

The "Unbudgeables"

Seventeen hundred and six. Black the horizon
For Turin who groaned, trapped in a vise.
But Pero Mica lit the fuse...
That startled the Piedmontese into lifting their heads.

Soon after another event
---scarcely mentioned in our glorious annals---
changed the history of our Piedmont,
When a woman, daughter of poor folk.

But well-oriented in her native Pianessa,
Without a shred of fear, guided
A little band of grenadiers and soldiers
Across the Doira up to the fortress.

Then vehemently, from a secret gallery
She burst into the room where the French,
Sure of having planted roots in our land,
Were dancing and holding a celebration.

When this intrepid figure appeared
They surrendered at once, so great was their shock.
The courage of this woman is the pride
Of Pianessa. Her name? "Brica Maria".

Of soldiers, colonels and generals
Nineteen hundred were made prisoner
That night of September fifth. All at once
They were minus their coxcombs --- those Roosters!

And in a few days of non-stop combat
the Turinese, jumping on their necks full force
made the French take to their heels.
Once they start moving,
Nothing can stop the "Unbudgeables".

Nello Zuliani
Translated by Gerald Fabian