

Life Among the Giants

*From a LSAVC 2001 Presentation by
Anne Nicholas*

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Long ago in the land of San Antonio, there was a wonderful Lilliputian plant territory known as Hortense's violets. In this vigorous kingdom, Queen Hortense and King Ray ruled with wisdom and loving attention and tended to their multitudes of tiny African violets. Up until this general time period, violets had mimicked their plant ancestry and were usually 10 inches and up in diameter. But Queen Hortense and King Ray had perfected the art of miniaturizing these wonderful plants. The King and Queen successfully grew tiny violets that were less than 8 inches in diameter. Their violets, under their dedication and care grew to be known not only in the land of San Antonio, but from border to border of the greater nation. The Queen and King of the tiny kingdom traveled far and wide and were presented with many honors for their lovely small plants. They shared their knowledge and wonderful small plants with many capable and excited new growers of the tiny violets.

Meanwhile, back in the land of San Antonio, there was a giant of a man who was quietly cultivating his own garden of African violets. As mentioned before, African violets were usually 10 inches and larger in diameter. This man carefully selected varieties of large violets and grew them to gigantic proportions - some even 30 inches in diameter. He loved his gigantic violets and achieved success in the growing and showing of his giant plants. This gentle giant was married to a school teacher who spent much time in her classroom but more and more enjoyed the time she spent with her husband at African violet shows and with violet friends.

As this giant and his wife learned more about their violets, they were pleased and surprised to discover that they lived in the very neighborhood of the Lilliputian violet territory. Since they only knew about the care and growing of their giant violets, they were curious about the tiny violets. They began to take evening strolls over to the castle of the Lilliputians in hopes of catching either the queen or king outside the castle and being asked to view the tiny treasures inside the castle. The king and queen were always gracious and shared their knowledge and wisdom with the giant and his lady.

Thus began this saga of Life Among the Giants. Queen Hortense graciously shared some of her tiny violets with the wife of the Giant. The lady was delighted and took the little treasures home and placed them among the shadows of the giant violets grown by her husband. She carefully tended them as she had seen her husband do with his beautiful large plants. All of the little plants settled in and all lived happily ever after. THE END. But it was not really the end, it was **THE BEGINNING**.

Ed. Note: This segment was the beginning section of a LSAVC presentation by Anne on how she grows her consistently winning little ones. Most of us know that Richard Nicholas is renowned for growing the BIG violets – and we mean REALLY BIG violets!! In fact, you might have caught his article in the 1988 LSAVC newsletter, or reprinted in the AVSA Magazine – “Growing ‘Em TEXAS Size”



**Petite Ruby – Best Unusual Container, LSAVC 2000 –
by Anne Nicholas**