



MIGUEL DE CERVANTES

Don Quixote

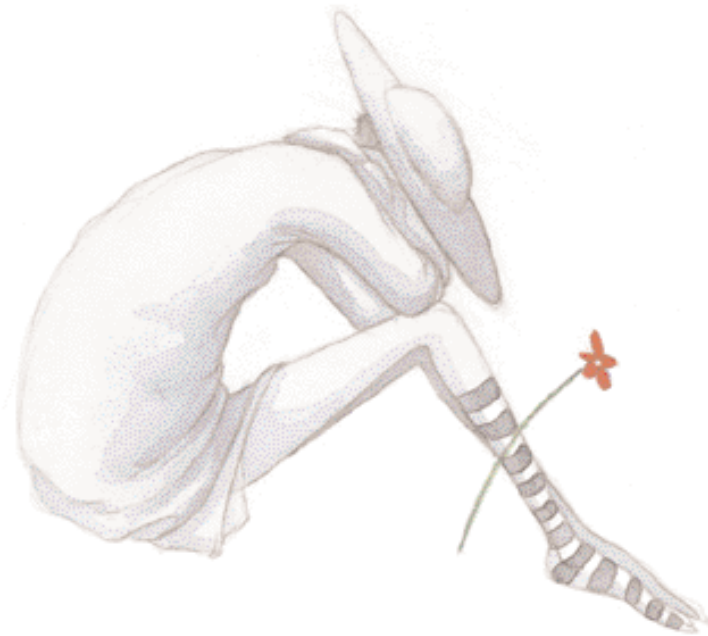
Adapted by
Agathi Dimitrouka

Illustrated by
Vassilis Papatsarouhas

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FOREWORD

Cervantes' monumental work in a new translation and adaptation for children, directly from the original. In this edition we aim to provide young readers with a vivid and eloquent description of the legendary knight's adventures, while systematically avoiding the use of caricature, which is the slapdash solution commonly found up until now.

This adaptation has respected the emotional wealth of the Spanish text and the many levels on which it can be read, and aspires to initiate children, and all who may read it, into the overall novel Don Quixote.

The book you are holding in your hands can be read chapter by chapter, like a story written in sequels.

But by omitting the headings, it can be read like an extended song for two voices: the one emerging from the soul of Don Quixote and the other that can be heard from within the heart of Sancho Pança.

You can also read it by only looking at the pictures, which Vassilis Papatsarouhas created with such inspiration, and can use your own imagination to invent new adventures between earth and sky for heroes made of solid earth and wispy cloud.

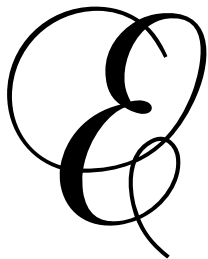
My conviction that the great works of literature are a gift to humanity and the emotion that Don Quixote has always stirred in me have led me to perform my own little Don Quixotism with Unicef as its recipient.

In the hope that this endeavour will be repeated in the future, for the time being I wish you a pleasant read!

Agathi Dimitrouka



The manner of life of Don Quixote and his decision to become a knight-errant



xactly five hundred years ago, or maybe somewhere thereabouts, in a country named Spain, it was in fashion to read books that told tales about knights.

People would come home from work at dusk. They would feed their children, put them to sleep and gather around the fireplace: grandmother with her knitting, grandfather with the tongs, stirring the fire, and mother with a piece of embroidery. And father, who was usually better at reading and writing, would sit with a book in his hands and would read out loud – so that all could hear – about the

unbelievable adventures of knights. In this way, the day's weariness was forgotten.

In a certain village in La Mancha, whose name I cannot remember, Old Alonso had no weariness to forget about. He had workers cultivating his fields and a housekeeper and niece to take care of his house. And as for his stable and horse, these too were looked after by a servant.

Old Alonso was an hidalgo. That is to say, he had a noble title or simply some property from his father's side of the family, which made it possible for him to live comfortably, but without any excesses. In other words, he was never without a good meal and fine clothes.

He was tall, lean, thin-faced, an early riser and loved to hunt. However, most of the time he had nothing to do to make the hours go by, and so he too began reading books of chivalry. But Old Alonso soon became so enthralled with reading them that he stopped caring about hunting and his estate. He even ended up selling his fields so that he would be able to buy more and more of these books. And he spent one, two, three and even four whole days and nights without a single thing to eat and without any sleep so that he could read them! Thus, from too much reading and too little sleep he lost his reason and took for real the fantastical stories the tomes were so full of. That is to say, he believed that the earth was full of knights who, for the love of a certain beautiful lady,

righted wrongs, hunted evil, fought with giants, wizards and ghosts, and were always victorious, either because they were strengthened by their love or because another wizard, who was their friend, healed their wounds.

So, having lost his mind, he stumbled upon the oddest thought that ever entered into a madman's brain: he decided to become a knight-errant and with his deeds to surpass in renown and glory the heroes in the books he read!

And at once he began his preparations.

He first took his forefathers' suit of armour, which stood in a corner, rust-eaten and mouldy. After cleaning it and seeing that, instead of a complete helmet with a neck guard and a visor, there was only a single head-piece, he used pasteboard to supply the missing parts. Then, to test how strong his beautiful helmet was, he drew his sword and gave it two fierce strokes, but with the very first stroke the helmet fell to pieces. Our dear hidalgo then repaired it, fixing thin plates of iron on the inside. And without further experiment he confidently put the helmet on and decided it was perfect.

He then went to view his horse, which may have had tattered legs and may have been bony and pimply, but in his eyes it was stronger than Alexander the Great's Bucephalus.

For four days he plumbed his imagination and memory and devised,



rejected, subtracted, added, unmade and remade names for his horse. He wanted to find one that would be a perfect fit for the horse of the most renowned knight-errant, and at last he found it: Rozinante! In his opinion a name that was lofty-sounding and significant, a name with meaning. Because what was his horse before? A common old horse, a *rozin*. And what was it now? Top of the tops and *ante*, and before all the vulgar breed of horses in the world!

Having now given his horse a name, he wished to name himself too. Another eight days he spent labouring over this, until at the end of the eighth day he resolved to name himself Don Quixote. And at once he remembered that every brave knight added the name of his country to his own so that it would become known all over the world. So to honour his very own native soil, La Mancha, he decided to call himself - what else? – Don Quixote de la Mancha!

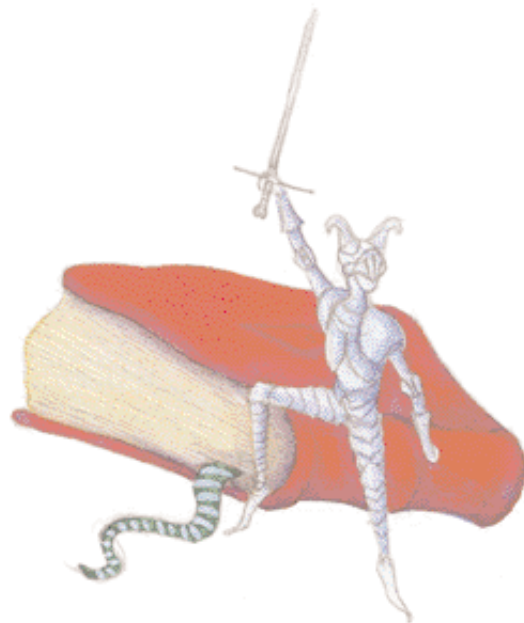
The only thing left for him to do was to find a young maiden to fall in love with, since a knight-errant without love in his life was a tree without either fruit or leaves, and a body without a soul.

“If on my way I happen to come across some giant,” he said to himself, “and knock him out or split him in two with a single swoop of my sword or simply defeat him, wouldn’t it be proper for him to go to my lady and to bow before her, saying: *Lady, I am the giant Caraculiambro, defeated in*

single combat by that wondrous knight Don Quixote, who has commanded me to cast myself most humbly at your feet, and all your needs to meet!'

Oh, how happy our dear old knight became when he thought of who he could name the lady of his thoughts! In a nearby village there lived a lovely young woman who worked in the fields and who he had once fallen in love with – of course, she had never been aware of this and he had never revealed his feelings to her.

This young woman was called Aldonza Lorenzo, but he now had to find her a name that would make her sound like a princess or great lady. And because his lady was born and bred in Toboso, he called her Dulcinea del Toboso: a name that he felt was melodious and original, a noble and significant name just like the ones he had found for himself and his horse.



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“If anyone should ever ask, Your Worship, who is my master, I will tell them that it is the famous Don Quixote de la Mancha, otherwise called the Knight of the Woeful Figure!”

“That sounds really good, Sancho! How did you think of it? Surely the wise wizard who is going to write my story made you say it,” said Don Quixote, and continued: “With this name I will receive great honour and this is what I will engrave on my shield: a sorrowful face!”



Το μεγαλύτερο μέρος από τα έσοδα των πνευματικών δικαιωμάτων της παρούσας μετάφρασης-διασκευής θα δοθεί από τη συγγραφέα ως δωρεά στην Ελληνική Επιτροπή Συνεργασίας με τη UNICEF.