

Tarzan of the Apes

by Edgar Rice Burroughs

SYNOPSIS
The infant son of Lord and Lady Greystoke is mothered by Kala, an ape, after the death of his own parents.
The boy, called Tarzan by the apes, finds the skeletons of his parents in their cabin, but still thinks himself a white ape.
Tarzan wins renown by killing a gorilla. He learns to read from books found in the cabin.
Tarzan kills his enemy Tumbi. Kulonga, a savage, shoots Kala and is pursued by the infuriated apes.

old men and the women and children, until, in a moment, the village was deserted.
Tarzan of the apes knew that they had found the body of his victim, but that interested him far less than the fact that no one remained in the village to prevent his taking a supply of the arrows which lay below him.

CHAPTER VI.
King of the Apes.

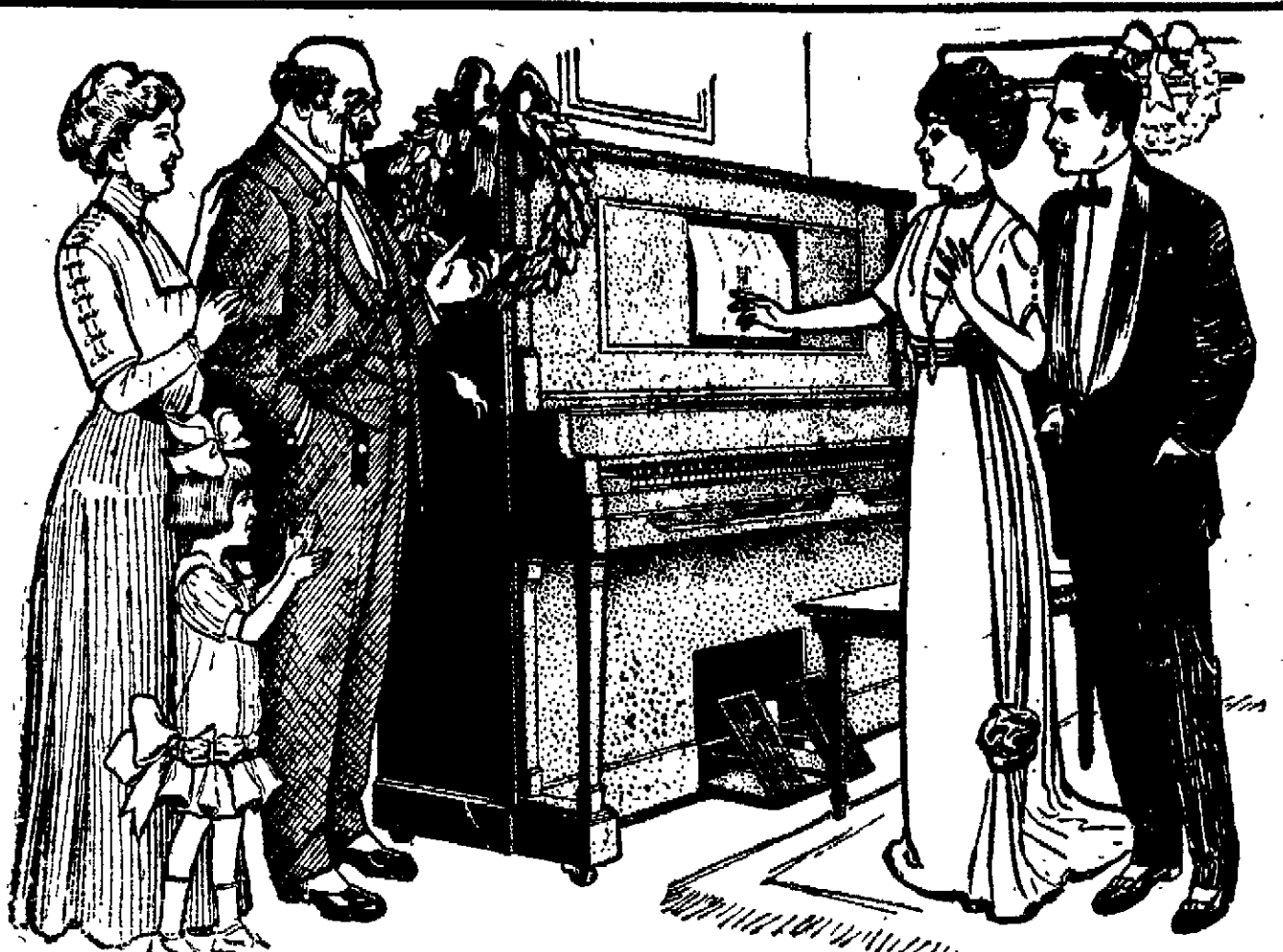
TARZAN dropped to the ground beside the caldron of poison and stood motionless, his quick eyes scanning the interior of the palisade.
No one was in sight. His eyes rested upon the open doorway of a nearby hut. He would take a look within, thought Tarzan, and so cautiously he approached the low thatched building.
For a moment he hesitated without, listening intently. There was no sound, and he glided into the semi-darkness of the interior.
Weapons hung against the walls—long spears, strangely shaped knives, a couple of narrow shields. In the center of the room was a cooking pot and at the far end a litter of dry grasses covered by woven mats, which evidently served the owners as beds and bedding. Several human skulls lay upon the floor.
Tarzan of the apes felt of each article, hefted the spears, smelled of them, for he "saw" largely through his sensitive and highly trained nostrils. He determined to own one of these long pointed sticks, but he could not take one on this trip because of the arrows he meant to carry.
One by one as he took each article from the walls he placed them in a pile in the center of the room, and on top of all he placed the cooking pot, inverted, and on top of this he laid one of the grinning skulls, upon which he fastened the headress of the dead Kulonga.
Then he stood back and surveyed his work and grinned. Tarzan of the apes was a joker.
But now he heard without the sounds of many voices and long, mournful howls and mighty wailing. He was startled. Had he remained too long?
Quickly he reached the doorway and peered down the village street toward the village gate.
The natives were not yet in sight, though he could plainly hear them approaching across the plantation. They must be very near.
Like a flash he sprang across the opening to the pile of arrows. Gathering up all he could carry under one arm, with a kick he overturned the seething caldron and disappeared into the foliage, just as the first of the returning natives entered the gate at the far end of the village. He turned to watch the proceedings below, poised like some wild bird ready to take swift wing at the first sign of danger.
The natives filed up the street, four of them bearing the body of Kulonga. Behind trailed the women, uttering strange cries and weird lamentation. On they came to the portals of the very hut in which Tarzan had wrought his depredations.
Scarcely had half a dozen entered the building ere they came rushing out in wild, jabbering confusion. The others hastened to gather about. There was much excited gesticulating, pointing and chattering. Several of the warriors approached and peered within.
Finally an old fellow with many ornaments of metal about his arms and legs and a necklace of dried human hands depending upon his chest, entered the hut.
It was Mbonga, the king, father of Kulonga.
For a few moments all were silent. Then Mbonga emerged, a look of mingled wrath and fear upon his hideous countenance. He spoke a few words to the assembled warriors, and in an instant the men were flying through the little village searching minutely every hut and corner within the palisade.
Scarcely had the search commenced than the overturned caldron was discovered and with it the theft of its poisonous arrows. Nothing more they could do, and it was a thoroughly awed and frightened group of savages which huddled around their king a few moments later.
They stood in little groups, talking in low tones and casting affrighted glances behind them from their great rolling eyes.
Tarzan of the apes watched them for awhile from his lofty perch in the great tree. The sun was high in the heavens. Tarzan had not broken fast this day, and it was many miles to where lay the toothsome remains of Horta, the boar. So he turned his back upon the village of Mbonga.
It was not yet dark when he reached his tribe, though he stopped to exhume and devour the remains of the wild boar he had consumed the preceding day and again to get Kulonga's bow and arrows from the tree top in which he had hidden them.
It was a well laden Tarzan who dropped from the branches into the midst of the tribe of Kerchak.

With swelling chest he narrated the glories of his adventure and exhibited the spoils of conquest.
Kerchak grunted and turned away, for he was jealous of this strange member of his band. In his little evil brain he sought for some excuse to wreak his hatred upon Tarzan.
The next day Tarzan was practicing with his bow and arrows at the first gleam of dawn. At first he lost nearly every bolt he shot, but finally he learned.

It was a thoroughly awed and frightened group of savages.
To guide the little shafts with fair accuracy, and ere a month had passed he was no mean shot, but his proficiency had cost him nearly his entire supply of arrows.
It was during this period that the young English lord found hidden in the back of one of the cupboards in the cabin a little metal box. The key was in the lock, and a few moments' investigation and experimentation were rewarded with the successful opening of the receptacle.
In it he found a faded photograph of a smooth faced young man, a golden locket studded with diamonds linked to a small gold chain, a few letters and a small book.
Tarzan examined these all minutely. The photograph he liked best of all, for the eyes were smiling, and the face was open and frank. It was his father.
The locket, too, took his fancy, and he placed the chain about his neck in imitation of the ornamentation he had seen to be so common among the black men he had visited. The brilliant stones gleamed strangely against his smooth, brown hide.
The letters he could scarcely decipher, for he had learned little or nothing of script; so he put them back in the box with the photograph and turned his attention to the little book.
This was almost entirely filled with fine script; but, while the little bugs were all familiar to him, their arrangement and the combinations in which they occurred were strange and entirely incomprehensible.
Tarzan had long since learned the use of the dictionary; but, much to his sorrow and perplexity, it proved of no avail to him in this emergency. Not a word of all that was written in the little book could he find, and so he put it back in the little metal box, but with a determination to work out the mysteries of it later on.
This was the diary of John Clayton, Lord Greystoke, kept in French, as had always been his custom.
Tarzan replaced the box in the cupboard, but always thereafter he carried the features of the strong, smiling face of his father in his heart and in his head a fixed determination to solve the mystery of the strange words in the little book.
At present he had more important business in hand, for his supply of arrows was exhausted, and he must needs journey to the black men's village and renew it.
Early the following morning he set out, and, traveling rapidly, he came before midday to the little clearing. Once more he took up his position in the great tree, and, as before, he saw the women in the fields and the village street and the little caldron of bubbling poison directly beneath him.
For hours he lay awaiting his opportunity to drop down unseen and gather up the arrows for which he had come. But it was not until night fell that Tarzan saw his chance. This time he took all of the arrows, for he had brought a number of long fibers to bind them into a bundle.
When the savages discovered that once more their arrows had been



It was a thoroughly awed and frightened group of savages.



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