Che Home Reading Circle



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thick as young trees, and the ropes of

vy stout and tight. Then at last she

lay down amidst some ferns in a hol-

low place near a thicket, and listened

She heard footsteps presently rust-

ing among the dead leaves, far off,

and they died away and everything

vas still again except the scandalising

drawing on-and the incessant whis-

per of the leaves. She laughed silent-

She lay a long time there, glad of

with her heart beating in her ears.

This story is of a time beyond the memory of man, before the beginning of history, before the beginning of speech almost, when men still eked out their scare words by gestures, and talked together as the animals do, by the passing of simple thoughts from mind to mind-being themselves indeed still of the brotherhood of the heasts.

Fifty thousand years ago it was, fifty thousand years-if the estimates of the geologists are correct.

And in those days the springtime was as joyful as it is now, amidst the woodland and marsh and open grass along the river Wey, and sent the blood coursing in just the same fashion. The afternoon sky was blue with piled white clouds sailing through it, and the southwest wind came like a soft caress. The new-come swallows drove to and fro. The reaches of the river were spangled with white ranunculus, the marshy places were starred with ladies-smock and lit with marsh mallow whereever the regiments of the sedger lowered their swords, and the northward moving hippopotami, shiny black monsters, sporting clumsily, came floundering and blundering through it all, rejoicing dimly and possessed with one clear idea, to splash the river mud-

Further up the river and well in eight of the hippopotami a number of little buff-colored animals dabbled in the water. There was no fear, no rivalry, and no enmity between them and the hippopotami. As the great bulks came crashing through the reeds and smashed the mirror of the water into silvery splashes, these little creatures shouted and gesticulated with glee It was the surest sign of high spring. "Boloo!" they cried. "Baayah. loo!" They were the children of the men folk, the smoke of whose encampment rose from the knoll at the river's bend. Wild-eyed youngsters they were, with matted hair and little broadnosed, impish faces, covered (as some children are covered even nowadays) with a delicate down of hair. They were narrow in the loins and long in the arms. And their ears had no lobes, and had little pointed tips, a thing that still, in rare instances, survives.

Their eleders were hidden from the wallowing hippopotami by the crest of the knoll. The human squatting-place was a trampled area among the dead brown fronds of Royal Fern, through which the crosiers of this year's growth were unrolling to the light and warmth. The fire was a smouldering heap of char, light gray and black, replenished by the old women from time to time with brown leaves. Most of the men were asleep-they slept sitting with on their knees. The had killed that morning a good quarry, enough for all, and some of the women were still gnawing the bones that lay scattered about. Others were making a heap of leaves and sticks to feed Brother Fire when the darkness came again, that he might grow strong and tall therewith, and guard them against the beasts.

None of these buff-skinned savages were clothed, but were about their hips rude girdles of adder skin or crackling undressed hide, from which depended little bags, not made, but torn from the paws of beasts, and carrying the rudely dressed flints that were men's chief weapons and tools. And one woman, the mate of Uya the Cunning Man, wore wonderful necklace of perforated fossils-that others had worn before her. Besides some of the sleeping men lay the big antlers of an elk, with the tines chipped to sharp edges, and long sticks, hacked at the ends with flints into sharp points. But Uya the Cunning did not sleep, but sat with a bone in his hand and scraped busily thereon with a flint, a thing no animal would do. He was the oldest man in the tribe, beetlebrowed, prognathous, lank-armed. And by virtue both of his strength and cunning he was master of the tribe, and his share was always the most and the

Eudena had hidden herself among the alders, because she was afraid of Uya. She was still a girl, and her eyes were bright and her smile pleasant to see. He had given her a piece of the liver, a man's piece, and a wonderful treat for a girl to get; but as she took it the other woman with the neckince had looked at her an evil glance, and Ugh-lomi had made a noise in his throat. At that Uya had looked at him long and steadily, and Ugh-lomi's face had fallen. An then Uya had looked at her. She was frightened and she had stolen away, while the feeding was still going on. Afterwards Uya had wandered about as if looking for her, and she crouched among the alders. After a little she saw Cya coming

down the knoll. He had seen the moveet—he was very keen-eyed. Eudena set off through the alders

and reeds as fast as she could go. She did not care where she went so long as the escaped Uya.

She was soon amidst the trees-she was very fleet of foot, and she ran on and on, until the forest was old and the trees great, and the vines about their stems where the light came were

Blood

Whether itching, burning, bleeding, scaly, crusted, pimply, or blotchy, whether simple, scrofulous, or hereditary, from infancy to age, seedily cured by warm baths with CUTICURA SOAP, gentle anointings with CUTICURA (ointment), the great skin cure, and mild doses of Curicuna RESOLVENT, greatest of blood

FACE HUMORS falling Hair and Baby Blomi she stirred. Then the white owl, flit-

ting silently, came ghostly through the shades. Darker grew the world and larker, until the leaves and twigs gairst the sky were black, and the ground was hidden.

She remained there all night, an age-long vigii, straining her ears for the things that went on below in the darkness, and keeping motionless lest some stealthy beast should discover her. Man in those days was never alone in the dark, save for such rare accidents as this. Age after age he had learnt the lesson of its terrora lesson we poor children of his have nowadays painfully to unlearn. Eudena, though in age a woman, was in heart like a child. She kept as still, poor little animal, as a hare before it

The stars gathered and watched her her one grain of comfort. In one bright one she fancied there was something like Ugh-lomi. Then she fancled it was Ugh-lomi. And near him, red and duller, was Nya, and as the night passed Ugh-lomi fled before him up the sky. She tried to see Brother Fire, who

guarded the squatting-place from peasts, but he was not in sight. And far away she heard the mammoths trumpeting as they went down to the drinking place, and once some huge bulk with heavy paces hurried along of the midges—for the evening was making a noise like a calf, but what drawing on—and the incessant whisthought from the voice it was Yeaa ly to think the cunning Uya should go the rhinoceros, who stabs with his nose, goes always alone, and rages

her escape, and then she sat up listen-At last the little stars begin to hide, and then the larger ones. It was like it was a rapid pattering growing all the animals vanishing before the louder and coming towards her, and in Terror. The Sun was coming, lord of



FAR AWAY AMONG THE TREES RAN A MAN.

swine. She turned about her, for a then the sky paled to the dawn.
boar is an ill fellow to pass too closely. When the daylight came the fear of nearer, they were not feeding as they wandered, but going fast-or else they would not overtake her-and she caught the limb of a tree, swung on to it, and run up the stem with something of the gility of a monkey.

Down below, the sharp bristling backs of the swine were already passing when she looked down. And she knew the short, sharp grunts they made meant fear. What were they afraid of? A man? They were in a great hurry for just a man.

And then, so suddenly it made her grip on the branch tighten involuntarily, a fawn started in the brake and rushed after the swine.

Then, far away among the trees, clear or a moment, then hidden, then visible knee-deep in ferns, then gone again, ran a mat., She knew it was young Ugh-lomi by the fair color of his hair, and there was red upon his face, Somehow his frantic flight and that scarlet mark made her feel sick. And then, nearer, running heavily and breathing hard, came another man also running. It was Uya, running with great strides and his eyes staring. He was not going after Ugh-lomi. His face was white, It was Uyaafrald! He passed, and then mething else, something large and with grizzled fur, swinging along with soft, swift strides, came rushing in pursuit of him.

Eudena suddenly became rigid,

eased to breathe, her clutch convulsed, and her eyes staring. She had never seen the thing before, the did not even see him clearly now, bue she knew at once it was the Terfor of the Woodshade. His name was legend, the children would frighter te another, frighten even themselves with his name, and run screaming to the squatting place. No man had ever killed any of his kind. Even the mighty mammoth feared his anger. It was the grizzly bear, the lord of the world

as the world went then,
As he can be made a continuous growling grumble: "Men in my very ment of her pale arm amidst the thick-et-he was very keen-eyed. lair! Fighting and blood. At the very mouth of my lair! Men. men, men! Fighting and blood," For he was the lord of the wood and of the caves. Long after he had passed she remained, a girl of stone, staring down through the branches. All her power of action had gone from her. gripped by instinct with hands and knees and feet. It was some time before she could think, and then only one thing was clear in her mind, that as long as the Terfor was between her

and the tribe it would be impossible to Presently w'en her fear was a little abated she clambered into a more comfortable position, where a great branch forked. The trees rose about her, so that she could see nothing of Brother Fire, who is black by day. Birds began to stir about her, and

hings that had gone into hiding for ar of her movements crept out. After a time the blue overhead deep ned, and the taller branches flamed ut at the touch of the sunset. Eudena hought of going back to the squating place; she let herself down some vay, and then the fear of the Terror of the Woodshade came again. While she hesitated a rabbit squealed dismally, and she dared not descend fur-

The shadows now were gathering in the trees; they sat on the branches and watched her. Branches and leaves were turned to ominous, quiet black shapes, that would spring on her if

a little while she could hear grunting the sky, as the grizzly was lord of the noises and the snapping of twigs. It forest. Eudena wondered what would was a drove of the lean, grisly wild happen if one star stayed behind. And ing the bracken and stepping clear

arking things passed, and she could laughed aloud at the unequal chatusks, and she made off slantingly descend. She was stiff, and as she had They were an exceptionally straightthrough the trees. But the patter came | not been trained to eat at least once limbed couple for those days. in three days, she did not feel uncomfortably hungry. She crept down the tree very cautiously, and went her way Suddenly Eudena cried and swerved stealthily through the wood, and not aside, pointing, and looking up through a squirrel sprang or deer started but the tree-stems. Ugh-loml saw the feet the terror of the grizzly bear freze her and legs of men running towards him.

Her desire was now to find her peof loneliness. But she had lost her diection. She had run heedlessly overnight, and she could not tell whether the squatting-place was sunward or stopped and listened, and at last, very far away, she heard a measured chinking. She knew the sound was that of

a man sharpening a flint. Presently the trees began to thin out, and then came a regiment of nettles barring the way. She turned aside, and then she came to a fallen tree that she knew, with a noise of bees about it. And so presently she was in sight of the knoll, very far off, and the river under it, and the children and the hippopotami just as they had been yesterday, and the thin spire of smoke swaying in the morning breeze. She crept into a thicket of bracken, out of which a rabbit scuttled, and lay

awhile to watch the squatting-place. The men were mostly out of sight saving Wau, the flint-chopper. They were away hunting-food, no doubt. Some of the women, too, were down in the stream, stooping intent, seeking musels, crayfish and water-snails, and at the sight of their occupation Endena felt hungry. She rose, and ran through the fern, designing to join them. As she went she heard a voice among the bracken calling softly. She stopped. Then suddenly she heard a rustle behind her, and turning, saw Ugh-lomi ed Uya, antier in hand, leading them



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rising out of the fern. There were this face, and his eyes were fierce, and the white stone of Uya, the white Fire Stone, that none but Uya dared to yet the fine work of many of these touch, was in his hand. In a stride he was beside her, and gripped her arm. He swung her about, and thrust her before him towards the woods. "Uya," he said, and waved his arms about. She heard a cry, tooked back, and saw all the women standing up. and two wading out of the stream. Then came a nearer howling, and the old woman with the beard who watched the fire on the knoll, was waving her arms, and Wau, the man who had been chipping the flint, was getting to his feet. The little children too were hurrying and shouting.

"Come!" said Ugh-lomi, and dragged her by the arm.

She still did not understand. "Uya," said Ugh-lomi, and she glanced back again at the screaming urve of figures, and dimly understood Wau and all the women and children were coming towards them, a senttered array of buff, shock-headed figures, howling, leaping and crying Down among the ferns to the right came a man, beading them off from the wood. Ugh-lomi left her arm, and the and wide. Eudena, knowing her fleetness and the fleetness of Ugh-lomi

They soon cleared the open, and drey near the wood of chestnut trees again Eudena was already running off at a tangent. And as he too turned to folple again. Her dread of Uya the Cun- low her they heard the voice of Uya ning was consumed by a greater dread coming through the trees, and roaring

out his rage at them. Then terror came in their hearts, no the terror that numbs, but the terror that makes one silent and swift. They where it lay. Ever and again she were cut off on two sides. They were

MEN IN MY VERY LAIR! FIGHT

ING AND BLOOD."

in a sort of corner of pursuit. On the

the men swift and heavy, with beard-

and on the left, scattered as one scat-

ters corn, yellow dashes among the

fern and grass, ran Wau and the wo-

men; and even the little children from

the shallow had joined the chase. The

two parties converged upon them. Off

They knew there was no mercy for

hem. There was no hunting so sweet

o these ancient men as the hunting of

marked Ugh-lomi with the death word.

(To Be Continued.)

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opening selection, and was well ren-

background a heautiful rural scene.

ture then presented.

And Uya in the night had

they went, with Endena ahead,

Ugh-lomi was the day's quarry.

streaks of brown blood and dirt on dered. Without an exception the procalled forth loud applause.

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