

The Song of Roland

Roland, Roland King Charles' sister - son
Renowned through all the Frankish lands for battles ye have won.
In council hear ye Ganelon make plea to go to war,
To aid the rebel Saracen against their rightful lord

Roland, Roland you call this plan ill - made
But nonetheless does Charlemagne agree to send them aid.
Then Ganelon requests you for the post most perilous
And willingly do you accept as honor deems ye must.

Roland, Roland the rearguard you command
With Oliver, your loyal friend to ride at your right hand
But at the vale of Roncevalles your doom is now a - nigh
The Saracen do hold the pass and will not let you by.

Roland, Roland ye know now you're betrayed,
Yet in your heart is courage and your voice is not dismayed
"Face we now grim battle - take your shields and hold them high.
With honor we have lived our lives, with honor we will die!"

Roland, Roland sound your mighty horn
Try to call the men back that marched out just yester morn.
The King has heard ye call afar, but Ganelon says "Nay,
'Tis only our young Roland out a-hunting on this day."

Roland, Roland sound your horn again
As fierce the battle rages through the valley and the glen.
Again the King has heard your call, again the traitor lies,
And none will come to aid you since your peril he denies.

Roland, Roland sound your final blast
As one-by-one your men-at-arms die fighting in the pass
And at the last is Oliver by swordsmen overthrown
And ye of all the Frankish host now stand alone.

Roland, Roland oh black the day ye died!
Your comrades slain around you and your sword by your side.
They find you on the hilltop with your face turned towards the foe.
Never has there been a day of such great woe!

Roland, Roland your name will live in song
Wherever brave men take up arms to right a mighty wrong.
The fairest flower of chivalry to bloom in all the land,
The noblest of all the knights of Charlemagne

Notes: this is a favorite for many. Sounds wonderful with harmony and especially with a bodhran !

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