

too." Don Quixote was no less perplexed not being able to imagine the reason either of their hard usage or scurrilous language, which, hitherto promised but little good. At last, after they had ridden about an hour in the dark, they came to the gates of the castle, which Don Quixote presently knowing to be the duke's where he had so lately been, "Heaven bless me," cried he, "what do I see! Was not this the mansion of civility and humanity? But thus the vanquished are doomed to see everything frown upon them." With that the two prisoners were led into the great court of the castle, and found such strange preparations made there, as increased at once their fear and their amazement; as we shall find in the next chapter.

CHAPTER LXIX

OF THE MOST SINGULAR AND STRANGE ADVENTURE
THAT BEFEL DON QUIXOTE IN THE WHOLE
COURSE OF THIS FAMOUS HISTORY

ALL the horsemen alighted, and the footmen snatching up Don Quixote and Sancho in their arms, hurried them into the court-yard, that was illuminated with above a hundred torches, fixed in huge candlesticks; and about all the galleries round the court, were placed above five hundred lights, insomuch that all was day in the midst of the darkness of the night. In the middle of the court there was a tomb, raised some two yards from the ground, with a large pall of black velvet over it, and round about it a hundred tapers of virgin-wax stood burning in silver candlesticks. Upon the tomb lay the body of a young damsel, who, though to all appearance dead, was yet so beautiful, that death itself seemed lovely in her face. Her head was crowned with a garland of fragrant flowers, and supported by a pillow of cloth of gold; and in her hands,

that were laid across her breast, was seen a branch of that yellow palm, that used of old to adorn the triumphs of conquerors. On one side of the court there was a kind of theatre erected, on which two personages sat in chairs, who, by the crowns upon their heads, and sceptres in their hands, were, or at least appeared to be, kings. By the side of the theatre, at the foot of the steps by which the kings ascended, two other chairs were placed, and thither Don Quixote and Sancho were led, and caused to sit down; the guards that conducted them continuing silent all the while, and making their prisoners understand, by awful signs, that they must also be silent. But there was no great occasion for that caution; for their surprise was so great, that it had tied up their tongues without it.

At the same time two other persons of note ascended the stage with a numerous retinue, and seated themselves on two stately chairs by the two theatrical kings. These Don Quixote presently knew to be the duke and duchess, at whose palace he had been so nobly entertained. But what he discovered as the greatest wonder, was, that the corpse upon the tomb was the body of the fair Altisidora.

As soon as the duke and duchess had as-

cended, Don Quixote and Sancho made them a profound obeisance, which they returned with a short inclining of their heads. Upon this a certain officer entered the court, and, coming up to Sancho, he clapped over him a black buckram frock, all figured over with flames of fire, and, taking off his cap, he put on his head a kind of mitre, such as is worn by those who undergo public penance by the Inquisition; whispering him in the ear at the same time, that if he did but offer to open his lips, they would put a gag in his mouth, or murder him outright. Sancho viewed himself over from head to foot, and was a little startled to see himself all over in fire and flames; but yet since he did not feel himself burn, he cared not a farthing. He pulled off his mitre, and found it pictured over with devils; but he put it on again, and bethought himself, that since neither the flames burned him, nor the devils ran away with him, it was well enough. Don Quixote also stedfastly surveyed him, and, in the midst of all his apprehensions, could not forbear smiling to see what a strange figure he made. And now in the midst of that profound silence, while every thing was mute, and expectation most attentive, a soft and charming symphony of flutes, that seemed to issue from

the hollow of the tomb, agreeably filled their ears. Then there appeared, at the head of the monument, a young man extremely handsome, and dressed in a Roman habit, who, to the music of a harp, touched by himself, sung the following stanzas with an excellent voice:—

ALTISIDORA'S DIRGE.

While slain, the fair Altisidora lies
A victim to Don Quixote's cold disdain:
Here all things mourn, all pleasure with her dies,
And weeds of woe disguise the graces' train.

I'll sing the beauties of her face and mind,
Her hopeless passion, her unhappy fate;
Not Orpheus' self, in numbers more refin'd,
Her charms, her love, her sufferings could relate.

Nor shall the fair alone in life be sung,
Her boundless praise is my immortal choice;
In the cold grave, when death benumbs my tongue,
For thee, bright maid, my soul shall find a voice.

When from this narrow cell my spirit's free,
And wanders grieving with the shades below,
Even o'er oblivion's waves I'll sing to thee;
And hell itself shall sympathize in woe.

“Enough,” cried one of the two kings; “no more, divine musician; it were an endless task to enumerate the perfections of Altisidora, or give us the story of her fate. Nor is she dead, as the ignorant vulgar surmises; no, in the mouth of fame she lives, and once more shall

revive, as soon as Sancho has undergone the penance that is decreed to restore her to the world. Therefore, O Rhadamanthus! thou who sittest in joint commission with me in the opacous shades of Dis, tremendous judge of hell! thou to whom the decrees of fate, inscrutable to mortals, are revealed; in order to restore this damsel to life, open and declare them immediately, nor delay the promised felicity of her return to comfort the drooping world!”

Scarce had Minos finished his charge, when Rhadamanthus started up. “Proceed,” said he, “ye ministers and officers of the household, superior and inferior, high and low; proceed one after another, and mark me Sancho's chin with twenty-four twitches, give him twelve pinches, and run six pins into his arms and back-side; for Altisidora's restoration depends on the performance of this ceremony.” Sancho, hearing this, could hold out no longer, but bawling out, “Body of me,” cried he, “I will as soon turn Turk as give you leave to do all this. You shall put no chin or countenance of mine upon any such mortification. What the devil can the spoiling of my face signify to the restoring of the damsel? I may as soon

turn up my broad end, and awaken her with a gun. Dulcinea is bewitched, and I forsooth must flog myself, to free her from witchcraft! and here is Altisidora too drops off of one distemper or other, and presently poor Sancho must be pulled by the handle of his face, his skin filled with oiled holes, and his arms pinched black and blue, to save her from the worms! No, no; you must not think to put tricks upon travellers! An old dog understands trap."*—"Relent," cried Rhadamanthus aloud, "thou tiger; submit, proud Nimrod; suffer and be silent, or thou diest: No impossibility is required from thee; and therefore pretend not to expostulate on the severity of thy doom. Thy face shall receive the twitches, thy skin shall be pinched, and thou shalt groan under the penance.—Begin, I say, ye ministers of justice, execute my sentence, or, as I am an honest man, ye shall curse the hour ye were born." At the same time six old duennas, or waiting-women, appeared in the court, marching in a formal procession one after another, four of them wearing spectacles, and all with their right hands held aloft, and their wrists, according to the fashion, about four inches bare, to make their hands seem the longer. Sancho

* *Tus, tus*, in the original. See this explained elsewhere.

no sooner spied them, than, roaring out like a bull, "Do with me what you please," cried he; "let a sackful of mad cats lay their claws on me, as they did on my master in this castle, drill me through with sharp daggers; tear the flesh from my bones with red hot pincers, I will bear it with patience, and serve your worships; but the devil shall run away with me at once, before I will suffer old waiting-women to lay a finger upon me." Don Quixote, upon this, broke silence: "Have patience, my son," cried he, "and resign thyself to those potentates, with thanks to heaven, for having endowed thy person with such a gift, as to release the enchanted, and raise the dead from the grave."

By this time the waiting-women were advanced up to Sancho, who, after much persuasion, was at last wrought upon to settle himself in his seat, and submit his face and beard to the female executioners. The first that approached him gave him a clever twitch, and then dropped him a courtesy. "Less courtesy, and less sauce, good Mrs Governante," cried Sancho; "for, by the life of Pharaoh, your fingers stink of vinegar." In short, all the waiting-women, and most of the servants, came and twitched and pinched him decently,

and he bore it all with unspeakable patience. But when they came to prick him with pins, he could contain no longer; but starting up in a pelting chafe, snatched up one of the torches that stood near, and swinging it round, put all the women and the rest of his tormentors to their heels. "Avaunt," cried he, "ye imps of the devil! do ye think my backside is made of brass, or that I intend to be your master's martyr, with a pox to ye?"

At the same time Altisidora, who could not but be tired with lying so long upon her back, began to turn herself on one side, which was no sooner perceived by the spectators, than they all set up the cry, "She lives, she lives! Altisidora lives!" And then Rhadamanthus, addressing himself to Sancho, desired him to be pacified, for now the wonderful recovery was effected. On the other side, Don Quixote, seeing Altisidora stir, went and threw himself on his knees before Sancho. "My dear Son," cried he, "for now I will not call thee squire, now is the hour for thee to receive some of the lashes that are encumbent upon thee for the disenchanting of Dulcinea. This, I say, is the auspicious time, when the virtue of thy skin is most mature and efficacious for working the wonders that are ex-

pected from it."—"Out of the frying pan into the fire," quoth Sancho; "I have brought my hogs to a fair market truly; after I have been twinged and tweaked by the nose and everywhere, and my buttocks stuck all over and made a pin-cushion of, I must now be whipped like a top, must I? If you have a mind to be rid of me, cannot you as well tie a good stone about my neck, and tip me into a well? Better make an end of me at once, than have me loaded so every foot like a pack-horse with other folk's burdens. Look ye, say but one word more to me of any such thing, and on my soul all the fat shall be in the fire."

By this time Altisidora sat on the tomb, and presently the music struck up, all the instruments being joined with the voices of the spectators, who cried aloud, "Live, live, Altisidora, live!" The duke and duchess got up, and with Minos and Rhadamanthus, accompanied by Don Quixote and Sancho, went all in a body to receive Altisidora, and hand her down from the tomb. She pretended to faint, bowed to the duke and duchess, and also to the two kings; but, after looking askew upon Don Quixote, "Heaven forgive that hard-hearted lovely

knight," said she, "whose barbarity has made me an inhabitant of the other world for aught I know a thousand years.—But to thee," said she, turning to Sancho, "to thee, the most compassionate squire that the world contains, I return my thanks for my change from death to life, in acknowledgment of which, six of the best smocks I have shall be changed into shirts for thee; and if they are not spick and span new, yet they are all as clean as a penny." Sancho pulled off his mitre, put his knee to the ground, and kissed her hand. The duke commanded that they should return him his cap, and, instead of his flaming frock, to give him his gaberdine; but Sancho begged of his grace that he might keep the frock and mitre, to carry into his own country, as a relic of that wonderful adventure. The duchess said he should have them, for he knew she was always one of the best of his friends. Then the duke ordered the company to clear the court, and retired to their respective lodgings; and that Don Quixote and Sancho should be conducted to their apartments.

CHAPTER LXX

WHICH COMES AFTER THE SIXTY-NINTH, AND CONTAINS SEVERAL PARTICULARS, NECESSARY FOR THE ILLUSTRATION OF THIS HISTORY

THAT night, Sancho lay in a truckle-bed in Don Quixote's chamber, a lodging not greatly to the squire's liking, being very sensible that his master would disturb him with impertinent chat all night long. And this entertainment he found himself not rightly disposed for, his late penance having taken him quite off the talking-pin; and a hovel, with good sound sleep, had been more agreeable to his circumstances, than the most stately apartments in such troublesome company. And indeed, his apprehensions proved so right, that his master was scarcely laid when he began to open.

"Sancho," said he, "what is your opinion of the night's adventure? Great and mighty is the force of love, when heightened by disdain, as the testimony of your own eyes may convince you in the death of Altisidora. It was neither a dart, a dagger, nor any poison