

GULLIVER'S TRAVELS – READING TEXT

In this part of the story, Lemuel Gulliver, a ship's doctor, is the only survivor to reach the shore when his boat goes down in a great storm in 1699. Exhausted, he falls into a deep sleep; he tells of what happened next.

I must have slept for a long time, for the sun had just begun to rise above the horizon when I awoke. I tried to stand up but found to my astonishment that I could not move. My hands and feet and even my hair seemed to be fastened to the ground. The sun was getting hotter. Then I was horrified to feel some small creatures moving along my left leg and up to my chest. Straining to lift my head a little, I peered down and saw a tiny human creature not much bigger than my middle finger. He was followed by about forty more of the same kind.



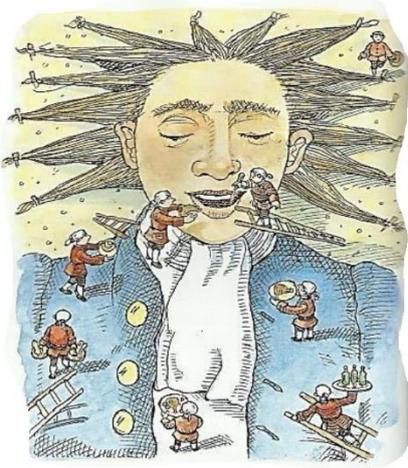
I was so astonished that I roared aloud. With this they all ran back in fright, and some even fell off. However, they soon returned, and one climbed up to where he could get a full sight of my face.

“Hekinah degul!” he called out but, although I’ve studied several other languages beside my native English, I could not understand what he meant.

With a violent pull, I managed to break a few of the strings that bound my left hand. I then tried to catch some of the annoying little creatures, but I could not – they ran away far too quickly.

Then one of them cried aloud, “Tolgo phonac!” In an instance I felt my left hand and my face pierced with hundreds of tiny arrows. Although it was very painful, I decided not to anger my tiny captors further. I lay still and tried to think about how to get free later, when they had all gone away and left me alone.

After a little while, I heard some knocking near my right ear and the sound of a great crowd. Turning my head as far as I could, I saw that some of the tiny people were building a tower about half a metre high. Now one little man, who seemed to be important, climbed up to the top of it and made a long speech, not a word of which I could understand. He said the word “Lilliput” several times, however, and I guessed that this might be the name of the place I was in. He looked quite friendly, and since I was very hungry, I put my finger to my mouth to indicate this.



Before long, about a hundred inhabitants set ladders against my sides and climbed up and walked towards my mouth, carrying little baskets of food: miniature legs of lamb, tiny roasted turkeys and sides of beef. They were deliciously cooked, but three of them together made scarcely a mouthful for me.

Then someone called out, “Peplum selam.” At this, they loosened the cords that bound me a little, so I was able to turn on my side. Before I knew it, I was fast asleep. Only later did I discover that their doctors had put a sleeping potion into my food.

Adapted from *Gulliver's Travels* by Jonathan Swift

Source: *Collins Focus on Comprehension*