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Gallant Ladies

By Jacques Emmanuel

HD Presentation

The digitization and restoration of this film remain faithful to the body and spirit of the original work. They have been made possible by funding from

1575, in France:

the 5th war of religion.
Brantme sets off for war
trying to forget the beautiful
and ardent ladies of his life...
In these days, set
under the cloud of sorrow...
calamity and misery...
it's pleasant to make merry.
Ah! Kissing, cuddling, hugging...
undressing each other...
gently warming each other!
Women are the joy of my life.
I like them lively, broken in...
libertine and a little whorish.
No prudish, wary, faithful ones for me!
You won't stop me thinking of them!
I accepted.
Her servant blindfolds me...
and leads me to a carriage.
One hour later...
I'm pushed up some stairs...
I feel the sweet warmth...
of a wood fire.
A chambermaid says:
"My lady is four steps in front of you.
"Don't try to make her speak,
or remove your blindfold.
Or you'll be killed."
I approached.
The mysterious lady smelled nice.
I started feeling her...
kissing her...
What then?
Then I went six stations with the lady.
At each skirmish...
I tried new caresses...
to make her give herself away.

She never made a single sound.
Six stations...
With God's leave!
In the name of religion!
Should I die tonight...
whom will I think of at the end?
Victoire, of course!
How lovely the arms of a stranger are!
If I have to dream of a lady,
let it be one I never had!
The most mysterious...
a lady of high breeding
and every intrigue!
The Queen of Navarre!
They say the boxes at her waist...
contain the hearts of her dead lovers.
Since her husband left her,
everyone is passionate about her.
They say she is most loving.
Will I die without having
tasted her charms?
Brantme...
you who are so popular, come over here.
The Queen of Navarre and I need
a brave, selfless man for a task.
Forget him, I've better.
I must make women laugh to love them.
What a tiresome business!
Stand! You're my prisoner!
No sir, you're mine!
La Paloterie?
Brantme?
I've lost my men.
Have a drop of brandy.
How can I like war?
I hate the countryside!
After I left court...
did you still frequent Mme. de Chantenac?
You and I were rivals, old boy.
When you joined the Protestants,
I went to her...
and took my leave of her.
If I leave here alive...
war's over for me.

I won't fight the Protestants again.
And I can't afford soldiers.
Why try to change?
I'm only happy at court with the ladies.
All those with whom I've made merry...
thrive within me.
I'm tied to them forever.
I can't forget some of them.
Mademoiselle d'Angoulme...
Ah, yes, Mademoiselle d'Angoulme!
I'm of royal blood. I have to be on top.
Jeanne de Tignonville!
That lasted for some time.
It lasts still.
Really?
A complicated lady.
You have to chase her
for two hours or more.
But then!
Maybe we should return to our armies.
I've an idea.
You'll need arms to continue.
I can sell you some.
For your court expenses.
Goodbye, Brantme.
My love to our ladies.
From now on, the war of love!
Beware! It can be more
dangerous than the other.
When I get to court, I'll find Mme.
de Saint-Luc...
faithful to her husband
as she lifts her skirt.
Not on the lips.
I've sworn to be faithful to my husband.
I'll never waver
between pleasure and duty.
I'll choose both at once!
There's only one who's a lady...
a tasty piece and a wanton hussy.
Victoire! Victoire d'Estrivos!
Recently arrived from Italy...
at the request of her
cousin, the Queen Mother...

Victoire, a lass of lowly birth...
married M. de Mareuil, who had
some vineyards in Touraine.
Like many a cuckold, he thought
his new wife a virgin.
It's pigeon's blood.
The next morning...
she excitedly showed him
the proof of his virility.
I don't remember a thing.
You deflowered me so well!
Within 3 months,
the aphrodisiacs killed him.
I offered his widow my sympathy.
Say and do what you like.
You won't stop me dying!
When nothing can take away sorrow...
there's one last solution.
Stop it!
Believe me, it's the only way.
Thank you.
You're a friend.
A war wound?
No, a jealous husband.
She married the Comte d'Estrivos...
who made a fortune in the spice trade.
Brantme, a wedding
without you isn't a wedding.
To honour Victoire without her
husband suspecting...
I'll pretend to love another.
Paris, the paradise of women...
the hell of mules...
and the purgatory of supplicants...
Was the night good?
It was housebound, Sire.
Some ladies lack inspiration.
Brantme!
No more soldiering?
I can't live away from court, Sire.
Away from court or the ladies?
I did something you'll never

do:

Let's hear of your merrymaking.
I'm too poor to think of ladies now.
Have you heard, Bussy?
No, Sire.
The Comte d'Estrivos died last night.
D'Estrivos?
Yesterday, after supper.
He ate 2 partridges and a pheasant.
The pheasant killed him.
Victoire is a better catch now.
Victoire...
if only I'd known her before I wed!
Tell the queen to go to the chapel.
Here she is, Sire.
I suppose you'll go
to console the countess?
She deserves it.
Tell the countess
that Pierre de Brantme...
wishes to offer his condolences.
My dear friend...
I can't get used to it.
Crying is all that's left to me.
I cry a lot, it does me good.
What a tragedy!
He loved his food!
He ate five meals a day.
Oh, he was a happy man.
He'd put on 60 pounds since the wedding.
Don't let anyone in.
I'm here for all your misfortunes.
Yes.
You took advantage of me last time.
I was so distraught...
It's all very well staying
at court with us...
but it won't feed you.
That's true!
I live off my stipend
as a Lord of the King's Chamber...
and the money from my abbey. And only...
because my brothers are dead.
Thank God I'm not a priest!
Ask the king for another stipend.

He promised me one...
You should have gone to Poland with him.
Is it my fault his wedding changed him?
Before, we often had the same mistresses.
You mustn't rely on others.
Do as I did. I started out with nothing.
I now have a large income,
and my husband's estate.
Get married.
Plight my troth...
I've thought of it.
Plight your troth... That's horrible!
I couldn't live alone.
I need a husband near me.
A more sturdy one this time.
Do you have someone in mind?
I think I've found him.
How delicate of you...
to tell me that just now!
For 6 months now,
the Marchal de Labadens...
has been trying more serious things.
He was a terrible lover.
He'll be a good husband.
Have you ever considered me?
You?
A present, for you.
You refuse a woman's gift?
That's silly of you.
Their bodies are gifts too.
In case you change your mind.
Heavens, my husband's family
from Pithiviers!
Get dressed! They mustn't
see you, for my sake!
Is it safe?
- Don't worry. I'm used to this.
I was always saved...
by never forgetting all the women I knew.
A mighty lord, away at war...
ordered me to take
his son twice a week...
to Mme. de Sauve who would teach
and debauch him.

I don't want to go!
I'd rather play marbles or catapults.
I'm fed up of learning good manners!
Come on, don't be afraid.
You can have a cake after.
Mme. de Sauve was the mistress
of Charles IX...
Henri III and the King of Navarre.
She had earned the name "The
lady of 12 inventions".
Bussy, who frequented her...
claims there were only 6.
He's progressing but too hurried.
I must talk to you. I've made a decision.
Again?
Henceforward, I'll only live with women.
Men are boastful braggarts.
I can bear them no more.
Only women please me.
Good. So what?
I want to serve
the greatest of them again.
Our Queen Mother.
Only you can help me see her.
So you intend to live
more seriously, do you?
Have some grapes.
Sit down, Brantme.
The grapes are excellent.
We remember your past services.
And we'll gladly use you again.
You know that M. de la Frgouse
has turned Calvinist...
and had the nerve to kidnap the Gelosi...
Italian actors on their way to us.
Yes. He's asking for a ransom.
200,000 pounds!
It's too much! We're poor!
We spoke to him but he's stubborn.
I know M. de la Frgouse well.
I know.
You even travelled
to Scotland with him...
to take back poor Queen Mary.

I'm sick of being spied on, mother!
The king keeps me in the Louvre.
Last night...
Your brother is king. He has his reasons.
He's the one who decides.
He doesn't like the company you keep.
If a husband is flighty...
his wife sets a good example.
My private life...
is better than his.
It's no use speaking Italian.
I forgot that M. de Brantme
has fought in Italy.
Monsieur de Brantme?
M. de Bussy has many good words for you.
It's mutual. We're more than cousins.
Almost brothers.
Come to me after supper. We'll talk then.
I'm ready to negotiate with la Frgouse.
I'll make him lower his price.
Do you have a plan?
Could I possibly take two ladies
from your suite with me?
If you don't endanger their honour.
I'll see to it, ma'am.
Will two be enough?
Mlle. de Ngrepelisse!
Mlle. de Chteaneuf!
Do you know...
Mlle. de Ngrepelisse? Mlle.
de Chteaneuf?
I know them from court.
Now you've treated my lower lips...
the upper ones are jealous.
Ladies, you're to go with M. de Brantme.
Obey him willingly and respectfully.
It's in the country's interest.
These ladies livened up...
the negotiations so much...
that M. de la Frgouse...
was bowled over.
I simply talked of the ladies for 3 days.
That stirred his interest.
I want to ask you something.

How do you manage to be
with so many women at once?
You never leave them!
They form a whole.
Oh, I do hold you dear!
Yes, but she only pays 8,000 pounds!
And I saved the Royal Treasury 175,000!
I was hoping for money,
not just consideration!
When my cousin, the Duchess
of Retz, received...
her husband went away...
and her lover of the day,
her "favourite", arrived.
He was always a poet.
My cousin liked poetry in general...
and certain poets in particular.
She called them "chosen extracts".
Good day, cousin. So...
you're famous now.
Make the most of it.
Divine Artemis, I missed poetry.
Careful, Brantme. Too
many husbands hate you.
Beware of them.
You always say that.
One day it will be too late.
I've a surprise.
Would the Gelosi please come out now.
This is your liberator.
Good evening.
Good evening.
I haven't seen you for two weeks.
We're in the middle of Lent!
That redheaded goddess!
We met at Chenonceaux. What's her name?
Mme. de la Rivire.
Her husband has at last left her
to fight the rebels in Guyenne.
Here, I'm known as Astre.
Be silent!
I hear you're a real jester.
Only for some people.
Go on then, make me laugh.

Don't you like the Italian way?
Is it quite correct?
Tomorrow, in my rooms?
I'm not like modern women...
who want freedom and independence.
No, sir...
were I expecting, I'd be
tempted to accept.
But such is not the case now.
I only allow passengers
on board my ship...
when it is loaded and full.
Fair Calipante, I've written...
Later.
Good evening, sir.
I hear you dance wonderfully.
It depends on the partner.
You won't be disappointed.
Tomorrow, at seven, in my chambers.
If you know the volta, we'll try that.
Daughter, sister and wife of a king.
She looked at me at last.
What a conquest! The summit! The zenith!
The queen invited me to dance!
Let him in.
Someone tried to poison Mlle.
de Thorigny...
the queen's friend.
But she'll live.
My worst enemy did it.
Don't hesitate in taking revenge.
Good evening, M. de Brantme.
We'll talk tomorrow.
Someone is trying to hurt me, destroy me.
Gillonne de Thorigny, my only friend!
We had agreed to dance tonight.
Let's not change that.
Call my musicians.
Come, come, ladies!
Even though death is among us,
we should make merry.
A volta! For M. de Brantme and me!
When the volta was banned,
I had it imposed.

Another indecency.
What do you think of the Salic Law?
Are we right to stop women ruling?
The law dismays me, ma'am.
Elizabeth is England's greatest ruler.
In France, we're here to make children.
When we can't have any, we're rejected.
You must dance with someone to know him.
It's important to sound him.
To tell if he's healthy and odorous.
If his limbs are supple...
And if she talks worthily.
My mother has a new task for you.
You have to fetch my brother.
He left Paris.
Precisely.
She wants you to fetch him.
I wish to ask you a favour.
Take a message to my brother.
He must impose conditions on his return.
But above all...
my mother mustn't find out.
You can count on me.
Thank you, M. de Brantme.
Come to us when you return.
Let's go to bed.
I'll join you, ma'am.
My dear cousin...
she and I have travelled
some way on love's path...
but there's no reason why you
shouldn't skirmish with her.
Why do you say that, cousin?
Her boiling point is high.
One feels like unpeeling her.
If I were you...
You wouldn't say that.
That's the difference.
You keep your women. I pass through mine.
The next morning...
the Queen Mother officially
asked me to find Monsieur...
the king's brother,
who was in talks with the rebels.

The Virgin Mary sent me!
Holy images, crosses of Lorraine...
rosaries...
Give what you can. I only want charity.
Where are you going?
To carry the word of God...
the Lord Jesus and our beloved Pope...
to those infidels and renegades.
They'll slaughter you!
Our religion has seen other martyrs.
Go with him...
and protect him as you can.
My dear Brantme!
I've been here for weeks.
But they're wary.
So I make up for lost time.
My travelling and lusting companion.
He knows about Elizabeth Tudor.
Tell her how I kissed her!
I was her "toad".
Yes, Sire, you spent a good evening!
Your mother sent me to talk to you.
I have a message from your sister too.
Don't ever leave me!
I'll make you chamberlain!
Life away from Paris is a bore!
She asked me to send for you.
She's still in bed.
Come in, M. de Brantme.
Do you know the resurrected Mlle.
de Thorigny?
M. de Champvallou forgot his hat again.
We'll give it to him tonight.
I was eager to see you.
My mother tells me you were successful.
My brother's returning.
Yes, and on your conditions.
That's fine diplomacy.
One day, my brother will be King.
You and I will benefit
from his ambitions for peace.
Take this handkerchief.
It will be your password.
Your cousin Bussy is a lout.

I dismissed him.
He had two other mistresses.
I hope you're not like that.
I don't want my belt stolen.
Talk about women.
I hear you and Bussy
know them best at court.
It's a treat for me to know them.
Come, come, Brantme, to each his own.
Keep your rank. I'm a king's wife.
Or find a way to make me want to.
Farewell, till we meet again!
Many a kiss on your lips.
Many a kiss on your lips.
I never had the chance.
Peace talks had begun.
She joined her husband,
the King of Navarre, in Nrac.
Tell your master a lady is here to comfort him.
He'll understand.
My poor friend! It's my turn
to warm your heart.
Your queen has gone!
We're just friends.
Friendship and love are the same for you.
Not really.
It's fortunate we both refuse jealousy.
I've only two hours.
We must try to hurry.
Help me.
How can you live in such bareness?
My husband's arms.
The Marchal de Labadens
likes to be everywhere.
The clergy forbids women
to wear underpants.
If they do, they're excommunicated!
The devout are bare-assed all winter!
First assault!
Let's see your muzzles!
Brantme! Next time you won't get away.
Your mistress's protector
refuses to share her.
Thank you.

Which mistress does he mean?
If only I knew!
I like cuckolds...
but not cruel, bloodthirsty maniacs!
They can't satisfy their wives!
They assume the right to murder!
Often they kill wife
and lover to marry again!
Is that Christian?
They kill women...
often superior to them...
in beauty, talent,
intelligence and charm.
For women are superior to us!
Cuckolds don't realize that!
If God exists, He must be a woman!
The Romans simply repudiated their wives.
Anyway...
if they want to kill me
for loving ladies...
let them do it while I'm rutting lustily!
If this is your reaction, gentlemen...
I'll make more cuckolds before I die!
I swear I will!
I'm your neighbour, madam.
Never mind!
Is your master in? - Yes, madam.
Alone?
Have you heard?
Your cousin Bussy has been murdered.
I know. Another jealous husband!
I don't think so. It's political,
disguised as adultery.
Like you, Bussy supported Monsieur.
He was killed for his boasting.
Beware of the king.
Am I that dangerous?
Yes.
I may have the answer.
You'll be protected
by an escort and soldiers.
Marry Louise de Charenonnay,
my husband's niece.
When you enter the Labadens family,

no one will dare attack you.
I'll do it!
I must warn you, she's not
quite made for marriage.
How can I put it... Louise
is a bit mannish...
but she never slept with a man.
Well, she only likes ladies,
nothing but ladies.
Will she accept?
They want an unconsummated marriage.
If she doesn't, her fortune
goes to collaterals.
This noble maiden has a total...
of 60,000 pounds annually...
as her dowry...
along with other advantages
in kind, such as...
hunting and land rights,
mills and miscellaneous...
To which we must add...
20,000 pounds from the town house...
5,000 pounds paid quarterly...
making in all a total
income of 80,000 pounds...
annually. Signed this day.
80,000 pounds of income a year!
My niece is a treasure trove.
I can see how she ensnared you!
It's fortunate our families
are equally glorious.
My dear Louise...
give me your hand so that I may
give it to your fianc...
whom I'm sure you'll willingly accept.
The wedding will take
place in four weeks.
You'll move to the mansion then.
In the meantime, Louise will stay here.
Louise...
I want you to be open with your fianc.
Both look replete with love.
The gossip could only be
to your advantage.

I'll respect the proprieties, Uncle.
The 6th Civil War comes to an end.
Arms are laid down...
or rather put aside.
They may come in useful again.
Ladies...
let's celebrate peace.
What a good idea! You
should come more often.
You've seen so many countries.
When we're married, I'd like...
to travel abroad with you,
to Venice, Greece...
Lesbos!
My uncle told us...
that we should act like lovers.
Kiss me.
That's the hors d'oeuvre.
Now show me what you do to others, sir.
Can I not arouse passion
within a good man?
Stop your snuggling. Leave me.
Don't play with caresses!
Let's play it rough!
Like the Virgin of Heraklion!
You'll go the same way!
Diane, help! Help!
The beauty of a woman!
What a feat! You're a real man!
I heard something else.
It seems you were led
into the country, masked...
to serve a lady.
Do you know the lady?
No, but I would have liked to.
I wanted to help you, not create a rival!
I have no reason to marry you now.
If there are flowers
in the antechamber, I'm busy.
Don't come in.
My misfortune was as great as my pride.
Such is Paris. She prefers
insolence to virtue.
I want Monsieur.

He's here.
I have to marry the Comte de Pangeas.
A buffalo.
Don't forget me.
Never.
Sire...
I can't find my persecutor. He has fled.
Calm down, Lord Chamberlain. He
had to fight the Barbaresques...
or I'd seize his fortune.
Some muscatel?
I'm well placed to become King.
I'd know how to make peace last.
Since Bussy died, I only have you.
Ladies, hurry. We're going
on a royal pilgrimage.
Again?
We're going to mass at Chartres.
The king needs an heir.
Believers can walk. The others
will go by litter. Hurry!
I'm sick of sleepless nights, going
to Chartres at a snail's pace!
It's my fifth pilgrimage.
If she can't have a child,
she should go elsewhere.
She's had offers but always refuses.
The king! The king! He's here!
It's time to atone for our sins
with a fine prayer.
I expect my young brother
to pray the most.
You can count on it.
Well, any more bad news for me?
We'll talk of stoicism at dinner.
Desportes will describe Marcus Aurelius.
M. de Brantme!
You wished to see me, I believe?
Majesty, death has struck again.
Andr, my brother,
seneschal of Prigord...
and I appeal to you.
He made his will before he died.
It doesn't concern you.

And I won't intervene.
I've often asked you for a new stipend.
I believe this is yours.
It was found in your room.
You had it searched!
Don't shout. I hate that.
My sister gives too many of them away.
You keep poor company.
You'll no longer have mine.
Farewell.
Didn't you want to make love to me?
We met at Mme. de Retz's once.
Mme. de la Riviere!
Are you still only unfaithful when full?
Precisely! I'm two months pregnant.
Really?
I prefer doing it dressed.
My satisfaction is greater.
The most pathetic pass in front of me.
They receive orders,
stipends and medals...
while I get nothing at all!
You see this key? It has shown
my rank since I was 16.
Gentleman of the King's Chamber!
Damn his key!
Let them all go to Rabelais' hell.
I'll leave France and go to Spain.
Philip II values me highly.
Let's put the fire out. It's too hot.
Yes, ma'am.
I'm Mme. de Bourdeille,
his brother's widow.
How is he feeling?
He was in agony for 4 days.
The doctors won't say.
Good day, Brantme.
You don't look too debilitated!
Oh, but I am, ma'am.
Leave us.
The king, my brother, has banished me.
I had to leave the Ile-de-France.
I never take this off.
The man who gave it to me

avenged two close friends.
He was killed the day
after he gave it to me.
Hurry up and get better, Brantme.
You've made me want you.
Alas, ma'am...
I don't know if I'll ever walk again.
My spine was broken in 2 places.
I didn't know about your accident.
I left Paris with a whole
trunk of aphrodisiacs.
I need powders and pills to make love.
At 19, my mother gave them to me...
when I was forced
to marry against my will.
I slept with Henri de Navarre for 7
months without speaking to him.
He made love to me
the hundred times you know of...
but that was all.
It makes me mad to be lying here.
Be silent!
I'm cold.
Don't move.
Your lips are burning.
You're feverish.
Since I started seeing the world...
I've always enjoyed travelling.
But the finest journeys...
were embarked upon in bed...
with a lady.
Montaigne says one should
lend oneself to others...
and give only to oneself.
I've lent myself a lot.
So have I.
But the glowing embers
of passion are not enough.
For love to be good
and tender, you need...
the sting and a slow burn.
Imagination! Without that,
love can't exist. If not...
how can you renew the sting?

Some time ago, when I spotted
a man I wanted to love...
I had him brought to me blindfolded.
I didn't speak so
he didn't know who I was.
That happened to me once...
in the country...
It wasn't me! I'd remember.
Good beddings or bad, I never forget.
Are you asleep?
The devil never sleeps.
Get well soon and send me your news.
I have to go. My younger
brother is very ill.
If Monsieur dies, what will happen?
We'll simply survive in these
days of treachery...
and banditry.
You're lucky to be indoors.
War is back again.
Thanks for last night.
Follow your inclination.
Write down your memoirs.
I already started, years ago.
It will be another way
for women to share your bed.
Describe your lusting, but no names.
And please, just talk
of the best in love.
You mustn't mention the rest.
I've always thought
you'd die making love.
Your face shows it at those moments.
Thank you, Lord!
You're floppy, sir. All of a droop!
Sorry, madam, my nerve has gone.
Stop titillating my wife!
Should Brantme die,
keep his heart for me...
to compare it to M. de Bussy's.
I chose you for your fine hand.
You'll share secrets with me.
Not a word to anyone,
or I'll have you killed.

It's to be published after I die...
as it's too sensitive.

First speech:

"Women and their cuckolded husbands."
There were of course, in my day...
virtuous ladies.
I won't talk of them.
Hearty ladies...
suffice to make me happy.

TWO YEARS LATER:

Left leg! Right leg! Left!
Right!
The bonesetter said
that with your constitution...
you'd be better next year.
Left!
Don't complain. You're
missing the troubles.
The Huguenots were here last night.
I chased them off.

Left leg!
Right leg!

ANOTHER TWO YEARS LATER

Where was I?
"She was twitching in my mind..."
Ah, yes!
Her flesh was beautiful...
and her skin was immaculate.
Yes, let's work.
Her conversation
was studded with oaths...
which, on her lips...
became diamonds.
It was said...
that she gave more... than she promised.
So I joined the ranks.
She welcomed me abed,
a feast for my eyes.
"Are you hungry? Do you
like good food?" she asked.
Happily, I answered yes.
"We can move on then," she said.

"Lechery is just a type of gastronomy."
By the way, your soup's ready.
Did you see a lot of that lady?
She fell in love and married.
Her husband was a real rake.
She caught him with his mistress
and killed him herself.
One should never obey one's feelings.
How wonderful all this is!
You've made me the happiest of men.
I'm cured, cured!
I owe you everything.
We were made for each other.
I must start riding again and go
to Paris as soon as I can.
Just think... Paris is in turmoil.
I have to go to serve the Queen Mother.
It will help my writing.
I can find out how my ladies are.
Later, I'll marry you.
When we've lived well separately...
we'll marry, I promise.
Mme. de Saint-Luc! You're in a hurry.
I'm going to church. I'm fasting.
To calm the pricking of the flesh?
All that's behind me now.
Women aren't as jolly now.
I was in the country.
I can tell.
I wish to greet the king.
Come on.
What became of Victoire?
She hasn't been seen out since her
third husband died.
And the Queen of Navarre?
She's a prisoner, somewhere in Auvergne.
She pulled too many strings.
I don't understand...
Are you still alive?
Someone to amuse us at last.
You arrive like the Messiah to help
me with this thorny matter.
Tell him what you said.
My husband makes love to me too much.

How many times a day?
I've counted up to 32 times.
Poor woman!
He's beaten you!
What would you decide?
On such a matter...
the Queen of Aragon stated
that a fair limit...
should be six times a day.
If the lady agrees.
Well, the King of France
follows the example.
Only six?
You can't reproach me with anything.
I've never been unfaithful to her!
It seems you're keeping
a record of our intimate deeds.
I could have you arrested, you know.
I only write of famous
ladies and warriors.
Yes, yes, nothing but bedroom secrets.
You're only writing to prolong
the burning desire...
De Guise's men are entering Paris.
I won't give in to a Papist
paid by the King of Spain.
I won't be his prisoner!
The people have taken to the streets.
Ah, Brantme, I've often
envied your life.
Being just a witness, a memorialist.
A king writes history, Sire.
I just tell it.
To each his own.
I've spent my time
stitching France together.
Brantme, we were missing you.
I'm happy to see you so well, ma'am.
In the evening, we eat a light meal.
Two quail roasted in vine leaves...
a good pear grilled in the embers...
and a jug of wine.
That's enough and it does us good.
You find us in total disarray.

We have to leave Paris...
hounded out by the Duc de Guise.
For how long?
Are our ladies-in-waiting in your books?
I only tell the truth.
That's what's worrying us.
Give us your manuscripts...
and we'll judge for ourselves.
We'll give you one last chance.
Come to the Loire and we'll pardon you.
I can't, ma'am.
Because of a lady?
You're incorrigible! Leave us now.
I was one of the only men allowed
into the ladies' quarters...
Why me?
We thought that if they had
to know a man...
before marriage, it should be you.
Forgive our haste. This is a revolution.
Farewell, Brantme.
I want a scene showing
life's sweetness on a summer's eve.
It's hot...
couples are joining together...
Ah! At last!
Is Victoire de Labadens here?
We're expecting her.
What do you think? I've given birth...
and I can still frolic like I used to.
What about me! Ten pregnancies!
Try that, ladies!
May I?
I'll keep my missal.
I want to appear pious.
I'll put her in the shadows.
She's forgotten her past since she married M.
de Noirmoutier.
Our pamphlets have ruined the king.
People think he sleeps with his henchmen.
It's one of our greatest victories.
He'll never recover.
What a shame Victoire couldn't be here.
They say she's fading fast.

What do you mean?
I heard she's dying.
Of indigestion, it seems.
The king has just fled Paris!
They've poisoned me.
My husband's family.
To keep the money.
But I'll have the last word.
When the Marchal died
three years ago...
I wanted to come but I was bedridden.
I know how attentive you are.
Your letter did me a lot of good.
Don't be sad.
You're in my will.
My heart was too big.
So was mine.
I never wanted to make
a woman stay with me.
That's why we loved you.
The best lovers are those who confuse...
friendship and love.
I've always known that.
Yes, you told me.
Help me.
Come in.
It won't be long now.
A priest!
She asked to confess.
She wanted to relieve her turpitude.
The family was sent out.
Four hours later, Victoire
still hadn't finished.
The priest had a fit of apoplexy.
He was replaced by another.
At last, at 3 in the morning...
the confession came to an end.
Then Victoire asked:
Send me a minister!
Now we have two religions,
I'd rather be on the safe side.
Then Victoire made another demand.
Send the priest back...
along with M. de Brantme.

Hurry up or I'll die!
He's the one!
He's the one with whom I made love best!
My knight rider!
Thank you for jumping over my body!
The next day, she was made up.
I'm going to die today.
Let's get it over with.
She asked for a violinist
to play until she died...
Go to Marguerite.
She's being held in Usson.
She needs you.
At four, just before dawn,
the violinist fainted away.
She left two thirds of her
fortune to the two churches...
with the order to share their profits.
She left me the jewels I had
always refused to take.
May God protect you!
Let them impale each other.
We stop when blood is shed.
It's only a game.
I came to save you, to take
you to a safe place.
M. de Canillac is the bearded one.
The other is M. d'Urf.
Come with me.
If I leave, I'll be killed.
My brother the king has
executed everyone around me.
Now my husband is heir, he has
to marry a foreign princess.
An Italian astrologist advises
me on when to make love.
That's why they're fighting.
My winter is better than your spring.
M. d'Urf writes too. He
deigned to sleep with me once.
M. de Canillac was my jailor.
Now he protects me.
One morning I showed him my breasts.
He wanted the rest!

Your turn now, M. de Brantme.
En garde!
Lunge, for God's sake!
You're a poor fighter.
One, two, three and boot!
Maybe I fight badly...
but I prick well.
You prick, sir! Good night, M.
de Canillac.
Supper awaits us in my room.
Good night, ma'am.
I'll watch over you.
Nothing but food to heat our fancy.
Some wine as a mouthwash?
Sit down. Don't drink too much.
One day I slept with de Turenne...
he was so drunk, he threw
up all over my breasts.
You've led me so far
along the path of imagination...
that I can no longer go back.
I'll keep you with me
and turn my back on Venus.
Ma'am, he's dead!
I know. I don't want him touched.
He's a young local boy.
He did everything so well. In
bed, he did a dozen stations.
He overestimated himself.
Do you scorn me?
I learnt long ago never to scorn women!
Not one!
Go now, Brantme. I'll carry
on living as I wish.
You'll remain the most surprising
philanderer ever.
I often think of Ronsard. He's dead too.
"I love to make love
and speak to women...
and put down in words my love for them."
That's your whole life, Brantme.
And maybe mine too.
Friends forever?
For all eternity.

Let us exchange our writings.
Never go back to court.
They'd destroy you and your books.
Make them forget you. That
can be a road to glory.
We're getting too serious with the years.
Never be serious. Remain
lighthearted, Brantme.
They'll say you're superficial.
So what? You're right!
Be light-hearted, merry and curious.
Farewell, Brantme. Many
a kiss on your lips.
Many a kiss on your lips, my queen.
My Queen Margot!
In those days...
I would dress...
in grey and white...
for the love...
of a lady.
Make me die a little!
We'll live in my chateau.
It'll be more practical.
It's no use keeping all this.
I respect you so much...
but marriage is like a betrayal for me.
I must be faithful to them all...
and to you too...
Jacquette...
I'll be faithful to you
by not marrying you.
My heart's too big.
I'm used to it!
Is this goodbye for good?
I can never say goodbye.
Well...
if you don't mind...
I'll call sometimes...
on a neighbourly visit.
We could sleep together...
on the off chance.
That's a fine decision to take.
We'll keep each other warm
in the years to come.

This is my will and testament.
My heirs are to print the books...
produced by my imagination.
Thank you, ladies,
for entrancing me so often.
Without you, mortal life
would be unbearable.
I also thank those who loved me long...
and those who dismissed
me, leaving me to others.
Thanks, most distinguished whores...
and forgive me if I've offended you.
I wasn't born to displease you.
I mention some but not all...
Thanks for your kindness
and the great moments you gave me...
in these dangerous times.
Stay merry and good-natured
as I love you...
and so I'll keep you all:
as fine as goddesses
and as welcoming as mortals.
Thank you and many a kiss on your lips.
Brantme's works were published
55 years after his death.
He was praised for bearing witness
to the women and manners of his time.