

CHAPTER X

THE HISTORY OF THE FAMOUS PRINCESS MICOMICONA CONTINUED, WITH OTHER PLEASANT ADVENTURES

THE joy of the whole company was unspeakable by the happy conclusion of this perplexed business. Dorothea, Cardenio, and Lucinda thought the sudden change of their affairs too surprising to be real; and through a disuse of good fortune, could hardly be induced to believe their happiness. Don Ferdinand thanked Heaven a thousand times for its propitious conduct in leading him out of a labyrinth, in which his honour and virtue were like to have been lost. The curate, as he was very instrumental in the general reconciliation, had likewise no small share in the general joy; and that no discontent might sour their universal satisfaction, Cardenio and the curate engaged to see the hostess satisfied for all the damages committed by Don Quixote: only poor Sancho drooped pitifully. He found his lordship and his hopes vanished into smoke, the Princess

Micomicona was changed to Dorothea, and the giant to Don Ferdinand. Thus, very musty and melancholy, he slipt into his master's chamber, who had slept on, and was just wakened, little thinking of what had happened.

"I hope your early rising will do you no hurt," said he, "Sir Knight of the Woeful Figure; but you may now sleep on till doomsday if you will; nor need you trouble your head any longer about killing any giant, or restoring the princess, for all that is done to your hand."—"That is more than probable," answered the knight; "for I have had the most extraordinary, the most prodigious, and bloody battle with the giant, that I ever had, or shall have, during the whole course of my life. Yet with one cross stroke I laid his head thwack on the ground, whence the great effusion of blood seemed like a violent stream of water."—"Of wine, you mean," said Sancho; "for you must know (if you know it not already) that your worship's dead giant is a broached wine-skin; and the blood some thirty gallons of tent which it held in its belly; and your head so cleverly struck off, is the whore my mother; and so the devil take both giant and head, and all together for Sancho."—

"What sayest thou, madman?" said the Don; "thou art frantic, sure."—"Rise, rise, sir," said Sancho, "and see what fine work you have cut out for yourself; here is the devil-and-all to pay for, and your great queen is changed into a private gentlewoman, called Dorothea, with some other such odd matters, that you will wonder with a vengeance."—"I can wonder at nothing here," said Don Quixote, "where, you may remember, I told you all things ruled by enchantment."—"I believe it," quoth Sancho, "had my tossing in a blanket been of that kind; but sure it was the likest the tossing in a blanket of anything I ever knew in my life. And this same inn-keeper, I remember very well, was one of those that tossed me into the air, and as cleverly and heartily he did it as a man could wish, I will say that for him; so that after all I begin to smell a rat, and do perilously suspect that all our enchantment will end in nothing but bruises and broken bones."—"Heaven will retrieve all," said the knight; "I will therefore dress, and march to the discovery of these wonderful transformations."—While Sancho made him ready, the curate gave Don Ferdinand and the rest an account of Don Quixote's madness, and of the device he used to draw

him from the Poor Rock, to which the supposed disdain of his mistress had banished him in imagination. Sancho's adventures made also a part in the story, which proved very diverting to the strangers. He added, that since Dorothea's change of fortune had baulked their design that way, some other trick should be found to decoy him home. Cardenio offered his service in the affair, and that Lucinda should personate Dorothea. "No, no," answered Don Ferdinand; "Dorothea shall humour the jest still, if this honest gentleman's habitation be not very far off."—"Only two days' journey," said the curate.—"I would ride twice as far," said Don Ferdinand, "for the pleasure of so good and charitable an action."—By this Don Quixote had sallied out, armed cap-a-pie, Mambrino's helmet (with a great hole in it) on his head, his shield on his left arm, and with his right he leaned on his lance. His meagre, yellow, weather-beaten face, of half a league in length; the unaccountable medley of his armour, together with his grave and solemn port, struck Don Ferdinand and his companions dumb with admiration; while the champion, casting his eyes on Dorothea, with great gravity and solidity, broke silence with these words.

“I am informed by this my squire, beautiful lady, that your greatness is annihilated, and your majesty reduced to nothing; for of a queen and mighty princess, as you used to be, you are become a private damsel. If any express order from the necromantic king your father, doubting the ability and success of my arm in the reinstating you, has occasioned this change, I must tell him, that he is no conjurer in these matters, and does not know one half of his trade;* nor is he skilled in the revolutions of chivalry: for had he been conversant in the study of knight-errantry as I have been, he might have found, that in every age, champions of less fame than Don Quixote de la Mancha have finished more desperate adventures; since the killing of a pitiful giant, how arrogant soever he may be, is no such great achievement; for, not many hours past, I encountered one myself; the success I will not mention, lest the incredulity of some people might distrust the reality; but time, the discoverer of all things, will disclose it, when least expected.”—“Hold there,” said the host, “it was with two wine-skins, but no giant, that you fought.”—Don Ferdinand silenced

* *Literally*, one half of the mass, the saying of which is one great part of the priestly office.

the innkeeper, and bid him by no means interrupt Don Quixote, who thus went on. “To conclude, most high and disinherited lady, if your father, for the causes already mentioned, has caused this metamorphosis in your person, believe him not; for there is no peril on earth through which my sword shall not open a way; and assure yourself that in a few days, by the overthrow of your enemy’s head, it shall fix on yours that crown, which is your lawful inheritance.” Here Don Quixote stopt, waiting the princess’s answer; she, assured of Don Ferdinand’s consent to carry on the jest till Don Quixote was got home, and assuming a face of gravity, “Whosoever,” answered she, “has informed you, valorous Knight of the Woeful Figure, that I have altered or changed my condition, has imposed upon you; for I am just the same to-day as yesterday. It is true, some unexpected, but fortunate accidents, have varied some circumstances of my fortune, much to my advantage, and far beyond my hopes; but I am neither changed in my person, nor altered in my resolution of employing the force of your redoubtable and invincible arm in my favour. I therefore apply myself to your usual generosity, to have these words spoken to my father’s dishonour recalled, and believe these easy and

infallible means to redress my wrongs, the pure effects of his wisdom and policy, as the good fortune I now enjoy has been the consequence of your surprising deeds, as this noble presence can testify. What should hinder us then from setting forward to-morrow morning, depending for a happy and successful conclusion on the will of Heaven, and the power of your unparalleled courage?"

The ingenious Dorothea having concluded, Don Quixote turning to Sancho, with all the signs of fury imaginable; "Now must I tell thee, poor paltry hang-dog," said he, "thou art the veriest rascal in all Spain; tell me, rogue, scoundrel, did not you just now inform me, that this princess was changed into a little private damsel, called Dorothea, and the head which I lopped from the giant's shoulders, was the whore your mother, with a thousand other absurdities? Now, by all the powers of heaven," looking up, and grinding his teeth together, "I have a mind so to use thee, as to make thee appear a miserable example to all succeeding squires, that shall dare to tell a knight-errant a lie."—"Good your worship," cried Sancho, "have patience, I beseech you: mayhap I am mistaken or so, about my lady Princess Micomicona's concern there; but that

the giant's head came off the wine-skin's shoulders, and that the blood was as good tent as ever was tipt over tongue, I will take my corporal oath on it; Gadzookers, sir, are not the skins all hacked and slashed within there at your bed's-head, and the wine all in a puddle in your chamber? But you will guess at the meat presently, by the sauce; the proof of the pudding is in the eating, master,* and if my landlord here do not let you know it to your cost, he is a very honest and civil fellow, that is all."—"Sancho," said the Don, "I pronounce thee *non compos*; I therefore pardon thee, and have done."—"It is enough," said Don Ferdinand; "we therefore, in pursuance of the princess's orders, will this night refresh ourselves, and to-morrow we will all of us set out to attend the lord Don Quixote, in prosecution of this important enterprise he has undertaken, being all impatient to be eye-witnesses of his celebrated and matchless courage."—"I shall be proud of the honour of serving and waiting upon you, my good lord," replied Don Quixote, "and reckon myself infinitely

* The original runs, *It will be seen in the frying of the eggs.* When eggs are to be fried, there is no knowing their goodness till they are broken, *Royal Dict.* Or, a thief stole a frying-pan, and the woman, who owned it, meeting him, asked him what he was carrying away: he answered, You will know when your eggs are to be fried.

obliged by the favour and good opinion of so honourable a company; which I shall endeavour to improve and confirm, though at the expense of the last drop of my blood."

Many other compliments had passed between Don Quixote and Don Ferdinand, when the arrival of a stranger interrupted them. His dress represented him as a Christian newly returned from Barbary: he was clad in a short-skirted coat of blue cloth, with short sleeves, and no collar, his breeches were of blue linen, with a cap of the same colour, a pair of date-coloured stockings, and a Turkish scimitar hung by a scarf, in manner of a shoulder-belt. There rode a woman in his company, clad in a Moorish dress; her face was covered with a veil; she had on a little cap of gold-tissue, and a Turkish mantle that reached from her shoulders to her feet. The man was well-shaped and strong, his age about forty, his face somewhat tanned, his mustachios long, and his beard handsome. In short, his genteel mien and person were too distinguishable to let the gentleman be hid by the meanness of his habit. He called presently for a room, and, being answered that all were full, seemed a little troubled; however, he went to the woman who came along with him, and took her down

from her ass. The ladies, being all surprised at the oddness of the Moorish dress, had the curiosity to flock about the stranger; and Dorothea, very discreetly imagining that both she and her conductor were tired, and took it ill that they could not have a chamber, "I hope, madam, you will bear your ill fortune patiently," said she; "for want of room is an inconvenience incident to all public inns; but if you please, madam, to take up with us," pointing to Lucinda, "you may perhaps find that you have met with worse entertainment on the road than what this place affords."—The unknown lady made her no answer, but, rising up, laid her hands across her breast, bowed her head, and inclined her body, as a sign that she acknowledged the favour. By her silence they conjectured her to be undoubtedly a Moor, and that she could not speak Spanish. Her companion was now come back from the stable, and told them, "Ladies, I hope you will excuse this gentlewoman from answering any questions, for she is very much a stranger to our language."—"We are only, sir," answered Lucinda, "making her an offer which civility obliges us to make all strangers, especially of our own sex, that she would make us happy in her company all night, and fare as

we do: we will make very much of her, sir, and she shall want for nothing that the house affords."—"I return you humble thanks, dear madam," answered the stranger, "in the lady's behalf and my own; and I infinitely prize the favour, which the present exigence and the worth of the donors make doubly engaging."—"Is the lady, pray, sir, a Christian or a Moor?" asked Dorothea. "Our charity would make us hope she were the former; but by her attire and silence, we are afraid she is the latter."—"Outwardly, madam," answers he, "she appears and is a Moor, but in her heart a zealous Christian, which her longing desires of being baptized have expressly testified. I have had no opportunity of having her christened since she left Algiers, which was her habitation and native country; nor has any imminent danger of death as yet obliged her to be brought to the font, before she be better instructed in the principles of our religion; but I hope, by Heaven's assistance, to have her shortly baptized with all the decency suiting her quality, which is much above what her equipage or mine seem to promise."

These words raised in them all a curiosity to be farther informed who the Moor and her conductor were; but they thought it improper

then to put them upon any more particular relation of their fortunes, because they wanted rest and refreshment after their journey. Dorothea, placing the lady by her, begged her to take off her veil. She looked on her companion, as if she required him to let her know what she said; which, when he had let her understand in the Arabian tongue, joining his own request also, she discovered so charming a face, that Dorothea imagined her more beautiful than Lucinda; she, on the other hand, fancied her handsomer than Dorothea; and most of the company believed her more beautiful than both of them. As beauty has always a prerogative, or rather charm, to attract men's inclinations, the whole company dedicated their desires to serve the lovely Moor. Don Ferdinand asked the stranger her name; he answered, "Lela Zoraida;" she, hearing him, and guessing what they asked, suddenly replied with great concern, though very gracefully, "No, no Zoraida, Maria, Maria;" giving them to understand that her name was Maria, and not Zoraida. These words, spoken with so much eagerness, raised a concern in every body, the ladies especially, whose natural tenderness showed itself by their tears; and Lucinda, embracing her very lovingly, "Ay, ay," said

she, "Maria, Maria;" which words the Moorish lady repeated by way of answer. "Zoraida Macange," added she, as much as to say, not Zoraida, but Maria, Maria.

The night coming on, and the innkeeper, by order of Don Ferdinand's friends, having made haste to provide them the best supper he could, the cloth was laid on a long table, there being neither round nor square in the house. Don Quixote, after much ceremony, was prevailed upon to sit at the head; he desired the Lady Micomicona to sit next him; and the rest of the company having placed themselves according to their rank and convenience, they eat their supper very heartily. Don Quixote, to raise the diversion, never minded his meat, but inspired with the same spirit that moved him to preach so much to the goat-herds, he began to hold forth in this manner. "Certainly, gentlemen, if we rightly consider it, those who make knight-errantry their profession, often meet with most surprising and stupendous adventures. For what mortal in the world, at this time entering within this castle, and seeing us sit together as we do, will imagine and believe us to be the same persons which in reality we are? Who is there that can judge, that this lady by my

side is the great queen we all know her to be, and that I am that Knight of the Woeful Figure so universally made known by fame? It is then no longer to be doubted, but that this exercise and profession surpasses all others that have been invented by man, and is so much the more honourable, as it is more exposed to dangers. Let none presume to tell me that the pen is preferable to the sword; for be they who they will, I shall tell them they know not what they say: for the reason they give, and on which chiefly they rely, is, that the labour of the mind exceeds that of the body, and that the exercise of arms depends only on the body, as if the use of them were the business of porters, which requires nothing but much strength. Or, as if this, which we who profess it call chivalry, did not include the acts of fortitude, which depend very much upon the understanding. Or else, as if that warrior, who commands an army or defends a city besieged, did not labour as much with the mind as with the body. If this be not so, let experience teach us whether it be possible by bodily strength to discover or guess the intentions of an enemy. The forming designs, laying of stratagems, overcoming of difficulties, and shunning of dangers, are

all works of the understanding, wherein the body has no share. It being therefore evident, that the exercise of arms requires the help of the mind as well as learning, let us see in the next place, whether the scholar or the soldier's mind undergoes the greatest labour. Now this may be the better known, by regarding the end and object each of them aims at; for that intention is to be most valued which makes the noblest end its object. The scope and end of learning, I mean human learning (in this place I speak not of divinity, whose aim is to guide souls to heaven, for no other can equal a design so infinite as that), is to give a perfection to distributive justice, bestowing upon every one his due, and to procure and cause good laws to be observed; an end really generous, great, and worthy of high commendation; but yet not equal to that which knight-errantry tends to, whose object and end is peace, which is the greatest blessing man can wish for in this life. And therefore the first good news that the world received, was that the angels brought in the night, which was the beginning of our day, when they sang in the air, Glory to God on high, peace upon earth, and to men good-will. And the only manner of salutation taught by

the best Master in heaven, or upon earth, to his friends and favourites, was, that entering any house they should say, Peace be to this house. And at other times he said to them, My peace I give to you, my peace I leave to you, peace be among you. A jewel and legacy worthy of such a donor, a jewel so precious, that without it there can be no happiness either in earth or heaven. This peace is the true end of war; for arms and war are one and the same thing. Allowing then this truth, that the end of war is peace, and that in this it excels the end of learning, let us now weigh the bodily labours the scholar undergoes, against those the warrior suffers, and then see which are greatest."

The method and language Don Quixote used in delivering himself were such, that none of his hearers at that time looked upon him as a madman. But on the contrary, most of them being gentlemen, to whom the use of arms properly appertains, they gave him a willing attention; and he proceeded in this manner: "These, then, I say, are the sufferings and hardships a scholar endures. First, poverty (not that they are all poor, but to urge the worst that may be in this case), and having said he endures poverty, methinks nothing

more need be urged to express his misery; for he that is poor enjoys no happiness, but labours under this poverty in all its parts, at one time in hunger, at another in cold, another in nakedness, and sometimes in all of them together, yet his poverty is not so great, but still he eats, though it be later than the usual hour, and of the scraps of the rich, or, which is the greatest of a scholar's misfortunes, what is called among them *going a sopping*;* neither can the scholar miss of somebody's stove or fire-side to sit by, where, though he be not thoroughly heated, yet he may gather warmth, and at last sleep away the night under a roof. I will not touch upon other less material circumstances, as the want of linen, and scarcity of shoes, thinness and baldness of their clothes, and their surfeiting when good fortune throws a feast in their way: this is the difficult and uncouth path they tread, often stumbling and falling, yet rising again and pushing on, till they attain the preferment they aim at; whither being arrived, we have seen many of them, who, having been carried by a fortunate gale through all these quick-sands, from a chair govern the world; their hunger being changed

* The author means the sops in porridge, given at the doors of monasteries.

into satiety, their cold into comfortable warmth, their nakedness into magnificence of apparel, and the mats they used to lie upon into stately beds of costly silks and softest linen, a reward due to their virtue. But yet their sufferings being compared to those the soldier endures, appear much inferior, as I shall in the next place make out."