

*Chapter XI. About what happened to don Quixote with some goatherds.*

HE WAS warmly received by the goatherds, and after Sancho had taken care of Rocinante and the donkey as well as he could, he followed the aroma that came from certain chunks of goat meat that were boiling in a cauldron. He wanted to see if they were ready to be transferred from the cauldron into his stomach, but he didn't need to, since the goatherds removed them from the fire, spread some sheepskins onto the ground, quickly set their rustic table, and with a show of goodwill invited the two of them to join them to share their meal. Six goatherds sat around the skins, and with their best country manners they invited don Quixote to sit on a trough they had turned upside down especially for him. Don Quixote sat down with Sancho standing behind to serve him his cup made from a horn.

When don Quixote saw him standing, he said: "So that you can see, Sancho, the greatness embraced by knight-errantry, and that those who practice it in any capacity are soon honored and esteemed by everyone, I want you to sit down here next to me—your master and natural lord—and in the company of these good people, eat from my plate and drink from my cup, so that it can be said of knight-errantry what is said of love: that it makes all things equal."

"It's a great honor," said Sancho, "but I can tell you that as long as I have plenty to eat, I can eat as well, and even better, standing up alone than seated at the feet of an emperor. And if the truth be told, food that I eat in a corner somewhere, without all that fussing and table manners—even though it's only bread and onions—tastes better to me than turkeys served on tables, where I have to chew slowly, drink little, use my napkin a lot, and not sneeze or cough if I feel like it, nor do any of the other things that freedom and privacy guarantee. So, *señor mío*, concerning these honors that you want to offer me, since I, as your squire, am a servant and aide to knight-errantry, I'd rather have you swap them for other things that might

be of more use and benefit to me. Therefore, although I appreciate the offer, I renounce it from now until the end of the world."

"Even so, you must sit with me, because 'he who humbles himself is exalted by God.'"<sup>\*</sup> And grabbing Sancho by the arm, he forced him to sit at his side.

The goatherds didn't understand all that gibberish about squires and knights-errant; they only sat there and ate quietly as they looked at their guests, who were stowing away chunks of meat the size of your fist with great gusto and pleasure. After the meat course they spread quite a few acorns on the skins and added half a wheel of cheese, which was as hard as if it were made of cement. And the horn was hardly idle, because it circulated so frequently—now full, now empty, like the buckets of a waterwheel—that it easily emptied one of the two wineskins that were visible.

After don Quixote had satisfied his stomach, he took some acorns in his hand, and, examining them with great care, raised his voice to speak words like these: "What a happy time and a happy age were those that the ancients called GOLDEN! And not because gold—which in this our Age of Iron is so valued—was gotten in that fortunate time without any trouble, but rather because the people who lived then didn't know the two words YOURS and MINE! In that holy age all things were commonly owned. To find their daily sustenance, they had only to raise their hands and take from the robust oaks, which liberally offered their sweet and ripe fruit to them. Crystal-clear fountains and running rivers, in magnificent abundance, offered them their delicious and transparent water. In the fissures of boulders and in the hollows of trees, the diligent and prudent bees formed their republics and offered to any hand, without recompense, the fertile harvest of their very sweet work. The robust cork trees shed their lightweight bark without any artifice other than their own courtesy, with which people began to cover their rustic houses, built only for protection against the rigors of the heavens. Everything then was friendship; everything was harmony. The heavy plow had not yet dared to open nor visit the pious bowels of our

<sup>\*</sup> Luke 18:14.

first mother, for she, without being forced, gave everywh from her fertile and broad bosom which could fill, susta and delight the children that possessed her then.

"It was then that the simple and beautiful young she herdesses could travel from valley to valley and from hill hill, either in braids or with their hair flowing behind, w only enough clothing to cover modestly what decency quires, and has always required. And their ornamentati was not like the Tyrian purple and silk woven in a thousa different ways that women esteem nowadays, but rath it was of intertwined green-dock and ivy, with which th carried themselves with perhaps as much dignity and com posure as our courtesans do nowadays, strutting about e extravagant dresses. In those days, literary expressions o love were recited in a simple way, without any unnatur circumlocution to express them.

"Fraud, deceit, and wickedness had not as yet contami nated truth and sincerity. Justice was administered on o own terms and was not tainted by favor and self-interes which now impair, overturn, and persecute it. Arbitrary law had not yet debased the rulings of the judge, because i those days there was nothing to judge, nor anyone to b judged.

"Young women, with their chastity intact, traveled abou on their own anywhere they wanted, as I've said, withou fearing the damaging boldness or lust of others, and if the suffered any ruination, it was born of their own pleasur and free will. Nowadays, in our detestable age, no young woman is secure, even though she be hidden and locked i a new labyrinth of Crete, for even there, through the cracks or bornè in the air, the plague of lust finds its way in with the zeal of cursed importunity, and brings her to ruin i spite of her seclusion. As time went by and as wickedness grew, the order of knight-errantry was instituted to defend young women, protect widows, and help orphans and needy people.

"I am a member of this order, brother goatherds, and I'm grateful for the hearty welcome and reception you've given me and my squire. For, although under natural law all living souls are obliged to show favor to knights-errant, it's still fitting that—knowing as I do you received and enter-

ained me with no knowledge of this obligation—I should knowlege your goodwill with utmost gratitude."

All of this long speech, which could well have been eared, was given by our knight because the acorns brought his memory the Golden Age. And he was moved to give e useless speech to the goatherds, who, without saying i single word, were listening to him openmouthed and eezed. Sancho also remained silent as he snacked on e acorns and visited very frequently a second wineskin e had been suspended from a cork tree to make the wine eel.

But don Quixote took longer to finish his speech than dinner, and when he'd finished, one of the goatherds aid: "So that your grace, *señor* knight-errant, can say h even greater truth that we entertained you well with dy goodwill, we want to give you solace and pleasure y having one of our *compañeros* sing for you, and he'll e here pretty soon. He's a very smart goatherd and is ery much in love and, above all things, he can read and nte and can play the rabel,\* and you can't want more an that."

As soon as the goatherd had said this, notes from a rabel came to his ears, and a little while later the one who was playing it arrived, a lad about twenty-two years old and quite good-looking. His *compañeros* asked him if he'd eaten and he said that he had. The one who had suggested that the lad might sing said: "In that case, Antonio, you can do us the pleasure of singing a little bit, so that our *señor* guest can see that we have in these mountains and woods eople who can make music. We've told him about your skills and we're anxious for you to show them off and prove s true. So we'd like you to sit down and sing the ballad about your love that your uncle the priest wrote for you, and which was well received in town."

"I'd be very pleased," said the young man. And without any further urging, he sat on the trunk of a felled oak tree, tuned his instrument, and in a little while began to sing in a very spirited way:

\* The rabel is an old Arabic bowed musical instrument with three strings tuned in fifths. It had a flat top and a rounded bottom.

THE INGENIOUS  
HIDALGO DON QUIXOTE  
DE LA MANCHA,  
*Written by Miguel de Cervantes  
Saavedra.*

DEDICATED TO THE DUKE OF BÉJAR,  
Marquis of Gibraleón, Count of Benalcázar and Bañares,  
Viscount of the Puebla de Alcocer, Lord of  
the villages of Capilla, Curiel and  
Burguillos.

A.D.



1605

WITH COPYRIGHT  
IN MADRID By Juan de la Cuesta

Sold in the establishment of Francisco de Robles, book dealer  
to the king our lord.