

Roncevaux

Van der Graaf Generator

Fight within a war within a song:
Roland dies, but memory lingers on...

Soldier, approaching the Gates of Spain,
Treachery waits for you and the baggage train;
A rearguard stand, your final war,
It's what you've been living for.

Soldier, as you sit astride Viellantif
Durendal abides inside your sheath;
Soon you shall grace the day.
Turpin and Oliver ride by your side,
Bishop and king's pawn about to slide;
Do you feel fit to slay?

Carlton is riding far ahead
And cannot hear your voice if you call;
Ganelon, the traitor, in his tent
Cannot wait to hear the word of your fall...
Soon both shall laugh, in different ways.

Soldier, approaching the Gates of Spain,
The Paynim are sharpening up their blades.
Glory! Your moment is here!

Can you see Marsilion yet?
Is that a vulture wheeling overhead?
Twenty thousand Frenchmen, the flower of honour;
Stepfather's henchmen wait to fall on you -
Look around, the silent sound of death.

Saracen plots and Frenchman aids his plans:
Ambuscade springs eternal life to man.

Soldier, now white rises from the cliffs of Roncevaux -
Battle! Maybe you should heed the words of Oliver:
It's time to blow your horn.
Carlton twists and screams out in his sleep,
Ganelon walks the night with knuckles raw;
Soon both shall die, in different ways.

And you can see Marsilion now,
Baligant wields Maltet in his hand;
Now's the time to hold to virtuous vows,
Now's the time to fight and die alone in foreign lands.
Twenty thousand fall to sixty, there is no hope;
Oliver can well say "I told you so" now...
Blow the horn and sound the call for help!

Too late, too late and Oliver falls,
Now only Turpin and thee, back to back;
Though Charlemagne wheels round to answer the call
When he arrives he'll find your body hacked.
Only revenge is left, Marsilion shall die,
Only revenge is left, the traitor's eye is beamed...

Roland, the song is ended,

Roland, the song is ended,
Roland, the Song has only just begun.