PART ONE: A VOYAGE TO LILLIPUT: CHAPTER 3

My gentleness and good behaviour had gained so far on the emperor and his court, and indeed upon the army and people in general, that I began to conceive hopes of getting my liberty in a short time. I took all possible methods to cultivate this favourable disposition. The natives came, by degrees, to be less apprehensive of any danger from me. I would sometimes lie down, and let five or six of them dance on my hand; and at last the boys and girls would venture to come and play at hide-and-seek in my hair. I had now made a good progress in understanding and speaking the language. The emperor had a mind one day to entertain me with several of the country shows, wherein they exceed all nations I have known, both for dexterity and magnificence. I was diverted with none so much as that of the rope-dancers, performed upon a slender white thread, extended about two feet, and twelve inches from the ground. Upon which I shall desire liberty, with the reader's patience, to enlarge a little.

This diversion is only practised by those persons who are candidates for great employments, and high favour at court. They are trained in this art from their youth, and are not always of noble birth, or liberal education. When a great office is vacant, either by death or disgrace (which often happens,) five or six of those candidates petition the emperor to entertain his majesty and the court with a dance on the rope; and whoever jumps the highest, without falling, succeeds in the office. Very often the chief ministers themselves are commanded to show their skill, and to convince the emperor that they have not lost their faculty. Flimnap, the treasurer, is allowed to cut a caper on the straight rope, at least an inch higher than any other lord in the whole empire. I have seen him do the summerset several times together, upon a trencher fixed on a rope which is no thicker than a common packthread in England. My friend Reldresal, principal secretary for private affairs, is, in my opinion, if I am not partial, the second after the treasurer; the rest of the great officers are much upon a par.

These diversions are often attended with fatal accidents, whereof great numbers are on record. I myself have seen two or three candidates break a limb. But the danger is much greater, when the ministers themselves are commanded to show their dexterity; for, by contending to excel themselves and their fellows, they strain so far that there is hardly one of them who has not received a fall, and some of them two or three. I was assured that, a year or two before my arrival, Flimnap would infallibly have broke his neck, if one of the king's cushions, that accidentally lay on the ground, had not weakened the force of his fall.

There is likewise another diversion, which is only shown before the emperor and empress, and first minister, upon particular occasions. The emperor lays on the table three fine silken threads of six inches long; one is blue, the other red, and the third green. These threads are proposed as prizes for those persons whom the emperor has a mind to distinguish by a peculiar mark of his favour. The ceremony is performed in his majesty's great chamber of state, where the candidates are to undergo a trial of dexterity very different from the former, and such as I have not observed the least resemblance of in any other country of the new or old world. The emperor holds a stick in his hands, both ends parallel to the horizon, while the candidates advancing, one by one, sometimes leap over the stick, sometimes creep under it, backward and forward, several times, according as the stick is advanced or depressed. Sometimes the emperor holds one end of the stick, and his first minister the
other; sometimes the minister has it entirely to himself. Whoever performs his part with most agility,
and holds out the longest in leaping and creeping, is rewarded with the blue–coloured silk; the red is
given to the next, and the green to the third, which they all wear girt twice round about the middle;
and you see few great persons about this court who are not adorned with one of these girdles.

The horses of the army, and those of the royal stables, having been daily led before me, were
no longer shy, but would come up to my very feet without starting. The riders would leap them over
my hand, as I held it on the ground; and one of the emperor's huntsmen, upon a large courser, took
my foot, shoe and all; which was indeed a prodigious leap. I had the good fortune to divert the
emperor one day after a very extraordinary manner. I desired he would order several sticks of two
feet high, and the thickness of an ordinary cane, to be brought me; whereupon his majesty
commanded the master of his woods to give directions accordingly; and the next morning six
woodmen arrived with as many carriages, drawn by eight horses to each. I took nine of these sticks,
and fixing them firmly in the ground in a quadrangular figure, two feet and a half square, I took four
other sticks, and tied them parallel at each corner, about two feet from the ground; then I fastened
my handkerchief to the nine sticks that stood erect; and extended it on all sides, till it was tight as the
top of a drum; and the four parallel sticks, rising about five inches higher than the handkerchief,
served as ledges on each side. When I had finished my work, I desired the emperor to let a troop of
his best horses twenty–four in number, come and exercise upon this plain. His majesty approved of
the proposal, and I took them up, one by one, in my hands, ready mounted and armed, with the
proper officers to exercise them. As soon as they got into order they divided into two parties,
performed mock skirmishes, discharged blunt arrows, drew their swords, fled and pursued, attacked
and retired, and in short discovered the best military discipline I ever beheld. The parallel sticks
secured them and their horses from falling over the stage; and the emperor was so much delighted,
that he ordered this entertainment to be repeated several days, and once was pleased to be lifted up
and give the word of command; and with great difficulty persuaded even the empress herself to let
me hold her in her close chair within two yards of the stage, when she was able to take a full view of
the whole performance. It was my good fortune, that no ill accident happened in these
entertainments; only once a fiery horse, that belonged to one of the captains, pawing with his hoof,
struck a hole in my handkerchief, and his foot slipping, he overthrew his rider and himself; but I
immediately relieved them both, and covering the hole with one hand, I set down the troop with the
other, in the same manner as I took them up. The horse that fell was strained in the left shoulder, but
the rider got no hurt; and I repaired my handkerchief as well as I could: however, I would not trust to
the strength of it any more, in such dangerous enterprises.

About two or three days before I was set at liberty, as I was entertaining the court with this
kind of feat, there arrived an express to inform his majesty, that some of his subjects, riding near the
place where I was first taken up, had seen a great black substance lying on the around, very oddly
shaped, extending its edges round, as wide as his majesty's bedchamber, and rising up in the middle
as high as a man; that it was no living creature, as they at first apprehended, for it lay on the grass
without motion; and some of them had walked round it several times; that, by mounting upon each
other's shoulders, they had got to the top, which was flat and even, and, stamping upon it, they found
that it was hollow within; that they humbly conceived it might be something belonging to the man–
mountain; and if his majesty pleased, they would undertake to bring it with only five horses. I
presently knew what they meant, and was glad at heart to receive this intelligence. It seems, upon my
first reaching the shore after our shipwreck, I was in such confusion, that before I came to the place
where I went to sleep, my hat, which I had fastened with a string to my head while I was rowing, and
had stuck on all the time I was swimming, fell off after I came to land; the string, as I conjecture, breaking by some accident, which I never observed, but thought my hat had been lost at sea. I entreated his imperial majesty to give orders it might be brought to me as soon as possible, describing to him the use and the nature of it: and the next day the waggoners arrived with it, but not in a very good condition; they had bored two holes in the brim, within an inch and half of the edge, and fastened two hooks in the holes; these hooks were tied by a long cord to the harness, and thus my hat was dragged along for above half an English mile; but, the ground in that country being extremely smooth and level, it received less damage than I expected.

Two days after this adventure, the emperor, having ordered that part of his army which quarters in and about his metropolis, to be in readiness, took a fancy of diverting himself in a very singular manner. He desired I would stand like a Colossus, with my legs as far asunder as I conveniently could. He then commanded his general (who was an old experienced leader, and a great patron of mine) to draw up the troops in close order, and march them under me; the foot by twenty-four abreast, and the horse by sixteen, with drums beating, colours flying, and pikes advanced. This body consisted of three thousand foot, and a thousand horse. His majesty gave orders, upon pain of death, that every soldier in his march should observe the strictest decency with regard to my person; which however could not prevent some of the younger officers from turning up their eyes as they passed under me: and, to confess the truth, my breeches were at that time in so ill a condition, that they afforded some opportunities for laughter and admiration.

I had sent so many memorials and petitions for my liberty, that his majesty at length mentioned the matter, first in the cabinet, and then in a full council; where it was opposed by none, except Skyresh Bolgolam, who was pleased, without any provocation, to be my mortal enemy. But it was carried against him by the whole board, and confirmed by the emperor. That minister was galbet, or admiral of the realm, very much in his master's confidence, and a person well versed in affairs, but of a morose and sour complexion. However, he was at length persuaded to comply; but prevailed that the articles and conditions upon which I should be set free, and to which I must swear, should be drawn up by himself. These articles were brought to me by Skyresh Bolgolam in person attended by two under-secretaries, and several persons of distinction. After they were read, I was demanded to swear to the performance of them; first in the manner of my own country, and afterwards in the method prescribed by their laws; which was, to hold my right foot in my left hand, and to place the middle finger of my right hand on the crown of my head, and my thumb on the tip of my right ear. But because the reader may be curious to have some idea of the style and manner of expression peculiar to that people, as well as to know the article upon which I recovered my liberty, I have made a translation of the whole instrument, word for word, as near as I was able, which I here offer to the public.

"Golbasto Momarem Evlame Gurdilo Shefin Mully Ully Gue, most mighty Emperor of Lilliput, delight and terror of the universe, whose dominions extend five thousand blustrugs (about twelve miles in circumference) to the extremities of the globe; monarch of all monarchs, taller than the sons of men; whose feet press down to the centre, and whose head strikes against the sun; at whose nod the princes of the earth shake their knees; pleasant as the spring, comfortable as the summer, fruitful as autumn, dreadful as winter: his most sublime majesty proposes to the man–mountain, lately arrived at our celestial dominions, the following articles, which, by a solemn oath, he shall be obliged to perform:—

"1st, The man–mountain shall not depart from our dominions, without our license under our great seal.
"2d, He shall not presume to come into our metropolis, without our express order; at which time, the inhabitants shall have two hours warning to keep within doors.
"3d, The said man–mountain shall confine his walks to our principal high roads, and not offer to walk, or lie down, in a meadow or field of corn.
"4th, As he walks the said roads, he shall take the utmost care not to trample upon the bodies of any of our loving subjects, their horses, or carriages, nor take any of our subjects into his hands without their own consent.
"5th, If an express requires extraordinary despatch, the man–mountain shall be obliged to carry, in his pocket, the messenger and horse a six days journey, once in every moon, and return the said messenger back (if so required) safe to our imperial presence.
"6th, He shall be our ally against our enemies in the island of Blefuscu, and do his utmost to destroy their fleet, which is now preparing to invade us.
"7th, That the said man–mountain shall, at his times of leisure, be aiding and assisting to our workmen, in helping to raise certain great stones, towards covering the wall of the principal park, and other our royal buildings.
"8th, That the said man–mountain shall, in two moons' time, deliver in an exact survey of the circumference of our dominions, by a computation of his own paces round the coast.
"Lastly, That, upon his solemn oath to observe all the above articles, the said man–mountain shall have a daily allowance of meat and drink sufficient for the support of 1724 of our subjects, with free access to our royal person, and other marks of our favour. Given at our palace at Belfaborac, the twelfth day of the ninety–first moon of our reign."

I swore and subscribed to these articles with great cheerfulness and content, although some of them were not so honourable as I could have wished; which proceeded wholly from the malice of Skyresh Bolgolam, the high–admiral: whereupon my chains were immediately unlocked, and I was at full liberty. The emperor himself, in person, did me the honour to be by at the whole ceremony. I made my acknowledgements by prostrating myself at his majesty's feet: but he commanded me to rise; and after many gracious expressions, which, to avoid the censure of vanity, I shall not repeat, he added, "that he hoped I should prove a useful servant, and well deserve all the favours he had already conferred upon me, or might do for the future."

The reader may please to observe, that, in the last article of the recovery of my liberty, the emperor stipulates to allow me a quantity of meat and drink sufficient for the support of 1724 Lilliputians. Some time after, asking a friend at court how they came to fix on that determinate number, he told me that his majesty's mathematicians, having taken the height of my body by the help of a quadrant, and finding it to exceed theirs in the proportion of twelve to one, they concluded from the similarity of their bodies, that mine must contain at least 1724 of theirs, and consequently would require as much food as was necessary to support that number of Lilliputians. By which the reader may conceive an idea of the ingenuity of that people, as well as the prudent and exact economy of so great a prince.

PART ONE: A VOYAGE TO LILLIPUT: CHAPTER 4

The first request I made, after I had obtained my liberty, was, that I might have license to see Mildendo, the metropolis; which the emperor easily granted me, but with a special charge to do no hurt either to the inhabitants or their houses. The people had notice, by proclamation, of my design to visit the town. The wall which encompassed it is two feet and a half high, and at least eleven inches
broad, so that a coach and horses may be driven very safely round it; and it is flanked with strong
towers at ten feet distance. I stepped over the great western gate, and passed very gently, and
sidling, through the two principal streets, only in my short waistcoat, for fear of damaging the roofs
and eaves of the houses with the skirts of my coat. I walked with the utmost circumspection, to avoid
treading on any stragglers who might remain in the streets, although the orders were very strict, that
all people should keep in their houses, at their own peril. The garret windows and tops of houses
were so crowded with spectators, that I thought in all my travels I had not seen a more populous
place. The city is an exact square, each side of the wall being five hundred feet long. The two great
streets, which run across and divide it into four quarters, are five feet wide. The lanes and alleys,
which I could not enter, but only view them as I passed, are from twelve to eighteen inches. The town
is capable of holding five hundred thousand souls: the houses are from three to five stories: the shops
and markets well provided.

The emperor's palace is in the centre of the city where the two great streets meet. It is
enclosed by a wall of two feet high, and twenty feet distance from the buildings. I had his majesty's
permission to step over this wall; and, the space being so wide between that and the palace, I could
easily view it on every side. The outward court is a square of forty feet, and includes two other courts:
in the inmost are the royal apartments, which I was very desirous to see, but found it extremely
difficult; for the great gates, from one square into another, were but eighteen inches high, and seven
inches wide. Now the buildings of the outer court were at least five feet high, and it was impossible
for me to stride over them without infinite damage to the pile, though the walls were strongly built of
hewn stone, and four inches thick. At the same time the emperor had a great desire that I should see
the magnificence of his palace; but this I was not able to do till three days after, which I spent in
cutting down with my knife some of the largest trees in the royal park, about a hundred yards distant
from the city. Of these trees I made two stools, each about three feet high, and strong enough to bear
my weight. The people having received notice a second time, I went again through the city to the
palace with my two stools in my hands. When I came to the side of the outer court, I stood upon one
stool, and took the other in my hand; this I lifted over the roof, and gently set it down on the space
between the first and second court, which was eight feet wide. I then stept over the building very
conveniently from one stool to the other, and drew up the first after me with a hooked stick. By this
contrivance I got into the inmost court; and, lying down upon my side, I applied my face to the
windows of the middle stories, which were left open on purpose, and discovered the most splendid
apartments that can be imagined. There I saw the empress and the young princes, in their several
lodgings, with their chief attendants about them. Her imperial majesty was pleased to smile very
graciously upon me, and gave me out of the window her hand to kiss.

But I shall not anticipate the reader with further descriptions of this kind, because I reserve
them for a greater work, which is now almost ready for the press; containing a general description of
this empire, from its first erection, through along series of princes; with a particular account of their
wars and politics, laws, learning, and religion; their plants and animals; their peculiar manners and
customs, with other matters very curious and useful; my chief design at present being only to relate
such events and transactions as happened to the public or to myself during a residence of about nine
months in that empire.

One morning, about a fortnight after I had obtained my liberty, Reldresal, principal secretary
(as they style him) for private affairs, came to my house attended only by one servant. He ordered his
coach to wait at a distance, and desired I would give him an hours audience; which I readily consented
to, on account of his quality and personal merits, as well as of the many good offices he had done me

during my solicitations at court. I offered to lie down that he might the more conveniently reach my ear, but he chose rather to let me hold him in my hand during our conversation. He began with compliments on my liberty; said "he might pretend to some merit in it;" but, however, added, "that if it had not been for the present situation of things at court, perhaps I might not have obtained it so soon. For," said he, "as flourishing a condition as we may appear to be in to foreigners, we labour under two mighty evils: a violent faction at home, and the danger of an invasion, by a most potent enemy, from abroad. As to the first, you are to understand, that for about seventy moons past there have been two struggling parties in this empire, under the names of Tramecksan and Slamecksan, from the high and low heels of their shoes, by which they distinguish themselves. It is alleged, indeed, that the high heels are most agreeable to our ancient constitution; but, however this be, his majesty has determined to make use only of low heels in the administration of the government, and all offices in the gift of the crown, as you cannot but observe; and particularly that his majesty's imperial heels are lower at least by a drurr than any of his court (drurr is a measure about the fourteenth part of an inch). The animosities between these two parties run so high, that they will neither eat, nor drink, nor talk with each other. We compute the Tramecksan, or high heels, to exceed us in number; but the power is wholly on our side. We apprehend his imperial highness, the heir to the crown, to have some tendency towards the high heels; at least we can plainly discover that one of his heels is higher than the other, which gives him a hobble in his gait. Now, in the midst of these intestine disquiets, we are threatened with an invasion from the island of Blefuscu, which is the other great empire of the universe, almost as large and powerful as this of his majesty. For as to what we have heard you affirm, that there are other kingdoms and states in the world inhabited by human creatures as large as yourself, our philosophers are in much doubt, and would rather conjecture that you dropped from the moon, or one of the stars; because it is certain, that a hundred mortals of your bulk would in a short time destroy all the fruits and cattle of his majesty's dominions: besides, our histories of six thousand moons make no mention of any other regions than the two great empires of Lilliput and Blefuscu.

Which two mighty powers have, as I was going to tell you, been engaged in a most obstinate war for six—and—thirty moons past. It began upon the following occasion. It is allowed on all hands, that the primitive way of breaking eggs, before we eat them, was upon the larger end; but his present majesty's grandfather, while he was a boy, going to eat an egg, and breaking it according to the ancient practice, happened to cut one of his fingers. Whereupon the emperor his father published an edict, commanding all his subjects, upon great penalties, to break the smaller end of their eggs. The people so highly resented this law, that our histories tell us, there have been six rebellions raised on that account; wherein one emperor lost his life, and another his crown. These civil commotions were constantly fomented by the monarchs of Blefuscu; and when they were quelled, the exiles always fled for refuge to that empire. It is computed that eleven thousand persons have at several times suffered death, rather than submit to break their eggs at the smaller end. Many hundred large volumes have been published upon this controversy: but the books of the Big—endians have been long forbidden, and the whole party rendered incapable by law of holding employments. During the course of these troubles, the emperors of Blefusca did frequently expostulate by their ambassadors, accusing us of making a schism in religion, by offending against a fundamental doctrine of our great prophet Lustrog, in the fifty—fourth Chapter of the Blundecral (which is their Alcoran). This, however, is thought to be a mere strain upon the text; for the words are these: 'that all true believers break their eggs at the convenient end.' And which is the convenient end, seems, in my humble opinion to be left to every man's conscience, or at least in the power of the chief magistrate to determine. Now, the Big—endian exiles have found so much credit in the emperor of Blefuscu's court, and so much private assistance
and encouragement from their party here at home, that a bloody war has been carried on between the two empires for six—and—thirty moons, with various success; during which time we have lost forty capital ships, and a much a greater number of smaller vessels, together with thirty thousand of our best seamen and soldiers; and the damage received by the enemy is reckoned to be somewhat greater than ours. However, they have now equipped a numerous fleet, and are just preparing to make a descent upon us; and his imperial majesty, placing great confidence in your valour and strength, has commanded me to lay this account of his affairs before you."

I desired the secretary to present my humble duty to the emperor; and to let him know, "that I thought it would not become me, who was a foreigner, to interfere with parties; but I was ready, with the hazard of my life, to defend his person and state against all invaders."

PART ONE: A VOYAGE TO LILLIPUT: CHAPTER 5

The empire of Blefuscu is an island situated to the north—east of Lilliput, from which it is parted only by a channel of eight hundred yards wide. I had not yet seen it, and upon this notice of an intended invasion, I avoided appearing on that side of the coast, for fear of being discovered, by some of the enemy's ships, who had received no intelligence of me; all intercourse between the two empires having been strictly forbidden during the war, upon pain of death, and an embargo laid by our emperor upon all vessels whatsoever. I communicated to his majesty a project I had formed of seizing the enemy's whole fleet; which, as our scouts assured us, lay at anchor in the harbour, ready to sail with the first fair wind. I consulted the most experienced seamen upon the depth of the channel, which they had often plumbed; who told me, that in the middle, at high—water, it was seventy glumgluffs deep, which is about six feet of European measure; and the rest of it fifty glumgluffs at most. I walked towards the north—east coast, over against Blefuscu, where, lying down behind a hillock, I took out my small perspective glass, and viewed the enemy's fleet at anchor, consisting of about fifty men of war, and a great number of transports: I then came back to my house, and gave orders (for which I had a warrant) for a great quantity of the strongest cable and bars of iron. The cable was about as thick as packthread and the bars of the length and size of a knitting—needle. I trebled the cable to make it stronger, and for the same reason I twisted three of the iron bars together, bending the extremities into a hook. Having thus fixed fifty hooks to as many cables, I went back to the north—east coast, and putting off my coat, shoes, and stockings, walked into the sea, in my leathern jerkin, about half an hour before high water. I waded with what haste I could, and swam in the middle about thirty yards, till I felt ground. I arrived at the fleet in less than half an hour. The enemy was so frightened when they saw me, that they leaped out of their ships, and swam to shore, where there could not be fewer than thirty thousand souls. I then took my tackling, and, fastening a hook to the hole at the prow of each, I tied all the cords together at the end. While I was thus employed, the enemy discharged several thousand arrows, many of which stuck in my hands and face, and, beside the excessive smart, gave me much disturbance in my work. My greatest apprehension was for mine eyes, which I should have infallibly lost, if I had not suddenly thought of an expedient. I kept, among other little necessaries, a pair of spectacles in a private pocket, which, as I observed before, had escaped the emperor's searchers. These I took out and fastened as strongly as I could upon my nose, and thus armed, went on boldly with my work, in spite of the enemy's arrows, many of which struck against the glasses of my spectacles, but without any other effect, further than a little to discompose them. I had now fastened all the hooks, and, taking the knot in my hand, began
to pull; but not a ship would stir, for they were all too fast held by their anchors, so that the boldest part of my enterprise remained. I therefore let go the cord, and leaving the looks fixed to the ships, I resolutely cut with my knife the cables that fastened the anchors, receiving about two hundred shots in my face and hands; then I took up the knotted end of the cables, to which my hooks were tied, and with great ease drew fifty of the enemy's largest men of war after me.

The Blefuscudians, who had not the least imagination of what I intended, were at first confounded with astonishment. They had seen me cut the cables, and thought my design was only to let the ships run adrift or fall foul on each other: but when they perceived the whole fleet moving in order, and saw me pulling at the end, they set up such a scream of grief and despair as it is almost impossible to describe or conceive. When I had got out of danger, I stopped awhile to pick out the arrows that stuck in my hands and face; and rubbed on some of the same ointment that was given me at my first arrival, as I have formerly mentioned. I then took off my spectacles, and waiting about an hour, till the tide was a little fallen, I waded through the middle with my cargo, and arrived safe at the royal port of Lilliput.

The emperor and his whole court stood on the shore, expecting the issue of this great adventure. They saw the ships move forward in a large half–moon, but could not discern me, who was up to my breast in water. When I advanced to the middle of the channel, they were yet more in pain, because I was under water to my neck. The emperor concluded me to be drowned, and that the enemy's fleet was approaching in a hostile manner: but he was soon eased of his fears; for the channel growing shallower every step I made, I came in a short time within hearing, and holding up the end of the cable, by which the fleet was fastened, I cried in a loud voice, "Long live the most puissant king of Lilliput!" This great prince received me at my landing with all possible encomiums, and created me a nardac upon the spot, which is the highest title of honour among them.

His majesty desired I would take some other opportunity of bringing all the rest of his enemy's ships into his ports. And so unmeasureable is the ambition of princes, that he seemed to think of nothing less than reducing the whole empire of Blefuscu into a province, and governing it, by a viceroy; of destroying the Big–endian exiles, and compelling that people to break the smaller end of their eggs, by which he would remain the sole monarch of the whole world. But I endeavoured to divert him from this design, by many arguments drawn from the topics of policy as well as justice; and I plainly protested, "that I would never be an instrument of bringing a free and brave people into slavery." And, when the matter was debated in council, the wisest part of the ministry were of my opinion.

This open bold declaration of mine was so opposite to the schemes and politics of his imperial majesty, that he could never forgive me. He mentioned it in a very artful manner at council, where I was told that some of the wisest appeared, at least by their silence, to be of my opinion; but others, who were my secret enemies, could not forbear some expressions which, by a side–wind, reflected on me. And from this time began an intrigue between his majesty and a junto of ministers, maliciously bent against me, which broke out in less than two months, and had like to have ended in my utter destruction. Of so little weight are the greatest services to princes, when put into the balance with a refusal to gratify their passions.

About three weeks after this exploit, there arrived a solemn embassy from Blefuscu, with humble offers of a peace, which was soon concluded, upon conditions very advantageous to our emperor, wherewith I shall not trouble the reader. There were six ambassadors, with a train of about five hundred persons, and their entry was very magnificent, suitable to the grandeur of their master, and the importance of their business. When their treaty was finished, wherein I did them several
good offices by the credit I now had, or at least appeared to have, at court, their excellencies, who
were privately told how much I had been their friend, made me a visit in form. They began with many
compliments upon my valour and generosity, invited me to that kingdom in the emperor their
master's name, and desired me to show them some proofs of my prodigious strength, of which they
had heard so many wonders; wherein I readily obliged them, but shall not trouble the reader with the
particulars.

When I had for some time entertained their excellencies, to their infinite satisfaction and
surprise, I desired they would do me the honour to present my most humble respects to the emperor
their master, the renown of whose virtues had so justly filled the whole world with admiration, and
whose royal person I resolved to attend, before I returned to my own country. Accordingly, the next
time I had the honour to see our emperor, I desired his general license to wait on the Blefuscudian
monarch, which he was pleased to grant me, as I could perceive, in a very cold manner; but could not
guess the reason, till I had a whisper from a certain person, "that Flimnap and Bolgolam had
represented my intercourse with those ambassadors as a mark of disaffection;" from which I am sure
my heart was wholly free. And this was the first time I began to conceive some imperfect idea of
courts and ministers.

It is to be observed, that these ambassadors spoke to me, by an interpreter, the languages of
both empires differing as much from each other as any two in Europe, and each nation priding itself
upon the antiquity, beauty, and energy of their own tongue, with an avowed contempt for that of
their neighbour; yet our emperor, standing upon the advantage he had got by the seizure of their
fleets, obliged them to deliver their credentials, and make their speech, in the Lilliputian tongue. And it
must be confessed, that from the great intercourse of trade and commerce between both realms,
from the continual reception of exiles which is mutual among them, and from the custom, in each
empire, to send their young nobility and richer gentry to the other, in order to polish themselves by
seeing the world, and understanding men and manners; there are few persons of distinction, or
merchants, or seamen, who dwell in the maritime parts, but what can hold conversation in both
tongues; as I found some weeks after, when I went to pay my respects to the emperor of Blefuscu,
which, in the midst of great misfortunes, through the malice of my enemies, proved a very happy
adventure to me, as I shall relate in its proper place.

The reader may remember, that when I signed those articles upon which I recovered my
liberty, there were some which I disliked, upon account of their being too servile; neither could
anything but an extreme necessity have forced me to submit. But being now a nardac of the highest
rank in that empire, such offices were looked upon as below my dignity, and the emperor (to do him
justice), never once mentioned them to me. However, it was not long before I had an opportunity of
doing his majesty, at least as I then thought, a most signal service. I was alarmed at midnight with the
cries of many hundred people at my door; by which, being suddenly awaked, I was in some kind of
terror. I heard the word Burglum repeated incessantly: several of the emperor's court, making their
way through the crowd, entreated me to come immediately to the palace, where her imperial
majesty's apartment was on fire, by the carelessness of a maid of honour, who fell asleep while she
was reading a romance. I got up in an instant; and orders being given to clear the way before me, and
it being likewise a moonshine night, I made a shift to get to the palace without trampling on any of
the people. I found they had already applied ladders to the walls of the apartment, and were well
provided with buckets, but the water was at some distance. These buckets were about the size of
large thimbles, and the poor people supplied me with them as fast as they could: but the flame was
so violent that they did little good. I might easily have stifled it with my coat, which I unfortunately
left behind me for haste, and came away only in my leathern jerkin. The case seemed wholly desperate and deplorable; and this magnificent palace would have infallibly been burnt down to the ground, if, by a presence of mind unusual to me, I had not suddenly thought of an expedient. I had, the evening before, drunk plentifully of a most delicious wine called glimigrim, (the Blefuscudians call it flunec, but ours is esteemed the better sort,) which is very diuretic. By the luckiest chance in the world, I had not discharged myself of any part of it. The heat I had contracted by coming very near the flames, and by labouring to quench them, made the wine begin to operate by urine; which I voided in such a quantity, and applied so well to the proper places, that in three minutes the fire was wholly extinguished, and the rest of that noble pile, which had cost so many ages in erecting, preserved from destruction.

It was now day–light, and I returned to my house without waiting to congratulate with the emperor: because, although I had done a very eminent piece of service, yet I could not tell how his majesty might resent the manner by which I had performed it: for, by the fundamental laws of the realm, it is capital in any person, of what quality soever, to make water within the precincts of the palace. But I was a little comforted by a message from his majesty, "that he would give orders to the grand justiciary for passing my pardon in form:" which, however, I could not obtain; and I was privately assured, "that the empress, conceiving the greatest abhorrence of what I had done, removed to the most distant side of the court, firmly resolved that those buildings should never be repaired for her use: and, in the presence of her chief confidents could not forbear vowing revenge."