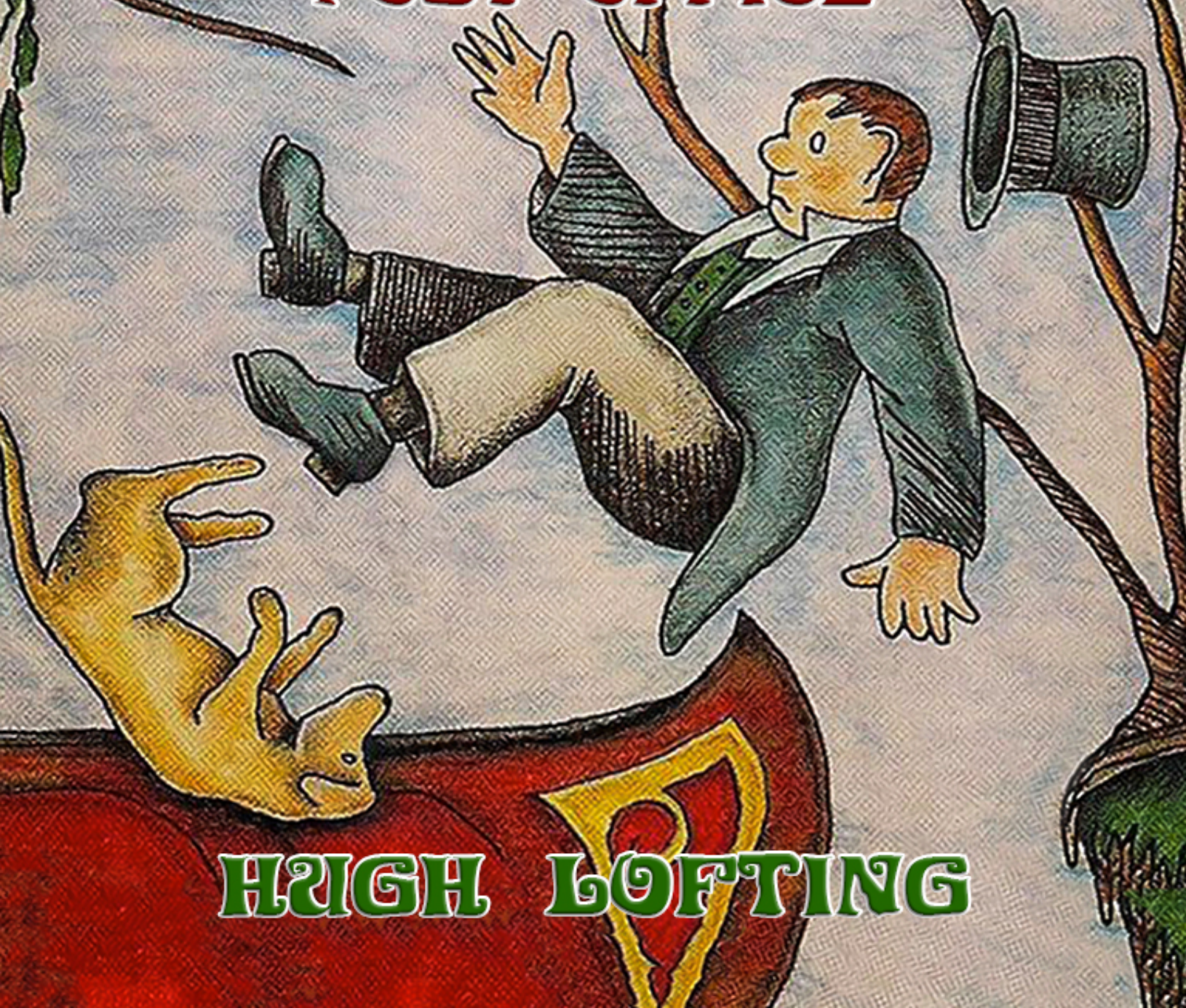


CLASSICS TO GO

# DOCTOR DOLITTLE'S POST OFFICE



HIGH LOFTING



**Doctor Dolittle's  
Post Office  
Hugh Lofting**



"It was mournful scenery"

# ILLUSTRATIONS

"It was mournful scenery" *Frontispiece*

"John Dolittle talked to the woman"

"Looking into all the bays"

"Where have you been?"

"The birds spread themselves out along the coast"

"Fire!" said Speedy"

"The bluejackets crowded to the rail"

"A rare Fantippo stamp"

"The Doctor gave the king a cup of China tea"

"Good morning! What can I do for you?"

"They found the Doctor shaving"

"Thousands of swallows built their nests in her rigging"

"Turn back, Jip!" gasped the Doctor"

"All we eat is bananas!"

"He was pulling out a loose tooth"

"They sat down in the shade of a palm tree"

"He began his great inauguration speech"

"He put his large face in at the information window"

"The houseboat post office of No-Man's-Land"

"Jip hung up the sign"

"He held scribbling classes for the animals"

"Cheapside, the London sparrow"

"The double letter boxes of Fantippo"

"The royal peacock complained that Cheapside had made faces at him"

"Great heavens, Doctor, I've gained an ounce!"

"The sailors were ready to kill their admiral"

"There were many rocks and shallows near the end of Cape Stephen"

"The gulls dashed themselves into the wheelman's face"

"The Doctor lit the candle"

"The Doctor and Dab-Dab cooked his breakfast for him"

"The gull caught the tomato skin with a lightning lunge"

"The gull took a fresh piece of toast"

"The Doctor took an armchair beside the kitchen stove"

"John Dolittle saw him snooping around the post office"

"The Doctor experimented on Jip"

"It was certainly a wonderful collection of objects"

"It was Sir Timothy Quisby, our most expensive patient"

"He had fallen into the soup"

"She made a regular pet of him"

"We'll keep the black and white one, Liza"

"The old rat laughed a quavering laugh"

"Upstairs where the dye vats stood"

"The Doctor cut off all my fur"

"His pictures are just awful"

"A retriever came up with a gold watch and chain"

"Come over here by the trough"

"The Doctor span the penny"

"What was that?"

"They'd run off with it and swallow it"

"I jabbed the watchman"

"I leapt as I have never leapt before"

"Putting the King's bicycle together"

"Dab-Dab looked over his shoulder"

"They reminded him of old broken down cab horses"

"I put the parcel down"

"Wilkins levelled a pistol at the Doctor's head"

"Pst!" I whispered to the wife  
"The rout of the Amazons"  
"Oh, I think this is an awful place!"  
"The young ones were with her"  
"Gub-Gub dives for pearls"  
"The Doctor patted him on the shoulder"  
"In the jungle Obombo made speeches"  
"How dare you speak to me like that?"  
"The white mouse would roll them down the hole"  
"Do you realize what that pearl means to us?"  
"The King saw the Doctor's canoe arriving"  
"In popped the head of an enormous snake"  
"The canoe was yanked from under them"  
"The Doctor saw the shape of an enormous turtle"  
"The trees bent down with his weight"  
"The Doctor was washing his face in the lake"  
"Dab-Dab, the economical housekeeper, blew out the candle"  
"Mixing the turtle's medicine"  
"A never-ending stream of big birds"  
"Dab-Dab prepared a meal"  
"A wooden statue still stands to his memory"

## PROLOGUE

Nearly all of the history of Doctor Dolittle's post office took place when he was returning from a voyage to West Africa. Therefore I will begin (as soon as I have told you a little about how he came to take the journey) from where he turned his ship towards home again and set sail for Puddleby-on-the-Marsh.

Some time before this the pushmi-pullyu, after a long stay in England, had grown a little homesick for Africa. And although he was tremendously fond of the Doctor and never wanted to leave him altogether, he asked him one winter day when the weather was particularly cold and disagreeable if he would mind running down to Africa for a holiday—just for a week or two.

The Doctor readily agreed because he hadn't been on a voyage in a long while and he felt he too needed a change from the chilly December days of England.

So he started off. Besides the pushmi-pullyu he took Dab-Dab the duck, Jip the dog, Gub-Gub the pig, Too-Too the owl, and the white mouse—the same good company he had had with him on his adventurous return from the Land of the Monkeys. For this trip the Doctor bought a little sailing boat—very old and battered and worn, but a good sound craft for bad weather.

They sailed away down to the south coast of the Bight of Benin. There they visited many African kingdoms and strange tribes. And while they were ashore the pushmi-pullyu had a chance to wander freely through his old grazing grounds. And he enjoyed his holiday thoroughly.

One morning the Doctor was delighted to see his old friends the swallows gathering once more about his ship at anchor for their yearly flight to England. They asked him whether he too was returning; because if so, they said, they would accompany him, the same as they had done when he was escaping from the Kingdom of Jolliginki.

As the pushmi-pullyu was now quite ready to leave, the Doctor thanked the swallows and told them he would be delighted to have their company. Then for the remainder of that day all was hustle and hurry and bustle, getting the ship provisioned and making preparations for the long trip back to England.

By the following morning everything was in readiness to put to sea. The anchor was drawn up and with all sail set the Doctor's ship moved northward before a favorable wind. And it is from this point that my story begins.



# **PART I**

# CHAPTER I

## ZUZANA

One morning in the first week of the return voyage when John Dolittle and his animals were all sitting at breakfast round the big table in the cabin, one of the swallows came down and said that he wanted to speak to the Doctor.

John Dolittle at once left the table and went out into the passage where he found the swallow-leader himself, a very neat, trim, little bird with long, long wings and sharp, snappy, black eyes. Speedy-the-Skimmer he was called—a name truly famous throughout the whole of the feathered world. He was the champion flycatcher and aerial acrobat of Europe, Africa, Asia, and America. For years every summer he had won all the flying races, having broken his own record only last year by crossing the Atlantic in eleven and a half hours—at a speed of over two hundred miles an hour.

"Well, Speedy," said John Dolittle. "What is it?"

"Doctor," said the little bird in a mysterious whisper, "we have sighted a canoe about a mile ahead of the ship and a little to the eastward, with only a black woman in it. She is weeping bitterly and isn't paddling the canoe at all. She is several miles from land—ten, at least, I should say—because at the moment we are crossing the Bay of Fantippo and can only just see the shore of Africa. She is really in dangerous straits, with such a little bit of a boat that far out at sea. But she doesn't seem to care. She's just sitting in the bottom of the canoe, crying as if she didn't mind what happens to her. I wish you would come and speak to her, for we fear she is in great trouble."

"All right," said the Doctor. "Fly slowly on to where the canoe is and I will steer the ship to follow you."

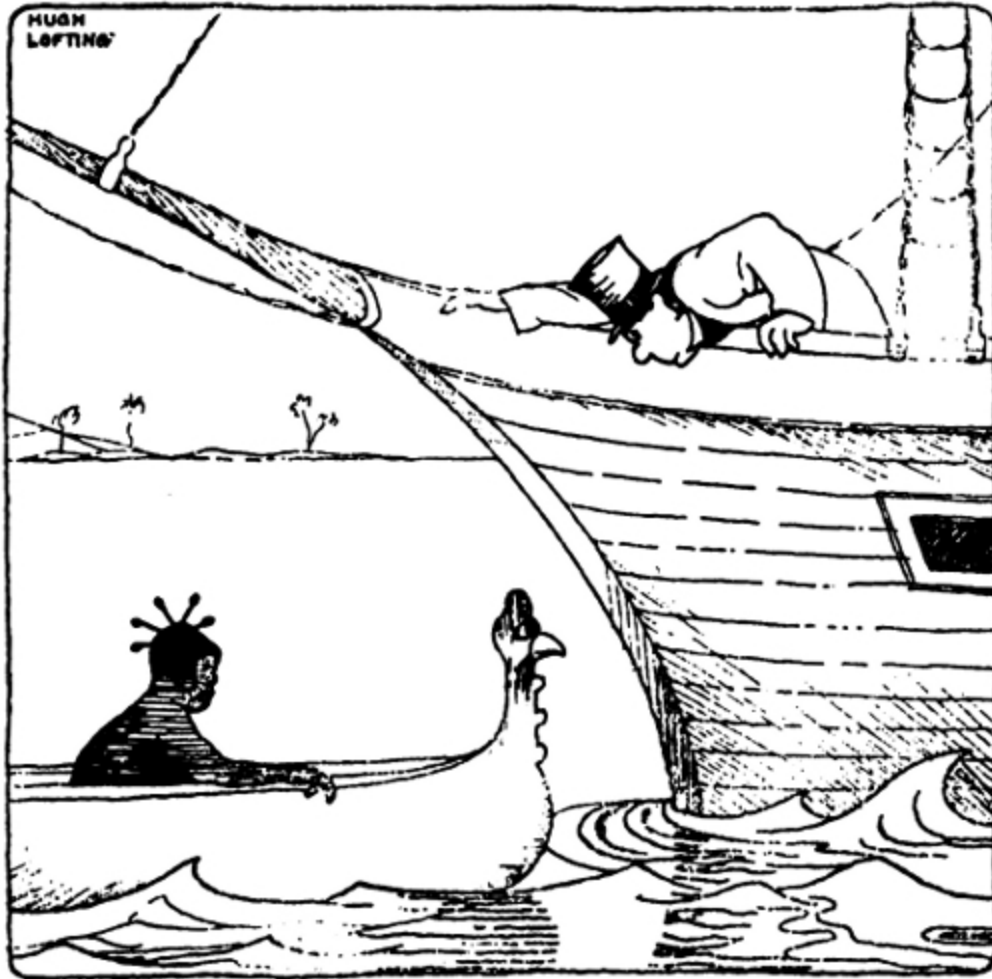
So John Dolittle went up on deck and by steering the boat after the guiding swallows he presently saw a small, dark canoe rising and falling on the waves. It looked so tiny on the wide face of the waters that it could be taken for a log or a stick—or, indeed, missed altogether, unless you were close enough to see it. In the canoe sat a woman with her head bowed down upon her knees.

"What's the matter?" shouted the Doctor, as soon as he was near enough to make the woman hear. "Why have you come so far from the land? Don't you know that you are in great danger if a storm should come up?"

Slowly the woman raised her head.

"Go away," said she, "and leave me to my sorrow. Haven't you white men done me enough harm?"

John Dolittle steered the boat up closer still and continued to talk to the woman in a kindly way. But she seemed for a long time to mistrust him because he was a white man. Little by little, however, the Doctor won her confidence and at last, still weeping bitterly, she told him her story.



"John Dolittle talked to the woman"

These were the days, you must understand, when slavery was being done away with. To capture, to buy or to sell slaves had, in fact, been strictly forbidden by most governments. But certain bad men still came down to the west coast of Africa and captured or bought slaves secretly and took them away in ships to other lands to work on cotton and tobacco plantations. Some African kings sold prisoners they had taken in war to these men and made a great deal of money that way.

Well, this woman in the canoe belonged to a tribe which had been at war with the king of Fantippo—an African kingdom situated on the coast near which the swallows had seen the canoe.



And in this war the King of Fantippo had taken many prisoners, among whom was the woman's husband. Shortly after the war was over some white men in a ship had called at the Kingdom of Fantippo to see if they could buy slaves for tobacco plantations. And when the king heard how much money they were willing to give for black slaves he thought he would sell them the prisoners he had taken in the war.

This woman's name was Zuzana and her husband was a very strong and fine-looking man. The King of Fantippo would have kept Zuzana's husband for this reason, because he liked to have strong men at his court. But the slave traders also wanted strong men, for they could do a lot of work on the plantations. And they offered the King of Fantippo a specially high price for Zuzana's husband. And the king had sold him.

Zuzana described to the Doctor how she had followed the white man's ship a long way out in a canoe, imploring them to give her back her husband. But they had only laughed at her and gone on their way. And their ship had soon passed out of sight.

That was why, she said, she hated all white men and had not wanted to speak to the Doctor when he had hailed her canoe.

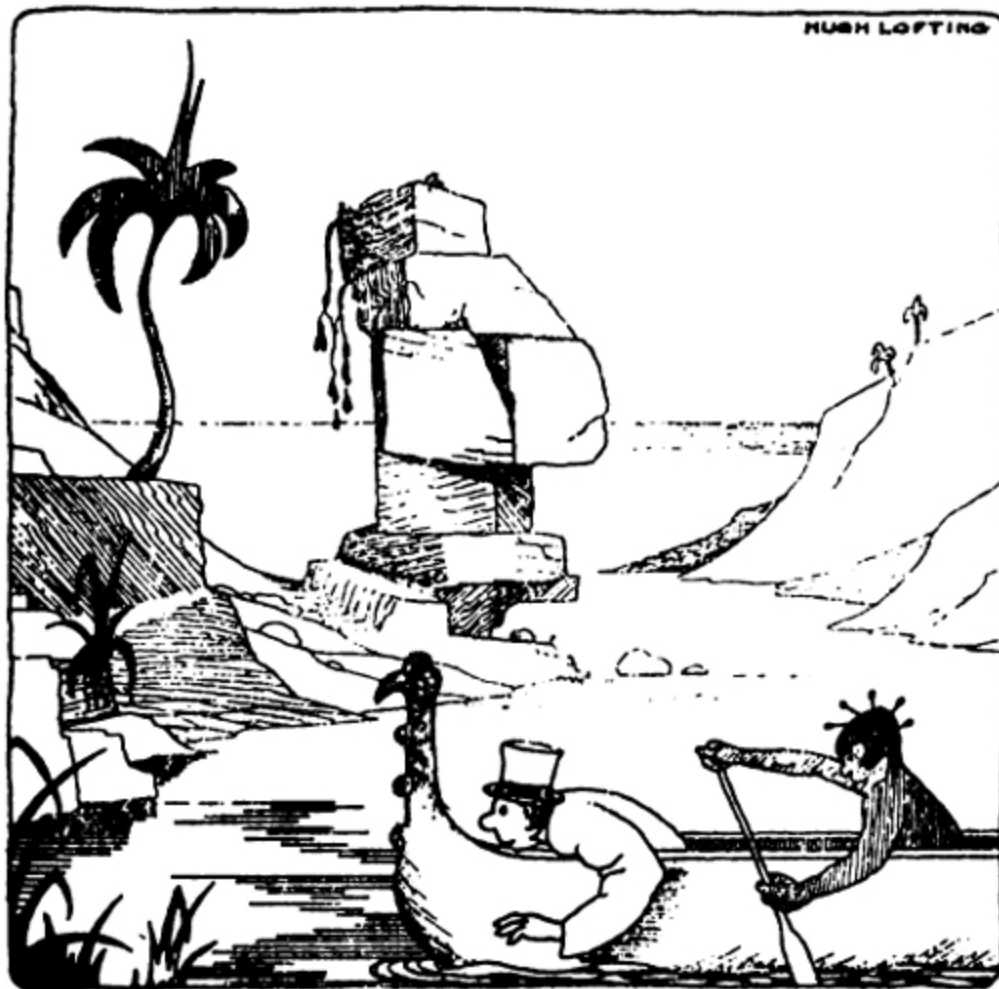
The Doctor was dreadfully angry when he had heard the story. And he asked Zuzana how long ago was it that the slaver's ship bearing her husband had left.

She told him it was half an hour ago. Without her husband, she said, life meant nothing to her, and when the ship had passed from view, going northward along the coast, she had burst into tears and just let the canoe drift, not even having the heart to paddle back to land.

The Doctor told the woman that no matter what it cost he was going to help her. And he was all for speeding up his

ship and going in chase of the slave boat right away. But Dab-Dab the duck warned him that his boat was very slow and that its sails could be easily seen by the slavers, who would never allow it to come near them.

So the Doctor put down his anchor and, leaving the ship where it was, got into the woman's canoe. Then, calling to the swallows to help him as guides, he set off northward along the coast, looking into all the bays and behind all the islands for the slave ship which had taken Zuzana's husband.



"Looking into all the bays"

But after many hours of fruitless search night began to come on and the swallows who were acting as guides could

no longer see big distances, for there was no moon.

Poor Zuzana began weeping some more when the Doctor said he would have to give up for the night.

"By morning," said she, "the ship of the wicked slave dealers will be many miles away and I shall never get my husband back. Alas! Alas!"

The Doctor comforted her as best he could, saying that if he failed he would get her another husband, just as good. But she didn't seem to care for that idea and went on wailing, "Alas! Alas!"

She made such a noise that the Doctor couldn't get to sleep on the bottom of the canoe—which wasn't very comfortable, anyway. So he had to sit up and listen. Some of the swallows were still with him, sitting on the edge of the canoe. And the famous Skimmer, the leader, was also there. They and the Doctor were talking over what they could do, when suddenly the Skimmer said, "Sh! Look!" and pointed out to the westward over the dark, heaving sea.

Even Zuzana stopped her wailing and turned to look. And there, away out on the dim, black edge of the ocean, they could see a tiny light.

"A ship!" cried the Doctor.

"Yes," said Speedy, "that's a ship, sure enough. I wonder if it's another slave ship."

"Well, if it's a slave ship, it's not the one we're looking for," said the Doctor, "because it's in the wrong direction. The one we're after went northward."

"Listen, Doctor," said Speedy-the-Skimmer, "suppose I fly over to it and see what kind of a ship it is and come back and tell you. Who knows? It might be able to help us."

"All right, Speedy. Thank you," said the Doctor.

So the Skimmer sped off into the darkness toward the tiny light far out to sea, while the Doctor fell to wondering how his own ship was getting on which he had left at anchor some miles down the coast to the southward.

After twenty minutes had gone by John Dolittle began to get worried, because the Skimmer, with his tremendous speed, should have had time to get there and back long ago.

But soon with a flirt of the wings the famous leader made a neat circle in the darkness overhead and dropped, light as a feather, on to the Doctor's knee.

"Well," said John Dolittle, "what kind of a ship was it?"

"It's a big ship," panted the Skimmer, "with tall, high masts and, I should judge, a fast one. But it is coming this way and it is sailing with great care, afraid, I imagine, of shallows and sandbars. It is a very neat ship, smart and new-looking all over. And there are great big guns—cannons—looking out of little doors in her sides. The men on her, too, are all well dressed in smart blue clothes—not like ordinary seamen at all. And on the ship's hull was painted some lettering—her name, I suppose. Of course, I couldn't read it. But I remember what it looked like. Give me your hand and I'll show you."

Then the Skimmer, with one of his claws, began tracing out some letters on the Doctor's palm. Before he had got very far John Dolittle sprang up, nearly overturning the canoe.

"H. M. S.!" he cried. "That means Her Majesty's Ship. It's a man-o'-war—a navy vessel. The very thing we want to deal with slave traders!"



## **CHAPTER II**

# **THE DOCTOR'S RECEPTION ON THE WARSHIP**

Then the Doctor and Zuzana started to paddle their canoe for all they were worth in the direction of the light. The night was calm, but the long swell of the ocean swung the little canoe up and down like a seesaw and it needed all Zuzana's skill to keep it in a straight line.

After about an hour had gone by the Doctor noticed that the ship they were trying to reach was no longer coming toward them, but seemed to have stopped. And when he finally came up beneath its towering shape in the darkness he saw the reason why—the man-o'-war had run into his own ship, which he had left at anchor with no lights. However, the navy vessel had fortunately been going so carefully that no serious damage, it seemed, had been done to either ship.

Finding a rope ladder hanging on the side of the man-o'-war, John Dolittle climbed up it, with Zuzana, and went aboard to see the Captain.

He found the Captain strutting the quarterdeck, mumbling to himself.

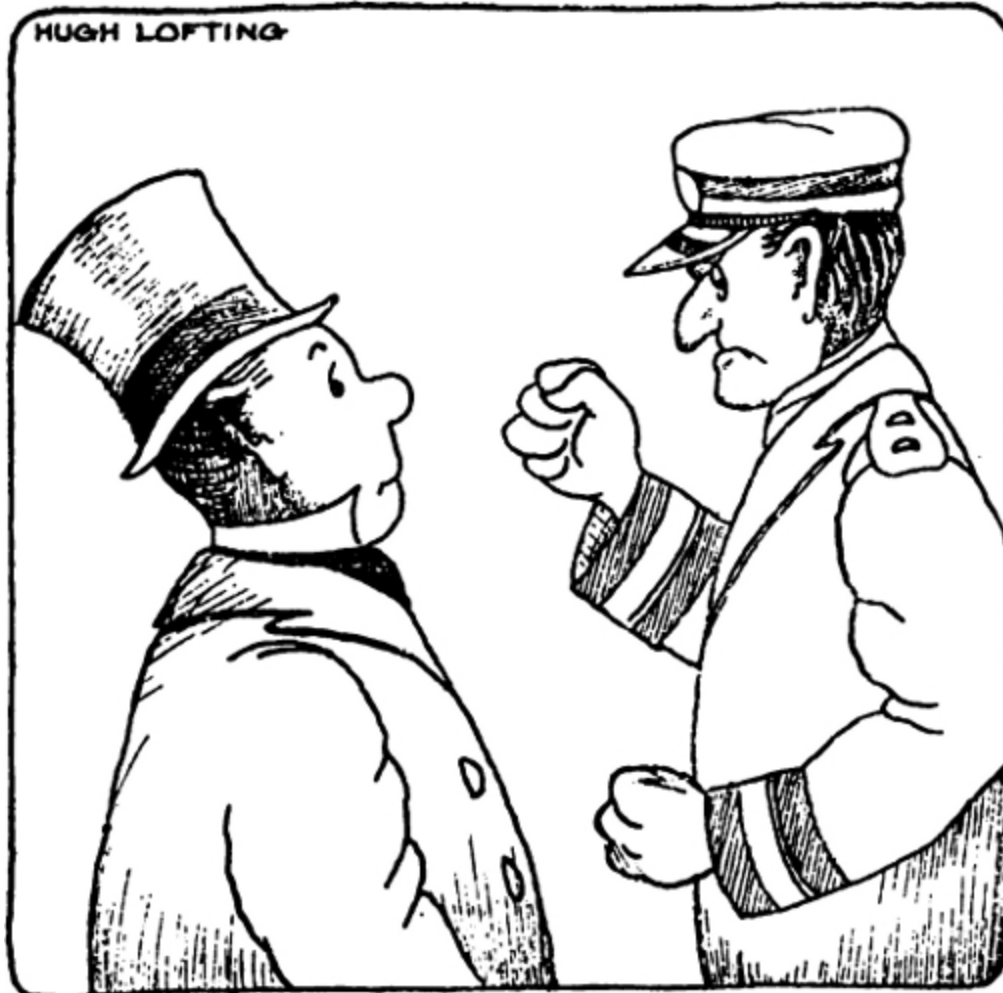
"Good evening," said the Doctor politely. "Nice weather we're having."

The Captain came up to him and shook his fist in his face.

"Are you the owner of that Noah's Ark down there?" he stormed, pointing to the other ship alongside.

"Er—yes—temporarily," said the Doctor. "Why?"

"Well, will you be so good," snarled the Captain, his face all out of shape with rage, "as to tell me what in thunder you mean by leaving your old junk at anchor on a dark night without any lights? What kind of a sailor are you? Here I bring Her Majesty's latest cruiser after Jimmie Bones, the slave trader—been hunting him for weeks, I have—and, as though the beastly coast wasn't difficult enough as it is, I bump into a craft riding at anchor with no lights. Luckily, I was going slow, taking soundings, or we might have gone down with all hands. I halloed to your ship and got no answer. So I go aboard her, with pistols ready, thinking maybe she's a slaver, trying to play tricks on me. I creep all over the ship, but not a soul do I meet. At last in the cabin I find a pig—*asleep in an armchair!* Do you usually leave your craft in the charge of a pig, with orders to go to sleep? If you own the ship, why aren't you on her? Where have you been?"



"Where have you been?"

"I was out canoeing with a lady," said the Doctor, and he smiled comfortingly at Zuzana, who was beginning to weep again.

"*Canoeing with a lady!*" spluttered the Captain. "Well, I'll be \_\_\_"

"Yes," said the Doctor. "Let me introduce you. This is Zuzana, Captain—er—"

But the Captain interrupted him by calling for a sailor, who stood near.

"I'll teach you to leave Noah's arks at anchor on the high seas for the navy to bump into, my fine deep-sea

philanderer! Think the shipping laws are made for a joke? Here," he turned to the sailor, who had come in answer to his call, "Master-at-arms, put this man under arrest."

"Aye, aye, sir," said the master-at-arms. And before the Doctor knew it he had handcuffs fastened firmly on his wrists.

"But this lady was in distress," said the Doctor. "I was in such a hurry I forgot all about lighting the ship. In fact, it wasn't dark yet when I left."

"Take him below!" roared the Captain. "Take him below before I kill him."

And the poor Doctor was dragged away by the Master-at-arms toward a stair leading to the lower decks. But at the head of the stairs he caught hold of the handrail and hung on long enough to shout back to the Captain:

"I could tell you where Jimmie Bones is, if I wanted to."

"What's that?" snorted the Captain. "Here, bring him back! What was that you said?"

"I said," murmured the Doctor, getting his handkerchief out and blowing his nose with his handcuffed hands, "that I could tell you where Jimmie Bones is—if I wanted to."

"Jimmie Bones, the slaver?" cried the Captain. "That's the man the government has sent me after. Where is he?"

"My memory doesn't work very well while my hands are tied," said the Doctor quietly, nodding toward the handcuffs. "Possibly if you took these things off I might remember."

"Oh, excuse me," said the Captain, his manner changing at once. "Master-at-arms, release the prisoner."

"Aye, aye, sir," said the sailor, removing the handcuffs from the Doctor's wrists and turning to go.



"Oh, and by the way," the Captain called after him, "bring a chair up on deck. Perhaps our visitor is tired."

Then John Dolittle told the Captain the whole story of Zuzana and her troubles. And all the other officers on the ship gathered around to listen.

"And I have no doubt," the Doctor ended, "that this slaver who took away the woman's husband was no other than Jimmie Bones, the man you are after."

"Quite so," said the Captain. "I know he is somewhere around the coast. But where is he now? He's a difficult fish to catch."

"He has gone northward," said the Doctor. "But your ship is fast and should be able to overtake him. If he hides in some of these bays and creeks I have several birds here with me who can, as soon as it is light, seek him out for us and tell us where he is."

The Captain looked with astonishment into the faces of his listening officers, who all smiled unbelievably.

"What do you mean—birds?" the Captain asked. "Pigeons—trained canaries, or something?"

"No," said the Doctor, "I mean the swallows who are going back to England for the summer. They very kindly offered to guide my ship home. They're friends of mine, you see."

This time the officers all burst out laughing and tapped their foreheads knowingly, to show they thought the Doctor was crazy. And the Captain, thinking he was being made a fool of, flew into a rage once more and was all for having the Doctor arrested again.

But the officer who was second in command whispered in the Captain's ear:

"Why not take the old fellow along and let him try, Sir? Our course was northward, anyway. I seem to remember hearing something, when I was attached to the Home Fleet, about an old chap in the west counties who had some strange powers with beasts and birds. I have no doubt this is he. Dolittle, he was called. He seems harmless enough. There's just a chance he may be of some assistance to us. The natives evidently trust him or the woman wouldn't have come with him—you know how scared they are of putting to sea with a white man."

After a moment's thought the Captain turned to the Doctor again.

"You sound clean crazy to me, my good man. But if you can put me in the way of capturing Jimmie Bones the slaver I don't care what means you use to do it. As soon as the day breaks we will get under way. But if you are just amusing yourself at the expense of Her Majesty's Navy I warn you it will be the worst day's work for yourself you ever did. Now go and put riding lights on that ark of yours and tell the pig that if he lets them go out he shall be made into rashers of bacon for the officers' mess."

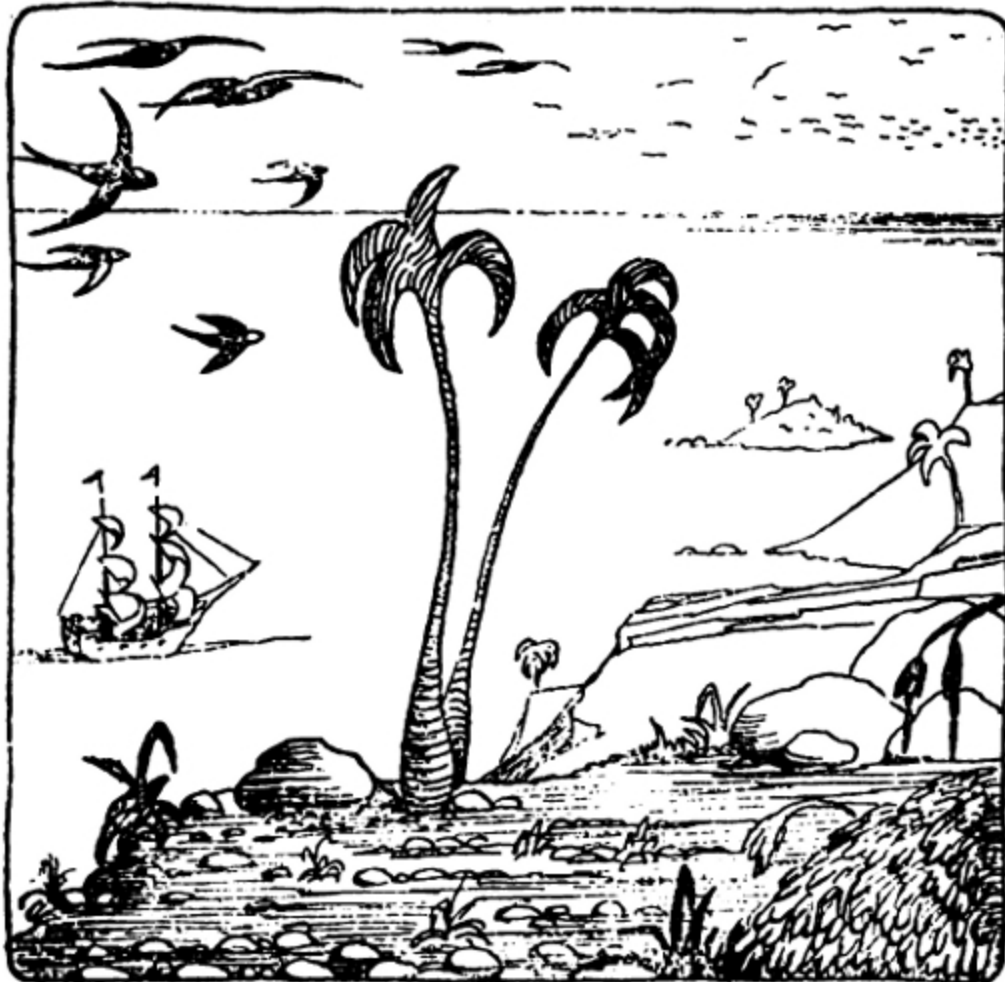
There was much laughter and joking as the Doctor climbed over the side and went back to his own ship to get his lights lit. But the next morning when he came back to the man-o'-war—and about a thousand swallows came with him—the officers of Her Majesty's Navy were not nearly so inclined to make fun of him.

The sun was just rising over the distant coast of Africa and it was as beautiful a morning as you could wish to see.

Speedy-the-Skimmer had arranged plans with the Doctor overnight. And long before the great warship pulled up her anchor and swung around upon her course the famous swallow leader was miles ahead, with a band of picked

hunters, exploring up creeks and examining all the hollows of the coast where the slave trader might be hiding.

Speedy had agreed with the Doctor upon a sort of overhead telegraph system to be carried on by the swallows. And as soon as the millions of little birds had spread themselves out in a line along the coast, so that the sky was speckled with them as far as the eye could reach, they began passing messages, by whistling to one another, all the way from the scouts in front back to the Doctor on the warship, to give news of how the hunt was progressing.



"The birds spread themselves out along the coast"

And somewhere about noon word came through that Bones's slave ship had been sighted behind a long, high

cape. Great care must be taken, the message said, because the slave ship was in all readiness to sail at a moment's notice. The slavers had only stopped to get water and look-outs were posted to warn them to return at once, if necessary.

When the Doctor told this to the Captain the man-o'-war changed her course still closer inshore, to keep behind the cover of the long cape. All the sailors were warned to keep very quiet, so the navy ship could sneak up on the slaver unawares.

Now, the Captain, expecting the slavers to put up a fight, also gave orders to get the guns ready. And just as they were about to round the long cape one of the silly gunners let a gun off by accident.

"*Boom!*" ... The shot went rolling and echoing over the silent sea like angry thunder.

Instantly back came word over the swallows' telegraph line that the slavers were warned and were escaping. And, sure enough, when the warship rounded the cape at last, there was the slave ship putting out to sea, with all sail set and a good ten-mile start on the man-o'-war.

## CHAPTER III

### A GREAT GUNNER

And then began a most exciting sea race. It was now two o'clock in the afternoon and there were not many hours of daylight left.

The Captain (after he had done swearing at the stupid gunner who had let off the gun by accident) realized that if he did not catch up to the slaver before dark came on he would probably lose him altogether. For this Jim Bones was a very sly and clever rascal and he knew the West Coast of Africa (it is sometimes called to this day *The Slave Coast*) very well. After dark by running without lights he would easily find some nook or corner to hide in—or double back on his course and be miles away before morning came.

So the Captain gave orders that all possible speed was to be made. These were the days when steam was first used on ships. But at the beginning it was only used together with the sails, to help the power of the wind. Of this vessel, H. M. S. *Violet*, the Captain was very proud. And he was most anxious that the *Violet* should have the honor of catching Bones the slaver, who for so long had been defying the navy by carrying on slave trade after it had been forbidden. So the *Violet's* steam engines were put to work their hardest. And thick, black smoke rolled out of her funnels and darkened the blue sea and smudged up her lovely white sails humming tight in the breeze.

Then the engine boy, also anxious that his ship should have the honor of capturing Bones, tied down the safety valve on the steam engine, to make her go faster, and then went up on deck to see the show. And soon, of course, one of the

*Violet's* brand new boilers burst with a terrific bang and made an awful mess of the engine room.

But, being a full-rigged man-o'-war, the *Violet* was still a pretty speedy sailer. And on she went, furiously plowing the waves and slowly gaining on the slave ship.

However, the crafty Bones, with so big a start, was not easy to overtake. And soon the sun began to set and the Captain frowned and stamped his feet. For with darkness he knew his enemy would be safe.

Down below among the crew, the man who had fired the gun by accident was having a terrible time. All his companions were setting on him and mobbing him for being such a duffer as to warn Bones—who would now almost certainly escape. The distance from the slaver was still too great to use the kind of guns they had in those days. But when the Captain saw darkness creeping over the sea and his enemy escaping, he gave orders to man the guns, anyway—although he hadn't the least hope that his shots would hit the slaver at that distance.

Now, Speedy-the-Skimmer, as soon as the race had begun, had come on to the warship to take a rest. And he happened to be talking to the Doctor when the order to man the guns came down from the Captain. So the Doctor and Speedy went below to watch the guns being fired.

They found an air of quiet but great excitement there. Each gunner was leaning on his gun, aiming it, watching the enemy's ship in the distance and waiting for the order to fire. The poor man who had been mobbed by his fellows was still almost in tears at his own stupid mistake.

Suddenly an officer shouted "*Fire!*" And with a crash that shook the ship from stem to stern eight big cannon balls went whistling out across the water.

But not one hit the slave ship. *Splash! Splash! Splash!* They fell harmlessly into the water.

"The light's too bad," grumbled the gunners. "Who could hit anything two miles away in this rotten light?"

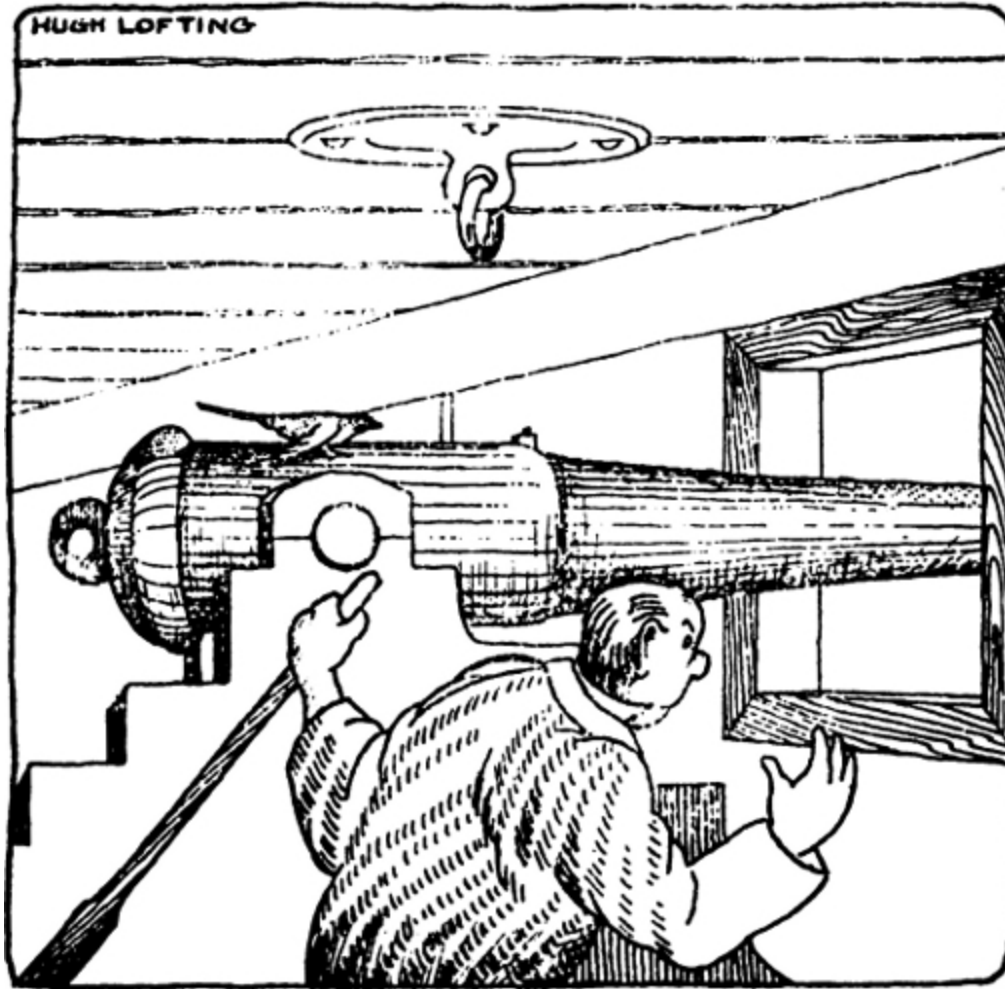
Then Speedy whispered in the Doctor's ear:

"Ask them to let me fire a gun. My sight is better than theirs for bad light."

But just at that moment the order came from the Captain, "*Cease firing!*" And the men left their places.

As soon as their backs were turned Speedy jumped on top of one of the guns and, straddling his short, white legs apart, he cast his beady little black eyes along the aiming sights. Then with his wings he signaled to the Doctor behind him to swing the gun this way and that, so as to aim it the way he wanted.

"*Fire!*" said Speedy. And the Doctor fired.



"Fire!" said Speedy"

"What in thunder's this?" roared the Captain from the quarterdeck as the shot rang out. "Didn't I give the order to cease firing?"

But the second in command plucked him by the sleeve and pointed across the water. Speedy's cannon ball had cut the slaver's mainmast clean in two and brought the sails down in a heap upon the deck!

"Holy smoke!" cried the Captain. "We've hit him! Look, Bones is flying the signal of surrender!"

Then the Captain, who a moment before was all for punishing the man who had fired without orders, wanted to know who it was that aimed that marvelous shot which



brought the slaver to a standstill. And the Doctor was going to tell him it was Speedy. But the Skimmer whispered in his ear:

"Don't bother, Doctor. He would never believe you, anyway. It was the gun of the man that made the mistake before that we used. Let him take the credit. They'll likely give him a medal, and then he'll feel better."

And now all was excitement aboard the *Violet* as they approached the slave boat lying crippled in the sea. Bones, the captain, with his crew of eleven other ruffians, was taken prisoner and put down in the cells of the warship. Then the Doctor, with Zuzana, some sailors and an officer, went on to the slave ship. Entering the hold, they found the place packed with slaves with chains on them. And Zuzana immediately recognized her husband and wept all over him with joy.

The black men were at once freed from their chains and brought on to the man-o'-war. Then the slave ship was taken in tow by the *Violet*. And that was the end of Mr. Bones's slave trading.

Then there was much rejoicing and hand-shaking and congratulation on board the warship. And a grand dinner was prepared for the slaves on the main deck. But John Dolittle, Zuzana and her husband were invited to the officers' mess, where their health was drunk in port wine and speeches were made by the Captain and the Doctor.

The next day, as soon as it was light, the warship went cruising down the coast again, putting the black people ashore in their own particular countries.

This took considerable time, because Bones, it seemed, had collected slaves from a great many different tribes. And it was after noon before the Doctor, with Zuzana and her