The fro thi loue, theigh that it were Eleyne
 That is thi brother wif, if ich it wiste;
 Be what she be, and loue hire as the liste.

675

"Therefore, as frend fullich in me assure,
 And telle me plat now what is thenchesoun
 And final cause of wo that ye endure;
 ffor douteth no thyng, myn entencioun
 Nis nat to yow of reprehencioun
 To speke as now, for no wight may byreue
 A man to loue, tyl that hym list to leue.

680

685

"And witteth wel that bothe two ben vices:
 Mistrusten alle, or elles alle leue.
 But wel I woot, the mene of it no vice is:
 ffor for to trusten som wight is a preue
 Of trouth, and forthi wolde I fayn remeue
 Thi wronge conseyte and do the som wyght triste
 Thi wo to telle; and tel me if the liste.

690

"The wise seith, "wo hym that is allone,
 ffor, and he falle, he hath non helpe to ryse';
 And sith thow hast a felawe, tel thi mone;
 ffor this nys naught, certein, the nexte wyse
 To wynnyn loue, as techen vs the wyse,
 To walwe and wepe as Nyobe the queene,
 Whos teres yet in marble ben yseene.

695

700

"Lat be thy wepyng and thi drerynesse,
 And lat vs lissen wo with oother speche;
 So may thy woful tyme seme lesse;
 Delyte nat in wo thi wo to seche,
 As don thise foles that hire sorwes eche

705

With sorwe, whan thei han mysaventure,
And listen naught to seche hem other cure.

"Men seyn, "to wrecche is consolacioun
To haue another felawe in hys peyne.'
That owghte wel ben oure opynyoun, 710
ffor bothe thow and I of loue we pleyne:
So ful of sorwe am I, soth forto seyne,
That certainly namore harde grace
May sitte on me, for why ther is no space.

"If god wol, thow art nat agast of me, 715
Lest I wolde of thi lady the bygyle;
Thow woost thy self whom that I loue, parde,
As I best kan, gon sithen longe while;
And sith thow woost I do it for no wyle,
And seyst I am he that thow trustest mooste, 720
Telle me somewhat, syn al my wo thow wooste."

Yet Troilus for al this no worde seyde,
But longe he ley as styll as he ded were;
And after this with sikynge he abreyde,
And to Pandarus vois he lente his ere, 725
And vp hise eighen caste he, that in feere
Was Pandarus lest that in frenesie
He sholde falle, or elles soone dye;

And cryde "awake," ful wonderlich and sharpe,
"What! slombrestow as in a litargie? 730
Or artow lik an asse to the harpe,
That hereth sown whan men the strynges plye,
But in his mynde of that no melodie
May sinken hym to gladen, for that he
So dul ys of his bestialite?" 735

And with that, Pandare of his wordes stente;
And Troilus yet hym no thyng answerde,
ffor why to tellen nas nat his entente
To neuere no man, for whom that he so ferde.
ffor it is seyde, "men maketh ofte a yerde 740
With which the maker is hym self ybeten
In sondry manere," as thise wyse treten;

And namelich in his counseil tellynge
That toucheth loue that oughte ben secree;

ffor of him self it wol ynough out sprynge, 745
 But if that it the bet gouerned be;
 Ek som tyme it is a craft to seme fle
 ffro thyng whych in effect men hunte faste —
 Al this gan Troilus in his herte caste.

But natheles whan he hadde herd hym crye 750
 "Awake," he gan to syken wonder soore,
 And seyde, "frende, though that I styлле lye,
 I am nat deaf; now pees, and crye namore,
 ffro I haue herd thi wordes and thi lore;
 But suffre me my meschief to bywaille, 755
 ffro thy prouerbis may me naught auaille.

Nor other cure kanstow non for me;
 Ek I nyl nat ben cured, I wol deye.
 What knowe I of the queene Nyobe?
 Lat be thyne olde ensaumles, I the preye." 760
 "No," quod tho Pandarus, "therfore I seye,
 Swych is delit of foles to by-wepe
 Hire wo, but seken bote they ne kepe.

"Now knowe I that ther reson in the failleth;
 But telle me if I wiste what she were 765
 ffro whom that the al this misaunter ailleth:
 Dorste thou that I tolde in hire ere
 Thi wo, sith thou darst naught thi self for feere,
 And hire bysoughte on the to han som routhe?"
 "Why nay," quod he, "by god and by my trouthe." 770

"What, nat as bisyly," quod Pandarus,
 "As though myn owene lyf lay on this nede?"
 "No, certes, brother," quod this Troilus.
 "And whi?" — "for that thou scholdest neuere spede."
 "Wostow that wel?" — "ye, that is out of drede," 775
 Quod Troilus, "for al that euere ye konne,
 She nyl to noon swich wrecche as I ben wonne."

Quod Pandarus, "allas, what may this be,
 That thou dispeired art thus causeles?
 What, lyueth nat thi lady, bendiste? 780
 How wostow so that thou art graceles?
 Swich yuel is nat alwey booteles.
 Why, put nat impossible thus thi cure,
 Syn thyng to come is oft in auenture.

"I graunte wel that thou endurest wo,
 As sharp as doth he Ticius in helle,
 Whos stomak foughles tiren euere moo
 That hightyn volturis, as bokes telle.
 But I may nat endure that thou dwelle
 In so vnskilful an oppynyoun
 That of thi wo is no curacioun.

785

790

"But oones nyltow, for thy coward herte,
 And for thyn ire and folissh wilfulnesse,
 ffor wantrust, tellen of thy sorwes smerte,
 Ne to thyn owen help don bysynesse
 As muche as speke a reson moore or lesse?
 But list as he that lest of no thyng recche —
 What womman koude louen swich a wrecche?"

795

"What may she demen oother of thy deeth,
 If thou thus deye and she not why it is,
 But that for feere is yolden vp thy breth
 ffor Grekes han biseged vs, i-wys?
 Lord, which a thonk than shaltow han of this!
 Thus wol she seyn, and al the town attones,
 "The wrecche is ded, the deuel haue his bones."

800

805

"Thou mayst allone here wepe and crye and knele —
 But loue a womman that she woot it nought,
 And she wol quyte it that thou shalt nat fele:
 Unknow, vnkist, and lost, that is vnsought.
 What! many a man hath loue ful deere ybought
 Twenty wynter that his lady wiste,
 That neuere yet his lady mouth he kiste.

810

"What sholde he ther-fore fallen in dispayre,
 Or be recreant for his owne tene,
 Or slen hym self, al be his lady faire?
 Nay, nay, but euere in oon be fresshe and grene
 To serue and loue his deere hertes queene,
 And thynk it is a guerdon hire to serue
 A thousand fold moore than he kan deserue."

815

And of that word took hede Troilus,
 And thoughte a-non what folie he was inne,
 And how that soth hym seyde Pandarus,
 That forto slen hym self myght he nat wynne,

820

But bothe don vnmanhod and a synne,
 And of his deth his lady naught to wite;
 ffor of his wo, god woot, she knew ful lite. 825

And with that thought he gan ful sore syke,
 And seyde, "allas, what is me best to do?"
 To whom Pandare answered, "if the like,
 The beste is that thow telle me al thi wo;
 And haue my trouthe, but thow it fynde so 830
 I be thy boote er that it be ful longe,
 To pieces do me drawe and sithen honge."

"Ye, so thow seyst," quod Troilus tho, "allas,
 But, god woot, it is naught the rather so. 835
 fful hard were it to helpen in this cas,
 ffor wel fynde I that fortune is my fo;
 Ne al the men that riden konne or go
 May of hire cruel whiel the harm withstonde;
 ffor as hire list she pleyeth with free and bonde." 840

Quod Pandarus, "than blamestow fortune
 ffor thow art wroth, ye, now at erst I see;
 Woost thow nat wel that fortune is comene
 To eueri manere wight in som degree?
 And yet thow hast this comfort, lo, perde, 845
 That as hire ioies moten ouergone,
 So mote hire sorwes passen euerychone.

"ffor if hire whiel stynte any thyng to torne,
 Than cessed she fortune anon to be.
 Now sith hire whiel by no way may soiourne, 850
 What woostow if hire mutabilite
 Right as thy seluen list wol don by the,
 Or that she be naught fer fro thyn helpynge?
 Paraunter thow hast cause forto synge.

"And therefore wostow what I the biseche? 855
 Lat be thy wo and tornyng to the grounde;
 ffor who-so list haue helyng of his leche,
 To hym byhoueth first vnwre his wownde.
 To Cerberus in helle ay be I bownde,
 Were it for my suster, al thy sorwe, 860
 By my wil she sholde al be thyn to-morwe.

"Look vp, I seye, and telle me what she is

Anon, that I may gon aboute thy nede.
 Knowe ich hire aught? for my loue, telle me this;
 Thanne wolde I hopen rather for to spede." 865
 Tho gan the veyne of Troilus to blede,
 ffor he was hit and wax al reed for shame.
 "A ha!" quod Pandare, "here bygynneth game."

And with that word he gan hym for to shake,
 And seyde, "thef, thow shalt hyre name telle." 870
 But tho gan sely Troilus for to quake,
 As though men sholde han led hym in to helle,
 And seyde, "allas, of al my wo the welle,
 Thanne is my swete fo called Criseyde."
 And wel neigh with the word for feere he deide. 875

And whann that Pandare herde hire name neuene,
 Lord, he was glad, and seyde, "frende so deere,
 Now fare aright, for Ioues name in heuene,
 Loue hath byset the wel; be of good cheere,
 ffor of good name and wisdom and manere 880
 She hath ynough, and ek of gentillesse —
 If she be fayre, thow woost thy self, I gesse.

"Ny neuere saugh a more bountevous
 Of hire estat, na gladder, ne of speche
 A frendlyer, na more gracious 885
 ffor to do wel, ne lasse hadde nede to seche
 What for to don; and al this bet to eche,
 In honour, to as fer as she may strecche,
 A kynges herte semeth by hyrs a wrecche.

["And forthi loke of good comfort thow be; 890
 ffor certainly the ferste poynt is this
 Of noble corage and wel ordeyne,
 A man to haue pees with hym self, y-wis;
 So oghtist thow, for nought but good it is
 To loue wel, and in a worthy place; 895
 The oughte not to clepe it hap but grace.]

"And also thynk, and ther-with glade the,
 That sith thy lady vertuous is al,
 So foloweth it that there is som pitee
 Amonges alle thise other in general; 900
 And forthi se that thow in special
 Requere naught that is a yeyns hyre name,

ffor vertue streccheth naught hym self to shame.

"But wel is me that euere that I was borne,
That thow biset art in so good a place; 905

ffor by my trouthe, in loue I dorste haue sworne
The sholde neuere han tid thus fayre a grace;
And wostow why? for thow were wont to chace
At loue in scorn, and for despit hym calle
"Seynt Idiot, lord of these foles alle." 910

"How often hastow maad thi nyce iapes,
And seyde that loues seruantz euerichone
Of nycete ben verray goddes apes;
And some wolde mucche hire mete allone,
Liggyng abedde, and make hem for to grone; 915
And som, thow seydest, hadde a blaunche feuere,
And preydest god he sholde neuere keure.

"And som of hem took on hem for the colde
More than ynough, so seydestow ful ofte;
And som han feyned ofte tyme, and tolde 920
How that they waken whan thei slepen softe;
And thus they wolde han brought hem self a-lofe,
And natheles were vnder at the laste —
Thus seydestow, and iapedest ful faste.

"Yet seydestow that for the moore parte, 925
These loueres wolden speke in general,
And thoughten that it was a siker arte,
ffor faylyng for tassaien ouere al.
Now may I iape of the, if that I shal;
But natheles, though that I sholde deye, 930
That thow art non of tho, I dorste saye.

"Now bet thi brest and sey to god of loue
Thy grace, lord, for now I me repente
If I mysspak, for now my self I loue' —
Thus sey with al thyn herte in good entente." 935
Quod Troilus, "a, lord, I me consente,
And preye to the my iapes thow for yiue,
And I shal neuere more whyle I liue."

"Thow seist wel," quod Pandare, "and now I hope
That thow the goddes wraathe hast al apesed; 940
And sithen thow hast wopen many a drope,

And seyð swych thyng wher-with thi god is plesed,
 Now wolde neuere god but thow were esed;
 And think wel, she of whom rist al thi wo
 Here-after may thy comfort be also. 945

"ffor thilke grownde that bereth the wedes wikke
 Bereth ek thise holsom herbes as ful ofte:
 Next the foule netle, rough and thikke,
 The rose waxeth swoote and smothe and softe;
 And next the valeye is the hill o-lofte; 950
 And next the derke nyght the glade morwe;
 And also ioie is next the fyn of sorwe.

"Now loke that a-tempre be thi bridel,
 And for the beste ay suffre to the tyde,
 Or elles al oure laboure is on ydel; 955
 He hasteth wel that wisely kan abyde.
 Be diligent and trewe, and ay wel hide;
 Be lusty, fre, perseuere in thy seruyse —
 And al is wel, if thow werke in this wyse.

"But he that parted is in eueri place 960
 Is nowher hol, as writen clerkes wyse.
 What wonder is though swich oon haue no grace?
 Ek wostow how it fareth of som seruise,
 As plaunte a tree or herbe in sondry wyse
 And on the morwe pulle it vp as blyue, 965
 No wonder is though it may neuere thryue.

"And sith that god of loue hath the bistowed
 In place digne vnto thi worthinesse,
 Stond faste, for to good port hastow rowed;
 And of thi self, for any heuynesse, 970
 Hope alwey wel; for but if drerinesse,
 Or ouere-haste, oure bothe labour shende,
 I hope of this to maken a good ende.

"And wostow why I am the lasse afered
 Of this matere with my Nece trete? 975
 ffor this haue I herd seyð of wyse lered,
 'Was neuere man or womman yet bigete
 That was vnapt to suffren loues hete,
 Celestial, or elles loue of kynde.'
 fforthy som grace I hope in hire to fynde. 980

"And for to speke of hire in specyal,
 Hire beaute to bithynken and hire youthe,
 It sit hire naught to ben celestial
 As yet, though that hire liste bothe and kowthe;
 But trewely, it sate hire wel right nowthe 985
 A worthi knyght to louen and cherice —
 And but she do, I holde it for a vice.

"Wher-fore I am and wol ben ay redy
 To peyne me to do yow this seruyse;
 ffor bothe yow to plesse thus hope I 990
 Her-afterward; for ye ben bothe wyse,
 And konne it counseil kepe in swych a wyse
 That no man shal the wiser of it be —
 And so we may ben gladed alle thre.

"And, by my trouthe, I haue right now of the 995
 A good conceyte in my wit, as I gesse,
 And what it is, I wol now that thow se:
 I thenke, sith that loue of his goodnesse
 Hath the conuerted out of wikkednesse,
 That thow shalt ben the beste post, I leue, 1000
 Of al his lay, and moost his foos to greue.

"Ensample why, se now thise wise clerkes,
 That erren aldermost a yeyn a lawe,
 And ben conuerted from hire wikked werkes
 Thorough grace of god that list hem to hym drawe, 1005
 Thanne arn they folk that han moost god in awe,
 And strengest feythed ben, I vndirstonde,
 And konne an errowre alderbest withstonde."

Whan Troilus hadde herd Pandare assented
 To ben his help in louyng of Cryseyde, 1010
 Weex of his wo, as who seith, vntormented,
 But hotter weex his loue and thus he seyde,
 With sobre chere, although his herte pleyde:
 "Now blisful Venus help, er that I sterue,
 Of the, Pandare, I mowe som thank deserue. 1015

"But deere frende, how shal my wo be lesse
 Til this be doon? and, good, ek telle me this:
 How wiltow seyn of me and my destresse,
 Lest she be wroth — this drede I moost, ywys —
 Or nyl nat here or trowen how it is? 1020

Al this drede I, and ek for the manere
Of the, hire Em, she nyl no swich thyng here."

Quod Pandarus, "thow hast a ful gret care
Lest that the Cherl may falle out of the moone.

Whi, lord, I hate of the thi nyce fare. 1025

Whi, entremete of that thow hast to doone!

ffor goddes loue, I bidde the a boone:

So lat malone, and it shal be thi beste."

"Whi, frende," quod he, "now do right as the leste.

"But herke, Pandare, o word, for I nolde 1030

That thow in me wendest so gret folie,

That to my lady I desiren sholde

That toucheth harm or any vilenye;

ffor dredeles me were leuere dye

Than she of me aught elles vnderstode 1035

But that that myghte sownen in-to goode."

Tho lough this Pandare, and anon answerde,

"And I thi borugh? fy, no wight doth but so;

I roughte naught though that she stood and herde

How that thow seist; but fare wel, I wol go. 1040

A-dieu, be glad, god spede vs bothe two!

Yef me this labour and this bisynesse,

And of my spede be thyn al that swetnesse."

Tho Troilus gan down on knees to falle,

And Pandare in his armes hente faste, 1045

And seyde, "now, fy on the Grekes alle!

Yet, parde, god shal helpe vs atte laste;

And dredelees, if that my lyf may laste,

And god to-forn, lo, som of hem shal smerte;

And yet mathenketh that this auant masterte. 1050

"Now, Pandare, I kan namore seye,

But thow wis, thow woost, thow maist, thow art al.

Mi lif, my deth, hol in thyn honde I leye;

Help now!" Quod he, " yis, by my trowthe, I shal."

"God yelde the, frend, and this in special," 1055

Quod Troilus, "that thow me recomande

To hire that to the deth me may comande."

This Pandarus, tho desirous to serue

His fulle frende, than seyde in this manere:

"ffarwell, and thenk I wol thi thank deserue,
 Haue here my trowthe, and that thou shalt wel here,"
 And went his wey thenkyng on this matere,
 And how he best myghte hire biseche of grace,
 And fynde a tyme therto and a place.

1060

ffor eueri wight that hath an hous to founde
 Ne renneth naught the werk for to bygynne
 With rakel hond, but he wol bide a stounde,
 And sende his hertes line out fro with-inne
 Aldirfirst his purpos forto wynne.
 Al this Pandare in his herte thoughte,
 And caste his werk ful wisely or he wroughte.

1065

1070

But Troilus lay tho no lenger down,
 But vp anon vpon his stede bay,
 And in the feld he pleyde the leoun;
 Wo was that Grek that with hym mette a-day!
 And in the town his manere tho forth ay
 So goodly was, and gat hym so in grace,
 That ecch hym loued that loked on his face.

1075

ffor he bicom the frendlieste wight,
 The gentilest, and ek the mooste fre,
 The thriftiest, and oon the beste knyght,
 That in his tyme was or myghte be:
 Dede were his iapes and his cruelte,
 His heighe port and his manere estraunge,
 And ecch of tho gan for a vertue chaunge.

1080

1085

Now lat vs stynte of Troilus a stounde,
 That fareth like a man that hurt is soore,
 And is som deel of akynge of his wownde
 Y-lissed wel, but heeled no deel moore,
 And, as an esy pacyent, the loore
 Abit of hym that gooth aboute his cure;
 And thus he dryeth forth his auenture.

1090

Explicit liber primus.

Book II*Incipit prohemium secundi libri*

Owt of thise blake wawes forto saylle, O wynde, O wynde, the weder gynneth clere, ffor in this see the boot hath swych trauaylle Of my konnyng that vnneth I it steere: This see clepe I the tempestous matere Of disspeir that Troilus was inne — But now of hope the kalendes bygynne.	5
O lady myn, that called art Cleo, Thow be my speed fro this forth, and my Muse, To ryme wel this book til I haue do; Me nedeth here noon othere art to vse. ffor-whi to euery louere I me excuse That of no sentement I this endite, But out of Latyn in my tonge it write.	10
Wherfore I nyl haue neither thank ne blame Of al this werk, but prey yow mekely, Disblameth me if any word be lame, ffor as myn auctour seyde, so sey I; Ek though I speeke of loue vnfelyngly, No wondre is, for it no thyng of newe is: A blynd man kan nat iuggen wel in hewis.	15 20
Ye knowe ek that in fourme of speche is chaunge With-inne a thousand yeer, and wordes tho That hadden pris now wonder nyce and straunge Us thenketh hem, and yet thei spake hem so, And spedde as wel in loue as men now do, Ek forto wynnen loue in sondry ages, In sondry londes, sondry ben vsages.	25
And forthi if it happe in any wyse, That here be any louere in this place That herkneth, as the storie wol deuse, How Troilus com to his lady grace, And thenketh, "so nold I nat loue purchace," Or wondreth on his speche or his doynge, I noot, but it is me no wonderynge.	30 35

ffor euery wight which that to Rome wente
 Halt nat o path or alwey o manere;
 Ek in som lond were al the game shente
 If that they ferde in loue as men don here,
 As thus, in opyn doying or in chere, 40
 In visityng in forme or seyde hire sawes;
 ffor-thi men seyn, ecch contree hath hise lawes.

Ek scarsly ben ther in this place thre
 That haue in loue seid like and don in al,
 ffor to thi purpos this may liken the, 45
 And the right nought, yet al is seid, or schal;
 Ek som men graue in tree, som in ston wal,
 As it bitit; but syn I haue bigonne,
 Myn auctour shal I folwen if I konne.

Explicit prohemium secundi libri

Incipit liber secundus

In May, that moder is of monthes glade, 50
 That fresshe floures blew and white and rede
 Ben quike agayn, that wynter dede made,
 And ful of bawme is fletyng euery mede;
 Whan Phebus doth his bryghte bemes sprede
 Right in the white Bole, it so bitidde, 55
 As I shal synge, on Mayes day the thrydde,

That Pandarus, for al his wise speche,
 ffelt ek his parte of loues shotes keene,
 That koude he neuere so wel of louyng preche,
 It made his hewe a-day ful ofte greene; 60
 So shop it that hym fil that day a teene
 In loue, for which in wo to bedde he wente,
 And made er it was day ful many a wente.

The swalowe Proigne with a sorowful lay
 Whan morwen com gan make hire waymentyng 65
 Whi she forshapen was, and euere lay
 Pandare a-bedde half in a slomberyng,
 Til she so neigh hym made hire cheteryng,
 How Tereus gan forth hire suster take,
 That with the noyse of hire he gan awake, 70

And gan to calle, and dresse hym vp to ryse,
 Remembryng hym his erand was to doone
 ffrom Troilus, and ek his grete emprise,
 And caste and knewe in good plit was the moone
 To doon viage, and took his way ful soone 75
 Unto his Neces palays ther biside;
 Now Ianus, god of entree, thow hym gyde!

Whan he was come vnto his Neces place,
 "Wher is my lady?" to hire folk quod he;
 And they hym tolde and he forth in gan pace 80
 And fond two othere ladys sete, and she,
 With-inne a pauerd parlour, and they thre
 Herden a mayden reden hem the geste
 Of the siege of Thebes while hem leste.

Quod Pandarus, "ma dame, god yow see, 85
 With al youre book and al the compaignie."
 "Ey, vncler myn, welcome i-wis," quod she;
 And vp she roos and by the hond in hye
 She took hym faste and seyde, "this nyght thrie —
 To goode mot it turne — of yow I mette." 90
 And with that word she doun on benche hym sette.

"Ye, Nece, yee shal faren wel the bet,
 If god wol, al this yeere," quod Pandarus;
 "But I am sory that I haue yow let
 To herken of youre book ye preysen thus. 95
 ffor goddes loue, what seith it? telle it vs;
 Is it of loue? O, som good ye me leere!.,
 "Uncle," quod she, " youre maistresse is nat here."

With that thei gonne laughe, and tho she seyde,
 "This romaunce is of Thebes that we rede; 100
 And we han herd how that kyng Layus deyde,
 Thorough Edippus his sone, and al that dede;
 And here we stynten at thise lettres rede,
 How the bisshop, as the book kan telle,
 Amphiorax, fil thorough the grounde to helle." 105

Quod Pandarus, "al this knowe I my selue,
 And al thassege of Thebes and the care,
 ffor her-of ben ther maked bookes twelue;
 But lat be this and telle me how ye fare;
 Do wey youre barbe and shew youre face bare; 110

Do wey youre book, rys vp, and lat vs daunce,
And lat vs don to May som obseruaunce."

"I, god forbede!" quod she, "be ye madde?
Is that a widewes lif, so god yow saue?
By god, ye maken me ryght soore adradde, 115
Ye ben so wylde, it semeth as ye raue.
It satte me wel bet ay in a caue
To bidde and rede on holy seyntes lyues;
Lat maydens gon to daunce and yonge wyues."

"As euere thriue I," quod this Pandarus, 120
"Yet koude I telle a thyng to doon yow pleye."
"Now Uncle deere," quod she, "telle it vs
ffor goddes loue: is than thassege aweye?
I am of Grekes so fered that I deye."
"Nay, nay," quod he, "as euere mote I thryue, 125
"It is a thing wel bet than swyche fyue."

"Ye, holy god," quod she, "what thyng is that?
What, bet than swyche fyue? I! nay, ywys.
ffor al this world ne kan I reden what
It sholde ben; som iape I trowe is this; 130
And but youre seluen telle vs what it is,
My wit is for tarede it al to leene;
As help me god, I not nat what ye meene."

"And I youre borugh, ne neuere shal, for me,
This thyng be told to yow, as mote I thryue." 135
"And whi so, vncler myn, whi so?" quod she.
"By god," quod he, "that wol I telle as blyue;
ffor proudder womman is ther noon on lyue,
And ye it wist, in al the town of Troye;
I iape nought, as euere haue I ioye." 140

Tho gan she wondren moore than biforne
A thousand fold, and down hire eyghen caste;
ffor neuere sith the tyme that she was borne
To knowe thyng desired she so faste;
And with a syk, she seyde hym atte laste, 145
"Now, Uncle myn, I nyl yow nought displese,
Nor axen more that may do yow disese."

So after this, with many wordes glade,
And frendly tales and with merie chiere,

Of this and that they pleide and gonnen wade 150
 In many an vnkouth, gladde, and depe matere,
 As frendes doon whan thei ben mette y-fere,
 Tyl she gan axen hym how Ector ferde,
 That was the townes wal and Grekes yerde.

"fful wel, I thonk it god," quod Pandarus, 155
 "Saue in his arme he hath a litel wownde,
 And ek his fresshe brother, Troilus,
 The wise, worthi Ector the secounde,
 In whom that alle vertue list habounde,
 As alle trouthe and alle gentillesse, 160
 Wisdom, honour, fredom, and worthinesse."

"In good feith, Em," quod she, "that liketh me
 Thei faren wel, god saue hem bothe two;
 ffor trowelich I holde it gret deynte,
 A kynges sone in armes wel to do, 165
 And ben of good condiciouns therto;
 ffor grete power and moral vertue here
 Is selde yseyn in o persone y-feere."

"In good faith, that is soth," quod Pandarus,
 "But, by my trouthe, the kyng hath sones tweye — 170
 That is to mene Ector and Troilus —
 That certeynly, though that I sholde deye,
 Thei ben as voide of vices, dar I seye,
 As any men that lyuen vndre the sonne;
 Hire myght is wyde i-knowe, and what they konne. 175

"Of Ector nedeth it namore forto telle:
 In al this world ther nys a bettre knyght
 Than he that is of worthynesse welle,
 And he wel moore vertue hath than myght;
 This knoweth many a wise and worthi wight. 180
 The same pris of Troilus I seye;
 God help me so, I knowe nat swiche tweye."

"By god," quod she, "of Ector that is sooth;
 "Of Troilus the same thyng trowe I;
 ffor dredeles, men tellen that he doth 185
 In armes day by day so worthily,
 And bereth hym here at hom so gentily
 To eueri wight, that alle pris hath he
 Of hem that me were leuest preysed be."

"Ye sey right sooth, y-wys," quod Pandarus; 190
 "ffor yesterday who-so hadde with hym ben,
 He myghte han wondred vp-on Troilus;
 ffor neuere yet so thikke a swarm of been
 Ne fleigh as Grekes fro hym gonne fleen;
 And thorough the feld in eueri wightes eere 195
 Ther nas no cry but 'Troilus is there!'

"Now here, now ther, he hunted hem so faste,
 Ther nas but Grekes blood and Troilus.
 Now hym he hurte and hym al down he caste;
 Ay wher he wente it was arayed thus: 200
 He was hire deth, and sheld and lif for vs,
 That, as that day, ther dorste non withstonde,
 Whil that he held his bloody swerd in honde.

"Therto he is the frendlieste man
 Of gret estat that euere I saugh my lyue, 205
 And wher hym lest, best felawshipe kan
 To swich as hym thynketh able forto thryue."
 And with that word tho Pandarus as blyue
 He took his leue and seyde, "I wol gon henne."
 "Nay, blame haue I, myn Uncle," quod she thenne. 210

"What aileth yow to be thus wery soone,
 And namelich of wommen? wol ye so?
 Nay, sitteth down; by god, I haue to doone
 With yow to speke of wisdom er ye go." 215
 And eueri wight that was aboute hem tho,
 That herde that, gan fer a-vey to stonde,
 Whil they two hadde al that hem liste in honde.

Whan that hire tale al brought was to an ende,
 Of hire estat and of hire gouernaunce,
 Quod Pandarus, "now is it tyme I wende; 220
 But yet I say, ariseth, lat vs daunce,
 And cast youre widewes habit to mischaunce.
 What list yow thus youre self to disfigure,
 Sith yow [MS thow] is tid thus faire an auenture?"

"A, wel bithought, for loue of god," quod she, 225
 "Shal I nat witen what ye meene of this?"
 "No, this thing axeth leyser," tho quod he,
 "And eke me wolde mucche greue, i-wis,

If I it tolde and ye it toke amys.
 Yet were it bet my tonge forto stille 230
 Than seye a soth that were a yeyns youre wille.

"ffor, Nece, by the goddesse Mynerue,
 And Iupiter, that maketh the thondre ryng,
 And by the blisful Venus that I serue,
 Ye ben the womman in this world lyuyng — 235
 With-outen paramours to my wyttyng —
 That I best loue and lothest am to greue,
 And that ye weten wel youre self, I leue."

"I-wis, myn vncler," quod she, "grant mercy;
 Your frendshipe haue I founden euere yit; 240
 I am to no man holden, trewely,
 So muche as yow, and haue so litel quyt;
 And with the grace of god, emforth my wit,
 As in my gylt I shall yow neuere offende,
 And if I haue er this, I wol amende. 245

"But for the loue of god, I yow biseche,
 As ye ben he that I moost loue and triste,
 Lat be to me youre fremde manere speche,
 And sey to me, youre Nece, what yow liste."
 And with that word hire uncler anon hire kiste 250
 And seyde, "gladly, leue Nece dere —
 Tak it for good that I shal sey yow here."

With that she gan hire eighen down to caste,
 And Pandarus to coghe gan a lite,
 And seyde, "Nece, alwey, lo, to the laste, 255
 How so it be that som men hem delite
 With subtyl art hire tales forto endite,
 Yet for al that, in hire entencioun,
 Hire tale is al for som conclusioun.

"And sithen thende is euery tales strengthe, 260
 And this matere is so bihouely,
 What sholde I peynte or drawen it on lengthe
 To yow that ben my frend so feythfully?"
 And with that word he gan right inwardly
 Byholden hire and loken on hire face 265
 And seyde, "on swich a mirour goode grace!"

Than thought he thus, "if I my tale endite

Aught harde, or make a proces any whyle,
 She shal no sauour haue ther-in but lite,
 And trowe I wolde hire in my wil bigyle; 270
 ffor tendre wittes wenen al be wyle
 Ther as thei kan nought pleyedly vnderstonde;
 fforthi hire wit to seruen wol I fonde."

And loked on hire in a bysi wyse,
 And she was war that he byheld hire so, 275
 And seyde, "lord, so faste ye mauisse!
 Sey ye me neuere er now? what sey ye? no?"
 "Yis, yys," quod he, "and bet wol er I go;
 But be my trouthe, I thoughte now if ye
 Be fortunat, for now men shal it se. 280

"fforto euery wight som goodly auenture
 Som tyme is shape, if he it kan receyuen,
 And if that he wol take of it no cure,
 Whan that it commeth, but wilfully it weyuen,
 Lo, neyther cas ne fortune hym deceyuen, 285
 But ryght his verray slouthe and wrecchednesse;
 And swich a wight is forto blame, I gesse.

"Good auenture, O beele Nece, haue ye
 fful lightly founden, and ye konne it take;
 And for the loue of god and ek of me, 290
 Cache it anon, lest auenture slake.
 What sholde I lenger proces of it make?
 Yif me youre hond, for in this world is noon,
 If that yow list, a wight so wel bygon.

"And sith I speke of good entencioun, 295
 As I to yow haue told wel here byforn,
 And loue as wel youre honour and renoun
 As creature in al this world yborn,
 By alle the othes that I haue yow sworn,
 And ye be wrooth therfore, or wene I lye, 300
 Ne shal I neuere sen yow eft with eye.

"Beth naught agast, ne quaketh naught; wherto?
 Ne chaungeth naught for feere so youre hewe;
 ffor hardely, the werst of this is do,
 And though my tale as now be to yow newe, 305
 Yet trist alwey ye shal me fynde trewe;
 And were it thyng that me thoughte vnsittyng,

To yow wolde I no swiche tales brynge."

"Now, my good Em, for goddes loue I preye,"
 Quod she, "come of and telle me what it is; 310
 ffor both I am agast what ye wol seye,
 And ek me longeth it to wite, ywis;
 ffor whethir it be wel or be amys,
 Say on, lat me nat in this feere dwelle.'," 315
 "So wol I doon; now herkeneth, I shall telle.

"Now, Nece myn, the kynges deere sone,
 The goode, wise, worthi, fresshe and free,
 Which alwey for to don wel is his wone,
 The noble Troilus, so loueth the,
 That, but ye helpe, it wol his bane be. 320
 Lo, here is al — what sholde I moore sey?
 Do what yow lest to make hym lyue or dey.

"But if ye late hym deyen, I wol sterue —
 Haue here my trouthe, Nece, I nyl nat lyen —
 Al sholde I with this knyf my throte kerue." 325
 With that the teris breste out of his eyen,
 And seyde, "if that ye don vs bothe dyen,
 Thus gilteles, than haue ye fished fayre;
 What mende ye, though that we booth appaire?"

"Allas, he which that is my lord so deere, 330
 That trewe man, that noble, gentil knyght,
 That naught desireth but youre frendly cheere,
 I se hym deyen ther he goth vp-ryght,
 And hasteth hym with al his fulle myght
 fforto ben slayn, if his fortune assente; 335
 Allas, that god yow swich a beaute sente!

"If it be so that ye so cruel be,
 That of his deth yow liste nought to recche,
 That is so trewe and worthi as ye se,
 Namooore than of a iaper or a wrecche — 340
 If ye be swich youre beaute may nat strecche
 To make amendes of so cruel a dede:
 Auusement is good byfore the nede.

"Wo worth the faire gemme vertueeles!
 Wo worth that herbe also that dooth no boote! 345
 Wo worth that beaute that is routheles!

Wo worth that wight that tret ech vndir foote!
 And ye that ben of beaute crop and roote,
 If therwith-al in yow ther be no routhe,
 Than is it harm ye lyuen, by my trouthe. 350

"And also think wel that this is no gaude;
 ffor me were leuere thow and I and he
 Were hanged, than I sholde ben his baude,
 As heigh as men myghte on vs alle y-see;
 I am thyn Em, the shame were to me 355
 As wel as the if that I sholde assente,
 Thorough myn abet, that he thyn honour shente.

"Now vnderstond, for I yow nought requere
 To bynde yow to hym thorough no byheste,
 But only that ye make hym bettre chiere 360
 Than ye han doon er this and moore feste,
 So that his lif be saued atte leeste;
 This al and som, and pleyedly, oure entente;
 God help me so, I neuere other mente.

"Lo this requeste is naught but skylle, ywys, 365
 Ne doute of resoun, pardee, is ther noon.
 I sette the worste that ye dreden this:
 Men wolde wondren sen hym com or goon;
 There-a yeins answeere I thus anoon,
 That euery wight, but he be fool of kynde, 370
 Wol deme it loue of frendshipe in his mynde.

"What, who wol demen, though he se a man
 To temple go, that he thymages eteth?
 Think ek how wel and wisely that he kan
 Gouverne hym self that he nothyng for yeteth, 375
 That where he cometh he pris and thank hym geteth;
 And ek therto he shal come here so selde,
 What fors were it though al the town byhelde?

"Swych loue of frendes regneth al this town,
 And wry yow in that mantel euere moo; 380
 And, god so wys be my sauacioun,
 As I haue seyde, youre beste is to do soo;
 But alwey, goode Nece, to stynte his woo,
 So lat youre daunger sucred ben a lite,
 That of his deth ye be naught forto wite." 385

Criseyde, which that herde hym in this wise,
 Thought, "I shal felen what he meneth, y-wis."
 "Now, Em," quod she, "what wolde ye deuse?
 What is youre rede I sholde don of this?"
 "That is wel seyde," quod he, "certein, best is 390
 That ye hym loue a yeyn for his louynge,
 As loue for loue is skilful guerdonyng.

"Think ek how elde wasteth euery houre
 In eche of yow a partie of beautee;
 And therefore, er that age the deuoure, 395
 Go loue, for old, ther wol no wight of the;
 Lat this prouerbe a loore vn-to yow be:
 "To late ywar, quod beaute, whan it paste';,
 And elde daunteth daunger at the laste.

"The kynges fool is wont to crien loude, 400
 Whan that hym thinketh a womman berth hire hye,
 "So longe mote ye lyue, and alle proude,
 Tyl crowes feet be growe vnder youre eye,
 And sende yow than a myroure in-to pryde,
 In which that ye may se youre face a morwe., 405
 Nece, I bidde wisshe yow namore sorwe."

With this he stynte and caste a-down the hede,
 And she began to breste a-wepe a-noon,
 And seyde, "allas, for wo why nere I deede?
 ffor of this world the feyth is al agoon. 410
 Allas, what sholden straunge to me doon,
 Whan he that for my beste frende I wende
 Ret me to loue, and sholde it me defende?

"Allas, I wolde han trusted, douteles,
 That if that I thorough my disaunture 415
 Hadde loued outhere hym or Achilles,
 Ector, or any mannes creature,
 Ye nolde han had no mercy ne mesure
 On me, but alwey had me in repreue.
 This false worlde, allas, who may it leue? 420

"What! is this al the ioie and al the feste?
 Is this youre reed? is this my blisful cas?
 Is this the verray mede of youre byheeste?
 Is al this paynted proces seyde, allas,
 Right for this fyn? O lady myn, Pallas, 425

Thow in this dredful cas for me purueye,
ffor so astoned am I that I deye."

Wyth that she gan ful sorwfully to syke.
"A! may it be no bet?" quod Pandarus,
"By god, I shal namore come here this wyke,
And god toforn, that am mystrusted thus. 430
I se ful wel that ye sette lite of vs,
Or of oure deth; allas, I woful wrecche!
Might he yet lyue, of me is nought to recche.

"O cruel god, O dispitouse Marte, 435
O furies thre of helle, on yow I crye!
So lat me neuere out of this hous departe,
If that I mente harm or vilenye.
But sith I se my lord mot nedes dye,
And I with hym, here I me shryue and seye 440
That wikkedly ye don vs bothe deye.

"But sith it liketh yow that I be dede,
By Neptunus, that god is of the see,
ffro this forth shal I neuere eten brede,
Til I myn owen herte blood may see; 445
ffor certeyn I wol deye as soone as he."
And vp he sterte and on his wey he raughte,
Tyl she agayn hym by the lappe kaughte.

Criseyde, which that wel neigh starf for feere,
So as she was the ferfulleste wight 450
That myghte be, and herde ek with hire ere,
And saugh the sorwful earnest of the knyght,
And in his preier ek saugh noon vnryght,
And for the harm that myghte ek fallen moore,
She gan to rewe and dredde hire wonder soore. 455

And thoughte thus: "vnhappes fallen thikke
Alday for loue, and in swych manere cas,
As men ben cruel in hem self and wikke;
And if this man sle here hym self, allas,
In my presence, it wol be no solas. 460
What men wolde of it deme I kan nat seye;
It nedeth me ful sleighly forto pleie.";

And with a sorwful sik she sayde thrie,
"A, lord, what me is tid a sory chaunce!

ffor myn estat lith now in iupartie, 465
 And ek myn Emes lif is in balaunce;
 But natheles, with goddes gouernaunce,
 I shal so doon, myn honour shal I kepe,
 And ek his lif" — and stynte forto wepe.

"Of harmes two the lesse is forto chese; 470
 Yet haue I leuere maken hym good chere
 In honour than myn Emes lyf to lese. —
 Ye seyn ye no-thing elles me requere?"

"No, wis," quod he, "myn owen Nece dere."
 "Now wel," quod she, "and I wol doon my peyne; 475
 I shal myn herte a yeins my lust constreyne.

"But that I nyl nat holden hym in honde,
 Ne loue a man ne kan I naught ne may
 A yeins my wyl, but elles wol I fonde, 480
 Myn honour sauf, plese hym fro day to day;
 Therto nolde I nat ones han seyde nay,
 But that I drede, as in my fantasye;
 But cesse cause, ay cesseth maladie.

"And here I make a protestacioun,
 That in this proces if ye depper go, 485
 That certeynly, for no saluacioun
 Of yow, though that ye steruen bothe two,
 Though al the world on o day be my fo,

Ne shal I neuere of hym han other routhe."
 I graunte wel, quod Pandare, "by my trowthe." 490

"But may I truste wel therto," quod he,
 "That of this thyng that ye han hight me here,
 Ye wole it holden trewely vn-to me?"

"Ye, doutelees," quod she, "myn vncler deere."
 "Ne that I shal han cause in this matere," 495
 Quod he, "to pleyn or offer yow to preche?"
 "Why no, perde; what nedeth moore speche?"

Tho fillen they in other tales glade,
 Tyl at the laste, "O good Em," quod she tho,
 "ffor his loue which that vs bothe made, 500
 Tel me how first ye wisten of his wo?
 Woot noon of it but ye?" He seyde, "no."
 "Kan he wel speke of loue," quod she, "I preye?"
 "Tel me, for I bet me shal purueye."

Tho Pandarus a litel gan to smyle, 505
 And seyde, "by my trouthe, I shal yow telle.
 This other day, naught gon ful longe while,
 In-with the paleis gardyn by a welle,
 Gan he and I wel half a day to dwelle,
 Right forto speken of an ordinaunce, 510
 How we the Grekes myghten disauaunce.

"Soon after that bigonne we to lepe,
 And casten with oure dartes to and fro,
 Tyl at the laste he seyde he wolde slepe,
 And on the gres adoun he leyde hym tho; 515
 And I afer gan romen to and fro,
 Til that I herde, as that I welk alone,
 How he bigan ful wofully to grone.

"Tho gan I stalke hym softly byhynde,
 And sikirly, the soothe forto seyne, 520
 As I kan clepe a yein now to my mynde,
 Right thus to loue he gan hym forto pleyne:
 He seyde, "lord haue routhe vp-on my peyne,
 Al haue I ben rebell in myn entente,
 Now *mea culpa*, lord, I me repente. 525

"'O god that at thi disposicioun
 Ledest the fyn, by iuste purueiaunce
 Of euery wight, my lowe confessioun
 Accepte in gree, and sende me swich penaunce
 As liketh the, but from disesperaunce, 530
 That may my goost departe away fro the,
 Thow be my sheld, for thi benignite.

"'ffor certes, lord, so soore hath she me wounded,
 That stood in blak, with loking of hire eyen,
 That to myn hertes botme it is y-sounded, 535
 Thorough which I woot that I moot nedes deyen:
 This is the werste, I dar me nat bywreyen,
 And wel the hotter ben the gledes rede,
 That men hem wrien with asshen pale and dede."

"Wyth that he smot his hed adown a-non, 540
 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 had I,

And com a yein anon and stood hym by,
 And seyde, "awake, ye slepen al to longe;
 It semeth nat that loue doth yow longe, 545

"That slepen so that no man may yow wake.
 Who sey euere or this so dul a man?"
 "Ye, frende," quod he, "do ye youre hedes ake
 ffor loue, and lat me lyuen as I kan." 550
 But though that he for wo was pale and wan,
 Yet made he tho as fresshe a countenaunce
 As though he sholde haue led the newe daunce.

"This passed forth til now, this other day,
 It fel that I com romyng al allone 555
 In-to his chaumbre and fond how that he lay
 Vp-on his bed, but man so soore grone
 Ne herde I neuere, and what that was his mone
 Ne wist I nought, for as I was comyng,
 Al sodeynly he lefte his complaynyng. 560

"Of which I took somewhat suspeciou, n,
 And ner I com and fond he wepte soore;
 And god so wys be my sauacioun,
 As neuere of thyng hadde I no routhe moore,
 ffor neither with engyn, ne with no loore, 565
 Unnethes myghte I fro the deth hym kepe,
 That yet fele I myn herte for hym wepe.

"And god woot, neuere sith that I was born
 Was I so besy no man forto preche,
 Ne neuere was to wight so depe i-sworn, 570
 Or he me told who myghte ben his leche.
 But now to yow rehercen al his speche,
 Or all his woful wordes forto sowne,
 Ne bid me naught, but ye wol se me swowne.

"But forto saue his lif, and elles nought, 575
 And to noon harm of yow, thus am I dryuen;
 And for the loue of god that vs hath wrought,
 Swich cheer hym dooth that he and I may lyuen.
 Now haue I plat to yow myn herte shryuen,
 And sith ye woot that myn entent is cleene, 580
 Take heede therof, for I non yuel meene.

"And right good thрифte, I prey to god, haue ye

That han swich oon y-kaught withouten net;
 And be ye wis as ye be faire to see,
 Wel in the rynge than is the rubie set. 585
 Ther were neuere two so wel y-met,
 Whan ye ben his al hool, as he is youre:
 Ther myghty god yit graunte vs see that houre."

"Nay, therof spak I nought, ha, ha!" quod she;
 "As helpe me god, ye shenden euery deel." 590
 "O, mercy, dere Nece," anon quod he,
 "What so I spak, I mente naught but wel,
 By Mars, the god that helmed is of steel;
 Now beth naught wroth, my blood, my Nece dere."
 "Now wel," quod she, "for yeuen be it here." 595

With this he took his leue and home he wente;
 And lord, so he was glad and wel bygon!
 Criseyde aros, no lenger she ne stente,
 But streght in-to hire closet wente anon,
 And set hire doun as styлле as any ston, 600
 Aad euery word gan vp and down to wynde,
 That he had seyde, as it com hire to mynde,

And wax somdel astoned in hire thoughte,
 Right for the newe cas, but whan that she
 Was ful auysed, tho fond she right noughte 605
 Of peril why she ought afered be.
 ffor man may loue, of possibilite,
 A womman so his herte may to-breste,
 And she naught loue a yein but if hire leste.

But as she sat allone and thoughte thus, 610
 Ascry aros at scarmuch al with-oute,
 And men criden in the strete, "se, Troilus
 Hath right now put to flight the Grekes route!"
 With that gan al hire meigne forto shoute,
 "A, go we se, caste vp the yates wyde, 615
 ffor thorwgh this strete he moot to paleys ride;

"ffor other wey is fro the yate noon
 Of Dardanus, there opyn is the cheyne."
 With that com he and al his folk anoon
 An esy pas rydyng in routes tweyne, 620
 Right as his happy day was, sooth to seyne,
 ffor which, men seyn, may nought destourbed be

That shal bityden of necessitee.

This Troilus sat on his baye steede,
 Al armed, saue his hed, ful richely, 625
 And wounded was his hors, and gan to blede,
 On which he rood a pas ful softely;
 But swich a knyghtly sighte, trewely,
 As was on hym was nought, withouten faille,
 To loke on Mars that god is of bataille. 630

So lik a man of armes and a knyght
 He was to seen, fulfilled of heigh prowesse,
 ffor bothe he hadde a body and a myght
 To don that thing, as wel as hardynesse,
 And ek to seen hym in his gere hym dresse, 635
 So fressh, so yong, so weldy semed he,
 It was an heuen vp-on hym forto see.

His helm to-hewen was in twenty places,
 That by a tyssew heng his bak byhynde;
 His sheeld to-dasshed was with swerdes and maces, 640
 In which men myghte many an arwe fynde
 That thirled hadde horn and nerf and rynde;
 And ay the peple cryde, "here cometh oure ioye,
 And, next his brother, holder vp of Troye."

ffor which he wex a litel reed for shame, 645
 When he the peple vp-on hym herde cryen,
 That to byholde it was a noble game,
 How sobrelich he caste down his eyen.
 Criseyda gan al his chere asprien,
 And leet it so softe in hire synke, 650
 That to hire self she seyde, "who yaf me drynke?"

ffor of hire owen thought she wex al reed,
 Remembryng hire right thus, "lo, this is he
 Which that myn vncler swerith he moot be deed,
 But I on hym haue mercy and pitee." 655
 And with that thought for pure ashamed she
 Gan in hire hed to pulle and that as faste,
 While he and al the peple forby paste;

And gan to caste and rollen vp and down
 With-inne hire thought his excellent prowesse, 660
 And his estat and also his renown,

His wit, his shap and ek his gentilesse,
 But moost hire fauour was for his distresse
 Was al for hire, and thought it was a routhe
 To sleen swich oon if that he mente trouthe. 665

Now myghte som envious iangle thus:
 "This was a sodeyn loue; how myght it be
 That she so lightly loued Troilus
 Right for the firste syghte, ye, parde?"
 Now whoso seith so, mote he neuere y-the; 670
 ffor euery thyng a gynnyng hath it nede
 Er al be wrought, with-owten any drede.

ffor I sey nought that she so sodeynly
 Yaf hym hire loue, but that she gan enclyne
 To like hym first, and I haue told yow whi; 675
 And after that his manhod and his pyne
 Made loue with-inne hire herte forto myne,
 ffor which by proces and by good seruyse
 He gat hire loue, and in no sodeyn wyse.

And also blisful Venus, wel arrayed, 680
 Sat in hire seuenthe hous of heuene tho,
 Disposed wel, and with aspectes payed,
 To helpen sely Troilus of his woo;
 And soth to seyne, she nas nat al a foo
 To Troilus in his natiuitee; 685
 God woot that wel the sonner spedde he.

Now lat vs stynte of Troilus a throwe,
 That rideth forth, and lat vs torne faste
 Unto Criseyde that heng hire hed ful lowe,
 Ther as she sat allone and gan to caste 690
 Where on she wolde apoynte hire atte laste,
 If it so were hire Em ne wolde cesse
 ffor Troilus vp-on hire forto presse.

And lord, so she gan in hire thought argue
 In this matere of which I haue yow tolde, 695
 And what to doone best were and what eschewe,
 That plited she ful ofte in many folde;
 Now was hire herte warme, now was it colde;
 And what she thoughte, somewhat shal I write,
 As to myn auctour listeth for tendite. 700

She thoughte wel that Troilus persone
 She knew by syghte and ek his gentillesse,
 And thus she seyde, "al were it nat to doone
 To graunte hym loue, yit, for his worthynesse,
 It were honour with pleye and with gladnesse 705
 In honestee with swich a lord to deele,
 ffor myn estat and also for his heele.

"Ek wel woot I my kynges sone is he,
 And sith he hath to se me swich delite,
 If I wolde outreliche his sighte flee, 710
 Peraunter he myghte haue me in dispite,
 Thorough whicch I myghte stonde in worse plite,
 Now were I wis me hate to purchace,
 With-outen nede, ther I may stonde in grace?

"In euery thyng, I woot, ther lith mesure, 715
 ffor though a man forbede dronkenesse,
 He naught forbet that euery creature
 Be drynkeles for alwey, as I gesse.
 Ek sith I woot for me is his destresse,
 I ne aughte naught for that thing hym despise, 720
 Sith it is so he meneth in good wyse.

"And ek I knowe, of longe tyme agon,
 His thewes goode, and that he is nat nyce;
 Nauantour, seith men, certein is he noon —
 To wis is he to doon so get a vice; 725
 Ne als I nyl hym neuere so cherice,
 That he may make auaunt by iuste cause;
 He shal me neuere bynde in swich a clause.

"Now sette a caas: the hardest is, y-wys,
 Men myghten demen that he loueth me; 730
 What dishonour were it vn-to me this?
 May ich hym lette of that? why nay, parde.
 I knowe also, and alday heere and se,
 Men louen wommen al biside hire leue,
 And whan hem leste namore, lat hem byleue. 735

"I think ek how he able is forto haue
 Of al this noble towne the thriftieste
 To ben his loue, so she hire honour saue;
 ffor out and out he is the worthieste,
 Saue only Ector, which that is the beste; 740

And yet his lif al lith now in my cure.
But swich is loue and ek myn auenture.

"Ne me to loue, a wonder is it nought;
ffor wel woot I my self, so god me spede —
Al wolde I that noon wiste of this thought — 745
I am oon the faireste, out of drede,
And goodlieste, whoso taketh hede,
And so men seyn, in al the town of Troie:
What wonder is though he of me haue ioie?"

"I am myn owene womman, wel at ese, 750
I thank it god, as after myn estate,
Right yong, and stonde vnteyd in lusty leese,
With-outen ialousie or swich debate;
Shal noon housbonde seyn to me 'chek mate.'
ffor either they ben ful of ialousie, 755
Or maisterfull, or louen nouelrie.

"What shal I doon? to what fyn lyue I thus?
Shal I nat loue, in cas if that me leste?
What, pardieux! I am naught religious.
And though that I myn herte sette at reste 760
Upon this knyght, that is the worthieste,
And kepe away myn honour and my name,
By alle right, it may do me no shame."

But right as when the sonne shyneth bright,
In March, that chaungeth ofte tyme his face, 765
And that a cloude is put with wynd to flight,
Which ouersprat the sonne as for a space,
A cloudy thought gan thorough hire soule pace,
That ouerspradde hire brighte thoughtes alle,
So that for feere almost she gan to falle. 770

That thought was this: "allas, syn I am free,
Sholde I now loue, and put in iupertie
My sikernesse and thrallen libertee?
Allas, how dorst I thenken that folie?
May I naught wel in other folk aspie 775
Hire dredfull ioie, hire constreinte and hire peyne?
Ther loueth noon that she nath wey to pleyne.

"ffor loue is yet the mooste stormy lyf,
Right of hym self, that euere was bigonne;

ffor euere som mystrust or nice strif 780
 Ther is in loue, som cloude is ouere that sonne.
 Therto we wrecched wommen no-thing konne,
 Whan vs is wo, but wepe and sitte and thinke;
 Oure wrecche is this, oure owen wo to drynke.

"Also thise wikked tonges ben so preste 785
 To speke vs harm, ek men ben so vntrewe,
 That right anon as cessed is hire leste
 So cesseth loue, and forth to loue a newe;
 But harm y-doon is doon, who-so it rewe:
 ffor though thise men for loue hem first to-rende, 790
 fful sharp bygynnyng breketh ofte at ende.

"How ofte tyme hath it y-knowen be,
 The tresoun that to wommen hath ben do;
 To what fyn is swich loue I kan nat see,
 Or wher bycometh it whan it is ago. 795
 Ther is no wight that woot, I trowe so,
 Where it bycometh; lo, no wight on it sporneth:
 That erst was no thing, in-to nought it torneth.

"How bisy, if I loue, ek most I be
 To plesen hem that iangle of loue and dremen, 800
 And coye hem, that they seye noon harm of me;
 ffor though ther be no cause, yet hem semen
 Al be for harm that folk hire frendes quemen;
 And who may stoppen euery wikked tonge,
 Or sown of belles whil that thei ben ronge?" 805

And after that, hire thought gan forto clere,
 And seide, "he which that nothing vndertaketh,
 No thyng nacheueth, be hym looth or deere."
 And with an other thought hire herte quaketh;
 Than slepeth hope, and after drede awaketh; 810
 Now hoot, now cold; but thus bitwixen tweye,
 She rist hire vp, and wente hire forto pleye.

Adown the steyre anon right tho she wente
 In-to the gardyn with hire neces thre,
 And vp and down ther made many a wente — 815
 fflexippe, she, Tharbe and Antigone —
 To pleyen, that it ioye was to see;
 And other of hire wommen a gret route
 Hire folwede in the gardyn al aboute.

This yerd was large and rayled alle thaleyas,
 And shaded wel with blosmy bowes grene,
 And benched newe, and sonded alle the weyas,
 In which she walketh arm in arm bitwene;
 Til at the laste, Antigone the shene
 Gan on a Troian song to singen cleere,

820

825

That it an heuen was hire vois to here.

Cantus Antigone

She seyde, "O loue, to whom I haue and shal
 Ben humble subgit, trewe in myn entente,
 As I best kan, to yow, lord, yeue ich al,
 ffor euere mo, myn hertes lust to rente.
 ffor neuere yet thi grace no wight sente
 So blisful cause as me, my lif to lede
 In alle ioie and seurte out of drede.

830

"Ye, blisful god, han me so wel byset
 In loue, i-wys, that al that bereth lif
 Ymagynen ne kouthe how to ben bet;
 ffor, lord, withouten jalousie or strif,
 I loue oon which that moost is ententif
 To seruen wel, vnweri or vnfeyned,
 That euere was, and leest with harm desteyned.

835

840

"As he that is the welle of worthynesse,
 Of trouthe grownd, mirour of goodlihede,
 Of wit Apollo, stoon of sikernesse,
 Of vertue roote, of lust fynder and hede,
 Thorough which is alle sorwe fro me dede —
 I-wis, I loue hym best, so doth he me;
 Now good thрифte haue he, wher-so that he be!

845

"Whom shulde I thanken but yow, god of loue,
 Of al this blisse in which to bathe I gynne?
 And thanked be ye, lord, for that I loue.
 This is the righte lif that I am inne,
 To flemen alle manere vice and synne;
 This dooth me so to vertue for tentende,
 That day by day I in my wille amende.

850

"And whoso seith that forto loue is vice,
 Or thraldom, though he feele in it destresse,
 He outhur is enuyous or right nyce,
 Or is vnmyghty for his shrewednesse

855

To louen; for swich manere folk, I gesse,
 Defamen loue as nothing of it knowe: 860
 They speken, but thei benten neuere his bowe.

"What is the sonne wers, of kynde right,
 Though that a man for fieblesse of his eyen
 May nought endure on it to see for bright?
 Or loue the wers, though wrecches on it crien? 865
 No wele is worth that may no sorwe dryen;
 And forthi, who that hath an hed of verre,
 ffro caste of stones war hym in the werre.

"But I with al myn herte and al my myghte,
 As I haue seyde, wol loue vn-to my laste 870
 My deere herte and al myn owen knyghte,
 In which myn herte growen is so faste,
 And his in me, that it shal euere laste:
 Al dredde I first to loue hym to bigynne,
 Now woot I wel ther is no peril inne." 875

And of hir song right with that word she stente,
 And ther-with-al, "now Nece," quod Cryseyde,
 "Who made this song now with so good entente?"
 Antygone answerde anon and seyde,
 "Madame, y-wys, the goodlieste mayde 880
 Of gret estat in al the town of Troye,
 And let hire lif in moste honour and ioie."

"ffor-sothe, so it semeth by hire songe,"
 Quod tho Criseyde, and gan therwith to sike,
 And seyde, "lord, is ther swych blisse amonge 885
 Thise loueres, as they konne faire endite?"
 "Ye, wis," quod fresshe Antigone the white,
 "ffor al the folk that han or ben on lyue
 Ne konne wel the blisse of loue discryue.

"But wene ye that euery wrecche woot 890
 The parfit blisse of loue? why nay, i-wys;
 They wenen all be loue if oon be hoot;
 Do wey, do wey, they woot nothyng of this.
 Men mosten axe at seyntes if it is
 Aught faire in heuene — why? for they kan telle — 895
 And axen fendes is it foule in helle."

Criseyde vnto that purpos naught answerde,

But seyde, "ywys, it wol be nyght as faste."
 But euery word which that she of hire herde,
 She gan to prenten in hire herte faste, 900
 And ay gan loue hire lasse for tagaste
 Than it dide erst and synken in hire herte,
 That she wex somewhat able to conuerte.

The dayes honour and the heuenes eye,
 The nyghtes foo — al this clepe I the sonne — 905
 Gan westren faste and downward forto wrye,
 As he that hadde his dayes cours yronne,
 And white thynges wexen dymme and donne
 ffor lakke of lyght and sterres for tapere,
 That she and alle hire folk in went yfeere. 910

So whan it liked hire to go to reste,
 And voided weren thei that voiden oughthe,
 She seyde that to slepen wel hire leste;
 Hire wommen soon vnto hire bed hire broughte.
 Whan al was hust, than lay she stille and thoughte 915
 Of al this thing the manere and the wise;
 Reherce it nedeth nought, for ye ben wise.

A nyghtyngale vpon a cedre grene,
 Under the chambre wal ther as she lay,
 fful loude song ayein the moone shene 920
 Peraunter in his briddes wise a lay
 Of loue that made hire herte fressh and gay,
 That herkned she so longe in good entente,
 Til at the laste the dede slepe hire hente.

And as she slep, anon right tho hire mette 925
 How that an egle fethered whit as bone
 Under hire brest his longe clawes sette,
 And out hire herte he rente, and that anone,
 And dide his herte in-to hire brest to gone —
 Of which she nought agroos ne nothyng smerte — 930
 And forth he fleigh with herte left for herte.

Now lat hire slepe, and we oure tales holde
 Of Troilus that is to paleis riden
 ffro the scarmuch of the which I tolde,
 And in his chaumbre sit and hath abiden 935
 Til two or thre of his messages yeden
 ffor Pandarus and soughten hym ful faste,

Til they him founde and broughte hym at the laste.

This Pandarus com lepyng in attones,
 And seyde thus, "who hath ben wel i-bete 940
 To-day with swerdes and with slyng stones
 But Troilus, that hath caught hym an hete?
 And gan to iape and seyde, "lord, so ye swete!
 But ris and lat vs soupe and go to reste."
 And he answerd hym, "do we as the leste." 945

With al the haste goodly that they myghte,
 They spedde hem fro the soper vnto bedde,
 And euery wight out at the dore hym dyghte,
 And where hym liste vp-on his wey him spedde;
 But Troilus, that thoughte his herte bledde 950
 ffor wo til that he herde som tydyng,
 He seyde, "frend, shal I now wepe or syng?"

Quod Pandarus, "ly stille and lat me slepe,
 And don thyn hood, thy nedes spedde be,
 And chese if thou wolt synge or daunce or lepe. 955
 At shorte wordes, thou shalt trowen me.
 Sire, my Nece wol do wel by the,
 And loue the best, by god and by my trouthe,
 By lakke of pursuyt make it in thi slouthe.

"ffor thus ferforth I haue thi werk bigonne, 960
 ffro day to day til this day by the morwe,
 Hire loue of frendshipe haue I to the wonne,
 And therto hath she leyd hire feyth to borwe;
 Algate a foot is hameled of thi sorwe."
 What sholde I lenger sermoun of it holde? 965
 As ye han herd byfore, al he hym tolde.

But right as floures, thorough the colde of nyght
 Iclosed, stoupen on hire stalkes lowe,
 Redressen hem ayein the sonne bright,
 And spreden on hire kynde cours by rowe, 970
 Right so gan tho his eighen vp to throwe
 This Troilus and seyde, "O Venus deere,
 Thi myght, thi grace, y-heried be it here."

And to Pandare he held vp bothe his hondes,
 And seyde, "lord, al thyn be that I haue, 975
 ffor I am hool, al brosten ben my bondes;

A thousand Troyes who-so that me yaue,
 Ech after other, god so wys me saue,
 Ne myghte me so gladen; lo, myn herte,
 It spredeth so for ioie it wol to-sterete. 980

"But lord, how shal I doon, how shal I lyuen?
 Whan shal I next my deere herte see?
 How shal this longe tyme away be dryuen
 Til that thow be ayein at hire fro me?
 Thow maist answer, "abid, abid," but he 985
 That hangeth by the nekke, soth to seyne,
 In gret disese abideth for the peyne."

"Al esily, now, for the loue of Marte,"
 Quod Pandarus, "for euery thing hath tyme
 So longe abid til that the nyght departe; 990
 ffor also siker as thow list here by me,
 And god to-forn, I wol be ther at pryme;
 And for-thi, werk som-what as I shal seye,
 Or on som other wight this charge leye.

ffor pardee, god woot, I haue euere yit 995
 Den redy the to serue, and to this nyght
 Haue I naught feyned, but emforth my wit
 Don al thi lust, and shal with al my myght.
 Do now as I shal seyn and fare aright;
 And if thow nyht, wite al thi self thi care: 1000
 On me is nought a-long thyn yuel fare.

"I woot wel that thow wiser art than I
 A thousand fold, but if I were as thow,
 God help me so, as I wolde outrely
 Right of myn owen hond write hire right now 1005
 A lettre, in which I wolde hire tellen how
 I ferd amys, and hire biseche of routhe;
 Now help thi self and leue it nought for slouthe-

"And I my self wol therwith to hire gon;
 And whan thow woost that I am with hire there, 1010
 Worth thow vp-on a courser right anon,
 Ye, hardily, right in thi beste gere,
 And ryd forth by the place as nought ne were,
 And thow shalt fynde vs, if I may, sittynge
 At som wyndow in-to the strete lokyng. 1015

"And if the list, than maystow vs salue,
 And vp-on me make thow thi countenance,
 But by thi lif be war and faste eschue
 To tarien ought — god shilde vs fro meschaunce!
 Rid forth thi wey and hold thi gouernaunce, 1020
 And we shal speak of the somewhat, I trowe,
 Whan thow art gon, to don thyn eris glowe.

"Towchyng thi lettre, thou art wys ynough;
 I woot thow nylt it dygneliche endite,
 As make it with thise argumentes tough, 1025
 Ne scryuenyssh or craftily thow it write;
 Biblotte it with thi teris ek a lite,
 And if thow write a goodly word al softe,
 Though it be good, reherce it nought to ofte.

"ffor though the beste harpouer vp-on lyue 1030
 Wolde on the beste sowned ioly harpe
 That euere was with alle his fyngres fyue
 Touche ay o stryng or ay o werbul harpe,
 Were his nayles poynted neuere so sharpe,
 It sholde maken euery wight to dulle 1035
 To here his glee and of his strokes fulle.

"Ne iompre ek no discordant thyng y-feere,
 As thus, to vsen termes of Phisik
 In loues termes; hold of thi matere
 The forme alwey and do that it be lik; 1040
 ffor if a peyntour wolde peynte a pyk
 With asses feet and hedde it as an ape,
 It cordeth naught, so nere it but a iape."

This counseil liked wel to Troilus,
 But as a dredful louere he seyde this, 1045
 "Allas, my deere brother Pandarus,
 I am ashamed forto write, ywis,
 Lest of myn innocence I seyde amys,
 Or that she nolde it for despit receyue;
 Than were I ded, ther myght it nothyng weyue." 1050

To that Pandare answerde, "if the leste,
 Do that I seye, and lat me therwith gon;
 ffor by that lord that formed est and weste,
 I hope of it to brynge answer anon
 Right of hire hond, and if that thow nylt noon, 1055

Lat be, and sory mote he ben his lyue
Ayeins thi lust that helpeth the to thryue."

Quod Troilus, "depardieux, ich assente,
Sith that the list, I wil arise and write;
And blisful god prey ich with good entente, 1060
The viage and the lettre I shal endite,
So spede it, and thow, Minerua the white,
Yif thow me wit my lettre to deuyse."
And sette hym down and wrot right in this wyse.

ffirst he gan hire his righte lady calle, 1065
His hertes lif, his lust, his sorwes leche,
His blisse, and ek thise other termes alle,
That in swich cas thise loueres alle seche;
And in ful humble wise, as in his speche,
He gan hym recomaunde vnto hire grace; 1070
To telle al how, it axeth muchel space.

And after this ful lowly he hire preyde
To be nought wroth, thogh he, of his folie,
So hardy was to hire to write, and seyde
That loue it made or elles most he die; 1075
And pitousli gan mercy forto crye;
And after that he seyde — and leigh ful loude —
Hym self was litel worth, and lasse he koude;

And that she sholde han his konnyng excused,
That litel was, and ek he dredde hire soo, 1080
And his vnworthynesse ay he acused;
And after that than gan he telle his woo—
But that was endeles, with-outen hoo —
And seyde he wolde in trouth alwey hym holde;
And radde it ouer and gan the lettre folde. 1085

And with hise salte teris gan he bathe
The rubie in his signet and it sette
Up-on the wex deliuerliche and rathe;
Therwith a thousand tymes, er he lette,
He kiste tho the lettre that he shette, 1090
And seyde, "lettre, a blisful destine
The shapyn is, my lady shal the see."

This Pandare tok the lettre, and that by-tyme
A-morwe, and to his Neces paleis sterte;

And faste he swor that it was passed prime,
 And gan to iape and seyde, "ywys, myn herte,
 So fresshe it is, al-though it sore smerte,
 I may naught slepe neuere a Mayes morwe;
 I haue a ioly wo, a lusty sorwe."

1095

Criseyde, whan that she hire vnclerde,
 With dredful herte and desirous to here
 The cause of his comynge, thus answerde,
 "Now by youre fey, myn vncler," quod she, "dere,
 What manere wyndes gydeth yow now here?
 Tel vs youre ioly wo and youre penaunce —
 How ferforth be ye put in loues daunce?"

1100

1105

"By god," quod he, "I hoppe alwey by-hynde."
 And she to laughe, it thought hire herte brest.
 Quod Pandarus, "loke alwey that ye fynde
 Game in myn hood, but herkneth, if yow lest:
 Ther is right now come in-to town a gest,
 A Greek espie, and telleth newe thinges,
 ffor which I come to telle yow tydynges."

1110

"In-to the gardyn go we and ye shal here
 Al pryuely of this a longe sermoun."
 With that they wenten arm in arm yfeere,
 In-to the gardyn from the chaumbre down,
 And whan that he so fer was that the sown
 Of that he spake no man heren myghte,
 He seyde hire thus, and out the lettre plighte:

1115

1120

"Lo, he that is al holy youre free
 Hym recomaundeth lowely to youre grace,
 And sente yow this lettre here by me.
 Auyseth yow on it, whan ye han space,
 And of som goodly answeere yow purchace;
 Or helpe me god, so pleynly forto seyne,
 He may nat longe lyuen for his peyne."

1125

fful dredfully tho gan she stonden styll,
 And took it naught, but al hire humble chere
 Gan forto chaunge, and seyde, "scrit ne bille,
 ffor loue of god, that toucheth swich matere
 Ne brynge me noon; and also, vncler deere,
 To myn estat haue more rewarde, I preye,
 Than to his lust — what sholde I more seye?"

1130

"And loketh now if this be resonable,
 And letteth nought for fauour ne for slouthe
 To seyn a sooth; now were it couenable
 To myn estat, by god and by youre trouthe,
 To taken it or to han of hym routhe
 In harmyng of my self or in repreue?
 Ber it ayein for hym that ye on leue."
 1135
 1140

This Pandarus gan on hire forto stare,
 And seyde, "now is this the grettest wondre
 That euere I seigh — lat be this nyce fare!
 To dethe mot I smyten be with thondre,
 If for the citee which that stondest yondre,
 Wolde I a lettre vnto yow brynge or take
 To harm of yow; what list yow thus it make?
 1145

"But thus ye faren, wel neigh alle and some,
 That he that most desireth yow to serue,
 Of hym ye recche leest wher he by-come,
 And whethir that he lyue or elles sterue.
 But for al that that euer I may deserue,
 Refuse it naught," quod he and hente hire faste,
 And in hire bosom the lettre down he thraste,
 1150
 1155

And seyde hire, "now cast it away anon,
 That folk may seen and gauren on vs tweye."
 Quod she, "I kan abyde til they be gon,
 And gan to smyle and seyde hym, "Em, I preye,
 Swich answeere as yow list youre self purueye,
 ffor trewely I nyl no lettre write."
 "No? than wol I," quod he, "so ye endite."
 1160

Therwith she lough and seyde, "go we dyne."
 And he gan at hym self to iape faste,
 And seyde, "Nece, I haue so grete a pyne
 ffor loue that euerich other day I faste,"
 And gan his beste iapes forth to caste,
 And made hire so to laughe at his folye,
 That she for laughter wende for to dye.
 1165

And whan that she was comen in-to halle,
 "Now Em," quod she, "we wol go dyne anon,"
 And gan some of hire wommen to hire calle,
 And streght in-to hire chambre gan she gon,
 1170

But of hire besynesses this was on,
 Amonges othere thynges out of drede,
 fful pryuely this lettre forto rede. 1175

Auysed word by word in euery lyne,
 And fond no lakke, she thoughte he koude good;
 And vp it putte and wente hire in-to dyne;
 But Pandarus, that in a studye stood, 1180
 Er he was war, she took hym by the hood,
 And seyde, "ye were caught er that ye wist."
 "I vouche-sauf," quod he, "do what you list."

Tho wesshen they and sette hem down and ete;
 And after noon ful sleightly Pandarus 1185
 Gan drawe hym to the wyndowe next the strete,
 And seyde, "Nece, who hath araied thus
 The yonder hous that stant aforzeyn vs?"
 "Which hous?" quod she, and gan forto byholde,
 And knew it wel, and whos it was hym tolde. 1190

And fillen forth in speche of thynges smale,
 And seten in the windowe bothe tweye,
 Whan Pandarus saugh tyme vn-to his tale,
 And saugh wel that hire folk were alle aweye,
 "Now, Nece myn, tel on," quod he, "I seye, 1195
 How liketh yow the lettre that ye woot?
 Kan he ther-on? for by my trouthe, I noot."

Therwith al rosy hewed tho wex she,
 And gan to homme and seyde, "so I trowe."
 "Acquite hym wel, for goddes loue," quod he; 1200
 "My self to medes wol the lettre sowe."
 And held his hondes vp and sat on knowe;
 "Now, goode Nece, be it neuere so lite,
 Yif me the labour it to sowe and plite."

"Ye, for I kan so writen," quod she tho, 1205
 "And ek I noot what I sholde to hym seye."
 "Nay, Nece," quod Pandare, "sey nat so;
 Yet at the leeste thonketh hym, I preye,
 Of his good wille and doth hym nat to deye.
 Now for the loue of me, my Nece deere, 1210
 Refuseth nat at this tyme my prayere."

"Depardieux," quod she, "god leue al be wel!

God help me so, this is the firste lettre
 That euere I wroot, ye, al or any del."
 And in-to a closet for tauise hire bettre 1215
 She wente allone, and gan hire herte vnfettre
 Out of desdaynes prisoun but a lite,
 And sette hire down and gan a lettre write.

Of which to telle in short is myn entente
 Theffect as fer as I kan vnderstonde: 1220
 She thanked hym of al that he wel mente
 Towardes hire, but holden hym in honde
 She nolde nought, ne make hire seluen bonde
 In loue, but as his suster hym to plese
 She wolde ay fayn, to doon his herte an ese. 1225

She shette it and to Pandare in gan goon,
 Ther as he sat and loked in-to the strete,
 And down she sette hire by hym on a stoon
 Of iaspre, vp-on a quysshyn gold y-bete,
 And seyde, "as wisly help me god the grete, 1230
 I neuere dide a thing with more peyne
 Than writen this, to which ye me constreyne" —

And took it hym. He thonked hire and seyde,
 "God woot, of thyng ful often looth bygonne
 Comth ende good, and, Nece myn, Criseyde, 1235
 That ye to hym of hard now ben y-wonne
 Oughte he be glad, by god and yonder sonne;
 ffor whi men seith, "Impressiounes lighte
 fful lightly ben ay redy to the flighte."

"But ye han played the tirant neigh to longe, 1240
 And hard was it youre herte forto graue;
 Now stynte, that ye no lenger on it honge,
 Al wolde ye the forme of daunger saue,
 But hasteth yow to doon hym ioie haue;
 ffor trusteth wel, to long y-doon hardnesse 1245
 Causeth despit ful often for destresse."

And right as they declamed this matere,
 Lo, Troilus, right at the stretes ende,
 Com rydyng with his tenthe somme y-fere,
 Al softly, and thiderward gan bende 1250
 Ther as they sete, as was his way to wende
 To paleis-ward, and Pandare hym aspide

And seyde, "Nece, i-see who comth here ride.

"O fle naught in — he seeth vs, I suppose —
Lest he may thynken that ye hym eschuwe." 1255

"Nay, nay," quod she, and wex as rede as rose.
With that he gan hire humbly to saluwe,
With dredful chere and oft his hewes muwe,
And vp his look debonairly he caste,
And bekked on Pandare and forth he paste. 1260

God woot if he sat on his hors aright,
Or goodly was biseyn that ilke day!
God woot wher he was lik a manly knyght!
What sholde I drecche or telle of his aray?
Criseyde, which that alle thise thynges say, 1265
To telle in short, hire liked al in fere,
His persoun, his aray, his look, his chere,

His goodly manere, and his gentilesse,
So wel that neuere, sith that she was born,
Ne hadde she swych routh of his destresse; 1270
And how so she hath hard ben here byforn,
To god hope I she hath now kaught a thorn,
She shal nat pulle it out this nexte wyke —
God sende mo swich thornes on to pike.

Pandare, which that stood hire faste by, 1275
ffelte iren hoot and he bygan to smyte,
And seyde, "Nece, I pray yow hertely,
Tel me that I shal axen yow a lite:
A womman that were of his deth to wite,
With-uten his gilt, but for hire lakked routhe, 1280
Were it wel doon?" Quod she, "nay, by my trouthe."

"God help me so," quod he, "ye sey me soth.
Ye felen wel youre self that I nought lye.
Lo, yond he rit!" "ye," quod she, "so he doth."
"Wel," quod Pandare, "as I haue told yow thrie, 1285
Lat be youre nyce shame and youre folie,
And spek with hym in esyng of his herte;
Lat nycete nat do yow bothe smerte."

But ther-on was to heuen and to doone,
Considered al thing, it may nat be; 1290
And whi? for shame, and it were ek to soone

To graunten hym so grete a libertee.
 ffor pleyedly hire entente, as seyde she,
 Was forto loue hym vnwist if she myghte,
 And guerdoun hym with no thing but with sighte. 1295

But Pandarus thought, "it shal nought be so,
 Yif that I may, this nyce opynyoun
 Shal nought be holden fully yeres two."
 What sholde I make of this a long sermoun?
 He moste assente on that conclusioun 1300
 As for the tyme, and whan that it was eue,
 And al was wel, he roos and toke his leue.

And on his wey ful faste homward he spedde,
 And right for ioye he felte his herte daunce;
 And Troilus he fond allone a-bedde, 1305
 That lay as do thise louers in a traunce,
 Bitwixen hope and derk disesperaunce.
 But Pandarus, right at his in comynge,
 He song, as who seyth, "somwhat I brynge."

And seyde, "who is in his bed so soone 1310
 I-buried thus?" "It am I, frend," quod he.
 "Who, Troilus? nay, help me so the moone,"
 Quod Pandarus, "thow shalt arise and see
 A charme that was sent right now to the,
 The which kan helen the of thyn accesse, 1315
 If thow do forth-with al thi bisynesse.",

"Ye, thorough the myght of god," quod Troilus.
 And Pandarus gan hym the lettre take,
 And seyde, "parde, god hath holpen vs;
 Haue here a light and loke on al this blake." 1320
 But ofte gan the herte glade and quake
 Of Troilus, whil that he gan it rede,
 So as the wordes yaue hym hope or drede.

But finally he took al for the beste
 That she hym wroot, for somewhat he byhelde 1325
 On which hym thoughte he myghte his herte reste,
 Al couered she the wordes vnder shelde.
 Thus to the more worthi part he helde,
 That what for hope and Pandarus byheste,
 His grete wo foryede he at the leste. 1330

But as we may alday oure seluen see,
 Thorough more wode or col the more fire,
 Right so encrees of hope, of what it be,
 Therwith ful ofte encreseth ek desire;
 Or as an ook comth of a litil spire, 1335
 So thorough this lettre which that she hym sente
 Encrescen gan desire of which he brente.

Wherfore I seye alwey that day and nyght
 This Troilus gan to desiren moore
 Thanne he did erst, thorough hope, and did his myght 1340
 To preessen on as by Pandarus loore,
 And writen to hire of his sorwes soore;
 ffro day to day he leet it nought refreyde,
 That by Pandare he wroot somewhat or seyde;

And dide also his other obseruaunces, 1345
 That til a louere longeth in this cas;
 And after that his dees torned on chaunces,
 So was he outhere glad or seyde "allas."
 And held after his gistes ay hid pas;
 And after swiche answeres as he hadde, 1350
 So were his dayes sory outhere gladde.

But to Pandare alwey was his recours,
 And pitously gan ay to hym to pleyne,
 And hym bisoughte of reed and som socours;
 And Pandarus, that sey his woode peyne, 1355
 Wex wel neigh ded for routhe, sooth to seyne,
 And bisily with al his herte cast
 Som of his wo to slen, and that as faste;

And seyde, "lord and frend and brother dere,
 God woot that thi disese doth me wo. 1360
 But wiltow stynten al this woful cheere,
 And by my trouthe, er it be dayes two,
 And god to-forn, yet shal I shape it so,
 That thow shalt come in-to a certeyn place,
 There as thow mayst thi self hire preye of grace. 1365

"And certeynly — I noot if thow it woost,
 But tho that ben expert in loue it seye —
 It is oon of the thynges forthereth most
 A man to han a layser forto preye,
 And siker place his wo forto bywreie; 1370

ffor in good herte it mot som routhe impresse
To here and see the giltles in distresse.

"Peraunter thynkestow: though it be so,
That kynde wolde don hire to bygynne
To haue a manere routhe vpon my woo, 1375
Seyth daunger, "nay, thow shalt me neuere wynne."
So reulith hire hir hertes gost with-inne,
That though she bende, yeet she stant on roote;
What in effect is this vnto my boote?

"Think here ayeins: whan that the stordy ook, 1380
On which men hakketh ofte for the nones,
Receyued hath the happy fallyng strook,
The greeete sweigh doth it come al at ones,
As don thise rokkes or thise milnestones;
ffor swifter cours comth thyng that is of wighte, 1385
Whan it descendeth, than don thynges lighte.

"And reed that boweth down for euery blaste,
fful lightly, cesse wynd, it wol aryse;
But so nyl nought an ook whan it is caste;
It nedeth me nought the longe to forbise. 1390
Men shal reioissen of a grete empryse
Acheued wel, and stant with-ouen doute,
Al han men ben the lenger ther-aboutte.

"But Troilus, yet telle me if the lest
A thing now which that I shal axen the: 1395
Which is thi brother that thow louest best,
As in thi verray hertes priuete?"
"I-wis, my brother Deiphebus," quod he.
"Now," quod Pandare, "er houres twyes twelue,
He shal the ese, vnwist of it hym selue. 1400

"Now lat malone and werken as I may,"
Quod he; and to Deiphebus wente he tho,
Which hadde his lord and grete frend ben ay;
Saue Troilus, no man he loued so.
To telle in short, withouten wordes mo, 1405
Quod Pandarus, "I pray yow that ye be
ffrend to a cause which that toucheth me."

"Yis, perde," quod Deiphebus, "wel thow woost,
In al that euere I may, and god to-fore,

Al nere it but for man I loue moost,
 My brother Troilus; but sey wherfore
 It is, for sith that day that I was bore,
 I nas, ne neuere mo to ben I thynke,
 Ayeins a thing that myghte the forthynke." 1410

Pandare gan hym thank and to hym seyde,
 "Lo, sire, I haue a lady in this town,
 That is my Nece and called is Criseyde,
 Which som men wolden don oppressioun;
 And wrongfully han hire possessioun;
 Wherfore I of youre lordship yow biseche
 To ben oure frend, withouten more speche." 1415
 1420

Deiphebus hym answerde, "O, is nat this,
 That thow spekest of to me thus straungely,
 Criseyda, my frend?" He seyde, "yis."
 "Than nedeth," quod Deiphebus, "hardly,
 Namore to speke, for trusteth wel that I
 Wol be hire champioun with spore and yerde;
 I roughte nought though alle hire foos it herde. 1425

"But telle me, thow that woost al this matere,
 How I myght best auaylen." — "Now lat se,"
 Quod Pandarus, "if ye, my lord so dere,
 Wolden as now do this honour to me,
 To preyen hire to-morwe, lo, that she
 Come vn-to yow, hire pleyntes to deuisse,
 Hire aduersaries wolde of it agrise. 1430
 1435

"And yif I more dorste prey yow as now,
 And chargen yow to han so gret trauaille,
 To han som of youre bretheren here with yow,
 That myghten to hire cause bet auaille,
 Than wot I wel she myghte neuere faille
 fforto ben holpen, what at youre instaunce,
 What with hire other frendes gouernaunce." 1440

Deiphebus, which that comen was of kynde
 To alle honour and bounte to consente,
 Answerd, "it shal be don, and I kan fynde
 Yet grettere help to this in myn entente.
 What wiltow seyn if I for Eleyne sente
 To speke of this? I trowe it be the beste,
 ffor she may leden Paris as hire leste. 1445

"Of Ector, which that is my lord, my brother,
 It nedeth naught to preye hym frend to be;
 ffor I haue herd hym, o tyme and ek oother,
 Speke of Cryseyde swich honour that he
 May seyn no bet, swich hap to hym hath she:
 It nedeth naught his helpes forto craue;
 He shal be swich right as we wol hym haue.

"Speke thow thi self also to Troilus
 On my byhalue, and prey hym with vs dyne."
 "Syre, al this shal be don," quod Pandarus,
 And took his leue and neuere gan to fyne,
 But to his Neces hous as streyght as lyne
 He come, and fond hire fro the mete arise,
 And sette hym down and spak right in this wise.

He seide, "O verray god, so haue I ronne!
 Lo, Nece myn, se ye nought how I swete?
 I not wheither ye the more thank me konne.
 Be ye naught war how false Poliphete
 Is now aboute eftsones forto plete
 And brynge on yow aduocacies newe?"
 "I? no," quod she, and chaunged al hire hewe.

"What is he more aboute me to drecche
 And don me wrong? what shal I doon, allas?
 Yet of hym self nothing ne wolde I recche,
 Nere it for Antenor and Eneas,
 That ben his frendes in swich manere cas.
 But for the loue of god, myn vnclde deere,
 No fors of that, lat hym han al yfeere.

"With-outen that I haue ynough for vs."
 "Nay," quod Pandare, "it shal no thing be so,
 ffor I haue ben right now at Deiphebus,
 At Ector, and myn oother lordes moo,
 And shortly maked eche of hem his foo,
 That, by my thrift, he shal it neuere wynne,
 ffor aught he kan, whan that so he bygynne."

And as thei casten what was best to doone,
 Deiphebus of his owen curteisie
 Com hire to preye, in his propre persone,
 To holde hym on the morwe compaignie,

At dyner, which she nolde nought denye,
 But goodly gan to his preier obeye. 1490
 He thonked hire and went vp-on his weye.

Whan this was don, this Pandare vp anon,
 To telle in short, and forth gan forto wende
 To Troilus, as stille as any ston,
 And al this thyng he tolde hym worde and ende, 1495
 And how that he Deiphebus gan to blende,
 And seyde hym, "now is tyme, if that thow konne,
 To bere the wel to-morwe, and al is wonne.

"Now spek, now prey, now pitously compleigne;
 Lat nought for nyce shame or drede or slouthe. 1500
 Som tyme a man mot telle his owen peyne;
 Bileue it, and she shal han on the routhe;
 Thow shalt be saued by thi feyth in trouthe.
 But wel woot I that thow art now in deede,
 And what it is I leye I kan arede. 1505

"Thow thynkest now, "how sholde I don al this?
 ffor by my cheres mosten folk asprie
 That for hire loue is that I fare amys;
 Yet hadde I leuere vnwist for sorwe dye."
 Now thynk nat so, for thow dost gret folie, 1510
 ffor I right now haue founden o manere
 Of sleyghte forto coueren al thi cheere.

"Thow shalt gon ouer nyght, and that bylyue,
 Unto Deiphebus hous as the to pleye,
 Thi maladie away the bet to dryue, 1515
 ffor whi thow semest sik, soth forto seye.
 Soone after that, down in thi bed the leye,
 And sey thow mayst no lenger vp endure,
 And lie right there and bide thyn auenture.

"Sey that thi fevre is wont the forto take 1520
 The same tyme, and lasten til a-morwe;
 And lat se now how wel thow kanst it make,
 ffor perde, sik is he that is in sorwe.
 Go now, far-wel; and Venus here to borwe,
 I hope, and thow this purpos holde ferme, 1525
 Thi grace she shal fully ther conferme."

Quod Troilus, "i-wis, thow nedeles

Conseilest me that siklich I me feyne,
 ffor I am sik in earnest, douteles,
 So that wel neigh I sterue for the peyne." 1530
 Quod Pandarus, "thow shalt the bettre pleyne,
 And hast the lasse nede to countrefete,
 ffor hym men demen hoot that men seen swete.

"Lo, hold the at thi triste cloos, and I
 Shal wel the deer vnto thi bowe dryue." 1535
 Therwith he took his leue al softely,
 And Troilus to paleis wente blyue;
 So glad ne was he neuere in al his lyue,
 And to Pandarus reed gan al assente,
 And to Deiphebus hous at nyght he wente. 1540

What nedeth yow to tellen al the cheere
 That Deiphebus vnto his brother made,
 Or his accesse or his siklich manere —
 How men gan hym with clothes forto lade,
 Whan he was leyd, and how men wolde hym glade? 1545
 But al for nought: he held forth ay the wyse
 That ye han herd Pandare er this deuyse.

But certayn is, er Troilus hym leyde,
 Deiphebus had hym preied ouer nyght
 To ben a frend and helpyng to Criseyde. 1550
 God woot that he it graunted a-non right,
 To ben hire fulle frend with al his myght;
 But swich a nede was to preye hym thenne,
 As forto bidde a wood man forto renne.

The morwen com and neighen gan the tyme 1555
 Of meeltide that the faire queene Eleyne
 Shoop hire to ben, an houre after the prime,
 With Deiphebus, to whom she nolde feyne;
 But as his suster, homly, soth to seyne,
 She com to dyner in hire pleyne entente — 1560
 But god and Pandare wist al what this mente.

Com ek Criseyde, al innocent of this,
 Antigone, hire suster Tarbe also,
 But fle we now prolixitee best is,
 ffor loue of god, and lat vs faste go 1565
 Right to theeffect, withouten tales mo,
 Whi al this folk assembled in this place;

And lat vs of hire saluynge pace.

Gret honour did hem Deiphebus, certeyn,
 And fedde hem wel with al that myghte like, 1570
 But euere mo, "allas," was his refreyn,
 "My goode brother, Troilus, the syke,
 Lith yet" — and therwithal he gan to sike;
 And after that he peyned hym to glade
 Hem as he myghte and cheere good he made. 1575

Compleyned ek Eleyne of his siknesse
 So feythfully that pite was to here;
 And euery wight gan waxen for accesse
 A leche anon and seyde, "in this manere
 Men curen folk; this charme I wol yow leere"; 1580
 But ther sat oon, al list hire nought to teche,
 That thoughte, "best koude I yet ben his leche."

After compleynte, hym gonnen they to preyse,
 As folk don yet whan som wight hath bygonne
 To preise a man, and vp with pris hym reise 1585
 A thousand fold yet heigher than the sonne:
 "He is, he kan, that fewe lordes konne."
 And Pandarus, of that they wolde afferme,
 He naught forgat hire preisynge to conferme.

Herde al this thyng Criseyde wel i-nough, 1590
 And euery word gan forto notifie,
 ffor which with sobre cheere hire herte lough;
 ffor who is that ne wolde hire glorifie,
 To mowen swich a knyght don lyue or dye?
 But al passe I, lest ye to longe dwelle; 1595
 ffor for o fyn is al that euere I telle.

The tyme com fro dyner forto ryse,
 And as hem aughte arisen euerichone,
 And gonne a while of this and that deuise;
 But Pandarus brak al this speche anone, 1600
 And seide to Deiphebus, "wol ye gone,
 If it youre wille be, as I yow preyde,
 To speke here of the nedes of Criseyde?"

Eleyne, which that by the hond hire helde,
 Took first the tale and seyde, "go we blyue"; 1605
 And goodly on Criseyde she bihelde,

And seyde, "Ioues lat hym neuere thryue,
That doth yow harm, and brynge hym soone of lyue,
And yeue me sorwe but he shal it rewe,
If that I may, and alle folk be trewe." 1610

"Tel thow thi Neces cas," quod Deiphebus
To Pandarus, "for thow kanst best it telle."
"My lordes and my ladyes, it stant thus:
What sholde I lenger," quod he, "do yow dwelle?"
He rong hem out a proces lik a belle 1615
Up-on hire foo, that highte Poliphete,
So heynous that men myghte on it spete.

Answerde of this eche werse of hem than other,
And Poliphete they gonnen thus to warien:
"Anhonged be swich oon, were he my brother,
And so he shal, for it ne may nought varien." 1620
What shold I lenger in this tale tarien?
Pleynliche alle at ones they hire highten
To ben hire help in al that euere they myghten.

Spak than Eleyne and seyde, "Pandarus, 1625
Woot ought my lord my brother this matere,
I meene Ector? or woot it Troilus?"
He seyde, "ye, but wole ye now me here?
Me thynketh this, sith that Troilus is here,
It were good, if that ye wolde assente, 1630
She tolde hire self hym al this er she wente.

"ffor he wol haue the more hir grief at herte,
By-cause, lo, that she a lady is,
And, by youre leue, I wol but in right sterte
And do yow wyte, and that anon, i-wys, 1635
If that he slepe, or wol ought here of this."
And in he lepte, and seyde hym in his ere,
"God haue thi soule, i-brought haue I thi beere!"

To smylen of this gan tho Troilus,
And Pandarus, withouten rekenyng, 1640
Out wente anon to Eleyne and Deiphebus,
And seyde hem, "so ther be no taryng,
Ne moore prees, he wol wel that ye bryng
Criseyda, my lady, that is here,
And as he may enduren, he wol here. 1645

"But wel ye woot, the chaumbre is but lite,
 And fewe folk may lightly make it warme;
 Now loketh ye — for I wol haue no wite,
 To brynge in prees that myghte don hym harme,
 Or hym disesen, for my bettre arme — 1650
 Wher it be bet she bide til eft-sonys?
 Now loketh ye, that knowen what to doon is.

"I sey for me, best is, as I kan knowe,
 That no wight in ne wente but ye tweye,
 But it were I, for I kan in a throwe 1655
 Reherce hire cas vnlik that she kan seye;
 And after this she may hym ones preye
 To ben good lord, in short, and take hire leue;
 This may nought muchel of his ese hym reue-

"And ek for she is straunge, he wol forbere 1660
 His ese which that hym thar nought for yow;
 Ek oother thing that toucheth nought to here
 He wol yow telle—I woot it wel, right now —
 That secret is, and for the townes prow."
 And they that nothyng knewe of his entente, 1665
 With-outen more, to Troilus in they wente.

Eleyne in al hire goodly, softe wyse
 Gan hym salue, wommanly to pleye,
 And seyde, "I-wys, ye moste algate arise;
 Now, faire brother, beth al hool, I preye." 1670
 And gan hire arm right ouer his shulder leye,
 And hym with al hire wit to reconforte;
 As she best koude, she gan hym to disporte.

So after this quod she, "we yow biseke,
 My deere brother, Deiphebus and I, 1675
 ffor loue of god, and so doth Pandare eke,
 To ben good lord and frend right hertely
 Unto Criseyde, which that certeynly
 Receyueth wrong, as woot weel here Pandare,
 That kan hire cas wel bet than I declare." 1680

This Pandarus gan newe his tong affile,
 And al hire cas reherce and that anon.
 Whan it was seyde, soone after in a while,
 Quod Troilus. "as sone as I may gon,
 I wol right fayn with al my myght ben oon, 1685

Haue god my trouthe, hire cause to sustene."
 "Good thrift haue ye," quod Eleyne the queene."

Quod Pandarus, "and it youre wille be,
 That she may take hire leue er that she go?"
 "O, elles god forbede it," tho quod he, 1690
 If that she vouche sauf forto do so."
 And with that word quod Troilus, "ye two,
 Deiphebus and my suster lief and deere,
 To yow haue I to speke of o matere,

"To ben auysed by youre reed the bettre." 1695
 And fond, as hap was, at his beddes hede,
 The copie of a tretys and a lettre
 That Ector hadde hym sent to axen rede
 If swych a man was worthi to ben dede —
 Woot I nought who — but in a grisly wise 1700
 He preyede hem anon on it auyse.

Deiphebus gan this lettre for tonfolde
 In earnest greet; so did Eleyne the queene;
 And romyng outward faste it gonne byholde,
 Downward a steire, in-to an herber greene, 1705
 This ilke thing they redden hem bitwene;
 And largely, the mountance of an houre,
 Thei gonne on it to reden and to poure.

Now lat hem rede, and torne we anon
 To Pandarus, that gan ful faste pryde 1710
 That al was wel, and out he gan to gon
 In-to the grete chaumbre, and that in hye,
 And seyde, "god saue al this companye!
 Come, Nece myn, my lady queene Eleyne
 Abideth yow and ek my lordes tweyne. 1715

"Rys, take with yow youre Nece, Antigone,
 Or whom yow list — or no fors, hardly
 The lesse prees the bet — com forth with me,
 And loke that ye thonken humbly
 Hem alle thre, and whan ye may goodly 1720
 Youre tyme se, taketh of hem youre leue,
 Lest we to longe hise restes hym byreeue.",

Al innocent of Pandarus entente,
 Quod tho Criseyde, "go we, vnclere deere."

And arm in arm inward with hym she wente, 1725
 Auysed wel hire wordes and hire cheere;
 And Pandarus in earnestful manere
 Seyde, "We folk, for goddes loue, I preye,
 Stynteth right here, and softely yow pleye.

"Auyseth yow what folk ben here with-inne, 1730
 And in what plit oon is, god hym amende!"
 And inward thus, "ful softely bygynne,
 Nece, I coniure and heighly yow defende,
 On his half which that soule vs alle sende,
 And in the vertue of corones tweyne, 1735
 Sle naught this man that hath for yow this peyne.

"ffy on the deuel! thynk which oon he is,
 And in what plit he lith; com of anon!
 Thynk al swich taried tyde but lost it nys —
 That wol ye bothe seyn whan ye ben oon. 1740
 Secoundely, ther yet deuyneþ noon
 Upon yow two; come of now, if ye konne —
 While folk is blent, lo, al the tyme is wonne.

"In titeryng and pursuyte and delayes
 The folk deuyne at waggyng of a stree; 1745
 And though ye wolde han after mirye dayes,
 Than dar ye naught; and whi? for she and she
 Spak swych a word, thus loked he and he;
 Las tyme i-loste, I dar nought with yow dele;
 Com of, therfore, and bryngeth hym to hele." 1750

But now to yow, ye loueres that ben here,
 Was Troilus nought in a kankedort,
 That lay and myghte whisprynge of hem here,
 And thoughte, "O lord, right now renneth my sort
 ffully to deye or han anon comfort," 1755
 And was the firste tyme he schulde hire preye
 Of loue? O myghty god, what shal he seye?

Explicit secundus liber.

Book III*Incipit prohemium tercii libri*

O blisful light, of which the bemes clere Adorneth al the thridde heuen faire; O sonnes lief, O Ioues doughter deere, Plesance of loue, O goodly debonaire, In gentil hertes ay redy to repaire; O veray cause of heele and of gladnesse, I-heryed be thy myghte and thi goodnesse.	5
In heuene and helle, in erthe and salte see, Is felt thi myght, if that I wel descerne; As man, brid, beste, fissue, herbe, and grene tree The fele in tymes with vapour eterne. God loueth, and to loue wol nought werne, And in this world no lyues creature With-outen loue is worth, or may endure.	10
Ye Ioues first to thilke effectes glade, Thorugh which that thynges lyuen alle and be, Comeueden, and amorous hem made On mortal thyng, and as yow list ay ye Yeue hym in loue ese or aduersitee, And in a thousand formes down hym sente ffor loue in erthe, and whom yow liste he hente.	15 20
Ye fierse Mars apaisen 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 resygne; Ye do hem cortays be, fresshe and benigne; And heighe or lowe, after a wight entendeth, The ioies that he hath, youre myght it sendeth.	25
Ye holden regne and hous in vnitee; Ye sothfast cause of frendshipe ben also; Ye knowe al thilke couered qualitee Of thynges, which that folk on wondren so, Whan they kan nought construe how it may jo She loueth hym, or whi he loueth here, As whi this fissh, and naught that, comth to were.	30 35

Ye folk a lawe han set in vniverse,
 And this knowe I by hem that louers be,
 That who-so stryueth with yow hath the werse.
 Now lady bryght, for thi benignite,
 At reuerence of hem that seruen the, 40
 Whos clerik I am, so techeth me deuyse
 Som ioie of that is felt in thi seruyse.

Ye in my naked herte sentement
 In-hielde, and do me shewe of thy swetnesse.
 Caliope, thi vois be now present, 45
 ffor now is nede: sestow nought my destresse,
 How I mot telle a-non right the gladnesse
 Of Troilus, to Venus herynge?
 To which gladnesse who nede hath god hym brynge!

Explicit prohemium tercii libri

Incipit liber tercius

Lay al this mene while Troilus, 50
 Recordyng his lesson in this manere:
 "Mafay," thoughte he, "thus wol I sey and thus;
 Thus wol I pleyne vn-to my lady dere;
 That word is good, and this shal be my cheere;
 This nyl I nought foryeten in no wise." 55
 God leue hym werken as he kan deuyse.

And lord, so that his herte gan to quappe,
 Heryng hire come, and shorte forto sike;
 And Pandarus that ledde hire by the lappe,
 Com ner and gan in at the curtyn pike, 60
 And seyde, "god do boot on alle syke!
 Se who is here yow comen to visite;
 Lo, here is she that is youre deth to wite."

Ther-with it semed as he wepte almoste.
 "Ha, a," quod Troilus so reufully, 65
 "Wher me be wo, O myghty god, thow wooste;
 Who is al ther? I se nought trewely."
 "Sire," quod Criseyde, "it is Pandare and I."
 "Ye, swete herte? allas, I may nought rise,
 To knele and do yow honour in som wyse"; 70

And dressed hym vpward, and she right tho
 Gan bothe hire hondes softe vpon hym leye,
 "O, for the loue of god, do ye nought so
 To me," quod she, "I! what is this to seye?
 Sire, comen am I to yow for causes tweye: 75
 ffirst, yow to thonke, and of youre lordshipe eke
 Continuance I wolde yow biseke."

This Troilus that herde his lady preye
 Of lordshipe hym, wax neither quyk ne dede,
 Ne myghte o word for shame to it seye, 80
 Al-though men sholde smyten of his hede;
 But lord, so he wex sodeynliche rede,
 And sire, his lessoun that he wende konne
 To preyen hire is thorough his wit i-ronne.

Criseyde al this aspied wel ynough, 85
 ffor she was wis and loued hym neuere the lasse,
 Al ner he malapert, or made it tough,
 Or was to bold to synge a fool a masse;
 But whan his shame gan somewhat to passe,
 His resons, as I may my rymes holde, 90
 I wol yow telle as techen bokes olde.

In chaunged vois, right for his verray drede,
 Which vois ek quook, and therto his manere
 Goodly abaist, and now his hewes rede,
 Now pale, vnto Criseyde, his lady dere, 95
 With look down cast and humble i-yolden chere,
 Lo, the alderfirste word that hym asterte
 Was twyes, "mercy, mercy, swete herte."

And stynte a while, and whan he myghte out brynge,
 The nexte word was, "god woot, for I haue, 100
 As ferforthly as I haue had konnyng,
 Ben youre al, god so my soule saue,
 And shal, til that I, woful wight, be graue;
 And though I dar ne kan vnto yow pleyne,
 I-wis, I suffre nought the lasse peyne. 105

"Thus mucche as now, O wommanliche wif,
 I may out brynge, and if this yow displese,
 That shal I wreke vp-on myn owen lif
 Right soone, I trowe, and do youre herte an ese,
 If with my deth youre wreththe may apese. 110

But syn that ye han herd me somewhat seye
Now recche I neuere now soone that I deye.

Ther-with his manly sorwe to biholde,
It myghte han made an herte of stoon to rewe,
And Pandare wep as he to water wolde, 115
And poked euere his Nece new and newe,
And seyde, "wo bygon ben hertes trewe;
ffor loue of god, make of this thinge an ende,
Or sle vs both at ones, er ye wende."

"I, what?" quod she, "by god and by my trouthe,
I not nat what ye wilne that I seye." 120

"I, what?" quod he, "that ye han on hym routhe,
ffor goddes loue, and doth him nought to deye."

"Now thanne thus," quod she, "I wolde hym preye
To telle me the fyn of his entente; 125
yet wist I neuere wel what that he mente."

"What that I mene, O swete herte deere?"
Quod Troilus, "O goodly fresshe free,
That with the stremes of youre eyen cleere
Ye wolde som-tyme frendly on me see, 130
And thanne agreeen that I may ben he,
With-ouen braunche of vice on any wise,
In trouthe alwey to don yow my seruise,

"As to my lady right and chief resorte,
With al my wit and al my diligence; 135
And I to han, right as yow list, comferte,
Under yowre yerde egal to myn offence,
As deth, if that I breke youre defence;
And that ye deigne me so mucche honoure
Me to comanden aught in any houre; 140

"And I to ben youre verray, humble, trewe,
Secret, and in myn paynes pacient,
And euere mo desiren fresshly newe
To serue and ben ay ylike diligent, 145
And with good herte al holly youre talent
Receyuen wel, how sore that me smerte —
Lo, this mene I, myn owen swete herte."

Quod Pandarus, "lo, here an hard requeste,
And resonable, a lady forto werne!

Now Nece myn, by natal Ioues feste, 150
 Were I a god ye sholden sterue as yerne,
 That heren wel this man wol no thing yerne
 But youre honour, and sen hym al-most sterue,
 And ben so loth to suffren hym yow serue."

With that she gan hire eyen on hym caste 155
 fful esily and ful debonairly,
 Auysyng hire, and hied nought to faste
 With neuere a word but seyde hym softly,
 "Myn honour sauf, I wol wel trewly,
 And in swich forme as he gan now deuuse, 160
 Receyuen hym fully to my seruyse,

"Bysechyng hym for goddes loue, that he
 Wolde in honour of trouthe and gentillesse,
 As I wel mene, ek menen wel to me,
 And myn honour with wit and bisynesse 165
 Ay kepe, and if I may don hym gladnesse,
 ffrom hennes-forth, i-wys, I nyl nought feyne.
 Now beth al hool, no lenger ye ne pleyne.

"But natheles, this warne I yow," quod she,
 "A kynges sone al-though ye be, ywys, 170
 Ye shal namore han souereignete
 Of me in loue than right in that cas is;
 Ny nyl forbere, if that ye don amys,
 To wratthe yow, and whil that ye me serue,
 Chericen yow right after ye disserue. 175

"And shortly, deere herte and al my knyght,
 Beth glad and draweth yow to lustinesse,
 And I shal trewely with al my myght
 Youre bittre tornen al in-to swetenesse;
 If I be she that may yow do gladnesse, 180
 ffor euery wo ye shal recouere a blisse."
 And hym in armes took and gan hym kisse.

ffil Pandarus on knees and vp his eyen
 To heuen threw and held hise hondes highe,
 "Immortal god," quod he, "that mayst nought deyen, 185
 Cupide I mene, of this mayst glorifie;
 And Venus, thow mayst maken melodie;
 With-outen hond me semeth that in towne
 ffor this merueille ich here ech belle sowne.

"But ho, namore as now of this matere; 190
 ffor whi this folk wol comen vp anon,
 That han the lettre red — lo, I hem here;
 But I coniure the, Criseyde, and oon,
 And two, thow Troilus, whan thow mayst goon,
 That at myn hous ye ben at my warnyng, 195
 ffor I ful well shal shape youre comyng;

"And eseth there youre hertes right ynough;
 And lat se which of yow shal bere the belle
 To speke of loue aright," — therwith he lough —
 "ffor ther haue ye a leiser forto telle." 200
 Quod Troilus, "how longe shalle I dwelle,
 Er this be don?" Quod he, "whan thow mayst ryse,
 This thyng shal be right as I yow deuyse."

With that Eleyne and also Deiphebus
 Tho comen vpward, right at the steires ende; 205
 And lord, so thanne gan gronen Troilus,
 His brother and his suster forto blende.
 Quod Pandarus, "it tyme is that we wende;
 Tak, Nece myn, youre leue at alle thre,
 And lat hem speke and cometh forth with me." 210

She took hire leue at hem ful thriftily,
 As she wel koude, and they hire reuerence
 Unto the fulle diden hardyly,
 And wonder wel speken in hire absence
 Of hire in preysing of hire excellence — 215
 Hire gouernaunce, hire wit, and hire manere
 Comendeden, it ioie was to here.

Now lat hire wende vnto hire owen place,
 And torne we to Troilus ayein,
 That gan ful lightly of the lettre pace, 220
 That Deiphebus hadde in the gardyn seyn;
 And of Eleyne and hym he wolde feyn
 Deliuered ben, and seyde that hym leste
 To slepe and after tales haue reste.

Eleyne hym kiste and took hire leue blyue, 225
 Deiphebus ek, and hom wente euery wight;
 And Pandarus, as faste as he may dryue,
 To Troilus tho com as lyne right;

And on a paillet al that glade nyght
 By Troilus he lay with mery chere 230
 To tale, and wel was hem they were yfeere.

Whan euery wight was voided but they two,
 And alle the dores weren faste yshette,
 To telle in short with-uten wordes mo,
 This Pandarus with-uten any lette 235
 Up roos and on his beddes syde hym sette,
 And gan to speken in a sobre wyse
 To Troilus, as I shal yow deuyse.

"Myn alderleuest lord and brother deere,
 God woot, and thow, that it sat me so soore, 240
 Whan I the saugh so langwisshyng to-yere
 ffor loue, of which thi wo wax alwey moore,
 That I, with al my myght and al my loore
 Haue euere sithen don my bisynesse
 To brynge the to ioye out of distresse; 245

"And haue it brought to swich plit as thow wooste,
 So that thorough me thow stondest now in weye
 To faren wel — I sey it for no boste,
 And wostow whi? for shame it is to seye: 250
 ffor =e haue I bigonne a gamen pleye
 Which that I neuere do shal eft for other,
 Al-though he were a thousand fold my brother.

"That is to seye, for the am I bicomen,
 Bitwixen game and ernest, swich a meene
 As maken wommen vn-to men to comen — 255
 Al sey I nought, thow wost wel what I meene:
 ffor the haue I my Nece, of vices cleene,
 So fully maad thi gentillesse triste,
 That al shal ben right as thi seluen liste.

"But god, that al woot, take I to witnesse, 260
 That neuere I this for coueitise wroughte,
 But oonly for tabregge that distresse,
 ffor which wel neigh thow deidest, as me thoughte.
 But goode brother, do now as the oughte,
 ffor goddes loue, and kepe hire out of blame, 265
 Syn thow art wys, and saue alwey hire name.

"ffor wel thow woost, the name as yet of here
 Among the peeple, as who seyth, halwed is;
 ffor that man is vnborne, I dar wel swere,
 That euere wiste that she dide amys. 270
 But wo is me that I, that cause al this,
 May thynken that she is my Nece deere,
 And I hire em and traitour ek y-feere.

"And were it wist that I, thorough myn engyn,
 Hadde in my Nece yput this fantasie, 275
 To doon thi lust and holly to ben thyn,
 Whi, al the world vpon it wolde crie,
 And seyn that I the werste trecherie
 Dide in this cas that euere was bigonne,
 And she forlost, and thow right nought y-wonne. 280

"Wher-fore, er I wol ferther gon a pas,
 The preye ich eft, although thow shuldest deye,
 That priuete go with vs in this cas —
 That is to seyn, that thow vs neuere wreye;
 And be nought wroth though I the ofte preye 285
 To holden secree swich an heigh matere,
 ffor skilfull is, thow woost wel, my praier.

"And think what wo ther hath bitid er this,
 ffor makyng of auantes, as men rede;
 And what meschaunce in this world yet ther is, 290
 ffro day to day, right for that wikked dede;
 ffor which these wise clerkes that ben dede
 Han euere yet prouered to vs yonge
 That 'firste vertue is to kepe tonge.'

"And nere it that I wilne as now tabregge 295
 Diffusioun of speche, I koude al-moost
 A thousand olde stories the allegge
 Of wommen lost thorough fals and foles bost;
 Prouerbes kanst thi self inowe and woost
 Ayeins that vice for to ben a labbe, 300
 Al seyde men soth as often as thei gabbe.

"O tonge, allas, so often here byforne
 Hath mad ful many a lady bright of hewe
 Seyd, 'weilaway, the day that I was borne!
 And many a maydes sorwe forto newe; 305
 And, for the more part, al is vntrewe

That men of yelp, and it were brought to preue —
Of kynde non auauntour is to leue.

"Auauntour and a lyere, al is on;
As thus: I pose a womman graunte me 310
Hire loue and seith that other wol she non,
And I am sworn to holden it secree,
And after I go telle it two or thre —
I-wis, I am auauntour at the leeste,
And lyere, for I breke my biheste. 315

"Now loke thanne if they be nought to blame,
Swich manere folk — what shal I klepe hem, what? —
That hem auaunte of wommen, and by name,
That neuere yet bihyghte hem this ne that, 320
Ne knewe hem more than myn olde hat.
No wonder is, so god me sende hele,
Though wommen dreden with vs men to dele.

"I sey nought this for no mistrust of yow,
Ne for no wise men, but for foles nyce,
And for the harm that in the werld in now, 325
As wel for folie ofte as for malice;
ffor wel woot I in wise folk that vice
No womman drat, if she be wel auised;
ffor wyse ben by foles harm chastised.

"But now to Purpos, leue brother deere, 330
Haue al this thyng that I haue seyde in mynde,
And kepe the clos and be now of good cheere,
ffor at thi day thow shalt me trewe fynde.
I shal thi proces set in swych a kynde,
And god to-forn, that it shal the suffise, 335
ffor it shal be right as thow wolt deuuse.

"ffor wel I woot, thow menest wel, parde;
Ther-fore I dar this fully vndertake.
Thow woost ek what thi lady graunted the,
And day is set, the chartres vp to make. 340
Haue now good nyght, I may no lenger wake;
And bid for me syn thow art now in blysse,
That god me sende deth or soone lisse."

Who myghte tellen half the ioie or feste
Which that the soule of Troilus tho felte, 345

Heryng theeffect of Pandarus byheste?
 His olde wo, that made his herte swelte,
 Gan tho for ioie wasten and to-melte,
 And al the richesse of hise sikes sore
 At ones fledde, he felte of hem namore. 350

But right so as thise holtes and thise hayis,
 That han in wynter dede ben and dreye,
 Reuesten hem in grene whan that May is,
 Whan euery lusty liketh best to pleye,
 Right in that selue wise, soth to seye, 355
 Wax sodeynliche his herte ful of ioie,
 That gladder was ther neuere man in Troie.

And gan his look on Pandarus vp caste
 fful sobrelly and frendly forto se,
 And seyde, "frend, in Aperil the laste — 360
 As wel thow woost if it remembre the —
 How neigh the deth for wo thow fownde me,
 And how thow dedest al thi bisynesse
 To knowe of me the cause of my destresse.

"Thow woost how longe ich it forbar to seye 365
 To the that art the man that I best triste;
 And peril non was it to the bywreye,
 That wist I wel; but telle me, if the liste,
 Sith I so loth was that thi self it wiste,
 How dorst I mo tellen of this matere, 370
 That quake now and no wight may vs here?

"But natheles, by that god I the swere,
 That as hym list may al this world gouerne —
 And if I lye, Achilles with his spere
 Myn herte cleue, al were my lif eterne, 375
 As I am mortal, if I late or yerne
 Wolde it be-wreye, or dorst, or sholde konne,
 ffor al the good that god made vnder sonne —

"That rather dey I wolde and determyne,
 As thynketh me, now stokked in prisoun, 380
 In wrecchidnesse, in filthe, and in vermyne,
 Caytif to cruel kyng Agamenoun;
 And this in all the temples of this town,
 Up-on the goddes alle, I wol the swere
 To-morwe day, if that it liketh the here. 385

"And that thow hast so mucche i-do for me
 That I ne may it neuere more disserue,
 This know I wel, al myghte I now for the
 A thousand tymes on a morwe sterue;
 I kan namore but that I wol the serue 390
 Right as thi sclawe, whider so thow wende,
 ffor euere more vn-to my lyues ende.

"But here, with al myn herte, I the biseche,
 That neuere in me thow deme swich folie
 As I shal seyn: me thoughte by thi speche 395
 That this, which thow me dost for compaignie,
 I sholde wene it were a bauderye —
 I am nought wood, al if I lewed be;
 It is nought so, that woot I wel, parde.

"But he that gooth for gold or for richesse 400
 On swich message, calle hym what the liste;
 And this that thow doost, calle it gentillesse,
 Compassioun, and felawship, and triste;
 Departe it so, for wyde wher is wiste
 How that ther is diuersite requered 405
 Bytwixen thynges lik, as I haue lered.

"And that thow knowe I thynke nought, ne wene,
 That this seruise a shame be or iape,
 I haue my faire suster, Polixene,
 Cassandre, Eleyne, or any of the frape; 410
 Be she neuere so faire or wel y-shape,
 Tel me which thow wilt of euerychone,
 To han for thyn, and lat me thanne allone.

"But sith thow hast i-don me this seruise,
 My lif to saue, and for non hope of mede, 415
 So, for the loue of god, this grete emprise
 Perfourme it out, for now is moste nede;
 ffor heigh and lough, with-owten any drede,
 I wol alwey thyn hestes alle kepe;
 Haue now good nyght, and lat vs bothe slepe." 420

Thus held hym eche of other wel apayed,
 That al the world ne myghte it bet amende;
 And on the morwe, whan they were arayed,
 Eche to his owen nedes gan entende.

But Troilus, though as the fire he brende
ffor sharp desire of hope and of plesaunce,
He nought forgat his wise gouernaunce. 425

But in hym self with manhod gan restreyne
Ech racle dede and ech vnbridled cheere,
That alle tho that lyuen, soth to seyne, 430
Ne sholde han wist, by word or by manere,
What that he mente as touchyng this matere:
ffrom euery wight as fer as is the cloude
He was, so wel dissimulen he koude.

And al the while which that I yow deuyse, 435
This was his lif: with all his fulle myght
By day he was in Martes heigh seruyse —
This is to seyn in armes as a knyght;
And for the more part, the longe nyght
He lay and thoughte how that he myghte serue 440
His lady best, hire think forto disserue.

Nil I naught swere, al-though he lay ful softe,
That in his thought he nas somewhat disesed,
Ne that he torned on his pilwes ofte, 445
And wold of that hym missed han ben sesed.
But in swich cas men ben nought alwey plesed,
ffor aught I woot, namore than was he;
That kan I deme of possibilitee.

But certeyn is, to purpos for to go,
That in this while, as writen is in geeste, 450
He say his lady som tyme and also
She with hym spak whan that she dorst or leste;
And by hire both auys as was the beste
Apoynteden full warly in this nede,
So as they durste, how they wolde procede. 455

But it was spoken in so short a wise,
In swich a-wait alwey and in swich feere,
Lest any wight deuynen or deuyse
Wold of hem two or to it laye an ere,
That al this world so leef to hem ne were 460
As that Cupide wolde hem grace sende
To maken of hire speche aright an ende.

But thilke litel that they spake or wroughte,

Hise wise goost took ay of al swych heede,
 It semed hire he wiste what she thoughte 465
 With-ouen word, so that it was no nede
 To bidde hym ought to doon or ought for-beede;
 ffor which hir thought that loue, al come it late,
 Of alle ioie hadde opned hire the yate.

And shortly of this proces forto pace, 470
 So wel his werk and wordes he bisette.
 That he so ful stood in his lady grace,
 That twenty thousand tymes, er she lette,
 She thonked god that euere she with hym mette;
 So koude he hym gouerne in swich seruyse, 475
 That al the world ne myght it bet deuyse.

ffor whi she fond hym so discret in al,
 So secret, and of swich obeisaunce,
 That wel she felte he was to hire a wal
 Of stiel and sheld from euery displesaunce; 480
 That to ben in his goode gouernaunce,
 So wis he was, she was namore afered —
 I mene as fer as oughte ben requered.

And Pandarus, to quike alwey the fire,
 Was euere y-like prest and diligent; 485
 To ese his frend was set al his desire.
 He shof ay on, he to and fro was sent,
 He lettres bar whan Troilus was absent,
 That neuere man, as in his frendes nede,
 Ne bar hym bet than he with-ouen drede. 490

But now, parauntour, som man wayten wolde
 That euery word, or soonde, or look, or cheere
 Of Troilus that I rehercen sholde,
 In al this while vnto his lady deere:
 I trowe it were a long thyng forto here, 495
 Or of what wight that stant in swich disioynte,
 Hise wordes alle, or euery look, to poynte.

ffor sothe I haue naught herd it don er this
 In story non, ne no man here, I wene;
 And though I wolde, I koude nought, y-wys; 500
 ffor ther was som epistel hem bitwene,
 That wolde, as seyth myn auctour, wel contene
 Neigh half this book, of which hym liste nought write;

How sholde I thanne a lyne of it endite?

But to the grete effect: than sey I thus, 505
 That stondyng in concord and in quiete
 Thise ilke two, Criseyde and Troilus,
 As I haue told, and in this tyme swete —
 Saeu only often myghte they nought mete,
 Ne leiser haue hire speches to fulfelle — 510
 That it bifel right as I shal yow telle,

That Pandarus, that euere dide his myght
 Right for the fyn that I shal speke of here,
 As forto bryngen to his hows som nyght
 His faire Nece and Troilus yfere, 515
 Wher-as at leiser al this heighe matere,
 Touchyng here loue, were at the fulle vp-bounde,
 Hadde out of doute a tyme to it founde.

ffor he with gret deliberacioun
 Hadde euery thyng that herto myght auaille 520
 fforncast and put in execucioun,
 And neither left for cost ne for trauaille;
 Come if hem list, hem sholde no thyng faille;
 And forto ben in ought aspied there,
 That wiste he wel an impossible were. 525

Dredeles it clere was in the wynde
 Of euery pie and euery lette-game;
 Now al is wel, for al the world is blynde
 In this matere, bothe fremed and tame. 530
 This tymbur is al redy vp to frame;
 Us lakketh nought but that we witen wolde
 A certeyn houre in which she comen sholde.

And Troilus, that al this purueiaunce
 Knew at the fulle and waited on it ay,
 Hadde here vpon ek mad gret ordinaunce, 535
 And found his cause, and therto al the aray,
 If that he were missed, nyght or day,
 Ther while he was aboute this seruyse,
 That he was gon to don his sacrificise,

And moste at swich a temple allone wake, 540
 Answered of Apollo forto be,
 And first to sen the holy laurer quake

Er that Apollo spak out of the tree
 To telle hym next whan Grekes sholde flee —
 And forthy lette hym no man, god forbede,
 But prey Apollo helpen in this nede. 545

Now is ther litel more forto doone,
 But Pandare vp and, shortly forto seyne,
 Right sone vp-on the chaungynge of the moone,
 Whan lightles is the world a nyght or tweyne, 550
 And that the wolken shop hym forto reyne,
 He streght o morwe vn-to his Nece wente —
 Ye han wel herd the fyn of his entente.

Whan he was come, he gan anon to pleye
 As he was wont, and of hym self to iape; 555
 And finaly he swor and gan hire seyde,
 By this and that, she sholde hym nought escape,
 Ne lenger don hym after hire to cape;
 But certeynly she moste, by hire leue,
 Come soupen in his hous with hym at eue. 560

At which she lough and gan hire faste excuse,
 And seyde, "it reyneth, lo, how sholde I gon?"
 "Lat be," quod he, "ne stant nought thus to muse;
 This moot be don, ye shal be ther anon."
 So at the laste herof they fille aton, 565
 Or elles, softe he swor hire in hire ere,
 He nolde neuere comen ther she were.

Soone after this she to hym gan to rowne,
 And axed hym if Troilus were there.
 He swor hire nay, for he was out of towne, 570
 And seyde, "Nece, I pose that he were,
 Yow thurste neuere han the more fere;
 ffor rather than men myghte hym ther asprie,
 Me were leuere a thousand fold to dye."

Nought list myn auctour fully to declare 575
 What that she thoughte whan he seyde so,
 That Troilus was out of towne y-fare,
 As if he seyde ther-of soth or no;
 But that, with-owten await, with hym to go
 She graunted hym, sith he hire that bisoughte, 580
 And as his Nece obeyed as hire oughte.

But natheles yet gan she hym biseche,
 Al-though with hym to gon it was no fere,
 ffor to ben war of goosissh poeples speche,
 That dremen thynges which that neuere were, 585
 And wel auyse hym whom he broughte there;
 And seyde hym, "Em, syn I most on yow triste,
 Loke al be wel and do now as yow liste."

He swor hire yes, by stokkes and by stones,
 And by the goddes that in heuene dwelle, 590
 Or elles were hym leuere, soule and bones,
 With Pluto kyng as depe ben in helle
 As Tantalus — what sholde I more telle?
 Whan al was wel, he roos and took his leue;
 And she to soper com whan it was eue. 595

With a certein of hire owen men,
 And with hire faire nece Antigone,
 And other of hire wommen nyne or ten;
 But who was glad now, who, as trowe ye,
 But Troilus, that stood and myght it se 600
 Thorough-out a litel wyndow in a stewe,
 Ther he bishet syn mydnyght was in mewe,

Unwist of euery wight but of Pandare?
 But to the point: now whan that she was come,
 With alle ioie and alle frendes fare, 605
 Hire Em anon in armes hath hire nome,
 And after to the soper, alle and some,
 Whan tyme was, ful softe they hem sette —
 God woot, ther was no deynte forto fette.

And after soper gonnen they to rise, 610
 At ese wel, with hertes fresshe and glade,
 And wel was hym that koude best deuyse
 To liken hire or that hire laughen made:
 He song; she pleyde; he tolde tale of Wade.
 But at the laste, as euery thyng hath ende, 615
 She took hire leue and nedes wolde wende.

But O fortune, executrice of wyerdes,
 O influences of these heuenes hye,
 Soth is that vnder god ye ben oure hierdes,
 Though to vs bestes ben the causes wrie. 620
 This mene I now, for she gan homward hye,

But execut was al bisyde hire leue
The goddes wil, for which she moste bleue.

The bente moone with hire hornes pale,
Saturne, and loue in Cancro ioyned were, 625
That swych a reyn from heuen gan auale,
That euery maner womman that was there
Hadde of that smoky reyn a verray feere;
At which Pandare tho lough and seyde thenne,
"Now were it tyme a lady to gon henne!" 630

"But goode Nece, if I myghte euere plese
Yow any thyng, than prey ich yow," quod he,
"To don myn herte as now so grete an ese
As forto dwelle here al this nyght with me,
ffor whi this is youre owen hous, parde. 635
ffor by my trouthe, I sey it nought a-game,
To wende as now, it were to me a shame."

Criseyde, which that koude as muche good
As half a world, took hede of his preiere;
And syn it ron and al was on a flod, 640
She thoughte, "as good chep may I dwellen here,
And graunte it gladly with a frendes chere,
And haue a thonk, as grucche and thanne a-bide —
ffor hom to gon, it may nought wel bitide."

"I wol," quod she, "myn vncler lief and deere, 645
Syn 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."
"I-wys, graunt mercy, Nece," quod he tho,
"Were it a game or no, soth forto telle, 650
Now am I glad, syn that yow list to dwelle."

Thus al is wel; but tho bigan aright
The newe ioie and al the feste agayn;
But Pandarus, if goodly hadde he myght,
He wolde han hyed hire to bedde fayn, 655
And seyde, "lord, this is an huge rayn!
This were a weder for to slepen inne —
And that I rede vs soone to bygynne.

"And Nece, woot ye wher I wol yow leye,
ffor that we shul nat ligen far a-sonder, 660

And for ye neither shullen, dar I seye,
 Heren noyse of reynes nor of thonder?
 By god, right in my litel closet yonder.
 And I wol in that outer hous allone
 Be wardein of youre wommen euerichone. 665

"And in this myddel chambre that ye se
 Shal youre wommen slepen wel and softe;
 And there I seyde shal youre seluen be;
 And if ye liggen wel to-nyght, com ofte,
 And careth nought what weder is a-lofte. 670
 The wyn anon, and whan so that yow leste,
 So go we slepe, I trowe it be the beste."

Ther nys no more, but here-after soone,
 The voide dronke, and trauers drawe anon,
 Gan euery wight that hadde nought to done 675
 More in the place out of the chaumbre gon;
 And euere mo so sterneliche it ron,
 And blew ther-with so wondirliche loude,
 That wel neigh no man heren other koude.

Tho Pandarus, hire Em, right as hym oughte, 680
 With wommen swiche as were hire most aboute,
 fful glad vnto hire beddes syde hire broughte,
 And took his leue and gan ful lowe loute,
 And seyde, "here at this closet dore with-oute,
 Right ouere-thwart, youre wommen liggen alle, 685
 That whom yow list of hem ye may hire calle."

So whan that she was in the closet leyde,
 And alle hire wommen forth by ordinaunce
 Abedde weren, ther as I haue seyde,
 Ther was nomore to skippen nor to traunce, 690
 But boden go to bedde, with meschaunce,
 If any wight was steryng any where,
 And lat hem slepen that a-bedde were.

But Pandarus that wel koude ech a deel 695
 The olde daunce and euery point ther-inne,
 Whan that he sey that alle thyng was wel,
 He thought he wolde vp-on his werk bigynne,
 And gan the stuwe doore al softe vnpynne,
 And stille as stoon, with-outen lenger lette,
 By Troilus a-down right he hym sette. 700

And shortly to the point right forto gon,
 Of al this werk he tolde hym word and ende,
 And seyde, "make the redy right anon,
 ffor thow shalt in-to heuene blisse wende."
 "Now blisful Venus, thow me grace sende," 705
 Quod Troilus, "for neuere yet no nede
 Hadde ich er now, ne haluendel the drede."

Quod Pandarus, "ne drede the neuere a deel,
 ffor it shal be right as thow wolt desire;
 So thryue I, this nyght shal I make it weel, 710
 Or casten al the gruwel in the fire."
 "Yet, blisful Venus, this nyght thow me enspire,"
 Quod Troilus, "as wys as I the serue,
 And euere bet and bet shal til I sterue."

"And if ich hadde, O Venus ful of myrthe, 715
 Aspectes badde of Mars or of Saturne,
 Or thow combust or let were in my birthe,
 Thy fader prey al thilke harm disturne
 Of grace and that I glad ayein may turne,
 ffor loue of hym thow louedest in the shawe — 720
 I meene Adoun, that with the boor was slawe."

"O Ioue ek, for the loue of faire Europe,
 The which in forme of bole away thow fette,
 Now help; O Mars, thow with thi bloody cope,
 ffor loue of Cipres, thow me nought ne lette; 725
 O Phebus, thynk whan Dane hire seluen shette
 Under the bark and laurer wax for drede,
 Yet for hire loue, O help now at this nede."

"Mercurie, for the loue of Hierse eke,
 ffor which Pallas was with Aglawros wroth, 730
 Now helpe, and ek Diane, I the biseke,
 That this viage be nought to the looth;
 O fatal sustren, which er any cloth
 Me shapen was, my destine me sponne,
 So helpeth to this werk that is bygonne." 735

Quod Pandarus, "thow wrecched mouses herte,
 Artow agast so that she wol the bite?
 Why, don this furred cloke vp-on thy sherte,
 And folwe me, for I wol haue the wite;

But bide, and lat me gon biforn a lite," 740
 And with that word he gan vndon a trappe,
 And Troilus he brought in by the lappe.

The sterne wynd so loude gan to route,
 That no wight oother noise myghte heere;
 And they that layen at the dore with-oute 745
 fful sikerly they slepten alle y-fere;
 And Pandarus with a ful sobre cheere
 Goth to the dore anon, with-uten lette,
 Ther as they laye, and softlytly it shette.

And as he com ayeynward pryuely, 750
 His Nece a-wook and axed, "who goth there?"
 "My dere Nece," quod he, "it am I.
 Ne wondreth nought, ne haue of it no fere."
 And ner he com and seyde hire in hire ere,
 "No word, for loue of god, I yow biseche: 755
 Lat no wight rise and heren of oure speche."

"What, which wey be ye comen, benedicite?"
 Quod she, "and how thus vnwist of hem alle?"
 "Here at this secre trappe dore," quod he.
 Quod tho Criseyde, "lat me som wight calle." 760
 "I, god forbede that it sholde falle,"
 Quod Pandarus, "that ye swich folye wrought;
 They myghte demen thyng they neuere er thought.

"It is nought good a slepyng hound to wake,
 Ne yeue a wight a cause to deuyne; 765
 Youre wommen slepen alle, I vndertake,
 So that for hem the hous men myghte myne,
 And slepen wollen til the sonne shyne;
 And whan my tale brought is to an ende,
 Unwist, right as I com, so wol I wende. 770

"Now Nece myn, ye shul wel vnderstonde,"
 Quod he, "so as ye wommen demen alle,
 That forto holde in loue a man in honde,
 And hym hire lief and deere herte calle,
 And maken hym an howue aboue a calle — 775
 I meene, as loue another in this while —
 She doth hire self a shame and hym a gyle.

"Now wherby that I telle yow al this:

Ye woot youre self as wel as any wight
 How that youre loue al fully graunted is 780
 To Troilus, the worthieste knyght,
 Oon of this world, and therto trouthe y-plaint,
 That, but it were on hym alonge, ye nolde
 Hym neuere falsen while ye lyuen sholde.

"Now stant it thus, that sith I fro yow wente, 785
 This Troilus, right platly forto seyn,
 Is thorough a goter by a pryue wente,
 In-to my chaumbre come in al this reyn,
 Unwist of euery manere wight, certeyn,
 Saue of my self, as wisly haue I ioie, 790
 And by that feith I shal Priam of Troie.

"And he is come in swich peyne and distresse
 That, but he be al fully wood by this,
 He sodeynly mot falle in-to woodnesse,
 But if god helpe, and cause whi this is: 795
 He seith hym told is of a frend of his,
 How that ye sholden louen oon that hatte Horaste,
 ffor sorwe of which this nyght shal ben his laste."

Criseyde, which that all this wonder herde,
 Gan sodeynly aboute hire herte colde, 800
 And with a sik she sorwfully answerde,
 "Allas, I wende, who-so tales tolde,
 My deere herte wolde me nought holde
 So lightly fals — alas, conceytes wronge,
 What harm they don! for now lyue I to longe. 805

"Horaste! alas, and falsen Troilus?
 I knowe hym nowt, god helpe me so," quod she,
 "Allas, what wikked spirit tolde hym thus?
 Now certes, Em, to-morwe and I hym se,
 I shal therof as ful excusen me 810
 As euere dide womman, if hym like."
 And with that word she gan ful soore sike.

"O god," quod she, "so worldly selynesse,
 Which clerkes callen fals felicitee,
 I-medled is with many a bitternesse! 815
 fful angwissous than is, god woot," quod she,
 "Condicoun of veyn prosperitee;
 ffor either ioies comen nought yfeere,

Or elles no wight hath hem alwey here.

"O brotel wele of mannes ioie vnstable! 820
 With what wight so thow be or how thow pleye,
 Either he woot that thow, ioie, art muable,
 Or woot it nought, it mot ben oon of tweye.
 Now if he woot it nought, how may he seye
 That he hath verray ioie and selynesse, 825
 That is of ignoraunce ay in derknesse?"

"Now if he woot that ioie is transitorie,
 As euery ioie of worldly thyng mot flee,
 Than euery tyme he that hath in memorie,
 The drede of lesyng maketh hym that he 830
 May in no perfit selynesse be;
 And if to lese his ioie he sette a myte,
 Than semeth it that ioie is worth ful lite.

"Wherfore I wol diffyne in this matere,
 That trewely, for aught I kan espie- 835
 Ther is no verray weele in this world heere.
 But O thow wikked serpent, ialousie,
 Thow mysbyleued, enuyous folie,
 Why hastow Troilus made to me vntriste,
 That neuere yet agylt hym that I wiste?" 840

Quod Pandarus, "thus fallen is this cas."
 "Why, Uncle myn," quod she, "who tolde hym this?
 Why doth my deere herte thus, allas?"
 "Ye woot, ye, Nece myn," quod he, "what is. 845
 I hope al shal be wel that is amys;
 ffor ye may quenche al this if that yow leste —
 And doth right so, for I holde it the beste."

"So shal I do to-morwe, ywys," quod she,
 "And god to-forn, so that it shal suffise."
 "To-morwe? allas, that were a faire," quod he; 850
 "Nay, nay, it may nat stonden in this wise.
 ffor, Nece myn, thus writen clerkes wise,
 That peril is with drecchyng in y-drawe —
 Nay, swiche abodes ben nought worth an hawe.

"Nece, alle thyng hath tyme, I dar avowe, 855
 ffor whan a chaumbre a-fire is, or an halle,
 Wel more nede is it sodeynly rescowe

Than to dispute and axe amonges alle
 How this candele in the strawe is falle.
 A, benedicite, for al among that fare
 The harm is don, and fare-wel feldefare! 860

"And Nece myn, ne take it naught a-grief:
 If that ye suffre hym al nyght in this wo,
 God help me so, ye hadde hym neuere lief,
 That dar I seyn now ther is but we two. 865
 But wel I woot that ye wol nat do so—
 Ye ben to wys to doon so gret folie,
 To putte his lif al nyght in iupertie."

"Hadde I hym neuere lief? by god, I weene
 Ye hadde neuere thyng so lief," quod she. 870
 "Now, by my thrift," quod he, "that shal be seene;
 ffor syn ye make this ensauple of me,
 If ich al nyght wolde hym in sorwe se,
 ffor al the tresour in the town of Troie,
 I bidde god I neuere mote haue ioie. 875

"Now loke thanne, if ye that ben his loue
 Shul putte his lif al night in iupertie
 ffor thyng of nought, now, by that god aboue,
 Naught oonly this delay comth of folie,
 But of malice, if that I shal naught lie. 880
 What! platly, and ye suffre hym in destresse,
 Ye neyther bounte don ne gentillesse."

Quod tho Criseyde, "wol ye don o thyng,
 And ye ther-with shal stynte al his disese?
 Haue heere and bereth hym this blewe ryng, 885
 ffor ther is no thyng myghte hym bettre plese,
 Saue I my self, ne more his herte a-pese;
 And sey my deere herte that his sorwe
 Is causeles, that shal be sen to-morwe."

"A ryng?" quod he, "ye, haselwodes shaken!
 Ye, Nece myn, that ryng moste han a stoon
 That myghte dede men alyue maken,
 And swich a ryng trowe I that ye haue non:
 Discrecioun out of youre hed is gon,
 That fele I now," quod he, "and that is routhe— 895
 O tyme i-lost, wel maistow corsen slouthe!

"Woot ye not wel that noble and heigh corage
 Ne sorweth nought, ne stynteth ek, for lite?
 But if a fool were in a ialous rage,
 I nolde setten at his sorwe a myte, 900
 But feffe hym with a fewe wordes white
 A-nothir day, whan that I myghte hym fynde;
 But this thyng stant al in another kynde.

"This is so gentil and so tendre of herte,
 That with his deth he wol his sorwes wreke; 905
 ffor trusteth wel, how sore that hym smerte,
 He wol to yow no ialous wordes speke.
 And forthi, Nece, er that his herte breke,
 So speke youre self to hym of this matere —
 ffor with a word ye may his herte stere. 910

"Now haue I told what peril he is inne,
 And his comynge vnwist is to euery wight;
 Ne, parde, harm may ther be non, ne synne —
 I wol my self be with yow al this nyght.
 Ye knowe ek how it is youre owen knyght, 915
 And that bi right ye moste vp-on hym triste —
 And I al prest to fecche hym whan yow liste."

This accident so pitous was to here,
 And ek so like a sooth at prime face,
 And Troilus hire knyght to hir so deere, 920
 His priue commyng and the siker place,
 That though that she did hym as thanne a grace,
 Considered alle thynges as they stoode,
 No wonder is, syn she did al for goode.

Criseyde answerde, "as wisly god at reste 925
 My soule brynge, as me is for hym wo;
 And Em, i-wis, fayn wolde I don the beste,
 If that ich hadde grace to do so.
 But whether that ye dwelle or for hym go,
 I am, til god me bettre mynde sende, 930
 At dulcarnoun, right at my wittes ende."

Quod Pandarus, "yee, Nece, wol ye here?
 Dulcarnoun called is 'flemyng of wrecches.'
 It semeth hard, for wrecches wol nought lere,
 ffor verray slouthe or other wilfull tecches. 935
 This seyde by hem that ben nought worth two fecches;

But ye ben wis, and that we han on honde
Nis neither hard ne skilful to withstonde."

"Than Em," quod she, "doth her-of as yow liste;
But er he come, I wil vp first arise; 940
And, for the loue of god, syn al my triste
Is on yow two, and ye ben bothe wise,
So werketh now in so discret a wise
That I honour may haue and he plesaunce;
ffor I am here al in youre gouernaunce." 945

"That is wel seyd," quod he, "my Nece deere.
Ther good thrift on that wise gentil herte!
But liggeth stille and taketh hym right here —
It nedeth nought no ferther for hym sterte. 950
And ech of yow ese otheres sorwes smerte,
ffor loue of god, and Venus I the herye,
ffor soone hope I we shul ben alle merye."

This Troilus ful soone on knees hym sette
fful sobrelly, right be hyre beddes hede,
And in his beste wyse his lady grette; 955
But lord, so she wex sodeynliche rede!
Ne though men sholde smyten of hire hede,
She kouthe nought a word a-right out brynge
So sodeynly, for his sodeyn comynge.

But Pandarus, that so wel koude feele 960
In euery thyng, to pleye anon bigan,
And seyde, "Nece, se how this lord kan knele:
Now, for youre trouthe, se this gentil man."
And with that word he for a quysshyn ran,
And seyde, "kneleth now, while that yow leste, 965
%ere god youre hertes brynge soone at reste."

Kan I naught seyn, for she bad hym nought rise,
If sorwe it putte out of hire remembraunce,
Or elles that she took it in the wise 970
Of dewete, as for his obseruaunce;
But wel fynde I she dede hym this plesaunce,
That she hym kiste, al-though she siked sore,
And bad hym sitte adown with-outen more.

Quod Pandarus, "now wol ye wel bigynne;
Now doth hym sitte, goode Nece deere, 975

Up-on youre beddes syde al ther with-inne,
 That eche of yow the bet may other heere."
 And with that word he drow hym to the feere,
 And took a light and fond his contenance,
 As forto looke vpon an old romaunce. 980

Criseyde, that was Troilus lady right,
 And clere stood on a grounde of sikernesse,
 Al thoughte she hire seruant and hire knyght
 Ne sholde of right non vntrouthe in hire gesse,
 Yet natheles, considered his distresse, 985
 And that loue is in cause of swich folie,
 Thus to hym spak she of his ialousie:

"Lo, herte myn, as wolde the excellence
 Of loue, ayeins the which that no man may,
 Ne oughte ek goodly, make resistence, 990
 And ek by-cause I felte wel and say
 youre grete trouthe and seruise euery day,
 And that youre herte al myn was, soth to seyne,
 This drof me forto rewe vp-on youre peyne.

"And youre goodnesse haue I founde alwey yit, 995
 Of which, my deere herte and al my knyght,
 I thonke it yow as fer as I haue wit,
 Al kan I nought as mucche as it were right;
 And I emforth my connyng and my might
 Haue, and ay shal, how sore that me smerte, 1000
 Ben to yow trewe and hool with al myn herte;

"And dredeles that shal be founde at preue.
 But herte myn, what al this is to seyne
 Shal wel be told, so that ye nought yow greue,
 Though I to yow right on youre self compleyne; 1005
 ffor therwith mene I fynaly the peyne,
 That halt youre herte and myn in heuynesse,
 ffully to slen and euery wrong redresse.

"My goode myn, noot I for why ne how
 That ialousie, allas, that wikked wyuere, 1010
 Thus causeles is copen in-to yow,
 The harm of which I wolde fayn delyuere.
 Allas, that he, al hool or of hym slyuere,
 Shuld han his refut in so digne a place —
 Ther loue hym sone out of youre herte arace! 1015

"But O thou Ioue, O auctour of nature,
 Is this an honour to thi deyte,
 That folk vngiltif suffren hire iniure,
 And who that giltif is al quyt goth he?
 O, were it lefull forto pleyn on the, 1020
 That vnderued suffrest ialousie,
 Of that I wolde vp-on the pleyne and crie.

"Ek al my wo is this, that folk now vsen
 To seyn right thus: 'ye, ialousie is loue';
 And wolde a busshel venym al excusen, 1025
 ffor that o greyn of loue is on it shoue.
 But that woot heighe god that sit a-boue,
 If it be likkere loue or hate or grame —
 And after that it oughte bere his name.

"But certeyn is, som manere ialousie 1030
 Is excusable more than som, i-wys,
 As whan cause is, and som swich fantasie
 With piete so wel repressed is
 That it vnnethe doth or seyth amys,
 But goodly drynketh vp al his distresse — 1035
 And that excuse I for the gentillesse.

"And som so full of furie is and despit
 That it sourmounteth his repressioun;
 But, herte myn, ye be nat in that plit,
 That thonke I god, for which youre passioun 1040
 I wol nought calle it but illusioun,
 Of habundaunce of loue and besy cure,
 That doth youre herte this disese endure.

"Of which I am right sory but nought wrothe;
 But, for my deuoir and youre hertes reste, 1045
 Wher so yow list, by ordal or by othe,
 By sort, or in what wise so yow leste,
 ffor loue of god lat preue it for the beste;
 And if that I be giltif, do me deye.
 Allas, what myght I more don or seye?" 1050

With that a fewe brighte teris newe
 Owt of hire eighen fille, and thus she seyde:
 "Now god, thou woost, in thought ne dede vntrewe
 To Troilus was neuere yet Criseyde."

With that here heed down in the bed she leyde, 1055
 And with the sheete it wreigh and sighte soore,
 And held hire pees; nought o word spak she more-

But now help god to quenchen al this sorwe:
 So hope I that he shal for he best may;
 ffor I haue seyn of a ful misty morwe 1060
 ffolowen ful ofte a myrie someris day,
 And after wynter foloweth grene May;
 Men sen alday, and reden ek in stories,
 That after sharpe shoures ben victories.

This Troilus, whan he hire wordes herde, 1065
 Haue ye no care, hym liste nought to slepe;
 ffor it thought hym no strokes of a yerde
 To heere or seen Criseyde, his lady, wepe;
 But wel he felt aboute his herte crepe
 ffor eueri tere which that Criseyde asterte, 1070
 The crampe of deth, to streyne hym by the herte.

And in his mynde he gan the tyme acorse
 That he com there, and that he was born;
 ffor now is wikke torned in-to worse,
 And al that labour he hath don by-forn, 1075
 He wende it lost, he thought he nas but lorn.
 "O Pandarus," thoughte he, "allas, thi wile
 Serueth of nought, so weylaway the while."

And therwith-al he heng adown the hede,
 And fil on knees, and sorwfully he sighte; 1080
 What myghte he seyn? he felte he nas but dede,
 ffor wroth was she that sholde hise sorwes lighte.
 But natheles, whan that he speken myghte,
 Than seyde he thus, "god woot that of this game,
 Whan al is wist, than am I nought to blame." 1085

Ther-with the sorwe so his herte shette
 That from his eyen fil ther nought a tere,
 And euery spirit his vigour in knette,
 So they astoned or oppressed were;
 The felyng of his sorwe or of his fere, 1090
 Or of aught elles, fled was out of towne,
 And down he fel al sodeynly a-swowne.

This was no litel sorwe forto se;

But al was hust, and Pandare vp as faste,
 "O Nece, pes, or we be lost," quod he, 1095
 "Beth naught agast"; but certeyn, at the laste,
 ffor this or that, he in-to bed hym caste,
 And seyde, "O thef, is this a mannes herte?"
 And of he rente al to his bare sherte,

And seyde, "Nece, but ye helpe vs now, 1100
 Allas, youre owen Troilus is lorn."
 "I-wis, so wolde I, and I wiste how,
 fful fayn," quod she, "allas, that I was born."
 "Yee, Nece, wol ye pullen out the thorn
 That stiketh in his herte?" quod Pandare, 1105
 "Sey 'al foryeue,' and stynt is al this fare."

"Ye, that to me," quod she, "ful leuere were
 Than al the good the sonne a-boute gooth."
 And therwith-al she swor hym in his ere,
 "I-wys, my deere herte, I am nought wroth, 1110
 Haue here my trouthe," and many an other oth;
 "Now speke to me, for it am I, Criseyde" —
 But al for nought; yit myght he nought a-breyde.

Therwith his pous and paumes of his hondes
 They gan to frote, and wete his temples tweyne; 1115
 And to deliueren hym fro bittre bondes,
 She ofte hym kiste and, shortly forto seyne,
 Hym to reuoken she did al hire peyne.
 So at the laste, he gan his breth to drawe,
 And of his swough sone after that adawe, 1120

And gan bet mynde and reson to hym take,
 But wonder soore he was abayst, i-wis;
 And with a sik, whan he gan bet a-wake,
 He seyde, "O mercy, god, what thyng is this?"
 "Why do ye with youre seluen thus amys?" 1125
 Quod tho Criseyde, "is this a mannes game?
 What, Troilus, wol ye do thus for shame?"

And therwith-al hire arme ouere hym she leyde,
 And al foryaf and ofte tyme hym keste.
 He thonked hire and to hire spak and seyde 1130
 As fil to purpos for his hertes reste;
 And she to that answerde hym as hire leste,
 And with hire goodly wordes hym disporte

She gan, and ofte his sorwes to comforte.

Quod Pandarus, "for aught I kan asprien,
This light nor I ne seruen here of nought;
Light is nought good for sike folkes yen;
But for the loue of god, syn ye ben brought
In thus good plit, lat now no heuy thought
Ben hangyng in the hertes of yow tweye" —
And bar the candel to the chymeneye. 1135
1140

Soone after this, though it no nede were,
Whan she swiche othes as hire leste deuyse
Hadde of hym take, hire thoughte tho no fere,
Ne cause ek non, to bidde hym thennes rise. 1145
Yet lasse thyng than othes may suffise
In many a cas; for euery wyght, I gesse,
That loueth wel meneth but gentilesse.

But in effect she wolde wite anon
Of what man, and ek wheer, and also why,
He ialous was, syn ther was cause non,
And ek the sygne that he took it by,
She badde hym that to telle hire bisily;
Or elles, certeyn, she bar hym on honde,
That this was don of malice, hire to fonde. 1150
1155

Withouten more, shortly forto seyne,
He most obeye unto his lady heste;
And for the lasse harm he moste feyne.
He seyde hire, whan she was at swiche a feste,
She myght on hym han loked at the leste —
Noot I nought what, al deere ynough a rysshe,
As he that nedes most a cause fissue. 1160

And she answerde, "swete, al were it so,
What harm was that, syn I non yvel mene?
ffor, by that god that bought vs bothe two,
In alle thyng is myn entente cleene. 1165
Swiche argumentes ne ben naught worth a beene.
Wol ye the childissh ialous contrefete?
Now were it worthi that ye were y-bete."

Tho Troilus gan sorwfully to sike;
Lest she be wroth hym thoughte his herte deyde,
And seyde, "allas, vp-on my sorwes sike 1170

Haue mercy, swete herte myn, Criseyde.
 And if that in tho wordes that I seyde
 Be any wrong, I wol nomore trespase. 1175
 Doth what yow list, I am al in youre grace."

And she answerde, "of gilt misericorde —
 That is to seyn, that I foryeue al this;
 And euere more on this nyght yow recorde,
 And beth wel war ye do namore amys." 1180
 "Nay, dere herte myn," quod he, "i-wys."
 "And now," quod she, "that I haue don yow smerte,
 ffor-yeue it me, myn owene swete herte."

This Troilus, with blisse of that supprised,
 Putte al in goddes hand, as he that mente 1185
 No thing but wel, and sodeynly auysed,
 He hire in armes faste to hym hente.
 And Pandarus with a ful good entente
 Leyde hym to slepe and seyde, "if ye be wise,
 Swouneth nought now, lest more folk arise." 1190

What myghte or may the sely larke seye,
 Whan that the sperhawk hath it in his foot?
 I kan namore, but of thise ilke tweye —
 To whom this tale sucre be or soot —
 Though that I tarie a yer, som tyme I moot, 1195
 After myn auctour, tellen hire gladnesse,
 As wel as I haue told hire heuynesse.

Criseyde, which that felte hire thus i-take —
 As writen clerkes in hire bokes olde —
 Right as an aspes leef she gan to quake, 1200
 Whan she hym felte hire in his armes folde.
 But Troilus, all hool of cares colde,
 Gan thanken tho the blisful goddes seuene:
 Thus sondry peynes bryngen folk to heuene.

This Troilus in armes gan hire streyne, 1205
 And seyde, "O swete, as euere mot I gon,
 Now be ye kaught, now is ther but we tweyne,
 Now yeldeth yow, for other bote is non."
 To that Criseyde answerde thus anon,
 "Ne hadde I er now, my swete herte deere, 1210
 Ben yolde, i-wis, I were now nought heere."

O sooth is seyde, that heled forto be,
 As of a fevre or other gret siknesse,
 Men moste drynke, as men may ofte se,
 fful bittre drynke; and forto han gladnesse, 1215
 Men drynken ofte peyne and gret distresse —
 I mene it here as for this auenture,
 That thorough a peyne hath founden al his cure.

And now swetnesse semeth more swete,
 That bitternesse assaied was byforn; 1220
 ffor out of wo in blisse now they flete,
 Non swich they felten syn they were born.
 Now is this bet than bothe two be lorn:
 ffor loue of god, take euery woman heede
 To werken thus, if it comth to the neede. 1225

Criseyde, al quyt from euery drede and tene,
 As she that iuste cause hadde hym to triste,
 Made hym swich feste it ioye was to seene,
 Whan she his trouthe and clene entente wiste;
 And as aboute a tree with many a twiste 1230
 Bytrent and writhe the swote wodebynde,
 Gan ech of hem in armes other wynde.

And as the newe abaysed nyghtyngale,
 That styteth first whan she bygynneth to synge,
 Whan that she hereth any herde tale, 1235
 Or in the hegges any wyght stiryng,
 And after siker doth hire vois out ryng,
 Right so Criseyde, whan hire drede stente,
 Opned hire herte and tolde hym hire entente.

And right as he that seth his deth y-shapen, 1240
 And dyen mot in ought that he may gesse,
 And sodeynly rescous doth hym escapen,
 And from his deth is brought in sykernesse,
 ffor al this world, in swych present gladnesse,
 Was Troilus, and hath his lady swete: 1245
 With worse hap god lat vs neuere mete.

Hire armes smale, hire streghte bak and softe,
 Hire sydes longe, flesshly, smothe, and white
 He gan to stroke, and good thrift bad ful ofte
 Hire snowissh throte, hire brestes rounde and lite; 1250
 Thus in this heuene he gan hym to delite,

And ther-with-al a thousand tyme hire kiste,
That what to don for ioie vnnethe he wiste.

Than seyde he thus, "O Loue, O Charite,
Thi moder ek, Citheria the swete, 1255
After thi self next heried be she —
Venus mene I, the wel-willy planete;
And next that, Imeneus, I the grete:
ffor neuere man was to yow goddes holde
As I, which ye han brought fro cares colde. 1260

"Benigne loue, thow holy bond of thynges,
Who-so wol grace and list the nought honouren,
Lo, his desire wol fle with-uten wynges;
ffor noldestow of bownte hem socouren
That seruen best, and most alwey labouren, 1265
Yet were al lost, that dar I wel seyn certes,
But if thi grace passed oure desertes.

"And for thow me, that koude leest disserue
Of hem that noumbred ben vn-to thi grace,
Hast holpen, ther I likly was to sterue, 1270
And me bistowed in so heigh a place
That thilke boundes may no blisse pace,
I kan namore, but laude and reuerence
Be to thy bounte and thyn excellence."

And therwith-al Criseyde anon he kiste, 1275
Of which certein she felte no disese;
And thus seyde he, "now wolde god I wiste,
Myn herte swete, how I yow myghte plese.
What man," quod he, "was euere thus at ese
As I, on which the faireste and the beste 1280
That euere I say deyneth hire herte reste?"

"Here may men seen that mercy passeth right;
Thexperience of this is felt in me,
That am vnworthi to so swete a wight.
But, herte myn, of youre benignite, 1285
So thynketh, though that I vnworthi be,
Yet mot I nede amenden in som wyse,
Right thorough the vertue of youre heigh seruyse.

"And for the loue of god, my lady deere,
Syn god hath wrought me for I shall yow serue — 1290

As thus I mene, he wol ye be my steere,
 To do me lyue, if that yow liste, or sterue —
 So techeth me how that I may disserue
 Youre thonk, so that I thorough myn ignoraunce
 Ne do no thyng that yow be displesaunce. 1295

"ffor certes, fresshe wommanliche wif,
 This dar I seye, that trouth and diligence,
 That shal ye fynden in me al my lif;
 Ny wol nat, certein, breken youre defence;
 And if I do, present or in absence, 1300
 ffor loue of god, lat sle me with the dede,
 If that it like vnto youre wommanhede."

"I-wys," quod she, "myn owen hertes list,
 My ground of ese, and al myn herte deere,
 Gramercy, for on that is al my trist; 1305
 But lat vs falle away fro this matere,
 ffor it suffiseth this that seyde is heere,
 And at o word, with-outen repentaunce,
 Welcome my knyght, my pees, my suffisaunce."

Of hire delit or ioies oon the leeste 1310
 Were impossible to my wit to seye;
 But iuggeth ye that han ben at the feste
 Of swich gladnesse, if that hem liste pleye.
 I kan namore, but thus thise ilke tweye
 That nyght bitwixen drede and sikernesse 1315
 ffelten in loue the grete worthynesse.

O blisful nyght of hem so longe i-soughte,
 How blithe vnto hem bothe two thow weere!
 Why nad I swich oon with my soule y-boughte,
 Ye, or the leeste ioie that was there? 1320
 Away, thow foule daunger and thow feere,
 And lat hem in this heuene blisse dwelle,
 That is so heigh that al ne kan I telle.

But sooth is, though I kan nat tellen all,
 As kan myn auctour of his excellence, 1325
 Yet haue I seyde, and god to-forn, and shal
 In euery thyng al holly his sentence;
 And if that ich, at loues reuerence,
 Haue eny word in-eched for the beste,
 Doth therwith-al right as youre seluen leste. 1330

ffor myne wordes, heere and euery parte,
 I speke hem alle vnder correccioun
 Of yow that felyng han in loues arte,
 And putte it al in youre discrecioun
 To encesse or maken dymynucioun 1335
 Of my langage, and that I yow biseche —
 But now to purpos of my rather speche.

Thise ilke two, that ben in armes lafte,
 So loth to hem a-sonder gon it were,
 That ech from other wenden ben birafte, 1340
 Or elles, lo, this was hir mooste feere:
 That al this thyng but nyce dremes were;
 ffor which ful ofte ech of hem seyde, "O swete,
 Clippe ich yow thus or elles I it meete?"

And lord, so he gan goodly on hire se, 1345
 That neuere his look ne bleynte from hire face,
 And seyde, "O deere herte, may it be
 That it be soth, that ye ben in this place?"
 "Yee, herte myn, god thank I of his grace,"
 Quod tho Criseyde, and ther-with-al hym kiste, 1350
 That where his spirit was for ioie he nyste.

This Troilus ful ofte hire eyen two
 Gan forto kisse and seyde, "O eyen clere,
 It weren ye that wroughte me swich wo,
 Ye humble nettes of my lady deere. 1355
 Though ther be mercy writen in youre cheere,
 God woot the text ful hard is, soth, to fynde;
 How koude ye with-ouen bond me bynde?"

Therwith he gan hire faste in armes take,
 And wel a thousand tymes gan he syke, 1360
 Naught swiche sorwfull sikes as men make
 ffor wo, or elles when that folk ben sike,
 But esy sykes, swiche as ben to like,
 That shewed his affeccioun with-inne;
 Of swiche sikes koude he nought blynne. 1365

Soone after this they spake of sondry thynges,
 As fel to purpos of this auenture,
 And pleyinge entrechaungen hire rynges,
 Of whiche I kan nought tellen no scripture;

But wel I woot a broche, gold and asure, 1370
 In which a ruby set was lik an herte
 Criseyde hym yaf, and stak it on his sherte.

Lord, trowe ye a coueytous or a wrecche,
 That blameth loue and halt of it despite,
 That of tho pens that he kan mokre and cretche, 1375
 Was euere yit y-yeuen hym swich delite,
 As is in loue, in o poynt, in som plite?
 Nay, douteles, for also god me saue,
 So perfit ioie may no nygard haue.

They wol seyn "yis," but lord, so that they lye, 1380
 Tho besy wrecches, ful of wo and drede!
 Thei callen loue a woodnesse or folie;
 But it shall falle hem as I shal yow rede:
 They shal forgon the white and ek the rede,
 And lyue in wo, ther god yeue hem meschaunce, 1385
 And euery louere in his trouthe auauce.

As wolde god tho wrecches that dispise
 Seruise of loue hadde erys also longe
 As hadde Mida, ful of coueytise,
 And therto dronken hadde as hoot and stronge 1390
 As Crassus didde for his affectis wronge,
 To techen hem that they ben in the vice,
 And loueres nought, al-though they holde hem nyce.

Thise ilke two of whom that I yow seye,
 Whan that hire hertes wel assured were, 1395
 Tho gonne they to speken and to pleye,
 And ek rehercen how and whan and where
 Thei knewe hem first, and euery wo or feere
 That passed was; but al swich heuynesse,
 I thank it god, was torned to gladnesse. 1400

And euere mo when that hem fel to speke
 Of any wo of swich a tyme agoon,
 With kissyng al that tale sholde breke
 And fallen in a newe ioie anoon, 1405
 And diden al hire myght, syn they were oon,
 ffor to recoueren blisse and ben at eise,
 And passed wo with ioie contrepeise.

Resoun wol nought that I speke of slepe.

ffor it acordeth nought to my matere —
 God woot they took of that ful litel kepe; 1410
 But lest this nyght, that was to hem so deere,
 Ne sholde in veyn escape in no manere,
 It was byset in ioie and bisynesse
 Of al that souneth in-to gentillesse.

But whan the cok, comune astrologer, 1415
 Gan on his brest to bete and after crowe,
 And Lucyfer, the dayes messenger,
 Gan for to rise and out hire bemes throwe,
 And estward roos, to hym that koude it knowe,
 ffortuna Maior, that anoon Criseyde, 1420
 With herte soor to Troilus thus seide,

"Myn hertes lif, my trist and my plesaunce,
 That I was born, allas, what me is wo,
 That day of vs moot make disseueraunce;
 ffor tyme it is to ryse and hennes go, 1425
 Or ellis I am lost for euere mo.
 O nyght, allas, why nyltow ouere vs houe,
 As longe as whan Almena lay by Ioue?

"O blake nyght, as folk in bokes rede,
 That shapen art by god this world to hide 1430
 At certeyn tymes wyth thi derke wede,
 That vnder that men myghte in reste abide,
 Wel oughten bestes pleyne and folk the chide,
 That there as day wyth labour wolde vs breste,
 That thow thus fleest and deynest vs nought reste. 1435

"Thow doost, allas, to shortly thyn office,
 Thow racle nyght, ther god, maker of kynde,
 The for thyn haste and thyn vnkynde vice
 So faste ay to oure hemysperie bynde,
 That neuere more vnder the ground thow wynde: 1440
 ffor now, for thow so hiest out of Troie,
 Haue I forgon thus hastili my ioie."

This Troilus, that with tho wordes felte,
 As thoughte hym tho, for pietous distresse
 The bloody teris from his herte melte, 1445
 As he that neuere yet swich heuynesse
 Assayed hadde, out of so gret gladnesse,
 Gan ther-with-al Criseyde, his lady deere,

In armes streyne and seyde in this manere:

"O cruel day, accusour of the ioie
 That nyght and loue han stole and faste i-wryen,
 Acorsed be thi comyng in-to Troye,
 ffor euery bore hath oon of thi bryghte yen.
 Enuyous day, what list the so to spien?
 What hastow lost, why sekestow this place,
 Ther god thi light so quenche for his grace?"

"Allas, what haue thise loueris the agylte,
 Dispitous day? thyn be the peyne of helle!
 ffor many a louere hastow slayn and wylte:
 Thy pouryng in wol nowher lat hem dwelle.
 What profrestow thi light here forto selle?
 Go selle it hem that smale selys graue —
 We wol the nought, vs nedeth no day haue."

And ek the sonne, Titan, gan he chide,
 And seyde, "O fool, wel may men the dispise,
 That hast the dawyng al nyght by thi syde,
 And suffrest hire so soone vp fro the rise,
 fforto disesen loueris in this wyse.
 What, holde youre bed ther, thow, and ek thi Morwe,
 I bidde god, so yeue yow bothe sorwe."

Ther-with ful soore he syghte and thus he seyde,
 "My lady right, and of my wele or wo
 The welle and roote, O goodly myn, Criseyde,
 And shal I rise, allas, and shal I so?
 Now fele I that myn herte moot a-two,
 ffor how sholde I my lif an heure saue,
 Syn that with yow is al the lif ich haue?"

"What shal I don? for certes I not how,
 Ne whan, allas, I shal the tyme see,
 That in this plit I may ben eft with yow;
 And of my lif, god woot how that shal be,
 Syn that desire right now so biteth me,
 That I am ded anon, but I retourne.
 How sholde I longe, allas, fro yow soiourne?"

"But natheles, myn owen lady bright,
 Yit were it so that I wiste outrely,
 That I, youre humble seruant and youre knyght,

Were in youre herte i-set so fermely
 As ye in myn — the which thyng, trewely,
 Me leuere were than thise worldes tweyne — 1490
 Yet sholde I bet enduren al my peyne."

To that Criseyde answerde right anon,
 And with a sik she seyde, "O herte deere,
 The game, y-wys, so ferforth now is gon,
 That first shal Phebus fallen fro his speere, 1495
 And euerich egle ben the dowues feere,
 And euerich roche out of his place sterte,
 Er Troilus out of Criseydes herte.

"Ye ben so depe in-with myn herte graue,
 That, though I wolde it torne out of my thought, 1500
 As wisly verray god my soule saue,
 To dyen in the peyne, I koude nought;
 And for the loue of god that vs hath wrought,
 Lat in youre brayn non other fantasie
 So crepe that it cause me to dye. 1505

"And that ye me wolde han as faste in mynde
 As I haue yow, that wolde I yow biseche;
 And if I wiste sothly that to fynde,
 God myghte nought a poynt my ioies eche.
 But herte myn, with-uten more speche, 1510
 Beth to me trewe, or ellis were it routhe,
 ffor I am thyn, by god and by my trouthe.

"Beth glad forthy, and lyue in sikernesse;
 Thus seyde I neuere er this, ne shal to mo;
 And if to yow it were a gret gladnesse 1515
 To torne aygeyn soone after that ye go,
 As fayn wolde I as ye that it were so,
 As wisly god myn herte brynge at reste" —
 And hym in armes tok and ofte keste.

Agayns his wil, sith it mot nedes be, 1520
 This Troilus vp ros and faste hym cledde,
 And in his armes took his lady free
 An hondred tyme and on his wey hym spedde,
 And with swich voys as though his herte bledde
 He seyde, "fare wel, dere herte swete, 1525
 Ther god vs graunte sownde and soone to mete."

To which no word for sorwe she answerde,
 So soore gan his partyng hire distreyne;
 And Troilus vn-to his paleys ferde,
 As wo-bygon as she was, soth to seyne; 1530
 So harde hym wrong of sharp desire the peyne
 fforto ben eft there he was in plesaunce,
 Thut it may neuere out of his remembraunce.

Retorned to his real paleys soone,
 He softe in-to his bed gan forto slynke, 1535
 To slepe longe, as he was wont to doone;
 But al for nought — he may wel ligge and wynke,
 But slep ne may ther in his herte synke,
 Thinkyng how she, for whom desire hym brende,
 A thousand fold was worth more than he wende. 1540

And in his thought gan vp and down to wynde
 Hire wordes alle, and euery countenaunce,
 And fermely impressen in his mynde
 The leeste point that to him was plesaunce;
 And verraylich of thilke remembraunce 1545
 Desire al newe hym brende, and lust to brede
 Gan more than erst, and yet took he non hede.

Criseyde also, right in the same wyse,
 Of Troilus gan in hire herte shette
 His worthynesse, his lust, hise dedes wise, 1550
 His gentillesse, and how she with hym mette,
 Thonkyng loue he so wel hire bisette,
 Desiryng eft to han hire herte deere
 In swich a plit she dorste make hym cheere.

Pandare, o-morwe which that comen was 1555
 Unto his Nece and gan hire faire grete,
 Seyde, "al this nyght so reyned it, allas,
 That al my drede is that ye, Nece swete,
 Han litel laiser had to slepe and mete;
 Al nyght," quod he, "hath reyn so do me wake, 1560
 That som of vs, I trowe, hire hedes ake."

And ner he com and seyde, "how stant it now
 This mury morwe, Nece, how kan ye fare?"
 Criseyde answerde, "neuere the bet for yow,
 ffox that ye ben, god yeue youre herte kare! 1565
 God help me so, ye caused al this fare,

Trowe I," quod she; "for al youre wordes white,
O, who-so seeth yow, knoweth yow ful lite."

With that she gan hire face forto wrye
With the shete, and wax for shame al reede; 1570
And Pandarus gan vnder forto prie,
And seyde, "Nece, if that I shal be dede,
Haue here a swerd and smyteth of myn hede."
With that his arm al sodeynly he thriste
Under hire nekke and at the laste hire kyste. 1575

[I passe al that which chargeth nought to seye —
What! god for-yaf his deth, and she al-so
ffor-yaf, and with here vncler gan to pleye,
ffor other cause was ther noon than so.
But of this thing right to the effect to go, 1580
Whan tyme was, hom to here hous she wente,
And Pandarus hath fully his entente.]

Now torne we ayeyn to Troilus,
That resteles ful longe a-bedde lay,
And pryuely sente after Pandarus 1585
To hym to com in al the haste he may;
He com anon, nought ones seyde he nay,
And Troilus ful sobrelly he grette,
And down vp-on his beddes syde hym sette.

This Troilus, with al thaffeccioun 1590
Of frendes loue that herte may deuyse,
To Pandarus on knowes fil a-down,
And er that he wolde of the place arise,
He gan hym thonken in his beste wise
An hondred sythe, and gan the tyme blesse 1595
That he was born to brynge hym fro destresse.

He seyde, "O frend of frendes the alderbeste
That euere was, the sothe for to telle,
Thow hast in heuene y-brought my soule at reste
ffro Flegitoun, the fery flood of helle; 1600
That, though I myght a thousand tymes selle
Up-on a day my lif in thi seruise,
It myghte naught a moote in that suffise.

"The sonne, which that al the world may se,
Sough neuere yet my lif, that dar I leye, 1605

So inly faire and goodly as is she,
Whos I am al, and shal, tyl that I deye.
And that I thus am hires, dar I seye,
That thanked be the heighe worthynesse
Of loue, and ek thi kynde bysynesse. 1610

"Thus hastow ne no litel thing y-yiue,
ffor which to the obliged be for ay
My lif, and whi? for thorough thyn helpe I lyue,
Or elles ded hadde I ben many a day."
And with that word down in his bed he lay, 1615
And Pandarus ful sobrelly hym herde,
Tyl al was seyde, and than he thus answerde:

"My deere frend, if I haue don for the
In any cas, god wot, it is me lief;
And am as glad as man may of it be, 1620
God help me so; but take it nat a-grief
That I shal seyn: be war of this meschief,
That, there as thow now brought art in thy blisse,
That thow thi self ne cause it nat to misse.

"ffor of fortunes sharpe aduersitee 1625
The worste kynde of infortune is this,
A man to han ben in prosperitee,
And it remembren whan it passed is.
Thart wis ynough, forthi do nat amys;
Be naught to rakel, theigh thow sitte warme, 1630
ffor if thow be, certeyn, it wol the harme.

"Thow art at ese and holde the wel ther-inne,
ffor also seur as reed is euery fire,
As gret a craft is kepe wel as wynne.
Bridle alwey wel thi speche and thi desire; 1635
ffor worldly ioie halt nought but by a wire.
That preueth wel, it brest al day so ofte;
ffor-thi nede is to werken with it softe.

Quod Troilus, "I hope, and god toforn,
My deere frend, that I shal so me beere 1640
That in my gilt ther shal no thyng be lorn,
Ny nyl nought rakel as forto greuen heere.
It nedeth naught this matere ofte steere;
ffor wystemyn myn herte wel, Pandare,
God woot of this thow woldest litel care." 1645

Tho gan he telle hym of his glade nyght,
 And wher-of first his herte dred, and how,
 And seyde, "frend, as I am trewe knyght,
 And by that feyth I shal to god and yow,
 I hadde it neuere half so hote as now;
 And ay the more that desire me biteth
 To loue hire best the more it me deliteth.

1650

"I not my self naught wisly what it is,
 But now I feele a newe qualitee,
 Yee, al a-nother than I didde er this."
 Pandare answerd and seyde thus, that "he
 That ones may in heuene blisse be,
 He feleth other weyes, dar I leye,
 Than thilke tyme he first herde of it seye."

1655

This is a word for al: this Troilus
 Was neuere ful to speke of this matere,
 And forto preisen vnto Pandarus
 The bounte of his righte lady deere,
 And Pandarus to thanke and maken cheere;
 This tale was ay span newe to bygynne,
 Til that the nyght departed hem atwynne.

1660

1665

Soon after this, for that fortune it wolde,
 I-comen was the blisful tyme swete,
 That Troilus was warned that he sholde,
 There he was erst, Criseyde his lady mete;
 ffor which he felte his herte in ioie flete,
 And feithfully gan alle the goddes herie —
 And lat se now if that he kan be merie.

1670

And holden was the forme and al the wise
 Of hire commyng, and ek of his also,
 As it was erst, which nedeth nought deuyse.
 But pleyntly to theeffect right for to go,
 In ioie and suerte Pandarus hem two
 A-bedde brought whan that hem bothe leste,
 And thus they ben in quyetie and in reste.

1675

1680

Nought nedeth it to yow, syn they ben mette,
 To axe at me if that they blithe were,
 ffor if it erst was wel, tho was it bette
 A thousand fold, this nedeth nought enquere.

A-gon was euery sorwe and euery feere,
 And bothe, y-wys, they hadde, and so they wende,
 As mucche ioie as herte may comprende. 1685

This is no litel thyng of for to seye;
 This passeth euery wit for to deuyse;
 ffor ech of hem gan otheres lust obeye. 1690
 ffelicite, which that thise clerkes wise
 Comenden so, ne may nought here suffise;
 This ioie may nought writen be with inke;
 This passeth al that herte may bythyne.

But cruel day, so wailaway the stounde,
 Gan for taproche, as they by sygnes knewe,
 ffor which hem thoughte feelen dethis wownde;
 So wo was hem that chaungen gan hire hewe,
 And day they gonnen to despise al newe,
 Callyng it traitour, enuyous, and worse, 1700
 And bitterly the dayes light thei corse.

Quod Troilus, "allas, now am I war
 That Pirous and tho swifte steedes thre,
 Which that drawen forth the sonnes char,
 Han gon som bipath in dispit of me; 1705
 That maketh it so soone day to be;
 And for the sonne hym hasteth thus to rise,
 Ne shal I neuere don hym sacrificise."

But nedes day depert hem moste soone,
 And whan hire speche don was and hire cheere, 1710
 They twynne anon as they were wont to doone,
 And setten tyme of metyng eft y-feere;
 And many a nyght they wroughte in this manere.
 And thus fortune a tyme ledde in ioie
 Criseyde and ek this kynges sone of Troie. 1715

In suffisaunce, in blisse, and in singynges,
 This Troilus gan al his lif to lede;
 He spendeth, iousteth, maketh festeynges;
 He yeueth frely ofte, and chaungeth wede,
 And held aboute hym alwey, out of drede, 1720
 A world of folk, as com hym wel of kynde,
 The fresshest and the beste he koude fynde;

That swich a vois of hym was and a steuene

Thorough-out the world, of honour and largesse,
 That it vp rong vnto the yate of heuene. 1725
 And as in loue he was in swich gladnesse,
 That in his herte he demed, as I gesse,
 That ther nys louere in this world at ese
 So wel as he, and thus gan loue hym plese.

The goodlihede or beaute which that kynde 1730
 In any other lady hadde ysette
 Kan nought the montance of a knotte vnbynde,
 Aboute his herte of al Criseydes nette;
 He was so narwe y-masked and y-knette,
 That it vndon on any manere syde, 1735
 That nyl naught ben, for aught that may bitide.

And by the hond ful ofte he wolde take
 This Pandarus, and in-to gardyn lede,
 And swich a feste and swich a proces make
 Hym of Criseyde, and of hire wommanhede, 1740
 And of hire beaute, that, with-ouen drede,
 It was an heuene his wordes forto here;
 And thanne he wolde synge in this manere:

Canticus Troili

"Loue that of erthe and se hath gouernaunce,
 Loue, that his hestes hath in heuenes hye, 1745
 Loue, that with an holsom alliaunce
 Halt peples ioyned, as hym lest hem gye,
 Loue, that knetteth lawe of compaignie,
 And couples doth in vertue forto dwelle,
 Bynd this acord that I haue told and telle. 1750

"That that the world with feith which that is stable,
 Diuerseth so his stowndes concordyng,
 That elementz that ben so discordable
 Holden a bond perpetuely duryng, 1755
 That Phebus mote his rosy day forth bryng,
 And that the mone hath lordshipe ouer the nyghtes —
 Al this doth loue, ay heried be his myghtes!

"That that the se, that gredy is to flowen,
 Constreyneth to a certeyn ende so
 His flodes that so fiersly they ne grow 1760
 To drenchen erthe and al for euere mo;

And if that loue aught lete his bridel go,
 Al that now loueth asondre sholde lepe,
 And lost were al that loue halt now to hepe.

"So wolde god, that auctour is of kynde, 1765
 That with his bond loue of his vertue liste
 To cerclen hertes alle and faste bynde,
 That from his bond no wight the wey out wiste;
 And hertes colde, hem wolde I that he twiste
 To make hem loue, and that hem liste ay rewe 1770
 On hertes sore, and kepe hem that ben trewe."

In alle nedes, for the townes werre,
 He was, and ay, the first in armes dyght,
 And certeynly, but if that bokes erre,
 Saue Ector, most y-dred of any wight; 1775
 And this encresse of hardynesse and myght
 Com hym of loue, his ladies thank to wynne,
 That altered his spirit so with-inne.

In tyme of trewe, on haukyng wolde he ride,
 Or elles honte boor, beer, or lyoun — 1780
 The smale bestes leet he gon biside;
 And whan that he com ridyng in-to town,
 fful ofte his lady from hire wyndow down,
 As fresshe as faukoun comen out of muwe,
 fful redy was hym goodly to saluwe. 1785

And moost of loue and vertue was his speche,
 And in despit hadde alle wrecchednesse;
 And douteles, no nede was hym biseche
 To honouren hem that hadde worthynesse,
 And esen hem that weren in destresse; 1790
 And glad was he if any wyght wel ferde,
 That louere was, whan he it wiste or herde.

ffor soth to seyne, he lost held euery wyght
 But if he were in loues heigh seruise —
 I mene folk that oughte it ben of right. 1795
 And ouere al this, so wel koude he deuuse
 Of sentement, and in so vnkouths wise
 Al his array, that euery louere thoughte
 That al was wel what so he seyde or wroughte.

And though that he be come of blood roial, 1800

Hym liste of pride at no wight for to chace;
Benigne he was to ech in general,
ffor which he gat hym thank in euery place.
Thus wolde loue, y-heried be his grace,
That pride, enuye, ire, and auarice
He gan to fle, and euerich other vice. 1805

Thow lady bright, the doughter to Dyone,
Thy blynde and wynged sone ek, daun Cupide,
Yee sustren nyne ek, that by Elicone
In hil Pernaso listen for tabide, 1810
That Ye thus fer han deyned me to gyde,
I kan namore, but syn that ye wol wende,
Ye heried ben for ay with-ouen ende.

Thorough yow haue I seyde fully in my songe
Theffect and ioie of Troilus seruise, 1815
Al be that ther was som disese amonge,
As to myn auctour listeth to deuse.
My thridde boke now ende ich in this wyse;
And Troilus in luste and in quiete
Is with Criseyde, his owen herte swete. 1820

Explicit liber tercius.

Book IV*Incipit prohemium quarti libri*

But al to litel, weylaway the whyle,
 Lasteth swich ioie, y-thonked be fortune,
 That semeth trewest whan she wol bygyle,
 And kan to fooles so hire song entune,
 That she hem hent and blent, traitour comune; 5
 And whan a wight is from hire whiel y-throwe,
 Than laugheth she and maketh hym the mowe.

ffrom Troilus she gan hire brighte face
 Away to writhe and tok of hym non heede,
 But caste hym clene out of his lady grace, 10
 And on hire whiel she sette vp Diomedé;
 ffor which right now myn herte gynneth blede,
 And now my penne, allas, with which I write,
 Quaketh for drede of that I moste endite.

ffor how Criseyde Troilus for-sook — 15
 Or at the leeste how that she was vnkynde —
 Moot hennes-forth ben matere of my book,
 As writen folk thorough which it is in mynde.
 Allas, that they sholde euere cause fynde
 To speke hire harm, and if they on hire lye, 20
 I-wis, hem self sholde han the vilanye.

O ye Herynes, Nyghtes doughtren thre,
 That endeles compleignen euere in pyne,
 Megera, Alete, and ek Thesiphone,
 Thow cruel Mars ek, fader to Quyryne, 25
 This ilke ferthe book me helpeth fyne,
 So that the losse of lyf and loue y-feere
 Of Troilus be fully shewed heere.

*Explicit prohemium quarti libri**Incipit liber quartus*

Liggyng in oost, as I haue seyde er this,
 The Grekes stronge a-boute Troie town, 30
 Byfel that whan that Phebus shynyng is

Upon the breste of Ercules lyoun,
 That Ector, with ful many a bold baroun,
 Caste on a day with Grekis forto fighte,
 As he was wont to greue hem what he myghte. 35

Not I how longe or short it was bitwene
 This purpos and that day they fighten mente;
 But on a day, wel armed brighte and shene,
 Ector and many a worthi wight out wente,
 With spere in honde and bigge bowes bente; 40
 And in the berd, with-ouen lenger lette,
 Hire fomen in the felde anon hem mette.

The longe day, with speres sharpe i-grounde,
 With arwes, dartes, swerdes, maces felle,
 They fighte and bringen hors and man to grounde, 45
 And with hire axes out the braynes quelle;
 But in the laste shour, soth for to telle,
 The folk of Troie hem seluen so mysledden
 That with the wors at nyght homward they fledden.

At whiche day was taken Antenore, 50
 Mauge Polydamas or Monesteo,
 Santippe, Sarpedoun, Polynestore,
 Polite, or ek the Troian daun Rupheo,
 And other lasse folk as Phebuseo;
 So that for harm that day the folk of Troie 55
 Dredden to lese a gret part of hire ioie.

Of Priamus was yeue at Grekes requeste
 A tyme of trewe, and tho they gonne trete
 Hire prisoners to chaungen, meste and leste,
 And for the surplus yeuen sommes grete. 60
 This thing anon was couth in euery strete,
 Bothe in thassege, in town and euery where,
 And with the firste it com to Calkas ere.

Whan Calkas knew this tretis sholde holde,
 In consistorie among the Grekes soone 65
 He gan in thringe forth with lordes olde,
 And sette hym there as he was wont to doone,
 And with a chaunged face hem bad a boone,
 ffor loue of god, to don that reuerence,
 To stynte noyse and yeue hym audience. 70

Than seyde he thus, "lo, lordes myn, ich was
 Troian, as it is knowen out of drede;
 And if that yow remembre, I am Calkas,
 That alderfirst yaf comfort to youre nede,
 And tolde wel how that ye shulden spede — 75
 ffor dredeles, thorough yow shal in a stownde
 Ben Troie y-brend and beten down to grownde.

"And in what fourme or in what manere wise
 This town to shende and al youre lust tacheue,
 Ye han er this wel herd me yow deuyse; 80
 This knowe ye, my lordes, as I leue.
 And for the Grekis weren me so leue,
 I com my self in my propre persone,
 To teche in this how yow was best to doone,

"Hauyng vn-to my tresore ne my rente 85
 Right no resport to respect of youre ese;
 Thus al my good I lefte and to yow wente,
 Wenying in this, my lordes, yow to plese.
 But al that los ne doth me no disese —
 I vouche-sauf as wisly haue I ioie, 90
 ffor yow to lese al that I haue in Troie,

"Sawe of a doughter that I lefte, allas,
 Slepynge at hom whan out of Troie I sterte.
 O sterne, O cruel fader that I was!
 How myghte I haue in that so hard an herte? 95
 Allas, I ne hadde i-brought hire in hire sherte!
 ffor sorwe of whiche I wol nought lyue to-morwe,
 But if ye lordes rewe vp-on my sorwe.

"ffor by that cause I say no tyme er now
 Hire to deliuere, ich holden haue my pees; 100
 But now or neuere, if that it like yow,
 I may hire haue right soone, douteles;
 O help and grace amonges al this prees —
 Rewe on this olde caytif in destresse,
 Syn I thorough yow haue al this heuynesse. 105

"Ye haue now kaught and fetere in prisoun
 Troians ynowe, and if youre willes be,
 My child with oon may han redempcioun.
 Now for the loue of god and of bounte,
 Oon of so fele, allas, so yeue hym me. 110

What nede were it this preiere forto werne,
Syn ye shul bothe han folk and town as yerne?

"On peril of my lif I shal nat lye,
Appollo hath me told it feithfullye;
I haue ek founde it be astronomye, 115
By sort and by augurye ek trewelye,
And dar wel say the tyme is faste by
That fire and flaumbe on al the town shal sprede,
And thus shal Troie torne to asshen dede.

"ffor certein, Phebus and Neptunus bothe, 120
That makeden the walles of the town,
Ben with the folk of Troie alwey so wrothe,
That they wol brynge it to confusioun,
Right in despit of kyng Lameadoun:
By-cause he nolde payen hem here hire, 125
The town of Troie shal ben set on fire."

Tellyng his tale alwey, this olde greye,
Humble in his speche and in his lokyng eke,
The salte teris from his eyen tweye
fful faste ronnen down by either cheke. 130
So longe he gan of socour hem biseke,
That forto hele hym of his sorwes soore,
They yaue hym Antenor with-uten moore.

But who was glad ynough but Calkas tho?
And of this thyng ful soone hise nedes leyde 135
On hem that sholden for the tretis go;
And hem for Antenor ful ofte preyde
To bryngen hom kyng Toas and Criseyde;
And whan Priam his saue garde sente,
Thembassadours to Troie streight they wente. 140

The cause i-tolde of hire comyng, the olde
Priam the kyng ful soone in general
Let her-vpon his perlement to holde,
Of which theeffect rehercen yow I shal:
Thembassadours ben answerd for fynal, 145
Theschaunge of prisoners and al this nede
Hem liketh wel, and forth in they procede.

This Troilus was present in the place,
Whan axed was for Antenor Criseyde,

ffor which ful soone chaungen gan his face, 150
 As he that with tho wordes wel neigh deyde;
 But natheles he no word to it seyde,
 Lest men sholde his affeccioun espye;
 With mannes herte he gan his sorwes drye,

And ful of angwissh and of grisly drede 155
 Abod what lordes wolde vnto it seye;
 And if they wolde graunte, as god forbede,
 Theschaunge of hire, than thoughte he thynges tweye:
 ffirst, how to saue hire honour, and what weye
 He myghte best theschaunge of hire withstonde; 160
 fful faste he caste how al this myghte stonde.

Loue hym made al prest to don hire byde,
 And rather dyen than she sholde go;
 But resoun seyde hym on that other syde:
 "With-ouen assent of hire ne do nat so, 165
 If thou debate it, lest she be thy fo,
 And seyn that thorough thy medlynge is i-blowe
 Youre bother loue, ther it was erst vnknowe.'

ffor which he gan deliberen for the beste,
 That though the lordes wolde that she wente, 170
 He wolde lat hem graunte what hem leste,
 And telle his lady first what that they mente;
 And whan that she hadde seyde hym hire entente,
 Ther-after wolde he werken also blyue,
 Theigh al the world ayeyn it wolde stryue. 175

Ector, which that wel the Grekes herde,
 ffor Antenor how they wolde han Criseyde,
 Gan it withstonde and sobrely answerde:
 "Syres, she nys no prisonere," he seyde;
 "I not on yow who that this charge leyde, 180
 But on my part ye may eft-sones hem telle,
 We vsen here no wommen forto selle."

The noyse of peple vp stirte thanne at ones,
 As breme as blase of straw i-set on fire;
 ffor infortune it wolde for the nones 185
 They sholden hire confusioun desire.
 "Ector," quod they, "what goost may yow enspyre,
 This womman thus to shilde and don vs leese
 Daun Antenor — a wrong wey now ye chese —

"That is so wys and ek so bold baroun? 190
 And we han nede of folk, as men may se:
 He is ek on the grettest of this town.
 O Ector, lat tho fantasies be.
 O kyng Priam,' quod they, "thus sygge we,
 That al oure vois is to forgon Criseyde." 195
 And to deliueren Antenor they preyde.

O Iuuenal, lord, soth is thy sentence,
 That litel wyten folk what is to yerne,
 That they ne fynde in hire desire offence;
 ffor cloude of errour lat hem nat discerne 200
 What best is; and lo, here ensample as yerne:
 This folk desiren now deliueraunce
 Of Antenor that brought hem to meschaunce.

ffor he was after traitour to the town
 Of Troye; alas, they quytte hym out to rathe. 205
 O nyce world, lo thy discrecioun!
 Criseyde, which that neuere dide hem scathe,
 Shal now no lenger in hire blisse bathe;
 But Antenor, he shal com hom to towne,
 And she shal out; thus seyde here and howne. 210

ffor which delibered was by perlement,
 ffor Antenor to yelden out Criseyde,
 And it pronounced by the president,
 Al-theigh that Ector nay ful ofte preyde.
 And fynaly, what wight that it with-seyde, 215
 It was for nought; it moste ben and sholde,
 ffor substaunce of the perlement it wolde.

Deperted out of parlement echone,
 This Troilus with-ouen wordes mo
 Into his chambre spedde hym faste allone, 220
 But if it were a man of his or two,
 The which he bad out faste forto go,
 By-cause he wolde slepen as he seyde,
 And hastily vp-on his bedde hym leyde.

And as in wynter leues ben birafte, 225
 Ech after other til the tree be bare,
 So that ther nys but bark and braunche i-lafte,
 Lith Troilus byraft of eche welfare,

I-bounden in the blake bark of care,
 Disposed wood out of his wit to breyde, 230
 So sore hym sat the chaungynge of Criseyde.

He rist hym vp, and euery dore he shette
 And wyndow ek, and tho this sorwful man
 Up-on his beddes syde adown hym sette,
 fful like a dede ymage, pale and wan; 235
 And in his brest the heped wo bygan
 Out breste, and he to werken in this wise
 In his woodnesse, as I shal yow deuyse.

Right as the wylde bole bygynneth sprynge,
 Now her, now ther, i-darted to the herte, 240
 And of his deth roreth in compleynynge,
 Right so gan he aboute the chambre sterte,
 Smytyng his brest ay with his fistes smerte;
 His hed to the wal, his body to the grounde,
 fful ofte he swapte, hym seluen to confounde. 245

His eyen two, for piete of herte,
 Out stremeden as swifte welles tweye;
 The heighe sobbes of his sorwes smerte
 His speche hym refte; vnnethes myghte he seye, 250
 "O deth, allas, why nyltow do me deye?
 Acorsed be that day which that nature
 Shop me to ben a lyues creature."

But after, whan the furie and al the rage
 Which that his herte twiste and faste threste,
 By lengthe of tyme somewhat gan aswage, 255
 Upon his bed he leyde hym down to reeste;
 But tho bygonne his teeris more out breste,
 That wonder is the body may suffise
 To half this wo which that I yow deuyse.

Than seyde he thus, "fortune, allas the while! 260
 What haue I don, what haue I thus a-gylte?
 How myghtestow for rowthe me by-gile?
 Is ther no grace, and shal I thus be spilte?
 Shal thus Creiseyde away for that thow wilte?
 Allas, how maistow in thyn herte fynde 265
 To ben to me thus cruwel and vnkynde?"

"Haue I the nought honoured al my lyue,

As thow wel woost, aboue the goddes alle?
 Whi wiltow me fro ioie thus depriue?
 O Troilus, what may men now the calle 270
 But wrecche of wrecches, out of honour falle
 Into miserie, in which I wol be-waille
 Creiseyde, allas, til that the breth me faille?

"Allas, fortune, if that my lif in ioie
 Displesed hadde vnto thi foule enuye, 275
 Why ne haddestow my fader, kyng of Troye,
 Byraft the lif or don my bretheren dye,
 Or slayn my self that thus compleyne and crye,
 I, combre-world, that may of no thyng serue,
 But euere dye and neuere fulli sterue? 280

If that Criseyde allone were me laft,
 Nought roughte I whider thow woldest me steere;
 And hire, allas, than hastow me biraft.
 But euere more, lo, this is thi manere,
 To reue a wight that most is to hym deere, 285
 To preue in that thi gerful violence:
 Thus am I lost, ther helpeth no diffence.

"O verrey lord of loue, O god, allas,
 That knowest best myn herte and al my thoughte,
 What shal my sorwful lif don in this cas, 290
 If I for-go that I so deere haue boughte?
 Syn ye Criseyde and me han fully broughte
 In-to youre grace and bothe oure hertes seled,
 How may ye suffre, allas, it be repeled?

"What shal I don? I shal, while I may dure 295
 On lyue in torment and in cruwel peyne,
 This in-fortune or this disaunture
 Allone as I was born, i-wys, compleyne;
 Ne neuere wol I seen it shyne or reyne,
 But ende I wol as Edippe in derknesse 300
 My sorwful lif and dyen in distresse.

"O wery goost that errest to and fro,
 Why nyltow fleen out of the wofulleste
 Body that euere myghte on grounde go?
 O soule, lurkyng in this wo, vnneste, 305
 ffle forth out of myn herte and lat it breste,
 And folwe alwey Criseyde, thi lady dere;

Thi righte place is now no lenger here.

"O woful eyen two, syn youre disport
 Was al to sen Criseydes eyen brighte, 310
 What shal ye don but, for my discomfort,
 Stonden for naught and wepen out youre sighte,
 Syn she is queynt that wont was yow to lighte?
 In vayn fro this forth haue ich eyen tweye
 I-fourmed, syn youre vertue is aweye. 315

"O my Criseyde, O lady souereigne
 Of thilke woful soule that thus crieth,
 Who shal now yeuen comfort to the peyne?
 Allas, no wight; but whan myn herte dieth,
 My spirit, which that so vnto yow hieth, 320
 Receyue in gree, for that shal ay yow serue;
 ffor-thi no fors is though the body sterue.

"O ye loueris, that heigh vp on the whiel
 Ben set of fortune in good auenture,
 God leue that ye fynde ay loue of stiel, 325
 And longe mote youre lif in ioie endure!
 But whan ye comen by my sepulture,
 Remembreth that youre felawe resteth there,
 ffor I loued ek, though ich vnworthi were.

"O oold, vnholsum and myslyued man — 330
 Calkas I mene — allas, what eiled the
 To ben a Grek, syn thow art born Troian?
 O Calkas, which that wolt my bane be,
 In corsed tyme was thow born for me.
 As wolde blisful Ioue for his ioie 335
 That I the hadde wher I wolde in Troie."

A thousand sikes hotter than the gleede
 Out of his brest ech after other wente,
 Medled with pleyntes new his wo to feede,
 ffor which his woful teris neuere stente; 340
 And shortly, so his peynes hym to-rente
 And wex so mat, that ioie nor penaunce
 He feleth non, but lith forth in a traunce.

Pandare, which that in the parlement
 Hadde herd what euery lord and burgeys seyde, 345
 And how ful graunted was by oon assent

ffor Antenor to yelden so Criseyde,
 Gan wel neigh wood out of his wit to breyde,
 So that for wo he nyste what he mente,
 But in a rees to Troilus he wente. 350

A certeyn knyght that for the tyme kepte
 The chambre door vndid it hym anon;
 And Pandare, that ful tendreliche wepte,
 In-to the derke chambre, as stille as ston,
 Toward the bed gan softly to gon, 355
 So confus that he nyste what to seye —
 ffor verray wo his wit was neigh awaye.

And with his chiere and lokyng al to-torne
 ffor sorwe of this, and with his armes folden,
 He stood this woful Troilus by-forne, 360
 And on his pitous face he gan byholden;
 But, lord, so ofte gan his herte colden,
 Seyng his frend in wo, whos heuynesse
 His herte slough, as thoughte hym, for destresse.

This woful wight, this Troilus, that felte 365
 His frend Pandare y-comen hym to se,
 Gan as the snow ayeyn the sonne melte,
 ffor which this sorwful Pandare of pitee
 Gan forto wepe as tendreliche as he;
 And specheles thus ben thise ilke tweye, 370
 That neither myghte o word for sorwe seye.

But at the laste this woful Troilus,
 Neigh ded for smert gan bresten out to rore,
 And with a sorwful noise he seyde thus,
 Amonge hise sobbes and his sikes sore: 375
 "Lo, pandare, I am ded with-ouen more.
 Hastow nat herd at parlement," he seyde,
 "ffor Antenore how lost is my Criseyde?"

This Pandarus, ful dede and pale of hewe,
 fful pitously answerde and seyde, "yis, 380
 As wisly were it fals as it is trewe,
 That I haue herd and woot al how it is.
 O mercy, god, who wolde haue trowed this?
 Who wolde haue wend that in so litel a throwe
 ffortune oure ioie wold han ouere-throwe? 385

"ffor in this world ther is no creature,
 As to my dome, that euere saugh ruyne
 Straunger than this thorough cas or auenture.
 But who may all eschue or al deuyne?
 Swich is this world; forthi I thus diffyne: 390
 Ne trust no wight to fynden in fortune
 Ay propretee — hire yiftes ben comune.

"But telle me this, whi thow art now so mad
 To sorwen thus? Whi listow in this wise,
 Syn thi desire al holly hastow had, 395
 So that by right it oughte ynough suffise?
 But I that neuere felte in my seruyse
 A frendly cheere or lokyng of an eye,
 Lat me thus wepe and wailen til I deye.

"And ouere al this, as thow wel woost thi selue, 400
 This town is ful of ladys al aboute;
 And to my doom, fairer than swiche twelue
 As euere she was shal I fynde in some route,
 Yee, on or two, with-outen any doute.
 ffor-thi be glad, myn owen deere brother; 405
 If she be lost, we shal recouere an other.

"What, god forbede alwey that eche plesaunce
 In o thing were and in non other wight:
 If oon kan synge, an other kan wel daunce;
 If this be goodly, she is glad and light; 410
 And this is faire, and that kan good aright:
 Eche for his vertue holden is for deere,
 Both herouner and faucoun for ryuere.

"And ek as writ Zanzis, that was ful wys,
 'The newe loue out chaceth ofte the olde',;
 And vp-on newe cas lith newe auys. 415
 Thenk ek thi lif to sauen artow holde.
 Swich fir by proces shal of kynde colde;
 ffor syn it is but casuel plesaunce,
 Som cas shal putte it out of remembraunce. 420

"ffor also seur as day comth after nyght,
 The newe loue, labour, or oother wo,
 Or elles selde seyng of a wight,
 Don olde affeccious alle ouere-go.
 And for thi part thow shalt haue oon of tho 425

Tabregge with thi bittre peynes smerte;
Absence of hire shal dryue hire out of herte."

These wordes seyde he for the nones alle,
To help his frend lest he for sorwe deyde;
ffor douteles to don his wo to falle 430
He roughte nought what vnthrift that he seyde.
But Troilus, that neigh for sorwe deyde,
Took litel heede of al that euere he mente;
Oon ere it herde, at tother out it wente.

But at the laste he answerde and seyde, "frende, 435
This lechecraft, or heeled thus to be,
Were wel sittynge if that I were a fende —
To traysen a wight that trewe is vnto me.
I pray god lat this conseil neuere y-the;
But do me rather sterue anon right here, 440
Er I thus do as thow me woldest leere.

"She that I serue, i-wis, what so thow seye,
To whom myn herte enhabit is by right,
Shal han me holly hires til that I deye.
ffor Pandarus, syn I haue trouthe hire hight, 445
I wol nat ben vntrewe for no wight;
But as hire man I wol ay lyue and sterue,
And neuere other creature serue.

"And ther thow seist thow shalt as faire fynde
As she — lat be, make no comparisoun 450
To creature y-formed here by kynde.
O leue Pandare, in conclusioun
I wol nat ben of thyn opynyoun
Touchyng al this; for which I the biseche,
So holde thi pees: thow sleest me with thi speche. 455

"Thow biddest me I shulde loue an other
Al fresshly newe and lat Criseyde go.
It lith nat in my power, leue brother;
And though I myght, I wolde nat do so.
But kanstow playen raket to and fro, 460
Nettle in, dok out, now this, now that, Pandare?
Now foule falle hire for thi wo that care.

"Thow farest ek by me, thow Pandarus,
As he that whan a wight is wo bygon,

He cometh to hym a paas and seith right thus, 465
 "Thynk nat on smert and thow shalt fele non.'
 Thow moost me first transmewen in a ston,
 And reue me my passionnes alle,
 Er thow so lightly do my wo to falle.

"The deth may wel out of my brest departe 470
 The lif, so longe may this sorwe myne;
 But fro my soule shal Criseydes darte
 Out neuere mo, but down with Proserpyne,
 Whan I am ded, I wol go wone in pyne;
 And ther I wol eternaly compleyne 475
 My wo and how that twynned be we tweyne.

"Thow hast here made an argument for fyne,
 How that it sholde lasse peyne be
 Criseyde to forgon, for she was myne,
 And lyued in ese and in felicite — 480
 Whi gabbestow, that seydest vn-to me,
 That hym is wors that is fro wele ythrowe,
 Than he hadde erst noon of that wele y-knowe?

"But telle me now syn that the thynketh so light 485
 To changen so in loue ay to and fro,
 Whi hastow nat don bisily thi myght
 To chaungen hire that doth the al thi wo?
 Whi nyltow lete hire fro thyn herte go?
 Whi nyltow loue an othere lady swete,
 That may thyn herte setten in quiete? 490

["If thow hast had in loue ay yet myschaunce,
 And kanst it not out of thyn herte dryue,
 I that leuede yn lust and in plesaunce
 With here as mucche as creature on lyue,
 How sholde I that foryete and that so blyue? 495
 O where hastow ben hid so longe in muwe,
 That kanst so wel and formely arguwe?

"Nay, nay, god wot, nought worth is al thi red,
 ffor which, for what that euere may by-falle,
 With-outen wordes mo I wol be ded. 500
 O deth that endere art of sorwes alle,
 Com now syn I so ofte after the calle;
 ffor sely is that deth, soth for to seyne,
 That ofte ycleped cometh and endeth peyne.

"Wel wot I, whil my lyf was in quyete, 505
 Er thow me slowe I wolde haue yeuen hire;
 But now thi comynge is to me so swete
 That in this world I no thing so desire:
 O deth, syn with this sorwe I am a-fyre,
 Thou other do me anoon yn teris drenche, 510
 Or with thi colde strok myn hete quenche.

"Syn that thow sleest so fele in sondry wyse
 A-yens hire wil vnpreyed day and nyght,
 Do me at my requeste this seruice:
 Delyuere now the world, so dostow right, 515
 Of me that am the wofulleste wyght
 That euere was; for tyme is that I sterue,
 Syn in this world of right nought may I serue."

This Troilus in teris gan distille,
 As licour out of a lambyc ful faste; 520
 And Pandarus gan holde his tunge stille,
 And to the ground his eyen doun he caste;
 But natheles, thus thought he at the laste:
 "What, parde, rather than my felawe deye,
 Yet shal I som-what more vn-to hym seye." 525

And seyde, "frend, syn thow hast swych distresse,
 And syn the list myn argumentz to blame,
 Why nylt thi seluen helpen don redresse,
 And with thy manhod letten al this grame?
 Go rauysshe here ne kanstow not for shame? 530
 And other lat here out of towne fare,
 Or hold here stille and leue thi nyce fare.]

"Artow in Troie and hast non hardymente
 To take a womman which that loueth the,
 And wolde hire seluen ben of thyn assente? 535
 Now is nat this a nyce vanitee?
 Ris vp anon and lat this wepyng be,
 And kith thow art a man, for in this houre
 I wol ben ded or she shal bleuen oure."

To this answerde hym Troilus ful softe 540
 And seyde, "perde, leue brother deere,
 Al this haue I my self yet thought ful ofte,
 And more thyng than thow deuysed here.

But whi this thing is laft thow shalt wel here,
 And whan thow me hast yeue an audience, 545
 I her-after maystow telle al thi sentence.

"ffirst, syn thow woost this town hath al this werre
 ffor rauysshynge of wommen so by myght,
 It sholde nought be suffred me to erre,
 As it stant now, ne don so gret vnright: 550
 I sholde han also blame of euery wight,
 My fadres graunt if that I so with-stoode,
 Syn she is changed for the townes goode.

"I haue ek thought, so it were hire assent,
 To axe hire at my fader of his grace; 555
 Than thynke I this were hire accusement,
 Syn wel I woot I may hire nought purchase:
 ffor syn my fader in so heigh a place
 As parlement hath hire eschaunge enseled,
 He nyl for me his lettre be repeled. 560

"Yet drede I moost hire herte to pertorbe
 With violence, if I do swich a game;
 ffor if I wolde it openly destorbe,
 It mooste be disclaundre to hire name.
 And me were leuere ded than hire diffame — 565
 As nolde god but if I sholde haue
 Hire honour leuere than my lif to saue.

"Thus am I lost for aught that I kan see;
 ffor certeyn is, syn that I am hire knyght,
 I moste hire honour leuere han than me 570
 In euery cas, as louere ought of right.
 Thus am I with desire and reson twight:
 Desire forto destourben hire me redeth,
 And reson nyl nat, so myn herte dredeth."

Thus wepyng that he koude neuere cesse, 575
 He seyde, "allas, how shal I, wrecche, fare?
 ffor wel fele I alwey my loue encresse,
 And hope is lasse and lasse alway, Pandare;
 Encressen ek the causes of my care.
 So weilaway, whi nyl myn herte breste? 580
 ffor as in loue ther is but litel reste."

Pandare answerde, "frend, thow maist for me

Don as the list; but hadde ich it so hoothe,
 And thyn estat, she sholde go with me,
 Though al this town cride on this thyng by note: 585
 I nolde sette at al that noys a grote,
 ffor whan men han wel cryed, than wol they rowne;
 Ek wonder last but nyne nyght neuere in towne.

"Deuyne nat in resoun ay so depe
 Ne corteisly, but help thi selue anon. 590
 Bet is that othere than thi seluen wepe,
 And namely, syn ye two ben al on,
 Ris vp, for by myn hed she shal not goon;
 And rather be in blame a lite i-founde
 Than sterue here as a gnat with-ouen wounde. 595

"It is no shame vn-to yow ne no vice
 Hire to withholden that ye loue moost.
 Peraunter she myghte holde the for nyce
 To late hire go thus to the Grekis oost.
 Think ek fortune, as wel thi seluen woost, 600
 Helpeth hardy man to his enprise
 And weyueth wrecches for hire cowardise.

"And though thy lady wolde a lite hire greue,
 Thow shalt thi self thi pees here-after make;
 But as for me, certeyn, I kan nat leue 605
 That she wolde it as now for yuel take.
 Whi sholde thanne of fered thyn herte quake?
 Think ek how Paris hath, that is thi brother,
 A loue, and whi shaltow nat haue another?

"And Troilus, o thyng I dar the swere, 610
 That if Criseyde, which that is thi lief,
 Now loueth the as wel as thow dost here,
 God help me so, she nyl nat take a-grief
 Theigh thow do boote a-non in this meschief;
 And if she wilneth fro the for to passe, 615
 Thanne is she fals, so loue hire wel the lasse.

"ffor-thi take herte and thynk right as a knyght,
 Thorough loue is broken al day euery lawe.
 Kith now somewhat thi corage and thi myght;
 Haue mercy on thi self, for eny awe. 620
 Lat nat this wrecched wo thyn herte gnawe,
 But manly sette the world on six and seuene,

And if thou deye a martyr, go to heuene.

"I wol my self ben with the at this dede,
 Theigh ich and al my kyn vp-on a stownde 625
 Shulle in a strete as dogges liggen dede,
 Thorough-girt with many a wide and bloody wownde;
 In euery cas I wol a frend be founde.
 And if the list here steruen as a wrecche,
 A-dieu, the deuel spede hym that it recche." 630

This Troilus gan with tho wordes quyken,
 And seyde, "frend, graunt mercy, ich assente.
 But certeynly thou maist nat so me priken,
 Ne peyne non ne may me so tormente,
 That for no cas it is nat myn entente, 635
 At shorte wordes, though I deyen sholde,
 To rauysshe hire, but if hire self it wolde."

"Whi so mene I," quod Pandare, "al this day.
 But telle me thanne, hastow hire wil assayed,
 That sorwest thus?" and he answerde hym, "nay." 640
 "Wherof artow," quod Pandare," thanne amayed —
 That nost nat that she wol ben yuele appayed —
 To rauysshe hire, syn thou hast nought ben there,
 But if that Ioue tolde it in thyn ere?"

"fforthi ris vp as nought ne were anon, 645
 And wasshe thi face and to the kyng thou wende,
 Or he may wondren whider thou art goon.
 Thou most with wisdom hym and othere blende,
 Or vp-on cas he may after the sende
 Er thou be war; and shortly, brother deere, 650
 Be glad, and lat me werke in this matere.

"ffor I shal shape it so that sikerly
 Thou shalt this nyght som tyme, in som manere,
 Com speken with thi lady pryuely,
 And by hire wordes ek as by hire cheere 655
 Thou shalt ful sone aperceyue and wel here
 Al hire entente, and in this cas the beste;
 And fare now wel, for in this point I reste."

The swifte fame, which that false thynges
 Egal reporteth lik the thynges trewe, 660
 Was thorough-out Troye y-fled with preste wynges

ffro man to man and made this tale al newe,
 How Calkas doughter with hire brighte hewe,
 At parlement with-outen wordes more
 Y-graunted was in chaunge of Antenore. 665

The whiche tale anon right as Criseyde
 Hadde herd, she which that of hire fader roughte,
 As in this cas, right nought, ne whan he deyde,
 fful bisily to Iupiter bisoughte
 Yeue hem meschaunce that this tretis broughte; 670
 But shortly, lest thise tales sothe were,
 She dorst at no wight asken it for fere,

As she that hadde hire herte and al hire mynde
 On Troilus i-set so wonder faste,
 That al this world ne myghte hire loue vnbynde, 675
 Ne Troilus out of hire herte caste;
 She wol ben his while that hire lif may laste.
 And thus she brenneth both in loue and drede,
 So that she nyste what was best to reede.

But as men seen in towne and al aboute 680
 That wommen vsen frendes to visite,
 So to Criseyde of wommen com a route
 ffor pitous ioie and wenden hire delite;
 And with hire tales deere ynough a myte,
 These wommen which that in the Cite dwelle, 685
 They sette hem down and seyde as I shall telle.

Quod first that oon, "I am glad, trewely,
 By-cause of yow that shal youre fader see.',
 Another seyde, "ywis, so nam nat I,
 ffor al to litel hath she with vs be." 690
 Quod tho the thridde, "I hope, ywis, that she
 Shal bryngen vs the pees on euery syde,
 That, whan she goth, almyghty god hire gide."

Tho wordes and tho wommanysse thynges,
 She herde hem right as though she thennes were; 695
 ffor, god it woot, hire herte on othir thyng is:
 Al-though the body sat among hem there,
 Hire aduertence is alwey elles-where;
 ffor Troilus ful faste hire soule soughte;
 With-outen word on hym alwey she thoughte. 700

Thise wommen, that thus wenden hire to plese,
 Aboute naught gonne alle hire tales spende;
 Swich vanyte ne kan don hire non ese,
 As she that al this mene while brende
 Of other passioun than that they wende, 705
 So that she felte almost hire herte dye,
 ffor wo and wery of that compaignie.

[ffor which no lenger myghte she restreyne
 Hir teeris, so they gonnen vp to welle,
 That yauen signes of the bittre peyne 710
 In which hir spirit was and moste dwelle,
 Remembryng hir fro heuen into which helle
 She fallen was, syn she forgoth the syghte
 Of Troilus, and sorwfully she sighte.]

And thilke fooles sittyng hire a-boute 715
 Wenden that she wepte and siked sore
 By-cause that she sholde out of that route
 Deperte and neuere pleye with hem more.
 And they that hadde y-knowen hire of yore
 Seigh hire so wepe and thoughte it kyndenesse, 720
 And ech of hem wepte ek for hire destresse.

And bisyly they gonnen hire comforten
 Of thyng, god woot, on which she litel thoughte,
 And with hire tales wenden hire disporten,
 And to be glad they often hire bysoughte. 725
 But swiche an ese therwith they hire wroughte
 Right as a man is esed forto feele,
 ffor ache of hed to clawen hym on his heele.

But after al this nyce vanyte
 They toke hire leue and hom they wenten alle. 730
 Criseyde, ful of sorweful pite,
 In-to hire chambre vp went out of the halle,
 And on hire bed she gan for ded to falle,
 In purpos neuere thennes for to rise;
 And thus she wroughte, as I shal yow deuyse. 735

Hire ownded heer that sonnyssh was of hewe
 She rente, and ek hire fyngeres longe and smale
 She wrong ful ofte and bad god on hire rewe,
 And with the deth to doon boote on hire bale;
 Hire hewe whilom bright, that tho was pale, 740

Bar witnesse of hire wo and hire constreynte;
And this she spak, sobbyng in hire compleynte,

"Allas,' quod she, "out of this regioun
I, woful wrecche and in-fortuned wight,
And born in corsed constellacioun, 745
Moot goon and thus deperten from my knyght.
Wo worth, allas, that ilke dayes light
On which I saugh hym first with eyen tweyne,
That causeth me — and ich hym — al this peyne!"

Ther-with the teris from hire eyen two 750
Down fille as shoure in Aperil ful swithe;
Hire white brest she bet and for the wo
After the deth she cryed a thousand sithe,
Syn he that wont hire wo was for to lithe,
She moot forgon; for which disaunture 755
She held hire self a forlost creature.

She seyde, "how shal he don and ich also?
How sholde I lyue if that I from hym twynne?
O deere herte eke, that I loue so,
Who shal that sorwe slen that ye ben inne? 760
O Calkas, fader, thyn be al this synne!
O moder myn, that cleped were Argyue,
Wo worth that day that thow me bere on lyue!

"To what fyn sholde I lyue and sorwen thus?
How sholde a fissh with-uten water dure? 765
What is Criseyde worth from Troilus?
How sholde a plaunte or lyues creature
Lyue with-uten his kynde noriture?
ffor which ful ofte a byword here I seye,
That "rooteles moot grene soone deye.' 770

"I shal doon thus, syn neither swerd ne darte
Dar I noon handle for the crueltee,
That ilke day that I from yow departe,
If sorwe of that nyl nat my bane be,
Thanne shal no mete or drynke come in me 775
Til I my soule out of my breste vnshethe,
And thus my seluen wol I don to dethe.

"And Troilus, my clothes euerychon
Shul blake ben in tokennyng, herte swete,

That I am as out of this world agon, 780
 That wont was yow to setten in quiete;
 And of myn ordre ay til deth me mete,
 The obseruance euere in youre absence
 Shal sorwe ben, compleynt and abstinence.

"Myn herte and ek the woful goost ther-inne 785
 Byquethe I with youre spirit to compleyne
 Eternaly for they shal neuere twynne;
 ffor though in erthe y-twynned be we tweyne,
 Yet in the feld of pite, out of peyne,
 That highte Elisos, shal we ben y-feere, 790
 As Orpheus with Erudice his feere.

"Thus, herte myn, for Antenor, allas,
 I soone shal be chaunged, as I wene.
 But how shul ye don in this sorwful cas?
 How shal youre tendre herte this sustene? 795
 But, herte myn, foryete this sorwe and tene,
 And me also, for sothly forto seye,
 So ye wel fare, I recche naught to deye."

How myghte it euere y-red ben or y-songe,
 The pleynte that she made in hire destresse? 800
 I not; but as for me, my litel tonge,
 If I discryuen wolde hire heuynesse,
 It sholde make hire sorwe seme lesse
 Than that it was, and childisshly deface
 Hire heigh compleynte, and therfore ich it pace. 805

Pandare, which that sent from Troilus
 Was to Criseyde — as ye han herd deuyse,
 That for the beste it was acorded thus,
 And he ful glad to doon hym that seruyse —
 Unto Criseyde in a ful secree wise, 810
 Ther as she lay in torment and in rage,
 Come hire to telle al holly his message.

And fond that she hire seluen gan to trete
 fful pitously, for with hire salte teris
 Hire brest, hire face, y-bathed was ful wete; 815
 The myghty tresses of hire sonnysshe heeris
 Unbroiden hangen al aboute hire eeris,
 Which yaf hym verray signal of martire
 Of deth which that hire herte gan desire.

Whan she hym saugh she gan for sorwe anon 820
 Hire tery face atwixe hire armes hide,
 ffor which this Pandare is so wo-bygon
 That in the hous he myghte vnnethe abyde,
 As he that pite felt on euery syde:
 ffor if Criseyde hadde erst compleyned soore, 825
 Tho gan she pleyne a thousand tymes more.

And in hire aspre pleynte thus she seyde,
 "Pandare first of ioies mo than two
 Was cause causyng vnto me, Criseyde,
 That now transmewed ben in cruel wo. 830
 Wher shal I seye to yow welcom or no,
 That alderfirst me broughte vnto seruyse
 Of loue, allas, that endeth in swich wise?

"Endeth thanne loue in wo? ye, or men lieth,
 And alle worldly blisse as thynketh me: 835
 The ende of blisse ay sorwe it occupieth.
 And who-so troweth nat that it so be,
 Lat hym vp-on me, woful wrecche, ysee,
 That my self hate and ay my burthe a-corse,
 ffelyng alwey fro wikke I go to worse. 840

"Who-so me seeth, he seeth sorwe al atonys,
 Peyne, torment, pleynte, wo, distresse.
 Out of my woful body harm ther noon is,
 As angwissh, langour, cruel bitternesse,
 Anoy, smert, drede, fury and ek siknesse. 845
 I trowe, ywys, from heuene teeris reyne
 ffor pite of myn aspre and cruel peyne."

"And thow my suster, ful of discomfort,"
 Quod Pandarus, "what thynkestow to do?
 Whi ne hastow to thy seluen som resport? 850
 Whi wiltow thus thi self, allas, for-do?
 Leef al this werk and take now heede to
 That I shal seyn, and herkne of good entente
 This which by me thi Troilus the sente."

Tornede hire tho Criseyde, a wo makynge 855
 So gret that it a deth was forto see.
 "Allas," quod she, "what wordes may ye brynge?
 What wol my deere herte seyn to me,

Which that I drede neuere mo to see?
 Wol he han pleynte or teris er I wende?
 I haue ynough if he ther-after sende." 860

She was right swich to seen in hire visage
 As is that wight that men on beere bynde:
 Hire face, lik of Paradys the ymage,
 Was al ychaunged in a-nother kynde; 865
 The pleye, the laughter, men was wont to fynde
 In hire, and ek hire ioies euerichone,
 Ben fled, and thus lith now Criseyde allone.

Aboute hire eyen two a purpre ryng
 By-trent in sothfast tokenyng of hire peyne, 870
 That to biholde it was a dedly thyng,
 ffor which Pandare myghte nat restreine
 The teeris from hise eighen forto reyne.
 But natheles, as he best myghte, he seyde
 ffrom Troilus thise wordes to Criseyde. 875

"Lo, Nece, I trowe ye han herd al how
 The kyng with othere lordes for the beste
 Hath made eschaunge of Antenor and yow,
 That cause is of this sorwe and this vnreste.
 But how this cas dooth Troilus moleste, 880
 That may non erthely mannes tonge seye;
 ffor verray wo his wit is al aweye.

"ffor which we han so sorwed, he and I,
 That in-to litel bothe it hadde vs slawe;
 But thorough my conseyl this day finaly, 885
 He somewhat is fro wepyng now withdrawe,
 And semeth me that he desireth fawe
 With yow to ben al nyght forto deuyse
 Remedie in this, if ther were any wyse.

"This, shorte and pleyn, theeffect of my message, 890
 As ferforth as my wit kan comprehende;
 ffor ye that ben of torment in swich rage
 May to no longe prologe as now entende;
 And here-vpon ye may answere hym sende —
 And for the loue of god, my Nece deere, 895
 So leue this wo er Troilus be here."

"Gret is my wo," quod she and sighte soore,

As she that feleth dedly sharp distresse,
 "But yit to me his sorwe is muchel more,
 That loue hym bet than he hym self, I gesse. 900
 Allas, for me hath he swich heynesse?
 Kan he for me so pitously compleyne?
 I-wis, his sorwe doubleth al my peyne.

"Greuous to me, god woot, is forto twynne,"
 Quod she, "but yet it harder is to me 905
 To sen that sorwe which that he is inne,
 ffor wel woot I it wol my bane be,
 And deye I wol in certeyn," tho quod she;
 "But bid hym come er deth, that thus me threteth,
 Dryue out that goost which in myn herte beteth." 910

Thise wordes seyd, she on hire armes two
 ffil gruf and gan to wepen pitously.
 Quod Pandarus, "allas, whi do ye so,
 Syn wel ye woot the tyme is faste by 915
 That he shal come? Aris vp hastily,
 That he yow nat bywopen thus ne fynde,
 But ye wole haue him wood out of his mynde.

"ffor wiste he that ye ferde in this manere,
 He wolde hym seluen sle; and if I wende 920
 To han this fare, he sholde nat come here
 ffor al the good that Priam may dispende.
 ffor to what fyn he wolde anon pretende,
 That knowe ich wel, and forthi yet I seye,
 So lef this sorwe or platly he wol deye.

"And shapeth yow his sorwe for tabregge, 925
 And nought encesse, leeue Nece swete;
 Beth rather to hym cause of flat than egge,
 And with som wisdom ye his sorwes bete.
 What helpeth it to wepen ful a strete,
 Or though ye bothe in salte teeris dreynte? 930
 Bet is a tyme of cure ay than of pleynte.

"I mene thus: whan ich hym hider brynge,
 Syn ye be wise and bothe of oon assente,
 So shapeth how destourbe youre goynge,
 Or come ayeyn soon after ye be wente — 935
 Wommen ben wise in short auysemente —
 And lat sen how youre wit shal now auaille,

And what that I may helpe, it shal nat faille.

"Go," quod Criseyde, "and Uncle, trewely,
I shal don al my myght me to restreyne 940
ffrom wepyng in his sighte, and bisily
Hym forto glade I shal don al my peyne,
And in myn herte seken euery veyne;
If to his sore ther may be fonden salue,
It shal nat lakke, certeyn, on my halue." 945

Goth Pandarus and Troilus he soughte,
Til in a temple he fond hym al allone,
As he that of his lif no lenger roughete;
But to the pitouse goddes euerichone
fful tendrely he preyde and made his mone, 950
To doon hym sone out of this world to pace,
ffor wel he thoughte ther was non other grace.

And shortly, al the sothe forto seye,
He was so fallen in despeir that day,
That outrely he shop hym forto deye. 955
ffor right thus was his argument alway:
He seyde he nas but lorn, so weylaway —
"ffor al that comth, comth by necessitee,
Thus to ben lorn, it is my destinee.

"ffor certeynly, this wot I wel," he seyde, 960
"That for-sight of diuine purueyaunce
Hath seyn alwey me to forgon Criseyde,
Syn god seeth euery thyng, out of doutaunce,
And hem disponyth, thorough his ordinaunce,
In hire merites sothly for to be, 965
As they shul comen by predestyne.

"But natheles, allas, whom shal I leue?
ffor ther ben grete clerkes many oon,
That destyne thorough argumentes preue;
And som men seyn that nedely ther is noon, 970
But that fre chois is yeuen vs euerychon.
O welaway, so sleighe arn clerkes olde
That I not whos opynyoun I may holde.

"ffor som men seyn, if god seth al biforn —
Ne god may nat deceyued ben, parde — 975
Than moot it fallen, theigh men hadde it sworn,

That purueiance hath seyn byfore to be.
 Wherfore I sey that from eterne if he
 Hath wist byforn oure thought ek as oure dede,
 We han no fre chois, as thise clerkes rede. 980

"ffor other thought, nor other dede also,
 Myghte neuere ben, but swich as purueyaunce,
 Which may nat ben deceyued neuere mo,
 Hath feled byforn, with-outen ignoraunce.
 ffor if ther myghte ben a variaunce 985
 To writhen out fro goddis purueyinge,
 Ther nere no prescience of thyng comynge.

"But it were rather an opynyoun
 Uncerteyn, and no stedfast forseynge;
 And certes, that were an abusioun, 990
 That god sholde han no parfit clere wytynge
 More than we men that han doutous wenyng:
 But swich an errour vp-on god to gesse
 Were fals and foul and wikked corsednesse.

"Ek this is an opynyoun of some 995
 That han hire top ful heigh and smothe yshore:
 They seyn right thus, that thyng is nat to come
 ffor that the prescience hath seyn by-fore
 That it shal come; but they seyn that therfore
 That it shal come, therefore the purueyaunce 1000
 Woot it byforn, with-outen ignoraunce.

"And in this manere this necessite
 Retorneth in his part contrarie agayne;
 ffor nedfully byhoueth it nat to bee
 That thilke thynges fallen in certayne 1005
 That ben purueyed; but nedly, as they sayne,
 Byhoueth it that thynges whiche that falle,
 That they in certayn ben purueyed alle.

"I mene as though I laboured me in this
 To enqueren which thyng cause of which thyng be: 1010
 As wheither that the prescience of god is
 The certeyn cause of the necessite
 Of thynges that to comen ben, parde;
 Or if necessite of thyng comynge
 Be cause certeyn of the purueyinge. 1015

"But now nenforce I me nat in shewyng
 How the ordre of causes stant; but wel woot I
 That it byhoueth that the byfallynge
 Of thynges wiste byforn certeynly
 Be necessarie, al seme it nat therby
 That prescience putte fallynge necessaire
 To thyng to come, al falle it foule or faire.

1020

"ffor if ther sitte a man yond on a see,
 Than by necessite bihoueth it
 That, certes, thyn opynyoun sooth be
 That wenest or coniectest that he sit;
 And further ouere now ayeynward yit,
 Lo, right so is it of the part contrarie,
 As thus — now herkne, for I wol nat tarie:

1025

"I sey that if the opynyoun of the
 Be soth for that he sitte, than sey I this:
 That he mot siten by necessite;
 And thus necessite in eyther is.

1030

ffor in hym nede of sittyng is, ywys,
 And in the nede of soth; aud thus, forsothe,
 There mot necessite ben in yow bothe.

1035

"But thow mayst seyn the man sit nat therfore
 That thyn opynyoun of his sittyng soth is;
 But rather for the man sit ther byfore,
 Therfore is thyn opynyoun soth, ywys.
 And I seye, though the cause of soth of this
 Comth of his sittyng, yet necessite
 Is entrechaunged both in hym and the.

1040

"Thus in the same wise, out of doutaunce,
 I may wel maken, as it semeth me,
 My resonyng of goddes purueyaunce
 And of the thynges that to comen be;
 By which resoun men may wel y-se
 That thilke thynges that in erthe falle,
 That by necessite they comen alle.

1045

1050

"ffor al-though that, for thyng shal come, y-wys,
 Therfore is it purueyed, certeynly —
 Nat that it comth for it purueyed is —
 Yet natheles bihoueth it nedfully
 That thing to come be purueyd, trewely;

1055

Or elles thynges that purueyed be,
That they bitiden by necessite.

"And this suffiseth right ynough, certeyn,
fforto destruye oure fre chois euery del.
But now is this abusioun to seyn
That fallyng of the thynges temporel
Is cause of goddes prescience eternal.
Now trewely, that is a fals sentence,
That thyng to come sholde cause his prescience.

1060

"What myght I wene, and I hadde swich a thought,
But that god purueyeth thyng that is to come
ffor that it is to come, and ellis nought?
So myghte I wene that thynges alle and some,
That whilom ben byfalle and ouercome,
Ben cause of thilke souereyne purueyaunce
That for-woot al with-ouen ignoraunce.

1065

"And ouere al this, yet sey I more herto,
That right as whan I wot ther is a thyng,
I-wys, that thyng moot nedfully be so;
Ek right so whan I woot a thyng comyng,
So mot it come; and thus the bifallyng
Of thynges that ben wist bifore the tyde,
They mowe nat ben eschued on no syde."

1075

Thanne seyde he thus, "al-myghty Ioue in trone,
That woost of al thys thyng the sothfastnesse,
Rewe on my sorwe and do me deyen sone,
Or bryng Criseyde and me fro this destresse."
And whil he was in al this heuynesse,
Disputyng with hym self in matere,
Com Pandare in and seyde as ye may here.

1080

1085

"O myghty god," quod Pandarus, "in trone,
I! who say euere a wis man faren so?
Whi Troilus, what thinkestow to doone?
Hastow swich lust to ben thyn owen fo?
What, perde, yet is nat Criseyde a-go!
Whi list the so thi self fordoon for drede,
That in thyn hed thyne eyen semen dede?"

1090

"Hastow nat lyued many a yer byforn
With-ouen hire and ferd ful wel at ese?"

Artow for hire and for noon other born? 1095
 Hath kynde the wrought al only hire to plese?
 Lat be, and thynk right thus in thi disese:
 That in the dees right as ther fallen chaunces,
 Right so in loue ther come and gon plesaunces.

"And yet this is my wonder moste of alle, 1100
 Whi thow thus sorwest, syn thow nost nat yit,
 Touchyng hire goyng, how that it shal falle,
 Ne yif she kan hire self destourben it.
 Thow hast nat yet assayed al hire wit;
 A man may al by-tyme his nekke beede 1105
 Whan it shal of, and sorwen at the nede.

"ffor-thi tak hede of that I shal the seye:
 I haue with hire y-spoke and longe y-be,
 So as acorded was bitwixe vs tweye.
 And euere mor me thynketh thus that she 1110
 Hath somewhat in hire hertes priuete,
 Wher-with she kan, if I shal right arede,
 Destourbe al this of which thow art in drede.

"ffor which my counseil is, what it is nyght,
 Thow to hire go and make of this an ende, 1115
 And blisful Iuno thorough hire grete myght
 Shal as I hope hire grace vnto vs sende.
 Myn herte seyth certeyn she shal nat wende;
 And forthi put thyn herte a while in reste,
 And holde this purpos, for it is the beste." 1120

This Troilus answered and sighte soore,
 "Thow seist right wel, and I wol don right so."
 And what hym liste, he seyde vn-to it more.
 And whan that it was tyme for to go,
 fful pryuely hym self, with-outen mo, 1125
 Unto hire com as he was wont to doone,
 And how they wroughte, I shal yow tellen soone.

Soth is, that whan they gonnen first mete,
 So gan the peyne hire hertes forto twiste,
 That neyther of hem other myghte grete, 1130
 But hem in armes toke and after kiste.
 The lasse woful of hem bothe nyste
 Wher that he was, ne myghte o word out bryng,
 As I seyde erst, for wo and for sobbyng.

- The woful teeris that they leten falle 1135
 As bittre weren out of teris kynde,
 ffor peyne, as is ligne aloes or galle:
 So bittre teeris weep nought, as I fynde,
 The woful Mirra thorough the bark and rynde;
 That in this world ther nys so hard an herte 1140
 That nolde han rewed on hire peynes smerte.
- But whan hire woful weri goostes tweyne
 Retourned ben ther as hem owe to dwelle,
 And that somewhat to wayken gan the peyne
 By lengthe of pleynte, and ebben gan the welle 1145
 Of hire teeris and the herte vnswelle,
 With broken vois, al hoors for-shright, Criseyde
 To Troilus thise ilke wordes seyde:
- "O Ioue, I deye, and mercy I beseche!
 Help, Troilus!" and ther-with-al hire face 1150
 Up-on his brest she leyde and loste speche —
 Hire woful spirit from his propre place,
 Right with the word, alwey o poynt to pace —
 And thus she lith with hewes pale and grene,
 That whilom fresshe and fairest was to sene. 1155
- This Troilus, that on hire gan biholde,
 Clepyng hire name — and she lay as for dede,
 Withoute answeere, and felte hire lymes colde,
 Hire eyen throwen vpward to hire hede —
 This sorwful man kan now noon other rede, 1160
 But ofte tyme hire colde mowth he kiste:
 Wher hym was wo, god and hym self it wiste!
- He rist hym vp and long streght he hire leyde;
 ffor signe of lif, for aught he kan or may,
 Kan he non fynde in no thyng on Criseyde, 1165
 ffor which his song ful ofte is "weylaway."
 But whan he saugh that specheles she lay,
 With sorweful vois and herte of blisse al bare,
 He seyde how she was fro this worlde y-fare.
- So after that he longe hadde hire compleyned, 1170
 His hondes wrong and seyde that was to seye,
 And with hise teeris salt hire brest byreyned,
 He gan tho teeris wypen of ful dreye,

And pitously gan for the soule preye,
 And seyde, "O lord that set art in thi trone,
 Rewe ek on me, for I shal folwe hire sone." 1175

She cold was and with-ouen sentement,
 ffor aught he woot, for breth ne felte he non;
 And this was hym a pregnant argument
 That she was forth out of this world a-gon. 1180
 And whan he say ther was non other woon,
 He gan hire lymes dresse in swich manere
 As men don hem that shal ben layde on beere.

And after this with sterne and cruel herte,
 His swerd anon out of his shethe he twichte,
 Hym self to slen, how sore that hym smerte,
 So that his soule hire soule folwen myghte,
 Ther as the doom of Mynos wolde it dighte;
 Syn loue and cruel fortune it ne wolde,
 That in this world he lenger lyuen sholde. 1185
 1190

Than seyde he thus, fulfild of heigh desdayn,
 "O cruel Ioue, and thow fortune aduerse,
 This al and som, that falsly haue ye slayn
 Criseyde, and syn ye may do me no werse,
 ffor on youre myghte and werkes so dyuerse! 1195
 Thus cowardly ye shul me neuere wynne;
 Ther shal no deth me fro my lady twynne.

"ffor I this world, syn ye haue slayn hire thus,
 Wol lete and folwe hire spirit low or hye;
 Shal neuere louere seyn that Troilus 1200
 Dar nat for fere with his lady dye;
 ffor certeyn, I wol beere hire compaignie.
 But syn ye wol nat suffre vs lyuen here,
 Yet suffreth that oure soules ben y-fere.

"And thow, Cite, which that I leue in wo, 1205
 And thow, Priam, and bretheren alle yfeere,
 And thow, my Moder, far wel, for I go;
 And Atropos, make redy thow my beere.
 And thow Criseyde, O swete herte deere,
 Receyue now my spirit," wolde he seye, 1210
 With swerd at herte, al redy forto deye.

But as god wolde, of swough therwith shabreyde,

And gan to sike and "Troilus" she cride,
 And he answerde, "lady myn, Criseyde,
 Lyue ye yeet?" and leet his swerd down glide. 1215
 "Ye, herte myn, that thonked be Cipride,"
 Quod she, and ther-with-al she soore syghte,
 And he bigan to glad hire as he myghte;

Took hire in armes two and kiste hire ofte,
 And hire to glade he did al his entente; 1220
 ffor which hire goost, that flikered ay o-lofte,
 In-to hire woful herte ayeyn it wente.
 But at the laste, as that hire eye glente
 A-syde, anon she gan his swerd espie,
 As it lay bare, and gan for fere crye, 1225

And asked hym whi he it hadde out drawe?
 And Troilus anon the cause hire tolde,
 And how hym self therwith he wolde han slawe;
 ffor which Criseyde vp-on hym gan biholde,
 And gan hym in hire armes faste folde, 1230
 And seyde, "O mercy, god, lo, which a dede!
 Ailas, how neigh we weren bothe dede!

"Than if I nadde spoken, as grace was,
 Ye wolde han slayn youre self auon?" quod she.
 "Yee, douteles"; and she answerde, "allas, 1235
 ffor by that ilke lord that made me,
 I nolde a forlong wey on lyue haue be
 After youre deth, to han ben crowned Queene
 Of al that lond the sonne on shyneth sheene.

"But with this selue swerd which that here is, 1240
 My selue I wolde han slayne," quod she tho.
 "But hoo, for we han right ynough of this,
 And lat vs rise and streght to bedde go,
 Aud there lat vs speken of oure wo —
 ffor by the mortar which that I se brenne, 1245
 Knowe I ful wel that day is nat far henne."

Whan they were in hire bed in armes folde,
 Naught was it lik tho nyghtes here by-forn;
 ffor pitously ech other gan by-holde,
 As they that hadden al hire blisse y-lorn, 1250
 Bywaylinge ay the day that they were born,
 Til at the laste this sorwful wight Criseyde

To Troilus this ilke wordes seyde:

"Lo, herte myn, wel woot ye this," quod she,
 "That if a wight alwey his wo compleyne,
 And seketh nought how holpen forto be,
 It nys but folie and encesse of peyne;
 And syn that here assembled be we tweyne,
 To fynde boote of wo that we ben inne,
 It were al tyme soone to bygynne. 1255
 1260

"I am a womman, as ful wel ye woot,
 And as I am auysed sodeynly,
 So wol I telle yow while it is hoot:
 Me thynketh thus, that nouthur ye nor I
 Ought half this wo to maken skilfully;
 ffor ther is art ynough forto redresse
 That yet is mys and slen this heuynesse. 1265

"Soth is, the wo the which that we ben inne,
 ffor aught I woot, for no-thing ellis is
 But for the cause that we sholden twynne:
 Considered al, ther nys namore amys.
 But what is thanne a remede vnto this,
 But that we shape vs soone forto meete?
 This al and som, my deere herte sweete. 1270

"Now that I shal wel bryngen it a-boute
 To come ayeyn soone after that I go,
 Ther-of am I no manere thyng in doute;
 ffor dredeles, with-inne a wowke 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. 1275
 1280

"ffor which I wol nat make long sermoun,
 ffor tyme y-lost may nought recouered be;
 But I wol gon to my conclusioun,
 And to the beste in aught that I kan see.
 And for the loue of god foryeue it me,
 If I speke aught ayeyns youre hertes reste;
 ffor trewely, I speke it for the beste, 1285

"Makyng alwey a protestacioun
 That now this wordes which that I shal seye,
 Nis but to shewen yow my mocioun 1290

To fynde vnto oure help the beste weye;
 And taketh it non other wise, I preye.
 ffor in effect what so ye me comaunde,
 That wol I don, for that is no demaunde. 1295

"Now herkneth this: ye han wel vnderstonde,
 My goyng graunted is by parlement
 So ferforth that it may nat be withstonde
 ffor al this world, as by my iugement;
 And syn ther helpeth non auisement 1300
 To letten it, lat it passe out of mynde,
 And lat vs shape a better wey to fynde.

"The soth is this: the twynnyng of vs tweyne
 Wol vs dise and cruelich anoye;
 But hym byhoueth som tyme han a peyne, 1305
 That serueth loue, if that he wol haue ioie.
 And syn I shal no ferther out of Troie
 Than I may ride ayeyn on half a morwe,
 It oughthe lesse causen vs to sorwe.

"So as I shal not so ben hid in muwe, 1310
 That day by day, myn owne herte deere,
 Syn wel ye woot that it is now a trewe,
 Ye shal ful wel al myn estat y-heere.
 And er that trewe is doon I shal ben heere;
 And thanne haue ye both Antenore y-wonne, 1315
 And me also; beth glad now if ye konne.

"And thenk right thus, "Criseyde is now agon,
 But what! she shal come hastiliche ayeyn.'
 And whanne, allas? by god, lo, right anon,
 Er dayes ten, this dar I saufly seyn. 1320
 And than at erste shal we be so feyn,
 So as we shal to-gideres euere dwelle,
 That al this world ne myghte oure blisse telle.

"I se that ofte tyme there as we ben now,
 That for the beste oure counseyl for to hide, 1325
 Ye speke nat with me nor I with yow
 In fourtenyght, ne se yow go ne ride.
 May ye naught ten dayes thanne abide,
 ffor myn honour in swich an auenture?
 I-wys, ye mowen ellis lite endure. 1330

"Ye knowe ek how that al my kynne is heere,
 But if that onliche it my fader be,
 And ek myn othere thynges alle yfeere —
 And nameliche, my deere herte, ye,
 Whom that I nolde leuen forto se
 ffor al this world, as wyde as it hath space —
 Or ellis se ich neuere Ioues face. 1335

"Whi trowe ye my fader in this wise
 Coueyteth so to se me, but for drede
 Lest in this town that folkes me despise
 By-cause of hym for his vnhappy dede? 1340
 What woot my fader what lif that I lede?
 ffor if he wiste in Troie how wel I fare,
 Us neded for my wending nought to care.

"Ye sen that euery day ek more and more
 Men trete of pees and it supposid is
 That men the queene Eleyne shal restore,
 And Grekis vs restoren that is mys;
 So though ther nere comfort non but this,
 That men purposen pees on euery syde,
 Ye may the bettre at ese of herte abyde. 1345
 1350

"ffor if that it be pees, myn herte deere,
 The nature of the pees moot nedes dryue
 That men moost entrecomunen yfeere,
 And to and fro ek ride and gon as blyue
 Alday as thikke as been fleen from an hyue,
 And euery wight han liberte to bleue
 Where-as hym liste the bet withouten leue. 1355

"And though so be that pees ther may be non,
 Yet hider, though ther neuere pees ne were,
 I moste come; for whider sholde I gon,
 Or how meschaunce sholde I dwelle there
 Among tho men of armes euere in feere?
 ffor which, as wisly god my soule rede,
 I kan nat sen wher-of ye sholden drede. 1360
 1365

"Haue here another wey, if it so be
 That al this thyng ne may yow nat suffise:
 My fader as ye knowen wel, parde,
 Is old, and elde is ful of coueytise;
 And I right now haue founden al the gise, 1370

With-outen net, wherwith I shal hym hente;
And herkeneth how, if that ye wol assente.

"Lo, Troilus, men seyn that hard it is
The wolf ful and the wether hool to haue;
This is to seyn, that men ful ofte, i-wys,
Mote spenden part the remenant for to saue;
ffor ay with gold men may the herte graue
Of hym that set is vp-on coueytise;
And how I mene, I shal it yow deuyse.

1375

"The moeble which that I haue in this town
Unto my fader shal I take and seye
That right for trust and for sauacioun
It sent is from a frend of his or tweye,
The whiche frendes feruentliche hym preye
To senden after more and that in hie,
Whil that this town stant thus in iupartie.

1380

"And that shal ben an huge quantite —
Thus shal I seyn — but lest it folk aspide,
This may be sent by no wyght but by me.
I shal ek shewen hym, yf pes by-tyde,
What frendes that ich haue on euery syde
Toward the Court, to don the wrathe pace
Of Priamus and don hym stonde in grace.

1385

1390

"So what for o thyng and for other, swete,
I shal hym so enchaunten with my sawes,
That right in heuene his sowle is, shal he mete;
ffor al Appollo or his clerkes lawes,
Or kalkullynge, auayleth nought thre hawes;
Desir of gold shal so his soule blende,
That as me lyst I shal wel make an ende.

1395

1400

"And yf he wolde ought by hys sort it preue
If that I lye, in certayn I shal fonde
Distorben hym and plukke hym by the sleue,
Makyng his sort, and beren hym on honde
He hath not wel the goddes vnderstonde;
ffor goddes speken in amphibologies,
And for a soth they tellen twenty lyes.

1405

"Eke drede fond first goddes, I suppose —
Thus shal I seyn — and that his coward herte

Made hym amys the goddes text to glose,
 Whan he for fered out of Delphos sterte.
 And but I make hym soone to conuerte,
 And don my rede with-inne a day or tweye,
 I wol to yow oblige me to deye."

1410

And treweliche, as writen wel I fynde,
 That al this thyng was seyde of good entente;
 And that hire herte trewe was and kynde
 Towardes hym and spak right as she mente,
 And that she starf for wo neigh whan she wente,
 And was in purpos euere to be trewe:
 Thus writen they that of hire werkes knewe.

1415

1420

This Troilus, with herte and erys spradde,
 Herde al this thyng deuysen to and fro,
 And verrayliche hym semed that he hadde
 The selue wit, but yet to late hire go
 His herte mys-foryaf hym euere mo.
 But fynaly he gan his herte wreste
 To trusten hire and took it for the beste.

1425

ffor which the grete furie of his penaunce
 Was queynt with hope, and therwith hem bitwene
 Bigan for ioie thamorouse daunce;
 And as the briddes whanne the sonne is shene
 Deliten in hire song in leues grene,
 Right so the wordes that they spake y-feere
 Delited hem and made hire hertes clere.

1430

1435

But natheles, the wending of Criseyde
 ffor al this world may nat out of his mynde;
 ffor which ful ofte he pitously hire preyde
 That of hire heste he myghte hire trewe fynde,
 And seyde hire, "certes, if ye be vnkynde,
 And but ye come at day set in-to Troye,
 Ne shal I neuere haue hele, honour ne ioie.

1440

"ffor also soth as sonne vp-rist o-morwe,
 And god so wisly thow me, woful wrecche,
 To reste brynge out of this cruel sorwe,
 I wol my seluen sle if that ye drecche.
 But of my deth though litel be to recche,
 Yet er that ye me causen so to smerte,
 Dwelle rather here, myn owen swete herte.

1445

"ffor trewely, myn owne lady deere,
 Tho sleghtes yit that I haue herd yow stere
 fful shaply ben to faylen alle y-feere.
 ffor thus men seyth: "that on thenketh the beere,
 But al another thenketh his ledere.'
 Youre syre is wys, and seyde is out of drede:
 "Men may the wise at-renne and naught atrede.'

1450

1455

"It is ful hard to halten vnespied
 Byfore a crepel, for he kan the crafte;
 Youre fader is in sleght as Argus eyed;
 ffor al be that his moeble is hym birafte,
 His olde sleighte is yet so with hym lafte:
 Ye shal nat blende hym for youre wommanhede,
 Ne feyne aright, and that is al my drede.

1460

"I not if pees shal euere mo bitide;
 But pees or no, for earnest ne for game,
 I woot, syn Calkas on the Grekis syde
 Hath ones ben, and lost so foule his name,
 He dar nomore come here ayeyn for shame;
 ffor which that wey, for aught I kan espie,
 To trusten on nys but a fantasie.

1465

1470

"Ye shal ek sen youre fader shal yow glose
 To ben a wif and, as he kan wel preche,
 He shal som Grek so preyse and wel allose,
 That rauysshen he shal yow with his speche,
 Or do yow don by force as he shal teche;
 And Troilus, of whom ye nyl han routhe,
 Shal causeles so steruen in his trouthe.

1475

"And ouere al this, youre fader shal despise
 Us alle and seyn this Cite nys but lorne,
 And that thassege neuere shal aryse,
 ffor whi the Grekis han it alle sworne,
 Tyl we be slayn and down oure walles torne.
 And thus he shal yow with his wordes fere,
 That ay drede I that ye wol bleuen there.

1480

"Ye shal ek seen so many a lusty knyghte
 Amonge the Grekis, ful of worthynesse,
 And ech of hem with herte, wit and myghte,
 To plesen yow don al his bisynesse,

1485

That ye shul dullen of the rudenesse
Of vs sely Troians, but if routhe
Remorde yow or vertue of youre trouthe. 1490

"And this to me so greuou is to thynke,
That fro my brest it wol my soule rende;
Ne dredeles in me ther may nat synke
A good opynyoun if that ye wende; 1495
ffor whi youre fadres sleghte wol vs shende.
And if ye gon, as I haue told yow yore,
So thenk I nam but ded, with-oute more.

"ffor which with humble, trewe and pitous herte,
A thousand tymes mercy I yow preye;
So rueth on myn aspre peynes smerte,
And doth somewhat as that I shal yow seye,
And lat vs stele away bitwixe vs tweye;
And thynk that folie is whan man may chese,
ffor accident his substaunce ay to lese. 1500
1505

"I mene thus, that syn we mowe er day
Wel stele away and ben togidere so,
What wit were it to putten in assay,
In cas ye sholden to youre fader go,
If that ye myghten come ayeyn or no? 1510
Thus mene I, that it were a gret folie
To putte that sikernesse in iupertie.

"And vulgarly to speken of substaunce,
Of tresour may we bothe with vs lede
I-nough to lyue in honour and plesaunce 1515
Til in-to tyme that we shal ben dede;
And thus we may eschuen al this drede.
ffor euerich other wey ye kan recorde,
Myn herte, ywys, may therwith naught acorde.

"And hardily, ne dredeth no pouerte, 1520
ffor I haue kyn and frendes elles-where,
That though we comen in oure bare sherte,
Us sholde neyther lakken gold ne gere,
But ben honored while we dwelten there.
And go we anon, for as in myn entente, 1525
This is the beste, if that ye wol assente."

Criseyde, with a sik right in this wise,

Answerde, "y-wys, my deere herte trewe,
 We may wel stele away as ye deuyse,
 And fynden swich vnthriftly weyes newe; 1530
 But afterward ful soore it wol vs rewe,
 And helpe me god so at my mooste nede,
 As causeles ye suffren al this drede.

"ffor thilke day that I for cherisyng
 Or drede of fader, or for other wight, 1535
 Or for estat, delit or for weddyng,
 Be fals to yow, my Troilus, my knyght,
 Saturnes doughter, Iuno, thorough hire myght,
 As wood as Athamante do me dwelle
 Eternalich in Stix, the put of helle. 1540

"And this on euery god celestial
 I swere it yow and ek on eche goddesse,
 On euery nympe and deite infernal,
 On satiry and fawny more and lesse,
 That halue goddes ben of wildernesse; 1545
 And Attropos my thred of lif to-breste,
 If I be fals — now trowe me if yow leste.

"And thow Symois, that as an arwe clere
 Thorough Troie ay rennest downward to the se,
 Ber witnesse of this word that seyde is here, 1550
 That thilke day that ich vntrewe be
 To Troilus, myn owene herte fre,
 That thow retourne bakward to thi welle,
 And I with body and soule synke in helle.

"But that ye speke away thus forto go 1555
 And leten alle youre frendes, god forbede,
 ffor any womman that ye sholden so,
 And namely syn Troie hath now swich nede
 Of help; and ek of o thyng taketh hede:
 If this were wist, my lif lay in balaunce, 1560
 And youre honour — god shilde us fro meschaunce!

"And if so be that pees heere after take,
 As alday happeth after anger game,
 Whi, lord, the sorwe and wo ye wolden make,
 That ye ne dorste come ayeyn for shame; 1565
 And er that ye iuperten so youre name,
 Beth naught to hastif in this hote fare —

ffor hastif man ne wanteth neuere care.

"What trowe ye the peple ek al aboute
 Wolde of it seye? It is ful light tared:
 They wolden seye and swere and it out of doute
 That loue ne drof yow naught to don this dede,
 But lust voluptuous and coward drede.
 Thus were al lost, ywys, myn herte deere,
 Youre honour which that now shyneth so clere.

"And also thynketh on myn honeste,
 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 lyued vnto the werldes ende,
 My name sholde I neuere ayeynward wynne:
 Thus were I lost, and that were routhe and synne.

"And for-thi sle with resoun al this hete;
 Men seyn, 'the suffrant ouercomith,' parde;
 Ek 'who-so wole han lief, he lief moot lete.'
 Thus maketh vertue of necessite
 By pacience, and thynk that lord is he
 Of fortune ay that naught wole of hire recche;
 And she ne daunteth no wight but a wrecche.

"And trusteth this, that certes, herte swete,
 Er Phebus suster, Lucina the sheene,
 The leoun passe out of this Ariete,
 I wol ben here withouten any wene:
 I mene, as helpe me Iuno, heuenes quene,
 The tenthe day, but if that deth messaile,
 I wol yow sen with-outen any faille."

"And now, so this be soth," quod Troilus,
 "I shal wel suffre vnto the tenthe day,
 Syn that I se that nede it mot be thus.
 But for the loue of god, if it be may,
 So late vs stelen priueliche away;
 ffor euere in oon, as forto liue in reste,
 Myn herte seyth that it wol be the beste."

"O mercy, god, what lif is this?" quod she,
 "Allas, ye sle me thus for verray tene.
 I se wel now that ye mystrusten me,

ffor by youre wordes it is wel yseene.
 Now for the loue of Cinthia the sheene,
 Mistrust me nought thus causeles for routhe,
 Syn to be trewe I haue yow plight my trouthe. 1610

"And thynketh wel that som tyme it is wit
 To spende a tyme a tyme forto wynne;
 Ne, parde, lorn am I naught fro yow yit,
 Though that we ben a day or two atwynne.
 Drif out tho fantasies yow with-inne, 1615
 And trusteth me and leueth ek youre sorwe,
 Or here my trouthe, I wol naught lyue tyl morwe.

"ffor if ye wiste how soore it doth me smerte,
 Ye wolde cesse of this; for god thow woste,
 The pure spirit wepeth in myn herte 1620
 To se yow wepen that I loue moste,
 And that I mot gon to the Grekis ooste.
 Ye, nere it that I wiste remedie
 To come ayeyn, right here I wolde dye.

"But certes, I am naught so nyce a wight 1625
 That I ne kan ymaginen a wey
 To come ayeyn that day that I haue hight,
 ffor who may holde a thing that wol away?
 My fader naught, for al his queynte pley.
 And by my thrift, my wending out of Troie 1630
 A-nother day shal torne vs alle to ioie.

"fforthi with al myn herte I yow biseke,
 If that yow list don ought for my preyere,
 And for that loue which that I loue yow eke,
 That er that I deperte fro yow here, 1635
 That of so good a confort and a cheere
 I may yow sen, that ye may brynge at reste
 Myn herte which that is o poynt to breste.

"And ouere al this I prey yow," quod she tho,
 "Myn owene hertes sothfast suffisaunce, 1640
 Syn I am thyn al hol with-ouen mo,
 That whil that I am absent no plesaunce
 Of oother do me fro youre remembraunce:
 ffor I am euere agast, for why men rede
 That loue is thyng ay ful of bisy drede. 1645

"ffor in this world ther lyueth lady non,
 If that ye were vntrewe, as god defende,
 That so bitraised were or wo bigon
 As I, that alle trouthe in yow entende.
 And douteles, if that ich other wende, 1650
 I ner but ded, and er ye cause fynde,
 ffor goddes loue, so beth me naught vnkynde."

To this answerde Troilus and seyde,
 "Now god, to whom ther nys no cause y-wrye,
 Me glad, as wys I neuere vnto Criseyde, 1655
 Syn thilke day I saugh hire first with ye,
 Was fals ne neuere shal til that I dye.
 At shorte wordes, wel ye may me leue;
 I kan namore, it shal be founde at preue."

"Grant mercy, goode myn, i-wys," quod she, 1660
 "And blisful Venus lat me neuere sterue
 Er I may stonde of plesaunce in degree
 To quyte hym wel that so wel kan deserue;
 And while that god my wit wol me conserue,
 I shal so don, so trewe I haue yow founde, 1665
 That ay honour to meward shal rebounde.

"ffor trusteth wel that youre estat roiale,
 Ne veyn delit nor only worthinesse
 Of yow in werre or torney marciale, 1670
 Ne pompe, array, nobleye or ek richesse,
 Ne made me to rewe on youre destresse;
 But moral vertue grounded vp-on trouthe,
 That was the cause I first hadde on yow routhe.

"Eke gentil herte and manhod that ye hadde,
 And that ye hadde, as me thoughte, in despit 1675
 Euery thyng that souned in-to badde,
 As rudenesse and poeplissh appetit,
 And that youre resoun bridlede youre delit;
 This made, abouen euery creature,
 That I was youre and shal while I may dure. 1680

"And this may lengthe of yeres naught fordo,
 Ne remuable fortune deface;
 But Iuppiter that of his myght may do
 The sorwful to be glad, so yeue vs grace,
 Or nyghtes ten to meten in this place, 1685

So that it may youre herte and myn suffise;
And fareth now wel, for tyme is that ye rise."

And after that they longe ypleyned hadde,
And ofte ykist and streite in armes folde,
The day gan rise and Troilus hym cladde, 1690
And rewwfullich his lady gan byholde,
As he that felte dethes cares colde,
And to hire grace he gan hym recomaunde:
Wher hym was wo, this holde I no demaunde.

ffor mannes hed ymagynen ne kan, 1695
Nentendement considere, ne tonge telle
The cruele peynes of this sorwful man,
That passen euery torment down in helle.
ffor whan he saugh that she ne myghte dwelle,
Which that his soule out of his herte rente, 1700
With-ouen more out of the chaumbre he wente.

Explicit liber quartus.

Book V*Incipit liber quintus*

Aprochen gan the fatal destyne That Ioues hath in disposicioun, And to yow, angry Parcas, sustren thre, Committeth to don execucioun; ffor which Criseyde moste out of the town, And Troilus shal dwellen forth in pyne Til Lachesis his thred no lenger twyne.	5
The goldetressed Phebus heighe on lofte Thries hadde al with hise bemes clene The snowes molte, and Yepherus as ofte Ibrought ayeyn the tendre leues grene, Syn that the sone of Ecuba the queene Bigan to loue hire first, for whom his sorwe Was al that she deperte sholde amorwe.	10
fful redy was at prime Diomede, Criseyde vn-to the Grekis oost to lede, ffor sorwe of which she felt hire herte blede, As she that nyste what was best to rede. And trewely, as men in bokes rede, Men wiste neuere womman han the care, Ne was so loth out of a town to fare.	15 20
This Troilus, with-ouen reed or loore, As man that hath hise ioies ek forlore, Was waytyng on his lady euere more, As she that was the sothfast crop and more Of al his lust or ioies here-bifore. But Troilus, now far wel al thi ioie, ffor shaltow neuere sen hire eft in Troie.	25
Soth is that while he bood in this manere, He gan his wo ful manly forto hide, That wel vnnethe it sene was in his chere. But at the yate ther she sholde out ride, With certeyn folk he houed hire tabide, So wo-bigon, al wolde he naught hym pleyne, That on his hors vnnethe he sat for peyne.	30 35

ffor ire he quook, so gan his herte gnawe,
 Whan Diomedé on horse gan hym dresse,
 And seyde to hym self this ilke sawe:
 "Allas," quod he, "thus foul a wrecchednesse,
 Whi suffre ich it, whi nyl ich it redresse? 40
 Were it nat bet atones for to dye
 Than euere more in langour thus to drye?"

"Why nyl I make atones riche and pore
 To haue inough to doone er that she go?
 Why nyl I brynge al Troie vp-on a roore? 45
 Why nyl I slen this Diomedé also?
 Why nyl I rather with a man or two
 Stele hire away? Whi wol I this endure?
 Whil nyl I helpen to myn owen cure?"

But why he nolde don so fel a dede, 50
 That shal I seyn and whi hym liste it spare:
 He hadde in herte alweyes a manere drede,
 Lest that Criseyde in rumour of this fare
 Sholde han ben slayn — lo, this was al his care,
 And ellis, certeyn, as I seyde yore, 55
 He hadde it don with-outen wordes more.

Criseyde, whan she redy was to ride,
 fful sorwfully she sighte and seyde "allas."
 But forth she moot for aught that may bitide,
 Ther nys non other remedie in this cas. 60
 And forth she rit ful sorwfully a pas.
 What wonder is though that hire sore smerte,
 Whan she forgoth hire owen dere herte?

This Troilus, in wise of curteysie,
 With hauke on honde and with an huge route 65
 Of knyghtes, rood and did hire companye,
 Passyng al the valeye fer with-oute,
 And ferther wolde han riden out of doute
 fful fayn, and wo was hym to gon so sone;
 But torne he moste, and it was ek to done. 70

And right with that was Antenor ycome
 Out of the Grekis oost, and euery wight
 Was of it glad and seyde he was welcome.
 And Troilus, al nere his herte light,
 He peyned hym with al his fulle myght 75

Hym to withholde of wepyng atte leeste,
And Antenor he kiste and made feste.

And ther-with-al he moste his leue take,
And caste his eye vp-on hire pitously,
And neer he rood his cause forto make, 80
To take hire by the honde al sobrelly;
And lord, so she gan wepen tendrely,
And he ful soft and sleighly gan hire seye,
"Now holde youre day and do me nat to deye."

With that his courser torned he aboute 85
With face pale, and vnto Diomedede
No word he spak, ne non of al his route;
Of which the sone of Tideus took hede,
As he that koude more than the Crede
In swich a craft, and by the reyne hire hente; 90
And Troilus to Troie homward he wente.

This Diomedede that ledde hire by the bridel,
Whan that he saugh the folk of Troie aweye,
Thoughte, "al my labour shal nat ben on ydel,
If that I may, for somewhat shall I seye; 95
ffor at the werste it may yet shorte oure weye.
I haue herd seyde ek tymes twyes twelue,
"He is a fool that wol foryete hym selue."

But natheles this thoughte he wel ynough,
That, "certeynlich I am aboute nought 100
If that I speke of loue or make it tough;
ffor douteles, if she haue in hire thought
Hym that I gesse, he may nat ben ybrought
So soon away; but I shal fynde a meene
That she naught wite as yet shal what I mene.," 105

This Diomedede, as he that koude his good,
Whan tyme was, gan fallen forth in speche
Of this and that, and axed whi she stood
In swich disese and gan hire ek biseche,
That if that he encesse myghte or eche 110
With any thyng hire ese, that she sholde
Comaunde it hym, and seyde he don it wolde.

ffor troweliche he swor hire as a knyght,
That ther nas thyng with which he myghte hire plese,

That he nolde don his peyne and al his myght 115
 To don it for to don hire herte an ese;
 And preyde hire she wolde hire sorwe apese,
 And seyde, "I-wis, we Greekis kan haue ioie
 To honouren yow as wel as folk of Troie."

He seyde ek thus, "I woot yow thynketh straunge — 120
 No wonder is, for it is to yow newe —
 Thaquauntaunce of thise Troians to chaunge
 ffor folk of Grece that ye neuere knewe.
 But wolde neuere god but if as trewe
 A Grek ye sholde among vs alle fynde 125
 As any Troian is and ek as kynde."

"And by the cause I swor yow right, lo, now,
 To ben youre frend and helply to my myght,
 And for that more aquayntauace ek of yow
 Haue ich had than another straunger wight, 130
 So fro this forth I pray yow, day and nyght,
 Comaundeth me, how soore that me smerte,
 To don al that may like vnto youre herte;

"And that ye me wolde as youre brother trete,
 And taketh naught my frendshipe in despite; 135
 And though youre sorwes be for thynges grete,
 Not I nat whi, but out of more respite,
 Myn herte hath for tamende it gret delite:
 And if I may youre harmes nat redresse,
 I am right sory for youre heuynesse. 140

"ffor though ye Troians with vs Grekes wrothe
 Han many a day ben, alwey yet, parde,
 O god of loue in soth we seruen bothe.
 And for the loue of god, my lady fre,
 Whom so ye hate, as beth nat wroth with me; 145
 ffor trewely ther kan no wyght yow serue,
 That half so loth youre wratthe wold disserue.

"And nere it that we ben so neigh the tente
 Of Calcas which that sen vs bothe may,
 I wolde of this yow telle al myn entente; 150
 But this enseled til anothis day.
 Yeue me youre honde; I am and shal ben ay,
 God helpe me so, while that my lyf may dure,
 Your owene abouen euery creature.

"Thus seyde I neuere er now to womman born;
 ffor god myn herte as wisly glade so,
 I loued neuere womman here-biforn
 As paramours, ne neuere shal no mo.
 And for the loue of god beth nat my fo,
 Al kan I naught to yow, my lady deere,
 Compleyne aright, for I am yet to leere.

155

160

"And wondreth nought, myn owen lady bright,
 Though that I speke of loue to yow thus blyue;
 ffor I haue herd er this of many a wight
 Hath loued thyng he neuere saigh his lyue:
 Ek I am nat of power forto stryue
 Ayeyns the god of loue, but hym obeye
 I wole alwey, and mercye I yow preye.

165

"Ther ben so worthi knyghtes in this place,
 And ye so fayre, that euerich of hem alle
 Wol peynen hym to stonden in youre grace.
 But myghte me so faire a grace falle,
 That ye me for youre seruant wolde calle,
 So lowely ne so trewely yow serue
 Nil non of hem, as I shal, til I sterue."

170

175

Criseyde vn-to that purpos lite answerde,
 As she that was with sorwe oppressed so
 That in effect she naught hise tales herde
 But here and ther, now here a word or two.
 Hire thoughte hire sorwful herte brast atwo,
 ffor whan she gan hire fader fer espie,
 Wel neigh down of hire hors she gan to sye.

180

But natheles she thonketh Diomede
 Of alle his trauaile and his goode cheere,
 And that hym list his frendshipe hire to bede;
 And she accepteth it in good manere,
 And wol do fayn that is hym lief and dere,
 And tristen hym she wolde, and wel she myghte,
 As seyde she, and from hire hors shalighte.

185

Hire fader hath hire in hise armes nome,
 And twenty tyme he kiste his doughter sweete,
 And seyde, "O deere doughter myn, welcome."
 She seyde ek she was fayn with hym to mete,

190

And stood forth muwet, milde and mansuete.
 But here I leue hire with hire fader dwelle, 195
 And forth I wol of Troilus yow telle.

To Troie is come this woful Troilus,
 In sorwe abouen alle sorwes smerte,
 With feloun look and face dispitous.
 Tho sodeynly doun from his hors he sterte, 200
 And thorough his paleis with a swollen herte
 To chaumbre he wente; of no wight took he hede,
 Ne non to hym dar speke a word for drede.

And ther his sorwes that he spared hadde
 He yaf an issue large and "deth" he criede; 205
 And in his throwes frenetik and madde
 He corseth Ioue, Appollo and ek Cupide,
 He corseth Ceres, Bacus and Cipride,
 His burthe, hym self, his fate and ek nature,
 And, saue his lady, euery creature. 210

To bedde he goth, and walwith ther and torneth
 In furie, as doth he Ixion in helle;
 And in this wise he neigh til day soiorneth.
 But tho bigan his herte a lite vnswelle
 Thorough teris which that gonne vp to welle, 215
 And pitously he cryde vpon Criseyde,
 And to hym self right thus he spak and seyde:

Wher is hire white brest, wher is it, where?
 "Wher is myn owene lady lief and deere?
 Wher ben hire armes and hire eyen cleere, 220
 That yesternyght this tyme with me were?
 Now may I wepe allone many a teere,
 And graspe aboute I may, but in this place,
 Saue a pilowe, I fynde naught tenbrace.

"How shal I do? Whan shal she come ayeyn?
 I not, allas! whi lete ich hire to go?
 As wolde god ich hadde as tho ben sleyn!
 O herte myn, Criseyde, O swete fo!
 O lady myn, that I loue and namo,
 To whom for euermo myn herte I dowe, 230
 Se how I dye — ye nyl me nat rescowe.

"Who seth yow now, my righte lode sterre?"

Who sit right now or stant in youre presence?
 Who kan conforten now youre hertes werre?
 Now I am gon, whom yeue ye audience? 235
 Who speketh for me right now in myn absence?
 Allas, no wight, and that is al my care,
 ffor wel woot I as yuele as I ye fare.

"How sholde I thus ten dayes ful endure,
 Whan I the firste nyght haue al this tene? 240
 How shal she don ek, sorwful creature?
 ffor tendernesse how shal she ek sustene
 Swich wo for me? O pitous, pale and grene
 Shal ben youre fresshe wommanliche face
 ffor langoure, er ye torne vnto this place." 245

And whan he fille in any slomberynges,
 Anon bygynne he sholde forto grone,
 And dremen of the dredefulleste thynges
 That myghte ben: as mete he were allone
 In place horrible, makyng ay his mone, 250
 Or meten that he was amonges alle
 His enemys and in hire hondes falle.

And therwith-al his body sholde sterte,
 And with the sterte al sodeynliche awake,
 And swiche a tremour fele aboute his herte, 255
 That of the fere his body sholde quake;
 And therwith-al he sholde a noyse make,
 And seme as though he sholde falle depe
 ffrom heighe o-lofte, and thanne he wolde wepe,

And rewen on hym self so pitously, 260
 That wonder was to here his fantasie.
 Another tyme he sholde myghtyly
 Conforte hym self and sein it was folie,
 So causeles swich drede forto drye;
 And eft bygynne his aspre sorwes newe, 265
 That euery man myght on his sorwes rewe.

Who koude telle aright or ful discryue
 His wo, his pleynt, his langoure and his pyne?
 Naught alle the men that han or ben on lyue.
 Thow redere, maist thi self ful wel deuyne 270
 That swich a wo my wit kan nat diffyne.
 On ydel forto write it sholde I swynke,

Whan that my wit is wery it to thynke.

On heuene yet the sterres weren seene,
 Al-though ful pale y-woxen was the moone, 275
 And whiten gan the orisonte shene
 Al estward as it wont is to doone;
 And Phebus with his rosy carte soone
 Gan after that to dresse hym vp to fare
 Whan Troilus hath sent after Pandare. 280

This Pandare, that of al the day biforn
 Ne myghte ham comen Troilus to se,
 Al-though he on his hed it hadde sworn —
 ffor with the kyng Priam alday was he,
 So that it lay nought in his libertee 285
 Nowher to gon — but on the morwe he wente
 To Troilus whan that he for hym sente.

ffor in his herte he koude wel deuyne
 That Troilus al nygh for sorwe wooke,
 And that he wolde telle hym of his pyne— 290
 This knew he wel ynough with-oute booke.
 ffor which to chaumbre streght the wey he tooke,
 And Troilus tho sobrelich he grette,
 And on the bed ful sone he gan hym sette.

"My Pandarus," quod Troilus, "the sorwe 295
 Which that I drye, I may nat longe endure:
 I trowe I shal nat lyuen tyl to-morwe.
 ffor which I wolde always on auenture
 To the deuysen of my sepulture
 The fourme, and of my moeble thow dispone 300
 Right as the semeth best is forto done.

"But of the fir and flaumbe funeral
 In which my body brennen shal to glede,
 And of the feste and pleyes palestral
 At my vigile, I prey the tak good hede 305
 That al be wel and offre Mars my steede,
 My swerd, myn helm and, leue brother deere,
 My sheld to Pallas yef, that shyneth cleere.

"The poudre in which myn herte y-brend shal torne,
 That preye I the thow take and it conserue 310
 In a vessell that men clepeth an vrne

Of gold, and to my lady that I serue,
 ffor loue of whom thus pitouslich I sterue,
 So yeue it hire and do me this plesaunce,
 To preye hire kepe it for a remembraunce. 315

"ffor wele I fele by my maladie,
 And by my dremes now and yore ago,
 Al certeynly that I mot nedes dye:
 The owle ek, which that hette Escaphilo,
 Hath after me shrigh al thise nyghtes two. 320
 And god Mercurye, of me now, woful wrecche,
 The soule gyde and, whan the liste, it fecche."

Pandare answerde and seyde, "Troilus,
 My deere frende, as I haue told the yore
 That it is folye forto sorwen thus, 325
 And causeles, for which I kan namore.
 But who-so wil nought trowen reed ne loore,
 I kan nat sen in hym no remedie,
 But lat hym worthen with his fantasie.

"But Troilus, I prey the tel me now, 330
 If that thow trowe er this that any wight
 Hath loued paramours as wel as thow?
 Ye, god woot, and fro many a worthi knyght
 Hath his lady gon a fourtenyght,
 And he nat yet made haluendel the fare. 335
 What nede is the to maken al this care?

"Syn day by day thow maist thi seluen se
 That from his loue, or ellis from his wif,
 A man mote twynnen of necessite —
 Ye, though he loue hire as his owene lif; 340
 Yet nyl he with hym self thus maken strif.
 ffor wel thow woost, my leue brother deere,
 That alwey frendes may nat ben yfeere.

"How don this folk that seen hire loues wedded
 By frendes myght, as it bitit ful ofte, 345
 And sen hem in hire spouses bed y-bedded?
 God woot, they take it wisly, faire and softe,
 ffor-whi good hope halt vp hire herte o-lofte.
 And for they kan a tyme of sorwe endure,
 As tyme hem hurt, a tyme doth hem cure. 350

"So shuldestow endure and laten slide
 The tyme and fonde to ben glad and lighte;
 Ten dayes nys so longe nought tabide.
 And sen she the to comen hath bihyghte,
 She nyl hire heste breken for no wighte. 355
 ffor drede the nat that she nyl fynden weye
 To come ayein — my lif that dorste I leye.

"Thi sweuennes ek and al swich fantasie
 Drif out and lat hem faren to meschaunce,
 ffor they procede of thi malencolie, 360
 That doth the fele in slepe al this penaunce.
 A straw for alle sweuenes signifaunce!
 God helpe me so, I counte hem nought a bene;
 Ther woot noman aright what dremes mene.

ffor prestes of the temple tellen this, 365
 That dremes ben the reuelaciouns
 Of goddes, and as wel they telle, ywis,
 That they ben infernals illusiouns;
 And leches seyn that of complexiouns
 Proceden they, or fast, or glotonye — 370
 Who woot in soth thus what thei signifie?

"Ek oother seyn that thorough impressiouns,
 As if a wight hath faste a thyng in mynde,
 That ther-of cometh swiche auysiouns;
 And other seyn, as they in bokes fynde, 375
 That after tymes of the yere by kynde
 Men dreme and that theffect goth by the moone —
 But leue no dreme, for it is nought to doone.

"Wel worthe of dremes ay these olde wiues,
 And troweliche ek augurye of these fowles, 380
 ffor fere of which men wenen lese here lyues,
 As rauenes qualm, or shrichyng of these owles:
 To trowen on it bothe fals and foul is.
 Allas, allas, so noble a creature
 As is a man shal dreden swiche ordure! 385

"ffor which with al myn herte I the biseche
 Unto thi self that al this thow foryyue;
 And ris now vp with-owten more speche,
 And lat vs caste how forth may best be dryue
 This tyme, and ek how fressshly we may lyue 390

Whan that she comth, the which shal be right soone.
God helpe me so, the beste is thus to doone.

"Ris, lat vs speke of lusty lif in Troie
That we han led and forth the tyme dryue;
And ek of tyme comyng vs reioie, 395
That bryngen shal oure blisse now so blyue;
And langour of these twyes dayes fyue
We shal ther-with so foryete or oppresse,
That wel vnneth it don shal vs duresse.

"This town is ful of lordes al aboute, 400
And trewes lasten al this mene while.
Go we pleye vs in som lusty route
To Sarpedoun, nat hennes but a myle.
And thus thou shalt the tyme wel bygile,
And dryue it forth vnto that blisful morwe 405
That thou hire se that cause is of thi sorwe.

"Now ris, my deere brother Troilus,
ffor certes it non honour is to the
To wepe and in thi bedde to iouken thus;
ffor tewelich of o thyng truste me: 410
If thou thus ligge a day or two or thre,
The folk wol seyn that thou for cowardise
The feynest sik and that thou darst nat rise."

This Troilus answerde, "O brother deere,
This knowen folk that han ysuffred peyne, 415
That though he wepe and make sorwful cheere,
That feleth harm and smerte in euery veyne,
No wonder is; and though ich euere pleyne
Or alwey wepe, I am no thyng to blame,
Syn I haue lost the cause of al my game. 420

"But syn of fyne force I mote arise,
I shal arise as soone as euere I may;,
And god, to whom myn herte I sacrifice,
So sende vs hastely the tenthe day:
ffor was ther neuere fowel so fayn of May 425
As I shal ben whan that she comth in Troie,
That cause is of my torment and my ioie.

"But whider is thi reed," quod Troilus,
"That we may pleye vs best in al this town?"

"By god, my conseil is,' quod Pandarus, 430
 "To ride and pleye vs with kyng Sarpedoun.'
 So longe of this they speken vp and down,
 Til Troilus gan at the laste assente
 To rise, and forth to Sarpedoun they wente.

This Sarpedoun, as he that honourable 435
 Was euere his lyue and ful of heigh largesse,
 With al that myghte y-serued ben on table
 That deynte was, al coste it gret richesse,
 He fedde hem day by day, that swich noblesse,
 As seyden bothe the mooste and ek the leeste, 440
 Was neuere ere that day wist at any feste.

Nor in this world ther is non instrument
 Delicious thorough wynd or touche of corde,
 As fer as any wight hath euere ywent,
 That tonge telle or herte may recorde, 445
 That at that feste it nas wel herd acorde;
 Ne of ladys ek so faire a compaignie
 On daunce er tho was neuere i-seye with ie.

But what auailleth this to Troilus,
 That for his sorwe no thyng of it roughte? 450
 ffor euere in on his herte pietous
 fful bisyly Criseyde, his lady, soughte.
 On hire was euere al that his herte thoughte,
 Now this, now that, so faste ymagenyng,
 That glade, i-wis, kan hym no festeyng. 455

Thise ladies ek that at this feste ben,
 Syn that he saugh his lady was aweye,
 It was his sorwe vpon hem forto sen,
 Or forto here on instrumentes so pleye:
 ffor she that of his herte berth the keye 460
 Was absent, lo, this was his fantasie —
 That no wight sholde maken melodie.

Nor ther nas houre in al the day or nyght,
 Whan he was there as no wight myghte hym heere,
 That he ne seyde, "O lufsom lady bryght, 465
 How haue ye faren syn that ye were here?
 Welcome, ywis, myn owne lady deere."
 But weylaway, al this nas but a maze:
 ffortune his howue entended bet to glaze.

The lettres ek that she of olde tyme
 Hadde hym ysent, he wolde allone rede
 An hondred sithe atwixen noon and prime,
 Refiguryng hire shap, hire wommanhede,
 With-inne his herte, and euery word or dede
 That passed was; and thus he drof tanende
 The ferthe day and seyde he wolde wende.

And seyde, "leue brother, Pandarus,
 Intendestow that we shal here bleue
 Til Sarpedoun wol forth congeyen vs?
 Yet were it fairer that we toke oure leue.
 ffor goddes loue, lat vs now soone at eue
 Oure leue take, and homward lat vs torne,
 ffor troweliche I nyl nat thus sojourne.'

Pandare answerde, "be we comen hider
 To fecchen fire and rennen home ayein?
 God help me so, I kan nat tellen whider
 We myghte gon, if I shal sothly seyn,
 Ther any wight is of vs more feyn
 Than Sarpedoun; and if we hennes hye
 Thus sodeynly, I holde it vilanye.

"Syn that we seyden that we wolde bleue
 With hym a wowke, and now, thus sodeynly,
 The ferthe day to take of hym owre leue,
 He wolde wondren on it trowely.
 Lat vs holde forth oure purpos fermely;
 And syn that ye bihighten hym to bide,
 Holde forward now and after lat vs ride."

Thus Pandarus, with alle peyne and wo,
 Made hym to dwelle, and at the wikes ende
 Of Sarpedoun they toke hire leue tho,
 And on hire wey they spedden hem to wende.
 Quod Troilus, "now lord me grace sende
 That I may fynden at myn hom comyng
 Criseyde comen," and ther-with gan he syng.

"Ye, haselwode,' thoughte this Pandare,
 And to hym self ful softeliche he seyde,
 "God woot, refreyden may this hote fare
 Er Calkas sende Troilus Criseyde."

But natheles he iaped thus and pleyde,
 And swor, ywis, his herte hym wel bihighte
 She wolde come as soone as euere she myghte. 510

Whan they vnto the paleys were ycomen
 Of Troilus, they doun of hors alighte,
 And to the chambre hire wey than han they nomen;
 And in-to time that it gan to nyghte 515
 They spaken of Criseyde the brighte;
 And after this, whan that hem bothe leste,
 They spedde hem fro the soper vnto reste.

On morwe, as soone as day bygan to clere,
 This Troilus gan of his slepe tabrayde, 520
 And to Pandare, his owen brother deere,
 "ffor loue of god," ful pitously he sayde,
 "As go we sen the palais of Criseyde;
 ffor syn we yet may haue namore feste,
 So lat vs sen hire paleys atte leeste." 525

And therwith-al his meyne forto blende,
 A cause he fond in towne forto go,
 And to Criseydes hous they gonnen wende,
 But lord, this sely Troilus was wo!
 Hym thoughte his sorwful herte braste atwo, 530
 ffor whan he saugh hire dores spered alle,
 Wel neigh for sorwe adoun he gan to falle.

Therwith whan he was war and gan biholde
 How shet was euery wyndow of the place,
 As frost hym thoughte his herte gan to colde; 535
 ffor which, with chaunged dedlich pale face,
 With-outen word he forthby gan to pace,
 And as god wolde, he gan so faste ride
 That no wight of his contenance espide.

Than seide he thus, "O paleys desolat,
 O hous of houses whilom best i-hight,
 O paleys empty and disconsolat,
 O thow lanterne of which queynt is the light,
 O paleys, whilom day, that now art nyght,
 Wel oughtestow to falle and I to dye 540
 Syn she is went that wont was vs to gye.

"O paleis, whilom crowne of houses alle,

Enlumyned with sonne of alle blisse,
 O ryng fro which the rubie is out falle,
 O cause of wo that cause hast ben of lisse, 550
 Yet syn I may no bet, fayn wolde I kisse
 Thy colde dores, dorste I for this route;
 And far wel shryne, of which the seynt is oute."

Ther-with he caste on Pandarus his eye,
 With chaunged face and pitous to biholde, 555
 And whan he myghte his tyme aright asprie,
 Ay as he rood to Pandarus he tolde
 His newe sorwe and ek hise ioies olde
 So pitously and with so dede an hewe
 That euery wight myghte on his sorwe rewre. 560

ffro thennes forth he rideth vp and down,
 And euery thyng com hym to remembraunce
 As he rood forby places of the town
 In which he whilom hadde al his plesaunce.
 "Lo, yonder saugh ich last my lady daunce, 565
 And in that temple with hire eyen clere
 Me kaughte first my righte lady dere.

"And yonder haue I herd ful lustyly
 My dere herte laugh and yonder pleye
 Saugh ich hire ones ek ful blisfully; 570
 And yonder ones to me gan she seye,
 "Now goode swete, loue me wel, I preye";
 And yond so goodly gan she me biholde,
 That to the deth myn herte is to hire holde.

"And at that corner in the yonder hous 575
 Herde I myn alder-leuest lady deere,
 So wommanly with vois melodious,
 Syngen so wel, so goodly and so cleere,
 That in my soule yet me thynketh ich here
 The blisful sown; and in that yonder place 580
 My lady first me took vnto hire grace."

Thanne thoughte he thus, "O blisful lord Cupide,
 Whan I the processe haue in my memorie
 How thow me hast wereyed on euery syde,
 Men myght a book make of it lik a storie. 585
 What nede is the to seke on me victorie,
 Syn I am thyn and holly at thi wille?

What ioie hast thou thyn owen folk to spille?

"Wel hastow, lord, y-wroke on me thyn ire,
 Thou myghty god and dredefull for to greue. 590
 Now mercy, lord, thou woost wel I desire
 Thi grace moost of alle lustes leue,
 And lyue and dye I wol in thy byleue;
 ffor which I naxe in guerdoun but a bone —
 That thou Criseyde ayein me sende sone. 595

"Destreyne hire herte as faste to retorne,
 As thou doost myn to longen hire to see,
 Than woot I wel that she nyl naught soiorne.
 Now blisful lord, so cruel thou ne be
 Unto the blood of Troie, I preye the, 600
 As Iuno was vnto the blood Thebane,
 ffor which the folk of Thebes caughte hire bane."

And after this he to the yates wente,
 Ther as Criseyde out rood a ful good paas,
 And vp and down ther made he many a wente, 605
 And to hym self ful ofte he seyde, "allas,
 ffro hennes rood my blisse and my solas;
 As wolde blisful god now, for his ioie,
 I myghte hire sen ayeyn come in-to Troie.

"And to the yonder hille I gan hire gyde, 610
 Allas, and ther I took of hire my leue;
 And yond I saugh hire to hire fader ride,
 ffor sorwe of which myn herte shal to-cleue;
 And hider home I com whan it was eue,
 And here I dwelle out cast from alle ioie, 615
 And shal til I may sen hire eft in Troie."

And of hym self ymageden he ofte
 To ben defet, and pale, and waxen lesse
 Than he was wont, and that men seyden softe,
 "What may it be? who kan the sothe gesse 620
 Whi Troilus hath al this heuynesse?"
 And al this nas but his malencolie,
 That he hadde of hym self swich fantasie.

Another tyme ymaginen he wolde
 That euery wight that wente by the weye 625
 Hadde of hym routhe and that thay seyn sholde,

"I am right sory Troilus wol deye."
 And thus he drof a day yet forth or tweye
 As ye haue herd; swich lif right gan he lede,
 As he that stood bitwixen hope and drede. 630

ffor which hym likede in his songes shewe
 Thennesoun of his wo, as he best myghte,
 And made a song of wordes but a fewe,
 Somwhat his woful herte for to lighte;
 And whan he was from euery mannes syghte, 635
 With softe vois he of his lady deere,
 That absent was, gan synge as ye may heere.

Canticus Troili

"O sterre, of which I lost haue al the light,
 With herte soore wel oughte I to biwaille,
 That euere derk in torment nyght by nyght, 640
 Toward my deth with wynd in steere I saille;
 ffor which the tenthe nyght, if that I faille
 The gydyng of thi bemes bright an houre,
 My ship and me Caribdis wol deuoure."

This song whan he thus songen hadde, soone 645
 He fil ayeyn in-to hise sikes olde;
 And euery nyght, as was his wone to doone,
 He stood the brighte moone to byholde,
 And al his sorwe he to the moone tolde,
 And seyde, "ywis, whan thow art horned newe, 650
 I shal be glad, if al the world be trewe.

"I saugh thyn hornes olde ek by the morwe
 Whan hennes rood my righte lady dere,
 That cause is of my torment and my sorwe;
 ffor which, O brighte Latona the clere, 655
 ffor loue of god, ren faste aboute thy spere!
 ffor whan thyne hornes newe gynnen sprynge,
 Than shal she come that may my blisse brynge."

The dayes moore and lenger euery nyghte
 Than they ben wont to be, hym thoughte tho, 660
 And that the sonne went his cours vnrighte
 Be lenger weye than it was wont to go;
 And seyde, "ywis, me dredeth euere mo
 The sonnes sone, Pheton, be on lyue,

And that his fader carte amys he dryue." 665

Up-on the walles faste ek wolde he walke,
 And on the Grekis oost he wolde se,
 And to hym self right thus he wolde talke,
 "Lo, yonder is myn owene lady free,
 Or ellis yonder ther tho tentes be, 670
 And thennes comth this eyre that is so soote,
 That in my soule I fele it doth me boote.

"And hardily this wynd, that more and moore
 Thus stoundemele encresseth in my face,
 Is of my ladis depe sikes soore. 675
 I preue it thus, for in noon other place
 Of al this town, saue onliche in this space,
 ffele I no wynd that sowneth so lik peyne;
 It seyth, "allas, whi twynned be we tweyne?"

This longe tyme he dryueth forth right thus, 680
 Til fully passed was the nynthe nyghte;
 And ay bisyde hym was this Pandarus,
 That bisily did al his fulle myghte
 Hym to conforte and make his herte lighte,
 Yeuyng hym hope alwey the tenthe morwe 685
 That she shal come and stynten al his sorwe.

Up-on that other syde ek was Criseyde,
 With wommen fewe, among the Grekis stronge,
 ffor which ful ofte a day, "allas," she seyde,
 "That I was born! Wel may myn herte longe 690
 After my deth, for now lyue I to longe.
 Allas, and I ne may it nat amende,
 ffor now is wors than euere yet I wende.

"My fader nyl for no thyng do me grace
 To gon ayeyn, for naught I kan hym queme; 695
 And if so be that I my terme pace,
 My Troilus shal in his herte deme
 That I am fals, and so it may wel seme:
 Thus shal ich haue vnthok on euery side —
 That I was born, so weilaway the tide! 700

"And if that I me putte in iupertie
 To stele away by nyght, and it bifalle
 That I be kaught, I shal be holde a spie;

Or elles, lo, this drede I moost of alle,
 If in the hondes of som wrecche I falle, 705
 I nam but lost, al be myn herte trewe —
 Now myghty god, thow on my sorwe rewe!"

fful pale ywexen was hire brighte face,
 Hire lymes lene, as she that al the day
 Stood whan she dorste and loked on the place 710
 Ther she was born and ther she dwelt hadde ay;
 And al the nyght wepyng, allas, she lay.
 And thus despeired out of alle cure
 She ladde hire lif, this woful creature.

fful ofte a day she sighte ek for destresse, 715
 And in hire self she wente ay purtrayng
 Of Troilus the grete worthynesse,
 And al his goodly wordes recording
 Syn first that day hire loue bigan to spring;
 And thus she sette hire woful herte a-fire 720
 Thorough remembraunce of that she gan desire.

In al this world ther nys so cruel herte
 That hire hadde herd compleynen in hire sorwe,
 That nolde han wepen for hire peynes smerte;
 So tendrely she wepte bothe eue and morwe, 725
 Hire nedede no teris forto borwe.
 And this was yet the werste of al hire peyne,
 Ther was no wight to whom she dorste hire pleyne.

fful rewfully she loked vpon Troie,
 Biheld the toures heigh and ek the halles, 730
 "Allas," quod she, "the plesance and the ioie,
 The which that now al torned into galle is,
 Haue ich had ofte with-inne the yonder walles.
 O Troilus, what dostow now?" she seyde;
 "Lord, wheyther thow yet thenke vpon Criseyde? 735

"Allas, I ne hadde trowed on youre loore,
 And went with yow as ye me redde er this,
 Than hadde I now nat siked half so soore.
 Who myghte han seyde that I hadde don amys
 To stele away with swich oon as he ys? 740
 But al to late comth the letuarie,
 Whan men the cors vnto the graue carie.

"To late is now to speke of that matere;
 Prudence, alas, oon of thyne eyen thre
 Me lakked alwey er that I come here: 745
 On tyme y-passed wel remembred me,
 And present tyme ek koud ich wel i-se,
 But future tyme, er I was in the snare,
 Koude I nat sen; that causeth now my care.

"But natheles, bityde what bityde, 750
 I shal to-morwe at nyght by est or west
 Out of this oost stele on some manere syde,
 And gon with Troilus where as hym lest:
 This purpos wol ich holde, and this is best.
 No fors of wikked tonges ianglerie, 755
 ffor euere on loue han wrecches had enuye.

"ffor who-so wol of euery word take hede,
 Or reulen hym by euery wightes wit,
 Ne shal he neuere thryuen, out of drede:
 ffor that that som men blamen euere yit, 760
 Lo, other manere folk comenden it.
 And as for me, for al swich variaunce,
 ffelicite clepe I my suffissaunce.

"ffor which with-uten any wordes mo,
 To Troie I wole, as for conclusioun." 765
 But god it wot, er fully monthes two
 She was ful fer fro that entencioun;
 ffor bothe Troilus and Troie town
 Shal knotteles thorough-out hire herte slide,
 ffor she wol take a purpos for tabide. 770

This Diomede, of whom yow telle I gan,
 Goth now with-inne hym self ay arguyng,
 With al the sleghte and al that euere he kan,
 How he may best with shortest taryng
 In-to his net Criseydes herte bryng. 775
 To this entent he koude neuere fyne;
 To fisshen hire he leyde out hook and lyne.

But natheles, wel in his herte he thoughte
 That she nas nat with-oute a loue in Troie;
 ffor neuere sythen he hire thennes broughte 780
 Ne koude he sen hire laughe or maken ioie.
 He nyst how best hire herte for tacoye,

"But for tasay," he seyde, "it naught ne greueth;
ffor he that naught nasaieth naught nacheueth."

Yet seyde he to hym self vp-on a nyght, 785
 "Now am I nat a fool, that woot wel how
 Hire wo for loue is of another wight,
 And here-vpon to gon assaye hire now?
 I may wel wite, it nyl nat ben my prow.
 ffor wise folk in bookes it expresse, 790
 'Men shal nat wowe a wight in heuynesse.'

"But who-so myghte wynnen swich a floure
 ffrom hym for whom she morneth nyght and day,
 He myghte seyn he were a conqueroure."
 And right anon, as he that bold was ay, 795
 Thoughte in his herte, "happe how happe may,
 Al sholde I dye, I wol hire herte seche;
 I shal namore lesen but my speche."

This Diomede, as bokes vs declare,
 Was in his nedes prest and corageous, 800
 With sterne vois and myghty lymes square,
 Hardy, testif, strong and chiualrous
 Of dedes lik his fader Tideus;
 And som men seyn he was of tonge large,
 And heir he was of Calydoigne and Arge. 805

Criseyde mene was of hire stature,
 Therto of shap, of face and ek of cheere,
 Ther myghte ben no fairer creature;
 And ofte tyme this was hire manere,
 To gon y-tressed with hire heres clere 810
 Doun by hire coler at hire bak byhynde,
 Which with a thred of gold she wolde bynde.

And saue hire browes ioyneden y-feere,
 Ther nas no lakke in aught I kan espian;
 But forto speken of hire eyen cleere, 815
 Lo, trewely, they writen that hire syen,
 That Paradis stood formed in hire eyen;
 And with hire riche beaute euere more
 Strof loue in hire ay which of hem was more.

She sobre was, ek symple, and wys with-al, 820
 The best ynorisshed ek that myghte be,

And goodly of hire speche in general;
 Charitable, estatlich, lusty and fre,
 Ne neuere mo ne lakked hire pite:
 Tendre herted, slydyng of corage — 825
 But trewely I kan nat telle hire age.

And Troilus wel woxen was in highte,
 And complet formed by proporcioun
 So wel that kynde it nought amenden myghte;
 Yong, fressh, strong, and hardy as lyoun, 830
 Trewe as stiel in ech condicioun,
 Oon of the beste entecched creature
 That is, or shal, whil that the world may dure.

And certeynly in storye it is yfounde,
 That Troilus was neuere vnto no wight, 835
 As in his tyme, in no degree secounde
 In duryng don that longeth to a knyght,
 Al myghte a geant passen hym of myght.
 His herte ay with the first and with the beste
 Stood peregal to durre don that hym leste. 840

But forto tellen forth of Diomede:
 It fel that after, on the tenthe day
 Syn that Criseyde out of the Citee yede,
 This Diomede, as fressh as braunche in May,
 Come to the tente ther as Calkas lay, 845
 And feyned hym with Calkas han to doone;
 But what he mente I shal yow tellen soone.

Criseyde, at shorte wordes forto telle,
 Welcomed hym, and down hym by hire sette,
 And he was ethe ynough to maken dwelle; 850
 And after this, with-outen longe lette,
 The spices and the wyne men forth hem fette,
 And forth they speke of this and that y-feere
 As frendes don, of which som shal ye heere.

He gan first fallen of the werre in speche 855
 Bitwixe hem and the folk of Troie town,
 And of thassege he gan hire ek biseche
 To telle hym what was hire opynyoun;
 ffro that demaunde he so descendeth down
 To axen hire if that hire straunge thoughte 860
 The Grekis gise and werkes that they wroughte;

And whi hire fader tarieth so longe
 To wedden hire vnto som worthy wight.
 Criseyde, that was in hire peynes stronge
 ffor loue of Troilus, hire owen knyght, 865
 As ferforth as she konnyng hadde or myght,
 Answerde hym tho; but as of his entente,
 It semed nat she wiste what he mente.

But natheles this ilke Diomede
 Gan in hym self assure and thus he seyde, 870
 "If ich aright haue taken of yow hede,
 Me thynketh thus, O lady myn Criseyde,
 That syn I first hond on youre bridel leyde,
 Whan ye out come of Troie by the morwe,
 Ne koude I neuere sen yow but in sorwe. 875

"Kan I nat seyn what may the cause be
 But if for loue of som Troian it were,
 The which right sore wolde athynken me
 That ye for any wight that dwelleth there
 Sholden spille a quarter of a tere, 880
 Or pitously youre seluen so bigile —
 ffor dredeles, it is nought worth the while.

"The folk of Troie, as who seyth alle and some,
 In prisoun ben, as ye youre seluen se;
 ffor thennes shal nat oon on lyue come 885
 ffor al the gold atwixen sonne and se.
 Trusteth wel and vnderstondeth me:
 Ther shal nat oon to mercy gon on lyue,
 Al were he lord of worldes twies fyue.

"Swich wreche on hem for fecchyng of Eleyne 890
 Ther shal ben take er that we hennes wende,
 That Manes, which that goddes ben of peyne,
 Shal ben agast that Grekes wol hem shende;
 And men shul drede, vnto the worldes ende,
 ffrom hennes-forth to rauysshyn any queene, 895
 So cruel shal oure wreche on hem be seene.

"And but if Calkas lede vs with ambages —
 That is to seyn with double wordes slye,
 Swich as men clepe a word with two visages —
 Ye shal wel knowen that I naught ne lye, 900

And al this thyng right sen it with youre eye,
 And that anon, ye nyl nat trowe how sone;
 Now taketh hede, for it is forto doone.

"What wene ye youre wise fader wolde
 Han yeuen Antenor for yow anon, 905
 If he ne wiste that the Cite sholde
 Destroied ben? whi, nay, so mote I gon!
 He knew ful wel ther shal nat scapen oon
 That Troian is, and for the grete feere,
 He dorste nat ye dwelte lenger there. 910

"What wol ye more, lufsom lady deere?
 Lat Troie and Troian fro youre herte pace.
 Drif out that bittre hope and make good cheere,
 And clepe ayeyn the beaute of youre face,
 That ye with salte teris so de-face. 915
 ffor Troie is brought in swich a iupertie,
 That it to saue is now no remedie.

"And thenketh wel ye shal in Grekis fynde
 A moore perfit loue er it be nyght,
 Than any Troian is, and more kynde, 920
 And bet to seruen yow wol don his myght;
 And if ye vouche-sauf, my lady bright,
 I wol ben he to seruen yow my selue,
 Yee, leuere than be kyng of Greces twelue."

And with that word he gan to waxen rede, 925
 And in his speche a litel wight he quoke,
 And caste a-syde a litel wight his hede,
 And stynte a while, and afterward he woke,
 And sobreliche on hire he threw his loke,
 And seyde, "I am, al be it yow no ioie, 930
 As gentil man as any wight in Troie."

"ffor if my fader Tideus," he seyde,
 "I-lyued hadde, ich hadde ben er this
 Of Calydoyne and Arge a kyng, Criseyde,
 And so hope I that I shal yet, i-wis, 935
 But he was slayn, allas, the more harm is,
 Unhappily at Thebes al to rathe,
 Polymytes and many a man to scathe.

"But, herte myn, syn that I am youre man,

And ben the first of whom I seche grace 940
 To serue yow as hertely as I kan,
 And euere shal whil I to lyue haue space,
 So er that I deperte out of this place,
 That ye me graunte that I may to-morwe
 At bettre leyser telle yow my sorwe." 945

What sholde I telle his wordes that he seyde?
 He spak i-nough for o day at the meeste.
 It preueth wel, he spak so that Criseyde
 Graunted on the morwe at his requeste
 fforto speken with hym at the leeste, 950
 So that he nolde speke of swich matere.
 And thus to hym she seyde as ye may here,

As she that hadde hire herte on Troilus
 So faste that ther may it non arace;
 And strangely she spak and seyde thus, 955
 "O Diomedes, I loue that ilke place
 Ther I was born, and Ioues for his grace
 Delyuere it soone of al that doth it care:
 God, for thy myght, so leue it wel to fare.

"That Grekis wolde hire wrath on Troie wreke 960
 If that they myght, I knowe it wel, i-wis;
 But it shal naught by-fallen as ye speke,
 And god to-forn, and forther ouere this,
 I woot my fader wys and redy is,
 And that he me hath bought, as ye me tolde, 965
 So deere, I am the more vnto hym holde.

"That Grekis ben of heigh condicioun
 I woot ek wel, but certeyn, men shal fynde
 As worthi folk with-inne Troie town,
 As konnyng and as perfit and as kynde, 970
 As ben bitwixen Orkades and Inde.
 And that ye koude wel yowre lady serue,
 I trowe ek wel, hire thank forto deserue.

"But as to speke of loue, ywis," she seyde,
 "I hadde a lord to whom I wedded was, 975
 The whos myn herte al was til that he deyde;
 And other loue, as help me now Pallas,
 Ther in myn herte nys ne neuere was —
 And that ye ben of noble and heigh kynrede,

I haue wel herd it tellen out of drede. 980

"And that doth me to han so grete a wonder,
That ye wol scornen any womman so;
Ek, god woot, loue and I ben fer asonder:
I am disposed bet, so mot I go,
Unto my deth to pleyne and maken wo. 985
What I shal after don I kan nat seye,
But trewelich, as yet me list nat pleye.

"Myn herte is now in tribulacioun,
And ye in armes bisy day by day;
Herafter, whan ye wonnen han the town, 990
Peraunter thanne so it happen may,
That whan I se that neuere yit I say,
Than wol I werke that I neuere wroughte:
This word to yow ynough suffisen oughte.

"To-morwe ek wol I speken with yow fayn, 995
So that ye touchen naught of this matere.
And whan yow list, ye may come here ayayn;
And er ye gon, thus muche I sey yow here:
As help me Pallas with hire heres clere,
If that I sholde of any Grek han routhe, 1000
It sholde be youre seluen, by my trouthe.

"I say nat therfore that I wol yow loue,
Ny say nat nay, but in conclusioun,
I mene wel, by god that sit aboue."
And ther-with-al she caste hire eyen down, 1005
And gan to sike and seyde, "O Troie town,
Yet bidde I god in quiete and in reste
I may yow sen, or do myn herte breste."

But in effect, and shortly forto seye,
This Diomede al fresshly new ayeyn 1010
Gan presen on and faste hire mercy preye;
And after this, the sothe forto seyn,
Hire gloue he took, of which he was ful feyn,
And finaly, whan it was woxen eue,
And al was wel, he roos and tok his leue. 1015

The brighte Venus folwede and ay taughte
The wey ther brode Phebus down a-lighte;
And Cynthea hire chare-hors ouere-raughte

To whirle out of the Leoun if she myghte;
 And Signifer hise candels sheweth brighte, 1020
 Whan that Criseyde vnto hire bedde wente
 Inwith hire fadres faire brighte tente,

Retornyng in hire soule ay vp and down
 The wordes of this sodeyn Diomede,
 His grete estat, and perel of the town, 1025
 And that she was allone and hadde nede
 Of frendes help; and thus bygan to brede
 The cause whi, the sothe forto telle,
 That she took fully purpos forto dwelle.

The morwen com and, gostly forto speke, 1030
 This Diomede is come vnto Criseyde;
 And shortly lest that ye my tale breke,
 So wel he for hym seluen spak and seyde,
 That alle hire sikes soore adown he leyde;
 And finaly, the sothe forto seyne, 1035
 He refte hire of the grete of alle hire peyne.

And after this the storie telleth vs
 That she hym yaf the faire baye stede,
 The which he ones wan of Troilus;
 And ek a broche — and that was litel nede — 1040
 That Troilus was, she yaf this Diomede;
 And ek the bet from sorwe hym to releue,
 She made hym were a pencil of hire sleue.

I fynde ek in the stories elles-where,
 Whan thorough the body hurt was Diomede 1045
 Of Troilus, tho wep she many a teere,
 Whan that she saugh hise wyde wowndes blede,
 And that she took to kepen hym good hede;
 And forto hele hym of his sorwes smerte,
 Men seyn — I not — that she yaf hym hire herte. 1050

But trewely the storie telleth vs
 Ther made neuere womman moore wo
 Than she whan that she falsed Troilus:
 She seyde, "allas, for now is clene ago
 My name of trouthe in loue for euere mo, 1055
 ffor I haue falsed oon the gentileste
 That euere was and oon the worthieste.

"Allas, of me vnto the worldes ende
 Shal neyther ben ywriten nor ysonge
 No good word, for thise bokes wol me shende. 1060
 O, rolled shal I ben on many a tonge;
 Thorough-out the world my belle shal be ronge!
 And wommen moost wol haten me of alle —
 Allas, that swich a cas me sholde falle.

"Thei wol seyn, in as muche as in me is, 1065
 I haue hem don deshounour, weylaway!
 Al be I nat the first that dide amys,
 What helpeth that to don my blame away?
 But syn I se ther is no bettre way,
 And that to late is now for me to rewe, 1070
 To Diomedede algate I wol be trewe.

"But Troilus, syn I no bettre may,
 And syn that thus deperten ye and I,
 Yet prey I god, so yeue yow right good day,
 As for the gentileste, trewely, 1075
 That euere I say, to seruen feythfully,
 And best kan ay his lady honour kepe."
 And with that word she braste anon to wepe.

"And certes, yow ne haten shal I neuere,
 And frendes loue, that shal ye han of me, 1080
 And my good word, al sholde I lyuen euere.
 And trewely, I wolde sory be
 ffor to seen yow in aduersitee;
 And gilteles, I woot wel, I yow leue —
 But al shal passe, and thus take I my leue." 1085

But trewely, how longe it was bytwene
 That she forsok hym for this Diomedede,
 Ther is non auctour telleth it, I wene.
 Take euery man now to his bokes heede;
 He shal no terme fynden, out of drede. 1090
 ffor though that he bigan to wowe hire soone,
 Er he hire wan, yet was ther more to doone.

Ne me ne list this sely womman chyde
 fforther than the storye wol deuysse:
 Hire name, allas, is punysshed so wide, 1095
 That for hire gilt it oughte ynough suffise;
 And if I myghte excuse hire any wise,

ffor she so sory was for hire vnrouthe,
I-wis, I wolde excuse hire yet for routhe.

This Troilus, as I byfore haue tolde, 1100
Thus driueth forth as wel as he hath myghte;
But often was his herte hoot and colde,
And namely that ilke nynthe nyghte,
Which on the morwe she hadde hym bihighte
To com ayeyn — god woot, ful litel reste 1105
Hadde he that nyght: nothyng to slepe hym leste.

The laurer-crowned Phebus with his heete
Gan in his cours ay vpward as he wente,
To warmen of the Est se the wawes weete,
And Nysus doughter song with fressh entente, 1110
Whan Troilus his Pandare after sente;
And on the walles of the town they pleyde,
To loke if they kan sen aught of Criseyde.

Tyl it was noon they stoden forto se
Who that ther come; and euery maner wight 1115
That com fro fer they seyden it was she,
Til that thei koude knowen hym aright.
Now was his herte dul, now was it light;
And thus by-iaped stonden forto stare
Aboute naught, this Troilus and Pandare. 1120

To Pandarus this Troilus tho seyde,
ffor aught I woot, byfor noon, sikirly,
In-to this town ne comth nat here Criseyde.
She hath ynough to doone, hardyly, 1125
To wynnen from hire fader, so trowe I;
Hire olde fader wol yet make hire dyne
Er that she go; god yeue his herte pyne!"

Pandare answerde, "it may wel be, certeyn;
And forthi lat vs dyne, I the byseche,
And after noon than maystow com ayeyn." 1130
And hom they go with-oute more speche,
And come ayeyn; but longe may they seche
Er that they fynde that they after cape:
ffortune hem bothe thenketh forto iape.

Quod Troilus, "I se wel now that she 1135
Is taried with hire olde fader so,

That er she come it wol neigh euen be.
 Com forth, I wol vnto the yate go:
 Thise porters ben vnkonyng euere mo,
 And I wol don hem holden vp the yate 1140
 As naught ne were, al-though she come late."

The day goth faste and after that com eue,
 And yet com nought to Troilus Criseyde.
 He loketh forth by hegge, by tre, by greue,
 And fer his hed ouere the walle he leyde, 1145
 And at the laste he torned hym and seyde,
 "By god, I woot hire menyng now, Pandare —
 Al-moost, ywys, al newe was my care.

"Now douteles this lady kan hire goode;
 I woot she meneth riden pryuely. 1150
 I comende hire wisdom, by myn hoode.
 She wol nat maken peple nycely
 Gaure on hire whan she comth, but softly
 By nyghte in-to the town she thenketh ride.
 And deere brother, thynk nat longe tabide. 1155

"We han naught elles forto don, y-wis,
 And Pandarus now woltow trowen me?
 Haue here my trouthe, I se hire, yond she is!
 Heue vp thyn eyen, man, maistow nat se?" 1160
 Pandare answerde, "nay, so mote I the.
 Al wronge, by god; what saistow, man, where arte?
 That I se yond nys but a fare carte."

"Allas, thou seyst right soth," quod Troilus;
 "But hardily it is naught al for nought
 That in myn herte I now reioysse thus; 1165
 It is ayeyns som good I haue a thought —
 Not I nat how, but syn that I was wrought,
 Ne felte I swich a comfort, dar I seye;
 She comth to-nyght, my lif that dorste I leye."

Pandare answerde, "it may be wel ynough," 1170
 And helde with hym of al that euere he seyde.
 But in his herte he thought and softe lough,
 And to hym self ful sobreliche he seyde,
 "ffrom haselwode, there ioly Robyn pleyde,
 Shal come al that that thow abidest heere: 1175
 Ye, fare-wel al the snow of ferne yere."

The warden of the yates gan to calle
 The folk which that with-oute the yates were,
 And bad hem dryuen in hire bestes alle,
 Or all the nyght they moste bleuen there. 1180
 And fer with-inne the nyght with many a teere
 This Troilus gan homward forto ride;
 ffor wel he seth it helpeth naught tabide.

But natheles, he gladed hym in this:
 He thought he misaccounted hadde his day, 1185
 And seyde, "I vnderstonde haue al amys:
 ffor thilke nyght I last Criseyde say,
 She seyde, "I shal ben here, if that I may,
 Er that the moone, O deere herte swete,
 The Leoun passe, out of this Ariete." 1190

"ffor which she may yet holde al hire byheste."
 And on the morwe vnto the yate he wente,
 And vp and down, by west and ek by este,
 Upon the walles made he many a wente;
 But al for nought, his hope alwey hym blente; 1195
 ffor which at nyght in sorwe and sikes sore,
 He wente hym hom with-uten any more.

His hope al clene out of his herte fledde,
 He nath wher-on now lenger forto honge;
 But for the peyne hym thoughte his herte bledde, 1200
 So were his throwes sharpe and wonder stronge.
 ffor whan he saugh that she abood so longe,
 He nyste what he iuggen of it myghte,
 Syn she hath broken that she hym bihighte.

The thridde, ferthe, fifte, sexte day 1205
 After tho dayes ten of whiche I tolde,
 Bitwixen hope and drede his herte lay,
 Yet somewhat trustyng on hire hestes olde.
 But whan he saugh she nolde hire terme holde,
 He kan now sen non other remedie 1210
 But forto shape hym soone forto dye.

Ther-with the wikked spirit, god vs blesse,
 Which that men clepeth woode ialousie,
 Gan in hym crepe in al his heynesse;
 ffor which by-cause he wolde soone dye, 1215

He ne et ne drank for his malencolye,
 And ek from euery compaignye he fledde;
 This was the lif that al the tyme he ledde.

He so defet was that no manere man
 Unneth hym myghte knowen ther he wente; 1220
 So was he lene, and therto pale and wan,
 And feble, that he walketh by potente;
 And with his ire he thus hym selue shente.
 But who-so axed hym wher-of hym smerte,
 He seyde his harm was al aboute his herte. 1225

Priam ful ofte, and ek his moder deere,
 Hise bretheren and his sustren gon hym freyne
 Whi he so sorwful was in al his cheere,
 And what thyng was the cause of al his peyne —
 But al for naught: he nolde his cause pleyne, 1230
 But seyde he felte a greuous maladie
 Aboute his herte and fayn he wolde dye.

[So on a day he leyde hym down to slepe,
 And so byfel that yn his slep hym thoughte
 That in a forest faste he welk to wepe 1235
 ffor loue of here that hym these peynes wroughte;
 And vp and down as he the forest soughte,
 He mette he saugh a bor with tuskes grete,
 That slepte ayeyn the bryghte sonnes hete.

And by this bor, faste in his armes folde, 1240
 Lay kyssyng ay his lady bryght, Criseyde —
 ffor sorwe of which, whan he it gan byholde,
 And for despit, out of his slep he breyde,
 And loude he cride on Pandarus & seyde,
 "O Pandarus, now know I crop and roote — 1245
 I nam but ded; ther nys non other bote.

"My lady bryght, Criseyde, hath me bytrayed,
 In whom I trusted most of ony wight;
 She ellis-where hath now here herte apayed.
 The blysfyl goddes thorough here grete myght 1250
 Han in my drem y-shewed it ful right;
 Thus yn my drem Criseyde I haue byholde."
 And al this thing to Pandarus he tolde.

"O my Criseyde, allas, what subtilte,

- What newe lust, what beaute, what science, 1255
 What wratthe of iuste cause haue ye to me?
 What gilt of me, what fel experience,
 Hath fro me raft, allas, thyn aduertence?
 O trust, O feyth, O depe aseuraunce,
 Who hath me reft Criseyde, al my plesaunce? 1260
- "Allas, whi leet I you from hennes go,
 ffor which wel neigh out of my wit I breyde?
 Who shal now trowe on ony othes mo?
 God wot, I wende, O lady bright, Criseyde,
 That euery word was gospel that ye seyde. 1265
 But who may bet bigile, yf hym lyste,
 Than he on whom men weneth best to triste?
- "What shal I don, my Pandarus, allas?
 I fele now so sharpe a newe peyne:
 Syn that ther lith no remedye in this cas, 1270
 That bet were it I with myn hondes tweyne
 My seluen slowh than alwey thus to pleyne:
 ffor thorough the deth my wo shold han an ende,
 Ther euery day with lyf my self I shende."
- Pandare answerde and seyde, "allas, the while 1275
 That I was born! Haue I nat seyde er this,
 That dremes many a maner man bigile?
 And whi? for folk expounden hem amys.
 How darstow seyn that fals thy lady ys,
 ffor any drem, right for thyn owene drede? 1280
 Lat be this thought; thow kanst no dremes rede.
- "Peraunter ther thow dremest of this boor,
 It may so be that it may signifie
 Hire fader, which that old is and ek hoor,
 Ayeyn the sonne lith o poynt to dye, 1285
 And she for sorwe gynneth wepe and crie,
 And kisseth hym ther he lith on the grounde:
 Thus sholdestow thi dreme aright expounde."
- "How myghte I than don," quod Troilus,
 "To knowe of this, yee, were it neuere so lite?" 1290
 "Now seystow wisly," quod this Pandarus.
 "My red is this, syn thow kanst wel endite,
 That hastily a lettre thow hire write,
 Thorough which thow shalt wel bryngyn it aboute,

To know a soth ther thow art now in doute. 1295

"And se now whi: for this I dar wel seyn,
That if so is that she vntrewe be,
I kan nat trowen that she wol write ayeyn.
And if she write, thow shalt ful sone yse
As wheither she hath any liberte 1300
To come ayeyn, or ellis in som clause,
If she be let, she wol assigne a cause.

"Thow hast nat writen hire syn that she wente,
Nor she to the, and this I dorste lay,
Ther may swich cause ben in hire entente, 1305
That hardily thow wolt thi seluen say
That hire abod the best is for yow tway.
Now write hire thanne and thow shalt feele sone
A soth of al; ther is namore to done."

Acorded ben to this conclusioun, 1310
And that anon, thise ilke lordes two:

And hastily sit Troilus a-down,
And rolleth in his herte to and fro,
How he may best descryuen hire his wo;
And to Criseyde, his owen lady deere, 1315

He wrot right thus and seyde as ye may here.

Litera Troili

"Right fresshe flour whos I ben haue and shal
With-outen parte of elles-where seruyse,
With herte, body, lif, lust, thought and al,
I, woful wyght, in euerich humble wise, 1320
That tonge telle or herte may deuuse,
As ofte as matere occupieth place,
Me recomaunde vnto youre noble grace.

"Liketh yow to witen, swete herte,
As ye wel knowe how longe tyme agon 1325
That ye me lefte in aspre peynes smerte,
Whan that ye wente, of which yet boote non
Haue I non had, but euere wors bigon
ffro day to day am I, and so mot dwelle,
While it yow list, of wele and wo my welle. 1330

"ffor which to yow with dredful herte trewe
I write, as he that sorwe drifto write,
My wo that euerich houre encresseth newe,

Compleynyng as I dar or kan endite.
 And that defaced is, that may ye wite 1335
 The teris which that fro myn eyen reyne,
 That wolden speke, if that they koude, and pleyne.

"Yow first biseche I that youre eyen clere
 To loke on this defouled ye nat holde,
 And ouere al this that ye, my lady deere, 1340
 Wol vouche-sauf this lettre to byholde.
 And by the cause ek of my cares colde,
 That sleth my wit, if aught amys masterte,
 fforyeue it me, myn owen swete herte.

"If any seruant dorst or oughte of right 1345
 Upon his lady pitously compleyne,
 Thanne wene I that ich oughte be that wight,
 Considered this, that ye thise monthes tweyne
 Han taried ther ye seyden, soth to seyne,
 But dayes ten ye nolde in oost soiourne — 1350
 But in two monthes yet ye nat retourne.

"But for as muche as me moot nedes like
 Al that yow liste, I dar nat pleyne moore,
 But humblely, with sorwful sikes sike,
 Yow write ich myn vnresty sorwes soore, 1355
 ffro day to day desiryng euere moore
 To knowen fully, if youre wille it weere,
 How ye han ferd and don whil ye be there;

"The whos welfare and hele ek god encesse
 In honour swich that vpward in degree 1360
 It growe alwey so that it neuere cesse;
 Right as youre herte ay kan, my lady free,
 Deuyse, I prey to god so moot it be,
 And graunte it that ye soone vp-on me rewte,
 As wisly as in al I am yow trewe. 1365

"And if yow liketh knowen of the fare
 Of me whos wo ther may no wit discryue,
 I kan namore but, chiste of euery care,
 At wrytyng of this lettre I was on lyue,
 Al redy out my woful gost to dryue; 1370
 Which I delaye and holde hym yet in honde,
 Up-on the sighte of matere of youre sonde.

"Myn eyen two, in veyn with whiche I se,
 Of sorwful teris salt and waxen welles;
 My song, in pleynte of myn aduersitee; 1375
 My good in harm, myn ese ek woxen helle is;
 My ioie in wo — I kan sey yow naught ellis,
 But torned is, for which my lif I warie,
 Eueriche ioie or ese in his contrarie.

"Which with youre commyng hom ayeyn to Troie 1380
 Ye may redresse, and more a thousand sithe
 Than euere ich hadde, encressen in me ioie:
 ffor was ther neuere herte yet so blithe
 To han his lif as I shal ben as swithe
 As I yow se; and though no manere routhe 1385
 Commeue yow, yet thinketh on youre trouthe.

"And if so be my gilt hath deth deserued,
 Or if yow list namore vp-on me se,
 In guerdoun yet of that I haue yow serued,
 Byseche I yow, myn hertes lady free, 1390
 That here-vpon ye wolden write me,
 ffor loue of god, my righte lode sterre,
 That deth may make an ende of al my werre.

"If other cause aught doth yow forto dwelle,
 That with youre lettre ye me recomforte; 1395
 ffor though to me youre absence is an helle,
 With pacience I wol my wo comporte,
 And with youre lettre of hope I wol desporte.
 Now writeth, swete, and lat me thus nat pleyne;
 With hope or deth deliuereth me fro peyne. 1400

"I-wis, myne owene deere herte trewe,
 I woot that whan ye next vpon me se,
 So lost haue I myn hele and ek myn hewe,
 Criseyde shal nought konne knowen me.
 I-wys, myn hertes day, my lady free, 1405
 So thursteth ay myn herte to byholde
 Youre beute that my lif vnnethe I holde.

"I say namore, al haue I forto seye
 To yow wel more than I telle may;
 But whether that ye do me lyue or deye, 1410
 Yet praye I god, so yeue yow right good day.
 And fareth wel, goodly, faire, fresshe may,

As she that lif or deth may me comande;
And to youre trouthe ay I me recomande.

"With hele swich that, but ye yeuen me 1415
The same hele, I shal none hele haue.

In yow lith, whan yow liste that it so be,
The day in which me clothen shal my graue;
In yow my lif, in yow myght forto saue
Me fro disese of alle peynes smerte; 1420

And far now wel, myn owen swete herte. le vostre T."

This lettre forth was sent vnto Criseyde,
Of which hire answeere in effect was this:
fful pitously she wroot ayeyn and seyde,
That also sone as that she myghte, y-wys, 1425
She wolde come and mende al that was mys;
And fynaly she wroot and seyde hym thenne,
She wolde come, ye, but she nyste whenne.

But in hire lettre made she swich festes,
That wonder was, and swerth she loueth hym best, 1430
Of which he fond but botmeles bihestes.

But Troilus, thow maist now, est or west,
Pipe in an ivy lef if that the lest.
Thus goth the world; god shilde vs fro meschaunce,
And euery wight that meneth trouthe auauce. 1435

Encressen gan the wo fro day to nyght
Of Troilus, for taryng of Criseyde,
And lessen gan his hope and ek his myght,
ffor which al down he in his bed hym leyde;
He ne eet, ne dronk, ne slep, ne no word seyde, 1440
Ymagynyng ay that she was vnkynde,
ffor which wel neigh he wex out of his mynde.

This drem of which I told haue ek byforn,
May neuere come out of his remembraunce:
He thought ay wel he hadde his lady lorn, 1445
And that Ioues, of his purueyaunce,
Hym shewed hadde in slep the signifaunce
Of hire vntrouthe and his disaunture,
And that the boor was shewed hym in figure.

ffor which he for Sibille his suster sente, 1450

That called was Cassandre ek al aboute,
 And al his drem he tolde hire er he stente,
 And hire bisoughte assoilen hym the doute
 Of the stronge boor with tuskes stoute;
 And fynaly with-inne a litel stounde,
 Cassandre hym gan right thus his drem expounde. 1455

She gan first smyle and seyde, "O brother deere,
 If thow a soth of this desirest knowe,
 Thow most a fewe of olde stories heere,
 To purpos how that fortune ouerthrowe 1460
 Hath lordes olde, thorough which with-inne a throwe
 Thow wel this boor shalt knowe, and of what kynde
 He comen is, as men in bokes fynde.

"Diane, which that wroth was and in ire
 ffor Grekis nolde don hire sacrifice, 1465
 Ne encens vpon hire auter sette afire,
 She, for that Grekis gonne hire so despise,
 Wrak hire in a wonder cruel wise:
 ffor with a boor as gret as ox in stalle,
 She made vp frete hire corn and vynes alle. 1470

"To sle this boor was al the contre raysed,
 Amonges which ther com this boor to se,
 A mayde, oon of this world the beste y-preysed;
 And Meleagre, lord of that contree,
 He loued so this fresshe mayden free, 1475
 That with his manhod, er he wolde stente,
 This boor he slough and hire the hed he sente.

"Of which as olde bokes tellen vs,
 Ther ros a contek and a gret enuye,
 And of this lord descended Tideus 1480
 By ligne or ellis olde bookes lye;
 But how this Meleagre gan to dye
 Thorough his moder wol I yow naught telle,
 ffor al to longe it were forto dwelle."

She tolde ek how Tideus, er she stente, 1485
 Unto the stronge citee of Thebes,
 To cleymen kyngdom of the citee wente
 ffor his felawe, daun Polymytes,
 Of which the brother, daun Ethiocles,
 fful wrongfully of Thebes held the strengthe: 1490

This tolde she by processe al by lengthe.

She tolde ek how Hemonydes astate
 Whan Tideus slough fifty knyghtes stoute;
 She tolde ek alle the prophecyes by herte,
 And how that seuen kynges with hire route 1495
 Bysegeden the citee al aboute;
 And of the holy serpent and the welle
 And of the furies al she gan hym telle;

Associat profugum Tideo primus Polymytem;
 Tidea legatum docet insidiasque secundus;
 Tercius Hemoduden canit et vates latitantes;
 Quartus habet reges ineuntes prelia septem;
 Mox furie Lenne quinto narratur et anguis;
 Archymory bustum sexto ludique leguntur;
 Dat Grayos Thebes et vatem septimus umbris;
 Octauo cecidit Tideus, spes, vita Pelasgis;
 Ypomedon nono moritur cum Parthenopea;eacute;
 ffulmine percussus, decimo Capaneus superatur;
 Undecimo sese perimunt per vulnera fratres;
 Argiua flentem narrat duodenus et ignem;

Of Archymoris burying and the pleyes,
 And how Amphiorax fil thourgh the grounde, 1500
 How Tideus was sleyn, lord of Argeyes,
 And how Ypomedoun in litel stounde
 Was dreynt, and ded Parthonope of wownde;
 And also how Capaneus the proude
 With thonder dynt was slayn, that cride loude. 1505

She gan ek telle hym how that eyther brother,
 Ethiocles and Polymyte also,
 At a scarmuche ech of hem slough other,
 And of Argyues wepyng and hire wo,
 And how the town was brent she tolde ek tho; 1510
 And so descendeth down from gestes olde
 To Diomed and thus she spak and tolde:

"This ilke boor bitokneth Diomed,
 Tideus sone, that down descended is
 ffro Meleagre that made the boor to blede; 1515
 And thy lady, wher-so she be, ywis,
 This Diomed hire herte hath and she his —
 Wepe if thow wolt or lef, for out of doute,

This Diomedes is inne and thou art oute."

"Thou seyst nat soth," quod he, "thou sorceresse. 1520

With al thy false goost of prophecye

Thou wenest ben a gret deuynesse.

Now sestow nat this fool of fantasie

Peyneth hire on ladys forto lye?

Away," quod he, "ther Ioues yeue the sorwe! 1525

Thou shalt be fals, peraunter, yet to-morwe.

"As wel thou myghtest lien on Alceste,

That was of creatures, but men lye,

That euere weren, kyndest and the beste,

ffor whan hire housbonde was in iupertye 1530

To dye hym self but if she wolde dye,

She ches for hym to dye and gon to helle,

And starf anon as vs the bokes telle."

Cassandre goth, and he with cruel herte

fforyat his wo for angre of hire speche, 1535

And from his bedde al sodeynly he sterte,

As though al hool hym hadde ymad a leche.

And day by day he gan enquire and seche

A sooth of this with al his fulle cure;

And thus he drieth forth his auenture. 1540

ffortune — which that permutacioun

Of thynges hath, as it is hire comitted

Thorugh purueyaunce and disposicioun

Of heighe Ioue, as regnes shal be flitted

ffro folk in folk or when they shal be smytted — 1545

Gan pulle away the fetheres brighte of Troie

ffro day to day til they ben bare of ioie.

Among al this, the fyn of the parodie

Of Ector gan aprochen wonder blyue;

The fate wolde his soule sholde vnbodye, 1550

And shapen hadde a mene it out to dryue,

Ayeyns which fate hym helpeth nat to stryue;

But on a day to fighten gan he wende,

At which, allas, he caughte his lyues ende.

ffor which me thynketh euery manere wight 1555

That haunteth armes oughte to biwaille

The deth of hym that was so noble a knyght;

ffor as he drough a kyng by thauentaille,
 Unwar of this, Achilles thorough the maille
 And thorough the body gan hym forto ryue; 1560
 And thus the worthi knyght was brought of lyue.

ffor whom, as olde bokes tellen vs,
 Was made swich wo that tonge it may nat telle,
 And namely the sorwe of Troilus,
 That next hym was of worthynesse welle; 1565
 And in this wo gan Troilus to dwelle,
 That, what for sorwe and loue and for vnreste,
 fful ofte a day he bad his herte breste.

But natheles, though he gan hym dispaire,
 And dradde ay that his lady was vntrewe, 1570
 Yet ay on hire his herte gan repaire,
 And as thise louers don, he soughte ay newe
 To gete ayeyn Criseyde, brighte of hewe;
 And in his herte he wente hire excusyng,
 That Calkas caused al hire tariyng. 1575

And ofte tyme he was in purpos grete,
 Hym seluen like a pilgrym to desgise
 To seen hire; but he may nat contrefete
 To ben vnknownen of folk that weren wise,
 Ne fynde excuse aright that may suffise, 1580
 If he amonge the Grekis knowen were;
 ffor which he wep ful ofte and many a tere.

To hire he wroot yet ofte tyme al newe
 fful pitously — he lefte it nought for slouthe —
 Bisechyng hire that syn that he was trewe, 1585
 That she wol come ayeyn and holde hire trouthe;
 ffor which Criseyde vp-on a day for routhe —
 I take it so — touchyng al this matere,

Wrot hym ayeyn and seyde as ye may here.

Litera Criseydis

"Cupides sone, ensample of goodly-heede,
 1590
 O swerd of knyghthod, sours of gentillesse,
 How myght a wight in torment and in drede,
 And heleles, yow sende as yet gladnesse?
 I herteles, I sik, I in destresse,
 Syn ye with me nor I with yow may dele, 1595
 Yow neyther sende ich herte may nor hele.

"Youre lettres ful, the papir al ypleynted,
 Conceyued hath myn hertes pietee;
 I haue ek seyn with teris al depeynted
 Yourre lettre, and how that ye requeren me
 To come ayeyn, which yet ne may nat be.
 But whi, lest that this lettre founden were,
 No mencioune ne make I now for feere.

1600

"Greuous to me, god woot, is youre vnreste,
 Yourre haste, and that the goddes ordinaunce
 It semeth nat ye take it for the beste;
 Nor other thyng nys in youre remembraunce,
 As thynketh me, but only youre plesaunce.
 But beth nat wroth and that I yow biseche;
 ffor that I tarie is al for wikked speche.

1605

1610

"ffor I haue herd wel moore than I wende,
 Touchyng vs two, how thynges han y-stonde,
 Which I shal with dissymelyng amende;
 And beth nat wroth, I haue ek vnderstonde
 How ye ne do but holden me in honde;
 But now no force, I kan nat in yow gesse
 But alle trouthe and alle gentillesse.

1615

"Come I wole, but yet in swich disioynte
 I stonde as now, that what yer or what day
 That this shal be, that kan I naught apoynte.
 But in effecte I pray yow as I may,
 Of youre good word and of youre frendship ay:
 ffor trewely, while that my lif may dure,
 As for a frend ye may in me assure.

1620

"Yet prey ich yow on yuel ye ne take
 That it is short which that I to yow write;
 I dar nat, ther I am, wel lettres make,
 Ne neuere yet ne koude I wel endite.
 Ek grete effect men write in place lite;
 Thentente is al and nat the lettres space.

1625

1630

And fareth now wel, god haue yow in his grace.

la vostre C."

This Troilus this lettre thoughte al straunge,
 Whan he it saugh and sorwfullich he sighte;
 Hym thoughte it lik a kalendes of chaunge.
 But fynaly he ful ne trowen myghte
 That she ne wolde hym holden that she hyghte;

1635

ffor with ful yuel wille list hym to leue,
That loueth wel, in swich cas, though hym greue.

But natheles men seyn that at the laste,
ffor any thyng men shal the soothe se, 1640
And swich a cas bitidde and that as faste,
That Troilus wel vnderstod that she
Nas nought so kynde as that hire oughte be;
And fynaly he woot now, out of doute,
That al is lost that he hath ben aboute. 1645

Stood on a day in his malencolie
This Troilus, and in suspecioun
Of hire for whom he wende forto dye.
And so bifel that thorough-out Troie town,
As was the gise, i-born was vp and down 1650
A manere cote-armure, as seith the storie,
Byform Deiphebe in signe of his victorie.

The whiche cote, as telleth Lollius,
Deiphebe it hadde rent fro Diomede
The same day; and whan this Troilus 1655
It saugh, he gan to taken of it hede,
Auysyng of the lengthe and of the brede,
And al the werk; but as he gan byholde,
fful sodeynly his herte gan to colde,

As he that on the coler fond with-inne 1660
A broche that he Criseyde yaf that morwe
That she from Troie moste nedes twynne,
In remembraunce of hym and of his sorwe,
And she hym leyde ayeyn hire feith to borwe
To kepe it ay — but now ful wel he wiste 1665
His lady nas no lenger on to triste.

He goth hym hom and gan ful soone sende
ffor Pandarus; and al this newe chaunce
And of this broche he tolde hym word and ende,
Compleynyng of hire hertes variaunce, 1670
His longe loue, his trouthe and his penaunce;
And after deth, with-ouen wordes moore,
fful faste he cride, his reste hym to restore.

Than spak he thus, "O lady bright, Criseyde,
Where is youre feith and where is youre biheste? 1675

- Where is youre loue, where is youre trouthe?" he seyde.
 "Of Diomedea haue ye now al this feeste;
 Allas, I wolde han trowed atte leeste
 That syn ye nolde in trouthe to me stonde,
 That ye thus nolde han holden me in honde. 1680
- "Who shal now trowe on any othes mo?
 Allas, I neuere wolde han wend er this
 That ye, Criseyde, koude han chaunged so,
 Ne, but I hadde agilt and don amys.
 So cruel wende I nought youre herte, ywis, 1685
 To sle me thus; allas, youre name of trouthe
 Is now fordon and that is al my routhe.
- "Was ther non other broche yow liste lete
 To feffe with youre newe loue," quod he,
 "But thilke broche that I with teris wete 1690
 Yow yaf as for a remembraunce of me?
 Non other cause, allas, ne hadde ye
 But for despit, and ek for that ye mente
 Al outrely to shewen youre entente.
- "Thorugh which I se that clene out of youre mynde 1695
 Ye han me cast, and I ne kan nor may,
 ffor al this world, with-inne myn herte fynde
 To vnlouen yow a quarter of a day.
 In corsed tyme I born was, weilaway,
 That yow that doon me al this wo endure 1700
 Yet loue I best of any creature.
- "Now god," quod he, "me sende yet the grace
 That I may meten with this Diomedea;
 And trewely, if I haue myght and space,
 Yet shal I make, I hope, his sydes blede. 1705
 O god," quod he, "that oughtest taken heede
 To fortheren trouthe and wronges to punyce,
 Whi nyltow don a vengeance of this vice?
- "O Pandare, that in dremes forto triste
 Me blamed hast and wont art oft vpbreyde, 1710
 Now maistow sen thi self, if that the liste,
 How trewe is now thi Nece, brighte Criseyde.
 In sondry formes, god it woot," he seyde,
 "The goddes shewen bothe ioie and tene
 In slep, and by my drem it is now sene. 1715

"And certeynly, with-outen moore speche,
ffrom hennes-forth as ferforth as I may,
Myn owen deth in armes wol I seche,
I recche nat how soone be the day.
But trewely, Criseyde, swete may, 1720
Whom I haue ay with al my myghte y-serued,
That ye thus doon, I haue it nat deserued."

This Pandarus, that al thise thynges herde,
And wiste wel he seyde a soth of this,
He nought a word ayeyn to hym answerde; 1725
ffor sory of his frendes sorwe he is,
And shamed for his Nece hath don amys,
And stant astoned of thise causes tweye,
As stille as ston; a word ne kowde he seye.

But at the laste thus he spak and seyde: 1730
"My brother deer, I may do the namore.
What sholde I seyn? I hate, ywis, Criseyde,
And god woot, I wol hate hire euermore.
And that thow me bisoughtest don of yoore,
Hauyng vn-to myn honour ne my reste 1735
Right no reward, I dide al that the leste.

"If I dide aught that myghte liken the,
It is me lief, and of this tresoun now,
God woot that it a sorwe is vnto me;
And dredeles, for hertes ese of yow, 1740
Right fayn I wolde amende it, wiste I how.
And fro this world almyghty god I preye
Deliuere hire soon, I kan namore seye."

Gret was the sorwe and pleynte of Troilus;
But forth hire cours fortune ay gan to holde. 1745
Criseyde loueth the sone of Tideus,
And Troilus moot wepe in cares colde.
Swich is this world, who-so it kan byholde;
In ech estat is litel hertes reste;
God leue vs forto take it for the beste. 1750

In many cruel bataille, out of drede,
Of Troilus, this ilke noble knyght,
As men may in thise olde bokes rede,
Was seen his knyghthod and his grete myght;

And dredeles, his ire day and nyght
 fful cruwely the Grekis ay aboughte,
 And alwey moost this Diomedede he soughte. 1755

And ofte tyme I fynde that they mette
 With blody strokes and with wordes grete,
 Assayinge how hire speres weren whette; 1760
 And god it woot, with many a cruel hete
 Gan Troilus vp-on his helm to bete.
 But natheles, fortune it naught ne wolde
 Of oothers hond that eyther deyen sholde.

And if I hadde ytaken forto write 1765
 The armes of this ilke worthi man,
 Than wolde ich of his batailles endite;
 But for that I to writen first bigan
 Of his loue, I haue seyd as I kan —
 Hise worthi dedes, who-so list hem heere, 1770
 Rede Dares, he kan telle hem alle i-feere —

Bysechyng euery lady bright of hewe,
 And euery gentil womman, what she be,
 That al be that Criseyde was vntrewe,
 That for that gilt she be nat wroth with me: 1775
 Ye may hire gilt in other bokes se,
 And gladlier I wol write, if yow leste,
 Penelopes trouthe and good Alceste.

Ny sey nat this al oonly for thise men,
 But moost for wommen that bitraised be 1780
 Thorough false folk; god yeue hem sorwe, amen!
 That with hire grete wit and subtilte
 Bytraise yow; and this commeueth me
 To speke, and in effect yow alle I preye,
 Beth war of men, and herkneth what I seye. 1785

Go, litel boke, go, litel myn tragedye,
 Ther god thi makere yet, er that he dye,
 So sende myght to make in some comedye;
 But litel boke, no makyng thow nenvie,
 But subgit be to alle Poyesy, 1790
 And kis the steppes where as thow seest space
 Uirgile, Ouide, Omer, Lucan and Stace.

And for ther is so gret diuersite

- In Englissh and in writyng of oure tonge,
 So prey I god that non myswrite the,
 Ne the mys metre for defaute of tonge.
 And red wher-so thow [MS yow] or elles songe,
 That thow be vnderstonde, god I biseche.
 But yet to purpos of my rather speche —
 1795
- The wrath as I bigan yow for to seye
 Of Troilus the Grekis boughten deere;
 ffor thousandes hise hondes maden deye,
 As he that was with-ouen any peere,
 Saue Ector in his tyme as I kan heere;
 But weilawey, saue only goddes wille,
 Despitously hym slough the fierse Achille.
 1800
- And whan that he was slayn in this manere,
 His lighte goost ful blisfully is went
 Up to the holughnesse of the eighthe spere,
 In conuers letyng euerich element;
 And ther he saugh with ful auysement
 The erratik sterres, herkenyng armonye
 With sownes ful of heuenyssh melodie.
 1810
- And down from thennes faste he gan auyse
 This litel spot of erthe that with the se
 Embraced is, and fully gan despise
 This wrecched world, and held al vanite
 To respect of the pleyn felicite
 That is in heuene aboue, and at the laste,
 Ther he was slayn his lokyng down he caste.
 1815
- And in hym self he lough right at the wo
 Of hem that wepten for his deth so faste,
 And dampned al oure werk that foloweth so
 The blynde lust, the which that may nat laste,
 And sholden al oure herte on heuen caste;
 And forth he wente, shortly forto telle,
 Ther as Mercurye sorted hym to dwelle.
 1820
- Swich fyn hath, lo, this Troilus for loue,
 Swich fyn hath al his grete worthynesse;
 Swich fyn hath his estat real aboue,
 Swich fyn his lust, swich fyn hath his noblesse;
 Swich fyn hath false worldes brotelnesse:
 And thus bigan his louyng of Criseyde,
 1830

As I haue told, and in this wise he deyde.

O yonge, fresshe folkes, he or she, 1835
 In which that loue vp groweth with youre age,
 Repeyreth hom fro worldly vanyte,
 And of youre herte vp casteth the visage
 To thilke god that after his ymage
 Yow made, and thynketh al nys but a faire 1840
 This world that passeth soone as floures faire.

And loueth hym the which that right for loue
 Upon a Crois oure soules forto beye,
 ffirst starf and roos and sit in heuene aboue;
 ffor he nyl falsen no wight, dar I seye, 1845
 That wol his herte al holly on hym leye.
 And syn he best to loue is and most meke,
 What nedeth feynede loues forto seke?

Lo here, of payens corsed olde rites,
 Lo here, what alle hire goddes may auaille; 1850
 Lo here, thise wrecched worldes appetites;
 Lo here, the fyn and guerdoun for trauaille
 Of Ioue, Appollo, of Mars, of swich rascaille;
 Lo here, the forme of olde clerkis speche
 In poetrie, if ye hire bokes seche. 1855

O moral Gower, this book I directe
 To the, and to the, philosophical Strode,
 To vouchen-sauf, ther nede is, to correcte,
 Of youre benignites and zeles goode;
 And to that sothfast Crist that starf on rode, 1860
 With al myn herte of mercy euere I preye,
 And to the lord right thus I speke and seye:

Thow oon, and two, and thre, eterne on lyue,
 That regnest ay in thre, and two, and oon,
 Uncircumscript, and al maist circumscriue, 1865
 Us from visible and in-visible foon
 Defende, and to thy mercye, euerichon,
 So make vs, Ihesus, for thi mercy digne,
 ffor loue of Mayde and moder thyn benigne. Amen.

Explicit liber Troily.