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CHAUCER

Troilus and Criseyde

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Geoffrey Chaucer, Nevill Coghill (Translation)

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Set against the epic backdrop of the battle of Troy, Troilus and Criseyde is an evocative story of love and loss. When Troilus, the son of Priam, falls in love with the beautiful Criseyde, he is able to win her heart with the help of his cunning uncle Pandarus, and the lovers experience a brief period of bliss together. But the pair are soon forced apart by the inexorable tide of war and - despite their oath to remain faithful - Troilus is ultimately betrayed. Regarded by many as the greatest love poem of the Middle Ages, Troilus and Criseyde skilfully combines elements of comedy and tragedy to form an exquisite meditation on the fragility of romantic love, and the fallibility of humanity.

Troilus and Criseyde Details

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From Reader Review Troilus and Criseyde for online ebook

Chris says

It is a masterpiece still being read more than 620 years after it was written, and hundreds of scholars have had their say on Criseyde's betrayal of Troilus; so I'm wondering if I'm the only one who thinks Criseyde has been getting shortchanged all these centuries.

The language is beautiful. You want love poetry? Check out the passage where Troilus undresses Criseyde in bed. But to say that Criseyde betrays Troilus is as overwrought as the general emotional level of the characters. Troilus: "I will die without your love!" Criseyde "Really?"

The biggest portion of the book has Troilus mooning over the widow Criseyde. Despite being the second child of the king of Troy, it would somehow besmirch her honor should he openly express his love for her. (I didn't get that part) Luckily, her uncle Pandarus is good friends with Troilus, and he hatches a crazy scheme where Troilus and Criseyde end up in bed together. At this point Troilus convinces Criseyde of his love, and she falls for him.

Naturally, happiness is shortlived. Criseyde's father, who has aligned himself with the Greeks sieging Troy, arranges a deal to give his daughter to the Greeks in exchange for a Trojan warrior. Before the exchange, Criseyde promises her undying love to Troilus and makes a vow to somehow meet him in 10 days.

The exchange happens, and Criseyde is wooed by a great Greek warrior who really isn't a bad guy. The promised meeting with Troilus never happens, Troilus heart breaks, and he kills or wounds a thousand Greeks before Achilles kills him. Troilus goes to heaven and realizes how foolish he was.

If this were a tale told in a modern day setting, it would really come off as a coming of age tale where the heartsick teen boy learns there's other fish in the sea to fall in love with. Instead, Criseyde gets a bad rap as an unfaithful lover. Here are my bullet points:

- 1) Troilus is never brave enough to express his feelings until an elaborate ruse is played out.
- 2) Criseyde is taken out the city of Troy against her will
- 3) Criseyde is practically held prisoner in the camp of the enemy army.
- 4) Criseyde realizes Troy is doomed.
- 5) Criseyde is sincerely wooed by a Greek guy who actually tells her he likes her without an elaborate ruse.

In my point of view Criseyde is never unfaithful. She is the victim of circumstances out of her control and is just making the best of a bad situation. Let's give the lady the benefit of the doubt here.

Nikki says

This is a very good edition of the text. Being a Norton edition, it provides a very good gloss by the side of each line, for the Middle English; critical material and responses; an introduction with very good background

information; and a translation of Chaucer's main source alongside the text.

I have to confess I've never been that enthused with Chaucer before. As with Shakespeare, I feel that he's presented far too often as the be-all and end-all of his period. They *are* massively influential, of course, but there's so much focus on these texts that pre-university, I had little idea of the breadth of literature. It pretty much narrowed down to them and Dickens.

I didn't like The Canterbury Tales very much when I came to it in first year. I won't say that an academic viewpoint spoils Chaucer, because I came to Troilus and Criseyde for a class, too, but I do wish people *could* come to Chaucer and Shakespeare on their own terms. It was much easier to do that, with Troilus and Criseyde, because I knew almost nothing about this before I started this module of my MA.

I loved it. Chaucer's command of language and of his material is superb; it's not like a modern novel, of course, but anyone familiar with medieval literature would be prepared for that, and this is surprisingly accessible even without that familiarity. It's full of hyperbole and courtly love and Troilus being pretty flippin' pathetic, as we see it -- and yet Chaucer's pity for his characters still creeps through.

I highly recommend reading this in Middle English, with a glossary: it's not hard, as long as you work out how to pronounce the words, and a translation would lose that innate Chaucerian touch. The rhyme scheme often helps out, as it's very regular. I can understand reading Sir Gawain and the Green Knight in translations -- it looks less familiar, usually, and is a different dialect which didn't survive as well into Modern English, and some people have done fantastic things with it -- but don't do that with this, if you can help it. It gets easier as you go along.

The Norton edition is great, packed with information and a good -- indeed, overly exhaustive at times -- glossary. They gloss 'desolat', for goodness sake. I don't think you could be steered wrong in getting this edition.

Laura says

From BBC Radio 4 - Classical Serial:

One of the great works of English literature, this powerful, compelling story explores love from its first tentative beginnings through to passionate sensuality and eventual tragic disillusionment. Lavinia Greenlaw's new version for radio brings Chaucer's language up-to-date for a modern audience while remaining true to his original poetic intention. After seeing the beautiful widow Criseyde at the temple in Troy, Troilus falls instantly in love with her. Inexperienced in love, he is unable to act on his feelings and locks himself in his room to compose love songs. Pandarus, worried for his friend, eventually persuades Troilus to tell him why he is so miserable and is delighted to hear that the cause is Troilus' love for his niece Criseyde. Worried about her reputation, Criseyde is at first reluctant to enter into a relationship with Troilus. After much cajoling and manipulation, she reluctantly comes around to the idea. Pandarus is frustrated that the relationship is moving too slowly and engineers a complex plan to get Criseyde and Troilus in bed together.

Troilus Tom Ferguson

Criseyde Maxine Peake

Pandarus Malcolm Raeburn

*Servant/Friend Kathryn Hunt
Calchas/Servant Kevin Doyle
Priam/Servant Terence Mann
Hector/Diomede Declan Wilson*

*With music composed by Gary Yershon and performed by Ehsan Emam, Tim Williams and Mike Dale.
Directed by Susan Roberts.*

M.L. Rio says

Pandarus: Original creepy uncle. Criseyde: Actually pretty defensible considering the circumstances.
Troilus: Does nothing but cry. Chaucer: Makes the Trojan War more boring than Bingo night at the local nursing home.

Update 9/13/18: Still convinced it might be the most tedious poem of all time.

David Sarkies says

A medieval romantic tale of love destroyed by war

18 May 2012

The story of Troilus and Criseyde (I will use that Chaucerian as opposed to the Shakespearian spelling here) dates back only a far as the middle ages, despite it being set during the Trojan War. The interesting thing is that while Troilus does appear in the Iliad, this particular story does not. I will briefly recount the story as I suspect people are not too familiar with it. I also suspect that it is not the style of romantic comedy people would appreciate today. Well, I will call it a comedy, despite difficulty in finding anything funny in the poem, but that probably has more to do with it not being the easiest story to read.

Anyway, Troilus is the son of Priam, king of Troy, and Criseyde is a high born woman of Trojan origin. Initially Troilus is a warrior through and through, and claims to have no time for love, especially during a war. However, it is not that he meets Criseyde (for in those times, even in a city like Troy, you would probably know everybody anyway), but that he first looks on Criseyde and discovers her beauty and thus falls in love. This is a very intense, sickness causing, love, but fortunately, for a time, Criseyde responds to his advances (though this has a lot to do with Troilus' friend and matchmaker Pander). However it is not a happily ever after type love, as Criseyde's father defects to the Greek camp, and Criseyde is swapped for a prisoner being held by the Greeks, and then in turn is married to the Greek Diomede. In the end, or at least in the original, Troilus was killed by Achillies.

This is a romantic poem, pure and simple, and is a beautiful example of English Renaissance poetry, though one should consider that the period in which it was written, the 14th Century, England had not entered the Renaissance. Chaucer, however, had for he had travelled to Italy and spent time with Boccaccio (who was famous for the Decameron, the book upon which Chaucer's Cantabury Tales was based upon). The poem is also a tragedy, but not because of any fatal flaw (though one might argue that Troilus' fatal flaw is his obsession with Criseyde), but is rather the tragedy of a love that is torn apart by war. What struck me as I was reading this book was that I feel that this book was the beginning of the Renaissance in England (though

it would not take off until at least two hundred years later) and in travelling to Italy, Chaucer brought back some of the earlier Renaissance ideas.

Now, Chaucer, and in fact many Europeans of the time, did not know Greek. Many of the Greek speakers, and even the Greek texts, were still in Byzantine libraries, and it would be another fifty to seventy years before the likes of Machiavelli, Michaelangelo, and Dante, appeared on the scene. Now, to put the book in context, it was written around 1380, which at the time England was engaged in a 100 year long war with France (though the war was not continuous = rather a series of campaigns that occurred over a period of 117 years). At the time the heroes of the first period of the war, Edward III and the Black Prince, had died, and Richard II was currently on the throne (though he was not a particularly good king). The use of Troy also conjured up images of patriotism as it was believed, even at that time, that the original Englishmen were descended from a man named Brutus who had left Aenias to establish his own colony.

Chaucer didn't know Greek, but then again neither did Shakespeare. The more modern languages had by this time begun to supersede Latin as the written language (and this poem was written in English, though not the English that we know), however most educated people of the time could read Latin, which means that Chaucer had access to texts like Virgil and Ovid (and he even attributes his work to them at the end of the poem). Granted, they would have known Homer (and once again, Homer also appears by name in the poem) however he did not have access to the original Greek (and I am unsure if there were any Latin translations). However, while he did not have access to Homer, he did have access to Ovid, and we see quite a few allusions to the Metamorphoses throughout the poem.

One of the reasons I mention this is because the poem falls into the category of a literary epic. A literary epic is an epic poem in the style of the Iliad, but unlike the Iliad it was originally written down. While these days all of the epic poems that we have been written down, when you read the Odyssey you will see a number of recurring styles that suggest that it was originally a spoken poem. There is also the use of the epic simile, which is simply a very long and descriptive phrase. To be honest, we really only know of three true epic poems, two of them are Greek and one is German (the Nibelungenlied, though I am not sure whether that poem is truly an epic), though I should also make mention of Beowulf and the Song of Roland, so maybe there are five. However, being cheeky, I would also suggest that Paradise Lost is also a true epic, even if only for the reason that Milton dictated the poem to his daughter (he was blind so he could not easily write, however isn't it interesting that both Homer and Milton were blind poets, that says something about Milton).

Another convention in an epic is the term 'invoking the Muses'. The Muses were Greek spirits that would inspire artistic ability in people and what simply began as a mere religious exercise before writing something has come down to us as a literary convention. In a way invoking the Muses is very much like a Christian saying a prayer before embarking on a journey or a project. Chaucer does something slightly, or actually very, different here and that is that he invokes the Furies. Now the Furies are the closest in Greek mythology to what we would call a demon. They are quite nasty creatures, and if you are familiar with Greek literature and mythology, you would know that one appearance of the Furies was after Orestes killed his mother, and was tormented by them until he was found innocent of the crime of matricide (or rather that his duty as a son to avenge the death of his father overrid the crime of matricide). It has been suggested that the reason Chaucer changed the convention was because this story was much bleaker and darker than other stories where the Muses were invoked.

Sam says

Whenever anybody decides to refer to the Middle Ages as "The Dark Ages" in front of me, two things inevitably happen. Firstly, my eye starts twitching in frustration, and secondly, I refer them to this or any number of the spellbinding narratives penned during this so called "Age of Ignorance". *Troilus and Criseyde* has recently been added as one of my go to recommendations when confronted with this ignorance.

Having soldiered on and slowly worked my way through Chaucer's masterpiece in the original Middle English, contemplating Chaucer's beautiful poetic majesty all the way, I perfectly understand now why it is considered one of the best narrative poems in the English language. Though 'The Canterbury Tales' are more famous, '*Troilus and Criseyde*' is undoubtedly Chaucer's masterpiece.

Set during the Trojan war, *Troilus and Criseyde* relates a love affair doomed to failure by the circumstances surrounding it. While it might not be entirely correct to label it a tragedy as such, it does share many elements found in tragic stories (obviously because a love affair between Trojans set during the Trojan war was never going to end well).

The poem has sometimes been described as an early precursor to the English novel, and though that statement is not entirely accurate, it does have some merits. For instance, the introspective style with its psychological focus is part and parcel with what the novel is all about. The main characters are believable and affecting, and though it is based on an earlier work by Boccaccio which painted Criseyde in a rather unfavourable light (as post Chaucerian renditions of her also did), Chaucer's rendition of her is surprisingly sympathetic. She is a character with genuine depth, and is given far more agency than a great many female portrayals of the time, which is refreshing to anybody that has read other works from around this period, in which women are more often than not portrayed as either virtuous maidens, or harlots out to trick men into sin.

Throughout the poem Chaucer playfully skims the boundaries of what could be gotten away with in writings of the time, usually claiming that " Myn Auctor Lollus" wrote any parts which could have been construed as "unchristian" for the time. This, coupled with the entreatie at the end to his fellow author "moral Gower" and the fact that Lollus is a complete fabrication show that Chaucer was not above having a chuckle with his author friends at the expense of his general readership, which in my opinion adds a thinly veiled layer of comedy to some of the poem's sections (not that there aren't funny sections, as books 1-3 have some very funny moments).

All in all I would just say to read it, as it is fantastic. Either read it in the original Middle English if you have the time and patience (The Riverside Chaucer is an excellent edition for this), or find a well received translation, either way if you have any love of the English language and/or great, timeless literature, you owe it to yourself to read this.

Jan-Maat says

[or auditor (hide spoiler)]

Sarah says

"And for to have of hem compassiou
As though I were hir owene brother dere.
Now herkeneth with a gode entenciou,
For now wol I gon streight to my matere,
In which ye may the double sorwes here
Of Troilus, in loving of Criesyde,
And how that she forsook him er she deyde."

-Book I

Some call *Troilus and Criseyde* Chaucer's best, most sophisticated work. I am not entirely sure where they're coming from when they say that. In comparison to *The Canterbury Tales*, this lengthy poem comes off to me as a bit stiff and courtly with a plot that is clearly explained by Chaucer in the first book before it even happens. I am not denying that Chaucer's writing itself is sophisticated and entertaining as it always is (perhaps a bigger reason this poem gets so much praise), but I really did not get into the plot very much, at least not as much as I had hoped.

I think that my largest complaint is that Troilus and Criseyde themselves are not exactly great characters. Rather than actual people, they strike me simply as ideals of courtly love as Chaucer would have known in his time; maybe this statement applies to the entire work, but to me it comes through especially through the two main characters themselves. Of course, Troilus' dilemma really shines through in the end and Chaucer's true point eventually leaves a good impression, but I had to read through a lot of fluff to get to that. And I suppose in Criseyde's case, she's not really supposed to be all that great in the end anyways considering what happens, but I would have loved to have a stronger connection. Instead, I got two representations of ideals or lack thereof rather than characters that really feel like they're made of flesh and blood.

The other big issue I had with this is that the setting and the tone of the poem don't line up. So according to the exposition, it's set in Troy. I had to constantly remind myself of that because Chaucer's ideas of courtly love and ideals made it feel like it was set in a later time and a completely different place. Maybe that's just something that bothered me and not a true criticism, but it was very distracting for me.

For a work that is praised as better than Chaucer's *true* masterpiece, I found it a bit underwhelming. It's well-written but just not what I have come to expect based on better poems by this author.

Matt says

Throughout almost the entire book, *Troilus and Cressida* appears to be the idealized courtly romantic poem. Though set in Troy during the Greek seige, Middle English notions of love and virtue dictate Troilus' aspirations and Cressida's coy rebuffs. Eventually, they find each other in love.

Then it gets interesting.

Betrayal and heartache guides Troilus into Chaucer's main theme in the final pages. The games of love and human drama are all ultimately foolish and small-minded affairs. Life is wasted on the self-absorbed infatuations which consume us. Life is about the adoration of God. It's a quick bait-and-switch Chaucer pulls

at the end.

The edition I read is a translation that attempts to mimic the rhyme of Chaucer's English. I have no idea how accurate and true the translation is to the original. There seems to be an inherent problem in reading a translation of a poem. Where the author may have agonized over a turn of phrase, a punctuation mark or a simple word, we are always left with a shadow of the intent. In the end, unless you are going to analyze the Middle English, George Philip Krapp's translation was easy to read, artfully composed and, at the very least, a conscientious attempt to give us the true Chaucer.

Samantha says

To be perfectly honest, I struggled to read this version. Not because I could not do it, but simply because it was tedious and I hated this version. Does it really hurt a story to translate the words to modern spelling? Some say yes, but I say no. Had I not spent the time seeking a version that was a simple update to modern spelling, I would have hated this story with every fiber of my being.

As it were, I actually loved this story. It started out funny, then it shifted to sweet and heartwarming, and finally it ripped my heart out. As I read book four and five, I found myself tearing up. It shocked me to be moved by the story, because I had no idea that I felt that invested in the characters. There is something about them, about their devotion to one another, that causes your heart to break.

As for Criseyde, I do not see her "betrayal" as an actual betrayal. Instead, I read it very differently and saw it as a survival mechanism. From first to last, she is concerned with her protection and survival. I felt just as much sorrow for her as I did for Troilus. This story is worth a read and I suggest people find a version that is less tedious, unless you are used to reading in (I believe) Middle English.

Charles says

Many scholars believe 'Troilus and Criseyde' to be Chaucer's finest work. Nevill Coghill, the brilliant translator of my Penguins Classics edition, considers it to be "the most beautiful long poem in the English language". So, 'Troilus and Criseyde' has its fair share of acclaim, for sure.

However, after reading the poem for myself, I just had to write a review. It is so majestic, so different from Shakespeare's later adaptation, in a good way, so charming and elegant yet so profound and moving, that it should not be difficult to see why it is considered to be one of Chaucer's peak literary achievements. As it is divided into five books, it takes some time to read it all. But I enjoyed every second of it. 'Troilus and Criseyde' is a poem that I hope I will treasure and read over and over again for the rest of my life.

I believe that the characters, however few (especially when compared to Shakespeare), are the principal asset of 'Troilus and Criseyde'. They truly engage both one's interest and involvement. I felt a bond, a connection almost, with Troilus that is really hard to describe. It is true that both Chaucer's and Shakespeare's Troilus are similar as regards to his embodiment of a 'lover's truth' (one of the main ideals of the courtly love tradition). However, with Chaucer's version, I found a certain charming aspect, in all its innocence, to his character that makes him unique. An example would be the first night he shared with Criseyde. It also explains why Troilus had to secure Pandarus' help and to do the wooing for him, unlike Boccaccio's Troilo, who did the

wooing for himself.

Obviously, the poem has more to it than just that. In fact, the poem's brilliance is hard to express and prove without an example:

"The game has gone so far since yesterday,
That Phoebus first shall tumble from on high,
And doves be one with eagles in the sky,
And every rock on earth shall break apart,
Ere (before) Troilus be sundered (torn away) from my heart"

This is part of just one stanza spoken early on in the poem by Criseyde. For those that are accustomed with the story, they can understand the level of irony in these verses, that are so elegantly written.

There are also a variety of philosophical and religious (Catholic) concerns that Chaucer expertly interweaved into his poem. If anything they provide a chance for the magnificent author to achieve an outstanding elevation of speech which he is so universally acclaimed for. However, one should not assume that this poem was written just to exhibit Criseyde's treachery, especially as an example. Chaucer makes it clear that it was not his intention, throughout the poem, to do so. Too many tales have already been written about that, he says. In his characteristic originality, he actually tells the part about her desertion and affair with Diomede with obvious pain and reluctance. The result is that he presents a charming heroine, who is not stereotyped by all means. This is yet another difference between Chaucer and Shakespeare (and Boccaccio). It would be unfair to think that any of these poets is inferior to the other as well though, a mistake I hope one does not make. Each have their own particular merits.

There is a lot to be said about Chaucer's 'Troilus and Criseyde'. I believe it is one of the best poems I have ever read for Chaucer's particular style always manages to enchant me. A masterpiece.

Bettie? says

[Bettie's Books (hide spoiler)]

Roy Lotz says

Some great authors spur us on to greater heights; others serve to remind us of our shortcomings. For me, Chaucer is of the latter type. From the beginning, and to the bitter end, he was a struggle to appreciate. I could, of course, sense his greatness; it is manifest in every stanza. Yet I could not, despite my dogged persistence, suck the nectar direct from the fountain; I'm only left with the drippings.

A great part of my difficulty was purely linguistic. I was going back and forth between reading Chaucer in the original or in translation when the choice was decided for me. A friend of mine loaned me the complete collected works of Chaucer, in the original Middle English. There were footnotes, of course, but not as many as could be desired.

So there I was, struggling night after night, reading a language which I could only half-pronounce and half-understand. It was folly, of course; but I like a good challenge, and I'm not one to stop a book once started. Going on this way, I read the entire *Canterbury Tales* over several months—no mean feat, I tell you. Rewarding and entertaining? Certainly. But I missed so much that I will inevitably need to reread it. Chaucer himself addresses this difficulty in this poem:

And for ther is so gret diversite
In Engliss and in writyng of oure tonge,
So prey! God that non myswrite the,
Ne the mysmetre for defaute of tonge;
And red wherso thow be, or elles songe,
That thow be understande, God I biseche!

Even when I did get to the point when I could read Chaucer without too much pain, I was still left a little cold. As I also experienced while reading *A Clockwork Orange*, there is something withdrawn and detached about reading a work in a language half your own. Words from our day to day life have a certain emotional immediacy which is lacking in words otherwise synonymous but unfamiliar. Chaucer's language does make up for this in its richness, elegance, and novelty. Even so, there is something hermetic about a language that nobody has spoken in 700 years.

So what of this poem? Well, compared with the *Canterbury Tales*, it is certainly lacking in ribaldry and boisterous fun. The atmosphere is one of gallantry and courtly romance, rather than a bar where chums gather to tell stories. Yet for what it lacks in liveliness, *Troilus and Criseyde* makes up for in its completeness and polish. The Canterbury Tales are unfinished and uneven, whereas this poem is finely crafted and composed.

The story is classic: two beautiful young people fall in love, and then something conspires to end the love affair in tragedy. Unlike *Romeo and Juliet*, however, the tragedy comes from unfaithfulness as much as circumstances. There is, of course, controversy as to how Chaucer wanted us to interpret the poem. On the one hand, the narrator points to the unfaithfulness of women as the moral of the story; on the other hand, Troilus is so whiny and self-absorbed, that it's hard for us to condemn Criseyde's choice. We moderns, in our more sexually enlightened age, run a risk of imposing our own cultural sensibilities on the characters; for readers at that time, the story could have been a straightforward tale of the fickleness of women.

This story suffers from the same malady as did *Romeo and Juliet*—two protagonists neither likable nor compelling. Troilus was melodramatic; Criseyde, more even-tempered, but still uninteresting. Pandarus comes across as the most likable chap in the story. Even so, it's hard to understand why he—or anyone else, for that matter—would devote so much time to a love affair, while Troy is being sacked by a gigantic army of Greeks. In fact, the whole idea of putting a courtly romance amid the Trojan War didn't quite work for me. Courtly romance is silly, adolescent, and self-indulgent; imagine Romeo and Juliet pining for each other in Saigon during the Vietnam War. Their entire city, all of their family and friends, are facing death and destruction; yet all they can do is soliloquize.

But, as I said at the beginning of this review, it really comes down to my own shortcomings that this poem fell flat. At least I can say I gave it an honest shot. Now, I can only hope that time will amend my faults, and learning my ignorance.

Nikki says

Yes, another reread of this text, my third this semester. I don't think I'm going to want to read it for a long time after this, lovely as it is. I just can't seem to get to grips with it well enough to do my essay, so I just marathoned it, alongside Shakespeare and Dryden's versions.

I read mostly for Criseyde/Cressida's character, this time. I don't know quite what to make of it, actually: she is so virtuous, and we see her in so much detail for the first part of the story, but then we see her betrayal only from Troilus' point of view -- when it seemed to me that she was the one who risked most for their love, and who was ready to put more into it. Maybe I'm too coloured by Shakespeare and Dryden, though.

(The actual edition I used was the Norton one, so my original comments on that still stand.)

Yani says

Relectura agosto 2016

Algún envidioso podría chismorrear: "esto es un amor repentino, ¿cómo puede ser que ella ame a Troilo tan fácilmente, sólo a primera vista, pardiez?". Que quien hable así nunca prospere, pues todo debe tener un principio antes de estar hecho, sin ninguna duda.

Ah, peco de envidiosa entonces. Tengo ciertos reparos con esta historia, sobre todo cuando toca el tema relativo al amor en sí, así que seré breve e informal (léase: "con un tono inadecuado para libros tan importantes como este") porque mis problemas están en el argumento. *Troilo y Criseida* es lindo para leer y guarda ese componente trágico que reclaman las tramas en donde los dos amantes vienen de mundos (o ciudades) distintos y las cosas no pueden ser fáciles para ellos. No obstante, hay algo en él que produce un boicot interno, por decirlo de alguna forma.

El libro está impecablemente escrito y (tal vez con un poco de ayuda de la traducción) no es rebuscado. El problema es la historia de amor entre Troilo y Criseida, que se siente muy forzada y hasta en uno de los discursos de Pándaro, el tío de Criseida, se insinúa eso. Prácticamente, a Criseida la obligan a enamorarse de Troilo porque él sufría por ella y estaba a punto de morir (figurativamente hablando). "Que se las arregle", le podría haber contestado*, pero no: tras el lavado de cabeza que le hace su tío, ella cae. Lo peor de todo es que se siente real. Y no es spoiler, porque todo esto pasa en los primeros capítulos y no estoy contando el giro.

Puede que esté mirando esto con los ojos del siglo XXI, puede que no. La cuestión es que el argumento no se sostiene por sí mismo porque los cimientos tambalean desde el principio, cosa que me extraña de Chaucer. Los hechos sobre Troya se mencionan muy por encima, a pesar de ser el contexto. Si bien el proceso del enamoramiento está explicado paso a paso y tiene algunas ideas interesantes, no soy adepta a leer libros que se centren totalmente en una pareja. Lamentablemente, no le puedo poner más calificación porque no lo pude disfrutar.

(*) Para paliar un poco que suene como una desalmada: Criseida es viuda y su tío sabe que ella no está pensando en enamorarse (ni mucho menos), pero él va y le pone a Troilo delante de la nariz, básicamente.

