

THE BROAD HIGHWAY

A Tale of 19th Century England, Full of the Thrills of Adventure and Spirit of Romance
BOOK II.
CHAPTER XXXIX—(Continued).

BY JEFFERY FARNOL

THE BEASTS OF TARZAN

By EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS

ANOTHER STORY ABOUT THE FAMOUS "APE-MAN"

Why is "Tarzan of the Apes" the most popular figure in the fiction of today? Why should a character who is half man, half brute so in gross the reading public? Why should the primitive impulses of this creature awaken such an inexhaustible interest, and project into popular favor this highly imaginative personality as he is understood by Edgar Rice Burroughs, the novelist who is responsible for him?

Probably the thing that makes Tarzan king to us all is the fact that in his powerful breast a heart pulsed with a passion stirred by ferocity and tenderness. If you would go again with Tarzan into the jungle, begin this story.

Tarzan crept into public notice through the pages of the Evening Ledger where thousands of readers have followed him in his adventures through the jungle. The story, which begins tomorrow in these columns, is a fitting sequel to his Ape-man's former extraordinary exploits in "Tarzan of the Apes," and "The Return of Tarzan."

plato, and a bullet sang over my head; and then I knew they were after me, for I could hear the patter of their feet upon the hard road.

Now, as I ran, my brain cleared, but the only nerve that appreciated the difficulty of eluding men so seasoned and hardy as my pursuers; moreover, the handcuffs galled my wrists, and the short connecting chain hampered my movements considerably, and I saw that, upon this straight level, I must soon be run down, or shot from behind.

Glancing back, I beheld them some hundred yards or so away, elbows in, heads up, running with that long, free stride that speaks of endurance. I increased the pace, the ground flew beneath me, but when I glanced again, though the man Bob had dropped back, the saturnine Jeremy ran on, no nearer, but no farther than before.

Now, as I went, I presently espied that for which I had looked—a gate set in the midst of the hedge, but it was closed, and never did a gate, before or since, come open so high and insurmountable, but, with the desperation of despair, I turned, ran at it and sprang, swinging my arms above my head as I did so. My foot grazed the top bar—down I came, slipped, stumbled, regained my balance, and ran on over the springy turf. I heard a crash behind me, an oath, a second pistol barked, and immediately it seemed that a hot iron seared my forearm, and glancing down, I saw the skin cut and bleeding, but, finding it no worse, breathed a sigh of thankfulness and ran on.

By that leap I had probably gained some twenty yards; I would nurse my strength, therefore, if I could once gain the woods! How far off were they?—half a mile, a mile?—well, I could run that easily, thanks to my hardy life.

Stay! what was that sound behind me—the fall of flying feet, or the throbbing of my own heart? I turned, and lo! the man Jeremy was within ten yards of me—lean and spare, his head thrust forward, he ran with the long, easy stride of a greyhound.

So it was to be a question of endurance? Well, I had caught my second wind by now. I set my teeth and, clenching my fists, lengthened my stride.

And now, indeed, the real struggle began. My pursuer had long ago abandoned his rifle, but his boots were thick and clammy than those I wore; but then, again, my confining shackles seemed to contract my chest; and the handcuffs galled my wrists cruelly.

On I went, scattering flocks of scampering sheep, past meditating cows, who started up, puffing out snorts of perfume; scrambling through hedges, over gate and stile and ditch, with eyes upon the distant woods full of the purple gloom of evening, and, in my ears, the muffled thud! thud! thud! of the pursuit.

On, and ever on, climbing steep uplands, plunging down precipitous slopes, past brawling brooks and silent pools all red and gold with sunset, past oak and ash and thorn—on and on, with ever those thudding footfalls close behind. And, as we ran, it seemed to me that our feet beat out a kind of cadence—his heavy shoes and my lighter ones.

Thud! thud!—pad! pad!—thud! thud!—pad! pad! until they would suddenly become confused and mingle with each other.

One moment it seemed that I almost loved the fellow and the next that I bitterly hated him. Whether I had gained or not, I could not tell; to look back was to lose ground.

The woods were close now, so close that I fancied I heard the voice of their myriad leaves calling to me—encouraging me. But my breath, as passing thick and short, my stride was less sure, my wrists were raw and bleeding, and the ceaseless jingle of my chain maddened me.

Thud!—thud!—untiring, persistent—thud!—thud!—the pulse at my temples throbbing in time with it, my breath panting to it. And surely it was nearer, more distinct—yes, he had gained on me in the last half-mile—but how much? I cast a look over my shoulder; it was but a glance, yet I saw that he had lessened the distance between us by half. His face shone with sweat—his mouth was a line—his nostrils broad and expanded—his eyes staring and shot with blood, but he ran on with the same long easy stride that was slowly but surely wearing me down.

We were descending a long, grassy slope, and I stumbled, more than once, and rolled in my course, but on came those remorseless footfalls—thud!—thud!—thud!—strong and sure as ever.

He was nearing me fast—he was close upon me—closer—within reach of me. I could hear his whistling breaths, and then, all at once, I was down on hands and knees; he tried to avoid me, failed, and, shooting high over me, thudded down upon the grass.

For a moment he lay still, then, with a groan, he rolled over and, propping himself on his arm, thrust a hand into his bosom; but I hurried myself upon him and, after a brief struggle, twisted the pistol from his grasp, whereupon he groaned again.

"Hurt! I said.

"Hurt! I think," he growled, and forthwith burst into a torrent of curses.

"Does it hurt—so much?" I panted.

"Ah! but it—ain't that," he panted back; "it's me—a lettin' of you—work off a moidy-old trick on me—like that there—"

"It was my only chance," said I, sitting down beside him to regain my wind.

"To think," he growled, "o' me bein' took in by a—"

"But you are a great runner!" he said in a great voice, you mean, to be took in by—"

"You have a long walk back, and your arm will be painful—"

"And serve me right for bein' took in by—"

which, he nodded, turned upon his heel, and strode away, cursing to himself.

Now, presently, as I went, I heard the merry ring and clink of hammer and anvil, and, guided by the sound, came to a tumbledown smithy where was a man busily at work with a shock-headed boy at the bellows. At sight of me the smith set down his hammer and stared open-mouthed, as did also the shock-headed boy.

"How long would it take you to file off these shackles?" I inquired, holding out my hands.

"To file 'em off?"

"Yes, that—that depends—"

"Then do it—as soon as you can." Upon this, the man turned his back to me and began rummaging among his tools, with his head very near that of the shock-headed boy, until, having found a file suitable to the purpose, he set to work upon my handcuffs. But he progressed so slowly, for one reason and another, that I began to grow impatient; moreover, noticing that the shock-headed boy had disappeared, I had a suspicion that "A cold chisel and hammer will be quickest," said I; "come, cut me off this chain—here, close up to the rivets." And, when he had done this, I took his file, and, trusting it beneath my coat, set off, running my hardest, leaving him to stare after me, with his eyes and mouth wider than ever.

The sun was down when I reached the woods, and here, in the kind shadows, I stayed a while to rest, and rid myself of my handcuffs; but when I felt for the file to do so—it was gone.

CHAPTER XLII

JUSTLY to narrate all that befell me during my flight and journey to London would fill many pages, and, therefore, as this book of mine is already of a magnitude far beyond my first expectations, I shall hurry on to the end of my story.

Acting upon the advice of the saturnine Jeremy, I lay hidden by day and traveled by night, avoiding the highway. But in so doing I became so often involved in the maze of cross-roads, byways, cow-paths and cart-tracks that twice the dawn found me as completely lost as though I had been set down in the midst of the Sahara. I thus wasted much time and wandered many miles, making my escape, wherefore, to put an end to these futile ramblings I set my face westward, hoping to strike the high road somewhere between Tonbridge and Sevenoaks; determined rather to run the extra chance of capture than follow haphazard these tortuous and interminable byways.

It was, then, upon the third night since my escape that, faint and spent with hunger, I saw before me the welcome sight of a finger-post, and, hurrying forward, eager to learn my whereabouts, came full upon a man who sat beneath the finger-post, with a hunch of bread and meat upon his knee, which he was eating by means of a clasp-knife.

Now, I had tasted nothing save two apples all day, and but little the day before—thus, at sight of this appetizing food, my hunger grew, and increased to the point of desire before which prudence vanished and caution flew away. Therefore, I approached the man, with my eyes upon his bread and meat.

But, as I drew nearer, my attention was attracted by something white that was nailed up against the finger-post, and I stopped dead, with my eyes riveted by a word printed in great black capitals, and stood oblivious alike of the man who had stopped eating to stare at me and the bread and meat that he had set down upon the grass; for what I saw was this:

G. R. MURDER

REWARD
Whereas, PETER SMITH, black-smith, late of SISSINGHURST, in the county of Kent, suspected of the crime of WILFUL MURDER, did, upon the Tenth of August last, make his escape from his gaolers, upon the Tonbridge road, somewhere between SISSINGHURST and PEMBRAY; the above REWARD, namely, FIVE HUNDRED POUNDS, will be paid to any person or persons who shall give such INFORMATION as shall lead to the ARREST, and APPREHENSION of the aforesaid PETER SMITH; in the furtherance of which, he is hereto added a just and close description of the same—VIZ—He is six foot tall, and a sizable ROGUE. His hair, black, his eyes dark and piercing. Clad, when last seen, in a worn velvet jacket, knee-breeches buckled at the knees, gray worsted stockings, and patched shoes. The coat TORN at the RIGHT shoulder. Upon his wrists, a pair of steel HANDCUFFS. Last seen in the vicinity of PEMBRAY.

While I yet stared at this, I was conscious that the man had risen, and now stood at my elbow; also, that in one hand he carried a short, heavy stick. He stood very still, and with bent head, apparently absorbed in the printed words before him, but more than once I saw his eyes gleam in the shadow of his hat-brim, as they turned to scan me furtively up and down. Yet he did not speak or move, and there was something threatening in his immobility.

Wherefore I, in turn, watched him narrowly from the corner of my eye, and thus it chanced that our glances met.

"You seem thoughtful," said I.

"Ah—I be that."

"And what might you be thinking?"

"Why—since you ax me, I was thinkin' as your eye was mighty sharp and piercin'."

"Ah," said I; "and what more?"

"That you coat was tore at the shoulder."

"So it is," I nodded; "well?"

"You likewise wears buckled breeches, and gray worsted stockings."

"You are a very observant man," said I. "Though, to be sure," said he, shaking his head, "I don't see no 'andcuffs.'"

"That is because they are hidden under my sleeves."

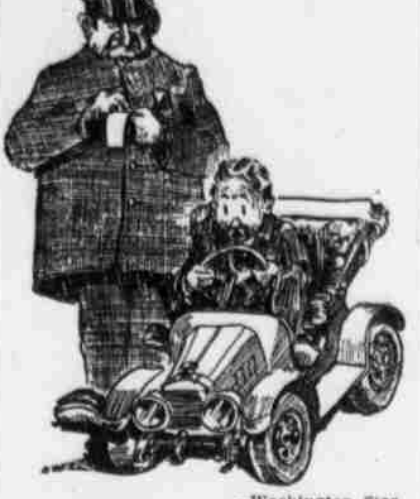
"Ah—ah!" said he, and I saw the stick quiver in his grip.

"As I said before, you are a very observant man," said I, watching the stick.

SCRAPPLE



Rube—By Hem, but this is sure a friendly town. —Cornell Widow.



"I understand you have a new car. Do you drive it yourself?" —Washington Star.



"Is there any outdoor sport she is fond of?" —"I should say so. She's dead in love with a football player."

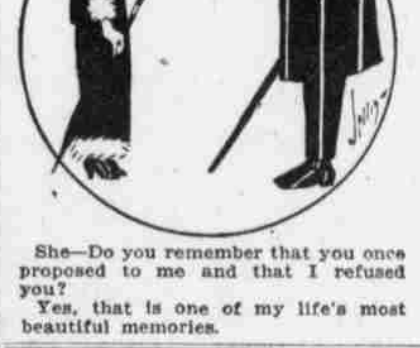
THE PADDED CELL



ONCE IS ENUF!



Mean Thing



She—Do you remember that you once proposed to me and that I refused you? Yes, that is one of my life's most beautiful memories.



WILL YOU COME UP ON THE STAGE, SIR, AND ASSIST IN MY IMPROVISED EXHIBITION?



BARK LIKE A DOG FOR THE LADIES AND GENTLEMEN



THE SUBJECT IS NOW HYPOCRITIZED AND WILL MAKE A MERRY OF HIMSELF



THE SUBJECT NOW IMAGINES HE IS A BOARD AND FEELS NO PAIN



YOU WOULDNT TAKE HIM TO BE ONE OF OUR LEADING CRITICISMS



WILL YOU AID ME IN MY EXPERIMENTS, SIR?

SISTER SUSIE'S SEWING SOCKS

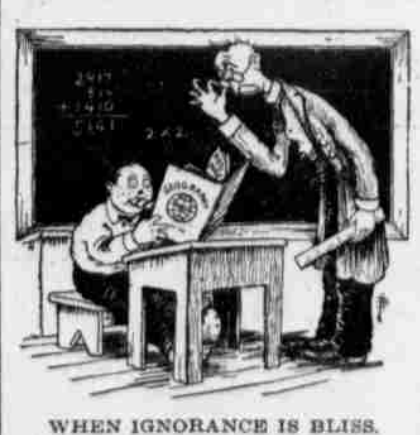


Even While Riding in the Park

Sorry He Spoke



He—Who is that strange-looking man over there who stares at me so much? She—Oh, that's Professor Smith, the famous expert on insanity.



WHEN IGNORANCE IS BLISS.



—Harvard Lampoon.



Circumstances Alter Cases



A Secret

—AND THE WORST IS YET TO COME



Private Brown (out of the picture)—Who put the butter on this bread? Sister Mary (sternly)—I did, Brown. Private Brown—O-ho! Who took it off, then?



Exceptions



He—Women tell everything they know. She—With one exception. He—What's that? She—Their ages.