

5 - The Altar of the Flaming God

In Chapter 5 of "Tarzan and the Jewels of Opar," titled "The Altar of the Flaming God," Tarzan's pursuit of the outer world is abruptly halted by a sudden earthquake that traps him inside a treasure room. As he regains consciousness, he finds himself amidst untold wealth but is more concerned with escaping. Meanwhile, Werper, a Belgian, also survives the quake unharmed and begins a desperate search for an exit, fearing for his safety amid the chaos and darkness.

Werper discovers Tarzan unconscious, mistaking him for dead, and hurriedly seeks a way out. His initial relief at finding a passage is short-lived when he encounters a blocked path. Through determination, Werper manages to find and navigate through hidden doors and tunnels, his only source of comfort being a dwindling candle. His journey through the darkened corridors is marked by fear and desperation, exacerbated by eerie screams that hint at some unspeakable horror lurking nearby.

The Belgian's plight takes him across a treacherous well and into a series of cryptic, interconnected chambers, each presenting new challenges and deepening his sense of dread. Despite the perils, Werper's resolve to escape remains undeterred, driven by fear and the slim hope of finding a way back to the surface. His ordeal in the darkness culminates when he emerges into a sunlit court, only to be captured by the grotesque and terrifying priests of the Flaming God of Opar.

This chapter effectively conveys a palpable sense of claustrophobia and terror as Werper, and, implicitly, Tarzan face the mysteries and dangers of the ancient city of Opar. The narrative maintains a consistent atmosphere of suspense and foreboding, delving into the primal fear of the unknown and the instinct for survival against seemingly insurmountable odds.