

Gulliver of Mars

Gulliver of Mars by Edwin L. Arnold is a science fiction novel in which Gulliver, after an extraordinary journey, is transported to Mars, where he encounters alien civilizations and navigates thrilling adventures on the red planet.

CHAPTER I -Gulliver of Mars

In the opening chapter of "Gulliver of Mars," the protagonist, a lieutenant disillusioned with his mundane existence and haunted by unrequited love, teeters on the edge of a fantastical adventure spurred by his longing for a life beyond the ordinary. Gulliver Jones's narrative unfolds on a dreary New York evening, as he meanders through the slums, longing for the comfort of home. Unexpectedly, his night takes a turn towards the extraordinary when he encounters a dying old man, adorned in peculiar attire and clutching a mysterious rug. This rug, seemingly ordinary at first glance, catches Gulliver's attention with its exotic appearance and enigmatic patterns that hint at otherworldly origins.

Upon the man's death, Gulliver, moved by a blend of curiosity and humanitarian concern, brings the body to a hospital, only to learn the man had already passed, leaving behind no clues but a curious bead. The old man's rug, inadvertently left in Gulliver's possession, becomes a nexus of intrigue as its intricate design and strange behavior suggest a connection to far-off realms. The rug, with its cryptic symbols and maps, seems to beckon Gulliver towards an adventure beyond the confines of his current disillusionment.

As Gulliver contemplates his stagnant life, juxtaposed against his yearning for significance and excitement, he unwittingly invokes the rug's latent power with his wishful thinking. This act of desire, combined with the mysterious properties of the rug, prepares the stage for a journey that promises to transcend the bounds of Gulliver's imagination and reality alike. The chapter closes with the anticipation of a grand adventure, as Gulliver stands on the precipice of the unknown, driven by a deep-seated quest for purpose and the allure of the extraordinary concealed within the everyday.

The chapter masterfully sets the stage for a tale of adventure and discovery, introducing readers to a world where the mundane and the miraculous intertwine. Through Gulliver's initial skepticism and longing for more, we are invited to explore themes of escapism, love, and the eternal human quest for significance against the backdrop of cosmic mystery.

CHAPTER III -Gulliver of Mars

In Chapter III of "Gulliver of Mars," the protagonist is awakened by An, a Martian boy, who attributes Gulliver's disorientation to not drinking enough of the local wine. Eager to learn about Mars, Gulliver and An set off towards the city, journeying through a landscape filled with canals, gardens, and social Martians engaging in leisurely activities. An prefers learning through experience rather than talking, reflecting the Martian disdain for work. Their trip is marked by numerous stops, showcasing Martian society's laid-back nature.

As they approach the city, the differences in Martian society become apparent, with half the population dressed in colorful attire and the other half, including An, in yellow, indicating a class or gender distinction that confuses Gulliver. The Martians are intrigued by Gulliver, drawing attention as they navigate the crowded and lively canals toward the city. An reveals being part of a despised class, once considered

priestesses, now regarded as lower-class citizens due to their history of attempting to emulate the opposite sex, now serving as laborers without the privileges of love or family.

They encounter a royal barge led by Hath, the supposed ruler of Mars, amid a celebratory fleet. Gulliver, struck by the beauty of Princess Heru and moved by curiosity, jumps aboard the royal barge. An accident with a floating log throws Heru into the water, prompting Gulliver to heroically rescue her, earning the Martians' admiration but revealing the societal norms and peculiarities of Mars, such as their method of determining marital partners through a lottery system, contrasting sharply with Earth's customs of courtship and individual choice.

CHAPTER IV -Gulliver of Mars

Lodged regally in a foreign Martian city, the narrator awakens from a restful sleep in a luxurious chamber and ventures onto a terrace to absorb the breathtaking sunrise and city view. Below, he observes a colorful gathering of locals participating in a communal food distribution, illustrating the people's indolence and reliance on a group of diligent yellow-clothed slaves who manage the city's labor. An, his Martian friend, approaches with a cheerful greeting and informs him that the government is ready to assist him further, an offer he politely declines in favor of independence.

After a hearty breakfast provided by An, the narrator explores the city, marveling at its indolent inhabitants and architectural beauty, while also noticing signs of ancient conflicts. Through conversations with An, he learns about the Martians' unique societal structure: they value leisure, have no real concept of family or lineage, and live a communal life with minimal personal ambition or responsibility. The city lacks commerce or industry, thriving instead on a culture of shared resources and mutual care among its inhabitants and the serving class.

An reveals the people's historical fear of barbaric invaders from the West, who previously ravaged the land, leading to a ritual tribute that includes sending provisions and a maiden across the sea to appease the leader of the invaders. Despite the narrator's disbelief and suggestions of resistance, An explains their preference for peace over conflict, even at great cost.

Exploring the city further, the narrator is struck by the Martians' contentment with simple pleasures and their casual approach to love and companionship. The absence of family bonds or long-term relationships is alien to him, and he finds their lack of ambition and satisfaction with mere existence both baffling and somewhat melancholic.

Introduced to various Martian wines that can influence emotions, the narrator requests something to ease his feelings of distance and loss. After drinking, he experiences an intense euphoria, losing himself in uncontained joy alongside the Martians, until he's brought back to his senses by a sobering beverage, highlighting the delicate balance between indulgence and recovery in Martian society.

CHAPTER V -Gulliver of Mars

When the protagonist wakes up in the Martian wilderness, he and An continue their exploration, eventually witnessing a festival where the locals engage in various games and performances. The protagonist's daring demonstration of javelin-throwing and using his wits to bring down a seemingly invulnerable mystic earns him recognition. Later, he separates from An and experiences Martian hospitality and camaraderie, culminating in an invitation to witness Princess Heru's ceremonial reading of the year's destiny. This ceremony involves a mysterious dance performed by Heru, followed by the revelation contained within a magically illuminated water-filled globe. Tragically, the globe turns a menacing red, foretelling disaster, leaving Heru in a state of shock. In a daring move, the protagonist rescues the distressed princess by

removing her from the influence of the ceremony, showcasing both his bravery and the depth of his connection to Heru. This act signifies a pivotal moment, highlighting the cultural chasm between the sole Earthling and the Martian populace, setting the stage for future adventures on this alien planet.

CHAPTER VI -Gulliver of Mars

In Chapter VI of "Gulliver of Mars," our protagonist faces deep loneliness and disillusionment upon his abrupt impact on Mars, feeling estranged amid the Martians' indifference after a dramatic event involving a magic globe. He wanders the ancient terrace of the palace, reflecting on his yearning for his familiar world and the palpable, yet alien, beauty of Mars that seems to sap his vitality and ambition, leading him to question his future on this foreign planet.

Attempting to find connection or insight, Gulliver decides to seek out Hath, a man of reputed wisdom, only to find him inebriated and unhelpful amid the chaos of a library turned into a veritable mausoleum of knowledge. Amid his exploration, he encounters Princess Heru, who, in a moment of candid affection, offers herself as a more engaging source of knowledge than the dusty tomes surrounding them. Despite being momentarily distracted by the allure of Heru's affection, Gulliver's curiosity about the Martians' stored wisdom remains.

Gulliver's initial endeavor to excavate wisdom from the Martian library transforms as he stumbles upon "The Secret of the Gods," a book purportedly containing divine knowledge yet misused as a mousetrap. Alongside Heru, he delves into the book, seeking insights into the universe's mysteries and the history of his own and other worlds. Their reading reveals profound and cryptic passages suggesting ancient civilizations, cosmic origins, and the essence of life itself, tantalizingly hinting at knowledge beyond human understanding but tragically damaged and incomplete.

As they read about a primeval light and the life it engendered, their pursuit of knowledge is abruptly interrupted, leaving the secrets of the gods and the universe just beyond reach. This chapter weaves themes of isolation, the quest for understanding, and the yearning for connection amidst the vast, indifferent cosmos, highlighting Gulliver's existential solitude and the fleeting comfort found in human (or Martian) companionship and love.

CHAPTER VII -Gulliver of Mars

In Chapter VII of "Gulliver of Mars," the protagonist finds himself increasingly entangled in the peculiar and whimsical ways of the Martians. Reflecting on his sudden and remarkable journey to Mars, he experiences a mix of awe and unease. The Martians, with their cheerful dispositions and unusual customs, make it difficult for him to dwell on his predicament. He befriends another Martian who introduces him to local customs, including their unique funeral practices, indicating Martians' indifference to death and their eternal youthfulness.

The narrative takes a turn with the introduction of a Martian matrimonial ceremony, painting a vivid picture of societal norms where marriages are randomly determined by drawing lots. Despite the strangeness of the custom, the protagonist is drawn to Heru, a Martian girl whose beauty and grace captivate him. An unexpected twist occurs when it is suggested that the ceremony's outcome might be influenced, leading to a charming exchange between the protagonist and Heru, filled with subtle hints and playful mischief.

As the ceremony progresses, tension mounts with the arrival of the alien envoys from a rival Martian kingdom. The situation escalates when the envoys demand a tribute, including the most beautiful woman present, leading to Heru being chosen. The protagonist, fueled by a mixture of alcohol-induced bravery and

genuine affection, confronts the envoy in a dramatic and chaotic clash. His actions disrupt the ceremony and ignite a fierce physical confrontation, showcasing his willingness to fight for Heru against the Martian customs and the formidable envoys.

The chapter masterfully blends humor, action, and alien customs, setting the stage for further adventures on Mars. The protagonist's actions against the envoys mark a significant deviation from passive observation to active participation in Martian affairs, hinting at the deeper connections and conflicts he will navigate in this alien world.

CHAPTER VIII -Gulliver of Mars

Chapter VIII of "Gulliver of Mars" unfolds with the protagonist, now fully enveloped in the alien landscape of Mars, waking from a night of wine-induced ambiguity. He reminisces about the feast from the prior evening, questioning the reality of the events, particularly the existence of the lovely Heru and the horrific ape-like creatures. Upon recognizing physical remnants of the previous night's escapades, his thoughts pivot sharply to Heru's safety, launching him into a frantic search.

As the search begins, the protagonist encounters Martians who reluctantly inform him that Heru was seen being taken to the harbor by the woodmen at dawn. Enraged at their inaction, he dons his attire and rushes to the palace's exterior, propelled by a singular resolve to rescue Heru. Despite his pleas for assistance yielding no volunteers among the Martians, known for their lackluster courage, he presses on alone to the harbor.

At the harbor, he arrives too late to prevent Heru's abductors from embarking. In a desperate bid, he leaps onto the departing boat, engaging the abductors with his sword. His efforts are heroic but futile against the overwhelming numbers, and in the mêlée, he catches a brief, distressing glimpse of Heru before being struck unconscious by a club.

Regaining consciousness adrift in the sea on a pile of silken materials, he notes the swift tide carrying him to unknown territories. The land on either side presents no comfort, and the fleeting hope of reaching some semblance of sanctuary is dashed by his physical incapacities. As nighttime approaches, despair sets in, only to be momentarily stirred by the sight of a swimming stag. In a blend of desperation and ingenuity, he attempts to hitch a ride by ensnaring the beast with silk or by physically grappling onto it. The stag, initially perturbed, inadvertently becomes his savior, pulling him towards the shore tethered by the silken mass.

This chapter encapsulates not just physical journey and adventure but also delves into themes of desperation, isolation, and the small glimmers of hope that persist in the direst circumstances. The protagonist's actions underscore a resilience and a willingness to grasp at any strand of hope, even in the alien and indifferent world that Mars presents to him.

CHAPTER IX -Gulliver of Mars

In Chapter IX of "Gulliver of Mars," the protagonist finds himself in a desolate and eerie region after landing on a shore surrounded by low islands, rank vegetation, and shallow pools, with a forest beyond. As night falls, he takes shelter under a tree, facing the lonely and chilling wilderness alone. The night is alive with strange and unsettling sounds, suggesting the presence of unseen creatures and haunting the protagonist with their cries.

As he attempts to rest, the night brings more unsettling events, with heavy footsteps approaching from the darkness, signaling the presence of large, unidentified creatures. The tension rises as these creatures, hinted to be enormous and rat-like but as large as elephants, become aware of each other and engage in a fierce and

unseen battle near the protagonist. The fight is brutal and ends with one creature devouring the other, an ordeal that the protagonist can only listen to, unable to see or intervene.

By morning, the protagonist is tired and hungry but resolves to press on, driven by thoughts of the abducted princess Heru and a sense of duty. His immediate concern, however, is finding food. The sight of smoke signals the presence of another being, leading him to a solitary girl who mistakes him for a spirit. The girl, a fisherwoman, offers him food and shares knowledge of the island and directions to a village that could aid in his quest.

The chapter illustrates the protagonist's resilience and determination amid the alien and often hostile environment of Mars. His interaction with the fisherwoman brings a moment of human connection in the midst of his isolation, highlighting themes of survival, the kindness of strangers, and the pursuit of a noble, if daunting, objective.

CHAPTER X -Gulliver of Mars

In Chapter X of "Gulliver of Mars," the protagonist embarks on a wilderness adventure, driven by a mixture of curiosity and a sense of mission. The Martian landscape is vividly described, teeming with life and phenomena that are both wondrous and unsettling. The array of Martian flora is unlike anything on Earth, featuring plants with dynamic colors, predatory behaviors, and even mobility.

As the narrator ventures deeper into the forest, the description reflects a blend of fascination and caution, highlighting the dual nature of the alien world — its beauty is as compelling as its dangers are lurking. The forest acts almost as a character in itself, brimming with mysteries that captivate the protagonist's attention and delaying his progress.

Upon eventually reaching a fishing village, the narrative shifts to exploring Martian customs and technology, particularly focusing on their unique method of "growing" boats from gourds. This practice showcases the Martians' harmony with their environment, utilizing natural resources in ways that seem magical to the protagonist. The boats, described as being crafted to perfection without seams or patches, symbolize Martian efficiency and their preference for simplicity and conservation.

Interactions with the Martian inhabitants reveal their culture and social norms, which are marked by innocence and a communal spirit. The protagonist is introduced to the Martian way of life, which emphasizes leisure, communal meals, and an affinity for the natural world. These experiences culminate in a deeper understanding of Martian society, highlighting a stark contrast with Earthly perspectives on labor, technology, and nature.

This chapter serves to underscore the thematic elements of discovery and the clash of civilizations. Through the protagonist's eyes, readers are invited to question their own worldviews, challenging the notions of progress and the relationship between humanity and the environment. The discoveries on Mars provoke both wonder and reflection, making this chapter a critical piece in the broader narrative of "Gulliver of Mars."

CHAPTER XI -Gulliver of Mars

In Chapter XI of "Gulliver of Mars," our protagonist wakes with a renewed sense of duty, eager to rescue Heru from danger. Despite enjoying a final frolic with his light-hearted companions, he sets off alone, navigating through unfamiliar Martian waters aboard a sea-going canoe, equipped with a scarce supply of cakes and fresh water. Warned to avoid the ominous "River of the Dead," he inadvertently drifts too far north, missing the supposed route and instead finds himself in a bleak, desolate landscape devoid of life, save

for ghastly fauna that strikes a chord of loneliness and peril within him.

As night descends, the terrain becomes even more sinister, his isolation underscored by the absence of any signs of life or direction. His journey becomes increasingly surreal as he encounters a silent, solemn procession of Martians adrift on rafts, among them a deceased, regal Martian maiden whose presence symbolizes the voyage into death. This spectral fleet, a mix of the young, old, and erstwhile slaves, is being carried inexorably toward a frozen, foreboding region symbolic of Martian afterlife beliefs.

Gulliver's desperate struggle to escape this grim flotilla only entangles him further, his efforts to reach the safety of a shadowy beach thwarted by the relentless current and the chilling companionship of the dead. With a combination of horror and determination, he makes a final, frantic attempt to escape the river's deadly pull, only to find himself trapped on a solitary ledge, a temporary refuge from the inevitable plunge over the waterfall and into the abyss.

The chapter shifts from a tangible adventure into an ethereal, almost philosophical exploration of mortality and the afterlife, as Gulliver discovers a vast, frozen gallery of Martian history encapsulated within the ice-cliffs — an entire civilization preserved in death. This revelation paints a vivid picture of Martian cultural practices regarding death, and their acceptance of it as part of a grand, natural cycle. This macabre museum, both fascinating and horrifying, offers Gulliver a profound insight into the Martian way of life and death, deepening his understanding of the planet's mysteries but leaving him physically isolated and pondering his next move in the chilling Martian night.

CHAPTER XII -Gulliver of Mars

Chapter XII of "Gulliver of Mars" narrates the protagonist's harrowing yet intriguing experiences after being cast away on the Martian ice. The chapter opens with Gulliver setting up a fire for warmth, only to discover a frozen figure of an imposing, grey-clad man, speculated to be a king of an ancient Martian race, encased in the nearby ice. This mysterious figure, with a gold band adorned with runes, fascinates Gulliver with his regal yet inaccessible presence.

The turning point occurs when the fire's warmth releases the figure from his icy prison, leading Gulliver into a startling confrontation with what he initially believes to be an assailant. After a tumultuous struggle, he realizes he has been grappling with the thawed body of the ancient Martian, not a living attacker. The realization is both eerie and awe-inspiring, considering the man's possible ancient wisdom and the stories he might have shared.

The following morning, plagued by hunger, Gulliver encounters a living Martian, an old woodsman, in this forbidding landscape. The woodsman initially mistakes Gulliver for a spirit but is ultimately convinced of his mortality after Gulliver humorously points out the physicality of his presence. They share a meal, with Gulliver marveling at the simplicity yet satisfying nature of the food presented.

Gulliver learns the old man is harvesting gems washed from the higher cliffs, a morbid reminder of the rich and powerful figures frozen above. Despite the fascinating opportunity to gather wealth, Gulliver's primary concern is to find a way out of the desolate pit they find themselves in. He bargains with the woodsman, offering the jewels he's collected for guidance to escape and directions to the Martian city where he intends to deliver a message.

The chapter concludes with Gulliver and the woodsman navigating through a narrow, eerie cleft in the ice, packed with more frozen Martians, leading towards the light and hope of the outer world. This adventure-filled chapter blends elements of horror, discovery, and the bizarre, maintaining a gripping narrative that highlights Gulliver's resilience and curiosity in the face of otherworldly challenges.

CHAPTER XIII -Gulliver of Mars

Upon leaving the icy regions and descending into the lowlands, the protagonist, now named Gulliver, finds himself amidst a rugged and less prosperous landscape. Here, vegetation is sparse, dominated by firs and pines reminiscent of Earth's ancient coal-forming forests. The inhabitants, in contrast to the previous lands of abundance, are sturdier and more straightforward, living in close-knit communities rather than sprawling cities. An early encounter with a native, initially hostile, highlights the importance of introductions in this more cautious society. Gulliver's guide presents him as a spectral being, a strategy that garners them both a mix of curiosity and reverence from the locals.

As they travel towards a sea-fishers' hamlet, Gulliver's perception of his journey evolves. The hospitality and simple genuineness of the villagers contrast sharply with the opulence and intrigue he left behind. Amid this rugged lifestyle, he engages in philosophical reflections on his quest and the stark differences between the two cultures he has witnessed. Despite his self-questioning, the allure of adventure and the mysteries of this Martian world propel him forward.

The narrative reveals that Gulliver's arrival on Mars might not be as unique as presumed, with mentions of another Earthly traveler, supposedly from Venus, who is described in less flattering terms. This revelation adds to the sense of a grander, interconnected cosmos of wanderers and hints at untapped mysteries Gulliver has yet to uncover.

The richness of Martian flora, as observed in his travels, astonishes Gulliver, particularly two plants: one lethally seductive, embodying a dangerous allure with its promise of fatal ecstasy, and another, a tree that crumbles to dust with a mere touch, symbolizing the fragility and transient beauty of life on Mars.

As Gulliver's journey progresses, these encounters—both cultural and botanical—deepen his appreciation for the diversity of Martian life and the planet's natural wonders. Each step further not only distances him from the known but draws him closer to a personal transformation, spurred by the extraordinary realities of this alien landscape. His continued adventures blur the lines between exploration and introspection, suggesting that the greatest discoveries on Mars are not just of its lands and peoples but also of oneself.

CHAPTER XIV -Gulliver of Mars

In Chapter XIV of "Gulliver of Mars," our protagonist encounters an affable woodman while journeying through a Martian forest. Appreciating his company, he agrees to spend the night at the woodman's humble yet welcoming cabin by a lagoon. The setting is picturesque, nestled among trees with the aroma of bark used for tanning permeating the air. This night introduces him to the commonalities of daily life on Mars including their food, drink, and hospitality. They share a hearty meal of toasted aru fruit and bread flavored with dried fish, washed down with strong ale, leading to an evening filled with laughter and storytelling.

The protagonist marvels at the cultural and technological parallels between Earth and Mars, emphasizing the universality of certain human experiences across galaxies. Despite the differences, he finds common ground in the simple joys of sharing a meal and stories. However, the conversation takes a darker turn as the woodman shares local legends of haunted places and advises against wandering off the path. This advice goes unheeded, as the following morning our wanderer inadvertently takes a forbidden road while seeking Ar-hap's capital.

Lost amidst the Martian wilderness, he comes across more locals and observes their way of life from a distance, including a stone craftsman. Their interaction sheds light on the development of tools and weapons on Mars, hinting at a shared history of innovation driven by necessity across civilizations. Despite friendly

exchanges, the conversation with the stone craftsman almost turns deadly, revealing the underlying hostility and precariousness of survival on this foreign planet.

As he continues his journey, the protagonist faces natural obstacles, including a misleading fog that eventually leads him to a ghostly city, accompanied by the wails of unseen children. This city, he realizes with a shock, is the haunted domain of Queen Yang—a place of ancient ruins and sorrowful spirits, which he was explicitly warned to avoid. This twist highlights the protagonist's disregard for local wisdom, setting the stage for an exploration of the unknown and the forbidden history of Mars.

Through descriptive scenes of Martian life and the looming mystery of Queen Yang's city, the chapter bridges the familiar with the fantastic, emphasizing the universal curiosity and fear of the unknown that drives exploration and storytelling.

CHAPTER XV -Gulliver of Mars

The whole tale, briefly but with fervor, hiding nothing—how Heru and I met, how I had come from another world, the deadly feud against her, my pledge to help her, the ambush, the fight, and our flight to the forest. Her plain face softened as the story proceeded, touching me deeply by her ready sympathy.

When I finished, she brushed a rough hand across her eyes, then gripped mine tightly, saying with conviction, "You shall have her, lad! Hearts like yours deserve to win. It's foolhardy, I know, but love makes us all fools. Listen here! My husband has influence with the ferrymen who row up the estuary. It's late, yes, but he can get you passage on a boat leaving tonight for Ar-hap's town. Once you're there, finding the girl will be risky, but I trust your luck. Her captor, they say, is a brute, yet not devoid of kingly virtues. Perhaps a bold appeal to him, the offer of a ransom—something may turn the scale. You saved the girl once; who's to say you can't do it again? But eat, rest, prepare. You'll need all your strength and wits for what's ahead."

Gratitude was heavy on me. Here was unexpected help, a beam of direction in the desolate uncertainty that had oppressed me. I embraced the chance fully. After refreshing and taking counsel on various ingenious approaches to my desperate undertaking, I followed the burly fisherman as he led me under the starry Thither night to a little quay where a broad-beamed boat rocked gently, making ready to slip away upstream. His influence was evident; a word here, a nod there, and I was aboard, my strange quest cloaked as a mere whim to see the interior.

As the oars dipped and the dark banks slipped by, I pondered this unexpected turn of events. Strange how the thread of our fates can be taken up and knitted by others, leading us to paths unthought of. My resolve hardened; come what may, I would face Ar-hap and, with luck, finesse, or bold action, reclaim Heru. The thought of her, alone and imperiled, transformed every doubt into determination, every fear into resolve. The mission might be fraught with danger, but for Heru's sake, every risk was worth taking.

CHAPTER XVI -Gulliver of Mars

In Chapter XVI of "Gulliver of Mars," our protagonist, having already embarked on his Martian journey, secures passage as a supercargo on a merchant boat headed to the capital. The journey introduces him to the peculiar and monotonous rowing chants of the Martian sailors, stirring thoughts about his extraordinary situation far from Earth. Upon arrival, the protagonist discovers that the Martian capital is bustling and vibrant, filled with exotic ships and goods from unknown regions.

The protagonist, still driven by his quest to rescue the Hither princess, Heru, encounters Si, a slave girl from his own planet Hither, now serving in the barbarous land of Thither. Si shares her heart-wrenching story of

being selected as tribute for the Martian ruler Ar-hap and subsequently demoted to a servant's status. Despite her own perilous situation, Si vows to assist the protagonist in his daring plan to rescue Heru from captivity.

Their initial efforts to reach Heru are met with challenges. The protagonist is unable to gain access to her, reflecting on his seemingly quixotic mission amidst the obstacles posed by Martian customs and the guarded palace of Ar-hap. However, Si's connection within the palace provides a glimmer of hope. She introduces him to the porter's wife, who manages a lodging for petitioners at the palace gate. This strategic position allows the protagonist to observe and plan his next moves more closely to the heart of Martian authority.

The chapter takes an unexpected turn as a mysterious and intense heatwave, accompanied by a red glare in the Martian sky, brings a sense of impending doom to the inhabitants of Thither. The heatwave is so severe that it starts affecting the environment and the citizens, causing widespread panic and fear of a cataclysm. This apocalyptic phenomenon adds a layer of urgency and mystical intrigue to the protagonist's mission.

Despite the grim situation, the protagonist's resolve to rescue Heru remains unshaken. The chapter closes on a note of suspense, highlighting the protagonist's determination against the backdrop of a world facing an inexplicable and possibly catastrophic event. The blend of personal valor, emerging camaraderie, and the hint of otherworldly forces at play sets the stage for the unfolding adventure in the Martian landscape.

CHAPTER XVII -Gulliver of Mars

Chapter 17 of "Gulliver of Mars" sees our protagonist witnessing the return of Ar-hap, the king, and his weary army to their home city, a situation made stark by the ominous threat of a comet and the severe drought plaguing the land. Amidst these dire circumstances, the king, upon learning of the protagonist's presence, demands his appearance to address the matter of Heru, a princess apparently claimed by Ar-hap under dubious circumstances related to a royal custom. The protagonist, determined to rescue Heru, confronts the king and is challenged with seemingly impossible tasks as tests of his spirit claims. Astonishingly, he completes these tasks with ease due to his earlier adventures and possession of certain artifacts, thereby astounding the king and the court.

The narrative treats us to a rollercoaster of emotions and events - from the protagonist's frustration at the arid disappearance of his favored pool, to his astonishment at the king's eerie challenge which, unknowingly to Ar-hap, plays directly into the protagonist's hands. The protagonist smartly uses items he acquired from earlier exploits to fulfill the king's demands, notably the ancient jawbone of a long-dead king and the crown of a dead queen, which he miraculously produces in what appears to be acts of supernatural ability. Each successful task further compels King Ar-hap, initially doubtful and scornful, to reconsider his stance.

The chapter culminates with the tension dissolving momentarily as a comet-threatening religious ritual necessitates the king's attention elsewhere. The king, perhaps out of respect for the protagonist's evident powers or realization of the futility in opposing him, agrees to a temporary truce. This respite allows for the protagonist and Heru to stay unharmed, albeit separated, until a decision on their future and the safety of the kingdom regarding the comet's threat can be made.

This chapter masterfully mixes elements of fantasy, romance, and political intrigue with a backdrop of a Martian society facing environmental and supernatural challenges. The storytelling is rich with vivid descriptions, powerful character interactions, and a clever plot that emphasizes the protagonist's cunning and resourcefulness amidst otherworldly trials.

CHAPTER XVIII -Gulliver of Mars

In Chapter XVIII of "Gulliver of Mars," the intensity of suffering under a relentless heatwave reaches its zenith, showcasing a dire landscape where both the characters and the environment are pushed to the edge of survival. The scarcity of water leads to a complete collapse of discipline and a desperate longing for relief. The protagonist and the characters around him, including Heru, the Martian princess, are depicted in a battle against the extreme conditions, with their strength and vitality drained away, leaving them in a state of lethargy and despair. The atmosphere is one of intense hopelessness, punctuated by the fervent but futile prayers for rain to alleviate their torment.

A turning point arrives with the brewing of a storm that promises some respite from the scorching heat, bringing rain and a hint of survival. The vivid descriptions of animals, driven by their survival instincts, seeking refuge and the last remnants of water around the protagonist, highlight the universal desperation permeating every living being in this crisis. As the rain finally begins to fall, it brings a glimmer of hope and revives the protagonist and Heru, signaling a potential change in their dire circumstances.

Seeing this as an opportunity, the protagonist devises a plan to escape with Heru from the clutches of Ar-hap, driven by the realization that staying would mean certain death for him and a bleak future for Heru. The escape plan, however, is fraught with risks and uncertainties, as they must navigate a hostile environment and evade capture. The urgency and desperation of their escape are palpable, with each step towards freedom fraught with peril.

Their attempt to flee, initially seems promising as they manage to reach the wharf undetected, displaying the protagonist's resourcefulness and determination to protect Heru at all costs. The chapter concludes with a tense encounter that threatens to unravel their plan, leaving their fate hanging in the balance. This chapter serves as a testament to the themes of survival, resilience, and the lengths to which individuals will go to seek freedom and safety amidst the most harrowing conditions.

CHAPTER XIX -Gulliver of Mars

Chapter XIX of "Gulliver of Mars" details an adventurous escape by sea under the veil of early morning mist. Gulliver and Heru narrowly evade capture by soldiers in a war-canoe thanks to a combination of stealth and luck. As they drift silently, the soldiers, suspecting their presence, ultimately dismiss the possibility and move on, allowing Gulliver and Heru to continue their escape toward a small harbour town.

Upon arrival at the town, Gulliver quickly seeks help from a friendly fish-shop owner, explaining their dire situation. The fish-shop owner, astounded by their audacity and moved by their plea, agrees to assist them. Heru's charm and earnest request seal their fate towards safety, drawing the fish-shop owner's commitment to their cause.

Their escape plan involves a clever diversion—using a fishing boat to sail out of the immediate danger zone, hidden under nets. In a tense moment, soldiers nearly discover them, but the fisherman convincingly deters their interest with a mix of bravado and quick wit, ensuring the soldiers' departure with a promise of beer from his wife. This bold interaction underscores the fisherman's loyalty to Gulliver and Heru despite the imminent threat to himself.

The chapter closes as they sail away from the town, out of the soldiers' reach, thanks to the fisherman's courage and the sea's cooperation. The fisherman is rewarded modestly with a gold button and affectionate gratitude from Heru. Their departure from the island on friendly terms with the small community they encountered suggests a hopeful continuation of their journey.

This segment of "Gulliver of Mars" encapsulates themes of risk, adventure, and the unexpected alliances formed in the face of adversity, all set against the backdrop of Mars's fantastical seascapes. The narrative thrives on the element of suspense and the universal appeal of a daring escape, driven by the quick thinking

and cooperation among the characters.

CHAPTER XX -Gulliver of Mars

In Chapter XX of Gulliver of Mars, the protagonist returns to the city after his time with the woodmen, feeling out of place amidst the joyous celebration that greets Princess Heru's return. The citizens are thrilled, but they show no understanding of the deeper implications of her restoration or the looming threat from their enemies across the sea. Their reaction is superficial, marked by flower processions and a carefree atmosphere, as they celebrate without acknowledging the dangers ahead.

The protagonist, feeling overlooked and unappreciated, drowns his frustration in revelry. He indulges in excessive drinking, dancing, and forgetfulness, until the next day when he feels remorseful but resigned to the laid-back Martian way of life. As he mingles in the crowd, he learns that Princess Heru is about to consult the globe to determine the timing of her marriage, a ceremony that has been postponed.

Although he initially feels angered by the prospect of Heru marrying someone else so quickly, the protagonist becomes increasingly indifferent, adopting the apathetic mindset of the Martians. As they gather in the palace square to witness Heru's consultation of the globe, a shocking event occurs: Ar-hap, the barbarian king, and his forces arrive, launching a surprise attack on the city. The peaceful celebration is violently interrupted, and the protagonist is caught in the chaos.

Inside the palace, he finds Prince Hath unmoved by the destruction around him, calmly resigned to the fate of his people. Despite the urgency, Hath refuses to act, explaining that Heru's fate has already been decided and that she will be safe. The protagonist, determined to save Heru, searches for her and eventually finds her being carried away by slaves. As the palace is destroyed, Hath remains indifferent, while the protagonist escapes, eventually finding himself on a dangerous, wild chase.

As he flees the palace, the protagonist encounters a strange and familiar object—a magical rug that had once transported him to Mars. Seizing the opportunity, he wishes himself back to New York. Miraculously, his wish is granted, and he wakes up on a doorstep in his home city, realizing with a mix of disbelief and relief that he is back in his world, just as his life on Mars comes to an end.