

out fire," replied Sancho, "and brightness comes most from flames. Who knows but those about us may burn us! But music I take to be always a sign of feasting and merriment."—"We shall know presently what this will come to," said Don Quixote; and he said right, for you will find it in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER XXXV

WHEREIN IS CONTAINED THE INFORMATION GIVEN  
TO DON QUIXOTE HOW TO DISENCHANT DUL-  
CINEA, WITH OTHER WONDERFUL PASSAGES

WHEN the pleasant music drew near, there appeared a stately triumphal chariot, drawn by six dun mules, covered with white, upon each of which sat a penitent, clad also in white, and holding a great lighted torch in his hand. The carriage was twice or thrice longer than any of the former, twelve other penitents being placed at the top and sides, all in white, and bearing likewise each a lighted torch, which made a dazzling and surprising appearance. There was a high throne erected at the farther end, on which sat a nymph, arrayed in cloth of silver, with many golden spangles, glittering all about her, which made her dress, though not rich, appear very glorious. Her face was covered with transparent gauze, through the flowing folds of which might be descried a most beautiful face; and, by the great light which the torches gave, it was easy



to discern, that, as she was not less than seventeen years of age, neither could she be thought above twenty. Close by her was a figure, clad in a long gown, like that of a magistrate, reaching down to its feet, and its head covered with a black veil. When they came directly opposite to the company, the shawms or hautboys that played before immediately ceased, and the Spanish harps and lutes, that were in the chariot, did the like; then the figure in the gown stood up, and, opening its garments, and throwing away its mourning veil, discovered a bare and frightful skeleton, that represented the deformed figure of Death; which startled Don Quixote, made Sancho's bones rattle in his skin for fear, and caused the duke and the duchess to seem more than commonly disturbed. This living Death being thus got up, in a dull, heavy, sleeping tone, as if its tongue had not been well awake, began in this manner:—

MERLIN'S SPEECH.

“Behold old Merlin, in romantic writ,  
Miscall'd the spurious progeny of hell;  
A falsehood current with the stamp of age;  
I reign the prince of Zoroastic science,  
That oft evokes and rates the rigid powers:  
Archive of Fate's dread records in the skies,  
Coëvous with the chivalry of yore;  
All brave knights-errant still I've deem'd my charge,

Heirs of my love, and fav'rites of my charms.

“While other magic seers, averse from good,  
Are dire and baleful like the seat of woe,  
My nobler soul, where power and pity join,  
Diffuses blessings, as they scatter plagues.

“Deep in the nether world, the dreary caves,  
Where my retreated soul, in silent state,  
Forms mystic figures, and tremendous spells,  
I heard the peerless Dulcinea's moans.

“Apprized of her distress, her frightful change,  
From princely state, and beauty near divine,  
To the vile semblance of a rustic quean,  
The dire misdeed of necromantic hate,  
I sympathized, and awfully revolved  
Twice fifty thousand scrolls, occult and loath'd,  
Some of my art, hell's black philosophy;  
Then closed my soul within this bony trunk,  
This ghastly form, the ruins of a man;  
And rise in pity to reveal a cure  
To woes so great, and break the cursed spell.

“O glory, thou, of all that e'er could grace  
A coat of steel, and fence of adamant!  
Light, lantern, path, and polar star and guide  
To all who dare dismiss ignoble sleep,  
And downy ease, for exercise of arms,  
For toils continual, perils, wounds and blood!  
Knight of unfathom'd worth, abyss of praise,  
Who blend'st in one the prudent and the brave:  
To thee, great Quixote, I this truth declare;  
That, to restore her to her state and form,  
Toboso's pride, the peerless Dulcinea,  
'Tis Fate's decree, that Sancho, thy good squire,  
On his bare brawny buttocks should bestow  
Three thousand lashes, and eke three hundred more,  
Each to afflict and sting, and gall him sore;  
So shall relent the authors of her woes,  
Whose awful will I for her ease disclose.”

“Body o'me,” quoth Sancho, “three  
thousand lashes! I will not give myself



three; I will as soon give myself three stabs in the guts. May you and your disenchanting go to the devil! What a plague have my buttocks to do with the black art? Passion of my heart! Mr Merlin, if you have no better way for disenchanting the Lady Dulcinea, she may even lie bewitched to her dying-day for me."

"How now, opprobrious rascal," cried Don Quixote, "stinking garlick-eater! Sirrah, I will take you and tie your dogship to a tree, as naked as your mother bore you; and there I will not only give you three thousand three hundred lashes, but six thousand six hundred, ye varlet! and so smartly, that you shall feel them still, though you rub your backside three thousand times, scoundrel! Answer me a word, you rogue, and I will tear out your soul."—"Hold, hold!" cried Merlin, hearing this, "this must not be; the stripes inflicted on honest Sancho must be voluntary, without compulsion, and only laid on when he thinks most convenient. No set time is for the task fixed; and if he has a mind to have abated one half of this atonement, it is allowed, provided the remaining stripes be struck by a strange hand, and heavily laid on."

"Hold you there," quoth Sancho, "neither

a strange hand nor my own, neither heavy nor light, shall touch my bum. What a pox, did I bring Madam Dulcinea del Toboso into the world, that my hind parts should pay for the harm her eyes have done? Let my master Don Quixote whip himself, he is a part of her; he calls her every foot, my life, my soul, my sustenance, my comfort, and all that. So even let him jirk out her enchantment at his own bum's cost; but as for any whipping of me, I deny and pronounce\* it flat and plain."

No sooner had Sancho thus spoken his mind, than the nymph that sat by Merlin's ghost in the glittering apparel, rising and lifting up her thin veil, discovered a very beautiful face; and with a masculine grace, but no very agreeable voice, addressing Sancho, "O thou disastrous squire," said she, "thou lump, with no more soul than a broken pitcher, heart of cork, and bowels of flint! Hadst thou been commanded, base sheep-stealer! to have thrown thyself headlong from the top of a high tower to the ground; hadst thou been desired, enemy of mankind! to have swallowed a dozen of toads, two dozens of lizards, and three dozen of snakes; or hadst thou been requested to have butchered thy wife and

\* A blunder of Sancho's, for renounce.



children, I should not wonder that it had turned thy squeamish stomach; but to make such a hesitation at three thousand three hundred stripes, which every puny school-boy makes nothing of receiving every month, it is amazing, nay astonishing to the tender and commiserating bowels of all that hear thee, and will be a blot in thy escutcheon to all futurity. Look up, thou wretched and marble-hearted animal! look up, and fix thy huge louring goggle-eyes upon the bright luminaries of my sight. Behold these briny torrents, which, streaming down, furrow the flowery meadows of my cheeks. Relent, base and exorable monster—relent; let thy savage breast confess at last a sense of my distress, and, moved with the tenderness of my youth, that consumes and withers in this vile transformation, crack this sordid shell of rusticity that envelopes my blooming charms. In vain has the goodness of Merlin permitted me to reassume a while my native shape, since neither that, nor the tears of beauty in affliction, which are said to reduce obdurate rocks to the softness of cotton, and tigers to the tenderness of lambs, are sufficient to melt thy haggard breast. Scourge, scourge that brawny hide of thine, stubborn and unrelenting brute!

that coarse inclosure of thy coarser soul, and rouse up thus thyself from that base sloth that makes thee live only to eat and pamper thy lazy flesh, indulging still thy voracious appetite. Restore me the delicacy of my skin, the sweetness of my disposition, and the beauty of my face. But if my entreaties and tears cannot work thee into a reasonable compliance, if I am not yet sufficiently wretched to move thy pity, at least let the anguish of that miserable knight, thy tender master, mollify thy heart. Alas! I see his very soul just at his throat, and sticking not ten inches from his lips, waiting only thy cruel or kind answer, either to fly out of his mouth, or return into his breast."

Don Quixote, hearing this, clapped his hand upon his gullet, and turning to the duke, "By heavens, my lord," said he, "Dulcinea is in the right; for I find my soul traversed in my wind-pipe like a bullet in a cross-bow."—"What is your answer, now, Sancho?" said the duchess.—"I say, as I said before," quoth Sancho; "as for the flogging, I pronounce it flat and plain."—"Renounce, you mean," said the duke.—"Good, your worship," quoth Sancho, "this is no time for me to mind niceties and spelling of letters: I have other fish to fry. This plaguy whipping-bout



makes me quite distracted. I do not know what to say or do; but I would fain know of my Lady Dulcinea del Toboso, where she picked up this kind of breeding, to beg thus like a sturdy beggar! Here she comes, to desire me to lash my backside as raw as a piece of beef, and the best word she can give is, soul of a broken pitcher, monster, brute, sheep-stealer, with a ribble-rabble of saucy nicknames, that the devil himself would not bear. Do you think, mistress of mine, that my skin is made of brass? Or shall I get any thing by your disenchantment! Beshrew her heart, where is the fine present she has brought along with her to soften me? A basket of fine linen, holland-shirts, caps, and socks, (though I wear none,) had been somewhat like; but to fall upon me and bespatter me thus with dirty names, do you think that will do? No, in faith. Remember the old sayings, A golden load makes the burden light; gifts will enter stone-walls; scratch my breech and I will claw your elbow; a bird in hand is worth two in the bush. Nay, my master too, who one would think should tell me a fine story, and coax me up with dainty sugar-plum words, talks of tying me to a tree, forsooth, and of doubling the whipping. Ods-

bobs! methinks those troublesome people should know who they prate to. It is not only a squire-errant they would have to whip himself, but a governor! and there is no more to do, think they, but up and ride. Let them even learn manners, with a pox. There is a time for some things, and a time for all things; a time for great things, and a time for small things. Am I now in a humour to hear petitions, do you think? Just when my heart is ready to burst for having torn my new coat, they would have me tear my own flesh too, in the devil's name, when I have no more stomach to it than to be among the men-eaters."\*

"Upon my honour, Sancho," said the duke, "if you do not relent, and become as soft as a ripe fig, you shall have no government. It would be a fine thing, indeed, that I should send among my islanders a merciless hard-hearted tyrant, whom neither the tears of distressed damsels, nor the admonitions of wise, ancient, and powerful enchanter, can move to compassion. In short, sir, no stripes, no government."—"But," quoth Sancho, "may not I have a day or two to consider on it?"—"Not a minute," cried Merlin; "you must

\* In the original, to turn Cazique; Bolverme Cazique. Caziques are petty kings in the West Indies.



declare now, and in this very place, what you resolve to do, for Dulcinea must be again transformed into a country wench, and carried back immediately to Montesinos's cave, or else she shall go as she is now, to the Elysian fields, there to remain till the number of stripes be made out."—"Come, come, honest Sancho," said the duchess, "pluck up a good courage, and show your gratitude to your master, whose bread you have eaten, and to whose generous nature, and high feats of chivalry, we are all so much obliged. Come, child, give your consent, and make a fool of the devil: Hang fear; faint heart never won fair lady; fortune favours the brave, as you know better than I can tell you."—"Hark you, Mr. Merlin," quoth Sancho, without giving the duchess an answer; "pray, will you tell me one thing. How comes it about, that this same post-devil that came before you, brought my master word from Signior Montesinos, that he would be here, and give him directions about this disenchantment, and yet we hear no news of Montesinos all this while?"—"Pshaw," answered Merlin, "the devil is an ass and a lying rascal; he came from me, and not from Montesinos; for he, poor man, is still in his cave, expecting the dissolution of the spell that confines him there

yet, so that he is not quite ready to be free, and the worst is still behind.\* But if he owes you any money, or you have any business with him, he shall be forthcoming when and where you please. But now, pray make an end, and undergo this small penance, it will do you a world of good, for it will not only prove beneficial to your soul as an act of charity, but also to your body as a healthy exercise; for you are of a very sanguine complexion, Sancho, and losing a little blood will do you no harm."—"Well," quoth Sancho, "there is like to be no want of physicians in this world, I find; the very conjurors set up for doctors too. Well, then, since every body says as much, (though I can hardly believe it,) I am content to give myself the three thousand three hundred stripes, upon condition that I may be paying them off as long as I please; observe that: though I will be out of debt as soon as I can, that the world may not be without the pretty face of the Lady Dulcinea del Toboso, which, I must own, I could never have believed to have been so handsome. Item, I shall not be bound to fetch blood, that is certain, and if any stroke happens to miss me, it shall pass for one,

\* *Aun le falta la cola por desollar, i.e.*—The tail still remains to be flayed, which is the most troublesome and hard to be done.



however. Item, Mr Merlin, (because he knows all things,) shall be obliged to reckon the lashes, and take care I do not give myself one more than the tale."—"There is no fear of that," said Merlin; "for at the very last lash the Lady Dulcinea will be disenchanting, come straight to you, make you a courtesy, and give you thanks. Heaven forbid I should wrong any man of the least hair of his head."—"Well," quoth Sancho, "what must be, must be; I yield to my hard luck, and, on the aforesaid terms, take up with my penance."

Scarcely had Sancho spoken, when the music struck up again, and a congratulatory volley of small shot was immediately discharged. Don Quixote fell on Sancho's neck, hugging and kissing him a thousand times. The duke, the duchess, and the whole company, seemed mightily pleased. The chariot moved on, and as it passed by, the fair Dulcinea made the duke and duchess a bow, and Sancho a low courtesy.

And now the jolly morn began to spread her smiling looks in the eastern quarter of the skies, and the flowers of the field to disclose their bloomy folds, and raise their fragrant heads.\* The brooks, now cool and clear, in gentle murmurs, played with the grey pebbles,

and flowed along to pay their liquid crystal tribute to the expecting rivers. The sky was clear, the air serene, swept clean by brushing winds for the reception of the shining light, and every thing, not only jointly, but in its separate gaiety, welcomed the fair Aurora, and, like her, foretold a fairer day. The duke and duchess, well pleased with the management and success of the hunting, and the counterfeit adventure, returned to the castle, resolving to make a second essay of the same nature, having received as much pleasure from the first, as any reality could have produced.