

## **How Madame Brunissende de Brocéliande obtained and disposed of the sword**

It was during a nice night in Summer, a Friday I think, that I came to meet Serpent's Thunder. News from around France were good. There had been no fighting for a long time now. Crop was growing well and harvest promised to be plentiful. Artisans had been busy, even in Paris where I was. Since the night was warm and happy there had been a great deal of rejoicing and drinking. During the numerous toasts, our good King Louis was joyfully praised by the populace.

We were, as usual, open for business. I mean my "Salon artistique et social" was ready to receive noble gentlemen willing to exchange philosophical view with our residents, in exchange of course of a reasonable contribution to the fees of their education and lodging. And since the night was warm and happy we did not lack gentlemen in search of artistic or social exchanges.

One of them was François, coming from Brittany, which we promised not to call François de Bretagne. He thought his wife (I don't remember which one though) might have issues, and maybe misunderstand his presence in this Salon. My opinion is that she probably enjoyed the free time... Also considering that François II, duc de Bretagne had been fighting our good King Louis XI, this name was not necessarily welcome in his Kingdom, or maybe "too" welcome. But I digress... It so happens that before he came to visit us he had been engaged in games of chances. Don't you find it a sign that the French name "jeux de hasard" seems to reflect more accurately the dangers of these games? But I digress again... So he had been playing, and unfortunately playing with gentlemen with more luck or less honesty than him, and was clear out of money. Well, at least the kind of money required to socialize in our establishment. So he offered an arrangement. To tell the truth the girls liked him and would likely have granted him a loan, but since he absolutely wanted to pay in some way... So, he had with him this sword, a very nice sword which, he told us, had been in his family for years and years, at least as far as he could remember. He then told us a story of how it came to be in his family. A story about some drunken jongleresse in a tavern in Brittany, who lost a bet and thus the sword, but who looked merry as would be the winner while handing the sword over. It was a nice tale and well told too. So I decided that the tale, and the sword, and a little work would pay his stay. So we enjoyed the tale and the work and he enjoyed the stay.

So, I was left with this sword, a beautiful and most impressive sword, but not my kind of weapon. I do like more discreet weapons and would have happily exchanged it for one or two or more daggers. Now daggers, that's a weapon of choice. But I'm losing track of the story one more time... On the other hand, selling the sword was probably a stupid idea. It was a most valuable sword and I would have sold it for much less than its real worth. So I decided the best use was probably a gift. Since I was to meet our good King Louis to discuss some Kingdom related matters, I mean since I happened to go in the city where he was and by chance could happen to meet him, I did decide to bring it to him. Our King is benevolent and extends his Kingdom by treaties more than by harassing the population in wars. Thus, gifts are always useful. And so I did.

The funny thing is that years later this sword was part of the gift offered by my King when peace was finally signed between Louis XI, roi de France and François II, duc de Bretagne in Senlis. I guess the sword liked him after all.