

THE FIRSTBOOK.

THE double sorrow <1> of Troilus to tell, That was the King Priamus' son of
Troy, In loving how his adventures* fell *fortunes From
woe to weal, and after* out of joy, *afterwards My purpose is,
ere I you parte froy.* *from Tisiphone, <2> thou help me
to indite These woeful words, that weep as I do write.

To thee I call, thou goddess of torment! Thou cruel wight, that sorrowest
ever in pain; Help me, that am the sorry instrument That helpeth lovers, as I
can, to plain.* *complain For well it sits,* the soothe for to
sayn, *befits Unto a woeful wight a dreary fere,*
companion And to a sorry tale a sorry cheer. *countenance

For I, that God of Love's servants serve, Nor dare to love for mine
unlikeliness,* <3> *unsuitableness Pray for speed,* although I
shoulde sterue,** *success **die So far I am from his help in
darkness; But natheless, might I do yet gladness To any lover, or any love
avail,* *advance Have thou the thank, and mine be the
travail.

But ye lovers that bathen in gladness, If any drop of pity in you be,
Remember you for old past heaviness, For Godde's love, and on adversity
That others suffer; think how sometime ye Founde how Love durste you
displease; Or elles ye have won it with great ease.

And pray for them that been in the case Of Troilus, as ye may after hear,
That Love them bring in heaven to solace;* *delight, comfort And for
me pray also, that God so dear May give me might to show, in some
mannere, Such pain or woe as Love's folk endure, In Troilus' *unseely
adventure* *unhappy fortune*

And pray for them that eke be despair'd In love, that never will recover'd be;
And eke for them that falsely be appair'd* *slandered Through
wicked tongues, be it he or she: Or thus bid* God, for his benignity,
pray To grant them soon out of this world to pace, *pass, go
That be despaired of their love's grace.

And bid also for them that be at ease In love, that God them grant
perseverance, And send them might their loves so to please, That it to them
be *worship and pleasance;* *honour and pleasure* For so hope I my

*assured

Dan Troilus, as he was wont to guide His younge knightes, led them up and down In that large temple upon ev'ry side, Beholding ay the ladies of the town; Now here, now there, for no devotioun Had he to none, to *reave him* his rest, *deprive him of* But gan to *praise and lacke whom him lest;* *praise and disparage whom he pleased* And in his walk full fast he gan to wait* *watch, observe If knight or squier of his company Gan for to sigh, or let his eyen bait* *feed On any woman that he could espy; Then he would smile, and hold it a folly, And say him thus: "Ah, Lord, she sleepeth soft For love of thee, when as thou turnest oft.

"I have heard told, pardie, of your living, Ye lovers, and your lewed* observance, *ignorant, foolish And what a labour folk have in winning Of love, and in it keeping with doubtance;* *doubt And when your prey is lost, woe and penance;* *suffering Oh, very fooles! may ye no thing see? Can none of you aware by other be?"

But the God of Love vowed vengeance on Troilus for that despite, and, showing that his bow was not broken, "hit him at the full."

Within the temple went he forth playing, This Troilus, with ev'ry wight about, On this lady and now on that looking, Whether she were of town, or *of without;* *from beyond the walls* And *upon cas* befell, that through the rout* *by chance* *crowd His eye pierced, and so deep it went, Till on Cresside it smote, and there it stent;* *stayed

And suddenly wax'd wonder sore astoned,* *amazed And gan her bet* behold in busy wise: *better "Oh, very god!" <5> thought he; "where hast thou woned* *dwelt That art so fair and goodly to devise?* *describe Therewith his heart began to spread and rise; And soft he sighed, lest men might him hear, And caught again his former *playing cheer.* *jesting demeanour*

She was not with the least of her stature, *she was tall* But all her limbes so well answering Were to womanhood, that creature Was never lesse mannish in seeming. And eke *the pure wise of her moving* *by very the way She showed well, that men might in her guess she moved* Honour, estate,* and womanly nobless. *dignity

Then Troilus right wonder well withal Began to like her moving and her cheer,* *countenance Which somedeal dainous* was, for she let

fall *disdainful Her look a little aside, in such mannere Ascaunce*
"What! may I not stande here?" *as if to say <6> And after that *her
looking gan she light,* *her expression became That never thought him
see so good a sight. more pleasant*

And of her look in him there gan to quicken So great desire, and strong
affection, That in his hearte's bottom gan to sticken Of her the fix'd and
deep impression; And though he erst* had pored** up and down,
*previously **looked Then was he glad his hornes in to shrink; Unnethe*s*
wist he how to look or wink. *scarcely

Lo! he that held himselfe so cunning, And scorned them that Love's paines
drien,* *suffer Was full unaware that love had his dwelling
Within the subtile streames* of her eyen; *rays, glances That
suddenly he thought he felte dien, Right with her look, the spirit in his
heart; Blessed be Love, that thus can folk convert!

She thus, in black, looking to Troilus, Over all things he stoode to behold;
But his desire, nor wherefore he stood thus, He neither *cheere made,* nor
worde told; *showed by his countenance* But from afar, *his manner for
to hold,* *to observe due courtesy* On other things sometimes his look
he cast, And eft* <7> on her, while that the service last.** *again **lasted

And after this, not fully all awhaped,* *daunted Out of the
temple all easily be went, Repenting him that ever he had japed*
*jested Of Love's folk, lest fully the descent Of scorn fell on himself; but what
he meant, Lest it were wist on any manner side, His woe he gan dissemble
and eke hide.

Returning to his palace, he begins hypocritically to smile and jest at Love's
servants and their pains; but by and by he has to dismiss his attendants,
feigning "other busy needs." Then, alone in his chamber, he begins to groan
and sigh, and call up again Cressida's form as he saw her in the temple --
"making a mirror of his mind, in which he saw all wholly her figure." He
thinks no travail or sorrow too high a price for the love of such a goodly
woman; and, "full unadvised of his woe coming,"

Thus took he purpose Love's craft to sue,* *follow And
thought that he would work all privily, First for to hide his desire all *in
mew* *in a cage, secretly From every wight y-born, all utterly, *But he
might aught recover'd be thereby;* *unless he gained by it* Rememb'ring
him, that love *too wide y-blow* *too much spoken of* Yields bitter fruit,
although sweet seed be sow.

Love, he shall be made the best post of all Love's law, and most grieve Love's enemies. Troilus gives utterance to a hint of fear; but he is silenced by Pandarus with another proverb -- "Thou hast full great care, lest that the carl should fall out of the moon." Then the lovesick youth breaks into a joyous boast that some of the Greeks shall smart; he mounts his horse, and plays the lion in the field; while Pandarus retires to consider how he may best recommend to his niece the suit of Troilus.