

The Giant of Mutton Cove
by Amanda Harris



This time of year I tend to drift over to Devonport. More chance of grub than over the water. I could fish but there are easier ways... Here I can snatch a bun, grab some crib, empty bins. The fishermen at Mutton Cove are reckless with their scraps. Only slight downside is pushing my way through the annoyance of resident pigeons. What I probably love best is my perch on the tallest of towers. From here I can watch it all and be ready.

Am not much interested in the work of men but round here they are always building walls. Not any old wall but massive ones. They don't stop me from flying anywhere and they do make the perfect landing. A whole scrabble of men are involved in their construction. One of them has caught my eye. A giant of a man, size fourteen boots, I'd say, tree trunk trousers and a mainsail for a jacket. He pushes a cart laden with stone. Then, like a human catapult, he hurls it up to the men who are building the walls. At the midday horn, our giant seeks out more rock to sit on. Remember that jacket? Well, imagine the size of the pockets stuffed with hanks of rope, candle stubs, chisels, a knife, a handkerchief the size of a tablecloth as well as the possibility of food. He unwraps a huge hunk of bread, a lump of cheese with a couple of slightly shrivelled apples and lays them on his knees. My opportunity. Don't judge; a bird has to eat. I reckon it is best to approach from behind, over the shoulder. I limber, take aim and launch to spear the target until – boof – he bats me away with his paddle of a hand. Three sixty vision that one. I'm not hurt but somewhat ruffled. I land on the wall, turn my back to him and leave my mark on the new masonry. I know there will be crumbs. He is a messy eater. I can wait.

Once the simple meal has been consumed, the giant brushes the crumbs from his legs and stuffs any errant belongings back into his pocket chasms. In the process he dislodges a piece of official paper which flutters to the ground: Confirmation of Passage to America ... The size fourteen boots squash it into the mud where it lies until a seagull tugs at it, flies off and discards it on the far side of the new wall.

Inspired by a pair of boots at Bogey Knights



DEVONPORT: *Stories of Stuff*

This story was written as part of a *Writers' Room* in Devonport, Plymouth led by Anna Maria Murphy and The Writers' Block Cornwall. For more information and stories please visit www.thewritersblock.org.uk/the-library/

