THE TWO VOYAGES OF GULLIVER

To the Lilliputians and to the Giants

Translated by Alexandr Benghiat

To the Lilliputians

My mother had five children, the author begins, but out of them the one who had the greatest taste for travel, was I. And in spite of all the punishments imposed on me in order to make me abandon\(^1\) my idea, on 4 May, 1699, I embarked the ship called “Antilop.” And relying on my star and my age of twenty, I got on the way.

For several days, the sea was good, and we moved towards the Indias. But the weather suddenly changed, and, after many weeks of suffering in the sea, the ship was wrecked against a rock, and out of the thirty men, who were aboard, only five of us could save ourselves in a boat.

We rowed for several hours without knowing in which direction we were going. But, finally, tired and without any hope, we entrusted the boat to the will of the
waves, until a powerful rush of wind overturned it, and all five of us who were there fell into the water.

I do not know what became of my comrades. The sea was very stormy, and I cared only about saving my life. I swam without stopping, without taking a breath, without losing hope, and helped by the wind which pushed me to the land, I suddenly saw that my feet began to touch the sand. The storm calmed down, and a quarter of an hour later I was walking on hard ground.

The exhaustion, the heat, and a good quantity of raki, which I had drunk before leaving the ship, made me sleepy, and I stretched on the grass, and slept for nine hours.

Finally, after waking up, I tried to get up, but in vain. I was lying down with my face to the sky, and my head, as well as my arms and my feet, and the rest of my body, were as if fastened and nailed down.

The sun was very hot, it bothered my eyes. Around me, I could hear a noise, as if of speech, but it was very soft, muffled speech of many people. Something was walking over my face and over my whole body, and I could not understand or see what it was. Concentrating my attention and making an effort to turn on my side, so that my eyes would not be bothered by the rays of sun, I saw small creatures, much smaller than dolls, walking with spears in their hands.

I screamed so loudly that all these small animals started running in a fright, and, making a very strong effort, I sat up in the place where I was stretched. Then I noticed that I was tied to the ground with several ropes, as thin as my hairs. Among those who ran away was one who also emitted a small scream. I suddenly felt hurt by more than a hundred arrows, which pricked me like needles.
Then I rose up completely. Now the little dwarfs ran away faster, and an hour later I saw thousands of them come back. One, on horseback, well dressed and with plumage on his head, was their prince. And after an hour-long conversation with his ministers, he turned to me and began to talk. In order not to have to lie down and to hear him speak, I put him on the palm of my hand, and [despite] his way of speaking, I could understand that he was taking me under his guard and was going to bring me to his palace.

So, I got into the country of little dwarfs, small as can be, and everything I found there was small.

2.

I stayed on the ground a little more. Meanwhile, five thousand carpenters and engineers were assigned to construct a cart, and one thousand strongest men were assigned to lift me and put me into it. One thousand five hundred horses pulled the cart, and an hour later we arrived in the capital.

When we arrived at the palace and I was resting, I sneezed, and fifteen or twenty persons around me felt sick from fear. And an order was given not to come close to the “Man-Mountain”--the title given to me by the prince and those of his court.

So, I settled in the palace, and everybody came to see and greet me with curiosity. All the time I was tied with a chain made of iron, which ten thousand blacksmiths took a week’s time to make. It was feared that I might run away and destroy their cities and ruin their fields and crops.
The food they gave me cost them a lot, and they were afraid that I might cause famine. But, on the other hand, they thought that, if they killed me with poisoned arrows, my corpse would rot and cause them plague or cholera.

For these reasons, they thought well of what they were going to do with me. In a special session, they decided to teach me their language, so that afterwards they could discuss with me what I wanted of them or the profit which they could get from me.

So, after several weeks of thorough learning when they taught me their language and their ways, it was understood that we did not want to harm each other. Freed from the chain, which I did not want to break before I knew where all this was going, I found favor in the eyes of their prince and became his advisor.

3.

A few days later, one afternoon, I saw from above what [was going on] in the prince’s house, and having asked for information, I learned that the neighbor prince had declared war on him. And the Lilliput government would be attacked from the sea, because it did not have a fleet.

The prince came to ask me for advice, and the first thing I asked him to do was to go to our port and find out the number of the enemy’s ships. Everything was prepared immediately for the trip, and the next day, before noon, we were in the port.

The enemy’s lands lay on the opposite side of the sea, and the only means to save ourselves from the peril was to destroy his fleet. In order to achieve this, I recommended that they make me ropes as thick as possible, and immediately twenty thousand Lilliputians set to work.
Having tied those ropes to myself, I entered the sea and, swimming and walking in that shallow sea, I reached the opposite side, where the enemy’s fleet was anchored. I began to tie one ship to another, and while I was tying them, I was breaking the chains that kept them in place.

From in front of me and from both sides they were looking at the “Man-Mountain” work without understanding what I was doing. But the enemy suspected something bad, and they began to throw poisoned arrows at me. I had already taken my measures which consisted in taking good care of my eyes, and I was not worried about the rest of my body. For the eyes I had a pair of glasses with covers, which I had found in my pocket, and having put them on, I did not pay attention to the arrows that were thrown at me.

And suddenly, when nobody expected it, having finished cutting off all the chains that tied the ships, I began to swim with all my strength in the water, and an hour later, all the thirty war ships from the enemy waters, were in front of our port attached to each other.

This victory very much weakened the enemy, who sent messengers, a good peace treaty was concluded and contracts of friendship were written and exchanged. As a reward, I asked my prince to let me visit the palace and the lands of the enemy.

4.

The joy in our country was great, and the prince covered me with honors and distinctions, but it did not take a long time before I saw him change his behavior toward me: if at first he was very affectionate, later he became very grave and even hostile to me.
I was thinking about what could have made the prince angry with me, when I finally learned from a minister that the admiral, who became the head of the fleet that we had taken from the enemy, spoke badly of me to the prince, telling him that I wanted to go to the enemy’s lands in order to join him and to declare war on the prince. For this reason the parliament decided to murder me or to take out my eyes.

The minister informed me about everything that was going to be done to me, promised me his help, and told me to be on the alert.

I did not wait till dawn and began to swim, helped by the moonlight. I arrived in the enemy’s country where I was received with open arms. But they were not going to use me to make war against my old prince.

There, helped and encouraged by all the people, I had them cut down a whole mountain of trees and put more than one thousand men to work, to help me out. In less than a month I built a big boat that thousands of people put on water.

At the end of the month, when everything was ready, I took permission to leave, and having laden the boat with one hundred cows and three hundred sheep as well as the amount of bread that four hundred cooks managed to bake for me, I boarded the boat and said goodbye to the city on 24 September, 1701.

5.

Three days I navigated in the shallow and quiet sea. On the fourth day a light breeze broke, and I saw that my boat came to the deep sea. I was taken by an English ship, the captain of which did not want to believe what I told him. But when he saw how small the cows and the sheep were, and after I gave him some true details, he believed
me, and as the weather was favorable, we arrived in England and to my family a month later.

To the giants

1.

It seems I was born to live the life of a sailor. I could not be in my homeland with my family for a long time. And again, on 20 June, 1702, I embarked the ship “Adventure,” which was leaving, this one, too, for the Indias.

We arrived at a good port, and having given and taken [the merchandise], we safely embarked on the ship in order to return with the goods to England.

It was precisely a year and one day since we had left England, it was, therefore, 21 June, and we sailed, navigating in good weather, when a big whale (the biggest fish)\(^7\) in its passage made a hole in our ship. And despite all our efforts to stop the leak, the water entered the ship, and a day later we were obliged to take the boats and leave the sinking ship.

The boat where I was seated was thrown away farther than the rest, and when we reached the ground, there were only three of us, the rest having died of exhaustion and starvation.

My two comrades stayed at the seashore, behind the high rock that shielded the entrance to those lands, and only I took the road and very soon came to a big and vast valley, where some men, tall like giants, were walking around.

When I saw them, I began to tremble out of fear, and at that moment I could not help thinking of the Lilliputians for whom I was a mountain.
One of the giants was busy cutting wheat, which was twice taller than I am. He noticed me and took two big steps of fifteen or twenty meters. He took me in his hand, brought me close to his eyes, and examined me very carefully.

But I did not stop crying, screaming, and moaning, showing him how much pain he was causing me by pressing me with his fingers. It seemed that he understood me, and he slowly and calmly opened the pocket of his gardening clothes, put me inside, and went to his house.

2.

The peasant, who seemed to have a lot of land, examined me more carefully in his house, seemed to have understood that I was an intelligent creature, and said something to me, but I did not understand anything, so he began to explain himself with gestures. And I made him understand that I was hungry. He put me on the table at the edge of a plate, holding me because he was afraid I might fall inside and drown.

The peasant’s wife, who was a smart person, seeing that I was in danger, lifted me from the edge of the plate and put me in front of herself. She had a coffee cup brought, filled it with soup, and with a toy spoon used for her nine-year-old daughters doll began to feed me.

The husband, seeing this, also wanted to do something for me, but he had in his hand a piece of bread, and when a crumb of it fell on my head, it almost smashed it. From that moment on, this made him act more carefully and attentively. And I was passed as a doll into the hands of their little daughter.
But before they got up from the table, I almost disappeared in the mouth of the house cat that was three times bigger than a cow, and only thanks to the care of my little nurse, was I able to escape. Still, it did not leave me alone, looking at me with its terrible eyes and sniffing, as they do in front of dogs. I saw that it would be shameful for me if I did not show my courage, and I, in my turn, put myself erect and threatening in front of the animal. I made it run away with my look, and it seemed everybody in the house enjoyed this and was delighted to see how I behaved.

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After the meal, the wet nurse entered the room carrying in her arms a one-year-old child, who, as soon as he saw me, began to scream so loudly that he could be heard in other houses. The child looked at me and wanted me to be given to him as a toy. The mother picked me up and put me into the child’s hands, who opened his mouth and put my head in it. I screamed and yelled so desperately that the child, not understanding what was happening, decided not to bite me.

But neither my screams, nor my groans would have done anything had it not been for the mother, who calmly removed me from the mouth of the little one, and putting me in the pocket of her apron, carried me to the next room, where I again passed into the power of the girl of nine.

3.

For her age, my little nurse was very intelligent. The daughter, the mother, and the whole family were good people. They made me a little cradle and a place to sit, cut me six shirts and pants, and even began to teach me to understand their language.
After a few days I learned to understand some words and phrases, they gave me a new garment, made of velvet\(^9\) and a hat with a feather, and my master and his daughter took me to the bazaar to show to people and to make money.

For many days, I was on display for people, who paid my master a lot of money, which was very tiring for me, because I had to do exercises and tricks for the public.

The prince of that place, who saw and liked me, bought me from my master, and I was taken to the palace, where two ladies of honor were in charge of my education and care. But in order to understand to which family of animals I belonged, three great scholars and philosophers were brought to the palace. They put on their glasses in order to see my smallness well. They examined me from head to toe, looked at my teeth, which they described as little pricks, and were going to start an explanation, when one of them coughed.

The sound of the cough deafened me so much that I fainted and almost died. And from every part of the palace giants ran to rescue me and help me come to. Finally, after many words and examinations on the part of the three philosophers, they gave a report about my person, in which they said that I belonged to the race of the carnivorous, but, having been born prematurely and only a few months before (at that time, I was thirty years old), I was useless, as my life was close to its end.

One of the philosophers wanted to make the others believe that I was a dwarf, but his idea was rejected, and it was explained to him that it was not possible for such a small person to be a dwarf, since the prince’s dwarf, who was the smallest person on the earth, was still ten meters tall, while I was hardly two.
So that the palace cats could not frighten me and would not bother me, a closet was made with four windows, and I was put into it, and it was hung on the wall of the prince’s room, where the princess came every day to play with me.

The prince himself took great pleasure in conversations with me. He liked to spend in my company an hour or two every day, and so I was very well taken care of and better looked after than in the peasant’s house.

The princess, having heard of my voyages, once asked me if I could handle a boat, and after my affirmative answer she filled a jar with water. The neck of this jar with its roundness was still wider than our water reservoirs, and forty or 50 sailboats could come in and out of it. My boat was made out of a toothpick, and a small handkerchief of my mistress served me as a sail. And I started to sail, but since there was no wind, my mistress began to make a breeze with her fan, and the wind opened the sail of my boat, and I started going from one side of the water to the other.

This game became my pastime and that of the princess, but everything in this world has an end. So, I also almost drowned one day. Because there was always the same water in the jar, frogs came there, and one day, when I was using both oar and sail with pleasure and joy, a frog put its paws on one side of the boat, which leaned forward, so, if it had not been for the princess, who made it in time, I would have certainly choked and died. The water was immediately thrown out, and the exercise was never continued.

4.

Then they decided to entertain me in a different way and carried me to the room, where the monkeys of the palace’s children were kept. Locked in my closet,
through the thick glass of my windows, I watched their games, but most of all I liked those of the smallest one. It was hardly two or three months old but more than 4 meters tall, and each of its nails was more than half a meter long.

One day, when I had the courage to put my head out of the window, the little monkey came up to make friends with me. And thinking that it pleased me, it forcefully pushed fruit into my mouth. I could not speak or scream, and it was by miracle that at this time my mistress came in and made me vomit, which saved me, but this made me ill, and I suffered for many days. This incident made the prince laugh very much, and when I was well again and near him, he made me tell him about this event in detail and could not help laughing, when he heard me speak.

It pleased him so much to hear about this strange event of my life, that now the prince had me brought to him almost every day and asked me with humor to tell him the story.

And hearing me tell it always caused him laughter and pleasure.

5.

Although I was treated with much kindness and love, without saying anything to the prince, I always tried to regain my freedom. For some time, I was mainly possessed by the idea of freeing myself, and I did not have a minute of joy.

I had been in the palace for two years, and each time there was a possibility, my masters did not miss a chance to give me a pleasant passtime in their lands and cities. But my heart was anxious, and no pleasure could penetrate it.

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One day, early in the morning, I noticed great movement in the palace: there was a lot of coming and going, many pages and maids entered and left all the rooms, and a young page came to take me with my closet, saying that the prince and his family were going for a few days to stay at a castle at the seashore, and that they were going to take me with them.

An hour later we were on the road, and in the afternoon at our new dwelling. I was tired of the swinging of my closet during the trip, and after eating I went to bed. The page shut the windows securely and, having wished me good night, left, saying that the next day he was going to take me to see the sea from the height of a mountain.

The following morning, before my masters woke up, the page came smiling at me. And happy to know that after two years I was finally going to be able to see the sea, I let him take me in his arms in my closet, and he carried me to a high mountain. There, he put me down and went away to look for eagles’ eggs.

The wind up there was very strong, but I was well protected by the closed windows, and I was not tired of watching the sea through the glass.

The page went in all directions everywhere in the mountains, running here and there, putting one foot on one peak and the other on another, one could tell a giant was running over the mountains.

And I kept admiring the beauty of the place, the clearness of the sky, and the freshness of the sea, thinking of my relatives and the wonderful days spent with them.
I felt sleepy. I was tired and exhausted, and, unable to resist it any more, I stretched on my bed in my closet and fell asleep.

I do not know how long I slept, but I was suddenly woken by a powerful pull which I felt inside my closet, and opening my eyes, I felt as if I was not in my place, as if a hand had lifted me high up in the air together with my closet.

Also, though I was well protected inside, I began to feel cold and noticed that I was going upwards in the air to a place that was much higher and colder than where the page had left me. I made an effort and, getting on my feet in the closet, tried to look outside. With great difficulty, I was able to open the window and, putting my head outside, saw that my closet was flying over the sea, and over my head I saw wings open and close, they were making a terrible noise and a [___] wind. Also, at that moment, I understood with a great shudder that an eagle had seized my closet and was flying with it in the air.  

At that moment, I felt another wave of cold go through my whole body, and my hair stood on end as I shuddered in horror: I was a prisoner in altitude, having over me the sky, underneath the sea, and around me emptiness. What miserable and fearful moments I spent. How to get out, what to do, and where to turn? This problem was neither easy to solve, nor even to ask myself about. I entrusted myself to the power of God, asking him to save me. I fell on my knees, crying from the depth of my heart and swearing that if I were saved and returned to my homeland, I would never leave my house. And since I was begging the heavens from the depths of my heart, God heard my prayer and, it seems, took pity on me because suddenly over my head I heard a terrible
cry. It was two other eagles attacking the one who was holding my closet. And while the three eagles were fighting for me, the one who had me in its beak, dropped me, and I felt that I was falling down at a dangerous speed. Thus I came down from the height of many thousand meters, and though I fell into the water, I still felt a dizziness, as if I were thrown down from a high wall.

But several minutes later, I came to and, having ascertained that the closet did not suffer from the fall and that it was built well enough not to let the water penetrate it at all, I began to look through the shut window searching for a way to save myself.

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This time again, the heavens took pity on me: a sail appeared in the distance, and an hour later I saw a big ship, which, helped by the wind, was approaching me.

All in expectation of salvation, I was impatient until I saw the ship come closer and closer, but it took it more than four hours to get to the distance of almost one hundred meters from the place where I was, after it had changed its route in order to be able to move up to me.

Finally and with the most vivid joy, I saw a boat being untied from the ship and thrown into the sea. Two men got into it and, having approached my closet, began to examine it from all sides without understanding what it was. I started shouting and made myself understood in English by the two men, who were also English. They tied the closet behind the boat and bringing me to the ship, put me on it.

Needless to say, when I was on the ship and surrounded by all those who were on board, their curiosity was great and I was asked many questions, one after another. But, like the captain of the ship that picked me up when I came from the country
of the Lilliputs, at first this captain did not want to believe my words either. Little by little, I convinced him, and as soon as the captain was convinced, everybody also ended up sincerely believing my words, especially when they saw that I was not exaggerating, because when I wanted to speak to them I would start shouting, the way I did when I was among the giants.

Finally, when after a few weeks the ship arrived in England and landed, I came to my town thinking that I would not go on another voyage.

(END)

1 Benghiat introduces a new Romance word, renunsiar, glossed in parentheses as desvachar, a Ladino verb of Turkish origin.

2 The rewriter introduces the word kukla, a Greek word also used in Turkish. It is found in this text three times and glossed twice as bunyeka, Ladino term combining the Turkish bebek and the Spanish muñeca.

3 So in the original.

4 One or more words are missing in the original. Most likely, it is a pesar de, “despite of.”

5 This sentence is translated ad sensum, because in the original it is convoluted and ungrammatical.

6 Lit. “the chamber” (la kamara).

7 Ben Ghiat explains a new term: una balena (el mas grande peskado).

8 Again glossed in parentheses.

11 Benghiat uses two synonymous nouns denoting “velvet”: katifi (of Turkish origin) and veludo (of Spanish origin).

10 So in the original.
11 Lit. “in the air of the world.”