

**THE ORLANDO
FURIOSO. VOL. VI**

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The Orlando furioso. Vol. VI by Lodovico Ariosto

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LODOVICO ARIOSTO

**THE ORLANDO
FURIOSO. VOL. VI**

THE
ORLANDO FURIOSO

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH VERSE

FROM THE ITALIAN OF

LUDOVICO ARIOSTO
//

WITH NOTES

BY

WILLIAM STEWART ROSE

VOL. VI.

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THE ORLANDO FURIOSO.

CANTO XXXI.

ARGUMENT.

*Rinaldo and Dudon fight ; then friendship make,
And to each other fitting honour pay.
Agramant's host the united champions break,
And scatter it, like chaff, in disarray.
Brandimart wages war, for Roland's sake,
With Rodomont, and loses in the fray.
This while, for good Bayardo, with more pain,
Contend Rinaldo and the Sericane.*

THE ORLANDO FURIOSO.

CANTO XXXI.

I.

WHAT sweeter, gladder, state could be possess
Than falls to the enamoured bosom's share?
What happier mode of life, what lot more blest,
Than evermore the chains of love to wear?
Were not the lover, 'mid his joys, distressed
By that suspicious fear, that cruel care,
That martyrdom, which racks the suffering sprite,
That phrensied rage, which jealousy is hight.

II.

For by all bitters else which interpose
Before enjoyment of this choicest sweet,
Love is augmented, to perfection grows,
And takes a finer edge; to drink and eat,
Hunger and thirst the palate so dispose,
And flavour more our beverage and our meat.
Feebly that wight can estimate the charms
Of peace, who never knew the pain of arms.

III.

That which the heart aye sees, though undiscerned
Of human eye, we can support in peace.
To him long absent, to his love returned,
A longer absence is but joy's increase.
Service may be endured, though nought is earned,
So that the hope of guerdon does not cease.
For worthy service in the end is paid,
Albeit its wages should be long delaid.

IV.

Scorn, and repulse, and finally each pain
Of suffering love, his every martyrdom,
Through recollection, make us entertain
Delights with greater rapture, when they come.
But if weak mind be poisoned by that bane,
That filthy pest, conceived in Stygian home,
Though joy ensue, with all its festive pleasures,
The wretched lover ill his comfort measures.

V.

This is that cruel and envenomed wound
Where neither salve nor potion soothes the smart ;
Nor figure made by witch, nor murmured sound ;
Nor star benign observed in friendly part ;
Nor aught beside by Zoroaster found,
Inventor as he was of magic art ¹.
Fell wound, which, more than every other woe,
Makes wretched man despair, and lays him low !

VI.

O! cruel wound! incapable of cure,
Inflicted with such ease on lover's breast,
No less by false suspicion than by sure!
O wound! whose pangs so woefully molest,
They reason and our better wit obscure,
And from its natural bent our judgment wrest:
Wound, which against all reason didst destroy
The damsel of Dordona's every joy!

VII.

I speak not of what fatal mischief wrought
Hippalca's and the brother's bitter blow;
I speak of fell and cruel tidings brought
Some few days after; for the former woe,
Weighed with this other, was a thing of nought:
This after some digression will I show:
But first Rinaldo's feats I must declare,
Who with his troop to Paris made repair.

VIII.

The following day they met a cavalier,
Towards evening, with a lady by his side;
Sable his shield, and sable was his gear,
Whose ground a bar of silver did divide.
As foremost, and of seeming force, the peer,
Young Richardetto to the joust defied:
He, prompt for battle, wheeled his courser round,
And for the tourney took sufficient ground.