

Cheese in Literature

Katie Glauzell

Queso Manchego, cottage cheese, membrillo, & Spanish nut mix - La Mancha, Spain
Petit Albet Cava Brut Rosé - Catalonia, Spain

Don Quixote - Miguel de Cervantes, 1605

"My friend, give me my helmet—for either I know little about adventures, or I can see one over there that will and does need me to take up arms..."

...and since Sancho hadn't had time to take the cottage cheese out, he had to hand it over as it was. Don Quixote took it, without noticing what was in it, and quickly put it onto this head. Since the cottage cheese was squeezed, the whey began to trickle down all over don Quixote's face and beard, which startled him so much that he said to Sancho:



"What can this be, Sancho? You'd think my brain was softening or I'm sweating from head to foot. And if it's sweat, in truth it's not from fear. Doubtless this is a terrible adventure that is about to happen to me. Give me, if you have anything, something to wipe my face with, for the copious sweat is blinding my eyes...On the life of my lady Dulcinea del Toboso, this is cottage cheese that you put in my helmet, you traitor, scoundrel and ill-bred squire!"

To which with great calm and dissimulation Sancho responded: "If it's cottage cheese, give it to me, your grace, and I'll eat it. But let the devil eat it since he must have put it there. Would I dare dirty your grace's helmet? Do you think I'm to blame?...I trust in the good sense of my master who will have considered that I don't have any cottage cheese, nor milk, nor anything of the kind, and if I had any, I'd put it in my stomach rather than in the helmet."

Chapter XVII - Wherein is declared the height and extreme to which the unheard-of bravery of don Quixote reached or could ever reach, with the very fortunate conclusion of the Adventure of the Lions.

There was a wall made of cheeses arranged like open brick-work, and two cauldrons full of oil, bigger than those of a dyer's shop, served for cooking fritters, which when fried were taken out with two mighty shovels, and plunged into another cauldron of prepared honey that stood close by...The spices of different kinds did not seem to have been bought by the pound but by the quarter, and all lay open to view in a great chest. In short, all the preparations made for the wedding were in rustic style, but abundant enough to feed an army.

Chapter XX - Wherein an account is given of the wedding of Camacho the Rich, together with the incident of Basilio the Poor

L'Etivaz Alpage with Wagyu beef salami - Fribourg, Switzerland
Crazy Creatures Grüner Veltliner Kremstal- Palt, Austria

Heidi - Johanna Spyri, 1880

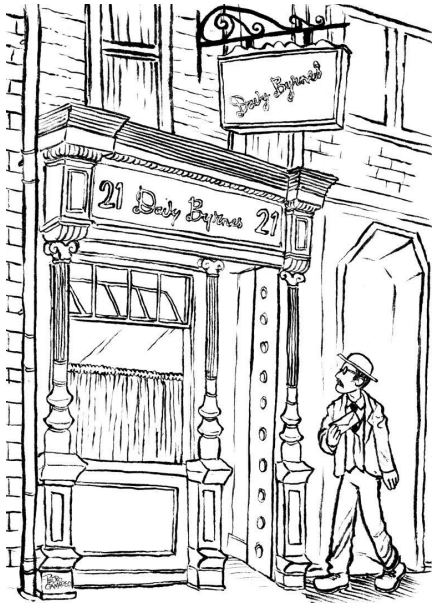


When the kettle was boiling, the old man put a large piece of cheese on a long iron fork, and held it over the fire, turning it to and fro, till it was golden-brown on all sides. Heidi had watched him eagerly. Suddenly she ran to the cupboard. When her grandfather brought a pot and the toasted cheese to the table, he found it already nicely set with two plates and two knives and the bread in the middle. Heidi had seen the things in the cupboard and knew that they would be needed for the meal...

...Soon the uncle appeared with the steaming milk, the toasted cheese, and the finely-sliced, rosy meat that had been dried in the pure air. The doctor enjoyed his dinner better than any he had ever tasted.

Chapter II - At Home with Grandfather

Gorgonzola with cherry tomato & Dijon on beer bread - Gorgonzola, Italy
Jacques Girardin Bourgogne Pinot Noir - Santenay - Côte d'Or, France



Ulysses - James Joyce, 1922

Mr. Bloom cut his sandwich into slender strips...He studded under each lifted strip yellow blobs...

—Ay, now I remember, Nosey Flynn said, putting his hand in his pocket to scratch his groin. Who is this was telling me? Isn't Blazes Boylan mixed up in it?

A warm shock of air heat of mustard hunched on Mr Bloom's heart. He raised his eyes and met the stare of a bilious clock. *Two. Pub clock five minutes fast. Time going on. Hands moving. Two. Not yet.* His midriff yearned then upward, sank within him, yearned more longly, longingly. *Wine.* He smellsipped the cordial juice and, bidding his throat strongly to speed it, set his wineglass delicately down...

Mr Bloom ate his strips of sandwich, fresh clean bread, with relish of disgust, pungent mustard, the feety savour of green cheese. Sips of his wine soothed his palate. Not logwood that. Tastes fuller this weather with the chill off...

Wine soaked and softened rolled pith of bread mustard a moment mawkish cheese. Nice wine it is. Taste it better because I'm not thirsty...

Mild fire of wine kindled his veins...Glowing wine on his palate lingered swallowed. Crushing in the winepress grapes of Burgundy. Sun's heat it is. Seems to a secret touch telling me memory.

Episode VIII - Lestrygonians

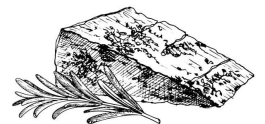
More Pricks than Kicks - Samuel Beckett, 1934

The slab of cheese was prepared. Separated since morning from the piece, it was only waiting for Belacqua to call and take it. Gorgonzola cheese. He knew a man who came from Gorgonzola, his name was Angelo. He had been born in Nice but all his youth had been spent in Gorgonzola. He knew where to look for it. Every day it was there, in the same corner, waiting to be called for. They were very decent obliging people.

He looked sceptically at the cut of cheese. He turned it over on its back to see was the other side any better. The other side was worse. They had laid it better side up, they had practised that little deception. Who shall blame them? He rubbed it. It was sweating. That was something. He stooped and smelt it. A faint fragrance of corruption. What good was that? He didn't want fragrance, he wasn't a bloody gourmet, he wanted a good stench. What he wanted was a good green stenching rotten lump of Gorgonzola cheese, alive, and by God he would have it. He looked fiercely at the grocer.

"What's that?" he demanded. The grocer writhed. "Well?" demanded Belacqua, he was without fear when roused, "is that the best you can do?"

"In the length and breadth of Dublin" said the grocer "you won't find a rottener bit this minute." Belacqua was furious. The impudent dogsbody, for two pins he would assault him. "It won't do" he cried "do you hear me, it won't do at all. I won't have it." He ground his teeth.



The grocer, instead of simply washing his hands like Pilate, flung out his arms in a wild crucified gesture of supplication. Sullenly Belacqua undid his packet and slipped the cadaverous tablet of cheese between the hard cold black boards of the toast.

Story I - Dante and the Lobster

Comté with baguette - Jura Mountains, France
Anne Pichon Grenache Noir - Rhône Valley, France

Les Misérables - Victor Hugo, 1862

“They have, in the country of Pontarlier...a truly patriarchal and truly charming industry... It is their cheese-dairies, which they call fruitières...they were divided into two classes: the big barns which belong to the rich, and where there are forty or fifty cows which produce from seven to eight thousand cheeses each summer, and the associated fruitières, which belong to the poor; these are the peasants of mid-mountain, who hold their cows in common, and share the proceeds. They engage the services of a cheese-maker, whom they call the grurin; the grurin receives the milk of the associates three times a day, and marks the quantity on a double tally. It is towards the end of April that the work of the cheese-dairies begins; it is towards the middle of June that the cheese-makers drive their cows to the mountains.”

The man recovered his animation as he ate. My brother made him drink that good Mauves wine, which he does not drink himself, because he says that wine is expensive.

Chapter IV - Details Concerning the Cheese-Dairies of Pontarlier

double-cream beer washed Foxglove on oatcake biscuits - Indianapolis, IN
Cidre au Poire - Normandy, France

Three Men in a Boat - Jerome K. Jerome, *1889*

Splendid cheeses they were, ripe and mellow, and with a two hundred horse-power scent about them that might have been warranted to carry three miles, and knock a man over at two hundred yards...

...From Crewe I had the compartment to myself, though the train was crowded. As we drew up at the different stations, the people, seeing my empty carriage, would rush for it. “Here y’ are, Maria; come along, plenty of room.” “All right, Tom; we’ll get in here,” they would shout. And they would run along, carrying heavy bags, and fight round the door to get in first. And one would open the door and mount the steps, and stagger back into the arms of the man behind him; and they would all come and have a sniff, and then droop off and squeeze into other carriages, or pay the difference and go first...



3 days later: “You think he would be upset,” she queried, “if I gave a man a sovereign to take them away and bury them?” I answered that I thought he would never smile again...“Very well, then,” said my friend’s wife, rising, “all I have to say is, that I shall take the children and go to an hotel until those cheeses are eaten. I decline to live any longer in the same house with them...”

...The hotel bill came to fifteen guineas; and my friend, after reckoning everything up, found that the cheeses had cost him eight-and-sixpence a pound. He said he dearly loved a bit of cheese, but it was beyond his means; so he determined to get rid of them. He threw them into the canal; but had to fish them out again, as the bargemen complained. They said it made them feel quite faint. And, after that, he took them one dark night and left them in the parish mortuary. But the coroner discovered them, and made a fearful fuss. He said it was a plot to deprive him of his living by waking up the corpses.

My friend got rid of them, at last, by taking them down to a sea-side town, and burying them on the beach. It gained the place quite a reputation. Visitors said they had never noticed before how strong the air was, and weak-chested and consumptive people used to throng there for years afterwards.

Chapter IV - THE FOOD QUESTION... ADVANTAGES OF CHEESE AS A TRAVELLING COMPANION...



Idyll Farms chevre with roasted hazelnuts & honey - Northport, MI
Puffing Billy American Brown Ale with Cacao Nibs - Chicago, IL

Redwall - Brian Jacques, 1986

"Another tankard of that fine October ale, and perhaps one more portion of your very good summer salad. Ah, and I think I could manage another few slices of Friar Hugo's quince pie. Superb! Ahem, don't forget the goatsmilk cheese with hazelnuts. I'm very partial to that."

Book VI

Martin the Warrior: A Redwall Tale - Brian Jacques, 1993

"Laughter and merry chatter rose to the rafters of the big room beneath the Abbey. There was warmth there, good companionship and good humour. Dishes went this way and that from paw to paw, snowcream pudding, hot fruit pies, colorful trifles, tasty pasties, steaming soup, new bread with shiny golden crusts, old cheeses studded with dandelion, acorn and celery. Sugared plums and honeyed pears vied for place with winter salads and vegetable flans."

Book I

