THE HISTORY OF DON QUIXOTE, By Cervantes, I−v9

Miguel de Cervantes

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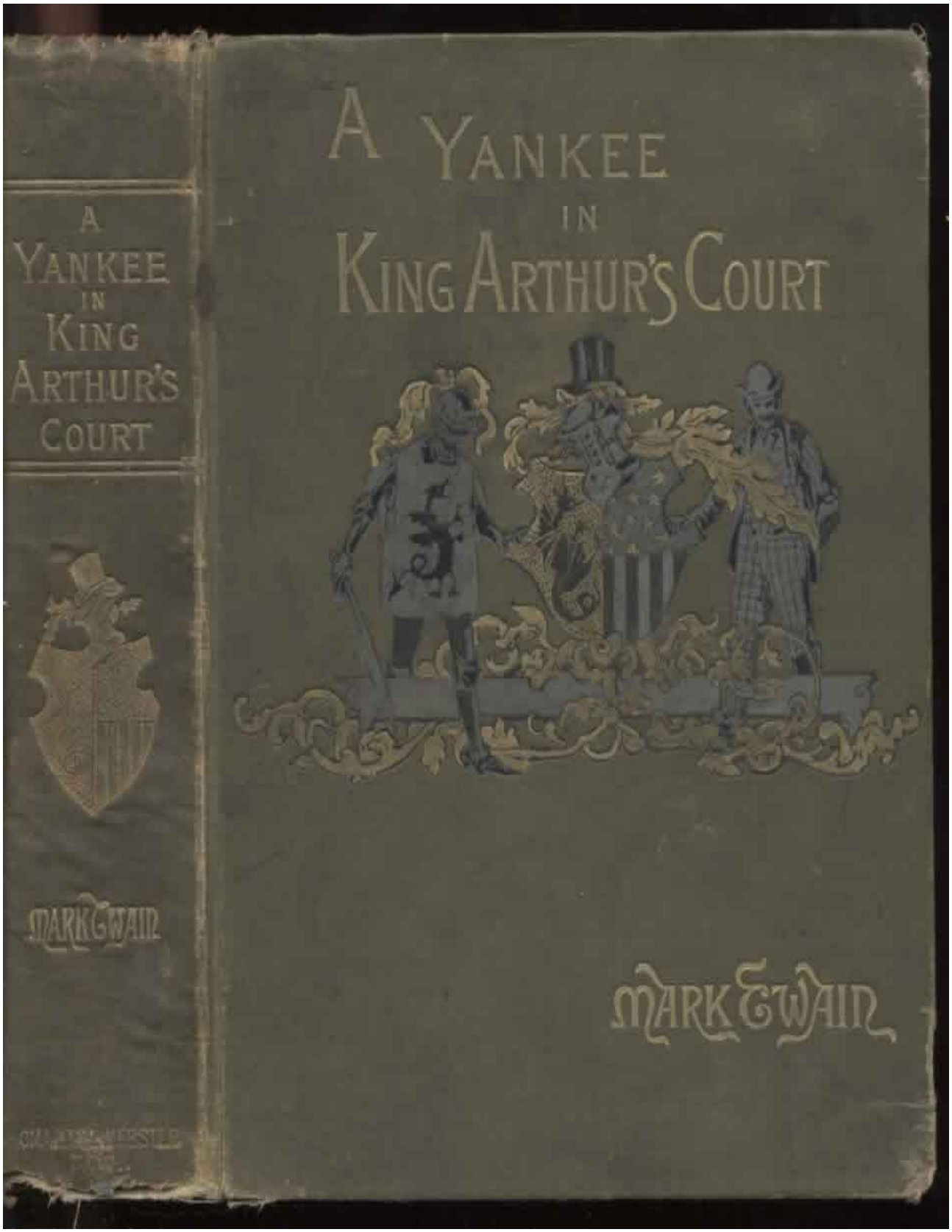
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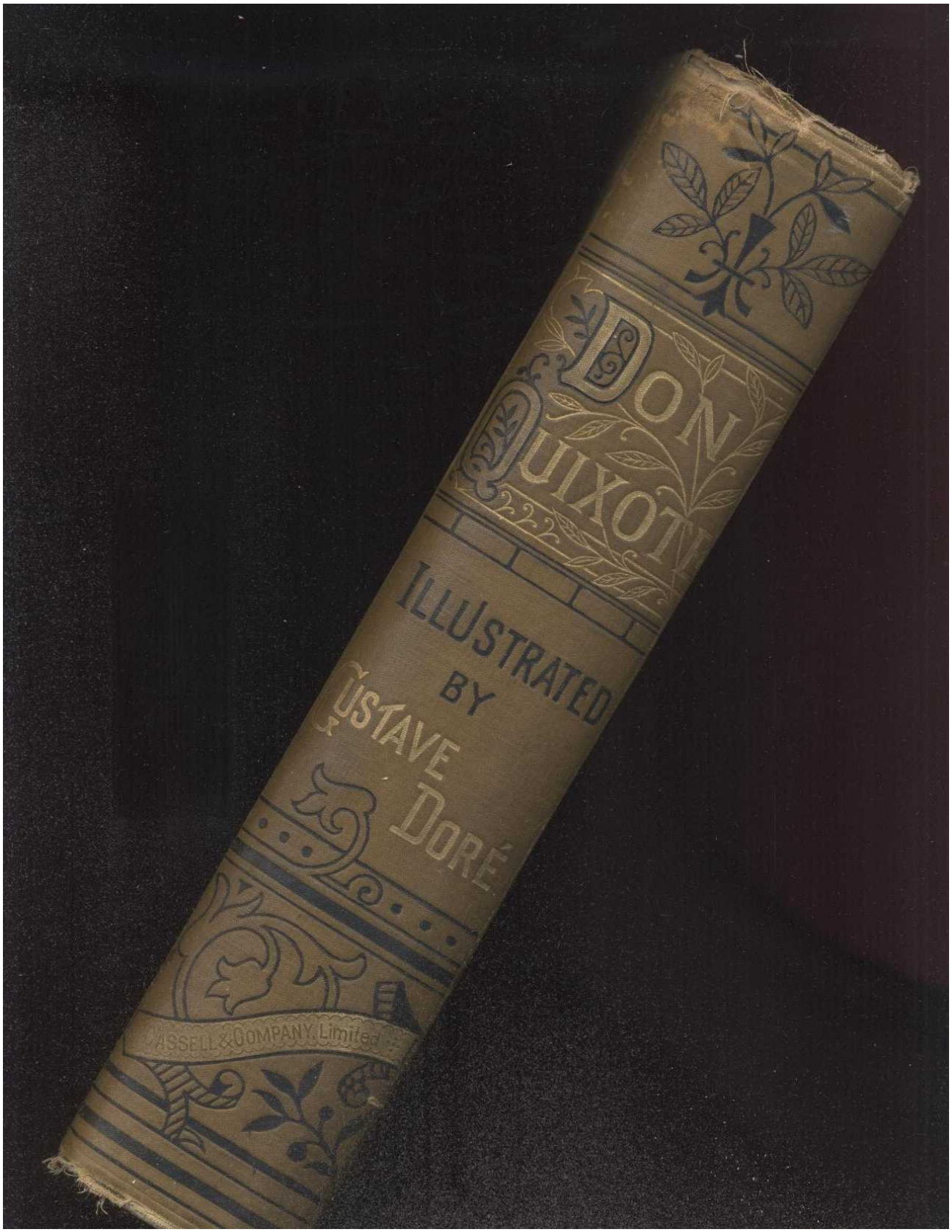
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Ebook Editor's Note

The book cover and spine above and the images which follow were not part of the original Ormsby translation—they are taken from the 1880 edition of J. W. Clark, illustrated by Gustave Dore. Clark in his edition states that, "The English text of 'Don Quixote' adopted in this edition is that of Jarvis, with occasional corrections from Motteaux." See in the introduction below John Ormsby's critique of both the Jarvis and Motteaux translations. It has been elected in the present Project Gutenberg edition to attach the famous engravings of Gustave Dore to the Ormsby translation instead of the Jarvis/Motteaux. The detail of many of the Dore engravings can be fully appreciated only by utilizing the "Full Size" button to expand them to their original dimensions. Ormsby in his Preface has criticized the fanciful nature of Dore's illustrations; others feel that these woodcuts and steel engravings well match the dreams of the man from La Mancha. D.W.

CHAPTER XXIV.

IN WHICH IS CONTINUED THE ADVENTURE OF THE SIERRA MORENA

The history relates that it was with the greatest attention Don Quixote listened to the ragged knight of the Sierra, who began by saying:

"Of a surety, senor, whoever you are, for I know you not, I thank you for the proofs of kindness and courtesy you have shown me, and would I were in a condition to requite with something more than good−will that which you have displayed towards me in the cordial reception you have given me; but my fate does not afford me any other means of returning kindnesses done me save the hearty desire to repay them."

"Mine," replied Don Quixote, "is to be of service to you, so much so that I had resolved not to quit these mountains until I had found you, and learned of you whether there is any kind of relief to be found for that sorrow under which from the strangeness of your life you seem to labour; and to search for you with all possible diligence, if search had been necessary. And if your misfortune should prove to be one of those that refuse admission to any sort of consolation, it was my purpose to join you in lamenting and mourning over it, so far as I could; for it is still some comfort in misfortune to find one who can feel for it. And if my good intentions deserve to be acknowledged with any kind of courtesy, I entreat you, senor, by that which I perceive you possess in so high a degree, and likewise conjure you by whatever you love or have loved best in life, to tell me who you are

and the cause that has brought you to live or die in these solitudes like a brute beast, dwelling among them in a manner so foreign to your condition as your garb and appearance show. And I swear," added Don Quixote, "by the order of knighthood which I have received, and by my vocation of knight−errant, if you gratify me in this, to serve you with all the zeal my calling demands of me, either in relieving your misfortune if it admits of relief, or in joining you in lamenting it as I promised to do."

The Knight of the Thicket, hearing him of the Rueful Countenance talk in this strain, did nothing but stare at him, and stare at him again, and again survey him from head to foot; and when he had thoroughly examined him, he said to him:

"If you have anything to give me to eat, for God's sake give it me, and after I have eaten I will do all you ask in acknowledgment of the goodwill you have displayed towards me."

Sancho from his sack, and the goatherd from his pouch, furnished the Ragged One with the means of appeasing his hunger, and what they gave him he ate like a half−witted being, so hastily that he took no time between mouthfuls, gorging rather than swallowing; and while he ate neither he nor they who observed him uttered a word. As soon as he had done he made signs to them to follow him, which they did, and he led them to a green plot which lay a little farther off round the corner of a rock. On reaching it he stretched himself upon the grass, and the others did the same, all keeping silence, until the Ragged One, settling himself in his place, said:

"If it is your wish, sirs, that I should disclose in a few words the surpassing extent of my misfortunes, you must promise not to break the thread of my sad story with any question or other interruption, for the instant you do so the tale I tell will come to an end."

These words of the Ragged One reminded Don Quixote of the tale his squire had told him, when he failed to keep count of the goats that had crossed the river and the story remained unfinished; but to return to the Ragged One, he went on to say:

"I give you this warning because I wish to pass briefly over the story of my misfortunes, for recalling them to memory only serves to add fresh ones, and the less you question me the sooner shall I make an end of the recital, though I shall not omit to relate anything of importance in order fully to satisfy your curiosity."

Don Quixote gave the promise for himself and the others, and with this assurance he began as follows:

"My name is Cardenio, my birthplace one of the best cities of this Andalusia, my family noble, my parents rich, my misfortune so great that my parents must have wept and my family grieved over it without being able by their wealth to lighten it; for the gifts of fortune can do little to relieve reverses sent by Heaven. In that same country there was a heaven in which love had placed all the glory I could desire; such was the beauty of Luscinda, a damsel as noble and as rich as I, but of happier fortunes, and of less firmness than was due to so worthy a passion as mine. This Luscinda I loved, worshipped, and adored from my earliest and tenderest years, and she loved me in all the innocence and sincerity of childhood. Our parents were aware of our feelings, and were not sorry to perceive them, for they saw clearly that as they ripened they must lead at last to a marriage between us, a thing that seemed almost prearranged by the equality of our families and wealth. We grew up, and with our growth grew the love between us, so that the father of Luscinda felt bound for propriety's sake to refuse me admission to his house, in this perhaps imitating the parents of that Thisbe so celebrated by the poets, and this refusal but added love to love and flame to flame; for though they enforced silence upon our tongues they could not impose it upon our pens, which can make known the heart's secrets to a loved one more freely than tongues; for many a time the presence of the object of love shakes the firmest will and strikes dumb the boldest tongue. Ah heavens! how many letters did I write her, and how many dainty modest replies did I receive! how many ditties and love−songs did I compose in which my heart declared and made known its feelings, described its ardent longings, revelled in its recollections and dallied with its desires! At length growing impatient and feeling my heart languishing with longing to see her, I resolved to put into execution and carry out what seemed to me the best mode of winning my desired and merited reward, to ask her of her father for my lawful wife, which I did. To this his answer was that he thanked me for the disposition I showed to do honour to him and to regard myself as honoured by the bestowal of his treasure; but that as my father was alive it was his by right to make this demand, for if it were not in accordance with his full will and pleasure, Luscinda was not to be taken or given by stealth. I thanked him for his kindness, reflecting that there was reason in what he said, and that my father would assent to it as soon as I should tell him, and with that view I went the very same instant to let him know what my desires were. When I entered the room where he was I found him with an open letter in his hand, which, before I could

utter a word, he gave me, saying, 'By this letter thou wilt see, Cardenio, the disposition the Duke Ricardo has to serve thee.' This Duke Ricardo, as you, sirs, probably know already, is a grandee of Spain who has his seat in the best part of this Andalusia. I took and read the letter, which was couched in terms so flattering that even I myself felt it would be wrong in my father not to comply with the request the duke made in it, which was that he would send me immediately to him, as he wished me to become the companion, not servant, of his eldest son, and would take upon himself the charge of placing me in a position corresponding to the esteem in which he held me. On reading the letter my voice failed me, and still more when I heard my father say, 'Two days hence thou wilt depart, Cardenio, in accordance with the duke's wish, and give thanks to God who is opening a road to thee by which thou mayest attain what I know thou dost deserve; and to these words he added others of fatherly counsel. The time for my departure arrived; I spoke one night to Luscinda, I told her all that had occurred, as I did also to her father, entreating him to allow some delay, and to defer the disposal of her hand until I should see what the Duke Ricardo sought of me: he gave me the promise, and she confirmed it with vows and swoonings unnumbered. Finally, I presented myself to the duke, and was received and treated by him so kindly that very soon envy began to do its work, the old servants growing envious of me, and regarding the duke's inclination to show me favour as an injury to themselves. But the one to whom my arrival gave the greatest pleasure was the duke's second son, Fernando by name, a gallant youth, of noble, generous, and amorous disposition, who very soon made so intimate a friend of me that it was remarked by everybody; for though the elder was attached to me, and showed me kindness, he did not carry his affectionate treatment to the same length as Don Fernando. It so happened, then, that as between friends no secret remains unshared, and as the favour I enjoyed with Don Fernando had grown into friendship, he made all his thoughts known to me, and in particular a love affair which troubled his mind a little. He was deeply in love with a peasant girl, a vassal of his father's, the daughter of wealthy parents, and herself so beautiful, modest, discreet, and virtuous, that no one who knew her was able to decide in which of these respects she was most highly gifted or most excelled. The attractions of the fair peasant raised the passion of Don Fernando to such a point that, in order to gain his object and overcome her virtuous resolutions, he determined to pledge his word to her to become her husband, for to attempt it in any other way was to attempt an impossibility. Bound to him as I was by friendship, I strove by the best arguments and the most forcible examples I could think of to restrain and dissuade him from such a course; but perceiving I produced no effect I resolved to make the Duke Ricardo, his father, acquainted with the matter; but Don Fernando, being sharp−witted and shrewd, foresaw and apprehended this, perceiving that by my duty as a good servant I was bound not to keep concealed a thing so much opposed to the honour of my lord the duke; and so, to mislead and deceive me, he told me he could find no better way of effacing from his mind the beauty that so enslaved him than by absenting himself for some months, and that he wished the absence to be effected by our going, both of us, to my father's house under the pretence, which he would make to the duke, of going to see and buy some fine horses that there were in my city, which produces the best in the world. When I heard him say so, even if his resolution had not been so good a one I should have hailed it as one of the happiest that could be imagined, prompted by my affection, seeing what a favourable chance and opportunity it offered me of returning to see my Luscinda. With this thought and wish I commended his idea and encouraged his design, advising him to put it into execution as quickly as possible, as, in truth, absence produced its effect in spite of the most deeply rooted feelings. But, as afterwards appeared, when he said this to me he had already enjoyed the peasant girl under the title of husband, and was waiting for an opportunity of making it known with safety to himself, being in dread of what his father the duke would do when he came to know of his folly. It happened, then, that as with young men love is for the most part nothing more than appetite, which, as its final object is enjoyment, comes to an end on obtaining it, and that which seemed to be love takes to flight, as it cannot pass the limit fixed by nature, which fixes no limit to true love—what I mean is that after Don Fernando had enjoyed this peasant girl his passion subsided and his eagerness cooled, and if at first he feigned a wish to absent himself in order to cure his love, he was now in reality anxious to go to avoid keeping his promise.

"The duke gave him permission, and ordered me to accompany him; we arrived at my city, and my father gave him the reception due to his rank; I saw Luscinda without delay, and, though it had not been dead or deadened, my love gathered fresh life. To my sorrow I told the story of it to Don Fernando, for I thought that in virtue of the great friendship he bore me I was bound to conceal nothing from him. I extolled her beauty, her gaiety, her wit, so warmly, that my praises excited in him a desire to see a damsel adorned by such attractions. To my misfortune I

yielded to it, showing her to him one night by the light of a taper at a window where we used to talk to one another. As she appeared to him in her dressing−gown, she drove all the beauties he had seen until then out of his recollection; speech failed him, his head turned, he was spell−bound, and in the end love−smitten, as you will see in the course of the story of my misfortune; and to inflame still further his passion, which he hid from me and revealed to Heaven alone, it so happened that one day he found a note of hers entreating me to demand her of her father in marriage, so delicate, so modest, and so tender, that on reading it he told me that in Luscinda alone were combined all the charms of beauty and understanding that were distributed among all the other women in the world. It is true, and I own it now, that though I knew what good cause Don Fernando had to praise Luscinda, it gave me uneasiness to hear these praises from his mouth, and I began to fear, and with reason to feel distrust of him, for there was no moment when he was not ready to talk of Luscinda, and he would start the subject himself even though he dragged it in unseasonably, a circumstance that aroused in me a certain amount of jealousy; not that I feared any change in the constancy or faith of Luscinda; but still my fate led me to forebode what she assured me against. Don Fernando contrived always to read the letters I sent to Luscinda and her answers to me, under the pretence that he enjoyed the wit and sense of both. It so happened, then, that Luscinda having begged of me a book of chivalry to read, one that she was very fond of, Amadis of Gaul−"

Don Quixote no sooner heard a book of chivalry mentioned, than he said:

"Had your worship told me at the beginning of your story that the Lady Luscinda was fond of books of chivalry, no other laudation would have been requisite to impress upon me the superiority of her understanding, for it could not have been of the excellence you describe had a taste for such delightful reading been wanting; so, as far as I am concerned, you need waste no more words in describing her beauty, worth, and intelligence; for, on merely hearing what her taste was, I declare her to be the most beautiful and the most intelligent woman in the world; and I wish your worship had, along with Amadis of Gaul, sent her the worthy Don Rugel of Greece, for I know the Lady Luscinda would greatly relish Daraida and Garaya, and the shrewd sayings of the shepherd Darinel, and the admirable verses of his bucolics, sung and delivered by him with such sprightliness, wit, and ease; but a time may come when this omission can be remedied, and to rectify it nothing more is needed than for your worship to be so good as to come with me to my village, for there I can give you more than three hundred books which are the delight of my soul and the entertainment of my life;—though it occurs to me that I have not got one of them now, thanks to the spite of wicked and envious enchanters;—but pardon me for having broken the promise we made not to interrupt your discourse; for when I hear chivalry or knights−errant mentioned, I can no more help talking about them than the rays of the sun can help giving heat, or those of the moon moisture; pardon me, therefore, and proceed, for that is more to the purpose now."

While Don Quixote was saying this, Cardenio allowed his head to fall upon his breast, and seemed plunged in deep thought; and though twice Don Quixote bade him go on with his story, he neither looked up nor uttered a word in reply; but after some time he raised his head and said, "I cannot get rid of the idea, nor will anyone in the world remove it, or make me think otherwise—and he would be a blockhead who would hold or believe anything else than that that arrant knave Master Elisabad made free with Queen Madasima."

"That is not true, by all that's good," said Don Quixote in high wrath, turning upon him angrily, as his way was; "and it is a very great slander, or rather villainy. Queen Madasima was a very illustrious lady, and it is not to be supposed that so exalted a princess would have made free with a quack; and whoever maintains the contrary lies like a great scoundrel, and I will give him to know it, on foot or on horseback, armed or unarmed, by night or by day, or as he likes best."

Cardenio was looking at him steadily, and his mad fit having now come upon him, he had no disposition to go on with his story, nor would Don Quixote have listened to it, so much had what he had heard about Madasima disgusted him. Strange to say, he stood up for her as if she were in earnest his veritable born lady; to such a pass had his unholy books brought him. Cardenio, then, being, as I said, now mad, when he heard himself given the lie, and called a scoundrel and other insulting names, not relishing the jest, snatched up a stone that he found near him, and with it delivered such a blow on Don Quixote's breast that he laid him on his back. Sancho Panza, seeing his master treated in this fashion, attacked the madman with his closed fist; but the Ragged One received him in such a way that with a blow of his fist he stretched him at his feet, and then mounting upon him crushed his ribs to his own satisfaction; the goatherd, who came to the rescue, shared the same fate; and having beaten and pummelled them all he left them and quietly withdrew to his hiding−place on the mountain. Sancho rose, and with

the rage he felt at finding himself so belaboured without deserving it, ran to take vengeance on the goatherd, accusing him of not giving them warning that this man was at times taken with a mad fit, for if they had known it they would have been on their guard to protect themselves. The goatherd replied that he had said so, and that if he had not heard him, that was no fault of his. Sancho retorted, and the goatherd rejoined, and the altercation ended in their seizing each other by the beard, and exchanging such fisticuffs that if Don Quixote had not made peace between them, they would have knocked one another to pieces.

"Leave me alone, Sir Knight of the Rueful Countenance," said Sancho, grappling with the goatherd, "for of this fellow, who is a clown like myself, and no dubbed knight, I can safely take satisfaction for the affront he has offered me, fighting with him hand to hand like an honest man."

"That is true," said Don Quixote, "but I know that he is not to blame for what has happened."

With this he pacified them, and again asked the goatherd if it would be possible to find Cardenio, as he felt the greatest anxiety to know the end of his story. The goatherd told him, as he had told him before, that there was no knowing of a certainty where his lair was; but that if he wandered about much in that neighbourhood he could not fail to fall in with him either in or out of his senses.

CHAPTER XXV.

WHICH TREATS OF THE STRANGE THINGS THAT HAPPENED TO THE STOUT KNIGHT OF LA MANCHA IN THE SIERRA MORENA, AND OF HIS IMITATION OF THE PENANCE OF BELTENEBROS

Don Quixote took leave of the goatherd, and once more mounting Rocinante bade Sancho follow him, which he having no ass, did very discontentedly. They proceeded slowly, making their way into the most rugged part of the mountain, Sancho all the while dying to have a talk with his master, and longing for him to begin, so that there should be no breach of the injunction laid upon him; but unable to keep silence so long he said to him:

"Senor Don Quixote, give me your worship's blessing and dismissal, for I'd like to go home at once to my wife and children with whom I can at any rate talk and converse as much as I like; for to want me to go through these solitudes day and night and not speak to you when I have a mind is burying me alive. If luck would have it that animals spoke as they did in the days of Guisopete, it would not be so bad, because I could talk to Rocinante about whatever came into my head, and so put up with my ill−fortune; but it is a hard case, and not to be borne with patience, to go seeking adventures all one's life and get nothing but kicks and blanketings, brickbats and punches, and with all this to have to sew up one's mouth without daring to say what is in one's heart, just as if one

were dumb."

"I understand thee, Sancho," replied Don Quixote; "thou art dying to have the interdict I placed upon thy tongue removed; consider it removed, and say what thou wilt while we are wandering in these mountains."

"So be it," said Sancho; "let me speak now, for God knows what will happen by−and−by; and to take advantage of the permit at once, I ask, what made your worship stand up so for that Queen Majimasa, or whatever her name is, or what did it matter whether that abbot was a friend of hers or not? for if your worship had let that pass −and you were not a judge in the matter—it is my belief the madman would have gone on with his story, and the blow of the stone, and the kicks, and more than half a dozen cuffs would have been escaped."

"In faith, Sancho," answered Don Quixote, "if thou knewest as I do what an honourable and illustrious lady Queen Madasima was, I know thou wouldst say I had great patience that I did not break in pieces the mouth that uttered such blasphemies, for a very great blasphemy it is to say or imagine that a queen has made free with a surgeon. The truth of the story is that that Master Elisabad whom the madman mentioned was a man of great prudence and sound judgment, and served as governor and physician to the queen, but to suppose that she was his mistress is nonsense deserving very severe punishment; and as a proof that Cardenio did not know what he was saying, remember when he said it he was out of his wits."

"That is what I say," said Sancho; "there was no occasion for minding the words of a madman; for if good luck had not helped your worship, and he had sent that stone at your head instead of at your breast, a fine way we should have been in for standing up for my lady yonder, God confound her! And then, would not Cardenio have gone free as a madman?"

"Against men in their senses or against madmen," said Don Quixote, "every knight−errant is bound to stand up for the honour of women, whoever they may be, much more for queens of such high degree and dignity as Queen Madasima, for whom I have a particular regard on account of her amiable qualities; for, besides being extremely beautiful, she was very wise, and very patient under her misfortunes, of which she had many; and the counsel and society of the Master Elisabad were a great help and support to her in enduring her afflictions with wisdom and resignation; hence the ignorant and ill−disposed vulgar took occasion to say and think that she was his mistress; and they lie, I say it once more, and will lie two hundred times more, all who think and say so."

"I neither say nor think so," said Sancho; "let them look to it; with their bread let them eat it; they have rendered account to God whether they misbehaved or not; I come from my vineyard, I know nothing; I am not fond of prying into other men's lives; he who buys and lies feels it in his purse; moreover, naked was I born, naked I find myself, I neither lose nor gain; but if they did, what is that to me? many think there are flitches where there are no hooks; but who can put gates to the open plain? moreover they said of God−"

"God bless me," said Don Quixote, "what a set of absurdities thou art stringing together! What has what we are talking about got to do with the proverbs thou art threading one after the other? for God's sake hold thy tongue, Sancho, and henceforward keep to prodding thy ass and don't meddle in what does not concern thee; and understand with all thy five senses that everything I have done, am doing, or shall do, is well founded on reason and in conformity with the rules of chivalry, for I understand them better than all the world that profess them."

"Senor," replied Sancho, "is it a good rule of chivalry that we should go astray through these mountains without path or road, looking for a madman who when he is found will perhaps take a fancy to finish what he began, not his story, but your worship's head and my ribs, and end by breaking them altogether for us?"

"Peace, I say again, Sancho," said Don Quixote, "for let me tell thee it is not so much the desire of finding that madman that leads me into these regions as that which I have of performing among them an achievement wherewith I shall win eternal name and fame throughout the known world; and it shall be such that I shall thereby set the seal on all that can make a knight−errant perfect and famous."

"And is it very perilous, this achievement?"

"No," replied he of the Rueful Countenance; "though it may be in the dice that we may throw deuce−ace instead of sixes; but all will depend on thy diligence."

"On my diligence!" said Sancho.

"Yes," said Don Quixote, "for if thou dost return soon from the place where I mean to send thee, my penance will be soon over, and my glory will soon begin. But as it is not right to keep thee any longer in suspense, waiting to see what comes of my words, I would have thee know, Sancho, that the famous Amadis of Gaul was one of the most perfect knights−errant—I am wrong to say he was one; he stood alone, the first, the only one, the lord of all that were in the world in his time. A fig for Don Belianis, and for all who say he equalled him in any respect, for, my oath upon it, they are deceiving themselves! I say, too, that when a painter desires to become famous in his art he endeavours to copy the originals of the rarest painters that he knows; and the same rule holds good for all the most important crafts and callings that serve to adorn a state; thus must he who would be esteemed prudent and patient imitate Ulysses, in whose person and labours Homer presents to us a lively picture of prudence and patience; as Virgil, too, shows us in the person of AEneas the virtue of a pious son and the sagacity of a brave and skilful captain; not representing or describing them as they were, but as they ought to be, so as to leave the example of their virtues to posterity. In the same way Amadis was the polestar, day−star, sun of valiant and devoted knights, whom all we who fight under the banner of love and chivalry are bound to imitate. This, then, being so, I consider, friend Sancho, that the knight−errant who shall imitate him most closely will come nearest to reaching the perfection of chivalry. Now one of the instances in which this knight most conspicuously showed his prudence, worth, valour, endurance, fortitude, and love, was when he withdrew, rejected by the Lady Oriana, to do penance upon the Pena Pobre, changing his name into that of Beltenebros, a name assuredly significant and appropriate to the life which he had voluntarily adopted. So, as it is easier for me to imitate him in this than in cleaving giants asunder, cutting off serpents' heads, slaying dragons, routing armies, destroying fleets, and breaking enchantments, and as this place is so well suited for a similar purpose, I must not allow the opportunity to escape which now so conveniently offers me its forelock."

"What is it in reality," said Sancho, "that your worship means to do in such an out−of−the−way place as this?"

"Have I not told thee," answered Don Quixote, "that I mean to imitate Amadis here, playing the victim of despair, the madman, the maniac, so as at the same time to imitate the valiant Don Roland, when at the fountain he had evidence of the fair Angelica having disgraced herself with Medoro and through grief thereat went mad, and plucked up trees, troubled the waters of the clear springs, slew destroyed flocks, burned down huts, levelled houses, dragged mares after him, and perpetrated a hundred thousand other outrages worthy of everlasting renown and record? And though I have no intention of imitating Roland, or Orlando, or Rotolando (for he went by all these names), step by step in all the mad things he did, said, and thought, I will make a rough copy to the best of my power of all that seems to me most essential; but perhaps I shall content myself with the simple imitation of Amadis, who without giving way to any mischievous madness but merely to tears and sorrow, gained as much fame as the most famous."

"It seems to me," said Sancho, "that the knights who behaved in this way had provocation and cause for those follies and penances; but what cause has your worship for going mad? What lady has rejected you, or what evidence have you found to prove that the lady Dulcinea del Toboso has been trifling with Moor or Christian?"

"There is the point," replied Don Quixote, "and that is the beauty of this business of mine; no thanks to a knight−errant for going mad when he has cause; the thing is to turn crazy without any provocation, and let my lady know, if I do this in the dry, what I would do in the moist; moreover I have abundant cause in the long separation I have endured from my lady till death, Dulcinea del Toboso; for as thou didst hear that shepherd Ambrosio say the other day, in absence all ills are felt and feared; and so, friend Sancho, waste no time in

advising me against so rare, so happy, and so unheard−of an imitation; mad I am, and mad I must be until thou returnest with the answer to a letter that I mean to send by thee to my lady Dulcinea; and if it be such as my constancy deserves, my insanity and penance will come to an end; and if it be to the opposite effect, I shall become mad in earnest, and, being so, I shall suffer no more; thus in whatever way she may answer I shall escape from the struggle and affliction in which thou wilt leave me, enjoying in my senses the boon thou bearest me, or as a madman not feeling the evil thou bringest me. But tell me, Sancho, hast thou got Mambrino's helmet safe? for I saw thee take it up from the ground when that ungrateful wretch tried to break it in pieces but could not, by which the fineness of its temper may be seen."

To which Sancho made answer, "By the living God, Sir Knight of the Rueful Countenance, I cannot endure or bear with patience some of the things that your worship says; and from them I begin to suspect that all you tell me about chivalry, and winning kingdoms and empires, and giving islands, and bestowing other rewards and dignities after the custom of knights−errant, must be all made up of wind and lies, and all pigments or figments, or whatever we may call them; for what would anyone think that heard your worship calling a barber's basin Mambrino's helmet without ever seeing the mistake all this time, but that one who says and maintains such things must have his brains addled? I have the basin in my sack all dinted, and I am taking it home to have it mended, to trim my beard in it, if, by God's grace, I am allowed to see my wife and children some day or other."

"Look here, Sancho," said Don Quixote, "by him thou didst swear by just now I swear thou hast the most limited understanding that any squire in the world has or ever had. Is it possible that all this time thou hast been going about with me thou hast never found out that all things belonging to knights−errant seem to be illusions and nonsense and ravings, and to go always by contraries? And not because it really is so, but because there is always a swarm of enchanters in attendance upon us that change and alter everything with us, and turn things as they please, and according as they are disposed to aid or destroy us; thus what seems to thee a barber's basin seems to me Mambrino's helmet, and to another it will seem something else; and rare foresight it was in the sage who is on my side to make what is really and truly Mambrine's helmet seem a basin to everybody, for, being held in such estimation as it is, all the world would pursue me to rob me of it; but when they see it is only a barber's basin they do not take the trouble to obtain it; as was plainly shown by him who tried to break it, and left it on the ground without taking it, for, by my faith, had he known it he would never have left it behind. Keep it safe, my friend, for just now I have no need of it; indeed, I shall have to take off all this armour and remain as naked as I was born, if I have a mind to follow Roland rather than Amadis in my penance."

Thus talking they reached the foot of a high mountain which stood like an isolated peak among the others that surrounded it. Past its base there flowed a gentle brook, all around it spread a meadow so green and luxuriant that it was a delight to the eyes to look upon it, and forest trees in abundance, and shrubs and flowers, added to the charms of the spot. Upon this place the Knight of the Rueful Countenance fixed his choice for the performance of his penance, and as he beheld it exclaimed in a loud voice as though he were out of his senses:

"This is the place, oh, ye heavens, that I select and choose for bewailing the misfortune in which ye yourselves have plunged me: this is the spot where the overflowings of mine eyes shall swell the waters of yon little brook, and my deep and endless sighs shall stir unceasingly the leaves of these mountain trees, in testimony and token of the pain my persecuted heart is suffering. Oh, ye rural deities, whoever ye be that haunt this lone spot, give ear to the complaint of a wretched lover whom long absence and brooding jealousy have driven to bewail his fate among these wilds and complain of the hard heart of that fair and ungrateful one, the end and limit of all human beauty! Oh, ye wood nymphs and dryads, that dwell in the thickets of the forest, so may the nimble wanton satyrs by whom ye are vainly wooed never disturb your sweet repose, help me to lament my hard fate or at least weary not at listening to it! Oh, Dulcinea del Toboso, day of my night, glory of my pain, guide of my path, star of my fortune, so may Heaven grant thee in full all thou seekest of it, bethink thee of the place and condition to which absence from thee has brought me, and make that return in kindness that is due to my fidelity! Oh, lonely trees, that from this day forward shall bear me company in my solitude, give me some sign by the gentle movement of your boughs that my presence is not distasteful to you! Oh, thou, my squire, pleasant companion in my prosperous and adverse fortunes, fix well in thy memory what thou shalt see me do here, so that thou mayest relate and report it to the sole cause of all," and so saying he dismounted from Rocinante, and in an instant relieved him of saddle and bridle, and giving him a slap on the croup, said, "He gives thee freedom who is bereft of it himself, oh steed as excellent in deed as thou art unfortunate in thy lot; begone where thou wilt, for thou bearest written on thy

forehead that neither Astolfo's hippogriff, nor the famed Frontino that cost Bradamante so dear, could equal thee in speed."

Seeing this Sancho said, "Good luck to him who has saved us the trouble of stripping the pack−saddle off Dapple! By my faith he would not have gone without a slap on the croup and something said in his praise; though if he were here I would not let anyone strip him, for there would be no occasion, as he had nothing of the lover or victim of despair about him, inasmuch as his master, which I was while it was God's pleasure, was nothing of the sort; and indeed, Sir Knight of the Rueful Countenance, if my departure and your worship's madness are to come off in earnest, it will be as well to saddle Rocinante again in order that he may supply the want of Dapple, because it will save me time in going and returning: for if I go on foot I don't know when I shall get there or when I shall get back, as I am, in truth, a bad walker."

"I declare, Sancho," returned Don Quixote, "it shall be as thou wilt, for thy plan does not seem to me a bad one, and three days hence thou wilt depart, for I wish thee to observe in the meantime what I do and say for her sake, that thou mayest be able to tell it."

"But what more have I to see besides what I have seen?" said Sancho.

"Much thou knowest about it!" said Don Quixote. "I have now got to tear up my garments, to scatter about my armour, knock my head against these rocks, and more of the same sort of thing, which thou must witness."

"For the love of God," said Sancho, "be careful, your worship, how you give yourself those knocks on the head, for you may come across such a rock, and in such a way, that the very first may put an end to the whole contrivance of this penance; and I should think, if indeed knocks on the head seem necessary to you, and this business cannot be done without them, you might be content—as the whole thing is feigned, and counterfeit, and in joke—you might be content, I say, with giving them to yourself in the water, or against something soft, like cotton; and leave it all to me; for I'll tell my lady that your worship knocked your head against a point of rock harder than a diamond."

"I thank thee for thy good intentions, friend Sancho," answered Don Quixote, "but I would have thee know that all these things I am doing are not in joke, but very much in earnest, for anything else would be a transgression of the ordinances of chivalry, which forbid us to tell any lie whatever under the penalties due to apostasy; and to do one thing instead of another is just the same as lying; so my knocks on the head must be real, solid, and valid, without anything sophisticated or fanciful about them, and it will be needful to leave me some lint to dress my wounds, since fortune has compelled us to do without the balsam we lost."

"It was worse losing the ass," replied Sancho, "for with him lint and all were lost; but I beg of your worship not to remind me again of that accursed liquor, for my soul, not to say my stomach, turns at hearing the very name of it; and I beg of you, too, to reckon as past the three days you allowed me for seeing the mad things you do, for I take them as seen already and pronounced upon, and I will tell wonderful stories to my lady; so write the letter and send me off at once, for I long to return and take your worship out of this purgatory where I am leaving you."

"Purgatory dost thou call it, Sancho?" said Don Quixote, "rather call it hell, or even worse if there be anything worse."

"For one who is in hell," said Sancho, "nulla est retentio, as I have heard say."

"I do not understand what retentio means," said Don Quixote.

"Retentio," answered Sancho, "means that whoever is in hell never comes nor can come out of it, which will be the opposite case with your worship or my legs will be idle, that is if I have spurs to enliven Rocinante: let me once get to El Toboso and into the presence of my lady Dulcinea, and I will tell her such things of the follies and madnesses (for it is all one) that your worship has done and is still doing, that I will manage to make her softer than a glove though I find her harder than a cork tree; and with her sweet and honeyed answer I will come back through the air like a witch, and take your worship out of this purgatory that seems to be hell but is not, as there is hope of getting out of it; which, as I have said, those in hell have not, and I believe your worship will not say anything to the contrary."

"That is true," said he of the Rueful Countenance, "but how shall we manage to write the letter?"

"And the ass−colt order too," added Sancho.

"All shall be included," said Don Quixote; "and as there is no paper, it would be well done to write it on the leaves of trees, as the ancients did, or on tablets of wax; though that would be as hard to find just now as paper. But it has just occurred to me how it may be conveniently and even more than conveniently written, and that is in

the note−book that belonged to Cardenio, and thou wilt take care to have it copied on paper, in a good hand, at the first village thou comest to where there is a schoolmaster, or if not, any sacristan will copy it; but see thou give it not to any notary to copy, for they write a law hand that Satan could not make out."

"But what is to be done about the signature?" said Sancho.

"The letters of Amadis were never signed," said Don Quixote.

"That is all very well," said Sancho, "but the order must needs be signed, and if it is copied they will say the signature is false, and I shall be left without ass−colts."

"The order shall go signed in the same book," said Don Quixote, "and on seeing it my niece will make no difficulty about obeying it; as to the loveletter thou canst put by way of signature, 'Yours till death, the Knight of the Rueful Countenance.' And it will be no great matter if it is in some other person's hand, for as well as I recollect Dulcinea can neither read nor write, nor in the whole course of her life has she seen handwriting or letter of mine, for my love and hers have been always platonic, not going beyond a modest look, and even that so seldom that I can safely swear I have not seen her four times in all these twelve years I have been loving her more than the light of these eyes that the earth will one day devour; and perhaps even of those four times she has not once perceived that I was looking at her: such is the retirement and seclusion in which her father Lorenzo Corchuelo and her mother Aldonza Nogales have brought her up."

"So, so!" said Sancho; "Lorenzo Corchuelo's daughter is the lady Dulcinea del Toboso, otherwise called Aldonza Lorenzo?"

"She it is," said Don Quixote, "and she it is that is worthy to be lady of the whole universe."

"I know her well," said Sancho, "and let me tell you she can fling a crowbar as well as the lustiest lad in all the town. Giver of all good! but she is a brave lass, and a right and stout one, and fit to be helpmate to any knight−errant that is or is to be, who may make her his lady: the whoreson wench, what sting she has and what a voice! I can tell you one day she posted herself on the top of the belfry of the village to call some labourers of theirs that were in a ploughed field of her father's, and though they were better than half a league off they heard her as well as if they were at the foot of the tower; and the best of her is that she is not a bit prudish, for she has plenty of affability, and jokes with everybody, and has a grin and a jest for everything. So, Sir Knight of the Rueful Countenance, I say you not only may and ought to do mad freaks for her sake, but you have a good right to give way to despair and hang yourself; and no one who knows of it but will say you did well, though the devil should take you; and I wish I were on my road already, simply to see her, for it is many a day since I saw her, and she must be altered by this time, for going about the fields always, and the sun and the air spoil women's looks greatly. But I must own the truth to your worship, Senor Don Quixote; until now I have been under a great mistake, for I believed truly and honestly that the lady Dulcinea must be some princess your worship was in love with, or some person great enough to deserve the rich presents you have sent her, such as the Biscayan and the galley slaves, and many more no doubt, for your worship must have won many victories in the time when I was not yet your squire. But all things considered, what good can it do the lady Aldonza Lorenzo, I mean the lady Dulcinea del Toboso, to have the vanquished your worship sends or will send coming to her and going down on their knees before her? Because may be when they came she'd be hackling flax or threshing on the threshing floor, and they'd be ashamed to see her, and she'd laugh, or resent the present."

"I have before now told thee many times, Sancho," said Don Quixote, "that thou art a mighty great chatterer, and that with a blunt wit thou art always striving at sharpness; but to show thee what a fool thou art and how rational I am, I would have thee listen to a short story. Thou must know that a certain widow, fair, young, independent, and rich, and above all free and easy, fell in love with a sturdy strapping young lay−brother; his superior came to know of it, and one day said to the worthy widow by way of brotherly remonstrance, 'I am surprised, senora, and not without good reason, that a woman of such high standing, so fair, and so rich as you are, should have fallen in love with such a mean, low, stupid fellow as So−and−so, when in this house there are so many masters, graduates, and divinity students from among whom you might choose as if they were a lot of pears, saying this one I'll take, that I won't take;' but she replied to him with great sprightliness and candour, 'My dear sir, you are very much mistaken, and your ideas are very old−fashioned, if you think that I have made a bad choice in So−and−so, fool as he seems; because for all I want with him he knows as much and more philosophy than Aristotle.' In the same way, Sancho, for all I want with Dulcinea del Toboso she is just as good as the most exalted princess on earth. It is not to be supposed that all those poets who sang the praises of ladies under the

fancy names they give them, had any such mistresses. Thinkest thou that the Amarillises, the Phillises, the Sylvias, the Dianas, the Galateas, the Filidas, and all the rest of them, that the books, the ballads, the barber's shops, the theatres are full of, were really and truly ladies of flesh and blood, and mistresses of those that glorify and have glorified them? Nothing of the kind; they only invent them for the most part to furnish a subject for their verses, and that they may pass for lovers, or for men valiant enough to be so; and so it suffices me to think and believe that the good Aldonza Lorenzo is fair and virtuous; and as to her pedigree it is very little matter, for no one will examine into it for the purpose of conferring any order upon her, and I, for my part, reckon her the most exalted princess in the world. For thou shouldst know, Sancho, if thou dost not know, that two things alone beyond all others are incentives to love, and these are great beauty and a good name, and these two things are to be found in Dulcinea in the highest degree, for in beauty no one equals her and in good name few approach her; and to put the whole thing in a nutshell, I persuade myself that all I say is as I say, neither more nor less, and I picture her in my imagination as I would have her to be, as well in beauty as in condition; Helen approaches her not nor does Lucretia come up to her, nor any other of the famous women of times past, Greek, Barbarian, or Latin; and let each say what he will, for if in this I am taken to task by the ignorant, I shall not be censured by the critical."

"I say that your worship is entirely right," said Sancho, "and that I am an ass. But I know not how the name of ass came into my mouth, for a rope is not to be mentioned in the house of him who has been hanged; but now for the letter, and then, God be with you, I am off."

Don Quixote took out the note−book, and, retiring to one side, very deliberately began to write the letter, and when he had finished it he called to Sancho, saying he wished to read it to him, so that he might commit it to memory, in case of losing it on the road; for with evil fortune like his anything might be apprehended. To which Sancho replied, "Write it two or three times there in the book and give it to me, and I will carry it very carefully, because to expect me to keep it in my memory is all nonsense, for I have such a bad one that I often forget my own name; but for all that repeat it to me, as I shall like to hear it, for surely it will run as if it was in print."

"Listen," said Don Quixote, "this is what it says:

"DON QUIXOTE'S LETTER TO DULCINEA DEL TOBOSO

"Sovereign and exalted Lady,—The pierced by the point of absence, the wounded to the heart's core, sends thee, sweetest Dulcinea del Toboso, the health that he himself enjoys not. If thy beauty despises me, if thy worth is not for me, if thy scorn is my affliction, though I be sufficiently long−suffering, hardly shall I endure this anxiety, which, besides being oppressive, is protracted. My good squire Sancho will relate to thee in full, fair ingrate, dear enemy, the condition to which I am reduced on thy account: if it be thy pleasure to give me relief, I am thine; if not, do as may be pleasing to thee; for by ending my life I shall satisfy thy cruelty and my desire.

"Thine till death,

"The Knight of the Rueful Countenance."

"By the life of my father," said Sancho, when he heard the letter, "it is the loftiest thing I ever heard. Body of me! how your worship says everything as you like in it! And how well you fit in 'The Knight of the Rueful Countenance' into the signature. I declare your worship is indeed the very devil, and there is nothing you don't know."

"Everything is needed for the calling I follow," said Don Quixote.

"Now then," said Sancho, "let your worship put the order for the three ass−colts on the other side, and sign it very plainly, that they may recognise it at first sight."

"With all my heart," said Don Quixote, and as he had written it he read it to this effect:

"Mistress Niece,—By this first of ass−colts please pay to Sancho Panza, my squire, three of the five I left at home in your charge: said three ass−colts to be paid and delivered for the same number received here in hand, which upon this and upon his receipt shall be duly paid. Done in the heart of the Sierra Morena, the twenty−seventh of August of this present year."

"That will do," said Sancho; "now let your worship sign it."

"There is no need to sign it," said Don Quixote, "but merely to put my flourish, which is the same as a signature, and enough for three asses, or even three hundred."

"I can trust your worship," returned Sancho; "let me go and saddle Rocinante, and be ready to give me your blessing, for I mean to go at once without seeing the fooleries your worship is going to do; I'll say I saw you do so

many that she will not want any more."

"At any rate, Sancho," said Don Quixote, "I should like—and there is reason for it—I should like thee, I say, to see me stripped to the skin and performing a dozen or two of insanities, which I can get done in less than half an hour; for having seen them with thine own eyes, thou canst then safely swear to the rest that thou wouldst add; and I promise thee thou wilt not tell of as many as I mean to perform."

"For the love of God, master mine," said Sancho, "let me not see your worship stripped, for it will sorely grieve me, and I shall not be able to keep from tears, and my head aches so with all I shed last night for Dapple, that I am not fit to begin any fresh weeping; but if it is your worship's pleasure that I should see some insanities, do them in your clothes, short ones, and such as come readiest to hand; for I myself want nothing of the sort, and, as I have said, it will be a saving of time for my return, which will be with the news your worship desires and deserves. If not, let the lady Dulcinea look to it; if she does not answer reasonably, I swear as solemnly as I can that I will fetch a fair answer out of her stomach with kicks and cuffs; for why should it be borne that a knight−errant as famous as your worship should go mad without rhyme or reason for a—? Her ladyship had best not drive me to say it, for by God I will speak out and let off everything cheap, even if it doesn't sell: I am pretty good at that! she little knows me; faith, if she knew me she'd be in awe of me."

"In faith, Sancho," said Don Quixote, "to all appearance thou art no sounder in thy wits than I."

"I am not so mad," answered Sancho, "but I am more peppery; but apart from all this, what has your worship to eat until I come back? Will you sally out on the road like Cardenio to force it from the shepherds?"

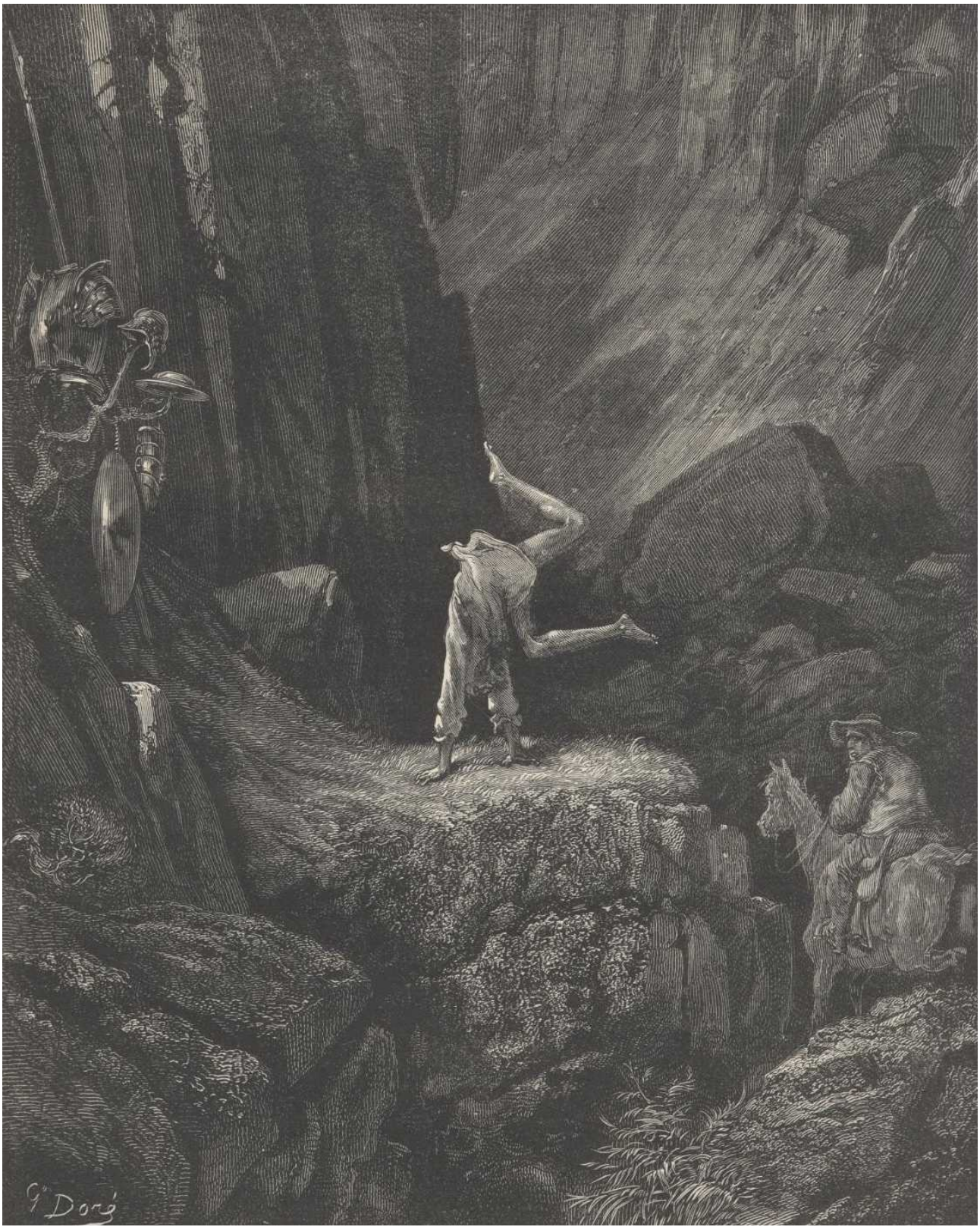
"Let not that anxiety trouble thee," replied Don Quixote, "for even if I had it I should not eat anything but the herbs and the fruits which this meadow and these trees may yield me; the beauty of this business of mine lies in not eating, and in performing other mortifications."

"Do you know what I am afraid of?" said Sancho upon this; "that I shall not be able to find my way back to this spot where I am leaving you, it is such an out−of−the−way place."

"Observe the landmarks well," said Don Quixote, "for I will try not to go far from this neighbourhood, and I will even take care to mount the highest of these rocks to see if I can discover thee returning; however, not to miss me and lose thyself, the best plan will be to cut some branches of the broom that is so abundant about here, and as thou goest to lay them at intervals until thou hast come out upon the plain; these will serve thee, after the fashion of the clue in the labyrinth of Theseus, as marks and signs for finding me on thy return."

"So I will," said Sancho Panza, and having cut some, he asked his master's blessing, and not without many tears on both sides, took his leave of him, and mounting Rocinante, of whom Don Quixote charged him earnestly to have as much care as of his own person, he set out for the plain, strewing at intervals the branches of broom as his master had recommended him; and so he went his way, though Don Quixote still entreated him to see him do were it only a couple of mad acts. He had not gone a hundred paces, however, when he returned and said:

"I must say, senor, your worship said quite right, that in order to be able to swear without a weight on my conscience that I had seen you do mad things, it would be well for me to see if it were only one; though in your worship's remaining here I have seen a very great one."


G. Doré

"Did I not tell thee so?" said Don Quixote. "Wait, Sancho, and I will do them in the saying of a credo," and pulling off his breeches in all haste he stripped himself to his skin and his shirt, and then, without more ado, he cut a couple of gambados in the air, and a couple of somersaults, heels over head, making such a display that, not to see it a second time, Sancho wheeled Rocinante round, and felt easy, and satisfied in his mind that he could swear he had left his master mad; and so we will leave him to follow his road until his return, which was a quick one.

CHAPTER XXVI.

IN WHICH ARE CONTINUED THE REFINEMENTS WHEREWITH DON QUIXOTE PLAYED THE PART OF A LOVER IN THE SIERRA MORENA

Returning to the proceedings of him of the Rueful Countenance when he found himself alone, the history says that when Don Quixote had completed the performance of the somersaults or capers, naked from the waist down and clothed from the waist up, and saw that Sancho had gone off without waiting to see any more crazy feats, he climbed up to the top of a high rock, and there set himself to consider what he had several times before considered without ever coming to any conclusion on the point, namely whether it would be better and more to his purpose to imitate the outrageous madness of Roland, or the melancholy madness of Amadis; and communing with himself he said:

"What wonder is it if Roland was so good a knight and so valiant as everyone says he was, when, after all, he was enchanted, and nobody could kill him save by thrusting a corking pin into the sole of his foot, and he always wore shoes with seven iron soles? Though cunning devices did not avail him against Bernardo del Carpio, who knew all about them, and strangled him in his arms at Roncesvalles. But putting the question of his valour aside, let us come to his losing his wits, for certain it is that he did lose them in consequence of the proofs he discovered at the fountain, and the intelligence the shepherd gave him of Angelica having slept more than two siestas with Medoro, a little curly−headed Moor, and page to Agramante. If he was persuaded that this was true, and that his lady had wronged him, it is no wonder that he should have gone mad; but I, how am I to imitate him in his madness, unless I can imitate him in the cause of it? For my Dulcinea, I will venture to swear, never saw a Moor

in her life, as he is, in his proper costume, and she is this day as the mother that bore her, and I should plainly be doing her a wrong if, fancying anything else, I were to go mad with the same kind of madness as Roland the Furious. On the other hand, I see that Amadis of Gaul, without losing his senses and without doing anything mad, acquired as a lover as much fame as the most famous; for, according to his history, on finding himself rejected by his lady Oriana, who had ordered him not to appear in her presence until it should be her pleasure, all he did was to retire to the Pena Pobre in company with a hermit, and there he took his fill of weeping until Heaven sent him relief in the midst of his great grief and need. And if this be true, as it is, why should I now take the trouble to strip stark naked, or do mischief to these trees which have done me no harm, or why am I to disturb the clear waters of these brooks which will give me to drink whenever I have a mind? Long live the memory of Amadis and let him be imitated so far as is possible by Don Quixote of La Mancha, of whom it will be said, as was said of the other, that if he did not achieve great things, he died in attempting them; and if I am not repulsed or rejected by my Dulcinea, it is enough for me, as I have said, to be absent from her. And so, now to business; come to my memory ye deeds of Amadis, and show me how I am to begin to imitate you. I know already that what he chiefly did was to pray and commend himself to God; but what am I to do for a rosary, for I have not got one?"

And then it occurred to him how he might make one, and that was by tearing a great strip off the tail of his shirt which hung down, and making eleven knots on it, one bigger than the rest, and this served him for a rosary all the time he was there, during which he repeated countless ave−marias. But what distressed him greatly was not having another hermit there to confess him and receive consolation from; and so he solaced himself with pacing up and down the little meadow, and writing and carving on the bark of the trees and on the fine sand a multitude of verses all in harmony with his sadness, and some in praise of Dulcinea; but, when he was found there afterwards, the only ones completely legible that could be discovered were those that follow here:

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Ye on the mountain side that grow,
  Ye green things all, trees, shrubs, and bushes,
Are ye aweary of the woe
  That this poor aching bosom crushes?
If it disturb you, and I owe
    Some reparation, it may be a
Defence for me to let you know
Don Quixote's tears are on the flow,
    And all for distant Dulcinea
                         Del Toboso.

The lealest lover time can show,
  Doomed for a lady−love to languish,
Among these solitudes doth go,
  A prey to every kind of anguish.
Why Love should like a spiteful foe
  Thus use him, he hath no idea,
But hogsheads full—this doth he know−
Don Quixote's tears are on the flow,
    And all for distant Dulcinea
                       Del Toboso.

Adventure−seeking doth he go
  Up rugged heights, down rocky valleys,
But hill or dale, or high or low,
  Mishap attendeth all his sallies:
Love still pursues him to and fro,
  And plies his cruel scourge—ah me! a
Relentless fate, an endless woe;
Don Quixote's tears are on the flow,
    And all for distant Dulcinea
                       Del Toboso.
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The addition of "Del Toboso" to Dulcinea's name gave rise to no little laughter among those who found the

above lines, for they suspected Don Quixote must have fancied that unless he added "del Toboso" when he introduced the name of Dulcinea the verse would be unintelligible; which was indeed the fact, as he himself afterwards admitted. He wrote many more, but, as has been said, these three verses were all that could be plainly and perfectly deciphered. In this way, and in sighing and calling on the fauns and satyrs of the woods and the nymphs of the streams, and Echo, moist and mournful, to answer, console, and hear him, as well as in looking for herbs to sustain him, he passed his time until Sancho's return; and had that been delayed three weeks, as it was three days, the Knight of the Rueful Countenance would have worn such an altered countenance that the mother that bore him would not have known him: and here it will be well to leave him, wrapped up in sighs and verses, to relate how Sancho Panza fared on his mission.

As for him, coming out upon the high road, he made for El Toboso, and the next day reached the inn where the mishap of the blanket had befallen him. As soon as he recognised it he felt as if he were once more living through the air, and he could not bring himself to enter it though it was an hour when he might well have done so, for it was dinner−time, and he longed to taste something hot as it had been all cold fare with him for many days past. This craving drove him to draw near to the inn, still undecided whether to go in or not, and as he was hesitating there came out two persons who at once recognised him, and said one to the other:

"Senor licentiate, is not he on the horse there Sancho Panza who, our adventurer's housekeeper told us, went off with her master as esquire?"

"So it is," said the licentiate, "and that is our friend Don Quixote's horse;" and if they knew him so well it was because they were the curate and the barber of his own village, the same who had carried out the scrutiny and sentence upon the books; and as soon as they recognised Sancho Panza and Rocinante, being anxious to hear of Don Quixote, they approached, and calling him by his name the curate said, "Friend Sancho Panza, where is your master?"

Sancho recognised them at once, and determined to keep secret the place and circumstances where and under which he had left his master, so he replied that his master was engaged in a certain quarter on a certain matter of great importance to him which he could not disclose for the eyes in his head.

"Nay, nay," said the barber, "if you don't tell us where he is, Sancho Panza, we will suspect as we suspect already, that you have murdered and robbed him, for here you are mounted on his horse; in fact, you must produce the master of the hack, or else take the consequences."

"There is no need of threats with me," said Sancho, "for I am not a man to rob or murder anybody; let his own fate, or God who made him, kill each one; my master is engaged very much to his taste doing penance in the midst of these mountains; and then, offhand and without stopping, he told them how he had left him, what adventures had befallen him, and how he was carrying a letter to the lady Dulcinea del Toboso, the daughter of Lorenzo Corchuelo, with whom he was over head and ears in love. They were both amazed at what Sancho Panza told them; for though they were aware of Don Quixote's madness and the nature of it, each time they heard of it they were filled with fresh wonder. They then asked Sancho Panza to show them the letter he was carrying to the lady Dulcinea del Toboso. He said it was written in a note−book, and that his master's directions were that he should have it copied on paper at the first village he came to. On this the curate said if he showed it to him, he himself would make a fair copy of it. Sancho put his hand into his bosom in search of the note−book but could not find it, nor, if he had been searching until now, could he have found it, for Don Quixote had kept it, and had never given it to him, nor had he himself thought of asking for it. When Sancho discovered he could not find the book his face grew deadly pale, and in great haste he again felt his body all over, and seeing plainly it was not to be found, without more ado he seized his beard with both hands and plucked away half of it, and then, as quick as he could and without stopping, gave himself half a dozen cuffs on the face and nose till they were bathed in blood.

Seeing this, the curate and the barber asked him what had happened him that he gave himself such rough treatment.

"What should happen me?" replied Sancho, "but to have lost from one hand to the other, in a moment, three ass−colts, each of them like a castle?"

"How is that?" said the barber.

"I have lost the note−book," said Sancho, "that contained the letter to Dulcinea, and an order signed by my master in which he directed his niece to give me three ass−colts out of four or five he had at home;" and he then told them about the loss of Dapple.

The curate consoled him, telling him that when his master was found he would get him to renew the order, and make a fresh draft on paper, as was usual and customary; for those made in notebooks were never accepted or honoured.

Sancho comforted himself with this, and said if that were so the loss of Dulcinea's letter did not trouble him much, for he had it almost by heart, and it could be taken down from him wherever and whenever they liked.

"Repeat it then, Sancho," said the barber, "and we will write it down afterwards."

Sancho Panza stopped to scratch his head to bring back the letter to his memory, and balanced himself now on one foot, now the other, one moment staring at the ground, the next at the sky, and after having half gnawed off the end of a finger and kept them in suspense waiting for him to begin, he said, after a long pause, "By God, senor licentiate, devil a thing can I recollect of the letter; but it said at the beginning, 'Exalted and scrubbing Lady.'"

"It cannot have said 'scrubbing,'" said the barber, "but 'superhuman' or 'sovereign.'"

"That is it," said Sancho; "then, as well as I remember, it went on, 'The wounded, and wanting of sleep, and the pierced, kisses your worship's hands, ungrateful and very unrecognised fair one; and it said something or other about health and sickness that he was sending her; and from that it went tailing off until it ended with 'Yours till death, the Knight of the Rueful Countenance."

It gave them no little amusement, both of them, to see what a good memory Sancho had, and they complimented him greatly upon it, and begged him to repeat the letter a couple of times more, so that they too might get it by heart to write it out by−and−by. Sancho repeated it three times, and as he did, uttered three thousand more absurdities; then he told them more about his master but he never said a word about the blanketing that had befallen himself in that inn, into which he refused to enter. He told them, moreover, how his lord, if he brought him a favourable answer from the lady Dulcinea del Toboso, was to put himself in the way of endeavouring to become an emperor, or at least a monarch; for it had been so settled between them, and with his personal worth and the might of his arm it was an easy matter to come to be one: and how on becoming one his lord was to make a marriage for him (for he would be a widower by that time, as a matter of course) and was to give him as a wife one of the damsels of the empress, the heiress of some rich and grand state on the mainland, having nothing to do with islands of any sort, for he did not care for them now. All this Sancho delivered with so much composure—wiping his nose from time to time—and with so little common−sense that his two hearers were again filled with wonder at the force of Don Quixote's madness that could run away with this poor man's reason. They did not care to take the trouble of disabusing him of his error, as they considered that since it did not in any way hurt his conscience it would be better to leave him in it, and they would have all the more amusement in listening to his simplicities; and so they bade him pray to God for his lord's health, as it was a very likely and a very feasible thing for him in course of time to come to be an emperor, as he said, or at least an archbishop or some other dignitary of equal rank.

To which Sancho made answer, "If fortune, sirs, should bring things about in such a way that my master should have a mind, instead of being an emperor, to be an archbishop, I should like to know what archbishops−errant commonly give their squires?"

"They commonly give them," said the curate, some simple benefice or cure, or some place as sacristan which brings them a good fixed income, not counting the altar fees, which may be reckoned at as much more."

"But for that," said Sancho, "the squire must be unmarried, and must know, at any rate, how to help at mass, and if that be so, woe is me, for I am married already and I don't know the first letter of the A B C. What will become of me if my master takes a fancy to be an archbishop and not an emperor, as is usual and customary with knights−errant?"

"Be not uneasy, friend Sancho," said the barber, "for we will entreat your master, and advise him, even urging it upon him as a case of conscience, to become an emperor and not an archbishop, because it will be easier for him as he is more valiant than lettered."

"So I have thought," said Sancho; "though I can tell you he is fit for anything: what I mean to do for my part is to pray to our Lord to place him where it may be best for him, and where he may be able to bestow most favours upon me."

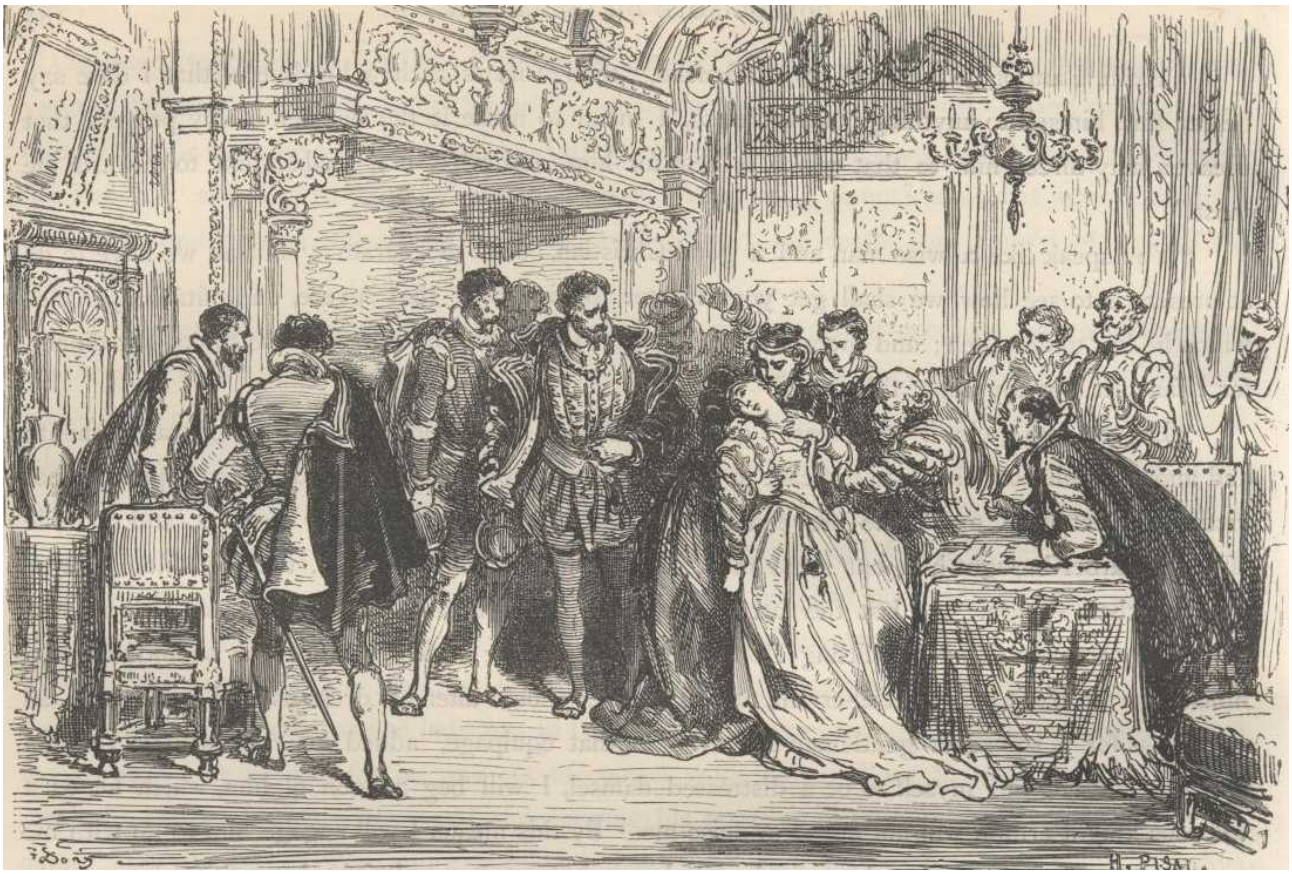
"You speak like a man of sense," said the curate, "and you will be acting like a good Christian; but what must now be done is to take steps to coax your master out of that useless penance you say he is performing; and we had best turn into this inn to consider what plan to adopt, and also to dine, for it is now time."

Sancho said they might go in, but that he would wait there outside, and that he would tell them afterwards the reason why he was unwilling, and why it did not suit him to enter it; but be begged them to bring him out something to eat, and to let it be hot, and also to bring barley for Rocinante. They left him and went in, and presently the barber brought him out something to eat. By−and−by, after they had between them carefully thought over what they should do to carry out their object, the curate hit upon an idea very well adapted to humour Don Quixote, and effect their purpose; and his notion, which he explained to the barber, was that he himself should assume the disguise of a wandering damsel, while the other should try as best he could to pass for a squire, and that they should thus proceed to where Don Quixote was, and he, pretending to be an aggrieved and distressed damsel, should ask a favour of him, which as a valiant knight−errant he could not refuse to grant; and the favour he meant to ask him was that he should accompany her whither she would conduct him, in order to redress a wrong which a wicked knight had done her, while at the same time she should entreat him not to require her to remove her mask, nor ask her any question touching her circumstances until he had righted her with the wicked knight. And he had no doubt that Don Quixote would comply with any request made in these terms, and that in this way they might remove him and take him to his own village, where they would endeavour to find out if his extraordinary madness admitted of any kind of remedy.

IN WHICH ARE CONTINUED THE REFINEMENTS WHEREWITH DON QUIXOTE PLAYED THE PART OF A

CHAPTER XXVII.

OF HOW THE CURATE AND THE BARBER PROCEEDED WITH THEIR SCHEME; TOGETHER WITH OTHER MATTERS WORTHY OF RECORD IN THIS GREAT HISTORY



The curate's plan did not seem a bad one to the barber, but on the contrary so good that they immediately set about putting it in execution. They begged a petticoat and hood of the landlady, leaving her in pledge a new cassock of the curate's; and the barber made a beard out of a grey−brown or red ox−tail in which the landlord used to stick his comb. The landlady asked them what they wanted these things for, and the curate told her in a few words about the madness of Don Quixote, and how this disguise was intended to get him away from the mountain where he then was. The landlord and landlady immediately came to the conclusion that the madman was their guest, the balsam man and master of the blanketed squire, and they told the curate all that had passed between him and them, not omitting what Sancho had been so silent about. Finally the landlady dressed up the curate in a style that left nothing to be desired; she put on him a cloth petticoat with black velvet stripes a palm broad, all slashed, and a bodice of green velvet set off by a binding of white satin, which as well as the petticoat must have been made in the time of king Wamba. The curate would not let them hood him, but put on his head a little quilted linen cap which he used for a night−cap, and bound his forehead with a strip of black silk, while with another he

made a mask with which he concealed his beard and face very well. He then put on his hat, which was broad enough to serve him for an umbrella, and enveloping himself in his cloak seated himself woman−fashion on his mule, while the barber mounted his with a beard down to the waist of mingled red and white, for it was, as has been said, the tail of a clay−red ox.

They took leave of all, and of the good Maritornes, who, sinner as she was, promised to pray a rosary of prayers that God might grant them success in such an arduous and Christian undertaking as that they had in hand. But hardly had he sallied forth from the inn when it struck the curate that he was doing wrong in rigging himself out in that fashion, as it was an indecorous thing for a priest to dress himself that way even though much might depend upon it; and saying so to the barber he begged him to change dresses, as it was fitter he should be the distressed damsel, while he himself would play the squire's part, which would be less derogatory to his dignity; otherwise he was resolved to have nothing more to do with the matter, and let the devil take Don Quixote. Just at this moment Sancho came up, and on seeing the pair in such a costume he was unable to restrain his laughter; the barber, however, agreed to do as the curate wished, and, altering their plan, the curate went on to instruct him how to play his part and what to say to Don Quixote to induce and compel him to come with them and give up his fancy for the place he had chosen for his idle penance. The barber told him he could manage it properly without any instruction, and as he did not care to dress himself up until they were near where Don Quixote was, he folded up the garments, and the curate adjusted his beard, and they set out under the guidance of Sancho Panza, who went along telling them of the encounter with the madman they met in the Sierra, saying nothing, however, about the finding of the valise and its contents; for with all his simplicity the lad was a trifle covetous.

The next day they reached the place where Sancho had laid the broom−branches as marks to direct him to where he had left his master, and recognising it he told them that here was the entrance, and that they would do well to dress themselves, if that was required to deliver his master; for they had already told him that going in this guise and dressing in this way were of the highest importance in order to rescue his master from the pernicious life he had adopted; and they charged him strictly not to tell his master who they were, or that he knew them, and should he ask, as ask he would, if he had given the letter to Dulcinea, to say that he had, and that, as she did not know how to read, she had given an answer by word of mouth, saying that she commanded him, on pain of her displeasure, to come and see her at once; and it was a very important matter for himself, because in this way and with what they meant to say to him they felt sure of bringing him back to a better mode of life and inducing him to take immediate steps to become an emperor or monarch, for there was no fear of his becoming an archbishop. All this Sancho listened to and fixed it well in his memory, and thanked them heartily for intending to recommend his master to be an emperor instead of an archbishop, for he felt sure that in the way of bestowing rewards on their squires emperors could do more than archbishops−errant. He said, too, that it would be as well for him to go on before them to find him, and give him his lady's answer; for that perhaps might be enough to bring him away from the place without putting them to all this trouble. They approved of what Sancho proposed, and resolved to wait for him until he brought back word of having found his master.

Sancho pushed on into the glens of the Sierra, leaving them in one through which there flowed a little gentle rivulet, and where the rocks and trees afforded a cool and grateful shade. It was an August day with all the heat of one, and the heat in those parts is intense, and the hour was three in the afternoon, all which made the spot the more inviting and tempted them to wait there for Sancho's return, which they did. They were reposing, then, in the shade, when a voice unaccompanied by the notes of any instrument, but sweet and pleasing in its tone, reached their ears, at which they were not a little astonished, as the place did not seem to them likely quarters for one who sang so well; for though it is often said that shepherds of rare voice are to be found in the woods and fields, this is rather a flight of the poet's fancy than the truth. And still more surprised were they when they perceived that what they heard sung were the verses not of rustic shepherds, but of the polished wits of the city; and so it proved, for the verses they heard were these:

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What makes my quest of happiness seem vain?
    Disdain.
What bids me to abandon hope of ease?
    Jealousies.
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What holds my heart in anguish of suspense?
    Absence.
  If that be so, then for my grief
  Where shall I turn to seek relief,
  When hope on every side lies slain
  By Absence, Jealousies, Disdain?

What the prime cause of all my woe doth prove?
    Love.
What at my glory ever looks askance?
    Chance.
Whence is permission to afflict me given?
    Heaven.
  If that be so, I but await
  The stroke of a resistless fate,
  Since, working for my woe, these three,
  Love, Chance and Heaven, in league I see.

What must I do to find a remedy?
    Die.
What is the lure for love when coy and strange?
    Change.
What, if all fail, will cure the heart of sadness?
    Madness.
  If that be so, it is but folly
  To seek a cure for melancholy:
  Ask where it lies; the answer saith
  In Change, in Madness, or in Death.
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The hour, the summer season, the solitary place, the voice and skill of the singer, all contributed to the wonder and delight of the two listeners, who remained still waiting to hear something more; finding, however, that the silence continued some little time, they resolved to go in search of the musician who sang with so fine a voice; but just as they were about to do so they were checked by the same voice, which once more fell upon their ears, singing this

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SONNET

When heavenward, holy Friendship, thou didst go
  Soaring to seek thy home beyond the sky,
  And take thy seat among the saints on high,
It was thy will to leave on earth below
Thy semblance, and upon it to bestow
  Thy veil, wherewith at times hypocrisy,
  Parading in thy shape, deceives the eye,
And makes its vileness bright as virtue show.
Friendship, return to us, or force the cheat
  That wears it now, thy livery to restore,
    By aid whereof sincerity is slain.
If thou wilt not unmask thy counterfeit,
  This earth will be the prey of strife once more,
    As when primaeval discord held its reign.
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The song ended with a deep sigh, and again the listeners remained waiting attentively for the singer to resume; but perceiving that the music had now turned to sobs and heart−rending moans they determined to find out who the unhappy being could be whose voice was as rare as his sighs were piteous, and they had not proceeded far when on turning the corner of a rock they discovered a man of the same aspect and appearance as Sancho had

described to them when he told them the story of Cardenio. He, showing no astonishment when he saw them, stood still with his head bent down upon his breast like one in deep thought, without raising his eyes to look at them after the first glance when they suddenly came upon him. The curate, who was aware of his misfortune and recognised him by the description, being a man of good address, approached him and in a few sensible words entreated and urged him to quit a life of such misery, lest he should end it there, which would be the greatest of all misfortunes. Cardenio was then in his right mind, free from any attack of that madness which so frequently carried him away, and seeing them dressed in a fashion so unusual among the frequenters of those wilds, could not help showing some surprise, especially when he heard them speak of his case as if it were a well−known matter (for the curate's words gave him to understand as much) so he replied to them thus:

"I see plainly, sirs, whoever you may be, that Heaven, whose care it is to succour the good, and even the wicked very often, here, in this remote spot, cut off from human intercourse, sends me, though I deserve it not, those who seek to draw me away from this to some better retreat, showing me by many and forcible arguments how unreasonably I act in leading the life I do; but as they know, that if I escape from this evil I shall fall into another still greater, perhaps they will set me down as a weak−minded man, or, what is worse, one devoid of reason; nor would it be any wonder, for I myself can perceive that the effect of the recollection of my misfortunes is so great and works so powerfully to my ruin, that in spite of myself I become at times like a stone, without feeling or consciousness; and I come to feel the truth of it when they tell me and show me proofs of the things I have done when the terrible fit overmasters me; and all I can do is bewail my lot in vain, and idly curse my destiny, and plead for my madness by telling how it was caused, to any that care to hear it; for no reasonable beings on learning the cause will wonder at the effects; and if they cannot help me at least they will not blame me, and the repugnance they feel at my wild ways will turn into pity for my woes. If it be, sirs, that you are here with the same design as others have come wah, before you proceed with your wise arguments, I entreat you to hear the story of my countless misfortunes, for perhaps when you have heard it you will spare yourselves the trouble you would take in offering consolation to grief that is beyond the reach of it."

As they, both of them, desired nothing more than to hear from his own lips the cause of his suffering, they entreated him to tell it, promising not to do anything for his relief or comfort that he did not wish; and thereupon the unhappy gentleman began his sad story in nearly the same words and manner in which he had related it to Don Quixote and the goatherd a few days before, when, through Master Elisabad, and Don Quixote's scrupulous observance of what was due to chivalry, the tale was left unfinished, as this history has already recorded; but now fortunately the mad fit kept off, allowed him to tell it to the end; and so, coming to the incident of the note which Don Fernando had found in the volume of "Amadis of Gaul," Cardenio said that he remembered it perfectly and that it was in these words:

> "Luscinda to Cardenio.
>
> "Every day I discover merits in you that oblige and compel me to hold you in higher estimation; so if you desire to relieve me of this obligation without cost to my honour, you may easily do so. I have a father who knows you and loves me dearly, who without putting any constraint on my inclination will grant what will be reasonable for you to have, if it be that you value me as you say and as I believe you do."

"By this letter I was induced, as I told you, to demand Luscinda for my wife, and it was through it that Luscinda came to be regarded by Don Fernando as one of the most discreet and prudent women of the day, and this letter it was that suggested his design of ruining me before mine could be carried into effect. I told Don Fernando that all Luscinda's father was waiting for was that mine should ask her of him, which I did not dare to suggest to him, fearing that he would not consent to do so; not because he did not know perfectly well the rank, goodness, virtue, and beauty of Luscinda, and that she had qualities that would do honour to any family in Spain, but because I was aware that he did not wish me to marry so soon, before seeing what the Duke Ricardo would do for me. In short, I told him I did not venture to mention it to my father, as well on account of that difficulty, as of many others that discouraged me though I knew not well what they were, only that it seemed to me that what I

desired was never to come to pass. To all this Don Fernando answered that he would take it upon himself to speak to my father, and persuade him to speak to Luscinda's father. O, ambitious Marius! O, cruel Catiline! O, wicked Sylla! O, perfidious Ganelon! O, treacherous Vellido! O, vindictive Julian! O, covetous Judas! Traitor, cruel, vindictive, and perfidious, wherein had this poor wretch failed in his fidelity, who with such frankness showed thee the secrets and the joys of his heart? What offence did I commit? What words did I utter, or what counsels did I give that had not the furtherance of thy honour and welfare for their aim? But, woe is me, wherefore do I complain? for sure it is that when misfortunes spring from the stars, descending from on high they fall upon us with such fury and violence that no power on earth can check their course nor human device stay their coming. Who could have thought that Don Fernando, a highborn gentleman, intelligent, bound to me by gratitude for my services, one that could win the object of his love wherever he might set his affections, could have become so obdurate, as they say, as to rob me of my one ewe lamb that was not even yet in my possession? But laying aside these useless and unavailing reflections, let us take up the broken thread of my unhappy story.

"To proceed, then: Don Fernando finding my presence an obstacle to the execution of his treacherous and wicked design, resolved to send me to his elder brother under the pretext of asking money from him to pay for six horses which, purposely, and with the sole object of sending me away that he might the better carry out his infernal scheme, he had purchased the very day he offered to speak to my father, and the price of which he now desired me to fetch. Could I have anticipated this treachery? Could I by any chance have suspected it? Nay; so far from that, I offered with the greatest pleasure to go at once, in my satisfaction at the good bargain that had been made. That night I spoke with Luscinda, and told her what had been agreed upon with Don Fernando, and how I had strong hopes of our fair and reasonable wishes being realised. She, as unsuspicious as I was of the treachery of Don Fernando, bade me try to return speedily, as she believed the fulfilment of our desires would be delayed only so long as my father put off speaking to hers. I know not why it was that on saying this to me her eyes filled with tears, and there came a lump in her throat that prevented her from uttering a word of many more that it seemed to me she was striving to say to me. I was astonished at this unusual turn, which I never before observed in her. for we always conversed, whenever good fortune and my ingenuity gave us the chance, with the greatest gaiety and cheerfulness, mingling tears, sighs, jealousies, doubts, or fears with our words; it was all on my part a eulogy of my good fortune that Heaven should have given her to me for my mistress; I glorified her beauty, I extolled her worth and her understanding; and she paid me back by praising in me what in her love for me she thought worthy of praise; and besides we had a hundred thousand trifles and doings of our neighbours and acquaintances to talk about, and the utmost extent of my boldness was to take, almost by force, one of her fair white hands and carry it to my lips, as well as the closeness of the low grating that separated us allowed me. But the night before the unhappy day of my departure she wept, she moaned, she sighed, and she withdrew leaving me filled with perplexity and amazement, overwhelmed at the sight of such strange and affecting signs of grief and sorrow in Luscinda; but not to dash my hopes I ascribed it all to the depth of her love for me and the pain that separation gives those who love tenderly. At last I took my departure, sad and dejected, my heart filled with fancies and suspicions, but not knowing well what it was I suspected or fancied; plain omens pointing to the sad event and misfortune that was awaiting me.

"I reached the place whither I had been sent, gave the letter to Don Fernando's brother, and was kindly received but not promptly dismissed, for he desired me to wait, very much against my will, eight days in some place where the duke his father was not likely to see me, as his brother wrote that the money was to be sent without his knowledge; all of which was a scheme of the treacherous Don Fernando, for his brother had no want of money to enable him to despatch me at once.

"The command was one that exposed me to the temptation of disobeying it, as it seemed to me impossible to endure life for so many days separated from Luscinda, especially after leaving her in the sorrowful mood I have described to you; nevertheless as a dutiful servant I obeyed, though I felt it would be at the cost of my well−being. But four days later there came a man in quest of me with a letter which he gave me, and which by the address I perceived to be from Luscinda, as the writing was hers. I opened it with fear and trepidation, persuaded that it must be something serious that had impelled her to write to me when at a distance, as she seldom did so when I was near. Before reading it I asked the man who it was that had given it to him, and how long he had been upon the road; he told me that as he happened to be passing through one of the streets of the city at the hour of noon, a very beautiful lady called to him from a window, and with tears in her eyes said to him hurriedly, 'Brother, if you

are, as you seem to be, a Christian, for the love of God I entreat you to have this letter despatched without a moment's delay to the place and person named in the address, all which is well known, and by this you will render a great service to our Lord; and that you may be at no inconvenience in doing so take what is in this handkerchief;' and said he, 'with this she threw me a handkerchief out of the window in which were tied up a hundred reals and this gold ring which I bring here together with the letter I have given you. And then without waiting for any answer she left the window, though not before she saw me take the letter and the handkerchief, and I had by signs let her know that I would do as she bade me; and so, seeing myself so well paid for the trouble I would have in bringing it to you, and knowing by the address that it was to you it was sent (for, senor, I know you very well), and also unable to resist that beautiful lady's tears, I resolved to trust no one else, but to come myself and give it to you, and in sixteen hours from the time when it was given me I have made the journey, which, as you know, is eighteen leagues.'

"All the while the good−natured improvised courier was telling me this, I hung upon his words, my legs trembling under me so that I could scarcely stand. However, I opened the letter and read these words:

'"The promise Don Fernando gave you to urge your father to speak to mine, he has fulfilled much more to his own satisfaction than to your advantage. I have to tell you, senor, that be has demanded me for a wife, and my father, led away by what he considers Don Fernando's superiority over you, has favoured his suit so cordially, that in two days hence the betrothal is to take place with such secrecy and so privately that the only witnesses are to be the Heavens above and a few of the household. Picture to yourself the state I am in; judge if it be urgent for you to come; the issue of the affair will show you whether I love you or not. God grant this may come to your hand before mine shall be forced to link itself with his who keeps so ill the faith that he has pledged.'

"Such, in brief, were the words of the letter, words that made me set out at once without waiting any longer for reply or money; for I now saw clearly that it was not the purchase of horses but of his own pleasure that had made Don Fernando send me to his brother. The exasperation I felt against Don Fernando, joined with the fear of losing the prize I had won by so many years of love and devotion, lent me wings; so that almost flying I reached home the same day, by the hour which served for speaking with Luscinda. I arrived unobserved, and left the mule on which I had come at the house of the worthy man who had brought me the letter, and fortune was pleased to be for once so kind that I found Luscinda at the grating that was the witness of our loves. She recognised me at once, and I her, but not as she ought to have recognised me, or I her. But who is there in the world that can boast of having fathomed or understood the wavering mind and unstable nature of a woman? Of a truth no one. To proceed: as soon as Luscinda saw me she said, 'Cardenio, I am in my bridal dress, and the treacherous Don Fernando and my covetous father are waiting for me in the hall with the other witnesses, who shall be the witnesses of my death before they witness my betrothal. Be not distressed, my friend, but contrive to be present at this sacrifice, and if that cannot be prevented by my words, I have a dagger concealed which will prevent more deliberate violence, putting an end to my life and giving thee a first proof of the love I have borne and bear thee.' I replied to her distractedly and hastily, in fear lest I should not have time to reply, 'May thy words be verified by thy deeds, lady; and if thou hast a dagger to save thy honour, I have a sword to defend thee or kill myself if fortune be against us.'

"I think she could not have heard all these words, for I perceived that they called her away in haste, as the bridegroom was waiting. Now the night of my sorrow set in, the sun of my happiness went down, I felt my eyes bereft of sight, my mind of reason. I could not enter the house, nor was I capable of any movement; but reflecting how important it was that I should be present at what might take place on the occasion, I nerved myself as best I could and went in, for I well knew all the entrances and outlets; and besides, with the confusion that in secret pervaded the house no one took notice of me, so, without being seen, I found an opportunity of placing myself in the recess formed by a window of the hall itself, and concealed by the ends and borders of two tapestries, from between which I could, without being seen, see all that took place in the room. Who could describe the agitation of heart I suffered as I stood there—the thoughts that came to me—the reflections that passed through my mind? They were such as cannot be, nor were it well they should be, told. Suffice it to say that the bridegroom entered the hall in his usual dress, without ornament of any kind; as groomsman he had with him a cousin of Luscinda's and except the servants of the house there was no one else in the chamber. Soon afterwards Luscinda came out from an antechamber, attended by her mother and two of her damsels, arrayed and adorned as became her rank and beauty, and in full festival and ceremonial attire. My anxiety and distraction did not allow me to observe or

notice particularly what she wore; I could only perceive the colours, which were crimson and white, and the glitter of the gems and jewels on her head dress and apparel, surpassed by the rare beauty of her lovely auburn hair that vying with the precious stones and the light of the four torches that stood in the hall shone with a brighter gleam than all. Oh memory, mortal foe of my peace! why bring before me now the incomparable beauty of that adored enemy of mine? Were it not better, cruel memory, to remind me and recall what she then did, that stirred by a wrong so glaring I may seek, if not vengeance now, at least to rid myself of life? Be not weary, sirs, of listening to these digressions; my sorrow is not one of those that can or should be told tersely and briefly, for to me each incident seems to call for many words."

To this the curate replied that not only were they not weary of listening to him, but that the details he mentioned interested them greatly, being of a kind by no means to be omitted and deserving of the same attention as the main story.

"To proceed, then," continued Cardenio: "all being assembled in the hall, the priest of the parish came in and as he took the pair by the hand to perform the requisite ceremony, at the words, 'Will you, Senora Luscinda, take Senor Don Fernando, here present, for your lawful husband, as the holy Mother Church ordains?' I thrust my head and neck out from between the tapestries, and with eager ears and throbbing heart set myself to listen to Luscinda's answer, awaiting in her reply the sentence of death or the grant of life. Oh, that I had but dared at that moment to rush forward crying aloud, 'Luscinda, Luscinda! have a care what thou dost; remember what thou owest me; bethink thee thou art mine and canst not be another's; reflect that thy utterance of "Yes" and the end of my life will come at the same instant. O, treacherous Don Fernando! robber of my glory, death of my life! What seekest thou? Remember that thou canst not as a Christian attain the object of thy wishes, for Luscinda is my bride, and I am her husband!' Fool that I am! now that I am far away, and out of danger, I say I should have done what I did not do: now that I have allowed my precious treasure to be robbed from me, I curse the robber, on whom I might have taken vengeance had I as much heart for it as I have for bewailing my fate; in short, as I was then a coward and a fool, little wonder is it if I am now dying shame−stricken, remorseful, and mad.

"The priest stood waiting for the answer of Luscinda, who for a long time withheld it; and just as I thought she was taking out the dagger to save her honour, or struggling for words to make some declaration of the truth on my behalf, I heard her say in a faint and feeble voice, 'I will:' Don Fernando said the same, and giving her the ring they stood linked by a knot that could never be loosed. The bridegroom then approached to embrace his bride; and she, pressing her hand upon her heart, fell fainting in her mother's arms. It only remains now for me to tell you the state I was in when in that consent that I heard I saw all my hopes mocked, the words and promises of Luscinda proved falsehoods, and the recovery of the prize I had that instant lost rendered impossible for ever. I stood stupefied, wholly abandoned, it seemed, by Heaven, declared the enemy of the earth that bore me, the air refusing me breath for my sighs, the water moisture for my tears; it was only the fire that gathered strength so that my whole frame glowed with rage and jealousy. They were all thrown into confusion by Luscinda's fainting, and as her mother was unlacing her to give her air a sealed paper was discovered in her bosom which Don Fernando seized at once and began to read by the light of one of the torches. As soon as he had read it he seated himself in a chair, leaning his cheek on his hand in the attitude of one deep in thought, without taking any part in the efforts that were being made to recover his bride from her fainting fit.

"Seeing all the household in confusion, I ventured to come out regardless whether I were seen or not, and determined, if I were, to do some frenzied deed that would prove to all the world the righteous indignation of my breast in the punishment of the treacherous Don Fernando, and even in that of the fickle fainting traitress. But my fate, doubtless reserving me for greater sorrows, if such there be, so ordered it that just then I had enough and to spare of that reason which has since been wanting to me; and so, without seeking to take vengeance on my greatest enemies (which might have been easily taken, as all thought of me was so far from their minds), I resolved to take it upon myself, and on myself to inflict the pain they deserved, perhaps with even greater severity than I should have dealt out to them had I then slain them; for sudden pain is soon over, but that which is protracted by tortures is ever slaying without ending life. In a word, I quitted the house and reached that of the man with whom I had left my mule; I made him saddle it for me, mounted without bidding him farewell, and rode out of the city, like another Lot, not daring to turn my head to look back upon it; and when I found myself alone in the open country, screened by the darkness of the night, and tempted by the stillness to give vent to my grief without apprehension or fear of being heard or seen, then I broke silence and lifted up my voice in maledictions

upon Luscinda and Don Fernando, as if I could thus avenge the wrong they had done me. I called her cruel, ungrateful, false, thankless, but above all covetous, since the wealth of my enemy had blinded the eyes of her affection, and turned it from me to transfer it to one to whom fortune had been more generous and liberal. And yet, in the midst of this outburst of execration and upbraiding, I found excuses for her, saying it was no wonder that a young girl in the seclusion of her parents' house, trained and schooled to obey them always, should have been ready to yield to their wishes when they offered her for a husband a gentleman of such distinction, wealth, and noble birth, that if she had refused to accept him she would have been thought out of her senses, or to have set her affection elsewhere, a suspicion injurious to her fair name and fame. But then again, I said, had she declared I was her husband, they would have seen that in choosing me she had not chosen so ill but that they might excuse her, for before Don Fernando had made his offer, they themselves could not have desired, if their desires had been ruled by reason, a more eligible husband for their daughter than I was; and she, before taking the last fatal step of giving her hand, might easily have said that I had already given her mine, for I should have come forward to support any assertion of hers to that effect. In short, I came to the conclusion that feeble love, little reflection, great ambition, and a craving for rank, had made her forget the words with which she had deceived me, encouraged and supported by my firm hopes and honourable passion.

"Thus soliloquising and agitated, I journeyed onward for the remainder of the night, and by daybreak I reached one of the passes of these mountains, among which I wandered for three days more without taking any path or road, until I came to some meadows lying on I know not which side of the mountains, and there I inquired of some herdsmen in what direction the most rugged part of the range lay. They told me that it was in this quarter, and I at once directed my course hither, intending to end my life here; but as I was making my way among these crags, my mule dropped dead through fatigue and hunger, or, as I think more likely, in order to have done with such a worthless burden as it bore in me. I was left on foot, worn out, famishing, without anyone to help me or any thought of seeking help: and so thus I lay stretched on the ground, how long I know not, after which I rose up free from hunger, and found beside me some goatherds, who no doubt were the persons who had relieved me in my need, for they told me how they had found me, and how I had been uttering ravings that showed plainly I had lost my reason; and since then I am conscious that I am not always in full possession of it, but at times so deranged and crazed that I do a thousand mad things, tearing my clothes, crying aloud in these solitudes, cursing my fate, and idly calling on the dear name of her who is my enemy, and only seeking to end my life in lamentation; and when I recover my senses I find myself so exhausted and weary that I can scarcely move. Most commonly my dwelling is the hollow of a cork tree large enough to shelter this miserable body; the herdsmen and goatherds who frequent these mountains, moved by compassion, furnish me with food, leaving it by the wayside or on the rocks, where they think I may perhaps pass and find it; and so, even though I may be then out of my senses, the wants of nature teach me what is required to sustain me, and make me crave it and eager to take it. At other times, so they tell me when they find me in a rational mood, I sally out upon the road, and though they would gladly give it me, I snatch food by force from the shepherds bringing it from the village to their huts. Thus do pass the wretched life that remains to me, until it be Heaven's will to bring it to a close, or so to order my memory that I no longer recollect the beauty and treachery of Luscinda, or the wrong done me by Don Fernando; for if it will do this without depriving me of life, I will turn my thoughts into some better channel; if not, I can only implore it to have full mercy on my soul, for in myself I feel no power or strength to release my body from this strait in which I have of my own accord chosen to place it.

"Such, sirs, is the dismal story of my misfortune: say if it be one that can be told with less emotion than you have seen in me; and do not trouble yourselves with urging or pressing upon me what reason suggests as likely to serve for my relief, for it will avail me as much as the medicine prescribed by a wise physician avails the sick man who will not take it. I have no wish for health without Luscinda; and since it is her pleasure to be another's, when she is or should be mine, let it be mine to be a prey to misery when I might have enjoyed happiness. She by her fickleness strove to make my ruin irretrievable; I will strive to gratify her wishes by seeking destruction; and it will show generations to come that I alone was deprived of that of which all others in misfortune have a superabundance, for to them the impossibility of being consoled is itself a consolation, while to me it is the cause of greater sorrows and sufferings, for I think that even in death there will not be an end of them."

Here Cardenio brought to a close his long discourse and story, as full of misfortune as it was of love; but just as the curate was going to address some words of comfort to him, he was stopped by a voice that reached his ear,

saying in melancholy tones what will be told in the Fourth Part of this narrative; for at this point the sage and sagacious historian, Cide Hamete Benengeli, brought the Third to a conclusion.