

ALDONZA. Why do you call me that?

DON QUIXOTE. My lady!

ALDONZA. Oh, get up from there! Get up!

DON QUIXOTE *rises*.

Why do you call me by that name?

DON QUIXOTE. Because it is thine.

ALDONZA. My name is Aldonza!

DON QUIXOTE. (*A denial*) I know thee, lady.

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

DON QUIXOTE. All my years I have known thee. Thy virtue. Thy nobility of spirit.

ALDONZA. (*Dropping the rebozo she wears around her head to her shoulders*)
Take another look!

DON QUIXOTE. I have already seen thee in my heart.

ALDONZA. Your heart doesn't know much about women!

ALDONZA *starts away, then turns back through the following*.

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

ALDONZA. What do you want of me?

DON QUIXOTE. Nothing.

ALDONZA. Liar!

DON QUIXOTE. (*Turning away*) I deserved the rebuke. I ask of my lady—

ALDONZA. (*Moving toward DON QUIXOTE*) Now we get to it.

DON QUIXOTE. (*Turning back to ALDONZA*) ... 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. (*Starts away again*) I must go ... Pedro is waiting ...

(*Pauses; turns to DON QUIXOTE, then vehemently*) Why do you do these things?

DON QUIXOTE. What things?

ALDONZA. These ridiculous ... the things you do!

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

ALDONZA. The world's a dung heap 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*) That for your quest.

ALDONZA turns, marches away. Stops. Turns back and asks, awkwardly:

What does that mean—quest?

DON QUIXOTE. It is the mission of each true knight ...