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Of Fools and Jewels: The Five Rhetorical Thrusts of Pandarus's 'Proces' in his Exchange with Criseyde (*Troilus and Criseyde*, II, 260-595)

by D. Jones

Donald Howard anatomised the process of Criseyde's falling in love with Troilus (lines 596-931 of Book II of Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*). Yet the developments of those 335 lines would never have been possible had it not been for the groundwork that Pandarus lays in the preceding 335 lines (260-595). This symmetry in construction is striking; however, it pales in comparison to Pandarus's careful construction and execution, in these lines, of his plan to persuade Criseyde, his niece, at least to be open to the possibility of accepting Troilus as her lover. Falling in love was perhaps the farthest thing from widowed Criseyde's mind before this exchange with Pandarus, but he connives and contrives to alter her entire outlook. In the immediate wake of this exchange, Criseyde does indeed fall in love with Troilus. Thus, Pandarus effects a remarkable transformation, pivotal to the narrative: her embryonic love for Troilus, a man she barely knows from Adam, is formed by Pandarus's words here. As Stephen Barney confirms, "Pandarus has conditioned her feelings" (29). The way in which Pandarus undertakes this "proces" (268, as he calls it)¹ is both original and brilliant. Chaucer takes the outline of the scene from Boccaccio's *Il Filostrato* but greatly embellishes it, particularly in the speeches and scheming of Pandarus. The design that Pandarus executes to persuade Criseyde takes the form of five rhetorical thrusts. After each thrust, Pandarus assesses the situation: how has Criseyde reacted, what has she conceded? Then, he pushes for more. To mix metaphors, Pandarus is always moving back the goalposts on shifting sands. Thus, he induces Criseyde to concede more and more. Pandarus forces these concessions through a cunning and eclectic mixture of rhetorical tactics, playing 'good cop/bad cop' with many more subtly painted shades in between. Pandarus's rhetorical display in this scene is astonishing, yet its "epic machinery" (*Riverside Chaucer* 472) has been curiously neglected by critics. After a little background, a close reading and analysis of this exchange should serve both to complement Howard's close reading of how Criseyde falls in love (in "four scenes," 174) and to compliment Chaucer's wonderfully original creation of Pandarus by dissecting the five rhetorical thrusts.

Despite not having really dissected the inner-workings of Pandarus's exchange with Criseyde, critics

have nevertheless acclaimed the scene in a more general way. This exchange perhaps represents the ebullient Pandarus's *pièce de résistance*. As Eben Bass notes, the exchange is one of the "high points of the whole narrative" (145), indeed one of the greatest of all Chaucerian set-pieces. Pandarus performs a virtuoso vignette (or, considering the length, a sequence of *quatre-vignettes*), yet all perfectly woven into the poem's fabric as a whole. Siegfried Wenzel summarises the exchange as follows:

Pandarus makes a lengthy attempt to talk his niece into giving herself to Troilus...[using]...artful rhetoric...[the passage is a]...subtle and sympathetic exploration of the psychology of a beautiful woman about to fall in love...nothing much happens on the surface of the story; yet the seemingly endless speech-making is filled with subtle tensions, with various shades of emotions, with an intriguing give-and-take between uncle and niece. Pandarus's intention is to bring Criseyde around, to convince her that she ought to accept Troilus as her lover. (149, 152-153)

Useful as Wenzel's overview is, it implicitly draws attention to the need for a closer analysis of this "artful rhetoric" and "seemingly endless speech-making," with all its "subtle tensions" and "shades of emotions": the reactions that Pandarus progressively provokes in Criseyde as he shifts back and forth through the gears with his five rhetorical thrusts. This "give-and-take between uncle and niece" is indeed "intriguing."

One of the most intriguing aspects is that, although Pandarus dominates the exchange with his avalanche of rhetoric (speaking 231 lines to Criseyde's 62), by no means all critics have adjudged him the winner. Sanford Meech observes that, "Uncle and niece...reveal their subtle natures in a battle of wits" (35), with Criseyde taking the "honors of word play" (36): "Her maneuvers...are often counterparts to his" (35). Similarly, Carolyn Dinshaw discerns that, "When she is with Pandarus, she speaks the language of Pandarus—practical, witty, wily, tactical" (58). On the other hand, more misogynistic old school critics point to Pandarus's 'winning' of Criseyde as a foul foretaste of the flaw of fescennine feminine fickleness that ultimately carries her away from Troilus to Diomedes. Robert apRoberts describes this as a "central" issue (1962, 373), with too many critics reading Criseyde overly salaciously in how far and how quickly she commits herself to Troilus at the start. A close reading of the text, especially this key exchange, confirms that Criseyde retains "complete control of determining what reward," if any, Troilus will receive, and the "ingenious devisings of Pandarus are...the principal way by which Chaucer is able to avoid showing us precisely what Criseyde's feelings are until she is face to face with Troilus" in Book III (apRoberts, *Il Filostrato*, li). As Meech states, "she has had all her own way" and "taken no irrevocable step" (39), yet Pandarus exits the exchange well pleased.

This sublime subtlety, this extended exposition of the cat-and-mouse game, is not found to anything like the same degree in *Il Filostrato*, Chaucer's source. Boccaccio states that Pandaro "wishes to come to his

point by ingenious arguments" (2:35) and shows him to be immodestly proud of his "improvised skill and varied cunning" (2:63),² but it is child's play compared to the rhetoric of Chaucer's Pandarus. Pandaro is no plotter; he is far more impatient and impetuous than Pandarus. Pandaro is much more direct and lusty in his approach to bringing Troilo and Criseida into a state of denuded *détente*: he neither pussyfoots around nor beats about the bush, but gets straight to the meat.³ In contrast, Pandarus waxes far more philosophical and discourses at far greater length. Approximately half the lines in Chaucer's version of the exchange have no equivalent in *Il Filostrato*. Unlike Pandaro, Pandarus constantly stresses to Criseyde that he has only good intentions and is telling the truth. Moreover, Pandarus is far more dramatic in his words and actions: all part of his cunning plan. This plan is meticulously formulated, then implemented almost to the letter. Pandarus's five rhetorical thrusts represent the building blocks on which his grand design is realised. Pandarus is a far more complex character than Pandaro,⁴ as is reflected in their respective rhetoric. C. S. Lewis argued that Chaucer performed a "rhetoricization" (22) of *Il Filostrato*, as well as a "process of medievalization" (especially in terms of "*l'amour courtois*," 17). Similarly, Barry Windeatt notes Chaucer's addition of "more courtly love" (168) as well as a "much more vigorous and defined sense of the processes and developments within the responses of the characters" (166).

Chaucer's Pandarus is far more artful than Boccaccio's Pandaro. Pandarus casts himself as an artist, having to "peynthe or drawen" (262) his work of art, his rhetorical masterpiece to persuade Criseyde. Similarly, it is possible to construe Pandarus's art as theatre: he is extremely theatrical and performs as stage-master. He has a script in mind, but he can modify it (*ex tempore*) to overcome almost any contingency. Pandarus can even pre-empt Criseyde's objections or reactions. Furthermore, when necessary for extra effect at crucial points, Pandarus supplements verbal verve with non-verbal communication signals. Pandarus's acting might seem hammed up and melodramatic (much exaggerated from anything in *Il Filostrato*), but it seems to work on Criseyde, to some extent at least, as it forces her to make more concessions. Thus, analogous to *Troilus and Criseyde* as a whole (with its five books), the exchange between Pandarus and Criseyde is a play in five acts, punctuated at key moments with stage directions of sorts.⁵ The five acts are the five rhetorical thrusts by Pandarus at Criseyde (and her responses): the tantalising set-up, the partial disclosure (with menaces), the sting, the hard sell with emotional blackmail, and the fantasy sequence.

Before throwing out his opening gambit, though, as a sort of prologue, Pandarus sets the stage for his rhetorical *tour de force*. He carefully considers the rhetorical "proces" (268) required to achieve his goal. Barney describes "proces" as a "half-abstract" word (18), generally connoting the "opposite of things done suddenly" (30), with the *Troilus* boasting "twelve of the twenty-five occurrences of *proces*" in Chaucer's works (18), mostly in Books II and III, "where the term often describes Pandarus's machinations...[as]...a plot-maker" (32).⁶ Wenzel glosses this key, recurring word as follows: "'a lengthy telling of a story,' with a more specific meaning of the 'careful development of an argument.'" Wenzel wants "to emphasize what

pains Chaucer is here taking to call our attention to Pandar's concern with the rhetoric of his plea" (154). As J. D. Burnley confirms, Pandarus is a "skilled rhetorical practitioner, employing eloquence for its original purpose of persuasion" (63): in the words of Peter Mack, "The skillful orator must be an expert in the discovery and formulation of persuasive arguments" with the "instinct for timing, the knowledge of when to make which argument, when to appeal to the emotions" (109). Pandarus knows that "th'ende is every tales strengthe," (260), so, technically, he should save his main point till the end. However, rather disparagingly, Pandarus believes that such elaborate rhetorical artifice would be wasted on Criseyde: "She shal no savour have therein" (269). Thus, resolves Pandarus, "Forthi hire wit to serven wol I fonde" (273). Pandarus feels that he must dumb down his speech and come to the point quickly. This inner monologue (267-73) of Pandarus, revealing his true thoughts, is not in *Il Filostrato*. Pandarus confides sinisterly that, "I wolde hire in my wil bigyle" (270) and devises the requisite "proces."

Having settled on the correct rhetorical "proces," Pandarus prepares to put it into practice. As Meech notes, the "opening presentation of his case is greatly subtilized" from Boccaccio (38). However, despite his decision to come to the point directly, Pandarus can not be so artlessly crude as simply to blurt out to Criseyde that Troilus loves her. Just as Pandarus had used non-verbal communication to good effect in the preceding stanzas (suggesting his niece discard her widow's wimple and dance with him, 110-111 and 221-222, kissing her, 250, to show his love for her, then giving a little cough, 254, to make her look up, none of which feature in *Il Filostrato*), he uses some more of it here, fixing Criseyde with a freaky stare: he "looked on hire in a bysi wyse" (274). Whereas Boccaccio's Criseida responds "smilingly" (2:36) to Pandaro's stare, Chaucer's Criseyde is disturbed by the intensity of Pandarus's stare and is anxious to know the reason for it: "Lord! So faste ye m'advise!/Sey ye me nevere er now? What sey ye, no?" (276/7). Thus, Pandarus's stare has the desired effect: to make Criseyde anxious and curious, hanging on his every word. Criseyde's question gives Pandarus the perfect cue to instigate the exordium of his "proces."

Just as Pandarus's stare creates suspense in Criseyde, his first rhetorical thrust (lines 278-308), the set-up, builds a yet more intense suspense. Pandarus talks abstractly about how everyone is the recipient of some "goodly aventure" (281) in life, and the recipient should grasp this good fortune with both hands, otherwise the chance will be lost forever: "Cache it anon, lest aventure slake!" (291). When opportunity knocks, to use an existential apophthegm, one should go for it. Forget *tempus fugit; carpe diem!* He introduces the *carpe diem* theme here and "labors the point" (Meech 38). All of this might sound slightly banal,⁸ but Criseyde knows this is just the preamble to the big news that Pandarus has to divulge. Thus, the more he tantalisingly forestalls in telling her, the greater the suspense: he is "teasing her into curiosity and savoring his delay...artfully drawing out an interesting piece of news" (Barney 32, 33). Criseyde grows desperate to discover what all this cryptic disquisition about "goodly aventure" has to do with her.

Pandarus prevaricates further by constantly stressing his honesty and desire not to hurt Criseyde. He

talks of his "trouthe" (279), "good entencioun" (295), concern for her "honour and renoun" (297), and concludes that "ye shal me fynde trewe;/And were it thing that me thoughte unsittyng,/To yow wolde I no swiche tales bryng" (306-8). The fact that Pandarus repeatedly stresses his good intentions only heightens the suspense for Criseyde: the news must be earth-shattering if he must soften the blow by couching it with all these assurances. Boccaccio's Pandaro never mentions having any such honourable intentions, nor is he nearly so concerned with using cryptic rhetoric to build suspense: "there was scant finesse...Pandaro worked out no strategy" (Meech 35). Thus, Pandaro shoots his bolt almost immediately by telling Criseida that a man loves her (2:37). The only information that Pandaro holds back, briefly, is her lover's identity. Pandarus, in contrast, does not immediately lay all his cards on the table; he keeps the important ones close to his chest. In this first thrust, Pandarus never mentions anything about anyone being in love with Criseyde. Instead, he builds suspense by musing cryptically about 'good aventure' and by emphasising his good faith.

All of this suspense-building is part of the "proces" for Pandarus, as he indicates by repeating that key word again (292) as he concludes this first rhetorical thrust. He repeats aloud what he was thinking as he first formulated this 'proces', that he should come to the point quickly: "What sholde I lenger proces of it make?" (292). He immediately follows this rhetorical question by taking Criseyde's hand: "Yif me your hond" (293). Again, Pandarus uses non-verbal communication at a key juncture: here, it ostensibly cements a bond of solidarity between him and his niece as he prepares to tell her the news, intimating that they will get through it together. Then, just before that final assurance that he only has her best interests at heart, Pandarus ratchets up the suspense level in Criseyde even more. He entreats her with a pair of startlingly hyperbolic imperatives: "Beth naught agast, ne quaketh naught! Whereto?/Ne chaungeth naught for fere so youre hewe!" (302/3). What sort of news might make her be aghast, quake, and drain the colour from her face?

Criseyde's response to Pandarus's first thrust shows that he has indeed succeeded in heightening her suspense to an intolerable level. Whatever it may be, she simply must know this monumental news:

...for Goddes love, I preye,
come of, and telle me what it is!
 For both am I agast what ye wol seye,
 And ek me longeth it to wite, ywis;
 For whethir it be wel or be amys,
 Say on, lat me nat in this feere dwelle. (309-14)

Criseyde is dying to know the news; the suspense is almost killing her. Although she is afraid to know, not

knowing is worse. Criseyde wants Pandarus to spit out his news *tout de suite*. Her response to Pandarus's first rhetorical thrust of 31 lines is a meagre six lines, but this highlights Pandarus's success in creating so much suspense. Criseyde desperately wants him to do the talking, and Pandarus is only too happy to oblige. He needs no second invitation to launch into his second thrust.

In Pandarus's second rhetorical thrust (315-85), the partial disclosure (with menaces), he drops the bombshell about Troilus, but makes it a controlled explosion, not detonating the full force of the blast. He tells Criseyde that Troilus loves her, but she is not obliged to reciprocate. Pandarus only asks that she cheer Troilus up a bit: a purely platonic relationship. Pandarus shows empathy with her situation and makes his arguments sound eminently reasonable: who could object simply to being civil to a person to relieve their misery? Yet Pandarus's rational arguments are strategically supplemented by some darker arts: more hyperbole and histrionics, a guilt-trip, and some scaremongering. Fear is a powerful motivator, and Pandarus can wield an iron fist in a silk glove.

Having made Criseyde so desperate to know the big news, Pandarus immediately tells her at the start of this second thrust. As he mused earlier, he has nothing to gain by dragging it out. He delays only briefly now to give Troilus a grand build-up: "the kynges deere sone/The goode, wise, worthi, fresshe, and free" (316/7), highlighting his lofty lineage, then praising him with all these alliterative adjectives. After this build-up, Pandarus tells Criseyde, "The noble Troilus, so loveth the" (319) and then, in Windeatt's words, "rushes on pell-mell to urge his suit" (179).

Pandarus tells Criseyde that if she does not "helpe" (320) the lovesick Troilus, Troilus will die. Such information is bound to scare Criseyde as lovesickness was regarded as a serious, even fatal, ailment. As Chaucer's contemporary, Bernard de Gordon (medical Professor at the University of Montpellier) stated: "unless the lovesick are helped, they fall into madness or die."

In this second rhetorical thrust of Pandarus, only these opening five lines (316-20) correspond to *Filostrato* (2:46). The rest of Pandarus's long oration (to 385) is essentially Chaucer's original work. The first diversion is for Pandarus to stress that key "tenet of courtly love" (Meech 38) that Criseyde holds Troilus's life in her hands: "Doth what yow lest to make hym lyve or deye" (322). Not only that, though, but Pandarus also raises the stakes by tying his own fate in to that of Troilus, again showing his flair for the melodramatic: "if ye late hym deyen I wol sterve—/...Al sholde I with this knyf my throte kerve" (323, 325). Pandarus portrays it as a genuine life-or-death situation: if Criseyde will not "helpe," then both Troilus *and* her dear uncle will die. If they both died, it would not sit well on Criseyde's conscience. Thus, Pandarus tries to guilt her into helping Troilus. Pandarus supplements this verbal brinkmanship with more dramatic gestures, what Meech esteems a "fine bit of acting" (38). Pandarus flourishes before Criseyde the very knife with which he threatens to slit his throat, and, "[w]ith that the teris breste out of his yen" (326).

After this apparent catharsis, Pandarus assumes a more reasonable demeanour. He tells Criseyde that she

will gain nothing by their deaths (329) and would be doing Troilus a grave wrong: "That trewe man, that noble, gentil knight,/That naught desireth but youre friendly cheere" (331/2). Troilus desires nothing more than "friendly cheere," so how could Criseyde begrudge him that to save his life? Pandarus begs her not to be "cruel" (337, 342) to a heart that is "trewe" (339). He praises her beauty (336, 341), but warns her to deliberate carefully before deciding what to do (343). Just to help her make the right rational decision, though, Pandarus launches into a dramatic display of epanaphora:

Wo worth the faire gemme vertulees!¹⁰
Wo worth that herbe also that dooth no boote!
Wo worth that beaute that is routhles!
Wo worth that wight that tret ech undir foote! (344-47)

Pandarus then changes tone again and returns to his powers of cold reasoning. He reassures Criseyde of his integrity, again stressing "this is no gaude" (351), and he is no "baude" (353).¹¹ He is her uncle, so if she were dishonoured in any way, "the shame were to me,/As wel as the" (355/6). Pandarus is asking nothing shameful of her. He just wants her to treat Troilus with kindness. That much will be enough to save his life. Nothing more is required. Perish the thought that Pandarus is demanding a binding promise to be with Troilus forever:

Now understond, for I yow nought requere
To bynde yow to hym thorough no byheste,
But only that ye make hym bettre chiere
Than ye han doon er this, and moore feste,
So that hys lif be saved atte leeste;
This al and som, and pleyedly, our entente.
God help me so, I nevere other mente! (358-64)

This represents the sum total of his request, claims Pandarus. He has no hidden agenda. He again asserts the reasonableness of this modest request: "Lo, this requeste is naught but skylle, ywys,/Ne doute of resound, pardee, is ther noon" (365/6).

Despite the request sounding so eminently reasonable, Pandarus thinks that he can nevertheless pre-empt Criseyde's objection to it. He shows empathy by hypothesising about her fears: people might assume some scandalous affair if they see Troilus coming and going. Having set up this hypothesis (367/8), Pandarus proceeds to allay such fears by advancing a different theory about people's reactions: "every wight, but he

be fool of kynde,/Wol deme it love of frendshipe in hys mynde” (370/1). Wenzel observes how skilfully Pandarus is operating here, “considering a possible objection of his opponent in order to advance his own argument” (155). Pandarus claims that anyone but a fool would naturally (and correctly) assume that she and Troilus are just good friends not lovers. Besides, “he shal come here so selde,/What fors were it though al the towne byhelde?/Swych love of frendes regneth al this town” (377-9). Pandarus concludes this second thrust by repeating his eminently reasonable request to his “goode nece” (383) simply to treat Troilus a little more sweetly, as a friend, “not a jot more” (Meech 38), to ensure that he does not die. It hardly seems too much to ask. Who could refuse such an apparently innocuous request?

However, just as Aesop’s fable about the trees and the axe warns that giving a little can lead to giving everything, Criseyde suspects that Pandarus has not yet revealed his full “entente.” She takes a moment to reflect before responding. She thinks, “I shal felen what he meneth, ywis” (387). *The Riverside Chaucer* glosses “felen” as “inquire indirectly” (1246). Although Pandarus claims to have said his piece plainly and in full, Criseyde knows that he wants something more. She is not nearly as simple as Pandarus had assumed. As Mack observes, Pandarus’s “elaborate preparation and sequencing fails as Criseyde suspects subterfuge and responds with a trap of her own” (119). Now, she seeks to make him divulge what he really wants of her, so she disingenuously asks for his advice: “Now em,...what wolde ye devise?/What is youre reed I sholde don of this?” (388/9). Once again, Criseyde’s response seems disproportionately short compared to Pandarus’s preceding thrust, but again she feels that he should do the talking until he comes clean about his true “entente.” Saul Brody remarks on Criseyde’s “need to see past the surface of language and performance so as to get at inner meaning” (139).

However archly Criseyde might have solicited her uncle’s advice, he takes it as paving the way for his third rhetorical thrust (390-406), the sting, the most audacious of the quintet. Pandarus is gratified that Criseyde has solicited his advice (“That is wel seyde,” 391) and takes her lack of overt objection to his previous thrust as signalling her tacit acquiescence to his request that she be friendlier to Troilus. Given an ‘in’ and inch, Pandarus immediately tries to take a mile, upping the ante from “friendship” to “love”: “Certein, best is/That ye hym love ayeyn for his lovyng” (390/1). Thus, Pandarus completes the controlled explosion of his bombshell of news, now detonating the most explosive matter. Or, to use a different figure, Pandarus lets the cat out of the bag in stages, saving the claws, or the sting in the tail, until now. Contrary to everything he so recently and reasonably argued, just being friendly to Troilus is not enough; she ought to return his love: “As love for love is skilful guerdonyng” (392). Pandarus then returns to his ‘gather ye rosebuds while ye may’ refrain: Criseyde should love Troilus because her beauty will not last forever, so the chance could disappear. The clock is ticking (or, rather, the sundial’s gnomon casts ever-lengthening shadows):

Thenk ek how elde wasteth every houre
In ech of yow a partie of beautee;
And therefore er that age the devoure,
Go love... (393-6)

Pandaro makes the same argument in *Il Filostrato* (2:54), although at a later stage. The order of events is a little different, partly because Pandaro is so much more direct (he never bothers with the staging post of inducing Criseida just to be friendly to Troilo; he urges them to become lovers right from the start). Besides, Chaucer's Pandarus advances this 'age withers beauty' argument in a novel way, telling the story of the "Kynges fool" (400) suggesting that conceited women look into a magic mirror to see how their faces will look in future, "crowes feet" (403) and all. As *The Riverside Chaucer* notes, "No earlier use of the figure of crow's-feet has been identified" (1032). Similarly attesting to Chaucer's originality here is Wenzel's commentary on Pandarus's words:

Part of his artful rhetoric is...[this]...curious image designed to drive home his lesson of *carpe diem*...The thought of the fool's speech is of course Ovidian and commonplace, but the figure of the king's fool who speaks the truth is not...the figure of such a wise fool is extremely rare in literature before the Renaissance period. (149, 150)¹²

Pandarus concludes the verbal part of his thrust with this sobering thought, appealing to Criseyde's vanity, appending a single line to the fool's words: "I bidde wisse yow namore sorwe" (406). Once again, he anticipates Criseyde's reaction: his words will not please her. He finishes with another dramatic gesture (not in *Il Filostrato*) to indicate both his empathy and that the ball is now in her court: "With this he stynte, and caste adown the heed" (407).

Criseyde does indeed seem outraged and upset by Pandarus's words, as is clear in her response. Her response is a real crux in the exchange. Now Pandarus has finally spilt all the beans, it is Criseyde's first chance to have her say. Thus, tellingly, her response here is (slightly) longer than Pandarus's rhetorical thrust that provoked it. Her response has dramatic stage-direction bookends, starting with tears ("she began to breste a-wepe anon," 408) and ending with sighs (428). In contrast, in *Il Filostrato*, Criseida sighed but "held back the tears" (2:47). The words of Chaucer's Criseyde in between the tears and sighs also powerfully signal her sorrow. She cries "Allas" no fewer than five times (409, 411, 414, 420, 424) as she rails against Pandarus and false love. *The Riverside Chaucer* notes that Criseyde's speech here should be compared to Helen's reply to Paris in Ovid's *Heroides* (17:17-18), both being "a tissue of sentences on false love" (1033). Both feel afraid and confused and concerned for their honour.¹³ Criseyde is full of "wo" (409)

and claims to have lost all “feyth” (410) in the world because Pandarus has thus betrayed her: “Whan he that for my beste frend I wende/Ret me to love, and sholde it me defende?” (412/3). Pandarus should be protecting, not procuring, her. Criseyde observes that had the boot been on the other foot, and she had first fallen in love with a man (416/7), then Pandarus would have reproached her and fought against her will (Criseida makes the same point in *Il Filostrato* 2:48). Criseyde then laments this “false world” (420) and assaults Pandarus with a barrage of bitter questions, mounting to a “rhetorical crescendo” (Barney 33):

What, is this al the joye and al the feste?
 Is this youre reed? Is this my blisful cas?
 Is this the verray mede of youre byheeste?
 Is al this paynted proces seyde—allas!—
 Right for this fyn? (421-5)

Criseyde has truly rumbled Pandarus’s ‘proces.’ She has induced him to state that making her love Troilus was the bottom line for him all the time. As apRoberts confirms, “It is true that the aim of all the actions of Pandarus is to bring about a final and not too far off union between his niece and Troilus” (1962, 375). All that other talk about only asking her to be friends with Troilus was something of a red herring. That part had sounded fairly reasonable, as if they were not asking the Earth. Now, though, the truth is revealed: they do want the shirt off her back. Criseyde berates Pandarus for having aimed squarely below the belt with his third thrust. When planning his precious “proces,” Pandarus underestimated Criseyde. Now, she objects that he should try to manipulate her in this manner, with the “deceptive use of rhetorical skill” (Burnley 64). She shows that she is acutely aware of this “paynted proces” that Pandarus has been working on her. *The Riverside Chaucer* glosses “paynted proces” thus: “Manipulative and deceptive discourse, with reference to the ‘colors’ of rhetoric...and paint’s quality of concealing” (1033).¹⁴ Yet Criseyde can give as good as she gets. Brody suggests that all her sighs, tears, fury, and woe here “may well be a contrived performance of her own” (135). Criseyde concludes her response by declaring, “Thow in this dredful cas for me purveye,/For so astoned am I that I deye” (426/7).¹⁵ Her furious response ends with the sorrowful sighing (428).

Pandarus instantly retaliates with his fourth thrust, the hard sell with emotional blackmail, dramatically fighting ire with ire. “Namore” Mr Nice Guy (till the latter part of the thrust), ‘bad cop’ Pandarus is now playing hardball. This fourth thrust (429-97) has a more complicated dynamic than the others as it is not simply Pandarus making a single speech, then Criseyde responding. Here, the two have more of a genuine dialogue, responding more immediately and briefly to each other. As with thrust three, Criseyde speaks (slightly) more lines than Pandarus, although he has the last word. As with thrust two, this section is almost

all Chaucer's invention.¹⁶ Both the tension and drama are high as Pandarus again attempts to win Criseyde for Troilus.

Pandarus begins this fourth thrust in a state of high dudgeon. He is appalled to have been "mystrusted thus" (431) and that Criseyde "sette lite of us,/Or of oure deth!" (432/3). More dramatic epanaphora follows: "O cruel god, O dispitouse Marte,/O Furies thre of helle" (435/6). Pandarus repeats that he never "mente harm or vilenye" (438), but now he and Troilus must die. Criseyde has treated them "wikkedly" (441) and does not care that they will die: "it liketh yow that I be ded" (442). Pandarus repeats his threat (from thrust two) to starve himself and die alongside Troilus:

Fro this forth shal I nevere eten bred
 Till I myn owen herte blood may see;
 For certeyn I wol deye as soone as he. (444-6)

As in thrust two, Pandarus dramatically intertwines his fate with Troilus's, although he makes the threat of their dying much more real and immediate this time. Pandarus's words amount to browbeating, scare-mongering, and emotional blackmail. He plays on Criseyde's attachment to *him* (her uncle) to make her love Troilus. Otherwise, they will surely die. He cannot raise the stakes any higher with his brinkmanship, so he underscores his deadly seriousness by motioning that he will go away and die without further ado: "And up he sterte, and on his wey he raughte" (447). Once again, Pandarus uses a melodramatic gesture as part of his thrust.

Pandarus's dramatic words and actions seem too much for Criseyde to bear. She physically pulls him back ("she agayn hym by the lappe kaughte" 448).¹⁷ Brody believes this action "implies a movement on her part to regain control of the situation. We are watching a man and a woman contend with each other" (135). According to the narrator, Criseyde is the "ferfelleste wight/That might be" (450/1). She thinks that Pandarus might not be bluffing: she "saugh the sorwful ernest of the knight,/And in his preier ek saugh noon unryght" (452/3). She thinks for a while before speaking. She is well aware that love is by no means a bed of roses ("Unhappes fallen thikke/Alday for love," 456/7), and men can be "cruel in hemself and wikke" (458). However, if Pandarus were to die, she would fear for her reputation:

And if this man sle himself—allas!—
 In my presence, it wol be no solas.
 What men wolde of hit deme I kan nat seye;
 It nedeth me ful sleighly for to pleie. (459-62)

Criseyde resolves to counter Pandarus's cunning of with some of her own, showing what Hubertis Cummings calls "her faculty for simulation" (104). Thus, before she speaks, she gives a "sorrowful sik" (463), then curses her unhappy lot (464). She laments her dilemma: either accept Troilus, or her uncle will die. She announces that "myn honour shal I kepe./And ek his life," and, that said, she "stynte for to wepe" (468/9). She conveys to Pandarus that the decision is heart-wrenching, but she will opt for the lesser of two evils: "Of harmes two, the lesse is for to chese" (470). Thus, she "levere maken hym[Troilus] good chere" (471).

Her choice, though, is motivated by strategy and fear: this is prudence not prurience. Pandarus has painted her into a corner, so she is fighting a desperate rearguard action. By showing that she has only agreed to accept Troilus under duress, Criseyde is drawing a line in the quicksand. Ostensibly, she is agreeing to no more than Pandarus asked for in his second thrust (332, 350), just to bring Troilus better "chere," although she almost certainly realises that such half measures will not satisfy them: in for a penny, in for a pound. As Burnley avers, she is now "complying to an extent, uncertain even to her, with his requests" (64). Yet Criseyde gives away nothing more at this juncture. This concession made, Criseyde seeks confirmation that "ye nothing elles me require?" (473). Pandarus recognises this concession by instantly confirming, "No, wis" (474), that is all they want.¹⁸ He also calls her "myn owen nece dere" (474) to re-ingratiate himself.

However, Pandarus has reneged before on his declarations that he only seeks Criseyde's friendship to Troilus, so she reiterates that this is as far as she has agreed to go. Troilus should not get his hopes up because she cannot "love a man.../Ayeins my wyl" (478/9). All she can try to do is to "plese hym fro day to day" (480), while safeguarding her honour.¹⁹ She would have agreed to that much before but for her "drede" (482). Fear is never far from her mind. She again tries to demark the boundary over which Troilus and Pandarus should never presume to cross. If they should try to push their luck any farther, then she will cut them loose and let them die. She proclaims this her "protestacioun" (484), warning them what will happen "in this proces if ye depper go" (485). Once more, she shows herself not to be oblivious to Pandarus's "proces" of persuasion, again throwing his odious word back in his face with this warning.²⁰

Pandarus, though, is a master of picking his battles. He pays ready lip service to Criseyde's condition here (490), but makes her promise to keep her word: "of this thyng that ye han hight me here,/Ye wole it holden trewely unto me?" (492/3). Criseyde promises, "Ye, doutelees,...myn uncle deere" (494). Friendly relations between niece and uncle have been re-established. Having won this promise from Criseyde, Pandarus is temporarily satisfied. Ostensibly, he has backtracked to his original position, but it seems something of a feigned retreat. Perhaps now he espies a tiny chink in Criseyde's armour against amour, through which Cupid's arrow may eventually penetrate. Nothing more remains to be said on the subject of Troilus for now ("what nedeth moore speche?" 497), so Pandarus thus concludes this fourth thrust.

The next development represents a watershed. Until now, Pandarus has badgered Criseyde relentlessly

about Troilus. Criseyde, meanwhile, would have willingly dropped the subject. Now, though, Pandarus backs off, having planted the seed in Criseyde's mind. Thus, "fellen the in other tales glade," (498). Troilus's name is not mentioned again until, significantly, *Criseyde* raises the topic of her own free will. Pandarus is no longer holding a figurative knife to her throat (or a real knife to his own throat, as in thrust two, 325). Criseyde is curious about Troilus's love and thus asks Pandarus with ill-feigned insouciance: "O good em...Tell me how first ye wisten of his[Troilus's] wo...Kan he wel speke of love?" (499, 501). Hearing these words, "Pandarus a litel gan to smyle," (505), pleased that Criseyde has presented him this perfect opportunity to describe Troilus's tortured love. Pandarus will not look this gift-horse in the mouth.²¹

Pandarus's fifth and final rhetorical thrust (505-88), the fantasy sequence, will entail talking up Troilus to the hilt, using plenty of artistic licence. Pandarus sees that Criseyde's rancour has given way to feeling flattered and curious. As Helen asks Paris, "who grows offended with a lover?" (*Heroides* 17:35). Pandarus will reap the fruit of this seed that he has so carefully sown: given *carte blanche*, he really goes to town describing Troilus's lovesickness, giving a "long, highly romanticized account" (Howard 174). The stages of the scene almost all have their equivalents in *Il Filostrato*, but Pandarus's particular panache is again clear. His efforts here seem successful in making Criseyde excited about the possibility of loving Troilus: by the thrust's end, she appears almost giddy with girlish glee. Even so, she is still "playing the game" (Cummings 104), to an extent, wanting to see Pandarus jump through all the right pro-forma hoops for wooing and winning a courtly lady in his account, although she almost certainly knows that the story he relates is not true (he is talking out of his "ers"). Thus, Brody contends that, "The point the poem makes...is not that she believes Pandarus but that she pretends to" (138). She somewhat willingly suspends her disbelief.

The opening salvo of this thrust has Pandarus setting the scene of how he first stumbled upon the lovesick Troilus, employing much artistic licence. In *Il Filostrato*, Pandaro simply tells Criseida that he and Troilo were in a "shady wood", talking about love (2:56). In contrast, Pandarus is more conscious of using all the proper courtly love conventions and paraphernalia for maximum effect, and so pulls out all the stops. He immediately describes a "paleis garden, by a welle" (508) as the setting of his putative encounter with Troilus. The garden well was a generic backdrop for complaining lovers, as in *The Romaunt of the Rose*.²² Pandarus reports that he and Troilus spent half a day there, before Troilus claimed to feel sleepy and lay down on the grass (515). Thinking Pandarus had gone, Troilus soliloquized his sorrows. However, Pandarus's propensity for propinquity enabled him to witness everything: "gan I stalke hym softly byhynde" (519).

Pandarus's account represents quite an elaboration on both *Il Filostrato* and the truth of the matter. Pandaro eavesdrops after hearing Troilo's "murmur" (*Filostrato* 2:57), but Pandarus's more dramatic account upgrades this to a woeful "grone" (518). *Il Filostrato* makes it "explicit" (*Riverside Chaucer* 1033)

that Pandarus did witness Troilus making such a lament, although it sounds “fictitious” (apRoberts, 1972, 12). However, Pandarus’s account seems purely fictitious: he probably never saw Troilus in any garden. *The Riverside Chaucer* suggests that Pandarus “concocts the whole episode in order to impress Criseyde” (1033).

The truth would impress Criseyde far less. As Arthur Hutson observes, Pandarus “did not tell Criseyde the exact truth: that he had come unexpectedly upon Troilus at home and in bed, and had with much difficulty wrung from him the cause of his malady and the name of his sweet foe” (469). Thus, Pandarus sexes it up by transforming this “supermundane” (Meech 35) slugabed into a lover who more closely fits the romantic ideal: pacing around a well, pining to Love. Even the sentiment that underpins the eloquent words that Pandarus attributes to Troilus was first planted in Troilus’s mind by Pandarus. When Troilus revealed his love for Criseyde, Pandarus “directed him to make a formal statement of sorrow for the sin of rejecting love” (Hutson 469). Only Pandarus’s prompting made Troilus apologise to the God of Love (I:932-8), yet Pandarus presents it as Troilus’s own heartfelt sentiment: “Right thus to Love he gan hym for to pleyne” (522), issuing a “*mea culpa*” (525) for previously treating Love so flippantly.²³ Pandarus had to give Troilus a kick in the pants to pull his romantic act together, then to prep and prime, to coax and coach, him. Hutson claims that, “There was no reason for Pandarus’ telling Criseyde his little fib, except that he seemed to enjoy dressing up the facts to make a nice little story. Literal truth was never, with Pandarus, a desideratum” (470). However, this is more of a ‘whopper’ than a “little fib,” and here he has every reason to embellish. Pandarus wants to impress the pants off Criseyde, so will sing Troilus’s praises even if it means lying. As Bass observes, “it is typical of...his well-meant sophistry to displace truth with falsehood,” (146).

Even so, Pandarus still keeps stressing his veracity to Criseyde. At the start of Troilus’s lament, Pandarus declares “the soothe for to seyne” (520), and, at its end, also protests that he speaks “trewely” (541). These declarations frame all his lies in between. Firstly, Pandarus lies about Troilus’s “*mea culpa*” to Love, then about his entreaty to Love to help him in his hour of need:

For certes, Lord, so soore hath she me wounded,
That stood in blak, with lokyng of hire eyen,
That to myn hertes botme it is ysounded,
Thorough which I woot that I moot nedes deyen. (533-6)

Pandarus presents Criseyde’s eyes as shooting deadly arrows into Troilus’s heart, again in the tradition of *The Romaunt of the Rose*.²⁴ Pandarus then quotes Troilus using another powerful image:

This is the werste, I dar me nat bywreyen;
 And wel the hotter ben the gledes rede,
 That men hem wrien with asshen pale and dede. (537-9)²⁵

Pandarus's account of Troilus's lament finishes with his description of another gesture: Troilus hanging his head and muttering (540-1).

The next part of Pandarus's story is thought to have its origins in Boccaccio's *Il Filocolo* rather than *Il Filostrato*.²⁶ Pandarus brags of the ruse he used so Troilus would not realise that he had been eavesdropping. Pandarus walked away, then returned, shouting at Troilus to wake up. This ruse also represents a love convention that might impress Criseyde: "To overhear a noble lover's compliant...and then to pretend ignorance...was a conventional strategy in amatory literature" (*Riverside Chaucer* 1033). Troilus, "though that he for wo was pale and wan" (551), quickly put on a brave face for Pandarus.

After leading Criseyde up the garden path with his fabricated account of Troilus in the garden, Pandarus speaks more truthfully as he rounds into the peroration of this thrust. He reports that Troilus had worn this painted smile until recently, when Pandarus found him in bed, groaning grievously as "he wepte soore" (562). Pandarus was deeply moved. Troilus swears Pandarus to secrecy before he will disclose his woes, then identifies Criseyde as the physician to cure his lovesickness (571). Pandarus begs Criseyde not to make him "rehercen al his speche,/Or alle his woful words" (572/3) because "ye wol se me swowne" (574).²⁷ This statement and the verb "rehercen" again underscore Pandarus's theatricality. Pandarus only breaks his oath to Troilus "to save his lif, and elles nought,/And to noon harm of yow" (575/6). Pandarus implores Criseyde:

Swich cheer hym dooth that he and I may lyven!
 Now have I plat to yow myn herte shriven,
 And sith ye woot that myn entent is cleene,
 Take heede thereof, for I non yvel meene. (578-81)

Pandarus's reprises some more jewel imagery as he concludes that Troilus and Criseyde will make the perfect couple: "be ye wis as ye be fair to see,/Wel in the ryng than is the ruby set" (584/5). The corresponding line in *Il Filostrato* is, "well is the jewel placed in the ring, if you are as wise as you are beautiful" (2:43), so "Chaucer's particularization of Boccaccio's 'gemma' into 'ruby'" (Jennings 534) is evident (as is Chaucer's having moved the image to a later, more climactic point in the dialogue). Clearly, this image of the ruby, "lord of all gems" (Jennings 534), is significant: Criseyde is the ruby that Troilus longs to possess, as critics have argued.²⁸ Once again, Pandarus's language and figures of speech are much more

evocative and powerful than those of Pandarus in *Il Filostrato*. Building on this image of Criseyde/Troilus as ruby/ring, Pandarus exults:

Ther were nevere two so wel ymet,
Whan ye ben his hool as he is youre;
Ther mighty God graunte us see that heure! (586-8)

These lines represent the climax of Pandarus's fifth thrust, his *coup de grace*, marking the full, dizzying progression of Pandarus's rhetorical "proces" in this exchange. Pandarus has gone from asking Criseyde merely to treat Troilus kindly when he occasionally calls to, here, enshrining them as the perfect couple, wholly given to one another: quite a stretch! Finally, though, Pandarus has stated his hopes in full. The timing of this full disclosure is surely no coincidence. When formulating this whole "proces," Pandarus postulated that, "th'ende is every tales strengthe" (260). Pandarus's point, as Wenzel affirms, is that the "gist of any speech, however long and artistically set, comes at the end" (153). In Burnley's words, the "closing stages...reveal the *dénouement* of the plot or the purpose of the narrative" (63). Although Pandarus modified this practice somewhat by telling Criseyde his wishes at an earlier stage, through piecemeal disclosures, he still appreciates the impact of the grand finale. Thus, he concludes this final rhetorical thrust by clearly delivering his point, his 'whammy,' to go out with a bang.

Criseyde reacts instantaneously to Pandarus's thunderbolt. She feels Pandarus is getting well ahead of the game and should hold his horses. She never said anything about giving herself wholly to Troilus: "Nay, therof spak I nought, ha! ha!.../As helpe me God, ye shenden every deel!" (589/90). Criseyde protests that Pandarus will spoil everything. Her words make her seem scandalised; however, does her laughter not betray that she is now more excited by the idea of loving Troilus, whereas before she had been horrified by it? Even so, for the sake of her honour, the observance of courtly love conventions, she cannot capitulate. She must still play hard to get. The situation Pandarus postulated may come about in future, but they should take it one step at a time. Hence, perhaps, Criseyde shows this *ad hoc* mock shock. For his part, Pandarus apologises for having been so presumptuous, repeating the familiar refrain that "I mente naught but wel" (592) and calling Criseyde "my blood, my nece dere" (594). Criseyde instantly forgives him, again suggesting that she had never been too deeply outraged by his audacious words.

Their epic exchange thus concluded, Pandarus goes home, leaving Criseyde alone. Pandarus "was glad and wel bygone!" (597). Presumably, he is so happy because he considers his five-pronged rhetorical 'proces' to have achieved its goal: it is almost in the bag. Criseyde, though, is less happy.²⁹ She immediately sits down, "And every word gan up and down to wynde/That he had seyde, as it com hire to mynde," (601/2). She replays in her mind every word that Pandarus has said, rehearsing the whole 'proces' again.

Presumably, she is trying to work out how she was transformed from someone adamantly opposed to having a lover into someone now curiously amenable to the idea (though still racked with some intangible fear). The process of how she comes to fall in love with Troilus from this point on is the subject of Howard's article, as he identifies therein Criseyde's "moment of consciousness during which the balance was tipped." Howard readily acknowledges that this moment only comes about because "Pandarus has just persuaded her to take a favorable view of Troilus" (174).

In conclusion, this exchange between Pandarus and Criseyde is no less a "*tour de force*" (Barney 29) than the ensuing lines (596-931), showing Criseyde, all alone, falling in love with Troilus, especially because the latter could never have happened without the former. In lines 260-595, Pandarus effects an astonishing *volte face* in Criseyde, transforming her from a woman implacably opposed to the idea of falling in love to one on the cusp of doing so. The *pas de deux* between uncle and niece has been intriguing, with almost every utterance being heavily nuanced and often supplemented by dramatic actions. Pandarus has great confidence in his powers of suave suasion, believing it will always keep him one move ahead of Criseyde; however, she can see through his attempts to finesse her. Their battle of wills is all the more epic when seen in the context of the "Boethian and Christian...[impression]...of a God who forsee[s] all events, controls all events, and yet does not remove free will from men" (apRoberts 1970, 435, which was "an indisputable truth for the medieval reader," 432). Pandarus believes that he is spinning a rhetorical web to ensnare Criseyde into loving Troilus. His "proces" consists of the five rhetorical thrusts: the set-up, the partial disclosure (with menaces), the sting, the hard sell with emotional blackmail, and the fantasy sequence. He runs the rhetorical gamut, ever moving back the goalposts on shifting sands. Such are the mechanics of this exchange between Pandarus and Criseyde, highlighting Chaucer's marvellous subtlety and originality in embellishing this scene from *Il Filostrato*. Beyond these mechanics, though, the task of recapturing the exact evanescent essence of the exchange seems almost analogous to trying to catch lightning in a bottle.

Endnotes

1. All *Troilus and Criseyde* quotations are from *The Riverside Chaucer*.
2. All *Il Filostrato* quotations are from the apRoberts translation.
3. Similarly, Boccaccio's Criseida is far lustier than Chaucer's Criseyde: "every step of the main action is the result of Criseida's passionate nature" (apRoberts 1962, 382), whereas Pandarus has to make all the running in the *Troilus* because Criseyde is a courtly heroine and thus not at all aggressively sexual. Meech claims Criseida "will have a bedfellow, be he who he may" (4) and thus "failed to offer a dignified resistance" (35) to Pandaro (who is her cousin, not uncle, in *Il Filostrato*). Moreover, Chaucer's Troilus is a novice in love, a 'cherry boy,' whereas Troilo has loved before (1:23).

4. Dinshaw declares, “Pandarus owes much of his characterization to Amis, the friend of Amant in the *Roman de la rose*” (59). *The Riverside Chaucer* also notes this influence as well as adducing other possible literary models of go-betweens, including Anus of *Pamphilus de Amore*, 1023).
5. Windeatt confirms “Chaucer’s taste for a solemnizing of important actions and decisions” (170), the “scenes, and the characters’ actions and gestures are visualized” (169). Windeatt also quotes J. Norton-Smith: “*Troilus* has a scenic and dramatic plot structure...[featuring]...climactic scenes” (182n).
6. As Dinshaw states, “in creating his ‘werk,’ [Pandarus] is much like a poet creating a text, inventing scenes, planning dialogue, ‘shaping’...the plot” (49). Similarly, Brody sees “Pandarus as a maker of plays,” wanting “to shape human emotions and behavior” (138): “He creates fictions” (139).
7. Wenzel also explains that “in fourteenth-century Latin, French, and English the noun *proces* had an even more specific technical sense referring to the ordered development of a sermon...[so]...it is likely that Chaucer intended to evoke the contemporary practice of skilful sermon-building.” Thus, Pandarus is like a “priest of Love” (154). D. W. Robertson, though, favoured the epithet “priest of Satan” (17) for Pandarus!
8. Pandarus’s “proverbial worldly wisdom” (Meech 35) is a feature of his speech: he “talks solemn platitude at interminable length” (Lewis 25). Pandarus returns to this *carpe diem* theme later in his third thrust (393-5). Both instances find their equivalents in *Il Filostrato* (2:44 and 2:54, respectively).
9. Bernard is quoted in Allen (2). Allen shows medieval lovesickness symptoms “ranged from mild (irregular pulse, loss of appetite, mental preoccupation) to weird (some medical writers said that the disease could turn men into werewolves) to dire (insanity and death)” (xviii). The “idea of lovesickness was at the center of a highly erudite and deeply respected tradition” (6), including Ovid’s mock-didactic treatises *Ars Amatoria* and *Remedia Amoris*. In *Remedia* (end of Part VI), one of Ovid’s “cures” was for the lovesick fellow to stumble upon the object of his affections while she voided her bowels as the sight and smell might dampen a lover’s ardour. Ovid was surely only joking, but his words came to be “regularly cited in all apparent seriousness by medieval medical writers” (Allen 11). Other, more extreme “cures” for the lovesick included beatings and even castration. However, most “doctors claimed that lovesickness could be cured by sex” (Allen 2). The theory (dating back to Galen, ca. 130-200) ran that lovesickness was a form of melancholia (caused by a build-up of black bile, of which semen was a by-product), so a release of semen would help restore the optimum balance of humours. Thus, when men get that feeling, they need sexual healing: “therapeutic intercourse” (Wack 15). Constantine also mentioned this “concept of lovesickness and the coital cure in several books” (Allen 9), including *De Coitu* (to which Chaucer refers, Merchant’s Tale, IV. 1810/11). Wack also asserts that “there was such an affinity between lovesickness and ‘courtly love’...Both offered techniques for constraining and yet indulging in potentially disruptive erotic impulses” (30). As Cummings confirms, quoting William G. Dodd, the basic principles of ‘Courtly Love’ are that it is “sensual and illicit” and “must not be too easily obtained” (122n).
10. Jewel imagery is important in *Troilus*, recurring at key points throughout the narrative (including twice in this exchange). Here, Pandarus posits that the beautiful Criseyde (potentially) being unkind

to Troilus would be analogous to a beautiful gem lacking “the magical power a gem was thought to possess” (*Riverside Chaucer* 1032).

11. Pandarus's protestation that he is no bawd rings rather ironic as his actions would see him become eponymous with bawdry (as Cummings notes, “Chaucer, it would seem, is responsible for the odious meaning the word has assumed” (118n). *The Riverside Chaucer* confirms, “From Pandarus's name the common noun *pandare* (procurer) is first attested...in about 1440”, 1023, and this meaning is so evident in Shakespeare's re-incarnation of the Pandarus character as a syphilis-obsessed bawd in his *Troilus and Cressida*). Chaucer's Pandarus might see himself as an *agent provocateur d'amour*, but others have reviled him as a base fornicatory facilitator, doing all the legwork, so Troilus can get his leg over, or being the Trojan horse that enables Troilus to get his oats. Worse still, Rudat even argues that, “For Pandarus, then, the Troilus-Criseyde affair is the vicariously performed actualization of his own incestuous fantasies” (112).
12. Thus, this passage is one of the first incarnations of the ‘Wise Fool’ in literature. Wenzel shows that, although wise fools featured in sermons, “the great poets of the fourteenth century did not pick up this potentially powerful figure” (238), which became “an obsession in literature” of the Renaissance (Welsford 200).
13. Helen writes to Paris (*Heroides* 17): “I forget not my honour” (17:13), “no false lover makes his boast of me” (17:18), and “My fear is a burden, I am in confusion even now” (17:147), as well as posing some rhetorical questions (17:210-14, 227-30).
14. In his Prologue, the Franklin claims that, “Colours of rethoryk been to me queynte” (V.726), and Pandarus had been trying to convey a similarly disingenuous impression to Criseyde. Barney observes the “terms *proces* and *peynte* are likewise collocated in the *House of Fame*” (37n) and also that Criseyde's “term, ‘paynted process,’ nicely joins the schemes of plot to the colors of language” (33). Windeatt also uses the term to characterise Chaucer's reworking of *Il Filostrato* as it “suggests the analogy of processes involved in painting or forms of printing and film: he overlays the existing structure with his own tones” (165).
15. Boccaccio's Criseida is not nearly as shocked and never suggests that she will die, which again shows Chaucer's Criseyde's “greater adamancy against commitment” (Meech 38). However, Criseida objects here by claiming still to be grieving for her late husband (2:49). In contrast, Criseyde never mentions the fact her late husband might still be warm in his grave as a possible impediment to her becoming hot and heavy with Troilus. Her widow's raiment, though, might signify that it goes without saying.
16. As Meech confirms, “Nowhere is Chaucer freer with his material” than in Book II (33).
17. Again, *Il Filostrato* is less dramatic. Pandaro never allies his fate so closely to that of Troilo, or suggests that he might die, too. As endnote 15 (above) also shows, “Death is much more often on [Chaucer's characters'] lips” (Windeatt 96). In this scene, Pandaro “almost rose to leave” (2:52) but settles himself back down without Criseida ever having to restrain him physically.
18. Although technically describing events in Book III, apRoberts's (1962) words on Pandarus's tactics also seem relevant to his fourth thrust here: “Pandarus has trapped Criseyde in a maze. She has tried every alley of escape but he has blocked each one and he leaves her with but a single course” (381); and he “is pleased and amused because a request which on the surface has the appearance of one

- purpose may be used to serve another purpose in a way which he alone can see" (375).
19. Again, Criseyde's concern with her honour recalls Helen (and even Criseida 1:121).
 20. As apRoberts (1969) avers, "At almost every step in the first three books, Criseyde offers resistance to Troilus and his helper and at each step her resistance is overcome...Criseyde's opposition is definitely shown at II, 484-489" (395). Indeed, Barney claims that, "'Proces' here, like 'protestacioun,' has a faintly legal tang" (33).
 21. In *Il Filostrato*, Criseida's request (2:55) to know more about Troilo's love also elicits a smile from Pandaro (2:56). Criseida's request, though, is immediate: there is no interlude of digressive small talk, further highlighting the greater subtlety of Chaucer's characters.
 22. *The Romaunt's* narrator reports how, in his dream, he wandered around a "garden dilectable" (1440), the Garden of Love, then "rested me/Besydes a wel, under a tree" (1456), the very spot where Narcissus expired.
 23. Hutson notes that Troilus's "*mea culpa*" here repeats the "well-known phrase from the *Confiteor*, which is recited by the penitent before Confession" (469). This image of Troilus as penitent before Confessor is reinforced by the mention of his "lowe confessioun" (528), request for "penaunce" (529), his smiting down of his head (540) and muttering (541, which sounds like the "murmur of the penitent in the confessional," Hutson 469). There also seems to be some correlation between Troilus's muttering with his head down here and *Il Filostrato*, which describes Troilus's "bowed head" (2:61). However, 2:61 contains no mutter (although 2:57 has that "murmur"), so *The Riverside Chaucer* suggests Chaucer's use of "motre" might instead "reflect the French translation of the *Filostrato*," (1033).
 24. *The Romaunt's* narrator describes how the God of Love shot an arrow "thorough myn ye unto myn herte" (1728). Perhaps only by somewhat fortuitous coincidence, this part of Pandarus's account is not an outright lie. As Stanbury confirms, "In Book 1 Troilus falls in love through visual rays, which penetrate his eye to wound his heart" (224). At the temple, through the crowd, the "subtile Stremes of hire yen" (1305) smote him so hard, "That sodeynly hym thoughte he felte dyen,/Right with hire look, the spirit in his herte" (306/7).
 25. This proverb dates back to Ovid, *Metamorphoses*: "the more they covered the fire, the more it burned" (4:64, talking about the love of Pyramis and Thisbe. Chaucer also uses a variant on the line in his *Legend of Thisbe* in *The Legend of Good Women*: "As wry the glede and hotter is the fyr,/Forbede a love, and it is ten so wod," 735/6).
 26. *The Riverside Chaucer* notes that lines 542-50 are "Not in the *Filostrato*; some details may be drawn from the *Filocolo* 1.238" (1033). In *Il Filostrato*, Pandaro does not speak again with Troilo in the woods after overhearing his lament.
 27. The swoon is a powerful gesture in *Troilus and Criseyde*. Troilus finally wins Criseyde after a dramatic swoon (III, 1092).
 28. Bass, Doob, and Jennings make use of the old *Lapidaries* to argue their cases. As well as the two jewel images Pandarus uses in this exchange, Bass shows how gems (especially rubies) become significant symbolically later in the poem. II 1087: Troilus sets the "ruby in his signet" in wax on his love letter to Criseyde. III 885: Criseyde wants to send Troilus a "blewe ryng." III 1371: Criseyde gives Troilus a gold brooch with a heart-shaped ruby. IV 549: When Criseyde has left Troy,

Pandarus laments, "O ryng, fro which the ruby is out falle." V 1661: Troilus's heart goes cold when he finds, on Diomede's cloak, the very brooch that he had given her. Although Doob claims Bass's "interpretations are not always valuable" (95n), her own interpretation of all the blue and red jewels still seems to fit. Jennings notes the "striking correlation between lapidary symbolism for the ruby and Chaucer's characterization of Criseyde" (533). The God-bestowed powers of the ruby were great: almost everything from conferring love and joy to guarding against snakebite, and they were much prized. Troilus believes that Criseyde, "as his ruby, will give peace to his eyes and comfort to his body" (536). Thus, Jennings rejects readings of lines II, 584-85, "as a metaphoric description of intercourse—with Criseyde as the ring and Troilus as the ruby" (535).

29. In contrast, Boccaccio's Criseida was "sighing, joyfully" immediately after Pandaro's departure as she also replayed "every little word and piece of news from Pandaro in the form in which it had been said" (2:68).

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