Robert Garnier's Bradamante (1582): An English Translation of Act IV, With an
Introduction Concerning the Historical Development of the Title Character

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by

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Abstract

The title character of Robert Garnier’s *Bradamante* (1582) was introduced to French literature through the *matière de France* (Matter of France), epic poems written during the Middle Ages. The personage of Bradamante was expanded over time into that of the greatest female knight, whose exploits were chronicled by the Italian writers Matteo Maria Boiardo (*Orlando Innamorato*, 1495) and Ludovico Ariosto (*Orlando Furioso*, 1532). It is from Ariosto’s epic that Garnier took the material for his tragicomedy, repatriating the fierce and chivalrous Bradamante into French literature and using the story of her battle against Saracen knights as an allegory for the political turbulence of France in the late sixteenth century. The character of Bradamante has continued to inspire a variety of authors, from seventeenth-century playwrights to operatic composers, and even a children’s author at the dawn of the twenty-first century.

In addition to an introduction that explores the development of Bradamante as a literary figure, I have also written an English translation of Act IV of Garnier’s *Bradamante*. Translation in general is like walking a tightrope: Faithfulness to the source language, readability in the target language, word choice and grammatical structure must all be weighed and the right balance must be struck. Transforming Garnier’s Middle French from Alexandrine verse into sufficiently literary English prose proved to be as challenging as it was rewarding. I have included the French text published edited by Raymond Lebègue in *Robert Garnier. Les Juïves. Bradamante. Poésies diverses* (1949) for comparison.
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Thanks also to the other teachers and professors of French with whom I have had the opportunity to study: Mr. John Bolinger, Mr. Matt Zimmerman, Mrs. Olga Mounayar, Mr. Dominique Philippon, Ms. Marie-Josée Fortin, Dr. Dorothy Stegman, Dr. Kevin Hudson, Dr. Ellen Thorington, and Mrs. Sue Guillaud.
From a twenty-first-century vantage point, the life and works of Robert Garnier are best described as paradoxical. In spite of having been lauded as the only name “which can properly be called great to literary history,”¹ vis-à-vis classical tragedy, as well as “the finest 16th-century writer of tragedy,”² the exact dates of his birth and death have been lost. In fact, “there is a difference of eleven years between the two dates most commonly assigned to his birth, and ten years between those assigned to his death.”³ Although his plays were said to have “[surpassed] the very finest”⁴ examples of Greek and Latin drama, Garnier was also criticized for penning lengthy soliloquies, such as the “unbroken monologue of nearly two hundred lines [ ... ] inflicted on the hapless spectators”⁵ of his Hippolyte (1573). Of his eight published plays, the final two are cited as his greatest creations; but Bradamante (1582) and Les Juives (1583) are as different from one another as they are from the previous six. Nevertheless, Garnier revisits several themes throughout his plays, including the social and psychological effects of war, the importance of nationalism, and the Christian imperative of salvation. Nowhere are these elements more skillfully combined than in Bradamante. This play and the historical development of its title character demand particular examination, but a fundamental understanding of Garnier’s masterpiece can be achieved by first examining the life and development of the playwright himself.

**Garnier’s Life and Career**

Robert Garnier was born in the medieval city of La Ferté-Bernard in 1545, the date adopted by Henri Chardon, a nineteenth-century biographer of Garnier, after
considerable research. Some texts state that little is known of his early life, while others seem to draw conclusions from his works and observations of the Maine province. He was a lawyer by training, having studied in Toulouse from 1563 to 1566. It was in Toulouse that Garnier first met Pierre de Ronsard. During this time he also participated in the Jeux Floraux, “a poetic competition […] at which the prizes were gold and silver flowers.” Garnier placed second in 1564 and won top honors two years later. In 1567, he moved to Paris, passed the bar, and became an avocat en la cour de Parlement for two years. Garnier “soon came into contact with the members of the Pléiade, the most brilliant literary group of the century, and the most important in its influence on French literature.” At this time he reconnected with, and came to admire, Ronsard as a mentor; he also associated with other writers of the Pléiade, such as Joachim du Bellay, Étienne Jodelle, and Jean Dorat.

The poet-jurist continued to hone his talents and win admirers in both law and letters. In 1569, he returned to Maine and became conseiller du roi au siège présidial et sénéchaussée, the king's counselor in the Présidial (judicial tribunal) and the Sénéchaussée (regional office of justice and administrative control). In 1572, the St. Bartholomew Day massacre took place in Paris and elsewhere in France. The Roman Catholic mob violence and assassinations directed at French Protestants were ordered by Catherine de Medici, mother of King Charles IX. It is easy to understand the difficult obligation Garnier faced “to administer justice with impartiality during these years of religious wars in France”. In 1574, he became a judge in the criminal court, deputy president of the city assembly in Le Mans, and chief justice of the entire county of Maine, “apparently through the direct intervention of the king.”
He held these offices until 1586, when Henri III recalled him to Paris to serve as a member of the Grand Conseil, the body responsible for the country’s legal and judicial affairs. According to Henri Chardon, Garnier lived another four years, dying at Le Mans in 1590. His wife Françoise Hubert predeceased him by two years, and he was survived by two daughters.

In the midst of an increasingly demanding and wide-reaching judicial responsibility, Garnier composed his eight tragic plays, published between 1568 and 1583. As previously mentioned, the first six differ from the final two in several ways. Whereas Porcie (1568), Hippolyte, Cornélie (1574), Marc Antoine (1578), La Troade (1579), and Antigone (1580) are based on Greek and Roman history and mythology, the setting and characters of Bradamante are taken from Ludovico Ariosto’s epic Orlando Furioso (1532). Moreover, Les Juives borrows from the Bible, especially the Psalms. Bradamante is further distanced from the other works in that it lacks the chorus of classical theater, although Garnier notes in his preface that “the manager is requested to have the want supplied in case of its being acted”. Finally, there is the label of “tragicomedy”, used for the first time in reference to Bradamante, which simultaneously isolates it from Garnier’s other works and elevates it to the standard of being “remarkable” and “of no small importance.” This last point will be examined in another introduction.

The Origins of Bradamante: Medieval France and Renaissance Italy

The personage of Bradamante was first presented in the matière de France (Matter of France), chansons de geste (songs of heroic deeds), and other epic
literature first produced in the Middle Ages. Popular subjects included Charlemagne, King of the Franks, and his paladins or peers who were considered “[residents] of the palace and companions of the king.” Rolan is the most celebrated paladin; his *Chanson de Roland* is the national epic of France, and he is the title character of Ariosto’s *Orlando Furioso*, Orlando being the Italian version of the name. Tales of war between Christians and Saracens, the medieval term for Muslims, were a favorite subject. *Les Quatres Fils Aymon* appeared in the 13th century, and it introduced the character of Renaud, an enemy of Charlemagne after he killed one of the king’s nephews. Over time, however, such details were “thrust into the background, and many episodes were added, as well as the personage of the hero’s sister, Bradamante.” It is difficult to be more exact about her origins.

The figure of Bradamante may have been outlined in medieval France, but the details of her personality, her desires, and her strength, were augmented during the early Italian Renaissance. It was the poet Matteo Maria Boiardo (1440/41-1494), author of *Orlando Innamorato*, who wrote the first work “to combine elements of both Arthurian and Carolingian traditions of romance, [giving] new life to the chivalrous epic, which was declining in popularity.” The epic’s 46 cantos interweave multiple storylines, one of which presents “Ruggiero and Bradamante [...] purported founders of the Estense dynasty [...] as perfect knights destined to a life of service.” In fact, Boiardo depicts Bradamante as “a female warrior, in prowess equal to the best of knights.” She and Ruggiero are separated for the majority of the epic, one constantly in pursuit of the other, with Bradamante at one point rescuing her future husband from the island of the enchantress Alcina, aided
by a magical ring. Some have suggested that Boiardo favored Ruggiero's tale from
the start: the narrator of the *Innamorato* announces his arrival to the story as "more
important matters" than Orlando's exploits before the end of the first canto.
Boiardo categorizes Bradamante as "a young strong soldier of the Christian faith
who is completely dedicated to the well-being of her king and Christian people." He refers to her as a "valorous" woman, one who leads all of Charlemagne's troops
into battle against the chief of the Saracen army.

Boiardo never finished his *Innamorato*, and it was not published until after his
death. Three decades later, the first edition of Ludovico Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*
was published, a reworking of Boiardo's interwoven storylines in addition to "the
vital personality of the author [...] enlivening and unifying the whole work [...] endlessly teasing his readers and dropping casual asides about his contemporaries." Bradamante is introduced in the second canto as the assigned protector of the city
of Montpellier. Throughout the text she is variously "lovely," "angry as a viper,"
"spirited," and "a fearsome gust of wind which churns the billowing seas."
Ultimately, it is the interference of Bradamante's parents, Aymon and Beatrix, that
threatens to drive her to suicide if she is not permitted to marry Ruggiero, the half-
Muslim knight.

**Garnier's Bradamante**

*Ariosto's Orlando Furioso*, in spite of its considerable bulk, seems always to be in
motion, switching from one group or character without warning, sometimes
summarizing unseen action for the sake of focusing on a battle or another series of
events. In Garnier’s *Bradamante*, the action is less frenetic and more respectful of
the *trois unités* (unities of time, action, and place) implied by Aristotle in his *Poetics.*
Indeed, Act IV contains several sizeable soliloquies, such as La Montagne’s 85-line
description of the battle between Roger and Bradamante (4.1.1037), or the 45 lines
Roger spends cursing his misery (4.2), which seem to stop the action altogether.
However:

> The principle of ‘stopping to sing’ is contrary only to a rather narrow
> conception of drama, that which demands that every speech should in some
> way advance the action. [...] It may serve to crystallize the character’s
> intentions. But even when it serves only to confirm a state of mind which is
> already known, [...] it has a legitimate place in a play since it gives the
> audience an opportunity of savouring a situation and of identifying itself
> more closely with the emotions of the character.26

Bradamante appears in the third scene of the act, where she laments her defeat
at the hand of Leon, who was in fact Roger in disguise. She asks herself “where is
your warrior’s bravery? Where is your vigor and your inborn strength?” [ou est ta
prouesse guerriere? / Ou est plus ta vigueur & ta force premiere?] (4.3.1177). As the
act progresses, lengthy monologues give way to stichomythia, or fast-paced dialogue
in split verse. A plan is developed to delay the impending wedding of Leon and
Bradamante, which also creates time to locate Roger. The act closes with Leon
wishing to locate his impersonator, so that he can be returned to the tournament
hall for another battle.
For much of the act, Bradamante serves as an object rather than an agent. Her parents and confidantes make decisions and create diversions in her name but, aside from her soliloquy in the third scene, "[s]he is saying nothing" [Elle ne répond rien] (4.5.1377). Even the reader must learn of her exhausting battle against Roger through La Montagne’s report, rather than Bradamante sharing a firsthand account.

**Bradamante after Garnier**

Western literature has continued to find inspiration in the character of Bradamante, in her unmatched bravery and valor, her religious conviction, and the relentless pursuit of her heart’s desire. However, one must also consider that:

> It has rarely fallen to the lot of an author who shone with the brilliance of a star of the first magnitude in his own days, to undergo such a profound eclipse as has obscured the name of Robert Garnier during the past three centuries.\(^{27}\)

Historical evidence suggests that Garnier’s *Bradamante* was not performed in the French court until after his death. Furthermore, some qualify *Bradamante* as being "easily the most outstanding"\(^{28}\) example of French tragicomedy, rather than the first.

The century following Garnier’s death saw the creation of two additional five-act plays based on Ariosto’s female knight. The first, la Calprenède’s *La Bradamante* (1637), calls itself a *tragicomédie* and involves many of Garnier’s characters, in addition to a French lord and a friend for Leon. Perhaps more famous is Thomas Corneille’s *Bradamante* (1680), a strict *tragédie* which begins with the title
character speaking to her confidante in order to set the scene. Garnier seems to have written his *Bradamante* as a metaphor for France's then-turbulent political climate:

Henry III’s prestige was continuing to decline. Pamphleteers continued to stir up hatred against him and his government. The breakdown of negotiations for the marriage of Anjou to Elizabeth of England, the defeat of Strozzi and the French fleet off the Azores by the Marquis of Santa-Cruz, were blows to national pride. Garnier seems to be trying to remedy this low state of national self-respect [...] by praising France and stressing her world-wide renown.

His successors lack a similar impetus. In fact, some historians argue that Corneille, younger brother to Pierre, based his play on the work of la Calprenède rather than on Garnier’s. No matter the inspiration, it cannot be denied that Robert Garnier was the first to repatriate the exploits of Bradamante from the Italian poets to France.

In 1735, George Frederic Handel premiered *Alcina*, the composer’s “last operatic success.” The anonymous libretto is a direct borrowing from Ariosto, as Ruggiero arrives at Alcina’s island, and Bradamante follows to rescue him. Her first aria possesses “a tough air of self-righteousness [...] she scarcely emerges as a sympathetic figure.” Because Bradamante arrives at the island covered in armor, she is mistaken for a man and goes by the name of one of her brothers. Her music, written for a mezzo-soprano, “could perfectly well represent a man [...] vocally,”
which “introduces sexual complications almost de rigeur in [period opera] and not quite the absurdity they may seem today.”34 Within a few years of its premier, Alcina fell into obscurity and was not revived until the 20th century. Recently, however, Italian director Franco Zeffirelli and American soprano Renée Fleming have been involved in productions of the opera, indicating a renewed appreciation of the opera seria genre, and perhaps attesting to an enduring interest in the character of Bradamante.

The female knight is also a principal character in Italo Calvino’s The Nonexistent Knight (1959; English translation in 1962). The title is a reference to Agilulf, an empty suit of stainless white armor who moves, speaks, and precisely executes his duties through sheer force of will. Calvino introduces Bradamante anonymously, as periwinkle-clad knight who comes to the aid of a novice warrior named Raimbaut. The scene establishes her prowess in battle, but when Raimbaut discovers his ally “naked from the waist downwards and running barefoot over rocks in the stream [...] looking for a suitable spot [to begin] quietly and proudly to pee,”35 the reader encounters a heretofore unseen side of Bradamante.

When the half-nude warrior discovers she is being watched, she attacks him “not with the gesture of a perfect manager of weapons that she was, but with the impetus of a furious woman.”36 Just as Agilulf is a walking contradiction, the rule-bound knight/empty suit of armor, Calvino’s Bradamante is a “little paladiness”37 full of “love for all that [is] strict, exact, severe, conforming to moral rule” who, “having been brought up a princess,”38 refuses to sweep, sew, or maintain her tent.
Eventually Sister Theodora, who is writing this tale of Charlemagne’s Christian knights from a convent, is revealed to be Bradamante. Over the course of the novel she loves and loses the nonexistent knight, deciding finally to pursue Raimbaut, whom she initially spurned. The story concludes with Bradamante trading her habit for armor, mounting the future’s horse for another adventure.

More recently, in 2000, American author Jane Yolen collected a series of tales and legends from around the world, all featuring “sword-wielding, spear-throwing, villain-stomping, rescuing-type heroes who also happen to be female” as a gift to her daughter and granddaughter.\(^{39}\) Growing up, Yolen reveals she would pretend to be “King Arthur or Merlin or Lancelot because [she] didn’t know about Bradamante.”\(^{40}\) Yolen chooses two tales, Bradamante’s fierce battle with Rodomonte and her quest to free Ruggiero from the enchanter’s castle, to display her strength, wit, and devotion to her love. Far from being a damsel in distress, Yolen’s Bradamante is a faithful reproduction of Boiardo's and Ariosto's creation, fierce and faithful.

Conclusions

The character of Bradamante has undergone a sort of identity crisis. Invented by the French in some early heroic tale, the female knight was rediscovered, embraced, and celebrated by the epics of two writers of the Italian Renaissance. Within fifty years, the more popular work had inspired a French tragicomedy preoccupied with ideas of patriotism, religious devotion, love, and family. While Robert Garnier did not originate Bradamante, he effectively reintroduced her to French literature, repackaging her and her travails into a straightforward, five-act
play, both admired and emulated. Although other writers have emerged and assumed the superlatives once bestowed on Garnier, his works do survive and continue to attract the interest of both historians and audiences.
Difficulties of Translation

Working alone as a first-time translator would have certainly doomed my efforts early on in the process. Instead, weekly meetings with other students in the translation group allowed me to compare my interpretation of a word or grammatical structure against someone else’s, which occasionally required me to defend why I made the decision I did. The need to justify my choices helped me clarify my point of view as a translator, and define the type of text I hoped to create.

As I translated Act IV, orthography posed the greatest challenge to understanding Garnier’s work. Half-formed words (*ja* for *déjà*, *heur* for *bonheur*), missing accents, and vowel substitution (*y* for *i* in words such as *loy*, *roy*, *luy*, *feray*, etc.) were difficult to understand at first, but in the case of *loy* and *luy*, reading the words revealed their meaning. Randle Cotgrave’s *A Dictionarie of the French and English Tongues* (1611) became my Rosetta Stone for much of the text. Failing this, the University of Chicago’s digitized *Dictionnaire de l’Académie française* (1634) would usually reveal a solution.

I would caution against embracing cognates unquestioningly. Besides translating between languages, in the case of *Bradamante*, one must also translate between eras. On several occasions our group found that a word in Middle French, while still used in modern English, had shifted in meaning, so that retaining it would make the translation less accurate. *Magnanime* appears several times in *Bradamante*, and seems simply to indicate "great," whereas the English *magnanimous* refers to “a lofty and courageous spirit” or “nobility of feeling and
generosity of mind.”41 The staggering number of synonyms in English can makes finding *le mot juste* a difficult proposition, but ultimately such flexibility is appreciated when a variety of concerns (accuracy, metaphor, alliteration, word play, brevity) must be addressed in a given passage.
Works Cited


4. Hollier, Ibid.

5. Saintsbury, Ibid.


8. Witherspoon, p. 5.

9. Ibid., p. 6.


13. Saintsbury, Ibid.


15. Saintsbury, Ibid.


20. Saintsbury, ibid.
23. Cavallo, ibid.
25. Ibid., p. 551.
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid.
36. Ibid., p. 48.
37. Ibid., p. 66.
38. Ibid., p. 61.
40. Ibid.
Act III. Scene I.
LA MONTAGNE, AYMONE, BEATRIX.

LA MONTAGNE.
Qui eust jamais pensé que ce prince de Grecce
Eust en luy tant de cœur, tant de force, et d’adresse.
1015 Veu qu’il n’estoit cogneu des Paladins François,
Et qu’on prise assez peu les armes des Gregeois :
Toutefois il est brave et vaillant au possible,
Son ame est genereuse et sa force invincible.

AYMON.
Que dit ce gentilhomme ?

LA MONTAGNE.
Il est Cesar de nom,
1020 Mais il l’est maintenant de faict et de renom.

AYMON.
C’est de Leon qu’il parle, escoutons-le un peu dire.

LA MONTAGNE.
Chacun luy fait honneur, tout le monde l’admire.

AYMON.
Il a doncques vaincu : nous voyla hors d’ennuy.

LA MONTAGNE.
Certes il est digne d’elle autant qu’elle de luy.

BEATRIX.
Arraisonbons-le un peu.

AYMON.
J’en ay fort grand’envie.
Et quoy? nostre bataille est elle ja finie ?

LA MONTAGNE.
C’en est fait.

AYMON.
Et qui gaigne ?
LA MONTAGNE.

Ils ont égal honneur.

AYMON.

Egal ? comment cela ?

LA MONTAGNE.

Mais Leon est vainqueur.

AYMON.

Hà que j'en ay de joye !

BEATRIX.

Et moy que j'en suis aise !

AYMON.

Je ne sçauois ouir chose qui tant me plaise !

Mais de grace contez comme tout s'est passé.

LA MONTAGNE.

Autour du camp estoit tout le peuple amassé,
Et Charles devisoit avec les preux de France,
Quand les deux champions après la reverence
Se plantent opposez l'un à l'autre, aux deux bouts,
L'un attisé d'amour, et l'autre de courroux.
Un pennache ondoyoit sur leurs brillantes armes,
Chacun prisoit le port de ce pair de gensdarmes,
Leur demarche et leur grace; ils semboient deux Soleils,
Ils paroissonent en force et proiies pareils.

1030

Ils firent quelque pause aux portes des barrières,
S'entréilladant l'un l'autre au travers des visières:
Et ressembloit la vierge, au mouvoir de son corps,
Un generceux cheval qu'on retient par le mors,
Trop ardant de la course: et qui, forcelle droite,
La narine tendue et la bouche mouête,
Frappu du pié la terre, et marchant ça et là,
Monstre l'impatience et la fureur qu'il a.

La voix ne fut si tost de la tompute ouye,

1040

Que l'espee en la main elle court resjouye
Contre son adversaire, et semble à l'approcher
D'une tourmente esmeue encontre un grand rocher.
L'autre marche à grands pas, et plus grave, ne montre
Avoir tant de fureur qu'elle, à ce dur rencontre :

LA MONTAGNE.

They are equally glorious.

AYMON.

Equal? How is that?

LA MONTAGNE.

But Leon is the victor.

AYMON.

And I am very glad about it!

BEATRIX.

As for me, I am delighted!

AYMON.

I have not heard anything so pleasing before!

But please, report on everything that has transpired.

LA MONTAGNE.

Around the camp everyone gathered,
And Charles conversed with the valiant knights of France
When the two champions, after showing respect to each other,
Stood facing one another, at each end,
One fueled by love, the other by wrath.
Plumage waved on their shining armor:
Everyone respected this pair of military men,
Their carriage and their elegance. They seemed like two suns,
Appearing equal in strength and prowess.
They paused briefly at the gates,
Glancing at one another through their visors.
The maiden resembled, in the movement of her body,
A noble steed that one restrains by the bit,
Too fiery for the track. And, with raised ear,
Flared nostril, and gaping maw,
Striking its foot to the ground, bucking here and there,
It shows the impatience and fury that she possesses.

No sooner is the sound of the trumpet heard
That he runs, rejoicing, with sword in hand
Toward her adversary, seeming to approach him
As a tempest churns against a large rock.
The other walks in strides, resolute, not showing
As much fury as she in this rude encounter.
Il saque au poing l'espèce, et destourne et soutient
Les grands coups qu'elle rue, et ferme se maintient.
Comme une forte tour, sur le rivage assise,
Par les vagues battue, et par la froide Bise,
Ne s'en esbranle point, dure contre l'effort

De l'orage qui bruit et tempeste si fort,
Ainsi luy, sans ployer sous l'ardente furie
Et les aspares assaurs de sa douce ennemie,
Qui chamaile sans cesse, ores haut, ores bas,
Par le chef, par le col, par les flancs, par les bras.

Ne s'esmeur de la charge, ains s'avance, ou se tourne,
Ou recule en arrière, et le malheur destourne.
Il s'arreste par fois, et par fois s'avançant,
De la main et du pied se va comme élançant :
Puis soudain se retire, et jette la rudache

Au devant de l'espèce et rend le coup plus laschc.
Il tire peu souvent, et encore ses coups.
Comme en feinte tirez, sont debiles et mous :
Il prend garde à frapper où sa dextre ne nuise,
Et là par grande adresse à tous les coups il vise :

Mais elle s'en courrouce, et ce courtos devoir
Fait redoubler sa haine, ainsi qu'il semble à voir.
Tantost fiert du trenchant, et tantost de la pointe
Elle cherche où l'armure est à l'armure jointe,
Elle voltige, et tourne incessamment la main.

Le sonde en rous endroits, mais son labeur est vain.
Comme un qui pour forcer une ville travaille,
Ceinte de grands fossés et d'espaisse muraille,
De toutes parts flanque, ore fait son effort
Contre un gros boulevard, ou contre un autre fort :

Ore bat une tour, ore assaut une porte,
Ore donne escalade à la muraille forte,
S'attaque à tous endroits, en vain essaye tout,
Il y perd ses soldats et n'en vient point à bout.
La vierge ainsi se peine, et tant moins elle espere

Vaincre son ennemi, d'autant plus se colere,
D'autant plus fait d'effort : le feu sort de ses coups,
Et ne sauroit briser mailles, lames, ne clous.
En fin elle se laisse, et halette de peine,
Elle fond en sueur et se met hors d'haleine :

La main luy devient foible, et ne peut plus tenir
L'indigne coutelace, et l'escu soutenir.
La force luy defaut : mais la colere aigue,
He quickly draws his sword, turns around, and withstands
The heavy blows she lets fly, remaining steady.
Like a mighty tower, situated on the shore,
Battered by the waves and by the cold North Wind,¹
He does not weaken at all, steadfast against the effort
Of the rumbling storm and such strong gales.
Thus, without bending under the burning fury
And harsh assaults of his tender enemy
Who strikes relentlessly, first here, now there,
The head, the neck, the sides, the arms;
He does not flinch under the burden, neither advancing or turning,
Or recoiling backward, and misfortune is averted.
Sometimes she stops, and sometimes she advances,
From hand and foot she goes as if piercing:
Then suddenly she withdraws, throws the shield
In front of the sword, and weakens the blow.
He strikes less frequently, and yet his blows,
Like feigned blows, are weak and soft:
He takes care to strike where her right hand cannot be hurt.
And there, with great direction, he lands all his blows:
But she becomes enraged, and this courteous endeavor
Intensifies her hate, as much as he can see.
Sometimes using the sword's edge, and sometimes the tip,
She searches for the seams in his armor;
She jumps around, and turns her hand incessantly,
Probing in every place, but her effort is futile.

As one who, toiling to overcome a village
Enclosed by deep ditches and thick walls,
Flanked on every side, now focuses his effort
Against a large rampart, or against another fort:
Now he batters a tower, now he assaules a door,
Now he climbs up the sturdy wall,
Attacking everywhere, vainly trying everything,
Losing his soldiers there and not reaching the end.
The maiden toils as well, and so much less she hopes
To defeat her enemy, yet she becomes much more angry,
Making more of an effort: Fire comes from her blows,
And she knew to break the chainmail, swords, and nails.
Finally she grows tired, and pants in pain;
She breaks into a sweat and loses her breath.
Her hand becomes weak; it can no longer hold
The unworthy cutlass² or support the shield.
Her strength wastes away, but her rage is acute:
La honte et le despit de se trouver vaincue,
Luy renflle le courage : et laschant le pavois.

1100 Prend à deux mains l'espee, et bat sur le harnois
Comme sur une enclume au milieu d'une forge.
Où quelque grand Cyclope un corps d'armures forge.
Ses coups drus et pesans passent l'humain pouvoir,
La force luy redouble avec le desespoir :

1105 D'ahan elle se courbe, et semble avoir envie
De perdre en cet effort la victoire et la vie.
Leon frais et dispos comme en ayant pitié,
Pour finir ce combat, entrepris d'amitié,
Commence a la presser, la suivre, la contraindre,

1110 Feint redoubler ses coups, sans toutefois l'atteindre,
La poursuit, la resserre, il la pousse et la poinç,
Et laisse la reduit jusques au dernier point.
Charles fait le signal, et Leon se retire :
Bradamante fremist de deuil, de honte, et d'ire.

1115 Le Conseil s'assembla, qui, de Charles requis,
Dit que Leon avoit Bradamante conquis,
Qu'il la devoit avoir pour legitime esposse.

AYMON.
Et que dit l'Empereur?

LA MONTAGNE.
Qu'il entend qu'il esposse.

AYMON.
O Dieu, que de ta main les faits sont merveilleux !

1120 Tu as orce abatu le coeur des orgueilleux :
Bradamante a trouvé maintenant qui la dome.

BEATRIX.
Elle n'en faisoit cas.

AYMON.
Mais elle en avoit honte.

BEATRIX.
She did not think much of it.

AYMON.
I am going to find the king, and together we shall decide
The time and place to marry them.
SCENE II

ROGER.

1125 Gouffres des creux enfers, Ténariens rivages, Ombres, Larves, Fureurs, Monstres, Démons, et Rages, Arrachez moy d’ici pour me rouëer là bas : Tous tous à moy venez, et me tendez les bras, Je sens plus de douleurs, je souffre plus de peines

1130 Qu’on n’en sçauroit souffrir sur vos dolentes plaines. Je suis au desespoir, je suis plein de fureur, Je ne projette en moy que desastre et qu’horreur : Je ne veux plus du jour, fay sa lampe odieuse, Je veux chercher des nuits la nuit la plus ombreuse, Un lieu Ie plus sauvage et Ie plus escarte Qui se trouve sur terre, un rocher deserte, Solitaire, effroyable, où sans destourbier d’homme Le dueil, l’amour, la rage, et la faim me consomme. Où me puis-je laver de l’horrible forfaict , Que j’ai, monstre execrable, à ma Maistresse faict ? Je l’ay prise de force, et de force ravie A moy, son amour, et sa propre vie, Pour la donner en proye, et en faire seigneur (Ungrate cruaute !) son principal haineur ?

1145 O terre, ouvre ton sein ! ô ciel, lasche ton foudre, Et mon parjure chef broye soudain en poudre ! J’ay madame conquise, et un autre l’aura : J’ay gaigné la victoire, un autre en bravera. Ainsi pour vous, taureaux, vous n’escorchez la plaine, Ainsi pour vous, moutons, vous ne portez la laine, Ainsi pour vous, oiseaux, aux bois vous ne nichez. Hâ regret eternel, crevecceur, jalouise, Dont ma destetable ame est justement saisie !

1155 Mourons tost, depeschons, ne tardons plus ici, Allons voir des Enfers le Royaume noirci : Je n’ay plus que du mal et des langueurs au monde, Ce qu’il ha de plaisir douleur me redonde. Adieu cuirace, armet, cuissots, greves, brassars, Adieu rudeche, espee, outils sanglans de Mars, Dont le Troyen Hector s’arma jadis en guerre : Je ne vous verray plus devalé sous la terre. Et vous, Maistresse, adieu, adieu, Maistresse, helas ! Pardonnez moy ma coulpe, et n’y repensez pas.

SCENE II

ROGER.

Whirlpools in the caves of Hades, the banks of Cape Matapan, Shadows, Spirits, Furies, Monsters, Demons, and blind passion: Uproot me from this place to break me upon the wheel. All of them, all of them come to me, reach out your arms to me. I feel more sadness, I suffer more pain Than one could suffer on your sorrowful plains. I am in despair, I am full of rage, I forecast for myself only disaster and dread: I no longer want daylight, I possess its loathsome lamp: I want to seek out each night the darkest night, The wildest, most faraway place To be found on Earth: A rock that is deserted, Solitary, dreadful, where, without anyone’s interference, Grief, love, madness, and hunger consume me. Where can I cleanse myself of this horrid crime That I, abominable monster, committed against my lady? Did I take her by force, and with this force violate Myself, her love, and her very life, So as to offer her as prey, simply to make (Ungrateful cruelty!) the one she hates most her lord? Oh Earth, open your breast! Oh sky, unleash your thunderbolt, And my most grievous betrayal will turn quickly into powder! I conquered the lady, and another will have her. I won the battle, another will glory in it. As for you, bulls, you will not graze the plains; As for you, sheep, you will not wear wool; And bees, in the fields you will not make honey; As for you, birds, in the trees you will not nest. Oh eternal regret, heartbreaking sorrow, jealousy: These are what rightly grip my detestable soul! Let us die soon, let us hurry, let us not stay here, Let us go see the blackened kingdom of Hades: I have nothing left in the world but evil and langour, What once gave me pleasure now overwhelms me with pain. Farewell breastplate, helmet, cuisses, greaves, armbands, Farewell shield, sword, bloodied tools of Mars With which Hector of Troy once armed himself for war: I will no longer see you, buried underground. And you, my mistress, farewell, farewell, my mistress, alas! Forgive me my guilt, and think of me no longer.
J’ai failli, j’ai forfait, il faut qu’on me punisse,
Je soumets corps et âme à tout aspèce supplice :
Je ne refuse rien, pourveu que mon torment
Tire de votre cœur tout mescontentement :
Que vous me pardonnez devant que je trespasse,
Si que mourir je puisse en votre bonne grace.

SCENE III
BRADAMANTE, HIPPALQUE.

BRADAMANTE.
Hâ fille miserable et regorgeant de maux !
O du Sort outrageux trop outrageux assauts !
O malheureuse vie en misères plongée !
O mon ame, ô mon ame, à jamais affligée !
Que feray-je ? où iray-je ? et que diray-je plus ?
Je suis prise it mes rets, je suis prise a ma glus.
Ah Bradamante, où est ta promesse guerriere ?
Où est plus ta vigueur et ta force premiere ?
Bras traistres, traistre acier, et pourquoi n’avez-vous
Poussé dans son gosier la roideur de vos coups ?
Une goutte de sang n’est de son corps sortie,
Nulle escaille ne lame est de son lieu partie :
Il n’a point chancele, ferme comme une tour
Que la mer abayante assaut tout alentour.
Et folle je pensois ne trouver rien sur terre
Que Roger seulement, qui me vainquist en guerre :
Toutefois ce Gregeois qui n’est parei!
lui, n’acquist onc honneur, m’a domtee aujourdhuy.
Alas! Roger, où es-tu, ou es-ru, ma chere ame?
Où es-tu, mon Roger ! en vain je te reclame,
Tu n’entens à mes cris. Es-ru seul des mortels
Qui n’ayes entendu publier mes cartels ?
Chacun l’a secu, Roger : les peuples Iberides,
Les Mores, les Persans, les Getes, les Colchides :
Et tu l’ignores seul, cela toy seul ne sçais
Qu’espondre pour toy seul par le monde je fais.

HIPPALQUE.
He mon Dieu, que vous sert ceste larmeuse plainte ?
Pourez-vous Ie malheur rompre en vous tormentant ?

SCENE III
BRADAMANTE, HIPPALQUE.

BRADAMANTE.
You desolate wretch, overflowing with troubles!
Oh outrageous attacks from an unreasonable destiny!
Oh unhappy life plunged into misery!
Oh my soul, oh my soul forever afflicted!
What will I do? Where will I go? And what will I say?
I am trapped in my own nets, I am caught in birdlime.9
Ah Bradamante, where is your warrior’s bravery?
Where is your vigor and your inborn strength?
Disloyal arms, disloyal steel, and why did you not
Plunge the strength of your blows into his throat?
Not a drop of blood flowed from his body,
Not one scale10 or blade left its place.
Nothing wavered; he was steady like a tower
That the roaring sea assaults from every side.
And blindly I thought I would find on this Earth
Only Roger, who conquered me in battle:
Yet this Greek, who has no equal, and
Who never gained honor, has tamed me today.
Alas! Roger, where are you, where are you, my dear soul?
Where are you, my Roger! I call out for you in vain;
You do not heed my cries. Are you the only mortal
Who has not heard my challenges proclaimed?
Everyone knew it, Roger: The Iberians,
The Moors, the Persians, the Dacians, the Colchians:11
And you alone are unaware, you alone do not know of
This world of mine, made for you alone to populate.

HIPPALQUE.
Oh my God, what purpose does this tearful lament serve?
Why do you upset yourself with a matter beyond control?
Why do you cry so much? Why do you sigh so much?
Do you intend to break this sadness by tormenting yourself?
BRADAMANTE.
Ma compagne m’amie, hé que j’ay de tristesse !
Le deuil, l’amour, la haine et la crainte m’opprime :
Je suis au désespoir, au desespoir je suis :
Je n’ay plus que la mort pour borner mes ennuis.

HIPPALQUE.
» Ne vous desolcz point. II n’y a maladie,
» Tant soit-elle incurable, où lon ne remedie :
Il faut prendre courage et tousjours esperer.
Dieu vous peut (s’il luy plaist) de ces malheurs tirer.

BRADAMANTE.
Et comment ? quel moyen ? qu’à Leon j’obeisse
Par ses armes vaincue, et sois Imperatrice ?
Hà non ! plusost la mort se coule dans mon sein,
Et plusost me puissé-je enferrer de ma main,
Que d’estre onques à luy : j’en suis là resolue.
Je çay que d’un chacun j’en seray mal-voulue :

HIPPALQUE.
Je voy Marphise seule, allons par devers elle :
Elle en pourra possible avoir quelque nouvelle.

SCENE III
MARPHISE, BRADAMANTE, HIPPALQUE.

MARPHISE.
Quelle fureur, mon frere, a vostre esprit espoind
De quitter vostre Dame et ne la revoir point ?
D’abandonner la Cour, et moy vostre germaine,
Me laissant en destresse, et Bradamante en peine ?
La pauvre Bradamante, hè que j’en ay pitié !
Jamais ne fut, je croy, plus constante amitie.
Las ! que sera-ce d’elle ? Elle avoir esperance
Qu’au bruit de son cartel vous reviendriez en France :
Un chacun l’estimoit, son pere en avoir peur,

BRADAMANTE.
My people love me, and yet how sad I feel!
Grief, love, hate, and fear all weigh upon me:
I am in despair; I have become despair itself.
I have nothing but death to curtail my worries.

HIPPALQUE.
» Do not destroy yourself. There is no illness,
» Except something incurable, that cannot be remedied:
You must be courageous and ever hopeful.
God can (if it pleases Him) pull you from these troubles.

BRADAMANTE.
Defeated by his might, and become his Empress?
No! Death should sooner slip into my breast,
Than ever be his: I am resigned to it.
I know that everyone will scorn me:
Charles will be angry about it, and above all my father
Will spew the venom of his wrath upon me.
Understandably, I will be seen as capricious,
Both the Greeks and French will call me shameless:
I will offend Leon: but all of this is minor to me
And less of a sin than offending Roger.

HIPPALQUE.
I see Marphise alone, let us go toward her:
She might have some news concerning the matter.

SCENE III
MARPHISE, BRADAMANTE, HIPPALQUE.

MARPHISE.
What madness, my brother, moves your soul
To leave your lady and never see her again?
To abandon the court, and your kin,
Leaving me in distress, and Bradamante in pain?
Poor Bradamante, how I pity her situation!
Never was there, I believe, more constant kindness.
Alas! What will become of her? She had hope
That upon hearing her challenge you would return to France:
Everyone supposed it, her father feared it.
Qui a tant ce Leon et son Empire au cœur :
Et ores la pauvreté, et moqueee, et trompee,
Est la femme du Grec par le droit de l'espée.

He who takes Leon and his empire to heart:
And now the wretch, mocked and deceived.
Is the woman, thanks to the might of the Greek sword.

BRADAMANTE.

Et ores la pauvreté, et moqueee, et trompee, 
Est la femme du Grec par le droit de l'espée.

BRADAMANTE.

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BRADAMANT.
BRADAMANTE.
Non, ainçois la fortune à mon bien envieuse.

1250 MAPHISSE.
Il mourroit à l'instant qu'il scâuroit vostre fin.

BRADAMANTE.
J'ay peur qu'il soit desja de la mort le butin.

MAPHISSE.
Non est pas, si Dieu plaist, il en seroit nouvelle.

BRADAMANTE.
S'il vit, il est épris de quelque amour nouvelle.

1255 MAPHISSE.
N'ayez peur qu'il soit onc d'aurre amour retenu.

BRADAMANTE.
Qu'au bruit de ce combat n'est-il donques venu ?

MAPHISSE.
Helas, je n'en scay rien, j'ay peur qu'il soit malade.

BRADAMANTE.
Leon luy auroit bien dressé quelque embuscade,
Comme il est fraudulent, et l'auroit pris, de peur
1260 Qu'il fust à son dommage encontre moy vaincueur.

HIPPALQUE.
Je scay bien un moyen pour brouiller tout l'affaire.

MAPHISSE.
Et quel ? ma grand amie.

BRADAMANTE.
Et que faudroit-il faire ?

MAPHISSE.
Je volle toute d'aise.

BRADAMANTE.
Hippalque, mon amour.

BRADAMANTE.
No, but destiny covets my earthly being.

MAPHISSE.
Roger will die the moment he learns of your demise.

BRADAMANTE.
I fear that he has already become Death's prize.

MAPHISSE.
He has not, God forbid, there would be news of it.

MAPHISSE.
If he lives, he is possessed by some new love.

MAPHISSE.
Do not worry that he will ever be entrapped by another love.

MAPHISSE.
Given news of the battle, why has he not arrived yet?

MAPHISSE.
Alas, I know nothing, but I fear that he is ill.

MAPHISSE.
Leon would have set up some ambush for him,
Cunning as he is. He would have taken Roger for fear
That Roger is against him, which would hinder him.

HIPPALQUE.
I know a way to complicate this affair.

MAPHISSE.
What would that be, my dear friend?

MAPHISSE.
I want you to be at ease, Bradamante.

HIPPALQUE, my dear.
MARPHISE.
Mon cœurct, je te prê, fay nous quelque bon tour.

HIPPALIQUE.

1265 La fourbe est bien aisee, il faut que vous, Marphise,
Allez vers l'Empereur, et que de galantise
Soustenez qu'on fait tort à vostre frere absent,
Mariant Bradamante, et la luy ravissant,
Veul'quis ont devant vous par paroles expresses
Fait de s'ent're-spouser l'un à l'autre promesses :
Qu'un sceptre ne doit pas la faire varier,
Qu'on ne la scáuroit plus à d'autres marier :
Que si par arrogance elle veut contredire,
Les armes en la main soustien drez votre dire.

1270 Bradamante y sera qui, le front abbaissant,
Ira par son mainten vos propos confessant :
Lors Charles et ses Pairs, ne voulan faire outrage
A Roger, suspendront ce dernier mariage.
Il viendra ce pendant, ou quelque autre moyen
Se pourra presenter commode à nostre bien.

MARPHISE.
J'approuve ce conseil : car si Leon s'y treuve,
Il faudra qu'avec moy par honneur il s'espreuve
Pour defendre sa cause, et j'espère qu'après
Vous n'aurez plus de mal de luy, ny d'autres Grecs.

HIPPALIQUE.
The scheme is very easy: You must, Marphise,
Go the Emperor, and courageously
Insist they are doing an injustice to your absent brother,
By marrying off Bradamante and spoiling her for him.
Seeing that he and she, in front of you, explicitly
Promised to marry one another:
A scepter ought not change her.
So that she could no longer be wed to others:
If, through arrogance, she wishes to contradict all of this,
You will maintain your word with weapons in hand.
Bradamante will give into this and, head bowed,
Will be led by her propriety to avow your proposal:
Then Charles and his Peers, not wanting to wrong
Roger, will postpone this recent marriage.
Meanwhile, Roger will come, or some other way
Will conveniently present itself in our favor.

MARPHISE.
I approve this advice: because if Leon finds himself in that position,
He must prove himself to me on his honor
To uphold his cause, and I hope that afterward
You will no longer harbor ill-will for him, nor for other Greeks.

SCENE V
LEON, CHARLES, AYMON, MARPHISE, BEATRIX.

LEON.

1285 Magnanime Empereur, dont le nom venerable
Est aus fiers Sarrasins et aus Turcs redoutable,
Qui le sceptre Francois faites craindre par tout
D'un bout de l'Univers jusques à l'autre bout,
Et qui ce grand Paris, vostre cite Royale,
En majesté rendez aux deux Rommes egale :
Heureuse est vostre France, et moy plein de grand heur
De m'estre ici trouvé pour voir vostre grandeur,
Et d'avoir eu de vous tesmoignage honorable
Au prix de ma valeur, qui vous est redevable.

SCENE V
LEON, CHARLES, AYMON, MARPHISE, BEATRIX.

LEON.
Great Emperor, whose venerable name
Brings dread to proud Saracens and Turks,12
Whose French scepter inspires fear
From one end of the universe to the other,
And whose immense Paris, your royal city,
Brings majesty equal to two Romes:
France is lucky under you, and I, too, am filled with good fortune
To have found myself here to witness your greatness,
And to have received your honorable testimony
As a reward for my valor, which is indebted to you.
CHARLES.
Mon fils, votre vertu s'est montrée à nos yeux,
Comme l'alme clairée d'un Soleil radieux :
Ma voix ne la scarioit rendre plus heroice.
> Le tesmoignage est vain en chose si publique.
Et meritez aussi d'estre gendre d'Aymon,
Bradamante espousant, que vostre vaillantise
Et vostre ferme amour a doublement conqllise.

LEON.
Sire, vous plaist-il pas la faire icy venir,
Pour de nostre nopc;:age ensemble convenir ?

CHARLES.
Je le veux. Ha voicy le bon Duc de Dordonne,
Noble sang de Clairmont qui vous affectionne,
Vostre race et vaillance il honore : et voici
La Duchesse sa femme, et Bradamante aussi.

Vous, Aymon, scavez bien que le prince de Greece,
Aussi grand en vertu comme il est en noblesse,
Poursuit vostre alliance, et s'est acquis vaincueur
En publique combat vostre fille, son ceeur :
Ore voulez-vous pas vos promesses conclure,
Et determiner jour pour la nopce future ?

AYMON.
Ouy, Sire : Je n'ay rien qui me plaise si fort
Que me voir allié d'un prince si accort :
Je me sens bien-heureux, et Bradamante heureuse
D'entrer en une race et noble et valeureuse.

LEON.
Moy plus heureux encor, d'avoir une beaute
Dont mon cœur si long temps idolatre a esté :
Et qui vraye Amazonne est aussi belliqueuse
(Rare faveur du ciel) que belle et gracieuse.
Puis elle est d'un estoc d'hommes vaillants et forts,
Les premiers de la terre en Martiaus efforts,
De Renauts, de Rolands, les foudres dé la guerre,
D'Ogers et d'Oliviers, plus craints que le tonnerre.

CHARLES.
My son, your virtue has appeared before our eyes
Like the beautiful light of a radiant sun:
I could not say it more heroically.
Testimony is useless in something so public.
Truly you deserve the title of Augustus,
And deserve also to be Aymon's son-in-law, and
Bradamante's spouse: Your exploits
And your steadfast love have conquered her two-fold.

LEON.
Sire, does it not please you to come,
In order to bring this marriage together?

CHARLES.
I indeed want it. Ah, here is the good Duke of Dordogne,
Noble blood of Clairmont's house, who is fond of you,
Your family and your valor; and here are
The Duchess his wife, and Bradamante as well.

You, Aymon, know indeed that the prince of Greece,
As virtuous as he is noble,
Haunts your marriage, and has attained,
In public combat, your daughter and her heart:
Now do you not want to resolve your promises,
And determine the date of this forthcoming wedding?

AYMON.
Yes, Sire: Nothing would please me more
Than to see myself allied with such a galant prince:
I feel unbelievably happy, and Bradamante will be thrilled
To join such a noble and valiant family.

LEON.
I am happier still, to have a beauty
Which my heart has idolized for so long:
And who, a true Amazon, is as warlike
As she is beautiful and gracious (a rare favor from heaven).
Then again, she comes from a long line of strong, valiant men,
The first on Earth to engage in Martian efforts,
The Renauts, the Rolands, the lightning bolts of war,
The Ogers and Oliviers, more feared than thunder.
CHARLES.
Tout l'Orient n'est point en gemmes si fecund,
Qu'est en hommes guerriers la race de Clairmont.
Jadis le cheval Grec neut les entrailles pleines
1330 De tant de bons soldats et de bons Capitaines.
Que de cette famille il en sort tous les jours
Indomtez de courage aux belliqueux estours.
La loy de Jesus-Christ par eux est maintenue,
Et la fureur Payenne en ses bords retenue :
1335 Comme un torrent enflé, qui par la plaine bruit
Et ja prez et jardins de ses ondes destruit,
Entraineroit maisons, granges, moulins, estables,
S'il n'estoit arresté par rempars defensables,
Qui rompent sa fureur, et ne permettent pas
1340 Qu'il desborde, et s'espande aux endroits les plus bas.

AYMON.
C'est par vostre vertu que cette heureuse France
Sert encore Jesus-Christ, vous estes sa defense.

CHARLES.
La puissance Chresiennne accroisra de moitié
Par ce nceu conjugal, qui joint nostre amitie :
1345 Quand l'un et l'autre Empire unissant ses armées
Guerroyra les Payens aux terres Idumees,
Ou en la chaude Egypte, en l'Afrique, et aux bords
De l'Espagne indomtee, ou j'ay fait tant d'efforts.

BEATRIX.
Mais pensons d'ordonner du jour du mariage,
1350 A fin qu'on se prepare et mettre en equipage.

LEON.
Ce ne sera si tost que j'en ay de desir.

AYMON.
Sire, il depend de vous, s'il vous plaist Ie choisir.

CHARLES.
Je veux que par tout soit la feste publique.

MARPHISE.
Il n'est pas raisonnable, elle est ja mariee.
AYMON, BEATRIX.
Married? To whom? She has never been...
Never was it said.

MARPHISE.
So she fools you.

AYMON, BEATRIX.
Très ceste querelle ?
Bradamante est présente, il la faut enquérir.

AYMON.
May she say who it is.

MARPHISE.
It happened in my presence.

AYMON, BEATRIX.
Oh God, what impudence!

CHARLES.
How do you know this?

MARPHISE.
It is to my brother Roger.

AYMON, BEATRIX.
They are promised to one another?

MARPHISE.
Indeed, with an oath.

AYMON, BEATRIX.
Marriage? And to whom? She never was...
Never was it said.

MARPHISE.
She fools you.

BEATRIX.
My daughter, married?

AYMON.
It was never announced.

BEATRIX.
Without considering me.

CHARLES.
What good is this argument?

BEATRIX.
This is killing me.

MARPHISE.
It is to my brother Roger.

AYMON.
O God, what impudence!

CHARLES.
How do you know this?

MARPHISE.
It happened in my presence.

BEATRIX.
They are promised to one another?

MARPHISE.
Indeed, with an oath.
LEON.
J’ay toujours entendu qu’il estoit son amant.

AYMON, BEATRIX.
O qu’elle est effrontee !

1365

MARPHISE.
O fille desloyale !
Et faut-il sous couleur d’une Aigle imperiale,
D’un sceptre, d’un tiare ainsi vous oublier ?
O que l’ambition fait nos ames plier !

CHARLES.
Mais qu’en dit Bradamante?

MARPHISE.
Et que peut elle dire ?

1370

CHARLES.
Levez un peu le front.

AYMON.
Ne la croyez pas, Sire.

MARPHISE.
Si elle contredit je la veux desfier :
J’ay les armes au poing pour le verifier.
S’y offre qui voudra, je sous tiens obstinee
Qu’elle s’est pour espouse à mon frere donnee :
Et que l’on ne s’aura, qui ne luy fera tort,
A d’autres la donner jusqu’à tant qu’il soit mort.

CHARLES.
Elle ne respond rien.

MARPHISE.
Elle se sent coupable,
Et reconnoist assez mon dire veritable.

AYMON.
C’est une pure fraude ourdie encontre moy.

1380

MARPHISE.
If she contradicts me, I want to challenge her:
I have a pistol in order to confirm it.
May whoever would like to offer a challenge do so; I firmly uphold
That she gave herself as a wife to my brother:
And let it be known that whoever wrongs her,
Will himself be wronged by others until he is dead.

CHARLES.
She is saying nothing.

MARPHISE.
She feels guilty,
And recognizes well enough the truth in my words.

AYMON.
This is a pure fraud contrived against me.

1380

MARPHISE.
Bradamante never gave herself to Roger,
Nor could she, being under my jurisdiction.
Une telle promesse est de nulle importance.

Puis, où fut-ce? quand fut-ce? estoit-il ja Christien?
Il n'y a que deux jours qu'il combatoit, Payen,
Nos peuples baptizez : or, estant infidelle,
Il ne pouvoit avoir d'alliance avec elle.
C'est abus, c'est abus, jamais n'cn fut rien dit :
Au contraire elle mesme a pratiqué l'édit
Qui a conduit Leon, un si notable prince,
Depuis le bord Gregeois jusqu'en cette province,
Pour entrer en bataille : et ore estant vainqueur,
Qu'on le vienne frauder par un propos mocqueur,
Une baye, un affront, et sur tout que vous, Sire,
Veuillez pour tout cela revoquer vostre dire,
Il est deraisonnable : il faut que le combat,
Fait aux yeux d'un chacun, ait vuidé tout debat.

CHARLES.
Je ne veux rien resoudre en affaire si grande,
Que des gens de conseil avis je ne demande.
» Un Roy qui tout balance au poix de l'equité,
» Doit juger toute chose avecque meureré.

1390 MARPHISE.
Puisque cette pucelle à Roger s'est donnee,
Leon ne peut l'avoire sous un juste Hymence
Tant que Roger vivra : qu'ils se battront tous deux
A la lance et l'espee, et cil qui vaincra d'eux
Son rival envoyé là bas chez Rhadamante,
Ait sans aucun debat l'amour de Bradamante.

AYMON.
Ce n'est pas la raison, Leon a combatu,
Son droit suffisamment est par luy debatu.

1400 MARPHISE.
Que vous nuisce ce combat?

AYMON.
Il serait inutile.

Car vainceur ou vaincu Roger n'aura ma fille.

1410 LEON.
J'accepte le party : non non, ne craignez point :
J'ai pour lui cet estoc, qui toujours trena et point.
Sire, permettez moy d'entrer encore en lice,
Et que de s'y trouver Roger on adverisse.

CHARLES.

1415 Je desire plus host par douceur accorder
Vos differens esmeus que de vous hasarder.
Je ne vus pas vous perdre, estans de tel merite,
Tous deux braves guerriers et champions d'elite.

1420 Que l'un de vous mourust outre necessité.

CHARLES.

1415 Je desire plus host par douceur accorder
Vos differens esmeus que de vous hasarder.
I do not want you to lose, being of such worth,
Two brave warriors and elite champions.

LEON.

Dieu dispose de tout, il donra la victoire
A celuy qu'il voudra, l'autre au Styx ira boire
Marphise, c'est à vous de faire icy trouver
Vostre Roger, à fin de nous entresprouver.

LEON.

God arranges everything, He will give victory
To the one who wishes it; the other will drink from Styx.^{16}
Marphise, it is up to you to find
Your Roger, in order to prove this to us.

SCENE VI

LEON, BASILE, DUC D'ATHENES

LEON.

1425 Quand ce seroit Renaut, quand seroit Roland mesme,
Que le ciel a doué d'une force supreme,
Je l'oserois combatre, ayant ce chevalier,
Qui est plus mille fois que nul autre guerrier,
Il n'a point de pareil : que ce beau Roger vienne,

1430 Et l'espee à la main ses promesses soustienne,
Il luy ferait bien tost son ardeur appaiser,
Et au lieu d'une amie une tombe espouser :
Mais voyla pas Basile, honnure de nostre Grece,

1435 Basile mon amy, je me viens d'engager
De promesse à la Cour, de combatre Roger.

BASILE.

Roger, ce grand Achille, à qui la France toute
Ne scauoir opposer Paladin qu'il redoute !

LEON.

C'est ce mesme Roger.

BASILE.

Roger, the great Achilles, whom all France
Knew could not stand up to a Paladin he fears!

LEON.

It is the same Roger.
BASILE.
Il n’est pas à la Cour.

LEON.

1440 Sa sœur Marphise y est.

His sister Marphise is there.

BASILE.
Est-ce un combat d’amour?

LEON.
C’est pour ma Bradamante.

It is for my Bradamante.

BASILE.
Et qui vous la querelle?

LEON.
Marphise pour Roger.

Marphise does, on Roger's behalf.

BASILE.
Que pretend-il en elle?

LEON.
Il pretend l’espouser.

He claims to marry her.

BASILE.
L’espouser ? et comment?

LEON.
Pour luy avoir promis.

Because I promised her to him.

BASILE.
J’estime qu’elle ment.

LEON.

1445 C’est d’où vient nostre guerre.

This is the source of our war.

BASILE.
Et qu’en dit Bradamante?

LEON.
Elle monstre à son geste en estre consentante.

She shows agreement through her actions.

BASILE.
He is not at court.

BASILE.
Is this a battle of love?

BASILE.
And who challenges you for her?

BASILE.
What does he claim about her?

BASILE.
To marry her? How?

BASILE.
Because I promised her to him.

BASILE.
I think she is lying.

BASILE.
And what says Bradamante about it?
BASILE.

Monsieur, laissez la donc et vous tirez de là.

LEON.

Basile, je ne puis consentir à cela.

BASILE.

Quoy ? voulez-vous mourir pour une ingrate amie?

LEON.

Je voudrois bien pour elle abandonner la vie. Je n'entens toutefois combatare contre luy D'autre sorte que j'ay combattu ce jourdhuy.

BASILE.

Par la force d'un autre ?

LEON.

Ouy bien de celuy mesme Qui m'a tantost conquis ceste beauté que j'aime.

BASILE.

Il n'est plus avec nous.

LEON.

Et où done ? ô mon Dieu !

BASILE.

Il s'en est ore allé.

LEON.

Helas! et en quel lieu ? Quel chemin a til pris? qui l'a meu de ce faire ?

BASILE.

Il estoit tout chagrin, et sembloit se desplaire.

LEON.

Hé Dieu je suis perdu ! malheureux, qu'ay-je fait ?

BASILE.

Sir, leave her and withdraw from here.

LEON.

Basile, I cannot consent to that.

BASILE.

What? Do you want to die for an ungrateful friend?

LEON.

I would indeed give up my life for her. Nevertheless, I understand that fighting against him Requires a manner different from how I fought today.

BASILE.

Through the force of another?

LEON.

Indeed, the same one Who has presently conquered this beauty I love.

BASILE.

He is not with us anymore.

LEON.

Where is he then? Oh my God!

BASILE.

He has now fled.

LEON.

Alas! And where? What road did he take? Who moved him to do this?

BASILE.

He was despondent, and seemed very unhappy with himself.

LEON.

Oh God I am lost! Miserable person, what have I done? Here I am criticized for my disloyal deed.

BASILE.

Everyone will know of my infamy, and the gathered crowd Of people around me will howl at me in the street. These French knights, the terror of the world.
Qui ont l'honneur si cher, m'auront tous en horreur.

Et ma maistresse mesme (ah ! que la terre s'ouvre)
Crevera de despit, Charles et tout le Louvre
Se riront bien de moy d'avoir, homme peureux,
Usurpé le loyer d'un homme valeureux.

Hâte timide poltron, par mon dol je décrie

Moy, mon père, ma race, et toute ma patrie!
J'ay promis de combattre, en autrui me fiant,
Et du premier succez trop me glorifiant,
Et faudray de promesse, et la Cour abusée
Fera de ma vergongne une longue risée.

Hâ chetif !

BASILE.
Mais tandis qu'ici vous souspirez,
Au lieu de vous guarir, vostre mal empirez.
Ne perdons point de temps, s'insuyvons-le à la trace,
Et le cherchons par tout courans de place en place.

...
Endnotes

1. “The twelve most illustrious knights of Charlemagne were called Peers, for the equality that reigned among them; while the name of Paladins, also conferred on them, implies that they were inmates of the palace and companions of the king.” Bulfinch, Thomas. The Age of Fable. New York: Review of Reviews, 1913; Bartleby.com, 2000. www.bartleby.com/bulfinch/.

2. “This wind called in Provence Bise, is the Circius of the ancients, mentioned by Seneca, Pliny, Diodorus, and Strabo. Diodorus in the Fifth Book of his history, says, “The wind blows with so much impetuosity that it raises up stones larger than the fist and clouds of gravel. It is so violent that it carries away the arms and clothing from the soldiers and throws over horses and their riders.” Inglis, Henry D. Switzerland, the south of France, and the Pyrenees in M.DCCC.XXX. Edinburgh: Constable & Co., 1831. p.50


4. “Le Ténare est un cap à l’extrémité du Péloponèse; il s’y trouvait une caverne, considérée comme une entrée des enfers. [Tenaro is a cape at the southern tip of Peloponnese; a cavern can be found there, considered to be the entrance to the underworld.] Hervier, Marcel. Robert Garnier. Bradamante: Tragécomédie. Introduction, notes, grammaire et lexique. Paris: Editions Garnier Frères, 1949. p. 134

5. The Catherine Wheel, a medieval torture device named for St. Catherine of Alexandria, whose touch is said to have destroyed the wheel which was to kill her. Clugnet, Léon. “St. Catherine of Alexandria.” The Catholic Encyclopedia. Vol. 3. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1908. 29 Apr. 2009


8. Birdlime, “a sticky substance usually made from the bark of a holly (Ilex aquifolium) that is smeared on twigs to snare small birds.” Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. 2009.
10. Iberian: a member of one or more peoples anciently inhabiting the Caucasus in Asia between the Black and Caspian seas; Moor: one of the Arab and Berber conquerors of Spain; Persian: a member of one of the peoples forming the modern Iranian nationality; Dacian: ancient country and Roman province of southeastern Europe, roughly equivalent to Romania and Bessarabia; Colchian: ancient country bordering on Black Sea, south of Caucasus Mountains, now western part of Republic of Georgia. Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. 2009.

11. Saracen: a member of a nomadic people of the deserts between Syria and Arabia. Taken with Turk, broadly refers to Arab Muslims of that area. Ibid.

12. Martian refers to the Marcius, a group of families in ancient Rome that spawned several military and political figures. Ibid.

13. Edomite: a member of a Semitic people living south of the Dead Sea in biblical times. Ibid.

14. Rhadamanthus is “a judge of the underworld in Greek mythology.” Ibid.

15. The Styx is “the principal river of the underworld in Greek mythology.” Ibid.