

## CHAPTER IV

THE STORY WHICH A YOUNG GOAT-HERD TOLD TO  
THOSE THAT WERE WITH DON QUIXOTE

A YOUNG fellow, who used to bring them provisions from the next village, happened to come while this was doing, and addressing himself to the goat-herds, "Hark ye, friends," said he, "d'ye hear the news?"—"What news?" cried one of the company. "That fine shepherd and scholar Chrysostome died this morning," answered the other; "and they say it was for love of that devilish untoward lass Marcella, rich William's daughter, that goes up and down the country in the habit of a shepherdess."—"For Marcella!" cried one of the goat-herds.—"I say for her," replied the fellow, "and what is more, it is reported, he has ordered by his will, they should bury him in the fields like any heathen Moor, just at the foot of the rock, hard by the cork-tree fountain, where they say he had the first sight of her. Nay, he has likewise ordered many other strange things to be done, which the heads of the

parish won't allow of, for they seem to be after the way of the Pagans. But Ambrose, the other scholar, who likewise apparelled himself like a shepherd, is resolved to have his friend Chrysostome's will fulfilled in everything, just as he has ordered it. All the village is in an uproar. But after all, it is thought Ambrose and his friends will carry the day; and to-morrow morning he is to be buried in great state where I told you: I fancy it will be worth seeing; howsoever, be it what it will, I will even go and see it, even though I could not get back again to-morrow."—"We will all go," cried the goat-herds, "and cast lots who shall tarry to look after the goats."—"Well said, Peter," cried one of the goat-herds; "but as for casting of lots, I will save you that labour, for I will stay myself, not so much out of kindness to you neither, or want of curiosity, as because of the thorn in my toe, that will not let me go."—"Thank you, however," quoth Peter. Don Quixote, who heard all this, entreated Peter to tell him who the deceased was, and also to give him a short account of the shepherdess.

Peter made answer, that all he knew of the matter was, that the deceased was a wealthy gentleman, who lived not far off; that he had been several years at the university of Sala-



manca, and then came home mightily improved in his learning. "But above all," quoth he, "it was said of him, that he had great knowledge in the stars, and whatsoever the sun and moon do in the skies, for he would tell us to a tittle the clip of the sun and moon."—"We call it an eclipse," cried Don Quixote, "and not a clip, when either of those two great luminaries are darkened."—"He would also," continued Peter, who did not stand upon such nice distinctions, "foretell when the year would be plentiful or *estil*."—"You would say *steril*," cried Don Quixote.—"*Steril* or *estil*," replied the fellow, "that is all one to me: but this I say, that his parents and friends, being ruled by him, grew woundy rich in a short time;<sup>1</sup> for he would tell them, This year sow barley and no wheat: in this you may sow pease, and no barley: next year will be a good year for oil: the three after that you shan't gather a drop; and whatsoever he said would certainly come to pass."—"That science," said Don Quixote, "is called astrology."—"I do not know what you call it," answered Peter, "but I know he knew all this, and a deal more. But in short, within some few months after he had left the versity, on a certain morning we saw him come dressed for all

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, Note 1, Book II., Chapter IV.

the world like a shepherd, and driving his flock, having laid down the long gown, which he used to wear as a scholar. At the same time one Ambrose, a great friend of his, who had been his fellow scholar also, took upon him to go like a shepherd, and keep him company, which we all did not a little marvel at. I had almost forgot to tell you how he that is dead was a mighty man for making of verses, inso-much that he commonly made the carols we sung in Christmas Eve, and the plays which the young lads in our neighbourhood enacted on Corpus Christi day;<sup>1</sup> and every one would say, that nobody could mend them. Somewhat before that time Chrysostome's father died, and left him a deal of wealth, both in land, money, cattle, and other goods, whereof the young man remained dissolute master; and in troth he deserved it all, for he was as good-natured a soul as e'er trod on shoe of leather; mighty good to the poor, a main friend to all honest people, and had a face like a blessing. At last it came to be known, that the reason of his altering his garb in that fashion, was only that he might go up and down after that shepherdess Marcella, whom our comrade told you of before, for he was fallen mightily in love

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, Note 2, Book II., Chapter IV.



with her. And now I will tell you such a thing you never heard the like in your born days, and may not chance to hear of such another while you breathe, though you were to live as long as Sarnah."—"Say Sarah," cried Don Quixote, who hated to hear him blunder thus.—"The Sarna, or the itch, for that is all one with us," quoth Peter, "lives long enough too; but if you go on thus, and make me break off my tale at every word, we are not like to have done this twelve-month."—"Pardon me, friend," replied Don Quixote; "I only spoke to make thee understand that there is a difference between Sarna and Sarah: however, thou sayest well; for the Sarna (that is, the itch) lives longer than Sarah; therefore pray make an end of thy story, for I will not interrupt thee any more."

"Well then," quoth Peter, "you must know, good master of mine, that there lived near us one William, a yeoman, who was richer yet than Chrysostome's father; now he had no child in the versal world but a daughter; her mother died in child-bed of her (rest her soul), and was as good a woman as ever went upon two legs: methinks I see her yet standing afore me, with that blessed face of hers, the sun on one side, and the moon on the t'other. She

was a main house-wife, and did a good deal among the poor; for which I dare say she is at this minute in paradise. Alas! her death broke old William's heart; he soon went after her, poor man, and left all to his little daughter, that Marcella by name, giving charge of her to her uncle, the parson of our parish. Well, the girl grew such a fine child, and so like her mother, that it used to put us in mind of her every foot: however, 'twas thought that she'd make a finer woman yet: and so it happened indeed; for, by that time she was fourteen or fifteen years of age, no man set his eyes on her, that did not bless heaven for having made her so handsome; so that most men fell in love with her, and were ready to run mad for her. All this while her uncle kept her up very close: yet the report of her great beauty and wealth spread far and near, insomuch, that she had I don't know how many sweethearts, almost all the young men in our town asked her of her uncle; nay, from I don't know how many leagues about us, there flocked whole droves of suitors, and the very best in the country too, who all begged, and sued, and teased her uncle to let them have her. But though he'd have been glad to have got fairly rid of her, as soon as she was fit for a husband, yet would not he



advise or marry her against her will; for he's a good man, I'll say that for him, and a true Christian every inch of him, and scorns to keep her from marrying to make a benefit of her estate; and, to his praise be it spoken, he has been mainly commended for it more than once, when the people of our parish meet together. For I must tell you, Sir Errant, that here in the country, and in our little towns, there is not the least thing can be said or done, but people will talk and find fault: but let busybodies prate as they please, the parson must have a good body indeed, who could bring his whole parish to give him a good word, especially in the country."—"Thou art in the right," cried Don Quixote, "and therefore go on, honest Peter, for the story is pleasant, and thou tellest it with a grace."—"May I never want God's grace," quoth Peter, "for that is most to the purpose. But for our parson, as I told you before, he was not for keeping his niece from marrying, and therefore he took care to let her know of all those that would have taken her to wife, both what they were, and what they had, and he was at her, to have her pitch upon one of them for a husband; yet would she never answer otherwise, but that she had no mind to wed as yet, as finding herself too

young for the burden of wedlock. With these and such like come-offs, she got her uncle to let her alone, and wait till she thought fit to choose for herself: for he was won't to say, that parents are not to bestow their children where they bear no liking; and in that he spoke like an honest man. And thus it happened, that when we least dreamed of it, that coy lass, finding herself at liberty, would needs turn shepherdess; and neither her uncle, nor all those of the village who advised her against it, could work anything upon her, but away she went to the fields to keep her own sheep with the other young lasses of the town. But then it was ten times worse; for no sooner was she seen abroad, when I cannot tell how many spruce gallants, both gentlemen and rich farmers, changed their garb for love of her, and followed her up and down in shepherd's guise. One of them, as I have told you, was this same Chrysostome, who now lies dead, of whom it is said, he not only loved, but worshipped her. Howsoever, I would not have you think or surmise, because Marcella took that course of life, and was as it were under no manner of keeping, that she gave the least token of naughtiness or light behaviour; for she ever was, and is still, so coy, and so watchful to keep



her honour pure and free from evil tongues, that among so many wooers who suitor her, there is not one can make his brags of having the least hope of ever speeding with her. For though she does not shun the company of shepherds, but uses them courteously, so far as they behave themselves handsomely; yet whensoever any one of them does but offer to break his mind to her, be it never so well meant, and only in order to marry, she casts him away from her, as with a sling, and will never have any more to say to him.

“And thus this fair maiden does more harm in this country than the plague would do; for her courteousness and fair looks draw on everybody to love her; but then her dogged stubborn coyness breaks their hearts, and makes them ready to hang themselves; and all they can do, poor wretches, is to make a heavy complaint, and call her cruel, unkind, ungrateful, and a world of such names, whereby they plainly shew what a sad condition they are in: were you but to stay here some time, you’d hear these hills and vallies ring again with the doleful moans of those she has denied, who yet cannot, for the blood of them, give over sneaking after her. We have a place not far off, where there are some two dozen of beech trees,

and on them all you may find I don’t know how many Marcellas cut in the smooth bark. On some of them there is a crown carved over the name, as much as to say that Marcella bears away the crown, and deserves the garland of beauty. Here sighs one shepherd, there another whines; here is one singing doleful ditties, there another is wringing his hands and making woeful complaints. You shall have one lay him down at night at the foot of a rock, or some oak, and there lie weeping and wailing without a wink of sleep, and talking to himself till the sun finds him the next morning; you shall have another lie stretched upon the hot sandy ground, breathing his sad lamentations to heaven, without heeding the sultry heat of the summer sun. And all this while the hard-hearted Marcella ne’er minds any one of them, and does not seem to be the least concerned for them. We are all mightily at a loss to know what will be the end of all this pride and coyness, who shall be the happy man that shall at last tame her, and bring her to his lure. Now because there is nothing more certain than all this, I am the more apt to give credit to what our comrade has told us, as to the occasion of Chrysostome’s death; and therefore I would needs



have you go and see him laid in his grave to-morrow; which I believe will be worth your while, for he had many friends, and it is not half a league to the place where it was his will to be buried."—"I intend to be there," answered Don Quixote, "and in the meantime I return thee many thanks for the extraordinary satisfaction this story has afforded me."—"Alas! Sir Knight," replied the goat-herd, "I have not told you half the mischiefs this proud creature hath done here, but to-morrow mayhap we shall meet some shepherd by the way that will be able to tell you more. Meanwhile it won't be amiss for you to take your rest in one of the huts; for the open air is not good for your wound, though what I've put to it is so special a medicine that there's not much need to fear but 'twill do well enough." Sancho, who was quite out of patience with the goat-herd's long story, and wished him at the devil for his pains, at last prevailed with him to lie down in Peter's hut, where Don Quixote, in imitation of Marcella's lovers, devoted the remainder of the night to amorous expostulations with his dear Dulcinea. As for Sancho, he laid himself down between Rozinante and his ass, and slept it out, not like a disconsolate lover, but like a man that had been soundly kicked and bruised in the morning.

## CHAPTER V

## A CONTINUATION OF THE STORY OF MARCELLA

SCARCE had day begun to appear from the balconies of the east, when five of the goat-herds got up, and having waked Don Quixote, asked him if he held his resolution of going to the funeral, whither they were ready to bear him company. Thereupon the knight, who desired nothing more, presently arose, and ordered Sancho to get Rozinante and the ass ready immediately; which he did with all expedition, and then they set forwards. They had not gone yet a quarter of a league, before they saw advancing towards them, out of a cross path, six shepherds clad in black skins, their heads crowned with garlands of cypress and bitter rose-bay-tree, with long holly-staves in their hands. Two gentlemen on horseback, attended by three young lads on foot, came immediately after them: as they drew near, they saluted one another civilly, and after the usual question,—“Which way d'ye travel?” they found they were all going the same way,