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CHAPTER III. Exit Paulvitch.

As the trainer, with raised lash, hesitated an instant at the entrance to the box where the boy and the ape confronted him, a tall, broad-shouldered man pushed past him and entered. As his eyes fell upon the newcomer a slight flash mounted the boy's cheeks.

"Father!" he exclaimed. The ape gave one look at the English lord and then leaped toward him, calling out in excited jabbering. The



The Man Stopped as Though Turned to Stone. "Akut!" He Cried.

man, his eyes going wide with astonishment, stopped as though turned to stone.

"Akut!" he cried. The boy looked bewildered, from the ape to his father, and from his father to the ape. The trainer's jaw dropped as he listened to what followed, for from the lips of the Englishman flowed the gutturals of an ape that were answered in kind by the huge anthropoid that now clung to him.

And from the wings a hideously bent and disfigured old man watched the tableau in the box. His pockmarked features working spasmodically in varying expressions that might have marked every sensation in the gamut from

"Long have I looked for you, Tarzan," said Akut. "Now that I have found you I shall come to your jungle and live there always."

The man stroked the beast's head. Through his mind was running rapidly a train of recollections that carried him far into the depths of the primeval African forest, where this huge, manlike beast had fought shoulder to shoulder with him in years before. He saw the black Mugambi wielding the deadly knob stick and beside them, with bared fangs and bristling whiskers, Sheeta the Terrible and, pressing close behind, savage as the savage panther, the hideous apes of Akut.

The man sighed. Strong within him surged the jungle lust that he had thought dead. Ah, if he could go back even for a brief month of it; to feel



Then Briefly Tarzan of the Apes Told His Son of His Early Life.

again the brush of leafy branches against his naked hide; to smell the musty rot of dead vegetation—frankincense and myrrh in the jungle-born—to sense the noiseless coming of the great carnivore upon his trail; to hunt and to be hunted; to kill!

The picture was auring. And then came another picture—a sweet-faced woman, still young and beautiful; friends; a home; a son. He shrugged his giant shoulders.

"It cannot be, Akut," he said. "But when would return I shall see that it

is done. I can not be happy here; I may not be happy there."

The trainer stepped forward. The ape bared his fangs, growling.

"Go with him, Akut," said Tarzan of the Apes. "I will come and see you tomorrow."

The beast moved sullenly to the trainer's side. The latter, at John Clayton's request, told where they might be found. Tarzan turned toward his son.

"Come," he said, and the two left the theater. Not her spouse for several minutes after they had entered the limousine. It was the boy who broke the silence.

"The ape knew you," he said, "and you spoke together in the ape's tongue. How did the ape know you, and how did you learn his language?"

And then, briefly and for the first time, Tarzan of the Apes told his son of his early life—of his birth in the jungle, of the death of his parents and of how Kala, the great she ape, had suckled and raised him from infancy almost to manhood.

He told him, too, of the danger and the horrors of the jungle—of the great beasts that stalked one by day and by night; of the periods of drought and of the cataclysmic rains; of hunger, of cold, of intense heat, of nakedness and fear and suffering.

He told him of all those things that seem most horrible to the creature of civilization in the hope that the knowledge of them might expunge from the lad's mind any inherent desire for the jungle. Yet they were the very things that made the memory of the jungle what it was to Tarzan—that made up the composite jungle life he loved.

And in the telling he forgot one thing—the principal thing—that the boy at his side, listening so eagerly, was the son of Tarzan of the Apes.

After the boy had been tucked away to bed John Clayton told his wife of the events of the evening and that he had at last acquainted the boy with the facts of his jungle life. The mother, who had long foreseen that her son must some time know of those frightful years during which his father had roamed the jungle, a naked, savage beast of prey, shook her head, hoping against hope that the lure she knew was still strong in the father's breast had not been transmitted to his son.

Tarzan visited Akut the following day, but though Jack begged to be allowed to accompany him, he was refused. This time Tarzan saw the pockmarked old owner of the ape, whom he did not recognize as the wily Paulvitch of former days. Tarzan, influenced by Akut's pleadings, broached the question of the ape's purchase, but Paulvitch would not name any price, saying that he would consider the matter.

When Tarzan returned home Jack was all excitement to hear the details of his visit, and finally suggested that his father buy the ape and bring it home. Lady Greystroke was horrified at the suggestion.

The boy was insistent. Tarzan explained that he had wished to purchase Akut and return him to his jungle home, and to this the mother assented. Jack asked to be allowed to visit the ape, but again he was met with flat refusal.

He had the address, however, which the trainer had given his father, and two days later he found the opportunity to elude his new tutor—who had replaced the terrified Mr. Moore—and after considerable search through a section of London which he had never before visited he found the smelly little quarters of the pockmarked old man.

The old fellow himself replied to his knocking, and when Jack stated that he had come to see Ajax, opened the door and admitted him to the little room which he and the great ape occupied.

At sight of the youth the ape leaped to the floor and shuffled forward. The man, not recognizing his visitor and fearing that the ape meant mischief, stepped between them, ordering the ape back to the bed.

"He will not hurt me," cried the boy. "We are friends, and before, he was my father's friend. They knew one another in the jungle. My father is Lord Grey-stoke. He does not know that I have come here. My mother forbade my coming, but I wished to see Ajax, and I will pay you if you will let me come here often to see him."

Paulvitch encouraged the boy to come and see him often, and always he played upon the lad's craving for tales of the savage world, with which Paulvitch was all too familiar. He left him alone with Akut much, and it was not long until he was surprised to learn that the boy could make the great beast understand him—that he had actually learned much of the primitive language of the anthropoids.

During this period Tarzan came several times to visit Paulvitch. He seemed anxious to purchase Ajax, and

at last he told the man frankly that he was prompted not only by a desire upon his part to return the beast to the liberty of his native jungle, but also because his wife feared that in some way her son might learn the whereabouts of the ape and through his attachment for the beast become imbued with the roving instinct which, as Tarzan explained to Paulvitch, had so influenced his own life.

The Russian could scarce repress a smile as he listened to Lord Grey-stoke's words, for scarce a half hour had passed since the future Lord Grey-stoke had been sitting upon the disordered bed, jabbering away to Ajax with all the fluency of a born ape.

It was during this interview that a plan occurred to Paulvitch, and as a result of it he agreed to accept a fabulous sum for the ape and upon receipt of the money to deliver the beast to a vessel that was sailing south from Dover for Africa two days later.

Everything played into Paulvitch's hands. As chance would have it, Tarzan's son overheard his father relating to the boy's mother the steps he was taking to return Akut safely to his jungle home, and, having overheard, he begged them to bring the ape home that he might have him for a playfellow. Tarzan would not have been averse to this plan, but Lady Grey-stoke was horrified at the very thought of it.

Jack pleaded with his mother, but all unavailingly. She was obstinate, and at last the lad appeared to acquiesce in his mother's decision that the ape must be returned to Africa and the boy to school, from which he had been absent upon a vacation.

He did not attempt to visit Paulvitch's room again that day, but instead busied himself in other ways. He had always been well supplied with money, so that when necessity demanded he had no difficulty in collecting several hundred pounds.

Some of this money he invested in various strange purchases, which he managed to smuggle into the house undetected when he returned late in the afternoon.

The next morning, after giving his father time to precede him and conclude his business with Paulvitch, the lad hastened to the Russian's room. Knowing nothing of the man's true character, the boy dared not take him fully into his confidence for fear that the old fellow would not only refuse his aid, but would report the whole affair to his father.

Instead, he simply asked permission to take Ajax to Dover. He explained that it would relieve the old man of a tiresome journey, as well as placing a number of pounds in his pocket, for the lad purposed paying the Russian well.

"You see," he went on, "there will be no danger of detection, since I am supposed to be leaving on an afternoon train for school. Instead I will come here after they've left me on the train. Then I can take Ajax to Dover, you see, and arrive at school only a day late. No one will be the wiser, no harm will be done, and I shall have had an extra day with Ajax before I lose him forever."

That afternoon Lord and Lady Grey-stoke bade their son good-bye and saw him safely settled in a first class compartment of the railway carriage that would set him down at school in a few hours. No sooner had they left him, however, than he gathered his bugs together, descended from the compartment and sought a cab stand outside the station. Here he engaged a caddy to take him to the Russian's address.

It was dusk when he arrived. He found Paulvitch awaiting him. The man was pacing the floor nervously.

The ape was tied with a stout cord to the bed. It was the first time that Jack had ever seen Ajax thus secured. He looked questioningly at Paulvitch. The man mumblingly explained that he believed the animal had guessed that he was to be sent away and that he feared he would attempt to escape.

Paulvitch carried another piece of cord in his hand. There was a noose in one end of it, which he was continually playing with. He walked back and forth, up and down the room. His pockmarked features were working horribly as he talked silently to himself. The boy had never seen him thus. It made him uneasy.

At last Paulvitch stopped on the opposite side of the room far from the ape.

"Come here," he said to the lad. "I will show you how to secure the ape should he show signs of rebellion during the trip."

The lad laughed. "It will not be necessary," he replied. "Ajax will do whatever I tell him to do."

The old man stamped his foot angrily. "Come here, I tell you," he repeated. "If you do not do as I say you shall not accompany the ape to Dover. I will take no chances upon his escaping."

Still smiling, the lad crossed the room and stood before the Russ.

"Turn around, with your back toward me," directed the latter, "so I can show you how to bind him quickly."

The boy did as he was bid, placing his hands behind him when Paulvitch told him to do so. Instantly the old man slipped the running noose over one of the lad's wrists, took a couple of half hitches about his other wrist and knotted the cord. The moment that the boy was secured the attitude of the man changed. He had known and bitterly hated Tarzan in Africa years before, for Tarzan had broken up his business as a slave dealer. Now, with an angry oath, he wheeled Tarzan's son about, tripped him and hurled him violently to the floor, leaping upon his breast as he fell. From the bed the ape growled and struggled with his bonds.

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... boy did not cry out that he inherited from his savage sire, who during years in the jungle following the death of his foster mother, Kala, the great ape, had learned that there was none to come to the succor of the fallen.

Paulvitch's fingers sought the lad's throat. He grinned down horribly into the face of his victim.

"Your father ruined me," he mumbled. "This will pay him. He will think that the ape did it. I will tell him that the ape did it; that I left him alone for a few minutes and that you sneaked in and the ape killed you. I will throw your body upon the bed after I have choked the life out of you, and when I bring your father he will see the ape squatting over it," and the twisted fiend cackled in gloating laughter.

His fingers closed upon the boy's throat.

Behind them the growling of the maddened beast reverberated against the walls of the little room. The boy paled, but no other sign of fear or panic showed upon his countenance. He was the son of Tarzan. The fingers tightened their grip upon his throat. It was with difficulty that he breathed—gaspingly.

The ape lunged against the stout cord that held him. Turning, he wrapped the cord about his hands, as



His Hideous Face Went White in Terror—The Ape Was Free!

a man might have done, and surged heavily backward. The great muscles stood out beneath his shaggy hide.

There was a rending as of splintered wood—the cord held, but a portion of the footboard of the bed came away.

At the sound Paulvitch looked up. His hideous face went white in terror—the ape was free!

(Continued next week.)

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