

1532

ORLANDO FURIOSO

Lodovico Ariosto

translated by John Harington

Ariosto, Lodovico (1474-1533) - Italian poet whose spent most of his life in service to the House of Este. His poetry was popular in his day, but he is best-known for his enduring masterpiece, Orlando Furioso,(Roland Mad). Orlando Furioso (1532) - One of the most important works of early Italian literature, this epic poem consists of a number of stories centering around Orlando and other knights of Charlemagne. It was written as a continuation of the unfinished and lesser-known Orlando Innamorato, by Boiardo.

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TRANSLATORS DEDICATION

TO THE MOST EXCELLENT
VERTUOUS, AND NOBLE PRINCESSE,
ELIZABETH,
BY THE GRACE OF GOD, QUEENE OF
ENGLAND, FRANCE AND IRELAND,
DEFENDER OF THE FAITH, &c.

MOST renowned (and most worthy to be most renowned)
Soveraigne Ladie; I presume to offer to your Highnesse this first
part of the fruit of the little garden of my slender skill. It hath been
the longer in growing, and is the lesse worthy the gathering, be-
cause my ground is barren and too cold for such dainty Italian
fruits, being also perhaps over-shaded with trees of some older
growth: but the beams of your blessed countenance, vouchsafing
to shine on so poore a soile, shall soone disperse all hurtfull mists
that would obscure it, and easily dissolve all (whether they be Mel-
dews, or Fel-dews) that would sterve this shallow set plant. I de-
sire to be briefe, because I love to be plaine. Whatsoever I am or

can, is your Majesties. Your gracious favours have been extended in my poore family even to the third generation, your bounty to us and our heires. Wherefore this (though unperfect and unworthy worke) I humbly recommend to that gracious protection, under which I enjoy all in which I can take joy.

If your Highnesse will read it, who dare reject it? if allow it, who can reprove it? if protect it, what MOMUS barking, or ZOILUS biting can any way hurt or annoy it? And thus most humbly craving pardon for this boldnesse, I cease to write, though I will not cease to wish, that your high felicities may never cease.

Your most humble servant,
JOHN HARINGTON.

ARGUMENT

THE FIRST BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Charles hath the foyle, Angelica flies thence:
Renaldos horse holpe him his Love to find:
Ferraw with him doth fight in her defence:
She flies againe, they stay not long behind.
Argalias ghost reproves Ferraws offence,
The Spaniard to new vows himselfe doth bind:
His mistris presence Sacrapant enjoyeth,
With Bradamant, Renaldo him annoyeth.

FIRST BOOKE

1

Of Dames, of Knights, of armes, of loves delight,
Of courtesies, of high attempts I speake,
Then when the Moores transported all their might
On Africke seas, the force of France to breake:
Incited by the youthfull heate and spight
Of Agramant their King, that vowd to wreake
The death of King Trayano (lately slaine)
Upon the Romane Emperour Charlemaine.

2

I will no lesse Orlandos acts declare,
(A tale in prose ne verse yet sung or said)
Who fell bestraught with love, a hap most rare,
To one that erst was counted wise and stayd:
If my sweet Saint that causeth my like care,
My slender muse affoord some gracious ayd,
I make no doubt but I shall have the skill.
As much as I have promist to fulfill.

3

Vouchsafe (O Prince of most renowned race,
The ornament and hope of this our time)
Taccept this gift presented to your grace,
By me your servant rudely here in rime.
And though I paper pay and inke, in place
Of deeper debt, yet take it for no crime:
It may suffice a poore and humble debter,
To say, and if he could it shoulde be bet

4

Here shall you find among the worthy peeres,
Whose praises I prepare to tell in verse,
Rogero, him from whom of auncient yeeres
Your princely stems derived, I rehearse:
Whose noble mind by princely acts appeares,
Whose worthy fame even to the skie doth perse:
So you vouchsafe my lowly stile and base,
Among your high conceits a little plase.

5

Orlando who long time had loved deare,
Angelica the faire: and for her sake,

About the world, in nations far and neare,
Did high attempts performe and undertake,
Returnd with her into the West that yeare,
That Charles his power against the Turks did make:
And with the force of Germanie and France,
Neare Pyren Alpes his standard did advance.

6

To make the Kings of Affrike and of Spaine,
Repent their rash attempts and foolish vaunts;
One having brought from Affrike in his traine,
All able men to carry sword or launce,
The other movd the Spaniards now againe
To overthrow the goodly Realme of Fraunce,
And hither (as I said) Orlando went,
But of his comming straight he did repent.

7

For here (behold how humane judgements are,
And how the wiser sort art oft mistaken)
His Ladie whom he guarded had so farre,
Nor had in fights nor dangers great forsaken,
Without the dint of sword or open warre,

Amid his friends away from him was taken.
For Charles the great, a valiant Prince and wise,
Did this to quench a broile that did arise.

8

Betweene Orlando and Renaldo late,
There fell about Angelica some brall,
And each of them began the tother hate,
This Ladies love had made them both so thrall.
But Charles who much mislikes that such debate
Betweene such friends should rise, on cause so small,
To Namus of Bavier in keeping gave her,
And suffred neither of them both to have her.

9

But promist he would presently bestow
The damsell faire, on him that in that fight,
The plainest prooffe should of his prowesse show,
And danger most the Pagans with his might,
But (ay the while) the Christians take the blow,
Their souldiers slaine, their Captaines put to flight,
The Duke himselfe a prisner there was taken,
His tent was quite abandond and forsaken.

10

Where when the damsell faire a while had stayd,
That for the victor pointed was a pray,
She tooke her horse, ne farther time delayd,
But secretly conveyd her selfe away,
For she foresaw, and was full sore afrayd,
That this to Charles would prove a dismall day.
And riding through a wood, she hapt to meet
A Knight that came against her on his feet.

11

His curats on; his helmet not undone,
His sword and target ready to the same,
And through the wood so swiftly he did runne,
As they that go halfe naked for a game.
But never did a shepherds daughter shunne
More speedily a snake that on her came,
Then faire Angelica did take her flight,
When as she once had knowledge of the Knight.

12

This valiant Knight was Lord of Clarimount,
Duke Ammons sonne, as you shall understand,

Who having lost his horse of good account,
That by mishap was slipt out of his hand,
He followd him, in hope againe to mount,
Untill this Ladies fight did make him stand,
Whose face and shape proportiond were so well,
They seemd the house where love it selfe did dwell.

13

But she that shuns Renaldo all she may,
Upon her horses necke doth lay the raine,
Through thicke and thin she gallopeth away,
Ne makes she choise of beaten way or plaine,
But gives her palfrey leave to chuse the way,
And being movd with feare and with disdain,
Now up, now downe, she never leaves to ride,
Till she arrived by a river side.

14

Fast by the streame Ferraw she sees anone,
(Who noyd, in part with dust, and part with sweat)
Out of the battell hither came alone,
With drinke his thirst, with aire to swage his heat;
And minding backe againe to have bene gone,

He was detain'd with an unlookt for let,
Into the streame by hap his helmet fell,
And how to get it out he cannot tell.

15

And hearing now the noise and mournfull crie
Of one with piteous voice demaunding ayd,
Seeing the damsell eke approaching nie,
That nought but helpe against Renaldo prayd,
What wight it was, he guessed by and by,
Though looking pale, like one that had bene frayd,
And though she had not late bene in his sight,
He thought it was Angelica the bright.

16

And being both a stout and courteous Knight,
And love a little kindling in his brest,
He promist straight to aide her all he might,
And to performe what ever she request.
And though he want an helmet, yet to fight
With bold Renaldo he will do his best.
And both the one, the other straight defied,
Oft having either others value tried.

17

Between them two a combat fierce began,
With strokes that might have pierst the hardest rocks.
While they thus fight on foote, and man to man,
And give and take so hard and heavy knocks,
Away the damsell posteth all she can,
Their paine and travell she requites with mocks.
So hard she rode while they were at their fight,
That she was cleane escaped out of sight.

18

When they long time contended had in vaine,
Who should remaine the master in the field,
And that with force, with cunning, nor with paine,
The tone of them could make the other yeeld,
Renaldo first did move the Knight of Spaine
(Although he usd such curtesie but seeld)
To make a truce; ne was he to be blamed,
For love his heart to other fight inflamed.

19

You thought (said he) to hinder me alone,
But you have hurt your selfe as much or more,

You see the faire Angelica is gone,
So soone we leese that earst we fought so sore.
Had you me tane or slaine, your gaine were none,
Sith you were nere the nere your love therfore.
For while we two have made this little stay,
She lets us both alone and goes her way.

20

But if you love the Ladie, as you say,
Then let us both agree to find her out,
To have her first will be our wisest way,
And when of holding her there is no doubt,
Then by consent let her remaine his pray,
That with his sword can prove himselfe most stout,
I see not else after our long debate,
How either of us can amend his state.

21

Ferraw (that felt small pleasure in the fight)
Agreed a sound and friendly league to make:
They lay aside all wrath and malice quight,
And at the parting from the running lake,
The Pagan would not let the Christen Knight

To follow him on foote, for manners sake:
But prayes him mount behind his horses backe,
And so they seeke the damsell by the tracke.

22

O auncient Knights of true and noble hart,
They rivals were, one faith they livd not under,
Beside they felt their bodies shrewdly smart
Of blowes late given, and yet (behold a wonder)
Through thicke and thin, suspition set apart,
Like friends they ride, and parted not asunder,
Untill the horse with double spurring drived,
Unto a way, which parts in two, arrived.

23

And being neither able to descric
Which way was gone Angelica the bright,
Because the tracke of horses feet, whereby
They seeke her out, appeare alike in sight:
They part, and either will his fortune try,
The left hand one, the other takes the right.
The Spaniard when he wandred had a while,
Came whence he went, the way did him beguile.

24

He was arrivd but there, with all his paine,
Where in the foord he let his helmet fall,
And of his Ladie (whom he lov'd in vaine)
He now had little hope, or none at all.
His helmet now he thinkes to get againe,
And seekes it out, but seeke it while he shall,
It was so deeply sunken in the sand,
He cannot get it out at any hand.

25

Hard by the banke a tall yong Popler grew,
Which he cut downe, thereof a pole to make,
With which each place in feeling and in vew,
To find his scull he up and downe doth rake,
But lo a hap unlookt for doth ensew,
While he such needlesse frutelesse paine doth take,
He saw a Knight arise out of the brooke,
Breasthie, with visage grim, and angry looke.

26

The Knight was armd at all points save the hed,
And in his hand he held the helmet plaine,

That very helmet that such care had bred
In him that late had sought it with such paine.
And looking grimly on Ferraw, he sed,
Ah faithlesse wretch, in promise false and vaine,
It grieves thee now this helmet so to misse,
That should of right be rendred long ere this.

27

Remember (cruell Pagan) when you killed
Me, brother to Angelica the bright:
You said you would (as I then dying willed)
Mine armour drowne, when finisht were the fight,
Now if that fortune have the thing fulfilled,
Which thou thy self sholdst have performd in right,
Greeve not thy selfe, or if thou wilt be greeved,
Greeve that thy promise cannot be beleaved.

28

But if to want an helmet thou repine,
Get one wherewith thine honour thou maist save,
Such hath Orlando Countie Paladine,
Renaldo such, or one perchance more brave,
That was from Almont tane, this from Mambrine:

Win one of these; that, thou with praise maist have,
And as for this, surecase to seeke it more,
But leave it as thou promisd me before.

29

Ferraw was much amazd to see the sprite,
That made this strange appearance unexpected,
His voice was gone, his haire did stand upright,
His senses all were so to feare subjected.
His heart did swell with anger and despight,
To heare his breach of promise thus objected,
And that Argalia (so the Knight was named)
With just reproofe could make him thus ashamed.

30

And wanting time, the matter to excuse,
And being guiltie of no litle blame,
He rested mute, and in a senslesse muse,
So sore his heart was tainted with the shame.
And by Lanfusas life he vowd to use
No helmet, till such time he gat the same,
Which from the stout Almont Orlando wan,
When as they two encountted man to man.

31

But he this vow to keepe more firmly ment,
And kept it better then the first he made,
Away he parted hence a malcontent,
And many daies ensuing rested sad.
To seeke Orlando out is his intent,
With whom to fight he would be very glad,
But now what haps unto Renaldo fell,
That tooke the other way, tis time to tell.

32

Not farre he walkt, but he his horse had spide,
That praunsing went before him on the way,
Holla my boy holla (Renaldo cride)
The want of thee annoyd me much to day.
But Bayard will not let his master ride,
But takes his heeles and faster goes away.
His flight much anger in Renaldo bred:
But follow we Angelica that fled.

33

That fled through woods and deserts all obscure,
Through places uninhabited and wast,

Ne could she yet repute her selfe secure,
But farther still she gallopeth in hast.
Each leafe that stirres in her doth feare procure,
And maketh her affrighted and agast:
Each noise she heares, each shadow she doth see,
She doth mistrust it should Renaldo be.

34

Like to a fawne, or kid of bearded goate,
That in the wood a tyger fierce espide,
To kill her dam, and first to teare the throate,
And then to feed upon the hanch or side,
Both feare lest she might light on such a lot,
And seeke it selfe in thickest brackes to hide,
And thinkes each noise the wind or aire doth cause,
It selfe in danger of the tygers clawes.

35

That day and night she wandred here and there,
And halfe the other day that did ensue,
Untill at last she was arrived where
A fine yong grove with pleasant shadow grew,
Neare to the which two little rivers were,

Whose moisture did the tender herbes renew,
And make a sweete and very pleasing sound,
By running on the sand and stonie ground.

36

Here she at last her selfe in safetie thought,
As being from Renaldo many a mile,
Tyrd with annoy the heate and travell brought,
She thinkes it best with sleepe the time beguile,
And having first a place convenient sought,
She lets her horse refresh his limbes the while,
Who fed upon the bankes well clothd with grasse,
And dranke the river water cleere as glasse.

37

Hard by the brooke an arbor she descride,
Wherein grew faire and very fragrant floures,
With roses sweet, and other trees beside,
Wherewith the place adornes the native boures,
So fenced in with shades on either side,
Safe from the heate of late or early houres,
The boughes and leaves so cunningly were mixt,
No sunne, no light, could enter them betwixt .

38

Within, the tender herbes a bed do make,
Inviting folke to take their rest and ease:
Here meanes this Ladie faire a nap to take,
And fals to sleepe, the place so well doth please.
Not long she lay, but her a noise did wake,
The trampling of a horse did her disease,
And looking out as secret as she might,
To come all armd she saw a comely Knight.

39

She knowes not yet if he be foe or friend,
Twixt hope and feare she doubtfully doth stand,
And what he meanes to do she doth attend,
And who it was she faine would understand.
The Knight did to the river side descend,
And resting downe his head upon his hand,
All in a muse he sitteth still alone,
Like one transformd into a marble stone.

40

He tarrid in this muse an houre and more,
With looke cast downe in sad and heavie guise,

At last he did lament his hap so sore,
Yet in so sweete and comely mournfull wise,
So hard a heart no tyger ever bore,
But would have heard such plaints with warrish eies.
His heart did seeme a mountaine full of flame,
His cheekes a streame of teares to quench the same.

41

Alas (said he) what meanes this divers passion?
I burne as fire, and yet as frost I freese,
I still lament, and yet I move compassion,
I come too late, and all my labour leese.
I had but words and lookes for shew and fashion,
But others get the game, and gainefull fees:
If neither fruite nor floure come to my part,
Why should her love consume my carefull hart?

42

Like to the rose I count the virgine pure,
That growth on native stem in garden faire,
Which while it stands with wals environd sure,
Where heardmen with their heards cannot repaire
To favor it, it seemeth to allure

The morning dew, the heate, the earth, the aire.
Yong gallant men, and lovely dames delight
In their sweet sent, and in their pleasing sight.

43

But when at once tis gathered and gone,
From proper stalke, where late before it grew,
The love, the liking little is or none,
Both favour, grace and beautie all adew.
So when a virgin grants to one alone
The precious floure for which so many sew,
Well he that getteth it may love her best,
But she forgoes the love of all the rest.

44

She may deserve his love, but others hate,
To whom of love she shewd her selfe so scant,
(Oh then my cruell fortune or my fate)
Others have store, but I am starvd with want:
Then leave to love this ladie so ungrate:
Nay live to love (behold I soone recant)
Yea first let life from these my limbs be rent,
Ere I to change my love shall give consent.

45

If some perhaps desirous are to know,
What wight it was with sorrow so opprest,
Twas Sacrapant that was afflicted so,
And love had bred this torment in his brest:
That trickling wound, that flattring cruell foe,
Most happie they that know and have it least.
The love of her I say procurd his woe,
And she had heard and knew it long ago.

46

Her love allurd him from the Easterne land,
Unto the Westerne shores, where sets the Sunne,
And here he heard how by Orlandos hand,
A passage safe from thIndies she had wonne.
Her sequestration he did understand,
That Charles had made, and how the same was done
To make the Knights more venterous and bold,
In fighting for the Floure de luce of gold.

47

And furthermore himselfe had present bene
When Charles his men were overthrowne and slaine

Since then, he traveld farre to find this Queene,
But hitherto it hath bene all in vaine.
Now much despaire, and little hope betweene,
So rufully thereof he doth complaine,
And with such wailing words his woes rehearst,
As might the hardest stonie heart have pearst.

48

And while in this most dolefull state he bides,
And sighes full oft, and sheddeth many a teare,
And speakes these same, and many words besides,
(Which I to tell for want of time forbear)

His noble fortune so for him provides,
That all this came unto his mistresse eare,
And in one moment he prevailed more
Then he had done in many yeares before.

49

Angelica with great attention hard,
The mone, and plaint, that him tormented sore,
Who long had loved her, with great regard,
As she had triall, many yeares before,
Yet as a marble pillar cold and hard,

She not inclines to pittie him the more.
Like one that all the world doth much disdain,
And deemeth none worthie her love againe.

50

But being now with danger compast round,
She thought it best to take him for her guide,
For one that were in water almost drownd,
Were very stout, if for no helpe he cride:
If she let passe the fortune now she found,
She thinkes to want the like another tyde.
And furthermore for certaine this she knew,
That Sacrapant had beene her lover true.

51

Ne meant she tho to quench the raging fires,
That ay consumd his faithfull loving heart,
Ne yet with that a lover most desires,
Tasswage the paine in all, or yet in part:
She meanes he first shall pull her from the briers,
And feed him then with words and womens art,
To make him first of all to serve her turne,
That done, to wonted coyresse to returne.

52

Unto the river side she doth descend,
And toward him most goddesse like she came,
And said, all peace to thee my dearest friend,
With modest looke, and cald him by his name,
And further said, the Gods and you defend
My chastity, mine honour and my fame,
And never grant by their divine permission,
That I give cause of any such suspition.

53

With how great joy a mothers minde is fild,
To see a sonne, for whom she long had mourned,
Whom she heard late in battell to be kild,
And saw the troopes without him home returned,
Such joy had Sacrapant when he behild,
His Ladie deere: his teares to smiles are turned,
To see her beautie rare, her comely favour,
Her princely presence, and her stately havour.

54

Like one all ravisht with her heavenly face,
Unto his loved Ladie he doth runne,

Who was content in armes him to embrace,
Which she perhaps at home would not have done,
But doubting now the dangerous time and place,
She must go forward as she hath begun,
In hope by his good service and assistance,
To make her home returne without resistance.

55

And in most lovly manner she doth tell,
The strange adventures, and the divers chance,
That since they two did part to her befell,
Both on the way, and since she came to France:
And how Orlando used her right well,
Defending her from danger and mischance,
And that his noble force and magnanimitie,
Had still preservd the floure of her virginity.

56

It might be true, but sure it was incredible,
To tell to one that were discreet and wise,
But unto Sacrapant it seemed possible,
Because that love had dasled so his eyes:
Love causeth what is seene, to seeme invisible,

And makes of things not seene, a shape to rise.
It is a proverbe used long ago,
We soone beleeve the thing we would have so.

57

But to himselfe thus Sacrapant doth say,
Bit that my Lord of Anglant were so mad,
To take no pleasure of so faire a pray,
When he both time and place, and power had,
Yet am not I obliged any way,
To imitate a president so bad,
Ile rather take my pleasure while I may,
Then waile my want of wit another day.

58

Ile gather now the fresh and fragrant rose,
Whose beautie may with standing still be spent,
One cannot do a thing (as I suppose)
That better can a womans mind content:
Well may they seeme much grieved for a glose,
And weepe and waile, and dolefully lament,
There shall no foolish plaints, nor fained ire,
Hinder me to encarnat my desire.

59

This said, forthwith he did himselfe prepare,
Tassault the fort that easly would be wonne,
But loe a sodaine hap that bred new care,
And made him cease his enterprise begonne,
For of an enemy he was aware,
He claspt his helmet late before undone,
And armed all, he mounteth one his beast,
And standeth ready with his speare in rest.

60

Behold a warrior whom he did not know,
Came downe the wood in semblance like a Knight,
The furniture was all as white as snow,
And in the helme a plume of fethers white.
King Sacrapant by prooffe doth plainely show,
That he doth take the thing in great despite,
To be disturbd and hindred from that pleasure,
That he preferd before all other treasure.

61

Approching nie, the warrior he defide,
And hopes to set him quite beside the seat:

The other with such loftie words replide,
As persons use, in choler and in heat.
At last when glorious vaunts were laid aside,
They come to strokes and each to do his feat,
Doth couch his speare, and running thus they sped,
Their coursers both encountred hed to hed.

62

As Lions meete, or Bulls in pastures greene,
With teeth & hornes, & staine with bloud the field,
Such eger fight these warriers was betweene,
And eithers speare had pearst the tothers sheild,
The sound that of these strokes had raised beene,
An eccho lowd along the vale did yeeld.
Twas happie that their curats were so good,
The Lances else had pierced to the blood.

63

For quite unable now about to wheele,
They butt like rammes, the one the others head,
Whereof the Pagans horse such paine did feele,
That ere long space had past he fell down dead.
The tothers horse a little gan to reele,

But being spurd, full quickly up he sped.
The Pagans horse thus overthrowne and slaine,
Fell backward greatly to his masters paine.

64

That unknowne champion seeing thother downe,
His horse upon him lying dead in vew,
Expecting in this fight no more renowne,
Determind not the battell to renew.
But by the way that leadeth from the towne,
The first appointed journey doth pursew,
And was now ridden halfe a mile at least,
Before the Pagan parted from his beast.

65

Like as the tiller of the fruitfull ground,
With sodaine storme and tempest is astonishd
Who sees the flash, and heares the thunders sound,
And for their masters sakes, the cattell punishd,
Or when by hap a faire old pine he found,
By force of raging winds his leaves diminishd,
So stood amazd the Pagan in the place,
His Ladie present at the wofull case.

66

He fetcht a sigh most deeply from his heart,
Not that he had put out of joynt, or lamed
His arme, his legge, or any other part,
But chiefly he his evill fortune blamed,
At such a time, to hap so overthwart,
Before his love, to make him so ashamed:
And had not she some cause of speech found out,
He had remained speechlesse out of doubt.

67

My Lord (said she) what ailes you be so sad?
The want was not in you, but in your steed,
For whom a stable, or a pasture had
Beene fitter then a course at tilt indeed.
Nor is that adverse partie very glad,
As well appeares, that paried with such speed,
For in my judgement they be said to yeeld,
That first leave off, and do depart the feeld.

68

Thus while she gives him comfort all she may,
Behold there came a messenger in post,

Blowing his horne, and riding downe the way,
Where he before his horse, and honor lost,
And comming nearer he of them doth pray,
To tell if they had seene passe by that cost,
A champion armd at all points like a Knight,
The shield, the horse, and armour all of white.

69

I have both seene the Knight, and felt his force,
(Said Sacrapant) for here before you came,
He cast me downe and also kild my horse,
Ne know I (that doth greeve me most) his name.
Sir (quoth the post) the name I will not force,
To tell, sith you desire to know the same,
First, know that you were conquerd in this fight,
By valour of a damsell faire and bright.

70

Of passing strength, but of more passing hew,
And Bradamant, this damsell faire is named,
She was the wight, whose meeting you may rew,
And all your life hereafter be ashamed.
This said, he turnd his horse and bad adew.

But Sacrapant with high disdain enflamed,
Was first so wroth, and then so shamd thereto,
He knew not what to say, nor what to do.

71

And after he had staid a while and musd,
That at a womans hands he had received
Such a disgrace as could not be excusd,
Nor how he might revenge it he perceived,
With thought hereof his mind was so confusd,
He stood like one of wit and sense bereaved.
At last he goth, a better place to finde,
He takes her horse and makes her mount behind.

72

Now having rode a mile, or thereabout,
They heard a noise, a trampling on the ground,
They thought it was some company or rout,
That caused in the woods so great a sound:
At last they see a warlike horse, and stout,
With gilded barb, that cost full many a pound,
No hedge, no ditch, no wood, no water was,
That stopped him where he was bent to passe.

73

Angelica casting her eye aside:
Except (said she) mine eies all dazled be,
I have that famous horse Bayardo spide,
Come trotting downe the wood, as seemes to me:
(How well for us our fortune doth provide)
It is the very same, I know tis he:
On one poore nag to ride we two were loth,
And here he commeth fit to serve us both.

74

King Sacrapant alighted by and by,
And thinkes to take him gently by the raine,
But with his heeles the horse doth streight reply,
As who should say, his rule he did disdain.
It happie was he stood the beast not nye,
For it he had, it had beene to his paine,
For why, such force the horse had in his heele,
He would have burst a mountaine all of steele.

75

But to the damsell gently he doth go,
In humble manner, and in lowly sort,

A spaniell after absence fauneth so,
And seekes to make his master play, and sport,
For Bayard cald to mind the damsell tho,
When she unto Albracca did resort,
And usd to feed him for his masters sake,
Whom she then lovd, and he did her forsake.

76

She takes the bridle boldly in her hand,
And strokt his brest, and necke, with art and skill:
The horse that had great wit to understand,
Like to a lambe, by her he standeth still,
And while Bayardo gently there did stand,
The Pagan got him up, and had his will.
And she that erst to ride behind was faine,
Into her saddle mounted now againe.

77

And being newly settled in her seate,
She saw a man on foote all armed runne,
Straight in her mind she gan to chafe and fret,
Because she knew it was Duke Ammons sonne,
Most earnestly he sude her love to get,

More earnestly she seeks his love to shunne.
Once she lov'd him, he hated her as much,
And now he loves, she hates, his hap was such.

78

The cause of this first from two fountaines grew,
Like in the tast, but in effects unlike,
Plac'd in Ardenna, each in others vew,
Who tastes the one, loves dart his heart doth strike,
Contrary of the other doth ensew,
Who drinke thereof, their lovers shall mislike.
Renaldo dranke of one, and love him pained,
Shee drunke the other and his love disdained.

79

The liquor thus with secret venom mingled,
Makes her to stand so stiffely in the nay,
On whom Renaldos heart was wholly kindled,
Though scarce to looke on him she can away,
But from his sight desiring to be singled,
With soft low voice the Pagan she doth pray,
That he approach no nearer to this Knight,
But flie away with all the speed he might.

80

Why then (quoth he) make you so small esteeme,
Of me, as though that I to him should yeeld?
So weake and faint my forces do you deeme,
That safe from him your selfe I cannot shield?
Then you forget Albracca it should seeme,
And that same night, when I amid the field,
Alone unarmed did defend you then,
Against King Agrican and all his men.

81

No sir, said she (ne knowes she what to say)
Because Renaldo now approcht so nie,
And threatned so the Pagan in the way,
When under him his horse he did espie,
And saw the damsell taken as a pray,
In whose defence he meanes to live and die.
But what fell out betweene these warriors feerce,
Within the second booke I do rehearse.

ARGUMENT

THE SECOND BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

A Frere betweene two rivals parts the fray,
By magicke art: Renaldo hasteth home,
But in embassage he is sent away,
When tempest makes the sea to rage and fome.
Bradamant seekes her spouse, but by the way,
While she about the country wyld did rome,
Met Pinnabel, who by a craftie traine,
Both sought, and thought the Ladie to have slaine.

SECOND BOOKE

1

O Blind god Love, why takst thou such delight,
With darts of divers force our hearts to wound?
By thy too much abusing of thy might,
This discord great in humane hearts is found.
When I would wade the shallow foord aright,
Thou drawst me to the deepe to have me dround,
From those love me, my love thou dost recall,
And place it where I find no love at all.

2

Thou makst most faire unto Renaldo seeme
Angelica, that takes him for a foe,
And when that she of him did well esteeme,
Then he dislikt, and did refuse her thoe.
Which makes her now of him the lesse to deeme.
Thus (as they say) she renders quit pro quo.
She hateth him, and doth detest him so,
She first will die, ere she will with him go.

3

Renaldo (full of stately courage) cride,
Downe theefe from of my horse, downe by and by,
So robd to be I never can abide,
But they that do it dearely shall aby,
Also this Ladie you must leave beside,
Else one of us in her defence will dye
A horse so good, and such a goodly dame,
To leave unto a theefe it were a shame.

4

What? me a theefe? thou in thy throat dost lye,
(Quoth Sacrapant, that was as hot as he)
Theefe to thy selfe, thy malice I defie,
For as I heare, the name is due to thee:
But if thou dare thy might and manhood trie,
Come take this Ladie, or this horse from me.
Though I allow in this of thine opinion,
That of the world she is the matchlesse minion.

5

Like as two mastive dogges with hungrie mawes,
Movd first to hate, from hate to raging ire,

Approch with grinning teeth, and griesly jaws,
With staring eyes, as red as flaming fire,
At last they bite, and scratch with teeth and claws,
And teare themselves, and tumble in the mire.
So after byting and reprochfull words,
Did these two worthy warriors draw their swords.

6

One was on foote, the tother on a horse,
You thinke perhaps, the horseman vantage had,
No sure, no whit; he would have wisht to skorce,
For why at last to light he must be glad,
The beast did know thus much by natures force,
To hurt his master were a service bad.
The pagan could not nor with spur nor hand,
Make him unto his mind to go or stand.

7

He stops, when he should make a full careire,
He runnes or trots, when he would have him rest,
At last to throw his rider in the mire,
He plungeth with his head beneath his breast.
But Sacrapant that now had small desire,

At such a time, to tame so proud a beast,
Did worke so well at last by sleight and force,
On his left side, he lighted from his horse.

8

When from Bayardos over furious might,
The Pagan had himselfe discharged so,
With naked swords there was a noble fight,
Sometimes they lye aloft, sometimes aloe,
And from their blowes the fire flies out in fight:
I thinke that Vulcans hammers beat more slow,
Where he within the mountaine AEtнас chaps,
Doth forge for love, the fearfull thunderclaps.

9

Sometimes they profer, then they pause a while,
Sometime strike out, like masters of the play,
Now stand upright, now stoup another while,
Now open lye, then cover all they may.
Now ward, then with a slip the blow beguile:
Now forward step, now backe a little way:
Now round about, and where the tone gives place,
There still the other presseth in his place.

10

Renaldo did the Pagan Prince invade,
And strike at once with all the might he coud,
The other doth oppose against the blade,
A shield of bone and steele of temper good.
But through the same a way Fusberta made,
And of the blow resounded all the wood:
The steele, the bone like yse in peeces broke,
And left his arme benumbed with the stroke.

11

Which when the faire and fearfull damsell saw,
And how great damage did ensue thereby,
She looked pale, for anguish and for aw,
Like those by doome that are condemnd to dye:
She thinks it best her selfe from hence withdraw,
Else will Renaldo take her by and by,
The same Renaldo whom she hateth so,
Though love of her procured all his wo.

12

Unto the wood she turnes her horse in hast,
And takes a little narrow path and blind;

Her fearfull looks ofttimes she backe doth cast,
Still doubting lest Renaldo came behind:
And when that she a little way had past,
Alow the vale a Hermit she did find:
A weake old man, with beard along his brest,
In shew devout, and holier then the rest.

13

He seemd like one with fasts and age consumed,
He rode upon a slouthfull going asse,
And by his looke, a man would have presumed,
That of his conscience scrupulous he was.
Yet her young face, his old sight so illumed,
When as he saw the damsell by to pass:
(Though weake and faint, as such an age behoved)
That charitie his courage somewhat moved.

14

The damsell of the Hermit askt the way,
That might unto some havn town lead most neare,
That she might part from France without delay,
Where once Renaldos name she might not heare.
The frier that could enchaunt, doth all he may,

To comfort her, and make her of good cheare,
And to her safetie promising to looke,
Out of his bag forthwith he drew a booke.

15

A booke of skill and learning so profound,
That of a lease he had not made an end,
But that there rose a sprite from under ground,
Whom like a page he doth of arrants lead.
This sprite by words of secret vertue bound,
Goes where these Knights their combat did intend:
And while they two were fighting very hard,
He enters them betweene without regard.

16

Good sirs (quoth he) for courtesie sake me show,
When one of you the tother shall have slaine,
And after all the travell you bestow,
What guerdon you expect for all your paine,
Behold, Orlando striking nere a blow,
Nor breaking staffe, while you strive here in vaine,
To Paris ward the Ladie faire doth carie,
While you on fighting undiscreetly tarie.

17

I saw from hence a mile, or thereabout,
Orlando with Angelica alone,
And as for you, they jest and make a flout,
That fight where praise and profit can be none.
Twer best you quickly went to seeke them out,
Before that any farther they be gone,
Within the walls of Paris if they get,
Your eye on her againe you shall not set.

18

When as the Knights this message had received,
They both remaind amazed, dumbe and sad,
To heare Orlando had them so deceived,
Of whom before great jealousie they had;
But good Renaldo so great griefe conceived,
That for the time, like one all raging made,
He sware without regard of God or man,
That he will kill Orlando if he can.

19

And seeing where his horse stood still untide,
He thither goes: such hast he makes away,

He offers not the Pagan leave to ride,
Nor at the parting once adieu doth say.
Now Bayard felt his masters spurs in side,
And gallops maine, ne maketh any stay.
No rivers, rocks, no hedge, nor ditches wide,
Could stay his course, or make him step aside.

20

Nor marvell if Renaldo made some hast,
To mount againe upon his horses backe,
You heard before how many dayes had past,
That by his absence he had felt great lacke,
The horse (that had of humane wit some tast,)
Ran not away for any jadish knacke,
His going only was to this intent,
To guide his master where the Ladie went.

21

The horse had spide her when she tooke her flight,
First from the tent, as he thereby did stand,
And followd her, and kept her long in sight,
As then by hap out of his masters hand.
(His master did not long before alight,

To combat with a Baron hand to hand)
The horse pursude the damsell all about,
And holpe his master still to find her out.

22

He followed her through valley, hill and plaine,
Through woods and thickets for his masters sake,
Whom he permitted not to touch the raine,
For feare lest he some other way should take,
By which Renaldo though with mickle paine
Twise found her out, twice she did him forsake:
For first Ferraw, then Sacrapant withstood,
That by twice finding her he did no good.

23

Bayardo trusting to the lying sprite,
Whose false (but likely) tale so late he hard,
And doubting not it was both true and right,
He doth his duty now with due regard.
Renaldo prickt with love and raging spite,
Doth pricke apace, and all to Paris ward,
To Paris ward he maketh so great shift,
The wind it selfe seemes not to go so swift.

24

Such hast he made Orlando out to find,
That scant he ceast to travell all the night,
So deeply stacke the storie in his mind,
That was of late devised by the sprite:
Betimes and late as first he had assignd,
He rode untill he saw the towne in sight:
Where Charles whose chance all christned hearts did rew,
With the small relikes of his powre withdrew.

25

And for he lookes to be assaulted then,
Or else besiegd, he useth all his care,
To store himselfe with victuall and with men.
The walls eke of the towne he doth repaire,
And take advice, both how, and where, and when,
For his defence each thing he may prepare.
An armie new to make he doth intend,
And for new souldiers into England send.

26

He minds to take the field againe ere long,
And trie the hap of warre another day,

And all in hast to make himselfe more strong,
He sends Renaldo Englands ayd to pray.
Renaldo thought the Emperour did him wrong,
To send him in such hast, and grant no stay.
Not that ill will to thiland he did carie,
But for another cause he faine would tarie.

27

Yet now although full sore against his mind,
As loth to leave the Ladie he so loved,
Whom he in Paris hoped had to find,
Because tobey his Prince it him behoved,
He taketh this embassage thus assignd,
And having straight all other lets removed,
He posted first to Callis with great hast,
And there embarkt ere halfe next day was past.

28

Against the mariners and masters minds,
(Such hast he made to have returned backe)
He takes the sea though swelling with great winds,
And threatning ruine manifest and wracke.
Fierce Boreas that himselfe despised finds,

Doth beate on seas with tempest foule and blacke,
By force whereof the waves were raisd so hie,
The very tops were sprinkled all thereby.

29

The mariners take in their greater saile,
And by the wind they lie, but all in vaine,
Then backe againe they bend without availe,
Now they are out, they cannot in againe.
No (said the wind) my force shall so prevaile,
Your bold attempts shall put you to some paine.
It was a folly any more to strive,
Needs must they follow as the wind did drive.

30

In the foeship sometimes the blast doth blow,
Straight in the poope, the seas breake to the skies.
Needs must they beare a saile, though very low,
To void the waves that higher still did rise:
But sith my web so diverse now doth grow,
To weave with many threds I must devise,
I leave Renaldo in this dangerous place,
And of his sister speake a little space.

31

I meane the noble damsell Bradamant,
Of Ammon daughter, and dame Beatrice,
In whose rare mind no noble part did want,
So full of value, and so void of vice,
King Charles and France of her might rightly vaunt,
So chast, so faire, so faithfull and so wise,
And in the feates of armes of so great fame,
A man might guesse by that of whence she came.

32

There was a Knight enamour'd on this dame,
That out of Affricke came with Agramant,
Roger hight, so was his fathers name,
(His mother was the child of Agolant)
The damsell that of worthy lineage came,
And had a heart not made of adamant,
Disdained not the love of such a Knight,
Although he had but seeld bene in her sight.

33

Long travell and great paine she had endured,
And rid alone her lover to have found,

Ne would she thinke her saftie more assured,
If with an armie she were garded round.
You heard before how she by force procured
King Sacrapant to fall and kisse the ground,
The wood she past, and after that the mountaine,
Untill at last she saw a goodly fountaine.

34

A goodly fountaine running in a field,
All full of trees, whose leaves do never fade,
Which did to passengers great pleasure yeeld,
The running streame so sweete a murmur made,
Upon the South, a hill the Sunne did shield,
The ground gave floures, the grove a gratefull shade.
Now here the dame casting her eye aside,
A man at armes fast by the brooke descride.

35

A man at armes she spyed by the brooke,
Whose banks with flowers of divers hew were clad,
Of which sweet place he so small pleasure tooke,
His face did shew his heart was nothing glad,
His targe and helmet were not farre to looke,

Upon a tree where tide his horse he had:
His eyes were swolne with tears, his mind oppressed
With bitter thoughts that had his heart distressed.

36

The damsell faire enticd by deepe desire,
That all (but chiefly women) have to know,
All strangers states, doth earnestly require
The dolefull Knight his inward grieffe to show.
Who marking well her manner and attire,
Her courteous speech with him prevailed so,
He tels his state, esteeming by the sight,
That needs she must have bene some noble Knight.

37

Good sir (said he) you first must understand,
I served Charles against the King of Spaine,
I horsemen had and footmen in my band,
In ambush placd the Spanish King thave slaine:
I brought the fairest Ladie in this land,
And my best loved with me in my traine,
When sodainly ere I thereof was ware,
There came a horseman that procurd my care.

38

Perhap a man, or some infernall sprite,
In humane shape, I cannot certaine say,
But this I say, he tooke the damsell bright,
Even as a faulcon seaseth on his pray,
So he my loving Ladie did affright,
And so affrighted bare her quite away.
And when I thought to rescue her by force,
Aloft in aire he mounted with his horse.

39

Even as a ravnous kite that doth espie
A little chicken wandring from the other,
Doth catch him straight, and carries him on hie,
That now repents he was not with his mother.
What could I do? my horse wants wings to flie,
Scant could he set one leg before the tother,
He traveld had before so many dayes,
Among the painfull hils and stonie wayes.

40

But like to one that were his wit beside,
I leave my men to do my first intent,

Not caring of my selfe what should betide,
(So strongly to my fancie was I bent)
And tooke the blind god Cupid for my guide,
By wayes as blind to seeke my love I went.
And though my sense, my guide, my way were blind,
Yet on I go in hope my love to find.

41

A senight space abating but a day,
About the woods and mountaines I did range,
In savage deserts wilde and void of way,
Where humane steps were rare and very strange.
Fast by the desert place a plaine there lay,
That shewed from the rest but little change,
Save onely that a castle full of wonder
Did stand in rockes that had bene clovn asunder.

42

This castle shines like flaming fire a farre,
Not made of lime and stone as ours are here:
And still as I approcht a little narre,
More wonderfull the building doth appeare.
It is a fort impregnable by warre,

Compacted all of mettall shining cleare.
The fiends of hell this fort of steele did make,
Of mettall tempred in the Stigian lake.

43

The towres are all of steele, and polisht bright,
There is on them no spot or any rust,
It shines by day, by darke it giveth light,
Here dwels this robber wicked and unjust,
And what he gets against all lawes and right,
The lawlesse wretch abuseth here by lust,
And here he keepes my faire and faithfull lover,
Without all hope that I may her recover.

44

Ah wo was me, in vaine I sought to helpe,
I see the place that keepes that I love best,
Even as a foxe that crying heares her whelpe,
Now borne aloft into the Eagles nest,
About the tree she goes, and faine would helpe,
But is constrained for want of wings to rest.
The rocke so steepe, the castle is so hie,
None can get in except they learne to flie.

45

And as I tarrid in the plaine, behold
I saw two Knights come riding downe the plaine,
Led by desire and hope to win this hold,
But their desire and hope was all in vaine.
Gradasso was the first of courage bold,
A King of Serican that held the raine,
Rogero next, a man of noble nation,
Of yeares but yong, but of great estimation.

46

A little dwarfe they had to be their guide,
Who told me that they came to trie their force
Against the champion that doth use to ride
Out of this castle on the winged horse.
Which when I heard, to them for helpe I cride,
And prayd them of my case to take remorse,
And that they would, if twere their chance to win,
Set free my love that there was locked in.

47

And all my grieffe to them I did unfold,
Affirming with my teares my tale too true:

No sooner I my heavy hap had told,
But they were come within the castles vew,
I stood aloofe the battell to behold,
And praid to God good fortune might ensue.
Beneath the castle lies a little plaine,
Exceeding not an arrow shoore or twaine.

48

And as they talkt who first should fight or last,
They were arrived to the castle hill,
At length Gradasso (whether lots were cast,
Or that Rogero yeilded to his will)
Doth take his horne, and blew therewith a blast,
The noise whereof the castle wals did fill.
And straight with greater speed then can be guest,
Came out the rider of the flying beast.

49

And as we see strange cranes are wont to do,
First stalke a while, ere they their wings can find,
Then soare from ground not past a yard or two,
Till in their wings they gatherd have the wind,
At last they mount the very clouds unto,

Triangle wise, according to their kind:
So by degrees this Mage begins to flie,
The bird of Jove can hardly mount so hie.

50

And when he sees his time, and thinkes it best,
He falleth downe like lead in fearfull guise,
Even as the faulcon doth the fowle arrest,
The duccke and mallard from the brooke that rise,
So he descending with his speare in rest,
Doth pierce the aire in strange and monstrous wise,
And ere Gradasso were thereof admonishd,
He felt a stripe that made him halfe astonishd.

51

The Mage upon Gradasso brake his speare,
Who strikes in vaine upon the aire and wind,
Away he flue without or hurt or feare,
And leaves Gradasso many a pace behind.
This fierce encounter was so hard to beare,
That good Alfana to the ground inclind,
This same Alfana was Gradassos mare,
The fairst and best that ever saddle bare.

52

Aloft the starres the sorcerer doth ascend,
And wheelles about, and downe he comes againe,
And on Rogero hee his force doth bend,
That had compassion on Gradassos paine:
So sore thassault Rogero did offend,
His horse the force thereof could not sustaine,
And when to strike againe he made account,
He saw his foe up to the clouds to mount.

53

Sometimes the Mage Rogero doth assaile,
Straight way Gradasso he doth set upon,
And oft they strike againe without availe,
So quickly he at whom they strike is gone,
He winds about as ships do under saile,
His sailes are wings, and rest he gives them none,
But sets upon them in so sudden wise,
That he amazd and dazeld both their eyes.

54

Betweene this one aloft, and two alow,
This conflict did no little space endure,

Untill at last the night began to grow,
With mistie clouds making the world obscure:
I saw this fight, the truth thereof I know
I present was thereat, yet am I sure,
That very few (except the wiser sort)
Will credence give to such a strange report.

55

This heavenly hellish warriour bare a shield
On his left arme that had a silken case,
I cannot any cause or reason yeeld,
Why he would keepe it covered so long space:
It had such force, that who so it beheld,
Such shining light it striketh in their face,
That downe they fall with eyes and senses closed,
And leave their corps of him to be disposed.

56

The target like the carbuncle doth shine,
Such light was never seene with mortall eye,
It makes to ground the lookers on decline,
Be they farre off, or be they standing nie:
And as it closd their sight, it closed mine,

That in a trance no little space was I.
At last when I awakt and rose againe,
The aire was darke, and voided was the plaine.

57

The sorcerer hath tane them (I surmise)
Into his castle, as is likely most,
And by this light that dazeld all our eies,
My hope is gone, their liberty is lost:
This is the truth, ne do I ought devise,
You heare the same, I felt it to my cost.
Now judge if I have reason to complaine,
That have and do endure such endlesse paine.

58

When as this Knight his dolefull tale had done,
He sate him downe all chearlesse in the place,
This was Earle Pinnabel Anselmus sonne,
Borne in Maganza of that wicked race,
Who like the rest so lewd a course did runne,
He holpe the more his linage to deface:
For onely vertue noblenesse doth dignifie,
And vicious life a linage base doth signifie.

59

The Ladie faire attentive all this while,
Doth hearken unto this Maganzese tale,
Rogeros name sometime doth make her smile,
Sometime againe for feare she looketh pale:
But hearing how a sorcerer base and vile,
Should in a castle so detaine him thrall,
She pitied him, and in her mind she fretted,
And oft desird to heare the tale repeated.

60

When at the last the whole she understood,
She said, sir Knight mourne not, but take some pleasure,
Perhaps our meeting may be to your good,
And turne your enemy unto displeasure:
Shew me this fort, for why it frets my blood,
So foule a prison holds so faire a treasure
And if good fortune favour mine intent,
You will right well suppose your travell spent.

61

Ah (said the Knight) should I returne againe,
To passe these mountaines hard and overthwart?

Though for my selfe it is but little paine,
To toile my bodie having lost my hart:
For you to go where as you may be slaine,
Or taken prisner were a foolish part:
Which if it hap, yet me you cannot blame,
Because I give you warning of the same.

62

This said, he riseth up his horse to take,
The noble Ladie on the way to guide,
Who meanes to venter for Rogeros sake,
Or death or thraldome, or what ere betide,
But loe a messenger great hast doth make,
That comes behind, and (tarry ho) he cride,
This was the post that told to Sacrapant,
How she that foyld him was Dame Bradamant.

63

This messenger brought tidings in great post,
Both from Narbona and from Mompeleere,
How they were up in armes along the cost
Of Aquamort, and all that dwelled neere,
And how Marfilias men their hearts had lost,

Because of her no tidings they could heare:
And (for her absence made them ill apayd)
They sent to have her presence and her ayd.

64

These townes and others many to the same,
Betweene the streames of Rodon and of Vare,
The Empror had assignd this worthy dame,
Committing them unto her trust and care.
Her noble value gat her all this fame,
Because in armes herselfe she bravely bare,
And so the cities under her subjection,
This message sent, requiring her direction.

65

Which when she heard, it made her somewhat pause,
Twixt yea and no she stood a pretie space,
Of one side honor and her office draws,
On thother side love helps to pleade the case,
At last she meanes tensue the present cause,
And fetch Rogero from thinchanted place:
And if her force cannot to this attaine,
At least with him a prisner to remaine.

66

In courteous sort her answer she contrived,
With gracious words, and sent away the post,
She longs with her new guide to have arrived,
To that same place where both their loves were lost.
But he perceiving now she was derived,
From Clarimont that he detested most,
Doth hate her sore, and feareth to the same,
Lest she should know he of Maganza came.

67

There was betweene these houses auncient hate;
This of Maganza, that of Clarimount,
And each of them had weakned others state,
By killing men in both of great account.
This Pinnabel (a vile and wicked mate,
That all his kin in vices did surmount)
Meanes with himselfe this damsell to betray,
Or else to slip aside and go his way.

68

And this same fancie so his head did fill,
With hate, with feare, with anger and with doubt,

That he mistooke the way against his will,
And knew not how againe to find it out,
Till in the wood he saw a little hill,
Bare on the top, where men might looke about,
But Bradamant such amorous passions feeles,
She followeth like a spannell at his heeles.

69

The craftie guide thus wandring in the wood,
Intending now the Ladie to beguile,
Said unto her forsooth he thought it good,
Sith night grew on, themselves to rest a while:
Here is, quoth he (and shewd which way it stood)
A castle faire, and hence not many a mile:
But tarry you a little here untill
I may descrie the countrey from the hill.

70

This said, he mounted to the higher ground,
And standing now the highest part upon,
He cast about his eyes and looked round,
To find some path whereby he might be gone.
When unawares a monstrous cave he found,

And strange cut out and hollowd in the stone,
Deepe thirtie cubits downe it doth descend,
Having a faire large gate at lower end.

71

Such as great stately houses wont to have,
Out of which gate proceeds a shining light,
That all within most lightsome makes the cave,
And all this while on this felonious Knight
This noble Ladie due attendance gave,
And never suffred him go out of sight.
She followd Pinnabel hard at his backe,
Because she was afeard to leefe the tracke.

72

When as this villaine traitor did espie,
That his designements foolish were and vaine,
Either to leave her, or to make her die,
He thought it best to trie a further traine,
Perswading her for to descend and trie,
What Ladies faire within the cave remaine,
For why (said he) within this little space
I saw a goodly damsell in the place.

73

Both rich arayd and very faire of hew,
Like one of noble linage and degree,
And this her fortune made me more to rew,
That here against her will she seemd to be.
And when I thought for to descend and vew,
The cause of this her grieffe to know and see,
I was no sooner from my horse alighted,
But with infernall hags I was afrighted.

74

The noble Bradamant that was more stout
Then warie, who it was did her perswade,
Hath such desire to helpe a damsell out,
That straight the cave she meaneth to invade,
She finds by hap a long bough thereabout,
Thereof a pole of mightie length she made,
First with her sword she hewes and pares it fit,
That done she lets it downe into the pit.

75

She giveth Pinnabel the bigger end,
And prayes him stand above and hold it fast,

And by the same intending to descend,
Upon her armes her whole waight she doth cast.
But he that to destroy her did intend,
Doth aske if she would learne to leape a cast,
And laughing, loosd his hands that were together,
And wisht that all the race of them were with her.

76

Yet great good hap the gentle damsell found,
As well deservd a mind so innocent:
For why the pole strake first upon the ground,
And though by force it shiverd all and rent,
Yet were her limbes and life kept safe and sound,
For all his vile and traiterous intent,
Sore was the damsell mazed with the fall,
As in another booke declare I shall

ARGUMENT

THE THIRD BOOK OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Faire Bradamant was falne in Merlins cave,
Melissa meetes her there her ancient friend,
And there to her she perfite notice gave,
Of such brave men as should from her descend.
She told her where she should Rogero have,
Whom old Atlanta had in prison pend,
And from Brunello how to take the ring,
That unto liberty her deere might bring.

THIRD BOOKE

1

Oh that my head were so well stord with skill,
Of such a noble subject fit to treat,
Oh that my wits were equall to my will,
To frame a phrase fit for so high conceat:
Ye Muses that do hold the sacred hill,
Inspire my heart with flame of learned heat,
While I presume in base and lowly verse,
The names of glorious Princes to rehearse.

2

Such Princes as excell all Princes far,
In all the gifts of body and of mind,
Temprat in peace, victorious eke in war,
Themselves most noble, come of noble kind.
And such (except my guesse do greatly er)
As are by heavns eternall doome assignd,
In wealth, in fame, in rule and in prosperity,
To live themselves, their children and posterity.

3

Nor can I now their severall actes most rare,
Atcheevd by evry one of them recite,
No though my verse with Virgils might compare,
Or I as well as Homer could endite:
With their great praise, great vollumes filled are,
With large discourse, by them that stories write.
I onely meane to shew what was foreshowne,
Long ere their persons, or their deeds were knowne.

4

But first of Pinnabel a word to speake,
Who as you heard with traiterous intent,
The bonds of all humanity did break,
For which ere long himselfe was after shent.
Thus while base minds their wrongs do basly wreak,
They do that once that often they repent,
And curse that time, a thousand times, too late
When they pursude their unrevenged hate.

5

With fainting heart, (for sin is full of feare)
By stealing steps from hence he doth depart,

And as he goes he prieth here and there,
His fearefull looke bewraies his guilty hart,
Nor yet his dread doth move him to forbear,
To heape more sin upon this ill desart.
Appald with feare, but toucht with no remorse,
Supposing she was slaine, he takes her horse.

6

But let him go untill another time,
For I do meane hereafter you shall heare,
How he was dealt with, when his double crime,
In secret wrought, most open did appeare.
Now unto Bradamant I bend my rime,
Who with her fall, was yet of heavy cheare:
And had beene taught a gamball for the nonce,
To give her death and buriall at once.

7

Now when she came unto her selfe againe,
And had recoverd memory and sence,
She gets her on her feet, although with paine,
In mind to seeke some way to get fro thence,
When loe, before her face she seeth plaine,

A stately portall built with great expence,
And next behind the same she might descrie,
A larger roome and fairer to the eie.

8

This was a Church most solemne and devout,
That stands on marble pillars small and round,
And raisd by art on arches all about,
That made each voyce to yeeld a double sound.
A lightsome lampe that never goeth out,
Did burne on altar standing in the ground:
That though the roomes were large and wide in space,
The lampe did serve to lighten all the place.

9

The noble damsell full of revrent feare,
When as her selfe in sacred place she sees,
(As one that still a godly minde did beare,)
Begins to pray to him upon her knees,
Whose holy side was perst with cruell speare,
And who to save our lives his owne did leese:
And while she stayes devoutly at her prayre,
The sage Melyssa doth to her repaire.

10

Her gowne ungyrt, her haire about her head,
Much like a priest or prophetesse arraid,
And in her booke a little while she red,
And after thus unto the damsell said:
O thou by Gods appointment hither led,
O Bradamant, most wise and worthy maid,
I long have looked here for this thy comming,
Foretold thereof by prophet Merlins cunning.

11

Here is the tombe that Merline erst did make,
By force of secret skill and hidden art,
In which sometimes the Ladie of the lake,
That with her beautie had bewicht his hart,
Did make him enter fondly for her sake,
From whence he never after could depart,
And he was by a woman over reached,
That unto others prophesied and preached.

12

His carkas dead within this stone is bound,
But with dead corse the living soule doth dwell:

And shall untill it heare the trumpet sound,
That brings reward of doing ill or well.
His voice doth live and answer and expound,
And things both present past and future tell,
Resolving men of evrie doubtfull case,
That for his counsell come unto this place.

13

About a moneth or little more or lesse,
It is since I repaird to Merlins grave,
Of him about the studie I professe,
Some precepts and instructions to have.
And (for I willing was I must confesse)
To meete you at your comming to this cave:
For which he did prefixe this certaine day,
This moved me of purpose here to stay.

14

Duke Ammons daughter silent stands and still,
The while the wise Melyssa to her spake,
Astonished at this unusuall skill,
And doubting if she were asleepe or wake,
A modest shame with grace her eyes doth fill,

With which downe cast, this answer she doth make:
Alas what good or merite is in me
That prophets should my comming so foresee?

15

And glad of this adventure unexpected,
She followeth her guide with great delight,
And straight she saw the stately toombe erected,
Of marble pure that held his bones and sprite,
And (that which one would little have suspected)
The very marble was so cleare and bright,
That though the sunne no light unto it gave,
The tombe it selfe did lighten all the cave.

16

For whether be the nature of some stone,
A darkesome place with lightsomenes to fill,
Or were it done by magike art alone,
Or else by helpe of Mathematike skill,
To make transparencies to meete in one,
And so convey the sunnebeames where you will:
But sure it was most curious to behold,
Set forth with carved workes and guilt with gold.

17

Now when the damsell was approched nyre,
To this strange toombe where Merlins bones were plast,
Forth of the stones that shine like flaming fire,
His lively voyce such speeches out doth cast:
Let fortune ever favour thy desire,
O Bradamant thou noble maid and chast,
From out whose wombe an issue shall proceed,
That all the world in glorie shall exceed.

18

The noble blood that came of ancient Troy,
By two cleare springs in thee together mixt,
Shall breed the flowre, the jewell and the joy,
Of all on whom the sunne his beames hath fixt,
Twixt those that heat, and those that cold annoy,
From Tage to Inde, Danub and Nile betwixt,
Emprors and Kings, and Dukes and Lords for ay,
Of this thy linage carrie shall the sway.

19

And many a Captaine brave and worthy Knight,
Shall issue from this stocke, that shall restore

By warlike feates the glorie shining bright,
That Italy possessed heretofore.
And magistrates to maintaine peace and right,
As Numa and Augustus did before,
To cherish vertue, vice so to assuage,
As shall to us bring backe the golden age.

20

Wherefore sith God hath by predestination,
Appointed thee to be Rogeros wife,
And means to blesse thine heirs and generation,
With all the graces granted in this life,
Persist thou firme in thy determination,
And stoutly overcome each storme of strife,
And worke his worthy punishment and paine,
That doth thy lives delight from thee detaine.

21

This said: the prophet Merline holds his peace,
And gives Melissa time to worke her will,
Who when she did perceive the voice to cease,
She purposeth by practise of her skill,
To shew the damsell part of that increase,

That should with fame the world hereafter fill.
And for this purpose she did then assemble,
A troupe of sprights their persons to resemble.

22

Who straight by words of secret vertue bound,
In numbers great unto the cave repaire,
Of whence I know not, whether under ground,
Or else of those that wander in the aire:
Then thrise she drawes about a circle round,
And thrise she hallowes it with secret praire.
Then opens she a triple clasped booke,
And softly whispering in it she doth looke.

23

This done she takes the damsell by the hand
Exhorting her she should not be afraid,
And in a circle causeth her to stand,
And for her more securitie and aid,
And as it were for more assured band,
Upon her head some characters she laid.
Then having done her due and solemne rites,
She doth beginne to call upon the sprites.

24

Behold a crew of them come rushing in,
In sundrie shapes with persons great and tall,
And now they filled all the roome within,
So readily they came unto her call,
When Bradamant to feare did straight begin,
Her heart was cold, her colour waxed pall.
But yet the circle kept her like a wall,
So that she needed not to feare at all.

25

Howbeit Melyssa caused them be gone,
From thence unto the next adjoyning cave,
And thence to come before them one by one,
The better notice of their names to have,
That at more leysure they may talke thereon,
When as occasion so may seeme to crave
Although (quoth she) this short time cannot serve
To speake of evrie one as they deserve.

26

Lo here the first thy first begotten sonne,
That beares thy favour and his fathers name,

By whom the Lombards shall in fight be wonne,
To Defiderius their Kings great shame,
Who shall at Pontyr make the streames to runne,
With blood in fields adjoyning to the same,
And shall revenge the deeds and minds unpure,
Of such as did his fathers fall procure.

27

And for this noble act among the rest,
The Emperour shall give him in reward,
The honours great of Caloon and Est,
By which his family shall be prefard,
The next Uberto is whose valiant brest,
Shall be unto the church a gard,
Defending it with valiant heart and hand,
To thhonor of Hesperyan armes and land.

28

Alberto he is namd that third comes in,
Whose triumphs are most famous evrie where,
Then his sonne Hugo that did Millain winne,
And for his crest two vipers usd to beare,
Next Atso is and next to him of kinne,

That erst of Lombardie the crowne shall weare.
Then Albertasso by whose meanes are wonne,
The Beringers both father and the sonne.

29

To him shall Othons favour so encline,
He shall in marriage give to him his daughter.
Now Hugo comes againe, o happie line,
And happie man that savd so great a slaughter,
When at Christs vicars rule Rome did repine,
He daunteth them and so restord them after:
The which by wit without the dint of sword,
He shall effect in Othons time the third.

30

Now Fulko comes that to his brothers gave,
His land in Italy which was not small,
And dwelt in Almany his land to save
Of Samsony, that unto him did fall.
A Dukedome great that did with Castles brave,
Accrew to him for want of issue male.
By him that noble house is held and cherished,
That but for him would be extinct and perished.

31

Then commeth Atso that misliketh warre,
But yet his sonnes Bertold and Albertasse,
With second Henrie shall be still at jarre,
And bring the Dutchmen to a wofull passe.
Next young Renaldo shining like a starre,
Shall be unto the Church a wall of brasse,
And worke the utter overthrow and losse,
Of wicked Fredrike named Barbarosse.

32

Behold another Atso shall possesse,
Verona with a stately territorie,
Of Oton and Honorius no lesse,
Shall be a marquesse made to his great glory,
It would be long their names all to expresse,
That shall protect the sacred consistorie,
And in most valerous and marshall manner,
Display and eke defend the Churches banner.

33

Obyso next and Folko you may view,
With Henries two, the father and the sonne,

Both Guelfes that fruitfull Humbrya shall subdew,
And keepe the Dukedome there by conquest won.
Behold him that the good state doth renew,
Of Italy that late was quite undone.
Cald Atso fift that bravely overthrew,
The cruell Esselino and him slew.

34

That cruell Esselyno that was thought,
To have beene gotten by some wicked divell,
That never any goodnesse had beene taught,
But sold his soule to sinne and doing evill,
Comparing with the cruell acts he wrought,
Fierce Nero were but myld and Sylla civill.
Beside this Atso shall in time to come
The powre of second Fredrike overcome.

35

And then he shall his brother Albandrine,
Unto the Florentines for monie gage,
And Othon with the faction Gebellyne,
He shall suppress amid the furious rage,
And raise the Church, nor letting it decline,

But spending to defend it all his age.
For which good service he shall justly merite,
The Dukedome of Ferrara to inherite.

36

Next him Renaldo now ensuth, whose lot,
Shall be at Naples to be made away,
A death his vertuous deeds deserved not,
But wo to them that guiltlesse blood betray.
Now followeth a worthy crue and knot,
Whose acts alone to tell would spend a day:
Obyso, Nicolas and Aldbrandine,
Whose noble deeds shall honour much their line.

37

Then Nicolas is he that next ensuth,
That ruld in tender yeares both neere and farre,
That findes and eke revengeth their untruth,
That sought his state by civill strife to marre.
The sports and exercises of his youth,
Are blowes and fights, and dangers great and warre.
Which makes that ere to manly state he came,
For martiall deeds he gets the onely name.

38

Lo Lyonell the glory of his age,
Maintaining peace and quiet all his time,
And keeping that with ease by wisdom sage,
To which some others by much paine do clime,
That fettred furie and rebuked rage,
That locks up Mars in wals of stone and lime:
That all his wit, his care and travell bent,
To make his subjects live in state content.

39

Now Hercules comes, an Hercules indeed,
Whose deeds shall merite ever during fame:
That by his paines his countries ease shall breed,
And put his enemies to flight and shame.
Sharpe to devise, to execute with speed,
Both stout tattempt, and patient to the same,
No Prince shall ever rule his countrie better,
No Prince had ever countrie more his detter.

40

Not onely that he shall their moorish grounds,
By great expence to pasture firme reduce,

Not that the towne with wall environ round,
And store with things behooffull to their use.
Not that when warre in ech place shall abound,
He shall mantaine them peaceable in truce,
Not that he shall according to their asking
Disburden them of payments and of tasking.

41

But that he shall more and above all these,
Leave them behind him such a worthy race,
As search within the circuit of the seas,
You shall not find two to supplie their place.
So shall the one the other strive to please,
So shall the one the others love imbrace,
As may for loving brotherly regard,
With Castor and with Pollux be compard.

42

The elder of these two Alfonso hight,
The next of them Hyppolito we call.
Both passing stout and valiant in fight,
Both passing wise and provident withall:
And both in due defence of countries right,

Shall seeme a bulwarke and a brazen wall:
They both shall have of enemies good store,
They both shall still subdue them evermore,

43

Their mother (if I may a mother name,)
One more like Progne and Medea fell,
Unto her endlesse infamie and shame,
Against her sonne Alfonso shall rebell,
And joyne with Venice force (for this to blame)
Though for the same ere long they paid full well,
For those they thought to hurt, they did this good,
To make the ground more fruitfull with their blood.

44

Not far fro thence the Spanish souldier hired,
By pastors purse and in that pastors pay,
That with a forcible assault aspired,
To take a fort, and eke the captaine slay.
But loe he comes and they perforce retyred,
And have so short a pleasure of this pray,
Scarse one of them in life is left abiding,
To carrie notice of so heavie tiding.

45

His wit and valour shall him so advance,
To have the honour of Romania field,
Where by his meanes unto the force of France,
The Pope and Spaniards, forced are to yeeld:
And there in Christian blood, o fatall chance,
Shall horses swimme, such number shall be keeld,
Nor shall not men enough alive remaine,
To burie those that are in battell slaine.

46

The while his brother under Cardnals cap,
Shall cover, nay shall shew a prudent head,
Hyppolito (I meane) who shall have hap,
With band of men but small (yet wisely led)
To give to the Venetians such a clap,
As few the like in stories have bene read.
To take three times five Gallies at one tide,
And barks and boates a thousand more beside.

47

Behold two Sygismonds both wise and grave,
Alfonso next, whose fame is talkt of rife,

With his five sonnes, then Hercules that shall have
The King of France his daughter to his wife,
That towards him, her selfe shall so behave,
Shall make him live most happie all his life.
Hyppolito it is that now comes in,
Not least for praise and glorie of his kin.

48

Next Francis named third, Alfonsos two,
With many others worthy of renowne,
The which to name might finde one worke to do,
From Phoebus rising to his going downe.
Now therefore if you will consent thereto,
I here will end and send the spirits downe:
To this the worthy damsell said not nay,
And straight the spirits vanisht all away.

49

Then Bradamant, that all well marked had,
Of whom her selfe should be the ancient mother,
Did say, to learne she would be very glad,
What two those were that differed from the other,
That came with backward steps and lookt so sad,

Upon the good Alfonso and his brother.
Melyssa sighs, misliking that suggestion,
Which put it in her heart to ask this question.

50

And then as in a trance these words she spake,
O thou more worthy sonne of worthy sire,
They are thy bloud, on them compassion take,
Let grace asswage, though justice kindle ire:
Then unto Bradamant as new awake,
I must (said she) denie you this desire,
I say no more, content you with the sweet,
For you, this sower morsell is not meet.

51

To morrow when the Sunne at breake of day,
With light shall dim the light of evry starre:
I meane my selfe to guide you on your way,
So as I will be sure you shall not arre.
The place whereas your love is forcd to stay,
Is from the salt sea shore not very farre:
That were you past a mile beyond this wood,
The other way would easie be and good.

52

Of this nights stay the damsell was content,
And in the cave with her she doth remaine,
And most thereof in Merlins tombe she spent;
Whose voice with talke did her still entertaine:
Emboldning her to give her free consent,
To love where she should sure be lovd againe.
Now gan the messenger of day to cro,
When as her guide and she away did go.

53

The way they went was darke and unaccessible,
By secret vaults and hollowes of the hill,
To find it out had bene a thing impossible,
But with a guide of knowledge great and skill:
At last they came unto a path more passible,
By which they cease not to ascend, until
They quite had left the darke and lothsome place,
And saw the beames of Phoebus chearefull face.

54

And while that up this hill they slowly stalke,
With pausing panting oft, and taking wind,

To make lesse wearie seeme their wearie walke,
Melyssa still doth store of matter find,
And now of this, and then of that doth talke,
But chiefly she the damsell puts in mind,
Of her Rogero, how he had bene trained
Into the prison where he now remained.

55

Atlanta that Magician strange is he
That holdeth him (I trust) unto his cost,
But had you Pallas strength or Mars (quoth she)
And eke of armed men a mightie host,
Yet to attempt by force to set him free,
Your travell and your labour all were lost.
Art must be wonne by art, and not by might,
Force cannot free your welbeloved Knight.

56

For first the castle mounted is on hie,
Impregnable with wals all over steeld,
And next, the horse he rides hath wings to flie,
And gallops in the aire as in the field:
And last he dazleth evry mortall eie,

By hidden force of his enchanted shield,
With light whereof mens senses are so dazed,
With sight thereof they fall downe all amazed.

57

In all the world one onely meane hath beene,
And is yet still to worke so rare a feat,
A ring there is which from an Indian Queene,
Was stole sometime, of price and vertue great:
This ring can make a man to go unseene,
This ring can all inchantments quite defeat:
King Agramant hath sent his secretarie,
Unto Rogero this same ring to carie.

58

Brunello in his name that hath the ring,
Most leud and false, but politike and wise,
And put in trust especiall by his King,
With it Rogeros safetie to devise:
Which sith I wish not he, but you should bring,
To bind him to you by this enterprise,
And for I would not have the Turke protect him,
Because I know he greatly doth affect him.

59

Do therefore this, when you do meete this man,
Whose markes I wish in memory you beare,
His stature is two cubits and a span,
His head is long and gray, and thin of haire,
His nose is short and flat, his colour wan,
With beetle brow, eyes watrie not with teare,
His beard growes on his face without all stint,
And to conclude, his looke is all a squint.

60

Now when as you this comely man shall meet,
As sure you shall within a day or two,
You may with curteous words him seeme to greet,
And tell him partly what you meane to do,
But speake not of the ring although you seet,
For so you may the matter all undo,
Then he great courtesie to you will offer,
And straight his companie to you will proffer.

61

But when unto the castle you come nie,
Then see you set upon him on the way,

And take away the ring and make him die,
Nor give him any time, lest he convey
The ring into his mouth, and so thereby
Out of your sight he vanish quite away.
The worthy damsell makes her speeches well,
And so the one the other bids farewell.

62

Next day she hapt Brunello to espie,
She knew him straight, she found him at her inne,
She grows to question with him by and by,
And he to lie doth by and by beginne,
And she dissembles too, and doth denie
Her country, stocke and name, and sex and kinne.
Brunello pleasantly doth talke and tipple,
Not knowing he did halt before a cripple.

63

Now when they almost broken had their fast,
She marking more his fingers then his eyes,
When much good talke between them two had past,
The most whereof were false and forged lies,
Behold mine host came unto them in hast,

And told them newes that made them sooner rise:
But here I meane to make a little pause,
Before I tell what was thereof the cause.

ARGUMENT

THE FOURTH BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Bradamant overcomes the false Magician,
And sets Rogero free, who by and by
Leapt on a horse not knowing his condition,
Who bare him quite from sight of any eye.
Renaldo sailed as he had commission,
To England ward, but borne by wind awrie,
At Callidon in Scotland he arrived,
When faire Geneuras foul death was contrived.

FOURTHBOOKE

1

Though he that useth craft and simulation,
Doth seldome bend his acts to honest ends,
But rather of an evill inclination,
His wit and skill to others mischiefe bends:
Yet sith in this our worldly habitation,
We do not ever dwell among our friends,
Dissembling doubtlesse oftentimes may save
Mens lives, their fame and goods, and all they have.

2

If man by long acquaintance and great prooffe,
To trust some one man scant can be allured,
To whom he may in presence or aloofe,
Unfold the secrets of his mind assured:
Then doth this damsell merit no reproofe,
That with Brunello (to all fraud inured)
Doth frame her selfe to counterfeit a while,
For to deceive deceivers is no guile.

3

Now while these two did to conferre begin,
She to his fingers having still an eye,
The host and other servants of the Inne,
Came on the sodaine with a wofull crie,
And some did gaze without, and some within,
(As when men see a Comet in the skie)
The cause of this their wondring and their crying,
Was that they saw an armed horseman flying.

4

And straight by thhost and others they were told,
How one that had in Magicke art great skill,
Not far from thence had made a stately hold,
Of shining steele, and placd it on a hill,
To which he bringeth Ladies yong and old,
And men and maids according to his will,
And when within that castle they have beene,
They never after have bene heard or seene.

5

No sooner can he spie a pretie maide,
But straight he takes her up into the aire,

The which his custome makes them all afraid,
That either are or thinke that they be faire.
Those hardie knights that went to give them aide,
Of which sort many hither did repaire,
Went like the beasts to the sicke Lions den,
For all went in, but none returnd agen.

6

This tale in worthy Bradamant did breed
A kind of pleasure and confused joy,
In hope (which after she performd indeed)
The sight of her beloved to enjoy,
She praid the host procure a guide with speed,
As though each little stay did breed annoy:
She swears that in her heart she longd to wrastle
With him that kept the captives in his castle.

7

Because that you sir knight should want no guide,
(Brunello said) I will my selfe be he,
I know the way, and somewhat have beside,
By which may fortune you may pleasurd be:
He meant the ring of force and vertue tride,

Although he meant not she the same should see.
Great thanks (quoth she) that you will take the pain,
In hope hereby the precious ring to gain.

8

Thus each from other hiding their intent,
They forward set like friends by breake of day,
Brunello sometime foremost of them went,
Sometime behind, as chanced on the way.
Now had they certaine houres in travell spent,
When they arrived where the castle lay,
Whereas mount Pyrene stands above the plaine,
So high as may discover France and Spaine.

9

When as the castle did in sight appeare,
So strange, so faire, so stately, and so hie,
In which that Knight whom she esteemd so deare,
With many others, prisoner did lie.
She thought her fittest time drew very neare,
To take the ring, and make Brunello die.
Wherefore with open force she doth assaile him,
Whose strength with age and feare soon gan to faile him.

10

Her meaning was the Caitife to have kild,
But unto that her noble heart said nay,
Small praise would come from bloud so basely spild,
She meanes to get the ring another way:
But first she bound him where he wild or nild,
And though with teares he did for pittie pray,
Yet left she him unto a tree fast tide,
And with the ring away she straight did ride.

11

And being in the greene fast by the towre,
Straight (as the fashion was) her horne she blew,
Out came that armed Knight that present houre,
And seeing there a challenger in vew,
He seemeth to assault her with great powre,
But by the ring she all his falshood knew:
She saw he carride neither sword nor speare,
Nor any weapon that one need to feare.

12

He only carride at his saddle bow,
A shield all wrapped in a crimson case,

And read a booke by which he made to show
Some strange and strong illusions in the place:
And many that these cunnings did not know,
He had deceivd and tane in little space.
And causd both swords and lances to appeare,
When neither sword nor lances them were neare.

13

But yet the beast he rode was not of art,
But gotten of a Griffeth and a Mare,
And like a Griffeth had the former part,
As wings and head, and clawes that hideous are,
And passing strength and force and ventrous hart,
But all the rest may with a horse compare.
Such beasts as these the hils of Ryfee yeeld,
Though in these parts they have bin seene but seeld.

14

This monster rare from farthest regions brought
This rare Magician ordred with such skill,
That in one month or little more he tought
The savage monster to obey his will:
And though by conjurations strange he wrought,

In other things his fancie to fulfill,
(As cunning men still trie each strange conclusion)
Yet in this Griffeth horse was one collusion.

15

The Ladie faire protected by the ring,
Found all his sleights (although she seemd not so)
Her purpose to the better passe to bring,
And first she seemes to ward a coming blow,
And then to strike, and oft to curse the wing,
That caride still away her flying fo,
And sith to fight on horsebacke did not boote,
She seemes as in a rage to light on foote.

16

The Necromancer, as his manner is,
Disclosed at the last his shining shield,
Supposing that the vertue would not misse,
To make her (as it had done others) yeeld:
So have I seene a craftie cat ere this,
Play with a silly mouse of house or field,
And let it go a while for sport and play,
But kill at last and beare it quite away.

17

I say that he the cat, the other mise,
Resembled had in every former fight,
But now this ring had made this one so wise,
That when she saw the strange enchanted light,
She falleth not of force, but of devise,
As though she were astonied at the sight,
And lay like one of life and sense bereaved,
By which the poore Magician was deceived.

18

For straight he lighted from the flying horse,
To take her as he had done many mo,
The shield and booke in which was all his force,
He left behind him at his saddle bow,
But thinking to have found a senslesse corse,
Amazd and dead, he finds it nothing so,
For up she starts, so quite the case was altdred,
That with the cord he brought, himselfe was haltred.

19

And when with those selfe bonds she had him tide,
By which he thought before her to have snared,

She strong and yong, he witherd, old and dride,
Alas an unmeet match to be compared,
Forthwith determining he should have dide,
To strike his head from shoulders she prepared,
Till she was movd to mercy with his teares,
And with the sight of white and hoary haire.

20

For when he saw his force was overlaid,
And that her strength was not to be withstood,
O pardon life thou heavenly wight (he said)
No honour comes by spilling aged blood.
Which words to mercie movd the noble maid,
Whose mind was alwayes mercifull and good.
Then why he built the castle she demanded,
And what he was to tell her him commanded.

21

With wofull words the old man thus replide,
I made this castle for no ill intention,
For covetice or any fault beside,
Or that I loved rapine or contention,
But to prevent a danger shall betide

A gentle Knight, I framed this invention:
Who as the heavens hath shewd me in short season,
Shall die in Christian state by filthy treason.

22

Rogero named is this worthy youth,
Whose good and safetie faine I would advance,
My name Atlante is to tell you truth,
I bred him of a child, till his hard chance,
And valiant mind (that breeds alas my ruth)
With Agramant entist him into France.
And I that (like mine owne child) alway lovd him,
From France and danger faine would have removd him.

23

By art and helpe of many a hellish elfe,
This castle for Rogero I did build,
And took him as I meant to take thy selfe,
But that with greater art I was beguild,
From dainty fare, and other worldly pelfe,
Because he should not thinke himselfe exild,
For company I brought him worthy wights,
Both men and women, Ladies faire and Knights.

24

They have all plentie of desired pleasure,
I bend to their contentment all my care,
For them I spend my travell and my treasure,
For musicke, clothes and games, and daintie fare,
As hart can think, and mouth require with measure,
Great store for them within this castle are.
Well had I traveld, well my time bestowed,
But you have mard the fruits that I had sowed.

25

But if your mind be gracious as your looke,
If stonie heart bide not in tender brest,
Behold I offer thee my shield and booke,
And flying horse, and grant my just request,
Some two or three, or all the Knights I tooke,
I give thee free, let but Rogero rest:
Whose health, whose wealth, whose safty and welfare
Have ever bene (and ever shall) my care.

26

Your care (quoth she) is very ill bestowne,
In thraldome vile to keepe a worthy wight:

As for your gifts you offer but mine owne,
Sith by my conquest you are mine in right.
Those dangers great you say to be foeshowne,
And upon him in time to come must light,
With figures cast and heavenly planets vewed,
Cannot be knowne or cannot be eschewed.

27

How can you others harmes foresee so farre,
And not prevent your owne that were so nie?
I certaine shall suppose your art doth erre,
And for the rest the end the truth shall trie:
I now intend your matter all to marre,
And that before these bonds I will untie,
You shall set free and loose your prisners all,
Whom in this castle you detained thrall.

28

When as the poore old man was so distrest,
That needs he must for feare and dread obey,
And that this same imperious dames behest,
Could neither beare deniall nor delay,
To do as she commands he deemes it best,

And therefore takes thinchanted place away.
He breakes some hollow fuming pots of stone,
And straight the wals and buildings all were gone.

29

This done, himselfe eke vanisht out of sight,
As did the castle at that present hower,
Then Ladies, Lords, and many a worthy Knight,
Were straight releast from his enchanted power:
And some there were had taken such delight
In those so stately lodgings of that tower,
That they esteemd that liberty a paine,
And wisht that pleasant slavery againe.

30

Here were at freedome set among the rest,
Gradasso, Sacrapant, two Kings of name,
Prasyldo and Iroldo that from thEst
Into this country with Renaldo came.
Here Bradamant found him she loved best,
Her deare Rogero of renowned fame,
Who after certaine notice of her had,
Did shew to see her he was very glad.

31

As one of whom he great account did make,
And thought himselfe to her most highly bound,
Since she put off her helmet for his sake,
And in her head receivd a grievous wound,
Twere long to tell what toile they both did take,
Both night and day each other to have found,
But till this present time they had no meeting,
Nor givn by word nor writing any greeting.

32

Now when before him present he beheld
Her that from danger had him sole redeemed,
His heart with so great joy and mirth was fild,
The happiest wight on earth himselfe he deemed:
And christall teares from her faire eyes distild,
Embracing him whom she most deare esteemed.
As oft we see a strong and sodaine passion,
Bring forth effects quite of another fashion.

33

The Griffeth horse the while upon the plaine,
Stood with the target at his saddle bow,

The damsell thought to take him by the raine,
But he then mounteth up, and like a crow
Chast by a dog forthwith descends againe,
And standeth still, or soareth very low,
And when that some come nie in hope to take him,
He flies away that none can overtake him.

34

But neare unto Rogero soone he staid,
Which by Atlantas care was sole procured,
Who for Rogeros danger was afraid,
And thinkes his safetie never well assured.
Wherefore he sent this monster for his aid,
And by this meanes from Europe him allured,
To his welfare his cares and thoughts he bendeth,
To succor and preserve him he intendeth.

35

Rogero from his horse forthwith alighted,
(The horse he rode on was Frontyno named)
And with this flying horse was so delighted,
That though he saw him wanton and untamed,
Yet up he leapt, and soone was sore afrighted,

He finds he would not to his mind be framed,
For in the aire the Griffeth sord so hie,
As doth the Faulcon that at fowle doth flie

36

The damsell faire that now beheld her deare,
Borne farre away by force of monsters wing,
Was sorrowfull and of so heavie cheare,
That to their course her wits she scant could bring,
The tale of Ganymed she once did heare,
Whom Poets faine to tend the heavenly King,
She doubts may true of her Rogero be,
That was as comely and as faire as he.

37

As long as eyesight could at all prevaile,
So long she viewd him still in all and part:
But when his distance made the sight to faile,
At least she followed him in mind and hart,
To sob, to sigh, to weepe, lament and waile,
She never leaves these chances overthwart.
And seeing plaine her love and she were parted,
She tooke Frontyno and away departed.

38

Now was Rogero mounted up so hie,
He seemd to be a mote or little pricke,
For no man could distinguish him by eie,
Except his sight were passing fine and quicke:
All southerly this Griffeth horse doth flie,
(Was never jade that servd man such a tricke)
But let him on his way, God speed him well,
For of Renaldo somewhat I must tell.

39

Who all the while with raging tempest strived,
Borne where himselfe nor no man else did know,
By cruell stormie winds and weather driven,
That dayes and nights surceased not to blow:
At last in Scotland weary he arrived,
Where woods of Callidony first do show,
A famous wood wherein in times of old,
Brave deeds were done by ventrous Knights & bold.

40

Here have those famous Knights great honour won,
At whose rare worth the world it selfe did wonder,

Here were most valiant acts atchievd and done,
By Knights that dwelt there neare or far asunder,
And many a man hath here bene quite undone,
Whose feeble force his enemie was under,
Here were, as proved is by ancient charter,
The famous Tristram, Lancelot and sir Arther.

41

At this same wood Renaldo from his fleet,
Well mounted on his Bayards backe did part,
He points his men at Barwicke him to meet,
The while himselfe alone with valiant heart,
Sometime on horsebacke, sometime on his feete,
Doth march in mind to do some worthy part.
But seeing now the night came on so fast,
Unto an Abbey he repaires at last.

42

The Abbot and his Monks with comely grace,
As holy men of humane manners skilled,
Did welcome him, and in a little space,
With costly fare his emptie stomacke filled.
Renaldo straight enquired of the place,

What feates of armes had there bene late fulfilled,
And where a man by valiant acts may show,
If his exploits deserve dispraise or no.

43

They said that in that wood and forrest, find
Adventures strange and feates of armes he might,
But as the place, so are the actions blind,
That oft their doings never come to light.
But if (say they) we may perswade your mind,
Attempt an action worthy of a Knight,
Where if you passe the perill and the paine,
Eternall fame shall unto you remaine.

44

For if you would performe an act indeed,
Whereby great name and honour may be wonne,
Then this would be the best and noblest deed,
That late or long time past was ever done:
Our Princes daughter standeth now in need,
Of great defence, a danger great to shunne,
Against a Knight Lurcanio by name,
That seekes to take away her life and fame.

45

This Knight hath her unto the King accused,
I thinke of malice rather then of right,
That he hath seene how she her selfe abused,
And closely tooke her lover up by night.
Now by the lawes that in this land are used,
Except she have a champion that by might
Within a month Lurcanio prove a lier,
She shall be straight condemned to the fier.

46

The Scottish law that breedeth all this strife,
Appoints that all of base or better sort,
That take a man except she be his wife,
And spends her time with him in Venus sport,
By cruell torment finish shall her life,
Except she find some Knight that will support,
That she the hainous fact hath not committed,
But that in law she ought to be acquitted.

47

The King for faire Geneura takes great thought,
Both for her safetie and her estimation,

And seeks by all good meanes that may be wrought
For her defence, and maketh proclamation,
That by whose helpe from danger she is brought,
(Provided he be one of noble nation)
Shall have the goodly damsell for his wife,
With livings large to keepe him all his life.

48

But if within this month that now ensuth,
(So little time for her defence is left her)
No Knight will come that will defend her truth,
Then friends and fame, and life will be bereft her,
This enterprise would much commend your youth,
The praise whereof would last a great while after:
And from Atlantas pillars unto Inde,
A fairer Ladie you shall never finde.

49

Now then beside the honour and the praise,
To have a state, may make you live content,
The Princes love (that helpeth many waies)
Whose honour now is halfe consumd and spent.
Againe true Knights should helpe at all assaies,

When any harme to Ladies faire is ment.
The very law of knighthood hath commanded,
To grant this aide that we have now demanded.

50

Renaldo pausd, and after thus he spake,
Why then (said he) must this faire damsell die,
TH_t for her true and secret lovers sake,
Did condescend within his armes to lie?
Accurst be they that such a law did make,
Accurst be they that meane to live thereby,
Nay rather point a punishment and paine
For such as do their lovers true disdaine.

51

If faire Geneura had her friend or no,
I stand not now the matter to decide,
Yea I would praise her had she done it so,
That by her foes it had not bene espide.
Be as be may, my meaning is to go
To fight for her, if I may have a guide
That will but shew me where is her accuser,
And I shall quickly prove he doth abuse her.

52

I know not of the fact she have committed,
Nor can I say in this the certaine sure:
But this I say, it ought to be remitted,
Much rather then she should distresse endure.
I further say, they were but meanly witted,
That did so straight a stature first procure.
I also say, this law they ought recall,
In place thereof a better to enstall.

53

Sith like desire the fancies doth possesse,
Both of the male and of the female gender,
To do that thing that fooles count great excesse,
And quench the flame that Cupid doth engender,
To grant the men more scope, the women lesse,
Is law for which no reason we can render.
Men using many never are ashamed,
But women using one or two are blamed.

54

This law I say is partiall and naught,
And doth to women plaine and open wrong,

I trust in God they shall be better taught,
And that this law shall be revokt ere long,
The Abbot and his Monks in word and thought,
Allowd Renaldos speech, both old and yong:
They all condemne the law, and partly blame
The king that may and mendeth not the same.

55

Next morning when Renaldo doth perceave
The Sunne appeare, and starres their heads to hide,
He thanks them for his cheare, and taketh leave,
And takes a target bearer for his guide,
For feare lest unknowne paths should him deceave,
Himselfe all armed doth on Bayard ride,
And to the Scottish court he goes a stranger,
For to defend the damsell faire from danger.

56

And for they thought to take a way more nie,
They leave the common way a mile or twaine,
When suddenly they heard a piteous crie,
Well like to one that feared to be slaine.
In hast they spurre their horses by and by,

Along the vale, and looking downe the plaine,
A maide betweene two murderers they saw,
That meant to take her life against all law.

57

The caitifes put the damsell in great feare,
And shewd that they were come to end her dayes,
Which made her weepe, and shed full many a teare,
To move their minds she trieth many wayes:
And though the fact a while they did forbear,
Yet now they had removed all delayes,
When as Renaldo came unto her aid,
And made the malefactors sore afraid.

58

Away they fled and left the wench alone,
For dread of death appald and sore affrighted,
Who all her cause of danger and of mone,
Unto Renaldo straight would have recited,
But so great hast he maketh to be gone,
He gave no eare, nor from his horse alighted,
But to ensue the journey first assignd him,
He causd the guide to take her up behind him.

And now on horsebacke marking well her face,
And marking more her gesture and behaviour,
Her pleasing speech, and modest sober grace,
She now hath wonne a great deale more his favour,
And after he had rode a little space,
To tell her hard adventure he would have her:
And she began with humble voice and low,
As more at large hereafter I will show.

ARGUMENT

THE FIFTH BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Dalinda tels what sleights her Duke devised,
To get with faire Geneura reputation:
Lureanio of his brothers fall advised,
Accusth her publikely of fornication.
A Knight unknowne in armour blacke disguised,
Comes and withstands Lurcanios accusation,
Untill Renaldo made all matters plaine,
By whom the unjust Duke was justly slaine.

FIFTHBOOKE

1

We see the rest of living creatures all,
Both birds and beasts that on the earth do dwell,
Live most in peace, or if they hap to brall,
The male and female still agreeth well.
The fierce, the faint, the greater nor the small,
Against the law of nature will rebell.
The savage Lions, Beares and Buls most wyld,
Unto their females shew themselves most myld.

2

What fiend of hell, what rage raignes here so rife,
Disturbing still the state of humane harts?
How comes it that we find twixt man and wife,
Continuall jarres bred by injurious parts?
The undefiled bed is filde by strife,
And teares that grow of words unkind and thwarts:
Nay oft all care and feare is so exiled,
Their guilty hands with blood have bene defiled.

3

No doubt they are accurst and past all grace,
And such as have of God nor man no feare,
That dare to strike a damsell in the face,
Or of her head to minish but a haire:
But who with knife or poison would unlace
Their line of life, or flesh in peeces teare,
No man, nor made of flesh and blood I deeme him,
But sure some hound of hell I do esteeme him.

4

Such were these theeves that would the damsell kill,
That by Renaldos comming was recovered:
They secretly had brought her downe the hill,
In hope their fact could never be discovered,
Yet such is God, so good his gracious will,
That when she looked least she was delivered,
And with a chearefull heart that late was sorie,
She doth begin to tell the wofull storie.

5

Good sir (said she) my conscience to discharge,
The greatest tyrannie I shall you tell,

That erst in Thebes, in Athens or in Arge,
Was ever wrought, or where worst tyrants dwell:
My voice and skill would faile to tell at large
The filthy fact, for I beleeve it well,
Upon this countrey Phoebus shines more cold,
Because he doth such wicked acts behold.

6

Men seeke we see, and have in every age,
To foile their foes, and tread them in the dust:
But there to wreake their rancor and their rage,
Where they are lovd, is foule and too unjust.
Love should prevaile, just anger to asswage,
If love bring death, whereto can women trust:
Yet love did breed my danger and my feare,
As you shall heare if you will give me eare.

7

For entring first into my tender spring,
Of youthfull yeares, unto the court I came,
And served there the daughter of our King,
And kept a place of honour with good fame,
Till love (alas that love such care should bring)

Envide my state, and sought to do me shame.
Love made the Duke of Alban seeme to me,
The fairest wight that erst mine eye did see.

8

And (for I thought he lov'd me all above)
I bent my selfe to hold and love him best,
But now I find that hard it is to prove,
By sight or speech what bides in secret brest;
While I (poore I) did thus beleve and love,
He gets my body, bed and all the rest.
Nor thinking this might breed my mistres wrong
Evn in her chamber this I practisd long.

9

Where all the things of greatest value lay,
And where Geneura sleepes her selfe sometime,
There at a window we did finde a way,
In secret sort to cover this our crime:
Here when my love and I were bent to play,
I taught him by a scale of cord to clime,
And at the window I my selfe would stand,
And let the ladder downe into his hand.

10

So oft we meete together at this sport,
As faire Geneuras absence gives us leave,
Who usd to other chambers to resort
In summer time, and this for heat to leave:
And this we carried in so secret sort,
As none there was our doings did perceave,
For why, this window standeth out of sight,
Where none do come by day nor yet by night.

11

Twixt us this use continu'd many dayes,
Yea many months we usd this privie traine,
Love set my heart on fire so many wayes,
That still my liking lasted to my paine.
I might have found by certaine strange delayes,
That he but little lov'd and much did faine,
For all his sleights were not so closely covered,
But that they might full easly be discovered.

12

At last my Duke did seeme enflamed sore,
On faire Geneura: neither can I tell,

If now this love began or was before,
That I did come to court with her to dwell.
But looke if I were subject to his lore,
And looke if he my love requited well,
He askt my aid herein no whit ashamed,
To tell me how of her he was enflamed.

13

Not all of love, but partly of ambition,
He beares in hand his minde is onely bent,
Because of her great state and hie condition,
To have her for his wife is his intent:
He nothing doubteth of the Kings permission,
Had he obtaind Geneuras free assent.
Ne was it hard for him to take in hand,
That was the second person in the land.

14

He sware to me, if I would be so kind
His hie attempt to further and assist,
That at his hands I should great favour finde,
And of the King procure me what me list:
How he would ever keepe it in his mind,

And in his former love to me persist,
And notwithstanding wife and all the rest,
I should be sure that he would love me best.

15

I straight consented to his fond request,
As readie his commandment to obey,
And thinking still my time employed best,
When I had pleasd his fancy any way:
And when I found a time then was I prest,
To talke of him, and good of him to say.
I used all my art, my wit, and paine,
Geneuras love and liking to obtaine.

16

God knoweth how glad I was to worke his will,
How diligent I followd his direction,
I spard no time, no travell nor no skill,
To this my Duke to kindle her affection:
But alwayes this attempt succeeded ill,
Love had her heart already in subjection,
A comely Knight did faire Geneura please,
Come to this countrie from beyond the seas.

17

From Italy for service (as I heare)
Unto the court he and his brother came,
In tourneys and in tilt he had no peere,
All Brittain soone was filled with his fame.
Our King did love him well and hold him deere,
And did by princely gifts confirme the same.
Faire castels, townes, and lordships, him he gave,
And made him great, such power great princes have.

18

Our Sovereigne much, his daughter likt him more,
And Ariodant this worthy Knight is named,
So brave in deeds of armes himselfe he bore,
No Ladie of his love need be ashamed:
The hill of Stoil burneth not so sore,
Nor is the mount Vesuvio so inflamed,
As Ariodantes heart was set on fire,
Geneuras beautie kindling his desire.

19

His certaine love by signes most certaine found,
Cause that my sute unwillingly was hard,

She well perceivd his love sincere and sound,
Enclining to his sute with great regard.
In vaine I seeke my Dukes love to expound,
The more I seeke to make the more I mard.
For while with words I seek to praise and grace him
No lesse with workes she striveth to deface him .

20

Thus being oft repulst (so ill sped I,
To my too much beloved Duke I went,
And told him how her heart was fixt alreadie,
How on the stranger all her mind was bent.
And praid him now sith there was no remedie,
That to surcease his sute he would consent,
For Ariodant so lovd the princely maid,
That by no meanes his flames could be alaid.

21

When Polynesso (so the Duke we call)
This tale unpleasant oftentime had hard,
And of himselfe had found his hopes were small,
When with my words her deeds he had compard,
Greevd with repulse, and vexed therewithall,

To see this stranger thus to be prefard,
The love that late his heart so sore had burned,
Was cooled all, and into hatred turned.

22

Intending by some vile and subtill traine,
To part Geneura from her faithfull lover,
And plant so great mislike betweene them twaine,
Yet with so cunning shew the same to cover,
That her good name he will so foule distaine,
Alive nor dead she never shall recover.
But lest he might in this attempt be thwarted,
To none at all his secret he imparted.

23

Now thus resolv'd (Dalinda faire) quoth he,
(I so am cald) you know though trees be topt,
And shrowded low, yet sprout yong shoots we see,
And issue from that head so lately lopt:
So in my love it fareth now with me.
Though by repulse cut short and shrewdly cropt,
The pared tops such buds of love do render,
That still I prove new passions there engender.

24

Ne do I deeme so deare the great delight,
As I disdain I should be so reject,
And left this griefe should overcome me quight,
Because I faile to bring it to effect,
To please my fond conceit this very night,
I pray thee deare to do as I direct:
When faire Geneura to her bed is gone,
Take thou the clothes she ware and put them on.

25

As she is wont her golden haire to dresse,
In stately sort to wind it on her wire,
So you her poyson lively to expresse,
May dresse your owne and weare her head attire,
Her gorgets and her jewels rich no lesse,
You may put on accomplish my desire.
And when unto the window I ascend,
I will my comming there you do attend.

26

Thus I may passe my fancies foolish fit,
And thus (quoth he) my selfe I would deceive.

And I that had no reason nor no wit,
His shamefull drift (though open) to perceive:
Did weare my mistresse robes that servd me fit,
And stood at window, there him to receive.
And of the fraud I was no whit aware,
Till that fell out that caused all my care.

27

Of late twixt him and Ariodant had past,
About Geneura faire these words or such,
(For why there was good friendship in times past
Betweene them two, till love their hearts did tuch)
The Duke such kind of speeches out did cast,
He said to Ariodant, he marveld much,
That seeing he did alwaies well regard him,
He should againe so thanklesly reward him.

28

I know you see (for needs it must be scene)
The good consent and matrimoniall love,
That long betweene Geneur and me hath beene,
For whom I meane ere long the King to move.
Why should you fondly thrust your selfe betweene?

Why should you rove your reach so farre above?
For if my case were yours I would forbear,
Or if I knew that you so loved were.

29

And I much more (the other straight replies)
Do marvell you sir Duke are so unkind,
That know our love, and see it with your eyes,
(Except that wilfulnesse have made you blind)
That no man can more sured knots devise,
Then her to me, and me to her do bind,
Into this sute so rashly are intruded,
Still finding from all hope you are excluded.

30

Why beare you not to me the like respect,
As my good will requireth at your hand?
Since that our love is growne to this effect,
We meane to knit our selves in weddings band:
Which to fulfill ere long I do expect,
For know I am (though not in rents or land)
Yet in my Princes grace no whit inferiour,
And in his daughters, greatly your superiour.

31

Well (said the Duke) errors are hardly moved,
That love doth breed in unadvised brest.
Each thinkes himselfe to be the best beloved,
And yet but one of us is loved best.
Wherefore to have the matter plainly proved,
Which should proceed in love, and which should rest,
Let us agree that victor he remaine,
That of her liking sheweth signes most plaine.

32

I will be bound to you by solemne oth,
Your secrets all and counsell to conceale,
So you likewise will plight to me your troth,
The thing I shew you never to reveale.
To trie the matter thus they greed both,
And from this doome hereafter not repeale:
But on the Bible first they were deposed,
That this their speech should never be disclosed.

33

And first the stranger doth his state reveale,
And tell the truth in hope to end the strife,

How she had promist him in wo and weale,
To live with him, and love him all her life:
And how with writing with her hand and seale,
She had confirmed she would be his wife,
Except she were forbidden by her father,
For then to live unmarride she had rather.

34

And furthermore he nothing doubts (he said)
Of his good service so plaine prooffe to show,
As that the King shall nothing be afraid,
On such a Knight his daughter to bestow:
And how in this he needeth little aid,
As finding still his favour greater grow,
He doubts not he will grant his liking after
That he shall know it pleaseth so his daughter.

35

And thus you see so sound stands mine estate,
That I my selfe in thought can wish no more.
Who seekes her now is sure to come too late,
For that he seekes is granted me before;
Now onely rests in marriage holy state,

To knit the knot that must dure evermore.
And for her praise, I need not to declare it,
As knowing none to whom I may compare it.

36

Thus Ariodant a tale most true declared,
And what reward he hoped for his paine,
But my false Duke that him had foully snared,
And found by my great folly such a traine,
Doth sweare all this might no way be compared
With his, no though himselfe did judge remaine,
For I (quoth he) can shew signes so expresse,
As you your selfe inferiour shall confesse.

37

Alas (quoth he) I see you do not know
How cunningly these women can dissemble,
They least do love where they make greatest show,
And not to be the thing they most resemble.
But other favours I receive I trow,
When as we two do secretly assemble,
As I will tell you (though I should conceale it)
Because you promise never to reveale it.

38

The truth is this, that I full oft have seene
Her ivory corpes, and bene with her all night,
And naked laine her naked armes betweene,
And full enjoyde the fruites of loves delight:
Now judge who hath in greatest favour beene,
To which of us she doth pertaine in right,
And then give place, and yeeld to me mine owne,
Sith by just proofes I now have made it knowne.

39

Just proofes? (quoth Ariodant) nay shamefull lies,
Nor will I credit give to any word:
Is this the finest tale you can devise?
What, hopd you that with this I could be dord?
No, no, but sith a slander foule doth rise
By thee to her, maintaine it with thy sword,
I call thee lying traitor to thy face,
And meane to prove it in this present place.

40

Tush (quoth the Duke) it were a foolish part,
For you to fight with me that am your friend,

Sith plaine to shew without deceit or art,
As much as I have said I do intend.
These words did gripe poore Ariodantes hart,
Downe all his limbes a shivering doth descend,
And still he stood with eyes cast downe on ground,
Like one would fall into a deadly sound.

41

With wofull mind, with pale and chearlesse face,
With trembling voice that came from bitter thought
He said he much desird to see this place,
Where such strange feats and miracles were wrought.
Hath faire Geneura granted you this grace,
That I (quoth he) so oft in vaine have sought?
Now sure except I see it in my view,
I never will beleeve it can be trew.

42

The Duke did say he would with all his hart
Both shew him where and how the thing was done,
And straight from him to me he doth depart,
Whom to his purpose wholly he had wonne:
With both of us he playth so well his part,

That both of us thereby were quite undone.
First he tels him that he would have him placed
Among some houses falne and quite defaced.

43

Some ruind houses stood opposd direct
Against the window where he doth ascend,
But Ariodant discreetly doth suspect
That this false Duke some mischiefe did intend,
And thought that all did tend to this effect,
By trechery to bring him to his end,
That sure he had devised this pretence,
With mind to kill him ere he parted thence.

44

Thus though to see this sight he thought it long,
Yet tooke he care all mischiefe to prevent,
And if perhap they offer force or wrong,
By force the same for to resist he ment.
He had a brother valiant and strong,
Lurcanio cald, and straight for him he sent,
Not doubting but alone by his assistance,
Against twice twentie men to make resistance.

45

He bids his brother take his sword in hand,
And go into a place that he would guide,
And in a corner closely there to stand,
Aloofe from tother threescore paces wide,
The cause he would not let him understand,
But prayes him there in secret sort to bide,
Untill such time he hapt to heare him call,
Else (if he lovd him) not to stirre at all.

46

His brother would not his request denie,
And so went Ariodant into his place,
And undiscoverd closely there did lie,
Till having looked there a little space,
The craftie Duke to come he might descrie,
That meant the chast Geneura to deface,
Who having made to me his wonted signes,
I let him downe the ladder made of lines.

47

The gowne I ware was white, and richly set
With aglets, pearle, and lace of gold well garnished,

my stately tresses coverd with a net
Of beaten gold most pure and brightly varnished.
Not thus content, the vaile aloft I set,
Which only Princes weare: thus stately harnished,
And under Cupids banner bent to fight,
All unawares I stood in all their sight.

48

For why Lurcanio either taking care,
Lest Ariodant should in some danger go,
Or that he sought (as all desirous are)
The counsels of his dearest friend to know,
Close out of sight by secret steps and ware,
Hard at his heeles his brother followd so,
Till he was nearer come by fiftie paces,
And there againe himselfe he newly places.

49

But I that thought no ill, securely came
Unto the open window as I said.
For once or twice before I did the same,
And had no hurt, which made me lesse afraid:
I cannot boast (except I boast of shame)

When in her robes I had my selfe arraid,
Me thought before I was not much unlike her,
But certaine now I seemed very like her.

50

But Ariodant that stood so farre aloofe,
Was more deceivd by distance of the place,
And straight beleevd against his owne behoofe,
Seeing her clothes that he had seene her face.
Now Yet those judge that partly know by prooffe,
The wofull plight of Ariodantes case,
When Polynesso came my faithlesse frend,
In both their sights the ladder to ascend.

51

I that his comming willingly did wait,
And he once come thought nothing went amisse,
Embracd him kindly at the first receit,
His lips, his cheeks, and all his face did kisse,
And he the more to colour his deceit,
Did use me kinder then he had ere this.
This sight much care to Ariodante brought,
Thinking Geneura with the Duke was nought.

52

The griefe and sorrow sinketh so profound
Into his heart, he straight resolves to die,
He puts the pummell of his sword on ground,
And meanes himselfe upon the point to lie:
Which when Lurcanio saw and plainly found,
That all this while was closely standing by,
And Polynessos comming did discerne,
Though who it was he never yet could learne.

53

He held his brother for the present time,
That else himselfe for griefe had surely slaine,
Who had he not stood nigh and come betime,
His words and speeches had bene all in vaine.
What shall (quoth he) a faithlesse womans crime,
Cause you to die or put your selfe to paine?
Nay let them go, and curst be all their kind,
Ay borne like clouds with evry blast of wind.

54

You rather should some just revenge devise,
As she deserves, to bring her to confusion:

Sith we have plainly seene with both our eyes,
Her filthy fact appeare without collusion.
Love those that love againe, if you be wise,
For of my counsell this is the conclusion,
Put up your sword against your selfe prepared,
And let her sinne be to the King declared.

55

His brothers words in Ariodantes mind
Seeme for the time to make some small impression,
But still the curelesse wound remaind behind,
Despaire had of his heart the full possession.
And though he knew the thing he had assignd,
Contrary to a Christian knights profession:
Yet here on earth he torment felt so sore,
In hell it selfe he thought there was no more.

56

And seeming now after a little pause,
Unto his brothers counsell to consent,
He from the court next day himselfe withdrawes,
And makes none privie unto his intent.
His brother and the Duke both knew the cause,

But neither knew the place whereto he went:
Divers thereof most diversly did judge,
Some by good will perswaded, some by grudge.

57

Sevn dayes entire about for him they sought,
Sevn dayes entire no newes of him was found,
The eight a peasant to Geneura brought
These newes, that in the sea he saw him drownd:
Not that the waters were with tempest wrought,
Nor that his ship was stricken on the ground.
How then? Forsooth (quoth he) and therewith wept,
Downe from a rocke into the sea he lept.

58

And further he unto Geneura told,
How he met Ariodant upon the way,
Who made him go with him for to behold
The wofull act that he would do that day.
And charged him the matter to unfold,
And to his Princes daughter thus to say,
Had he been blind, he had full happie beene,
His death should shew that he too much had seene.

59

There stands a rocke against the Irish ile,
From thence into the sea himselfe he cast:
I stood and looked after him awhile,
The height and steepnesse made me sore agast,
I thence have traveld hither many a mile,
To shew you plainly how the matter past.
When as the clowne his tale had verifide,
Geneuras heart was throughly terrifide.

60

O Lord what wofull words by her were spoken,
Laid all alone upon her restlesse bed!
Oft did she strike her guiltlesse brest in token
Of that great griefe that inwardly was bred:
Her golden tresses all were rent and broken,
Recounting still those wofull words he sed,
How that the cause his cruell death was such,
Was onely this, that he had seene too much.

61

The rumor of his death spread farre and neare,
And how for sorrow he himselfe had killed,

The King was sad, the court of heavy cheare,
By Lords and Ladies many teares were spilled.
His brother most, as loving him most deare,
Had so his mind with sorrow overfilled,
That he was scantly able to refraine,
With his owne hands himselfe for to have slaine.

62

And oftentimes repeating in his thought,
The filthy fact he saw the other night,
Which (as you heard) the Duke and I had wrought,
I little looking it would come to light,
And that the same his brothers death had brought,
On faire Geneura he doth wreake his spight,
Not caring (so did wrath him overwhelme)
To leese the Kings good will and all his realme.

63

The King and Nobles sitting in the hall,
Right pensive all for Ariodants destruction,
Lurcanio undertakes before them all,
To give them perfect notice and instruction
Who was the cause of Ariodantes fall:

And having made some little introduction,
He said it was unchast Geneuras crime,
That made him kill himselfe before his time.

64

What should I seeke to hide his good intent?
His love was such as greater none could be,
He hopd to have your highnesse free assent,
When you his value and his worth should see:
But while a plaine and honest way he went,
Behold he saw another climb the tree,
And in the midst of all his hope and sute,
Another tooke the pleasure and the frute.

65

He further said, not that he had surmised,
But that his eies had seene Geneura stand,
And at a window as they had devised,
Let down a ladder to her lovers hand,
But in such sort he had himselfe disguised,
That who it was he could not understand.
And for due prooffe of this his accusation,
He bids the combat straight by proclamation.

66

How sore the King was grievd to heare these newes,
I leave it as a thing not hard to guesse,
Lurcanio plaine his daughter doth accuse,
Of whom the King did looke for nothing lesse:
And this the more his feare and care renews,
That on this point the lawes are so expresse,
Except by combat it be provd a lie,
Needs must Geneura be condemnd to die.

67

How hard the Scottish law is in this case,
I do not doubt but you have heard it told,
How she that doth another man embrace,
Beside her husband, be she yong or old,
Must die, except within two fortnights space,
She find a champion stout that will uphold,
That unto her no punishment is due,
But he that doth accuse her is untrue.

68

The King (of crime that thinkes Geneura cleare)
Makes offer her to wed to any Knight,

That will in armes defend his daughter deare,
And prove her innocent in open fight.
Yet for all this no champion doth appeare,
Such feare they have of this Lurcanios might.
One gazeth on another as they stand,
But none of them the combat takes in hand.

69

And further by ill fortune and mischance,
Her brother Zerbin now is absent thence,
And gone to Spaine (I thinke) or else to France,
Who were he here, she could not want defence,
Or if perhaps so lucky were her chance,
To send him notice of her need from hence,
Had she the presence of her noble brother,
She should not need the aide of any other.

70

The King that meanes to make a certaine triall,
If faire Geneura guilty be or no,
(For still she stiffly stood in the deniall,
Of this that wrought her undeserved wo)
Examines all her maids, but they reply all,

That of the matter nothing they did know.
Which made me seek for to prevent the danger,
The Duke and I might have about the stranger.

71

And thus for him more then my selfe afraid,
(So faithfull love to this false Duke I bare)
I gave him notice of these things, and said,
That he had need for both of us beware.
He praid my constant love, and farther praid,
That I would credit him, and take no care.
He points two men (but both to me unknowne)
To bring me to a castle of his owne.

72

Now sir, I thinke you find by this effect,
How soundly I did love him from my heart,
And how I provd by plaine course and direct,
My meaning was not any wayes to start:
Now marke if he to me bare like respect,
And marke if he requited my desart,
Alas how shall a silly wench attaine,
By loving truely to be lov'd againe.

73

This wicked Duke ungratefull and perjured,
Beginneth now of me to have mistrust,
His guilty conscience could not be assured,
How to conceale his wicked acts unjust,
Except my death (though causlesse) be procured,
So hard his heart, so lawlesse was his lust.
He said he would me to his castle send,
But that same castle should have beene mine end.

74

He wild my guides when they were past that hill,
And to the thicket a little way descended,
That there (to quite my love) they should me kill,
Which as you saw, they to have done intended,
Had not your happy comming stopt their will,
That (God and you be thank) I was defended.
This tale Dalinda to Renaldo told,
And all the while their journey on they hold.

75

This strange adventure luckily befell
To good Renaldo, for that now he found,

By this Dalinda that this tale did tell,
Geneuras mind unspotted cleare and sound,
And now his courage was confirmed well,
That wanted erst a true and certaine ground:
For though before for her he meant to fight,
Yet rather now for to defend the right.

76

To great S. Andrewes towne he maketh hast,
Whereas the King was set with all his traine,
Most carefull waiting for the trumpets blast,
That must pronounce his daughters joy or paine.
But now Renaldo spurred had so fast,
He was arrivd within a mile or twaine,
And through the Village as he then was riding,
He met a page that brought them fresher tiding.

77

How there was come a Warriour all disguised,
That meant to prove Lurcanio said untreu,
His colours and his armour well devised,
In maner and in making very new:
And though that sundry sundrily surmised,

Yet who it was for certaine no man knew.
His page demaunded of his masters name,
Did sweare he never heard it since he came.

78

Now came Renaldo to the City wall,
And at the gate but little time he staid,
The porter was so ready at his call:
But poore Dalinda now grew sore afraid,
Renaldo bids her not to feare at all,
For why he would her pardon beg he said:
So thrusting in among the thickest rout,
He saw them stand on scaffolds all about.

79

It straight was told him by the standers by,
How there was thither come a stranger Knight,
That meant Geneuras innocence to try,
And that already was begun the fight:
And how the greene that next the wall did ly,
Was raild about of purpose for the fight.
This newes did make Renaldo hasten in,
And leave behind Dalinda at her Inne.

80

He told her he would come again ere long,
And spurs his horse that made an open lane,
He pierced in the thickest preasse among,
Whereas these valiant Knights had givn and tane,
Full many strokes, with sturdy hand and strong,
Lurcanio thinks to bring Geneuras bane,
The other meanes the Lady to defend,
Whom (though unknown) they favor and commend.

81

There was Duke Polynesso bravely mounted,
Upon a courser of an exclent race,
Sixe Knights among the better sort accounted,
On foot in armes do marshall well the place.
The Duke by office all the rest surmounted,
High Constable (as alwaies in such case)
Who of Geneuras danger was as glad,
As all the rest were sorrowfull and sad.

82

Now had Renaldo made an open way,
And was arived there in lucky howre,

To cause the combat to surcease and stay,
Which these two knights applid with al their powre.
Renaldo in the Court appeared that day,
Of noble Chivalry the very flowre,
For first the Princes audience he praid,
Then with great expectation thus he said.

83

Send (noble Prince) quoth he, send by and by,
And cause forthwith that they surcease the fight,
For know, that which so ere of these doth dy,
It certaine is he dies against all right.
One thinks he tels the truth and tels a ly,
And is deceivd by error in his fight,
And looke what cause his brothers death procured,
That very same hath him to fight allured.

84

The tother of a nature good and kind,
Not knowing if he hold the right or no,
To dy or to defend her hath assignd,
Lest so rare beauty should be spilled so.
I harmeslesse hope to save the faultlesse mind:

And those that mischiefe mind to worke them wo,
But first o Prince to stay the fight give order,
Before my spech proceedeth any farder.

85

Renaldos person with the tale he told,
Movd so the King, that straight without delay,
The Knights were bidden both their hands to hold,
The combat for a time was causd to stay,
Then he againe with voice and courage bold,
The secret of the matter doth bewray,
Declaring plaine how Polynessos lust
Was first contriver of this deed unjust.

86

And proffreth of this spech to make a prooffe,
By combat hand to hand with sword and speare:
The Duke was cald that stood not far aloofe,
And scantly able to conceale his feare,
He first denies, as was for his behoofe,
And straight to battell both agreed were,
They both were armd, the place before was ready,
Now must they fight there could be no remedy.

87

How was the King, how were the people glad,
That faire Geneura faultlesse there did stand,
As Gods great goodnesse now revealed had,
And should be proved by Renaldos hand.
All thought the Duke of mind and maners bad,
The proudst and cruelst man in all the land,
It likely was as every one surmised,
That this deceit by him should be devised.

88

Now Polinesso stands with doubtfull brest,
With fainting heart, with pale dismaied face,
Their trumpets blew, they set their speares in rest,
Renaldo commeth on a mighty pace,
For at this fight he finish will the feast,
And where to strike him he designes a place:
His very first encounter was so fierce,
Renaldos speare the tothers sides did pierce.

89

And having overthrowne the Duke by force,
As one unable so great strokes to bide,

And cast him cleane sixe paces from his horse,
Himselfe alights and thothers helme untide,
Who making no resistance like a corse,
With faint low voice for mercy now he cride,
And plaine confest with this his later breath,
The fault that brought him this deserved death.

90

No sooner had he made this last confession,
But that his life did faile him with his voyce.
Geneuras double scape of foule oppression,
In life and fame did make the King rejoyce:
In lieu of her to leese his crownes possession,
He would have wisht, if such had beene his choyce:
To leese his realme he could have beene no sadder:
To get it lost he could have beene no gladder.

91

The combat done, Renaldo straight untide
His beaver, when the King that knew his face,
Gave thanks to God that did so well provide,
So doubtlesse helpe in such a dangerous case.
That unknowne Knight stood all this while aside,

And saw the matters passed in the place,
And evry one did muse and marvell much,
What wight it was whose curtesie was such.

92

The King did aske his name because he ment,
With kingly gifts his service to reward,
Affirming plainly that his good intent,
Deserved thanks and very great regard.
The Knight with much intreatie did assent,
And to disarm himselfe he straight prepard,
But who it was if you vouchsafe to looke,
I will declare it in another booke.

ARGUMENT

THE SIXTH BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Geneura faire to Ariodant is given,
And he a Duke is made that verie day.
Rogero with the Griffeth horse is driven,
Unto Alcynas Ile, and there doth stay.
A mirtle in the middle strangly riven,
Alcinas frands doth unto him bewray:
Of which enformd he thence would have departed,
But by the way he finds his purpose thwarted.

SIXT BOOKE

1

Most wretched he, that thinks by doing ill,
His evill deedes long to conceale and hide,
For though the voice and tongues of men be still,
By foules or beasts his sin shall be descride:
And God oft worketh by his secret will,
That sinne it selfe the sinner so doth guide,
That of his owne accord, without request,
He makes his wicked doings manifest.

2

The gracelesse wight, Duke Polinesso thought,
His former fault should sure have bin concealed,
If that Dalinda unto death were brought,
By whom alone the same could be revealed.
Thus making worse the thing before was nought,
He hurt the wound which time perhaps had healed.
And weening with more sinne the lesse to mend,
He hastned on his well deserved end.

3

And lost at once his life, his state, and frends,
And honour too, a losse as great or more.
Now (as I said) that unknowne Knight entends,
Sith everie one to know him sought so sore,
And sith the King did promise large amends,
To shew his face which they saw oft before,
And Ariodant most lovely did appeare,
Whom they thought dead as you before did heare.

4

He whom Geneura wofully did waile,
He whom Lurcanio deemed to be dead,
He whom the King and court did so bewaile,
He that to all the realme such care had bred,
Doth live: the clownes report in this did faile,
On which false ground the rumour false was spred.
And yet in this the peasant did not mocke,
He saw him leape downe headlong from the rock.

5

But as we see men oft with rash intent
Are desperate and do resolve to die,

And straight do change that fancie and repent,
When unto death they do approach more nie:
So Ariodant to drowne himselfe that ment,
Now plungd in sea repented by and by,
And being of his limbes able and strong,
Unto the shore he swam againe ere long.

6

And much dispraising in his inward thought,
This fond conceit that late his minde possest,
At last a blind and narrow path him brought,
All tyrd and wet to be an hermits guest:
With whom to stay in secret sort he sought,
Both that he might his former grieffe digest,
And learne the truth, if this same clownes report,
Were by Geneura tane in grieffe or sport.

7

There first he heard how she conceivd such grieffe,
As almost brought her life to wofull end,
He found of her they had so good beleefe,
They thought she would not in such sort offend:
He further heard except shee had release,

By one that would her innocence defend,
It was great doubt Lurcanios accusation,
Would bring her to a speedie condemnation,

8

And looke how love before his heart enraged,
So now did wrath enflame, and though he knew wel
To wreake his harme, his brothers life was gaged,
He nathles thought his act so foule and cruell,
That this his anger could not be asswaged,
Unto his flame love found such store of fewel:
And this the more increast his wrath begun,
To heare how every one the fight did shun.

9

For why Lurcanio, was so stout and wise,
Except it were for to defend the truth,
Men thought he would not so the King despise,
And hazard life to bring Geneuras ruth,
Which caused everie one his friend advise,
To shunne the fight that must maintaine untruth.
But Ariodant after long disputation,
Meanes to withstand his brothers accusation.

10

Alas (quoth he) I never shall abide,
Her, through my cause, to die in wo and paine,
For danger or for death what may betide,
Be she once dead my life cannot remaine,
She is my saint, in her my blisse doth bide,
Her golden rayes my eies light still maintaine,
Fall backe, fall edge, and be it wrong or right,
In her defence I am resolv'd to fight.

11

I take the wrong, but yet ile take the wrong,
And die I shall, yet if I die I care not,
But then alas, by law she dies ere long,
O cruell lawes so sweete a wight that spare not:
Yet this small joy I finde these griefes among,
That Polinesso to defend her dare not,
And she shall finde how little she was loved,
Of him that to defend her never moved.

12

And she shall see me dead there for her sake,
To whom so great a damage she hath done:

And of my brother just revengement take
I shall, by whom this strife was first begun,
For there at least my death plaine prooffe shall make
That he this while a foolish thred hath spun,
He thinketh to avenge his brothers ill,
The while himselfe his brother there shall kill.

13

And thus resolv'd, he gets him armour new,
New horse and all things new that needfull beene
All clad in blacke, a sad and mournfull hew,
And crost with wreath of yellow and of greene,
A stranger bare his sheeld that neither knew
His masters name nor him before had seene,
And thus as I before rehearst, disguised
He met his brother as he had devised.

14

I told you what successe the matter had,
How Ariodant himselfe did then discover,
For whom the King himselfe was even as glad,
As late before his daughter to recover,
And since he thought in joyfull times and sad,

No man could shew himselfe a truer lover
Then he that after so great wrong, intended
Against his brother her to have defended.

15

Both loving him by his owne inclination,
And praid thereto by many a Lord and Knight,
And chiefly by Renaldos instigation,
He gave to Ariodant Geneura bright.
Now by the Dukes atteint and condemnation,
Albania came to be the Kings in right.
Which dutchie falling in so luckie houre,
Was given unto the damsell for her dowre.

16

Renaldo for Dalindas pardon praide,
Who for her error did so sore repent,
That straight she vowd, with honest mind and staid,
To live her life in prayer and penitence:
Away she packt, nor further time delaid,
In Datia, to a nunrie there she went.
But to Rogero now I must repaire,
That all this while did gallop in the aire.

17

Who though he were of mind and courage stout,
And would not easily feare or be dismaid,
Yet doubtlesse now his mind was full of doubt,
His hart was now appald, and sore afraid.
Farre from Europa, he had travaild out,
And yet his flying horse could not be staid,
But past the pillars xij. score leagues and more,
Pitcht there by Hercules many yeares before.

18

This Griffeth horse a bird most huge and rare,
Doth pierce the skie with so great force of wing,
That with that noble bird he may compare,
Whom Poets faine, Joves lightning downe to bring
To whom all other birds inferior are,
Because they take the Eagle for their king.
Scarse seemeth from the clouds to go so swift,
The thunderbolt sent by the lightnings drift.

19

When long this monster strange had kept his race,
Straight as a line bending to neither side,

He spide an Iland distant little space,
To which he bends in purpose there to bide,
Much like in semblance was it to the place,
Where Arethusa usd her selfe to hide,
And seekes so long her love to have beguild,
Till at the last she found her selfe with child.

20

A fairer place they saw not all the while,
That they had travaild in the aire aloft,
In all the world was not a fairer ile,
If all the world to finde the fame were sought:
Here having travaild many a hundred mile,
Rogero by his bird to rest was brought,
In pastures greene, and hils with coole fresh aire,
Cleere rivers, shadie banks, and meddowes faire.

21

Heere divers groves there were, of dainty shade,
Of Palme, or Orenge trees, of Cedars tall,
Of sundrie fruites and flowers that never fade,
The shew was faire, the plenty was not small.
And arbours in the thickest places made,

Where little light and heat came not at all:
Where Nightingales did straine their little throtes,
Recording still their sweete and pleasant notes.

22

Amid the lilly white and fragrant rose,
Preservd still fresh by warme and temprate aire,
The fearefull hare, and conny carelesse goes,
The stag with stately head and body faire,
Doth feed secure, not fearing any foes,
That to his damage hither may repaire,
The Bucke and Doe doth feed amid the fields,
As in great store the pleasant forrest yeelds.

23

It needlesse was to bid Rogero light,
When as his horse approched nigh the ground,
He cast himselfe out of his saddle quite,
And on his feet he falleth safe and sound,
And holds the horses raines, lest else he might
Fly quite away, and not againe be found,
And to a mirtle by the water side,
Betweene two other trees his beast he tide.

24

And finding thereabout a little brooke,
That neere unto a shady mountaine stands,
His helmet from his head forthwith he tooke,
His shield from arme, his gantlet from his hands,
And from the higher places he doth looke,
Full oft to sea, full oft to fruitfull lands,
And seekes the coole and pleasant aire to take,
That doth among the leaves a murmure make.

25

Oft with the water of that crystall well,
He seekes to quench his thirst and swage his heate,
With which his veines enflamd did rise and swell,
And causd his other parts to fry in sweate:
Well may it seeme a marvell that I tell,
Yet will I once againe the same repeate,
He traveld had above three thousand mile,
And not put off his armour all the while.

26

Behold his horse he lately tyed there,
Among the boughs in shady place to bide,

Strave to go loose, and started backe for feare,
And puls the tree to which the raines were tide,
In which (as by the sequell shall appeare)
A humane soule it selfe did strangely hide.
With all his strength the steed strives to be loosed,
By force whereof the mirtle sore was broosed.

27

And as an arme of tree from body rent,
By peasant strength with many a sturdy stroke,
When in the fire the moisture all is spent,
The empty places fild with aire and smoke,
Do boile and strive, and find at last a vent,
When of the brand a shiver out is broke,
So did the tree strive, bend, writh, wring and breake,
Till at a little hole it thus did speake.

28

Right curteous Knight (for so I may you deeme,
And must you call not knowing other name)
If so you are as gracious as you seeme,
Then let your friendly deed confirme the same,
Unloose this monster, sent as I esteeme,

To adde some farther torment to my shame.
Alas mine inward griefes were such before,
By outward plagues they need be made no more.

29

Rogero mazed looked round about,
If any man or woman he might see,
At last he was resolved of his doubt,
He found the voice was of the mirtle tree,
With which abasht, though he were wise and stout,
He said, I humbly pray thee pardon me,
Whether thou be some humane ghost or spright,
Or power divine that in this wood hast right.

30

Not wilfulnesse, but ignorance did breed
Thine injury, mine error in this case:
And made me do this unadvised deed,
By which unwares thy leaves I did deface:
But let thy speech so farre forth now proceed,
To tell me how thou art that in this place,
Dost dwell in tree amid the desert field,
As God from haile and tempest thee may shield.

31

And if that I for this amends may make,
Or now or after, or by paine or art,
I sweare to thee by her, and for her sake,
That holds of me, and shall the better part,
That I shall not surcease all paines to take,
To worke thy joy, or to asswage thy smart.
This said, he saw again the mirtle shake,
And then again he heard that thus it spake:

32

Sir Knight, your curtesie doth me constraine,
To shew to you the thing that you desier,
Although I sweat (as you may see) with paine,
Like greenest boughes upon the flaming fier,
I will discover unto you her traine,
(Wo worth the time that ever I came nie her)
That did for malice and by magicke strange,
My lively shape to livelesse branches change.

33

I was an Earle, Astolpho was my name,
Well knowne in France in time of warre and peace,

Orlandos cosen and Renalds, whose fame
While time shall last in earth shall never cease.
Of Oton King of English Ile I came,
And should succeed him after his decease,
Both comely, young, carelesse of worldly pelfe,
To none an enemy but to my selfe.

34

For as we turned from the Estern Iles,
Whose banks are worne with surge of Indian wave,
Where I and many more with witching wiles,
Were straight inclosed in a hollow cave,
Untill Orlando did avenge the guiles,
And found by force a meane his friends to save,
We Westward went upon the shore and sand,
That lieth on the North side of the land.

35

And as we travell'd homeward on our way,
As chance did leade or destiny us drive,
It was our fortune once on breake of day,
Hard by Alcynas Castle to arrive,
Where she alone, to sport her selfe and play,

Such kind of gins for fishes did contrive,
That though we saw no net, no bait, no hooke,
Yet still we saw that store of fish she tooke.

36

The Dolphin strong, the Tunny good of tast,
The Mullet, Sturgeon, Samon (princely fish)
With Porpose, Seales, and Thornpooles came as fast,
As she was pleased to commaund or wish.
And still she tooke of each kind as they past,
Some strange for shew, some dainty for the dish,
The horsefish and the huge and monstrous whales,
Whose mighty members harnest are with scales.

37

Among the rest that were too long to count,
We saw the fish that men Balena can,
Twelve yards above the water did amount
His mighty backe, the monster is so tall:
And (for it stood so still) we made account,
It had beene land, but were deceived all,
We were deceivd, well I may rew the while,
It was so huge we thought it was an Ile.

38

I say this potent witch Alcyna tooke
All sorts of fish without or net or aide,
But only reading in a little booke,
Or mumbling words, I know not what she said,
But seeing me so well she likt my looke,
That at her sport but little time she staid,
But sought forthwith to trap me by her skill,
Which straight fell out according to her will.

39

For toward me with pleasant cheare she came,
In modest maner and in comely sort,
And did withall her speech demurely frame,
And praid me to her lodging to resort,
Or if I would be partner of her game,
She offred me to shew me all the sport,
And all the kinds of fish in seas that were,
Some great, some small, some smooth, and some with haire.

40

And if you lift a Mermaid faire to see,
That can with song the raging stormes appease,

At yond same little banke you may (quoth she)
To which we two will safely passe with ease:
(The banke which she pretends to shew to me,
Was that same fish the monster of the seas)
And I that too much loved to adven-ter,
Upon the fishes back with her did enter.

41

My cousins Dudon and Renaldo beckned
To draw me thence, I heard not what they said,
But of their speech and signes I little reckned,
I had not wit enough to be afraid:
But soone my courage was appald and weakned,
I straight was faine in vaine to cry for aid,
The monstrous fish that seemd to me an Ile
Straight bare me from the shore full many a mile.

42

There was Renaldo like to have beene drown'd,
Who swam to save me if perhaps he might,
But suddainly of him and of the ground,
A misty cloud did take away the sight:
Alcyna and I with seas environd round,

Did travell on that monster all the night,
And then with gracious speeches she began
To give me all the comfort that she can.

43

And thus at last to this place we repaire,
Of which by wrong Alcyna keeps possession,
Deposing forcibly the rightfull heire,
(Her elder lawfull sister) by oppression:
The other two more vicious then faire,
Are bastards, and begotten in transgression,
I heard it told, and have it not forgotten,
She and Morgana were in incest gotten.

44

And as their first beginning was of sinne,
So is their life ungodly and defamed,
Of law nor justice passing not a pinne,
But like the heifer wanton and untamed,
By warre they seeke their sisters right to winne,
Their elder sister Logistilla named,
And have so farre prevailed with their powers,
They have of hers about an hundred towers.

45

And had ere this time taken all away,
Save that the rest is strongly fenced round,
For of one side the water stops the way,
On thother side the vantage of the ground,
Which with a mighty banke doth make a stay,
Much like the English and the Scottish bound:
And yet the bastard sisters doe their best,
And labour still to spoile her of the rest.

46

And why, because they see her good and holy,
They hated her because themselves are vicious.
But to returne, and tell you of my folly,
That turnd to me so hurtfull and pernicious,
I now again grew somewhat bold and jolly,
I see no cause to feare or be suspicious,
And finding she lovd me by signes most plaine,
I wholly bent my selfe to love againe.

47

When I her dainty members did embrace,
I deemed then there was none other blisse,
Me thought all other pleasures were but base,
Of friends nor kin I had no want nor misse,
I onely wisht to stand in her good grace,
And have accesse her corral lips to kisse,
I thought my selfe the happiest of all creatures,
To have a Lady of so goodly features.

48

And this the more confirmd my joy and pride,
That toward me she shewd such love and care,
By night and daily I was by her side,
To do or speake against me no man dare,
I was her stay, I was her houses guide,
I did commaund, the rest as subjects are:
She trusted me, alone with me she talked,
With me within she sat, without she walked.

49

Alas, why do I open lay my sore,
Without all hope of medicine or releefe?

And call to mind the fickle joy before,
Now being plungd in gulfes of endlesse griefe?
For while I thought she lov'd me more and more,
When as I deem'd my joy and blisse was chiefe,
Her waving love away from me was taken,
A new guest came, the old was cleane forsaken.

50

Then did I find full soone, though too too late,
Her wanton, wavering, wily womans wit,
Accustom'd in a trice to love and hate,
I saw another in my seate to sit:
Her love was gone, forgone my happie state,
The marke is mist that I was wont to hit:
And I had perfect knowledge then ere long,
That to a thousand she had done like wrong.

51

And least that they about the world might go,
And make her wicked life and falshood knowne,
In divers places she doth them bestow,
So as abroad they shall not make their mone,
Some into trees, amid the field that grow,

Some into beasts, and some into a stone:
In rockes or rivers she doth hide the rest,
As to her cruell fancie seemeth best.

52

And you that are arrivd by steps so strange,
To this unfortunate and fatall Ile,
Although in youthfull sports a while you range,
And though Alcina favour you a while,
(Although you little looke for any change,
Although she friendly seeme on you to smile,
Yet looke no lesse, but changd at last to be,
Into some brutish beast, some stone or tree.

53

Thus though perhap my labour is but lost,
Yet have I givn you good and plaine advise,
Who can themselves beware by others cost,
May be accounted well among the wise:
The waves that my poore ship so sore hath tost,
You may avoid by heed and good devise,
Which if you do, then your successe is such,
As many others could not do so much.

54

Rogero did with much attention heare
Astolfos speech, and by his name he knew
To Bradamant he was of kindred neare,
Which made him more his wofull state to rew:
And for her sake that loved him most deare,
To whom from him all love againe was dew,
He sought to bring him aid and some releefe,
At least with comfort to asswage his grieffe.

55

Which having done, he asked him againe,
The way that would to Logistilla guide,
For were it by the hils, by dale or plaine,
He thither meant forthwith to runne or ride.
Astolfo answerd it would aske much paine,
And many a weary journey he should bide,
Because to stop this way Alcina sets
A thousand kinds of hindrances and lets.

56

For as the way it selfe is very steepe,
Not passable without great toile and paine,

So she that in her mischiefe doth not sleepe,
Doth make the matter harder to attaine,
By placing men of armes the way to keepe,
Of which she hath full many in her traine.
Rogerio gave Astolfo many thanks,
For giving him this warning of her pranks.

57

And leading then the flying horse in hand,
Not daring yet to mount a beast so wilde,
Least (as before I made you understand)
He might the second time have been beguild:
He meanes to go to Logistillas land,
A vertuous Ladie, chast, discreet and mild,
And to withstand Alcina tooth and naile,
That upon him her force might not prevaile.

58

But well we may commend his good intent,
Though missing that to which he did aspire,
Who judgeth of our actions by thevent,
I wish they long may want their most desire.
For though Rogerio to resist her ment,

And feared her as children feare the fire,
Yet was he taken to his hurt and shame,
Even as the flie is taken in the flame.

59

For going on his way, behold he spies
A house more stately then can well be told,
Whose wals do seeme exalted to the skies,
From top to bottome shining all of gold,
A sight to ravish any mortall eyes,
It seemd some Alcumist did make this hold,
The wals seemd all of gold, but yet I trow
All is not gold that makes a golden show.

60

Now though this stately sight did make him stay,
Yet thinking on the danger him foretold,
He left the easie and the beaten way,
That leadeth to this rich and stately hold,
And to her house where vertue beares the sway,
He bends his steps with all the hast he could:
But ere he could ascend the mountaines top,
A crew of catives sought his way to stop.

61

A foule deformd, a brutish cursed crew,
In bodie like to antike worke devised,
Of monstrous shape, and of an ugly hew,
Like masking Mathachinas all disguised.
Some looke like dogs, and some like apes in vew,
Some dreadfull looke, and some to be despised,
Yong shamelesse folke, and doting foolish aged,
Some nakd, some drunk, some bedlamlike enraged.

62

One rides in hast a horse without a bit,
Another rides as slow, an asse or cow,
The third upon a Centaurs rumpe doth sit,
A fourth would flie with wings, but knows not how,
The fift doth for a speare employ a spit,
Sixt blowes a blast like one that gelds a sow.
Some carrie ladders, others carrie chaines,
Some sit and sleepe while others take the paines.

63

The Captaine of this honorable band,
With belly swolne, and puffed blubberd face,

Because for drunkenesse he could not stand,
Upon a tortesse rode a heavy pace:
His sergeants all were round about at hand,
Each one to do his office in his place:
Some wipe the sweat, with fans some make a wind,
Some stay him up before, and some behind.

64

Then one of these that had his feet and brest
Of manlike shape, but like unto a hound
In eares, in necke, and mouth, and all the rest
Doth utter barking words with currish sound,
Part to command and partly to request
The valiant knight to leave the higher ground,
And to repaire unto Alcynas castle,
Or els they two, for mastery must wrastle.

65

This monster seeing his request denide,
Strake at Rogeros beaver with a launce,
But he that could no such rude jests abide,
With Ballisarda smote him in the paunch
Out came the sword a foote on thother side,

With which he led his fellowes such a daunce,
That some hopt headlesse, some cut by the knees,
And some their arms, and some their eares did leese.

66

In vaine it was their targets to oppose
Against the edge of his enchanted blade,
No steele had force to beare those fatall blowes,
Unto the quicke the sword a passage made:
But yet with numbers they do him inclose,
Their multitude his force did overlade:
He needs at least Briarius hundred armes
To foile the foes that still about him swarmes.

67

Had he remembred to unfold the shield,
Atlanta carrid at his saddle bow,
He might have quickly overcome the field,
And causd them all without receiving blow,
Like men dismaid and blind themselves to yeeld:
But he perhaps that vertue did not know,
Or if he did, perhaps he would disdain,
Where force did faile, by fraud his will to gaine.

68

But being full resolved not to yeeld
Unto such beasts, but ere he parted thence
He would his carkasse leave amid the field,
And manfully would die in his defence,
Then lo good hap that failes the forward seeld,
Provided him a meane to rid him hence.
There came two Ladies, either like a Queene,
And each of them most stately to be seene.

69

For each of them an Unicorne did ride,
As white as Lillies, or unmolten snow,
And each of them was deckt with so great pride,
As might most richly set them forth to show,
But each of them was so divinely eide,
Would move a man in love with them to grow,
And each of them in all points was so choice,
As in their sight a man would much rejoyce.

70

Then both of them unto the medow came,
Whereas Rogero fought with all that rout,

And both of them those brutish beasts did blame,
That sought to harme a knight so strong and stout.
Rogero blushing now with modest shame,
Thankt them that had of danger holpt him out,
And straight consented with those Ladies faire,
Unto Alcynas castle to repaire.

71

Those ornaments that do set forth the gate,
Embost a little bigger then the rest,
All are enricht with stones of great estate,
The best and richest growing in the East,
In parted quadrons, with a seemely rate,
The collons diamonds as may be guest:
I say not whether counterfait or true,
But shine they did like diamonds in view.

72

About these stately pillars and betweene
Are wanton damsels gadding to and fro,
And as their age, so are their garments greene,
The blacke oxe hath not yet trod on their toe,
Had vertue with that beautie tempred beene,

It would have made the substance like the show:
These maids with curteous speech and manners nice
Welcome Rogero to this Paradise.

73

If so I may a Paradise it name,
Where love and lust have built their habitation,
Where time well spent is counted as a shame,
No wise staid thought, no care of estimation,
Nor nought but courting, dauncing, play and game,
Disguised clothes, each day a sundry fashion,
No vertuous labour doth this people please,
But nice apparrell, bellycheare and ease.

74

Their aire is alway temperate and cleare,
And wants both winters storms, and summers heate,
As though that Aprill lasted all the yeare,
Some one by fountaines side doth take his seate,
And there with fained voice and carelesse cheare,
Some sonnet made of love he doth repeate:
Some others, other where with other fashions,
Describe unto their loves their loving passions.

75

And Cupid then, the captaine of the crew,
Triumphs upon the captives he hath got,
And more and more his forces to renew,
Supplies with fresh the arrowes he hath shot,
With which he hits (his levell is so true)
And wounds full deepe, although it bleedeth not:
This is the place to which Rogero went,
And these the things to which our youth is bent.

76

Then straight a stately steed of colour bay,
Well limbd and strong was to Rogero brought,
And deckt with faire capparison most gay,
With gold and pearle and jewels richly wrought,
The Griffeth horse (that whilome to obey
The spurre and bit was by Atlanta taught)
Because his journey long required rest,
Was carrid to a stable to be drest.

77

The Ladies faire that had the knight defended,
From that same wicked and ungratious band,

Which as you heard at large before pretended,
Rogeros passage stoutly to withstand,
Told now Rogero how that they intended,
Because his valew great they understand,
Of him to crave his furtherance and aid,
Against their fo that made them oft afraid.

78

There is (quoth they) a bridge amid our way,
To which we are already verie nie,
Where one Erifila doth all she may,
To damage and annoy the passers by,
A Giantesse she is, she lives by pray,
Her fashions are to fight, deceive and lye:
Her teeth be long, her visage rough with heare,
Her nayles be sharpe, and scratching like a Beare.

79

The harme is great this monster vile doth doe,
To stop the way that but for her were free,
She spils and spoiles, she cares not what nor who,
That grieffe to heare, and pittie is to see:
And for to adde more hatred hereunto,

Know this, that all yon monsters you did see,
Are to this monster either sonnes or daughters,
And live like her by robberies and slaughters.

80

Rogero thus in curteous sort replide,
Faire Ladies gladly I accept your motion,
If other service I may do beside,
You may command, I stand at your devotion:
For this I weare this coat and blade well tride,
Not to procure me riches or promotion,
But to defend from injurie and wrong,
All such as have their enemies too strong.

81

The Ladies did Rogero greatly thanke,
As well deservd so stout and brave a Knight,
That proferd at the first request so franke,
Against the gyantesse for them to fight.
Now they drew nye unto the rivers banke,
When as Erifila came out in sight:
But they that in this story take some pleasure,
May heare the rest of it at further leasure.

ARGUMENT

THE SEVENTH BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

When foule Erifila was overcome,
Rogero guided by two stately dames,
Unto Alcynas sumptuous court doth come,
Where he his time in pleasure spends and games;
Melissa him rebukes, he standeth dumme,
And at her true reproofes he greatly shames.
In fine, by her good counsell and direction,
He frees himselfe from that most foule subjection.

SEVENTHBOOKE

1

All they that to far countries do resort,
Shall see strange sights, in earth, in seas, in skies,
Which when againe at home they shall report,
Their solemne tales, esteemed are as lyes.
For why the fond and simple common sort,
Beleeve but what they feele or see with eyes,
Therefore to them, my tale may seeme a fable,
Whose wits to understand it are not able.

2

But carelesse what the simple sots surmise,
If they shall deeme it a device or deede,
Yet sure to those that are discrete and wise,
It will no wonder nor no passion breed:
Wherefore my tale to such I do devise,
And wish them to the same to take good heed,
For some there are, may fortune in this booke,
As in a glasse their acts and haps to looke.

3

For many men with hope and show of pleasure,
Are carrid far in foolish fond conceit,
And wast their pretious time, & spend their treasure,
Before they can discover this deceit.
O happie they that keepe within their measure,
To turne their course in time, and sound retreat,
Before that wit with late repentance taught,
Were better never had then so deare bought.

4

A little while before I did rehearse,
How that Rogero by two dames was brought,
To combat with Erifila the feerse,
Who for to stop the bridge and passage sought.
In vaine it were for to declare in verse,
How sumptuously her armor all was wrought,
All set with stones, and guilt with Indian gold,
Both fit for use, and pleasant to behold.

5

She mounted was, but not upon a steed,
Instead thereof she on a Wolfe doth sit,

A Wolfe whose match Apulia doth not breed,
Well taught to hand, although she usd no bit,
And all of sandie colour was her weed,
Her armes were thus (for such a champion fit)
An ugly Tode was painted on her shield,
With poyson swolne, and in a sable field.

6

Now each the other forthwith had descride,
And each with other then prepard to fight,
Then each the other scornefully defide,
Each seekes to hurt the other all he might.
But she unable his fierce blowes to bide,
Beneath the vizer smitten was so right:
That from her seat sixe paces she was heaved,
And lay like one of life and sense bereaved.

7

Rogero readie was to draw his sword,
To head the monster lying on the sand,
Untill those dames with many a gentle word,
Asswagd his heat and made him hold his hand:
He might in honour now her life affoord,

Sith at his mercie wholly she doth stand:
Wherefore sir Knight put up your blade (say they)
Lets passe the bridge and follow on our way.

8

The way as yet unpleasant was and ill,
Among the thornie bushes and betweene,
All stony, steep, ascending up the hill,
A way lesse pleasant seldome hath been seene:
But this once past according to their will,
And they now mounted up upon the greene,
They saw the fairest castle standing by,
That ere was seene with any mortall eye.

9

Alcyna met them at the outer gate,
And came before the rest a little space,
And with a countnance full of high estate,
Salutes Rogero with a goodly grace,
And all the other courtiers in like rate,
Do bid Rogero welcome to the place,
With so great showes of duty and of love,
As if some god descended from above.

10

Nor onely was this pällace for the sight,
Most goodly, faire, and stately to behold,
But that the peoples courtsie bred delight,
Which was as great as could with tongue be told.
All were of youth and beautie shining bright,
Yet to confirme this thing I dare be bold,
That faire Alcyna past the rest as farre,
As doth the Sunne another little starre.

11

A shape whose like in waxe twere hard to frame,
Or to expresse by skill of painters rare.
Her haire was long, and yellow to the same,
As might with wire of beaten gold compare:
Her lovely cheekes with shew of modest shame,
With roses and with lillies painted are,
Her forehead faire and full of seemely cheare,
As smooth as polisht Ivory doth appeare.

12

Within two arches of most curious fashion,
Stand two gray eyes, that like to cleare suns shind,

Of stedic looke, but apt to take compassion,
Amid which lights, the naked boy and blind,
Doth cast his darts that cause so many a passion,
And leave a sweet and curelesse wound behind:
From thence the nose in such good sort descended,
As envie knowes not how it may be mended.

13

Conjoynd to which in due and comely space,
Doth stand the mouth staine with Vermilion hew,
Two rowes of precious perle serve in their place,
To show and shut, a lip right faire to vew:
Hence come the courteous words, and full of grace,
That mollifie hard hearts and make them new:
From hence proceed those smilings sweet and nice,
That seeme to make, an earthly paradise.

14

Her brest as milke, her necke as white as snow,
Her necke was round, most plum and large her brest
Two Ivory apples seemed there to grow,
Full tender smooth, and fittest to be prest:
They wave like seas, when winds most calme doth blow,

But Argos selfe might not discerne the rest,
Yet by presumption well it might be gest,
That that which was concealed was the best.

15

Her armes due measure of proportion bare,
Her faire white hand was to be viewed plaine,
The fingers long, the joynts so curious are,
As neither knot appeard nor swelling vaine.
And full to perfect all those features rare,
The foote that to be scene doth so remaine,
Both slender, short, little it was and round,
A finer foote might no where well be found.

16

She had on every side prepard a net,
If so she walke, or laugh, or sing, or stand:
Rogero now the counsell doth forget,
He had receivd late at Astolfos hand:
He doth at nought those wholsome precepts set,
That warned him to shun Alcynas land,
He thought no fraud, no treason nor no guile,
Could be accompanid with so sweete a smile.

17

The dame of France, whom he so loved erst,
He quite forgets, so farre awry he swarved:
The tale Astolfo had to him reherst,
He thinketh false, or else by him desarved:
Alcynas goodly shape his heart so perst,
She onely seemd a mistresse to be sarved:
Ne must you blame Rogeros inclination,
But rather blame the force of incantation.

18

Now as abrode the stately courts did sound,
Of trumpets, shagbot, cornets, and of flutes,
Even so within there wants no pleasing sound,
Of virginals, of vials and of lutes,
Upon the which persons not few were found,
That did record their loves and loving sutes,
And in some song of love and wanton verse,
Their good or ill successes did reherse.

19

As for the sumptuous and luxurious fare,
I thinke not they that Nynus did succeed,

Nor Cleopatra faire, whose riot rare,
To Antonie such love and losse did breed,
Might with Alcynas any way compare,
Whose love did all the others farre exceed,
So deeply was she ravisht in the sight,
Of this so valiant and so comely Knight.

20

The supper done, and tables tane away,
To purposes and such like toyes they went,
Each one to other secretly to say
Some word, by which some pretie toy is ment,
This helpt the lovers better to bewray
Each unto other what was their intent,
For when the word was hither tost and thither,
Their last conclusion was to lie together.

21

These prettie kinds of amorous sports once ended,
With torches to his chamber he was brought,
On him a crew of gallant squires attended,
That every way to do him honour sought.
The chambers furniture could not be mended.

It seemd Arachne had the hangings wrought,
A blanket new was made, the which once finishd,
The company by one and one diminishd.

22

Now was Rogero couched in his bed,
Betweene a paire of cambricke sheets perfumed,
And oft he hearkens with his wakefull hed,
For her whose love his heart and soule consumed:
Each little noise hope of her comming bred,
Which finding false, against himselfe he fumed,
And curst the cause that did him so much wrong,
To cause Alcyna tarry thence so long.

23

Sometime from bed he softly doth arise,
And looke abroad if he might her espie,
Sometime he with himselfe doth thus devise,
Now she is comming, now she drawes thus nie:
Sometime for very anger out he cries,
What meaneth she, she doth no faster hie?
Sometimes he casts least any let should be,
Betweene his hand and this desired tree.

24

But faire Alcyna, when with odors sweet,
She was perfumd according to her skill,
The time once come she deemed fit and meet,
When all the house were now asleepe and still:
With rich embroderd slippers on her feet,
She goes to give and take of joyes her fill,
To him whom hope and feare so long assailed,
Till sleepe drew on, and hope and feare both failed.

25

Now when Astolfos successor espide
Those earthly starres, her faire and heavnly eyes,
As sulphur once in flamed cannot hide,
Even so the mettall in his veines that lies,
So flamd that in the skin it scant could bide:
But of a sodaine straight he doth arise,
Leaps out of bed, and her in armes embraced,
Ne would he stay till she her selfe unlaced.

26

So utterly impatient of all stay,
That though her mantle was but cyprus light,

And next upon her smocke of lawne it lay.
Yet so the champion hasted to the fight,
The mantle with his fury fell away,
And now the smocke remaind alone in sight,
Which smocke as plaine her beauties all discloses,
As doth a glasse the lillies faire and roses.

27

And looke how close the Ivie doth embrace
The tree or branch about the which it growes,
So close the lovers couched in the place,
Each drawing in the breath the other blowes:
But how great joyes they found that little space,
We well may guesse, but none for certaine knowes:
Their sport was such, so well their leere they couth,
That oft they had two tongues within one mouth.

28

Now though they keepe this close with great regard,
Yet not so close but some did find the same,
For though that vertue oft wants due reward,
Yet seldome vice wants due deserved blame.
Rogerio still was more and more prefard

Each one to him with cap and courtesie came,
For faire Alcyna being now in love,
Would have him plast the others all above.

29

In pleasure here they spend the night and day,
They change their clothes so often as they lust,
Within they feast, they dance, disport and play,
Abroad they hunt, they hauke, they ride, they just,
And so while sensuall life doth beare the sway,
All discipline is troden in the dust.
Thus while Rogero here his time mispends,
He quite forgets his dutie and his frends.

30

For while Rogero bides in feast and joy,
King Agramant doth take great care and paine,
Dame Bradamant doth suffer great annoy,
And traveld farre to finde him all in vaine:
She little knew Alcyna did enjoy
Her due delights, yet doth she mone and plaine,
To thinke how strangely this same flying horse,
Bare him away against his will by force.

31

In townes, in fields, in hils, in dales she sought,
In tents, in campes, in lodgings and in caves,
Oft she enquird, but yet she learned nought,
She past the rivers fresh and salt sea waves,
Among the Turkes she leaves him not unsought,
(Gramercy ring that her from danger saves:)
A ring whose vertue workes a thing scant possible,
Which holding in her mouth she goes invisible.

32

She will not, nor she cannot thinke him dead,
For if a man of so great worth should die,
It would some great report or fame have bred,
From East unto the West, both farre and nie:
It cannot sinke nor settle in her head,
Whether he be in seas, in earth or skie,
Yet still she seekes, and her companions are
Sorrowes and sighes, and feares, and loving care.

33

At last she meanes to turne unto the cave,
Where lie the great and learned Merlins bones,

And at that tombe to crie so loud and rave,
As shall with pitie move the marble stones:
Nor till she may some certaine notice have
Of her belovd to stay her plaints and mones,
In hope to bring her purpose to effect,
By doing as that Prophet should direct.

34

Now as her course to Poytiers ward she bent,
Melyssa using wonted skill and art,
Encountred her, her journey to prevent,
Who knew full well, and did to her impart,
Both where he was, and how his time he spent,
Which grievd the vertuous damsell to the hart,
That such a Knight, so valiant erst and wise,
Should so be drownd in pleasure and in vice.

35

O poysond hooke that lurkes in sugred bait,
O pleasures vaine, that in this world are found,
Which like a subtile theefe do lie in waite,
To swallow man in sinke of sinne profound:
O Kings and peeres, beware of this deceit.

And be not in this gulfe of pleasure dround:
The time will come, and must I tell you all,
When these your joyes shall bitter seeme as gall.

36

Then turne your cloth of gold to clothes of heares,
Your feasts to fasts, to sorrowes turne your songs,
Your wanton toyes and smilings into teares,
To restitution turne your doing wrongs,
Your fond securenesse turne to godly feares,
And know that vengeance unto God belongs,
Who when he comes to judge the soules of men,
It will be late alas to mend it then.

37

Then shall the vertuous man shine like the sunne,
Then shall the vicious man repent his pleasure,
Then one good deed of almes sincerely done,
Shall be more worth then mines of Indian treasure,
Then sentence shall be givn which none shall shun,
Then God shall wey and pay our deeds by measure;
Unfortunate and thrice accursed thay,
Whom fond delights do make forget that day.

38

But to returne unto my tale againe,
I say Melyssa tooke no little care,
To draw Rogero by some honest traine,
From this same place of feasts and dainty fare,
And like a faithfull friend refusd no paine,
To set him free from her sweet senslesse snare,
To which his unkle brought him with intent
His destinie thereby for to prevent.

39

As oft we see men are so fond and blind,
To carry to their sonnes too much affection,
That when they seeme to love, they are unkind,
(For they do hate a child that spare correction)
So did Atlanta, not with evill mind,
Give to Rogero this so bad direction,
But of a purpose, thereby to withdraw
His fatall end that he before foresaw.

40

For this he sent him past so many seas,
Unto the Ile that I before did name,

Esteeming lesse his honour then his ease,
A few yeares life then everlasting fame.
For this he caused him so well to please
Alcyna that same rich lascivious dame;
That though his time old Nestors life had finishd,
Yet her affection should not be diminishd.

41

But good Melyssa on a ground more sure,
That lovd his honor better then his weale,
By sound perswasions meanes him to procure,
From pleasures court to vertues to appeale:
As leeches good that in a desperate cure,
With steele, with flame, and oft with poison heale,
Of which although the patient do complaine,
Yet at the last he thanks him for his paine.

42

And thus Melyssa promised her aid,
And helpe Rogero backe againe to bring,
Which much recomforted the noble maid,
That lovd this Knight above each earthly thing.
But for the better doing this (she said)

It were behovefull that he had her ring,
Whose vertue was that who so did it weare,
Should never need the force of charmes to feare.

43

But Bradamant that would not, onely spare
Her ring (to do him good) but eke her hart,
Commends the ring and him unto her care,
And so these Ladies take their leave and part.
Melissa for her journey doth prepare,
By her well tried skill in Magicke art,
A beast that might supply her present lacke,
That had one red foot and another blacke.

44

Such hast she made, that by the breake of day
She was arrived in Alcynas Ile,
But straight she changd her shape and her array,
That she Rogero better might beguile:
Her stature tall she makes, her head all gray,
A long white beard she takes to hide the wile,
In fine she doth so cunningly dissemble,
That she the old Atlanta doth resemble.

45

And in this sort she waiteth till she might
By fortune find Rogero in fit place,
Which very seldome hapt, for day and night
He stood so high in faire Alcynas grace,
That she could least abide of any wight,
To have him absent but a minute space,
At last full early in a morning faire,
She spide him walke abroad to take the aire.

46

About his necke a carkneet rich he ware,
Of precious stones, all set in gold well tride,
His armes that erst all warlike weapons bare,
In golden bracelets wantonly were tide:
Into his eares two rings conveyed are,
Of golden wire, at which on either side
Two Indian pearles in making like two peares,
Of passing price were pendent at his eares.

47

His locks bedewd with waters of sweet savour,
Stood curled round in order on his hed,

He had such wanton womanish behaviour,
As though in Valence he had long bene bred:
So changd in speech, in manners and in favour,
So from himselfe, beyond all reason led,
By these inchantments of this amrous dame,
He was himselfe in nothing but in name.

48

Which when the wise and kind Melyssa saw,
(Resembling still Atlantas person sage)
Of whom Rogero alwayes stood in aw,
Even from his tender youth to elder age,
She toward him with looke austere did draw,
And with a voice abrupt, as halfe in rage,
Is this (quoth she) the guerdon and the gaine,
I find for all my travell and my paine?

49

What wast for this that I in youth thee fed,
With marrow of the Beares and Lions fell?
That I through caves and deserts have thee led,
Where serpents of most ugly shape do dwell,
Where Tygers fierce and cruell Leopards bred,

And taught thee how their forces all to quell:
An Atis or Adonis for to be,
Unto Alcyna as I now thee see.

50

Was this foreshewd by those observed starres,
By figures and nativities oft cast,
By dreames, by oracles that never arres,
By those vaine arts I studide in time past,
That thou shouldst prove so rare a man in warres,
Whose famous deeds to endlesse praise should last?
Whose acts should honor be both farre and neare,
And not be matcht with such another peare.

51

Is this a meane or ready way you trow?
Which other worthy men have trod before,
A Caesar or a Scipio to grow,
And to increase in honor more and more?
But to the end a man may certaine know,
How thrall thou art unto Alcynas lore,
Thou wearest here her chaines and slavish bands,
With which she binds thy warlike armes and hands.

52

If thou regard not thine owne estimation,
To which the heavns ordaine thee if thou would,
Defraud not yet thine heires and generation,
Of which I have thee oftentime foretold,
Appointed by eterne predestination,
Except thou do their due from them withhold,
Out of thy loines and bowels to proceed
Such men whose match the world did never breed.

53

Let not so many a worthy soule and mind,
Framd by the wisdom of the heavnly King,
Be hindred of the bodies them assignd,
Whose ofspring chiefe must of thy issue spring:
Be not unto thine owne blood so unkind,
Of whose great triumphs all the world shall ring,
Whose successors, whose children and posterity,
Shall helpe our country to her old prosperity.

54

What good hath this great Queene unto thee done,
But many other queanes can do the same?

What certaine gaine is by her service wonne,
That soone doth fancie, sooner doth defame?
Wherefore to make thee know what thou hast done,
That of thy doings thou maist have some shame,
But weare this ring, and next time you repaire
To your Alcyna, marke if she be faire.

55

Rogero all abasht and mute did stand,
With silent tongue, and looke for shame downe cast,
The good enchantresse tooke him by the hand,
And on his finger straight the ring she plast,
But when this ring had made him understand
His owne estate, he was so sore agast,
He wisht himselfe halfe buride under ground,
Much rather then in such place once be found.

56

But she that saw her speech tooke good effect,
And that Rogero shamed of his sinne,
She doth her person and her name detect,
And as her selfe (not Atlant) doth beginne,
By counsell and advice him to direct,

To rid himselfe from this so dangerous ginne:
And gives him perfect notice and instruction,
How these deceits do bring men to destruction.

57

She shewd him plainly she was thither sent,
By Bradamant that lovd him in sinceritie,
Who to deliver him from bondage ment,
Of her that blinded him with false prosperity.
How she tooke Atlants person to thintent
Her countenance might carry more austeritie,
But finding now him home reducd againe,
She saith she will declare the matter plaine.

58

And unto him forthwith she doth impart,
How that faire dame that best deservd his love,
Did send that ring, and would have sent her hart,
If so her heart his good so farre might move,
The ring this vertue had, it could subvert
All magick frauds, and make them vaine to prove:
Rogero as I said, no time did linger,
But put the ring upon his little finger.

59

When truth appeared, Rogero hated more
Alcynas trumpries, and did them detest,
Then he was late enamored before,
(O happie ring that makes the bearer blest)
Now saw he that he could not see before,
How with deceits Alcyna had bene drest,
Her borrowd beauties, all appeared stained,
The painting gone, nothing but filth remained.

60

Evn as a child that taking from the tree
An apple ripe, and hides it in some place,
When he returns the same againe to see,
After a senight or a fortnights space,
Doth scant beleieve it should the same fruite be,
When rottennesse that ripenesse doth deface,
And where before delight in it he tooke,
Now scant he bides upon the same to looke.

61

Evn so Rogero plainly now descride,
Alcynas foule disgraces and enormitie,

Because of this his ring she could not hide,
By all her paintings any one deformitie:
He saw most plainly that in her did bide,
Unto her former beauties no conformity,
But lookes so ugly, that from East to West,
Was not a fouler old misshapen beast,

62

Her face was wan, a leane and writhled skin,
Her stature scant three horseloaves did exceed:
Her haire was gray of hue, and very thin,
Her teeth were gone, her gums servd in their steed,
No space was there between her nose and chin,
Her noisome breath contagion would breed,
In fine, of her it might have well bene said,
In Nestors youth she was a pretie maid.

63

I feare her arts are learned now a dayes,
To counterfait their haire and paint their skin,
But reasons ring their crafts and guiles bewrayes,
No wise men of their paintings passe a pin,
Those vertues that in women merit praise,

Are sober shewes without, chast thoughts within,
True faith and due obedience to their make,
And of their children honest care to take.

64

Now though Rogero (as before I sed)
Detested sore the ugly witches sight,
Yet by Melyssas counsell wisely led,
He doth conceale the matter for a night,
Till of provision he were better sped,
With which he might more safely take his flight,
And taking care his meaning close to hide,
He doth forthwith his armour all provide.

65

And tels Alcyna he would go and trie,
If that he were not waxen grosse or no,
Because that idle he so long did lie,
And never fought with any armed fo:
His sword unto his girdle he doth tie,
With armour on, a walking he doth go,
And with a scarfe about his arme he lapt
The shield that in the cypresse case was wrapt.

66

And thus arraid, he commeth to the stable,
And tooke a horse (as wise Melyssa taught)
A horse as blacke as any jeat or sable,
So made as if in waxe he had bene wrought,
Most swift for course, and strong of limbes and able,
This horse hight Rabican was thither brought
By Duke Astolfo, who by sorcerie
Was turned late into a mirtle tree.

67

As for the Griffeth horse that there was by,
Melyssa wisheth him to let him stand,
And sayth, that she her selfe ere long would trie,
To make him gentle to the spur and hand:
And that she would hereafter time espie,
To bring it him, and let him understand,
How he should do with very little paine,
To make him yeeld to spurre, to rod and raine.

68

She further said, his flight would be suspected,
Except he let the flying horse to stay,

Rogero none of all her words neglected,
But did her counsell wise and sage obey:
And so before his meaning was detected,
From this misshapen hag he stole away,
And meanes (if God will grant him so much grace)
To be at Logistillas in short space.

69

Such men of armes as watched at the gate
He slue, the rest he sodainly assailed,
Good was his hap that scapt with broken pate,
They tooke their heeles when as their hearts them failed.
Alcyna now had notice all too late,
Rogero was so farre it nought availed:
But in another booke shall be contained,
How him dame Logestilla entertained.

ARGUMENT

THE EIGHT BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Rogero fled: Melissa after staid,
Astolfo with some others to restore:
Renaldo musters souldiers sent for aid,
To Charles the great, who never needed more:
Angelica by drowsie hermit laid,
Is tane and bound all naked to the floore
Orlando is so troubled with his dreame,
He leaves the service of his King and reame.

EIGHT BOOKE

1

Oh strange enchantments used now adayes,
Oh charmers strange among us dayly found,
That find so many charms and subtle waies,
Wherewith they hold fond lovers hearts fast bound,
Not with conjured spirits that they raise,
Nor knowledge of the stars and skill profound,
But blinding mens conceits, and them fast tying,
With simulation, fraud, deceit and lying.

2

But he that had the rule and ring of reason,
Should soone their frauds, their crafts and guiles discover,
And finde a hoord of foule and lothsome treason,
To lurke within the shew of such a lover:
Well may they seeme most lovely for a season,
When all their wrinkles they with painting cover,
But unto men of wit and reason learned,
Their subtleties shall quickly be discerned.

3

Rogero (as I said) in secret sort,
With Rabican out of the castle went,
And made the watch and guard unpleasant sport,
That most of them his coming might repent:
Some had their armes, and some their heads cut short,
All put to flight, the gates in peeces rent.
And then unto the wood he entred, when
He met by chance one of Alcynas men.

4

This man did beare a faulcon on his fist,
With which he went on hauking day by day,
To flie in field, or river as he list,
The countrie full of game still yeelded pray,
He had a spaniell could not well be mist,
And eke a hauking nagge not very gay,
And meeting good Rogero halfe disguised,
That he was fled away he straight surmised.

5

The servant rideth on, and at their meeting,
He askt Rogero why he rode so fast,

Rogero gave him very slender greeting,
As though on such a squire he little past:
Well (quoth the faulkner) though thou now art fleeting,
I trust ere long to shew thee such a cast,
That with my dogge, my faulcon and my horse,
I do not doubt to fetch thee backe by force.

6

And first he lets the faulcon take her flight,
But Rabican as fast as she did flie,
Then from his horse the faulkner doth alight,
His horse flue like an arrow by and by.
Then went the dogge, who was of course so light,
As is the wind that bloweth in the skie:
And last of all himselfe ran with such shift,
It seemd the lightnings flame was not so swift.

7

Rogero thinketh it a foule disgrace,
That any man should thinke he fled for feare,
And more because he now was had in chase;
Wherefore he doth a while the flight forbear,
And manfully to them he turnes his face,

And seeing no man but the faulkner there,
And that no weapon in his hand he saw,
He much disdaind on him his sword to draw.

8

But straight the dog doth bite his horses heeles,
The hauke his head amazed with her wings.
When Rabycan such strange foes forces feeles,
He riseth up before, behinde he flings:
Rogero thought the world had run on wheeles,
And Balisarda out at once he brings,
But they, it seemd so well were seene in fence,
That all his blowes to them brought no offence.

9

Both loth to stay, resolved not to yeeld,
He takes his target from his saddle bow,
And with the dazling light of that same sheeld,
Whose force Melyssa lately made him know,
He made them fall as if their eyes were seeld,
So that no farther let from them did grow,
But having vanquisht them this wise with ease,
He now may ride at leasure where he please.

10

These foes once foild their forces overcome,
Alcyna straight had notice of his flight,
For of the watchmen one to her was come,
That while these things were done did stand in sight.
This made her stand like one halfe dead or dumme,
And after put her into such a fright,
That forthwith for avoiding further harme,
Through all the towne she made them crie alarme.

11

And calling oft her selfe a foolish beast,
Because Rogero so from her was slipt,
Sometime she beats her head, her face and breast,
Sometime in rage her garments all she ript:
She calleth all her men from most to least,
A part of whom unto the sea she shipt,
And of the rest she makes a mighty band,
To fetch Rogero backe againe by land.

12

All were so busie to this service bent,
That none remaind the pallace faire to gard,

Which greatly helpt Melyssas good intent,
Which chiefly was as you before have hard,
To set at large poore prisoners so long pent,
Which now to do (she absent) was not hard,
Dissolving all her circles and her knots,
And stroying all her figures and her lots.

13

And thus in fields, in houses, and in woods,
She set at large as many as she found,
That had beene turnd to trees, to stones and floods,
And in that state by magicke art fast bound:
Likewise to them she rendred all their goods,
Who when they saw themselves so cleare unbound,
Departing thence with all the hast they might,
To Logestilla they arrivd that night.

14

And first of all and chiefe of all the rest,
The English Duke came to himselfe againe,
Because Rogero lovd and wisht him best,
And lends the ring that makes inchantments vaine.
But good Melyssa could by no meanes rest,

Untill she could his armour eke regaine,
And that same famous worthie guilded launce,
That had to him such honor done in Fraunce.

15

With which Argalia got no little fame,
Who used oft the same in fight to beare.
Now when Melyssa to the castle came,
She found his other armour with the speare,
And this atcheevd, the sage and friendly dame
Mounts on the Griffith horse without all feare,
And Duke Astolfo mounting on his crupper,
To Logestillas came that night to supper.

16

Now was Rogero with no small ado,
Tiring himselfe amid those craggie wayes,
And striving all that he with paine may do,
To cut off all those lothsome long delayes,
That hindred him for sooner comming to
That Ladie faire whose vertues merit praise,
Till neare the Southerne sea with mickle paine,
He came unto a sandy desert plaine.

17

Here was he plagud with thirst and parching heat,
And with the sunne reflecting on the sand,
Which from the South upon the banke did beat,
Enflaming still the aire on either hand,
But leaving now Rogero in this sweat,
That still I may not in one matter stand.
To Scotland now I will returne againe,
And of Renaldo talke a word or twaine.

18

Great was his entertainment and his cheare,
Made by the King and people of the land,
Which feasts once done, the worthy valiant peare,
As was his charge, doth let them understand,
How Charles the great, whose state doth touch them neare
In no small need of their good aid did stand,
And how for this he sent him to their nation,
And to this tale he ads an exhortation.

19

Then was it answerd him without delay,
That for King Charls and for the Empires sake,

They all were ready to do all they may,
And would for this behoofe short order take,
And offred him to shew (if he would stay)
What store of horse and footmen he could make:
Namely the King himselfe would be right glad,
To go in person, but his age forbad.

20

Nor yet should age with him so much have done,
As make him from the battell to abide,
Save that he had a wife and valiant sonne,
Well able such a band of men to guide,
Whose value had already praises wonne,
And of his youth was now in floure and pride.
This noble toward impe he doth intend,
As captaine of his armed men to send.

21

Wherefore about his realme forthwith he sent,
To get of horses and of men good store,
With ships, and things to war most pertinent,
As needfull meate, and mony needfull more:
The while Renaldo into England went,

The King to Barwicke companie him bore,
And men report that when they should depart,
The King was seene to weepe for tender hart.

22

Renaldo went with faire and prosprous wind,
And past along upon the English coast,
Untill he hapt the noble Tems to find,
Of which all London justly make their boast:
Here he tooke land as first he had assignd,
And in twelve houres journey riding post,
Unto the Prince of Wales he was conducted,
Whom of these matters fully he instructed.

23

The Prince that was Vicegerent to the King,
(That Oton hight) who sojournd now in France,
From whom Renaldo did commission bring,
To take up horse, and men, and ordinance:
When he had once true knowledge of that thing,
Which of all other he would most advance:
He marshald men of armes without delay,
And points them meet at Callice by a day.

24

But here I must a while from hence digresse,
Lest to one tale my pen should still be bound,
As good musitians do their skill expresse,
By playing on the strings of divers sound:
While Renald here is cheard with great excesse,
(As ever in the English land is found)
I meane to tell how that faire Lady sped,
That twice before from this Renaldo fled.

25

I told you how Angelica the bright,
Fled from Renaldo in a thicke dark wood,
How on a Hermit there she hapt to light,
And how her sight revivd his aged blood:
But she that tooke in him but small delight,
Whose hoary haires could do her little good,
With this good Hermit made but little stay,
But turnd her horses rains and went away.

26

The Hermit seeing he contemned was,
(Whom age long since, and love did newly blind)

Doth spurre a thousand times his silly asse,
Who still remained more and more behind,
And sith he saw he could not bring to passe,
To stop her course (afflicted much in mind)
In vaine he doth his poore asse beate and curse,
His trot was very bad, his gallop worse.

27

And being out of hope of comming nire,
As having almost lost her horses tracke,
He studies now to compasse his desire,
With some rare stratageme to bring her back:
Unto that art forthwich he doth retire,
(That damned art that is surnamed blacke)
And by his bookes of magicke he doth make,
A little sprite the Lady overtake.

28

And as the hound that men the Tumbler name,
When he a hare or cony doth espie,
Doth seeme another way his course to frame,
As though he meant not to approch more nie,
But yet he meeteth at the last his game,

And shaketh it untill he make it die:
So doth the Hermit traverse all about,
At evry turne to find the damsell out.

29

What he intends to do, full well I wot,
And meane ere long the same to you to show,
The damsell travelld still that knew it not,
The spright to do his office was not slow,
For straight within the horse himselfe he got,
As she on sands of Gascoigne seas did go,
The spright that fully had possest the horse,
Did drive her to the sea with all his force.

30

Which when the faire and fearefull damsell saw,
Although she tride full oft with rod and raine,
Her palfrey from his dangerous course to draw,
Yet seeing plainly she did strive in vaine,
With colour changd for anguish and for aw,
And casting oft her looke to land againe,
At last she sitteth still, nor further striveth,
For needs they must go whom the divell driveth.

31

In vaine it was to strike the horse her bare,
It was not done by that poore palfreis falt,
Wherefore she tucks her garments, taking care
Lest they should be bedewd with waters salt,
Upon her haire, which then all loose she ware,
The aire doth make an amorous assalt,
The greater winds were still, I thinke of duty,
That they acknowledge to so rare a beauty.

32

The waters more, the land still lesse she sees,
At last she saw but one small peece of land,
And that small peece in small time she doth leese,
Now sees she neither shore nor any sand.
Then cold despaire all lively hope did freese,
When as her horse did turne to the right hand,
And at the twilight, or not long before,
Did bring her to a solitary shore.

33

Here she remaining helplesse and alone,
Among the fruitlesse trees and senslesse rocks,

Standing her selfe all like the marble stone,
Save that sometime she tare her golden locks,
At last her eyes to teares, her tongue to mone,
She doth resolve, her faire soft breast she knocks,
And blames the God of heavn and power divine
That did the fates unto her fall incline.

34

O fortune, fortune (thus the damsell cride)
Fill now thy rage and execute thine ire,
And take this life that takest all beside,
And let my death accomplish thy desire:
I have and daily do thy force abide,
Feare still my mind, travell my limbs doth tire,
And makes me think in this great storme and strife,
That death were sweet to shorten such a life.

35

Can all thy malice do me further spite?
Can any state be worse or more unsteady?
That am from princely scepter banisht quite,
A helplesse hap and hurt past all remedy,
And worse then this, mine honor shining bright

Is stained sore, and evn defast alreedy,
For though in act no ill I ever wrought,
Yet wandring thus will make men think me nought.

36

What can a woman hold of any price,
If once she leese her honor and good name?
Alas I hate this beautie and despise,
And wish it never had bene of such fame:
Ne do I for this gift now thanke the skies,
By which my spoile and utter ruine came,
Which causd my brother Argal shed his blood,
Ne could his armes enchanted do him good.

37

For this the King of Tartar Agricane,
Sought of my father Galafron the spoile,
Who whilome was in India cald great Cane,
And after dide with sorrow of the foile.
For this I dayly doubting to be tane,
From place to place do passe with endlesse toile,
And now to loose alas what hast thou left me,
Since fame, and goods, and friends are all bereft me?

38

If drowning in the sea were not a death
Severe enough to quench thy raging spite,
Then send some beast out of this desert heath,
To teare my limbs and to devoure me quite:
I shall thee thanke for stopping of my breath,
If to torment me thou have no delight,
These wofull words utterd the Ladie bright,
When straight the hermit came within her sight.

39

Who all the while had in a corner stood,
And heard her make this piteous plaint and mone,
Proceeding from her sad and mourning mood,
Enough to move a heart as hard as stone:
It did the senex fornicator good,
To thinke that he was there with her alone,
Yet so devoutly commeth this old carrion,
As though it had bene Paul or Saint Hillarion.

40

When as the damsell saw a man appeare,
In such a desert solitary place,

She straight began to be of better cheare,
Though feare and dread appeare still in her face:
And with a voice so loud as he might heare,
She praid him pitie this her wofull case,
Recounting all her dangers overblowne,
To him to whom they were already knowne.

41

No sooner had the hermit heard her out,
But straight to comfort her he doth begin,
And shewes by many reasons and devout,
How all these plagues were sent her for her sin:
The while he puts his sawcie hands about,
Sometime her breasts, sometime her neck and chin,
And more and more still gathering heart of grace,
He offers boldly her for to embrace.

42

But she that much disdaind this homely fashion,
Doth staine her cheekes with red for very shame,
Thrust back his carren corpes without compassion,
Reviling him with many a spitefull name,
Who testy with old age and with new passion,

That did him now with wrath and love inflame,
Drawes out a bottle of a strange confection,
That sleepe procureth by a strong infection.

43

With this he sprinkleth both the damsels eies,
(Those eyes whence Cupid oft his arrowes shet)
Straight sound asleepe the goodly damsell lies,
Subjected to the will of such a sot:
Ne yet for ought he did or could devise,
He could procure his curtall stir a jot,
Yet oft he kist her lips, her cheekes, her brest,
And felt and saw the beauties of the rest.

44

The dullerd jade still hangeth downe his head,
Sturring or spurring could not make him prounce,
The sundrier wayes he said, the worse he sped,
His youthfull dayes were done, he could not daunce,
His strength was gone, his courage all was dead,
His weapon looked like a broken launce:
And while himselfe in vaine he thus doth cumber,
He falleth downe by her into a slumber.

45

But now another evill chance befell,
(For one ill turne alone is seldome done)
The which to thend I may the better tell,
Know this, about the setting of the sunne,
There is an Ile, Ebuda as men tell,
Whose habitants are welnigh all undone,
By meanes that mightie Proteus thither sent
An Orke that doth the people teare and rent.

46

Within this Ile, as auncient stories tell,
(I not affirme how false they are or true)
Sometime a King of mightie powre did dwell,
That had a daughter passing faire of hue,
The which faire Ladie Proteus likt so well,
When her on sands in walking he did vew,
That though he dwelt in waters salt and cold,
Yet fresh hot love on him had taken hold.

47

Which heate when all the sea could not asswage,
He thought her milkwarm flesh could only quench,

And (for he saw she was of lawfull age)
With her consent he forst the princely wench:
Which sinne did set her father in such rage,
That straight condemning her in open bench:
Her of her life he publikely bereaved,
Nor spard the infant in her wombe conceived.

48

This cruell act her lover so inflamed,
On King and Iland he doth wreake his spite,
He sends that monster that before I named,
With other beasts to stroy the Iland quite:
These monsters hurt their men, beat, kild and lamed,
In fine put all the people in such fright,
That to escape the beast devoid of pitie,
They left their fields, and fled unto their citie.

49

And though men armd the gates and wals defend,
Yet they within scant thought themselves secure,
And sith their harmes have neither ease nor end,
And tird these tedious travels to endure,
Unto Apollos oracle they send,

To know how they their safetie might procure,
Who after humble sute and sacrifice,
Answerd them of Ebuda in this wise.

50

Blood guiltlesse spilt did breed great Proteus ire,
Inflamd with love, and fed with beauty rare,
Blood guiltlesse must be spilt to quench this fire,
Till one be found may with the first compare:
This you must do and if you peace desire,
To take of damsels those that fairest are,
And offer one a day upon the shore,
Till he find one like unto that before.

51

This wofull answer breeding much despaire,
And more dislike within their carefull hearts,
To thinke that evry day a damsell faire,
Must for a prey be givn without desarts:
This is the cause that maketh them repaire,
(To find sufficient store) to sundry parts,
And get them Virgins faire and undefloured
Of this most ugly Orke to be devoured.

52

Now if this be of Proteus true or not,
I meane not in defence of it to stand,
But this is certaine so, full well I wot,
Men use this cruell custome in that land,
And day by day a maid is drawne by lot,
And left for prey upon the rocke or sand,
Unto the monster that doth them devoure,
Evn in their prime of youth and tender floure.

53

O wretched wights, whom subtle snares have brought
To this unfortunate and fatall Ile,
Where damsels faire and handsome out are sought,
To serve for food unto a monster vile:
Their pyrats bring them home, their vessels fraught
With such they take by force, or trap with wile,
With which they fill their prisons and their towres,
To have them ready at appointed hours.

54

Thus sending out their vessels day by day,
It chanced that one of them with tempest tost,

Hapt to arrive whereas the Hermit lay
With that faire Lady hard upon the cost:
Oh cruell chance, oh precious peerlesse pray,
Among the pirats either to be lost,
Or to be caried to the fatall Ile,
To be devoured of a monster vile.

55

That beauty rare that Sacrapant ay deemed
More deare then living, liberty or life:
That beauty rare that to Orlando seemed
Most fit of all the world to be his wife:
That beauty rare in India so esteemed,
That bred so many a blow and bloody strife,
Is now so quite of aid and comfort reft,
Not one to speake a word for her is left.

56

The damsell faire drownd in a deadly sleepe,
Was tane and bound before she could awake,
Also the drowsie Fryer, to make him keepe
Her company, away with them they take:
This done, they lanchd out into the deepe,

And with this precious prey they homeward make,
Where in a Castle they detaine her thrall,
Untill to dy her lucklesse lot should fall.

57

Yet such great force her passing beauty had,
Among these barbarous and savage wights,
That they appeared sorrowfull and sad,
To wey the danger of her dolefull plights,
It seemed all of them would have beene glad,
To have preservd her many dayes and nights:
But such small store of others there remained,
At last to offer her they were constrained.

58

Who can the woes, the teares, the plaints rehearse,
The lamentations & the mourning sound,
That seemd the heavens themselves with noise to pearce,
To rend the rocks, and stir the stedy ground?
Her ivry corps conveyd (as in a hearse)
By wailing wights, where they must leave it bound:
The thought hereof in me such pang doth breed,
I can no further in this tale proceed.

59

Wherefore I must some other matter find,
Untill my Muse her sorrow may assuage,
For sure no cruell beast were so unkind,
Nor Tyger in their greatest wrath and rage,
Nor any cruell tyrant can we find,
(Although there are good store in evry age)
That could behold or thinke without compassion,
A Lady bounden in so vile a fashion.

60

Oh had Orlando notice of her smart,
Who was to Paris gone to seeke her out,
Or those two Knights whom late the fiend did part,
The which for love of her together fought,
They would for her use all paine, care and art,
Of death nor danger they would put no doubt:
But if they helpe not now, it is no wonder,
Sith they and she were placd so far asunder.

61

Now in this time to Paris siege was layd,
By famous Agramant Trajanos sonne,

Of which at last they grew so sore afraid,
The towne had almost of the Turks beene wonne,
Had not their vowes procurd them heavnly ayd,
They had bin ruind all and quite undone,
The force of France had welnigh then bin foyled,
The holy Empire had almost bin spoyled.

62

For when that now the City was on fire,
And when all hope of humane helpe was past,
Then mighty God forgetting wrath and ire,
Upon their teares, repentance true and fast,
At Charles his humble prayer and desire,
With helpe from heavn releevd them at the last,
And sent such raine to aide the noble Prince,
As seld was seene before, and never since.

63

Now lay Orlando on his restlesse bed,
And thinks with sleepe to rest his troubled sprite,
But still a thousand thoughts possest his head,
Troubling his mind, and sleepe expelling quite:
As circles in a water cleare are spread,

When sun doth shine by day, and moone by night
Succeeding one another in a ranke,
Till all by one and one do touch the banke.

64

So when his mistris entred in his thought,
(As lightly she was never thence away)
The thought of her in him such circles wrought,
As kept him waking ever night and day,
To thinke how he from India had her brought,
And that she should thus on the sodaine stray,
Nor that he could of her true notice know,
Since Charles at Burdels had the overthrow.

65

The grieffe hereof did him most neerely tuch,
And causd him often to himselfe to say,
What beast would have been overruld so much?
That when I might have made her with me stay,
(For why her love and zeale to me was such,
That in her life she never said me nay)
Yet I must suffer Namus for to guard her,
As though my selfe but little did regard her.

66

I should to Charles my selfe have rather scused,
And as I did, have kept the damsell still,
Or if excuses all had bin refused,
I might in stead of reason pleaded will:
And rather then have bin so much abused,
All those that should resist me slay and kill,
At least I might have got her safer keeping,
And not have let her thus be lost with sleeping.

67

Where bidest thou, where wanderst thou my deare?
So yong, so lovely, and so faire of hew?
Even like a lambe when starres do first appeare,
(Her dame and shepheard being out of vew)
Bleateth aloud to make the shepheard heare,
And in her kind her evill hap doth rew,
Untill the wolfe doth find her to her paine,
The silly shepheard seeking her in vaine.

68

Where is my love, my joy, my lifes delight?
Wanderst thou still? do not the wolves offend thee?

Or needst not thou the service of thy Knight?
And keepest thou the flowre did so commend thee?
That flowre that me may make a happy wight,
That flowre for which I ever did defend thee,
That I forbare, to please thy mind (too chast)
Is not that flowre (alas) now gone and past?

69

O most unfortunate and wretched I,
If they have tane that sweet and precious floure,
What can I do in such a case but dy?
Yea I would kill my selfe this present houre,
I would this world and that to come defy,
Earth first my coarse, and Hell my soule devoure,
And this unto himselfe Orlando said,
With care and sorrowes being overlaid.

70

Now was the time when man and bird and beast,
Gives to his traveld body due repose,
When some on beds, and some on boords do rest,
Sleepe making them forget both friends and foes.
But cares do thee Orlando so molest,

That scarce thou canst thine eyes a little close,
And yet that fugitive and little slumber,
With dreames unpleasant thee doth vex and cumber.

71

He dreamt that standing by a pleasant greene,
Upon a bank with fragrant flowers all painted,
He saw the fairest sight that erst was seene,
I meane that face with which he was acquainted,
And those two stars that Cupid sits between
Whence came that shaft whose head his heart hath tainted,
The sight whereof did breed in him that pleasure,
That he preferd before all worldly treasure.

72

He thought himselfe the fortunatest wight
That ever was, and eke the blessedst lover:
But lo a storme destroyd the flowers quite,
And all the pleasant banke with haile did cover:
Then suddenly departed his delight,
Which he remaind all hopelesse to recover;
She being of this tempest so afraid,
That in the wood to save herselfe she straid.

73

And there (unhappy wretch) against his will,
He lost his Lady in unlucky howre:
But her to find againe he traveld still,
Employing to her safety all his powre,
The woods and deserts he with plaints doth fill,
And cride, alas turnd is my sweet to sowre:
And while these same and such like words he said,
He thought he heard her voice demaunding aid.

74

At this same voice (well knowne) a while he staid,
Then followd as the sound him guided most
With this mischance his mind was much dismaid,
His body sore with toile and travell tost:
When straight he heard another voice, that said,
Now hope no more, for all thy hope is lost.
And of the sodaine waking with the sound,
His eies all full of watry teares he found.

75

So sore he was affrighted at this vision,
That evn as though it had been so indeed,

And not a fancy vaine or apparition,
Thinking his lady stood of him in need:
In secret sort he getteth all provision,
To make repaire unto her aid with speed:
And (for he would not willingly be knowne)
He tooke nor man nor armour of his owne.

76

His coate of armes, of colour white and red,
He left behind for doubt of ill successe,
That if it fortund he but evill speed,
At least the losse and foile should be the lesse:
Upon his armour cypresse blacke he spred,
With colour sad, his sorrow to expresse.
And thus disguisd in sad and mourning hue,
He parts, and biddeth not his friends adue.

77

Not of King Charles, whose kinsman he is neare,
Nor taketh he his leave of Brandimart,
Nor yet to kinsman kind, or freind most deare,
Doth he his meaning open or impart:
Nor untill day did all abrode appeare,

Was Charles advised that he did depart,
But in great rage and choler when he knew it,
He sware and vowd Orlando sore should rue it.

78

At which good Brandimart was greatly greeved,
As one that deemd it was without desart,
And (that his frend by him might be releevd)
To find him out from thence he straight doth part,
For by his words, he certainly beleevd,
That he could ease his friend Orlandos smart,
But this to Fiordeledge he not imparted,
For feare that she his purpose would have thwarted.

79

This Fiordeledge of him was dearely loved,
A Lady of great beauty and cleare fame,
Of parents good, of manners unreproved,
Both wealthy, wise and modest to the same,
Yet taketh he no leave of his beloved,
But early in the morning from her came,
To turne that night was his determination,
But was deceived of his expectation.

80

And when she waited had a month or more,
Expecting his returne, and all in vaine,
For love of him she was inflamd so sore,
Alone she goes to find him out againe,
And many sorry haps she bid therefore,
As in the story shall be shewed plaine,
For of Orlando now I have to say,
That is of more importance then both thay.

81

Who having changd the armes he late did weare.
Directly to the City gate he went,
And told the Sentnell, softly in his eare,
What was his name, and what was his intent:
Who straight abast the bridge, without all feare,
(Suposing sure his uncle had him sent:)
And straight upon the Pagan campe he lighted,
As in the booke ensuing is recited.

ARGUMENT

THE NINTH BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Orlando hastes his journey when he hears,
What costly food Proteus his Orke allowes,
But by the way movd with Olimpias tears,
That did lament her late captived spouse,
His hasty journey he a while forbears,
To wreake her wrong upon her foe he vowes,
Which done no longer in the place he tarries:
Byreno false the faire Olimpia marries.

NINTHBOOKE

1

Alas what dammage cannot Cupid bring,
A noble heart once thralld to his lore?
That makes Orlando careles of his King,
To whom of late most faithfull love he bore.
Who earst so grave and wise in every thing,
And of the Church a Champion was before,
Now that in loves blind pathes he learns to plod,
Forgets himselfe, his country and his God.

2

Faine would I him disburden of this blame,
Glad in my faults a fellow such to finde,
For to my good I feele me dull and lame,
But prompt to ill, and swifter then the wind:
He not bethinking him how great a shame,
It was to leave his helplesse friends behind,
Went where the Kings of Affricke and of Spaine,
Did ly in field encampt with all their traine.

3

Yet not encampt I can them call, for why
They lay abroad dispersed with the raine,
Some twenty, ten, or eight together lie,
Or sixe, or five, or foure, or three, or twaine:
Some farther off, and some are lodged nie,
All weary with their former taken paine:
He might have killd of them a worthy crew,
Ne yet his Durindana once he drew.

4

The cause was this, so noble was his minde,
To murther men asleepe he thought it base,
He lets them rest, and seekes his love to finde,
By evry person, and in evry place,
And those he meets, with words and speches kind,
(Describing her apparell and her face)
He praies of all good fellowship to shoe,
Or where she is, or whither she did goe.

5

When light approcht and day began to breake,
By day he seekes her in the host of Turkes,

His passions strong do make his reason weake,
Yeeld to the fit that in his fancy workes.
Some helpe it was, he could their language speake,
By which the safer he among them lurkes:
His words, his weeds, so like to theirs were seene,
As though he bred in Tripoly had beene.

6

But when he saw his staying was for nought,
At three daies end away from thence he flang,
He left no towne of France and Spaine unsought,
Ne yet this paine could ought asswage that pang:
Him Autumne first this wandring humor brought,
When frutes do fade, his fruitlesse love first sprang,
And lasted still his force and rage renewing,
Both all the spring and summer next ensuing.

7

Now having traveld as his custome was,
From realme to realme, he came upon a day,
Where as the river cleare sometimes as glasse,
That twixt the Britans and the Normans lay,
Was growne so high as now he could not passe,

The snow and raine had borne so great a sway,
By force whereof the bridge was overthrowne,
The passage stopt, the foords were overflowne.

8

And looking round about the shore at large,
Devising how to passe to thother side,
He saw a little way from thence a barge,
That seemed toward him the course to guide,
Of which a certaine damsell had the charge,
To whom with voice aloud Orlando cride,
Intreating her because his hast was great,
Within the barge him to affoord a seat.

9

The maid affirmd no price the barge could hire,
And to command it he had no commission,
But promist she would grant him his desire,
Upon a certaine covnant and condition;
Which was to undertake by sword and fire,
For to destroy an Ile, without remission,
A cruell Ile, Ebuda cald by name,
The wickedst place where ever creature came.

10

For know (quoth she) beyond the Irish land,
There lyes among the rest this gracelesse Ile,
That yeerely sends of wicked wights a band,
To rob, to spoile, to fraud and to beguile:
All women kind that happen in their hand,
They give for food unto a monster vile,
A monster vile that useth every day,
To have a maid or woman for his pray.

11

Of merchants and of pyrates that do come,
They get them store, and of the fairest most:
Now guesse by one a day how great a somme,
Of women kind within this Ile are lost.
If then of love you ever tasted cromme,
Make one within the King of Irelands host,
That make them ready shortly to proceed,
To take a faire revenge of this foule deed.

12

No sooner had Orlando heard her out,
But vowd to be as forward as the first,

To joyne himselfe with that same worthy rout,
And now (for love doth ever cast the worst)
Within himselfe begins to cast this doubt,
Least that this wicked monster and accurst,
Had got his Lady for a dainty bit,
Because he heard no newes of her as yet.

13

And this conceit his minde so much possest,
And in his heart made such a deepe impression,
(For both in nature he did still detest
All such as unto others do oppression)
And much he feard his love among the rest,
Might fall into the monsters vile possession,
That straight he shipt, and by their due account,
Within three daies he past S. Michels mount.

14

But having passed now the milke white sand,
Of which the Ile of Albion takes his name,
The wind that in the South before did stand,
With so great fury to the Northwest came,
In vaine it was against the same to stand,

And therefore to retire it was no shame,
Backe in one night the tempest drave them more
Then they had saild three daies and nights before.

15

For when they saw it was no boote to strive,
Against the fury of so feirce a winde,
They went even as the weather did them drive
Untill the streame of Antwerpe they did finde,
Where they to land with safety did arrive:
There loe, an aged man with yeeres halfe blinde,
Who deemd Orlando of that crew the chiefe
To this effect utterd to him his griefe.

16

How that a certaine Dame of noble blood,
Of vertue very great, of beauty rare,
Of sober cheare and of behaviour good,
(Though now opprest with misery and care)
Requested him, except his hast withstood,
That she to him a matter might declare,
In which to aske his wise advise she ment,
To which Orlando quickly did consent.

17

The Ladies pallace stood within the land,
To which the Earle conducted was with speed,
Where at the entry did the Lady stand,
In mourning shew, and sorrowfull indeed,
Who brought Orlando sadly by the hand,
Into a chamber hangd with mournfull weed,
First him by her to sit she doth beseech,
And then in ruefull sort she usd this speech.

18

First (worthy Knight) I would you understood,
I was the Earle of Hollands daughter deare,
Who was to me so tender and so good,
That though my brothers both were him as neare,
Yet my desire in nothing he withstood,
Nor spake the word that I was loth to heare:
Thus whiles in state most steddy I did stand,
A certaine Duke arrived in this land.

19

The Duke of Zeland, and his arrant was,
To Bisky there against the Moores to fight,

His age and beauty that did others passe,
Moovd me that had not tasted loves delight,
Nor armd against his darts with steele or brasse,
To yeeld my selfe his prisner without fight,
Beleeving then as still I do and shall,
That he to me doth carry love not small.

20

For while the windes contrary here him stay,
Though naught for his, yet exclent for my drift,
What time me seemd each weeke was but a day,
The pleasant houres did slide away so swift,
We kept ourselves together day by day,
Till at the last we made us so good shift,
That ere we parted we had so procured,
Each was to other man and wife assured.

21

Byreno was from hence but newly gone,
(So is my deare beloved husbands name)
But that a great Ambassador anon
Directly from the King of Friseland came,
To treat a certaine marriage upon

With other of that nation of good fame,
That to my Sire from Holland did repaire,
That I might marry with his son and heire.

22

But I in whom faith tooke so deepe a roote,
I could not change my new made choice, and tho
I would, to strive with love it was no boote,
That wounded me so lately with his bow,
To stop the motions newly set on foote,
Before they might to farther matter grow:
I would not go, I flatly told my father,
That I to dye a thousand deaths had rather.

23

My loving sire that chiefest care did take,
That all he did might me his daughter please,
Agreeing to my will, and for my sake,
My griefe so new conceived to appease,
Straightway the motion of this marriage brake,
Which did so sore the Friseland King displease,
He made sharpe warres on Holland in short space,
By force whereof he ruind all my race.

24

For first he is of limbes and body strong,
To meete his enemies in open field,
And then so politicke in doing wrong,
He makes their force unto his fraud to yeeld:
He hath his other weapons strange among,
A weapon strange, before this seene but seeld,
A trunke of iron hollow made within,
And there he puts powder and pellet in.

25

All closed save a little hole behind,
Whereat no sooner taken is the flame,
The bullet flies with such a furious wind,
As though from clouds a bolt of thunder came.
And whatsoever in the way it find,
It burnes, it breakes, it teares and spoiles the same,
No doubt some fiend of hell or divellish wight,
Devised it to do mankind a spite.

26

And thus with this device and many other,
In open field our battels twice he brake,

And first in fight he slue mine elder brother,
(The bullet through his curat way did make)
And next in flight he tooke and kild the tother,
Which causd my fathers aged heart to quake,
Who notwithstanding stoutly did intend,
His honor and my safety to defend.

27

But in a hold, that onely now was left him,
They him besiegd that all the rest had wonne,
And by sharpe battell all the rest had reft him,
Where to a loup one leveld so a gunne,
The blow thereof of life and sense bereft him,
So swift it came as none the same may shun.
A weapon vile, wherewith a foolish boy
May worthy Captaines mischief and annoy.

28

Thus was my father and my brothers slaine,
Before this furious King his warre would cease,
And I sole heire of Holland did remaine,
Which made his former fancy more increase:
He thinks by match with me my land to gaine,

And offerd to my people rest and peace,
If I Arbante marry would his sonne,
Which I before refused to have done.

29

And I (as well for hatred I did beare,
Most just to him and all his generation,
By whom my sire and brothers killed were
By whom was spoild and robbed all our nation,
As that to breake my promise I did feare,
Which I Byreno made with protestation,
That howsoever fortunes wheele should turne,
Yet none should marry me till his returne)

30

Made answer this, that if for every ill
I now abide I should have thousands more,
Though they my corpes with cruell torments kill,
I would not breake my promise given before.
My countrymen perswade me change this will,
First praying me, then threatning me full sore,
Except I do, to yeeld me and my land
(Desired prey) into mine enemies hand.

31

But finding still their threats and prayers vaine,
And still that in my former mind I staid,
Me and my country by a privy traine,
Unto the King of Friseland they berraid;
Who thinking now with flattry me to gaine,
First bid me not to feare or be dismaid,
Then offred free to give me lands and life,
If I would be his sonne Arbantes wife.

32

Then I that see my selfe inforced so,
Although I meant that death should set me free,
Yet loth as unrevenged hence to go,
On those that had so greatly injurd me:
Did muse on many meanes to helpe my wo,
At last I thought dissembling best to be,
Wherefore I fained that I was relented,
And that to have his son I was contented.

33

Among some servants that my father had,
Two brethren strong and hardy I did chuse,

Most apt to do what ever I them bad,
And for my sake no danger to refuse,
For each of them was brought up of a lad
Within our house, I did their service use
In warre and peace, and found their faiths as great
As were their hearts to any hardy feat.

34

To these two men I open made my mind,
They promist me their service and their aid,
One into Flanders went a barke to find,
The other with my selfe in Holland staid:
Now was our day for marriage assignd,
When flying newes the strangers made afraid,
With many sailes Byreno was reported,
Into these parts newly to have resorted.

35

For when the first conflict and broile was fought,
Wherein my brother cruelly was slaine,
I straight by letters with Byreno wrought,
To make all speed to succour us from Spaine.
But while provision for each thing was sought,

The Friseland King gate all that did remaine,
Byreno hearing not what late was past,
Conducts his navy hither in great hast.

36

The Friseland King that heard of his repaire,
Doth leave the marriage for his eldest sonne,
And to the sea he goes with navy faire,
They meet, they fight the King of Friseland wonne,
And to expell all comfort with despaire,
Byreno prisner tane, I quite undone,
Abrode Byreno captive like was carried,
At whom unto his enmy I was married.

37

But when he thought in armes me to embrace,
And have that due that wives their husbands ow,
My servant standing in a secret place,
Which I to him did for this purpose show,
Affoords him to his sport but little space,
And with a Pollax strake him such a blow,
That staggring straight, and making little strife,
He left his love, his living and his life.

38

And thus this youth borne in unhappy houre,
Came to his death as he deserved well,
In spite of all his sire Cymoscus powre,
Whose tyranny all others did excell:
Whose sword my sire and brothers did devoure,
And from my native soile did me expell,
And meant to enter upon all my lands,
While I by marriage should be in their hands.

39

But when we once performed had this deed,
And taken things of greatest price away,
Before that any noyse or tumult breed,
Out of the window we devisd a way:
And packing thence with all expedient speed,
We came to sea before the breake of day,
Whereas my servant waited with a barge,
As he before receivd of me in charge.

40

I know not if Cymosco tooke more grieffe,
Or wrath or rancor kindled in his mind,

To see his son that lay past all reliefe,
To find nothing of value left behind,
Then when his pride and glory should be chiefe,
Then when to make a triumph be assignd,
And hoping all were at a wedding glad,
He finds them all as at a buriall sad.

41

His hate of me and pittie of his sonne,
Torment him night and day with endlesse grieffe:
But sith by teares no good the dead is done,
And sharpe revenge asswageth malice cheefe,
From dolefull teares to rage he straight doth runne,
And seeks of all his sorrow this releese,
To get me in his hands with subtile traines,
Then me to kill with torments and with paines.

42

Those of my friends or servants he could find,
Or that to me did any way retaine,
He all destroyd, and left not one behind,
Som hangd, som burnd, & som with torment slaine,
To kill Byreno once he had assignd,

Of purpose onely to procure my paine,
But that he thought his life would be a net,
The sooner me into his hands to get.

43

Wherefore he set a hard, and cruell law,
Except Byrena could in twelve months space,
Find meanes by fraud or forces me to draw,
To yeeld my selfe a prisner in his place,
(Such Princes are that have of God no aw)
Then dy he should without all hope of grace:
So that to save his life, my death alone
Must be the meanes, for other can be none.

44

All that by paine or cost procure I could,
With diligence I have already done,
Sixe Castles faire in Flanders I have sold,
The mony spent, and yet no profit wonne,
I sought to bribe those that him kept in hold,
But they my craft with greater craft did shunne:
I also movd our neighbours neere and farre,
English and Dutch on him to make sharp warre.

45

But those I sent when they long time had staid,
I thinke they would not, or they could not speed:
They brought me many words, but little aid,
My store decreast, but greater grew my need,
And now (the thought whereof makes me afraid)
That time drawes ny, when neither force nor meed,
As soone as full expired is the yeere,
From cruell death can safe preserve my deare.

46

For him my father and his sonnes were slaine,
For him my state and living all is lost,
For him those little goods that did remaine,
I have consumd to my great care and cost,
For him with hearts disease and bodies paine,
With troublous waves of fortune I am tost,
Now last of all I must lay down my life,
To save my spouse from blow of bloody knife.

47

And finding that my fortune is so bad,
I must to save his life lay downe mine owne,

To leese mine owne I shall be faine and glad,
Where sorrow springs of seeds that love had sowne:
This onely feare and doubt doth make me sad,
Because I know not how it may be knowne,
If I shall sure release Byrenos bands,
By yeelding me into the tyrants hands.

48

I feare when he hath shut me in this cage,
If all the torments I shall then endure,
His fury to Byreno may asswage,
Whose liberty I study to procure:
I rather feare least following his rage,
When he shall find he hath us both so sure,
He will not care his oath and vow to breake,
Upon us both at once his wrath to wreake.

49

Behold the cause why I did long so sore
To speake with you, demaunding your advice,
As I have oft of others done before,
Yet found I none so handy nor so wise,
That would assure his freedome to restore,

Whose love doth me to hate my selfe intice,
The cause no doubt is this, they stand in feare
Of those his guns, whose force no steele can beare.

50

But if your vertue do not disagree,
With this your comely shape and manly show,
Let me request you sir to go with me,
Where I my selfe in prison shall bestow,
And promise me to set Byreno free,
If so the tyrant from his promise go.
For I shall die with great content and joy,
If by my death Byreno scape annoy.

51

Her dolefull tale the damsell here did end,
Which oft was interrupted with her teares:
Orlando loving not the time to spend
In idle talke, all answers long forbears,
But in his mind he fully doth intend
To foile her foes and rid her of her feares,
He briefly said, that she should him commaund,
To do much more then she did him demaund.

52

He meanes not tho that she her selfe should yeeld
Unto the cruell tyrant as a pledge,
Except his sword (that failed him but seeld)
Had on the sodaine lost his force and edge,
He meanes (like common birders in the field)
To catch the birds and never hurt the hedge,
And thus resolv'd to do this worthy deed,
From Flanders now by sea they go with speed.

53

The skilfull Pilot doth the vessell steare,
Sometime on thone, sometime on thother side,
The Iles of Zeland some before appeare,
And some behind as fast themselves do hide,
And straight to Holland they approched neare,
Orlando went to land, but bids her bide:
His meaning is that she shall understand,
The tyrants death before she come on land.

54

Himselfe forthwith was mounted on a steed,
A darke browne bay, with white starre in his face,

Both large and strongly limbd (like Flemish breed)
But not so full of life nor swift of pace,
Yet good enough to serve him at his need,
When as his Briliador was not in place:
And thus he came to Dordreck, where he found
With men of armes the gates environd round.

55

The wayes, the wals, with armd men watched were,
For tyrants still are most of such condition,
(And chiefly new) that ay they stand in feare,
And further now some newes had bred suspition,
How that an armie great approched neare,
Well stord with men, and stuffed with munition,
The which they said Byrenos cosin brought,
By force his kinsmans freedome to have wrought.

56

Orlando wils a watchman carry word
Unto their King, how that a wandring Knight
Desires to prove his force with speare and sword,
Whom if the King could overcome in fight,
Then he should have the Ladie by accord,

That slue Arbante on his wedding night:
For he had taken her into protection,
And could deliver her to his subjection.

57

But craved eke the King should bounden be,
By promise firme (if he were overcome)
To set his prisner (cald Byreno) free,
And of his message this was all the summe;
And this was told unto the King, but he
That of true vertue never tasted crumme,
Bent all his will and wit against all reason,
To falshood foule, to false deceit and treason.

58

He makes account if he this Knight can stay,
The which to do he meanes great meanes to make,
That then the Ladie quickly get he may,
And make him yeeld her for his safetie sake,
He sendeth thirtie men a privie way,
Him to inclose about and prisner take,
Who fetching compasse to avoid suspition,
At last arrived where they had commission.

59

In this meane time with words he foded out,
The worthy Earle, untill he saw his men,
According as he bad them come about,
Enclosing all the way behind, and then
Out of the gates he rusheth with a rout,
Of men on horse and foot of three times ten,
As hunters do inclose the beasts in woods,
Or fishers do inclose the fish in floods.

60

So doth the King Cymosco care and strive,
To stop the wayes with all foresight and heed,
And meaneth sure to have him tane alive,
And thinks the same is such an easie deed,
That of those guns with which he did deprive
So many lives, he thinks there is no need,
For such a weapon serveth very ill,
Where he did meane to take and not to kill.

61

As cunning fowlers do the birds reserve,
That first they take in hope of greater pray,

And makes them for a bait and stale to serve,
To take the rest by sport and pretie play,
So meanes the King alive him to preserve,
But unto this Orlandos force said nay:
He meanes not to be handled in that sort,
But breakes the nets and marreth all the sport.

62

The noble Earle with couched speare in hand,
Doth ride where as he finds the thickest prease,
Two, three and foure, that in this way did stand,
The speare doth pierce, nor at the fift doth cease,
It past the sixt the brodenesse of a hand,
Nor that same handbredth maketh any peace,
The seventh so great a blow therewith he strake,
That downe he fell and never after spake.

63

Evn as a boy that shoots abroad for sport,
And finds some frogs that in a ditch have bred,
Doth pricke them with an arrow in such sort,
One after one untill such store be dead,
As that for more his shaft may seeme too short,

From fethers fild already to the head,
So with his speare Orlando him besturd,
And that once left, he draweth out his sword.

64

That sword that never yet was drawne in vaine,
Against whose edge doth armour little boote,
At evry thrust or blow he gave was slaine,
A man on horse, or else a man on foote.
The edge whereof with crimson still doth staine,
And where it lights it pierceth to the roote.
The Friseland King repents him now too late,
That he for hast his guns behind forgate.

65

With voice aloud, and many a boistrous thret,
He bids them bring his gun, but none doth heare,
Who once within the gate his foot can get,
Hee dare not once peepe out againe for feare:
But when he saw none by his word did set,
And that almost they all departed were,
He thought it best to save himselfe by flight,
From so great force of this same furious Knight.

66

He back retires, ne drawes the bridge for hast,
Because Orlando now approacht so nie,
And had not then his horse him speeded fast,
As though he did not runne but rather flie,
Orlando would have made him sore agast,
Who caring not to make the poore sort die,
Past by the rest and kept the King in chase,
That savd himselfe by his good horses pace,

67

But yet ere long, againe he doth returne,
And brings with him his iron cane and fire,
Wherwith he doth beate down, and bruse and burne
All those whom he to mischief doth desire:
He hopes this weapon well shall serve his turne,
Yet for all this he meanes to come no nire,
But like a hunter privily doth watch,
Where he the heedlesse beast may safest catch.

68

The King with this his engine lyth in wait,
A weapon tearing trees and rending rocks,

Whose force no fence can ward with any sleight,
It gives so sound and unexpected knocks:
Thus having laine a little at receipt,
And watcht his vantage like a crafty foxe,
When once the Earle within his reach he spide,
He setteth fire unto his peeces side.

69

Straight like a lampe of lightning out it flies,
And sendeth forth withall so great a sound,
As seemd to shake the everlasting skies,
And to remove the unremoved ground,
The shot gainst which no armour can suffice,
But breaketh all that in the way is found,
Doth whiz, and sing, and kindles as it went,
Yet did not that effect the tyrant ment.

70

For whether twere his overhasty speed,
And too great will to hurt did make him swerve,
Or whether feare possest him in the deed,
That not to guide his hand his heart could serve,
Or whether God of mercy meere and meed,

Was pleasd his champion longer to preserve:
It onely strake the horse with so great paine,
That downe he fell and never rose againe.

71

The horse and horseman downe together fell,
Downe lay the horse, up quickly rose the Knight,
And on his feet was straight recoverd well,
More earnestly bent then before to fight,
And as the stories of Antheus tell,
In whom each fall increased more his might:
So though Orlando with his fall was troubled,
His force and fury seemed to be doubled.

72

But when the King of Friseland plainly saw,
How this bold Knight grew fiercer then before,
He thought it best by flight himselfe withdraw,
His fainting heart with feare was pierst so sore:
Aside he turnes the horses foming jaw,
Now full resolvd to prove his force no more,
Orlando with such speed doth him pursue,
As doth an arrow from a bow of Yue.

73

And what he could not riding erst atchieve,
He doth the same and more upon his feet,
And runs so swift as few men would believe,
Except themselves had present bin to see it,
Untill at last so hard he him did drive,
He overtooke him in a narrow street,
And with his sword he cleft his head in twaine,
The senslesse corpes doth on the ground remaine.

74

Now as Orlando did this feate contrive,
There grew new broiles from thence a little distance,
For then Byrenos cosin did arrive,
With men on horse and foot for his assistance,
And finding none that durst against him strive,
He entred had the gates without resistance,
So late a feare was in the people bred,
That none of them durst come to make a hed.

75

The silly Burgers knew not what to say,
Nor who these were, nor what was their desire,

Untill the Zelanders themselves bewray,
Both by their speech and manner of attire:
Then made they peace, & promist them straightway,
To do what ere the captaine should require,
Against the men of Friseland them to aid,
Who yet in prison still Byreno staid.

76

For why, that people alwaies had in hate,
The King of Friseland and his men of warre,
Their Dukes late death, and altring their estate,
Had movd their minds, but that that all did marre,
Was overtaxing them in such a rate,
As alwaies breeds a great dislike and jarre.
Orlando twixt these men made such conclusion,
As turnd unto the Friseland mens confusion.

77

For straight to ground they threw the prison gate,
They fetch the prisners out without a kay,
Byreno to the Earle is not ungrate,
With thanks a part of his due debt to pay:
And then they go to shew Byrenos state,

To faire Olympia that at anchor lay,
For so they call the Lady chast and faire,
That of that Country was undoubted haire.

78

She that was thither by Orlando brought,
Without all hope of any such successe,
Who lately (silly creature) onely sought,
Her death might bring her lover from distresse:
Now was her safety and Byrenos wrought,
When she supposd and lookt for nothing lesse:
The joy cannot with many words be told,
Wherewith the tone the tother did behold.

79

The people do the damsell faire restore,
Unto the state that unto her was due:
But she that vovd her selfe for evermore,
To be unto Byreno lover true,
Persisting now as faithfull as before,
Nor fearing any harme that might ensue,
Doth grant to him for love and meere affection
Of her and her estate the full protection.

80

Byreno leaves his cosin in his place,
To guide that Country with sufficient gard,
His loving wife in Zeland he will place,
That done, with forces march to Friseland ward:
And hopes to conquer it in little space,
If that his fortune were not over hard,
And that which most assur'd him of this thing,
He had in hold the daughter of their King.

81

Whom he did meane to marry (as men say)
Unto a younger brother of his name:
Orlando shipt himselfe that present day,
Byreno with him to his shipping came,
And offerd him a large part of the pray,
Because his valeour cheefly won the same,
Who nothing tooke but that same engin rare,
Which we before to lightning did compare.

82

Ne took he this away because he ment,
To prove the force therof upon his foe,

Or use the same when he to battell went,
His courage would not suffer him do so:
To hurle away the same was his intent,
Where it mankind might never damage moe:
He lets nor powder nor the shot remaine,
Nor ought that did unto the same pertaine.

83

And when that now the shelves and shallow shore,
Some twenty leagues or there about was left,
No land discerned behind nor yet before,
Upon the right hand or upon the left,
Because (said he) hereafter never more,
May any Knight of life and limb be reft
By thee, or coward vaunt him with the stout,
Lye there alow untill I fetch thee out.

84

O curst device found out by some foule fend,
And framd below by Belzebub in hell,
Who by thy meane did purpose and intend,
To ruine all that on the earth do dwell,
From whence thou camst, I thither thee do send:

(This said) the peece unto the bottom fell:
Orlando maketh all the speed he may,
Himselfe unto Ebuda to convey.

85

I say the noble Earle in hast him hide,
Unto that cruell Ile to find that wight,
Whom he more lov'd then all the world beside,
On whom his thoughts were running day and night
Nor would he by the way one whit abide,
Lest of new stay might new occasion light,
And cause him when he had his purpose mist,
To cry with late repentance, had I wist.

86

His course he meanes of neither side to bend,
Nor South nor North, such hast he meanes to make,
But goes as that blind archer doth him send,
That deepe with dart of golden head him strake.
And here a while to leave him I intend,
Returning to the match of which I spake:
For you may thinke I lost it in the carriage,
If you should heare no more newes of the marriage.

Great feasts were made in Holland, and great sport,
Because of this new match and copulation;
But greater shall in Zeland by report,
For which there was great care and preparation:
Yet would I not you thither should resort,
Except you knew Byrenos inclination,
For chaunces fell that spoiled all the cheare,
As in the book ensuing you shall heare.

ARGUMENT

THE TENTH BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Wicked Byreno falls in love of new,
And in an Ile hie kind Olympia leaves:
Rogerio bids Alcynas realme adew,
But Logestilla gently him receaves:
She shewes him how to rule the horse that flew:
He flying in the aire, from thence perceaves
Renaldos musters: after which he found
Angelica unto the rocke fast bound.

TENTHBOOKE

1

Among the mirrors rare of loyall love,
That present are, or have bin in time past,
Whose faith no force of fortune could remove
With fauning cheare, nor yet with frowning blast:
Olympia faire all others farre above,
By just desert requireth to be plast:
Whose stedfast love (to say I dare be bold)
Doth passe the paterns of the new or old.

2

How could she signes more evident impart,
Unto Byreno of her loving mind?
No, though she should have open laid her hart,
Yet could she not have provd her selfe more kind:
And if such love and duty, by desart
May looke of due like love again to find,
Her faith requires unto Byreno showne,
That he should seeke her safety as his owne.

3

Nor onely not to leave her in annoy,
Or her reject for any other dame,
No not for her that bred the bane of Troy,
Or any other of more worthy name,
But her preferre before all worldly joy,
Before his sences five, before his fame,
Or any other thing of greater price,
To be exprest by word or by device.

4

Now if Byreno did her well requite,
If that he shewd to her the like good will,
If he regarded as he ought of right,
To bend unto her liking all his skill,
Nay if forgetting all her merits quite,
Ungrate, unkind, he sought her life to spill:
Behold I shall a tale to you recite,
Would make a man his lip for anger bite.

5

And when that I shall have declared plaine,
His cruelty, her loves unkind reward,

I thinke you Ladies never will againe
Beleeve mens words, your hearts will wax so hard;
For lovers loved Ladies loves to gaine,
Do promise, vow and sweare without regard,
That God doth see and know their falshood still,
And can and shall revenge it at his will.

6

Their othes but words, their words are all but wind,
Utterd in hast, and with like hast forgotten,
With which their faiths they do as firmly bind,
As bundels are trust up with cords all rotten:
Coynesse is naught, but worse to be too kind,
Men care not for the good that soone is gotten:
But women of their wits may justly bost,
That are made wiser by an others cost.

7

Wherefore I wish you lovely dames beware,
These beardlesse youths, whose faces shine so neate,
Whose fancies soone like strawe fire kindled are,
And sooner quencht amid their flaming heate:
The hunter chaseth still the flying hare,

By hill, by dale, with labour and with sweate,
But when at last the wished prey is taken,
They seeke new game, the old is quite forsaken.

8

Even so these youths, the while you say them nay,
In humble sort they seeke, they sue, they serve,
They like, they love, they honor, and obey,
They wait, they watch your favours to deserve:
A part they plaine, in presence of they pray,
For love of you they mourne, they pine and starve:
But having got that erst they sought so sore,
They turne their sailes unto another shore.

9

Though this be true, I not perswade you tho,
To leave to love, for that were open wrong,
To cause you like a vine undrest to grow,
Uncared for the briers and thornes among:
But least on youths you should your selves bestow,
That never in one fancy tarry long:
The meane is best, young fruits the stomach gripe,
The elder cloy when they be over ripe.

10

I shewd you in the tale I told you last,
How that Byreno had Cymoscus daughter,
To marry whom a motion late was past,
Because his brother lovd and greatly sought her,
But his owne mouth was of too lickrish tast,
To leave so sweet a morsell, having caught her:
He thought it were a point of foolish kindnesse,
To part withall, a peece of so rare finenesse.

11

The damsell little passed fourteene yeare,
Most tender, sweet and lovely, fresh and faire,
As when the budding rose doth first appeare,
When sunny beames in May make temperate aire,
Byreno likes her face, her sober cheare,
And usd to her to make so oft repaire,
That evn as Brimstone quickly taketh flame,
So love tooke him to his perpetuall shame.

12

The streame of teares that for her sire she shed,
A flaming fornace bred within his brest,

The plaints she made, and dolefull words she sed,
Doth breed his hope of getting his request,
Thus foule desires with hopes as foule are fed,
As water hote from boiling straight doth rest,
When liquor cold is powred in the pot,
So with new love his old was quite forgot.

13

From flow to ebbe thus turned was the tide,
His late belovd Olympia lothsome grew,
To looke on her his heart could scant abide,
His thoughts were all so setled on the new,
Yet still the time might serve he thinks to hide,
His filthy hate with faire and painted hew,
And though in fancy he did her detest,
Yet still great kindnesse he in shew profest.

14

And if he shewd the other signes of love,
(Although such love was worse then any hate)
Yet none there was herein did him reprove,
But tooke his meaning in another rate,
They thought som good remorse his mind did move,

In gracious sort to pity her estate,
And that to her he charitably ment,
Because she was so yong and innocent.

15

O mighty God, haw much are men mistane?
How oft with fained shewes they are deceived?
Byrenos wicked meaning and prophane,
For good and godly was of men received:
The marriners their oares in hand had tane,
And from the shore the ship was quickly heaved,
To Zeland ward the Duke with all his traine,
With helpe of oares and sailes doth passe amaine.

16

Now had they lost the sight of Holland shore,
And marcht with gentle gale in comely ranke,
And (for the wind was westerly) they bore
To come within the lue of Scottish banke,
When as a sodain tempest rose so sore,
The force thereof their ships had well nie sanke,
Three dayes they bare it out, the fourth at night
A barren Iland hapned in their sight.

17

Here faire Olympia from her ship to sand,
From sands she passeth to the higher ground,
Byreno kindly led her by the hand,
(Although his heart another harbour found)
They sup in their pavillion pitcht on land,
Environd with a tent about them round:
The supper done, to bed do go they twaine,
The rest unto their ships returne againe.

18

The travell great she lately did endure,
And had three dayes before her waking kept,
And being now upon the shore secure,
(Now glad of that for which ere long she wept)
And taking her amid his armes secure,
All this did cause that she the sounder slept,
(Ah silly soule) when she was least afraid,
Of her false husband thus to be betraid.

19

The trecherous Byreno, whom deceit
And thought of leud intent doth waking keepe,

Now having time for which he long did wait,
Supposing faire Olympia sound asleepe,
Unto his ships he hies with short retrait,
And makes them all lanch forth into the deepe:
And thus with wicked practise and unjust,
He her forsooke that chiefly him did trust.

20

Now were the sailes well charged with the wind,
And beare him lighter then the wind away,
The poore Olympia now was left behind,
Who never waked till that breake of day,
To lightsomnesse had changd the darknesse blind,
And sunny beames had drivn the mist away,
She stretcht her armes betwixt asleep and wake,
And thinks Byreno in her armes to take.

21

She findeth none, and drawing back againe,
Again she reacht them out, but findeth none,
Her leg likewise she reached out in vaine,
In vaine, for he for whom she feeles is gone,
Feare sleep expels, her eies she opens plaine,

Nor yet she heares, she sees, nor feeles not one,
With which amazd, the clothes away she cast,
And to the shore she runneth in great hast.

22

With heart dismaid, and seeing her before
Her fatall hap, unto the sea she hies,
She smote her brest, her haire she rent and tore,
Now looking (for all lightsome were the skies)
If ought she could discerne, but even the shore,
But even the shore, no other thing she spies:
Then once or twice she cald Byrenos name,
Then once or twice the caves resound the same.

23

And boldly then she mounted on the rocks.
All rough and steepe, such courage sorrow brought,
Her wofull words might move the stones and stocks,
But when she saw, or at the least she thought,
She saw the ships, her guiltlesse brest she knocks,
By signes and cries to bring them backe she sought,
But signes and cries but little now availes,
That wind bare them away that fild their sailes.

24

What meanest thou (thus poore Olympia spake)
So cruelly without me to depart?
Bend back thy course, and cease such speed to make,
Thy vessel of her lading lackes a part:
It little is the carkas poore to take,
Since that it doth already beare the hart:
Thus having by the shore ende long in vaine,
Unto the tent she backe returnes againe.

25

And lying groveling on her restlesse bed,
Moistning the same with water of her eies,
Sith two on thee did couch last night (she sed)
Why did not two from thee together rise?
Accurst the wombe that false Byreno bred,
Accurst the day that first I saw the skies.
What shall I do? what can I here alone,
Or who (wo me) can mitigate my mone?

26

I see no man, nor any signe I see,
That any man within this Ile doth dwell:

I see no ship that hence may carry me,
With (at the least) some hope of being well:
I here shall starve, it cannot other be,
And buried how to be I cannot tell;
Ah how if wolves that wander in this wood,
Devoure my flesh, or drinke my guiltlesse blood?

27

Alas I doubt, and stand evn now in feare,
Lest that some ravnous wolfe that here abides,
Some Lion, Tyger, or some ugly Beare,
With teeth and clawes shall pierce my tender sides,
Yet what beast could with greater torment teare,
Then thou more fierce then any beast besides?
For they contented are but once to kill,
But thou my life a thousand times dost spill.

28

But presuppose some vessell here arrive,
And take me from this place for pittie sake,
And so perchance I may be left alive,
The Beares nor Lions never shall me take,
Yet will it be in vaine for me to strive,

Againe to Holland my repaire to make:
Thou keepst by force the place where I was borne,
Whence by deceit thou broughts me (false forsworn)

29

Thou tookst from me my living, by pretence
And colour of thy friendship and alliance,
Thy men of armes were paid by my expence,
I gave thee all, such was my fond affiance:
Or shall I turne to Flanders? sith from thence
I sold my selfe, and am at flat defiance
With all the nation, whom to set thee free
I quite forsooke, that now ah wo is me?

30

Is there for me in Friseland any place?
Where I refusd for thee to be a Queene,
The which refusall ruind all my race,
As by the sequell was too plainly seene?
O cruell hap, o strange and monstrous case,
The righteous God judge thee and me betweene.
Was ever Tyger carried heart so hard,
For so firme love to pay so foule reward?

31

But what and if some pyrat wanting feare
Of God and man, shall take me as a slave?
Thou God forbid, let Tyger, Wolfe and Beare,
First carry me a prey into their cave,
And there my flesh in peeces all to teare,
That dying, I my chastitie may save.
This said, her raging griefe her hands addresses,
To offer force unto her golden tresses.

32

And even as Hecuba fell raging mad,
With griefe of mind and sorrow sore oppressed,
To see her Polydorus little lad
By kinsmans fraud and crueltie distressed:
So ravid Olympia faire, as though she had
With twentie thousand divels bene possessed:
At last she sitteth on the rocks alone,
And seemes as senslesse as the senslesse stone.

33

And in this state I meane to let her stay,
Till of Rogero I have talkt a while,

Who traveld in the hot and sandy way,
Full many weary and unpleasant mile:
And now it was the middle of the day,
When as upon the South side of the Ile,
He saw three Ladies neere a little towre,
Did sport themselves within a pleasant bowre.

34

These Ladies faire were of Alcynas crew,
And there refresht themselves a little space,
They had great store of wines both old and new,
And sundry kind of junkets in like case:
A prety barke there lay within their vew,
That did attend their pleasures in the place,
And wait when any little gale should blow,
(For now was none) that they might homeward go.

35

Then one of these that had espide the Knight,
At such a time, and in such way to ride,
With courteous speech invites him to alight:
The second brings him wine on thother side,
And makes him farre more thirstie with the sight,

But these enticements could not cause him bide,
He feares Alcyna prisner so might take him,
If by this stay she hapt to overtake him.

36

Even as salt peeter mixt with brimstone pure,
Inflameth straight when once it feeles the fire,
Or as the sea with winds and aire obscure,
Doth worke and swell, and ever riseth hier;
So they that saw their words could not allure,
His noble mind to follow their desier,
Tooke high disdaine that they were so contemned,
And him of great discourtesie condemned.

37

And straight the third as in a raging mood
Said thus, O creature void of all gentilitie,
And borne (no doubt) of base unworthy blood,
And bred where never used was civilitie,
Ay during life fro thee depart all good,
Nor maist thou die in quiet and tranquillitie,
But burned maist thou be, or cut in quarters,
Or driven to hang thy selfe in thine owne garters.

38

With these and many bitter speeches mo,
They raile on him, and then they take their barke,
And coast along upon the Southerne shore,
That they his passage and his course might marke.
But he that now was gotten farre before,
Did little to their threats or curses harke:
And notwithstanding all that they contrived,
Yet to his ship in safetie he arrived.

39

The Pilot doth Rogero much commend,
That from Alcyna so himselfe did save,
And as a wise and well experiencd frend,
Sound counsel and good precepts him he gave,
And wisht that he his time would better spend,
And leave fond toyes, embracing wisdoms grave,
And from the good the evill to discerne,
As Logestilla used men to learne.

40

There is the food that fills and never cloyeth,
There is the love, the beauty and the grace,

That maketh him most blest that them enjoyeth,
To which compar'd, all other joyes are base:
There hope, nor feare, nor care the mind annoyeth,
Respect of persons, nor regard of place:
The mind still finding perfit contentation,
That rests it selfe in vertuous contemplation.

41

There are (said he) some better lessons taught,
Then dancings, dallyings, or daintie diet,
There shal you learne to frame your mind & thought
From will to wit, to temperance from riet:
There is the path by which you may be brought
Into the perfect paradise of quiet.
This tale the Pilot to Rogero told,
And all the while their course they forward hold.

42

But lo, they see a navie under saile,
Of ships that toward them in hast did bend,
Alcyna wrathfull striving tooth and naile,
Doth thinke to fetch againe her fleeting frend:
But all her diligence could not availe,

Rogero to returne doth not intend,
And of her forces he was not afraid,
Because that Logestilla sent him aid.

43

For straight a watchman standing in a towre,
So high that all the hils and shore was under,
Did ring the larum bell that present houre,
He saw her fleet, though distant farre asunder:
And when that now approched was their powre,
With cannon shot they made them such a thunder,
That though Alcyna threatned much and braved,
Yet was Rogero from her malice saved.

44

Then at his first arrivall to the shore,
Foure damsels met him sent by Logestilla,
Andronica that wisely sees before,
And Fronesis the just, and chast Drusilla,
And she that boldly fights for vertues lore,
Descending from the Romane race Camilla:
And straight rusht out of men a worthy band,
Ay prest to meet their foes on sea and land.

45

Within a large and very quiet bay,
A navie was of vessels big and tall,
That readie at an howers warning lay,
To go to fight at any little call.
And now there was begun a great affray,
By land and sea the conflict was not small,
Which did the realme in hurly burly set,
Alcyna late did from her sister get.

46

This strange to see of wars the strange successe,
She that of late was counted of such might,
Is now so drivn in danger and distresse,
That scant she could preserve her selfe by flight.
Rogeros parting brought her griefe no lesse,
Then did the foile, which both bred such despite,
And such despaire, to die she had intended,
(If so she might) to have her torments ended.

47

And as her selfe the dame of Carthage kild,
When as the Troyan Duke did her forsake:

Or as her blood the Queene of AEgypt spild,
For that so famous Romane captaines sake:
Even so Alcyna with like sorrowes fild,
Wisht of her selfe with like death end to make,
But (either auncient folke beleevd a lie,
Or this is true) a fairy cannot die.

48

But leave we now Alcyna in this paine,
That from her elder sister fled apace,
And to Rogero let us turne againe,
That was conducted to a better place,
Where finding now that he did safe remaine,
He thanked God that gave him so much grace,
To see his foes of forces all deprived,
Himselfe within the castle safe arrived.

49

And such a castle that in stately show
And costly substance others all surmounted,
The value of the wals can no man know,
Except he first upon the same had mounted:
Men have not jewels of such price below,

For Dimonds are to these but drosse accounted,
And Pearles but pelfe, and Rubies all are rotten,
Where stones of such rare vertue can be gotten.

50

These wals are built of stones of so great price,
All other unto these come farre behind:
In these men see the vertue and the vice,
That cleaveth to the inward foule and mind.
Who looks in such a glasse, may grow so wise,
As neither flattering praises shall him blind
With tickling words nor undeserved blame,
With forged faults shall worke him any shame.

51

From hence doth come the everlasting light,
That may with Phoebus beames so cleare compare,
That when the Sunne is downe there is no night,
With those that of these jewels stored are:
These gems do teach us to discern aright,
These gems are wrought with workmanship so rare,
That hard it were to make true estimation,
Which is more worth the substance or the fashion.

52

On arches raisd of prophiry passing hie,
So hie that to ascend them seemd a paine,
Were gardens faire and pleasant to the eie,
Few found so faire below upon a plaine:
Sweet smelling trees in order standing by,
With fountaines watring them in steed of raine,
Which do the same so naturally nourish,
As all the yeare both flowres and fruites do flourish.

53

No weeds or fruitlesse trees are in this place,
But herbs whose vertues are of highest price,
As soveraigne sage, and thrift, and herbe of grace,
And time, which well bestowed maketh wise,
And lowly patience, proud thoughts to abase,
And hearts ease, that can never grow with vice.
These are the herbs that in this garden grew,
Whose vertues do their beauties still renew.

54

The Ladie of the castle greatly joyed,
To see the safe arrivall of this Knight,

And all her care and travell she employed,
That honor might be done him in her sight.
Astolfo (in his passage lesse annoyed)
Doth take in his acquaintance great delight,
And all the other his good favour sought,
That by Melyssa to themselves were brought.

55

Now having all themselves some dayes reposed
In Logestillas house, and taken rest,
And finding all themselves right well disposed,
To make returne againe into the West,
The good Melyssa for them all proposed,
Unto the mighty Ladie this request,
That by her leave without incurring blame,
They might returne them all from whence they came.

56

To whom dame Logestilla thus replide,
That after they a day or two had staid,
She would for them most carefully provide,
For all their journey furniture and aid:
And first she taught Rogero how to ride

The flying horse (of whom he was afraide)
To make him pace or passe a full careere,
As readily as other horses here.

57

When all was ready now for him to part,
Rogerio bids this worthy dame farewell,
Whom all his life time after from his hart
He highly honored and loved well.
First I will shew how well he playd his part,
Then of the English Duke I meane to tell,
How in more time, and with far greater paine,
He did returne to Charles his court againe.

58

Rogero mounted on the winged steed,
Which he had learnd obedient now to make,
Doth deeme it were a brave and noble deed,
About the world his voyage home to take.
Forthwith beginneth Eastward to proceed,
And though the thing were much to undertake,
Yet hope of praise makes men no travell shunne,
To say another day, we this have done.

59

And leaving first the Indian river Tana,
He guides his journey to the great Catay,
From thence he passeth unto Mangiana,
And came within the sight of huge Quinsay:
Upon the right hand leaving Sericana,
And turning from the Scythians away,
Where Asia from Europa first doth draw,
Pomeria, Russia, Prutina he saw.

60

His horse that hath the use of wings and feet,
Did helpe with greater haste home to retire,
And tho with speed to turne he thought it meet,
Because his Bradamant did so desire,
Yet having now of travell felt the sweet,
(Most sweet to those to knowledge that aspire)
When Germany and Hungry he had past,
He meanes to visit England at the last.

61

Where in a medow on a morning faire,
Fast by the Tems at London he did light,

Delighted with the water and the aire,
And that faire citie standing in his sight,
When straight he saw that souldiers did repaire,
To muster there, and asking of a Knight,
That in the medow he had met by chance,
He understood that they were bound for France.

62

These be the succors (thus the Knight him told)
Renaldo sude for at his comming hither,
With Irish men and Scots of courage bold,
To joyne in hearts and hands and purse together.
The musters tane and each mans name enrold,
Their onely stay is but for wind and wether,
But as they passe I meane to you to shew them,
Their names and armes, that you may better know them.

63

You see the standerd, that so great doth show,
That joynes the Leopard and the Flouredeluce,
That chiefest is, the rest do come below
And revrence this according to our use:
Duke Leonell Lord generall doth it ow,

A famous man in time of warre and truce,
And nephew deare unto the King my master,
Who gave to him the Dukedome of Lancaster.

64

This banner that stands next unto the Kings,
With glittering shew that shakes the rest among,
And beares in azure field three argent wings,
To Richard Earle of Warwicke doth belong,
This man the Duke of Glosters banner brings,
Actaeons head, except my guesse be wrong,
The fierbrand the Duke of Clarence is,
The tree the Duke of Yorke doth claime for his.

65

The launce into three sundry peeces rent,
Belongs unto the worthy Duke of Norfolke:
The lightning longs unto the Earle of Kent,
The Griphin longs unto the Earle of Pembroke:
The ballance evn by which just doome is ment,
Belongs unto the noble Duke of Suffolke.
The Dragon to the valiant Earle of Cumberland,
The garland is the brave Earls of Northumberland.

66

The Earle of Arundell a ship halfe drown'd,
The Marquesse Barkly gives an argent hill:
The gallant Earle of Essex hath the hound,
The bay tree Darby that doth flourish still:
The wheele hath Dorset ever running round,
The Earle of March his banner all doth fill
With Caedar trees: the Duke of Somerset
A broken chaire doth in his ensigne set.

67

The Faulcon hovering upon her nest,
The Earle of Devnshire doth in banner beare,
And brings a sturdy crew from out the West.
The Earle of Oxenford doth give the Beare:
The banner all with blacke and yellow drest,
Belongs unto the Earle of Winchester.
He that the cristall crosse in banner hath,
Is sent from the rich Bishop of the Bath.

68

The archers on horse, with other armed men,
Are two and fortie thousand more or lesse,

The other footmens number doubles them,
Or wants thereof but little as I guesse:
The banners shew their captains noble stem,
A crosse, a wreath, an azure bar, a fesse,
Geffray and Ermant, Edward bold and Harry,
Under their guide the footmen all do carry.

69

The Duke of Buckingham that first appeares,
The next to him the Earle of Salsbury:
Burgany next, a man well stricke in yeares,
And Edward next the Earle of Shrewsbury.
Now turne about, and lo the Scottish peares,
Brave men, and well appointed you shall see,
Where Zerbin sonne unto the Scottish King,
Unto the field doth thirtie thousand bring.

70

All chosen men from many a shire and towne,
All ready to resist, assaile, invade,
Their standerd is the beast of most renowne,
That in his paw doth hold a glittering blade,
This is the heire apparant to the crowne,

This is the goodly impe whom nature made,
To show her chiefest workmanship and skill,
And after brake the mould against her will.

71

The Earle of Otton commeth after him,
That in his banner beares the golden barre:
The spotted Leopard that looks so grim,
That is the ensigne of the Duke of Marre.
Not far from him there commeth Alcubrin,
A man of mighty strength and fierce in warre,
No Duke, nor Earle, nor Marquesse as men say,
But of the savages he beares the sway.

72

The Duke of Trafford beares in ensigne bright,
The bird whose yong ones stare in Phoebus face:
Lurcanio Lord of Angus, valiant Knight,
Doth give a Bull, whom two dogs hold in chase;
The Duke of Albanie gives blue and white,
(Since he obtained faire Geneuras grace)
Earle Bohune in his stately banner beares
A Vulture that with clawes a Dragon teares.

73

Their horsemen are with jacks for most part clad,
Their horses are both swift of course and strong,
They run on horseback with a slender gad,
And like a speare, but that it is more long:
Their people are of warre then peace more glad,
More apt to offer then to suffer wrong:
These are the succors out of Scotland sent,
That with the noble Prince Zerbino went.

74

Then come the Irish men of valiant harts,
And active limbs, in personages tall,
They naked use to go in many parts,
But with a mantle yet they cover all:
Short swords they use to carry and long darts,
To fight both neare and farre aloofe withall,
And of these bands the Lords and leaders are,
The noble Earles of Ormond and Kildare.

75

Some sixteene thousand men or thereabout,
Out of the Irish Ile at this time went,

Beside the other Ilands thereabout,
Sweveland and Island other succors sent;
To good King Charles, for why they stood in doubt,
If he were conquerd they should all repent,
And still their numbers daily did increase,
Of those that better like of warre then peace.

76

Now while Rogero learns the armes and name
Of every Britttish Lord, behold a rout
Of citizens and folke of all sorts came,
Some with delight, and some with dread and doubt,
To see a beast so strange, so strong, so tame,
And wondring much, they compast him about:
They thought it was a strange and monstrous thing,
To see a horse that had a Griffons wing.

77

Wherefore to make the people marvell more,
And as it were to sport himselfe and play,
He spurd his beast, who straight aloft did soare,
And bare his master Westward quite away:
And straight he was beyond our English shore,

And meanes to passe the Irish seas that day,
Saint George his channell in a little while,
He past, and after saw the Irish Ile.

78

Where men do tell strange tales, that long ago
Saint Patrick built a solitary cave,
Into the which they that devoutly go,
By purging of their sins their soules may save:
Now whether this report be true or no,
I not affirme, and yet I not deprave.
But crossing from hence to Island ward he found
Angelica unto the rock fast bound.

79

Both nakd and bound at this same Ile of wo,
For Ile of wo it may be justly called,
Where peerlesse peeces are abused so,
By monster vile to be devourd and thralld,
Where pyrats still by land and sea do go,
Assaulting forts that are but weakly walled:
And whom they take by flattery or by force,
They give a monster quite without remorse.

80

I did declare not many books before,
If you the same in memory do keepe,
How certaine pyrats tooke her at a shore,
Where that chast Hermit lay by her asleepe,
And how at last for want of other store,
Although their hearts did melt, and eies did weepe,
Moovd with a helplesse and a vaine compassion,
Perforce they bound her on this wofull fashion.

81

And thus the caitives left her all forlorne,
With nothing but the rocks and seas in sight,
As naked as of nature she was borne,
And void of succour, and all comfort quite.
No vaile of lawne as then by her was worne,
To shade the damask rose and lillies white,
Whose colours were so mixt in every member,
Like fragrant both in July and December.

82

Rogero at the first had surely thought,
She was some image made of alabaster,

Or of white marble curiously wrought,
To shew the skilfull hand of some great master.
But vewing neerer he was quickly taught,
She had some parts that were not made of plaster:
Both that her eies did shed such wofull teares,
And that the wind did wave her golden heares.

83

To see her bound to heare her mourne and plaine,
Not onely made that he his journey staid,
But causd that he from teares could scant abstaine,
Both love and pity so his heart assaile,
At last with words to mitigate her paine,
Thus much to her in loving sort he said,
O Lady worthy onely of those bands,
Wherewith love binds the hearts and not the hands.

84

And farre unfit for these or any such,
What wight was found so cruell and unkind,
To banish all humanity so much,
Those polisht Ivory hands in chaines to bind,
About that corps whom none can worthely tuch

With hurtfull hands, unworthy bands to wind?
This said, she blusht, seeing those parts were spide,
The which (though faire) yet nature strives to hide.

85

Faine would she with her hand have hid her eyes,
But that her hands were bound unto the stone,
Which made her oft to breake to wofull cries,
(Sole remedy where remedy is none)
At last with sobbing voice she doth devise
To tell the Knight the cause of all her mone:
But from the sea a sodaine noise was heard,
That this her speech and all the matter mard.

86

Behold there now appeared the monster great,
Halfe underneath and halfe above the wave,
As when a ship with wind and weather beat,
Doth hasten to the havn it selfe to save:
So doth the monster hast, in hope to eate
The dainty morsell he was wont to have:
Which sight so sore the damsell did appall,
Roger could not comfort her at all.

87

Yet with his speare in hand, though not in rest,
The ugly Orke upon the brow he strake,
(I call him Orke, because I know no beast,
Nor fish from whence comparison to take)
His head and teeth were like a bore, the rest
A masse, of which I know not what to make,
He gave him on the brow a mighty knocke,
But pierst no more then if it were a rocke.

88

And finding that his blow so small hurt brings,
He turnes again on fresh him to assay,
The Orke that saw the shadow of great wings,
Upon the water up and down to play,
With fury great and rage away he flings,
And on the shore doth leave the certaine pray,
The shadow vaine he up and downe doth chase,
The while Rogero layth him on apace.

89

Even as an Eagle that espies from hie,
Among the herbs a party colourd snake,

Or on a bank sunning her selfe to lie,
To cast the elder skin, a new to make,
Lies hovering warily till she may spie
A vantage sure the venomd worme to take,
Then takes him by the back, and beates her wings,
Mauger the poison of his forked stings.

90

So doth Rogero both with sword and speare,
The cruell monster warily assaile,
Not where he fenced is with grizly heare,
So hard as that no weapon could prevaile,
But sometime pricks him neere unto his eare,
Sometime his sides, sometimes his ugly taile:
But nature had with such strong fences armd him,
As all his blowes but small or nothing harmd him.

91

So have I seene ere this a silly flie,
With mastive dog in sommers heate to play,
Sometime to sting him in his nose or eie,
Sometime about his grizly jawes to stay,
And buzzing round about his eares to flie,

He snaps in vaine, for still she whips away,
And oft so long she dallies in this sort,
Till one snap comes and marreth all her sport.

92

But now Rogero doth this sleight devise,
Sith that by force he cannot make him yeeld,
He meanes to dazle both the monsters eyes,
By hidden force of his enchanted sheeld.
And being thus resolv'd to land he flies,
And from all harme the Lady faire to sheeld,
He puts the precious Ring upon her hand,
Whose vertue was enchantments to withstand.

93

That ring that worthy Bradamant him sent,
When she from false Brunello had it tane,
With which Melyssa into India went,
And wrought his freedome, and Alcynas bane,
That ring he lends the damsell, with intent
To save her eyes by vertue of the same,
Then takes he forth the shield, whose light so dazed
The lookers on, they fall down all amazed.

94

The monster now approaching to the shore,
Amazd at this, resistance none did make
Rogero hewes upon him more and more,
But his hard scales no harme thereby did take.
Oh sir (saith she) unloosen me before
Out of this maze the monster do awake,
And let your sword slay me this present houre,
So as this monster may not me devoure.

95

These wofull words movd so Rogeros mind,
That straight he did unloose the Lady faire,
And causd her by and by to get behind
Upon his horse, then mounting in the aire,
He leaves his Spanish journey first assignd,
And unto little Brittain doth repaire,
But by the way be sure he did not misse,
To give her many a sweet and friendly kisse.

96

And having found a solitary place,
A pleasant grove well waterd with a spring,

Which never herd nor herdman did deface,
Where Philomela used still to sing,
Here he alights, minding to stay a space,
And hither he the Lady faire did bring,
But sure it seemd he made his full account,
Ere long upon a better beast to mount.

97

His armour made him yet a while to bide,
Which forced stay a more desire did breed,
But now in him it was most truly tride,
Oft times the greater hast, the worse the speed,
He knits with hast two knots, while one untide.
But softtis best no furder to proceed,
I now cut off abruptly here my rime,
And keepe my tale unto another time.

ARGUMENT

THE ELEVENTH BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Angelica doth hide her selfe away,
By vertue of the Ring Rogero lent her:
Rogero sees a Gyant beare away
His spouse halfe dead, and greatly doth lament her:
Orlando at the Ile of woe doth stay,
Where many women meete but hard aduenter:
Here he the Monster kild, Olympia freed,
To marry whom Oberto soone agreed.

ELEVENTHBOOKE

1

The gallant courser in his full carriere,
Is made by man, to stop with slender raine:
But man himselfe his lust and fond desire,
Is seldome drawne by reason to refraine:
Tis hard to stop, but harder to retire,
When youthfull course ensueth pleasure vaine,
As Bears do breake the hives and weake defences,
When smell of hony commeth to their sences.

2

No marvell if Rogero could not hold,
But that he would now take a little sport,
That naked did Angelica behold,
Within a grove alone from all resort:
His love to Bradamant now waxeth cold,
Or at the least is temperd in such sort,
He meanes therewith at this time to dispence,
And not to let this go a maiden hence.

3

Whose beauty was so rare as well it might
Have made Zenocrates an Epicure,
No marvell then if this same gentle Knight,
Could not so great temptation well endure:
But while he hastend to his hopt delight,
Of which he thought him in possession sure,
There fell a strange and unexpected thing,
By meanes Angelica did know the ring.

4

This was the ring that she with her had brought
To France, the very first time she was there,
What time by aid thereof so well she wrought,
She holp her brother to thinchanted speare,
By vertue of this ring she set at nought
Those magike arts, that men so greatly feare:
With this Orlando County Palladine,
She did release from wicked Dragontine,

5

By helpe of this invisible she went,
Out of the towre where Atlant had her set:

For this same Ring Brunello false was sent
By Agramant, who longd the same to get.
To tell that story is not my intent,
For feare it might my other matter let,
But certaine tis, that when this Ring was lost,
In fortunes waves she had been ever tost.

6

Now when she saw this Ring was on her hand,
She was so strooke with marvell and with joy,
That scarce she could discerne and understand,
If she were wake or if she dreamd some toy;
But to make tryall how the case doth stand,
And know if she this treasure doth enjoy,
Into her mouth the Ring she doth convey,
And straight invisible she goeth away.

7

Rogero that each minute thought an howre,
(His armour off, and ready for the play)
Expecting now the damsell in a bowre,
Where he had pointed her for him to stay,
Found all too late, that by the Rings strange power,

She had unseene convoid her selfe away.
He lent it her to save her eyes from blindnesse,
And for reward she quits him with unkindnesse.

8

With which her act displeasd and ill apaid,
He curst himselfe, and chafed in his mind:
O cruell and unthankfull wench (he said)
Is this the love that I deservd to find?
Dost thou reward him thus that brought thee aid?
To thy preserver art thou so unkind?
Take ring and shield, and flying horse and me,
This onely barre me not thy face to see.

9

This said, he goth about where she had beene,
Still groping as the weather had bin darke,
Embracing of the aire his armes betweene,
In steed of her, then heedfull he doth harke,
To find her by the sound that was not seene,
And whence the same doth come he wel doth mark.
But on went she untill it was her lote
To come into a silly shepherds cote.

10

And though this fame were far from any towne,
Yet there she quickly did her selfe provide
Of meate and drinke, and of a simple gowne,
Sufficient for the time her bare to hide,
Not suting for a Ladie of renowne,
That had bin ever clad in pompe and pride,
Had gownes of crimson, purple and carnasion,
Of evry colour, and of evry fashion.

11

But yet no kind of weed so base or ill is,
Her of her princely beauty to bereave,
They that so much extoll faire Amarillis,
Or Galate, do but themselves deceave:
Cease Tyteras to praise thy golden Phillis,
Peace Melebe, this passes by your leave;
Ye souldiers all that serve in Cupids garrison,
May not presume with this to make comparison.

12

Now here the damsell faire a palfrey hired,
With other things most needfull for her way,

And meanes to her owne home to have retired,
From whence she had bin absent many a day.
The while Rogero now with travell tired,
Lamenting he had lost so faire a pray,
Doth seeke his horse who had not long bin idle,
But in his masters absence brake his bridle.

13

Which when he found, the raines in peeces torne,
The horse soard far away with mighty wing,
How could such haps with patientnesse be borne,
Of one great losse to find a greater spring?
He sitteth in a dumpe, like one forlorne,
For losse of her, his horse, and of his ring,
Whose vertue great did make him much repent it,
But yet much more her vertue that had sent it.

14

And in this rage he puts his armor on,
And on his shoulder carieth his shield,
Pursuing that first path he fights upon,
He found it brought him to a goodly field,
One side whereof when he a while had gone,

It seemd the wood adjoynd some sound did yeeld,
And still the neare and nearer that he goes,
The plainer sound he heard of sturdy bloes.

15

A combat twixt a Giant and a Knight,
He sees hard by most furiously begunne,
The Giant with a club doth think by might,
The battell of the tother to have wonne;
The tother with his sword and nimble fight,
His furious blowes with watchfull eye doth shunne,
Rogerio seeing this great inequalitye,
Yet standeth still and shewes no partialitie.

16

But in his mind he wisht the Knight to win,
When lo the Giant with new fury fed,
To lay on lode with both hands doth begin,
And with one blow he layes him downe for dead,
And straight in cruell sort he steppeth in,
For to disarm him, and cut off his head:
But when the Giant had the face disarmed,
Rogerio knew the partie he had harmed.

17

He saw it was his Bradamant most deare,
Whom this same Giant would have made to die,
Wherefore with courage stout he steppeth neare,
The Giant to new combat to defie,
Who either heares him not, or would not heare,
Or meaneth not a conflict new to trie,
But tooke her up, and on his shoulders layd her,
And so in hast away from thence convayd her.

18

So have I seene a wolfe to beare away
A lambe from shepheards fold, so have I seene
An Eagle on a silly Dove to pray,
And soare aloft the skie and earth betweene:
Rogerio hies him after as he may,
Untill he came unto a goodly greene,
But thother evry step so much out stept him,
That in his view Rogerio scantly kept him.

19

But now a while of him I speake no more,
And to Orlando I returne againe,

Who having lost the sight of Holland shore,
Did hasten to Ebuda with much paine:
I did declare not many books before,
How he Cymoscos engin strange did gaine,
And to the bottome of the sea did throw it,
That none might find it out againe or know it.

20

And though his meaning and intent was so,
Yet vaine it was, as after was perceived,
For why, that serpent vile our auncient fo,
That Eva first in Paradise deceived,
Not much above two hundred yeares ago,
(As we from our forefathers have received)
From out the sea by necromancie brought it,
And then in Almanie afresh they wrought it.

21

They wrought it both in iron and in brasse,
The cunning and the art increasing still,
As oft by prooffe we find it comes to passe,
The worse the worke, the greater growes the skill,
And to each kind a name assignd there was,

According to the first inventers will,
To tell the names of all were but a trouble,
Some demicanons, some are called double.

22

The Culverings to shoot a bullet farre,
The Falcon, Saker, Minion and the Sling,
Not armed men, but walled townes to marre,
Such divllish force is in this hellish thing.
Ye souldiers brave, and valiant men of warre,
Now cease to field your manly darts to bring,
And get a hargubush upon your shoulder,
Or else in vaine you sue to be a souldier.

23

How didst thou find (oh filthy foule invention)
A harbor safe in any humane hart?
Thou makst a coward get the souldiers pension,
And souldiers brave thou robst of due desart,
Whole millions have bin slaine, as stories mention,
Since first devised was this wicked art,
France, Italy and England chiefe may rew it,
Since first they usd this art, and first they knew it.

24

The English bowmen may go burne their boes,
And breake their shafts and cut in two the string,
That weapon now may keepe the come from croes,
That did the French at Agincourt so sting:
But to that wight I wish a world of woes,
That did to light device so divllish bring,
Let him be givn into the hands of Sathan,
To be tormented ay with Core and Dathan.

25

Now good Orlando though he greatly strived,
With speed to get him to the Ile of wo,
Yet first the Irish King was there arrived,
By chance, or else that God would have it so,
Because it might the better be contrived,
On wrongfull wights his judgements just to show.
But when Ebuda once in sight appeared,
Orlando all the company straight cheared.

26

And putting off his armes of colour sable,
He bids the master out to launch his boate,

And in the same an anker strong and cable,
With which he meanes unto this Ile to floate,
Not doubting (if lucke serve) he will be able,
To put the anker in the monsters throate.
And thus alone the noble Knight doth venter,
Into the Ile Ebuda then to enter.

27

Now was the time when as Aurora faire,
Began to shew the world her golden head,
And looke abroad to take the coole fresh aire,
Tythono lying still in jealous bed,
When as Orlando hither did repaire,
By two blind guides, Cupid and Fortune led,
When lo unto the shore his shipboate turning,
He seemd to heare a noise as one were mourning.

28

At which strange sound casting his eye aside,
He might discerne a goodly damsell naked,
With armes abrode unto the rocke fast tide,
That what with cold and what with terror shaked,
Eftsoones the hideous monster he espide,

Whose sight might well have made stout harts have quaked,
Orlandos mind therewith is not amated,
Nor his high courage any whit abated.

29

He gets betweene the monster and his pray,
That pray that he so hotly doth pursue,
And (for before he was resolv'd what way
He would attempt the monster to subdue)
Upon his shoulder doth the anker lay,
And when he came within his ugly view,
Even mauger all his malice, might and rancor,
Into his open jawes he beares the ancor.

30

As they that dig in mine of cole or stone,
The same in sundry places underprop,
Lest it should fall when least they thinke thereon,
And so their breath or else their passage stop:
So is this anker fastend in the bone,
Both in the bottome of his mouth and top,
That though he would againe he could not close it,
Nor wider open it for to unlose it.

31

Now having gagd his hideous chaps so sure,
That out and in he can with safetie go,
He enters with his sword the place obscure,
And there bestoweth many a thrust and blow,
And as that citie cannot be secure,
That hath within her wals receivd her so,
No safer could this Orke be now from danger,
That in his entrals hath receivd a stranger.

32

But griped now with pangs of inward paine,
Sometime he plungeth up unto the skie,
Sometime he diveth to the deepe againe,
And makes the troubled sands to mount on hie:
Orlando feels the sea come in amaine,
That forced him at last his swimming trie.
He swims to shore with body strong and able,
And beares upon his neck the ankers cable.

33

And as a savage Bull that unaware
About his hornes hath now a cord fast bound,

Doth strive in vaine to breake the hunters snare,
And skips and leaps, and flings, and runneth round,
So though Orlando with his strength so rare,
Assaid to draw him nearer to the ground,
Yet doth he fetch an hundred frisks and more,
Ere he could draw him up upon the shore.

34

His wounded bowels shed such store of blood,
They call that sea the red sea to this howre,
Sometime he breathed such a sudden flood,
As made the clearest weather seeme to lowre,
The hideous noise fild evry cave and wood,
So that god Proteus doubting his owne powre,
Fled straight fro thence, himselfe in corners hiding,
Not daring longer here to make abiding.

35

And all the gods that dwell in surging waves,
With this same tumult grew in such a feare,
They hid themselves in rocks and hollow caves,
Lest that Orlando should have found them there:
Neptune with triple mace by flight him saves,

His charret drawne with dolphins doth him beare,
Nor yet behind Glaucus or Triton taried,
For feare in these new broiles to have miscaried.

36

Those Ilanders that all this while attended,
And saw the monster drawne to land and tane,
With superstition moved much, condemned
This godly worke for wicked and profane;
As though that Proteus would be new offended,
That had before, and now might worke their bane.
They doubt he wold (thus fools their good haps consters)
Send to their land his flock of ugly monsters.

37

And therefore Proteus anger to appease,
They meane to drowne Orlando if they can,
Whose deed they deemd his godhead did displease:
And evn as fire doth creepe from bran to bran,
Untill the pile of wood it wholly cease,
So doth this fury grow from man to man,
That they concluded all upon the matter,
To throw Orlando bound into the water.

38

One takes a sling, another takes a bowe,
This with a sword is armed, he with a speare,
And some afore, and some behind him go,
Some neare approach, some stand aloofe for feare:
He museth much what his ungratefull fo
Should meane, for benefits such mind to beare:
And inwardly he was displeasd and sory,
To find such wrong where he deserved glory.

39

As little cures that barke at greatest Beare,
Yet cannot cause him once his way to shunne,
No more doth he these curlike creatures feare,
That like a sort of mad men on him runne.
And (for they saw he did no armor weare)
They thought the feat would have bin easly done,
They knew not that his skin from head to foote,
Was such to strike on it, it was no boote.

40

But when that he his Durindana drew,
He layd therewith about him in such sort,

That straight their faintnes and his force they knew,
They found to fight with him it was no sport.
Thrise ten of them at blowes but ten he slew,
Their fellowes fled that saw them cut so short,
Which foes thus foild, Orlando now intended
Tunloose the Ladie whom he had defended.

41

But now this while, behold the Irish band
Arrived neare unto their chiefest citie,
Who had no sooner set their foote on land,
But that forthwith they put apart all pittie,
And slue all sorts that came unto their hand,
The fierce, the faint, the foolish and the wittie,
Thus weret just doome, or were it cruell rage,
They spard of neither sexe nor neither age.

42

Thus thIlle of wo is made a wofull Ile,
And for the peoples sake they plague the place,
Orlando sets the Lady free the while,
That there was bound in that unseemly case,
To have bin given unto the monster vile:

And viewing well, he cald to mind her face,
And that it should Olympia be he guessed,
But twas Olympia that had thus bin dressed.

43

Distrest Olympia thus unkindly served,
Whom love and fortune made a double scorne:
For first of him, of whom she best deserved,
She was forsaken quite and left forlorne.
And next by pyrats taken and reserved,
Of monster vile to be in peeces torne.
And in this case the good Orlando found her,
And then with great compassion he unbound her.

44

And thus he said, now tell what strange annoy,
Or evill hap hath hurt thy happy raigne?
Whom late I left in solace and in joy,
Why do I find in danger and in paine?
How is the blisse that thou didst then enjoy,
So changd and turnd to misery againe?
And she in wofull manner thus replied,
When shame her cheeks with crimson first had died.

45

I know not if my chance or else my choice,
If fortune or my folly be in blame.
Shall I lament, or shall I now rejoyce,
That live in wo, and should have dide in shame?
And as she spake, the teares did stop her voice:
But when againe unto her selfe she came,
She told him all the wofull story weeping,
How false Byreno had betraid her sleeping.

46

And how from that same Ile where he betrayd her,
A crew of cursed pyrats did her take,
And to this wicked Iland had convayd her,
For that same foule and ugly monsters sake,
Where now it was Orlandos hap to ayd her:
She walked naked when these words she spake.
Looke how Diana painted is in tables,
Among the rest of Ovids pleasant fables.

47

Of whose sharpe doome the Poet there doth tell,
How she with hornes Actaeon did invest,

Because he saw her naked at the well:
So stands Olympia faire, with face and brest,
And sides, and thighes to be discerned well,
And legs and feet, but yet she hides the rest.
And as they two were talking thus together,
Oberto King of Irish Ile came thither.

48

Who being moved at the strange report,
That one alone the monster should assaile,
And gag him with an anker in such sort,
To make his strength, and life, and all to faile,
Then draw him to the shore as ship to port
Is towd with ropes, without or oares or saile.
This made him go to find Orlando out,
The while his souldiers spoiled all about.

49

Now when the King this worthy Knight did see,
Though all with bloud and water foule distaind,
Yet straight he guest it should Orlando be,
For in his youth in France he had remained,
And knew the Lords and Knights of best degree,

In Charles his court a page of honor trained:
Their old acquaintance causd at this new meeting,
They had a loving and a friendly greeting.

50

And then Orlando told the Irish King,
How and by whom Olypia was abused,
By one whom out of danger great to bring,
She had no paine nor death it selfe refused,
How he himselfe was witsesse of the thing.
While they thus talke, Oberto her perused,
Whose sorrowes past, renewd with present feares,
Did fill her lovely eyes with watry teares.

51

Such colour had her face, as when the Sunne
Doth shine on watry cloud in pleasant spring,
And evn as when the sommer is begunne,
The Nightingales in boughes do sit and sing,
So that blind god, whose force can no man shunne,
Sits in her eyes, and thence his darts doth fling,
And bathes his wings in her cleare cristall streames,
And sunneth them in her rare beauties beames.

52

In these he heates his golden headed dart,
In those he cooleth it, and temperd so,
He levels thence at good Obertos hart,
And to the head he drawth it in his bow.
Thus is he wounded deepe and feeles no smart,
His armor cannot fend so fierce a blow:
For while on her faire eyes and limbs he gaped,
The arrow came that could not be escaped.

53

And sure Olympias beauties were so rare,
As might well move a man the same to note,
Her haire, her eyes, her cheeks most amorous are,
Her nose, her mouth, her shoulders and her throte,
As for her other parts that then were bare,
Which she was wont to cover with her cote,
Were made in such a mould as might have moved
The chast Hipolytus her to have loved.

54

A man would thinke them framd by Phydias arts,
Their colour and proportion good was such,

And unto them her shamefastnesse imparts
A greater grace to that before was much:
I cease to praise those other secret parts,
As not so fit to talke of as to tuch,
In generall all was as white as milke,
As smooth as ivory, and as soft as silke.

55

Had she in valley of Idea beene,
When Pastor Paris hap did so befall,
To be a judge three goddesses betweene,
She should have got, and they forgone the ball.
Had she but once of him bene naked seene,
For Helena he had not card at all,
Nor broke the bonds of sacred hospitalitie,
That bred his country warres and great mortalitie.

56

Had she but then bene in Crotana towne,
When Zeuxes for the goddesse Junos sake,
To paint a picture of most rare renowne,
Did many of the fairest damsels make
To stand before him bare from foote to crowne,

A patterne of their perfect parts to take,
No doubt he would have all the rest refused,
And her alone in steed of all have chused.

57

I doubtlesse deeme Byreno never viewd,
Her naked corps, for certaine if he had,
He could not so all humane sence exclude,
To leave her thus alone in state so bad:
But briefly all this matter to conclude,
It seemd Oberto would have bin full glad,
In this her wo, her misery and need,
To comfort her by either word or deed.

58

And straight he promist that he would attend her,
And set her in her country if he may,
And mauger all her enemies defend her,
And take revenge on him did her betray.
And that he might both men and money lend her,
He would to pawne his realme of Ireland lay,
Nor till she were restord aske no repayment,
And straight he sought about to get her raiment.

59

They need not travell farre to find a gowne,
For why immediatly they found good store,
By sending to the next adjoyning towne,
The which his men of warre had spoild before,
Where many a worthy Ladie of renowne,
That had bene naked tide unto the shore,
And many a tender virgin and unsoiled,
Were of their raiment and their lives despoiled.

60

And yet for all they were so richly gownd,
Oberto could not cloath her as he wold,
No not in Florence (though it doth abound
With rich embroderies of pearle and gold)
Could any peece of precious stufte be found,
Of worth to serve to keepe her from the cold,
Whose shape was so exact in every part,
Even hard to match by nature or by art.

61

Orlando with this love was well content,
As one that hither came with other end,

For sith he mist Angelica, he ment
His journey backe to France againe to bend.
With them by ship to Ireland first he went,
As in his way, and with the King his friend,
Not hearing, had his love bin here or no,
For all were dead that could have told him so.

62

At both their sutes he scant staid there one day,
His passing love such passions in him bred,
But ere he went he doth Oberto pray
To do for her as much as he had sed,
And parting so from thence he tooke his way,
Evn as his fortune and his fancie led,
But good Oberto need not be desired,
To do as much or more then he required.

63

For few dayes past but that with her he went
To Holland, where he raised such commotion,
That straight Byreno taken was and shent,
Receiving on three trees a just promotion:
And all those countries did forthwith consent,

To sweare them faith and be at their devotion.
Thus of a countesse she is made a Prince,
And lives in joy and solace ever since.

64

Orlando bends his course to Brittish shore,
Whence he not long before to ship did mount,
Where he had left his famous Brilliadore,
A goodly courser and of good account,
No doubt of valiant acts he did good store,
Though what they were I cannot here recount,
For such a minde he carride still unto them,
He cared not to tell them, but to do them.

65

But in what fashion he did passe the rest
Of that unfortunate and fatall yeare,
I say by me it cannot be exprest,
Because thereof no record doth appeare,
But when the spring did ground with green invest,
And sunne in Gemini made weather cleare,
Then did he acts both worthie of reciting,
And to be kept in everlasting writing.

From hils to dales, from woods to pastures wide,
From waters fresh unto the salt sea shore,
To seeke his love he up and downe doth ride,
The lesse he finds he seeketh still the more,
At last he heard a voice for helpe that cride,
He drawes his sword and spurs his Brilliadore.
But to refresh the reader now tis reason,
And stay my storie to a better season.

ARGUMENT

THE TWELFTH BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Orlando doth pursue with great disdain,
One that did seeme his love by force to carrie:
Rogero led by such another traine,
With him doth in the charmed pallace tarrie:
Orlando parting from the place againe,
He sees indeed her whom he faine would marrie,
Fights with Ferraw, and foiles two Turkish bands,
And findes faire Isabell in outlawes hands.

TWELFTHBOOKE

1

Faire Ceres when she hastned backe againe,
From great Idea homeward to returne,
There where Enceladus with endles paine,
Doth beare mount AEtna that doth ever burne,
When she had sought her daughter long in vaine,
Whose losse so strange did make the mother mourne,
She spoiles for spite her brest, cheeks, eyes and heare,
At last two boughs from Pyne tree she doth teare.

2

In Vulcans forge she sets on fire the brands,
And gives them powre for ever to be light,
And taking one a peece in both her hands,
And drawne in coach by yoaked serpents might,
She searcheth woods and fields and seas and lands,
And brooks and streames and dens devoyd of light,
And hearing here on earth no newes to like her,
At last she went to hell it selfe to seeke her.

3

Were good Orlandos powre to be compared,
As well with Ceres as his loving minde,
He would no paine, no place, nor time have spared,
His deare belovd Angelyca to finde,
To go to rocks and caves he would have dared,
And place to saints, and place to fends assignd,
He onely wanted one of Ceres waggons,
In which she carried was with flying draggons.

4

How he did search all France before he told,
Now Italy to search is his intent,
And Germany and Castill new and old,
And then to Affrica to passe he ment,
And as he thus determined, behold
He heard a voice that seemed to lament,
And drawing nye, to understand what tyding,
On a great horse he saw a horse man ryding.

5

Perforce he bare upon his saddle bow,
A Lady sorrowfull and sore afrayd,

That cryde aloud still making open show,
Of inward griefe, and thus to him she said,
O worthy wight (Lord of Anglante) know
I dye, I dye without you bring me ayd,
And then he thought comming more nie to vew her,
It was Angelyca, and that he knew her.

6

I say not that it was, but that it seemd,
To be Angelyca that thus was caryd,
But he that justly great disgrace it deemd,
Thus in his sight, to have his mistresse haryd,
Whose love above all treasures he esteemd,
To take revenge hereof he nothing taryd,
But put his spurres to Brillidores sides,
And in great hast to that same horseman rydes.

7

With many bloodie words and cruell threats,
He bids that horseman to come backe againe,
But he at naught his words and speeches sets,
Rejoycing in so rich a gotten gayne,
The when still ground of Orlando gets,

Untill they came into a faire large plaine,
Wherein a house of great estate was built,
The gate hereof in gorgeous sort was gilt.

8

The building all of marble faire was wrought,
Most costly carvd and cunningly contrived,
To this faire house, his pray the foule thiefe brought,
Straight after him Orlando there arrived:
Then he alights and all about he sought,
For him that had him of his joy deprived,
He maketh search in chambers all about,
And galleries and halls to finde them out.

9

Each roome he finds set forth with rich aray,
With beds of silke, and gold of curious art,
But yet he finds not that desired pray,
The want whereof did sore torment his heart.
There might he finde with like affliction stray,
Gradasso, Sacrapant and Brandimart,
And feirce Ferraw possest with strange confusion,
Procured in that place by strong illusion.

10

They all complaine in anger and in rage,
How of this house the master them hath used,
One lost his horse, another lost his page,
Another doubts his mistresse is abused:
Thus are they kept like birds within a cage,
And stand with sense and wits and words confused
And manic with this strange deception carried,
Within this place both weeks & months had tarrid.

11

Orlando when he saw he could not learne,
Where this same theefe his mistresse had convoid,
Though she was carride out at some posterne,
Wherefore within no longer time he staid,
But walkes about the castle to discernne,
If that were true of which he was afraid:
But as he walked up and downe the plaine,
He thought he heard her call him backe againe.

12

And to a window casting up his eye,
He thought he saw her face full of divinity,

And that he heard her plainly thus to crie,
O noble wight of proved magnanimitie,
Helpe now, or never helpe, alas shall I
In mine Orlandos sight leese my virginitie?
Kill me, or let a thousand deaths befall me
Rather then let a villaine so to thrall me.

13

These wofull speeches once or twice repeted,
Causd him returne into the house againe,
And searching once againe he chafte and freted,
(Hope still asswaging somewhat of his paine)
And oft he heard the voice that counterfeted
The speech of his Angelica most plaine.
From side to side he followd still the sound,
But of Angelica no signe he found.

14

Now while Orlando tarrid in this trance,
In hope for to avenge his mistresse harmes,
Roger (who I told you had this chaunce)
To see his Bradamant in gyants armes,
(Drawne to this place with such another daunce)

Namely by force of some unusuall charmes,
Saw first the gyant in this castle enter,
And after him he boldly doth aduenter.

15

But when he came within the castle walls,
And made much narrow search, as in such case,
In garrets, towrs, in parlors and in halls,
And under staires and many a homely place,
Oft casting doubts what hurt his love befalls,
Or lest the theefe were gone in this meane space,
Forthwith he walketh out into the plaine,
And heares a voice recall him backe againe.

16

That voice that lately did Orlando make
Returne in hope Angelica to finde,
Rogero now for Bradamant doth take,
Whose love no lesse possest his carefull minde:
And when the voice unto Gradasso spake,
Or Sacrapant, or Brandimart most kinde,
To every one of these it plainely seemed,
To be her voice whom each one best esteemed.

17

Atlanta had procurd this strange invention,
Thereby to keepe Rogero from mischance,
Because he saw it was the heavens intention,
That he by treason should be kild in France,
Ferraw and those of whom I last made mention,
With all whom vallew highest did advance,
To keepe him companie he here detained,
With good provision while they here remained.

18

And while these knights with strange enchantments bound
Do here abide, behold the Indian queene
Angelica that late her ring had found,
(Whose vertue can her cause to go unseene,
And also frustrate magick still profound)
Now longing home, where long she had not been,
And being now of needfull things provided,
Yet wants she one that her might home have guided.

19

Orlandos company she would have had,
Or Sacrapant, she card not which of twaine,

Not that of eithers love she would be glad,
For them and all the world she did disdain,
But (for the way was dangerous and bad,
In time of warre to travell France and Spaine)
She wisht for her owne safetie and her ease,
To have the company of one of these.

20

Wherefore a while she travels up and downe,
To seeke for them that long in vaine had sought her,
And passing many woods and many a towne,
Unto this place at last good fortune brought her,
Where whe she saw these knights of great renowne,
Thus seek for her, she scant abstaines from laughter,
To see Atlantas cunning and dissembling,
Her person and her voice so right resembling.

21

Her selfe unseene sees them and all the rest,
Now meanes she sure to take one of them two,
But yet she knowes not which (her doubtfull brest
Did stay as unresolved what to do)
Orlandos valour could defend her best,

But then this doubt is added thereunto,
That when she once so highly had prefard him,
She shall not know againe how to discard him.

22

But Sacrapant although she should him lift
High up to heaven yet maketh she no doubt,
But she will find some sleight and pretie shift,
With her accustomd coynesse him to lout:
To him she goes, resolved of this drift,
And straight the precious ring she taketh out
From of her mouth, which made her go concealed,
With mind to him alone to be revealed.

23

But straight came in Orlando and Ferraw,
That both desired, her to have enjoyd,
Thus all of them at once their goddess saw,
Not being now by magick art annoyd,
For when the ring on finger she did draw,
She made unwares all their enchantments voyd,
These three were all in complete armor, save
Ferraw no headpeece had, nor none would have.

24

The cause was this, he solemnly had sworne,
Upon his head no helmet should be set,
But that that was by stout Orlando worne,
Which he did erst from Trajans brother get,
Ferraw to weare a helmet had forborne,
Since with the ghost of Argall he had met:
Thus in this sort they came together armed,
By vertue of her ring now all uncharmed.

25

All three at once do now the damsell view,
All three at once on her would straight have seased.
All three her faithfull lovers were she knew,
Yet with all three at once she is displeased,
And from all three she straight her selfe withdrew,
Who (haply) one at once would her have pleased,
From henceforth none of them she thinks to need,
But that the ring shall serve in all their steed.

26

She hastens hence and will no longer stay,
Disdaine and feare together make her swift,

Into a wood she leades them all the way,
But when she saw there was none other shift,
Into her mouth the ring she doth convay,
That ever holpe her at the deadeſt lift,
And out of all their ſights forthwith ſhe vaniſhd,
And leaves them all with wonder halfe aſtoniſhd.

27

Onely one path there was, and that not wide,
In this they followd her with no ſmall haſt,
But ſhe firſt cauſd her horſe to ſtep aſide,
And ſtandeth ſtill a while till they were paſt,
And then at better leiſure ſhe doth ride,
A farre more eaſie pace, and not ſo faſt,
Untill they three continuing ſtill their riding,
Came to a way in ſundry parts dividing.

28

And comming where they found no further tracke,
Ferraw, that was before the tother two,
In choler and in fury great turnd backe,
And aſkt the other what they meant to do,
And (as his manner was to brag and cracke)

Demaunded how they durst presume to wo,
Or follow her, whose propertie he claimed,
Except they would of him be slaine or maimed.

29

Orlando straight replide, thou foolish beast,
Save that I see thou doest an helmet want,
I would ere this have taught thee at the least,
Hereafter with thy betters not to vant:
Ferraw doth thanke him for his care (in jeast)
And said it shewd his wits were very scant,
For as he was he would not be afraid,
To prove against them both that he had said.

30

Sir, said Orlando to the Pagan King,
Lend him your headpeece, and ere we go hence,
I will this beast in better order bring,
Or sharply punish him for his offence.
Nay soft (said Sacrapant) that were a thing,
The which to grant might shew I had no sence,
Lend you him yours, for Ile not go to schoole,
To know as well as you to bob a foole.

31

Tush (quoth Ferraw) fooles to your faces both,
As though if I had bin disposd to weare one,
I would have sufferd (were you leive or loth)
The best and proudest of you both to beare one,
The truth is this, that I by solemne oth
Upon a certaine chance did once forswear one,
That on my head no helmet should be donne,
Untill I had Orlandos helmet wonne.

32

What (quoth the Earle) then seems it unto thee,
Thy force so much Orlandos doth surmount,
That thou couldst do the same to him, that he
Unto Almonta did in Aspramount?
Rather I thinke, if thou his face should see,
Thou wouldst so farre be wide of thine account,
That thou wouldst tremble over all thy body,
And yeeld thy selfe and armour like a nody.

33

The Spanish vaunter (like to all the nation)
Said he had often with Orlando met,

And had him at advantage in such fashion,
That had he list he might his helmet get,
But thus (quoth he) the time brings alteration,
That now I seeke, I then at naught did set,
To take his helmet from him then I spared,
Because as then for it I little cared.

34

Then straight Orlando movd in rightfull anger,
Made answer thus, thou foole and murren lier,
I cannot now forbear thee any longer,
I am whom thou to find dost so desire,
When met we two that thou didst part the stronger?
Thou thoughtst me farder, thou shalt feele me nier,
Try now if thou beest able me to foyle,
Or I can thee of all thy armour spoyle.

35

Nor do I seeke to take this ods of thee,
This said, forthwith his helmet he untide,
And hung the same fast by upon a tree,
Then drew his Durindana from his side;
And in like sort you might the Spaniard see,

That was no whit abated of his pride,
How he his sword and target straight prepar'd,
And lay most manfully unto his ward.

36

And thus these champions do the fight begin
Upon their coursers fierce, themselves more fierce,
And where the armour joynes, and is most thin,
There still they strive with sturdy strokes to pierce:
Search all the world, and two such men therein
Could not be found, for as old books rehearse,
Their skins were such, as they had bin unarmed,
Yet could they not with weapons have bin harmed.

37

Ferraw had in his youth inchantment such,
That but his navell, hard was all the rest,
Unto Orlando there was done as much,
By prayer of some saint (as may be guest)
Save in his feet, which he let no man tuch,
Take it for truth, or take it for a jest,
Thus I have found it wrote, that they indeed
Ware armor more for shew then any need.

38

Thus twixt them two the fight continues still,
Yet not so sharpe in substance as in show;
Ferraw imploying all his art and skill,
Sharpe thrusts upon the tother to bestow:
Orlando that hath ever strength at will,
Layth on the Spaniard many a lustie blow:
Angelica doth stand fast by unseene,
And sees alone the battell them betweene.

39

For why the Pagan Prince was gone the while,
To find her out, when they together fought,
And by their strife, that he might both beguile,
He hopes, and had conceived in his thought:
He rides away, and travels many a mile,
And still his deare beloved mistris sought.
And thus it came to passe that she that day,
Was onely present at so great a fray.

40

Which when she saw continue in such sort,
Nor yet could guesse by ought that she did see,

Which was most like to cut the others short,
She takes away the helmet from the tree,
And thinks by this to make her selfe some sport,
Or they by this might sooner sundred be,
Not meaning in such sort away to set it,
But that the worthy Earle againe may get it.

41

And with the same away from hence she goes,
The while they two with paine and travell tired,
In giving and in taking deadly bloes,
Ferraw (that mist the headpeece first) retired,
And for he did most certainly suppose,
That Sacrapant had tane it undesired,
Good Lord (said he) what meane we here to do?
This other Knight hath cousened us two.

42

And unawares the helmet tane away,
Orlando hearing this, doth looke aside,
And missing it, he doth beleewe straight way,
As did Ferraw, and after him they ride:
They came at last into a parted way,

That in two parts it selfe doth there divide,
Fresh tracke in both of them was to be seene,
This of the Knight, that of the Indian Queene.

43

Orlandos hap was to pursue the Knight,
Ferraw, that was more luckie of the twaine,
Happend upon Angelica to light,
Who to refresh her former taken paine,
Fast by a fountaine did before alight,
And seeing sodainly the knight of Spaine,
Straight like a shadow from his sight she past,
And on the ground the helmet left with hast.

44

But as the sight of her did make him glad,
In hope by this good fortune her to get,
So thus againe to loose her made him sad,
And shewd that she did him at nothing set:
Then curst he as he had bin raging mad,
Blaspheming Trivigant and Mahomet,
And all the Gods adord in Turks profession,
The grieffe in him did make so deepe impression.

45

Yet when he had Orlandos helmet spide,
And knew it was by letters writ thereon,
The same for which Trajanos brother dide,
He takes it quickly up and puts it on,
And then in hast he after her doth ride,
That was out of his sight so strangely gone,
He takes the helmet, thinking little shame,
Although he came not truly by the same.

46

But seeing she away from him was fled,
Nor where she was he knew nor could not guesse,
Himselfe from hence to Paris ward he sped,
His hope to find her waxing lesse and lesse:
And yet the sorrow that her losse had bred,
Was part asswagd, the helmet to possesse,
Though afterward when as Orlando knew it,
He sware great othes that he would make him rew it.

47

But how Orlando did againe it get,
And how Ferraw was plagued for that crime,

And how they two betweene two bridges met,
Whereas Ferraw was killed at that time,
My purpose is not to declare as yet,
But to another story turne my rime:
Now I must tell you of that Indian Queene,
By vertue of her ring that goeth unseene.

48

Who parted thence all sad and discontented,
That by her meanes Ferraw his will had got,
That she (with this unlookt for hap prevented)
Left him the helmet, though she meant it not,
And in her heart her act she sore repented,
And with her selfe she said, alas God wot,
I silly foole tooke it with good intention,
Thereby to breake their strife and sharpe contention.

49

Not that thereby this filthy Spaniard might
By helpe of my deceit and doing wrong,
Keepe that by fraud he could not win by might,
Alas to thy true love and service long,
A better recompence then this of right,

From me (my good Orlando) should belong:
And thus in this most kind and dolefull fashion,
She doth continue long her lamentation.

50

Now meaneth she to travell to the East,
Unto her native soile and country ground,
Her journey doth her other griefes digest,
Her ring doth in her journey keepe her sound;
Yet chanced she, ere she forsooke the West,
To travell neare a wood, whereas she found
A fine yong man betweene two dead men lying,
With wound in bleeding brest even then a dying.

51

But here a while I cease of her to treat,
Or Sacrapant, or of the Knight of Spaine,
First I must tell of many a hardy feate,
Before I can returne to them againe:
Orlandos actions I will now repeate,
That still endurd such travell and such paine,
Nor time it selfe, that sorrowes doth appease,
Could grant to this his grieve an end or ease.

52

And first the noble Earle an headpeece bought,
By late ill fortune having lost his owne,
For temper or the strength he never sought,
So it did keepe him but from being knowne.
Now Phoebus charret had the daylight brought,
And hid the starres that late before were showne,
And faire Aurora was new risen when
Orlando met two bands of armed men.

53

One band was led by worthy Manilard,
A man though stout, yet hoary haird for age,
Who with his men did make to Paris ward,
He not for warre, but fit for counsell sage:
Alsydo of the other had the guard,
Then in the prime and chiefe floure of his age,
And one that passed all the Turkish warriors,
To fight at tilt, at turney or at barriers.

54

These men with other of the Pagan host,
Had layne the winter past not far fro thence,

When Agramant did see his men were lost,
By vaine assaults unto his great expence,
And therefore now he swears and maketh bost,
That he will never raise his siege fro thence,
Till they within that now had left the field,
Were forst by famine all their goods to yeeld.

55

And for that cause, now sommer comes againe,
He gets together all the men he may,
With new supplies of Affrike and of Spaine,
And some of France that did accept his pay,
But that in order due they may remaine,
He points them all to meet him in one day,
Who by commandement hither came in clusters,
To make appearance at the pointed musters.

56

Now when Alsyrdo saw Orlando there,
Inflamd with pride and glory of his mind,
He longed straight with him to breake a speare,
And spurs his horse, but quickly he doth find
Himselfe too weake so sturdy blowes to beare,

And wisheth now that he had staid behind,
He falleth from the horses back downe dead,
The fearfull horse without his master fled.

57

Straight there was raised a mighty cry and shout,
By all the souldiers of Alsyrδος band,
When as they see their captaine (late so stout)
Throwne downe and killed by Orlandos hand:
Then out of ray they compast him about
On evry side in number as the sand,
They that are nie, with blowes do him assaile,
And those aloofe throw darts as thicke as haile.

58

Looke what a noise an herd of savage swine
Do make when as the wolfe a pig hath caught,
That doth in all their hearings cry and whine,
They flocke about as nature hath them taught:
So do these souldiers murmure and repine,
To see their captaine thus to mischief brought,
And with great fury they do set upon him,
All with one voice, still crying, on him, on him.

59

I say the nearer fight with sword and speare,
And those aloofe send shafts and many a dart,
But he that never yet admitted feare
To lodge in any harbour of his hart,
Upon his shield a thousand darts doth beare,
And thousands more on every other part,
Yet of them all makes no more care nor keepe,
Then doth a Lion of a flocke of sheepe.

60

For when at once his fatall blade he drew,
That blade so often bathd in Pagans blood,
No steele there was of temper old or new,
Nor folded cloths the edge thereof withstood,
About the field, heads, legs, armes, shoulders flew,
The furrowes all did flow with crimson flood,
Death goeth about the field rejoycing mickle,
To see a sword that so surpast his sickle.

61

This made the Pagan rout so sore agast,
He that could swiftest runne was best apaid,

And as they came, so fled they now as fast,
One brother for another never staid:
No memory of love or friendship past,
Could make one stay to give another aid,
He that could gallop fastest was most glad,
Not asking if the wayes were good or bad.

62

Onely one man there was in all the field,
That had so long in vertues schoole bin bred,
That rather then to turne his backe or yeeld,
He meaneth there to leave his cark as dead:
Old Manyard, who taking up his sheeld,
Even as his valiant heart and courage led,
Sets spurs to horse, and in his rest a lance,
And runs against the Palladine of France.

63

Upon Orlandos shield his speare he brake,
Who never stird for all the manly blow,
But with his naked sword againe he strake,
And made him tumble ore the saddle bow:
Fortune on vertue did some pitie take,

For why, Orlandos sword fell flatling tho,
That though it quite amazd and overthrew him,
Yet by good hap it maimd him not nor slew him.

64

With great confusion all the other fled,
And now of armed men the field was voyd,
Save such as were or seemed to be dead,
So as Orlando now no more annoyd,
Went on his journey as his fancie led,
To seeke her, in whose sight he onely joyd,
Through plains and woods, through sandy ways and miry,
He travels making still of her enquiry.

65

Untill it was his fortune toward night
To come fast by a mountaine, in whose side
Forth of a cave he saw a glims of light,
And towards it he presently doth ride:
Then at the mouth thereof he doth alight,
And to a bush fast by his horse he tide,
He douts, as ever love is full of feare,
That his belovd Angelica was there.

66

Evn as the hunters that desirous are,
Some present pastime for their hounds to see,
In stubble fields do seeke the fearfull hare,
By evry bush, and under evry tree:
So he with like desire and greater care,
Seeks her that sole of sorrow can him free,
He enters boldly in the hollow cave,
And thinks of her some tidings there to have.

67

The entrance straight and narrow was to passe,
Descending steps into a place profound,
Whereas a certain faire yong Ladie was,
Kept by some outlawes prisner under ground,
Her beautie did the common sort surpasse,
So farre as scant her match was to be found,
So as that darke and solitary den,
Might seeme to be a Paradise as then.

68

On her an aged woman there did wait,
The which (as oft with women doth befall)

About some matter of but little waight,
Did happen at that time to chide and brall,
But when they saw a stranger comming, straight
They held their peaces, and were quiet all,
Orlando doth salute them with good grace,
And they do bid him welcome to the place.

69

Then after common words of salutation,
Although at first of him they were afraid,
Yet straight he enterd in examination,
By whom in that same cave they had bin staid
And who they were in so unseemly fashion,
That kept a comely and a noble maid?
And said, he saw it written in her face,
Her nurture and her lineage were not base.

70

She told him straight how long she there had beene,
And by what hap she had bin thither brought,
Amid her words the sighs do passe betweene,
The corall and the pearle by nature wrought,
Sweet teares upon her tender cheeks were seene,

That came from fountaine of her bitter thought:
But soft, lest I should do the Reader wrong,
I end this booke, that else would be too long.

ARGUMENT

THE THIRTEENTH BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Orlando beares Zerbynos love to tell,
Her strange misfortune and her hard aduenter:
These outlawes that in that vast cave did dwell,
Orlando hangd that had in prison pent her.
Bradamant though Melissa did her tell
Atlantas frauds, yet doth his Pallace enter,
Where she is staid by force of Atlants charmes,
While Agramant musters his men of armes.

THRITEENTHBOOKE

1

Full ventrous were the noble knights of old,
And worthy that their fame should aye endure,
That durst with valiant heart and courage bold
Find out in dens and places all obscure,
Such as in courts we now but seeld behold,
Faire dames, of beauty, mind, and manners pure:
As erst I told you how Orlando found
A brave young Lady hidden under ground.

2

Now in my former matter to proceed,
I say when he had viewd her person well,
And markd her face and haviour with great heed,
He doth request the damsell faire to tell,
Who was the author of so foul a deed,
To force her in so unfit place to dwell:
And she as plaine and briefly as she can,
In this sweet sort her woful speech began.

3

Most worthy knight (she said) although I know,
That I shall buy my speech to you full deare,
(For sure I am, this woman here will show
My words to him that first did place me here)
Truth I will tell, though truth increase my woe,
And make him look on me with angry cheare:
Despaire hath ever danger all contemnd,
What should she feare that is evn now condemnd?

4

I am that Isabel that sometime was
A daughter deare unto the king of Spaine,
Well did I say I was, for now alas,
I am the child of anguish and of paine:
Love, onely love this great change brought to passe,
Love, only love of thee I may complaine,
That flattring alwaies in thy first beginnings,
Yeeldst certaine losse in stead of hoped winnings:

5

Then in good state I spent my happy daies,
Noble and young, honest and rich, and faire,

Now base, despised, poore, and wanting praise:
Drownd in a dungeon of most deep despaire,
Thus love throws down whom fortune high doth raise,
And marrs the sport in which he is a plaier:
He that in art of love did shew his skill,
Saith, love and majestie agrees but ill.

6

But that I plainly may declare my mind,
Thus it fell out, my father twelve moneths since,
To make a famous triumph had assignd,
Unto the which came many a Lord and Prince:
Now whether liking did my eys so blind,
Or that his vertue did it selfe convince:
Zerbin (me thought) the king of Scotlands son
In this same triumph honour chief had won.

7

The passing feats of armes I saw him do,
In which he was compared with the best,
His person and his beauty joynd thereto,
In which he far surpassed all the rest,
Did cause that he no sooner did me wo,

But I as quickly granted his request:
Interpreters nor other means none wanted,
To make the seeds to grow that love had planted.

8

When as these feasts and solemne shewes were ended,
My Zerbin back againe to Scotland hasted,
Wherewith how grievously I was offended,
Well may you guesse, if ever love you tasted:
But he that cannot be too much commended,
Whose love to me no lesse in absence lasted,
With purpose and with promise firm to marry me,
Studid all means away from hence to carry me.

9

Twere vaine he thought to ask me of my sire,
(Zerbin a Christen, I a Sarazine)
Our country law contrarid that desire,
To which our loves so wholly did incline:
This feat doth some new stratagem require,
More heedfull, secret, circumspect and fine:
When love hath knit two hearts in perfit unity,
They seldome faile to finde their opportunity.

10

An house of great estate in Bayon towne,
My father had with gardens sweet and faire,
In which with large descents still going down
Unto a river comes the garden staire,
Here (if ill fortune on us do not frown)
He means when I shall walk to take the aire,
Soon to surprise me walking in an ally,
And so convey me to his armed gally.

11

But sith with him the case did then so stand,
Not to be present at this enterprise,
He sent me letters written with his hand,
By Oderike of Byskie stout and wise,
Expert in service both of sea and land,
And wils me do as he should me advise,
Whose faith he nothing doubteth to be found,
As one to him by benefits much bound.

12

This firm and fast, and sure obliged friend,
Of proved courage, value and of skill,

Against the time appointed he doth send:
And I that for their coming looked still,
Against the time appointed did descend,
To give him scope to work his masters will,
And he accordingly came unespied,
With armed men under the garden side.

13

I seeing them, my selfe most fearfull faine,
They seeing me soon of their purpose sped,
Those that resistance made, forthwith were slaine,
And some afraid and faint, like cowards fled,
The rest with me as prisners do remaine;
Then straight we were unto the gally led,
And gone so farre, we could not be recovered,
Before my father had the fact discovered.

14

Of this departure I my selfe was glad,
In hope ere long my Zerbin to have found,
But lo a sudden tempest made us sad,
And neare to Rochell almost had us drownd
The master of the ship no cunning had,

To keep the keel from striking on the ground:
It booted not against the waves to strive,
Upon sharp rocks the tempest doth us drive.

15

In vaine it was to pull down all our sailes,
And on the foreboord close to couch the mast,
No paine against the raging sea prevailes,
On land we look each minute to be cast:
Divine help oft doth come, when humane failes,
And when in reason all reliefe is past:
For doubtlesse I do deem by power divine,
We were preserved in this dangrous time.

16

The Byskin that the danger well doth note,
Doth meane a desprate remedy to trie,
He straightway launcheth out the little bote,
He and two more go down therein, and I,
This done, he cuts the rope and lets her flote,
Threatning with naked sword that he should die,
That durst presume to give so bold adven-ter,
Against our wils into the boat to enter.

17

The rope now cut, away the boat was carried
By force of waves unto the shallow shore,
And by great fortune none of us miscarried,
So great a plunge I never scapd before,
But they (poore soules) that in the gally tarried,
Were drown'd, the vessell quite in peeces tore,
Where though my losse of stuffe and jewels grievd me,
My hope to see my Zerbin still relievd me.

18

Now being come to land (in lucklesse houre)
And trusting onely Oderikes direction,
Love (that doth ever love to shew his power,
In tempring or distempring our affection)
My good to ill, my sweet doth turn to sower,
My hope to hurt, my health into infection:
He in whose trust Zerbin so much relieth,
Freezeth in faith, and in new fancie frieth.

19

Now whether first at sea this humour grew,
Or els he moved was with new occasion,

To have me here alone with so small crew,
As from his will I could not make evasion,
He bids all faith and honesty adieu,
And yeelds himselfe unto this foul perswasion;
And that he may his pleasure surely warrant,
He sends the servants of a sleevelesse arrant.

20

Two men there were that had so lucky lot,
With us into the shipboat to descend,
One hight Almonio, by birth a Scot,
A valiant man, and Zerbins trusty friend,
Odrike tels him, that it beseemed not,
So few upon a Princesse to attend,
And that the daughter of the King of Spaine
Should go on foot, and with so small a traine.

21

Wherefore he wisheth him to go before
To Rochell, there a palfrey to provide,
And hire some men, a dozen or a score,
Me to my lodging mannerly to guide:
Almonio went, then was there left no more,

But Coreb, one of wit and courage trid,
In whom the Byskin put the more affiance,
Because that he was one of his alliance.

22

Yet long he seemd in doubtfull minde to hover,
Faine (if he could) he would have rid him thence,
At last he thinks so fast a friend and lover
Will with his friends iniquity dispence:
Wherefore he doth to him his minde discover,
In hope that he would further his offence,
And do as friends in our dayes have a fashion,
Advance their pleasure more then reputation.

23

But he whose honest minde could not suppose,
That Oderike had had so little grace,
The fact not only threatens to disclose,
But cals him false and traitor to his face:
From bitter words unto more bitter blowes,
They came and fought together in the place;
And I in this prospect no whit delighting,
Fled to the wood while they two were a fighting.

24

Between them two the combat was not long,
But lo the worser cause the better sped,
Whether he were more skilfull or more strong,
Odrike doth lay Corebo there for dead:
That done, he runs the woods and fern among,
And followes fast the way that I had fled,
I think that he god Cupids wings did borrow,
He made such hast to hasten on my sorrow.

25

Feare made me swift, for I was sore afraid,
Love made him swifter run to overtake me,
Then sore against my will my course he staid,
Then sundrily both foul and faire he spake me,
Somtime he promised, sometime he praid,
Somtime he threatned he by force would make me:
With suit, with gifts with threats he oft did prove me,
With suit, with gifts, with threats he nought did move me.

26

But when he could not with his words prevaile,
He doth resolve no further time to stay,

With open force he then did me assaile,
As doth a hungry Beare cease on his pray,
And I defended me with tooth and naile,
And cries, and skreeks, and all the wayes I may,
Nor was I in mine own defence afeard,
To scratch his eyes, and pull away his beard.

27

I know not if it were my skreetch and crie,
That might have well bin heard a league and more,
Or if it were their use that dwell thereby,
To come to seek some shipwracks on the shore,
But straight upon the hill we might descry,
Come toward us of company good store,
Which makes my Byskie man away to run,
And to surcease his enterprise begun.

28

Thus this unlookd for crew preservd me then,
And hindred him of his unjust desire:
But I was savd, as is the flounder, when
He leapeth from the dish into the fire.
For though these barbarous and savage men

To touch my person did not once aspire;
No vertuous thought did breed this moderation,
But hope of gaine and greedy inclination.

29

The Leader of this miserable band
Did think his market will be raised much,
In selling me, when men shall understand,
He sels a maid whom none did ever touch,
And now I heare a merchant is in hand,
Of him to buy me, if his luck be such;
From whom into the East I shall be sent,
Where to the Souldan they will me present.

30

And in this sort her wofull tale she told,
And mingled sighs with tears in rufull fashion,
Expressed with such dolefull words as would
Have movd a stony heart to take compassion:
It easd in part her mind, thus to unfold
The bitter cause of her unpleasant passion.
Now while Orlando to this tale attended,
The crew of caitives to the cave descended.

31

A barbarous and foul misshapen crew,
Armed, one with a spit, one with a prong,
Mouthes, eyes and face most ugly were to view,
One had no nose, anothers was too long:
But when their leader somewhat nearer drew,
And saw Orlando standing there among,
Turning to his companion he said,
Lo here a bird for whom no net we laid.

32

Then to the Earle he said, I am right glad
To find one so well armed in my cave,
For long for such an armour longd I had,
And surely now this I suppose to have:
How think you, when my person shall be clad
With this your coat, shall not I then be brave?
Wherefore good sir, think not your welcome scant,
That come so fitly to supply my want.

33

Orlando turning with a sower smile,
Answerd, his armour was of price too high,

And that he greatly did himselfe beguile,
That thought of him his armour there to buy:
And as they nearer came, he stoopt the while,
And took a brand that in the fire did lie,
And straight he threw it at the caitives head,
And laid him there along the floor for dead.

34

A short thick plank stood on a scrubby post,
That servd them for a boord to drink and eat,
This like a coight at them Orlando tost,
And (for the same full heavy was and great)
It fell down there among them to their cost,
They never saw before so strange a feat:
By which scarce one of them escaped harm,
In head, in leg, in brest, in side or arm.

35

So shall you see a country man that takes
In time of spring a brickbat or a stone,
And throwes the same upon a knot of snakes,
That lie together clusterd all in one,
How great a spoile the stone among them makes,

And those that scape, how quickly they be gone:
So did Orlando with these peasants play,
That glad were they that scapd to run away.

36

Those that could scape the heavy tables fall,
Unto their feet commended their defence,
Which were (as Turpin writes) but seven in all,
Which seven were glad to run away from thence:
But yet their flying brought them help but small,
Orlando means to punish their offence,
Their feet, nor yet their fence could them so guard,
But that he brought them to the hanging ward.

37

Now when the foresaid aged woman saw,
In how bad sort these friends of hers were servd,
She was affeard, for well she knew by law,
That no lesse punishment she had deservd.
Forthwith from thence she stale away for aw,
And up and down the desart wood she swervd,
Untill at last a warriour stout her met,
But who it was I may not tell as yet.

38

The tender damsell doth Orlando pray,
Her chastity and honour to protect,
Who made her go with him, and from that day
Had unto her a fatherly respect:
Now as they went, a prisner by the way
They saw, whose name I may not now detect.
Now should I speak of Bradamant by right,
Whom erst I left in such a dolefull plight.

39

The valourous Lady looking long in vaine,
When her Rogero would to her return,
Lay in Marsilia to the Pagans paine,
Where evry day she did them some shrewd turn;
For some of them in Provence did remaine,
And Languedock where they did spoile and burn,
Till with her value she did them rebuke,
Supplying place of captaine and of duke.

40

Now on a day as she sate still and mused,
The time of his appointment long expird,

Doubting lest she by him might be abusd,
Or that her company he not desird;
And often when she blamd, she straight excusd:
Thus while with carefull thought her self she tird,
Melissa whom she thought not to be neare her,
Came suddenly of purpose for to cheare her.

41

With pleasant countenance Melissa sage,
Much like to those that carie welcome newes,
Wils her, her causlesse sorrow to asswage,
And good Rogeros absence doth excuse,
Swearing that she durst lay her life to gage,
He would not absent be, if he might chuse,
And that he did now in his promise halt,
Was not by his but by anothers fault.

42

Wherefore (quoth she) get you to horseback straight
If you would set your faithfull lover free,
And I my selfe intend on you to wait,
Till you his prison with your eye shall see,
Whereas Atlanta with a strange deceit

Detaineth men, of base and high degree,
And shoves by strange illusion distrest,
Each one the party whom he loveth best.

43

Each one doth deeme he sees in great distresse,
His love, his friend, his fellow or his page,
According as mens reasons more or lesse,
Are weak or strong such passion to asswage:
Thus do they follow this their foolish guesse,
Untill they come like birds into a cage,
Searching the pallace with a pensive heart,
The great desire not suffring them to part.

44

Now then (said she) when you shall once draw nigh,
Where this same Necromancer strange doth dwell,
He will your comming and the cause descry,
And to delude you (mark me what I tell)
He straight will offer there unto your eye
(By help of some inhabitants of hell)
Rogeros person, all in wofull plight,
As though he had been conquered in fight.

45

And if you follow, thinking him to aid,
Then will he stay you as he doth the rest,
But kill him therefore, and be not afraid,
For so you shall your friend deliver best:
So shall your foe Atlanto be betraid
In his own trap when as he looketh left,
And feare not when he commeth by to strike him,
Though he your deare resemble, and look like him.

46

I know full well how hard twill be to try,
And how your heart will faile, and hand will tremble
When you shall go about to make one dy,
That shall Rogeros shape so right resemble:
But in this case you may not trust your ey,
But all your sprites and forces all assemble:
For this assure you, if you let him go,
You work your own and your Rogeros wo.

47

The Proverb saith, one that is warnd is armd,
The which old saw, doth prove by due construction,

That they that after warning had are harmd,
Did ill regard or follow good instruction.
Now Bradamant rides to the place so charmd,
And vowd that old Magicians destruction,
And that they may the tedious way beguile,
They spend the time in pleasant talk the while.

48

And oft Melissa doth to her repeat
The names of those that should be her posterity,
That should in force and deeds of armes be great,
But greater in Religion and sincerity,
Atchieving many a strange and worthy feat,
And use both head and hand with great dexterity,
In ruling just, and bountifull in giving,
Caesars in fight, and Saints in godly living.

49

Now when Melissa sage such things did show,
The noble Lady modestly replid,
Sith God (quoth she) doth give you skill to know,
The things that shall in future times betide,
And means on me (unworthy) to bestow

An issue such as few shall have beside,
Tell me, among so many men of name,
Shall there no woman be of worthy fame?

50

Yes many a one (said she) both chaste and wise,
Mothers to such as beare imperiall crownes,
Pillars and stayes of royall families,
Owners of realmes, of countries and of townes,
Out of thy blessed offspring must arise,
Such as shall be evn in their sober gownes,
For chastity and modesty as glorious,
As shall their husbands be in warre victorious.

51

Nor can I well, or do I now intend,
To take upon me all their names to tell,
For then my speech would never have an end,
I find so many that deserve so well,
Onely I mean a word or two to spend,
Of one or two that do the rest excell:
Had you but talkd hereof in Merlins cave,
You should have seen the shapes that they shall have.

52

Shall I begin with her whose vertue rare
Shall with her husband live in happy strife,
Whether his valiant actions may compare,
Or be preferd before her honest life?
He fights abroad against king Charles at Tare,
She staid at home a chaste and sober wife:
Penelope in spending chaste her dayes,
As worthy as Ulisses was of praise.

53

Then next dame Beatrice the wife sometime
Of Lodwicke Sforze, surnamed eke the More:
Wise and discreet, and known without all crime,
Of fortunes gifts, and vertues having store:
Her husband livd most happy all her time,
And in such state as few have livd before:
But after fell from being Duke of Millen,
To be a captive fetterd like a villen.

54

To passe the famous house I should be sorie,
Of Aragon, and that most worthy queen,

Whose match in neither greek nor latine storie,
Or any writer els hath ever been:
And full to perfect her most worthy glory,
Three worthy children shall of her be seen:
Of whom the heavens have pointed her the mother,
Isbell by name, Alfonso and his brother.

55

As silver is to tin, as gold to brasse,
As roses are to flowers and herbs more base,
As diamonds and rubyes are to glasse,
As cedars are to fallowes: in like case
Shall famous Leonora others passe,
In vertue, beauty, modesty and grace:
But above all, in this she shall excell,
In bringing up her children passing well.

56

For as the vessell ever beares a tast
Of that same juyce wherewith it first was fild,
And as in fruitfull ground the seed growes fast,
That first is sowne when as the same is tild:
So look what lore in youthful yeares is placd,

By that they grow the worse or better wild,
When as they come to manly age and stature,
Sith education is another nature.

57

Then next her neece, a faire and famous dame,
That hight Renata I may not forget,
Daughter to Lews the xij king of that name,
Whom of the Britten Dutches he did get:
Whose vertue great shall merit lasting fame,
While fier shall be warm or water wet,
While wind shall blow, and earth stand firm & sound,
And heavnly sphears shall run their courses round.

58

I passe all those that passe all these some deale,
Whose soules aspiring to an higher praise,
Despising pomp and ease, and worldly weale,
In sacred rites shall spend their blessed dayes:
Whose hearts and holy love and godly zeale,
To heavnly joyes from earthly thoughts shall raise,
That to good works, to prayer and pure divinitie,
Shall consecrate their lives and their virginitie.

59

Thus doth Melyssa unto her discourse,
Of those should come hereafter of her seed,
And while they talked oft by entercourse,
They in their journey onward do proceed,
And oftentimes Melyssa hath recourse,
To will her of Atlanta take great heed,
And least she should with faint and foolish kindnes
Be led unwares in errour and in blindnes.

60

Now when they neare approached to the place,
Then Bradamant departed from her guide,
And after she had rode a little space,
She saw one brought with hands together tid,
Exceeding like Rogero in the face,
In voice, in stature, haire and all beside:
Bound fast with chaines betweene two gyants led,
That threatned him ere long he should be dead.

61

But when the damsell saw within her view,
The lamentable state and hard condition,

Of him whose face she certaine thought she knew,
She changeth straight her trust into suspicion,
Doubting Melyssa of some malice new,
Or hidden hate had givn her such commission,
To make Rogero for a greater spite,
Be slaine by her in whom he doth delight.

62

Is not this he (thus to her self she spake)
Whom still mine heart and now mine eyes do see?
If my Rogero I can so mistake,
I never shall have knowledge which is he:
I either dream and am not now awake,
Or els no doubt it can none other be,
Melyssa? what, may not Melyssa lye?
Shall I believe her tale, and not mine eye?

63

Now while that thus she thought and thus she said,
And in this unwise thought did thus persever,
She thought she heard him speak and ask for aid,
Saying (my love) assist me now or never,
What shall I in thy sight be so betraid?

Dost thou forsake me? then farewell for ever:
These unkind words her heart so greatly daunted,
She followes him into the house enchanted.

64

No sooner was she enterd in the gate,
But that the common error her possest,
Wandering about the house betimes and late,
Nor night nor day she taketh any rest;
The strange enchantment brought her in that state,
That though she saw the man that lovd her best,
And spake with him, and met him every houre,
To know the tone the tother had no power.

65

But let not now the reader be displeasd,
Although I leave her in this charmed place,
I mean ere long her travell shall be easd,
And she shall see and know Rogeros face,
Evn as the tast with diverse meats is pleasd,
So think I by this story in like case;
The friendly reader shall be lesse annoyd,
If with one matter long he be not cloyd.

66

With sundry threds a man had need to weave,
To make so large a web as I intend,
Wherefore all other matters I must leave,
Of Agramant a little time to spend:
Who sorely at the flower de luce did heave,
And all his might to mar the same did bend,
Sending for men to Affricke and to Spaine,
Those to supply that in the field were slaine.

67

Thus all on war his heart was wholly fixt,
His new supplies with sundry captains led
Were come, with men of sundry nations mixt,
With whom that no disorder may be bred,
A day for viewes and musters was prefixt,
That evry one might know his guide and head:
Then fell they to their mustring and their viewing,
As shall be shewd you in the book ensuing.

ARGUMENT

THE FOURTEENTH BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Agramant mustring of his men, doth misse
Two bands that by Orlando late were slaine:
Mandricard vowes to be revengd of this,
But by the way he haps to entertaine
Dame Doralice, whose beauty was his blisse.
An Angell brings Renaldo and his traine
Unseene, there where the Pagan did encampe,
And sendeth discord to the Turkish campe.

FOURTEENTH BOOKE

1

Among the fierce assaults, and cruell blowes,
That France hath felt from Affrick and from Spaine,
In which so many men fed Wolves and Crowes,
That were on both sides in the battell slaine:
Although the French were foiled by their foes,
That long they came not to the field againe,
Yet was this foile sore to the Pagans cost,
For diverse Lords and Princes that they lost.

2

So bloody was the victory they gate,
That scant this joy did countervaile that wo,
And if we may compare things done of late,
(Renownd Alfons) to things done long ago,
Ravennas fall by fortune or by fate,
In which your vertue great did flourish so,
To win the field so bloody and so hard,
With this of theirs may justly be compard.

3

For when the souldiers of the Spanish band
Whom then the Pope retained in his pay,
Had almost got the victory in hand,
The Frenchmen ready now to run away,
Thou camst to succour with that noble band
Of valiant youths, that merited that day
The honour of the gilded spurre and hilt,
In recompence of bloud so bravely spilt.

4

So didst thou bruise the Akornes rich of gold,
So didst thou break the yellow staffe and red,
So didst thou then the Flower de luce uphold,
When as the captaine was in battell dead,
For which the Lawrell crown they ware of old,
By just desert belongeth to thy head;
And Civill crown, no lesse in honour precious,
For saving unto Rome her own Fabricius.

5

Colonna namd a collum true indeed,
Unto the state of Rome and Romane name,

Whom you by value took, and savd by meed,
By which more honour true and worthy fame,
Unto your self you did procure and breed:
Then in the overcomming all that came,
From Aragon, from Castill and Navar,
For all their speares and new devised car.

6

Now though we all our lives and safeties ow,
To you that this great conquest did atchieve,
Yet our side did receive so great a blow,
As scarce that joy this sorrow did relieve:
And that the dames of France most plainly show,
Whom this so bloody triumph still doth grieve,
Witnesse their widowes in their mourning gownes,
And watry eyes in villages and townes.

7

King Lews of France had need in time prepare,
For captains new to these unruly bands,
That wickedly without all feare or care,
Of lawes of God, of nature, or of lands,
No sort, nor sex, nor age, nor order spare,

From force of their unchast and bloody hands.
Christs body in the Sacrament they tare it,
To beare away the silver plate that bare it.

8

Wretched Ravenna better had it been,
That thou the French shouldst not at all resist,
Thou mightst by Brescy have been warnd I ween,
Now thou a warning art for such as list
To shun like losse, by thy mishaps foreseen,
Not stubbornly in folly to persist;
So Riminy and Faens were preservd,
By marking in what sort thou hadst been servd.

9

As now king Lews (I say) had need to send
New captains to supply their rooms were dead,
So then the Pagan Princes did intend
To see their men from sundry countries led,
And all disorders and defects to mend,
To point them captains that do lack a head;
First then Marsilio all his souldiers viewth,
And Agramant next after him insewth.

10

The chief of those are of Marsilios traine,
Are first the Catalins, men of great land,
And of the best and noblest blood of Spaine:
The next that do to them in order stand,
Are of Navar, whose King was lately slaine
At Burdels by Renaldos valiant hand,
Marsilio sore laments the sorie case,
And pointeth Isolir supply his place.

11

Bulligant governeth those of Lion,
Grandonius for thAlgarbys doth provide,
Marsilios brother called Falsiron,
Doth those of lesser Castile rule and guide:
Those of Mallaga do attend upon
Madrasso, so doth Civill all beside,
There where as Betis water so abounds,
As all about it makes them fruitfull grounds.

12

Tessyra, Baricond and Stordilan,
Unto the field do bring their forces in,

Granado this, Majorick he hath tane,
The first to rule in Lisbon doth begin,
Where Larbin late was brought unto his bane,
Tessyra unto Larbyn next of kin,
Those of Gallicia Serpentine doth guide,
Since valiant Maricold in battell did.

13

Those of Toledo and of Galatrave,
Whom Synagon did lead not long ago,
Now Matalist their government must have,
Because that he was slaine by Christen so:
Then Pisardin a man in battell brave,
With all the band of Salamance doth go.
With many other souldiers of Pagenza,
Of Avila, Zamorra and Palenza.

14

Those of the court and of Marsilios traine,
With those of Saragose, Ferraw doth guide,
The chiefest flour, and the chief host of Spaine,
Well armd, well horsd, well furnished beside,
With whom two kings that late had lost their raigne,

Morgant and Malsatise did there abide,
And in the state of private men remaind,
And were by him most friendly entertaind.

15

The name of many a Duke, and Lord, and Knight,
For brevity I purpose to omit,
Such as were stout and hardy men in fight,
Such as were wise and politike in wit,
With thEarle of Sagunt Archidant that hight,
Langiran, Ammirant, and Malagit:
There was great Fulliron, Marsilios bastard,
That in that fight did shew himself no dastard.

16

After the Spanish hoast was viewd and past,
Before king Agramant, the next that came,
Was one that all the rest in stature past,
The governour and king of great Orane,
Then came a band whose leader small time past,
At Burdels field was brought unto his bane,
Lamenting that the king of Garamant
Was conquerd by the Lady Bradamant.

17

Then came the third, and that a headless crew,
Whose captaine Argust was in battell slaine,
To this the second and the fourth, anew
King Agramant doth leaders fresh ordaine.
But few there were that for these roomes did sew,
So few sufficient men there did remaine:
Buraldo and Argonio for the best,
And Ormida he chose among the rest.

18

Then came Brunello with a chearlesse face,
And look for shame still fixed on the ground,
For late he fell in Agramants disgrace,
Who doubted that his faith had not been sound,
Ere since he went unto thinchanted place,
Where to a tree dame Bradamant him bound,
Because he lost his ring, whose losse so grievd him,
That though he told him true, he not believd him.

19

But Isolir the brother of Ferraw,
That was the first that found him and untid him,

Avouchd to Agramant the thing he saw,
How that by force some enemy had tid him,
So as the King his anger did withdraw,
Although he never after well could bide him,
But swore the next offence that he committed,
An halter should unto his neck be fitted.

20

With those of Esperie came Soridano,
And Doribon did come with those of Set,
With those of Nasomanie Prusiano,
King Agricalt Amonios charge did get,
Malabusers came with them of Fisano,
The rest doth Finadure in order set,
Ballastro those that followd erst Tardocco,
Those of Canaria and of Morocco.

21

From Mulga and Arsilla others came,
The first their former captaine still doth hold,
Unto the next the King a new doth name,
One Corineus a trusty man and bold,
Then Balivesse a man of evill fame,

Clarindo next of whom great deeds are told,
Sobrino next a man of elder age,
In all the camp was none more wise and sage.

22

Those of Getulia came with Rimedont,
With Maribaldo those of Bolga went,
And those of Cosca came with Balnifront,
Their former Lord his life in battell spent:
Then came the king of Algier Rodomont,
That lately into Turkie had been sent,
To bring some new supplies of horse and men,
And back againe was new returnd as then.

23

In all the camp was not a man more stout,
In all the camp was not a man more strong,
Nor one of whom the French stood more in doubt,
Was there the Turkish army all among,
In Agramants nor in Marsilios rout,
Nor all the followers did to them belong.
Beside he was (which made them dread him chief)
The greatest enemy to our belief.

24

Then Puliano came, a gallant king,
And Agramantes cousen Dardanell,
Whether some Owle did at their window sing,
Or other lucklesse bird, I cannot tell,
As oft we see it is an usuall thing,
That some presage ones mischief shall foretell;
But sure it was prefixt in heavn on high,
What time and hour next day they both should die.

25

Now all their bands were musterd saving two,
Those of Noritia and of Tremisen,
King Agramant doth marvell what they do,
He knowes not where to heare of them nor when:
Now as he was dispatching hereunto
Some messenger, behold one of the men
That servd the king of Tremisen, in hast
Came and discoverd all that had been past.

26

Sir king (quoth he) by fortune and ill chance,
The noble kings Alsird and Manilard,

Happend to meet a cruell knight of France,
While with their bands they traveld hitherward,
He overthrew them both, (oh hard mischance)
And kild and spoild, and drave away their guard,
And sure (quoth he) I think his force is such,
To all your camp he would have done as much.

27

Among the rest that to this tale gave eare,
There was a Prince that late from Affricke came,
To whom king Agramant great love did beare,
And Mandricardo was the Princes name,
His heart was stout, and far from any feare,
His body strong and able to the same:
And that which greatest glory did him yeeld,
He had in Sorie conquerd Hectors field.

28

Now that the messenger his tale had done,
Which made the hearers hearts for sorrow cold,
This valiant Prince king Agricanes son,
Straight was resolvd with heart and courage bold,
That to win praise no paine did ever shun:

Although his purpose secret he did hold,
To be revenged on this bloody knight,
That had so many slaine and put to flight.

29

He askd the messenger what clothes he ware,
And in what colourd garments he was clad?
Black (quoth the messenger) his raiments are,
No plume nor bravery his helmet had:
And true it was, Orlandos inward care
That made his heart so sorrowfull and sad,
Causd that his armour and his open shoes
Had like resemblance of his inward woes.

30

Marsilio had before a day or twaine,
Givn unto Mandricard a gallant steed;
His colour bay, but black his taile and maine,
Of Frizland was the dam that did him breed,
The Sier was a villan brave of Spaine:
On this brave beast this brave man mounts with speed.
Swearing he will not to the camp turn back,
Till he had found the champion all in black.

31

He meets the silly people in the way,
Halting, or maimd, or weeping for their friends,
Their wofull looks their fearfull hearts bewray,
(Weeping in such a losse but small amends)
But when he came where the dead bodies lay,
In viewing of their wounds some time he spends,
As witnesses of his strong hand that gave them,
Him he envies, and pities them that have them.

32

Evn as a Wolfe by pinching famine led,
That in the field a carren beast doth find,
On which before the dogs and ravns have fed,
And nothing left but hornes and bones behind,
Stands still, and gazeth on the carkasse dead:
So at this sight the Pagan Prince repind,
And curseth oft, and cals himself a beast,
For comming tardy to so rich a feast.

33

But when the mourning knight not here he found,
From thence he traveld many a weary mile,

Untill he found a meadow compast round,
With running streames that almost made an Ile,
Save one small entrance left of solid ground,
Which guarded was with armed men that while,
Of whom the Pagan asketh why they stand
To guard the place with weapons in their hand.

34

Their captaine viewing well his brave attire,
Doth think he was a man of great regard,
And said king Stordilano did then hire,
Into these parts his daughter deare to guard,
Espoused to king of Sarza by her Sire,
Who shortly for the mariage prepard:
And here (quoth he) we do this passage keep,
That none may trouble her while she doth sleep.

35

To morrow to the camp we mind to go,
Where she unto her father shall be brought,
Who means on Rodomont her to bestow,
By whom this noble match is greatly sought.
Now when the captaine had him answerd so,

This Prince that setteth all the world at nought,
Why then (quoth he) this maid belike is faire,
I pray thee cause her hither to repaire.

36

My hast is great, but were it greater far,
Yet would I stay to see a prettie maid:
Alas you misse your mark your aime doth arr,
(Gentle sir foole) to him the captaine said:
Thus first they gan with bitter words to jar,
And then from blowes but little time they staid,
For straight the Prince did set his speare in rest,
And smote therewith the captaine through the brest.

37

And straightwayes he recovered his speare,
And at the next that came therewith doth run,
For why none other weapon he did weare,
Since he the Trojan Hectors armor won,
At what time he most solemnly did swears,
To win the sword worn by Trajanos son,
Cald Durindan, a blade of temper rare,
That Hector erst, and now Orlando bare.

38

Great was the force of this Tartarian knight,
That with his speare and weapon none beside,
Durst with so many joynd together fight:
Yet sets he spurs to horse, and stoutly crid,
Where is a man that dare withstand my might,
Who dares forbid me where I list to ride?
And with that speare himselfe he so bestird,
That small prevaile against him bill or sword.

39

But when his speare in peeces burst he saw,
The trunchen huge he takes in both his hands,
His blowes were such, not bloud but life to draw,
All dead or fled, not one his force withstands:
As Ebrew Samson with the Asses jaw,
Did heap on heaps the proud Philisten bands,
So Mandricard smote oft with so great force,
As one stroke kild both horsman and his horse.

40

Now though they took this thing in high disdain,
To be thus conquerd with a broken stick,

Yet when they learned had unto their paine,
It was in vaine against the wall to kick,
Though unrevenged lie their fellowes slaine,
They leave the dead, rather then loose the quick:
But he so eager was to kill and slay,
That scant he sufferd one to scape away.

41

And as the reeds in marishes and lakes,
Drid with the Sun, or stubble in the field,
When as by hap the fire among it takes,
May not it selfe against that fury shield:
Evn so this crew but small resistance makes,
And evn of force is drivn at last to yeeld,
And leave her undefended to their shame,
For whose defence they from Granata came.

42

Now when the passage open did appeare,
He hastens in the Lady faire to see,
Whom he doth finde in sad and mourning cheare,
And leaning of her head against a tree,
All down her cheeks ran streames of cristall cleare,

She makes such mone, as greater could not be,
And in her countenance was plainly shown
Great grief for others harms, feare of her own.

43

Her feare increast when as he nearer drew,
With visage stern and all with bloud distaind,
The cries were great of her and of her crew,
That to their gods of their ill haps complaind:
For why, beside the guard whom late he slew,
She had (that privately with her remaind)
Laundrers and nurses, playfellowes and teachers,
With learnd Physitions, and heathnish Preachers.

44

Now when the Pagan Prince saw that faire face
Whose fairer was not to be found in Spaine,
He thinks if weeping give her such a grace,
What will she prove when she shall smile againe?
He deemeth Paradise not like this place,
And of his victory he seeks this gaine,
To have his prisner suffer him to wo her,
And yeeld himself a prisner unto her.

45

Howbet he maketh her against her minde,
Upon her ambling nag with him to ride,
Her masters, maids, and servants left behinde,
And promisd them he will for her provide,
He will be servitor, and nurse, and hinde,
And playfellow, and governour, and guide,
Adieu my friends (quoth he) I you enlarge,
For of your Mistris I will take the charge.

46

The wofull folk all mourning part away,
With scalding sighs, cold hearts, and watry eyes,
And one unto another thus they say,
How deep revenge will her stout spouse devise,
How will he rage to leese so faire a pray?
Oh that he had been at this enterprise,
No doubt but he would quickly wreak this slaughter,
And bring againe king Stordilanos daughter.

47

Of this faire prey the Prince was well apaid,
Which fortune gate him joyned to his might,

And now it seemd his hast was well alaid,
That late he made to meet the mourning knight,
Before he rode in post, but now he staid,
Bethinking where to rest himself that night,
To finde a place was now his whole desire,
Where he might quench his lately kindled fire.

48

And first to comfort and asswage the paine,
Of Lady Doralice (so was her name)
He frames a tale, and most thereof doth faine,
And swears that he allured by her fame,
Had purposely forsook his home and raigne,
And for her love into these quarters came,
Not that he ought to France and Spaine that duty,
But only to the beams of her rare beauty.

49

If love deserveth love (quoth he) then I
Deserve your liking, that have lovd you long;
If stock you do esteem, my stock is high,
Sith I am sonne to Agrican the strong:
If state may stand in stead, who can denie,

To God alone our homage doth belong?
If value in your choise be of behoof,
I think this day thereof I have showd proof.

50

These words and such as love had then him taught,
Who lent him eloquence to serve his turne,
So sweetly in her tender fancie wrought,
That in a little while she ceast to mourne,
And first her feare asswad, and then her thought,
A pleasing looke doth to her eye returne,
By which the Prince (in love no novice) guest,
That she ere long would grant him his request.

51

Now doth the night approch, and Phoebus face
In Ocean sea begins it selfe to hide,
The which did cause them somewhat mend their pace
And on their way with greater speed to ride:
And now they traveld had but little space,
When first a smoke and then a light they spide,
Then came they where they heard the bandogs bark
When as the aire was now obscure and dark.

52

A few poore cotages where heardmen dwell,
They find, and there together they alight,
The houses poore, but such as very well
Might serve them to repose them for a night,
Their fare was meane, fit hunger to expell,
To which the heardmen friendly them invite,
As curtesie oft times in simple bowres
Is found as great as in the stately towres.

53

But after supper what did passe betweene
Dame Doralyce and Agricanes haire,
May not be told, because it was not seene,
But they may guesse, that have with Ladies faire
By night alone in place convenient beene,
Where to disturbe them no man did repaire,
I doubt he did not so his passion bridle,
To let so faire a dame lie by him idle.

54

But sure I am when day light did appeare,
They both arose well pleasd and well content,

And thankt the heardmen for their friendly cheare,
And so from thence they both together went,
Untill they came unto a river cleare,
Before the forenoone of the day was spent,
And riding downe along the river side,
Two horsemen with a damsell they espide.

55

But let them go, for why my high conceat
Forbiddeth me long in one path to tread,
And cals me back of Agramant to treat,
Who being newly troubled in his head,
To heare there were from England succors great,
Under the conduct of Renaldo led,
To counsell cald the Princes sage and wise,
Some remedie for mischiefs to devise.

56

They all conclude the next ensuing day,
With scaling ladders on the wals to mount,
Lest dangers new be bred by long delay,
And succors fresh hinder their first account:
Thus Agramant, thus doth Marsilio say,

Sobrina sage, and cruell Rodomont,
Who to destroy Paris alone doth threate,
And to pull downe the sacred Romane seate.

57

And to this end they straight provide in hast,
Innumerable ladders apt to scale,
With timber towres upon great wheelles so plast,
As that they may approch the citie wall,
From whence they may broade bridges safely cast,
And passe without all jeopardie to fall,
And throw their balls compact of firy matter,
Then have they rams, the walls to bruse and batter.

58

But Charles, the day that went before that day,
The Painims meant to do their worst and best,
Did cause the Priests and Friers masse to say,
Did cause the people all to be confest,
And humbly prostrate unto God to pray,
To save and pittie them that were opprest,
And then they all receivd in Christen union,
The blessed Sacrament, that high communion.

59

Himselfe with Lords and Barons of great fame,
(An humble feare of God in him so wrought)
In person publikly performes the same,
And by example others duties tought,
And calling on our Saviours blessed name,
O Lord (said he) though I my selfe be nought,
Let not my sinne, my wickednesse and ill,
Move thee thy faithfull peoples blood to spill.

60

And if it be thy sacred will (O God)
To punish us for our so great transgression,
And make us feele thy hand and heavy rod,
At least defer this plague and just oppression,
That by thy foes we be not overtrod,
We that of thy true faith do make profession,
Lest they blaspheme thy name (we overthrowne)
And say thou couldest not defend thine owne.

61

So shall our fall make them thy law despise,
So shall their wicked number still increase,

So shall the power of Babylon arise,
So shall thy Sacraments and Gospell cease,
Looke on this people Lord with gracious eyes,
Turne foiles and warres to victories and peace,
That when these dogs and runnegates be daunted,
Thy tombe and temple may be daily haunted.

62

Alas our merits are of none effect,
To pay a portion of our grievous debt,
Except thy grace our weaknesse so protect,
That our misdeeds out of thy sight be set,
Lord heale our soules with grievous vice infect,
Forgive our faults, our errors all forget,
And though our sinnes the sands in number passe,
Yet let thy mercies greatnesse them surpasse.

63

Thus praid the Prince most sorrowfull and sad,
With humblenesse of heart and great contrition,
And to this prayre he then a vow doth ad,
Well suting to his state and high condition.
Nor small effect these vowes and prayers had,

For presently without all intermission,
His Angell good up to our Saviour mounted,
And there his vowes and prayers all recounted.

64

And thousand prayrs alike at that same time,
By messengers alike to God were brought,
When lo the goodnesse, and the powre divine,
That never shall, nor never vaine was sought,
His gracious eare doth to their prayre incline,
Those whom he made, & who he deare had bought:
Then to the Angell Michael straight he beckned,
Who not a little of his calling reckned.

65

And thus he said, go thither straight in post,
Where now in Picardie the Christens land,
And so to Paris guide that English host,
Let not their foes their comming understand,
In this attempt shall Silence helpe you most,
Will him this enterprise to take in hand,
This done, then see you find dame Discord out,
And will her hast unto the Pagan rout.

66

And charge her there according to her skill,
Among the best to sow such foule dissention,
That they may one the other wound and kill,
And fill their camp with brauls and with contention:
Let some men like their entertainment ill,
And grudge because they have no bigger pension,
And let them all so vary out of measure,
That they may do their Prince but little pleasure.

67

The blessed Angell not a word replies,
But doth his makers holy will obey,
Forthwith evn in a moment downe he flies,
And where he goes the clouds do fleet away:
But by the way he thinks and doth devise,
Of evry place where Silence find he may,
Though he an Angell were he could not tell,
Where this same enemy of speech doth dwell.

68

At last he fully doth himselfe perswade,
To find him in some houses of devotion,

That first for life monasticall were made,
Where godly men, despisers of promotion,
Dwell farre from all this worldly wicked trade,
With minds abhorring flesh and fleshly motion,
Where idle words should counted be a shame,
And where on evry wall they write his name.

69

Wherefore into an Abbey he doth go,
And makes no question Silence there to find,
And Peace and Charitie, and Love also,
And lowly thoughts, and well contented mind:
But soone he was aware it was not so,
All contrary their humors were inclind,
For Silence in that Abbey doth not host,
His name was onely writ upon a post.

70

Nor Quietnesse, nor Humblenesse, nor Peace,
Nor Charitie, nor godly love was here,
They were sometimes, but now those times do cease,
Now Covetise, and Ease, and Belly cheare,
Pride, Envie, Sloth, and Anger, so increase,

That Silence banisht is and comes not neare.
With wonder great the Angell them doth vew,
And findeth Discord in this cursed crew.

71

Her whom the heavnly King did will him find,
Next after Silence, her he findeth furst,
To seeke her out in hell he had assignd,
Among the spirits damned and accurst,
It sore did grieve his pure unspotted mind,
Where he expected best, to find them worst,
It seemd to him a thing uncouth and strange,
In sacred place to find so great a change.

72

He knew her by her weed of sundry hew,
All parcht with infinite unequall lists,
Her skin in sundry places naked vew
At divers rents and cuts, he may that lists:
Her haire was gray, and red, and blacke and blew,
And hard, and soft, in laces some she twists,
Some hangeth downe, upright some standeth staring,
As if each haire with other had bene squaring.

73

Her lap was full of writs and of citations,
Of processes, of actions and arrests,
Of bills, of answers, and of replications,
In courts of Delegates and of Requests,
To grieve the simple sort with great vexations:
She had resorting to her as her guests,
Attending on her circuits and her journeys,
Scrivners and Clerks, and Lawyers and Attorneys.

74

The Angell calleth her, and bids her go,
Unto the Turks as fast as she can hie,
Among their Kings such seeds of strife to sow,
As one of them may cause the tother die.
Then he demaundeth her if she do know,
Within what place Silence doth use to lie,
He thought that she that traveld much about,
In stirring strife might hap to find him out.

75

I cannot call to mind (quoth she) as yet,
That I have talkt with Silence any time,

I heare them talke of him, and praise his wit,
And secretnesse to cover any crime;
But my companion Fraud can serve you fit,
For she hath kept him companie sometime,
And which was Fraud she pointeth with her finger,
Then hence she hies and doth no longer linger.

76

Fraud shewd in comely clothes a lovely looke,
An humble cast of eye, a sober pace,
And so sweet speech, a man might her have tooke,
For him that said, haile Marie full of grace,
But all the rest deformedly did looke,
Full of all filthinesse, and foule disgrace,
Hid under those large garments that she ware,
Close under which a poisonsd knife she bare.

77

The Angell asketh her if she do know
The place where Silence makes his habitation.
Forsooth (quoth Fraud) he dwelled long ago
With the wise sages of the Greekish nation.
Archytas and Pythagoras (I trow)

That chiefe to vertue had their inclination,
And afterward he spent these latter yeers
With Carmelit and with Saint Bennet friers.

78

But since these old Philosophers did faile,
And these new saints their saintlike life did change,
He sought new places for his most availe,
And secret and uncertaine he doth range:
Sometime with theeves that true men do assaile,
Sometime with lovers that delight in change,
Sometime with traitors he doth bide, and funder,
I saw him late with one that did a murder.

79

With clippers and with coyners he doth stay,
Sometime in secret dens and caves obscure,
And oft he changeth places day by day,
For long he cannot in a place endure.
But I can tell you one most ready way,
Where you to find him out shall be most sure,
Go where as Sleepe doth dwell, and out of doubt,
At midnight you shall find him thereabout.

80

Though Fraud by custome use to lie and faine,
Yet was this tale so evidently trew,
The Angell now no longer doth remaine,
But with his golden wings away he flew
To Arabie, where in a country plaine,
Far from all villages and cities vew,
There lieth a vale with woods so overgrowne,
As scarce at noone the day light there is showne.

81

Amid this darke thicke wood, there is a cave,
Whose entrance is with Ivie overspread,
They have no light within, nor none they crave,
Here Sleepe doth couch his ever drowsie head,
And Sloth lies by, that seems the gout to have,
And Idlenesse, not so well taught as fed,
They point Forgetfulnesse the gate to keepe,
That none come in nor out to hinder Sleepe.

82

She knowes no names of men, nor none will learne,
Their messages she list not understand,

She knowes no businesse doth her concerne,
Silence is sentinell unto this band,
And unto those he comming doth discern,
To come no neare he beckens with his hand,
He treadeth soft, his shoes are made of felt,
His garment short, and girded with a belt.

83

To him the Angell goth, and in his eare
He tels him thus, Jehovah bids you guide
Renaldo, with the succors he doth beare,
To Paris walls, so as they be not spide,
Nor let the Pagans once suspect or feare
Their comming, nor for it at all provide,
And let them heare no incling of these foes.
Untill they find their force and feele their bloes.

84

No answer Silence made, but with his head
He made a signe, as who should say he would,
And with the Angell straight himselfe he sped,
In greater hast then can be thought or told,
To Picardie, from whence the Angell led,

That present day the bands of souldiers bold,
To Paris walls, an hundred miles asunder,
Yet no man was aware it was a wonder.

85

And Silence still surveyeth all the rout,
Before, beside, behind, with great regard,
And with a cloud doth compasse them about,
No man of them was seene, no noise was heard,
Then walketh he among the Pagans scout,
And unto them that kept their watch and ward,
And brought them somewhat (what I do not find)
That made them for the time both deafe and blind.

86

Now while Renaldo came with so great hast,
As well it seemd an Angell did him guide,
And as he went, with so great silence past,
As by his foes his comming was not spide:
King Agramant had now his footmen plast
By Paris walls, fast by the ditches side,
He meanes the citie to assaile that day,
On evry side by all the meanes he may.

87

He that would take upon him to declare,
Of Agramantas host the certaine number,
That to destroy this Citie did prepare,
Shall seeme himselfe as frutelesly to cumber,
As if he told what flowres in Hyble are,
What fish in sea, what water drops in Humber,
What starres in skie at midnight when it covers
The unchast acts of close and secret lovers.

88

The larum bell in evry place doth ring,
About the towne with strange disorderd sound,
In Churches Mattens they do say and sing,
Some kneeling down, some groveling in the ground,
If gold were unto God so gratefull thing,
As fond men think, no doubt there would be found,
Enough in this extremity, that would
Make all the saints new images of gold.

89

There might you see godly old men and just,
Lamenting that their lives so long did last,

And call them happie that were laid in dust,
And buried many yeares and ages past;
But gallant youths, devoid of all mistrust,
Not with these perils any whit agast,
Whom enemies nor engines none appals,
Go to defend right manfully the walls.

90

Bold Barons, Earles and Dukes of great degree,
With souldiers, forreiners, and of the towne,
Did come to Charles, and praid him to agree,
To let them out, and let the drawbridge downe:
Glad was King Charles their forward minds to see,
To fight for Christs religion and his crowne,
But yet as then he doth not thinke it best,
In this one point to grant them their request.

91

He rather thinks it better them to place,
The forces of the fierce assault to breake,
With distant bands a great or little space,
According as the wall was strong or weake:
Himselfe with chearfull vigor in his face,

Unto them all most curteously doth speake,
These he doth comfort, them he doth encourage,
And fill the stout with hope, the faint with courage.

92

Faire Paris lieth in a pleasant plaine,
Evn in the navell, rather in the hart
Of France, the river cuts the same in twaine,
And makes an Iland of the better part,
The rest that doth in greatnesse more containe,
A ditch and wall doth from the plaine depart,
King Agramant assaults the Westerne side,
As having Westward gotten all beside.

93

Marsilio with the warlike bands of Spaine,
He points to keepe the field in armed ranks,
Sobrino sage and those with him remaine,
Are placed upon Sequans fruitfull banks.
Himselfe with an innumerable traine,
With ladders, bridges, fagots, barres and planks,
Doth thinke to fill the ditch and make it levell,
And at the walles do keepe unruly revell.

94

What should I speake of Rodomont most fell,
Blaspheming God, not onely scorning men,
That knew to use a glittering blade so well,
As I so well know not to use my pen:
His deeds alone would aske a day to tell,
That in few houres he did performe as then:
As for the rest they came like swarmes of flies,
And fild the aire with shouts and hideous cries.

95

And they no lesse provided are within,
With rampers, bulwarks, and with double dikes,
And where their foes to climbe do once begin,
They push them down with bils, with staves & pikes;
If one be kild, another steppeth in,
Ho man his place for feare of hurt mislikes,
Some throw down bricks, some stones, some scalding water,
And grieve them much with all, most with the later.

96

Some throw among them newly flaked lime,
That burneth most when most it seems to quench,

With pots of brimstone, pitch and turpentine,
Annoying them with heate, and smoke, and stench,
The rest are still employd, and leese no time,
With wreathed stakes to fortifie, the trench:
Thus all within were busie, all without,
On both sides fortune standing still in doubt.

97

The while the king of Sarza brought about
His owne and men of divers other lands,
Himselfe to shew his might and courage stout,
That made him counted valiant of his hands,
From Cupids campe was not excluded out,
But rather soly subject to such bands,
A Lion geuls he gives in loftie banner,
A Ladie bridling him in lowly manner.

98

So by the beast he meant his owne fierce mind,
And by the dame his mistris faire was ment,
The bridle was to shew how love could bind
His loftie heart, and bow it to her bent.
He little knew, that shewd himselfe so kind,

How of his purchase others tooke the rent:
He knew not Mandricard did pleade possession,
Of her to whom he makes this kind profession.

99

Straight to the wals are thousand ladders plast,
With double ranks that two may climbe at once,
And up the souldiers get on them in hast,
One shoulders up another for the nonce:
He that goes slow, and he that climbs too fast,
Are each in perill of a broken sponce.
Their enemies assailing still the hier,
Their captains those that linger or retier.

100

Thus evry one do clammer up the wall,
For value some, and other some for feare,
And some are slaine, and some are made to fall,
Repenting late that ever they came there:
Fierce Rodomont alone (contemning all)
No paine, no place for perill doth forbear,
But rusheth on, more despratly then stoutly,
Blaspheming God while others pray devoutly.

101

A paire of curats passing hard he ware,
Made of an ugly Dragons scaly skin,
This armour his great auncestor first bare,
He that to build Babel did first begin:
(A towre whose height shold with the clouds copare)
And thought from God the rule of heavn to win:
And to the same effect likewise he made,
Of passing prooffe an helmet, shield and blade.

102

Thus Rodomont that came of Nimrods kind,
As proud and irreligious as was he,
Regardeth not a passage safe to find,
Or where the wall might weakest guarded be,
But with a heart to mischief all inclind,
Where he the same defended best doth see,
(Protected with his shield) he makes no bones,
To go through fire and water, darts and stones.

103

When once upon the battlement he was,
Where all the wall was broade and largely paved,
How did he slay the Christens then alas,
How fierce he unto them himselfe behaved?
His blade doth pierce their plates of steele and bras,
All were not priests whose crownes that day were shaved,
He kild alone so many as their blood
Did cause the ditch to fill with crimson flood.

104

Beside the baser sort, these men of name,
At this same first conflict by him were slaine,
Orgetto Duke, that late from Flanders came,
Arnold and Hugo, two of Charles his traine,
And Lews that governd Provence with great fame,
Walter and Denis, Hawnce of Satalline,
Some were thrust through, some had (past all releefe)
Their helmets and their heads clovn to the teeth.

105

And some by force from off the wall he cast,
Among the which was one Moschino hight,

That by his will would never water tast,
But still in wine did put his whole delight:
But lo his lucke was to be drownd at last,
Within this dirtie ditch for further spite,
And he that never water could abide
In all his life, now here in water dide.

106

Thus while that Rodomont did kill and slay,
All that he found upon the utmost wall,
His band of men the while had found the way,
To passe the ditch and so the wall to scale.
But now within another dike there lay,
The sight whereof their courage did appall,
For why the Christens sent such store of shot,
As this same place did seeme to them too hot.

107

The dike was drie, the bottome evn and plaine,
Both sides were steep, but steepest next the towne,
At this the souldiers curtesie do straine,
Which of them first shall venter to go downe,
Within the citizens had made a traine,

With labour great and cost of many a crowne,
That when the ditch with armed men was filled,
With heat and smother they should all be killed.

108

It cubits had in bredth thrise ten and more,
And in the bottome there were closely plast,
Barrels of pitch, brimstone, and oyle good store,
All matter quick to kindle, long to last.
The captaine led them all the way before,
And thousand souldiers followd them as fast,
But Rodomont as though he had had wings,
Quite ore the dike like to a grehound springs.

109

And being placed on the inner side,
Armd and unarmed men to him are like,
No steele there was his forces could abide,
Death followth evrie blow that he doth strike:
Which when a while to their great cost they tride,
They do of force abandon quite the dike,
He follows slaying without all remorse,
So sharpe his sword, so furious is his force.

110

But when the souldiers thought the banke to mount,
With scaling ladders, as they did the wall,
They found themselves deceivd of their account,
For straight the fier works were kindled all,
Whose sudden flames the clouds themselves surmount
Which sight the Pagans greatly did appall;
And so increase their terror and their wonder,
It made a noise like to continuall thunder.

111

The Christens do rejoyce at this reliefe,
To see their practise had succeeded well:
The Pagans plagud, with heat, and smother chiefe,
In great dispaire do rore alowd and yell:
Thus twixt the noise of fier and cries of grieffe,
They make an harmony most meete for hell.
And here I meane to leave them in the fire,
For to repose my selfe I now desire.

ARGUMENT

THE FIFTEENTH BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Faire Paris is assaild on evrie part,
By those of Affricke, and by those of Spaine:
From Logestill Astolfo doth depart,
And takes Calligorant in his owne traine,
Then slew Orillo, that by Magicke art
Revivd, when by the brothers he was slaine:
Stout Sansonet Astolfo kind doth use,
But Gryphin of his mistres beares ill newes.

FIFTEENTHBOOKE

1

To winne the field against our armed foes,
Is counted honourable any waies,
Although it be with policie or blowes,
Yet bloody conquests staine the Captaines praise,
But chiefest honour doth belong to those,
Whom Fortune to such height of hap doth raise,
To have their foe suppress and overthrowne,
With little losse and damage of their owne.

2

Such was the victorie that you then gaind,
O stout Hyppolito you conquerd so,
When the Venetian Navie had obtaind,
With armed vessels all the streame of Poe,
Your policie and vallue them constraind,
With losse inestimable thence to go:
Their marriners and souldiers all destroying,
Our marriners and souldiers not annoying.

3

The Pagan Rodomont did want this skill,
That forst ten thousand men the trench to enter,
By his commandment sore against their will,
Upon so perillous a place to venter,
Where straight the smother doth their bodies kill,
And send their sinfull soules beneath the center,
Himselfe in safetie sees them there a dying,
Still swearing, cursing, heavn it selfe defying.

4

Now Agramant an hot assault and fearce,
Gave where he thought the same was lest expected
He strives the wals to batter, break and pearce
With engines strong, and rams thereto erected:
Those Kings whose names I did before rehearse,
Brought men some stout, & some with fear infected,
And such as rather wish to stand aloofe,
Then weare a corslet of the surest prooffe.

5

But Agramant herein was much deceived,
For where he thought them weake and unprepard,

He found that manfully he was received,
And that the King himselfe the place did guard,
With thousands more readie to be bereaved
Of life and limbe, and such as nought regard,
Before that they would take so great disgrace,
As in their masters sight to leese their place.

6

But here I cease untill another time,
To tell of these assaults the hard successe,
Of damage like to both sides: now my rime
Unto the English Duke I must adresse,
Astolfo sonne of Oton whom sometime
Alcynas witchcraft held in great distresse,
Who like another Cyrce men transformed,
To trees, to beasts, and foules of shapes deformed.

7

You heard before how all her strange deceits,
Melyssa sage did with the ring discover,
And how she gave them also good receits,
As made them all their former shapes recover,
How after having scaped all their sleights,

They did no longer in such fancies hover,
But to be surely able to resist her,
They fled unto her vertuous elder sister.

8

Where when they had with comfort great remained,
Desirous to their countries to retire,
They asked leave of her, and leave obtained,
Of her that never hinders just desire:
But ere they went she frendly them constrained,
With precious gifts to be endowed by her,
Such gifts as were of precious price indeed,
And all their lives should stand them all in steed.

9

But chiefly to this English Duke she gave,
Of secret skill a little written booke,
Containing many a precept wise and grave,
The which of her most thankfully he tooke;
These teach a man from charmes himselfe to save,
That in the same advisedly doth looke,
And that to find them out he may be able,
The booke had in the end a perfit table.

10

Beside this booke on him she doth bestow,
Another gift of as great price and more,
A horne in which if he do once but blow,
The noise thereof shall trouble men so sore,
That all both stout and faint shall flie therefro,
So strange a noise was never heard before;
When to the Duke these rare gifts were imparted
He humblie tooke his leave and thence departed.

11

And least Alcyna should by force attempt,
To bring him backe or worke him some disease,
Andronica was with a navie sent,
To wafte him safe till he were past those seas,
And vertuous Sophrosina with him went,
To see him passe with safety and with ease,
So good a conduct and so sure a guide,
As was not found in all the world beside.

12

And thus she saild along that Indian shore,
And sees and leeseeth sight of sundry Iles,

Those called fortunate and others more,
That distant are, some few, some many miles,
And (for he never heard of them before)
He askt his guide some questions other whiles,
As whether from those Indian seas perchance,
A ship may saile to England, Spaine, and France.

13

She answerd thus; to put you out of doubt,
First know the earth it selfe is like an Iland,
Invironed with waters round about,
That compasse in on evry side their drie land,
And though to this day no man hath found out,
Nor thinks there can be any way but by land,
Because they judge the lands length there is such,
That it the other Hemispher doth tuch.

14

Yet I foresee, ere many ages passe,
New marriners and masters new shall rise,
That shall find out that erst so hidden was,
And shall discover where the passage lies,
And all the men that went before surpasse,

To find new lands, new starres, new seas, new skies,
And passe about the earth as doth the Sunne,
To search what with Antipodes is done.

15

Behold I see the signe of holy crosse,
A signe within these quarters seene but seeld,
I see where ten a thousand put to losse,
And to thimperiall banner all do yeeld,
I see in spite of evry thwart and crosse,
The house of Aragon still wins the feeld,
I see that fortune is disposd to lift
Up unto heavn the name of Charles the fift.

16

It pleaseth God to keepe the waies unknowne,
Unto these parts as they have bene and are,
Untill seven hundred yeares be overblowne,
What time he meanes to raise an Empror rare,
That shall both find and make them all his owne,
And one that shall most worthily compare,
In warre for courage, and in peace for justice,
With Trajan, with Aurelius or Augustus.

17

I see the will of heavn doth so incline,
The house of Austria and of Arragon,
Shall linke together in a happie line,
And be by match united both in one:
I see a braunch grow by the banke of Ryne
Out of this house, as like there hath bene none,
Whose match (thus much to say I dare be bold)
May not be found in writers new or old.

18

By him againe Astrea shall be brought,
And be restored from her long exile,
And vertues that have long bene set at nought,
Shall raigne and banish fraud deceit and guile:
For which great works by him so nobly wrought,
God meanes to grant him all this earthly Ile,
And under this wise Prince his deare annoited,
One shepheard and one flocke he hath appointed.

19

Which that it may the better be effected,
He gives them Captaines both by sea and land,

That shall win places never yet detected
And none shall dare their forces to withstand;
Cortese first, by whom shall be erected,
The Emprors banner in the Indian sand,
Who by his valiant hand and wise direction,
Shall win and keepe those Indies in subjection.

20

Loe, with the noble Marques of Pescare,
Prosper Colonna prosperous in fight,
Loe him that may with both of them compare,
Or be preferred if you do him right,
I meane the Marques Vast, whose vallew rare,
In tender youthfull yeares shall shine most bright,
Like to a horse that running swiftest pace,
Doth last set out, and first doth win the race.

21

In him shall faith and courage be so mixt,
That when his years shall seeme but young & tender
As passing not the twenty yeare and sixt,
Yet shall his fame and forces not be slender;
On him shall eyes and hearts of men be fixt,

To him shall townes and forts, and castles render,
As to a Captaine with such worth endewed,
As he alone the world might have subdewed.

22

What should I speake of famous Andrew DORie,
That to the pyrats so much terror breeds,
As Pompey so much praisd in Latin storie?
This Andrew either matches or exceeds:
What nobler name can be, what greater glorie,
Then to roote out such hurtfull cursed weeds?
So as men may with saftie and with ease,
From Italy to Nylus passe the seas.

23

By his assistance, furtherance and his aide,
In Italy Caesar a crowne obtaines,
For which good service though he be well paid,
Yet for himselfe thereby he nothing gaines:
The paine is his (o noble mind well staid)
The profit to his country sole remaines:
And whereas some to rule their country sought,
By him his countries freedome shall be wrought.

24

This love by him unto his country showne,
In honor true shall more his name advance,
Then both the Caesars victories well knowne,
In England, Spaine, in Italy and France:
For though their enemies were overthrowne,
By valour oft, and oftentimes by chance,
Yet this did blot their praise and make it lesse,
That both their countries freedome did oppresse.

25

Wherefore let them and others all beside,
That tyrannize their countries be ashamed,
And hanging downe their heads, their faces hide,
When they shall heare this noble Andrew named,
By whose rare temperate and happie guide,
His countries peace and freedome shall be framed:
And thus Andronica the Duke foretold,
What men in future ages come there shold.

26

The while with prosperous winds the vessels driven,
Came first within the view of Persian shore,

And then from thence their way they so contrived,
They past the gulfe (so called long before)
And there to land so happily arrived,
Misdoubting of Alcynas might no more,
He thanks these guides that all the way defend him,
And humbly to their Ladie recommend him.

27

More woods then one, more fields then one he past,
More then one valley, more then one high hill:
He meeteth theeves by night, by dayes as fast,
That lie in wait poore travellers to kill:
Of beasts, of serpents huge he was agast,
That with their terror those wild deserts fill,
But when he blew his horne they fled away,
No man nor beast durst in the hearing stay.

28

He travels through the happie Arabie,
So called for the store of spices sweet,
There where the bird that burnes and doth not die,
To dwell of all the world hath thought most meet:
Thence went he to the sea, that once was drie,

Which Jacobs sons went through upon their feet,
Proud Pharao following them unto his cost,
Himselfe and all his charets drownd and lost.

29

Fast by the banks of Trajans streame he rides;
There where as Nylus doth receive the same,
An horse of passing swiftnesse he bestrides,
That was ingendred twixt the wind and flame,
Not such a beast in all the world besides,
And Rabycano is this horses name:
Now as along the rivers banke he past,
He saw a boate make toward him in hast.

30

A simple hermit did the vessell steare,
Whose beard with age was overgrowne and gray,
And when he came so nie that he might heare,
These words to him he fatherly doth say,
My sonne if you do hold your safetie deare,
Except you meane to die this present day,
Proceed no farther in the way you ride,
But ferrie over to the other side.

31

For if you do that fatall way proceed,
You shall within a mile a giant meet,
Whose stature other men doth farre exceed,
For why his height is counted fourteene feet,
He makes a sport of evry cruell deed,
The flesh of man unto his tast is sweet,
He eateth some alive, and some he slayeth,
He quarters some, and other some he flayeth.

32

Amid this crueltie he hath great sport,
To use the service of a certaine net,
Which in the common way in secret sort,
With dust and gravell coverd he doth set,
And then when strangers do that way resort,
First if he may, behind them he doth get:
And then with hideous outcries he them scares,
Untill they fall into his net unwares.

33

But having caught them once in such a cage,
Of birth or merit he hath no respect,

Of wealth nor sex, of country nor of age,
No priviledge from him can them protect,
Their carkases his hunger must asswage,
Their sculs like monuments he doth erect,
In posts and windowes hanging them on pins,
His chambers all are hanged with their skins.

34

Take then (my sonne) take then this other way,
Where with more ease and safetie you may go.
Thanks (gentle Frier) the English Duke doth say,
Yet can I not your counsell follow tho,
Though danger bids go safest way one may,
Yet what saith honor? honor saith not so,
Let none retire with shame, thus honor seath,
The worst that can befall one is but death.

35

But contrary, if I may him intrap,
As he to do to other doth devise,
And take himselfe in his prepared trap,
The good is great that hereof may arise.
Well, quoth the hermit, God grant blessed hap,

And send his Angell Michael from the skies,
That may deliver him into thy hand,
Or give thee strength his forces to withstand.

36

On goes the Duke blest by the simple Frier,
Much trusting in his sword, more in his sound:
And being now approacht a little nier,
The cruell giants gracelesse house he found,
Environd all with marish ground and mier,
His chambers all within were furnisht round
With skins and skuls of many a wofull hed,
Of such as evill chance had thither led.

37

As hunters that by forrest wild do dwell,
Naile by on post the heads and pawes of Beares,
And of their dangers do delight to tell,
And call to mind their hardly scaped feares:
So looke who did in strength the rest excell,
The giant kept some speciall limbs of theirs,
The rest in ditches carelesly he throwes,
To rot and be devourd by dogs or crowes.

38

Calygorant (so is this giants name)
Stands looking at his gate with watchfull eie,
Rejoycing much when any stranger came,
And namely now the Duke he doth espie,
Not doubting but by him to do the same,
He had to others done, and make him die;
But first he seekes behind the Duke to get,
And thinks hereby to drive him to the net.

39

When as the Duke the Giant fierce espide,
He staid his horse and would not forward go,
For feare lest in the net he might be tide,
Of which the hermit had forwarnd him tho:
Then bloweth he his horne of vertue tride,
That in the hearers terror breeds and wo,
Which so possest his senses altogether,
As straight he fled, and saw not where nor whether.

40

It seemed with his heart he lost his eies,
And still he fled, and cares not how nor where,

Right to the place where that most strange net lies,
Which he to take the Duke had placed there,
The net his armes and all his members ties,
Which then Astolfo saw (now out of feare)
He lights and drawes his sword, intending then
To venge the death of thousand guiltlesse men.

41

But finding him so sure and strongly bound,
He thought it were a base ungentle part,
To slay a prisner whom in bands he found,
So as he could not stir, nor no way start:
God Vulcan wrought this net in caves profound,
Of flaming AEtna, with such skill and art,
That though the wires did seem but smal and weak,
Yet could no force the same consume nor breake.

42

I say this curious net then Vulcane wrought,
When certaine jealous thoughts his heart inflamed,
His spouse therwith in Mars his armes he caught,
And openly then made them both ashamed,
At which prospect though many gods then laught,

Yet many wisht in like sort to be shamed:
Slie Mercury did after steale this net,
His lovely Cloris therewithall to get.

43

Faire Cloris who flies out before the morne,
And sprinkleth aire with smell of fragrant flowres,
That in her lovely lap about are borne,
From whence do fall the pleasant Aprill showres:
But Mercury, sith she his love did scorne,
Lay with his net in waite not many houres,
Till at the last by Nylus banks he caught her,
And there to daunce la volta then he taught her.

44

The net in Anubs temple he did leave,
Where many yeares in safetie it did bide,
Untill Calygorant not asking leave,
And caring not what should thereof betide,
Of this great relique did the Church bereave,
With all the plate and ornaments beside:
And to this wicked use the net employed,
By which the passengers were sore annoyed.

45

Now of this net Astolfo tooke a wire,
And (like a theefe) behind him tide his hands,
Who now was meeke as any could desire,
And like a lambe by him most gently stands:
At least the waight thereof himselfe might tire,
First having bound his prisner sure in bands,
He makes him carry that upon his backe.
And usde him like a mule to beare a packe.

46

And thus he parteth thence triumphing so,
And led the giant prisner in a string,
And all about the country him doth show,
(A sight that to them all great joy did bring)
To Memphis Pyramids he then doth go,
Most famous for the tombe of many a King,
More hie in height then fiftie times Pauls steeple,
Then saw he Cayr so huge and full of peeple.

47

But not so peopled as they now report,
That thousands in the streets by night do lie

For want of roome, yet builded in such sort,
That evry house is made three stories hie,
Where runnegates do dwell, that make a sport,
Their faith and their salvation to denie:
Of which the Sowdan for his owne behoofe,
Keepes fifteene thousand lodging in one roofe.

48

Thence went Astolfo to the banks of Nyle,
To Damyat a citie thereabout,
And here he heard within a dozen myle
Orillo dwelt, a hardy theefe and stout,
That robd poore men, and kild them other while,
As travellers of him stood sore in doubt,
And (that which him with greater wonder filled)
The common voice was he could not be killed.

49

Full many a thrust, full many a cruell blow,
Of many men in fight he had endured,
And unto many men great care and wo,
And death it selfe he often had procured:
But his owne body was enchanted so,

As evry wound he had forthwith was cured,
I thinke some Fayry was his dame, or rather
I thinke some Incubus had bene his father.

50

The worthy Knight this wicked creature sought,
Untill at last he came unto the place,
Where then Orillo with two champions fought,
The combat having held no little space,
Yet at his hands they both had gained nought,
Though both of them gave sundry blowes apace,
Their names were these that held this mongrell tack,
Griffin the white and Aquilant the black.

51

The Necromancer fought with vantage great,
He rode upon a cruell hideous beast,
A Crocodile that flesh of men doth eat,
And birds and beasts, and doth them all digest,
Yet had the brethren throwne him from his seat,
And further had the Crocodile distrest:
But him to wound and kill in vaine they strived,
For still his wounds did heale, and he revived.

52

Sometime they cleft his head by force in twaine,
As butchers cleave a bullocks with an axe,
But straight he joyneth both the parts againe,
As if they had bene made of melting waxe.
Who so hath seene the Alcumists most vaine,
That work with Mercurie their cunning knacks,
Which quite disperst, rejoyne evry member,
Would soone by this be made that to remember.

53

Fierce Aquilant among so many bloes,
With one, his head from off his shoulders strake,
About he seekes and gropeth as he goes,
And in the dust to find his head doth rake,
And finding it, he takes it by the nose,
Or by the locks, nor more ado doth make,
But sets it on as if it were but glewed,
And fights as if his forces were renewed.

54

Stout Griffin at a blow cuts off his arme,
And takes it up and flings it in the brooke,

But he like one that had receivd no harme,
Doth dive the same within the streame to looke,
Which found, he joynes (I know not with what charme)
Unto the place it late before forsooke:
Two dames stood by in white and blacke attire,
The combat being fought at their desire.

55

These were the courteous dames that with great care
Had brought them up evn from their swathing bads,
For these two brothers did by fortune rare
In their first childhood chance into their hands:
These two to Oliver, Gysmonda bare,
Though straight they were convaied to forren lands,
Where these two Ladies kept them as their owne,
I need not tell at large a tale so knowne.

56

Now was the time that neare approcht the night,
That makes each thing with shadow shew obscure,
So that not want of force, but want of light,
Did cause the combat could no longer dure:
The Ladies clad in garments blacke and bright,

That (as I said) this conflict did procure,
On this condition did them all dismisse,
That to returne next day they do not misse.

57

But when that English Duke both saw and knew,
The valiant youths Griffin and Aquilant,
Not onely by their armes he saw in vew,
But by their blowes, of which they were not scant,
He doth acquaintance old with them renew,
And they no point of courtesie do want,
For straightway by the Ladies he was led,
To take with them a supper and a bed.

58

Then in a garden sweet they did provide
Great store of daintie meats and costly wine,
Fast by a coole and pleasant fountaines side,
As best agreeth with the sommer time,
The while the giant with strong chaines they tide
Unto the body of an auncient Pine,
Lest he might hap to trouble and molest them,
While they determind to refresh and rest them.

59

The boord with rich and costly fare was filled,
And yet their smallest pleasure was their meat,
The Knights in languages and learning skilled,
Talke of Orillo and the wonder great,
To see one wounded so, and yet not killed,
It seemd to them a dreame and strange conceat,
And evn the wisest and most learnd did wonder,
How he rejoynd his members cut in sunder.

60

Astolfo onely in his booke had read,
(That booke that taught all charmes to overthrow)
How this Orillo never could be dead,
While in his head one fatall haire did grow,
But having puld this haire from off his head,
He should be subject unto evry blow,
Thus said the booke, but precept there was none,
Among so many haire to find that one.

61

Astolfo joyfull of this good instruction,
Not doubting but by this to make him die,

First makes some circumstance of introduction,
And prayes the brothers give him leave to trie,
If he could bring Orillo to destruction,
And they this friendly sute do not denie,
Not doubting he alone would strive in vaine,
With him that late resisted had them twaine.

62

Now had the Sunne removd the nights darke vaile,
When as Orillo turned to the field,
And then the English Duke did him assaile,
Both fought on horseback, both with spear & shield.
Evn then Orillo felt his heart to faile,
(A hap to him that hapned had but feeld)
Evn then some strange presage did him offend,
That shewd his dayes drew shortly to their end.

63

Their speares now broke their naked swords they drew,
Astolfo layes on blowes on him a maine,
About the field Orillos members flew,
But he together gathers them againe,
And straight his fight and forces doth renew,

The English Duke dismembring him in vaine,
Untill at length one blow so luckie sped,
That by his shoulders he cut off his hed.

64

And having headed him so evn and just,
Straight with his head on horsebacke he doth mount
And rides away, Orillo in the dust
Doth grope to find the same as he was wont,
But missing it and full of new mistrust,
To overtake him yet he makes account,
He rides, and would have cride ho tarrie tarrie,
But in his hand the Duke his tongue doth carrie.

65

But though his head were lost, he finds his heeles,
To spurre and pricke he never doth forbear,
The headlesse body never stirs nor reeles,
But sits as sure as if the head were there:
The while the skull Astolfo puls and peeles,
Among such store to find thinchanted haire,
For in the haire no difference was in sight,
To know if he did take the wrong or right.

66

But sith to make sure worke he thought it best,
He makes his sword serve for a barbers knife,
To shave the skull therewith he doth not rest,
Untill he finisht had the bloody strife:
He cuts that haire by chance among the rest,
That haire that held Orillo in his life,
The face looks pale, devoid of lively heate,
The body backward fals out of the seate.

67

This done, the Duke brought in his hand the head,
Returning to the company againe,
And shewd them where he left the carkas dead,
Which when they saw with certain signes and plaine
A kind of envious joy in them it bred,
For glad they were their enemy was slaine,
But inwardly they were displeasd and sorie,
That this same Duke had got from them the glorie.

68

The women also were not well content,
That he had slaine Orillo in the fight,

Because it hindred had their first intent,
Which was to stay these youths al means they might,
In hope thereby some mischiefes to prevent,
Which they foresaw should unto them alight:
Straight all that country was with rumor filled,
How thEnglish Duke Orillo fierce had killed.

69

For as in all those cities they do use,
The keeper of the next adjoyning fort,
Sent by a Dove a letter of the newes,
From Damiat unto the nearest port,
By which device most rare they cannot chuse
But heare and send with speed each true report:
And thus in evry country and in towne,
They do extoll this English Dukes renowne.

70

The worthy Duke the brothers doth perswade,
From thence their courses into France to bend,
To do the dutie for which man was made,
Gods honour and their countries to defend,
Which now the Turks and Painims did invade,

And neare had brought the same to wofull end:
Which counsell from so great a Prince proceeding
They follow straight with forwardnesse exceeding.

71

The women now with teares in watry eies,
Bid them farewell, and so they parted thence:
And for they heard the holy citie lies
Not passing sixe or sevn dayes journey thence,
To take it in their way they do devise,
To see the place, where for humane offence,
True God, true man descending from above,
Did die for us unworthy of such love.

72

And sith the way betweene was large and wide,
And void of fruits for sustenance of man,
They do good store of bread and wine provide,
With needfull things, as for the time they can,
And on the giants shoulders them they tide,
Who like a sumpter horse them after ran,
And on this sort with most devout intent,
Like pilgrims to Jerusalem they went.

73

Six dayes they traveld in their weary way,
Nor seeing man, nor beast, nor bird alive,
The seventh immediat after breake of day,
In that most blessed city they arrive:
Then visit they the tombe where Jesus lay,
When with his death he did us dead revive,
And brought hell, sinne and death into subjection,
With suffring, dying, and his resurrection.

74

Now while the tombe with great heed they behold,
Bare head and feet in shew of meek submission,
And with more inward joy then can be told,
Yet joyned with a deepe and sad contrition,
That strake their hearts in awe and made them cold,
With true remorse devoid of superstition,
And with themselves they still continued musing,
Each one himselfe in such like words accusing.

75

Why then, where thou deare Lord didst for our sake,
With water and with blood the ground distaine,

Shall not mine eyes some small amends to make,
Shed teares in memory of so great paine?
Oh drowsie heart that dost not now awake,
Oh frozen heart that meltest not in raine,
Oh stony heart that dost not now relent,
Lament thee now, or else for ay lament.

76

Thus with an humble and repentant sprite,
They tarride at the tombe no little space,
When lo the priest appeared in their sight,
Whose office was to keepe the holy place,
Who seeing them so lowly and contrite,
He doth impart to them this speciall grace,
(Sith to amendment they were now resolved)
Them of their sinnes forepassed he absolved.

77

This done, they went about and viewd the towne,
Held in those happy dayes by Christen hands,
Who striving now to keepe each other downe,
With causlesse warres do trouble sea and lands,
Or leeing or neglecting that renowne,

In which Gods honour and their safetie stands:
But letting this great enemy increase,
By their seeld making, never keeping peace.

78

A gallant knight whom Sansonet they call,
This city governd under Charles the great,
Who then intended to repaire the wall,
And make the town a strong and stately seat:
Astolfo gave to him the Giant tall,
For strength and stature fit for such a feat,
To serve his present purpose for the nonce,
Unto the wals to carie heavy stones.

79

And Sansonet doth eke on him bestow
A curious belt and hangers for a blade,
And spurs of gold, in substance rich and show,
That for that knight were thought to have bin made
That slue the Dragon with a deadly blow,
Which did the Lady chast and faire invade:
Thus gifts both givn and tane on either part,
Each from the other friendly doth depart.

80

Now going from Jerusalem, behold
They met a Greekish pilgrim by the way,
That such ill newes to good Griffino told,
As made him out of temper all the day:
It was his evill fortune, deare to hold,
And give his heart unto her for a prey,
That had a pleasing hue, and faire smooth skin,
But false, unchast, and trecherous within.

81

Her name was Origilla, whom of late
He left at Constans of an ague sick;
And hoping now to find her in good state,
He heares she hath him servd a sluttish trick,
As namely she had got a newfound mate,
Not caring if that he were dead or quick:
She thought that for her yong yeares twas no reason
To lie alone in that sweet pleasant season.

82

This newes his mind doth gripe, his heart doth bite,
He mournes by day, by night he takes no rest,

That breeds him paine, that others breeds delight,
And this torments him more than all the rest,
He shames, and shuns to have it come to light,
What was his griefe that did him so molest.
And this to keep it close the rather made him,
Because from her his brother did dissuade him.

83

But all in vaine, for he was wholly bent
To follow her, although he knew her nought,
Yet to himselfe he keepeth his intent,
That secretly his going may be wrought:
He vowes to make thadulterer repent,
Who now to Antiochia her had brought:
But in another book I will expresse,
Of his departure what was the successe.

ARGUMENT

THE SIXTEENTH BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Stout Griffin finds his subtill mistresse straying,
With vile Martano, but is pacifid:
The Turks and Christians all their force displaying,
Do fight, on both sides many thousands did:
Both man and house by sword and fire decaying,
Do make a wofull sight on either side:
Without the towne the Christians plague the Turks,
Within fierce Rodomont much mischief works.

SIXTEENTHBOOKE

1

Great paines in love full many men have found,
Of which my self have provd so great a part,
As by my skill some good may hap redound,
To such as are lesse skilfull in this art:
Wherefore what I affirme with judgement sound,
To breed just cause of lesse or greater smart,
Believe what I set downe for your behoofe,
Probatum est, I know tis true by prooffe.

2

I do affirm, and have, and ever shall,
That he that binds himselfe in worthy bands,
Although his mistresse shew him grace but small,
Although he find no favour at her hands,
Sharp words, coy looks, smal thanks, hope none at all,
Though more and more aloofe from him she stands,
Yet so his heart and thoughts be highly placd,
He must not mourn, no though he die disgracd.

3

Let him lament, let him mourn, pine, and die,
Whom wanton wandring eyes, whom flaring haire
Have made a slave, when under them doth lie
A heart corrupt, a tongue that false will sweare,
Like wounded Deere in vaine he seekes to flie,
And in his thigh the shaft about doth beare;
And this above the rest torments him chiefe,
He is ashamd and dares not shew his grieve.

4

Such was the hap, such was the wofull state
Of Griffin now possest with foolish love,
He knew her mind and manners worthy hate,
Yet could not he this fancy fond remove:
His reason faine his passion would abate,
But appetite is placed her above:
That be she ner so false, ingrate or nought,
Yet needs of him she must be lov'd and sought.

5

Away he steales from hence in secret sort,
Nor to his brother once adieu doth say,

For feare lest that his brother would dehort
Him from her love, as oft he did assay:
And that his journey may be cut more short,
He coasts the country for the nearest way,
He travels all the day and half the night,
Untill Damasco came within his sight.

6

Fast by this town this trull he overtooke,
That lovingly with her new love did ride,
And all old friends and lovers all forsooke,
He was her Champion, he her onely guide:
A man might boldly sweare it on a book,
He were a husband fit for such a bride,
He false, unconstant, trecherous, so was she:
She had a modest look, and so had he.

7

He rode all armd upon a stamping steed,
With gilded barb that cost full manya crown;
She ware no lesse magnificent a weed,
A rich embroidered purple velvet gown;
Thus to Damasco ward they do proceed,

Where late there was proclaimed in the towne,
A solemne feast that should endure some dayes,
For justs, for tilt, for turneyes, and for playes.

8

Now when the queen good Griffin had espied,
(For whom she knew her squire would be too weak)
Though sore appald, as scant she could it hide,
Lest he his wrath on both at once should wreak,
Yet as the time permits she doth provide,
Consulting with her guide before she speak:
And when they had agreed how to deceive him,
With open armes she runneth to receive him.

9

And framing then her speech with great regard,
To answer fit unto her gestures kind,
Deare sir (quoth she) is this the due reward,
My loyall love to you deserves to find?
That from your sight I should a yeare be bard,
Your sight that wholly can content my mind?
You left me grieved with a burning fever,
But burning more in love of you for ever.

10

Where I your coming lookd for long in vaine,
Each houre a day, each moneth did seem a yeare,
And of your absence long I did complaine,
Enquiring oft, if I of you could heare:
Alas how full is carefull love of paine?
So sad mine heart, so heavy was my cheare,
As being in despaire which way to mend it,
I loathd my life, and did desire to end it.

11

But lo how fortune when I looked least,
Hath now provided me of double aid,
And sent my brother, this most welcome guest,
With whom I have without dishonour staid,
And now your selfe whose presence makes me blest,
For had your coming longer been delaid,
So was my heart and soule to you inclind,
That sure for grief I should have did and pind.

12

Thus flattring words wherewith her tongue abounds,
Holp her in so good sort her tale to frame,

That now on him the greater fault redounds,
As glad he was to scuse himselfe from blame,
And her strong reasons sounded on weak grounds,
Do cleare both her, and him that with her came,
And makes him deemd a kinsman and a brother,
That did his best to make this maid a mother.

13

So that he did not onely not reprove
Her that so trechrously had him betraid,
So that he did not wreak as did behove,
Thadulterer that false with her had plaid;
But thinks it well if he the blame remove,
Which to his charge so probably she laid:
And as for him (love makes him see so blindly)
He calls him kinsman, and salutes him kindly.

14

Thus Griffin of his love no whit abates,
But keeps her company as with his own,
Untill they came within Damasco gates,
Where none of them were seen before or known.
The town was full of Lords and great estates,

The rumor of the feast so far was blown,
Which that they might have more securely haunted,
The king to all that came safe conduct graunted.

15

But here I cease to talk of Origill,
And of her mate with her as fitly met,
As knavish jack could be for whorish gill,
Unchast and false, as ever water wet:
To flatter and dissemble passing skill,
And all was fish that came into her net:
Now here I leave good Griffin in her armes,
And turne me to the Turkish men of armes.

16

I left where Agramant assaulted hard,
A gate which he had hoped to have found,
But weak and feeble, naked, unprepard,
And easie to be beaten to the ground:
I told you how king Charles the place did guard,
Invirond with selected souldiers round:
As namely Guydons strong, and Angilero,
With Oton stout Ovolyo Berlingero.

17

Thus either band in sight of either king,
Doth fight in hope of great reward and praise,
And thinks such honour back that day to bring,
As should themselves and all their ofspring raise.
But such great store of darts the Christens sling,
As still the Turks are foiled many wayes,
They die, and by their deaths do others reach,
How hurtfull tis to rove beyond their reach.

18

But Rodomont whose men consumd with fire,
Do fill their masters mind with double rage,
Yet to avenge their deaths doth so desire,
As nought but blood his thirst of blood can swage:
He spares not in the passion of his ire,
Nor men nor women, order, sex nor age,
Away do run the silly people crying,
And leave their children, friends, and wives a dying.

19

They happy were whose feet did serve them best,
The fury of this cruell Turke to shun,

For some were killed in the flight, the rest
Unto the Churches or strong houses run,
And lock the gates against so fierce a guest,
That in the streets had so great mischief done:
And of them all that had been slaine in chase,
Not one of them was wounded in the face.

20

But as the Tyger kills the fearfull Doe,
That but by flight cannot it self defend,
Or as the Wolves do spoile the sheep: evn so
This cruell Turke their guiltlesse blood doth spend:
They neither know to strike nor ward a blow,
To hurt their foe nor yet to help their friend:
Thus past the Pagan to S. Michels bridge,
And none there was his passage to abridge.

21

He kills alike the sinner and the good,
The reverend father and the harmlesse child,
He spils alike the yong and aged blood,
With widowes, wives, and virgins undefild;
And though that all did yeeld, and none withstood,

Yet mercy from his mind was so exild,
He shewd to such as things can truly value,
Great signes of cruelty, but none of value.

22

Nor doth the cruell rage and fury cease,
With seeing of so many people slaine,
But rather still it growes and doth increase,
Against those other that alive remaine:
Nor grants he to the Churches any peace,
But evn as though the walls could suffer paine,
He maketh furious warres against the walls,
And flings against them store of fiery balls.

23

Their houses all were built in Paris then,
Of timber (and I judge this present houre
Of brick and stone there are not six of ten)
Which made the Pagan then to bend his power,
To burn the houses, having kild the men:
And though that fire do of it self devoure,
Yet he doth help the fire and overthrew them,
And those that lurkd within he spoild and slue them.

24

Had Agramant had like successe without,
As had within this wicked Rodomount,
The wals of Paris had not kept him out,
On which so oft he did assay to mount:
But now this while the Angell brought about
Renaldo stout the flower of Clarimount,
Both with the English and the Scots supplies,
As secretly as Silence could devise.

25

And that they might them more unwares assaile,
They cast a bridge a league above the towne,
And passe the river to their best availe,
And so in battell order comming downe,
Not doubting if their footing do not faile,
To get that day great glory and renowne:
And still among the ranks Renaldo rides,
And for things needfull evermore provides.

26

Two thousand horse in good Duke Edmonds guide,
And thrice two thousand archers he doth send,

To get to Paris on the tother side,
To help within the city to defend:
(The cariages and other lets beside,
To leave behind a while he doth intend)
These succours greatly help the town within,
And at Saint Dennis gate they let them in.

27

Renaldo takes the conduct of the rest,
Appointing each his office and his place,
As in his skill and judgement seemeth best,
Sevring each band from others with a space:
And seeing evry one was prone and prest,
As was to be required in such case,
He calleth all the Lords and Leaders chiefe,
And usd to them this pithy speech and briefe.

28

My Lords (quoth he) I need not to repeat
Your weighty businesse unto you at large,
I onely say, you have just cause and great,
To give God thanks your duties to discharge,
That here hath sent you, where with little sweat,

But giving on your foes one valiant charge,
You may obtaine true fame and glory more,
Than all your ancestors obtaind before.

29

God, onely God that gives and guides good chance,
Hath offerd unto you this good occasion,
Your names and glories highly to advance,
Which is in noble minds a strong perswasion:
Behold the kings of England and of France,
Endangerd greatly by the Turks invasion,
Shut up in trenches and in wals with shame,
You may set free to your immortall fame.

30

The very law of nature and humanity
Wils noble hearts to help the weak distresd;
But more the lawes of state and Christianity,
Without your help now like to be oppresd,
And right Religion turnd to Turkish vanity,
Of which what harms will grow, may soon be guest,
Our temples faire with their foule idols fild,
Our virgins (chast by vow) deflourd and kild.

31

No mean, no stay, no end will be of slaughter,
Of rapes and rapines wicked and unjust;
No man shall keep his sister, wife, or daughter,
From out the reach of their unruly lust:
But now if you these sorrowes turn to laughter,
And raise your honour troden in the dust,
They must owe you the freedomes and the lives
Of them, their friends, their children, and their wives.

32

In ancient times a lawrell Civick crown
To him that savd one citizen they gave,
If then they had such honour and renown,
How many crownes shall you deserve to have,
If (not a townsman, but) a noble town,
And thousand innocents therein you save?
In you it lies them to preserve and cherish,
That (but for you) in wo should pine and perish.

33

Which if they should (as God forbid they should)
By these vile Saracens be overrun,

Then were the Romane Empire bought and sold,
The holy Church were spoild and quite undone:
In you it is these huge harms to withhold,
By you alone must this exploit be done,
Tread then this path of praise so large and ample,
He lead the way, follow but mine example.

34

This speech by him pronounced with so good spright,
With voice so audible, with comely grace,
Incensed them with such desire to fight,
That tedious seemd to them each little space.
And as we see in riding men delight
To spurre a horse, although he run apace:
So stird Renaldo with this exhortation
Those of the English and the Scottish nation.

35

And having thus confirmd their forward hearts,
And promisd largely in his masters name,
Great recompence to evry mans deserts,
Unto the river walls he closely came,
His army he divides in sundry parts,

Lest breach of order bring them out of frame,
And with the Irish band he first indents,
To spoile their lodgings, and to rob their tents.

36

The rest he thus in prudent sort divides,
The wayard Zerbin hath in government,
The Duke of Lancaster the battell guides,
The Duke of Clarence with the rereward went,
Renaldo with some chosen men besides,
Gives first the charge by generall consent:
Then on a sodaine they do raise a shout,
And fild our side with courage, theirs with doubt.

37

Renaldo riding out afore the rest,
(With mind to do as much as he had said)
Puts spurs to horse and sets his speare in rest,
His onely sight the Pagans greatly fraid,
With fainting hearts, pale looks, and panting brest,
They shew most certaine signes of minds dismaid,
Yet stout king Puliano shewes no token
Of heart astonished or courage broken.

38

But trusting to his strength, and void of feare,
And ranging out in sight of all his band,
He met him man to man and speare to speare,
He met him horse to horse, and hand to hand:
But straight it plainly was discerned there,
Sleight without force in little steed doth stand:
This kind of fight was of a rougher sort,
Then running of a course at tilt in sport.

39

Thus was king Pulian overthrown and tane,
To no small terrour of the Pagan host,
Next came the king (that giant) of Oran,
That of his goodly stature much doth bost,
But soon Renaldo brought him to his bane,
His horse, his weapon, and his life he lost:
The horse was glad to find himselfe enlargd,
And of his heavy burden so dischargd.

40

Nor was Renaldo of his sword more spare,
Then of his speare before himselfe he showd,

His blade Fusberta pierced to the bare,
When he his thrusts or deadly blowes bestowd:
No shields, no coats of so good temper are,
Nor cloth in hundred folds together sowd,
That this same fatall blade of his withstood,
But that at evry blow it fetcht the blood.

41

Nor did Zerbino merit common praise,
That of his value shewd that day good proof,
He met the stoutest Turks at all assaies,
On horse, on foot, at hand, and farre aloof,
Attempting and performing sundry waies,
That might be for their harm and his behoof:
And all his band in fight was fierce and hot,
As is the nature of the valiant Scot.

42

And thus their fiery heat and courage bold,
Well shewd by blowes they to the Pagans gave,
Did make their stomacks faint, their courage cold,
And glad in thend by flight themselves to save:
For Sobrin one in yeares and judgement old,

(Though no lesse stout the those lesse age that have)
Doth now a little with his band retire,
To shun the fury of the Scottish fire.

43

The worthy Dukes of Albanie and Mar,
Ensud in valiant sort the good successe,
And with the same prevailed had so far,
As they had brought the Turks to great distresse,
Till Isolir the new king of Navar,
Came with his band their fury to repress;
And on that side the battell did restore,
Almost now lost, at least declind before.

44

Then grew the fight on both sides firm and stable,
Both sides defend, both sides alike invade,
They cast on both sides darts innumerable,
And make therewith a dark unpleasing shade:
An endlesse work it were to write the rable,
The Christens kild with bow, with bill, with blade,
Somtime the sway goeth hither, sometime thither,
Like waters drivn with doubtfull tides and weather.

45

When one is slaine, his room another fills,
When one is hurt, another takes his place,
And he that now another smites and kills,
Falls dead himself within a little space;
Great heaps of bodies dead make little hills,
The earth it selfe doth look with bloody face,
The green wherewith it erst was overspread,
Is turned to sanguine and vermilion red.

46

My pen would faile, and skill would be too scant,
To tell the famous acts that Zerbin wrought,
How his new brother noble Ariodant,
A fresh supply against the Pagans brought,
And how still one supplying to others want,
Against the Turks with mutual forces fought;
Then namely when the Prince was almost slaine,
By bastards two of Aragen in Spaine.

47

Chelindo one, the other Mosco hight,
These two at once on Zerbin bent their force,

In hope that if their hands could hit aright,
To wound him sore, or at the least unhorse,
They wound him not, yet forcd him to alight,
For under him so sore they hurt his horse,
To serve his Lord he was no longer able,
But made the field his everlasting stable.

48

This foile and fall his courage more do whet,
To lose the service of his trusty steed,
But from the saddle quickly he doth get,
His losse his wrath, his wrath revenge doth breed:
He means not long to tarry in their debt,
That to his horse did this unworthy deed:
And first he gave to Mosco such a thrust,
As made him tumble senslesse in the dust.

49

But when Chelindo saw his brother dead,
Revenge and feare in him together strave,
His inward care provokd him to have fled,
Himselfe from danger imminent to save,
But straight revenge another humour bred,

Expelling feare, and makes him bold and brave,
He spurs his horse in hope to overrun him,
But Zerbin slightly steps aside to shun him.

50

And such a blow he lent him as he past,
Upon his shoulders from the reredemaine,
That horse and man unto the ground were cast,
Whence neither of them rose alive againe:
And now the Spanish band came in so fast,
As noble Zerbin had almost been slaine;
But Ariodante then himselfe bestird,
And makes an open lane by dint of sword.

51

The while the Duke of Clarence doth assaile
Their rere that was by Baricondo led,
The English archers shoot as thick as haile,
Which to their horsemen great annoyance bred:
On evry side the Christens do prevaile,
On evry side the fearfull Pagans fled,
Great store were slaine, and many prisners taken,
Their battell now declined sore and shaken.

52

And had been lost, had not Ferraw by chance
Come to their aid as yong Olimpio fell,
Slaine by a knight of Scotland or of France;
A cruell knight, whose name I cannot tell:
Ferraw was sore aggrievd at this mischance,
He knew this youth and lovd him passing well,
Because his skill in musick was so choice,
Both for sweet stroke, and for his pleasing voice.

53

Had not the humour of ambition vaine
With crotchets new his foolish fancy fild,
He might have better staid at home in Spaine,
Than come abroad to be in battell kild:
But thus we see they get but losse and paine,
That deale in that in which they be not skild;
I wish musitions meddle with their songs,
And pray the souldiers to revenge their wrongs.

54

Ferraw that saw ten thousand slaine before,
Without or fetching sigh or shedding teare:

With this his minions death was grievd so sore,
As scarce he could evn then to weep forbear,
But he that kild him shall abuy therefore,
By Macon and Lanfusa he doth sweare,
And straight performd it to the knights great paine,
For with his polax out he dasht his braine.

55

Nor so content, he runs among the presse,
And in his rage so many Scots he slew,
That their late forwardnesse he did repress,
And causd that they in hast themselves withdrew:
Then to the tents was sent the king of Fesse,
To make resistance to the Irish crew,
That spoild their lodgings having robd the best,
And went about to set on fire the rest.

56

Then when the stout king Agramant espid,
The danger great he and his men were in,
And how these new supplies on evry side,
Made his retire, and ground of them did win:
To save his own in time he doth provide,

And lets alone the wals, and them within,
Himselpe with Lords and other Princes store
Came where Ferraw was entred late before.

57

And in such strength they do their forces link,
And with such fury they restore the fight,
That now the Scots began to faile and shrink,
Save that Renaldo came evn then in sight,
And crid, O worthy Scots, and do you think
To save your selves by so unworthy flight?
Will you so leese the honour late you wonne?
Care you no more to save your masters sonne?

58

Do you no more regard your reputation,
By you in sundry bloody battels got,
To leave the flower and jewell of your nation,
Amid his foes as if you lovd him not?
Ye shame your selves and all your generation,
If you distaine you with so foule a blot,
Turn, turn I say, and take some heart of grace,
And meet and smite these Panims in the face.

59

They that before were sore with feare possest,
Were now so heartned, that with honest shame,
Each one doth seem his safety to detest,
Each one his mind with anger doth inflame,
And where they left their captaine halfe distrest,
With this so forward guide as fast they came:
So Zerbin rescud was from Turkish forces,
And mounted straight one of the empty horses.

60

Renaldo that did ever take delight
To set on those that were most strong and stout,
When once king Agramant was come in sight,
Him from the rest forthwith he singles out:
But when between them was begun the fight,
They sundred were by those that stood about,
I meane the Turks, who their chief Prince defended,
Who els perhap his raigne evn then had ended.

61

Now while without the wals the battell so,
On either side with fury was renewd,

Fierce Rodomont within did work such wo,
More ruffull sight with eye was never viewd;
To wrack profane the holy temples go,
He setteth fire on all, and to conclude,
He did alone so spoile the goodly citie,
As might have movd a stony heart to pitie.

62

And (while king Charles that was farre off from thence,
Did entertaine the newcome English host,
The which Renaldo sent for their defence)
Behold there came a messenger in post,
That lookd like one bestraught of wit and sence,
His voice with hast and feare was welnigh lost,
And when his broken words were plainly heard,
Ah well away (he cries) we all are mard.

63

Some fiend of hell (for sure a fiend of hell
It is that doth our city so destroy)
Is sent from Belzebub with us to dwell,
To work our utter ruine and annoy:
This day we must bid all good dayes farewell,

This day must be the last day of our joy,
Lo yonder how our sacred temples smoke,
Nor one in their defence dares strike a stroke.

64

Look how a man would be amazed to hear
A noise confused of backward ringing bells,
And after find, when he approacheth neare,
New set on on fire his house wherein he dwells;
In such amazement and in such a feare
Was Charles to hear the tale this poore man tells,
And as he thither nearer came and nearer,
He sees the buildings clearer burn and clearer.

65

Of hardy Squires he culls a gallant crew,
And means to drive away this wicked wight,
If man it be, or sprite with humane hue,
That doth unto the town this fowle despite:
Now came he where he plaine might see in view
Men murdered, houses burned, a woeful sight.
But now although perhaps my story please you,
To pause a little may refresh and ease you.

ARGUMENT

THE SEVENTEENTH BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Fierce Rodomont leave Paris is constraind,
Martano at Damasco tilts most vily,
Stout Griffin thinks his running thereby staind,
And goes from thence, the while Martano slily
Doth steale his coat and horse, and so obtaind
Great gifts, and of the king is graced highly:
But Griffin taken in Martanos clothing,
Receives disgrace, each one his presence lothing.

SEVENTEENTHBOOKE

1

The most just God, when once mans sins do grow
Beyond the bounds of pardon and of grace,
Because that men his judgements just may know,
No lesse then love, to rule on earth doth place,
Vile monsters, such as tyrannize us so,
With wrong the right, with lust they lawes deface:
For this same cause were Sylla sent and Marius,
The Nerons both, and filthy minded Varius.

2

For this Domician held in Rome the raigne,
And Antoninus of that name the last,
And Massimin a base unworthy swaine,
To plague mankind in Princely throne was placd:
For this in Thebes did cruell Creon raigne,
With other tyrants more in ages past,
For this of late hath Italie been wonne,
By men of Lumbarde, of Goth, and Hunne.

3

What should I of unjust Attyla speak?
Of Esselin, and of an hundred more?
Whom God doth send his anger just to wreak,
On us that still neglect his sacred lore.
The times forepast long since, the present eke,
Of such examples yeelds us wofull store,
How we unthankfull and unfruitfull sheep
Are givn to hungry ravning Wolves to keep.

4

Such Wolves as would not onely by their wils,
Seaze all our goods and substance as their pray,
But also send beyond the Alps high hils,
For other wolves more hungerstervd than they:
The bones of men that Thrasimeno fils,
The fights of Treb and Cannas are but play,
If with our bloody slaughters they compare,
Of Adda, Mela, Ronco, and of Tare.

5

No doubt but God in heavnly throne that sits,
And thence our deeds and thoughts doth plainly see,

Us to be spoild and conquerd thus permits,
By those that are perhaps as ill as we:
But if to please him we would bend our wits,
Then from these foes he soone would set us free,
And we shall see their punishment ere long,
That us oppresse by villany and wrong.

6

But now to turn from whence I did digresse,
I told you how when Charles the newes had heard,
Of houses burnd, and men in great distresse,
By him that doth nor God nor man regard:
Unto their aid he doth himself adresse,
And chuse some speciall men to be his guard,
And meeting such as fled their course he staid,
And these or such like words to them he said.

7

O simple fooles, what mean you hence to run?
Turn back for shame, turn back, and do not flie,
You chuse the greater ill the lesse to shun,
To live with shame, and may with honour die;
What city have you left when this is won?

What hope is left a fortune new to trie?
Shall one vile Pagan boast another day,
That he alone hath drivn you all away?

8

This said, he came unto the pallace gate,
Where now the Pagan Prince triumphant stood,
Most like a Serpent fierce that hath of late,
His old skin cast and left it in the wood,
Rejoycing now of his renewed state,
Of his fresh strength, of young and lusty bloud,
He shewes his forked tongue and comes apace,
And evry beast that sees him gives him place.

9

Thus scornfull and thus proud the Pagan stands,
With threats to spoile the Pallace and deface,
And not a man that once his force withstands,
Untill king Charles appeared in the place;
Who looking on his old victorious hands,
Said thus; and is now alterd so the case,
That these my hands that wonted were to win,
To yeeld and to be faint should now begin?

10

Why should the strength, the vigour and the might,
That I was wont in you to feel now faile?
Shall this same Panim dog evn in my sight,
My people slay, my dwelling house assaile?
No, first on me a thousand deaths alight,
No death can make a princely heart to quaile;
And with that word with couched speare in rest,
He runs and smites the Pagan on the breast.

11

And straight the other of the chosen crew,
On evry side the Pagan do beset,
But how he scapd, and what did then ensew,
Another time ile tell, but not as yet:
For first some matters past I must renew,
And namely Griffin I may not forget,
And crafty Origilla with the tother,
That was her bedfellow and not her brother.

12

These three unto Damasco came together,
The fairst and richest town of all the East,

What time great lords and knights repaired thither,
Allured by the fame of such a feast.
I told you from the holy city hither,
Was five or six dayes journey at the least:
But all the townes about both small and great,
Are not like this for state and fruitfull seat.

13

For first, beside the cleare and temprate aire,
Not noid with sommers heat nor winters cold,
There are great store of buildings large and faire,
Of carved stone most stately to behold,
The streets all pavd where is their most repaire,
And all the ground is of so fruitfull mold,
That all the yeare their spring doth seem to last,
And brings them store of fruits of dainty tast.

14

Above the City lies a little hill,
That shades the morning sun in early houres,
Of waters sweet (which here we use to still)
They make such store with spice and juyce of flowrs,
As for the quantity might drive a mill,

Their gardens have faire walks and shady bowrs:
But (that which chief maintaineth all the sweets)
Two christall streams do run amid the streets.

15

Such was the native beauty of the town:
But now because they look for great resort,
Of Princes and of Lords of great renown,
They deck their city in another sort:
Each Lady putteth on her richest gown,
Each house with Arras hangd in stately port:
The noble youths do stand upon comparison,
Whose horse doth best, who wears the best caparison.

16

Thus Griffin and his mates come to this place,
And first they view these showes with great delight,
And after they had rode a little space,
A courteous squire perswades them to alight,
And prayeth them to do his house that grace,
To eat and take their lodgings there that night:
They thank him for his kind and friendly offer,
And straight accept the courtsie he doth profer.

17

They had set down before them costly meat,
Of sundry wines there was no little store,
Of precious fruits the plenty was so great,
As they had seldom seen the like before:
The while their host doth unto them repeat,
The cause of all this feasting, and wherefore
The king appointed all these solemne sports,
To draw together knights of sundry sorts.

18

But Griffin (though he came not for this end,
For praise and bravery at tilt to run,
But came to find his fleeting female friend)
Yet was his courage such he would not shun,
In these brave sports some little time to spend,
Where of well doing honour might be won.
He promis'd straight (though little were his leisure)
Before he go, to see and shew some pleasure.

19

And first he asketh farther of the feast,
If it were new ordain'd, or els of old?

His host replieth thus (my worthy guest)
I shall in briefe to you this thing unfold:
Our Prince the greatest Prince in all the East,
Hath newly pointed this great feast to hold;
This is the first, but all of his retinue
Mind each fourth month this custome to continue.

20

In token of great gladnesse and great joy,
By all the city is the feast begun,
In token of the danger and annoy
That Norandin (our king) did lately shun,
Lockd up foure months, where he could not enjoy
The use of earth, of water, aire, nor sun:
Yet at the foure months end by hap he scapd
The death with yawning mouth that on him gapd

21

(But plaine to shew you whence did come the seed,
Of which this danger seemed first to grow)
Love did to Norandin this danger breed,
The king of Cypres daughter pleasd him so,
Because her beauty did the rest exceed,

To see her, needs (in person) he would go:
He saw he likd, he wood, he won, he married her,
And homward then by ship he would have caried her

22

But lo a wind and tempest rose so sore,
As three dayes space they looked to be drownd,
And made them land upon an unknown shore,
Where straight we pitcht our tents upon the ground,
And (for of trees and grasse there was good store)
The King in hope some venson to have found,
Into the next adjoyning wood doth go,
Two pages beare his quiver and his bow.

23

His meaning was some stag or buck to kill,
We wait his comming in the tent at ease,
When suddenly such noise our eares doth fill,
As wind in woods, and waves do make in seas,
And aye more nigh us it approched, till
We plaine might see unto our sore disease,
A monster huge that ran along the sand,
Destroying all that in the way did stand.

24

This Orke (for so men do the monster call)
Directed straight his course upon our tent,
His eyes were out, how ere it did befall,
But yet he was so quick and sharp of sent,
As all his blindnesse help not us at all,
He hunteth like a spaniell by the vent,
His sent is such as none can hope to shun him,
His pace is such as no man can outrun him.

25

Thus whether they prepar'd to fight or fly,
Or whether feare both fight and flight did let,
He takes them as his prisners by and by,
Of forty, ten scarce to the ship could get,
Among the other prisners tane was I,
Whilst I our Queene in safety would have set,
But all in vaine to flie, it did not boot,
He was so quick of sent, and swift of foot.

26

As shepheards hang a wallet at their wast,
So at his girdle hangs a mighty sack,

In which the better sort of us he placd,
The rest he bound together in a pack,
And to his cave that was most huge and vast,
He beares us (hopelesse ever to come back)
A comely matron in this den he had,
Maids faire and foule, some poore, some richly clad.

27

Beside this female family of his,
He hath a cave wherein he keeps his flock,
That cave in length and largenesse passeth this,
Made all by hand out of the stony rock:
And (for mans flesh his chiefest dainty is)
Into the cave he safely doth us lock,
The while he leads abroad his goats and sheep,
Which in the fields adjoyning he doth keep.

28

The king not knowing this, returned back,
The silence that he found some feare did breed:
But when he found his wife and men were lack,
He then to sea did hast him with great speed:
He sees plaine signes of hast, of spoile, of wrack,

Yet knowes he not the author of this deed,
Untill he had his ship by hap recoverd,
Then by his men the fact was plaine discoverd.

29

When he had heard at last the wofull newes,
How greatly was his heart surprisd with grieffe?
What gods, what fortune did he not accuse
For all his losses, but Lucyna chiefe?
But dangers all and death he first will chuse,
Ere he then leave his love without reliefe,
He either will her libertie procure,
Or els he will like chance with her endure.

30

He leaves his ship, and goes by land apace,
There where the monster had his love convoid,
And often wailes her hard and wofull case,
Desiring and despairing of her aid.
Now came he in the kenning of the place,
And stands twixt halfe amazd and halfe afraid:
At last he enters (love expelling feare)
When by good hap the monster was not there.

31

His wife was there, who with compassion movd,
Admonishd him to make but little stay,
But hasten thence, if so his life he lov'd,
Lest that her husband find him in the way:
Yet from his purpose this him not remov'd,
But to the sober matron he doth say,
In vaine you seek to drive me hence by terror,
Desire hath hither brought me, and not error.

32

By my ill hap while I abroad was riding,
The Orko bare away my dearest wife,
I hither come of her to heare some tiding,
Or having lost my love to leese my life,
I care not I, if she in life be biding,
If she be dead, my death shall end this strife,
Love in this point so resolute hath made me,
You should but leese your labour to disswade me.

33

The gentle matron in this sort replies,
Know this, thy wife in safety doth remaine,

But hard it is to compasse or devise,
Which way to get her from his hand againe,
His want of sight, his passing sent supplies,
To strive with him by force it were but vaine,
He spoileth men, but women do not die,
Save onely such as strive away to flie.

34

But those he finds his company to shun,
With hatred great he doth for aye pursue,
Some he doth hang all naked in the sun,
And day by day their torments doth renue;
And some immediatly to death are done,
Both yong and old, both foule or faire of hew,
So that to seek to set Lucyna free,
May harm her much, and little profit thee.

35

Wherefore my sonne depart the while thou may,
(The matron saith) Lucyna shall not die,
For hither shortly he will her convay,
Where she shall fare no worse than these and I,
Depart? (quoth he) nay here I mind to stay,

And fall what shall, I will my fortune trie,
And if my hap be such I cannot free her,
At least I meane before I die to see her.

36

The matrons mind with much compassion moved,
To see his loving and most constant mind,
That from his purpose would not be removed,
To bring him aid and comfort was inclin'd:
And then she told him how it him behoved,
If so to see his wife he had assign'd,
To use some such device as she would tell him,
That when the Ork should come he might not smell him.

37

She had that hanged in the houses rooffe,
The hairie skins of many a bearded goate,
And knowing best what was for his behoofe,
Of one of them she makes him make a coate,
And with goates suet for a further prooffe,
To noint his body from the foote to throate:
And in this sort his shape and favour hiding,
He commeth to the place where we were biding.

38

Now night drew neare, his horne the Orke doth blow,
And all his heards came backe unto his fold,
And Norandin among the goates doth go,
And enters in, love maketh him so bold,
The Orke shuts the doore, and leaves us so,
Shut up as safe as in a towre or hold,
Then doth the King at large unto his lover,
His comming and the meanes thereof discover.

39

Lucina doth not onely not rejoyce,
To see her husband come thus strangely clad,
But with most lamentable mournfull voyce,
She blamd him that such perill ventred had,
And swears that if she might have had her choyce,
She would alone have felt this fortune bad,
And that before it somewhat easd her paine,
To thinke that he in safetie did remaine.

40

Thus said Lucina faire with watred eies,
As seeming now more dolefull then before;

But Norandino in this sort replies,
Thinkst thou my deare I loved thee no more?
Yes sure, and will evn now a meane devise
Both thee and these to freedome to restore,
And to deliver from this servile slavery,
By helpe of this same skin and grease unsavery.

41

And straight he taught us as himselfe had tride,
Each one to kill a goate and take the skin,
And outwardly to weare the hairy hide,
And to be noited with the grease within.
Thus evry one doth for himselfe provide,
Before the sunne did yet to shine begin,
Then came the Orke and movd away the stone,
And out the bearded goates came one and one.

42

The smelling Orko at the doore doth stand,
We past like goates and make no noise nor speech,
Yet oft he groped with his hideous hand,
But poore Lucina could not chuse but skreech;
Or that he hapt to touch her with his wand,

Or else too roughly pawd her by the breech,
So back he puts her straight, and locks her up,
And swears that she should drinke a sory cup.

43

Himselpe drives out his flocke (as wont he was)
And we like goates among the goates do keepe,
And when as they were feeding on the grasse,
The monstros heardman laid him downe to sleepe.
Thus we escapt, but our good King alas,
(That mist his love) doth nought but waile and weep
And save that still he hopt of her reliefe,
He would no doubt have dide of very grieffe.

44

At night he turneth back with like desire,
As he before had come to set her free,
And he conceales himselpe with like attire,
From him that wants his instrument to see.
The Orke inflamd with cruell rage and ire,
And finds himselpe deceived thus to be,
This recompence he points her for her paines,
Upon that hill to hang each day in chaines.

45

A cruell doome, but who could it resist?
Away went we, each for himselfe afraid,
But Norandino ever doth persist
In his first purpose of procuring aid,
Lamenting that so narrowly he mist
To bring her out, among the goates he staid,
And like a goate (forgetting his estate)
He goth out early, and returneth late.

46

She sees him go and come, but all in vaine,
She maketh signes to him to have him part,
He constantly resolveth to remaine,
The love of her posseseth so his hart,
Despising danger and enduring paine,
He hopeth hopelesse still to ease her smart,
At foure months end (good fortune so prepar'd)
Gradasso thither came and Mandricard.

47

And (for her father was their loving frend)
They gave this bold attempt to set her free,

And to her father straight they do her send,
Who was full glad and joyfull her to see,
And that her dangers had this happie end:
But Norandino was more glad then he;
Who with the goats no longer now did stay,
But while the Orko slept he stale away.

48

And now for joy of this great perill past,
In which he stayd so wofull and forlorne,
And that the memorie thereof may last,
To those that shall be, and are yet unborne,
(For never Prince before such wo did tast,
Nor stayd so long in misery and scorne,
And it shall be just sixteene weeks to morow,
That he remained in this wo and sorow.)

49

Therefore I say the King prepares this sport,
With very great magnificence and bost,
Inviting hither men of evry sort,
Such as in chivalrie excell the most,
That far and neare may carie the report,

Of these great triumphs unto evry cost.
This tale the courteous host did tell his guest,
Of him that first ordaind the sumptuous feast.

50

In this and such like talke they spend the night,
And then they sleepe upon their beds of downe,
But when that once it shined cleare and light,
The trumpets sounded over all the towne,
And Griffin straight puts on his armor bright,
Aspiring after fame and high renowne;
His leud companion likewise doth the same,
To shew a hope as well as he of fame.

51

All armed thus they came unto the field,
And view the warlike troupes as they did passe,
Where some had painted on their crest and shield,
Or some device that there described was,
What hope or doubt his love to him did yeeld,
They all were Christens then, but now alas,
They all are Turks unto the endlesse shame,
Of those that may and do not mend the same.

52

For where they should employ their sword and lance,
Against the Infidels our publike foes,
Gods Word and true Religion to advance,
They to poore Christens worke perpetuall woes:
To you I write, ye Kings of Spaine and France,
Let these alone, and turne your force on those:
And unto you also I write as much,
Ye nations fierce, Zwizzers I meane and Dutch.

53

Lo, tone of Christen Kings usurps a name,
Another Catholike will needs be called:
Why do not both your deeds declare the same?
Why are Christs people slaine by you and thralled?
Get backe againe Jerusalem for shame,
That now the Turke hath tane from you and walled
Constantinople get that famous towne,
That erst belonged to thImperiall crowne.

54

Dost not thou Spaine confront with Affrike shore,
That more then Italy hath thee offended?

Yet to her hurt thou leavest that before,
Against the Infidels thou hadst intended:
O Italy a slave for evermore,
In such sort mard, as never can be mended,
A slave to slaves, and made of sinne a sinke,
And sotted sleepe like men orecome with drinke.

55

Ye Swizzers fierce, if feare of famine drive you,
To come to Lombardie to seeke some food,
Are not the Turks as neare? why should it grieve you
To spill your foes, and spare your brothers blood?
They have the gold and riches to relieve you,
Enrich your selves with lawfull gotten good,
So shall all Europe be to you beholding,
For driving them from these parts, and withholding.

56

Thou Lion stout that holdst of heavn the kayes,
(A waightie charge) see that from drowsie sleepe
Thou wake our realme, and bring her joyfull dayes,
And from these forren wolves it safely keepe,
God doth thee to this height of honor raise,

That thou mayst feed and well defend thy sheepe,
That with a roring voice and mighty arme,
Thou mayst withhold thy flock from evry harme.

57

But whither roves my rudely rolling pen,
That waxe so sawcie to reprove such peeres?
I said before that in Damasco then
They Christend were (as in records appeares)
So that the armor of their horse and men
Was like to ours (though changd of later yeares)
And Ladies fild their galleries and towrs,
To see the justs as they did here in ours.

58

Each strives in shew his fellow to exceed,
And to be gallant in his mistris sight,
To see each one manage his stately steed,
Was to the standers by a great delight:
Some praise unto themselves, some shame do breed,
By shewing horses doings wrong or right,
The chiefest prize that should be of this tilt,
An armor was rich, set with stone and gilt.

59

By hap a merchant of Armenia found
This armour, and to Norandin it sold,
Who, had he knowne how good it was and sound,
Would not have left it sure for any gold,
(The circumstance I cannot now expound,
I meane ere long it shall to you be told)
Now must I tell of Griffin that came in,
Just when the sport and tilting did begin.

60

Eight valiant Knights the chalenge did sustaine,
Against all commers that would runne that day,
These eight were of the Princes private traine,
Of noble blood, and noble evry way,
They fight in sport, but some in sport were slaine,
For why as hotly they did fight in play,
As deadly foes do fight in battell ray,
Save that the King may when he list them stay.

61

Now Griffins fellow was Martano named,
Who (though he were a coward and a beast)

Like bold blind Bayard he was not ashamed,
To enter like a Knight among the rest,
His countenance likewise in shew he framed,
As though he were as forward as the best,
And thus he stood and viewd a bitter fight,
Between a Baron and another Knight.

62

Lord of Seleucia the tone they call,
And one of eight that did maintaine the just,
The Knight Ombruno hight of person tall,
Who in his vizer tooke so great a thrust,
That from his horse astonied he did fall,
And with his lively blood distaind the dust:
This sight amazd Martano in such sort,
He was afraid to leese his life in sport.

63

Soone after this so fierce conflict was done,
Another challenger straight steppeth out,
With whom Martano was requird to runne,
But he (whose heart was ever full of doubt)
With fond excuses sought the same to shunne,

And shewd himselfe a faint and dastard lout,
Till Griffin egd him on, and blamd his feare,
As men do set a mastive on a Beare.

64

Then tooke he heart of grace, and on did ride,
And makes a little florish with his speare,
But in the middle way he stept aside,
For feare the blow would be too big to beare:
Yet one that would seeke this disgrace to hide,
Might in this point impute it not to feare,
But rather that his horse not good and redie,
Did shun the tilt, and raune not evn nor stедie.

65

But after with his sword he dealt so ill,
Demosthenes him could not have defended,
He shewd both want of courage and of skill,
So as the lookers on were all offended,
And straight with hissing and with voices shrill,
The conflict cowardly begun was ended:
In his behalfe was Griffin sore ashamed,
His heart thereto with double heate inflamed.

66

For now he sees how much on him it stands,
With double value to wipe out the blot,
And shew himselfe the more stout of his hands,
Sith his companion shewd himselfe a sot,
His fame or shame must flie to forren lands,
And if he now should faile one little jot,
The same wold seem a foule and huge transgression,
His mate had fild their minds with such impression.

67

The first he met Lord of Sidona hight,
And towards him he runs with massie speare,
And gave a blow that did so heavie light,
As to the ground it did him backward beare:
Then came of Laodice another Knight,
On him the staffe in peecees three did teare,
Yet was the counterbuffe thereof so great,
The Knight had much ado to keepe his seate.

68

But when they came with naked swords to trie,
Which should the honor and the prise obtaine,

So Griffin did with deadly strokes him plie,
At last he left him stonid on the plaine.
Straightway two valiant brothers standing by,
That at Griffino tooke no small disdaine,
The tone Corimbo, tother Tirse hight,
These two forthwith do challenge him to fight.

69

Successively them both he overthrew,
And now men thought that he the prise would win,
But Salintern that saw them downe in vew,
To envie good Griffino doth begin,
This man the stoutst of all the courtly crew,
Doth take a speare in hand, and enters in,
And to the combat Griffin straight defies,
And scornes to have a stranger win the prize.

70

But Griffin chose one staffe among the rest,
The biggest and the strongest of a score,
And with the same he pierceth backe and brest,
That downe he fell and never stirred more;
The King that loved and esteemd him best,

Laments his death, and maketh mone therefore,
But yet the common sort were faine and glad,
That knew his mind and manners were but bad.

71

Next after him two others he doth meet,
Ermofilo the captaine of his guard,
And Carmond Admirall of all his fleet,
With these a while he had a conflict hard,
The first unhorst was left upon his feet,
The other with a blow was almost mard.
Thus of eight challengers remaind but one,
The rest were quite subdude by him alone.

72

This one was he of whom at first I spake,
Lord of Seleucia a valiant man,
This one to Griffin did resistance make,
And long it was ere ought of him he wan,
But one blow on his head so fierce he strake,
As he likewise to stagger now began,
Had not the King made them to have bene parted,
Sure Griffin had him kild ere he had parted.

73

Thus all those eight, that all the world defide,
By one alone were vanquished and slaine,
So as the King was forced to provide,
An order new for those that do remaine;
(By parting runners some on either side)
For yet was spent not past an houre or twaine,
Lest this his triumph should have end too soone,
He makes them spend therein the afternoone.

74

But Griffin full of wrath and discontent,
Backe to his host with his companion came,
The praise he wan did him not so content,
As he was grievd at his companions shame:
Wherefore to leave the towne they do consent,
While men were busie looking on the game,
And to a little towne fast by he goes,
And meanes himselfe a while for to repose.

75

The travell sore he had before endured,
So great a wearinesse in him had bred,

And such desire of sleepe withall procured,
As straight he gat him to his naked bed.
The while Martano to all fraud inured,
And using aid of her mischievous head,
(As he did soundly sleepe) devisd the while
A stratageme most strange, him to beguile.

76

They do conclude to take Griffinos steed,
And cote, and evry warlike implement,
And that Martano in Griffinos steed,
Himselfe to Norandino shall present.
This they devisd, this they performd in deed,
And boldly backe againe Martano went,
In Griffin armor stoutly stepping in,
As did the Asse that ware the Lions skin.

77

He rusheth in among the thickest presse,
An houre before the setting of the sunne,
The King and all the rest straightway do guesse,
That this was he that had such honor wonne:
And straight great honour they to him adresse,

And cause the like by others to be done,
And his base name, not worthy to be named,
About the towne with honor was proclaimed.

78

Fast by the King he rideth cheeke by cheeke,
And in his praise they songs and verses make,
In Hebrew tongue, in Latin and in Greeke.
And now this while did Griffin hap to wake,
And seeing that his armour was to seeke,
He first begins some small mistrust to take,
Yet hardly could it sinke into his reason,
That she had givn consent to such a treason.

79

In feare and doubt no little time he hovered,
But when his host the truth had plaine declar'd,
And that he saw the falshood plaine discovered,
By which she had in follies bands him snard,
Then truth shewd plain, that love before had covered,
And to revenge this wrong he straight prepar'd,
But wanting other furniture (perforce)
He tooke Martanos armor and his horse.

80

And backe unto Damasco he doth ride,
Arriving there within an houre of night,
And entring at the gate upon the side,
The pallace of the king stood plaine in sight,
Where then the King a blanket did provide,
For many a Duke and Lord, and valiant Knight,
And Griffin boldly sate among the rest,
Forgetting that he ware the scorned crest.

81

And taken for the man whose coate he ware,
His presence did the better sort offend,
Of which when vile Martano was aware,
That of the table sate at thupper end,
And sees that to disgrace him they forbare,
And thinke him his companion and his frend:
His friendship and acquaintance he renounced,
And this hard doom of him he straight pronounced.

82

O King (quoth he) it seems that for my sake,
You graciously forbear to do him shame,

That of his basenesse shamefull prooffe did make
This day, and now againe confirms the same:
But you the matter and the man mistake,
I know not him, his nation, nor his name,
By chance I met him onely on the way,
I never saw him I, till yesterday.

83

Wherefore might I herein your grace advise,
You should a sample make him for the rest,
That here presents unto your princely eies,
Himselfe unworthy, and unwelcome guest,
Let him tormented be in cruell wise,
(This is my doome) let him be hangd at least,
And unrevenged let him not be borne,
That Knighthood should receive so great a scorne.

84

Thus much the vile and base Martano seth,
And Origilla soothd it with as much,
And wisht an halter stop the villains breth.
Nay (quoth the King) the sinne is nothing such,
As is in law or reason worthy death,

His life or yet his liberty to tuch:
This, for examples sake I thinke it meet,
To do him some disgrace in open street.

85

And straight he rounds a Sergeant in his eare,
And secretly appoints him what to do,
Who came forthwith unto the table where
Griffino sate, and made no more ado,
But leadeth him, that no such thing did feare,
A secret prison and a sure unto,
And for that night he clapt him up in fetters,
Where theeves do use to lie and evill debtors.

86

Next day Martano that did greatly dread,
Lest this his foule device would come to light,
If Griffin should be heard his cause to pleade,
Therefore as soone as Phoebus shined bright,
(Pretending businesse) away he sped,
And leaves Griffino in this wofull plight:
But ere he goes, the King to him imparts
No small rewards for his, not his desarts.

87

But let him go his wayes, and do not doubt,
That this unknowne and unrevengd shall be:
Straight was Griffin from the jayle put out,
And carted so as all men might him see,
Tide hand and foot, and people all about,
Of which the most were but of meane degree,
Also the armor whence this error came
Was hald about unto his farder shame.

88

With many filthy words they him revile,
From filthy tongues, that hard it is to stop,
And shewd him round about the towne the while,
At evry crosse, and house, and stall and shop:
Then thinking him for ever to exile,
They led him of that hill unto the top,
And there his bonds they loose with great disgrace,
And then they will him packe him thence apace.

89

With scornfull sound of bason, pot and pan,
They thought to drive him thence like Bees in swarmes,

But when he was untide, then he began
To make them know their error to their harmes,
Then he did lay about, and play the man,
Now having use of both his warlike armes,
But in what sort he them dismayd and scared,
Within another booke shall be declared.

ARGUMENT

THE EIGHTEENTH BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Now Griffins knowne and felt: Algyre doth threaten
The Tartar Prince: Charles fighteth and prevailes:
Martano like a coward is well beaten,
Marfisas force Damasco warriers quales:
From thence with tempest tost, and weather beaten,
Both she and Griffin and Astolfo sailes:
Medor and Cloridan with care and paine,
Seeke for the carkas of their master slaine.

EIGHTEENTHBOOKE

1

Most worthie Prince your vertues high and rare,
With tongue and penne I praise, and ever shall,
Although my words and verse inferiour are,
In number and in worth to match them all:
But all above this one I do compare,
And far prefer, and pure divinest call,
That giving gracious care to those are greeved,
Yet evry tale is not by you beleaved.

2

Oft have I heard your highnesse hath refused,
Although the same most earnestly were sought
To heare the guiltlesse absent man accused,
(And when a great complaint to you was brought)
You have the matter and the man excused:
Suspending still your judgement and your thought,
And keeping till the truth were truly tride,
Ever one eare for the contrarie side.

3

Had Norandino had so great a grace,
As not to credite tales so lightly told,
He had not offerd Griffin this disgrace,
No though thereby he might have gained gold:
But so doth rashnes vertue oft deface,
As here was proved that was said of old;
The silly people beare the scourge and blame,
Oft when their Princes do deserve the same.

4

For Griffin (as in part I told before)
When as his hands and feete were once untide,
Did deale about of blowes and thrusts such store,
As well was he could for himselfe provide,
His wrath was such as none he then forbore,
The old, the young, the strong, the feeble dide:
And they that laught before to see him carted,
Now for their labor whinde as much and smarted.

5

The people faint and mazed fled away,
From him whom late they did deride and scorne,

He followd them and kild them by the way,
Dastards more meet to die, then to be borne.
But in this chase a while I let him stay,
Triumphing now that lately was forlorne:
Of Rodomont now somewhat must be spoken,
On whom at once I said eight speares were broken.

6

Eight speares at once upon the scaly skin,
Did light, and divers darts were throwne aloofe,
For speares and darts he passeth not a pin,
Such was his strength, so sure his armors prooffe:
But when he saw that more and more came in,
To part from thence he thinks his best behoofe,
For why on evry side they do assaile him,
That needs at length his breath and strength must faile him.

7

Evn as the Lions whelps that see a Bull,
Are at the first of his great strength affraid,
But when they see their sire to teare or pull
His throte and sides, they runne their sire to aid,
And flie upon his face and horned scull,

Till prostrate on the ground they have him laid:
So now when Charles himselfe was in the place,
Each one tooke armes, each one took hart of grace.

8

Who so hath seene a huge well baited Beare,
With many dogs, men standing close about,
When he by hap the stake or cord doth teare,
And rusheth in among the thickest rout,
How suddenly they runne away with feare,
And make a lane to let the Beare go out:
He might (I say) compare by such a sight,
The manner of this Pagans fight and flight.

9

He rusheth out, and with his two hand blade,
He florisheth about in so fierce sort,
That soone a way for him to passe was made,
To hinder him his way it was no sport,
And those that by the way did him invade,
Except they shifted better, were cut short:
Thus in despite of Charles and all his realme,
He came unto the banks of Sequans streame.

10

And standing from the banke a little distance,
That few or none behind could him enclose,
An howers space and more he made resistance,
Against King Charles, whose powre stil greater groes
Till in the end in hope of no assistance,
Displeasd, but not disgrast away he goes:
He takes the river fretting in his minde,
That he had left a man alive behinde.

11

And so he swelld in anger and in pride,
That he had thought to turne him backe againe,
And to have mounted on the other side,
And all that should withstand him to have slaine:
But lo a messenger he then espide,
That made him from that rash attempt refraine,
But who did send him, and what word he bare,
I meane to you another time declare.

12

But first what Discord did I meane to show,
Who as you heard was by the Angell sent

Among the Pagans, seeds of strife to sow,
And as she was commanded thither went:
Yet leaving Fraud behind the coales to blow,
Least all the fire of strife should quite be spent,
And to augment his strength, as much as may be,
He carrid Pride with him out of the Abby.

13

Pride leaves Hypocrisie to keepe his place,
And thus these jarring friends together go,
And when they traveld had a little space,
They found by hap dame Jelousie also,
That met a dwarfe that run a trudging pace,
Evn as she wanderd idly to and fro:
And learning unto whom this page was sent,
To go with him she quickly did consent.

14

You call to mind (for sure you cannot chuse,
But call to mind so late a written storie)
How Mandricardo Doralice did use,
And kept with joy whom he did win with glorie:
She secretly sent notice of this newes,

(Though afterward her selfe perhap was sorie)
To Rodomont, and sharply him incited,
To venge her rape as I before recited.

15

The messenger arrived then by hap,
When from the streame the Pagan did ascend,
And told him all the tale of her mishap,
And how another did possesse his frend:
Cold jelousie straight enterd in his lap,
And Pride with Discord do the matter mend,
Alledging if he put up this disgrace,
Then let him nere looke Ladie in the face.

16

Like as a Tyger that her young hath lost,
Supprid by hunters hand and borne away,
Doth follow on the foote through evry cost,
No dikes nor waters wide can make her stay:
So Rodomont with love (and anger most)
Enflamed, could endure no more delay,
And though he want his horse, that did not boote,
To cause him stay, he rather goes on foote.

17

He meanes what ever horseman next he spide,
To take his horse of frend or else of foe,
At this is Discord pleasd, and said to Pride,
That she was glad their busnes cotned so:
I will (quoth she) a horse for him provide,
An horse shall cost him deare enough I trow;
But what of him and of that horse befel,
Another time not now I meane to tell.

18

This while the most renowned Christen King,
That had expulst the Pagan from the towne,
His valiant men of armes about doth bring,
And on the sodaine lets the draw bridge downe,
And with a fresh assault their foes so sting,
While fortune smild on him, on them did frowne,
That they had runne away like men dismaid,
Had not Ferraw couragiously them staid.

19

My mates in armes (quoth he) brethren and frends,
Provd valiant heretofore, now hold your place:

More happie far is he his life that spends,
In honour, then that keeps it in disgrace;
Loe me your generall that here entends,
No way to staine the blood of Spanish race;
The patterne follow that I shew you furst,
And then I care not, let them do their worst.

20

Thus in that part Ferraw the fight renewd,
And draws with him the chosen Spanish band,
That oft in Christen blood their hands imbrewd,
And none almost but they did now withstand:
But destinie can never be eschewd,
As may by their successe be rightly scand;
Behold Renaldo comes, and as he came,
It seemd he carrid lightning fierce or flame.

21

Not long before Almontes valiant sonne,
Hight Dardanell, had slaine a Christian Knight,
And proud of that his glorie lately wonne,
And of this good successe he had in fight,
About the field he carelessly did runne,

Untill he hapt to see a wofull sight,
He saw Alfeo yeelding up the ghost,
A youth whom he esteemd and loved most.

22

Lurcanio was the man that did the deed,
And Dardanell to venge it doth intend,
Lurcanio followd on and tooke no heed,
The other all on him his force doth bend,
And with a waightie speare, him and his steed,
Unto the earth together he doth send,
And pierst his thigh, and put him in such paine,
As scant he able was to rise againe.

23

But Ariodant (that deare his brother loved)
And sees him in such paine and danger lie,
Was therewithall in wrath so greatly moved,
He meaneth to avenge his hurt, or die:
But though that he attempted oft and proved,
Yet could he not to Dardanell come nie,
For still of other men, the throng and number,
Did him in this attempt molest and cumber.

24

No doubt the heavns had Dardanell ordained,
To perish by a more victorious hand;
Renaldos blade must with his blood be stained,
And was, as after you shall understand:
By him this praise and glory must be gained,
The fame whereof must fill both sea and land:
But let these westerne warres a while remaine,
And of Griffino talke we now againe.

25

Who taught those of Damasco to their harmes,
What wrong they did to cart him in such sort,
They fill the towne with uprores and alarmes,
Mens mouthes and eares were full of this report:
The King brings forth five hundred men in armes,
And sends five more to fortifie the fort:
For why this tumult brought him in perswasion,
That sure some host of men did make invasion.

26

But when he saw no men, no host, no band,
No troupes of horse the citie to invade,

Onely one man (well knowne) that there did stand,
And of his people such a slaughter made,
(Movd with remorse) he stretcheth out his hand
Naked, in shew of peace, as is the trade,
And openly his rashnesse he lamented,
That such a Knight to harme he had consented.

27

And Griffin when to find he now begunne,
The King was of so good an inclination,
And that the wrong to him before was done,
Not of his owne, but others instigation:
To make a friendly concord doth not shunne,
Because hereby he lost no reputation:
And there he tarid at the Kings request,
To cure his wounds and take a little rest.

28

This while his brother Aquilant the blacke,
That with Astolfo still in Jewrie staid,
And sees his brother now so long did lacke,
Was in his mind all sad and ill apaid:
They heard no newes of him, they found no tracke,

Though wait about in evry place was laid,
Untill the Greekish pilgrim they had met,
By whom of him some inkling they did get.

29

He told them how a certaine wanton dame,
Hight Origilla, with a ruffian knave,
That kept her openly without all shame,
Yet going in apparell fine and brave,
These two (the pilgrim said) together came,
From Antioch (as forth in speech they gave)
And to Damasco then they meant to go,
But what became of them he did not know.

30

And further unto Aquilant he told,
How he Griffino met this other day,
And did to him the matter all unfold,
And how forthwith Griffino went his way,
With chase enough, and swearing that he would
Kill this same vile adultrer if he may:
No sooner had his speech the pilgrim ended,
In post to follow, Aquilant intended.

31

In post he followd to Damasco ward,
And when he traveld had a day or twaine,
(Behold that God that ever doth reward
The good with blessings and the bad with paine)
That gracelesse couple that before you heard,
Betraid Griffino with that divellish traine,
Into the hands of Aquilant did give,
While they in pleasure most securely live.

32

I say that Aquilant by Gods permission,
Doth meet the vile Martano on the way,
His horse, his coate, and outward apparition,
So like unto Griffino evry way,
That Aquilant at first without suspition,
Went to embrace him, and began to say,
Brother well met, I joy of your welfare,
Your absence bred in me much feare and care.

33

But when he saw the tother not replide,
But shrunke away like one that were afraid,

Ah traitor villain; yeeld thy selfe, he cride,
Thou hast my brother spoiled and betraid,
Tell me (thou wretch) doth he in life abide?
To whom in humble sort Martano said,
(With fainting hart, with quaking voice & trembling
Yet in the midst of all his feare dissembling.)

34

Oh pardon sir, your brother is alive,
And like to live, and hath no hurt, nor shall,
The truth is this, I being loth to strive
With him, because I found him stout and tall,
Did with no ill intent this drift contrive,
To save my selfe and do him hurt but small,
For this same womans sake that is my sister,
With open force not daring to assist her.

35

It grieved me to see how he by lust
Did her abuse whom nature made me love,
And for I thought it was both meet and just,
Her from this wicked custome to remove,
And sith I did his valew great mistrust,

I thought it best by pollicie to prove:
I stole his horse and coat while he was sleeping,
And so conveyed her quite out of his keeping.

36

Well might Martano bear away the bell,
Or else a whetstone challenge for his dew,
That on the sodaine such a tale could tell,
And not a word of all his tale was true,
But yet in shew it all agreed well,
Save one which Aquilant most certaine knew,
Was false, and he in vaine did seeke to smother,
He was her bedfellow, and not her brother.

37

With hand and tongue at once he doth replie,
And in one instant he both strake and spake,
I know (quoth he) vile villaine thou dost lie,
And on the face so fiercely him he strake,
He makes two teeth into his throate to flie;
Then with great violence he doth him take,
And him and her he binds in bitter bands,
Like captives carried into forren lands.

38

And thus in hast unto Damasco riding,
He swears that he these bands would not unbind,
Till of his brother he do heare some tiding,
Whom in Damasco after he did find;
Who now with cunning Phisicke and good guiding,
Was almost heald in body and in mind,
And when he saw his unexpected brother,
They both saluted and embracd each other.

39

And after they had made in speech some sport,
About full many a foolish accident,
(For Aquilant had heard a large report
Of Griffins carting, and his punishment)
At last he asketh Griffin in what sort
They should this couple worthily torment;
To hang and draw, and burne their privie parts,
Was not too much for their too foule desarts.

40

The King and all his Councell thought it good,
Because their fault was such so open knowne,

That they should publikely dispill their blood,
And their desarts might publikely be showne:
But yet that motion Griffin straight withstood,
Pretending private causes of his owne,
Onely he wisht Martano should be stript,
And at a cart drawne through the street and whipt.

41

And as for her, although she had deserved
A punishment as great as he, or more,
Yet was the sentence of her doome reserved
Untill Lucina came, and not before:
So that by Griffins meane she was preserved,
So great a sway love in his fancie bore:
Here Aquilant by Griffin was procured,
To bide with him untill his wounds were cured.

42

Now Norandin that all his powre still bends,
To honor Griffin all the meanes he may,
And with great courtesie to make amends,
For that disgrace he did him thother day;
To make another triumph he intends,

Set forth with pompe and state, and rich array:
And that the same may flie to forraine nations,
He notifies it straight by proclamations.

43

At foure weekes end the triumph should begin,
The same whereof about so farre was blowne,
Without the land of Jewrie and within,
At last unto Astolfo it was knowne,
Who asking Sansonets advice herein,
Whose wisdom he preferd before his owne,
At last for company they both agree,
To go together these same justs to see.

44

Now as they went upon their way, behold
They met a gallant and a stately dame,
With whom this Duke acquainted was of old,
Marfisa was this noble Ladies name:
She traveld like a Knight, her heart was bold,
Her body passing strong unto the same,
And when she knew both why and where they went,
To go with them she quickly did consent.

45

And thus these three their journey so contrive,
As just against the day and solemne feast,
Together at Damasco they arrive,
Each one well mounted on a stately beast,
The King that specially did care and strive,
To honor Griffin more then all the rest,
By all the meanes and wayes he could devise,
Augmented much the valew of the prise.

46

And where it was, as I before declar'd,
A single armor rich and finely wrought,
Now Norandino at this time prepar'd,
To set it out with things not lightly bought,
To this he adds a horse most richly barbd,
By riders skill to great perfection brought,
Wel shapt, wel markt, strong limbd, & passing swift,
The beast alone, fit for a Princes gift.

47

All this he did, because great hope he saw,
That Griffin once againe the prise would win,

But then was verifide the old said saw,
Much falls betweene the Challice and the chin:
For when Marfisa (void of feare or aw)
Without had viewd this armor and within,
And finds it had bene hers by marks well knowne,
She seizeth straight upon it as her owne.

48

The King that ill so great disgrace could brooke,
Did shew himselfe therewith much discontent,
And with a princely frowne and angry looke,
His silence threatned that she should repent,
And in so great despite the thing he tooke,
That straight some sergeants unto her he sent,
With souldiers, some on foote and some on horse,
Deceivd much in her sex, more in her force.

49

For never did a child take more delight,
With gawdie flowres in time of spring to play,
Nor never did yong Ladie brave and bright,
Like dauncing better on a solemne day,
Then did Marfisa in the sound and sight

Of glittering blades and speares delight to stay:
And this did cause her take therein more pleasure,
Because her strength was great beyond all measure.

50

Those few that were to apprehend her sent,
And punish her for this unlawfull deed,
Were causd their comming quickly to repent,
And others by their harmes tooke better heed:
The armed Knights most diversly were bent,
Some standing still to mark what this would breed,
Some to the sergeants thought to bring reliefe,
Of whom were Griffin and his brother chiefe.

51

The English Duke doth deeme it were a shame,
To leave Marfisa in this dangerous case,
Sith chiefly for his company she came,
And Sansonet doth deeme it like disgrace,
Wherefore they meane how ere the matter frame,
Not leave her unassisted in the place,
Astolfo had a charmed speare all gilt,
With which he used oft to runne at tilt.

52

The vertue of this charmed speare was such,
Besides the gilding bright and faire of hew,
That whom so ere the head thereof did tuch,
Straight him from off his horse it overthrew,
Griffino first although disdainning much,
He quite unhorst, nor who it was he knew:
Then Aquilant that to revenge it ment,
Unto the ground in manner like was sent.

53

Thus did these warriors three themselves behave,
But chiefe Marfisa, who would never rest,
But would in spite of all, the armor have,
Nor once vouchsafe to aske it or request;
She doth the King and all his nobles brave,
And when the best of them had done his best,
On evry side she beat the people downe,
And from them all made way out of the towne.

54

Sansonet and Astolfo did the like,
King Norandinos men of armes pursew,

The foolish people crie stop, kill and strike,
But none comes neare, but stand aloofe to vew:
A narrow bridge there was, this place they pike,
And to defend it against all the crew,
Till Griffin came, having his horse recovered,
And by some markes the English Duke discovered.

55

And straight his brother Aquilante came,
And of Astolfo both acquaintance take,
And then in civill termes they somewhat blame
Her litle count she of the King did make,
Astolfo friendly told to them her name,
And in defence of her some words he spake,
The rest that came marvell to what it tends,
To heare them talke together now like friends.

56

But when that Norandinos souldiers hard
Her name, so dreaded over all the East,
They surely thought that they should all be mard,
And that the citie would be tane at least,
Therefore they pray the King to have regard.

But now Marfisa (moved by request
Of those two brothers) friendly doth consent,
Herselfe before the Prince for to present.

57

And thus without much reverence she spake,
Sir King, I marvell what your highnesse ment,
A prise and gift of such a thing to make,
As is not yours without I give consent:
The Armes this armor hath plaine prooffe do make,
Namely a crowne into three peeces rent:
Once I put off this armor in a way,
To chase a theefe that stale from me a pray.

58

Then said the King, faire dame the truth is so,
Of one Armenian merchant I them bought,
I make no question be they yours or no,
Nor needs for prooffe more witnessse to be brought,
For though they were not, I would them bestow
On you, if so the same by you were sought:
As for Griffino unto whom I gave them,
He shall be pleasd I hope, and not to have them.

59

I will him recompence some other way,
And give him gifts of as great worth or more;
Thanks to your highnesse Griffin straight doth say,
Preserve me in your grace, I aske no more:
But when Marfisa saw that evry way
They honord her, she changd her mind before,
To shew magnificence she usd this drift,
That he must take this armor as her gift.

60

And thus good friends all turned back againe,
And then with double joy the feast they hold,
In which chiefe praise did Sansonet obtaine,
The other foure did then themselves withhold,
Wishing the praise should unto him remaine,
And then with greater cheare then can be told,
By Norandino they were nobly feasted,
And there themselves they well reposd and rested.

61

Sevn dayes or eight the King them entertained,
And those once past, of him their leave they take,

The which with gifts and honor great obtained,
Unto the towne of Tripoly they make,
And in one company these five remained,
And mind not one the other to forsake,
As long as one of them was left alive,
Untill in France they safely should arrive.

62

And straight they get a vessell for their hire,
A merchants ship new laden from the West,
The master of the ship an auncient sire,
Consented to their wils with small request,
The wind as then servd fit for their desire,
And blowes a gentle gale all from the East,
So that with filled sailes in little while,
They came as farre as Cypres, Venus Ile.

63

Here evry place was full of odours sweet,
Of gardens faire or spice of pleasant tast,
The people lustfull (for dame Venus meet)
From tender yeares to doting age do last,
With wanton damsels walking in each street,

Inviting men to pleasure and repast,
From hence againe they loosed, at what time,
Don Phoebus charret unto thEast did clime.

64

The weather still was temperat and cleare,
A pleasant gale their swelling sailes did fill;
No signe of storme or tempest did appeare,
To such as in the weather had best skill:
But loe the weather oft doth change her cheare,
Evn as a woman oft doth change her will,
For sodainly they had such stormes of wether,
As if that heavn and earth would come together.

65

The aire doth on the sodaine grow obscure,
But lightned oft with lightnings dreadfull light,
And save their houreglasse kept them reckning sure
Twas hard for to discerne the day from night:
The desprat marriners do all endure,
As men inured to the waters spight,
The heavns above, the waves beneath do rore,
Yet are not they dismaid one whit therefore.

66

One with a whistle hangd about his necke,
Shows by the sound which cord must be undone,
And straight the shipboy ready at a becke,
Unto the tops with nimble sleight doth runne,
The other marriners upon the decke,
Or at the steere the comming waves do shunne,
And then by turnes they pump the water out,
By paine and care preventing evry doubt.

67

Now while this noble crew with tempest tost,
Went in the sea as wind and weather drave,
And looke each minute to be drownd and lost,
The Christians with a fresh assault and brave,
Set on the Pagans sorely to their cost:
Who now began the worser side to have,
But chiefly then their courage gan to quaile,
When noble Dardanellos life did faile.

68

Renaldo him had noted from the rest,
Full proud of slaughter of so many foes,

And to himselfe he said tis surely best,
To crop this weed before it higher growes,
Therewith he sets his fatall speare in rest,
And cries to Dardanello as he goes,
Alas poore boy, much wo to thee they bred,
That left to thee that sheild of white and red.

69

Ile trie if you defend those colours well,
(He saith) which if with me you cannot do,
Against Orlando fierce, I can you tell,
For to defend them will be great adoe.
Thus said Renaldo, and noble Dardanell,
In valiant wise thus answerd thereunto,
Know this (quoth he) that these my colours I
Will bravely here defend, or bravely die.

70

With that he spurrd his horse (as this he spake)
And with great force Renaldo did assaile,
But loe the staffe upon his armor brake,
So as his blow but little did availe,
But straight Renaldos speare a way did make,

And pierce the double folds of plate and maile,
And went so deepe into the tender skin,
The life went out there where the staffe went in.

71

Looke how a purple flowre doth fade and drie,
That painefull plowman cutteth up with sheare,
Or as the Poppeys heads aside do lie,
When it the bodie cannot longer beare;
So did the noble Dardanello die,
And with his death fild all his men with feare,
As waters runne abrode that breake their bay,
So fled his souldiers breaking their array.

72

They flie unto their tents with full perswasion,
That of the field the masterie was lost,
Wherefore to fortifie against invasion,
They spare no time, no travell, nor no cost;
Now Charles by forhead meanes to take Occasion,
And follows them full close with all his host,
And comming to their tents so bravely venterd,
That he with them themselves almost had enterd.

73

Had not his valiant attempt bene staid,
By over hastie comming of the night,
So that of force as then it was delaid,
And either side was drivn to leave the fight,
But with this difference, all the Turks dismaid,
And newly gatherd from their fearfull flight,
The Christians on the tother side pursewing,
And day by day their hope and powre renewing.

74

The number of the Turks that day were slaine,
Was more then fourscore thousand (as they say)
Their bloud did fat the ground of all that plaine,
And makes the ground more fertile to this day:
Among the dead some men halfe dead remaine,
Left there for theeves and robbers as a pray,
Within the Pagan campe great mone they make,
Some for their friends, some for their kinsfolks sake.

75

Two youths there were among so many more,
Whose friendship fast and firme, whose faithful harts

Deserved to be plast the rest before,
And to be praised for their good desarts,
Their names were Cloridano and Medore,
Both borne farre hence, about the Estern parts,
Their parents poore, and not of our beleefe,
Yet for true love they may be praised chiefe.

76

The elder of the two hight Cloridan,
An hunter wilde in all his life had beene,
Of active limbs, and eke an hardie man,
As in a thousand men might well be seene:
Medoro was but yong, and now began
To enter too, of youth the pleasant greene,
Faire skind, black eyd, and yellow curled heare,
That hangd in lovely locks by either eare.

77

These two among the rest kept watch that night,
And while the time in sundry speech they spent,
Medoro oftentime most sadly sight,
His masters death did cause him to lament,
Oh (said Medoro) what a wofull spight:

What cruell scourge to me hath fortune sent?
That Dardanel Almontes worthy sonne,
So sodainly should unto death be done?

78

Behold his noble corse is left a prey,
To be devoured by the wolfe and crow,
A food too fine to be so borne away,
But I shall remedy that hap I trow,
Ile find the meane his corse thence to convay,
I am resolvd my selfe will thither go,
That for the good he did me when he livd,
At least his corse by me may be reliev'd.

79

When Cloridano heard this saying out,
He stood amaz'd, and musing in his mind,
In tender yeares to find a heart so stout,
Unto so dangerous attempt inclin'd,
And straight disswades him, casting many a doubt,
To make him change the thing he had assign'd:
But still Medoro doth resolve to trie,
To bury Dardanell, or els to die.

80

When Cloridan so resolute him found,
Of his own frank accord he vow doth make
To follow him in broken state and sound,
And never him to leave or to forsake;
And straight they two do leave this fenced ground,
And pointing new supplies their roomes to take
They find the Christen camp lie all neglected,
As those that feare no harm, nor none suspected.

81

I say those Christens that the watch should keep,
Lay as they cared not for foe nor friend,
Their senses so possest with wine and sleep,
That none of them their office did attend:
But Cloridan that saw them drownd so deep,
(Said thus) Medoro, now I do intend
To get for our great losse this small amends,
To kill some foes, that killed all our friends.

82

Stand thou and watch, and harken evry way,
And for the rest let me alone to trie,

This said, he goes where one Alseo lay,
That took upon him knowledge in the skie,
By which he dreamd he should live many a day,
And in his wives beloved bosome die:
But all was false, his cunning him deceivd,
For now this Pagan him of life bereavd.

83

And many more whom here I do not name,
That sleep on boards, or making straw their bed:
At last where wretched Grillo lay he came,
That on an empty barrell couchd his head,
Himselfe had emptied late before the same,
A deadly sleep the wine in him had bred,
The Turke his sword within his bowels fixd,
Out came the blood and wine together mixd.

84

Neare Grillo slept a dutchman and a Greeke,
That all the night had plid the dice and drink,
To both of them at once he did the like,
That dreamd perhaps of sevn and of sysesink:
They had been better watched all the week,

Then at so bad a time as this to wink:
Death certaine is to all, the Proverb saith,
Uncertaine is to all the houre of death.

85

Look how a Lion fierce with famine pind,
That comes unto a flock of silly sheep,
Where neither fence, nor people he doth find,
Doth spoile the flock the while the shepheards sleep;
So Cloridano with as bloody mind,
That found those husht that watch and ward should keep,
Could not his cruell rage and malice bridle:
Nor was this while Medoros weapon idle.

86

For he that did disdaine to make to die,
Those of the common and the baser sort,
Came there where Duke Labretto then did lie,
Embracing of his Lady in such sort,
As yvie doth the wall, they lay so nie,
Now soundly sleeping after Venus sport,
So close, the aire could not have come betweene;
Medore their heads at one blow cuts off cleane.

87

Oh happy state, o life, o death most sweet,
For sure I think their soules embracing so,
In heavnly seat do oft together meet,
And in good peace and love did thither go.
Then next a captaine of the Flemish fleet,
And thEarle of Flaunders sonnes with other mo,
Medoro kild, and so far forward went,
He came but little from the Emprors tent.

88

But loe they both with shedding bloud now tird,
And fearing lest at length some few might wake,
Ere long time past, both by accord retird,
And mind their first attempt in hand to take,
(as both, but as Medoro chiefe desird)
Most secretly unto the field they make,
They mean although they both were faint & weary,
The noble Dardanellos corse to burie.

89

The heaps of men that in the field remaine,
Some dead, and some between alive and dead,

Had made their labour to have been in vaine,
Had not the moone shewd out her horned head,
So bright, as cleare discoverd all the plaine,
That then was coverd with Vermillion red,
Were it a chance or els his earnest prayer,
That made the moon at that time shine so faire.

90

Now after search by Phoebes friendly light,
The good Medore espied him on the ground,
Who when he saw that grievous wofull sight,
He was for sorrow ready there to sound;
And out he cries, alas o wo thy wight,
Not worthy, in this sort to have been found;
Now my last duty do I mean to pay,
And then to say, farewell to you for ay.

91

Thus spake Medoro shedding many a teare,
And minding now no longer time to tarrie,
The loved corse doth on his shoulders beare,
And Cloridano holp the same to carrie,
And they that erst were stout and void of feare,

Were waxen now so timerous and warie,
Not for their own, but this deare burdens sake,
That evry little noise did cause them quake.

92

This while the noble Zerbin, having chast
His fearfull foes while others were asleep,
That had his heart on vertues lore so placd,
As did to noble deeds him waking keep,
Came with his troope where these two made great hast
By hils, by dales, by stony waies and steep,
The carkas of their Lord to beare away,
When much it wanted not of break of day.

93

The Scots that were of noble Zerbins band,
And saw two men go loden down the plaine,
Make after them a gallop out of hand,
In hope to light upon some prey or gaine:
When Cloridano spyng ore the land,
Did say twas best to let the corse remaine,
Alledging that it was a foolish trick,
In saving one dead man to lose two quick.

94

And herewithall his hold he letteth slide
And thinks Medoro would the same have done,
He meanes himselfe in the next wood to hide,
And toward it in great hast he doth run;
But good Medoro that could not abide,
To leave the office he so late begun,
Although with double paine and duller pace,
With all the burthen fled away in chase.

95

And to the wood the nearest way he went,
In hope to get it ere the horsemen came,
But now his breath and strength were so farre spent,
As they had very neare him overtane,
Yet in his deed he doth no whit relent,
To leave his Lord he counts it such a shame.
But they that think this story worth the reading,
Must take a little respite in proceeding.

ARGUMENT

THE NINETEENTH BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Angelica doth heale, and wed Medore:
Marfisa, with that other worthy crew,
Lands (after travell long) upon the shore
Of Amazons: where when the law they knew,
Stout Guydon, that came thither late before,
Fought with Marfisa, who his nine men slue;
But when the combat ceast for want of light,
Then Guydon prayth them lodge with him that night.

NINETEENTHBOOKE

1

None can deeme right who faithfull friends do rest,
While they beare sway and rule in great degree,
For then both fast and fained friends are prest,
Whose faiths seeme both of one effect to be:
But then revolts the faint and fained guest,
When wealth unwindes, and fortune seems to flee,
But he that loves indeed remaineth fast,
And loves and serves when life and all is past.

2

If all mens thoughts were written in their face,
Some one that now the rest doth overcrow,
Some other eke that wants his soverains grace,
When as their Prince their inward thoughts should know:
The meaner man should take the betters place,
The greater man might stoop and sit below.
But tell me now how poore Medoro sped,
That lovd his master both alive and dead.

3

In vaine he sought to get him to the wood,
By blind and narrow paths to him unknown,
Their swift and his slow pace the same withstood,
Forcd by the burden that he bare alone.
But now, when Cloridano understood
Medoros case, he made for him great mone,
And cursd himselfe, and was full ill apaid,
That he had left his friend devoid of aid.

4

Medoro all about so straight beset,
To leave his loved load was then constraind,
But all in vaine he sought from thence to get
His masters carkas that behind remaind,
Was unto him so fierce and strong a let;
It staid his weary steps, and him retaind,
Evn as a Beare that would defend her whelp,
About doth hover though she cannot help.

5

So good Medore about the corse did hover,
The while that Cloridano commeth back,

And (for the day was dawnd) he might discover,
How greatly his Medore, his help did lack;
Wherefore to do his best him to recover,
He takes his bow and quiver from his back,
And at a Scot he took his aime so well,
He strake him in the braine that down he fell.

6

The fall and death so sodaine of the Scot
Abated much the courage of the rest,
And much they marveld whence should come this shot,
And sore this accident did them molest:
But Cloridan for this forbare them not,
But shot another in about the brest,
The which inflamd Zerbinos mind so sore,
That for revenge he would have slaine Medore.

7

And fastning in his golden curled haire,
His warlike hand, thou shalt (said he) abuy,
Thou shalt the penance and the burthen beare
Of him, that here hath made my men to die:
Yet for all this, Zerbino did forbear

To kill him, when he saw with gracious eye,
His sweet sad look, and harkned to his speech,
That in this sort for pardon did beseech.

8

Sir knight (he said) for thy Messias sake,
I thee do pray and earnestly conjure,
So much compassion now on me to take,
To let me give my Lord his sepulture.
I little care what spoile of me ye make,
What paines or tortures I my selfe endure,
I onely sue, so long my life to save,
As I may lay my master in his grave.

9

Now while Medoro spake these words and such,
Whereby Zerbino was to mercy movd,
And to his favour was inclined much,
As one that gratefulness had ever lov'd,
A vile base swaine so rudely did him touch,
As him not onely from his place removd,
But with his staffe most rudely overthrew him,
That evry one do deem him dead that view him.

10

This fact did so Zerbinos mind offend,
That presently the villain he did chase,
And to have killed him he did intend,
And had, but that the other fled apace:
But when that Cloridano saw his friend,
With bleeding wound he prostrate in the place,
He means himselfe no longer now to hide,
But evn to die by deare Medoros side.

11

And as he purposd, so he did indeed,
For fighting manfully he there was slaine,
The Scots do onward on their way proceed,
Medoro halfe alive doth now remaine:
And still his brest in wofull sort doth bleed,
The staffe had cut therein so large a veine,
And sure he had bled out his life and all,
But for one rare good hap did him befall.

12

For lo, a damsell came, though meanly clad,
In shepheards weeds, yet fresh and faire of favour

And such a one as in those base clothes had
A shew of princely birth and high behaviour,
She finding him he there in case so bad,
Did think it charity to be his saviour:
This was (if you forget) the Lady faire,
That of Cataya was undoubted heire.

13

I shewd you by what hap she gat the ring,
And how the same had fild her with such pride,
And her into so high conceit did bring,
That all her suters now she flat denid,
She careth not for Earle, nor Duke, nor King,
Orlando she and Sacrapant defid,
But chiefly she would blush and be ashamd,
If she but hapt to heare Renaldo namd.

14

So great her folly grew, so vaine her pride,
As she esteemed all the world at nought,
The which when once the blind boy had espid,
(Not blind when any mischiefe may be wrought)
He will no longer this presumption bide,

And for a fit occasion long he sought,
And finding this, he thought himselfe now sped,
And up he drawes his arrow to the head.

15

Now when this Indian Queene did there behold
A lovely youth lie dying in the place,
His body feeble in a mortall cold,
A deadly pale amid his lively face,
A kind of passion straight on her took hold,
That movd her mind to pitie this his case,
And much the rather when he did declare
The wofull cause that bred him all this care.

16

She having learnd of Surgerie the art,
An art which still the Indians greatly prize,
Which fathers to their children to impart,
Whose knowledge in tradition chiefly lies,
Which without books the children learn by hart,
I say Angelica doth then devise,
By skill she had in juyce of herbs and flowers,
For to renew Medoros lively powers.

17

And calling to her mind she late had seen,
An herb whose vertue was to stanch the blood,
As Dittamie, or some such herb I ween,
That for such purpose wholsome was and good;
Straightway she seeks this herb upon the green,
With all the hast and diligence she could;
And finding it, she takes thereof a branch,
Whose vertue was the course of blood to stanch.

18

Then comming back againe, she met by hap,
A silly shepheard seeking of his cow,
That brake out of his ground at some small gap,
And now was straid he knew not where nor how,
She prayes him take the herbs were in her lap,
(A servitor more fit to serve a sow)
And beare her company unto the place,
Where poore Medoro lay in dangrous case.

19

Then from their horse she and the shepheard light,
And straight between two tiles those herbs she brusd

And took the juyce between her fingers bright,
And so into the wound the same infusd,
Whose vertue great revivd Medoros spright,
To find himselfe so well and kindly usd,
That doubt it was which most his wound did salve,
The precious surgeon or the precious salve.

20

And now he had recoverd so much force,
As what with hers, and with the shepherds aid,
He clamerd up upon the shepherds horse,
Howbeit in the place so long he staid,
Untill he saw his loved masters corse,
Into a grave with Cloridanos laid;
And then, and not before he did agree,
To do as they by her should pointed be.

21

From thence unto the shepherds house she went,
And made her patient eke with her to go,
And there to bide with him she was content,
Till he were clearely rid of all his wo:
But in this while she felt her heart relent,

With sundry qualms that wonted not be so,
And when his comely personage she saw,
A secret heat she felt her heart to gnaw.

22

For while she heald his wound, another dart
Did wound her thoughts, and high conceits so deep,
As now therewith was ravisht her proud heart,
Possessing it although she wake or sleep:
Her wound to heale, there was no herb nor art,
For more and more like flame the same doth creep,
Yet her chiefe care is him to help and cure,
That all this torment doth to her procure.

23

Thus while Medoro better growes and better,
She feels her self tormented more and more,
And he that for his love to her was debter,
Is he alone that plagueth her so sore:
Wherefore though modesty a while did let her,
Yet now perforce no further she forbore,
But plainly to Medoro told her grief,
And at his hands as plainly askd relief.

24

O stout Orlando, valiant Sacrapant,
O fierce Ferraw, o hundreds more beside,
Where are those valiant acts of which you vaunt?
Where is your pomp, your glory, and your pride?
One poore Medore all your desires doth daunt,
One poore Medore doth all your power deride,
And she whom all of you have wooed in vaine,
To woo Medoro doth not now disdain.

25

She suffers poore Medoro take the flowre,
Which many sought, but none had yet obtained
That fragrant rose, that to that present houre
Ungatherd was, behold Medoro gaine,
And over her to give him perfect power,
With sacred rites a marriage was ordained,
And with the veile of this so sacred order,
She covers this her folly and disorder.

26

Now when the solemne marriage was done,
Of which god Cupid asked the banes (I trow)

She going forward as she hath begun,
Continud there with him a month or mo,
From rising to the setting of the Sun,
With him she doth sit, talk, lie, stand and go,
Forgetting so all maidenly sobrietie,
That she of him could never have satietie.

27

If in the house she staid, then would she crave
Medoro in the house with her to stay,
If in the field she walk, then must she have
Medoro lead or guide her in the way:
And by a river in the shady cave,
They oft did use to spend the heat of day:
Like to that cave where (shunning stormy weather)
The Trojan Duke and Dido met together.

28

Amid these joyes (as great as joyes might be)
Their manner was on evry wall within,
Without on evry stone or shady tree,
To grave their names with bodkin, knife, or pin,
Angelica and Medore, you plaine might see,

(So great a glory had they both therein)
Angelica and Medore in evry place,
With sundry knots and wreathes they enterlace.

29

Now when she thought in this well pleasing place,
She had already made sufficient stay,
And, for she longd to do Medore that grace,
To give to him her kingdome of Catay,
From whence she had been absent so long space,
From this poore house she means to go away,
Yet minds she ere she go, her host to please,
With whom she found such pleasure and such ease.

30

Angelica had since she was a gerle,
Worn on her arm (as for Orlandos sake)
A bracelet rich, of precious stone and pearle,
Which as a token she of him did take,
And though she had it of this worthy Earle,
Yet did she thereof chiefest reckning make,
Not that the giver she did much esteem,
But for the gift was rich, and so did seem.

31

By her this bracelet many yeares was worn,
Not onely in her time of peace and joy,
But evn when she remained most forlorn,
And subject to each danger and annoy,
Evn then when nakd as ever she was born,
The Orko came in hope her to enjoy.
This bracelet (wanting store of coine and pence)
She gives her host as for a recompence.

32

Next day betime she getteth on her way,
And makes Medoro sole her Lord and guide,
He kept her company both night and day,
And none but he with her did go and ride;
Their meaning is at Berselon to stay,
A port in Spaine, untill they may provide
A vessell that with help of oare and wind
May them transport from Spanish seas to Inde.

33

But ere they were arrived at this port,
They met a mad man of his wit bestraught,

Besmeard with dirt and mire in filthy sort,
His outward sense expeld with inward thought:
This mad man made them but ilfavourd sport,
And had made worse, had he them rightly caught,
But as it was, he put them in great danger,
And flies at them as dogs do at a stranger.

34

But how she scaped and away did get
With her new love, hereafter I declare:
For why Marfisa I may not forget,
And those with her that in the tempest are,
With Griffin, Aquilant, and Sansonet,
And thEnglish Duke that hath the horn so rare,
Which five I left in danger and disease,
Tost terribly in the tempestuous seas.

35

Now while the wind continud blowing hard,
And of his rage did small or nothing bate,
The master sets his compasse and his card,
And cals to counsell first the masters mate,
And then the mariners of best regard

Consulting of the weather and their state,
And evry one doth tell his guesse and thought,
Neare to what coast the tempest had them brought.

36

Some say Lymisso, Tripoly some say,
Some say Satila, full of rocks and sands,
And swear that all of them were cast away,
Except they keep aloofe from off those lands;
This causeth some to curse and some to pray,
And lift to heavn their wofull hearts and hands,
Their stuffe nor merchandize none care to save,
But hurle the same into the greedy wave.

37

Well might they bost of iron heart and breast,
That could at such a time be void of feare:
The stout Marfisa at that time confest,
She wisht with all her heart not to be there,
So sore the swelling seas did them molest,
As though it would the ship in peeces teare,
Nor was there any signe the wind would cease,
And that the sea would grant them any peace.

38

One vowes a journey to the holy tombe,
Another to Galicia vowes to go,
Unto Saint James, some others unto Rome,
Or other hallowed places that they know:
The mariners feare nought but want of roome,
Sea roome they wish, then care they for no mo,
At foure daies end it cleard and waxed faire,
Or weret the season, or their earnest praier.

39

And as the weather grew more cleare and cleare,
They did discover plaine a goodly coast,
And to the port as they drew neare and neare,
Born in by tide, their sailes and tackle lost,
Behold a goodly city did appeare,
With towres and stately buildings of great cost,
Of which when once the master was aware,
It bred in him no little feare and care.

40

To cast his anker straight he doth provide,
For vaine it was to labour to go back,

The vessels wanted sailes to stem the tide,
The tempest had put all things so to wrack,
And yet he feared on the other side,
They of the town would sure be on his jack;
In fine so full his mind was of confusion,
He knew not whereupon to make conclusion.

41

Now while he stood confused in this sort,
The English Duke demaunds what cause of doubt
Made him refuse so faire and safe a port,
And strive against the streame to keep still out?
Sir (quoth the master) briefly to report
To you the cause, know this, that hereabout
And namely in that city dwels a nation,
That use a barbarous and cruell fashion.

42

They call them Amazons that here do dwell,
Here women guide, and rule, and govern all,
The men from government they do expell,
Some they do kill, the rest keep bond and thrall,
He sole shall scape that runs at tilt so well,

As first to make ten men of theirs to fall,
And next in Venery and flesh delight,
Can satisfie ten women in one night.

43

And if a man performe the first of these,
And have such hap to overthrow the men,
And yet at night his force do faile to please
In act of generation damsels ten,
He must be kild or drowned in the seas,
Or kept a prisner in some cave or den;
But they that both perform, shall have their lives,
And those ten damsels ever for their wives.

44

When as the pilot out his tale had told,
Of women that delight in spoile and murder,
The English Duke could hard his laughter hold,
To heare of so fantasticall an order,
And all the five affirmed straight they would
Land at this place, and go by sea no further;
Each place to them was safe and out of feare,
Where they might have the use of sword and speare.

45

But all the shipmen carried other minds,
As men that better were to stormes inurd,
And would have thought their lives in waves & winds
More then in conflicts and in fights assurd:
But whether reason leads or causes binds,
Or that the better part the same procurd,
The ship with broken mast and tackle torn,
By force of tide into the havn was born.

46

No sooner was the vessell in the port,
But straight a gally ready for such need,
Stord with artillery of evry sort,
And one that could both row and saile with speed,
Did board them, and (to make the matter short)
A woman clad in grave and ancient weed,
As old as Sibill, or as Hectors mother,
Spake in effect these words, with many other.

47

My friends (quoth she) or yeeld or look to die,
For hope is none to scape away by flight,

But thus if any of you mean to trie,
If he alone can vanquish ten in fight,
And afterward with twice five maidens lie,
And of them maids make women in one night;
Then such a one shall rule among us chiefe,
And save his friends from punishment and grieffe.

48

But if that any shall the fact attempt,
And faile but in the first or in the last,
Then he shall die because of his contempt,
And into prison ye shall all be cast.
They made her answer all, they were content,
Not one man there was therewithall agast
For in both kinds the knights had so been provd,
As with the danger they were nothing movd.

49

The English Duke with these three youths of France,
Straight for this enterprise themselves prepare,
But chiefe the Duke that doubted no mischance,
By vertue of his book and horn most rare:
Marfisa eke (though for the second daunce

She was not fit) so manly mind she bare,
As she would needs her force and fortune trie,
And sware her sword all weapons should supplie.

50

And straight they all agreed some lots to draw,
And to conclude, on her the hazard fell,
But she that quite was void of feare and aw,
Did promise to perform her office well:
This sword (quoth she) shal abrogate this law,
And plague them all that in this city dwell,
And to undo these doubts I will provide,
As Alexander Gordius knots untid.

51

No forreiner hereafter shall bewaile,
The wicked law of this ungodly land:
This said, she putteth on her coat of maile,
In hope alone against ten men to stand.
Then came the ten were pointed to assaile,
But he that was the foremost of the band,
As farre as by apparance might be guest,
Was one that farre surpassed all the rest.

52

His horse was black as pitch, or polisht jet,
Save in one foot, and in his brow a starre,
A shining spot of white, not very great,
A lofty reine, an eye that threatned warre;
Such as the horse, such was his own conceit,
His sorrowes did exceed his joyes so farre,
And deadly care so drownd his small delight,
As did the black the little spot of white.

53

This knight (that ever vantage did eschew)
Would not accompany those other nine,
But standeth still on horseback taking view,
Which way the victory did most incline:
Marfisa rode a horse of dainty hew,
Givn unto her of late by Norandine,
His colour pide, powderd with many a spot,
Small head, fierce look, clean limbd, and lofty trot.

54

Now when that givn of battell was the signe,
On her alone all nine at once did flie,

And she alone sustained the force of nine:
The tenth (I said) was quiet standing by,
As one that did against that use repine,
When more then one should seek to make one die:
And with the first encounter thus she sped,
She laid down foure of them on ground for dead.

55

The fift she justles, and by force unhorses,
And with a trunch the sixt she gave a blow,
That to the ground both man and horse inforces,
With mazed head, and foltring feet to go.
The standers by admire her passing forces,
And chiefe their wives that saw them killed so,
For as a chainshot sweeps all in the way,
So with those nine Marfisa then did play.

56

She bathd her blade in blood up to the hilt,
And with the same their bodies all she mangled,
All that abode her blowes, their bloud was spilt,
They scaped best that here and thither ranged,
Or those whose horses overthrown at tilt,

Lay with their masters on the earth intangled.
Thus of nine enemies remained none,
For all were kild, or maimd, or overthrown.

57

The knight that was arraid in black attire,
And stood aside, and saw this hardy fight,
To shew that he for feare did not retire,
But to make known his curtsie shining bright,
Straight steppeth out, and first he doth desire
To speak with her whom he esteemd a knight,
For he could not imagine nor suppose,
A woman could have givn such manly blowes.

58

And thus he saith, me seems the odds too great,
That I of you should take, to fight straightway,
Sith both your horse and you are in a sweat,
Mine offer is to respite you a day,
Till you may be refresht with rest and meat,
That with mine honour fight with you I may:
For I should think my selfe disgraced sore,
To vanquish one weand and spent before.

59

Wearid and spent (quoth she) alas the while,
Think you I am so wearid and so spent?
Your courteous offer causeth me to smile,
To think how quickly you will it repent;
You do deceive your selfe, and much beguile,
To think that I to pawse would be content,
I doubt not you shall find but little cause,
(When you have trid) to offer me to pause.

60

Well, said the knight, if you will trie it straight,
That you accept, I cannot well refuse:
Forthwith two speares of mighty strength & waight
Were brought, and he doth bid Marfisa chuse:
Now was the Sun foure houres past his haight,
When as these two began their speares to use;
The trumpets sound, they set their speares in rest,
And each determining to do their best.

61

The speares in spels and sundry peeces flew,
As if they had been little sticks or cane,

Yet of the blowes to both did hurt ensew,
Their steeds were welnigh brought unto their bane,
Quite overthrown in all the peoples view,
As though their legs had quite from them been tane,
So both their horses tumbled on the ground,
Yet both themselves from hurt were safe and sound.

62

An hundred and an hundred knights and more,
Marfisa had subdud (it was well known)
Yet such a chance she never had before,
To have her horse so strangely overthrown:
Also the knight that black apparell wore,
Doth marvell whence this great mishap was grown,
And not a little wondred at her force,
That had so stoutly overthrown his horse.

63

Forthwith on foot the combat they apply,
In which the tone the tother doth not spare,
And either thinks to make the other die,
And either of the tother doth beware.
But all the while among the standers by,

Appeared great attentiveness and care,
For never could they guess from the beginning,
Which of the two was in best hope of winning.

64

Now gan Marfisa to her selfe to say,
It happy was that he before stood still,
For had he holp the tother nine to day,
No doubt with me it could have been but ill,
That now alone so hard doth hold me play,
As scant I save my selfe with all my skill,
Thus to her selfe the stout Marfisa thought,
And all the while couragiously she fought.

65

Contrary, to himselfe the knight thus saith,
Twas well for me, that he before was spent,
For had he been but fresh in perfect breath,
I doubt me that ere this I had been shent,
Surely (thought he) I scant had scaped death,
If he to rest himselfe had givn consent,
No question I did great advantage take,
That he refusd that offer I did make.

66

Thus did the combat long twixt them endure,
And neither party boasted of their gaine,
Untill the nights dark shadow and obscure
Did cover city, wood, and vale, and plaine,
And that that rest to all things doth procure,
Did force them two to respit this their paine;
And first the knight thus said, what can we do?
Behold how night is come to part us two.

67

You may (said he) one night prolong your life,
And longer not, such is the cursed law,
Against my will (God knowes) I hold this strife,
And now I feare and have no little aw,
Lest evry one that was to them a wife,
Whom late you kild, will from your beds you draw,
For evry one of those unhappy men
Whom erst you slue, was husband unto ten.

68

So that for those same nine that you have slaine,
Nine times ten women seek revenge to take:

Wherefore I wish that you and all your traine
Within my roofe this night abode do make,
For so perhap from wrong they will abstaine,
If not for right, at least for revrence sake,
Ile take your offer sir, Marfisa saith,
So that hereof to me you give your faith.

69

That as in fight you shew your value great,
As I have proved in this present place,
So I may find your words without deceit,
Lest falshood should your noble deeds deface:
I will accept your lodging and your meat,
And will perswade my fellowes in like case;
But rather then for feare you should it think,
Lets fight it out by light of torch and link.

70

And thus in fine they all of them agreed,
That unto him that night they would be guest:
Straight to a sumptuous pallace they proceed,
By torchlight brought to chambers richly drest:
But when that each put off their warlike weed,

Then each of them with wonder was possest:
She, that the knight did by his face appeare,
To be a boy, of age but eighteene yeare.

71

And he, when by her haire her sex he knew,
Wonderd to see a woman of such might,
As namely that in sight nine tall men slue,
And after had with him prolongd the fight:
And either pleased in the others view,
Behold the one the other with delight,
Then each desird the others name to learn,
As in thensuing book you shall discern.

ARGUMENT

THE TWENTIETH BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

With Guidon all his worthy guests agree,
To breake from thAmazons the morrow morne:
Astolfo doubting lest it would not be,
Doth drive them thence and scares them with his horne
Zerbino laughs Gabrina gay to see;
Marfisa seemes to take it in great scorne,
And gainst his will commits her to his guiding,
By whom he heares of Isabella tiding.

TWENTIETHBOOKE

1

Right wondrous deeds by diverse dames were done,
In times of old, as well by sword as pen,
Whereby their glory shined like the sun,
And famous was both farre and neare as then,
The same Harpalice in battell wonne,
Camillas worth is eke well known to men,
Corinnas praise, and Saphos are discern'd,
Above the rest, because they both were learnd.

2

What art so deep? what science is so high,
But worthy women have thereto attain'd?
Who list in stories old to look, may trie,
And find my speech herein not false nor faind,
And though of late they seem not to come nigh,
The praise their sexe in former times have gaind,
No doubt the fault is either in backbiters,
Or want of skill and judgement in the writers.

3

For sure I see in this our present age,
Such vertuous parts in their sweet sex to grow,
The young so sober, and the rest so sage,
And all so chast, as writers shall (I know)
Have work enough to fill full many a page,
With their great praise that from their worth will flow,
To win the fame their ancestors did leese,
And passe Marfisa not in few degrees.

4

But now to turn my speech to her againe,
I say that when the knight did ask her name,
She made him answer, and did not disdain,
To tell both what she was, and whence she came,
Yet (as her fashion was) both brief and plaine;
She saith thus to the knight, I called am
Marfisa: and she need to say no more,
For all the world had heard the rest before.

5

The tother, when his turn to speak came in,
First making long and farther circumstance,

In such like manner doth his tale begin,
(And sighing deep) you all have heard perchance,
Both of my fathers house, and of my kin,
Of fame in Italie, in Spaine, and France:
For sure I am the house of Clarimount,
In all the world is known and of account.

6

He that Charello and Mambrino slew,
And did their kingdomes ruine and deface,
Out of one stock with me together grew,
Although we were not all born in one place,
For why at Ister stood (to tell you true)
My father me begat, and in that case
My mother great with child he left behind,
And went to France by help of saile and wind.

7

Thus sevnteen yeares I livd like one exild,
Untill I able was to break a lance,
And for that place me seemd too base and vild,
I mean to seek my friends and kin in France:
They name me Guidon savage of a child,

As yet I could not much my name advance,
For hither by a tempest I was born,
As you were now, with ship and tackle torn.

8

Here first Argillon with nine men I kild,
Elevn months since, and that same day at night,
The office of an husband I fulfild,
Unto ten Amazons in flesh delight:
This done, to take my choice then was I wild,
Of any ten that pleased best my sight,
And these remaine my wives, and must until
One come that me with other nine can kill.

9

Unto the knights this seemd a marvlous storie,
And much they wondred at this government,
They marvell that so great a territorie
For want of men was not consumd and spent:
They thought no lesse the women would be sorie,
For want of men to live so continent:
Twas strange one man sufficed ten of these,
Sith one with us can scant one woman please.

10

And straight they were inquisitive to know,
When first this foolish order there began,
And upon what occasion it did grow,
That women in that country ruled man?
Then Guidon answerd thus, I shall you show
The whole discourse as briefly as I can,
According as my selfe have heard the same,
Since (by mishap) into this realme I came.

11

When as the Greekes had quite defaced Troy,
And after twice ten yeares returned home,
(For ten whole yeares in danger and annoy,
Of surging seas they up and down did rome)
They found their wives that had but little joy,
So long a time, to live and lie alone,
Each one a lusty lover to have chosen,
Lest with the cold they might be stervd and frozen.

12

Their houses full of bastard brats they see:
In fine, they purpose after consultation,

To pardon all their wives, and set them free,
But for these boyes that bred some alteration,
To drive them out a doore they do agree,
And make them seek a forraine habitation;
It was contrary much to their desires,
That others brats should warm them at their fires.

13

Thus some thrown out, some close their mothers keep
In corners, from their angry husbands sight,
And when as elder yeares on them do creep,
Each one betakes him to his most delight;
Some plow, some get them herds of goats and sheep,
Some sciences, and some do learn to fight,
Thus evry one betook him to some trade,
As he assignes that all the world hath made.

14

Among the rest that art of war ensue,
Phalanto sonne of Clytemnestra Queene,
But eighteen yeares of age, and fresh of hue,
And in the flower of youths well pleasing greene,
This one to him an hundred gallants drue,

And getting ships and things that needfull been,
With writs of Mart (a thing that breeds much sorrow)
He gets him to the sea, in mind to borrow.

15

Now while Phalanto with his cursed fleet
Abode at sea with that more cursed traine:
It fortund at that time that they of Creet,
Had Idumeo drivn out of his raigne:
Wherefore for better strength they thought it meet
Phalanto and his men to entertaine:
They give to him great hire, and great reward,
The city of Ditea for to guard.

16

Ditea was a town of great estate,
Rich, and frequented with no small resort,
And yeelds in plenty large, betimes and late,
Of sundry kinds of pleasures, and of sport;
And as they all men usd, so in like rate,
They usd their soldiers in so friendly sort,
As though they had agreed by sound accords,
To make them all their masters and their Lords.

17

But chief they found with women so great grace,
As they wan most of them unto their lure;
But when the warres were ended in short space,
And that their pay no longer did endure,
They all prepar'd to leave this pleasant place,
Which to the damsels did great griefe procure;
To leese their husbands brother, or their father,
Then these new lovers evry one had rather.

18

And when they saw they could not make them stay,
By no device of theirs, nor no request,
They do agree with them to steale away,
And take such things as were of value best;
Thus came these damsels loden with their prey,
And thence to sea, and were now gone at least
An hundred leagues, with these new lawlesse lovers,
Before Ditea this their flight discovers.

19

The wind so good then for their purpose blew,
Phalanto quickly landed in this coast,

And here the amorous and wanton crew
Unto their loves of this their lewdnesse boast;
But now that saying was confirmed true,
That pleasant things, do often cloy the most:
And there can be a greater clog to no man,
Then to be weary of a wanton woman.

20

Wherefore like men that were, and had been ever
Of gaine most greedy, sparing of expence:
They secretly consulting, do endever
To take the goods, and then to steale from thence.
Thus while the women still in love persever,
They that regard not pleasure more then pence,
Load with their wealth, of which there was good store,
Stale to the sea, and left them on the shore.

21

Sore were the damsels daunted and dismaid,
When once they saw their loves had them forsaken,
For what more spite can be, then be betraid
Of him to whom one hath her selfe betaken?
And sith they find that weeping doth not aid,

They meane betime some order shall be taken,
What they shall do, and how hereafter live,
An evry one doth straight her verdit give.

22

One, home to turne againe doth thinke it best,
And to their kin and friends them to submit,
And with repentance pardon to request,
And vow the like fault never to commit;
Another that good motion doth detest,
And swears it shewd the mover had no wit,
And that with greater honestie or ease,
They might go drowne them headlong in the seas.

23

Among the rest one Orontea hight,
That lineally of Mynos was descended,
And past the rest in beautie and good sprite,
And had lesse grievously then they offended,
For to Phalanto she her troth did plight,
And to have bene his honest spouse intended:
This one declareth thus her resolution,
And makes the rest put it in execution.

24

She wishes them to tary in this land,
That had both fruitfull earth and pleasant aire,
And fountaines sweet, and woods on evry hand,
And medowes greene, and pastures fresh and faire,
Beside large havns, where ships at ease might stand,
To which the merchants often made repaire,
By tempest driven, well loden with good trafficke,
Of things that came from AEgypt and from Affrick.

25

Wherefore this place she minds not to forsake,
But that they may as chiefly they desire,
A sharpe revenge on men for ever take,
They vow to put to sacke, to sword and fire,
Such ships as to their havn repaire do make,
And kill the men, and this they all conspire:
And still when any come, this trade they use,
Nor left a man alive to carry newes.

26

But when this cruell law some yeares had lasted,
Which they had meant to have confirmd for ay,

They find that they so fast consumed and wasted,
That this their barren kingdom would decay,
Except to find some remedy they hastened,
And having long consulted on the way,
They meant of this their law to bate some rigor,
Yet leave the substance still in strength and vigor.

27

And thus they do, they choose among such men,
As tempests drive to this their wicked nation,
Some few as were so lusty, as with ten
They could performe the act of generation,
All in one night, the rest into a den
They cast, and kill them in most cruel fashion,
And build unto revenge a solemn altar,
And over this they make them stretch a halter.

28

Such men as live are to this order sworn,
To kill all such as hither shall repair,
And all men children that to them are borne,
They sell or change as in an open fair,
So when some die with age and weakness worn,

Then other women do the want repaire,
Their powre and number thus doth still increase,
Their wealth and pomp augmented, with long peace.

29

But after many yeares it thus befell,
Elbanio, one of Hercules noble race,
A comely tall strong man, and favord well,
And in his speech and manners passing grace,
Arrived where these homicids do dwell,
And ere he knew the fashion of the place,
The cruell sergeants tooke him as they found him,
And like a fellow hand and foote they bound him.

30

It fortun'd as they carrid him to slaughter,
Among the rest that did the same behold,
Was Alessandra, Orontes daughter,
A fine yong girle, about twise eight yeare old,
Elbanio humbly as he went besought her,
To be a meane this foule death to withhold,
That like a man he might be kild at least,
And not be drawne to slaughter like a beast.

31

To beg my life (quoth he) it were a vanitie,
(Which in your service I would gladly spend)
Where humane hearts be void of all humanitie,
But all the sute that I to make intend,
(Which to denie were too too much immanitie)
Is this, that thus my life I may not end,
But with my sword in hand to fight with men,
With sevn at once, or eight, or nine or ten.

32

This he to her, thus she to him replies,
Though to mankind we all professe hostilitie,
Yet thinke not (this she spake with watrie eyes)
That all our hearts are void of all gentilitie,
What Progne or Medea could despise
Your passing beautie, courage and nobilitie?
And were my fellowes all so ill inclind,
Yet I my selfe would beare a better mind.

33

And though the rigor of our law be such,
That no man can obtaine a pardon free,

And evn this small you aske, to graunt is much,
If our law strictly should observed be,
Yet such remorse I feele my heart doth tuch,
To grant thy sute if others will agree
Although I feare thou wilt in such a strife,
Prolong thy paine, and not preserve thy life.

34

Oh (said Elbanio) blest were such a day,
That in the field my manhood I might trie,
Could but your credit carry such a sway,
Not ten, but ten times ten I would defie.
This said, she causd the execution stay,
And to her mother goes she by and by,
With thousand strings of Cupid in her brest,
And unto her expoundeth his request.

35

Straight Orontea doth her counsell call,
And in such sort thereof to them she spake,
In guarding of our havn and citie wall,
Tis good that of the strongest men we take:
Therefore to know who be most stout and tall,

I thinke it very good some prooffe to make,
For else we shall unto our selves do wrong,
To save the weaker men, and kill the strong.

36

And who can wish to make a better triall,
Then for one man to fight with five and five,
And if he vanquisht them and make them die all,
Twere certes meet he should be kept alive:
Thus Orontea said, and they replie all,
That in this point with her they cannot strive,
Save old Artemia (carren witherd jade)
Mislikt the motion, and this answer made.

37

The cause that first we did some men admit,
Was not to keepe our havns or citie wall,
For we our selves have strength enough and wit,
To keepe our towne (I trust) and ever shall.
Were we as well for procreation fit,
Without mans helpe, not one should live at all;
Now for necessitie some few we spare,
Such as most able for that service are.

38

This motion quite gainsaith our auncient law,
To keepe one man as strong as halfe a score:
How many women would he keepe in aw?
Had we ten such we should beare rule no more.
And further, tis an old and certaine saw,
Both usd and proved many yeares before,
That they that give a weapon to their stronger,
Are like themselves to carry rule no longer.

39

But put the case this one by our consent,
And his good hap ten of the others kill,
How shall an hundred widowes then lament,
That long must lie alone against their will?
If he an hundred women would content,
Then him to save I should not thinke it all,
Then were he to be lovd, admird and wonderd,
If he alone could satisfie an hunderd.

40

This cruell spech did all the rest displease,
And loth they were Elbanio should be slaine,

His comely shape their sharpnesse did appease,
And chiefly she that over all did raigne,
Doth seeke herein her daughters mind to please,
With many reasons answring her againe,
And point by point did all her speech confute,
And in the end obtaind her daughters sute.

41

Thus to Elbanio pardon they impart,
Provided if he overcome the men,
And after bravely play the husbands part,
Not with an hundred women, but with ten.
Elbanio thanketh them with chearfull hart,
Then was he freely loosed from the den:
In fine, when all things ready were ordained,
In both exploits the conquest he obtained.

42

Then Alessandra, in whose tender mind
Love had already made so deepe impression,
With other nine, were unto him assignd,
And princely mace was put in his possession.
But first by solemne vow they do him bind,

To hold this law for ever by succession,
To sacrifice all men, save such as trie,
To kill ten men, and with ten women lie.

43

And though that many have in ages past
Attempted both, yet few have had successe,
To scape the first exploit, and trie the last,
In which to faile, the danger were no lesse,
But he that both performes, forthwith is plast
In princely seate, and free from all distresse:
And this their law (as by records appeares)
Alreadie lasted hath two thousand yeares.

44

The last but I, that held this cursed place,
Argillon hight, whom I in combat killed,
And him and his thereby I did displace,
And then their roomes with me and mine I filled,
Where we have tarrid now a twelvemonths space,
Among these wights of goodnesse all unskilled,
And leade a life full of disdain and scorne,
As better had bene never to be borne.

45

For why these dallyings and wanton toyes,
That wonted are to please our foolish youth,
With costly fare, gay clothes, and Venus joyes,
Of which repentance is the frute ensewth,
Doth breed to me but anguish and annoyes,
And pensive cares, and ever during ruth;
And chiefly when unto my mind I call,
My liberty is lost, and I a thrall.

46

To loose my lustie time in this vile place,
Removd from kin and friends, and countrey farre,
A wofull and remedillesse disgrace,
Movd by some ill aspect of angry starre,
Evn as a stallion kept for breed and race,
Whom some mishap hath made unfit for warre,
By losse of sight and foundring of his feete,
For service quite unable and unmeete.

47

The while this tale the savage Guidon told,
The English Duke that all this while stood by,

And heard his speech, and did his face behold,
And noted all his grace with watchfull eye,
And made by all these observations bold,
He runneth to embrace him by and by,
And said, deare cosin, I were much too blame,
Except I lov'd the house from whence you came.

48

Your mother could not tie a better lace
About your necke, to make your linage knowne,
Then this your value in this present place,
Against Marfisa in the battell showne:
I am Astolfo one of Ammons race,
Friend to your house, and kinsman of your owne,
I much rejoyce to find by this mischance;
So neare a kinsman so far off from France.

49

But he that otherwise would have bene glad,
To meet a friend, a Prince of kin so neare,
Now on the other side he was full sad,
And shewd the same in countenance and cheare,
For evry way the sequell must be bad,

For if he win they die, the case is cleare,
And if he do not win, he is but ded,
Thus by ones good the tothers harme is bred.

50

On thother side his yeares and tender age,
Did all of them so farre with pittie move,
And did Marfisas heate so much asswage,
Her enmitie was welnigh turnd to love:
At last she makes a motion wise and sage,
Which was, that all to scape by force should prove,
She swears if he would take part with his cosen,
Not all the towne could vanquish that halfe dosen.

51

Most glad (said Guidon) I would take your part,
Though vaine it is against so great a number,
To enterprise by force hence to depart,
Their very multitude will us so cumber:
For often (to the terror of mine hart)
Ten thousand armed women I do number
Here in the streets, and with as many more,
They do defend the port, the havn and shore.

52

Tush (quoth Marfisa) this I not regard,
Were they in number as the sands of seas,
To valiant hearts no enterprise is hard,
Take you but part, and joyne with me and these.
Yes, answerd Guidon, be I made or mard,
Or beet with paine, with danger or disease,
I will take part with you, but if I may,
I would advise you to a safer way.

53

If we this matter wisely take in hand,
This is the safest way that I do know,
They let no men to touch the salt sea sand,
Lest any should attempt from hence to go:
And sith tis hard their forces to withstand,
Ile trie a better way then that, I trow,
Among my ten I have one speciall wife,
Upon whose trust I venter dare my life.

54

She shall a barke provide in secret sort,
And other needfull things for us prepare,

And when as to the tiltyard they resort,
And of our fight in expectation are,
We suddenly will make unto the port,
And ship our selves ere any be aware:
To leade the way my selfe I am content,
So you and yours to follow will consent.

55

Marfisa straight, and all the rest agreed,
That Guidon for that time should be their guide,
And that accordingly they would proceed,
As he for them had promist to provide:
Though (said Marfisa) saving this my weed,
My shape and sexe from all of them doth hide,
I know my selfe from harme could be excused,
And of them all both welcome and well used.

56

But now (said she) such part I mind to take,
As you shall tast (how good or bad it prove)
That night with his Aleria Guidon spake,
(So was her name that bare him chiefest love)
And points that she provision good should make,

For things that needfull were for their remove.
And she no time, nor paine, nor travell spard,
But out of hand a galley straight prepard.

57

And that her fellowes might no fraud suspect,
To go to seeke a prize she doth pretend,
And with great diligence she doth direct,
All meanes to serve their passage to defend:
And they within no time nor meane neglect,
To bring their stout designement to an end.
Thus evry one their charge so well attended,
That ere the morning all was done and ended.

58

No sooner came the dawning of the day,
But that those Amazons like bees in swarmes,
That seeke new dwellings in the month of May,
So came they well appointed all in armes,
To see an end of that unended fray,
Not looking for such new and strange alarmes,
For straight those sixe I namd and all their traine,
Came with intent to scape or else be slaine.

59

First Guidon breakes the way to all the rest,
Soone after him Marfisa did ensew,
Then Sansonet and thEnglish Duke were prest,
And next two brothers came, then all the crew;
But yet with numbers they were so opprest,
Both with the shafts they shot, and darts they threw,
That notwithstanding all they had devised,
They were in danger great to be surprised.

60

But when the English Duke the danger saw,
Unto himselfe these words or such he said,
I see our foes in troupes together draw,
I see our friends are weakned and dismaid,
Now will I strike our enemies in aw,
Now will I bring our friends unlookt for aid,
With this he tooke his horne and blew a blast,
That made the hearers evry one agast.

61

So great a terror in their minds was bred,
That straight as if with sprites they had bene scard,

This way and that, confusedly they fled,
And left the gates without defence or guard,
As tumults often are at stageplayes bred,
When false reports of sudden fires are heard,
Or when the overloden seates do cracke,
One tumbling downe upon anothers backe.

62

One breakes a leg, another breakes an arme,
And some are choakt and stifled in the presse,
Some kill themselves for feare of further harme.
And whence the danger comes they cannot guesse,
But all of them in hast themselves unarme,
And unto fearefull flight themselves adresse:
Nor women onely with this feare are punishd,
But even the men themselves were all astonishd.

63

Yea even Marfisas courage, late so fierce,
(So great a vertue this inchantment had)
That strange and sudden feare the same did pearce,
And she by flight to save her selfe was glad:
The Knights likewise whom late I did rehearse,

And all the men, as if they had bene mad,
To seaward fled, as doth a fearfull Dove,
When any noise doth scare her from above.

64

Thus doth the blast annoy both friends and foes,
Yet so as all the men to shipboord went:
Astolfo stil about the citie goes,
For them to terrifie is his intent,
And more and more in all the streets he bloes,
And chiefly those where they do most frequent,
The while his frends were now to shipboord gotten,
And launched out, and him had quite forgotten.

65

The ship Aleria did before provide,
And Guidon taking ship with all the rest,
Would not consent neare to the shore to bide,
But stale away with dreadfull feare possest.
Now came the Duke unto the water side,
And seeing all were gone, he thought it best
Some other meane and way to take in hand,
By which he might convey him home by land.

66

But how he gate him home, and there did speed,
When from those countries he was come to France,
And how his horne did stand him in great steed,
Defending him from danger and mischance,
Hereafter I will shew, now I proceed
To her whose deeds do still her name advance,
I meane Marfisa stout, that made great hast,
To shun the hearing of the fearfull blast.

67

But when they were removed from the shore,
By helpe of sailes and oares, so great a space,
As now the fearfull sound was heard no more,
Each thought them guilty of a great disgrace,
And of their feare they were ashamd so sore,
One shund to looke another in the face,
The while their bark had so good wind and wether,
As all arrivd in Tyrrhen seas together.

68

And to Marsilia thence by sea they went,
Where Bradamant bare all the rule and sway,

Who late as governesse was thither sent,
Though thence she had bene absent many a day:
For had she present bene, by her assent,
Unentertained they should not go away.
Here when they were refresht with meate and rest,
Marfisa tooke her leave of all the rest.

69

And said she thought it great disgrace and shame,
So many in one company to see,
For crows (quoth she) and pigeons do the same,
And Deere, and sheepe, and beasts that fearfull be,
But Falcons that do flie at stately game,
With other birds and beasts in their degree,
That feare not others force, and trust their owne,
Shun company, and love to go alone.

70

But yet the rest that were of other mind,
Together kept, and bad the Dame farewell,
Untill by hap a castle they did find,
Wherein a Lord of great estate did dwell,
That in appearance courteous seemd and kind,

But not in acts, as after I shall tell,
For he surprisd them all that night asleepe,
And made them sweare a cruell law to keepe.

71

The while Marfisa on her way doth ride,
Appareld like a Knight of some renowne,
And as she passed by the river side,
She met a woman in a tawnie gowne,
Ifavourd, crooked, old and hollow eyd,
Her forehead furrowd with continuall frowne,
Her body tyrd with travell and ill fare,
Her guilty mind afflicted more with care.

72

This filthy hag, this carren witherd jade,
Was she whom in the cave Orlando found,
When of the theeves such massacre he made,
That kept faire Isabella under ground:
This wretch that holpe them in that wicked trade,
And feard the plague that might on her redound,
Fled from all company for feare of danger,
Untill she hapt to light upon this stranger.

73

And for she saw her clad in strange array,
Though gracelesse, yet she gathers heart of grace,
And at the foord her comming she doth stay,
And when Marfisa came unto the place,
Sir Knight (for so she seemd) I shall you pray,
(Said this old hag) to do me so much grace,
That on your horse behind you I may ride,
Till I be past the streame on thother side.

74

Marfisa that was ever from her cradle,
Of courteous kind, doth grant her her desire,
And made her clamber up behind her sadle,
To passe the river and a filthy mire,
That to her horse had almost bene a stable:
And when they were ascended somewhat higher,
They met a faire yong Ladie with a Knight,
Both richly clad, both comely to the sight.

75

But both their minds were false, their manners bad,
And therefore matcht together very fit,

For he was Pinnabell, that lately had
Faire Bradamant deceivd at Merlins pit,
She was his love, for whom he was so sad,
When Bradamant on him did hap to hit,
Till after by this noble Damsels meane,
That strange inchantment was dissolved cleane.

76

This Ladie that was Pinnabellos love,
And was both proud and scornfull of behaviour,
And sees this hag, did straight her laughter move,
To scorne her writheld skin and evill favour:
For which Marfisa stout doth her reprove,
And with a sharpe reply she straight doth brave her,
Because (quoth she) I find thou dost disdain her,
Against thy Knight and thee I will maintaine her.

77

I say this woman fairer is then thou,
Now let thy Knight come fight in thy defence,
For I by force my saying will avow,
And if that I prevaile, ere thou go hence,
Thou shalt thy horse and garments all allow

To this old woman for a recompence.
Then Pinnabell to fight doth him addresse,
Because in manhood he could do no lesse.

78

But when they met (Marfisas passing force,
Was such) she quickly vanquished the Knight,
And overthrew him quite beside his horse.
This done, she makes the stately dame to light,
And with the aged woman cloths to scorse,
At which the tone tooke sport, the tother spite,
She tooke likewise the Ladies ambling nagge,
And thereupon she sets the trotting hagge.

79

Who in this youthfull tyre and rich array,
Doth looke in shew more ugly then before,
Thus three dayes with Marfisa she did stay,
Before they hapt to meet with any more;
The fourth they met Zerbino on the way,
The Scottish Prince that would have savd Medore,
And now in anger great the Scot pursude,
That in his presence provd himselfe so rude.

80

Now though Zerbino were but ill apaid,
Yet was he straight with laughter great surprisde,
To see an aged woman so arraid,
In youthfull cloths as though she were disguisde:
And to Marfisa merily he said,
Sir Knight it seemeth you are well advisd,
To get so faire a peece to carrie by you,
As you are sure that no man will envie you.

81

The woman seemd some hundred yeares of age,
Her witherd skin such store of wrinkles had,
And like an ape or monkie in a cage,
So looked she in this apparrell clad:
But now she looked worse, when with new rage,
Her eyes enflamed were, and she halfe mad:
For what more spite can be a woman told,
Then if one say she looketh foule and old?

82

Marfisa seemeth wroth (to make some sport)
And thus she saith, surcease your slandrous toung,

Your vertue of her beautie commeth short,
She is (in spite of you) both faire and young:
And if you dare contrarie my report,
Or that hereby you feele your courage stoung,
I will maintaine against you evry word,
On horse, or foote, by speare or else by sword.

83

Zerbino at this challenge did but laffe,
And said he would not leese their friendship so:
Tis fit (quoth he) that swine should feed on draffe,
I am not I, so mad and fond I trow,
For her to draw a sword or breake a staffe,
But as you came you may together go:
No doubt you are a fitly matched paire,
If you as lustie be as she is faire.

84

Wherefore I list not paine and travell take,
To get a conquest better lost then wonne:
Then (answerd stout Marfisa) I will make
Another offer which you may not shunne,
On this condition let us for her sake,

A course at field one with the other runne:
That if you win then I will keepe her still,
If I, then you shall serve her while she will.

85

Content (quoth Zerbin) and with that they ran,
With couched spears, and met amid the plaine;
But Zerbin had the worse, Marfisa wan,
As better horst, and stronger of the twaine:
Who seeing Zerbin downe, she then began,
To talke with him and jest with him againe,
Behold (quoth she) I here to you present,
This lovely damsell for your more content.

86

Now see you keepe your promise and your troth,
To this faire dame to be a champion trew,
And do not breake the bands of sacred oth,
And so (quoth she) for now I bid adew.
Zerbin was movd with shame and anger both,
Shame for his foile, a thing most strange and new:
And wrath for her whom he thereby did gaine,
Which he might deeme the greater losse of twaine.

87

Then of his mistresse new he doth enquire,
What Knight it was that did him overthrow,
She willingly did grant him his desire,
Supposing so his grieffe might greater grow,
It was a Ladie in a Knights attire,
Marfisa hight (quoth she) that layd you low,
The which strange news I thinke not much did lacke
To make his armor blush upon his backe.

88

Upon his horse in anger great he gets,
And curst himselfe he had not sit more sure,
He bites his lips, and inwardly he frets,
And she in him more anger to procure,
With byting words his discontentment whets;
Yet he doth for his oth sake all endure,
Like tired horse he quiet all abides,
That hath the bit in mouth, and spurs in sides.

89

At last into this bitter plaint he burst,
On thee o fortune well I may complaine,

And call my selfe unhappie and accurst,
That dost at once two plagues for me ordaine,
Two plagues that of all plagues I count the worst,
As first this foile, my former fame to staine;
And having lost a Ladie of rare features,
To have this mistresse, fowlest of all creatures.

90

She, whose surpassing beautie well deserved,
All worldly blisse, whose match was never found,
She from misfortune could not be preserved,
But that by cruell stormes she must be dround,
And this, who if she had bene rightly served
Ought long ere this, have fed worms under ground,
Thou hast these many yeares and still dost save,
That I by her at last this plague might have.

91

By these and such like words as Zerbin spake,
That aged woman gives assured guesse,
That this was he, to whom, and for whose sake,
Faire Isabell (kept erst in great distresse,
There where Orlando did from theeves her take)

Was wont so great affection to professe,
And to describe his parts and shape so trew,
As evrie one might know him at a vew.

92

And now that by his words she plainly found,
That this was Zerbin, and that he beleved
Faire Isabella was in tempest dround,
With which conceit she saw he sore was greaved,
She that did know her to be safe and sound,
Yet meaning not his griefe should be releved,
She telleth onely that that would disease him,
And doth conceale that which she thought would please him.

93

You sir (quoth she) that me so greatly scorne,
If you but knew what tydings I could tell,
Of her whom you lament as dead and lorne,
You would both speake me faire and use me well:
But first I will with horses wild be torne,
And suffer all the paines of earth and hell,
Before that I will condescend to show it,
Or then by me you ever come to know it.

94

Looke how a gentle grewnd, that doth assaile
And flies upon a stranger at the furst,
Will on the sodaine faune and wag his taile,
If so of bread one profer him a crust:
So Zerbin that before on her did raile,
And bitterly unto her face her curst,
Now he intreates her, and doth pray and flatter,
To give him farther notice of the matter.

95

At last with long intreatie she replies,
And saith, faire Isabella is not ded,
But so she lives, that sure she death envies:
And never hope to have her maidenhed,
For I have seene (quoth she) with these mine eyes,
How twentie lawlesse men her captive led,
And evry one might have her at their pleasure,
As having liberty, and lust, and leasure.

96

Ah wicked hagge, thou knowst it is a lie,
And yet behold how thou canst paint it out,

Thou knowst that none of them with her did lie,
Thou knowst Orlando thence did fetch her out:
And made the malefactors all to die,
That of her danger now there was no doubt.
But now alas this lying storie bred,
A thousand jealousies in Zerbines hed.

97

He askt her where and when his love she saw,
He speakes her oftentimes both foule and faire,
But not a word more could he from her draw,
Neither by threatning words, nor yet by prayre:
He feeles a corzie cold his heart to gnaw,
His little hope was turnd to great dispaire:
And thus this old ilfavoured spitefull Callet,
Gave good Zerbino such a choking sallet.

98

What patience thus provoked could have borne,
At such a womans hands so vile a spite?
And save he was unto her service sworne,
No doubt he would have done her then her right.
Thus she of malice full, and he of scorne,

Went on their way, untill they met a Knight:
But what became hereof if you will know,
The booke ensuing shall the sequell show.

ARGUMENT

THE TWENTYFIRST BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Most worthie Zerbin by his promise bound,
Defends Gabrina most unworthie wight,
And for her sake he overthrowes to ground
Hermonida, unluckie Flemish Knight:
Who doth to him her most lewd life expound,
Increasing by his speech, her cruell spite:
Yet still the good Zerbino travels with her,
And many a wearie mile they rode together.

TWENTY FIRST BOOKE

1

Nor Iron nailes make fast a planke or boord
More firme, nor cords a burden surer binde,
Then faith once givn by promise or by word,
Tyes most assuredly the vertuous minde,
Old times to us good store of samples foord,
How praise devine was unto faith assinde,
And how in garments white she still was painted,
That ech smal spot or staine might shew her tainted.

2

Faith ever should be kept in secret sort,
Although to one, or whether given to more,
Although in deserts farre from all resort,
Or else a judge or multitude before:
What though the witsse wants to make report?
Yet must we keepe our covnant evermore,
As well by word and private protestation,
As by record and publike obligation.

3

And so did Zerbin as before I told,
His promise firme unviolate preserve,
And though Gabrina was both foule and old,
Though her misdeeds all rigor did deserve:
Yet he his faith and promise firme doth hold,
And left his former busines her to serve,
Till as they traveld on the way by chance,
They met a Flemish Knight late come to France.

4

The Knight of stature comly was and tall,
And in his shield he bare an azure bend,
His name Ermonida they use to call,
It seemd he was not this old womans frend,
For straight his sight her heart did so appall,
Unto her guide her life she doth commend:
And praid him (as he promist) to vouchsafe,
From this her enemies to keepe her safe,

5

This man (quoth she) my guiltlesse father killed,
For malice onely that to me he bare:

This man my onely brothers blood hath spilled,
Because he wisht my safetie and welfare:
Yet with revenge his rage cannot be fined,
But still he seekes to worke my farther care.
Well (quoth Zerbino) be of better cheare,
For none shall do thee harme whilst I am heare.

6

Now when the Knight of Flaunders saw that face,
That of all faces he did most detest:
With me to combat in this present place,
You must prepare (quoth he) and trie your best,
Or yeeld to me this woman void of grace,
That as she hath deservd she may be drest:
If you resistance make you will be slaine,
For so it fals to such as wrong maintaine.

7

Zerbino curteously doth thus replie,
Bethinke your selfe with more consideration,
To make a woman of your hand to die,
What staine it is to Knightly reputation;
As for the combat if you needs will trie,

Her to defend is my determination:
For I am sworne to fight in her defence,
And therefore cannot with mine oth dispence.

8

This, and to this effect much more in vaine
He spake, him from his purpose to perswade,
At last they were so kindled with disdain,
That one the other fiercely did invade:
Zerbino was the stronger of the twaine,
And strake the tother through the shoulder blade,
So as he fell halfe dead and halfe alive,
Not able any more with him to strive.

9

But Zerbin doubting lest he had bene dead,
With much compassion from his horse did light,
And first he loosd his helmet from his head,
And seeketh to revive him if he might;
Who looking firmly on Zerbino sed,
I cannot much lament that such a Knight,
Hath hurt me in this fight and overthrowne,
In whom such valew and such worth is showne.

10

In this alone my hap I do lament,
That it should be for such a womans sake,
And much I marvell that you would consent,
To your protection such a one to take,
Which I am sure you would full sore repent,
If I to you her deeds should open make,
And that you should so greatly damage me,
For such a wicked caitive as is she.

11

And save my voice and strength will faile I doubt,
Before my tale will come to perfect end,
I will declare if you will heare it out,
The wicked life of this ungracious fend;
I had a brother valorous and stout,
In Holland borne, who (for he did intend
To win by service honour and renowne)
Heraclio servd that bare of Greece the crowne.

12

A noble Gentleman Argeo hight,
Neare the confines of Servia did dwell,

Who in my brother tooke so great delight,
That in short space they were acquainted well.
Argeo marride had this cursed wight,
Of whom the present storie I do tell,
And tooke in her (unworthy) so great pleasure,
As past the bands of reason and of measure.

13

But she more light then leaves in Autumne season,
That evry blast doth blow about and change,
Against all wively care, all cause and reason,
Because she doth delight her selfe in change,
With wicked hart and head full fraught with treason,
So farre she lets her raging love to range,
She sues to have my brother to her lover,
And doth to him the foule desire uncover.

14

But neither doth a rocke more firmly stand
Upon the shore against the surging wave,
Nor doth the Cedar more upon the land
Resist the tempest that doth rage and rave,
Then doth my brother her desire withstand,

Though she at sundrie times the same doth crave,
And though she seeketh many a meane and triall,
Yet still she turneth with a flat deniall.

15

At last it fell (as oft it doth befall
To valiant men that love to fight and quarell)
My brother was sore wounded in a brall,
So that it seemd his life was in some parell:
Wherefore he gets within the castle wall,
Both that his frend might know & venge his quarell,
And other needfull things may be procured,
By which his hurt might be the sooner cured.

16

Now while my brother staid in this ill state,
His friend Argeo sometime absent thence,
This woman early visits him and late,
And offers him good store of pounds and pence:
But he that alwaies villany did hate,
And would not do his friend so great offence,
Thought (as in evill cases is the best)
Of two great mischiefes to chuse out the lest.

17

He meanes to leave Argeos friendship quite,
And get him home againe from whence he came,
Or hide himselfe where this most wicked wight
Shall never see his face nor heare his name:
This, though it grievd him, as it ought of right,
He chuseth as a way lesse worthy blame,
Then yeelding to her lust for to abuse her,
Or to her loving husband to accuse her.

18

Wherefore (though of his wound both faint and weak)
He doth resolve to part with constant mind,
He gets him thence, and not a word doth speake,
And leaves this filthy minded beast behind:
But fortune ill his purpose good doth breake,
And alterd quite the course he had designd,
Home came her husband finding her alone,
Complaining grievously and making mone.

19

Her cheekes with teares all blubberd were and red,
Her lookes did shew her mind was ill apaid,

Her lockes all torne did hang about her hed,
With which her loving husband sore afraid,
Did aske her oft what chance such change had bred,
Till at the length the wicked wretch thus said,
With spiteful heart, with wicked voice & trembling,
And faind a cause, the cause it selfe dissembling.

20

Alas (quoth she) what should I seeke to hide
My wicked act and hainous deadly sinne,
Which though from you, and all the world beside,
I could conceale, yet doth the soule within,
And conscience grudge, a burden such to bide,
So as the inward torment I am in,
Doth passe the plague or penance far away,
That mortall man upon my sinne can lay.

21

If so a sinne of right you may it name,
That one is forst unto against her will,
But thus it is, your friend that hither came,
(I thinking he had thought nor meant none ill)
Inforced me to my perpetuall shame,

Against all lawes, all honestie and skill:
And doubting that I would the fact bewray,
Forthwith he gate him hence and fled away.

22

But though my body he have so defild,
Yet is my mind from sinne devoid and cleare,
Although from sight of men I am exild,
Nor dare I once in publike place appeare:
This said, with thousand names she him revild,
So that Argeo that the tale did heare,
Beleeved it, and straight withall intended
To punish him that never had offended.

23

He taketh horse forthwith and followth post,
All on revenge his mind was wholly bent,
And, for he perfitly did know the cost,
And for my brother faire and softly went,
He met him in an hower at the most,
Bidding him stand or else he should be shent:
My brother would dissuade him if he might,
But all in vaine, Argeo needs would fight.

24

The tone was strong and full of fresh disdain,
The tother weake and loth to hurt his frend,
So that himselfe defending long in vaine,
My brother was constrained to yeeld in thend:
And thus at last he prisner doth remaine,
And yeelds, himselfe unable to defend:
Which seene, Argeo doth surcease to strike,
But speaketh unto him these words or like.

25

God never let my heart so farre be moved,
With rightfull wrath that I thy blood should spill,
Since once I thee esteemed well and loved,
Whom once I loved, I will never kill:
And though thy act may justly be reproved,
The world shall see my goodnesse by thine ill,
For be it love, or be it in disdain,
I will be found the better of the twaine.

26

Another meane then death to use I mind,
In punishing this sinne and foule misdeed,

This said (with willow bands he there did find)
He makes a hurdle fit to serve such need,
On which my brothers body he doth bind,
That with old hurts and new did freshly bleed;
And to his castle he doth him convey,
In mind to keepe him there a prisner ay.

27

Yet though with him a prisner he remaind,
In other things he felt no lacke nor want,
Save that his liberty was him restraind:
But lo, this wretch that late did him supplant,
And to her husband so of him complaind,
Thought she would trie if he would yet recant,
And (for at her command she had the kayes)
She goes to him, and thus to him she sayes.

28

Now sir (quoth she) I trust you feele the frute,
That this your foolish constancie hath wrought,
Had you not better bene to graunt the sute,
That I in friendly sort so often sought?
You see tis vaine to argue or dispute,

Say what you can, you are a traitor thought:
And he to whom you shewd so great fidelity,
Imputes to you treason and infidelity.

29

I thinke both for your ease and reputation,
You had bene better graunted my request,
You see you have a sorie habitation,
And in the same for ever looke to rest,
Except you change your first determination,
And mollifie your stonie hearted brest,
Which if you yet will do, I do assure you,
Both libertie and credite to procure you.

30

No, never hope, no said Filandro, never,
(So my unhappie brothers name they call)
In vaine to change my mind youd do endever,
And though Argeo causlesse keepe me thrall,
Yet I in faith and troth will still persever,
Sufficeth me, that he that seeth all,
Doth know mine innocencie and doth see me,
And when he list can both reward and free me.

31

I care not though the world of me thinke ill,
I hope another world will make amends,
Yet let Argeo slay me if he will,
Or let him (as it seemeth he intends)
Though wrongfully, in prison hold me still,
Yet one day he will find he hurts his frends,
And know by prooffe how he hath bene beguild,
When truth appears, and time brings forth her child.

32

Yet for all this, this woman void of shame,
Did cease no whit Filandro still to tempt,
And oftentimes in vaine to him she came,
And ever turnes repulst and with contempt,
And in this frantike fancie she doth frame
A thousand sleights to further her attempt,
And many things in mind she doth revolve,
Before on any one she doth resolve.

33

Sixe months entire she doth her selfe absent,
Nor ever came Filandro to entice,

Which made him hope that she was now content
To cease her sute, and follow his advice;
But lo, how fortune (that is ever bent
To further wicked persons in their vice)
Doth unto her a fit occasion lend,
To bring her wicked lust to wofull end.

34

There had bene hate and enmity of old,
Betweene her husband and another Knight,
Morando cald, who often would be bold,
If so Argeo absent were a night,
To come with force and to assault his hold,
Or thereabout to do him some despight:
But if he were at home, then all that whiles
He came not neare him by a dozen miles.

35

Wherefore to be revengd on this his fo,
That often did him wrong and great outrage,
Argeo gives it out that he will go
Unto Jerusalem on pilgrimage,
And from his house disguysd he parted so,

In secret sort, without or man or page,
And evry night comes in at the posterne,
That none but she his comming might discerne.

36

Thus all the day he wanders all about,
In woods, in groves, in pastures here and thither,
To see if he could find Morando out,
That in his absence used to come hither:
And farre he keepes himselfe from any rout,
Untill that darknesse doth obscure the wether,
Then would he get him home a secret way,
Of which his wife did keepe a privie kay.

37

Thus all but she, Argeo absent thought,
By which his wicked wife with wonted skill,
Another meanes and new occasion sought,
To bring to passe her foule unbridled will:
With weeping eyes (her eyes to weepe she tought)
And all with teares her bosome she doth fill,
Then came she to my brother and complained,
That (but he helpe) her honour would be stained.

38

Nor mine alone, but mine Argeos too,
Who were he here (quoth she) I would not care,
You know what harme Morando wonts to doo,
When as mine husbands absence makes him dare,
And now behold the caitive me doth woo,
And to intrap me sets full many a snare,
And offred servants great reward and hire,
So they would helpe to further his desire.

39

And hearing that Argeo was away,
And would continue so no little space,
He came within the castle wall to day,
(His absence gave him so much heart of grace)
Where, had my husband bene but in the way,
He durst not onely not have shewd his face,
But sure he would not have presumd at all,
To come within a kenning of the wall.

40

And what by message he before had done,
Now face to face by mouth he doth the same,

So as I hardly know which way to shunne,
That which to do, would breed my endlesse blame.
Had not my sugred speech his favour wonne,
By faining I my will to his would frame,
He would perforce have had his foule intent,
Which now he hopes to get by my assent.

41

I promist him (but promise made for feare
Is voyd) and I performance never ment,
But so that act I made him to forbear,
Which he to do by force was fully bent.
Now if you be a friend, or ever were,
Unto Argeo, you may this prevent,
Nor onely save mine honour thus distressed,
But his to whom such love you have professed.

42

Which if you me denie, then I may say,
Not honestie, of which your bost you make,
But crueltie did cause you say me nay,
And of my sute so small regard to take:
And that you were not moved any way

With friendships rule, or for Argeos sake:
Although twixt us it might have secret beene,
But now my shame must needs be knowne & seene.

43

Tush (quoth Filandro) this is more then need,
To use much circumstance in such a case,
As I began, so meane I to proceed,
And though Argeo hold me in disgrace,
Yet unto him I not impute this deed,
But ready will be still in time and place,
To do him service any way I may,
So you but shew to me the meane and way.

44

Sir then (said she) the way were this, to kill
Him that doth seeke my husbands shame and mine,
Which you may easly do, if so you will
A while unto my words your eare incline:
I have put off his comming hither, till
It be betwixt the houres of ten and nine,
What time I promist him so to provide,
To let him in, so as he were not spide.

45

Now then my counsell is, that you do stay
Here in my chamber, untill I procure
Him to disarme himselfe, so as you may
Slay him with small ado, and make him sure.
This is (quoth she) the onely ready way,
And safest for your selfe, I you assure:
To this device Filandro doth assent,
Thinking hereby his friends hurt to prevent.

46

Now more and more approcht the cursed night,
When as his wife (if I a wife may call)
This hellish hag and foule infernall sprite,
Did place my brother armd behind a wall,
And as she wisht, evn so it fell aright,
For ill device amisse doth seldome fall;
Her husband in the evning somewhat late,
Enterd his castle at the posterne gate.

47

Filandro at one blow cuts of his hed,
Taking him for Morando in exchange,

She stands fast by that him had thither led,
Nor shewes in word or gesture any change:
Argeo there remaineth slaine and ded,
And kild by him (o chance most hard and strange)
That while he friendly thought to do him good,
Most cruell and unfriendly shed his blood.

48

Now when this feate had thus bene brought to passe,
Gabrina (so is this good womans name)
That doth in craft the fiends of hell surpasse,
Unto my brother for his weapon came,
Which he deliverd as his promise was,
And that once done, then she without all shame,
Prayes him to take in hand a lighted candle,
And view him well whom he so ill did handle.

49

There first he saw how he had kild his frend,
A sight that made him at the heart repent,
And she afresh the matter to amend,
Doth threate, except he would to her assent,
That she should bring his life to shamefull end,

For to accuse him of this fact she ment,
Wishing him though his life he did despise,
To shunne a shamefull death if he be wise.

50

Filandro mazd, and full of feare did stand,
When of his error he was first aware,
He thought at first to kill her out of hand,
By whom he was intrapt in such a snare,
But she had got his weapons in her hand,
And to defend her selfe did straight prepare:
But sure he could have found it in his hart,
By peicemeale to have torne her evry part.

51

Like as a ship in midst of seas opprest,
Betweene two winds that do together strive,
Can have no time of respite or of rest,
But goes what way the stronger wind doth drive:
So now Filandro doubting which was best,
To die, or in such sort to bide alive,
Stood long in doubt; and neither way did bend,
Yet chose the worsen bargain in the end.

52

His reason open layes before his face,
The danger great if once the fact were knowne,
Beside the infamie and great disgrace,
That would about the world of him be blowne:
Beside to chuse he had but little space,
So as his wit and sence was scant his owne:
At last he doth conclude what ever come,
To swallow this unsavry choking plum.

53

Wherefore against his will, inforst by feare,
He promiseth to take her for his wife,
And unto her he solemnely doth sweare,
To marry her if now she save his life:
And (for it was not safe to tarry theare)
When once the murder should be publisht rife,
He turnes unto the place where he was borne,
And leaves behind him infamie and scorne.

54

And still he carrid in his pensive heart,
His friends mishap, lamenting it in vaine,

How for a just reward of such desart,
A Progne and Medea he did gaine;
And save his oth restrained him in part,
No doubt he would the wicked hag have slaine:
But yet he hated her like toade or snake,
And in her company small joy did take.

55

From that to this, to laugh or once to smile,
He was not seene, his words and looks were sad,
With often sighs, and in a little while,
He grew much like Orestes, when he had
First slaine his father by his mothers guile,
Then her, and last of all fell raging mad,
With spirits vext so was my brothers hed,
Still vext till sicknes made him keepe his bed.

56

But when this cursed strumpet plainly saw,
How small delight in her my brother tooke,
She doth her fervent love from him withdraw,
And in short space that fancie she forsooke:
And lastly she resolves against all law,

So soone as she can fit occasion looke,
To bring Filandros life to wofull end,
And after her first husband him to send.

57

An old Physition full of false deceit,
She findeth out most fit for such a feat,
That better knew to give a poisonsd bait,
Then for to cure with herbs or wholesom meate:
Him, that for gaine most greedily doth wait,
By profers large she quickly doth intreate,
To take upon him this ungracious cure,
With poysond cup to make her husband sure.

58

Now while my selfe was by, and others more,
This old Physition came to him ere long,
And brought a cup, in which was poyson store,
And said, it cordiall was, to make him strong:
But lo, Gabrina that devisd before,
Evn in the prise of wrong, to do some wrong,
Before Filandro of the cup did tast,
Stept twixt the leach and him in no small hast.

59

And taking in her hand against his will,
The cup in which the poysond drinke was plast,
She said, good Doctor do not take it ill,
That I require you first the drink to tast,
I will not have my husband drinke, until
You have your selfe before him tane the tast:
I will (said she) be certaine by the rood,
That this you give him, wholsome is and good.

60

Now in what pickle thinke you was the leach?
The time was short to take a sound advice,
He might not use perswasion now nor speach,
He durst not tell how she did him intice,
Nor could he guesse what was herein her reach,
To make him tast first of the poysond spice,
Wherefore to take a tast he thought it best,
And then he gives my brother all the rest.

61

Even as a hawke that hath a partidge trust
In griping talents, sits and plumes the same,

Oft by a dog whom she doth not mistrust,
Is kild her selfe and reaved of her game:
So this Physition gracelesse and unjust,
While he to greedie gaine his mind doth frame,
Was usd by her even as he well deserved,
And so I wish all such Physitions served.

62

The poore old man that felt his stomacke ake,
Began to take his leave, and homeward hasted,
He thinks some strong Antidoton to take,
Against the poysond cup he lately tasted:
She swears his home returne he may not make,
While thoperation of the potion lasted,
And that she will see plainly ere he go,
If so it do her husband good or no.

63

By humble sute and offers he doth trie,
That with her licence he may thence depart,
But all in vaine, his sute she doth denie:
Now had the liquor welnigh toucht his hart,
Wherefore perceiving plainly he must die,

He doth the secret to us all impart:
Thus to himselfe he did the same at last,
Which oft he did to others in time past.

64

And straight in little space my brother dyde,
And after him dide this same false Phisition,
We that had heard and seene the matter tride,
Of which my selfe before had some suspition;
Both hand and foote we then this monster tyde,
And bring her unto such as had commission,
Where her confession, and our accusation,
Made them pronounce her doome of condemnation.

65

Thus in the gaile in fetters she was laid,
Adjudged to be burned at a stake,
Thus (said the Knight) and more he would have said
How she escapt, and how she prison brake,
But so he fainted, as they were affraid,
He would have sounded at those words he spake:
Wherefore his page him to his horse doth lift,
And then to binde his wounds they make a shift.

66

Then Zerbin tooke his leave and made a skuse,
That he had hurt the knight in her defence,
Affirming he had done, as is the use,
To save his charge from damage and offence:
And that thenceforth with him he would have truce,
This said, he tooke his leave and parted thence,
And promist him with words of great civillity,
To further him unto his best ability.

67

Sir (said the Knight) for this I do you thanke,
And wish you of that woman to beware,
Lest that she serve you some such slipperie pranke,
As may procure your farther woe and care:
For hard shall any scape from danger franke,
That in her company long season are:
Gabrina silent all the while stands by,
For hard it is to prove the truth a lye.

68

Thus hence they part, and for his promise sake,
At her commandment Zerbin doth attend,

And wisht in heart, the divell might her take,
Though with his hand he must her still defend:
And those last words the Knight of Holland spake,
To give him warning of the cursed fend,
Do fill his mind with so great griefe and spight,
That now he scant could well abide her sight.

69

And this same old and weatherbeaten trot,
Perceiving how Zerbino was inclind,
Would not once yeeld or be behind a jot,
In spitefull wishing, nor in evill mind:
Her eye and tongue and looke conceale it not,
Nor yet her deeds as after he did finde,
Thus in this harmony and concord good,
It was their hap to travell through the wood.

70

Now when the time approched neare the night,
They heard a noise of bustling and of blowes,
Causd as they guessed by some brall or fight,
But where it was yet neither of them knowes,
Zerbino longed much to see the fight,

And thitherwards in no small hast he goes,
And in no lesse, Gabrina maketh after,
As shall be shewd you more at large hereafter.

ARGUMENT

THE TWENTYSECOND BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Astolfo doth dissolve the charmed place,
And spite of Atlant, sets his prisners free:
Then Bradamant doth see Rogeros face:
To helpe an unknowne Knight they craved be;
But by the way Rogero in short space,
Subdewd foure Knights, of worth and good degree,
That were by Pinnabell in prison hild,
Whom Bradamant with just revengment kild.

TWENTY SECOND BOOKE

1

Ye courtly dames, that are both kind and true,
Unto your loves, if kinde and true be any,
As sure I am in all your lovely crue,
Of so chast minde, there are not over many,
Be not displeasd with this that doth ensue,
For neither must I leave it, neither can I,
And beare with me for that I said before,
When on Gabrina I did raile so sore.

2

Mine earnest words, nor yet her great offence,
Cannot obscure in honour and cleare fame,
Those few, whose spotlesse lives want no defence,
Whom hate nor envie no way can defame:
He that his master sold for thirtie pence,
To John nor Peter breeds no blot nor blame:
Nor men of Hipermestra worse have thought,
Although her sisters were unchast and nought.

3

For one that in this verse I shall dispraise,
As drivn by course of this my present storie,
Whole hunderds are whom I intend to praise,
And magnifie their well deserved glory,
If this then be offensive any waies,
To all or any, I can be but sorie:
Now of the Scottish Prince a word or two,
That heard a noise, and went forthwith thereto.

4

Betweene two mountaines in a shadie dale,
He doth descend that way the noise him led,
But when he came he saw upon the vale,
A Baron lately slaine and newly ded.
But ere I enter further in this tale,
I first must tell you how Astolfo sped:
Whom late I left in that most cursed citie,
Where women murther men without all pittie.

5

I told you how his horne with mightie blast,
Not onely all his foes had driven away,

But also made his friends so sore agast,
As not the stowtest of them there durst stay:
Wherefore (I said) he was constrained at last,
Alone to get him homward on his way,
Forthwith on Rabicano he doth mount,
An horse of which he makes no small account.

6

His horne that serves him still at all assayes,
He carries with him and his learned booke,
First by Armenia he goes his wayes,
Then Brusia and the way of Thrase he tooke,
So that within the space of twentie daies,
The streame Danubio he quite forsooke:
Then from Boemia ward he doth decline,
Unto Franconia and the streame of Rhyne.

7

Then through Ardennas wood to Aquis grave,
And thence to Flanders where he shipping found,
What time a Northeast winde, did blow so brave,
As set him soone in sight of English ground:
So that no whit annoyd with winde nor wave,

His native soile receivd him safe and sound:
He taketh horse, and ere the Sunne was downe,
At London he arrivd the chiefest towne.

8

Here at his first arrivall straight he heares,
How that the Turkes faire Paris did beseege,
And how his sire (a man well stroke in yeares)
Was there, and sent for ayd to raise the seege:
And how of late the Lords and chiefest peares,
Were gone with new supplies to helpe their leege,
But little stay he makes these words once hard,
But taketh ship againe to Callice ward.

9

And for the winde servd then not very well,
They were by force thereof borne quite aside,
So that the master scant himselfe could tell,
What course he held, they were borne downe so wide,
Yet at the last so luckie it befell,
Within a kenning they some land had spide,
And drawing neare they found the towne of Roan,
Where presently the Duke tooke land alone.

10

And crossing through a wood when time drew neare,
That neither day could well be cald nor night,
He hapt to finde a christall spring and cleare,
And by the side thereof he did alight,
With mind to quench his thirst and rest him heare,
As in a place of pleasure and delight,
He ties his horse unto a tree, and thinketh
To have him tarrie safe there while he drinketh.

11

Strange things may fall betweene the lip and cup,
For scant Astolfo yet had wet his lip,
But from a bush a villaine started up,
Untide the horse, and on his backe doth skip:
The Duke that scant had tasted yet a sup;
And finds himselfe thus tane in such a trip,
Forgets to drinke, and followes in a rage,
For wrath not water doth his thirst asswage.

12

The little villaine that the horse had got,
(Like one that did in knavish pranks delight)

Although he might have run, yet did it not,
Because Astolfo should not leese his sight:
But with false gallop, or a gentle trot,
He leads the Duke unto that place aright,
Where many Knights and Lords of high degree,
Without a prison, more then prisners be.

13

Astolfo, though his armour doth him cumber,
Yet fearing least he might arrive too late,
In following the villaine doth not slumber,
Untill he came within the pallace gate,
Where (as I said) of Lords no little number,
Were wandring up and downe in strange estate:
Astolfo of their presence doth not force,
But runneth up and downe to finde his horse.

14

The craftie villaine was in no place found,
Though many a homely place for him was sought,
Yet still the Duke doth search the pallace round,
And for his beast he takes no little thought:
At last he gwest it was enchanted ground,

And as by Logestilla he was tought,
He tooke his booke and searcheth in the table,
How to dissolve the place he might be able.

15

And straight in thindex for it he doth looke,
Of pallaces framd by such strange illusion,
Among the rest, of this (so saith the booke)
That it should never come unto confusion,
Untill a certaine stone away were tooke,
In which a sprite was kept by strange inclusion,
And if he did but lift the threshold stone,
The goodly house would vanish and be gone.

16

The Duke not doubting now of good successe,
Goth to the threshold where the stone was laid,
And which it was he presently doth guesse,
And then by force to move it he assaid:
But Atlant, that expected nothing lesse,
And sees his bold attempt, was sore affraid,
And straight an hundred meanes he doth devise,
To hinder him from this bold enterprise.

17

He makes the Duke, by this his divellish skill,
To seeme of divers shapes unto the rest,
To one a dwarfe, of face and favour ill,
To one a gyant, to a third a beast,
And all their hearts with hatred he doth fill,
He thinkes by them the Duke should be distrest:
By seeming unto evrie one the same,
For which each one into the pallace came.

18

Behold Rogero stout, and Brandimart,
Prasildo, Bradamant, and others moe,
Upon Astolfo set with cruell hart,
As to revenge themselves upon their foe:
But with his horne the Duke then plaid his part,
And brought their loftie stomackes somewhat low:
But had not thorne procurd him this exemption,
No doubt the Duke had dyde without redemption.

19

For when they heard the strange and fearfull blast,
They forced were for feare away to runne,

As fearefull Pigeons flie away agast.
When men do ring a bell or shoot a gunne;
The Sorcerer himselfe was not the last,
That sought by flight the fearfull noise to shunne:
Yea such it was, that neither rat nor mouse,
Durst tarrie in the circuit of the house.

20

Among the horses that did breake their bands,
Was Rabican of whom before I told,
Who by good hap came to Astolfos hands,
Who was full glad when of him he had hold,
Also Rogeros Griffith horse there stands,
Fast tyed in a chaine of beaten gold,
The Duke, as by his booke he had bene tought,
Destroyed quite the house by magicke wrought.

21

I do not doubt but you can call to minde,
How good Rogero lost this stately beast,
What time Angelica his eyes did blinde,
Denying most unkindly his request:
The horse that sored swifter then the winde,

Went backe to Atlant whom he loved best,
By whom he had bene of a young one bred,
And diligently taught, and costly fed.

22

This English Duke was glad of such a pray,
As one that was to travell greatly bent,
And in the world was not a better way
For him to serve his purpose and intent;
Wherefore he meaneth not to let him stray,
But takes him as a thing from heavn him sent,
For long ere this he had of him such prooffe,
As well he knew what was for his behoofe.

23

Now being full resolv'd to take in hand,
To travell round about the world so wide,
And visite many a sea and many a land,
As none had done, nor ever should beside,
One onely care his purpose did withstand,
Which causd him yet a little time to bide,
He doth bethink him oft, yet doth not know
On whom his Rabicano to bestow.

24

He would be loth that such a stately steed
Should by a peasant be possest or found,
And though of him he stood then in no need,
Yet had he care to have him safe and sound,
In hands of such as would him keepe and feed;
While thus he thought and lookt about him round,
Next day a while before the Sunne was set,
A champion all in armes unwares he met.

25

But first I meane to tell you what became
Of good Rogero and his Bradamant,
Who when againe unto themselves they came,
The pallace quite destroyd of old Atlant:
Each knew and cald the other by their name,
And of all courtesies they were not scant,
Lamenting much that this enchanted pallace,
Had hinderd them so long such joy and sollace.

26

The noble maid to shew her selfe as kind,
As might become a virgin wise and sage,

Doth in plaine termes as plaine declare her mind,
As thus, that she his loves heate will asswage,
And unto him her selfe in wedlocke bind,
And spend with him all her ensuing age,
If to be christned first he were content,
And afterwards to aske her friends consent.

27

But he that would not onely not refuse
To change his life for his beloveds sake,
But also if the choise were his to chuse,
To leese his life and all the world forsake,
Did answer thus, my deare, what ere ensues
I will performe what ere I undertake.
To be baptizd in water or in fire,
I will consent if it be your desire.

28

This said, he goes from thence with full intent,
To take upon him christend state of life,
Which done he most sincerely after ment,
To aske her of her father for a wife;
Unto an Abby straight their course they bent,

As in those days were in those places rife,
Where men devout did live with great frugalitie,
And yet for strangers kept good hospitalitie.

29

But ere they came to that religious place,
They met a damsell full of heavy cheare,
That had with teares bedewed all her face,
Yet in those teares great beautie did appeare,
Rogero, that had ever speciall grace
In courteous acts and speech when she came neare,
Doth aske of her what dangers or what feares,
Did move her so to make her shed such teares.

30

She thus replies, the cause of this my grieffe,
Is not for feare or danger of mine owne,
But for good will, and for compassion chiefe,
Of one yong Knight, whose name is yet unknowne,
Who if he have not great and quick reliefe,
Is judgd into the fier to be throwne,
So great a fault they say he hath committed,
That doubt it is it will not be remitted.

31

The fault was this, there was good will betweene
Him and the daughter of the King of Spaine,
And lest his love should be descride and seene,
He finely doth himselfe a woman faine,
And went and spake as if he had so beene,
And thus he plaid (to tell the matter plaine)
The maid in shew, the man in deed so well,
That in a while he made her belly swell.

32

But out alas, what can so secret be,
But out it will when we do least suspect?
For posts have cares, and walls have eyes to see,
Dumbe beasts and birds have tongues ill to detect,
First one had found it out, then two or three:
And looke how fire doth creepe that men neglect,
So this report from mouth to mouth did spring,
Till at the last it came unto the King.

33

The King straight sends a trustie servant thether,
Who making search when they two were in bed,

Found out the troth, and tooke them both together,
Found him a man, and found her belly sped,
Away they carrid her I know not whether,
Away unto the prison he was led,
And must be burnd this day or else to morow,
The thought wherof doth move my mind to sorow.

34

This made me purposely to come from thence,
And not to see one of so comely shape,
So sharply punisht for this small offence,
As if it were for murder or for rape,
Nor any hope could sinke into my sence,
How possible it were for him to scape,
And who could see or thinke without compassion,
A fine yong youth tormented in such fashion?

35

Twas strange to thinke how nie this tale did touch
The noble Bradamants most tender hart,
It seemd she pittide this mans state as much,
As if her brother had playd such a part:
Some cause there was to make her fancie such,

As afterward at large I shall impart:
And straight she makes this motion that they twaine
Might save this wofull youth from being slaine.

36

Rogero much commends her noble mind,
And to the mourning damsell thus they said,
We both are to this enterprise inclind,
If fortune serve we will the yong man aid,
But when they saw that still she mournd and whind,
Tush (quoth Rogero) cease to be afraid,
Tis more then time that we were going hence,
Not teares but force must serve for his defence.

37

These comfortable words Rogero spake,
With that his warlike looke and manly show,
Did cause her heart of grace forthwith to take,
Yet still she doubts which way were best to go,
Not that she feard the right way to mistake,
For all the wayes she perfitley did know,
To turne the way she came she was afraid,
Lest in the way they haply might be staid.

38

There are (quoth she) two wayes unto the place,
Of which the tone is easie, faire and plaine,
The tother foule, and farre the greater space,
Yet at this time the safer of the twaine,
But yet I feare, except God send more grace,
That ere we thither come, he may be slaine:
Thus stood this damsell still, not little musing,
Betweene the nearer way and safer chusing.

39

Rogero that was resolute and stout,
Did aske what reason moovd her to perswade
Them two to take the farther way about;
And straightway she to them this answer made,
Forsooth (said she) the cause that moves my doubt
Is this, I feare that some will you invade,
By meanes that Pinnabell (Anselmus sonne)
Hath here of late a custome leud begunne.

40

As namely that who ever that way ride,
Of what estate soever or degree,

Must leese their horses first and then beside
Must of their clothes and raiment spoiled be.
Foure valiant youths of strength, and courage tride,
Are sworne to this, so that no he nor she
Can passe that way without this evill paiment,
That he must weapons leese, and she her raiment.

41

The custome is, as yet but three dayes old,
By Pinabello and his wife devised,
Who meeting haply (as I heard it told)
A Knight, or one in Knightly clothes disguised,
With whom a woman ugly to behold,
And by this couple scorned and despised,
This Pinnabell the worse had of the quarrell,
His wife was spoild of horse and of apparrell.

42

This spite enraged so the womans mind,
That wishing to revenge, not knowing how,
Yet wrath and folly so her sence doth blind,
That straight she makes a foolish solemne vow,
And he that was to evill deeds inclind

No lesse then she, doth of the same allow:
The vow was this, for anger of this foile,
A thousand others in like sort to spoile.

43

That very night came to that house by chance,
Foure valiant Knights as ever armor bare,
To fight on horse or foot with sword or lance,
But few may with the worst of them compare,
These foure I say were first that led this dance,
By night surprised ere they were aware,
Both Griffin, Aquilant and Sansonet,
And Guidon Savage, scant a man as yet.

44

These foure in shew he gently entertained,
And makes them friendly countenance and cheare,
With courteous speech and friendly manner fained,
As if he lov'd them well and held them deare:
But while secure they in their beds remained,
And when Sunne rising now approched neare,
He did beset the lodging where they lay,
And tooke their armor and their clothes away.

45

And further bound them in that present place,
Both hand and foote as if they prisners were,
And ere he did those causlesse bonds unlace,
He makes them solemnly to vow and sweare,
To keepe this order for a twelvemonths space,
That whosoever hapned to come there,
They foure endeavour should with all their forces,
To take away their raiment and their horses.

46

To this by solemne oth are sworne they foure,
Constrained thereto by this their cruell host,
And though herewith they were offended sore,
Yet must they sweare for feare of farther cost,
Already not so few as twise a score,
Their horses and their furniture have lost,
And none as yet so able have bene found,
But one of these have laid him on the ground.

47

But if some one do hap so strong to be,
To make his partie good with one of those,

Then straight the order is, the other three
Must him assist, thus none unconquerd goes.
Wherefore if you will be advisd by me,
Tis best to shun this way as I suppose,
Sith each of these is such as I recited,
How great thinke you will be their force united?

48

But presuppose that you their force withstand,
As your great courage makes me thinke you might,
Yet needs it hinder must the cause in hand,
And make you tarry hereabout all night:
Sith then this case so dangerously doth stand,
I would perswade you now to shun this fight,
Lest while you in this enterprise remaine,
The poore yong man may fortune to be slaine.

49

Tush quoth Rogero, have no doubt at all,
Let us endeavor still to do our best,
And then hap good or ill, fall what may fall,
Let God and fortune governe all the rest:
I hope this enterprise I finish shall

So well, as I shall eke do your request,
And there arrive to save him in good time,
That should be burned for so small a crime.

50

This said, he gets him on the nearest way,
Fast by the place where Pinnabell doth dwell,
And at the bridge they forced were to stay,
And straight a man (whose name I know not well)
Came out in hast, and stand to them doth say,
And then begins their order them to ten,
Perswading them, if they will shunne the perill,
To yeeld in peace their horses and apparell.

51

Peace (quoth Rogero) leave thy foolish prating,
A tale already knowne thou dost repeate,
Children with bugs, and dogs are scard with rating,
With me it small availes to brag or threate,
I leese but time with thee to stand debating,
Shew me the men that mind to do this feate,
My hast is such that long I may not stay,
Wherefore I pray you bid them come away.

52

Lo here comes one of them, this old man sed,
And as he spake the word, out came a Knight,
A tall strong man, all armd from foot to hed,
His armor like a fornace shined bright,
His colours that he ware were white and red,
This was the first, and Sansonet he hight,
And, for he was a man of mighty strength,
Two massie speares he brought of mighty length.

53

The one of these he to Rogero gave,
The other to himselfe he doth reserve,
Then each in hope the victory to have,
To spurre their stedic steeds that will not swerve,
Rogeros shield from wounding doth him save,
The others did him not so well preserve,
The speare both pierst his shield and prickt his arme,
And overthrew him to his further harme.

54

You do not sure, nor cannot yet forget,
What of Rogeros shield before I told,

That made the fiends of hell with toyle to swer,
And shind so bright as none could it behold,
No marvell then though valiant Sansonet,
Although his hands were strong and hart were bold,
Could not prevaile so strong a shield to pierce,
Of so great force as late I did rehearse.

55

This while was Pinnabell approched nie
To Bradamant, and askt of her his name,
That in their sight his force so great did trie,
To overthrow a Knight of so great fame.
(Lo how the mighty God that sits on hie,
Can punish sinne when least men looke the same)
Now Pinnabell fell in his enemies hands,
When in his owne conceit most safe he stands.

56

It was his hap that selfe same horse to ride,
Which eight months past from Bradamant he stale,
Then when he falsly let the pole to slide,
At Merlins cave (if you did marke the tale)
But now when she that traitor vile had spide,

That thought by trechery to worke her bale,
She stept forthwith betweene him and his castle,
And swears that she with him a pull would wrastle.

57

Looke how a fox, with dogs and hunters chast,
That to come backe unto her hole did weene,
Is utterly discouragd and agast,
When in her way she nets and dogs hath seene:
So he that no such perill did forecast,
And sees his fo stept him and home betweene,
With word him threatning and with sword assailing,
Doth take the wood his heart and courage failing.

58

Thus now on flight his onely hope relying,
He spurd that horse that chiefe his trouble bred,
No hope of helpe, and yet for helpe still crying,
For doubt of death almost already ded,
Sometime the fact excusing or denying,
But she beleeving not a word he sed,
None in the castle were of this aware,
About Rogero all so busied are.

59

This while forth of the gate came thother three,
That to this law so solemnly had sworne,
Among the rest that came was also she
That caused this law, full of disdain and scorne,
And none of these but sooner would agree
With horses wilde to be in peeces torne,
Then to distaine their honor and good name,
With any act that might be worthy shame.

60

Wherefore it grievd them to the very gall,
That more then one at once should one assaile,
Save they were sworne to runne together all,
If so the first of victorie did faile:
And she uncessantly on them did call,
What meane you sirs (quoth she) what do you aile?
Do you forget the cause I brought you hither?
Are you not sworne to take part altogether?

61

Fie, answered Guidon, what a shame is this?
Let rather me alone my fortune trie,

And if of victory I hap to misse,
At my returning backe then let me die.
Not so quoth she, my meaning other is,
And you I trust will not your word denie:
I brought you hither for another cause,
Not now to make new orders and new lawes.

62

Thus were they urged by this scornfull dame,
To that which all their hearts abhorred sore,
And which they thought to them so great a shame,
As never like had chanced them before;
Also Rogeros words increast the same,
Upbraiding them, and egging more and more,
And asking why they made so long delay,
To take his armor and his horse away.

63

And thus in maner forst and by constraint,
They came all three Rogero to invade,
Which act they thought wold sore their honors taint,
Though full account of victory they made,
Rogero at their comming doth not faint,

As one well usd through dangers great to wade,
And first the worthy Oliveros sonnes,
With all their force against Rogero runnes.

64

Rogero turnd his horse to take the field,
With that same staffe that lately overthrew
Stout Sansonet, and with that passing shield,
That Atlant made by helpe of hellish crew,
That shield, whose ayd he used very seeld,
Some unexpected danger to eschew:
Twise when Alcynas kingdome he forsooke,
Once when the Indian Queene from thOrk he took.

65

Save these three times he never usd the aid
Of this his shield, but left it coverd still,
If he abroade, or if within he staid,
He never left it open by his will.
As for these three, he was no more afraid
Of all their strength, their number nor their skill,
Nor made no more account with them to fight,
Then if they had seemd children in his sight.

66

And first he met the yonger of the twaine,
That Griffin hight, who had so great a blo,
As in the saddle he could scant remain,
But quite amazed reeled to and fro;
He strake Rogero, but it was in vaine,
For why, the stroke fell overthwartly so,
That quite beside Rogeros shield it slipt,
But yet the case it all to tare and ript.

67

Now when the renting of the silken case,
In which Rogero usd the shield to hide,
Had cast out such a light in each mans face,
That none of them the force thereof could bide,
They fell downe all amazed in the place,
Admit they sit, or stand, or go, or ride,
Rogero with the cause not yet acquainted,
Did marvell how his foes so soone had fainted.

68

But when he once was of the cause aware,
And how the cover of his shield was rent,

By meane whereof it open lay and bare,
And thence such light unto the lookers sent:
He lookes about where his companions are,
Because forthwith to get him thence he ment,
I meane his Bradamant, and that same maid,
That for that youth did erst demaund his aid.

69

But his belovd as then he found not, where
He erst had left her when he went to just,
And when he plainly saw she was not there,
And that that happend he could not mistrust,
He parted thence, and with him he doth beare
The maid that made to him the sute so just,
Who lay that time amazed with the rest,
With sudden blasing of the light distrest.

70

He takes her kirtle, and with it doth hide,
The light that did so dazle all their eyes,
That light on which to looke none could abide,
As if two Sunnes had shone at once in skies:
Forthwith himselfe all malcontent doth ride,

To have this combat ended in such wise,
As might imputed be to Magicke art,
And not his prowesse or his valiant hart.

71

Now while this thought such passions did him yeeld,
That though he had indeed most bravely donne,
Yet men would thinke the glory of the field,
Not by his valiantnesse to have bene wonne,
But by the force of that enchanted shield,
That cast a light more piercing then the Sunne,
I say as thus he thought, he passed by
A large deepe well, that by the way did lie.

72

A well at which the beasts in summers heate
Did use their thirstie drought to quench and coole,
And chew againe their undigested meate,
And walke about the shallowes of the poole.
Here did Rogero oft these words repeate,
Thou shield, that late didst make me such a foole,
To cause me get a conquest with such shame,
Lie there (quoth he) with thee go all my blame.

73

With that he threw the shield into the well,
The well was deepe, the shield of mighty weight,
That to the bottome suddenly it fell,
The water over it a monstrous height:
But lo dame Fame the thing abroad doth tell,
How he because he would not win by sleight,
But by meere value, had his target drownd,
Where it should never afterward be found.

74

Yet many (that had heard the strange report)
Of those that dwelled thence, some farre, some nire,
To seeke the target thither did resort,
And to have found it out had great desire,
But it was cast away in such a sort,
As none unto their purpose did aspire,
For why the maid that onely did behold it,
And knew which well it was, yet never told it.

75

But when the Knights came to themselves againe,
And were awake, and one the other saw,

That late were vanquisht with so little paine,
As if to him they had bene men of straw,
They wondred much what troubled had their braine,
And all of them did thence themselves withdraw,
And all that day they argue and devise,
How that same light should dazle so their eyes.

76

This while came notice of the wofull fall
Of Pinnabell, whom Bradamant had killed,
With which they greatly were displeas'd all,
Not knowing why or who his blood had spill'd;
His wife and sire that heard what was befall,
His sonne, her spouse, the place with outcries fill'd,
And curst and chased with too late repentance,
That none on Pinnabell had givn attendance.

77

Now when the damsell justly had him slaine,
And tane away his horse, sometime her owne,
She would have turnd the way she came againe,
But that the same was unto her unknowne;
To purpose small, she travels with great paine,

To seeke it out, as after shall be showne:
For here to stay is my determination,
And pawse a little for my recreation.

ARGUMENT

THE TWENTYTHIRD BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Astolfo on the Griffith horse doth mount:
To Zerbin Pinnabellos death is laid;
Orlando saveth him: fierce Rodomount
Frontyno takes from Bradamantes maid:
The Paladyn and Mandricard confront;
They part by chance, and each from other straid:
Orlando falls starke mad, with sorrow taken,
To heare his mistres hath him quite forsaken.

TWENTYTHIRD BOOKE

1

Let evrie one do all the good they can,
For seldom commeth harme of doing well,
Though just reward it wanteth now and than,
Yet shame, and evill death it doth expell,
But he that mischieveth another man,
Doth seldome carrie it to heavn or hell:
Men say it, and we see it come to passe,
Good turns in sand, shrewd turns are writ in brasse.

2

Seeld mountaines meet, but men may often meet,
(The Proverbe saith) and who so sets a trap,
May catch himselfe, as here you plainly seet
In him, that thought his dame in woes to wrap,
But hurts himselfe, a punishment most meet;
God still defending her from all mishap:
God her preservd, and will all those preserve,
As shunne all vice, and him sincerely serve.

3

It little did availe to Pinnabell,
To be amid his kinsfolke and his frends;
And neare the castle, where his sire did dwell,
Where evry one, him honours and attends,
Loe here the end of him doth plainly tell,
How wicked lives have often wretched ends;
But to proceed, I said when he was slaine,
The noble damsell sought her way againe.

4

Which when she saw she could by no meanes know,
But more and more uncertainly did rove;
And sees the sunne was now declining low,
She meanes that night to rest her in the grove:
And sleepe sometime, or else sometime (I trow)
To looke on Mars, on Saturne, or on Jove,
But chiefly, whether she awakes or sleepes,
Rogeros image in her heart she keepes.

5

Oft times she fretting to her selfe would say,
Loe; hate with me farre more prevailed hath,

Then love could do, that now have lost my way,
And left my comfort to avenge my wrath,
Nor had my wit so much forecast or stay,
To take some marke of my foretrodden path:
I did (quoth she) as fooles are wont to do,
Take one shrewd turne to do another two.

6

These words and many like to these she spake,
To passe the rest of that her restlesse night,
Till starres gan vanish and the dawning brake,
And all the Eastern parts were full of light,
Then at adventure she her way doth take,
Not knowing yet if it were wrong or right;
And having traveld in that way some miles,
By hap Astolfo came that way the while.

7

He rides the winged horse, but in his hand,
He leades the famous Rabican behinde,
And evn as then, in great doubt he did stand,
Where to bestow a beast of so good kind:
She knowing him, went to him out of hand,

With words, with showes, and with embracements kind,
And joyd to find this kinsman of her owne,
And unto him her selfe she maketh knowne.

8

Astolfo much rejoyst at this their meeting,
Then one the other askt of their well fare,
And after their long talke, and friendly greeting,
In which each shewd of other loving care:
Sith I (quoth he) intend hence to be fleeting,
To see what sights in forren countries are,
This horse of me, I shall request you take,
Till I returne, and keepe him for my sake.

9

Also he said, this corslet and this speare,
With you I leave till I returne againe,
(This speare the sonne of Galafron did beare,
Whom as you heard before Ferraw had slaine,)
With head whereof, if any touched were,
Straight wayes to fall to ground they must be faine,
All these he left behind to make him light,
Before that he begins to take his flight.

10

Thus leave once tane, away the Duke doth sore,
First low, and after still more hye and hye,
Till at the length she could him see no more;
So doth the Pylot first, with watchfull eye,
Guide out his vessell softly by the shore,
While he doth thinke the rocks and shallowes nye:
But after when he dreads no more such doubts,
He fayles apace, and claps on all his clouts.

11

Now when the Duke was from the damsell gone,
What she might do she mused in her minde,
And carefully she meditates thereon:
How she may take the journey first assignd,
And not neglect her kinsmans charge; anon
A wandring peasant twas her hap to finde,
To him she doth betake the horses spare,
Though of the wayes they both unskilfull are.

12

Her meaning was to go to Vallumbrose,
As first her love and she concluded had,

Whom there to finde, she certaine doth suppose;
Whom there to find, she would have bene full glad,
But loe a quite contrary course she goes,
And sees a sight that made her then full sad,
Her fathers house Montalbanie she spide,
In which as then her mother did abide.

13

If she shall forward go, approching nire,
She shall be stayed there, she stands in doubt,
If she stand still, or backward do retire,
She feares to meet acquaintance thereabout;
If she be staid, she feeles such burning fire,
Of longing love as cannot be put out:
She chaunst amid these thoughts, and many other,
To meet Alardo there her younger brother.

14

This meeting in her minde bred much vexation,
When as she found her brother her had spide,
And made her alter her determination,
Which that she might from him the better hide,
She usd some common words of salutation,

And to Montalban with him she doth ride,
Where as her mother, full of care and feare,
Had wisht, and wayted for her comming there.

15

But all those kind embracings and those kisses,
She had of parent, kinsmen kinde, and frends,
She deems of little vallue to those blisses,
That she had lost, and thought them small amends:
But sith to meet Rogero now she misses,
To send a messenger she now intends,
Some such to whom she may commit the charge,
To tell her mind unto her love at large.

16

And if neede were to pray him in her name,
As he had promist her, to be baptised,
And to excuse, that thither she not came,
As they together had before devised:
Besides his horse Frontino, by the same,
She sent a horse of goodnes not despised,
No horse in France or Spaine esteemed more,
Bayardo sole except, and Brigliadore.

17

Rogero (if you call it well to minde)
What time the Griffith horse he first did take,
That soard away as swift as western winde,
And forst him quickly Europe to forsake,
That gallant beast Frontino left behind,
Whom Bradamant then, for his masters sake,
Tooke home, and with much care and costly feeding,
Made him by this time, faire and fat exceeding.

18

And straight her mayds and women servants all,
That skilfull were to sow, to weave, and knit,
She doth to worke in hast together call,
And she her selfe among them all doth sit,
To worke a net, of art and cost not small,
For his caparison to make it fit:
When this was done, and finisht, straight way after,
She calls her nurse Callitriscas daughter.

19

This mayd knew best her minde of all the rest,
And oft had heard her praising to the skyes,

Rogeros comly shape, and valiant brest,
His sugred speech, sweet face, and lovly eyes;
This mayd with secrets all shee trusted best,
On this mayds secrecie, she much relyes:
Hyppalca named was this trustie mayd,
Her then she cald, and thus to her she said.

20

Hyppalca mine, you know of all my crew,
Of women servants, I esteeme you most,
As one that hath bene secret, wise, and trew,
(A praise of which we women seld can bost)
My meaning is to make a choise of you,
To have you to Rogero ride in post;
And unto him mine absence to excuse,
And shew, that I could neither will nor chuse.

21

Your selfe (quoth she) may ride a little nagge,
And in your hand lead by Frontino spare,
And if perhap some foole will be so bragge,
As that to take the horse from you he dare,
To make him that he shall no farther wagge,

But tell who owes the horse, and do not care:
She thought Rogero was of so great fame,
That evry one would quake to heare his name.

22

Thus when Hyppalca was instructed well,
Of all that to her arrant did belong,
And that no more remaind behind to tell,
She tooke her horse, and there she stayd not long,
In ten miles space (so luckie it befell)
None offer made to do her any wrong,
No traveller, no Knight, nor peasant staid her,
Nor once with word or deed so much as frayd her.

23

About the time the Sun to South did mount,
She met (poore soule) a Knight, unto her cost,
That Turke most terrible cald Rodomount,
That followd armd on foote, a passage in post;
Who when he saw an horse of such account,
He God blasphemd and all the heavnly host,
That such a gallant serviceable beast,
In some mans hand, he had not found at least.

24

He had before profest by solemne vow,
When wanting horse, he traveld on his feet,
That wert from knight, or knave that drives a plow,
To take perforce the next horse he should meet:
Yet though he likt the horse, to take this now,
And rob a mayd thereof, he thought unmeet,
He sees her leade a horse, and he doth lacke,
And oft he wisht his master on his backe.

25

I would he were (quoth she) he soone would make,
You change your mind, and glad to get you hence,
And you should find how much you do mistake,
Your strength and force to offer him offence.
And who (quoth he) is this, of whom you cracke?
Rogero she replies: forsooth, and sence
So great a champion is the horses owner,
I may (said he) then take him with mine honor.

26

To take his horse (quoth he) I now intend,
For of a horse you see I stand in need:

And if I find it true as you pretend,
That he so stout a champion is in deed,
I Rodomont this action will defend,
Now on my present journey I proceed,
And where I go my vertues shine so bright,
He soone may find me if he list to fight.

27

This said, with cruell threats, and part with force,
He gat his will, full sore against her will,
And straight he mounteth up upon that horse,
She cursing followd him, and banning still,
But of those curses he doth little force;
Then winners bost, when leasers speake their fill,
Best pleasd was he, when as she wisht him worst,
As still the foxe fares best when he is curst.

28

But what she saith he little doth regard,
Suppose she curst, or prayd, or rayld, or cride,
He seekes out Doralice and Mandricard,
And had the little dwarfe to be his guide,
No little hast he maketh thither ward:

But here a while mine author steps aside,
And to that place of purpose makes digression,
Where Pinnabell was shrivn without confession.

29

The noble Dame no sooner left the place,
Where late this caitive by her hand was slaine,
But Zerbin there arrivd in little space,
With old Gabrina, who perceiving plaine,
One murderd, straight he followed the trace,
(Lest murder unrevenge should remaine)
He minds if fortune be so much his furdere:
To be revenged sharply on the murderer.

30

Gabrina to the quarrie straight approacheth,
Looks all about, searching the corse and prying,
(As one that still on evrie gaine encrocheth)
To win both by the living and the dying,
In purses and in pockets all she pocheth,
Of him that murderd on the ground was lying,
As having this, conjoynd to other evils,
In covetise to passe the very devills.

31

She would have had his cote and armor faine,
Save that she knew not how them to have hidden,
But from great part of that desired gaine,
By want of leysure she was then forbidden;
Howbit she did convay away his chaine,
And ere Zerbino backe againe was ridden,
She put it safely where it was not seene,
Her upper gowne and peticote betweene.

32

And sore it grieved her to leave the rest,
But now Zerbino was returned backe,
And for the time drew nigh of taking rest,
And night came now to spread his mantell blacke,
To seeke some lodging out they thought it best,
Of which, in that wild countrie was great lacke.
They leave the valley, and they came that night,
Unto a castle Altariva hight.

33

They thither went, and long they had not stayd,
But in came people with great exclamation,

With wofull news, that many hearts dismayd,
And filld their mouths and eyes with lamentation,
How Pinnabell was murderd and betrayd,
And lost his life, and worldly habitation,
And straight they brought the corse with light of torches
And led the same through all the courts and porches.

34

Great were the plaints, the sorow and the grieffe,
By kindred made, by tenants and his frends;
But by his father, old Anselmus chiefe,
Who, though revenge be but a small amends,
And his sonnes life was now past all relieffe,
By search to find the murdrer he intends.
Zerbino hereof makes himselfe a stranger,
As well to shunne suspition as danger.

35

Now when the funerals in stately sort,
Ordained were with pompe and superstition
To which great store of people did resort,
And all that would, had franke and free permission,
Straight with oyes, a cryer doth report,

Thereto assigned by that Earles commission,
That who so could the murderer bewray,
Should have a thousand duckats for his pay.

36

This newes from mouth to mouth, from eare to eare,
(As newes are wont to do) did flie so fast,
That old Gabrina, being present there,
Among the rest, heard of it at the last:
Who either for the hatred she did beare,
To good Zerbino, for some matters past,
Or else for gaine of that so great reward,
Straight to destroy Zerbino she prepard.

37

And that she might more surely him entrap,
With thErle himselfe to speake she doth request,
And probably, she tels how this mishap,
Was by Zerbino wrought his new come guest:
And straight she puld the chaine out of her lap,
Which sole might serve to verifie the rest:
That aged sire, that all the tale beleaved,
Was sore inragd herewith, not onely grieved.

38

And lifting up his hands unto the skies,
With age now feeble, feeble now with woe,
With fainting voice he spake, and watrie eies,
(My sonne) thou shalt not unrevenged go:
And while in bed secure Zerbino lyes,
Not thinking he had bene betrayed so,
With armed men his lodging was beset,
He naked tane, as is a byrd in net.

39

With as great cruelty as could be showne,
His princely armes were piniond fast behind him,
And to a dungeon deepe he straight was throwne,
And that vile place, to bide in was assignd him,
Untill the sentence of his death were knowne:
In fine Anselmus (so did passion blind him)
(Her likely tale, his wrath so rashly leading)
Condemnd him, and never heard him pleading.

40

Thus was this worthy Prince without all cause,
Condemnd to die (such is the wofull being,

Where hests of lawlesse lords, must stand for laws,
Though from all lawes and reason disagreeing)
Now neare and neare his execution drawes,
And gazing people, greedie still of seeing,
In clusters march and follow all confused,
On horse, on foot, as at such time is used.

41

But loe how God that ever doth defend,
Those innocents that put in him their trust,
A helpe unlooked for did thither send,
And freed him from this doome of death unjust:
Orlando did evn then the hill ascend,
Orlando is the man that save him must,
And at that time there did with him remaine,
The daughter of Galego, King of Spaine.

42

This was that Isabell, whom he of late,
Recoverd from the outlawes in the cave,
And having brought her out of that ill state,
Yet still he promist care of her to have,
And whatsoever danger or debate,

To him befell, yet her he still did save:
Orlando all that great assemblie saw,
That did the Knight to execution draw.

43

He thither went and askt of him the cause,
Why he was drawne unto a death so cruell,
Forsooth (Zerbino said) against all lawes,
I am condemnd if you the matter knew well,
Anselmus rage, that will admit no pause,
Unto this flame, doth kindle all the fewell:
Beleeving falsely that I slue his sonne,
Whereas by me (God knowes) it was not done.

44

Thus Zerbin said, and said it in such sort,
As made Orlando vow him to releeve,
For very apt he was, each in report,
Of any of Maganza to beleeve;
Each house still thought to cut the other short,
Each house still sought the other how to greeve:
Each house long time, had tane a pride and pleasure,
To worke the tother danger and displeasure.

45

Unloose the Knight ye catives (straight he cride)
Else looke for death to be your due reward:
What man is this (quoth one) that gapes so wide?
And speakes so foolishly without regard?
Were he of steele, of strength and temper tride,
And we of straw, his sute might hap be hard.
This said, he taketh up a mighty launce,
And runnes against the Palladine of Fraunce.

46

Orlando ran at him with couched speare,
And though his armour were both good and sure,
As namely that Zerbino erst did weare,
Yet was the stroke too grievous to endure,
For though the beaver did it stifly beare,
Yet did the blow a greater hurt procure:
For on the cheeke, it gave him such a checke,
That though it pierced not, it brake his necke.

47

Nor at that course did all his furie cease,
Six other of that speare the force then felt,

Then with his sword among the thickest prease,
Such store of thrusts, and deadly blowes he delt,
That many in the place did straight decease;
And evn as snow against the Sunne doth melt,
So melted they and fainted in his sight,
That in an houre he put them all to flight.

48

When they were fled, he set Zerbino free,
Who would have kist the ground whereon he trod,
And done him reverence humbly on his knee,
But that the Earle such courtsie him forbod:
But yet he thankt him in the highst degree,
As one he honourd most, excepting God;
Then did he put his armor on againe,
Which late was worne by him that there was slaine.

49

Now while Zerbino there a little staid,
Preparing with Orlando to go hence,
Behold faire Isabell, that princely maid,
That all the while had staid a little thence,
And sees no farther cause to be affraid,

Came neare, & brought great joy and great offence,
By divers passions bred of one desire,
Some cold as ice, and some as hot as fire.

50

For where before Zerbino thought her drownd,
Now certaine he rejoyced very much,
To see her in his presence safe and sound,
And that her misadventure was not such;
But weying in whose hand he had her found,
A jealous feare forthwith his heart doth tuch,
And inwardly a greater anguish bred,
Then late it had, to heare that she was ded.

51

To see her in the hands of such a Knight,
It greatly did him anger and displease,
From whom to offer, her to take by might,
It were no honestie nor haply ease,
But for Orlandos sake he ought of right,
All passions both of love and wrath appease;
To whom in thankfulnessse it were but meete,
To lay his hands under Orlandos feete.

52

Wherefore he makes no words, but on he goth
In silent sort, till coming to a well
To drinke they lighted, being thirstie both,
And each his drought with water doth expell,
But when the damsell saw and knew for troth,
That was Zerbino whom she lovd so well,
(For when to drinke his bever he untide)
Straight she her love had through his bever spide.

53

With open armes she runs him to embrace,
And hangs about his necke a pleasant yoke,
And speechlesse she remaind a pretie space,
And with her cristall teares (before she spoke)
Surprisd with joy, she all bedewd his face,
And long it was ere into speech she broke,
By which the noble Earle did plainly see,
That this could no man but Zerbino be.

54

Now when she had againe her vitall sprites,
And that she able was her mind to show,

First she Orlandos great desarts recites,
That rescude her from place of shame and wo,
Commending him above all other Knights,
That undefiled had preservd her so,
And prayd her deare, when she had made recitall
Of his good deeds, to make him some requitall.

55

Great thanks were givn, and profers great there were
Of recompence and service on each side,
But lo a hap that made them speech forbear,
For why an armed Knight they had espide:
Twas Mandricardo that arrived there,
Who as you heard, these many dayes did ride
To seeke this Earle, till meeting by the way
Faire Doralice, a while it made him stay.

56

You heard how Mandricard sought out the tracke,
(Movd thereunto by envie and disdaine)
Of this fierce Knight, appareld all in blacke,
By whom the King of Tremysen was slaine,
And those Noritians all, so put to wracke,

As few of them unwounded did remaine,
And now he found him as it came to passe,
Yet knew he not that this Orlando was.

57

But marking well, the signes and tokens eke,
To those he heard, of such as thence were fled,
You are (quoth he) the selfe same man I seeke,
By whom so many of my friends are ded:
I have (he said) traveld above a weeke
To find you out, and now at last am sped,
You are the man that I have sought (I guesse)
And sure your manly looke doth shew no lesse.

58

Sir (quoth Orlando) though I want your name,
A noble Knight you are it may be guest,
For sure a heart so thirsting after fame,
Is seldome bred in base unnoble brest:
But if to see me onely now you came,
I straight herein will graunt you your request:
And that you may behold me to your fill,
I will put off mine armour if you will.

59

But when you well have viewd me all about,
If yet you have a farther mind to trie,
Which of us two can prove himselfe most stout,
And first in field can make the tother flie:
Attempt it when you list, and make no doubt,
But hereunto right soone agree shall I:
That (quoth the Pagan) is my mind indeed,
And thus to fight together they agreed.

60

But when Orlando viewd the Pagan King,
And saw no pollax at his saddle bow,
No sword by side, no bow, nor dart, nor sling,
But evn a speare, he needs of him would know,
When that were burst, unto what other thing
He then would trust, to give or beare a blow:
Tush (quoth the Pagan Prince) you need not feare,
But I will match you onely with the speare.

61

I have (quoth he) an oath most solemne sworne,
Since first the noble Hectors armes I wan,

That by my side should never sword be worne,
Nor other iron weapon, till I can
Get Durindana by Orlando borne,
Though how he gate it, well I cannot scan,
But since he gate it, great reports do flie,
That noble deeds of armes he doth thereby.

62

No lesse (quoth he) I faine on him would wreake
My fathers death, whom falsly he betraid,
For well I wot my sire was not so weake,
With any Christen to be overlaid:
At this Orlando could not chuse but speake,
It is a lie (quoth he) that thou hast said,
I am Orlando, and I will not beare it,
This sword is Durindan, win it and weare it.

63

And though this sword is justly wholly mine,
Yet for this time I frankly do agree,
A while it shall be neither mine nor thine,
And if in combat you can vanquish me,
Then takt, and thereat I shall not repine:

This said, he hangd the sword upon a tree,
Indifferently betweene them both to stand,
Untill the strife by combat might be scand.

64

Now one at thother ran with couched speare,
And on the headpeece each the other strake,
The staves in sundry peeces rend and teare,
But by the blowes the men small hurt do take:
And now the trunchens onely left them were,
And at foure blowes the trunchens likewise brake,
Thus when they saw all other weapons mist,
At last they were inforst to fight with fist.

65

So have I seene two clownes fall at debate,
About some watercourse or marke of land,
And either clap the tother on the pate,
With crabtree staffe, or with as crabbed hand;
Such of this conflict was the present state,
And each of them doth to his tackle stand,
And being tyrd with giving frutelesse stripes,
At last they flatly fell to handie gripes.

66

The Pagan, part by sleight and part by force,
Thought to have done as Hercules in time past,
To fierce Antheus did, and thEarle inforce,
To yeeld himselfe, or leave his horse at last.
Orlando that could surely sit his horse,
With all his strength bestrides the saddle fast,
Yet did the Pagan heave him with such strength,
That all his gyrses broken were at length.

67

Downe came the Earle, yet kept his saddle still,
Nor what had happend was he well aware,
But as he fell, intending by his will,
Unto the Pagan King to worke some care,
He meant (but his attempt succeeded ill)
To overthrow the horse the Pagan bare,
But missing hold, the horse unhurt remaines,
Yet off he puld his headstall and his raines.

68

The horse that had at liberty his hed,
Runs over ditch and valley, hedge and wood,

As partly feare, and partly courage led,
For nothing was that his mad course withstood:
But Mandricard still beates him on his head,
And evn as if he speech had understood,
He threatens him (except he stay) to beate him,
And with faire speech sometime he doth intreat him.

69

But all was one, three mile outright he rode,
Ere he could make the harebraine horse to stay,
Or cause him once to make a small abode,
But more and more he gallops still away:
At last with hast the horse and eke the lode
Fell downe into a ditch, and there they lay,
Both horse and man all soyld and rayd with durt,
Yet neither horse nor man had any hurt.

70

This while Dame Doralice that saw her guide
Thus post away against his will amaine,
She thought it were not safe behind to bide,
And therefore followd him though with great paine,
And seeing that he could no farther ride,

Because his wilfull horse did want a raine,
She prayes him take her horses raine and bit,
For mine (quoth she) will go though wanting it.

71

Much did the Pagan praise her gentle offer,
Yet did refuse it as a part too base,
To let her want and take her bridle of her,
He thought it were to him a great disgrace.
But lo good chance a better meane did profer,
Gabrina came unwares unto the place,
She that betraid of late the Scottish Prince,
And heard (of like) of his delivery since.

72

And therefore fearing punishment and blame,
And clogd with guilty conscience, fled the light,
Untill by hap unwares she thither came,
And on this couple fortun'd to light:
They could not chuse but make great sport & game,
To see so strange and unagreeing sight,
As such a witherd old ilfavord hag,
To ride in purple on an ambling nag.

73

He that of right or wrong did little passe,
Meanes with her store his lacke there to supply,
Nor once demaunded who or what she was,
But takes away her bridle by and by:
She skreecheth out, and weepes, and cries alas,
Evn ready fearing hurt, unhurt to die:
Hereafter I shall tell what became on her,
Now for a farewell shame I wish upon her.

74

This while Orlando had his girses mended,
And new provided what before did lacke,
And mounting on his horse, a while attended
To see if so the Pagan would come backe;
But seeing that he came not, he intended
To follow him, and find him by the tracke:
But first (as one that well good manners knew)
He bad Zerbino and his spouse adew.

75

Faine would Zerbino with this Earle have gone,
And take such part of evry hap as he,

But that the noble Earle hereof would none,
And said there could not more dishonor be,
Then for a Knight to shun to fight alone;
Wherefore he would not thereunto agree:
Thus Zerbin loth doth from this Earle depart,
Poore Isbell shedding teares for tender hart.

76

But ere they went this Earle Zerbino praid,
If first he hapt on Mandricard to light,
To tell him how long time for him he staid,
And meant to seeke him out againe to fight,
Now that his comming was so long delaid,
He meant to Paris ward to go that night,
To Charles his camp, and if he sought him there,
He should assured be of him to heare.

77

Thus much he praid, and thence away he went,
To seeke out Mandricard, but found him not,
And (for the day now more then halfe was spent,
The Sunne and season waxing somewhat hot)
A shadie grove he found, and there he ment

To take some ease, but found small ease God wot:
He thinks his thirst and heate a while to swage,
But found that set him in worse heate and rage.

78

For looking all about the grove, behold
In sundry places faire ingravn he sees,
Her name whose love he more esteemes then gold,
By her owne hand in barkes of divers trees,
This was the place wherein before I told,
Medoro usd to pay his surgeons fees,
Where she, to bost of that that was her shame,
Usd oft to write hers and Medoros name.

79

And then with true love knots and pretie poses,
(To shew how she to him by love was knit)
Her inward thoughts by outward words discloses,
In her much love to shew her little wit.
Orlando knew the hand, and yet supposes
It was not she that had such posies writ;
And to beguile himselfe, tush, tush (quoth he)
There may be more Angelicas then she.

80

Yea, but I know too well that pretie hand,
Oft hath she sent me letters of her writing:
Then he bethinks how she might understand
His name and love by that same new inditing,
And how it might be done long time he scand,
With this fond thought so fondly him delighting.
Thus with small hope, much feare, all malcontent,
In these and such conceits the time he spent.

81

And ay the more he seekes out of his thought
To drive this fancie, still it doth increase,
Evn as a bird that is with birdlime caught,
Doth beate her wings, and strives, and doth not cease
Untill she hath her selfe all overwrought,
And quite intangled in the slimie grease:
Thus on went he, till him the way did bring
Unto a shadie cave and pleasant spring.

82

This was a place, wherein above the rest,
This loving paire, leaving their homely host,

Spent time in sports that may not be exprest,
Here in the parching heate they tarrid most,
And here Medore (that thought himselfe most blest)
Wrote certaine verses as in way of bost:
Which in his language doubtlesse sounded prittie,
And thus I turne them to an English dittie.

83

Ye pleasant plants, greene herbs, and waters faire,
And cave with smell, and gratefull shadow mixt,
Where sweet Angelica, daughter and heire
Of Galafronne, on whom in vaine were fixt
Full many hearts, with me did oft repaire
Alone, and naked lay mine armes betwixt;
I poore Medore, can yeeld but praise and thanks,
For these great pleasures found amid your banks.

84

And pray each Lord whom Cupid holds in pay,
Each Knight, each dame, and evry one beside,
Or gentle or meane sort that passe this way,
As fancie or his fortune shall him guide,
That to the plants, herbs, spring, and cave he say,

Long may the Sun and Moon maintaine your pride,
And the faire crew of Nymphs make such purveyance
As hither come no heards to your annoyance.

85

It written was there in thArabian tong,
Which tong Orlando perfect understood,
As having learnt it when he was but yong,
And oft the skill thereof had done him good,
But at this time it him so deeply stoong,
It had bin well that he it never coud,
And yet we see, to know men still are glad,
And yet we see much knowledge makes men mad.

86

Twise, thrise, yea five times he doth reade the rime,
And though he saw and knew the meaning plaine,
Yet, that his love was guilty of such crime,
He will not let it sinke into his braine,
Oft he perused it, and evry time
It doth increase his sharpe tormenting paine,
And ay the more he on the matter mused,
The more his wits and senses were confused.

87

Evn then was he of wit welnigh bestraught,
So quite he was givn over unto grieffe,
(And sure if we beleeeve as prooffe hath taught,
This torture is of all the rest the chiefe)
His sprite was dead, his courage quaild with thought,
He doth despaire and looke for no reliefe,
And sorrow did his senses so surprise,
That words his toong, and teares forsooke his eyes.

88

The raging pang remained still within,
That would have burst out all at once too fast:
Evn so we see the water tarry in
A bottle little mouthd, and bit in wast,
That though you topsie turvy turne the brim,
The liquor bides behind with too much hast,
And with the striving oft is in such taking,
As scant a man can get it out with shaking.

89

At last he comes unto himselfe anew,
And in his mind another way doth frame,

That that which there was written was not trew,
But writ of spite his Ladie to defame,
Or to that end, that he the same might vew,
And so his heart with jealousie inflame:
Well bet who list (quoth he) I see this clearly,
He hath her hand resembled passing nearly.

90

With this small hope, with this poore little sparke,
He doth some deale revive his troubled sprite,
And for it was now late, and waxed darke,
He seekes some place where he may lie that night,
At last he heares a noise of dogs that barke,
He smels some smoke, and sees some candle light,
He takes his Inne, with will to sleepe, not eate,
As fild with grieffe, and with none other meate.

91

But lo his hap was at that house to host,
Where faire Angelica had layne before,
And where her name on evry doore and post,
With true love knots was joyned to Medore,
That knot his name whom he detested most,

Was in his eye and thought still evermore:
He dares not aske, nor once the matter tuch,
For knowing more of that he knowes too much.

92

But vaine it was himselfe so to beguile,
For why his host unasked by and by,
That saw his guest sit there so sad the while,
And thinks to put him from his dumps thereby,
Beginneth plaine without all fraud or guile,
Without concealing truth or adding lie,
To tell that tale to him without regard,
Which divers had before with pleasure heard.

93

As thus, how at Angelicas request
He holpe unto his house to bring Medore,
Who then was sorely wounded in his brest,
And she with surgery did heale his sore:
But while with her owne hands the wound she drest,
Blind Cupid wounded her as much or more,
That when her skill and herbs had curd her patient,
Her curelesse wound in love made her impatient.

94

So that, admit she were the greatest Queene
Of fame, and living in those Eastern parts,
Yet so with fancie she was overseene,
To marry with a page of meane desarts;
Thus love (quoth he) will have his godhead seene,
In famous Queens, and highest Princes harts:
This said (to end the tale) he shewd the jewell
That she had givn him, which Orlando knew well.

95

This tale, and chiefly this same last conclusion,
Was evn a hatchet to cut off all hope,
When love had after many a vaine collusion,
Now for his farewell lent him such a rope
To hang himselfe, and drowne him in confusion,
Yet faine he would denie his sorrow scope,
And though a while to shew it he forbeares,
It breaketh out at last in sighs and teares.

96

And as it were inforst he gives the raine
To raging grieffe, upon his bed alone,

His eyes do shed a very showre of raine,
With many a scalding sigh and bitter grone,
He slept as much as if he had then laine
Upon a bed of thornes, and stuft with stone.
And as he lay thereon and could not rest him,
The bed it selfe gave matter to molest him.

97

Ah wretch I am (thus to himselfe he sed)
Shall I once hope to take repose and rest me
In that same house? yea evn in that same bed
Where my ungratefull love so leudly drest me?
Nay, let me first an hundred times be ded,
First wolves devoure and vultures shall digest me.
Strait up he starts, and on he put his clothes,
And leaves the house, so much the bed he lothes.

98

He leaves his host, nor once doth take his leave,
He fard so in, he bids them not farewell,
He leaves the towne, his servants he doth leave,
He rides, but where he rides he cannot tell.
And when alone himselfe he doth perceave

To weepe and waile, nay evn to houle and yell,
He doth not cease to give his griefe a vent,
That inwardly so sore did him torment.

99

The day the night to him were both aleeke,
Abroade upon the cold bare earth he lies,
No sleepe, no food he takes, nor none would seek,
All sustenance he to himselfe denies.
Thus he began, and ended halfe the weeke,
And he himselfe doth marvell, whence his eyes
Are fed so long with such a spring of water,
And to himselfe thus reasons on the matter.

100

No, no, these be no teares that now I shed,
These be no teares, nor can teares run so rife,
But fire of frenzie drawth up to my head,
My vitall humor that should keepe my life;
This streame will never cease till I be dead,
Then welcome death and end my fatall strife:
No comfort in this life my wo can minish,
But thou who canst both life and sorrow finish.

101

These are not sighs, for sighs some respite have,
My gripes, my pangs, no respite do permit,
The blindfold boy made me a seeing slave,
When from my eyes my heart he first did hit.
Now all inflamd, I burne, I rage and rave,
And in the midst of flame consume no whit:
Love sitting in my heart a master crewell,
Blowes with his wings feeds with his will the fewell.

102

I am not I, the man that earst I was,
Orlando, he is buried and dead,
His most ungratefull love (ah foolish lasse)
Hath kild Orlando, and cut off his head:
I am his ghost, that up and downe must passe,
In this tormenting hell for ever led,
To be a fearfull sample and a just,
To all such fooles as put in love their trust.

103

Thus wandring still in wayes that have no way,
He hapt againe to light upon the cave,

Where (in remembrance of their pleasant play)
Medoro did that epigram engrave.
To see the stones againe, his woes display,
And her ill name, and his ill hap deprave,
Did on the sudden all his sence inrage,
With hate, with fury, with revenge and rage.

104

Straightwayes he draweth forth his fatall blade,
And hewes the stones, to heavn the shivers flee,
Accursed was that fountaine, cave and shade,
The arbor and the flowres and evry tree:
Orlando of all places havocke made,
Where he those names together joynd may see,
Yea to the spring he did perpetuall hurt,
By filling it with leaves, boughs, stones and durt.

105

And having done this foolish franticke feate,
He layes him downe all weary on the ground,
Distemperd in his bodie with much heate,
In mind with paines that no tongue can expound,
Three dayes he doth not sleepe, nor drinke, nor eate,

But lay with open eyes as in a sound.
The fourth with rage, and not with reason waked,
He rents his clothes, and runs about starke naked.

106

His helmet here he flings, his poulderns there;
He casts away his curats and his shield:
His sword he throws away, he cares not where,
He scatters all his armor in the field:
No ragge about his bodie he doth beare,
As might from cold or might from shame him shield,
And save he left behind this fatall blade,
No doubt he had therewith great havocke made.

107

But his surpassing force did so exceed,
All common men, that neither sword nor bill,
Nor any other weapon he did need,
Meere strength sufficed him to do what he will,
He rootes up trees as one would root a weed:
And evn as birders laying nets with skill,
Pare slender thornes away with easie strokes,
So he did play with ashes, elmes and okes.

The heardmen and the shepheards that did heare,
The hideous noise and unacquainted sound,
With feare and wonder great approched neare,
To see, and know, what was hereof the ground.
But now I must cut off this treatise heare,
Lest this my booke do grow beyond his bound;
And if you take some pleasure in this text,
I will go forward with it in the next.

ARGUMENT

THE TWENTYFOURTH BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

The noble Zerbin pardon doth afford
To Odrik and Gabrina, gracelesse paire;
A Turke with him fights for Orlandos sword,
He dies, in armes of Isabella faire.
Fierce Rodomont with sundry passions stird,
Doth fight with cruell Agricanes heire,
But them in their chief rage their mistresse parted,
From whence to aid their Prince they both departed.

TWENTYFOURTHBOOKE

1

Who so shall set on Cupids snares his foot,
Must seeke to draw it backe, least it be caught,
And madnes meer, in love to overshoot,
The fool hath felt, the wise hath ever taught,
And though in all alike it take not root,
Yet all shall find that loves a thing of naught,
For sure it is an open signe of madnesse,
To have anothers pleasure breed thy sadnesse.

2

Now though effects prove not in all alike,
Yet all are mad in sort, all go astray,
As in a wildernesse where men do seek,
And more and more in seeking lose their way,
Wherefore let no man this my wish mislike,
In whom fond love shall carie long the sway,
I wish for due reward such doting dolts,
Like wilfull prisners, store of iron bolts.

3

Some man perhap will say, what soft, my friend,
You spie our faults, in your own errors blind;
And true it is, yet speak I to this end,
To bring us both into a better mind.
As for my selfe, I hope ere long to mend,
And from these bonds in time my selfe unwind:
Though it had tane in me such root, I proove it,
As hard tis on the sudden to remoove it.

4

I shewd you in the book that went before,
By what mishap Orlando waxed mad,
And lost not onely care of vertues lore,
But reason, wit, and all the sense he had:
His armor he disperst, his clothes he tore,
The very clothes wherewith his corps was clad:
And though he wanderd all unarmd and naked,
Yet at his presence all the country quaked.

5

The countrimen that heard the noise aloof,
Of trees, that with their fall made no small crack:

Came neare, and saw by plaine and open proof,
His monstrous strength, by their so monstrous wrack;
And straight they found it best for their behoof,
With all the hast they could to get them back;
For those he caught he did this lesson teach,
To keep aloof from out a mad mans reach.

6

Away they fled, but he pursud so fast,
That some he caught, and some surprisd with feare,
Stood still (as oft it happens) all agast,
Not knowing how to hide themselves, nor where:
Some other ploughmen seeing what had past,
Thought it but little wit to tarie there,
But climd (for feare) their houses and their churches,
Not trusting strength of elmes, of beech, and burches.

7

Among the rest he takes one by his heel,
And with his head knocks out anothers braine,
Which caused both of them such paine to feel,
As till doomes day they never shall complaine,
Another with his fist he made to reel,

Till paine it selfe made him past sense of paine,
And when the men fled all away affeard,
Then with like rage he set upon their heard.

8

The voice of men, the bellowings of beast,
About the country raisd so great a sound,
As might have well been heard five leagues at least,
And all the people straight were raised round;
Each man providing (as he could) the best,
And for the present time might then be found,
With bows, with bils, with staves, & pikes, & prongs
To be revengd on these outrageous wrongs.

9

Look how the waves are drivn by western blast,
And one and one, do rise still more and more,
Untill their force so great be at the last,
They sprinkle all the banks, and beat the shore;
So now these country folk came in so fast,
By two, and three, a dozen, and a score;
Till at the last they grew so great a number,
Their very multitude themselves did cumber.

10

But when they saw their force could do no good,
And that his skin so strange protection had,
That though they smote thereon, they drew no blood,
They thought that they might worse be thought then mad,
To fight with one that all them so withstood,
Wherefore they parted home dismaid and sad,
The mad man went unto the nearest village,
Although he cared not for spoile or pillage.

11

And finding no man there, nor small, nor great,
For all were fled away from thence for aw;
As famine forced him, he sought out some meat,
And were it fine or course, the first he saw,
In greedy sort he doth devoure and eat,
Not caring if it rosted were or raw;
And when thus homely he had tane repast,
About the country bedlamlike he past.

12

He scares both man and beast without regard,
He takes swift goats and fallow deere in chase,

Somtimes a Lion fierce, a Bore, a Pard,
He kils by strength and swiftnesse of his pace.
At last he came whereas a knight did guard
The passage of a bridge, and by the place
Had built a towre of no small work and charge,
As shall be showd hereafter more at large.

13

Now must I tell what hap Zerbino had,
Who with faire Isabell together rode.
Along that place where this good Earle fell mad;
But by the way, these two made some abode,
Where they beheld two men in armour clad,
That drive a horse that bare a wofull lode,
A knight a prisner, to Zerbino known,
That had been once a servant of his own.

14

This prisner Oderike of Biskie hight,
In the Prince had put so great a trust,
He made chiefe choice of him as of a knight,
That of his promise would be firm and just:
But he (fond beast) esteeming small delight,

And fruitlesse hope of his unbridled lust,
Above his sacred oath and promised fealtie,
Would have defloured her against all lealtie.

15

Faire Isabell by hap evn then was telling,
How in the boat she desperately was savd;
And having scapd the stormy seas and swelling,
How trecherously this wretch himselfe behavd,
That (had not outlawes thereabout been dwelling)
He would have forced her unto that he cravd,
And evn as these, or some such words she said,
She saw the man she spake of captive led.

16

Those two that led the wicked Odricke tid,
Knew well their Lord when as they came in view,
Both by the Lady that was by his side,
And by the rampant Lion red of hew,
Born by the Prince, not for a shew of pride,
But his as from his predecessors dew,
They light, and with a courtesie to the ground,
And cap in hand, salute their Lord thus found.

17

Zerbino knew and cald them both by name,
Corebo tone, Almonio tother hight,
Which two with Isabell from Bayon came,
In conduct of that most unworthy wight.
And straight Almonio thus his speech doth frame,
My Lord (said he) I shall to you recite
Some little part of that unpleasant story,
That till this houre had made my heart full sory.

18

Sith (thankd be God) this Lady here doth live,
Who felt these stormes, and therein chiefly smarted,
I know that she thereof could notice give,
And hath ere this to you the same imparted;
I onely shall declare what did me grieve,
And what had hapned since from her I parted,
What time by this vile wretches lewd intent,
For horse and men to Rochell I was sent.

19

And as I went, so back I turnd in hast,
With men and horse as good as I could get,

To seek them out mine eyes about I cast,
But yet mine eyes on them I could not set,
Their track I found, and following that full fast,
It brought me to a wood whereas I met
My fellow Coreb, panting then and groning,
This caitife cursing and himselfe bemoning.

20

He told me how he (fighting in defence
Of Isabella) was so sorely wounded,
That from that place he had not stirred since,
And how with bleeding much he oft had sounded,
At which report I took so great offence,
That in my wits I was wellnigh confounded:
And to revenge my heart so sharp was whet,
That Corebs danger quite I did forget.

21

But when in vaine this wretch I long had sought,
To Coreb I returned back againe,
Who was so weak and low by bleeding brought,
That scant the life did in his limbs remaine:
For which his wofull state I took great thought,

As one that deemed it fitter to ordaine
Some Priests and Friars, buriall to procure him,
Then Surgeons or Physitions that might cure him.

22

Yet him unto the town at last I caried,
Where by such help our friendly host procurd,
It pleased God, Corebo not miscaried,
But of his grievous hurts was soundly curd;
Which done, no longer in those parts we taried,
But being there by sundry men assurd,
That Odricke in Alfonsos court was biding,
We thither went to heare of him some tiding.

23

And there I challengd Odricke face to face,
And by the noble justice of the King,
And chiefly (as I deem) by Gods great grace,
That onely rules and governes evry thing,
I took him prisner in the present place,
From whence alive I did him hither bring.
For why that king that heard his great offence,
Did grant us liberty to bring him thence.

24

I might have slaine him, as he well deservd,
But yet I chused rather of the twaine,
Unto your doom to have his life reservd,
That you might point him death with worthy paine,
And much I joy that luck so well hath servd,
That we so safe have found your grace againe:
And much more I rejoyce, if much more may be,
At health and welfare of this noble Lady.

25

Thus much Almonio said, and then did cease,
Expecting what Zerbino would reply,
Who all the while stood still and held his peace,
And viewd the prisner with an heedfull eye,
And much it did his grieffe of mind increase,
To think a friend could stray so farre awry.
Then sighing deep; what Odricke is this true,
Wherewith (quoth he) Almonio chargeth you?

26

The caitive humbly prostrate on the ground,
Forgive my Lord (said he) your servants crime,

What wight on earth can void of fault be found?
What Saint is such as doth not sin sometime?
Tween good and bad this diffrence sole is found,
That good men sin but seeld, and mend betime,
The bad man (making scruple none or question)
Yeelds wilfully to evry lewd suggestion.

27

If you to me some fortresse had committed,
And I the same had wittingly betraid,
I graunt such fault were not to be remitted,
But if I had with force been overlaid,
Then sure I am my case would have been pitied,
At least no sin should to my charge be laid:
For when the enemy is once the stronger,
Tis vaine to make resistance any longer.

28

Evn so my Lord, my faith I ought to guard,
No other then a fortresse or a hold,
Put in my charge with carefull watch and ward,
As long as strength will serve me it to hold:
And so I kept my faith with due regard,

Nor was I any way to be controlld
Untill at last I was so strong assaild,
That faith gave place, and fancy then prevaild.

29

Thus Odricke said, and what he said beside,
I doubt it somewhat tedious were to tell,
As namely, none so great assault could bide,
That love all other passions doth excell,
But sure if it were ever plainly tride,
That humble speech doth often wrath expell;
Now Odricke found of lowly words the fruit,
That help him to obtaine so hard a suit.

30

Zerbino stood a while in mind confusd,
To punish or to pardon his offence,
Somtime his thoughts all clemency refusd,
Somtime the love and service done long since,
Asswagd his wrath, and tothers fault excusd,
And movd him with his folly to dispence:
And still as rage did kindle fire of wrath,
To quench it mercy store of water hath.

31

Now while in this same doubt Zerbino staid,
Behold by hap Gabrina there was brought,
She that of late had this good Prince betraid,
And had to him so great a danger wrought;
Her horse that heard where other horses naid,
Came to the noise, as nature had them taught,
Against her will she wanting force to sway him,
And having lost the reines wherewith to stay him.

32

The beastly wretch crid help, and out alas,
While thus her horse ran over fields and lands,
But when the Scottish Prince saw who she was,
And how she thither came he understands,
He gave God thanks that so had brought to passe,
To give those two at once into his hands,
Which two for their misdeeds above the rest,
He had great cause to malice and detest.

33

And after he had made a little pause,
Unto his servants turning thus he said,

Sirs, Odricke shall not die, although by lawes
His fact deserves no lesse uprightly waid,
For sith he saith affection was the cause,
Content I am, on love the fault be laid,
The sin to which a man by love is driven,
So much the rather ought to be forgiven.

34

The force of strong affection hath ere this
Distemperd, yea and sometime overthrown
A wiser and a staid head then his,
As is to me by mine experience known,
And that herein he did his duty misse,
I must confesse, the fault was part mine own,
That gave to him such charge and did not know
How quickly flaming heat can kindle tow.

35

Then to the caitive Odricke thus he spake,
Here I forgive thee, and do thee enlarge,
But yet the penance I will have thee take,
Is this, to take this woman in thy charge,
And swear to me thou shalt her not forsake

For one whole yeare, but this thine oath discharge
And that thou shalt if any would offend her,
Do thy dever, and unto death defend her.

36

This was the punishment on him he laid,
And certainly this same had been enow,
If so the circumstance were duly waighd,
And Odericke had right performd his vow.
For why? so many men she had betraid,
And done such sinnes evn from her youth till now,
That wheresoere they had together traveld,
In her defence he must at last be graveld.

37

Thus Zerbin let this wicked couple go,
And thinks sufficiently to plague them both,
But swears if ever he did hap to know,
That he therein should violate his troth,
His flesh should serve as feeding for the crow,
A fit reward for such as break their oath;
Thus went this honest couple thence together,
Lurking in corners, wandring here and thither.

38

But what in thend of these same two became,
I know not, and mine author doth not write,
I onely heard a speech, or flying fame,
That when they once were quite from Zerbins sight
Odricke (to shun the quarrels and the shame,
That by her company on him might light)
Did hang her up, and after in short space,
Almonio made him run the selfe same race.

39

The Prince that faine some tidings would have heard,
Of that Earle Palladine, who tother day,
Fought hand to hand with lofty Mandricard,
Untill his rainlesse horse bare him away,
Doth travell on his way to Paris ward,
Though faire and soft, and lingring by the way,
And his two servants he doth send before,
And kept with him his Lady, and no more.

40

They rode not farre but that they found the cave,
And that same pleasant arbor and the spring,

At which Medoro used such sport to have,
With that faire daughter of the Indian king;
Where she their names together did engrave,
All tied with true love knots (a wondrous thing)
They look, and see the stones, the words and letters
All cut and mangled in a thousand fitters.

41

And as they must hereon, they might espie
Orlando's armour, and his famous blade,
High Durindana on the ground to lie,
That sword that first for Hector had been made,
They saw where Brigliador was feeding by
Upon the grass amid the pleasant shade:
This sight did make them both exceeding sad,
Yet little did they deem that the Earle was mad.

42

Had they but seen one little drop of blood,
They would have surely thought he had been slain,
But while in this most careful doubt they stood,
Behold there came a country silly swain,
That with no little speed ran through the wood,

And scapd the mad mans fury with great paine;
He told them how a man bestraught of senses,
Had done these outrages and great offences.

43

And further gave them perfect information,
And told each circumstance at their request:
Zerbino standeth still in admiration,
And (as the manner is) himselfe he blest,
And with great griefe of mind and lamentation,
He takes the sword and armour, and the rest,
And Isabella helpeth them to gather,
And so they lay them on a heap together.

44

This while by hap came by faire Fiordeliege,
Who (as I told before) with pensive heart
Went to seek out her loved Lord and Liege,
I mean Orlandos friend, King Brandimart,
Who leaving Paris in the wofull siege,
To seek Orlando did from thence depart,
Till Atlant to that cage him did intice,
Which he had framd by magicall device.

45

The which enchantment being now defeated,
By good Astolfos value and his skill,
And all the knights as I before repeated,
At liberty to go which way they will,
King Brandimart, though much in mind he fretted,
To think how long in vaine he had stood still,
Back unto Paris ward his course he turnd,
Yet missing her the way that he returnd.

46

Thus (as I said) faire Fiordeliege by chance,
Saw much of that which hapd, and heard the rest,
How that same worthy Palladine of France,
With inward griefe of mind, and thought opprest,
Or by some other great and strange mischance,
Went like a man with some ill sprite possest,
And she likewise enquiring of the peasant,
Heard all the circumstance, a tale unpleasant.

47

Zerbino being farre from any town,
Hangs all Orlandos armour on a Pine,

Like to a Penon, and lest any clown
Or peasant vile should take a thing so fine,
He writes upon the tree, let none take down
This armour of Orlando Palladine;
As who should say, if any man attempt it,
Orlando would ere long cause him repent it.

48

And having brought this worthy work to end,
And ready now to take his journey hence,
Fierce Mandricard hapt thither to descend,
And when he saw the tree, he askd of whence
Those weapons were? which known, he doth intend
To take away good Durindana thence,
He steps unto the tree, and takes the sword,
Nor so content, he adds this spitefull word.

49

Ah sir (quoth he) this hap doth make me glad,
My claime unto this sword is not unknown,
And though before I no possession had,
Yet now I lawfully seize on mine own:
Alas poor fool, and doth he faine him mad?

And hath away his sword and armour thrown,
Because he was not able to maintaine it,
And was afeard that I by force would gaine it?

50

Zerbino crieth out, what? peace for shame,
Take not his sword, or think not I will beare it,
If by the coat of Hector so you came,
You stale it, and unworthy are to weare it:
Tush (quoth the Pagan) I will beare that blame,
As for your threatning, do not think I feare it:
Thus tones sharp answers, tothers sharp replying
Made them to fall to termes of flat defying.

51

And either shewing signes of plaine hostilitie,
Prepares the tother fiercely to invade,
Zerbino with his skill and great agilitie,
His party good against the Pagan made,
And voided all the blowes with much facilitie,
Though having great disvantage in the blade,
And in that armour massie so and strong,
That in times past to Hector did belong.

52

Look how a Grewnd that finds a sturdy Bore,
Amid the field far straying from the heard,
Doth run about, behind him and before,
Because of his sharp tusks he is afeard.
So Zerbin that had seen oft heretofore
That blade, and of the force thereof had heard,
With heedfull eye to shun the blowes he watched,
Because he was in weapons overmatched.

53

Thus warily this worthy Prince did fight,
And though by heedfull skill he scaped oft
The furious blowes of this Tartarian knight,
Yet lo at last one blow came from aloft,
And Durindan so heavy did alight,
As pierced through the hard unto the soft,
A finger deep, and went in length a span,
Down from the place where first the wound began.

54

The Prince so earnest was, he felt no smart,
Yet ran the blood out of the brest amaine,

And of his curats all the former part
With crimson streame of blood it did distaine:
So have I seen her hand that to mine heart,
Hath been a cause of anguish and much paine,
When she a purple seam or flower hath drawn,
In silver kirtle, or in sleeve of lawn.

55

The wound was great, but yet did greater show,
Which sight faire Isabella much amated,
The Prince that seemed not the same to know,
With force increased rather then abated,
Upon the Pagans brow gave such a blow,
As would (no doubt) have made him checkt & mated,
Save that (as I to you before rehearst)
His armour was not easie to be pierst.

56

The blow was such as caused him to reel,
And on his styrupts staggringly he stood,
Had not his armour been of passing steel,
The blow would sure have entred to the blood,
The grievous paine that he thereof did feel

Did put him in so fierce a raging mood,
So that for all Zerbinos skill and sleight,
He wounded him in places sevn or eight.

57

Which when his loving Isabella saw,
She went to Doralice, and her doth pray,
The fury of her husband to withdraw,
And joyne with her to part the bloody fray,
Who both because she was in feare and aw,
Lest yet the Prince her spouse indanger may,
And for of nature kind she was and meek,
Or that good motion she doth not mislike.

58

Thus those two Ladies this fierce battell parted,
In which the Prince received many a wound,
Though being (as he was) most valiant hearted,
He never gave the Pagan inch of ground:
From thence each couple presently departed,
Fierce Mandricard to Pagan camp was bound,
To Paris ward the Prince, but drivn to stay,
By reason of his bleeding by the way.

59

Dame Fiordeliege that stood this while aloof,
And saw how Mandricard prevailed had,
And how the Prince had fought with evill proof,
Departed thence all sorrowfull and sad,
Reviling Mandricard with just reproof,
That of this evill gotten sword was glad,
And wished that her husband Brandimart,
Had present been to take Zerbinos part.

60

But as she traveld homward to the camp,
She saw the noble Palladine of France,
Not like himselfe, but of another stamp,
Besmeard and nakd as anticks wont to dance:
Quite was extinguished the shining lamp,
Of vertue bright that did his name advance:
This fight in Fiordeliege much sorrow bred,
But tell me now how good Zerbino sped.

61

Who on his way with painfull steps proceeding,
With Isabella onely and no more,

His former taken hurts still freshly bleeding,
Which now with cold were stiffe and waxed sore,
And yet this grieffe in him the rest exceeding,
To think that sword of which I spake before,
Should mauger him, be by a Turke possest,
I say this grievd him more then all the rest.

62

Now gan the dreadfull pangs of death assaile him,
So great a streame of blood his wound had draind,
His eyes were dim, his speech began to faile him,
Strong hart to yeeld to weak limbs was constrained:
What can poore Isabella do but waile him?
She blamd the heavns and fates that had ordaind
Her to escape such dangers and such harmes,
And now to have her deare die in her armed.

63

Zerbino though he scant could draw his breath,
Yet hearing her lamenting in such fashion,
Doth ope his closed lips, and thus he saith,
Both shewing then, and moving much compassion:
So might I (my deare love) evn after death,

Be deare to thee as I do feel great passion,
To think when as my death fro hence shall reave me,
Alone in wo and danger I shall leave thee.

64

Might I have left thee in some safer place,
I should esteem my death a blessed hap,
And that the heavns had givn me speciall grace,
To end my life in thy beloved lap,
Now grieves it me to think of thine hard case,
In what a world of woes I thee shall wrap,
When I must die, and leave thee here alone,
And none to help thy harm, or heare thy mone.

65

To this the wofull Isabell replies,
With watred eyes, and heart surprizd with anguish,
Her face to his, and joyning her faire eyes
To his that like a witherd rose did languish,
No thought (said she) my deare in thee arise
For me, for know I neither do nor can wish
Thee to survive, I will be thine for ever,
Life could not, and death shall not us dissever.

66

No sooner shall thy breath thy brest forsake,
But I will follow thee I care not whither,
Griefe or this sword of me an end shall make,
And if some stranger after shall come hither,
I hope of us such pitie he will take,
To lay our bodies in one grave together:
This said, about his neck her arms she claspd,
And drawes the fainting breath that oft he gaspd.

67

The Prince inforcing his sorefeebled voice,
Saith thus, I thee conjure my sole delight,
By that deare love that made me first thy choice,
And thee from native soile to take thy flight,
If ever in my love thou didst rejoyce,
If to command thee I have any right,
That thou still live (as long as God shall graunt thee)
And not despaire how ever fortune daunt thee.

68

Thalmighty God from danger and from ill
Hath hitherto, and will (I trust) thee save;

Evn as he sent that noble Earle to kill
Those caitives that did keep thee in their cave,
And savd thee from the Biskins wicked will,
First having thee preservd from salt sea wave,
Live then my deare, and trust in him above,
And while you live be mindfull of my love.

69

These latter words his lips had scantly past,
When death unto his heart was softly crept;
And as the lamp goeth out when oyle doth wast,
So quietly the noble Zerbin slept:
What tongue can tell how sore she was agast,
How she lamented, wailed, mournd and wept,
To her own eyes and faire haire doing force,
When as she saw her deare a senslesse corse?

70

And griefe had set her in so great a rage,
With Zerbins sword she thinks an end to make
Of her own life, her sorrow to asswage,
Neglecting those last words Zerbino spake:
But lo, a certaine saintlike personage,

That sword from hand, that thought from heart doth take,
A certaine godly hermit and devout,
That was by hap abiding thereabout.

71

Who came and said, oh damsell leave despaire,
Mans nature weak, and womens sex is fraile,
Feare him that rules both heavn, and earth, and aire,
Who saith the word, and his word cannot faile,
That those that unto him for help repaire,
And put their trust in him, shall never quaile:
Then shewd he her, to prove his saying true,
Examples out of Scriptures old and new.

72

Of saintlike women that in time of old,
Their lives in prayer and chastity had spent;
And further to the damsell faire he told,
And provd and shewd by reasons evident,
That worldly things are vaine and have no hold,
Alone in God is joy and true content:
In fine, he makes to her this godly motion,
Her future life to spend in true devotion.

73

His godly speech by help of heavenly grace,
Powrd in her heart by high divine infusion,
Wrought such effect, and found so great a place,
She ceast to seek or work her own confusion:
But leaving the profession of her race,
Profest her selfe a Christen in conclusion;
She gave her selfe to praier and pure divinity,
And vowd to God her life and her virginity.

74

Yet did she not remove out of her thought,
The fervent love Zerbino had her born,
But by the hermits help the corse she brought,
And thinks it sin to leave it so forlorn,
And in some village thereabout she bought
Sweet balmes to fill the flesh all cut and torn,
Then in a Cypres coffin she doth close it,
Not being yet resolv'd where to dispose it.

75

That aged sire, though being wise and staid,
Yet would not trust in his own stay so well,

To carry such a faire and goodly maid
To sojourn with him in his little cell,
Twere perill great (thus to himselfe he said)
That fire and straw should nigh together dwell,
Wherefore he means to Province her to carie,
And there to place her in a monestarie.

76

But as he thitherward with Isbell went,
And by the way devoutly did her teach,
All things unto religion pertinent,
And of the same most learnedly did preach:
Behold a Pagan fierce with foule intent,
This purpose and their journey doth impeach,
As I shall shew more largely afterward,
Now back I must return to Mandricard.

77

Who having ended that same cruell fight,
In which the worthiest Prince alive was slaine,
Soon after by a shady bank did light,
And turnd his horse a grazing on the plaine,
Dame Doralice in whom he took delight,

Alone with him in that place did remaine,
When looking sodainly by chance aside,
An armed knight come toward them she spide.

78

She guest, but yet she knew not by the view,
Who it might be, untill she spid her page
That came with him, then certainly she knew
Twas Rodomont, full of revenge and rage,
Wherefore unto her knight she nearer drew,
And said (my Lord) mine honour I dare gage,
That yon is Rodomont mine ancient lover,
Who thinks by fight from you me to recover.

79

Look how the Falcon in the aire doth mount,
When she espies a Bittor or a Hern,
So when this Prince espied Rodomount,
And by his hast his fury did discern,
Like one that made of conquest full account,
He starteth up with visage grim and stern:
Straight armd and horsd he is, his foe to meet,
In hand the reines, in styrups are his feet.

80

When as the tone the tother came so neare,
As each might hearken what the tother said,
Fierce Rodomont spake lowd as he might heare,
With threatning gesture both of hand and head:
And said, be sure Ile make thee buy it deare,
That with a short vaine pleasure hast been led,
To do to one so foule and open wrong,
That can and will it wreak on thee ere long.

81

The Tartar Prince that for him little card,
Made answer thus, in vaine you me do threat:
Poore boyes with words, or women may be scard,
Not I that fight as willingly as eat:
Prove when you please, I am not unprepard,
At any time for any warlike feat,
On horse, on foot, in field, or in the list,
I shall be ready; try me when you list.

82

Thus words bred wrath, and wrath engendred blowes,
And blowes increasd their sharp avenging will,

Evn as the wind that first but calmly blowes,
But after more and more increasing still,
At last it trees and houses overthrowes,
And seas and lands with tempest it doth fill:
So cruell grew the fight them two between,
Whose match might hardly in the world be seen.

83

Their hearts were stout, so were their bodies strong,
Desire to win in both alike was great,
One doth maintaine, tother would venge his wrong,
And love their fury equally doth whet,
In equall peise the fight endured long,
Nor each of tother any gaine could get,
But each of them so firmly kept his ground,
As if each inch thereof had cost a pound.

84

Among an hundred blowes the Tartar smit,
Of which small hurt to Rodomont did rise,
Yet one at last so heavily did hit
Upon his helmet, over both his eyes;
His senses all were so amazd with it,

He thought he saw more starres then are in skies,
And almost down he was evn in her sight,
For whom he first began this cruell fight.

85

But as a strong and justly temperd bow
Of Pymount steel, the more you do it bend,
Upon recoile doth give the bigger blow,
And doth with greater force the quarrell send,
Evn so the Sarzan king that stoopd so low,
As highly to revenge it doth intend,
And to acquit himselfe of this disgrace,
He striketh at the Tartar Princes face.

86

So fierce he strake in this so furious mood,
An inch or little more above his sight,
That save those armes of Hector was so good,
No doubt that blow had finishd all the fight,
But so astond therewith the Tartar stood,
He could not tell if it were noon or night:
And while in this amazement he abode,
The tother ceaseth not to lay on load.

87

The Tartars horse that saw the glittering blade,
That Rodomont about his head so tost,
Did start aside, and with a turn he made,
Rescud his master, sore to his own cost:
Down with the blow fals this unluckie jade,
And with his starting he his life hath lost:
To ward his head he wanted Hectors shield,
And therefore dead he tumbleth on the field.

88

Now came his master to himselfe againe,
Inflamd with greater anger then before,
To see his horse so pitifully slaine,
But Rodomont forbearcs him neer the more.
But spurrs on him, and thinks with fury maine,
To beare him down, but he so strongly bore
The push, and thrust withall Frontino back,
He made his master glad to leave his back.

89

Thus now with minds more aliend from all peace,
In eager sort the combat is renewd,

To strike, to thrust each other doth not cease,
In hope with bloud their swords to have embrewd,
Fell rancor, wrath and pride do still increase,
And death of one or both must have ensewd,
Ere either of them would from thence have started,
Had not a certaine messenger them parted.

90

One that had traveld all about the cost,
To seek them out, to ask their help and aid
To raise the siege, that by the Christen host,
Unto the camp of Agramant was laid:
Yet though he came in peace, and eke in post,
To speak to them at first he was affraid,
And though his office were sufficient warrant,
Yet to themselves he dares not do his arrant.

91

But seeing Doralice, to her he told,
How Agramant, Marsilie, Stordylan,
And others more, like men pent up in hold,
Were in great danger to be kild or tane,
Wherefore he wisheth her for to unfold

Thus much to them, that sought each others bane:
And to perswade them to so good accord,
As they might go to help their soveraigne Lord.

92

She that a woman was of passing sprite,
And knew that neither of them would offend her,
Stept them between, and chargd them stay the fight,
As they their honour and her love did tender,
And help their king that is in wofull plight,
And end this fray begun of cause so slender,
At least defer so long to trie this quarrell,
Till Agramant their king were out of perill.

93

When she thus much to them declared had,
Then doth the messenger declare the rest,
And other strong perswasions he doth add,
And doth expound to them their kings request,
Alledging that their absence made him sad,
That but they help, the camp would be distrest,
And that if they to rescue him neglected,
A present ruine were to be expected.

94

With his report and with her strong perswasion,
The hardy knights the combat do defer,
Till Agramant be freed from this invasion,
And all the Christen forces moved are,
Thus of this friendly truce she is occasion,
That first was causer of their deadly war,
To her they bind themselves by solemne oth,
That untill then they will be quiet both.

95

There Discord was and Pride, and what they may,
They do this league to interrupt and break,
But at that time Love bare so great a sway,
That to withstand him, they were both too weak:
In vaine it was to argue and gainsay,
When once dame Doralice the word did speak,
By her perswasion firmly they agreed,
Like friends upon their journey to proceed.

96

One onely want there was, that let them sore,
Which was that Mandricardos horse was dead,

But lo evn then came thither Brygliadore,
That since his masters madnesse there had fed,
Full glad the Prince of Tartar was therefore,
Of such a horse so quickly to be sped:
But least my tale with tediousnesse molest you,
I wish you lay aside the book, and rest you.

ARGUMENT

THE TWENTYFIFT BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Rogero saveth (to his fame and glory)
His spouses brother, that had els been dead:
Who doth recount to him the wofull storie,
That so great danger unto him had bred:
His cousin cheares them, though himselfe were sorie,
Next morne they arme them all from foot to head,
Good Malagige and Vivian to relieve,
Whose thraldome did their kinsmen greatly grieve.

TWENTY FIFT BOOKE

1

The strife is great that growes in youthfull mind,
When honour falls at variance with affection,
Nor could it yet be known or well definde,
Which passion keeps the tother in subjection,
For both allure, both do our judgements blind,
And both corrupt the heart with strong infection:
Yet lo sometimes these hurts procure our weal,
Evn as one poyson doth another heale.

2

For here you see these princes that of late,
Strave fiercely tone the tother to subdue,
Agreed to respit this their sharp debate,
And to repaire unto the Turkish crew,
To succour Agramants distressed state,
To whom they ought in duty to be true,
And yet herein love claimeth halfe the praise,
For she commanded them to go their waies.

3

And on they went without more disagreeing,
Faire Doralice with these her servants twaine,
The tone in suit, one in possession being,
And yet as then in concord they remaine:
At last they came unto a place, where seeing
Foure knights themselves did solace on a plaine,
(Of which two were unarmd, two armour bare)
With them a Lady was of beauty rare.

4

With these a while they staid, but who these were,
And what they did, and whither then they went,
A little while to tell I do forbear,
For to Rogero now my tale is meant,
Who would no more the shield enchanted beare,
But in the well did drown it, with intent
That men might know his valiant deeds of armes,
Were done by force of vertue, not of charmes.

5

He scant had gone a mile or little more,
From this same well, but that he met a post

From Agramant, of which there went good store,
The Captaines to recall unto the host,
He told him how the king (besieged sore,
And like [if succour come not] to be lost)
Commanded him as his true Lord and Liege,
To come without delay to raise the siege.

6

Much was Rogero with the message movd,
And diverse passions strave within his mind,
He faine would have his Princes siege removd,
Yet loth he was to leave his love behind;
But be his doing praised or reprovd,
He was so to the present cause inclind,
First with his guide he goes to stay the slaughter,
Of him that had deflowrd Marsilios daughter.

7

They came unto the place an houre ere night,
Where this same execution should be done,
A castle that belongd to Charles of right,
But late the Spanish king the same had wonne,
And kept it in the midst of France by might,

By countnance of the great Trajanos sonne:
Roger commeth in, and none denid him,
Because they knew the damsell that did guide him.

8

There first he saw prepard a flaming fire,
In which they meant to burne the wofull youth,
He thought so small a sinne did not require
Such punishment, no more it doth in truth:
But when he markt his face and his attire,
And heard and saw the manner of his ruth,
Now sure I know (quoth he) I am not I,
Or this is Bradamant that here should die.

9

Tis certaine she, I see which way it went,
Belike while I at yonder castle staid,
She hither came afore me, with intent
To bring unto the prisner here some aid,
For which (poore soule) her self should now be shent,
Yet I am glad and very well apaid,
That I am hither come in so good season,
To save her that should die against all reason.

10

And even with that, most furiously he flies
With naked sword upon the gazing rout,
Who ever standeth in his way he dies,
With so great force he hurles his blade about:
Then straight the prisners fetters he unties,
Nor was there one so hardie or so stout,
That once durst make resistance or forbid it,
No not so much as aske him why he did it.

11

As fearfull fowle that in the sunshine bright,
Sit pruning of themselves upon a banke,
When as a Faulcon doth among them light,
Flie without care of order or of ranke:
So when these caitives saw this noble Knight,
Forthwith they from his manly presence shranke,
So did their fearfull hearts and courage faile them,
When as they felt Rogero once assaile them.

12

No marvell tho, for why Rogeros force
Was not as mens that now borne later are,

The strength of Lion, Beare, or Bull, or Horse,
Were nothing, if with his they do compare,
And chiefe sith now he doth himselfe inforce,
To do as much as he or can or dare,
Hereby from danger thinking to recover,
Her unto whom he was professed lover.

13

Now when the youth from danger quite was freed,
And all that sought his death away were fled,
He thanks the author of this worthy deed,
And thanketh her that had him thither led
Then, when of helpe he stood in greatest need,
When otherwise he doubtlesse had bin dead,
And executed like a malefactor,
Agnizing him his Lord and benefactor.

14

And furthermore he doth Rogero pray,
To let him understand his name and nation;
Rogero musing to himselfe doth say,
What meaneth this so strange congratulation?
In face, in shape, in gesture, in array,

This is my love, I see no alteration,
Yet strange it is her voice should be so changed,
More strange that she from me is so estranged.

15

It doubtlesse is not she, for if it were,
Could she within three houres my name forget?
Wherefore to ten his name he doth forbear,
Untill he may more perfect notice get:
And thus he said, I have, I know not where,
Seene you ere this, and I bethinke me yet
Where it might be, for sure I know your face,
Though now I have fogot the time and place.

16

Most noble sir (said tother) I agree,
You may have seene me, though I know not when,
I rather judge it should my sister be,
That fights and carries armes as well as men:
My mother at one birth bare her and me,
And we be both so like, that now and then
Our servants, yea our father and our mother

Have tane us in exchange the tone for tother.

17

Chiefly since in her head she had a wound,
For which she was constrained to cut her haire,
Twere long the circumstances to expound,
How she was hurt and heald, by whom and where,
Since that betweene us difference none is found,
Save sex and names that from our birth we beare,
She Bradamant, I Richardet am cald,
She sister, and I brother to Renald.

18

And further if you please, I shall you tell,
As we do onward on our journey go,
A strange mishap that unto me befell,
By being tane for her not long ago;
A hap that at the first I liked well,
But after wrought my danger great and wo:
Yes with good will, Rogero said, and than
Yong Richardetto thus his tale began.

19

It happend (as in part I toucht before)
My valiant sister passing through a wood,
Was hurt with certaine Sarazins so sore,
As had her cost almost her vitall blood,
Which wound to cure, her tresses short she wore,
For so as then her surgeon thought it good;
The wound once curd, for which her head was pold
Abroade to go againe she waxed bold.

20

And having traveld till the heate of day,
All clad in armor, as her manner was,
At noone she tooke occasion to make stay,
Fast by a watrie streame as cleare as glasse,
And putting off her helmet, downe she lay,
Upon a pleasant banke well clothd with grasse,
And sleepe at last her heavie eyes did close,
The place inviting her to take repose.

21

Now while she did there fast asleepe remaine,
There happend to arrive unto that place,

The daughter of Marsilio King of Spaine,
That there by chance was hunting in the chase,
And seeing signes of manhood very plaine,
With that her sweet and amiable face,
As horse, and sword, and target all of steele,
A little amorous passion she doth feele.

22

And taking then my sister for a man,
As by all circumstances well she might,
She offers her all courtsie that she can,
And askt her if in hunting she delight;
And then to chuse a standing they began,
And finding one far off from others sight,
She opened more plainly that affection,
That had her heart already in subjection.

23

And save her maiden modestie forbad,
She would the same in words have plainly told,
Howbit with sighs, with ruffull looks and sad,
And silent signes she doth her griefe unfold:
And when she thus long time discoursed had,

Surprisd with hope, she could no longer hold,
But steps unto her, and gives her such a kisse,
As that alone shewes what her meaning is.

24

My sister at the first doth thinke it strange,
That such a sute should unto her be made,
And finding she had tane her in exchange,
She thinks it best (before she further wade,
Or let the tothers humor further range)
Tell troth, for thus she doth her selfe perswade,
Tis better to be knowne a Ladie gentle,
Then to be deemd a base man and ungentle.

25

For what could be more cullenlike or base?
Or fitter for a man were made of straw,
Then standing in a faire yong Ladies grace,
To shew himselfe a cuckow or a daw,
And leese occasion both of time and place?
My sister therefore that this ill foresaw,
And knew she wanted that, that her should aid,
Told her by circumstance she was a maid.

26

And thus she told her how the worthy fame,
Hippolita and stout Camilla wonne,
In deeds of armes, movd her her mind to frame,
To do the like while others sowd and sponne:
And that she thought it to her sex no shame,
To do as women of such worth had done;
She told her this, in hope this would appease her,
But this alas did so much more disease her.

27

For why the fancie was so firmly fixt,
That in her mind she had before conceived,
By meanes of speech had passed them betwixt,
That sore it grievd her to be thus deceived,
Before, her feare with some good hope was mixt,
But now evn hope it selfe was her bereaved:
And this is one extremest point of grieffe,
Still to despaire and hope for no reliefe.

28

He that had heard her wofull plaint and mone,
Must needs have greatly at the same bin grievd,

Ah wo is me (she said) that I alone
Should live in such despaire to be relieved:
In passed times I thinke there hath bene none,
In time to come it will not be beleaved,
That love should make by such a strong infection,
One woman beare another such affection.

29

O Cupid, if thou didst my state envie,
And that thou hadst a mind me to torment,
To send such paines as others more do trie,
At least me thinke thou shouldst have bin content:
Shall in so many ages none but I,
Yeeld of so uncouth love such president?
The female with the female doth not wish
To couple, nor in beast, nor foule, nor fish.

30

I sole am found in earth, aire, sea, or fire,
In whom so strange a wonder thou hast done,
On me thou shewst the power of thine ire,
And what a mighty conquest thou hast wonne.
The wife of Nynus had a strange desire,

To joyne in copulation with her sonne;
Faire Myrrba by her sire was made a mother,
And made Adonis both her sonne and brother.

31

Pasyphae, except it be a tale,
Was buld, inclosed in a wooden cow;
Yet in all these the female sought the male,
But nature doth my fancie disallow;
No Dedalus could remedy my bale,
Nor art can frame, nor sense imagine how,
This knot dame nature hath so firmly knit,
It cannot be dissolv'd by any wit.

32

This Fiordispina faire (so was her name)
In piteous sort her wofull state doth waile,
My sister unto her, her speech doth frame,
As chiefly to her comfort might availe:
And wisht her this unbridled will to tame,
Sith nature could not suffer it prevaile,
And that she would let that desire be daunted,
Which possibly by no meanes could be graunted.

33

All this but all in vaine my sister said,
To seeke that fancie from her mind to wrest,
She that for comfort card not, but for aid,
Doth more and more her selfe vex and molest:
Now night grew on as they together staid,
What time all creatures seeke repose and rest,
The Ladie prayes my sister for her sake,
A lodging at her castle then to take.

34

To this request doth Bradamant assent,
And so together to that place they came,
Where I (but that you did my harme prevent)
Should have bene cast into the burning flame:
She that all kindnesse to my sister ment,
By many outward courtesies shewd the same:
And caused her to weare a womans weed,
That men might know that she was one indeed.

35

For why the semblance false she saw before,
Of manly shape to her was so pernicious,

She would now see her in those weeds no more,
The rather eke lest folke should be suspicious,
(If she had bene as shewd the weed she wore)
Lest that they two did live together vicious:
She further was by physick rules assured,
That contraries by contraries are cured.

36

But nought could salve that sore, nor swage her woes,
That night they lay together in one bed,
But sundry and unlike was their repose,
One quiet slept, the tothers troubled hed
Still waking, or if she her eyes but close,
That little sleepe strange dreames and fancies bred:
She thought the gods and heavn would so assist her,
Into a better sex to change my sister.

37

As men tormented with a burning fever,
Do dreame with drinke they swage their grievous thirst,
But when they wake, they feele their thirst persever,
And to be greater then it was at first;
So she whose thoughts from love, sleepe could not sever,

Did dreame of that, for which she wake did thirst,
But waking felt and found it as before,
Her hope still lesse, and her desire still more.

38

How fervently did she to Macon pray?
What vowes did she unto her prayre annex?
If so by mighty miracle he may,
Her bedfellow turne to a better sex?
Now neare approcht the dawning of the day,
When she in vaine her selfe doth grieve and vex:
And so much more her passion grew the stronger,
Because my sister now would stay no longer.

39

When Fiordispina saw she would be gone,
She caused a gallant gennet to be brought,
All richly barbd, and furniture thereon,
Which with her owne hand partly she had wrought,
This frankly she bestoweth her upon,
My sister takes it kindly, as she ought,
And takes her leave, and on her way doth get,
And home she came that night ere Sunne was set.

40

We that long time of her had heard no tiding,
I meane her mother, brothers, and her kin,
Do welcome her, and aske of her abiding,
Why she so long from us had absent bin?
Who straight from us the troth of nothing hiding,
Doth tell us how great danger she was in;
And opned from the ending to beginning,
The course of all her leeing and her winning.

41

As namely first how hardly she had sped,
And in a conflict had receivd a wound,
For which she was constrained to pole her head,
Before her health she could recover sound;
She told how fortune afterwards her led,
Where that faire huntresse had her sleeping found;
She told us how the Ladie did her woo,
And all the circumstance that longd thereto.

42

To heare this story I was passing glad,
For why at Saragoza I had seene

This Fiordispina, and some knowledge had
Of her likewise when she in France had beene;
And likt her well, yet was I not so mad,
In vaine to set my love on such a Queene:
But now againe I gave that fancie scope,
When by this tale I had conceavd some hope.

43

Love was my counsellor that me advised,
My meaning secret I to none impart,
This was the stratageme that we devised,
This was the plot, the cunning, and the art,
To go in Bradamantas clothes disguised,
And for a while to play the womans part:
I knew my face my sisters so resembling,
Would be the better helpe for my dissembling.

44

The day ensuing ere it yet was light,
I tooke my way, my love and fancie guiding,
I there arrivd an houre before twas night,
Such hap I had, such hast I made in riding:
No sooner came I in the servants sight,

But well was he of me could carry tiding:
They looke (as Princes oft to give do use)
Some recompence for bringing so good newes.

45

Straight out she came, and met me halfe the way,
And tooke me fast about the necke and kist me,
And told me how in this my little stay,
In anguish great and sorrow she had mist me,
Then she did cause me alter mine array,
In which with her owne hands she doth assist me;
A cawl of gold she set upon my crowne,
And put on me a rich and stately gowne.

46

And for my part to helpe the matter,I
Did take great heed to all I did or said,
With sober cast I carrid still mine eye,
And bare my hands before me like a maid;
My voice did serve me worst, but yet thereby
Such heed I usd, my sex was not bewraid:
And thus arrayd, my Princesse led me with her,
Where many Knights and Ladies were together.

47

My looke and clothes did all them so beguile,
They all had thought I had a woman beene,
And honour such was done to me that while,
As if I were a Dutchesse or a Queene:
And (that which made me oftentime to smile)
Some youths there were of yeers & judgement green
That cast upon me many a wanton looke,
My sex and quality they so mistooke.

48

At last came meate, both store of flesh and fish,
What kinds of both, to tell I overslip,
I maidenly tast here and there a dish,
And in the wine I scant do wet my lip,
The time seemd long that staid my wanton wish,
And still I doubted taking in some trip:
When bed time came, she told me I must be
Her bedfellow, the which well pleased me.

49

Now when the maids and pages all were gone,
One onely lampe upon the cubbard burning,

And all coasts cleare, thus I began anon:
Faire dame I thinke you muse of my returning,
And cause you have indeed to muse thereon,
For yesterday when I did leave you mourning,
I thinke both you and I did thinke as then,
We should not meet againe till God knowes when.

50

First let me tell you why from you I went,
Then why I come, hereafter I shall show:
Deare Ladie (thus it was) I did lament
Your fruitlesse love on me was placed so,
And though I could have ay bene well content,
To waite on you, and never part you fro,
Yet since my presence did but make you languish,
I thought mine absence minish would your anguish.

51

But riding on my way, I somewhat straid,
As fortune and adventure did me guide,
And lo I heard a voice that cride for aid,
Within a thicket by the river side:
A Satyr taken had a naked maid,

And with a twisted cord her hands had tide,
And in his usage seemed so to threate her,
As if that he would kill her straight, and eate her.

52

I rusht to them with naked sword in hand,
And death to him, and freedome I did give her,
She diving under water out of hand,
Unrecompent thou shalt not me deliver,
Quoth she, for I will have you understand,
I am a Nymph that dwell here in this river;
And for this courtesie I do much regard you,
And am well able richly to reward you.

53

Aske of me what you list, and I will give it,
For I upon the elements have powre;
I can with charms bring down the Moon, beleeve it,
I can swage stormes, and make faire weather lowre,
What is so hard but my skill can atchieve it?
To drayne the sea, or build in aire a towre?
Yea evn with simple words (and if I will)
I can inforce and make the Sunne stand still.

54

When as the Nymph had made me this great offer,
(Lo Ladie what great love to you I bare)
I neither askt with gold to fill my coffer,
Nor victory, of which some greedy are,
This favour onely I demaunded of her,
To make me able to asswage your care:
Nor namd I any meanes for feare of erring,
The onely way and meanes to her referring.

55

No sooner this request to her I told,
But in the christall streame againe she dived,
And sprinkled me with drops of water cold,
Which to my skinne no sooner were arrived,
But I was changd from that I was of old,
And of my former state I was deprived;
I felt, I saw, yet scant beleieve I can,
That of a woman I was made a man.

56

And saving that evn now I am so nie you,
As you may quickly prove my tale not fained,

Else you might thinke I said it but to trie you;
Now lo, since I for you this wish obtained,
Aske what you please, I nothing shall denie you,
Enjoy that which my love for you hath gained:
When I had pleaded thus, and she had heard it,
On sight of evidence she gave her vardit.

57

As one whose state is overwhelmd with debt,
By lending or by spending out of measure,
That looks ech houre when prouling shreevs will fret
Himselfe to ward, and of his goods make seasure,
If some unlookt for gaine he hap to get,
By some mans death, or by some trovie treasure,
Is so surprisd with joy, he scant doth know,
If true it be, or if he dreamed so.

58

So she that now did see, and feele, and touch,
That which she long had longed for in vaine,
It overfild her mind with joy so much,
It seemed in a trance she did remaine;
Therein her incredulity was such,

As to resolve her I did take much paine:
If these be dreames (quoth she) for these dreams sake
I ever wish to dreame and never wake.

59

Not sound of drum, of trumpet, or of phife,
Nor warlike instrument of any sort,
Did sound alarum to our friendly strife,
But dovelike billing followd lovely sport,
This battell hazards neither limbe nor life,
Without a ladder I did scale the fort;
And stoutly plant my standard on the wall,
And under me I made my fo to fall.

60

If that same bed were full the night before,
Of teares, of plaints, of anguish and annoyes,
No doubt but now it had in as great store,
Both smilings, sports, and solaces and joyes:
No luy doth embrace the pillar more,
Then she did me, nor Apes can find more toyes,
Then we yong fooles did find to make us merie,
Till joy it selfe of joy did make us wearie.

61

The thing twixt us did secret long remaine,
And certaine months this pleasure did endure,
Till some had found, and told it to my paine,
As you well know that did my life assure:
Yet I confesse great grieffe I still sustaine,
Not knowing how her safetie to procure.
This Richardetto to Rogero told,
And all the while their journey on they hold.

62

By that time Richardettos tale was done,
They gan up to a little hill to mount,
And when an houre and more was set the Sunne,
They came unto the castle Agrismount,
Kept then by Aldiger the bastard sonne
Of Bovo, of the house of Clarimount,
A wise and sober man and of good qualitie,
And bountifull in keeping hospitalitie.

63

And after he had bid them welcome both,
One as his kinsman, tother as his friend,

I heare ill newes (quoth he) that I am loth
To tell to you, lest it should you offend:
But thus it is, to let you know the troth,
I heare that Bertolage doth sure intend
To buy the prisners that Ferraw hath tane,
As namely Malagige and Viviane.

64

Lanfusa taketh upon her to sell them,
And as I heare to morrow is the day,
Unto your brothers I sent one to tell them,
But they be absent hence so farre away,
As ere they come, from hence they may expell them,
I am too weake to force, too poore to pay,
My love is great, to wish all good unto them,
But powre so small, as good I can none do them.

65

Young Richardetto much mislikt the newes,
So did Rogero for the tothers sake,
And when he saw they both were in a muse,
Nor knew what counsell, or what course to take,
No feare (quoth he) let me this matter use,

On me this enterprise Ile undertake,
So I shall handle this affaire so handsome,
This sword alone shall pay your kinsmens ransome.

66

This spake Rogero his companions chearing,
But notwithstanding Aldiger, his host,
Gave to those loftie promises such hearing,
As if there were great boast and little rost:
Which unto Richardetto plaine appearing,
Who knew his vallew, greater then his bost:
Good cosen if you knew him well that sed it,
You would said he unto his word give credit.

67

Then Aldiger on better information,
Gave eare and credit to his noble guest,
And made him cheare to sute his reputation,
And plast him at the boord above the rest:
And supper done, he was in seemely fashion,
In chamber lodgd, of all the house the best,
The master of the house in nothing scant,
His worthy guest will suffer nothing want.

68

Now was the time when all men soundest sleepe,
Rogero onely cannot sleepe a winke,
For cares and thoughts that him do waking keepe,
And in his troubled braine profoundly sinke;
The siege of Agramant doth pierce him deepe,
And what dishonor men of him may thinke,
And deeme his heart but faint, his faith but fickle,
To leave his Soveraigne in so wofull pickle.

69

Had he revolted at some other time,
Men might have thought that true religion movd him,
None could have it imputed as a crime,
Nor no man probably could have reprovd him:
Now, when his masters fortune did decline,
And when to aid him chiefest it behoovd him,
Feare, men will thinke, his change procured chiefe,
Nor just remorse, nor zeale of true believe.

70

This troubled him, and little lesse then this,
It troubled him, to thinke of his deare hart,

Whom now by evill fortune he doth misse,
Nor cannot once salute ere he depart;
Wherefore to write to her his purpose is,
And so to her at large his mind impart,
Both that of him she may have certaine newes,
As that he may his sodaine going scuse.

71

The chamberlaines both prudent and discreet,
Upon Rogero quicke attendance gave,
Providing him of needfull things and meet,
Inke, paper, light, and what he else would crave:
Then (as the manner is) he doth her greet,
Upon the front, as letters use to have;
Thus after very hartly commendations,
Or some such phrase of friendly salutations.

72

Then tels he her how that the Turkish Prince,
Had for his ayd, by speciall message sent,
Who is besiegd, and hath bene long time since;
And how to rescue him is his intent:
Least men of cowardise might him convince,

That he away in time of danger went;
And now would leave his lawfull Lord and liege,
Then when his enemies did him besiege.

73

He prayeth her to weigh, how foule a deed,
How full it were of infamy and shame,
To yeeld his Prince no aid in such a need,
That sent to him of purpose for the same:
He wisht her for her owne sake to take heed,
That no such staine might spot her spouses name,
That being she, so true and so sincere,
She should no blemish in her husband beare.

74

He further doth his zeale to her protest,
As erst he had in word so now in writing,
And swears that when his Prince were undistrest,
The siege quite raisd, by concord or by fighting,
That foolish people might not make a jest,
To his reproch, that common speech reciting,
Roger loves to take the surer side,
And turnes his sailes, as fortune turnes her tide.

75

I shall (he writes) when that time doth expire,
Which in a month I hope will be effected,
Finde some occasion from them to retire,
And of no breach of honour be suspected.
Then shall I full accomplish your desire,
And do, as I by you shall be directed:
This onely for my honour I demand thee,
And after this thou ever shalt command mee.

76

These things, and like to these Rogero wrate,
As then by hap came in his troubled hed,
To certifie his love of his estate,
And of the cause that his departure bred:
By that time he had done, it was full late,
And then againe he got him to his bed,
And closd his eyes, when he had closd the letter,
And after tooke his ease a great deale better.

77

Next day they all arose at breake of day,
With minde to go to set their kinsmen free,

And though Rogero earnestly did pray,
That none might take that enterprise but he,
Yet both the other stifly said him nay,
And thereunto by no meanes would agree,
Unto the place assignd they ride together,
And by the time appointed they came thither.

78

The place they came to was a goodly plaine,
In which no tree nor bush was to be seene,
Here Bertolage did point to take them twaine,
As were agreed Lanfuse and him betweene,
But first they met, while here they did remaine,
One that a Phenix bare in field all greene,
With armor faire embost, and guilt with gold,
As in the booke that follows shall be told.

ARGUMENT

THE TWENTYSIXT BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

The learned Malagige strange riddles shoves,
To his companions out of Merlins well:
With Mandricard the Sarzan thither goes,
And each tooke quarrels new, as there befell:
For Discord seed of strife among them sowes,
But Doralices horse, by fiend of hell
Affrighted, doth his mistres beare away,
Which causd the Pagans both breake off the fray.

TWENTY SIXT BOOKE

1

Right worthy dames there were in times of old,
That more esteemd of vertue then of wealth,
But now our iron age is all for gold,
For bad, and worse, in sicknes and in health,
But she that will that elder custome hold,
And leave this new, deserves where ere she dwelth,
Here in this life to have a happie choice,
And in the next for ever to rejoyce,

2

Such was the noble Bradamantas mind,
Who sought not after wealth and rich ability,
Nor state, nor pompe, that many women blind,
But after vertue pure, the true nobility:
And well deserved he to find her kind,
That shewd in him such proofs of high gentility,
And tooke upon him actions for her sake,
Which time to come for miracles may take.

3

Rogero (as before I did recite)
With Aldiger and Richardetto came,
To rescue those two prisners (if they might)
That should be sold with great reproch and shame.
I told you how they met a gallant Knight,
Whose shield had painted that same bird of fame,
That still renewes it selfe, and never dies,
And onely one, in all the world there flies.

4

Now when this Knight was of these three aware,
That stood like men new plast in battell ray,
He comes to them, and seeing what they are,
Will there (quoth he) some one of you assay,
If so his value can with mine compare,
With staffe, with sword, or any other way?
If any will, come then, and let us trie it,
If none, then say so quickly, and denie it.

5

Sir answerd Aldiger, I were content,
To trie my selfe with you, a bout or two,

But we three came not here for this intent;
We come, a greater feate then this to do,
And at this time, a little time mispent,
May hinder us, and little pleasure you,
We three intend (if God do say Amen)
To take two prisners from sixe hundred men.

6

Sure (said that other) if you mind indeed,
So great an enterprise to take in hand,
No doubt it doth of valiant mind proceed,
And pittie twere, your purpose to withstand:
I rather shall assist you in this deed,
If you vouchsafe to make me of your band,
And by my service I will quickly shoe,
Good prooffe if I deserve such grace or no.

7

Perhap that some would know, and if they may,
What valiant Knight this was that did intreat,
To take Rogeros part in such a fray,
Whereas the danger could not be but great.
Now she, not he, hereafter I must say,

Marfisa was, of whom I did repeat,
How she both fought, and foyld a little since,
And with Gabrina, chargd the Scottish Prince.

8

Rogero stout, and they of Clarimount,
Of her and of her offer well esteemed,
She joynd with them, they making full account
That she had bene of that same sex she seemed.
Straight ready on their horses backes they mount,
They see a loose a cornet (as they deemed)
Of horse, and mingled some on foote together,
And all of them directly tending thether.

9

Their march, their ensignes, penons, and their flags,
Did cause for Moores they knowne were & descride,
Amid this crew, upon two little nags
The prisners rode with hands behind them tide,
That must be changd for certaine golden bags,
That Bertolage had promist to provide;
Come (saith Marfisa) to the other three,
Now let the feast begin, and follow me.

10

Soft (quoth Rogero) there be wanting some
Of those that to the banquet must be bidden,
And to begin afore the guest be come,
In reason and good manners is forbidden;
By this, the tother crew had overcome
The hill, that late before from them were hidden,
These were the traitrous wretches of Magaunse,
And now was ready to begin the daunce.

11

Maganza men of one side, merchant like,
Brought laden moyles with gold and costly ware,
The Moors their prisners brought with sword & pike,
Environd round about with heed and care;
The Captains meet with mind a match to strike,
The prisners present at the bargaine are,
And now are bought and sold (for ought they know)
To Bertolage their old and mortall foe.

12

Good Aldiger and noble Ammons sonne,
Could hold no longer seeing Bertolage,

But both together at him they do runne;
With hearts all set on fierce revenge and rage,
His force nor fate their fury could not shunne,
Their speares his armor and his brest did gage,
Downe falls the wretch, his wealth him cannot save,
Such end I wish all wicked wretches have.

13

Marfisa and Rogero at this signe,
Set out without expecting trumpets blast,
And with two staves of straight well seasond Pine,
Twise twenty men unto the ground they cast;
The Captaine of the Moores doth much repine,
They of Maganza murmured as fast:
For each side deemed, as they might in reason,
That this had happend by the tothers treason.

14

Wherefore each side with wrath and fury kindled,
Upbraiding tone the tother with untruth,
With swords and bils, pel mel together mingled,
Do fight, and then a bloody fray ensuth,
The Moorish Duke was by Rogero singled,

A man evn then in prime and strength of youth,
But youth, nor strength, nor armour could not save him,
From such a blow as good Rogero gave him.

15

Marfisa doth as much on tother side,
And in such sort besturd her with her blade,
That looke which way soever she did ride,
An open lane for her the people made;
If any were so stout the brunt to bide,
Yet soone they found their forces overlaid;
Through coats of proof they provd her sword would enter,
She sent their soules below the middle center.

16

If you have seen the hony making Bees
To leave their hives, and going out in swarmes,
When as their kings and masters disagrees,
And they make camps in thaire like men at armes,
Straight in among them all the Swallow flees,
And eates and beates them all unto their harmes:
So thinke Rogero and Marfisa then,
Did deale among these bands of armed men.

17

Now Aldiger and Richardet no lesse,
Upon Maganza merchants lay on lode,
Both free to set their kinsmen from distresse,
And for they hated them like snake or tode,
They that the cause nor quarrell could not guesse,
And saw their Captaine dead, made short abode:
Their plate, their coine and treasure all they yeeld,
And were the first that faintly left the field.

18

So flie from Lions silly heards of Goates,
That have devourd and spoild them at their list,
And torne their sides, their hanches and their throtes,
Yet none of them their fellowes dare assist:
So fled these men, and cast away their coates,
And weapons all, and durst no more resist:
Nor marvell if these two had Lions harts,
That ready find such two to take their parts.

19

Whose acts at large to tell I do refraine,
At which that age did not a little wonder,

And now to tell them, men would thinke I faine,
Yea though my words their actions far were under;
For at one blow oft horse and man was slaine,
From head to foote whole bodies clovn in sunder,
And either standing on their reputation,
Bred for their foes a costly emulation.

20

Still tone of them markt tothers valiant deed,
And each of tother fell in admiration,
She deemes him Mars, or one of Mars his seed,
And farre above all humane generation:
And save he was deceived in her weed,
He would have givn her equall commendation,
And likned her, as well he liken might,
Unto Bellona for her valiant fight.

21

Thus of two bands these foure the battell wonne,
And all their stuffe and carriages they got,
The prisners loosd, their bands were all undone,
Their foes all foild, such is their happie lot:
The man was well whose horse could swiftest runne,

Small count they make of amble or of trot:
The tone side leave their gold on asses loden,
The tother of their captives are forboden.

22

The noble vanquishers do seize the pray,
Which was both rich and sumptuous to behold,
Of Flanders worke an hanging rich and gay,
(To hang a stately roome) of silke and gold;
They also found rich clothing and array,
That should have bene unto Lanfusa sold,
And namely mong the rest a gallant gowne,
Embroderd round with cost of many a crowne.

23

They further found good vittels and good store,
Wine bottels coole and fresh, and good of tast,
With which (not having eate that day before)
They do agree to baite and breake their fast,
And evry one prepares himselfe therefore,
And to that end their curats they unlast:
Now when Marfisa had put off her beaver,
To be a woman each one doth perceave her.

24

Her golden haire trust up with carelesse art,
Her forehead faire, and full of stately grace,
Her eye, her lip, and evry other part,
So suting to her comely shape and face,
As bred evn then in each beholders hart,
A revrend love and wonder in like case;
And straight they askt her name, the which she told them,
And with as great delight she doth behold them.

25

But she her selfe farre more then all the rest,
Rogeros shape and person doth regard,
His vallew great, his unappalled brest,
Before the others all she much prefard,
To him alone her speeches she adress,
Of him alone she would her speech were hard:
Thus she in him, and he delighted in her,
The while the other had preparad their dinner.

26

The place they dind in was a pleasant cave,
And one of foure that famous Merlin wrought,

Where he in milke white marble did ingrave
Strange stories, which things future strangely taught,
The very images seemd life to have;
And saying they were dumb, you wold have thought
Both by their lookes and by their lively features,
That they had movd, and had bene living creatures.

27

From out a desert wood an ugly beast
There seemd to come, whose shape was thus defined
An asses eares, a wolfe in head and brest,
A carkas all with pinching famine pined,
A Lions grizly jaw, but all the rest
To foxlike shape did seeme to be inclined:
In England, France, in Italy and Spaine,
Yea all the world this monster seemd to raigne.

28

Where ere this cruell monster set his foote,
He kild and spoild of evry sort and state,
No height of birth or state with him did boote,
He conquerd Kings and clownes, all in a rate,
Yea this beasts powre had tane so deepe a roote,

It enterd in Christ his vicars sacred gate,
And vexed Cardinals and Bishops chiefe,
And bred a scandall evn in our believe.

29

Unto this beast men seemd to bow and bend,
This beast brake through each wall and evry fence,
No citie could it selfe therefrom defend,
Strong castles made from it but weake defence,
In fine, her powre did seeme so farre extend,
That many were so fond and void of sence,
To thinke and to beleeve this monster fell,
Had powre of all things both in heavn and hell.

30

But when this beast had rangd a while, behold
One wearing on his head a lawrell crowne,
With three that wore the flowre de luce of gold,
Embroderd richly on their purple gowne,
And with these three a stately Lion bold,
Did joyne his force to put the monster downe;
The titles and the names that them concerned,
Might in their garments plainly be discerned.

31

One that with sword the beast thrusts in the paunch,
Was he whose praise no time shall ever smother,
Francis the first of that name King of France,
Of Austria Maximillen is another,
Then Charles the fift that with a mighty launce
Smites through the beast, from tone side to the tother:
The fourth that in the brest with arrow wounds him
Was Henrie theight, the writing so expounds him.

32

Leo the tenth, the Lion fierce is called,
Who chast him, and fast caught him by the eare,
And in the chase the beast so tyrd and galled,
As others tooke him while he held him there:
By this the world seemd freed that erst was thralled,
By this men seemd secure and void of feare,
Seeing that beast whose look late made them tremble
Stroyd by the powre of this so brave assemble.

33

This story so set forth (as I have told)
With costly workmanship, great pleasure bred,

In all their minds that did the same behold,
And on this sight more then their meat they fed,
And chiefe Marfisa wisht to heare it told,
What men these were, if men already dead,
Or else a prophecie of things ensuing,
By hidden skill, laid ope to each mans vewing.

34

Then Malagigi was by them requested,
As one in Mathematikes seene right well,
And had the method thereof so digested,
As he all hidden mysteries could tell,
To shew what monster thus the world molested,
And who be these that him from earth expell:
For though they saw their names, they did not know them,
But he they knew by his great skil could show them.

35

Know then (quoth he) that these whose names appeare
In marble pure, did never live as yet,
But long time hence, after six hundred yeare,
To their great praise in princely throne shall sit,
Merlin the English prophet plast them here

In Arthurs time, and by his passing wit,
Set here (as yet) their unperformed deeds,
And noted all their names upon their weeds.

36

This beast you saw, had first her habitation
Beneath amongst the wicked fiends of hell,
And staid there till that wicked generation,
(I meane the iron age) on earth did dwell,
When none durst trust without an obligation,
When fraud first came tween them that buy and sel,
And when the mighty (to their great reproch)
First on the poore mens livings did incroch.

37

Then first this monster cruell got abroad,
And ever since her powre doth still increase,
And wheresoere she maketh her abode,
There is no friendship firme, nor godly peace;
Conscience and justice under foote are trod,
Good government and wholesome lawes do cease,
That Python Phoebus kild with thousand darts,
Was monster lesse then this by thousand parts.

38

Thus Malagigi said, and then he told
Who those should be that should the monster kill,
That should come then when as the world were old,
That should renew each good, and mend each ill,
Whose names in sacred stile to be inrold
Deserve and to be praisd and honourd still,
That should in time to come, as he did conster;
With bountie kill that miserable monster.

39

Those five I namd, and more by five times five,
Mine author names, that holpe to slay the beast,
Roger and the rest, the time did drive,
In such like talke during the present feast,
And ere they rose, behold there did arrive
Unto this cave unwares another guest,
By name that maid from whom of late by force,
Fierce Rodomont had tane Rogeros horse.

40

She having heard by hap upon the way,
Her mistris brother was at Merlins cave,

Where she had bin her selfe another day,
Not thinking now Rogero there to have;
Him when she saw, she not one word doth say
To him, nor any show or inckling gave,
Like one that knew so well to do her arrant,
As she durst go, sometime beside her warrant.

41

But unto Richardet she frames her tale,
Yet so as tother might her speeches heare,
How one from her a gallant courser stale,
Which Bradamant her mistris held full deare,
The horse (quoth she) Frontyno she did call,
As I had led him thirty mile well neare,
Marfilia toward, where she bad me stay,
And pointed me to meet me at a day.

42

So fond was I, I feared no mans force,
Nor doubted no mans will to do me wrong,
When once I should but shew them how the horse
Unto Renaldos sister did belong:
Yet one fierce Pagan voide of all remorse,

Met me, and tooke him from me, and ere long
Did meet a fo, with whom I fighting left him,
That hath (I hope) by this of life bereft him.

43

Rogero with this tale was so much moved,
That scant hereof Hippalca made an end,
But Richardetto straight by him was moved,
Yea and conjurd, as he would be his frend,
That this attempt might sole by him be proved,
And (but this damsell) none might him attend:
That she may bring him to the Pagans sight,
That tooke away her horse against all right.

44

Stout Richardet (though thinking too much wrong,
So oft to let another undertake
Those enterprises that to him belong)
Yet sith so earnestly Rogero spake,
He gives consent, and tother staid not long,
But of the company his leave doth take,
And leaves them all, in wonder great to see,
That such hie worth could in a yong man be.

45

Now when Hippalca was quite out of sight,
She opned to Rogero all the troth,
How she that counts him her beloved Knight,
And voweth to be his by solemne oth,
Sent her of purpose to him this last night,
Which she before conceald (as being loth
Her mistris brother should her counsell know,
How she that horse upon him did bestow.)

46

She told him how that he that tooke the steed,
Did adde these proud and scornfull words beside,
Because it is Rogeros horse indeed,
So much the rather on the horse I ride,
And if he will be grievd at this my deed,
Tell him I do not mind my selfe to hide,
For I am Rodomont (he said) whose name
Where ere I passe filleth the world with fame.

47

One might have seene it in Rogeros face,
In how great dudgen this great wrong he tooke,

Both for the gift and giver in like case,
And grosse abuse, for which he did not looke:
He thinks what infamy and foule disgrace
It were to him, so great despite to brooke;
Which if he would, then justly evry body,
Might take him for a dastard and a nody.

48

Wherefore with heart upon revenge full set,
He followeth forthwith his female guide,
She that did thinke the fray unparted yet,
That Rodomont and Mandricardo tride,
By darke blind wayes, the nearest she could get,
Unto the place directly she did ride,
But as you heard, they had deferd the quarell,
And hasted thence to help their Liege from perell.

49

And as I toucht before, their hap them brought
Unto the foresaid Merlins famous cave,
There where before good Malagigi taught,
What secret meaning all the pictures have:
Now had Marfisa (by the rest besought)

Put on a womans garment passing brave,
Which lately Lanfusa had bin made,
And so attyrd, refresht her in the shade.

50

When that Tartarian Prince had spide this dame,
Straight in his mind he plots this new found drift,
I will (thought he) by conquest win the same,
And give her Rodmontee as my gift,
(As though that love were but a sport and game,
That might be sold and changed for a shift)
For why (he thought) what needs a man complaine,
If leeing one, he do another gaine?

51

Wherefore the tothers damage to repaire,
And that he might his owne in quiet have,
And for Marfisa seemly was and faire,
As no man need a dame more comely crave:
He doth forthwith unto them make repaire,
Denouncing straight the challenge stout and brave,
That he with those foure knights at tilt wold runne,
Till they slue him, or he their Ladie wonne.

52

Straight stept out Malagige and Vivian,
Both prest in her defence to breake a speare,
Nor fearing to encounter man to man,
With those two Pagans they saw present there;
But when the fray betweene them now began,
Fierce Rodomont stood still and doth forbear,
As comming thither with another mind,
And not to change his purpose first assignd.

53

Now of the brothers Vivian was the first,
That with great might the Pagan did invade,
Upon whose crest in vaine his speare he burst,
His blow no hurt it did, no signe it made,
His force was least, so was his fortune worst,
For Mandricard (more perfect in his trade)
With so great strength and skill his speare inforced,
That he was overthrowne and quite unhorsed.

54

To venge his brother, Malagige thought,
But if his thought he quickly was deceived,

His force thus overmatcht prevailed nought,
From off his saddle he was quickly heaved.
Next Aldiger his coming dearly bought,
For in his side a great wound he received,
So downe upon the grasse he fell halfe dead,
His visage waxing pale, his armor red.

55

Then Richardetto came with mighty lance,
And provd himselfe by his great force to be
Worthy the name of Palladine of France,
As oft his foes did feele, his friends did see;
But at this time one overthwart mischance
Did hap, that downe among the rest lay he,
His horse wherein he put so great a trust,
Fell downe with him, and tumbled in the dust.

56

When as no other champion did appeare,
But all were overthrowne in this late fight,
Thinking this conquest now obtained cleare,
Without more stay he from his horse doth light,
And coming unto her with smiling cheare,

Faire dame (quoth he) you now are mine by right,
You cannot it denie, or once excuse it,
For by the lawes of battell so we use it.

57

Indeed (Marfisa said) it were no wrong,
And I were yours I grant by law of warre,
If I were theirs, or did to them belong,
That you have foiled in this present jarre,
But I shall make you know I hope ere long,
You misse your marke, your aime did greatly arre,
I am mine owne, mine owner is within me,
He that will have me, from my selfe must win me.

58

I handle can (quoth she) both sword and speare,
And have ere this made more then one man bleed,
Then cald she for her armor which was there,
Which by a page was brought to her with speed
Off goth her gowne, and for she still did weare
A slender trusse beneath her womans weed,
Her well shapt limbs therein were plainly seene,
In shape like Mars, in face like AEgypt's Queene.

59

When at all peeces she was armed round,
She vaulteth nimbly up into her seate,
And twise or thrise she makes her horse to bound,
To bate a little of his furious heate,
And makes a turne or two above the ground,
Then turnes she to her fo to do her feate;
Such was (I judge) Penthesseleas fight,
Against Achilles famous Greekish Knight.

60

Thus each themselves upon their horse advances,
And with their couched speares forthwith they run,
Up in a thousand splinters flies the lances,
But unto them no hurt at all is done:
The Pagan greatly marvels how it chanches,
That she should scape, and curses Moone and Sun;
And she with her successe as ill content,
Blasphemeth eke the heavns and firmament.

61

Then they assayd with swords most dreadfull dint,
To wound the tone the tother, and to kill,

Their strokes were such as might have pierst the flint,
And to their force was joynd passing skill:
They lay on lode amaine, and do not stint,
The sound doth all the place with eccho fill,
But never was it more for their behoofe,
To have their armour of so passing prooffe.

62

But while they now did most apply the fray,
Fierce Rodomont doth step them both betwixt,
And blames him much for making such delay,
Of that which late by him was firmly fixt;
And then with courteous speech he her doth pray,
With lowly words and loftie, quaintly mixt,
That she would helpe to aid Trajanos sonne,
Whose tents were in much danger to be wonne.

63

To this request Marfisa doth assent,
As well to helpe King Agramant thereby,
As for she came to France with that intent,
The forces of the Palladines to try;
This while Rogero, wroth and malcontent,

After the stealer of his horse doth hie;
And having found of him the perfect tracke,
He sends againe his guide Hippalca backe.

64

And for he thought that none could do it better,
The messenger he makes her of his mind,
And sends by her his lately written letter,
Protesting he will still continue kind,
And that he doth himselfe acknowledge debter,
And would himselfe to her for ever bind,
He onely prayes her for a time excuse
His absence, which he would not, might he chuse.

65

With this dispatch Hippalca went her way,
And came to mount Albano that same night,
Rogerio made but very little stay,
Untill he had Frontino in his sight;
Which seen & known, forthwith there was no way,
But he will have his horse againe, or fight
With him, that had with so unnooble force,
The damsell robbed of the gallant horse.

66

And straight in shew of warre he coucht his speare,
And to his face the Pagan he defide,
But Rodomont doth patiently forbear,
Evn as a Job, and all his words abide;
Not that of him he had one sparke of feare,
For his great value often had bin tride,
But that the danger of his Lord and King,
Weyd more with him then any other thing.

67

Wherefore he gently tels him for what cause
He may not fight, and him exhorted to
What all divine, and what all humane lawes,
Unto his Prince commands a man to do.
I (said Rogero) am content to pawse,
In this respect, and make a truce with you,
So that this horse againe to me you render,
Which so to take, your reason was but slender.

68

Now while these two herein do square and brave,
The Tartar King doth unto them approch,

And when he saw what armes Rogero gave,
He set another brabble straight abroch.
Mine are (quoth he) these armes that now you have,
How dare you on my titles thus incroch?
The cause why Mandricardo spake these words,
Was that Rogero gave the King of burds.

69

An Eagle argent in a field of blew,
Rogero gave, whilom the crest of Troy,
As one that thence derivd his pedegrew,
And did by due descent the same enjoy;
But hereof Mandricardo nothing knew,
Or nought beleevd, and calld it but a toy,
And tooke it as an injury and scorne,
To see the same by any other worne.

70

For he himselfe did give, as for his cote,
That bird that bare up Ganimed on hie,
Ere since he wan (as I before did note)
Don Hectors armes, and wan such praise thereby,
The good successe hereof makes him aflote,

So that he did Rogero straight defie,
I shall (quoth he) some better manners teach thee,
Then in such sawcie sort to overreach thee.

71

As wood well dride will quickly fall on fire,
If so a man a little do it blow;
So was Rogero kindled now in ire,
To heare the Pagan reprehend him so;
Thou thinkst (quoth he) to have thy fond desire,
By charging me now with a double fo,
But know that I my partie good will make,
From him mine horse, from thee mine arms to take.

72

Did not we two about this matter boord?
And then to take thy life I did abstaine,
Because that by your side I saw no sword;
But now sith you begin this brawle againe,
This shall be fight in deed, that was but word,
And that your crest shall turne you to much paine,
Which unto me descent and propagation
Hath left, but you do hold by usurpation.

73

Nay thou usurpst, the tother straight doth say,
And with that word he Durindana drew,
That sword that erst Orlando flang away,
And then a cruell fray was like ensew:
But straight the tother two did cause them stay,
And chiefly Rodomont did seeme to rew,
That Mandricard of lightnesse shewd such token,
That twice by him his promise had bin broken.

74

First when to get Marfisa he had thought,
He had conflicted more then twice or thrise,
And now with tother quarrelled for nought,
About a bird or some such fond devise:
Nay then (quoth he) if needs you would have fought,
We two should trie the title of our prise,
Which by consent should stand still undecided,
Untill our Princes safetie were provided.

75

Wherefore for shame do as you have agreed,
And let us cease and lay all quarrels by,

And when our Prince from danger shall be freed,
Then first betwene us two the matter trie,
And after if you live, you may proceed
To fight it out with him, and so will I:
Though well I wot, when I have done with you,
But little will remaine for him to do.

76

Tush (saith the Tartar Prince) for him nor thee,
Nor all the world beside, I passe one straw,
For though you fight, or though you do agree,
Of neither of you both I stand in aw,
As water in a spring, so strength in me
Shall still supply much more then you can draw;
I hope by that time I have done my feate,
From head to foot with blood Ile make you sweate.

77

Thus one ill word another doth draw on,
And wrathfull Mandricard them both defies;
Rodomont would have peace, but they would none,
If this speake sharpe, then that more sharpe replies;
If one strife be compounded, yet anon

Another strife as bad or worse doth rise;
In vaine Marfisa labours to compound them,
For more and more untoward still she found them.

78

Evn as the painfull husbandman doth thinke,
By care to keepe the river in his bounds,
That swels with raine, readie to passe the brinke,
And overflow his mowd or sowed grounds,
He strengthens evry place that seems to shrinke,
Yet more and more the water still abounds,
And while he stops one vent, another groweth,
Till over all perforce at last it floweth.

79

So when the dame, of whom I last made mention,
Saw how Rogero stout and Mandricard,
With Rodomont continude in contention,
And each would seeme for tother two too hard,
She willing to compound this sharpe dissention,
Perswades them, but they little it regard,
For still as one at her request forbearcs,
The other two are at it by the eares.

80

When as she saw their furie still increase,
Let either us (quoth she) our Prince assist,
And in the meane time let all quarrels cease;
Or if you in this fury still persist,
Then I with Mandricard will have no peace,
Do herein (quoth Rogero) as you list,
For I resolved am to have my horse,
Although it be by faire meanes or by force.

81

Then do (said Rodomont) your worst and best,
For with that horse to part I not agree,
But here before you all I do protest,
That if our King by this stay damagd be,
And that for want of ayd he be distrest,
The cause thereof did not proceed of me;
Rogero little weyes his protestation,
But firmly holds his first determination.

82

And at the Sarzan furiously he flies,
And with his shoulder gave him such a thrust,

He lost his stirrops, and so loosed his thies,
That hard he scaped lying in the dust.
What? hold Rogero, Mandricardo cries,
Either not fight, or fight with me you must,
And in great rage, as that same word he spake,
Rogeros beaver with great might he strake.

83

The blow was such, as made him forward leane,
And ere that he himselfe againe could reare,
Upon him smote the sonne of Ulyen,
With so great strength as no strength might it beare
That had his armor bene of temper meane,
No doubt they had an end made of him there:
Rogeros hands flie ope with senslesse paine,
The tone his sword, the tother leaves his raine.

84

His horse away beares him about the greene,
And Balisard his blade is left behind:
Marfisa that had to Rogero beene
Fellow in armes that day, was grievd in mind,
To see him usd so hardly them betweene,

And being strong of limbes, and stout by kind,
She smiteth Mandricardo on the crowne
So hard, as wants not much to fell him downe.

85

After Rogero Rodmont doth get him,
And now Frontino had welnigh bin wonne,
But by the way stout Richardetto met him,
And with him joynd his cousin Bovos sonne;
Tone justles him, and furder off doth set him,
The tother, namely Vivian, doth runne,
Unto Rogero that by this was waked,
And lends his sword unto his right hand naked.

86

Now backe he doth returne, enragd with scorne,
Minding to pay his damage home againe,
Evn as a Lion, whom the Bull hath borne
Upon his head, is full of fierce disdaine,
Flies at him still, nor feares his cruell horne,
His anger making him forget his paine,
And on his beaver with such force he thundered,
As though he wold his head in twain have sundered.

87

And sure he had performd it very neare,
If Balisarda had bene in his hand,
Which he let fall, as you before did heare,
Now when as Discord saw how things did stand,
She thinks no peace can possibly be here,
And taking Pride her sister by the hand,
Now sister let us turne us to our Priers,
For here (quoth she) are raisd sufficient fiers.

88

And so away they went, and let them go:
And let me tell you how Rogero sped,
Who gave to Rodomont so fierce a blow,
That such a great amazement in him bred,
That twice or thrise he reeled to and fro;
Frontino with his senslesse master fled,
Also his sword had falne out of his fist,
But that a chaine did tie it to his wrist.

89

This while Marfisa held the tother tacke,
And yet on either side the conquest swayd,

Each had so good an armor on their backe,
Of piercing it they need not be afrayd,
Yet by a chance Marfisa hapt to lacke,
And likewise hapt to have Rogeros ayd,
For in a turne she made, her horse did trip,
And in the durt upon one side did slip.

90

And as againe he labourd up to rise,
The cruell Tartar justled him so crosse,
That on his side the horse constrained lies,
Foundring againe upon the slimie mosse;
Which when Rogero from aloofe espies,
How neare she was to danger great and losse,
He steps to Mandricard, fiercely assailing him,
While Rodomont stands mazd, his senses failing him.

91

The Tartar doth as fiercely him resist,
But yet Rogero strake so great a blow,
Both to avenge himselfe, and her assist,
Whom Mandricardo hapt to overthrow,
That sure I thinke that blow had little mist,

Quite to have clovn him to the saddle bow,
Save that the Tartars armor was so hard,
And that Rogero wanted Balisard.

92

By this the Sarzan King againe did wake
And seeing none but Richardetto neare,
He cals to minde how for Rogeros sake,
That youth to him was troublesome while eare.
Straight with great rage he toward him doth make,
Minding to make him buy that curtsie deare:
And sure good Richardetto had repented it,
But that his cosin with great art prevented it.

93

His cosin Malagige, whose skill was great,
In all that doth to magicke art pertaine,
With words that he without booke could repeat,
Did conjure up a spryte of hellish traine,
And by this meanes he works a passing feat:
For (though he namd no place) he doth ordaine,
This sprite in Doralices horse to enter,
And beare her thence away at all adventer.

94

The sprite thus conjurd, quickly doth his part,
Into the damsels gentle nag he crept,
And so his quiet nature did pervart,
That on the sudden thirtie foot he lept,
And ten foot high, yet with so easie start,
That Doralice still the sadle kept,
Yet cride she out, in doubt to have miscarried,
For in the divels name she thence was carried.

95

Forthwith to helpe her Rodomonte goth,
Because she fled, and cride to him for aid,
To stay behind the Tartar is as loth,
For feare betweene them he may be betraid,
He leaves Rogero and Marfisa both,
Nor in the place so little time he staid,
As to accord with them upon some truce,
Or make at least some mannerly excuse.

96

This while Marfisa was got up againe,
And now she means to venge her on her fo,

But he was gone, at which in great disdain,
She frets and chafes, that he had servd her so,
Rogerio chafes as much, for all in vaine,
He knew it would be, after them to go:
They know their steeds (and this doth grieve them more)
Cannot outrun Frontin and Briogliadore.

97

Wherefore supposing (as it was indeed)
That they were gone unto the Turkish host,
To follow them forthwith these two agreed,
Though not to follow as they went in post,
Not doubting but when Agramant were freed,
At leasure them to meet, and to their cost:
They onward go, but yet Rogerio ment,
To bid his friends farewell afore he went.

98

Downe from his horse he gently doth descend,
And Richardetto he aside doth take,
And promist him for ay to be his frend,
And to his noble sister for his sake:
To whom (said he) I pray you me commend,

Yet in such pretie sort the same he spake,
His inward love was not thereby detected,
Nor her great love to him, one whit suspected.

99

Thus solemne leave once tane on either side,
And profers of great love and curtsie made,
To him was hurt, and all the rest beside,
As still among great nobles is the trade,
Rogerio with Marfisa on doth ride,
But how they did the Christen campe invade,
And what great losse did Charles thereby receive,
In next ensuing booke you may perceive.

ARGUMENT

THE TWENTYSEVENTH BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Rogero and those other Pagan Kings,
Make Charles againe to Paris wals retire:
Among the Turks new seed of quarrell springs,
And kindles in their hearts a quenchlesse fire:
Which all their campe in great disorder brings.
Agramant to appease them doth desire;
Fierce Rodomont doth leave the campe in wrath,
Because his mistres him forsaken hath.

TWENTY SEVENTH BOOKE

1

Among the many rare and speciall gifts,
That in the female sex are found to sit,
This one is chiefe, that they at sodaine shifts,
Give best advice, and show most readie wit:
But man, except he thinks and chews, and sifts,
How evry part may answer tother fit,
By rash advice doth often overshoot him,
And doth attempt the things that do not boot him.

2

Good Malagigi thought he had done wisely,
In making Doralice to Paris fly,
But if he had the matter wayd precisely,
(Though Richardetto was preservd thereby)
He would have sure confest it done unwisely,
His safetie with so great a losse to buy:
For by this act (which he then not forethought)
A losse unspeakable to Charles was wrought.

3

Alas how much might he have better done,
If he had made the fiend the wench convey,
Unto the fall or rising of the Sunne?
To West, or East, or any other way,
Where Rodomont and Agricanes sonne,
From Paris wals might have gone far astray?
But he that ever wisheth Christens evill,
So at this time did prove himselfe a Devill.

4

The fiend her silly horse most slily enterd,
And, not before prescribed any place,
He quickly all the company distemperd;
Nor bare he her away a common pace,
But over brooks, and streams, and ditches venterd:
She crying still for ayd as in such case,
Nor leaves her beast to fling, run, snore and stampe,
Untill she quite was past the Christen campe.

5

There did she come evn as she could desire,
Among the midst of Agramantes traine,

And there at last she found the King her sire,
That of Granata did possesse the raigne:
The while her lovers both themselves do tire,
And in pursuing her do take great paine,
By tracing her with as great toile and care,
As huntsmen do with pleasure trace the Hare.

6

Now Charles tis time for thee to looke about,
Unto thy wals and strengths in time betake thee,
Thou never canst escape this plunge, I doubt,
Except thou stir up quickly, and awake thee,
Thy strength, the lamps of France are quenched out
I meane thy frends & champions chiefe forsake thee,
Orlando thee, his wits have him relinquished,
And all his vertues drownd and quite extinguished.

7

Likewise Renaldo, though not fully mad,
Yet little lesse then mad seekes there and heare,
For faire Angelica, and is full sad,
To see that he of her no news can heare;
For why a certaine old inchaunter had

Told him a forged tale, that toucht him neare,
How she, to whom of love he made profession,
Was in Orlandos keeping and possession.

8

This made him at the first so loth to go
To England, whither he was sent for ayd;
This made him backe againe to hasten so,
Then when the Turks his presence so dismaid,
And thinking after that, some news to know,
By privie search the Nunries all he laid,
And Castels all, in Paris and about,
To see if he by search could finde her out.

9

But when he heard of her no news nor tiding,
And that Orlando there likewise did want,
He could in Paris make no longer biding,
Doubting his rivall sought him to supplant,
But up and downe about the countrie riding
Sometime to Brava, sometime to Anglant,
Supposing still Orlando her had hidden,
Lest of his pleasure he might be forbidden.

10

And thus the wicked fiend his time espide,
To give the Christens such a fatall blo,
When as these two, in whom they most asside,
Were absent now their Prince and countrie fro;
Furder for souldiers of the Turkish side,
All that were valiant men, or counted so,
Were all against this time entised hither,
Wholly uniting all their force together.

11

Gradasso stout, and Sacrapantee fearce,
That in that charmed castell long had dwelt
Which thEnglish Duke, as I did late rehearse,
Dissolved quite, and causd like snow to melt.
These two likewise the Christen campe do pearce,
The forces of these two the Christens felt.
Rogerio and Marfisa made lesse hast,
And so it happend, they arrived last.

12

The first two couple neare the Christens tents,
Did meet, and then after long consultation,

Each unto other shewing their intents,
They all conclude with one determination,
And all of them to this give their consents,
In spite of all the Christen generation,
To succour Agramant their Lord and Liege,
And mauger Charls his might, to raise the siege.

13

Straight in one crew they foure together knit,
Breake through the Christen watch by force amaine,
Neither in hugger mugger did they it,
But crying lowdly, Affrica and Spaine,
They lay on lode, and evrie one they hit,
Dead or astonished doth there remaine:
Alarum then all ore the campe was rung,
Though few could tel the cause fro whence it sprung.

14

Some thought the Gascoigns or the Switzers bold,
By mutiny had made some insurrection,
And their surmise unto the Empror told,
Who came with minde to give them due correction
But when he did the bodies dead behold,

Incurable untill the resurrection,
He standeth still like one with wonder mazed,
And on their wofull wounds long time he gazed.

15

Evn as a man that with a bolt of thunder,
Hath seene his dwelling house smit unaware,
Straight searcheth with no little feare nor wonder,
Which way the bolt did passe that causd his care:
So Charles that saw mens bodies cut in sunder,
Inquires, of so great wounds who authours are,
And when he knew how few they were that did it,
Did wish himselfe there present to forbid it.

16

This while Marfisa on another side,
With good Rogero do them sore impeach,
And through the campe in spite of them they ride,
Killing or wounding all within their reach:
As in a mine that lies close unespide,
With trayns of gunpowder men make a breach:
Or as a tempest goes along by coast,
So suddenly these two brake through the host.

17

Many that scapt the tother foure by flight,
In flying, fell unwares upon these twaine;
And felt by prooffe that neither flight nor fight,
Can save a man ordained to be slaine.
Evn as a Foxe, whom smoke and fire doth fright,
So as he dare not in the ground remaine,
Bolts out, and through both smoke & fire she flieth,
Into the Tartars mouth, and there he dieth.

18

Thus last of all, by this most noble paire,
The Christen armie once againe was sundred,
And then to Agramant they all repaire,
Who welcoms them, and at their value wondred.
Now hope and courage, drive away dispaire,
One Turke, of Christens straight defide an hundred,
So great a boldnesse in their mind doth rise,
By helpe and succour of these new supplies.

19

Straightway on both sides out their men were brought
Their standerds and their banners all displaid,

And there that day a bloodie field was fought,
And neither side made shew to be dismaid,
For hopes alike in either armie wrought,
Tones passed conquests, tothers present aid.
But fortune on the Christens so did frowne,
That they againe were drivn unto the towne.

20

The passing force of cruell Rodomount,
The strength and value great of Mandricard,
Rogeros vertue, that doth all surmount,
Gradassos courage of no small regard,
Marfisas heart, of principall account,
The skill of Sacrapant, with best compard,
These were the causers of good Charles his losse,
And sent the Christens home by weeping crosse.

21

Great store were drown'd in Sequana with hast,
The bridge so narrow was for to receive them,
Wishing (as Dedals sonne had in time past)
Some wings wherewith aloft in ayre to heave them,
Some thrusting, strave to get them in so fast,

That strength & breath, & life at last did leave them
But that, whereby King Charles was chiefly shaken,
Was this, that many Palladyns were taken.

22

Thus fortune once againe did turne the wheele,
The good King Charles had her, but could not hold her,
And of this foile this hurt he then did feele,
It fainter made his friends, his foes the bolder:
The Marquis of Vienna true as steele,
Was at that service wounded in his shoulder,
And many hurt, but none did play his part,
So well that day, as valiant Brandimart.

23

He stoutly bare it out, no little space,
And when he saw there was no other way,
Then to the furie prudently gave place,
And spard himselfe, against another day:
Now once againe is Charles in wofull case,
Now once againe to Paris siege they lay.
Yong Orphans, and old widdows prayre and cries,
Againe unto Gods heavnly throne arise.

24

The Angell Michel, was but ill appaid,
Finding the cause of those good Christens teares,
He thought his maker was but ill obaid,
And that he may be blamd therefore he feares;
He cals himselfe deceived and berraid;
By her should set the Pagans by the eares,
From which (it seemed) now she did so vary,
As she had rather done the quite contrary.

25

Evn as the Servitor whose love and zeale,
More then his memory may be commended,
Forgetting in some waighty cause to deale,
That by his Lord to him was recommended,
Would with new care his former fault conceale,
That ere his master know, it may be mended:
So this good Angel, went not up to God,
Till he had done as much as he was bod.

26

To seeke dame Discord he doth leave the skie,
And to the Abby he returnes againe,

Where her amid the monks he might espie,
That change old officers, and new ordaine:
She laughs to see their portises to flie,
Readie to knocke out one anothers braine:
The Angel takes her by her painted locks,
And with great furie gives her many knocks.

27

He brake a crosses handle on her crowne,
And grievously doth beat her, backe and side,
The wretch upon her mary bones fals downe,
At thAngels feet, and mercy, mercy cride:
Packe to the Pagans then, that siege yon towne,
(Quoth he) and see that you among them bide,
For if this place againe thou ever trouble,
Assure thy selfe, thy payment shall be double.

28

Though Discords back & arms were sore with beating
Yet thence with all the hast she could she went;
Sore terrifid with that great Angels threatening,
Doubting againe in like sort to be shent:
Yet in this hast, behind her not forgetting,

Bellows and coles, in steed of those were spent,
By which in many minds, and hearts invincible,
She quickly kindle might a fire inquenchible.

29

Rogero, Mandricard, and Rodomont,
Gan now their quarrels to renew,
As making of the Christians small account,
That unto Paris walls themselves withdrew:
Wherefore to Agramant they do recount
Their quarrels & the grounds of whence they grew,
Each one by challenge his just cause averring,
The combats order to the King referring.

30

Also Marfisa doth the King intreat,
That she may end her combat first begunne,
With as great hast thereof, and as great heat,
Against the Tartar, Agricanes sonne:
This she desires with hast and instance great,
As one that thinks, great wrong to her was done,
If in regard of any state or powre,
She should attend one day, or yet one howre.

31

But Rodomont alledgeth that of right,
He first should end the matter with his rivall,
Sith by accord they first deferd the fight,
Till time might serve, after their here arrivall:
No lesse Rogero for his horse takes spight,
And swears, that whether they agree or strive all,
To take Frontino, no man should restraine him,
Or else to fight with him that doth detaine him.

32

Further, the matter farther to entangle,
The argent Eagle in the azure field,
Gave to the Tartar matter more to jangle,
And quarrell with Rogero for his shield:
And so confusedly he then did wrangle,
As though with all at once he would the field,
And in his furie sure he had attempted it,
But that the Kings commandment flat prevented it.

33

Who first with grave and frendly admonition,
To peace and good attonement did exhort them,

But when beyond all meanes of composition,
He saw that wrath and furie did transport them,
To certaine Marshals he doth give commission,
According to the law of armes to sort them:
And of all wayes, this was not thought the worst,
To trie by lots, which two should combat first.

34

Foure little scrowles were put into a pot,
The first had Rodomont and Mandricard;
Rodomont and Rogero next they wrot;
The third Rogero was and Mandricard;
The fourth paire that must trie the present lot,
Was stout Marfisa joynd to Mandricard:
When lots were cast, these two first out were tane,
Fierce Rodomont and sonne of Agrican.

35

Mandricard and Rogero next they finde,
Rodomont and Rogero next was said:
Mandricard and Marfisa staid behinde,
With which the stately dame was ill apaid:
Nor was Rogero well content in minde,

Doubting that when they first their parts had plaid,
The combat will be such betwene them two,
He and Marfisa should have nought to do.

36

Not farre from Paris, lay a levell ground,
That was in compasse scant a thousand paces,
This plain with rayles, and bars was compast round,
And tents therein were set with equall spaces,
With scaffolds raysd upon the outward bound,
To give to lookers on convenient places:
Now came the time these strifes should be decided,
Among those Knights, those tents were thus devided.

37

In the pavillion bordring on the East,
Stands Rodomont with visage sterne and grim,
Ferraw and Sacrapant were readie prest,
To put his scaly serpents hide on him:
In tother tent that was upon the West,
Gradasso and stout Falsyron do trim,
With Hectors armes so stately and so faire,
The valiant Prince, King Agricanes haire.

38

On one side in a high tribunall seat,
Do sit the Kings of Affrica and Spaine,
With Stordilan and other Princes great,
Both feard and followd of the Turkish traine:
Happie was he that day, that could but get,
A place to sit or stand although with paine,
On ridge of house, or wall, or top of tree,
In so great presse, the goodly shew to see.

39

On tother side sat Ladies of great name,
In stately sort, to see and to be seene,
That out of divers realmes and countries came,
To visit or attend the Spanish queene:
There Doralyce was plast, that lovely dame,
Who wears a robe of crimson cut on greene,
Yet was the crimson staind in such a fashion,
It rather seemd inclining to carnation.

40

Among the rest Marfisa sat that day,
In short light clothes most sumptuously arraid,

The fashion of such kind, as well it may
Become a warrior, and yet a maid,
Hippolita (I thinke) used such array,
When in the field her banner she displayed,
Thus each thing was prepared for the fight,
And each man was prepared for the sight.

41

An Herald in his coate of armes steppes out,
And of the law of armes expounds the guise,
Professing to resolve each little doubt,
That in such case accustoms to arise:
The people gasing standeth all about,
Attent with listning ears, and longing eyes,
When from the tent of valiant Mandricard
Behold a sodaine noyse and sturre was hard.

42

The cause was this, the King of Sericane,
Who (as before I did rehearse) was one,
That holpe to arme the sonne of Agricane,
Taking his sword in hand to put it on,
Saw written in the handle, Durindane,

And looking more advisedly thereon,
He saw Almontes armes gravn on the blade,
The which strange sight him greatly wonder made.

43

And glad he was when once he did espy it,
(The chiefest cause that first to France he came)
Although before he never could come by it,
Wherefore he questions straight upon the same,
If Mandricardo wan it, or did buy it?
Who in this sort his answer then did frame:
I with Orlando for this sword did quarrell,
And car I had it, put my life in perrell.

44

Further unto this answer he doth ad,
A farther lie, his glorie to increase,
How that Orlando for the feare he had,
That for this sword he never should have peace,
Had throwne away the sword, and faind him mad,
That thereby he might cause his quarrell cease:
Doing herein, as is the Castor wonted,
Bite of his stones, when he is nearly hunted.

45

Well (quoth Gradasso) what Orlando ment,
I cannot now discusse, nor do I know,
But sure I am it is not mine intent,
Now I have found it here to let it go,
The money, men, munition I have spent,
Deserve as good a thing as this I trow:
You did but finde it, you your selfe confesse it,
And now I challenge it and do possesse it.

46

If you denie my claime, here I will prove it,
This field the court, this list my pleading bar,
My plea is such, as no writ can remove it,
My judge must be the sequell of the war.
War said the other, who, can better love it
Then I? these words to me as musicke are,
If so the King of Sarza will agree,
To stay his combat, till I fight with thee.

47

Be sure Ile answer thee, and all beside,
That dare presume to offer me offence:

With that Rogero stept betweene and cride,
Ho sirs, with this I minde not to dispence,
Or let the fight proceed, as lots have tride,
Or I my selfe will put you to your fence:
Shall he denie the sword and shall I yeeld,
That you shall weare mine Eagle on your shield?

48

Wherefore preserve that order first agreed on,
From which in honour, you may no way start,
Or if to breake it further you proceed on,
I breake will all, if you do breake a part.
Tush (quoth the Tartar) threats we have no need on,
If Mars were in you both, and tooke your part,
Yet both should finde it folly to attempt,
Me of my shield, or sword once to prevent.

49

And with that word forthwith he bent his fist,
And on Gradassos hand so fierce he strake,
That sodainly, or ear Gradasso wist,
He made him unawares the sword forsake:
Who much repind he thus his purpose mist,

And that so unprepard he could him take,
And much more grievd it him, that this disgrace,
Was offerd him in such an open place.

50

Wherefore to be avengd of so great wrong,
He steppeth backe and out his sword he drawes,
The tother doth no farther time prolong,
Though in respect of order there was cause,
Nay which was more, he thought himselfe so strong
To fight with all at once, he askt no pause,
But to them both at once he makes defiance,
In his owne strength he had so great affiance.

51

This man is mad, but let me with him trie it,
Gradasso said, Ile make him wise againe:
Nay softly (quoth Rogero) I deny it,
For this same combat doth to me pertaine:
Stand backe saith tone, saith tother nay not I yet,
Backe you; yet both still in their place remaine.
Thus do these three with malice great and spite,
Strangely begin a combat tripartite.

52

And sure to much confusion it had growne,
Had not some men, more stout perhap then wise,
Themselves among them undiscreetly throwne,
With courage great, but yet with small advise,
To succour others danger with their owne:
Yet could no force them part, nor no devise,
Till Agramant himselfe, their dreaded Lord,
In person came their quarrell to accord.

53

The revrence great that unto him they beare,
Made them forthwith their forces to restraine,
Who straight the causes of these broiles did heare,
And to compound them sought, but all in vaine,
For scant Gradasso could be made forbear,
The sword so long with tother to remaine,
Untill the fight were ended now in hand,
Of which the sequell could not yet be scand.

54

Scarse had the King with words of great perswasion,
This quarrell new begun, a while appeasd,

But that another strife, by new occasion,
In Rodomontes tent them all diseasd:
An hurlyburly and a fierce invasion,
There grows betweene two Princes sore displeasd,
Betweene stout Sacrapant and Rodomount,
As I to you will presently recount.

55

King Sacrapant, as late before I told,
Helping to arme the cruell Sarzan King,
With those selfe armes that Nimrod ware of old,
From whom this Prince, his pedigree did bring,
Whiles he (I say) did curiously behold
His furniture, and evrie other thing,
That to his horse, or unto him belong,
To see they might be sure and firme, and strong.

56

While he, that stately steed Frontino vewd,
That proudly champing stood upon his bit,
And all his raines with snowlike fome bedewd,
Without regard, whose hands embroderd it,
A thought unpleasant in his mind renewd,

And to his heart did seeme full neare to sit,
He thinks this horse was very like in sight,
To one of his, that Frontlat whilom hight.

57

And more and more with heedfull looke still eying,
The markes and shape, and colour of the steed,
After his long and very curious prying,
He saw and knew it was his horse indeed:
Which horse from him (then at Albracca lying)
Brunello stale, for want of better heed;
And shewd him an unusuall cunning knacke,
To steale his horse while he sate on his backe.

58

Brunello stale that time more things beside,
By name Orlandos sword hight Balisard,
Angelicas faire ring, of vertue tride,
Which she recoverd as before you heard:
Likewise a sword evn from Marfisas side:
This done, he gave Rogero afterward,
Orlandos sword, and this horse to the same,
But to Frontino first he changd his name.

59

Now then I say, when Sacrapant was sure,
This horse was Frontlat that sometime was his,
And that the markes he saw did him assure,
That he therein tooke not his marke amis,
To hold his peace he could not long endure,
But said, good sir, know mine Frontino is,
Stolne late from me, as I can make good prooffe,
Although (I trow) mine owne word is inough.

60

One at Albracca stale from me this steed,
Yet for our late acquaintance I consent,
Because I see that now you stand in need,
That you shall use him now I am content:
Conditionally, that first it be agreed,
You shall acknowledge him not yours, but lent,
Else here I claime him as my goods and chattell,
And will defend my right in open battell.

61

The Sarzan King, that past (I thinke) in pride,
All Kings and Knights that ever carrid sword,

And past (I thinke) in strength and courage tride,
All samples that old stories us afford,
Made answer thus; if any man beside,
Durst unto me have spoken such a word,
He should have found, I took it in such scorne,
He had bin better have bin speechles borne.

62

But for our late begunne acquaintance sake,
I am content this at your hands to beare,
So as you this, do as a warning take,
The like attempt hereafter to forbear,
And if you will but harke what end I make,
With Mandricardo, then I do not feare,
But you shall see such sample of my force,
Shall make you glad, to pray me take your horse.

63

Then villany is courtesie with thee,
(Saith Sacrapant inflamd with high disdaine)
When you be offerd faire you cannot see,
Wherefore my purpose is, I tell you plaine,
My horse shall service do to none but mee,

And with these hands I will my right maintaine:
And that is more, if these same hands should faile,
I will defend my right with tooth and naile.

64

Thus galling speech, betweene them multiplying,
Till each last word, the former worser made,
At last they fell to acts of flat defying,
And tone the tother fiercely doth invade:
Rodomont on his strength and armes relying;
Yet tother so defends him with his blade,
And makes it so about his head to hover,
That seemes alone his body all to cover.

65

Evn as a charret wheele that runnes apace,
Seemes to the eye all solid, firme and sound,
Although twixt evrie spoke there is a space,
Concealed from our sights by running round:
So Sacrapant seemd armed in that place,
Though armour then about him none was found,
So dextrously himselfe he then besturd,
As well it stood upon him with his sword.

66

But quickly Serpentino and Ferraw,
With naked sword in hand, stept them betwixt,
With others more that present were and saw,
As friends of either part together mixt,
Yet them no force, nor prayre could once withdraw,
Their loftie hearts were on revenge so fixt,
And wrath had quite so put them out of frame,
Till Agramant to them in person came.

67

Upon the sight of him, their soveraigne Lord,
They both agreed their furie to withhold,
Who straight perswaded them to good accord,
And much good counsell to them both he told:
But peace and good perswasions they abhord,
And either on his manhood made him bold;
Their King doth but among them leese his winde,
For more and more he froward them doth finde.

68

By no meanes Sacrapant will be intreated,
Unto the Sarzan King his horse to lend,

Except that he (as I before repeated)
To borrow it of him, would condescend:
The tother at this very motion freated,
And swears nor heaven, nor he should make him bend,
To seek to have by prayer or request,
A thing of which by force he was possest.

69

King Agramant doth aske by what mischance,
He lost his horse, or who it from him stale?
The tother open all the circumstance,
And blusht for shame, when as he told the tale;
Namely, how late before he came to France,
One tooke him napping, as it did befall,
And underpropt his saddell with foure stakes,
And so from under him his courser takes.

70

Marfisa, that was come to part this fray,
Hearing of this stolne horse among the rest,
Was grievd in minde, for why that very day,
Her sword was stolne as she most truly guest;
And then King Sacrapant she knew straight way,

Whom erst she knew not, and that gallant beast,
For which of late those two began to fight,
She knew, and said belongd to him in right.

71

While these things passed thus, the standers by,
That oft hereof had heard Brunello bost,
Straight in such sort to him did cast their eye,
As turned greatly to Brunellos cost:
By which Marfisa plainly did descrie
Him, by whose theft her sword she late had lost,
To be Brunello, whom she saw there sitting,
Among great Lords, a place for him unfitting.

72

She heard, and much it grieved her to heare,
How for these thefts and many mo beside,
The King rewarded him, and held him deare,
Whereas in law for them he should have dide:
These news so greatly changd Marfisas cheare
That hardly she her wrath could longer hide,
Let Agramant accept it as he will,
She minds Brunello presently to kill.

73

Straight way she armed is from head to heele,
And makes her page her helmet close to claspe,
To him she goes, and with her glove of steele,
She gives him such a blow as made him gaspe,
And while the paine hereof doth make him reele
With her strong hand, his weak corse she doth graspe
As doth the Faulcon fierce the Mallard gripe,
To which a while before she gave a stripe.

74

With furie great from thence away she flings,
While he for helpe, and oft for mercy cride,
But will he, nill he, him away she brings,
Like to a thiefe with hands together tide,
Where Agramant among the meaner Kings,
Sate like a judge their causes to decide,
Then making some obeysance for good manner,
She speaketh thus in short but stately manner.

75

Sir King, I minde to hang this thiefe your man,
That by desart should long ere this have dide,

For when he stole that horse from him, even than
He stole my sword that hanged by my side:
But if there any be, that dare or can
Deny my words, or say that I have lied;
Here in your presences I do desire,
To try by combat whether is the liar.

76

But least some should, as some by fortune may,
Affirme, I chuse this time to make new strife,
Alone at such a time, on such a day,
When other quarrels in the campe are rife,
I am content a day or two to stay,
And to prolong this wretched captives life,
To see if any man will him defend,
And after sure to hang him I intend.

77

I meane (quoth she) to bring him three mile hence,
And keepe him as a prisner in yon towre,
And with his life I promise to dispence,
For two dayes space, and longer not an howre,
If any list to fight in his defence,

There let him come and trie my force and powre:
Away she gallopt when she this had said,
And on her saddle bow the wretch she laid.

78

The King was sore displeasd at this attempt,
And much it did his princely mind enrage,
And minds himselfe to wreake so great contempt,
Untill Sobrino, one both grave and sage,
Told him in wisdom he must be content,
His choler in this matter to asswage;
And said it were a base part for his highnesse,
To fight for one sprung up by theft and slinesse.

79

Yea though before hand he were sure to win,
Yet would such victorie dishonor have,
Because a woman vanquisht were therein:
Wherefore (quoth he) if you his life might save,
With one words speech, to speake that word were sin;
For sure she doth but law and justice crave:
And Princes never do themselves more wrong,
Then when they hinder justice, or prolong.

80

You may (said he) to satisfie your mind,
Send after her, in manner of request,
And promise her, that if just cause you find,
He shall be hangd, and so all strife may rest;
But if to this you find her not inclind,
Give her her will, for so I thinke tis best;
So that she firmly in your friendship bide,
Hang up Brunello, and all theeves beside.

81

This good direction Agramant obeying,
Went not himselfe, nor sent none to molest her,
But yet according to Sobrinos saying,
He sent a messenger that might request her:
Himselfe the while doth travell in allaying
The tumults fierce that all his campe do pester:
Pride laughs at this, and Discord so rejoyces,
As up to heavn flie their eternall voyces.

82

Five men most resolute have set their rest,
To be the first that will begin the fight,

The strife so intricate, as would molest
Apollo to decide or set it right,
Yet Agramant still strives to do his best,
And to compound the matter if he might:
And thus to end the matter he begonne,
Twixt Rodomont and Agricanes sonne.

83

He makes to them this good and friendly motion,
That sith for Doralice they onely strave,
They would agree to stand at her devotion,
And let her take her choise which she will have,
And that once made, to raise no more commotion.
This pleasd them both, to this consent they gave;
A certaine hope and trust them both alluring,
Each on himselfe of her firme love assuring.

84

The Sarzan King doth thinke, that needs she must
Give sentence on his side, and be his owne,
Sith oft he had in turneys and in just,
Her favours worne, and his affection showne:
How can she love (thinkes he) or put her trust

In one, who she scant three daies space hath knowne?
Nor was alone his owne opinion such,
But all the campe beside did thinke as much.

85

They all thinke Mandricardo overseene,
And made no question but she would reject him:
But he that knew what past had them betweene,
And found that she did inwardly affect him,
Was sure, although his service were unseene,
And done by night, that she would not neglect him;
Wherefore of her good will he nothing doubting,
Did scorne their scorns, and flouted at their flouting.

86

Thus having put the matter in her choyce,
And put the choice in her owne declaration,
She with a sober looke and lowly voice,
Chose Mandricard, against all expectation:
The Tartar Prince hereat did much rejoyce,
But all the rest were filld with admiration,
And Rodomont himselfe was so astound,
As hardly he could lift his eyes from ground.

87

But when his wonted wrath had drivn away
That bashfull shame that dyde his face with red,
Unjust he cald that doome, and curst that day,
And clapping hand upon his sword, he sed,
This better arbitrate our matters may,
Then womens foolish doome by fancie led,
Who oftentimes are so perverse in chusing,
They take the worst, the offerd best refusing.

88

Go then (quoth Mandricard) I little care,
I hope that fight shall yeeld you like successe:
And thus againe to fight they ready are,
But Agramant doth soone that rage represses,
And said, upon this point againe to square,
Quite were against all lawes of armes expresse:
And Rodomont he sharply then controid,
That in his sight was against law so bold.

89

The Sarzan King that saw himselfe that day,
So noted by those Peeres with double scorne,

Both from his Prince, whom he must needs obey,
And her to whom so great love he had borne,
With fury great he flings from thence away,
And counts himselfe disgrast and quite forlorne:
Of all his traine two men he onely taketh,
The King, the campe, the place he quite forsaketh.

90

And as a Bull his loved heard that leaves,
By his strong rivall forced to be gone;
Among the trees all clad with thickest leaves,
Doth hide himselfe, and seekes to be alone:
So he, whom shame of comfort all bereaves,
Flies sight of men, yet still he thinks thereon;
And chiefe when he remembers what disgrace
His mistris did him in so open place.

91

Rogero gladly would have him pursude,
To get his horse, but yet he doth refraine,
Lest men should thinke he had the fight eschude,
That did twixt Mandricard and him remaine.
But Sacrapant whom no cause doth include,

Pursues the Sarzan King, the horse to gaine:
And doubtlesse had outgone him that same day,
But for mishap that chanced by the way.

92

A damsell fell by hap into a river,
And was in perill great to have bin drownd;
He lighting from his horse backe to relieve her,
Lept in, and brought her out all safe and sound:
But doing this good act, her to deliver,
Scarce all that day his horse againe he found,
His horse got loose, and he with all his cunning,
Could scantly catch him in sixe howers running.

93

At last with much ado he doth him get,
And after Rodomont he then doth make;
But where, and how long after him he met,
And how the Sarzan did him prisner take,
I may not now proceed to ten as yet:
First tell I what vild words the Sarzan spake,
That cald his Prince and mistris both unkind,
And for her fault doth raile at all her kind.

94

With scalding sighes, that inward pangs bewrayd,
He breathes out flames in places where he goes,
From rocks and caves his plaints doth eccho ayd,
And takes compassion on his ruffull woes;
O womens wits, how weake you are (he said)
How soone to change you do your selves dispose?
Observers of no faith, nor good direction,
Most wretched all that trust in your protection.

95

Could neither service long, nor sured love,
By me above a thousand wayes declared,
Thy fickle mind to fastnesse so farre move,
But wilfully to let thy selfe be snared?
If reason could have led thy mind to prove,
Was Mandricard with me to be compared?
Hereof can reason be alledgd by no man,
But this alone, my mistris is a woman.

96

I thinke that nature, or some angry God,
Brought forth this wicked sex on earth to dwell,

For some great plague, or just deserved rod
To us, that wanting them had lived well:
As in the wormes, an Adder, Snake and Tode:
Among the Beasts, Beares, Wolves and Tygers fell:
And makes the aire the Flie and Waspe to breed,
And Tares to grow among the better seed.

97

Why did not Nature rather so provide,
Without your helpe that man of man might come,
And one be grafted on anothers side,
As are the Apples with the Peare and Plom?
But Nature can no meane nor rule abide,
But still she must exceed in all or some;
Full easie tis the cause thereof to render,
For Nature selfe is of the womans gender.

98

Yet be not therefore proud and full of scorne,
O womankind, that men come of your seed;
The fragrant Rose growth on the pricking thorne,
The Lilly faire comes of a filthy weed;
In lothsome soyle men sow the wholesome corne;

The basest mould, the fairest flowre doth breed:
Ungratefull, false and craftie yare and cruell,
Borne of our burning hell to be the fuell.

99

These words, and like to these the Pagan fearece,
Doth spend amid his rage and frantike fumes;
And like a mad man did the same rehearse,
Sometime in hie, oft times in baser tunes:
I tremble to set downe in my poore verse,
The blasphemie that he to speake presumes;
And writing this I do, know this that I
Full oft in heart do give my pen the lie.

100

But Passion did this Pagans sense so blind,
And left within the same so sharpe a sting,
That he not onely blamd his love unkind,
But also ragd against his soveraigne King,
And cursed him, and wished in his mind,
That fortune so great woes on him might bring,
That he might loose his state and princely crowne,
And see his country turnd quite upsidowne.

101

And being to such miseries once brought,
And with adversitie assaild so sore,
That then by him his freedome might be wrought,
And that he might his former state restore,
That Agramant might by such prooffe be taught,
Of faithfull friends indeed to set more store,
And learne to know, that such a friend as he,
Deservd in right and wrong preferd to be.

102

Thus blaming oft his Lord, more oft his love,
To his owne native soyle his course he bent,
But changing place, could not his sorrow move,
Nor travels paine, his paine of mind relent;
It seemd his horse Frontino well to prove,
Before his bridle should be drawne, he ment,
To Sonna he doth ride without a bait,
And minds fro thence to passe to Provence strait.

103

And there to cast away all care and carke,
And all his anguish quickly to appease,

For Affrica he will himselfe imbarke,
And passe the large Mediterranean seas;
But, for the weather, now waxt dim and darke,
First in his Inne he minds to take his ease,
For all the country, evn as farre as Spaine,
In Agramantes powre did then remaine.

104

Now he resolves to lodge about the cost,
And long he is not of a place to seeke,
For straight he was invited by an host,
To take his house, if so it might him like:
It pleasd the Pagan well, to heare him bost,
That he had Corsike wine, and French and Greeke,
For though he were a Turke in all the rest,
Yet did he like French fashion drinking best.

105

The pleasant host, that was indeed of those,
That can with double diligence attend,
As having savd, amid both friends and foes,
His goods, and gaind by that which both do spend;
When by that princes view he did suppose

Him some great man, he straight abroade did send,
And thither doth his kin and friends request,
To helpe to waite, and welcome such a guest.

106

But loe, his guest sits musing all apart,
And of his Mistres runneth all his thought,
Which (though he would forget) spite of his heart,
He thinks on still, so strong the fancy wrought:
The standers by are not so malipart,
To talk to him, till he occasion sought:
Which having found, up from his chaire he started,
And salutations to them all imparted.

107

Then askt he many questions of them all,
And as occasion servd, discourses varid;
But still we find, and ever find we shall,
By thought of heart the speech of tongue is carid:
For last to treat of marriage he doth fall,
And asketh of the men if they be marid:
And if they be, he prayth them to declare,
Of their wives truths, what their opinions are.

108

Straight all of them made answer they had wives,
And but mine host, all praised the happy state;
And said they were the comforts of their lives,
That draw a happy yoke without debate:
A playfellow that farre off all grieffe drives,
A steward, early that provides and late;
Both faithfull, chast, and sober, mild, and trusty,
Nurse to weak age, and pleasure to the lusty.

109

Tush (quoth mine host) under your good correction,
(Most noble guest) these fellowes say not right,
But either with fond love, or foule subjection,
So blinded are, they take the black for white:
I once my selfe was toucht with this infection,
But now I see that then I wanted sight:
And now I know, as being better taught,
That theirs and mine be all unchast and naught.

110

For as the Phoenix is a bird alone,
And of that kind the whole world hath no more;

So (think I) of all wives there is but one,
That liveth chaste in love and vertues lore:
He blest may be that lighteth her upon,
Small hope (think I) there is in so scant store,
That many should have one of such a kind,
Of which in all the world but one I find.

111

I once so blinded was as now be these,
Till by good hap unto my house there came
A gentleman of Venice from the seas,
Francis Valerio was he cald by name:
He knew, and could declare them all with ease,
All womens wiles, and stories to the same
He had of old; and of the later times,
To shew both wives, and single womens crimes.

112

He said, and bad me hold it as my creed,
That all of them are false, if they be trid:
If some seemd chaste, it did of this proceed,
They had the wit to do, and not be spid,
And knew by deep dissembling and good heed,

With sober looks their wanton lusts to hide:
And this to prove, he told me such a tale,
As while I live I still remember shall.

113

And if it like you sir to lend me care,
In my rude fashion I shall it recite;
Right glad (quoth Rodomont) by heavns I sweare,
For thou hast hit my present humour right:
Wherefore (said he) sit down I pray thee there,
For in thy speech already I delight:
But here I end this book, for doubt I have,
That in his tale mine host will play the knave.

ARGUMENT

THE TWENTYEIGHT BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Fierce Rodomont heares of his prating Host
A lying tale, to womens great disgrace:
Unto Algier he meanes to passe in post:
But by the way he finds more pleasing place,
Faire Isabell passeth by that cost;
The Pagan changeth mind, and sues for grace:
The Hermit warnes her keep her vow and oth,
At which the Pagan Prince is passing wroth.

TWENTYEIGHTBOOKE

1

You Ladies, ye that Ladies hold in prize,
Give not (perdie) your eare to this same tale,
The which to tell, mine Host doth here devise,
To make men thinke your vertues are but small:
Though from so base a tongue there can arise,
To your sweet sexe, no just disgrace at all;
Fooles will find fault without the cause discerning,
And argue most of that they have no learning.

2

Turn ovr the leaf, and let this tale alone,
If any think the sex by this disgracd,
I write it for no spite, nor malice none,
But in my Authors book I find it placd;
My loyall love to Ladies all is known,
In whom I see such worth to be imbracd,
That theirs I am, and glad would be therefore,
To shew thereof a thousand proofes and more.

3

Peruse it not; or if you do it read,
Esteeme it not, but as an idle bable;
Regard it not; or if you take some heed,
Believe it not, but as a foolish fable:
But to the matter, thus it was indeed,
When all the guests were cheared at the table;
Neare Rodomont (so was the Pagan namd)
Down sate mine Host, and thus his tale he framd.

4

Astolfo, whilom king of Lumbardy,
To whom his elder brother left his raigne,
Was in his youth so fresh and faire to see,
As few to such perfection could attaine:
Apelles match, or Zeuces he might be,
That such a shape could paint without much paine,
Great was his grace, and all the world so deemd it,
But yet himselfe of all men most esteemd it.

5

He did not of his scepter take such pride,
Nor that degree that common men are under,

Nor wealth, nor friends, nor meaner kings beside,
That thereabout dwelt neare or far asunder:
But of his beauty, which he would not hide,
At whose rare worth he thought the world did wonder,
This was his joy, and all that he intended,
To heare his comely face and shape commended.

6

Among his courtiers, one above the rest,
Fausto by name, by birth a Romane knight:
Who hearing oft so praisd, as they know best,
His face, and hands, and all that praise he might,
The king did bid him tell at his request,
Neare or farre off if he had seen that wight,
That in all parts so perfectly was wrought:
But he was answerd as he little thought.

7

My Liege (quoth Fausto) plainly to declare,
Both what my selfe doth see, and others say,
But few with your rare beauty can compare,
And that same few were none, were one away:
Iocundo hight, a man of beauty rare,

And brother mine, excepting whom, I may
Prefer your grace before all other creatures,
But he doth match or passe you for his features.

8

The king to heare such tidings strange it thought,
As having still till that day kept the prize,
And with a deep desire straightwayes he sought,
To know this man, and see him with his eyes:
In fine, with Fausto so far forth he wrought,
To bring him to his court he must devise:
Although (quoth he) to bring my brother to it,
I shall be sure of work enough to do it.

9

The cause is this, my brother never went
Forth of the gates of Rome scant all his life,
And such small goods as Fortune hath him lent,
He hath enjoyd in quiet, free from strife,
Left by our sire, and them he hath not spent,
Nor yet increast, his gaines are not so rife:
And he will think it more to go to Pavy,
Then some would think to thIndies in a Navy.

10

But I shall find it hardest when I prove,
To draw him from his loving wife away;
To whom he is so linkd in chaines of love,
That all is vaine, if once his wife say nay:
But yet your grace is so far all above,
You shall command me, certes all I may.
Thanks (quoth the king) and addeth such reward,
As might have moved any to regard.

11

Away he posts, arriving in few dayes
At Rome, and to his brothers house he went,
And with such earnest words his brother prays,
That to return with him he doth consent:
Also his sisters love he so allayes,
That she doth hold her peace as halfe content,
Beside great thanks, laying before her eyes
Preferments large, that hereof might arise.

12

Iocundo now resolvd to go his way,
Gets men and horse against he should depart,

Sets forth himselfe with new and rich array,
As still we see nature adorned by art,
His wife at night in bed, at board by day;
With watry eyes to shew a sorry heart,
Complains his absence will so sore her grieve,
Till his return she doubts she shall not live.

13

Ay me, the thought (quoth she) makes me so fraid,
That scant the breath abideth in my brest;
Peace my sweet love and life (Iocundo said)
And weeps as fast, and comforts her his best:
So may good fortune ay my journey aid,
As I return in threescore dayes at least:
Nor will I change the day I set thee down,
No though the king would grant me half his crown.

14

All this might not assuage this womans paine,
Two moneths were long, yea too too long she cries,
Needs must I die before you come againe,
Nor how to keep my life can I devise:
The dolefull dayes and nights I shall sustaine,

From meat my mouth, from sleep will keep mine eyes;
Now was Iocundo ready to repent,
That to his brother he had givn consent.

15

About her neck a jewell rich she ware,
A crosse all set with stone in gold well tride,
This relick late a Boem Pilgrim bare,
And gave her father other things beside:
Which costly things he kept with no small care,
Till comming from Jerusalem he did:
And her of all his goods his heire he makes,
This precious crosse to her goodman she takes.

16

And prayes him for her sake to weare that token,
And think on her: the man that was most kind,
Receivd it with more joy then can be spoken,
Although he needed not be put in mind,
For why no time, nor no state sound nor broken,
Nor absence long, a mean should ever find,
To quaile his love, not onely while his breath
Maintaines his life, but neither after death.

17

That very night that went before the morrow,
That they had pointed surely to depart;
Iocundos wife was sick, and sounds for sorrow,
Amid his armes, so heavy was her heart;
All night they wake, and now they bid Godmorrow,
And give their last farewell, and so they part;
Iocundo on his way with all his traine,
His loving wife doth go to bed againe.

18

Scant had Iocundo rode two mile forthright,
But that his crosse now came into his mind,
Which on his pillow he had laid last night,
And now for hast had left the same behind:
He would devise to scuse it if he might,
But no excuse sufficient could he find:
But that his love must needs be much suspected,
To find the precious jewell so neglected.

19

When no excuse within his mind could frame,
But that all seemed frivolous and vaine;

To send his man he counted it a shame,
To go himselfe it was but little paine:
He staid, and when his brother did the same,
Ride soft (quoth he) till I return againe:
For home againe I must, there is no nay,
But I will overtake you on the way.

20

Thaffaire is such as none can do but I,
But doubt you not, I will return as fast;
Away he spurres as hard as he could hie,
Alone without or man or page, for hast:
Now had the suns new rising cleard the skie,
With brightest beames, ere he the streame had past,
He hies him home, and finds his wife in bed,
Full sound asleep, such cares were in her head.

21

He drawes the curtaine softly without sound,
And saw that he would little have suspected;
His chaste and faithfull yokefellow he found
Yokd with a knave, all honesty neglected:
ThAdulterer, though sleeping very sound,

Yet by his face was easily detected:
A beggars brat, bred by him from his cradle,
And now was riding on his masters saddle.

22

Now if he stood amazd and discontent,
Believe it ye, to trie that would be loth;
For he that tries it, doubtlesse will repent,
As poore Iocundo did, who was so wroth,
That out he drew his sword, with just intent,
For their ungratefull act to kill them both:
But lo, the love he bare her, did withstand,
Against his heart, to make him hold his hand.

23

O ribald love, that such a slave couldst make,
Of one that now was subject to thy force;
He could not break her sleep for pities sake,
That brake all bonds of faith without remorse;
But back he goes before they did awake,
And from his house he gets him to his horse:
Love so pricks him, and he so pricks his steed,
He overtakes his company with speed.

24

His look is sad, all changed is his cheare,
Full heavy was his heart they well perceivd,
They see no cause of grieffe, nor guesse they neare,
And they that guesse most likely, are deceivd;
They thought he went to Rome, but you do heare
How at Cornetto he his hurt receivd:
Each man espid that love procurd that passion,
But none descried the manner nor the fashion.

25

His brother deems that all his grieffe doth grow,
Because his loving wife is left alone;
But he a cleane contrary cause doth know,
Her too much company did cause his mone:
He bends his browes, his looks he casts alow,
With powting lips, and many a grievous grone;
In vaine doth Faustus comfort seek to bring him,
For why he knowes not where the shoe doth wring him.

26

He gives a salve afore the sore is found,
His plaisters are as poison to the smart;

He seeks to heale, and wider makes the wound,
He names his wife, but her name kills his heart:
Gone was his tast, his sleeps do grow unsound,
Nature decayth, and little helpeth art;
And that faire face that erst was of such fame,
Is now so changd, it seemeth not the same.

27

His eyes are sunk so deep into his head,
It made his nose seem bigger then it should,
His flesh doth shrink, his bones do seem to spread,
He was so changd, as more cannot be told;
At last an ague makes him keep his bed,
And bait at innes more often then he would;
His faire complexion now is pale and withered,
Much like the Rose that yesterday was gathered.

28

With this mishap was Faustus sore agrievd,
Not onely for his brothers wofull state,
But fearing of his Prince to be reprovd,
Unto whose grace he undertook so late,
To shew the goodliest man, as he believd,

Now growne uncouth, by force of inward bate:
Yet as they could their way they so contrivd,
That at the last in Pavie they arrivd.

29

He would not straightway shew him to the King,
Lest evry one might deem his judgement small,
But sent by letters notice of the thing,
And what mishap his brother did befall;
How scant alive he could him thither bring,
A secret griefe so greatly did him gall,
And with an ague puld him down so sore,
He seemd not now the man he was before.

30

And yet behold this noble King is glad
That he is come, and meanes to make him cheare,
As if he were the dearest friend he had,
So sore he had desird to see him here:
Nor would the worthy naturd Prince be sad,
In praise of beauty to have found a Peere;
He knew Iocundos beauty had exceld,
But that by this disease it was expeld.

31

He placeth him to his own lodging nigh,
He visits him each day and evry houre,
Great plenty of provision he doth buy,
To welcome him he bendeth all his power:
But still Iocundo languishing doth lie,
His wives misdeeds makes all his sweet seem sowre,
No songs, no sighs, which oft he heard or saw,
One dram of this his dolour could withdraw.

32

Fast by his lodging was (amongst the rest)
A faire large room, which very few did use,
Here would he walk, as one that did detest
All pleasing sights, and comforts all refuse:
Here the wide wound he bare within his brest,
With thousand thoughts unpleasant he renewes;
Yet here he found (which few would have believd)
A remedy for that which had him grievd.

33

For at the upper end of this old hall,
There was a place of windowes void, and light,

Save that the lime new molten from the wall,
Let in a little beame that shined bright;
Here did he see (which some may think a tale)
A very strange and unexpected sight,
He heard it not, but saw it in his view,
Yet could he scant believe it should be true.

34

For at the chink was plainly to be seen
A chamber hangd with faire and rich array,
Where none might come, but such as trusty been:
The Princesse here in part doth spend the day,
And here he saw a Dwarfe embrace the Queen,
And strive a while; and after homely play
His skill was such, that ere they went asunder,
The Dwarfe was got aloft, and she lay under.

35

Iocundo standeth still as one amazd,
Supposing sure that he had seen a vision,
But seeing plaine when he a while had gazd,
It was an act, and not an apparition:
Good God (said he) are this Queenes eyes so dazd,

To love a Dwarfe, more worthy of derision?
Whose husband is a Prince of worthy fame,
So brave a man, such love? now fie for shame.

36

He now began to hold his wife excusd,
His anger now a little was relented:
And though that she her body had abusd,
And to her servant had so soon consented;
Not her for this, but he the sex accusd,
That never can with one man be contented:
If all (quoth he) with one like staine are spotted,
Yet on a monster, mine was not besotted.

37

The day ensuing he returned thither,
And saw the dwarfe couragious still and jolly;
Eke he another day repaired hither,
And still he found the Queen committing folly:
He oft returns, he finds them oft together,
They cease not work, on dayes prophane nor holy:
Yea which was strange, the goodly Queen complaind
That of the dwarfe she found she was disdaind.

38

One day when in the corner he had staid,
He sees her come all sad and malecontent,
Because the dwarfe her comming still delaid,
For whom of purpose twice before she sent;
Once more she sends, this answer brings the maid,
Forsooth unto his play he is so bent,
That for mistrust at chesse to leese a shilling,
To come to you the apes face is not willing.

39

Iocundo who before had still been sad,
Upon this sight became of better cheare;
The paines, the plaints, the cloudy stormes he had,
Away were blown, the coast began to cleare:
Most ruddie faire he chearfull grew and glad,
That angelllike his beauty did appeare,
So as the King and others thought it strange,
In so short time to find so great a change.

40

Now as the King desired much to know,
The mean whereby his hurt so soon was heald,

No lesse Iocundo did desire to show,
And would not have the thing from him conceald,
So as his choler might no greater grow,
Then his had been, when as it were reveald:
But first he made him swears on his salvation,
Upon the parties to use no castigation.

41

He made him swears for ought he heard or saw,
Wherewith his mind might fortune be diseas'd,
Yet from his choler so much to withdraw,
As that in shew he may not seem displeas'd,
Nor punish it by might nor yet by law,
Nor first nor last, but hold himselfe appeas'd,
So as thoffenders might not have suspected,
That their misdeeds were to his grace detected.

42

The King so sure, by oth so solemne bound,
As one that little thought his Queene so staine'd,
Iocundo first his own grieffe doth expound,
Why he so long so dolefull had remain'd,
And in whose armes his own wife he had found,

And how the griefe thereof so sore him paid,
Had not that salve unlookd for been applied,
Of that conceit no doubt he should have died.

43

But lying in your highnesse house forlorn,
I saw (quoth he) that minisht much my mone;
For though it grieved me to weare a horn,
It pleasd me well, I ware it not alone:
This said, he brought him where the wall was torn,
And shewd him that that made his heart to grone,
For why the dwarfe did mannage with such skill,
Though she curvets he keeps his styrup still.

44

Much did the King this foule prospect mislike,
Believe my words I say, I need not sweare,
Horn wood he was, he was about to strike
All those he met, and his own flesh to teare;
His promise to have broken he was like,
If of his oath he had not had some feare;
But unrevenged all must now be born,
For on his Agnus Dei he had sworn.

45

Now to Iocundo gently he doth speak,
Good brother mine, advise me what to do,
Sith I am bound by oath, I may not wreak
The fact, with such revenge as longs thereto;
Forsooth lets trie if others be as weak,
(Iocundo said) and make no more ado:
This was the counsell he did give the King,
Into their order other men to bring.

46

We both are yong, and of such pleasing hew,
Not to be matcht with such another paire:
What she will be so obstinately true,
But will be won with youth, and being faire?
If youth and beauty both do misse their due,
The want herein our purses shall repaire:
Let us not spare our beauty, youth, and treasure,
Till of a thousand we have had our pleasure.

47

To see strange countries placed farre apart,
Of other women eke to make some triall,

Will ease the paine that whilom piercd our heart,
And salve our sore, there can be no deniall:
The King that longd to ease his newfound smart,
Consented straight, and to avoid espiall,
Himselfe, the Knight, two pages, and no mo,
Out of the Realme forthwith disguised go.

48

Away they past through Italy and France
And through the Flemish and the English land,
And those whose beauties highest did advance,
Those still they found most ready to their hand:
They give, they take, so luckie is their chance,
To see their stock at one stay still to stand:
Some must be wood forsooth they were so chast,
And some there were that wooed them as fast.

49

In countries some a moneth or two they taried,
In some a week, in others but a day;
In all of them they find the women married,
Like to their wives, too gentle to say nay:
At last because they doubt to have miscaried,

They mean to leave this sport, and go their way;
They found it full of danger and debate,
To keep their standings in anothers gate.

50

They do agree to take by common voice,
Some one whose shape and face may please them both,
In whom without suspect they might rejoyce;
For wherefore (quoth the King) should I be loth,
To have your selfe a partner in my choice?
I must have one, and I believe for troth,
Among all women kind there is not one
That can content her selfe with one alone.

51

But of some one we two might take our pleasure,
And not inforce our selves beyond our ease,
But as they say, take meat, and drink, and leasure,
And by our doings other not displease;
Well might that woman think she had a treasure,
That had us two her appetite to please:
And though to one man faithfull none remaine,
No doubt but faithfull they would be to twaine.

52

The Roman youth much praised the Princes mind,
And to perform it, seemed very faine,
Away they posted as they had assignd,
By town and city, over hill and plaine,
Till at the last a prettie peece they find,
The daughter of an Inkeeper in Spaine,
A gyrl of person tall, and faire of favour,
Of comely presence, and of good behaviour.

53

She was new entring in the flower and pride
Of those well pleasing youthfull yeares and tender,
Her father many children had beside,
And poverty had made his portion slender,
And for them all unable to provide,
It made him soon consent, away to send her;
The price agreed, away the strangers carie her,
Because the father money wants to marie her.

54

In concord great she did with them remaine,
Who took their pleasure one and one by turn,

As bellows do, Where Vulcans wonted paine
By mutuall blast doth make the metall burn:
Their meaning is, now they had traveld Spaine,
By Siphax realme to make their home return;
And having left Valenza out of sight,
At faire Zativa they did lodge at night.

55

The masters go abroad to view the town,
And first the Churches for devotions sake;
And then the monuments of most renown,
As travellers a common custome take:
The gyrl within the chamber sate her down,
The men are busied, some the beds do make,
Some care to dresse their wearied horse, and some
Make ready meat against their masters come.

56

In this same house the gyrl a Greeke had spid,
That in her fathers house a boy had been,
And slept full often sweetly by her side,
And much good sport had passed them between;
Yet fearing lest their love should be descrid,

In open talk they durst not to be seen,
But when by hap the pages down were gone,
Old love renewd and thus they talk thereon.

57

The Greek demands her whither she was going,
And which of these two great estates her keeps?
She told them all, she needs no further woing,
And how a night between them both she sleeps:
Ah (quoth the Greek) thou tellest my undoing,
My deare Fiametta, and with that he weeps;
With these two Lords wilt thou from Spaine be banishd
Are all my hopes thus into nothing vanishd?

58

My sweet designements turned are to sowre,
My service long finds little recompence;
I made a stock according to my power,
By hoarding up my wages, and the pence
That guests did give, that came in luckie houre;
I meant ere long to have departed hence,
And to have askd thy sires good will to marie thee,
And that obtaind, unto a house to carie thee.

59

The wench of her hard fortune doth complaine,
And saith that now she doubts he sues too late;
The Greeke doth sigh and sob, and part doth faine,
And shall I die (quoth he) in this estate?
Let me enjoy thy sweetnesse once againe,
Before my dayes draw to their dolefull date;
One small refreshing ere we quite depart,
Will make me die with more contented heart.

60

The gyrlle with pitie moved, thus replies,
Think not (quoth she) but I desire the same;
But hard it is among so many eyes,
Without incurring punishment and shame.
Ah (quoth the Greeke) some meanes thou wouldst devise,
If thou but felt a quarter of my flame,
To meet this night in some convenient place,
And be together but a little space.

61

Tush (answerd she) you sue now out of season,
For evry night I lie betwixt them two,

And they will quickly feare, and find the treason,
Sith still with one of them I have to do.
Well (quoth the Greeke) I could refute that reason,
If you would put your helping hand thereto,
You must (said he) some pretie scuse devise,
And find occasion from them both to rise.

62

She first bethinks her selfe, and after bad
He should return when all were sound asleep,
And learned him, who was thereof right glad,
To go and come, what order he should keep.
Now came the Greeke, as he his lesson had,
When all was husht, as soft as he could creep,
First to the doore, which opend when he pushd,
Then to the chamber, which was softly rushd.

63

He takes a long and leisurable stride,
And longest on the hinder foot he staid,
So soft he treads, although his steps were wide,
As though to tread on eggs he were afraid;
And as he goes, he gropes on either side

To find the bed, with hands abroad displaid,
And having found the bottome of the bed,
He creepeth in, and forward goth his head.

64

Between Fiamettas tender thighes he came,
That lay upright, as ready to receive,
At last they fell unto their merry game,
Embracing sweetly now to take their leave;
He rode in post, ne can he bait for shame,
The beast was good, and would not him deceive,
He thinks her pace so easie and so sure,
That all the night to ride he could endure.

65

Iocundo and the King do both perceive
The bed to rock, as oft it comes to passe,
And both of them one errour did deceive,
For either thought it his companion was:
Now hath the Greeke taken his latter leave,
And as he came, he back againe doth passe,
And Phoebus beames did now to shine begin,
Fiametta rose and let the pages in.

66

Now with Iocundo gan the King to jest,
Brother (quoth he) I doubt we do you wrong,
It were more time for you to take your rest,
That have this night a journey rode so long.
Iocundo answers him againe in jest,
Oh sir, you do mistake, you sing my song;
Take you your ease, and much good do your grace,
That all this night have rid a hunting pace.

67

I, quoth the King? I would in faith I swear
Have lent my dog a course among the rest,
But that I found your selfe so busie were,
And rode so hard, you could not spare the beast.
Well (said the Knight) it seemeth me to beare,
Although you brake your promise and behest,
Yet privy quips and taunts here needed none,
You might have bid me let the wench alone.

68

One urgd so farre, the tother so replid,
That unto bitter words their tongues were moovd,

Scarce one forbare to say the tother lid:
And plaine to trie whose truth should be reprov'd,
They cald the gyrl the matter to decide,
Who was afraid, as well it her behoov'd
And she must tell (they standing face to face)
Which of them two deserved this disgrace.

69

Tell (quoth the King) with grim and angry sight,
Nor feare not him nor me, but tell us true,
Which of us two it was, that all this night
So gallantly performed all his due.
Thus either deeming he did hold the right,
They looked both which should be found untrue:
Fiametta lowly laid her selfe on ground,
Doubting to die because her fault was found.

70

She humbly pardon craves for her offence,
And that they pitie would her wofull case,
That she with pitie mov'd to recompence
His love, that lasted had no little space,
And who it was, she told them, and of whence,

Had this ill luck in this unluckie place,
How she had hopd that though they, hapt to wake,
Yet for his partner either would it take.

71

The King and his companion greatly musd,
When they had heard the practice so detected,
And their conceits not little were confusd,
To heare a hap so strange and unexpected:
And though no two were ever so abusd,
Yet had they so all wrathfull mind rejected,
That down they lay, and fell in such a laughter,
They could not see nor speak an houre after.

72

And when at last their stomacks and their eyes
Waterd and akd, they laughed had so much,
Such shifts (quoth they) these women will devise,
Do what we can, their chastity is such:
If both our cares could not for one suffice,
That lay betwixt us both, and did us touch,
If all our haire were eyes, yet sure they said,
We husbands of our wives should be betraid.

73

We had a thousand women provd before,
And none of them denied our request,
Nor would and if we trid ten thousand more,
But this one triall passeth all the rest:
Let us not then condemne our wives so sore,
That are as chaste and honest as the best,
Sith they be as all other women be,
Let us turn home, and well with them agree.

74

When on this point they both were thus resolvd,
They gave the Greeke Fiametta for his wife,
And tid the knot that cannot be dissolvd,
With portion large, to keep them all their life:
Themselves went home, and had their sins absolvd,
And take againe their wives, and end all strife:
And thus mine Host the prettie storie ended,
With which he prayth them not to be offended.

75

The Pagan Prince, of whom I erst made mention,
Was pleased with this story passing well,

And heard the same with heed and great attention,
And praised it, and said it did excell,
And swears he thought no wit nor no invention,
No pen could write, no tongue attaine to tell,
By force of eloquence, or help of art,
Of womens trecheries the hundredth part.

76

But at the table sate another guest,
Of riper yeares, and judgement more discreet,
Who such untruths to heare could not digest,
And see their praises so trod under feet;
Wherefore his speech he presently addrest
Unto his host, and said, we daily meet
With slanders and with lying fables told,
And this is one, to say I dare be bold.

77

Nor thee, nor him that told thee trust I will,
No though in other things he gospell spake,
I dare affirm it well, that evill will,
Not any triall that himselfe could make,
Movd him of all the kind to speak so ill,

Belike for some one naughty womans sake:
But he that would enter in womens praise,
On higher steps aloft his stile might raise.

78

But tell me now, if any one of you
That married are, have not awry yet stept?
No scarce a man, that hath not been untrue,
And with some other woman hath not slept:
Nay that is more, they woo, they seek, they sew,
They trie, they tempt those that be safest kept,
Yet women seek not after men I ween,
(I meane not such as common harlots been.)

79

Surely the man on whom your tale you father,
Cannot himselfe nor other men excuse,
Who still to take an unknown piece had rather,
Although their own were better far to chuse:
But if themselves were wood, I surely gather
Such curtesies they never would refuse,
But rather straine themselves beyond their might,
Such kindnesse with more kindnesse to requite.

80

But beet some woman breaks chast wedlocks lawes,
And leaves her husband, and becomes unchast,
Yet commonly it is not without cause,
She sees her man in sin his substance wast;
She feels that he his love from her withdrawes,
And hath on some (perhap) lesse worthy placd,
Who strikes with sword, the scabberd him may strike,
And sure love craveth love, like asketh like.

81

Indeed in their behalfe agree would I
That all wives that adultery do commit,
Should by a law condemned be to die,
If so their husbands guiltlesse be of it.
But if that men unpunishd walk awry,
Doubtlesse in sense and reason tis not fit,
The weaker sexe should for this sin be vext,
Do as you would be done to, saith the text.

82

Yet when a man is bent to speak his worst,
That in despite he can of women say,

He calls them but incontinent and curst,
No greater fault he to their charge can lay:
To rob, to spoile, houses to break and burst,
Whole cities, townes, and countries to betray.
Usury, murder, all such sinnes appeare
Proper to men, women of them are cleare.

83

This said this grave wise man, and would have told
Some story to the same, his speech to verifie,
Of women that had livd till they were old,
Chastly and vertuously, and with sincerity,
But that the cruell Turke did him behold,
With so grim look as did the poore man terrifie,
And made him hold his peace with threats and terror,
Yet hating inwardly the Pagans error.

84

These brables ended, night on them did creep,
To rest they went, having their bodies fed:
But Rodomont scant all the night could sleep,
For cares that ran still in his troubled head,
His unkind mistresse him doth waking keep,

She troubles him, whether he lie on bed,
Whether he go, or ride, or sit, or stand,
Whether it be by water or by land.

85

But though himselfe could take but little rest,
Yet of his horse he takes no little care,
Both that he should be diligently drest,
And have good provender, to mend his fare:
To go by water now he thought it best,
Himselfe to ease, and his good horse to spare,
That horse he gat, as he might justly vant,
Spite of Rogero, and of Sacrapant.

86

He takes a bark, and down the pleasant streame
Of Sonna he doth passe, with wind and ore,
Great hast he makes, to get to his own Reame,
But changing place doth help him ner the more;
In sleep, of her unkindnesse he doth dreame,
Awake, he sighs and still renewes the sore:
To talk was best, and yet not much the better,
Say what he list, yet cannot he forget her.

87

Annoid by boat, againe he taking land,
Vienna, Lions, and Valenza past,
All which then were in Agramantes hand,
His late good hap had so them all agast:
To Aquamort he turnes on his right hand,
And thence he will to Algier turn in hast,
And in his way, his journey to abridge,
He past Avignon at the sumptuous bridge.

88

Not far from Mompelier a towne he saw,
Of Bacchus, and of Ceres well belovd,
Though then so spoild by souldiers that for aw,
The dwellers all themselves from thence removd:
Also there was a Church for Christen law,
But yet the Priests (in this to be reprovd)
To save themselves, their Church had quite forsaken,
So as the same by Rodomont was taken.

89

This seat, this place, did so the Pagan please,
That here he minds to make his firm abode;

For of the one side he might see the seas,
On t'other side the ground with corn well load:
Here all provisions he might find with ease,
Here he doth cause his men his stuffe unload,
And makes that Church (oh horrible abuse)
Serve him, to his profane ungodly use.

90

Now standing pensive in this pleasing place,
As still he usd, he saw a Lady faire,
(Though mourning, yet most full of pleasing grace)
Who with a Frier made thither her repaire:
A goodly horse they led a soft slow pace,
And as they went he taught her many a praier:
That horse did beare a coffin on his back,
All overspread in mourning sort, with black.

91

Me think by this description you may guesse,
Who this same Frier, and who this damsell is,
Yet for more plainnesse sake, I will expresse
Her name, lest any may the matter misse.
Twas Isabella, who did late professe

That state that leadeth straight to heavnly blisse,
He was the Frier, that to that mind converted her,
When as despaire had almost quite subverted her.

92

Within the mourning coffin was inclosed
His corse, whom she so lovd alive and dead,
And though to grieffe she seemed all disposd,
Though all in black she went from foot to head,
Yet in that wofull shew there was disclosed
So worthy grace, as in the Pagan bred
A fancy, moving such an alteration,
As made him change his first determination.

93

For where before he did dispraise and scorn
All women, now againe he doth commend
That sex, that doth indeed the world adorn:
His second love to place he doth intend
On this, sith that his first hath him forlorn;
Here now he hopeth all his wo to end;
And with this passion to drive out the tother,
As men do drive out one naile with another.

94

And straight in mildest manner that he can,
Saluting her, he askd what causd her paine?
And she the wofull tale to tell began,
How her true love by Mandricard was slaine,
For whose sake she would never marrie man,
But serve God all her life that doth remaine:
The Pagan laughs at that the damsell saith,
As one that knowes no God, and hath no faith.

95

And greatly he her good intent controld,
Affirming her to merit as great blame,
As doth the miser that hoards up his gold,
And neither doth himselfe imploy the same,
And yet from those that would, doth it withhold:
So shut not up your selfe (quoth he) for shame;
Fierce Lions, Bears, and Serpents that have stings,
Should be shut up, not faire and harmlesse things.

96

The godly Frier that took no little care,
Lest this ill speech might turn her to small good,

With new exhortings, bad her to beware,
That such intisements strongly be withstood:
And for that end forthwith he doth prepare
A sumptuous messe of ghostly inward food:
But this vile Pagan did no sooner tast it,
But up againe his squemish stomack cast it.

97

And seeing that the speeches of this Frire,
(Whom he could make by no means hold his peace)
Seemd greatly to contrary his desire;
Wrath kindled, and at last did so increase,
That this poore priest got but a sorie hire.
But here a while my story now shall cease,
Lest my mishap or punishment be such
As was this Priests, for talking overmuch.

ARGUMENT

THE TWENTYNINTH BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Faire Isabella, to loose her head is glad,
To save her chastity from Pagans might:
To pacifie her ghost, the Pagan sad
Doth make a bridge, at which fals many a knight:
Orlando commeth thither, being mad,
And in the water both together light.
From thence the madman onward still proceeds,
And by the way doth strange and monstrous deeds.

TWENTYNINTHBOOKE

1

Oh thoughts of men, unconstant and unstable,
As subject unto change, as Western wind,
In all designments fond and variable,
But chiefly those that love breeds in the mind:
Lo he that late devisd all he was able,
To slander and deface all women kind,
Yet now with them whom he so sore revild,
Evn on the sudden he is reconcild.

2

Indeed (most noble Dames) I am so wroth
With this vile Turke, for this his wicked sin,
For speaking so great slander and untroth,
Of that sweet sex, whose grace I faine would win,
That till such time he shall confesse the troth,
And what a damned error he was in:
I shall him make be so in conscience stung,
As he shall teare his flesh, and bite his tongue.

3

But with what folly he was then possest,
The sequell of the matter plaine doth show,
For he that yesterday himselfe profest
To all the kind a sworn and open foe:
Now to this stranger one in state distrest,
Whose birth, whose kin, whose name he doth not know,
With one small glance, and sober cast of ey,
Was so enthrald, he woos her by and by.

4

And as new fancy doth his heart inflame,
So to new speech it doth his tongue direct,
A new discourse, new reasons he doth frame,
With great perswasions, but to small effect:
For still the godly Friere refutes the same,
Exhorting her such speeches to neglect,
And fast to hold her purpose good and holy
Of serving God, and leaving worldly folly.

5

He saith the way of death is large and spacious,
But that to life is straight and full of paine:

But Rodomont that saw him so audacious,
In spite of him this doctrine to maintaine;
Steps to him, and with hand and tongue ungracious,
First bids him get him to his cell againe;
Then his long beard grown on his aged chin,
All at one pull he pillesh from the skin.

6

And so farre forth his wrath and fury grew,
He wrings his neck, as pincers wring a naile,
And twice or thrice about his head him threw,
As husbandmen that thresh do tesse a flaile:
Reports most divers afterwards ensew,
But which be true, and which of truth do faile,
Is hard to say: some say he was so battered,
That all his limbs about a rock were scattered.

7

Some say that to the sea he hurled him,
Though diverse furlongs distant from the place,
And that he did because he could not swim:
Some others tell, some saint did him that grace,
To save his life, and heale each broken lim,

And to the shore did bring him in short space.
The likelihood hereof who list may way,
For now of him I have no more to say.

8

Thus cruell Rodomont that had removed
The babling Frire that did him so much spight;
The fearfull damsels love to win he proved,
By all kind words and gestures that he might;
He cals her his deare heart, his sole beloved,
His joyfull comfort, and his sweet delight,
His mistresse and his goddesse, and such names,
As loving Knights apply to lovely dames.

9

Her reasons he doth curteously confute,
(Love soone had made him such a learned clarke)
In phrases mannerly he moves his sute,
And still his sute was leveld at one marke,
And though he might by force have pluckt the frute,
Yet for that time he doth but kisse the barke:
He thinkes it will more sweet and pleasing make it,
If she do give him leave before he take it.

10

Wherefore a while he is content to pawse,
In hope by time to win her love and grace:
She deems her selfe like mouse in cats sharpe clawes,
In strangers hands, and in as strange a place;
She sees he feard not Gods nor humane lawes,
Nor had no pittie of her wofull case,
That onely for his lust would her perswade,
To breake the vow that she to God had made.

11

Her heart and eyes oft times to heavn she lifts,
And prayes the blessed Virgin and her Sonne,
To save her from this Pagans filthy drifts,
That unto her no villanie be donne:
She doth bethinke her of an hundred shifts,
How she his beastly lust may safely shunne,
That like an open gulfe on her did gape,
So as it seemd impossible to scape.

12

She finds out many scuses and delayes,
That to prolong, which faine she would prevent,

Sometime in humble manner him she prays,
That to release her he would be content:
But being still repulst at all assayes,
At last she doth a way and meanes invent,
Not onely how to shun that present shame,
But merit to her selfe eternall name.

13

Unto the cruell Turke that now began
From all good course of curtesie to swarve,
She commeth in the meekest sort she can,
And saith, if he her honour will preserve;
(Which is the part of each true valiant man)
She would of him that favour well deserve,
And give him such a gift as in due measure,
Should farre surpasse this momentarie pleasure.

14

But if you needs will me defloure, I wis
(She said) when you have done you will repent,
To thinke how fondly you have done amisse,
And lost that might have bred you true content:
As for your carnall love, you need not misse

More faire then I, and fitter for your bent,
But in ten thousand, one you shall not know,
That such a gift upon you can bestow.

15

I know (quoth she) an herbe, and I have seene
A little since the place where as it grew,
That boild upon a fire of cypresse cleene,
And mixt with elder berries and with rew;
And after strained harmelesse hands betweene,
Will yeeld a juyce, that who in order dew,
Annoint therewith, shall never damage feele,
By flame of fire, nor yet by dint of steele.

16

I say if one therewith annoint him thrise,
These strange effects thereof will strait ensew,
Provided alwayes that in any wise
He must each month the liquors strength renew:
I have the way to make it in a trice,
And you shall see by prooffe that it is true;
This thing I thinke should joy you more to gaine,
Then if you conquerd had all France or Spaine.

17

And now for my reward of you, I pray
Let me obtaine this favourable meed,
To sweare that you henceforth will not assay
My chastity, by either word or deed:
Fell Rodomont thinks this a blessed day,
And hopes he now shall never armor need,
And swears he will her honour safe defend,
Though to performe it he doth not intend.

18

Yet still she might this worke bring to effect,
He doth himselfe against his mind inforce,
And that she might no violence expect,
He doth not offer any signe of force;
But that once done, his oth he will neglect,
For of an oth he never had remorse;
But specially he thought it least disgrace,
His oth to violate in such a case.

19

He makes to her a solemne protestation,
And with most damned oaths the same doth bind,

That he will never do her molestation,
If she procure a juyce of such a kind:
This sinks so deepe in his imagination,
Of Cygnus and Achilles runs his mind,
For by this meanes he doth himselfe assure,
Such priviledge as they had to procure.

20

Poore Isabella glad of this delay,
By which a while her chastitie she shields,
Receiving this his promise, goth straightway
To seeke these herbs amid the open fields,
In evry bank and grove, and hedge and way,
She gathers some, such as the country yeelds;
And all the while the Pagan walketh by,
And to the damsell casteth still an eye.

21

And least she should want cypresse wood to burne,
He with his sword cuts downe whole cypresse trees,
And in all other things to serve her turne,
That each thing may provided be he sees:
Now with her herbs she made her home returne,

The caldrons are on fire (no time to leese)
She boyles and perboyles all those herbs and flowres,
In which he thought there were such hidden powres.

22

At all these ceremonies he stands by,
And what she doth he many times doth looke,
The smoke and heate at last him made so dry,
That want of drinke he could no longer brooke,
Greeke wines there were, and those he doth apply,
Two firkins late from passengers he tooke,
He and his men by drinking both that night,
Their heads full heavie made, their hearts full light.

23

Though by their law they are forbidden wine,
Yet now that here they did the liquor tast,
They thought it was so sweet and so divine,
That Nectar and that Manna farre it past:
At that restraint they greatly do repine,
That did debar them of so sweet repast,
And at their owne law and religion laffing,
They spend that night carowsing and in quaffing.

24

Now had faire Isbell finisht that confection,
Which this grosse Pagan doth beleewe to be,
Against both steele and fire a safe protection:
Now sir (she said) you shall the trial see,
And that you may be sure than no infection
Is in these drugs, you first shall prove by me,
I shall you shew thereof so perfect triall,
As you shall see the prooffe past all deniall.

25

My selfe (quoth she) mind first to take the say,
That you may see I do not faine nor lie,
Then after on your selfe you prove it may,
When you have made a witnes of your eie:
Now therefore bid your men to go away,
That none be present here but you and I,
And thus, as with her selfe she had appointed,
Her neck and brests, and shoulders she annoited.

26

Which done, in chearefull sort she open layd
Her naked necke before the beastly Turke,

And bad him strike, for she was not afraid,
She had such skill and trust in this rare worke:
He unadvisd, and haply overlayd
With wine, that in his idle braine did worke,
Was with her speech so undiscreetly led,
That at one blow he quite cut off her head.

27

The head where love and all the graces dwelt,
By heedlesse hand is from the bodie severed,
Alas whose heart at such hap could not melt?
Yea that is more, the head cut off endeavored
To shew what pleasure of her death she felt,
And how she still in her first love persevered:
Thrise from the floore the head was seene rebound,
Thrise it was heard Zerbinos name to sound.

28

His name to whom so great love she did beare,
As she to follow him would leave her life,
To whom tis hard to say if that she were
A truer widow or a kinder wife;
O soule that didst not death nor danger feare,

(A sample in these latter times not rife)
To save thy chastitie and vowed truth,
Evn in thy tender yeares and greenest youth.

29

Go soule, go sweetest soule for ever blest,
So may my verse please those whom I desire,
As my poore Muse shall ever do her best,
As farre as pen can paint; and speech aspire,
That thy just praises may be plaine exprest
To future times. Go soule to heaven or hyer;
And if my verse can graunt to thee this chartir,
Thou shalt be cald of chastitie the Martir.

30

At this her deed so strange and admirable,
He that above all heavns doth ay remaine,
Lookt downe, and said it was more commendable
Then hers for whom Tarquinio lost his raigne.
And straight an ordinance inviolable,
Ay to be kept on earth he doth ordaine,
And thus he said, evn by my selfe I swear,
Whose powre, heavn, earth, sprites, men and Angels feare,

31

That for her sake that dide of this name last,
Who ever shall hereafter beare that name,
Shall be both wise and continent and chast,
Of faultlesse manners, and of spotlesse fame,
Let writers strive to make their glorie last,
And oft in prose and verse record the same,
Let Hellicon, Pindus, Parnassus hill,
Sound Isabella, Isabella still.

32

Thus said the Hyst, and then there did ensew
A wondrous calme in waters and in aire,
The chast soule up into the third heavn flew,
Where Zerbin was, to that she did repaire:
Now when the beastly Turke saw plaine in vew,
How he had provd himselfe a womanslayre,
When once his drunken surfet was digested,
He blamd himselfe and his owne deed detested.

33

In part to satisfie for this offence,
And to appease her ghost as twere in part,

Although he thought no pardon could dispence,
Nor punishment suffice for such desart;
He vowes a monument of great expence,
Of costly workmanship and cunning art,
To raise for her, nor minds he to go furder,
Then that selfe church where he had done the murder.

34

Of that selfe place he minds her tombe to make,
And for that cause he gets of workmen store,
For love, for mony, and for terrors sake,
Six thousand men he set to worke and more;
From out the mountaines massie stones they take,
With which wel wrought, & hewd, & squard therefore
With hie and stately arch that Church he covers,
And in the midst intombs the blessed lovers.

35

And over this was raisd with curious sleight,
A Pyramid, a huge and stately towre,
Which towre an hundred cubits had in height,
By measure from the top unto the flowre;
It seemd a worke of as great charge and weight,

As Adrian made, to bost his wealth and powre,
Of goodly stones, all raisd in seemly ranks,
Upon the edge of stately Tybris banks.

36

Now when this goodly worke was once begunne,
He makes a bridge upon the water by,
That of great depth and force did ever runne,
In former time a ferrie there did lye,
For such as would a further circuit shunne,
And passe this way more easy and more nye;
The Pagan takes away the ancient ferrie,
And leaves for passengers, nor bote, nor wherrie.

37

But makes a bridge where men to row are wont,
And though the same were strog, & of great length,
Yet might two horses hardly meet a front,
Nor had the sides a raile or any strength,
Who comes this way he meanes shall bide a bront,
Except he have both courage good and strength,
For with the armes of all that this way come,
He means to bewtifie faire Isbels toome.

38

A thousand brave Atchievements he doth vow,
Wherewith he will adorne his stately worke,
From whom he taketh all these spoiles or how,
He cares not whether Christian or Turke.
Now was the bridge full finished, and now
His watchmen on each side in corners lurke,
To make him know when any one coms neare,
For all that come, he means shall buy it deare.

39

And further his fantastike braine doth thinke,
That sith by drinking wine he did that sin,
In lieu thereof he now would water drinke,
As oft as by mishap he should fall in:
For when he should unto the bottome sinke,
The top would be an ell above his chin,
As who should say, for evrie evill action
That wine procures, were water satisfaction.

40

Full many there arrived in few days,
Some men, as in the way from Spaine to France,

Some others fondly thirsting after prayse,
In hope by this exploit their names tadvance,
But Rodomont doth meet them both the ways,
And such his vallew was so good his chance,
That still as many men as there arrives,
Lost all of them their arms, and some their lives.

41

Among the many prisners that he tooke,
All those were Christians to Algyre he sent,
And willd his men safely to them to looke,
Because ere long himselfe to come he ment;
The rest, save that their armors they forsooke,
All harmesse backe into their countries went:
Now while such feats were by the Pagan wrought,
Orlando thither came of wits bestraught.

42

At that same instant that Orlando came,
Was Rodomont all armed save his hed,
The naked Earle with wits quite out of frame,
Leaps ovr the bar, and went (as folly led)
To passe the bridge, the Pagan him doth blame,

For his presumption, and withall he sed,
Stay sawcy villen, proud, and undiscreet,
For such as thee this passage is not meet.

43

For Lords and Knights and Squyres of good estate,
This bridge was built, and not for thee thou beast:
He that no sence had in his idle pate,
Not heeding what was said still onward prest:
I must (the Pagan thinks) this fools pride bare,
It seems belike he thinks I am in jest,
And thereupon he makes the madman towards,
And minds to drowne him, sith he was so frowards.

44

He little lookt to find a match so hard,
Now while they two together gan to strive,
Behold a gallant dame of great regard,
At that same bridge by fortune did arrive,
Faire Fiordeliege, that late before had hard,
How love did of his witts this Earle deprive;
She hither came to seeke out Brandimart,
That now in Paris was with pensive hart.

45

And thus this Ladie (as before I told)
Came at that season to this dangerous place,
And knew this Earle, when she did him behold,
And wonderd much to see him in such case:
Now held Orlando with his foe hard hold,
In vaine the Pagan strives him to displace,
And grinning, to himselfe he said at length,
Who could have thought, a foole had had such strength?

46

And fretting that he had his purpose mist,
He doth by sleight the madmans force assay,
Sometime he puts his hand below his twist,
Sometime above, sometime another way:
Orlando stands unmovd, do what he list;
The Pagan seemd to do by him that day,
As doth the Beare, that would dig up the tree,
From whence she fell, but sees it will not be.

47

Orlando full of force, though void of sence,
About the middle tooke the Pagan fast,

And heaves him up from ground, and so from thence,
Into the streame himselfe he backward cast:
Unto the bottome both do sinke, from whence
Each one was glad to get him in great hast,
Orlando nakt and light, swam like a fish,
So that he soone gat out as he would wish.

48

And being out, away he straight doth runne,
Nor tarries he to heare, or to expect,
If men do blame or praise that he had donne,
But follows on his former course direct:
This while the Pagan dranke nye halfe a tunne
Of water, ere he could himselfe erect,
And hardly he escaped being drownd,
So heavie armd, and in place so profound.

49

Now, while the Pagan swimmeth for his life,
Faire Fiordeliege with sad and pensive hart,
A lively patterne of a vertuous wife,
Doth search the sepulcher for Brandimart,
Shee tooke her time while they fell first at strife,

And up and downe she lookt in evrie part,
But here she finds nor arms nor yet his mantell,
Nor meets with such as of him tydings can tell.

50

But leave we her awhile thus mourning sad,
And seeking him each where save where he was,
And tell we now what hap Orlando had,
And what strange feats his furie brought to passe,
You might perchance beleieve that I were mad,
If none of his mad pranks I overpasse.
Which were so strange, and in so great a number,
As you to heare, and me to tell would cumber.

51

I onely shall some few of those recite,
As to my present purpose shall pertaine
The madman westward held his course forthright,
Straight to the hils that sever France fro Spaine,
He seldome bayts, but travels day and night,
So much he was distemperd in his braine,
And by the mountaines side as he did passe,
He met two young men driving of an asse.

52

This asse they loden had with clefts of wood,
Fast bound upon his burdenbearing backe;
They seeing one runne nakt as he were wood,
Amid their way, they cride, hoe sirra backe,
But he makes answer neither bad nor good,
For sence and understanding he did lacke,
But with his foote the poore asse he so spurned,
That both his lode and him he overturned.

53

He tost him like a football up on hy,
Whence downe he fell and brake his necke with it;
Then at the men he doth with furie fly,
Of which the tone had better hap then wit,
For downe the rocke the tone lept by and by,
Deep threescore yards, and by the way did hit
Upon a banke of furze, growne in the place,
And scapt with onely scratching of his face.

54

The tother that of feare like passion feels,
Did thinke to clammer up upon the rocke,

But straight Orlando takes him by the heels,
And puls him downe and beats him like a stocke,
As fishers use to beat their sliding Eels,
And evn as fawlknars teare some time a cocke,
To give unto their hawks their intrals warme,
So he teares leg from leg, and arme from arme.

55

These same and other like stupendious deeds,
He put in practise while those hils he past,
Evn such as speech and credit all exceeds,
His fits so furious were, his strength so vast:
So far unto the westward he proceeds,
That to the sea, he now was come at last,
Evn to the sandie shoars of Tarracona,
That leadeth right the way to Barcellona.

56

Upon those sands (such was his mad conceat)
He purposd with himselfe a house to build,
And being noyed with the parching heat,
He thinks with sand his skin therefro to shild:
Straight with his hands he digs him out a seat,

And though the oes his bodie all defild,
Yet with that mould his members all he covered,
That nothing but his head could be discovered.

57

Now as he lay halfe burid in the sand,
(For save his head, the rest was all unseen,)
There thither came, as in their way by land,
Medoro with Angelica his Queen,
She not aware what in her way did stand,
(Of her lorne lovers bosting then I ween)
Came unto him so neare and on such soden,
That upon him her horse had welny troden.

58

But seeing straight up start a naked man,
The sight did her greatly amaze and fright,
She knows him not, nor guesse at him she can,
She thinketh sure, he is some hellish spright:
Rough grisly beard, eyes staring, visage wan,
All parcht, and sunne burnd, and deformd in sight,
In fine he lookt (to make a true description)
In face like death, in cullor like a Gyptian.

59

But she at this strange sight (as erst I said)
Did gallop thence as fast as she could ride,
And screeching lowd, she crieth out for aid,
Unto Medoro her beloved guide:
The mad Orlando was not ill apaid,
When such a prettie damzell he had spide:
Though he no knowledge nor remembrance had,
How this was she, for whom he first fell mad.

60

Yet, as delighted with her pleasing hew,
And liking well to see so faire a face,
With great desire he straight doth her pursew,
Evn as a hound the fearfull Doe doth chase,
Medoro movd herewith, his rapier drew,
And after this mad fellow rides apase,
And with his horse he thinketh downe to tred him,
And with his blade he thinketh to behed him.

61

But by effect, contrariwise he found,
That he without his host his reckning made,

The madman shrinketh not an inch of ground,
And his bare skin was harder then the blade,
Yet sodenly when as the madman found,
That one behinde his backe did him invade,
He turnd and with his fist so smote the horse,
As made him ly on ground a senslesse corse.

62

And in a trise he backe againe doth goe,
To catch Angelica who spurrs with speed,
And thinketh still her palfreys pase too sloe
For such a turne, and so it was indeed,
For had it gone like arrow from a boe,
It hardly could have holpe her at this need;
At last her onely hope was in the ring,
For now to helpe her was none other thing.

63

The ring that never faild her at her need,
Did make her now to vanish out of sight,
But whether that it were for want of heed,
Or that the sodainenesse did her affright,
Or that her beast did founder with the speed,

Or that she did determine to alight,
Of all these which it was I cannot tell,
But topsie turvie from the beast she fell.

64

Had she falne shorter, or on tother side,
In likelihood the madman had her caught,
Which if he had, she doubtles should have dide,
But great good fortune her deliverie wrought:
But now another beast she must provide,
For this another pase will soone be taught,
Orlando still doth her pursue so fast,
That needs he must ovrget her at the last.

65

As for Angelica I take no care,
I know that she a beast long will not lacke,
But rather steale one, as she did that Mare,
That now in madmans hands will suffer wracke.
To follow her Orlando doth not spare,
Till he her staid and lept upon her backe,
Then gallopt he as long as she was able,
And lets her rest in neither field nor stable.

66

Untill at last in leaping ovr a ditch,
The poore Mare put her shoulder out of joynt,
He with his fall, took neither ach nor stitch,
Nor of the bruse he passeth not a poynt;
Nor seeketh he for turpentine or pitch,
The poore beasts brused members to annoynt,
Though he might see with this fall he had mard her,
Yet faine he would, she should have borne him farder.

67

At last on his owne shoulder her he laid,
And bare her so about an arrow shoot,
But feeling then that she too heavie waid,
He leadeth her and lets her go on foot,
She limping follows him, and still he said,
Come on, come on, but little did it boot.
At last to make her her slow pace to alter,
About his right leg he doth tie her halter.

68

And tels her now with ease she follow may,
And so to harry her he doth begin,

The sharpe stones lying in the rugged way,
Fret of her haire, and afterward the skin,
The beast misused thus, lives scarce a day:
Orlando hath her tyde unto his shinne;
He sees not, nor he knows not she is ded,
But on he draws her as his furie led.

69

And sure he would have servd her such a tuch,
I meane his mistres if he could have caught her,
Had not the vertue of the ring beene such,
As how to walke invisible it taught her:
Ah cursed be that ring, and curst as much
Be he that so unluckily it brought her;
Else sure Orlando had revenged then
Her often wrongs, to him and other men.

70

Yet why wish I this curse on her alone?
I would the like might hap to all the kinde,
For in a thousand good there is not one,
All be so proud, unthankfull and unkinde,
With flinty hearts, carelesse of others mone,

In their owne lusts carrid most headlong blinde,
But more herein to speake I am forbidden,
Sometime for saying truth one may be chidden.

ARGUMENT

THE THIRTIETH BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Strange feats by mad Orlando are atchieved,
Fierce Mandricard is by Rogero slaine:
Himselpe so hurt, that all the campe believed,
He had bin dead the formost of the twaine:
His love with his long absence sore is grieved:
To breake his word his wounds do him constraine:
Renaldo with his kinsfolke and his frends,
To set his Prince at libertie intends.

THIRTIETHBOOKE

1

When men with wrath and sodaine pangs of ire,
Permit themselves to be orewhelmd & drownd,
And hot revenge that burns like flaming fire,
Moves hearts to hurt, or tongs or hands to wound,
Though after to amend it they desire,
Yet place of pardon seldome can be found:
Ah (worthy Ladies) I do you beseech,
To pardon that my former foolish speech.

2

For I am growne like a diseased man,
That when he finds by phisicke no reliefe,
And now no more with patience suffer can
The burning torture of his lingring griefe,
Doth fall to rave and rage, and curse and ban,
Blaspheming God, renouncing his believe:
But when that fit is past, then would he faine,
But ah he cannot call it backe againe.

3

Yet Ladies of your clemencie I hope,
I pittie shall, not onely pardon finde,
Although I somewhat swarve from reasons scope,
And rash words flow from unadvised minde:
She onely beares the blame that slayes my hope,
And for true service shews her selfe unkinde:
That I did speake was partly of compassion,
With sympathy movd of Orlandos passion.

4

Who (as I partly did before declare)
In monstrous sort, survayd Marsilios raigne,
And wrought great wo, great danger, and great care,
To all the then inhabitants of Spaine,
I told you how he drew the silly Mare,
Tide to his leg, till she was dead with paine:
And how he had so small sense in his head,
He drew her after him when she was dead.

5

But comming to a great deepe running water,
He was constrained to let her there abide,

And (for he swimmes as perfect as an Atter)
He quickly passed to the tother side,
Where then a herdman came his beasts to water,
And on a curtall he himselfe did ride:
And though he saw the madman and did view him,
Yet being naked he would not eschew him.

6

The madman prayeth him that he would spare
His horse; that they two might together cope:
I left (quoth he) on tother side my Mare,
And fast about her necke I left a rope:
I left her dead; but yet with heed and care,
Of her recoverie there is good hope:
The herdman laugheth at his sencelesse words,
And unto him no answer he affords.

7

Ho (saith Orlando) fellow, dost not heare?
I must thy curtall have, thou needst not laffe:
And with that word approching somewhat neare,
The crabbed herdman with a crabtree staffe,
Gave him a bastinado on his eare,

Which put the mad Erle into such a chafe,
That with his fist he made the herdman reele,
Till paine it selfe made him no paine to feele.

8

This done he leapeth on the horses backe,
And at adventure on he takes his way,
Where ere he comes he putteth all to wracke,
His horse tasts neither provender nor hay:
But though this tyrd, a horse he may not lacke,
The next he meets by force he takes away:
To strive with him it was but little boote,
He is resolved not to go a foote.

9

He passeth to the straits of Gibraltar,
Or Zibelterra (call it which you will)
And as he went, with force of open war,
Townes he did burne, and all the dwellers kill:
Ten yeares will hardly make that he would mar
Within one houre, and thus he traveld still,
Till on a day, riding upon the sand,
He saw a ship new loosed from the land.

10

The aire was cleare and mild, and calme the wether,
And certaine Gentlefolke had hyrd the barke,
With mind to take their solace there together,
And to returne againe ere it were darke:
The madman cries, hoe sirs let me come thither:
His deeds, his words, they neither marke nor harke,
Or if they did you may be sure they thought,
They would not comberd be with such a fraught.

11

He hallows after them, and whoopes and hayles,
To have them stay, & with faire words doth wo the,
Glad might they be they went with oars and sayls,
For might he come, he surely would undoe them,
The foole that sees how small his speech prevails,
Beats on his horse, and meanes to ride unto them:
In vaine his horse would shun this hard adventer,
But he perforce makes him the sea to enter.

12

First he his feete doth wet, and then his knees,
And next his belly, after that his backe,

Now scant his nose one in the water sees,
And still he layes him on; poore horse alacke,
That either in these seas his life must leese,
Or swim to Affricke ere he can turne backe:
At last with swimming tyrd, with water cloyd,
His belly fild, till limbs of life were void.

13

The horse unto the bottome quickly sunke,
And had for company his burthen drownd,
If fortune that helps frantike men and drunke,
Had not him safe conveyd to Affricke ground:
Orlando at the danger never shrunke,
But to the shore he swam both safe and sound:
It happie was the seas were then so still,
Else had the Erle bin drownd for all his skill.

14

Now being safe arrived at the shore,
Neare Setta strayt he ranged ovr the cost,
And did such deeds as he had done before,
On tother side to many poore mens cost;
At last he came where as he found great store,

Of warlike weapons, and a mighty host:
But how with them this madman disagreed,
I may not in this booke to tell proceed.

15

And further how Angelica the faire,
Did meete her love againe, and what a Lord
He grew, by matching with so great an haire,
And livd with her in love and sweet accord,
(Although in birth an unfit matched paire)
I leave for other Muses to record:
For now I must addressse my selfe to tell,
What haps in Agramantes campe befell.

16

I told you two bookes past, or thereabout,
How Mandricard was Doralices choice:
And how in face of all the Pagan rout,
She gave that doome, that made him much rejoyce,
For she was deemd for beauty (out of doubt)
The best in Europe by the common voice:
Now chiefe since faire Angelica was fled,
And worthy Isabella lost her hed.

17

But yet this pleasure was not so entire,
But that it sawced was with some annoy,
For wrath and envie set his heart on fire,
And much abated of his present joy:
It spites him that Rogero dare aspire,
To give his coat, being a berdlesse boy:
And further that the King of Sericane,
Should openly lay claime to Durindane.

18

And first Rogero will by no meanes yeeld,
By no intreatie, nor by no request,
That Mandricard should carrie that same sheeld,
Which had the Argent Eagle on the crest,
Except he first could win it in the feeld:
On tother side Gradasso doth not rest,
But he will be the first to trie by fight,
Which of them two had to the sword most right.

19

With Agramant Marsilio tooke great paine,
In all or part these quarrels to appease,

But when they saw their labour was in vaine,
To governe or perswade with one of these:
The chance (quoth Agramant) shal make that plaine,
For which you strive, and evn as fortune please,
So let it be, and let some lots be cast,
Which two or three, shall fight the first or last.

20

And yet this just request denie me not,
Before the matter any further goth,
(Though now you be so violent and hot,
That speech of peace and all accord you loth)
To grant that who shall combat first by lot,
May leeing leese, and winning win for both:
This motion, most indifferent must seeme,
Sith both their vallews equall we esteeme.

21

This motion neither of them do mislike,
And straight Gradassos and Rogeros name,
Upon two scroles were writ so passing like
You would have judgd them both to be the same:
A boy of fourteene yeare of age they pike,

To draw the lot, and he that first out came,
Must fight with Mandricard, and make it knowne,
He fights for tothers title and his owne.

22

When on this order all parts were agreed,
The lot to fight upon Rogero fell,
Which hap great griefe did in Gradasso breed,
Although in shew he seemd to take it well:
Contrariwise it did all joy exceed,
The joy Rogero had, it so befell:
So well of his owne vallew he believed,.
He joyd at that at which the tother grieved.

23

But yet Gradasso doth with great regard,
Both favour and advance Rogeros side,
And sheweth him how he must lie to ward
A comming blow, how he might slip aside:
How for a thrust he may be best prepard:
Which blowes be firme, and which be falsifide,
When best time is to follow thrust or blow:
How one may best take vantage of his foe.

24

The rest of that same day that did remaine,
Ensuing this same course of casting lots,
They spent as pleased each mans pleasing vaine,
In talke, or banquetting, or tossing pots:
To see this fight the people glad and faine,
Clammer the scaffolds, gazing still like sots,
Some for desire do come by breake of day,
And some all night within the place do stay.

25

Thus (as I say) these simple fooles do long,
To see the combat these brave Knights betwixt,
And blame the stay, and thinke the time too long,
That for the same the Heralds had prefixt:
But sober men that knew what did belong
To such exploits, whose wiser heads were fixt
On publike good, this quarrell much lament,
And traveld all they can it to prevent.

26

And chiefe Marsilio and Sobrino sage,
Advise King Agramant to stay the fight,

And these same champions furie to asswage,
And to take up the quarrell if they might:
Forewarning him when he must battell wage,
With Charles of France, the losse of one such Knight
Will do him greater hurt and damage then,
Then would the losse of thousands other men.

27

But Agramant knew all was true they spoke,
And faine he would their counsell wise obay,
But could not tell his grant how to revoke:
Onely he doth in curteous sort them pray,
That he may strike with them so great a stroke,
Either to end or to defer the fray;
And yeeld the rather unto his perswasion,
Because it rose upon so light occasion.

28

Or if they did esteeme such toyes so far,
As though they matters were of true renowne;
That yet they would the fight so long defar,
Untill the sonne of Pipen were put downe:
And till they conquerd had the Realme by war,

And tane from him his mantle and his crowne,
This motion had in likelihood taken place,
Save each thought first consent would be disgrace.

29

Above them all and more then all the rest,
That in this sort their speech in vaine had spent:
Faire Doralyce doth Mandricard request,
That to the Kings desire he would assent:
She doth exhort, intreat, perswade, protest,
She doth complaine, and languish, and lament:
To thinke that by his over hastie choler,
She still must live in anguish and in dolor.

30

How can I hope (said she) that ere I shall
Live any houre in solace and in joy?
When still I see you readie be to brall,
With evrie man, for evrie trifling toy:
The Sarzans foile doth me no good at all,
My choyce of you hath bred me more annoy:
To end that quarrell, ah what did it boot,
Sith straight another quarrell is on foot?

31

I simple foole, in minde was proud and glad,
That such a Prince, so brave a man as you,
For love of me his whole state venterd had;
But now I finde by this that doth ensew,
That I had far more reason to be sad,
Sith each like cause, like danger doth renew;
And not my love, but your owne native furie,
To bide such hard adventures did procure yee.

32

But if your love be such as in your speech,
You do professe, and in your open show:
Then by that love I humbly you beseech,
And by that fancie which too well I know,
Doth evn my heart and soule with love bewitch,
Let not this quarrell any further grow:
I see not why it should you so molest,
To see your Eagle in anothers crest.

33

If needs you will attempt this hardie feat,
And venter life upon a thing so vaine,

The hazard that you make must needs be great,
But none, or very small can be the gaine:
But if that fortune change her fickle seat,
Thinke then, o thinke, what woe shall I sustaine?
There never yet was Emperor or King,
Could boast that he had Fortune in a string.

34

But if that life be unto you lesse deare,
Then is a painted bird upon a sheeld;
Yet for my sake, whom it doth touch more neare,
Let me intreat you to this motion yeeld:
If you were slaine, what joy could I have heare?
Death sole from wo, both could and should me sheeld
Nor feare I death; my onely griefe would bee,
Before my death thy wofull end to see.

35

Thus earnestly faire Doralycee dealt,
All that same night, as in his armes she lyes,
And as she spake, the teares distill and melt,
In watrie streames, downe from her crystall eyes:
The Tartar that no little passion felt,

To comfort her saith all he can devise:
And wipes her cheekes, and her sweet lip doth kisse,
And weeps for company, and answers this.

36

Ah do not grieve thy selfe so sore (my deare)
Ah do not grieve thy selfe for such a toy,
Plucke up thy sprights, and be of better cheare,
There is no cause of feare mine onely joy:
No though that all the Kings and captains heare,
Had sworne my death, and vowed mine annoy:
Yet all the Kings and captaines I would vanquish,
Why then should you causles in sorrow languish?

37

What, did not I with trunchen of a speare,
(You know your selfe whether I say the truth)
Not having sword nor other weapon theare,
Win you from all your gard? and shall a youth,
A beardlesse boy, cause you my safetie feare,
And breed in you so unadvised ruth?
Well might you deeme I were a dastard lout,
If of Rogero I should stand in doubt.

38

Gradasso, though unto his griefe and shame,
Yet if one aske him can it not gainesay,
That when he last unto Sorya came,
I met and tooke him prisner by the way,
Yet he is of another manner same,
Then is Rogero, you your selfe will say:
I had him there a prisner at my will,
And if I listed might have kept him still.

39

And least I should of this good witnes want,
Beside Gradasso, there be hundreds more,
As namely Isolyr, and Sacrapant,
Whom I set free and had great thanks therefore:
Also the famous Griffin and Aquilant,
That there were taken, but few dayes before:
With divers more both Turkish and baptised,
That by my force were taken and surprised.

40

Their wonder in those countries still doth last,
Of that great vallew I that time did show,

And should I now a doubt or perill cast?
Am I in greater danger now you trow?
Shall one young youth me hand to hand agast?
Shall I now doubt his force, or feare his blow?
Now having Durindana by my side,
And Hectors armour on my backe beside?

41

Why did not I, as pointed was by lot,
With Rodomont first bloudie battell wage?
That by his ill successe you might forewot,
The speedie end of this young sorrie page.
Drie up these teares (my deare) and bring me not,
Before the combat such an ill presage:
Nor thinke an Eagle on a target painted
Moves me hereto, but doubt of honor tainted.

42

Thus much said he, but she such answer made him,
With words expressing such a loving mone,
As were not onely able to perswade him,
But might (I thinke) have movd a marble stone:
The force was great wherewith she did invade him,

In fine so farre she conquers him alone,
He grants thus farre to be at her devotion,
If peace be offerd, to accept the motion.

43

And so I thinke indeed he would have done,
Had not Rogero early in the morne,
Got up before the rising of the Sunne,
And enterd in the lists, and blowne his horne,
To shew that he the battell would not shunne,
And that Joves bird by him was justly borne:
Which either he will carrie on his shield,
Or else will leave his carkas in the field.

44

But when the Tartar fierce did heare that sound,
And that his men thereof had brought him word:
He thinks great shame should unto him redound,
If any treatie he of peace afford:
Arme arme he cries, & straight he armes him round,
And by his side he hangs his trustie sword.
And in his countenance he lookes so grim,
Scarse Doralyce her selfe dares speake to him.

45

And armed at all pieces, up in hast
He gets, and that same courser he bestrides,
That was that Christen champions in time past,
Who now doth runne his wit and sense besides:
And thus he comes unto the lists at last,
The place that all such quarrels still decides,
The King and all his court soone after came,
And now ere long begins the bloudie game.

46

Now on their heads their helmets are made fast,
Now are the Lances put into their hands,
Now was the token givn by trumpets blast,
Which both the horse and horseman understands:
Now in a full carryre they gallop fast,
And either strongly to his takle stands:
Now with such force the tone the tother strake,
As though that heavn did fall, and earth did shake.

47

The Argent Eagle comes on either side,
With wings displaid on either captaines sheeld,

The bird which Jove (men say) was seene to ride,
(Though better wingd) ovr the Thessalian feeld:
As for their mighty strength and courage tride,
Their massie speares sufficient witsesse yeeld:
Nor sturd they more with those tempestuous knocks,
Then wind sturs towres, or waves do stur the rocks.

48

The splinters of the spears flew to the skie,
(As Turpin writeth that was present there)
And were on fire by having bin so nie,
Unto the scorching of the fierie Spheare:
The champions out their swords draw by and by,
As those that neither sword nor fire did feare,
And either thrusteth at the tothers face,
And seekes by force the tother to displace.

49

They never sought to hurt each others steed,
Not that they made together such accord,
But that they deemd it an unworthy deed,
Not worthy of a worthy Knight or Lord:
Of base revenge they count that act proceed,

And meet of noble minds to be abhord,
So that in those dayes none were knowne to kill
A horse, except it were against his will.

50

Upon their vizers both do strike at once,
And though the same were firme and plated double,
As being made of prooffe and for the nonce,
Yet did the force of such fell strokes them trouble;
And still they lay on lode as thicke as stones
Of haile, that often turne the corne to stubble:
I thinke it needlesse further to alledge,
If they have strength, or if their swords have edge.

51

Yet long they fought together in that field,
Ere any signe of any blow was left,
Such wary heed each tooke himselfe to shield;
But Durindan at last fell with such heft,
Full on the circle of Rogeros shield,
That halfe way through the argent bird it cleft,
And pierst the coate of male that was within,
And found a passage to the very skin.

52

The cruell blow made many hearts full cold,
Of such as wisht well to Rogeros part,
For most of those that stood by to behold,
Rogerio favourd in their mind and hart,
So that afore to say one might be bold,
If fortune follow would the greater part,
Fierce Mandricard were slaine, or else should yeeld,
So that this blow offended halfe the field.

53

But surely some good Angell I beleeve,
The force of this so fearfull stroke abated,
Rogerio though the wound him somewhat grieve,
Yet was his mind therewith no whit amated,
Great usury he mindeth him to give,
And that the strife may quickly be debated,
He frankly strikes with his whole force and might,
Full on the helmet of the Tartar Knight.

54

With so great force and furie came the blow,
As to the teeth no doubt had clovn his head,

Saving by what mishap I do not know,
But want of heed that too much hast had bred,
It lighted flatling on him, else I trow
That stroke alone had him most surely sped,
But as it was it made his head so idle,
He opend both his hands and loosd his bridle.

55

Good Brigliadore that felt the slacked raine,
(I thinke still mourning for his masters change)
Ran up and downe at randon on the plaine,
His senslesse rider suffering him to range;
Who when he came unto himselfe againe,
And saw his horse to run a course so strange,
A spurned Viper hath not so much wrath,
Nor wounded Lion, as the Tartar hath.

56

He claps the spurs to Brigliadoros side,
And on his stirrops he himselfe advances,
And to his fo with furie he doth ride,
And up on hie his right arme he inhances,
To strike a blow; but when Rogero spide

His arme lie ope, as oft in fight it chanches,
He chopt his swords point under tothers arme,
And puld it out with blood both wet and warme.

57

By which he did not onely maime his fo,
By letting blood upon so large a vaine,
But bated much the furie of the blo,
Which notwithstanding fell with force so maine,
As made Rogero stagger to and fro,
And mazd his head, and dazd his eyes with paine;
And much it was that time for his behoofe,
To have his helmet of so good a prooffe.

58

But having now againe recoverd force,
And as it were new wakned from his dreame,
Upon the Tartar Prince he turnd his horse,
And on his thigh he strikes with strength extreame,
That through the steele he did the sword enforce:
Out spins the blood in pure vermilion streame,
Nought could availe enchanted Hectors armes,
Against his sword with stronger temperd charmes.

59

The Tartar feeling to his great disease,
His body wounded as he little thought,
Did rage as terrible as do the seas,
With highest winds and strongest tempests wrought,
He curseth heavns, his smarting pangs to ease,
The shield that had the bird for which he fought,
Away he hurleth from him for the nonce,
And to his sword he sets both hands at once.

60

Ah (quoth Rogero) too plaine triall this is,
That to that Eagle thou no title hast,
That first didst with thy sword cut mine in peeces,
And now thine owne away from thee dost cast:
Thus much said he, but whatsoever he sees,
He must the force of Durindana tast,
Which fell upon his forehead with such might,
A mountaine might have seemd to fall as light.

61

I say the blow upon his forehead fell,
But yet his beaver savd it from his face,

It happend at that time for him full well,
That in the hollow there was so much space;
Yet harmlesse quite to scape him not befell,
For why the sword that ever cuts apace,
Did pierce his plated saddle, and beside
An inch did enter into Rogeros side.

62

Thus each with crimson had his armor dide,
And bloud did streame from both a double way,
Yet hitherto it could not be describe,
On whether side would chances ballance sway:
At last Rogero did that doubt decide,
With that same sword that ever home doth pay,
And where the tothers target wants, there just
Rogero payes him with a speeding thrust.

63

The blade, gainst which prevailes no Magick art,
His curats pierst, and ribs and flesh it tore,
And found a passage to the naked hart:
Now must the Tartar Prince for evermore
In sword and painted shield forsake his part,

Not onely so, but that which grieves him more,
He must forsake his much beloved life,
More loved honour, and most loved wife.

64

The wretch yet unrevenged did not die,
But gave hard recompence ere he departed,
At good Rogeros head he doth let flie,
And had (no doubt) the same in sunder parted,
Save that his arme was maymd, and so thereby
Much of his force from thence had bin divarted,
Much of his force diverted was from thence
Before, when for his arme he wanted fence.

65

But as it was, yet too too hard it fell,
And causd the noble Knight great paine to feele,
His helmet it did cleave, though plated well,
And made for prooffe of tough well temperd steele,
And in the very skull it clove a spell,
Two fingers deepe. and made him backward reele,
He backward fals, the paine was so exceeding,
With grievous wound his hed most freshly bleeding.

66

Rogero was the first that tumbled downe,
And Mandricardo fell a good while after,
All thought Rogero dead, because his crowne
Still bled, but chiefly Stordilanos daughter
Joyes, that her spouse had won this fights renowne,
Now hopes she, she shal turne her teares to laughter,
And as she thought, so was the common voice,
So that the Tartars friends did all rejoyce.

67

But when there did appeare by certaine signes,
The live man living, and the dead man slaine,
Then Doralycee wrings her hands and whines,
And grieffe came there, and comfort here againe:
The chiefest part, whose favour all inclines
Unto Rogero, are full glad and faine,
And gratulate his good successe, and grace him,
And runne to him, and in their armes embrace him.

68

Nor was this shew of love, dissimulation,
But true unfained kindnesse, and good faith,

But yet Gradassos faint congratulation
Makes men surmise he thinks not as he saith:
He secretly envies such reputation,
Though outwardly the flatterer he playth,
And curseth (were it destinie or chance)
That to this enterprize did him advance.

69

But Agramant that ever did before,
Do him great honor, and him well esteeme,
Now he doth him admire, extoll, adore,
So highly of his valew he doth deeme:
In him alone he puts affiance more,
Then all his campe together it should seeme,
Now that the seed of Agricane was spent,
And Rodomont gone thence a malcontent.

70

What should I tell the praise that many a Ladie
Gave of this Knight, of Affricke and of Spaine?
Who knew that Mandricardo was no babie,
And saw him now by this mans valew slaine;
Yea dolefull Doralyce her selfe (it may be)

Save that for modestie she must refraine,
Would have bene moved with a small request,
To speake as well of him as did the rest.

71

I say it may be, but I cannot tell,
For why? before unconstant she was proved;
And sure Rogeros parts did so excell,
As any Ladie doubtlesse might have moved.
While tother livd, perhap she likt him well,
But now to seeke a new it her behoved,
Such one as she her selfe might able warrant,
To ride both day and nightly on her arrant.

72

Now brought the King Rogero with great care
To his owne tent, that there he may be cured,
The best Physitions thither sent for are,
To search his wounds, they straight his life assured:
The shield and armes that Mandricardo bare,
The which this bloudie battell first procured,
All save the sword that was Gradassos right,
Were hanged up by his beds head that night.

73

Howbeit that brave courser Brigliadore,
Rogerero needs would give unto the King,
Who tooke it thankfully, and set more store
By that same steed then any such like thing:
But hereof now a while I treat no more,
First must you heare what news the maide did bring,
(I meane Hyppalca) to her mistris deare,
Whom love had made to be of heaui cheare.

74

She told her first what hap to her befell,
How Frontine by a Turke was tane away;
And after, how she found at Merlins well
Richardo and Rogerero that same day,
To whom she did her hard adventure tell,
And how Rogerero went with her straightway,
To win the horse out of the Pagans fist,
But at that season he his purpose mist.

75

Also she told to Bradamant the cause,
Why her deare love himselfe did now absent,

Who promist her, to take a little pawse,
And then her mind most thoroughly content:
In fine Hyppalca from her bosome drawes
That letter which was to her mistris sent,
Who so much lesse did seeme to like the letter,
Because she would have likt his presence better.

76

For sith before she did himselfe expect,
Now paper in his steed to have and inke,
It caused her to feare and to suspect,
And made some doubts into her thoughts to sinke,
Yet likt she well the meaning and effect,
And kist the letter oft, and sure I thinke,
Had burnd it with the heate of her desire,
Save that the teares she shed did quench that fire.

77

She read the writing ovr, five times or six,
The words, the phrase, the sence her pleasd so well,
And then she made the maid, each time betwix,
The message that Rogero sent to tell,
And save he did so short a time prefix

To come to her, and ay with her to dwell,
I thinke she never would have ceased mourning,
Till she had seene or heard of his returning.

78

Rogero to Hippalca promised had,
Fifteen or twenty dayes at most to stay,
And her, to tell her mistresse so he bad,
But swearing to come sooner if he may:
But neerthelesse good Bradamant is sad,
Still doubting chances to prolong that day.
All things (said she) to fortune are subjected,
And chiefe in warres that are by chance directed.

79

Ay (my Rogero) who could once have thought,
Sith I more then my selfe esteemed thee,
That thou by any meanes couldst have been brought
To beare thy very foes more love then me?
Whom thou shouldst hurt, by thee their help is sought
Whom thou shouldst save, by thee they spoiled be;
Needs must I blame thy negligent regarding,
As well in punishing as in rewarding.

80

Trajano slue thy sire, I think thou knowst,
(For sure the stones it know) yet to his sonne,
Thou thinkst in honour thou such dutie owest,
That thou must see no hurt may him be done:
Is this sufficient a revenge thou trowest,
Thinkst thou true fame can by such facts be won?
Lo unto what thy shew of honour tends,
To serve thine enemies, and slay thy friends.

81

Thus Bradamant spake to her absent love,
With passion great, and evermore her maid
With reason seeks that fancy to remove,
Assuring her she need not be affraid:
And wishing her with patient mind to prove,
If so he would not do as he had said,
And that she would in all things hope the best,
And then to God and fortune leave the rest.

82

With this good speech of hers, and strong perswasion,
She doth his comming till the day expect,

Which good Rogero brake, not by occasion
That he his word and promise did neglect;
But that which hapt against his expectation,
His wounds had bred so dangerous effect,
But chiefe the same he last took in his head,
Which made him forty dayes to keep his bed.

83

Now Bradamant doth wait the twenty dayes,
And staid at Montalbano with her mother,
And making still enquiry many wayes,
If she might heare some newes of one or other,
But none she heard, save that which to his praise
Was told her after by her younger brother,
Which though she joyd to heare, as was most meet,
Yet mingled was some sowre with that same sweet.

84

For why the value of Marfisa stout
Which did assist them greatly, as he told,
To win their kinsmen from the moorish rout,
That unto Bertolage should have been sold,
This bred in Bradamantes mind some doubt,

And strake into her heart a jealous cold;
Because twas said they two together went
To Agramant, that in his camp was pent.

85

For though she could not chuse but greatly praise her,
That did her selfe so stout and valiant prove,
Yet on the tother side, her beauty frayes her,
Lest he perhap on her might set his love:
But yet in fine, hope of his promise stayes her,
So that in twenty dayes he did not move
From Montalbano, and in that same space,
There thither came the chiefe man of her race.

86

I mean not chiefe of birth, but chiefe of name,
For two there were, in birth more old then he,
Renaldo unto Montalbano came,
His brothers, cosins; and his friends to see,
Whom he had heard by speech of flying fame,
Now safe arrived at that place to be,
And how Rogero and Marfisa wrought
Their liberty, when they were sold and bought.

87

Wherefore he came to see them face to face,
And understand with them how each thing stood,
It seemd he was as welcome to the place,
As is the swallow to her tender brood,
That almost starved, and in sorie case
Have long expected sustenance and food,
And when they there had staid a day or twaine,
Both they and he to Paris went againe.

88

Alardo and Guicchiardo, Richardet,
And Malagigy and good Viviane,
Close after this brave Lord themselves do get,
And Bradamant with them they would have tane,
But she alledgd she could not come as yet;
(But hopes ere long they should be overtane)
She prayes them for that time content to hold them,
For why she was not well at ease she told them.

89

And true it was, she was not well at ease,
Not that she had a fit of any feaver,

Or any other corporall disease,
It was a fit of love, that burneth ever;
Whose heat no herb nor physick can appease;
This fit did her from that brave crew dissever:
But in another book I shall repeat,
What succour they did bring to Charles the great.

ARGUMENT

THE THIRTYFIRST BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Unwares doth Guidon with Renaldo fight,
But afterward is by his brethren known,
By whose great courage and united might,
The Turks are vanquished and overthrown.
Good Brandimart seeks out that wofull knight,
Whose wits by love distraught, are not his own,
Is tane, and of his life was in great perill,
Renaldo and Gradasso fall to quarrell.

THIRTY FIRST BOOKE

1

What state of life more pleasing may we find,
Then theirs, that true and hearty love do beare?
Whom that sweet yoke doth fast together bind,
That man in Paradise first learnd to weare:
Were not some so tormented in their mind,
With that same vile suspect, that filthy feare,
That torture great, that foolish frenesie,
That raging madnesse, called jealousy.

2

For evry other sowre that gets a place,
To seat it selfe amid this pleasant sweet,
Doth help in thend to give a greater grace,
And makes loves joy more grateful when they meet,
Who so abstaines from sustenance a space,
Shall find both bread and water relish sweet:
Men know not peace, nor rightly how to deem it,
That have not first by war been taught esteem it.

3

Though eyes want sight of that they would see faine,
The thought yet sees, & hearts with patience take it,
Long absence grieves, yet when they meet againe,
That absence doth more sweet and pleasant make it:
To serve and sue long time for little gaine,
(So that all hope do not evn quite forsake it)
One may endure, for when the paine is past,
Reward, though long it stay, yet comes at last.

4

The sharp repulses, and the deep disdaines,
And all the torments that in love are found,
At last with pleasure recompence the paines,
And make far more contentment to abound:
But if this hellish plague infect the braines,
Though afterward it seem both whole and sound,
The quality thereof is so mischievous,
The very thought is to a lover grievous.

5

This is that cruell wound, against whose smart
No liquors force prevailes, nor any plaster,

No skill of starres, no depth of Magick art
Devised by that great clark Zoroaster:
A wound that so infects the soule and heart,
As all our sense and reason it doth master;
A wound whose pang and torment is so durable,
As it may rightly called be incurable.

6

That is a plague that quickly doth infect
All lovers hearts, and doth possesse their thought,
As well with causelesse as with just suspect;
By this a man to madnesse meere is brought:
Oh plague, by whose most damnable effect
In deep despaire to die have divers sought;
Oh jealousie, that didst without desert
Possesse the noble Bradamantes heart.

7

Not for the tale her maid or brother told,
Which made within her mind a sharp impression,
But other newes that made her heart full cold,
How her love of new love did make profession;
As I more plaine hereafter shall unfold,

For now I needs a while must make digression
To brave Renaldo, that to Paris ward
Did march, with that same crew of great regard.

8

The day ensuing ere it yet was night,
They met an armed knight upon the way,
A Lady faire accompanid the knight,
His armour all was black, save that there lay
Athwart the brest a wreath of Argent bright.
And straight the formost man in their array,
Which Richardetto was, as then did chance,
He challenged with him to break a lance.

9

The gallant youth that never man refusd,
Straight turnd his horse, a space for course to take,
As one that (for his time) had often usd
Such feats as this to do, and undertake:
Renaldo standeth still, and them perusd,
To see which knight the fairest course would make,
Now Richardet thinks, if I hit him just,
I shall this gallant tumble in the dust.

10

But otherwise it then to him befell,
And of his reckning he was quite deceivd,
The tother knew to hit, and sit so well,
That Richardet was from the saddle heavd:
Alardo seeing how his brother fell,
Did think tavenge the foile that he receivd,
But he likewise inferiour did remaine,
His arm was bruised, his shield was rent in twaine.

11

Guicchiardo next the selfe same fortune trid,
And was constraind unto the ground tinline,
Although to him Renaldo lowdly crid,
Stay, hold your hands, for this course should be mine.
Vivian and Malagige, and more beside,
That at their kinsmens foile did much repine,
Would then have fought with this same stranger knight,
Save that Renaldo claimd it as his right.

12

And said, my friends, we must to Paris hast,
But to himselfe he said, it were a jest,

For me to stay till all they down were cast
By one and one, Ile fight and they shall rest;
This said, he spurs his horse, and commeth fast,
And as he runs he sets his speare in rest;
The tother doth as much, and eithers speare
The stroke doth in a thousand peeces teare.

13

The horsmen with the stroke stir not an inch,
They both had learnd so perfectly to sit,
But on their horses it did shrewdly pinch,
Yet Bayard scarce his course doth intermit,
The tothers horse had such a parlous wrinch,
That mard him quite, and brake his back with it,
His master that was greatly grievd to seet,
Forsakes his seat, and takes him to his feet.

14

And to Renaldo, that with naked hand
Came toward him in shew of truce, he said,
Sir knight I give you here to understand,
I likd so well this horse that here is dead,
I think it would not with mine honour stand,

To leave him unrevengd, which hath me led
To challenge you, evn as you are true knight,
That you will answer me againe in fight.

15

Renaldo answerd, if your horse you lost,
The onely cause of this your quarrell be,
Then comfort you, for of mine onely cost,
Your want herein shall be supplid by me,
With such a horse, as I may boldly boast,
To be as good a one as ere was he:
Not so sir, said the tother, you mistake it,
I will expound my mind, and plainer make it.

16

Though I likd well my serviceable horse,
Yet sith he now is in this conflict slaine,
Think not that of his death I so much force,
As that alone moves me to fight againe;
But in plaine termes on foot to trie your force,
As well as erst on horseback I would faine.
Renaldo, that of no mans force accounted,
Without delay straight from his horse dismounted.

17

And sith (quoth he) I see your noble mind,
Of this my company hath no suspition,
They shall go on, and I will stay behind,
And so will fight with you on evn condition.
This said, his band to part thence he assignd,
Who went their way upon their Lords commission,
Which bred great admiration in the stranger,
To find a man so little fearing danger.

18

Now when his standerd quite was out of sight,
And all Renaldos company was gone,
Then hand to hand they do apply the fight,
With force and fury great they lay it on;
Each marvels at the tothers passing might,
And yet of either side the gaine is none,
They felt the blowes so heavy and so hard,
That glad they were to lie well to their ward.

19

Thus these two knights, for honours only sake,
Together combat in such eager sort,

That evry little errour they should make,
Endangerd life in this unpleasant sport;
An houre and halfe this travell they did take,
Each labouring to cut the tother short,
And in his mind Renaldo labours much,
Who this should be, whose skill and force was such.

20

And, save that he could not with his reputation,
He would have wisht the battell at an end,
And offerd of a truce communication,
And of his unknown foe have made his friend:
Likewise the tother felt such inclination,
Now finding scarce he could himselfe defend,
That he repented his rash hardy part,
And would have had a truce with all his heart.

21

It waxed dark, there fell an evning mist,
So that at last they neither of them know
When he did hit aright, or when he mist,
Nor how to give, nor how to ward a blow:
When first Renaldo wisht him to desist,

Sith now the Sun descended was so low,
And that the combat might be now rejournd,
Till Phoebus were about the world returnd.

22

Offring (at which the stranger greatly musd,
And his rare curtesie therein commended)
To lodge him where he should both be well usd,
And like a man of honour well attended:
The tother his great curtsie not refusd,
And so between them two the fray was ended:
And straight Renaldo gave him as his gift,
His pages horse, that was both strong and swift.

23

Thus on they rode unto Renaldos tent,
And grew acquainted ere they thither came,
By meanes in certaine speeches as they went,
Renaldo happened to tell his name;
By which the stranger knew incontinent,
That this was that same Palladine of fame,
And that himselfe was to Renaldo brother,
By fathers side alone, and not by mother.

24

The savage Guidon, this brave warrior hight,
That traveled had full many a hundred mile,
With those two brothers, named the black and white,
And Sansonnet, until by craft and guile
They were surprised, as you heard last night,
And made against their wills to wait a while,
For maintenance of laws unjust and bad,
That wicked Pinnabell devised had.

25

Now when as noble Guidon certain knew
That this Renaldo was, whom he before
Desired long to see, he much did rewe
That he had done, and did lament it sore:
A blind man would not be more glad to view
The light, he doubted he should never see more,
Then Guidon in his mind was well appaid,
To see this knight, and thus to him he said.

26

What strange mishap, what sinister adventure,
Hath bred this fault in me, my noble Lord,

That I with you into this strife should enter,
With whom I ought to have all kind accord?
I am your fathers sonne, not by one venter,
I ever have your name and stock adord,
Guidon I hight, Constanza was my mother:
Born beyond Euxin seas, and yet your brother.

27

Wherefore I pray, pardon my fond offence,
That have instead of duty offerd wrong,
And tell me wherein I may recompence
This oversight, and I will do ere long:
Renaldo that had heard of him long since,
And to have seen him did not little long,
Embracd him, and not onely did forgive him,
But commendation great and praise did give him.

28

He said his valew was a perfect signe,
To shew himselfe in fight so fierce and stout,
That he was truly come of that same line,
Whose noble brute was blown the world about:
For if your manners did to peace incline,

Then had there been (said he) more cause of doubt,
The fearfull Hart comes not of Lions seed,
Nor doth a silly Dove a Faulcon breed.

29

Thus fell they two acquainted on the way,
And talkd together friendly as they went,
But neither did their talk the journey stay,
Nor did their riding make their speech relent,
Untill they came where all their brothers lay,
When as a great part of the night was spent,
Who with great joy and pleasure did behold them,
And chiefe when who this was Renaldo told them.

30

For though he must to them (no doubt) have ever
Been very welcome as a brother deare,
Yet could he be to them more welcome never,
Then now, what time as you before did heare,
They all did mind to do their best endeavor
To rescue Charles that was of heavy cheare:
Wherefore for this one cause above the rest,
He was unto them all a welcome guest.

31

Thus now the day ensuing on went Guidon,
Joyning himselfe unto Renaldos crew,
And as to Paris wals they forward ride on,
They met two valiant youths that well him knew:
Further with them conferring, they descride one,
A Lady richly clad, and faire of hew:
These warlike youths had Gismond to their mother,
White Griffin and black Aquilant his brother.

32

Now Guidon knew them, and to them was known,
As having been together many dayes,
By whom they were unto Renaldo shown,
And praisd for gallant men at all assayes:
As in your judgement, likewise in mine own,
(Renaldo said) these youths do merit praise,
For they have oft been provd two perfect warriors,
As well in spite as sport, at tilt and barriers.

33

Renaldo did by their apparell know them,
Tone ever wearing white, the tother black,

And friendly countenance he now did show them,
Chiefly because the King did succour lack:
Wherefore into his band he doth bestow them,
That band that to the Turks did bring much wrack,
And they do joyne them to Renaldos banner,
Forgetting all old jars in loving manner.

34

Between the house of Ammon and these twins,
About one Truffaldin a jarre there fell,
The matter at the first not worth two pins,
Wherefore the circumstance I will not tell,
But now Renaldo their affection wins,
By using them so curteously and well,
For curteous speech and usage mild and kind,
Wipes malice out of evry noble mind.

35

Now after these another knight there came,
Hight Sansonet a man of great account,
Who welcomd was, and took it for no shame,
Of stout Renaldos band himselfe to count:
While this thus past, behold the gallant dame,

That knew this noble Lord of Clarimount,
(For she was one that all the French Lords knew)
Told him a tale that made him greatly rew.

36

My Lord (said she) I bring you sorie tiding,
He whom the Church and Empire held so deare,
Runs all about, in no one place abiding,
Of sense and argument deprived cleare:
He naked goes, not natures secrets hiding,
Which me to tell, and you must grieve to heare,
Orlando (that same light and lamp of France)
Hath lost his wits, God knowes by what mischance.

37

His armes and sword that he away had thrown,
As things by him left and forsaken clearly,
I saw a courteous knight, to me unknown,
But one (it seemd) that lovd Orlando dearly,
Them gather where they scatterd were and sown,
And evn of charity, as seemed meerly,
In triumph wise on tree he hangd the same,
And underneath he gravd Orlandos name.

38

But straight the sword that hanged on the tree,
With force and scornfull speech away was tane,
(As I can witnesse well that did it see)
By Mandricard the sonne of Agricane:
Think you what hurt this will to Europe be,
That once againe the Turks have Durindane:
The gentle knight strave long with him to save it,
But in the end was forcd to let him have it.

39

I saw Orlando late in monstrous guise,
To run about uncouth and all unclad,
With strangest clamours and most hideous cries:
In fine I do conclude that he is mad;
And save I saw it so with these mine eyes,
I would not trust if any told it had.
She further told how she had seen him later,
With Rodomont to tumble in the water.

40

And last of all she told him she had heard,
How that about this sword there grew some strife,

Between Gradasso stout and Mandricard:
And how the Tartar having lost his life,
The sword was givn Gradasso afterward,
As over all the Pagan camp was rife:
And having ended this so sad narration,
There to she addeth this short exhortation.

41

That he and evry one that were not foe
To stout Orlando, would take so much paine,
In Paris or elsewhere him to bestow,
Till he had purged his distemperd braine:
Mine husband Brandimart (said she) I know,
To do him any good himselfe would straine:
Thus Fiordeliege spake, the loving wife
Of Brandimart, that lov'd her as his life.

42

At this strange tale and wofull accident,
Such inward griefe the good Renaldo felt,
That with the thought his heart incontinent
Did seem like snow against the Sun to melt,
And with all speed he might to go he meant,

And by all meanes he might so to have dealt,
To seek Orlando, whom if he can find,
He hopes to bring him to a better mind.

43

But sith he now had hither brought his band,
Or weret the will of God, or were it chance,
He first doth mind to end the cause in hand,
And rescue Paris and the king of France:
Wherefore he makes his men all quiet stand
Till night, what time himselfe will lead the dance,
And then between the fourth and second watch,
He meanes at once the matter to dispatch.

44

He makes his men lie close for all that day,
By way of Ambuscado in a wood,
And ease themselves and horses all they may,
And take the sustenance of rest and food,
The place within three leagues of Paris lay,
And when the Sun was set, he thought it good,
What time the world doth use his lesser lamp,
To Paris ward to move his silent camp.

45

And as he purposd, he performd indeed,
For straight himselfe with that same gallant crew,
Set out by night, as first they had decreed,
In silent sort suspition to eschew.
Now came the time that they must do the deed,
Now neare unto the Turkish camp they drew,
When first the heedlesse Sentinels intrapping,
They kild them all because they took them napping.

46

The watch once slaine, they are no longer dumbe,
But after stout Renaldo soon they came,
They sound the trumpet, and strike up the drum,
And calling still upon that noble name,
That often had the Pagans overcome,
(I meane Renaldos house of Montalbane)
Which crie he causd both his own men to quicken,
And that the Turks might in more feare be stricken.

47

Himself well mounted on his famous horse,
Doth presse amidst the Pagan Princes tents,

And with his own, and with his horses force,
He treads them down, and all in peeces rents,
Unarmd, or armd he kills without remorse,
Who ever commeth in his way, repents,
The drowsie men halfe armd make poore resistance,
Against so brave a man with such assistance.

48

For why, beside those men I namd before,
Whose vertue and whose value oft were shown,
Renaldo had six hundred men and more,
All perfect traind, of strength and courage known,
Which about Clarimont he kept in store,
For his own use and causes of his own,
Though at this need his Princes turn to furnish,
He soon agreed his own towns to unfurnish.

49

And though Renaldo had no great revenue,
The which chiefe sinewes unto warre affords,
Yet kept he still six hundred in retinue,
What with good usage and with gentle words,
That all of them did still with him continue,

At his command with launces, horse and swords,
Nor was there any that from him away went,
Though diverse others offerd greater payment.

50

Now think when this brave crew the Turks assailed,
At unawares, halfe wake or halfe asleep,
How that same name & that same noise them quailed
How here they fled and there, with hold and keep:
But smally flight, and lesse their fight prevailed;
But evn as Goats from Lions, or as sheep
From Wolves make small defence, such in comparison
These Pagans made against Renaldos garison.

51

On tother side king Charles (that by espiall)
Had notice of Renaldos comming hither,
With all that crue so noble and so loyall,
That to his aid combined were together,
With diverse Lords came forth in person royall,
And all his men of armes likewise came thither:
Eke Brandimart, rich Monodontes heire,
Did with king Charles unto the field repaire.

52

Whom when his spouse that neare about did hover,
Had found out by his standard and his armes,
And plainly saw it was her dearest lover,
She rusheth in among the men of armes,
And unto him her selfe she doth discover,
Who straight embraced her in open armes;
And leaving then the battell, drew apart,
That each to other might their minds impart.

53

And after sweet embracing oftentimes,
They did conferre together of their state:
O vertue of those unsuspecting times,
When Ladies early wander might and late,
And yet be faultlesse deemd and free of crimes,
Where now each small suspect turnes love to hate,
Yea evn for all their watching and safe keeping,
They doubt their wives do wake while they are sleeping.

54

Among the conference this couple had,
The Lady did unto her spouse unfold,

How his good friend Orlando was faln mad,
How she her selfe his madnesse did behold,
His running naked, carelesse and unclad,
Not credible had any els it told,
But credible it was now she had sed it,
For in far greater things he gave her credit.

55

She further did to Brandimart recount,
How she had seen the bridge the Pagan made,
(I meane the cruell Pagan Rodomount)
Upon the streame so deep as none could wade,
Where he the passengers of best account
Did from each side with fury great invade,
And with the spoiles of those he kild and took,
Did beautifie a tombe made by the brook.

56

And last she told how with his strength extreme
Orlando heavd the Turke armd from the ground,
And so with him fell backward in the streame,
With perill great there to have both been drownd,
From whence Orlando went about the Reame,

Where his mad parts would make him soon be found.
This tale in Brandimart did breed such sorrow,
He staid not for the next ensuing morrow.

57

But taking for his guide faire Fiordeliege,
And being ready armd, as then he was,
He goth to seek that foresaid parlous bridge,
In mind (what ever hap) the same to passe,
Where many men their lives line did abridge,
As in such dangers soon it comes to passe:
No sooner came he to the utmost ward,
But Rodomont had notice by his guard.

58

He greatly did to heare such newes rejoyce,
And straight he commeth forth with warlike gesture,
And bids him with a loud and scornfull voice,
Unto the tombe to yeeld his armes and vesture:
Or threatens him, if he refuse his choice,
To make him drink beyond all good disgesture:
But Brandimart his threats did nothing feare,
And makes no answer but with couched speare.

59

Then straight to horses side he sets the spurs,
The horse he rode upon Batoldo hight,
The horse though good, yet snores, and starts, & stirs,
Much scard with narrow bridge, and waters sight:
Eke Rodomont his good Frontino spurs,
Who ever starts, as used to this fight,
Although the bridge did shake all under feet,
When in the middle way these knights did meet.

60

Their speares that were of firm well seasond wood,
With so great force upon their armour strake,
That though their horses were both strong and good
Yet both fell from the bridge into the lake,
Quite overwhelmd with water and with mud,
Yet neither horseman did his horse forsake;
Long taried they within the streame below,
To search if any Nymph dwelt there, I trow.

61

This had not been the first time nor the fift,
That from this bridge the Turke had been throwne down,

Wherefore his horse and he could better shift,
For neither horse nor he did doubt to drown;
For where the streame was most profound and swift,
He often had been plungd above his crown,
Which made his horse and him the more audacious
Amid the streame, although profound and spacious.

62

He knew by prooffe (for he had trid it oft)
Where all the shelves, and where the channell lay,
Which parts were gravelly, and which were soft:
The tother ignorant, was born away,
Tost here and there, now low, and then aloft,
The while the Pagan greedy of his prey,
At all advantages doth still assaile him,
Whose horses footing more and more did faile him.

63

At last with plunging and with striving tird,
He backward fell into the weeds and mud,
Where he was like to have been drownd and mird,
Save that his spouse that by the river stood,
In humble wise the Pagan Prince desird,

And in most earnest manner that she could,
Evn for her sake, whose ghost he did adore,
To help her worthy knight unto the shore.

64

Ah gentle sir, if ever you did tast
Of love (she said) or of a lovers passion,
Save that same knight, on whom my love is placd,
And let him not be drown'd in so vile fashion:
Suffice it you, your tombe will be more grac'd
With one such prisner of such reputation,
Then hundreds other that shall here arrive;
Then take his spoiles, and save himselfe alive.

65

These words that might have mov'd a stone I think,
Mov'd him to rescue noble Brandimart,
Who without thirst had tane such store of drink,
As from his limbs, his life did welnigh part:
But ere he brought him to the rivers brink,
He caus'd him with his sword and armes depart,
And made him sweare now he was in his power,
To yeeld himselfe true prisner to his tower.

66

The dame of comfort all was quite bereavd,
When as she saw how ill her spouse had sped,
And yet lesse grieffe of this chance she conceivd,
Then if he had been in the water dead:
She cals her selfe the cause that he receivd
This harme, that fondly had him thither led,
Into a place of danger such and jeopardie,
As needs must hazard either life or libertie.

67

About the place in vaine she long did hover,
Then parted she in mind to seek some knight,
Of Charles his camp, that might her losse recover,
And prove himselfe, though not more strong in fight,
At least more fortunate then was her lover:
Long did she travell all that day and night,
And eke the day ensuing, ere she met one,
Yet was it her good hap at last to get one.

68

A champion in a rich artire she met,
All wrought with withered leaves of Cypresse tree,

Hereafter I will tell you, but not yet,
What wight this was, whether a he or she:
Now turn I to the camp, lest I forget
The noble knights that set their sovereigne free,
I meane Renaldo and his new come brother,
With cunning Malagige and many other.

69

Unpossible it was account to keep
Of those were kild that night, and those that fled,
Fierce Agramant was wakned from his sleep,
And with all speed that might be up he sped,
He weighs the perill and the danger deep,
His souldiers run away, ner making head:
Marsilio, with Sobrino, and the rest,
Wish him to flie, for feare he be distrest.

70

Advising him, sith fortune now gan frown,
Unto this tempest wisely to give place,
And go to Arly, or some other town,
So strong to dure assault no little space:
So might he save his person and his crown,

As first was to be card for in such case:
And then with wisdom warily proceeding,
To wait till time might serve of better speeding.

71

Thus Agramant, to so great danger brought,
Well knew not what to do, nor what to say,
But did as by his counsell he was taught,
And in great hast conveyd himselfe away:
The while much woe unto his men was wrought,
The Christens them discomfite, kill and slay:
The darknesse causd the number be unknown,
That in this fight were kild and overthrown.

72

With hast full many were in water drownd,
That saw there was no safetie in the land,
More succour in their heeles then hands they found,
Against such fierce assaylants few durst stand;
But greatest dammage did to them redound,
By those six hundred of Renaldos band:
Who did distribute strokes in so great plenty,
As evry one of them massacred twenty.

73

Some think that Malagigi plaid his part
In this conflict, not wounding men nor slaying,
But making of their foes by Magick art
To heare so huge a noise of horses naying,
Such sound of Drums, such shouts from evry part,
As all the world had vowed their decaying:
By which they all were stricken in such feare,
As not a man of them durst tarie there.

74

Yet though the Turkish Prince fled thence so fast,
The brave Rogero he would not forget,
But caused him from danger to be placd,
And on an easie paced horse him set:
Thus now the Turks were by the Christens chasd,
And glad they were a walled town to get:
But yet Gradasso and his valiant band
Did still unto their tackle stoutly stand.

75

Nay, which was more, when as he understood,
How that Renaldo Palladine of France,

Was he that shed such store of Turkish blood
He was so glad he ready was to dance;
He thanks his gods that were to him so good,
To send him this so much desired chance,
By which he hopes and makes account most clearly,
To win that horse Renaldo held so dearly.

76

For why Gradasso king of Serycane,
Long since to France came with an army Royall,
With onely hope to conquer Durindan,
That famous blade of so good prooffe and triall:
And eke Renaldos courser to have tane,
That Bayard hight: and now when by espiall,
He knew Renaldo was on that beast mounted,
The conquest sure, the horse his own he counted.

77

So much the rather, for that once before,
About this matter they had made a fray,
Fast by the sea upon the sandy shore;
(To tell the circumstance I may not stay)
But Malagigi thence his cosin bore,

And did into a barge him safe convey:
And thereupon Renaldo ever since
Was tane but for a coward by this Prince.

78

Wherefore in hope so rich a spoile to reape,
Two houres before the rising of the sun,
All armed on Alfana he doth leape,
And with his lance to death are diverse done:
On French the Moores, on Moores the French doth heape,
And all he meeteth he doth overrun:
So did ambition set his heart on fire,
To meet Renaldo, such was his desire.

79

Soon after this, each met with speare in rest,
(But neither then at first the tother knew)
Each brake his speare upon the tothers crest,
Unto the heavnly car the splinters flew:
Then with their swords either was ready prest,
(Their lances thrown away, their swords they drew)
Each laying on the tother so fell strokes,
As if not knights had fought, but clownes feld okes.

80

Gradasso though he knew him not by sight,
(For yet the morning beames were not displaid)
Yet did he guesse both by the horses might,
And those fierce strokes the tother on him laid;
Wherfore with words that savourd scorn and spight,
He straight begins Renaldo to upbraid:
And said he had his challenge disappointed,
And not appeared at the day appointed.

81

Belike you thought I should have met you never,
But now (said he) you here are met right well,
Assure your selfe I will pursue you ever,
Were you tane up to heavn, or down to hell;
No height nor depth should hinder mine endever,
I meane to find you out where ere you dwell,
To shun the fight with me it doth not boot,
Untill you leave your horse and go on foot.

82

At this his speech were diverse standing by,
As Guidon, Richardet, and others more,

Who would have slaine Gradasso by and by,
Had not Renaldo stepped them before,
And said in wrath, what masters am not I
Well able wreake my private wrongs therefore?
Then to the Pagan gently thus he spake,
And wisht him mark the answer he did make.

83

Who ever saith, that I did fight eschue,
Or shew defect of value any way,
I say and do avouch he saith untrue,
And I will prove by combat what I say;
I came unto the place to meet with you,
No scuses I did seek, nor no delay,
And frankly here to you I offer fight,
But first I wish you were informed right.

84

Then took he him aside, and more at large
He told what hapned him, and how by art
His cosin Malagige into a barge
Conveighed him, and forcd him to depart:
In fine himselfe of blame quite to discharge,

He brought him out to witness evry part,
And then to prove that this was true indeed,
He offerd in the combat to proceed.

85

Gradasso that both curteous was, and stout,
Gave eare unto the tale Renaldo told,
And though it seemd he stood thereof in doubt,
Yet him in all his speech he not controld:
But in conclusion, having heard it out,
He doth his former purpose firmly hold:
Which was by combat fierce to try and know,
If so he could Bayardo win or no.

86

The Palladine that passed not a point
Of no mans force, to meet him gave his word:
The place in which to meet they did appoint,
Was neare a wood, and by a pleasant foord,
There onely added was a further point;
Which was that Durindan, Orlandos sword
Should to Renaldo as of right accrew,
If he the Pagan overcame or slew.

87

Thus for the present time departed they,
Untill the time approchd of pointed fight,
Although Renaldo friendly did him pray,
To rest him in his tent that day and night:
And offerd frank safe conduct for his stay,
So curteous was this same couragious knight:
Gradasso greatly praisd the noble offer,
But yet refusd the curtsie he doth profer.

88

The feare was great that secretly did lurk
In all the minds of all Renaldos kin,
Who knew, the strength and cunning of this Turke
Was such, as doubt it was which side should win:
Faine Malagigi by his art would work
To end this stay, before it should begin:
Save that he feard Renaldos utter enmity,
In so base sort for working this indemnity.

89

But though his friends did feare more then was meet,
Himselfe assurd himselfe of good successe:

Now at the pointed time and place they meet,
Both at one very instant, as I guesse,
And first they kindly do embrace and greet
The tone the tother with all gentlenesse;
But how sweet words did turn to bitter blowes,
The next booke saving one the sequell showes.

ARGUMENT

THE THIRTYSECOND BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Good Bradamant Rogero long expecteth,
But heareth newes that touch her very nie,
How he all other loves beside neglecteth,
To wed Marfisa, thus the same doth flie:
To Arly Bradamant her course directeth,
To kill Marfisa, or her selfe to die:
Three kings and Ullany she doth subdue,
Those with her speare, and this with passing hue.

THIRTY SECOND BOOKE

1

I now remember how by promise bound
Before this time I should have made you know
Upon what cause faire Bradamant did ground,
The jealous humours overchargd her so:
She never took before so sore a wound,
She never felt before such bitter wo,
No not the tale which Richardetto told her,
In such a fit and so great pangs did hold her.

2

To tell you first, when I should have begun,
Renaldo calld my tale another way;
No sooner with Renaldo had I done,
But straight with Guidon I was forcd to stay:
From this to that thus unawares I run,
That I forgot of Bradamant to say:
But now I mean to speak of her, before
I speak of those two champions any more.

3

Yet needs I borrow must a word or twaine,
How Agramant to Arly did retire,
And gatherd there the few that did remaine,
Escaped from the fury of the fire:
Where not farre off from Affrica nor Spaine,
He plants as fit as he could well desire,
For lying on a flood so neare the seas
Both men and vittell were supplid at ease.

4

To muster men Marsilio had commission,
That may supply the place of them were lost,
Of ships of warre there was no small provision,
Soone had he gatherd up a mighty host:
There was no want of armour and munition,
There was no spare of labour nor of cost,
That with such taxes Affrica was sessed,
That all the Cities were full sore oppressed.

5

And further Agramant, that he might win
Fierce Rodomont to aid him with his power,

Did offer him a match of his neare kin,
King Almonds daughter with a Realme in dower;
But he his profer weighs not worth a pin,
But keeps the bridge, and doth the passage scowre,
That with his spoiles the place was welnigh fild,
Of those he had dismounted, tane, and kild.

6

But faire Marfisa took another way:
For when she heard how long the siege had lasted,
How Agramant his camp at Arly lay,
How both his men were slaine, and store was wasted,
She sought no cause of any more delay,
But thither straight without inviting hasted,
Her purse and person offering in the fight,
In just defending of his crown and right.

7

She brings Brunello, and the king she gave him,
Who had givn cause of very just offence,
Ten dayes and ten, she did of curtsie save him,
To see who durst to stand in his defence;
But when that no man made the means to have him,

Though she to kill him had so good pretence,
She thought it base, her noble hands to file,
Upon an abject dastard, and a vile.

8

She will deferre reveng of all his wrong;
And unto Arly brought him to the King;
Whose joy to tell, would aske a learned tongue,
Both for the aid, and present she did bring:
(For shew whereof, before it should be long,
He offerd her to make Brunello wring:
And at what time she pleased to appoint,
To have him sent to crack his chiefest joynt).

9

Unto some desart place he banisht was,
To serve for meat for carrion crows and pyes,
Roger that had helpt him oft (alas)
Now cannot heare his piteous mones and cryes:
He lyes sore wounded, as it comes to passe,
And little knowes where poore Brunello lyes:
And when he understands thereof at last,
It is so late alreadie it is past.

10

This while what torments Bradamant indured,
Those twenty days, how did she waile and mourne?
Against which time she thought her selfe assured,
Her love to her, and to the faith should turne:
She makes no doubt but he might have procured,
Within that space to make his home returne,
(Yea though he were in prison kept or banished)
If troth and care of promise were not vanished.

11

In this long looking she would often blame,
The fierie coursers of the heavenly light,
She thought that Phoebus wheeles were out of frame,
Or that his charriot was not in good plight:
Great Josuahs day seemd shorter then these same,
And shorter seemd the false Amphitrions night:
Each day and night she thought was more then doubled
So fancie blind her sence and reason troubled.

12

She now envyes the Dormouse of his rest,
And wisht some heavy sleepe might overtake her,

Wherewith she might most deadly be possest,
Till her Rogero should returne to wake her:
But waking cares ay lodged in her brest,
That her desired sleepe did quite forsake her:
To sleepe so long doth so much passe her power,
She cannot frame her eyes to wincke one hower.

13

But turnes and tosses in her restlesse bed,
(Alas no turning turnes her cares away)
Oft at the window she puts forth her hed,
To see how neare it waxeth unto day;
When by the dawning, darkesome night is fled,
She notwithstanding stands at that same stay:
And during all the time the day doth last,
She wishes for the night againe as fast.

14

When fifteene dayes were of the twenty spent,
She growes in hope that his approach is ny,
Then from a towre with eyes to Paris bent,
She waytes and watches if she can descry
At least some messenger that he hath sent,

May bring the news where her sweet heart doth ly,
And satisfie her mind by what hard chance,
He is constrained to stay so long in France.

15

If farre aloofe the shine of armour bright,
Or any thing resembling it she spies,
She straight way hopes it is her only Knight,
And wipes her face and clears her blubbred eyes:
If any one unarmd do come in sight,
It may be one from him, she doth surmise:
And though by prooffe she finde each hope untrue,
She ceaseth not for that, to hope anew.

16

Sometime all armd she mounteth on her steed,
And so rides forth in hope to meet her deare,
But soone some fancie her conceit doth feed,
That he is past some other way more neare:
Then homeward hasteth she with as much speed,
Yet she at home no newes of him can heare:
From day to day she passeth on this fashion,
Hither and thither tossed with her passion.

17

Now when her twenty daies were full expired,
And that beside were passed some dayes more,
Yet not Rogero come, whom she desired,
Her heart with care and sorrowes waxed sore;
With cryes & plaints the woods and caves she tyred,
Her brests she beat, her golden locks she tore,
Nor while these gripes of griefe her heart embrace,
Doth she forbear her eyes or Angels face.

18

Why then (quoth she) beseemes it me in vaine,
To seeke him still, who thus from me doth slide?
Shall I esteeme of him that doth disdain
My sute, and scorne the torments I abide?
Him, in whose heart a hate of me doth raine,
Him, that accounts his vertues so well tride,
As though some goddesse should from heavn desced,
Before that he his heart to love would bend?

19

Though stout he is, he knows how well I love him,
And how I honor him with soule and hart,

Yet can my hot affection nothing move him,
To let me of his love possesse some part:
And lest he might perceive it would behove him
To ease my grieffe, if he did know my smart,
To give me hearing of my plaint he feares,
As to the charme the Adder stoppes his eares.

20

Love; stop his course that doth so loosely range,
And flit so fast before my sorrie pace;
Or with my former state else let me change,
When I sought not to tracke thy tedious trace:
I hope in vaine; remorse to thee is strange,
Thou dost triumph upon my piteous case:
For hearts thy meat, thy drinke is lovers teares,
Their cries the Musicke doth delight thine eares.

21

But whom blame I? it was my fond desire,
That first entist me to this killing call,
And made me past my reach so far aspire,
That now I feele the greater is my fall:
For when aloft my wings be toucht with fire,

Then farewell flight and I am left to fall:
But still they spring, and still I upward tend,
And still I see my fall, and finde no end.

22

Desire quoth I? my selfe I was too light,
To give desire an entrance in my brest,
Who when he had my reason put to flight,
And of my heart himselfe was full possest,
No roome for joy is left, or hearts delight,
Since I do harbour this unruly guest,
Who though he guide me to my certaine fall,
The long expectance grieves me worst of all.

23

Then mine the fault be, if it be a fault,
To love a Knight deserves to be beloved,
With all good inward parts so richly fraught,
Whose vertues be so knowne, and well approved;
And more, whom would not his sweet face have caught?
My self, I must confesse, his beautie moved:
What blind unhappie wretch were she would shun,
The pleasing prospect of the precious Sun?

24

Beside my destinie which drew me on,
By others sugred speech I was entrained,
As though I should by this great match anon,
Another Paradice on earth have gained:
But now their words into the wind be gon,
And I in Purgatorie am restrained:
Well may I Merlin curse the false deceiver,
Yet my Rogero I shall love for ever.

25

I hopt of Merlins and Melissas promises,
Who did such stories of our race foretell:
Is this the profit of beleaving prophesies,
And giving credit to the sprites of hell?
Alas they might have found them better offices,
Then me to flout that trusted them so well:
But all for envie have they wrought me this,
So to bereave me of my former blis.

26

Thus sighs and lamentations are not fained,
Small place was left for comfort in her brest:

Yet spite of sorrows hope was entertained,
And though with much a do, yet in it prest;
To ease her mourning heart when she complained,
And giving her sometimes, some little rest,
By sweet remembrance of the words he spake,
When he was forst of her his leave to take.

27

The minding of those words did so recure
Her wounded heart that she was well content,
For one months space his absence to endure,
Yea when his dayes of promise quite were spent;
Yet still she lookt for him you may be sure,
And many a time that way she came and went,
Till by the way at last such news she hard,
That all the hope she had before, was mard.

28

For she by chance did meet a Gascoigne Knight,
That in the warres of Affrica was caught,
One that was taken captive in that fight,
Then when fore Paris the great field was fought,
What she requires to know, he could recite,

But carelesse of the other news he brought,
Of her Rogero chiefly she enquires,
To heare of him is all that she desires.

29

Of whom the Knight could let her understand,
(For in that Court he late his life had led)
How Mandricard and he fought hand to hand,
And how much blood on either part was shed:
And though by wounds himselfe in perrill stand,
That he subdewd his foe, and left him ded.
Now if with this, his story he had ended,
Rogeros scuse had very well bin mended.

30

But he proceeds to tell, how one was theare,
A Ladie hight Marfisa in the feeld,
Whose fame for martiall acts did shine most cleare,
Whose beauty rare to few or none did yeeld,
Rogero her, she held Rogero deare,
They never were asunder or but seeld,
And that they two, as evrie one there saith,
The tone the tother plighted have their faith.

31

And if Rogero once were whole and sound,
Their wedding should be celebrate with speed:
That such a paire as yet was never found,
And happie they should come of such a seed:
How much it joyd the Pagan Princes round,
To thinke upon the race they two should breed,
Which likely were all others to excell
In feats of arms that erst on earth did dwell.

32

The Gascoigne Knight of all that he had sed,
Himselfe had reason to beleeeve was sooth,
So generall a fame thereof was spred,
There were but few but had it in their mouth.
Some little kindnesse she did use had fed
Their foolish humors of this false untrowth;
Still fame will grow if once abroade it flie,
Although the ground be troth or be a lye.

33

They came indeed together to this fight,
And many times together they were seene,

For he was warlike, stout and worthy Knight,
And she a gallant, faire, and daintie Queene,
By which, suspition never judging right,
Did gather straight they had assured beene:
And specially because when she departed,
To visite him she was so soone reverted.

34

Of just suspect their reason was but slender,
If they had weighed well their vertues rare,
Though of his wounds she seemd to be so tender,
And of his danger had so great a care;
Against bad tongues no goodnes can defend her,
For those most free from faults; they least wil spare,
But prate of them whom they have scantly knowne,
And judge their humors to be like their owne.

35

Now when the Knight avowd the tale he told,
(And yet in truth you know twas but a tale)
The damsels heart was toucht with shivering cold,
The little hope she had away it stale,
Almost in sound her seate she scarce could hold:

With mourning cheare, and face both wan and pale,
She said no more: but mad with griefe and ire,
Her horse she turnd, and homeward did retire.

36

And all in armour on her bed she lyes,
She wisht a thousand times she now were ded,
She bytes the sheets to dampe her sobs and cries,
The Gascoigns news still bearing in her hed:
Her heart is swolne, and blubberd be her eyes,
With trickling teares bedewed is her bed,
When griefe would be no longer holden in,
Needs out it must, and thus it doth begin.

37

Ah wretched me, whom might a maiden finde,
In whom she might be bold to put her trust?
Since you Rogero mine, become unkinde,
And dread your faith and promise in the dust;
You only you, mine eye so farre did blinde,
I still esteemd you faithfull, true and just:
Ah never wench that loved so sincerely,
Was in requitall punisht so severely.

38

Why (my Rogero) why do you forget?
(Sith you in beutie passe each other Knight,
And do in feats of armes such honor get,
As none can match your chivalrie in fight)
This golden vertue with the rest to set,
By which your glorious name will shine more bright
If as in other graces you abound,
So in your promise constancie were found?

39

This is the vertue breeds most estimation,
By which all other vertues shew more cleare,
As things most faire do loose their commendation,
Which by the want of light can not appeare:
What glory was it by false protestation,
Her to deceive whose Saint and God you were?
Whom your fair speeches might have made beleeve
That water would be carrid in a seeve.

40

From any haynous act wouldst thou refraine,
That murdrest her who beares thee so good will?

How wouldst thou use thy foe, that thus in paine
Dost let thy frend to be tormented still?
Thou that with breach of faith thy heart dost staine,
No doubt thou dost not care for doing ill;
Well this I know, that God is ever just,
He will ere long revenge my wrongs I trust.

41

For why, unthankfulnesse is that great sin,
Which made the Divell and his angels fall,
Lost him and them the joyes that they were in,
And now in hell detaines them bound and thrall:
Then marke the guerdon thou art like to win;
For why like faults like punishment do call,
In being thus unthankfull unto me,
That alwayes was so faithfull unto thee.

42

Besides of theft thy selfe thou canst not quit,
If theft it be to take that is not thine;
The keeping of my heart: no thats not it,
That thou shouldst have it I do not repine,
Thy selfe thou stalst, which I can not remit,

Thy selfe thou knowst thou art, or shouldst be mine,
Thou knowst damnation doth to them belong,
That do keepe backe anothers right by wrong.

43

Though thou Rogero do forsake me so,
I can not will nor chuse but love thee still;
And since there is no measure of my wo,
Death is the only way to end mine ill;
But thus to cut of life, and thou my fo
It makes me do it with a worsers will;
Yet had I dyde when best I did thee please,
I should have counted death, no death but ease.

44

When with these words she was resolv'd to dy,
She tooke her sword in hand for that intent,
And forst her selfe upon the point to ly,
Her armour then her purpose did prevent,
A better spirit checkt her by and by:
And in her heart this secret reason went,
O noble Ladie borne to so great fame,
Wilt thou thus end thy dayes with so great shame?

45

Nay rather if thou beest resolv'd to dy,
Unto the campe why dost thou not repaire,
Where bodies of brave Knights in heaps do ly?
Lo there to honour the directest staire,
The losse of life with glory thou mayst buy,
To die in thy Rogeros sight were faire,
And happily by him thou mayst be slaine,
So he that wrought thy wo may rid thy paine.

46

Thou mayst be sure Marfisa there to see,
Who hath so falsly stolne away thy frend;
If first on her thou couldst revenged be,
With more contented mind thy dayes would end.
Unto this counsell she doth best agree,
And onward on this journey straight doth tend,
She takes a new device that might implie
A desperation, and a will to die.

47

The collour of her bases was almost,
Like to the falling whitish leaves and drie,

Which when the moisture of the branch is lost,
Forsakenly about the tree doth lye.
With Cipresse trunks embroderd and embost,
(For Cipresse once but cut will alwaies die)
A fine conceipt, she thinks to represent
In secret sort her inward discontent.

48

She tooke Astolfos horse and Goldelance,
As fittest both for this her present feat,
That speare could make the bravest Knight to dance,
And caper with a tuch beside his seate.
But where Astolfo had it, by what chance,
Or why he gave it, need I not repeate,
She tooke it, notwithstanding her election,
Not knowing of that magicall confection.

49

Thus all alone without both Squire and Page,
Thus furnished she set her selfe in way,
To Paris ward she traveld in a rage,
Whereas the campe of Sarzins lately lay,
And (as she thought) kept up King Charles in cage,

Not understanding how before that day,
Renaldo aiding Charles with Malageege,
Had forced them from thence to raise their seege.

50

Now had she left mount Dordon at her backe,
When little way behind her she descride,
A gallant Damsell following of her tracke,
A shield of gold unto her saddle tide,
Of Squires and other servants none did lacke,
And three brave Knights were riding by her side,
But of the Squires that overtooke her last,
She askt one what those were that by her past.

51

And straight the worthie Ladie it was told,
How from Pole Artike that same damsell came,
Sent from a Queene, with that faire shield of gold,
Unto King Charles (that there was knowne by fame)
But so, as he must this condition hold,
That on a Knight he must bestow the same,
Such one as he in his imagination,
For prowesse deemd most worthy reputation.

52

For she of Island Ile that holds the raigne,
And is (and knows it) that she is most faire,
Doth thinke she should her worth not little staine,
And her great fame and honour much impaire,
If any Knight her Ile and her should gaine,
Except he stood so high on honors staire,
As that he were adjudgd in feats of warre,
The prymer man, and passing others farre.

53

Wherefore the cause she sends to France is this,
She thinks if she shall finde one any where,
That in the Court of France he surely is:
And therefore she doth send to greet him there.
As for those three, because you shall not misse,
To know the truth, Ile tell you what they were:
They were 3 Kings, of whom great fame there goth,
Of Norway one, one Swethland, one of Goth.

54

These three, though far they dwell from Island Ile,
Yet love of that same Queene hath brought them hither,

This Ile is calld Perduta otherwhile,
Because the seamen leese it in foule weather:
These Kings livd from their country in exile,
And to this Queene were suters all together:
And she that knew not well how to forbid them,
With this same pretie shift from thence she rid them.

55

She saith, she minds to wed for her behoofe,
That wight that most excels in warlike action,
And though (quoth she) you shew no little proofe,
Of valew here (as twere in privat faction)
Yet I must have you tride more far aloofe,
Before my mind can have full satisfaction:
Wherefore I meane my selfe and crowne to yeeld
Alone to him that bringeth backe my sheeld.

56

This is the cause that these three Kings did move
Each one to come from so remote a nation,
With purpose firme their utmost force to prove,
To win the golden shield with reputation,
Or leese their lives, for that faire Ladies love,

If that they failed of their expectation.
When he had told her thus, he her forsooke,
And soone his company he overtooke.

57

The Damsell rode a softer pace behind,
And so as in a while she lost their sight,
And often she revolved in her mind,
The tale the fellow told, with small delight.
She doubts this shield bestowd in such a kind,
Will be in France a cause of brall and fight,
That this will be a meanes she greatly feares,
To set her kin together all by theares.

58

This fancie movd her much, but more then this,
That former jealous fancie did her move,
That her Rogeros kindnesse alterd is,
That on Marfisa he had plast his love:
This so possest her sence that she did misse
Her way, nor never thought as did behove,
Till night was almost come, and Sunne nigh set,
Where she a lodging for her selfe may get.

59

Evn as an emptie vessell that was tide,
Unto the wharfe, with some old rotten cable,
If that the knot do hap to breake or slide,
So that to hold it be no longer able,
Is borne away, as please the wind and tide:
So Bradamant, with mind and thoughts unstable,
Was in such muse, as she the right way mist,
And so was borne, where Rabicano list.

60

But when she saw the Sunne was almost set,
She tooke more heede, and asking of a clowne,
(A shepherd that by hap there by she met)
Where she might lodging get er Sunne went downe
The shepherd made her answer, that as yet
She was almost a league from any towne,
Or other place where she might eate or lodge,
Save at a Castle cald sir Tristrams lodge.

61

But evrie one that list, is not assured,
Though he do thither come, to stay therein,

To martiall feats they must be well inured,
With speare and shield they must their lodging win:
Such custome in the place hath long indured,
And many years ago it did begin,
Wherefore tis good that one be well advised,
Ere such an act by him be enterprised.

62

In briefe thus is their order, if a Knight
Do finde the lodgings void, they him receive,
With promise, that if more arive that night,
Either he shall to them his lodging leave,
Or else with each of them shall prove in fight,
Which of them can of lodging tother reave:
If none do come that night he shall in quiet,
Have both his horsemeat, lodging, and his diet.

63

If foure or five do come together first,
The Castle keeper them must entertaine,
Who commeth single after, hath the worst,
For if he hope a lodging there to gaine,
He must (according to that law accurst)

Fight with all those, that did therein remaine:
Likewise if one come first, and more come later,
He must go fight with them yet nere the later.

64

The like case is, if any maid or dame
Do come alone, or else accompanied,
Both they that first, and they that latest came,
Must by a Jurie have their beauties tried:
Then shall the fairest of them hold the same,
But to the rest that come shall be denied:
Thus much the shepheard unto her did say,
And with his finger shewd to her the way.

65

About three miles was distant then the place,
The damsell thither hasts with great desire;
And though that Rabicano trot apace,
Yet was the way so deepe and full of mire,
The snow and drift still beating in their face,
She later came then manners good require;
But though it were as then both darke and late,
She boldly bounced at the castle gate.

66

The porter told her that the lodgings all
Were filld by Knights that late before them tooke,
Who now stood by the fire amid the hall,
And did ere long to have their supper looke:
Well (answers she) then have they cause but small
(If they be supperlesse) to thanke the cooke;
I know (quoth she) the custome, and will keepe it,
And meane to win their lodging ere I sleepe yet.

67

The Porter went and did her message bold,
To those great states then standing by the fire,
Who tooke small pleasure when they heard it told,
For thence to part they had so small desire;
Now chiefly when twas rainie, darke and cold;
But so their oth and order did require,
That they must do it, were it cold or warme,
And therefore quickly they themselves did arme.

68

These were those three great kings, whom that same day
Dame Bradamant had seene but few houres past,

Though they had sooner finished their way,
Because she rode so soft, and they so fast.
Now when they were all armd, they make no stay,
But all on horsebacke mount themselves at last:
No doubt but few in strength these three did passe,
Yet of those few, sure one this damsell was.

69

Who purposd (as it seemeth) nothing lesse,
Then in so wet and in so cold a night,
To lack a lodging and sleepe supperlesse:
Now those within at windowes see the fight,
The men themselves on horsebacke do adresse,
To looke thereon, for why the Moone gave light:
And thus at last, though first twere somewhat late,
They did abase the bridge and ope the gate.

70

Evn as a secret and lascivious lover,
Rejoyceth much, when after long delayes,
And many feares, in which his hope did hover,
He heares at last the noise of pretie kayes:
So Bradamant that hopes now to recover

A lodging, for the which so long she stayes,
Did in her mind in such like sort rejoyce,
When as she heard the watchfull porters voyce.

71

Now when those Knights and some few of their traine,
Were past the bridge, the dame her horse doth turne
To take the field, and then with speed againe,
With full careere she doth on them returne,
And coucht that speare, yet never coucht in vaine,
For whom it hits it still doth overturne;
This speare her cosin, when he went from France,
Gave unto her, the name was Goldelance.

72

The valiant King of Swethland was the first
That met her, and the next the King of Goth,
The staffe doth hit them full, and never burst,
But from their saddles it did heave them both;
But yet the King of Norway sped the worst,
It seemd to leave his saddle he was loth,
His girses brake, and he fell upside downe,
In danger with the mire to choke and drowne.

73

Thus with three blows, three kings she down did beare,
And hoist their heels full hie, their heads full low,
Then enterd she the castle voyd of feare,
They stand without that night in raine and snow;
Yet ere she could get in, one causd her sweare
To keepe the custome, which they made her know;
And then the master doth to her great honor,
And entertainment great bestowed on her.

74

Now when the Ladie did disarme her head,
Off with her helmet came her little caul,
And all her haire her shoulders overspred,
And both her sex and name was knowne withall,
And wonder great and admiration bred
In them that saw her make three Princes fall;
For why she shewd to be in all their sight,
As faire in face as she was fierce in fight.

75

Evn as a stage set forth with pompe and pride,
Where rich men cost and cunning art bestow,

When curtaines be removd that all did hide,
Doth make by light of torch a glittering show;
Or as the Sunne that in a cloud did bide,
When that is gone, doth clearer seeme to grow:
So Bradamant when as her head was barest,
Her colour and her beautie seemed rarest.

76

Now stood the guests all round about the fire,
Expecting food, with talke their eares yet feeding,
While evry one doth wonder and admire,
Her speech and grace, the others all exceeding,
The while her host to tell she doth desire,
From whence and who this custome was proceeding,
That men were drivn unto their disquiet,
To combat for their lodging and their diet.

77

Faire dame (said he) sometime there ruld in France,
King Feramont, whose sonne a comely Knight,
Clodian by name, by good or evill chance,
Upon a lovely Ladie did alight:
But as we see it oftentimes doth chance,

That jealousie in love marres mans delight;
Thus he of her in time so jealous grew,
He durst not let her go out of his vew.

78

Nor ever Argus kept the milkwhite cow
More straight, then Clodian here did keepe his wife,
Ten Knights eke to this place he doth allow,
Thereby for to prevent all casuall strife;
Thus hope and feare betweene, I know not how,
As he prolongs his selfetormenting life,
The good sir Tristram thither did repaire,
And in his company a Ladie faire.

79

Whom he had rescude but a little since
From Giants hand, with whom he did her find,
Sir Tristram sought for lodging with the Prince,
For then the Sunne was very low declind:
But as a horse with galled backe will wince,
Evn so our Clodian with as galled mind:
For casting doubts and dreading evry danger,
Would by no meanes be won to lodge a stranger.

80

When as sir Tristram long had prayd in vaine,
And still denide the thing he did demaund,
That which I cannot with your will obtaine,
In spite of you (said he) I will commaund;
I here will prove your villanie most plaine,
With launce in rest, and with my sword in hand:
And straight he challenged the combat then,
To fight with Clodian and the other ten.

81

Thus onely they agreed upon the case,
If Clodian and his men were overthrowne,
That all then presently should voyd the place,
And that sir Tristram there should lie alone:
Sir Clodian to avoid so great disgrace,
The challenge tooke, for why excuse was none:
In fine, both Clodian and his men well knockt,
And from the castle that same night were lockt.

82

Triumphant Tristram to the Castle came,
And for that night, as on his owne he seased,

And there he saw the Princes, lovely dame,
And talkt with her, who him not little pleased:
This while sir Clodian was in part with shame,
And more with thought and jealous feare diseased,
Disdaining not in humble sort to woo him,
By message mild to send his wife unto him.

83

But he, though her he do not much esteeme,
For why, by meanes of an enchanted potion,
Isotta fairest unto him did seeme,
To whom he vowed had his whole devotion:
Yet for he did the jealous Clodian deeme
Some plague to merit, he denide his motion;
And swears it were no manners nor no reason,
A Ladie to unlodge at such a season.

84

But if (saith he) it do his mind offend,
To lie all night alone and eke abode,
Tell him I will this other Ladie send
To him, that shall with him make her abode:
Now tell him that to keepe this I intend,

The which to win, I have such paine bestowd;
Tis reason that the fairest should remaine
With him that is the strongest of us twaine.

85

Clodian in mind was wondrous malcontent,
Usd so not like a Prince but like a patch,
That puffing, blowing up and downe he went
All night, as one were set to keepe a watch:
But whether he do chase or else lament,
He found the Knight for him too hard a match.
Next day sir Tristram let him have his wife,
And so for that time finisht was the strife.

86

For openly he on his honour swore,
That he her honour had that night preserved,
Although discourtesies he had before
Had at his hands a great revenge deserved;
Yet in that Clodian had lodgd out of dore,
He was content that penance should have served;
He nathesle tooke it for no good excuse,
To say that love was cause of such abuse.

87

For love should gentle make rude hearts and base,
And not in gentle mind breed humors vile:
Now when sir Tristram parted from the place,
Sir Clodian meant to stay there but a while,
But to a Knight that stood much in his grace,
He graunts the keeping of this stately pile:
Keeping one law for him and for his heires,
With evry one that to the place repaires.

88

That namely ever he that was most strong,
Should there be lodgd, and she that was most faire,
And that the rest should take it for no wrong,
To walke abroad into the open aire:
This is the law which hath endured long,
And no man may the strength thereof impaire:
Now while the man this storie did repeate,
The steward on the boord did set the meate.

89

The boord was coverd in a stately hall,
Whose match was scarce in all the country seene,

With goodly pictures drawne upon the wall,
All round about, but chiefly on the screene;
These they did looke on, with delight not small,
And would have quite forgot their meate I weene,
Save that their noble host did them advise,
To feed their bellies first, and then their eyes.

90

Now as they downe did at the table sit,
The master of the house began to lowre,
And said they did an error great commit,
To lodge two Ladies come in sundry howre;
Needs one must be put out, where ere it hit,
And go abrode into the cold and showre:
The fairest (sith they came not both together)
Must bide, the foulest must go trie the wether.

91

Two aged men and women more beside
He cald, and bad them quickly take a vew,
Which of the twaine should in the place abide,
And namely which of twaine had fairest hew:
This Jurie do the matter soone decide,

And gave their verdict, as it was most trew,
That Bradamant past her in hew as farre,
As she exceld the men in feates of warre.

92

Then spake the Knight unto the Island dame,
Whose mind was full of timorous suspition,
I pray you thinke it not a scorne or shame,
For hence you must, there can be no remission.
Poore Ullany (so was the damsels name)
Doth thinke she now is drivn to hard condition,
Yet in her conscience true she knew it was,
That Bradamant in beauty her did passe.

93

Evn as we see the Sunne obscurd sometime,
By sudden rising of a mistie cloud,
Engendred by the vaporbreeding slime,
And in the middle region then embowd:
So when the damsell plainly saw that time,
Her presence in the place was not allowd,
She was so changd in countnance and in cheare,
That evn unlike her selfe she did appeare.

94

But much astonish'd with the sudden passion,
She ready was to sound in all their sight;
But Bradamant that would not for compassion
Permit that she should go abroad that night,
Did say, this trial was of no good fashion,
And that the judgement hardly could be right,
When men observe not this same chief regard,
As not to judge before both parts be hard.

95

I, that on me do take her to defend,
Say thus, that be I faire, or lesse or more,
I came not as a woman, nor intend
As woman now to be adjudg'd therefore;
Who knowes my sex, except I condescend
To shew the same? and one should evermore
Shun to confirme things doubtfull, or deny it,
When chiefly others may be harmed by it.

96

Yet who can say precisely what I am?
For many men do weare their haire as long,

And you do know that as a man I came,
And all my gestures to a man belong;
Wherefore in giving me a womans name,
To both of us perhaps you may do wrong;
Your law points women (if their right be donne)
By women, not by warriers to be wonne.

97

But yet admit it were as you do guesse,
That I indeed were of the female gender,
Though that it is so, I do not confesse;
Should I to her my lodging then surrender,
If that my beauty of the two were lesse?
No sure, in that the reason were but slender:
The price that unto vertue longs of dewtie,
Should not be tane away for want of bewtie.

98

And if your law were such, that needs of force,
Unto the fairest lodging should be given,
Yet at this feast I tary would perforce,
And from my lodging I would not be driven:
Wherefore mine argument I thus enforce,

That this same match betweene us is not even,
For striving here with me, the case is plaine,
She much may leese, and little she may gaine.

99

And where the gaine and losse unequall is,
The match is evill made in common sence;
Wherefore I thinke it were not much amisse,
With this same law for this time to dispence;
And if that any dare mislike of this,
Or seeme to take the matter in offence,
I will with sword be readie to maintaine,
That mine advice is good, and his is vaine.

100

Thus noble Ammons daughter movd with pittie
In her behalfe, who to her great disgrace
Should have bin sent, where neither towne nor citie
Was neare almost in three leagues of the place,
Framd her defence so stout and eke so wittie,
That to her reason all the rest gave place;
But chiefe the perill great and hazard waying,
That might have grown to them by her gainsaying.

101

As when the Sunne in sommer hath most powre,
And that the ground with heate thereof is rived,
For want of raine the drie and parched flowre
Doth fade, and is as twere of life deprived,
But if in season come a fruitfull showre,
It riseth up and is againe revived:
So when the damsell this defence did heare,
She waxed faire againe, of better cheare.

102

And thus at last they fell unto their feast
In quiet sort, for none did come that night,
To challenge any of them, or molest,
No traveller, nor any wandring Knight;
All merry were but Bradamante least,
Fell jealousie bard her of all delight,
Her stomacke so distempring, and her tast,
She tooke no pleasure of that sweet repast.

103

When supper ended was, they all arise,
Although perhaps they would have longer sate,

Save for desire they had to feed their eyes;
And now the night was spent and waxed late,
The master of the house in seemly wise,
Doth call for torches to set out his state,
And straight with torch light filled was the hall,
But what they saw, hereafter shew I shall.

ARGUMENT

THE THIRTYTHIRD BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Faire Bradamant sees gravn by passing art,
The future wars of France upon a screene,
Bayardos flight the combat fierce doth part,
Renaldo and the Sericane betweene.
Astolfo having past the greater part
Of all the world, and many countries seene,
Unto Senapos kingdome last arrives,
And from his boord the foule Harpias drives.

THIRTY THIRD BOOKE

1

Tymagoras, Parrhasius, Polignote,
Timant, Protogenes, Apollodore,
With Zeuxis, one for skill of speciall note:
Apelles eke, past all the rest before:
Whose skill in drawing, all the world doth note,
And talke of still (to writers thanks therefore)
Whose works and bodies, time and death did wast,
Yet spite of time and death their fames do last.

2

With others that in these our later daies
Have livd, as Leonard and John Belline,
And he that carves and drawes with equall praise,
Michell more then a man, Angell divine,
And Flores, whom the Flemmings greatly praise,
With Raphael and Titian passing fine,
With divers others that by due desart,
Do merit in this praise to have a part.

3

Yet all these cunning drawers with their skill,
Could not attaine by picture to expresse,
What strange events should happen well or ill,
In future times, no not so much as guesse:
This art is proper unto Magike still:
Or to a Prophet, or a Prophetesse,
By this rare art, the Brittish Merlin painted
Strange things, with which our age hath bin acquainted.

4

He made by Magike art, that stately hall,
And by the selfe same art he causd to be,
Strange histories ingraved on the wall,
Which (as I said) the guests desird to see.
Now when they were from supper risen all,
The pages lighted torches two or three,
Making the roome to shine as bright as day,
When to his guests the owner thus did say.

5

I would (quoth he) my guests, that you should know,
That these same stories that here painted are,

Of future warres the sequels sad do show,
That shall to Italie bring wo and care:
Whereas the French full many a bloodie blow
Shall take, while others they to harme prepare,
As Merlin here hath layd downe, being sent
From English Arthur, chiefe for this intent.

6

King Fieramont that was the first that past
The streame of Rhine with armie great of France,
And being in possession quiet plast
Or all those parts, sturd with so luckie chance,
Straight in ambitious thought began to cast,
His rule and scepter higher to advance.
Which that he might to passe the better bring,
He made a league with Arthur English King.

7

Informing him how that his meaning was,
Of Italie the rule and crowne to get,
And askt his ayd to bring the same to passe,
Which never had atchieved bin as yet,
Now Merlin that did all men far surpass

In Magike art, his purpose sought to let,
For Merlin had with Arthur so great credit,
He thought all Gospell was, if once he sed it.

8

This Merlin then did first to Arthur show,
And then by Arthur was of purpose sent,
To Fieramont of France, to let him know
The cause why he misliked his intent,
As namely, many mischiefs that would grow,
To all that now, or that hereafter ment
The like attempt, advising him abstaine
From certaine trouble, for uncertaine gaine.

9

And that he might his courage more appall,
And quite remove him from this enterprise,
He made by Magicke, this so stately hall,
Adorned as you see in sumptuous wise,
And drew these histories upon the wall,
That what he saw in mind, they might with eyes,
And thereby know, that in Italian ground
The Flour de luce can near take root profound.

10

And how as often as the French shall come,
As frends to aid and free them from distresse,
So oft they shall their foes all overcome,
And fight with honor great, and good successe:
But be they sure to have that place their toome,
If so they come their freedome to oppresse;
Thus much the owner of the house them told,
And so went on, the storie to unfold.

11

Lo first how Sigisbert in hope of gaine,
And promises of Emperour Mauricius,
Doth passe the mountaines with a mighty traine,
With mind to Lombardie to be pernicious:
But Ewtar drives him backe by force againe,
When he of such attempt is least suspicious,
So that his enterprise is quite reversed,
Himselfe doth flie, and leave his men dispersed.

12

Next after him the proud Clodoveus went,
And had with him one hundred thousand men,

But him doth meet the Duke of Benevent,
With scarce for evrie hundred souldiers, ten,
Who doth intrap him in an ambushment,
So as the French might well be likned then,
While Lombard wines too greedily they took,
To fish beguiled with a baited hooke.

13

Straight Childibertus with a mighty host,
Doth come with mind to wipe away this blot:
But of his gamings he may make small bost,
For of his purpose he prevailed not:
His enterprise by heavnly sword is crost,
The plague doth grow among his men so hot,
What with the burning feaver, and the flixe,
Of sixtie men, there scant returneth sixe.

14

Another picture lively doth expresse,
How that King Pepin and King Charles his sonne,
Fought both in Italie with good successe;
Not with intent that Realme to overrunne,
But to set free Pope Stevn from sharpe distresse

And wrongs, that by Astolfo were him done,
One tames Astolfo that was Stevns oppressor
Tother takes Desiderius his successor.

15

Behold another Pepin yet a youth,
Not like his father, doth that Realme invade,
And thinking to procure their wofull truth,
Of ships and boats a mighty bridge he made:
But marke what ill successe to him ensuth,
Ear he through his great enterprise could wade,
A tempest did his massie worke confound,
His bridge was broken, and his souldiers drownd.

16

Lo Lews of Burgundie, descending theare
Where, as it seemes he taken is and bound,
And he that takes him, maketh him to sweare,
That he shall neare beare arms gainst Latian ground,
Low how he breakes his oth without all feare,
Lo how againe his foes do him confound,
And like a moldwarpe, make him loose his eyes:
A just reward for such as oths despise.

17

See here how Hugh of Arly doth great feats,
Driving the Beringars from native soile,
Forcing them twise or thrise to change their seats,
And cause the Hunnes and Baviers backe recoile:
But greater force at last his acts defeats,
First he compounds, and after all his toile,
He dies, nor after long his heire doth tarie,
But yeeldeth up his crowne to Beringarie.

18

Lo heare another Charles that by perswasion,
Of evill shepherd, sets on fire the fold,
And kills two Kings in this his fierce invasion,
Manfred and Corradin, which makes him bold:
But his owne faults of his fall gave occasion;
His crueltie was such, so uncontrold,
That he and his were all kild (as they tell)
Evn at the ringing of an evnsong bell.

19

Now after these about one hundred yeares,
For so the space betweene did seeme to say,

From France, one shall invade those famous peeres,
The Vicount Galeasses, and shall lay
Siege unto Alexandria as appeares,
By those that here do stand in battell ray.
Lo how the Duke preventing evrie doubt,
Provideth strength within, deceit without.

20

And with this warie policie proceeding,
He doth the Frenchmen at advantage take,
Not finding his ambushment, and not heeding,
Together with the Lord of Arminake,
Who dieth of his hurts with overbleeding:
Lo how the streame of bloud there spilt doth make
A sanguin colour in the streame of Poe,
By meanes Tanarus into it doth goe.

21

After all these, one comes that Marca hight,
And three that do of Aniom house proceed,
All these to those of Naples do much spite,
Yet none of these can brag of their good speed:
For though to French they joyne some Latian might,

Of greedie sort, that with their crownes they feed:
Yet still for all their paine and their expence,
Alfonse and Ferdinando drive them thence.

22

Lo Charles the eight descending like a thunder,
Downe from the Alps with all the floure of France,
And conquering all (to all mens passing wonder)
Not drawing once a sword, nor breaking lance,
(Except that rocke that Typhesus lyeth under
While he too high himselfe strave to advance)
This Ile and castle both, that Iskia hight,
Defended was by Vasto gallant Knight.

23

Now as the master of the castle told,
And pointed out each storie in his place,
It came into his fancy to unfold,
The worthy praise of Alvas noble race;
Which (as for certaintie they all did hold)
Wise Merlin propheside, who had the grace
To shew before hand, both with tongue and pen,
What accidents should hap, and where, and when.

24

And namely that this Knight whom here you see,
Defending so the castle and the rocke,
As though he feard not those same fires that flee,
As far as Fare, but them did scorne and mocke.
From this same Knight there shal descend (quoth he)
Out of the root of this most worthy stocke,
A Knight shall win such fame and reputation,
As all the world shall hold in admiration.

25

Though Nereus were faire, Achilles strong,
Though Ladas swift, though Nestor was most wise,
That knew so much, and lived had so long;
Though bold Ulysses could both well devise,
And execute what doth to warre belong
Though Caesars bountie praisd be to the skies,
Yet place to give all these may thinke no scorne,
To one that shall in Iskia Ile be borne.

26

And if that ancient Creta may be proud,
Because that Celus nephew sprang therein:

If Thebes of Bacchus birth doth vant so lowd,
And Hercules; if Delus of their twin:
Then may that Ile no lesse be well allowd,
To vant it selfe, that hath so happie bin,
To have that Marquesse borne within that place,
On whom the heavns shall powre so great a grace.

27

Thus Merlin usd to tell and oft repeat,
How he should be for such a time reserved,
When Roman Empires high and stately seat,
At lowest eb should be, and welnigh starved;
That his rare parts againe might make it great,
And that by him it might be safe preserved,
Which that you may see plainly to his glory,
Marke in this table the ensuing story.

28

Lo here (said he) how Lodwicke doth repent,
That he had thither brought King Charles the eight,
Which at the first he did but with intent
To weaken, not to presse with so hard weight
His ancient foe; for now gainst Charles he went,

Making new leagues according to his sleight,
He thinks to take him prisoner by the way,
But Charles by force through the doth make his way.

29

But yet the souldiers that behinde him staid,
Had not the like good fortune nor successe,
For Ferdinando grew by Mantuan aid
So strong, that soone he did the French distresse:
To whose great grieffe, this Marquesse was betraid
By Gypson vile, when he feard nothing lesse,
Which doth in Ferdinand so great grieffe breed,
As doth his joy of victorie exceed.

30

Next after these, he shews them Lews the twelfth,
That puls out Lodwicke Sforse with mighty hand,
And gets by force, what he had got by stelth,
And plants the Flour de luce in Millen land;
Yet he no long time there in quiet dwelth,
The great Consalvo with a Spanish band,
His Captaines and Lieutenants oft repulses,
And in the end from Millen quite expulses.

31

Lo here (which I forgot before to show)
How Lodwickes frends, and his own men betray him,
One sells his castell never striking blow;
The Swizzers eke that might away convay him,
And had his pay, and did him service ow,
For filthy luces sake they do bewray him;
Whereby without once breaking of a lance,
Two victories came to the King of France.

32

Lo how by favour of this mighty King,
The bastard Caesar Borgia grew full great,
And doth the necks of many nobles wring
Of Italie, that had most ancient seat.
Lo how this King doth eke the akornes bring
To Bulloign, lo how with another feat
He doth the Genowais in fight subdue,
And maketh them their late revolt to rue.

33

Lo here not far from thence, how all the feeld
With dead mens bones is held at Geriudad,

How all the cities unto Lews do yeeld,
How Venice to shut up her gates is glad;
And scarce her selfe from this great storme can sheeld:
Lo how the Pope (his part that herein had)
Doth take away unto his great rebuke,
Modone, and more, from good Ferraras Duke.

34

At which King Lews (with rightfull choller moved)
Gives Bulloign to the Bentivols againe,
And thence to Breskie all his force removed,
And succours to Felsina doth ordaine,
What time the Churches souldiers felt and proved,
The French mens force unto their mickle paine:
Lo after where both armies meet to fight,
Neare Chassie shore, to trie their utmost might.

35

On this side France, on that the powre of Spaine,
United is, and deadly blows ensew,
The ditches all seemd fild with bodies slaine,
A hap to make a stonie heart to rew;
Long time in doubt doth victorie remaine,

Which way the sway would carry no man knew,
Till by the vertue of Alfonse alone,
The French prevaile, the Spanish (forst) are gone.

36

Lo how the Pope his lip doth bite for grieffe,
Because the Frenchmen do Ravenna sack;
Low how he sent to Swizzers for reliefe,
Lo how they come and drive the Frenchmen back;
And they that with their treason caused chiefe
Of Lodowike the overthrow and wrack,
To make some mends for that they erst had done,
Unto the fathers place restore the sonne.

37

But lo a Prince of France then new created,
Meets with the Swizzers to their mickle cost,
And so their courage quaild, and force abated,
As all the nation seemed welnigh lost;
And of their title that them animated,
Those villens vile hereafter need not bost,
Defenders of the Church, tamers of Kings,
They cleaped were, now clipped are their wings.

38

Lo how the French king Francis in despite
Of all the league, faire Millen doth surprise,
Bourbon defending it from Genoas might;
Lo while this king doth practise and devise,
Some great exploit, while by foule oversight,
His lawlesse men the town did tyrannize;
Their having too much pride and want of pitie,
Doth cause them suddenly to lose the city.

39

Lo yet another Francis Sforse, a man
Like to his grandsire both in acts and name,
Who to drive out the Frenchmen well began,
And Millen did recover with great fame;
Lo France againe endeavour all they can,
To win with praise that they had lost with shame,
But Mantuas worthy Duke on Tycian streame,
Cuts off his way, and kept him from that Realme.

40

Yong Fredericke, yet but a beardlesse boy,
Scant having on his chin a little downe,

Lo how he saves Pavia from annoy,
When furiously the French besiege the towne;
He makes their earnest plots turn to a toy,
The Lion of the sea he beateth down:
Lo here two Marquesses both of one blood,
Both born to do their country endlesse good.

41

The first of these is that Alfonsos sonne,
That by the Negro erst you saw betraid,
Behold what feats of armes by him are done,
How at their greatest need he them doth aid,
How oft he hath on Frenchmen glory wonne,
That of his very name they seem afraid:
The tother that so mild doth look in sight,
Is Lord of Vasto, and Alfonso hight.

42

This is that worthy knight, of whom I told,
Then when I did the Ile of Iskia show,
Of whom I said that Merlin had foretold
To Feramont what he by skill did know,
That when this world were worn and waxen old,

And Rome and Italy were brought most low,
Then he should spring, who to his endlessse praise
Their foes should overthrow, and them should raise.

43

Lo how he with his cousin of Pescare,
And with Colonnas prosperous aid no lesse,
The French and Dutch that at Bycocca are,
Do foile and slay, and drive to great distresse;
Lo how againe the Frenchmen do prepare,
With new attempts to mend their bad successe,
One camp the king in Lombardie doth make,
And with another Naples he would take.

44

But she that useth men as wind doth dust,
First take it up and blow it very high,
And from that highest place straight when she lust,
She throwes it down whereas it first did lie:
She makes this king devoid of all mistrust,
Think he hath men an hundred thousand nie
At Pavie siege, believing others muster,
(But wo to kings whose servants are no juster.)

45

So while this noble Prince mistrusts no harme,
His wicked Captaines greedy gaine to win,
Causd that the soldiers in the night alarm,
Came to their colours slow and very thin,
Within their tents they feel their skirmish warme;
The warie Spaniards soon had entred in
With those two guides, with whom they durst assay
In hell or els in heavn to break a way.

46

Lo how the chiefe nobility of France
Lie dead on ground, a cause of many teares,
How many an hargabush, a sword and lance
This stout king hath alone about his eares:
His horse slaine under him by hard mischance,
And yet he nothing yeelds, nor nothing feares,
Though all the host assaulted him alone,
And all the rescues and supplies were gone.

47

The valiant King defends him on his feet,
Bathing his blade long time in enemies blood,

But vertue that with too much force doth meet,
Must yeeld at last, it cannot be withstood;
Lo him here prisner, lo how in a fleet
He passeth into Spaine the salt sea flood,
Whence Vasto doth the chiefest honour bring
Of the field won, and of the prisner king.

48

Thus both that hoast the king had thither brought,
And that he meant to Naples to have sent,
Were both dispersed quite, and came to nought,
Much like a lamp when all the oyle is spent
Lo how the King againe so well hath wrought,
He leaves his sonnes for pledge, and homeward went,
Lo how abroad he doth new quarrels pike,
Lo how at home some do to him the like.

49

Lo here the wofull murders and the rapes
That Rome doth suffer in the cruell sack,
Where neither thing prophane nor holy scapes,
But all alike do go to spoile and wrack:
The league that should relieve, sits still and gapes,

And where they should step forward, they shrink back,
Thus Peters successor by them forsaken,
Is straight besieged, and at length is taken.

50

The King sends Lautrek new supplies to gather,
Not that he should to Lombardie do ought,
But that he might set free the holy father,
That to so low an ebb so soon was brought:
But Lautrek should have come a little rather,
The Popes own coyn hath his own freedome bought,
Lautrek attempts to conquer Naples town,
And soon turnes all the country upside down.

51

Lo how a faire imperiall navy bends
His course to succour the distressed town,
But Doria back with heave and ho them sends,
And some of them doth burn, and some doth drown:
Lo, fickle fortune once againe intends
To change her cheare and on the French to frown,
With agues not with swords they all are slaine,
Scarce of an hundred one turnes home againe.

52

These and such stories had the stately hall
In marble rich ingraved on the skreen,
As were too tedious to recite them all,
Though then by them they were perusd and seen;
Their wonder great, their pleasure was not small,
And oft they read the writings were between,
That in faire Roman letters all of gold,
The circumstance of evry picture told.

53

Now when the Ladies faire and all the rest,
Had seen and askd as much as they desird,
Their host doth bring them to their rooms of rest,
Where sleep renewes the strength of bodies tird,
Onely Duke Ammons daughter could not rest,
Though bed were soft, room warm, and well attird,
Yet still she tost from left side to the right,
And could not sleep one wink all that same night.

54

With much ado her eyes at last she closd,
Not much afore the dawning of the day,

And as she slept, she in her sleep supposed
Rogero present was, and thus did say,
My deare, what ailes thee to be thus disposed,
That false beliefe in thee doth beare such sway?
First shall the rivers to the mountaines clime,
Ere I will guilty be of such a crime.

55

Beside she thought she heard him thus to say,
Lo I am come to be baptizd my love,
And that I seemd my comming to delay,
Another wound, and not a wound of love,
Hath been the cause of my constrained stay,
Suspitions vaine, and causlesse feare remove:
With this the damsell wakd, and up she started,
But found her dreame and lover both departed.

56

Then freshly she doth her complaints renew,
And in her mind thus to her selfe she spake,
Lo what I like, are dreames vaine and untrue,
And in a moment me do quite forsake;
But ah, what me offends is too too true,

I dream of good, but none I find awake,
How are mine eyes alas in so ill taking,
That closed see good, and nought but evil waking?

57

Sweet dream did promise me a quiet peace,
But bitter waking turneth all to warre;
Sweet dreame deluded me, and soon did cease,
But bitter waking plagues, and doth not arre:
If falshood ease, and truth my paine increase,
I wish my selfe from truth I still might barre,
If dreames breed joy, and waking cause my paine,
Ay might I dream, and never wake againe.

58

Oh happy wights whom sleep doth so possesse,
As in six moneths you never open eye,
For sure such sleep is like to death I guesse,
But waking thus, is not like life (think I)
How strange are then the pangs that me oppresse,
That sleeping seem to live, and waking die?
But if such sleep resemblance be of death,
Come death and close mine eyes, and stop my breath.

59

Now were those Eastern parts of heavn made red,
Where Phoebus beames do first begin appeare,
And all the thick and rainie clouds were fled,
And promised a morning faire and cleare;
When Bradamant forsook her restlesse bed,
And giving for her lodging and good cheare,
Right courteous thanks unto her noble host,
She leaves his house, and minds to part in post.

60

But first she found how that the damsell faire
The messenger that supd with her last night,
Was gone before, with purpose to repaire
To those three knights that lately felt her might,
When she did cause them caper in the aire,
Drivn without styrups from their steeds to light,
She found they had all night to their great paine
Abid the wind, the tempest and the raine.

61

And that which greatly did increase their griefe,
Was that while those within had cheare great store,

They and their horse lackd lodging and reliefe:
But that which did offend their stomacks more,
And was indeed of all their sorrowes chiefe,
Was lest the maid (of whom I spake before)
Would tell their mistresse of their hard mischance,
They had at their arrivall first in France.

62

And having full resolved and designd,
To die or venge the foile receivd last night,
To thend the messenger might change her mind,
(The messenger that Ullania hight)
Who thought their force and value far behind
The vaunts that they had made of their great might,
Therefore as soon as Bradamant they spid,
Straight each of them to combat her defid.

63

Not thinking though she should a damsell be,
For of a damsell gesture none she usd;
The Lady gently spake unto them three,
And thought her hast the fight might have excusd,
But they did urge her still so farre, that she

Without disgrace could not have it refused;
Wherefore she caught the goldenheaded lance,
And from their saddles made them all to dance.

64

And for that time thus ended was that fray,
For she set spurs to horse, and rode so post,
That ere they rose, she quite was gone away:
They that their seats had twice together lost,
Were so ashamed, they knew not what to say:
For why they wanted were to make their best,
No knight of France should able be to stand
Against the worst of them, with speare in hand.

65

But Ullania further them to taunt,
That Bradamant a Lady was, them told,
Now sirs (said she) you that were wont to vaunt,
From Palladins to win the shield of gold,
Lo how a womans forces can you daunt,
Now is (I hope) your lofty courage cold:
Sure for those knights you be too weak a match,
When one poore damsell you can overmatch.

66

What need (said she) be further triall had,
You have already that for which you came,
Except that any of you be so mad,
To joyne a future losse to present shame;
Or if perhaps ye would be faine and glad,
To end your lives by men of worthy fame:
Trow you that vanquisht are by womans hand,
Renaldo or Orlando to withstand?

67

Now when as Ullanie declared had,
How that a damsell them had overthrown,
With grieffe and with disdain they were so mad,
That scarce their wits and senses were their own,
Each one himselfe, or armour all unclad,
Their horse turnd loose, their swords away were thrown,
And vowd for penance of so great disgrace,
To touch no armour in a twelvemoneths space.

68

They further vow they neer will ride againe,
No not when that same yeare should be expird,

Although the way were mountanie or plaine,
And though the way were gravelly or mird,
Untill they could by force of armes regaine
Such horses, as for service are requird,
And furniture for three such champions meet;
Till then they vovd to travell on their feet.

69

Thus wilfully they walkd while others rode,
But Bradamant went on, and that same night,
She at a castle maketh her abode,
Neare to the way that leads to Paris right:
Here by her host, the Lady faire was showd,
How Agramant was vanquisht in the fight:
Good meat, good lodging, and good newes she had,
Yet eat she not, nor slept, nor was she glad.

70

But now of her so much I must not say,
That I forget my story out to tell,
Of those two knights that met this other day,
And tid their horses at the running well:
No lands nor townes were causes of their fray,

Nor who in rule nor office should excell,
But evn that he that strongest was of twaine,
Should Bayard win, and Durindana gaine.

71

There needs no signe of War, nor trumpets sound,
To warn them when to strike or when to pawse,
No Heralds need to limit out the ground,
Nor read them lectures of their warlike lawes.
They met as they by promise firm were bound,
And each his weapon at one instant drawes,
And then they laid about them strong and nimble,
Blowes bred their smart; and smart their wrath did kindle.

72

Two blades more firm in triall, and more sure,
Could not in all the world have been prepard,
That having been (as these were) put in ure,
Would not have been in peeces burst and mard:
But both these blades were of such temper pure,
So keen so tough, and therewithall so hard,
They might a thousand times at hardedge met,
And neither blade thereby a gap would get.

73

Renaldo quick hither and thither goes,
And oftentime was forcd to change his place,
And traverse ground, for why the weight he knowes
Of Durindana, that would cut apace:
Gradasso ever gave the stronger blowes,
But tother still to scape them had the grace;
Or if they hit, they hit in some such part,
Where though they made great sound, they causd no smart.

74

Renaldo with lesse strength, but far more art,
Strake once or twice the Pagan on the arm,
And with a thrust had surely piercd his heart,
Save that his armour strengthened was by charm,
So that no maile out of his place would start:
But while each sought to do the other harm,
A sodaine noise did part their earnest quarrell,
They lookd and saw Bayardo in great parell.

75

I say they lookd about, and spid at length
Bayardo fighting with a monstrous fowle,

Bigger then he, her beak three yards of length
In other shape and making like an owle,
Her talents huge and sharp, and of great strength,
The feathers of her wings all black and fowle,
Her eyes like fire, a long and hideous taile,
Her wings so huge, they seemed like a saile.

76

Perhaps it was a fowle, but I think not,
Nor ever heard I erst of such a bird;
Onely so Turpin calle it well I wot,
If any will credit to him affoord:
Rather I deem that Malagigi got
Some sprite infernall, that himselfe had stird,
To come in shape as I did shew before,
Because the champions fierce might fight no more.

77

Renaldo eke himselfe believd the same,
And with his cousin Malagige fell out,
And to his charge laid not a little blame,
And gave him evill language thereabout,
The tother sware by him that heavns did frame,

It was not he, to put him out of doubt.
But were it fowle, or were it a foule devill,
Certaine to Bayard it did work much evill.

78

The horse that was puissant, brake his raine,
When as the sharpnesse of her clawes he feels,
And what with terrour movd, and what with paine,
He yerketh at her fiercely with his heels:
She soard aloft, and downe she comes againe,
And strikes him so, that Bayard almost reels,
And sith of other fence no meane he had,
He runs away as if he had been mad.

79

Unto the nearest wood he right doth run
And still the featherd beast him held in chase,
Till the thick boughs holp him her gripes to shun,
So that she gave him over in short space,
And seeing that her sport with him was done,
She sored up on high, and left this place,
And to another coast her flight doth frame,
Where as she thought to find some other game.

80

Gradasso and Renaldo when they saw,
The horse was fled that caused all the fray,
Do by consent themselves from thence withdraw,
To find Bayardo out and if they may:
But first each promis'd to observe this law,
That he that found him first of both, should stay
At this same well, till tother should come thither,
And then againe to fight it out together.

81

Thus when each had his word to thother past,
That they would meet there at their comming back,
They after go, but Bayard ran so fast,
As soone they lost the sight of any track:
Gradasso rode, and therefore made more hast,
The Palladine that his good horse did lack,
Remaind behind, all sad and griev'd more,
And malecontent then ere he was before.

82

And when he traveld had about in vaine,
In body wearie, discontent in mind,
With losse of all his travell and his paine,
He turneth to the place they first assignd,
In hope the tother would return againe,
And firing the horse, if so he could him find:
But when he saw his looking did not boot,
He traveld back unto the camp on foot.

83

But yet Gradassos paine succeeded well,
For why, a while before the lights decaying,
He passed neare the place, as it befell,
Where in a cave he found him by his naying,
Still fearing that same monstrous imp of hell:
He takes him thence, and then but little waying
His promise made, he turnes another way,
And to himselfe in secret thus doth say.

84

Let them that list hold things in strife and war,
I mean to hold mine own with peace and ease;

Onely to get this horse I came so far,
And past so many lands, and many seas:
My promise breach to me shall be no bar,
To keep that I so quietly do sease:
If he desire to win his horse againe,
To come to India let him take the paine.

85

As safe as France hath been from me now twice,
So safe from him shall be my Serycane,
I thither wish him come if he be wise,
Els of Bayardo now his leave is tane:
If he will have him he shall know the prise,
Now mine Bayardo is and Durindane:
This said, he mounted on the steed so warly,
And by another way went back to Arly.

86

Where finding ships newriggd to seaward bent,
Though then at anker in the harbour lying,
With those rich spoiles, to passe the seas he meant,
In all post hast into his country hying:
Hereafter you shall heare which way he went,

And of his last conflict and of his dying:
Now him I leave, Renaldo, and all France,
And tell you what did to Astolfo chance.

87

Who mounted on his stately winged steed,
Well tamed late by Logestillas wit,
Took perfect view of France with passing speed,
And saw how evry town of worth did fit,
Which having well observd and markd with heed,
From Rhine to Pyren mount he thought it fit,
In manner like all over Spaine to ride,
And many countries of the world beside.

88

To Aragon he passed through Navar,
Each man that saw him wondring at the sight,
Then Tاراcon he did descry not far
Upon his left hand, Biskie on his right,
Where Castell, Lisbon, and Galicia are,
And Cordove neare, and Sivill see he might,
With diverse crownes now joynd in one raigne,
Are governd by the mighty king of Spaine.

89

There saw he Gades where erst by Hercules hand,
Two pillars, marks for Mariners were placd,
Then over Atlant sea, to Egypt land,
And over Affrica forthwith he past,
And saw where Balearick Iles do stand,
Then traveld to Eviza with like hast,
And to Arzillaward he thence departeth,
Quite ore that sea that it from Spagna parteth.

90

Oran he saw, Ippon, Marocco, Fesse,
Algier, Buzea, and those stately townes,
Whose Princes with great pomp and pride possesse
Of diverse Provinces the stately crownes,
He saw Byserta, and Tunigi no lesse,
And flying over many dales and downes,
He saw Capisse and Alzerbee Ile,
And all the cities to the flood of Nyle.

91

Tripolie, Bernick, Tolomit, and all
Between the sea and Atlas woodie sides,

Then on the Cereneys he right doth fall,
And past Carena mounts, and more besides;
Then crossing ovr the barren fields and pall,
Where sands with wind do ebb and flow like tides,
The tombe of Battus he doth leave behind,
And Ammons temple now worn out of mind.

92

Then came he by another Tremisen,
That followes eke of Mahomet the law,
Unto another AETHiopia then
He went, the which before he never saw,
That differs both in language and in men:
From thence he toward Nubia doth draw,
Dobada and Coallee just between,
Of which these Christend, and those Turkish been.

93

The bordrers still are armd in heat and cold,
Senapo yet of AETHiop is the chief,
And hath great store of jewels and of gold,
And much he varies not from our belief,
For he those principles most firm doth hold,

That can defend from everlasting grief.
Here is it (if mine author be no lier)
Where they do use to be baptizd with fier.

94

The Duke here lighted after travell long,
And to Senapos stately Court was led;
The castle was more sumptuous then strong,
And admiration more then terrour bred;
The locks, bars, chaines, and all that did belong
Unto the bridge and gates from foot to head,
Which we make here of iron to endure,
Was there faire wrought in massie gold most pure.

95

And though they have great store of metals fine,
Yet were the chambers and the lodgings here
Born up with crystall collumns, that did shine
All ovr the stately court most bright and cleare;
A stately border, causd unto the eyne
Red, white, green, blew, and yellow to appeare,
Enriched with divisions for the nones,
Of Rubie, Smarag, Zaphyr, Topas stones.

96

Most orient pearls and gems of passing price
Were sprinkled on the pavements here and there,
Hence balme doth come, hence other precious spice,
Which from Jerusalem men wont to beare;
Hence commeth musk, for odours sweet and nice,
And amber pure, that some in bracelets weare;
And finally all things grow there in plenty,
That in this country are esteemd most deintie.

97

Most true it is, els some have written lies,
The Sowdan to this King doth tribute pay,
For that in this Kings power alone it lies,
Great Cayre and fertile Egypt to decay,
Because that by those means he may devise,
He may turn Nyle from them another way:
This Prince Senapo there is cald of many,
We call him Prester John or Preter Jany.

98

Of all the Kings that ever there did raigne,
This King exceld in riches and in treasure,

But losse of sight made all his comforts vaine,
And bard him evry tast of worldly pleasure,
And this did much increase his care and paine,
And grieved him indeed beyond all measure,
That all his wealth and treasure not prevented,
But that with famine he was aye tormented.

99

For when this Prince (as hunger meet him drew)
Did but prepare himself to drink or eat,
Straight of Harpias came a cursed crew,
With mighty wings, huge pawes, and bellies great,
And all the dishes quite they overthrew,
And greedily devoured all the meat;
And that they left they did so file and flaver,
As few could brook the sight, but none the saver.

100

The cause was this, why his great plague was such,
Because in youth (when men most carelesse are)
Finding himself to be extold so much,
And passing other Kings in wealth so far,
So foul a pride his lofty heart did touch,

Against his maker, he would needs move war,
To which intent a mighty power he led,
Unto that mount whence Nylus hath his head.

101

He had been told, and did it firm believe,
That on that mount, whose top did touch the skie,
Was that same place where Adam dwelt and Eve,
Before their fall did cause them thence to flie.
He hoping some rare conquest to atchieve,
A mighty host prepar'd by and by,
With mind (so high his heart with pride did swell)
To make them tribute pay that there did dwell.

102

But high Jehova their foule pride repress,
And down he sent his Angell that same night,
Who slue an hundred thousand for the least,
And him condemn'd for aye to lose his sight;
Then sent he monsters vile him to molest,
Those ugly monsters, that Harpias hight,
Which so devoure and so spoile all his meat,
Scarce they permit him once to drink or eat.

103

And that which drave him into meere despaire,
Was that one told by way of prophecie,
How those foule creatures ever should repaire
Unto that place, till time they might espie
A gallant knight all armed in the aire,
Upon a winged beast aloft to flie:
And for that this impossible he deemd,
Past hope of help himselfe he then esteemd.

104

Now when the people saw from evry wall,
And from each towre the strangely flying knight,
He happy thought himselfe, that first of all
Could tell the king of this unused sight;
Who straight the prophecie to mind did call,
And with the sudden joy, forgetting quite
His trustie staffe, went groping with his hand,
To welcome him that now came down to land.

105

Astolfo being lighted, nearer drew,
And as he was the great court entring in,

Behold the King stood ready in his vew,
And kneeling down, to speak did thus begin,
O heavnly Angell, O Messias new,
Though I deserve not pardon for my sin,
Yet think to us is proper to offend,
To you, to pardon those that will amend.

106

My guilt so heavy on my conscience lies,
I dare not sue thou shouldst my sight restore,
Though well I wot that thou couldst heal mine eyes,
That art of those that aye stand God before,
Let then this plague my want of sight suffice,
And let me not be stervd thus evermore,
At least from me these filthy monsters drive,
And let me eat with quiet while I live.

107

And I do vow a temple unto thee,
Of marble faire to build here in this place,
Whose gates and cover all of gold shall be,
Adornd with costly jewels in like case,
Namd by thy name, and gravd that men may see

Thy miracle, which no time shall deface:
Thus saith the prostrate King that nothing sees,
And gropes to have embracd Astolfos knees.

108

The Duke to him thus friendly doth reply,
Nor Angell I, nor new Messiah am,
Nor come from heavn, but mortall man am I,
And thrall to sinne, unworthy so high name;
But for your sake my best skill I will trie,
To kill or drive those fowle from whence they came,
Which if I do, give God, not me the praise,
That for your help did hither guide my waies.

109

For him your Churches and your altars make,
That must of duty Church and altars have:
This said, he up from ground the King doth take,
And went with him and other Barons grave:
Straightwaies of meat provision new they make,
For so the hungry King in hast doth crave,
In hope that now the monsters would be quiet,
And not to interrupt him at his diet.

110

Forthwith a sumptuous dinner was prepard,
In stately sort great store and of the best,
Senapo hopes Astolfo can him guard
From those foule fowles that did him so molest;
But lo a sodain noise forthwith was heard,
The sent of those same viands that were drest
Had brought them thither, ere the men were able
To set down all the dishes on the table.

111

Of them came sevn together in a knot,
With womans faces, wan with deadly cold,
So hungerstarvd, as death it selfe might not
Be at first sight more hideous to behold,
Their wings were great, but foule blacke wings God wot,
Their talents sharp to gripe, but strong to hold,
A large foule paunch, a filthy taile and long,
From whence there came an odour mighty strong.

112

As sodaine heard, so sodaine were they seen,
For on the table all at once they fell,

And spoild the meat, and from their wombs unclean
Cast lothsome filth to see, irksome to smell:
The Duke with blade of mettall sharp and keen,
Strikes at the monsters, thinking them to quell;
But all in vaine, his bootlesse blade turnd back,
As he had smitten on a woollen sack.

113

Some ravnously devourd the sweet repast,
And did so eager fill their greedy gorge,
That by and by they were compeld as fast,
The same in beastly manner to disgorge:
The wofull King thinks now all succour past,
Till good Astolfo sware by sweet Saint George,
Sith force was vaine, he would another way
To drive these monsters from the King assay.

114

The horn which ever he about him beares,
He means against these monsters to employ,
He causd the King and his to stop their eares
With molted waxe, that no noise them may noy,
Els might his blast have bred in them such feares,

To drive them thence, and all the land destroy;
Then causd he them prepare another feast,
And up he gets him on his winged beast.

115

The steward that did know his mind by signes,
Straightwaies another dinner doth adresse,
With store of dainty meats and costly wines;
But in a trice more soon then one could guesse,
The filthy flock (as famine them inclines)
Came down, and seizd upon the costly messe,
But straight Astolfo blew them such a blast,
As on the sodaine made them all agast.

116

The noise into their open eares so enterd,
That had no means to stop them, nor defence,
As so their stomacks and their tast distemperd,
They fled, as feare expeld all other sence:
The English Duke to follow them adventerd,
And winding still his horn, he chasd them thence,
To that hils foot, whence Nylus first doth fall,
If so that Nyle have any head at all.

117

About the bottome of this mighty mount
There is a cave descending like a well,
By which (as dwellers by do oft recount)
A speedy passage one may have to hell;
To this the monsters fled, and made account
Within this cave safe from the noise to dwell,
Which seen, Astolfo from his beast allighted,
And ceast the blowing that them so affrighted.

118

And for he did with heed the caves mouth mark,
He nearer doth approch unto the same,
And with a listning eare he then doth hark
If any sound from thence unto him came;
The entrance lookt all like a dungeon dark,
With smoke that seemd to come from smotherd flame:
But more of this hereafter I will treat,
For now this book begins to be too great.

ARGUMENT

THE THIRTYFOURTH BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Astolfo heares of Lydias plague in hell,
Untill the smoke annoid and fould him so,
That he was faine to wash him at a well;
Which done, to Paradise he straight doth go,
Where he doth meet Saint John, who doth him tell
Strange things, and as strange things to him doth show:
And there Orlandos wit he doth receive,
And sees the fatall threeds the sisters weave.

THIRTYFOURTHBOOKE

1

Oh foule Harpias, greedy, hunger starvd,
Whom wrath divine for just revenge hath sent
To blinded Italy, that hath deservd
For sinnes both old and late so to be shent.
The sustenance that should for food have servd,
For widowes poore and orphans innocent,
These filthy monsters do consume and wast it
Oft at one meale, before the owners tast it.

2

He doubtlesse guilty is of grievous sin,
That first set open that long closed cave,
From which all filth and greedinesse came in
To Italy, and it infected have,
Then ended good then did bad dayes begin,
And discord foule so fane off all peace drave,
That now in warres, in poverty and paine,
It long hath tarid, and shall long remaine.

3

Untill she can her slothfull sonnes awake,
From drowsie sleep, that now themselves forget,
And say to them, for shame example take,
Let others valiant deeds your courage whet:
Why should not you the like acts undertake,
As in time past did Calai and Zet?
That erst like aid to Phineas did bring,
As did Astolfo thEthiopian king.

4

Who having drivn away these monsters fell,
From blind Senapos boord, as erst I told,
And chased them so farre, untill they fell
Into the cave most fearfull to behold;
That fearfull cave that was the mouth of hell,
To hearken at the same he waxed bold,
And heard most wofull mourning, plaints and cries,
Such as from hell were likely to arise.

5

Astolfo minds into the place to enter,
And visit those that have forgone this light

And pierce the earth evn to the middle center,
To see if ought may there be worth the sight;
For why he thought, what need I feare to venter,
That have this horn, with which I can affright
Foule Sathan, Cerberus with triple chaps,
And safely keep my selfe from all mishaps?

6

He ties his flying beast fast by the reines,
With mind to hell it selfe to bid defiance,
His horn fast tid about his neck remaines,
In which much more then sword he puts affiance:
But at his very entrance he complaines
Of that same smoke that bred him much annoyance,
That savourd strong of brimstone and of pitch,
Yet still Astolfo goeth thorow stitch.

7

But still the further that he forward goes,
He feels the smoke more noisome and more thick,
That in himselfe he gan now to suppose,
If further he should wade he should be sick,
When lo a shadow seemed to disclose

It selfe to him, of somewhat that was quick,
And to his thinking hither wavd and thither,
Much like a carcasse hanged long in weather.

8

The English Duke that had desire to know,
If so he saw a body or a vision,
Strake with his sword thereat so fierce a blow,
As would indeed thereof have made division,
If it had been as it did seem in show:
But when he saw his sword made no incision,
He guessed that it was (by that blowes giving)
A passed spirit, not a body living.

9

Then heard he how thus wofully it said,
Oh you that to these lower parts descend,
Bring us no hurt, though you can bring no aid,
And be not so to those whom none can friend.
The Duke amazd, both hands and footsteps staid,
And said unto the ghost, so God thee send
Some speedy ease of this thy painfull smart,
As thou wilt deine to tell me who thou art.

10

And if to work your good lay in my lot,
Above or here I should be glad to do it.
Ah (said the ghost) my plague with such a knot
Is tid, as mortall strength cannot undo it,
Yet your request deny you will I not,
Because you have so great a mind unto it,
I will declare to you my stock and name,
And eke the cause why to this place I came.

11

My name is Lydia, born of princely birth,
And bred in pomp and solaces delightfull,
Though now in place excluded from all mirth,
I lie condemnd by Gods high doom and rightfull,
Because while I did live above on earth,
Unto my love I shewd my selfe so spightfull;
And many more be here for like offences,
As he that all doth rule, their plague dispences.

12

Here lies that faire, but cruell Anaxaritee,
Whose corps a stone divine revenge did make,

Her ghost in smoke that no light ay shall clarifie,
Doth most severe, but most just penance take,
Because she could without all sense of charity,
Behold her lover hanging for her sake:
Here Daphne lies, that now repents her shunning
Of Phoebus, whom she scapd with overrunning.

13

Too tedious it would be for me to tell
The sevrall names of evry female spirit,
That for reward of their hard hearts, in hell
Appointed are such portions to inherit.
Yet farre more are the men that there do dwell,
For like offence, who for their evill merit
Are placed much more low, though somewhat nigh, them,
Where fume doth smother them, and flame doth fry them.

14

And reason good, for sith our sex is weak,
The greater sinne it is us to deceive,
As Theseus and Jason well can speak,
And he that Latin did of rule bereave,
With him, on whom faire Absolon did wreak

The wrong that ravisht Thamar did receive,
With diverse that of tone and tother gender,
Refusd or left their loves for causes slender.

15

But that I may particularly touch
The cause that brought me to this endlesse paine,
My beauty while I livd, and pride was such,
As none or few did to the like attaine,
And both of them in me exceld so much,
Twas hard to say which greater was of twaine:
But this I know full well, my proud mind grew
Out of conceit of my well pleasing hew.

16

It hapned that a valiant knight of Thrace
In state and living of the better sort,
And hearing praise of my praiseworthy face,
Confirmed oft by more then one report,
He purposd, and performd it in short space,
Unto my fathers kingdome to resort,
That he might sue to me, and only serve me,
In hope by his great value to deserve me.

17

In gallant sort when he to Lydia came,
And saw with eye what he had heard with eare,
He calleth scant report, and niggard fame,
That did to him so barren tidings beare:
And ravisht with my look, he straight doth frame
Himselfe to wait in court, and tarrie there,
And shewd such worth, and used such behaviour,
As justly might deserve my fathers favour.

18

Exceeding was his service and desert,
If to a gratefull Prince it had been done,
So perfectly he had of warre the art,
That for my sire, by his conduct he won
All Caria, and of Cilicia part,
And after these exploits, he then begun,
For recompence of these his merits rife,
To pray my father I might be his wife.

19

My father him repulsd with answer sowre,
Because to match me higher was his will,

Not to a private knight, whose chiefest dowre
Was vertue, of whose worth he could not skill,
His greedy thoughts did nought but gaine devoure,
And covetise the branch and root of ill,
Made him no more regard his vertuous sute,
Then doth an Asse the sound of sweetest Lute.

20

Alceste (so was namd the worthy Knight)
Took this so foul repulse in great disdaine,
Proceeding thence, from whence he ought of right
Expect great recompence for his great paine;
Wherefore he parted thence in great despight,
And vowd revenge, nor was his vow in vaine.
Unto thArmenian king he thence doth go,
My fathers emulous and ancient foe.

21

Him (ready to accept each light occasion)
He soon perswades, without all intermission,
To make upon my father fierce invasion,
And make him chiefe Lieutenant by commission:
And having won him thereto by perswasion,

They thus agreed of spoiles to make partition,
As namely all the towns he won should be
The kings, and for himselfe he askd but me.

22

This league thus made, what woes my sire he wrought,
I know not how in speeches to expresse,
Foure royall armies quickly came to nought,
Disperst or dead in half a yeare and lesse;
In fine Alceste by his value brought
My father and his friends to such distresse,
They took them to a fort with such small treasure,
As in so Scarbrow warning they had leasure.

23

When here a while he us besieged had,
To such despaire he then my father drave,
To yeeld me up he would have been full glad,
To be his wife, yea evn to be his slave;
Nor would my sire have thought the bargaine bad,
If halfe the Realme with me for dowre he gave,
So sore he feard, ere long to leese it all,
And die in wofull bands a captive thrall.

24

Wherefore in season to prevent the worst,
Me that had been the cause of all this ill,
He minds to offer to Alceste first,
To win thereby his favour and good will:
I went (for why none other do I trust)
With mind herein my sires mind to fulfill,
And offer mine own self at his devotion,
With halfe the Realme, if he accept the motion.

25

Alceste hearing I came him to look,
Against me forth he comes all pale and trembling,
Not like a conqueror was then his look,
But rather a captived man resembling;
Which when I found, my first plot I forsook,
For well I saw that this was not dissembling,
With lowring look I held my peace a while,
Then fit for his estate I framd my stile.

26

I waxed bold the more I see him faint,
And first I cursed this unluckie love,

And of his cruelty I made complaint,
Which harmd my friends, and chiefe that he would prove
Against my will to have me by constraint,
I further did most sharply him reprove,
That he so parted with the first deniall,
And never sought to make new friendly triall.

27

I told him that his manners were too fierce,
That though my father his just suit denyd,
Because perhaps his nature is perverse,
And would not at the first attempt be plyd,
He should not though, all his good deeds reverse,
But rather ought with constancy have tryd,
By patient suffring, and by painfull serving,
To come unto reward of well deserving.

28

And if my father would not have been won,
I would (I said) his favour have procurd,
And would have praid him, to make him his sonne,
If I had found his love to me had durd;
Or else in secret I would that have done,

By which of me he should have been assur'd;
But sith he needs would trie another mean,
I told him plaine, my love was alterd clean.

29

And though I now came in this humble sort,
To yeeld my body, as the price of peace,
Because my father, whom he held so short,
Intreated me to sue for his release;
Yet did I vow to marre his hoped sport,
And if to offer force he would not cease,
I sware that rather I my selfe would kill,
Then grant such joyes constraind against my will.

30

These words and such as these to him I spake,
Finding my power was over him so great,
Wherewith I did him as repentant make,
As ere was Saint in Hermits desart seat:
He fell down at my feet, and praid me take
His naked dagger, and did me intreat,
To stab him with the same into his heart,
To take just vengeance of his lewd desart.

31

Now when I saw him at this passe, I thought
To follow this great conquest to his end,
And straight a little hope to him I brought,
Of favour, if his errour he would mend,
And if my fathers freedome might be wrought,
And state restord, and he continue friend,
And not attempt hereafter to constraine me,
But with his serviceable love to gaine me.

32

He promised hereof he would not misse,
And back unto my sire me safe did send,
Nor once presumed he my mouth to kisse;
Think you, how he unto my yoke did bend;
I think that love plaid well his part in this,
And needed not for him more arrowes spend;
Hence straight unto thArmenian king he went,
Whose all the winnings should be, by consent.

33

And in the mildest manner that he could,
He prayeth him to grant his good assent,

That my poore sire might Lydia quiet hold,
And he would with Armenia be content.
The king Alceste sharply then controld,
And in plaine terms he told he never meant
To cease that bloody warre at any hand,
While that my father had a foot of land.

34

What if (said he) Alcestes wavring braine
Is turnd with womans words? his dammage be it:
Shall I therefore lose all a whole yeares gaine
At his request? I never will agree it:
Againe Alceste prayes him, and againe,
But all in vaine, he sees it will not be yet:
And last he waxed angry, and did sweare,
That he should do it, or for love or feare.

35

Thus wrath ingendred many a bitter word,
And bitter words did breed more bloody blowes,
Alceste in that fury drew his sword,
And straight the guard on each side him inclose,
But he among them so himselfe bestird,

He slue the king, and by the help of those
Of Thrace, and of Cilicia in his pay,
ThArmenians all he put to flight that day.

36

And then his happy victory pursuing,
First he my fathers friends did all inlarge,
And next the Realme within one month ensuing,
He gat again, without my fathers charge;
And for the better shunning and eschuing
Of all unkindnesse, with amends most large,
For recompence of all harms he had done,
He gave him all the spoiles that he had won.

37

Yea fully to content him to his asking,
In all the countries that did neare confine,
He raisd such summes of coine, by cursed tasking,
As made them grieve and greatly to repine.
The while my hate in loves faire vizar masking,
In outward show, I seemd him to incline;
Yet secretly I studid to annoy him,
And many wayes devised to destroy him.

38

In stead of triumph by a privy train,
At his return to kill him we intended,
But from such fact feare forcd us to refrain,
Because we found he was so strongly friended;
I seemed of his comming glad and fain,
And promisd when our troubles all were ended,
That I his faithfull yokefellow would be,
In wo or weale, to take such part as he.

39

Wherefore I praid him first, that for my sake,
He would subdue some of our private foes,
And he each hard exploit doth undertake,
And now alone, and then with few he goes,
And safe returns, yet oft I did him make,
To fight with cruell Giants, and with those
That past his strength, oft with some monstrous beast,
Or Dragon fell, that did our Realme molest.

40

Don Hercules never by his cruell Aunt,
Nor by the hard Euristeus was so wrought

In Lerna, Thrace, in Nemea Eremaunt,
Numid, Etolia, Tebrus where he fought,
Nor Spaine, nor no where els, as I might vaunt,
With mild perswasion, but with murdring thought,
I made my lover still to put in ure,
In hope hereby his ruine to procure.

41

But as the Palm the more the top is prest,
The thicker do the under branches grow,
Evn so, the more his vertue was opprest
By hard attempts the brighter it did show:
Which when I found, forthwith I thought it best,
Another way to work his overthrow,
A way by which indeed I wrought the feat,
Which yet I shame and sorrow to repeat.

42

Against all such as bare him best affection,
I secretly did still his mind incense,
And ever one and one by my direction,
I made him wrong, till all were drivn from thence:
So was his heart and soul in my subjection,

So had my beauty blinded all his sence,
Had I but winkd, or up my finger hild,
He had not card whom he had hurt or kild.

43

Now when I thus had foild my fathers foes,
And by Alceste, had Alceste won,
And made him for my sake forsake all those,
That for his sake no high attempt would shun;
I then began my self plain to disclose;
And let him know what wise thred he had spun,
With bitter spitefull words I all to rated him,
And told him plain that in my heart I hated him.

44

And that I wishd his life and dayes were ended,
And would have kild him, if I could for shame,
Save then I should of all men be condemned,
Because his high deserts were of such fame;
Yet him and them I utterly contemned,
And loathd to see his face, or heare his name,
And sware I would wish him thenceforth no better,
Nor heare his message, nor receive his letter.

45

At this my cruell usage and ungrate
He took such grief, that in a while he did:
Now for this sin, he that all sin did hate,
Condemnes me here in this smoke to be tid,
Where I in vain repent my self too late,
That I his suit so causlesly denid,
For which, in smoke eternall I must dwell,
Sith no redemption can be had from hell.

46

Here Lidia this her wofull tale doth end,
And faded thence; now when her speech did cease,
The Duke a farther passage did intend,
But this tormenting smoke did so increase,
That backward he was forcd his steps to bend,
For vitall sprites already did decrease,
Wherefore the smoke to shun, and life to save,
He clammerd to the top of that same cave.

47

And lest those womanfaced monsters fell
Might after come from out that lothsome ledge,

He digd up stones, and great trees down did fell,
(His sword sufficing both for axe and sledge)
He hewd and brake, and labourd it so well,
That gainst the cave he made a thick strong hedge,
So stopd with stones, and many a ragged rafter,
As kept thHarpias in a great while after.

48

But now the Duke, both with his present toile,
That did with dirt and dust him all to dash,
And with the smoke that erst did him so soile,
As black as soot, was drivn to seek some splash,
Where he himself might of his clothes dispoile,
And both his raiment and his armour wash,
For why the smoke without and eke within,
Did taint his clothes, his armour, and his skin.

49

Soon after he a chrystall stream espying,
From foot to head he washd himself therein,
Then up he gets him on his courser flying,
And of the aire he more and more doth win,
Affecting heavn, all earthly thoughts defying:

As fishes cut the liquid streame with fin,
So cutteth he the aire and doth not stop,
Till he was come unto that mountaines top.

50

This hill nigh touchd the circle of the Moone,
The top was all a fruitfull pleasant field,
And light at night, as ours is here at noone,
The sweetest place that ever man beheld;
(There would I dwell if God gave me my boone)
The soyle thereof most fragrant flowres did yeeld,
Like Rubies, Gold, Pearles, Saphyrs, Topas stones,
Chrysolites, Diamonds, Iacints for the nones.

51

The trees that there did grow were ever green,
The fruits that thereon grew were never fading,
The sundry colourd birds did sit between,
And sing most sweet, the fruitfull boughs them shading:
The rivers cleare as crystall to be seen,
The fragrant smell the sense and soule invading,
With aire so temperate and so delightsome,
As all the place beside was cleare and lightsome.

52

Amid the plaine a pallace passing faire
There stood, above conceit of mortall men,
Built of great height, unto the clearest aire,
And was in circuit twenty mile and ten;
To this faire place the Duke did straight repaire,
And viewing all that goodly country then,
He thought this world, compared with that pallace,
A dunghill vile, or prison void of solace.

53

But when as nearer to the place he came,
He was amazed at the wondrous sight;
The wall was all one precious stone, the same,
And then the carbuncle more sanguine bright;
O workman rare, O most stupendious frame,
What Dedalus of this had oversight?
Peace ye that wont to praise the wonders seavn.
Those earthly kings made, this the King of heavn.

54

Now while the Duke his eyes with wonder fed,
Behold a faire old man in thentrie stood,

Whose gown was white, but yet his jacket red,
The tone as snow, the tother lookd as blood,
His beard was long and white, so was his head,
His countenance was so grave, his grace so good,
A man thereby might at first sight suspect,
He was a Saint, and one of Gods elect.

55

He comming to the Duke with chearfull face,
Who now alighted was for revrence sake,
Bold Baron (said the Saint) by speciall grace,
That sufferd wast this voyage strange to make,
And to arrive at this most blessed place,
Not knowing why thou didst this journey take,
Yet know that not without the will celestiall,
Thou commest here to Paradise terrestriall.

56

The cause you came a journey of such length,
Is here of me to learn what must be done,
That Charles and holy Church may now at length
Be freed, that erst were welnigh overrun,
Wherefore impute it not to thine own strength,

Nor to thy courage, nor thy wit, my son,
For neither could thy horn nor winged steed
Without Gods help stand thee in any steed.

57

But at more leisure hereof we will reason,
And more at large I mind with you to speak,
Now with some meat refresh you, as is reason,
Lest fasting long may make your stomack weak;
Our fruits (said he) be never out of season:
The Duke rejoyced much, and marveld eke;
Then chiefe when by his speeches and his coat
He knew twas he that the fourth Gospell wrote.

58

That holy John whom Christ did hold so deare,
That others thought he death should never see,
Though in the Gospell it appeares not cleare,
But thus he said, What if it pleased me,
O Peter, that thy fellow tarry here
Untill my comming, what is that to thee?
So though our Saviour not directly spake it,
Yet sure it was, so evry one did take it.

59

He here assumed was in happy houre,
Whereas before Enoch the Patriark was,
And where the Prophet bides of mighty power,
That in the fierie coach did thither passe:
These three in that so happy sacred bowre
In high felicity their dayes did passe:
Where in such sort to stand they are allowd,
Till Christ return upon the burning cloud.

60

These Saints him welcome to that sacred seat,
And to a stately lodging him they brought;
And for his horse likewise ordained meat,
And then the Duke himselfe by them was taught;
The dainty fruits of Paradise to eat,
So delicate in tast, as sure he thought
Our first two parents were to be excusd,
That for such fruit obedience they refusd.

61

Now when the Duke had nature satisfid,
With meat and drink, and with his due repose,

(For there were lodgings faire, and all beside
That needfull for mans use man can suppose)
He gets up early in the morning tide,
What time with us alow, the Sun arose,
But ere that he from out his lodging movd,
Came that Disciple whom our Saviour lovd.

62

And by the hand the Duke abroad he led,
And said some things to him, I may not name,
But in the end (I think) my son he sed,
Although that you from France so lately came,
You little know how those in France have sped,
There your Orlando quite is out of frame,
For God his sinne most sharply now rewardeth,
Who most doth punish whom he most regardeth.

63

Know that the champion your Orlando, whom
God so great strength and so great courage gave,
And so rare grace, that from his mothers wombe,
By force of steel his skin no hurt might have,
To thend that he might fight for his own home,

And those that hold the Christian faith to save;
As Sampson erst enabled was to stand,
Against Philistins for the Hebrew land.

64

This your Orlando hath bin so ungrate
(For so great grace receivd) unto his maker,
That when his country was in weakest state,
And needed succour most, he did forsake her,
For love (O wofull love that breeds Gods hate)
To woo a Pagan wench, with mind to take her,
And to such sin this love did him intice,
He would have kild his kinsman once or twice.

65

For this same cause doth mighty God permit
Him mad to run, with belly bare and breast,
And so to daze his reason and his wit,
He knowes not others, and himselfe knowes least:
So in times past our Lord did deem it fit,
To turn the king of Babel to a beast,
In which estate he sevn whole yeares did passe,
And like an oxe did feed on hay and grasse.

66

But for the Palladins offence is not
So great as was the King of Babels crime,
The mighty Lord of mercy doth allot
Unto his punishment a shorter time,
Twelve weeks in all he must remaine a sot,
And for this cause you sufferd were to clime
To this high place that here you may be taught
How to his wits Orlando may be brought.

67

Here you shall learn to work the feat I warrant,
But yet before you can be fully sped
Of this your great, but not forethought on arrant,
You must with me a more strange way be led,
Up to the Planet that of all starres errant
Is nearest us, when she comes over head,
Then will I bring you where the medicine lies,
That you must have to make Orlando wise.

68

Thus all that day they spent in divers talk,
With solace great, as never wanteth there,

But when the Sun began this earth to balk,
And passe into the tother hemispheare,
Then they prepard to fetch a further walk,
And straight the firie charet that did beare
Elias, when he up to heavn was carid,
Was ready in a trice, and for them tarid.

69

Foure horses fierce, as red as flaming fire,
ThApostle doth into the charet set,
Which when he framed had to his desire,
Astolfo in the carre by him he set,
Then up they went, and still ascending higher,
Above the firie region they did get,
Whose nature so thApostle then did turn,
That though they went through fire, they did not burn.

70

I say although the fire were wondrous hot,
Yet in their passage they no heat did feel,
So that it burnd them, nor offends them not;
Thence to the Moone he guides the running wheel,
The Moone was like a glasse all void of spot,

Or like a peece of purely burnisht steel,
And lookd, although to us it seemd so small,
Welnigh as big as earth and sea and all.

71

Here had Astolfo cause of double wonder,
One, that that region seemeth there so wide,
That unto us that are so farre asunder,
Seems but a little circle, and beside,
That to behold the ground that him lay under,
A man had need to have been sharply eyd,
And bend his browes, and mark evn all they might,
It seemd so small, now chiefly wanting light.

72

Twere infinite to tell what wondrous things
He saw, that passed ours not few degrees,
What towns, what hils, what rivers, and what springs,
What dales, what pallaces, what goodly trees;
But to be short, at last his guide him brings
Unto a goodly valley, where he sees
A mighty masse of things strangely confusd,
Things that on earth were lost, or were abusd.

73

A storehouse strange, that what on earth is lost,
By fault, by time, by fortune, there is found,
And like a merchandize is there ingrost,
In stranger sort then I can well expound;
Nor speak I sole of wealth, or things of cost,
In which blind fortunes power doth most abound,
But evn of things quite out of fortunes power,
Which wilfully we wast each day and houre.

74

The precious time that fooles misspend in play,
The vaine attempts that never take effect,
The voves that sinners make, and never pay,
The counsels wise that carelesse men neglect,
The fond desires that lead us oft astray,
The praises that with pride the heart infect,
And all we lose with folly and misspending,
May there be found unto this place ascending.

75

Now as Astolfo by those regions past,
He asked many questions of his guide,

And as he on one side his eye did cast,
A wondrous hill of bladders he espied;
And he was told they had been in time past,
The pompous crowns and scepters full of pride,
Of monarchs of Assyria and of Greece,
Of which now scanty there is left a piece.

76

He saw great store of baited hooks with gold,
And those were gifts that foolish men preferred
To give to Princes covetous and old,
With fondest hope of future vain reward;
Then were there ropes all in sweet garlands rold,
And those were all false flatteries he heard.
Then heard he crickets songs, like to the verses
The servant in his masters praise rehearses.

77

There did he see fond loves, that men pursue,
To look like golden gives with stones all set,
Then things like Eagles Talents he did view,
Those offices that favourites do get:
Then saw he bellows large that much wind blew,

Large promises that Lords make, and forget,
Unto their Ganimedes in flowre of youth,
But after nought but beggery ensuth.

78

He saw great Cities seated in faire places,
That overthrowne quite topsie turvie stood,
He askd and learnd, the cause of their defaces
Was treason, that doth never turne to good:
He saw foule serpents with faire womens faces,
Of coyneres and of theeves the cursed brood,
He saw fine glasses all in peeces broken,
Of service lost in Court, a wofull token.

79

Of mingled broth he saw a mighty masse
That to no use all spilt on ground did lie,
He askd his teacher, and he heard it was
The fruitlesse almes that men give when they die:
Then by a faire green mountaine he did passe,
That once smelt sweet, but now it stinks perdye,
This was that gift (bet said without offence)
That Constantine gave Silvester long since.

80

Of birdlimerods he saw no little store,
And these (O Ladies faire) your beauties be,
I do omit ten thousand things and more
Like unto these, that there the Duke did see:
For all that here is lost, there evermore
Is kept, and thither in a trice doth flee,
Howbeit more nor lesse there was no folly,
For still that here with us remaineth wholly.

81

He saw some of his own lost time and deeds,
But yet he knew them not to be his own,
They seemd to him disguisd in so strange weeds,
Till his instructor made them better known:
But last, the thing which no man thinks he needs,
Yet each man needeth most, to him was shown,
By name mans wit, which here we leese so fast,
As that one substance all the other past.

82

It seemd to be a body moist and soft,
And apt to mount by evry exhalation,

And when it hither mounted was aloft,
It there was kept in pots of such a fashion,
As we call jarrs, where oyle is kept in oft:
The Duke beheld (with no small admiration)
The jarrs of wit, amongst which one had writ
Upon the side thereof, Orlandos wit.

83

This vessell bigger was than all the rest,
And evry vessell had ingravn with art
His name that erst the wit therein possest:
There of his own the Duke did find a part,
And much he musd, and much himselfe he blest,
To see some names of men of great desert,
That think they have great store of wit, and boast it,
When here it plaine appeard they quite had lost it.

84

Some lose their wit with love, some with ambition,
Some running to the sea, great wealth to get,
Some following Lords, and men of high condition,
And some in faire jewels rich and costly set:
One hath desire to prove a rare Magician,

And some with Poetrie their wit forget,
Another thinks to be an Alcumist,
Till all be spent, and he his number mist.

85

Astolfo takes his own before he goes,
For so thEvangelist doth him permit;
He set the vessels mouth but to his nose,
And to his place he snuft up all his wit:
Long after wise he livd, as Turpin showes,
Untill one fault he after did commit:
By name the love of one faire Northerne lasse,
Sent up his wit into the place it was.

86

The vessell where Orlandos wit was closd,
Astolfo took, and thence with him did beare;
It was far heavier then he had supposd,
So great a quantity of wit was there;
But yet ere back their journey they disposd,
The holy Prophet brought Astolfo, where
A pallace (seldome seen by mortall man)
Was placd, by which a thick dark river ran.

87

Each room therein was full of diverse fleeces,
Of wooll, of lint, of silk, or els of cotten,
An aged woman spun the diverse peeces,
Whose look and hew did shew her old and rotten:
Not much unlike unto that labour, this is,
By which in Sommer new made silk is gotten,
Where from the silk worme his fine garment taking,
They reave him of the clothes of his own making.

88

For first in one large roome a woman span
Threds infinite, of diverse stuffe and hew;
Another doth with all the speed she can,
With other stuffe the distaves still renew;
The third in feature like, and pale and wan,
Doth sever faire from foule, and old from new:
Now who be these? the Duke demands his guide,
These be the fatall sisters, he replid;

89

The Parcees that the thred of life do spin
To mortall men, hence death and nature know

When life must end, and when it must begin:
Now, she that doth divide them, and bestow
The course from finer, and the thick from thin,
To that end works, that those that finest grow,
For ornaments in Paradise may dwell,
The course are curst to be consumd in hell.

90

The Duke did further in the place behold,
That when the threds were spent that had been spun,
Their names in brasse, in silver, or in gold
Were wrote, and so into great heapes were done;
From which a man that seemed wondrous old,
With whole loads of those names away did run,
And turnd againe as fast the way he went,
Nor ever wearie was, nor ever spent.

91

This aged man did hold his pace so swift,
As though to run he onely had been born,
Or had it givn him as a speciall gift:
And in the lappet of his cloke were born,
The names of men, with which he made such shift:

But now a while I crave to be forborn,
For in the book ensuing shal be showd,
How this old sire his cariage ill bestowd.

ARGUMENT

THE THIRTYFIFT BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Saint John the praise of writers doth recount:
Bradamant doth with good successe recover
The prisners that were tane by Rodomount:
This done, she sends a challenge to her lover,
And sends withall an horse of good account,
Which makes Rogero long in doubt to hover;
The while before his face the fall he saw,
Of Serpentine, Grandonio, and Ferraw.

THIRTY FIFT BOOKE

1

Faire mistresse who for me to heavn shall flie,
To bring againe from thence my wandring wit,
Which I still lose, since from that piercing eye
The dart came forth that first my heart did hit?
Nor of my losse at all complaine would I,
Might I but keep that which remaineth yet:
But if it still decrease, within short space
I doubt I shall be in Orlandos case.

2

Yet well I wot where to recover mine,
Though not in Paradise nor Cynthias sphere,
Yet doubtlesse in a place no lesse divine,
In that sweet face of yours, in that faire heare,
That rubie lip, in those two starlike eyne,
There is my wit, I know it wanders there;
And with my lips (if you would give me leave)
I there would search, I thence it would receive.

3

But to returne unto that English Prince,
Whom (if you do remember) with S. John,
By ugly streame I left a little since,
The fatall sister spinners looking on,
Who sometime do prolong, and sometime mince
Our thred of life, I say he saw anon,
Among a million more, one passing fleece,
More fine than that that Jason brought to Greece.

4

So shone the thred that from that fleece out came,
No gold, nor orient pearle could look so bright,
Astolfo much desird to know his name,
And time of birth, that to that thred had right.
Straightwayes this answer unto him doth frame,
He that the darke Apocalyps did write;
The number of his name shall noted be,
When twenty shall be tane from M and D.

5

And as the fleece which here so faire doth show,
In finest substance passeth all the rest;

So shall the person that the same doth owe,
Make that same age in which he liveth, blest,
For all the gifts that nature can bestow,
Or with which study can a man invest,
Shall powred be on him with large proportion,
Assigned from above to be his portion.

6

There stands (said he) neare to the banks of Poe
A village, now of small or none account,
Whose moorish seat the streame doth overflow,
But in that time that I to you recount,
Unto a City of such state shall grow,
As all the neighbour townes it shall surmount;
Nor sole in walls, and buildings fine and stately,
But in good arts of old found out, or lately.

7

Nor think you this preferment to proceed
By peradventure, or as twere by chance,
But evn as a thing by God himselfe decreed,
For one mans sake his native soile tadvance;
As still we see those that good fruit will breed,

Do grasse the stock, and prune and pick the branch,
Or as the goldsmith pollisheth the mettell,
In which he means a gemme of price to settell.

8

For nere shall soule that shall to earth descend,
With mortall garment be more comly clad,
Never did God a soule from hence down send,
That more choice gifts, nor more rare vertues had
Then this, which unto him he doth intend,
That shall his country and his friends make glad,
Hippolito of Est his name shall be,
To whom the heavns such favours do decree.

9

For all those vertues great that wonted are,
To set forth diverse, diversly divided,
Shall joynd be in this same man most rare,
Unto such place, by heavns appointment guided;
Maintaind shall studies be by his great care,
All quarrels cease, and broiles shall be decided,
Whose vertues all, if I to tell prolong,
Orlando should expect his wit too long.

10

Thus much the follower of Jesus spake,
The while Astolfo those same webs doth view,
From whence our lives end and beginning take:
One spun, one cut, the third doth stuffe renew,
Then came they to the foul and lothsome lake,
Dark, deep, and miry, of a deadly hew,
Where was the aged man that never stinted
To carie bundels of the names imprinted.

11

This was the man, whom (as I told before)
Both use and nature so swift pacd had made,
He never rested, but ran evermore,
And with his running he did use this trade;
A heap of names within his cloke he bore,
And in the river did them all unlade;
Or (plaine to speak) away he cast them all
Into this stream, which Lethe we do call.

12

This prodigall old wretch no sooner came
Unto this cursed rivers barren bank,

But desprately, without all feare of blame,
Or caring to deserve reward or thank,
He hurld therein full many a precious name,
Where millions soon into the bottome sank,
And scant in evry thousand one was found,
That was not in the gulf quite lost and drownd.

13

Yet all about great store of birds there flew,
As vultures, carren crowes, and chattring pies,
And many more of sundry kinds and hew,
That made lewd harmony with their lowd cries:
These when the carelesse wretch the tresor threw
Into that stream, did all they could devise,
What with their talents some, and some with beak,
To save those names, but find themselves too weak.

14

For ever as they sought themselves to raise,
To beare away those names of great renown,
The weight of them so heavy downward waies,
They in the stream were drivn to cast them down,
Only two swans sustaind so great a praise,

In spite of him that sought them all to drown,
These two do still take up whose names they list,
And bare them safe away, and never mist.

15

Somtime all under that foule lake they divid,
And took up some that were with water coverd,
And those that seemd condemned they reprivd,
And often, as about the bank they hoverd,
They caught them ere they to the stream arrivd:
Then went they with the names they had recoverd
Up to a hill that stood the water nigh,
On which a stately Church was built on high.

16

This place is sacred to immortall fame,
And evermore a Nymph stands at the gate,
And took the names wherwith the two swans came,
(Whether they early come, or whether late)
Then all about the Church she hangd the same,
Before the sacred image in such rate,
As they might then well be assurd for ever,
Spite of that wretch in safety to persever.

17

Astolfo had a great desire to know
The mysteries most high, and hidden sence
Of that old man, that still ran to and fro,
And precious things so lewdly did dispence,
And of the birds, and of the nymph also,
That from the swans took names, and bare them thence,
And therefore asked what they signifid,
To whom the man of God thus wise replid:

18

Know first (said he) there cannot wag a straw
Below on earth, but that the signe is here:
And each small act doth correspondence draw,
Although in other shew it doth appeare:
That aged man, that running erst you saw,
And never baits, nor resteth all the yeare,
To work the like effects above is bound,
As time doth work below upon the ground.

19

When here the fatall threed of life is spun,
Then doth below the life of man decline,

There fame, and here their names in metall done,
Would make them both immortall and divine,
Save here this aged sire that so doth run,
And there below, time doth thereat repine,
He here flings all their names into a puddle,
Time there doth all in dark oblivion huddle.

20

And evn as here Ravns, Vultures, Pies, and crowes,
And such like birds, endeavour all they may
To save those names that worthiest they suppose,
But wanting strength, the names stil downward sway;
So there promoters, ruffins, bawds, and those
That can the parasites and jesters play,
That by great Lords are oft more made of, then
The true, and plaine, and vertuous minded men.

21

And these (forsooth) good fellowes call you must,
Because they learn like Asse and Pork to be,
But when their Lords be laid full low in dust,
Their line of life cut off by sisters three,
Yea oft by their own surfetting and lust,

Then these same goodly squires of base degree,
In their vile mouthes their names beare up and down
A while, and after in oblivion drown.

22

But as the swans that here still flying are,
With written names unto the sacred port,
So there Historians learnd and Poets rare
Preserve them in cleare fame and good report;
O happy Princes, whose foresight and care
Can win the love of writers in such sort,
As Caesar did, so as you need not dread
The lake of Lethe after ye be dead.

23

But surely God their reason so doth blind,
And takes from them all sence of wit and skill,
That when their rooms on earth they have resign'd,
Death both their bodies and their fames might kill;
Where at the least some fame would stay behind,
(Admit in part their manners were but ill)
Had they but wit to get some grace with Cirra,
Their fame should sweeter smel then nard or mirrha.

24

Perhaps AEneas was not so devout,
Nor Hector nor Achilles were so brave,
But thousands have as honest been and stout,
And worthy by desert more praise to have;
But those faire lands and castles out of doubt,
That their successors unto writers gave,
Made them so famous over forraigne lands,
Canonizd by the Poets sacred hands.

25

Augustus Caesar was not such a Saint,
As Virgil maketh him by his description,
His love of learning scuseth that complaint,
That men might justly make of his proscription;
Nor had the shame that Neros name doth taint,
Confirmd now by a thousand yeares prescription,
Been as it is, if he had had the wit,
To have been frank to such as Poems writ.

26

Blind Homer writ how Agamemnon fought,
And wan at last great Troy that long resisted;

And how Penelope, though greatly sought
By many suters, yet in faith persisted.
Yet sure (for ought you know) he might have taught
The contrary to this, if he had listed,
That Troy prevails, that Greeks were conquer'd clean,
And that Penelope was but a quean.

27

On tother side, we see Queen Didos name
That worthy was indeed to be commended,
Is subject now to slander and to shame,
Because that she by Virgil is not friended.
But on this point I now more tedious am
Then I was ware, or then I had intended,
For I love writers well, and would not wrong them,
And I my self do count my self among them.

28

I wrate a volume of my masters praise,
For which to me he hath not been ungrate,
But to this height of honour me doth raise,
Where (as you see) I live in happy state;
I pitie those that in these later dayes

Do write, when bounty hath shut up her gate,
Where day and night in vaine good writers knock,
And for their labours oft have but a mock.

29

So as indeed this reason is the chief,
That wits decay, because they want their hire,
For where no succour is, nor no relief,
The very beasts will from such place retire.
Thus said the Saint, and (as it were with grief
Of such offence) his eyes did flame like fire,
But turning to the Duke with sober lafter,
He pacifid himself a little after.

30

But here I leave Astolfo safe and sound
With holy John, for forthwith leap must I,
As far as from the Moon unto the ground;
My wings would faile, if I still soard so hie:
Now come I unto her that had the wound,
That ever smarting wound of jealousie,
I told she had, when last of her I spoke,
Unhorst three kings with goldelaunces stroke.

31

And how she lay all at a castle sad,
Although in vaine she sought her grief to smother,
How at that place she perfect knowledge had,
That Agramant was foiled by her brother,
And that to flie to Arlie he was glad,
With good Rogero and with many other;
This made her unto Provence then to hast,
Because she heard that Charles pursud him fast.

32

Now unto Provence onward as she went,
A comely damsell in her way she viewd,
Who though she lookt like one that did lament,
Yet could not grieffe her comly grace exclude;
This dame had traveld long, with this intent,
To find some knight that from the Pagan rude,
(Fierce Rodomont, that prisner held her lover)
By force of arms againe might him recover.

33

Now when the comfortlesse dame Bradamant
Had met a dame as comfortlesse as she,

Such sympathy she felt of grieffe, that scant
She kept in teares, so sad a sight to see,
She askd her what misfortune or what want,
Of her sad plight, unworthy cause might be:
Faire Fiordeliege that for a knight did hold her,
The circumstance of all the matter told her.

34

And in most ruffull sort she did recount,
Both of the tombe and bridge the wofull storie,
And how the cruell Pagan Rodomount
Had taken him, for whom she was so sorie,
Not that he could in value him surmount,
That for his value had obtaind much glory,
But that the Pagan not to strength did trust,
But to a bridge, and vantages unjust.

35

Wherefore most noble minded knight (said she)
If such you be, as by your speech I guesse,
Help my deare spouse from bondage vile to free,
And plague the Pagan that doth him oppresse;
Or if you cannot so, yet counsell me,

Where I may find some aid for my distresse,
Some knight so stout of heart, and strong of hand,
As may this cruell Sarazen withstand.

36

So shall you do a brave and noble deed,
That wandring knights do think they ought of due,
So might you aid a worthy man indeed,
And one in love most faithfull and most true:
As for his other praise, it is no need
For me to tell mine own griefes to renew,
Sith well I know they plainly are appearing,
To all that have their sense of sight and hearing.

37

The worthy Dame that thirsted still for praise,
Agrees to take this hard exploit in hand,
As one that ready was at all assaies,
On horse, on foot, by water, or by land:
For either thus she shall her glory raise,
If so she shall the Pagans force withstand,
Or die she shall, which danger lesse doth move her,
Because she thinks Rogero doth not love her.

38

And thus she said, most lovely loving Dame,
Gladly I shall my utmost forces prove,
To succour one that merits so great fame,
Yet of his praises chiefly me doth move,
Because you give him such a noble name,
That he is true and faithfull in his love:
Which sith you speak by triall, I must ween so,
Els I durst swears no man alive had been so.

39

These last words ending with a scalding sigh,
A sigh that came indeed from grievous thought,
Then on they went, till they approached nigh
The parlous bridge, that Rodomont had wrought:
And straight the watch descried them from on high,
And blew a horn, by which the Pagan thought,
That travellers were come the bridge to passe,
Came out all armed, as his manner was.

40

But when that he one all in armour saw,
He greets them lowd with this lewd salutation:

Ho stay, and ere you passe observe this law,
Unto this tombe, humbly to make oblation,
Of horse and armes, with feare and revrent aw:
Els with this speare expect sharp castigation.
She that before had heard of Isbels death,
And of this tombe thus stoutly to him seth.

41

Ah damned wretch, why should the innocent
Indure the penance of thy grievous guilt?
Thy self shouldst die, or suffer punishment,
That killedst her, if please her ghost thou wilt:
Her soule (upon my soule) would be content,
If by my hand thy guilty blood were spilt,
More then with all the armors, men, and horses,
That thou dost win by thy unlawfull forces.

42

And so much more it will accepted be
To her, if thou by my right hand maist die,
Because I am a woman as was she,
And onely come on thee my force to trie:
But let us first upon these points agree;

That if you hap to vanquish me, then I
Shall suffer at your hands, so and no more,
Then other prisoners have done before.

43

But if I vanquish you (as sure I trust)
Then I will have the spoile of all the rest,
And make your horse, and armes, a gift more just,
Upon the tombe of her for ever blest:
And then withall, to me you promise must,
That all your prisners straight shall be releast,
When thus the Dame her mind had signifid,
Thus the fierce Turk mildly to her replid.

44

Faire Dame, you seem to me to speak but reason,
And thereto I my frank assent affoord:
But true it is, that I for feare of treason,
My prisners all, have sent from hence aboard,
So as I cannot free them at this season,
But firmly here to you I passe my word,
If you foile me, of which there is small jeoberty,
I will send word to set them all at liberty.

45

But if I conquer you, as sure I shall,
(For so it is most likely, and most meet)
I will not hang your armour on the wall,
Nor send you hence a prisner in my fleet,
I will remit to you my conquest all,
For that faire faces sake, and look so sweet;
Suffice it that this curtesie may move thee,
Where now thou seemst to hate me, then to love me.

46

Be not (faire Dame) in your own strength beguild,
I offer not such grace to evry stranger,
For I am strong; at this the damsell smild,
But such a smile, as shewd not mirth, but anger;
And whether courage had all feare exild,
Or that despaire made her to doubt no danger;
She spurd her horse, nor other answer made him,
But with her speare in rest she doth invade him.

47

This so did move the cruell Rodomount,
Upon his horse he doth himself advance,

Not making doubt, but that he would dismount
Out of her seat, the noble Dame of France;
But he was quite deceivd of his account,
No sooner was he toucht with Goldelance,
But evn as if of strength he had bin reavd,
Quite from the saddle backward he was heavd.

48

But yet the Dame her self in danger was,
To fall into the streame so swift and fleet,
By meanes the bridge so narrow was to passe,
That hardly two at once thereon could meet;
But Rabican, whose swiftnesse did surpasse
All foure foot beasts, did firmly keep his feet:
Although so straight and narrow was the bridge,
He was constraind to run upon the ridge.

49

Now when the Pagan lay thus overthrown,
She turnd to him, and sporting, thus she spake,
Now sir (said she) I hope it may be known,
Of us two which the worser cause did take.
But he, like one whose wits were not his own,

He either could or would no answer make;
But still he stood, looking on ground and musing,
Neither his foile denying nor excusing.

50

And having walkd some half a dozen paces,
He suddenly cast all his armour off,
And hurles it gainst the stones, and it defaces,
That scant he left unbroke one peece thereof:
Determining after such foule disgraces,
To hide himselfe, and go a great way off:
But ere he went, he granted full commission,
To free his prisners without intermission.

51

So thence he went, and what of him became,
Or what he did, no notice cleare I have,
But onely this, that evn for very shame,
He long livd close within a secret cave:
The while his armes by that victorious Dame,
Were hangd up at the tombe for triumph brave,
The tother armes and furnitures among,
That erst to Pagan Princes did belong.

52

But for all those that were from Christens won,
She laid them up, and did in safety set,
Among the which was Monodantes son,
And Olivero and stout Sansonet,
Who late before with ill successe did run,
So that the Pagan did their armour get,
And them themselves as prisners did convey
Unto Algirie, farre from thence away.

53

Among the rest that had their armour lost,
Was Sacrapant the fierce Circassen Prince,
Who sought for Frantlet, to his paine and cost,
And with the Pagan fought but little since;
But being foild, he quite forsook that coast,
Where men, of such disgrace might him convince,
And with great shame, but what could shame him boot?
He came on horsback, & went thence on foot.

54

Wherefore ashamd in such sort to return,
He minds to follow that his former quest

Of her, whose love long since his heart did burn,
Although her love he never yet possest:
For still her froward mind did ever spurn,
Against his earnest, and most just request.
Of her return he late had heard the newes,
(I know not how) but now he her pursues.

55

And let him her pursue, for I proceed,
Of noble Bradamantes acts to tell,
Who having done this brave and worthy deed,
To free the passage where so many fell,
She wrate it, so as evry one might read,
How all the circumstance thereof befell;
Which having done, then she demands to know,
Which way Dame Fiordeliege did mind to go.

56

Who straight her purpose unto her unfolding,
Told her, to passe the sea by ship she meant,
At Arly, least the Turke his word not holding,
Might keep her spouse too long in prison pent:
Then shall you (saith the Dame) be more beholding

To me, for sure (said she) tis mine intent,
Unto that town to guard you in your passage,
So you will do for me but one embassage.

57

And that withall, you me this grace affoord,
To give Rogero this same horse for me,
And say an unknown champion sends him word,
To challenge him, that all the world may see
He hath been false of promise and of word;
Of which our combat shall the triall be:
And tell him plainly there is no deniall,
But that by challenge I will make this triall.

58

This say, and say no more; and if he ask
My name, then tell him plaine you may not tell;
The while mine armes shall serve me for a mask,
This I desire, do this, and so farewell;
This is (said Fiordeliege) an easie task
From you, that have of me deservd so well,
As binds me both to this that you demand me,
And to what ever els you would command me.

59

This said, she takes the bridle in her hand,
And with her leads Frontino on the way,
Untill they both came to the salt sea sand,
That next unto the town of Arly lay;
But Fiordeliege goes to the town by land,
And Bradamant doth in the suburbs stay,
To thend she may convenient respit give her,
To him the horse and message to deliver.

60

Who when the bridge and gate she quite had past,
She prayeth one of those that kept the ward,
To bring her to Rogero in great hast,
And through the town of curtsie her to guard;
This done, she to Rogero came at last,
And did her message with most due regard,
And gave Frontino, and then went her way,
Nor would she once to heare his answer stay.

61

Rogero standeth still all in a muse,
The messenger and message so beguile him,

He wonders who it is, that both doth use
Such curtesie, and yet withall revile him.
He thinks the partie doth him much abuse,
With fowlest blot of breach of word to file him:
And of all others, least of all he thought,
That Bradamant of him the combat sought.

62

To think it Rodomont he was inclind,
But yet it could not sink into his reach,
Why of a sudden he should be so kind,
And wherein he could blame his promise breach;
And save with him, he cannot call to mind,
With whom he had of friendship any breach:
The while the Lady with a stately scorn,
In token of defiance blew her horn.

63

Straightwayes the newes to Agramant doth fly,
That one without did challenge some within,
And Serpentine, that then by chance was by,
Askd leave to fight, with suerd hope to win,
And swears the knight should yeeld or els should dy,

And then the people flockt both thick and thin,
And stood upon the wals with young and old,
Between these two the combat to behold.

64

Out Serpentino came in brave array,
And bravely with his speare in rest he ran,
But at the first encounter downe he lay,
The horse runnes leere away without the man,
But noble Bradamant, the horse doth stay,
And backe restore: then finely as she can,
She prayes him to King Agramant to speake,
To send a stronger Knight, sith he was weake.

65

The mightie Kings of Affrike and of Spaine,
That from the wall the courteous act did vew,
From praising of the same could not refraine,
Though none of them, thereof the author knew;
Now Serpentino backe returnd againe,
And to his Prince he told his message trew,
How that same champion did desire to fight,
With some more stout and more renowned Knight.

66

And then Grandonio fierce of Volaterne,
The proudest Knight that Spaine long time had bred
Obtaind next place, and with a visage sterne,
And threatning voice thus to the damsell sed:
Your curtsie small reward for you shall earne;
For either here in fight you must be ded,
Or at the least, I will you prisner bring,
Unto Marsilio, of great Spaine the King.

67

Well (answerd she) keepe these your threats in store,
Your villany my curtsie shall not let,
But that ile frendly monish you before,
That backe againe unto your King you get,
Ere that your fall may make your body sore;
And say that I desired to have met
A man indeed of courage, and of worth,
And not your selfe, nor him that last came forth.

68

This her replie so mild, and yet so bitter,
The Pagan with more furie did enflame;

With speare then speech, he thought an answer fitter
And toward her in full carreer he came,
Intending sure, some deadly blow to hit her;
But she that was accustomed to this game,
Bare well his blow, and with her Goldelance,
She taught him how the somersaut to dance.

69

But yet his horse, that loose about did runne,
She brought him backe, and thus to him she said,
Loe sir, you had bin better to have donne
My message, when I curteouslie you prayd;
Yet here I will release my prisner wonne,
So you will tell your King that I have stayd,
To combat with a man in fight well seene,
And not with novices, of skill so greene.

70

The lookers on that sure thought nothing lesse,
Then that a virgin so could guide a speare,
With murmurings their wonder great expresse;
Still ayming with surmises who it were;
Some Brandimart, and some Renaldo guesse,

Or others whom the Turks had cause to feare,
But most they would Orlando have suspected,
Save they had heard his sences were distracted.

71

Next stout Ferraw desird to have the place,
Not that he hopt the conquest to have wonne,
But that these Knights may have the lesse disgrace,
If I (quoth he) shall do as they have donne:
A strong swift horse he takes, and sure of pace,
Well made to beare the shocke, and free to runne,
The choisest of an hundred that he kept,
And thus all armd upon the beast he lept.

72

Against the femall champion forth he goes,
And first they interchangeably salute,
Please it you (said the Ladie) to disclose
Your name to me? that shall be all my sute:
He (that what longs to civill manners knowes,)
To satisfie her therein was not mute,
And I refuse you not, then said the tother,
Although I rather would have had another.

73

Whom? (quoth Ferraw) Rogero (she replied)
And scarce she fully could bring forth his name,
But that a blush with rosie colour dyed
Her lovely cheekes, with secret honest shame:
(Further she addeth) him whose vallew tryed,
And so much praysd, was cause I hither came,
None else I seeke, nor for none else care I,
Onely his manhood I desire to try.

74

She spake the word in plaine and simple sence,
Which some perhaps will subtilie wrest awry,
Well (said Ferraw) yet now ere I go hence,
Let me with you have leave on course to try;
To see if I can make no more defence,
Then those whom last you made on earth to ly,
If I fall as did they, then I will send
That gentle Knight, that may our errour mend.

75

Her beaver open was while they confard,
At which, when her the Spaniard well had vewed,

And markt her bewtie worthy of regard,
He was alreadie more then halfe subdewed:
He thought an Angell of the heavnly guard,
Could not with greater bewtie be endewed;
Against her speare, what fence can he devise,
That is already conquerd with her eyes?

76

Now tooke they field, and ran with all their force,
And now Ferraw is from his saddle borne,
The damsell doth of curtsie stay his horse,
The Spaniard lyeth like a man forlorne;
But backe he must unto the King perforce,
Nor true to do his message doth he scorne;
He tels Rogero plaine before them all,
How this same Knight onely for him doth call.

77

Rogero who it is yet little knowing,
In hast to make him readie doth begin,
A settled hope of conquest plainly showing,
Willing to fight, with mind assurd to win:
As for their foyles, and their fowle overthrowing,

That went before, he weighd them not a pin;
But how they met, how kindly him she served,
Unto the booke ensuing is reserved.

ARGUMENT

THE THIRTYSIXTH BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Duke Ammons daughter with revengefull heart
Doth meet Marfisa, minding her to kill,
Untill the battels joynd on either part,
And so did sunder them against their will:
Bradamant and Rogero talke apart:
Marfisa gets of both great evill will,
By troubling them: but when she knew her brother,
She reconciled is to tone and tother.

THIRTY SIXTH BOOKE

1

Tis meet a gentle heart should ever show
By curtesie the fruits of true gentilitie,
Which will by practice to an habit grow,
And make men do the same with great facilitie:
Likewise the dunghill blood a man shall know
By churlish parts and acts of incivility,
Whose nature apt to take each lewd infection,
Custome confirmes, and makes ill in perfection.

2

Of curteous acts, old stories he that reads,
In ancient times shall find there hath been store;
But in our dayes of bloody cruell deeds
Is greater plenty then hath been before;
For charity brings forth but barren seeds,
And hatred still is sowd in so great store,
That when the fruits of both come to be reapd,
The tone is scarce, the tother overheapd.

3

What fierce Barbarian, Tartar, Moore, or Turke,
Could use more cruelty then now of late
In Latian land Venelian force did work?
Not by consent of the wise men of state,
But by the filthy nature that did lurk
In wicked hirelings, and a hidden hate;
I speak not of the dammage and defaces,
They did by fire in all our pleasant places.

4

Though that revenge was foule and too too cruell,
And chiefe against Hippolito, who late,
When Caesar sieged Padoa, as they knew well,
And brought it to low ebbe and woful state,
He both withdrew the matter all and fewell,
And quencht the fires kindled by deadly hate,
Preserving many a Church and many a village
By his rare clemency from fire and pillage.

5

Not those I meane, nor many actions more,
That cannot be excused or defended,

But such an act as stones might weep therefore,
As oft as it is talkd of or remembred:
Then when my Lord his houshold sent before,
There where his foes were secretly assembled,
And left their vessels on the saltish sand,
While in ambushment close they lay on land.

6

As Hector and AEneas did by fire
Assault the Greekish fleet with hardy fight,
So saw I two, whose hearts to fame aspire,
(One Alexander, tother Hercules hight)
Assault their foes, and drive them to retire
Unto their trenches, nay within them quite;
But one of them returned thence full hard,
The tother of returning clean was bard.

7

For Feruffino scapd, Cantelmo staid,
O Duke of Sore what great sore didst thou find,
To see thy noble sonne so foule betraid,
Among a thousand blades left there behind?
His naked neck on side of gally laid,

And chopped off: now surely in my mind,
When that same bloody stroke his neck smit off,
You felt like stroke, evn with the sight thereof.

8

Slavonian vile, where didst thou learne to know
Such lawes of warre? within that Scithian land,
Use men to kill a prisner taken so,
That yeelds, and hath no weapon in his hand?
Or was it such a grievous sinne you trow,
The foes of his deare country to withstand?
Why hast thou Sunne, so long on this age shinde,
That breeds of Atrews and Thiestes kinde?

9

Barbarian vile, that kild so sweet a youth,
To satisfie thy rancor and thy rage,
So rare a youth, as to confesse the truth,
His match could not be found in this our age,
Whose beautie might have bred sufficient ruth,
Fierce Poliphemus anger to asswage,
But not fierce thee, more cruell and more fell,
Then any monsters that in deserts dwell.

10

The valiant men did studie in time past,
With clemencie their honors to increase,
And hate no longer then the fight did last,
With victorie revenge did ever cease:
So Bradamant, of whom I told you last,
The prisners she had tane, did still release,
And staid their horses when themselves were downe,
And sent them backe againe into the towne.

11

And praid them but her challenge to deliver,
Unto Rogero, and to call him out,
Who meant with speare in rest her answer give her,
Unto her challenge that she sent so stout.
Now when the other Knights were all together,
In presence of the Kings, they cast a doubt,
Who this should be, and then they aske Ferraw,
That talkt with her, and her bare visage saw.

12

Sure (said Ferraw) it is not tone nor tother,
Of those on whom before your thoughts were set;

I tooke it first it was Renaldos brother,
Who is in yeares a very youth as yet:
But now I rather judge it is another,
For so much force is not in Richardet,
I thinke it is his sister by her usage,
Who I have heard is like him much in visage.

13

She hath ere this of value had great fame,
Renaldo and the Palladins among,
I must confesse I found it to my shame,
Her, then her brothers to be farre more strong:
Roger, when he heard them her to name,
Was guiltie straight that he had done her wrong,
And blusht in countenance with bashfull grace,
And oft his heart shot blood into his face.

14

Yea feare invaded him, not feare of danger,
For force he feared not of any wight,
Of Turke nor Christen, countryman or stranger;
The very cause of this his dolefull plight
Was love, for love feares nothing more then anger,

He doubts least she conceivd not of him right:
Thus waving thoughts his mind do both waies cary,
If so he better were to go or tary.

15

The while Marfisa that was present there,
And ever had a forward will to just,
Could now no longer from the same forbear,
Though seeing some before her lie on dust.
For all their fals did breed in her no feare,
So much in her great value she did trust,
Wherefore least good Rogero might prevent her,
First she rides forth, and in the lists doth enter.

16

And mounted on her horse came swiftly running,
Unto the place where Bradamant did stay,
With panting heart to wait Rogeros comming,
With mind to take him prisner if she may,
She thinks how she might guide her staffe with cunning,
As with her stroke do him least hurt she may:
Thus commeth out Marfisa, nothing fearing,
Upon her loftie crest the Phenix bearing.

17

Or that thereby to bost her strength she ment,
Of her rare strength, of which she tooke some pride,
Or else thereby to note her chast intent
She had, a warlike virgin still to bide;
But Bradamant, who first to meet her went,
And not to be Rogero now espide,
Did aske her name, and by her name she knew
That this was she that made her love untrew.

18

Or to say better, whom she did surmise,
To be the sole withholder of her deare,
Her whom she hates, gainst whom her blood doth rise,
And minding now to make her buy it deare,
With furie great and rage at her she flies;
And that she may make all suspitions cleare,
With couched speare she fiercely runneth on her,
And meanes to kill her, or to die upon her.

19

Marfisa was constrained with the stroke,
To kisse the ground as those before her had,

Which to such rage her courage did provoke,
That with disdain she seemd as one halfe mad;
Not knowing how so great a foile to cloke,
She drawes her sword with an intention bad,
But Bradamant cryth out with loftie hart,
What dost thou traitor? thou my prisner art.

20

And though I used curtsie to the rest,
To use it unto thee I am not tide,
Whose mind (as I have heard) is evn a nest,
Wherin is bred all villanie and pride:
Looke how great waters rage and do not rest,
When as the winds do strive against the tide,
So ragd Marfisa rather more then lesse,
And for meere spite could not a word expresse.

21

But hurles about her blade with all her force,
Not caring what she strikes, nor where, nor how,
Upon the horseman or upon the horse,
Her rage in her no reason did allow:
And Bradamant as void of all remorse,

With mind to breake that, that refusd to bow,
Ranne at her with the speare that would not misse,
And made her once againe the ground to kisse.

22

But once againe upon her feet she getteth,
And with her sword revengement she intends,
Each fall she hath, her furie sharper whetteth,
Yet still she fals, and can have no amends,
Nor golde lance his wonted force forgetteth,
For all it touches, to the ground it sends;
Had not the speare bene (as it was) inchaunted,
It could not so Marfisas force have daunted.

23

Some of our men were hither come the while,
I meane some of the Christen host, that lay
Encamped neare the towne within a mile,
So as the wals of Arlie see they may,
And thinking (for her sex did them beguile)
Some Knight of theirs maintaind so great a fray,
They thither came with will and with delight,
To see so fierce and well maintaind a fight.

24

Whom when as Agramant from far espide,
And thinks they came to bring their knight assistance
He thought it best in wisdom to provide,
If they should offer force to make resistance;
Wherefore he pointed some that of their side,
May stand from that same place a little distance,
Of this last crew Rogero was the first,
With whom the damsell so to fight did thirst.

25

And seeing now how fierce the combat groth,
Betwixt these two, to whom he wisht none ill,
Although in sundry kinds he favoured both,
For tone was love, the tother bare good will;
To suffer them to fight he was full loth,
Although for honors sake he must be still,
Else sure he could have found it in his hart,
To step betweene them, and the fray to part.

26

But they that with him from the citie came,
And saw the Christen champion was so strong,

Stept in betwixt her and the tother dame,
And so withdrew Marfisa them among,
Which act the other Christens did inflame,
So that with mind to venge so foule a wrong,
They stept in too: thus both sides cride alarme,
And soone the skirmish waxed fresh and warme.

27

Such as before were armed, out do runne,
They that unarmed were, their armor take,
And some runne out on foot, on horsebacke some,
Each to his standerd doth himselfe betake;
The divers sound of trumpet and of drum,
That doth the horsemen, this the footmen wake,
But Bradamant is malcontent and wrath,
To thinke Marfisa thus escaped hath.

28

Then lookt she wishly all about the place,
To finde out him that caused all her care,
At last she knew him, though not by his face,
Yet by the argent Eagle that he bare,
And viewing well his person and good grace,

His goodly stature and his feature rare,
She ragd to thinke another should possesse it,
And in these secret words she doth expresse it.

29

Shall any other then that sweet lip kisse?
And I in love thereof still mourne and pine?
Shall any other then possesse my blisse:
Shalt thou anothers be, if none of mine?
No certes, rather then to suffer this,
Thou by my hand shalt die, or I by thine,
If in this life we shall be joyned never,
Death onely be the meane to joyne us ever.

30

Although that thou shouldst fortune me to kill,
Thy death by right should pacifie my spirit,
For lawes appoint, who guiltlesse blood do spill,
Shall for reward the doome of death inherit;
Yet still I shall sustaine the greater ill,
For I should guiltlesse die, but thou by merit,
I killing thee, kill one that hates me meerely,
Thou killing me, kilst one that loves thee deerly.

31

Why shouldst not thou (my hand) be strong and bold,
That by thy stroke his hard heart may be riven?
Who unto me sharp wounds and manifold,
In time of loves sweet peace and truce hath given,
And doth evn now with stonie heart behold
The wofull state to which poore I am driven,
Heart now be stout to take thy just revenge,
Let this one death thy thousand deaths avenge.

32

With that at him she runs, but first aloud,
Defend thy selfe (Rogero false) she said,
And think not thou shalt scape with spoiles so proud
Of heart subdued of a silly maid.
Rogero, who to her himselfe had vowd,
And to offend her greatly was afraid,
Held up his gantlet unto her in token,
That he with her desired to have spoken.

33

He would her wrath with kind words have appeased,
And shewd her how the cause he brake his day,

Was that with grievous wounds he lay diseased,
Which forced him against his will to stay;
But at this time she was so sore displeased,
She would not hearken what he had to say,
But with her speare in rest, on him she runneth,
Who such unkind encounter greatly shunneth.

34

But when he saw she was so rash and headie,
And that her cholere now so great did grow,
That she was in her full careere alreadie,
He puts his speare in rest, at least for show,
And forward sets, but when she was evn readie,
Him to have givn a sharpe disgracefull blow,
(Or that it were that she evn then recanted,
Or that her heart to harme him courage wanted)

35

She bare her lance aloft quite ore his crest,
And so of purpose that same course she mist,
Yet so, as by the manner might be guest,
She could have hit him surer, had she list,
And wrath and rage still boiling in her brest,

To bend her force gainst him she did desist,
But in that mood no little harme she workes,
Unto the other souldiers of the Turkes.

36

In little time, she with her gilded lance
Had causd three hundred men on ground to lie,
So that the conquest to the part of France,
Was thought to have bene gained sole thereby:
Rogero seekes her out, and last by chance,
He speakes to her, and saith, my deare I die,
But I may talke with you, what have I done
Alas, that you my conference should shunne.

37

As when the Southerne wind with lukewarme blast,
Doth breath on hils where winter long had dwelt,
Resolves the rocks of ice that hung so fast,
And all the new made mounts of snow doth melt:
So with this gentle prayre, though spoke in hast,
The damsell such an inward motion felt,
That sodainly her hardned heart did soften,
As unto women kind it chanceth often.

38

Yet answer made she none, but held her peace,
She onely turned Rabican aside,
And hasting to get out of that same prease,
She beckned him that after her he ride:
Thus went she thence, with mind inclind to peace,
Unto a valley, where on either side,
A grove of Cypres so evn set was seene,
As if they all of one selfe stampe had beene.

39

Amid this grove a goodly sepulture
Was built, which these faire Cypres trees did shade,
Of Porphyrie and marble white and pure,
And faire engravn, to shew why it was made;
But of the tombe she tooke no care nor cure,
But there expected in the open glade,
Untill Rogero having made good hast,
Approcht the wood and damsell at the last.

40

But of Marfisa now I must you tell,
Who having got by this her horse againe,

Her loftie heart with rancor great did swell,
To be revengd of this foule sufferd staine,
And seeing where she went, as it befell,
And how Rogero followd her amaine,
She little thinketh that it is for love,
But rather that they may the combat prove.

41

Wherefore to follow them she thinks it best,
So as she came almost as soone as they,
But what a tedious and unwelcome guest
She seemd to both, one soone conjecture may:
Much sure it did the Dordon dame molest,
Who sole to her Rogeros faults did lay,
She deemd that to come thither nothing movd her,
But that Rogero in ill sort had lovd her.

42

And false, Rogero she againe doth name,
And was it not enough false man, said she,
That of thy falshood I should heare by fame,
But that I with these eyes the same should see?
But sith I find thou dost thy actions frame,

To drive me with unkindnesses from thee,
I am content to die, but ere I die yet,
She that did cause it, dearly shall abuy it.

43

Thus as a Viper angrie and malicious,
With mind indeed to do her best to kill
Her, that was come in manner so suspitious;
(Though she came more for wrath, the for good wil)
With gilded launce she gives a blow pernicious,
That quite unhorsed her for all her skill,
Backward Marfisa fell, and in the durt,
Her beaver stucke, but had no further hurt.

44

Duke Ammons daughter that resolves to die,
Or kill her fo, so much her selfe forgetteth,
That thinking to dispatch her by and by,
Before her head out of the mire she getteth,
The golden launce she will no farther trie,
But throwes it downe, as wrath her courage whetteth,
And to performe the feate, her sword she drawes,
Therewith of feare to cut away the cause.

45

But ere she came so neare, Marfisa met her,
Like one with rage, with spite and scorne halfe mad,
To thinke that now againe she sped no better,
And that a while before she sped so bad;
So that Rogero could by no meanes let her
From fighting, which to stop great will he had,
But both of them with choler were so blinded,
They fought like bedlem folk, and desprat minded.

46

They came unto the halfe sword at the first,
And with their rage forgetting rules of skill,
Their overmuch desire to do their worst,
Was only cause that they could do none ill;
Their hearts were ready for despite to burst,
And either purposing to die or kill,
Did leave her sword aside, in mind supposing,
With stab to kill each other at the closing.

47

Rogero sunders them, and both intreateth,
To pacifie themselves, but all in vaine,

Then of their daggers he them both defeateth,
And by perswasions movd them both againe;
Sometime he speaketh faire, sometime he threateth,
Except they wil at his request abstaine;
But these viragoes will not thoe desist,
Though weapons want, they fight with feet and fist.

48

He steps betweene againe, and back he drawes,
Now one, and then the tother by the sleeves,
And makes them both against their wils to pause,
At which Marfisa not a little grieves;
Her selfe too greatly wronged in the cause,
And him to be too partiall she beleeves,
Wherefore his friendship she doth quite disclaime,
And open warres with him she doth proclaime.

49

And taking up her sword, in termes most vile,
She saith he plaies the churlish villens part,
And that he greatly doth himselfe beguile,
To thinke her fight against her will to part,
She swears she will, within a little while,

Of his owne folly make him feele the smart;
And that she will henceforth so short him curbe,
He shall not dare her combat to disturbe.

50

Rogero still bare all her words as words,
And sought by speech her to have pacified;
But seeing that it needs must come to swords,
And that with blowes, not speeches she replied,
No longer time to walking he affords,
But to his weapon he himselfe applied,
And being moved now with rightfull anger,
To save himselfe, he oft put her in danger.

51

But nere did spectacle breed more delight,
In stately Rome or Athens so well learned,
Then Bradamant did take to see this fight,
In which she now apparently discerned,
That of their love she had not judged right;
Now jealousie, and all that it concerned,
Suspition, feare, mistrust, and wrath, and franzie,
Are of the sodaine quite put from her fancie.

52

And taking up her sword, she stands not farre,
With mind not yet awhile the fray to part,
She thinkes in him she sees the God of warre,
Such grace Rogero usd, such skill, such art:
And tother seemd in that unpleasant jarre,
Some hellish furie, (so she playd her part)
Yet true it is that he a while forbare her,
Nor did his worst, but did of purpose spare her.

53

He knew the secret vertue of this blade,
Which he had tride in many battels well,
That evermore a way and entrance made,
Whose charme all charmed armes did far excell;
Wherefore he doth not fiercely her invade,
With bloody blowes nor fearfull thrusts and full,
But flatling still he causd his blowes to light,
Till once he was of patience put out quite.

54

For once Marfisa, with intention shrowd,
Strake with such furie at Rogeros beaver,

That with that blow she very plainly showd,
That to have kild him she did her endeuer,
Rogerio with his argent Eagle trowd,
From danger of the stroke himselfe to sever,
But though the shield brake not, gramercy charme,
Yet underneath the shield it stound his arme.

55

It happie was Don Hectors shield was there,
Else had she put him unto further paine,
Scarce could he now the massie target beare,
Scarce now the silver bird he could sustaine:
Now he intends no longer to forbear,
But hurleth out a foyne with force so maine,
In rage with that late blow so fierce and bitter,
Wo unto poore Marfisa, had it hit her.

56

I know not what good Angell did her keepe,
The thrust mist her, and in a tree it strake,
And enterd in the same a shaftman deepe,
And on the sodaine all the hill did quake:
A secret horror on them all did creepe,

They see the hill, the trees and tombe to shake,
Till from that sepulcher a voice proceeding,
Spake unto them all humane voice exceeding.

57

The voice to them with no small terror cride,
File not your hands and hearts with so great sin,
It is a kinde of cruell parricide,
To seeke to kill, and be so neare of kin:
Wherefore I charge you lay all hate aside,
And marke my speech, and all containd therein,
I say you both were gotten of one seed,
One wombe you bare, one brest you both did feed.

58

My deare Rogero, my Marfisa deare,
Let not the sister seeke to kill the brother,
But learne of me some things that touch you neere,
Which former times in ignorance did smother;
Your sire, Rogero hight, who that same yeare
He gat you of dame Gallacell your mother,
Was by your uncles of his life deprived,
Who also your destruction thus contrived.

59

They put your mother in a steerlesse bote,
Who was as then of you twaine great with child,
And in the Ocean wide they let her flote,
There to be starvd or drownd in waters wilde:
But lo how fortune holpe the lucklesse lot,
And ere you yet were borne, upon you smild,
For why against all hope or expectation,
Your mother made a happie navigation.

60

And being safe arrivd at Syrtee shore,
There at one burden she brought forth both you,
And then (as if she ought this world no more)
Her blessed soule to Paradise up flew;
But there by hap (to God be thanks therefore)
Was I at hand, and when the cause I knew,
I did as much, ere I the place did leave,
As such a barren soile would give me leave.

61

Your mother then in dust of earth I lapt,
(Our auncient mother) whereto all must go,

And in my cloke your little selves I wrapt,
To seeke some meanes to nourish you, when lo,
A Lionesse that late had whelpt there hapt,
To come in sight while I went to and fro,
Her did I make to leave her proper whelpes,
And give you sucke, then wanting other helpes.

62

Ten months and ten in forrests wilde and moorish,
The Lions tets you used were to sucke,
I after learnd with wilde flesh you to nourish,
Such as I could, of Beares, or Stag and Bucke;
But when you now began in strength to flourish,
One day while I was lacke, by evill lucke,
A band of fierce Arabians comming thither,
Would have convoid you both from thence together.

63

But thou Rogero when thou sawst them comming,
Didst save thy selfe from that mishap by flight,
But thou Marfisa, not so swiftly running,
Wert tane, and quickly carrid out of sight,
To fetch thee backe againe I wanted cunning,

For which I soride many day and night,
But as the losse of tone did make me sad,
So of the tother greater care I had.

64

Ah my Rogero, thou thy selfe canst tel
If thine Atlanta lovd thee while he livd,
I saw the starres some evill haps foretell,
That thou shouldst have, which me no little grievd:
Yet I endeavourd still, as thou knowst well,
That by my means thou mightst have been relievd:
But finding thee still contrary inclin'd,
For very grieffe at last I did and pind.

65

But here I built this tombe afore I did,
Where I foresaw you two should make this fray;
And being dead, to Charon lowd I crid,
To suffer in this wood my ghost to stray,
Untill this fight, to me foresignifid,
Should happen, which was done this present day,
Now shall my soule from hence depart in peace,
Now Bradamant thy jealousie may cease.

66

Thus said the voice, and left them all amazd,
With wonder great, and strangenesse of the case,
And when a while each had on other gazd,
They met in kindest manner, and embrace;
Nor Bradamant her selfe, who erst was crazd
With jealousie, now took it in disgrace,
To see her spouse, when he most kindly kist her,
Now well assured that she was his sister.

67

Thus they agreed at last, and either twin
Do call to mind some acts of childish yeares,
What they had said and done, where they had bin,
Which evn with tender heart did move their teares;
At last the worthy brother doth begin
To tell Marfisa what great love he beares
To Bradamant, whom he to wed intends,
And so at length he made them faithfull friends.

68

Then all parts pacifid so well at length,
Marfisa doth intreat her noble brother,

To tell to her the story more at length,
Of that so strange exiling of her mother,
And if their sire were slaine by fraud or strength,
And who it was that wrought the tone or tother,
For sure (said she) I think I never heard it,
Or childishnesse did make me not regard it.

69

Rogero tels her, how of Trojan race,
From Hector they be lineally descended,
By meanes Astianax (of speciall grace,
That scapd Ulysses and the snares intended)
Did leave a child of like yeares in his place,
And from that country to the sea descended,
And came to Sicill after travell long,
And took Mesina and grew very strong.

70

His ofspring still increasing in renown,
Calabria ruld in part, and thence to Phare,
And came at last to dwell in Mars his town,
And many a noble Emperour and rare
In stately Rome have worn thImperiall crown,

Of such as from this stock descended are,
From Constance and from Constantine accounting,
To Pepin and his sonne, them all surmounting.

71

Rogero first, and Iambaron of these,
Rovus, Rambaldus, and Rogero againe,
Of whom (as Atlant told) savd from the seas,
Our mother by the shore brought forth us twaine,
Their acts in ancient stories they that please
To look, may find them there recorded plaine;
Then tels he how there came king Agolant,
With Almont, and the sire of Agramant.

72

How that Kings daughter, a most noble maid,
In feats of armes so valorous did prove,
That diverse Palladines she overlaid;
And then with that Rogero fell in love,
And of her fathers anger not afraid,
Did match in Christen state, as did behove,
How after this one Beltram sought by treason,
Incestuous love of her without all reason.

73

And for that cause his brothers and his sire,
And his own native soile he did betray,
And open Risa at his foes desire;
Which being tane, and seizd on as a pray,
Fierce Agolant and his inflamd with ire,
Took Gallacell our mother where she lay
Six months with child, and put her in a boat,
And in the Ocean wide they let her float.

74

Marfisa all this while with gladsome cheare,
Unto her new known brothers tale attended,
And in her mind rejoyced much to heare,
That of so noble house she was descended,
From which Mongrana came, as doth appeare,
And that of Clarimount so much commended,
Which houses both long in great fame had flourished,
For divers noble persons they had nourished.

75

But when of Agramant she heard him say,
How both his grandsire, uncle, and some other,

Consented had their father to betray,
And in so cruell sort to use their mother,
She could not suffer any longer stay,
But breaking of his tale, said, noble brother,
(With your good favour) you have too much wrong
To leave your father unrevengd so long.

76

If not in Almont nor Trajanos blood,
You can avenge this ill sith they be gone,
Yet ought you to avenge it on their brood;
Live you, and let you Agramant alone?
This blot except it quickly be withstood,
Will shame you ever, if it once be known,
That he that did this wrong not onely liveth,
But that to you he entertainment giveth.

77

But for my part (said she) by Christ I vow,
(Whom as my father did, so serve I will)
That I will not leave armes, till I know how
To venge my fathers and my mothers ill;
And much I shall lament, and do evn now,

If in that Pagan camp you tarry still,
Or ever should be seene therein hereafter,
Except it were to work their harm and slaughter.

78

Oh how did Bradamant at this rejoyce,
Advising him to follow that direction,
And to give eare unto his sisters voice,
To leave so vile a place and base subjection,
And cleave to Charles as to the better choice,
Who gladly would receive him in protection,
Of which (she said) one sure signe she did gather,
She heard him often so extoll his father.

79

Rogero answers thus with great regard,
(My deare) to have done this at first I ought,
But then indeed the troth I had not heard,
Whereby I might my duty have been taught:
Now sith that Agramant hath me preferd,
If his destruction should by me be sought,
That am his servant and a daily waiter,
The world might justly deem I were a traiter.

80

But this my meaning was, and so it is,
To find some means I may (with honour) part,
Which when I have, then sure I will not misse,
To come and to requite your great desert;
And that (quoth he) I had performd ere this,
Save that a cause (of which I felt the smart)
Enforcd my stay, the wounds the Tartar gave me,
So as my friends had much to do to save me.

81

As she knowes well that help me at my need,
And evry day did sit by my beds side:
Thus much he said, but they that took good heed
To all he said, in earnest sort replid,
Howbeit at the last it was agreed,
That he so long with Agramant should bide,
Till he some honourable cause might find.
To leave his master and to change his mind.

82

Well (quoth Marfisa) if he needs will go,
Then let him go, but I will you assure,

That shortly I will use the matter so,
He shall not long with Agramant endure:
This said she unto Bradamant, but tho
She told not how she would the same procure:
Thus for that time Rogero brake this parlie,
And turnd his horse to turn againe to Arlie.

83

When lo they chanced a sudden crie to heare,
Proceeding from the next adjoyning vale,
The voice did seem (when they approached neare)
To be some damsels that for help did call:
But who it was hereafter you shall heare,
For now of force I must cut off my tale,
And pray you my abruptnesse to excuse,
For in the next you shall heare further newes.

ARGUMENT

THE THIRTYSEVENTH BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Rogero with his sister and his spouse,
Find Ullanie halfe stript and strangely used,
Straight each of them, but chiefe Marfisa vowes
To be avengd on him that her misused:
She heares the law that women none allowes;
She finds the man that hath the sex refused:
She plagues the tyrant, for his proud behaviour,
And makes another law in womens favour.

THIRTY SEVENTH BOOKE

1

If worthie Ladies would but take such paine,
In studies that immortall glorie raise,
As they do often take in matters vaine,
Deserving none at all, or little praise,
Which notwithstanding that they might obtain,
They have employed many nights and dayes;
To have thereby some trifling want supplied,
That niggard nature had to them denied.

2

And further, if they could with their owne pen,
Set forth the worthie praise of their owne kind,
And not to be beholding unto men,
Whom hate and envie often so doth blind,
To make us heare the good but now and then,
But evrie place full of their ill we find;
Then sure I judge, their praises would be such,
As hardly men should have attaind so much.

3

For many writers do not onely strive,
Too highly to extoll our sexes fame,
But that they thinke they must withall contrive,
To publish womens blemish and their blame;
As fearing haply, lest they might arrive,
By their most due desart, to greater name;
And so they might thereby obscure our praise,
As doth a cloud the Sunnes bright shining rayes.

4

But yet, for all such sparing pens do write,
Or lavish tongues can speake in their disgrace,
Enforcing evrie il report for spite,
That may their credit slander and deface,
We still shall find their glorie shining bright,
We still shall see, it keepes a worthie place,
Though wanting of that height the greater part,
To which it should attaine to by desart.

5

Harpalice and Thomeris beside,
With those that Turnus did and Hector ayd,

Besides that dame that in an Oxes hide,
The first foundation of faire Carthage layd,
Zenobia eke, and she that quayld the pride
Of Assur, and both Inde and Persia frayd:
I say there have bin many more then these,
That have bin famous both by land and seas.

6

Nor only Rome and Greece have bred such store,
Of faithfull matrons, chast, and stout, and wise,
But all the world beside, some lesse, some more,
From whence it sets, to where the Sun doth rise:
Though now their names obscured are so sore,
That few or none are laid before our eys:
And all because that they in those dayes wrate,
Were envious, and false, and full of hate.

7

Yet cease not Ladies, ye that vertue love,
To follow that your course, and so good way,
And let not feare your minds from it remove,
That your great fame hereafter may decay;
For true it is, as we do daylie prove,

No good nor ill can still stand at a stay;
Though writers in time past were not your friends,
The present time shall make you large amends.

8

The worthie writers of this present time,
Have set your worthy praises so to vew,
Some in grave prose, and some in learned rime,
As none shall need this want hereafter rew:
And though they were infected with this crime,
Yet in this age, so learnd are some of you,
So well acquainted with the noble muses,
You could your selves remedie such abuses.

9

And if I should recite the names of those,
That by the writers of our times are praisd,
Or that themselves have wrote in verse or prose,
And have their owne and others glory raisd,
As I might please some few, so I suppose,
I might be blamd of others and dispraisd,
Or in omitting some, to do them wrong,
Or reckning all, too tedious wax and long.

10

Shall I then all omit? that were not well,
Sith that to please them all I do desire:
Then will I chuse some one, that doth excell
The rest so fane, as none may dare envie her;
Whose name doth in such height of honor dwell,
As hard it is, for any to come nye her,
Whose learned pen such priviledge can give,
As it can make evn those are dead to live.

11

For evn as Phebus shines on evrie star,
Yet on his sister casts his fairest light,
So eloquence and grace ay shining are,
Much more on her, then any other wight,
And maketh her to passe the rest as farre,
As Phebe doth the other starrs in night,
Her light so splendent is, and so divine,
As makes another Sunne on earth to shine.

12

Vittoria is her name, a most fit name,
For one in triumphs borne, in triumphs bred,

That passeth Artimesia in the fame
Of doing honor to her husband ded;
For though she did erect a wondrous frame,
For her Mausolio, with a Pyramed,
Yet which is more, to lay the dead in grave,
Or else from death, with learned pen to save.

13

If Laodamie, and if Brutus wife,
Argia, Arria, and Evadne chast,
Be to be praised, as they are so rife,
Because when as their husbands dayes were past,
They willingly forsooke this mortall life:
Then in what height must she of right be plast?
That such a gift unto her spouse doth give,
That being dead she still doth make him live.

14

And if the great Macedon envie bare
Unto Achilles, for Meonian Lyre,
Much more to noble Francis of Pescare,
He would have borne, whose praise is sounded hyre;
By such a wife, so vertuous, chast, and rare

As evn thy soule it selfe could not desire
A louder trumpe thy praises out to sound,
Sith hardly can a match to this be found.

15

But to conclude both these and others prayse,
That I may follow on my present storie,
I say that both in these and former dayes,
Faire dames have merited great fame and glorie;
Which though by writers envie much decayes,
Yet need you not therefore now to be sorie,
Because amongst us all it is intended,
That this foule fault hereafter shall be mended.

16

Now of Marfisa and of Bradamant,
I meane to tell, that still were so victorious,
As both my voice too faint, and skill too scant
Would be, to count their famous deeds and glorious;
Yet shall good will so farre supply my want,
As I will reckon those were most notorious,
And were my might agreeing to my mind,
I would deserve as well of all their kind.

17

If you remember, I declared erst,
How good Rogero purposd to returne,
And how he heard the sound I then reherst,
Of some that seemed wofully to mourne;
Which wayling so his mind with pittie pierst,
As he a while his journey did adjourne,
Both that to know the parties he desired,
And ment to succour them, if cause required.

18

With him those dames the noble cosins went,
And when they nearer came unto the place,
They saw three damsels wofully lament,
Appareld strangely and in sorie case,
Their clothing all had bene clipt off and rent,
Up to their navels, to their foule disgrace,
They sitting on the grand and durst not rise,
To hide their secret parts from strangers eyes.

19

As Vulcans sonne (by Pallas pointment nurst)
Whom (without mother) got of earth he had,

(For whom Aglaur was plagud, because she durst
Looke on him when the Goddesse had forbad)
Sat in a coach (by him devised furst)
To hide his leggs, that were deformd and bad:
So sat the wofull maids their secrets hiding,
Scarse from the ground to lift their looks abiding.

20

The foule prospect, did with great wrath inflame
The worthie dames when they did plaine it vew,
And in the maids behalfts, they blusht for shame,
As do in Pestus gardens roses new:
But Bradamant, when as more neare she came,
Was grieved more, for one of them she knew,
Whose name was Ullanie, that since a while,
Was unto France sent from the Island Ile.

21

She also knew both tother in effect,
For she had met them travling on that cost,
But yet her speech she chiefly did direct,
To Ullany, whom she regarded most;
And askt her what vile wight did so neglect

All law, and had all humane nature lost,
As that without remorse he could abide,
To leave that bare that nature seekes to hide?

22

Poore Ullanie, that both by speech and sight,
The worthie damsell Bradamant did know,
To be a Ladie, whom she saw last night,
To give three Princes such an overthrow;
When first a while she sobbed had and sight,
The manner and the matter plaine doth show,
How people neare that place, did ill intreat them,
And clippe their cloths, and also whip and beat them.

23

Fast by (said she) the Castle you may see,
Where they do keepe, that us so ill did use,
As for the shield of gold and Princes three,
That came to win if, she could tell no newes:
We only ment to trudge on foote (said she)
To make complaint of those did us abuse,
Unto the noble Christen Emprour Charles,
Who punish will I trust such lawlesse carles.

24

Brave Bradamant and stout Marfisa longs,
To go immediatly unto this place,
And be avengd on such enormous wrongs,
Done as they deeme, to all the sexe disgrace:
Roger o eke, that knows well what belongs,
Unto the law of Knighthood, in such case,
(To succour all that are by wrong opprest,
But chieflie women) goes without request.

25

With one consent, they all put off their bases,
Which servd the maidens very fit to hide
The secret parts, of those same privie places,
That modestie to show cannot abide.
Then Bradamant straightway behind her places
Faire Ullany, and makes her so to ride,
Marfisa and Roger o take the paine,
Behind themselves, to place the other twaine.

26

The dame of Dordan led them all the way,
The tother two do follow with great hast,

But Ullany showd where the Castle lay,
To which they many a hill and valley past.
But now so much was spent of that same day,
That they were quite benighted at the last,
At night to take a village they were glad,
Where they good meat, good drinke, good lodging had.

27

But when to looke about them they began,
They none could see but women in the place,
The women drest, brought all, and not a man,
In all the village that did show his face:
Among themselves, they on the matter scan,
And much they mused at so strange a case,
Among so many, fayre, foule, young, and old,
As there they saw, not one man to behold.

28

I thinke that Jason never marveld more,
Nor those his Argonauts, that with him came,
Then when they first arrivd at Lemnos shore,
Where they found none but women void of shame,
That had their sires, and brethren slaine before,

And did a common wealth of women frame:
Then did Rogero with the Ladies wonder,
To see no men, but women such a number.

29

Wherefore (when first they had in seemly sort,
Provided raiment for the damsels three,
If not so sumptuous, certes not so short,
But to conceale that which men should not see)
Then they desired some dweller there, report
To them, what might the cause and reason be,
Why in this towne there were allowed no men,
And in this sort the woman answered then.

30

This order at the which you seeme to wonder,
Was by a tyrant pointed for our paine,
A tyrant, whose subjection we are under,
Who by his proclamation doth ordaine,
From mothers sons, from husbands wives to sunder,
And in such hard exile we must remaine,
And suffer not by merit, but by force,
From our deare spouses, such a long divorce.

31

Thrise have the trees with winter bene deleaved,
Since we have bene into this place confind,
Of husbands, fathers, and of sonnes bereaved,
So sore the tyrant hateth all our kinde:
And if that any chance to be perceaved,
(As some perhaps there be, that are so kinde)
To come but once to looke upon his wife,
The man and woman both, shall loose their life.

32

The lawlesse wretch, that makes this cruell law,
Dwels two leagues hence, and is of such behaviour,
As from his purpose no man can him draw,
How much so ever he be in his favour;
He doth all women from his land withdraw,
As if he were infected with their favour,
He is so fierce, so sturdie, and so strong,
That none dare once protect, whom he will wrong.

33

And which is strange, he useth strangers worst,
If any happen to his house arrive,

(It seems he hath of womens bloud some thirst)
For though he let them part from thence alive,
Yet first with whipping, and with usage curst,
He doth their torment, and reproch contrive:
Wherefore if you your safeties do regard,
I wish you not to travell thitherward.

34

At this Marfisa and the Dordon dame,
Were much incenst, and did desire to know,
How he was cald, and whence his furie came,
That made him first to such a madnes grow:
The woman maketh answer thus, his name
Is Marganor, and if you please Ile show
The whole discourse: to this they all agreed,
And she then on her tale did thus proceed.

35

This Marganor, that makes full many weepe,
Was bloodie from his birth by disposition,
But yet a while he did dissemble deepe,
That of the same there was but some suspition;
His sonnes did make him it the closer keepe,

Because they were of contrary condition,
Both bounteous, frank, & courteous, of good qualitie,
Of strangers lovers and of hospitalitie.

36

Faire dames and Knights that hapt to passe this way,
Were still by them so frendly entertained,
That by such kind of courteous usage, thay
The love and praise of evrie one had gained;
Their honors also farther to display,
The sacred right of Knighthood they obtained;
Both stout, both strong, comly and of good stature,
Not wanting ornaments of art or nature.

37

Cylandro and Tanacro namd they are,
And long they livd with no dishonor stained,
And longer had, if they had bene so ware,
As not in Cupids snares to have bene trained;
This foolish passion foyld all their welfare,
The passion men call love, this them constrained,
To change the worthie course they had begonne,
And do that by the which they were undonne.

38

It happend that there thither came a Knight,
Belonging to this Emperour of Greece,
Who brought with him a Ladie faire, and bright,
Of good behaviour, and a lovely peece,
With whom Cylandro fell in love that night,
And fully bent of her to have a fleece,
He thought her beautie so possest his hart,
That he should surely dye, if she depart.

39

And, for he deemd it labour lost to pray,
To open force he doth himselfe dispose,
And secretly all armd, unto the way
Where tother needs must passe, afore he goes,
And seeing him he would no longer stay,
But trusting to his manhood, comes to bloes,
Not seeking vantage, but with lance to lance,
He minds to trie of fight the doubtfull chance.

40

Not thinking though but with his suer running,
To beat him downe, and beare away his wife,

But this same Knight, that in this art was cunning,
Did pierce his shield, and rest him of his life:
The newes hereof unto his father comming,
Fild all the court with plaints and sorrows rife;
At last, when long the time had bene deferred,
By his great ancestors they him interred.

41

Nor did this foule mishap and ill successe,
Make Marganor to minish ought his port,
Tanacro still did courtesie professe,
To strangers all, and usd them in good sort:
But loe, it chanct within a yeare and lesse,
A noble Baron thither did resort,
A comely man of personage to see,
With him a Ladie faire as faire might be.

42

And to her beautie her behaviour fitted,
Her looks are modest, manners sober are,
Her words are ware, and shew her sharply witted;
Likewise her Lord, himselfe most comely bare,
As fit to whom the charge should be committed,

Of one in shape and qualities so rare:
He hight Olindro, Lord of Longavilla,
The lovely Lady named was Drusilla.

43

No lesse Tanacro doted on this Dame,
Then had his brother done on that before,
But that foule end to which his brother came,
Made him more warie, though not honest more;
By former good report that bred him fame,
And all his passed praise, he sets no store:
Be fame, be vertue troden in the dust,
So he may but fulfill his present lust.

44

Thus caring onely to avoid the danger,
In which he saw before his brother dyde,
He secretly that night waylaid the stranger,
There as he knew next day he needs must ride,
Not meaning his owne person to endanger;
In fine, the Baron that to save his bride,
Did stoutly give and take full many a wound,
At last they left foule murderd on the ground.

45

Drusilla seing her deare Olindro ded,
In deadly sound unto the ground she sanke,
But thence in curteous sort the men her led,
Whom to have kild her, she would give more thanke:
But grieve in her such will to die had bred,
That wilfully she leapt downe from a banke,
To kill her selfe, but poore soule could not dy,
But all her head and face was brusd thereby.

46

Tanacro gets some surgeons and Phisicians,
To looke unto her health, and hurts to cure,
He causeth her to heare most rare musicions,
To cheare her heart, and solace to procure:
He makes great brags of her so chast conditions,
With mind by marriage to make her sure,
He thinks a woman of so vertuous life,
Must not be termd a lemman, but a wife.

47

To marrie her he inwardly intends,
This outwardly in shew he doth make knowne,

And evermore he highly her commends;
And though her griefe was by his doings growne,
He saith he will for this make large amends,
And that he will her love, and be her owne:
But still the more that on that point he grateth,
The more in heart she him detests and hateth.

48

But yet her hate did not so blind her wit,
But that to keepe it close she tooke good heed;
She knew full well she must dissemble it,
If she will be revengd of him indeed;
Wherefore untill the time may serve her fit,
She seemes unto his meaning halfe agreed,
And did in shew the same so smoothly carrie,
That lastly she consented him to marrie.

49

Sweet peace and love were written in her eyes,
Revenge and hate were in her heart engraved,
To kill him, in her thought she doth devise,
When with most kindnesse she her selfe behaved:
He needs must die, needs die in any wise,

But evn thus long to live of God she craved:
How can I better end my life (she seth)
Then in revenging my deare husbands deth?

50

Thus seeming to forget all former wrong,
She chearfully expects the wedding day,
As though that she did for this marriage long,
And so she did, although another way,
She shortens all that might the time prolong,
And paints her selfe, and tricks her trim and gay:
She onely cravd thus much for Christ his Passion,
She might be marryd of her country fashion.

51

Not that her speech herein indeed was trew,
That such the custome was as she pretended;
But she doth mind to forge a custome new,
With trust assuredly to be revenged
On him, that her beloved husband slew;
Revenge, revenge was all that she intended:
She prayth, she might observe her countrie guise,
Which in this sort, she doth to them devise.

52

The widdow that to marrie new intends,
According as our countrie law allows
Must first appease the ghost whom she offends,
I meane (saith she) that of her former spouse,
And make unto his spirit some amends,
By Dirges, trentals, masses, prayrs and vows,
In that same Church, whereas his bones be resting,
Then may she marrie new, without molesting.

53

But when of her new spouse she takes the ring,
The Priest in sight of all that stand about,
Of hallowd wine, a bottle then must bring,
And in the Challice he must powre it out;
Then over it he must both say and sing,
Effectual prayrs, and Psalmes, and hymnes devout,
Then must the woman take it of the Vicker,
And drinke unto her spouse the blessed licker.

54

Tanacro liketh well of this her motion,
Respecting little how much it imported,

To let her marrie with so strange devotion,
He onely wisht to have the season shorted;
And not mistrusting that same hallowd potion,
To cut of all delays he her exhorted,
Each makes like hast, though sundry in construction,
He to her wedding, she to his destruction.

55

Among her women servants that were theare,
Drusilla had one old ilfavord trot,
She calleth her, and bad her in her eare,
That some strong sodaine poyson may be got,
You know (said she) to get it, how and wheare,
Convay it safe into some pretie pot,
For I (quoth she) have found the way and skill,
The wicked sonne of Marganor to kill.

56

And doubt not, I know how to save us both,
As I will let thee know at better leasure,
The woman doth the feat though seeming loth,
Save onely, that it was her mistres pleasure:
Then for a cup of Candie wine she goth,

And mingles this and that in so due measure,
As made it with but little alteration,
Not sowre in tast, yet sure in operation.

57

Now came Drusilla on the wedding day,
With gorgeous gowns and costly jewels dect,
There where Olindros corps intombed lay,
Raisd high on collumns as she did direct;
The Priest began the solemne Masse to say,
To which came great resort, without suspect,
And Marganor himselfe now most contenting,
Came with his son and frends the place frequenting.

58

When all the solemne rites to end were brought,
Then in a cup of massie gold and fine,
The Priest powrd out, as she before had taught,
The cursed poyson, with the blessed wine;
She soberly drinks a convenient draught,
Inough to do the feat she did designe,
Then to Tanacro with a lovely cheare,
She gave it, who supt up the chalice cleare.

59

And rendring then the chalice to the Frire,
He thought in open arms her to embrace,
But then she sodainly began retire,
Then her sweet looks, and words so full of grace,
Were gone, her eyes did seeme to flame like fire,
Then wrath and spite were written in her face,
She cries with grisly looke, and voice unpleasant,
Avaunt, and touch not me thou traitor peasant.

60

Thoughtst thou of me solace to have and sport,
And bring me cause of torment, teares, and woe,
No, now I trow that I have cut thee short,
That drinke was poyson, if you do not know:
But ah this death is of too gentle sort,
And I too noble hangman am I trow,
A hangman ought with halter stop thy breath,
This was for thee, too honorable death.

61

My onely sorrow is that ere I dyde,
My sacrifice was not in full perfection,

And that thy wicked sire and more beside,
Did not with thee, tast of that strong confection:
But pardon me (my deare dead spouse) she cride,
If I have fayld for fault of good direction,
If I perhaps have not done all I should do,
Yet sure I have performed all I could do.

62

And looke what I do want in all or part,
In working him torture condigne, and shame,
I hope the world to come, with greater smart,
Will pay it him, and I shall see the same.
Thus much she said, and then with chearfull hart,
Still calling on her former spouses name,
Take here in worth (said she) this sacrifice,
That thy poore wife did for thy sake devise.

63

And of our Lord for me a place obtaine,
In Paradise, with thy most blessed spirit,
And if he say that none must there remaine,
But they that by good works the same inherit;
Tell him I have a cruell tyrant slaine,

Of tyrants death I bring with me the merit;
To kill a tyrant, what can be more glorious,
Or in the sight of God more meritorious?

64

Thus much she said, and fell dead therewithall,
And being dead, she kept a chearfull looke,
And sure to her the comfort was not small,
That for her spouse so sharpe revenge she tooke.
I know not if Tanacro in his fall,
Did follow her, or else her overtooke,
He overtooke her sure, as may be thought,
That dranke the bottome, and the greater draught.

65

Fell Marganor that heard his sonnes last grone,
And seeing him lie dead past all reliefe,
Made at the first so great and grievous mone,
As though he would have dide of very grieffe:
Two sons he had of late, now hath he none,
Two women had hereof bin causes chiefe,
One movd the first to hazard life, the tother
With her owne hands gave poison to his brother.

66

Love, pitie, griefe, disdain, and hate, and wrath,
Desire of death and of revenge together,
The dolefull parent so enraged hath,
Like to the roaring seas in fowlest wether:
Faine to Drusilla he would do some scath,
But she was dead before, yet goes he thether,
As blinded hate did him still forward pricke,
He seeks to harme the corse that was not quicke.

67

Evn as a snake whom speare to ground doth naile,
Doth bite the steele and wood that sense hath none,
Or as a dog that doth a man assaile,
If one do fling at him a sticke or stone,
Doth runne and bite the same without availe,
Till he that hurled it is past and gone:
So Marganor more fierce then dog or snake,
Seeks on the senslesse corse revenge to take.

68

And when that harrying it, and all to tearing,
Could not in any part his wrath asswage,

Evn in the Church on us, no such thing fearing,
He drawes his sword, and in his senselesse rage
Doth hew and mangle women, none forbearing,
For dignity, for beautie, nor for age;
While we cride out, and at his furie wondred,
He thirtie kild, and hurt and maimd an hundred.

69

So sorely of his people he is dreaded,
That no man dare against his acts oppose him,
Unto his will he is so firmly wedded,
That for the time starke mad ye would suppose him;
Who would reforme him, hangd shall be & headed,
For guerdon of his paine, when once he knows him:
His servants do, as doth the proverbe say,
When furie runs, let furie have her sway.

70

But when at last himselfe was almost tired
With killing us, though voyd of all remorse,
Then by his friends request he was desired,
And as it were constraind by honest force;
And to his castle he himselfe retired,

Appointing there this law of our divorce,
And clemencie forsooth he doth it call,
In that he did forbear to kill us all.

71

Thus whether they obeyd or else repined,
Men are from wives, babes fro their dames devided,
And hither all the women be confined;
This towne of purpose is for us provided,
Where if that any man to love inclined,
And by a good and kind affection guided,
Come but to see his wife, and thereby show it,
Wo be to him if Marganor may know it.

72

And worse then this, he hath ordaind an order,
Such one I thinke was never heard before,
All women that are tane within his border,
Must first be whipt with rods till they be sore,
And then he doth their vestiments disorder,
By clipping them behind and eke before;
And so away he sendeth them halfe stripped,
When first they have bin beaten well and whipped.

73

And if that any hope to have assistance,
Or bring some Knights them to defend and save,
Forthwith he killeth them and their assistants,
As sacrifices on his childrens grave:
So as no hope there is to make resistance,
For evermore he if he list can have
At his commaund, of men a mighty powre,
By name one thousand evn within an houre.

74

And further all men in his realme he takes,
By either faire perswasions or by feare,
Upon the Sacrament to sweare he makes,
That ay they shall to women hatred beare.
Now for your owne and these faire Ladies sakes,
Judge you if you have reason to forbear,
Unto his castle nearer to approch,
Except you will be shamd with foule reproch.

75

This tale so much did move the warriers three,
With pitie first, and then with high disdaine,

That save it was so darke they could not see,
They would have gone evn then him to have slain:
Now for that night they rest, but they decree,
So soone as Phebus should returne againe,
To arme themselves, and boldly to aduenter,
Upon the tyrants hold by force to enter.

76

Now as they were about their horse to take,
They saw before them at the mountaines root,
Some twentie men, that no great hast did make,
But some on horseback were, and some on foote,
All armd, these three them soone did overtake,
Before they full had rode an arrow shoot,
And then they saw how they did beare by force,
An aged beldam on a sumpter horse.

77

This was forsooth Drusillas chamber mayd,
That to her mistris that same poison gave,
And being then mistrustfull and afrayd,
What strange effect it fortune might to have,
Upon the wedding day from Church she staid,

And so by secret flight her selfe did save,
And kept her selfe three yeares from law and triall,
Till Marganor had found her by espiall.

78

What cannot gaine and hope of money worke?
First by his coyne he learned where she lay,
Then with his coyne he set these men a worke,
Who in this sort did fetch her thence away,
And of a Lord (in whose land she did lurke,
With promise that she safely there should stay)
With coyne of that same Baron her he bought;
Ah noble men, can nobles make you nought?

79

Looke how the great and stately streame of Poe,
The nearer he unto the sea descends,
When Lambra, Tycin, Adda, with some mo,
Fall into him, and their due tribute sends,
The broader and the deeper still doth grow:
Evn so the more that Marganor offends,
The greater will in these three champions breeds,
To be avenged on so vile misdeeds.

80

Yet first to free this woman they intend,
Who else (at least) should have bin hangd in chaines,
Straight on those lowts all three their forces bend,
They couch their speares and slacke their horses rains:
An host of men could scarce such force defend;
Much lesse a sort of dastard hireling swaines:
Wherefore they cast away their warlike tooles,
Their cariage left, and went away like fooles.

81

Evn as a greedie wolfe that runneth loden
With his desired pray unto his den,
That finds unwares the way to him forboden,
By hunting dogs, or by the hunting men,
Hurles downe his pray, and by the paths untroden
Doth flie for life; so did these cullions then,
Not onely that their prisoner enlarge,
But leave their horses and their other charge.

82

Some, others force, some, their owne feare unhorses,
By meanes whereof they did at ease provide,

For those three damsels good convenient horses,
That yesterday behind them three did ride:
Also Rogero that old trot inforces,
(Though she in vaine refused and denide)
To go with them, lamenting sore and wailing,
But all her lamentation nought availing.

83

Now were they come unto the towne at length,
About the which there was no ditch nor wall,
Yet were the houses built in bredth and length
Both orderly and very strong withall:
A castle in the midst of mightie strength,
Stood on a rocke that overlookt them all:
To this they march with great desire and longing,
Because it was to Marganor belonging.

84

Within this towne no sooner set they feet,
But that the guard that kept the watch, began
Behind them step, and chained fast the street:
Some others, with the greatest hast they can,
Cald Marganor, that straight came them to meet,

With guard of many a tall and sturdie man,
Who with a speech but short yet full of pride,
The leud law of his Citie signifide.

85

Marfisa who before hand had agreed,
Upon the matter with the other two,
Sets spurs to horse, and galloping in steed
Of making answer, makes no more ado,
But being of her person strong indeed,
Employing neither launce nor sword thereto,
With bended fist she gives him such a boxe,
As stonid him, and would have feld an oxe.

86

Nor doth Rogero, nor the dame of France,
Grant to the others any time of ease,
But chiefe the damsell that with Goldelance,
Doth throw to ground as many as she please;
No man there was that durst himselfe advance,
To stand unto the shocke with one of these;
Rogero seven, she threw downe seven times seaven,
Evn as if thunder had falne downe from heaven.

87

The hurtlesse people to their houses fled,
The hartlesse souldiers followd them as fast,
None stayd behind but those were maimd or dead,
And Marganor alone was left at last,
And by Marfisa now is captive led,
Who (with his armes behind him piniond fast)
Gave him Drusillas maid to be tormented,
And would have burnd the town, had they consented.

88

But all consent the law to abrogate,
The people easily were wonne thereto,
And to accept one of another rate,
Which there was ratifide, with small ado
His law and him they did detest and hate,
Yet as him list they were content to do,
As still we see the foolish common use,
Obey him best that doth them most abuse.

89

And why, they dare not one another trust,
Nor tell to one another their complaints,

They let him kill and banish whom he lust;
Ones goods he takes, anothers house he taints,
The silent soule yet cries for vengeance just
Unto the mighty God and to his Saints,
Who though they seeme in punishing but slow,
Yet pay they home at last, with heave and how.

90

So now these silly soules inflamd with ire,
With speech and deeds do make their stomacks knowne,
And (as the proverbe saith) each man beares fire,
To burne the tree the wind hath overthrowne.
Ye Princes that to tyrannize desire,
Marke this mans end, and make his case your owne,
Beleeve it well, that God doth ever send
Unto a wicked life a wretched end.

91

Out came the yong and old, the great and small,
In words and workes to do him great disgrace:
He that so terrible was erst to all,
Is now despise of all (a wondrous case)
Yea those three warriers had ado not small,

To keepe him now from killing in the place,
Not that they card to have his life preserved,
But unto greater paines they him reserved.

92

They gave him bound unto that woman aged,
That erst upon Drusilla did attend,
And to those three, whose minds were yet intraged,
Whom whipt and stript he lately thence did send;
These with sharp goads and knives his body gaged,
And to torment him, all their wits did bend,
Now some cast stones, and some with needles pricke him;
Some scratch, some bite, with feet some spurn & kick him.

93

Evn as a brooke new swolne with rage of raine,
Or with a sodaine thaw of melting snow,
Oft bears down rocks and trees with force so maine,
As heards doth drowne and houses overthrow,
A drouth doth come, and then that brooke againe
Abates his pride, and is at last so low,
A woman, yea a child with small adoe,
May passe the same, and never wet their shoe.

94

So Marganor that erst in pompe and pride,
Made hearts of men to quake when he was named,
To lowest ebb now turned sees his tyde,
His combe now cut, his furie now is tamed;
Now kennelrakers scorne him, and deride,
To looke men in the face he is ashamed,
Small children, yea the babes, be not affeard,
To pull away his haire from head and beard.

95

The while Rogero with those champions twaine,
The castle summond that did gladly yeeld,
Here Ullanie recovered againe,
Which lately she had lost, her golden shield:
Here met they those three kings, which to their pain,
Dame Bradamant had twise ovrthrowne in field,
At the same castle, where before I told
She wan their lodging, and made them lie cold.

96

Since which, on foote unarmd they vowd to go,
Which want faire Ullanie from death did save,

For all that went with armd men garded so,
Were sacrificed on Tanacros grave;
Yet better of the twaine it was to show,
The parts that modestie conceald would have,
For why both this and evry other shame,
Is halfe excusd, if force procure the same.

97

Marfisa straight a Parliament did call
Of all the towne, and made them take an oth,
Of high and low, rich, poore, and great and small,
Although they were content, or else were loth,
That to their wives they should be subject all;
That in their houses and the Citie both,
The women should have rule, such powre, such graces,
As men are wont to have in other places.

98

She further made this notable decree,
That lodging, meate and drinke should be forbode
To travellers, of whatsoere degree,
Admit they go on foote, or that they rode,
(Within that towne) except they first agree

To sweare by some great Saint, or else by God,
That they should evermore be womens friends,
And foe unto their foes to their lives ends.

99

And whatsoever stranger there arrives,
Must further sweare, before they go their way,
If, or they have, or meane to marry wives,
That evermore they shall their wils obey:
This must they keepe on perill of their lives,
For why she vowes to come ere twelve months day,
And if she find her law broke in that Citie,
To sacke and burne the same without all pitie.

100

This done, the warriers three did hasten hence,
But yet their going they so long deferred,
Untill Drusillas corse was tane from thence,
Where (as it seemd) it was but homely berred,
And order tane, with cost and good expence,
Her spouse and she might nobly be interred,
With Epitaphs, by which was signified,
In how great honour they both livd and died.

101

Marfisa made her law in marble faire,
Upon a pillar to be written downe,
And then Rogero with the warlike paire
Of damsels, took their leaves of all the towne:
But Ullanie her garments doth repaire,
And stayes to make some new and costly gowne,
She thinks to come to Court were great dishoner,
Except she had some sumptuous clothing on her.

102

Therefore she staid behind, and in her powre
Was Marganor, by those same warriers given,
Who had new torments taught him evry howre,
And was at last by his sharpe judges driven,
To leape downe headlong from a mighty towre,
Where all his bones and flesh were broke and riven:
Of him nor these I have no more to say,
But of those three that went the tother way.

103

The rest of that same day together riding,
And halfe the next in company they spent,

Untill they found a way in twaine dividing,
One to the campe, tother to Arlie went;
Here oft they take their leaves, yet still abiding,
For ever parting makes friends ill content:
In fine the Knight the way to Arlie tooke,
They to the campe, and thus I end this booke.

ARGUMENT

THE THIRTYEIGHT BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Marfisa doth present her selfe before
King Charles, and in his presence is baptized:
Astolfo doth Senapos sight restore,
By whom such hardie feats are enterprised,
That Agramant therewith molested sore,
Is by Sobrino finally advised,
To make a challenge on Rogeros hed,
To end the troubles that the warre had bred.

THIRTY EIGHTH BOOKE

1

Faire Ladies, you with gracious eare that heare
My present storie, now me seemes I see,
By this unwonted changing of your cheare,
That with Rogero you offended be,
For thus againe departing from his deare,
And that you take the same as ill as she,
As though you thought, and durst affirme it boldly,
That fire of love in him did burne but coldly.

2

And sure had he bin moved hereunto,
By any other cause, then that I told,
No though thereby he had attained to
Rich Crassus wealth, or richer Gresus gold,
Yet would I thinke (as now it seemes ye do)
Loves darts in him had tane but shallow hold:
For so sweet joy, as this was to be thought,
With gold nor silver never could be bought.

3

But when ones honour shall thereon depend,
Then should it merit not excuse but praise,
And chiefe when one so truly may pretend,
He cannot save his honor otherwayes:
And that same woman that her selfe should bend,
To stop the same by prayre, or by delayes,
Should give just cause to evrie one to guesse,
Her love were little, or her wit were lesse.

4

For if a woman should of him she loves,
Esteeme the life and safetie as her owne,
(I speake of such, whose choice no change removes,
And whose affections are not rashly growne)
Then sure much more in reason it behoves,
That of his honour should more care be showne;
By how much more, it should in due account,
Both pleasures all, and life it selfe surmount.

5

In following of his Lord so faithfully,
Roger did but evn as he was bound,

And if he should have left him then, thinke I,
He should have done it but on slender ground:
What though Almonte made his father die?
On Agramant that fault could not redound,
Who had for all his ancestors offences,
Givn to Rogero many recompences.

6

He did but well in going to his Lord,
And she as well (it cannot be denied)
In that she thereto granted her accord,
Which she might hap have stopt, had she replied,
That from the same her liking had abhord;
What now she wants, henceforth may be supplied,
But if that honor have one minutes staine,
An hundred yeares scant can it cleanse againe.

7

Now while Rogero unto Arly went,
As duty bound him to Trajanos haire,
Unto the Christen campe incontinent,
Rogeros spouse and sister (noble paire)
As loving friends and cosins now they went,

And unto Charles his tent they did repaire;
Who minds by siege, or battels doubtfull chance,
To drive these tedious troubles out of France.

8

When in the campe it was made knowne and bruted,
That Bradamant was come, her noblest brothers
Came forth to her, and kindly her saluted,
With Guidon, though they came of sundry mothers;
And she, as for her sexe and calling suted,
Did resalute both them, and divers others,
By kissing some, and speaking to the best,
And making frendly gestures to the rest.

9

But when Marfisas name was heard and knowne,
Whose noble acts evn from Catay to Spaine,
And over all the world beside were blowne,
To looke on her all were so glad and faine,
With presse and thrust not few were overthrowne;
And scarce a man could in the tents remaine,
But heaving, shoving, hitherward and thither,
To see so brave a paire as these together.

10

Now when to Charles his presence come they be,
Upon her knee Marfisa did decline,
And (as Turpinon writes) no man did see
Her knee to touch the ground before that time,
To none of any calling, or degree,
Not unto Christen Prince or Sarazine:
She onely doth esteeme King Pepins sonne,
As worthie whom such honor should be donne.

11

But Charles arose, and met her halfe the way,
And in kinde stately sort did her embrace,
And set her by his side that present day,
Above the Princes all, and gave her place.
Then voided was the roome that none might stay,
But Lords and Knights well worthie so great grace,
Excluding all the sawcie baser sort,
And then Marfisa spake in such like sort.

12

Most mighty Caesar, high renownd and glorious,
That from our Indies, to Tyrinthian shore,

From Scythia, frozen still with breath of Boreas,
To AEthiopia scorching evermore,
Makst thy white crosse, so famous and victorious,
By value much, but by thy justice more;
Thy praise (O Prince) and thy renowned name,
Were cause from countries farre I hither came.

13

And to say troth, flat envie movd me chiefe,
Because thy powre to reach so farre I saw,
I must confesse I tooke disdain and grieffe,
That any Prince that favord not our law,
And was to us of contrarie believe,
Should grow so great, to keepe us all in aw;
Wherefore I came with mind to have destroid thee,
Or by all meanes I could, to have annoyd thee.

14

For this I came, for this I stayd in France,
To seeke your ruine and your overthrow,
When lo a chance (if such a thing can chance)
Made me a frend and subject of a fo,
I will not stay to tell each circumstance,

But this in substance, it did make me know,
That I, your bloodie enimie Marfisa,
Was daughter to Rogero late of Rysa.

15

He by my wicked uncles was betraid,
And left my wofull mother big with child,
Who neare to Syrte downe her bellie laid,
As strangely savd, as wrongfully exild;
She brought a twin, a man child and a maid,
We fosterd were, seven yeares in forrest wild,
By one that had in Magicke art great skill,
But I was stolne from him against his will.

16

For some Arabians sold me for a slave,
Unto a Persian King, whom (growne in yeares)
Because he my virginity would have,
I killed him and all his Lords and Peeres
And then such hap, God and good fortune gave,
I gat his crowne and armes, as yet appeares;
And ere I fully was twise ten yeare old,
Seven crownes I gat beside, which yet I hold.

17

And being envious of your endlesse fame,
(As erst I told) I came with firme intent,
By all the meanes I could, to quaile the same,
And haply might have done the hurt I ment;
But now a better minde, that minde doth tame,
Now of my malice I do much repent,
Since by good hap, I lately understood,
That I was neare allide to you in blood.

18

And sith I know my father was your man,
I meane no lesse then he did, you to serve,
As for the hate and envie I began,
To beare you I now do the same reserve,
For Agramant, and all the harme I can,
To all his kin, that do the same deserve,
Because I now do know, and am assured,
His ancestors my parents death procured.

19

This said Marfisa, and withall did adde,
That she would be baptized out of hand,

And when that Agramant she vanquisht had,
Returne (if Charles so pleasd) to her owne land,
And Christen them, and farther would be glad,
Against all those that would Christs law withstand,
Ay to beare armes, with vow that all her gaine
To Charles and holy Church should ay remaine.

20

The noble Charles of tongue as eloquent,
As wise in head, as valorous in heart,
Did much extoll the Ladie excellent,
And all her kin and sire by just desart:
And of her former speech incontinent,
Most graciouslie he answerd evrie part,
Concluding that he would for ever after,
Accept her as his cousin, and his daughter.

21

And her againe he did embrace of new:
And kist her forehead as his child indeed:
It long would be to tell how brave a crew,
From Clarimount, and Mongrane did proceed,
To welcome her, or when Renaldo knew

Marfisas name, what joy in him did breed,
He calls to mind what force in her he found,
Then when Albracca he besieged round.

22

It long would be to tell of Guidons joy,
With Griffin, Aquilant and Sansonet,
That scapt with her their land, that do destroy,
Those men that in their Realme they hap to get:
No lesse did Malagige and Vivian joy,
Remembring how she joynd with Richardet,
To rescue them, as long before I told,
When unto Bertolage they had bene sold.

23

Now was prepard against thensuing day,
A place, as was by Charles himselfe devised,
Set stately forth, and hangd with rich aray,
Where this most worthy dame should be baptised,
Then Bishops were employd by whom she may
Be taught the Christen faith and Catechised,
And all that day a learned Clarke and Preacher,
The principles of Christen faith did teach her.

24

Then Turpin Archbishop of chiefe account,
In his robes pontificiall doth baptise her,
Charles with great revrence standeth by the fount,
And what to answer, he did still advise her.
But now tis time that to the Moone I mount,
For that receipt must make Orlando wiser,
From whence the Duke, descending by strange byas,
Came with S. John in charret of Elyas.

25

And by his guide he backe againe was led,
And keeps still in his hand that pot or Jarre,
That should againe make wise the mased hed,
Of that same Palladin well seene in warre.
Likewise the Saint unto Astolfo sed,
As soone as they allighted from the carre,
That with an herbe (of which there grew great store)
He should againe Senapos sight restore.

26

For which, and for his former great desart,
He should have men tassault Biserta land,

He teacheth him those people unexpert,
He should so traine, to make them to his hand:
He further learned him the way and art,
How he might safely passe thunstable sand;
And plainly thus S. John, from point to point,
What thEnglish Duke should do, did him appoint.

27

Then did Astolfo take his winged steed,
And of the Saint devoutly tooke his leave,
And soaring downe, he makes no little speed,
To do that which in charge he did receive;
So farre by Nylus bankes he doth proceed,
Untill that Nubia he did plaine perceave;
And following the course of that same streame,
Came to Senapo, head of that same Reame.

28

Great was the pleasure, triumph, and the joy,
Senapo tooke when he thereof had woord,
Remembring well the trouble and annoy,
The foule Harpias brought him at his boord:
But when he made him eke his sight enjoy,

And did so rare a grace to him affoord,
That by his meanes his eye sight was restord him,
He worshipt him and like a God adord him.

29

Nor onely did he give him souldiers then,
Wherewith he might Biserta towne invade,
But for each one he askt he gave him ten,
That soone two hundredthousand men he made:
Scarse had the fields roome for so many men,
But footmen all: so is that countryes trade,
For horses in that Region are but dentie,
But Elephants and Camells they have plentie.

30

Now that same day that went before the day,
In which the men of Nubia made account,
To march on forward, some part of their way,
Astolfo on his Griffith horse doth mount;
And Southward he doth passe, and doth not stay,
Untill he came neare to a mighty mount:
At foote whereof a vast cave he doth finde,
Which was the lodging of the Sotherne winde.

31

The mighty cave had but a narrow mouth,
At which the Duke (as Christs Apostle taught)
Did watch so long, untill the wind of South,
Came home to ease his spirits overwrought,
To enter in Astolfo him allowth,
But when anone, to have come out he thought,
Within a leather sacke the Duke had plast
At that caves mouth, he caught and tyde him fast.

32

The Palladin, full proud of such a pray,
Returnes to Nubia ward, before twas night,
And to the Negros then he showd the way,
Appointing them how they should travell right;
He victualls doth and cariages convay,
All safe unto that hill, that Atlas hight;
Quite ore those fields where many have bene found,
With wind for want of water, more then drownd.

33

And being come unto the mountaines side,
There, where he might discover all the plaine,

He doth his bands and companies deuide,
And chuseth those that are most apt to traine,
And those he parts and putteth them aside,
And orders for the rest he doth ordaine,
Then he in sight of all the hill ascendeth,
And lookt like one that some great feat intendeth.

34

And kneeling downe (as one that did beleeve,
His prayre should granted be, as well as hard)
He prayd his master their great want releeve:
Then casting stones that were before prepard,
(What cannot firme beleeefe in Christ atcheeve?)
The very stones (a thing to credit hard)
Did grow, and live, and move by hidden cause,
And had both bellyes, legges, and necke, and jawes.

35

And naying lowd, fild all the place with sound,
Of horse, some bay, some roane, some duple gray,
And of all them were readie horses found,
The spurre, the wand, the leg and voyce tobay;
To stop, to start, to passe carier, to bound,

To gallop straight, or round, or any way:
Thus were the men well horst, with little paines,
For evrie horse had saddle, bit and raines.

36

Thus by this vertuous Duke, within one houre,
Were fourescore thousand footmen, horsemen made,
With which so great and unexpected powre,
Full fiercely he all Affrike did invade,
And burnt and spoild full many a towne and towre,
All giving way to his victorious blade,
Untill three Princes, Agramants vicegerents,
Made head against the Duke, with their adherents.

37

The King of Aldyzer, and he of Ferse,
With stout Bransardo, all three mighty Kings,
That find their enemies to grow so fierce,
Do send their Lord by sea, word of these things.
A little fricket straight the waves doth pierce,
And of these evill newes quicke notice brings
To Agramant that lay that time in Arlie,
Besieged by an army strong and warlie.

38

Who hearing of his countries wofull case,
And by his absence what did them betide,
He cald his Lords and Princes to the place,
Consulting how for this harme to provide;
And looking once or twice with stately grace,
Now on the tone, then on the tother side,
But on Marsilio and Sobrino chiefe,
In such like words he told to them his grieffe.

39

Although I wot it worst beseemes of all,
A Generall to say, I had not thought,
Yet so say I, for when a harme doth fall,
Beyond the reach of humane sence or thought,
Then sure the blame is either none or small,
And in this compasse may my fault be brought:
My fault it was, Affricke to leave unarmed,
If of the Nubians now they could be harmed.

40

But who could thinke (but God that understands
The things to come as well as those are past)

So great an host could passe so many lands,
That were from us so great a distance past,
Twixt whom and us lies those unstable sands,
That dangerously are movd with Southerne blast;
Yet are they come, and have so farre prevailed,
Biserta selfe is now by them assailed.

41

Now on this point your counsels here I crave,
If so I shall all fruitlesse hence retire,
Or trie before I go, if I can have
The crowne of France, to which I do aspire,
Or how I may at home my country save,
And this destroy, which is my most desire;
If any know the meane, then speake he to it,
To thend that we may know the best, and do it.

42

Thus much the sonne of great Trajano spake,
And on Marsilio fixt his eyes, that he
As chiefe in place, thereby might notice take,
That first by him he would advised be:
Who when he had stood up for revrence sake,

And bowd his body, and withall his knee,
Downe sate him in his honorable seate,
And spake such words as I shall here repeate:

43

What ever fame doth bring, of good or ill,
To make it greater it doth ever use,
Wherefore (my soveraigne Lord) I never will
Be bold or basht with hearing flying newes,
But move such doubt and such assurance still,
As though I would not all reports refuse,
Yet would I thinke the truth of other sort,
Then as so many mouthes shall make report.

44

And I beleeeve each tale so much the lesse,
By how much more from likelihood it doth arre:
Now in this present cause let any guesse,
If like it be, a King that dwels so farre,
Could come with such an host, as they expresse,
To Affrica, so often usd to warre,
And passe those parlous sands, where to his cost,
Cambises erst did leese his mighty host.

45

But they be Nubians, let it be allowd,
By miracle come in a showre of raine,
Or closely carrid thither in some clowd,
Sith by the way none saw so large a traine:
Hath Affricke ever to such people bowd,
Must they have aide to drive them home againe?
I sure may think you kept a sorie garison,
If them and yours betweene there be comparison.

46

I rather thinke thArabians are come downe,
From those their hils, and done some spoile or wast,
And tane some men, and burnt some baggage towne,
But small resistance finding as they past,
And that Bransardo for his owne renowne,
Whom as your deputie you there had plast,
For one sets downe one hundred in his letter,
To thend that his excuse may seeme the better.

47

But if you will but send some ship or twaine,
That but your standard may therein appeare,

No doubt but they will hie them home againe,
By that time these but weigh their ankers here,
If they Arabians, that can bide no paine,
Or if they Nubians be, the case is cleare,
Who onely taken have this heart of grace,
To know your person absent from the place.

48

This therefore is the sum of my perswasion,
Make sure the conquest here ere you go hence,
Charles can no more endure your sharpe evasion,
Now that his nephew is distraught of sence:
Now by the forehead let us take Occasion,
Least after all our travell and expence,
He hide away his haire, and turne his bald,
And we unprovident be thought and cald.

49

With these so warie words, and such as these,
The subtle Spaniard labourd to perswade,
The King of Affrike not to passe the seas,
Till of the warres in France an end were made:
But sage Sobrino, that espide with ease,

How deepe he seemd in shallow streames to wade,
Respecting privat more then publike cause,
Did answer thus after a little pause.

50

My Liege, when first to peace I counseld you,
I would I had not bin so true a Prophet,
Or if my sayings needs must prove so true,
I would you had beleevd them for your profit;
Not Rodomont, with that rash youthfull crue
Of Alcyrd, Marbalust, that then did scoffe it,
Whom now I wish here present, face to face,
But chiefly Rodomont I wish in place.

51

He that then undertooke to make all France,
But like the dust that flies before the wind,
He that did vow, in heavn or hell, your lance
To follow, nay to leave it farre behind,
Now when he should the matter most advance,
Unprofitably lurkes in corners blind,
And I that then (because I told you true)
Was cald a coward, still abide with you.

52

And still I will abide, what ere ensuth,
During this life, which though made weake with age,
I will not feare, against the strongest youth
That lives in France, in your defence to gage;
Nor yet can any charge me with untruth,
Nor from the proudest Prince to poorest page,
And well I wot, I have done more then some,
That promist much ere they were hither come.

53

Thus much I say, thereby more plaine to prove,
That what I then did say, or now impart,
Came from true service, and of loyall love,
And not of faint, much lesse of hollow hart:
Now I advise you hence with speed remove,
And that you homeward in all hast depart,
For well you wot, that wisdome it is none,
In winning other mens, to leese ones owne.

54

Yet know not I why we should call it winning,
If of our losses just account we yeeld,

Thirtie two Kings we were at the beginning,
A third part now scarce tarries in the field;
And we our selves here up in corners pinning,
Scant safe within these rampiers can us shield,
We so decay, except in time we cease,
At last we shall be drivn to sue for peace.

55

Orlando is not there, tis true, what tho?
Had he bin there, we had all dide ere this,
His want doth but prolong our overthrow,
By other men, our state in danger is:
They have Renaldo there, that plaine doth show
His force and courage not much lesse then his,
There are his cousins, all the Palladins,
Eternall terror to our Sarazins.

56

They further have a man in strength and hart,
(I needs must praise my foe against my will)
A second Mars, I meane King Brandimart,
Whose great puissance joynd to active skill,
My selfe in single fight have found in part,

And further proofe have seene by others ill:
Besides, Orlando wanted long ago,
Since which we more have lost then won you know.

57

Now if we sped no better in time past,
We shall speed worse hereafter I do dread,
We see Gradasso over sea is past,
And that the valiant Mandricard is dead;
Marfisa hath forsaken us at last,
And Rodomont, of whom it may be sed,
Were but his faith with force to be compared,
The rest might in a manner have bin spared.

58

Now when as so great helpes and succors faile us,
So many thousands of our souldiers slaine,
And all supplies that should at all availe us,
Already come from Affrike and from Spaine;
They have of late got foure new Knights to quaile us,
Compard with any of the Christen traine,
Foure Knights, that if you search from hence to Inde,
Foure Knights to match these foure you shal not find.

59

I known not if you ever heard before,
Of Oliveros sons, and Sansonet,
With Guidon savage, whom I value more
Then all their other succors that they get,
From Almanie the higher or the lower,
Although such aids at nought we cannot set,
And we do plainly see before our eyes,
That evry day they may have fresh supplies.

60

We may assure our selves if any more
We take the field, our side goes to the pot,
For if when we were two for one before,
Yet we must needs confesse we gained not,
Now they so much increased have their store,
With forraine powre, both English, Dutch and Scot,
What can we hope but after all our toyle,
To have bad recompence of shame and foyle.

61

Yet all is well, if you will part betime,
And hie you home before it prove too late;

But if you tarry any longer time,
You here will leese your men, at home your state:
Now if to leave Marsilio seeme a crime,
For feare the world condemne you for ungrate,
To save him harmlesse you for peace must sue,
Which they will so accept, if so will you.

62

But if you thinke such motion may not stand,
With honour of your state and high degree,
And hope by fight to make a surer hand,
Which yet how it succeeded hath you see;
Yet seeke at least to have the upper hand
By this device, and herein follow me:
Put all the quarrels triall, if you can,
To one, and let Rogero be the man.

63

I know, and you do know, and so we all
Do know, that our Rogero hath such might,
No Christen can so sturdie be or tall,
As hand to hand to conquer him in fight:
But if you meane to make warre generall,

Though he in strength far passe each other Knight,
Yet in the fight he but for one can stand,
And what is one against a mightie band?

64

I thinke it best, if so you thinke it good,
To offer this to Charles, that if he will,
If with his worthy courage so it stood,
For saving those, whom you on both sides kill,
And shunning of the shedding guiltlesse blood,
Which both of you, on each side dayly spill,
Each side to chuse one champion at whose parrell,
To make a full conclusion of the quarrell.

65

Provided first, that which so ere of these
Shall dye, his Prince shall pay the tother tribute:
I know this motion will not Charles displease,
For all his Lords, will thereunto contribute;
And this would worke our safetie, and our ease,
For to Rogero, so much I attribute,
That such his vallew is, this cause so just,
Were Mars Antagonist, yet yeeld he must.

66

These words Sobrino spake with such effect,
As Agramant thereto gave his consent,
And then Interpreters he did direct,
Who straight to Charles with such a challenge went:
Charles meanes not such occasion to neglect,
He thinks the combat wonne incontinent,
He had such store of champions, nere the latter,
Unto Renaldo he commits the matter.

67

Glad were both armies of this new accord,
Henceforth to live in quiet they intend,
And either part doth praise his soveraigne Lord,
That of these broyles would make so speedie end.
Each one in mind these foolish bralls abhord,
That made them thus in warres their dayes to spend,
Each man could say, and no man then denyd it,
That warre is sweet to those that have not tryd it.

68

Renaldo, he in mind doth much rejoyse,
To thinke his Prince had done him such a grace,

To make of him above so many choyse,
For triall of so great importing case:
And though Rogero were by common voyce,
The chiefe man deemd of all the Turkish race,
And hand to hand had killed Mandricard,
Renaldo this but little did regard.

69

But good Rogero he was nothing glad,
Though of so many gallant men and stout,
His King to his great praise, him chosen had,
Above all other Knights, and pikt him out;
His heart was heavie, and his looke was sad,
Not that in mind he ought did dread or doubt,
Renaldos forces, or Orlandos either,
No scarce and if they had beene both together.

70

But this procurd his griefe, because he knew,
Renaldo brother was unto his deare,
Who did her plaints with letters oft renew,
And charged him so deepe, as toucht him neare:
Now if he should to old wrongs, add this new,

To kill Renaldo, then the case is cleare,
She should have so great reason to reprove him,
He doubts she never will hereafter love him.

71

Now if Rogero do in silent sort,
Lament this combat tane against his will,
No doubt his spouse which heard this sad report,
Was worse appaid then he, at least as ill;
She beats her brest, and breakes her tresses short,
And many teares with sorrow she did spill,
And calls Rogero oftentimes ungrate,
And curseth evermore her cruell fate.

72

It needs must turne unto her griefe and paine,
Who ere is overcome, who ever win,
She dare not thinke Rogero can be slaine,
Her heart such anguish doth conceive therein;
And if it pleased Christ so to ordaine,
For chastising his wretched peoples sin,
That man should dye, that of her house was chiefe,
Besides his death, that brought a further griefe.

73

A griefe that was indeed beyond all measure,
To thinke she never might henceforth for shame,
Go to her spouse, without the flat displeasure,
Of all her kin and house of whence she came:
And when she weighd the case at better leasure,
Each thing to her seemd worse and worse to frame,
For why she knew, her tongue that knot had tyde,
That while she livd, might never loose, nor slide.

74

But that deare frend of hers, that never faild,
To helpe at chiefest needs, the noble maid,
I meane the sage Melissa, so prevaild,
That Bradamantes guese was part alaid,
For when she knew the cause, and what she aild,
Against the time, she promised her aid;
And undertooke, that of that bloody quarrell,
To her nor hers, there should arise no parrell.

75

This while the gallant Knights against the fight,
Themselves, and eke their weapons do provide,

The choise whereof did appertaine in right,
Unto the champion of the Christen side,
Who, as a man that tooke but small delight,
(Since he had lost his famous horse) to ride,
Did chuse to fight on foot, and in this sort,
All armd, with axes long, and daggers short.

76

Or were it chance, or were it in regard,
That Malagige advised him thereto,
Because he knew the force of Balysard,
Of powre all charms of armour to undoe,
(Of whose sharpe edge you have ere this time hard)
But this they did appoint betweene them two,
About the place likewise they do agree,
A plaine neare Arlie walls, the same to be.

77

Now when Aurora left the lothed bed,
Of Tytan (unto whom she hath no list)
To thend that no disorder may be bred,
On either side the marshalls part the list,
At end whereof, were rich pavillions spred,

Where nothing that belongs to state was mist,
And distant from each tent a little space,
On either side, they did an alter place.

78

Not long time after this, in battell ray,
The Turkish armie with their King came out,
Glistring in gold, and stately rich aray,
In show, with all Barbarian pompe set out,
A swift Arabian horse, of colour bay
He rode, and by his side Rogero stout,
Rode cheeke by cheeke, and to his greater fame,
On him to wait, Marsilio thought no shame.

79

His helmet (for the which the Tartar dyde,
Slaine by Rogero as I did rehearse)
(Which since a thousand yeares, and more beside,
Was celebrated in more stately verse)
Marsilio carrid, by Rogeros side,
Well mounted on a Spanish genet fearce,
His arms, and all that did thereto belong,
Some other states divided them among.

80

On tother side came worthie Charlemayne,
From out his tents, strongly intrencht, anone,
And all his bands of men he did ordaine,
So as if to battell he should then have gone:
About him was of Peers a noble trayne,
Renaldo in the mids, with armour on,
That onely helmet erst from Mambryn tane,
Was by Uggero borne, the noble Dane.

81

Two axes, both alike in each respect,
Salemon and Duke Namus beare before,
The Chieftaines on each side their men direct,
To keepe within their limits evermore;
And in the midst was left a large prospect,
Betweene each company, and roome good store,
For present death it was, if any venter,
Save those two champions, in the list to enter.

82

When second choise of weapon (as was fit)
Was givn Rogero to avoid suspect,

Two Priests before the rest came forth, to wit,
Of each side one, and one of either sect,
Each had a booke, ours had Christs holy writ,
Theirs Alcoran, with errorrs foule infect,
With ours came forth the Christen Prince devout,
With that of theirs, the King of Turks came out.

83

Now first King Charles neare to his altar stands,
And this great protestation there did make,
And lifts to heaven both heart, and eyes and hands,
O God, O Christ, that sufferdst for our sake,
O blessed Ladie, that in swathing bands,
Heldst him that mortall flesh of thee did take,
And didst nine months inclose that high divinitie,
In sacred wombe, still keeping true virginitie.

84

Be witnesses, that here I make it knowne,
And promise faithfully for me and mine,
To Agramant, and who so ere shall owne
The crowne of Affrike in ensuing time,
That if my champion shall be overthrowne,

To pay to them, each yeare of gold most fine,
Ten horslode, and forthwith the warres to cease,
And evermore hereafter to have peace.

85

And if I fayle, then let the fearfull wrath
Of both, on me at once this folly wreake,
And worke unto my sect all wo and scath,
That all insuing ages plaine may speake,
Loe what a plague, and just reward he hath,
That durst his oth to you, and promise breake:
This said, his hand he laid upon the booke,
And up on heaven he fixt his stedfast looke.

86

When this was done, then all departed thence,
There where the Turks had with much superstition
Adornd their altar with no small expence,
And their King Agramant, with like condition,
Vowd never after this, to do offence
To Charles, but passe the seas with expedition,
And ay keepe peace, and equall tribute pay,
If that Rogero vanquisht were that day.

87

And in like sort he did protest aloud,
And call'd on Mahomet, his Idol great,
And by that booke, that his Priest held, he vow'd
To keepe most duly all he did repeat:
This done, to part from thence were all allow'd,
And either Prince retired to his seat;
Then in like sort they sweare the champions both,
And thus much in effect contain'd their oth.

88

Rogero promiseth, that if the fight,
By Agramant shall be disturb'd or parted,
That never after he will be his Knight,
But serve King Charles, and be to him true harted.
Renaldo in like sort his faith doth plight,
That if to him, Charles any aid imparted,
Before that one of them were overcome,
That then himselfe to Agramant would come.

89

Now when these ceremonies all were ended,
That ev'ry man departed to his side,

And then the warriors onely now attended,
The trumpets sound, that battell signified;
Which when both heard, then each of them intended,
To show the utmost of his vallew tride:
Now sounds the steele with blows, not few nor soft,
Now they themselves, strike low and now aloft.

90

Sometime they would beguile the tone the tother,
With mind unto their strength, to ad their art,
They profer at one place, and strike another,
Invading still the least defended part:
But good Rogero, that against the brother,
Of her did fight, that did possesse his hart,
Did oft bestow his blows, with such regard,
Most thought Renaldo was for him too hard.

91

He seemed readier to ward then strike,
For he himselfe well knew not what he ment,
To kill Renaldo, that he did not like,
To dy himselfe that was not his intent:
But now I hope that none will it mislike,

Sith in this booke so much time hath bene spent,
And least my tediousnesse may some molest,
In this ensuing booke to heare the rest.

ARGUMENT

THE THIRTYNINTH BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

King Agramant breakes oth, and is constrained,
Unto his native soile by sea to flye,
Where then Astolfo many townes had gained,
And at Biserta siege as then did lye:
Orlando thither commeth, madly brained,
But thEnglish Duke did cure him by and by:
Brave Dudon, with his navie made of leaves,
Meets Agramant, and hotly him receives.

THIRTY NINTH BOOKE

1

What tongue can tell, or learned pen expresse
The woes, to which Rogero now did runne?
In mind, and body, drivn to such distresse,
That of two deaths, the tone he cannot shun:
If he be slaine, and if he kill no lesse,
Both wayes he sees he shall be quite undonne:
By shame in death, and if he win and live,
By that offence he shall his true love give.

2

The tother Knight whom no such thought encombred
Lets frankly fly his blows without regard,
In so great store as was not to be numbred,
No time, no place, nor no advantage spard:
Rogero seemd to him, as if he slumbred,
Small list he had to strike, but all to ward,
And if he did, in such a place he strake,
His blow great sound, but little signe did make.

3

The Pagan Lords now doubt it will go wrong,
They see the combat so unequal grow,
Renaldo seemd too lustie and too strong,
Rogero seemd too lasie and too slow.
But Agramant that sate the rest among,
Doth fret, and fume, and chafe, and sweat, and blow,
Doth blame Sobrino chiefly, whose perswasion,
Was of this combat chiefe and sole occasion.

4

This while Melissa sage, whose skill was great
In Magicke art, repaired to the place,
And with some secret words she did repeat,
She changd her voice, her stature, and her face,
In mind hereby to worke a wondrous feat;
She seemd all armed in a Dragons case,
In sword, in shield, in shew, in evrie thing,
She seemed Rodomont the Sarzan King.

5

To wofull Agramant she straight doth ride,
(In likenesse of an horse, she rode a sprite)

And coming to his presence, lowd she cride,
(My Liege) this was too fowle an oversight,
To match a beardlesse boy so meanly tride,
With such a famous and renowned Knight,
And chiefe in matter that imports so much,
As doth the whole estate of Affricke tuch.

6

Wherefore that you in time this losse may save,
Permit the combat to proceed no more,
Let Rodomont the blame and blemish have,
Of breaking that, which you so rashly swore;
Now each man shew how well his sword can shave,
Now I am here, each man is worth a score.
These words in Agramant had so much force,
That without more advice, he straight tooke horse.

7

And thinking sure fierce Rodomont was theare,
Forthwith the Christens host he doth invade,
Of oth nor promise he hath now no feare,
This one mans presence him so bold had made:
Each man doth in a moment couch his speare,

Or charge his pike, or draw his glittering blade:
Melissa having set them thus together,
With this illusion vanisht (God knows whither).

8

The two stout champions when they plainly saw,
Their combat, that all quarrell should descide,
Disturbd against all promise, and all law,
They cease all force, and lay all wrath aside,
And by consent, themselves they do withdraw,
Untill it might more plainly be descride,
In whether Prince of faith were found such want:
In aged Charles, or youthfull Agramant.

9

And each of them of new doth vow and sweare,
That unto him that first did covnant breake,
They will for ever endlesse hatred beare,
And joyne together such offence to wreake:
The while the hosts of neither side forbear
To make quicke triall who be strong or weake,
For lightly at the first conflict they shoe,
Their hearts if they be resolute or no.

10

Even as a grewnd which hunters hold in slip,
Doth strive to breake the string, or slide the coller,
(That sees the tearfull Deare, before him skip,
Pursewd belike with some Actaeons scholler)
And when he sees he can by no meanes slip,
Doth howle, and whine, and bites the string for choler
In such like case within the tents did stay,
Marfisa with dame Bradamant that day.

11

All that same day unto that present howre,
They had beheld with great despite and paine,
Such tempting baites, yet had they not the powre,
To set their foote in that forbidden plaine:
But now they do the field on each side scowre,
Though erst for duties sake they did abstaine,
Now finding such a true and just excuse,
That Agramant had lewdly broke the truse.

12

Marfisa ran the first quite through the brest,
And made the speare come forth a yard behind;

Then with her sword she flies among the rest,
There chiefe where most resistance she doth finde:
And Bradamant puts Goldelance in rest,
With like effects, but of another kind,
For all she toucht therewith she overthrew,
And yet not one among them all she slew.

13

Thus these two warriours ever as they went,
Subdewd their enemies, and kept them under,
Who ever met them surely should be shent,
And each of them at tothers force did wonder:
But being both to sharpe revengement bent,
At last they part themselves, and went asunder,
Each by her selfe, such high exploits performing,
As gave the Turks long after cause of mourning.

14

As when the Southerne winds do melt the snow,
Congeald on tops of mountaines many dayes,
It often happens that two streames do flow,
And taking in their course, two sundrie wayes,
At last so violent and furious grow,

That bearing downe, and breaking usuall bayes,
They wast the fields, and seeme on vye to runne,
By which of them most damage may be donne.

15

Evn so these twaine, incenst with rage and wrath,
And each in sevrall acts their forces trying,
Do worke the Turks, no little woe and scath,
And leave them overthrowne, or maymd, or dying:
Scarse Agramant the powre by this time hath,
(Say what he list) to keepe his men from flying,
Himselfe not shrinking though, nor once retiring,
But evermore for Rodomont enquiring.

16

By onely his advise and exhortation,
(For so the unadvised Prince doth thinke)
He broken had his solemne protestation,
He marvels now, to find him so to shrinke:
Likewise Sobrino with great lamentation,
(Religion in his mind so deepe did sinke)
Retyrd to Arly, evermore protesting
His faultlesse mind, that perjurie detesting.

17

Marsilio eke unto his cuntry fled,
The shamefull promise breach of Agramant
Strake in his mind such superstitious dred,
He leaveth him to beare the brunt, who scant
Against the Christen souldiers could make hed:
That no supplies of forren powres did want,
With Palladines among them fierce and bold,
Mixt like rich gemmes in faire embroderd gold.

18

But now a while I linquish this conflict,
And passe beyond the seas without a barke,
For to this tale I am not tyde so strict,
But that I will repeat (if you will harke)
Astolfos acts, who forward dayly prickt,
With new made horsemen, as (if you did marke)
I told you erst, and did all Affrike wast,
Untill three Kings resisted him at last.

19

The King of Algazer, and stout Bransard,
Did levy powres, such as in hast they could,

And put them all in armes without regard,
That some too young were found and some too old;
Yea from the musters, women scant were spard,
For Agramant (as hath before bene told)
With hope of vaine revenge, without advise,
Of able men, unpeopled Affrike twise.

20

Thus few were there, and of those few were theare,
(So quite his countrie weale he did neglect)
The greater part unskilfull, armes to beare,
As was more plainly proved in effect,
For at first brunt they fled from thence for feare,
In hope Biserta walls should them protect:
Brave Bucifer was taken in the fight,
Bransardo scapt, and savd himselfe by flight.

21

But Bucifer alone, he tooke more griefe,
Then all the rest (he did him so esteeme)
Because Biserta asked great reliefe,
For which this Bucifer most fit did seeme,
Who was in all those parts of credit chiefe;

Wherefore Bransardo faine would him redeeme,
He many wayes doth cast, but none conclude on,
Till at the last he did remember Dudon.

22

This Dudon was by blood and birth a Dane,
But yet esteemd the Palladins among,
He lately at the Bridge was prisner tane,
Where Rodomont the sturdie Turke and strong,
Brought many worthy men unto their bane:
To Affrike Dudon then he sent ere long,
Now Bransard thinkes (nor was his thought amisse)
Stout Bucifer by change to get for this.

23

He perfect notice had, by true espiall,
The Nubians leader was an English Lord,
Who love a Dane (there can be no deniall)
And once were Danes, as writers do record:
Wherefore he sends a messenger for trial
Unto Astolfo, who doth soone accord,
To free his kinsman, whom he lovd so dearly,
And joyned was in blood to him so nearly.

24

Thus Dudon by the English Duke was freed,
Who afterward his service did employ,
Now (as Saint John had wild him to proceed)
He sought to worke the Turks some more annoy;
And that he might set Provence free with speed,
Which Agramant and his did then enjoy,
He maketh of his men a new election,
Whom he may send to free them from subjection.

25

And having chosen forth some men of these,
As best from his huge armie might be mist,
Whose number was so great, as he at ease
With halfe of them three Affricks might resist:
He causd them to be trained for the seas,
And praying God his purpose to assist,
That night was shewd Astolfo in a vision,
How he of ships might make a large provision.

26

Next day the weather being faire and calme,
Astolfo walketh to the salt sea shore,

And holding in his hands in either palme,
Great store of leaves that he had tane before,
Of Bayes, of Cedar trees, of Oke, of Palme,
Into the sea he flang them in great store;
O metamorphosis beyond all credit,
O admirable powre divine that bred it!

27

No sooner had the water wet the leaves,
But presently they changd their former hue,
The veines that were in them, each man perceaves
To grow to ribs and posts in order due,
And still at each end sharp each leafe receaves,
Evn of a sailing ship proportion true:
And of the ships as many sorts there weare,
As there were trees that those same leaves did beare.

28

A miracle it was to see them growne
To ships and barks, with gallies, bulks and crayes,
Each vessell having tackling of their owne,
With sailes and oares to helpe at all assayes.
The Duke provided, when it once was knowne,

Both marriners and masters in few dayes,
For with his present pay he soone allured
From Sard and Corsie men to seas inured.

29

Those that take shipping then, were counted more
Then six and twentie thousand strong of hand,
Great Admirall was Dudon, who before
Had learnd the service both of sea and land:
Now while they lay at anker nigh the shore,
To wait when wind would for their purpose stand,
It fortun'd a man of warre came by them,
Full lode with prisners, and cast anker nie them.

30

These were those prisners whom fierce Rodomount,
(As oft I have declard) did daily get,
When at the bridge he did them so dismount,
And sometime backward in the river set:
Here were (among some more of good account)
Brave Brandimart and worthy Sansonet,
With Oliver, and some I now not tutch,
Both French, Italian, Gascoigne Knights and Dutch.

31

The master of the barke had first assignd,
His prisoners at Algier to unlode,
But being drivn by overblowing wind,
Farre past the place, he thought to make abode
Neare great Biserta, where he thinks to find
None but his countrimen within the rode;
To which he thinks himselfe as welcome guest,
As Progne is unto her chirping nest.

32

But after, when thImperiall bird he saw,
Conjoynd to the Pard and flowre of France,
He was abasht, and looked pale for aw,
Much like to him that waking new, doth chance
On poisond serpent tred, and faine would draw
Himselfe from thence, for feare of more mischance;
He quakes, and from the serpent doth retire,
Whose poison swels, and eyes do flame like fire.

33

But now the wretched Pilot could not flie,
And lesse could keepe the prisners he had caught,

For both himselfe, and all they by and by,
Unto the place against his will were brought,
Whereas the Duke and Dudon then did lie,
Who welcomd well the Christens as they ought,
And he that brought them thither, for his paines,
Was made a gally slave, and bound in chaines.

34

Thus were the Knights most frendly entertained,
And greatly welcomed by Otons sonne,
Who horse and furniture for them ordained,
And causd to them great honor to be donne:
Eke Dudon with these Knights some days remained,
And thinks the time so spent, not lost but wonne:
His journey purposely three dayes deferring,
To spend the same with these brave knights conferring.

35

By their relation he doth understand,
In what estate King Charles and thempire stood,
What are the havns, where he may safely land,
And where they thought the same would be withstood.
Thus while discreetly on each point they scand;

And each man told what he thought ill or good,
There suddenly rose in the campe alarme,
The cause unknown, but ech man cride, arme, arme.

36

The Duke Astolfo with his noble crew,
That at that time conferring were together,
Straight armd themselves, and out their swords they drew
And went enquiring hither still and thither,
To learne of whence this sudden tumult grew,
But yet no cause they could suspect or gether,
At last they saw a madman stare and stampe,
That nakt alone did trouble all the campe.

37

Those that had seene him first belike did flout him,
But when some few unto their cost had found,
That with a bat he so did play about him,
His blowes made many fall in deadly sound:
They now began so much to dread and doubt him,
That they had givn to him no little ground,
And none of them to meet him had the harts,
They onely shot at him, or cast some darts.

38

The noble Duke, and those with him did see,
The wondrous force and most stupendious wracke,
The madman wrought, and marveld much that he
Alone could drive so many souldiers backe:
When lo, a Ladie of no meane degree,
Rode towards them attyred all in blacke,
And unto Brandimart she came in hast,
And claspt her arms about his necke full fast.

39

I know you know, without my further showing,
This was the spouse of noble Brandimart,
Who ever since his wofull overthrowing,
By Rodomont, did with a pensive hart,
Seeke his release, till at the last she knowing,
(As I before did more at large impart)
How he beyond the seas was prisner sent,
Her selfe at Arly to take shipping ment.

40

But while that loving purpose she pursewth,
Bardino met with her, an Easterne Knight,

Who brought up Brandimart in tender youth,
And kept him at a Castell (Silvan hight)
He hearing at her mouth at large the truth,
And how in Affrica they find him might,
They soone agreed, no long time overslipping,
To seeke him out and so forthwith tooke shipping.

41

No sooner they on Affrike shore did land,
(Bardino sage, and faithfull Fiordeliege)
But first the people let them understand,
Astolfo great Biserta did besiege,
With many a Captaine brave, and gallant band;
Likewise a brute of Brandimart their liege
Was spred, that he was there arived newly,
But none was able to confirme it truly.

42

Untill so long they traveld on the cost,
At last she found and saw him with her eyes,
Among those Lords, amid the Nubian host,
With which such joy did in her thoughts arise,
As vitall sprites did faile in her almost,

Nor any word to speake could she devise,
But hangd about his necke a burden sweet,
And he as lovingly his spouse did greet.

43

Full glad was he to see her, and as glad
To see his ancient tutor and his friend,
And further talke with them he would have had,
But he was forst to make a speedie end,
By meanes the man that naked ran and mad,
Did keepe such rule as did them all offend.
Faire Fiordeliege that lookt with eye more curious,
Cride, ah my deare, this is Orlando furious.

44

Astolfo eke when as he did behold him,
And saw how madly he about did range,
And no man durst him meet, nor none could hold him,
He wonderd greatly at the sight so strange,
And by the marks that erst S. John had told him,
He knew it was the man; but such a change
There was in all his shape, from top to toe,
He rather seemd a beast, more then a man in show.

45

Astolfo straight did call unto the rest,
And said my Lords, this man that you had vewd,
Orlando is: at this themselves they blest,
And evrie one his wofull pickle rew:
Well (said the Duke) to helpe our friend is best,
And not to wayle; and therefore to conclude,
Come joyne your force to mine, and let us take him
And I do hope ere long Ile sober make him.

46

To this they soone assent, and Brandimart,
With Sansonet and Olivero jolly,
And Dudon closd him round, on evrie part,
But he as full of strength, as foole of folly,
At Dudon strake, and save the blow in part
Was broke by Oliver, and fell not wholly
On Dudon, sure I thinke that staffe accurst,
His shield, his headpeece, head and all had burst.

47

His shield it brake, and thunderd on his scull,
That noble Dudon therewithall fell backe,

But Sansonet strake with his sword so full,
That of the staffe three yards he made him lacke:
Now Brandimart thinks backward him to pull,
And leaps behind, a pick pack, on his backe,
And holds his armes: the Duke doth then devise,
To hold his legs, and Oliver his thyes.

48

Orlando shakes himselfe, and with a spring,
Ten paces off, the English Duke he cast,
But Brandimart from him he could not fling,
That was behind him, and did hold him fast,
But yet with Oliver he was to bring,
For with his fist he smote him as he past,
That downe he fell, and hardly scaped killing,
From mouth, nose, eyes, the bloud apace distilling.

49

Of headpeece strong he never had more need,
For sure he could not have escaped death,
Except it had a good one bene indeed.
This while Astolfo now had taken breath,
And Dudon both who late for want of heed,

Were by Orlando tumbled on the heath,
With Sansonet, that pard his staffe so well,
All these at once upon Orlando fell.

50

Good Dudon that endeavors him to cast,
With Brandimart, about his shoulders hangs;
Astolfo and the rest his arms hold fast,
He seeks to loose himselfe with sudden pangs:
Who so hath seene a Bull with mastives chast,
That in his eares have fixt their cruell fangs,
How he doth runne, and rore, and with him beares
The eager doggs, that still hold fast his eares.

51

Let him imagine that Orlando now,
In such sort drew the warriours, on the plaine;
But Oliver, that had the broken brow,
Againe on foote recoverd up againe,
Did cast within his mind a reason how,
To do with ease, that they did seeke with paine:
He doth bethinke a way, that will not misse,
To do the feat: and his device was this.

52

Full many a halser, and full many a cord,
With sliding knots all knit he doth provide,
And to the leggs and armes of this mad Lord,
He made them on the sudden to be tyde,
And then their ends on each side by accord,
They all of them amongst themselves deuide,
Thus were those Princes faine to do unto him,
As Smiths do to an oxe, when they do shoe him.

53

Then fell they on him when he lay on ground,
And then they bind him sure, both hand and foote:
Orlando when he felt himselfe thus bound,
Doth strive in vaine, for striving will not boote.
Astolfo that doth meane to make him sound,
And saw his skin looke blacke as any soote,
Requested them unto the shore to beare him,
Which soone was done, for now they need not feare him.

54

Then seavn times was he washed in the place,
And seavn times dipped over eares and hed,

To get the scurfe from of his skin and face,
Which with his naked going had bene bred:
Then with some herbs, the Duke gat in this space,
He made them stop his mouth, for why he sed,
For certaine secret reasons that he knowes,
He must not fetch his breath but at his nose.

55

Then kneeling downe as if he askt some boone
Of God, or some great Saint, that pot he brought,
Which he had carride from beyond the Moone,
The Jarre, in which Orlandos wit was caught,
And closd it to his nostrills, and eftsoone,
He drawing breath, this miracle was wrought,
The Jarre was void, and emptyd evrie whit,
And he restord unto his perfect wit.

56

As one that in some dreame or fearfull vision,
Hath dreamt of monstrous beasts, and ugly fends
Is troubled when he wakes with superstition,
And feareth what such ugly sight intends,
And lying wake, thinks of that apparition,

And long time after in that fancie spends:
So now Orlando lay, not little musing,
At this his present state, and uncouth using.

57

He holds his peace, but lifting up his eyes,
He sees his ancient frends King Brandimart,
And Oliver, and him that made him wise,
All whom he knew, and loved from his hart;
He thinks, but cannot with himselfe devise.
How he should come to play so mad a part,
He wonders he is nakt, and that he feeles
Such store of cords about his hands and heeles.

58

At last he said, as erst Sileno said,
To those that tooke him napping in the cave,
Solvite me: with countenance so stayd,
And with a cheare so sober and so grave,
That they unloosed him, as he them prayde,
And sufferd him his liberty to have,
And clothed him, and comforted his sadnesse,
That he conceived of his former madnesse.

59

Thus being to his former wits restord,
He was likewise delivered cleane from love;
The Ladie whom he erst so much adord,
And did esteeme all earthly joyes above,
Now he despisde, yea rather quite abhord:
Now onely he applies his wits to prove,
That fame and former glory to recover,
Which he had lost, the while he was a lover.

60

This while Bardino told to Brandimart,
How that his father Monodant was dead,
And how his brother Gylyant on the part
Of all that those East Iles inhabited,
Him sent of purpose these news to impart,
And pray him (as he ought) to be their head:
Sith all the world had not a Realme more wealthy,
Nor any Prince could wish a seate more healthy.

61

Wherefore (saith he) deare sir, it is most meet,
That you should now repaire to your owne home,

For home though homely twere, yet is it sweet,
And native soile is best: you would not rome
About the world, did you once tast and seet,
Thus much he said, but Brandimart in whome
True love and great renown were bands more strong
Then privat profit, answerd this ere long,

62

My brothers message, and your frendly paine
I kindly take, but lo, my word is past,
With Charles and with Orlando to remaine,
And them to serve while these garboyles do last:
Now in my steed, I will my brother raigne,
Let him be my viceroy, and I will hast,
When once these warres are at a finall end,
To come, and there my life with them to spend.

63

Thus these did part, and next ensuing day,
Went Dudon with his fleet to Provence ward,
Orlando with the British Prince doth stay;
And when the state of those same warres he hard,
Unto Biserta straight a siege they lay,

But evermore Orlando had regard,
That (as Astolfo followd his advise)
To give him thhonor of each enterprise.

64

But how they did the great Biserta win,
When they assaulted it, and on which side,
How at the first assault, the men within
Did yeeld, and durst no longer try all byde,
I cannot farther now proceed herein,
But must deferre it to another tyde:
Now I do purpose unto you to show,
How Agramant receivd an overthrow.

65

Who was welnye abandond of his men,
Evn in the very furie of the fight,
For why Marsilio and Sobrino then
Were gone, in minde to save themselves by flight;
In walled townes they feard themselves to pen,
But went to sea with all the hast they might,
And many Princes of the Turkish trayne,
The sample follow givn them by these twayne.

66

Yet Agramant did beare it out a space,
But when he saw there was no other shift,
Then from his enemies he turnd his face,
To get into the towne was all his drift:
Him Bradamant pursewd a wondrous pace,
Still spurring Rabican, that ran full swift,
She wisht upon his corps to venge the wrong,
In keeping of her deare from her so long.

67

On tother side Marfisa rode as fast,
To venge though late, her fathers wofull end,
She makes her horse to feele she is in hast,
But each of them doth misse that they intend:
He got within the gates and made them fast,
And then to sea he doth himselfe commend,
He sees he was not able to withstand,
The forces of his enemies by land.

68

As two couragious Pards, that held in chase
An Hart, or bearded Goat upon a plaine,

That scaped then by swiftnese of his pace,
With no small wrath, and chase turne backe againe,
As though they thought they had a great disgrace,
In that they followd had the prey in vaine,
So did the damsels chase, and sigh, and fret,
That they to Agramant no neare could get.

69

But though he scapt their hands, yet sure the rest
Escaped not, full dearely then abuying,
Some wounded in the side, in backe, and brest,
Some slaine outright, some worse then dead a dying,
How sorily (poore soules) had they bene drest,
Whose safetie was not wrought, no not by flying,
For Agramant, himselfe more sure to save,
To shut the Citie gates commandment gave.

70

He made the bridges eke to be cut downe,
On Rodon streame, that was both large and deepe,
Ah wofull subjects unto tyrants crowne,
Who that they may their persons safely keepe,
Regard not if their people swim or drowne,

But deeme of them like beasts, or silly sheepe,
That so themselves they pamper may and cherish,
They care not if their men in millions perish.

71

Tw'as infinite the number that was slaine,
In this same last conflict, nor fewer drownd,
While they attempted desprately in vaine,
To passe the streame, so brode and so profound;
Of which great slaughter yet the signes remaine,
For dayly neare to Arlie walls are found,
Huge heapes of dead mens bones, and of their skulls,
Whose flesh was then devourd by crows and gulls.

72

Now Agramant made speedie preparation,
And causd his ships forth in the deepe to lanch,
Providing all that longs to navigation,
In mind for ay to bid farwell to France:
Two dayes the winde stopt his determination,
The third it servd, and then he did advance
His sayles, and evrie one did ship his ore,
And so away they parted from the shore.

73

Marsilio doubting least his Realme of Spaine,
Should now be drivn to pay this costly shot,
And fearing to be forced to sustaine
That storme alone, which fell in France so hot,
Doth land at Valence, where he did ordaine
All furniture, that might for warre be got,
Repairing all his townes against that warre,
That after him, and all his frends did marre.

74

But Agramant, his ships to Affrike bent,
Ill armd, halfe void of men, but full of griefe,
For most of them were sad and malcontent,
Three parts of foure were lost past all reliefe:
And though for feare perhaps, of being silent,
None dare in publike speake to his reprehensive,
Yet secretly, their burning hate to coole,
Some cald him proud, some cruell, some a foole.

75

But (as I say) they speake this in their sleeves,
For feare of blame, except some two or three,

That each to other open dare their greeves,
Yet wretched Agramant, he doth not see,
How he is scorned; but he still beleeves,
That he is lovd, and why, because that he,
Saw never lookes but fawningly disguised,
Heard never words, but fainly devised.

76

Now he was fully purposd in his landing,
To leave Biserta and seeke harbour nyer,
Because he late had perfect understanding,
The Nubians spoyld those parts with sword and fier
Wherefore for doubt of dangerous withstanding,
He meant to shun that port, and land farre hyer,
And thence withall unto his parts addicted,
To bring reliefe unto the towne afflicted.

77

But loe his cruell fate doth overthrow
His counsell sage; and quite his hope deceaves,
For while scant winde did make him sayle but slow,
Stout Dudon with that navie made of leaves,
Met him full butt, that no such thing did know,

And with a fierce assault him there receaves,
Enforcing him to unexpected fight,
In that darke, cloudie, and tempestuous night.

78

For Agramant no spyall had till now,
Of these same ships, and would have deemd a fable,
If one had told him of a little bow,
To make a hundred ships, a man was able:
Wherefore he sayled on he card not how,
And doubts no foe but wave, and wind unstable,
And not expecting such strange sodaine stops,
He never set his watchmen in his tops.

79

On tother side, our men that had espyde
Their enemies at sea, an houre ere night,
Came with great speed, although all undeseride,
For evry ship kept close their fire and light:
At last when as they saw their time, they tryde
Their utmost force, and with full sayles they light
On their foes shipping, that at first did shrinke,
And many did unto the bottome sinke.

80

Now Dudons men began to play their parts,
Some using fire, some heavie stones, some steele,
Upon the Turks fell such a storme of darts,
As they before, the like did never feele:
On our side God with courage filld their harts,
On their side, each mans hart was in his heele,
They stood amazd with feare, and quite astonished,
The time now come their old sins should be punished.

81

Thus Agramant was closd on evrie side,
With many a pike, and sword, and hooke, and axe,
The stones that fell from high, made breaches wide,
And much sea enterd at the new made cracks,
But most the fire, which they could least abide,
That takes in pitched boords, and wreathed flax,
To kindle very quicke, but slow to quench,
Annoyd them sore with heat, and smoke, and stench.

82

Some over boord do fall in water cold,
And there are drownd: some take them to their swimming,

But on another bark while they take hold,
They now full fraught, and fearing overtrimming,
With cruell sword (a foule sight to behold)
Cut of their hands, with which they now were climbing
The bleeding stumps all mingled their remained,
And with fresh blood, the water salt was stained.

83

Some few to save their lives that had desier,
Or at the least, to leese them with least paine,
Do leape in water to escape the fier,
Till with new feare of drowning, they againe,
Unto the flaming shipwracks do retier,
And there, with much ado are glad and faine,
To catch some burning boord: and being loth
To dye of either death, they dye of both.

84

Some one for feare of sword, or axe, or pike,
Doth all in vaine, unto the sea betake him,
For why some stone, or arrow, or such like,
Ere he be farre from thence, doth overtake him:
But least the reader haply may mislike,

My too long tale, this motion I would make him,
That to another season he defarre,
To heare the sequell of this bloody warre.

ARGUMENT

THE FORTIETH BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Great Agramant doth fly, and in his flight
Would kill himselfe, but Sobrin him forbode,
Biserta being fird, a wofull sight:
At last they meet Gradasso in a rode,
They send a challenge, three to three to fight,
Unto Orlando, where he then abode;
Rogero fights with Dudon to set free
Sevn Kings, whom bound in chaines he chaunst to see.

FORTIETHBOOKE

1

Twere long (my Lord) to tell of all that fought,
In that sea fight, and certes all the while,
That I should tell it you, I should be thought,
To beare pots (as they say) to Samos Ile,
Where earthen vessels in great store are wrought,
Or Owles to Athens, Crocodils to Nyle,
For more then can of this by me be told,
Your selfe have caused many to behold.

2

Your faithfull people had a long prospect,
When all a day upon the streame of Poe,
Your men, as your great vallew did direct,
The shipping of your foes assaulted so,
That with their blood the streame they did infect,
And brought upon them all, a world of woe;
Then both your selfe, and others plaine did see,
How sundry deaths, in fights of sea there be.

3

It was not then indeed, my hap to seet,
(Sent then to Rome six dayes before in post,
To crave then, at the holy fathers feet,
Reliefe and aid against so great an host)
And in that time your grace with them did meet,
In such a sort, so sorely to their cost,
And so you pard the Lyons teeth and pawes,
That since that time to feare we had no cause.

4

But Alfonsin, and Moore that saw the same,
Affranio, Anniball, and Zerbinet,
Albert, and Baygn, and three that beare my name,
Declard to me the conquest you did get:
Also their banners, monuments of fame,
Which offerd in the Churches you did set,
With fifteene Gallies tane a thousand botes,
Of that rich conquest, give us open notes.

5

He that had seene the fire and wondrous wreake,
That at that time was wrought upon your foes,

When for your few, their many were too weake,
He might describe the deaths and divers woes,
Of Agramantes host, of which I speake,
And of their great and grievous overthrowes,
Then when amidst the surging waves and salt,
Stout Dudon in the night did them assault.

6

When first the fight began, the night was darke,
But when the flame upon the pitch tooke hold,
The fire gave light, and did so clearly sparke,
That Agramant might plainly now behold
His enemies, and their great number marke,
Incredible, if any had it told:
Wherefore in season to prevent the worst,
He changd the course he had intended furst.

7

And chusing out a vessell swift of sayle,
And placing there his things of greatest price,
With Brigliadore (sith all hope now doth fayle)
To steale from thence he closlie doth devise:
And while that Dudon doth his men assayle,

In all the hast he can, away he flyes,
His men the sword, the sea, the fire destroyes,
And he is fled that caused their annoyes.

8

And in that Barke, with him Sobrino fled,
Who much complaind and was not little greeved,
That that which he before so truly sed,
Yet then by Agramant was not beleaved:
But tell we now how good Astolfo sped,
And what exploits Orlando had atcheeved,
Who counseld so to raze Biserta towne,
That it might never noy thImperiall crowne.

9

And so it was in publicke sort proclaymd,
That the third day thassault they should expect,
Astolfo had some ships before ordaynd,
(For Dudon had not all) for this effect,
And these same ships with Sansonet remaynd,
A man that could by sea and land direct,
Who rode at anker neere Biserta shore,
But distant from the havn a myle and more.

10

The Brittish Duke, and valiant Palladine,
That like good Christens used evermore,
To pray to God for grace and aide divine,
Proclaime in the campe, three dayes before,
That to assault the towne they did assigne,
By fast and publike prayre, Christ to adore,
And crave his aid against that wicked towne,
That they might raze it quite and beat it downe.

11

And having ended that their solemne fast,
And made their vowes, accustomed in such case,
Then frendly they together take repast,
And each his frend, and parent doth embrace,
And spake as if those words should be their last,
The kindly tears, oft trickling downe their face,
And evrie one resolved by and by,
Either to win the towne, or in the place to dy.

12

Also the wretched Priests within the towne,
With fayned show of foolish superstition,

Pray unto Macon, that he do not frowne
On them: and vow to him on that condition,
Great Holocausts, with cost of many a crowne,
Of him they seeke to have their sinnes remission,
And as if he the fates could mend or alter,
They offer sacrifices on his alter.

13

Then when they were by their great Cady blest,
They went (but faintly) to their Citie wall,
Yet did the fayre Aurora take her rest,
And scarce the Esterne coast yet looked pale,
When Sansonet, Astolfo, and the rest,
That had the needfull things provided all,
The noble enterprise did take in hand,
And did assault the towne by sea and land.

14

Biserta hath this manner situation,
Two parts thereof with water are enclosed,
Two parts with goodly wall of ancient fashion,
But not so strong, as one would have supposed:
And though to make new strength and reparation,

The King Bransardo all the towne disposed,
His time and warning were so short and small,
He could do little good, or none at all.

15

Astolfo did appoint the Nubian King
Such wise to noy the keepers of the wall,
With darts, and Turkish bowes, and many a sling,
That from the battlements he drave them all,
That now he might both horse and footmen bring,
Upon the ditch in perill none or small;
And each according to his powre and skill,
Brought matter wherewithall the ditch to fill.

16

Some fagots brought, and some brought store of helme,
Some heavy stones, and some light planks and boords,
And lest the streame their worke might overwhelme,
They turned it away by other foords;
Great store of wood there grew in that same Realme
The which to them great store of stuffe affoords,
And now that Proverbe see performd you might,
That many hands make heavie works but light.

17

The Nubians fierce impatient of all stay,
And by desire of gaine all headlong led,
The perill great and danger do not way,
But each man clapps his target on his hed:
And then their battrie to the walls they lay,
With rammes, and engines strongly furnished,
With which to shake the walls they do begin,
Nor were they all unfurnished within.

18

Darts, stones, and planks, yea evn their houses tyle,
They flang down on the, whe they drew more neare
By which they brake and pierced otherwhile,
Their engines huge, so as it might appeare,
Dame Fortune seemd at first on Turks to smile,
But after soone againe she changd her cheare,
No sooner night was gone, and Sun once up,
But that they tasted of another cup.

19

Then on each side they had so hot a charge,
As hardly they were able to sustaine:

Sansonet of the shipping had the charge,
And he by sea assaults them to their paine;
And, for their powre was great, and place was large,
Each Captaine tooke with him a severall traine,
Thereby the more to trouble all their foes,
And of their vertue, to make larger shoes.

20

And for that speciall cause, they do divide,
Their mightie host into foure sevrall parts,
To thend that by that meanes it might be spide,
Which men had stout, and which had fainting harts,
Great towres on mighty wheeles did seeme to ride,
Drawne with great force like ordinary carts,
And Elephants did carrie towres so tall,
As did in height surpasse the Citie wall.

21

A scaling ladder Brandimart doth beare,
And clymes himselfe and causeth others clyme:
For what man having such a guide, could feare?
Each man to stay doth thinke it haynous crime:
The ladders strength was weighd by no man there,

Each roun a man, and some beares two sometime:
Now Brandimart to conquest wholly bent,
Gets to the top, and winnes a battlement.

22

With hand and foote he clammerd in such sort,
He wan a batlement and did it keepe,
Then with his sword he made them all such sport,
As causd the lookers on, not laugh, but weepe:
The ladder now chargd with too great resort,
Standing aslope, and not upright and steepe,
Brake in the midst, so that save Brandimart,
All of them fell, unto their paine and smart.

23

Their Captaine though, with this no whit dismayd,
Keepes still his place though he the hap did marke,
Although he saw his men him could not ayd,
Though he alone were all their shooting marke;
His men below cryde out to him, and prayd
Him to retire, but he no whit could harke;
But boldly from the wall into the towne,
Which was thrise ten foote deepe, he leaped downe.

24

As if the pavement had bene straw, not stone,
So leapt he downe, so nimble and so light,
And being there, layd so about alone,
He made them all give place unto his might:
Of those that fought he killed many a one,
The rest thought best to save themselves by flight,
But they that saw him leape downe from without,
Within their minds were full of dread and doubt.

25

Straightwayes about the campe a rumor spred,
From mouth to mouth, and man to man doth come,
And some doth fly, and flying gathers hed,
Of that hard feat, that Brandimart had done;
And comes at last whereas Orlando led
His band, and after to King Oton's sonne,
And then to Olivero, never ceasing,
But in her going still her tale increasing.

26

All these but chiefe Orlando all among,
That Brandimart in minde did dearely love,

And hearing it from thence they tarrid long,
It would be hard his danger to remove;
Unto the walls set scaling ladders strong,
Resolved now their utmost force to prove;
And up they mount, with looks so grim and bold,
As scant their enemies durst them behold.

27

As when the seas are wrought with sturdie wind,
The ventrous vessell tost with many a wave,
Is sometime smote before, sometime behind,
And each surge strives a passage free to have;
The fearfull Pilot with astonisht minde,
Knowes not which way himselfe he should behave,
Till at the last one surge the whole possesseth,
And so both Pilot, ship, and all oppresseth.

28

So when those three, of whom before I spake,
Had got the wall, they did the souldiers teach,
To follow them, and so large path did make,
As thousands of them now the wall did reach:
This while the monstrous rammes the walls did shake

In other places, and made such a breach,
That now in many parts without resistance,
They might to Brandimart bring good assistance.

29

Looke how that streame surnamd of streams the king,
With damage great above his bankes doth grow,
When some strong wind or tyde of highest spring,
Makes him beyond accustomed bounds to flow,
And thereby hurt unto the fields doth bring,
And drowneth flockes, and houses overthrow,
Then trees do harbour fish, as new come guests,
Where flying birds were wont to build their nests.

30

So now Biserta walls were farre too weake,
To save the Citie from both sword and fire;
The valiant Captaines first the Ice do breake,
To follow whom, the souldiers do aspire;
And what with will their ancient wrongs to wreake,
And what with hope of booties, and desire,
They ruind soone that Citie, that had beene
Of Affrica, the sole triumphant Queene.

31

Now multitudes lay slaine in evry street,
And with the bloud that of their wounds did runne,
The channels flowd vermillion under feet;
But when the fire to take had once begunne,
No doubt it was a wofull sight to seet,
What spoile upon the towne by fire was done:
Such cryes, such plaints were over all the Citie,
As might have moved any hearts to pitie.

32

Their helpes Gods now under foot were troden,
Their sacred jewels taken all for pray,
The conquerers come forth of houses, loden,
With gold, with plate, with faire and rich aray;
And though the souldiers flatly were forboden
Foule beastly lust, this was to them no stay,
Young children and old matrones could not scape,
Deflouring forced, not ungodly rape.

33

Stout Olivero with a sound blow slew,
King Bucifer, and brought him to his end,

Bransardo kild himselfe, when as he knew,
The Citie could not now it selfe defend;
Astolfo did in single fight subdew
Fulvo, and tooke him prisner in the end:
These three were those, whom (as before you hard)
King Agramant those countryes left to guard.

34

But Agramant, who as before I told,
Stole from his men, and so away did sayle,
When as he did these flames from farre behold,
Much did the state of that same towne bewaile;
But when a messenger did plaine unfold,
How farre his foes in Affricke did prevaile,
He would have slaine himselfe, of woes to rid him,
Save that the sage Sobrino did forbid him.

35

Ah sir said he (in frendly sort him chiding)
Drive from your worthy minde such wretched thought,
What could be to your foes more welcome tiding,
Then that your selfe, your owne destruction sought?
They doubt, while you in safetie are abiding,

But hard to keepe, that they have easlie caught;
Not one of them but dreads, and greatly feares,
That Affricke while you live, cannot be theirs.

36

Your death would all your frends of hope deprive,
(The onely helpe that in our case is left)
All they have got, while you remaine alive,
They can but count it robberie and theft:
But if you die, who shall against them strive?
Both Affricke lost, and we of hope are reft:
Wherefore though for your selfe you life abhord,
Live for our sake (at least) my soveraigne Lord.

37

The Souldan sure will helpe your cause tadvance,
To him you may for men and money send,
Be sure he will be loth the King of France
Should nest in Affricke, being not his frend:
If Norandino knew of your mischance,
He would both men, and horse, and monie send,
The states of Media, Persia, and Armenie,
With Arabia, will helpe you with their menie.

38

These words then spake the grave wise man and old,
To move his Prince a better minde to carrie,
And bad him cheare himselfe, and still he told,
What hopes there were (tho sure he thought cotrary)
He saw and knew their comfort was but cold,
That long they use to pray, and sue, and tarie,
Who having lost their crownes, to sue are faine
To other Kings, to helpe them home againe.

39

Both Hanniball and Iugurth samples be,
To Princes all, that trust in forren ayd,
With Lodwicke Sforce whom this last age did see,
Unto a stronger Lodwicke foule betraid:
Wherefore unto that sentence I agree,
The Duke Alfonso of Ferrara said,
A greater signe of folly is not showne,
Then trusting others force, distrust ones owne.

40

Wherefore in that conflict and bitter warre,
In which he found Christs Vicar not his frend,

And that the Venice state with him did jarre,
And he that promised him to defend,
From Italie was drivn and absent farre,
Yet never would Alfonso condescend,
To put himselfe in other mens subjection,
And leave his state to forren powres protection.

41

But Agramant of comfort all bereft,
Forsooke the shore, and lanchd to the deepe,
To thinke in what estate his Realme was left,
Does make him bitterly to wayle and weepe,
From right hand now they sayld unto the left,
And Eastward all the night their course did keepe,
Untill a storme that rose within a while,
Did cause them harbour in a little Ile.

42

A little Ile voyde of inhabitants,
But full of Hares, and Conies, and of Deare,
With coverts great, of trees and slender plants,
That had not bene cut downe in many a yeare:
Else there was nothing to supply their wants,

Onely some tokens plainly did appeare,
That fishers used there their nets to drye,
The while the fish in sea do quiet lye.

43

Here onely in the harbour they did find,
A ship that had bene weatherbeaten sore,
Gradasso forced by contrary wind,
Came in that ship from Arly late before,
With princely gesture, and behaviour kind,
Each King salutes the tother on the shore;
For well they lov'd together, and were late,
Fellows in arms neare Paris walles and gate.

44

The King of Sericane with no small grieffe,
Did heare the storie of their late distresse,
And which did comfort Agramante chiefe,
His person offerd these harms to redresse,
But that he shall in AEgypt finde reliefe,
He greatly doubts, and thinketh nothing lesse,
Pompeys example teacheth you (he said)
That banisht men finde there but sorie aid.

45

But sith the case so stands, and that you say,
English Astolfo with a Nubian host,
And mad Orlando, who this other day,
As I did heare, for love his wit had lost,
Have done such hurt, I have bethought a way,
That at this time I thinke will profite most:
I will Orlando challenge hand to hand,
Who (sure I am) in my hands cannot stand.

46

Were he once dead, the rest I count as straw,
And for the Nubians, though I cannot dreame
How they should come, yet know I how to draw
Them backe againe from yours, to their own Reame
Those other Nubians, whom a divers law
Sunders from these, as well as Nylus streame,
Shall with Arabian and Macrobian forces
Assaile them, (these have gold, & those good horses).

47

The King of Affricke praised this offer kind,
And called it a good and blessed storme,

That causd him such a frend as this to find,
And thanks him for his offer: but the forme
Of it (he said) doth no whit please my mind,
No though thereby I might all harmes reforme,
And that I might Biserta towne regaine,
I would not do mine honor such a staine.

48

If any man must challenge him, then I
It is, that am in honor tide unto it,
And whether I shall kill or else shall die,
I am resolved, surely I will do it
Nay then sir (said Gradasso) I will trie
Another way, if you assent but to it,
We two will make one challenge thus: to fight
Against Orlando and some other Knight.

49

So I be one (then Agramant replide)
I care not, though I second be or furst,
For in the world is not a man beside,
To trust whose courage more then yours, I durst.
Sobrino that stood all the while aside,

Into such speech, upon the sudden burst,
Hath age (quoth he) brought me in such contempt,
To be excluded from so brave attempt?

50

Disgrace me not so much, to leave out me,
Age hath not tane away my vigor cleene,
Skill and experience good companions be,
Age knoweth whatsoever youth hath beene;
Wherefore let me be one, and you shall see,
That I am stronger, then perhaps you weene:
To this request of his they soone agree,
And so they send their challenge three to three.

51

They send a Herald, as it is the use,
The challeng to Orlando stout to beare,
With number like to meet at Lippaduse,
And so by combat, end all matters theare:
The while each side should grant the other truse,
And all acts of hostilitie forbear;
This Lippadusa is a little Ile,
Distant from Affricke shore some twentie mile.

52

The Herald made good hast, and went apace,
And usd all helpe of oares and sailes he could,
And comming to Orlando with good grace,
His message and the challenge plaine he told:
Amids Biserta in the market place,
He found him parting summes of coyne and gold,
(Of that same sacked towne the many spoiles)
Unto his men for guerdon of their toiles.

53

Now when Orlando this brave challenge hard,
He did accept it, and did much rejoyce,
And gave unto the Herald in reward,
Of many sumptuous gifts great store and choise;
He knew before the death of Mandricard,
And heard of Durindan by common voice,
How that Gradasso had it, whom to find,
A voiage unto thIndies he assignd.

54

But knowing that he need not go so farre,
And that his great good fortune so had wrought,

That he should send to offer single warre,
Whom he farre of had purposd to have sought;
He now doth hope that long they should not barre
Him of his sword, that he so deare had bought,
Eke Brigliadore he hopes now to regaine,
That did in Agramantes hands remaine.

55

He chuseth for his frends to take his part,
In this so great and dangerous a fray,
His cousin, and that faithfull Brandimart,
Both whom he oft saw tride before that day;
Armours and horse, and swords on evry part,
He seekes to get for them the best he may,
For none of them had armour of his owne;
As I before this time have made it knowne.

56

Orlando when he first of all fell mad,
Lost both his sword and armour that same howre,
The tothers twaine, the Sarzan taken had,
And now they were safe lockt up in a towre:
In Affrica their armour was but bad,

The warres in France did dayly theirs devowre:
They seldome had in those parts any store,
And Agramant what was, had had before.

57

Such as he could, though it were old and rustie,
He caused to be scowrd and furbusht new,
And evrie day with his companions trustie,
He talked of the fight that should ensew.
One day, as in a morning fresh and lustie,
They walkt upon the shore, they saw in vew
A great ship under saile with treble top,
Saile to the shore, without all stay or stop.

58

No saylers, passengers, nor anie guide,
Within the ship to be discoverd were,
But as the tempest drave her and the tide,
She came, and safely so arived there:
But here a while the emptie ship shall bide,
And these three Knights, because the love I beare
Unto Rogero and Renaldo both,
To overpasse them longer makes me loth.

59

You heard how they themselves aside did draw,
And of their owne accords their combat cease,
When as they saw, against all right and law,
On either side the battell to increase:
They were so earnest, neither of them saw
Which side was first, that brake their vowed peace:
Wherefore they aske of those that neare them came,
Which King of this foule breach should have the blame.

60

Rogero had a valiant trustie man,
That served him with faithfulnessse and care,
Who never since the combat first began,
Had lost the sight of him, and being ware
Of this new breach, with all the speed he can,
He did his masters sword and horse prepare,
And brought it him, and wished him to use it,
But for that day Rogero did refuse it.

61

Howbet from thence he did his course direct,
And promise with Renaldo doth renew,

That if his King were first did oath neglect,
And shewd himselfe in promise so untrue,
That he would leave him and his wicked sect;
This said, he bad Renaldo then adew,
Demanding all he met, who was in fault,
Of this ungodly and unjust assault.

62

Of all the world he heares it plainly spoken,
How that of youthfull Agramantes part,
The law of armes, and late sworne truce was broken
Which now was turnd unto his losse and smart:
Yet thinks he, men would deeme it were a token
In him of faint or of unfaithfull hart,
To leave his Master in so great distresse,
Although his falshood had deservd no lesse.

63

The thought thereof drave him to no small muse,
If better twere for him to goe or tarrie,
If he do go, he much shall her abuse
Whom he so oft had promised to marrie;
Againe he thinketh that he cannot chuse;

In his returne to Affricke but miscarie,
He knowes how perjurie offendeth God,
How over it ay hangs a heavie rod.

64

On tother side, he feares the great disgrace,
Men would impute to him his Lord to leave,
And thinke it comes of fearfull heart and base:
What if some men perhaps his scuse receive,
When they do know, and understand the case?
Yet most will say, he doth his Lord deceave:
And that a man such promise may forsake,
As at the first, unlawfull was to make.

65

All that same day, and all that night ensuing,
He did the matter with himselfe debate,
His love, his Lord, on either side renewing
The doubtfull question, each in divers rate:
But noble minde, the greater shame eschewing,
Chose lastly to releev his masters state,
Much lovd he Bradamant, much thought he on her,
But more he lovd his duty and his honer.

66

Wherefore resolved to depart the Reame,
He sought at Arly, ships him to transport,
But neither at the sea, nor in the streame,
Could he there find a ship of any sort,
For Agramant in hast and feare extream,
Had all from thence, or burnd them in the port,
Which when Rogero once did understand,
He went unto Marsiliaward by land.

67

In Arly, nor from Arly all the way,
He saw no living Turke, but many a corse,
He mindeth at Marsilia, if he may,
To get a ship, by faire meanes or by force,
That into Affrica shall straight convay
Him and Frontino, his well tried horse:
But while such thoughts he in his mind contrived,
Great Dudon with his navie there arrived.

68

That Dudon, whom King Agramant on seas
Met to his cost, when erst his men were slaine:

He fled, his frends tane prisners, and in thease
Seaven Kings that erst in Affrica did raigne;
A man as then, might hardly cast a pease
Into that streame, or any little graine,
The Navie, and the prises, in such number,
Did so the river pester up, and cumber.

69

But Dudon selfe was newly come on land,
And his chiefe prisners he had set on shore,
And as in way of triumph made them stand,
The chiefe behind, the meaner set before,
With souldiers garded of his choisest band,
Who with their warlike voices evermore,
Made that same towne, and all the places round,
Of Dudons praise, and Dudons name to sound.

70

Rogero when he saw these bands appeare,
First thought it was the fleet of Agramant,
But when as he approched now more neare,
He saw how much his guesse of truth did want;
He sees his captive frends, with heavie cheare,

Bambyrage, Agricalt, and Ferurant,
Balastro, Rimedont, and Manilard,
And Nasamon, that wayle their hap so hard.

71

Rogero could by no meanes it endure,
To see in misery his noble frends,
He doubts his prayre no succour can procure,
And therefore he to trie his force intends:
His lance he presently doth put in ure,
With which not few unto the ground he sends;
His sword he drawes, and therewith in short space,
He doth an hundred hurt, kill, maime, displace.

72

Now Dudon heares the noise, the harme doth see,
Done by Rogero, yet to him unknowne,
He sees his men displact and foyled be,
And by one onely man their hurt is growne:
He takes his horse, and to that end that he
May venge these harms, or joyne thereto his owne,
He setteth in his rest, a mightie lance,
To prove himselfe a Palladine of France.

73

He bids his men in order to retire,
That of the field they two may have good scope:
Roger, that to rescue did desire
His friends, and now had put them in some hope:
And seeing vertuous Dudon did aspire,
In combat hand to hand with him to cope,
Did deeme he was the Captaine chiefe and guide,
And with great courage toward him did ride.

74

First Dudon came, but when he nearer came,
And saw Roger had no speare in sight,
He cast away his owne, as counting shame
To use advantages in any fight.
Then saith Roger to himselfe, this same
Is token of a most brave minded Knight;
And sure, except mine aime be much amisse,
One of the Palladines of France he is.

75

Wherefore he minds, ere any more ensew,
Or any force of either part were donne,

To learne his name: and asking him, he knew
How that he was the Dane Uggeros sonne;
Now (saith good Dudon) let me know of you
Your name, before our combat be begonne:
Rogerio in like sort him satisfied,
And so they both each other then defied.

76

Now Dudon had that Axe or iron Mace,
Wherewith he wonne such fame in many fights,
As proved him to be of that same race
Of Palladines, so brave and worthie Knights:
Rogerio hath the sword that cuts apace,
And frustrateth all charms, where ere it lights,
So that he had the vantage, had he usd it,
But for that time, it seemed he refusd it.

77

The cause was this, he was afeard perchance,
It would offend his loving Bradamant,
For being skilfull in the lines of France,
He knew that Dudons mother was her Ant:
So though his conquest might his name advance,

He doubts her love it may not little daunt:
For Turpin thinks, this was the onely reason,
That Dudon scaped killing at that season.

78

Rogero never foynd, and seldome strake,
But flatling, and his sword was so good steele,
The backe so thicke, as it no hurt did take,
Yet oft therewith he made good Dudon feele
Such thundring knocks, as causd his head to ake,
And made him readie many times to reele,
But least much reading may annoy your eyes,
To lay this booke aside I you advise.

ARGUMENT

THE FORTYFIRST BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

His prisners Dudon to Rogero gives,
Who in a tempest all were drowned quite,
Rogero onely scapes the storme, and lives,
And then is Christend, and beleeves aright.
Neare Lippadusas steepe and craggie clyves,
Sixe valiant Knights, a combat fierce do fight,
Where Sobrine hurt, the Marquesse lame on ground,
Good Brandimart receives a deadly wound.

FORTY FIRST BOOKE

1

That odor sweet wherewith an amorous youth
Of either sexe, their garments do perfume,
Or head or beard, when (full of loving ruth)
In flames of Cupids fire they co consume:
We say that odor perfect was in truth.
And of his goodnesse we do much presume,
If so a good while after it be felt,
And that the sweetnesse be long after smelt.

2

That pleasant juyce that Icarus unwise,
Did cause his men (to his great harme) to tast,
And did the Gauls to Italie entise,
Where they committed so great spoile and wast,
Was doubtlesse perfect good, and of great price,
If so at twelvemonths end it pleasant last.
The tree that doth his leaves in winter nourish,
Without all question did in sommer florish.

3

The bountie that so many hundred yeare,
In your most Princely stocke did ever shine,
Is to the world an open prooffe and cleare,
That he, from whom was first derivd your line,
Was sure a great, and worthie minded Peare,
And had that noble vertue and divine,
Which chiefly makes a man so rare and od,
As in that one, they most resemble God.

4

I shewd you in the booke that went before,
How good Rogero tooke great care and heed,
That as in other acts he shewd great store
Of vertues rare, that other men exceed,
So in this fight he shewd as much or more,
Then he had done in any other deed:
With noble mind ambitious to all good,
For glory thirsting still, but not for blood.

5

Good Dudon found (for well discerne he might)
How that Rogero him to hurt forbare,

How though he had great vantage in the fight,
Yet that to use the same he still did spare;
Wherefore though he were overmatcht in might,
Yet therewithall he shewd his speciall care,
That though Rogero were in force superiour,
Himselfe in courtsie would not be inferiour.

6

Perdie sir let (saith he) our combat cease,
Your courtsie hath alreadie conquerd me,
I cannot winne, and therefore seeke I peace;
And I (saith tother) will to peace agree:
I onely crave this grace, that you release
Those seavn, whom standing there in bonds I see,
Those were the Kings, whom late near Affrike shore
Had taken bene a day or two before.

7

At his request thus Dudon gave remission,
But ere they went, he made them first to swear,
That neither they, nor none by their permission,
Gainst any Christen state, should armour beare;
He gave them also leave on like condition,

To take the choisest vessell that was theare,
Who no convenient season overslipping,
For Affrica immediately tooke shipping.

8

Thus had those kings their ransomes all remitted,
And with Rogero shipt themselves that day,
And then to faithlesse winds themselves committed,
They weigh their ankers, and their sailes display:
A friendly gale at first their journey fitted,
And bare them from the shore full far away:
But afterward within a little season,
The wind discoverd his deceit and treason.

9

First from the poop, it changed to the side,
Then to the prore, at last it turned round,
In one place long it never would abide,
Which doth the Pilots wit and skill confound:
The surging waves swell still in higher pride,
While Proteus flock did more and more abound,
And seem to him as many deaths to threaten,
As that ships sides with divers waves are beaten.

10

Now in their face the wind, straight in their back,
And forward this, and backward that it blowes,
Then on the side it makes the ship to crack,
Among the Mariners confusion growes;
The Master ruine doubts, and present wrack,
For none his will, nor none his meaning knowes,
To whistle, becken, crie it nought availes,
Somtime to strike, sometime to turn their sailes.

11

But none there was could heare, nor see, nor mark,
Their eares so stopt, so dazeld were their eyes,
With weather so tempestuous and so dark,
And black thick clouds that with the storme did rise,
From whence sometime great gastly flames did spark,
And thunderclaps that seemd to rend the skies:
Which made them in a manner deaf and blind,
That no man understood the Masters mind.

12

Nor lesse, nor much lesse fearfull is the sound
The cruell tempest in the tackle makes,

Yet each one for himselfe some businesse found,
And to some speciall office him betakes:
One this untid, another that hath bound,
He the Main bowling, now restraines, now slakes:
Some take an oare, some at the pump take paine,
And powre the sea into the sea againe.

13

Behold a horrible and hideous blast,
That Boreas from his frozen lips doth send,
Doth backward force the saile against the mast,
And makes the waves unto the skies ascend:
Then brake their oares and rudder eke at last,
Now nothing left from tempest to defend,
So that the ship was swaid now quite aside,
And to the waves laid ope her naked side.

14

Then all aside the staggering ship did reel,
For one side quite beneath the water lay,
And on the tother side the very keel,
Above the water cleare discern you may.
Then thought they all hope past, & down they kneel,

And unto God to take their soules they pray,
Worse danger grew then this, when this was past,
By means the ship gan after leak so fast.

15

The wind, the waves to them no respite gave,
But ready evry houre to overthrow them,
Oft they were hoist so high upon the wave,
They thought the middle region was below them,
Oft times so low the same their vessell drave,
As though that Caron there his boat would show the
Scant had they time and power to fetch their breath,
All things did threaten them so present death.

16

Thus all that night they could have no release,
But when the morning somewhat nearer drew,
And that by course the furious wind should cease,
(A strange mishap) the wind then fiercer grew,
And while their troubles more and more increase,
Behold a rock stood plainly in their view,
And right upon the same the spitefull blast
Bare them perforce, which made them all agast.

17

Yet did the master by all means assay
To steare out roomer, or to keep aloof,
Or at the least to strike sailes if they may,
As in such danger was for their behoof.
But now the wind did beare so great a sway,
His enterprizes had but little proof:
At last with striving yard and all was torn,
And part thereof into the sea was born.

18

Then each man saw all hope of safety past,
No means there was the vessell to direct,
No help there was, but all away are cast,
Wherefore their common safety they neglect,
But out they get the shipboat, and in hast
Each man therein his life strives to protect,
Of King, nor Prince no man takes heed nor note,
But well was he could get him in the boat.

19

Among the rest, Rogero doth suppose
The safest way to be, to leave the ship,

And being in his dublet and his hose,
He nimbly down into the boat did skip,
But after him so great a number goes,
Before they could the rope unwind or slip,
The boat at length did sink with overlading,
And to the bottome carid all her lading.

20

Twas lamentable then to heare the cries,
Of companies of evry sort confusd,
In vaine to heavn they lift their hands and eyes,
And make late vowes, as in such case is usd,
For over them the wrathfull sea doth rise,
As though to give them eare it had refusd,
And made them hold their peace by hard constraint,
And stopt the passage whence came out the plaint.

21

Some swam a while, some to the bottome sank,
Some flote upon the wave, though being dead,
Rogero for the matter never shranke,
But stil above the water keeps his head,
And not farre off he sees that rockie banke,

From which in vaine he and his fellowes fled:
He thither laboureth to get with swimming,
In hope to get upon the same by climbing.

22

With legs and armes he doth him so behave,
That still he kept upon the floods aloft,
He blowes out from his face the boistrous wave
That ready was to overwhelm him oft.
This while the wind aloof the vessell drave,
Which huld away with pace but slow and soft,
Fro those, that while they thought their deth to shun
Now did perhaps before their glasse was run.

23

O hopes of men uncertaine, vaine and fraile,
The ship that all forsook, as quite forlorn,
When all her wonted guides and helps did faile,
Her sailers drownd, and all her tackle torn,
A safe course held with broken mast and saile,
And by an Eddie from the rock was born,
And evn as if the storm had changd his mind,
It went with merry gale afore the wind.

24

And where with mariners it went awry,
Now wanting them it went to Affricke right,
And came on land unto Biserta ny,
And gently on the sands it did alight,
What time Orlando then was walking by,
Conferring with his fellowes of their fight,
The which was undertaken by them three,
Against three Princes of no mean degree.

25

And for they saw the ship was fast on ground,
They took a boat, and went on her aboard,
With mind to question whither she was bound,
Or what good merchandise she can affoord;
But under hatches lading none they found,
Save good Rogeros armour, horse, and sword,
Which he behind him left, when in bad taking,
He took the boat, the ship itself forsaking.

26

Orlando viewd them well with good regard,
And having chiefly markd the noble blade,

He knew it was that famous Ballisard,
With which he did some yeares before invade
Fallarius garden, spite of all her guard,
Who by strong charms, the sword and garden made,
It may be you ere this have heard the tale,
And how this sword from him Brunello stale.

27

And after to the good Rogero gave it,
Who late had left it in this wofull wrack,
Glad was Orlando now againe to have it,
That oft had triall both of edge and back;
He deemd that God did evn of purpose save it,
Now to supply therewith his present lack:
And after oft he said, and thought indeed,
That God did send it him at so great need.

28

At so great need, when as he was to fight,
Against Gradasso king of Sericane,
Who had, beside his great and passing might,
Renaldos horse, and fearfull Durindane.
Rogeros armour though it looked bright,

Yet was it not as thing so precious tane,
As being prizd more for the sumptuous show,
Then for the goodnesse, which they did not know.

29

And sith himselfe for armour did not care,
And never did the dint of weapon feare,
He doth that armour to his cosin spare,
But not the sword, for that himself doth weare:
The horse that was of shape and goodnesse rare,
Had Brandimart, and thus divided were,
Among these three, in guerdon of their paines,
An equall share and portion in the gaines.

30

Now each prepard against the day of fight
Brave furniture, with cost of many a crown:
Orlando on his quarter, bare in sight,
High Babels tower with lightning stricken down:
His cosin had a Lyme hound argent bright,
His Lyme laid on his back, he couching down,
The word or mot was this, untill he commeth,
The rest was rich, and such as him becommeth.

31

But Brandimart, who as I erst made mention,
Had heard his fathers death, went all in black:
Of braveries he now had no intention,
Lest men might think he did discretion lack,
He card for no device, nor new invention,
Nor ware he sumptuous clothing on his back,
He only had one border richly set
With stones, but darkned over with a net.

32

A net that Fiordeliege his dearest Queene
With her own hands against that day did make,
But neither then, nor all the time between
That first she undertook it for his sake,
Till she had done it, was she ever seen
To laugh or smile, or any joy to take:
Her heart still heavy was, her look still sad,
And yet her self did know no cause she had.

33

But still in feare, and still in doubt she is,
Her spouse by death shall now from her be sunderd:

Oft times her self hath seen him be, ere this
In greater fights an hunderd and an hunderd,
Yet never did her heart so give amisse,
Wherefore at her own feare she greatly wonderd:
And evn that reason made her feare the more,
Because she was not usd to feare before.

34

Now when each thing in order fit was set,
The champions three were shipped with their horses:
Unto Astolfo and to Sansonet,
The charge was left of all those Christen forces,
But dolefull Fiordeliege, although as yet
To hide her sorrow, she her self inforces,
Yet when the wind away the vessell beares,
She bursteth out to open cries and teares.

35

With Sansonet Astolfo took much paine,
To bring her to her chamber from the shore,
Who lying on her bed, she still doth plaine,
That she hath lost her spouse for evermore:
To seek to comfort her it was in vaine,

For talking made her feare increase the more,
But now the worthy champions in this while
Were safe arrivd at Lippadusa Ile.

36

No sooner set they foot upon the land,
But (on the Eastern side) they pitcht a tent,
Because perhap that part was nearest hand,
Or els upon some politick intent:
On tother side, with such an equall band,
Came Agramant: but sith this day was spent,
They all agreed all fight to be forborn,
Untill the very next ensuing morn.

37

A watch was charged then on either part,
That neither side the tother may deceive,
But ere it yet was dark, king Brandimart,
(Though not without Orlandos speciall leave)
Doth mean a wondrous favour to impart
To Agramant, if he the same receive:
For why the tone the tother oft had seen
As friends, and had in France together been.

38

Now after joyning hands and salutation,
The noble minded Brandimart begun
To use unto the Turke an exhortation;
That with Orlando he the combat shun:
Affirming unto him with protestation,
Would he believe but in the Virgins Son,
That he both present peace would then assure him,
And all his Realmes in Affricke safe procure him.

39

Because you are, and have been deare to me,
Therefore (he saith) this counsell I you give,
And sith I follow it my self you see,
Thereby you may be sure I it believe;
Christ is a God, a God indeed is he;
An Idol Mammet is, that doth not live:
Wherefore deare sir, I do desire to move
From errours foule, your self and all I love.

40

This is indeed the way of truth and life,
All other wayes but this do lead astray;

Why should you live in error and in strife,
When in true peace and knowledge live you may?
Tempestuous cares this world hath ever rife,
And if your present state you would but way,
You plainly may perceive your venter such,
As you to win but little hazard much.

41

What if you could the sonne of Milo kill?
Or us that come with him to win, or die?
Think you that then you shall have all you will?
Think you your state you can restore thereby?
No sure, the state of Charles is not so ill,
But that he quickly can our lack supply:
Wherefore deare Sir unto my counsell listen,
All would be well, if you would be a Christen.

42

Thus much said Brandimart, and more beside
He would have said, to peace him to exhort,
Save that with scornfull speech and full of pride,
Fierce Agramant this wise did cut him short;
A madnesse meet it is (thus he replid)

In you, or any man that in such sort
Will counsell and advise men what to do,
Not being cald of counsell thereunto.

43

And where you say, to this love movd you chief,
That you have born, and still do beare to me,
Herein you pardon must my hard belief,
While in Orlandos company you be;
I rather think despaire, and spite, and grief
Hath movd you hereunto, because you see
Your soule is damned to eternall fire,
To draw us thither with you, you desire.

44

What victories, or els what overthrowes
I shall hereafter have, God onely knoweth,
Nor you nor I, nor yet Orlando knowes,
God onely where he list the same bestoweth:
But as for me, no feare nor foolish showes
Shall daunt my courage, howsoere it goeth,
Die first I will with torment and with paine,
Much rather then to yeeld, my stock to staine.

45

Now when you list, depart from hence you may,
As little thank, and slenderly rewarded,
And if to morrow you the Champion play
No better, nor no more to be regarded,
Then you have plaid the Orator to day,
Orlando sure will be but weakly guarded;
And these last words in manner such he said,
As that thereby much choler he bewraid.

46

Thus parted they, and rested all that night,
But ready they were all by break of day,
All armd, and ready for the future fight,
Small speech was usd, no lingring nor no stay,
They couch their spears, & run with all their might:
But while I tell you of this bloody fray,
I doubt I do unto Rogero wrong,
To leave him swimming in the sea so long.

47

The gallant youth had labourd many an houre
To swim, and save himself from being drownd,

The surging wave still threatens him to devoure,
But guilty conscience more doth him confound;
He thinks that God will of his mighty power
Sith he foresloed when he was on ground
To he baptizd in waters fresh, and fitter,
To sowse him now in waves both salt and bitter.

48

He now remembers he had plighted troth
To Bradamant, nor done as he had spoken,
How to Renaldo he had made an oath,
And that the same by him was foully broken;
Most earnestly he now repents them both,
And cals to God for mercy, and in token
Of true contrition voweth out of hand,
To be baptizd, if ere he come to land.

49

And that he would renounce all Turkish lawes,
Nor gainst a Christen Prince once weapon carrie,
But serve king Charles, and aid the Churches cause,
And from the same hereafter not to varie,
And never seek delay or farther pause,

His vertuous spouse Dame Bradamant to marrie.
(Twas strange) no sooner he this vow had ended,
But that his strength increast, & swimming mended.

50

And where before he greatly was affraid,
That those same surging waters him would drown,
He thinketh now they do his swimming aid:
And sometime rising, sometime going down,
He passeth on with courage undismaid,
And scarce he seemed once to wet his crown:
That so with cunning part, and part with strength,
He reached to the little Ile at length.

51

The rest of all his company was drownd,
Nor ever was a man of them seen more,
But by Gods onely grace Rogero found
This little Ile, and clammerd up the shore:
And finding it a small and barren ground,
A new feare rose no lesse then that before,
Lest in a place of needfull things too scant,
He should be starvd with penury and want.

52

But yet with constant mind and unappald,
Resolvd to suffer all that God would send,
Upon the rock with much ado he crald,
And gat upon the levell ground in thend;
When lo an aged man whose head was bald,
And beard below his girdle did descend,
That was an Hermit that did there inhabit,
Came forth to him in godly revrent habit.

53

And comming neare he crid, O Saul, O Saul,
Why persecutest thou my people so?
As erst our Saviour spake unto Saint Paul,
Then when he gave to him that blessed blow,
Behold how God when pleaseth him can call,
From sea, from land, from places high and low,
When you did ween him farthest he was nighest,
So strong an arm, so long reach hath the highest.

54

Thus spake this Hermit so devout and old,
Who by an Angell in his sleep that night

Of good Rogeros comming was foretold,
And of all chances should on him allight,
With all his valiant actions manifold,
That he had done, and should perform in fight,
And of his death, and of his noble race,
That should succeed him after in his place.

55

Now (as I said) this wise this Hermit spoke,
And part doth comfort him, and part doth check,
He blameth him, that in that pleasant yoke
He had so long deferd to put his neck,
But did to wrath his maker still provoke,
And did not come at his first call and beck,
But still did hide himself away from God,
Untill he saw him comming with his rod.

56

Then did he comfort him, and make him know,
That grace is nere denid to such as ask:
(As do the workmen of the Gospell show,
Receiving pay alike for divers task)
Provided that our prayr of zeal do grow,

And serve not as a viser or a mask:
This did the man of God Rogero tell,
And so from thence he led him to his cell.

57

The cell a chappell had on thEastern side,
Upon the Western side a grove or berie,
Forth of the which he did his food provide,
Small chear God wot, wherwith to make folk merie,
Yet forty yeare he had that living trid,
And yet thereof it seemd he was not wearie:
But eating berries, drinking water cleare,
He had in strength and health livd fourscore yeare.

58

Now kindled had the man of God some wood,
And on his boord he set a little fruit,
The youth to drie his clothes not far off stood,
For why, to change he hath no other sute;
Then he by thold mans teaching understood
The faith, and how to Christ he must impute
The pardon of his sins, yet nere the later
He told him he must be baptizd in water.

59

And so he was the next ensuing day,
And afterward he rested in that place
A while, and with the man of God did stay,
Resolving him of evry doubtfull case:
Somtime of heavn, and of the later day,
Somtime of earth, and of his noble race,
That should in time to come hold mighty Reames,
As was reveald to him in former dreames.

60

And further unto him he doth repeat,
How his chief house should be sirnamed Este,
Because in time to come king Charles the great
Should say to them in Latin words, Hic este,
Which is as much to say, be here the seat,
In which you shall hereafter ever rest ye,
And many future things to him he told,
Which were too long for me now to unfold.

61

This while Orlando and king Brandimart
With Marquesse Olivero, (as I told)

Met with those three of the contrary part,
Yong Agramante and Gradasso bold,
With good Sobrino, who for valiant heart,
Gives place to few of them, though being old;
Each spurs his horse, that ran a wondrous pace,
And of their blowes resounded all the place.

62

In this same course each plaid his part so well,
That up to heavn flew shiverd evry lance,
The hideous noise did cause the seas to swell,
And some report, twas heard as far as France;
Gradasso and Orlando (as befell)
Did meet together, were it choice or chance;
The match was evn, save that their horses differ,
And made Gradasso seem to run the stiffer.

63

The weaker horse on which Orlando rode,
Was bruised so with this so fearfull shock,
As now he could no longer beare his lode,
But sinking down, lay senslesse with the knock;
Orlando then did make but small abode,

His courser lying senselesse like a stock,
Sith that with neither raines nor spurs he sturd,
He left his saddle, and drew forth his sword.

64

With Agramant the Marquesse hand to hand
Did most, betweene them equall went the game,
Sobrino was by Brandimartes hand,
Cast from his horse, I know not how it came,
But at that time it could not well be scand,
If so the horse or horseman were to blame:
But whether beast or rider wanted force,
Sobrino certaine downe was from his horse.

65

King Brandimart nere offerd once to touch
Sobrino, when he saw him downe in vew,
But to Gradasso that had done as much
Unto Orlando, in great hast he flew
The Marquesse fight with Agramant was such,
As which side had the vantage no man knew,
For when their staves were shivered all and rent,
Their axes then they usd incontinent.

66

Orlando who by hap a horse did lacke,
And saw Gradasso bent another way,
Whome Brandimart did hold so hardly tacke,
That he enforced him thereby to stay;
I say the Palladine then looking backe,
Saw old Sobrino standing in his way,
And toward him he goth with looke so fierce,
As though his eye, as well as sword could pierce.

67

Sobrino gainst the force of such a man,
Sought with his surest ward himselfe to save,
And as a Pilot doth the best he can,
To shunne the furie of the surging wave,
Evn so this well experienct Turke began,
Himselfe in this great danger to behave,
With sword and shield his best defence he made,
Against the fearfull edge of that same blade.

68

Which blade, of such an edge, in such an arme,
No marvell if to pierce it seldom faile,

Against the which in vaine was any charme,
For though his shield was steeld, his cote of male,
Yet quite through shield and armore it did harme,
To save his shoulder all could not availe.
But he to wound Orlando was not able,
For God hath made his skinne impenetrable.

69

The valiant Earle redoubled still his blow,
And thinks from shoulders off to cut his head,
He, that the force of Clarimont did know,
Gave backward, or his ground still traversed,
But in his traversing he was so slow,
That with one blow he laid him downe for dead,
The blow fell flatling, but with force so maine,
As crusht his helmet, and amazd his braine.

70

Downe fell Sobrino backward on the ground,
From whence long time it was ere he arose,
Orlando thinks that he was safe and sound,
And that he was starke dead he doth suppose:
Wherefore since single foe he no where found,

Unto Gradasso presently he goes,
To whom king Brandimart in armes, and horse,
In sword, inferiour was, perhaps in force.

71

But yet the noble minded Brandimart,
Upon Rogeros horse Frontino mounted,
With that same Sarasin so plaid his part,
As if his forces he but little counted:
And sure Gradasso not in skill nor heart,
But in his sword and armour him surmounted:
Enforcing him oft times to stand aloofe,
Because his armour was of no good prooffe.

72

But good Frontino bare away the bell,
For being ready to the riders hand,
It seemd where ever Durindana fell,
Frontino had such wit to understand,
That evermore he did escape it well:
But all this while it hardly could be scand,
In tother twaine on which side fortune works,
In Olivero, or the king of Turks.

73

Orlando had (as late before I told)
Left good Sobrino on the ground for dead,
Wherefore on foot he goes with courage bold,
To succour Brandimart if ill he sped;
But in the way by hap he did behold
Sobrinos horse that without rider fled,
Orlando straight into the saddle valted,
Not looking if he went upright or halted.

74

One hand his sword, the tother holds his raine,
And so he rideth to Gradasso ward,
Who when he saw him come, did not refraine,
But to encounter with him straight prepard:
To fight with one of them, or els with twaine,
It seemd he little reckoned nor card;
He minds and hopeth to effect it soon,
To make them both to think it night ere noone.

75

Yet for a while king Brandimart he leaves,
And turnes him to the Earle, and with a thrust

Whereas his armour weakest he perceives,
There doth the fierce Gradasso hit him just,
And enterd, but his cunning him deceives,
Orlandos skin be pierced never must.
But when with Ballisard Orlando strake,
His helmet, coat of maile, and shield he brake.

76

So that both in his face, his breast, and side,
He wounded sore the king of Sericane,
Who marvels much what strange chance did betide,
For never erst such sore hurt he had tane:
He thought there could not be a blade beside
To pierce his coat, he having Durindane;
And sure that blow had him dispatched clearly,
If it had had more strength, or come more nearely.

77

He sees that now he must take better heed,
And not trust armour, but a surer ward,
To seek to save himselfe he now hath need,
And looke unto his limbs with more regard:
Now while twixt them the fight did thus proceed,

Good Brandimart did see he might be spard,
Wherefore to breath himselfe he then retir'd,
Still ready taid each part, if cause requird.

78

Now had Sobrino long laine in a trance,
With that same bruse, and with that bloody wound,
Givn him by that great Palladine of France,
That at two blowes had laid him on the ground,
With much ado he doth himselfe advance,
And standing on his feete, and looking round,
He thought his Master was in weakest case,
And to his aid he moves his silent pace.

79

At Oliveros backe he comes unspide,
Who sole on Agramant did fixe his eyes,
And that same horse that Oliver did ride,
He hought behind in such despitefull wise,
That wanting strength, he fell downe on his side,
And was not able any more to rise:
And which was worse then his unlookt for fall,
His foot hung in the stirop therewithall.

80

Sobrino doubled then his blowes againe,
Thinking from shoulders off his head to pare,
But yet the steele made that attempt but vaine,
That Vulcan tempred erst, and Hector ware:
King Brandimart at Sobrin runnes amaine,
When of his doings he was well aware,
And overthrew him quite, and stoutly smote him,
But thold fierce man, soone on his feet up got him.

81

And once againe at Oliver he flies,
And once again he thinketh him to kill,
Or at the least cause him he shall not rise;
But he that had his better arme at will,
Layd with his sword about him in such wise,
As that he kept himselfe from further ill:
And made his foe, that was of no great strength
Stand distant from him, almost twice his length.

82

The Marquesse hopes ere long to ease his paine,
If he can cause Sobrino stand aloofe,

Who bled so fast, as now from fight tabstaine
He thought it would be best for his behoofe:
Now Olivero all his force doth straine,
And to get loose he maketh manie a prooffe,
But still his foot was fast to his great hurt,
And still the horse lay tumbling in the durt.

83

This while king Brandimart doth go to find
Traianos sonn, and now he hath him found,
Frontino now before, and straight behind:
That good Frontino that can turne so round:
The horse was sure and of a passing kind,
The Sotherne kings was readie, strong, and sound:
He had that famous courser Brigliadore,
The which Rogero gave him late before.

84

But sure the Turke great ods in armour had,
For he had one of prooffe, well tride, and sure,
And Brandimartes was indeed but bad,
Such as he could in warning short procure,
Wherefore to change it now he would be glad,

And that he shall, his heart doth him assure:
So that he waxed stouter still and bolder,
Though Agramant had hurt him in the shoulder.

85

Gradasso further had about his thye,
Him givn a blow, not to be tane in sport,
But yet the king did so the fight apply,
And laid on lode in so couragious sort,
As that he wounded his left arme therby,
And pricked his right hand (thus they report)
But all this was but Maygame and delight,
Unto Gradassos and Orlandos fight.

86

Gradasso hath Orlando halfe disarmd,
And made him with one blowe his shield forsake,
He could not wound him, for his skin was charmd,
But yet his headpeece on both sides he brake;
But him Orlando hath in worse sort harmd,
Beside that hurt of which before I spake,
He hath drawn blood of him in many a place,
As namely in brest, in throate, and in his face.

87

Gradasso sees himselfe with blood besmeard,
And smarting paine in many places found,
And sees that Earle like one that nothing feard,
Stand whole and quite unwounded safe and sound;
Wherefore with both his hands his sword he reard,
With mind to cleave him, rather then to wound,
And evn as he desird, with all his strength,
He strake him on his head, at halfe sword length.

88

And sure had clovd him to the saddle bow,
Had it another then Orlando bene,
But now as if it had falne flatling thoe,
The blade rebounded from him bright and cleene,
But yet that Earle was dazd so with the bloe,
I think some starres on ground by him were seene;
He lost his bridle, and his sword had mist,
Save that a chaine did bind it to his wrist.

89

The horse on which the good Orlando rode,
Was eke so scared with the fearfull sound,

As there he durst no longer make abode,
But on the sands at randon runneth round,
And beares Orlando as a senslesse lode,
That with the paine still stood as in a sound,
And had Gradasso little harder spurred,
He might have tane the Earle ere he had sturred.

90

But as he rode, he saw king Agramant,
Unto extremest point of danger brought,
For why the valiant sonne of Monodant,
Had loosd his bever, and such hold had caught
Upon his gorget, that but small did want,
Evn with one stab his last end to have wrought:
For why the noble minded Christen Prince,
Had wonne his sword from him a good while since.

91

Gradasso doth no more that Earle pursew,
But maketh hast king Agramant to ayd,
And unto Brandimart that nothing knew,
Nor of no such misfortune was affrayd,
He comes behind his back quite out of vew,

And both his hands at once on sword he laid,
And in that sort, he strake with all his might,
Full on the helmet of the noble knight.

92

Oh heavnly Father grant a resting place
In Paradice, for this thy Martyrs spirit,
That having run all his tempestuous race,
He may with thee an harbour safe inherit.
Ah Durindan, hadst thou so little grace,
So ill to quite thy noblest Masters merit,
That in his sight thou could of life deprive,
His best and kindest friend he had alive?

93

The sword did pierce a double plate of steele,
That little lesse was then two fingers thick,
Good Brandimart gan with the blow to reele,
It pierced had so deepe unto the quicke.
His braines all cut therewith he plain did feele,
And downe he fell like one most deadly sicke;
A streame of blood out of the grievous wound,
Ran forth, and dyde with crimson all the ground.

By this Orlando waked, and behild
His Brandimart that lay now a la mort:
He sees the Sericane that him had kild,
This angerd him, and grievd him in such sort,
Twas hard to say which more his stomacke fild,
His wrath or griefe, but time to mourne was short,
That griefe gave place, and wrath bare chiefest sway,
But now I thinke it best awhile to stay.

ARGUMENT

THE FORTYSECOND BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Orlando of his conquest takes small joy,
Which caused him his dearest friend to want:
Loves divers passions breed no small annoy,
To stout Renaldo and good Bradamant:
She wishing her Rogero to enjoy,
He thIndian Queene, but soone he did recant,
Taught by disdain: at last in Latian ground,
The Palladine kind entertainment found.

FORTY SECOND BOOKE

1

What iron band, or what sharp hard mouthd bit,
What chaine of diamond (if such might be)
Can bridle wrathfulnesse and conquer it,
And keep it in his bounds and due degree?
When one to us in bonds of friendship knit,
And dearly lovd, before our face we see,
By violence or fraud to suffer wrong,
By one for him too crafty, or too strong.

2

And if before we can such pang digest,
We swerve sometime from law, and run astray,
It may be well excusd, sith in ones brest
Pure reason at such time beares little sway;
Achilles when with counterfeited crest,
He saw Patroclus bleeding all the way,
To kill his killer was not satisfid,
Except he hald and tare him all beside.

3

So now a little since when in his brow,
Alfonso wounded was with cursed stone,
And all his men and souldiers thought that now
His soule from earth to heavn had been up flowne,
They kild and spoild, they card not whom nor how,
Strong rampiers, wals, to them defence were none,
But in that fury they put all to wrack,
Both old and yong, and all the town to sack.

4

Our men were so enraged with this fall,
To think they had their Captaine lost for aye,
That to the sword they put both great and small,
That happend then to come within their way:
And so their fortune did prevaile withall,
That they the Castle did regaine that day,
In fewer houres to their great fame and praise,
Then had the Spaniards got it erst in dayes.

5

It may be, God ordained (as I guesse)
That he that time should wounded be so sore,

To punish that same sin and foule excesse,
His foes committed had a while before,
When Vestidell forlorn and in distresse
Did yeeld, and should have had his life therefore:
Yet was he kild when they had him surprisd,
By men whose greater part were circumcisd.

6

Wherefore I justly may conclude thus much,
That nothing can more hotly kindle wrath,
Then if one shall the life and honour touch,
Of our deare friend, or do him wrong or scath.
Now (as I said) Orlandos grief is such,
And such occasion of just grieffe he hath,
He sees his friend, for lack of better heeding,
Lie flat on ground, and almost dead with bleeding.

7

As the Nomadian Shepheard, that a Snake
Along the grasse and herbes hath sliding seen,
Which late before with tooth most poysond strake
His little son, that plaid upon the green,
Doth bruise and beat, and kill him with a stake:

So goes this Earle with blade most sharp and keen,
And yet far more with wrath and choler whet;
And Agramant was then the first he met.

8

Unhappy he that in his passage stood,
His sword was gone, as I declard before,
Himselfe besmeared all with his own blood,
Brave Brandimart had wounded him so sore,
Orlando comes, and in his wrathfull mood,
With Ballisard, that payes home evermore,
He strikes (by fortune were it or by art)
Just where the shoulders from the head do part.

9

Loosd was his helmet, as I erst did tell,
That like a Poppie quite fell off his head,
The carkas of the Lybian Monarch fell
Down to the ground and lay along stark dead,
His soule by Charon, ferrieman of hell,
To Plutos house or Stygian lake was led,
Orlando staid no whit, but straight prepard
To find Gradasso eke with Ballisard.

10

But when Gradasso plain beheld and saw
Of Agramant the wofull end and fall,
He felt an unaccustomd dread and aw,
Who never wonted was to feare at all;
And evn as if his own fate he foresaw,
He made the Palladine resistance small:
Feare had so mazd his head and dazd his sence,
That for the blow he quite forgat his sence.

11

Orlando thrust Gradasso in the side,
About the ribs, as he before him stood,
The sword came forth a span on tother side,
And to the hilt was varnisht all with blood,
By that same thrust alone it might be trid,
That he that gave it was a warriour good,
That with one thrust did vanquish and subdue
The stoutest champion of the Turkish crew.

12

Orlando of this conquest nothing glad,
Doth from his saddle in great hast alight,

And with a heavy heart and countenance sad,
He runs unto his deare beloved knight,
He sees his helmet cut, as if it had
Been cloven quite with axe (a wofull sight)
And evn as if it had been made of glasse,
And not of steel, and plated well with brasse.

13

The Palladine his helmet then unties,
And finds the scull clovn down unto the chin,
And sees the braine all cut before his eyes;
Yet so much breath and life remaind within,
That he is able yet before he dies,
To call to God for mercy for his sin,
And pray Orlando joyne with him in praying,
And use to him this comfortable saying.

14

My deare Orlando, see that to our Lord,
Thou in thy good devotions me commend:
Likewise to thee commend I my deare Fiorde
And liege he would have said, but there did end;
Straight Angels voices with most sweet accord,

Were heard the while his spirit did ascend,
The which dissolved from this fleshly masse,
In sweetest melody to heavn did passe.

15

Orlando though he should rejoyce in heart,
Of this his end so holy and devout,
Because he knew his loving Brandimart
Was taken up to heavn without all doubt,
Yet flesh and bloud in him so plaid their part,
That without teares he cannot beare it out,
But that he needs must shew some change in cheare,
To leese one more then any brother deare.

16

This while Sobrino bruised in his head,
And wounded sorely in his side and thye,
Upon the ground so great a streame had bled,
It seemd his life in perill was thereby;
And Olivero little better sped,
On whom his horse still overthrown doth lie,
He striving, but his striving did not boot,
To get at liberty his bruised foot.

17

And sure it seems he had been worse apaid,
Had not his dolefull cosin quickly come,
And brought to him both quick and needfull aid,
Before the paine had him quite overcome:
His foot that long had in the stirop staid,
Was therewithall so void of sence and numme,
That when he stood upright he was not able
To touch the ground, much lesse tred firm and stable.

18

So that indeed Orlando in his heart,
But little joy of so great conquest had,
He wailes the death of his deare Brandimart,
And that his kinsman was in state so bad:
Now lay Sobrino, though alive in part,
Yet with a look so chearlesse and so sad,
And so much blood his aged veines had bled,
That doubtlesse in few howres he had been dead.

19

Save that Orlando with compassion movd,
To see him lie so lorn, and so distressed,

Gate him such needfull things as best behovd,
And charitably made his wounds be dressed:
So kindly, that some kinsman deare belovd,
And not his foe, a man might him have guessed:
Such was this Earles good nature, fierce in fight,
But fight once done, from malice free or spight.

20

The horse, and bodies of the other twaine
He took away, and left their men the rest,
To be disposd to their own private gaine,
Or to interre their Lords, as they thought best.
But here, that in my story I do faine,
Fredericke Fulgoso (as I heare) hath guest,
Sith at this Ile he late arriving found
In all the same no levell foot of ground.

21

Nor doth he probable it deem or take,
That six such knights as had in armes no peere,
On horseback should a combat undertake,
Where no one foot of plaine ground doth appeare,
To which objection I this answer make,

That then, in times now past sevn hundred yeare,
Plaine ground there was, but now some inundation,
Or earthquake might procure this alteration.

22

Wherefore Fulgoso, honour of thy name,
Bright Fulgor, causing all thy stock to shine,
If in this point thou hadst imputed blame
To me, perhaps before that Prince divine,
From whom thy countries good and quiet came,
And did it first to love and peace incline,
Inform him now, that evn perhaps in this
My tale of truth or likelihood doth not misse.

23

This while Orlando looking from the shore,
A little Frigot did far off descrie,
That both with saile and with the help of ore,
Unto that Ile seemd in great hast to flie;
But ere of this I tell you any more,
I must to France as fast as I can hie,
To see if they be merry there or sad,
Now they from thence the Turks expulsed had.

24

First let us see how faithfull Bradamant
Doth take his absence whom she loveth most,
Who in his oath due care of faith did want,
Which he had tane in sight of either host:
Now sure she thinks his love and faith too scant,
To heare he quite had left the Chistren cost:
If in his publike oath he be unjust,
Whereto alas, then whereto can she trust?

25

And still returning to her former plaints,
And still bemoaning her unluckie fate,
With which her selfe she too too well acquaints,
She cals her selfe accurst, and him ungrate,
Yea blaming God himself, and all his Saints,
For not redressing this her wofull state,
She scarce abstaines high blasphemie to speak,
That God unjust, and that Saints powers are weak.

26

Then she Melissa (absent) doth reprove,
And curst that Oracles perswasion blind,

That lapt her in this Labyrinth of love,
Whence she her self by no means can unwinde,
But to Marfisa all the rest above,
She open layes her stomack and her mind,
With her she chides and utters all her choler,
And yet she prayes her comfort this her doler.

27

Marfisa comforts her in all she may,
And tels her what a vertue patience is,
And partly doth excuse Rogeros stay:
And further giveth her her faith in this,
That if she find he wilfully delay,
She will constraine him mend all is amisse,
Or if she find that he refuse to do it,
To fight with him, and so compell him to it.

28

With this she did in part her paine asswage,
For why it is in sorrow great relief,
To those of either sex or any age,
To have some friend to whom to tell their grief,
But now if Bradamant be in such rage,

No lesse is he that of her house was chief,
I meane Renaldo, that cannot expulse
Loves fire, from evry sinew, veine and pulse.

29

I think I need not now to you repeat
A thing by me so often told before,
By name that love and that affection great,
That to Angelica Renaldo bore:
Nor did her beauty cause so much his heat,
As did that spring of which he drank such store,
Now all the other Palladines were free
From all their foes, now Cupids thrall is he.

30

An hundred messengers he sends about,
Himselfe the while an hundred wayes more riding,
To ask of her, or els to find her out,
Who hath her now, or where is her abiding.
At last, because he thinketh out of doubt,
That Malagige of her can learn some tiding,
He asketh him (but blushing sore with shame)
If he knew what of thIndian Queene became.

31

His cosin wonders at so strange a case,
And in his mind thereon long time he mused,
That when Renaldo had both time and place,
Her offers large and kind he still refused,
When both her self did sue to have his grace,
And many of his friends perswasions used:
And Malagige himself among the rest,
Had provd him oft with prayer and with request.

32

The rather eke, because Renaldo then
By taking her, had set his cosin free,
Who then was kept close prisner in a den,
And for that cause in perill slaine to be;
He marvels that he now would seek her, when
No hope nor cause there was, and further he
With angry look did bid him call to mind,
How in this point he had been too unkind.

33

But good Renaldo now quite out of tune,
Prayth him old quarrels from his mind to move,

And doth most earnestly him importune
Unto his help, his skill and books to prove:
Which made his cosin so much more presume
Upon his reconcilment and true love,
And promist to assist him if he may,
And for his answer he prefixt a day.

34

And straight from thence he goth unto the place,
Where he was wont the spirits to conjure,
A strong vast cave, in which there was great space,
The precepts of his art to put in ure:
One sprite he cald, that of each doubtfull case
Of Cupids court, could give him notice sure:
Of him he askt what bred Renaldos change,
By him he heard of those two fountaines strange.

35

And how Renaldo by misfortune led,
First happend of that hatefull spring to drink,
Which his dislike of that faire Lady bred,
And made her love and proferd service stink:
And how againe by some ill star misled,

He drank of thother spring, which causd him think
Her only to be loved and admird,
Whom erst he hated more then cause requird.

36

Moreover he to Malagigis showd,
How that same famous Indian Queen (nay quean)
Had on a Pagan youth her self bestowd,
Of parentage, of state, of living mean:
And how from Spaine they in a galley rowd,
All Christendome and Spaine forsaking clean,
And passing both with safety and with ease,
(In ventrous bark of Catalyn) the seas.

37

Now when Renaldo for his answer came,
His learned cosin seeks him to perswade,
Unto some better thought his mind to frame,
Nor further in this gulf of love to wade;
Alledging what a slander and a shame,
It was to fancy one her self had made,
Not like a Queen, but like a vile maid Marian,
A wife (nay slave) unto a base Barbarian.

38

In fine he said, she was to thIndies gone,
With her Medoro, and was welnigh there:
Renaldo not a little musd thereon,
Yet all the rest he could with patience beare,
And for the paine, he counts it small or none,
So he at last might find her any where;
Wherefore of it he had no care nor keep,
Nor could that make him once to break his sleep.

39

But when he heard that one of birth so base
Had with his mistris laid his knife aboard,
It seemd this strake him speechlesse in the place,
He was not able to pronounce a word:
His heart did quake within, his lips like case
So trembled, answer he could none afford;
But overcome with anguish of the passion,
He flang away from thence in carelesse fashion.

40

And much lamenting this her foule abuse,
He vowes to follow her what ere ensue,

But yet to Charles he faineth this excuse,
That sith Gradasso, of his word untrue,
Had tane his horse contrary to the use
Of valiant knights, he means him to pursue;
Alledging that it were his great dishoner,
To let Bayardo have a forren owner.

41

And that a Turke should boast another day,
That he by fight did him thereof bereave:
King Charles (though loth) yet could not say him nay
To such an honest suit, but gave him leave;
Which tane, alone from thence he goes his way,
And all his friends in Paris he doth leave:
With Guidon, Dudon stout to him do profer
Their company, but he refusd their offer.

42

Away he goes alone, yet not alone,
Griefs, teares, and plaints still his companions are:
And oft in heart he bitterly doth grone,
To think that erst he should so little care
For her great love, which wilfully forgone,

He now esteemes at rate so high and rare,
He could have wishd (thus was his mind perplext)
But one day to enjoy, and die the next.

43

Then he bethinks with no lesse grief, nay rage,
How she could find in that her lofty heart,
To set her love on such a sorrie page,
The merits all, and service put apart,
Done unto her evn from her tender age,
By men of high renown, and great desert:
Thus with a fired heart and watred eyne
He rode untill he toucht the banks of Rhyne.

44

Ere long into Ardenna woods he enters,
Soone after he Basylea quite had past:
Ardenna woods, whence many come repenters,
And in that forrest have been sore agast,
To travell through the same Renaldo venters,
When suddenly the skie did overcast,
And there arose a black and hideous storm,
And then appeard a monster of strange form.

45

She seemd of womans shape, but in her head
A thousand eyes she had, that watch did keep,
As many eares, with which she harkened,
Her eyes want lids, and therefore never sleep,
In stead of haire her crown snakes overspred,
Thus marched she forth of the darknesse deep,
Her taile one Serpent bigger then the rest,
Which she with knots had tid about her brest.

46

This sight Renaldos mind appald so sore,
He feels his heart already gan to faile him,
And sith it never had done so before,
He marvels very much what now should aile him:
Yet still his mind misgave him more and more,
To see the monster comming to assaile him,
He nathlesse counterfeits his wonted boldnesse,
Though quaking hands bewraid his inward coldnes.

47

The monster straight assaulted him, much like
To one that perfect was and skild in fence,

And when againe he with his sword did strike,
He missed, and could do her none offence.
Much doth Renaldo this ill match mislike,
And little wants to quite distract his sense,
Right blowes and reardemaine he striketh many,
But yet he cannot hit her right with any.

48

The monster sticks a Serpent in his brest,
That strake his heart into a freezing cold,
Another fixed is below his crest,
And on his neck and shoulders taketh hold;
Renaldo thinks to get him gone is best,
And spurs away with all the speed he could,
But that vile monster was not lame to find him,
But overtook him; and leapt up behind him.

49

And whether he go straight, or go he wide,
The monster sitteth sure and holds him fast,
He knowes not how to be from her untid,
Nor any mean within his mind can cast,
His heart evn quakes within him, and beside

That he was with this hideous plague agast,
He sorrowd so not knowing how to mend it,
He lothd his life, and did desire to end it.

50

He spurs amaine, and purposely he takes
The rugged wayes, the worst that he could find,
By craggie rocks, and hils, through bryers and brakes,
Through copsies thick, by narrow paths and blind,
But sure the knight the matter much mistakes,
He cannot from the monster him unwind:
And like it was, great harme had him betided,
Had not for him been help in time provided.

51

For lo a knight unto his succour went,
All armd in shining steel, and on his shield
He bare a yoke in sundry peeces rent,
And flames of fire all in a yellow field,
So weaponed he was, as if he meant
To make all that encountred him to yeeld.
A sword and speare he had, and to the same,
A Mace from whence he threw continuall flame.

52

His Mace was stord with everlasting fire,
That ever burned, and did never wast,
No other weapon needed one desire,
To make good way with, wheresoevr he past,
And sure Renaldos danger did require
Quick remedy, wherefore the knight doth hast:
And when he saw this monster, and did view her,
With his stiffe speare forthwith he overthrew her.

53

But this same fall did her no whit annoy,
Wherefore to use his speare he now misliketh,
He onely wils his fiery Mace imploy,
And with that same the monster foule he striketh:
Then she no longer could her force enjoy;
Renaldo while she fled, occasion piketh
To scape away, as him that knight perswaded,
While he this monster more and more invaded.

54

Now when the knight had with his fiery Mace
Drivn back this monster to her darksome den,

Where she for spite doth beat her head and face,
Repining at the good of other men,
Then to Renaldo he doth ride apace,
And when he had soon overtane him, then
He offerd in kind sort with him to ride,
From out the darksome places him to guide.

55

But when Renaldo was from danger free,
And that same knight by whom his safety came,
So courteously to come to him did see,
His speech to him in kind words he did frame,
And gave him many thanks in high degree.
And then besought him he might know his name,
That thEmperour and all his court might know,
What knight did so great grace on him bestow.

56

The knight in courteous manner thus replid,
I would not you should take it in displeasure,
That I my name from you a while shall hide,
But ere the shadow grow a yard by measure,
I shall you tell: thus onward still they ride,

Renaldo being pleasd to stay his leasure,
So long they went together till they found
A chrystall spring that ran along the ground.

57

At which full oft the herdmen that did dwell
Neare those same woods, have in their loving fits
Drunk love away, with tasting of that well,
And of those passions purged clean their wits:
Now (for the knight that rode with him could tell
That for Renaldos ill, this Physick fits)
He doth advise him there to stay a space,
And make that well their bait and resting place.

58

Renaldo of the motion well allowth,
And lighteth straight, and to the well doth go,
Both for that heat and travell bred his drowth,
And that the monster had disturbd him so;
Unto the Chrystall well he puts his mouth,
And greedily drinks down five gulps or mo,
And from his brest doth with one draught remove
His burning thirst and his more burning love.

59

Now when that other knight that with him went,
Saw him lift up himself from that same brook,
And found he did his foolish love repent,
And that he now that humour quite forsook,
Then to declare his name he was content,
And looking with a grave and lofty look,
He said, Renaldo, know I hight Disdaine,
That came to loose thee from loves foolish chaine.

60

This said, he vanishd from Renaldo quite,
His horse nor him he could not after see,
Renaldo marvels at this wondrous sight,
And looks about, and saith, what where is he?
At last he thinks tis some familiar spright,
That by good Malagigis sent might be:
To rid him of that tedious care and wo,
That many months had him afflicted so.

61

Or els that God to him this help did lend,
Of his especiall grace and loving kindnesse,

As erst he did unto Tobias send
His Angell to deliver him from blindness:
But let it Angell be, or be it fiend,
Renaldo takes against him no unkindnesse:
He thanks and praises it, and doth acknowledge
To have receivd of him grace, wit, and knowledge.

62

Now that same great mislike and hate returned
Of faire Angelica, whom late he lov'd,
Now he despised her, and greatly scorned
To think that he for her one foot had mov'd:
Yet onward into India ward he journeyed,
As for Bayardos sake it him behov'd:
Because both honour did compell him to it,
And to his Prince he undertook to do it.

63

He rides to Basile next ensuing night,
Where very late before some newes were heard,
How that Orlando challeng'd was to fight,
And for that fight how he himself prepar'd,
Not, that Orlando newes hereof did write,

But one that came from Sicill thitherward,
Affirmed he had heard the same reported,
By many that to Sicily resorted.

64

These newes do set on edge Renaldos heart,
He faine would present be at this conflict,
He faine would take therein Orlandos part,
To whom he bounden was in bonds most strict,
Of friendship, of alliance, and desert:
Wherefore he takes post horse, and spurd and prickt,
And changd both beasts & guides each te miles end
And toward Italy he still doth bend.

65

At Constance he did passe the stream of Rhine,
And then beyond the Alpes he soon doth go,
To Mantoa, and ere the Sun decline,
He passed ore the stately stream of Poe,
Here he did doubt, and did not soon designe,
If he should travell all the night or no:
Till at the last a well behaviourd knight
And full of curtesie, came in his sight.

66

This knight forthwith unto Renaldo went,
And askd him if he were a marrid man,
Renaldo marvels what the question meant,
But answerd yea, then tother straight began,
And praid him, that he would be then content
To be his guest, at such cheare as he can:
Offring to show him, while with him he tarrid,
A sight well pleasing unto all were marrid.

67

Renaldo glad so good a bait to make,
And no lesse willing, haps most rare to heare,
Would not the offer of this knight forsake,
Of entertainment good and friendly cheare,
But onward with him doth his journey take,
Untill he saw a goodly place appeare,
So well set forth both for the shew and sence,
As seemd not for a private mans expence.

68

The porch was all of Porpherie and Tuch,
Of which the sumptuous building raised was,

With images that seemd to move, see, tuch,
Some hewd in stone, some carvd and cut in brasse,
Likewise within the beauty was as much:
Beneath a stately arch they straight did passe
Unto a court that good proportion bare,
And was each way one hundred cubites square.

69

And either side a Porch had passing faire,
That with an arch is on two collumns placd,
Of equall size they seemed evry paire,
Yet sundry works; which them the better gracd,
At each of these a wide, large, easie staire,
Without the which all buildings are defacd,
And those same staires, so stately mounting, led
Each to a chamber richly furnished.

70

The collumns high, the chapters built with gold,
The cornishes enrichd with things of cost,
The Marbles set from far, and dearly sold,
By cunning workmen carved and imbost,
With Images, and antikes new and old,

(Though now the night thereof concealed most)
Shew that that work so rich beyond all measure,
Could scant be builded with a Princes treasure.

71

But nothing did so much the sight enrich,
As did the plenteous fountaine, that did stand
Just placed in the middle, under which
The Pages spred a table out of hand,
And brought forth napy rich, and plate more rich,
And meats the choicest of the sea or land:
For though the house had stately roomes full many,
In summer season this was best of any.

72

This fountaine was by curious workmen brought
To answer to the rest with double square,
Eight femall statues of white marble wrought,
With their left hands an azure skie up bare,
Which raining still, expelled heat and drought,
From all that under it, or neare it are,
In their right hands was Amaltheas horn
By evry one of those eight statues born.

73

Each of these statues rested both their feet
Upon two images of men below,
That seemd delighted with the noise so sweet
That from the water came, that there did flow,
They also seemd the Ladies low to greet,
As though they did their names and vertues know:
And in their hands they hold long scroles of writings
Of their own pennings and their own enditings.

74

And in faire golden letters were the names
Both of the women wrote, and of the men,
The women were eight chast and sober dames,
That now do live, but were unborn as then:
The men were Poets, that their worthy fames
In time to come should praise with learned pen:
These Images bare up a brazen tressell,
On which there stood a large white Marble vessell.

75

This took the water from the azure skie,
From whence, with turning of some cock or vice,

Great store of water would mount up on high,
And wet all that same court evn in a trice;
With sight of these Renaldo fed his eye,
So that his host could scarcely him intice,
To feed his stomack, yet he oft him told,
His meat would marre, and sallets would be cold.

76

Then down at last they sate them at the boord,
And pleasant talk did help digest their meat,
His host that was no niggard, did affoord
Great store of delicates to drink and eat,
And all this while Renaldo spake no word,
Although he did it oft in mind repeat,
And though his tongue did itch, to pray him tell,
What twas that would please marrid men so well.

77

At last he put him mannerly in mind
Of that he first did promise him to show,
Evn then he plainly saw his host inclind
To inward grief, and did more pensive grow,
With secret sighs, and leaving half behind;

At last a Page came in with curtsie low,
And beares a standing cup of gold most fine,
Without of gemmes, and full within of wine.

78

With this, the Master of the feast did smile,
And on Renaldo lookd with pleasant cheare,
But one that well had marked him that while,
Might see more griefe then mirth in him appeare:
Now noble guest (quoth he) within a while
You shall see provd a strange conclusion here,
That needs must be full welcome to be trid,
By all that are in bonds of wedlock tid.

79

For sure I think (he said) each husband ought,
Make search if so his wife esteem him dearly,
If fame or shame by her to him be brought,
If man or beast he be reputed meerly:
The burthen of the horne though it be thought
To weigh so heavie, and to touch so nearly,
No doubt but many get them in their mariage,
Yet feel them not, they be so light in cariage.

80

But if a man by certaine signes may know,
How that his wife to him is true and just,
He hath more cause more kindnesse her to show,
Then he that lives in right or wrong mistrust:
For some without a cause do jealous grow,
Whose wives are chast, and free from lawlesse lust:
And some that for their wives truth durst have sworn,
Have for their labours in their head a horn.

81

Now sir, if you believe your wife is true,
As sure till one do find contrary prooffe,
I think both you and all men ought of due,
For that no doubt is best for their behoofe,
Here you shall see it trid within your view,
For which I praid you harbour in my rooffe:
This cup (said he) if you desire to know it,
By drinking in the same, will clearly show it.

82

Now drink hereof, and prove this passing skill,
For if Acteons armes be on your crest,

Do what you can, you shall the liquor spill
Beside your mouth, upon your lap and brest:
But if your wife be chaste, then drink your fill,
No such mischance your draught will then molest,
Thus much he said, and fixt on him his eyne,
And thinks Renaldo sure would spill the wine.

83

Renaldo halfe allured to assay
To find a thing, which found he might repent,
Did take in hand the golden cup straight way,
As if to quaffe it off, were his intent:
Yet first he doth the certaine danger way,
To which by tasting such a cup he went.
But give me leave a while some breath to take,
Before you heare what answer he did make.

ARGUMENT

THE FORTYTHIRD BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Renaldo heares two tales to like effect,
Tone of a Bargeman, tother of a Knight:
Both proving that rewards will soone infect
The minds of chastest dames, and make them light:
To Lippaduse he doth his course direct,
But first Orlando finishd had his fight:
That Hermit that Rogero did baptize,
Heald Oliver, and Sobrine in likewise.

FORTY THIRD BOOKE

1

O curst, o greedy, o unsatiable
Desire of gaine, I do not marvell sure,
If thou the base and filthy minds art able
To cause to stoope unto thy carren lure,
Sith oft we see some persons honorable,
Can scarce thy weak and base assaults endure,
Who if they could thy foule inticements shun,
No doubt but they great glory should have won.

2

Some men can measure earth, and sea, and skie,
And tell the change and cause of evry season,
And wade so far with wit, and mount so hie,
They search both heavn & hel with depth of reason,
But when thou comst in place, then by and by
Thou putst their dainty tastes so out of season,
They place their whole delight, their hope, their health
In onely scraping and in heaping wealth.

3

Another man in wars hath great renown,
And gets the conquest in each bloody strife,
And wins this fortresse and that walled town,
Opposing his stout brest to perils rife,
Thou only conquerst him, and thrusts him down,
And keepest him thy prisner all his life:
Some men excelling in each art and studie,
Thou dost obscure, with base desires and muddie.

4

What should I speak of dames of worth not small,
That having lovers, men of great deserts,
Oppose their honours as a brazen wall,
Against their suits with unrelenting hearts?
But come some miser, base deformed squall,
That save his riches hath no worthy parts,
They break the wall, and make therein a gap,
To take the showre that fell in Danaes lap.

5

Nor without cause hereof complaine do I,
Take me that can, for I do rightly take it,

Nor from my matter do I swerve awry,
Or by a vaine digression do forsake it:
Yet to my former speech I not apply,
But tending to a future tale I spake it:
Now let me tell you of Renaldo first,
That with one draught would swage his double thirst.

6

But whether that his courage did him faile,
Or that on more advice he changed mind,
He thought and said, what should it one availe,
To seek a thing he would be loth to find?
My wife a woman is, their sex is fraile,
I yet am to believe the best inclind;
I know I cannot better my belief,
And if I change it, it will be my grief.

7

What good may come by such a straight espiall,
Into my sences surely cannot sink,
Much hurt may come, there can be no deniall,
Let nothing sever those whom God doth link:
Wherefore to make so unaccustomd triall,

Were sin, and tempting God, as I do think:
Then drink this cup (quoth he) that list, not I,
I am not, nor I mind not to be drie.

8

God would such skill from mortall men be hid,
And evn as Adam wrought his overthrow,
By tasting fruit that God did him forbid,
So he that curiously will search to know
All that his wife hath said, or what she did,
May fortune at the last himself beshrow,
And shall confound himself (this think I verily)
And live in sorrow, that did erst live merrily.

9

Thus much said good Renaldo, and withall
He thrust away that hatefull cup of wine,
And then he saw of teares a stream not small,
Flow from the master of that house his eyne:
Which past, he said, now foule may them befall,
That first procurd this misery of mine:
To prove (which I shall sorrow all my life)
That, which bereft me of my dearest wife.

10

Why was not I (said he) with you acquainted,
Ten yeares ere this, to take advice so sound,
Before my heart was thus with sorrow tainted,
Of which no case can now, nor end be found:
But that you may (as in a table painted)
Behold my griefs, I will to you expound,
What causd this my incomparable woe,
And then you sure will pitie me I know.

11

Not far from hence you left a little town,
About the which there runs a pretie lake,
That fals into this stream of great renown,
But from Banaco first his head doth take,
Erected when those wals were beaten down,
That erst Agenors dragon there did make;
There was I born of house and stock not base,
Though of mean wealth inferiour to my race.

12

But though to me dame Fortune was but spare,
That by my birth small wealth to me there grew,

Yet nature did with bounty great and care
Supply that want, by faire and comly hew,
My seemly personage, my beauty rare,
To me the liking of full many drew:
My qualities thereto were quaint and jolly,
Although I know to praise ones self is folly.

13

Within this town a great rich man did tarie,
Well learnd and wise, and old beyond all credit,
For ere he did, he on his back did carie
Full six score yeares and eight at least, he sed it:
An hundred yeares he lived solitarie,
But after that (you know what humor bred it)
He lovd a dame, & with his wealth so wrought her,
That at the last he gat of her a daughter.

14

And lest the daughter should prove like the mother,
To sell her chastity for filthy pelf,
Which whosoever sels, it quite undoth her,
Although she thinks she doth enrich her self,
Therefore he bred her far from sight of other,

And by the help of many a hellish elf,
Which by his skill in Magick he could master,
He built this house of Tutch and Alablaster.

15

He caused chast old women her to nourish
In this same house, in which she grew so faire,
And in those years when youth doth chiefly flourish,
He let not any thither to repaire,
That were in looks, or speech, or manners whorish,
But contrary, he causd in marble faire,
Or els on tables to be drawn and carvd,
All such whose chastities had praise deservd.

16

Nor only such as have in ancient times,
Been patterns true of manners chast and pure,
And have opposd against all fleshly crimes,
Most chast and vertuous thoughts (a buckler sure)
By which their name to such high honour climes,
As their great praise shall evermore endure:
But such as shall excell in times to come,
Of which those eight that erst you saw be some.

17

Now when this aged sire had with his skill
Procurd his daughter be thus choicely bred,
It was my hap, (shall I say good or ill?)
That I was deemd most worthy her to wed;
And that old man bare her so great good will,
He gave to me this house thus furnished
With needfull things within it and without it,
And all the lands in twenty mile about it.

18

But her own shape so pleasd my heart and eyne,
That for the rest I did but little care,
For needle works and for embroidries fine,
I think her skill with Pallas may compare;
To heare her play or sing, a thing divine
It was, her stroke so sweet, her voice so rare:
In other sciences her skill was such
As was her fathers, or almost as much.

19

Great was her wit, no lesse then wit, her favour,
As might in senslesse stones affection move,

To this she had a sweet and kind behaviour,
As more then all the rest ingendred love,
It seemd her sole delight was in my favour,
Out of my sight she was most loth to move:
So lived I, and still had lived so,
But that my self did work my self this wo.

20

For when her father finishd had his life,
Full five years after I had got his daughter,
Then grew the causes of this wofull strife,
That unto sorrow turneth all my laughter;
For when I doted most upon my wife,
And of the world the chiefest jewell thought her,
A dame of noble birth, of person seemly,
Did hap to fall in love with me extremely.

21

This dame, for passing skill in Magick art,
Was comparable to the best Magicion,
But yet for all her skill, my constant heart,
She could not move nor turn on no condition,
To cure her malady, or ease her smart,

I still refused to be her Physition,
Because the medicine that of me she sought,
As injurie unto my wife I thought.

22

Yet was her beauty much, I must confesse,
And greater offers she to me did make,
Beside the love she did to me professe,
Would move a man some care of her to take,
But my wives love did me so firm possesse,
I all rejected, only for her sake,
And that which most to her my liking drew,
Was that I found her still so kind and true,

23

The good opinion, and the strong surmise,
I had of my wives chastity and truth,
Would without doubt have made me to despise
The Dame, whose beauty bred to Troy such ruth.
And all the wealth (though laid before mine eyes)
That Juno offerd to the Trojan youth,
Yet my refusall, and her oft repulses,
No part of her great love from her expulses.

24

Melissa, so was this inchantresse name,
Perceiving still in vaine to me she sewed,
Once finding me at leisure, to me came,
And in most cunning sort her suit renewed,
And secretly she kindled jealous flame
Within my brest, which oft I since have rued.
She saith, I do but well so true to be
Unto my wife, if she were so to me.

25

But how know you (saith she) your wife is true,
That of her faith as yet no proof have made,
You never let her go scant from your view,
When none can come to vice her to perswade,
When none can see her, none to her can sue,
Tis easie to resist where none invade,
To praise her truth untrid, is too much hast,
Your care, and not her vertue keeps her chast.

26

But get you but from home some little while,
That men to sue to her might take occasion,

And thinking you are absent many a mile,
With letters and with gifts to make invasion,
And then if you shall find in her no guile,
Except she yeeld to gifts and to perswasion,
So she have hope to do it unespied,
Then think your wife is chaste when that is tried.

27

With these and such like words the Inchantresse sly
Did make me do that that hath me undone,
By name, to give consent my wife to try,
If so she could by such assaults be won:
But how shall I be well assured (said I)
To know at my return, what she hath done,
And whether she, with these so great assays,
Have at my hands deserved blame or praise?

28

Forsooth (saith she) I will on you bestow
A drinking bowle, not much unlike that cup
With which Morgana made her brother know
Genewras fraud, when he thereon did sup.
Who drinks hereof, his wives truth plain shall know,

If she be chaste, he drinks the liquor up,
But if a cuckold to carrowse doth think,
He sheddeth in his bosome all the drink.

29

Now ere you go the cup I wish you tast,
And you shall drink, perhaps and shall not spill,
Because as yet I think your wife is chaste,
As never being tempted unto ill:
But try againe when as a month is past,
And you shall see (I trow) a prettie skill,
For then I grant, that if you drink it cleanly,
Above all men you blessed are not meanly.

30

I took her offer, and I took the say
Of that same cursed cup, with sweet successe,
I find my wife unspotted to that day,
As I my self was sure, and she did guesse:
Now straight (quoth she) to part from hence away,
For one or two months space, your self addresse,
Then try at your return how you have sped,
If you drink clean, or if the drink you shed.

31

But now this parting such a penance seemd,
As I indeed could by no means indure,
Not that of my deare wife I ought misdeemd,
For her of all the rest, I thought cocksure;
But that her company I so esteemd:
Well then (Melissa saith) I will procure,
If you will do but what I shall you teach,
That you shall change your clothes, your shape, and speech.

32

And so you shall your self to her present,
And make your self a plaine and perfect proof,
I foolishly to this device assent,
And so it hapt that hence not far aloof,
A knight of large revenue and of rent
Dwelt at Giabana, fit for this behoof,
His personage was brave, his purse well lind,
His yeares but young, to Venus all inclind.

33

That gallant youth had one day been a halking,
His hawke by hap into my garden flew,

He comming thither, found my wife a walking,
And much he likd her at the very view;
But when he had a while with her been talking,
To burning love his warm affection grew,
That after that full many waies he provd her,
If his request to grant he could have movd her.

34

But having still such short and sharp repulses,
He means no more in that fond suit to wade,
But from his thought her shape he not expulses,
That first to give the bold attempt him made;
So well Melissa knew to touch my pulses,
To take his form she doth me soon perswade,
I straight was changd I know not how nor where,
In face, in clothes, in speech, in eyes, in heare,

35

Now having to my wife a tale devisd,
As though to thEast I then my journey took,
And being like this youth, so strange disguisd,
In gate, in voice, apparell, and in look,
I came as she Melissa me advisd,

And she did like my Page or Lackie look,
Upon her arm she beares a little flasket,
In which of jewels rich she had a casket.

36

I that well knew each room, came in securely
Into the house, my Page and I together;
There where my Lady sate alone demurely,
For neither groome as then, nor maid was with her,
Then I expound my suit, and that more surely
She might believe my words, I needs would give her
Pearles, Rubies, Diamonds of passing price,
The wicked baits to draw good minds to vice.

37

I bad she should esteem this gift but small,
To that she might of me in time expect:
I said her husbands absence fit did fall,
And wisdom bids occasions not neglect:
I praid her weigh my constant love withall,
Which long had lasted, though without effect,
And last, I sware I had some grace deservd,
That had so long, that had so truly servd.

38

At first she blusht, and lookd with lowring cheare,
And would not hearken, but did still retire,
But thOrient Pearls and stones that shone so cleare,
Did mollifie her heart, to my desire:
She softly saith, but so as I might heare,
That for the thing which I so oft require,
She grant it would, and would on me bestow it,
So she were sure that none beside might know it.

39

This answer was to me a poysond dart,
To strike my soule in desperate disease,
And straight my heart, my head, and evry part
I felt a frozen jealousie to seize:
And presently Melissa by her art
Restord my shape (as she could do with ease.)
How lookd my wife (think you) whe by my trapping
She found her self thus foully taken napping.

40

We both do look like ashes, pale and wan,
We both stand dumb, we both cast down our eye,
Scarce able was my voice (do what I can)
To serve my turn, while I did think to cry:
Then wouldst thou wife unto another man
Mine honour sell, if he the same could buy?
She held her peace, and answer made me none,
But onely wept, and made a piteous mone.

41

The shame was much, but much more the disdain,
That of my foolish usage tane she hath,
Within due bonds she could not it containe,
But that it brake to spite, to hate, to wrath,
Resolvd with me no longer to remaine,
When Phoebus charret trod his Western path,
That evning in a small barge of her own,
Down stream she swimmeth as if she had flown.

42

Betimes next day she doth unto that knight
Her self present, that her before had lovd,

In whose disguised shape, I her last night
Both gainst mine own, and gainst her honour provd,
You well may judge it was a welcome sight
To him, that long before such suit had movd,
From thence she sends to me this message plaine,
That she would never come at me againe.

43

Ah wo was me, for from that houre to this,
She bides with him, where me they lout and scorn,
And I that could not see my sugred blisse,
Now by forgoing it am quite forlorn;
Nor can I say but just my penance is,
Which still growes more, and will till I be worn,
And sure one yeare of life had quite bereft me,
Save for one only comfort that was left me.

44

This only comfort brought me some relief,
That for the space of ten years all my guests,
(Though many of their wives had great belief)
Yet still they shed the drink upon their brests;
To find so many partners in my grief,

Asswageth much the paine that me molests,
Your only self hath been the onely stranger,
That hath refusd a draught of so great danger.

45

My overmuch desire to sift my wife
In so precise and in so straight a sort,
Doth cause that now I shall not all my life
Live one good houre, endure it long or short:
Glad was Melissa that procurd this strife,
But soon I turnd and marred all her sport,
For finding she was of my harm procurer,
I hated her and could no more endure her.

46

But she that finds her selfe disdained nearly,
Where she had hoped to have found reward,
And me, whom she profest to love so dearly,
Her love and kindnesse nothing to regard,
The grief hereof did touch her mind so nearly,
To leave this country she forthwith prepard,
And ever since farre hence she is abiding,
Whereas of her we heare no newes nor tiding.

47

Thus told the wofull knight in dolefull wise,
This ruffull tale unto his noble guest,
Who with compassion moved, thus replies,
Melissas counsell certes was not best,
That did without discretion you advise,
To anger wasps, or so to stir their nest,
And you your self did greatly overshoot you,
To seek a thing, whose finding would not boot you.

48

What marvell is it, if your wife were won
With gifts, and were to lightnesse soon allurd?
Is she the first (think you) that hath so done?
No, nor the fiftieth be you well assurd,
Yea, minds full sound have wanted power to shun
Such baits, and have not such assaults endurd:
Have you not heard of men that have for gold
Their masters and their friends most dearest sold?

49

You should not with a dart so fierce assaile,
If to see her defend her self you sought,

What, know you not stone wals cannot availe,
Nor steel, if gold be to the battrie brought?
Now sure your self of duty more did faile,
In tempting her, then she in being caught,
Perhaps if she had tempted you so sore,
Your folly would have been as much, or more.

50

Thus spake Renaldo, and withall he rose,
And prayd he might betake him to his rest,
He minds a while himselfe there to repose,
And after to depart he doth request;
Small time he hath, and that he would dispose
With great regard, for so he thinks it best:
The gentle knight doth tel him when it please him
He may within his chamber rest and ease him.

51

But if you will unto my counsell harke,
And that you have (as you pretend) such hast,
I will appoint for you a little barke,
That shall with oares convey you safe and fast,
There may you sleepe the while you finde it darke,

And when your stomake serves you, take repast:
Thus may you, downe the streame in safty sliding,
Win one whole night, & save a whole daies riding.

52

Renaldo this good offer doth accept,
And gave him hartie thanks, then tooke his barge:
He found his host with him had promise kept,
And makes of needfull things provision large;
No sooner was he settled, but he slept,
But yet before he gave the steerman charge,
If that to sleepe too long it did befall him,
When he came neare Ferrara, then to call him.

53

Now did the knight of France in quiet sleepe,
And past by divers townes of count the whiles,
And still the barge a pace most swift doth keepe,
Upon that hand, where Poe makes divers Iles:
And now the Rosie colour gan to creepe
To thEsterne skie, when having past some miles,
Bandano then the steerman wakt Renaldo,
When they discovered both rocks of Tealdo.

54

Whereon when as the knight his eye had fixt,
He saith, O happie place that I behold,
Of which, by vew of wandring starres and fixt,
My cosin Malagigis oft foretold,
How that by heavnly doome it was prefixt,
On thee to lay such blessings manifold,
As that thy glorie to such height should rise,
Of Italie to hold the chiefest prise.

55

Thus good Renaldo spake, the while his bote
Down that same streame did swim, or rather fly,
And when the knight came nearer he did note
The place, that seemed then all wast to ly,
And with a moorish water all on flote:
Yet did he much rejoyce thereof, for why,
He knew that that same towne in future time,
Ordained was to great renowne to clime.

56

His cosin Malagige and he while eare
Had past that way, what time his cosin told,

That when the Ram had tane the golden spheare,
That fourth is placd in height, sevn hundred fold,
Then should there be the bravest Iland there,
That ever sea, or streame, or lake did hold,
So well replenished, that none should dare
With this Nausicas Iland to compare.

57

And that it should for building faire, disgrace
Tiberius Ile, that Capry they do call,
And that thHesperides should give it place,
For passing fruits, and sundry sorts withall:
Beside, more store of beasts, for use or chase,
Then Circes erst did keep in field or stall,
That Venus with her sonne, and all the Graces,
Should chuse this seat, and leave all other places.

58

And that a certaine Prince should this fulfill,
So provident, so stout, so wise, so staid,
As having power united to his will,
Should with strong Rampires fence the town, he said,
That foes should have no force to work her ill,

Nor she should never feed of forraine aid:
And that the man by whom this must be done,
Should be both Hercules Sire, and Hercules sonne.

59

Thus while the knight of France with great delight
Did call to mind what should another day
Upon that happy City there alight,
His watermen did give so lusty way,
That of the place he soon had left the sight,
And keeping on the right hand all the way,
They went beyond Saint Georges in an houre,
And passed by Grabanas ditch and Tower.

60

And now Renaldo, as doth oft befall,
That one conceipt another out doth drive,
Began the knight to memorie to call,
That last did him kind entertainment give,
That had just cause this City more then all
To hate, and should have still while he did live:
The cursed cup he further cald to mind,
In which men may their spouses falshood find.

61

And last of his hosts later speech he thought,
Concerning that same cup, and how they sped,
I meane his guests, that that same triall sought,
Into their bosoms still the liquor shed:
Now he doth half repent he mist the draught,
Yet was he glad thereof, for why (he said)
Had it faln well, what had I got thereby?
If not, in what a case had then been I?

62

I now believe so well, as having trid
With good successe believe I better should not;
So that I might have well been damnifid,
But by my triall mend my state I could not:
But what grief had it been if I had spid,
By my most deare Clarice, that I would not?
Much may they leese, but gains get small or none,
That will in play a thousand lay to one.

63

These later words so lowd and plaine he spake,
(Though to himselfe) that he that steard the boat,

Who to his speech and gestures heed did take,
The words and meaning of his words did note:
Wherefore a further cause of speech to make,
As one that though he ware a livry coat,
Yet was well spoken, and of good bold sprite,
He straight doth fall to reason with the knight.

64

In fine, the summe of all their argument,
Was that his wit was much to be controld,
That sought to make too great experiment,
Of womens truths, more then their force can hold:
For she that can with chast and firm intent,
Maintaine her truth, against assault of gold,
Might evn as easily defend the same,
Against a thousand swords in midst of flame.

65

To this the Bargeman said, you sure may swear it,
They must not be assaild with darts so fierce,
For their soft breasts too tender are to beare it,
Sith coats of sounder prooffe such shot will pierce:
I could (saith he) to this effect rehearse,

And sure a pietie tale (if you would heare it)
Of one who though his wife had sore offended,
By her, in greater sinne was apprehended.

66

I meane the tale of that Adonio, which
The great gift gave unto the Judges wife,
A little dogge that made his owner rich,
A thing that in these parts is known so rife,
The knight replid, mine cares to heare it itch,
For never yet I heard it in my life:
Then if it please you, heare it now you shall,
The Stearsman said, and thus began his tale.

67

There was a learned Lawyer, cald by name
Anselmus, borne here in our neighbour towne,
That so long studied Ulpian, till he came
To be a Judge, and weare a scarlet gowne,
And having won great wealth, he wood a dame
For beauty and for state of great renowne;
They wedded were, for better and for worse,
So he her person likd, so she his purse.

68

Her qualities and haviour past the rest,
She seemed all of lovelinesse composd,
Not fit indeed for him, that was to rest,
And to his bookes, more then to sports disposd:
Wherefore foule jealous thoughts his mind possest,
And that his wife plaid false, he still supposd,
Yet cause was none, of her so to misdeem,
Save that too faire, and wittie she did seem.

69

Now in the selfe same City dwelt a knight,
(Too neare a neighbour to this man of law)
That was of that same stock descended right,
That had their offspring from the serpents jaw,
From whence the Fairy eke, that Manto hight,
And built our City, doth her lineage draw,
This knight that was Adonio cald by name,
Was much enamord on the lovely dame.

70

And that he might attaine this Ladies love,
He doth begin to spend beyond all measure,

In clothes, in feasts, his calling farre above,
In showes, in playes, to do his mistris pleasure:
To beare the charge thereof it would behove
To have that Emperour Tiberius treasure,
So as I ween ere winters twaine were past,
His lands were quite consumd, he spent so fast.

71

Wherefore compeld to strike his lofty sailes,
He suddenly surceast his stately port,
The house (now that the Lords revenue failes)
Stood solitary, quite without resort:
There was no Feasants, Partridges, nor Quailes,
His pittance now was grown but bare and short,
And he that erst was king of all this feasting,
Plaid least in sight, now doubting of arresting.

72

And therefore lothing to be known or seen,
He purposd in his place not long to tarie,
But with a mind to leave his country clean,
He stale away from thence all solitarie:
Her onely love, that of his heart was Queen,

In all his woes he still with him doth carie,
But lo, when as his Ebb did seem most low,
Good fortune made his tide most high to flow.

73

For as he wanderd here and there abroad,
He saw how that a sturdy clown and stout,
With sturdy staffe, laid on no little load
Upon a bush, still beating thereabout:
Adonio in the place makes some abroad,
And askd the cause of that same country lout,
Who told him that a monstrous snake and huge
Had taken that same bush for a refuge.

74

And told him further he that stir did make,
With mind to find and kill it ere he part.
Adonio for his crest did give the Snake,
And therefore lov'd and favour'd Snakes in hart,
As from whose kind he did his gentry take;
Wherefore unto the clown he doth impart
His mind so farre, at last he him perswaded,
To let alone the Snake he so invaded.

75

This done, he went as he was bent before,
Farre from his country, where he was unknown,
And so indurd till sevn whole yeares and more
Of woe and want quite ore his head were blown:
But that great love he to his mistris bore,
Him forcd, though now all out of fashion grown,
With bushie beard, lean cheeks, and ragged clothes,
To turne unto the place that most he lothes.

76

In this mean time, our town had cause to send
Some sage Ambassadour unto the Pope,
That must upon his Holinesse attend,
And for his suit to take a whole yeares scope:
The Judge by lot was chosen to that end,
(O cursed lot that killed all his hope)
To shun this office he tries many shifts,
By scuses, promises, by prairs and gifts.

77

But finding that he strave against the streame,
At last against his will he takes the place,

Though to depart into another Reame,
It seemed unto him a grievous case:
His jealousie therewith grew most extreame,
Misdoubting his wives truth, so long a space,
Yet nathlesse her, in grave and friendlesse speech,
To have great care thereof he doth beseech.

78

He saith, a woman cannot take upon her,
With beauty, riches, nor with high Nobility,
To claime the true deserved praise of honour,
If chastity do faile by her fragility,
This is the vertue that defends her owner,
And now she may (he saith) with great facility
Attaine great praise, and shew thereof great proof,
While he is forcd to stay so far aloof.

79

These words he spake, and many such as these,
Thereby to move her to continue true,
And she (poore soule) yet free from such disease,
His parting thence did much lament and rue;
She swears that sooner men should draine the seas,

Then draw her mind so to forget her due;
Yea first she will evn die the death she saith,
Much rather then to falsifie her faith.

80

The Judge appeasd with this her protestation,
Began to have of her the lesse mistrust,
But yet his fond and jealous inclination
So moves him, that search further needs he must:
He had a friend that could by conjuration
Foretell of future matters true and just:
That were it skill in Magick, or in starres,
His guesse was such, as that it seldome erres.

81

He speaketh to that friend to this effect,
That he his wives nativity would cast,
To learn if he did right or wrong suspect,
That she would in his absence live unchast:
The man thus praid, the figure doth erect,
And in their place the Planets all he placd,
Anselmus leaves him busie, and next day
Doth come to heare him what he hath to say.

82

Twas long before thAstronomer would speak,
As loth to speak, that would the Judge offend,
With many scuses frivolous and weak,
He shifts him off, but urged by his friend,
He told him flatly she would wedlock break,
And that she would to him prove false in thend,
Not movd by beauty, nor by suit desird,
But evn for lucre's sake directly hird.

83

Now when Anselmus former bad belief
Was newly reconfirmd by Spheares supernall,
It doubtlesse did so much augment his grief,
I think his torture past the paines infernall:
And more then all the rest, this grievd him chief,
And to his heart a corsive was eternall,
To think that Avarice should her entice,
Upon her chastity to set a price.

84

Yet to prevent all that such mind might breed,
Most earnestly he bendeth all his power,

For (as they say) man is compeld by need
To rob the Church, and hallowd things devoure:
His jewels, plate, and stock that did exceed,
He put all in her hands that present houre,
And made it all her own by deed of gift,
And told her plaine what was herein his drift.

85

He saith he gives it her on this condition,
Not that she should strive to increase or mend it,
For why (he said) she should have free commission,
To sell, to give, cast it away and spend it,
But only that she should avoid suspition
Of wedlock breach, and by no means offend it,
On this condition, all he then bequeaths her,
That he may find her such as now he leaves her.

86

He further doth her earnestly exhort,
That presently when he is gone away,
She should (for more eschuing of resort)
Not any longer in the City stay,
But at his countrey house, where in good sort

Till his return the season passe she may:
Belike, he thought in tillers of the ground,
And country swaines, inticements none are found.

87

His loving wife Argia all this space
Still hanging on his neck while he did speak,
With kindly teares bedewed all his face,
And much it grievd her to be judgd so weak,
And to be deemed so devoid of grace,
That in his absence she would wedlock break,
Her manners have not been so light and vicious,
(She saith) to move him to be thus suspicious.

88

I should too long in this one matter dwell,
If all that past between them two at large,
When he departed, I to you should tell,
Still iterating that his former charge:
Now on his way he goes, God speed him well,
The grief was great that did his heart surcharge,
But thus they part, her eyes all full of teares,
His mind of jealousies and thousand feares.

89

This while Adonio looking pale and wan,
As erst I told, and overgrown with haire,
To travell to his countryward began,
In hope that no man now would know him there,
He travels in the secretst sort he can,
Unseen, unknown, till he arrived where
He rescud had the snake sevn yeares before,
That by the clown pursued was so sore.

90

Arriving at this place by break of day,
He saw a Lady walking neare the lake,
Who though she seemd attird in strange array,
Yet for some great estate one would her take,
Her countnance did such majesty bewray:
She toward him with stately gate did make,
And looking on him with a gracious cheare,
She spake these words so loud as he might heare.

91

Gentleman, though you do not know my face,
Yet am I bound to you, and am your friend,

I am your cosin, and of Cadmus race
Our royall stock doth lineally descend,
I am that Manto, that in yond same place
To build that town did first begin and end,
And Mantua, according to my name,
Tis cald, as you perhaps have heard by fame.

92

I am a Fayrie, and to make you know,
To be a Fayrie what it doth import,
We cannot die how old so ere we grow:
Of paine and harmes of evry other sort
We tast, but yet no death we nature ow;
But which is worse then if our lives were short,
Each sevnth day we constrained are to take
Upon our selves the person of a snake.

93

To be transformd to Serpents ugly hew,
That creepeth still, and on his belly goth,
Is such a grief to us, to tell you true,
Not one of us but then to live doth loth.
Now that I further may declare to you,

From whence this kindnesse that I speak of, groth,
Know this, what day we have this cursed shape,
We hardly dangers infinite escape.

94

No living thing is lothed more then they,
So that no sooner one of us is spid,
But we are chasd and hunted out straightway;
And if we find no place our selves to hide,
They lay on load, and beat us so that day,
That we the paine thereof long after bide,
And who would not rather one death have chusd,
Then beaten evermore to be and brusd?

95

Now Sir, the benefit that I confesse
I have receivd, in which your merit stands,
Was this, some sevn yeares since, or not much lesse,
As you did wander ovr these woods and lands,
You saved me from danger and distresse,
I should have sufferd at a villens hands:
Who though he could not slay me, neare the latter,
Did seek with cudgill me to bruise and batter.

96

For why those dayes that we be snakes (she saith)
And creeping groveling, bellies on the ground,
The heavns, that other times our hest obeyth,
Denies their aid, in us no force is found:
Somtimes the Sun at our commandment stayth,
The steadie earth doth move and turneth round,
As we can by our power cause in a trice,
Ice turn to flame, and fire congeal to ice.

97

Now here I come your curtsie to requite,
Which sevn years since I to me done did note,
Now to reward you I have power and might,
While I am free from serpents cursed coat,
Three times your fathers wealth you shall ere night
Possesse, and I will set you so aflote,
You never shall be poore, to your lives end,
But ever have the more, the more you spend.

98

And (for I know that in your former knot
In which love bound you first; you still are tid)

I will direct you so, by wayes I wot,
Your sute shall not be unto you denied.
Now that the jealous Judge at home is not,
Go thither straight, and I will be your guide,
She now is at her husbands country village,
Attending there good huswifrie and tillage.

99

She further doth at large to him devise,
How he shall go, in what apparell clad,
How he shall tempt her, in what manner wise,
And how to grant his suit she should be glad;
Then told she how she would her self disguise,
For why, for ever in her power she had,
Except the dayes in which she was a snake,
What shape she list upon her self to take.

100

Thus she disguis'd him like a Pilgrim poore,
That on his shoulders doth a wallet beare,
And doth for Gods sake beg from doore to doore,
A gown of Fryers gray she made him weare,
A strange apparell for a gallant woer:

Into an Island dog, with shagged haire,
As white as Ermin, and the prettiest elf,
That ever nature made, she changd her self.

101

And thus unto Argias they resort,
First to some utter rooms, in which were biding
The Hinds and Labourers of meaner sort,
Here he with certaine pipes of his providing,
His dog made dance, and make such prettie sport,
That glad was he could bring his mistres tiding,
Who needs would see as much as they had seen,
Such was the Doctors destinie I ween.

102

Adonio to her presence thus admitted,
Commands the dog, which in all points obeyd,
His turns, his dances, and his gestures fitted,
So due and just, to all the Pilgrim said.
They musd to see a dog so rarely witted,
And marking still the qualities he plaid,
In seeing them they take great mirth and pleasure,
And praisd the little dog beyond all measure.

103

Much wonder first, but after much desire
Bred in the Judges wife, the dog to get,
She bids the nurse the dog to buy or hire,
And try what price the man thereof would set:
Dame (said the Pilgrim) had your mistres by her
In coyned gold, as much as ever yet
A womans thought did wish, it would not boot,
Of this same dog of mine to buy one foot.

104

And plaine to shew that that was true he said,
And that it rather better was then worse,
He took her straight aside with him, and praid
The dog to give two duckats to the nurse,
The dog but shook his eares, and out he laid
The gold; there take and put it in thy purse,
Adonio saith, and think what price is able
To buy a dog that is so profitable.

105

What ere I ask this dog to me will bring,
Embroiderd gowns and kirtles, cloth of gold,

A chaine of pearle, a jewell, or a ring,
In shorter time then it can well be told;
Yet tell my Lady this, she hath a thing,
For which alone my Spaniell can be sold,
To pay me gold or coyne I count it dodging,
But I will sell it her for one nights lodging.

106

This said, he sent by her as for a token,
A gem of passing price, then newly made;
The nurse rewarded thus, and fairely spoken,
And usd (perhaps) to trafficke in such trade,
Went backe therewith, and having fitly broken
The matter first, her mistres doth perswade,
To buy the dog, and said she might atchieve it,
With such a price, as is no losse to give it.

107

At first, the fayre Argia backward drew,
As partly, being loth to breake her faith,
And partly doubting all could not be trew,
The which the tatling nurse before her laith;
But she with oathes doth her first tale renew,

And that such offers seldome come she saith,
In fine she wan her mistres to agree,
Next day more privatly the dog to see.

108

Adonios next apparance in the place,
Became the Doctors ruine and confusion,
Suck duckets, such spur Ryals in like case,
Such gems he shewd indeed, or by illusion,
He mollifid thereby my Ladies grace,
And movd her marke the bargaine in conclusion,
And this did (then perhaps) the rather move her,
When as she knew he was her ancient lover.

109

Thus her true lovers presence, and his prayer,
The comforts of her nurse, that whorish drudge,
The great rewards he presently did pay her,
The absence long of that same jealous Judge;
And lastly hope that sure none would bewray her,
Wipt from her conscience scruple all and grudge,
So that she tooke his dog, and for his laber,
Gave him free leave to play upon her taber.

110

Thus now Adonio frankly reapt the fruit,
Of that faire Ladies love that he had wonne,
The which he followd still with sweet pursuit,
Unto their likings both: this while the Sun,
Before the judg full ended had his suit,
Through twice six signes his yearly course had run,
And home he came at last, suspecting sore,
That which thAstronomer had told before.

111

But ere unto his owne house he would go,
First of thAstronomer to aske he ment,
If so his wife had taryed chast or no,
Since he from home on his Ambassage went:
The cunning man, that meant the troth to show,
Doth calculate, to see how starres were bent,
And when that he the planets well had vewd,
That she had plaid the quean, he doth conclude.

112

And that it was befalne as he forshowed,
How she, with mightie gifts and bribes allured,

Her selfe upon another had bestowed.
The wretched Judge, with no small grieffe indured,
To heare these news, & though too true he trowed
The same, yet seeking to be more assured,
He calls the nurse aside, at his home comming,
And seekes to sift her with no little cunning.

113

With divers circumquakes and devises
He seeketh of the nurse to finde the trace,
But she in speech so warie and so nice is,
As one belike well studied in the case,
That all his cunning speech her not intices,
But that she still denide with shamelesse face,
That which she knew, and whereof her perswasion
Had bene in part, though not the chiefe occasion.

114

When as the jealous Judge long time in vaine,
Had tempted her with promises and gifts,
And that he saw for all his search and paine,
He found lesse certentie, the more he sifts,
He doth expect to try a further traine,

As one not unacquainted with such drifts,
He watcht a time, when they should fall to bralling,
As still where women are, is oft befalling.

115

And as he thought indeed so fell it out,
The testie nurse one day not pleased well,
Came unto him at their next falling out,
And of her owne accord the truth doth tell:
Thinke you, when as the Judge had heard her out,
How he did chase, and fret and fume, and swell,
So neare unto his heart and braine it sits,
It little wanted to have reavd his wits.

116

And in this agonie resolvd to dye,
And finish both his owne dayes and his wives,
And so his griefe, and her great shame thereby
To wipe away, with ending both their lives,
He turneth to the Citie by and by,
As that same desperat desire him drives,
And thence a trustie servant with instruction,
He sends of purpose for his wives destruction.

117

He bids him tell Argia in his name,
That on the sodaine he was falne so sicke,
That but to him without delay she came,
The doubt was great she could not find him quick,
Wherefore her journey with more speed to frame,
To ryde behind this man, who in a thicke,
That was right in the way unto the Citie,
Had charge to kill her there without all pitie.

118

And straight accordingly the servant went,
To say and do, as much as he was bidden,
But she foretold of that their fell intent,
(For nothing from her little dogge was hidden)
And taught withall, the same for to prevent,
Away with this same servant she is ridden,
And in few houres arived at the wood,
Where he was purposd to have shed her blood.

119

Then did he tell to her his masters will,
And drew his sword a speedie death to give her,

He onely offered, ere he would her kill,
To grant her time, to pray God to forgive her,
I cannot tell you by what manner skill,
She did her selfe forth of his hands deliver,
But gon she was, he seeking all about,
And for his life he could not find her out.

120

Backe went the fellow, with astonied face,
With trembling heart, and courage all dismayd,
And made his master, at the wondrous case,
No lesse then he had bene afore afrayd,
He knew not how; by Faery Mantos grace,
His wife could when she list, have helpe and ayd,
For why the nurse that did the rest unfold,
I knew not why, but this she never told.

121

The Doctor now was plagud with griefe extreame,
Far more then ever he had felt before,
What erst was but a mote, is now a beame,
Nor he one jot revenged is the more;
His shame will now be blazd ovr all the Reame,

And all men now, will laugh at him therefore,
The former errour, might have bene concealed,
But this to all the world will be revealed.

122

He thinks that sure, upon this plaine detection,
Of his fellonious mind, of which I spake,
She will, to keepe her out of his subjection,
To some great Lord, forthwith her selfe betake,
And live in spite of him, with such protection,
And so a mocking stocke of him to make,
But most he doubts, least to some man she goth,
As is a leacher, and a ruffin both.

123

Wherefore so foule a mischief to prevent,
He spares no paine, no travell nor no cost,
To evrie towne, in Lombardie he sent,
With letters and with messages in post;
And further he himselfe in person went
To seeke his wife that was so strangely lost,
But all in vaine, for why of her abiding,
No inckling he could heare nor any tyding.

124

And to conclude, at last he cald his man,
That man that made to him the strange report,
And bids him show the place, and if he can,
Where his lewd mistres vanisht in such sort:
The servant straight to lead the way began,
And to the place, together they resort,
But (which was strange) where erst he left a wood,
A wondrous stately Palace now there stood.

125

The fayre Argia caused had this space,
Her Faery to erect there for her pleasure,
An house of Allablaster in the place,
Adornd and guilt, with cost beyond all measure:
Twere hard to thinke, much lesse to tell with grace,
What beautie was without, within what treasure;
My masters house, fro whence last night you came,
Was but a paltrie Alehouse to this same.

126

Of costly Arras, there was so great plentie,
Of beds of silke, imbroidred, fresh and new,

As furnisht chambers, more then ten times twentie,
And halls, and what soever was in view,
Cups, candlesticks, and bowls of stones most dentie,
Of precious substance, and of sundrie hew,
To be imploid for eating, and for drinking,
And store of gold, and silke beyond all thinking.

127

Now sir, the wretched Judge, as I said earst,
That out to seeke his wife had here assignd,
And findes this house, in state as I rehearst,
Where he had nothing thought, but woods to find,
With wonder great his mazed head was pearst,
And doubted not a little in his mind,
If so himselfe were sleeping then or waking,
Or if his troubled brayne, were in due taking.

128

He sees a Gibsen standing at the doore,
All blablipt, beetle browd, and bottle nozed,
Most greasie, nastie, his apparell poore,
His other parts, as Painters are disposed,
To give to Esop, such a Blackamore

Could not be seene elsewhere, as he supposed,
So vile a visage, and so bad a grace,
To make evn Paradise a loathsome place.

129

Anselmus seeing none but this same drudge,
Went unto him, and praith him make it knowne,
Whose house is this: the Gipsen tels the Judge,
That he himselfe, the stately house doth owne:
The Judge, that he doth mocke him sure doth judge,
And prayes the certaine truth to him be showne:
The Negro doth affirme with many an oth,
That that which he had said before, was troth.

130

And that he plainly might the truth perceave,
He prayes him vew the house at better leasure,
And offreth him free libertie and leave,
Of any thing was there, at his owne pleasure,
For him or for his friends, to take and leave,
And evn as of his owne, to make free seasure,
The Doctor marvels that such liberalitie
Could be in one, of so base show and qualitie.

131

But yet the Judge, so fayre and kind intreated,
In frendly sort, doth from his horse alight,
And sees the house as I before repeated,
With wonder great, and with as great delight,
So richly furnished, so Princely seated,
So bravely built for use, as well as sight,
And evrie part with other so agreeing,
He could not satisfie his eyes with seeing.

132

Now when the Judge came backe againe, he told
He nere saw house, so pleasing to his eye,
And swears he thought that ten times Craesus gold,
Were scant a price, so rare a house to buy:
Yet may (the Negro saith) this house be sold,
Though not for coyne (for not for coyne care I)
Yet for some other ware, which sure I guesse,
You will esteeme at price a great deale lesse.

133

In fine, he made to him the like request,
As Sodomits did make for guests of Lot:

The Judge his motion doth and him detest,
Who though five times repulst, yet ceaseth not,
But him with so large offers still he prest,
That in conclusion, like a beastly sot,
So as it might be done, in hugger mugger,
The Judge agreed, the Negro him should () .

134

Argia that there by unseene had stayd,
And seene him falne into the sinne forenamed,
Disclosd her selfe, and sharply did upbrayd
His filthy fact, that justly might be blamed;
A Judge (said she) reputed wise, and stayd,
Sinne thus? wherewith the Doctor was so shamed,
He wisht the earth would cleave unto the center,
That he to hide himselfe, therein might enter.

135

But she exclaimeth on him still anew,
For his more shame, and for her more excuse,
And said, what punishment were fit for you,
For this foule sinne, against all natures use?
That did no lesse then death to me thinke dew,

For such a small and naturall abuse,
With one that lov'd me, and whose gift was such,
As ten such houses are not worth so much.

136

If one death did unto my fault belong,
One hundred deaths were fit to thine to give,
And though my selfe am in this place so strong,
That if I list, thou shouldst no longer live,
Yet will I do to thee no further wrong,
But pardon thee, and thou shalt me forgive,
And quite each other, all old debts and driblets,
And set the hares head against the goose gyblets.

137

And let henceforth peace follow in effect,
As ought to be betweene the man and wife,
Nor ever tone to tother once object,
Our former fault in all our future life:
The Judge was glad, and did it not neglect,
To take this frendly end of cursed strife;
Thus as good frends, they lived many a yeare,
And while they livd, they lov'd each other deare.

138

And there the steersman did his story end,
With which he movd the worthy knight to lafter,
Who blamd the Doctor, that did so offend,
And talked of the same a good while after:
But much he did Argias wit commend,
Or at the least, the wit of her that taught her,
To make the Judge into that net fall in,
In which her selfe was falne with far lesse sin.

139

Now when the Sunne gan mount unto the South,
A little Table in the Barge was spred,
And then the knight began to feed his mouth,
When sleepe his eyes, and talke his eares had fed:
The Mantuan at his charges, him allowth,
All fine Acates that that same country bred,
The while his swimming vessell doth forsake
The pleasant country, and unpleasant lake.

140

From thence, he held his course still forward right,
The river running straight as any lyne,

Which when they passed had with speedie flight,
Upon the tother hand they did decline:
And by a ditch, and standing poole in sight,
Ere of that day, were spent full howers nine,
Unto Ravenna as they were commanded,
They went, and there the brave Renaldo landed:

141

Although Renaldo could but seldome bost
Of store of coyne, yet now such store he had,
As to the Bargemen of his frendly host,
He gave a largesse such, as made them glad:
From thence to Rimini, he went in post,
And changing horses still, now good, now bad,
That night at Mountefior, he did but sup,
And so tUrbyno, ere next Sunne was up.

142

Then Caglie, and from thence the Alpes he past,
Then thUmbrys and Etruscians, thence to Rome,
And so by Barke, to Ostia in great hast
He went, and to that Citie he doth come,
Which good AEneas many ages past,

Ennobled with his sire Anchyses toome:
Then straight by sea he went unto this Ile,
Where I did leave Orlando, since a while.

143

I meane that Ile, that Lippadusa hight,
Wherein the famous warriors, three to three,
The combat that I spake of erst did fight,
The which Renaldo longing sore to see,
With ores and sayles, made all the hast he might,
But yet for all his hast, it would not be,
The wind did for his purpose serve so slacke,
More then an houre too late it kept him backe.

144

So that evn much about that time he came,
When as Orlando had that conquest wonne,
In which unto his everlasting fame,
Two Turkish Princes, unto death were donne;
Yet was some sorrow mingled with the same,
Both for the death of Monodantes sonne,
And Oliveros hurt, of which he found
Such grieffe, he could not set his foote to ground.

145

Now as the Earle Renaldo did imbrace,
He could not chuse, but shed a streame of teares,
When as he showd him, in the present place,
Good Brandimart, to whom such love he beares,
Lye newly slaine, with pale and livelesse face:
Likewise to weepe, Renaldo not forbeares,
To see his death, and eke his cosins bruse,
So grievous, that his foote he could not use.

146

Renaldo comforts them in all he may,
Although himselfe of comfort tasted least,
And chiefe to thinke by his unluckie stay,
He was come tardie, to so great a feast:
This while the wofull servants did convay,
Their masters coarses, to the towne distrest,
I meane Biserta, where they made it knowne,
Which side prevaild, and which was overthrowne.

147

Of this same conquest that Orlando wonne,
Astolfo and stout Sansonet were glad;

Yet joyd they not, so as they would have donne,
If Brandimart his death then had not had:
The fall of noble Monodantes sonne,
Strake them into a dumpe and made them sad,
But who shall now impart to Fiordeliege,
The wofull losse of her deare Lord and liege?

148

Her self had dreamd a strange dream overnight,
Which did her mind in fearfull sort dismay,
She dreamd the bases of her loved knight,
Which she embroidred black this other day,
With spots of red were powdred all in sight,
And on the same like storm of hailstones lay:
That she had done it so she sure believd,
And with the thought thereof was greatly grievd.

149

She further thought, that to her self she sed,
Did not my Lord command me black to make it,
What meant I then to mix it so with red,
And in so strange a manner to mistake it?
An ill presage in her this fancy bred,

And for an evill token she did take it,
Then came these newes which none imparted with her,
Till thEnglish Duke and Sansonet came thither.

150

When they came in, and that she well had heeded
Their countnances, in such a conquest sad,
No further newes, no further notice needed,
To make her know, they brought her tidings bad:
Forthwith her grief and sorrow so exceeded,
Scarce any power her vitall spirits had,
But presently in pale and deadly sound
She fell in wofull trance upon the ground.

151

But when that life came to his course againe;
Her tender cheeks and her faire haire she tare,
Oft calling on his loved name in vaine,
Whose losse had bred in her such wofull care,
She screeches and cries out with grief and paine,
Like those with Devils that possessed are,
Or as the Menades with sound of horn
In furious manner all about were born.

152

This man and that to lend she doth intreat
A knife, wherewith her self she murder may,
Straight to the havn she runs with fury great,
There where the bodies of the dead kings lay,
With mind to mangle them, and bruise, and beat:
Then to the sea she will, there is no nay,
And passe to Lippaduse, and there abide,
And end her life by Brandimarts deare side.

153

Ah Brandimart my loved Lord (she said)
What meant I without me, to let thee part?
Ay me unluckie wretch, in that I staid,
And was not present there to take thy part;
Mine eye might unto thee have been an aid,
My voice might have assisted thee in part,
And if Gradasso thee behind had stricken,
One cry of mine might thee both warn and quicken.

154

Or els perhaps, so well I might have sped me,
As to have stept the blow and thee between,

If thou hadst scapd, although it did behead me,
I would have said that it had happy been:
Now die I will, though death no whit can sted me,
And though I know my death is fruitlesse cleane;
Whereas if I had did in thy defence,
My death had profit bred, and not offence.

155

And if the heavns had been so hard in this,
That I could not have holp thee in the place,
At least my last farewell and solemne kisse,
I should have givn thee, and thy lovely face,
Bedewd with teares, and ere to heavnly blisse
Thy soule had flown, I should have had the space
To say, depart from hence in peace my deare,
And know, I have not long to tarie here.

156

Is this deare Brandimart is this thy raigne,
Of Damagyre, whose scepter I should take?
Is this the dowre thou dost to me ordaine?
Is this the royal seat, of which you spake?
Ah fortune hard, how frivolous and vaine

Dost thou my hopes and my designements make?
Ah why cease I, sith so great good is reft me,
To cast away what ever els is left me?

157

With this, againe so great her fury grew,
She made upon her self a fresh assault,
And her faire haire she rent, and tare anew,
As if her haire had been in all the fault,
Evn from her tender cheeks the bloud she drew,
Still dewing them with watry teares and salt:
But let her here a while lament and mourn,
For to Orlando I must now return.

158

Who with his kinsman that did now require
Some cunning leach his grievous wound to cure,
And (for to Brandimart he did desire
To give an honourable sepulture)
To that hill went that doth the night with fire
Make cleare, and doth the day with smoke obscure,
And so the wind did favour his intent,
In twenty houres he came to Agringent.

159

Here when they were down from their ships alighted,
The Sun evn then preparing to go down,
They sent abroad and in great hast invited
The chief Nobility of all the town:
Straight at the shore of torches store was lighted,
And many men of honour and renown,
When as Orlando to the shore returnd,
Went with him to the corps, and with him mournd.

160

There Bardyn stood, a man well strick in yeares
And in such sort to waile he did persever,
That with abundant shedding of his teares,
Men thought he would have lost his eyes for ever;
To blame the heavns and stars he not forbears,
But roaring like a Lion in a fever,
Tare his gray haire, and all about it sprinkled,
And spared not his aged skin and wrinkled.

161

When as the Palladine approched neare,
Straight doubled was the mourning noise and cry,

Each strivd who should most sorrowfull appeare,
And evry one lift up his voice on high;
Orlando with more heavy heart then cheare,
Still keeping fixed on the beare his eye,
When silence first by signes procurd he had,
Pronounced these words with mourning voice & sad.

162

O stout, o deare champion mine, and friend,
That here art dead, but livst in heavnly seat,
Where thy great joyes shall never have an end,
Nor ever be empaird with cold or heat:
Yet pardon me in that I do offend,
To walle my woe, and misery so great,
My sorrow is not for thy parting hence,
But that my selfe am so long absent thence.

163

To think that he is severd now so far,
In whom I joyd, this doth my paine increase,
I was with thee in tempests and in war;
Why am not I with thee in calm and peace?
O mirie flesh, that me from blisse doth bar,

Why cannot I obtaine a like release,
Sith still I was copartner of thy paine,
Why am I kept from part of so great gaine?

164

To you the happy guerdon and the gaine,
To us the losse and dammage all is left,
France, Germany, and Italy complaine,
Their chiefe defence, and their chiefe buckler rest:
How shall my Prince and uncle now sustaine,
(Deprivd of so good help) so great a heft,
Thy losse of succour hath bereaved wholly
Both holy Church, and eke the empire holy.

165

The Pagans whom thou dantedst in thy life,
How will they gather heart now with thy death?
How will they stir new storms of fearfull strife,
Now having so good meanes to gather breath?
But how great sorrow will thy dearest wife
Sustaine? me thinks I heare evn now she seth
I am to blame, and that she hates me most,
And saith by me she hath her worlds joy lost.

166

Yet Fiordeliege, this comfort may revive
Both thee, and all that for his death are sorie,
That all the valiant knights that him survive,
Have cause to envy, and admire his glory:
The Decij, nor the knight that leapt alive
In Curtian lake, so praised in Latin story,
Nor Codrus by the Greeks so magnifid,
With greater praise, nor honour never did.

167

These words, and such as these Orlando spake,
The while the Fryres, both white, and black, and gray
A solemne and a long procession make,
In goodly rank, and in devout array:
That God to heavn the dead mans spirit take,
Requiem aeternam for his soule they pray,
And tapers in the midst, before, behind,
Did cause that knight, like to the noone day shind.

168

Then diverse Earles and knights the hearse uphold,
All over which a mantle rich was spread,

Of purple silk, embroiderd brave with gold,
And with faire pearle, and stone well garnished,
Of equall cost and beauty to behold,
The coffin was that held the body dead,
Provided by the Palladine to be,
Fit for his calling and his high degree.

169

Three hundred people of the poorer sort
Of dwellers that inhabited the town,
Unto the funerals did then resort,
And unto each was givn a mourning gown;
An hundred Pages, mounted in good sort,
On warlike steeds, clothd to the ground adown,
And both the Pages, and the gallant steeds
From top to toe were clad in mourning weeds.

170

Then bare they divers banners faire displaid,
And painted divers armes, that he obtaind
From armed bands alone, without all aid,
And had to Caesar and to Peter gaind:
With hundreds more, all in black gowns arraid,

To whom were divers offices ordaind,
And last Renaldo and Orlando came,
But Olivero staid (for he was lame.)

171

It long would be ere I could it rehearse,
And tell what ceremonies used were,
Nor can I comprehend them well in verse,
How orderly they were accomplishd there:
Unto the chiefest Church they bare a hearse,
The while nor old nor young to weep forbear,
His noblenesse, his value, and his youth
Did breed in all their hearts so wondrous ruth.

172

Now when the women finishd had and done
Their bootlesse weeping, and their fruitlesse paine,
The Priest had said their Kyrieleisonne,
And all the rites that thereunto pertaine:
The carkasse of great Monodantes sonne,
So chested, on two collumns to remaine
Orlando causd, till time he might procure
A costly and more stately sepulture.

173

From Sicilie Orlando not departs,
Till he for Tutch and Porpherie had sent,
And all that were most skilfull of those arts,
Had talkd withall, and told them his intent:
Then Fiordeliege comming to those parts,
Her time, her travell, and her treasure spent,
To make the tombe most stately for her spouse,
At which to spend her future time she vows.

174

And sith her plaints and teares were never tird,
In that self place she means her dayes to passe,
And for her husbands soule she still desird
Continuall Dirges, and perpetuall Masse;
From company her selfe she quite retird,
And to the place (such her devotion was)
That by the tombe she built a little cell,
In which till death she purposed to dwell.

175

Orlando divers messages did send
To her, and after that in person went

To fetch her into France, and did pretend
That her to place with Galeran he meant,
Or if the time in prayer she still would spend,
He would a Nunry build for that intent,
Or that he would, if so she so had rather,
Attend her to her country, and her father.

176

But at the tombe she tarid obstinate,
And would from thence by no mean be removd,
Still doing, saying, both betime and late,
Penance and prayers, for him that she so lovd,
Till death in thend cut off her dolefull date,
And sent her soon, to find her deare belovd:
But now the knights of France from Sicill parted,
For losse of their companion heavy hearted.

177

And Oliver still of his foot complaind,
For why, no salve nor surgery prevaild,
But that he was with griefe so greatly paind,
They doubted that his life would then have faild:
Thus while they all in doubtfull dump remaind,

The man that steard the bark in which they saild,
Did make to them this motion sage and wise,
And they agreed to follow his advise.

178

He told them that not far from thence there dwelled
An Hermit in a solitary place,
That so in sanctity of life excelled,
That he could remedy each doubtfull case,
Diseases divers were by him expelled,
Dumbe, blind, and lame were heald (such was his grace)
And that he could with one signe of the crosse
Allay the waves when they do highest tosse.

179

In fine, he told them sure there was no doubt,
To find relief, evn present at the hands
Of that same man, so holy and devout,
As scarce his match was found in many lands.
Orlando having heard the Pylot out,
Inquired of the place, which way it stands,
And presently the place to him was showd,
And toward it in hast they saild and rowd.

180

Next morning they discoverd all the Ile,
But kept aloof, so as their ship might float,
And there they cast their anchor, and the while
Convaid the wounded Marquesse in a boat,
Upon the shallow waves, scant half a mile,
Unto the blessed Hermits simple coat,
That very Hermit that before but late
Had brought Rogero unto Christian state.

181

The man of God that had his dwelling here,
Came forth, and met Orlando at the gate,
And welcomd him with kind and friendly cheare,
Inquiring of his arrant, and their state,
(Although to him it was apparant cleare:
For God that night had sent his Angell late
To tell the Saint thereof) Orlando said,
His arrant was to get his kinsman aid.

182

Who had a great and grievous maime receavd,
In fighting for the Empire and the faith,

And was of hope and comfort quite bereavd,
Be of good cheare (the godly Hermit saith)
Who trust in God shall never be deceavd,
Yet ointment none unto his hurt he layth,
But first to Church he goth, and makes his prayre,
Then with great boldnesse doth to them repayre.

183

And calling on that treble sovraigne name,
Of God the Father, Sonne, and Holy Ghost,
He blest the knight that maimed was and lame,
(Oh wodrous grace, of which Gods Saints may bost)
Straight to his use each veine and sinew came,
No part of all his former strength was lost,
And as it pleased God of his great grace,
Sobrino present was then in the place.

184

And being now so weak with bleeding brought,
That evn his vitall sprites were almost spent,
And seeing plainly such a wonder wrought,
So great, so gracious, and so evident,
To leave his Macon he thereby was taught,

And to confesse our Christ omnipotent,
He praid in most contrite and humble manner,
To be a souldier under Christian banner.

185

The just old man did grant him his request,
And christend him, and did his health restore,
At which Orlando stout and all the rest
Rejoyced much, and praised God therefore.
Rogero eke as joyfull as the best
Increased in devotion more and more,
To see those mysteries divine and Oracles,
Confirmed so by plaine apparant miracles.

186

Thus all this company in sweet consort
In this same blessed Hermits house do stay,
Who doth them all most fatherly exhort,
To bend their whole endeavours all they may,
That in this Inne where mans abode is short,
They seek to wash away the dirt and clay,
That some call life, and greatly do commend,
And sole to heavn their eyes and hearts to bend.

187

Then sent Orlando to his ship in hast
For bread and wine, and other dainty dishes,
And this old man whom abstinence and fast
Had made forget the tast of beasts and fishes,
Of charity they praid some flesh to tast,
And he therein consented to their wishes,
And when they had all eat to their contents,
They found discourse of sundry arguments.

188

And as in speech it often doth befall,
That one thing doth another bring to light,
Rogerero was at last known to them all,
For that Rogerero that exceld in fight,
The first that him to memory did call,
Was Sobrin, who did know him well by sight:
The next that knew his lovely look and stately,
Was good Renaldo that fought with him lately.

189

They all do come to him with friendly face,
When of his christendome they understand,

And some do kisse him, others him embrace
In kindest sort, some take him by the hand,
And chiefe Renaldo strives to do him grace:
Yet if that you desire to understand,
Why more then all the rest Renaldo sought it,
Turn ore the leaf, and there you shall be taught it.

ARGUMENT

THE FORTYFOURTH BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Renaldo to Rogero gives his sister,
Against Duke Ammon and their mothers will:
Rogero doubting lest he should have mist her,
Vowes Leon and his father both to kill:
He leaveth France, and to the streame of Ister,
He rides and travels in those parts, untill
He found the Bulgars fighting with the Greeks,
And aideth those, because he these mislikes.

FORTY FOURTH BOOKE

1

Oft times we see in house of mean estate,
In fortune bad, and chances overthwart,
That men do sooner lay aside debate,
And joyne in sound accord with hand and heart,
Then Princes Courts, where riches gender hate,
And vile suspect that loving mind doth part,
Where charity is clean consumd and vanishd,
And friendship firm is quite cast out and banishd.

2

Hence comes it that twixt Princes and great Lords,
Agreements all and covnants are so fraile,
To day Kings, Popes, and Emprors make accords,
To morrow deadly wars with tooth and naile:
And why? their thoughts still varie from their words,
They keep not oaths but for their own availe:
Nor weigh they wrong or right, or reckon of it,
But as the same may turn to their own profit.

3

Now though such men as yet were never taught,
What friendship is, nor ever knew the same,
(For friendship never growes where there is nought
But shewes disguisd, in earnest or in game)
Yet if ill fortune them so low have brought,
To meet in meaner place, they straight do frame
Their proud high minds to friendship true and plaine,
Which erst they knew not, or they did disdain.

4

The saintlike man had in his Cell more power,
His guests in firm and sound accord do bind,
Then others should have had in Princely bowre:
And more, this friendship was of such a kind,
That ever after from that present houre
Evn to their ends they all agreed in mind:
Appearing to this old man and devout,
As white within, as swans are white without.

5

He found them all both gentle, kind, and meek,
And not in sort of which I erst complaind,

Of those that never think and speak alike,
But ever go with speech and visage faind.
They cleare forgat all grudge and old mislike;
No signe nor memory thereof remaind:
But love together, as if they had come
All of one seed, and laine all in one wombe.

6

But good Renaldo could by no means rest,
To shew Rogero kindnesse great and love,
Both for his prowesse great, and valiant brest,
Which hand to hand in fight he late did prove:
And for his courtsie, that did passe the rest,
And was praiseworthy all the rest above:
But chiefe the cause was this, because he found
His friends to him had sundry wayes been bound.

7

He knew, for often he had heard it told,
How first Rogero saved Richardet,
Whom then Marsilio kept in cruell hold,
Because with child he did his daughter get:
And further, Bovos sons should have been sold,

But them Rogero did at freedome set:
These things in honour true and reputation,
He knew were matters of great obligation.

8

And though before he could no kindnesse show
To him, while he profest himself a Turke,
Yet now that him a Christian he did know,
He would now let his love no longer lurk:
Which when the Hermit saw, he was not slow,
A farther kindnes them between to work;
He moves them (sith he so good friends had seene them)
That he might make affinity between them.

9

He said it was foreshowd him from on hie,
That by the joyning their two lines in one,
Such ofspring should arise, as under skie
To passe or match the same, there should be none;
Wherefore he wisheth them that by and by
By his advice they would agree thereon:
Renaldo at his motion straight allowes
That Bradamant should be Rogeros spouse.

10

Orlando, Olivero soon to that
Gave their good will, and favour, and assent,
Affirming that all France may joy thereat;
They little knew how good Duke Ammon meant
To match his daughter higher far, and that
King Charles thereto did willingly consent:
To Leon namely Constantinos heire,
Emprour of Greece, who sought the Lady faire.

11

Duke Ammon meant not such a match to shun,
But yet his answer he a while deferd
Untill such time as with his absent son
He had on such a weighty cause conferd:
Not doubting but he thereto would be won,
And glad to have his sister so preferd;
But yet, though herein he did nothing doubt him,
Yet would he not resolve thereon without him.

12

But now Renaldo absent from his father,
And ignorant of that imperiall plot,

Unto Rogero promist her the rather,
Because his present friends mislikd it not;
But chief that he by thHermits speech did gather,
That God ordaind it by eternall lot;
And of his father firmly he believd,
At such alliance he could not be grievd.

13

All that same day and night, and half the next,
They made abode with that same saintlike sire,
Still preaching, teaching them the blessed text,
Expounding evry place at their desire:
The mariners with their long tarrying vext,
Oft sent to pray them to the ship retire,
Because the wind blew well to serve their turn,
Compelling them in fine to make return.

14

Rogero that had livd in long exile,
(Now glad to do as that old man had told him)
Doth bid farewell, and left that happy Ile,
When he had learnd that faith that sole must save him
Orlando unto him his sword this while,

And Hectors armes, and good Frontino gave him,
Both to declare his love so much the more,
And that he knew they had been his before.

15

And though the Palladine in common sence
Had juster claime unto the blade inchaunted,
As having won it in his own defence,
Forth of the garden with foule spirits haunted,
Whereas Rogeros title and pretence
Came from Brunello, that of theft was taunted,
Yet gave he it of his good nature meerly,
Although his right thereto appeared clearly.

16

Then by the holy man they were all blessed,
And to their ship they made their back repaire,
Their oares for waves, their sails for winds addressed,
Which then blew very temperate and faire:
No feare of wrack, no doubt to be distressed;
No need there was of vowes, or yet of praier:
But here I leave them sailing in faire weather,
Till thEnglish Duke and them I bring together.

17

Who when the victory he understood
Orlando got, of which he was lesse glad,
Because the same was won with so much blood,
And sith now France no feare of Affricke had;
To send Senapo home he thought it good,
And therefore with a countnance grave and sad,
Yet kind and friendly he did give him thank,
For lending him his aid so free and frank.

18

And Dudon sent a little while before,
All that his great triumphant navy back,
Wherewith he plagued had the Turks so sore,
And brought them all to ruine great and wrack:
Which ships no sooner touchd that Affrike shore,
And quite disburdend of the people black,
But evry ship his shape forsakes and leaves,
And all of them were turnd againe to leaves.

19

And now on parting were the Nubian bands:
Some mounted, some on foot pell mell together,

The winds that wont to move the troublous sands,
Astolfo gave their king in bags of leather,
So firmly tid, and in so sured bands,
As feare they need not any change of weather:
And willd him, when they were past all jeoperty,
That they should grant unto the wind his liberty.

20

Turpino writes that they no sooner came
Unto the mountaine Atlas stony root,
But that their horses stones againe became,
And so they all went home againe on foot:
But after how each thing with them did frame,
In this discourse to tell it shall not boot:
Now tell we of your English Dukes proceeding,
Of his return to France, and of his speeding.

21

Who having rulers for those parts ordaind,
That might as pleasd them ruine or repaire,
No longer then in Affrica remaind,
But unto France he quickly did repaire,
By land or sea to travell he disdaind,

But with his winged beast he cuts the aire,
And quickly came to Province, where he did
As much as erst thEvangelist did bid.

22

Which was that entred into Province, he
Should take away his saddle and his raines,
And grant him liberty and set him free,
And put him now unto no further paines:
For Cinthias spheare, in which our lost wits be,
That maketh of our losses greatest gaines
Had made his horne long since to loose his sound,
That now no vertue in the same was found.

23

Now thEnglish Duke unto Marsilio came,
And just at that same time arrived there,
When those three Palladines, of worthy fame,
With Sobrin and Rogero landed were:
Much was their joy, yet lessond was the same,
And outward showes thereof they do forbear:
So great a sadnes in them all it bred,
To thinke their friend king Brandimart was ded.

24

But Charles that from Sicilia notice had,
How those two kings were slaine, and Sobrine taken,
And Brandimart deceast (which made him sad)
And that Rogero had the Turkes forsaken;
Was in his minde now well apaid and glad,
That such a peise, he from his neck had shaken,
Which for a long time had so grievous wayed,
As he therewith was welny overlayed.

25

Wherefore to do them honour, as was meete,
That with their courage did his crowne sustaine,
He sent his Peeres and nobles them to greette,
Unto the verie confines of his raigne:
Himselfe in person, after did them meete,
With Lords and Princes of his chiefest traine:
And neare the town, the Queene with many a Ladie
Came forth, to do them honor all that may be.

26

King Charles himselfe with chearfull friendly face,
The Palladines, their kinsfolke and their friends,

The noble men, and people meane and base,
To make them for their merits some amends,
With friendly shouts did fill up all the place,
Each man and every child his voice extends,
And cride on those two houses of account,
That of Mongrana, and of Clarimount.

27

Now to the Prince Rogero they did bring,
And told him how he was apparent haire
To Risa, and of that great house did spring:
And while they spake these words, Marfisa faire
Saluted him in presence of the King,
But Bradamant (who thither did repaire)
Yet kept her selfe aloofe with more respect,
Least openly she should her love detect.

28

Then Charls doth welcom him with words most sweet,
And usd him like a man of rare account,
And for he was allighted on his feet,
For revrence sake, againe he made him mount;
And cheeke by cheeke, to ride through evry street:

He knew and joyd, that at the sacred fount,
Roger by the hermit was baptised,
As he by former letters was advised.

29

In triumph and in feasts they spent the day,
And riding through the towne at sundry houres,
Some straw greene leaves, or rushes in the way,
Some cast downe garlands made of sundry flowres.
The streets were hanged all with rich array,
And damsels from the windowes high and towers,
To gratulate their prosperous deeds and haps,
Cast showres of Roses from their tender laps.

30

At evry corner, marketcrosse or gate,
High arches triumphlike were new erected,
Some of Bisertas fall and wofull state,
Which they had overthrowne and quite dejected:
Some of the combate that was fought so late,
With playes and new devises unexpected:
Thus dedicate and thus entitled wholly,
To those Redeemers of the Empire holy.

31

With gratefull sound, of instruments and voice,
With sundrie sweet and musicall consorts,
The people shew how greatly they rejoyce,
With Jubiles, and shouts, and playes and sports.
Then Charles and all his knights, and Barons choise
To his owne house, and his owne court resorts:
And there with tilting, turneis, and with playes,
They spent a few of then ensuing dayes.

32

Renaldo taking time, upon a day,
The mariage matter to his father brake,
And told him he had promist by the way,
His sister should for spouse, Rogero take:
By which, allyance such procure they may,
As men may count great folly to forsake:
In which himselfe the further did proceed,
Because Orlando was thereto agreed.

33

With much disdain this speech Duke Ammon hard,
Affirming he presumptuously had donne,

To promise so, sith he had now prepard,
To match her to the Greekish Emprors sonne,
And not this private knight, who he had hard,
Had not one foote of land scant under Sunne;
Alas (quoth he) poore gentrie small availes,
And vertue lesse, if land and riches failes.

34

But chiefly Ammons wife, dame Beatrice,
Doth call her sonne ungrate and arrogant,
And thinks to worke so by her wise advise,
To make an Empresse of her Bradamant:
Renaldo much condemneth that device,
Nor will not of his word one title want:
But said, his sister (under their correction)
Would therein ruled be by his direction.

35

The mother (in her daughter much beguild)
Perswades with her, and comforts her to say,
That she will rather dye and be exild,
Then match so meane, when higher match she may.
She saith, she will not take her for her child,

If she will let her brother beare such sway:
Wherefore (saith she) be bold, and do denie it,
And with your brother give me leave to try it.

36

Poore Bradamant doth silent stand and still,
She dares not scarce in thought, for revrence sake,
Gainsay her mother, or withstand her will,
On tother side, she dare not promise make,
Of that, which to performe did passe her skill,
And was above her power to undertake:
Now power she had in this nor great nor small,
For long ere this, love seased on it all.

37

She dares not give consent, nor yet deny,
She onely sighes, and answer maketh none,
But when she is alone that none are by,
Unto her selfe she makes a piteous mone;
She makes her brests and her faire haire to trie
In part her griefe, for why she beates the tone,
In spitefull wise, the tother short she teares.
And thus she speakes amid her plaints and feares.

38

Wo me, shall then my will and fancie varie
From hers, whose will should rule and governe mine?
Shall my will to my mothers be contrarie,
Or that disdaine, my mother doth designe?
Shall I presume with such a man to marrie,
At whom my parents both do so repine?
What fowler blot can staine a damsels praise,
Then when her parents will she disobayes?

39

Shall then my mothers revrence and my sires,
Make me my deare Rogero to forget?
And to new loves, new hopes, and new desires
Betake my selfe, and him at nought to set?
Or shall the revrence which their age requires,
And which my selfe hath borne them ever yet,
Be now forgot, and I be wholly bent,
To mine owne joy, and solace, and content?

40

I know (alas I know) my dutie well,
But powre I have not to performe the same,

My fancie reasons rule doth quite expell,
And my well ordred thoughts, put out of frame:
And tyrant Love, gainst whom who dare rebell,
Makes me cast off all feare of others blame:
My speech, my deeds, my thoughts he doth dispose,
And ruleth them, against my will God knowes.

41

To Ammon daughter, and to Beatrice
I am, but unto Love I am a slave,
Though I do now refuse their wise advice,
Of them I may hereafter pardon have.
But if I Love resist, who knowes the price,
Or who can me from his great furie save?
He will not stay to harken to my scuses,
But slay me presently, for such his use is.

42

With much adoe, and with long time I drew
My deare Rogero, to the Christian faith,
What profit doth thereof to me ensew,
If still ill hap my purpose good gainsaith?
So doth the Bee, not for himselfe renew,

The hony that in combes he safely laith:
But sooner of my life they shall me reave,
Then force me my Rogero deare to leave.

43

But though herein I disobey my mother,
And father too, which I to do am loth:
What though? yet I therein obey my brother,
That is reputed wiser then they both:
Orlando eke, for me speakes tone and tother,
And favour will this match, how ere it goth;
And sure I am, the world doth of them twaine,
Make more esteeme then all our house againe.

44

Sith then the world esteemes and calleth those,
The glorie and the flower of Clarimount,
Lesse shame it is for me, as I suppose,
If that I suffer men of such account,
Of me in marriage matters to dispose,
That all my kin in credit do surmount:
Beside they have the word directly spoken,
But to the Greeke the matter is but broken.

45

But now if Bradamant her selfe torment,
And doth her evill hap bewaile and blame,
No doubt Rogero is as malcontent,
Who had some privie inckling of the same:
He secretly doth his ill state lament,
And curseth fortune that unconstant dame,
That had for wealth, so sparing left his lot,
Which divers base unworthy men had got.

46

In each thing else that nature man can graunt,
Or that is got by industrie or art,
He knowth, and each man saith that none can vaunt
To have a greater no nor such a part:
His strength was such, no strength the same could daunt,
His person past his strength; his noble hart,
His Princely manners, and his brave behaviour,
Wan each mans love, each mans applause & savour.

47

But this same vulgar sort untaught and rude,
That as them list distribute praise and shame,

And (save the wise and learned) I include
All men that live on earth, within that name;
For Myters, states, nor crownes, may not exclude,
Popes, mightie kings, nor Keysars from the same:
But onely wisdomes grave, and learning cleare,
Gifts given from heavn, that are not common here.

48

This vulgar sort (to tell my meaning out)
That saving wealth and riches, nought admire,
And nothing thinke praise worthy them without,
And in their base conceits can looke no hyre:
That be one nevr so learned, so wise, so stout,
Well shapt as eye can see, or heart desire,
Well borne, well qualited of sober cariage,
They nought esteeme all these in case of mariage.

49

Well (saith Rogero) if that Ammon needs
Will make an Empresse of his daughter deare,
At least this hast he makes, is more then needs,
Let him yet give me respite but one yeare:
And if in that same yeare I do such deeds,

That both the sonne and sire, I vanquish cleare:
When both their crowns I conquerd have & wonne
Then I may worthy be, to be his sonne.

50

But if he straight the mariage do effect,
With Constantinos heire in so great hast,
And will Renaldos promise quite neglect,
And eke his Cosens, which so few dayes past,
Before that blessed man of Gods elect,
And that good Marques, they did bind so fast:
If they shall wrong me so, what then shall I,
What can I do in such a case but die?

51

What should I do? shall I then be avenged
Of him that me contraries in this wise?
Let me be blamed herein, or commended,
Let me therein be deemd a foole or wise:
But would my state alas, be then amended
By thold mans death? no, no, far otherwise:
I doubt this would not worke my more content,
But rather contrarie my first intent.

52

My first intention was, and yet is still,
That Bradamant should beare me love, not hate,
Now then if I her father here should kill,
Or ought attempt against her brothers state:
Had she not cause of me to thinke then ill,
And to refuse me for her spouse and mate?
What shall I do? alas then shall I beare it?
Ah no perdy, first I will dye I swear it.

53

And yet I will not die, but Ile destroy
That Leon that procurd my harme and wo,
And is disturber of my chiefest joy,
Him and his father I will kill also:
Faire Helen to the lover lewd of Troy,
Nor cost so deare, nor longer far ago,
Proserpine cost Perythous price so hye,
As I will cause them this my grieffe to buy.

54

But were it possible (my deare) that thou,
Canst leave thine owne Rogero for this Greeke?

Yea though that all thy brothers did allow
This match, which Ammon doth so fondly seeke?
Yes yes, I feare that thine owne minde doth bow
To his desire, and could far better leeke,
When with thy selfe, thou dost these offers scan,
To have a Caesar then a private man.

55

Can then the dignitie and glorious name
Of pompous shewes, and of imperiall seat,
The noble heart of Bradamant so frame,
Her vallew rare, and vertue to defeat,
And go from her first promise, to her shame,
Which me she made with many vowes and great?
No sure I know she will them all forsake,
Much rather then unsay, that once she spake.

56

These words Rogero spake, and many such,
And oftentimes he spake them in such sort,
That divers overheard him, in so much
That they were told, by more then one report
To Bradamant, whom they did chiefly tuch,

Who tooke them not (you may be sure) in sport:
But as her private grieffe was great before,
So this report of him did grieve her more.

57

But most it grivd her and above the rest,
That he mistrusted she would him forsake,
At any mans commandment or request,
And specially for this same Grecians sake:
Wherefore to move this scruple from his brest,
And this foule error from his minde to take,
She gat her pen and inke one night full late,
And to Rogero such like words she wrate.

58

My deare, as erst I was I still will bide,
While life shall dure, yea evn when life is past,
Though toward me, love shew his grace, or pride,
Or fortune raise me up, or downward cast:
My stable faith shall never faile nor slide,
For calme, nor storme, but as a Rocke stand fast,
Against the surging waves still unremoveable,
So shall my faith stand firme and unreproveable.

59

First shall a file, or knife of drossie lead,
The Dyamond to sundrie figures carve,
Ere any chance by Fortunes frailtie bred,
Or power of love shall cause my course to swarve:
First shall the streames runne backe unto their hed,
Ere I will justly such a blame deserve:
Or ere I shall, for chances good or ill,
Give my consent to change my setled will.

60

To thee Rogero mine, a good while since,
Of me, and of my heart I gave dominion,
I should my selfe of lightnes great convince,
If I so sodainly could change opinion:
As for my true allegeance, sure no Prince,
Is faithfuller belovd of dearest minion.
For me you need no fortresse nor no towre,
To be defences against forren powre.

61

You need no bands of men to entertaine,
To keepe this fortres, strength enough have I,

For riches make on me assault but vaine,
So base a price no gentle heart can buy:
Nor noble birth, nor name of crowne or raigne,
Which oft doth dase the common peoples eye,
Nor beautie, to the which light minds incline,
Though greater see I never shall then thine.

62

No, feare not, no man powre shall ever have,
My heart to other figure to transforme,
Love did your shape therein so deepe ingrave,
As now it can receive none other forme:
My heart is not of wax, for why Love gave,
(When to his worke he did it first conforme)
An hundred strokes with cheessell and with male,
Ere he could fetch therefrom one little scale.

63

Pure Juorie, gemmes, and evrie hardest stone,
That most withstandeth steel, a man may burst,
But other figure yet receive they none,
Then that to which they formed were at furst:
My heart is not unlike a precious stone,

Or Adamant, or what so cutteth worst;
Love sooner shall it breake in thousand splints
Ere other beauties bring it to new prints.

64

These words she wrote, and many more to these,
That him with faith, with love, with hope so fed,
Of force to cure each desperate disease,
Or rather to revive him being ded:
But when they thought them safest from the seas,
And in the havn securely harbored,
A new and sodaine tempest rose so sore,
As drave them backe to sea from sight of shore.

65

For worthy Bradamant that had assignd,
To shew her meaning plaine was, and direct,
And calling wonted courage to her minde,
And quite rejecting womanly respect,
Came unto Charles, and spake in such a kind;
My Liege, if ere my service did effect,
Ought worth your highnes thanks, at your comand
Let not your grace deny me one demand.

66

But promise me, upon your Princely faith
And royall word, which I may surely trust,
To grant one suit, what ere your handmaid praith
And I will promise that it shall be just.
(Beloved worthy mayd, the Empror saith)
Your many services confesse I must,
Deserve no lesse, and frankly here I vow it,
If of my Realme you aske part, Ile allow it.

67

My suit is that your highness will not yeeld,
That I (said she) may any husband have,
That shall not first of all, with speare and sheeld,
Or else with sword in hand him so behave,
As that he can withstand me in the field,
Behold the only favour that I crave;
I would be his that proves himselfe so stout,
The rest may be content to stand without.

68

Most noble maid (the Empror straight replide)
Thy stout demand, well to thy minde doth sute,

Wherefore by me it may not be denyde,
It is so noble and so just a suite:
Now (for she sought not this her suit to hide)
All they that heard thereof, sure were not mute,
But evn ere night it publisht was so rife.
As it was knowne to Ammon and his wife.

69

And thereupon they presently conceavd
Against their daughter, great disdain and wrath,
For by such motion plainly they perceived,
She to Rogero most devotion hath:
Wherefore to thend she might be quite bereaved
All hope, to follow that forbidden path,
From out the court they traird her by a flight,
And sent her to their castle that same night.

70

This was a fortresse that but few dayes past,
The Prince had givn to them upon request,
Betweene Perpignan and Cirtasso plast,
And neare the sea, not of importance least:
Here as a prisner they did keepe her fast,

With minde to send her one day unto thEast,
They purpose, will she, nil she, she must take
Don Leon, and Rogero quite forsake.

71

The Damsell, though not kept with watch or guard,
Yet bridled with the Parents awfull raine,
Did keepe her close, with good and due regard,
And of their rigor did no whit complaine:
But yet to this her thoughts were full prepar'd,
To bide imprisonment or any paine,
Or death it selfe, by torture or by racke,
More rather then from promise to go backe.

72

Renaldo finding that his suttile sire,
Had tane his sister thus from out his fist,
Nor able as his promise did require,
Rogeros suit to further and assist,
Forgets he is his sonne, and in his ire,
Rebukes his Parents, but say what he list,
They are content to give the words to losers,
But in their daughters match they will be choosers.

73

Rogero hearing this, and greatly fearing,
Least Leon should by love, or by constraint,
Possesse his ladie by his long forbearing,
He minds (but none he doth therewith acquaint,)
To give a speedie death to Leon, swearing
That he of Caesar, will make him a saint,
And that he will, except his hope deceive him,
Of scepter, life, and love, and all bereave him.

74

And in his minde resolved full thereon,
Don Hectors armor that from Mandricard
He late had wonne, forthwith he putteth on,
Frontino eke he secretly prepard:
But Eagle on his shield he would have none,
I cannot tell you well in what regard;
In steed thereof an argent Unicorne,
In field of Gewls by him as then was borne.

75

One onely trustie servant and no mo,
He takes with him his purpose to conceale,

He giveth him in charge where ere he go,
That he his name to no man do reveale:
Thus Mosa, Rhyne, he past with pace not slow,
And Austria to thUngarian common weale:
And upon Isters banke, such speed he made,
That in a while he came unto Belgrade.

76

Where Saua doth into Danubia fall,
And all along that streame he might discover
Ensignes and banners all Imperiall,
That nye the streame in numbers great did hover:
Great was the multitude, and Grecians all,
Who with a hope that citie to recover,
Which late before from them the Bulgars wonne,
Were thither brought by thEmperor and his sonne.

77

Twixt Belgrade, and the streame in warlike rankes,
The Bulgars stood evn to the mountaines ridge,
Both armies watred at the rivers bankes,
The Greeks endevord there to cast a bridge;
And for that end prepared boats and plankes,

The Bulgars sought their purpose to abridge:
Scarse had Rogero vewd them well, and seene them,
But that there fell a skirmish hot betweene them.

78

The Greeks were foure to one, beside they have
Good store of boats with many a planke and boord,
And to the place a sharp assault they gave,
And meane to passe although there were no foord:
But this was but a policie, and brave,
For Leon so this while himselfe besturd,
That with a compasse that about he set
Both he and his the streame past without let.

79

With little lesse then twentie thousand men,
Along the banks he secretly doth ride,
And gave to them a fresh alarum then,
Unlooked for, unwares, and unespide:
No lesse the Empror Constantino, when
He saw his sonne, on land on tother side,
By joyning planke to planke, and boat to boat,
With all his power, an easie passage got.

80

The Bulgar Captaine that Vatrano hight,
And was a valiant warrior and a wise,
Endevoured both by policie and fight
To beare the bront, but nothing could suffice:
For Leon both by multitude and might,
Unhorsed him, and ere he could arise;
Sith he to yeeld him prisner did disdain,
Among a thousand swords he there was slaine.

81

Till then, the Bulgars valiantly made hed,
But when they saw their king and Captaine slaine,
So great a terror in their minds was bred,
In their faint hearts no courage did remaine.
Rogerosee seeing how the Bulgars fled,
And none to stay or bring them backe againe:
To helpe the weaker part resolveth briefly,
For hate of Constantine, but Leon chiefly.

82

He spurres his horse that like the winde doth runne,
And makes them stand, that fled with fainting brest,

And having spide one braver then the Sunne,
A gallant youth, more forward then the rest:
(This same was Constantinos sisters sonne)
At him Rogero runnes with speare in rest:
He brake his shield and coat like brittle glasse,
And through his bodie made the speare to passe.

83

He leaves him dead, and Ballisard he drawes
And with that blade he shewd himselfe so stout,
Who meeteth with him, to repent have cause,
He presseth in among the thickest rout;
Ones skull he cleaveth to the verie jawes,
Heads, leggs, and armes flew all the field about:
The streame that erst did run as Christall cleare,
Vermillion now doth to the sight appeare.

84

No man that saw, much lesse that felt his blowes,
Dare once make head against them, or resist them,
Rogero in the field triumphant goes,
The Bulgars now march freely where it list them:
Nor was there one amongst them all that knowes,

What wight it was that did so well assist them.
This change they saw procurd in little space,
Who lately fled, now held their foes in chase.

85

The yong Augustus standing on a hill,
A place above the rest much eminent,
Seeing one man his men to slay and kill,
And that their losse and flight was evident:
He wonders at his courage and his skill,
And thinks that God had sure some Angel sent,
To plague the Grecians for their old offences;
And for the Bulgars succours and defences.

86

He sees both by his armes and Unicorne,
That sure he was a knight of forraine Nation,
And whereas some, more hate would him have born,
He rather held him in more admiration:
His heart, whom vertuous thoughts did still adorne
And ever was of noble inclination,
Made him extoll him for his deeds of armes,
Although his men by him receivd such harmes.

87

Evn as a babe, whom sometime movd with ire,
The mother beats with rod; or with it chaseth,
Runnes not unto the sister, nor the sire
But to the Mam, and sweetly her imbraceth:
So now though Leons men are made retire,
And though Rogero killeth them and chaseth,
Yet his great valed maketh Leon love him,
Much more then hate him, for the harme he doth him.

88

But if that Leon love him and admire,
Me thinks he hath but sorrie recompence,
For why Rogeros hope and sole desire,
Is to do Leon damage and offence:
He lookes for him, and oft he doth enquire,
Which way he was, but still the diligence,
And long experience of the warie Greeke,
Do cause Rogero him in vaine did seek.

89

Don Leon saw his soldiers flee so fast,
He sounds retreat and to his father sent

A messenger forthwith, in all post hast,
And of his message this was chiefe content;
To let him understand how things had past,
And wish him flie for feare of being shent:
Likewise himselfe and his hast all they may,
Back ore the streame themselves then to convay.

90

But yet for all his hast, his men were slaine,
And some with hast were drowned in the streame;
The Bulgars now did conquerors remaine,
That erst in perill were to loose their Reame:
The knight of thUnicorne, they all see plaine,
Causd all their good, wherefore with joy extream,
To him they go acknowledging indeed,
That all their glorie did from him proceed.

91

Some kisse his hands, and some do kisse his feete,
And in most humble manner him salute,
They thinke for him a praise divine were meete,
And power divine they do to him impute:
They send their chiefest Captaines him to meete,

And all of them to him do make this sute:
And up to heavn their joyfull voices ring,
That he would be their Captaine, guide, and king.

92

Rogero unto them this answer made,
That he will be their guide as they thinke best,
But that he will not come into Belgrade,
Nor staffe nor scepter touch at no request,
Untill that Leon that did them invade,
He have once slaine, or tane him at the least:
For why a thousand miles for this alone,
He ridden had, and other cause had none.

93

This said, forthwith he biddeth them adew,
And would no longer stay at their desiring,
But that way Leon fled, did him pursew,
(For flight it was indeed, and not retyring)
Howbeit Leon and his men that knew,
What in such case for safetie was requiring,
Brake downe the bridge, when they the streame had past
And so as then they made the passage fast.

94

Rogero failing of his first intent,
Did seeke some place to passe to tother side,
Along that streame till all that day was spent,
And all that night uncessantly doth ride:
Betime next morne unto a towne he went,
To ease his wearied bodie, and beside,
To make his horse amends for so great wrong,
In keeping him without a bait so long.

95

Ungardo, one of reckning good and state,
Held this same towne to Constantino deare,
And footmen had, and horsemen got of late,
Since of these warres he did first tidings heare:
Rogero finding none to watch the gate,
More boldly entred finding passage cleare,
The towne it selfe within he likewise found,
With meat and drinke, and lodging to abound.

96

Now where Rogero lodged that same night,
One of Romania, happened there to oste,

That present was at that precedent fight,
When as Rogero holpe the Bulgars host:
And at that time did him so sore affright,
That though of his escaping he might bost;
Yet still he feared him, and still did doubt him,
And still he thought that Unicorne about him.

97

Wherefore when as he saw that shield, he knew
This was the man that evn before so late,
So many of the Grecian armie slew,
Straightway he hasted to the castle gate:
And that he may have audience he doth sew,
For matter that concernes the Realme and state:
But when he was admitted, what he told,
Within the booke insuing ile unfold.

ARGUMENT

THE FORTYFIFT BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

The noble Leon doth Rogero save,
In Theodoras cruell prison pent;
Soon after Leon doth Rogero crave,
To win him Bradamant: he doth assent:
And fought with her xij. houres a combat brave;
Of which he after did so sore repent,
In sorrow great he thought to end his life,
To thinke another should possesse his wife.

FORTY FIFTH BOOKE

1

Looke how much higher Fortune doth erect
The climbing wight, on her unstable wheel,
So much the nigher may a man expect,
To see his head, where late he saw his heele:
Polycrates hath provd it in effect,
And Dionysius that too true did feel:
Who long were luld on high in Fortunes lap,
And fell down sodainly to great mishap.

2

On tother side the more a man is pressed,
And utterly ovrthrown by Fortunes lowre,
The sooner comes his state to be redressed,
When wheel shall turn, and bring the happy houre:
Some from the block have grown to be so blessed,
Whole realmes have been subjected to their power,
As Marius and Ventidius sample is
In former age, and Lews of France in this.

3

That Lews of France (the story well is known)
That to Alfonsos sonne did give his daughter,
Who was at Saint Albinos overthrown,
And evn with much ado escaped slaughter;
A like misfortune by like danger grown,
Corvino scaped but a little after:
And having past that moment by good chance;
One ruled Hungary, the tother France.

4

Tis manifest in stories new and old,
That good and ill each other do succeed,
And worldly blisse hath but a slender hold;
Wherefore a man of wisdome will take heed;
And on his fortune never be too bold,
Although his state and riches farre exceed:
Nor yet in fortune ill, despaire or doubt,
For evermore her wheel doth turn about.

5

Rogero (as I lately did repeat)
Now having both repulst the sonne and sire,

Grew to such pride therewith, and such conceit,
(Ambition evermore aspiring hier,)
He thinks by fortune and his force so great,
To kill Don Leon, which was his chief desire,
And for that purpose aid he asketh none,
But thinketh sure to do the feat alone.

6

But she that cannot suffer nor abide,
That any long should of her favour bost,
Now in the midst of all his praise and pride,
When in her favour he affied most,
Did cause him of this knight to be descried;
Who went unto Ungardo straight in post,
And told him how that man that put to flight
The Greekish host, would lie in town that night.

7

He said, twas happend evn as one could wish,
If so they mard not all by ill contriving,
That he was taken now as is a fish,
That to the net approcheth without driving:
Or rather layes itself into the dish,

And makes resistance none nor any striving,
Much did the Captaine at these newes rejoyce,
And shewd the same by gesture and by voice.

8

And presently provision such he made,
That good Rogero taken was that night,
And kept as prisner now in Novengrade,
(For so the town where he was taken hight)
What should he do? when armd men did invade
Him naked and asleep, with so great might:
Unguardo straight doth send this joyfull tiding
To Constantine, at Beltrich now abiding.

9

For since his forces late were beaten down,
He thought it safest, quickly to withdraw
Unto some strength, or to some walled town,
(For of the Bulgars now he had such aw)
He doubted they would hazard evn his crown,
Now having such a guide as erst he saw,
And this same town was strong, and did pertaine
To him, whose sonne was by Rogero slaine.

10

But when this message of their Captains taking,
By letters and by post was brought to him,
He was therewith in such a joyfull taking,
He thought he now in seas of milk did swim;
His face that pale, his heart that erst was quaking,
Upon this newes it chearfull was and trim;
The Bulgars now he counts as overthrown,
The victory he judgeth sure his own.

11

As doth the father joy, so doth the son,
Of this good hap, though for a further end,
He hopeth this brave knight may now be won
By curtesie, to be his faithfull friend,
He needeth not envie (if that were done)
King Charles the great (he thinks) but evn contend
Both with his Palladines and all his garison,
For flowre of Chivalry, to make comparison.

12

But Theodora was of other mind,
Don Leons Ant, whose sonne Rogero slew,

For she with cholere carrid headlong blind,
And for his losse, whose death she most did rewe,
To Constantine her Lord, and brother kind
She went, and at his feet her selfe she threw,
And when she first had made a piteous plaint,
She with her suit this wise did him acquaint.

13

I will not rise from these your feet (she saith)
My liege, untill you grant me power to wreak
My selfe on him, that brought my sonne to death,
And did with cruell speare his bowels break:
Besides he was your nephew, while his breath
Did dure, you saw his love, and service eke,
Your highnesse knowes it were too great a wrong,
To let his death be unrevenged long.

14

You further see, that God of goodnesse meane
Had causd that wretch the camp thus to forsake,
And come like bird to bait (the case is cleare)
Whereas Ungardo did him prisner take,
Because my only sonne I lov'd so deare,

Might not go unrevengd to Stygian lake;
Then give me him (my Lord) and be content,
I swage my grief, with his sharp punishment.

15

Her complaints and mone so well she doth devise,
So forcibly and heartily she praid,
Nor would not stirre from thence in any wise,
(Although the noble Empror did and said
Evn all he could, to make her thence arise)
That sith she would by no means be denaid,
But still renewd her suit, with piteous weeping,
He granteth her the prisner in her keeping.

16

And thus at last, to make the matter short,
He sendeth for the knight of thUnicorn,
And gave him her, whose chiefe delight and sport
Was to devise to work him woe and scorn;
All common deaths were of too mild a sort,
To have him hangd, and all in peeces torn,
And on each gate to set a quarterd lim,
She thought it was not plague enough for him.

17

Chaind hands and feet, and neck, she lockt him up
In dungeon void of light, but full of stink,
With mouldie bread she made him dine and sup,
And gave him puddle water for his drink:
She shortly means, that he a sorrie cup
Shall tast, but till she may her selfe bethink
The kind of death, she giveth him a keeper,
Whose rancor was as deep as hers, or deeper.

18

Oh had Duke Ammons noble daughter known
Of her Rogeros now distressed state,
Or if it had been to Marfisa shown,
Who lovd him deare, though in another rate,
But tone and tother thither would have flown,
And would not cease to ride betimes and late,
To rescue good Rogero and assist,
Let Ammon and his wife say what they list.

19

Now Charles the great began to call to mind
His promise, by the which himself was bound,

That husband none should ever be assignd
To Bradamant, but he in fight were found
Her match, and (as kings use in such a kind)
He published the same by trumpets sound,
Ovr all his Empire sending proclamations,
That soon the fame did flie to forrain nations.

20

Thus much the writing made men understand,
That no man Bradamant to wife should get,
But one that would attempt with sword in hand
From rising of the Sun, untill it set,
Her force in single combat to withstand;
Which if that any could, there was no let,
But she agrees, and Charles himselfe allows,
That such a one should have her for his spouse.

21

This Article was likewise there set down,
That they should name the weapon if they list,
For why her valew was of great renown,
To fight on horse, on foot, in field, in list.
Duke Ammon now that to withstand the crown,

Wants force and will, no longer doth resist,
But after long discourses with his daughter,
Compeld in fine, back to the Court he brought her.

22

Her mother eke, though wroth and malecontent,
Yet both for nature and for honours sake,
Good store of costly clothes incontinent,
Both gownes and kirtles she for her doth make;
Thus Bradamant with both her parents went
Unto the Court, where she small joy did take,
She scarce esteemed it a Court to be,
When that her lover there she could not see.

23

As one that saw in Aprill or in May
A pleasant garden full of fragrant flowres,
Then when fresh earth new clad in garments gay,
Decks evry wood and grove with pleasant bowres,
And comes againe on some Decembers day,
And sees it mard, with winters storms and showres,
So did this Court to Bradamant appeare,
When as she saw Rogero was not here.

24

She dares not ask of any man for feare,
Lest such a question might her love accuse,
Howbeit secretly she lendeth eare,
To others talk, as in such case men use:
Each man saith gone he is, but none knowes where,
For to the Court of him there came no newes,
And he himselfe, when as he thence departed,
His purpose unto no man there imparted.

25

Oh in what feare and rage these newes do set her,
To heare Rogero was in manner fled,
She thinks that sure, because he could not get her,
And that her father nay to him had sed,
That now he sought of purpose to forget her,
And shun her sight, that all his sorrow bred;
She thinks that he from thence himselfe withdrawes,
For this alone, and for none other cause.

26

But more then all, this doubt her heart assailes,
That he was gone to seek some forrain love,

And sith that of his purpose here he failes,
To speed some otherwhere he straight would prove,
As from a boord men drive out nailes with nailes,
So with new love he would her love remove;
But straight another thought that thought gainsaith,
She thinketh her Rogero full of faith.

27

And thereupon her selfe she reprehends,
That she her lover should so much abuse,
Thus in her mind one fancy him defends,
And then another doth him sore accuse,
And she her thought to either fancy lends,
And in great doubt she is which part to chuse;
But when a while she had her self bethought,
She leaneth most unto best pleasing thought.

28

Then chief, when in her mind she doth repeat
Rogeros promise, which he bad her trust,
She thinks to him the injury is great,
That causlesly she now should him mistrust,
And evn as he were present, she doth beat

Her breast that still doth harbour thoughts unjust,
My self hath sind (she saith) which now I curse,
But he that caused it is cause of worse.

29

Love was the cause (quoth she) that in my heart
Your face and grace ingraved hath so seemly,
And therewith hath set forth each vertuous part,
Beseeming thee so sweetly and so trimly,
That sure no dame, that knowes well what thou art,
Can chuse but fall in love with thee extremely,
And therewithall with all her power indever
To win thy love, and make thee hers for ever.

30

Oh if that love had gravd thy thoughts so well,
As it hath gravd thy visage in my mind,
In how great joy and blisse should I then dwell,
For well I know that they be true and kind;
Then jealousie the onely plague of hell,
(To which alas I am too much inclind)
Should quickly cease, and I should free me from it,
Nor would I in my heart once think upon it.

31

But as a miser hoarding up his treasure,
Doth doubt in absence still that theeves be there,
So I when thou that art mine onely pleasure,
Art absent farre from me (I know not where)
I straight suspect, and straight I doubt false measure,
And straight my hope grows lesse, and more my fear,
Which though I think both bootlesse and unjust,
Yet still I doubt, and still I do mistrust.

32

But yet no sooner shall the pleasing light
Of thy sweet countnance come unto mine eyes,
O thou my joy, O thou my lives delight,
(Though where thou art I cannot now devise)
But that true hope false feare shall put to flight,
And knowledge plaine all doubts shall satisfie,
Come then my deare, and hasten thy returning,
Ere hope and fear shal wast me quite with mourning.

33

As when the night hath spread her mantle black,
Faint hearted folk are wont to be affraid,

But when again the daylight doth come back,
They seem of better cheare and well appaid:
So I do faint, when as my deare I lack,
But in his presence I am undismaid:
Come then my deare Rogero, come unto me,
Before that hope and doubt do quite undo me.

34

As in the night each little fierie spark
May plainly be discerned with our eyne,
But when the day doth come we then shall mark,
That all are dampd, and do no longer shine,
So kindles feare in mind with doubt made dark,
Untill my Sun in my Horizon shine:
Turn then my deare, and with thy light illume me,
And drive away this care that doth consume me.

35

As when the Sun declines to South most low,
The land doth leese the beauty that she had,
And winter stormes breed raine, and ice, and snow,
The pleasant birds all silent sit and sad:
So when as thou from me far off dost go,

O shining Sun, whose beams do make me glad,
A thousand feares but all unjust and vaine,
Make winter in my heart, to my great paine.

36

Shine then on me, O my cleare Sun, and bring
Thy beames more nye, this snow and ise to thaw,
Refresh these branches withred in their spring,
And do no more thy self so fall withdraw:
As Philomena dolefully doth sing,
When as her young ones all destroyd she saw
Or as the Turtle early mourns and late,
When she hath lost her deare beloved mate.

37

So noble Bradamant still mournes and plaines,
With feare Rogero had her love rejected,
And with salt teares her lovely cheeks distaines,
Yet secretly, for feare to be detected:
O had she knowne that he was bound in chaines,
And evrie houre a cruell death expected,
What griefe of minde thinke you, should she then take,
That was so grievd alreadie for his sake!

38

But loe, the heavnly goodnes so ordaines,
That Theodoras rage, and cruell spight,
Against her prisner, whom she keeps in chaines,
And means to kill with torture all she might,
Reserving him alive for greater paines,
Came to the eare of Caesars sonne one night,
And put into his heart to save and cherish,
And not to suffer so great vallew perish.

39

The noble Leon that Rogero loves,
(Not knowing tho that this Rogero was)
Whom his rare vertue, and great vallew moves,
Which he did thinke all humane farre to passe,
Devising sundry wayes, this one he proves,
And by the same, he brought the feat to passe,
So that his cruell Aunt could not espy him,
Nor once complaine that she was wronged by him.

40

He speaketh in the secretst sort he can,
Unto the bloody wretch that kept the kayes,

And prayth him show him the condemned man,
For why he must examin him he sayes:
A knight a valiant man that was his man,
He takes with him fit for all bold assayes,
The cruell Jayler, that no fraud suspected,
In all points did as Leon him directed.

41

He leads him secretly unto the den,
Where good Rogero was in prison pent,
Nor tooke he with him any of his men,
But as their guide, the formost of them went:
Who when they saw the time best served then
No longer to defer thoccasion ment,
But unawares they at advantage catch him,
And with a sodaine stab they do dispatch him.

42

Then open they the trap doore out of hand,
And downe they let the ladder that was by,
And Leon with a lanterne in his hand,
Of light conceald, went where the knight did ly,
Fast bound upon a grate with bitter band,

Not in the water, but thereto so ny,
The very dampe was such, that one might guesse,
That sole would kill him, in a month or lesse.

43

With great compassion Leon him imbraced,
And sayd, sir knight, the vertue you have showne,
With suered knots my love hath knit and laced
To you, since first the same to me was knowne,
So as my heart and thoughts are wholly placed,
To seeke your safetie, rather then mine owne,
Ventring, your welfare and your love to win,
To leese my sires good will, and all my kin.

44

To tell you true, the Emprours sonne I am,
Leon by name, as yet to you a stranger,
To set you free, of purpose now I came,
And put my person, and my state in danger,
That both my father greatly me may blame,
And looke upon me evermore with anger;
The losse at Belgrade which you wrought him late
Makes him to beare to you so sharp an hate.

45

These sugred words, and many more beside,
Which were for me too tedious to repeat,
He spake, and then his hands he all untyde,
And secretly he causd him move his seat:
Rogero in this wise to him replyde,
Your courtesie is such, your gift so great,
To give me life, that you shall ay command it,
When ever it shall please you to demand it.

46

Thus Leon in this secret sort unknowne,
Rogero from the prison doth convay,
And send him to a castle of his owne,
Whereas he might secure in silence stay,
Until this tumult all were overblowne,
And till againe for him regaine he may
His armes and gallant horse, and famous blade,
Kept by Ungardo, Lord of Novengrade.

47

The keeper slaine the next ensuing morne,
The prison gates, from off the hinges heaved,

The hinges, and the manicles in pieces torne
Each man might see, but none by whom perceaved:
All thought that Leon had him hatred borne,
Wherefore of him they no mistrust conceived,
The cause he had of hate, each man doth know,
By name his late received overthrow.

48

At this great curtesie that Leon used,
Rogero wonders much, and thinks it strange,
And sore he was in mind and thought confused,
And sodainly he feels a wondrous change,
His heart relented, and all hate refused,
And turnde it all to love, by sweet exchange,
What erst malicious, cruell was, and hatefull,
Is turned now to kinde, and milde, and gratefull.

49

So deepe into his head and heart it sinks,
That it possessed all his soule and sense,
On this he studies when he wakes or winkes,
How he may do to him some recompence:
To spend evn al his future dayes (he thinkes,)

Sole in his service, and in his defence,
Could not requite, no scarce the twentieth part
Of so great curtsie, and so great desart.

50

In this meane while, the newes was come from France,
Which Charles had notifid to many a nation,
Of her that would be wood by sword and lance,
In single fight (so said the proclamation:)
Don Leon was quite out of countenance,
To heare of this her strange determination,
And as a man that wel his owne strength knowes,
Himselfe too weake for her he doth suppose.

51

And long debating how he might supply,
His want of force and courage, by his wit,
In fine he purposd with himselfe to try,
This new made fred, whose name he knowes not yet,
Although he well could witnessse with his eye,
That for no brave exploit he was unfit,
He hopeth by his manhood and his aid,
To conquer and to have that hardie maid.

52

But two things he must do before he goes,
One is the minde of this same unknowne knight,
Unto this hardie enterprise dispose,
The tother is, to bring him to the fight
So secretly, as none might it disclose,
And all that while to keepe himselfe from sight;
First then, in earnest sort he doth intreat
Rogerio take on him this hardie feat.

53

Much might the Greeke prevaile by eloquence,
The which he usd to lead him thereunto,
But more prevaild the bond of recompence,
So firme as no time ever could undo,
That though the motion bred him great offence,
And seemd a thing impossible to do,
With gladder looke then heart he doth reply,
Deare sir, I nothing may to you deny.

54

Though he no sooner had this word pronounced,
But that he felt such griefe did gripe his hart,

As if damnation were to him denounced,
Such pangs he had, such torture and such smart:
But yet his promise givn he not renounced,
Nor from the same once purposd to depart,
For first a thousand deaths he ment to chuse,
Then one request of Leons to refuse.

55

Dye sure he shall (he thinks) for if he leave
His love, he knowes he cannot byde alive,
For either sorrow will of life him reave,
Or if that nature shall with sorrow strive,
Of his owne hands he will his death receive,
And so his soule from hated harbor drive,
Each other thing on earth to him seems possible,
But missing her, to live he thinks impossible.

56

Then die he must, onely he doubts what kinde
Of death, were for his state and fancie best,
Once this conceit did come into his minde,
To lay in fight his naked open brest:
Might she him slay, he deemeth in his minde,

That such a death, in death might make him blest,
But then he sees what follow would of this,
That noble Leon should his purpose misse.

57

And then himselfe of promise eke should fayle
Which was not to dissemble, but indever
That Leon in his wooing might prevaile,
And make dame Bradamant his owne for ever:
Thus though that divers thoughts his minde assayle,
Yet wholly in that thought he doth persever,
That moveth him most plaine to deale and trew,
And to all other thoughts he bids adew.

58

This while Don Leon with his fathers leave,
With such retinue as his state required,
Of knights and squires, his native soyle did leave,
And went to see the dame he so desired:
Rogerio did of him before receive,
His armes and horse, and in strange clothes attired,
Day after day they so their journey frame,
That at the last to Paris wals they came.

59

Don Leon to the Citie would not go,
But neare unto the same he pitcht a tent:
And by Ambassage made the king to know,
How he was come, and unto what intent:
King Charles was glad and did his gladnes show
With gifts, and unto him in person went:
Don Leon tels what did his comming breed,
And prayes he may dispatched be with speed.

60

And that King Charles that noble maid would cause,
To come the day ensuing to the field,
That would (against all common wedlocks lawes)
Be wood and woone, with onely sword and shield:
King Charles her cals, and she that askt no pause,
Unto the motion willingly did yeeld,
And so accordingly next day she came,
Unto the lists prepared for the same.

61

That day that went before the day of fight,
Roger passed with as great content,

As doth a man condemned spend the night,
The which before his execution went,
He chused to fight all clad in armour bright,
Because as then to be unknowne he ment,
And (for to hurt her, was not his pretence)
Save sword, he usd no weapon of offence.

62

Lance he would none, not that he feard the lance
Which first Argalia, then Astolfo bare,
Which forced men beside their seat to dance,
And unto many men procurde great care,
For neither he that usd it first in France,
Nor any of those other, was aware,
How all those feats were by enchantment donne,
Save that same king, that gave it to his sonne.

63

Likewise Astolfo and the Dordon dame,
That with that speare full many did unhorse,
Thought not that it from Negromancy came,
But from their sleight, and their owne proper force,
They thought with any speare to do the same:

But now Rogero, did both speare and horse
Refuse, because if he had usde his owne,
He thought it would by Bradamant be knowne.

64

Needs must the damsell call to minde the steed,
For why she kept him long at Clarimount,
And used him with her owne hands to feed,
And made of him a speciall deare account:
Wherefore Rogero that took speciall heed
To go unknowne refusd on horse to mount,
Or any other thing by which he may,
Unto his dearest love himselfe bewray.

65

He further needs another sword would take,
For well he knew against his Ballisard,
No steele, nor armour none, defence could make,
Whose edge so keene, whose mettall was so hard,
Of that new sword likewise he (for her sake)
Rebates the edge, so great was his regard,
And thus himselfe both weakning and disguising,
He came into the field at Phebus rising.

66

And that each one for Leon might him note,
Untill the controversie were decided,
He weares upon his backe Don Leons cote,
The golden Eagle with the head divided,
(Their making both was like, from foote to throte)
Thus when all things were readily provided,
The tone presents him in the open greene,
The tother kept him close, and was not seene.

67

But Bradamant now farre in other rate,
Herselfe in readines for fight doth set,
And if the knight do his swords edge rebate,
As fast the damsel her swords edge doth whet:
She wisheth with a heart most full of hate,
Her sword a passage to the quicke would get,
Yea comfort her it would and doe her good,
If she with evrie blow could draw the blood.

68

Evn as a Barbrye horse that runnes a race,
And for the signe thereof hath long expected,

Against his will, doth stay his running pace,
With swelling nostrils and with eares erected:
Evn so the noble damsell in like case,
That of Rogeros presence naught suspected,
Did swell with wrath, and burnes like flaming fire:
Unto the combat, such was her desire.

69

And as oftimes upon some fearefull clap
Of thunder, straight a hurlewinde doth arise,
And lifts the waves aloft, from Thetys lap,
Evn in a moment up unto the skyes,
The Heardman doubting of some great mishap,
About some tree, or cave, close hidden lyes,
So Bradamant with rage of anger driven,
Assayld Rogero when the signe was given.

70

But never did a stiffe and aged oake,
Against the Northern blast more firmly stand,
Nor better doth a rocke, indure the stroke,
Of surging waves, still wallowing to the land,
Then good Rogero, guarded in the cloke

Of Hectors armes, her forces did withstand,
Though she still layd on loade with spite and hate
Upon his armes, his sides, his brest, and pate.

71

Sometimes she gives a blow, sometime a thrust,
According as her vantage most she spide,
And still she watcht, if she could hit him just
Betweene the plates or where the same were tide,
Twas well the coate was such as one might trust,
For she doth search it still on evry side,
And inwardly she fretteth in her minde,
That nought fell out of that she had assignd.

72

So shall you see some men besiege a towne,
Wel walld, and strongly flankt with rampiers mayne,
Assault it oft, and strive to batter downe
Some towers or gates, with perill great and payne,
And wast their time, and spending many a crowne,
To lose their men about the same in vayne,
No more the damsels force did now prevaile,
To pierce a plate, or to unrivet nayle.

73

Sometime forth of his helmet and his sheeld,
She made the sparkes of fire fly out in sight,
Still smiting him with blowes not soft, nor feeld,
Somtime at reardemaine, and oft downe right,
As thicke as haylestones that upon the feeld,
Or on the tyled houses do alight:
But still Rogero close lyes to his ward,
And not to hurt her, still he hath regard.

74

Oft standing still, now turning, then retiring,
He makes his foote accompanie his fist,
With sword, with shield, with slip (cause so requiring)
He wards the blowes, or shunnes them as him list,
And ever not to damage her desiring,
When he might hit, of purpose still he mist,
Yet in such wise, that she her selfe was ware,
And all the rest, that he the same forbare.

75

But Bradamant when she her selfe bethought,
What was containd in thEmperors Edict,

That whosoevr with her a whole day fought,
Should have her at the end of such conflict,
With all her force endevord still and sought,
To gall her adversarie and afflict;
And now the more she troubled was in minde,
To see the Sun to West so low declinde.

76

And as her hope still lesse and lesser grew,
So her desire increast still more and more,
Her loving adversarie to subdew,
That she had fought withall the day before:
As labourers whose worke by taske was dew,
That loytred have and now are sad therefore,
When night drawes on bestur their lasie bones,
Untill their strength, and light fayle both at once.

77

Alas good Bradamant, if thou didst know,
The man to whom thou wishest so much ill,
That in this fight hath beene thy friendly foe,
And winneth thee (perhaps against his will)
Thou wouldest first have kild thy selfe I trow,

Then of his blood one little drop to spill,
Thou that didst now so curse him and beshrow him
Wouldst neither of them do, if thou didst know him.

78

But Charles and all his Lords, with full perswasion
That this so valiant champion, Leon was,
To praise him highly now they take occasion;
And sith his strength did hers so greatly passe,
They think for her there now was no evasion,
The matter brought to such a narrow passe.
Each man esteems this match for her most fit,
Each man allowes, each man commendeth it.

79

Now gan Don Phebus dip his golden rays,
(To swage their burning) in the Westerne seas,
When Charles himselfe comes to them both & prays
The damsell now her furie to appease,
And giveth sentence, that without delayes,
Don Leon may her marrie when he please:
Roger doth himselfe no whit disclose,
But armed still backe to the tent he goes.

80

Don Leon, brotherly doth him imbrace,
And then he holpe him to untie his beaver,
And with great kindnes kissed all his face,
And said that he was bound to him for ever,
And that no time such merit could deface,
Which to reward he would for ay indever,
Affirming frankly of his owne meere motion,
That all he had, should be at his devotion.

81

I never can such curtesie requite,
Scant in this life (he saith) or in the next,
No though I should surrender all my right
Unto my crowne, and all thereto annex.
Rogero, that in speech tooke small delight,
And was with inward passion so perplexed,
Restord to him his armes, that he had worne,
And tooke againe his shield of thUnicorne.

82

Pretending (as he truly might pretend)
He wearie was, and would himselfe repose,

And therefore to his tent unto that end,
All privat unaccompanyd he goes;
At midnight horse to take he doth intend,
At midnight privily from bed he rose.
And armd, and mounted thence away departed,
But why nor whither, he to none imparted.

83

And thus away he secretly doth ride,
And gives Frontino leave to chuse the way,
Now neere a wood, then by the river side,
(He never looking to what coast it lay)
He faine would die, and still come death he cride,
He thought death onely could his paine allay,
He onely wisheth death to end his grieffe,
That while he lives, is sure past all relieffe.

84

Ah wretch (said he) of whom can I complaine,
For sodain reaving me of all my blisse?
Shall I so great an injurie sustaine?
Of whom else shall I be avengd for this?
I did the fault, and now I feele the paine,

Nor can I say, but just the torment is,
For punishment doth properly belong
To him that is the author of the wrong.

85

But had I done my self the wrong alone,
I might perhap forgive my selfe the same,
Though surely cause, nor reason there is none,
To pardon such a fact, so worthie blame:
But now I have to her bene cause of mone,
To suffer that, it were perpetuall shame;
So though I should no just revengment take
For mine owne cause, yet must I for her sake.

86

This wrong revenge I may, I will, I must,
By onely death, sith this offence was such;
To dye, I soone shall finde the way I trust,
The care thereof my minde no whit doth tuch:
Oh that I had long since bene layd in dust,
Ere that I injured my deare so much,
I would I had bene put to death before,
When I was prisner unto Theodore.

87

If I had then bene martyrd and tormented,
With all the plagues her malice could devise,
At least my deare my death would have lamented,
With teares, from out her christall streaming eyes:
Now when she knows, that I have thus consented
To Leon, to betray her in this wise,
My part of her, unto a stranger giving,
She will have cause to hate me dead and living.

88

Now while the knight did thus lament and plaine,
The Eastern parts of heavn with light were cleared,
And Phebus from his golden house againe,
Lift up his head, wherewith all creatures cheared,
Betake them to their ordinarie paine:
And then unto Rogero it appeared,
That he was in a wood, a most fit place,
For one of such a mind, in such a case.

89

He lights, and off he takes Frontinos saddle,
And gives him libertie, and thus he sayes,

My gallant beast so good, so serviceable,
As I have found thee still at all assayes,
Go, here I set thee free, and were I able,
As I am willing, to set forth thy prayse,
Thou doubtlesse shouldst not need that horse envie
That was tane up from earth unto the skye.

90

Nor should Arions prayses make thee sory,
Nor Cillarus that Castor did bestryde,
Nor any praisd in Greeke, or Latin story,
For why (thy shape and readines beside)
Of all these famous steeds not one can glorie,
As thou maist do, it cannot be denide,
Of them none passeth thee in commendation,
Nor justly challenge can such reputation.

91

Thou hast bene cherished and loved deere,
By such a Nymph, so faire and so divine
As all the world can hardly show her peere,
She hath thee fed with that fayre hand and fine,
I meane my love, but ah why live I here,

Sith now I may no longer call her mine?
No longer mine she is, ah cruell word,
Why end not I my dayes by mine owne sword?

92

Now if Rogero thus himselfe tormented,
And causd the birds and beasts, to mone his plaint,
For none but birds and beasts the place frequented,
Whom he with his great sorrow might acquaint;
No doubt the damsell was as ill contented,
And made a greater, or as great complaint,
Sith for her selfe she nothing hath to say,
Why she to Leon longer should say nay.

93

Yet all meanes possible she meanes to trye,
Before that she will her Rogero leave,
And make king Charles and all his Lords to lye,
And Leon of his promise to deceave:
Or if the worst shall hap, she meanes to dye,
And with her hands of life her self bereave,
For present death she rather ment to chuse,
Then her belovd Rogero to refuse.

94

How commeth it to passe (said she) my deare
That at this time thou art so farre from hence?
How can a thing which all the world did heare,
So strangely be concealed from thy sence?
If thou hadst heard it, sure thou wouldst appeare;
For that my drift, that was my sole pretence,
Ah my ill fortune evermore accurst,
What can I deeme, but evn the very worst.

95

Why, then Rogero mine, can you alone,
Not know that all the world doth know beside,
For had you known it straight you would have flown
Of purpose hither combate to have tride;
Thou sure art taine, or slaine, for third is none:
It may be Leon that thy praise envie,
Hath like a traytor, set for thee a trap,
And thou art tane therein by some mishap.

96

I gat this grace of Charles to mary none,
But one that were in fight for me too hard,

Assured thou shouldst be that onely one,
For no mans force but thine I did regard;
I thought none else could vanquish me alone,
But lo how God doth this my pride reward,
That he that never erst in all his life
Did manly deed, hath wonne me for his wife.

97

If I be won and vanquished, because
He matched still my force at all assayes,
But Charles doth not judge rightly of the cause,
And therefore I must seeke some new delayes;
Ah if I now put in some baffling clause,
I shall be cald unconstant all my dayes,
But ficklenes in maids is seldome wondred,
Nor am I first that usde it, by an hundred.

98

Sufficeth me that in the being trew
Unto my love, I others all excell,
And passe the paterns either old or new,
Or neare or far, evn wheresoevr they dwell:
Then will I bid that constancie adew,

That may be hindrance to my doing well,
So I and Leon may not match together,
Let me be deemd as wavring as the wether.

99

This Bradamant unto her selfe doth say,
And oft she breaks her speech with sighs and teares,
And that night that ensud that lucklesse day,
To sleepe or close her eye lids she forbears,
But when Apollos beames had drivn away
Nocturnus shades, then lo supernall spheares,
By which all humane actions are directed,
Brought helpe to her, when least it was expected.

100

For why Marfisa, that brave minded dame,
The next day came and sowd new seeds of strife,
Alledging that it was great wrong and shame,
A forrener should have her brothers wife;
And swears her selfe could not endure the same;
And that she would by combate gage her life,
According as the law of armes allows,
To prove Rogero was her lawfull spouse.

101

And if dame Bradamant would it deny,
She said, she will it to her face aver,
As having witnes bene with care, and eye,
That good Rogero was assurd to her
With words, as folkes in mariages apply,
And adding shee would unto law refer,
If so the damsell to her noble brother
Affianced, might justly take another.

102

Now whether this she spake were false or true,
I know not, but she spake it with intent,
To stop the mariage likely to ensew
With Leon, which she studid to prevent:
Some thought perhaps that Bradamant it knew,
And that twas done in part by her consent,
As having no more safe nor honest way,
Unto her left, to say Don Leon nay.

103

In evill part these newes the Empror tooke,
And called for the damsell by and by,

And told her what Marfisa undertooke,
(And loe by hap, Duke Ammon then stood by)
She fixed on the ground her silent looke,
And to the question, said nor no nor I,
That by her gesture, evrie one did take,
That that was true, that erst Marfisa spake.

104

This made Orlando and Renaldo glad,
In hope that this might prove a lawfull meane,
To make the match which they forepromist had,
And hinder this new match, and dash it cleane:
For sith Duke Ammon those first banes forbad,
And unto Leons side did wholly leane,
To use pretence of law, they both had rather,
Then take by force, the damsell from her father.

105

For if that this pretence may stand for good,
The neck of Leons match it then would breake,
And move no cause of warre, or shedding blood:
But Ammon in great wrath, thus wise doth speake;
This is a tale indeed of Robinhood,

Which to beleeve, might show my wits but weake,
But thinke not that I will be so besotted,
Though this were true, that you have vainly plotted.

106

For presuppose, which yet I not confesse,
My daughter was by folly so allured,
And that they are, which none of wit could guesse,
Each unto other, man and wife assured:
I pray you yet, the time more plaine expresse,
When this was done, how long it hath indured,
This (sure I am) tis but a tale devised,
Except it were before he was baptised.

107

And if twere done before his Christen state,
To stand unto the same I am not tyde,
Wherefore this caveat is put in too late,
His owne desire she hath not had denyde:
Now tis not fit, a Prince of such estate,
As for her sake, adventurd to have dyde,
Should by our Emprours promise be deluded,
And by such craft, be from his right excluded.

108

You should have spoken then of this contract,
Before our king had sent his proclamation,
I meane not thus to have my credit crakt,
For more then so I weigh my reputation:
Thus pleaded he against that precontract,
The which to breake was his determination,
To either part his eare the Emperor lends,
Yet partially, to neither side he bends.

109

Looke what a murmure winds do make in woods,
When Zephyrus mild blasts among them are,
Or when one hears from farr the saltish floods,
When Eolus and Neptune are at square:
So did the common people in their moods,
Talke of these matters, and the same compare,
And as the manner is (for nine dayes space)
This was the newes and talke in evrie place.

110

This man Rogero, Leon that defends,
According to the fancies of the men,

But yet it seemd Rogero had most friends,
Scarse had the stranger one, for tothers ten,
But as I said, the king to no side bends,
And having duly weighd the matter then,
He points the mariage day to be deferred,
The case unto his Parliament referred.

111

Next day Marfisa made another offer,
Sith that none could, during her brothers life,
Wed Bradamant, and be assured of her,
Her brother should (for ending of the strife)
To Leon hand to hand, the combate proffer,
So she might be the last survivors wife;
And he that tother could in battell kill,
Enjoy her might alone at his owne will.

112

Charles unto Leon, doth impart these newes,
As he before the other did impart,
That offer Leon ment not to refuse,
But saith he take it would, with all his hart,
He minds again the matter so to use,

The knight of thUnicorne should play his part,
He little knew that in great care and anguish,
The noble knight did now consume and languish.

113

But missing him, he quickly did repent,
That he accepted had that stout defiance,
And therefore straight to seeke the knight he sent,
In whose tryde force, he put his whole affiance;
Him to Rogero to oppose he ment,
And all his friends and all his strong alliance:
Wherefore to shun both danger great and scorne,
He sent to seeke the Knight of thUnicorne.

114

To al the Cities, and the towns he sends,
And all the villages were there about,
And mounting on his horse himselfe intends
To go in person and to seeke him out,
But neither he nor all Rogeros friends,
In France had ever light on him I doubt,
Had not Melissa holpe him at his need,
As in the booke insuing you may reed.

ARGUMENT

THE FORTYSIXT BOOKE OF ORLANDO FURIOSO

Leon by search doth good Rogero find,
And having learnd the cause of his annoy,
He grants to him his love in manner kind,
Whom now Rogero sweetly doth enjoy:
Onely the Sarzan king with hatefull mind
Comes to disturbe Rogeros ease and joy,
Nathelesse he is deceivd of his account,
In fine, Rogero kils fierce Rodomount.

1

Now if my compasse and my card be true,
I am not far from that desired cost,
Where I shall pay my vow and promise due
Unto my Saint, of whose great grace I bost:
I looked erst with pale and chearlesse hue,
For feare in this wide Ocean to be lost,
But now me think I see, I now see surely
The havn, in which I harbor shall securely.

2

Hark, hark, what peals of Ordnance great and Guns,
Are shot in token of congratulation,
Hark how they sound the Trumpets and the Drums,
To gratulate my happy navigation:
See how on either shore the people runs,
To see me after my long pergrination,
Behold a crew of peerlesse knights and dames,
Now I discern them, now I know their names.

3

But least my ship should perish in the port,
As oft it doth befall for want of heed,

I will go forward in my first report,
And tell to you how well the Prince did speed
That sought Rogero, who in wofull sort
Did pine and languished, and wishd indeed,
Sith that dame Bradamant he might not marie,
To die all comfortlesse and solitarie.

4

But sage Melyssa that had ever sought,
To make that match (as often hath been sed)
And evermore did take great care and thought,
That good Rogero Bradamant might wed,
By her great skill in Magick art so wrought,
She had continuall notice how they sped;
Two sprites she did imploy for that intent.
And still as one came home, another went.

5

By them she quickly had intelligence,
How he had tane so inward grief and great,
He tarid in a wood with firm pretence,
To pine himself away with want of meat:
Melyssa parteth presently from thence,

And with some secret words she did repeat,
In likeness of a horse a sprite she took,
And so met Leon, that for him did look.

6

And thus she said to him, sir, if you be
So gracious, as your semblance makes me ween,
If your good mind with your good looks agree,
If so you have not lost all pitie cleen;
Come then, o come and help, and joyne with me,
To aid the bravest knight that ere was seen,
Who for one curteous part that he hath done,
(Except you help) is like to be undone.

7

The noblest, stoutest, and the prowest knight,
That ever carid shield, or blade forth drew,
The seemliest and most worthy minded wight,
That ever was in age, or old, or new,
Is like to perish in most wofull plight,
Except he may relieved be by you;
Come quickly then unto his aid perdye,
And suffer not so brave a man to die.

8

Don Leon straight supposed in his minde,
That this same knight, of whom the stranger spake,
Was he whom long he sought and could not finde,
And he for whom such care himselfe did take:
Melissa leads the way, he close behind
Doth follow her, and so good shift they make,
That in some twaine, at most in three hours ryding
They came there where Rogero was abyding.

9

Now being at the place to which they hasted,
They both alighted there, with minde to stay:
There saw they how he pinde away and wasted,
For in two dayes before, nor all that day,
No liquor he had drunke, nor meat had tasted,
But in his armor on the ground he lay,
And made a pillow of that noble sheeld,
With thUnicorne upon vermillion feeld.

10

Here as I said, he lay along and mused
On his owne miserie, and on that wrong,

With which he had his love so much abused,
And bites for griefe, his hands, and lips, and tong;
And his conceits, and wits were so confused,
To set his thoughts upon one thing so long,
And having on his griefe so firmly fixt them,
He saw not them, although he were betwixt them.

11

Don Leon harkned to his lamentation,
And heard him often call himselfe unkind,
And saw him vexe himselfe in such a fashion,
As unto pittie great his heart inclind:
He finds that love bred all this molestation,
But yet whose love it was he did not find,
He heard how sundry times himselfe he blamed,
But all that while his love he never named.

12

And therefore pitying much his wofull case,
Although awhile he silent stood and mute,
Yet after stood before him face to face,
And with great lovingnesse doth him salute,
And with affection great doth him imbrace,

Intreating him, and making speciall sute,
That he would tell him plaine, and make him know,
What cause had bred him so great griefe and woe.

13

Rogero loth to live, resolv'd to dye,
Prayes Leon now to trouble him no more,
But he most sweetly doth to him reply,
That God hath made a salve for evry sore,
If men would learne the same how to apply,
And that no one thing may avayle man more,
To cure a griefe, and perfectly to heale it,
Then if he do unto some frend reveale it.

14

And sure (said he) I take it in ill part,
Because you trust not me, that am your frend,
Not onely, since with your late frendly part,
You bound me unto you, to my lives end,
But was evn then, when you with hatefull hart,
At Belgrade siege did me and mine offend,
Thinke not but I will still procure your good,
Both with my lands, my frends, and with my blood.

15

Why should it grieve you to declare your grieffe,
To one that may perhaps your losse repayre:
Bad haps are holpe with hope, and good believe,
Wherefore a wise man never will dispayre:
I hope my selfe shall bring you some reliefe,
By force, by policie, or else by prayre,
When all meanes have bene tryde, and all hope past
Then dye, at least keepe that unto the last.

16

These words so earnestly Don Leon spake,
And with such efficacie him he praid,
Beseeching him, his frendly counsell take,
That tother now, with kindnesse overlaid,
Was forst an answer unto him to make;
But in his answer, sodainly he staid,
And stammerd twise, ere he could bring it out,
Despaire still moving him to causlesse doubt.

17

Good sir (he said) when I my name shall show,
As I do meane, and that evn by and by,

You will be then full well content I trow,
To grant me leave and liberty to dye:
I am Rogero (if you needs will know)
That went from France (and if I shall not lye)
Mine arrant was, your sire and you to kill.
And would have done it, had I had my will.

18

And all because indeed I then supposed,
Your only life, did let me of my love,
Man purposes, but all things are disposed,
By that great God, that sits and rules above:
Behold it hapt I was in prison closed,
And there I did your noble courtesie prove,
For there you did me such a great good turne,
As all my hatred into love did turne.

19

And having bound me with so great desart,
And ignorant, that I Rogero was,
You did your secrets unto me impart,
And praid me win for you, that warlike lasse,
Which was all one, as to have askt my hart;

Yet loe for you, I brought the same to passe,
Now take her to your selfe, and much good do you,
More good then to my selfe, I wish unto you.

20

But yet withall forbid me not to dye,
As now I trust I shall, ere many houres,
For live as well without a soule can I,
As without her, that holds my vitall powres:
And sure tis best for your behoofe, for why
While I do live, she is not lawfull yours,
For we two are betrotht, and law allowes,
One woman, but of one to be the spouse.

21

Don Leon with these newes was so accrazed,
He seemed in a traunce, he knew not how,
And on Rogero stedfastly he gazed,
Nor ever moving lip, nor hand, nor brow,
But like an Image long he stood amazed,
That some hath hallowd to performe his vow,
This act of his, so curteous he doth weene,
He thinks the like before had never beene.

22

So that he did not (when he knew his name)
Repent him of the good he had him done,
But rather greatly did increase the same,
Proceeding in the course he had begun:
Wherefore to shew from how great stock he came,
And that he was indeed an Emperors sonne:
Although in other things he was inferiour,
In curtesie he means to be superiour.

23

And thus (he said) my deare Rogero know,
As if I well had known your person, when
As by your means I had an overthrow,
And that you foiled me and all my men:
Yet that great vertue that you there did show,
Should evn in manner like have movd me then,
And so I would all malice have removd,
And so I would your vertue great have lovd.

24

That once I did dislike Rogeros name,
Before I knew you I must needs confesse,

But that I now continue should the same,
Assure your self I purpose nothing lesse:
And if when first I to the prison came
To set you free from danger and distresse,
I known had all the truth, yet then I vow,
I would have done the same I will do now.

25

And surely, if I would have done it then,
When I had reason to have born you hate,
Much rather now I ought to do it, when
Not doing it I should be most ungrate,
And most unthankfull of all other men;
Sith you your love, your life, and whole estate
Have freely givn for me, but as you gave it,
Of me againe so freely you shall have it.

26

More due to you then me the Damsell is,
Whom though I much esteem of due desert,
Yet not so much, that if I her do misse,
Straightwayes the grief thereof should kill my heart:
Nor shall your death avantage me in this,

Sith you in her already claime such part,
That lawfully while you abide in life,
She can by no means be anothers wife.

27

As for my part, first I will quite forsake
Both her, and all my worldly joyes beside,
Then it shall once be said, that for my sake
A noble knight of so great worth had did:
This only thing I could unkindly take,
That you that had before my kindnesse trid,
Would rather chuse to end your dayes with grief,
Then at my hands have comfort and relief.

28

These words Don Leon spake, and many more,
Which now would be too tedious to recite,
Refuting good Rogero evermore,
That in conclusion being vanquishd quite:
He said, I yeeld, and Ile resist no more,
I will not die; but when I shall requite
Your curtesie, that twice to me hath given
My life, when I to greatest wo was driven.

29

Now had Melissa caused to be brought
Both cordiall meats, and wines of her purvaying,
And made him take the same, who now with thought
And fasting long was evn almost decaying:
His horse likewise (as nature hath them taught)
Came where he heard the other horses naying:
Don Leon caused his lackies him to get,
And then his saddle on his back to set.

30

And so Rogero with Don Leons aid,
With much ado did clammer to his seat,
So greatly was his former strength decaid,
With which he overthrew an army great:
And lately did withstand that warlike maid,
So weakly weapond, as I did repeat:
And thus with all convenient speed they might,
They brought him to an Abbey that same night.

31

Where all the night, and three dayes that ensewd,
They staid, and had of needfull things good store,

Untill Rogero had his strength renewd,
Which had with fasting long been weakned sore:
Then privily among them they conclude,
To turn to Paris, where the night before
A few Bulgarians came with an embassage,
And this was all the substance of their message.

32

They said how that the people of their Nation,
To whom Rogero late such aid did bring,
Beyond all hope, beyond all expectation,
Had therefore chosen him to be their king:
Rejecting all their own kings generation,
And all his royall race (no usuall thing)
So much they loved him, so well they like him,
And therefore sent to Charles his Court to seek him.

33

Rogeros lackey that had been their guide,
Told eke his masters friends how he had sped,
As namely how the Greeks he damnifid,
And how the Bulgars having lost their head,
Chose him for king, how he alone did ride,

To Novengrade, where he was tane in bed,
And unto Theodora was presented,
Who purposed to have him sore tormented.

34

And how he heard it commonly was spoken,
That he his cruell keeper closely slew,
And that the Prison gates were rent and broken,
And he was gone, but whither no man knew:
Now while Rogeros man such things did open,
Rogerero closely out of all mens view,
Did come to town, and there that night did stay,
And he and Leon came to Charles next day.

35

Don Leon arm in arm Rogero led,
(Thus it was then devised them between)
With that self cote and arms apparelled,
That were of late by all the people seen,
Then when dame Bradamant had combated
With Leon (as they falsly then did ween)
That batterd sword, that coat, that plume all torn,
That headpeece now was by Rogero worn.

36

By which each man evn at first sight surmisd,
This was that knight that had the Lady won,
Don Leon self bare faced, undisguisd,
Came richly clothed, like an Emprors son,
And with retinue not to be despised:
And when he had to Charles due revrence done,
Roger by the hand he then did take,
On whom all eyes were fixt, and thus he spake.

37

This is that stout and well approved knight,
That did with Bradamant fight hand to hand,
Whom sith she never took nor put to flight,
But that he did twelve houres her force withstand,
(Most worthy sir) to have her ought of right,
If your edict we rightly understand.
And therefore now accordingly he commeth,
To lay his claime to her, as best becommeth.

38

Besides his right by proclamation known,
That justly doth all others claime debar,

I think the value that he now hath shown,
Proves his sufficiency in feats of war:
If love may win her, she is sure his own,
His love to her doth passe all others far;
And here he stands prepared to aver
By law or force, that he hath right to her.

39

King Charles and all his court did greatly muse
At this, for why till then he little thought,
That he before did them so much abuse,
But that himself had that same combat fought:
This while Marfisa, that with flying newes
Of this same strange report was thither brought,
Scant him to end his speech she would permit,
But presently this wise she answerd it.

40

Sith now Rogero absent is from hence,
That might his right against this knight defend,
And prove that this is but a vaine pretence,
Because the strife shall not so easely end:
I that his sister am, in his defence,

And in defence of this same cause intend,
To fight with whomsoever in this place,
As shall deny his title, or disgrace.

41

And these last words she spake with such disdain,
That some that knew her nature (hasty ever)
Did feare she scantly would evn then refraine,
But without leave to kill him straight endeavor:
Now Leon thinks it best no longer faine;
And forthwith pulling off Rogeros beaver,
Lo here himself now ready prest (he said)
To answer all shall to his charge be laid.

42

As old AEgeus at his cursed boord
Amazed sate, to find his spouses wile,
When to his sonne she poyson did affoord,
And if he lingred had a little while,
And had not known the handle of his sword
Had kild his sonne he gat by Pitheus guile:
So stood Marfisa mazed in the place,
When as she saw and knew Rogeros face.

43

And straight she runs, and on his neck doth fall,
And long it were ere from him she could part,
Renald, Orlando, Charles, afore them all
Embraced him, and welcomd from their heart:
Good Dudon, Oliver, with joy not small,
And old Sobrino, health to him impart,
Eke all the other Lords, and Knights, and Squires
To bid him welcome shew most prompt desires.

44

Don Leon that in speech was eloquent,
When evry one had done his gratulation,
Begins to tell to Charles incontinent,
And all the rest, Rogeros commendation:
And how he to the Bulgars succour lent,
(To no small dammage of the Greekish nation)
And shewd such noble courage and such force,
As him to love Rogero did enforce.

45

So as when he was after tane and brought
To her that vowd with torments him to slay,

Himself in spite of her, and all that sought
To hurt Rogero, brought him safe away:
For which kind part of his Rogero thought
Himself so bound to him, that he last day
Did him that curtesie that sure doth passe
The greatest curtesie that ever was.

46

He further doth from point to point declare
What for his sake Rogero hath atchievd,
But after this, with anguish great and care,
The losse of his belovd so sore him grievd,
As he to pine away did straight prepare,
Had not his sorrow been in time reliev'd:
All which so rufully Don Leon sed,
Scarce was an eye but teares with blindnesse shed.

47

Then spake he to that obstinate old man,
I meane Duke Ammon that faire Ladies sire,
And with all skill and Rhetorick he can,
He wooes his love, and pacifies his ire.
That by entreaty at the last he wan

Himself to go in person, and desire
Rogeros pardon: praying him in thend
To take him for his fatherinlaw and friend.

48

This while to Bradamant the joyfull tiding
Was quickly brought, by more then one report,
Who in her chamber all her sorrow hiding,
Eschewd all solace, shunning all resort:
Whereby the blood about the heart abiding
Was drawn now thence in such a sodaine sort,
And this unlookd for joy so overfild her,
That evn the suddennesse had almost kild her.

49

Quite speechlesse, livelesse, sinking to the ground,
(So strong a qualme her tender heart did feel)
And she in whom such force was lately found,
For want of strength did here and thither reel;
But nevr did thief with hands together bound,
Condemned to the rope, the axe, or wheel,
And blindfold, looking evry houre to die,
Joy more to heare some man a pardon crie.

50

The houses of Mongrane and Montalbane,
Rejoyce at these their branches newly knit,
But by Maganza comfort small is tane,
For in their hearts they sorrie were for it:
Anselmus, Falcon, Gynamus, and Gane,
Dissembling yet their thoughts with crafty wit:
But for a time of vengeance they do watch,
As doth the Fox the hurtlesse Hare to catch.

51

Beside old quarrels and their ancient hate,
New matters done of late did them displease,
Although the king and wise men of the state,
For common quiet did the same appease:
The death of Pynabello slaine but late,
And Bertolage did much their minds disease:
Yet now in shew they do dissemble deep,
And close in mind they do their malice keep.

52

In this meane time thAmbassadours that came
To Charles his court by those Bulgarians sent,

Rejoycing now that things so well did frame,
In humble manner to Rogero went:
And did salute him king, as in the name
Of all their countrimen incontinent,
And so accordingly did lowly greet,
Their new made Prince, and kneeled at his feet.

53

They told him how their Scepter and their Crown
Was safely kept, alone for his behoof,
In Adrianopolis their chiefest town:
And for they knew by many a former proof,
That Constantino strave to keep them down,
They pray him not to stay so far aloof;
Affirming boldly that if he were there,
The forces of all Greece they would not feare.

54

Rogero granteth them their just request,
And promisd to defend them from the Greeks,
And vowes (if God permit) to do his best,
To be with them within some thirteen weeks:
But Leon bids them set their hearts at rest,

He tels them that their choice so well he likes,
He on his Princely word will undertake,
Twixt Constantine and them firm peace to make.

55

Thus each thing framed now in so good sort,
As could be wisht by thought or by device,
But neither did Rogeros good report,
Get favour with ambitious Beatrice,
Nor personage that past the common sort,
Nor feats of armes, in which he wan the prize;
And of the which all Europe now doth ring,
But onely this to see him made a king.

56

In royall sort this mariage they prepare,
(Whose charge it was, the state will make it known)
Charles bare the charge, and took thereof such care,
As if she were a daughter of his own:
Of her and hers so great the merits are,
And had to her so many wayes been shown;
He thought the cost had not exceeded measure,
If he had spent upon them half his treasure.

57

He kept an open court by proclamation,
Where nine dayes space, who list may freely haunt,
Men of their own, and men of forren nation,
To all of them he did safe conduct grant:
And all that stood upon their reputation,
That sought their foes in single fight to daunt,
Had licence frank to challenge whom they lists,
For evermore prepared were the lists.

58

In open fields they pitched tents great store,
Beside with Oken boughs they made such bowres,
Strawing the pavements of them evermore,
With fragrant Roses and sweet smelling flowres;
That never had the like been seen before;
Nor never since, from that same age to ours;
Besides the furnitures of silk and gold,
Was more then can conveniently be told.

59

Thinnumerable people of each sort,
From Greece, from England, Italy, and Spaine,

ThAmbassadours that thither did resort,
Beside each severall Prince a severall traine,
Did cause the city walls to seem too short,
To lodge them all, so they in fine were faine
In hovels, booths, in tents, and in pavillions,
To lodge some thousands, if I say not millions.

60

Onely Melissas care was to foresee,
The marriage chamber should be well attyrd,
Which by her skill she meant should furnisht be,
For long to make the match she had aspid:
Which now that she accomplished did see,
She thought she had the thing she most desird:
For by her skill in magick she did know
What passing fruit forth of that branch should grow.

61

Wherefore she placd the fruitfull wedding bed
Amid a faire and large pavillion, which
Was evn the sumptuosest that ere was spred,
Of silk and beaten gold wrought evry stitch:
And more, from over Constantinos head,

At Thracyan shore, where he his tents did pitch
Fast by the sea, for his more recreation,
She took the same to his great admiration.

62

Were it that Leon gave consent thereto,
Or that she did the same her skill to vaunt,
To shew what one by Magick art can do,
That have the skill the fiends of hell to daunt:
(For what cannot their power atchieve unto,
When for our plague God leave to them will grant!)
From Thrace to Paris in twelve houres it came,
I trow she sent one in the divels name.

63

She causd it to be carid at noone day
From Constantino Empror then of Greece,
The beam, the staves, the cords they brought away,
The pins, the hoops, and evry little peece:
She placed it whereas she meant to lay
Atlantas Nephew, with his new made Neece:
In this pavillion she did place their bedding,
And sent it back when finisht was the wedding.

64

Two thousand yeare before, or not much lesse,
This rich pavillion had in Troy been wrought,
By faire Cassandra that same Prophetesse,
That had (but all in vaine) in youth been taught,
Of future things to give most certaine guesse,
For her true speech was ever set at naught:
She wrought this same, with help of many other,
And gave it Hector, her beloved brother.

65

The worthiest wight that evr man did behold,
That should proceed forth of his noble line,
She here portrayd in work of silk and gold,
Of precious substance, and of colour fine:
Also the time and season was foretold,
Both of his birth, and of his praise divine:
Don Hector of this gift great count did make,
Both for the work and for the workers sake.

66

But when himselfe by treason foule was slaine,
And Troy was by the Greeks defaced quite,

Who enterd it by Synons subtill traine,
And worse ensewd thereof then Poets write:
Then Menelaus did this great relick gaine,
And after on king Proteus hapt to light,
Who gave to him dame Helen ere he went,
And for reward receivd of him this tent.

67

And thus to AEgypt at that time it came,
Where with the Ptolomeys it long remaind,
Till Cleopatra that lascivious dame
As by inheritance the same obtaind:
Agrippas men by sea then took the same,
What time in Rome Augustus Caesar raignd:
And then in Rome, while Rome was thEmpires seat,
It staid till time of Constantine the great.

68

That Empror Constantine I mean, of whom
Faire Italy for ever shall lament,
Who when he lothed Tibris banks and Rome,
Unto the city of Byzantium went,
A place of more receipt and larger roome,

And thither this pavillion then he sent:
Of which the cords were golden wyre and silk,
The staves and pins were Ivrie white as milk.

69

In this Cassandra wrought such divers faces,
More then Apelles erst with pensill drew,
A queen in childbed lay, to whom the graces
With pleasant grace performd Lucynas dew:
Jove, Mercurie, and Mars in other places,
And Venus do receive the babe born new:
The sweetest babe that to the world came forth,
From mans first age, evn down unto the fourth.

70

Hippolito they name him, as appeares
Wrote in small letters on his swathing bands,
And when he is a little grown in yeares;
On one side fortune, tother vertue stands:
Then in another picture divers Peeres,
Clad in long raiments, sent from forren lands,
Unto the father and the mother came,
To beg the babe in great Corvinos name.

71

They part from Hercules with great reverence then,
And from that infants mother Elinore,
Unto Danubia ward, and there the men
Still run to see that infant and adore:
Also the king Corvino, wonders when
He saw in him both wit and judgement more,
In those his tender childish yeares and green,
Then many times in older men had been.

72

One doth endeavour in his childish hand,
Of the Strigonian Realme to put the mace,
But evermore the tender youth doth stand
So high in that same noble Princes grace,
That if he war in manly Almans land,
Or in the Turks or any other place;
Hippolito is ever by his side,
And learneth vertue under such a guide.

73

Another place shewes how he doth dispence,
His youthfull time in discipline and art,

Fusco instructs him in the hidden sence
Of ancient writs, and precepts doth impart,
What actions praise, what actions breed offence,
What be reward of good and ill desert:
All which the picture did so well expresse,
That at the meaning evry one might guesse.

74

Lo where as yet a boy in Vatican
Among the gravest Cardinals he doth sit,
And speaks so wisely that they all began
To wonder at his towardnesse and wit;
What manner man (if once he were a man)
Would this man prove? for Peters chaire how fit?
They seem to say; oh if he thither clime,
What holy age were that? what happy time?

75

Within another part described were
His youthfull sports, when he more strong did grow
Oft in the mountaines he doth meet a Beare,
Oft times a Bore, in marish grounds and low:
He rides his Genet fierce, and void of feare,

He chaseth oft the Buck, the Hart and Roe,
And by his horse swift pace doth override them,
And then doth with his sword in twaine divide them.

76

Of Poets then, and of Philosophers,
About him you shall see a worthy band,
To make him know the course of wandring stars,
How heavn doth move, & why the earth doth stand,
Or reading of Elegies, or verse of wars,
Fine Epigrams, Odes hard to understand:
Or sometime instruments of Musick hearing,
In all his acts a speciall grace appearing.

77

Then on another part was to be viewd
His vertues, each one by it self distinct,
First Prudence, Temperance, and Fortitude,
And justice, and a fift unto them linkt
So nigh, that who with it is not indewd,
The rest may seem or blotted, or extinct:
Good bounty, shewd in giving and in spending,
A speciall grace to all the other lending.

78

This one place shewes he aids unluckie Sforse,
Him evermore most faithfully assisting,
Sometime with policie, sometime with force,
Him helping, and his enemies resisting:
Of Fortunes change he doth but little force,
In woe and weale, in one faith still persisting:
He comforts him when evill haps do grieve him,
In dangers he doth save, in want relieve him.

79

Then stands he studying at another season,
And for his countries safetie taking care,
He searcheth, and he finds by depth of reason,
And finding, to his brother doth declare
Their most unnaturall and filthy treason,
That some of his owne blood for him prepaire,
By which he doth deserve such name to have,
As Rome yet free, to famous Tully gave.

80

Fast by he stands all clad in armour bright,
And to relieve the Church he runs in post,

With sodaine souldiers, raw and armed light,
Against a settled and wel ordred host:
Yet did his onely presence so affright
The adverse part, that one may rightly bost,
It quencht the fire, ere it to burne began,
So he may say, I came, I saw, I wan.

81

Here stands he by his native rivers side,
And straight encounters with the strongest fleete,
That ever yet Venetians did provide,
Gainst Greeke, or Turke, but he doth boldly meet,
And vanquisht them; and took them at one tide,
And though the bootie and the gaine was sweet,
All (save the praise) he left unto his brother,
For only that cannot be givn another.

82

Thus this Pavillion, as before I told,
The which Melissa brought so far from thence,
Did please the knights, and dames that did behold
The goodly imagrie, and rich expence:
Although they had not any to unfold

The meaning of the same and hidden sence;
But yet by good Melissas wise instruction
Dame Bradamant did know their whole construction.

83

Rogero markt likewise with great attention,
Those goodly figures calling to his minde,
That oft his unckle of that Prince made mention,
Hippolito the flowre of all his kinde:
But now king Charles, whose care is and intention,
To give to all men entertainment kinde,
Made playes and feasts with sundry sports and great,
And evermore the tables fild with meat.

84

There, men might plainly see and understand,
The courage and the strength of evrie knight,
Sometimes in single wise, now band to band,
In justs, and turnaments resembling fight,
But still Rogero, had the upper hand,
In all his exercise of day and night:
In leaping, running, wrastling, and in dancing,
All men him far above the rest advancing.

85

But on the last of these dayes festivall,
Then when to take away they did provide,
What time king Charles was set amid them all,
Evn just between the Bridegroome and the Bride,
Behold they saw a goodly man and tall,
That seemd directly toward them to ride.
Most proudly mounted on a coursers backe,
But yet his horse and he, all clad in blacke.

86

This was fierce Rodomont, king of Algyre,
Who at his late received foile, and scorne
Of Bradamant, inflamd with spite and ire,
All use of horse and armor had forsworne,
Till one whole yeare, one month, one day expire,
But live that while an Hermit all forlorne:
For so the knights were wont in ancient times,
Of their owne selves, to punish their owne crimes.

87

And though this while he oft had notice how
King Agramant, and how king Charles had sped,

Yet nathelesse for not breaking of his vow,
Forth of the doores he never put his hed:
But when the yeare and month were ended now,
And day beside, himselfe he furnished,
With armour new, new horse, new sword, new lance,
And came therewith unto the court of France.

88

Not once allighting nor so much as rising,
For revrence sake, to bow his head or knee,
He bare the countnance of a man despising
Both Charles, and all those Peeres of great degree:
At this each man amazed stands devising,
What proud and sawcy fellow this might be,
From talking and from eating each man stayes,
To hearken what this loftie warriar sayes.

89

Now when he was to thEmpror come so nye,
That he Rogero fully did confront,
With stately voice, and with disdainfull crie,
(He saith) I am the king of Sarza Rodomont,
That thee Rogero flatly here defie,

And ere the Sunne go downe make full account,
To prove thou hast bene false unto thy Prince,
And openly of treason thee convince.

90

For though thy trechery be knowne so cleare,
In being Christned, thou canst not deny it,
Yet that to all the world it may appeare,
I offer here in single fight to trie it:
Or if thy courage faile, if any here
Will take on them thy quarrell, to supply it,
I will accept of any one or more,
Yea not to faile, of six or halfe a score.

91

Rogero, when he first had licence craved
Of Charles, this wise to Rodomont replide,
(And said) he ever had his honour saved
And who so said contrarie lowdly lide:
For he had to his Prince himselfe behaved,
Most loyally evn to the day he dide:
And said he there was readie to maintaine,
That yet his faith had never sufferd stain.

92

And that himselfe was bold enough and strong,
With him to buckle hand to hand alone,
And that he hopt to make him feele ere long,
He had enough perhap too much of one:
Straightwayes Renaldo to aveng this wrong,
Orlando, and the Marquis would have gone,
Marfisa with the brothers white and blacke,
And Dudon would be on the Pagans jacke.

93

Alledging, that sith he was newly marid,
For him to fight, it was against all use,
But from their speches his opinion varid,
And swears that that for him was no excuse:
Those armes that erst the famous Tartar carrid,
He takes, nor will he make one houre of truse:
To arme him, all those states their aids afford,
King Charles himselfe, holpe to put on his sword.

94

His wife takes care his Curats well may fit,
Orlando tyes his spurres, Marfisa bold

Doth fast upon his head his beaver knit,
Astolfo is content his horse to hold:
His stirrop, Dudon; others thinke it fit,
To rid the lyst, and drive out yong and old:
Renaldo, Namus, Oliver, take charge
To martiall it, and make it cleare and large.

95

Faire dames and damzels stand with lookes dismaid,
With feare and trembling, like to fearfull Doves.
Who some blacke tepestbringing cloud hath fraid,
And drivn from fields, to shrowd in houses rooves:
(Downe fals the haile with which the corne is laid,
And profitlesse unto his owner proves)
So do they this fierce Pagans forces feare,
Which sure they judge, Rogero cannot beare.

96

Nor onely do faint people so surmise,
But many knights of worth, the same did weene,
That cald to mind what erst before their eyes,
To their griefe they had in Paris seene:
When he with fire and sword in fearfull wise,

Did welny spoile the towne, and wast it cleane:
Of which the wofull signes did still appeare,
And would remaine yet many a month and yeare.

97

But Bradamant more feard then all the rest,
Not that she thought in strength or skill well tride,
The Pagan past her spouse, nor valiant brest,
Or that he had more reason of his side,
(Which unto victorie availes not least,
When men by combat quarrels do discide)
Yet still her minde is sad, her lookes unchearefull,
Nor blame her though, for love is ever fearfull.

98

Great suit she makes, great labour to procure,
That upon her she may the quarrell take,
Yea if to have bene slaine she had bene sure,
To save her spouse, but all in vaine she spake:
The champions now their lances put in ure,
And each with couched speare the tother strake:
The staves like Ise in shivers small did flie,
The splints like buds did mount unto the skie.

99

The Pagan that his lance did full direct,
Against the middle of Rogeros sheeld,
Did smite on it to small or none effect,
For Vulcan had the same most firmly steeld:
The tothers Target had no knowne defect,
Yet to the stroke it did a passage yeeld:
Yet was it thicke a quarter of a foote
Of bone, and linde with plated steele to boot.

100

And save the lance sustained not the blow,
But at the first did break and was dispersed,
So that the pieces of it seemd in show,
To have beene feathered foules (as I rehearsed,)
That stroke had finished that strife I trow,
And had his Curats and his bodie pearced:
But now it brake, and both gave strokes so sound,
As made both horses cruppers kisse the ground.

101

The riders neare the lesse sate firme and stedic,
And laboured so well with spurre and raine,

Their horses were got up on foote alreadie,
The men to fight addresse themselves againe
With swords; their horses both were stronge & redie
And each with skill some vantage sought to gaine,
And where they thought their armors were most thin,
With force they strave to pierce & enter in.

102

Fierce Rodomont had not that Serpents hide
He usd to weare, nor yet that shaving blade,
That he was wont to carrie by his side,
For Nimrod his great ancestor first made;
He lost those armes, and many more beside,
Then when as Bradamant did him invade,
At that same church, where he a twelvemonth since,
Entombed Isbell, with that peerlesse Prince.

103

He had another armor good and sure,
But not like that so passing tough and hard,
But neither this, nor any else could dure,
Against the piercing edge of Ballisard:
No mixture such, no metall was so pure,

No charme so strong, but that this blade the mard:
Roger so besturd him with this blade,
More then one hole, in tothers coate he made.

104

Now though a little while the Pagan clokes
His hurts receivd, with unappaled minde,
Yet when he saw his blood, and felt the strokes
So smart, that still they seemd the quick to finde:
To so great wrath and rage it him provokes,
Evn like the sea turmoyle with blustering winde,
He hurles away his shield, and doth endeavor,
With both his hands to cleave Rogeros beaver.

105

With force as great he strikes, and as extreame,
As doth that engin in the River Poe,
Borne twixt two shippes upon the stately streame,
Enforcing downe with many a heavie bloe,
Some piece of timber or some sharpned beame:
I say the Pagan smote Roger so,
Had not the charmed helmet bene of force,
He doubtlesse would have clovn him & his horse.

106

Rogero sitteth staggering in his seat,
His hand the bridle left, his thighes their hold,
Rodomont gives another blow as great,
To maze him more by all the meanes he could:
And last a third, but now he so did beate
His blade of mettall free, it would not hold,
But burst in twaine, with his continuall hammering,
And left the Pagan in no little mammering.

107

But yet for this the Turke doth not refraine,
But still invades the knight that wants defence,
So had the blow amazd his head and braine,
So dazed had the blow his witt and sense:
The Pagan minds to waken him againe,
First he doth close with him, and so from thence,
Wringing him by the necke with all his force,
To leave the saddle he doth him inforce.

108

He fell, but yet the ground he touched scant,
But he that rose, inflamd with wrath and shame;

For looking up, he saw faire Bradamant,
Whose blush did shew how ill shee tooke the same:
Yea evn of sounding she did little want,
And still her fainting colour went and came;
Which seene, Rogero with his sword intends,
For this so great disgrace to make amends.

109

The Pagan with his horse would overrunne him,
And justles him, but he with little paine,
Doth step aside, and warily doth shunne him,
And with his left hand takes the horses raine:
(So as the Turke thereby no hurt hath done him)
The while he puts in ure his sword againe,
And with two thrusts, he did the Pagan harme,
One in his thigh, another in his arme.

110

The Turke with whom a peece did yet remaine,
Of that same blade that was in pieces flowne,
Smote on Rogeros headpiece so againe,
As had wellny againe him overthrowne:
But good Rogero now perceiving plaine,

His vantage that was erst to him unknowne,
Takes him by his left arme with all his force
And (will he nill he) puls him from his horse.

111

Were it his strength or flight, I cannot tell,
But so he fell, no ods was them betweene,
My meaning is that on his feete he fell,
For in the swords, Rogeros odds was seene:
Rogerro that did know his vantage well,
To keepe him now at bay his best doth weene;
It is not best for him he doth suppose,
With such a strong, and big bond man to close.

112

He further saw what store of blood he spilt,
So now he hopes by warily procceding,
To force his foe to yeeld, and leave the tilt,
Whose strength decaid, still more & more with bleeding:
The Turke then takes the pomell and the hilt
Of his owne sword, and with force so exceeding
Did hurle the same, he smote the knight so sore,
He stund him more then evr he was before.

113

It strake him twixt the shoulders and the head,
And gave to him a blow so firme and sound,
That good Rogero therewith staggered,
And scant could keepe his feet upon the ground.
The Turke to close with him then hastened,
But loe his foote did faile with former wound,
So that his too much hast (as oft we see)
Did hurt, and made him fall upon his knee.

114

Rogero lost no time in manfull wise,
To strike fierce Rodomont in brest or face,
And holds him short, and so his force applies,
He laid him on the ground, but in short space:
In spyte of him, the Pagan doth arise,
And with small kindnesse he doth him embrace:
And then they strive, heave, shove, thrust to and fro,
And either seekes the tothers overthrow.

115

Each strives with all his skill, and his abilitie,
By force to lay the tother on the ground,

Now Rodomont was growne to some debilitie,
By meanes of more then one received wound,
Rogerero had great practise and agilitie,
And usd to wrastle, and he quickly found
His vantage, which he did not overslip,
But on his weakest side his foe doth trip.

116

The Turke most full of wrath and of despite,
Upon Rogeros necke tooke stedfast hold,
Now drawing toward him with all his might,
Now thrusting him backe from him all he could,
And by and by he heavd him quite upright,
As strong Antheus was in time of old:
Rogerero notwithstanding sure doth stand,
And labord still to have the upper hand.

117

Full oft the valiant knight his hold doth shift,
And with much prettie sleight, the same did slippe:
In fine he doth applie one speciall drift,
Which was to get the Pagan on the hippe:
And having caught him right, he doth him lift,

By nimble sleight, and in such wise doth trippe:
That downe he threw him, and his fall was such,
His headpeice was the first that ground did tuch.

118

The Turke with such an hard and heavie fall,
Was sore perplext, and bruised in such wise
His wounds fell fresh on bleeding therewithall,
And make the place Vermillion where he lyes.
Rogero gives him respite very small,
But keeps him downe and will not let him rise:
And presently presents his dagger point
Unto his throat, and to his chiefest joynt.

119

As those that digge and search for golden ore,
Within Pannonian or Iberian hils,
Not underpropping sure the ground before,
Oft for a plague of their too greedie wills,
With sodaine ruine, are surprisd so sore,
As to get forth againe, doth passe their skills:
So was the Turke held downe, and pressed so,
By brave Rogero his triumphant foe.

120

Who now his naked dagger did present,
Unto the others vizer at his eye,
And with sharpe words he told him that he ment,
Except he yeeld, to kill him by and by:
But Rodomont, that rather then relent,
Or shew base minde a thousand deaths would dy,
No word doth speake, but strave himselfe to sunder
From him, or if he could to get him under.

121

Evn as a Mastive fell, whom Grewnd more fell,
Hath tyrde, and in his throat now fastned hath
His cruell fangs, yet doth in vaine rebell,
Though under him, and seekes to doe some skath:
For still the Grewnd prevailes, and doth excell
In force of breath, though not in rage and wrath:
So doth the cruell Pagan strive and straine,
To get from under him, but all in vaine.

122

But with long striving and with wondrous paines,
He freed his better arme, and void of aw,

His dagger that in his right hand remaines,
Which in this later bickring he did draw,
He seekes to stabbe into Rogeros raines;
But now the valiant youth the perill saw,
Then for his safeties sake he was constrained,
To kill the cruell Turke that grace disdained.

123

And lifting his victorious hand on hie,
In that Turks face he stabd his dagger twise
Up to the hilts, and quickly made him die,
And rid himselfe of trouble in a trice:
Downe to the lake, where damned ghosts do lie,
Sunke his disdainfull soule, now cold as Ise,
Blaspheming as it went, and cursing lowd,
That was on earth so loftie and so proud.

THE END