

PART 3 GULLIVER IN THE COUNTRY OF THE HOUYHNNHMS

Chapter 1 Houyhnhnms and Yahoos

I stayed in England with my family for some months, but then I wanted to travel again. I left England in my ship in September 1710. For a month we had a good wind. Then it died and we could not move. The seamen were all ill.

'I have to find more men,' I thought. 'I'll go to the island of Barbados.'

There I found men, but the idea was a mistake. These men, and mine, took the ship. They put me in a small room and tied me to my bed.

'There's a man outside your door,' they said. 'Don't come out or he'll kill you. We have your ship now. So we can fight other ships and take things from them.'

They brought me food and drink and I stayed in that room for a long time.



Then, one day, a great wind took the ship out of our way. In May 1711 the other men saw a beach, and they took me to it in the ship's small boat.

'What country is this?' I asked them. They said nothing and left me there.

I began to walk away from the sea. I had my sword with me, and I was happy about that.

When I came to a road, I walked carefully. I was afraid of arrows. I saw some animals near the road and other animals up in the trees. They were very dirty and very ugly. The bigger animals had a lot of hair on their heads, their faces and their backs, and on the front of their legs and feet. The smaller animals had longer hair on their heads but not much hair on their bodies. Their hair was different colours - brown, red, black and yellow I hated these animals. When I looked at them, I felt ill.

I walked again. 'Perhaps I will meet some men and they'll help me,' I thought.

Suddenly, I met one of these ugly animals on the road. He stopped and looked hard at me. This made his face uglier. He put out his front foot and I hit him with my sword.

'You will not hurt me, you ugly animal!' I cried.

I did not want to hurt him too much. But he made a loud noise and about forty more animals ran to him. They shouted at me and made angry noises.

I moved to a tree and stood with my back to it. I used my sword, but some animals climbed up the tree. From there they threw things down at me.

Suddenly the animals all ran away quickly. I left the tree and started on the road again.

'Why are they so afraid?' I thought.

Then I saw the answer to my question.



He walked round and round me.

It was a horse. He saw me and stopped in front of me. Then this horse looked carefully at my face and hands and feet. He walked round and round me. I tried to walk away but he stopped again in front of me.

I put my hand on his back. We do this in England when we meet a strange horse. But the horse did not like it. He put up his left front foot and pushed away my hand! Then he made the sounds of a horse, again and again. But each sound was different.

'Is he speaking a language?' I thought.

Another horse arrived, and the two horses made noises.

'They're having a conversation,' I thought.

I was a little afraid and I began to walk away. But the first horse, a grey horse, made a sound. I understood - he wanted me to stop. The two

horses came near me and looked carefully at my face and hands. The grey horse moved my hat with his right foot and it fell to the ground. I put it on again. The other horse — a brown horse — felt my coat, then my clothes. He hurt me and I shouted loudly: 'I'm an Englishman. Please can I sit on your back and go to a town or village?'

The two horses began to talk about me again in their horse-language. One word made the sound Yahoo. I tried to say it too.

Then I said it to the horses.

The grey horse said the word again and again. I repeated it, but not very well. The brown horse gave me a second word, a more difficult one: Houyhnhnm. I tried it two or three times. The last time was better.

One horse talked to the other horse — about me, I think — and the brown horse went away. The grey horse told me: 'Walk in front of me!' I followed him. Sometimes I walked too slowly and he cried, *'Hhuun, Hhuun!*

'I'm tired and I can't walk faster,' I showed him.' Can I sit on the ground?'

Then the horse stood quietly and I sat down.

We travelled for five kilometres before we arrived at a house. I began to look for people.

'They teach their horses well in this country,' I thought.' Now I'll meet the owner of this fine horse and he can help me.'

But there were no people in the first room of the house - only horses. I followed the horse into the second room, then the third room. I waited for people.

The grey horse made a sound, and a smaller horse and two young horses came. They looked at me.

'This is the horse's house,' I thought.' The grey horse is the owner, and these are his wife and children. The servants are horses too. But how can this be true?'

The 'wife' looked at me in an unfriendly way. She turned to the grey horse and spoke to him. I heard the word Yahoo. He moved his head and said: *'Hhuun, Hhuun'* . So I followed him.

We went to another house, and in it there were three of those ugly, hairy animals. They could not leave because there was strong string round them. The other end of the string was in the wall. The grey horse called a young red-brown horse (a servant), and the servant untied one of the animals. He put that ugly, hairy animal next to me!

The owner and his servant looked carefully at the animal, then at me. Again, I heard the word Yahoo. Then I understood. This ugly animal was not very different from a man! He had front feet and I had hands. My feet and the Yahoo's feet were the same. The horses could not see that, because I wore shoes. Our bodies were the same too. But the horses could not see that because I wore clothes.

The red-brown horse gave me different foods. The Yahoos ate meat, but I could not eat it. It was too hard and dirty. Then the horse gave me horse-food, but it was too dry for me.

'I'll have to meet some men,' I thought,' or I'll die. And these Yahoos are not men.'

I put my hands to my mouth: 'I am thirsty'. The horses gave me milk. Later I made bread from the dry horse-food. Sometimes I caught a bird or a small animal and ate that. With this food and some fruit from the trees, I lived a very good life. I was never ill on that island.

At night, the grey horse — I will call him my owner - talked to his servants about me. They found a place for me near the horse's house, and not too near the Yahoos. I slept there.