

## CHAPTER XVII

A CONTINUATION OF THE STRANGE ADVENTURES IN  
THE INN

THE miserable outcries of Don Quixote presently drew the innkeeper to the door, which he hastily opening, was strangely affrighted to hear such a terrible roaring, and the strangers stood no less surprised. Maritornes, whom the cries had also roused, guessing the cause, ran straight to the loft, and, slipping the halter, released the Don, who made her a very prostrate acknowledgment, by an unmerciful fall on the ground. The innkeeper and strangers crowded immediately around him to know the cause of his misfortune. He, without regard to their questions, unmanacles his wrist, bounces from the ground, mounts Rozinante, braces his target, couches his lance, and, taking a large circumference in the field, came up with a hand-gallop: "Whoever," said he, "dare affirm, assert, or declare, that I have been justly enchanted, in case my lady the Princess Micomicona will but give me leave, I will tell him he lies, and will maintain

my assertion by immediate combat." The travellers stood amazed at Don Quixote's words, till the host removed their wonder, by informing them of his usual extravagances in this kind, and that his behaviour was not to be minded. They then asked the innkeeper if a certain youth, near the age of fifteen, had set up at his house, clad like a muleteer; adding withal some farther marks and tokens, denoting Donna Clara's lover.

He told them, that among the number of his guests, such a person might pass him undistinguished; but one of them accidentally spying the coach which the judge rid in, called to his companions, "O, gentlemen, gentlemen, here stands the coach which we were told my young master followed, and here he must be, that is certain; let us lose no time, one guard the door, the rest enter into the house to look for him. Hold—stay," continued he, "ride one about to the other side of the house, lest he escape us through the back-yard."—"Agreed," says another, and they posted themselves accordingly. The innkeeper, though he might guess that they sought the young gentleman whom they had described, was nevertheless puzzled as to the cause of their so diligent search. By this time the day-

light, and the outcries of Don Quixote, had raised the whole house, particularly the two ladies, Clara and Dorothea, who had slept but little, the one with the thoughts her lover was so near her, and the other through an earnest desire she had to see him. Don Quixote, seeing the travellers neither regard him nor his challenge, was ready to burst with fury and indignation; and could he have dispensed with the rules of chivalry, which oblige a knight-errant to the finishing one adventure before his embarking in another, he had assaulted them all, and forced them to answer him to their cost; but being unfortunately engaged to reinstate the Princess Micomicona, his hands were tied up, and he was compelled to desist, expecting where the search and diligence of the four travellers would terminate. One of them found the young gentleman fast asleep by a footman, little dreaming of being followed or discovered. The fellow lugging him by the arm, cries out, "Ay, ay, Don Lewis, these are very fine clothes you have got on, and very becoming a gentleman of your quality; indeed, this scurvy bed too is very suitable to the care and tenderness your mother brought you up with." The youth, having rubbed his drowsy eyes, and fixed them steadfastly on the man,

knew him presently for one of his father's servants, which struck him speechless with surprise. The fellow went on; "There is but one way, sir; pluck up your spirits, and return with us to your father, who is certainly a dead man unless you be recovered."—"How came my father to know," answered Don Lewis, "that I took this way, and this disguise?"—"One of your fellow students," replied the servant, "whom you communicated your design to, moved by your father's lamentation of your loss, discovered it. The good old gentleman despatched away four of his men in search of you; and here we are all at your service, sir, and the joyfullest men alive; for our old master will give us a hearty welcome, having so soon restored him what he loved so much."—"That, next to Heaven, is as I please," said Don Lewis.—"What would you, or Heaven either, please, sir, but return to your father? Come, come, sir, talk no more of it; home you must go, and home you shall go." The footman that lay with Don Lewis, hearing this dispute, rose, and related the business to Don Ferdinand, Cardenio, and the rest that were now dressed; adding withal, how the man gave him the title of Don, with other circumstances of their conference. They being

already charmed with the sweetness of his voice, were curious to be informed more particularly of his circumstances, and resolving to assist him, in case any violence should be offered him, went presently to the place where he was still contending with his father's servant.

By this Dorothea had left her chamber, and with her Donna Clara in great disorder. Dorothea beckoning Cardenio aside, gave him a short account of the musician and Donna Clara; and he told her that his father's servants were come for him. Donna Clara over-hearing him, was so exceedingly surprised, that had not Dorothea run and supported her, she had sunk to the ground. Cardenio promising to bring the matter to a fair and successful end, advised Dorothea to retire with the indisposed lady to her chamber. All the four that pursued Don Lewis were now come about him, pressing his return without delay, to comfort his poor father. He answered it was impossible, being engaged to put a business in execution first, on which depended no less than his honour, and his present and future happiness. They urged, that since they had found him, there was no returning for them without him, and if he would not go, he should be

carried. "Not unless you kill me," answered the young gentleman; upon which all the company were joined in the dispute, Cardenio, Don Ferdinand and his companions, the judge, the curate, the barber, and Don Quixote, who thought it needless now to guard the castle any longer. Cardenio, who knew the young gentleman's story, asked the fellows upon what pretence, or by what authority, they could carry the youth away against his will.—"Sir," answered one of them, "we have reason good for what we do; no less than his father's life depends upon his return."—"Gentlemen," said Don Lewis, "it is not proper perhaps to trouble you with a particular relation of my affairs; only thus much, I am a gentleman, and have no dependence that should force me to any thing beside my inclination."—"Nay, but sir," answered the servant, "reason, I hope, will force you; and though it cannot move you, it must govern us, who must execute our orders, and force you back; we only act as we are ordered, sir."—"Hold," said the judge, "and let us know the whole state of the case."—"O lord, sir," answered one of the servants that knew him, "my lord judge, does not your worship know your next neighbour's child? See here, sir, he has run away from his father's

house, and has put on these dirty tattered rags to the scandal of his family, as your worship may see." The judge then viewing him more attentively knew him, and saluting him, "What jest is this, Don Lewis?" cried he; "what mighty intrigue are you carrying on, young sir, to occasion this metamorphosis, so unbecoming your quality?" The young gentleman could not answer a word, and the tears stood in his eyes; the judge perceiving his disorder, desired the four servants to trouble themselves no farther, but leave the youth to his management, engaging his word to act to their satisfaction; and retiring with Don Lewis, he begged to know the occasion of his flight.

During their conference, they heard a great noise at the inn door, occasioned by two strangers, who, having lodged there over night, and seeing the whole family so busied in a curious inquiry into the four horsemen's business, thought to have made off without paying their reckoning; but the innkeeper, who minded no man's business more than his own, stopped them in the nick, and demanding his money, upbraided their ungentle design very sharply: they returned the compliment with kick and cuff so roundly, that the poor

host cried out for help. His wife and daughter saw none so idle as Don Quixote, whom the daughter addressing, "I conjure you, sir knight," said she, "by that virtue delivered to you from heaven, to succour my distressed father, whom two villains are beating to jelly."—"Beautiful damsel," answered Don Quixote, with a slow tone and profound gravity, "your petition cannot at the present juncture prevail, I being withheld from undertaking any new adventure, by promise first to finish what I am engaged in; and all the service you can expect, is only my counsel in this important affair: Go with all speed to your father, with advice to continue and maintain the battle with his utmost resolution, till I obtain permission from the Princess Micomicona to reinforce him, which once granted, you need make no doubt of his safety."—"Unfortunate wretch that I am," said Maritornes, who overheard him, "before you can have this leave, my master will be sent to the other world."—"Then, madam," said he, "procure me the permission I mentioned, and though he were sent into the other world, I will bring him back in spite of hell and the devil, or at least so revenge his fall on his enemies, as shall give ample satisfaction to his surviving friends;" whereupon breaking off the

discourse, he went and threw himself prostrate before Dorothea, imploring her, in romantic style, to grant him a commission to march and sustain the governor of that castle, who was just fainting in a dangerous engagement." The princess despatched him very willingly; whereupon presently buckling on his target, and taking up his sword, he ran to the inn door, where the two guests were still handling their landlord very unmercifully: he there made a sudden stop, though Maritornes and the hostess pressed him twice or thrice to tell the cause of his delay in his promised assistance to his host. "I make a pause," said Don Quixote, "because I am commanded by the law of arms to use my sword against none under the order of knighthood; but let my squire be called, this affair is altogether his province."—In the meantime drubs and bruises were incessant at the inn-gate, and the poor host soundly beaten. His wife, daughter and maid, who stood by, were like to run mad at Don Quixote's hanging back, and the inn-keeper's unequal combat; where we shall leave him, with a design to return to his assistance presently, though his fool-hardiness deserves a sound beating, for attempting a thing he was not likely to go through with. We now

return to hear what Don Lewis answered the judge, whom we left retired with him, and asking the reason of his travelling on foot, and in so mean a disguise. The young gentleman, grasping his hands very passionately, made this reply, not without giving a proof of the greatness of his sorrow by his tears.

"Without ceremony or preamble, I must tell you, dear sir, that from the instant that heaven made us neighbours, and I saw Donna Clara, your daughter and my mistress, I resigned to her the whole command of my affections; and unless you, whom I most truly call my father, prevent it, she shall be my wife this very day; for her sake I abandoned my father's house; for her have I thus disguised my quality; her would I thus have followed through the world; she was the north-star, to guide my wandering course, and the mark at which my wishes flew. Her ears indeed are utter strangers to my passion; but yet her eyes may guess, by the tears she saw flowing from mine. You know my fortune and my quality; if these can plead, sir, I lay them at her feet. Then make me this instant your happy son; and if my father, biassed by contrary designs, should not approve my choice, yet time may

produce some favourable turn, and alter his mind."—The amorous youth having done speaking, the judge was much surprised at the handsome discovery he made of his affections, but was not a little puzzled how to behave himself in so sudden and unexpected a matter; he therefore, without any positive answer, advised him only to compose his thoughts, to divert himself with his servants, and to prevail with them to allow him that day to consider on what was proper to be done. Don Lewis expressed his gratitude by forcibly kissing the judge's hands, and bathing them with his tears, enough to move a heart of a cannibal, much more a judge's, who, being a man of the world, had presently the advantage of the match and preferment of his daughter in the wind; though he much doubted the consent of Don Lewis's father, who he knew designed to match his son into the nobility.

By this time Don Quixote's entreaties more than threats had parted the fray at the inn-door; the strangers paying their reckoning went off, and Don Lewis's servants stood expecting the result of the judge's discourse with their young master; when, as the devil would have it who should come into the inn but the barber

whom Don Quixote had robbed of Mambrino's helmet, and Sancho of the pack-saddle. As he was leading his beast very gravely to the stable, he spies Sancho mending something about the pannel; he knew him presently, and setting upon him very roughly, "Ay, master thief, master rogue," said he, "have I caught you at last, and all my ass's furniture in your hands too?" Sancho finding himself so unexpectedly assaulted, and nettled at the dishonourable terms of his language, laying fast hold on the pannel with one hand, gave the barber such a douse on the chops with the other, as set all his teeth a bleeding. For all this the barber stuck by his hold, and cried out so loud, that the whole house was alarmed at the noise and scuffle; "I command you, gentlemen," continued he, "to assist me in the king's name; for this rogue has robbed me on the king's high-way, and would now murder me, because I seize upon my goods."—"That is a lie," cried Sancho, "it was no robbery on the king's high-way, but lawful plunder, won by my lord Don Quixote fairly in the field."—The Don himself was now come up, very proud of his squire's behaviour on this occasion, accounting him thenceforth a man of spirit, and designing him the honour of knighthood on the first

opportunity, thinking his courage might prove a future ornament to the order. Among other things which the barber urged to prove his claim; "Gentlemen," said he, "this pack-saddle is as certainly my pack-saddle, as I hope to die in my bed; I know it as well as if it had been bred and born with me; nay, my very ass will witness for me; do but try the saddle on him, and if it does not fit him as close as can be, call me then a liar. Nay, more than that, gentlemen, that very day when they robbed me of my pack-saddle, they took away a special new basin which was never used, and which cost me a crown."—Here Don Quixote could no longer contain himself; but thrusting between them, he parted them; and having caused the pack-saddle to be deposited on the ground to open view, till the matter came to a final decision; "That this honourable company may know," cried he, "in what a manifest error this honest squire persists, take notice how he degrades that with the name of basin, which was, is, and shall be, the helmet of Mambrino, which I fairly won from him in the field, and lawfully made myself lord of by force of arms. As to the pack-saddle, it is a concern that is beneath my regard; all I have to urge in that affair is, that my squire begged my permission

to strip that vanquished coward's horse of his trappings, to adorn his own. He had my authority for the deed, and he took them. And now for his converting it from a horse's furniture to a pack-saddle, no other reason can be brought, but that such transformations frequently occur in the affairs of chivalry. For a confirmation of this, despatch, run, Sancho, and produce the helmet, which this squire would maintain to be a basin."—"O' my faith, sir," said Sancho, "if this be all you can say for yourself, Mambrino's helmet will prove as arrant a basin, as this same man's furniture is a mere pack-saddle."—"Obey my orders," said Don Quixote; "I cannot believe that every thing in this castle will be guided by enchantment."—Sancho brought the basin, which Don Quixote holding up in his hands, "Behold, gentlemen," continued he, "with what face can this impudent squire affirm this to be a basin, and not the helmet I mentioned? Now, I swear before you all, by the order of knighthood which I profess, that this is the same individual helmet which I won from him, without the least addition or diminution."—"That I will swear," said Sancho; "for since my lord won it, he never fought but once in it, and that was the

battle wherein he freed those ungracious galley-slaves, who, by the same token, would have knocked out his brains with a shower of stones, had not this same honest basin-helmet saved his skull."

## CHAPTER XVIII

THE CONTROVERSY ABOUT MAMBRINO'S HELMET AND THE PACK-SADDLE, DISPUTED AND DECIDED; WITH OTHER ACCIDENTS, NOT MORE STRANGE THAN TRUE

"PRAY, good gentlemen," said the barber, "let us have your opinion in this matter; I suppose you will grant this same helmet to be a basin."—"He that dares grant any such thing," said Don Quixote, "must know that he lies plainly, if a knight; but if a squire, he lies abominably."—Our barber, who was privy to the whole matter, to humour the jest, and carry the diversion a little higher, took up the other shaver.—"Master Barber,—you must pardon me, sir, if I do not give you your titles,—I must let you understand," said he, "that I have served an apprenticeship to your trade, and have been a freeman in the company these thirty years,<sup>1</sup> and therefore am not to learn what belongs to shaving. You must likewise know that I have been a soldier too in my younger days, and consequently understand the differ-

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