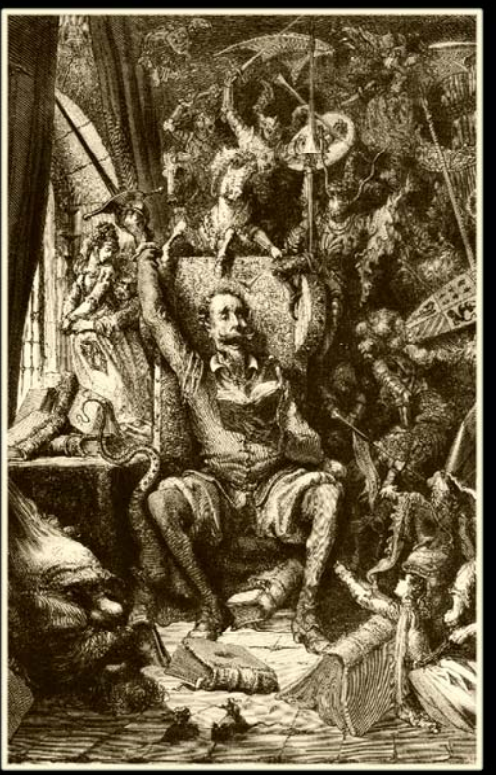
Quixote!



F. Scott Regan

Adapted from the novel by Miguel de Cervantes
Illustrations by Gustave Doré (1863)

Norman Maine Publishing

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P.O. Box 1400
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For Diane,
my Sancho.

Quixote! was produced by Theatre UNI (University of Northern Iowa) and the Treehouse Troupe (Bowling Green State University).

Quixote!

CLASSIC. This streamlined version of *Don Quixote* is easy to produce and features nonstop laughs and endless opportunities to showcase physical comedy. Having gone mad from reading too many romantic novels about chivalrous knights, Don Quixote sets off on a grand adventure as a wandering knight in order to restore the age of chivalry by winning honor and glory for his imaginary lady love, Dulcinea del Toboso. Though there haven't been knights in Spain for more than 400 years, Quixote begins his knight's quest accompanied by his "squire," an illiterate servant named Sancho, and an old swaybacked horse. Along the way, Quixote stumbles across a windmill, which he thinks is an evil giant and bravely "defeats" it with his lance. Quixote then encounters a barber and mistakes his shaving basin for the mythical Golden Helmet of Mambrino. Weary and hungry, Quixote and Sancho arrive at an inn, where Quixote confuses the innkeeper for a king and demands that the innkeeper properly knight him!

Performance Time: Approximately 60 minutes.

Miguel de Cervantes (1547-1616)
Portrait by Juan de Jáuregui

About the Story

Miguel de Cervantes was a playwright, poet, and most notably a novelist. *Don Quixote* is Miguel de Cervantes' most famous work and is considered one of the greatest novels ever written. An immediate success, the novel was originally entitled *The Ingenious Gentleman Don Quixote of La Mancha* and was published in 1605. Ten years later, Cervantes published a sequel and now the two volumes are published together as one book. Cervantes married in 1584 and some scholars believe the character of Don Quixote was inspired by Cervantes father-in-law. Many of the popular novels of Cervantes' time featured the adventures of wandering knights as they battled giants and sorcerers and rescued princesses. *Don Quixote* parodies this type of novel and depicts the world of ordinary people including tavern owners, innkeepers, and muleteers and uses elements of satire, farce, parody, and slapstick humor. The influence of the novel has been far reaching. Today, the phrase "tilting at windmills" is used to describe the act of attacking imaginary enemies, and "quixotic" has come to mean "foolishly impractical." *Don Quixote* has been adapted and made into several movies, a ballet, and the Tony Award winning musical, *Man of la Mancha* (1965).

Characters

(10 M, 7 F, 8 flexible, opt. extras)
(With doubling: 9 M, 5 F, 2 flexible)

DON QUIXOTE: 50s, retired, idealistic gentleman who lives in La Mancha with his niece; his real name is Alonzo Quixano but he has become obsessed with books of chivalry and thinks of himself as a wandering knight in search of adventure; tall and thin.

ANTONIA QUIXANO: Quixote's niece who disapproves of his obsession with books of chivalry.

SANCHO PANZA: Illiterate peasant who is simple but wise to the world; serves Quixote faithfully as his trusted "squire" and friend and accompanies Quixote on many adventures with the hope of being rewarded with his own kingdom; short and portly; male.

BARBER: Ordinary barber; Quixote thinks the Barber is a knight and his shaving basin is the Golden Helmet of Mambrino; male.

INNKEEPER: Owner of an inn; Quixote thinks the innkeeper is a king and that the inn is a castle; male.

WIFE: Innkeeper's bossy wife.

MARITORNES: Servant at the inn who serves customers, feeds the pigs, and cleans the rooms; Quixote thinks Maritornes is the beautiful, virtuous noble lady, Dulcinea del Toboso; ugly and wears vulgar, ragged clothing.

MULETEER 1-4: Ruffians who transport goods using mules; male.

ACTOR: Traveling actor and puppeteer; flexible.

APPRENTICE: Apprentice actor and puppeteer; female. Note: Can also be played by a child.

DUCHESS: Haughty, arrogant duchess of Villahermossa who is staying at the inn.

DUENNA: Haughty, arrogant friend of the Duchess; female.

SAMSON CARRASCO: Self-important and stuffy university scholar from Seville; wears an academic hood; male.

CURATE: Parish priest who disapproves of Quixote's obsession with books of chivalry and tries to bring him home and cure him of his madness.

SHEPHERDESS: Kind woman who tends goats and offers the hungry Quixote and Sancho some goat's milk; female.

COMMISSARY: In charge of transporting prisoners; flexible.

PRISONER 1-4: Prisoners who are being transported to serve on the King's galley ships; flexible.

GUARD 1, 2: Guards in charge of transporting prisoners; non-speaking; flexible.

EXTRAS (opt.): As Muleteers, Inn Patrons, Guards, and Prisoners.

Options for doubling:

CURATE/INNKEEPER (Male)
ANTONIA/WIFE (Female)
SHEPHERDESS/ DUENNA (Female)
MULETEER 1/PRISONER 1 (Male)
MULETEER 2/PRISONER 2 (Male)
MULETEER 3/PRISONER 3 (Male)
MULETEER 4/PRISONER 4 (Male)
ACTOR/GUARD 1 (Flexible)
APPRENTICE/GUARD 2 (Flexible)

Setting

1614, the plains of La Mancha in central Spain.

Set

Don Quixote's house. An old suit of armor stands rusting in the corner along with a lance. Books are everywhere, taking over the room. There is a table with a small candelabra on it and some chairs. There is a window.

Along a road. Backstage a windmill is seen through a scrim to give it an ethereal effect. There are some rocks downstage.

Courtyard of an inn. One exit leads to the road and stable and the other exit leads to the interior of the inn. There is a large wineskin hanging from a roof extending over part of the courtyard. There are a table and chairs on one side of the stage and a well on the other.

Synopsis of Scenes

ACT I
Scene 1: Don Quixote's house.
Scene 2: Along a road, three days later.
Scene 3: Along a road, later.
Scene 4: Along a road, later.

ACT II
Scene 1: Courtyard of an inn.
Scene 2: Courtyard of the inn, later that evening.
Scene 3: Don Quixote's house.

Props

Candelabra
Candles
Walking stick
Armor with breastplate, for Quixote
Lance
Broken lance
Turkey drumstick
2 or more large fake rocks
Dummy dressed like Quixote (opt.)
Shiny bowl or shaving basin (large enough to be worn as a helmet)
Broad sword
Coins
Money pouch
Chains
Sword, for Soldier
2 Muskets
Large skin filled with milk
Puppet dressed as Death
Puppet dressed as the devil
Puppet hero
Puppet of Don Galiferos
Puppet of Melisandre
Puppet of Charlemagne
Puppet of Quixote wearing a pink scarf
Moor puppet
Mask, for Actor
Colorful scarf, for Quixote
Large wineskin filled with red colored water
Loaf of bread
Cups
Pink scarf
Blanket
Cape
Chef's hat
Large mixing spoon
Cookbook
Pen
Will
Cart for puppet show stage
Swaybacked horse on wheels (to be pulled by Sancho and large enough for Quixote to sit on)
Cage with wheels or on a cart (large enough to contain Quixote)
Full armor and helmet, for Carrasco

Special Effects

Flames (lighting effect)
Trumpet blast
Flourish of trumpets
Music
Image of a large windmill viewed through a scrim

"In a village of La Mancha,
the name of which I have no desire to call to mind,
there lived not long since one of those gentlemen
that keep a lance in the lance-rack,
an old buckler, a lean hack,
and a greyhound for coursing."

—*Cervantes, from Don Quixote*

ACT I

Scene I

(AT RISE: Room in the house of Alonzo Quixano. The rays of sunset filter through cracks in the closed door and window. An old suit of armor stands rusting in the corner with a lance. Books are everywhere, taking over the room. Alonzo Quixano is sleeping, slumped over the table, face first in an open book. A small candelabra burns on the table. A meal sits next to him, untouched. After a moment there is a knock. Alonzo stirs and snorts but does not wake. Antonia enters, looks at Alonzo, then crosses quickly to the door and opens it. Curate and Don Carrasco enter.)

ANTONIA: *(To Carrasco.)* Thank heavens you've come.

CURATE: Your uncle is not well?

ANTONIA: I don't know what it is, your reverence. *(Curate sees Quixano and starts to cross toward him but is restrained by Antonia.)* He is finally sleeping. Leave him in his peace.

CARRASCO: What is the nature of his illness?

ANTONIA: I don't know, Your Grace. He seems to dream…but even while he is awake. He does not sleep but sits and reads these books all night. He hasn't touched his food.

CARRASCO: *(Reads book titles.)* "Arthur and the Round Table," "Lancelot the Knight," "The Mirror of Chivalry"? What does he dream of?

ANTONIA: Of Frestón, the enchanter, who tries to make knights-errant stray from their noble duty. He calls himself by a new name. He is no longer Alonzo Quixano but insists that he be called Don Quixote.

CARRASCO: Don Quixote?

QUIXOTE: *(Begins to stir.)* Yes, Your Grace?

ANTONIA: *(To Carrasco.)* He refuses to eat anything but bread and water saying, "Knights-errant like myself must

suffer in order to be worthy of the love and admiration of a beautiful princess."

CARRASCO: Princess? He knows no princess.

ANTONIA: Only in his books. If you ask me, they have dried up his brain.

CURATE: What do you think of this behavior, Don Carrasco? Perhaps a change of diet?

CARRASCO: My studies at the university were not in medicine, but these symptoms seem to indicate a disease of the mind rather than the body. I am sure that—

(Quixote jumps up.)

QUIXOTE: *(Addresses the candelabra.)* Ahh! The three-eyed monster! I shall cleave you asunder with a single blow! *(Attacks the candelabra with his walking stick.)*

ANTONIA: Alonzo!

(They rush to Quixote and subdue him but not before he knocks over the candles.)

QUIXOTE: May this victory over the three-eyed monster win everlasting renown for Don Quixote of La Mancha!

CURATE: Calm yourself!

QUIXOTE: Who are you?

CARRASCO: Wake up, Alonzo. You've been dreaming.

QUIXOTE: *(Calm now.)* Dreaming?

CARRASCO: There is no three-eyed monster here…only this candelabra with the three flames.

QUIXOTE: My enemy, Frestón, the enchanter, has transformed the monster into these candles.

ANTONIA: Why would he do that?

QUIXOTE: To rob me of my glory. *(Shouts.)* I did slay a monster! *(Confused.)* But only these candles are left.

CURATE: You were dreaming, Alonzo.

QUIXOTE: Alonzo?

CURATE: I am talking to you, Alonzo Quixano.

QUIXOTE: Perhaps you mistake me for someone else. I am Don Quixote de la Mancha, a knight-errant.

CARRASCO: You are deluded, sir. There haven't been knights in 400 years. And the fact is that many of their deeds have been exaggerated by the modern writers.

QUIXOTE: You, my friend, are a scholar?

CARRASCO: You can see by my hood that I have taken my degree at the university in Seville.

QUIXOTE: I can see that you suffer from the university disease of mistaking facts for truth. There are things that cannot grow old and pass out of fashion. *(To Curate.)* You are a man of the Holy Spirit. Surely, you can understand that there are things in life that cannot grow old—things that are true for all times. Fashions may change, but knight-errantry, like the words of the Lord, are timeless.

CARRASCO: To say what is so is not so is to promote ignorance. Knights dueling in shining armor are legends from the past.

QUIXOTE: These books have convinced me that we can, that we *must* recreate the past. We must restore the age of chivalry.

(Carrasco is about to object but is interrupted as Sancho Panza bursts in, weighed down with books.)

SANCHO: Here are the books, Alonzo.

QUIXOTE: *(Corrects him.)* Here are the books your lordship bade me entrust to your guardianship.

SANCHO: Here are the books your lordship…bade…

SANCHO/QUIXOTE: Me entrust to your guardianship.

QUIXOTE: Sancho, my friend, you might make a good squire for a knight-errant…with proper training, of course.

(Quixote finally lets Sancho put the pile of books down and begins to read one.)

SANCHO: Who? Me? I am just a simple man with no learning.

ANTONIA: *(To Carrasco.)* See how he treats this lowly peasant as a…as if he was a gentleman!

CARRASCO: *(To Sancho.)* Where did you get these books?

SANCHO: Forgive me, Your Grace, but I brought them on direct orders from my landlord, Don Diego Sanchez, who told me… *(Quixote raises a finger in objection.)* …who *bade* me… *(Quixote nods at this improvement.)* …to bring them here as they were promised to this gentleman in exchange for 40 acres of land.

CURATE: *(To Quixote.)* Is this true?

(No response from Quixote, who is busy reading.)

ANTONIA: *(To Curate and Carrasco.)* You see? He sells all of our property to get more of these silly books, these romances of knights in shining armor. He has sold all but the roof over our head, and that will soon go the way of his senses!

CARRASCO: These books have disturbed his senses. I'm sure of it.

ANTONIA: They should be burned!

CURATE: Alonzo? *(No response from Don Quixote.)* Don Quixote?

QUIXOTE: *(Reads.)* "The reason for your unreasonable reason so enfeebles my reason that I have reason to complain of your beauty."

CURATE: You sold 40 acres of arable land for these fairy tales?

QUIXOTE: What needs a knight-errant for 40 acres? I need only my lady. Where is my princess? *(Wanders dangerously close to some furniture and is stopped by Antonia.)* You are not my lady. You are not Dulcinea.

ANTONIA: It is me, your niece, Antonia.

QUIXOTE: *(To no one in particular.)* Grievous wrong has she done me by cruelly forbidding me to appear in her

beauteous presence. I pray, sweet lady, remember this poor, enslaved heart.

(Antonia makes the sign of the cross.)

ANTONIA: *(To Curate.)* With heaven as my witness, I've done nothing to deserve this.
SANCHO: *(To Carrasco.)* He speaks so nobly.
CARRASCO: *(To Antonia and Curate.)* Help me. *(They begin to carry out the books.)* We must destroy the cause of the madness. We'll burn them in the courtyard.
CURATE: Are you sure? When you burn the books, the ideas will still be in his head.
CARRASCO: The more he reads, the worse he gets. Drastic measures are called for, Father.
QUIXOTE: *(Reads from another book.)* "The high heavens, which with your divinity divinely fortify you with stars make your deserver of the desert that is deserved by your greatness." *(Carrasco takes the book from Quixote's hand, but he doesn't seem to notice.)* Ahh! Such wisdom! Such poetry!
SANCHO: *(To Quixote.)* Excuse me, Your Grace. What does a knight-errant do for an occupation?
QUIXOTE: A knight-errant roams throughout the world… *(Indicates armor.)* …in quest of adventure, righting wrong to win everlasting honor and renown for himself and his lady.

(Sancho helps Quixote don his breastplate as Quixote begins to live the image during the following exchange.)

SANCHO: Does he always have a lady?
QUIXOTE: A knight-errant without a lady is like a tree without leaves, a building without a foundation.
SANCHO: Who is your lady?
QUIXOTE: The unspeakably beautiful Princess Dulcinea.
SANCHO: When do we see her?

QUIXOTE: She has forbidden me to see her until I have won a great honor in her name.

SANCHO: And what does a squire do?

QUIXOTE: He carries his lordship's bags and serves him faithfully. When a knight defeats a giant or an evil duke, he will often reward a faithful squire with the duke's fortune or the giant's kingdom.

SANCHO: *(Excited, skipping a step.)* Me, the ruler of a kingdom! *(Recovering.)* I mean, if your lordship would have a simple fool of a fellow as his squire, I would be a faithful servant.

QUIXOTE: It is not for me to decide. Heaven, in the heavenly form of Dulcinea, has already decided. We must prepare. At dawn, we shall sally forth to begin our adventure.

SANCHO: Yes, Your Grace. *(Bows awkwardly, heads for the door, suddenly stops, and returns to Quixote. Worried.)* Forgive me, Your Grace, but when you are fighting these terrible giants is your squire liable to get involved in the fight?

QUIXOTE: That, I am afraid, would be against the laws of chivalry.

SANCHO: Good, then I'm your man! Should I bring my donkey?

QUIXOTE: *(Shocked.)* I beg your pardon?

SANCHO: My donkey, Your Grace. *(Pats his stomach.)* I am not cut out for long walks.

QUIXOTE: I cannot recall in all my readings of a case in which a knight-errant was attended by a squire mounted on a donkey. Leave your beast behind, and I will present you with a noble steed when we meet the first discourteous knight or monstrous dragon. *(Grabs his lance.)* I will rise up like a lion…like Richard the Lionheart. *(Starts attacking the room wildly with his lance.)* I will squelch the evil-doer in the name of my lady! *(Falls awkwardly.)*

SANCHO: Are you all right, Alonzo?

QUIXOTE: *(Regains dignity and starts to exit.)* I am Don Quixote of La Mancha! Onward!

(Quixote exits. Sancho picks up an uneaten drumstick from the table, takes a bite, and charges offstage, using it as a lance.)

SANCHO: *(Shouts.)* Onward to glory!

(Sancho exits as the flames [lighting effect] of burning books fill the room from the outside. Blackout.)

Scene 2

(AT RISE: Along a road, three days later. Backstage a windmill is seen through a scrim to give it an ethereal effect. Downstage are some large fake rocks. Quixote and Sancho enter. Quixote is riding on a sway-backed nag (horse on wheels), which is pushed or pulled by Sancho.)

SANCHO: *(To horse.)* Come on, you old nag!

QUIXOTE: Sancho! As my squire, you must address my steed correctly. Rocinante is the name of my noble steed. She is a direct descendant of the horse that Roland used in his battles against the heathens.

SANCHO: We'd be better off if its name was less fancy and its back was straighter. *(To horse.)* Come, Rocinante. *(They travel a short distance. Bored.)* How long before we meet with an adventure, and I become king of a country?

QUIXOTE: This is not for us to say. A knight-errant puts his faith in the stars.

SANCHO: I trust the stars, all right, but I only packed enough food for a week. It's been three days since we left La Mancha.

QUIXOTE: *(Corrects him.)* Three days since we *sallied forth.*

SANCHO: Sallied forth. *(Pause.)* This "sallying forth" seems a lot to me like walking. Mind, Your Worship, don't let slip from your memory the kingdom you promised me.

QUIXOTE: It is my plan not to let six days pass without conquering such a kingdom. But do not be surprised if you receive even more than I promised. Now let there be silence.

SANCHO: You won't hear a word from me, Your Grace. *(Pause.)* As they say, "Silence is golden." *(Quixote gives him a dirty look. Pause.)* And they say, "Silence makes the fool seem wise." *(Pause.)* I have also heard it said that silence is the—

QUIXOTE: Sancho, enough of your chatter about silence! *(Sancho mimes zipping his lip. Quixote sees the windmill for the first time.)* Fortune is guiding our affairs better than you could wish. *(Indicates windmill.)* Do you see yonder hulking giant? I intend to do battle with it.

(Afraid, Sancho hides behind Quixote.)

SANCHO: What giant?

QUIXOTE: *(Indicates windmill.)* That which you see over there with long arms that waves so. *(Mimes windmill action.)*

SANCHO: *(Laughs.)* That is not a giant but a windmill, and that which seems to be arms are but sails that turn the millstone.

QUIXOTE: You are not experienced in these matters. That is a giant. *(To windmill, shouts.)* Fly not vile caitiff! One knight alone attacks you! For God, King, and Dulcinea of Tobosooooo… *(Carrying his lance, he rushes offstage to battle the windmill.)*

SANCHO: *(Calls.)* But, master, that is nothing but a… *(We hear crashing sounds and see parts of Quixote's accouterments flying behind the back screen. A dummy of Quixote can be used to fly up and offstage.)* …windmill. God help us! *(Runs over and catches Quixote, who is staggering back onstage holding a broken lance.)* Did I not tell you, sir, that this was only a windmill?

QUIXOTE: Peace, good Sancho! I am convinced that the magician Frestón, the one who burned the books in my study, has changed that giant into a windmill to deprive me of the glory of victory. But his evil arts will be of little avail against my mighty lance! *(Holds up broken lance.)* Never mind. I will tear a limb from the first oak tree we meet to serve as well to perform great deeds. *(Tries to rise but falters with pain.)* Ahhh…

SANCHO: Are you all right?

QUIXOTE: I do not complain. Knights-errant must never complain of any wound.

SANCHO: As for myself, I'll never fail to complain at the smallest twinge if that is all right, Your Grace.

QUIXOTE: We shall be a famous pair of heroes for a great story…or perhaps…an epic poem. I'll write it myself. I'll—

SANCHO: That is probably best as I cannot write my name, so I think an epic poem would come hard to my fingers. *(Barber enters, wearing a shiny bowl or shaving basin on his head. Quixote is interrupted by the sight of the Barber.)* Your Grace?

QUIXOTE: *(Indicating Barber.)* Do you not see that knight coming toward us with a helmet of gold on his head?

SANCHO: Knight? *(Laughs.)* What I see is a man carrying a shiny bowl on his head.

QUIXOTE: That is Mambrino's helmet!

SANCHO: *(To himself.)* Somehow, I think that means our next adventure has arrived.

QUIXOTE: It was stolen by Frestón, the enchanter, after Mambrino had rescued the beautiful Amanda from his evil clutches. *(To Barber.)* Halt, you baseborn robber! *(Barber stops, looks behind Quixote, shrugs, and proceeds. Quixote draws his broad sword.)* Halt, you vile cad! *(Barber points to himself as if to ask "Me?" He shrugs and proceeds again.)* You insulter of Mambrino, you shall die… *(This gets Barber's full attention.)* …unless you fall to your knees and beg forgiveness of Dulcinea!

BARBER: *(On his knees.)* Pardon. Pardon. Thousand times a thousand pardons to Dulcinea, whoever she is, and you, whatever you are. Here is my money. *(Holds up a money purse full of coins.)*

QUIXOTE: Be it known that it is I, Don Quixote of La Mancha, who has defeated you, sir knight, and rescued this helmet.

(Quixote ignores the Barber's coins and takes the shaving basin instead. Barber runs offstage.)

SANCHO: *(Laughs.)* Helmet? *(Takes the shaving basin from Quixote.)*

QUIXOTE: What are you laughing at?
SANCHO: See, Your Grace, it is naught but a shaving basin.

(Demonstrates how the shaving basin fits under the chin. Pause. Quixote looks puzzled.)

QUIXOTE: Again Frestón tortures me! It has been transformed into a shaving basin, but to me, who knows what it really is. It makes no matter. *(Proudly puts the shaving basin on his head.)*
SANCHO: *(Laughs.)* You aren't really going to wear that? People will laugh at you. *(Quixote flashes him a disapproving look.)* People who don't know of Frestón's treachery, that is.
QUIXOTE: Then we can forgive them their ignorance. *(Exits.)*
SANCHO: But will they forgive us our appearance as we forgive them their ignorance? *(Exits. Blackout.)*

Scene 3

(AT RISE: Along a different road, later.)

QUIXOTE: Come along, Sancho.
SANCHO: I'm not built for speed, Your Grace. As they say, "He who has a square wheel on his wagon… *(Indicates his legs.)* …will not roll along as well as others."
QUIXOTE: Very well, we will rest here for a while. *(Prisoners 1-4 enter in a line chained to each other. They are accompanied by a Commissary and guarded by Guard 1, 2. Guard 1 has a sword and the other two have muskets. Prisoners look surly and dangerous.)* What is here?
SANCHO: A chain of convicted criminals probably on their way to serve the king as slaves in his galley ships.
QUIXOTE: Unfortunate souls.
SANCHO: Forgive me, Your Grace, but these "unfortunates" are people condemned for their crimes. Best to leave them be.
QUIXOTE: Here is an opportunity to carry out my duty—to redress grievances and to give help to the poor and afflicted.
SANCHO: Uh-oh.
COMMISSARY: *(To Quixote and Sancho.)* Good day, sirs.
QUIXOTE: Why are these men chained?
COMMISSARY: They are His Majesty's prisoners. It is none of your concern. We will protect you from them.
QUIXOTE: *(To Prisoner 1.)* For what crimes have you found yourself in these chains?
PRISONER 1: For love.
QUIXOTE: For love?
PRISONER 1: I loved too much a basket of fine linen that was not mine.

(Prisoners laugh.)

QUIXOTE: *(To Prisoner 2.)* And you?
PRISONER 2: Sir, I am chained here for being a canary…for singing.
QUIXOTE: For singing?
PRISONER 3: Yes. She sang like a bird when they stretched her on the rack. *(Demonstrates torture.)* She confessed to all she did and some she didn't do.

(Prisoners laugh.)

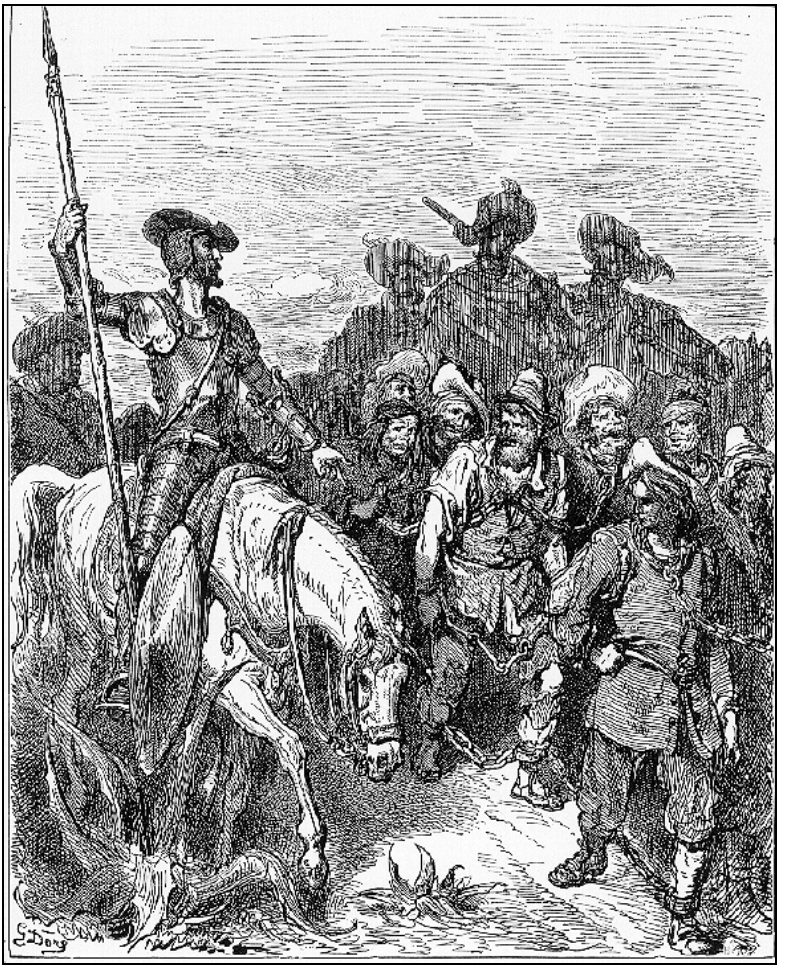
QUIXOTE: *(To Prisoner 3.)* What about you?
PRISONER 3: I'm off the gallows for a lack of ten ducats.
QUIXOTE: I will give you 20 ducats right now.
PRISONER 3: That will be of no use to me now. But if I had 10 ducats, I would have greased the judge's palm with them and so sharpened his wit that today I would be strolling the marketplace in Madrid a free woman.
QUIXOTE: *(To Sancho.)* Love? Singing? Poverty? If these be crimes, I should be chained.
COMMISSARY: *(To Prisoner 4.)* On your feet, you scum.

(Commissary hits Prisoner 4 with the flat edge of his sword.)

PRISONER 4: Please, not so fast. The lords of this land did not give you that sword to mistreat us, but to guide us.
COMMISSARY: Quiet, you! Move along!
PRISONER 4: Can't you see our legs are chained? Unchain them and we will be able to go at the pace you wish us to keep.
COMMISSARY: I've had enough of your lip.

(Commissary hits Prisoner 4 again.)

QUIXOTE: It is only fair that one who had her hand so tied, should be somewhat free with her tongue.


G.Doré

COMMISSARY: Don't interfere with the work I do under the authority of the King.

QUIXOTE: No king gives orders to treat people inhumanely, or they are not true kings. Never in all my books have I heard of a king who was not noble and generous to those less fortunate, including conquered victims.

COMMISSARY: Let me remind you, sir, that you are living in the time of the Inquisition. I have the authority to treat these prisoners as I wish.

QUIXOTE: You are a cat, a rat, and a knave! And in the name of all knight-errantry, I chastise you!

(Quixote attacks the Commissary. Guards 1-2 come to Commissary's rescue, but the Prisoners attack the Guards.)

COMMISSARY: *(Shouts.)* You're under arrest!

QUIXOTE: *(Striking a blow with each phrase.)* Here is for the "authority of the king" and here for "freedom" and for "justice." Fight bravely, for you are fighting for a just case and cannot be defeated. *(Commissary is knocked senseless and Guards 1, 2 escape. Prisoners 1-4 take the keys from the Commissary and free themselves.)* Victory is ours! Come here! *(Prisoners reluctantly gather around him.)* It is the duty of all well-bred people to be grateful for the benefits received. All I wish in return for your liberation is that you go to the city of El Toboso and present yourself before Lady Dulcinea and say that I, Don Quixote of La Mancha, sent you there to tell of my heroic deeds.

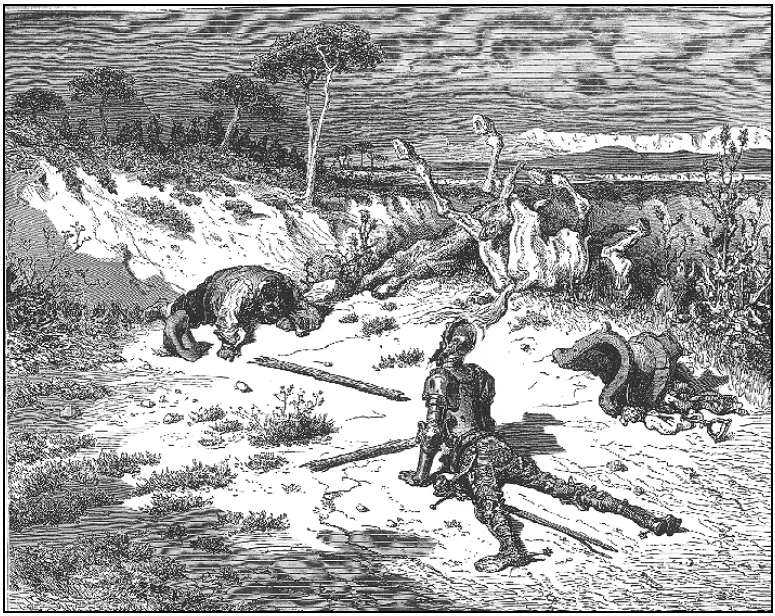
(Pause.)

PRISONER 1: What you demand is not possible.

QUIXOTE: What?

PRISONER 2: For we would surely be captured if we were to travel the roads together.

PRISONER 3: *(To Quixote.)* We are not that foolish.



PRISONER 4: *(To Quixote.)* We thank you for our freedom but cannot do this.
QUIXOTE: I vow that you will go to Dulcinea with your tails between your legs.

(Quixote attacks the Prisoners. They soon surround Quixote and knock him down. Sancho comes to Quixote's rescue.)

SANCHO: *(To Prisoners.)* You can't do that to a knight-errant!

(Prisoners beat on Sancho and Quixote. Sancho runs for cover. Quixote falls. Prisoner 1 hits Quixote over the head with the shaving basin.)

PRISONER 1: Now we'll see whose tail is between whose legs!

(Prisoners 1-4 exit in various directions. Sancho pokes his head out from cover, sees that the Prisoners have left, and rushes to Quixote.)

SANCHO: *(To Quixote.)* Are you all right? I wanted to aid you but remembered the rules of knighthood.
QUIXOTE: Quite right.
SANCHO: It's as I have heard: "To do a kindness for a rogue is like pouring water into the sea." I told you to leave them be.
QUIXOTE: *(Kindly.)* Sancho, we must do what is right without regard to the consequences.
SANCHO: That might be, but now it is right that we leave here before the King's men return, for they don't care two straws for all the knights-errant in the world.
QUIXOTE: I comply with your request, but not out of fear for any man or army of men.
SANCHO: Master, to withdraw is not to run away. It is a wise man's duty to protect himself today for tomorrow's fray. *(Commissary starts to come to his senses.)* I am only a

rough clodhopper of a fellow, but I have a notion that for the present, we'll need our heels more than our heads.

(Sancho helps Quixote up and they quickly exit. Blackout.)

Scene 4

(AT RISE: Along a roadside, a short time later. There are two or more large rocks. A young Shepherdess with a skin filled with goat's milk is lounging on a rock. Quixote crosses the stage and exits. Sancho enters carrying Quixote's helmet and either pulling or dragging Rocinante. Sancho stops, sits down on a rock, and starts to rub his feet.)

SANCHO: *(Rubbing his feet.)* Owwww!
SHEPHERDESS: What's the matter, sir?
SANCHO: My feet are hungry and my stomach is tired.
SHEPHERDESS: Don't you mean that your stomach is hungry and your feet are tired?
SANCHO: I wish it were that good. The pain in my feet has spread to my belly, and I hunger down to my toes.
SHEPHERDESS: How about a drink of my goat's milk?
QUIXOTE: *(Offstage. Calls.)* Saanchoo!
SANCHO: *(Shouts.)* Coming, Your Grace! *(To Shepherdess.)* Goat's milk! But what to put it in?
SHEPHERDESS: That bowl will do just fine.
SANCHO: This is not a bowl. This is the golden helmet of Mabri— *(Sancho's hunger changes his mind for him.)* It's a bowl. *(Shepherdess fills the bowl with milk.)* Thank you.

(Sancho starts to drink the milk as Quixote enters. Sancho hides the bowl behind a rock.)

QUIXOTE: Sancho!

(Shepherdess takes one look at Quixote and runs off.)

SANCHO: *(Trying to distract Quixote to gain more resting time.)* Excuse me, sire, could you tell me again about this questing business?

QUIXOTE: *(Settling in to philosophize.)* The profession of all knights-errant is to correct wrongs, to defend the honor of innocent maidens, to slay giants and to defeat any who—

SANCHO: Excuse me, Your Grace. I am interested in the part about squires.

QUIXOTE: Well, then, the squire—

SANCHO: *(Excited.)* About the kingdom I will soon possess.

QUIXOTE: *(Annoyed.)* Very well, but don't interrupt me again. *(Sancho starts to say something but stops.)* I warn you, if you interrupt me, I will clap you with my sword! *(During the following speech, Actor and Apprentice appear in the distance pushing a cart full of puppets. One is dressed like Death and the other like the Devil. Sancho sees them and tries to tell Quixote, who doesn't see them.)* When a knight-errant has defeated an evil duke or a monster, he will give a kingdom to his squire. It is the squire's duty to rule this kingdom with fairness. Listen carefully, Sancho, these rules will aid you in your governance. First, consider what you are and try to know yourself, which is the most difficult study in the world. Show pride in your humble origins and do not scorn to say you spring from poor roots. Remember, it is better to be humble and virtuous than to be proud and sinful. Let the tears of the poor find more compassion but not more justice than the pleading of the wealthy.

SANCHO: *(Can't stand it any longer.)* Your Grace! Surely Death has come to take us away!

QUIXOTE: *(To Actor and Apprentice.)* Zounds! Stand ho and unmask yourselves or stand forth and prepare to die. *(Draws his sword.)*

ACTOR: *(To Quixote.)* Bravo!

APPRENTICE: *(To Quixote.)* Bravo!

ACTOR: *(To Quixote.)* What a fine speech!

APPRENTICE: *(To Quixote.)* What a noble costume!

SANCHO: *(To Quixote.)* Save me, o master! It is Death and the Devil come to take us away!

(Pause. Quixote laughs and bows.)

QUIXOTE: Sancho. This is not Death and the Devil, but actors who portray these roles.

ACTOR: Right you are, my lord. We have no time to change our costumes as we are expected to perform in the next village before sundown.

QUIXOTE: Godspeed, my friends. Were I not called to be a knight-errant, I might have been a traveling actor like yourselves.

APPRENTICE: *(Showing puppet of hero.)* Our roles are often the same!

ACTOR: *(To Quixote.)* And our fates.

QUIXOTE: Get up, Sancho. They will not harm you.

SANCHO: First, put your hand on my head, your worship, and forgive my secret thoughts.

QUIXOTE: What secret thoughts?

SANCHO: I had it in my head, Your Grace, that you were…crazy. But now I can see how wrong I have been.

QUIXOTE: *(Gently.)* Arise, my squire, and let this be a lesson to you. *(Takes mask from Actor.)* One must touch with the hand what appears to the eye if one is not to be deceived. *(Sancho bravely touches the mask and is reassured. Quixote returns the mask and the Apprentice presents him with a colorful scarf that clashes badly with his apparel.)* For me? *(Apprentice nods yes.)* I will wear it with pride.

(Apprentice whispers something to Actor.)

ACTOR: *(To Quixote.)* My shy friend, here… *(Indicates Apprentice.)* …wonders if we might see you in your full regalia before we leave.

QUIXOTE: Certainly, my friend. Sancho, my helmet!

SANCHO: Yes, Your Grace. *(Goes to get the helmet but realizes it is filled with milk.)*

QUIXOTE: Sancho, bring me the golden helmet of Mambrino.

SANCHO: *(Hesitantly.)* But, Your Grace…there's a slight—
QUIXOTE: *(Fiercely.)* Sancho!
SANCHO: But…
QUIXOTE: Bring me the golden helmet of Mambrino!
SANCHO: Very well, Your Grace.

(Sancho reluctantly gives Quixote the bowl full of milk and Quixote puts it on his head. Milk spills all over him. Actor and Apprentice burst out laughing and exit.)

QUIXOTE: Sancho, what have you done to Mambrino?

(Quixote starts after Sancho.)

SANCHO: *(Backing away.)* Ah…ah…your enemies have enchanted the helmet again and filled it with goat's milk.

[END OF FREEVIEW]