

GULLIVER'S TRAVELS

Jonathan Swift

TIMELESS CLASSICS



Man-Mountain Visits Lilliput

I, Lemuel Gulliver, was born the third of five sons. My humble father had a small estate in Nottinghamshire, England. The family did not have a lot of money. Still, I was lucky enough to study medicine in London.

When my studies were finished, I worked as a doctor on a ship called the *Swallow*. We sailed for three and a half years. After this voyage, I settled in London. I married a woman named Mary Burton and began to practice medicine.

Unfortunately, my business did poorly, so I went to sea again—this time for six years.

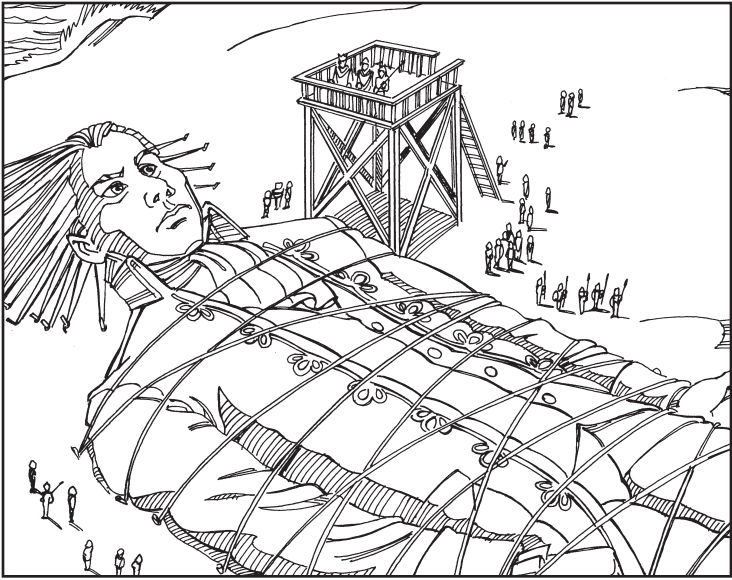
We set out on a ship called the *Antelope* on May 4, 1699, bound for the East Indies. The voyage began well, but we soon ran into bad weather. We were hit by a violent storm that lasted several days. Finally, the *Antelope* was split upon a rock. Some of us were able to escape on a small boat, but the wind overturned it. Then I was at

the mercy of the waves. What became of my companions I could not tell. But I swam as far as I was able. When I was almost gone, I stretched out my legs and felt the bottom under my feet. I walked to the shore, lay down in the soft grass, and fell into a deep sleep.

When I woke up, I could not move at all. Thin lines stretched all across my body! I felt something move along my left leg. Then I felt it run up to my chest. It was a human-looking creature—no more than six inches high! I could feel about 40 more of the tiny creatures running just behind him along my body. I let out a loud cry, and they ran back in fear. Afterward I was told that some of them were hurt when they leaped off me.

I struggled against the lines that held me. At last I pulled my hand loose and tried to grab some of them. But immediately, I felt a hundred sharp little arrows strike my hands and face. They felt like so many needles. After this I lay quietly and the shower of arrows stopped falling.

For about an hour, I heard pounding by my left ear. I turned my head just enough to see the little people building a kind of platform. An important-looking person climbed up on it and spoke to me. Unfortunately, I understood not one



word. I made signals to show that I was hungry. He seemed to understand my signals very well.

Ladders were placed at my sides. More than 100 tiny people then brought me baskets full of meat and bread. They also gave me a small barrel of wine that was almost too heavy for them to carry. I drank it in one gulp, and then drank a second one. They were amazed at my appetite. When I finished, they shouted for joy, and danced on my chest.

A royal-looking person marched up my chest. He made signals to communicate that I must be taken to another spot. I let him know that I wanted

to be set free, but he shook his head. He made signs that I would have more to eat and be treated well. Once more, I thought of trying to break free. But I still felt the sting of their needle-like arrows. Also, I felt that I must be hospitable to these people. After all, they had been very generous.

I began to feel sleepy, even though I had slept for many hours. Later I learned that a sleeping potion had been put into my wine.

As soon as I was asleep, the people set about building an enormous wagon. They raised me up with lines and slung me onto it. Some 1,500 of their tiny horses then pulled me all the way to the capital city. There I was laid down in an ancient temple. I was not free, however. My left leg was bound with 91 tiny but very strong chains.

Once I was placed in the temple, I was paid a visit by the Emperor. The little fellow said he was 28 years old. He had an arched nose and olive skin, and he was taller than most of his people. He walked with an air of majesty, and he wore a helmet of gold, decorated with jewels. He held his sword in one hand, in case I happened to break loose. I spoke to him in all the languages I knew, but he could understand none of them.

After two hours, the Emperor took his leave.

He left me well guarded, with his colonel in charge. This was for protection against the crowds who had gathered to see me. In spite of this, several of them shot arrows at me. One arrow nearly struck my eye. The colonel captured six of the troublemakers and tied them up. He brought them to me, indicating that I should punish them as I wished.

I put five of them in my coat pocket. The sixth I moved toward my mouth as if I would eat him alive. The poor man cried out terribly. Even the colonel seemed afraid when I took out my knife. But I soon put them at their ease. I cut the strings that bound all six of them, and I let them run away. Both the soldiers and the crowd seemed to be impressed by my mercy.

They had many arguments about what to do with me. Some of them were afraid I would break loose. Others feared my diet might be too expensive, and could even cause a famine. One idea was to shoot me with poisoned arrows and let me die. But they were afraid of the smell that would come from such a large carcass. And they thought my rotting body might cause a plague!

But then the news of my kindness toward the six criminals reached the Emperor. He decided to

take care of me. He ordered the villages around the city to supply me with food. The villagers who helped me would be paid from his treasury. Also, some 600 of these small people would be my servants from now on. A team of 300 tailors would make me a new suit of clothes. Six of the best teachers would teach me their language.

In three weeks, I had learned much of their language. The Emperor often came to talk to me. As soon as I was able, I asked for my freedom. His answer, as far as I could tell, was that I must wait. Meanwhile, he told his officers to search my belongings for any hidden weapons. He hoped that this act would not offend me.

What could I do but agree? So two gentlemen searched my clothes. "On the Great Man-Mountain we found several articles," their report said. "First was a great piece of cloth and a huge silver chest. Inside the chest was a sort of dust which made us sneeze. We also found a bundle of thin white material marked with black figures. We believe these are letters. Then there was a long piece of wood with twenty poles attached to it. We believe the Man-Mountain uses this device to smooth out the hair on his head.

“We also found two dangerous-looking plates of steel. One of these the Man-Mountain uses to cut his beard. The other is for cutting his meat. At the end of a chain we discovered a kind of globe. It was half silver, with figures of some kind drawn on it. It made a constant clicking noise. The Man-Mountain said he looked at the thing often. It pointed out the time for every action in his life.”

When the search was finished, the Emperor asked to see my sword and my pistols. He called them hollow iron pillars. I showed him both. Then, after telling him not to be afraid, I shot off my pistol into the air. The sound terrified the crowd that was standing around watching. Hundreds of people fell to the ground in shock and lay there as if they were dead. Even the Emperor was shaken for some time.

I gave my sword and pistols to the Emperor. He promised to return them whenever I left the country. My handkerchief, snuff box, journal, comb, razor, knife, and watch were returned to me.