

DON QUIXOTE

MIGUEL DE CERVANTES SAAVEDRA

Read from the Pocket Library Edition by LESTER G. CROCKER

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DON QUIXOTE

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DON QUIXOTE

MIGUEL DE CERVANTES SAAVEDRA

When Cervantes started to write Don Quixote, after the trials and frustrations of his own life, he set out only to mock novels of chivalry; but his book soon grew to vast symbolic dimensions. His burlesque knight-errant turned into one of the great mythic figures of literature, like Faust, Ulysses and Don Juan, incarnating the deepest truths of human nature and the human situation. Don Quixote embodies man's aspirations and his idealism, his endless striving to break through the limits of finiteness and mediocrity that have been assigned him, to create his own reality and meanings, by his own will. But Don Quixote is also the story of frustration and failure, of the ironic absurdity of would-be greatness. Cervantes seems to tell us that man can never be content with the mediocrity which is his lot; yet he seems also to condemn all forms of delusion and self-delusion, with which the novel is filled, as false and harmful. The ultimate lesson, perhaps, is that we must face our poor human nature and our fate as they really are, smile at the necessary failure of our longings, accept life within the unacceptable limits of the possible.

Don Quixote, which came off the presses in 1605, is the first true novel, for it gives us the history of a living character, self-aware and self-directing, who evolves in interaction with a living, organic cultural environment, and the values and individuals it has produced.

Don Quixote is above all a good story, and a masterpiece of humor. The philosophical meanings are so completely transmuted into the esthetic values of character and action, that we are free to overlook them, if we will, and read the book just as a story.

And here is how it begins:

Down in a village of La Mancha,* the name of which I have no desire to recollect, there lived, not long ago, one of those gentlemen who usually keep a lance upon a rack, an old buckler, a lean horse, and a coursing greyhound. Soup, composed of somewhat more mutton than beef, the fragments served up cold on most nights, lentils on Fridays, pains and breakings on Saturdays, and a pigeon, by way of addition, on Sundays, consumed three-fourths of his income; the remainder of it supplied him with a cloak of fine cloth, velvet breeches, with slippers of the same for holidays, and a suit of the best home-spun, in which he adorned himself on week-days. His family consisted of a housekeeper above forty, a niece not quite twenty, and a lad who served him both in the field and at home, who could saddle the horse or handle the pruning-hook. The age of our gentleman bordered upon fifty years; he was of a strong constitution, spare-bodied, of a meagre visage, a very early riser, and a lover of the chase. Some pretend to say that his surname was Quixada, or Quesada, for on this point his historians differ; though, from very probable conjectures, we may conclude that his name was Quixano. This is, however, of little importance to our history; let it suffice that, in relating it, we do not swerve a jot from the truth.

The country gentleman's head is completely turned by the endless reading of novels of chivalry. From these books, he takes a systematic set of keys with which to interpret reality. They constitute an absolute ideal that will crash against the established realities of men, their deceits, and their vices.

In fine, his judgment being completely obscured, he was seized with one of the strangest fancies that ever entered the head of any madman: this was, a belief that it behoved him, as well for the advancement of his glory as the service of his country, to become a knight-errant, and traverse the world, armed and mounted, in quest of adventures, and to practise all that had been performed by knights-errant, of whom he had read; redressing every species of grievance, and exposing himself to dangers which, being surmounted, might secure to him eternal glory and renown. The poor gentleman imagined himself at least crowned emperor of Trebison, by the valour of his arm; and thus wrapped in these agreeable delusions, and borne away by the extraordinary pleasure he found in them, he hastened to put his designs into execution.

Alonso Quijano re-baptizes himself with the name Don Quixote. He also transforms a country wench into Dulcinea--the ideal woman, or simply, the ideal.

Clad in a make-shift suit of armor, mounted on a lean nag dubbed Rocinante, he sets out, joyful and supremely confident.

O happy era, happy age," he continued, "when my glorious deeds shall be revealed to the world! deeds worthy of being engraven on brass, sculptured in marble, and recorded by the pencil! And thou, O sage enchanter, who-soever thou mayest be, destined to chronicle this extraordinary history! forget not, I beseech thee, my good Rozinante, the inseparable companion of all my toils!" Then again, as if really enamoured, he exclaimed, "O Dulcinea, my princess! sovereign of this captive heart! greatly do you wrong me by a cruel adherence to your decree, forbidding me to appear in the presence of your beauty! Deign, O lady, to think on this enslaved heart, which for love of you, endures so many pangs!"

After some amusing adventures at an inn, which our Don takes for a castle, he comes upon a real case of distress--one of two in the entire story. He frees a boy, Andrés, who is being whipped by his cruel master, Juan Haldudo, and orders that his wages be paid.

"The mischief is, señor cavalier," quoth the countryman, "that I have no money about me; but let Andres go home with me, and I will pay him all, real by real." "I go home with him!" said the lad; "the devil a bit! No, sir, I will do no such thing; for when he has me alone, he will flay me like any Saint Bartholomew." "He will not do so," replied Don Quixote; "to keep him in awe, it is sufficient that I lay my commands upon him; and, on condition he swears to me, by the order of knighthood which he has received, I shall let him go free, and will be bound for the payment." "Good sir, think of what you say," quoth the boy; "for my master is no knight, nor ever received any order of knighthood; he is John Aldudo, the rich, of the neighbourhood of Quintanar." "That is little to the purpose," answered Don Quixote; "there may be knights of the family of the Aldudos: more especially as every man is the son of his own

works." "That's true," quoth Andres; "but what works is my master the son of, who refuses me the wages of my sweat and labour?"

Alas, Don Quixote has misjudged the evil in human nature--the irreducible vices that will defeat his mission. No sooner does he depart, than poor Andres is played twice as hard as before.

Don Quixote next meets some merchants and demands they recognize the supreme beauty of Dulcinea. But they insist on material proofs, proofs they can see and touch.

—"Señor cavalier, we do not know who this good lady you mention may be: let us but see her, and if she be really so beautiful as you intimate, we will, with all our hearts, and without any constraint, make the confession you demand of us." "Should I show her to you," replied Don Quixote, "where would be the merit of confessing a truth so manifest? It is essential that, without seeing her, you believe, confess, affirm, swear, and maintain it; and, if not, I challenge you all to battle, proud and monstrous as you are: and, whether you come on one by one (as the laws of chivalry require), or all together, as is the custom and wicked practice of those of your stamp, here I wait for you, confiding in the justice of my cause."

As usual, our knight ends up by being beaten. He returns home, then sallies forth a second time, accompanied by Sancho Panza. Sancho is a peasant who has led only a physical, almost an animal life. Don Quixote opens a new door, a new perspective to him. The reward he promises is to make him governor of an island. At the outset, Sancho sees this only in terms of gain. But Sancho will grow, as he becomes quixotized by the personality of his master. The book is rich in savory, humorous discussions, in which master and squire engage as they wander across the open landscape, the one perched on his lean nag, the other ensconced on his beloved burro.

Engaged in this discourse, they came in sight of thirty or forty windmills, which are in that plain; and, as soon as Don Quixote espied them, he said to his squire: "Fortune disposes our affairs better than we ourselves could have desired: look yonder, friend Sancho Panza, where thou mayest discover somewhat more than thirty monstrous giants, whom I intend to encounter and slay; and with their spoils we will begin to enrich ourselves; for it is lawful war, and doing God good service to remove so wicked a generation from off the face of the earth." "What giants?" said Sancho Panza. "Those thou seest yonder," answered his master, "with their long arms; for some are wont to have them almost of the length of two leagues." "Look, sir," answered Sancho, "those which appear yonder are not giants, but windmills; and what seem to be arms are the sails, which, whirled about by the wind, make the mill-stone go." "It is very evident," answered Don Quixote, "that thou art not versed in the business of adventures: they are giants: and, if thou art afraid, get thee aside and pray, whilst I engage with them in fierce and unequal combat." So saying, he clapped spurs to his steed, notwithstanding the cries his squire sent after him, assuring him that they were certainly windmills, and not giants. But he was so fully possessed that they were giants, that he neither heard the outcries of his squire Sancho, nor yet discerned what they were, though he was very near them, but went on crying out aloud: "Fly not, ye cowards and vile caitiffs; for it is a single knight who assaults you." The wind now rising a little, the great sails began to move; upon which Don Quixote called out: "Although ye should have more arms than the giant Briareus, ye shall pay for it."

Then recommending himself devoutly to his lady Dulcinea, beseeching her to succour him in the present danger, being well covered with his buckler, and setting his lance in the rest, he rushed on as fast as Rozinante could gallop, and attacked the first mill before him; when, running his lance into the sail, the wind whirled it about with so much violence that it broke the lance to shivers, dragging horse and rider after it, and tumbling them over and over on the plain, in very evil plight. Sancho Panza hastened to his assistance,

as fast as the ass could carry him; and when he came up to his master, he found him unable to stir, so violent was the blow which he and Rozinante had received in their fall. "God save me!" quoth Sancho, "did not I warn you to have a care of what you did, for that they were nothing but windmills? And nobody could mistake them, but one that had the like in his head." "Peace, friend Sancho," answered Don Quixote: "for matters of war are, of all others, most subject to continual change. Now I verily believe, and it is most certainly the fact, that the sage Freston, who stole away my chamber and books, has metamorphosed these giants into windmills, on purpose to deprive me of the glory of vanquishing them, so great is the enmity he bears me! But his wicked arts will finally avail but little against the goodness of my sword." "God grant it!" answered Sancho Panza; then helping him to rise, he mounted him again upon his steed, which was almost disjointed.

We must skip many of our hero's adventures, including a wild night in the same enchanted inn. They are almost all disastrous; but Don Quixote rationalizes his defeats. The first real blow to his system comes when he frees a chain of criminals who are being led to the galleys.

Then turning about to the whole string, he said: "From all you have told me, dearest brethren! I clearly gather that, although it be only the punishment of your crimes, you do not much relish what you are to suffer, and that you go to it with ill-will, and much against your inclination; and that, probably, the pusillanimity of him who was put to the torture, this man's want of money, and the other's want of friends, and, in short, the biased sentence of the judge, may have been the cause of your not meeting with that justice to which you have a right. Now this being the case, as I am strongly persuaded it is, my mind prompts and even compels me to manifest in you the purpose for which Heaven cast me into the world, and ordained me to profess the order of chivalry, which I do profess, and the vow I thereby made to succour the needy, and those oppressed by the powerful.

He asks the guard to release their prisoners, and they refuse. The guards try to send him along.

Go on your way, señor, and adjust the basin on your noddle, and do not go feeling about for three legs to a cat." "You are a cat, and a rat, and a rascal to boot!" answered Don Quixote: and thereupon, with a word and a blow, he attacked him so suddenly, that, before he could stand upon his defence, he threw him to the ground, much wounded with a thrust of the lance;

Having liberated the prisoners, he addresses them. He asks them to report in person to Dulcinea. The galley-slaves of course refuse to do what their liberator asks.

"I vow, then!" quoth Don Quixote, in a rage, "Don son of a strumpet, Don Ginesillo de Parapilla, or whatever you call yourself, that you alone shall go with your tail between your legs, and the whole chain upon your back!" Passamonte, who was not over passive, seeing himself thus treated, and being aware that Don Quixote, from what he had just done, was not in his right senses, gave a signal to his comrades, upon which they all retired a few paces, and then began to rain such a shower of stones upon Don Quixote, that he could not contrive to cover himself with his buckler;

Our poor knight is very badly bruised. He continues on his way, shaken and saddened by man's evil and ingratitude. With Sancho, he makes his way into the mountains, where, he has decided, he will act like a madman, out of love for Dulcinea. Here we see his quixotism.

"It seems to me," quoth Sancho, "that the knights who acted in such manner were provoked to it, and had a reason for these follies and penances; but pray what cause has your worship to run mad? What lady has disdained

you? or what tokens have you discovered to convince you that the lady Dulcinea del Toboso has committed folly either with Moor or Christian?" "There lies the point," answered Don Quixote, "and in this consists the refinement of my plan. A knight-errant who runs mad with just cause deserves no thanks; but to do so without reason is the point; giving my lady to understand what I should perform in the wet if I do this in the dry.

Don Quixote's village friends, the priest and the barber, set out to find him and take him back home to be cured of his folly. After all, madmen are dangerous, especially when they wish to slay giants and enchanters, and bring back the Golden Age. Through trickery, they persuade him to follow them. At one point, they make fun of a certain madman who has released a chain of criminals.

Laughing in his sleeve, Sancho said, as soon as the priest had done speaking, "By my troth, señor licentiate, it was my master who did that feat; not but that I gave him fair warning, and advised him to mind what he was about, and that it was a sin to set them at liberty; for that they were all going to the galleys for being most notorious villains." "Blockhead!" said Don Quixote, "knights-errant are not bound to inquire whether the afflicted, fettered, and oppressed whom they meet upon the road, are brought to that situation by their faults or their misfortunes. It is their part to assist them under oppression, and to regard their sufferings, not their crimes. I encountered a rosary and string of miserable wretches, and acted towards them as my profession required of me. As for the rest, I care not; and whoever takes it amiss, saving the holy dignity of señor the licentiate, and his reverend person, I say he knows but little of the principles of chivalry, and lies in his throat; and this I will maintain with the edge of my sword!" So saying, he fixed himself firmly in his stirrups and lowered his vizor; for Mambrino's helmet, as he called it, hung useless at his saddle-bow, until it could be repaired of the damage it had received from the galley-slaves.

Sancho provokes Don Quixote's wrath by suggesting he give up Dulcinea--who after all is not so beautiful--and marry the supposed princess Micomicona.

Don Quixote, unable to endure such blasphemies against his lady Dulcinea, raised his lance, and, without word or warning, let it fall with such violence upon Sancho that he was laid flat on the ground; and had not Dorothea called out entreating him to forbear, the squire had doubtless been killed on the spot. "Thinkest thou," said Don Quixote to him, after a short pause, "base varlet! that I am always to stand with my arms folded; and that there is to be nothing but transgression on thy side, and forgiveness on mine? Expect it not, excommunicated wretch! for so thou surely art, having presumed to speak ill of the peerless Dulcinea. Knowest thou not, rustic, slave, beggar! that were it not for the power she infuses into my arm, I should not have enough to kill a flea? Tell me, envenomed scoffer! who, thinkest thou, has gained this kingdom, and cut off the head of this giant, and made thee a marquis (all of which I look upon as done), but the valour of Dulcinea, employing my arm as the instrument of her exploits? She fights, she vanquishes in me; in her I live and breathe, and of her I hold my life and being. O, base-born villain! what ingratitude, when thou seest thyself exalted from the dust of the earth to the title of a lord, to make so base a return as to speak contemptuously of the hand that raised thee."

A second blow to Don Quixote's confidence comes when the party runs across Andrés, the whipped boy. Don Quixote boasts how he had righted a wrong.

Is not all this true, son Andres? Didst thou not observe with what authority I commanded, and with what humility he promised to do whatever I enjoined, notified, and required of him? Answer boldly: relate to this company what passed, that they may see the benefits resulting from the vocation of knights-errant." "All that your worship has said is very true," answered the lad; "but the business ended quite contrary to what your worship supposes." "How, contrary?" replied Don Quixote: "did not the rustic instantly pay thee?" "He not only did not pay me," answered the boy, "but as soon as your worship was out of the wood and

we were left alone, he tied me again to the same tree, and gave me so many fresh lashes that I was flayed like any Saint Bartholomew; and at every stroke he said something by way of scoff or jest upon your worship, which, if I had not felt so much pain, would have made me laugh. In short, he laid on in such a manner that I have been ever since in a hospital, to get cured of the bruises that cruel fellow then gave me: for all which your worship is to blame, for had you gone on your way, and not come when you were not called, nor meddled with other folks' business, my master would have been satisfied with giving me a dozen or two of lashes, and then would have loosed me, and paid me my due. But, as your worship abused him so unmercifully, and called him so many bad names, his wrath was kindled; and, not having it in his power to be revenged on you, no sooner had you left him than he discharged such a tempest upon me that I shall never be a man again while I live."

"The mischief," said Don Quixote, "was in my departing before I had seen you paid; for I should have known, by long experience, that no rustic will keep his word, if he finds it his interest to break it.

Don Quixote offers to go back and see that justice is done, but this Andrés refuses.

"For the love of Heaven, señor knight-errant, if you ever meet me again, though you see me beaten to pieces, do not come with your help, but leave me to my fate, which cannot be so bad but that it will be made worse by your worship, whom God confound, together with all the knights-errant that ever were born!" So saying, he ran off with so much speed that nobody attempted to follow him. Don Quixote was much abashed at this affair of Andres, and his companions endeavoured to restrain their inclination to laugh, that they might not put him quite out of countenance.

After many adventures, Don Quixote is 'enchanted' by his good friends, that is, tied up and put into a cage, despite loyal Sancho's protests. He is brought back to his village, to be cured of his folly. And so, he who set forth to restore justice to the world is sent home in a cage.

But the will of the knight-errant cannot be contained. Once again, Cervantes sends his two creations out into the world, in the Second Part of *Don Quixote*, published in 1615, ten years after the first. In the second part his work reaches its widest dimensions.

Out of his own interest, Sancho tricks his master, and makes him believe that a repulsive country wench, with garlic-laden breath, is Dulcinea. Don Quixote concludes that she has been enchanted by his enemies. The rest of the story becomes in large part his quest for the disenchantment of his ideal, in adventures that are mostly fabricated by others who wish to enjoy themselves at the expense of his torment.

For a while, Don Quixote's self-confidence is restored, after he defeats a knight in single combat. The knight turns out to be Sansón Carrasco, the village intellectual, smug in possession of the truth, who mocks and resents Don Quixote. To the knight-errant, the appearance of Sansón Carrasco is explained as the work of enchanters.

Indeed, already thou knowest by experience, Sancho, how easy a thing it is for enchanters to change one face into another, making the fair foul, and the foul fair; since not two days ago, thou sawest with thine own eyes the grace and beauty of the peerless Dulcinea in their highest perfection, while to me she appeared under the mean and disgusting exterior of a rude country-wench, with cataracts on her eyes, and a bad smell in her mouth. If, then, the wicked enchanter durst make so foul a transformation, no wonder at this deception of his, in order to snatch the glory of victory out of my hands! However, I am gratified in knowing that, whatever was the form he pleased to assume, my triumph over him was complete." "Heaven knows the truth of all things," answered

Sancho; who, well knowing the transformation of Dulcinea to have been a device of his own, was not quite satisfied with his master's elucidations: but he would make no reply, lest he should betray himself.

They join up with a gentleman in a green riding-coat. Don Quixote notices that the traveler is taken aback at his strange appearance.

"You are probably surprised, señor, at my appearance, which is certainly uncommon in the present age; but this will be explained when I tell you that I am a knight in search of adventures. I left my country, mortgaged my estate, quitted ease and pleasures, and threw myself into the arms of fortune. I wished to revive chivalry, so long deceased; and for some time past, exposed to many vicissitudes, stumbling in one place, and rising again in another, I have prosecuted my design; succouring widows, protecting damsels, aiding wives and orphans—all the natural and proper duties of knights-errant. And thus, by many valorous and Christian exploits, I have acquired the deserved honour of being in print throughout all or most of the nations in the world. Thirty thousand copies are already published of my history, and, heaven permitting, thirty thousand thousands more are likely to be printed. Finally, to sum up all in a single word, know that I am Don Quixote de la Mancha, otherwise called the Knight of the Sorrowful Figure! Though self-praise depreciates, I am compelled sometimes to pronounce my own commendations, but it is only when no friend is present to perform that office for me. And now, my worthy sir, that you know my profession, and who I am, you will cease to wonder at my appearance."

Don Quixote said that, since he had so freely described himself, he hoped he might be permitted to ask who he was. To which the traveller answered, "I, sir knight of the sorrowful figure, am a gentleman, and native of a village where, if it please Heaven, we shall dine to-day. My fortune is affluent, and my name is Don Diego de Miranda. I spend my time with my wife, my children, and my friends: my diversions are hunting and fishing; but I keep neither hawks nor greyhounds, only some decoy partridges, and a stout ferret. I have about six dozen of books, Spanish and Latin, some of history, and some of devotion: those of chivalry have not come over my threshold. I am more inclined to the reading of profane than devout authors, provided they are well written, ingenious, and harmless in their tendency, though, in truth, there are very few books of this kind in Spain. Sometimes I eat with my neighbours and friends, and frequently I invite them; my table is neat and clean, and not parsimoniously furnished. I slander no one, nor do I listen to slander from others. I pry not into other men's lives, nor scrutinize their actions. I hear mass every day; I share my substance with the poor, making no parade of my good works, lest hypocrisy and vain-glory, those insidious enemies of the human breast, should find access to mine. It is always my endeavour to make peace between those who are at variance. I am devoted to our blessed Lady, and ever trust in the infinite mercy of God our Lord."

Sancho was very attentive to the account of this gentleman's life, which appeared to him to be good and holy; and, thinking that one of such a character must needs work miracles, he flung himself off his Dapple, and, running up to him, he laid hold of his right stirrup; then, devoutly, and almost with tears, he kissed his feet more than once. "What mean you by this, brother?" said the gentleman; "why these embraces?" "Pray let me kiss on," answered Sancho; "for your worship is the first saint on horseback I ever saw in all my life." "I am not a saint," answered the gentleman, "but a great sinner: you, my friend, must indeed be good, as your simplicity proves."

The party meets a man driving a cart with two lions in it. Don Quixote wishes to prove his courage, by a pure, quixotic act, one with no other motive or purpose. He demands the cage be opened, despite the protests of all the company.

"What!" said Don Quixote, with a scornful smile, "Lion-whelps against me! Against me, your puny monsters! and at this time of day! By yon blessed sun! those who sent them hither shall see whether I am a man to be scared by lions. Alight, honest friend! and, since you are their keeper, open the cages and turn out your savages of the desert: for in the midst of this field will I make them know who Don Quixote de la Mancha is, in spite of the enchanterers that sent them hither to me."

"Sir," said he, "knights-errant should engage in adventures that, at least, afford some prospect of success, and not such as are altogether desperate; for the valour which borders on temerity has in it more of madness than courage."

"Sweet sir," answered Don Quixote, "go hence, and mind your decoy partridge and your stout ferret, and leave every one to his functions. This is mine, and I shall see whether these gentlemen lions will come against me or not." Then, turning to the keeper, he said, "I vow to Heaven, Don Rascal, if thou dost not instantly open the cages, with this lance I will pin thee to the cart." The carter seeing that the armed lunatic was resolute, "Good sir," said he, "for charity's sake, be pleased to let me take off my mules and get with them out of danger, before the lions are let loose: for should my cattle be killed, I am undone for ever, as I have no other means of living than by this cart and these mules." "Incredulous wretch!" cried Don Quixote, "unyoke and do as thou wilt; but thou shalt soon see that thy trouble might have been spared."

The rest all run away, and Don Quixote calmly faces one of the lions.

Here the author of this faithful history breaks out into the following exclamation:—"O most magnanimous, potent, and beyond all expression courageous, Don Quixote de la Mancha! Thou mirror of heroes, and grand exemplar of valour! Thou new and second Don Manuel de Leon—the glory and pride of Spanish knights! In what words shall I describe this tremendous exploit—how render it credible to succeeding ages? What praise or panegyric can be imagined, though above all hyperboles hyperbolic, that does not belong to thee? Thou who, alone, firm, fearless, and intrepid, armed with a single sword, and that none of the sharpest, defended with a single shield, and that neither broad nor bright, stoodest expecting and braving two of the fiercest lions that ever roared in Libyan desert! But let thine own unrivalled deeds speak thy praise, valorous Manchegan! for I have no words equal to the lofty theme." Here the author ends his exclamation, and resumes the thread of the history.

The keeper seeing Don Quixote fixed in his posture, and that he could not avoid letting loose the lion without incurring the resentment of the angry and daring knight, set wide open the door of the first cage, where the monster lay, which appeared to be of an extraordinary size, and of a hideous and frightful aspect. The first thing the creature did was to turn himself round in the cage, reach out a paw, and stretch himself at full length. Then he opened his mouth and yawned very leisurely; after which he threw out some half-yard of tongue, wherewith he licked and washed his face. This done, he thrust his head out of the cage, and stared round on all sides with eyes like red-hot coals: a sight to have struck temerity itself with terror! Don Quixote observed him with fixed attention, impatient for him to leap out of his den, that he might grapple with him and tear him to pieces; to such a height of extravagance was he transported by his unheard-of frenzy! But the generous lion, more gentle than arrogant, taking no notice of his vapouring and bravadoes, after having stared about him, turned himself round, and, showing his posteriors to Don Quixote, calmly and quietly laid himself down again in the cage.

Knight and squire meet a duchess, who has read the first part of the novel. They are invited to her castle, which is to be Don Quixote's Inferno. The duke and duchess pretend to accept Don Quixote for what he is, so that he himself, Alonso Quijano, for the first time

comes really to believe it. Mercilessly and cruelly, these corrupt sophisticates torment him and Sancho in their naive sincerity, thinking this to be great fun.

Don Quixote then dressed himself, girt on his sword, threw the scarlet mantle over his shoulders, put on a green satin cap which the damsels had given him, and thus equipped marched out into the great saloon, where he found the damsels drawn up on each side in two equal ranks, and all of them provided with an equipage for washing his hands, which they administered with many reverences and much ceremony. Then came twelve pages, with the major-domo, to conduct him to dinner, the lord and lady being now waiting for him; and, having placed him in the midst of them with great pomp and ceremony, they proceeded to another hall, where a rich table was spread with four covers only. The duke and duchess came to the door to receive him, accompanied by a grave ecclesiastic—one of those who govern great men's houses: one of those who, not being nobly born themselves, are unable to direct the conduct of those who are so; who would have the liberality of the great measured by the narrowness of their own souls: making those whom they govern penurious, under the pretence of teaching them to be prudent. One of this species was the grave ecclesiastic who came out with the duke to receive Don Quixote.

Then turning to Don Quixote, he said—"And you, señor addle-pate, who has thrust it into your brain that you are a knight-errant, and that you vanquish giants and robbers? Go, get you home in a good hour, and in such are you now admonished; return to your family, and look to your children, if you have any: mind your affairs, and cease to be a vagabond about the world, sucking the wind, and drawing on yourself the derision of all that know you, or know you not. Where, with a murmur, have you ever found that there are, or ever were, in the world such creatures as knights-errant? Where are there giants in Spain, or catiffs in La Mancha, or enchanted Dulcineas, or all the rabble rout of follies that are told of you?"

Springing to his feet, Don Quixote, trembling like quicksilver from head to foot, in an agitated voice said, "Tell me, I beseech your reverence, for which of the follies you have observed in me do you thus condemn and revile me, desiring me to go home and take care of my house, and of my wife and children, without knowing whether I have either? What! there is nothing more to do, then, but boldly enter into other men's houses, and govern the masters, for a poor pedagogue, who never saw more of the world than twenty or thirty leagues around him, rashly to presume to give laws to chivalry, and pass judgments upon knights-errant!"

A knight I am, and a knight I will die, if it be Heaven's good will. Some choose the spacious field of proud ambition; others the mean path of servile and base flattery; some seek the way of deceitful hypocrisy, and others that of true religion: but I, directed by the star that rules my fate, take the narrow path of knight-errantry; despising wealth, but thirsting for honour. I have redressed grievances, righted wrongs, chastised insolence, vanquished giants, and trampled upon hobgoblins: I am enamoured—for knights-errant must be so; but I am conscious of no licentious passion—my love is of the chaste Platonic kind. My intentions are always directed to virtuous ends—to do good to all, and injury to none. Whether he who thus means, thus acts, and thus lives, deserves to be called fool, let your highnesses judge, most excellent duke and duchess."

"Well said, I' faith!" quoth Sancho. "Say no more for yourself, good lord and master: for there is nothing more in the world to be said, thought, or done. And, besides, this gentleman denying, as he has denied, that there neither are, nor ever were, knights-errant, no wonder if he knows nothing of what he has been talking about." "So then," said the ecclesiastic, "you, I suppose, are the same Sancho Panza they talk of, to whom it is said your master has promised an island?" "I am that Sancho," replied the squire, "and deserve it too, as well as any other man whatever. Of such as me, it is said, 'Keep company with the good, and thou wilt be one of them;' and, 'Not with whom thou wert bred, but with whom thou hast fed;' and, 'He that leaneth against a good tree, a good shelter findeth he.' I have leaned and stuck close to a good master these many months, and shall be such another as he, if it be God's good pleasure; and if he lives, and I live, neither shall he want kingdoms to rule, nor I islands to govern."

"That you shall not, friend Sancho," said the duke, "for in the name of Señor Don Quixote, I promise you the govern-

ment of one of mine now vacant, and of no inconsiderable value."

"Kneel, Sancho," said Don Quixote, "and kiss his excellency's feet for the favour he has done thee." Sancho did so; upon which the ecclesiastic got up from the table in great wrath, saying, "By the habit I wear, I could find in my heart to say that your excellency is as simple as these sinners; no wonder they are mad, since wise men authorize their follies! Your excellency may stay with them, if you please; but while they are in this house I will remain in my own, and save myself the trouble of reproving where I cannot amend." Then, without saying another word, and leaving his meal unfinished, away he went, in spite of the entreaties of the duke and duchess: though, indeed, the duke could not say much, through laughter at his foolish petulance.

In a costly and fantastic pageant, representing the knights of chivalry in the underworld, Don Quixote and Sancho are told how Dulcinea can be disenchanted.

Would'st thou to beauty's pristine state restore
Th' enchanted dame, Sancho, thy faithful squire,
Must to his brawny buttocks, bare expos'd,
Three thousand and three hundred stripes apply,
Such as may sting and give him smarting pain:
The authors of her change have thus decreed,
And this is Merlin's errand from the shades."

"What!" quoth Sancho, "three thousand lashes! 'Od's-flesh! I will as soon give myself three stabs as three single lashes—much less three thousand! The devil take this way of disenchanting! I cannot see what my buttocks have to do with enchantments. Before Heaven! if Señor Merlin can find out no other way to disenchant the lady Dulcinea del Toboso, enchanted she may go to her grave for me!" "Not lash thyself! thou garlic-eating wretch!" quoth Don Quixote; "I shall take thee to a tree, and tie thee naked as thou wert born, and there, not three thousand and three hundred, but six thousand six hundred lashes will I give thee, and those so well laid on that three thousand three hundred hard tugs shall not tug them off. So answer me not a word, scoundrell for I will tear thy very soul out!" "It must not be so," said Merlin; "the lashes that honest Sancho is to receive must not be applied by force, but with his good will, and at whatever time he pleases, for no term is fixed:

"Neither another hand nor my own," quoth Sancho, "no hand, either heavy or light, shall touch my flesh. Was the lady Dulcinea brought forth by me, that my posteriors must pay for the transgressions of her eyes? My master, indeed, who is part of her, since at every step he is calling her his life, his soul, his support, and stay—he it is who ought to lash himself for her, and do all that is needful for her delivery; but for me to whip myself—no, I pronounce it!"

No sooner had Sancho thus declared himself, than the spangled nymph who sat by the side of Merlin arose, and throwing aside her veil, discovered a face of extraordinary beauty: and with a masculine air, and no very amiable voice, addressed herself to Sancho: "O wretched squire! Cast, thou marble-hearted wretch!—cast, I say, those huge goggle eyes upon these lovely orbs of mine, that shine like glittering stars, and thou wilt see them weep, drop by drop, and stream after stream, making furrows, tracks, and paths down these beautiful cheeks!"

Lash, untamed beast! lash away on that brawny flesh of thine, and rouse from that base sloth which only inclines thee to eat and eat again; and restore to me the delicacy of my skin, the sweetness of my temper, and all the charms of beauty; and if for my sake thou wilt not be mollified into reasonable compliance, let the anguish of that miserable knight stir thee to compassion—thy master I mean, whose soul I see sticking crosswise in his throat, not ten inches from his lips, waiting only thy cruel or kind answer either to fly out of his mouth, or return joyfully into his bosom."

The duke obliges Sancho to accept, and then rewards him by appointing him to the supposed governorship of a supposed island. Don Quixote rejoices, but he is also sad, at his own failure and the world's injustice.

"I am thankful to Heaven, friend Sancho, that, even before fortune has crowned my hopes, prosperity has gone forth to meet thee. I, who had trusted in my own success for the reward of thy services, am still but on the road to advancement, whilst thou, prematurely and before all reasonable expectation, art come into full possession of thy wishes. Some must bribe, importune, solicit, attend early, pray, persist, and yet do not obtain what they desire; whilst another comes, and,

without knowing how, jumps at once into the preferment for which so many had sued in vain. It is truly said that 'merit does much, but fortune more.' Thou, who in respect to me, are but a very simpleton, without either early rising or late watching, without labour of body or mind, by the air alone of knight-errantry breathing on thee, findest thyself the governor of an island, as if it were a trifle, a thing of no account!

Don Quixote is left alone, unhappy and depressed, but his tormentors give him no respite. Sancho turns out to be a marvel of wisdom and honesty in his post as governor. But this, too, is contrary to the established and necessary order of things, in the world of human beings. Sancho fails because men want him to fail; and because of his own shortcomings. In a mock battle he is trampled on. Gone is the new wisdom. Frightened for his own security and well-being, he resigns his post.

At length, having put on his clothes, which he did slowly, and with much difficulty, from his bruises, he bent his way to the stable, followed by all present, and going straight to Dapple, he embraced him, and gave him a kiss of peace on his forehead. "Come hither," said he, with tears in his eyes, "my friend, and the partner of my fatigues and miseries. When I consorted with thee, and had no other care but mending thy furniture, and feeding that little carcass of thine, happy were my hours, my days, and my years: but since I forsook thee, and mounted the towers of ambition and pride, a thousand toils, a thousand torments, and ten thousand tribulations, have seized and worried my soul."

"Make way, gentlemen, make way, and let me return to my ancient liberty; let me seek the life I have left, that I may rise again from this grave. I was not born to be a governor, nor to defend islands nor cities from enemies that break in upon them. I understand better how to plough and dig, to plant and prune vines, than to make laws, and take care of provinces or kingdoms. Saint Peter is well at Rome:—I mean to say, that nothing becomes a man so well as the employment he was born for.

I had rather lay under the shade of an oak in summer, and wrap myself in a jerkin of double sheep's-skin in winter, at my liberty, than lay me down, under the slavery of a government, between Holland sheets, and be robed in fine sables. Heaven be with you, gentlefolks; tell my lord duke that naked was I born, and naked I am; I neither win nor lose; for without a penny came I to this government, and without a penny do I leave it—all governors cannot say the like. Every sheep with its like; stretch not your feet beyond your sheet; so let me be gone, for it grows late."

Master and squire set out once more, disillusioned, but happy to be together again, happy to be free of their tormentors, the duke and duchess. But the final blow is now at hand. They reach Barcelona. Once more Don Quixote is challenged by a strange Knight, he of the White Moon. The loser must declare the winner's lady to be the fairest in the world, and give up knight-errantry for one year.

and now Don Quixote, recommending himself to Heaven, and (as usual on such occasions) to his lady Dulcinea, retired again to take a larger compass, seeing his adversary do the like; and without sound of trumpet or other warlike instrument, to give signal for the onset, they both turned their horses about at the same instant; but he of the White Moon being mounted on the fleetest steed, met Don Quixote before he had run half his career, and then, without touching him with his lance, which he seemed purposely to raise, he encountered him with such impetuosity that both horse and rider came to the ground; he then sprang upon him, and, clapping his lance to his vizor, he said, "Knight, you are vanquished and a dead man, if you confess not, according to the conditions of our challenge."

Don Quixote, bruised and stunned, without lifting up his vizor, and as if speaking from a tomb, said in a feeble and low voice, "Dulcinea del Toboso is the most beautiful woman in the world, and I am the most unfortunate knight on earth, nor is it just that my weakness should discredit this truth; knight, push on your lance, and take away my life, since you have despoiled me of my honour."

"Not so, by my life!" quoth he of the White Moon: "long may the beauty and fame of the lady Dulcinea del Toboso

flourish! All I demand of the great Don Quixote is, that he submit to one year's domestic repose and respite from the exercise of arms."

The victorious Knight of the Moon is none other than Don Quixote's good 'friend' Sansón Carrasco, who had vowed to revenge himself for his earlier defeat at Don Quixote's hands.

This is the final blow. It puts an end to the adventures, and to the possibility of all further adventures. Don Quixote has been defeated by another knight, and his faith in his invincibility, in himself and in his mission are gone. He begins perhaps to suspect that Dulcinea will never be disenchanted. Nevertheless, he urges Sancho to carry out the whippings, but Sancho refuses.

"O thou soul of flint!" cried Don Quixote; "O remorseless squire! O bread ill-bestowed! A poor requital for favours already conferred and those intended! Through me thou hast been a governor; through me art thou in a fair way to have the title of an earl, or some other equally honourable, and which will be delayed no longer than this year of obscurity; for *Post tenebras spero lucem*."

"I know not what that means," replied Sancho; "I only know that while I am asleep I have neither fear nor hope, nor trouble nor glory. Blessings light on him who first invented sleep!—it covers a man all over, body and mind, like a cloak: it is meat to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, heat to the cold, and cold to the hot: it is the coin that can purchase all things: the balance that makes the shepherd equal with the king, the fool with the wise man. It has only one fault as I have heard say, which is, that it looks like death: for between the sleeper and the corpse there is but little to choose."

Sancho is slipping back, for the dream is over. He tricks his master, takes his money for whipping himself, and instead flays the trees. No, Dulcinea cannot be disenchanted. For Sancho Panza--the 'natural' man--can go no higher than his own self-interest.

They are overtaken on the road by a horde of swine being driven to market.

The wide-spreading host of grunTERS came crowding on, and without showing the smallest degree of respect for the lofty character of Don Quixote or of Sancho his squire, threw down both master and man, demolishing Sancho's entrenchment, and laying even Rozinante in the dust! On they went, and bore all before them, overthrowing pack-saddle, armour, knight, squire, horse, and all; treading and trampling over everything without remorse. Sancho with some difficulty recovered his legs, and desired his master to lend him his sword, that he might slay half a dozen at least of those unmannerly swine—for he had now discovered what they were; but Don Quixote admonished him not to hurt them. "Heaven," said he, "has inflicted this disgrace upon my guilty head: it is no more than a just punishment that dogs should devour, hornets sting, and hogs trample on a vanquished knight-errant."

"And Heaven, I suppose," quoth Sancho, "has sent fleas to sting and bite, and hunger to famish us poor squires, for keeping such knights company. If we squires were the sons of the knights we serve, or their kinsmen, it would be no wonder that we should share in their punishments, even to the third and fourth generation: but what have the Panzas to do with the Quixotes? Well, let us to our litter again, and try to sleep out the little that is left of the night, and God will send daylight, and mayhap better luck." "Sleep thou, Sancho," said Don Quixote, "who wert born to sleep, whilst I, who was born to watch, allow my thoughts, till daybreak, to range, and give a tuneful vent to my sorrow in a little madrigal which I have just composed."

Don Quixote fails to react to several possible adventures. His value-system has been destroyed. The springs of action are paralyzed. He becomes apathetic. Perhaps Sancho was right, after all,

about it being better to be a monk or a saint. 'They conquered Heaven by force of arms, because Heaven suffers violence, but I thus far do not know what I conquer by my labors.'

They return home again. The knight is put to bed with a high fever. During his sleep, Don Quixote dies, and Alonso Quijano awakens, a sane man again.

—"Praised be Almighty God, who has vouchsafed me so great a blessing!

My judgment is now clear, and freed from the dark clouds of ignorance with which the continual reading of those detestable books of chivalry had obscured it. I now see their extravagance and folly, and am only grieved that this discovery happens so late as to leave me no time to profit by such books as might improve and enlighten my soul. I feel myself, niece, at the point of death, and I would fain wash away the stain of madness from my character; for though in my life I have been deservedly accounted a lunatic, I earnestly desire that the truth thereof shall not be confirmed at my death. Go, therefore, dear child, and call hither my good friends the priest, the bachelor Samson Carrasco, and Master Nicholas the barber; for I would fain make my confession and my will."

Fortunately, at that moment, his three friends entered. As soon as Don Quixote saw them, he exclaimed, "Give me joy, good gentlemen, that I am no longer Don Quixote de la Mancha, but Alonso Quixano, the same whom the world, for his fair and honest life, was pleased to surname the Good. I am now an utter enemy to Amadis de Gaul and all his generation. Now the senseless and profane histories of knight-errantry are to me disgusting and odious; I now acknowledge my folly, and perceive the danger into which I was led by reading them; and now, through the mercy of God, and my own dear-bought experience, I abhor them."

Alonso Quijano--or is it Quixada, or Quesana? --has rejected Don Quixote, renounced and condemned his dream of self-creation, of self-surpassing. We are not free to remake reality, but must do the best we can in the world as it is. He confesses, and dictates his will. Three days later he dies, like a Christian gentleman.

But despite Alonso Quijano's own renunciation, can the world of men ever forget Don Quixote, ever forget their own tragi-comic aspirations?

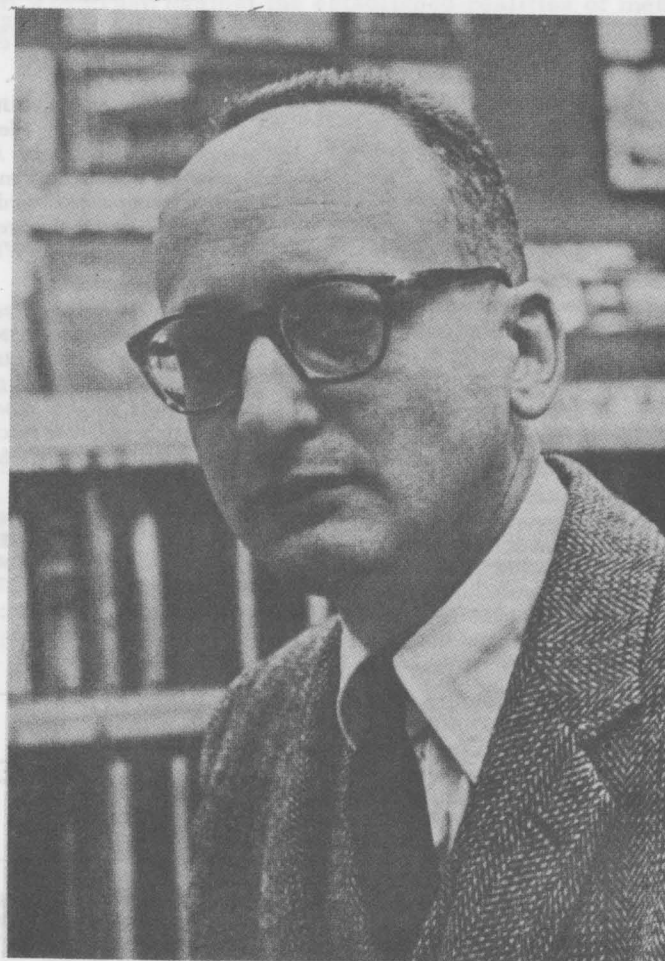


Photo by David Gahr

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