

CHAPTER IV

WHAT BEFEL THE KNIGHT AFTER HE HAD LEFT
THE INN

AURORA began to usher in the morn, when Don Quixote sallied out of the inn, so well pleased, so gay, and so overjoyed to find himself knighted, that he infused the same satisfaction into his horse, who seemed ready to burst his girths for joy. But calling to mind the admonitions which the inn-keeper had given him, concerning the provision of necessary accommodation in his travels, particularly money and clean shirts, he resolved to return home to furnish himself with them, and likewise get him a squire, designing to entertain as such a labouring man, his neighbour, who was poor and had a charge of children, but yet very fit for the office. With this resolution he took the road which led to his own village; and Rozinante, that seemed to know his will by instinct, began to carry him a round trot so briskly, that his heels seemed scarcely to touch the ground.

The knight had not travelled far, when he fancied he heard an effeminate voice complaining in a thicket on his right hand. "I thank Heaven," said he, when he heard the cries, "for favouring me so soon with an opportunity to perform the duty of my profession, and reap the fruits of my desire! for these complaints are certainly the moans of some distressed creature who wants my present help." Then turning to that side with all the speed which Rozinante could make, he no sooner came into the wood but he found a mare tied to an oak, and to another a young lad about fifteen years of age, naked from the waist upwards. This was he who made such a lamentable outcry; and not without cause, for a lusty country-fellow was strapping him soundly with a girdle, at every stripe putting him in mind of a proverb, *Keep your mouth shut, and your eyes open, sirrah*. "Good master," cried the boy, "I'll do so no more; as I hope to be saved, I'll never do so again! indeed, master, hereafter I'll take more care of your goods." Don Quixote seeing this, cried in an angry tone, "Discourteous knight, 'tis an unworthy act to strike a person who is not able to defend himself: come, bestride thy steed, and take thy lance," (for the farmer had something that looked like one

leaning to the same tree to which his mare was tied,) "then I'll make thee know thou hast acted the part of a coward." The country-fellow, who gave himself for lost at the sight of an apparition in armour brandishing his lance at his face, answered him in mild and submissive words: "Sir Knight," cried he, "this boy, whom I am chastising, is my servant, employed by me to look after a flock of sheep, which I have not far off; but he is so heedless, that I lose some of them every day. Now, because I correct him for his carelessness or his knavery, he says I do it out of covetousness, to defraud him of his wages; but, upon my life and soul, he belies me."—"What! the lie in my presence, you saucy clown," cried Don Quixote; "by the sun that shines, I have a good mind to run thee through the body with my lance. Pay the boy this instant, without any more words, or, by the power that rules us all, I'll immediately dispatch, and annihilate thee: come, unbind him this moment." The country-man hung down his head, and without any further reply unbound the boy; who being asked by Don Quixote what his master owed him? told him it was nine months' wages, at seven reals a month. The knight having cast it up, found it came to sixty-three reals in all;

which he ordered the farmer to pay the fellow immediately, unless he intended to lose his life that very moment. The poor country-man, trembling for fear, told him, that, as he was on the brink of death, by the oath he had sworn (by the by he had not sworn at all) he did not owe the lad so much: for there was to be deducted for three pair of shoes which he had bought him, and a real for his being let blood twice when he was sick.—"That may be," replied Don Quixote; "but set the price of the shoes and the bleeding against the stripes which you have given him without cause: for if he has used the shoe-leather which you paid for, you have in return misused and impaired his skin sufficiently; and if the surgeon let him bleed when he was sick, you have drawn blood from him now he is in health; so that he owes you nothing on that account."—"The worst is, sir knight," cried the farmer, "that I have no money about me; but let Andrew go home with me, and I'll pay him every piece out of hand."—"What! I go home with him," cried the youngster; "the devil a-bit, sir! not I, truly, I know better things: for he'd no sooner have me by himself, but he'd flea me alive like another St Bartholomew."—"He will never dare to do it," replied Don Quixote; "I com-

mand him, and that's sufficient to restrain him: therefore, provided he will swear by the order of knighthood which has been conferred upon him, that he will duly observe this regulation, I will freely let him go, and then thou art secure of thy money."—"Good sir, take heed what you say," cried the boy; "for my master is no knight, nor ever was of any order in his life: He's John Haldudo, the rich farmer of Quintinar."—"This signifies little," answered Don Quixote, "for there may be knights among the Haldudos; besides, the brave man carves out his fortune, and every man is the son of his own works."¹—"That's true, sir," quoth Andrew; "but of what works can this master of mine be the son, who denies me my wages, which I have earned by the sweat of my brows?"—"I do not deny to pay thee thy wages, honest Andrew," cried the master; "be but so kind as go along with me, and by all the orders of knighthood in the world, I swear, I'll pay thee every piece, as I said, nay and perfumed to boot."*—"You may spare your perfume," said Don Quixote; "do but pay him

¹ See Appendix, Note 1 to Chapter IV.

* To pay or return a thing perfumed, is a Spanish expression, signifying it shall be done to content or with advantage to the receiver. It is used here as a satire on the effeminate custom of wearing every thing perfumed, insomuch that the very money in their pockets was scented.

in reals, and I am satisfied; but be sure you perform your oath; for if you fail, I myself swear by the same oath to return and find you out, and punish you, though you should hide yourself as close as a lizard. And if you will be informed who it is that lays these injunctions on you, that you may understand how highly it concerns you to observe them, know, I am the valorous Don Quixote de la Mancha, the righter of wrongs, the revenger and redresser of grievances; and so farewell: but remember what you have promised and sworn, as you will answer the contrary at your peril." This said, he clapped spurs to Rozinante, and quickly left the master and the man a good way behind him.

The country-man, who followed him with both his eyes, no sooner perceived that he was passed the woods, and quite out of sight, but he went back to his boy Andrew. "Come, child," said he, "I will pay thee what I owe thee, as that righter of wrongs and redresser of grievances has ordered me."—"Ay," quoth Andrew, "on my word, you will do well to fulfil the commands of that good knight, who Heaven grant long to live; for he is so brave a man, and so just a judge, that adad if you don't pay me he'll come back and make his words good." "I dare

swear as much," answered the master; "and to shew thee how much I love thee, I am willing to increase the debt, that I may enlarge the payment." With that he caught the youngster by the arm, and tied him again to the tree; where he handled him so unmercifully, that scarce any signs of life were left in him. "Now call your righter of wrongs, Mr. Andrew," cried the farmer, "and you shall see he will never be able to undo what I have done; though I think it is but a part of what I ought to do, for I have a good mind to flea you alive, as you said I would, you rascal." However, he untied him at last, and gave him leave to go and seek out his judge, in order to have his decree put in execution. Andrew went his ways, not very well pleased, you may be sure, yet fully resolved to find out the valorous Don Quixote de la Mancha, and give him an exact account of the whole transaction, that he might pay the abuse with sevenfold usury: in short, he crept off sobbing and weeping, while his master staid behind laughing. And in this manner was this wrong redressed by the valorous Don Quixote de la Mancha.

In the mean time, being highly pleased with himself and what had happened, imagining he had given a most fortunate and noble beginning to his feats of arms, as he went on towards his

village, "O most beautiful of beauties," said he with a low voice, "Dulcinea del Toboso! well may'st thou deem thyself most happy, since it was thy good fortune to captivate and hold a willing slave to thy pleasure so valorous and renowned a knight as is, and ever shall be, Don Quixote de la Mancha; who, as all the world knows, had the honour of knighthood bestowed on him but yesterday, and this day redressed the greatest wrong and grievance that ever injustice could design, or cruelty commit: this day has he wrested the scourge out of the hands of that tormentor, who so unmercifully treated a tender infant without the least occasion given." Just as he had said this, he found himself at a place where four roads met; and this made him presently bethink of those cross-ways which often used to put knights-errant to a stand, to consult with themselves which way they should take: and that he might follow their example, he stopped a while, and after he had seriously reflected on the matter, gave Rozinante the reins, subjecting his own will to that of his horse, who pursuing his first intent, took the way that led to his own stable.

Don Quixote had not gone above two miles, but he discovered a company of people riding towards him, who proved to be merchants of

Toledo, that were going to buy silks in Murcia. They were six in all, every one screened with an umbrella, besides four servants on horseback, and three muleteers on foot. The knight no sooner perceived them, but he imagined this to be some new adventure; and because he was resolved to imitate as much as possible the passages which he read in his books, he was pleased to represent this to himself as such a particular adventure as he had a singular desire to meet with; and so, with a dreadful grace and assurance, fixing himself in his stirrups, couching his lance, and covering his breast with his target, he posted himself in the middle of the road, expecting the coming up of the supposed knights-errant. As soon as they came within hearing, with a loud voice and haughty tone, "Hold," cried he, "let all mankind stand, nor hope to pass on further, unless all mankind acknowledge and confess, that there is not in the universe a more beautiful damsel than the empress of La Mancha,¹ the peerless Dulcinea del Toboso." At those words the merchants made a halt, to view the unaccountable figure of their opponent; and easily conjecturing, both by his expression and disguise, that the poor gentleman had lost his senses, they were willing to understand the

¹ See Appendix, Note 2, Chapter IV.

meaning of that strange confession which he would force from them; and therefore one of the company, who loved and understood raillery, having discretion to manage it, undertook to talk to him. "Signor cavalier," cried he, "we do not know this worthy lady you talk of; but be pleased to let us see her, and then if we find her possessed of those matchless charms, of which you assert her to be the mistress, we will freely, and without the least compulsion, own the truth which you would extort from us."—"Had I once shown you that beauty," replied Don Quixote, "what wonder would it be to acknowledge so notorious a truth? the importance of the thing lies in obliging you to believe it, confess it, affirm it, swear it, and maintain it without seeing her; and therefore make this acknowledgment this very moment, or know, that it is with me you must join in battle, ye proud and unreasonable mortals. Come one by one, as the laws of chivalry require, or all at once, according to the dishonourable practice of men of your stamp; here I expect you all my single self, and will stand the encounter, confiding in the justice of my cause."—"Sir knight," replied the merchant, "I beseech you in the name of all the princes here present, that for the discharge of our con-

sciences, which will not permit us to affirm a thing we never heard or saw, and which, besides, tends so much to the dishonour of the empresses and queens of Alcaria and Estramadura, your worship will vouchsafe to let us see some portraiture of that lady, though it were no bigger than a grain of wheat; for by a small sample we may judge of the whole piece, and by that means rest secure and satisfied, and you contented and appeased. Nay, I verily believe, that we all find ourselves already so inclinable to comply with you, that though her picture should represent her to be blind of one eye, and distilling vermilion and brimstone at the other, yet to oblige you, we shall be ready to say in her favour whatever your worship desires."—"Distil, ye infamous scoundrels," replied Don Quixote in a burning rage, "distil, say you? know, that nothing distils from her but amber and civet: neither is she defective in her make or shape, but more straight than a Guadaramian spindle. But you shall all severely pay for the horrid blasphemy which thou hast uttered against the transcendent beauty of my incomparable lady." Saying this, with his lance couched, he ran so furiously at the merchant who thus provoked him, that had not good fortune so ordered it, that Rozinante

should stumble and fall in the midst of his career, the audacious trifler had paid dear for his raillery: but as Rozinante fell, he threw down his master, who rolled and tumbled a good way on the ground, without being able to get upon his legs, though he used all his skill and strength to effect it, so encumbered he was with his lance, target, spurs, helmet, and the weight of his rusty armour. However, in this helpless condition he played the hero with his tongue; "Stay," cried he, "cowards, rascals, do not fly! it is not through my fault that I lie here, but through that of my horse, ye poltroons!"

One of the grooms, who was none of the best natured creatures, hearing the overthrown knight thus insolently treat his master, could not bear it without returning him an answer on his ribs; and therefore coming up to him as he lay wallowing, he snatched his lance, and having broke it to pieces, he so belaboured Don Quixote's sides with one of them, that, in spite of his arms, he thrashed him like a wheat sheaf. His master indeed called to him not to lay on him so vigorously, and to let him alone; but the fellow, whose hand was in, would not give over rib-roasting the knight, till he had tired out his passion and himself; and therefore

running to the other pieces of the broken lance, he fell to it again without ceasing, till he had splintered them all on the knight's iron inclosure. He, on his side, notwithstanding all this storm of bastinadoes, lay all the while bellowing, threatening heaven and earth, and those villainous ruffians, as he took them to be. At last the mule-driver was tired, and the merchants pursued their journey, sufficiently furnished with matter of discourse at the poor knight's expense. When he found himself alone, he tried once more to get on his feet; but if he could not do it when he had the use of his limbs, how should he do it now, bruised and battered as he was? But yet for all this, he esteemed himself a happy man, being still persuaded, that his misfortune was one of those accidents common in knight-errantry, and such a one as he could wholly attribute to the falling of his horse; nor could he possibly get up, so sore and mortified as his body was all over.

CHAPTER V

A FURTHER ACCOUNT OF OUR KNIGHT'S
MISFORTUNES

DON QUIXOTE perceiving that he was not able to stir, resolved to have recourse to his usual remedy, which was to bethink himself what passage in his books might afford him some comfort: and presently his folly brought to his remembrance the story of Baldwin and the Marquis of Mantua,¹ when Charlot left the former wounded on the mountain; a story learned and known by little children, not unknown to young men and women, celebrated, and even believed, by the old, and yet not a jot more authentic than the miracles of Mahomet. This seemed to him as if made on purpose for his present circumstances, and therefore he fell a rolling and tumbling up and down, expressing the greatest pain and resentment, and breathing out, with a languishing voice, the same complaints which the

¹ See Appendix, Note 1, Chapter V.