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Travels into several remote nations of the world

in 4 pt.

Swift, Jonathan

London, 1726

Chap. I. The Author sets out as Captain of a Ship. His Men conspire against him, confine him a long time to his Cabbin, set him on Shore in an unknown Land. He travels up in the Country. The Yahoos a ...

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TRAVELS.

PART IV.

A VOYAGE to the Country of the HOUYHNHNMS.

CHAP. I.

The Author sets out as Captain of a Ship. His Men conspire against him, confine him a long time to his Cabbin, set him on shore in an unknown Land. He travels up in the Country. The Yahoos a strange sort of Animal described. The Author meets two Houyhnhnms.



CONTINUED at home with my Wife and Children about five Months in a very happy Condition, if I could have learned the Lesson of

of knowing when I was well. I left my poor Wife big with Child, and accepted an advantagious Offer made me to be Captain of the *Adventure*, a stout Merchant-man of 350 Tuns: For I understood Navigation well, and being grown weary of a Surgeon's Employment at Sea, which however I could exercise upon occasion, I took a skilful young Man of that Calling, one *Robert Purefoy*, into my Ship. We set sail from *Portsmouth* upon the second Day of *August*, 1710; on the fourteenth we met with Captain *Pocock* of *Bristol*, at *Tenariff*, who was going to the Bay of *Campechy*, to cut Logwood. On the sixteenth he was parted from us by a Storm; I heard since my Return, that his Ship foundered, and none escaped, but one Cabbin-Boy. He was an honest Man, and a good Sailor, but a little too positive in his own Opinions, which was the Cause of his Destruction, as it hath been of several others. For if he had followed

my

my Advice, he might have been safe at home with his Family at this Time as well as myself.

I HAD several Men died in my Ship of Calentures, so that I was forced to get Recruits out of *Barbadoes*, and the *Leeward Islands*, where I touched by the Direction of the Merchants who employed me, which I had soon too much cause to repent; for I found afterwards that most of them had been Bucaneers. I had fifty Hands on board, and my Orders were, that I should trade with the *Indians* in the *South-Sea*, and make what Discoveries I could. These Rogues whom I had picked up debauched my other Men, and they all formed a Conspiracy to seize the Ship and secure me; which they did one Morning, rushing into my Cabbin, and binding me Hand and Foot, threatning to throw me over-board, if I offered to stir. I told them, I was their Prisoner, and would submit. This they made me swear to
do,

do, and then they unbound me, only fastening one of my Legs with a Chain near my Bed, and placed a Centry at my Door with his Piece charged, who was commanded to shoot me dead, if I attempted my Liberty. They sent me down Victuals and Drink, and took the Government of the Ship to themselves. Their Design was to turn Pyrates, and plunder the *Spaniards*, which they could not do, till they got more Men. But first they resolved to sell the Goods in the Ship, and then go to *Madagascar* for Recruits, several among them having died since my Confinement. They sailed many Weeks, and traded with the *Indians*, but I knew not what Course they took, being kept a close Prisoner in my Cabbin, and expecting nothing less than to be murdered, as they often threatned me.

UPON the ninth Day of *May* 1711, one *James Welch* came down to my Cabbin; and said he had Orders from
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the Captain, to fet me a-shore. I expostulated with him, but in vain; neither would he so much as tell me who their new Captain was. They forced me into the Long-boat, letting me put on my best Suit of Cloaths, which were as good as new, and a small bundle of Linen, but no Arms except my Hanger; and they were so civil as not to search my Pockets, into which I conveyed what Money I had, with some other little Necessaries. They rowed about a League; and then fet me down on a Strand. I desired them to tell me, what Country it was. They all swore, they knew no more than myself, but said, that the Captain (as they called him) was resolved, after they had sold the Lading, to get rid of me in the first place, where they could discover Land. They pushed off immediately, advising me to make haste, for fear of being overtaken by the Tide, and so bad me farewell.

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IN this desolate Condition I advanced forward, and soon got upon firm Ground, where I sat down on a Bank to rest myself, and consider what I had best to do. When I was a little refreshed, I went up into the Country, resolving to deliver myself to the first Savages I should meet, and purchase my Life from them by some Bracelets, Glass-rings, and other Toys, which Sailors usually provide themselves with in those Voyages, and whereof I had some about me: The Land was divided by long rows of Trees, not regularly planted, but naturally growing; there was great plenty of Grass, and several Fields of Oats. I walked very circumspectly for fear of being surprized, or suddenly shot with an Arrow from behind or on either side. I fell into a beaten Road, where I saw many Tracks of human Feet, and some of Cows, but most of Horses. At last I beheld several Animals in a Field, and
one

one or two of the same kind sitting in Trees. The Shape was very singular, and deformed, which a little discomposed me, so that I lay down behind a Thicket to observe them better. Some of them coming forward near the place where I lay, gave me an opportunity of distinctly marking their Form. Their Heads and Breasts were covered with a thick Hair, some frizled and others lank, they had Beards like Goats, and a long ridge of Hair down their Backs and the fore-parts of their Legs and Feet, but the rest of their Bodies were bare so that I might see their Skins, which were of a brown buff Colour. They had no Tails, nor any Hair at all on their Buttocks, except about the *Anus*, which, I presume, Nature had placed there to defend them as they sat on the Ground; for that Posture they used as well as lying down, and often stood on their hind Feet. They climbed high Trees as nimbly as a Squirrel, for they had strong extended Claws before
and

and behind, terminating in sharp points, hooked. They would often spring, and bound, and leap with prodigious Agility. The Females were not so large as the Males, they had long lank Hair on their Faces, nor any thing more than a sort of Down on the rest of their Bodies, except about the *Anus*, and *Pudenda*. Their Dugs hung between their Fore-feet, and often reached almost to the Ground as they walked. The Hair of both Sexes was of several Colours, brown, red, black, and yellow. Upon the whole, I never beheld in all my Travels so disagreeable an Animal, nor one against which I naturally conceived so strong an Antipathy. So that thinking I had seen enough, full of Contempt and Aversion, I got up and pursued the beaten Road, hoping it might direct me to the Cabbin of some *Indian*. I had not gone far when I met one of these Creatures full in my way, and coming up directly to me. The ugly Monster, when he saw me, distorted

torted several ways every Feature of his Visage, and started as at an Object he had never seen before; then approaching nearer, lifted up his fore-paw, whether out of Curiosity or Mischief, I could not tell. But I drew my Hanger, and gave him a good Blow with the flat side of it, for I durst not strike him with the Edge, fearing the Inhabitants might be provoked against me, if they should come to know, that I had killed or maimed any of their Cattle. When the Beast felt the smart, he drew back, and roared so loud, that a Herd of at least forty came flocking about me from the next Field, howling and making odious Faces; but I ran to the Body of a Tree, and leaning my Back against it, kept them off by waving my Hanger. Several of this cursed Brood getting hold of the Branches behind, leapt up in the Tree, from whence they began to discharge their Excrements on my Head: However, I escaped pretty well, by sticking close

to the Stem of the Tree, but was almost stifled with the Filth, which fell about me on every side.

IN the midst of this Distress, I observed them all to run away on a sudden as fast as they could, at which I ventured to leave the Tree, and pursue the Road, wondring what it was that could put them into this Fright. But looking on my left hand, I saw a Horse walking softly in the Field: which my Persecutors having sooner discovered, was the cause of their Flight. The Horse started a little when he came near me, but soon recovering himself, look'd full in my Face with manifest Tokens of Wonder: He viewed my Hands and Feet, walking round me several times. I would have pursued my Journey, but he placed himself directly in the way, yet looking with a very mild Aspect, never offering the least Violence. We stood gazing at each other for some time; at last I took the Boldness to reach my Hand

Hand

Hand towards his Neck, with a Design to stroak it using the common Style and Whistle of Jockies when they are going to handle a strange Horse. But this Animal seeming to receive my Civilities with Disdain, shook his Head, and bent his Brows, softly raising up his right fore-foot to remove my Hand. Then he neighed three or four times, but in so different a Cadence, that I almost began to think he was speaking to himself in some Language of his own.

WHILE he and I were thus employed, another Horse came up; who applying himself to the first in a very formal manner, they gently struck each others right Hoof before, neighing several times by Turns, and varying the Sound, which seemed to be almost articulate. They went some Paces off, as if it were to confer together, walking side by side, backward and forward, like Persons deliberating upon some Affair of Weight, but often turning their
N 2 Eyes

Eyes towards me, as it were to watch that I might not escape. I was amazed to see such Actions and Behaviours in brute Beasts, and concluded with myself, that if the Inhabitants of this Country were endued with a proportionable Degree of Reason, they must needs be the wisest People upon Earth. This Thought gave me so much Comfort, that I resolved to go forward until I could discover some House or Village, or meet with any of the Natives, leaving the two Horses to discourse together as they pleased. But the first, who was a Dapple-Gray, observing me to steal off, neighed after me in so expressive a Tone, that I fancied myself to understand what he meant; whereupon I turned back, and came near him, to expect his farther Commands. But concealing my Fear as much as I could, for I began to be in some Pain, how this Adventure might terminate; and the Reader will easily believe I did not much like my present Situation.

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THE two Horses came up close to me, looking with great Earnestness upon my Face and Hands. The grey Steed rubbed my Hat all round with his right fore-hoof, and discomposed it so much, that I was forced to adjust it better, by taking it off, and settling it again; whereat both he and his Companion (who was a brown Bay) appeared to be much surprized; the latter felt the Lappet of my Coat, and finding it to hang loose about me, they both looked with new Signs of Wonder. He stroked my right hand, seeming to admire the Softness and Colour; but he squeezed it so hard between his Hoof and his Pastern, that I was forced to roar; after which they both touched me with all possible Tenderness. They were under great Perplexity about my Shoes and Stockings, which they felt very often, neighing to each other, and using various Gestures, not unlike those of a Philosopher, when he would attempt to

solve some new and difficult Phenomenon.

UPON the whole, the Behaviour of these Animals was so orderly and rational, so acute and judicious, that I at last concluded, they must needs be Magicians, who had thus metamorphos'd themselves upon some design, and seeing a stranger in the way, were resolv'd to divert themselves with him; or perhaps were really amazed at the sight of a Man so very different in Habit, Feature and Complexion from those who might probably live in so remote a Climate. Upon the strength of this Reasoning, I ventured to address them in the following manner: Gentlemen, if you be Conjurers, as I have good Cause to believe, you can understand any Language; therefore I make bold to let your Worships know, that I am a poor distressed *English* Man, driven by his misfortunes upon your Coast, and I entreat one of you, to let me ride up-
on

on his Back, as if he were a real Horse, to some House or Village, where I can be relieved. In return of which Favour, I will make you a Present of this Knife and Bracelet, (taking them out of my Pocket.) The two Creatures stood silent while I spoke, seeming to listen with great Attention; and when I had ended, they neighed frequently towards each other, as if they were engaged in serious Conversation. I plainly observed, that their Language expressed the Passions very well, and their Words might with little Pains be resolved into an Alphabet more easily than the *Chinese*.

I could frequently distinguish the Word *Yahoo*, which was repeated by each of them several times; and altho' it was impossible for me to conjecture what it meant; yet while the two Horses were busy in Conversation, I endeavoured to practise this Word upon my Tongue; and as soon as they were

N 4 silent,

silent, I boldly pronounced *Tahoo* in a loud Voice, imitating at the same time, as near as I could, the Neighing of a Horse; at which they were both visibly surprized, and the Gray repeated the same Word twice, as if he meant to teach me the right Accent, wherein I spoke after him as well as I could, and found myself perceivably to improve every time, though very far from any degree of Perfection. Then the Bay tried me with a second Word, much harder to be pronounced; but reducing it to the *English Orthography*, may be spelt thus, *Houyhnhnms*. I did not succeed in this so well as in the former, but after two or three farther Trials, I had better fortune; and they both appeared amazed at my Capacity.

AFTER some farther Discourse, which I then conjectured might relate to me, the two Friends took their Leaves with the same Compliment of striking each other's Hoof; and the Gray
made

made me signs that I should walk before them, wherein I thought it prudent to comply, till I could find a better Director. When I offered to slacken my pace, he would cry *Hbuun, Hbuun*; I guessed his meaning, and gave him to understand, as well as I could, that I was weary, and not able to walk faster; upon which, he would stand a while to let me rest.

