

## Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde,

### Book 3

After a lengthy conversation, Criseyde says she will accept Troilus' love-service.

155 With that she gan hir eyen on him caste  
Ful esily, and ful debonairly,  
Avysing hir, and hyed not to faste  
With never a word, but seyde him softly,  
`Myn honour sauf, I wol wel trewely,  
160 And in swich forme as he can now devyse,  
Receyven him fully to my servyse,  
  
`Biseching him, for goddes love, that he  
Wolde, in honour of trouthe and gentillesse,  
As I wel mene, eek mene wel to me,  
165 And myn honour, with wit and besinesse  
Ay kepe; and if I may don him gladnesse,  
From hennes-forth, y-wis, I nil not feyne:  
Now beeth al hool; no lenger ye ne pleyne.

`But nathelees, this warne I yow,' quod she,  
170 `A kinges sone al-though ye be, y-wis,  
Ye shal na-more have soverainetee  
Of me in love, than right in that cas is;  
Ne I nil forbere, if that ye doon a-mis,  
To wrathen yow; and whyl that ye me serve,  
175 Cherycen yow right after ye deserve.

`And shortly, dere herte and al my knight,  
Beth glad, and draweth yow to lustinesse,  
And I shal trewely, with al my might,  
Your bittre tornen al in-to swetenesse.  
180 If I be she that may yow do gladnesse,  
For every wo ye shal recovere a blisse';  
And him in armes took, and gan him kisse.

Troilus is very grateful. So time passes, and his desire grows stronger.

But certeyn is, to purpos for to go,  
450 That in this whyle, as writen is in geste,  
He say his lady som-tyme; and also  
She with him spak, whan that she dorste or leste,  
And by hir bothe avys, as was the beste,  
Apoynteden ful warly in this nede,  
455 So as they dorste, how they wolde procede.

But it was spoken in so short a wyse,  
In swich awayt alwey, and in swich fere,  
Lest any wyght devynen or devyse  
Wolde of hem two, or to it leye an ere,

460 That al this world so leef to hem ne were  
As that Cupido wolde hem grace sende  
To maken of hir speche aright an ende.

But thilke litel that they spake or wroughte,  
His wyse goost took ay of al swich hede,  
465 It semed hir, he wiste what she thoughte  
With-outen word, so that it was no nede  
To bidde him ought to done, or ought for-bede;  
For which she thought that love, al come it late,  
Of alle Ioye hadde opned hir the yate.

470 And shortly of this proces for to pace,  
So wel his werk and wordes he bisette,  
That he so ful stood in his lady grace,  
That twenty thousand tymes, or she lette,  
She thonked god she ever with him mette;  
475 So coude he him governe in swich servyse,  
That al the world ne might it bet devyse.

For-why she fond him so discret in al,  
So secret, and of swich obeisaunce,  
That wel she felte he was to hir a wal  
480 Of steel, and sheld from every displesaunce;  
That, to ben in his gode governaunce,  
So wys he was, she was no more afered,  
I mene, as fer as oughte ben requered.

Pandare sees that they need more time to talk together in private. He sets about arranging a longer, closer meeting. This quickly leads to the climax of their relationship, thanks to Pandare's skill in astrological weather-forecasting; Pandare assures her that Troilus is away and invites her to his house when he knows it is going to rain very hard. Troilus is in fact hidden ready to join Criseyde when the moment comes.

610 And after souper gonnen they to ryse,  
At ese wel, with hertes fresshe and glade,  
And wel was him that coude best devyse  
To lyken hir, or that hir laughen made.  
He song; she pleyde; he tolde tale of Wade.  
615 But at the laste, as every thing hath ende,  
She took hir leve, and nedes wolde wende.

But O, Fortune, executrice of wierdes,  
O influences of these hevenes hye!  
Soth is, that, under god, ye ben our hierdes,  
620 Though to us bestes been the causes wrye.  
This mene I now, for she gan hoomward hye,  
But execut was al bisyde hir leve,  
At the goddes wil, for which she moste bleve.

The bente mone with hir hornes pale,  
625 Saturne, and Iove, in Cancro ioyned were,

That swich a rayn from hevене gan avale  
That every maner womman that was there  
Hadde of that smoky reyn a verray fere;  
At which Pandare tho lough, and seyde thenne,  
630 `Now were it tyme a lady to go henne!

`But goode nece, if I mighte ever plese  
Yow any-thing, than prey I yow,' quod he,  
`To doon myn herte as now so greet an ese  
As for to dwelle here al this night with me,  
635 For-why this is your owene hous, pardee.  
For, by my trouthe, I sey it nought a-game,  
To wende as now, it were to me a shame.'

Criseyde, which that coude as mucche good  
As half a world, tok hede of his preyere;  
640 And sin it ron, and al was on a flood,  
She thoughte, as good chep may I dwellen here,  
And graunte it gladly with a freendes chere,  
And have a thank, as grucche and thanne abyde;  
For hoom to goon, it may nought wel bityde.'

645 `I wol,' quod she, `myn uncle leef and dere,  
Sin that yow list, it skile is to be so;  
I am right glad with yow to dwellen here;  
I seyde but a-game, I wolde go.'  
`Y-wis, graunt mercy, nece!' quod he tho;  
650 `Were it a game or no, soth for to telle,  
Now am I glad, sin that yow list to dwelle.'

Thus al is wel; but tho bigan aright  
The newe Ioye, and al the feste agayn;  
But Pandarus, if goodly hadde he might,  
655 He wolde han hyed hir to bedde fayn,  
And seyde, `Lord, this is an huge rayn!  
This were a weder for to slepen inne;  
And that I rede us son to biginne.

Pandare arranges for Criseyde to sleep alone, with her servants in the next room. Then he tells Troilus of his plan. Troilus is nervous and prays for courage.

Quod Pandarus, `Thou wrecched mouses herte,  
Art thou agast so that she wol thee byte?  
Why, don this furred cloke up-on thy sherte,  
And folowe me, for I wol have the wyte;  
740 But byd, and lat me go bifore a lyte.'  
And with that word he gan un-do a trappe,  
And Troilus he broughte in by the lappe.

The sterne wind so loude gan to route  
That no wight other noyse mighte here;  
745 And they that layen at the dore with-oute,

Ful sykerly they slepten alle y-fere;  
And Pandarus, with a ful sobre chere,  
Goth to the dore anon with-outen lette,  
Ther-as they laye, and softly it shette.

750 And as he com ayeinward prively,  
His nece awook, and asked, `Who goth there?'  
`My dere nece,' quod he, `it am I;  
Ne wondreth not, ne have of it no fere;'  
And ner he com, and seyde hir in hir ere,  
755 `No word, for love of god I yow biseche;  
Lat no wight ryse and heren of oure speche.'

`What! Which wey be ye comen, benedicite?'  
Quod she; `And how thus unwist of hem alle?'  
`Here at this secre trappe-dore,' quod he.  
760 Quod tho Criseyde, `Lat me som wight calle.'  
`Ey! God forbede that it sholde falle,'  
Quod Pandarus, `that ye swich foly wroughte!  
They mighte deme thing they never er thoughte!

`It is nought good a sleping hound to wake,  
765 Ne yeve a wight a cause to devyne;  
Your wommen slepen alle, I under-take,  
So that, for hem, the hous men mighte myne;  
And slepen wolen til the sonne shyne.  
And whan my tale al brought is to an ende,  
770 Unwist, right as I com, so wol I wende.

`Now, nece myn, ye shul wel understonde,'  
Quod he, `so as ye wommen demen alle,  
That for to holde in love a man in honde,  
And him hir "leef" and "dere herte" calle,  
775 And maken him an howve above a calle,  
I mene, as love an other in this whyle,  
She doth hir-self a shame, and him a gyle.

`Now wherby that I telle yow al this?  
Ye woot your-self, as wel as any wight,  
780 How that your love al fully graunted is  
To Troilus, the worthieste knight,  
Oon of this world, and ther-to trouthe plyght,  
That, but it were on him along, ye nolde  
Him never falsen, whyle ye liven sholde.

785 `Now stant it thus, that sith I fro yow wente,  
This Troilus, right platly for to seyn,  
Is thurgh a goter, by a prive wente,  
In-to my chaumbre come in al this reyn,  
Unwist of every maner wight, certeyn,  
790 Save of my-self, as wisly have I loye,  
And by that feith I shal Pryam of Troye!

He tells Criseyde that Troilus has been told she loves another and is in the house, full of distress. She must comfort him and reassure him. She says that she will do so tomorrow. Pandare convinces her that she must see him at once and brings Troilus to her. He tells her that Troilus has heard she loves another and is mad with jealousy. She makes a long speech reassuring him that it is not true, and starts to cry. Troilus is overwhelmed, and faints. Pandare throws him onto the bed and removes most of his clothes. They talk some more . . .

This Troilus, with blisse of that supprysed,  
1185 Put al in goddes hond, as he that mente  
No-thing but wel; and, sodeynly avysed,  
He hir in armes faste to him hente.  
And Pandarus, with a ful good entente,  
Leyde him to slepe, and seyde, `If ye ben wyse,  
1190 Swowneth not now, lest more folk aryse.'

What mighte or may the sely larke seye,  
Whan that the sperhawk hath it in his foot?  
I can no more, but of these ilke tweye,  
To whom this tale sucre be or soot,  
1195 Though that I tarie a yeer, som-tyme I moot,  
After myn auctor, tellen hir gladnesse,  
As wel as I have told hir hevinesse.

Criseyde, which that felte hir thus y-take,  
As writen clerkes in hir bokes olde,  
1200 Right as an aspes leef she gan to quake,  
Whan she him felte hir in his armes folde.  
But Troilus, al hool of cares colde,  
Gan thanken tho the blisful goddes sevene;  
Thus sondry peynes bringen folk in hevene.

1205 This Troilus in armes gan hir streyne,  
And seyde, `O swete, as ever mote I goon,  
Now be ye caught, now is ther but we tweyne;  
Now yeldeth yow, for other boot is noon.'  
To that Criseyde answerde thus anoon,  
1210 `Ne hadde I er now, my swete herte dere,  
Ben yolde, y-wis, I were now not here!'

O! Sooth is seyde, that heled for to be  
As of a fevre or othere greet syknesse,  
Men moste drinke, as men may often see,  
1215 Ful bittre drink; and for to han gladnesse,  
Men drinken often peyne and greet distresse;  
I mene it here, as for this aventure,  
That thourgh a peyne hath founden al his cure.

And now swetnesse semeth more sweet,  
1220 That bitternesse assayed was biforn;  
For out of wo in blisse now they flete;  
Non swich they felten, sith they were born;  
Now is this bet, than bothe two be lorn!

For love of god, take every womman hede  
1225 To werken thus, if it comth to the nede.

Criseyde, al quit from every drede and tene,  
As she that iuste cause hadde him to triste,  
Made him swich feste, it Ioye was to sene,  
Whan she his trouthe and clene entente wiste.  
1230 And as aboute a tree, with many a twiste,  
Bitrent and wryth the sote wode-binde,  
Gan eche of hem in armes other winde.

And as the neue abaysshed nightingale,  
That stinteth first whan she biginneth to singe,  
1235 Whan that she hereth any herde tale,  
Or in the hegges any wight steringe,  
And after siker dooth hir voys out-ringe;  
Right so Criseyde, whan hir drede stente,  
Opned hir herte and tolde him hir entente.

1240 And right as he that seeth his deeth y-shapen,  
And deye moot, in ought that he may gesse,  
And sodeynly rescous doth him escapen,  
And from his deeth is brought in sikernesse,  
For al this world, in swich present gladnesse  
1245 Was Troilus, and hath his lady swete;  
With worse hap god lat us never mete!

Hir armes smale, hir streyghte bak and softe,  
Hir sydes longe, fleshly, smothe, and whyte  
He gan to stroke, and good thrift bad ful ofte  
1250 Hir snowish throte, hir brestes rounde and lyte;  
Thus in this hevne he gan him to delyte,  
And ther-with-al a thousand tyme hir kiste;  
That, what to done, for Ioye unnethe he wiste.

Than seyde he thus, `O, Love, O, Charitee,  
1255 Thy moder eek, Citherea the swete,  
After thy-self next heried be she,  
Venus mene I, the wel-willy planete;  
And next that, Imeneus, I thee grete;  
For never man was to yow goddes holde  
1260 As I, which ye han brought fro cares colde.

`Benigne Love, thou holy bond of thinges,  
Who-so wol grace, and list thee nought honouren,  
Lo, his desyr wol flee with-uten winges.  
For, noldestow of bountee hem socouren  
1265 That serven best and most alwey labouren,  
Yet were al lost, that dar I wel seyn, certes,  
But-if thy grace passed our desertes.

`And for thou me, that coude leest deserve  
Of hem that nombred been un-to thy grace,  
1270 Hast holpen, ther I lykly was to sterve,  
And me bistowed in so heygh a place  
That thilke boundes may no blisse pace,  
I can no more, but laude and reverence  
Be to thy bounte and thyn excellence!

1275 And therwith-al Criseyde anoon he kiste,  
Of which, certeyn, she felte no disese,  
And thus seyde he, `Now wolde god I wiste,  
Myn herte swete, how I yow mighte plese!  
What man,' quod he, `was ever thus at ese  
1280 As I, on whiche the faireste and the beste  
That ever I say, deyneth hir herte reste.

`Here may men seen that mercy passeth right;  
The experience of that is felt in me,  
That am unworthy to so swete a wight.  
1285 But herte myn, of your benignitee,  
So thenketh, though that I unworthy be,  
Yet mot I nede amenden in som wyse,  
Right thourgh the vertu of your heyghe servyse.

`And for the love of god, my lady dere,  
1290 Sin god hath wrought me for I shal yow serve,  
As thus I mene, that ye wol be my sterve,  
To do me live, if that yow liste, or sterve,  
So techeth me how that I may deserve  
Your thank, so that I, thurgh myn ignoraunce,  
1295 Ne do no-thing that yow be displesaunce.

`For certes, fresshe wommanliche wyf,  
This dar I seye, that trouthe and diligence,  
That shal ye finden in me al my lyf,  
Ne wol not, certeyn, breken your defence;  
1300 And if I do, present or in absence,  
For love of god, lat slee me with the dede,  
If that it lyke un-to your womanhede.'

`Y-wis,' quod she, `myn owne hertes list,  
My ground of ese, and al myn herte dere,  
1305 Graunt mercy, for on that is al my trist;  
But late us falle away fro this matere;  
For it suffyseth, this that seyde is here.  
And at o word, with-outen repentaunce,  
Wel-come, my knight, my pees, my suffisaunce!'

1310 Of hir delyt, or Ioyes oon the leste  
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 can no more, but thus thise ilke tweye  
1315 That night, be-twixen dreed and sikernesse,  
Felten in love the grete worthinesse.

O blisful night, of hem so longe y-sought,  
How blithe un-to hem bothe two thou were!  
Why ne hadde I swich on with my soule y-bought,  
1320 Ye, or the leeste Ioye that was there?  
A-wey, thou foule daunger and thou fere,  
And lat hem in this hevене blisse dwelle,  
That is so heygh, that al ne can I telle!

But sooth is, though I can not tellen al,  
1325 As can myn auctor, of his excellence,  
Yet have I seyde, and, god to-forn, I shal  
In every thing al hoolly his sentence.  
And if that I, at loves reverence,  
Have any word in eched for the beste,  
1330 Doth therwith-al right as your-selven leste.

For myne wordes, here and every part,  
I speke hem alle under correccioun  
Of yow, that feling han in loves art,  
And putte it al in your discrecioun  
1335 To encrease or maken diminucioun  
Of my langage, and that I yow bi-seche;  
But now to purpos of my rather speche.

Thise ilke two, that ben in armes laft,  
So looth to hem a-sonder goon it were,  
1340 That ech from other wende been biraft,  
Or elles, lo, this was hir moste fere,  
That al this thing but nyce dremes were;  
For which ful ofte ech of hem seyde, `O swete,  
Clippe ich yow thus, or elles I it mete?'

1345 And, lord! So he gan goodly on hir see,  
That never his look ne bleynte from hir face,  
And seyde, `O dere herte, may it be  
That it be sooth, that ye ben in this place?  
`Ye, herte myn, god thank I of his grace!'  
1350 Quod tho Criseyde, and therwith-al him kiste,  
That where his spirit was, for Ioye he niste.

This Troilus ful ofte hir eyen two  
Gan for to kisse, and seyde, `O eyen clere,  
It were ye that wroughte me swich wo,  
1355 Ye humble nettes of my lady dere!  
Though ther be mercy writen in your chere,  
God wot, the text ful hard is, sooth, to finde,  
How coude ye with-outen bond me binde?'



Therwith he gan hir faste in armes take,  
1360 And wel an hundred tymes gan he syke,  
Nought swiche sorwfull sykes as men make  
For wo, or elles whan that folk ben syke,  
But esy sykes, swiche as been to lyke,  
That shewed his affeccoun with-inne;  
1365 Of swiche sykes coude he nought bilinne.

Sone after this they speke of sondry thinges,  
As fil to purpos of this aventure,  
And pleyinge entrechaungen hir ringes,  
Of which I can nought tellen no scripture;  
1370 But wel I woot, a broche, gold and asure,  
In whiche a ruby set was lyk an herte,  
Criseyde him yaf, and stak it on his sherte.

Time passes . . . it is time to part, but neither wants to. More talking . . .

1520 Agayns his wil, sin it mot nedes be,  
This Troilus up roos, and faste him cledde,  
And in his armes took his lady free  
An hundred tyme, and on his wey him spedde,  
And with swich wordes as his herte bledde,  
1525 He seyde, `Farewel, mr dere herte swete,  
Ther god us graunte sounde and sone to mete!'

To which no word for sorwe she answerde,  
So sore gan his parting hir destreyne;  
And Troilus un-to his palays ferde,  
1530 As woo bigon as she was, sooth to seyne;  
So hard him wrong of sharp desyr the peyne  
For to ben eft there he was in plesaunce,  
That it may never out of his remembraunce.

Retorned to his real palais, sone  
1535 He softe in-to his bed gan for to slinke,  
To slepe longe, as he was wont to done,  
But al for nought; he may wel ligge and winke,  
But sleep ne may ther in his herte sinke;  
Thenkinge how she, for whom desyr him brende,  
1540 A thousand-fold was worth more than he wende.

And in his thought gan up and doun to winde  
Hir wordes alle, and every countenaunce,  
And fermely impressen in his minde  
The leste poynt that to him was plesaunce;  
1545 And verrayliche, of thilke remembraunce,  
Desyr al newe him 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 hir herte shette

1550 His worthinesse, his lust, his dedes wyse,  
His gentillesse, and how she with him mette,  
Thonkinge love he so wel hir bisette;  
Desyring eft to have hir herte dere  
In swich a plyt, she dorste make him chere.

1555 Pandare, a-morwe which that comen was  
Un-to his nece, and gan hir fayre grete,  
Seyde, `Al this night so reyned it, allas!  
That al my drede is that ye, nece swete,  
Han litel layser had to slepe and mete;  
1560 Al night,' quod he, `hath reyn so do me wake,  
That som of us, I trowe, hir hedes ake.'

And ner he com, and seyde, `How stont it now  
This mery morwe, nece, how can ye fare?'  
Criseyde answerde, `Never the bet for yow,  
1565 Fox that ye been, god yeve youre herte care!  
God help me so, ye caused al this fare,  
Trow I,' quod she, `for alle your wordes whyte;  
O! Who-so seeth yow knoweth yow ful lyte!'

With that she gan hir face for to wrye  
1570 With the shete, and wex for shame al reed;  
And Pandarus gan under for to pryde,  
And seyde, `Nece, if that I shal be deed,  
Have here a swerd, and smyteth of myn heed.'  
With that his arm al sodeynly he thriste  
1575 Under hir nekke, and at the laste hir kiste.

I passe al that which chargeth nought to seye,  
What! God foryaf his deeth, and she al-so  
Foryaf, and with hir uncle gan to pleye,  
For other cause was ther noon than so.  
1580 But of this thing right to the effect to go,  
Whan tyme was, hom til hir hous she wente,  
And Pandarus hath fully his entente.

Pandare gives Troilus a 'Boethian' warning:

`My dere frend, if I have doon for thee  
In any cas, god wot, it is me leef;  
1620 And am as glad as man may of it be,  
God help me so; but tak now a-greef  
That I shal seyn, be war of this myscheef,  
That, there-as thou now brought art in-to blisse,  
That thou thy-self ne cause it nought to misse.

1625 `For of fortunes sharpe adversitee  
The worst kinde of infortune is this,  
A man to have ben in prosperitee,  
And it remembren, whan it passed is.

Thou art wys y-nough, for-thy do nought amis;  
Be not to rakel, though thou sitte warme,  
1631 For if thou be, certeyn, it wol thee harme.

`Thou art at ese, and holde the wel ther-inne.  
For also seur as reed is every fyr,  
As greet a craft is kepe wel as winne;  
1635 Brydle alwey wel thy speche and thy desyr,  
For worldly Ioye halt not but by a wyr;  
That preveth wel, it brest alday so ofte;  
For-thy nede is to werke with it softe.'

Quod Troilus, `I hope, and god to-forn,  
1640 My dere frend, that I shal so me bere,  
That in my gilt ther shal no thing be lorn,  
Ne I nil not rake as for to greven here;  
It nedeth not this matere ofte tere;  
For wistestow myn herte wel, Pandare,  
1645 God woot, of this thou woldest litel care.'

Soon after, they are able to meet again in the same place. They are forced to part when morning comes, but after that they often meet and sleep together. Troilus is very happy, and full of courage.

And by the hond ful ofte he wolde take  
This Pandarus, and in-to gardin lede,  
And swich a feste and swich a proces make  
1740 Him of Criseyde, and of hir womanhede,  
And of hir beautee, that, with-uten drede,  
It was an hevene his wordes for to here;  
And thanne he wolde singe in this manere.

`Love, that of erthe and see hath governaunce,  
1745 Love, that his hestes hath in hevene hye,  
Love, that with an holsom alliaunce  
Halt peples ioyned, as him list hem gye,  
Love, that knetteth lawe of companye,  
And couples doth in vertu for to dwelle,  
1750 Bind this acord, that I have told and telle;

`That that the world with feyth, which that is stable,  
Dyverseth so his stoundes concordinge,  
That elements that been so discordable  
Holden a bond perpetuely duringe,  
1755 That Phebus mote his rosy day forth bringe,  
And that the mone hath lordship over the nightes,  
Al this doth Love; ay heried be his mightes!

`That, that the see, that gredy is to flowen,  
Constreyneth to a certeyn ende so  
1760 His flodes, that so fersly they ne growen  
To drenchen erthe and al for ever-mo;  
And if that Love ought lete his brydel go,

Al that now loveth a-sonder sholde lepe,  
And lost were al, that Love halt now to-hepe.

1765 `So wolde god, that auctor is of kinde,  
That, with his bond, Love of his vertu liste  
To cerclen hertes alle, and faste binde,  
That from his bond no wight the wey out wiste.  
And hertes colde, hem wolde I that he twiste  
1770 To make hem love, and that hem leste ay rewe  
On hertes sore, and kepe hem that ben trewe.'

Love enables Trolus to fight more valiantly and speak more elegantly.

Thourgh yow have I seyde fully in my song  
1815 Theffect and Ioye of Troilus servyse,  
Al be that ther was som disese among,  
As to myn auctor listeth to devyse.  
My thridde book now ende ich in this wyse;  
And Troilus in luste and in quiete  
1820 Is with Criseyde, his owne herte swete.

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