

WHEN THE LION FED

How Tarzan Broke the Back of a Huge German Officer

By Edgar Rice Burroughs

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TARZAN of the Apes, roared among anthropoids, suckled at the shaggy breast of a she-ape, risen to a seat in the House of Lords, had reverted to savagery and speeded with the murder of his wife by Schneider the German captain. Tarzan had left the man in the lair of Numa the man-eater to expiate his sins; but Tarzan was not yet fully revenged. There were many millions of Germans yet alive—enough to keep Tarzan pleasantly occupied for the rest of his life and yet not enough, should he kill them all, to recompense him for the great loss he had suffered; nor could the death of all those million Germans bring back his loved one.

While in the German camp in the Pare mountains, which lie just east of the boundary line between German and British East Africa, Tarzan had overheard enough to suggest that the British were getting the worst of the fighting in Africa. At first he had given the matter but little thought; for after the death of his wife, the one strong tie that had held him to civilization, he had renounced all mankind, considering himself no longer man, but ape.

After accounting for Schneider as satisfactorily as lay within his power, he circled Kilimanjaro and hunted in the foothills to the north of that mightiest of mountains. But more and more Tarzan found himself thinking of the English soldiers fighting against heavy odds, and especially of the fact that it was Germans who were besting them. And at last the time came when he could no longer endure the thought of Germans killing Englishmen while he hunted in safety a bare march away.

Tarzan's decision made, he sat out in the direction of the German camp, no well-defined plan formulated, but with the general idea that once near the field of operations he might find an opportunity to harass the German command as he so well knew how to do. His way took him along the gorge close to the gulch in which he had left Schneider, and yielding to a natural curiosity, he scaled the cliffs and made his way to the edge of the gulch. The tree was empty; nor was there sign of Numa the lion. Picking up a rock, he hurled it into the gulch, where it rolled to the very entrance to the cave. Instantly the lion appeared in the aperture—but such a different-looking lion from the great sleek brute that Tarzan had trapped there two weeks before. Now he was gaunt and emaciated; and when he walked, he staggered.

"Where is the German?" shouted Tarzan. "Was he good eating, or only a bag of bones when he slipped and fell from the tree?"

Numa growled. "You look hungry, Numa," continued the Ape-man. "You must have been very hungry to eat all the grass from your lair and even the bark from the tree—as far up as you can reach. Would you like another German?" And smiling, Tarzan turned away.

A few minutes later he came suddenly upon Bara, the deer, asleep beneath a tree, and as Tarzan was squatting beside his prey proceeded to eat his fill. As he was gnawing the last morsel from a bone, his quick ears caught the padding of stealthy feet behind him; and turning he confronted Dango the hyena, sneaking upon him. With a growl the Ape-man picked up a fallen branch and hurled it at the skulking brute. "Go away, eater of carrion," he cried; but Dango was hungry, and being large and powerful, he only snarled and circled about as though watching for an opportunity to charge. Tarzan of the Apes knew Dango even better than Dango knew himself. He knew that the brute, made savage by hunger, was mustering its courage for an attack, that it was probably accustomed to man and therefore more or less fearless of him; and so he unsling his heavy spear and laid it ready at his side while he continued his meal. He felt no fear, for long familiarity with the dangers of his wild world had so accustomed him to them that he took whatever came as a part of each day's existence as you accept the homely though no less real dangers of the farm, the range or the crowded metropolis.

Dango might have charged sooner but for the savage growls of the Ape-man—growls which, coming from human lips, raised a question and a fear in the hyena's heart. He had attacked women and children in the native fields, and he had frightened their men about their fires at night; but never had he seen a man-thing who made this sound that reminded him more of Numa angry than of a man afraid.

When Tarzan had completed his repast, he was about to rise and hurl a clean-picked bone at the beast before he went his way, leaving the remains of his kill to Dango; but a sudden thought stayed him, and instead he picked up the carcass of the deer, threw it over his shoulder and set off in the direction of the gulch. For a few yards Dango followed, growling, and then realizing that he was being lobbied of even a taste of the luscious flesh, he cast discretion to the winds and charged. Instantly, as though nature had given him eyes in the back of his head, Tarzan sensed the impending danger and dropping Bara to the ground, turned with raised spear. Far back went the brown right hand and then forward, lightning-like, backed by the power of giant muscles and the weight of his brawn and bone. The spear, released at the right instant,

drove straight for Dango, caught him in the neck where it joined the shoulders and passed through the body.

When he had withdrawn the shaft from the hyena, Tarzan shouldered both carcasses and continued on toward the gulch. Below lay Numa beneath the shade of the lone tree, and at the Ape-man's call he staggered slowly to his feet; weak as he was, he still growled savagely, even essaying a roar at the sight of his enemy. Tarzan let the two bodies envelop the rim of the cliff. "Eat, Numa!" he cried. "It may be that I shall need you again." He saw the lion, quickened to new life at the sight of food, spring upon the body of the deer; and then he left him rending and tearing the flesh as he bolted great pieces into his empty maw.

The following day Tarzan came within sight of the German lines. From a wooded spur of the hills he looked down upon the enemy's left flank, and beyond to the British lines. His position gave him a bird's-eye view of the field of battle, and his keen eyesight picked out many details that would not have been apparent to a man whose every sense was not trained to the highest point of perfection as were the Ape-man's. He noted machine-gun emplacements cunningly hidden from the view of the British, and listening posts placed well out in No Man's Land.

As his interested gaze moved hither and thither from one point of interest to another, he heard from a point upon the hillside below him, above the roar of cannon and the crack of rifle-fire, a single rifle-spit. Immediately his attention was centered upon the spot where he knew a sniper must be hid. Patiently he awaited the next shot to learn the exact location of the rifleman, and when it came, he moved down the steep hillside with the stealth of a panther. Apparently he took no cognizance of where he stepped; yet never a loose stone was disturbed nor a twig broken.

Presently as Tarzan passed through a clump of bushes, he came to the edge of a low cliff and saw upon a ledge some fifteen feet below him a German soldier prone behind an embankment of loose rock and leafy boughs that hid him from the view of the British lines. The man must have been an excellent shot, for he was well back of the German lines, firing over the heads of his fellows. His high-powered rifle was equipped with telescope sights, and he also carried binoculars which he was just in the act of using. Tarzan let his eye move quickly toward that part of the British line the German seemed to be scanning, his keen sight revealing many excellent targets for a rifle placed so high above the trenches.

The Hun, evidently satisfied with his observations, laid aside his binoculars and again took up his rifle, placed its butt in the hollow of his shoulder and took careful aim. At the same instant a brown body sprang outward from the cliff above him. There was no sound, and it is doubtful that the German ever knew what manner of creature it was that alighted heavily upon his back; for at the instant of impact, the sinewy fingers of the Ape-man encircled the hairy throat of the brute, the sudden relaxation of dissolution; the sniper was dead.

Lying behind the rampart of rocks and boughs, Tarzan looked down upon the scene below. Near at hand were the trenches of the Germans. He could see officers and men moving about in them, and almost in front of him a well-hidden machine-gun was firing across No Man's Land in an oblique direction, striking the British at such an angle as to make it difficult for them to discover its location.

Tarzan watched, toying idly with the rifle of the dead German. Presently he fell to examining the mechanism of the piece. He glanced again toward the German trenches and changed the adjustment of the sights; then he placed the rifle to his shoulder and took aim. Tarzan was an excellent shot. With his civilized friends he had hunted big game with the weapons of civilization, and though he had never killed except for food or in self-defense, he had amused himself firing at inanimate targets thrown into the air and had perfected himself in the use of firearms without realizing that he had done so. Now indeed would he hunt big game. A slow smile touched his lips as his finger closed gradually upon the trigger. The rifle spoke, and a German machine-gunner collapsed behind his weapon. In three minutes Tarzan picked off the crew of that gun. Then he potted a German officer emerging from a dugout, and the three men in the bay with him; Tarzan was careful to leave no one in the immediate vicinity to question how Germans could be shot in German trenches when they were entirely concealed from enemy view.

Again adjusting his sights, Tarzan took a long-range shot at a distant machine-gun crew to his right. With calm deliberation he wiped them out to a man. Two guns were silenced. He saw men running through the trenches, and he picked off several of them. By this time the Germans were aware that something was amiss—that an uncanny sniper had discovered a point of vantage from which this sector of the trenches was plainly visible to him. At first they sought to discover his location in No Man's Land; but when an officer, looking over the parapet through a periscope was struck full in the back

of the head with a rifle bullet, which passed through his skull and fell to the bottom of the trench, they realized that it was beyond the parapet rather than the parapet that they should search.

One of the soldiers picked up the bullet that had killed his officer, and then it was that real excitement prevailed in that particular bay, for the bullet was obviously of German make. Hugging the parapet, messengers carried the word in both directions, and presently periscopes were leveled above the parapets and keen eyes were searching out the traitor. It did not take them long to locate the position of the hidden sniper, and then Tarzan saw a machine-gun being trained upon him. Before it had got into action, its crew lay dead about it; but here were other men to take their places—reluctantly perhaps; but driven on by their officers, they were forced to it, and at the same time two other machine-guns were swung around toward the Ape-man.

Tarzan saw that the game was about up, and with a farewell shot laid aside the rifle and melted into the hills behind him. For many minutes he could hear the sputter of machine-gun fire concentrated upon the spot he had just quit, and smiled as he contemplated the waste of German ammunition.

"They have paid heavily for Wasimbu the Waziri, whom they crucified, and for his slain fellows," he thought. "But for Jane they can never pay—no, not if I killed them all."

After dark that night he circled the flanks of both armies and passed through the British outposts and into the British lines. No man saw him come. No man knew that he was there.

Headquarters of the Second Rhodesians occupied a sheltered position far enough back of the lines to be comparatively safe from enemy observation. Even lights were permitted, and Colonel Capell sat before a field table on which was spread a military map, talking with several of his officers. A large tree spread above them; a lantern sputtered dimly upon the table; a small fire burned upon the ground close at hand. The enemy had no planes, and no other observers could have seen the lights from the German lines.

The officers were discussing the advantage in numbers possessed by the enemy, and the inability of the British to more than hold their present position. They could not advance. Already they had sustained severe losses in every attack, and had always been driven back by overwhelming numbers. There were hidden machine-guns, too, that bothered the commander considerably. It was evidenced by the fact that he often reverted to them during the conversation.

"Something silenced them for a while this afternoon," said one of the younger officers. "I was observing at the time, and I couldn't make out what the fuss was about; but they seemed to be having a devil of a time in a section of trench on their left. At one time I could have sworn I reported it to you at the time, sir, you'll recall—for the blighters were peeping away at the side of that bluff behind them. I could see that dirt fly. I don't know what it could have been."

There was a slight rustling among the branches of the tree above them, and simultaneously a lithe brown body dropped in their midst. Hands moved quickly to the butts of pistols, but otherwise there was no movement among the officers. First they looked wonderingly at the almost naked white man standing there with the firelight

ever free of men. But come, can I help you? Would you like to know where several machine-gun emplacements are hidden?"

The colonel assured him that they would, and a moment later Tarzan had traced upon the map the location of three that had been bothering the English. "There is a weak spot here," he said, placing a finger upon the map. "It is held by blacks; but the machine-guns out in front are manned by whites. If—Wait! I have a plan. You can fill that trench with your own men and enlarge the trenches to its right with their own machine-guns."

Colonel Capell smiled and shook his head. "It sounds very easy," he said.

"It is easy—for me," replied the Ape-man. "I can empty that section of trench without a shot. I was raised in the jungle; I know the jungle folk—the Gomangani as well as the others. Look for me again on the second night." And he turned to leave.

"Wait," said the colonel. "I will send an officer to pass you through the lines."

Tarzan smiled and moved away. As he was leaving the little group about headquarters, he passed a small figure wrapped in an officer's heavy overcoat. The collar was turned up, and the visor of the military cap pulled well down over the eyes; but as the Ape-man passed, the light from the fire illuminated the features of the newcomer for an instant, revealing to Tarzan a vaguely familiar face. Some officer he had known in London, doubtless, he surmised, and went his way through the British camp and the British lines, all unknown to the watchful sentinels of the outguard.

Nearly all night Tarzan moved across Kilimanjaro's foothills, tracking by instinct an unknown way, for he guessed that what he sought would be found on some wooded slope higher up than he had come upon his recent journey in this to his little-known country. Three hours before dawn, his keen nostrils apprised him that somewhere in the vicinity he would find what he wanted, and so he climbed into a tall tree and settled himself for a few hours' sleep.

Kudu the Sun was well up in the heavens when Tarzan awoke. The Ape-man stretched his giant limbs, ran his fingers through his thick hair and swung lightly down to earth. Immediately he took up the trail he had come in search of, following it by scent down into a deep ravine. Cautiously he went now, for his nose told him that the quarry was close at hand, and presently from an overhanging bough he looked down upon Horta the bear and many of his kinsmen. Unslung his bow and selecting an arrow, Tarzan fitted the shaft, and draw-

ing it far back, took careful aim at the largest of the great pigs. In the Ape-man's teeth were other arrows, and no sooner had the first one sped than he had fitted and shot another bolt. Instantly the pigs were in turmoil, not knowing from whence the danger threatened. They stood stupidly at first and then commenced milling around until six of their number lay dead or dying about them; then with a chorus of grunts and squeals they started off at a wild run, disappearing quickly in the underbrush.

Tarzan descended from the tree, dispatched those that were not already dead and then proceeded to skin the carcasses. As he worked, rapidly and with great skill, he neither hummed nor whistled as does the average man of civilization. Tarzan possessed the ability to concentrate each of his five senses

upon its particular business. Now he worked at skinning the six pigs, and his eyes and his fingers worked as though there was naught else in all the world than those six carcasses; but his ears and his nose were as busily engaged elsewhere—the former ranging the forest all about, and the latter assaying each passing zephyr. It was his nose that first discovered the approach of Sabor the lioness when the wind shifted for a moment.

As clearly as though he had seen her with his eyes, Tarzan knew that the lioness had caught the scent of the fresh-killed pigs and had immediately moved down-wind in their direction. He knew, from the strength of the scent-spor and the rate of the wind, about how far away she was, and that she was approaching from behind him. He was finishing the last pig and he did not hurry. The five pelts lay close at hand—he had been careful to keep them thus together and near him; an ample tree waved its low branches above him.

He did not even turn his head, for he knew she was not yet in sight, but he bent his ears just a bit more sharply for the first sound of her nearer approach. When the final skin had been removed, he rose. Now he heard Sabor in the bushes to his rear, but yet not too close. Leisurely he gathered up the six pelts and one of the carcasses, and as the lioness appeared between the boles of two trees, he swung upward into the branches above him. Here he hung the hides over a limb, seated himself comfortably upon another with his back against the bole of the tree, cut a hindquarter from the carcass he had carried with him and proceeded to satisfy his hunger. Sabor slunk growling from the brush, cast a wary eye upward toward the Ape-man and then fell upon the nearest carcass.

Tarzan looked down upon her and grinned, recalling an argument he once had with a famous big-game hunter, who declared that the king of beasts ate only what he had himself killed. Tarzan knew better, for he had seen Numa and Sabor stoop even to carrion.

Having filled his belly, the Ape-man fell to work upon the hides—all large and strong. First he cut strips from them about half an inch wide. When he had a sufficient length of these strips, he sewed two of the hides together, afterwards piercing holes every three or four inches around the edges. Running another strip through these holes gave him a large bag with a draw-string. In similar fashion he produced four other like bags, but smaller, from the four remaining hides, and had several strips left over.

All this done, Tarzan threw a large juicy fruit at Sabor, caught the remainder of the pig in a crotch

of the tree and swung off toward the southwest through the middle terraces of the forest, carrying his five bags with him. Straight he went to the rim of the gulch where he had imprisoned Numa the lion. Very stealthily he approached the edge and peered over. Numa was not in sight. Tarzan sniffed and listened. He could hear nothing, and yet he knew Numa must be within the cave. He hoped that Numa slept; much depended upon Numa's not discovering him.

Cautiously Tarzan lowered himself over the edge of the cliff, and with utter noiselessness commenced the descent toward the bottom of the gulch. He stopped often and turned his keen eyes and ears in the direction of the cave's mouth at the far end of the gulch some hundred feet away. As he neared the foot of the cliff, his danger increased greatly. If he could reach the bottom and cover half the distance to the tree that stood in the center of the gulch, he would feel comparatively safe, for then even if Numa appeared, Tarzan could beat him either to the cliff or to the tree, with enough of a lead to insure his escape.

At last Tarzan stood upon the floor of the gulch. Silent as a disembodied spirit, he advanced toward the tree. He was halfway there, and no sign of Numa. He reached the scarred bole from which the famished lion had devoured the bark and even torn pieces of the wood itself, and yet Numa had not appeared. As Tarzan drew himself up to the lower branches, he began to wonder if Numa were in the cave after all. Could it be possible that he had forced the barrier of rocks with which Tarzan had plugged the other end of the passage where it opened into the outer world of freedom? Or was Numa dead?

Tarzan started to descend and investigate the cavern, when it occurred to him that it would save effort were he to lure Numa out instead. Acting upon the thought, he uttered a low growl. Instantly he was rewarded by the sound of movement within the cave, and a moment later a wild-eyed, haggard lion rushed forth ready to face the devil himself, were he edible. When Numa saw Tarzan, fat and sleek, perched in the tree, he became suddenly the embodiment of frightful rage. His eyes and his nose told him that this was the creature who was responsible for his predicament, and also that this creature was good to eat. Frantically the lion sought to scramble up the bole of the tree. Twice he leaped high enough to catch the lowest branches with his paws, but both times he fell backward to the earth. Each time he became more furious. His growls and roars were incessant and horrible, and all the time Tarzan sat grinning down upon him, taunting him in jungle Billingsgate for his inability to reach him, and mentally exulting that always Numa was wasting his already waning strength.

Finally the Ape-man rose and unsling his rope. He arranged the coils carefully in his left hand and the noose in his right, and then he took a position with each foot on one of two branches that lay in about the same horizontal plane, and with his back pressed firmly against the stem of the tree. There he stood hurling himself at Numa until the beast was again goaded into leaping upward at him, and as Numa rose, the noose dropped quickly over his head and about his neck. A quick movement of Tarzan's rope-hand tightened the coil, and when Numa slipped backward to the ground, only his hind feet touched, for the Ape-man held him swinging by the neck.

Moving slowly outward upon the two branches, Tarzan swung Numa out, so that he could not reach the bole of the tree with his raking talons; then Tarzan made the rope fast after drawing the lion clear of the ground, dropped his five pig-skin sacks to earth and leaped down himself. Numa was striking frantically at the grass rope with his claws. At any moment he might sever it, and Tarzan must therefore work rapidly.

First Tarzan drew the larger bag over Numa's head and secured it about his neck with the drawingstring; then he managed, after considerable effort, during which he barely escaped being torn to ribbons by the mighty talons, to hog-tie Numa—drawing his four legs together and securing them in that position with the strips he had trimmed from the pigskins.

By this time the lion's efforts had almost ceased; it was evident that he was being rapidly strangled; and as that did not at all suit the purpose of the Tarmangani, the latter swung again into the tree, unfasted lowered the lion to the ground, where he immediately followed it and loosed the noose about Numa's neck. Then Tarzan drew his hunting-knife and cut two round holes in the front of the headbag opposite the lion's eyes for the double purpose of permitting him to see and giving him sufficient air to breathe.

This done, Tarzan busied himself fitting the other bags, one over each of Numa's formidably armed paws. Those on the hind feet he secured not only by tightening the draw-strings but also rigged garters that fastened tightly around the legs above the hocks. He secured the front-foot bags in place similarly above the great knees. Now, indeed, was Numa the lion reduced to a harmless Numa, the deer.

By now Numa was showing signs of returning life. He gasped for

breath and struggled; but the strips of pigskin that held his four legs together were numerous and tough. Tarzan watched and was sure that they would hold. After Numa again breathed normally and was able to roar out his protests and his rage, his struggles increased to Titanic proportions for a short time; but as a lion's powers of endurance are in no way proportionate to his size and strength, he soon tired and lay quietly. Amid renewed growling and another futile attempt to free himself, Numa was finally forced to submit to the further indignity of having a rope secured about his neck; but this time it was no noose that might tighten and strangle him, but a bowline knot—which does not tighten or slip under strain and may be easily upset when the strain is removed.

The other end of the rope Tarzan secured to the stem of the tree; then he quickly cut the bonds securing Numa's legs and leaped aside as the beast sprang to his feet. For a moment the lion stood with legs far outspread; then he raised first one paw and then another, shaking them energetically in an effort to dislodge the strange footwear that Tarzan had fastened upon them. Finally he began to paw at the bag upon his head. The Ape-man, standing with ready spear, watched Numa's efforts intently. Would the bags hold?

As the clinging things upon his feet and face resisted his every effort to dislodge them, Numa became frantic. He rolled upon the ground, fighting, biting, scratching and roaring. He leaped to his feet and sprang into the air. He charged Tarzan, only to be brought to a sudden stop as the rope securing him to the tree tautened. Then Tarzan stepped in and rapped him smartly on the head with the shaft of his spear. Numa reared upon his hind feet and struck at the Ape-man, and in return received a cuff on one ear that sent him reeling sideways. When he returned to the attack, he was again sent sprawling. After the fourth effort it appeared to dawn upon the king of beasts that he had met his master; his head and tail drooped, and when Tarzan advanced upon him, he backed away though still growling.

Leaving Numa tied to the tree, Tarzan entered the tunnel and removed the barricade from the opposite end; then he returned to the gulch and strode straight for the tree. Numa lay in his path, and as Tarzan approached, growled menacingly. The Ape-man cuffed him aside and unfasted the rope from the tree. Then ensued a half-hour of stubbornly fought battle while Tarzan endeavored to drive Numa through the tunnel ahead of him, and Numa persistently refused to be driven. At last, however, by dint of the unrestricted use of his spear-point the Ape-man succeeded in forcing the lion to move ahead of him and eventually guided him into the passageway. Once inside, the problem became simpler, for Tarzan followed close behind, his sharp spear-point an unremitting incentive to forward movement on the part of the lion. And so they passed through the tunnel and emerged into the jungle.

Numa had now learned the rudiments of being driven; Tarzan now urged him forward—and there began as strange a journey as the unrecorded history of the jungle contains. The rest of that day was eventful, both for Tarzan and for Numa. From open rebellion at first the lion passed through stages of stubborn resistance and grudging obedience, to final surrender. He was a very tired, hungry and thirsty lion when night overtook them; but there was to be no food for him that day nor the next; Tarzan did not dare risk removing the head-bag, though he did cut another hole in the nose that permitted Numa to quench his thirst shortly after dark. Then he tied the lion to a tree, sought food for himself and stretched out among the branches above his captive for a few hours' sleep.

Early the following morning they resumed their journey, winding over the low foothills south of Kilimanjaro, toward the east. The beasts of the jungle who saw them took one look and fled. The scent-spor of Numa alone might have been enough to provoke fight in many of the lesser animals, but the sight of this strange apparition—which smelled like a lion but looked like nothing they had ever seen before—led through the jungles by a giant Tarmangani was too much for even the more formidable denizens of the wild.

BUT Sabor, the lioness, recognizing from a distance the scent of her lord and master intermingled with that of a Tarmangani and the hide of Horta, the bear, trotted through the aisles of the forest to investigate. Tarzan and Numa heard her coming, for she voiced a plaintive and questioning whine as the baffling mixture of odors aroused her curiosity and her fears; for lions, however terrible their appearance, are often timid animals; and Sabor was habitually inquisitive as well.

Tarzan unsling his spear, for he knew it was likely that he would now have to fight to retain his prize. Numa halted and turned his outraged head in the direction of the coming she. He voiced a throaty growl that was almost a purr. Tarzan was upon the point of prodding him on again, when Sabor broke into view—and behind her the Ape-



They saw the giant ape-man pick the heavy German from the ground and shake him as a terrier might shake a rat.

HANLON