IRONY IN TROILUS AND CRISEYDE

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CHAPTER I

THE IRONIC NARRATOR

Sometime in the 1380's, Geoffrey Chaucer's energies were devoted to his greatest complete work, *Troilus and Criseyde*. The poem is cast into five books of seven-line stanzas, totaling more than eight thousand lines. Ostensibly, the *Troilus and Criseyde* of Chaucer is a romance of chivalry dealing with the "matter of Troy" which goes back for its story, not to Homer, but piece after piece, to Latin versions of the ancient tale. But Chaucer has written a poem that far surpasses the bounds of a simple literary species.

For the immediate source of the story, Chaucer used the *Filostrato* of Boccaccio. Boccaccio's *Filostrato* is primarily a tale of romantic love. Chaucer took the tale but added to it certain qualities that made it far more complex. One of the more striking differences between Boccaccio's story and Chaucer's story is the emphasis the English author places upon irony. Irony, as used by Boccaccio merely points up certain aspects of a carnal love, while irony as used by Chaucer provides a framework for the entire tale. George Saintsbury says, "... the
Troilus is the Filostrato thrice dipped in fresh irony of the whole situation always and of individual passages sometimes. Other critics have been quick to recognize the part irony plays in *Troilus and Criseyde*, but none has examined and discussed the poem with the end in view of showing how completely the ironic viewpoint encompasses the story. As the tale is told by Chaucer, the reader becomes more and more aware that irony is used to express an opinion about life itself. At first, it seems that Chaucer is discussing only the effect of courtly love, or more generally romantic love, upon Troilus. And in describing this romantic love of the chief character of the story, Chaucer reveals that he sees the love adventure from the point of view of an ironic observer. But, as the story spins to its end, the reader gradually begins to understand that, while Chaucer is laughing ironically at romantic love, he is also deploring all undue attachments to things of this world. Excessive emotionality toward things mundane seems to bring, according to Chaucer, no real, lasting happiness.

What do critics say about *Troilus and Criseyde*?

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and the part irony plays in the poem? Professor Robert
Kilburn Root of Princeton University, one of the leading
Chaucerian scholars of modern times has this to say
about Troilus and Criseyde:

"It is in ... a spirit of wise and thoughtful irony that Chaucer has conceived and executed
his poem, a spirit poles asunder from the tender
sentiment and ardent passion which inform the
Filostrato."²

Professor George Lyman Kittredge of Harvard Univer-
sity, in his book Chaucer and His Poetry, says of Chaucer:

He saw the irony of circumstance, or fate,
or what you will, pervading human life, as no
articulate-speaking man has ever seen it before
or since. . . . It was tragedy, no doubt, that
Cressida, at the very moment of her treason to
Troilus, should swear, in her heart, to keep faith
with her new lover:--

"To Diomede algate I wol be trewe!"³

Marion Tucker, Professor of English at Brooklyn
Polytechnic Institute, says:

This story of love, faithlessness and despair,
Chaucer treats sympathetically, yet with a sanity,
a sense of values, a profound humor and a worldly
wisdom that turn the tragedy into comedy, rather
ironic yet neither cynical nor bitter.⁴

² Robert Kilburn Root, editor, The Book of Troilus
and Criseyde by Geoffrey Chaucer (Princeton: Princeton

³ George Lyman Kittredge, Chaucer and His Poetry

⁴ Marion Tucker, "Troilus and Criseyde," The
Germaine Dempster, speaking of the development of irony in *Troilus and Criseyde* says:

The whole tragedy is felt, not so much as a series of events occurring one by one in the course of time, but as one solid mass, as the reflection in this world of elements somehow inseparably woven together in another world. No atmosphere could be more favorable to the development of a keen sense of dramatic irony, both in the poet and in us, readers; conscious of the agency of something very different from mere chance, we shall suspect connections between motifs and episodes not clearly related by our stiff law of cause and effect, and shall miss none of the otherwise perhaps insignificant ironies of circumstance.\(^5\)

Referring to the *Filostrato*—*Troilus and Criseyde* relationship, Dempster says:

As dramatic irony is used frequently and with strong emphasis in the *Filostrato*, readapting the Italian poem was the best possible early training in handling the device. But Chaucer went much farther than to rework the *Filostrato* with eloquent appreciation of the dramatic irony in it, much farther than learning Boccaccio's method of comment­ing rather insistently on the ironies of Fate, farther even than acquiring the master's talent for detecting or creating tragic or amusing irony; he developed a sense for new effects, for irony of a subtler character than any emphasized in the *Filostrato*, touches often too subtle and indefinite for any comment on his part to be desirable.\(^6\)

If irony plays as important a part in *Troilus and Criseyde* as critics say it does, then a close study of the


poem, with the end in view of illuminating the various ironies, is of value. That is the purpose of this thesis, namely, to examine the ironies in *Troilus and Criseyde* with the intended result of furthering appreciation and understanding of "Troilus unseelie aventure." (I, 35)

Frequently it is assumed that the code of courtly love provides the framework around which the structure of *Troilus and Criseyde* is formed. F. H. Robinson says:

"It is now generally recognised by critics that the *Troilus* is governed by the conventions of courtly love." However, J. S. P. Tatlock holds that the poem goes beyond courtly love and is concerned with a love commonly called "romantic.

Tatlock, in *The Mind and Art of Chaucer* (published posthumously in 1950), says:

The *Troilus* is a poem of mutual romantic love with an intensity and concentration coupled with refinement which were then new in European poetry, and have rarely been paralleled since. Were it a poem merely of "courtly love," it would be far less good a poem. It is fundamental to understand that the moral standard accepted by Chaucer in the *Troilus*, whether or not thought of or lived up to, is that assumed in much of modern literature, not some bygone esoteric standard; the assumption is that sincere and intense physical passion if managed with good taste is honorable to both parties.8

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Contrary to the opinions of Robinson, contrary to the opinions of Tatlock, the writer of this thesis would like to propose the hypothesis that the poem *Troilus and Criseyde* is governed not by the conventions of courtly love, not by the social code of romantic love, but is actually governed by a set of principles diametrically opposed to either!

Certainly it is true that within the poem are found many evidences that Troilus acts in conformity with the code of courtly love. It is equally true that parts of the poem ostensibly treat of romantic love, if Tatlock's position is preferred to Robinson's. But, and this point is important, Chaucer treats the love, however seen as either romantic or courtly, from nothing but an ironic point of view. More than ample evidence for this point is contained in the next five chapters of this thesis. And what is one of the characteristics of irony? It is representation through the opposite. Sigmund Freud says:

Indeed, the only technique that is characteristic of irony is representation through the opposite.9

A single example of what this means will suffice at this

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point. Troilus has seen Grisyele and been struck by love. As yet he does not know if she will accept him as a lover. In fact, he is not even sure that she knows that he exists. Alone in his room he addresses the absent Grisyele.

My dere herte, alasse! myn hale and hewe
And lif is lost, but ye wol on me rewe.
(I, 461-62; cf. post p. 25.)

Chaucer ironically comments on the words of Troilus:
"Lo, here his lif, and from the deth his cure!" (I, 469)

Chaucer has already told the reader enough of the story for him to know that Grisyele will be anything but Troilus's "cure" from "deth." Thus, while Troilus is observing the code of courtly love insofar as he threatens to die for love and feels great distress as a result of his love, Chaucer is using this particular article of the code to illustrate the principle that is directly opposed to the courtly code, namely that excessive emotional entanglements are not wise. It will be more than evident in succeeding chapters that as the story of Troilus and Grisyele progresses, Chaucer extends his admonition to beware of emotional entanglements to include aspects of life other than love. By the end of the poem, it seems that Chaucer is didactically expressing a *contemptus mundi* concept, a concept
poles apart from the code of courtly love and the conventions of romantic love. Nor is there any reason Troilus and Griseyde should not be didactic. Recall that in fourteenth century England it was commonly accepted that one of the purposes of literature was to instruct. As an indication to the extent irony pervades the poem, it is only necessary to realize that Chaucer uses a poem of pagan love to illustrate a fourteenth century scholastic teaching.

It is of interest to examine the opportunities for irony that exist within the poem. The story is simple enough. Troilus, the son of King Priam of Troy, while boasting himself to be love-proof, falls deeply in love with a beautiful young widow. Griseyde, the object of the love of Troilus, is the daughter of Galkas who has deserted the Trojan forces for the protection of the Greek camp. Griseyde's uncle, Pandarus, is a close friend of Troilus and arranges a series of secret communications and meetings between Griseyde and Troilus. Griseyde's heart is won, and the two lovers are extravagantly and secretly happy for a period of two or three years. But at last, an exchange of prisoners separates the two. Despite Griseyde's avowal of lasting love to Troilus, her
affections are turned to the Greek Diomede after she is separated from Troilus. When Grisye de fails to return to Troy within ten days as she had promised to do, Troilus gives himself over to despair and meets his death in battle at the hands of Achille. The last Chaucer shows us of Troilus, he is in heaven laughing at the follies of earthly life.

Ironies usually are built upon contrasts, dichotomies, or antinomies. Inherent in the story are these opportunities for irony: The son of the king loves the daughter of a traitor; the daughter proves untrue to the prince; inadvertently the love of father for daughter leads to the daughter's betrayal of her love and her ensuing loss of reputation in the eyes of Troilus, Pandarus, and perhaps even to herself; the efforts on the part of the uncle of Grisye de and friend of Troilus to provide happiness for the lovers end only in sorrow; and finally, pervading the entire tale as told by Chaucer is the conflict between the will of man seeking happiness on earth and the working of chance which decrees that Troilus cannot be happy for very long on earth. Around these basic opportunities for irony, Chaucer has woven a great net of verbal, dramatic, and structural ironies that unify
all actions of all participants of the tragedy.

Within the story as told by Chaucer, there are two main sources of irony around which is structured the tragedy. The first and most important is the part fate plays in shaping man's destiny. There are two main sources for the fatalistic background to the tragedy of Troilus and Criseyde. Chaucer is undoubtedly indebted to the Filostrato for part of the fatalism. But much of Chaucer's serious consideration of fate is owing more to Boethius than to Boccaccio.

The second main source of irony is the fickleness of human nature. Criseyde, a noble woman of truth and virtue, is forced by circumstances to leave her Trojan lover to whom she has pledged faithfulness; and within a short time after she is parted from Troilus, she finds herself attracted by Diomedes and falling in love with that Greek warrior.

In Chapters II to VI of this thesis a detailed discussion of the ironies found in each of the five books of Troilus and Criseyde is given. Throughout this study, when direct quotations from Chaucer are given, the book number and line references are listed at the end of the quotation. All citations by authors other than Chaucer
are footnoted in the conventional way. The text of *Troilus and Cressida* used in this study is that given by F. N. Robinson in the Cambridge edition.
CHAPTER II

THE MEETING

To see how important irony is to the story of Troilus and Criseyde, it is necessary to examine each book closely. This chapter discusses irony in Book I.

The double voice of Troilus to tellen,

In leuynge, how his adventures fallen
Pro we to wele, and after out of joie,
My purpos is, or that I parte fro ye.

(I, l-5)

With the above words Chaucer opens the story of Troilus and Criseyde. There is no doubt that the tale is to be one of sorrow, that Troilus is to be the central figure, and that the sorrow is to come to him as a result of love. Thus, with an artlessness that surpasses art, Chaucer tells the plot before he tells the story.

Knowing the outcome of the story even before the story begins, the reader has an objective view of the action that enables him to judge each event in its true relationship to other events. At the very beginning of the work, Chaucer provides the reader with a negative view of all the hopes and apparent joys of Troilus. It is upon this basis that the most obvious ironies of the tale are founded.
The reader of the story is prepared for tragedy. "Thesiphone," the "cruwel Furie," has been asked to aid Chaucer tell "this woful vers." This is to be a story of sorrow, perhaps even of tragedy. And then, with serious tone, Chaucer announces:

For I, that God of Loves servants serve,
He dar to Love, for myn unliklynesse,
Preyen for speed, al sholde I thercfore sterve,
So fer am I from his help in derknesse.

(I, 15-18)

The tempo is so regular and the tone so solemn that the casual reader is likely to miss completely the gentle, self-mocking note of laughter. As George Lyman Kittredge says,

Almost all Chaucer's references to himself are ironical. He is an outsider—so he tells us—in the courts of love, the servus servorum of the god.¹

Chaucer was certainly not unworthy of love. Brilliant, active in political and diplomatic life, favored in the court, widely traveled for those days, possessed of some of the world's material goods, he was certainly capable of entering the lists of love. Knowing something about Chaucer, the reader is not expecting Chaucer to say that he does not "dar to Love, for

¹ George Lyman Kittredge, Chaucer and His Poetry (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1933), p. 31.
my unlikeliness." As a result, the reader takes a negative attitude toward Chaucer's complaint and is inclined to smile. With the recognition of the irony, a new aspect of the poem is seen. After reading only eighteen lines the reader finds that Chaucer had a smile on his face when he started to compose. Is this story to be one of unmitigated tears? Obviously not.

Chaucer does not want the reader to forget that Troilus is to be entangled in "double serve." And, lest the reader forget the import of the opening lines of the poem, Chaucer repeats early in the tale that he is telling a story where

... ye may the double serve here
Of Troilus in lovyng of Grisye, And how that she forsook hym or she dye. (I, 54-56)

By doing this Chaucer has given the reader what Haakon Chevalier says is important to a person searching for irony:

... [an] exterior point of view, so as to embrace all contradictions and behold the world from a point of vantage to which nothing else is superior.2

The "world" in this case is the world of Troilus and Grisye.

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The knowledge that Grisye de is to be false to Troilus is the basis of a structural irony found in Chaucer's first picture of Grisye de. Calkas, Grisye de's father, has deserted the town of Troy. The people of the town are aroused to such an extent that Grisye de fears for her life. She rushes to Ector to ask his protection.

With pitous veis, and tendrelly wepyng
His mercy bad, hirselfen excusynge.
(I, lll-12)

The first picture seen of Grisye de, ironically enough, shows her involved in a situation where loyalty is the central theme.

In the famous Palladion scene in Book I (Lines 148-315), there are a number of important ironies. Although most of the ironies are easily recognised, one is so deeply buried in the background of the story that it could be overlooked.

But though that Grekes hem of Troie shotten,
And hir cite besieged al aboute,
Hire olde usage molde they nat letten,
As fer to honoure hir goddes ful devout;
But aldirmost in honour, out of doute,
Thel hadde a relik, heest Palladion,
That was hire trist aboven everishon.
(I, 148-54)

Pallas Athenae, the goddess of wisdom, was the one most worshiped by the Trojans. She was the one whom the Trojans most trusted. Yet, according to mythology, it
may be remembered that Athena was on the side of the Greeks. Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite engaged in a beauty contest of which Paris, son of King Priam of Troy, was the judge. To influence his choice, Hera offered Paris power and riches; Athena offered him military glory; and Aphrodite offered him the most beautiful woman in the world. Aphrodite was selected by Paris and she gave him Helen, the wife of King Menelaus of Sparta. The Greek-Trojan War was precipitated when Paris ran off with Helen to Troy. The decision of Paris to select Aphrodite alienated the Trojans from the affections of Hera and Athena, while it placed Aphrodite on the Trojan side. Thus, the fact that the Trojans held the feast of the Palladian, dedicated to Pallas Athena, "almost in honour," is extremely ironic.

Chaucer keeps the feeling of brooding tragedy alive in the poem when he sets the stage for Troilus's downfall in the Palladian scene. Describing the beautiful Grisye, Chaucer says

Has neuer yeit seyn thynge te ben preyased derre,
Nor under cloud blak so bright a sterre

As was Grisye, as folk seyde evrishone
That hir behelden in hir blake weede.
(I, 174-77)

Grisye was wearing black widow's weeds; thus, the
reference to a bright star under a black cloud. But examine the figure closely and a delicate irony is discovered. Stars are not under clouds; they are above them. And by this inversion an alert reader is forced to stop momentarily in his reading. He stops just long enough to realize that, since Grisye de is obviously going to figure in the love of Troilus, she is going to play a part in the "double servce." By this reasoning, the "cloude blak" takes on a double meaning. Here is an example of the irony of speech where the implication of what is said is in contrast to one of its literal meanings.

At the Palladian, Troilus, young, proud, strong, a king's son, master of his heart, laughs at love and lovers.

And seye hym thus, "God woot, she slepeth softe
For love of the, whan thou turnest ful ofte!

Troilus boasts of his freedom from the bonds of love
And wende nothing hadde had swich myght
Ayeysn his wille that almsd his herte sterre

Scoffing at those of his companions who are in love, Troilus enumerates the sorrows of a lover. Little does he know that he is enumerating his own future sorrows!
Because Chaucer has given the reader a foresight of
Troilus's life, the irony of Troilus laughing at love is seen. But, just as he is in the act of scoffing at love, his eye lights upon Grisye.

"O mercy, God," thought he, "where hastow woned,
That art so feyr and goodly to devise?"

(I, 276-77)

From that moment on, unknown to Troilus, but known to the reader, his doom is sealed. He who had been foremost in scorn ing love "wax sorecly moost subgit unto love."

(I, 231) The irony becomes apparent when it is realized that Troilus is subdued by a force he had scorned. The irony is intensified when it is seen that from that point on Troilus will seek love and in so doing will discover his sorrow. But the most penetrating edge of the whole ironic situation is felt when it is realised that Troilus, in a sense, loses his wisdom at a religious service dedicated to the honor of the goddess of wisdom who is opposed to all things Trojan!

Referring to Troilus's jests at love, Chaucer cannot forego this opportunity to comment in his droll manner.

This Troilus is clamber on the staire,
And litle wencheth that he most descenden

(I, 215-16)

There can be little doubt that Chaucer saw the story of Troilus and Grisye from an ironic point of
view. At the start of the work he prepares the reader for irony in the tale. The tale is barely under way when a number of ironies are pointed out by Chaucer, some obviously and some subtly. Fearing that some ironies may be overlooked by a casual reader, the author of the work takes time out from narration to point out ironies that are important to a full appreciation of the total situation. One example of how Chaucer, the ironic observer, calls attention to a structural irony is found in the following lines.

Lo he that leet hymselfen so konnyng,
And scorned hem that Lovas pynes dryen,
Wan ful unwar that Love hadde his dwell-yngge
Withinne the subtle stremes of hir yan;
That sodeynly hym thoughtes he felte dryen,
Right with hire look, the spirit in his herte.
Blisised be Love, that kan thus folk converte! (I, 302-8)

Trellus, who thought he was too clever for love, does not know love’s power. Further, he, who laughed at the pains of lovers, is suddenly struck with a love while he is laughing, and this love is to give him more pain than he imagined could exist. The final line of the stanza, "Blisised be Love, that kan thus folk converte," is so ironic in import that we can almost hear the tone of Chaucer's voice and see the expression on his face as he read the line to Adam, his "sariveyn."
When Troilus falls in love with Griseyde, the irony of the situation is seen by him. Of course, he who has just been railing at his comrades who were in love cannot suddenly turn about and say that he is now in love. As a result he silently leaves the temple.

Repentynge hym that he hadde evere
ijaped
Of Loves folk, lest fully the descents
Of scorn fille on hymself, but what he
ments,
Lest it were wist on any manere syde,
His woo he gan dissimulen and hide.

(I, 518-22)

Troilus does not only regret that he has jested at love, he is fearful that he will be scorned by others if he admits that he is in love. There is a little touch of irony in the fact that Troilus, who was second only to Hector in bravery and as a warrior, is afraid to admit that he is in love. But the biggest irony of this particular situation lies in the fact that Troilus, even though he is "moest subgit unto love," has to continue to jest at love and lovers in order to not attract attention to this great change in him. Before he fell in love, he mocked lovers, and the reader of the work knew that Troilus was inadvertently mocking himself. But after Troilus falls in love he has to continue mocking lovers, and he knows that he is mocking himself.

Shortly after Troilus leaves the temple, he has
occasion to jest at lovers again.

And sayde, "Lord, so ye lyve al in leat, Ye loveres! for the komyngeste of yow, That serveth most ententiflich and best, Hym tit as often harm therof as prow. Yore hire is quyte ayeyn, ye, God went how!

Nought wel for wel, but scorn for good servyse.

In feith, ysure ordre is ruled in good wise! (I, 350-56)

Even though Troilus is in love and so is not scorning love and lovers as before, he undoubtedly does not realize the whole truth of what he is saying. He was one of those who was to serve "most ententiflich and best," and the "harm" was to far exceed the "prow." The irony of the observation that

Yore hire is quyte ayeyn, ye, God went how!

Nought wel for wel, but scorn for good servyse. (I, 354-55)

is hidden from Troilus. His remark that

In feith, ysure ordre is ruled in good wise! (I, 356)

is painfully comic.

When Troilus says "Lord, wel is hym that may ben of yow oon!" (I, 380), he is indulging in an irony that must have made his smile since only he (and the reader) know the full meaning of the statement. No doubt, if Troilus could have seen the outcome of his own love, he
would have delivered the exclamation with a great deal more bitterness than humor. As it is, he probably makes the remark lightly. The irony of his remark is known to him but is felt more keenly by the reader who has been prepared by Chaucer to know that the love affair will not turn out well.

After Troilus has first seen Griseyde in the temple at the feast of the Palladian, he goes to his chamber where he recalls how Griseyde had been dressed and how she acted. He plans to serve her whether or not she ever discovers his care for her; but he has some hope that eventually she might look with favor upon him. At this point Chaucer feels it necessary to again remind the reader that Troilus is not to be happy as a result of his love affair, for he remarks after describing Troilus' hopes and plans:

Thus argumented he in his gymynge,
Ful unavysed of his wec cysynge.
(I, 577-78)

Chaucer's remark heightens the irony of the picture we form in our minds of Troilus, young and hopeful, embarking upon a career of love which he hopes will bring him nothing but joy.

Moved by his emotions, Troilus composes a song of love. Feeling that he is blessed by the gods, Troilus
It is not necessary to compare Troilus's various attitudes toward the god of love in order to see irony in Troilus's praise for love. To see the irony all we have to do is turn the related treatise of this situation.

Oft as the happy lover is made woe, so is the woful lover made happy in the divine plan, he resists it not, but being included he even praises the inevitability which places these forces which before he praised so fervently.

'Little does he know, that he is praising the god who was to cause his downfall!' Walter Clyde Curry has commented upon the related treatise of this situation.

Continuing to praise the god of love, he says, 'I, 433; 428-29; 17'. He might have brought to this, I, 433; 428-29. Indeed to be a "living death," as delivered by Troilus. For him, love of Griselda is pain of being in love, he characterizes love as a "quiet death."
to recall Chaucer's warning that Troilus will suffer as a result of love.

Carried away by emotion in his song of love, Troilus says:

But as hire man I wol ay lyve and sterve. \(\text{(I, 427)}\)

It is doubtful if Troilus really intended to live and die for Griseyde when he composed his lyric, but his comment takes on a definite ironic cast in view of his future life and death.

Chaucer says that to Troilus, Griseyde was fairer than either Eleyne or Polixene.

\[
\text{. . . that } [\text{Griseyde}] \text{ fairer was to sene} \\
\text{Than evere was Eleyne or Polixene.} \\
\text{(I, 454-55)}
\]

There is something tragic in this comparison. Eleyne, of course, was the apparent cause of the Greek-Trojan War. Carried away by Paris from her husband Menelaus, married to Deiphobus after the death of Paris, and finally reunited with Menelaus after the fall of Troy, it can be said that Eleyne brought a great deal of sorrow into the lives of those with whom she associated. As for Polixene, who was a sister of Troilus, she was sacrificed at Achille's grave by the son of Achille, Heeptolemus. Ranking Griseyde with these women of sorrow
is a faintly ironic comparison.

Chaucer misses no opportunity to commentironically upon Troilus's emotions. Alone in his chamber, Troilus addresses his absent lady in these words:

Good goodly, to whom serve I and la-
boure,
As I best ken, now wolde God, Griseyde,
Ye wolden on me rewe, or that I dayde!
My dere herte, alas! myn hele and hewe
And lif is lost, but ye wol on me rewe.

(I, 458-52)

To which Chaucer remarks:

Lo, here his lif, and from the deth his cure!

(I, 469)

By now it is perfectly obvious that Chaucer sees the whole story in an ironic light. And, since Chaucer has been at some pains to let the reader know of Troilus's fate, his remark can be nothing but ironical.

As time passes, Troilus becomes more and more in love with Griseyde, although Chaucer does not say that Griseyde gives him any encouragement. As his love grows, so grows his appreciation of the ironic position in which he finds himself. Fighting, acquiring reputation, seeking danger, and in all ways trying to bring himself to the attention of his lady, he has no way of knowing whether or not she is free to love him or whether she has even heard of him. He says:
... O fool, now artow in the snare,
That whilom Japedest at love's payne.
How artow hent, now gnaw thin owen
cheynes!
Thow were ay wont ech levere repre-
hends
Of thing fro which thow kunst the nat de-
fends. (I, 507-11)

One day while he is bewailing his fate to love a
woman who might not even know that he exists, Troilus is
surprised in his lamentations by Pandarus, a close friend.
Not knowing the cause for Troilus's sorrow, Pandarus
tries to arouse him by asking him if he is afraid of the
Greeks.

Or hastow som remors of conscience,
And art now falle in som devocion,
And wail est for thi synne and thin offence,
And hast for ferde caught attricioum?
God save hem that biseged han cure
town,
That so han leyeoure jolite on presse,
And bringe oure lusty folk to help-
nessel! (I, 554-60)

There are two ironies present in this little speech by
Pandarus. The most obvious is the irony of Pandarus
asking God to save the Greeks. Only the reader could
know that Troilus has real cause to fear the Greeks who
would be responsible for Griscyde leaving Troy, and who
would provide the man who would win Griscyde's love from
Troilus. The less obvious irony is that Pandarus has
unwittingly touched the sore spot on Troilus's conscience.
Troilus has fallen "in som devocioun" to the god of love, and he is wailing for his "symne" and "offense" against love. Of course, Pandarus is speaking in a jesting manner and only Troilus can see the fact that Pandarus is, in a way, speaking the truth.

Using their friendship as a lever, Pandarus prys from Troilus the information that Troilus is in love. Although he is surprised, Pandarus, attempting to cheer his friend, tells him that perhaps he could give Troilus some aid. Whereupon Troilus quickly remarks:

This were a wonder thing, . . .
Thow koudest nevere in love thiselven wisse?
How deovel maistow brynge me to blisse?
(I, 621-23)

Naturally, this is said in an ironic tone of voice. But there is a deeper irony to the question. As a matter of fact, Pandarus could not bring Troilus to "blisse." Pandarus, by furthering the love pursuit of his friend merely heightens the sorrow of Troilus.

Pandarus is not unaware of the irony of Troilus's situation. Shortly after he has learned that Troilus is in love with Grisye de, he says:

For by my trouthe, in love I doreste have sworn
The sholde nevere ban tid thus sayr a grace.
And wostow why? For thow were wont to chase
At Love in scorn, and for despit him calle
"Seynt Idyot, lord of thise foles alle."
(I, 906-10)

Pandarus, whose unsuccessful love affair is well known to Troilus, has probably suffered many of Troilus's gibes about love. Even though he is a close friend of Troilus he cannot miss the opportunity to point out to Troilus that he considers him to be lucky to have fallen in love with someone as good as Grisreyde rather than a less fair person. Pandarus, that wise, clever, and ironic personage, knew so much of the workings of fate and fortune that he expected Troilus to receive far less than "fayr a grace." But, back of the "fayr . . . grace" can be seen the deep, tragic irony of Troilus losing his happiness and his life as a result of the workings of that which Pandarus regards as so good.

Pandarus reacts to Troilus's confession of love as we would expect a clever, friendly man of the world to react. He first teases Troilus about the irony of his situation, then gains Troilus's faith, and finally promises to aid his friend. But, before he proposes any definite solution to Troilus's problems, he remonstrates with the Trojan prince. He tells Troilus to be careful that the love affair is not discovered and finally urges Troilus to be true and faithful to Grisseyde.
Germaine Dempster, in *Dramatic Irony in Chaucer*, recognizes the irony of Pandarus's description of Troilus's fate as a fair grace and finds a further irony in the same scene.

In the same scene this irony combines with a more clearly conveyed and more directly cruel stroke: Pandarus is preaching constancy in love to that same friend whom excess of constancy will ruin; we think of the future scene when he will use his eloquence, but in vain, to dissuade Troilus from fidelity.  

One of the most pathetic ironies of Book I is built around Troilus's sudden exultation when he learns that Pandarus will help him gain the favor of Griseyde. After expressing his gratitude to Pandarus and feeling his spirits rise, he exclaims:

... Now, fy on the Grekes alle!  
Yet, pardes, God shal helpe us atte laste.  
(I, 1046-47)  

The fate of Troy was well known to the readers of Chaucer's day. Then, as now, it was seen that Troilus's disparagement of the Greeks as well as his hope that God would aid his side was pitiful. Here is certainly an ironic effect.

Chaucer has prepared the reader to know that Griseyde is going to forsake Troilus for a Greek. Further, God was not going to help the Trojans "atte laste." As a matter

of fact, Fallas Athena was on the side of the Greeks from the very beginning of the war, even though this fact may not have been known to the Trojans. Troilus’s hopes and expectations are in direct contrast to what the reader knows is the truth. A smile is evoked at Troilus’s words, but the smile withers almost before it forms when the future events of the story are considered. This neat little structural irony, which Chaucer has incorporated in the story is one of the most effective ones found in Book I.

In the same address to Pandarus, Troilus makes another remark which is ironic because the full truth of the statement is not understood by either Pandarus or Troilus.

Now, Pandarce, I can na more seye,  
But, thow wis, thow weost, thow maist,  
thow art al!  
My lif, my deth, hol in thyn hand I leye.  
(I, 1051-53)

Pandarus quite literally holds Troilus’s life and death. If Pandarus had not furthered the love affair, there is some chance that Troilus would not have suffered as much as he did. Since from that moment on Pandarus is the director of the love affair that is to consume the life of Troilus, Pandarus does have, in a way which he does not understand, the life and death of Troilus.

The last seen of Troilus in Book I he is reformed
of his jests and cruelties and is growing in the favor of the people of Troy because of his knightly qualities. Apparently he is quite happy and things are going well for him. But Chaucer closes Book I on a note of warning.

Now lat us stynte of Troilus a stounde,
That fareth lik a man that hurt is sore,
And is somdeel of akynge of his wonde
Ylissed wel, but heeled no deel moore;
And, as an esy payent, the loore
Abit of hym that gooth aboute his cure;
And thus he dryeth forth his aventure.
(I, 1086-92)

"Ylissed wel, but heeled no deel moore." Chaucer does not comment further. The pain may be less for Troilus as a result of the ministrations of Pandarus, but the "wounde" is still there, ready to cause further trouble. Upon this disquieting note Chaucer ends Book I.
CHAPTER III

THE PURSUIT

In Book I it was seen that the double sorrow of Troilus was beginning. He had seen Griseldis and felt the pangs of love. In Book II, the pangs are intensified, but as they are intensified the hope of securing Griseldis is mounting. As Chaucer says,

But now of hope the kalendas bygynne.

(II, 7)

Because Chaucer has stated frequently in Book I that the love affair is not to be a happy one and that Troilus is to suffer a double sorrow, the theme of hope found in Book II must be seen in an ironic light. Chaucer has provided a negative view toward the hopes of Troilus. In Book II there is a sort of duality constantly held before the reader. On the one hand are all the hopes and plans of the characters of the tale; and on the other, there are the warnings of Chaucer that the plans are not going to provide the results anticipated by the planners. As the various characters go about their different parts, unaware of the structural ironies in which they are entangled, mixed emotions are engendered in the reader. A few of the ironies are funny and a few are sad. But
most of them are somewhat painfully comic. More often than not a wry smile is the result of recognition of an irony in this part of the story.

The first scene in Book II provides a new insight into the character of Pandarus. In Book I Pandarus appears as wise in the ways of the world. He is shown as a clever man, practical in dealing with people, a person resourceful in wit. He strikes us immediately as a prototype of a person we have met many times. We have met his like in real life: in the club, on the street, and in business. A little disillusioned, a cosmopolitan, devoted to friends, clever, possessed of the ethics of his own social group, he is no stranger to us. There are times when Pandarus reminds the reader of Chaucer, expressing some of the views of his creator. Even though we know that he has been not too successful in love, we do not expect this man of the world to be overly sentimental.

And yet we learn:

... on Mayes day the thrydde,

That Pandarus, for al his wise speche,
Felt ek his part of loves shots kesene,
That, kunde he nevare so wel of lovyng preche,
It made his heve a-day ful ofte greene,
So shent it that hym fil that day a tene
In love, for which in wo to bedde he wente,
And made, or it was day, ful many a
wente. (II, 56-63)

Is this not an interesting picture of Pandarus? "... for al his wise speche. ... made, or it was day, ful
many a wente"; certainly there is a little touch of irony in this picture.

The lines 64-70 are unexpectedly wealthy in connotations, some of which are subtly ironic.

The swallowe Proigne, with a sorrowful lay,
When morwen com, gan make hire waymentynge,
Whi she forshapen was; and ever lay
Pandare abedde, half in a slemberynge,
Til she so neigh hym made hire cheterynge
How Tereus gan forth hire suster take,
That with the noyse of hire he gan awake, (II, 64-70)

Chaucer devotes seven lines to the awakening of Pandarus. Because of one of "loves shotes keene" Pandarus had gained little sleep. And from that restless sleep he was awakened by the "swallowe Proigne, with a sorrowful lay." Of all the innumerable ways Pandarus could have been awakened, Chaucer chooses this method. Why? Is it a mere literary device? Probably not. As a matter of fact, the "sorrowful lay" serves the very definite purpose of casting a gloomy shadow upon the scenes of the coming day. It may be recalled that according to Greek mythology, Procone (Proigne) and Philomela were the daughters of an early king of Athens, Tereus, a Thracian king, had married Procone, but later had fallen in love with Philomela and married her after he had convinced her that Procone was dead. To conceal the second marriage
from Procne, he cut out the tongue of Philomela and imprisoned her in a hut in the forest. However, by a trick, Procne was informed of the truth and rescued her sister. The two sisters wreaked on the faithless Tereus a terrible vengeance by serving Ixylus, the son of Tereus, to his father as a main course at a feast. When Tereus pursued the two sisters the gods changed the three into birds.

Thus, Chaucer opens Book II which is supposed to tell "now of hope the kalendes bygynne" with a picture of Pandarus suffering from the pains of love and being awakened from his troubled sleep by a "swalowe" singing a tale of great sadness, which has as its basis an unfaithfulness in love. Pandarus, on that day, goes to see Grisye de in order to further the love of Troilus. It is as a result of this visit that Grisye de is eventually brought to Troilus. Could a day that is to have so sorrowful a result have a more appropriate beginning than that provided by Preigne? There is something ironic in the whole picture of Pandarus being awakened in such a manner.

Pandarus upon awakening remembers that he is going to visit Grisye de in order to aid Troilus.

... [he] caste and knew in good plit was the moone
To doon viage, and took his weye ful
seene
Unto his neesa palays ther baside.
Now Janus, god of entree, thew hym gydel
(II, 74-77)

There is a slight irony in Pandarus's resort to astrology
in order to determine if the day is proper for his adven-
ture. Recall that it was "on Mayes day the thrydde" that
he suffered a "teems in love." The third of May was an
unlucky day according to the astrology of the time. It
seems strange that Pandarus would pick an unlucky day to
advance his own love affair and then would "caste" in
order to aid his friend. A wry smile at the expense of
Pandarus in unavoidable. A sharper irony is found in the
invocation to Janus. Janus was not only the god of entry
to buildings, he was also the god of beginnings. And,
if something was well begun, it was supposed to end well.
If ever the aid of Janus was needed, it was at this time
when Pandarus was starting to further the love affair of
Troilus. The idea of Janus being invoked to aid a love
affair that is to end so badly is one of the more subtle
ironies of this section of the story.

Pandarus, upon arriving at the residence of Grisseyle,
finds his niece together with her ladies listening to the
tale of the siege of Thebes. Inquiring if the story is
about love, he is told by Grisseyle: "Uncle, youre
maistresse is not here." (II, 98) Following the laugh this jest provokes, uncle and niece engage in a long, and at times, desultory conversation. In the course of the conversation Grisye de reveals herself to be ready witted, dignified, and on very close terms with her uncle. Pandarus, for his part, demonstrates his ability to deal with people, to arouse the curiosity of his niece, and to set the stage for dramatic announcements. He first tells Grisye de that she is in great good fortune, and then refuses to tell her why. In the course of the conversation he finds reason to praise Troilus and to invoke from Grisye de the observation that

Of Troilus the same thynge trowe I;
For dredeles, men talleth that he doth
In arnes day by day so worthily,
And bereth hym here at hom so gentilly
To every wight, that alle pris hath he
Of hom that me were levest preyed on.

(II, 184-89)

Just before Pandarus takes his leave from Grisye de he makes a comment that reminds Grisye de she as yet does not know why Pandarus thinks she is coming into good fortune. Within a short time Pandarus allows himself to be wheedled into telling Grisye de of her good luck. Learning that Troilus loves her and that her uncle wishes her to return the love, Grisye de breaks into tears and reprimands her uncle for desiring her to do something that might
cause her to lose her honor.

... Why here I deem?
For of this world the fayth is al agoon,
Allas! what sholden straunge to me doon,
When he, that for my beste frende I wende,
Ret me to love, and sholde it me defende?

(The complaint "feyth is al agoon" is ironic coming from
the lips of Griseyde who is to demonstrate to Pandarus
and Troilus that she too could be unfaithful. Of course,
neither Griseyde nor Pandarus could see the irony at
this time, but Chaucer certainly prepares the reader to
recognize the irony by means of his constant reiteration
that Troilus is to come to sorrow as a result of Griseyde's
defection in love.

Once she recovers from the surprise of learning that
she is loved by the son of the king, Griseyde gives consider-
able thought to her place in life. It is not too diffi-
cult for Pandarus to secure from Griseyde the promise
that she will allow Troilus to serve her and will return
his affection for her to at least a limited extent.
After Pandarus leaves Griseyde, and while she is consid-
ering how she should conduct herself, Troilus chances to
ride past her window after a successful battle during
which he has put the Greeks to flight. Griseyde is im-
pressed by his manly carriage and also by the fact that
he is held in high acclaim by the crowds. While debating
the extent to which she should love him she reviews
in her mind the possible disadvantages of loving a man.

Also thise wikked tonges ben so prest
To speke us harm, ek men ben so untrew
That, right anon as ceased is hire lest,
So cesseth love, and forth to love a newe.
But harm ydoon is doon, whose it rewes;
For ththough thise men for love hem first
torende,
Ful sharp bygynnynge breketh ofte at ende.
(II, 785-91)

Again it must be noted that it is ironic to hear Grisyeide
speak of lovers being untrue. The themes of honor, truth,
and faithfulness are ever recurring in the speech of
Grisyeide, and more often than not, Chaucer has prepared
us to find irony behind Grisyeide's references to these
qualities.

Other objections she raises to loving Troilus
are these:

... Allas! syn I am
free,
Sholde I now love, and put in jupartie
My sikernesse, and thrallen libertee?
Allas! how dorst I thentken that folie?
(II, 771-74)

For love is yet the mooste stormy lyf,
Right of hymselfe, that euer was bigenne
(II, 778-79)

And so Grisyeide, who is to forsake Troilus for Diomede,
considers her problems and doubts the wisdom of loving
Troilus because he might not be true. But, in spite of
her long rationalisation of the situation, she reaches
no conclusion, and so

Now heot, now cold, but thus, bitwixen two ye,  
She rist hire up, and wente here for to playe. (II, 811-12)

Going into the garden she is joined by her three  
nieces, Flexippe, Tharbe, and Antigone. The three, walk-  
ing arm-in-arm through the garden are enjoying this place,  
so far from the battles outside the walls of Troy. Stroll-  
ing through the tree-lined, sanded paths, Antigone  

Gan on a Troian song to singen cleere,  
That it an heven was hire vois to here.  
(II, 825-26)

Without suspecting that her words have any special mean-  
ing for Grisayde, the singer takes up one at a time the  
objections Grisayde has to a love affair.

For nevere yet thi grace no wight sente  
So blisful cause as me, my lif to lede  
In alle joie and seurte, out of drede.  
(II, 831-35)

And whose seith that for to love is vice,  
Or thraldom, though he feele in it destresse,  
He uther is envyous, or right nyce,  
Or is unmyghty, for his shrewednesse,  
To loven; for swich manere folk, I gesse,  
Defamen Love, as nothing of him knowe.  
Thei spoken, but thei benten nevere his  
bowel (II, 855-61)

Or love the wroth, though wrecches on it  
crien? (II, 868)

The irony of course lies in the fact that Antigone does  
not know the meaning which Grisayde finds in her words.  
A delicate touch of irony is found in the words that end
the song.

Al drede I first to love hym to bigyne,
Now woot I wel, ther is no peril inne.
(II, 374-75)

The last words of the song presage the final decision made by Grisye. At first she was afraid to enter into a love affair with Troilus, but after consideration decides that there is "no peril inne." Of course, according to the story there was no peril to either of them as long as they both were true. And it was upon the predication that they both would be true that the love affair was founded.

After the song ends, Grisye engages Antigone in a conversation about love. In response to Grisye's questions, Antigone, still unconscious of what she is doing, continues to advocate the cause of Troilus while she explains the delights of love to her aunt. In the course of the conversation, Grisye asks a significant question that shows much of her nature.

... Lord, is ther swych blisse among
These loveres, as they konne faire endite?
(II, 385-86)

This rather plaintive query shows that perhaps Grisye's love had never been awakened, even though she had been a married woman. Perhaps she had been married too young to know love, or had been married to a man of much greater
age. At any event, she is curiously interested in Antigone's description of love. Her musings over the possible troubles that might accrue to her as a result of love contrast sharply with her curiosity concerning the pleasure and happiness that love might bring her. She listens closely to all that her niece has to say, considers the matter carefully, and is so impressed

That she was somewhat able to convert.

(II, 903)

The irony of the garden scene contains little comedy. It is a calm, pleasant irony on the surface, but ever lurking behind the scene is the shadow of war and the shadow of the unhappy ending the love affair is to have. As a result of the scene the impression is heightened that Grisye is almost irresistibly led by what Germaine Dempster calls "a sort of conspiracy of circumstances."1 Further, a deeper insight is provided of the mental processes of Grisye. Also, as Germaine Dempster observes concerning the garden scene,

... its altogether pleasant character contributes to the delicate atmosphere of optimism, of genial and youthful yearning for life, which pervades the whole scene and makes it stand unique in the somber tragedy as the lovely garden of Grisye against the dire background of the war.2

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2 Loc. cit.
The garden scene, one of the finest scenes in the entire poem, is due entirely to Chaucer's inspiration. The ironies are original with Chaucer as there is no corresponding part in the *Pilgrim's Progress* of Boccaccio, from which the greater part of Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* was taken. Of course, garden scenes were common in medieval literature, but Antigone's song seems to have been created entirely by Chaucer.

Criseyde, keeping in her memory all that Antigone has said retires from the garden, and shortly after sunset goes to her chamber.

A nyghtyngale, upon a cedir grene,
Under the chambre wal ther as she ley,
Ful loude song ayein the moone shene,
Perunter, in his briddles wise, a lay
Of love, that made hire herte fressh and gay.
That hermed she so longe in good entente,
Til at the laste the dede aple hire hente.

*While Criseyde dreams of love and Troilus, Pandarus seeks out Troilus in the prince's chamber and tells him that Criseyde will return love for love. Troilus exalting in his supposed good fortune says:*

A thousand Troyes whose that me yave,
Ech after other, God so wys me save,
He myghte me so gladen; lo, myn herte,
It spredeth so for joie, it wol testerte!

*Here again we see the irony of Troilus rejoicing over the*
progress of his love affair, little knowing that he is preparing the way for his own sorrow and death.

Commenting on his own impatience at the slowness with which the love suit is being advanced, Troilus tells Pandarus

Thow maist answer, "abid, abid, but he
That hangeth by the nkke, soth to seyne
In gret diseese abideth for the peyne.

(II, 955-97)

Chaucer has prepared us to see the irony of this complaint of Troilus. Troilus is at the present time suffering one sorrow of loving Griseyde but not having her. While he suffers this sorrow he longs for the surcease which will come when and if he has her. But he does not know that the second and greater sorrow will follow and come directly from the period of joy which will follow the present sorrow.

A little irritated by Troilus's youthful impetuousness, Pandarus with some aserbity tells Troilus that he must be trusted to further the love affair and that all will be well. Some of the irony in the character of Pandarus is brought out when he tells Troilus

I woot wel that thou wiser art than I
A thousand fold, but if I were as thou

(II, 1002-5)

Troilus, naturally, is quite anxious not to offend
Pandarus because it is through Pandarus that the love affair has the best chance of succeeding. However, it is probable that Pandarus is enjoying himself.

Quick to act upon the counsel of Pandarus, Troilus takes his shrewd friend's advice to write Griseyde a letter. That very night he composes an epistle to Griseyde in which he tells her of his love and that he will serve her faithfully and well.

The following morning Pandarus delivers the letter to Griseyde. On the way to see his niece, Pandarus reflects upon his own unhappy love affair and “japes” to himself

. . . Ywys, myn
herte,
So fresh it is, although it sore smerte,
I may naught slepe nevres a Mayes morwe;
I have a joly wo, a lusty sorwe.
(II, 1096-99)

He must have seen the irony of the situation. Unable to bring his own love affair to a satisfactory conclusion, he attempts to aid the love adventure of his friend. The fact that Troilus will probably gain Griseyde as a result of his intervention in the affair must be amusing to Pandarus.

Griseyde, knowing that her uncle has in the past had little success in love, greets him and then asks

How forforth be ye put in loves daunse?
(II, 1106)
To which Pandarus wryly answers

By God, I hoppe alway by-hynde! (II, 1107)

When the two are alone, Pandarus gives Grisye de the letter from Troilus and asks her to read it and send to Troilus an answer. Grisye de, startled by the speed with which the affair is going, reprimands Pandarus for bringing her a letter, and at first refuses to take it. Pandarus prevails upon her to keep the letter. In the privacy of her chamber while she is preparing to dine, Grisye de finds occasion to read the letter, after which she joins Pandarus for the meal. After they have eaten, Pandarus inveigles her into answering the letter of Troilus. While Pandarus and Grisye de are talking about the letter, Pandarus draws her attention to the street beneath her window. Troilus rides by while the two are watching and salutes them. Grisye de

To talle in short, hire liked al in-sere, His person, his aray, his looke, his chere
(II, 1266-67)

Grisye de little knows that Pandarus has arranged with Troilus for the prince to ride beneath her window at that opportune time. How Pandarus must have enjoyed the situation!

When next Pandarus and Troilus meet, Troilus is told of a scheme whereby Grisye de will be brought
face-to-face with Troilus, Pandarus tells Troilus:

And, by my trouthe, or it be dayes two,
And God toform, yet shal I shape it so,
That thou shalt come into a certeyn place,
There as thou mayst thyself hire preye of
grace. (II, 1362-65)

Deiphbus, the brother whom Troilus loves most, is to provide the means of implementing Pandarus's scheme.

Speaking of Deiphbus, Pandarus says:

Now . . . or houres twayne
twelve,
Be shal the ose, unwist of it hymselfe.
(II, 1399-1400)

Pandarus goes to see the brother of Troilus and tells him that Grisye de's well-being is threatened by some men. Deiphbus, quick to respond to Grisye de's imagined need, promises Pandarus that he will aid Grisye de and as a sign of his aid assents to Pandarus's suggestion that a dinner be held at the home of Deiphbus to which the brothers of Deiphbus will be invited. The purpose of the dinner is to show the enemies of Grisye de that she is protected by powerful friends. Of course, the dinner is arranged by Pandarus so that Troilus and Grisye de may be brought together.

A comical touch is found in the irony of Deiphbus asking Pandarus to

Spok thow thisself also to Troilus
On my byhalve, and prey hym with us
dyne. (II, 1457-58)
The response of Pandarus to the request of Deiphbus is a model of ironic understatement.

Syre, al this shal be don (II, 1459)
Pandarus immediately after leaving Deiphbus goes to see Grisye de where he tells her that Peliphe ute starting action to seize her possessions. Griseyde is of course worried but finds comfort in the words of Pandarus when he tells her that Deiphbus, Eater, and other lords would protect her. While he is bolstering up her hope,

Deiphbus, of his own curteisie,
Com hire to preye, in his propre persone,
To holde hym on the morwe compaigne
At dyner; which she holde nought denye,
But goodly gan to his praier obeye.
He thonked hire, and went upon his weye.
(II, 1486-91)

Seeing his own plans work so well, Pandarus must have been hard pressed to contain his laughter at the actions of his niece and Deiphbus. In fact, the reader of the story is almost inclined to join Pandarus in a secret smile were it not for the fact that in the progress of the love affair is seen the approach of tragedy.

Leaving Grisye de, Pandarus hurries to see Troilus whom he tells of the progress of the plan. Troilus is advised by Pandarus to go that very night to the home of Deiphbus and, after he has been there awhile, to feign illness and retire to bed. Before the night arrives
Deiphebus has

. . . hym preied over nyght
   To ben a frend and helpyng to Griseyde.
   (II, 1649-50)

The humor of the irony of Deiphebus asking Troilus to
befriend Grisyeide is too much for Chaucer to resist.
In his inimitable way, Chaucer comments:

   God woot that he it graunted anonright,
   To ben hire full frend with al his nyght;
   But swich a node was to preye hym theonne,
   As for to bidde a wood man for to renne.
   (II, 1561-54)

Troilus spends the night with Deiphebus and when the
morning comes still pretends to be ill. As the hour for
the dinner arrives, the guests begin to appear. Once
again it is easy to imagine Pandareus smiling craftily
as things work according to plan. As Chaucer says:

   But God and Pandare wist al what this
   mante. (II, 1561)

The dinner is a success. The only thing that
prevents the guests from having a thoroughly good time is
the knowledge that Troilus is too "syke" to attend. The
words of Deiphebus are:

. . . Alas! . . .
   My gode brother Troilus, the syke,
   Litt yet. (II, 1571-73)

One by one the guests propose remedies that might cure
Troilus. But, as the remedies are suggested,

. . . ther sat oon, al list hire nought to
tache,
That thoughts, "Best koud I yet ben his
leche." (II, 1581-82)
But, known only to the readers of the story is the fact that by curing Troilus she would be only preparing a greater sorrow for him. Perhaps Griseyde is enjoying the situation as she thinks of the power she has over Troilus. The reader does not share Griseyde's pleasure because Chaucer has already stated what the irony of fate has in store for Griseyde and Troilus.

After the dinner is over, some of the guests go to the room where Troilus is. Eleyne, wife of Paris and Troilus's sister-in-law, pleading the cause of Griseyde before Troilus, says:

... We yow biseke (II, 1674)

To ben good lord and frend, right hertely,
Unto Griseyde ... (II, 1677-78)

How can Troilus and Pandarus keep from laughing?

Troilus replies to Eleyne:

... As sone as I may gon,
I wol right fayn with al my myght ben onc,
Have God my trouthe, hire cause to sustene. (II, 1684-86)

To which Eleyne, innocent of the humor she is provoking, replies "Good thrift have ye!" (II, 1687)

Following a short conversation, Troilus gives Deiphobus and Eleyne a letter which he wants them to read and consider. The two leave the room together which gives Pandarus the opportunity to lead Griseyde into the
room. Book II closes with Troilus in bed, feigning illness, waiting for Grisye de to enter the room. Troilus is waiting to declare his love for her. She is expecting to comfort him in his sickness and to obtain his promise of aid against her enemies. Pandarus, like a stage director is playing one against the other, savoring each bit of irony that he is creating out of the situation.

The episode of the dinner at the house of Deiphbus is, like the garden scene in the same book, due to Chaucer's invention. It is quite likely that Chaucer fused several ideas found in Boccaccio's Filostrato to produce the dinner episode. For example, the hospitable reception of Deiphbus to Troilus could be compared with the kindness of Deifebo to Troilo in Filostrato VII. Also, the interest and sympathy of Eleyne and Deiphbus toward the feigned sickness of Troilus and the presence of these two people at his bedside might be compared with a scene near the end of Filostrato, where Deifebo and Elena together with a number of friends gather around the sick Troilo. As a whole, however, the dinner episode has no close counterpart in Boccaccio's Filostrato. As Germaine Dempster says:

The episode of the dinner at the house of Deiphbus (II, 1594 ff.) is Chaucer's invention; a masterly plot due partly to the genuine
kindness of Pandarus, partly to his intense delight in the ironical situations he creates, very specially in the blindness of the characters.\(^3\) 

\(^3\) Ibid., pp. 24-25.
CHAPTER IV

THE CONSUMMATION

Book III is a pleasant one. In it, all goes well for the principal characters. It is concerned with the closing stages of the love pursuit, the final winning of Griseyde, and the joy that love brings to the two lovers. The ironies in this book are, for the most part, subdued ones that do not intrude too strongly upon the sensibilities of the reader. But, even though the ironies are not blatant, they are present and are worth consideration.

At the conclusion of Book II, Troilus was anxiously waiting the entrance of Griseyde into his chamber. In Book III Griseyde enters the room and Troilus successfully pleads for her love. Despite all his thought and preparation concerning the words he would use to tell Griseyde of his love for her, when she first enters the room he is too abashed to speak coherently. Chaucer says:

But, Lord, so he wax sodenlyche red,
And sire, his lessoun, that he wende kenne
To preyen hire, is thorugh his wit ironne.

(III, 82-84)

However, his very speechlessness and confusion appeals to Griseyde

For she was wis, and loved hym nevere
the lasse (III, 86)
When Troilus is able to speak, he appeals to her to let him serve her or else she will be the cause of his death. Pandarus, hearing Troilus plead so eloquently after his first confusion, is moved to tears.

And Pandare wep as he to water wolde,
And pokéd evere his nese new and newe,
And sayde, "We bygon ben hertes trowe!
For love of God, make of this thing an ende,
Or alle us both at ones, or ye wende."

(III, 115-19)

Even though Chaucer does not comment upon the tears of Pandarus, the reader is considerably less impressed by the show of sorrow than is Grisye. Urged by both her uncle and Troilus to state her feelings, Grisye says:

Myn honour sauf, I wol wel trewely,
And in swich forme as he gan now devyse,
Receyven hym fully to my servyse.

(III, 159-61)

Grisye's first care is for her honor. Again and again throughout the story, Grisye refers to her honor as being all important. Her care for her honor is one of the things that adds to the irony of her final yielding to the love-making of Diomede after she is forced to leave Troy.

Hearing these words, and knowing that all his planning and scheming was successful, Pandarus falls on his knees
... and up his eyes
To heaven they, and held his hondes highe,
"Immortal god," quod he, "that mayst
nought deyen,
Cupid I men, of this mayst glorifie;
And Venus, thou mayst maken melodie;
Withouten hond, me someth that in towne,
For this merveille, 1sh here eek belle sowne.
..." (II, 183-89)

Here again is an irony. Pandarus praises the god of love for bringing Troilus and Criseyde to this happy state, unaware that the gods have planned a greater sorrow for Troilus that will come from the love.

Before the lovers have much chance to talk further, Deiphbus and Eleyne return to the room. Pandarus and Criseyde leave the room and bid farewell to the brother and sister-in-law of Troilus. Upon the pretext that he wants to sleep, Troilus rides himself of further company and the guests depart, leaving Troilus alone in the room. However, as soon as it is convenient, Pandarus returns to see Troilus.

Confident that Troilus's triumph in love is assured, Pandarus begins to suffer qualms of conscience. He says:

... throught me thou stonest now in waye
To faren vel; I say it for no bost,
And wostow wha? for shame it is to seye;
For the have I bigonne agamen playe,
Which that I nevere do shal eft for other,
Although he were a thousand fold my brother. (III, 247-62)

These feelings of Pandarus come as a surprise.
Pandarus had entered into the game with so much gusto that his observation that he cannot boast of his part is startling. His remorse makes him gain stature as an individual. He emerges from the scene as a much more complex individual. He has been made more human. Here is an irony of character where a person's words and thoughts seem to be at variance with his actions. Certainly, his words are in contrast to his activities. From all that has been seen of Pandarus to the present time, the reader of the story is inclined to take a questioning attitude toward this new aspect of character. Mingled emotions are aroused by the words of Pandarus. There is something in this new picture of Grisye's uncle that produces a smile on the face of the reader, but the smile is not humorous. If the scene of Pandarus's remorse is not painfully comic to the reader, it must have been to Pandarus.

Pandarus urges Troilus to be wise and to proceed carefully in the love affair. Pandarus stresses that Troilus, for the reputation of Grisye's, Pandarus, and himself, must be careful that no one discover the secret. Although he speaks with remorse about the part he has played in bringing Grisye to love Troilus, there is no hint in his speech that he will stop furthering the love affair,
or that he will attempt to undo any harm that he thinks he has done.

Troilus, of course, promises to uphold the reputation of Crisseyde and to keep the love affair secret. In the course of his expostulations concerning his care for Crisseyde's reputation, he says:

But natheles, by that God I the sware,
That, as hym list, may al this world governs—
And, if I lye, Achilles with his sper
Myn herte cleve, al were my lif eterne,
As I am mortal, if I late or yere
Wolde it bewreye, or dorst, or sholde konne,
For al the good that God made under
Sonne— (III, 372-78)

Chaucer, shrewd storyteller that he is, does not let the reader forget that Troilus is not destined to end his days in bliss. Just at the moment when Troilus is assured that everything will work to his advantage, Chaucer causes him to use in a figure of speech the very incident that will end his life. After this very deliberate and swift stroke of tragic irony, Chaucer makes no comment.

Troilus and Crisseyde meet many times but at these meetings they can say only a few words to each other. Both long for the time when they can be together privately so that they can speak more fully. Pandarus continues
his activity and misses no opportunity to further the love adventure. Finally, Pandarus finds the chance that he has been waiting for to bring the lovers together. In the dark of the moon, on a night that he knows will be stormy, he holds a dinner party. Grisye, when told by her uncle that she should attend, objects to the weather. Pandarus tells her that she must come in spite of the storm. Grisye, sensing that more is afoot than a mere dinner party, slyly asks Pandarus if Troilus will also be there. Pandarus evades the question and tells her not to worry. Chaucer, with a little touch of ironic humor says:

\[\text{Nought list myn auctour fully to de-} \\
\text{clare} \\
\text{What that she thoughte whan he seyde so,} \\
\text{That Troilus was out of towne yfare,} \\
\text{As if he seyde thereof soth or na;} \\
\text{But that, withowten await, with hym to go} \\
\text{She graunted hym, sith he hire that bi-} \\
\text{soughte,} \\
\text{And, as his nece, obeyed as hire oughte.} \]\\n\text{(III, 578-81)}

Grisye, with her retinue, attends the dinner of Pandarus. Troilus is at the house of Pandarus but is hidden in a secret chamber. After the dinner is over and when the guests prepare to depart, it starts to storm so hard that Pandarus has little difficulty in persuading Grisye to remain at his home. No sooner are all the
guests asleep than Pandarus awakens Grislyde in her private chamber and tells her that Troilus has just arrived at the house with the news that Grisleyde has been untrue. After some pleading, Grisleyde consents to see Troilus in order to tell him that she loves no one but him and that she will always be true. Grisleyde agrees to see Troilus because Pandarus tells her that Troilus will go mad and possibly die of jealousy before morning if she does not take pity on him. It is as a result of this supposed jealousy that Troilus gets to spend his first night with Grisleyde. It should be noted that the two greatest advances in Troilus's pursuit of Grisleyde are based upon deception. Troilus first gets Grisleyde to say that she loves him when she asks for his aid from her supposed enemies. Troilus gets her to spend the first night with him as a result of feigned jealousy. There are some obvious ironies inherent in this situation. One of the ironies is based upon the fact that he gains the happiness of having Grisleyde as a result of deception and loses his happiness and gains his sorrow as a result of Grisleyde's deception concerning her faithfulness after she parts from Troilus. The second irony is equally apparent when it is seen that Troilus gains his happiness from a feigned jealousy and loses his happiness, and his life,
when he has real cause for jealousy.

Before Troilus enters the room, Grisseyde comments upon happiness.

"O God!" quod she, "so worldly selynesse,
Which clerkes callen fals felicitee,
Immedle is with many a bitternesse!
Ful angwissous than is, God woot, " quod she,
"Condicioun of veyn prosperitee;
For either joies comen nought yfeere,
Or elles no wight hath hem alwey here.
... " (III, 813-19)

The irony is apparent. Her words have more truth in them than she realises, and the condition of happiness which she describes so well is perfectly applicable to the love affair.

Continuing to question the nature of joy, she comes to the conclusion

That troweys, for aught I kan espie,
Ther is no verrey weele in this world here.
But 0 thouw wikked serpent, jalousie,
Thou mysbyleved and envyous folie,
Why hastow Troilus mad to me untriste,
That nevere yet agylt hym, that I wiste?

(III, 835-40)

The irony of "That never yet agylt hym" is one of those numerous small evidences that Chaucer sees the story from an ironic point of view. Chaucer has Grisseyde say "yet" instead of "will" or "have." Always in the back of Chaucer's mind is the picture of Grisseyde's final defection in love. Grisseyde does not say "yet" with the obvious intention that
at some future date she will give Troilus cause for jealousy. Rather, she uses the word unconscious of the fact that she will in the future be untrue to Troilus. It is her unawareness of the truth with which she speaks that makes the irony felt.

Pandarus leaves the chamber and returns almost instantly with Troilus. Grisye de rather sharply criticizes Troilus for believing that she would be untrue to him. While she is affirming her loyalty, she says:

But O, thow Jove, 0 suctour of nature,
Is this an honour to thi dayte,
That folk ungiltif suffren hire injure,
And who that gilfif is, al quyf goth he?
0, were it leful for te pleyn on the,
That undeserved suffrest jalousie,
Of that I wulde upon the pleyne and erie!
(III, 1016-22)

Here again is irony based upon Grisye de's future faithlessness. She, who is to give real cause for jealousy and who is to do great harm to Troilus, rebukes Jove because he lets the innocent suffer and causes the guilty to go free. In wishing for justice to be done she is wishing evil upon her future self.

Troilus is so afraid, that he has offended Grisye de to the extent that she will not love him again, that he faints. Pandarus, opportunist that he is, picks Troilus up and places him on the bed of Grisye de. Under the ministrations of uncle and niece, Troilus returns to
consciousness and learns that Grisyele still loves him.
Within a short time he has taken Grisyele in his arms.
At this point Chaucer provides an interesting insight
into the character of Grisyele.

This Troilus in armes gan hire streyne,
And seyde, "O swete, as euer e was I
gon,
Now be ye kaught, now is ther but we
tweyne!
Now yeldeth yow, for other bote is non!"
To that Grisyele answerde thus anon,
"He hadde I er now, my swete herte
daere,
Ben yeld, ywis, I were now nought heere!"
(III, 1205-11)

"If I had not yielded before now, sweetheart, certainly
I would not be here now!" What is the reaction of Troilus
to these words? Chaucer does not say. But in view of
all his pain and worry, and in the light of all the schem-
ing of Pandarus, and considering his fear that Grisyele
would not yield her love at this time, Troilus must have
wondered at the nature of this woman. Was all the planning
necessary? Would she have yielded sooner if given the
opportunity? In short, was all the elaborate subterfuge
necessary? Troilus, blinded by love, does not question
her, nor does Chaucer give any indication that Troilus is
surprised by her words.

Troilus and Grisyele revel in their love. Chaucer
describes their joy, but in the middle of a discussion of
their happiness he says: "With worse hap God lat us neve re mete!" (III, 1246) The immediate reaction to this statement, coming as it does right in the middle of a description of the two lovers at the height of their bliss, is that Chaucer really means "let God give us as great a joy." But then, because of the fact that Chaucer has prepared us so well for the sorrow that is to come as a result of this love affair, the realisation comes that Chaucer actually means what he says. Thus we have an interesting case where the literal meaning is the same as the intended meaning with irony resulting. This type of irony is opposite to that type in which the literal meaning is the opposite of the intended meaning.

After the night is over, when the sun comes shining through the windows, the two lovers know they must separate, at least for a while. They renew their pledges of love and unite in praising the night and cursing the day which ends that happy night. Over and over again they restate their love for one another. Troilus, in attempting to show that his emotion is without bounds, makes a comparison that is ironic in the extreme.

Yit were it so that I wiste outrely
That I, youre humble servant and youre knyght,
Were in youre herte iset as fermely
As ye in wym, the which thyng, trewely,
Me levere were than thiese worlde,
tweyne (III, 1486-90)
Poor Troilus! If only he could know how justified he is in wishing that he is as firmly in her heart as she is in his. The irony gains weight when it is seen that Troilus does not doubt that Griseyde loves him, but only uses these words as a type of hyperbole. Griseyde, at this time, is quite sure that she will be true to Troilus, and no doubt considers his words to be the extravagant expression of youthful love.

In the same scene Griseyde says in reference to her loyalty and love:

Beth glad, forthy, and lyve in sikernesse!
Thus seyde I nevere or this, ne shal to me;
(III, 1513-14)

By a reference to both the future and the past instead of the past only, Chaucer makes us remember the whole unhappy situation. This little reminder of the outcome of the story tends to give a deeper ironic coloring to the whole scene.

The final surrender of Griseyde to Troilus is drawn much more tastefully than the corresponding part in the Filostrato. In fact, the triumph of Troilus is handled in such a different manner from the triumph of Troilo that it strikes such a competent scholar as Robert Kilburn Root as being the outstanding deviation of the entire story from its source.
For the main outline of his action Chaucer has been content to follow Filostrato faithfully; at one point only has the English poet drawn heavily on his own invention—the final surrender of Crisseyde to Troilus.  

After the lovers have parted and Troilus has returned to the royal palace, he sends for Pandarus, Praising and thanking Pandarus for bringing success to his love adventure, Troilus says:

... 0 frend of frendes the alder-beste
That evere was, the sothe for to telle,
Thow hast in heveme ybrought my soule at rest
Pro Flegetoun, the fery flood of helles

Troilus is now in "hevene." What would he say to Pandarus if he knew the future? Prepared by Chaucer to know that from the love will come sorrow, the reader takes a negative attitude toward Troilus's joy.

The second irony exists in the praise Troilus heaps upon Pandarus. If Pandarus is responsible for Troilus's happiness, Pandarus is also responsible for the Trojan prince's future grief.

Troilus continues to thank Pandarus, and while praising the goodness of Crisseyde says:

---

Whos I am, and shal, tyl that I dayse,
And that I thus am hire, dar I sayse,
That thanked be the heighe worthynesse
Of Love, and ek thi kynde bysynesse.

(III, 1607-10)

Chaucer makes no comment upon this irony. Troilus will be Crisseyd's until he dies. The irony lies in the fact that it is because he will be here that he dies. Chaucer has also given us enough information to know that in spite of what Troilus thinks, he is not "tysm am hirees." He is here at the present time, but he will not be here in the future.

Pandarun hears Troilus out and then proceeds to give him some sobering advice.

... be war of this meschier,
That, thare as thou now brought art in thy blisse,
That thou thiselie ne cause it nat to misse.

(III, 1622-24)

And only too wot well is Troilus to learn the full truth of his friend's statement that

For of fortunes sharpe adversitee
The worsst kynde of infortune is this,
A man to han ben in prosperitee,
And it remembren, whan it pased is.

(III, 1625-26)

The admonition of Pandarun has more meaning for the reader than for Troilus. Troilus of course cannot know that the time is coming when he will look back upon his present bliss and wonder how he could have such sorrow from such
joy. Pandarus closes his little speech of advice with words so apt that it is almost as if he sees the future for Troilus.

For worldly joie halt nought but by a war.
That preveth wel it brest al day so ofte;
Forthi nede is to werken with it softe.

(Troilus and Cressida, III, 1636-38)

Troilus and Pandarus spend the next hours praising Cressyde. After that, Pandarus arranges many such meetings for Troilus and Cressyde. Both of the lovers are supremely happy. As Chaucer says:

And many a nyght they wroughte in this manere;
And thus Fortune a tyme ledde in joie
Cressyde, and sk this kynges sone of Troie.

(Troilus and Cressida, III, 1713-15)

Notice that Chaucer says "a tyme ledde in joie." Just as he is describing the happiest moments of Troilus's life, Chaucer drops a gentle reminder that the joy is merely temporary. This little reminder helps us to keep in mind the irony of the total picture of the love affair. Over the entire scene of joy hangs the shadow of the coming sorrow.

Book III ends happily. At the close of this book, Troilus is as happy as he ever gets to be. The period of time he spends with Cressyde marks the high spot in his emotional career. But even as Chaucer depicts the joy of the lovers, he keeps before the reader the fact that
such a happy condition will not last forever. The closing lines of the book show that Chaucer wants the reader to be prepared for a decline in the fortunes of Troilus.

.. I seyd fully in my song
Th' effect and jeie of Troilus servise,
Al be that ther was son disease among,
As to myn anctour listeth to devise,
My thridde bok now ende ich in this wyse,
And Troilus in lust and in quiete
Is with Crisyeke, his owne herte swete.  

(III, 1814-20)

Even though in Book III Troilus is as happy as he ever gets, there is a gloomy foreshadowing of events that prevents the reader from wholeheartedly enjoying Troilus's joy. As is pointed out in the discussion of irony found in Book I, the reader knows that Troilus is going to go " Pré wo to wele, and after out of jeie." (Gf. ante p. 12.) Thus, the reader sees behind all the "wele" of Troilus the outline of approaching sorrow. The foreknowledge of the reader gives to the scenes of Book III a general and all-inclusive irony that is never entirely forgotten and is occasionally highlighted by a quick gleam of Chaucer's wit.
CHAPTER V

THE SEPARATION

Books I through III present the rise of Troilus's fortunes in love. In Book IV Chaucer presents the decline of Troilus's "wele." The wheel of fortune, which at first bore him up, now descends with such rapidity that it flings him from the lap of Aphrodite into the hands of Mars who demands his death. In Book IV Troilus does not meet his final end, but the end is assured. As Troilus is spun closer and closer to his final destiny, the ironies become heavier than they were in the first three books. Chaucer prepares the reader for ironies in the remainder of the story in the same way that he prepares the reader for ironies in the first book. The very first lines of Book IV are:

But al to litel, weylaway the whyle,
Lasteth swich joie, ythonked be Fortune,
That semeth truest wene she wol bygyle,
And kan to foolees so hire song entune,
That she hem bente and blent, traitour
comune! (IV, 1-8)

There is no doubt that from this point on Chaucer sets himself to describe the downfall of Troilus. Recall that Chaucer ends Book III with Troilus and Crisseyde in a happy state. His first lines of Book IV plainly tell us that the happiness of the two lovers is doomed.
Lest there be some doubt in the reader's mind concerning the fate of Troilus, Chaucer tells the reader that fortune

From Troilus she gan hire brighte face
Awey to writhe, and tek of hym non heede,
But caste hym selene out of his lady grace,
And on hire whil she sette up Diomede
(IV, 8-11)

Thus, we are provided an even more complete view of the love affair than is given at the beginning of the story in Book I.

As if there might still be some doubt about the future events of the story, Chaucer continues in the poem to stress the outcome of the tale.

For how Criseyde Troilus forsook,
Or at the leeste, how that she was unkynde,
Moot hennesforth ben mater of my book
(IV, 18-17)

Asking the gods for help, he closes the poem with these words:

This ilke ferthe book me helpeth fyne,
So that the losse of lyf and love yfeere
Of Troilus be fully shewed here.
(IV, 26-28)

All of these statements concerning the fate of Troilus serve to give the reader an objective view of just exactly what is going to happen. A more detailed account of Troilus's fate is provided than at the beginning of the story. The foreknowledge of events gives an ironic
east to all of Troilus's plans and hopes that are reported in Books IV and V.

Early in Book IV, a major battle between the Greeks and Trojans is reported. Both sides take many prisoners, but, on the whole, the Trojans lose more people than the Greeks. A truce is arranged between the forces for the purpose of exchanging prisoners. Calkas, the father of Criseyde, is in the camp of the Greeks where he is accorded some honor for his part in predicting a Greek victory. Because of his favors to the Greeks, Calkas has little trouble in persuading the Greek leaders to bargain Antenor, a captured Trojan warrior, for Criseyde who was left in Troy when her father deserted for the Greek side.

When the Greek ambassadors present their terms to the Trojan Parliament, Troilus is where he can hear the offer to exchange Antenor for Criseyde. Troilus, for fear that he might anger his lady if he says or does anything that might cause people to think there is something between himself and Criseyde, decides not to say anything to oppose the exchange until he first consults with his lady. Listening to all that is said concerning the exchange of prisoners, Troilus must be pleased to hear Ector, his brother, oppose the exchange.

Ector, which that wel the Grekeis herde,
For Antenor how they wolde han Criseyde,
Can it withstande, and sobrely answerde:
"Syres, she nys no prisoners," he seyde;
"I not on yow who that this charge
leyde,
But, on my part, ye may eftsone hem telle,
We usen here no wommen for to selle."
(IV, 176-82)

There is, of course, a slight irony here in the fact that Hector does not know that he is advocating his brother Troilus's cause. There is a much deeper irony in the fact that Hector is pleading indirectly against the return of Antenor who is to turn traitor to the Trojans and help bring about the downfall of Troy. Hector and Troilus, the two who are foremost in the defense of Troy, are the two who are most opposed to the exchange which will cause the final downfall of themselves and the city; although ironically enough, they do not see the total significance of their positions. Troilus opposes the exchange for purely personal reasons and might see a slight bit of irony in the defense of Grisye de by Hector; but certainly he does not see the final consequences of the exchange, either to himself or to Troy. Hector opposes the exchange as a matter of honor, but he too cannot foresee coming events.

The irony is strengthened by the cry of the people who hear Hector speak against the bartering of Grisye de for Antenor. Chaucer says:

The noysse of peple up stirte thanne at ones,
As brehe as blase of straw iset on-fire;
For infortune it wolde, for the nenes,
They sholden hire confusion desire.
"Ector," quod they, "what gost may yow enspyre,
This woman thus to shilde, and den us leese
Daun Antenor--a wrong wey now ye chase--(IV, 183-89)

The people, who have been best defended by Ector, now oppose him when he instinctively dissents from doing the thing which will make his past labors worthless.

Chaucer is so impressed with the inability of mankind to make decisions for the best, that he says:

O Juvenal, lord! trewe is thy sentence,
That lilet wyten folk what is to yerne
That they no fynde in hire desir offence;
For cloude of error lat hem nat dis-
cerne
What best is. And lo, here ensample as yerne:
This folk desiren now deliverance
Of Antenor, that brought hem to me-
shaunse. (IV, 197-203)

There is no doubt that Chaucer wants the reader to be aware of the irony of the whole situation. After explaining the outcome of the exchange and the desires of the people, he comments: "O nyse world, lo, thy discretion!" (IV, 206) There is no humor here. The irony is bitter and in sharp contrast to many of the light, humorous ironies found previously.

Chaucer points up the irony of the exchange of Grisyeyle for Antenor with a simple, poignant remark.
Criseyde, which that nevere dide hem seathe,
Shal now no longer in hire blisse bathe;
But Antene, he shal com hom to towne,
And she shal out; thys seyden here and homne. (IV, 207-10)

Despite the objections of Eater, the parliament rules that Criseyde is to be sent to the Greeks. Troilus, worried and half sick with fear that he might lose his lady, leaves the council chamber and goes swiftly to his own room where he gives vent to his emotions.

O deth, alas! why nyltow do me deye?
Asorsed be that day which that Nature
Shel me to ben a lyves creature!
(IV, 280-52)

Troilus, who has considered himself one of the most fortunate of all people, now regrets that he was ever born! In place of his praise of fortune he now assails fortune that has turned against him.

Than seyde he thus, "Fortune, alas the while!
What have I don? What have I the agylt?
How myghtestow for rowthe me bygile?
Is ther no grace, and shal I thus be spilt?
Shal thus Criseyde awes, for that thow wilt?
Allas! how maistow in thyn herte fynde
To ben to me thus cruel and unkynde? . . . ."
(IV, 260-66)

There is irony enough in the actions of fortune toward Troilus. The revolt of Troilus against fortune, which he had previously praised, is a natural and human reaction. Troilus so grieves over the coming separation of Criseyde
from Troy that

. . . shortly, so his psynes hym torente,
And wex so nat, that joie nor penuance
He feleth men, but lith forth in a traunce.

(IV, 341-43)

Pandarus, who has heard the decision of the parliament to trade Grisye by for Antenor

Gan wel neigh wood out of his wit to breyde,
So that, for we, he nyste what he mente,
But in a rees to Troilus he wente.

(IV, 348-50)

Seeing Troilus, "his frend in we" (IV, 363) so disconsolate, Pandarus is made speechless and for a while the two regard each other in silence. Troilus at last

"Neigh ded for smert gan bresten out to rere." (IV, 373)

The answer of Pandarus, bereft of his quick humor, is steeped in irony.

This Pandarus, ful ded and pale of hewe,
Ful pitously answered and seyde, "Yis!
As wely were it fals as it is trewe,
That I have hered, and woot al how it is.
O mercy, God, who wolde have trowed this?

Who wolde have wend that in so litel a throwe
Fortune cure joie wold han overthrowe?

"For in this world ther is no creature,
As to my dom, that ever saw ruyen
Stranunger than this, thorugh cas or aventure.
But who may al eschue, or al devyne.
Swich is this world! forthi I tyme difynye,
He trust no wight to fynden in Fortune
Ay preprotee, hire yiftes ben sumene.

. . . ."

(IV, 379-92)
Pandarus's present speech should be compared with his admonition to Troilus in Book III that

. . . worldly joys halt nought but by a vir.
That preveth wel it breast al day so ofte;
Forthi node is to werken with it softe.
(III, 1636-38)

and

For of fortunes sharpe adversitee
The worste kynde of infortune is this,
A man to han ben in prosperitee,
And it remembr'en, when it passed is.
(III, 1625-28)

The answer to the question, "O mercy, God, who wolde have trowed this?" can be answered quite simply: Pandarus! Gisseyde's uncle little knew that both he and Troilus would have cause to remember the warnings about the rapidity with which fate changes happiness into sorrow. The irony of this situation may or may not have been recognized by Troilus or Pandarus, but the reader can scarcely miss it because of Chaucer's constant efforts to keep the reader in the position of an ironic observer of the whole tale. A more subtle irony will be discovered if the speech of Pandarus in which he questions the workings of fate is compared with the soliloquy of Gisseyde in Book III (cf. ante p. 60) in which she notes that joys are mingled with sorrows and that happiness is transient. Gisseyde was aware of the nature of worldly happiness (which includes love) before she became deeply involved in the love affair.
The worldly wise Pandarus and the son of King Priam, Troilus, do not discover the full nature of happiness until the love affair has been too deeply entered for Troilus to recover. This structural irony leads the reader to wonder about the relative degree of wisdom found in the principal characters of the story. Is it too bold to suggest that Chaucer intends us to realise that perhaps Grisye is more worldly wise than she seems and that Pandarus and Troilus are more naive than they believe? Or could it be that Chaucer is gently poking fun at the worldly wisdom of his characters? At any event, the characters as depicted by Chaucer are anything but simple.

Issac D'Israeli describes the situation accurately.

The native bent of his Chaucer's genius, the hilarity of his temper, betrays itself by playful strokes of raillery and concealed satire when least expected. His fine irony may have sometimes left his commendations, or even the objects of his admiration, in a very ambiguous condition.¹

Dropping his complaint against fortune, Pandarus attempts to cheer Troilus with the information that there are many women in Troy whom Troilus could have for

a lady.

And as, as writ Zanxis, that was ful wys,
"The newe love out chaesth ofte the olde;" (IV, 414-15)

Here is irony! Pandarus had until now praised his niece as the fairest of the fair. He had time and again enjoined Troilus to be true to Griseyde. Now he tries to tell Troilus that another woman could satisfy him as well as could Griseyde and he asks Troilus to forget his present love in favor of another. But what makes the irony most effective is the knowledge that Griseyde will exchange her love of Troilus for the love of Diomede. Pandarus certainly does not know that he is predicting the exact state of affairs that will take place upon the separation of Griseyde from Troilus. The irony of the situation would be lost were it not for the fact that Chaucer has taken such trouble to impart to the reader the habit of regarding the story from an ironic point of view. By now it must be apparent that irony is not something grafted on to the tale. It is plain to see that Chaucer sees the total story from an ironic point of view and desires the reader to take the same point of vantage.

Pandarus knows that his words are wasted upon Troilus for as Chaucer says: "He roughte nought what unthrift
that he seyde." (IV, 431) The fact that Pandarus does not wholeheartedly believe in the advice he gives to Troilus adds another little twist to the irony of his remarks. His words would have been loaded with irony if he had believed all that he said, but the fact that he thinks he is talking nonsense adds considerably to the edge of the irony.

The knowledge that Chaucer has given us concerning the course of Criseyde's love gives an ironic meaning to Troilus's answer to Pandarus.

... Frend,
This leechcraft, or healed thus to be,
Were wel sittynge, if that I were a fende
To trysen hire that trewe is unto me!
(IV, 435-38)

The opposition between what Troilus thinks of Criseyde's faithfulness and what the reader knows of her coming dereliction, creates a duality in the mind of the reader which causes a negative evaluation of Troilus's belief with a concomitant mixture of emotions. Irony is the result.

Troilus follows his rejection of Pandarus's advice with the exclamation

I pray God lat this conseil nevye ythe;
But do me rather sterue anon-right
here,
Er I thus do as thow me woldest leere!
(IV, 439-41)
Troilus has good cause to pray that the counsel which Pandarus offers never succeed. Ironically, it is much the same counsel used by Diomede that causes Griseyde to forsake Troilus.

Pandarus, still attempting to ease the sorrow of the distraught lover, suggests that Troilus flee with Griseyde from the town of Troy. Troilus, rejects this bit of advice because, as he says:

First, syn thow woost this town hath al this werre
For ravysahyng of wommen so by myght,
It sholde nought be suffred me to erre,
As it stant now, ne don so gret unright.

(Iv, 547-50)

Ironsy lies in the fact that while Troilus is second only to Hector in the defense of Troy and thus is defending the action of Paris in bringing Eleyne to Troy, he refuses to take Griseyde from Troy even though the results would be far less reaching than those following the abduction of Eleyne. He refuses to abduct Griseyde for a second reason: "Syn she is chaunged for the townes goode." (Iv, 553) This second reason, like the first, has ironic implications because the exchange of Griseyde for the future traitor Antenor is most certainly not "for the townes goode." Troilus advances a few other reasons for not taking Griseyde away, among
which the most important is that such an abduction would
stain her honor: "Hire honour levere than my lif to save!"
(IV, 567) Ironically, Grisyeud's honor is far more in-
jured as a result of the exchange of Antenor for Grisyeud
than it would have been if Troilus took her from Troy.

Troilus and Pandarus discuss the situation, and it
is decided that Grisyeude should meet with Troilus to
decide about their future course. Pandarus tells Troilus
that

Thow shalt this nyght som tyme, in som
manere,
Come spoken with thi lady pryvely
(IV, 653-54)

Shortly afterward Pandarus takes his leave.

While Troilus is bemoaning his sorrow and consult-
ing with Pandarus, the news of the decision of the
parliament is carried to Grisyeude.

As she that hadde hire herte and al hire
mynde
On Troilus iset so wonder faste,
That al this world ne myghte hire love un-
bynde,
Ne Troilus out of hire herte caste,
She wol ben his, while that hire lif may
laste.
And thus she brenneth both in love and
drede,
So that she nyste what was best to rede.
(IV, 673-79)

There is no hint here that Grisyeude will not be true to
Troilus. Rather, there is repetition of the fact that
Grisyeude intends to love Troilus as long as she lives.
It is the fervor of her love and her good intentions that make the irony of her change in love so powerful.

The fervor and the care for honor which characterise Chaucer's Grisye, along with her seriousness, make the irony of her defection much more telling that the corresponding incident in Boccaccio's Filostrato. Because Chaucer has taken constantly throughout the story an ironic point of view, it is not too much to suggest that he made Grisye more serious and complex than her Italian counterpart with the end in view of heightening the irony of the entire love situation. Germaine Dempster says: "The Italian Griselda is . . . sincere in her promises of fidelity. . . . Ironical enough, yet of an irony almost shallow compared to that of very similar protestations in the mouth of serious Grisye."² Chaucer has certainly added to and modified his source material in order to bring irony into relief, and it is probable that he changed Grisye's character for the same reason.

The news reaches Grisye's women friends as rapidly as it reaches her. Accustomed to visit among themselves, the news concerning Grisye's coming departure from Troy is sufficient cause for them to call on

Quod first that oon, "I am glad, trewely,
Bycause of yow, that shal youre fader see."
Another sayde, "Ywis, so man nat I;
For al te litel hath she with us be."
Quod the the thriddle, "I hope, ywis, that she
Shal bryngen us the pees on every syde,
That, whan she goth, almyghty God hire
gide!" (IV, 667-03)

There is some excellent irony in the sentencem "I am glad, trewely, bycause of yow, that shal youre fader see."

At this time, Griseyde is not at all interested in seeing her father, although she is not in a position to express to these ladies what she had said to herself before they came. Chaucer says:

... she, which that of hire fader roughte,
As in this cas, right nought, ne whan he deyde,
Pul biauly to Jupiter bisoughte
Yve hez meshammez that this tretis broughte. (IV, 667-70)

The hope of the third woman that Griseyde shall bring peace and that when she goes God will guide her must also be seen from an ironic point of view. Griseyde's going will be the means by which Antenor will return to Troy, and it is as a result of Antenor that Troy falls. "Pees on every syde" is brought by Griseyde's exile, but not in the way that Griseyde's friend hopes.

The women shatter on "Aboute naught gonne alle hire
tales spende." (IV, 702) Criseyde has no interest in the conversation.

So that she felt almost hire herte dye
For wo and wary of that compaigne.

(IV, 706-7)

At last, unable to restrain her tears,

. . . so they gomnen up to welle,
That yaren signes of the bittre payne
In which hir spirit was, and moste dwelle;
Remembenye hir, fro heven into which helle
She fallen was, syn she forgothe the syghte
Of Troilus, and sorrowfully she sighte.

(IV, 709-14)

Chaucer, with fine irony, reports:

And thilke foole sittynge hire aboute
Wenden that she wepte and saked sore
Bycause that she sholdes out of that route
Departs, and nevere playes with hem more.
And they that hadde yknown hire of yore
Seigh hire so wepe, and thoughte it kyndenesse,
And eech of hem wepte eke for hire destresse.

(IV, 715-21)

They think Criseyde is crying because she is forced to leave them!

The women try to cheer up Criseyde and to comfort her "of thyng, God weot, on which she litle thoughtes."

(IV, 723) On which Chaucer comments in his own inimitably ironic way:

But swich an ese therwith they hire wroughte,
Right as a man is eased for to feele,
For aches of hed, to clawen hym on his heele! (IV, 726-28)
The incident of the women's visit to Griseyde is one of the finest examples of Chaucer's use of structural irony based upon the psychology of character. After the women take their leave from Griseyde, she goes to her chamber:

And on hire bed she gan for ded to falle,
In purpo neverse thennes for to rise
(IV, 733-34)

The picture of Griseyde's woe should be contrasted with the picture seen of Troilus's sorrow:

"Allas!" qued she, "out of this regioun
I, woful wrecshe and infortuned wight,
And born in cursed constellacioun,
Moot goon, and thus departen fro my knyght.
Wo worth, allas! that ilke dayes light
On which I saugh hym first with eyen
tweyne,
That causeth me, and ich hym, al this peyne!" (IV, 743-49)

Troilus regrets that he was born to such sorrow but complains most bitterly about the fact that he is to be separated from Griseyde. Griseyde mourns for the same reason, but also condemns the day on which she first saw Troilus! Griseyde, faced with the prospect of leaving Troy, regrets that she fell in love with Troilus, but since she is in love, decides to continue loving him. Troilus, to this point, never regrets his love. There is irony in the varied reactions of the two lovers toward the same cause for sorrow.
Because Chaucer frequently has pointed out that Grisye is destined to be untrue to Troilus, there is some danger that a reader might think Grisye's love for Troilus is shallow, or that her regret at leaving Troy, and her lover, is insincere. Such is not the case. Chaucer leaves the reader with the feeling that Grisye's grief is genuine.

How myghte it euer yred ben or yeange,
The pleynye that she made in hire des·
I not, but, as for me, my litel tounge,  
If I discryven wolde hire hevyynesse,  
It sholde make hire sorwe some lesse  
Than that it was, and childishly deface  
Hire heigh compleynye, and theryfore ich it pace.  (IV, 789-805)

There is real sympathy in Chaucer's treatment of Grisye's grief. He makes no ironic comments, leaving it to the reader to recall that Diomede will take Troilus's place in her heart.

While she is grieving, Pandarus "in a ful seorsce wise" (IV, 810) comes to see her in order to arrange for her to meet secretly with Troilus. The sight of Pandarus brings forth new protestations of sorrow.

Endeth thanne love in wo? Ye, or men lieth!  
And alle worldly blisse, as thynketh me,  
The ende of blisse ay sorwe it ocsypieth;  
And whoso troweth nat that it so be,  
Lyt hym upon me, wooful wrecche, ysee,  
That myself hate, and ay my burthe acorse,  
Pelyng alwey, fro wikke I go to worse.  (IV, 834-40)
Poor Grisye! "Felyng alwey, fro wikke I go to worse."
She does go from bad to worse, but probably not in the
manner which she expects. This little touch of uncon-
scious irony in her speech calls to mind her future un-
happy decision to love Diomede rather than Troilus. At
last Pandarus succeeds in lessening Grisye's grief.
He encourages her to plan how the exchange can be thwarted
or how she can come again to Troy if the exchange takes
place. Securing her word that she will try to cheer
Troilus, Pandarus leaves his niece and seeks Troilus.

Troilus is found "al alone" (IV, 947) in a temple
where he is inquiring into the nature of predestination.
The long soliloquy (IV, 958-1032) seems to show the in-
fluence of Boethius upon Chaucer. It is for this philo-
sophical soliloquy, as well as the many references to
classical literature, that critics remark upon Chaucer's
great variety of background material used in Troilus and
Grisye. Despite Chaucer's great debt to Boccaccio, it
would be wrong to assume that Troilus and Grisye is a
servile redaction of the work of the Italian author.

For the elaboration of his poem—for philosoph-
ic comment, for illustration, and for poetical orna-
ment—he has drawn upon the whole range of his
reading; and this reading is extensive enough to
justify his contemporary, Thomas Usk, in calling
him "the noble philosophical poet in English." Troilus is distinctly a "learned" poem.3

There is some irony in the picture seen of Troilus, alone in the temple.

And shortly, al the sothe for to seye,
He was so fallen in despair that day,
That cutrely he shope hym for to deye.
For right thus was his argument alway:
He seyde, he nas but lorn, so weylaway!
"For al that comth, comth by necessitez; Thys to ben lorn, it is my destinee.
... ." (IV, 963-59)

Yet later he supplicates the gods to take mercy on his woe.

While Troilus is disputing with himself the effects of fate upon mankind, Pandarus finds him in the temple and tells him that Grisseyde has a plan which will probably prevent Troilus from being parted from Grisseyde for too long a period of time. Troilus is somewhat cheered by the remarks of Pandarus.

When night comes, Troilus goes to see Grisseyde and for a while the two are overcome with grief. Grisseyde faints from sorrow and Troilus, thinking that she is dead, prepares to fall on his sword. He says:

... O Lord, that set art in thi
trone,
Rewe ek on me, for I shal folwe hire
sone! (IV, 1175-76)

But just as he is about to commit suicide, Crisseyde awakens from her swoon. Eventually the two lovers overcome their grief to the point where they can make plans. Crisseyde, after a long discussion, convinces Troilus that it is best for her to go to the camp of the Greeks. She tells Troilus that she will so work upon her father that within ten days she will return to Troy. Troilus, of course, thinks of many eventualities that might occur to prevent Crisseyde from returning to Troy. In the course of his objections to Crisseyde’s plan he raises this point:

Ye shal ek seen so many a lusty knyght
Among the Grekis, ful of worthynesse,
And eek of hem with herte, wit, and myght
To plesen yow don al his bisynesse,
That ye shul dullen of the rudenessse
Of us sely troians, but if routh the
Remorde yow, or vertu of youre trouthe.

And this to me so gresvous is to thynke,
That fro my brest it wol my soule rende

Little does Troilus know the full import of his words! It is doubtful if he really means that there is some danger of Crisseyde being untrue to him. Ironically the literal truth of his observation does not become apparent to him until it is too late for him to remedy the situation.

Of course Crisseyde does not permit Troilus to think that there is some danger of her affections being
turned. With all sincerity she assures Troilus that

    For thilke day that I for cherisynge
    Or drede of fader, or of other wight,
    Or for estat, delit, or for weddyngs,
    Be fals to yow, my Troilus, my knyght,
    Saturnes daughter, Juno, thorough hire
    myght,
    As wood as Athamante de me dwelle
    Eternalich in Stix, the put of helle!

And this on every god celestiai
I swere it yow, and ek on eeh goddesse,
On every nympe and deite infernal,
On satiry and fawny more and lesse,
That halve goddes ben of wilderness;
And Atetropos my thred of lif tobreaste,
If I be fals! now trowe me if you lest!
(IV, 1534-47)

This violent and tragic curse of herself combined with an
oath is one of the most powerful ironies of the tale.

When Troilus tells her that he would like to
spirit her out of Troy, she objects for a number of
reasons, one of the most important of them is

    And also thynketh on myn honeste,
    That fleureth yet, how foule I sholde it
    shende,
    And with what filthe it spotted sholde be,
    If in this forme I sholde with yow wende.
    Ne though I lyved unto the werldes
    ends,
    My name sholde I nevere aeyynward
    wyme.
    Thus were I lost, and that were routhes and
    synne. (IV, 1576-82)

Grisayde is afraid to leave Troy with Troilus because it
might stain her honor. Ironically enough, her honor is
stained more as a result of her decision to go to the
Greek camp, where she is won by Diomede, than it would have been had she fled Troy with Troilus.

Continuing to tell Troilus that he must trust her, Griseyde says:

```
For in this world ther lyveth lady non,
If that ye were untrew (as God defende!),
That so bitraised were or wo-bigon
As I, that alle trouthes in yow entendes.
And douteles, if that ich other wende,
I ner but ded, and er ye cause fynde,
For Goddes love, so beth me naught un-kynde!
(IV, 1646-52)
```

There is rich irony in this speech of Griseyde. Griseyde, who is to be untrue to Troilus admonishes him to be true to her. The irony is strengthened by the fact that neither know that she is to be untrue. Chaucer has given the reader ample information to know that before the story is to end, Troilus is to more than "cause fynde" to doubt Griseyde.

In Book IV there is one final irony that deserves comment. Shortly before the lovers are to part from their last night together, Griseyde tells Troilus why she loves him.

```
Ne pompe, array, nobleye, or ek rich-
esse
Ne made me to rewe on youre destresse,
But moral vertu, grounded upon trouthe,
That was the cause I first hadde on yow routhes!
(IV, 1670-73)
```

Is it not ironical that Griseyde, who is to become known as a symbol of infidelity, should tell Troilus that she
loves him because of his "moral vertu, grounded upon trouthe"? Irony of character is obvious in this case.

Book IV ends with Troilus realizing that Griseyde is soon to leave him. Overcome with sorrow, unable further to protest his love, "Withouten more, out of the chaumbre he wente." (IV, 1701)
CHAPTER VI

THE DESPAIR

Aprochen gan the fatal destyne
That Joves hath in dispesicien,
And to yow, angry Farchas, susten thre,
Committeth, to don execuciuon;
For which Crisyde moste out of the
town,
And Troilus shall dwellen forth in pyne
Til Lachesis his thred no longer twyne.

(V, 1-7)

Inexorably the wheel of fortune spins Troilus to
his doom. Chaucer, as if in a hurry to complete "thise
woful vers" (I, 7), omits a proem to Book V, the first
time he has failed to include a proem since Book I.
Instead, he plunges directly into the matter for Book V
with only a few succinct lines which emphasize the in-
escapable destiny which will soon end Troilus's life.
Gone is the deliberate, slow moving style which char-
acterizes the first four fifths of Troilus and Crisyde.
Chaucer, in Book V, narrates with a terse rapidity that
well suits the speed with which the end approaches.

The gold-ystressed Phebus heighe on-lofte
Thries hadde alle with his bemes clene
The snowes molte ...

... Syn that the sone of Ecbua the queene
Bigan to love hire first for whom his sorwe
Was al, that she departe sholde a-morwe.

(V, 8-14)
Three years have slipped by since Troilus first
was struck by love at the feast of the Palladion. But
now the time approaches for Criseyde to leave Troy.

Full redy was at prime Diomede,
Criseyde unto the Grekis cost to lade
(V, 15-16)

Here at last is Diomede whom Chaucer has informed us will
win the affections of Criseyde. The disclosure that
Diomede is the ambassador who will effect the exchange of
prisoners is dramatic. There has been no mention of
Diomede in the story except the single, enigmatic state-
ment that fortune is about to "sette up Diomede" on her
wheel. (IV, 11) With the entrance of Diomede into the
story, all is ready for the predicted catastrophe.

Troilus, hiding his sorrow from the crowd of
people waiting to see Criseyde leave Troy, is waiting for
Criseyde to appear.

But Troilus, now far-wel al thi joie,
For shalow neve re sen hire sft in Troiel
(V, 27-28)

Here again Chaucer provides the reader with a quick look
ahead into the rest of the story. Troilus is going to
wait anxiously, for a while even confidently, for Criseyde
to return to Troy; but Chaucer forces the reader to regard
Troilus's hopes from an ironic vantage point. Simp-
ly and shortly, Chaucer goes directly to the crux of Book V.
Troilus can bid farewell to all his joy, for Grisyeyle will never be seen by him again in Troy!

Seeing Diomedes ready to escort Grisyeyle to the Greek camp, Troilus "for ire he queek" *(V, 58)* and debated with himself the possibility of killing Diomedes and then escaping from Troy with Grisyeyle.

Why nyl I slain this Diomede also?
Why nyl I rather with a man or two
Steles hire away? Whi wol I this endure?
Whi nyl I helpen to myn owen cure? *(V, 46-49)*

Here is an ironic situation. Troilus debates about killing Diomedes before he knows that Diomedes will cause Grisyeyle to forsake all things Trojan. Later when he knows that Diomedes has won Grisyeyle's favor he is not able to kill Diomedes in battle, even though he frequently attempts to do so. Troilus has more cause to want to kill Diomedes than he realises. The question "Why nyl I helpen to myn owen cure?" has ironic undertones when it is realised that if Troilus should kill Diomedes he would be helping his own cure far more effectively than he realises. But, the sharpest irony of all is contained in the fact that it does not matter what Troilus does, fate has already conspired to mock him.

Grisyeyle, ready to ride,

Ful sorrowfully she sighte, and sayde "allas!"
But forth she mete, for saught that may bitide
And forth she rit ful sorrowfully a pas.
Ther is non other remedie in this cas.

*(V, 58-61)*
Troilus, with his knights, rides from Troy with Grisyeide as far as he can.

And farther wolde han ridden, out of doute

(Ⅴ, 68)

As Grisyeide and her escort near the Greek camp, Antenor rides from the Greek host to join the Trojans.

And right with that was Antenor ycome
Out of the Grekis cost, and every wight
Was of it glad, and seyde he was welcome.
And Troilus, al here his herte light,
He peyned hym with al his fulle myght
Hym to withholde of wepyng atte leeste,
And Antenor he kiste, and made feste.

(Ⅴ, 71-77)

Here again is irony based upon the exchange of the future traitor, Antenor, for Grisyeide. Troilus is forced to seem happy at the arrival of Antenor who is exchanged for Grisyeide. Troilus cannot show his sorrow at the loss of Grisyeide, but must put on an emotion he does not feel and disguise the emotion he has. Chaucer reports that the people are glad to see Antenor and welcome him to Troy; but there is little report of their sorrow at seeing Grisyeide leave, even though she never did them any harm. There is also some irony in the fact that the exchange of prisoners involves two people who will be traitors, one to Troy and the other to Troilus and indirectly to Troy. Considering the entire situation, the hidden sorrow of Troilus is a far more appropriate reaction to the exchange of prisoners.
than he realizes.

When at last Grisyeide must part from Troilus, she begins to weep. Troilus quietly says to Grisyeide: "Now holde youre day, and do me nat to deye." (V, 84)

Ironically, he gives her no word of comfort, says nothing to encourage her. Rather, his last words to his lady are an admonition to be faithful! More appropriate words could not have been used if Troilus had the power to see into the future.

Unable to say anything else, Troilus turns his horse about and returns to Troy. Diomede observes the pale face of the Trojan prince and draws his own conclusions.

As he that keuds more than the erede
In swich a craft, and by the reyne hire
hente (V, 89-90)

What an ironic symbol is the taking of the reins by Diomede! Diomede, who is to usurp Troilus's place in the heart of Grisyeide, takes control of Grisyeide directly from Troilus and within the sight of the son of Priam.

Like a true swashbuckling adventurer, Diomede, as soon as he is away from the people of Troy, decides to try to win Grisyeide's favor. He says:

For at the worste it may yet shortes curte weye.
I have herd seyd ek tymes twyes twelve, "He is a fool that wol foryte hymselfe." (V, 96-98)
Diomede, who knows more than the creed, starts his campaign to win Criseyde's affections by offering to do anything that will ease her grief. Telling her that she has little cause to worry about her coming stay with the Greeks, he says:

\[\ldots\text{ Iwis, we Grekis kan have joie} \]
\[\text{To honouren you, as wel as folk of Troie.} \]
\[(V, 118-19)\]

Continuing to advance his cause, Diomede says:

\[\text{For though ye Troians with us Grekes wrothe} \]
\[\text{Han many a day ben, alwey yet, parde,} \]
\[\text{O god of Love in soth we serven bothe.} \]
\[(V, 141-43)\]

The reader sees some irony in Diomede's words. It is the god of love who is responsible for the sorrows that occur to Troilus and Criseyde, and if the Greeks serve the same god, Criseyde should beware of another love affair. Instead of advancing his own cause, Diomede is in effect warning Criseyde to avoid love.

The words of Diomede must have sounded familiar to Criseyde when he said:

\[\ldots\text{ I am, and shal ben say} \]
\[\text{God helpe me so, while that my lyf may dure,} \]
\[\text{Youre owene aboven every creature.} \]
\[\text{Thus seyde I nevere er now to wooman born;} \]
\[\text{For, God myn herte as wisly glade so,} \]
I loved never woman here-biform
As paramours, ne nevere shal no mo.
(V, 152-58)

Unconsciously and ironically, Diomede is repeating almost the same words Troilus used over and over again to impress Griseyde with the sincerity and innocence of his love. The difference of course is that coming from the tongue of Troilus, the words were sincere; but when spoken by Diomede, the reader remembers that Diomede

... koude more than the erede
In swich a craft ... (V, 89-90)

In his same speech, Diomede is responsible for another irony.

Ther ben so worthi knyghtes in this place,
And ye so fayr, that everich of hem alle
Wol peyuen hym to stonden in youre grace.
(V, 169-71)

The reader wonders if Griseyde is too emotionally disturbed to notice this paraphrase of one of Troilus's objections to her leaving Troy.

Troilus, after leaving Griseyde, returns to his chamber.

And ther his sorwes that he spared hadde
He yaf an issue large, and "dethi" he criede;
And in his throwes frenetik and madde
He corseth Jove, Apollo, and ek Cupide,
He corseth Ceres, Bacus, and Gipride,
His burthe, hymself, his fate, and ek nature,
And, save his lady, every creature.
(V, 204-10)
Ironically, Troilus curses everybody but Criseyde, the one who will hurt him the most and eventually cause his death. Troilus spends the night in bed and

... walweth ther and
torneth
In furie, as doth he Ixion in helle
(V, 211-12)

Addressing the absent Criseyde, Troilus says:

Who seth yow now, my righte lode-sterre?
Who sit right now or stant in youre pres-
ence?
Who kan conforten now youre hertes 
warre?
Now I am gon, whom yeve ye audience?
Who speketh for me right now in myn 
absence?
Allas, no wight; and that is al my care!
For wel woot I, as yvele as I ye fare.

How abold I thys ten dayes ful endure,
When I the firste nyght have al this 
tene?
How shal she don ek, sorwful creature?
For tndernnesse, how shal she ek sustene 
Swich ve for me? 0 pitous, pale, and 
grene
Shal ben youre fresshe, wommanliche face 
For langour, or ye torne unto this place.
(V, 233-45)

Chaucer has provided the reader with the answer to the questions Troilus asks. Who sees Criseyde now? Who is in her presence? Who will comfort her? Who will give her audience? Who? The reader, sharing with Chaucer the ironic overview of the story, answers Troilus's questions with a single name: Diomedes! But the question "Who
speketh for me right now in myn absence?" (V, 236) can be answered only by silence. "Alas, no wight; and that is al my care!" (V, 237) is ironically true. The line "For wel woot I, as yvele as I ye fare." (V, 238) brings a bitter smile to the face of the reader for he knows that with Diomed in the Greek camp, Grisyeys will not be too lonely nor persist too long in her grief at leaving Troilus and Troy. "How shal she doon ek, sorwful creature?" (V, 241) The reader knows that she is going to do far better than Troilus. The final line carries the heaviest load of irony. Grisyeys is not going to look pale and faded to Troilus when she returns to Troy. Troilus is never going to see her again in Troy. If Troilus has such great sorrow at this point because he believes that she will be gone for ten days, how much more would he sorrow if he knew the truth of the matter?

All night Troilus grieves at the loss of Grisyeys. The sun is just starting to tint the eastern horizon "as it wont is for to doone" (V, 277), when Troilus sends for Pandarus. Grisyeys's uncle knows well enough that Troilus spent the night mourning the separation, so he comes to Troilus's chamber fully expecting to hear Troilus tell of his pain. Nevertheless, he is probably surprised to hear Troilus give him complete directions for the funeral
that is to take place when Troilus dies of grief at the loss of Griseyde. There is some irony in the fact that Troilus expects to die because he is separated from Griseyde even though he does not know that the separation is to be permanent. Troilus does die because he is parted from Griseyde, but Troilus does not know yet just how completely the daughter of Galkas is to imitate her father and to forsake Troy and all things Trojan.

Pandarus gently rebukes Troilus for his actions and excessive emotion and points out to the Trojan prince that many lovers are separated for far longer than ten days. He even mentions that some men are unlucky enough to see the object of their love married to some other person. Troilus is advised to give up his grief and to be light and glad.

Ten dayes nys so longe nought t'abide.  
And syn she the to comen hath blyght,  
She nyl hire heste broken for no wight.  
For dred the net that she nyl fynden weye  
To come ayen, my lif that dorse I leye.  
(V, 353-57)

Again, a negative response is evoked at the words of Pandarus. The reader knows that Griseyde will not come again and that if Pandarus bets his life on Griseyde's return, he is making a losing wager. After listening somewhat hopefully to Pandarus, Troilus says:
... though ich evere playne,
Or alwey wepe, I am no thyng to blame,
Syn I have lost the cause of al my game.

Only the reader sees the irony in these words. Troilus has indeed lost his Grisye. But it is not for a few days as Troilus thinks, it is forever.

At last yielding to the urging of Pandarus, Troilus arises from his bed. Discussing how best the next ten days may be passed, it is decided that Troilus and Pandarus should go to visit Sarpedoun. Sarpedoun is noted for his lavish entertainments, and Troilus and Pandarus seek his mansion with the full expectancy of being so well entertained that all sorrow will be driven out and the day of Grisye's arrival will approach so rapidly that it will seem as though she has been gone but a short time.

At Sarpedoun's, Troilus and Pandarus are entertained lavishly. Nothing is lacking in the way of food and amusement,

But what availeth this to Troilus,
That for his sorwe nothing of it roughtes?
For evere in con his herte pietous
Ful bisyly Grisye, his lady, soughtes.
On hire was evere al that his herte thoughtes,
Now this, now that, so faste ymagenynge,
That glade, iwis, kan hym no festeyinge.

There is no time, day or night, when Troilus does not think
about his lady and ask:

... O lufsom lady
bryght,
How have ye faren syn that ye were here?
Welcome, ywis, myn owne lady deers!
(V, 465-67)

To which Chaucer ironically comments:

But weylaway, al this nas but a mase.
Fortune his howve entended bet to glase!
(V, 468-69)

Fortune, indeed, has prepared more for Troilus than being separated from Crisseyde for ten days. The days drag past for Troilus, and at the end of a week’s time, he and Pandarus leave Sarpedoun’s and ride homeward. Troilus expresses a hope that when he gets home he will find that Crisseyde has returned.

Quod Troilus, "Now Lord me grace
sende,
That I may fynden, at myn hom-comynge
Crisseyde comen!" and therwith gan he
synge. (V, 502-4)

Chaucer records:

"Ye, naselwode!" thoughte this Pandare,
And to hymself ful softeliche he seyde,
"God woot, refreyden may this hote fare,
Er Calkas sende Troilus Crisseyde!"
But natheles, he japed thus, and pleyde,
And swor, ywys, his herte hym wel bi-
highte,
She wolde come as soone as evere she
myghte. (V, 505-11)

Pandarus’s secret thought that Calkas will not send
Crisseyde to Troilus until "refreyden may this hote fare"
is, of course, ironic. Pandarus knows Troilus well
enough to know that Troilus, with his innocence in love, will expect to have Criseyde return to Troy, some what may. Thus, if he says that Troilus's love will cool before Criseyde returns, he is really saying that Criseyde will never return. Does Criseyde's uncle so well know the father of Criseyde that he is certain that Criseyde will not return to Troy, despite the fact that he does not venture to give this opinion to Troilus? If it is correct to say that Pandarus knows Calcas and Criseyde so well that he does not expect to see Criseyde enter Troy, then it is equally correct to say that Pandarus is in a position to be an ironic observer of Troilus's hopes to be reunited with his lady. It is not correct to say that Pandarus actually predicts Criseyde's future actions, but it should be remembered that he has observed to Troilus that

And ek, as writ Zanxis, that was ful wys,  
"The newe love out shaseth ofte the oldes" (IV, 414-15)

Pandarus and Troilus spend the night together, and it can be imagined that Troilus continues to mourn the absence of Criseyde. In the morning Troilus suggests to Pandarus that they go to the palace of Criseyde

For syn we yet may have namore feste,  
So lat us sen hire paleys atte leeste.  
(V, 524-25)
The reader sees the irony of "we yet may have namore feste" because he knows that Troilus has said farewell to his earthly joy when he said farewell to Crisseyde outside the gates of Troy. Chaucer has also provided the reader with just enough of an insight of Pandarus's character to suspect that Crisseyde's uncle also could take a negative view toward Troilus's words.

The scene in which Troilus rides to view the home of Crisseyde in order to assuage in some manner his sorrow, but obtains only an increase of grief at the sight of the vacant abode, is one of the most touching of the entire tale. Troilus, strong, young, arrayed in the finery of a prince, mounted upon a charger, and accompanied by a friend, seemingly is a picture of gay manhood. While he dissembles his woe lest any person suspect that Crisseyde's house has any extraordinary meaning to him, his emotions are near the breaking point. In fact, his face blanches to such a death-like hue that he is forced to

... so faste ride
That no wight of his contenance espide.

(V, 538-39)

The whole picture of Troilus gazing at Crisseyde's vacant home has an irony that an acute observer such as Pandarus probably recognizes. The external appearance of Troilus
is in contrast to his feelings, while his hopes are in contrast to reality. Troilus goes to the house seeking surcease from sorrow, but the reader knows that Troilus will seek vainly for relief. Pandarus also knows enough of the nature of his friend to know that Troilus will not be made happy by looking at things that remind him of Griseyde. Thus, a negative attitude toward Troilus's expectations is taken and a typically ironic response is evoked. The observer of Troilus's actions feels sorrow for Troilus, but half smiles at the futility of Troilus's hopes.

As Troilus rides from place to place in Troy recalling the times when he was with his lady, he rebukes the god of love.

What need is the to seke on me vitorie,  
Syn I am thyn, and holly at thi wille?  
What joie hastow thyn owen folk to spille?  
(V, 586-88)

He then prays Cupid "That thow Griseyde ayein me sendes none." (V, 595) There is some irony in Troilus praying to Cupid to remove his sorrow because it is Cupid that has brought on the whole situation. Cupid is now aiding Diomede, who it might be recalled has said that the Greeks serve the same god of love as do the Trojans. When he reaches the gates of Troy, Troilus says:
... Allas!
Pro hennes rood my blisse and my solas.
As wolde blisful God now, for his joie,
I myghte hire sen ayen come into Troie!
(V, 606-9)

The reader knows that Grisyeyle will not come back to Troy
in response to Troilus's wishes. Not content to show
just a little of the irony of Troilus's hopes, Chaucer
reports in the same speech of Troilus these words:

And here I dwelle out cast from alle
joie,
And shal, til I may sen hire eft in Troie.
(V, 615-16)

Troilus spends a day or two in visiting the various
places in Troy where he had seen his lady while she loved
him, and whenever alone he would

... synge as ye may heere,

"O sterre, of which I loft have al the light,
With herte sore wel oughtes I to biwaille,
That evere deryk in torment, nyght by
nyght,
Toward my deth with wynd in steere I
saille;
For which the tenthe nyght, if that I faille
The gydyng of thi bemes bright an houre,
My ship and me Caribdis wol devoure."
(V, 637-44)

Immediately, the first thing that comes to mind when read-
ing the song of Troilus is the similarity between the
figure of the star that has lost its light for Troilus
and the lines in Book I:
His never ye seyn thyng to ben preyed dere,
Nor under cloude blak so bright a sterre

As was Criseyde, as folk seyde everichone  
(I, 174-76)

The figure of the star calls to mind the whole unhappy sequence of events that surrounds those people close to Criseyde. As the nights go by, Troilus stands beneath the stars

And al his sorwe he to the moone toldde  
(V, 649)

He says to the moon:

... Ywis, whan thow art horned newe,
I shal be glad, if al the world be trewe!  
(V, 650-51)

The reader knows that Troilus is soon to discover that all the world is not true. A further ironic response to Troilus’ words is evoked when Troilus says to the moon:

For whan thyne hornes newe gymmen sprynge,
Than shal she come that may my blisses brynge.  
(V, 657-58)

Thus, Troilus passes the time until the ninth night has been spent. Pandarus is always at his side

Yevyn hym hope alwey, the tenthe morwe
That she shal come, and stynten al his sorwe.  
(V, 685-86)

The picture of Pandarus constantly cheering Troilus by
telling him that Crisseyde will surely come on the tenth day is an interesting one. Chaucer has given us an insight into Pandarus's belief that Crisseyde will not return to Troilus for a long, long time. Why then does Pandarus build up the hopes of Troilus? The answer lies in Pandarus's complex nature. There is little doubt that Pandarus loves Troilus almost like a brother. But, there is no doubt that Pandarus loves intrigue and has a keen sense of irony. It has been seen that Pandarus almost revels in the ironies he creates. We have only to recall the scenes where Pandarus "blinds" Deiphebus and skillfully creates ironic situations in order to advance the love pursuit of Troilus. Pandarus then, probably wishes to prevent his friend from sorrowing too much and hopes that in time the lovesickness of Troilus will wear away. At the same time, Pandarus knows Calkas will not be swayed by Crisseyde and he knows that Crisseyde is not strong enough to overcome very many obstacles placed in her way. So, he cheers his friend as best he may while simultaneously he is aware that Troilus's hopes are going to be confounded. And there is just enough bitter wit in his nature to enjoy to some extent the irony surrounding Crisseyde's separation from Troilus.

While Troilus is suffering in Troy, Crisseyde is
With women few, among the Greeks strong;
For which ful ofte a day "Allast!" she seyde,
"That I was born! Wel may myn herte longe . . ." (V, 688-90)

Criseyde is having little success in arranging the situation so that she may return to Troy. She says:

My father nyel for nothyng do me grace
To gon ayeyn, for naught I kan hym queale;
And if so be that I my terme pace,
My Troilus shal in his herte deme
That I am fals, and so it may wel sene:
Thus shal ich have unthynk on every side.
That I was born, so weillaway the tide!
(V, 694-700)

The picture seen of Criseyde in the Greek camp during the first few days she is away from Troy shows her as having nothing but good intentions. There is no hint that she will, in a few days, prove to be untrue to Troilus. She is depicted as caring for her honor, as sincerely missing Troy and Troilus, and as regretting her inability to arrange things so that she may return to Troilus. She is genuinely sorry at being parted from her lover.

In all this world ther nys so cruel herte
That hire hadde herd compleynen in hire scowe,
That noldes han wepen for hire pynes smerte,
So tendrely she wepte, bothe eve and morwe.
Hire needede no teris for to borwe!
And this was yet the weerte of al hire pyna,
Ther was no wight to whom she dorte hire pleyne. (V, 722-25)
Fearing that she must soon act, Grisyeide decides to leave the Greek camp on the following night and return to Troy.

For which, withouten any wordes me,
To Troie I wol, as for conclusioun.
(V, 764-65)

But Chaucer enforces the irony seen in her decision to return to Troy by saying:

But God it wot, or fully monthes two,
She was ful far fro that entensioun!
For bothe Troilus and Troie town
Shal knotteles thoroughout hire herte slide;
For she wol take a purpos for t'abyde.
(V, 766-70)

Diomedes recognizes the beauty of Grisyeide and spends much time in consideration of how best he "into his net Griseydes herte brynge." (V, 775) He notices that Grisyeide has not laughed since she entered the Greek camp and he feels certain that she loves someone in Troy. Knowing that it is not easy to sway a person's emotions when they are truly grieving, he, nevertheless, decides to try to advance his cause with Grisyeide. An interesting side light into his character is found in these words of Diomedes:

But whoso myghte wynnen swich a flour
From hym for whom she morneth nyght
and day,
He myghte seyn he were a conquerour.
(V, 792-94)

Apparently, the idea of competition with another man appeals almost as much to Diomedes as does Grisyeide.
On the tenth day after Grisye de left Troy, Diomede goes to visit her.

Grisye de, at shorte wordes for to telle, Welcomed hym, and down hym by hire sette. (V, 948-49)

Diomede tells Grisye de that because the people in Troy are doomed, she is foolish to love anyone in that city. He tells her that Greeks are worthy of love and ends by imploring her to look with favor upon him. Grisye de replies to Diomede.

I hadde a lord, to whom I wedded was, The whos myn herte al was, til that he deyde; And other love, as help me now Pallas, Ther in myn herte nys, ne nevere was. (V, 975-78)

Are these not strange words to hear coming from Grisye de?

She goes on to say:

Myn herte is now in tribulacioun, And ye in armes bisy day by day. Herafter, whan ye wennen han the town, Feraunter, thanne so it happen may, That whan I se that nevere yit I say, Than wol I werke that I nevere wroghte! This word to yow ynough suffisen oughte. (V, 988-94)

Contrary to all that we expect her to say, she adds:

As help me Pallas with hire heres clere, If that I sholde of any Grek han routhe, It sholde be youreselven, by my trouthel I say nat thersore that I wol yow love, My say nat nay; but in conclusioun, I mene wel, by God that sit above! (V, 999-1004)
On the eleventh day, Diomedes so well presents his love that

... alle hire sikes score adown he leyde.
And finally, the sothe for to seyne,
He raftre hire of the grete of al hire payne.

(V, 1034-36)

After she has given her heart to Diomedes, it is possible that the irony of the situation bore down upon her.

Ther made never woman moore wo
Than she, when that she falsed Troilus.
She seyde, "Alas! for now is clene ago
My name of trouthe in love, for everemo!
For I have falsed oon the gentileste
That euer was, and oon the worthieste!

..." (V, 1052-57)

The remorse she feels at losing her good name is strongly ironical in the light of her former care for her "honour."

A further irony is found in the fact that she "falsed" the "gentileste" and the "worthieste" knight that ever was.

Continuing to regret her position, in the same scene she makes one of the most interesting remarks found in the entire story.

And that to late is now for me to rewe,
To Diomedes algate I wol be trewe.

(V, 1070-71)

Will she be true to Diomedes? It took Diomedes much less time to win her affections than it took Troilus. Further, will Diomedes be true to her? Diomedes demonstrated a skill
in love-making that is in contrast to Troilus’s pursuit of love. There is no lack of irony in the statement
“To Diomede algate I wol be trewe.”

On the very day that Diomede first presents his love successfully, Troilus with Pandarus walks the walls of Troy waiting for Grisyeyle to return to the city. Troilus, up at dawn, anxiously, expectantly awaiting Grisyeyle’s arrival in Troy: Grisyeyle, early in the morning listening with favor to the pleading of Diomede. Here is certainly an irony of events. All day long Pandarus and Troilus watch “To loke if they kan sen aught of Grisyeyle.” (V, 1113) But as Chaucer observes:

... long may they seeche
Er that they fynde that they after gape.
Fortune hem bothe thanketh for to jape!
(V, 1332-34)

The days go by without a sign of Grisyeyle. The fears of Troilus mount. Finally, after encouragement from Pandarus, Troilus writes Grisyeyle a letter. Grisyeyle answers the letter but gives Troilus no encouragement. Jealousy takes hold of Troilus and he explains his doubts of Grisyeyle’s fidelity to Pandarus who still continues to reassure him. But finally, after one of the battles, Diomede’s cloak is captured and born through the town of Troy. Troilus examines the cloak and finds pinned to it
a brooch which he had given Criseyde. At last Troilus
knows the worst.

Although he seems to have expected Criseyde's de-
fection, Pandarus is almost as hurt as is Troilus. Pandarus,
who is Criseyde's uncle and Troilus's best friend, finds
that his honor is stained by encouraging a love affair
that proves worthless. The irony of his situation is
this: he sacrificed honor for friendship; and out of the
love affair which he made possible, grows an infidelity
that ruins his friend. The irony is intensified with the
realisation that while Pandarus made the love affair pos-
sible, he did not greatly influence Criseyde who acts
according to her temperament rather than according to the
pleas of Pandarus. To prove this last point it is only
necessary to recall Criseyde's statement when Troilus
first made love to her: "Ne hadde I er now, my swete
herte deere, Ben yold, ywis, I were nownought heere!"
(III, 1210-11)

Troilus, half mad from sorrow, determines to avenge
himself upon the Greeks.

The wrath, as I bigan yow for to seye,
Of Troilus the Grekis boughten deere.
For thousands his hondes maden deye,
As he that was withouten any peere,
Save Estor, in his tyme, as I kan heere.
But wellawey, save only Goddes wille!
Despitously hym slough the fierse Achille.
(V, 1800-6)
With the death of Troilus, the wheel of fortune has completed a revolution. Troilus has been lifted high by fortune, only to be dashed down more rapidly than he arose. Chaucer, aware of the vagaries of fate and the mutability of fortune, writes of Troilus's death:

And when that he was slayn in this manere,
  His lighte goost ful blissfully is went
Up to the holugmesse of the eightshe spere,
In convors letyng everish element;
And ther he saugh, with ful avysement,
The erratik sterres, herkenyng armonye
With sownes ful of hevenyssah melodie.

And down from thames faste he gan avyse
This litel spot of erthe, that with the se
Embraced is, and fully gan despise
This wrecched world, and held al vanite
To respect of the pleyn felicite
That is in hevene above; and at the laste,
Ther he was slayn, his lekyng down he caste.

And in hymself he lough right at the wo
Of hem that wepten for his deth so faste;
And dampned al our werk that foloweth so
The blynde lust, the whiche that may nat laste
And sholden al our herte on heven caste.

(V, 1807-25)

In the last ironic chuckle of Troilus seems crystallized Chaucer's whole outlook toward life as expressed in the Troilus and Criseyde. Troilus, like Chaucer, knows that at the end of a man's life, all the cares in the world of time, no matter how great they may be, are insignificant
when seen from the aspect of eternity. In Troilus's case, it is the abstraction or withdrawal from the world that brings him peace. It is only when Troilus at last achieves the ironic viewpoint of life, sees life from the same vantage point as Chaucer, that he escapes his sorrow and sees how foolish it is to become emotionally entangled with temporal objects. So completely does Troilus assume the \textit{contemptus mundi} attitude that he is even enabled to laugh at those of his friends who mourn his death.

Writing of the Trojan War, remote from his own day by twenty-five centuries, Chaucer traces the last three tragic years of the life of Troilus, the greatest Trojan except Hector. The death of Troilus at the hands of Achilles has been preceded by a shocking betrayal, but has been glorified by a profound and exalted love. Chaucer illuminates the death of Troilus not only by the dim light of time, but by the great glare of eternity which makes insignificant even the most awful moment of death. Troilus, in the revelation of death, awed by the felicity of heaven, sees "this little spot of earth." Immediately he recognizes its wretchedness and vanity. The happiness so much striven for on earth by himself and all his friends, he has finally achieved. But the irony of the situation is that the
happiness has come not from material things for which he strove, but finally from the supernatural which has seemed to mock him from the moment of his first sight of Crisseyde.

Here at the end of a tale of pagan love it is discovered that ironically enough, the tale has been used to show the truth of the contemptus mundi concept of scholastic philosophy. Nor should this come as a surprise for, after all, did not Chaucer produce a translation of Boethius's Consolation of Philosophy?

It is hard to imagine that there could be more opposite ideas than the code of courtly love or the conventions of romantic love and the concept of scorn for the world. Yet, it is a measure of Chaucer's genius that he could take two such diametrically opposed ideas and weld them together to form the great poem that is Troilus and Crisseyde.
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