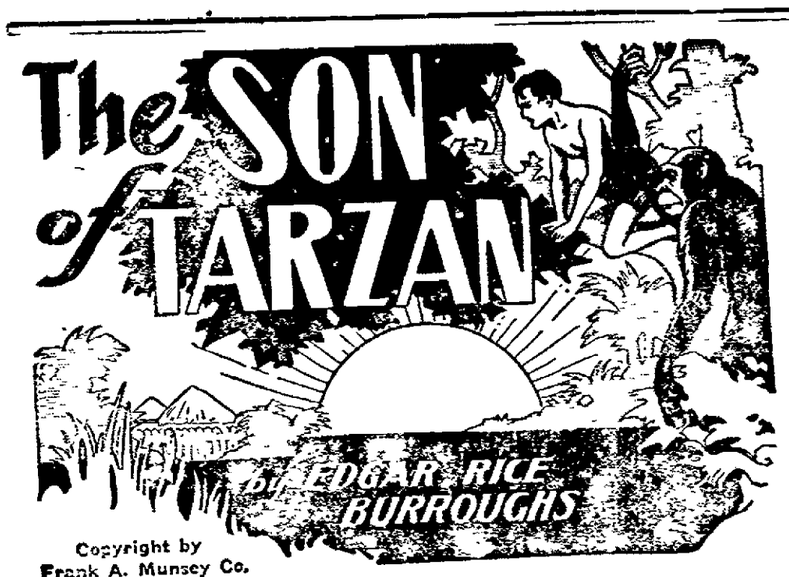

Copyright by
Frank A. Munsey Co.

Meriem walked on toward the bungalow, upon the porch of which a woman, dressed in white, waved a welcome to her returning lord. There was more fear in the girl's eyes now than there had been in the presence of strange men or savage beasts. She hesitated, turning an appealing glance toward the man.

"That is my wife," he said. "She will be glad to welcome you."

The woman came down the path to meet them. The man kissed her and,

She Buried Her Face on the Bosom of This New Friend.

turning toward Meriem, introduced them, speaking in the Arab tongue the girl understood.

"This is Meriem, my dear," he said, and told the story of the jungle waif so far as he knew it.

Meriem saw that the woman was beautiful. She saw that sweetness and goodness were stamped indelibly upon her countenance. She no longer feared her, and when her brief story had been narrated and the woman came and put her arms about her and kissed her and called her "poor little darling" something snapped in Meriem's heart.

She buried her face on the bosom of this new friend, in whose voice was the mother tone that Meriem had not heard for so many years that she had forgotten its very existence. She buried her face on the kindly bosom and wept as she had not wept before in all her life—tears of relief and joy that she could not fathom.

And so came Meriem, the savage little Mangani, out of her beloved jungle into the midst of a home of culture and refinement. Already "Bwana" and "my dear," as she first heard them called and continued to call them, were as father and mother to her.

Once her savage fears were allayed she went to the opposite extreme of trustfulness and love. Now she was willing to wait here until they found Korak or Korak found her. She did not give up that thought. Korak, her Korak, was always first.

* * * * * * * *

And out in the jungle, far away, Korak, covered with wounds, stiff with clotted blood, burning with rage and sorrow, as soon as sufficient strength returned swung back upon the trail of the great baboons. He did not find them where he had last seen them nor in any of their usual haunts, but he sought them along the well-marked spoor they had left behind them, and at last he overtook them.

He persuaded them to aid him in rescuing Meriem and attacking the village of Kovudoo, calling to mind how he had saved their king. And so they came, upon the second day, to the village of Kovudoo. It was midafternoon. The village was sunk in the quiet of the great equatorial sun heat. The mighty herd traveled quietly now. Beneath the thousands of padded feet the forest gave forth no greater sound than might have been produced by the increased soughing of a stronger breeze through the leafy branches of the trees.

Korak was in the lead. Close beside the village they halted until the stragglers had closed up. Now utter silence reigned.

The king of the baboons was anxious to revenge himself upon Kovudoo, and so the band was quickly organized.

Korak, creeping stealthily, entered the tree that overhung the palisade. He glanced [illegible]. The [illegible] was close upon [illegible]. The time had come. He had [illegible] and the [illegible] anxiously during the long march that no harm must befall [illegible] ape who lay a prisoner in the village. All others were their legitimate prey.

Then, raising his face toward the sky, he gave voice to a single cry. It was the signal.

In response 3,000 hairy bulls leaped screaming and barking into the village of the terrified blacks. Warriors poured from every hut. Mothers gathered their babies in their arms and fled toward the gates as they saw the horrid horde pouring into the village street. Kovudoo marshaled his fighting men about him and, leaping and yelling to arouse their courage, offered a bristling, spear-tipped front to the charging horde.

Korak, as he had led the march, led the charge. The blacks were struck with horror and dismay at the sight of this white-skinned youth at the head of a pack of hideous baboons.

For an instant they held their ground, hurling their spears once at the advancing multitude. But before they could fit arrows to their bows they wavered, gave and turned in terrified rout. Into their ranks, upon their backs, sinking strong fangs into the muscles of their necks, sprang the baboons, and first among them, most ferocious, most bloodthirsty, most terrible, was Korak, the Killer.

At the village gates, through which the blacks poured in panic, Korak left them to the tender mercies of his allies and turned himself eagerly toward the hut in which Meriem had been a prisoner.

It was empty. One after another the filthy interiors revealed the same disheartening fact—Meriem was in none of them. That she had not been taken by the blacks in their flight from the village Korak knew, for he had watched carefully for glimpse of her among the fugitives.

To the mind of the ape man, knowing as he did the proclivities of the savages, there was but a single explanation—Meriem had been killed and eaten. With the conviction that Meriem was dead, there surged through Korak's brain a wave of blood-red rage against those he believed to be her murderers. In the distance he could hear the snarling of the baboons mixed with the screams of their victims, and toward this he made his way.

In the distance Kovudoo was gathering his scattered tribesmen and taking account of injuries and losses. His people were panic-stricken. Nothing could prevail upon them to remain longer in this country. They would not even return to the village for their belongings. Instead they insisted upon continuing their flight until they had put many miles between themselves and the stamping ground of the white demon whose hordes had so bitterly attacked them.

And thus it befell that Korak drove from their homes the only people who might have aided him in a search for Meriem and cut off the only connecting link between him and her from whomsoever might come in search of him from the douar of the kindly Bwana who had befriended his little jungle sweetheart.

It was a sour and savage Korak who bid farewell to his baboon allies upon the following morning. They wished him to accompany them, but the ape man had no heart for society. Jungle life had encouraged taciturnity in him. His sorrow had deepened this to a sullen moroseness that could not brook even the savage companionship of the ill-natured baboons.

Brooding and despondent, he took his solitary way into the deepest jungle. He moved along the ground when he knew that Numa was abroad and hungry. He took to the same trees that harbored Sheeta, the panther. He courted death in a hundred ways and a hundred forms. His mind was ever occupied with reminiscences of Meriem and the happy years that they had spent together.

He realized now to the full what she had meant to him. The sweet face, the tanned, supple little body, the bright smile that always had welcomed his return from the hunt, haunted him continually.

Inaction soon threatened him with madness. He must be on the go. He must fill his days with labor and excitement that he might forget—that night might find him so exhausted that he should sleep in blessed unconsciousness of his misery until a new day had come.

Had he guessed that by any possibility Meriem might still live he would at least have had hope. His days could have been devoted to searching for her, but he believed implicitly that she was dead.

For a long year he led his solitary, roaming life. Occasionally he fell in with Akut and his tribe, hunting with them for a day or two, or he might travel to the hill country, where the baboons had come to accept him as a matter of course. But most of all was he with Tantor, the elephant—that great gray [illegible]ship of the jungle, the superior [illegible]aught of his savage world.

The peaceful quiet of the monster bulls, the watchful solicitude of the mother cows, the awkward playfulness of the calves, rested, interested and amused Korak. The life of the huge beasts took his mind temporarily from his own grief. He came to love them as he loved not even the great apes, and there was one gigantic tusker in particular of which he was very fond—

He Wound His Trunk About the Ape Man's Body.

the lord of the herd, a savage beast that was wont to charge a stranger upon the slightest provocation or upon no provocation whatsoever.

And to Korak this mountain of destruction was as docile and affectionate as a lapdog.

He came when Korak called. He wound his trunk about the ape man's body and lifted him to his broad neck in response to a gesture, and there would Korak lie at full length, kicking his toes affectionately into the thick hide and brushing the flies from about the tender ears of his colossal chum with a leafy branch torn by Tantor from a nearby tree.

And all the while Meriem was scarce a hundred miles away!

CHAPTER XI.
A Lion and a Lamb.

To Meriem, in her new home, the days passed quickly. At first she was all anxiety to be off into the jungle searching for her Korak.

Bwana, as she insisted upon calling her benefactor, dissuaded her from making the attempt at once by dispatching a head man with a party of blacks to Kovudoo's village, with instructions to learn from the old savage how he came into possession of the white girl and as much of her antecedents as might be culled from the black chieftain. Bwana particularly charged his head man with the duty of questioning Kovudoo relative to the strange character whom the girl called Korak and of searching for the ape man if he found the slightest evidence upon which to ground a belief in the existence of such an individual.

The white man's wife, whom Meriem had christened "My Dear" from having first heard her thus addressed by Bwana, took not only a deep interest in the little jungle waif because of her forlorn and friendless state, but grew to love her as well for her sunny disposition and natural charm of temperament. And Meriem, similarly impressed by like attributes in the gentle, cultured woman, reciprocated the other's regard and affection.

And so the days flew by while Meriem waited the return of the head man and his party from the country of Kovudoo. They were short days, for into them were crowded many hours of insidious instruction of the unlettered child by the lonely woman.

She commenced at once to teach the girl English without forcing it upon her as a task. She varied the instruction with lessons in sewing and deportment, nor once did she let Meriem guess that it was not all play. Nor was this difficult, since the girl was avid to learn.

Then there were pretty dresses to be made to take the place of the single leopard skin, and in this she found the child as responsive and enthusiastic as any civilized miss of her acquaintance.

A month passed before the head man returned, a month that had transformed the savage, little, half-naked Mangani into a daintily frocked girl of at least outward civilization. Meriem had progressed rapidly with the intricacies of the English language, for Bwana and My Dear persistently refused to speak Arabic from the time they had decided that Meriem must learn English, which had been a day or two after her introduction into their home.

But, docile as Meriem was in these matters, there was one thing that she insisted on during her entire stay with the kind white folk, and that was her personal freedom to make excursions into the jungle, attired very much as she had been when with Korak, whenever she chose. Bwana and My Dear got used in time to finding her room empty and to have her turn up hours later, flushed and radiant, after a wild romp through the trees and jungle.

Thus it was that, despite the civilized boots she wore and the confining feminine garb, the soles of her hard little feet and the palms of her capable hands remained exceedingly serviceable, nor did her grace and agility suffer.

The report of the head man plunged Meriem into a period of despondency, for he had found the village of Kovudoo deserted, nor, search as he would, could he discover a single native anywhere in the vicinity. For some time he had camped near the village spending the days in a systematic search of the environs for traces of Meriem's Korak. But in this quest, too, he had failed. He had seen neither apes nor ape man.

Meriem at first insisted upon setting forth herself in search of Korak, but [illegible] would go, he assured her, as soon as he could find the time, and at last Meriem consented to abide by his wishes. But it was months before she ceased to mourn almost hourly for her Korak.

It was about this time that a runner brought a letter that, when she learned the contents, filled Meriem with excitement. Visitors were coming! A number of English ladies and gentlemen had accepted My Dear's invitation to spend a month of hunting and exploring with them.

Meriem was all expectancy. What would these strangers be like? Would they be as nice to her as had Bwana and My Dear, or would they be like the other white folk she had known—cruel and relentless? My Dear assured her that they all were gentlefolk and that she would find them kind, considerate and honorable.

At last the visitors arrived. There were three men and two women—the wives of the two older men. The youngest member of the party was Hon. Morison Baynes, a young man of considerable wealth, who, having exhausted all the possibilities for pleasure offered by the capitals of Europe, had gladly seized upon this opportunity to turn to another continent for excitement and adventure.

Nature had favored him with a splendid physique and a handsome face and also with sufficient good judgment to appreciate that, while he might enjoy the contemplation of his superiority to the masses, there was little likelihood of the masses being equally entranced by the same cause. And so he easily maintained the reputation of being a most democratic and likable fellow, and, indeed, he was likable. Just a shade of his egotism was occasionally apparent—never sufficient to become a burden to his associates.

And this, briefly, was the Hon. Morison Baynes of luxurious European civilization. What would be the Hon. Morison Baynes of central Africa it were difficult to guess.

Meriem at first was shy and reserved in the presence of strangers. Her benefactors had seen fit to ignore mention of her strange past, and so she passed as their ward, whose antecedents, not having been mentioned, were not to be inquired into. The guests found her sweet and unassuming, laughing, vivacious and a never-exhausted storehouse of quaint and interesting jungle lore.

The Hon. Morison Baynes found Meriem a most beautiful and charming companion. He was delighted with her from the first, particularly so, it is possible, because he had not thought to find companionship of this sort upon the African estate of his London friends. They were together a great deal, as they were the only unmarried couple in the little company.

Meriem, entirely unaccustomed to the companionship of such as Baynes, was fascinated by him. His tales of the great, civilized world which he was familiar filled her with admiration and with wonder. [illegible] Hon. Morison always [illegible] to accept [illegible] in these narratives, Meriem saw in that fact but a natural consequence to his presence upon the scene of his story. Whereof or Meriem it never [illegible] he must be a hero, so thought the girl.

With the added presence and companionship of the young Englishman the image of Korak became less real. Where before it had been an actuality to her, she now realized that Korak was but a memory. To that memory she still was loyal. But what would be a memory in the [illegible]

(Continued next week.)

WEST INDIANA MOTOR CO.

Authorized Chevrolet Agent

—THE ECONOMICAL CAR—

SALES AND SERVICE
EXPERT REPAIR MECHANICS
COMPLETE STOCK OF PARTS

—AGENCY FOR—

Armstrong, White, Buffington
Brushvalley, Center, Young
And Parts of Washington
Rayne and Cherryhill
Townships

Conemaugh, Blacklick, Burrell,
East and West Wheatfield

TELEPHONE { Bell 9278
Local 309w

HARRY S. HOUK, Mgr.
Indiana, Pa.

Direct the Spotlight of Publicity on Your Store

In other words "Tell the People what you are doing."

You cannot expect people to come and ask you your business---especially when so many other firms are anxious for their trade and tell them so.

To help our advertisers to present their merchandise to the people of this community in an attractive and convincing way we have placed at their command the entire resources of the Bonnet-Brown Sales Service, an organization that produces the best in Advertising Copy and Illustrations.

We would be glad of an opportunity to show you how this Service can be fitted to your needs.

MESSENGER PUBLISHING COMPANY

Horses and Mules.

Do you want to raise a horse or mule for your own use or one that will sell for the high dollar? Get interested in breeding Percherons with style, substance and finish that we get a ton or light draft mules, the big kind, with bone and finish. For full [illegible] call at the Blackmore Valley Farms, Dilltown, Indiana County, Pa. 3-11-1[illegible]

AUDITOR'S NOTICE.

[illegible]

To Mail Coins.

A safe and handy method of inclosing small coins in letters, if you do not happen to have the regular coin holder at hand is to use a piece of corrugated cardboard, such as may be found in discarded wrappings, cartons, boxes, etc. Simply cut a slit in one side of the corrugated board, push the coin in and press it down flat, says Albert B. Wegener in Popular Mechanics Magazine. Be sure to write on the edge of the cardboard, "Coin inside" or "Money inside the card," so that the receiver can readily find the coin between the sides.

NOTICE OF APPLICATION TO DISSOLVE CORPORATION.

Notice is hereby given that appli[illegible] will be made to the Court of Common Pleas of Indiana County, Monday, June 7, 1920, for dissolution of [illegible] HOUK [illegible] CHEVROLET [illegible] under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

THOMAS SUTTON
Solicitor

5-20-3[illegible]

NEWSPAPERARCHIVE®
NEWSPAPERARCHIVE®