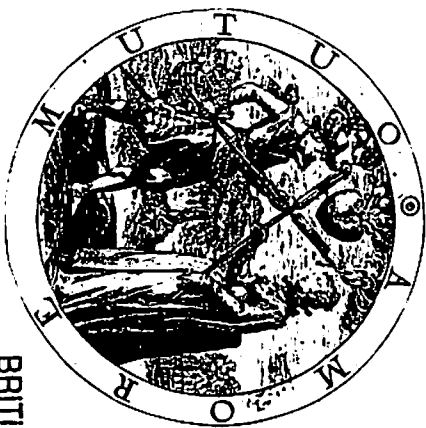


# TOUGH LOVE

Amazon Encounters in the

English Renaissance

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## CHAPTER FIVE

You have demolish'd the noble schooles of  
 Hors-manship (of which many were in this Citie),  
 hung up your Armes to rust, glued up those swords in  
 their scabberds that would shake all Christendome  
 with the brandish, and entertained into your mindes such  
 softnes, dulnesse and effeminate nicenesse, that it would  
 even make *Heracitus* himselfe laugh against his nature  
 to see how pulingly you languish in this weake  
 entertained sinne of womanish softnesse.

—*Haec-Vir: Or The Womanish-Man*

Beware of all enterprises that require new clothes.

—Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*

## STANDARD DEVIATIONS

In recent years, the terms "Amazon" and "lesbian" have been closely linked. Publications from the 1970s include *Amazon Quarterly: A Lesbian-Feminist Arts Journal*; *Amazon Expedition: A Lesbian Feminist Anthology*; *Amazon Poetry: An Anthology of Lesbian Poetry*; and *The Lesbian Reader: An Amazon Quarterly Anthology*, published in 1975 by Amazon Press.<sup>1</sup> Despite counterexamples that include the overheterosexed film *Gold of the Amazon Women* (1979), the connection remains firm in our cultural consciousness, as *Amazon All Stars: Thirteen Lesbian Plays*, published in 1996, suggests.<sup>2</sup> Dispensing with the need for subtitles, the word "Amazon" sometimes appears as a statement of sexuality in itself; so both *The Amazon Trail* (Library of Congress subject headings: "Lesbians—United States—Biography") and the "Amazon" buttons worn at gay pride parades assume a self-evident subject.<sup>3</sup> From the 1970s to the present, such references imply an intuitive homology, between lesbian identity and the popular idea of Amazons as large muscular women who live without men.

In previous chapters, I have argued that Amazon encounters in the early modern period instead reflect a profoundly heterosexual preoccupation. The fascination with amazonian practices of childbearing and

childrearing, the narratives of random mating and tame husbands, the equation between the danger women pose on the battlefield and the danger they pose in bed, all define Amazons in relation to men. Men who talk about Amazons in early modern texts show more interest in consolidating their own erotic and reproductive practices than in speculating about what women do when they are alone. But there is also, in this period, a powerful and explicit amazonian discourse of desire between women. The catch is that one of the women is a man; in a recurring story, a hero disguises himself as an Amazon to get close to the lady he loves. Improbable as the approach might seem, it has evident appeal: transvestite amazonian disguise is central to Sir Philip Sidney's *Old and New Arcadias* and John Marston's *Antonio and Mellida*, appears in *Swetnam the Woman-Hater*, and defines the speaking subject of a poem by Thomas Carew. And for *Amadis de Gaule*, it seems to be a kind of repetition compulsion. In the index to his study of that romance, under the heading "Amazons," John J. O'Connor presents the subheading, "Knights in disguise as."<sup>4</sup>

If amazonian disguise helps the hero to attain his objective—and it does—it also veils heterosexuality with the appearance of an exclusively female bond, and that appearance, once constructed, is difficult to dispel. The Induction of Marston's *Antonio and Mellida* attests to the tenacity of assumed parts. Asked about his role, the protagonist replies, "Faith, I know not what: an Hermaphrodite; two parts in one: my true person being *Antonio*, son to the Duke of *Genoa*; though for the love of *Mellida*, *Piero's* daughter, I take this fained presence of an *Amazon*, calling myself *Florizell*, and I know not what. I a voice to play a lady! I shall nere doe it."<sup>5</sup> In response, a fellow character argues that the double role makes *Antonio* not a hermaphrodite, but an actor: "Not play two parts in one? away, away: 'tis common fashion. Nay if you cannot bear two subtle fronts under one hood, Ideot goe by, goe by; off this world's stage!" But as both *Antonio's* recourse to his "true person" and that recurring phrase "I know not what" suggest, this is a fear not of doubleness but of altered singularity.

ANTONIO: I, but when use hath taught me action, to hit the right point of a Ladies part, I shall growe ignorant when I must turne young Prince againe, how but to trusse my hose.

FELICHE: Tush, never put them off: for women weare the breeches still. (7)

Antonio anticipates an irreversible transformation; Feliche assures him that the failure of sexual difference is a fact of life. As he shifts from "Amazon" to "woman" — "women wear the breeches still" — Feliche generalizes Antonio's predicament, reasoning from an idiosyncratic assumption of disguise to a statement about heterosociality. Playing Amazons, men make manliness a matter of playing as well; distinctions are fragile, even in love plots.

O'Connor writes, "Knights who disguise themselves as women invite embarrassment, and in *Amadis* they never escape it."<sup>6</sup> A transvestite hero might easily find himself scorned in battle, shunned by old allies, or courted by his prospective father-in-law. But perhaps the greatest embarrassment lies in the elimination of men from the field of desire; in amazonian disguise plots, female homoeroticism obscures heterosexual intent. Thomas Carew's poem, "A Lover, in the Disguise of an Amazon, is Dearly Beloved of his Mistress," summarizes a courtship that both rewards the male lover and leaves him out in the cold:

Cease in cold jealous fears to pine,  
Sad wretch, whom Rivals undermine:  
For though I hold lock'd in mine arms  
My life's sole joy, a traitor's charms  
Prevail: whilst I may only blame  
My self, that mine own Rival am.<sup>7</sup>

The predicament of a man whose disguise has become his competition, of a lover who has what he was after but still cannot get what he wants, is deliberately contrived, and might tempt us only to admire the conceit. But I want to take seriously the rivalry that Carew's poem describes, pursuing the implications of a disguise plot that causally links female homoeroticism to heterosexuality even as it assumes conflict between them. If desire between women enables women to meet men, the relationship of means to end is more complicated than it might appear.

Carew's poem sets up three subject positions — a lover, a mistress, and an Amazon — in a relationship of triangulated rivalry. But this is not the

familiar fantasy in which competition between two men results in one man's possession of a woman. In transvestite amazonian disguise plots as in Britomart's flirtations with women, a surplus male does not vanish, leaving a man and a woman together; instead, the only male vanishes, leaving two women alone. As the logic of disguise locates gender and eroticism between women, acquisition of an object of desire takes place not as a purchase or a swap or an intersection of self-congratulatory narcissisms, but as a seduction that privileges female sexual agency. Even if we remain aware of the maleness of one of the women involved — itself a surprisingly difficult project — erotic exchange in this story is never a transaction between men. The story gestures instead toward a different fantasy, in which female homoeroticism prepares women for heterosexual consummation, and the disguise plot efficiently ensures that a man is already in place.<sup>8</sup> This reading, as it reclaims agency for male desire, draws attention to the ending and relies on its status as the last word. But amazonian transvestism is a complicated and potentially unruly instrument, and texts such as *Antonio and Mellida* and Carew's poem invite us to look at its erotic complexities, focusing attention not on heterosexual conclusions but on the subject of disguise.

*The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia* presents a particularly elaborate version of this effect, and a correspondingly stubborn fascination with female homoerotic desire. Having fallen in love with a picture of the Princess Philoclea, Prince Pyrocles reinvents himself in her image, arguing that love "doth transform the very essence of the lover into the thing loved."<sup>9</sup> Desire, for Pyrocles, not only transforms its subject but closes the gap between subjectivity and objectification; as Clare Kinney writes, "Pyrocles perpetually reinvoles the prototype for both himself as desiring subject and Philoclea as object of desire, aggravating his Narcissistic confusion of the categories of desiring subject and desired object."<sup>10</sup> Musidorus finds something troubling in this equation between looking at and looking like, warning Pyrocles, "Sweet cousin, since you are framed of such a loving mettle, I pray you, take heed of looking yourself in a glass lest Narcissus's fortune fall unto you" (25). Defined indistinguishably as a lover and a narcissist, Pyrocles takes more than ordinary risks, submerging himself in a subordinate mimesis: "As for my name, it shall be Cleophila, turning Philoclea to myself, as my mind is wholly turned

and transformed into her" (17). Desire is a claustrophobic tautology, in which Philoclea's image produces Cleophila's copy and Pyrocles disappears.

I have chosen to focus on the first version of *The Arcadia* rather than the second to pursue the questions of where and how an amazonian disguise plot might end. In his unfinished revision, Sidney thickens the plot: Pyrocles names himself not Cleophila but Zelmane, taking the name of a woman who has disguised herself as a man named Daiphantus in order to pursue him and who, dying for love of him, causes him to take the name of Daiphantus as another disguise. The relationship among Zelmane the original (who was briefly Daiphantus), Zelmane the Amazon (who is Pyrocles and also Daiphantus), and Philoclea takes another turn when a portrait of the first Zelmane is described: "[She] at the first sight seemed to have some resembling of Philoclea; but with more marking (comparing it to the present Philoclea, who indeed had no paragon but her sister) they might see it was but such a likeness as an unperfect glass doth give, answerable enough in some features and colours, but erring in others."<sup>11</sup> Zelmane is a poor mirror of Philoclea, for whose sake Pyrocles becomes Zelmane, who seduces Philoclea by constructing herself as a mirror image. As it complicates the pattern of reflection, the revised *Arcadia* emphasizes sexual difference in various ways: through the invention of an "original" Zelmane; through greater attention to Musidorus and Pamela; through a proliferation of heroic male characters; through an increased emphasis on Pyrocles' own heroic past. These devices reflect without relieving uneasiness about narcissistic eroticism, multiplying distractions only to leave us, still, with a man who loses himself in a mirror. Some readers have argued that the revised *Arcadia* presents a more substantial—heroic, masculine, effective—Prince Pyrocles, but such a figure, if he exists at all, can appear only in the subjunctive and in the past tense; in the text's present moment, heroic masculinity is an effect of amazonian disguise.<sup>12</sup>

Concluding in midsentence, in midbattle, and on the note of a contested pronoun, the revised *Arcadia* suggests that the plot has become intractable, its teleology hard to imagine, as Margaret Sullivan writes, "Sidney seems to have revised himself into a corner."<sup>13</sup> The first *Arcadia*, by contrast, works its way to an ending that identifies it as a comedy, in which a series of misunderstandings and artificial obstacles resolve

themselves neatly into heterosexual pairs. Amazonian disguise catalyzes intersections of male and female homoerotic desire and of accurately and mistakenly conceived heteroerotic pursuit: Musidorus would want Cleophila if he believed she was a woman; Philoclea wants Cleophila despite believing she is a woman; the duke Basilius wants Cleophila because he believes she is a woman; the duke's wife Gynecia wants Cleophila because she hopes she isn't a woman at all. As foreplay for comic conclusions, such confusion assumes a return, a moment at which the rhetorical gesture toward the real regains its determinate force. In giving us that moment, the first *Arcadia* demonstrates its inadequacy; the return of Pyrocles as Pyrocles is less an exposure of what is true than an exposé of the need to know. The great revelation of *The Arcadia* is that the male body we have at the story's end is the same one we have had from the beginning, mystified, contested, subject to revision. In turning to that body for narrative resolution, we find ourselves looking in the wrong place.

*The Arcadia* emphasizes this through the example of Gynecia, Philoclea's mother, who desires Cleophila because she presumes "Cleophila" to be a false front. "For so the truth is that, at the first sight she had of Cleophila, her heart gave her she was a man thus for some strange cause disguised" (43). This direct approach to consummation—Cleophila is a man, Gynecia is a woman who knows that—produces nothing at all; Gynecia's recognition of Pyrocles proves only the limited relevance of empirical facts. The language of revelation is repeatedly displaced by that of theatrical performance: "The part she played did work in both a full and lively persuasion," the narrator says of Cleophila (183), and Gynecia's inside information dispels neither the effect of disguise nor the pronouns that make it impenetrable. "I will not be the only actor of this tragedy," she tells Cleophila (162); when the masquerade continues, she assures herself, "this was but a prologue to the play she had promised her" (189). In pursuing the figure of the stage, *The Arcadia* does not distinguish between knowledge and ignorance, or among teleological and misconceived desires. "Fortune had framed a very stage-play of love among these few folk, making the old age of Basilius, the virtue of Gynecia, and the simplicity of Philoclea, all affected to one; but by a three-headed kind of passion" (49). Taking up the erotic implications of the boy actor's body in disguise, Peter Stallybrass argues that even moments

of revelation may illuminate not what we are looking at, but what we are looking for: "The interplay between clothing and undressing on the Renaissance stage organized gender around a process of fetishizing, which is conceived *both* as a process of fixation *and* as indeterminable," he writes. "If the Renaissance stage demands that we 'see' particular body parts (the breast, the penis, the naked body), it also reveals that such fixations are inevitably unstable. The actor is both boy and woman, and he/she embodies the fact that sexual fixations are not the product of any categorical fixity of gender."<sup>14</sup> Like the actor onstage, Pyrocles-as-Cleophila both lacks and exceeds the parts he and/or she might be imagined to possess, displaying and inhabiting a body that at once focuses desire and proves nothing about the conditions of its fulfillment. The male body that Gynecia wants may exist—indeed, it is crucial to *The Arcadia's* erotic profusions that it does exist—but recognition of its presence neither explains nor disperses the compulsions engendered by disguise.

Heterosexuality as a fact about bodies does not generate persuasive heteroeroticism. Instead, it clarifies the extent to which desire is generated and sustained between women; whatever the sexual relations of bodies, eroticism is a contract among roles. Nor does disclaiming the disguise plot invalidate the identity that it has put into play, for, as Pyrocles discovers, it is easier to invent an Amazon than to make one disappear. Through consideration of the *first Arcadia*, and particularly of its attempts to arrive at a conclusion, I want to stress that we do not have to abandon desire between women as a temporary fiction simply because the ending tells us to. Indeed, it is far from clear that the ending *does* tell us to. The fact that Cleophila is "really" Pyrocles seems not to work as an answer, or perhaps to answer the wrong question; it may be true, but it does not impose resolution. If an amazonian invention enables a happy ending, it also constitutes an identity that, in its explicit and efficient artifice, alters the privileged originality of the body beneath the disguise.

#### DRESSING THE PART

In *Vested Interests*, Marjorie Garber describes the transvestite as a figure of "category crisis," writing, "The cultural effect of transvestism is to destabilize all such boundaries: not only 'male' and 'female,' but also 'gay' and 'straight,' and 'sex' and 'gender.' This is the sense—the radi-

cal sense—in which transvestism is a 'third.'"<sup>15</sup> In making heterosexuality the consequence of desire between women, *The Arcadia* constructs an erotic continuity that fails to draw lines between kinds; the heteroeroticism of Pyrocles' initial desire intersects Philoclea's homoerotic response to produce a sexual contract. Under such pressures, the logic of sex as identity is emptied out; bodies matter, but they do not signify in the sorting out of categories. Female masculinity and male femininity demonstrate the pleasures and dangers of performative play, but even this sense of paradoxical reference loses force in *The Arcadia* as the naturalized conditions of "female" and "male" recede from the processes of definition. Detached from assumptions, even radically wrong assumptions, about bodies, subjectivity emerges as a collision of performative conventions, which do not prescribe identity but accumulate to it. *The Arcadia* makes Pyrocles an Amazon so that he can act like a man, and uses his male body to substantiate his claim to be a woman; in the production of a transvestite femme virago, femininity and masculinity are at once mutually productive and utterly confused. That confusion produces both identity and agency: as a sustained illusion of feminine masculinity, Cleophila is the text's best articulated subject.

Early modern heroes disguise themselves as Amazons, rather than simply as women, to sustain a claim, however odd and tenuous, to a state of masculinity. But when Pyrocles tells Musidorus, "I am resolved, because all direct ways are barred me of opening my suit to the duke, to take upon me the estate of an Amazon lady," Musidorus, like Marston's Antonio, reasons not from "manliness" to "man" but from "Amazon" to "woman" (16). He responds with textbook misogyny. "And this effeminate love of a woman doth so womanize a man that, if you yield to it, it will not only make you a famous Amazon, but a launder, a distaff-spinner, or whatsoever other vile occupation their idle heads can imagine and their weak hands perform" (18). As loving a woman and looking like one become indistinguishable, Pyrocles is excluded from the rhetorical positions inhabited by men. The familiar argument about the emasculating effects of heterosexual desire takes on new force as Musidorus imagines a permanent transformation: "You must resolve, if you will play your part to any purpose, whatsoever peevish imperfections are in that sex, to soften your heart to receive them" (18).<sup>16</sup> Pyrocles opens himself to a transformation that works from the inside out.

[His hair] was drawn into a coronet of gold, richly set with pearls, and so joined all over with gold wires, and covered with feathers of divers colours, that it was not unlike to a helmet, such a glittering show it bare, and so bravely it was held up from the head. Upon his body he wore a kind of doublet of sky-colour satin so plated over with plates of massy gold that he seemed armed in it; his sleeves of the same, instead of plates, was covered with purled lace. And such was the nether part of his garment; but that made so full of stuff, and cut after such a fashion that, though the length fell under his ankles, yet in his going one might well perceive the small of the leg which, with the foot, was covered with a little short pair of crimson velvet buskins, in some places open (as the ancient manner was) to show the fairness of the skin . . . Upon his thigh he wore a sword (such as we now call scimitars), the pommel whereof was so richly set with precious stones as they were sufficient testimony it could be no mean personage that bare it. Such was this Amazon's attire; and thus did Pyrocles become Cleophila. (25)

From golden hair to little crimson buskins, this is an extraordinary fashion statement. Reading the disguise plot in theatrical terms, Lisa Jardine writes of this first entrance, "The passage compounds the 'stage transvestism' polemic theme yet further, because the 'woman' Pyrocles disguises himself as is herself in *male* dress (the dress of the female warrior) . . . Cleophila wears 'wanton' warrior's dress, whilst Pyrocles impudently shows the 'smalle of his Legg', and the 'fayrenes of his skynn' through his short boots, as provocative boy/girl."<sup>17</sup> Pyrocles reveals as much as he disguises, and, if this is his idea of what an Amazon looks like, we might better understand his cousin's concern.

As he turns his male body to the performance of femininity, Pyrocles flirts with more than Philoclea. Thomas Laqueur has explored the ways in which the Galenic idea of a sexual continuum, which posits difference as a matter of degree rather than of opposition, implies that distinctions between men and women can fail.<sup>18</sup> But sexual hierarchy insists that they fail in only one direction: women may become men, but the reverse violates common sense. Ambroise Paré, in *On Monsters and Marvels*, summarizes this point of view: "We therefore never find in any true story that any man ever became a woman, because Nature tends always

toward what . . . is most perfect and not, on the contrary, to perform in such a way that what is perfect should become imperfect."<sup>19</sup> *The Aradia*, aggressively not a true story, threatens just such an unnatural performance, for there is something disconcertingly final in that sentence "and thus did Pyrocles become Cleophila." Assuring Musidorus that his disguise will work, Pyrocles asserts that his own body makes it persuasive. "I have already provided all furniture necessary for it; and my face, you see, will not easily discover me" (16). Stephen Orgel writes of "the conviction that men can turn into—or be turned into—women; or perhaps more exactly, can be turned *back* into women, losing the strength that enabled the male potential to be realized in the first place."<sup>20</sup> If clothes deliberately unmake the man in *The Aradia*, that effect reiterates a larger cultural conviction that such slippage can always and easily occur. The femininity of transvestite disguise is at once a costume and a preexisting condition, and, as long hair, fair skin, a beardless face, and a shapely leg conspire to construct the ideal woman, it becomes clear that Pyrocles is transformed not only by the part he plays but by the parts he already has.

Disguise not only creates the appearance of lesbian desire, but asserts that that appearance is at least skin deep. This transformative thoroughness changes language as well; having named Pyrocles "Cleophila," the narrator says, "[This] name for a time hereafter I will use, for I myself feel such compassion of his passion that I find even part of his fear lest his name should be uttered before fit time were for it" (25). Cleophila appears always as "she," an effect ascribed to Pyrocles' own intent: "You remember I use the she-title to Pyrocles, since so he would have it" (34). In her analysis of the bodily and rhetorical effects of transsexual surgery, Garber asks, "Is it the change of pronoun, finally, as much as surgical intervention, that makes so profound a difference?"<sup>21</sup> For Pyrocles, who has his pronouns altered on page 25, the narrator's "she" is a speech act, when all we have is narrative, a shift in gendered reference not only describes a sex change but is one. At the final trial scene, Pyrocles' accuser says that he "from a man grew a woman, from a woman a ravisher of women" (334), leaving it unclear whether that shift, from "a woman" to "a ravisher of women," confers a return to naturalized maleness or merely describes the multiplication of sexual monstrosities into which maleness has disappeared.

Pyrocles, as Cleophila, conflates the conditions of being, having, and seeming like her object of desire. In her multiplied relations to possession and lack, subjectivity and objectification, she becomes irresistible: "[Philoctea] found a burning affection towards Cleophila; an unquiet desire to be with her; and yet she found that the very presence kindled the desire. And examining in herself the same desire, yet could she not know to what the desire inclined. Sometimes she would compare the love she bore to Cleophila with the natural goodwill she bore to her sister; but she perceived it had another kind of working. Sometimes she would wish Cleophila had been a man, and her brother; and yet, in truth, it was no brotherly love she desired of her" (85–86). Like Britomart confronted by Arregall's mirror image, Philoctea has practical concerns. Her desire perplexes her, but the fact that its object is a woman is a problem only in the sense that she cannot imagine what two women might do. Her wish that Cleophila could be made into a man seems to anticipate the plot, reassuring the reader even if Philoctea herself cannot yet be reassured; but she articulates that wish in problematic terms, imagining it as transformation rather than revelation and essentializing Cleophila's female homoerotic intent. "'For,' said she, 'if she were a man I might either obtain my desire, or have cause to hate for refusal'—besides the many duties Cleophila did to her assured her Cleophila might well want power, but not will, to please her" (98). Sex is a wish fulfillment, and, basing her fantasy on a structure of desire already in place, Philoctea does not want Pyrocles; she wants Cleophila with added parts, which is not the same thing at all.

Richard A. Levin argues that we should take female homoeroticism seriously as an imaginative possibility: "Until that time—until Pyrocles discloses his male identity and the couple reforms as a heterosexual one—we are prompted to think of the relationship as involving two women."<sup>22</sup> *The Aradia* sustains an extended flirtation with what we would term lesbian desire, presuming that that desire has both credibility and force; Pyrocles imagines his disguise not merely as a way to get close to Philoctea, but as a mode of seduction in itself. "If my beauty be anything, then will it help me to some part of my desires; otherwise I am no more to set by it than the orator by his eloquence that persuades nobody" (25). For Philoctea and Cleophila, the relation of likeness makes desire a natural consequence of mutual recognition. Orgel writes, "The

nature of love is to strive to be like the beloved; women are therefore best wooed by imitation. It is, indeed, precisely Pyrocles' ability to perform as a woman that persuades Philoctea to love him."<sup>23</sup> The courtship narrative is not simply an exercise in empathy, or a statement that Pyrocles is in touch with his feminine side. When "Cleophila straitly embracing [Philoctea], and (warranted by a womanly habit) often kissing her, desired her to stay her sweet speech," it is on that "womanly habit" that seduction depends (104).

Pyrocles sustains his disguise for only a hundred pages. But when he claims to be a man, Philoctea sees not resolution but doubleness: "Alas, how painful a thing it is to a divided mind to make a well joined answer; how hard it is to bring inward shame to outward confession; and how foolish, to you, must that answer be which is made one knows not to whom! Shall I say, 'O Cleophila? Alas, your words be against it! Shall I say, 'prince Pyrocles? Wretch that I am, your show is manifest against it. But this, this, I well may say: if I had continued as I ought Philoctea, you had either never been or ever been Cleophila'" (106). Emphasizing the gap between what she hears and what she sees, between words and things, Philoctea both understands her own desire as the cause of this disjuncting and defines it as an enduring effect. "O Cleophila (for so I love to call thee, since in that name my love first began, and in the shade of that name my love shall best lie hidden), that even while so thou wert (what eye bewitched me I know not) my passions were far fitter to desire than to be desired" (107). The appearance of a man, which is not in fact appearance but a statement that contradicts appearance, enables Philoctea to confess her love for a woman: Pyrocles may be the story's material conclusion, but Cleophila is its condition of desire.

Nor has the story ended yet. Philoctea's response to the revelation scene is described in an ambiguous figure: "The joy which wrought into Pymalion's mind while he found his beloved image wax little and little both softer and warmer in his folded arms, till at length it accomplished his gladness with a perfect woman's shape, still beautiful with the former perfections, was even such as, by each degree of Cleophila's words, stealingly entered into Philoctea's soul" (106). When Pyrocles declares himself a man, Philoctea takes on the role of a man constructing a woman. Invoking the precedent of the Pymalion/Galatea myth, *The Aradia* hints that at some level the end of the disguise plot changes nothing;

"a perfect woman's shape, still beautiful with the former perfections" is the most appropriate point of reference for the now-revealed Pyrocles.<sup>24</sup> In this analogy, Pyrocles-as-Galatea takes shape through a desire that is not his own, and the transformation that brings him to life makes him a woman. The narrative carries out this proposition, maintaining in the present tense the nostalgia that Philoclea expresses for the past; for a hundred pages after the revelation scene, Pyrocles continues to appear always as "Cleophila" and as "she." The prince's declaration does not undo the narrator's speech act, and if Philoclea is at least half willing to reread Cleophila as Pyrocles, *The Arcadia* is not. Why, then, is it so easy to make Pyrocles into Cleophila, and so difficult to reverse the procedure?

The answer might be that Cleophila provides a logical connection between performance and identity, a causality that works. Paul Salzman argues that Pyrocles' amazonian role transforms not only the prince but the genre: "The princes in the *Old Arcadia* are reduced through their disguises to actors (role-players) rather than heroes."<sup>25</sup> The disguise plot identifies theatricality as the condition of heroism, and feminine masculinity captures its audience while men are banished to the eclogues. Linking theatrically produced bodies to the idealized body of the Lacanian mirror stage, Gail Kern Paster writes, "The actor's body offers to the spectator the contrast between fictional outer and insufficient inner which a mirrored image offers the baby, a body of behavioral completeness, significance, and desirability."<sup>26</sup> Behaviorally complete and infinitely desirable, Cleophila signifies as Pyrocles does not, the assumed identity at once enacting and obscuring the things that the "real" body cannot do. Described by Philoclea as "invincible Amazon," Cleophila fulfills the promise of that name, killing lions, protecting ladies, fighting battles, and ending a civil war. And her audience naturalizes these actions within the context of other female heroic performances: "The duke told with what a gallant grace she ran after Philoclea with the lion's head in her hand, like another Pallas with the spoils of the Gorgon" (48).

Determined to read masculinity as male, Gynecia counters with a different reference: "She saw the very face of young Hercules killing the Nemean lion" (48). But for early modern texts, Hercules represents not absolute maleness but sexual confusion; so in the pamphlet *Haec-Vir* the Womanish-Man calls the Man-Woman "most courageous counterfet of Hercules and his Distaffe," gesturing toward the layered opacity of iden-

tity and disguise.<sup>27</sup> For Gynecia, the presumption of maleness can be articulated only through the possibility of feminization; for other characters, virility makes Cleophila persuasive as an Amazon.<sup>28</sup> Amazonian expectations interrupt the processes that reason from masculinity to men, and only a few pages after the revelation scene, in an encounter with unruly peasants, Pyrocles has disappeared again, leaving Cleophila free to act. "Cleophila, whose virtuous courage was ever awake in her, drawing out her sword, kept a while the villains at a bay while the ladies gat themselves into the lodge . . . No blow she strake that did not suffice for a full reward of him that received it" (109). In this disguise plot, a sword signifies both ways.

For early modern texts, Amazons often mark the failure of legible difference; as one author writes, "If they had no more evident distinction of sexe, then they have of shape, they would be all man, or rather all woman: for the *Amazons* beare away the Bell: as one wittily, *Hic mulier* will shortly bee good latine, if this transmigration hold: For whether on horsebacke, or on foote, there is no great difference: but not discernable out of a Coach."<sup>29</sup> Where categories are invisible, "not discernable," we are back in Knox's "whole world . . . transformed into Amazons."<sup>30</sup> Men disappear in that world, not because they are absent but because their presence fails to signify; Pyrocles has taken on an identity that subsumes his own. In response to Musidorus's misogynist reproach, he does not insist on his manhood but idealizes his disguise: "And, for example, even this estate of Amazons, which I now for my greatest honour do seek to counterfeit, doth well witness that, if generally the sweetness of their disposition did not make them see the vainness of these things which we account glorious, they neither want valour of mind, nor yet doth their fairness take away their force" (19). In this argument, men sustain their exclusive claim to masculinity only because women do not interfere; male self-satisfaction is a function of female self-restraint, and at the edges of that restraint there are Amazons.

Pyrocles follows a tradition of gynophilic defenses, arguing that conventions of gender rely on forbearance by women and misrepresentation by men. In a reading of the revised *Arcadia*, Sullivan traces the processes through which masculinity is invented and jealously guarded: "To judge by the activities Pyrocles-Zelma performs for the princesses . . . a male-dominated society systematically denies martial training to



women to create a physical weakness that lends credence to the metaphysics of gender difference."<sup>31</sup> Early modern texts go farther, holding narrative manipulation, more than nature or even nurture, responsible for the restricted arena of women's acts. Ariosto offers a concise comment on the representation of women:

And though of late they seem not to come nigh,  
The praise their sexe in former times have gain'd,  
No doubt the fault is either in backbiters,  
Or want of skill and judgement in the writers.<sup>32</sup>

Femininity is a false product of bad storytelling, and, submerging his identity in an amazonian name, Pyrocles claims to recover the truth about women. When Gynecia accuses him of deception, he says, "I am not acquainted with these words of disguising; neither is it the profession of an Amazon" (84). The argument—he is not disguised as an Amazon because Amazons do not assume disguise—hopelessly complicates the relationship between original and imitation, characterizing both men and women as narrative effects.

In response to such mystifications, Musidorus describes a loss of access to the real. "And is it possible that this is Pyrocles, the only young prince in the world, formed by nature and framed by education to the true exercise of virtue? Or is it, indeed, some Amazon Cleophila that hath counterfeited the face of my friend in this sort to vex me?" (17). Maleness is increasingly a fictional concept, a fantasy that recedes. Cleophila-as-counterfeit, like *Hæc-Vir's* "most courageous counterfet of *Hærcles* and his distaff" has become opaque, merging feminine appearance and masculine performance into an identity impenetrable by a gaze that looks for Pyrocles. Explaining himself to Philoëta, Pyrocles presents a catalogue of loss: "Behold here before your eyes Pyrocles, prince of Macedon, whom you only have brought to this fall of fortune and unused metamorphosis; whom you only have made neglect his country, forget his father, and lastly forsake himself!" (105). Pyrocles' reclaimed identity is closely circumscribed, for he has left everything that identifies him as a man and as a specific man in the past, and his past exists only in the subjunctive and in the eclogues. At *The Aradria's* beginning the narrator says of the princes, "What befell unto them, what valiant acts they did, passing in one year's space through the lesser Asia, Syria,

and Egypt, how many ladies they defended from wrongs, and disinherited persons restored to their rights, it is a work for a higher style than mine" (10). The heroism of Pyrocles as Pyrocles is at best a fragmented and allusive presence in *The Aradria*, and Plangus, who looks for Pyrocles and Musidorus, finds only the traces of stories: "Yet he took upon him the quest of those two heroic princes who, in this mean time, had done such famous acts that all Asia was full of their histories. But he, having travelled a whole year after them, and still hearing their doings notably recounted, yet could never (being stay'd by many misadventures) fully overtake them" (63).

The heroic history of Pyrocles cannot be attached to Pyrocles himself, and, when Gynecia forces him to a statement of maleness, it is another statement of loss. To her he offers the bald declaration for which the plot has been waiting: "The truth is I am a man" (179). But the explanation that follows detaches that statement from any claim to be masculine or heroic or Pyrocles. "The cause of this my changed attire was a journey two years ago I made among the Amazons, where having sought to try my unfortunate valour, I met not one in all the country but was too hard for me; till, in the end, in the presence of their queen Senicia, I (hoping to prevail against her) challenged an old woman of fourscore years to fight on horseback to the uttermost with me: who, having overthrown me, for saving of my life made me swear I should go like an unarmed Amazon till the coming of my beard did with the discharge of my oath deliver me of that bondage" (179). Pyrocles not only (presumably) invents his Amazon encounter, but claims to have lost his sword. As he disavows Cleophila, giving up her equipment and her acts, he plays another amazonian role, that of the male victim who is disarmed and disgraced. Maleness does not substantiate heroism, but displaces it; the loss of amazonian identity is a loss of masculinity as well.

#### END GAMES

Every time Pyrocles claims to be a man he loses something. The pattern reaches its climax in his seduction of Philoëta, which, rather than reconnecting gender to sex, precipitates the loss of masculine signifiers and the further mystification of the male body: "Neither doubt you, because I wear a woman's apparel, I will be the more womanish; since, I assure you, for all my apparel, there is nothing I desire more than fully to prove

myself a man in this enterprise," he tells Musidorus when he assumes his disguise (21). That proof seems endlessly deferred; for a hundred pages after he declares himself to Philoëta, *The Arcadia* deploys female pronouns, unfortunate parents, unruly peasants, and a great deal of occasional poetry to hold the conditions of speaking as and acting like man apart. Kinney writes, "In the narrative present of Arcadia, immediate—and in particular *erotic*—action is repeatedly deferred as Sidney's lords and ladies demand (and supply) additional narrative performances."<sup>33</sup> When Pyrocles' seduction of Philoëta finally takes place, we do not see it; instead, the text presents an intensely conventional love poem that Pyrocles once heard from a friend. Rather than reading about the triumph of manhood, we contemplate a blazon that not only displaces sexual consummation with erotic potential, but closely recalls the terms in which Cleophila first appeared. If this device decorously screens Philoëta's body, it does the same to that of Pyrocles, leaving us where we began: with an idealized feminine body that obscures the fact that we are looking at a man.

Displacing the apparent source of masculinity—that Cleophila is an Amazon—with the actual source—that Pyrocles is a man—imposes its own anxiety, for if shifting from Cleophila to Pyrocles enables a climb up the sexual ladder, it risks leaving something behind. Discovering Pyrocles in Philoëta's bed, the servant Darnetas has an extraordinarily symptomatic response: "Not thinking it good to awake the sleeping lion, he went down again, taking with him Pyrocles' sword (wherewith upon his shirt Pyrocles came only apparelled thither), being sure to leave no weapon in the chamber" (237). The causal progression from body to act, from disguise to identity, from desire to fulfillment, collapses into another narrative of loss; consummated heterosexuality leaves Pyrocles utterly disarmed. "The first ill handsel [Pyrocles] had of the ill case wherein he was was the seeing himself deprived of his sword, from which he had never separated himself in any occasion, and even that night, first by the duke's bed, and then there, had laid it as he thought safe, putting great part of the trust of his well doing in his own courage, so armed. For, indeed, the confidence in oneself is the chief nurse of true magnanimity; which confidence notwithstanding doth not leave the care of necessary furnitures for it" (251). Only when exposed as a man does Pyrocles fulfill Musidorus's fear that he may lose the signs of masculinity. Where

a visibly feminine body had sufficiently explained masculine acts, a demonstrably male one is vulnerable to dispossession. If, as I argued in the previous chapter, swords are fetishes for male heroes, enabling a referential and therefore protective relationship between heroism and sexuality, weapons and male genitals, Pyrocles' losses in the first category radically undermine him in the second. The dislocation of a metaphorical relation among objects deprives the body of its power to signify, and Darnetas leaves no weapon in the chamber.

Pyrocles seduces Philoëta through the medium of Cleophila, and the disappearance of that third term appears as loss. As a lover and a hero, Pyrocles loses place to his own amazonian performance; his sexual conquest only fulfills expectations that precede his reincorporation as a man. The introduction of his male body does not disallow the narrative of female homoerotic desire, but completes it, answering the question of what women do in bed. This may not sound new; it may indeed sound reactionary, like contemporary pornography that depicts lesbianism as two women waiting for real sex. But in transvestite amazonian disguise plots, desire does not tend toward heterosexuality in any direct or uncomplicated way, and there is no moment that consolidates identity and performance to a single-minded end. Instead, *The Arcadia* repeatedly separates embodied maleness from apparent masculinity as it turns each to the ends of sexual consummation. Through that consumption Philoëta gets what she wants, but exposure leaves Pyrocles in an inconclusive state. When Philoëta is ready for Cleophila to be Pyrocles, the narrative is not, refusing him his pronouns; and when the narrator informs us, in a transformation that takes place within parentheses, that Pyrocles "had at that present no more to play the part of Cleophila," Philoëta calls him "Cleophila or Pyrocles" and, still more suggestively, "false mankind" (200, 204, 205).

Cleophila works as a supplement. The disguise plot at once enables Pyrocles and, both linguistically and somatically, threatens to replace him; the conceit of amazonian transvestism is a seductive success, but generates a rhetoric of female homoeroticism that obscures the presence of men. Jacques Derrida writes, "The supplement adds itself, it is a surplus, a plenitude enriching another plenitude, the *fullest measure* of presence. It cumulates and accumulates presence . . . But the supplement supplements. It adds only to replace. It intervenes or insinuates itself in-

Cleopatra? Was all this play for nothing?" (334, 336). The answer is not nothing, but treason! Philanax holds Pyrocles-as-Cleopatra responsible for the duke's death. This is category crisis with a vengeance, not only challenging or displacing sovereign male authority but killing it off altogether.<sup>39</sup> Unimpressed by the essential manliness of a specific sexual act, Philanax puts the multiplicity of performances on trial, reasoning from indeterminacy to the dissolution of patriarchal effect. Pyrocles resumes his former identity only to find that its meaning has changed, leaving him in the position not of Prince Charming but of saboteur: the trial sets out to distinguish debauchers from lovers, traitors from heroes, women from men, and ends in an accumulation of terms. In a proceeding designed to redress the seduction of Philoclea, the insistence on sexual definition does not reduce two to one, but reflects the image of a third.

Analyzing the idea of thirtness as "that which questions binary thinking and introduces crisis," Garber writes, "What is crucial here—and I can hardly underscore this strongly enough—is that the 'third term' is not a term. Much less is it a sex, certainly not an instantiated 'blurred' sex as signified by a term like 'androgynous' or 'hermaphrodite'; although these words have culturally specific significance at certain historical moments. The 'third' is a mode of articulation, a way of describing a space of possibility. Three puts in question the idea of one: of identity, self-sufficiency, self-knowledge."<sup>40</sup> In this sense Philoclea's suspicion of a "third sex" does not anticipate bodily transformation, but responds to a representational swerve. *The Arcadia* follows the intersections of desire, attaching identities to modes that work rather than to statements that are true. Sexual indeterminacy, which begins by complicating the relationship of bodies to acts and exploiting the pleasures of incongruity, ends by privileging the surface: getting what you want gives way to wanting what you see. Like the pamphlet *His Mistr*, the subtlety of which shifts its focus from "the man-woman" to "the masculine-feminine," the travels of Pyrocles begin with a sex plot and conclude in a state in which bodily acts illuminate the paradox through which they occur. Sex and gender, like Pyrocles and Cleopatra, start out as self-evident distinctions and end up in a supplementary relationship through which the second invalidates the arguments of the first. Bodies work as instruments, but they neither return us to the real nor refer us to the symbolic.

Clitoris," Katharine Park writes, "Sex between women, removed from a heteronormalizing context, became significant as a social as well as a sexual threat; it imperiled not only marriage and reproduction, but also the 'natural' position of men as heads of household."<sup>37</sup> In Park's reading as in Traub's, the possibility that women might have sex that can be recognized as sex challenges the positions and assumptions of male privilege. Pyrocles' disguise plot incorporates such a challenge even as it claims to be a remedy: his story offers us two facts, that Cleopatra seduces Philoclea and that Cleopatra is a man, and the second accounts only incompletely for the first. Pyrocles tells Philoclea, "All, both men and women, owe this homage to the perfection of your beauty," and neither we nor they ever entirely escape that "both" (34–35). In formulating a sexuality that must be heterosexuality for the purposes of plot but is still theoretically legible as the consequence of desire between women, *The Arcadia* opens up a condition of doubleness that it fails—or, more accurately, refuses—to close down. Female homoeroticism might be a plot device that enables heterosexual conclusions; just as plausibly, heterosexualitv might be a sex toy for women.

Confronted with "a right Pyrocles countenance in a Cleopatra face," Darnetas addresses this vision as "thou woman or boy, or both, or whatsoever thou be" (29). The narrator refers to the reunion of Musidorus with "his dear he-the friend Cleopatra" and, at the trial scene, describes "Pyrocles of a pure complexion, and of such a cheerful favour as might seem either a woman's face on a boy or an excellent boy's face in a woman" (326). During the trial itself, Philanax, Pyrocles' accuser, returns again and again to these images of simultaneity, blaming the disruption of Arcadia not on the emergence of Pyrocles but on his failure to banish the specter of Cleopatra.<sup>38</sup> Philanax claims that "by an effeminate man we should suffer a greater overthrow than our mightiest enemies have been ever able to lay upon us" and calls Pyrocles "shameful and shameless creature, fit indeed to be the dishonour of both sexes," "mankind's courtesan," "whorish beauty," "a player in disguising, a tiger in cruelty, a dragon in ungratefulness" (336, 337, 338). He says of the impersonation, "Any shape or title he can take upon him that hath no restraint of shame," and asks, "What can all the earth answer for his coming hither? Why alone, if he be a prince? How so richly jewelled, if he be not a prince? Why then a woman, if now a man? Why now Timopyrus, if then

To identify himself as a man, Pyrocles offers Philoeta not weapons or genitals or a chronicle of past heroisms, but letters from his father. "For a conclusion of proof [he] showed her letters from his father, king Eucharus, unto him; which hand she happily knew, as having kept divers which passed betwixt her father and him" (107). Pyrocles, as distinct from Cleophila, exists as a condition of his father's writing. Describing the "paternal function" that authorizes subjectivity, Lacan writes, "It is in the *name of the father* that we must recognize the support of the symbolic function which, from the dawn of history, has identified his person with the figure of the law."<sup>41</sup> Pyrocles' flirtation with the symbolic attempts to claim such a connection to agency and to knowledge, but he cannot be precipitated into discrete and articulate identity by the distinction between other and self implicit in alliance with the father's name. For him, as for Lacanian subjects, patriarchal authority is a mirror-game of illusions, but in *The Arcadia* the counterfantasy of paternal violence comes true. The law Pyrocles invokes excludes and turns against him: at the moment when he publicly stands trial as a man, his father, speaking for the state, orders him killed.

This is the double move of *The Arcadia*. Imagining a man disguised as a manly woman who looks like a woman and acts like a man, the text situates the male body in a parodic rather than a natural relationship to masculinity. Judith Butler discusses the parodic effects of drag: "Although the gender meanings taken up in these parodic styles are clearly part of hegemonic, misogynist culture, they are nevertheless denaturalized and mobilized through their parodic recontextualization. As imitations which effectively displace the meaning of the original, they imitate the myth of originality itself."<sup>42</sup> For *The Arcadia* the myth of originality is not Amazon myth, but Prince Pyrocles. If such figures as tribades and hermaphrodites incorporate parody, constructing an alternative causality between sexed bodies and sexual acts, transvestite amazonian disguise plots go farther. At the end of these plots the revelation of a male body lacks transformative power, its singularity an incongruous epilogue to the multiplicity of performative effects. Pyrocles' impersonation provokes misogynist response and is governed by feminine clichés; at the same time, it presents masculinity as a natural female state. Claims about the origins of this polymorphous identity lose force as its effects proliferate, and there is more to be lost here than the true sex of a prince. In

*The Arcadia* as a Gender Trouble, parodic performance undermines normative heterosexuality: if the comic conclusion brings together real women and real men, it does so through an awkward calling out of dramatic personae and an aggressive claiming of parts. Levin reads the relationship between Philoeta and her apparent Amazon as a prototype of femme/butch role playing.<sup>43</sup> I have suggested instead that Cleophila appears in both conventionally masculine and conventionally feminine terms, her impersonation collapsing heterosexual oppositions. But *The Arcadia* does present a game of butch and femme, aggressively contrived and explicitly artificial in its conventions. It begins with the final appearance of Pyrocles:

Pyrocles came out, led by Sympathus, clothed after the Greek manner in a long coat of white velvet reaching to the small of his leg, with great buttons of diamonds all along upon it. His neck, without any collar, not so much as hidden with a ruff, did pass the whiteness of his garments . . . On his feet he had nothing but slippers which, after the ancient manner, were tied up by certain laces which were fastened under his knee, having wrapped about (with many pretty knots) his naked leg. His fair auburn hair (which he wore in great length, and gave at that time a delightful show with being stirred up and down with the breath of a gentle wind) had nothing upon it but a white ribbon, in those days used for a diadem, which rolled once or twice about the uppermost part of his forehead, fell down upon his back, closed up at each end with the richest pearl were to be seen in the world. (325-26)

Whatever allowances we make for the Greek manner or the Elizabethan world picture, Pyrocles in this scene looks decidedly femme. He also looks just like Cleophila, and if the speech act that makes him "she" succeeds in part by referring to a visibly feminine body, that which makes him "Pyrocles" might fail by the same test. As it reproduces Pyrocles to prove that gendered performances refer to appropriately sexed bodies, *The Arcadia* either asks a great deal of the reader's investment in essentialism or undertakes a prodigious feat of construction. Pyrocles must be returned at least to the fiction of exclusive masculinity, made a man manqué in order to validate heterosexual exchange. His story, like the dialogue of *Har-Vir*, ends with a renaturalization that works too visibly

and too hard: "We will heere change our attires, as wee have chang'd our mindes, and with our attires, our names . . . Henceforth we will live nobly like our selves, ever sober, ever discreet, ever worthy; true men, and true women. We will bee henceforth like well-coupled Doves, full of industry, full of love."<sup>44</sup> Sexual difference is the artificial product of the pursuit of happy endings; heterosociality requires a rigid and artificial insistence on roles. In "Toward a Butch-Femme Aesthetic," Sue-Ellen Case describes "a strategy of appearances [that] replaces a claim to truth," and writes, "These roles are played in signs themselves and not in ontologies."<sup>45</sup> In *The Arcadia*, the final union of Pyrocles and Philoclea is a similarly self-conscious semiosis, but its terms rely on implausibly categorical statements rather than exploiting the pleasures of play.

At the story's end, the narrator concludes of Basilius, "Many garboils passed through his fancy before he could be persuaded Cleophila was other than a woman" (360). However easy it may be to identify Basilius as a bad reader, it is hard to prove him entirely wrong. *The Arcadia* sustains its investment in desire between women even when the amazonian hairstyles and little crimson buskins come off, and does so at the risk of redistributing and even reinterpreting the cultural value of maleness. In "The Perversion of 'Lesbian' Desire," Traub argues that, by the end of the seventeenth century, female homoeroticism began to be perceived as dangerous even when enacted between conventionally feminine subjects: "Increasingly constructed as immoral, irrational, and narcissistic, the femme began to accrue the transgressive qualities associated before with the tribade."<sup>46</sup> *The Arcadia* anticipates this effect: the conviction that desire between women is an erotic irrelevance and the fear that it is a sexual fall converge in the masculine femininity of disguise. In a thoroughly amazonian paradox, Pyrocles' impersonation more explicitly engages the implications of female homoeroticism than do stories in which all the women are women. Locating a male body at the intersection of masculine and feminine conventions, *The Arcadia* constructs a progress of desire that insists on happy endings even as it inspires the catalogue of condemnations — "immoral, irrational, and narcissistic" — that Traub describes.

The persistence of desire between women revises the meaning of men: male sexuality is the addition that both consummates eroticism and makes it potentially monstrous, the part that at once completes and

explodes the logic of the whole. In the letter that prefaces *The Arcadia*, Sidney describes the process of creation as an unnatural birth: "In sum, a young head not so well stayed as I would it were (and shall be when God will) having many many fancies begotten in it, if it had not been in some way delivered, would have grown a monster, and more sorry might I be that they came in than that they gat out" (3). For Philoclea, at the climax of seduction, the monster is the un-cross-dressed Pyrocles; and if Philoclea quickly gets over it, the narrative does not. The erotic and political crises that fill the last book, from Basilius's apparent death and Gynecia's self-accusation to Pamela's claim to her father's throne, follow in one way or another from the lack of Cleophila's mediating effect. An amazonian transvestite disguise plot has focused the text's systems of desire, and its disappearance works less as triumphantly comic resolution than as a kind of emptying out.

*The Arcadia* ends as a melancholic response to loss. In the place of last words, the narrator writes of forthcoming marriages and children that they must "awake some other spirit to exercise his pen in that where-with mine is already dulled" (361). Like the princes' heroic history, the happy ending is not work for this pen; narrative truncations reprise the violence of transformation and loss. The fact that this was always after all a story about heterosexuality precipitates both a failure of desire and a sense of transgression: with the final appearance of Pyrocles, the narrative has reached some uneasy compromise between coming full circle and drawing a straight line, and the first *Arcadia* is in this sense no more finished than its successor. We know a version of the story it tells — boy meets girl; boy loses girl; boy wins girl — but where along the way does boy become girl? There seem to be more comic gestures available for making that move than for taking it back; and it is somewhat funny, but perhaps only in the serious sense of that word, that the discovery that a princess is sleeping with a prince instead of with an Amazon makes everyone want to kill the prince.

- 35 Suzuki suggests ways in which Artegall, Radigund, and Britomart are linked by various shared character traits, and argues that these links cause structures of allegorical opposition to break down; see *Metamorphoses of Helen*, esp. 181–86.
- 36 Gallop, *Reading Lacan*, 80.
- 37 Jonson, *The Masque of Queens*, 542, in *The Complete Masques*.
- 38 Sidney, "The Defense of Poesy," 151. Plutarch, in his "Comparison of Demetrius with Antonius," apparently finds nothing to laugh at in this episode, taking it instead as a cautionary tale: "But to conclude, he [Demetrius] never had overthrowe or misfortune through negligence, nor by delaying time to followe his owne pleasure: as we see in painted tables, where *Omphale* secretlie stealeth away *Hercules* clubbe, and tooke his Lyons skinne from him" (*The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romanes Compared*, 1010).
- 39 Raleigh, *The discoverie*, 367.
- 40 Carvajal, *Discovery of the Orellana River*, 222.
- 41 Painter, *The Second Tome of The Palace of Pleasure*, 2. This narrative of sons who are maimed or killed recurs throughout early modern translations and rewritings of Amazon myth. See for example Barckley, *The Felicitie of Man*, 259; Carvajal, *Discovery of the Orellana River*, 221; Diodorus, *Bibliotheca Historica*, 1: 200; and Thevet, *The Newe Founde Worlde*, 102v.
- 42 Montaigne, "Of the Lame or Cripple," in *Essayes*, 616.
- 43 Bushnell argues that female desire in this period is always potentially a form of tyranny: "Woman is represented as framed in nature as what the 'male' tyrant becomes: the principle of the lower and ferocious power of desire usurping the sovereignty of reason" ("Tyranny and Effeminacy in Early Modern England," 342). For an extended discussion of the anxieties displayed in the image of female dominance, see Davis, "Women on Top."
- 44 Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, 523. Emphasis in original. For a more optimistic account of the relationship between female and male desires, see Quilligan's analysis of Venus and Adonis in *The Faerie Queene*; Quilligan reads this relationship as "a vision of male sexuality brought safely and creatively under the control of an awesome female power" and links it to Britomart's own generative function ("The Gender of the Reader and the Problem of Sexuality," 141).
- 45 Quilligan, "The Comedy of Female Authority," 171.
- 46 Montrose, "Shaping Fantasies," 36. For a discussion of the relationship between Amazon myth and early modern ideas about maternity, see Schwarz, "Mother Love."
- 47 Orgel, *Impersonations*, 123, 124.
- 48 Eggert, "'Changing all that forme of common weale,'" 269. Eggert goes on to argue that the replacement of "feminine rule" by "masculine poetics" ultimately proves a fantasy (see 284–86). Cavanagh also discusses the pattern of male escapes from female desires in *Wanton Eyes and Chaste Desires*; see esp. 54. See also Parker's discussion of "suspended instruments" in *Literary Fat Ladies*, 54–66.
- 49 Charles Butler, *The Feminine Monarchie*, 64–65. I have modernized the appearance of "th," "ch," and "wh" throughout.
- 50 Stephens describes Radigund and the feminized Artegall as "Medusan faces" which, confronting Britomart, circumscribe and finally foreclose her role in the poem. See *The Limits of Eroticism*, esp. 93.
- 51 For a reading that equates Arthur and Britomart in terms of "love and friendship or knightly brotherhood," see Anderson, "'Nor Man It is,'" 75. Anderson reads the

- alliance of Arthur and Artegall as a temporary remedy for Artegall's dual role as knight and as the figure of Justice; the pairing, she argues, enables Artegall to act as an abstraction while Arthur acts as a knight (see esp. 75–78).
- 52 Cavanagh, *Wanton Eyes and Chaste Desires*, 142.
- 53 The exception to this rule in Book 4 appears to be the case of Cambell and Triamond, who both marry their ladies and continue their heroic careers. Their ability to do so requires a great deal of magic: three souls condensed into one body, a wound-healing ring, a rod of peace, and a round of nepenthe. Even after all this, the story scarcely merits its nominal place at the book's center, its relatively marginal position reflecting the truncating effect that happy endings have on chivalric narratives.
- 54 Silberman, *Transforming Desire*, 30. For a further reading of "the issue of eroticism between women" in the Malecasta episode, see Stephens, *The Limits of Eroticism*, esp. 78.
- 55 Stephens, "Into Other Arms," 201.
- 56 Quilligan, "The Gender of the Reader," 149.
- 57 Stephens, "Into Other Arms," 202.
- 58 Schleiner, "Le feu caché," 309.
- 59 Traub, "The Perversion of 'Lesbian' Desire," 34–35.
- 60 Recent feminist criticism has offered a variety of readings of Britomart's problematic chastity; see, for example, Cavanagh, *Wanton Eyes and Chaste Desires*, esp. 142, 171, and Suzuki, *Metamorphoses of Helen*, esp. 155. Wofford reads Britomart's complication of allegorical significance in terms of a struggle between male and female perspectives, as well as between allegorical ideal and character; see "Gendering Allegory," esp. 13–16. For a reading that links the text's representational problems to discontent with Elizabeth I's failure to produce an heir, see Villeponteaux, "Displacing Feminine Authority," esp. 54 and 60.
- 61 Vives, *Instruction of a Christen woman*, 10. Jardine quotes a letter from John Rainoldes to Thomas Thornton, written in 1592, which makes a similar point through a reference to Juvenal's sixth Satire; in Jardine's translation, "What modesty can you expect in a woman who wears a helmet?" (*Still Harping on Daughters*, 14–15).
- 62 For a reading of the ways in which allegory as a genre complicates the "subject/object split" in *The Faerie Queene*, see Quilligan, "The Comedy of Female Authority," esp. 160–64. See also Silberman's discussion of "subjective participation in the object" (*Transforming Desire*, esp. 22–23).
- 63 See, for example, Hamilton, *The Structure of Allegory in The Faerie Queene*, 189; Hankins, *Source and Meaning*, 174; Suzuki, *Metamorphoses of Helen*, 186–87.
- 64 Wofford, "Gendering Allegory," 3.

5 THE PROBABLE IMPOSSIBLE: INVENTING LESBIANS IN ARCADIA

- 1 *Amazon Quarterly*; Birkby, *Amazon Expedition*; Larkin and Bulkin, *Amazon Poetry*; Covina and Galana, *The Lesbian Reader*.
- 2 Curb, ed., *Amazon All Stars*.
- 3 Lynch, *The Amazon Trail*.
- 4 O'Connor, *Amadis de Gaule and Its Influence on Elizabethan Literature*, 297.
- 5 Marston, *Antonio and Mellida*, 13, 7.
- 6 O'Connor, *Amadis de Gaule and Its Influence on Elizabethan Literature*, 104.
- 7 Carew, "A Lover, in the Disguise of an Amazon, is Dearly Beloved of his Mistress," lines 13–18, in *The Poems and Masque of Thomas Carew*.