

# TARZAN THE TERRIBLE

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ALMOST instantly his eyes were above the level of the floor he understood how they had trapped him. The ropes had lain encircling the floor in the end of each of the chambers and at opposite sides of the chamber. When he had climbed to a sufficient height upon the rope that had fastened to the prison below and he had slipped into the encircling ropes, he was well within the encircling ropes. The two priests had pulled across the two ropes and he had been made an easy captive without any opportunity of defending himself or of inflicting injury upon his captors. And now they bound his legs from his knees and picking him up carried him from the chamber. No matter how they speak to him as they bore him upward to the temple yard.

The din of battle had risen again as Lu-don had urged his forces to renewed efforts. Tarzan had not arrived and the forces of the old chieftain were re-energized by his lessened efforts. The priests, demoralized, and then they carried the priests carried Tarzan to the roof of the palace and hid him in the sight of the warriors of both factions. There is the false Dor-ul-Ortho, Lu-don.

Oberatz, his shattered mentality never grasped fully the meaning of what was going on about him. He was a casual, and as his eyes fell upon the noble features of the ape-man, they went wide in astonishment and fright, and his priestly countenance turned a sickly blue. Once before he had seen Tarzan of the Apes, but many had been dreamed that he had seen the ape-man and always the giant ape-man always was the giant ape-man. Oberatz, the last of the ruthless warriors, he and his by the ruthless hands of the three German officers who had their native troops in the ravine of Tarzan's people. Hauptmann Fritz, a powerful, heavy-set man with his needless cruelty; the lieutenant von Goss, too, had a sad face, and now Oberatz, the last of the three, stood face to face with the ape-man who had trailed him through months of a long, weary months. He was bound and helpless, lessened by the German's terror—he seemed not to realize that he could not harm the ape-man. He stood cringing and shivering. Lu-don saw and was filled with apprehension that others might see and being sure that the two Tarzans were not so good as the more godly figures. Already the high priest noted that some of the palace warriors standing near were whispering together. Oberatz said: "You are Jad-ben-Otho," he whispered, "denounce him!"

The German shook himself. His mind cleared, of all but the priestly terror and the words of the high priest gave him the clue to safety. "You are the last of the true German warriors!" he screamed. "I am Jad-ben-Otho!" he screamed. Tarzan looked him straight in the eye. "You are Lieutenant Oberatz, of the German Army," he said in excellent German. "You are the last of the true German warriors and in your heart you know that as last for nothing."

The mind of Lieutenant Oberatz was functioning clearly and rapidly at last. He, too, saw the questioning looks upon the faces of some of those around him. He saw the opposing warriors of both cities standing by the gate in-actively, every eye turned upon him, and he turned to the gate and saw the figure of the ape-man standing in the sharp barbed tones of a Prussian officer, so unlike his former manner as to quickly attract the attention of every ear and to cause an impression of puzzlement to cross the faces of Lu-don. "I am Jad-ben-Otho," snapped Oberatz. "This creature is no son of mine. As a lesson to all blasphemers he shall die upon the altar at the hands of his god. Take him to the sun stand at midday, and when the sun stands at midday let the faithful congregations in the temple court and witness the wrath of his divine hand," and he held aloft his right hand.

Those who had brought Tarzan took him away then as Oberatz had directed, and the German turned once more to the warriors by the gate. "Throw down your arms, warriors of Lu-don," he cried, "let I call down lightning to blast you where you are. Those who do as I bid shall be forgiven. Come! Throw down your arms."

The warriors of Ja-don moved un-willingly, casting looks of appeal at their chief and of apprehension toward the priest upon the palace roof. Ja-don sprang forward among his men. "Let me forward and enter the palace," he cried, "but never will Ja-don and the warriors of Ja-lur touch their foreheads to the feet of Lu-don and his priest. Make your decision now." A few threw down their arms and with sheepish looks passed through the gateway into the palace, and with the exception of the dissection from the chief of the north, but staunch and true around him stood the majority of his warriors and when the last warrior had left their Ja-don roared the savage cry with which he led his warriors to the attack, and once again he raged about the palace gate. At times Ja-don's forces pushed the leaders far into the palace ground and the wave of combat would recede and Lu-don would enter the city again. And it did not come. It was drawing close to noon. Lu-don had mastered every available man that was not actually needed for the defense of the temple, and these he sent under the leadership of Pan-sat, out into the city through the secret passageway from the rear while those at the gate hammered them in front.

Arrived on two sides by a vasty host, and finally the result was inevitable, and the last remnants of the old chief were taken a prisoner before Lu-don. "Take him to the temple and witness the death of his accursed father and perhaps Jad-ben-Otho shall be a similar sentence upon him as well."

The inner temple court was packed with humanity. At either end of the gate, bound and helpless. The sounds of battle had ceased and presently the ape-man saw Ja-don being led into the temple court, his wrists bound tightly together before him. Tarzan turned the direction of Ja-don, and nodded in his eyes. "He is dead," he said quietly. "He was my last and only hope."

"We have at least found each other," she replied, "and our last days have been spent together. My only prayer now is that if they take you they do not leave me."

Tarzan made no reply for in his heart was the same bitter thought that

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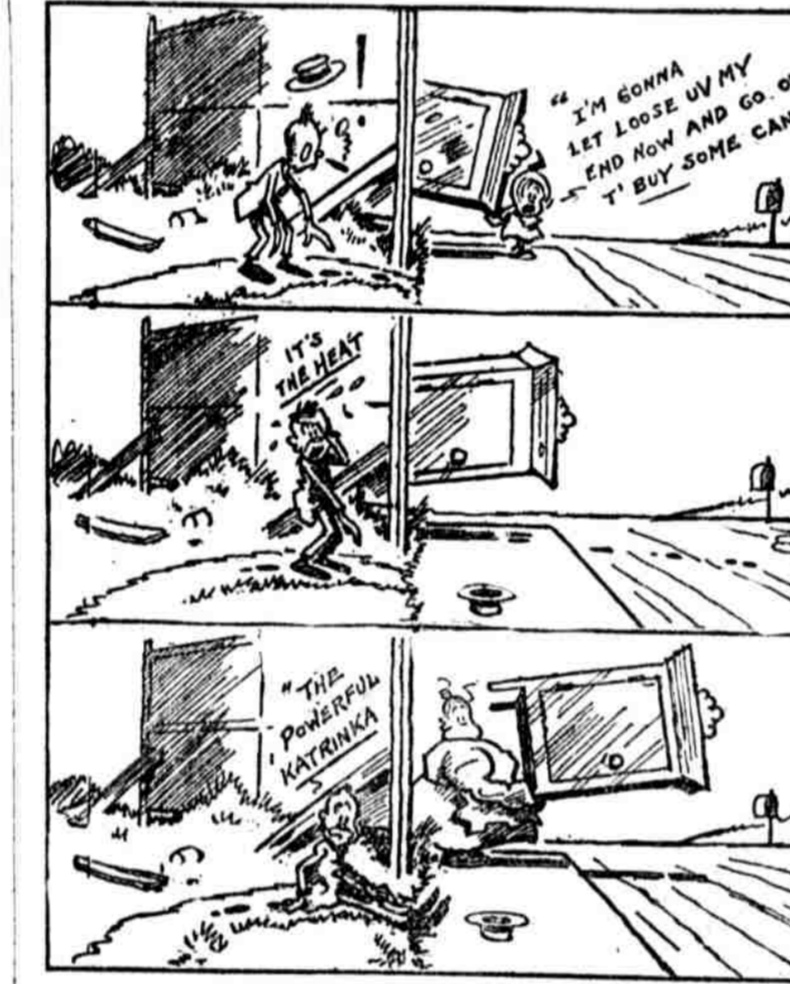
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