

STORIES OF DON QUIXOTE



CERVANTES

WHO FIRST TOLD THE STORY OF
"DON QUIXOTE"

**STORIES OF
DON QUIXOTE**

BY

JAMES BALDWIN

YESTERDAY'S CLASSICS

CHAPEL HILL, NORTH CAROLINA

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THIS BOOK
IS INSCRIBED
TO
THE BOYS WHO READ

WITH THE HOPE THAT THEY WILL
LOVE THE HERO
LAUGH AT HIS ADVENTURES
EXCUSE HIS FAULTS
AND LEARN WISDOM FROM HIS EXPERIENCE

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

THE romance entitled “The Achievements of the Ingenious Gentleman, Don Quixote de la Mancha,” was originally written in Spanish by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra. It was published in two parts, the first in 1605 and the second in 1615—now just about three hundred years ago. Among the great books of the world it holds a permanent place. It has been translated into every language of Europe, even Turkish and Slavonic. It has been published in numberless editions. It has been read and enjoyed by men of the most diverse tastes and conditions.

The story is so simple that every one can understand it, and yet it has in it so much wisdom that the wisest may derive pleasure from it. It touches the sense of humor in every heart. It moves to pity rather than ridicule, and to tears as well as laughter. And herein lies its chief claim to greatness, that it seems to have been written not for one country nor for one age alone, but to give delight to all mankind. “It is our joyfullest modern book.”

In its original form, however, it is a bulky work, dismaying the present-day reader by its vastness. For it fills more than a thousand closely printed pages, and

the story itself is interrupted and encumbered by episodes and tedious passages which are no longer interesting and which we have no time to read. The person who would get at the kernel of this famous book and know something of its plan and its literary worth, must either struggle through many pages of tiresome details and unnecessary digressions, or he must resort to much ingenious skipping. In these days of many books and hasty reading, it is scarcely possible that any person should read the whole of *Don Quixote* in its original form. And yet no scholar can afford to be ignorant of a work so famous and so enjoyable.

These considerations have led to the preparation of the present small volume. It is not so much an abridgment of the great book by Cervantes as it is a rewriting of some of its most interesting parts. While very much of the work has necessarily been omitted, the various adventures are so related as to form a continuous narrative; and in every way an effort is made to give a clear idea of the manner and content of the original. Although Cervantes certainly had no thought of writing a story for children, there are many passages in *Don Quixote* which appeal particularly to young readers; and it is hoped that this adaptation of such passages will serve a useful purpose in awakening a desire to become further acquainted with that great world's classic.

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GETTING READY FOR ADVENTURES

MANY years ago there lived in Spain a very old-fashioned gentleman whom you would have been glad to know. This gentleman had so many odd ways and did so many strange things that he not only amused his neighbors and distressed his friends, but made himself famous throughout the world.

What his real name was, no one outside of his village seemed to know. Some said it was this, some said it was that; but his neighbors called him “the good Mr. Quixana,”* and no doubt this was correct.

He was gentle and kind, and very brave; and all who knew him loved him. He had neither wife nor child. He lived with his niece in his own farmhouse close by a quiet little village in the province of La Mancha.

His niece was not yet twenty years of age. So the house was kept and managed by an old servant woman who was more wrinkled than wise and more talkative than handsome. A poor man who lived in a cottage

* *Quixana*. This word is pronounced as if it were spelled *kē hā' na*. So, also, *Quixote* is pronounced *kē hō' tē*.

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near by was employed to do the work on the farm; and he did so well that the master had much leisure time and was troubled but little with the cares of business.

Mr. Quixana was rather odd in his appearance and dress, as all old-fashioned gentlemen are apt to be.

He was more than fifty years of age, and quite tall and slender. His face was thin, his nose was long, his hair was turning gray.

He dressed very plainly. On week days he wore a coarse blouse and blue trousers of homespun stuff. On Sundays, however, he put on a plush coat and short velvet breeches and soft slippers with silver buckles.

In the hallway of his old-fashioned house a short, rusty sword was always hanging; and leaning against the wall were a rusty lance and a big rawhide shield. These weapons had belonged to his great-grandfather, long ago, when men knew but little about guns and gunpowder.

On the kitchen doorstep an old greyhound was always lying. This dog was very lean and slender, and his hunting days had long been past. But all old-fashioned gentlemen kept greyhounds in those days.

In the barn there was a horse as old and as lean as the greyhound. But of this horse I will tell you much more in the course of my story.

Like many other gentlemen, Mr. Quixana did not work much. He spent almost all his time in reading, reading, reading.

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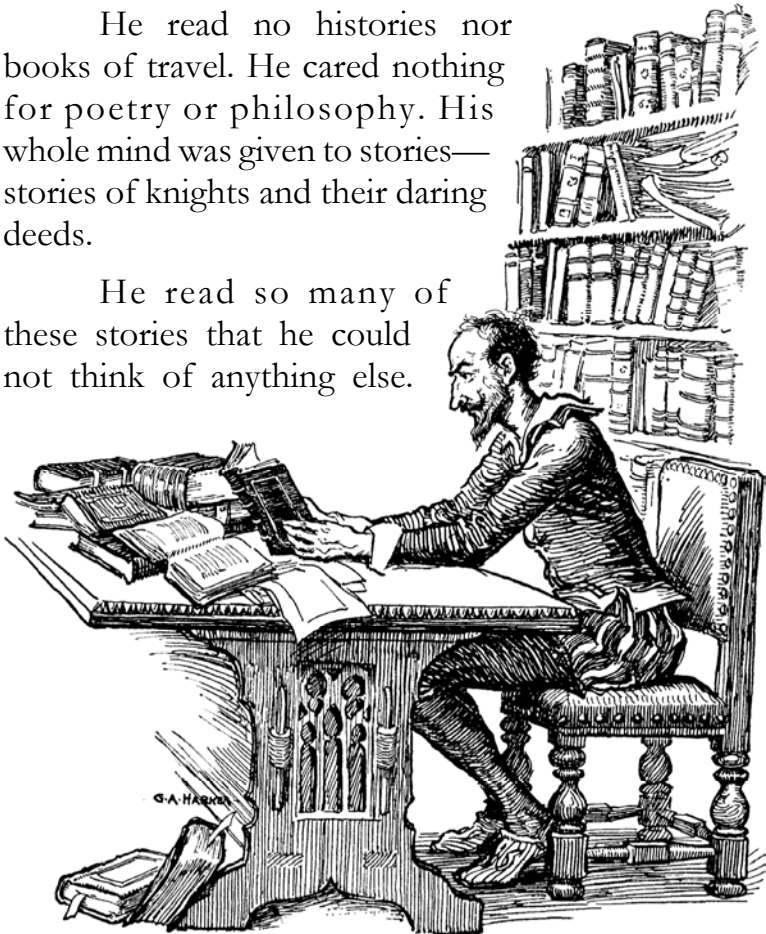
He was seldom seen without a book in his hand. When the weather was fine he would sit in his little library, or under the apple trees in his garden, and read all day.

He often forgot to come to his meals. He was so wrapped up in his books that he forgot his horse, his dog, and even his niece. He forgot his friends; he forgot himself. Sometimes he sat up and read all night.

Now, what kind of books do you suppose he read?

He read no histories nor books of travel. He cared nothing for poetry or philosophy. His whole mind was given to stories—stories of knights and their daring deeds.

He read so many of these stories that he could not think of anything else.



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His head was full of knights and knightly deeds, of magic and witchcraft, of tournaments and battlefields.

If he had read less, he would have been wiser; for much reading does not always improve the mind.

At length this old-fashioned gentleman said to himself, "Why should I always be a plain farmer and sit here at home? Why may I not become a famous knight?"

The more he thought about this matter the more he wished to be a hero like those of whom he had read in his books.

"Yes, I will be a knight," he said to himself. "My mind is fully made up. I will arm myself in a coat of mail, I will mount my noble steed, I will ride out into the world to seek adventures.

"No danger shall affright me. With my strong arm I will go forth to protect the weak and to befriend the friendless. Yes, I will be a knight, and I will fight against error wherever I find it."

So he began at once to get ready for his great undertaking.

The first thing to be done was to find some suitable armor. For what knight ever rode out into the world without being incased in steel?

In the garret of his house there was an old coat of mail. It had lain there among the dust and cobwebs for a hundred years and more. It was rusted and battered, and some of the parts were missing. It was a poor piece of work at the very best.

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But he cleaned it as well as he could, and polished it with great care. He cut some pieces of pasteboard to supply the missing parts, and painted them to look like steel. When they were properly fitted, they answered very well, especially when no fighting was to be done.

With the coat of mail there was an old brass helmet. It, too, was broken, and the straps for holding it on were lost. But Mr. Quixana patched it up and found some green ribbons which served instead of straps. As he held it up and looked at it from every side, he felt very proud to think that his head would be adorned with so rare a piece of workmanship.

And now a steed must be provided; for every knight must needs have a noble horse.

The poor old creature in the barn was gaunt and thin and very bony; but he was just the stuff for a war horse, wiry and very stubborn. As the old-fashioned gentleman looked at him he fancied that no steed had ever been so beautiful or so swift.

“He will carry me most gallantly,” he said, “and I shall be proud of him. But what shall I call him? A horse that is ridden by a noble knight must needs have an honorable and high-sounding name.”

So he spent four days in studying what he should call his steed.

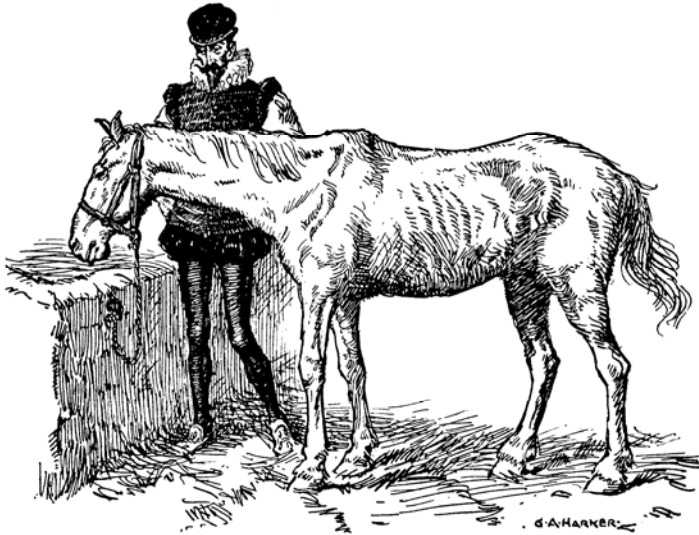
At last he said, “I have it. His name shall be Rozinante.”*

* Rozinante, pronounced rō' zǐ nǎn' tē

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“And why do you give him that strange name?” asked the niece.

“I will tell you,” he answered. “The word *rozin* means ‘common horse,’ and the word *ante* is good Latin for ‘before’ or ‘formerly.’ Now if I call my gallant steed ‘Formerly-a-Common-Horse,’ the meaning is plain; for everybody will understand that he is now no longer common, but very *uncommon*. Do you see? So his name shall be Rozinante.”



Then he patted the horse lovingly, and gently repeated, “Rozinante! Rozinante!”

He thought that if he could only find as good a name for himself, he would feel like riding out and beginning his adventures at once. For what more could he need?

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“Every knight,” he said, “has the right to put Don at the beginning of his name; for that is a title of honor and respect. Now, I shall call myself Don—Don—Don something; but what shall it be?”

He studied this question for eight days. Then a happy thought came into his mind.

“I will call myself Don Quixote,” he cried; “and since my home is in the district of La Mancha, I shall be known throughout the world as Don Quixote de la Mancha. What name is more noble than that? What title can be more honorable?”

The name was indeed not very different from his real name. For have we not said that his neighbors called him Quixana?

The good old gentleman had now mended and polished his armor and found new names for himself and his steed. He felt himself well equipped for adventures. But suddenly the thought came to him that still another thing must be settled before he could ride out and do battle as a real and true knight.

In all the stories he had read, every hero who was worthy of knighthood had claims to some fair lady whom he invoked in time of peril, and to whom he brought the prizes which he had won. It was at her feet that the knight must kneel at the end of every quest. It was from her that he must receive the victor’s crown. To him, therefore, a lady friend was as necessary as a steed or a suit of armor.

Now Don Quixote was not acquainted with many ladies, but he felt that, as a knight, he must

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center his thoughts upon some one who would be his guiding star as he went faring through the world.

Who should it be?

This question troubled him more than any other had done. He sat in his house for two whole weeks, and thought of nothing else.

How would his niece do?

Well, she was very young, and he was her uncle. In all the books in his library there was no account of a knight kneeling at the feet of his own niece. She was not to be thought of.

As for his housekeeper, she was too old and homely. He could never think of doing homage to one in her humble station.

At length he remembered a handsome, red-cheeked maiden who lived in or near the village of Toboso. Her name was Adonza Lorenzo, and many years ago she had smiled at him as he was passing her on the road. He had not seen her since she had grown up, but she must now be the most charming of womankind. He fancied that no lady in the world was better fitted to receive his knightly homage.

“Adonza Lorenzo it shall be!” he cried, rubbing his hands together.

But what a name! How would it sound when coupled with that of the valorous Don Quixote de la Mancha? Surely it was too common, and she must have a title more like that of a princess. What should it be?

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He studied over this for many days, and at last hit upon a name which pleased him much.

“It shall be Dulcinea,” he cried. “It shall be Dulcinea del Toboso. No other name is so sweet, so harmonious, so like the lady herself.”

Thus, after weeks of labor and study, Don Quixote de la Mancha at length felt himself prepared to ride forth into the world to seek adventures. He waited only for a suitable opportunity to put his cherished plans into execution.

THE ADVENTURE AT THE INN

ONE morning in midsummer, Don Quixote arose very early, long before any one else was awake.

He put on his coat of mail and the old helmet which he had patched with pasteboard and green ribbons.

He took down the short sword that had been his great-grandfather's, and belted it to his side. He grasped his long lance. He swung the leather shield upon his shoulder.

Then he went out very quietly by the back door, lest he should awaken his niece or the housekeeper.

He went softly to the barn and saddled his steed. Then he mounted and rode silently away through the sleeping village and the quiet fields.

He was pleased to think how easily he had managed things. He was glad that he had gotten away from the house and the village without any unpleasant scenes.

“I trust that I shall presently meet with some worthy adventure,” he said to himself.

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But soon a dreadful thought came into his mind: He was not a knight, for no one had conferred that honor upon him; and the laws of chivalry would not permit him to contend in battle with any one of noble rank until he himself was knighted.

“Whoa, Rozinante!” he said. “I must consider this matter.”

He stopped underneath a tree, and thought and thought. Must he give up his enterprise and return home?

“No, that I shall never do!” he cried. “I will ride onward, and the first worthy man that I meet shall make me knight.”

So he spoke cheeringly to Rozinante and resumed his journey. He dropped the reins loosely upon the horse’s neck, and allowed him to stroll hither and thither as he pleased.

“It is thus,” he said, “that knights ride out upon their quests. They go where fortune and their steeds may carry them.”

Thus, leisurely, he sat in the saddle, while Rozinante wandered in unfrequented paths, cropped the green herbage by the roadside, or rested himself in the shade of some friendly tree. The hours passed, but neither man nor beast took note of time or distance.

“We shall have an adventure by and by,” said Don Quixote softly to himself.

The sun was just sinking in the west when Rozinante, in quest of sweeter grass, carried his master to the summit of a gentle hill. There, in the valley

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below him, Don Quixote beheld a little inn nestling snugly by the roadside.

“Ha!” he cried. “Did I not say that we should have an adventure?”

He gathered up the reins; he took his long lance in his hand; he struck spurs into his loitering steed, and charged down the hill with the speed of a plow horse.

He imagined that the inn was a great castle with four towers and a deep moat and a drawbridge.

At some distance from the gate he checked his steed and waited. He expected to see a dwarf come out on the wall of the castle and sound a trumpet to give notice of the arrival of a strange knight; for it was always so in the books which he had read.

But nobody came. Don Quixote grew impatient. At length he urged Rozinante forward at a gentle pace, and was soon within hailing distance of the inn. Just then a swineherd, in a field near by, blew his horn to call his pigs together.

“Ah, ha!” cried Don Quixote. “There is the dwarf at last. He is blowing his bugle to tell them that I am coming.” And with the greatest joy in the world he rode onward to the door of the inn.

The innkeeper was both fat and jolly; and when he saw Don Quixote riding up, he went out to welcome him. He could not help laughing at the warlike appearance of his visitor—with his long lance, his battered shield, and his ancient coat of mail. But he kept as sober a face as possible and spoke very humbly.

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“Sir Knight,” he said, “will you honor me by alighting from your steed? I have no bed to offer you, but you shall have every other accommodation that you may ask.”



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Don Quixote still supposed that the inn was a castle; and he thought that the innkeeper must be the governor. So he answered in pompous tones:—

“Senior Castellano, anything is enough for me. I care for nothing but arms, and no bed is so sweet to me as the field of battle.”

The innkeeper was much amused.

“You speak well, Sir Knight,” he said. “Since your wants are so few, I can promise that you shall lack nothing. Alight, and enter!” And with that he went and held Don Quixote’s stirrup while he dismounted.

The poor old man had eaten nothing all day. His armor was very heavy. He was stiff from riding so long. He could hardly stand on his feet. But with the innkeeper’s help he was soon comfortably seated in the kitchen of the inn.

“I pray you, Senior Castellano,” he said, “take good care of my steed. There is not a finer horse in the universe.”

The innkeeper promised that the horse should lack nothing, and led him away to the stable.

When he returned to the kitchen he found Don Quixote pulling off his armor. He had relieved himself of the greater part of his coat of mail; but the helmet had been tied fast with the green ribbons, as I have told you, and it could not be taken off without cutting them.

“Never shall any one harm those ribbons,” cried Don Quixote; and after vainly trying to untie them he was obliged to leave them as they were. It was a funny

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sight to see him sitting there with his head inclosed in the old patched-up helmet.

“Now, Sir Knight,” said the innkeeper, “will you not deign to partake of a little food? It is quite past our supper time, and all our guests have eaten. But perhaps you will not object to taking a little refreshment alone.”

“I will, indeed, take some with all my heart,” answered Don Quixote. “I think I shall enjoy a few mouthfuls of food more than anything else in the world.”

As ill luck would have it, it was Friday, and there was no meat in the house. There were only a few small pieces of salt fish in the pantry, and these had been picked over by the other guests.

“Will you try some of our fresh trout?” asked the landlord. “They are very small, but they are wholesome.”

“Well,” answered Don Quixote, “if there are, several of the small fry, I shall like them as well as a single large fish. But whatever you have, I pray you bring it quickly; for the heavy armor and the day’s travel have given me a good appetite.”

So a small table was set close by the door, for the sake of fresh air; and Don Quixote drew his chair up beside it.

Then the innkeeper brought some bits of the fish, ill-dressed and poorly cooked. The bread was as brown and moldy as Don Quixote’s armor; and there was nothing to drink but cold water.

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It was hard for the poor man to get the food to his mouth, for his helmet was much in his way. By using both hands, however, he managed to help himself. Then you would have laughed to see him eat; for, indeed, he was very hungry.

“No true knight will complain of that which is set before him,” he said to himself.

Suddenly, however, the thought again came to him that he was not yet a knight. He stopped eating. The last poor morsel of fish was left untouched on the table before him. His appetite had left him.

“Alas! alas!” he groaned. “I cannot lawfully ride out on any adventure until I have been dubbed a knight. I must see to this business at once.”

He arose and beckoned to the innkeeper to follow him to the barn.

“I have something to say to you,” he whispered.

“Your steed, Sir Knight,” said the innkeeper, “has already had his oats. I assure you he will be well taken care of.”

“It is not of the steed that I wish to speak,” answered Don Quixote; and he carefully shut the door behind them.

Then falling at the innkeeper’s feet, he cried, “Sir, I shall never rise from this place till you have promised to grant the boon which I am about to beg of you.”

The innkeeper did not know what to do. He tried to raise the poor man up, but he could not. At

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last he said, "I promise. Name the boon which you wish, and I will give it to you."

"Oh, noble sir," answered Don Quixote, "I knew you would not refuse me. The boon which I beg is this: Allow me to watch my armor in the chapel of your castle to-night, and then in the morning—oh, in the morning—"

"And what shall I do in the morning?" asked the innkeeper.

"Kind sir," he answered, "do this: Bestow on me the honor of knighthood. For I long to ride through every corner of the earth in quest of adventures; and this I cannot do until after I have been dubbed a knight."

The innkeeper smiled, and his eyes twinkled. For he was a right jolly fellow, and he saw that here was a chance for some merry sport.

"Certainly, certainly," he said, right kindly. "You are well worthy to be a knight, and I honor you for choosing so noble a calling. Arise, and I will do all that you ask of me."

"I thank you," said Don Quixote. "Now lead me to your chapel. I will watch my armor there, as many a true and worthy knight has done in the days of yore."

"I would gladly lead you thither," said the innkeeper, but at the present time there is no chapel in my castle. It will do just as well, however, to watch your armor in some other convenient place. Many of the

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greatest knights have done this when there was no chapel to be found.”

“Noble sir, I believe you are right,” said Don Quixote. “I have read of their doing so. And since you have no chapel, I shall be content with any place.”

“Then bring your armor into the courtyard of my castle,” said the innkeeper. “Guard it bravely until morning, and at sunrise I will dub you a knight.”

“I thank you, noble sir,” said Don Quixote. “I will bring the armor at once.”

“But stop!” cried the innkeeper. “Have you any money?”

“Not a penny,” was the answer. “I have never read of any knight carrying money with him.”

“Oh, well, you are mistaken there,” said the innkeeper. “The books you have read may not say anything about it. But that is because the authors never thought it worth while to write about such common things as money and clean shirts and the like.”

“Have you any proof of that?”

“Most certainly I have. I know quite well that every knight had his purse stuffed full of money. Every one, also, carried some clean shirts and a small box of salve for the healing of wounds.”

“It does look reasonable,” agreed Don Quixote, “but I never thought of it.”

“Then let me advise you as a father advises his son,” said the innkeeper. “As soon as you have been

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made a knight, ride homeward and provide yourself with these necessary articles.”

“I will obey you, most noble sir,” answered Don Quixote.

He then made haste and got his armor together. He carried it to the barnyard and laid it in a horse trough by the well.

The evening was now well gone, and it was growing dark. Don Quixote took his shield upon his left arm. He grasped his long lance in his right hand. Then he began to pace to and fro across the barnyard. He held his head high, like a soldier on duty; and the old patched helmet, falling down over his face, gave him a droll if not fearful appearance.

The full moon rose, bright and clear. The barnyard was lighted up, almost as by day. The innkeeper and his guests stood at the windows of the inn, and watched to see what would happen.

Presently a mule driver came into the yard to water his mules. He saw something lying in the trough, and was stooping to take it out before drawing water from the well. But at that moment Don Quixote rushed upon him.

“Stop, rash knight!” he cried. “Touch not those arms. They are the arms of the bravest man that ever lived. Touch them not, or instant death shall be your doom.”

The mule driver was a dull fellow and very slow. He but dimly understood what was said to him, and so

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paid no attention to the warning. He laid hold of the coat of mail and threw it upon the ground.

“O my lady Dulcinea! Help me in this first trial of my valor!” cried Don Quixote.

At the same moment he lifted his lance with both hands and gave the mule driver a thrust which laid him flat in the dust of the barnyard.

Another such knock would have put an end to the poor fellow. But Don Quixote was too brave to think of striking a fallen foe.



He picked up the coat of mail and laid it again in the horse trough. Then he went on, walking back and forth as though nothing had happened.

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The poor mule driver lay senseless by the side of the trough. The innkeeper and his friends still watched from the inn.

“He is a hard-headed fellow,” said one. “He is used to rough knocks, and will soon recover.”

In a few minutes a noisy wagoner drove into the barnyard. He drove his team quite close to the trough. Then he began to clear it out in order to give water to his horses.

Don Quixote, however, was ready for him. He said not a word, but lifted his lance and hurled it at the wagoner’s head. It is a wonder that the fellow’s skull was not broken.

The wagoner fell to the ground, yelling most grievously. The people in the inn were frightened, and all ran quickly to the barnyard to put an end to the rough sport.

When Don Quixote saw them coming, he braced himself on his shield and drew his sword.

“O my Dulcinea, thou queen of beauty!” he cried. “Now give strength to my arm and courage to my beating heart.”

He felt brave enough to fight all the wagoners and mule drivers in the world. But just then several of the wagoner’s friends came running into the barnyard, and each began to throw stones at Don Quixote.

The stones fell in a shower about his head, and he was forced to shelter himself under his shield. Yet he stood bravely at his post, and nothing could make him abandon his arms.

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“Fling on!” he cried. “Do your worst. I dare you to come within my reach.”

He spoke with such fierceness that every man shrank back in fear. Some took refuge in the barn, but kept on throwing stones.

“Let him alone,” cried the innkeeper. “He is a harmless fellow who wishes to become a knight. He has lost his senses through too much reading. Come away and leave him in peace.”

The men stopped throwing stones. Don Quixote put down his shield and began again to pace back and forth between the horse trough and the barn. He allowed the servants to carry away the wounded wagoner and the unconscious mule driver; but he glared at them so fiercely that they were glad to get out of his reach.

The innkeeper began to think that he had carried the sport far enough. He was afraid that more and worse mischief might be done. So he spoke right gently to Don Quixote:—

“Brave sir, you have done nobly. You have guarded your armor with courage. You have shown yourself worthy of knighthood, and I will give you that honor without further delay.”

“But it is not yet daybreak,” answered Don Quixote. “I must guard my armor till the dawn appears.”

“It is not at all necessary,” said the innkeeper. “I have read of some very famous knights who stood

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guard only two hours; and you have watched for more than four hours although beset by many foes.”

“Time flies swiftly when one is doing his duty,” said Don Quixote. “The brave man is bravest when he curbs his anger; but if I am again attacked, I shall not be able to restrain my fury. Not a man in this castle shall be left alive unless it be to please you.”

“You shall not be attacked,” said the innkeeper. “You have guarded your armor quite long enough, and I will make you a knight at once, if you are willing.”

“Nothing can please me better,” answered Don Quixote; and he laid his lance gently down by the side of his armor.

The innkeeper, thereupon, called to his guests and servants to come and see the ceremony. A book was brought to him in which he kept his accounts of hay and straw. He opened it with much dignity while Don Quixote stood with closed eyes beside his armor.

The women of the inn gathered in a circle around them. A boy held a piece of lighted candle, while the innkeeper pretended to read a chapter from the book.

The reading being finished, Don Quixote knelt down in the dust of the barnyard. The innkeeper stood over him and mumbled some words without meaning. He gave him a blow on the neck with his hand. Then he slapped him on the back with the flat of his sword.

“Arise, Sir Knight,” he said. “Thou art Don Quixote de la Mancha, the most valorous of men. Be brave, be brave, be always brave.”

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Don Quixote arose, feeling that he was now in truth a knight and ready to do valorous deeds.

One of the women handed him his sword. "May your worship be a lucky knight," she said.

Another arranged the green ribbons which held his helmet in place. "May you prosper, brave sir, wherever you go," she said.

THE ADVENTURE AT THE INN

Don Quixote threw his arms around the innkeeper's neck and thanked him. He could not rest until he had done some gallant deed. So he sat up all the rest of the night, polishing his armor and thinking impatiently of the morrow.

THE ADVENTURE WITH THE FARMER

AT the earliest break of day, Don Quixote made ready to ride out in quest of adventures. He buckled on his armor. He took his lance and his shield in his hands. His gallant steed, Rozinante, stood saddled and bridled at the door of the inn.

He again embraced the innkeeper. "Farewell, thou greatest of my benefactors," he cried. "May heaven bless thee for having made me a knight."

Then, with the help of a groom, he mounted and rode forth into the world.

Right gayly did he ride. For he felt that he was now in truth a knight, and his mind was filled with lofty thoughts.

Right gayly also did Rozinante canter along the highway, and proudly did he hold his head. For did he not know that he was carrying the bravest of brave men?

They had gone but a little way when Don Quixote suddenly remembered the innkeeper's command

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to provide himself with money, clean shirts, and some salve.

“The command must be obeyed,” he said. “I must go home and get those necessary things.”

So he turned his horse’s head and took the first byroad that led towards his village. And now Rozinante seemed to have new life put into his lean body. He sniffed the air and trotted so fast that his heels seemed scarcely to touch the ground.

“This is after the manner of heroes,” said Don Quixote. “Yet I still lack one thing. I need a faithful squire to ride with me and serve me. All the knights I have ever read about had squires who followed in their footsteps and looked on while they were fighting. I think, therefore, that while I am providing myself with money and shirts, I will also get me a squire.”

Presently, as they were passing through a lonely place, the knight fancied that he heard distressing cries. They seemed to come from the midst of a woody thicket near the roadside.

“I thank Heaven for this lucky moment,” he said to himself. “I shall now have an adventure. No doubt I shall rescue some one who is in peril, or I shall correct some grievous wrong.”

He put spurs to Rozinante and rode as fast as he could to the spot from which the cries seemed to issue.

At the edge of the woody thicket he saw a horse tied to a small oak tree. Not far away, a lad of about fifteen years was tied to another oak. The lad’s shoulders and back were bare, and it was he who was

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making the doleful outcry. For a stout country fellow was standing over him and beating him unmercifully with a horsewhip.



“Hold! hold!” cried Don Quixote, rushing up. “It is an unmanly act to strike a person who cannot strike back.”

The farmer was frightened at the sudden appearance of a knight on horseback. He dropped his whip. He stood with open mouth and trembling hands, not knowing what to expect.

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“Come, sir,” said Don Quixote, sternly. “Take your lance, mount your horse, and we will settle this matter by a trial of arms.”

The farmer answered him very humbly. “Sir Knight,” he said, “this boy is my servant, and his business is to watch my sheep. But he is lazy and careless, and I have lost half of my flock through his neglect.”

“What of that?” said Don Quixote. “You have no right to beat him, when you know he cannot beat you.”

“I beat him only to make a better boy of him,” answered the farmer. “He will tell you that I do it to cheat him out of his wages: but he tells lies even while I am correcting him.”

“What! what!” cried Don Quixote. “Do you give him the lie right here before my face? I have a good mind to run you through the body with my lance. Untie the boy and pay him his money. Obey me this instant, and let me not hear one word of excuse from you.”

The farmer, pale with fear, loosed the boy from the cords which bound him to the tree.

“Now, my young man,” said Don Quixote, “how much does this fellow owe you?”

“He owes me nine months’ wages at seven dollars a month,” was the answer.

“Nine times seven are sixty-three,” said the knight. “Sir, you owe this lad sixty-three dollars. If you wish to save your life pay it at once.”

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The farmer was now more alarmed than before. He fell upon his knees. He lifted his hands, imploring mercy. He sobbed with fright.



“Noble sir,” he cried, “it is too much; for I have bought him three pairs of shoes at a dollar a pair; and twice when he was sick, I paid the doctor a dollar.”

“That may be,” answered Don Quixote, “but we will set those dollars against the beating you have given him without cause. Come, pay him the whole amount.”

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“I would gladly do so,” said the farmer, “but I have not a penny in my pocket. If you will let the lad go home with me, I will pay him every dollar.”

“Go home with him!” cried the lad. “Not I. Why, he would beat me to death and not pay me at all.”

“He won’t dare to do it,” answered Don Quixote. “I have commanded him and he must obey. His money is at his house. I give him leave to go and get it. His honor as a knight will make him pay his debt to you.”

“A knight!” said the lad. “He is no knight. He is only John Haldudo, the farmer.”

“What of that?” said Don Quixote. “Why may not the Haldudos have a knight in the family?”

“Well, he is not much of a knight. A knight would pay his debts,” said the lad.

“And he will pay you, for I have commanded him,” said Don Quixote.

Then turning to the farmer, he said, “Go, and make sure that you obey me. I will come this way again soon, and if you have failed, I will punish you. I will find you out, even though you hide yourself as close as a lizard.”

The farmer arose from his knees and was about to speak, but the knight would not listen.

“I will have no words from you,” he said. “You have naught to do but to obey. And if you would ask who it is that commands you, know that I am the

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valorous Don Quixote de la Mancha, the righter of wrongs and the friend of the downtrodden. So, good-bye!”

Having said this, he gave spurs to Rozinante and galloped away.

The farmer watched him until he was quite out of sight. Then he turned and called to the boy.

“Come, Andrew,” he said. “Come to me now, and I will pay thee what I owe thee. I will obey this friend of the downtrodden.”

“You will do well to obey him,” said the boy. “He is a knight, and if you fail to pay me, he will come back and make things hot for you.”

“Yes, I know,” answered the farmer. “I will pay you well and show you how much I love you.”

Then, without another word, he caught hold of the boy and again tied him to the tree. The boy yelled lustily, but Don Quixote was too far away to hear his cries. The farmer fell upon him and beat him with fists and sticks until he was almost dead. Finally he loosed him and let him go.

“Now, Andrew, find your friend of the downtrodden,” he said. “Tell him how well I have paid you.”

Poor Andrew said nothing. He hobbled slowly away, while the farmer mounted his horse and rode grimly homeward.

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In the meanwhile, Don Quixote was speeding toward his own village. He was very much pleased with himself and with his first adventure as a knight.

“O Dulcinea, most beautiful of beauties,” he cried, “well mayest thyself be happy. For thy knight has done a noble deed this day.”

And thus he rode gallantly onward, his lance clanging against his coat of mail at every motion of his steed.