

BOOK II. Incipit Prohemium Secundi Libri.

Out of these blake wawes for to sayle,
O wind, O wind, the weder ginneth clere;
For in this see the boot hath swich travayle,
Of my conning, that unnethe I it stere:
This see clepe I the tempestous matere 5
Of desespeyr that Troilus was inne:
But now of hope the calendes biginne.

O lady myn, that called art Cleo,
Thou be my speed fro this forth, and my muse,
To ryme wel this book, til I have do; 10
Me nedeth here noon other art to use.
For-why to every lovere I me excuse,
That of no sentement I this endyte,
But out of Latin in my tonge it wryte.

Wherfore I nil have neither thank ne blame 15
Of al this werk, but prey yow mekely,
Disblameth me if any word be lame,
For as myn auctor seyde, so seye I.
Eek though I speke of love unfeelingly,
No wondre is, for it no-thing of newe is; 20
A blind man can nat Iuggen wel in hewis.

Ye knowe eek, that in forme of speche is chaunge
With-inne a thousand yeer, and wordes tho
That hadden prys, now wonder nyce and straunge
Us thinketh hem; and yet they spake hem so, 25
And spedde as wel in love as men now do;
Eek for to winne love in sondry ages,
In sondry londes, sondry ben usages.

And for-thy if it happe in any wyse,
That here be any lovere in this place 30
That herkneth, as the storie wol devyse,
How Troilus com to his lady grace,
And thenketh, so nolde I nat love purchace,
Or wondreth on his speche or his doinge,
I noot; but it is me no wonderinge; 35

For every wight which that to Rome went,
Halt nat o path, or alwey o manere;
Eek in som lond were al the gamen shent,
If that they ferde in love as men don here,
As thus, in open doing or in chere, 40
In visitinge, in forme, or seyde hire sawes;
For-thy men seyn, ech contree hath his lawes.

Eek scarsly been ther in this place three

That han in love seid lyk and doon in al;
For to thy purpos this may lyken thee, 45
And thee right nought, yet al is seyde or shal;
Eek som men grave in tree, som in stoon wal,
As it bitit; but sin I have begonne,
Myn auctor shal I folwen, if I conne.

Exclipit prohemium Secundi Libri.

Incipit Liber Secundus.

In May, that moder is of monthes glade, 50
That fresshe floures, blewe, and whyte, and rede,
Ben quike agayn, that winter dede made,
And ful of bawme is fleting every mede;
Whan Phebus doth his brighte bemes sprede
Right in the whyte Bole, it so bitidde 55
As I shal singe, on Mayes day the thridde,

That Pandarus, for al his wyse speche,
Felt eek his part of loves shottes kene,
That, coude he never so wel of loving preche,
It made his hewe a-day ful ofte grene; 60
So shoop it, that hym fil that day a tene
In love, for which in wo to bedde he wente,

And made, er it was day, ful many a wente.

The swalwe Proigne, with a sorwful lay,
Whan morwe com, gan make hir waymentinge, 65
Why she forshapen was; and ever lay
Pandare a-bedde, half in a slomeringe,
Til she so neigh him made hir chiteringe
How Tereus gan forth hir suster take,
That with the noyse of hir he gan a-wake; 70

And gan to calle, and dresse him up to ryse,
Remembringe him his erand was to done
From Troilus, and eek his greet empryse;
And caste and knew in good plyt was the mone
To doon viage, and took his wey ful sone 75
Un-to his neces paleys ther bi-syde;
Now Ianus, god of entree, thou him gyde!

Whan he was come un-to his neces place,
'Wher is my lady?' to hir folk seyde he;
And they him tolde; and he forth in gan pace, 80
And fond, two othere ladyes sete and she,
With-inne a paved parlour; and they three
Herden a mayden reden hem the geste
Of the Sege of Thebes, whyl hem leste.

Quod Pandarus, `Ma dame, god yow see, 85
With al your book and al the companye!
`Ey, uncle myn, welcome y-wis,' quod she,
And up she roos, and by the hond in hye
She took him faste, and seyde, `This night thrye,
To goode mote it turne, of yow I mette! 90
And with that word she doun on bench him sette.

`Ye, nece, ye shal fare wel the bet,
If god wole, al this yeer,' quod Pandarus;
`But I am sory that I have yow let
To herknen of your book ye preysen thus; 95
For goddes love, what seith it? tel it us.
Is it of love? O, som good ye me lere!
`Uncle,' quod she, `your maistresse is not here!

With that they gonnen laughe, and tho she seyde,
`This romaunce is of Thebes, that we rede; 100
And we han herd how that king Laius deyde
Thurgh Edippus his sone, and al that dede;
And here we stenten at these lettres rede,
How the bisshop, as the book can telle,
Amphiorax, fil thurgh the ground to helle.' 105

Quod Pandarus, `Al this knowe I my-selve,
And al the assege of Thebes and the care;

For her-of been ther maked bokes twelve: --
But lat be this, and tel me how ye fare;
Do wey your barbe, and shew your face bare; 110
Do wey your book, rys up, and lat us daunce,
And lat us don to May som observaunce.'

`A! God forbede!' quod she. `Be ye mad?
Is that a widewes lyf, so god you save?
By god, ye maken me right sore a-drad, 115
Ye ben so wilde, it semeth as ye rave!
It sete me wel bet ay in a cave
To bidde, and rede on holy seyntes lyves;
Lat maydens gon to daunce, and yonge wyves.'

`As ever thryve I,' quod this Pandarus, 120
`Yet coude I telle a thing to doon you pleye.'
`Now, uncle dere,' quod she, `tel it us
For goddes love; is than the assege aweye?
I am of Grekes so ferd that I deye.'
`Nay, nay,' quod he, `as ever mote I thryve! 125
It is a thing wel bet than swiche fyve.'

`Ye, holy god,' quod she, `what thing is that?
What! Bet than swiche fyve? Ey, nay, y-wis!
For al this world ne can I reden what
It sholde been; som Iape, I trowe, is this; 130

And but your-selven telle us what it is,
My wit is for to arede it al to lene;
As help me god, I noot nat what ye meene.'

`And I your borow, ne never shal, for me,
This thing be told to yow, as mote I thryve!' 135

`And why so, uncle myn? Why so?' quod she.

`By god,' quod he, `that wole I telle as blyve;
For prouder womman were ther noon on-lyve,
And ye it wiste, in al the toun of Troye;

I iape nought, as ever have I Ioye!' 140

Tho gan she wondren more than biforn
A thousand fold, and doun hir eyen caste;
For never, sith the tyme that she was born,
To knowe thing desired she so faste;

And with a syk she seyde him at the laste, 145

`Now, uncle myn, I nil yow nought displese,
Nor axen more, that may do yow disese.'

So after this, with many wordes glade,
And freendly tales, and with mery chere,
Of this and that they pleyde, and gunnen wade 150

In many an unkouth glad and deep matere,
As freendes doon, whan they ben met y-fere;
Til she gan axen him how Ector ferde,

That was the tounes wal and Grekes yerde.

‘Ful wel, I thanke it god,’ quod Pandarus, 155
‘Save in his arm he hath a litel wounde;
And eek his fresshe brother Troilus,
The wyse worthy Ector the secounde,
In whom that ever vertu list abounde,
As alle trouthe and alle gentillesse, 160
Wisdom, honour, fredom, and worthinesse.’

‘In good feith, eem,’ quod she, ‘that lyketh me;
They faren wel, god save hem bothe two!
For trewely I holde it greet deyntee
A kinges sone in armes wel to do, 165
And been of good condiciouns ther-to;
For greet power and moral vertu here
Is selde y-seye in o persone y-fere.’

‘In good feith, that is sooth,’ quod Pandarus;
‘But, by my trouthe, the king hath sones tweye, 170
That is to mene, Ector and Troilus,
That certainly, though that I sholde deye,
They been as voyde of vyces, dar I seye,
As any men that liveth under the sonne,
Hir might is wyde y-knowe, and what they conne. 175

`Of Ector nedeth it nought for to telle:
In al this world ther nis a bettre knight
Than he, that is of worthinesse welle;
And he wel more vertu hath than might.
This knoweth many a wys and worthy wight. 180
The same prys of Troilus I seye,
God help me so, I knowe not swiche tweye.'

`By god,' quod she, `of Ector that is sooth;
Of Troilus the same thing trowe I;
For, dredelees, men tellen that he dooth 185
In armes day by day so worthily,
And bereth him here at hoom so gentilly
To every wight, that al the prys hath he
Of hem that me were levest preysed be.'

`Ye sey right sooth, y-wis,' quod Pandarus; 190
`For yesterday, who-so hadde with him been,
He might have wondred up-on Troilus;
For never yet so thikke a swarm of been
Ne fleigh, as Grekes fro him gonne fleen;
And thorough the feld, in everi wightes ere, 195
Ther nas no cry but "Troilus is there!"

`Now here, now there, he hunted hem so faste,
Ther nas but Grekes blood; and Troilus,

Now hem he hurte, and hem alle doun he caste;
Ay where he wente, it was arayed thus: 200
He was hir deeth, and sheld and lyf for us;
That as that day ther dorste noon with-stonde,
Whyl that he held his blody swerd in honde.

Therto he is the freendlieste man
Of grete estat, that ever I saw my lyve; 205
And wher him list, best felawshipe can
To suche as him thinketh able for to thryve.'
And with that word tho Pandarus, as blyve,
He took his leve, and seyde, 'I wol go henne.'
'Nay, blame have I, myn uncle,' quod she thenne. 210

'What eyleth yow to be thus wery sone,
And namelich of wommen? Wol ye so?
Nay, sitteth down; by god, I have to done
With yow, to speke of wisdom er ye go.'
And every wight that was a-boute hem tho, 215
That herde that, gan fer a-vey to stonde,
Whyl they two hadde al that hem liste in honde.

Whan that hir tale al brought was to an ende,
Of hire estat and of hir governaunce,
Quod Pandarus, 'Now is it tyme I wende; 220
But yet, I seye, aryseth, lat us daunce,

And cast your widwes habit to mischaunce:
What list yow thus your-self to disfigure,
Sith yow is tid thus fair an aventure?'

'A! Wel bithought! For love of god,' quod she, 225

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

'No, this thing axeth layser,' tho quod he,

'And eek me wolde mucche greve, y-wis,

If I it tolde, and ye it toke amis.

Yet were it bet my tonge for to stille 230

Than seye a sooth that were ayeins your wille.

'For, nece, by the goddesse Minerve,

And Iuppiter, that maketh the thonder ringe,

And by the blisful Venus that I serve,

Ye been the womman in this world livinge, 235

With-oute paramours, to my wittinge,

That I best love, and lothest am to greve,

And that ye witen wel your-self, I leve.'

'Y-wis, myn uncle,' quod she, 'grant mercy;

Your freendship have I founden ever yit; 240

I am to no man holden trewely,

So mucche as yow, and have so litel quit;

And, with the grace of god, emforth my wit,

As in my gilt I shal you never offende;

And if I have er this, I wol amende. 245

`But, for the love of god, I yow beseche,
As ye ben he that I love most and triste,
Lat be to me your fremde manere speche,
And sey to me, your nece, what yow liste:'
And with that word hir uncle anoon hir kiste, 250
And seyde, `Gladly, leve nece dere,
Tak it for good that I shal seye yow here.'

With that she gan hir eiyen doun to caste,
And Pandarus to coghe gan a lyte,
And seyde, `Nece, alwey, lo! To the laste, 255
How-so it be that som men hem delyte
With subtil art hir tales for to endyte,
Yet for al that, in hir entencioun
Hir tale is al for som conclusioun.

`And sithen thende is every tales strengthe, 260
And this matere is so bihovely,
What sholde I peynte or drawen it on lengthe
To yow, that been my freend so feithfully?'
And with that word he gan right inwardly
Biholden hir, and loken on hir face, 265
And seyde, `On suche a mirour goode grace!'

Than thoughte he thus: `If I my tale endyte
Ought hard, or make a proces any whyle,
She shal no savour han ther-in but lyte,
And trowe I wolde hir in mywil bigyle. 270

For tendre wittes wenen al be wyle
Ther-as they can nat pleyedly understonde;
For-thy hir wit to serven wol I fonde --'

And loked on hir in a besy wyse,
And she was war that he byheld hir so, 275
And seyde, `Lord! So faste ye me avyse!
Sey ye me never er now? What sey ye, no?'
`Yes, yes,' quod he, `and bet wole er I go;
But, by my trouthe, I thoughte now if ye
Be fortunat, for now men shal it see. 280

`For to every wight som goodly aventure
Som tyme is shape, if he it can receyven;
And if that he wol take of it no cure,
Whan that it commeth, but wilfully it weyven,
Lo, neither cas nor fortune him deceyven, 285
But right his verray slouthe and wrecchednesse;
And swich a wight is for to blame, I gesse.

`Good aventure, O bele nece, have ye
Ful lightly founden, and ye conne it take;

And, for the love of god, and eek of me, 290
Cacche it anoon, lest aventure slake.
What sholde I lenger proces of it make?
Yif me your hond, for in this world is noon,
If that yow list, a wight so wel begoon.

And sith I speke of good entencioun, 295
As I to yow have told wel here-biforn,
And love as wel your honour and renoun
As creature in al this world y-born;
By alle the othes that I have yow sworn,
And ye be wrooth therfore, or wene I lye, 300
Ne shal I never seen yow eft with ye.

Beth nought agast, ne quaketh nat; wher-to?
Ne chaungeth nat for fere so your hewe;
For hardely the werste of this is do;
And though my tale as now be to yow newe, 305
Yet trist alwey, ye shal me finde trewe;
And were it thing that me thoughte unsittinge,
To yow nolde I no swiche tales bringe.'

Now, my good eem, for goddes love, I preye,'
Quod she, `com of, and tel me what it is; 310
For bothe I am agast what ye wol seye,
And eek me longeth it to wite, y-wis.

For whether it be wel or be amis,
Say on, lat me not in this fere dwelle:'
`So wol I doon; now herkneth, I shal telle: 315

`Now, nece myn, the kinges dere sone,
The goode, wyse, worthy, fresshe, and free,
Which alway for to do wel is his wone,
The noble Troilus, so loveth thee,
That, bot ye helpe, it wol his bane be. 320
Lo, here is al, what sholde I more seye?
Doth what yow list, to make him live or deye.

`But if ye lete him deye, I wol sterve;
Have her my trouthe, nece, I nil not lyen;
Al sholde I with this knyf my throte kerve --' 325
With that the teres braste out of his yen,
And seyde, `If that ye doon us bothe dyen,
Thus giltelees, than have ye fisshed faire;
What mende ye, though that we bothe apeyre?

`Allas! He which that is my lord so dere, 330
That trewe man, that noble gentil knight,
That nought desireth but your freendly chere,
I see him deye, ther he goth up-right,
And hasteth him, with al his fulle might,
For to be slayn, if fortune wol assente; 335

Allas! That god yow swich a beautee sente!

ˆIf it be so that ye so cruel be,
That of his deeth yow liste nought to recche,
That is so trewe and worthy, as ye see,
No more than of a Iapere or a wrecche, 340
If ye be swich, your beautee may not strecche
To make amendes of so cruel a dede;
Avysement is good bifore the nede.

ˆWo worth the faire gemme vertulees!
Wo worth that herbe also that dooth no bote! 345
Wo worth that beautee that is routhelees!
Wo worth that wight that tret ech under fote!
And ye, that been of beautee crop and rote,
If therwith-al in you ther be no routhe,
Than is it harm ye liven, by my trouthe! 350

ˆAnd also thenk wel that this is no gaude;
For me were lever, thou and I and he
Were hanged, than I sholde been his baude,
As heyghe, as men mighte on us alle y-see:
I am thyn eem, the shame were to me, 355
As wel as thee, if that I sholde assente,
Thorugh myn abet, that he thyn honour shente.

Now understond, for I yow nought requere,
To binde yow to him thorough no beheste,
But only that ye make him bettre chere 360
Than ye han doon er this, and more feste,
So that his lyf be saved, at the leste;
This al and som, and playnly our entente;
God help me so, I never other mente.

Lo, this request is not but skile, y-wis, 365
Ne doute of reson, pardee, is ther noon.
I sette the worste that ye dredden this,
Men wolden wondren seen him come or goon:
Ther-ayeins answeere I thus a-noon,
That every wight, but he be fool of kinde, 370
Wol deme it love of freendship in his minde.

What? Who wol deme, though he see a man
To temple go, that he the images eteth?
Think eek how wel and wysly that he can
Governe him-self, that he no-thing foryeteth, 375
That, wher he cometh, he prys and thank him geteth;
And eek ther-to, he shal come here so selde,
What fors were it though al the toun behelde?

Swich love of freendes regneth al this toun;
And wrye yow in that mantel ever-mo; 380

And god so wis be my savacioun,
As I have seyde, your beste is to do so.
But alwey, goode nece, to stinte his wo,
So lat your daunger sucred ben a lyte,
That of his deeth ye be nought for to wyte.' 385

Criseyde, which that herde him in this wyse,
Thoughte, 'I shal fele what he meneth, y-wis.'
'Now, eem,' quod she, 'what wolde ye devyse?
What is your reed I sholde doon of this?'
'That is wel seyde,' quod he. 'certayn, best is 390
That ye him love ayein for his lovinge,
As love for love is skilful guerdoninge.

'Think eek, how elde wasteth every houre
In eche of yow a party of beautee;
And therefore, er that age thee devoure, 395
Go love, for, olde, ther wol no wight of thee.
Lat this proverbe a lore un-to yow be;
"To late y-war, quod Beautee, whan it paste;"
And elde daunteth daunger at the laste.

'The kinges fool is woned to cryen loude, 400
Whan that him thinketh a womman bereth hir hye,
"So longe mote ye live, and alle proude,
Til crowes feet be growe under your ye,

And sende yow thanne a mirour in to pry
In whiche that ye may see your face a-morwe!" 405
Nece, I bidde wisshe yow no more sorwe.'

With this he stente, and caste adoun the heed,
And she bigan to breste a-wepe anoon,
And seyde, `Allas, for wo! Why nere I deed?
For of this world the feith is al agoon! 410
Allas! What sholden straunge to me doon,
Whan he, that for my beste freend I wende,
Ret me to love, and sholde it me defende?

`Allas! I wolde han trusted, doutelees,
That if that I, thurgh my disaventure, 415
Had loved other him or Achilles,
Ector, or any mannes creature,
Ye nolde han had no mercy ne mesure
On me, but alwey had me in repreve;
This false world, allas! Who may it leve? 420

`What? Is this al the Ioye and al the feste?
Is this your reed, is this my blisful cas?
Is this the verray mede of your beheste?
Is al this peynted proces seyde, allas!
Right for this fyn? O lady myn, Pallas! 425
Thou in this dredful cas for me purveye;

For so astonied am I that I deye!

With that she gan ful sorwfully to syke;

‘Al May it be no bet?’ quod Pandarus;

‘By god, I shal no-more come here this wyke, 430

And god to-forn, that am mistrusted thus;

I see ful wel that ye sette lyte of us,

Or of our deeth! Allas! I woful wrecche!

Mighte he yet live, of me is nought to recche.

‘O cruel god, O dispitouse Marte, 435

O Furies three of helle, on yow I crye!

So lat me never out of this hous departe,

If that I mente harm or vilanye!

But sith I see my lord mot nedes dye,

And I with him, here I me shryve, and seye 440

That wikkedly ye doon us bothe deye.

‘But sith it lyketh yow that I be deed,

By Neptunus, that god is of the see,

Fro this forth shal I never eten breed

Til I myn owene herte blood may see; 445

For certayn, I wole deye as sone as he --’

And up he sterte, and on his wey he raughte,

Til she agayn him by the lappe caughte.

Criseyde, which that wel neigh starf for fere,
So as she was the ferfulleste wight 450
That mighte be, and herde eek with hir ere,
And saw the sorwful ernest of the knight,
And in his preyere eek saw noon unright,
And for the harm that mighte eek fallen more,
She gan to rewe and dredde hir wonder sore; 455

And thoughte thus, `Unhappes fallen thikke
Alday for love, and in swich maner cas,
As men ben cruel in hem-self and wikke;
And if this man slee here him-self, alas!
In my presence, it wol be no solas. 460
What men wolde of hit deme I can nat seye;
It nedeth me ful sleyly for to pleye.'

And with a sorwful syk she seyde thrye,
`Al Lord! What me is tid a sory chaunce!
For myn estat lyth in Iupartye, 465
And eek myn emes lyf lyth in balaunce;
But nathelees, with goddes governaunce,
I shal so doon, myn honour shal I kepe,
And eek his lyf;' and stinte for to wepe.

`Of harmes two, the lesse is for to chese; 470
Yet have I lever maken him good chere

In honour, than myn emes lyf to lese;
Ye seyn, ye no-thing elles me requere?'
'No, wis,' quod he, 'myn owene nece dere.'
'Now wel,' quod she, 'and I wol doon my peyne; 475
I shal myn herte ayeins my lust constreyne.

'But that I nil not holden him in honde,
Ne love a man, ne can I not, ne may
Ayeins my wil; but elles wol I fonde,
Myn honour sauf, plese him fro day to day; 480
Ther-to nolde I nought ones have seyd nay,
But that I dredde, as in my fantasye;
But cesse cause, ay cesseth maladye.

'And here I make a protestacioun,
That in this proces if ye depper go, 485
That certaynly, for no savacioun
Of yow, though that ye sterve bothe two,
Though al the world on o day be my fo,
Ne shal I never on him han other routhe. --'
'I graunte wel,' quod Pandare, 'by my trouthe. 490

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

`Ne that I shal han cause in this matere,' 495
Quod he, `to pleyne, or after yow to preche?
`Why, no, parde; what nedeth more speche?'

Tho fillen they in othere tales glade,
Til at the laste, `O good eem,' quod she tho,
`For love of god, which that us bothe made, 500
Tel me how first ye wisten of his wo:
Wot noon of hit but ye?' He seyde, `No.'
`Can he wel speke of love?' quod she, `I preye,
Tel me, for I the bet me shal purveye.'

Tho Pandarus a litel gan to smyle, 505
And seyde, `By my trouthe, I shal yow telle.
This other day, nought gon ful longe whyle,
In-with the paleys-gardyn, by a welle,
Gan he and I wel half a day to dwelle,
Right for to speken of an ordenaunce, 510
How we the Grekes myghte disavaunce.

`Sone after that bigonne we to lepe,
And casten with our dartes to and fro,
Til at the laste he seyde he wolde slepe,
And on the gres a-doun he leyde him tho; 515
And I after gan rome to and fro
Til that I herde, as that I welk allone,

How he bigan ful woefully to grone.

Tho gan I stalke him softly bihinde,
And sikerly, the sothe for to seyne, 520
As I can clepe ayein now to my minde,
Right thus to Love he gan him for to pleyne;
He seyde, "Lord! Have routhe up-on my peyne,
Al have I been rebel in myn entente;
Now, MEA CULPA, lord! I me repente. 525

"O god, that at thy disposicioun
Ledest the fyn by Iuste purveyaunce,
Of every wight, my lowe confessioun
Accepte in gree, and send me swich penaunce
As lyketh thee, but from desesperaunce, 530
That may my goost departe away fro thee,
Thou be my sheld, for thy benignitee.

"For certes, lord, so soore hath she me wounded,
That stod in blak, with loking of hir yen,
That to myn hertes botme it is y-sounded, 535
Thorugh which I woot that I mot nedes dyen;
This is the worste, I dar me not bi-wryen;
And wel the hotter been the gledes rede,
That men hem wryen with asshen pale and dede."

With that he smoot his heed adoun anoon, 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 hadde I,
And come ayein anoon and stood him by,
And seyde, "A-wake, ye slepen al to longe; 545
It semeth nat that love dooth yow longe,

"That slepen so that no man may yow wake.
Who sey ever or this so dul a man?"
"Ye, freend," quod he, "do ye your hedes ake
For love, and lat me liven as I can." 550
But though that he for wo was pale and wan,
Yet made he tho as freshe a countenaunce
As though he shulde have led the newe daunce.

This passed forth, til now, this other day,
It fel that I com roming al allone 555
Into his chaumbre, and fond how that he lay
Up-on his bed; but man so sore grone
Ne herde I never, and what that was his mone,
Ne wist I nought; for, as I was cominge,
Al sodeynly he lefte his compleynge. 560

Of which I took somwat suspeciouun,
And neer I com, and fond he wepte sore;

And god so wis be my savacioun,
As never of thing hadde I no routhe more.
For neither with engyn, ne with no lore, 565
Unethes mighte I fro the deeth him kepe;
That yet fele I myn herte for him wepe.

And god wot, never, sith that I was born,
Was I so bisy no man for to preche,
Ne never was to wight so depe y-sworn, 570
Or he me tolde who mighte been his leche.
But now to yow rehersen al his speche,
Or alle his woful wordes for to soune,
Ne bid me not, but ye wol see me swowne.

But for to save his lyf, and elles nought, 575
And to non harm of yow, thus am I driven;
And for the love of god that us hath wrought,
Swich chere him dooth, that he and I may liven.
Now have I plat to yow myn herte shriven;
And sin ye woot that myn entente is clene, 580
Tak hede ther-of, for I non yvel mene.

And right good thrift, I prey to god, have ye,
That han swich oon y-caught with-oute net;
And be ye wys, as ye ben fair to see,
Wel in the ring than is the ruby set. 585

Ther were never two so wel y-met,
Whan ye ben his al hool, as he is youre:
Ther mighty god yet graunte us see that houre!

`Nay, therof spak I not, a, ha!' quod she,
`As helpe me god, ye shenden every deel!' 590
`O mercy, dere nece,' anoon quod he,
`What-so I spak, I mente nought but weel,
By Mars the god, that helmed is of steel;
Now beth nought wrooth, my blood, my nece dere.'
`Now wel,' quod she, `foryeven be it here!' 595

With this he took his leve, and hoom he wente;
And lord, he was glad and wel bigoon!
Criseyde aroos, no lenger she ne stente,
But straught in-to hir closet wente anoon,
And sette here doun as stille as any stoon, 600
And every word gan up and doun to winde,
That he hadde seyde, as it com hir to minde;

And wex somdel astonied in hir thought,
Right for the newe cas; but whan that she
Was ful avysed, tho fond she right nought 605
Of peril, why she oughte afered be.

For man may love, of possibilitee,
A womman so, his herte may to-breste,

And she nought love ayein, but-if hir leste.

But as she sat allone and thoughte thus, 610

Thascry aroos at skarmish al with-oute,

And men cryde in the strete, `See, Troilus

Hath right now put to flight the Grekes route!

With that gan al hir meynee for to shoute,

`A! Go we see, caste up the latis wyde; 615

For thurgh this strete he moot to palays ryde;

`For other wey is fro the yate noon

Of Dardanus, ther open is the cheyne.'

With that com he and al his folk anoon

An esy pas rydinge, in routes tweyne, 620

Right as his happy day was, sooth to seyne,

For which, men say, may nought disturbed be

That shal bityden of necessitee.

This Troilus sat on his baye stede,

Al armed, save his heed, ful richely, 625

And wounded was his hors, and gan to blede,

On whiche he rood a pas, ful softly;

But swych a knightly sighte, trewely,

As was on him, was nought, with-outen faile,

To loke on Mars, that god is of batayle. 630

So lyk a man of armes and a knight
He was to seen, fulfild of heigh prowesse;
For bothe he hadde a body and a might
To doon that thing, as wel as hardinesse;
And eek to seen him in his gere him dresse, 635
So fresh, so yong, so weldy semed he,
It was an heven up-on him for to see.

His helm to-hewen was in twenty places,
That by a tissew heng, his bak bihinde,
His sheld to-dashed was with swerdes and maces, 640
In which men mighte many an arwe finde
That thirled hadde horn and nerf and rinde;
And ay the peple cryde, `Here cometh our Ioye,
And, next his brother, holdere up of Troye!

For which he wex a litel reed for shame, 645
Whan he the peple up-on him herde cryen,
That to biholde it was a noble game,
How sobreliche he caste doun his yen.
Cryseyda gan al his chere aspyen,
And leet so softe it in hir herte sinke, 650
That to hir-self she seyde, `Who yaf me drinke?'

For of hir owene thought she wex al reed,
Remembringe hir right thus, `Lo, this is he

Which that myn uncle swereth he moot be deed,
But I on him have mercy and pitee;' 655
And with that thought, for pure a-shamed, she
Gan in hir heed to pulle, and that as faste,
Whyl he and al the peple for-by paste,

And gan to caste and rollen up and doun
With-inne hir thought his excellent prowesse, 660
And his estat, and also his renoun,
His wit, his shap, and eek his gentillesse;
But most hir favour was, for his distresse
Was al for hir, and thoughte it was a routhe
To sleen swich oon, if that he mente trouthe. 665

Now mighte som envyous langle thus,
'This was a sodeyn love; how mighte it be
That she so lightly lovede Troilus
Right for the firste sighte; ye, pardee?'
Now who-so seyth so, mote he never thee! 670
For every thing, a ginning hath it nede
Er al be wrought, with-outen any drede.

For I sey nought that she so sodeynly
Yaf him hir love, but that she gan enclyne
To lyke him first, and I have told yow why; 675
And after that, his manhod and his pyne

Made love with-inne hir for to myne,
For which, by proces and by good servyse,
He gat hir love, and in no sodeyn wyse.

And also blisful Venus, wel arayed, 680
Sat in hir seventhe hous of hevene tho,
Disposed wel, and with aspectes payed,
To helpen sely Troilus of his wo.
And, sooth to seyn, she nas not al a fo
To Troilus in his nativitee; 685
God woot that wel the soner spedde he.

Now lat us stinte of Troilus a throwe,
That rydeth forth, and lat us tourne faste
Un-to Criseyde, that heng hir heed ful lowe,
Ther-as she sat allone, and gan to caste 690
Wher-on she wolde apoynte hir at the laste,
If it so were hir eem ne wolde cesse,
For Troilus, up-on hir for to presse.

And, lord! So she gan in hir thought argue
In this matere of which I have yow told, 695
And what to doon best were, and what eschue,
That plyted she ful ofte in many fold.

Now was hir herte warm, now was it cold,
And what she thoughte somewhat shal I wryte,

As to myn auctor listeth for to endyte. 700

She thoughte wel that Troilus persone
She knew by sighte and eek his gentillesse,
And thus she seyde, `Al were it nought to done,
To graunte him love, yet, for his worthinesse,
It were honour, with pley and with gladnesse, 705
In honestee, with swich a lord to dele,
For myn estat, and also for his hele.

`Eek, wel wot I my kinges sone is he;
And sith he hath to see me swich delyt,
If I wolde utterly his sighte flee, 710
Peraunter he mighte have me in dispyt,
Thurgh which I mighte stonde in worse plyt;
Now were I wys, me hate to purchace,
With-outen nede, ther I may stonde in grace?

`In every thing, I woot, ther lyth mesure. 715
For though a man forbede dronkenesse,
He nought for-bet that every creature
Be drinkelees for alwey, as I gesse;
Eek sith I woot for me is his distresse,
I ne oughte not for that thing him despyse, 720
Sith it is so, he meneth in good wyse.

And eek I knowe, of longe tyme agoon,
His thewes goode, and that he is not nyce.
Ne avauntour, seyth men, certein, he is noon;
To wys is he to do so gret a vyce; 725
Ne als I nel him never so cheryce,
That he may make avaunt, by luste cause;
He shal me never binde in swiche a clause.

Now set a cas, the hardest is, y-wis,
Men mighten deme that he loveth me; 730
What dishonour were it un-to me, this?
May I him lette of that? Why nay, pardee!
I knowe also, and alday here and see,
Men loven wommen al this toun aboute;
Be they the wers? Why, nay, with-outen doute. 735

I think eek how he able is for to have
Of al this noble toun the thriftieste,
To been his love, so she hir honour save;
For out and out he is the worthieste,
Save only Ector, which that is the beste. 740
And yet his lyf al lyth now in my cure,
But swich is love, and eek myn aventure.

Ne me to love, a wonder is it nought;
For wel wot I my-self, so god me spede,

Al wolde I that noon wiste of this thought, 745
I am oon the fayreste, out of drede,
And goodlieste, who-so taketh hede;
And so men seyn in al the toun of Troye.
What wonder is it though he of me have loye?

I am myn owene woman, wel at ese, 750
I thank it god, as after myn estat;
Right yong, and stonde unteyd in lusty lese,
With-outen Ialousye or swich debat;
Shal noon housbonde seyn to me "Chekmat!"
For either they ben ful of Ialousye, 755
Or maisterful, or loven novelrye.

What shal I doon? To what fyn live I thus?
Shal I nat loven, in cas if that me leste?
What, par dieux! I am nought religious!
And though that I myn herte sette at reste 760
Upon this knight, that is the worthieste,
And kepe alwey myn honour and my name,
By alle right, it may do me no shame.'

But right as whan the sonne shyneth brighte,
In March, that chaungeth ofte tyme his face, 765
And that a cloud is put with wind to flighte
Which over-sprat the sonne as for a space,

A cloudy thought gan thorough hir soule pace,
That over-spradde hir brighte thoughtes alle,
So that for fere almost she gan to falle. 770

That thought was this: `Allas! Sin I am free,
Sholde I now love, and putte in Iupartye
My sikernesse, and thrallen libertee?
Allas! How dorste I thenken that folye?
May I nought wel in other folk aspye 775
Hir dredful loye, hir constreynt, and hir peyne?
Ther loveth noon, that she nath why to pleyne.

`For love is yet the moste stormy lyf,
Right of him-self, that ever was bigonne;
For ever som mistrust, or nyce stryf, 780
Ther is in love, som cloud is over that sonne:
Ther-to we wrecched wommen no-thing conne,
Whan us is wo, but wepe and sitte and thinke;
Our wreche is this, our owene wo to drinke.

`Also these wikked tonges been so prest 785
To speke us harm, eek men be so untrewe,
That, right anoon as cessed is hir lest,
So cesseth love, and forth to love a newe:
But harm y-doon, is doon, who-so it rewe.
For though these men for love hem first to-rende, 790

Ful sharp biginning breketh ofte at ende.

How ofte tyme hath it y-knowen be,
The treson, that to womman hath be do?
To what fyn is swich love, I can nat see,
Or wher bicometh it, whan it is ago; 795
Ther is no wight that woot, I trowe so,
Wher it bycomth; lo, no wight on it sporneth;
That erst was no-thing, in-to nought it torneth.

How bisy, if I love, eek moste I be
To plesen hem that Iangle of love, and demen, 800
And coye hem, that they sey non harm of me?
For though ther be no cause, yet hem semen
Al be for harm that folk hir freendes quemen;
And who may stoppen every wikked tonge,
Or soun of belles whyl that they be ronge?' 805

And after that, hir thought bigan to clere,
And seyde, 'He which that no-thing under-taketh,
No thing ne acheveth, be him looth or dere.'
And with an other thought hir herte quaketh;
Than slepeth hope, and after dreed awaketh; 810
Now hoot, now cold; but thus, bi-twixen tweye,
She rist hir up, and went hir for to pleye.

Adoun the steyre anoon-right tho she wente
In-to the gardin, with hir neces three,
And up and doun ther made many a wente, 815
Flexippe, she, Tharbe, and Antigone,
To pleyen, that it loye was to see;
And othere of hir wommen, a gret route,
hir folwede in the gardin al aboute.

This yerd was large, and rayled alle the aleyes, 820
And shadwed wel with blosmy bowes grene,
And benched newe, and sonded alle the weyes,
In which she walketh arm in arm bi-twene;
Til at the laste Antigone the shene
Gan on a Troian song to singe clere, 825
That it an heven was hir voys to here. --

She seyde, `O love, to whom I have and shal
Ben humble subgit, trewe in myn entente,
As I best can, to yow, lord, yeve ich al
For ever-more, myn hertes lust to rente. 830
For never yet thy grace no wight sente
So blisful cause as me, my lyf to lede
In alle loye and seurtee, out of drede.

`Ye, blisful god, han me so wel beset
In love, y-wis, that al that bereth lyf 835

Imaginen ne cowde how to ben bet;
For, lord, with-outen Ialousye or stryf,
I love oon which that is most ententyf
To serven wel, unwery or unfeyned,
That ever was, and leest with harm distreyned. 840

As he that is the welle of worthinesse,
Of trouthe ground, mirour of goodliheed,
Of wit Appollo, stoon of sikernesse,
Of vertu rote, of lust findere and heed,
Thurgh which is alle sorwe fro me deed, 845
Y-wis, I love him best, so doth he me;
Now good thrift have he, wher-so that he be!

Whom sholde I thanke but yow, god of love,
Of al this blisse, in which to bathe I ginne?
And thanked be ye, lord, for that I love! 850
This is the righte lyf that I am inne,
To flemen alle manere vyce and sinne:
This doth me so to vertu for to entende,
That day by day I in my wil amende.

And who-so seyth that for to love is vyce, 855
Or thraldom, though he fele in it distresse,
He outhere is envyous, or right nyce,
Or is unmighty, for his shrewednesse,

To loven; for swich maner folk, I gesse,
Defamen love, as no-thing of him knowe; 860
Thei speken, but they bente never his bowe.

What is the sonne wers, of kinde righte,
Though that a man, for feblesse of his yen,
May nought endure on it to see for brighte?
Or love the wers, though wrecches on it cryen? 865
No wele is worth, that may no sorwe dryen.
And for-thy, who that hath an heed of verre,
Fro cast of stones war him in the werre!

But I with al myn herte and al my might,
As I have seyde, wol love, un-to my laste, 870
My dere herte, and al myn owene knight,
In which myn herte growen is so faste,
And his in me, that it shal ever laste.
Al dredde I first to love him to biginne,
Now woot I wel, ther is no peril inne.' 875

And of hir song right with that word she stente,
And therwith-al, 'Now, nece,' quod Criseyde,
'Who made this song with so good entente?'
Antigone answerde anoon, and seyde,
'Ma dame, y-wis, the goodlieste mayde 880
Of greet estat in al the toun of Troye;

And let hir lyf in most honour and loye.'

'Forsothe, so it semeth by hir song,'

Quod tho Criseyde, and gan ther-with to syke,

And seyde, 'Lord, is there swich blisse among 885

These lovers, as they conne faire endyte?'

'Ye, wis,' quod freshe Antigone the whyte,

'For alle the folk that han or been on lyve

Ne conne wel the blisse of love discryve.

'But wene ye that every wrecche woot 890

The parfit blisse of love? Why, nay, y-wis;

They wenen al be love, if oon be hoot;

Do wey, do wey, they woot no-thing of this!

Men mosten axe at seyntes if it is

Aught fair in hevene; Why? For they conne telle; 895

And axen fendes, is it foul in helle.'

Criseyde un-to that purpos nought answerde,

But seyde, 'Y-wis, it wol be night as faste.'

But every word which that she of hir herde,

She gan to prenten in hir herte faste; 900

And ay gan love hir lasse for to agaste

Than it dide erst, and sincken in hir herte,

That she wex somewhat able to converte.

The dayes honour, and the hevenes ye,
The nightes fo, al this clepe I the sonne, 905
Gan westren faste, and dounward for to wrye,
As he that hadde his dayes cours y-ronne;
And whyte things wexen dimme and donne
For lak of light, and sterres for to appere,
That she and al hir folk in wente y-fere. 910

So whan it lyked hir to goon to reste,
And voyded weren they that voyden oughte,
She seyde, that to slepe wel hir leste.
Hir wommen sone til hir bed hir broughte.
Whan al was hust, than lay she stille, and thoughte 915
Of al this thing the manere and the wyse.
Reherce it nedeth nought, for ye ben wyse.

A nightingale, upon a cedre grene,
Under the chambre-wal ther as she lay,
Ful loude sang ayein the mone shene, 920
Paraunter, in his briddes wyse, a lay
Of love, that made hir herte fresh and gay.
That herkned she so longe in good entente,
Til at the laste the dede sleep hir hente.

And as she sleep, anoon-right tho hir mette, 925
How that an egle, fethered whyt as boon,

Under hir brest his longe clawes sette,
And out hir herte he rente, and that a-noon,
And dide his herte in-to hir brest to goon,
Of which she nought agroos, ne no-thing smerte, 930
And forth he fleigh, with herte left for herte.

Now lat hir slepe, and we our tales holde
Of Troilus, that is to paleys riden,
Fro the scarmuch, of the whiche I tolde,
And in his chaumbre sit, and hath abiden 935
Til two or three of his messages yeden
For Pandarus, and soughten him ful faste,
Til they him founde and broughte him at the laste.

This Pandarus com leping in at ones,
And seiye thus: `Who hath ben wel y-bete 940
To-day with swerdes, and with slinge-stones,
But Troilus, that hath caught him an hete?'
And gan to lape, and seyde, `Lord, so ye swete!
But rys, and lat us soupe and go to reste;' 944
And he answerde him, `Do we as thee leste.'

With al the haste goodly that they mighte,
They spedde hem fro the souper un-to bedde;
And every wight out at the dore him dighte,
And wher him liste upon his wey him spedde;

But Troilus, that thoughte his herte bledde 950
For wo, til that he herde som tydinge,
He seyde, `Freend, shal I now wepe or singe?'

Quod Pandarus, `Ly stille and lat me slepe,
And don thyn hood, thy nedes spedde be;
And chese, if thou wolt singe or daunce or lepe; 955
At shorte wordes, thow shal trowe me. --
Sire, my nece wol do wel by thee,
And love thee best, by god and by my trouthe,
But lak of pursuit make it in thy slouthe.

`For thus ferforth I have thy work bigonne, 960
Fro day to day, til this day, by the morwe,
Hir love of freendship have I to thee wonne,
And also hath she leyd hir feyth to borwe.
Algate a foot is hameled of thy sorwe.'
What sholde I lenger sermon of it holde? 965
As ye han herd bifore, al he him tolde.

But right as floures, thorough the colde of night
Y-closed, stoupen on hir stalke lowe,
Redressen hem a-yein the sonne bright,
And spreden on hir kinde cours by rowe, 970
Right so gan tho his eyen up to throwe
This Troilus, and seyde, `O Venus dere,

Thy might, thy grace, y-heried be it here!

And to Pandare he held up bothe his hondes,

And seyde, `Lord, al thyn be that I have; 975

For I am hool, al brosten been my bondes;

A thousand Troians who so that me yave,

Eche after other, god so wis me save,

Ne mighte me so gladen; lo, myn herte,

It spredeth so for loye, it wol to-sterter! 980

`But Lord, how shal I doon, how shal I liven?

Whan shal I next my dere herte see?

How shal this longe tyme a-wey be driven,

Til that thou be ayein at hir fro me?

Thou mayst answer, "A-byd, a-byd," but he 985

That hangeth by the nekke, sooth to seyne,

In grete disese abydeth for the peyne.'

`Al esily, now, for the love of Marte,'

Quod Pandarus, `for every thing hath tyme;

So longe abyd til that the night departe; 990

For al so siker as thow lyst here by me,

And god toforn, I wol be there at pryme,

And for thy werk somewhat as I shal seye,

Or on som other wight this charge leye.

For pardee, god wot, I have ever yit 995
Ben redy thee to serve, and to this night
Have I nought fayned, but emforth my wit
Don al thy lust, and shal with al my might.
Do now as I shal seye, and fare a-right;
And if thou nilt, wyte al thy-self thy care, 1000
On me is nought along thyn yvel fare.

I woot wel that thow wyser art than I
A thousand fold, but if I were as thou,
God help me so, as I wolde outrely,
Right of myn owene hond, wryte hir right now 1005
A lettre, in which I wolde hir tellen how
I ferde amis, and hir beseche of routhe;
Now help thy-self, and leve it not for slouthe.

And I my-self shal ther-with to hir goon;
And whan thou wost that I am with hir there, 1010
Worth thou up-on a courser right anoon,
Ye, hardily, right in thy beste gere,
And ryd forth by the place, as nought ne were,
And thou shalt finde us, if I may, sittinge
At som windowe, in-to the strete lokinge. 1015

And if thee list, than maystow us saluwe,
And up-on me make thy contenance;

But, by thy lyf, be war and faste eschuwe
To tarien ought, god shilde us fro mischaunce!
Ryd forth thy wey, and hold thy governaunce; 1020
And we shal speke of thee som-what, I trowe,
Whan Thou art goon, to do thyne eres glowe!

ˆTouching thy lettre, thou art wys y-nough,
I woot thou nilt it digneliche endyte;
As make it with thise argumentes tough; 1025
Ne scrivenish or craftily thou it wryte;
Beblotte it with thy teres eek a lyte;
And if thou wryte a goodly word al softe,
Though it be good, reherce it not to ofte.

ˆFor though the beste harpour upon lyve 1030
Wolde on the beste souned Ioly harpe
That ever was, with alle his fingres fyve,
Touche ay o streng, or ay o werbul harpe,
Were his nayles poynted never so sharpe,
It shulde maken every wight to dulle, 1035
To here his glee, and of his strokes fulle.

ˆNe Iompre eek no discordaunt thing y-fere,
As thus, to usen termes of phisyk;
In loves termes, hold of thy matere
The forme alwey, and do that it be lyk; 1040

For if a peyntour wolde peynte a pyk
With asses feet, and hede it as an ape,
It cordeth nought; so nere it but a lape.'

This counseyl lyked wel to Troilus;
But, as a dreedful lover, he seyde this: -- 1045
`Allas, my dere brother Pandarus,
I am ashamed for to wryte, y-wis,
Lest of myn innocence I seyde a-mis,
Or that she nolde it for despyt receyve;
Thanne were I deed, ther mighte it no-thing weyve.' 1050

To that Pandare answerde, `If thee lest,
Do that I seye, and lat me therwith goon;
For by that lord that formed est and west,
I hope of it to bringe answeere anoon
Right of hir hond, and if that thou nilt noon, 1055
Lat be; and sory mote he been his lyve,
Ayeins thy lust that helpeth thee to thryve.'

Quod Troilus, `Depardieux, I assente;
Sin that thee list, I will aryse and wryte;
And blisful god preye ich, with good entente, 1060
The vyage, and the lettre I shal endyte,
So spede it; and thou, Minerva, the whyte,
Yif thou me wit my lettre to devyse:'

And sette him doun, and wroot right in this wyse. --

First he gan hir his righte lady calle, 1065
His hertes lyf, his lust, his sorwes leche,
His blisse, and eek these othere termes alle,
That in swich cas these loveres alle seche;
And in ful humble wyse, as in his speche,
He gan him recomaunde un-to hir grace; 1070
To telle al how, it axeth muchel space.

And after this, ful lowly he hir prayde
To be nought wrooth, though he, of his folye,
So hardy was to hir to wryte, and seyde,
That love it made, or elles moste he dye, 1075
And pitously gan mercy for to crye;
And after that he seyde, and ley ful loude,
Him-self was litel worth, and lesse he coude;

And that she sholde han his conning excused,
That litel was, and eek he dredde hir so, 1080
And his unworthinesse he ay acused;
And after that, than gan he telle his woo;
But that was endeles, with-outen ho;
And seyde, he wolde in trouthe alwey him holde; --
And radde it over, and gan the lettre folde. 1085

And with his salte teres gan he bathe
The ruby in his signet, and it sette
Upon the wex deliverliche and rathe;
Ther-with a thousand tymes, er he lette,
He kiste tho the lettre that he shette, 1090
And seyde, `Lettre, a blisful destenee
Thee shapen is, my lady shal thee see.'

This Pandare took the lettre, and that by tyme
A-morwe, and to his neces paleys sterte,
And faste he swoor, that it was passed pryme, 1095
And gan to lape, and seyde, `Y-wis, myn herte,
So fresh it is, al-though it sore smerte,
I may not slepe never a Mayes morwe;
I have a Ioly wo, a lusty sorwe.'

Criseyde, whan that she hir uncle herde, 1100
With dreedful herte, and desirous to here
The cause of his cominge, thus answerde:
`Now by your feyth, myn uncle,' quod she, `dere,
What maner windes gydeth yow now here?
Tel us your Ioly wo and your penaunce, 1105
How ferforth be ye put in loves daunce.'

`By god,' quod he, `I hoppe alwey bihinde!
And she to-laugh, it thoughte hir herte breste.

Quod Pandarus, `Loke alwey that ye finde
Game in myn hood, but herkneþ, if yow leste; 1110
Ther is right now come in-to toune a geste,
A Greek espye, and telleth newe thinges,
For which I come to telle yow tydinges.

`Into the gardin go we, and we shal here,
Al prevely, of this a long sermoun.' 1115
With that they wenten arm in arm y-ferre
In-to the gardin from the chaumbre doun.
And whan that he so fer was that the soun
Of that he speke, no man here mighte,
He seyde hir thus, and out the lettre plichte, 1120

`Lo, he that is al hoolly youres free
Him recomaundeth lowly to your grace,
And sent to you this lettre here by me;
Avyseth you on it, whan ye han space,
And of som goodly answeere yow purchace; 1125
Or, helpe me god, so pleyndly for to seyne,
He may not longe liven for his peyne.'

Ful dredfully tho gan she stonde stille,
And took it nought, but al hir humble chere
Gan for to chaunge, and seyde, `Scrit ne bille, 1130
For love of god, that toucheth swich matere,

Ne bring me noon; and also, uncle dere,
To myn estat have more reward, I preye,
Than to his lust; what sholde I more seye?

And loketh now if this be resonable, 1135
And letteth nought, for favour ne for slouthe,
To seyn a sooth; now were it covenable
To myn estat, by god, and by your trouthe,
To taken it, or to han of him routhe,
In harming of my-self or in repreve? 1140
Ber it a-yein, for him that ye on leve!

This Pandarus gan on hir for to stare,
And seyde, Now is this the grettest wonder
That ever I sey! Lat be this nyce fare!
To deethe mote I smiten be with thonder, 1145
If, for the citee which that stondest yonder,
Wolde I a lettre un-to yow bringe or take
To harm of yow; what list yow thus it make?

But thus ye faren, wel neigh alle and some,
That he that most desireth yow to serve, 1150
Of him ye recche leest wher he bicomme,
And whether that he live or elles sterve.
But for al that that ever I may deserve,
Refuse it nought,' quod he, and hente hir faste,

And in hir bosom the lettre doun he thraste, 1155

And seyde hire, `Now cast it away anoon,
That folk may seen and gauren on us tweye.'

Quod she, `I can abyde til they be goon,'
And gan to smyle, and seyde hym, `Eem, I preye,
Swich answeere as yow list, your-self purveye, 1160
For trewely I nil no lettre wryte.'

`No? than wol I,' quod he, `so ye endyte.'

Therwith she lough, and seyde, `Go we dyne.'

And he gan at him-self to iape faste,
And seyde, `Nece, I have so greet a pyne 1165
For love, that every other day I faste' --
And gan his beste Iapes forth to caste;
And made hir so to laughe at his folye,
That she for laughter wende for to dye.

And whan that she was comen in-to halle, 1170

`Now, eem,' quod she, `we wol go dine anoon;'
And gan some of hir women to hir calle,
And streyght in-to hir chaumbre gan she goon;
But of hir businesses, this was oon
A-monges othere thinges, out of drede, 1175
Ful prively this lettre for to rede;

Avysed word by word in every lyne,
And fond no lak, she thoughte he coude good;
And up it putte, and went hir in to dyne.
But Pandarus, that in a study stood, 1180
Er he was war, she took him by the hood,
And seyde, `Ye were caught er that ye wiste;'
`I vouche sauf,' quod he. `do what yow liste.'

Tho wesshen they, and sette hem doun and ete;
And after noon ful sleyly Pandarus 1185
Gan drawe him to the window next the strete,
And seyde, `Nece, who hath arayed thus
The yonder hous, that stant afor-yeyn us?'
`Which hous?' quod she, and gan for to biholde,
And knew it wel, and whos it was him tolde, 1190

And fillen forth in speche of thinges smale,
And seten in the window bothe tweye.
Whan Pandarus saw tyme un-to his tale,
And saw wel that hir folk were alle aweye,
`Now, nece myn, tel on,' quod he; `I seye, 1195
How liketh yow the lettre that ye woot?
Can he ther-on? For, by my trouthe, I noot.'

Therwith al rosy hewed tho wex she,
And gan to humme, and seyde, `So I trowe.'

`Aqynte him wel, for goddes love,' quod he; 1200

`My-self to medes wol the lettre sowe.'

And held his hondes up, and sat on knowe,

`Now, goode nece, be it never so lyte,

Yif me the labour, it to sowe and plyte.'

`Ye, for I can so wryte,' quod she tho; 1205

`And eek I noot what I sholde to him seye.'

`Nay, nece,' quod Pandare, `sey nat so;

Yet at the leste thanketh him, I preye,

Of his good wil, and doth him not to deye.

Now for the love of me, my nece dere, 1210

Refuseth not at this tyme my preyere.'

`Depar-dieux,' quod she, `God leve al be well!

God help me so, this is the firste lettre

That ever I wroot, ye, al or any del.'

And in-to a closet, for to avyse hir bettre, 1215

She wente allone, and gan hir herte unfettre

Out of disdaynes prison but a lyte;

And sette hir doun, and gan a lettre wryte,

Of which to telle in short is myn entente

Theffect, as fer as I can understonde: -- 1220

She thonked him of al that he wel mente

Towards hir, but holden him in honde

She nolde nought, ne make hir-selven bonde
In love, but as his suster, him to plese,
She wolde fayn to doon his herte an ese. 1225

She shette it, and to Pandarus in gan goon,
There as he sat and loked in-to the strete,
And doun she sette hir by him on a stoon
Of Iaspere, up-on a quissin gold y-bete,
And seyde, 'As wisly helpe me god the grete, 1230
I never dide a thing with more peyne
Than wryte this, to which ye me constreyne;'

And took it him: He thonked hir and seyde,
'God woot, of thing ful ofte looth bigonne
Cometh ende good; and nece myn, Criseyde, 1235
That ye to him of hard now ben y-wonne
Oughte he be glad, by god and yonder sonne!
For-why men seyth, "Impressiounes lighte
Ful lightly been ay redy to the flighte.'

'But ye han pleyed tyraunt neigh to longe, 1240
And hard was it your herte for to grave;
Now stint, that ye no longer on it honge,
Al wolde ye the forme of daunger save.
But hasteth yow to doon him Ioye have;
For trusteth wel, to longe y-doon hardnesse 1245

Causeth despyt ful often, for destresse.'

And right as they declamed this matere,
Lo, Troilus, right at the stretes ende,
Com ryding with his tenthe some y-fere,
Al softly, and thiderward gan bende 1250
Ther-as they sete, as was his way to wende
To paleys-ward; and Pandare him aspyde,
And seyde, `Nece, y-see who cometh here ryde!

`O flee not in, he seeth us, I suppose;
Lest he may thinke that ye him eschuwe.' 1255
`Nay, nay,' quod she, and wex as reed as rose.
With that he gan hir humbly to saluwe
With dreedful chere, and oft his hewes muwe;
And up his look debonairly he caste,
And bekked on Pandare, and forth he paste. 1260

God woot if he sat on his hors a-right,
Or goodly was beseyn, that ilke day!
God woot wher he was lyk a manly knight!
What sholde I drecche, or telle of his aray?
Criseyde, which that alle these thinges say, 1265
To telle in short, hir lyked al y-fere,
His persone, his aray, his look, his chere,

His goodly manere, and his gentillesse,
So wel, that never, sith that she was born,
Ne hadde she swich routhe of his distresse; 1270
And how-so she hath hard ben her-biforn,
To god hope I, she hath now caught a thorn,
She shal not pulle it out this nexte wyke;
God sende mo swich thornes on to pyke!

Pandare, which that stood hir faste by, 1275
Felte iren hoot, and he bigan to smyte,
And seyde, `Nece, I pray yow hertely,
Tel me that I shal axen yow a lyte:
A womman, that were of his deeth to wyte,
With-outen his gilt, but for hir lakked routhe, 1280
Were it wel doon?' Quod she, `Nay, by my trouthe!

`God help me so,' quod he, `ye sey me sooth.
Ye felen wel your-self that I not lye;
Lo, yond he rit!' Quod she, `Ye, so he dooth!
`Wel,' quod Pandare, `as I have told yow thrye, 1285
Lat be youre nyce shame and youre folye,
And spek with him in esing of his herte;
Lat nycetee not do yow bothe smerte.'

But ther-on was to heven and to done;
Considered al thing, it may not be; 1290

And why, for shame; and it were eek to sone
To graunten him so greet a libertee.
`For playnly hir entente,' as seyde she,
`Was for to love him unwist, if she mighte,
And guerdon him with no-thing but with sighte.' 1295

But Pandarus thoughte, `It shal not be so,
If that I may; this nyce opinioun
Shal not be holden fully yeres two.'
What sholde I make of this a long sermoun?
He moste assente on that conclusioun, 1300
As for the tyme; and whan that it was eve,
And al was wel, he roos and took his leve.

And on his wey ful faste homward he spedde,
And right for Ioye he felte his herte daunce;
And Troilus he fond alone a-bedde, 1305
That lay as dooth these loveres, in a traunce,
Bitwixen hope and derk desesperaunce.
But Pandarus, right at his in-cominge,
He song, as who seyth, `Lo! Sumwhat I bringe,'

And seyde, `Who is in his bed so sone 1310
Y-buried thus?' `It am I, freend,' quod he.
`Who, Troilus? Nay, helpe me so the mone,'
Quod Pandarus, `Thou shalt aryse and see

A charme that was sent right now to thee,
The which can helen thee ofthyn accesse, 1315
If thou do forth-with al thy besinesse.'

`Ye, through the might of god!' quod Troilus.
And Pandarus gan him the lettre take,
And seyde, `Pardee, god hath holpen us;
Have here a light, and loke on al this blake.' 1320
But ofte gan the herte glade and quake
Of Troilus, whyl that he gan it rede,
So as the wordes yave him hope or drede.

But fynally, he took al for the beste
That she him wroot, for somewhat he biheld 1325
On which, him thoughte, he mighte his herte reste,
Al covered she the wordes under sheld.
Thus to the more worthy part he held,
That, what for hope and Pandarus biheste,
His grete wo for-yede he at the leste. 1330

But as we may alday our-selven see,
Through more wode or col, the more fyr;
Right so encrees hope, of what it be,
Therwith ful ofte encreseth eek desyr;
Or, as an ook cometh of a litel spyr, 1335
So through this lettre, which that she him sente,

Encresen gan desyr, of which he brente.

Wherfore I seye alwey, that day and night

This Troilus gan to desiren more

Than he dide erst, thurgh hope, and dide his might 1340

To pressen on, as by Pandarus lore,

And wryten to hir of his sorwes sore

Fro day to day; he leet it not refreyde,

That by Pandare he wroot somewhat or seyde;

And dide also his othere observaunces 1345

That to a lovee longeth in this cas;

And, after that these dees turnede on chaunces,

So was he outhere glad or seyde `Allas!'

And held after his gastes ay his pas;

And aftir swiche answeres as he hadde, 1350

So were his dayes sory outhere gladde.

But to Pandare alwey was his recours,

And pitously gan ay til him to pleyne,

And him bisoughte of rede and som socours;

And Pandarus, that sey his wode peyne, 1355

Wex wel neigh deed for routhe, sooth to seyne,

And bisily with al his herte caste

Som of his wo to sleen, and that as faste;

And seyde, `Lord, and freend, and brother dere,
God woot that thy disease dooth me wo. 1360
But woltow stinten al this woful chere,
And, by my trouthe, or it be dayes two,
And god to-forn, yet shal I shape it so,
That thou shalt come in-to a certayn place,
Ther-as thou mayst thy-self hir preye of grace. 1365

`And certainly, I noot if thou it wost,
But tho that been expert in love it seye,
It is oon of the thinges that furthereth most,
A man to have a leyser for to preye,
And siker place his wo for to biwreye; 1370
For in good herte it moot som routhe impresse,
To here and see the giltles in distresse.

`Paraunter thenkestow: though it be so
That kinde wolde doon hir to biginne
To han a maner routhe up-on my wo, 1375
Seyth Daunger, "Nay, thou shalt me never winne;
So reuleth hir hir hertes goost with-inne,
That, though she bende, yet she stant on rote;
What in effect is this un-to my bote?"

`Thenk here-ayeins, whan that the sturdy ook, 1380
On which men hakketh ofte, for the nones,

Receyved hath the happy falling strook,
The grete sweigh doth it come al at ones,
As doon these rokkes or these milne-stones.
For swifter cours cometh thing that is of wighte, 1385
Whan it descendeth, than don thinges lighte.

And reed that boweth doun for every blast,
Ful lightly, cesse wind, it wol aryse;
But so nil not an ook whan it is cast;
It nedeth me nought thee longe to forbyse. 1390
Men shal reioysen of a greet emprise
Acheved wel, and stant with-outen doute,
Al han men been the lenger ther-about.

But, Troilus, yet tel me, if thee lest,
A thing now which that I shal axen thee; 1395
Which is thy brother that thou lovest best
As in thy verray hertes privetee?

Y-wis, my brother Deiphebus,' quod he.
Now,' quod Pandare, `er houres twyes twelve,
He shal thee ese, unwist of it him-selve. 1400

Now lat me allone, and werken as I may,'
Quod he; and to Deiphebus wente he tho
Which hadde his lord and grete freend ben ay;
Save Troilus, no man he lovede so.

To telle in short, with-outen wordes mo, 1405
Quod Pandarus, `I pray yow that ye be
Freend to a cause which that toucheth me.'

`Yis, pardee,' quod Deiphebus, `wel thow wost,
In al that ever I may, and god to-fore,
Al nere it but for man I love most, 1410
My brother Troilus; but sey wherfore
It is; for sith that day that I was bore,
I nas, ne never-mo to been I thinke,
Ayeins a thing that mighte thee for-thinke.'

Pandare gan him thonke, and to him seyde, 1415
`Lo, sire, I have a lady in this toun,
That is my nece, and called is Criseyde,
Which some men wolden doon oppressioun,
And wrongfully have hir possessioun:
Wherfor I of your lordship yow biseche 1420
To been our freend, with-oute more speche.'

Deiphebus him answerde, `O, is not this,
That thow spekest of to me thus straungely,
Criseyda, my freend?' He seyde, `Yis.'
`Than nedeth,' quod Deiphebus, `hardely, 1425
Na-more to speke, for trusteth wel, that I
Wol be hir champioun with spore and yerde;

I roughte nought though alle hir foos it herde.

‘But tel me how, thou that woost al this matere,
How I might best avaylen? Now lat see.’ 1430

Quod Pandarus; ‘If ye, my lord so dere,
Wolden as now don this honour to me,
To preyen hir to-morwe, lo, that she
Come un-to yow hir pleyntes to devyse,
Hir adversaries wolde of it agryse. 1435

‘And if I more dorste preye as now,
And chargen yow to have so greet travayle,
To han som of your bretheren here with yow,
That mighten to hir cause bet avayle,
Than, woot I wel, she mighte never fayle 1440
For to be holpen, what at your instaunce,
What with hir othere freendes governaunce.’

Deiphebus, which that comen was, of kinde,
To al honour and bountee to consente,
Answerde, ‘It shal be doon; and I can finde 1445
Yet gretter help to this in myn entente.
What wolt thou seyn, if I for Eleyne sente
To speke of this? I trowe it be the beste;
For she may leden Paris as hir leste.

´Of Ector, which that is my lord, my brother, 1450
It nedeth nought to preye him freend to be;
For I have herd him, o tyme and eek other,
Speke of Criseyde swich honour, that he
May seyn no bet, swich hap to him hath she.
It nedeth nought his helpes for to crave; 1455
He shal be swich, right as we wole him have.

´Spek thou thy-self also to Troilus
On my bihalve, and pray him with us dyne.'
´Sire, al this shal be doon,' quod Pandarus;
And took his leve, and never gan to fyne, 1460
But to his neces hous, as streyt as lyne,
He com; and fond hir fro the mete aryse;
And sette him doun, and spak right in this wyse.

He seyde, ´O veray god, so have I ronnel
Lo, nece myn, see ye nought how I swete? 1465
I noot whether ye the more thank me conne.
Be ye nought war how that fals Poliphete
Is now aboute eft-sones for to plete,
And bringe on yow advocacyes newe?'
´I? No,' quod she, and chaunged al hir hewe. 1470

´What is he more aboute, me to drecche
And doon me wrong? What shal I do, allas?

Yet of him-self no-thing ne wolde I recche,
Nere it for Antenor and Eneas,
That been his freendes in swich maner cas; 1475
But, for the love of god, myn uncle dere,
No fors of that; lat him have al y-fere;

'With-outen that I have ynough for us.'
'Nay,' quod Pandare, 'it shal no-thing be so.
For I have been right now at Deiphebus, 1480
And Ector, and myne othere lordes mo,
And shortly maked eche of hem his fo;
That, by my thrift, he shal it never winne
For ought he can, whan that so he biginne.'

And as they casten what was best to done, 1485
Deiphebus, of his owene curtasye,
Com hir to preye, in his propre persone,
To holde him on the morwe companye
At diner, which she nolde not denye,
But goodly gan to his preyere obeye. 1490
He thonked hir, and wente up-on his weye.

Whanne this was doon, this Pandare up a-noon,
To telle in short, and forth gan for to wende
To Troilus, as stille as any stoon;
And al this thing he tolde him, word and ende; 1495

And how that he Deiphebus gan to blende;
And seyde him, `Now is tyme, if that thou conne,
To bere thee wel to-morwe, and al is wonne.

`Now spek, now prey, now pitously compleyne;
Lat not for nyce shame, or drede, or slouthe; 1500
Som-tyme a man mot telle his owene peyne;
Bileve it, and she shal han on thee routhe;
Thou shalt be saved by thy feyth, in trouthe.
But wel wot I, thou art now in a drede;
And what it is, I leye, I can arede. 1505

`Thow thinkest now, "How sholde I doon al this?
For by my cheres mosten folk aspye,
That for hir love is that I fare a-mis;
Yet hadde I lever unwist for sorwe dye."
Now thenk not so, for thou dost greet folye. 1510
For I right now have founden o manere
Of sleighte, for to coveren al thy chere.

`Thow shalt gon over night, and that as blyve,
Un-to Deiphebus hous, as thee to pleye,
Thy maladye a-wey the bet to dryve, 1515
For-why thou semest syk, soth for to seye.
Sone after that, doun in thy bed thee leye,
And sey, thow mayst no lenger up endure,

And ly right there, and byde thyn aventure.

`Sey that thy fever is wont thee for to take 1520
The same tyme, and lasten til a-morwe;
And lat see now how wel thou canst it make,
For, par-dee, syk is he that is in sorwe.
Go now, farwel! And, Venus here to borwe,
I hope, and thou this purpos holde ferme, 1525
Thy grace she shal fully ther conferme.'

Quod Troilus, `Y-wis, thou nedelees
Conseylest me, that sykliche I me feyne,
For I am syk in earnest, doutelees,
So that wel neigh I sterve for the peyne.' 1530
Quod Pandarus, `Thou shalt the better pleyne,
And hast the lasse need to countrefete;
For him men demen hoot that men seen swete.

`Lo, holde thee at thy triste cloos, and I
Shal wel the deer un-to thy bowe dryve.' 1535
Therwith he took his leve al softly,
And Troilus to paleys wente blyve.
So glad ne was he never in al his lyve;
And to Pandarus reed gan al assente,
And to Deiphebus hous at night he wente. 1540

What nedeth yow to tellen al the chere
That Deiphebus un-to his brother made,
Or his accesse, or his siklych manere,
How men gan him with clothes for to lade,
Whan he was leyde, and how men wolde him glade? 1545
But al for nought; he held forth ay the wyse
That ye han herd Pandare er this devyse.

But certeyn is, er Troilus him leyde,
Deiphebus had him prayed, over night,
To been a freend and helping to Criseyde. 1550
God woot, that he it grauntede anon-right,
To been hir fulle freend with al his might.
But swich a nede was to preye him thenne,
As for to bidde a wood man for to renne.

The morwen com, and neighen gan the tyme 1555
Of meel-tyd, that the faire quene Eleyne
Shoop hir to been, an houre after the pryme,
With Deiphebus, to whom she nolde feyne;
But as his suster, hoomly, sooth to seyne,
She com to diner in hir playn entente. 1560
But god and Pandare wiste al what this mente.

Com eek Criseyde, al innocent of this,
Antigone, hir sister Tarbe also;

But flee we now prolixitee best is,
For love of god, and lat us faste go 1565
Right to the effect, with-oute tales mo,
Why al this folk assembled in this place;
And lat us of hir saluinges pace.

Gret honour dide hem Deiphebus, certeyn,
And fedde hem wel with al that mighte lyke. 1570
But ever-more, `Allas!' was his refreyn,
`My goode brother Troilus, the syke,
Lyth yet"--and therwith-al he gan to syke;
And after that, he peyned him to glade
Hem as he mighte, and chere good he made. 1575

Compleyned eek Eleyne of his syknesse
So feithfully, that pitee was to here,
And every wight gan waxen for accesse
A leche anoon, and seyde, `In this manere
Men curen folk; this charme I wol yow lere.' 1580
But ther sat oon, al list hir nought to teche,
That thoughte, best coude I yet been his leche.

After compleynt, him gonnen they to preyse,
As folk don yet, whan som wight hath bigonne
To preyse a man, and up with prys him reyse 1585
A thousand fold yet hyer than the sonne: --

`He is, he can, that fewe lordes conne.'
And Pandarus, of that they wolde afferme,
He not for-gat hir preysing to conferme.

Herde al this thing Criseyde wel y-nough, 1590
And every word gan for to notifie;
For which with sobre chere hir herte lough;
For who is that ne wolde hir glorifye,
To mowen swich a knight don live or dye?
But al passe I, lest ye to longe dwelle; 1595
For for o fyn is al that ever I telle.

The tyme com, fro diner for to ryse,
And, as hem oughthe, arisen everychoon,
And gonne a while of this and that devyse.
But Pandarus brak al this speche anoon, 1600
And seyde to Deiphebus, `Wole ye goon,
If youre wille be, as I yow preyde,
To speke here of the nedes of Criseyde?'

Eleyne, which that by the hond hir held,
Took first the tale, and seyde, `Go we blyve;' 1605
And goodly on Criseyde she biheld,
And seyde, `Ioves lat him never thryve,
That dooth yow harm, and bringe him sone of lyve!
And yeve me sorwe, but he shal it rewe,

If that I may, and alle folk be trewe.' 1610

`Tel thou thy neces cas,' quod Deiphebus
To Pandarus, `for thou canst 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 lyk a belle, 1615

Up-on hir fo, that highte Poliphete,
So heynous, that men mighte on it spete.

Answerde of this ech worse of hem than other,
And Poliphete they gonnen thus to warien,

`An-honged be swich oon, were he my brother; 1620

And so he shal, for it ne may not varien.'

What sholde I lenger in this tale tarien?

Pleyedly, alle at ones, they hir highten

To been hir helpe in al that ever they mighten.

Spak than Eleyne, and seyde, `Pandarus, 1625

Woot ought my lord, my brother, this matere,

I mene, Ector? Or woot it Troilus?'

He seyde, `Ye, but wole ye now me here?

Me thinketh this, sith Troilus is here,

It were good, if that ye wolde assente, 1630

She tolde hir-self him al this, er she wente.

For he wole have the more hir grief at herte,
By cause, lo, that she a lady is;
And, by your leve, I wol but right in sterte,
And do yow wite, and that anoon, y-wis, 1635
If that he slepe, or wole ought here of this.'
And in he lepte, and seyde him in his ere,
God have thy soule, y-brought have I thy bere!'

To smylen of this gan tho Troilus,
And Pandarus, with-oute rekeninge, 1640
Out wente anoon to Eleyne and Deiphebus,
And seyde hem, So there be no tarynge,
Ne more pres, he wol wel that ye bringe
Criseyda, my lady, that is here;
And as he may enduren, he wole here. 1645

But wel ye woot, the chaumbre is but lyte,
And fewe folk may lightly make it warm;
Now loketh ye, (for I wol have no wyte,
To bringe in prees that mighte doon him harm
Or him disesen, for my bettre arm), 1650
Wher it be bet she byde til eft-sones;
Now loketh ye, that knowen what to doon is.

I sey for me, best is, as I can knowe,
That no wight in ne wente but ye tweye,

But it were I, for I can, in a throwe, 1655

Reherce hir cas unlyk that she can seye;

And after this, she may him ones preye

To ben good lord, in short, and take hir leve;

This may not muchel of his ese him reve.

And eek, for she is straunge, he wol forbere 1660

His ese, which that him thar nought for yow;

Eek other thing that toucheth not to here,

He wol me telle, I woot it wel right now,

That secret is, and for the tounes prow.'

And they, that no-thing knewe of his entente, 1665

With-oute more, to Troilus in they wente.

Eleyne, in al hir goodly softe wyse,

Gan him saluwe, and womanly to pleye,

And seyde, `Ywis, ye moste alweyes aryse!

Now fayre brother, beth al hool, I preye!' 1670

And gan hir arm right over his sholder leye,

And him with al hir wit to recomforte;

As she best coude, she gan him to disporte.

So after this quod she, `We yow biseke,

My dere brother, Deiphebus and I, 1675

For love of god, and so doth Pandare eke,

To been good lord and freend, right hertely,

Un-to Criseyde, which that certainly
Receyveth wrong, as woot wel here Pandare,
That can hir cas wel bet than I declare.' 1680

This Pandarus gan newe his tunge affyle,
And al hir cas reherce, and that anoon;
Whan it was seyde, sone after, in a whyle,
Quod Troilus, `As sone as I may goon,
I wol right fayn with al my might ben oon, 1685
Have god my trouthe, hir cause to sustene.'
`Good thrift have ye,' quod Eleyne the quene.

Quod Pandarus, `And it your wille be
That she may take hir leve, er that she go?'
`O, elles god for-bede,' tho quod he, 1690
`If that she vouche sauf for to do so.'
And with that word quod Troilus, `Ye two,
Deiphebus, and my suster leef and dere,
To yow have I to speke of o matere,

`To been avysed by your reed the bettre': -- 1695
And fond, as hap was, at his beddes heed,
The copie of a tretis and a lettre,
That Ector hadde him sent to axen reed,
If swich a man was worthy to ben deed,
Woot I nought who; but in a grisly wyse 1700

He preyede hem anoon on it avyse.

Deiphebus gan this lettre to unfolde
In earnest greet; so did Eleyne the quene;
And rominge outward, fast it gan biholde,
Downward a steyre, in-to an herber grene. 1705
This ilke thing they redden hem bi-twene;
And largely, the mountaunce of an houre,
Thei gonne on it to reden and to poure.

Now lat hem rede, and turne we anoon
To Pandarus, that gan ful faste pryve 1710
That al was wel, and out he gan to goon
In-to the grete chambre, and that in hye,
And seyde, `God save al this companye!
Com, nece myn; my lady quene Eleyne
Abydeth yow, and eek my lordes tweyne. 1715

`Rys, take with yow your nece Antigone,
Or whom yow list, or no fors, hardily;
The lesse prees, the bet; com forth with me,
And loke that ye thonke humblely
Hem alle three, and, whan ye may goodly 1720
Your tyme y-see, taketh of hem your leve,
Lest we to longe his restes him bireve.'

Al innocent of Pandarus entente,
Quod tho Criseyde, `Go we, uncle dere';
And arm in arm inward with him she wente, 1725
Avysed wel hir wordes and hir chere;
And Pandarus, in earnestful manere,
Seyde, `Alle folk, for goddes love, I preye,
Stinteth right here, and softly yow pleye.

`Aviseth yow what folk ben here with-inne, 1730
And in what plyt oon is, god him amende!
And inward thus ful softly biginne;
Nece, I conjure and heighly yow defende,
On his half, which that sowle us alle sende,
And in the vertue of corounes tweyne, 1735
Slee nought this man, that hath for yow this peyne!

`Fy on the devel! Thenk which oon he is,
And in what plyt he lyth; com of anoon;
Thenk al swich taried tyd, but lost it nis!
That wol ye bothe seyn, whan ye ben oon. 1740
Secoundelich, ther yet devyneth noon
Up-on yow two; come of now, if ye conne;
Whyl folk is blent, lo, al the tyme is wonne!

`In titering, and pursuite, and delayes,
The folk devyne at wagginge of a stree; 1745

And though ye wolde han after merye dayes,
Than dar ye nought, and why? For she, and she
Spak swich a word; thus loked he, and he;
Lest tyme I loste, I dar not with yow dele;
Com of therfore, and bringeth him to hele.' 1750

But now to yow, ye lovers that ben here,
Was Troilus nought in a cankedort,
That lay, and mighte whispringe of hem here,
And thoughte, `O lord, right now renneth my sort
Fully to dye, or han anoon comfort'; 1755
And was the firste tyme he shulde hir preye
Of love; O mighty god, what shal he seye?

Explicit Secundus Liber.