

16 - Tarzan Again Leads the Mangani

In Chapter 16 of "Tarzan and the Jewels of Opar," Tarzan leads a pursuit to rescue Jane Clayton and retrieve the stolen jewels. Achmet Zek, the chief of the raiders, sets out with his men to intercept his deserting lieutenant, Werper, forming a vast circle and hunting toward the center. During a short rest, Achmet Zek, discontented over his losses, is alerted by a slight noise, discovering Jane, his thought-to-be-guarded prisoner, attempting to escape. As Jane crosses the clearing, pursued by a trio of anthropoid apes, Achmet Zek and his henchmen capture her again. However, Tarzan, alongside the great apes, intervenes, charging at the Arabs to rescue her. In a dramatic confrontation, the Arabs manage to shoot Tarzan and two apes, then escape with Jane, leaving a wounded but resolute Tarzan behind.

Upon regaining consciousness, Tarzan decides to follow the Arabs back to their camp with the assistance of Taglat and Chulk, two of the great apes, albeit for slightly differing motivations. Tarzan, still affected by a lingering memory loss from a previous injury, is primarily driven by his newfound primitive instincts and his attraction to Jane, whom he now considers his mate. Meanwhile, Taglat harbors secret, sinister intentions toward Jane, undisclosed to Tarzan.

The trio's journey is marked by challenges and distractions common to their simian nature, showcasing Tarzan's patience and strategic thinking despite his amnesiac state. They stealthily approach the Arab camp, observing and planning their next move. Tarzan's strategy includes disguising themselves with garments stolen from Arab scouts, capitalizing on the element of surprise.

The chapter concludes with Tarzan, Taglat, and Chulk preparing to infiltrate the camp under the cover of darkness, demonstrating Tarzan's adaptability and leadership even in his reverted savage state. His transformation from a distinguished member of London society back to his jungle origins is underscored, along with a persistent inner turmoil regarding his true identity and purpose. The anticipation of a confrontation with Achmet Zek and the rescue of Jane sets the stage for the subsequent chapters, highlighting Tarzan's unwavering resolve and the complexities of his dual nature.