***THE FORGOTTEN ADVENTURES***

***OF***

***MIGUEL DE CERVANTES***

**Written by**

**Leon J. Radomile**

**Screenplay Adaptation**

***The Spear of Lepanto***

**Book One: *The Papal Prize***

**Book Two: *The Beast Comes Forth***



**Miguel de Cervantes**

**Author of: *Don Quixote de la Mancha***

**490 Marin Oaks Dr., Novato, CA 94949**

**707.755.3800 / www.leonradomile.com**

**SUPER: SPAIN 1615**

**EXT. CERVANTES HOME, MADRID – DAY**

**A large dilapidated residence. A carriage pulls up. MIGUELITO SIGUERA, (19, sharply dressed) steps out, looking anxious. Sitting in a dark shadowy corner of the carriage is DULCINEA SIGUERA, 63. Miguelito turns to her.**

**MIGUELITO**

**How do I look?**

**DULCINEA**

**Nervous.**

**MIGUELITO**

**You’re sure you don’t want to come in?**

**DULCINEA**

**(slaps at him with her fan)**

**Go, Niño. Go. I want you to meet him first.**

**MIGUELITO**

**(scowls)**

**Very well Grandmother.**

**Miguelito approaches front door, knocks.**

**WOMAN**

**(opens peep hole)**

**What do you want?**

**MIGUELITO**

**Good day. My name is Miguelito Siguera. I understand this is the residence of Miguel de Cervantes. Would it be possible for me to have a word with him?**

**WOMAN**

**Many young men have knocked at this door. What makes you different?**

**MIGUELITO**

**Please inform señor Cervantes that a Siguera from his university is here to see him.**

**Off Woman SNAPPING the peep hole shut---**

**INT. CERVANTES HOME, STUDY - CONTINUOUS**

**Woman leads Miguelito into a room cluttered with paintings of Spanish royalty and framed proclamations of literary awards. Books and manuscripts litter floor and tables. A fireplace roars. Sitting in front of it: MIGUEL DE CERVANTES, 65, esteemed author of *Don Quixote de la Mancha*.**

**CERVANTES**

**My sister tells me you are a Siguera?**

**MIGUELITO**

**(grins broadly)**

**Si señor, I am.**

**CERVANTES**

**This is why you sought me out?**

**MIGUELITO**

**I wish to hear your story, señor. About how you came to write your stories. Your inspiration.**

**BEAT. Miguelito waits for a response.**

**CERVANTES**

**You say that you are a Siguera... Any relation to Antonio Siguera? Miguelito shifts uncomfortably in his chair.**

**MIGUELITO**

**He... He was my grandfather.**

**Cervantes eyes him suspiciously.**

**CERVANTES**

**And who is your grandmother?**

**MIGUELITO**

**Dulcinea. Siguera. She is part of the reason I’m here.**

**This information waves over Cervantes. He grabs his glass of wine on the desk and gulps it down.**

**CERVANTES**

**How is... Dulcinea?**

**MIGUELITO**

**Are you all right?**

**CERVANTES**

**Please, tell me. How is she?**

**MIGUELITO**

**She sends her regards.**

**CERVANTES**

**“Regards?”**

**Cervantes nods, turns to look out the window. Miguelito remains quiet.**

**CERVANTES (CONT’D)**

**She’s aware that you’ve come to my home?**

**MIGUELITO**

**It was her idea.**

**Cervantes whips back around to look at Miguelito.**

**MIGUELITO (CONT’D)**

**When I told her of my desire to write, she told me to seek out Spain’s greatest writer.**

**CERVANTES**

**She said that?**

**MIGUELITO**

**Those exact words. She’s the one who introduced me to your works. In fact, I’ve read Don Quixote a dozen times over.**

**Cervantes points to a copy of Don Quixote on a nearby shelf.**

**CERVANTES**

**All my trials and tribulations, all my life experiences have contributed, one way or another, to writing that story. I’ve discovered that hyperbole is a formidable tool.**

**MIGUELITO**

**Today I seek truth without embellishment. If you would afford me the honor?**

**Cervantes rises with arthritic difficulty, pours wine.**

**CERVANTES**

**A toast to your grandmother, my first love...**

**As both men raise their glasses, heated voices are heard in the entry. The door to Cervantes study flies open.**

**Exasperated woman enters the room, followed by Dulcinea Siguera. Tall and attractive, the elegantly dressed Dulcinea walks calmly to Miguelito’s side.**

**WOMAN**

**Brother, this woman refused to wait before I could announce her.**

**DULCINEA**

**The great writer and adventurer, Miguel de Cervantes.**

**MIGUELITO**

**When you fled Spain, you left behind more than just my grandmother...**

**CERVANTES**

**Meaning what?**

**DULCINEA**

**That I was with child. Your son.**

**CERVANTES**

**Dearest Jesus and Mary. I have a son?**

**DULCINEA**

**(sorrowfully)**

**Our son and his wife Carmen perished in a carriage accident soon after Miguelito was born.**

**Cervantes turns to Miguelito.**

**CERVANTES**

**So, you are my... Grandson?**

**MIGUELITO**

**Yes, it is why I could not help smiling when I saw your-our-nose on you when I came in.**

**Turns sideways to show his profile to Cervantes.**

**MIGUELITO (CONT’D)**

**Grandmother has told me a great deal about you. When I began writing in earnest, she wanted to inspire me with the possibility that I might have some of your talent.**

**Cervantes moves to an upholstered chair by the fireplace. He looks at Dulcinea and Miguelito.**

**CERVANTES**

**To this day, God continues to bless me. Your appearance here is evidence of that. But please, sit now and hear my story. You’ll see that God took me from you and my son because He had other plans for me.**

**FLASHBACK TO:**

**SUPER: 1571, SPAIN**

**INT. UNIVERSITY OF ALCALA - DAY**

**STUDENTS mill around a large walled atrium. Young and gorgeous Dulcinea stands beside, ANTONIO SIGUERA, 21, waving his rapier menacingly.**

**CERVANTES (V.O.)**

**My life’s adventure began in earnest when the son of King Philip’s finance minister, your grandfather, and I crossed swords over the affections of Dulcinea.**

**YOUNG MIGUEL DE CERVANTES, 19, stares at Dulcinea from across the atrium.**

**SANCHO (O.S.)**

**Miguel... Miguel!**

**Cervantes snaps out of his ‘love’ trance and faces: SANCHO PANZA who hands him a sword.**

**SANCHO (CONT’D)**

**This is my uncle's rapier. I know you would rather be cutting cheese with it, the way you feel about fighting and killing... It’s not too late to walk away.**

**CERVANTES**

**You know me well, Sancho but...**

**(stares back at Dulcinea)**

**I need to do this.**

**Sancho blocks Cervantes path.**

**SANCHO**

**He’s serious. When did you learn to sword fight?**

**CERVANTES**

**By reading Jeronimo de Carranza’s book on swordsmanship.**

**SANCHO**

**You think you know how to sword fight from reading a book?**

**CERVANTES**

**Well, I did read it twice. He walks nervously to center of the courtyard, faces Siguera.**

**CERVANTES (CONT’D)**

**Your family's wealth and power have won Dulcinea's hand. What else do you want?**

**Siguera smirks, then without warning swaggers into flamboyant circular movement, attacks with his blade.**

**Cervantes, at first flatfooted, crouches, mirrors Siguera’s movement. CROWD gets raucous, urges Siguera to draw blood. Siguera lunges with several quick strikes. Crowd is surprised when Cervantes parries, steps back, waves blade mockingly.**

**SIGUERA**

**I’ve had enough, genius. I hear God calling your name.**

**Angry, Siguera flails wildly, making Cervantes vulnerable to attack. He’s done for. Siguera swings for the head when---At the last second Cervantes evades and drives his rapier up, into Siguera’s chest, above his heart. Siguera crumples, looking as surprised as his opponent. His cohorts drag Siguera back to his corner.**

**CERVANTES**

**I think I’ve hurt him.**

**SANCHO**

**To say the least. It could be fatal.**

**CERVANTES**

**I had no intention of killing, only wounding the braggart.**

**SANCHO**

**Listen my friend, if I were you, I’d flee campus.**

**CERVANTES**

**But it was a gentleman’s wager.**

**SANCHO**

**Antonio isn’t used to losing the upper hand.**

**CERVANTES**

**If given half a chance, he would have lopped off my head.**

**SANCHO**

**Even still, I would leave.**

**CERVANTES**

**I lose either way then, is that what you’re saying?**

**SANCHO**

**You win if you stay alive. Nervously, Cervantes packs up his things. He turns back to take one last look at Dulcinea who’s whisked away by Siguera’s entourage.**

**SANCHO (CONT’D)**

**Fast, Miguel! Is there anyone who can help you?**

**Cervantes thinks.**

**INT. HOME OF HOYOS - NIGHT**

**JUAN DE HOYOS, an aging scholar shoos Cervantes into his study. Hoyos paces the room, concerned.**

**CERVANTES**

**I’m sorry professor, but I have no one else to turn to.**

**HOYOS**

**Why do young men always think there is no alternative?**

**CERVANTES**

**I wasn’t thinking. Professor, that’s why I’m here. To seek your guidance.**

**HOYOS**

**This offense could have you chained to an oar for the rest of your life.**

**(beat)**

**My boy, you have no choice but to leave Spain.**

**CERVANTES**

**What about my studies?**

**HOYOS**

**I may have a way to salvage your promising but impetuous brain until it grows some sense.**

**Hoyos moves to desk, writes a letter on a piece of vellum.**

**HOYOS (CONT’D)**

**Give this letter to my nephew, Diego de Rivera, captain of one of Philip’s galleys at Valencia. He is preparing to sail for Rome forthwith.**

**CERVANTES**

**Rome? Uh, but, Professor, what will I do in Rome?**

**HOYOS**

**What you’ve done for the last two years Cervantes, write. He takes another sheet of vellum and writes.**

**HOYOS (CONT’D)**

**This letter is to Cardinal Giulio Acquaviva, a former student who is also a nuncio serving Pope Pius. I’m asking him to sponsor your admittance to Collegio Romano.**

**CERVANTES**

**Collegio Romano? I...I... don’t know how to thank you.**

**HOYOS**

**Thank me by staying out of trouble. Write with passion my foolish friend and be master of your own destiny.**

**Hoyos RINGS a brass bell, SERVANT enters.**

**HOYOS (CONT’D)**

**Hurry with Cervantes to Valencia. He can ride the black Andalusian.**

**(to Cervantes)**

**Go now, I’ll bring some things to the stable for you.**

**EXT. BARN - LATER**

**Cervantes and Servant mount horses as Hoyos hurriedly approaches, carrying two saddlebags.**

**HOYOS**

**Here are some clothes and several manuscripts you wrote. You’ll need them in Rome to show that you’re a worthy intellect.**

**CERVANTES**

**Please tell mother...**

**Hoyos NODS. Servant kicks, prompting his horse to gallop into the darkness of the night. Cervantes in tow.**

**FADE TO:**

**SUPER: NICOSIA, CYPRUS**

**EXT. NICOSIA, CYPRUS - DAY**

**Turkish commander LALA MUSTAFA, swarthy and pocked faced, fidgets in his saddle while forty-seven thousand TURKISH INFANTRY prepare to invade the city.**

**CERVANTES (V.O.)**

**At the same time I was riding steadfast to pursue my dream of studying in Rome, a relentless Ottoman artillery bombardment had left the Venetian Cypriot capital of Nicosia in near collapse.**

**A gigantic siege gun is positioned at the city’s main gate. Artillery batteries, stretching for over a mile, are poised and ready.**

**Mustafa turns to lieutenant #1.**

**LALA MUSTAFA**

**I want the city’s governor brought to me alive.**

**LIEUTENANT #1**

**Yes my lord.**

**Mustafa nods to the siege GUN COMMANDER, who lites the fuse. The giant artillery piece unleashes its hellish salvo. The main gate is obliterated. Turkish soldiers charge and pour through the rubble.**

**Nicosia’s governor, NICCOLO DANDOLO, emerges from citadel under a white flag. He’s quickly and brutally bound.**

**NICOSIA’S CATHEDRAL**

**Dandolo is taken to Mustafa and forced to kneel on the steps. Turkish troops gather.**

**LALA MUSTAFA**

**Look at my sword, infidel. See how brightly it shines in the sun. Mustafa beheads Dandolo in one mighty stroke.**

**CERVANTES (V.O.)**

**Twenty thousand citizens of Nicosia were butchered that day. Lala Mustafa grabs Dandolo’s decapitated head by its hair, raising it before his soldiers along with his sword.**

**CERVANTES (V.O.)**

**Mustafa believed his sword to be an instrument of righteousness that would cleanse the city of its Christian blasphemies.**

**LALA MUSTAFA**

**(preaches to soldiers.)**

**Soon my brothers, the red apple that is Rome, shall be ours. Allahu Akbar.**

**The city is in total chaos, people run for their lives.**

**CERVANTES (V.O.)**

**Little did I know that in Rome, the Pope was organizing a united front against the approaching colossus?**

**The Venetians and Spanish, with a collection of Italian city states, would heed his call.**

**TITLE: The Forgotten Adventures of Miguel de Cervantes**

**EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DAY**

**We return to Cervantes galloping on horseback, alone as he approaches...**

**A SPANISH WAR GALLEY in the distance.**

**EXT. PORT OF VALENCIA - CONTINUOUS**

**The massive Spanish war Galley sits anchored. Cervantes stands before, CAPTAIN DIEGO DE RIVERA, 40’s, tall and imposing.**

**CAPTAIN RIVERA**

**What can I do for you? Cervantes hands him the letter.**

**CERVANTES**

**I have a letter from your uncle, Professor Hoyos.**

**CAPTAIN RIVERA**

**(scans letter)**

**A student bound for Rome?**

**Captain Rivera sizes him up with a penetrating stare. Rivera turns his back, whispers something to CREWMAN then walks away. Cervantes looks discouraged.**

**CREWMAN**

**(to Cervantes)**

**Señor, you will join Captain Rivera for supper. Follow me now, and I will show you your cabin.**

**Relief washes over Cervantes.**

**INT. SPANISH WAR GALLEY - NIGHT**

**Captain Rivera and Cervantes eat at small table.**

**CAPTAIN RIVERA**

**How do you know my uncle, Señor?**

**CERVANTES**

**I’ve had the privilege of studying under him for two years.**

**LEONARDO (O.S.)**

**Diego!**

**A surprised Captain Rivera turns to see: LEONARDO RADOLOWICK, early 30’s, handsome papal emissary, entering.**

**LEONARDO (CONT’D)**

**(smiling)**

**You should have your first officer flogged for not announcing me.**

**CAPTAIN RIVERA**

**Welcome Leonardo! May I introduce your cabin mate, Miguel de Cervantes. He will be attending Collegio Romano.**

**LEONARDO**

**Pleasure señor. So, you’re headed for my alma mater? Excited I suspect.**

**CERVANTES**

**Who wouldn’t be?**

**LEONARDO**

**Pardon my blunt nature but you sound reserved.**

**CERVANTES**

**No, just preoccupied.**

**CAPTAIN RIVERA**

**His first time on a vessel.**

**STEWARD dishes up plate of food for Leonardo.**

**LEONARDO**

**I’d say take it easy on the stew then.**

**Cervantes slows his chew, realizing Leonardo might be right.**

**LEONARDO (CONT’D)**

**So, have you decided on a course of study?**

**CAPTAIN RIVERA**

**His passion lies with the written word.**

**CERVANTES**

**I’m inclined toward literature and the art of composition.**

**LEONARDO**

**You might also consider a new chair concerning the Turkish culture.**

**CERVANTES**

**Turks? Politics? I’d rather tilt at windmills.**

**LEONARDO**

**Well, I’ll have this entire voyage to change your mind. Just remember, Señor Cervantes, “Those who are too smart to engage in politics are punished by being governed by those who are intellectually inferior.”**

**CERVANTES**

**“Just because you do not take an interest in politics, doesn’t mean politics won’t take an interest in you.”**

**LEONARDO**

**Ha! The quotable Plato.**

**CERVANTES**

**My classmates jeered me for using the ancients to win arguments.**

**LEONARDO**

**Then we have something in common. Leonardo smiles, raises his cup in a toast.**

**LEONARDO (CONT’D)**

**May King Philip find happiness with his new bride and may God bless this union with a baby son.**

**CAPTAIN RIVERA**

**(turns to Cervantes)**

**Leonardo joins us from His Majesty’s wedding at court in Madrid.**

**INT. SPANISH WAR GALLEY, GUEST CABIN - MORNING**

**Cervantes wakes, nauseated. Ship rolling. Lurches from his bunk and grabs chamber pot to spew in.**

**Recovering, he looks out small porthole to see Spanish coastline bobbing in distance.**

**EXT. SPANISH WAR GALLEY, POOP DECK - LATER**

**Leonardo climbs up from main deck to join Captain Rivera, who is observing crew.**

**CAPTAIN RIVERA**

**How’s our young scholar this morning?**

**LEONARDO**

**Sleeping and heaving. What do you make of him?**

**CAPTAIN RIVERA**

**A classic classroom idealist, with little sense of the real world.**

**LEONARDO**

**A bit presumptuous.**

**CAPTAIN RIVERA**

**The letter he had from my uncle seemed too spontaneous.**

**LEONARDO**

**Perhaps inspired by some sudden misadventure.**

**CAPTAIN RIVERA**

**Maybe when he’s through spilling his guts, he’ll start spilling his thoughts.**

**EXT. ROME, ST. PETER’S SQUARE - DAY**

**WELL DRESSED MAN, face cloaked, wearing a distinct gold, ruby stone ring approaches BEGGAR, tossing a coin with a small slip of paper into his basket, without stopping.**

**INT. SPANISH WAR GALLEY, GUEST CABIN - DAY**

**Leonardo enters to find Cervantes rifling through papers.**

**LEONARDO**

**Cervantes! I hardly recognize you without your cadaver complexion.**

**CERVANTES**

**Yes, I haven’t prayed for death for several hours now. What I need is some sustenance. As soon as I see what Hoyos packed for me, I’ll seek out some broth.**

**Leonardo grabs a manuscript.**

**LEONARDO**

**May I read this essay?**

**CERVANTES**

**(sarcastic)**

**It’s already in your hands.**

**LEONARDO**

**(reads title)**

***The Siege of Malta.***

**CERVANTES**

**Hoyos liked it enough to send a copy to La Valette.**

**LEONARDO**

**The grandmaster of the Knights of Malta has read the work of such a spewing young lad? I can hardly wait.**

**Leonardo opens porthole; sits atop bunk, begins to read. Cervantes looks through small porthole. Observes thick fog.**

**CERVANTES**

**I’ve never seen fog like this. I think I could piss out the porthole and never see it hit the water.**

**LEONARDO**

**Odd for this time of year. Even here. But Captain Rivera knows this stretch of sea like he knows his family bloodlines. Cervantes lights several lamps.**

**CERVANTES**

**I find the history behind bloodlines of interest. What of yours?**

**LEONARDO**

**When I was eight, the Turkish sultan decided to add my homeland to his empire. My father, a Bosnian noble, was slain in the invasion. My mother and I, with two servants, escaped to Italy aboard an old fishing vessel.**

**CERVANTES**

**Eight should not be an age for sorrow.**

**LEONARDO**

**In Italy, we found refuge with a friend of my father’s, a Dominican abbot. My mother died that first year. Father Colonna became my guardian. It was through him that I attended Collegio Romano and later the Vatican diplomatic service. Colonna’s old friend, a fellow Dominican, became Pope and well...**

**CERVANTES**

**Here you are. First a guest at King Philip’s wedding and now the Pope? I must begin counting my blessings.**

**Frantic CLANGING of ship’s bell, SHOUTING from topside.**