

TARZAN OF THE APES

The Thrilling Adventures of a Primeval Man and an American Girl

By EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS

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John Clayton, Lord Greystoke, embarks with his young wife, Jane Porter, on the steamer "Puritan" for British West Africa, where he is to assume a colonial position. The steamer is attacked by a man-eating ape, and after his wife has been slain, Clayton escapes by a narrow margin. A year later Clayton is eventually killed by the ape which he had slain. Clayton's body is captured by a tribe of apes, whose one purpose is to kill him. He is brought up in the way of the apes. Clayton is eventually killed by the ape which he had slain. Clayton's body is captured by a tribe of apes, whose one purpose is to kill him. He is brought up in the way of the apes.

With the subsidence of Esmeralda the lioness renewed her efforts to wriggle her huge bulk through the weakening lattice. The girl, standing pale and rigid against the further wall, sought with ever-increasing terror for some loop-hole of escape. Suddenly she felt the hard outline of the revolver that Clayton had left with her earlier in the day. Quickly she snatched it from its hiding-place and, feeling it fall at the lioness'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. Clayton saw the great form disappear suddenly from the window, and then, faintly, the revolver falling at her side. But Sabor was not killed. The bullet had but inflicted a painful wound in one of the great shoulders. It was the surprise at the blinding flash and the deafening roar that had caused her hasty, though but temporary, retreat. In another instant she was back at the lattice, and with renewed fury was clawing at the aperture, which with lessened effect, since the wounded member was almost useless.

CHAPTER XV. THE FOREST GOD. When Clayton heard the report of the firearm he fell into an agony of fear and apprehension. He knew that one of the lions might be the author of it; but the fact that he had left the revolver with Jane Porter, together with the overwrought condition of his nerves, made him doubtfully positive that she was threatened with some great danger, perhaps even now attempting to defend herself against some savage man or beast. 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, was down a dozen times in as many minutes in a vain effort to keep pace with him, and soon was left hopelessly behind.

CHAPTER XVI. (Continued). "Hush," she 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 pads creeping stealthily around the window. Again they stopped—beneath the window on which the terrified eyes of the girl now glared themselves. "God!" she murmured, for now, without aid against the moonlight, she saw the lioness, the tiny square of the lattice window the head of a huge lioness. The gleaming eyes were fixed upon her in intent ferocity.

"Look, Esmeralda," she whispered. "God's name, what shall we do? Look! Quick! The window!" Esmeralda, covering still closer to her mistress, took one terrified glance toward the little square of moonlight, just as the lioness smitten in her ear. The light that met the poor black's eyes was too much for the already overstrung nerves. "Oh, Gabriel!" she shrieked, and slid to the floor an inert and senseless mass. For what seemed a long time 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 the 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; this time with increasing force until the great beast was tearing at the massive panels in a perfect frenzy of eagerness to seize its defenseless victims.

Could Jane Porter have known the immense strength of that door, builded piece by piece, she would have felt less fear of the lioness reaching her by this avenue. Little did John Clayton imagine when he fashioned that crude but mighty portal that one day, 20 years later, it would save a fair American girl from the teeth and talons of a man-eating ape. For fully 20 minutes the brute alternately sniffed and tore at the door, occasionally giving voice to a wild, savage cry of baffled rage. At length, however, she gave up the attempt, and Jane Porter heard her returning toward the window, beneath which she paused for an instant, and then launched her 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 lioness repeated these tactics, until finally the terrified 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. Swiftly the powerful neck and shoulders spread the hair apart, and the little body protruded further and further into the room. As in a trance, the girl rose, her hand to her breast, wide eyes staring horror-stricken into the smiling face of the beast scarce 10 feet from her. At her feet lay the prostrate form of the negro. If she could but arouse her, they could back the fangs and blood-thirsty intruder. Jane Porter stood with a gasp, and the woman by the shoulder. Roughly she shook her.

"Esmeralda! Esmeralda!" she cried. "This one, or we are lost!" Esmeralda slowly opened her eyes. The first object they encountered was the dripping fangs of the hungry lioness. With a horrified scream the poor woman was to her hands and knees, and in this position she crawled across the room, shrieking, "Oh Gabriel! Oh Gabriel!" at the end of her lungs. Esmeralda weighed some 250 pounds, and she weighed nothing the gazelle-like lioness. She did not even stagger, and to her extreme haste, and to her extreme composure, produced a most unusual result when Esmeralda elected to crawl on all fours.

At a moment the lioness remained with its intense gaze directed upon the young Esmeralda, whose goal appeared to be the cupboard, into which she attempted to propel her huge bulk; but, as she advanced, but nine or ten inches she only succeeded in getting her head and shoulders, with a final shriek, into the cupboard, where she fastened her claws, and she fastened once again.

the ape-man jabbered to him in a commanding and peremptory tone something which Clayton knew to be orders, 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.

In so far as Clayton was concerned it was a very different matter, since the girl was not only of his own kind and race, but was the one woman in all the world whom he loved. Though he knew that the lioness would make short work of both of them, he pulled with a will to keep it from Jane Porter. And then he recalled the battle between this man and the great, black-maned lion which he had witnessed a short time before, and he commenced to feel more assurance.

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 thing himself, for he knew that the puny white man never could hold mighty Sabor alone, for an instant. Slowly the lioness was emerging from the window. At last her 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 lioness hung upon the sill only by her forepaws, Tarzan suddenly released his hold upon the brute. With the quickness of a striking rattler 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, wrestling victory over Terkoz. With a shriek the lioness turned completely over upon her back, falling full upon her enemy; but the black-haired giant only closed tighter his hold.

Fawing and tearing at earth and air, Sabor rolled and threw himself this way and that in an effort to dislodge this strange antagonist; but ever tighter and tighter drew the iron bands that were forcing her head lower and lower upon her tawny breast. Higher crept the steel forearms of the ape-man about the back of Sabor's neck. Weaker and weaker became the lioness's efforts.

At last Clayton saw the immense muscles of Tarzan's shoulders and hips leap into corded knots beneath the silver moonlight. There was a long sustained and supreme effort on the ape-man's part—and the vertebrae of Sabor's neck parted with a sharp snap. In an instant Tarzan was upon his feet, and for the second time that day Clayton heard the bull ape's savage roar of victory. Then he heard Jane Porter's agonized cry: "Ocell—Mr. Clayton! Oh, what is it? What is it?"

Running quickly to the cabin door, Clayton called out that all was right, and bade her open. As quickly as she could she raised the great bar and fairly dragged Clayton within. "What was that awful noise?" she whispered, shrinking close to him. "It was the cry of the kill from the throat of the man who has just saved your life, Miss Porter. Wait, I will fetch him that you may thank him." The frightened girl would not be left alone, so she accompanied Clayton to the side of the cabin where lay the dead body of the lioness.

Tarzan of the Apes was gone. Clayton called several times, but there was no reply, and so the two returned to the greater safety of the interior. "What a frightful sound!" cried Jane Porter. "I shudder at the mere thought of it. Do not tell me that human throat voiced that hideous and fearsome shriek." "But it did, Miss Porter," replied Clayton; "or at least it not a human throat that of a forest god." And then he told her of his experiences with this strange creature—of how twice the wild man had saved his life—of the wondrous strength, and agility, and bravery—of the brown skin and the handsome face.

"I cannot make it out at all," he concluded. "At first I thought he might be Tarzan of the Apes; but he neither speaks nor understands English, so that theory is impossible." "Well, whatever he may be," cried the girl, "we owe him our lives, and may God bless him and keep him in safety in his wild and savage jungle!" "Amen," said Clayton, fervently. "By the good Lord's sake, ain't he daid?" (CONTINUED TOMORROW.)

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