

MAN OF LA MANCHA

DON QUIXOTE (*Pausing*) Now must I consider how sages of the future will describe this historic night. (*He strikes a pose*) "Long after the sun had retired to his couch, darkening the gates and balconies of La Mancha, Don Quixote with measured tread and lofty expression held vigil in the courtyard of a mighty castle!" (*He hears the pompous echo of his voice, bows his head, ashamed*). Oh, maker of empty boasts. On this, of all nights, to give way to vanity. Nay, Don Quixote—take a deep breath of life and consider how it should be lived. (*He kneels*)

Call nothing thy own except thy soul.

Love not what thou art, but only what  
thou may become.

Do not pursue pleasure, for thou may have  
the misfortune to overtake it.

Look always forward; in last year's nest  
there are no birds this year.

(ALDONZA *has entered the courtyard en route to her rendezvous with PEDRO. She stops, watching DON QUIXOTE and listening*)

Be just to all men. Be courteous to all women.

Live in the vision of that one for whom great deeds  
are done . . . she that is called Dulcinea.

ALDONZA Why do you call me that?

DON QUIXOTE (*He opens his eyes*) My lady!

ALDONZA Oh, get up from there. Get up! (DON QUIXOTE *rises worshipfully*) Why do you call me by that name?

DON QUIXOTE Because it is thine.

ALDONZA My name is Aldonza!

DON QUIXOTE (*Shakes his head respectfully*) I know thee, lady.

Aldonza  
START

MAN OF LA MANCHA

ALDONZA My name is Aldonza and I think you know me  
*not.*

DON QUIXOTE All my years I have known thee. Thy vir-  
tue. Thy nobility of spirit.

ALDONZA (*Laughs scornfully, whips the rebozo from her  
head*) Take another look!

DON QUIXOTE (*Gently*) I have already seen thee in my  
heart.

ALDONZA Your heart doesn't know much about women!

DON QUIXOTE It knows all, my lady. They are the soul of  
man . . . the radiance that lights his way. A woman  
is . . . glory!

ALDONZA (*Anger masking uncertainty*) What do you  
want of me?

DON QUIXOTE Nothing.

ALDONZA Liar!

DON QUIXOTE (*Bows his head*) I deserved the rebuke. I  
ask of my lady—

ALDONZA Now we get to it.

DON QUIXOTE . . . that I may be allowed to serve her.  
That I may hold her in my heart. That I may dedicate  
each victory and call upon her in defeat. And if at last  
I give my life I give it in the sacred name of Dulcinea.

ALDONZA (*Draws her rebozo about her shoulders and backs  
away, shaken*) I must go . . . Pedro is waiting . . .  
(*She pauses. Vehemently*) Why do you do these things?

DON QUIXOTE What things, my lady?

ALDONZA These ridiculous . . . the things you do!

MAN OF LA MANCHA

DON QUIXOTE I hope to add some measure of grace to the  
world.

ALDONZA The world's a dungheap and we are maggots  
that crawl on it!

DON QUIXOTE My lady knows better in her heart.

ALDONZA What's in *my* heart will get me halfway to hell.  
And you, Señor Don Quixote—you're going to take such  
a beating!

DON QUIXOTE Whether I win or lose does not matter.

ALDONZA What does?

DON QUIXOTE Only that I follow the quest.

ALDONZA (*Spits in vulgar contempt*) That for your  
quest. (*She turns, marches away, then stops. Music:  
very softly, as she comes back*) What does it mean—  
quest?

*end*  
DON QUIXOTE The mission of each true knight . . . his  
duty—nay, his privilege! (*He sings*)

To dream the impossible dream,  
To fight the unbeatable foe,  
To bear with unbearable sorrow,  
To run where the brave dare not go.

To right the unrightable wrong,  
To love, pure and chaste, from afar,  
To try, when your arms are too weary,  
To reach the unreachable star!

This is my Quest, to follow that star,  
No matter how hopeless, no matter how far,  
To fight for the right without question or pause,  
To be willing to march into hell for a heavenly cause!