

Tarzan of the Apes



by **Edgar Rice Burroughs**

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SYNOPSIS

The infant son of Lord and Lady Grey-stoke is mothered by Kala, an ape, after the death of his own parents.

The boy, called Tarzan by the apes, finds the skin 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 Tumbat. Kilon-ga, a savage, shoots Kala and is pursued by the infuriated apes.

Tarzan slays Kulonga in revenge for Kala's death and secures a bow and poisoned arrows from the native village.

He finds a photograph of his father and his mother's locket. Worshipping Kerchak in battle, Tarzan becomes king of the apes.

After subduing Terkoz, Tarzan leaves the tribe and terrorizes the savages in the village of Mbonga.

Clayton, Tarzan's cousin, Jane Porter and party arrive in a ship, the crew of which has mutinied.

(Continued From Yesterday.)

The noise of some great body crashing through the underbrush so close beside him and the sound of that blood-curdling shriek from above tested Clayton's courage to the limit, but he could not know that it was to that very voice he owed his life nor that the creature who hurled it forth was his own cousin—the real Lord Grey-stoke.

The afternoon was drawing to a close, and Clayton, disheartened and discouraged, was in a terrible quandary as to the proper course to pursue, whether to keep on in search of Professor Porter, at the almost certain risk of his own death in the jungle by night, or to return to the cabin, where he might at least serve to protect Jane Porter from the perils which confronted her on all sides.

He disliked to return to camp without her father; still more he shrank from the thought of leaving her alone and unprotected in the hands of the mutineers of the Arrow or the hundred unknown dangers of the jungle.

Possibly, too, he thought, before this the professor and Philander had returned to camp. He started, stumbling back through the thick and matted underbrush in the direction that he thought the cabin lay.

To Tarzan's surprise, the young man was heading farther into the jungle in the general direction of Mbonga's village, and the shrewd young ape man was convinced that he was lost.

The three jungle would make easy prey of this unexpected stranger in a very short time if he were not guided quickly to the beach, thought Tarzan.

Yes, there was Numa, the lion, even now stalking the white man a dozen paces to the right.

Clayton heard the great body paralyzing his course, and now there rose upon the evening air the great beast's thunderous roar. The man stopped with upraised spear and faced the brush from which issued the awful sound. The shadows were deepening, darkness was coming on.

For a moment all was still. Clayton stood rigid with raised spear. Presently a faint rustling of the bush behind him apprised him of the stealthy creeping of the thing. It was gathering for a spring when at last he saw it, not twenty feet away—the long, lithe, muscular body and tawny head of a huge black maned lion.

In agony the man watched, fearful to launch his spear, powerless to fly. He heard a noise in the tree above him. Some new danger, he thought, but he dared not take his eyes from the yellow green orbs before him. There was a sharp twang, like the sound of a broken banjo string, and at the same instant an arrow appeared in the yellow hide of the crouching lion.

With a roar of pain and anger the beast sprang, but Clayton stumbled to one side, and as he turned again to face the infuriated king of beasts he was appalled at the sight which confronted him. Almost simultaneously with the lion's turning to renew the attack a naked giant had dropped from the tree above squarely on the brute's back.

With lightning speed an arm that was corded with layers of iron muscle encircled the huge neck, and the great beast was raised from behind, roaring and pawing the air—raised as easily as Clayton would have lifted a pet dog.

Had the battle continued a few seconds longer the outcome might have been different, but all was accomplished so quickly that the lion had scarce time to recover from its surprise before it sank lifeless to the ground.

Then the strange figure which had vanquished it stood erect upon the carcass and, throwing back the wild, handsome head, gave the fearsome cry which a few moments earlier had so startled Clayton.

Before him he saw the figure of a young man naked except for a loin cloth and a few barbaric ornaments on arms and legs and on the breast a priceless diamond locket gleaming against a smooth brown skin.

The hunting knife had been returned to its homely sheath, and the man was gathering up his bow and quiver from where he had tossed them when he leaped to attack the lion.

Clayton spoke to the man in English, thanking him for his brave rescue and complimenting him on his wondrous strength and dexterity.

The only answer was a steady stare and a faint shrug of the mighty shoulders, which may have betokened either disparagement of the service rendered or ignorance of the language.

The bow and quiver slung on his back, the wild man once more drew his knife and deftly carved a dozen large strips of meat from the lion's carcass. Then, squatting upon his haunches, he proceeded to eat, motioning Clayton to join him.

The strong white teeth sank into the raw and dripping flesh in apparent relish, but Clayton could not bring himself to share the uncooked meat with his strange host. Instead he watched him, and presently there dawned upon him the conviction that this was Tarzan of the apes, whose notice he had seen posted upon the cabin door that morning.

As if so he must speak English. Again Clayton essayed speech with the ape man, but the replies were in a strange tongue, which resembled the chattering of monkeys mingled with the growling of some wild beast.

CHAPTER X. The Forest God.

WHEN Tarzan had finished his repast he rose and, pointing in a very different direction from that which Clayton had been pursuing, started through the jungle toward the point he had indicated.

Clayton, bewildered and confused, hesitated to follow him, for he thought he was being led more deeply into the mazes of the forest, but the ape man returned and, grasping him by the coat, dragged him along until he was convinced that Clayton understood what was required of him and then left him to follow voluntarily.

The Englishman finally concluded that he was a prisoner and saw no alternative but to accompany his captor, and thus they traveled slowly through the jungle while the sable mantle of the impenetrable night of the forest fell about them.

Suddenly Clayton heard the faint report of a firearm—a single shot and then silence.

In the cabin by the beach two thoroughly terrified women clung to each other as they crouched upon the low bench in the gathering darkness.

The negro, sobbing hysterically, bemoaned the evil day that had witnessed her departure from her dear Maryland, while the white girl, dry eyed and outwardly calm, was tortured inwardly for forebodings. She feared not more for herself than for the three men whom she knew to be wandering in the abysmal depths of the jungle, from which now issued the incessant shrieks and roars, barkings and growlings of its terrifying and fearsome inmates.

Now came the sound of a heavy body brushing against the side of the cabin. She could hear the great padded paws upon the ground without. Then for an instant all was silence.

"Hush!" the girl whispered. "Hush, Esmeralda!" for the woman's sobs and groans seemed to have attracted the thing that stalked there just beyond the thin wall.

A gentle scratching sound was heard on the door. The brute tried to force an entrance, but presently this ceased, and again she heard the great padded paws creep stealthily around the cabin. Again they stopped—beneath the window, on which the terrified eyes of the girl now gazed themselves.

"Hush!" she murmured, for, silhouetted against the moonlit sky beyond, she saw framed in the tiny square of the latticed window the head of a huge tiger. The gleaming eyes were fixed upon her in tense ferocity.

"Look, Esmeralda!" she whispered. "What shall we do? Look! Quick! The window!"

Esmeralda covered still closer to her mistress and glanced alight toward the little square of moonlight just as the tiger emitted a low, savage snarl.

The sight that met the poor black's eyes was too much for the already overstrung nerves.

"Oh, Gabriel!" she shrieked and hid

to the floor, an inert and senseless mass.

For what seemed an eternity the great brute stood with its fore paws upon the sill, glaring into the little room. Presently it tried the strength of the lattice with its great talons.

The girl had almost ceased to breathe when to her relief the head disappeared and she heard the brute's footsteps leaving the window. "But now they came to the door again, and once more the scratching commenced, but this time with increasing force until the great beast was tearing at the massive panels in a perfect frenzy of fury.

Could Jane Porter have known the immense strength of that door, builded piece by piece, she would have felt less fear of the tiger reaching her by this avenue.

For fully twenty minutes the brute alternately sniffed and tore at the door, occasionally giving voice to a cry of baffled rage. At length, however, he gave up the attempt, and Jane Porter heard him returning toward the window, beneath which he paused for an instant and then launched his great weight against the time worn lattice.

The girl heard the wooden rods groan beneath the impact, but they held, and the huge body dropped back to the ground below.

Again and again the tiger repeated these tactics until finally the horrified prisoner within saw a portion of the lattice give way, and in an instant one great paw and the head of the animal were thrust within the room.

Slowly the powerful neck and shoulders were spreading the bars apart, and the lithe body came farther and farther into the room.

As in a trance the girl rose, her hand upon her breast, wide eyes staring horror stricken into the snarling face of the beast scarce ten feet from her. At her feet lay the prostrate form of the negro.

The girl, standing pale and rigid against the farther wall, sought with increasing terror for some loophole of escape. Suddenly her hand, tight pressed against her bosom, felt the hard outlines of the revolver that Clayton had left with her earlier in the day.

Quickly she snatched it from its hiding place and, leveling it full at the tiger's face, pulled the trigger.

There was a flash of flame, the roar of the discharge and an answering roar of pain and anger from the beast. Jane Porter saw the great form disappear from the window, and then she, too, fainted.

But the tiger was not killed. The bullet had but inflicted a painful wound in one of the great shoulders. In another instant he was back at the lattice and with renewed fury was clanging at the aperture, but with lessened effect, since the wounded member was almost useless.

He saw his prey—two women—lying senseless upon the floor. There was no longer any resistance to be overcome. Sabor had only to worm his way through the lattice to claim it.

Slowly he forced his great bulk, inch by inch, through the opening. Now his head was through, now one great fore leg and shoulder.

Carefully he drew up the wounded member to insinuate it gently beyond the tight pressing bars.

A moment more and both shoulders through, the long, sinuous body and the narrow hips would glide quickly after.

It was on this sight that Jane Porter again opened her eyes.

When Clayton heard the report of the firearm he fell into an agony of fear and apprehension. What were the thoughts of his strange captor or guide Clayton could only vaguely conjecture, but that he had heard the shot and was in some manner affected by it was quite evident, for he quickened his pace so appreciably that Clayton, stumbling blindly in his wake, went down.

For a moment Tarzan looked at the young man closely, as though undecided as to just what was best to do; then, stooping before Clayton, he motioned him to grasp him about the neck, and with the white man upon his back Tarzan took to the trees.

The next few minutes were such as the young Englishman never forgot. High into bending and swaying branches he was borne with what seemed to him incredible swiftness, while Tarzan chafed at the slowness of his progress.

From the first sensation of chilling fear Clayton passed to one of admiration and envy of those giant muscles, and that wondrous instinct or knowledge, which guided this forest god through the lanky blackness of the night.

Presently they came to the clearing, before the beach. Tarzan's quick ears had heard the strange sounds of Sabor's efforts to force his way through the lattice, and it seemed to Clayton that they dropped a straight hundred feet to earth so quickly did Tarzan descend. Yet when they struck the ground it was with scarce a jar, as if Clayton rejected his hold on the

ape man he saw him dart like a squirrel for the opposite side of the cabin. The Englishman sprang quickly after him just in time to see the hind quarters of some huge animal about to disappear within the cabin.

As Jane Porter opened her eyes to a realization of the again imminent peril which threatened her her brave heart gave up its final vestige of hope, and she turned to grope for the fallen



Jane Porter Raised the Weapon Against Her Own Temple.

weapon that she might mete to herself a merciful death before the cruel fangs tore at her flesh.

The tiger was almost through the window before she found the weapon, and she raised it quickly to her temple to shut out forever the hideous jaws gaping for their prey.

An instant she hesitated to breathe a short and silent prayer to her Maker, and as she did so her eyes fell upon the poor Esmeralda lying inert, but alive, beside the cupboard.

How could she leave the poor, faithful thing to those merciless yellow fangs? No, she must use one cartridge on the senseless woman ere she turned the cold muzzle toward herself again.

She shrank from the ordeal. But it would have been cruelly a thousand times less justifiable to have left the loving black woman who had reared her from infancy to regain consciousness beneath the rending claws of the tiger.

Quickly the girl sprang to her feet and ran to the side of the negro. She pressed the muzzle of the revolver tight against that devoted heart, closed her eyes, and—

The tiger emitted a frightful shriek. Jane Porter, startled, pulled the trigger and turned to face the beast, and with the same movement raised the weapon against her own temple.

She did not fire a second time. Astounded, she saw the huge beast being slowly drawn back through the window, and in the moonlight beyond she saw the heads and shoulders of two men.

As Clayton rounded the corner of the cabin to behold the animal disappearing within it was also to see the ape man seize the long black and yellow tail in both hands, and, bracing himself with his feet against the side of the cabin, throw all his mighty strength into the effort to draw the beast out of the interior.

Clayton was quick to lend a hand, but the ape man jabbered to him in a commanding and peremptory tone—orders, Clayton knew, though he could not understand them.

At last, under their combined efforts, the great body commenced to appear farther and farther without the window, and then there came to Clayton's mind a dawning conception of the rash bravery of his companion's act.

For a naked man to drag a shrieking, clawing man eater forth from a window by the tail to save a strange white girl was indeed the last word in heroism.

So far as Clayton was concerned it was a very different matter, since the girl was not only of his own kind, but was the woman whom he loved.

Tarzan was still issuing orders which Clayton could not understand.

He was trying to tell the stupid white man to plunge his poisoned arrows into Sabor's back and sides, and to reach the savage heart with the long, thin hunting knife that hung at Tarzan's hip, but the man would not understand, and Tarzan did not dare release his hold to do the things himself. He knew that the puny white man never could hold mighty Sabor lone for an instant.

Slowly the tiger was emerging from the window. At last his shoulders were out.

And then Clayton saw a thing done which not even the eternal heavens had ever seen before. Tarzan, racking his brains for some means to cope single handed with the infuriated beast, had suddenly recalled his battle with Terkoz, and as the great shoulders came clear of the window, so that the tiger hung upon the sill only by his fore paws, Tarzan suddenly released his hold upon the brute.

With incredible swiftness he launched himself full upon Sabor's back, his strong young arms seeking and gaining a full nelson upon the beast, as he had learned it that other day during his bloody victory over Terkoz.

With a shriek the tiger turned completely over upon his back, falling full upon his enemy. The black haired giant only closed tighter his hold.

Pawing and tearing at earth and air, Sabor rolled and threw himself this way and that in an effort to dislodge his antagonist. Always fighter and fighter drew the iron bands that were forcing his head lower and lower upon his white breast.

(To Be Continued.)

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