

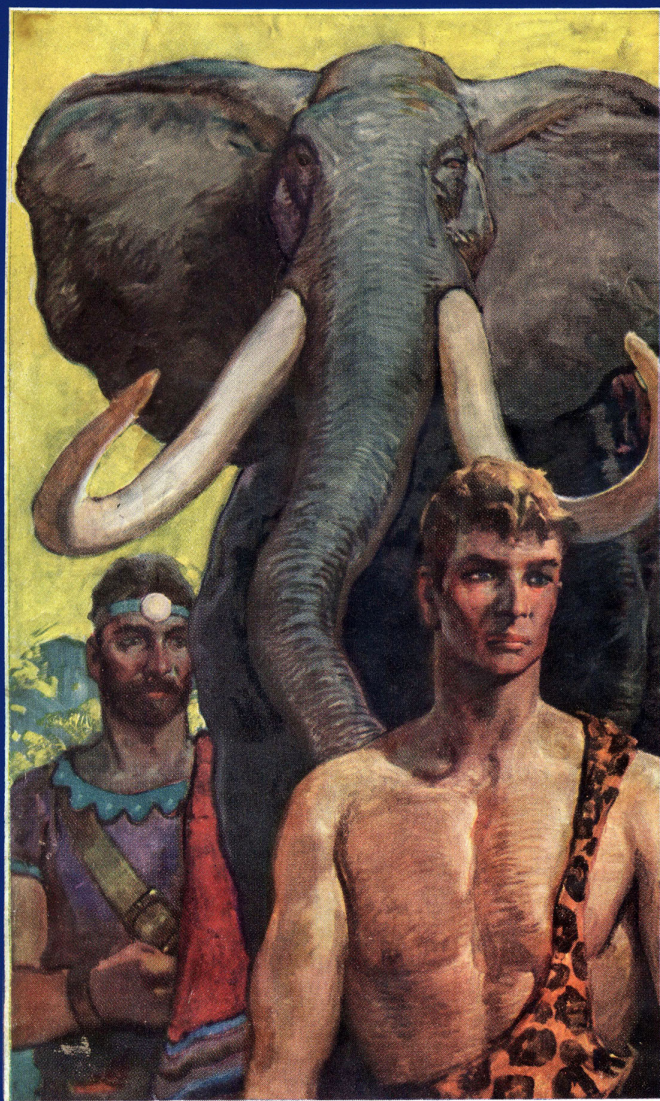
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# BLUE BOOK

OF FICTION AND ADVENTURE



TARZAN and TANTOR  
Painted by Herbert Morton Stoops

NOVEMBER

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**TARZAN**

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•

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# **TARZAN and the Elephant Men**

**By EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS**

**Illustrated by  
Jeremy Cannon**

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*The world's champion fiction hero comes back to you in  
one of the most interesting of all his adventures.*

**[Transcriber's Note: This etext was produced from  
The Blue Book Magazine November, December 1937,  
January 1938.]**

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Perhaps you will recall a Reuter's dispatch of a year or more ago announcing the success of the Wood and Van Eyk African Expedition in solving the mystery of the disappearance of Lord and Lady Mountford more than twenty years before, and of the rescue of their daughter Gonfala, queen of the warrior-women of Kaji.

The article mentioned the fact that Lord Greystoke had been largely instrumental in effecting the release not only of Gonfala but of the entire expedition and numerous slaves and captives, from the malign power of Mafka, the magician witch-doctor of the Kaji; it also touched lightly and rather skeptically upon the reported size and value of the Gonfal, the great diamond of the Kaji, and the enormous emerald of the Zuli that the expedition brought out of the Kaji country with them, only to have them stolen by Spike and Troll, the two white hunters who had accompanied the party. It closed by stating that Gonfala, Wood and Van Eyk had reached the African estate of Lord Greystoke in safety.

It did not mention that Stanley Wood and Gonfala planned to marry immediately and return to England and then to America; nor did it remind us that Lord Greystoke is Tarzan of the Apes.

What Reuter's could not know, it remains for us to tell: the amazing aftermath of the theft of the two great stones, the combined value of which has been estimated at between twenty-five and thirty million dollars—in addition to which is the inexplicable hypnotic powers they confer upon their possessors.



# CHAPTER I

## CANNIBALS

A low sun pointed long shadows toward the east; the tired day was preparing to lay aside its burdens. Far away, a lion roared. It was the prelude to another African night, majestic as the king of beasts, and as savage.

A party of eight men laid down their few belongings and made camp beside a water-hole. Two of the men were white. Like their black companions, they were armed with bows and arrows and short spears; there was not a firearm among them all.

Some of the men carried meat from the last kill, and there were two packages wrapped in skins. Besides their weapons, that was all. It was a poorly equipped safari, if it could be said to have been equipped at all.

The blacks were quiet, speaking in whispers as they cooked the meat for their evening meal. The white men were glum and scowling.

One of them nodded toward the blacks. "The beggars are scairt stiff."

The other nodded. "Cannibal country, and they know it."

His companion sat scowling down at the two skin-wrapped packages for a long period of silence. "I'm scairt myself, Troll," he said finally. "Scairt o' these things—they's a curse on 'em."

Troll shrugged. "I could take a lot o' cursin' for six million pun."

"Yeh; if we get out alive."

"I aint worrit about that. What I'm worrit about is runnin' into that bloke Clayton. He'll take the rocks away from us."

"He went north."

"But he said he was comin' back, an' he said he'd know if we'd pulled anything crooked. I don't like that bloke."

They lapsed into silence, chewing on the half-cooked meat of a tough old boar the blacks had killed the day before. Again the lion roared.

"The beggar's gettin' closer," remarked Spike. "I hopes he aint no man-eater."

Troll fidgeted. "Shut up!" he growled. "Can't you think of somethin' pleasant for a change?"

"Bein' way out here without no gun'd make any bloke nervous. Look at them damn' things!" He kicked his bow and bundle of arrows that lay at his feet. "I might kill a rabbit with 'em—if I could hit 'im; but I couldn't hit a elephant if he stood still at ten paces—and you know wot kind of a target a lion makes when he charges."

"Oh, fer cripe's sake, shut up!"

Again they lapsed into silence. The shadow of the forest covered them and stretched out across the plain, for the sun had all but set. Suddenly there was a frightened cry: "Bwana! *Look!*" One of the blacks was pointing toward the forest.

The white men wheeled as they rose to their feet. Coming toward them were a dozen black warriors. Spike stooped to pick up his bow and arrows.

"Lay off!" warned Troll. "They aint enough of us—an' anyways, they may be friendly." Spike stood erect again with empty hands. One by one the blacks of their party rose slowly to their feet.

The strangers were approaching cautiously, with their weapons ready. They halted a dozen paces from the camp, their grim-visaged leader in advance of the others. He surveyed the two white men and their six bearers arrogantly, contemptuously. Troll made the sign of peace.

The leader strode forward, followed by his warriors. "What you do here in the country of the Bantango?" he demanded.

"We look for guides," replied Troll in the same dialect. "Big safari behind us—many guns—they come soon; then we go. We wait here till they come."

"You lie," said the chief. "My man one he follow you two days; then he come me. No big safari. No guns. You lie."

"Wot did I tell you?" demanded Spike. "They's a curse on us—an' look at them filed teeth."

"I told you it was cannibal country," observed Troll lamely.

"Gawdamighty, I'd give both them rocks for a gun!" moaned Spike.

"The rocks!" exclaimed Troll. "That's it! Why didn't we think o' that before?"

"Think o' what?"



"The Gonfal. We can use it like old Mafka did: just put a hand on it an' make any bloke do wotever you wants him to do."

"Blime! That's a idea. Make 'em get out o' here." He stooped and started to unwrap the Gonfal, the great diamond of the Kaji.

The chief took a step forward. "What you got?" he demanded.

"Big medicine," said Troll. "You like see?"

The chief nodded. "Me like, me take."

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**"Me like," said the chief. "Me take."**

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The swift equatorial night had fallen. And only the cooking-fires of the little camp illuminated the tense scene. From the deep shadows a great lion watched.

Spike undid the thongs that bound the wrappings to the Gonfal, and with trembling hands threw back the skin

revealing the great stone shimmering and scintillating in the dancing lights of the cooking-fires. The chief recoiled with a short gasp of astonishment. He did not know what the stone was, but its brilliance awed him.

Troll dropped to one knee beside the Gonfal and laid a hand on it. "Go away!" he said to the chief. "Lay down your weapons, all of you; and go away!"

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The chief and his warriors stood looking at the stone and at Troll. They did not lay down their weapons, nor did they go away. As nothing happened, they regained confidence.

"No lay down weapons; no go away," said the chief. "We stay. Me like; me take." He pointed at the Gonfal. "You come our village. You b'long me."

"You better go away," insisted Troll. He tried to make his voice sound commanding, but failed.

"Wot's wrong with the Gonfal?" demanded Spike.

"It won't work," said Troll.

"Le'me try it." Spike stooped and placed a palm on the stone. "You blokes drop your weapons an' beat it before our big medicine kills you," he shouted threateningly.

The chief stepped forward and kicked Spike in the face, bowling him over on his back. His warriors rushed in with loud war-cries, brandishing their weapons. And then from the outer darkness came a thunderous roar that shook the earth, and a great lion charged into the savage mêlée.



**From the darkness came a thunderous roar, and a great lion charged into the mêlée.**

---

He leaped over the prostrate Spike and brushed past Troll, falling upon the terrified chief and his warriors.

Troll was quick to grasp the opportunity for escape. He gathered up the great diamond, shouting to Spike and the bearers to follow him and bring the other stone; then he ran for the forest.

A few screams mingled with savage growls rang in their ears for brief moments; then silence.

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All night they followed close to the forest's edge; nor did they stop until they came upon a small stream shortly after daylight. Then they threw themselves upon the ground, exhausted.

As they chewed once more upon the flesh of the old boar, their spirits revived, and they spoke for the first time for hours.

"I guess we don't know how to work the rock," ventured Troll.

"Who says 'we'?" demanded Spike. "I worked it."

"You?"

"Sure. Didn't I tell 'em they'd get killed if they didn't beat it? And wot happens? The Gonfal calls the old man-eater. You remember that lamp that bloke used to rub—I forget his name; but this works just the same for me. I rubs it and wishes—and there you are!"

"Rats!"

"A'right; didn't I do it?"

"No. That lion was comin' long before you touched the rock. He smelled meat—that was wot brought him, not you and your bloody rock."

"I'll show you. Here, give it to me."

Spike took the diamond from Troll, uncovered it, and placed a palm on its gleaming surface. He glowered fixedly at his companion.

"Sit down!" he commanded.

Troll grinned derisively and advised Spike to, "Go to 'ell." The latter scratched his head in momentary confusion; then he brightened. "'Ere," he exclaimed; "I got a better idea." He scratched a line on the ground with a bit of stick. "I says now that you can't cross that line—and you can't."

"Who says I can't?" demanded Troll, stepping across the line.

"I guess maybe there's something I don't understand about this," admitted Spike. "That Clayton bloke worked it on the Kaji and the Zuli. You seen him yourself."

"Gonfala was there," reminded Troll. "Maybe that's the answer. Maybe it won't work without her."

"Maybe," admitted Spike; "but the Zuli medicine-man done the same work with the emerald, an' he didn't have no Gonfala."

"Well, try the emerald, then."

"Le'me have it."

"I aint got it."

"One of the boys must have it."

"I told you to bring it."

"One of the boys always carries it," insisted Spike, turning to the bearers sprawled on the ground. "Hey, you! W'ich one o' you's got the green rock?" They looked at him blankly; then they looked at one another.

"No got," said one. "No bring."

"Hell!" ejaculated Troll. "You're a rare un, you are, a-leaving maybe a three-million-pun stone back there in the cannibal country!"



# CHAPTER II

## KIDNAPED

"Tired?" asked Wood. But Gonfala shook her head. "Not a bit."

"You're doing pretty well for a girl who never had to do anything more strenuous than sit on a throne," laughed Van Eyk.

"You'd be surprised. I can probably outrun and outlast either of you. You see I used to hunt with the Kaji. Mafka insisted on it—lots of exercise. He was a great believer in exercise—for everyone but Mafka."

"I'm glad," said Wood, "for we've got two long marches between this camp and rail-head. I'll be glad when it's over. To tell you the truth, I'm fed up on Africa. I hope I never see it again."

"I don't blame you, Stanlee; you came near staying here a long time."

"Yes; eternity is rather a long time." Wood grimaced. "It's hard to realize, even now, that we escaped."

"Really incredible," agreed Gonfala. "We're the first persons ever to escape from Mafka; and he'd been there—oh, no one knows how long; the Kaji said always. They believed that he created the world."

The three were camped at the end of a day's march on their way out toward civilization. They had a dependable, well-



equipped safari furnished by Tarzan. The men planned on devoting one day to hunting, as they were in excellent game country; then they would cover the two long marches to rail-head. The delay for hunting was Wood's concession to Van Eyk, an indefatigable Nimrod, who had obtained permission from the Lord of the Jungle to take out a few trophies for his collection.

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As night fell, the light of their beast-fire cast dancing shadows through the camp and shone far into the night, both attracting and repelling the great carnivores upon whose domain they trespassed; for this was lion country. It attracted also other eyes a mile or more to the north.

"I wonder what that might be," said Spike.

"A fire," growled Troll. "What you think it was—a iceberg?"

"Funny, aint you?"

"Not as funny as a bloke what runs off an' leaves three million puns' worth o' emerald with a bunch of cannibals."

"Fer cripe's sake, quit chewin' about that! I didn't leave it any more 'n you did. What I mean is, there must be men over by that fire; I wonder who."

"Natives, perhaps."

"Or white hunters."

"What difference does it make?" asked Troll.

"They might put us on the right trail."

"An' tell that Clayton bloke where we are? You're balmy."

"How do you know he's around here? Maybe they never even heard of him."

"He's everywhere. Everybody's heard of him. He said he'd know it if we double-crossed Stanley. After I seen what he done in the Kaji country, I wouldn't put nothin' past him—he's omnivorous."

"Whatever that means."

"You're ignorant."

"Well, just the same, I think we'd oughter find out who made that fire. If they're one thing, we'd better light out of here; if they're the other, we can ask 'em to set us on the right trail."

"Maybe you said something intelligent at last. It wouldn't do no harm to go have a look-see."

"That fire may be a long ways off, and—"

"And what?"

"This is lion country."

"You scared?"

"Sure I'm scared. So are you, unless you're a bigger fool than I think. Nobody but a fool wouldn't be scared in lion country at night without a gun."

"We'll take a couple of the smokes with us. They say lions like dark meat."

"All right; let's get goin'."

Guided by the fire, the four men approached the Wood-Van-Eyk camp; and after reconnoitering made their way to the

concealment of a clump of bushes where they could see and not be seen.

"Cripes!" whispered Spike. "Look who's there!"

"Gonfala!" breathed Troll.

"An' Wood an' Van Eyk."

"T'ell with them! If we only had the girl!"

"Wot do we want of her?"

"You get less brains every minute. Wot do we want of 'er? If we had her, we could make the diamond do its stuff just like Mafka did—just like Clayton did. We'd be safe; nothin' nor nobody couldn't hurt us."

"Well, we aint got her."

"Shut up! Listen to wot they're sayin'."

The voices of the three whites by the campfire came clearly to Troll and Spike. Van Eyk was making plans for the morrow's hunt.

---

"I really think Gonfala ought to stay in camp and rest; but since she insists on coming along, you and she can go together. If there were three men, now, we could spread out farther and cover more ground."

"I can do whatever a man can do," insisted Gonfala. "You can assume that you have three men."

"But, Gonfala—"

"Don't be foolish, Stanlee. I am not as the women you have known in your civilized countries. From what you have told me, I shall be as helpless and afraid there as they would be here; but here I am not afraid. So I hunt tomorrow as the third man, and now I am going to bed. Good night, Stanlee. Good night, Bob."

"Well, I guess that settles it," remarked Wood with a wry smile; "but when I get you back in God's country, you'll have to mind me!"

"Perhaps," said Gonfala.

The chill of night still hung like a vapor below the new sun as the three hunters set out from their camp for the day's sport, and although the hunt had been Van Eyk's idea primarily, each of the others was keen to bag a lion. Over their breakfast coffee they had laid wagers as to which would be the lucky one to bring down the first trophy, with the result that not a little friendly rivalry had been engendered. That each might come in with a prize seemed entirely possible, for the night had been filled with the continual roaring of the great carnivores.

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Shortly after leaving camp the three separated, Van Eyk keeping straight ahead toward the east, Wood diverging toward the south, and Gonfala to the north; each was accompanied by a gunbearer; and some of the members of the safari followed along after Van Eyk and Wood, either believing that one of the men would be more likely to get a

lion than would the girl, or perhaps feeling safer behind the guns of the men.

From behind an outcropping of rock at the summit of a low hill northwest of the Wood-Van-Eyk camp, Spike and Troll watched their departure; while below them, concealed from sight, the six men of their safari waited. The two whites watched Gonfala and her gunbearer approaching across the open plain. The direction that she was taking suggested that she would pass a little to the east of them, but that she would then still be in sight of Van Eyk and possibly Wood also.

The latter was not at all happy about the arrangements for the day; he did not like the idea of Gonfala going out on her own after lion with only a gunbearer, but the girl had overridden his every objection. He had insisted, however, upon sending as gunbearer a man of known courage who was also a good shot; and Wood instructed him to be ready always with the second rifle in the event that Gonfala got into a tight place and, regardless of custom, to shoot a charging lion himself.

While Gonfala had had little previous experience of firearms prior to the last few weeks, it gave Wood some consolation to reflect that she had, even in that short time, developed into an excellent shot; and in so far as her nerve was concerned, he had no cause for anxiety. What he could not have known, of course, was the far greater menace of the two men who watched her from their rocky concealment upon the hilltop. . .

Gonfala passed the hill beneath the eyes of Spike and Troll and then crossed a low rise that was a continuation of the hill running down into the plain, and from then on she was hidden from the sight of either Van Eyk or Wood. The country she

now entered was broken by gullies and outcroppings of rock, by low bushes and occasional trees; so it was comparatively easy for Spike and Troll to follow her without danger of being discovered; and this they did, catching only an occasional glimpse of her during the ensuing hour.

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Unsuspecting the fact that eight men followed upon her trail, Gonfala continued her seemingly fruitless search for lion, bearing constantly a little to the west because of a range of low hills that lay to the right of her and thus constantly increasing the distance between herself and her two companions. She had about come to the conclusion that the lions had all left the country, when she heard, faint and far toward the east, the report of two rifle-shots.

"Some one else had the luck," she said to her gunbearer; "I guess we came in the wrong direction."

"No, Memsahib," he whispered, pointing. "Look! *Simba!*"

She looked quickly in the direction he indicated; and there among the grasses beneath a tree she saw the head of a lion, the yellow-green eyes gazing unblinkingly at her. The beast was about a hundred yards distant; he was lying down, and as only his head was visible, he offered a poor target. A frontal shot, she knew, would only tend to infuriate him and precipitate a charge.

"Pay no attention to him," she whispered. "We'll try to get closer and to one side."

She moved forward then, not directly toward the lion, but as though to pass a little to the right of him; and always his eyes followed them, but neither she nor the gunbearer gave any indication that they were aware of his presence. When she had approached to within about fifty yards, she stopped and faced him; but he only lay quietly regarding her. When she took a few steps straight toward him, however, he bared his great fangs and growled.

Topping a rise behind her, Spike took in the situation at a glance. He motioned to his men to halt, and beckoned Troll to his side. Together they watched the tense scene below them.

"I wish he'd get up," said Gonfala.

The gunbearer picked up a stone and hurled it at the lion. The result was immediate. With an angry roar the lion leaped to its feet and charged.

*"Shoot, Memsahib!"*

Gonfala dropped to one knee and fired. The lion leaped high into the air, its angry roar shattering the silence. It was hit, but it was not stopped; for although it rolled over on its back, it was up again in an instant and bearing down on them at terrific speed. Gonfala fired again—and missed. Then the gunbearer took aim and pressed the trigger of his gun. There was only a futile click. The cartridge missed fire.

The lion was almost upon Gonfala when the gunbearer, unnerved by the failure of his gun, turned and fled.

Unwittingly he saved Gonfala's life, for at sight of the man in flight, the lion, already rising over Gonfala, followed a natural instinct that has saved the life of many a hunter, and pursued the fleeing man. Gonfala fired again, and again

scored a hit; but it did not stop the infuriated beast as it rose upon its hind feet and seized the gunbearer, the great fangs closing upon his head until they met in the center of his brain.

The girl was aghast as she stood helplessly by while the huge cat mauled its victim for a moment; then it sagged upon the body of the man and died.

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"That," said Troll, "is wot I calls a bit o' luck. We not only gets the girl, but we gets two guns."

"And no witness," added Spike. "Come on!" He motioned the others to follow him, and started down the declivity toward Gonfala.

She saw them almost immediately and for a moment thought her companions were coming, but presently she recognized them. She knew that they were bad men who had stolen the great diamond and the emerald, but she had no reason to believe that she was in any danger from them.

They came up to her, smiling and friendly. "You sure had a narrow squeak," said Spike. "We seen it from the top of that rise, but we couldn't have done nothing to help you even if we'd had guns—we was too far away."

"What are you doing here?" she asked.

"We was tryin' to find our way to rail-head," explained Spike. "We been lost fer weeks."

Troll was recovering the gun and ammunition from the dead gunbearer, and Spike was eying Gonfala's splendid rifle.



"We're on our way to rail-head," she explained. "You can come back to camp with me and go on to rail-head with us."

"Won't that be nice!" exclaimed Spike. "Say, that's a fine gun you got there. Le'me see it a minute." Thoughtlessly she handed the weapon over to him; then she stepped over to the body of the dead gunbearer.

"He's quite dead," she said. "It's too bad. Your men can carry him back to camp."

"We aint goin' back to your camp," said Spike.

"Oh," she exclaimed. "Well, what am I to do? I can't take him back alone."

"You aint goin' back, neither."

---



**"We aint goin' back to your camp," said Spike. "You aint goin' back, neither."**

---

"What do you mean?"

"Just wot I says: You aint goin' back to your camp. You're comin' with us."

"Oh, no, I'm not."

"Listen, Gonfala," said Spike. "We don't want no trouble with you. We don't want to hurt you none; so you might as well come along peaceful-like. We need you."

"What for?" Her voice was brave, but her heart sank within her.

"We got the Gonfal, but we can't make it work without you."

"Work?"

"Yes, work. We're goin' to set ourselves up like Mafka did and be kings—just as soon as we find a piece o' country we like. We'll live like kings too, off the fat of the land. You can be queen—have everything you want. Maybe, even, I'll marry you." He grinned.

"The hell you will," snapped Troll. "She belongs to me as much as to you."

Gonfala winced. "I belong to neither of you. You are both fools. If you take me away, you will be followed and killed; or at the least, both I and the Gonfal will be taken from you. If you have any sense, you will let me go; then you can take the Gonfal to Europe. They tell me that the money it would bring there would buy you anything you wanted all the rest of your lives."

"A fat chance we'd have gettin' rid o' that rock in Europe," said Troll. "No, sister, we got it all figgered out. You're comin' with us, an' that's that."

---

# CHAPTER III

## CLEWS

Van Eyk dropped his lion with the second shot, and a few minutes later he heard the three shots fired by Gonfala. Wood, having had no luck, and attracted by the report of Van Eyk's gun, joined him. He was still apprehensive concerning Gonfala's safety; and now that Van Eyk had his trophy, he suggested that they send the carcass back to camp while they joined Gonfala. Van Eyk agreed, and they set out in the direction from which they had heard the shots.

They searched for two hours without result, often calling her name and occasionally discharging their rifles; then, more by chance than design, they stumbled upon the little swale where Gonfala had come upon her lion. There it lay upon the body of the dead gunbearer, but Gonfala was nowhere to be seen.

The ground was hard and stony, giving no indication to the untrained eyes of the white men that others beside Gonfala and her gunbearer had been there; so they assumed that, having no one to cut off or carry the head of the lion back to camp, the girl had returned there herself alone; and that, having come from another direction, they had missed her. They were therefore not unduly apprehensive until after they reached camp and discovered that she had not returned.

By that time it was late in the afternoon; but Wood insisted upon taking up the search at once, and Van Eyk seconded the suggestion. They divided the safari into three sections. Van Eyk and Wood, each heading one, set out on slightly

diverging trails in the general direction that Gonfala had taken in the morning; while the third, under a headman, was ordered to remain in camp, keeping the large fire burning and occasionally discharging a rifle to guide Gonfala if she should return toward camp without meeting either Wood or Van Eyk. And all during the night Gonfala and her captors heard the faint reports of rifles far to the south.

---

It was around noon of the following day that, exhausted and disheartened, Wood and Van Eyk returned to camp.

"I'm afraid it's no use, old man," said the latter. "If she'd been alive, she'd have heard our rifles and replied."

"I can't believe she's dead," said Wood; "I won't believe it!"

Van Eyk shook his head. "I know it's tough, but you've got to face facts and reason. She couldn't be alive in this lion country now."

"But she had two guns," insisted Wood. "You saw that she took the gun and ammunition from the gunbearer after he was killed. If she'd been attacked by a lion, she'd have fired at least once; and we never heard a shot."

"She might have been taken unaware—stalked after dark and struck down before she knew a lion was near. You've seen 'em charge; you know it's all over in a second if you aren't ready for 'em."

Wood nodded. "Yes, I know. I suppose you're right, but I won't give up—not yet."

"Well, Stan, I've got to get back home. If I thought there was the slightest chance, I'd stay; but I know there's not. You'd better come along and try to forget it as soon as you can. You might never, here; but back home it'll be different."

"There's no use, Van; you go along. I'm going to stay."

"But what can you do alone?"

"I won't try to do anything alone. I'm going back and find Tarzan; he'll help me. If anyone can find her or where she was killed, it's he."

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Ten days later Wood plodded wearily into the camp that he had not left except in his daily fruitless searches for Gonfala. He had not gone back to enlist Tarzan's aid, but had instead sent a long letter to the ape-man by a runner. Every day for ten days he had combed the country for miles around, and each day he had become more convinced that Gonfala was not dead. He had found no trace of a human kill by lions, no shred of clothing, no sign of the two guns or the ammunition that Gonfala had had with her—though he had found plenty of lion kills: zebra, antelope, wildebeest. But he had found something else that gave support to his belief that Gonfala might be alive—the camp of Spike and Troll. It lay only a short distance northerly from his own camp. Gonfala must have passed close to it the morning she started out to hunt. What type of men had camped there, he could not know; but he assumed that they were natives; for there were no signs of white men—no empty tins, no indications that a tent had been pitched.

Perhaps, then, Gonfala's fate had been worse than the merciful death the king of beasts would have accorded her. That thought goaded him to desperation, and filled his mind with red imaginings of vengeance. Such were his thoughts as he threw himself upon his cot in hopeless bafflement to reproach himself as he had a thousand thousand times for having permitted Gonfala to hunt alone that day. How long ago it seemed, how many ages of bitter suffering!

A figure darkened the doorway of the tent, and Wood turned to look. Then he sprang to his feet. "Tarzan! God, I thought you'd never come."

"I came as soon as I got your letter. You have been searching, of course; what have you found?"

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Wood told him of his failure to find any evidence that Gonfala had fallen prey to lions, but that he had found a camp in which there had been men recently.

"That is interesting," commented Tarzan. "It is too late now to investigate that today; tomorrow I'll have a look at it."

Early next morning Wood and the ape-man were at the camp from which Spike and Troll had been attracted by the campfire that had led them to the discovery of the presence of Gonfala. As Tarzan examined the ground and the surroundings minutely, his lifetime of experience, his trained powers of observation, his sensitive nostrils revealed facts that were a sealed book to the American. The charred wood in the dead fires, the crushed grasses, the refuse each told him something.

"It was a poor camp," he said finally. "Perhaps ten or a dozen men camped here. They had very little food, and their packs were few. They did have packs, and that indicates that there were white men—perhaps one, perhaps two; the rest were natives. Their food was poor. That would suggest that they had no firearms, for this is a good game country; so perhaps there were no white men at all. Yet I am sure there were. They had only the meat of an old boar to eat. Some of the bones were split and the marrow extracted. That suggests natives. Other bones were not split, and that suggests white men."

"How do you know they had packs?" asked Wood, who could see no evidence to suggest anything more than that some one had been there and built fires and eaten food. He could see the discarded bones of their repast.

"If you look carefully, you will see where they lay on the ground. It has been ten days at least; and the signs are faint, but they are there. The grasses are pressed down and the marks of the cords that bound the packs are still visible."

"I see nothing," admitted Wood after close scrutiny.

Tarzan smiled one of his rare smiles. "Now we shall see which way they went," he said. "The spoor of so many men should be plain."

They followed toward the north the freshest spoor that led from the camp, only to lose it where a great herd of grazing game had obliterated it; then Tarzan picked it up again beyond. Eventually it led to the spot where the bodies of the gunbearer and the lion had lain.

"Your theory seems to have been correct," said the ape-man. "Gonfala, apparently, was captured by this party."



"That was eleven days ago," mused Wood despairingly.

"There is no telling where they are now, or what they have done to her. We must lose no time in following."

"Not we," replied Tarzan. "You will return to your camp and start tomorrow for my place. When I have definitely located Gonfala, if I cannot rescue her without help,"—again he smiled,—"I'll send word by a runner, and you can come with an escort of Waziri."

"But can't I go along with you?"

"I can travel much faster alone. You will do as I say. That is all."

And that *was* all. Wood stood watching the magnificent figure of the ape-man until it disappeared beyond a rise in the rolling plain; then he turned dejectedly toward camp. He knew Tarzan was right, that a man whose senses were dulled by generations of non-use would prove only a drag on the alert ape-man.

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For two days Tarzan followed the trail in a northerly direction; then an unseasonable rain obliterated it forever. He was now in the country of the Bantangos, a warlike tribe of cannibals and hereditary enemies of his Waziri. He knew that if the captors of Gonfala had come this way, it might be because they were themselves Bantangos, and so he determined to investigate thoroughly before searching farther. If they had not been Bantangos, it was very possible that they had been captured by this tribe; for he knew that they were a small and poorly equipped company.

In any event it seemed best to have a look into the village of the chief—to which, unquestionably, important captives would have been taken; but where the village lay, the ape-man did not know. To the east of him a range of low hills stretched away into the north, and to these he made his way. As he ascended them, he commenced to glimpse villages to the west and north, and finally from the summit of one of the higher hills he obtained a view of a considerable extent of country containing many villages. The majority of these were mean and small—just a handful of huts surrounded by flimsy palisades of poles.

The valley in which the villages lay was dotted with trees, and on the west abutted upon a forest. It was a scene of peace and loveliness that lent a certain picturesqueness to even the squalid kraals of the Bantagos and belied the savagery and bestiality of the inhabitants. The beauty of the aspect was not lost upon the ape-man, whose appreciation of the loveliness or grandeur of nature, undulled by familiarity, was one of the chiefest sources of his joy of living. In contemplating the death that he knew must come to him, as to all living things, his keenest regret lay in the fact that he would never again be able to look upon the hills and valleys and forests of his beloved Africa; and so today, as he lay like a great lion low upon the summit of a hill, stalking his prey, he was still sensible of the natural beauties that lay spread before him. Toward the center of the valley lay a large village; this, Tarzan knew, must be that of the chief.

The moonless night descended, a black shroud that enveloped the forest, the trees and the villages, concealing them from the eyes of the watcher; then the Lord of the Jungle arose, stretching himself. So like a lion's were all his movements

that one might have expected the roar of the hunting beast to rumble from his great chest. . . . Silently he moved down toward the village of the chief. Little lights shone now about the valley, marking the various villages by their cooking-fires. Toward the fires of the largest strode an English lord, naked but for a G-string.

From the hills he was quitting, a lion roared. He too was coming down to the villages where the natives had gathered their little flocks within the flimsy inclosures of their kraals. The ape-man stopped and raised his face toward the heavens. From his deep chest rose the ferocious, answering challenge of the bull-ape. The savages in the villages fell silent, looking questioningly at one another, wide-eyed in terror. The warriors seized their weapons, the women huddled their children closer.

"A demon," whispered one.

"Once before I heard that cry," said the chief of the Bantangos. "It is the cry of the devil-god of the Waziri."

"Why would he come here?" demanded a warrior. "The rains have come many times since we raided in the country of the Waziri."

"If it is not he," said the chief, "then it is another devil-god."

"When I was a boy," said an old man, "I went once with a raiding-party far toward the place where the sun sleeps, to a great forest where the hairy tree-men live. They make a loud cry like that, a cry that stops the heart and turns the skin cold. Perhaps it is one of the hairy tree-men. We were gone a long time. The rains were just over when we left our village; they came again before we returned. I was a great warrior. I killed

many warriors on that raid. I ate their hearts; that is what makes me so brave." No one paid any attention to him, but he rambled on. The others were listening for some sound that might presage the approach of an enemy.

Tarzan approached the palisade that surrounded the village of the chief. A tree within the enclosure spread its branches across the top. The ape-man came close and investigated. Through the interstices between the poles that formed the palisade he watched the natives. Gradually their tense nerves relaxed as there was no repetition of the cry that had alarmed them; and they returned to their normal pursuits.

Tarzan wished to scale the palisade and gain the branches of the tree that spread above him; but he wished to do it without attracting the attention of the Bantagos, and because of the frail construction of the palisade, he knew that that would be impossible during the quiet that prevailed within the village at the supper hour. He must wait. Perhaps the opportunity he sought would present itself later. With the patience of the wild beast that stalks its prey, the ape-man waited. He could, if necessary, wait an hour, a day, a week. Time meant as little to him as it had to the apes that raised him, his contacts with civilization not having as yet enslaved him to the fetish of time.

Nothing that he could see within the restricted limits of his vision, a section of the village visible between two huts just within the palisades, indicated that the Bantagos held white prisoners; but he knew that if such were the case they might be confined within a hut; and it was this, among other things, that he must know before continuing his search.

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The evening meal concluded, the blacks lapsed into somnolence. The quiet of the African night was broken only by the occasional roars of the hunting lion, coming closer and closer, a sound so familiar that it aroused the interest of neither the blacks within the village or the watcher without.

An hour passed. The lion ceased his roaring—evidence that he was now approaching his prey and stalking. The blacks stirred with awakening interest with the passing of the phenomenon of digestion, and became motivated by the same primitive urge that fills night-clubs and other late spots with dancers after the theater. A dusky maestro gathered his players with their primitive instruments, and the dancing began. It was the moment for which Tarzan had been awaiting. Amidst the din of the drums and the shouts of the dancers, he climbed to the top of the palisade and swung into the tree above.

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From a convenient limb he surveyed the scene below. He could see the chief's hut now, and the chief himself. The old fellow sat upon a stool watching the dancers, but in neither the chief nor the dancers did the ape-man discover a focus for his interest—that was riveted upon something that lay at the chief's feet: the Great Emerald of the Zuli.

There could be no mistake. There could be but one such stone, and its presence here induced a train of deductive reasoning in the alert mind of the ape-man that led to definite conclusions—that Spike and Troll had been in the vicinity, and that it was logical to assume that it must have been they who abducted Gonfala. Were they here now, in this village of

the Bantagos? Tarzan doubted it—there was nothing to indicate that there were any prisoners in the village; but he must know definitely; and so he waited on with the infinite patience that was one of the heritages of his upbringing.

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**Were there prisoners in the village? Tarzan must know definitely; so he waited on, with infinite patience.**

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The night wore on; at last the dancers tired, and the village street was deserted. Sounds of slumber arose from the dark huts, while here and there a child fretted or an infant wailed.

The ape-man dropped silently into the empty street. Like a shadow he passed from hut to hut, his keen nostrils searching out the scents that would tell him, as surely as might his eyes could he have seen within, whether a white lay prisoner there. No one heard him; not even a sleeping cur was disturbed. When he had made the rounds, he knew that those he sought were not there, but he must know more. He returned to the chief's hut. On the ground before it, like worthless trash, lay the Great Emerald of the Zuli. Its weird green light cast a soft radiance over the bronzed body of the jungle lord, tinged the chief's hut palely green, accentuated the blackness of the low entrance way.

The ape-man paused a moment, listening; then he stooped and entered the hut. He listened to the breathing of the inmates. By their breathing he located the women and the children and the one man—that one would be the chief. To his side he stepped and kneeled, stooping low. Steel-thewed fingers closed lightly upon the throat of the sleeper.

"Make no sound," whispered the ape-man, "if you would live."

"Who are you?" demanded the chief in a whisper. "What do you want?"

"I am the devil-god," replied Tarzan. "Where are the two white men and the white woman?"

"I have seen no white woman," replied the chief.

"Do not speak lies—I have seen the green stone."

"The two white men left it behind them when they ran away," insisted the chief, "but there was no white woman with them. The sun has risen from his bed as many times as I have fingers on my two hands and toes on one foot since the white men were here."

"Why did they run away?" demanded the ape-man.

"We were at their camp. A lion came and attacked us; the white men ran away, leaving the green stone behind."

A woman awoke and sat up. "Who speaks?" she demanded.

"Tell her to be quiet," cautioned Tarzan.

"Shut up," snapped the chief at the woman, "if you do not wish to die—it is the devil-god!"

The woman stifled a scream and lay down, burying her face in the dirty reeds that formed her bed.

"Which way did the white men go?"

"They came from the north. When they ran away, they went into the forest to the west. We did not follow them. The lion had killed two of my warriors and mauled others."

"Were there many in the safari of the white men?"

"Only six, beside themselves. It was a poor safari. They had little food and no guns. They were very poor." His tone was contemptuous. "I have told you all I know. I did not harm the white men or their men. Now go away. I know no more."

"You stole the green stone from them," accused Tarzan.



"No. They were frightened and ran away, forgetting it; but they took the white stone with them."

"The white stone?"

"Yes, the white stone. One of them held it in his hands and told us to put down our weapons and go away. He said it was big medicine and that it would kill us if we did not go away; but we stayed, and it did not kill us."

In the darkness the ape-man smiled. "Has a white woman passed through your country lately? If you lie to me, I shall come back and kill you."

"I have never seen a white woman," replied the chief. "If one had passed through my country, I should know it."

Tarzan slipped from the hut as silently as he had come. As he went, he gathered up the Great Emerald and swung into the tree that overhung the palisade. The chief breathed a choking sigh of relief and broke into a cold sweat.

Strong in the nostrils of the ape-man was the scent of Numa the lion. He knew that the great cat was stalking close to the palisade. He had no quarrel with Numa this night, and no wish to tempt a hungry hunting lion; so he made himself comfortable in the tree above the cannibal village to wait until Numa had taken himself elsewhere.

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# CHAPTER IV

## TANTOR

Weary day after weary day Gonfala had trudged north with Spike and Troll. They had made a wide detour to avoid the country of the Bantangos, for although they had both the Gonfal and Gonfala, they lacked the courage of their convictions relative to this combination that previously had seemed all-powerful.

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**Weary day after weary day Gonfala trudged north with  
Spike and Troll.**

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Gonfala's safety, so far, had lain in the two men's jealousy of one another. Neither would leave her alone with the other. Because of her, they had ceased to speak except when absolutely necessary; and each was constantly afraid that the other would murder him. To assure her own safety, the girl

watched over the safety of each of the others as though she loved them both.

One of the blacks carried the great diamond; nor did either of the white men attempt to touch it without arousing the savage objections of the other; for now that Gonfala was with them, each feared that the other might use the magical power of the stone to destroy him.

Spike was in search of a district which he had passed through on safari several years before.

"It's a regular garden, miss," he explained to Gonfala; "and game! S'elp me, it's lousy with game; and that gentle, from not bein' hunted none, that you can walk right up to 'em an' bat 'em over the head, if you'd a mind to. We could live like kings and with plenty of servants too; for the natives is peaceable-like, and not many of 'em. I mean not too many. We could rule 'em easy, what with our havin' the Gonfal and you."

"I don't know that the Gonfal would do you much good," said the girl.

"Why not?" demanded Troll.

"You don't know how to use it. One must have certain mental powers to succeed with the Gonfal."

"Have you got 'em?" asked Spike.

"I could use it unless Mafka desired to prevent me. He could do that, for his mind could control mine. I've never tried to use these powers since Mafka died."

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"But you think you can?" Spike's voice reflected the fear that was in him. He had banked heavily on the power of the Gonfal.

"I think so," replied Gonfala, "but I shall not use it to help either of you unless I am absolutely assured that neither one of you will harm me."

"I wouldn't think of hurtin' you, miss," Spike assured her.

"Me neither; but you better not trust him," said Troll.

Spike took a step toward Troll, his fists clenched. "You dirty crook," he shouted, "you're the one needs watchin', but you won't need it much longer. I'll break your neck for you, right now!"

Troll jumped back and picked up his rifle. "Come any closer, and I'll let you have it," he threatened, holding the muzzle of the weapon aimed at Spike's belly.

"You'd better not," Spike admonished him. "You may need another gun in some of the country we got to go through. You'd never get through alone with just six niggers."

"That goes for you too," growled Troll.

"Then let's call it quits, and quit our rowin'—it aint gettin' us nothin'."

"It won't ever get me, for either one of you," said Gonfala.

"And that's what's been the trouble between you. You stole me from my friends, and some day they're going to catch up with you. When they do, it'll be better for you if you haven't harmed me. Stanlee Wood will never give up until he finds me; and when he tells Tarzan I have been stolen, you can rest assured I'll be found and you will be punished."

"Tarzan!" exclaimed Spike. "What's Tarzan got to do with it?"

"You know who he is?"

"Sure—everybody's heard of him; but I aint never seen him. I always thought maybe he was just somethin' somebody made up. What do you know about him? Have you ever seen him?"

"Yes, and so have you."

"Not us," said Troll.

"You remember Clayton?" asked the girl.

"Sure, I remember Clayton. That bloke was as good as two—Say! You don't mean—?"

"Yes, I do. Clayton is Tarzan."

Troll looked worried. Spike scowled, then he shrugged. "Wot if he is?" he demanded. "He couldn't never find us—not where we're goin'; and even if he did, wot could he do against the Gonfal? We could do what we pleased with him."

"Sure," agreed Troll; "we could snuff him out like that." He snapped his fingers.

"Oh, no, you couldn't," said Gonfala.

"An' w'y couldn't we?"

"Because I wouldn't let you. You can't use the Gonfal without my help, and when Tarzan and Stanlee come I shall help them. You see, with the Gonfal, I can snuff *you* out."

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The two men looked at one another. Presently Spike walked away, calling to Troll to accompany him. When he was out of earshot of Gonfala, he stopped. "Listen," he said; "that dame's got us to rights. If she ever gets her paws on that rock, our lives won't be worth nothin'."

"Looks like the Gonfal aint goin' to do us much good," said Troll. "We can't make it work without her; and if we let her get her hands on it, she'll kill us. Wot are we goin' to do?"

"In the first place, we got to see that she doesn't get to touch it. One of us has got to carry it—she might get the nigger to let her touch it sometime when we weren't around. You can carry it if you want to."

"That's wot I been sayin' for a long time," Troll reminded him.

"Well, it's different now," Spike explained. "Neither one of us can get it to work, an' neither one of us dares let her touch it; so we're safe as long as one of us has it."

"But wot good is the stone goin' to do us, then?"

"Wait till we get up in that country I been tellin' you about. We can make the dame be good then. All we got to do is to tell her to work the stone the way we say, or we'll croak her. She'll have to do it, too; for where I'm takin' her, she couldn't never find her way out after she'd killed us; so it wouldn't do her no good."

Troll shook his head. "Maybe she'd kill us anyway, just to get even with us."

"Well, there aint nothin' we can do about it now, anyway," said Spike; "so let's get goin'. Come on, you niggers! Come on, Gonfala; we're trekkin'—the sun's been up an hour."

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As they broke camp far to the north of him, Tarzan stopped at the edge of the forest that bordered the valley of the Bantangos on the west. He looked about him, carefully taking his bearings; then with the tip of his spear he loosened the earth in the center of a triangle formed by three trees, and with his hands scooped out the earth until he had a hole about a foot deep. Into this he dropped the Great Emerald of the Zuli. When he had refilled the hole and covered it with the fallen leaves and twigs that he had carefully scraped away, no human eye could have detected the hiding-place. With his knife he blazed a tree fifteen paces from one of the three trees that formed the triangle. Only Tarzan could ever find the place again. Should he never return, the huge jewel would lie there to the end of time, undiscovered.

Unable to find the trail that the storm had obliterated, the ape-man attempted to deduce from his knowledge of the two men he was now positive were the abductors of Gonfala and from his knowledge of events leading up to the present moment, the logical destination for which they were headed.

He knew that they were familiar with the miraculous powers of the Gonfal and that they had been unable to call these powers into being themselves. The chief of the Bantangos had told him of their failure to demonstrate the value of their big medicine. Either by accident or intent they had found Gonfala, and what more natural than that they would assume that with her aid they could command the wonders of the Gonfal? And where would be the best place to utilize these powers? Why, the country of the Kaji, naturally; for there they would be safer from detection than almost anywhere else



on earth, and there they would find a tribe accustomed to the domination of the stone. There they would find women; and Tarzan felt that if he were any judge of men, that circumstance would have considerable bearing with Troll and Spike. So Tarzan traveled toward the north on a trail parallel to that taken by Spike and Troll, but some distance to the west of it.

For two days Tarzan moved toward the north, and still there was no sign of those whom he sought. He made his kills and ate and slept, and swung on tirelessly through forest or across plains.

As he was passing through a strip of forest along the shoulder of a range of hills thick with bamboo, he heard a sound that brought him to halt, listening. It was repeated—the weak trumpeting of an elephant in distress. The ape-man turned aside from the direction he had been traveling and moved cautiously through the bamboo thicket. He was moving down-wind; so he made a wide circuit in order to pick up the scent-spoor of what lay ahead. There might be something beside an elephant: the caution of the beast aided and abetted the reasoning powers of the man.

Presently the scent of Tantor the elephant told him that he had circled his quarry, and even stronger was the rank odor of Dango the hyena; then, harsh and raucous, came the hideous laughing cry of the unclean beast, followed by the plaintive help-cry of the elephant. Tantor was in trouble, and the ape-man pushed forward to learn the cause.

Almost as old as Tarzan was the friendship of Tarzan and Tantor. Perhaps he had never seen this elephant before; but

still, to Tarzan, he would be Tantor—the name and the friendship belonged to all elephants.

As Tarzan came closer, he moved more cautiously—beastlike, always scenting a trap. For those of the jungle, eternal vigilance is the price of life. At last he came close enough so that by parting the bamboo he could see that for which he had been searching. The top of Tantor's back was just visible in an elephant-pit. Snapping and growling at the edge of the pit were a pair of hyenas; circling above was Ska the vulture; from these omens the ape-man knew Tantor was near death.

Parting the bamboo, Tarzan stepped into the little clearing that the builders of the pit had made, an enlargement of a wide elephant-trail. Instantly the hyenas transferred their attention from the elephant to the ape-man, and with bared fangs faced him. But as the man advanced, they retreated, snarling.

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As he approached the pit, Tantor saw him and trumpeted a feeble warning. The elephant's skin hung loosely on its great frame, evidencing that it had been long without food or water. It had fallen into a pit that must have been dug and then abandoned, either because the tribe that dug it had moved away, or because no elephant having fallen into it, they had ceased to visit it.

Tarzan spoke to Tantor in the strange language that he used with the beasts of the jungle. Perhaps Tantor did not understand the words—who may know? But something, the

tone perhaps, carried the idea which the ape-man wished to convey, that he was a friend; but Tantor needed something beside kind words, and so Tarzan set about cutting the bamboo that bore the tenderest shoots and carrying them to the imprisoned beast.

Tantor ate with avidity, the water content of the shoots furnishing at least some of the moisture that his great frame required even more than it required food; then Tarzan set to work with spear and knife and hands upon the seemingly herculean task of excavating a ramp up which Tantor could walk to liberty. It was the work not of an hour but of many hours, and it was not completed until the following day; then, weak and staggering, the great pachyderm climbed slowly from the pit. He was a huge beast, one of the largest old bulls Tarzan had ever seen. One tusk, by some peculiar freak of nature, was much darker than the other; and this, with his great size, must have marked him among his fellows as a bull of distinction.

As he came out of the pit, his sensitive trunk passed over the body of the ape-man in what was almost a caress; then, as Tarzan took his way once more toward the north, Tantor turned and moved slowly along the elephant-trail eastward, toward the nearest water.

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Days passed. Stanley Wood, waiting at Tarzan's estate, became almost frantic as no news came of Tarzan's whereabouts. He pleaded with Muviro, headman of the Waziri, to furnish him with an escort and let him set out in

search of Gonfala; and at last Muviro yielded to his importunities and gave him half a dozen warriors as an escort.

Wood took up the search at the point at which Tarzan had left him, where the clean-picked bones of the lion Gonfala had killed lay bleaching in the sun. He knew only that those he sought had started north at that spot. It was a blind and seemingly hopeless search; but it meant action; and anything was preferable to sitting idly.

As they approached the Bantango country, the Waziri, knowing the nature and temper of the inhabitants, counseled making a detour to avoid them; and entirely by chance they selected an easterly route—the route that Spike and Troll had chosen for the same reason. Thus it happened that a week later they received definite proof that they were on the right trail. At a village of friendly blacks they were told that a safari of nine that included two white men and a white girl had stopped overnight with the tribe. The chief had furnished guides to the next friendly village to the north.

Wood talked to these men and learned that the chief of the village to which they had guided the safari had also furnished them guides for the next stage of their journey, and for the first time in weeks the young American found hope rekindled in his bosom; from what the villagers had seen, there was no indication that Gonfala was being ill-treated.

All the marvelous tracking skill of the Lord of the Jungle had been nullified by a heavy rain, and then chance had set in and sent him upon the wrong trail and Stanley Wood upon the right one.

Through such a trivial vagary of Fate lives were jeopardized and men died.



# CHAPTER V

## STRANGERS

Spike and Troll were holding palaver with the chief of a northern tribe. They had come far, guided from village to village by friendly natives. Luck had been with them, but now this good fortune seemed to be at an end. They were trying to persuade the old chief to furnish them with guides to the next village.

"No more villages," he said. He did not like these white men. He held them in contempt because their safari was small and poor, too poor even to rob. They had nothing but two rifles—and the girl. He had been thinking about her. He was also thinking of a black sultan to the east to whom she might be sold, but he put this thought from him. He did not wish any trouble with the white men. Native soldiers had come to his village once under white officers and punished him for ill-treating the safari of some white hunters. They had come from a great distance just to do that, and the incident had given him vast respect for the power and the long arm of the white man.

"What is north?" asked Spike.

"Mountains," replied the chief.

"That," said Spike to Troll, "is like the country where my valley is. It is surrounded by mountains." He tried to explain to the chief the valley for which they were searching and the tribe that inhabited it.

A cunning look came into the eyes of the chief. He wished to be rid of these men, and he saw how he might do it. "I know the valley," he said. "Tomorrow I will give you guides."

"I guess maybe we aint lucky!" gloated Spike, as he and Troll came from their palaver with the chief and sat down beside Gonfala. The girl did not inquire why; but Spike explained, nevertheless. "It won't be long now," he said, "before we're safe and sound in my valley."

"You won't be safe," said Gonfala. "Tarzan and Stanlee Wood will come soon—very soon now."

"They won't never find us where we're goin'."

"The natives will guide them from village to village just as they have guided you," she reminded him. "It will be very easy to follow you."

"Yes," admitted Spike, "they can follow us up to where these people will guide us."

"But there we will stop. They will find you there."

"We don't stop there," said Spike. "I guess I aint nobody's fool. The valley these people are takin' us to, aint my valley; but once I get in this here first valley, I can find the other. I passed through it comin' out of my valley. It's about two marches east of where we want to go. When we get to this here first valley, we won't need no guides the rest of the way; so, when we leave this here first valley, we'll tell 'em we're goin' to the coast, an' start off to the east; then we'll swing around back way to the north of 'em an' go west to my valley. And there won't nobody never find us."

"Tarzan and Stanlee Wood will find you," insisted Gonfala.

"I wisht you'd shut up about this here Tarzan and 'Stanlee' Wood. I'm sick of hearin' of 'em. It's gettin' on my nerves."

Troll sat staring at Gonfala through half-closed lids. He had not spoken much all day, but he had looked much at Gonfala. Always when she caught his glance he turned his eyes away.

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They had been able to sustain themselves this far by killing game, trading the meat to natives for other articles of food, principally vegetables and corn. Tonight they feasted royally and went to their beds early. Gonfala occupied a hut by herself; the two men had another near by. They had had a hard day's trek, and tired muscles combined with a heavy meal to induce early slumber. Gonfala and Spike were asleep almost as soon as they had stretched themselves on their sleeping-mats.

Not so Troll. He remained very much awake, thinking. He listened to the heavy breathing of Spike that denoted that he slept soundly. He listened to the sounds in the village. Gradually they died out—the village slept. Troll thought how easy it would be to kill Spike; but he was afraid of Spike. Even when the man slept, he was afraid of him. That made Troll hate him all the more, but it was not hate alone that made him wish to kill him. Troll had been day-dreaming—very pleasant dreams. Spike stood in the way of their fulfillment, yet he could not muster the courage to kill the sleeping man—not yet.

"Later," he thought.



He crawled to the doorway of the hut and looked out. There was no sign of waking life in the village. The silence was almost oppressive; it extended out into the black void of night beyond the village. As Troll rose to his feet outside the hut he stumbled over a cooking-pot; the noise, against the background of silence, seemed terrific. Cursing under his breath, the man halted, listening.

Spike, disturbed but not fully awakened, moved in his sleep and turned over; the first dead slumber of early night was broken. Thereafter he would be more restless and more easily awakened. Troll did not hear him move, and after a moment of listening he tiptoed away. Stealthily he approached the hut in which Gonfala slept.

The girl, wakened by the noise, lay staring wide-eyed out into the lesser darkness framed by the doorway of her hut. She heard footsteps approaching. Would they pass, or were they coming here for her? Weeks of danger, weeks of suspicion, weeks of being constantly on guard had wrought upon her until she sensed menace in the most ordinary occurrences; so now she felt, intuitively, she believed, that some one was coming to her hut. And for what purpose, other than evil, should one come thus stealthily by night?

Raising herself upon her hands, she crouched, waiting. Every muscle tense, she scarcely breathed. Whatever it was, it was coming closer, closer. Suddenly a darker blotch loomed in the low opening that was the doorway. An animal or a man on all fours was creeping in!

"Who are you? What do you want?" It was a muffled scream of terror.

"Shut up! It's me. Don't make no noise. I want to talk to you."

She recognized the voice, but it did not allay her fears. The man crept closer to her. He was by her side now. She could hear his labored breathing.

"Go away," she said. "We can talk tomorrow."

"Listen!" he said. "You don't want to go to that there valley and spend the rest of your life with Spike an' a bunch o' niggers, do you? When he gets us there, he'll kill me an' have you all to himself. I know him—he's that kind of a rat. Be good to me an' I'll take you away. Me an' you'll beat it with the diamond. We'll go to Europe, to Paris."

"I don't want to go anywhere with you. Go away! Get out of here, before I call Spike."

"One squawk out of you, an' I'll wring your neck! You're goin' to be good to me whether you want to or not." He reached out in the darkness and seized her, groping for her throat.

Before he found it, she had time to voice a single scream and cry out once: "*Spike!*" Then Troll closed choking fingers upon her throat and bore her down beneath his weight. She struggled and fought, striking him in the face, tearing at the fingers at her throat.

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Wakened by the scream, Spike raised upon an elbow. "Troll!" he called. "Did you hear anything?" There was no response. "Troll!" He reached out to the mat where Troll should have been. He was not there. Instantly his suspicions were aroused, and because of his own evil mind, they centered unquestioningly upon the truth.

In a dozen strides he was at Gonfala's hut; and as he scrambled through the doorway, Troll met him with an oath and a snarl. Clinching, the two men rolled upon the floor, biting, gouging, striking, kicking; occasionally a lurid oath or a scream of pain punctuated their heavy breathing. Gonfala crouched at the back of the hut, terrified for fear that one of them would kill the other, removing the only factor of safety she possessed.

They rolled closer to her; and she edged to one side; out of their way. Her new position was nearer the doorway. It suggested the possibility of temporary escape, of which she was quick to take advantage. In the open, she commenced to worry again for fear that one of the men would be killed.

She saw that some of the natives, aroused by the commotion within her hut, had come from theirs. She ran to them, begging them to stop the fight. The chief was there, and he was very angry because he had been disturbed. He ordered several warriors to go and separate the men. They hesitated, but finally approached the hut. As they did so, the sounds of conflict ended; and a moment later Spike crawled into the open and staggered to his feet.

Gonfala feared that the worst had happened. Of the two men, she had feared Spike the more; for while both were equally brutal and devoid of decency, Troll was not as courageous as his fellow. Him she might have circumvented through his cowardice. At least, that she had thought until tonight; now she was not so sure. But she was sure that Spike was always the more dangerous. Her one thought now was to escape him, if only temporarily. Inflamed by his fight, secure in the knowledge that Troll was dead, what might he not do? To a far corner of the village she ran and hid herself between a hut

and the palisade. Each moment she expected to hear Spike hunting for her, but he did not come. He did not even know that she had left her hut where he thought he had left her with the dead Troll, and he had gone to his own hut to nurse his wounds.

But Troll was not dead. In the morning Spike found him bloody and dazed, squatting in the village street, staring at the ground. Much to Spike's disgust, Troll seemed not even badly injured. He looked up as the other approached.

"Wot happened?" he asked.

Spike looked at him suspiciously for a moment; then his expression turned to puzzlement. "A bloomin' lorry ran over you," he said.

"A bloomin' lorry!" Troll repeated. "I never even seen it."

Gonfala, looking around a corner of the hut behind which she had been hiding, saw the two men and breathed a sigh of relief. Troll was not dead; she was not to be left alone with Spike. She came toward them. Troll glanced up.

"Who's the dame?" he asked.

Gonfala and Spike looked at one another, and the latter tapped his forehead. "A bit balmy," he explained.

"She don't look balmy," said Troll. "She looks like my sister —my sister." He continued to stare at her dully.

"We better get some grub an' be on our way," interrupted Spike. He seemed nervous and ill at ease. It is one thing to kill a man, quite another to have done such a thing as this to him.

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It was a silent, preoccupied trio that moved off behind two guides in a north-easterly direction after the morning meal had been eaten. Spike walked ahead; Troll kept close to Gonfala. He was often looking at her, a puzzled expression in his eyes.

"Wot's your name?" he asked.

Gonfala had a sudden inspiration. Perhaps it was madness to hope that it might succeed, but her strait was desperate.

"Don't tell me you don't remember your sister's name," she exclaimed.

Troll stared at her, his face expressionless. "Wot *is* your name?" he asked. "Everything is sort o' blurry-like in my memory."

"Gonfala," she said. "You remember, don't you—your sister?"

"Gonfala; oh, yes—my sister."

"I'm glad you're here," she said; "for now you won't let anyone harm me, will you?"

"Harm you? They better not try it on," he exclaimed belligerently.

The safari had halted, and they caught up with Spike who was talking with the two guides.

"The beggars won't go no farther," he explained. "We aint made more'n five miles an' they quits us, quits us cold."

"Why?" asked Gonfala.

"They say the country ahead is taboo. They say they's white men up ahead that'll catch 'em an' make slaves out of 'em an' feed 'em to lions."

"Let's turn back," suggested the girl. "What's the use anyway, Spike? If you get killed the Gonfal won't do you any good. If you turn around and take me back safely to my friends, I'll do my best to get them to give you the Gonfal and let you go. I give you my word that I will, and I know that Stanlee Wood will do anything that I ask."

Spike shook his head. "Nothin' doin'! I'm goin' where I'm goin', an' you're goin' with me." He bent close and stared boldly into her eyes. "If I had to give up one or t'other, I'd give up the Gonfal before I would you—but I'm not goin' to give up neither."

The girl shrugged. "I've given you your chance," she said. "You are a fool not to take it."

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So they pushed on without guides farther and farther into the uncharted wilderness; each new day Spike was confident that this day he would stumble upon the enchanted valley of his dreams, and each night he prophesied for the morrow.

Troll's mental condition remained unchanged. He thought that Gonfala was his sister, and he showed her what little consideration there was in his gross philosophy of life to accord any one. The protective instinct of the brutal male was stimulated in her behalf; and for this she was grateful, not to Troll but to fate. Where he had been, where he was going, he appeared not to know or to care. He trudged on day after day

in dumb silence, asking no questions, showing no interest in anything or anyone other than Gonfala. He was obsessed by a belief that she was in danger, and so he constantly carried one of the rifles the better to protect her.

For many days they had been in mountainous country searching for the elusive valley, and at the end of a hard trek they made camp on the shoulder of a mountain beside a little spring of clear water. As night fell the western sky was tinged with the golden red of a dying sunset. Long after the natural phenomenon should have faded into the blackness of the night the red glow persisted.

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Gonfala sat gazing at it, dreamily fascinated. Spike watched it, too, with growing excitement. The blacks watched it with fear. Troll sat down cross-legged, staring at the ground.

Spike sat down beside Gonfala. "You know wot that is, girlie?" he asked. "You know it aint no sunset, don't you?"

"It looks like a fire—a forest fire," she said.

"It's a fire, all right. I aint never been there, but I've seen that light before. I figure it's from the inside of one of them volcanoes, but I'll tell you wot it means to us—it means we found our valley. When I was in that valley I seen that light to the south at night. All we got to do now is trek along a little west o' north, an' in maybe four or five marches we orter be there; then, girlie, you an' me's goin' to settle down to housekeepin'."

The girl made no reply. She was no longer afraid; for she knew that Troll would kill Spike if she asked him to; and now she had no reason to fear being alone with Troll, other than the waning possibility that he might regain his memory. . . .

Morning found Spike almost jovial, so jubilant was he at the prospect of soon finding his valley; but his joviality disappeared when he discovered that two of his six men had deserted during the night. He was in a cold sweat until he found that they had not taken the Gonfal with them. After that, he determined, he would sleep with the great stone at his side, taking no more chances. He could do this now without arousing the suspicions of Troll, for Troll had no suspicions. He paid no attention to the Gonfal nor ever mentioned it.

Toward noon a great valley opened before them, the length of which ran in the direction Spike wished to travel; and so they dropped down into it, to easy traveling after their long days in the mountains.

The valley was partially forested, the trees growing more profusely along the course of a river that wound down from the upper end of the valley, crossed it diagonally, and disappeared in a cleft in the hills to the west; but considerable areas were open and covered with lush grasses, while on the east side of the valley was a veritable forest of bamboo.

Spike, not knowing if the valley were inhabited, nor, if it were, the nature or temper of its inhabitants, chose to follow the wooded strip that bordered the river, taking advantage of the cover it afforded. Along the river he found a wide elephant-trail, and here they were making excellent speed when one of the blacks stopped suddenly, listened intently, and pointed ahead.



"What's the matter?" demanded Spike.

"Men coming," replied the black.

"I don't hear nothin'," said Spike. "Do you?" he turned to Gonfala.

She nodded. "Yes, I hear voices."

"Then we better get off the trail and hide—at least until we see who they are. Here, all of you! Here's a little trail leadin' off here."

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He herded the party off to the left of the main trail along a winding path through rather heavy underbrush, but they had covered little more than a hundred yards when they came out onto the open plain. Here they stopped at the edge of the wood, waiting and listening. Presently the voices of men came plainly to their ears, constantly closer and closer, until suddenly it dawned on them all that the men they heard were approaching along the little trail through which they had sought to escape.

Spike looked for a place of concealment, but there was none. The thick underbrush was almost impenetrable behind them, while on the other hand the plain stretched away across the valley to the hills upon the west. As a last resort he turned north along the edge of the wood, urging the others to haste until all were running.

Glancing back, Gonfala saw the party that had alarmed them debouching onto the plain. First came a dozen huge negroes, each pair of whom held a lion in leash. Following these were

six white men strangely garbed. Even at a distance she could see that their trappings were gorgeous. Behind them followed a score or more of other white men. They were similarly dressed but in quieter raiment. They carried spears as well as swords. One of the warriors carried something dangling at his side which, even at a distance, could not have been mistaken for other than a bloody human head.

"They're white men," Gonfala called to Spike. "Maybe they'd be friendly."

"They don't look like it to me," he replied. "I aint takin' no chances after wot I been through gettin' you an' the Gonfal this far."

"Anyone would be better than you," said the girl, and stopped.

"Come on, you fool!" he cried; and, coming back, seized her by the arm and sought to drag her with him.

"Troll!" she cried. "Help!"

---

Troll was ahead of them, but now he turned; seeing Spike and the girl scuffling, he ran back. His face was white and distorted with rage. "Le' go her," he bellowed. "Le' go my sister!" Then he was upon Spike; and the two went down, striking, kicking, and biting.

For an instant Gonfala hesitated, undecided. She looked at the two beasts upon the ground, and then she turned in the direction of the strange warriors. No one, she reasoned, could be more of a menace to her than Spike; but she soon saw that

the decision had already been made for her—the entire party was moving in their direction. She stood and waited as they approached.

They had covered about half the distance when a warrior in the lead halted and pointed up the valley. For an instant they hesitated; then they turned and started off across the valley at a run, the lions tugging at their leashes and dragging their keepers after them, the warriors in formation behind them.

The girl, wondering at their sudden flight, looked up the valley in the direction in which the warrior had pointed. The sight that met her eyes filled her with amazement. A herd of perhaps a hundred elephants carrying warriors on their backs was moving rapidly down upon them.

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**Gonfala's eyes were filled with amazement.**

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On the ground at her feet, Spike and Troll still bit and gouged and kicked.

## CHAPTER VI

Stanley Wood had no difficulty following the trail of Gonfala's abductors to the point at which their guides had deserted them, and from there the trained Waziri trackers carried on until the trail was lost at the edge of a wood, where it had been obliterated by the shuffling pads of a herd of elephants. Search as they would, they could not pick up the trail again. To Wood, the mystery was complete; he was baffled, disheartened.

Wearily he pushed on up the valley. If only Tarzan were here! He, of all men, could find an answer to the riddle.

"Look, Bwana!" cried one of the Waziri. "A city!"

Wood looked ahead, amazed; for there lay a city indeed. No native village of thatched huts was this, but a walled city of white, its domes of gold and azure rising above its gleaming wall.

"What city is it?" he asked.

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The Waziri shook their heads and looked at one another. "I do not know, Bwana," said one. "I have never been in this country before."

"Perhaps the Memsahib is there," suggested a warrior.

"Perhaps," agreed Wood. "If the people here are unfriendly, they will take us all prisoners," he mused, half aloud; "and

then no one will know where we are, where Gonfala probably is. We must not all be taken prisoners."

"No," agreed Waranji, "we must not all be taken prisoners."

"That is a big city," said Wood; "there must be many warriors there. If they are unfriendly, they could easily take us all or kill us all. Is that not so?"

"We are Waziri," said Waranji, proudly.

"Yes, I know; and you're great fighters. I know that too; but seven of us can't lick an army, even though six of us are Waziri."

Waranji shook his head. "We could try," he said. "We are not afraid."

Wood laid a hand on the ebony shoulder. "You're great guys, Waranji; and I know you'd walk right plumb into hell for any friend of the Big Bwana, but I'm not goin' to sacrifice you. If those people are friendly, one man will be as safe as seven; if they're not, seven men won't be any better off than one; so I'm goin' to send you boys home. Tell Muviro we couldn't find Tarzan. Tell him we think we've found where the Memsahib is—we don't know for sure, but it seems reasonable. If you meet Tarzan, or he's back home, he'll know what to do. If you don't see him, Muviro will have to use his own judgment. Now, go along; and good luck to you!"

Waranji shook his head. "We cannot leave the Bwana alone," he said. "Let me send one warrior back with a message; the rest of us will stay with you."

"No, Waranji. You've heard my orders. Go on back."

Reluctantly they left him. He watched them until they passed out of sight in the wood; then he turned his steps toward the mysterious city in the distance.

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Once again Tarzan of the Apes stood upon the edge of the high plateau at the western rim of the valley of Onthar and looked down upon Cathne, the city of gold. The white houses, the golden domes, the splendid Bridge of Gold that spanned the river before the city's gates, gleamed and sparkled in the sunlight. The first time he had looked upon it, the day had been dark and gloomy; and he had seen the city as a city of enemies; for then his companion had been Valthor of Athne, the city of ivory, whose people were hereditary enemies of the Cathneans. But today, ablaze in the sunshine, the city offered him only friendship.

Nemone, the queen who would have killed him, was dead. Alextar, her brother, had been taken from the dungeon in which she had kept him and been made king by the men who were Tarzan's faithful friends—Thudos, Phordos, Gemnon, and the others of the loyal band whom Tarzan knew would welcome him back to Cathne. Tomos, who had ruled under Nemone as her chief adviser, must have been either killed or imprisoned. He would be no longer a menace to the ape-man.

With pleasant anticipation, Tarzan clambered down the steep gully to the floor of the valley and swung off across the Field of the Lions toward the city of gold. Field of the Lions! What memories it conjured! The trip to Xarator, the holy volcano, into whose fiery pit the kings and queens of Cathne had cast their enemies since time immemorial; the games in the arena;

the wild lions which roved the valley of Onthar, giving it its other name—Field of the Lions. Such were the memories that the name inspired.

Boldly the ape-man crossed the valley until he stood before the Bridge of Gold and the two heroic golden lions that flanked its approach. The guard had been watching his progress.

"It is Tarzan," one of them had said while the ape-man was still half a mile away; and when he stopped before the gates, they all came and welcomed him.

The captain of the guard, a noble whom Tarzan knew well, escorted him to the palace. "Alextar will be glad to know that you have returned," he said. "Had it not been for you, he might not now be king—or alive. Wait here in this anteroom until I get word to Alextar."

The room and its furnishings were of a type common in the palaces of the king and nobles of Cathne. The low ceiling was supported by a series of engaged columns; carved doors inlaid in mosaics of gold and ivory gave to the corridor and an adjoining apartment; on the stone floor lay some lion-skins and several heavy woolen rugs of simple design; mural decorations depicted battle scenes between the lion men of Cathne and the elephant-men of Athne; and above the murals was a frieze of mounted heads: lions, leopards, one huge elephant's head, and several human heads—the heads of warriors, beautifully cured and wearing the ivory head ornaments of nobles of Athne, trophies of the chase and of war.

It was a long time before the captain of the guard returned; and when he did, his face was flushed and troubled, and



twenty warriors accompanied him. "I am sorry, Tarzan," he said; "but I have orders to arrest you."

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The ape-man looked at the twenty spears surrounding him and shrugged. If he were either surprised or hurt, he did not show it. Once again he was the wild beast trapped by his hereditary enemy, man; and he would not give man the satisfaction of even being asked to explain. They took his weapons from him and led him to a room on the second floor of the palace directly above the guard-room. It was a better cell than that he had first occupied in Cathne when he had been incarcerated in a dark hole with Phobeg, the temple guard who had stepped on a god's tail and thus merited death; for this room was large, and well lighted by two barred windows.

When they had left him and bolted the door, Tarzan walked to one of the windows and looked down upon one of the palace courtyards for a moment; then he went to the bench that stood against one wall and lay down. Seemingly unconscious of danger, or perhaps contemptuous of it, he slept.

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It was dark when he was awakened by the opening of the door of his cell. A man bearing a lighted torch stood in the doorway. The ape-man arose as the other entered, closing the door behind him. He held the torch high.

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**Tarzan was awakened by the opening of the door. He arose as a man entered, bearing a torch. "Tarzan!" he exclaimed.**

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"Tarzan!" he exclaimed; and crossing the room, he placed a hand on the other's shoulder—the Cathnean gesture of greeting, of friendship and loyalty.

"I am glad to see you, Gemnon," said the ape-man. "Tell me, are Doria and her father and mother well? And your father, Phordos?"

"They are well, but none too happy. Things here are bad again, as you must have conjectured from the treatment accorded you."

"I knew that something must be wrong," admitted the ape-man; "but what it was, I didn't know—and don't."

"You soon shall," said Gemnon. "Ours is indeed an unhappy country."

"All countries are unhappy where there are men," observed the ape-man. "Men are the stupidest of beasts. But what has happened here? I thought that with the death of Nemone all your troubles were over."

"So did we, but we were wrong. Alextar has proved to be weak, cowardly, ungrateful. Almost immediately after ascending the throne, he fell under the influence of Tomos and his clique; and you know what that means. We are all in disfavor. Tomos is virtually ruler of Cathne, but as yet he has not dared to destroy us. The warriors and the people hate him, and he knows it. If he goes too far they will rise, and that will be the end of Tomos. . . . But tell me about yourself. What brings you again to Cathne?"

"It is a very long story," replied Tarzan. "In the end a young woman was stolen by two white men. She and the man whom she was to marry were under my protection. I am searching

for her. Several days ago I came upon two blacks who had been with the safari of the men who abducted the girl. They described the country in which the safari had been when they deserted. It lay to the southeast of Xarator. That is why I am here. I am going into the country southeast of Xarator in an effort to pick up the trail."

"I think you will not have to search long," said Gemnon. "I believe that I know where your young woman is—not that it will do you or her much good, now that you are a prisoner of Tomos. You must know he has no love for you."

"What makes you think that you know where she is?" asked the ape-man.

"Alextar sends me often to the valley of Thenar to raid the Athneans. It is, of course, the work of Tomos, who hopes that I shall be killed. Very recently I was there. The raid was not very successful, as we were too few. Tomos always sends too few, and they are always nobles he fears and would be rid of. We took only one head. On the way out, we saw a small party of people who were not Athneans. There were four or five slaves, two white men, and a white woman. The white men were fighting. The woman ran toward us, which made us think she wished to escape the two men she was with. We were going to meet her and take the entire party prisoners, when we saw a large body of Athneans coming down the valley on their war-elephants. We were too few to engage them; so we ran for the Pass of the Warriors and escaped. I naturally assume that the Athneans captured the young woman and those with her, and that she is now in the city of ivory; but as I said before, the knowledge won't help you much now: Tomos has you."

"And what do you think he will do with me? Has he another Phobeg?"

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Gemnon laughed. "I shall never forget how you tossed 'the strongest man in Cathne' about and finally threw him bodily into the laps of the audience. Tomos lost his last obol on that fight—another good reason why he has no love for you. No, I don't think he'll pit you against a man this time—probably a lion. It may even be poison or a dagger—they are surer. But what I am here for tonight is to try to save you. The only trouble is, I have no plan. A friend of mine is captain of the guard tonight—that is how I was able to reach you; but if I were to leave your door unbarred and you escaped, his life would not be worth an obol. Perhaps you can think of a plan."

Tarzan shook his head. "I shall have to know Tomos' plan first. Right now the only plan I have is for you to leave before you get caught in here."

"Isn't there anything that I can do, after all that you did for me? There must be something."

"You might leave your dagger with me. It might come in handy. I can hide it under my loin-cloth."

They talked for a short time longer before Gemnon left, and within a few minutes thereafter Tarzan was asleep. He did not pace his cell, fretting and worrying. His was more the temperament of the wild animal than the man.

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# CHAPTER VII

## RETRIBUTION

The sun is an impartial old devil. He shines with equal brilliance upon the just and the banker, upon the day of a man's wedding, or upon the day of his death. The great African sun, which after all is the same sun that shines on Medicine Hat, shone brilliantly on this new day upon which Tarzan was to die. He was to die because Alextar had decreed it—it had been Tomos' suggestion. The sun shone even upon Tomos; but then the sun is ninety-three million miles away, and that is a long way to see what one is shining on.

They came about eleven o'clock in the morning and took Tarzan from his cell. They did not even bother to bring him food or water. What need for food or drink has a man who is about to die? He was very thirsty; and perhaps, if he had asked, the guards would have given him water; for after all they were common soldiers and not a king's favorites, and therefore more inclined to be generous and humane. The ape-man, however, asked for nothing. It was not because he was consciously too proud; his pride was something instinctive—it prohibited even a suggestion that he might ask a favor of an enemy.

When he was brought out of the palace grounds onto the avenue, the sight that met his eyes apprised him of the fate that had been decreed for him. There was the procession of nobles and warriors, the lion-drawn chariot of the king, and a single great lion held in leash by eight stalwart blacks. Tarzan had seen all this before, that time that he had been the quarry

in the Queen's Hunt. Today he was to be the quarry in the King's Hunt, but today he could expect no such miracle as had saved him from the mighty jaws of Belthar upon that other occasion.

The same crowds of citizens lined the sides of the avenue; and when the procession moved toward the Bridge of Gold and out toward the Field of the Lions, the crowds moved with it. It was a good-natured crowd, such as one might see milling toward the gates at a Cub-Giant game or the Army-Navy classic.

They had taken no chances when they brought Tarzan from his cell. Twenty spearmen betokened the respect in which they held him. Now they chained him to Alextar's chariot, and the parade was under way.

Out upon the Field of the Lions, the procession halted, and the long gantlet of warriors was formed down which the quarry was to be pursued by the lion. The ape-man was unchained, and wagers were being laid as to the point in the gantlet at which the lion would overtake and drag down its victim; the hunting lion was being brought up to scent the quarry. Tomos was gloating. Alextar appeared nervous—he was afraid of lions; he would never have gone on a hunt of his own volition. Tarzan watched him. He saw a young man in his late twenties with nervous, roving eyes, a weak chin and a cruel mouth. There was nothing about him to remind one that he was the brother of the gorgeous Nemone. He looked at Tarzan, but his eyes fell before the steady gaze of the ape-man.

"Hurry!" Alextar snapped querulously. "We are bored."

They did hurry, and in their haste it happened. In a fraction of a second the comparatively peaceful scene was transformed to one of panic and chaos.

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By accident one of the men who held the hunting lion in leash slipped the beast's collar, and with an angry roar the trained killer struck down those nearest him and charged the line of spearmen standing between him and the crowd of spectators. He was met by a dozen spears while the unarmed citizenry fled in panic, trampling the weaker beneath their feet.

The nobles screamed commands. Alextar stood in his chariot, his knees shaking, and begged some one to save him. "A hundred thousand drachmas to the man who kills the beast!" he cried. "Anything he may ask shall be granted!"

No one seemed to pay any attention to him. All who could were looking after their own safety. As a matter of fact, he was in no danger at the time; for the lion was engaged elsewhere.

The jabbing spears further enraged the maddened beast; yet for some reason he did not follow up his attack upon the warriors; instead he wheeled suddenly and then charged straight for the chariot of the king. Now, indeed, did Alextar have reason to be terrified. He would have run, but his knees gave beneath him so that he sat down upon the seat of his golden vehicle. He looked about helplessly. Some of his noble guard had run to join in the attack upon the lion. Tomos had fled in the opposite direction. Only the quarry remained.



Alextar saw the man whip a dagger from his loin-cloth and crouch in the path of the charging lion. He heard savage growls roll from human lips. The lion was upon him. Alextar screamed; but fascinated, his terror-filled eyes clung to the savage scene before him. He saw the lion rise to make the kill, and then—it happened so quickly that he could scarcely follow it.

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**Mingled with the beast's horrid growls were the growls of the man-beast upon his back.**

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Tarzan stooped and dodged beneath the great forepaws outstretched to seize him; then he closed in and swung to the lion's back, one great arm encircling the shaggy throat. Mingled with the beast's horrid growls were the growls of the

man-beast upon his back. Alextar went cold with terror. He tried to run, but he could not.

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They were rolling upon the ground now in the dust of the Field of the Lions, sometimes the man on top, sometimes the lion; now and again the dagger Gemnon had supplied flashed in the sunlight, flashed as the blade drove into the side of the frantic beast. The two were ringed now by eager spearmen ready to thrust a point into the heart of the lion, but no chance presented that did not endanger the life of the man. But at last the end came. With a final supreme effort to escape the clutches of the ape-man, the lion collapsed upon the ground. Tarzan leaped to his feet. For a moment he surveyed the surrounding warriors with the blazing eyes of a beast of prey at bay upon its kill; then he placed a foot upon the carcass of the hunting lion, raised his face to the heavens, and from his great chest rose the challenge of the bull ape.

The warriors shrank away as that weird and hideous cry shattered the brief new silence of the Field of the Lions. Alextar trembled anew. He had feared the lion, but he feared the man more. Had he not had him brought here to be killed by the very lion he had himself dispatched? And he was only a beast. His growls and his terrible cry proved that. What mercy could he, Alextar, expect? Why, this man would kill him!

"Take him away!" he ordered feebly. "Take him away!"

"What shall we do with him?" asked a noble.

"Kill him! Kill him! Anything! Take him away!" Alextar was almost screaming now.

"But he saved your life," the noble reminded.

"Huh? What? Oh, well—take him back to his cell. Later I shall know what to do with him. Can't you see I am tired and don't wish to be bothered?"

The noble hung his head in shame as he ordered the guard to escort Tarzan back to his cell; and he walked at Tarzan's side, where a noble does not walk except with one of his own caste.

"What you did," he remarked on the way back to the city, "deserves better reward than this."

"I seem to recall hearing him offer anything he wished to the man who killed the lion," said the ape-man. "That and a hundred thousand drachmas."

"Yes, I heard him."

"He seems to have a short memory."

"What would you have asked him?"

"Nothing."

The noble looked at him in surprise. "You would ask for nothing?"

"Nothing."

"Is there nothing that you want?"

"Yes; but I wouldn't ask anything of an enemy."

"I am not your enemy."

Tarzan looked at the man, and a shadow of a smile lit his grim visage. "I have had no water since yesterday, nor any food."

"Well," the noble promised, laughing, "you shall have them both—and without asking for them."

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On their return to the city Tarzan was put in another cell; this one was on the second floor of a wing of the palace that overlooked the avenue. It was not long before the door was unbolted and a warrior entered with food and water. As he placed them on the end of the bench he looked at Tarzan admiringly.

"I was there and saw you kill the king's hunting lion," he said. "It was such a thing as one may see only once in a lifetime. I saw you fight with Phobeg before Nemone, the queen. That too was something to have seen. You spared Phobeg's life when you might have killed him, when all were screaming for the kill. After that he would have died for you."

"Yes, I know," replied the ape-man. "Is Phobeg still alive?"

"Oh, very much; and he is still a temple guard."

"If you see him, tell him that I wish him well."

"That I will," promised the warrior. "I shall see him soon. Now I must be going." He came close to Tarzan then, and spoke in a whisper. "Drink no wine; and whoever comes, keep your back to the wall and be prepared to fight." Then he was gone.

"Drink no wine," mused Tarzan. Wine, he knew, was the medium in which poison was customarily administered in Cathne; and if he kept his back to the wall, no one could stab him from behind. Good advice—the advice of a friend who might have overheard something that prompted it. Tarzan knew that he had many friends among the warriors of the City of Gold.

He walked to one of the windows and looked out upon the avenue. He saw a lion striding majestically toward the center of the city, paying no attention to the pedestrians or being noticed by them. It was one of the many tame lions that roamed the streets of Cathne by day; rarely did they attack anyone.

He saw a small gathering of people upon the opposite side of the avenue. They were talking together earnestly, often glancing toward the palace. Pedestrians stopped to listen and joined the crowd. A warrior came from the palace and stopped and spoke to them; then they looked up at the window where Tarzan stood. The warrior was he who had brought food to Tarzan.

When the crowd recognized the ape-man, it commenced to cheer. People were coming from both directions, some of them running. There were many warriors among them. The crowd and the tumult grew. When darkness came, torches were brought. A detachment of warriors came from the palace. It was commanded by a noble who sought to disperse the gathering.

Some one yelled, "*Free Tarzan!*" and the whole crowd took it up, like a chant. A huge man came, bearing a torch. In its light Tarzan recognized the man as Phobeg the temple guard. He

waved his torch at Tarzan, and cried: "Shame, Alextar! Shame!" And the crowd took that cry up and chanted it in unison.

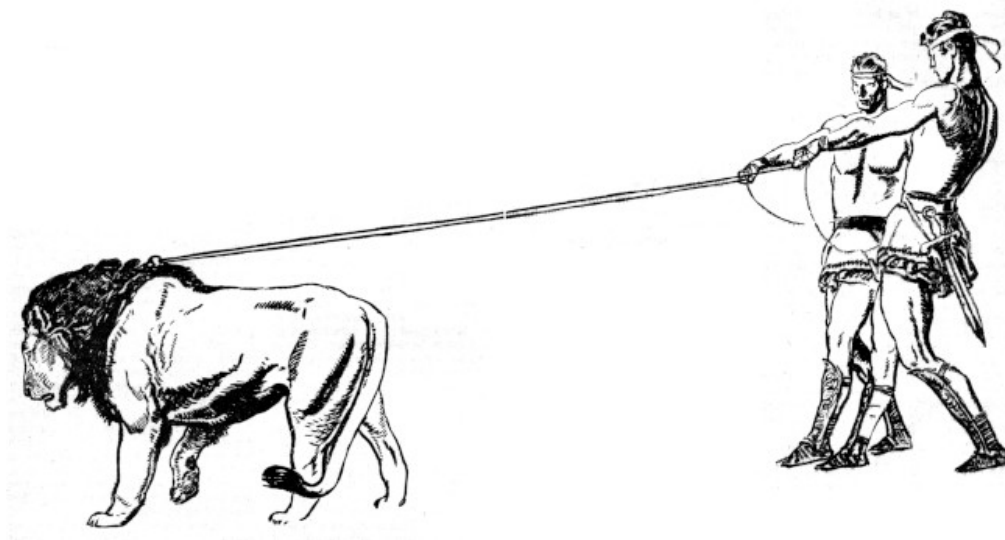
The noble and the guardsmen sought to quiet and disperse them, and then a fight ensued in which heads were broken and men were slashed with swords and run through with spears. By this time the mob had grown until it filled the avenue. Its temper was ugly, and when once blood was spilled, it went berserk. Before it the palace guard was helpless, and those who survived were glad to retreat to the safety of the palace.

Now some one shouted: "*Down with Tomos! Death to Tomos!*" And the hoarse voice of the mob seized upon this new slogan. It seemed to stir the men to new action, for now in a body they moved down upon the palace gates.

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As they hammered and shoved upon the stout portals, a man at the outer fringe of the mob shouted: "The hunting lions! Alextar has turned his hunting lions upon us! Death to Alextar!"

Tarzan looked down the avenue toward the royal stables; and there indeed came fully fifty lions, held in leash by their keepers. Excited by the vast crowd, irritated by the noise, they tugged at their chains, while the night trembled to their thunderous roars; but the crowd, aroused now to demoniacal madness, was undaunted. Yet what could it do against this show of savage force? It started to fall back, slowly, cursing and growling, shouting defiance, calling for Tarzan's release.



Involuntarily, a low growl came from the chest of the ape-man, a growl of protest that he was helpless to aid those who would befriend him. He tested the bars in the window at which he stood. To his strength and his weight they bent inward a little; then he threw all that he had of both upon a single bar. It bent inward and pulled from its sockets in the frame, the soft iron giving to his giant strength. That was enough! One by one in quick succession the remaining bars were dragged out and thrown upon the floor.

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Leaning from the window, Tarzan looked down. Below him was an enclosed courtyard. It was empty. A wall screened it

from the avenue beyond. He glanced into the avenue, and saw that the crowd was still falling back, the lions advancing. So intent were all upon the lions that no one saw the ape-man slip through the window and drop into the courtyard. Opposite him was a postern gate, barred upon the inside. Through it he stepped into the avenue just in front of the retreating crowd, between it and the lions.

A dozen saw and recognized him at once; and a great shout went up, a shout of defiance with a new note in it—a note of renewed confidence and elation.

Tarzan seized a torch from one of the citizens. "Bring your torches!" he commanded. "Torches and spears in the front line!" Then he advanced to meet the lions, and the men with the torches and the spears rushed forward to the front line. All that they had needed was a leader.

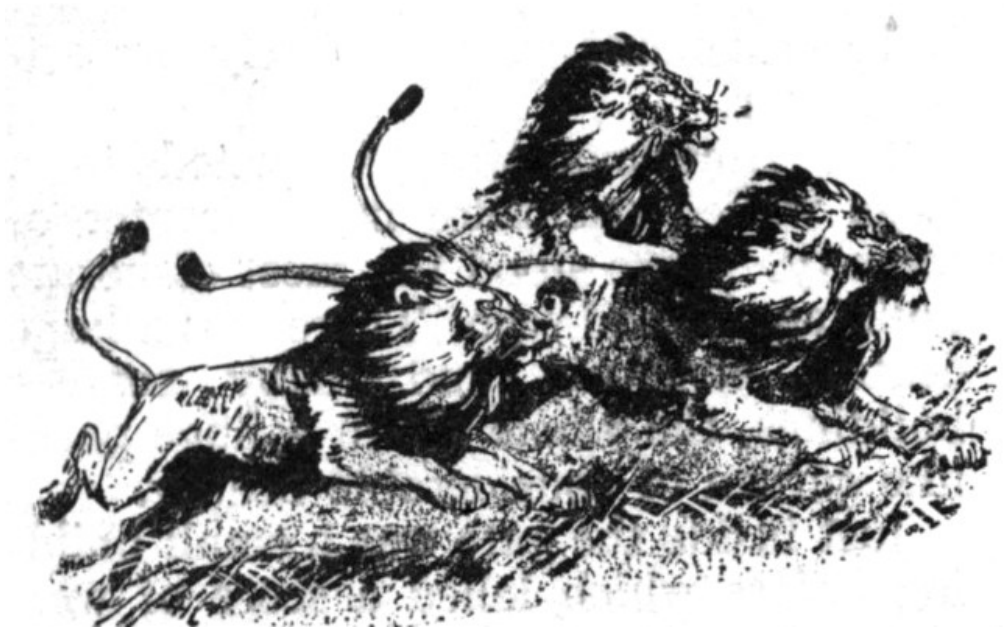
All wild animals fear fire. The king of beasts is no exception. The hunting lions of Alextar, king of Cathne, shrank back when blazing torches were pushed into their faces. Their keepers, shouting encouragement, cursing, were helpless. One of the lions, his mane ablaze, turned suddenly to one side, fouling another lion, causing him to wheel in terror and confusion and bolt back toward the stables. In doing so, they crossed the leashes of other lions, became entangled in them, and tore them from the hands of the keepers. The freed lions hesitated only long enough to maul the keepers that chanced to be in their way; then they too galloped back along the avenue toward the stables.

Emboldened by this success, the torch-bearers fell upon the remaining lions, beating them with fire until the beasts were mad with terror; and Tarzan, in the forefront, urged them on.



Pandemonium reigned. The hoarse shouts of the mob mingled with the roars of the carnivores and the screams of stricken men. By now the lions were frantic with terror. With leashes entangled, keepers down, manes afire, they could stand no more. Those that had not already broken and run, did so now. The mob was for pursuing, but Tarzan stopped them. With raised hand he quieted them after a moment.

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"Let the lions go," he counseled. "There is bigger game. I am going after Alextar and Tomos."

"And I am going with you," a big voice boomed beside him.

Tarzan turned and looked at the speaker. It was Phobeg, the temple guard.

"Good!" said the ape-man.

"We are going after Alextar and Tomos!" cried Phobeg.

A roar of approval rose from the crowd. "The gates!" some cried. "To the gates! To the gates!"

"There is an easier way," said Tarzan. "Come!"

They followed him to the postern gate that he knew was unbarred, and through it into the palace grounds. Here, Tarzan knew his way well; for he had been here both as a prisoner and a guest of Nemone, the queen.

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Alextar and a few of his nobles were dining. The King was frightened; not only could he hear the shouts of the mob, but he was kept constantly informed of all that was occurring outside the palace, and knew that the hunting lions he had been certain would disperse the rioters had been turned back and were in flight. He had sent every available fighting-man in the palace to the gates when the shouts of the crowd indicated that it was about to storm them; and though assured by his nobles that the mob could not hope to overcome his warriors, even if the gates failed to hold against them, he was still terrified.

"It is your fault, Tomos," he whined. "You said to lock the wild-man up, and now look what has happened! The people want to dethrone me. They may even kill me. What shall I do? What can I do?"

Tomos was in no better state of nerves than the King, for he had heard the people calling for his death. He cast about for some plan that might save him, and presently he thought of one.

"Send for the wild-man," he said, "and set him free. Give him money and honors. Send word at once to the gates that you have done this."

"Yes, yes," assented Alextar; and turning to a noble: "Go at once and fetch the wild-man; and you, go to the gates and tell the people what has been done."

"Later," said Tomos, "we can offer him a cup of wine."

The first noble crossed the room hurriedly and threw open a door leading into a corridor from which he could ascend to the second floor where Tarzan had been imprisoned; but he did not cross the threshold. In dismay he stepped back into the room.

"Here is Tarzan now!" he cried.

Alextar and Tomos and the others sprang to their feet as the opened door let in the murmurings of the crowd that followed the ape-man; then Tarzan stepped into the room, and crowding behind him came Phobeg and the others.

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The King rose to flee, as did Tomos also; with a bound Tarzan crossed the room and seized them. No noble drew a sword in defense of the King; like rats fleeing a sinking ship they were ready to desert Alextar. So great was his terror that the man

was in a state of collapse. He went to his knees and begged for his life.

"You do not understand," he cried. "I had just given orders to release you. I was going to give you money—I will give you money—I will make you a lion-man—I will give you a palace, slaves, everything."

"You should have thought of all this on the Field of the Lions today; now it is too late. Not that I would have what you offer," the ape-man added, "but it might have saved your life temporarily, and your throne, too, because then your people would not have grown so angry and disgusted."

"What are you going to do to me?" demanded the King.

"I am going to do nothing to you," replied Tarzan. "What your people do to you is none of my concern; but if they don't make Thudos king, they are fools."

Now, Thudos was the first of the nobles, as Tarzan knew; and in his veins flowed better blood from an older line than the king of Cathne could claim. He was a famous old warrior, loved and respected by the people; and when the crowd in the room heard Tarzan, they shouted for Thudos; and those in the corridor carried it back out into the avenue, and the word spread through the city.

Alextar heard, and his face went ashen white.

He must have gone quite mad—as his sister had, before him. He came slowly to his feet and faced Tomos. "You have done this to me," he said. "For years you kept me in prison. You ruined my sister's life—you and M'duze. You have ruined my life, and now you have lost me my throne. But you shall never ruin another life!" And with that he drew his sword so

quickly that none could stay him, and brought the blade down with all his strength on Tomos' skull, cleaving it to the nose.

As the body slumped to his feet, he broke into maniacal laughter, while those in the room stood stunned and silent; then, as quickly as he had done before, he placed the point of his sword at his heart and before anyone could prevent him, threw himself forward upon it.

Thus died Alextar, last of the mad rulers of Cathne.

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# CHAPTER VIII

## ATHNE

The main gate of Athne, the city of ivory, looks toward the south; for in that direction runs the trail that leads to Cathne, the city of gold, the stronghold of the hereditary enemies of the Athneans. In that direction ride the warriors and the nobles of Athne seeking women and heads and other loot; from that direction come the raiding parties from Cathne, also seeking women and heads and other loot; so the main gate of Athne is strong and well guarded. It is surmounted by two squat towers in which warriors watch by day and by night.

Before the gate is a great level plain where elephants are trained and where the warriors of Cathne drill upon their mighty mounts. It is dusty, and nothing grows there but a sturdy cynodon; and even that survives the trampling pads of the pachyderms only in scattered patches. The fields of the Athneans lie north of the city, and there the slaves labor; so one might approach the city from the south without glimpsing a sign of human life.

It was midafternoon. The hot sun beat down upon the watch-towers. The warriors, languid with the heat, gamed at dice—those who were not on watch. Presently one of the latter spoke.

"A man comes from the south," he said.

"How many?" asked one of the players.

"I said *a* man. I see but one."

"Then we do not have to give the alarm. But who could come alone to Athne? Is it a man from Cathne?"

"There have been deserters come to us before. Perhaps this is one."

"He is yet too far off to see plainly," said the warrior who had discovered the stranger, "but he does not look like a Cathnean. His dress seems strange."

He went to the inner side of the tower then, and leaning over the edge of the parapet, called the captain of the guard. An officer came from the interior of the tower and looked up.

"What is it?" he asked.

"Some one is coming from the south," explained the warrior.

The officer nodded and mounted the ladder leading to the tower's top. The warriors stopped their game then, and all went to the southern parapet to have a look at the stranger. He was nearer now, and they could see that he wore garments strange to them.

"He is no Cathnean," said the officer, "but he is either a fool or a brave man to come thus alone to Athne."

As Stanley Wood neared the gates of Athne, he saw the warriors in the watch-towers observing him; and when he had come quite close, they challenged him, but in a language he could not understand.

"Friend," he said, and raised his hand in the peace sign.

Presently the gate opened, and an officer and several warriors came out. They tried to talk with him; and when they found that neither could understand the other, they formed about him and escorted him through the gateway.

He found himself at the end of an avenue lined with low buildings occupied by shops. The warriors who had brought him into the city were white, as were most of the people on the avenue, although there were some negroes. Everyone appeared much interested in him; and he was soon surrounded by a large crowd, all talking at once, pointing, feeling of his clothes and weapons. The latter were soon taken from him by his guard; the officer shouted some commands, and the warriors pushed the people out of the way and started up the avenue with Wood.

He felt very uncomfortable and helpless because of his inability to converse with those about him. There were so many questions he wished to ask. Gonfala might be in this city, and yet he might never know it if he could not ask anyone about her who could understand him. He determined that the first thing he must do was to learn the language of these people. He wondered if they would be friendly. The fact that they were white gave him hope.

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Who could they be? Their garb, so different from anything modern, gave him no clue. They might have stepped from the pages of ancient history, so archaic were their weapons and their raiment; but he could not place them exactly. Where did they originate, these strange, rather handsome men and women? How and when did they reach this unknown valley in Africa? Could they be descendants of some Atlantean colonists stranded here after the submergence of their continent?



Vain speculations. No matter who they were, they were here; and he was either their prisoner or their guest—the former, he was inclined to believe. One did not usually surround a guest by armed warriors.

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As they proceeded along the avenue, Wood observed closely the raiment of his escort and of the people whom they passed. The officer in charge was a handsome black-haired fellow who strode along apparently oblivious of those they passed; yet there was nothing offensive about his manner. If there were social castes here, Wood hazarded a safe guess that this man was of the nobility. The head-band that confined his hair supported a carved ivory ornament at the center of his forehead, an ornament that was shaped like a concave curved trowel, the point of which projected above the top of the man's head and curved forward. He wore wristlets and anklets of long, flat strips of ivory laid close together and fastened around his limbs by leather thongs that were laced through holes piercing the strips near their tops and bottoms. Sandals of elephant-hide encasing his feet were supported by leather thongs fastened to the bottoms of his anklets. On each arm, below the shoulder, was an ivory disk upon which was a carved device; about his neck was a band of smaller ivory disks elaborately carved; and from the lowest of these a strap ran down to a leather habergeon, which was also supported by shoulder-straps. Depending from each side of his head-band was another ivory disk of large size, above which was a smaller disk, the former covering his ears. Heavy, curved, wedge-shaped pieces of ivory were held, one upon each

shoulder, by the same straps that supported his habergeon. He was armed with a dagger and a short-sword.

The warriors who accompanied him were similarly garbed, but less elaborately in the matter of carved ivory; and their habergeons and sandals were of coarser leather more roughly fabricated. Upon the back of each was a small shield. The common warriors carried short, heavy spears as well as swords and daggers. From their arms, Wood concluded that what he had first supposed to be ivory ornaments were definitely protective armor.

The American was conducted to a large walled enclosure in the center of the city. Here stood the most elaborate buildings he had seen. There was a large central structure and many smaller buildings, the whole set in a huge park-like garden of considerable beauty.

Just inside the gate was a small building before which lolled a score of warriors. Within, an officer sat at a table; to him Wood was taken, and here the officer who had brought him evidently made his report. What passed between them Wood could not, of course, understand; but when the first officer left, he realized that he had been delivered into the custody of the other.

While similarly garbed, this second officer did not give the impression of birth or breeding that had been so noticeable in the first. He was a burly, uncouth-appearing fellow with much less in his appearance to recommend him than many of the common warriors Wood had seen. When left alone with his prisoner, he commenced to shout questions at him; and when he found that Wood could not understand him, nor could he understand Wood, he pounded on the table angrily.

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Finally he summoned warriors to whom he issued instructions, and once again Wood was taken under escort. This time he was led to an enclosure toward the rear of the grounds not far from a quite large one-storied building, with the interior of which he was destined to become well acquainted.

He was thrust into an enclosure along the north side of which was an open shed in which were some fifty men. A high fence or stockade formed the remaining three sides of the quadrangle, the outside of which was patrolled by warriors; and Wood realized now that he was definitely a prisoner, and far from being either an important or favored one, for the other inmates of the stockade were for the most part filthy, unkempt fellows, both white and black.

As Wood approached the enclosure, every eye was upon him; and he knew that they were commenting upon him. From the tone of an occasional laugh, he judged that he was the butt of many a rough quip and he sensed antagonism.

Then he heard his name called by some one in the assemblage in the shed.

Immediately two men separated themselves from the others and came to meet him. They were Spike and Troll. A wave of anger swept through the American as the implication of their presence here pointed them out as the abductors of Gonfala.

His face must have betrayed his emotions as he advanced toward them; for Spike raised his hand defensively.

"Hold on, now," he cried. "Gettin' hostile aint goin' to get us no place. We're in a hell of a fix here, an' gettin' hostile aint goin' to help matters none. It'll be better for all of us if we work together."

"Where's Gonfala?" demanded Wood. "What have you done with her?"

"They took her away from us the day they captured us," said Troll. "We aint seen her since."

"We understand she's in the palace," said Spike. "They say the big guy here has fell for her. He's got her an' the Gonfal—the dirty bounder!"

"What did you steal her for?" Wood demanded. "If either one of you harmed her—"

"Harm her!" exclaimed Troll. "You don't think I'd never let nobody harm my sister, do you?"

Spike winked behind Troll's back and tapped his forehead. "They aint nobody harmed her," he assured Wood, "unless it was done after they took her away from us. And for why did we bring 'er along with us? We had to—we couldn't work the Gonfal without 'er."

"That damned stone!" muttered Wood.

"I think they's a curse on it myself," agreed Spike. "It aint never brought nobody nothin' but bad luck. Look at me and Troll: wot we got for our pains? We lost the emerald; now we lost the Gonfal, an' all we do is shovel dirt out o' the elephant-barns all day, an' wait to see w'ich way they's goin' to croak us."

As they talked, they were surrounded by other prisoners prompted by curiosity to inspect the latest recruit. They questioned Wood; but as he could not understand them nor they him, they directed their questions upon Spike, who replied in a strange jargon of African dialects, signs, and the few words of the Athnean language he had picked up. It was a wholly remarkable means of conveying thoughts, but it apparently served its purpose admirably.

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As Wood stood there, the object of interest, he was rapidly considering the attitude he should assume toward Spike and Troll. The men were scoundrels of the worst kind, and could command only his bitterest enmity. For the wrong that they had done Gonfala, it seemed to Wood that they deserved death; yet they were the only men here with whom he could talk, the only ones with whom he had any interests in common. His judgment told him that Spike had been right when he said that they should work together. For the time being, then, he would put aside his just anger against them and throw his lot in with them in the hope that in some way they might be of service to Gonfala.

"They wants to know who you are an' where you comes from," said Spike; "an' I told 'em you come from a country a thousand times bigger than Athne, an' that you was a juke or somethin', like their officers. They's one of 'em in here with us. See that big bloke over there standin' with his arms folded?" He pointed to a tall, fine-looking fellow who had not come forward with the others, "He's a toff, or I never seen

one. He don't never have no truck with these scrubs; but he took a shine to Troll and me, an' is learnin' us his language."

"I'd like to meet him," said Wood, for his first interest now was to learn the language of these people.

"Awright, come on over. He aint a bad bloke. He's wot they calls an elephant-man. That's somethin' like bein' a juke at home. They had some sort of a revolution here a few months ago, an' killed off a lot of these here elephant-men, wot didn't escape or join the revolutionists. But this bloke wasn't killed. They say it was because he was a good guy an' everybody liked him, even the revolutionists. He wouldn't join 'em; so they stuck him in here to do chamber-work for the elephants. These here revolutionists is like the gangsters in your country. Anyway, they's a bad lot, always makin' trouble for decent people an' stealin' wot they aint got brains enough to make for themselves. Well, here we are.—Valthor, shake hands with my old friend and buddy, Stanley Wood."

Valthor looked puzzled, but he took Wood's outstretched hand.

"Cripes!" exclaimed Spike. "I'm always forgettin' you don't know no English." Then he couched the introduction in the bastard language he had picked up.

Valthor smiled and acknowledged the introduction.

"He says he's glad to meetcha," translated Spike.

"Tell him it's fifty-fifty," said the American, "and ask him if he'll help me learn his language."

When Spike had translated this speech, Valthor smiled and nodded, and there immediately began an association that not only developed into a genuine friendship during the ensuing

weeks but gave Wood a sufficient knowledge of the Athnean language to permit intercourse with all with whom he came in contact.

During this time he worked with the other slaves in the great elephant-stables of Phoros, the dictator who had usurped the crown of Athne after the revolution. The food was poor and insufficient, the work arduous, and the treatment he received harsh; for the officers who were put in charge of the slaves had been men of the lowest class prior to the revolution, and found a vent for many an inhibition when given a little authority.

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During this time he heard nothing of Gonfala's fate, for naturally little news of the palace reached the slaves in the stables. Whether she lived or not, he could not know; and this state of constant uncertainty and anxiety told even more heavily upon him than did the hardships he was forced to undergo. "If she is beautiful," Valthor had told him, "I think you need have no fear for her life. We do not take the lives of beautiful women—even the Erythra would not do that."

"Who are the Erythra?" asked Wood.

"The men who overthrew the government and placed Phoros on the throne of Zygo, King of Athne."

"She is very beautiful," said Wood. "I wish to God she were not so beautiful!"

"Perhaps it will do her no harm. If I know Menofra, and I think I do, your friend will be safe from the attentions of

Phoros at least; and if I know Phoros, he will not let any one else have her if she is beautiful. He will wait—and hope that something will happen to Menofra."

"And who might Menofra be?"

"Above all else she is a she-devil for jealousy, and she is the wife of Phoros."

This was slight comfort, but it was the best that was vouchsafed Wood. He could only wait and hope. There was little upon which to base a plan of action. Valthor had told him that there might be a counter-revolution to unseat Phoros and return Zygo to the throne; but in the slaves' compound there was little information upon which to base even a conjecture as to when, if ever, this might take place; for there was no means of communication between those confined there and Zygo's sympathizers in the city, while Zygo and most of his loyal nobles and retainers were hiding in the mountains to which they had escaped.

Among other duties that had fallen to the lot of Wood was the exercising of the elephant that was his particular charge. He had been chosen for this work, along with Valthor, Spike and Troll, because of his greater intelligence than the ordinary run of slaves in the compound. He had learned quickly, and rode almost daily on the plain south of the city under a heavy escort of warriors.

They had returned to the stables one day from the field after the exercise period, which was always early in the morning, and were brushing and washing their huge mounts, when they were ordered to remount and ride out.

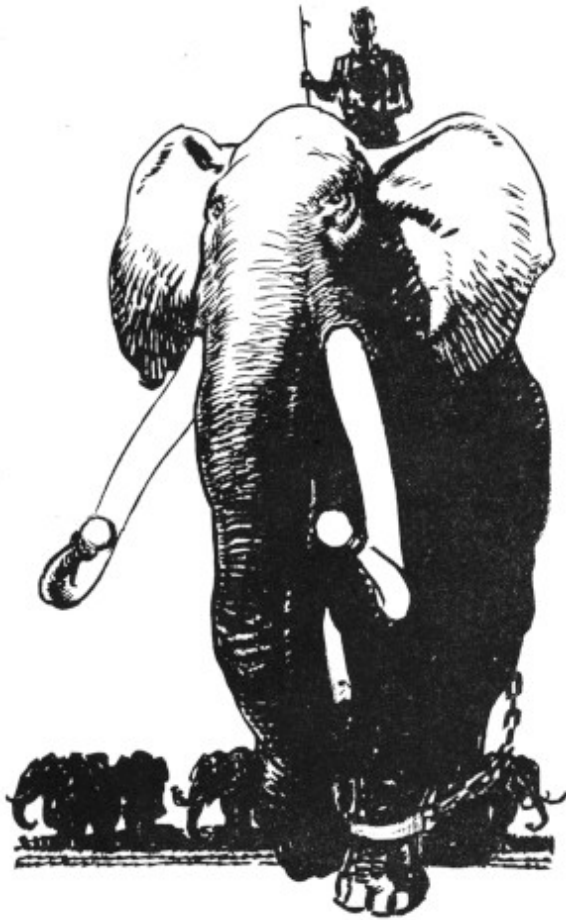


On the way to the plain they learned from the accompanying warriors that they were being sent out to capture a wild elephant that had been damaging the fields.

"They say he's a big brute, and ugly," offered one of the warriors; "and if he's as bad as all that, we won't all of us come back."

"Under Zygo, the nobles rode out to capture wild elephants—and not the slaves," said Valthor.

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**"Under Zygo, the nobles rode out to capture wild elephants—and not the slaves," Valthor had said.**

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The warrior rode his mount closer to the Athnean noble.  
"They are all too drunk to ride," he said, lowering his voice,  
"If they were just a little drunk, they might ride. If they were not drunk at all they would not have the nerve. We warriors

are sick of them. Most of us would like to ride again under real elephant-men like your nobleness."

"Perhaps you will," said Valthor, "—if you have the nerve."

"Hi-yah!" shouted a warrior, ahead.

"They've sighted him," Valthor explained to Wood, riding at his side.

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Presently they too saw the quarry emerging from a bamboo forest at the edge of the plain.

Valthor whistled. "He's a big brute, and if he's as ugly as they say we should have some real sport. But it's murder to send inexperienced slaves against him. Watch out for yourself, Wood. Just keep out of his way, no matter what the guards tell you to do. Make believe you can't control your elephant. Look at him! He's coming right for us. He's a bad one, all right—not a bit afraid of us either, by Dyaus!"

"I never saw a larger one," said Wood.

"Nor I," admitted Valthor, "though I've seen many an elephant in my time. He's got a blemish though—look at that tusk. It's much darker than the other. If it weren't for that, he'd make a king's elephant, all right."

"What are we supposed to do?" asked Wood. "I don't see how we could capture that fellow if he didn't want us to."

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"They'll have some females ridden close to him, and try to work him gently toward the city and into the big corral just inside the gate. Look at that, now!"

Up went the big elephant's trunk, and he trumpeted angrily. It was evident that he was about to charge. The officer in command shouted orders to the slaves to ride the females toward him, but the officer did not advance. Like the other three with him, he was an Erythros and not of the noble class. Not having their pride or their code of honor, he could order others into danger while he remained in comparative safety.

Some of the slaves moved forward, but with no great show of enthusiasm; then the great beast charged. He barged right through the line of advancing females, scattering them, and charged for the bull ridden by the officer in command.

Screaming commands, the officer sought to turn his mount and escape; but the bull he rode was a trained fighting elephant which knew little about running away; besides, his harem of cows was there; and he was not going to relinquish that to any strange bull without a battle. So, torn between his natural inclinations and his habit of obedience to the commands of his rider, he neither faced the oncoming bull nor turned tail toward him; but swung halfway around, broadside, in his indecision. And in this position the great stranger struck him with almost the momentum of a runaway locomotive.

Down he went, pitching the officer heavily to the ground; but the fellow was up instantly and running—by far the stupidest thing he could have done; for almost any animal will pursue a thing that flees.

Hoarse screams for help mingled with the trumpeting of the wild bull as the latter bore down upon his fleeing victim. Valthor urged the female he rode into a trot in an effort to head off the charge and distract the bull's attention, and Wood followed behind him—just why, he could not have explained.

Valthor was too late. The bull overtook the terrified man, tossed him three times, and then trampled him into the dust of the plain until he was only a darker spot on the barren ground.

It was then that Valthor and Wood arrived. Wood expected a repetition of the scene he had just witnessed, with either

himself or Valthor as the victim—but nothing of the kind happened.

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The Athnean rode his cow quietly close to the great bull, which stood complacently switching his tail, all the madness having apparently passed out of him with the killing of his victim; and Wood, following the example of Valthor, closed in gently on the other side.

All this time Valthor was chanting in a low singsong monotone a wordless song used by the elephant-men of Athne to soothe the great beasts; and now to the cadence of his chant he added words of instruction to Wood so that the two might work in harmony to bring the wild bull to the city and into the corral.

Between the two cows, which knew their parts well, the bull was guided to captivity; while the officers, the warriors, and the slaves trailed behind, happy and relieved that they had not been called upon to risk their lives.

Valthor already held the respect of his fellow prisoners as well as of the warriors who guarded them, and now Wood took his place as a person of importance among them.

That word of the manner of the capture of the wild elephant had reached the palace Wood had proof the following day when an officer and a detail of warriors came to take him into the presence of Phoros.

"He wishes to see the fellow who helped Valthor capture the rogue," said the officer.

Valthor leaned close and whispered: "He has some other reason. He would not send for you just for that."

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# CHAPTER IX

## PHOROS

Night was creeping stealthily out of its lair in the east, bringing its following of mystery and dark deeds and strange beasts that are not seen by day. Though the sun still colored the western sky with a fading tinge of red, it was already dark and gloomy in the Pass of the Warriors that leads from the valley of Onthar to the valley of Thenar.

In Onthar is Cathne, the city of gold; in Thenar is Athne, the city of ivory; in the Pass of the Warriors was Tarzan of the Apes; alone, he was going to Athne.

Gemnon had tried to dissuade him from going without an escort; and so had Thudos, whom he had helped to seat upon the throne of Cathne.

"If you are not back within a reasonable time," Thudos told him, "I shall send an army to Athne to bring you back."

"If I am not back in a reasonable time," suggested the ape-man, "it may be because I shall be dead."

"Perhaps," agreed Thudos, "but they will not kill you unless they have to. They are always hard pressed to find enough slaves to carry on the work of the city, and they'd never destroy such a fine specimen as you. Like us, they also need men to fight in the arena."

"You would like that better than scrubbing elephants," said Gemnon.



Tarzan shook his head. "I do not like to fight nor to kill, and there are worse things than scrubbing elephants."

And so he had gone, choosing to travel so that he would not have to cross the valley of Thenar by day, as he wished to approach and reconnoiter Athne unseen. That both valleys, especially Onthar, harbored many wild lions was a hazard he had to accept; but, except for the actual crossing of Thenar, he could take advantage of the protection of forests practically all of the way.

The hazard was great, for the lions of Thenar were not all ordinary lions. Many of them were escaped hunting lions of Cathne which had been often fed with human flesh and trained to hunt men. For generations they had been bred for speed and endurance; so that in all the world there were no such formidable beasts of prey as these.

As night fell, Tarzan heard the roars of the great cats in the valley he had quitted. With every sense alert he passed through the Pass of the Warriors and entered the valley of Thenar. As yet he had heard no lion roar coming from that direction. The wind was in his face. It brought no scent-spoor of Numa, but he knew that it was carrying his scent back in the direction of the hunting lions of Cathne.

He increased his speed, for though he had killed many a lion he knew that no living creature could hope to survive an attack by these beasts, which often hunted in packs.

He was out now upon the open plain of Thenar. He could still hear the roaring of the lions in Onthar. Suddenly they took on a new note. He knew it well. It told him that they had picked up the trail of some creature and marked it as their quarry. Was it his trail?

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A full moon rose above the mountains ahead of him, lighting the valley floor, revealing the dark strip of forest far ahead. The savage voices of the lions grew louder, reverberating in the canyon called the Pass of the Warriors, through which he had just come; then Tarzan knew that the hunting lions of Cathne were on his trail.

You or I could not have counted the lions by their voices; but to Tarzan the distinctive quality or character of each voice was discernible, and he knew that five lions were loping relentlessly to the kill. Once more he quickened his pace.

He judged that the lions were about a mile in rear of him, the forest about three miles ahead. If no obstacle intervened he could reach the forest ahead of the lions; but he was crossing an unfamiliar terrain known to him only by the descriptions given him by Gemnon and Thudos, and he knew that there might easily be some peculiarity of the topography of the floor of the valley that would delay him—for instance, a deep dry wash with overhanging banks of soft dirt.

On he ran, his great chest rising and falling regularly, his heart-beats scarcely accelerated by the exertion; but the lions came even more swiftly. He knew from the sound of their voices that they were gaining on him. Knowing them, even as he did, he marveled at their endurance, so unusual in lions; and was amazed at the results that could be attained by careful breeding. Now, for the first time, he broke into a run; for he knew that the moment they sighted him they would come on much faster than he could run for any great distance. It then would be just a question as to which could maintain the greatest speed for the longest distance.

No washes intervened nor other obstacle, and he came at last to within half a mile of the forest with sufficient distance and time to spare to assure him a reasonable margin of safety; then the unforeseen occurred. From the shadows of the forest a great lion stepped into view before him.

Those who would live long in the jungle must needs think quickly. Tarzan weighed the entire situation without losing a stride. The forest was his goal; one lion was less of a menace than five, and the one lion was all that stood between him and the forest. With a savage growl he charged the lion.

The beast had started to trot toward him; but now he stopped, hesitant. Would he hold his ground or would he break? Much depended upon whether he was an ordinary wild lion or a trained hunting lion. From the fact that he hesitated instead of carrying through his charge Tarzan guessed that he was the former.

The five lions from Onthar were gaining rapidly now. In the bright moonlight they must have caught sight of their quarry. Their voices proclaimed that. Now they were charging. Had they been wild lions they would have hunted in silence once their prey was marked—but the earth fairly trembled to their roars. Tarzan thought that they wasted too much energy thus, but he knew that they were trained to it so that the huntsmen could follow them even when they were out of sight.

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Tarzan saw that the lion facing him was wavering. He was probably surprised at the tactics of the man-thing, at a quarry that charged him; and the roars of the five lions doubtless

added to his nervousness. Only fifty yards separated them, and the lion had not made up his mind, when from the chest of the ape-man burst the savage challenge of the bull-ape. It was the last straw—the lion wheeled and bounded back into the forest. A moment later Tarzan swarmed up a friendly tree as five angry lions leaped to seize him.

Finding a comfortable resting-place, the ape-man broke off dead branches and threw them at the lions, calling them Dango, Ungo, Horta, and other insulting names, ascribing vile tastes and habits to themselves and their ancestors. A quiet, almost taciturn man, he was an adept in the use of the jungle billingsgate he had acquired from the great apes among which he had been raised. Perhaps the lions understood him; perhaps they did not. Who knows? Anyhow, they were very angry; they leaped high in the air in vain efforts to reach him, which only made them angrier. But Tarzan had no time to waste upon them; and, keeping to the trees, he swung away toward the north and Athne.

He had timed himself to reach the city while it slept, and knew how to approach it from information given him by Gemnon and Thudos, who had often visited Athne during the yearly truces when the two cities traded with one another. He passed halfway around the city to the north side, which was less well guarded than the south.

Here he faced the greatest danger of discovery, for he must scale the wall in the light of a full moon. He chose a place far from the north gate, and crept toward the city on his belly through the garden stuff growing in the cultivated fields. He stopped often to look and listen, but he saw no sign of life on the city wall.

When he had come to within about a hundred feet of the wall, he arose and ran toward it at top speed, scaling it like a cat until his fingers closed upon the coping; then he drew himself up; and, lying flat, looked down upon the other side. A shedlike building abutted against the wall, and beyond this was a narrow street. Tarzan slipped to the roof of the shed, and dropped into the street.

Instantly a head was thrust from an open window and a man's voice demanded, "What are you doing there? Who are you?"

"I am Daimon," replied Tarzan in a husky whisper. Instantly the head was withdrawn and the window slammed shut.

Tarzan, ever quick-witted, had profited by something that Gemnon had told him—that the Athneans believed in a bad spirit that was abroad at night seeking whom it might kill. To Daimon they attributed all unexplained deaths, especially those that occurred at night.

Following the directions he had received, Tarzan moved through the narrow, shadowed streets toward the center of the city, coming at last to the walled enclosure where the palace stood. He had been told that here he would find guards only at the north and south gates. Other gates, if there were any, were securely fastened and seldom used.

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As Tarzan approached the enclosure from the west, he encountered no gate and no guards. The wall was low compared with that which surrounded the city, and so proved no obstacle to the ape-man. Once over the wall he found himself in a garden of trees, shrubs, and flowers, a lovely

place of soft, sweet fragrances; but for these he had no senses at the moment—he was searching for other scents than those of flowers.

Winding among small buildings and other gardens he came to a large building that he knew must be the palace; and here, to his surprise, he saw several rooms brilliantly lighted. He had thought the entire palace would be asleep with the exception of the guards.

A number of old trees grew in the garden court that flanked this side of the palace, and in the security of their shadows Tarzan crossed to the building and looked in at one of the windows. Here he saw a large banquet-hall, down the length of which ran a long table at which a hundred or more men were seated, most of them in various stages of drunkenness.

There was much loud talk and laughter, and a couple of fights were in progress in which no one took any interest except the contestants. The men were, for the most part, coarse, common-appearing fellows, not at all like the nobles of Cathne. The man at the head of the table was quite bestial in appearance. He pounded on the table with a great ham of a fist, and bellowed in a voice more like that of a bull than of a man.

Slaves were coming and going, bringing more drink and removing empty goblets and dishes. Some of the guests were still eating, but most of them concentrated their energies and their talents upon the principal business of the evening—drinking.

"Didn't I tell you to fetch her?" shouted the large man at the head of the table, addressing the assemblage in general.

"Told who to bring what?" inquired another, seated farther toward the foot of the table.

"The girl," shouted the large man.

"What girl, Phoros?"

"*The* girl," replied Phoros drunkenly.

"Oh, *the* girl," said some one.

"Well, why don't you bring her?" demanded Phoros.

"Bring who?"

"Bring *the* girl," repeated Phoros.

"Who's to bring her?" asked another.

"You bring her," ordered Phoros.

The fellow addressed shook his head. "Not me," he said.

"Menofra'd have the hide off me."

"She won't know. She's gone to bed," Phoros assured him.

"I aint takin' any chances. Send a slave."

"You'd better not send anyone," counseled a man sitting next to Phoros, one who did not seem as drunk as the others.

"Menofra would cut her heart out, and yours too."

"Who's king?" demanded Phoros.

"Ask Menofra," suggested the other.

"I'm king," Phoros blustered. He turned to a slave. The fellow happened to be looking in another direction. Phoros threw a heavy goblet at him, which barely missed his head. "Here, you! Go fetch the girl."

"What girl, master?" asked the trembling slave.

"There's only one girl in Athne, you son of a wart-hog! Go get her!"

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When the slave hurried from the room, there ensued a discussion as to what Menofra would do if she found out. Phoros announced that he was tired of Menofra, and if she didn't mind her own business, he'd take her apart and forget to put her together again. He thought this such a good joke that he laughed immoderately and fell off his bench, but some of the others seemed nervous and looked apprehensively toward the doorway.

Tarzan watched and listened. He felt disgust and shame—shame, because he belonged to the same species as these creatures. Since infancy he had been fellow of the beasts of the forest and the plain, the lower orders; yet he had never seen them sink to the level of man. Most of them had courage and dignity of a sort; seldom did they stoop to buffoonery, with the possible exception of the lesser monkeys, who were most closely allied to man. Had he been impelled to theorize he would doubtless have reversed Darwin's theory of evolution. But his mind was occupied with another thought—who was "*the* girl"? He wondered if she might not be Gonfala, but further speculation was discouraged by the coming of a large, masculine-looking woman who strode into the room, followed by the slave who had just been dispatched to bring the girl. So this was the girl! Tarzan looked at her in mild astonishment. She had large, red hands, a whiskered mole on her chin, and quite a noticeable mustache. In other respects she was quite as unlovely.



"What's the meaning of this?" she demanded, glaring at Phoros. "Why did you send for me at this time in the morning, you drunken lout?"

Phoros' jaw dropped; he looked wildly about at his companions as though seeking help; but he got none. Each of those who had not passed out completely was engaged in trying to appear dignified and sober.

"My dear," explained Phoros ingratiatingly, "we wanted you to join us and help celebrate."

"My dear,' nothing!" snapped the woman; then her eyes narrowed. "Celebrate what?" she demanded.

Phoros looked about him helplessly. Bleary-eyed and belching, he looked foolishly at the man sitting next him. "What were we celebrating, Kandos?"

Kandos fidgeted, and moistened his dry lips with his tongue.

"Don't lie to me!" screamed the woman. "The truth is that you never intended to send for me."

"Now, Menofra!" exclaimed Phoros in what was intended to be a soothing tone.

The woman wheeled on the frightened slave behind her. "Were you told to fetch me?" she demanded.

"Oh, great queen! I thought he meant you," whimpered the slave, dropping to his knees.

"What did he say to you?" Menofra's voice was raised almost to a shriek.

"He said, 'Go fetch the girl!' and when I asked him what girl, he said, 'There's only one girl in Athne, you son of a wart-

hog!"

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Menofra's eyes narrowed menacingly. "The only girl in Athne, eh? I know who you sent for—that yellow-haired hussy, brought in with the two men. You think you've been fooling me, don't you? Well, you haven't. You've just been waiting for your chance, and tonight you got drunk enough to muster up a little courage. Well, I'll attend to you; and when I get through with you, I'll fix the 'only girl in Athne.' I'll send her to you, if there's anything left of you—I'll send her to you in pieces." She glared at the subdued and frightened company. "Get out of here, you swine—all of you!" Then she strode to the head of the table and seized Phoros by an ear. "And you come with me—*King!*"

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# CHAPTER X

## MENOFRA

Tarzan left the window and walked along the side of the building, looking up at the second floor. There, he surmised, would be the sleeping-chambers. In some room above, doubtless, Gonfala was confined. Several vines clambered up the wall. He tested them, trying to find one that might bear his weight; at last he came to some old ivy that had a stem as large around as his arm. Satisfied that it would bear him, he started to ascend.

Close beside an open window he paused and listened, his sensitive nostrils classifying the odors that came from the chamber. A man slept within. Heavy breathing told him the man was asleep. Its stertorousness and an odor told him the fellow was drunk. Tarzan threw a leg across the sill and stepped into the room. He moved noiselessly, feeling his way through the darkness. He took his time, and gradually his eyes became accustomed to the blackness of the interior. He had the gift, that some men have in common with nocturnal animals, of being able to see in the dark better than other men. Perhaps it had been developed to a higher state of efficiency by necessity. One who can see by night in the jungle has more chance of survival.

Soon he identified a darker mass on the floor near a side wall as the sleeper. That, however, was not difficult; the man's snores proclaimed his location. Tarzan crossed to the opposite end of the room and found a door. His fingers searched for lock or bolt and found the latter. It squeaked a little as he

drew it back; but he had no fear that it would arouse the man, nor did it. The door opened into a dimly lighted corridor—an arched corridor along which were other doors and the arched openings into other corridors.

Tarzan heard voices. They were raised in angry altercation, and there were sounds of scuffling. The voices were those of Menofra and Phoros. Presently there was a loud scream, followed by a thud as of a body falling; then silence. Tarzan waited, listening. He heard a door open farther up the corridor in the direction from which the voices had come; then he stepped back into the room behind him, leaving the door slightly ajar so that he could look out into the corridor. He saw a man step from a doorway and approach along the corridor. It was Phoros. He was staggering a little, and in his right hand he carried a bloody short-sword. His expression was bleary-eyed and vacuous. He passed the door from which Tarzan watched and turned into another corridor; then the ape-man stepped into the passageway and followed.

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As he reached the head of the corridor into which Phoros had turned, Tarzan saw the Athnean fumbling with a key at the lock of a door a short distance ahead; and he waited until Phoros had unlocked the door and entered the room beyond; then the ape-man followed at a run. He wished to reach the door before Phoros could lock it from within, if such were his intention; but it was not. In fact, in drunken carelessness, Phoros did not even close the door tightly; and he had little more than entered the room when Tarzan pushed the door open and followed him.

The ape-man had moved with utter silence; so that though he stood just behind Phoros the latter was unaware of his presence. The room was lighted by a single cresset—a wick burning in a shallow vessel half filled with fat. Lying in one corner of the room, bound hand and foot, was Gonfala; in another corner, similarly trussed, was Stanley Wood. They both saw and recognized Tarzan simultaneously, but he raised a finger to his lips to caution them to silence. Phoros stood leering at his two prisoners, his gross body swaying unsteadily.

"So the lovers are still here!" he taunted. "But why do they stay so far apart? Here, you stupid fool, watch me; I'll show you how to make love to the girl. She's mine now. Menofra, the old hell-cat, is dead. Look at this sword! See the blood? That's Menofra's blood. I just killed her." He pointed the sword at Wood. "And just as soon as I've shown you how a lover should behave I'm going to kill *you*."

He took a step toward Gonfala—but as he did so steel-thewed fingers gripped his sword wrist, the weapon was torn from his hand, and he was thrown heavily to the floor.

"Quiet, or I kill," a voice whispered.

Phoros looked into the cold gray eyes of an almost naked giant who stood above him with his own sword pointed at his breast. "Who are you?" he asked in a quavering voice. "Don't kill me. Tell me what you want. You can have anything if you'll not kill me."

"I'll take what I want. Don't move." Tarzan crossed to Wood and cut the bonds that held him. "Release Gonfala," he said, "and when you have done that bind this man and gag him."

Wood worked quickly. "How did you get here?" Tarzan asked him.

"I was searching for Gonfala. I followed her trail to this city; then they took me prisoner. Today Phoros sent for me. In some way, probably through some of his people overhearing Spike and Troll, he got the idea that I knew how to work the Gonfal. Spike had been bragging about its powers, but neither he nor Troll had been able to do anything with it. They had also told some one that Gonfala was the goddess of the big stone, and so he brought us together and told us to show him some magic. Our meeting was so sudden and unexpected that we gave ourselves away—it must have been apparent to any one that we were in love. Anyway, Phoros got it; maybe because he was jealous. He has been trying to make love to Gonfala ever since she was captured, but he was too afraid of his wife to go very far with it."

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When Gonfala was liberated, Wood trussed up Phoros; as he was completing the work they heard the sound of shuffling footsteps in the corridor. They all stood, tense and silent, waiting. Would the footsteps pass the door, or was some one coming to this room? Nearer and nearer they came; then they paused outside, as though he who walked was listening. The door was pushed open, revealing a horrible apparition. Gonfala muffled a scream; Wood recoiled; only Tarzan showed no emotion. It was Menofra. A horrible wound gashed her head and one shoulder. She was covered with blood; she reeled with weakness from the loss of it, but still retained her wits.

Stepping quickly back into the corridor, she closed the door and turned the key that the drunken Phoros had left in the lock; then they heard her crying loudly for the guard.

"We seem to be nicely trapped," commented Wood.

## CHAPTER XI

"But we have a hostage," Tarzan reminded him.

"What a horrible sight!" said Gonfala, shuddering and nodding in the direction of the corridor. "How do you suppose it happened?"

The ape-man jerked a thumb in the direction of Phoros. "He could tell you. I imagine that he's rather glad we were here with him."

"What a sweet couple!" said Wood. "But I imagine there are a lot of married couples who would like to do that to one another if they thought they could get away with it."

"What a terrible thing to say, Stanlee!" cried Gonfala. "Do you think that we would be like that?"

"Oh, we're different," Wood assured her; "these people are beasts."

"Not beasts," Tarzan corrected. "They are human beings, and they act like human beings."

"Here comes the guard," said Wood.

They could hear men approaching at a run along the corridor; they heard the warriors' exclamations when they saw Menofra's wound, and their excited questioning.

"There is a wild-man in there," Menofra told them. "He has set the two prisoners free, and they have bound and gagged the King. They may kill him. I don't want them to; I want him for myself. Go in and capture the strangers and bring the King to me."



Tarzan stood close to the door. "If you come in without my permission," he shouted, "I will kill the King."

"It looks as if you were on a spot, Phoros," said Wood, "no matter what happens. If Menofra gets you, she'll hand you plenty." But Phoros could make no reply, because of the gag.

The warriors and the Queen began arguing in the corridor.

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Tarzan was puzzled. He told Wood as much.

"I knew an Athnean noble well," Tarzan said; "and through him I was led to believe that these people were rather noble and chivalrous, not at all like those I have seen here. There was a rumor in Cathne that there had been some change in government here; but the natural assumption was that another faction of the nobility had come into power. If these people are of the nobility, our friend Spike must be at least an archbishop."

"They are not of the nobility," said Wood. "They are from the lowest dregs of society. They overthrew the King and the nobility a few months ago. I guess they are pretty well ruining the country."

"That accounts for it," said Tarzan. "Then I suppose my friend Valthor can't be of much help to me."

"Valthor!" exclaimed Wood. "Do you know him? Why, say, he's the only friend I have here."

"Where is he? He'll help us," said Tarzan.

"Not where he is, he won't. He and I were fellow-slaves at the elephant-stables."

"Valthor a slave!"

"Yes, and lucky to be that," Wood assured him. "They killed off all the other members of the nobility they caught—except a few that joined 'em. The rest escaped into the mountains. Everyone liked Valthor so much that they didn't kill him."

"It is a good thing that I didn't take any chances when I came here," remarked the ape-man. "They'd heard these rumors in Cathne; so I came in after dark to investigate before I tried to find Valthor, or made myself known."

There was a rap on the door. "What do you want?" asked Tarzan.

"Turn the King over to the Queen, and we won't harm you," said a voice.

Phoros commenced to wriggle and squirm on the floor, shaking his head vigorously.

Tarzan grinned.

"Wait until we talk it over," he said. Then to Wood: "Take the gag out of his mouth."

When the gag was removed, Phoros choked and spluttered before he could articulate an understandable word, so frightened and excited was he. "Don't let her have me," he finally managed to say. "She'll kill me."

"Maybe we can reach a bargain," suggested Tarzan.

"Anything you want!" cried Phoros.

"Our freedom and a safe escort to the Pass of the Warriors," demanded Tarzan.

"It is yours," promised Phoros.

"And the big diamond," added Wood.

"And the big diamond," agreed Phoros.

"How do we know you'll do as you agree?" asked the ape-man.

"You have my word for it," Phoros assured him.

"I don't think it's worth much. I'd have to have something more."

"Well, what?"

"We'd want to take you with us and keep you close to me where I could kill you if the bargain were not kept."

"That too. I agree to everything—only, don't let her get her hands on me."

"There is one more thing," added Tarzan. "Valthor's freedom."

"Granted."

"And now that you've got all that arranged," said Wood, "how in blazes are we going to get out of here with that old virago holding the fort with the guard out there?"

Tarzan crossed to Phoros and removed his bonds. "Come to the door," he directed, "and explain my proposition to your wife."

Phoros approached the door. "Listen, dear," he said ingratiatingly.

"*Listen* nothing, you beast, you murderer!" she screamed back at him. "Just let me get my hands on you, you—"

"But darling, I was drunk. I didn't mean to do it. Listen to reason. Let me take these people out of the country with an escort of warriors, and they won't kill me."

"Don't 'darling' me, you, you—"

"But, my own little Menofra, listen to reason. Send for Kandos, and let us all talk it over."

"Go in there, you cowards, and drag them out," Menofra ordered the guards.

"Stay out there!" screamed Phoros. "I am the King. Those are the King's commands."

"I'm the Queen," yelled Menofra. "I tell you to go in and rescue the King."

"I'm all right," shouted Phoros. "I don't want to be rescued!"

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**"I tell you to go in and rescue the King," yelled Menofra.**

**"I'm all right," shouted Phoros, "I don't want to be rescued!"**

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"I think," said the officer of the guard, "that the best thing to do is summon Kandos. This is no matter for a simple officer of the guard to decide."

"That's right," encouraged the King; "send for Kandos."

They heard the officer dispatch a warrior to summon Kandos.

Wood stepped to the door, "Menofra!" he called. "I have an idea that perhaps you hadn't thought of. Let Phoros accompany us to the border; then when he comes back, you'll have him. That will save a lot of trouble for all concerned."

Phoros looked troubled. He hadn't thought of that, either. Menofra did not answer immediately; then she said: "He might trick me in some way."

"How can he trick you?" demanded Wood.

"I don't know, but he'd find a way. He has been tricking people all his life."

"He couldn't. You'd have the army. What could he do?"

"Well, perhaps it's worth thinking about," admitted the Queen; "but I don't know that I could wait. I'd like to get my hands on him right now. Did you see what he did to me?"

"Yes. It was terrible," sympathized Wood.

It was not long before the warrior returned with Kandos. Menofra greeted him with a volley of vituperation as soon as he came in sight, and it was some time before he could quiet her and get the story. Then he led her away where none could overhear, and they whispered together for some time. When they had finished, Kandos approached the door.

"It is all arranged," he announced. "The Queen has given her permission. The party will start shortly after sunrise. It is still dark, and the trail is not safe by night. Just as soon as you and the escort have had your breakfasts, you may go in peace. Have we your promise that you will not harm the King?"

"You have," said Tarzan.

"Very well," said Kandos. "I am going now to arrange for the escort."

"And don't forget our breakfasts!" called Wood.

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# CHAPTER XII

## TREACHERY

Stanley Wood was in high spirits. "It commences to look as though our troubles were about over," he said. He laid a hand on Gonfala's arm tenderly. "You've been through a lot, but I can promise you that when we get to civilization, you'll be able to understand for the first time in your life what perfect peace and security mean."

"Yes," said Tarzan, "the perfect peace and security of automobile accidents, railroad wrecks, airplane crashes, robbers, kidnapers, war and pestilence."

Wood laughed. "But no lions, leopards, buffaloes, wild elephants, snakes nor tsetse flies, not to mention *shiftas* and cannibals."

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"I think," said Gonfala, "that neither of you paints a very pretty picture. You make one almost afraid of life. But after all, it is not so much peace and security that I want, as freedom. You know, all my life I have been a prisoner, except for the few short weeks after you took me away from the Kaji, and before Spike and Troll got me. Perhaps you can imagine, then, how much I want freedom, no matter how many dangers I have to take along with it. It seems the most wonderful thing in the world to me."

"It is," said Tarzan.

"Well, love has its points too," suggested Wood.

"Yes," agreed Gonfala, "but not without freedom."

"You're going to have them both," Wood promised.

"With limitations, you'll find, Gonfala," warned Tarzan with a smile.

"Just now I'm interested in food," said Gonfala.

"And I think it's coming." Wood nodded toward the door. Some one was fumbling with the key. Presently the door opened far enough to permit two pots to be shoved inside the room; then it was closed with a bang.

"They are taking no chances," commented Wood as he crossed the room and carried the two vessels back to his companions. One contained a thick stew; the other, water.

"What, no hardware?" inquired Wood.

"Hardware? What is that?" asked Gonfala. "Something to eat?"

"Something to eat with—forks, spoons. No forks, no spoons, no Emily Post—how embarrassing!"

"Here," said Tarzan, and handed his hunting-knife to Gonfala. They took turns spearing morsels of meat with it, and drinking the juice and the water directly from the pots, sharing the food with Phoros.

"Not half bad," commented Wood. "What is it, Phoros?"

"Young wether. There is nothing tastier. I am surprised that Menofra did not send us old elephant-hide to chew on.



Perhaps she is relenting." Then he shook his head. "No, Menofra never relents—at least, not where I am concerned. That woman is so ornery she thinks indigestion is an indulgence."

"Why!" said Gonfala drowsily. "I am so sleepy, I can't keep my eyes open."

"Same here," said Wood.

Phoros looked at them and yawned. Tarzan stood up and shook himself.

"You too?" asked Phoros.

The ape-man nodded. Phoros' lids drooped. "The old she-devil!" he muttered. "We've all been drugged—maybe poisoned."

Tarzan watched his companions fall into a stupor one by one. He tried to fight off the effects of the drug. He wondered if any of them would awaken again; then he sagged to one knee and rolled over on the floor, unconscious.

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The room was decorated with barbaric splendor. Mounted heads of animals and men adorned the walls. There were crude murals done in colors that had faded into softness, refined by age. Skins of animals and rugs of wool covered the floor, the benches, and a couch on which Menofra lay, her body raised on one elbow, her bandaged head supported by one huge palm. Four warriors stood by the only door; at Menofra's feet lay Gonfala and Wood, still unconscious; at

her side stood Kandos; at the foot of the couch, bound and unconscious, lay Phoros.

"You sent the wild-man to the slave-pen as I directed?" asked Menofra.

Kandos nodded. "Yes, Queen; and because he seemed so strong, I had him chained to a stanchion."

"That is well," said Menofra. "Even a fool does the right thing occasionally."

"Thank you, Queen," said Kandos.

"Don't thank me; you make me sick. You are a liar and a cheat and a traitor. Phoros befriended you; yet you turned against him. How much more quickly would you turn against me, who has never befriended you and whom you hate! But you won't, because you are a coward; and don't even think of it—if I ever get the idea that you might be thinking of turning against me, I'll have your head hanging on this wall in no time. . . . The man is coming to."

They looked down at Wood, whose eyes were opening slowly, and whose arms and legs were moving a little as though experimenting with the possibilities of self-control. He was the first to regain consciousness. He opened his eyes and looked about him. He saw Gonfala lying beside him. Her rising and falling bosom assured him that she lived. He looked up at Kandos and the Queen.

"So this is the way you keep your word!" he accused; then he looked about for Tarzan. "Where is the other?"

"He is quite safe," said Kandos. "The Queen in her mercy has not killed any of you."

"What are you going to do with us?" demanded Wood.

"The wild-man goes to the arena," replied Menofra. "You and the girl will not be killed immediately—not until you have served my purpose."

"And what is that?"

"You shall know presently. Kandos, send now for a priest; Phoros will soon awaken."

Gonfala opened her eyes and sat up. "What has happened?" she questioned. "Where are we?"

"We are still prisoners," Wood told her. "These people have double-crossed us."

"Civilization seems very far away," she said, and tears came to her eyes.

He took her hand. "You must be brave, dear."

"I am tired of being brave; I have been brave for so long. I should like so much to cry, Stanlee."

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Now Phoros regained consciousness, and looked first at one and then at another. When his eyes fell on Menofra, he winced.

"Ah, the rat has awakened," said the Queen.

"You have rescued me, my dear!" said Phoros.

"You may call it that, if you wish," said Menofra coldly; "but I should call it by another name, as you will later."

"Now, my darling, let us forget the past—let bygones be bygones. Kandos, remove my bonds. How does it look to see the King trussed up like this?"

"It looks all right to me," Menofra assured him; "how would you prefer to be trussed up? It could be done with red-hot chains, you know. In fact, it has been done. It's not a bad idea; I am glad you suggested it."

"But Menofra, my dear wife, you wouldn't do that to me?"

"Oh, you think not? But you would try to kill me with your sword, so that you could take this wench here to wife. Well, I'm not going to have you trussed up with red-hot chains—not yet. First I am going to remove temptation from your path without removing the object of your temptation. I am going to let you see what you might have enjoyed."

There was a rap on the door, and one of the warriors said:  
"The priest is here."

"Let him in," ordered Menofra.

Wood had helped Gonfala to her feet, and the two were seated on a bench, mystified listeners to Menofra's cryptic speech. When the priest had entered the room and bowed before the Queen, she pointed to them.

"Marry these two," she commanded.

Wood and Gonfala looked at one another in astonishment. "There's a catch in this somewhere," said the former. "The old termagant's not doing this because she loves us—but I'm not looking any gift horse in the mouth."

"It's what we've been waiting and hoping for," said Gonfala, "but I wish it could have happened under different conditions."

There is something sinister in this; I don't believe any good thought could come out of that woman's mind."

The marriage ceremony was extremely simple, but very impressive. It laid upon the couple the strictest obligations of fidelity, and condemned to death and damnation through eternity whoever might cause either to be unfaithful to the other.

During the ceremony Menofra wore a sardonic smile, while Phoros had difficulty in hiding his chagrin and anger. When it was concluded, the Queen turned to her mate. "You know the laws of our people," she said. "King or commoner, whoever comes between these two must die. You know that, don't you, Phoros? You know you've lost her, don't you—forever? You would try to kill me, would you? Well, I'm going to let you live—I'm going to let you live with this wench; but watch your step, Phoros; for I'll be watching you." She turned to the guard. "Now take them away. Take this man to the slave-pen; and see that nothing happens to him; and take Phoros and the wench to the room next to mine, and lock them in."

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When Tarzan regained consciousness, he found himself chained to a stanchion in a stockade compound, an iron collar around his neck. He was quite alone; but pellets of musty grass, odd bits of dirty clothing, cooking-utensils, and the remains of cooking-fires, still smoldering, disclosed the fact that the shed and the yard was the abode of others; and he conjectured correctly that he had been imprisoned in a slave-pen.

The position of the sun told him that he had been under the influence of the drug for about an hour. The effects were passing off rapidly, leaving only a dull headache, and a feeling of chagrin that he had been so easily duped. He was concerned about the fate of Wood and Gonfala, and was at a loss to understand why he had been separated from them. . . . His active mind was occupied with this problem and that of escape, when the gate of the compound opened, and Wood was brought in by an escort of warriors, who merely shoved the American through the gateway and departed after relocking the gate.

Wood crossed the compound to Tarzan, "I wondered what they had done with you," he said. "I was afraid they might have killed you." Then he told the ape-man what Menofra had decreed for Gonfala. "It is monstrous, Tarzan; the woman is a beast. What are we to do?"

Tarzan tapped the iron collar that encircled his neck. "There is not much that I can do," he said ruefully.

"Why do you suppose they've chained you up and not me?" asked Wood.

"They must have some special form of entertainment in view for me," suggested the ape-man with a faint smile.

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The remainder of the day passed in desultory conversation, principally a monologue; for Tarzan was not given to garrulity. Wood talked to keep from thinking about Gonfala's situation, but he was not very successful. Late in the afternoon the slaves were returned to the compound, and

immediately crowded around Tarzan. One of them pushed his way to the front.

"Tarzan!" he exclaimed. "It is really you?"

"I am afraid it is, Valthor," replied the ape-man.

"And you are back, I see," said Valthor to Wood. "I did not expect to see you again. What happened?"

Wood told him the whole story of their misadventure, and Valthor looked grave. "Your friend Gonfala may be safe as long as Menofra lives; but she may not live long. Kandos will see to that, if he is not too big a coward; then, with Menofra out of the way, Phoros will again come to power. When he does, he will destroy you. After that, there would not be much hope for Gonfala. The situation is serious, and I can see no way out unless the King and his party were to return and recapture the city. I believe they could do it now, for practically all of the citizens and most of the warriors are sick of Phoros and the rest of the Erythra."

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A tall black came close to Tarzan. "You do not remember me, master?"

"Why, yes; of course I do," replied the ape-man. "You're Gemba. You were a slave in the house of Thudos at Cathne. How long have you been here?"

"Many moons, master. I was taken in a raid. The work is hard, and often these new masters are cruel. I wish that I were back in Cathne."

"You would fare well there now, Gemba. Your old master is king of Cathne. I think that if he knew Tarzan was a prisoner here, he would come and make war on Athne."

"And I think that if he did," said Valthor, "an army from Cathne would be welcome here for the first time in history; but there is no chance that he will come, for there is no way in which he may learn that Tarzan is here."

"If I could get this collar off my neck," said the ape-man, "I could soon get out of this slave-pen and the city, and bring Thudos with his army. He would come for me to save my friends."

"But you can't get it off," said Wood.

"You are right," agreed Tarzan; "it is idle talk."

For several days nothing occurred to break the monotony of existence in the slave-pen of the King of Athne. No word reached them from the palace of what was transpiring there; no inkling came of the fate that was in store for them. Valthor had told Tarzan that the latter was probably being saved for the arena on account of his appearance of great strength; but when there would be games again he did not know. The new masters of Athne had changed everything, deriding all that had been sacred to custom and the old regime. There was even talk of changing the name of Athne to the City of Phoros. All that prevented was the insistence of the queen that it be renamed the City of Menofra.

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**All day Tarzan remained alone, chained like a wild animal.**

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Every morning the slaves were taken to work; and all day long Tarzan remained alone, chained like a wild animal. Imprisonment of any nature galled the Lord of the Jungle; to be chained, was torture. Yet he gave no sign of the mental

suffering he was enduring. To watch him, one might have thought he was content; but seething beneath that calm exterior was a raging sea of anger.

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One afternoon the slaves were returned to the pen earlier than usual. The guards who herded them in were unusually rough with them, and there were several officers not ordinarily present. They followed the slaves into the pen and counted them, checking off their names on a scroll carried by one of the officers; then they questioned them; and from the questions, Tarzan gathered that there had been a concerted attempt on the part of a number of slaves to escape, during which a guard had been killed. During the excitement of the mêlée several slaves had escaped into the bamboo forest close upon the eastern boundary of the cultivated fields of Athne.

The officers and warriors were extremely brutal in their handling of the slaves as they questioned them, trying to force confessions from them that they might ascertain just how far-reaching the plot had been, and which slaves were the ringleaders. After they left the pen, the slaves were in a turmoil of restlessness and discontent. The air was surcharged with a static electricity of repressed rebellion that the slightest spark would have ignited; but Valthor counseled them to patience.

"You will only subject yourselves to torture and death," he told them. "We are only a handful of unarmed slaves. What can we do against the armed warriors of the Erythra? A change must come. There is as much discontent outside the

slave-pen as within it; and one day Zygo our King will come out of the mountains and set us free."

"But some of us are slaves, no matter who is king," said one. "I am. It would make no difference whether Zygo or Phoros were king—I should still be a slave."

"No," said Valthor. "I can promise you all that when Zygo comes into power again, you will all be set free. I give you my word that it will be done."

"Well," said one, "I might not believe another, but all know that what the noble Valthor says he will do he will do."

It was almost dark now, and the cooking-fires were alight, and the slaves were cooking their poor meals in little pots. Jerked elephant-meat constituted the larger part of their diet; to this was added a very coarse variety of turnip. From the two the men made a stew. Sometimes those who worked in the fields varied this diet with other vegetables they had been able to steal from the fields and smuggle into the pen.

"This stew," remarked Wood, "should be full of vitamins; it has everything else, including elephant-hair and pebbles. The elephant-hair and the pebbles might be forgiven, but turnips! In the economy of mundane happiness, there is no place for the turnip."

"I take it that you don't like turnips," said Valthor.

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Since Tarzan had been brought to the slave-pen, Troll and Spike had kept to themselves. Spike was much afraid of the ape-man; and he had managed to impart this fear to Troll,

although the latter had forgotten that there was any reason to fear him. Spike was worried for fear that, in the event they were liberated, Tarzan would find some way to keep the great diamond from him. This did not trouble Troll, who had forgotten all about the diamond.

Spike encouraged him in the delusion, and never referred to the diamond, although it was constantly the subject of his thoughts and plannings. His principal hope of retrieving it lay in the possibility that the rightful King of Athne would regain his throne, treat him as a guest instead of a prisoner, and return the Gonfal to him; and he knew from conversations he had had with other prisoners, that the return of Zygo was just between a possibility and a probability.

As the slaves were eating their evening meal and discussing the escape of their three fellows, an officer entered the compound with a detail of warriors, one of whom carried an iron collar and chain. Approaching the shed, the officer called Valthor.

"I am here," said the noble, rising.

"I have a present for you, aristocrat," announced the officer, who until the revolution had been a groom in the elephant-stables of Zygo.

"So I see," replied Valthor, glancing at the collar and chain; "and one which it must give a stableboy much pleasure to bring me."

The officer flushed angrily. "Be careful, or I'll teach you some manners," he growled. "You are the stableboy now, and I am the aristocrat."

Valthor shook his head. "No, stableboy, you are wrong. You will always be a stableboy at heart; and way down deep inside you, you know it. That is what makes you angry. That is what makes you hate me, or think that you hate me; you really hate yourself, because you know that you will always be a stableboy, no matter what Phoros tells you you are. He has done many strange things since he drove out the King, but he cannot make a lion out of a jackal's tail."

"Enough of this," snapped the officer. "Here, you,"—to his soldiers,— "snap the collar about his neck and chain him to the stanchion beside the wild-man."

"Why has Phoros thus honored me?" inquired Valthor.

"It was not Phoros; it was Menofra. She is ruling now."

"Ah, I see," said the noble. "Her psychology of hate for my class is more deeply rooted than yours, for it springs from filthy soil. Your vocation was at least honorable. Menofra was a woman of the street before Phoros married her."

"Well, have your say while you can, aristocrat," said the officer tauntingly, "for tomorrow you and the wild-man die in the arena, trampled and gored by a rogue elephant."

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# CHAPTER XIII

## IN THE ARENA

The other slaves were furious because of the sentence imposed upon Valthor, who was to die, the officer had told them before he left, in punishment for the outbreak that had resulted in the death of an Erythros warrior and the escape of three slaves, and as a warning to the others. Valthor had been chosen ostensibly because he had been charged with fomenting rebellion among the slaves, but really because he was popular among them, and an aristocrat.

Wood was horrified by the knowledge that Tarzan was to die—Tarzan and Valthor, both of whom were his friends. It seemed to him absolutely inconceivable that the mighty heart of the Lord of the Jungle should be stilled forever, that that perfect body should be broken and trampled in the dust of an arena to satisfy the blood-lust of ignorant barbarians.

"There must be something that we can do," he said; "there's *got* to be. Couldn't we break those chains?"

Tarzan shook his head. "I have examined mine carefully," he said, "and tested it. If it were cast iron, we might break a link; but it is malleable, and would only bend. If we had a chisel—but we haven't. No, there is nothing to do but wait."

"But they are going to kill you, Tarzan! Don't you understand? They are going to kill you."

The ape-man permitted himself the shadow of a smile. "There is nothing unique in that," he said. "Many people have died;

many people are dying; many people will die—even you, my friend."

"Tarzan is right," said Valthor. "We must all die; what matters is *how* we die! If we meet death courageously, as befits warriors, there will be no regrets. For myself, I am glad that an elephant is going to kill me; for I am an elephant-man. You know what that means, Tarzan; for you have been to Cathne where the lion-men are the nobles; and you know with what pride they bear the title. It is the same here, except that the nobles are the elephant-men."

"If I were to have my choice of the manner in which I am to die," said Tarzan, "I should prefer the lion to the elephant. For one thing, the lion kills quickly; but my real reason is that the elephant has always been my friend—my very best friend, perhaps; and I do not like to think a friend must kill me."

"This one will not be your friend, Tarzan," Valthor reminded him.

"No, I know it; but I was not thinking of him as an individual," explained Tarzan. "And now, I am going to sleep."

---

Morning of their day of doom dawned like any other morning. Neither spoke of what was impending. With Wood they cooked their breakfasts; they talked, and Valthor laughed, and occasionally Tarzan smiled one of his rare smiles. Wood was the most nervous. When the time came for the slaves to be taken to their work, he came to say good-by to the ape-man.

Tarzan laid a hand upon his shoulder. "I do not like to say good-by, my friend," he said.

If Wood had known how rare was the use by Tarzan of that term "my friend," he would have felt honored. The Lord of the Jungle thought of many animals as friends, but few men. He liked Wood's intelligence, his courage, his cleanness.

"Have you no message you would like to send to—to—" Wood hesitated.

Tarzan shook his head. "Thank you, no," he said. "She will know, as she always has."

Wood turned and walked away, following the other slaves out of the stockade. He stumbled over the threshold, and swore under his breath as he drew a palm across his eyes.

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It was afternoon before they came for Tarzan and Valthor, half a hundred warriors and several officers, all in their best trappings, their freshly burnished arms shining in the sun.

In front of the palace a procession was forming. There were numerous elephants richly caparisoned and bearing howdahs in which rode the new-made nobility of Athne. All the howdahs were open except one elaborate pavilion. In this sat Menofra alone. When Valthor saw her, he laughed aloud. Tarzan turned and looked at him questioningly.

"Look at her!" exclaimed the noble. "She could not be more self-conscious if she were naked. In fact, that would not bother her so much. The poor thing is trying to look the queen. Note the haughty mien, and the crown! Dyaus! She is



wearing the crown to the arena—and wearing it backward! It is worth dying to see."

Valthor had not lowered his voice; he even raised it a little. His laughter had attracted attention to him, so that many listened and heard his words. They even reached the ears of Menofra. That was apparent to all who could see her, for her face turned fiery red; and she took the crown off and placed it on the seat beside her. She was so furious that she trembled; and when she gave the command to march, as she immediately did, her voice shook with rage.

With the hundred elephants in single file, the many warriors on foot, the banners and pennons, the procession was colorful; but it lacked that something that would have made its magnificence impressive. There was nothing real about its assumed majesty, and the entire pageant was colored by the spuriousity of its principal actors. This was the impression that it made upon the Lord of the Jungle walking in chains behind the elephant of Menofra.

The procession followed the main avenue to the south gate through lines of silent citizens. There was no cheering, no applause. There were whispered comments as Valthor and Tarzan passed; and it was plain to see that the sympathies of the people were with Valthor, though they dared not express them openly. Tarzan was a stranger to them; their only interest in him lay in the fact that he might serve to give them a few minutes of entertainment in the arena.

Passing through the gate, the column turned toward the east, coming at last to the arena, which lay directly east of the city. Just outside the main gate, through which the procession entered the arena, Tarzan and Valthor were led from the line

of march and taken to a smaller gate which led through a high palisade of small logs into a paddock between two sections of a grandstand. The inner end of the paddock was formed by a palisade of small logs, and was similar to the outer end, having a small gate opening onto the arena. The ape-man could not but notice the flimsy construction of the two palisades, and idly wondered if the entire arena were as poorly built.

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A number of armed guards were in the compound; and presently other prisoners were brought, men whom Tarzan had not before seen. They had been brought from the city behind the elephants of lesser dignitaries who had ridden in the rear of Menofra. Several of these prisoners, who spoke to Valthor, were evidently men of distinction.

"We are about the last of the aristocracy who did not escape or go over to the Erythra," Valthor explained to Tarzan, "Phoros and Menofra think that by killing off all their enemies, they will have no opposition and nothing more to fear; but as a matter of fact, they are only making more enemies, for the middle classes were naturally more in sympathy with the aristocracy than with the scum which constitutes the Erythra."

About four feet from the top of the inner palisade was a horizontal beam supporting the ends of braces that held the palisade upright; and upon this beam the prisoners were allowed to stand and witness what took place in the arena until it was their turn to enter. When Tarzan and Valthor took their places on the beam, the royal pageant had just

completed a circuit of the arena, and Menofra was clumsily descending from the howdah of her elephant to enter the royal *loge*. The grandstands were about half filled, and crowds were still pouring through the tunnels. There was little noise other than the shuffling of sandaled feet and the occasional trumpeting of an elephant. It did not seem to Tarzan a happy, care-free throng out to enjoy a holiday, but rather a sullen mob suppressed by fear.

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The first encounter was between two men—one a huge Erythros warrior armed with sword and spear; the other a former noble whose only weapon was a dagger. It was an execution, not a duel—an execution preceded by torture. The audience watched it, for the most part, in silence. There were a few shouts of encouragement from the *loges* of the officials and the new nobility.

Valthor and Tarzan watched with disgust. "I think he could have killed that big fellow," said the ape-man. "I saw how he might be easily handled. It is too bad that the other did not think of it."

"You think you could kill Hyark?" demanded a guard standing by Tarzan.

"Why not?" asked the ape-man. "He is clumsy and stupid; most of all, he is a coward."

"Hyark a coward? That is a good one. There are few braver among the Erythra."

"I can believe that," said Tarzan; and Valthor laughed.

Hyark was strutting to and fro before the royal box, receiving the applause of Menofra and her entourage; slaves were dragging out the mutilated corpse of his victim; an officer was approaching the paddock to summon the next combatants.

The guard called to him: "Here is one who thinks he can kill Hyark."

The officer looked up. "Which one thinks that?" he demanded.

The guard jerked a thumb toward Tarzan. "This wild-man, here. Perhaps Menofra would like to see such an encounter. It should prove amusing."

"Yes," said the officer, "I should like to see it myself. Maybe after the next combat. I'll ask her."

The next prisoner to be taken into the arena was an old man. He was given a dagger to defend himself; then a lion was loosed upon him.

"That is a very old lion," said Tarzan to Valthor. "Most of his teeth are gone. He is weak from mange and hunger."

"But he will kill the man," said Valthor.

"Yes, he will kill the man; he is still a powerful brute."

"I suppose you think you could kill him too," jeered the guard.

"Probably," assented the ape-man.

The guard thought this very funny, and laughed uproariously.

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The lion made short work of the old man, giving him, at least, a merciful death. Then the officer came, after they had driven the lion back into his cage with many spears, and said that Menofra had given assent to the fight between Hyark and the wild-man.

"She has promised to make Hyark a captain for killing two men in one afternoon," said the officer.

"This one says he can kill the lion too," jeered the guard.

"But Hyark is going to kill your wild-man now; so we will never know if he could kill the lion," said the officer, pretending to be deeply grieved.

"I will fight them both at once," said Tarzan, "—that is, if Hyark is not afraid to go into the arena with a lion."

"That would be something to see," said the officer. "I will go at once and speak to Menofra."

"Why did you say that, Tarzan?" asked Valthor.

"Didn't I tell you that I'd rather be killed by a lion than an elephant?"

Valthor shook his head. "Perhaps you are right. At least it will be over sooner. This waiting is getting on my nerves."

Very soon the officer returned. "It is arranged," he said.

"What did Hyark think of it?" asked Valthor.

"I think he did not like the idea at all. He said he just recalled that his wife was very ill, and asked Menofra to give some one else the honor of killing the wild-man."

"And what did Menofra say?"

"She said that if Hyark didn't get into the arena and kill the wild-man, she would kill Hyark."

"Menofra has a grand sense of humor," remarked Valthor.

Tarzan dropped to the ground and was taken into the arena, where the iron collar was removed from about his neck, and he was handed a dagger. He walked toward the royal box below which Hyark was standing. Hyark came running to meet him, hoping to dispatch him quickly and get out of the arena before the lion could be loosed. The men at the lion's cage were having some difficulty in raising the door. The lion, nervous and excited from his last encounter, was roaring and growling as he struck at the bars trying to reach the men working about him.

Hyark held his spear in front of him. He hoped to thrust it through Tarzan the moment that he came within reach of him. There would be no playing with his victim in this encounter, his sole idea being to get it over and get out of the arena.

Tarzan advanced slightly crouched. He had stuck the dagger into the cord that supported his loin-cloth. The fact that he came on with bare hands puzzled the crowd and confused Hyark, who had long since regretted that he had accepted the challenge so boastfully. He was not afraid of the man, of course; but the two of them! What if the man avoided being killed until the lion was upon them? The lion might as readily leap upon Hyark as upon the other! It was this that added to Hyark's confusion.

They were close now. With an oath, Hyark lunged his spear-point at the naked breast of his antagonist; then Tarzan did just what he had planned to do, knowing as he did, his own agility and strength. He seized the haft of the spear and

wrenched the weapon from Hyark's grasp, hurling it to the ground behind him. Hyark snatched for his sword; but he was too slow. The ape-man was upon him; steel-thewed fingers seized him and swung him around.

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**Hyark lunged at his antagonist; then Tarzan did just what he had planned to do.**

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A great shout went up from the crowd—the lion was loosed!

Grasping Hyark by the collar of his jerkin and his sword-belt, the ape-man held him helpless despite his struggles. For the first time the crowd became really vocal. They laughed, jeering at Hyark; they screamed warnings at the wild-man, shouting that the lion was coming; but Tarzan knew that already. From the corner of an eye he was watching the carnivore as it came down the length of the arena at a trot. He could get a better estimate of the beast now, as it came closer. It was a small lion, old and pitifully emaciated. Evidently it had been starved a long time to make it ravenous. Tarzan's anger rose against those who had been responsible for this cruelty; because of it, there was born in his mind a plan to avenge the lion.

As the lion approached, Tarzan went to meet it, pushing the frantic Hyark ahead of him; and just before the beast launched its deadly charge, the ape-man gave Hyark a tremendous shove directly toward the great cat; and then Hyark did precisely what Tarzan had anticipated he would do: he turned quickly to one side and broke into a run. Tarzan stood still—not a muscle moved. He was directly in the path of the lion, but the latter did not hesitate even an instant; it turned and pursued the fleeing man, the screaming, terrified Hyark.

"The brave Hyark will have to run much faster if he hopes to get his captaincy," said Valthor to the guard. "He would have been better off had he stood still; the lion was sure to pursue him if he ran. Had he stepped to one side and stood still, the lion might have continued his charge straight for Tarzan. At



least he would have had a chance then, but he certainly cannot outrun a lion."

Just in front of the *loge* of Menofra, the lion overtook Hyark, and the screaming man went down beneath the mangy body to a mercifully quick end. Before his final struggles had ended, the starving beast commenced to devour him.

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Up the arena, toward the royal *loge* and the feeding lion, came Tarzan. On the way he picked up Hyark's discarded spear, and he crept silently onto the lion from the rear; nor did the lion, occupied with his greedy feeding, see the approaching man. The crowd sat tense and silent—marveling, perhaps, at the courage of this naked wild-man. Closer and closer to the lion crept Tarzan; and still the lion fed upon the carcass of Hyark, unconscious of the ape-man's presence. Directly behind the carnivore, Tarzan laid the spear upon the ground. He had brought it only as a measure of safety in the event his plan miscarried. Then, with the swiftness and agility of Sheeta the panther, he leaped astride the feeding cat and grasped it by the mane and the loose hide upon its back, lifting it bodily from its kill, and at the same time swinging around and whirling the beast with him, roaring and striking, but futilely. It was the lightning quickness of his act that made it possible—that and his great strength, as, with one super-human effort, he flung the beast into the royal *loge*; then, without a single backward glance, he turned and walked back toward the prisoners' paddock.

The lion's body struck Menofra and knocked her from her chair; but the lion, frightened and bewildered now, thought

for the moment only of escape; and leaped to an adjoining box. Here he lashed out with his taloned paws to right and left among the screaming nobility. From one *loge* to another he leaped, leaving a trail of screaming victims, until he chanced upon a tunnel, into which he darted and galloped to freedom beyond the amphitheater.

The stands were in an uproar and the populace cheered Tarzan as he entered the paddock and took his place again beside Valthor on the cross-beam. The guard who had ridiculed him looked at him now in awe, while the other prisoners praised and congratulated him.

"Menofra should give you a wreath and a title," said Valthor, "for you have given her and the people such entertainment as they have never seen before in this arena."

Tarzan looked across at the royal box and saw Menofra standing in it apparently unhurt. "The lion missed a golden opportunity," he said; "and as for the wreath and the title, I do not deserve them; for it was the lion, not Menofra or the people watching us, that I was trying to entertain."

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When the stands had quieted and the wounded were removed, the officer in charge returned to the paddock. "You were a fool," he said to Tarzan, "to throw the lion into Menofra's *loge*. If you hadn't done that, I believe she would have given you your liberty; but now she has ordered that you be destroyed at once. You and Valthor go in next. You will take your places in the center of the arena immediately. May Dyaus have mercy on you!"

"I wish," said Valthor, "that you might have had a better reception in the City of Ivory. I wish that you might have known my own people, and they you. That you should have come here to die is tragic, but the fates were against you."

"Well, my friend," said Tarzan, "at least we have seen one another again; and—we are not dead yet."

"We shall be, presently."

"I think that perhaps you are right," agreed the ape-man.

"Well, here we are. Have you any plan?"

"None," replied Tarzan. "I know that I cannot throw an elephant into Menofra's *loge*."

"Not this one," said Valthor. "I know him. I helped capture him. He is a devil, and huge. He hates men. They have been saving him for this, and they will probably kill him afterward—he is too dangerous."

"They are opening the elephant paddock," said Tarzan. "Here he comes!"

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A huge elephant charged, trumpeting, through the opened gates. At first he did not seem to notice the two in the center of the arena, and trotted around close to the stands as though searching for an avenue of escape; then suddenly he wheeled and started for the two men.

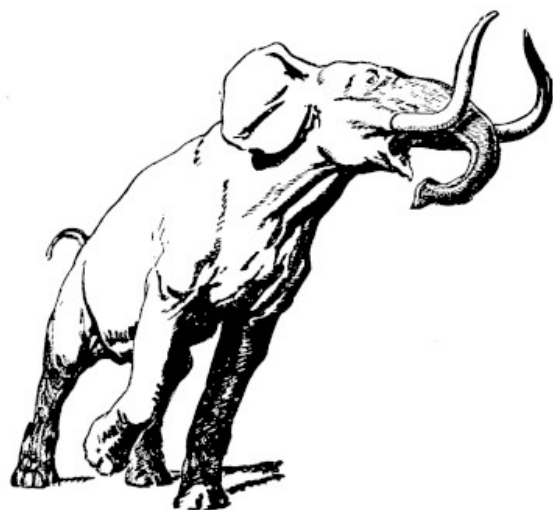
Tarzan had noted his great size and the one tusk darker than the other; and on the screen of memory was pictured another scene and another day—hyenas at the edge of a pit, snapping

at a huge elephant with one dark tusk, while above circled Ska the vulture.

The elephant's trunk was raised; he was trumpeting as he came toward them; and then Tarzan stepped quickly forward and raised a hand, palm outward.

"*Dan-do, Tantor!*" he commanded. "*Tarzan yo.*"

The great beast hesitated; then he stopped. Tarzan walked toward him, motioning Valthor to follow directly behind him, and stopped with one hand upon the trunk, which was now lowered and feeling exploratively over the ape-man's body.



Tarzan stepped quickly forward and raised a hand. "*Dan-do, Tantor!*" he commanded. "*Tarzan yo.*" The great beast hesitated, then stopped.

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"*Nala Tarzan!*" commanded the ape-man. "*Nala tarmangani!*" And he pulled Valthor to his side.

The elephant raised his trunk and trumpeted loudly; then he gathered first one and then the other in its folds and lifted them to his head. For a moment he stood swaying to and fro as Tarzan spoke to him in low tones; then, trumpeting again, he started off at a trot around the arena, while the spectators sat in stunned amazement. The great beast had completed half the oval and was opposite the prisoners' paddock when Tarzan gave a quick command. The elephant wheeled sharply to the left and crossed the arena, while Tarzan urged him on with words of encouragement in that strange mother of languages that the great apes use, and the lesser apes and the little monkeys; and that is understood in proportion to their intelligence by many another beast of the forest and the plain.

With lowered head the mighty bull crashed into the flimsy palisade at the inner end of the paddock, flattening it to the ground; then the outer palisade fell before him—and he bore Tarzan and Valthor out onto the plain toward freedom.

As they passed the main gate of the amphitheater and headed south, they saw the first contingent of their pursuers issuing from the arena and clambering to the howdahs of the waiting elephants; and before they had covered half a mile, the pursuit was in full cry behind them.

While their own mount was making good time, some of the pursuing elephants were gaining on him.

"Racing elephants," commented Valthor.

"They are carrying heavy loads," observed the ape-man: "five and six warriors, besides a heavy howdah."

Valthor nodded. "If we can keep ahead of them for half an hour, we've a good chance to get away." Then he turned from the pursuers and looked ahead. "Mother of Dyaus!" he exclaimed. "We're caught between a wild bull and a hungry lion—the Cathneans are coming, and they're coming for war. This is no ordinary raid. Look at them!"

Tarzan turned, and saw a body of men that approximated an army coming across the plain toward them; and in the van were the fierce war-lions of Cathne. He looked back. Closing in rapidly upon them were the war-elephants of Athne.

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# CHAPTER XIV

## THE OUTCOME OF THE BATTLE

"I think we yet have a chance to escape them both," said Valthor. "Turn him toward the east. Zygo and his loyal followers are there in the mountains."

"We do not have to run away from our friends," replied Tarzan.

"I hope they recognize you as a friend before they loose their war-lions, which are trained to leap to the backs of elephants and kill the men riding there."

"Then we'll approach them on foot," said the ape-man.

"And be caught by the Erythra," added Valthor.

"We shall have to take a chance; but wait—let's try something." He spoke to the bull, and the animal came to a stop and wheeled about; then Tarzan leaped to the ground, motioning Valthor to follow him. He spoke a few words into the ear of the elephant, and stepped aside. Up went the great trunk, forward the huge ears, as the mighty beast started back to meet the oncoming elephants.

"I think he'll hold them up long enough for us to reach the Cathnean line before they can overtake us," said Tarzan.

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The two men turned then and started toward the advancing horde of warriors—toward ranks of gleaming spears and golden helmets and lions of war on golden chains. Suddenly a warrior left the ranks and ran forward to meet them; and when he was closer, Tarzan saw that he was an officer. It was Gemnon.

"I recognized you at once," he cried to the ape-man. "We were coming to rescue you."

"How did you know that I was in trouble?" demanded Tarzan.

"Gemba told us. He was a prisoner with you in the slave-pen; but he escaped, and came straight to Thudos with word that you were to be killed."

"Two of my friends are still prisoners in Athne," said Tarzan; "and now that you have caught many of the warriors of Phoros out here on the plain in a disorganized condition—"

"Yes," said Gemnon. "Thudos realized his advantage, and we shall attack at once, as soon as we return to the lines."

Valthor and Gemnon had met before, when Valthor was a prisoner in Cathne.

Thudos the King welcomed them both, for Gemba had told him of the Erythra; and naturally his sympathies were with the aristocracy of Athne.

"If fortune is with us today," he said, "we shall put Zygo back upon his throne." Then, to an aide: "Loose the lions of war!"

The great bull with the dark tusk had met the first of the war elephants of Athne head-on with such a terrific impact that all the warriors were hurled from the howdah, and the war-elephant toppled over, whereupon the others scattered to



avoid him. And a moment later the war-lions of Cathne were among them, leaping to the howdahs and mauling the warriors. Two or three lions would attack a single elephant at a time, and at least two of them usually succeeded in reaching the howdah.

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**The great bull met the war-elephant with a terrific impact.**

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The commander of the Erythros forces sought to rally his men and form a line to repel the advance of the Cathneans; and while he was seeking to accomplish this, the Cathnean foot-warriors were upon them, adding to the rout.

The Erythros warriors hurled spears at their foes and sought to trample them beneath the feet of their mounts. The Cathneans' first aim was to kill the mahouts and stampede the elephants; and while some warriors were attempting this, others pressed close to the elephants in an endeavor to cut the

girths with their sharp daggers, precipitating howdahs and occupants to the ground.

The shouts of the warriors, the trumpeting of the elephants, the roars of the lions and the screams of the wounded produced an indescribable bedlam that added to the confusion of the scene and seemed to raise the blood-lust of the participants to demoniac proportions.

While a portion of his forces was engaging the Erythra on the plain before the city, Thudos maneuvered the remainder to a position between the battle and the city, cutting off the Erythra retreat; and with this and the killing of their commander, the Erythros warriors lost heart and scattered in all directions.

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Thudos led his victorious troops into Athne, and with him marched Tarzan and Valthor. They liberated Wood and the other prisoners in the slave-pen, including Spike and Troll; and then, at Wood's urgent pleading, marched to the palace in search of Gonfala. They met with slight resistance, for the palace guard soon fled from the superior numbers that confronted them.

Tarzan and Wood, led by a palace slave, hurried to the apartment where Gonfala was confined. The door, fastened by bolts on the outside, was quickly opened; and the two men entered, to see Gonfala standing above the body of Phoros, a dagger in her hand.

At sight of Wood, she rushed forward and threw herself into his arms. "Word just reached him that Menofra is dead," she

said, "and I—I had to kill him."

Wood pressed her to him. "Poor child!" he murmured tenderly. "You've been through a lot. . . . But our troubles are over now. The Erythra have fallen, and we are among friends."

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After the fall of Athne, events moved rapidly. Zygo was summoned from the mountains and restored to his throne by his hereditary enemies, the Cathneans.

"Now you can live in peace," said Tarzan.

"Peace!" shouted Thudos and Zygo almost simultaneously.

"Who would care to live always in peace?"

"I replaced Zygo on the throne," explained Thudos; "so that we Cathneans might continue to have foes worthy of our arms. No peace for us, eh, Zygo?"

"Never, my friend!" replied the King of Athne. . . .

For a week Tarzan and the other Europeans remained in Athne; then they set off toward the south, taking Spike and Troll and the great diamond with them. A short march from Athne they met Muviro with a hundred warriors coming to search for their beloved Bwana; and thus escorted, they returned to the ape-man's own country.

Here Tarzan let Spike and Troll leave for the coast on the promise that neither would return to Africa.

As they were leaving, Spike cast sorrowful glances at the great diamond. "We'd orter get somethin' out o' that," he said.

"After all, we went through a let o' hell on account of it."

"Very well," said Tarzan, "take it with you."

Wood and Gonfala looked at the ape-man in astonishment, but said nothing until after Troll and Spike had departed; then they asked why he had given the great diamond to two such villains.

A slow smile touched the ape-man's lips. "It was not the Gonfal," he said. "I have that at home. This was the imitation Mafka kept, to show and to protect the real Gonfal. And something else that may interest you: I found the great emerald of the Zuli and buried it in the Bantango country. Some day we'll go and get that too. You and Gonfala should be well equipped with wealth when you return to civilization—you should have enough to get you into a great deal of trouble and keep you there all the rest of your lives."

THE END

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[Transcriber's Note: Inserted Chapter VI and Chapter XI headers at beginning of December and January editions respectively.]

[*The end of Tarzan and the Elephant Men* by Edgar Rice Burroughs]