

THE NIGHTMARE : Being the Ninth of the Series of the Jungle Tales of Tarzan : By Edgar Rice Burroughs

THE blacks of the village of Mbonga, the chief, were feasting, while above them in a large tree sat Tarzan of the Apes—grim, terrible, empty, and envious. Hunting had proved poor that day, for there are lean days as well as fat ones for even the greatest of the jungle hunters. Oftentimes Tarzan went empty for more than a full sun, and he had passed through entire moons during which he had been but barely able to stave off starvation; but such times were infrequent.

What he was at this moment was a very hungry wild beast whom caution was holding in leash, for the great cooking pot in the center of the village was surrounded by black warriors, through whom not even Tarzan of the Apes might hope to pass unharmed. It would be necessary, therefore, for the watcher to remain there hungry until the blacks had gorged themselves to stupor, and then, if they had left any scraps, to make the best meal he could from such; but to the impatient Tarzan it seemed that the greedy Gomangani would rather burst than leave the feast before the last morsel had been devoured. For a time they broke the monotony of eating by executing portions of a hunting dance, a maneuver which sufficiently stimulated digestion to permit them to fall to once more with renewed vigor; but with the consumption of appalling quantities of elephant meat and native beer they presently became too loggy for physical exertion of any sort, some reaching a stage where they no longer could rise from the ground, but lay conveniently close to the great cooking pot, stuffing themselves into unconsciousness.



He snatched the hunting blade and, thrusting upward, drove it into the breast above him

croch from which he had toppled. Below him a lion roared, and, looking downward, Tarzan could see the yellow-green eyes shining in the moonlight as they bored hungrily upward through the darkness of the jungle night toward him. The ape-man gasped for breath. Cold sweat stood out from every pore, there was a great sickness at the pit of Tarzan's stomach. Tarzan of the Apes had dreamed his first dream.

With a great whirring of wings the bird rose rapidly until the forest lay far below. It made Tarzan sick and dizzy to look down upon it from so great a height, so he closed his eyes and held his breath. Higher and higher climbed the huge bird. Tarzan opened his eyes. He could see only a dim, gray blur below him, but just above and quite close was the sun. Tarzan reached out his hands and warmed them, for they were very cold. Then a sudden madness seized him. Where was the bird taking him? Was he to submit thus passively to a feathered creature however enormous? Was he, Tarzan of the Apes, mighty fighter, to die without striking a blow in his own defense? Never!

He snatched the hunting blade from his girdle and thrusting upward drove it once, twice, thrice into the breast above him. The mighty wings fluttered a few more times, spasmodically, the talons relaxed their hold, and Tarzan of the Apes fell hurtling downward toward the distant jungle. It seemed to the ape-man that he fell for many minutes before he crashed through the leafy verdure of the tree tops. The smaller branches broke his fall, so that he came to rest for an instant upon the very branch upon which he had sought slumber the previous night. For an instant he toppled there in a frantic attempt to regain his equilibrium; but at last he rolled off, yet, clutching wildly, he succeeded in grasping the branch and hanging on.

Once more he opened his eyes, which he had closed during the fall. Again it was night. With all his old agility he clambered back to the

mind on the little bugs upon the printed page before him, the active recollection of his strange adventures presently merged into the text of that which he was reading—a story of Bolgani, the gorilla, in captivity. There was a more or less lifelike illustration of Bolgani in colors and in a cage, with many remarkable looking Tarmangani standing against a rail and peering curiously at the snarling brute. Tarzan wondered not a little, as he always did, at the odd and seemingly useless array of colored plumage which covered the bodies of the Tarmangani. It always caused him to grin a trifle when he looked at these strange creatures. He wondered if they so covered their bodies from shame of their hairlessness or because they thought the odd things they wore added any to the beauty of their appearance. Particularly was Tarzan amused by the grotesque headresses of the pictured people. He wondered how some of the shes succeeded in balancing theirs in an upright position, and he came as near to laughing aloud as he ever had, as he contemplated the funny little round things upon the heads of the shes.

Slowly the ape-man picked out the meaning of the various combinations of letters on the printed page, and as he read, the little bugs, for as such he always thought of the letters, commenced to run about in a most confusing manner, blurring his vision and befuddling his thoughts. Twice he brushed the back of a hand smartly across his eyes; but only for a moment could he bring the bugs back to coherent and intelligible form. He had slept all the night before and now he was exhausted from loss of sleep, from sickness, and from the slight fever he had had, so that it became more and more difficult to fix his attention, or to keep his eyes open. Tarzan realized that he was falling asleep, and just as the realization was borne in upon him and he had decided to relinquish himself to an inclination which had assumed almost the proportions of a physical pain, he was aroused by the opening of the cabin door. Turning quickly toward the interruption Tarzan was amazed, for a moment, to see bulking large in the doorway the huge and hairy form of Bolgani, the gorilla.

Table with columns for days of the week (Monday to Saturday) and various theater listings including titles like 'The White Heather', 'The House Divided', and 'The Love Bazaar'.