

CHAPTER 19 -The beasts of Tarzan

The Last of the "Kincaid" unravels the initial phase of the return voyage to Jungle Island for Tarzan, Jane Clayton, and their entourage, which includes both crew members and the distinctive beasts that have been part of their extraordinary journey. As the day breaks, Tarzan is eager to set sail back home, entrusting the Kincaid under the watchful guidance of its remaining crew, who, reassured by Lord Greystoke's promises of no prosecution for their involvements with prior misdeeds, eagerly prep the ship for departure. The atmosphere aboard is tense yet seemingly under control as the beasts, led by Sheeta and the apes of Akut, are released on deck, their primal instincts barely restrained under the stern vigilance of Tarzan and Mugambi.

The narrative beautifully captures the poignant farewell to the African continent, with Tarzan exhibiting a rare moment of peace with his departure, driven by the urgency to find his lost child, a motivation that overshadows his inherent attachment to the land. The voyage seems painfully slow to Tarzan, underscoring his desperation and the emotional turmoil of a grieving father. Simultaneously, an ominous undertone is present in the cabin of Alexander Paulvitch, where a ticking mechanism hints at impending disaster.

This tranquil voyage is abruptly shattered by an explosive catastrophe that engulfs the Kincaid, throwing the ship into chaos. The explosion, whose cause remains a mystery to all but a knowing few, sets the stage for a dramatic fight for survival. The beasts, driven by fear and confusion, run amok, posing a grave threat until Tarzan manages to restore a semblance of order. However, the ship is irrevocably doomed, with fire ravaging its structure, prompting an immediate evacuation.

In a dramatic turn of events, the survivors make their escape to Jungle Island, leaving behind the Kincaid to its fiery demise. The beasts, sensing freedom and familiarity, swiftly abandon the humans, drawn irresistibly back to the wild. Tarzan watches them leave with a bittersweet acceptance, recognizing the primal divide that separates his wild allies from the civilized world represented by Jane and the crew members.

The chapter masterfully intertwines themes of adventure, loyalty, and the eternal conflict between civilization and the wild, culminating in a heartfelt goodbye to the faithful beasts that stood by Tarzan's side. The poignant departure from Africa, the explosive sabotage aboard the Kincaid, and the eventual return to Jungle Island encapsulate the unpredictable essence of Tarzan's world, where danger lurks in the shadow of camaraderie and betrayal.