

UNDER THE MOONS OF MARS

BY EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS

CHAPTER XX—Continued
CREEPING stealthily through corridor after corridor and down winding runways which turned hither and thither, I finally reached the long hall in which I had broken my fast that morning. Nowhere had I seen my host, nor did I know where he kept himself by night.

I was on the point of stepping boldly out into the room, when a slight noise behind me warned me back into the shadows of a recessed doorway. Dragging Woola after me, I crouched in the darkness.

Presently the old man passed close by me, and as he entered the dimly lighted chamber which I would take through I saw that he held a long, thin dagger in his hand, and that he was sharpening it upon a stone.

In his mind was the decision to inspect the radium, which would take about 30 minutes, and then return to my bed chamber and finish me.

As he passed through the great hallway and disappeared down the runway which led to the pump room, I stole stealthily from my hiding place and crossed to the great door, the inner of the three which stood between me and liberty.

Concentrating my mind upon the massive lock, I hurried the nine thought waves against it. In breathless expectancy I waited, when finally the great door swung slowly toward me and slid quietly to one side.

One after the other the remaining mighty portals opened at my command, and Woola and I stepped forth into the darkness free, but little better off than we had been before, other than that we had full stomachs.

Hastening away from the shadows of the formidable pile, I made for the great crossroad, intending to strike the central turnpike as quickly as possible. This I reached about morning, and after entering the first inclosure I came to, I searched for some evidences of a habitation.

There were low, rambling buildings of concrete, barred with heavy impassable doors, and no amount of hammering and hallooing brought any response. Wary and exhausted from sleeplessness, I threw myself upon the ground, commanding Woola to stand guard.

Some time later I was awakened by his frightful growlings, and opened my eyes to see three red Martians standing a short distance away covering me with their rifles.

"I am unarmed and no enemy," I hastened to explain. "I have been a prisoner among the green men, and am on my way to Zodanga. All I ask is food and shelter for myself and my cat. May the proper directions for reaching my destination."

"They lowered their rifles and advanced pleasantly toward me, placing their right hands upon my left shoulder, after the manner of their custom, and asking me many questions about myself and my wanderings. They then took me to the house of one of them, which was only a short distance away.

The buildings I had been hammering at in the early morning were only occupied by stock and farm produce, the house proper standing among a grove of enormous trees, the center of all the great homes, had been raised at night some 40 or 50 feet from the ground on a large, round metal shaft, which slid up or down within a sleeve sunk in the ground, and was operated by a tiny radium-engine in the entrance hall of the building.

Instead of bothing with bolts and bars for their dwellings, the red Martians simply run them up out of harm's way during the night. They also have secret means for lowering or raising them to the ground whenever they wish to go away and leave them.

These brothers, with their wives and children, occupied three similar houses on this farm. They did no work themselves, being government officers in charge.

The labor was performed by convicts, prisoners of war, delinquent debtors and confirmed bachelors who were too poor to pay the high celibate tax which all red Martians government citizens.

They were the personification of cordiality and hospitality, and I spent several days with them, resting and recuperating from my long and arduous experiences.

When they had heard my story—I omitted all reference to Dejah Thoris and the old man of the atmosphere plant—they advised me to color my body to more nearly resemble their own race, and then attempt to find employment in Zodanga, either in the army or the navy.

The chances are small that your tale will be believed, but after you have proved your trustworthiness and won friends among the higher nobles of the court, this you can most easily do through military service, as we are a warlike people on Barsom.

"I explained one of them, 'and save our richest favors for the fighting man.'
When I was ready to depart they furnished me with a small domestic bull truck, such as is used for saddle purposes by all red Martians. The animal is about the size of a horse and quite docile, but the noblest and exact replica of his huge and fierce cousin of the wilds.

The brothers had supplied me with a reddish oil, with which I anointed my entire body, and with a quantity of wool, which had grown quite long, in the prevailing fashion of the time, square at the back and banded in front, so that I could have passed anywhere upon Barsom as a full-fledged red Martian.

They filled a little sack at my side with Zodangan money. The medium of exchange upon Mars is not dissimilar from our own, except that the coins are oval.

Paper money is issued by individuals as they require it and redeemed yearly. If a man issues more than he can redeem, the government pays his creditors in full, and the debtor works out the amount upon the farms or in mines, which are all owned by the government.

This suits everybody except the debtor, as it has been a difficult thing to obtain sufficient credit for labor to work the great isolated farm lands of Mars, stretching as they do like narrow ribbons from pole to pole, through vast stretches peopled by wild animals and wilder men.

When I mentioned my inability to repay them for their kindness to me, they assured me that I would have ample opportunity, if I lived long upon Barsom, to do so, and they wished me good-bye until I wrote out of sight upon the broad, white turnpike.

CHAPTER XXI
John Carter, Air-Scout
As I proceeded on my journey toward Zodanga many strange and interesting things arrested my attention, and at the several farmhouses where I stopped I learned a number of new and instructive things concerning the methods and manners of Barsom.

The water which supplies the farms of Mars is collected in immense underground reservoirs at either pole from the melting ice-caps, and pumped through long conduits to the various populated centers.

Along either side of these conduits, and extending their entire length, lie the cultivated districts. These are divided into tracts of about the same size, each tract being under the supervision of one or more government officers.

Instead of flooding the surface of the fields, and thus wasting immense quantities of water by evaporation, the precious liquid is carried underground through a vast network of small pipes directly to the roots of the vegetation. The crops upon Mars are always uniform, for there are no drafts, no rains, no high winds, and no insects, or destroying birds.

On this trip I tasted the first meat I had eaten since leaving earth. Large juicy steaks and chops from the well-fed domestic animals of the farms. Luscious fruits and vegetables, but not a single article which was exactly similar to anything on earth.

Every plant and flower and vegetable and animal has been so refined by ages of careful scientific attention, and breeding that the like of them on earth dwindled into pale, gray, characterless nothingness by comparison.

At a second stop I met some highly cultivated people of the noble class, while in conversation we chanced to speak of Helium.

One of the older men had been there on a diplomatic mission several years before, and spoke with regret of the conditions which seemed destined ever to keep these two countries at war.

"Helium," he said, "rightly boasts the most beautiful woman of Barsom, and of a more treasured and precious daughter than the Kakia, the daughter of Dejah Thoris, is the most exquisite flower."
"Why," he added, "the people really worship the ground she walks upon, and her hair is held in the highest veneration. All Helium has been draped in mourning."
"That our ruler should have attacked the disabled feet as it was returning to Helium was but another of his awful blunders, which I fear will sooner or later compel Zodanga to replace him."
"Even now," though our victorious armies are surrounding Helium, the people of Zodanga are voicing their displeasure, for the war is not a popular one, since it is not based on right or justice, as our forces took advantage of the absence of the principal fleet of Helium on their search for the princess, and so we have been able easily to reduce the city of the sorry little nation to submission. Our forces will reach the next few passages of the further moon."
"And what, think you, may have been the fate of the princess, Dejah Thoris?" I asked as casually as possible.
"She is dead," he answered. "This much was learned from a green warrior recently captured by our forces in the south. She escaped from the hordes of Helium, but fell into the hands of the Warhorns. Their throats were found wandering upon the sea bottom and evidences of a bloody conflict were discovered nearby."
While this information was in no way reassuring, neither was it at all conclusive proof of the death of Dejah Thoris, and so I determined to make every effort possible to reach Helium as quickly as I could and carry to Tardos Mora such news of his granddaughter's possible whereabouts as lay in my power.
The next day after leaving the three Ptor brothers I arrived at Zodanga. The letter I bore from them gained me immediate entrance to the vast, walled city. It was still very early in the morning

and the streets were virtually deserted. The residences, raised high upon their metal columns, resembled huge rockeries, while the uprights themselves presented the appearance of stone. The shops and a rule, were not raised from the ground, nor were the doors bolted or barred, since thievery is virtually unknown upon Barsom.

Assuming that I was the ever-present fear of all Barsomians, and for this reason alone their homes are raised high above the ground at night, or in times of danger.

The Ptor brothers had given me explicit directions for reaching the point of the city where I could find living accommodations, and be near the office of the government agents to whom they had given me letters. My way led to the central square or plaza, which is a characteristic of all Martian cities.

The plaza of Zodanga covers a square of 100 rods, and is bounded by the palaces of the Jeddak, the Jeds and other members of the royalty and nobility of Zodanga, as well as by the principal public buildings, cafes and shops.

At the center of the great square, lost in wonder and admiration of the magnificent architecture and the gorgeous vegetation which carpeted the broad plaza, I discovered a red Martian walking briskly toward me from one of the avenues.

He paid not the slightest attention to me, but as he came abreast I recognized him, and turning I placed my hand upon his shoulder, calling out:
"Kaor—Kantos Kan!"
Like lightning he wheeled, and before I could so much as lower my hand, the point of his long sword was in my breast. "Who are you?" he growled, and then as a backward leap carried me 50 feet from his sword, he dropped the point to the ground and exclaimed, laughing:
"You are not a better reply. There is but one man upon this planet who can bounce about like that. By the mother of the further moon, John Carter, how came you here? Have you become a Jeddak that you can change your color at will?"
"You gave me a bad half minute, my friend," he continued, after I had briefly outlined my adventures since parting with my beloved Dejah Thoris, and my name and city known to the Zodangans, I would shortly be sitting on the banks of the lost sea of Korus with my beloved and departed daughter.

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Hoosier Poet's New Verses Read at Literary Club

CLEVELAND, April 24.—A new poem by James Whitcomb Riley, written as part of a letter to Mrs. E. L. Motts, Lakeview, and read at a literary club meeting, at the Hotel Barona, Dorothy Stoen, chairman, Katherine Nunoz, Alice Riddle, Edith Emerson and Messrs. Paul Froehling and O. Campbell.

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Socialist League to Visit Reading
Members of the Young People's Socialist League will leave this city for Reading next Saturday to take part in the second annual convention of the league. The Philadelphia group will attend the convention at A. Levinson, L. L. L. L., H. Pearlman, Harry Birtwistle, B. Schewe, Nathan Rose, N. Marks, M. Pravit, T. Hamburg, Chernov Snyder and Mayer Snyder.

Will Talk of Lincoln's Life
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and the streets were virtually deserted. The residences, raised high upon their metal columns, resembled huge rockeries, while the uprights themselves presented the appearance of stone. The shops and a rule, were not raised from the ground, nor were the doors bolted or barred, since thievery is virtually unknown upon Barsom.

Assuming that I was the ever-present fear of all Barsomians, and for this reason alone their homes are raised high above the ground at night, or in times of danger.

The Ptor brothers had given me explicit directions for reaching the point of the city where I could find living accommodations, and be near the office of the government agents to whom they had given me letters. My way led to the central square or plaza, which is a characteristic of all Martian cities.

The plaza of Zodanga covers a square of 100 rods, and