

Summer 1967

Chaucer's Pandarus : a character study

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CHAUCER'S PANDARUS: A CHARACTER STUDY

BY

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A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS IN ENGLISH

AUGUST, 1967

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PREFACE

Chaucer's Pandarus has been an intriguing character for me ever since my first exposure, as an undergraduate, to Troilus and Criseyde. Pandarus interests me because he is true to human nature in that he is not consistently one way all of the time. Like most human beings, Pandarus has many facets to his nature; therefore, I find it distressing that many critics and students of Chaucer will not acknowledge this complexity but rather tend to want to stereotype him. If Pandarus were a simple, transparent character, then his rank in English literature would be considerably less significant. It is my purpose in this thesis, then, to discover and point out many of the facets of Pandarus' complex character and, through this probe, to give the reader a better understanding and appreciation of one of Chaucer's most famous characters.

P. V. D.

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Chapter I
INTRODUCTORY

The line in Troilus and Criseyde, "A freend of his that called was Pandare,"¹ introduces one of the most controversial figures in English literature. In Pandarus, Chaucer created a character so vivid yet so complex that six hundred years of critical scholarship has resulted in little more than a hodge-podge of conflicting interpretations. Pandarus has been called everything from a common pimp to a "virtuous uncle and friend."² That there is a variety of interpretations should come as no surprise to anyone reasonably familiar with the poem. Successive readings of Troilus and Criseyde tend to complicate rather than clarify Pandarus' true character. Every new exposure to the poem reveals new facets of his nature. A brief review of some of the interpretations over

¹ Chaucer's Poetry, ed. E. T. Donaldson (New York, 1958), p. 568, Bk. I, line 548. (All subsequent references to Troilus and Criseyde are to the Donaldson text.)

² Eugene E. Slaughter takes the latter attitude in his article "Uncle Pandarus: Virtuous Uncle and Friend," JEGP, XLVIII (1949), 186-195.

the past seventy-five years will quickly reveal the critical dilemma.

W. M. Rossetti sees Pandarus as a "battered, middle-aged man of the world . . . whose scheming approaches nearer to treachery--both because he cleverly undermines the honour of Criseyde, and because his position as her uncle places him almost in the position of her 'guide and philosopher' as well as 'friend'"³ Bernhard ten Brink observes that "Pandarus is here properly adapted for a pimp, and his name has remained in the language as a synonym for this word."⁴ Like Rossetti and ten Brink, R. K. Root condemns the role that Pandarus plays. He feels that "from the medieval point of view as well as from the modern, the role which Pandarus plays is one of infamy and dishonor" While Troilus is blameless under the code, as is Criseyde as long as she is faithful, such is not the case with Pandarus, Root asserts. Circumstances, he says, have placed Pandarus in the position of a father or elder brother to Criseyde, and he betrays his trust. "He should have been

³
Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde Compared with Boccaccio's Filostrato (London, 1875-83), p. v, cited in T. A. Kirby, Chaucer's Troilus: A Study in Courtly Love (Gloucester, Mass., 1958), pp. 177-178.

⁴
History of English Literature (New York, 1893), II, i, 93-94, cited in Kirby, pp. 178-179.

her jealous guardian."⁵ The French critic Emile Legouis is severely critical of Pandarus. He says that because "Criseyde is such a pure heroine, the character of Pandarus becomes necessarily more repulsive." Pandarus, he thinks, is a corrupter of virtue . . . [whose] character would indeed have been intolerable if Chaucer had not veiled its nastiness by ridicule"⁶ J. J. Jusserand, in A Literary History of the English People (London, 1895), says that Chaucer makes Pandarus "a man of mature years, devoid of scruples, talkative, shameless [and] wily. . . . He is coarse and indecent, unintentionally and by nature, like Juliet's nurse. He is totally unconscious, and thinks himself the best friend in the world, and the most reserved"⁷ G. L. Kittredge, in attacking the role played by Pandarus, says that "the system of courtly love had neither comfort or excuse for Pandarus." Asserting that Criseyde's love for Troilus was well sanctioned by the courtly code, he argues that "that same code . . . held no justification for the go-between."⁸ D. W. Robertson sees

⁵ The Poetry of Chaucer, rev. ed. (Gloucester, Mass., 1957), p. 120. Root's Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde (Princeton, 1926), is a standard edition of Troilus and Criseyde. Its supplementary notes are helpful in a study of the poem.

⁶ Geoffrey Chaucer, trans. L. Lailavoix (London, 1913), pp. 127-128.

⁷ Cited in Kirby, p. 179.

⁸ Chaucer and His Poetry (Cambridge, Mass., 1960), p. 140.

Pandarus as a "wise, witty, and generous [man whose] . . . generosity is of the type which supplies gold to the avaricious and dainties to the glutton. . . . This little grotesque has as his function that of intermediary between a victim of foolish love and the object of his love. . . . Indeed there is more suggestion in the poem that Pandarus is a blind leader of the blind, a priest of Satan."⁹

The list of critics who are more favorable to Pandarus includes C. S. Lewis, who feels that Pandarus is a misinterpreted character. In The Allegory of Love, Lewis points out that Pandarus is a "faithful . . . discreet, resourceful, indefatigable man." Lewis states that Pandarus is "a friend according to the old, high code of friendship, and a man of sentiment. . . . He is inside the magic circle of courtly love--a devout, even a pedantic and lachrymose, exponent of it."¹⁰ Percy Van Dyke Shelly comes to the defense of Pandarus, declaring that "whatever [he] became in subsequent English literature, in Chaucer he is neither a pander nor a parasite nor a dotard nor a 'battered man of the world.' He is a man of the world, but he is neither battered nor old."¹¹ J. S. P. Tatlock thinks Pandarus is a "born intriguer [who] . . . truly

⁹ A Preface to Chaucer (Princeton, 1963), p. 479.

¹⁰ London, 1951, pp. 190-191, 194.

¹¹ The Living Chaucer (Philadelphia, 1940), p. 144.

believes he is not only making everybody comfortable but doing an unmixed service to both Troilus and his blighted and widowed niece."¹² Eugene Slaughter sees Pandarus as both a virtuous uncle to Criseyde and a good friend to Troilus. Invoking both the courtly ideal of friendship according to Guillaume de Lorris in the first part of The Romaunt of the Rose and the classical ideal of Jean de Meun in the second part of the Romaunt, Slaughter concludes that "Pandarus is still within the limits of ideal friendship." With equal ease Slaughter also acquits Pandarus of any charges of conflict of interest in his dealings with Criseyde.¹³ T. A. Kirby thinks Pandarus is "a typical courtly figure" and feels that he is motivated, as Troilus proclaims, by "gentillesse, / Compassion, and felaweshipe, and trist"¹⁴ (III, 402-403). George Williams, who sees Pandarus as "a complicated human being who has an acute sense of honor," takes a totally new approach to Pandarus and to Troilus and Criseyde as a whole. His thesis is that the poem, "in its essential narrative plot, seems to be a personal allegory" on the John of Gaunt-Katherine Swynford affair. Chaucer was a friend of John of Gaunt (and possibly his brother-in-law), but a more casual friend to Katherine

¹² "The People in Chaucer's Troilus," PMLA, LVI (1941), 96.

¹³ Slaughter, pp. 195, 186-191.

¹⁴ Kirby, pp. 190-191.

Swynford.¹⁵ In his discussion, Williams identifies Chaucer as the model for Pandarus and strengthens his argument for him by matching many of his character traits to those of the poet. In this manner Williams implies that our interpretation of Pandarus should be favorable, for certainly Chaucer did not intend an unfavorable interpretation of this "allegorical" figure.

It is at once apparent that there is anything but agreement on Pandarus' true nature. Older critics such as Legouis, ten Brink, Jusserand, and Root seem to concur in the opinion that Pandarus "is a middle-aged moral reprobate, an amusing character but a figure out of place in a courtly poem."¹⁶

This attitude can be explained in part by the fact that the Victorian atmosphere in which most of these critics lived was to some degree "colored by the unsavory connotation of the modern word 'pander.'¹⁷"

Modern critics such as Kirby, Lewis, Slaughter, Williams, Shelly, and Tatlock generally agree that Pandarus is motivated primarily by friendship, that at times he overplays his role, and that, in his position as a go-between, he operates within

¹⁵ George Williams, A New View of Chaucer (Durham, N. C., 1965), pp. 66-81.

¹⁶ Kirby, p. 186.

¹⁷ Williams, p. 76.

the framework of courtly love.

In light of this representative survey of both older and contemporary criticism, the reader should at once realize the scholarly entanglement facing one who would attempt to determine Pandarus' true nature.

Regardless of their differences of opinion, most critics will immediately point to the fact that Pandarus is not a character originating in Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde. He evolved in Boccaccio's Filostrato, the main source for Chaucer's poem, but even on first examination two obvious differences between the characters can be noted. Pandaro is depicted as a young man, certainly Troilo's contemporary and perhaps even the same age. Pandarus is cast as a man somewhat older than Troilus, but not too old to be his contemporary. 18
Though precise ages cannot be assigned, a reasonable view is that Pandarus is older than Troilus but is certainly within the same generation. A more specific determination of the relative ages of Pandarus and Troilus is not an essential element in this thesis. A further difference between Pandarus and Pandaro is the difference in the degree of kinship to the heroine.

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J. S. P. Tatlock places Pandarus' age in the early twenties and says that "Pandarus may well be thought of as older than his friend; he is Criseyde's uncle, but there is ~~not~~ another syllable to suggest that he belongs to a different generation." On this point G. L. Kittredge reminds the reader that Pandarus "is no boy, and middle age in the fourteenth century was ten years younger than it is today."

Pandaro is Criseida's cousin, and Pandarus is Criseyde's uncle.

However, the changes in kinship and age are minor in light of other changes Chaucer has made in the character. Boccaccio introduces his character as a "Trojan youth of high lineage and very bold spirit."¹⁹ Chaucer, in his introduction, describes him simply as "a freend of his that called was Pandare" (I, 548). We learn about Pandarus' social rank and "spirit" through dialogue and his activities rather than through a flat statement by Chaucer. Chaucer employs much more skill and technique in revealing to us that Pandarus is of noble lineage, and that he is on good terms with the royal family, moving in and out of the royal quarters with ease. With a few exceptions, Pandarus' character is revealed to the reader through dialogue.

In the Filostrato, Pandaro is practically indistinguishable from Troilo. Both are transparent figures, devoted to life on the town. They reflect in their makeup the "easy principles of their class."²⁰ Chaucer's Pandarus does not yield to such easy classification. One critic observes that his role is far more important than Pandaro's because "he has to deal with a woman quite different from her Italian prototype; much astute reasoning and many subtle speeches are

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R. K. Gordon, ed. The Story of Troilus and Criseyde (New York, 1964), p. 39.

20

Kittredge, p. 121.

required before Criseyde finally yields."²¹ The characterization of Pandarus, then, is stronger and more complex. C. S. Lewis indicates the complexity when he says there is "fold within fold" to be disentangled within him. This is a point that many critics overlook or refuse to accept. There exists a tendency to want to pigeon-hole Pandarus as a type. This is an unrealistic approach to the character; his very significance lies in his complexity. It is the purpose of this paper, then, to discover and examine the complexities of Pandarus' character and, by this approach, show the reader that Pandarus' character is multi-faceted rather than simple. The logical way to unfold his character is to trace his activities step-by-step through the poem and so to see Pandarus as Chaucer himself has chosen to reveal him; therefore, I have adopted the chronological approach in executing my examination.

²¹

Kirby, p. 121.

Chapter II

"A FREEND OF HIS THAT CALLED WAS PANDARE"

Pandarus first appears in Troilus and Criseyde midway through Book One. Finding his young friend weeping, he determines to stop his tears and discover the source of his woe. His first lines reveal him to be "Pandarus the psychologist"--one who can manipulate a person to get a desired result. He inquires:

" . . . what causeth al this fare?
O mercy God, what unhap may this mene?
Han now thus soone Greekes maad you lene?

Or hastou som remors of conscience,
And art now falle in som devocioun,
And waillest for thy sinne and thyn offence,
And hast forfered caught attricioun?
God save hem that biseged han oure town,
That so can laye oure jolitee on presse,
And bringe oure lusty folk to holinesse" (I, 551-560).

Pandarus knows that the greatest affront to a knight and prince is to have his manliness questioned. But Chaucer tells us that Pandarus does it for the "nones alle." At any rate, the taunt works, and Troilus musters up his courage and regains some of his composure, at least temporarily. He, however, is not yet ready to reveal the nature of his sorrow. Chaucer gives us

some insight into the strength of Pandarus' devotion to Troilus when he tells us that Pandarus "neigh malt for wo and routhe" (I, 582) when he sees his friend in such misery. A good affirmation of this friendship is seen in lines 589 through 595. Here, Pandarus offers to share the young prince's sorrow, telling him:

"I wol parten with thee al thy paine,
 If it be so I do thee no confort,
 As it is freendes right, sooth for to sayne,
 To entreparten wo as glad disport.
 I have and shal, for trewe or fals report,
 In wrong and right, yloved thee al my live--
 Hid nat thy wo fro me, but tel it blive."

To this reminder of their friendship, Troilus admits that he is in love. Pandarus at once chastises him, claiming that if he had known of it sooner he might have saved him some grief. Troilus retorts:

"This were a wonder thing, . . .
 Thou coudest nevere in love thyselven wisse:
 How devel maistou bringe me to blisse" (I, 621-623)?

Here we have the first suggestion of Pandarus' own limited success in love. But Pandarus is far from being ready to retreat at Troilus' thrust. He parries with one of his many apothegms:

"A whetstoon is no kerving instrument,
 But yit it maketh sharpe kerving tooles" (I, 631-632).

To bolster his argument Pandarus draws on his knowledge of

mythology, telling Troilus that

"'Phebus, that first foond art of medicine,'
 . . . 'and coude in every wightes care
 Remedye and reed by herbes he knew fine,
 Yit to himself his conning was ful bare,
 For Love hadde him so bounden in a snare,
 Al for the doughter of the king Amete,
 That al his craft ne coude his sorwes bete'"
 (I, 659-665).

We begin to see immediately that Pandarus is a man rarely at a loss for words. He has at his command a storehouse of maxims, old adages, and wise sayings from which he freely draws to meet the needs of the situation.

Pandarus refers to his own love life again in lines 667 through 669. Concluding his argument on his ability to advise Troilus, Pandarus says:

"I love oon best, and that me smerteth sore;
 And yit paraunter can I reden thee,
 And nat myselve; repreve me namore."

In speaking of Pandarus' progress in his own love affair, Charles Muscatine observes that he "has practiced love long and hard, and he knows his theory; but he was not born to play the instrument."²² He has had little or no success, but he bears his ill fortune admirably well. He is able to talk

²²
Chaucer and the French Tradition (Los Angeles, 1960),
 p. 139.

about his plight and, at times, even joke about it, but he is optimistic, for he tells Troilus:

"What many a man hath love ful dere abought,
Twenty winter that his lady wiste,
That nevere yit his lady mouth he kiste.

What sholde he therfore fallen in despair,
Or be recreant for his owene teene,
Or sleen himself, al be his lady fair?
Nay, nay, but evere in oon be fressh and greene,
To serve and love his dere hertes queene,
And thinke it is a guerdon hire to serve
A thousandfold more than he can deserve" (I, 810-819).

J. S. P. Tatlock agrees that Pandarus is "a suffering lover, but being more experienced and doubtless older, he accepts his plight with much more manhood and outward cheerfulness."²³ I believe that Pandarus accepts his fate as the will of Fortune; he realizes that nothing is to be gained by withdrawing into his quarters and weeping and feeling sorry for himself. He chooses to occupy himself with other affairs of life in order to forget his "joly wo."

Pandarus persists in persuading Troilus to reveal the name of the lady who is causing him all of this grief. He tries many different approaches. In playing up the friendship angle, Pandarus tells Troilus:

"Ne by my trouthe, I keepe nat restraine
Thee fro thy love, though that it were Elaine"
(I, 676-677).

²³
p. 44. The Mind and the Art of Chaucer (Syracuse, N. Y.), 1950),

Pandarus is unrelenting in his argument. Employing an old maxim he says:

"The wise saith, 'Wo him that is allone,
For, and he falle, he hath noon help to rise'"
(I, 694-695).

Changing his attack, Pandarus tells him:

"Men sayn, 'To wrecche is consolacioun
To have another felawe in his paine'" (I, 708-709).

Pandarus tries a different tack:

"If God wol, thou art nat agast of me,
Lest I wolde of thy lady thee begile" (I, 715-716).

These two lines are significant in that they give some suggestion of Pandarus' relative age. By his own words he considers himself young enough to be Troilus' rival.

Troilus is still unmoved by Pandarus' arguments. Pandarus argues that if he knew who the lady was he could go and ask her to be more compassionate, since Troilus is afraid to plead his own suit. Troilus remains mute. Pandarus changes his tack again. He warns Troilus of what might happen to his reputation if he grieves himself to death for a lady who does not know of his love:

"What may she deemen other of the deeth,
If thou thus die and she noot why it is,
But that for fere is yolden up thy breeth,

For Greekes han biseged us, ywis?
 Lord, which a thank thanne shaltou han of this!
 Thus wol she sayn, and al the town at ones:
 !The wrecche is deed, the devel have his bones!"
 (I, 799-805).

Pandarus tells Troilus that the best plan is for him to reveal all his woe and that shortly Troilus will discover that Pandarus will be a great aid to him. Replying that the matter is not in his or Pandarus' hands, Troilus asserts, "for wel finde I that Fortune is my fo" (I, 837). At this remark, "Pandarus the philosopher" steps on stage. Echoing Boethius' postulate, Pandarus tells Troilus that Fortune is common to every man and remarks that as our joys pass away, so must our sorrows. He continues:

"For if hir wheel stinte any thing to turne,
 Than ceessed she Fortune anon to be.
 Now, sith hir wheel by no way may sojurne,
 What woostou if hir mutabilitee
 Right as thyselven list wol doon by thee,
 Or that she be nought fer fro thyn helpinge?
 Paraunter thou hast cause for to singe" (I, 848-854).²⁴

Pandarus' remark some six lines later has been cited by some critics as evidence of his base character. In these two lines Pandarus tells Troilus that

"Were it for my suster al thy sorwe,
 By my wil she sholde by al thyn tomorwe" (I, 860-861).

24

Walter Clyde Curry, "Destiny in Chaucer's Troilus,"
PMLA, XLV (1930), 137.

On the basis of these lines, some critics classify Pandarus as a pimp who would even stoop so low as to procure his own sister. Grounds exist for serious objection to this conclusion; Pandarus should not be taken seriously here, but rather in the vein in which he speaks--for the "nones alle." On this point, Percy Van Dyke Shelly remarks that such an offer "was not such an offence against the morality in ancient Greece, or even in fourteenth-century England, as it is today. Instances of men offering their sisters to a comrade are not unknown in early literature."²⁵ To extend Shelly's analysis then, it would certainly be no offence for Pandarus to procure Criseyde, for his degree of kinship is not as close as it would be to a sister, and, of course, his obligation to his niece would certainly not be as strong.

This controversial proposition can best be understood when viewed in the context of the next two stanzas. Pandarus has lost all patience. He grabs Troilus and shakes him until he admits that his "sweete fo [is] called Criseide" (I, 874). It becomes evident that Pandarus is not necessarily speaking from the heart but is speaking as one who has reached the end of his patience. In his proposition perhaps he is much like the young lover who promises to get the moon for his beloved. Pandarus' proposal and the analogy of the young

²⁵
Shelly, p. 145.

lover, then, must be interpreted not literally, but rhetorically, expressing a desire to be of the utmost service.

An interpretation of one aspect of Pandarus' character that becomes well-nigh inescapable is that he has relentless curiosity. Mingled with his devotion to Troilus, this curiosity is almost inseparable from his sincere and genuine interest in the young prince. Where many other friends would have abandoned the quest for Troilus' secret, Pandarus' insatiable curiosity causes him to persist until he discovers what he is seeking. To attempt to separate incidents of curiosity from incidents of sincere interest and devotion would be folly. The mere fact that Pandarus persists in his inquiries to the point of intimidating Troilus bears witness to the presence of this undesirable character trait.

Pandarus is elated to learn that his friend's beloved is his own niece Criseyde. He praises her highly and compliments Troilus on his good selection. We see here strong evidence of Pandarus' keen insight into human nature, for he knows exactly what strategy has to be used in winning favor for Troilus. He tells his young friend to be glad because Criseyde is virtuous in all things and it follows that,

" . . . ther is som pitee
Amonges alle thise othere in general" (I, 899-900).

In pleading the case for Troilus, then, he will appeal to

26
 her pity. He warns his friend that if he wants to be successful in his suit, he must be circumspect. In some Polonius-like advice, Pandarus reminds Troilus:

"He hasteth wel that wisely can abide.
 Be diligent and trewe, and ay wel hide;
 Be lusty, free, persevere in the servise--
 And al is wel if thou werke in this wise"
 (I, 956-959).

By twentieth-century standards one expects Pandarus to realize that his first duty is to protect his niece and her honor. But he does not hesitate a minute; he leaps right into the breach, plotting to effect Criseyde's surrender. According to the courtly love tradition, it is a violation of the code for a young lady to deny her love to a worthy knight. Pandarus acknowledges this when he says:

"But trewely, it sate hire wel right nouthe
 A worthy knight to loven and cherice--
 And but she do, I holde it for a vice" (I, 985-986).

In lines 988-994, Pandarus again affirms his friendship with Troilus. Reminding him that "silence is golden" in courtly affairs, and reaffirming his advocacy to his cause, Pandarus says:

"Wherfore I am and wol been ay redy
 To paine me to do you this servise;

For bothe you to plesse thus hope I
 Hereafterward, for ye been bothe wise,
 And comen it conseil keepe in which a wise
 That no man shal the wise of it be--
 And so may we been gladdened alle three."

Troilus consents to follow Pandarus' directions and protests his indebtedness to him. Pandarus acknowledges this and departs.

In his preface to Pandarus' parting speech, Chaucer interjects that Pandarus was "tho desirous to serve / His fulle freend . . ." (I, 1058-59). This is the second of at least two affirmations of friendship given by the poet. As has been shown, Pandarus himself protests his willingness to serve his friend completely in the interest of their friendship. The fact that Troilus is hesitant to reveal the nature of his woe and later the name of his beloved to Pandarus is not inconsistent with their friendship. Troilus is a courtly lover, and he has been taught that "that toucheth love, that ought been secree" (I, 744). He only confesses because he has no defense against Pandarus' well-turned arguments.

Pandarus' complex nature should at once be apparent to the reader. Although we may safely conclude through Book One that he is a friend to Troilus, we must immediately concede that there is more to his character than simple friendship. Pandarus is certainly a curious and impatient man who will not take "no" for an answer when his curiosity is whetted.

In seeking information he is a master at persuasion, drawing freely from his ready supply of apothegms, adages, old saws, and Boethian philosophy, all of which he uses with consummate skill to reinforce his point. He knows human nature, and this keen insight allows him to "read the pulse" of both Troilus and Criseyde to determine which reservations must be argued away and which line of approach will best yield a desired result.

Pandarus is also an unsuccessful lover who bears his grief admirably well. However, his scars from his ill-fated love affair seem to be more than superficial, for he quickly becomes defensive when Troilus challenges his lack of success. Through the end of Book One Pandarus also seems to be a courtly figure, for he insists at several points that the love affair be conducted with utmost reserve and secrecy, which is consistent with the courtly code. Suffice it to say at the outset that Pandarus' character yields to no one simple classification.

Chapter III

"SLEE NOUGHT THIS MAN"

Book Two opens with an ironic situation. It is the month of May, and the countryside around Troy is bursting into bloom. The sun is shining brightly, and the "Swalwe Proigne" is announcing the day with her song. But what a striking contrast Pandarus presents! The man who is so hardened to the frustrations of love, so radiantly optimistic, so confident in Troilus' impending success, is himself feeling the pains of love:

So shoop it that him fil that day a teene
In love, for which in wo to bed he wente, 27
And made er it was day ful many a wente (II, 61-63).

Awakened from his half-sleep by the chattering of "Proigne," Pandarus arises, dresses, and then begins to address his thoughts to the affairs of Troilus. Lines 74 and 75 reveal that the many-faceted "freend" is also an astrologer. Before departing to Criseyde's house he "caste and knew in good plit was the moon to do viage . . .": finding the moon in a favor-

able position with the other planets, he sets out on his
²⁸
mission.

It should not be assumed that Pandarus sets out to see Criseyde on the day after his visit to Troilus. On the contrary, there is a sizeable lapse of time between the two events, perhaps as much as a month. Troilus, it will be remembered, "fell in love with Criseyde in early April (see Book I, Lines 155 ff.), and Pandarus experiences his 'teene' in love (II, 61-63) on the third of May."²⁹ One interpretation here is that Pandarus has been using this time to map out his strategy, not wanting to rush into the situation ill prepared, risking possible failure. He has been putting his time to good use, all the while waiting for favorable lunar conditions.

Arriving at Criseyde's house, he exchanges greetings with his niece. Their opening conversation is warm and light, revealing a relaxed closeness between the two. Criseyde is dressed in mourning clothing complete with veil. Her husband having died, she is observing a two-year period of mourning.³⁰ Pandarus chides her for her observance of this courtly rule. He tells her:

²⁸
Curry, p. 138.

²⁹
Kemp Malone, Chapters on Chaucer (Baltimore, 1951), p. 124.

³⁰
Rule Six of Andreas Capellanus, cited in Kirby, p. 297.

"Do way youre barbe and shew youre face bare.
 Do way youre book, rise up, and lat us daunce.
 And lat us doon to May som observaunce" (II, 110-112).

Criseyde is appalled at this suggestion. There are at least two possible interpretations of Pandarus' actions. First, that he makes his remark solely in jest; he is simply "japing" at her. However, it certainly would have been a cruel act to joke at a young widow for her mourning practices. The second, and, perhaps, the more valid interpretation is that Pandarus is speaking in earnest. He is impatient with the courtly code--at least this aspect of it. His is the realistic approach to life and particularly courtly matters. He thinks that Criseyde's mourning is at best asinine. He has masked his true feeling with good nature in an attempt to soft-pedal his doctrine. Pandarus' lack of success in his own courtly endeavors could be attributable to his unwillingness to follow the slow, step-by-step procedure. This impatience could have had an adverse effect on his own lady.

Letting the topic of mourning and mourning attire pass, Pandarus determines to make his pitch for Troilus. He tells her, "Yit coude I telle a thing to doon you playe" (II, 121). Pandarus here is plying a little psychology on Criseyde. He knows, or at least can surmise, that if he makes a straightforward statement of Troilus' case he will probably have a difficult time persuading Criseyde. But here he, in effect,

preconditions her by telling her that if she knew his secret she would really be happy. This is actually step two in his plan, for his attack on her mourning practices was an attempt to allay any reservations she might have in being receptive to Troilus' attentions.

Though her curiosity is whetted considerably, Criseyde, nevertheless, feigns disinterest and changes the topic of conversation. She attempts to make polite conversation and inquires about the war and the valorous Hector, thus falling right into Pandarus' hands. Her opportunistic uncle takes his cue. He makes a perfunctory reply and, then with a smooth transition, adds:

"And eek his fresshe brother Troilus,
The wise, worthy Ector the secoude,
In whom that alle vertu list habounde,
As alle trouthe and alle gentillesse,
Wisdom, honour, freedom, and worthinesse" (II, 157-161).

Concluding his praise of Troilus, Pandarus prepares to leave. A reasonable interpretation is that he makes this false start to heighten the tension and curiosity in Criseyde. She delays him, asking for his counsel in some business affairs. Business talk having been concluded, Pandarus, again pretending that he has to leave, tells her:

". . . Now it is time I wende.
But yit I saye, ariseth, lat us daunce,
And cast youre widwes habit to meschaunce.

What list you thus youreself to disfigure,
Sith you is tid thus an aventure?" (II, 220-224).

The impact of these lines is twofold. First, he tries to point out that her mourning is ridiculous and by implication anticipates a possible objection she might have when she learns his secret. He appeals to her vanity by telling her that the veil defaces her appearance. Few women can constantly remain impervious to this type of criticism--Criseyde included. Second, Pandarus, in line 224, brings up the matter of the secret again. Not that Criseyde necessarily had to be reminded--in fact it is certain that she did not. This line simply serves to intensify her curiosity.

Pandarus has laid all the ground work. Criseyde has been prejudiced sufficiently by Troilus propaganda; this coupled with her desire to know Pandarus' secret will probably yield a favorable result when her curiosity is satisfied. At the right time, Pandarus tells her:

"The noble Troilus so loveth thee,
That but ye helpe, it wol his bane be.
Lo, here is al--what sholde I more saye?
Dooth what you list to make him live or deye"
(II, 319-322).

But Pandarus is far from letting her do as she pleases, for during the next sixty-three lines, she cannot get a word in edgewise. Determined to prevent an unfavorable reaction, he employs all the craft at hand. He bursts into tears, pleading

that if she lets Troilus die, then he too will cut his own throat. He reproaches her for being cruel and indifferent. Compared to Pandarus, Clarence Darrow would seem like a high-school debater. In this speech Pandarus states his awareness of the role he appears to be playing:

"And also, think wel that this is no gaude,
 For me were levere thou and I and her
 Were hanged, that I sholde been his bawde,
 As heigh as men mighte on us alle ysee.
 I am thyn eem, the shame were to me
 As wel as thee, if that I sholde assente
 Thurgh myn abet that he thyn honour shente"
 (II, 351-357).

Pandarus does not consider himself a moral pervert, nor should he, for the go-between is a fully accredited member of the courtly tradition.³¹

Some 224 lines later Pandarus again protests the genuine nature of the role he is playing:

"And sith ye woot that myn entente is clene,
 Take heede therof, for I noon yvel mene" (II, 580-581).

There are two possible interpretations of Pandarus' protestations of innocence here. The first is that he is earnestly

31

Kirby, p. 187. Courtly love, it must be remembered, is certainly not Platonic. It is an idealized system of love-making characterized generally by adulterous, illicit behavior. According to the courtly code, a lady is expected to yield to her lover after he has proved worthy of her favor. The chief sin against courtly ethics is faithlessness. For a full discussion of courtly love and the courtly love code, see Lewis, pp. 1-43, and Kirby, pp. 1-87.

reminding Criseyde of the worthiness of the role he is playing and is merely attempting to allay any hesitancy she might have at being aided in an amour by her uncle. The second interpretation is that he is feeling a pang of conscience about the role he is playing. He is a courtly figure and accepts the role of the go-between, but has trouble accepting his seeming conflict of roles. Through this point in the poem, it appears that the more valid interpretation is the former one. Pandarus has reasoned out his strategy and is again attempting to anticipate one of his niece's reservations.

Criseyde finally agrees to show Troilus some favor, and Pandarus departs well satisfied. He was in control of the situation at all times. Just as he handled Troilus in Book One, so did he manipulate Criseyde here. It is again clear that Pandarus has an uncanny insight into human nature. In Book One he extracted the secrets from Troilus by appealing to his sense of honor and manliness. Here he effected an acceptance of his proposal by appealing to Criseyde's vanity, curiosity, and pity.

To reasonably determine Pandarus' liabilities in coaxing his niece into the love affair with Troilus, one must consider Criseyde's character in part. She is an independent woman who controls her own emotions. Living alone (save for her attendants), she is conditioned to making her own decisions and in the immediate circumstance, her decision to become involved

is her own. A reasonable interpretation is that she is not completely taken in by the dramatics of her uncle. She has weighed the situation carefully and finally resolved that

" . . . He which that nothing undertaketh
Nothing n' acheveth, be him loth or dere" (II, 807-808).

It is noteworthy that the "honour" that she esteems so highly is, in reality, reputation rather than conscience. This is evidenced by her lengthy soliloquy in lines 652 through 805.

Pandarus comes to Troilus and reports the success of his visit to Criseyde. Troilus is overjoyed and praises his friend to the highest. Pandarus, however, is not content to rest on his laurels but introduces the second step in his master-plan. He proposes that Troilus write a letter in his own hand, laying bare his heart and protesting his pitious state. Pandarus proposes to deliver the letter and tells Troilus to come riding by at the prearranged time; he will find Criseyde and him sitting in the window. He warns Troilus to be very restrained and tells him to simply salute them. He tells Troilus that he will follow this up by a pitch for his acceptance. The effects on Criseyde's emotional state should be devastating.

As to the form and content of the letter he proposes, Pandarus is a master. He reveals his years of practice in love when he advises Troilus on the mechanics of writing a billet doux. He says to Troilus:

"I woot thou wilt it digneliche endite,
 As make it with thise argumentes tough,
 Ne scrivenissh or craftily thou it write,
 Biblotte it with the teres eek a lite;
 And if thou write a goodly word al softe,
 Though it be good, reherce it nought too ofte"
 (II, 1024-29).

He concludes his instruction with this advice:

"Ne jompre eek no discordant thing yfere,
 As thus, to usen termes of physik;
 In loves termes hold of thy matere
 The forme alway, and do that it be lik" (II, 1037-40).

From Pandarus' advice we see that he is a man of both subtle skill and practicality. The proposed "coincidental" meeting shows that he is a man of artifice. ³² He knows human nature and knows how to toy with emotions. He designed the "coincidental" meeting to supercharge the effect of the well-turned letter.

Pandarus delivers Troilus' letter on the morning after it is written. He blames his early visit on his inability to sleep. The beauty of the May morning is having an adverse effect on him. Pandarus is feeling the pains of love again. He begins at once to joke with his niece, telling her of his love pains:

"I may nought sleepe nevere a Mayes morwe:
 I have a joly wo, a lusty sorwe" (II, 1098-99).

Criseyde, carrying on the bantering, asks him "how ferforth be ye put in loves daunce?" (II, 1106). Pandarus replies, "By God, . . . I hoppe alway bihinde" (II, 1107).

Pandarus' ability to endure his bad fortune is one of his better traits. Rather than burden Criseyde and Troilus with his plight, he prefers to treat the matter lightly in front of them. We have seen that Pandarus in fact does not take his misfortune as lightly as he pretends. One interpretation of his flippancy is that he is trying to save face in front of his friends by trying to show a lack of deep concern. If this is the true interpretation, then his tactics are ineffectual, for his plight is almost the laughingstock of Criseyde.

Pandarus and his niece retire to the garden to converse. He tenders the letter to her and tells her:

" . . . of som goodly answere you purchase
Or helpe me God, so plainly for to sayne
He may nat longe liven for his paine" (II, 1125-27).

There is a noticeable trend developing in Pandarus' grain of speech. Every request made of Criseyde, which she might find objectionable, is suffixed with the warning, "if you do not do that thing, Troilus will surely die." Pandarus is forced to hold the "big stick" over her head because of her nature. Criseyde does not act on impulse; she weighs and balances the merits and drawbacks of every situation. She is decisive when she moves, but nonetheless, she will not be forced into

a situation without forethought. When Pandarus speaks of Troilus' dying for love, Criseyde knows that he is not speaking figuratively. In courtly affairs, men dying because of a lost love or in pursuit of love are not uncommon. Criseyde simply responds better when this fact is re-emphasized.

Pandarus offers the letter to Criseyde, but she refuses to accept it. At this point he forces the letter down the bosom of her dress. It should not be assumed that he makes her accept the letter totally against her will. Criseyde is a courtly lady and is expected to exhibit a great deal of restraint and reserve. Her feigned indignance is consistent with the courtly pattern of conduct. That she wants to have the letter and know its contents is evidenced by the fact that she excuses herself almost immediately and retires to her room to read the letter. It can be reasonably conjectured here that Pandarus is aware of the restraint imposed on a lady by the courtly code, but he knows that, if through no other reason than her curiosity and vanity she will accept the billet doux. Here as in other places, Pandarus takes the realistic approach to the situation and uses his practicality to circumvent the rigid idealism of the courtly code to meet the practical needs of the situation.

Pandarus and Criseyde dine together and after dinner, on Pandarus' suggestion, Criseyde retires to her room to write Troilus a reply. Pandarus, in the meantime, has moved to the

window overlooking the street, and when Criseyde returns she joins him there. He begins at once to upbraid her for her hard-heartedness and just at the conclusion of the lecture, Troilus rides by. Criseyde is shaken emotionally by his total appearance. The poet tells us:

. . . nevere sith that she was born
 Ne hadde she swich routhe of his distresse
 (II, 1269-70).

Her affection, prompted by pity, is intensified. Pandarus' scheme has worked; but the practical uncle is determined to get more mileage out of the plan. Determined to get a commitment out of Criseyde, Pandarus becomes the lawyer and poses a supposititious case to her:

"Nece, I praye you hertely,
 Telle me that I shal axen you a lite:
 A womman that were of his deeth to wite,
 Withouten his gilt, but for hire lakked routhe,
 Were it wel doon?" Quod she, "Nay, by my trouthe"
 (II, 1277-81).

Getting the desired answer, Pandarus in effect, says, "you are that woman." He entreats her to speak with Troilus to ease the pain in his heart, but Criseyde, in true courtly fashion, thinks it is too early to grant such a liberty.

For plainly hir entente, as saide she
 Was for to love him unwist if she mighte,
 And guerdone him with nothing but with sighte
 (II, 1293-95).

On this point Pandarus and Criseyde do not see eye to eye.

Pandarus thinks to himself:

" . . . It shal nought be so;
If that I may this nice opinioun
Shal nought be holden fully yeres two" (II, 1296-98).

In these lines, which make reference again to Criseyde's mourning, we see another affirmation of Pandarus' impatience. He feels that things are going too slowly, but he lets matters stand for the moment and rises and takes his leave.

Arriving at Troilus' quarters, Pandarus finds the young prince in a trance hovering "bitwixen hope and derk despe-
raunce" (II, 1307). Pandarus gives him Criseyde's letter and his pain is temporarily allayed. But the letter simply fans the flames of love, and he writes letters to Criseyde frequently. Governed by her reply, "so were his dayes sory outhur gladde" (II, 1351). Chaucer tells us that Troilus is constantly turning to Pandarus for consolation and advice,

And Pandarus, that sawgh his woode paine,
Weex wel neigh deed for routhe, sooth to sayne
And bisily with al his herte caste
Som of his wo to sleen, and that as faste (II, 1355-58).

Here the author himself gives us another affirmation of the love, compassion, and friendship Pandarus has for Troilus. It is difficult to attribute a motive other than dedication and devotion to him here. Pandarus, who himself is "wel neigh

deed for routhe" for his young friend, feels compelled to devise some way to relieve Troilus' pain.

The plan devised by Pandarus is a masterpiece! He contrives a story of how certain men are trying to oppress Criseyde and seize her property. He tells this tale to Deiphebus, Troilus' younger brother, and to Criseyde. Deiphebus immediately volunteers his services in her defense. Pandarus then suggests that he have a dinner party at which this matter can be discussed. Deiphebus immediately agrees and suggests that Helen and Troilus be invited. According to Pandarus' plan, Troilus is to go to Deiphebus' house the day before the party and feign an illness and be confined in bed there. Pandarus is to arrange a private audience between Troilus and Criseyde where Troilus may protest his love and devotion to her.

The party is held and things are progressing smoothly. The conversation, as it does at most parties, switches from subject to subject. Every time Troilus' valor becomes the topic Pandarus adds his amen. After Criseyde's problem is aired and aid is enlisted, Helen inquires if Troilus knows of the matter. Pandarus says "yes" and suggests that Criseyde might see Troilus and personally enlist his aid before she goes. Deiphebus and Helen go in to see Troilus, and after some conversation they are diverted by a letter and walk out to peruse its contents. The way is clear for Criseyde;

Pandarus invites her to go and see the "ailing" knight.

Even while Pandarus is escorting Criseyde to Troilus' room, he is campaigning for his friend. He is ever preparing and conditioning her to reap every possible advantage from the psychological moment. He hits her with his barrage of entreaties:

"Slee nought this man that hath for you this paine"
(II, 1736).

"Think al swich taried tide but lost it nis"
(II, 1739).

"Lest time ylost, I dar nought with you dele:
Com of therefore, and bringeth him to hele"
(II, 1749-50).

Hearing all this, Troilus lies frozen in fear.

Pandarus announces Criseyde to Troilus as "lo here is she that is youre deeth to wite" (III, 63). Chaucer tells us that "therwith it seemed as he wepte almost" (III, 64). Pandarus is unrelenting. He constantly reminds her of Troilus' state to spur her into action. The fact that he looks as though he almost weeps may be interpreted not as heartfelt, but as mere theatrics. Criseyde has a duty to perform, he feels, and he is going to spare no technique in pushing her to perform it.

At the sight of Criseyde, Troilus is at first speechless. He regains his control, pledges his love and devotion to her, and asserts his willingness to die for her. The

poet, commenting on the pitious sight, tells us:

Therwith his manly sorwe to biholde
 It mighte han maad an herte of stoon to rewe
 (III, 113-114).

Pandarus is not unmoved by this scene, for he "weep as he to water wolde" (III, 115) and begs of Criseyde:

"For love of God, make of this thing an ende,
 Or slee us bothe at ones er that ye wende"
 (III, 118-119).

Here it seems that Pandarus' tears are genuine. To see his friend, a tenacious warrior, reduced to such a state is surely heart-rending. The narrator in lines 113 through 114 (above) confirms this. Pandarus' entreaty to his niece is the result of a spontaneous overflow of emotions.

Troilus continues his suit, petitioning to be taken into Criseyde's service. He vows to honor her every request and in other ways serve her completely. Inspired by this and another prod from Pandarus, Criseyde finally receives him fully into her service. After cautioning him on his conduct, she tells him:

"Beeth glad, and draweth you to lustinesse;
 And I shal trewely with al my might
 Youre bittre turnen al into swetnesse"
 (III, 177-179).

With these words she embraces and kisses him. Pandarus is

ecstatic. He falls to his knees and raises his arms heavenward:

"Immortal god," quod he, "that maist nought dien,
 Cupide I mene, of this maist glorifye:
 And Venus, thou maist maken melodye:
 Withouten hand me seemeth that in the towne
 For this merveile ich heere eech belle soune"
 (III, 185-189).

That Pandarus is overplaying his role for dramatic effect is a probable interpretation here. He is of course happy at what his niece has done but, nonetheless, her actions are not beyond his wildest dreams or expectations. He simply thinks it best to ratify her actions in such a strong manner that she will more readily realize her deed of mercy and will perhaps be inclined to be merciful again.

Hearing Deiphebus and Helen returning, Pandarus calls the meeting to a close, telling Troilus and Criseyde:

"That at myn hous ye been at my warninge,
 For I ful wel shal shape youre cominge.
 And eseth ther youre hertes right ynough,
 And lat see which of you shal bere the belle
 To speke of love aright"--therwith he lough--
 "For ther have ye a leiser for to telle"
 (III, 195-200).

Shortly after hearing these words, Criseyde takes her leave.

The entire plan and its application exhibit many of the facets of Pandarus' complex nature. As producer, director, and actor in his own little play, he was in complete control

of the situation from the outset to the finale. He moves the members of the cast around his own theater as though they were his own marionettes. There is an undertone running throughout the poem which is particularly strong here. This is that Pandarus is simply having Troilus and Criseyde act out for his vicarious pleasure the kind of love affair which he fails in himself. This interpretation is reasonably suggested and should be coped with. A further discussion of this interpretation is included in the summation.

That the plan Pandarus produces is based on an out-and-out lie, is obvious. He is a liar of consummate skill, but his falsehood is fathered by the merits of Troilus' case. Troilus is in the throes of love. Pandarus is afraid he will die (and ironically he does); out of pity and friendship, he propagates this plan. It is reasonable to assume that a forthright approach might not have worked with Criseyde. She has been married once and is mourning the death of her husband. She is virtually self-sufficient, making most of her own decisions. She has known love before and knows the pain of losing it, and, by the narrator's own words, she is hesitant to undertake an amour which might cause her pain and suffering. Her courtly restraint and sense of honor will not allow such a thing anyway, irrespective of her heart's desire, at least not until the end of the two-year period of mourning. By that time Troilus could grieve and pine himself

to death. To motivate her into action, then, requires persistent prodding and manipulation. Therefore, the fact that Pandarus sets her in motion by deceit should not be judged as treachery; it is a necessary action if Troilus is to be relieved. Pandarus is ever discreet throughout the entire scheme. His actions exhibit a "remarkable fidelity to the requirement of utmost secrecy in the conducting of an amour."³³ Though he deceives Criseyde in getting her to Deiphebus' house, he never once sacrifices her reputation for the sake of his plan; her private interview is made justifi-³⁴ fiable to others.

Aside from the mitigating of Troilus' pain, at least one other motive is suggested by Pandarus' plan. By creating a situation in which Criseyde seeks the aid of Troilus, Pandarus implants in her a sense of obligation to Troilus. This, coupled with her sense of pity for Troilus and his professed devotion to her, cannot help but more involve her emotionally with the young knight. That Pandarus sees this implication is suggested by the nature of the scheme he devises. Charles Muscatine, in speaking of Pandarus' character, says that "his courtliness is superimposed on his

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Kirby, p. 154.

³⁴
Charles Muscatine, "The Feigned Illness in Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde," MLN, LXIII (1948), 372.

realism."³⁵ We see a clear example of this in the dinner party scene. Here, by way of summary, Pandarus' realistic nature again circumvents his courtliness to meet what he deems the practical needs of the situation.

Pandarus' next speech (III, 250-343) contains material which is essential to any study of his character, for he spells out much of his courtly attitude here. Lines 250 through 259 have been cited by some critics as evidence of the treacherous role he plays. In asserting that in his role as a go-between he has been little more than a pimp, Pandarus says:

"For thee have I bigonne a gamen playe
Which that I nevere do shal eft for other,
Although he were a thousandfold my brother.

That is to saye, for thee am I bicomen,
Bitwixen game and earnest, swich a mene
As maken women unto men to comen--
Al saye I nought, thou woost wel what I mene:
For thee have I my nece, of vices clene,
So fully maad thy gentillesse triste,
That al been shal right as thyselven liste."

Seen out of context, these lines are a strong prima facia case against Pandarus. It at once appears that he is feeling a pang of conscience, but this interpretation is weakened somewhat when viewed in conjunction with the very next stanza. Here Pandarus justifies his role when he says:

"But God that al woost take I to witesse,

That nevere I this for coveitise wroughte
 But only for t'abregge that distresse,
 For which wel neigh thou deidest as me thoughte.
 But goode brother, do now as thee oughte,
 For Goddes love, and keep hire out of blame"
 (III, 260-266).

That Pandarus does not seriously consider himself a pimp is clear. One interpretation is that he makes the self-condemning remarks for the "nones alle." He desires reassurance and an acquittal from Troilus, and his remarks can reasonably be treated as feelers. Pandarus has one clear and justifiable motive--his fear of Troilus' death. Under the circumstances he needs no other.³⁶ But yet a second motive for Pandarus' self-denunciation is reasonably suggested. By calling to Troilus' attention the sacrifices made and the efforts expended in promoting his happiness, Pandarus has impressed upon him the gravity of his (Pandarus') actions. This, then, may be considered as a type of preconditioning for the next demand he makes of Troilus. He leads up to his point by reminding Troilus of what men may think if they find out about his go-between activities:

"Why, al the world upon it wolde crye,
 And sayn that I the werste trecherye
 Dide in this caas that evere was bigonne,
 And she forlost, and thou right nought ywonne"
 (III, 227-280).

36
 Slaughter, p. 189.

In light of this he tells Troilus, the "first virtue is to keepè tonge" (III, 294). By this reminder, Pandarus expresses the courtly rule that matters of love should be kept secret. It is noteworthy that most of the statements of courtly doctrine come from Pandarus who is, perhaps, the least courtly of the three main characters. It is seemingly ironic that here Pandarus is so adamant about silence when, in the first book, he argued so forcefully to persuade Troilus to reveal the identity of his beloved. Perhaps Pandarus can be determined courtly in all love matters except those that arouse his insatiable curiosity. At any rate, in the present situation, Pandarus adds that he gives his advice not for Troilus but for the "fooles nice." In conclusion he tells Troilus:

"For wel I woot thou menest wel, pardee,
Therefore I dar this fully undertake" (III, 337-338).

Pandarus is a diplomat plenipotentiary in the manner in which he deals with Troilus. He has told him to keep his mouth shut in an almost flattering way. Pandarus enforces his request by verbally weaving a rhetorical trap. Troilus cannot open his mouth about the affair to anyone without being condemned as a boaster, liar and fool. To be considered any or all of these things is detestable to the young prince's sense of honor and self respect. Pandarus capitalizes on this and manipulates Troilus to make the matter of secrecy absolute.

One other observation is pertinent here. In lines 250 through 259, Pandarus condemns himself for the role he is playing. In lines 260 through 266, he comes right back with his justification. In line 338 he vows to continue his role with great vigor to promote Troilus' cause. By way of summary, Pandarus has, in effect, set up his own one-man tribunal in which he is at once the plaintiff, the defendant, the judge, and the jury. In a mere 86 lines he accuses, defends, and returns a favorable verdict on his role. This analogy, then, strengthens the interpretation that Pandarus' self-condemnation is not heartfelt.

Troilus' answer, found in lines 360 through 420, is threefold. First, Troilus, assuring Pandarus of secrecy, remarks:

"Sith I so loth was that thyself it wiste,
How dorste I mo tellen of this matere" (III, 369-370).

Second, Troilus affirms his faith and utmost confidence in Pandarus when he offers to serve as his go-between with "Polyxene / Cassandra, Elaine, or any of the frape" (III, 409-410). Third, Troilus ratifies Pandarus' actions, telling him that he does not consider what he has done as "bawderye," but rather would call it "gentillesse / Compassion, and felawship and trist" (III, 402-403). It is apparent that Troilus does not wish to think his friend a moral reprobate. On these three points Pandarus should be well satisfied.

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Here, as in Book One, we become more acutely aware that Pandarus, indeed, cannot be pigeon-holed as a type. He professes honest intentions in serving his friend throughout. But his philosophy throughout this chapter seems to be: "it is not how you play the game, but whether you win or lose." Indeed, Pandarus seems to believe that the end justifies the means, for he is not straightforward to Criseyde. He hedges on the truth, and, at places, he out-and-out lies to her. Perhaps if he were dealing with a sensual character like Boccaccio's Criseida, he would not have to resort to so much craft and deceit. Criseyde will not be easily hoodwinked, and Pandarus knows this. She is unwilling to undertake any adventure that will upset the status quo. Troilus' life is in danger, and this gives Pandarus all the license he needs to go to great extremes to soothe his friend.

In his conversation with Criseyde, we also see that Pandarus is a man of dramatic ability. His tears seem to flow on cue; this, coupled with his rhetoric, seems to move the most stern heart. Pandarus is a master of oratory. When he tells Criseyde of Troilus' love, he immediately employs the rhetorical device of "praeteritio" to anticipate and dispel any of her objections. Pandarus, having anticipated and explained away any possible protests, leaves Criseyde almost defenseless.

We have seen that Pandarus is a man of great practicality,

taking many times what seems to be the most expedient approach to the problem. At the same time he espouses courtly doctrine to the young lovers, reminding them to maintain secrecy. Pandarus, too, is courtly in his behavior, for he never once sacrifices Criseyde's "honour" for the sake of his scheme. It is ideal courtly conduct to relieve a friend's pain, which is precisely what Pandarus is doing. He seems to hold a double standard: the idealism of courtly behavior in certain situations, and the practicality of realism in others. This in itself suggests a great complexity of character. In light of this recapitulation, it is apparent that anyone who would attempt to classify Pandarus as a particular type would be doing a great disservice to the controversial character that Chaucer wrought.

Chapter IV

"THAT AT MYN HOUS YE BEEN AT MY WARNINGE"

That Pandarus sets up a situation in his home in which Criseyde yields to Troilus is perhaps the best remembered scene in the whole poem, even to the most casual reader. Ostensibly, Pandarus is a villainous sort on the basis of his performance. Many critics have wielded this scene as a trump in attempting to clinch their arguments against him. These critics have not taken all of the factors into consideration before passing judgement. The courtly setting of the poem and Pandarus' role within this framework have been ignored altogether or misinterpreted. Also, Criseyde's nature and her observance of courtly rules have been disregarded by many. By examining Pandarus' activities to determine his motives and considering all these factors together, a reasonable interpretation may be arrived at.

Lest it be thought that Criseyde's surrender takes place close on the heels of the meeting at Deiphebus' house, it needs to be pointed out that an appreciable time elapses between the two scenes, dispelling any inference that Pandarus has pushed this affair so fast so as to bring about an untimely surrender.

In the intervening time Troilus' behavior has been exemplary, and he has been busy pleasing his lady. Owing to his good conduct, he has risen considerably in favor with Criseyde. Chaucer tells us that

So wel his werk and wordes he bisette,
That he so ful stood in his lady grade,
That twenty thousand times er she lette
She thanked God that evere she with him mette
(III, 471-474).

In lines 491-497 the poet suggests that this "interval occupies a considerable period of time. He excuses himself for not dwelling further upon it by saying that he is relating only the significant details and is merely summing up the effect of the period upon the lovers."³⁸ In commenting on Pandarus' devoted service to Troilus, Chaucer tells us that he **is** by no means idle:

He shoof ay on, he to and fro was sent,
He lettres bar whan Troilus was absent,
That nevere man as in his freendes neede
Ne bar him bet than he, withouten drede
(III, 487-490).

Before going any further we must stop and realize the change effected in Criseyde. As ApRoberts points out, "She is not the lady who has just accepted a suitor; she is the lady who has found her lover faithful in service and worthy

of the utmost trust."³⁹

For the day of the rendezvous at his house, Pandarus is very selective. He picks a day at the time of the changing of the moon because the night will be dark. Also, the overcast sky promises rain. These two factors will keep people off of the streets, adding to the privacy of the endeavor. Pandarus must have foreseen this, and his foresight reasonably can be taken as evidence of his regard for his niece's reputation or "honour" as she refers to it.

The conversation in which Pandarus invites Criseyde to dinner has been cited by some critics as evidence that Pandarus is a scheming liar who has openly deceived his niece. This interpretation seems to be a little severe. Admittedly Pandarus lies when he says that Troilus is not going to be there, but it is perfectly clear that she does not believe him, nor does Pandarus think that he is believed. That Criseyde does not believe him is suggested in lines 587 through 588:

"Eem, sin I moste on you triste,
 Looke al be wel, and do now as you liste."

These lines illustrate that there is some doubt in her mind but that she is going to leave everything to his discretion. To clinch the matter that Criseyde is not deceived, some six hundred lines later, in lines 1210 through 1211, she tells Troilus,

³⁹
 ApRoberts, p. 377.

"Ne hadde I er now, my sweete herte dere, 40
Been yolde, ywis, I were now nought here."

It cannot be conclusively stated here that Criseyde, in accepting the invitation, is agreeing to consummate the love affair. It seems reasonable that this discourse can be interpreted to mean that Criseyde suspects that Troilus will be there, and, by her acceptance of the invitation, she is agreeing to see him--but not necessarily in the bedroom.

Pandarus' remarks, after denying the presence of Troilus at his house, certainly should have put Criseyde on her guard:

"Nece, I pose that he were:
You tharste nevere han the more fere,
For rather than men mighte him ther espye,
Me were levere a thousandfold to die" (III, 570-574).

These remarks can illustrate that Pandarus knows he is not believed and that he does not necessarily want to be. By the manner of his argument, Pandarus is leaving Criseyde two alternatives. First, she can actually disbelieve him but go along with the affair and feign innocence. Second, she can actually believe all that he says and be honestly surprised. In giving her this choice, Pandarus is according her the respect that her honor demands.

Despite the drizzling rain, Criseyde and her attendants

arrive at Pandarus' house for dinner. After dinner and the merriments that follow, Criseyde and the company prepare to go home. But owing to Fortune, the rain intensifies; Criseyde is persuaded to spend the night. It must be admitted that for all Pandarus is, he is certainly not another Calchas. He might have been able to predict the coming of rain by observing the formation of clouds, but he certainly could not foresee that the rain would intensify just about the time that Criseyde would decide to go home. For want of any better explanation, we are forced to explain this as an act of Fortune. How Pandarus has planned to keep Criseyde at his house otherwise, is not explained by Chaucer.

One interpretation of this scene is that Pandarus realizes that if his scheme is going to work, Criseyde must stay without the slightest suspicion that Troilus will appear. The fact that he does not show up for dinner and merriments gives credence to Pandarus' story. Fortune, of course, aids him in his endeavor.

Pandarus escorts Criseyde to her room and then withdraws. He then goes to the closet and releases Troilus, who, unbeknownst to the world, has been quartered there for some time. He tells the young knight to prepare himself for his journey into "hevene blisse." At this Troilus begins at once to pray to the planets for help in his endeavor. Pandarus bursts out:

" . . . Thou wrecched mouses herte,
Artou agast so that she wol thee bite?" (III, 736-737).

Robert apRoberts offers a good analogy of Pandarus' actions here. He says that Troilus' emotions are much like a bridegroom on the eve of his wedding and that Pandarus is much like the jesting best man. ApRoberts sees at least two reasonable interpretations here. There "lines reveal the impatience of Pandarus to put his plan into action." Also, the lines serve as a means to relax Troilus who is "under such high nervous tension." Pandarus knows full well that Troilus has to be in control of his emotional faculties and that his ultimate success "depends in some measure upon his playing a part."⁴¹

Pandarus' remark is effective, for Troilus is brought to his senses. Pandarus then goes to ply his craft in obtaining an admittance for Troilus. Pandarus realizes that his task will not be easy. He knows that Criseyde, as a courtly lady, will be very circumspect because she values her honor "and that she will resist strongly any advance which seems likely to place it in jeopardy." He knows exactly what obstacles must be overcome. Pandarus knows that when he presents Troilus' case Criseyde will be torn between "her reserve on⁴² the one hand and her love, trust, and pity on the other."

⁴¹

ApRoberts, pp. 379-380.

⁴²

ApRoberts, p. 380.

With his work cut out for him, Pandarus enters Criseyde's room. Discovering him in her room, Criseyde says, "Lat me some wight calle" (III, 760). Pandarus quickly blocks this move by reminding her of what could happen to her reputation if someone else were called in. "They might deemen thing they nevere er thoughte" (III, 763). His will prevails. He knows of Criseyde's concern for her reputation, and he plays this to his advantage.

Pandarus immediately begins to lay the groundwork for the rest of his plan. He reminds her of what a despicable role a lady plays when she gives her affection to two men (III, 721-777). Criseyde is at once set to wondering. Pandarus pursues this line and tells her that Troilus

"Is thurgh a goter by a privee wente
 Into my chambre come in al this rain,
 Unwist of every manere wight, certain" (III, 787-789).

He tells her that Troilus is out of his mind for pain and distress, for he has heard that she loves another called Horaste; Criseyde is shocked at this story. We see from this that Pandarus is executing his plan with consummate skill. He has stunned Criseyde by his tale. The whole story is, of course, a lie--but Pandarus plays his role to the hilt. He puts Criseyde on the defensive by accusing her of carrying on a dual love affair. Pandarus again takes advantage of her position as a courtly lady. Andreas clearly states that "it

is forbidden for one woman to engage in love with two men . .

. ."⁴³ Both Criseyde and Pandarus are aware of this, and to be accused of such a transgression is shattering to her. Falsely accused, Criseyde's first inclination is to set the matter straight. By telling her of Troilus' pain and distress, Pandarus appeals to her pity, which we have learned was the original wedge in the door.

In stressing the manner in which Troilus arrived, Pandarus impresses on her that complete secrecy is being maintained, reassuring her that her "honour" will be safe should she decide to see Troilus then. By telling her this, he has placed the keystone in his argument, allaying what is perhaps her chief fear. The battle between her restraint and her pity, trust, and questioned love and "honour" rages, but she still will not consent to see Troilus then. Criseyde proposes several alternate plans, such as sending him her ring to reaffirm her love, but Pandarus will not be convinced. He blocks any means of escape and concludes by telling her:

"Now have I told what peril he is inne,
 And his coming unwist is to every wight,
 Ne, pardee, harm may ther be noon ne sinne"
 (III, 911-913).

His concluding argument is convincing, and he gets the desired

⁴³

Cited in Kirby, p. 298.

answer. But before she consents to see Troilus, she reminds Pandarus of her trust in him and in Troilus:

"So werketh now in so discreet a wise
That I may have honour and he pleasaunce
For I am here al in youre governaunce" (III, 943-945).

As evidenced by her own words, Criseyde is only concerned about two things: her reputation and Troilus' happiness. If Criseyde should surrender herself to Troilus, the reader should not feel that her action is too soon or too sudden, for it has been indicated that Troilus, by his constant service, rose in her esteem and she loved him. It is well known that in courtly love affairs surrender is the ultimate outcome. In this respect Pandarus' role here is not one of dishonor. For as John Livingston Lowes observes, "Pandare's masterly dialects are directed, not against her chastity, but against the wary circumspection of a woman . . . who knew her world and knew it as a world of wagging tongues."⁴⁴

Troilus comes in and kneels down by Criseyde's bedside. The atmosphere is so tense and strained that Criseyde cannot speak a word. Pandarus sees the quandary, and to break the ice he assumes the role of comedian and prompter, saying:

"Nece, see how this lord can kneele.

44

Geoffrey Chaucer and the Development of His Genius (New York, 1934), p. 177.

Now for youre trouthe, see this gentil man."
 And with that word he for a quisshe ran,
 And saide, "Kneeleth now whil that you leste,
 Ther God youre hertes bringe soone at reste"
 (III, 962-966).

Pandarus seems never to be at a loss for a practical solution. He is constantly prodding, coaching, and devising, all to promote his end. We see this type of thing again when Troilus faints at Criseyde's bedside. He rises at once to his feet, tears off Troilus' clothes, and casts him into her bed while at the same time telling her to act quickly to save Troilus' life. Charles Muscatine in commenting on this incident says that "this is the first time in medieval literature that the go-between must go so far as actually to pick up the hero and throw him into the lady's bed."⁴⁵

The practical Pandarus is allowing nothing to hinder the progress of his plan. To assert that the actual throwing of Troilus into bed is done under the auspices of friendship is to stretch the imagination. It is reasonably suggested here that Pandarus is acting beyond the scope of ideal friendship, and that he perhaps is getting vicarious pleasure out of directing the kind of love affair in which he fails himself. Unlike the dinner party scheme, there is no great urgency here. Troilus, as Chaucer tells us, has been accepted into Criseyde's

45

Chaucer and the French Tradition, p. 152.

service, and the love affair is progressing nicely. It seems very apparent that Pandarus is impatient with the progress of the love affair and that he is eager to direct his "little drama" on to its finale. It should not be concluded that this is the sole motive for his actions, but it is certainly one strongly suggested facet of his character here.

As is known, the love affair is consummated, and the young lovers spend a night of love and bliss. In the morning they reaffirm their love and vow to meet again.

A little later Pandarus, in high spirits, comes into Criseyde's bedroom. Immediately he starts jesting:

" . . . Al this night so rained it, allas,
That al my drede is that ye, nece sweete,
Han litel leiser had to sleepe and mete" (III, 1157-59).

He can never resist an opportunity to joke and to play. Criseyde, however, takes it in an embarrassed but light vein. Shortly hereafter we see that she has forgiven her uncle for his wiles, and they talk amicably.

Pandarus' concern for Troilus' continued good disposition and Criseyde's good reputation is illustrated when he meets Troilus again. He is happy that he has been of some service to his friend, but Pandarus warns him to exhibit restraint and discretion in his behavior:

" . . . But take now not agrief

That I shal sayn: be war of this meschief,
 That ther as thou now brought art in thy blisse,
 That thou thyself ne cause it nat to misse"
 (III, 1621-24).

Pandarus is espousing genuine courtly doctrine when he reminds his friend to restrain his talk and desire. His advice "is in keeping with those rules recommending moderations formulated by Andreas."⁴⁶

Reminiscent of Boethius' premise of medieval tragedy, Pandarus as philosopher reminds Troilus:

"For of Fortunes sharp adversitee
 The worste kinde of infortune is this:
 A man to han been in prosperitee,
 And it remembren whan it passed is" (III, 1625-28).

Through the end of Book Three, we see that Pandarus is a constant friend, always willing to mirror his friend's happiness. The young lovers are of course happy, for Chaucer tells us, to forbear

To ask at me if that they blithe were,
 For if it erst was wel, tho was it bet
 A thousandfold: this needeth nought enquire.
 Ago was every sorwe and every fere,
 And bothe ywis they hadde--and so they wende--
 As muche joye as herte may comprehende (III, 1682-87).

Through this point it cannot be denied that Pandarus effects a love affair which is beneficial to both parties.

Criseyde is exceedingly happy, and Troilus has risen in all qualities of manliness and honor, for Chaucer tells us:

That swich a vois was of him and a stevene,
Thurghout the world, of honour and largesse,
That it up roong unto the gates of hevene (III, 1723-25).

Pandarus' complex character is readily apparent in the scenes dealing with Criseyde's surrender. He at once appears to be a devoted friend to Troilus, particularly in the last scenes of Book Three. His advice here is courtly, reminding Troilus again to check his tongue and be restrained and discreet in pursuing the love affair. Pandarus protects Criseyde's "honour" from the "wagging tongues" of the world by the secretive way in which he effects the rendezvous. Friendship, however, is only one facet of Pandarus' character. Why does he insist on pushing the love affair, already progressing nicely, on to an immediate consummation? There is not the urgency here that gave rise to the dinner party. Perhaps it is Pandarus' impatient nature that causes him to hurry the affair on to the finale. Another interpretation is that Pandarus is getting vicarious pleasure out of the affair, and this, coupled with his impatience, leads him to attempt to conclude his "little drama" in one act. Perhaps there is a motive yet hidden from Pandarus himself. To explain his activities through the end of Book Three as promoted solely by friendship is naive. There are folds of complexity yet undisentangled.

Chapter V

"MY BROTHER DERE, I MAY DO THEE NAMORE"

The love and happiness enjoyed by Troilus and Criseyde in the last half of Book Three is to be short-lived. There is a lull in the war, during which time prisoners-of-war are exchanged. Parliament votes to exchange Criseyde for the Trojan Antenor to satisfy the demands of the Greeks. Pandarus next appears in the poem in the scene at Troilus' chamber. Troilus is in a trance, and Pandarus, who is tenderly crying, comes in. Pandarus is shaken by the news and by the sight of his mourning friend. We get a new picture of Pandarus in this scene; for the first time in the poem

" . . . he niste what to saye:
For verray wo his wit was neigh awaye" (IV, 356-357).

He is deeply moved and can do no more than "weepe as tendreliche as he" (IV, 369). That Pandarus acts out of sincere friendship and pity is apparent here. He comes to his friend immediately after hearing the news and is so overcome that for a few moments he is rendered speechless. Regaining his composure, he at once tries to comfort Troilus, telling him:

"Why listou in this wise,
 Sin thy desir al hoolly hastou had,
 So that by right it oughte ynough suffise?
 But I, that nevere felte in my servise
 A freendly cheere or looking of an yē,
 Lat me thus weepe and wailen til I die (IV, 394-399).

Besides, Pandarus says:

"This town is ful of ladies al aboute,
 And to my doom fairer than swiche twelve.
 As evere she was shal I finde in som route,
 Ye, oon or two, withouten any doute.
 Forthy by glad, myn owene dere brother:
 If she be lost, we shal recovere another" (IV, 401-406).

Taken out of context, these lines cast strong aspersions on Pandarus' character, but it must be realized that this advice is not heartfelt. To affirm this, the poet says:

These wordes saide he for the nones alle,
 To helpe his freend, lest he for sorwe deide.
 (IV, 428-429).

Troilus, who has been only halfway listening, rejects his advice. For perhaps the first time in the poem, Troilus sees through Pandarus' "double-edged logic"⁴⁷ and upbraids him severely. T. A. Kirby feels that "this rejection of Pandarus' advice, in a way, foreshadows [his] ineffectual role during the rest of the poem. . . ."⁴⁸ This appears to be a reasonable

⁴⁷ David Alfred, "The Hero of the Troilus," Speculum, XXXVII (1962), 575.

⁴⁸ Kirby, p. 165.

observation, for Pandarus does begin to fade gradually into the background. He no longer directs the action. All through Book Four, "Troilus refutes his arguments and makes the major decisions, including the decision to allow the exchange to take place."⁴⁹

But Pandarus is not quite ready to slip into the background. As a desperate solution to preserve the happiness of his young friend, he suggests that Troilus defy the king and parliament and carry Criseyde off. Pandarus reaffirms the strength of his friendship and his utter devotion to the young prince when he tells him:

"I wol myself been with thee at this deede,
 Though ich and al my kin upon a stounde
 Shulle in a streete as dogges liggen dede,
 Thurghgirt with many a wid and bloody wounde.
 In every caas I wol a freend be founde" (IV, 624-628).

G. L. Kittredge notes that "this is not rhetoric; it is stark realism. Chaucer and all of his readers had seen slain men lying in the street like dead dogs."⁵⁰

Pandarus' advice here is admittedly anti-courtly because if it were followed the love affair would be publicized. A reasonable interpretation is that if this had been the chosen course of action, Pandarus would have gone through with it for

⁴⁹ Alfred, p. 575.

⁵⁰ Kittredge, p. 142.

the sake of his friend.⁵¹ It seems, as before, that "his doctrine is adjusted not so much to his emotionally secure convictions as to the practical needs of the situation."⁵² His friend needs a solution to his problem, and Pandarus is determined to provide one, irrespective of the courtly code. Though he is finally able to persuade Troilus to follow this plan, Criseyde talks Troilus out of it and persuades him to go ahead and accept the exchange, promising him that she will return within ten days. As Kirby suggests above, Pandarus' role does diminish. He is reduced to little more than a messenger boy, but he performs this task for his friend and is said to be "ful glad to doon him that service" (IV, 809).

Throughout Book Five, though his role is minor, Pandarus remains a constant friend and companion to Troilus. Reflecting on his own unhappy love life, Pandarus suggests some activity to keep Troilus occupied, knowing that keeping busy is the best way to forget about sorrow. But this diversion lasts for only a week. Pandarus remains constant to Troilus throughout the waiting ordeal, always willing to lend a patient and sympathetic ear to his sorrows. The poet tells us that "ay biside him was this Pandarus" (V, 682).

When at last it becomes apparent that Criseyde is faith-

51
Slaughter adopts this view.

52
Muscatine, Chaucer and the French Tradition, p. 145.

less, Pandarus is shaken. He is sorry for his friend's misery and is ashamed of his niece's behavior,

And stant astoned of thise causes twaye,
As stille as stoon--a word ne coude he saye
(V, 1728-29).

Finally he is able to speak:

"My brother dere, I may do thee namore
What sholde I sayn? I hate, ywis, Criseide,
And God woot I wol hate hire everemore.
And that thou me bisoughtest doon of yore,
Having unto myn honour ne my reste,
Right no reward, I dide al that thee leste.

If I dide ought that mighte liken thee,
It is me lief; and of this treson now,
God woot that it a sorwe is unto me;
And dredelees, for hertes ese of you,
Right fain I wolde amende it, wiste I how.
And fro this world almighty God I praye
Delivere hire soone: I can namore saye"
(V, 1731-43).

Here Pandarus is not regretting that he brought Troilus and Criseyde together in a courtly relationship. He is merely "sorry for his friend's grief and ashamed of his niece's falseness." He has done his best to serve his friend even at the risk of his own personal honor. "But if he has done anything to please his friend, he is glad. He is sorry for Criseyde's 'treasoun' and to remove Troilus' 'grief, right fair . . . would it amend. . . .'"⁵³ This tragic scene showing Pandarus' total helplessness is the last one in which

⁵³
Slaughter, p. 191.

Pandarus appears.⁵⁴ As unannounced as he enters the story, he leaves it.

Two aspects of Pandarus' behavior in Books Four and Five require comment. He is a complete friend to Troilus throughout the entire crisis. He tries to cheer his friend from time to time, in many circumstances saying things for the "nonnes alle." However, Pandarus' proposal that Troilus ravage Criseyde, which can reasonably be interpreted as sincere, is inconsistent with some of his earlier advice. In the first three books, Pandarus is insistent on maintaining secrecy to protect his niece's honor as well as Troilus' and his own honor; the same Pandarus proposes a deed that will publicize the affair and bring shame to all involved. This contradictory advice bears witness to the thesis that Pandarus' character is complex.

⁵⁴
Kirby, p. 176.

Chapter VI

CONCLUSION

Before summarizing Pandarus' complex nature, one fact must be re-emphasized. The go-between is an accepted member of the courtly tradition. Miss Sara F. Barrow, in The Medieval Society Romances, comments on this general type of character:

courtly love need[s] a faithful servant, a kindly host, a spy, a fairy, an ambitious mother, a devoted friend, a rival, exacting barons--somebody to advance or interpret the action, to illustrate a principle or bring out the ideal qualities of the hero or heroine, and the romancer finds the proper person in the social environment of his lovers, makes him serve the purpose and then lets him go, to pick him up for reward or punishment at the end⁵⁵

Charles Muscatine cites the presence of the Pandarus-type in early French romance intrigues and fabliaux, listing D'Auberee,⁵⁶ Du Prestre et d'Alison, and Eracle as examples. Professor Karl Young, in The Origin and Development of the Story of

⁵⁵
Cited in Kirby, p. 106.

⁵⁶
Muscatine, Chaucer and the French Tradition, pp. 139-141.

Troilus and Criseyde, says that friends resembling Pandarus are common in medieval literature. He notes the appearance of of this character-type in works such as Sir Eglamour, Clariss⁵⁷ et Laris, Tristram and Iseult, and Lancelot du Lac. It must be noted that in the rules of courtly procedure compiled by Andreas, there is no exclusion of the go-between from the courtly ranks; Andreas only requires that the lovers not have too many go-betweens.⁵⁸ So, as far as his office as a go-between is concerned, Pandarus is well within the courtly framework.

Throughout the poem we see strong confirmations of Pandarus' complete friendship with Troilus and his willingness to go to great extremes for the young prince. This is voiced, not only by Pandarus, but also by the poet. Pandarus remains a constant friend and companion to Troilus even after Criseyde's defection is apparent. Friendship, then, is an almost uncontroversial aspect of Pandarus' nature, but this is only one facet of his personality. Pandarus' over-concern with the progress of the love affair is not completely explainable. Several possible interpretations are suggested to explain this character trait: impatience with the slow, step-by-step progress of courtly love affairs, impatience coupled with a desire for vicarious pleasure in bringing about the finale of

57

Cited in Kirby, pp. 108-110.

58

Kirby, pp. 55-68, 295-298.

the "drama." This aspect of Pandarus' character confirms his complexity.

Pandarus often seems to contradict his own advice in aiding his friend. This is apparent in Book Five. That Pandarus appears to operate under a double standard has been suggested. He is courtly in his behavior except when the situation demands a more realistic, expedient approach. His courtliness seems to be mingled with his realism. A recapitulation of only a few of the complex and often contradictory facets of Pandarus' character shows that to consider him a stereotyped character is inaccurate and naive. His character is too many sided to allow him to be categorized as a specimen.

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