

IVAN TORS'

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# DAKTARI

NIGHT OF TERROR



Ivan Tors'

**DAKTARI**  
**NIGHT OF TERROR**

by

George S. Elrick

Authorized Edition

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At Wameru Compound

## CHAPTER 1

### MONKEYSHINES

The baby rhino snorted and nuzzled his leathery lips against Paula Tracy's slender hand. Always hungry, he had been following the seventeen-year-old girl around the animal research compound since sunrise, hoping she'd give him another lump of sugar.



Paula brushed a wisp of blond hair off her forehead. "Go away!" she whispered. "You're making Judy jealous!"

As if he comprehended her words, the awkward little beast turned and stared with tiny, near-sighted eyes at the approaching chimpanzee.

Judy halted in front of the rhino, bared her teeth, and slapped the ground with the palms of both hands. Then she curled back her thin lips and uttered a stream of



Judy Is Jealous



high-pitched screams that only another chimp could understand. But the message was clear: Stay away from Paula Tracy! *I'm* her favorite pet!

“Behave yourself, Judy!” the girl chided, smiling in spite of herself. “That’s no way for a young lady to act! Why aren’t you dignified, like Clarence? *He* doesn’t care if the baby rhino follows me around!”

Judy spun her head to one side and glared at the cross-eyed lion,

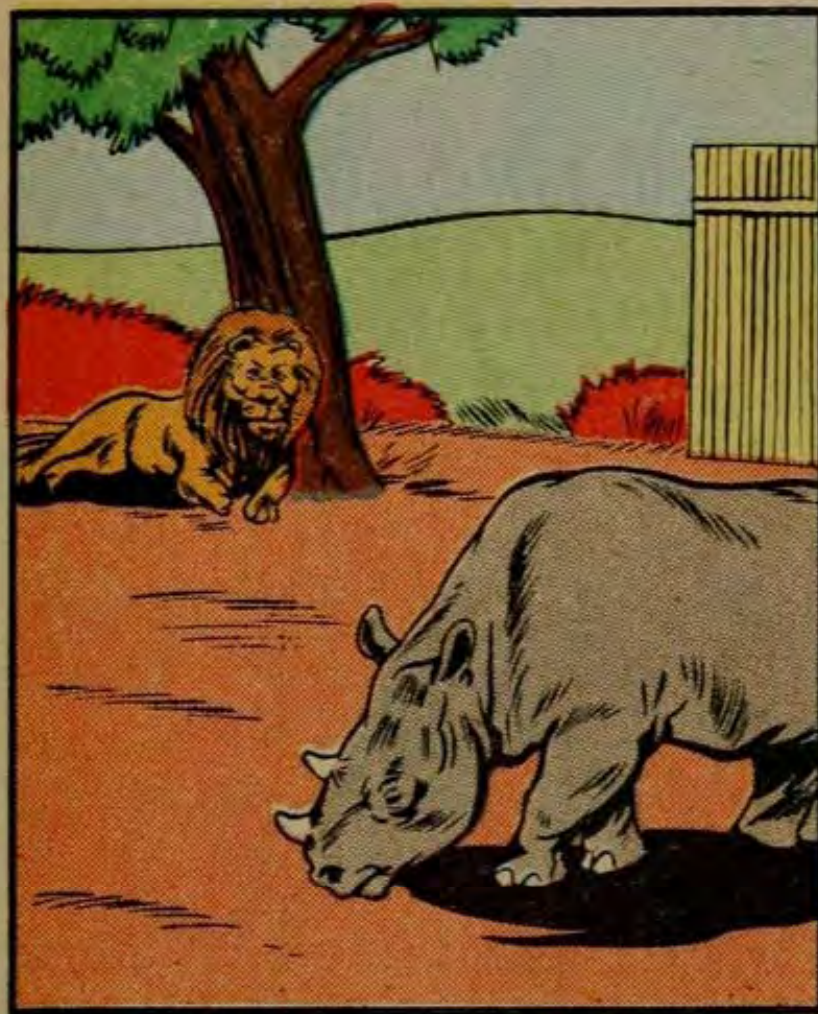


Getting Scolded



stretched out in the shade of a nearby flamboyant tree. He was gazing with tender fondness at the wrinkled infant. For some strange reason, Clarence had developed a deep affection for the gawky youngster.

Judy screamed once more, aimlessly plucked at the coarse black hair on top of her head, then scurried off, blind with jealousy. *She'd* show that baby rhino who was who at the Wameru Study Center for Animal Behavior!



Clarence Guards His Charge



"I'm afraid I'll have to put you back in your pen for the rest of the morning," said Paula as she led the rhino into a small fenced-off area and closed and locked the gate, "otherwise I won't get anything done. Besides, I have to say good-bye to Dad!"

She strode toward the main house, smiling brightly and waving at her famous father, Doctor Marsh Tracy, one of East Africa's foremost experts on wild animal diseases. "Daktari"—as he was



Back to the Rhino Pen



called by the natives—returned her wave but appeared unhappy. He had promised to make a speech at a two-day convention of conservationists in Nairobi, and he was frozen with anxiety.

“What’s the matter, Dad?”

“Nothing, honey. It’s just that I’m a little nervous!” He absent-mindedly kicked the tattered suitcase resting on the porch floor beside him.

“Don’t be silly, Dad. You’ll make a wonderful speech!”



“What’s the Matter, Dad?”



"I sure hope so," replied Doctor Tracy. "Isn't it odd? I'm not afraid to face a wounded leopard, but the thought of facing a group of fellow animal lovers makes my blood run cold!" He stooped and picked up his suitcase. "I guess I'd better shove off. I'll be back in a couple of days!"

His willowy daughter walked with him to the Land-Rover, which his assistants, Jack Dane and Mike M'Kula, had driven out of the equipment shed.

Daktari pushed his suitcase on



Daktari Loads the Land-Rover



the scuffed floor of the vehicle, and then he turned to Jack and Mike. "I'm putting Paula in charge while I'm gone," he said, winking at them.

"Oh, Dad!" protested his daughter. "Someday I'll show you that I really *can* take charge!"

Mike M'Kula grinned. "There's a lot to take charge *of*, Paula!"

"You can say *that* again!" interjected Jack. "Bini, the parrot, has fallen in love with his own reflection in a mirror. Rikki, the



Last-Minute Chatter



mongoose, is recovering from snakebite, having foolishly attacked two reptiles at the same time, and . . . .”

“And there’s a strange new disease dropping grazing animals in their tracks out on the grasslands!” added Mike.

“I can handle it all,” said Paula, shuffling her feet in the red dust.

“We *know* you can!” remarked Jack and Mike, nudging each other with their elbows.

Paula playfully stuck her tongue



Paula Protests



out at them, then cupped her hands to her lips and shouted, "Judy! Judy! Come and say good-bye to Daktari!"

There was no response from the chimpanzee, who had run off enraged a few minutes before.

"Oh, well, it'll be good to get away from that chimp for a day or two!" commented Tracy, turning the ignition key. He shifted gears, and the Land-Rover rumbled past the animal pens and cages and out of the compound.

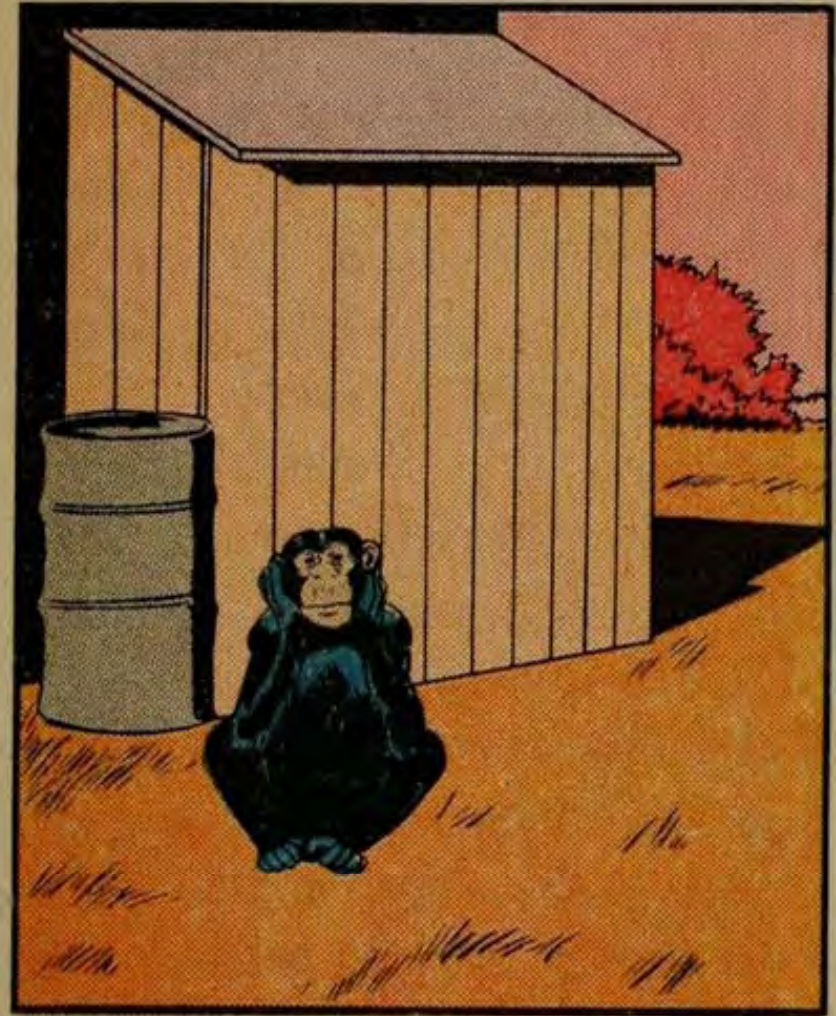


Leaving the Compound



“Good luck on your speech!” shouted Paula as the vehicle disappeared in a cloud of pink dust. She pivoted on her heels, a vexed look on her face. “Where is that chimpanzee? She thinks I’m still mad at her, just because she ate my lipstick this morning!”

While Paula walked back and forth in the compound looking for Judy, and Clarence stared fondly at what appeared to be *two* baby rhinos, Judy sulked behind the equipment shed. She could hear



Judy Sulks



Jack and Mike making their routine morning check of the cages. She didn't understand all the words, but she overheard them discussing the experiments they were conducting.

The two young men moved with swift assurance. Some animals were being tagged so that their movements could be traced out in the bush. Others were having their intelligence tested. Judy heard Mike saying something about "the critical distance, beyond which an



Mike and Jack at Work



animal feels it has nothing to fear from a nearby enemy," but the chimp didn't know what he meant.

Just then, Gordon, the study center's pet ostrich, stalked heavily around the corner of the shed and gobbled up a large insect that was scrambling across the sand. Gordon would eat *anything*. The chimp stared at the ungainly bird for a moment, and a light flashed in her brain. *Now* she'd show that rhino how to get attention!

Sensing that Judy was up to

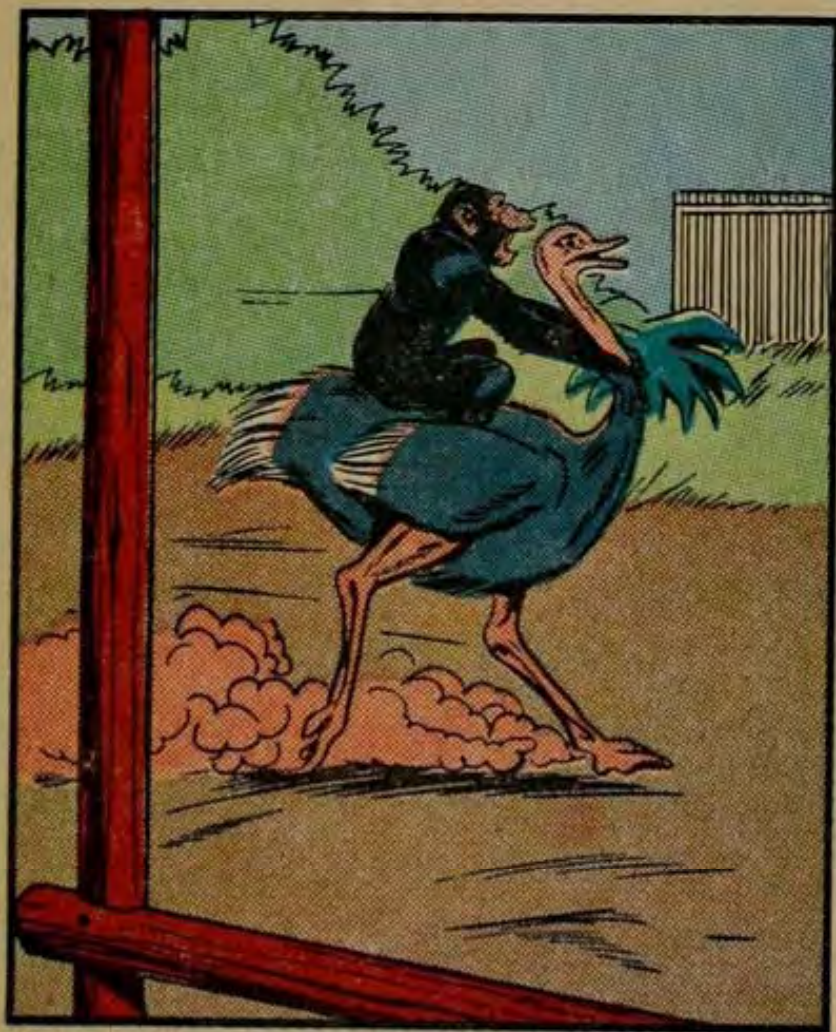


Judy Gets an Idea



something, the ostrich began to back away. But the ape's reflexes were quicker than the bird's. Leaping from the sand like a hairy jack-in-the-box, Judy clamped both hands around the bird's naked neck and swung herself into position on its feathery back. With a wild squawk, Gordon sprinted crazily around the shed and out into the compound area, trying to shake his burden loose.

"Will you look at *that!*" Jack blurted out as the odd twosome



A Wild Ride



bounced past. Judy was hanging on with both her feet as well as both hands.

Mike scratched the back of his head. "That crazy animal had better not disturb my experiments, or I'll—" He didn't finish the sentence, because his mouth sagged open. Judy was sailing through the air in front of the baby rhino's pen. The terrified ostrich had tripped over Clarence's prostrate body with such violence that the ape had lost her grip.



Gordon Trips



“Oh, oh!” muttered Jack as Judy cartwheeled over the top of the gate and into the infant’s pen. “Judy had better watch out! That rhino’s still a youngster, but his horn is developing!”

Upset because the rhino was being disturbed, normally peaceful Clarence threw back his shaggy head and roared. The sound brought every animal in the compound to its feet. Some bleated, some coughed, and others banged senselessly against the walls of



A Mighty Roar



their steel-mesh pens.

“We’ve got to get that pesty ape out of there!” exclaimed Mike as the two men dashed forward, bumping into Paula, who had come running at the sound of Clarence’s roar.

Judy shared their desire, because she wanted to get out of the pen, too. The nearsighted rhino was butting her mercilessly with his wedge-shaped head.

“Judy, what are you *doing?*” screamed Paula.



The Rhino's Self-Defense



“She’s ruining *everything!* That’s what she’s doing!” barked Jack, an angry frown crinkling his brows together. “We might as well forget continuing our intelligence tests today. The animals are too riled up.”

Judy scrambled over the top of the gate as the rhino tried to smash his head against her feet. Then, confronted by Jack, Mike, and Paula, she hung her head sheepishly and tried to slip away.

“Oh, no you don’t, young lady!”



Ashamed Chimp



Paula ordered. "You march right into that house and go to bed! You're to *stay* there the rest of the day!"

Whining like an overgrown puppy, Judy shuffled toward the house, clambered up the wooden steps, flung open the screen door, and vanished inside.

"I wish that crazy chimp would stay out of trouble," muttered Jack, still seething with irritation.

"Don't worry," Paula assured him. "She won't do anything else



Entering the House



today. I promise you!"

Mike and Jack exchanged glances. "So *this* is how you take charge when your father is gone!"

Even though she knew they were teasing her, the girl was worried. "Please don't tell Dad," Paula pleaded. "I want him to be proud of me!"

Mike grinned at her. "Okay, Paula. Just keep that chimpanzee of yours under lock and key. We don't want to see her again today!"

"Will do!" promised Paula.



"Please Don't Tell Dad!"



She stood there awkwardly for a moment or two, and then, hoping to change the subject, she added, "I guess I'll go wash the baby elephants."



"I'll Wash the Baby Elephants."





In the Main House

## CHAPTER 2

### JUDY'S REVENGE

Judy didn't feel like going to bed in the middle of the day, but since Paula had said she must, she had no choice. Yanking open the door to the bedroom she shared with the girl, the chimpanzee grumbled to herself, then jumped into the baby crib that stood next to Paula's bed,



and, finally, lay down.

Pulling a thin blanket over her face, Judy lay still for a moment, then perked up her large ears at the annoying sound of a fly buzzing in the center of the room. Sliding the frayed edge of the blanket away from her dark brown eyes, she watched the insect settle on the edge of Paula's vanity table. Not even a bug must be allowed to touch anything of Paula's!

The fly rubbed its legs together on the edge of the vanity table,



Watching a Fly



then blasted off a split second before Judy's hand slapped the tabletop with a whack so hard that one of the drawers slid out. The chimpanzee stared with interest at the contents of the drawer. What was this? A mass of red fur? Inserting a wrinkled hand in the drawer, the curious ape pulled out an auburn wig that Paula had ordered from a mail-order catalog.

Staring at her rubbery face in the mirror, Judy crammed the wig on top of her head and pulled it



Judy Finds a New Plaything



down over her ears. She then patted it this way and that, trying to arrange it in the most flattering manner. Anger surged through Judy. No matter how she twisted her features or tugged at individual hairs, she didn't resemble her mistress. The chimpanzee curled back her upper lip, grabbed Paula's comb, and brushed the front part of the wig down over her eyes.

Leading a baby giraffe behind him, Jack Dane paused in front of the house and yelped, "Good grief!



Lots of Fun

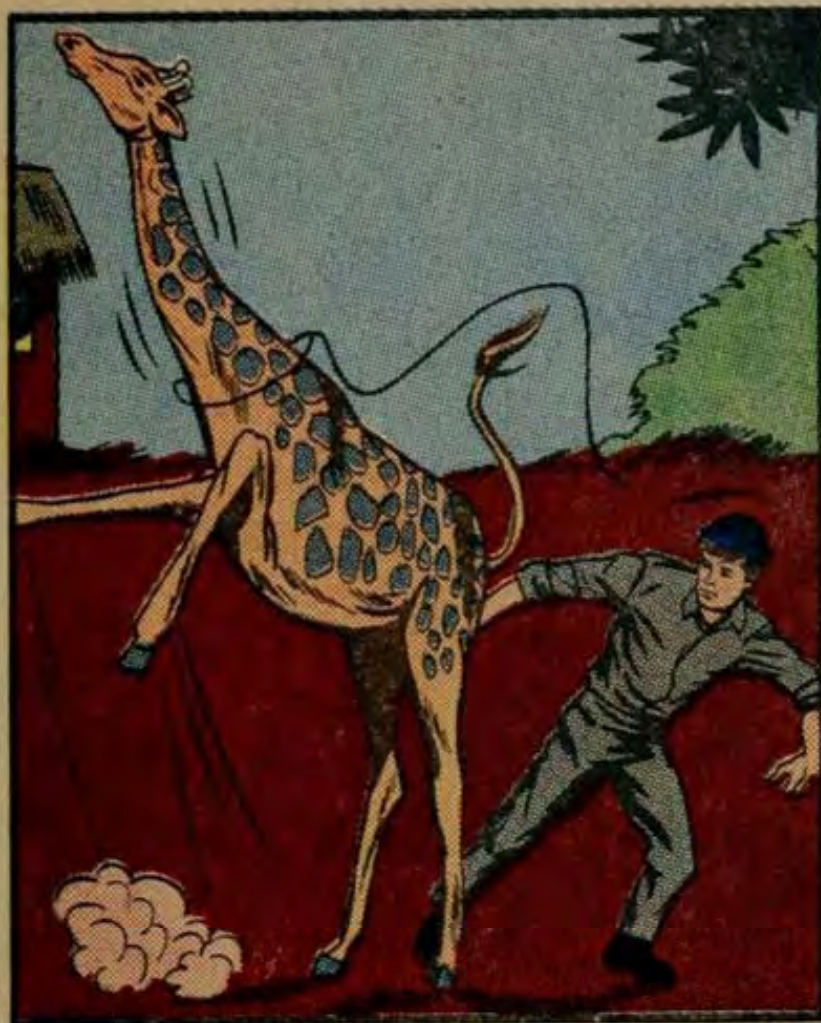


What in the world is *that?*”

Peering at him through the screen door was what appeared to be a dwarf with a pile of red hay for a head. What was even worse, shrieks of cackling laughter were causing the hay to wave back and forth.

Bug-eyed with fear, the giraffe jerked back on its leash, scrambled in a semicircle, and galloped off, knocking the young biologist flat on his back.

“Judy!” bellowed Jack, livid



Frightened Giraffe



with rage. "*That* does it! I'm going to lock you up in a cage until Doctor Tracy gets back!"

Laughter died on the chimp's lips and, pawing awkwardly at the wig, she backed away from the screen door. No one was going to lock *her* in a cage!

"Paula!" shouted Jack as he brushed the dust from his trousers. "Help me corner this confounded pet of yours!"

Paula, sudsing a baby elephant in a nearby pen, put down her



A Redheaded Chimp



bucket and brush. "Oh, Judy!" she muttered, biting her lower lip in vexation. "I'll be back in a minute!" she said to the elephant as she dashed out of the pen.

Still wearing Paula's wig, Judy raced back and forth through the house, knocking over furniture and creating havoc. She started to set a table upright, then hastily decided she'd better escape through the back door, since Jack was bounding up the front steps. Judy whimpered, tapped her lips with



Trying to Escape



her forefinger, and scrambled toward the kitchen. The native cook, preparing dinner, dropped his knife as the chimp bolted past him and slammed through the rear door.

“Which way did that little monster go?” Jack asked.

“That way!” replied the native chef, gesturing toward the compound area behind the house.

Jack poked his head out the kitchen door and watched Judy vanish around the corner of the



Startled Cook



equipment shed. His anger began to fade and a grin crept across his face. "I never saw a chimp wearing a wig before!" he chuckled.

"You mean Judy's wearing my wig?" gasped Paula, pushing her way into the kitchen.

"Yes . . . and it's very becoming!" commented Jack.

"Judy! You come back here this instant!" shouted the girl.

"Forget it!" advised the biologist. "I'll bet you a dollar we won't see that animal again for a week!



"Judy! You Come Back Here!"



At least I *hope* so!"

The chimp couldn't hear their conversation, because she was vaulting over the compound wall that separated the Wameru Study Center from the surrounding bush country. Carefully avoiding the main gate, she entered the forested area flanking the road that twisted its dusty way down the hill. A ver-  
vet monkey leaped out of her path as she seized a vine and hoisted herself into the crotch of a tree. From here she would be able to see



A Safe Hiding Place



everything without being seen in return.

Through the blistering heat of the afternoon the crestfallen chimp crouched in the tree, aimlessly plucking the wig to pieces and thinking black thoughts about the baby rhino. As evening approached and shadows lengthened, a dim plan formed in her mind. When the compound was quiet, and everyone was in bed, she would sneak back to the rhino's pen, pick the lock that fastened its gate, and drive



Judy Plots Her Revenge



the little beast away from the study center once and for all. Then she would have Paula completely to herself again.

While Judy watched the sun dip behind the horizon, Clarence, having recovered his dignity after the ostrich incident, grumbled his affection in front of the baby rhino's enclosure. He opened his mouth and yawned a mighty yawn. It was time for a sensible lion to go to bed. His wild cousins out on the veld were just waking up, preparing to



Sleepy Clarence



spend the night hunting their prey. But Clarence had little experience with that sort of thing. He had always been cared for by Daktari and had not needed to hunt his next meal.

Staring through nearsighted eyes, the young rhino watched the lion silently depart. Craning his thick neck, the object of Judy's hatred saw the blurry figure of the giant cat silently pad up the front steps of the main house. There someone opened the screen door



Clarence Climbs the Steps



and let him inside. The rhino didn't know that Clarence always spent the night in the hallway in front of Paula's bedroom door, where he snored softly like a monstrous kitten.

Somewhere out on the veld a cape hunting dog barked at the stars. The little rhino pivoted his ears. Although he couldn't see very well, his sense of hearing was keen. That's why he was completely aware of Judy's stealthy approach to the gate of his pen, and of the



Restless Rhino



chimpanzee jiggling the lock mechanism. Scuffling his feet in the straw, he backed to the rear of the enclosure. Then, to his astonishment, the gate swung open. He was free! He could roam around the compound as he saw fit! Perhaps Paula would be out there with a tasty lump of sugar in her hand!

Judy picked up a pebble and flung it at the rhino, catching him squarely on the flank. The wrinkled infant snorted, lowered his head, and charged blindly out of the pen,



Mischievous Judy



eager to trample the ape into the reddish dirt. He was still charging back and forth, unable to connect with his foe, when the chimpanzee cleverly led him out the main gate and down the dusty path that led to the bush country.



Judy Tricks the Rhino





Sound Asleep

### CHAPTER 3

## FIGHT FOR LIFE

Clarence rolled over and slapped his tail against the board floor. He was having a dream in which he, Paula, and the baby rhino were romping back and forth throughout the compound. Everything was pleasant, because Judy had been locked in a cage from which she



could not escape. Had the sleeping lion been more alert, he would have awakened with a start as the real Judy carefully tiptoed around him and silently entered Paula's bedroom.

The chimpanzee paused for a moment to contemplate Paula's sleeping figure, then quietly climbed into the baby crib and pulled the frayed blanket over her head. Now that the baby rhino was hopelessly lost and would never be able to find his way back, Paula



Judy Returns



would have to pay attention to her in the morning! Satisfied, Judy cleared her throat, ran her leathery fingers along the edge of the crib, and fell asleep.

As Judy dozed off, Clarence awakened. A tiny lizard had scurried over one of his outstretched paws, and the tickling sensation had caused him to open and blink his crossed eyes. He was about to shift his position and resume his slumbers when a thought nuzzled his brain. Why not wander out into



Clarence Wakes Up



the compound and spend the rest of the night sleeping in front of the baby rhino's pen? Shifting his weight, he stood up, shook his mane, and nosed the porch door open.

Because of his double vision, it was doubly obvious to the tame lion that the rhino pen was empty. The tawny short hair on his muscular back bristled into an upright position. *What had happened?* Quickly pressing his nose to the ground, Clarence sniffed back and



Looking for the Baby Rhino



forth in the tangled straw. He followed the scent of the baby rhino out of the pen and down the street of the compound area. There the rhino's scent mingled with that of Judy. His throat rumbled. *Judy!* Lashing his tail, Clarence bumped awkwardly against a water trough, then padded out the main gate of the study center and followed the double spoor with quivering nostrils.

When the bright morning sun bulged over the horizon, Clarence



On the Veld



had not only lost the baby rhino's meandering trail, he had also gotten himself completely lost. Lacking a sense of direction, and seeing two of everything, he now blundered back and forth in timid bewilderment, wishing he had stayed in the main house where everything was safe. Determined to make his way back to the compound, the cross-eyed lion smashed headlong into the concrete-hard surface of a giant termite nest. Stunned, Clarence moaned and sat down, then



Cross-Eyed Collision



shakily he stood up and headed in the wrong direction.

By the time the sun was directly overhead, he had fumbled through enough misadventures to last a lifetime. A herd of zebras that thundered past had veered out of his way, but they had kicked up so much dust that he coughed for twenty minutes.

Picking up the scent of impala downwind, and goaded by the first of many hunger pangs, he instinctively crept forward through a



Zebra Herd



stand of parched grass. The impala, moving across the veld with a herd of baboons, exploded in all directions when he zigzagged into view. Not realizing that he was supposed to run after them and pull one of them down, he sat there staring stupidly with his crossed eyes at the wildly leaping antelope.

The horde of chattering baboons, who had immediately scrambled up the trunks of some nearby trees when Clarence appeared, were scornful of his lack of technique.



Chattering Baboons



While the lion padded aimlessly beneath the branches on which they sat, they screamed insults at him and pelted him with a barrage of broken twigs. Terrified, he shuffled off, only to bump headlong into a herd of elephants who were wending their way toward the Wameru Game Reserve's north water hole.

A lion with normal vision avoids elephants, but Clarence's only experience with the thick-skinned beasts had been with baby elephants in the compound. Those



A Barrage of Twigs



baby elephants liked to squirt water at him when Paula was giving them a bath. Maybe one of these elephants would squirt water on him. It would be a welcome relief from the fierce midday heat! Anticipating this wet refreshment, Clarence plunged forward between their slowly moving, pillar-like legs.

A giant bull elephant, outraged at this conduct, curled back his trunk and trumpeted. Then, fanning his sail-like ears back and



Outraged Elephant



forth, he thrust his enormous, yellow-white tusks at the bewildered cat. The other pachyderms stopped in their tracks to see what would happen. Staring with their tiny eyes, they watched Clarence hastily flounder off through the grass.

As the afternoon progressed Clarence's spirits sank to rock bottom. Nothing had gone right since he had left the Wameru Study Center for Animal Behavior. He was parched with thirst but had no idea where the water hole was. He



Clarence Is Frightened Away



was hungry but there was no food. All thoughts of the baby rhino had been erased from his mind. He just wanted to go home.

Heaving a mournful sigh, Clarence sat down next to an empty warthog hole and stared blankly ahead. Then the wind shifted and his sensitive nostrils picked up the strong odor of fresh meat. There was another smell, too—that of fellow lions.

Tottering to his feet, Clarence slowly plodded forward through



Lost Lion



tufts of long brown grass, relying on his nose rather than his unreliable eyes. He hoped with every cell in his weary body that his dilating nostrils were leading him to a much-needed meal. As he increased his pace, the odor grew stronger and stronger and finally became so overwhelming that he started to run.

Failing to check his speed in time, Clarence smashed headlong into the family of feeding lions, unwittingly scattering them in all



Clarence Crashes a Feast



directions. So intent had they been on devouring the young wildebeest they had pulled down, they had been totally unaware of his stampeding approach.

Clarence caromed clumsily against the yielding carcass, then did an unplanned flip-flop that landed him on his back. Regaining his stance, he turned to join the startled feeders. Shaking his shaggy head back and forth in a friendly manner, he started to fill his empty stomach.



An Awkward Stumble



They fell on him with a fury he had never before encountered. He didn't know that wild lions were hostile to strangers. Even if he had known, his hunger still would have led him into the same situation. And now cross-eyed Clarence was fighting helplessly for his very life.



Hostile Relatives





Staring Chimp

## CHAPTER 4

### SEARCH WITHOUT A TRAIL

Paula Tracy awakened at dawn with a tingling sensation that someone was staring fixedly at the back of her blond head. Rolling over in bed, she found herself gazing into her pet chimpanzee's liquid brown eyes.

"Judy! I ought to paddle you for



all the trouble you caused yesterday! And where's my wig?"

The chimp chewed nervously on the edge of her tattered baby blanket.

Daktari's daughter sat up in bed. "I can tell that you feel guilty about something! What have you done *now*, you imp?"

Trying to change the subject, the ape turned her head to one side and whined piteously.

"I think Jack is right. Maybe we'd *better* lock you up in a cage



"Where's My Wig?"



until Dad returns from Nairobi!"

Judy's face assumed an expression of such sorrow that Paula laughed and relented. "All right, young lady, I'll forgive you this time, but no more tricks! You can redeem yourself by helping me feed some of the baby animals before Mike and Jack have breakfast!"

The chimpanzee clapped her hands together while her mistress quickly slipped into her khaki slacks, shirt, and bush boots.



"No More Tricks!"



“Wake Clarence, Judy. He can make our morning rounds with us!”

Opening the bedroom door, the chimp peered into the deserted hallway. The cross-eyed lion was not there.

When Paula realized Clarence wasn't slumbering in his usual place by the door to her bedroom, she remarked, “He must be down by the baby rhino's pen. We'll pick him up there!” Taking the strangely reluctant chimp by the hand, she



Looking for Clarence



tiptoed out the front door of the silent house, descended the wooden steps, and headed toward the rhino's pen.

"Judy! The baby rhino's *gone!*" The chimpanzee made an effort to look surprised, but failed miserably.

Daktari's willowy daughter wasn't a detective, but it took her less than a minute to piece together what must have happened the previous night. The pen's simple lock mechanism—obviously picked



The Lock Was Picked!



apart by the ape—was lying in the trampled straw. The overlapping footprints of Clarence and the baby rhino led down the reddish dirt of the narrow street toward the main entrance to the animal research compound. Filled with anxiety, Paula released the chimpanzee's hand and followed the fading footprints as far as the top of the dusty road that twisted down the hill.

Judy nibbled on her fingernails as the girl exclaimed, "I'll punish you later for what you've done, but



On the Trail



first we have to find Clarence! He'll get *lost* out there in the bush!"

With her hair tumbling over her face, Paula spun on her heels, sprinted back through the compound, and bounded up the steps to the main house. "I must call Officer Hedley on the radiophone!" she gasped, hardly able to speak because she was breathing so hard.

"Officer Hedley here!" stated the clipped British voice as the worried girl flipped several switches, tapped the battered microphone,



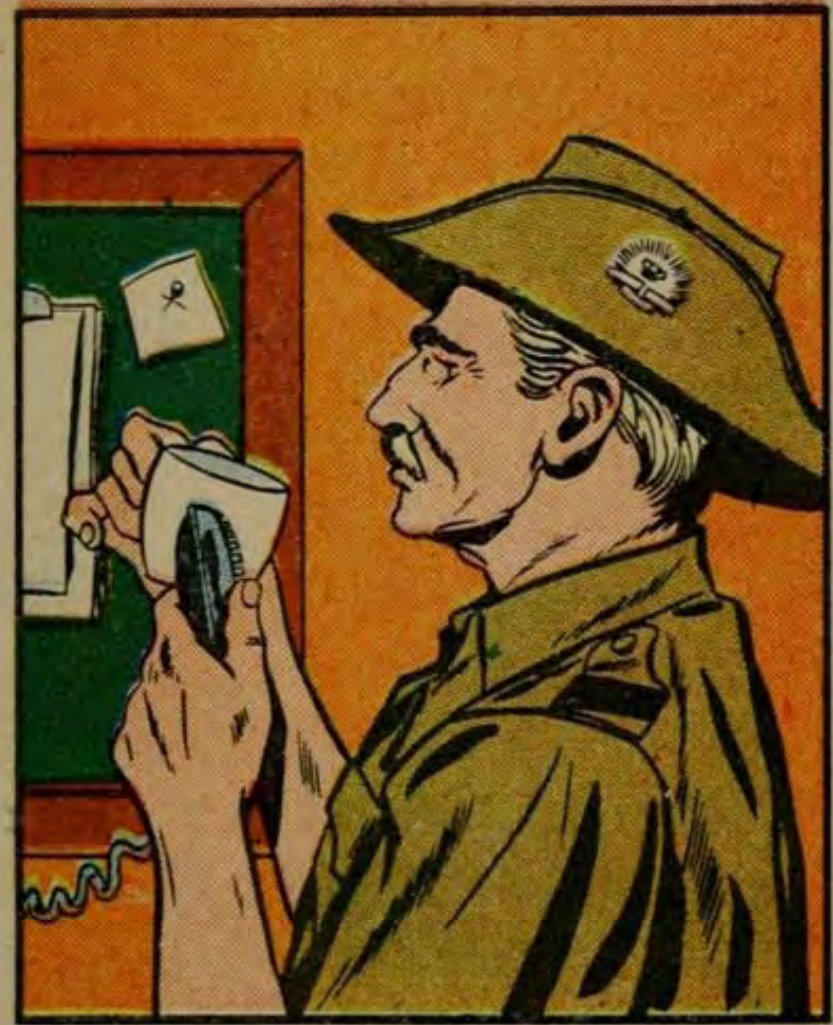
At the Radiophone



and established contact with the district station at Wampwepwe. "Can I help you, Paula? Is anything wrong?"

"Yes!" replied the seventeen-year-old in an agonized tone. "Judy let the baby rhino loose last night and Clarence apparently followed him out into the bush!"

A slight pause indicated that Hedley was putting down his cup of early morning tea and thoughtfully stroking his sandy moustache. "I say, that cross-eyed pet



Officer Hedley



lion of yours *will* have a rough time, won't he?"

"He'll *die* out there!" cried the girl. "He's more helpless than a newborn kitten!"

"You'd better have Mike, Jack, or your Dad drive out and try to find him!" suggested Hedley, his words almost drowned out by static.

"Mike and Jack are still asleep, and Dad is in Nairobi!" exclaimed Paula. "*I'll* take the jeep and see if I can find him!"



Paula Seeks Hedley's Help



"You shouldn't go out on the veld alone!" advised Hedley, a note of alarm creeping into his voice. "Even though it is a game reserve, and some of the animals are quite tame, it can be extremely dangerous! Whatever you do, return to the compound before dark!"

"Will do!" said Paula, clicking off the mechanism as Hedley remarked, "Over and out!"

"Come on, Judy," Paula commanded, "let's get the jeep and take off!"



The Search Begins



The shamefaced chimp followed the girl into the cool shadows of the equipment shed.

“Sit right there in the front seat!” remarked Daktari’s daughter. “I’d better go back to the house and get a rifle!”

Had Paula been less upset, she might have noticed that the vehicle’s tool box was missing. Jack had taken it the previous day when he tuned up the Land-Rover for Doctor Tracy.

“I think I’ll head for the water



Waiting for Paula



hole first," commented Paula to her little companion as she carefully placed the gun on the rear seat. "If Clarence is thirsty, chances are he'll go there!" The half smile that formed on her tan face immediately vanished. "I keep forgetting. Clarence hasn't the slightest idea where the water hole is, but let's look there anyway."

As Paula drove through the compound's gate and started to nose the jeep down the hill, Mike M'Kula ran down the steps and



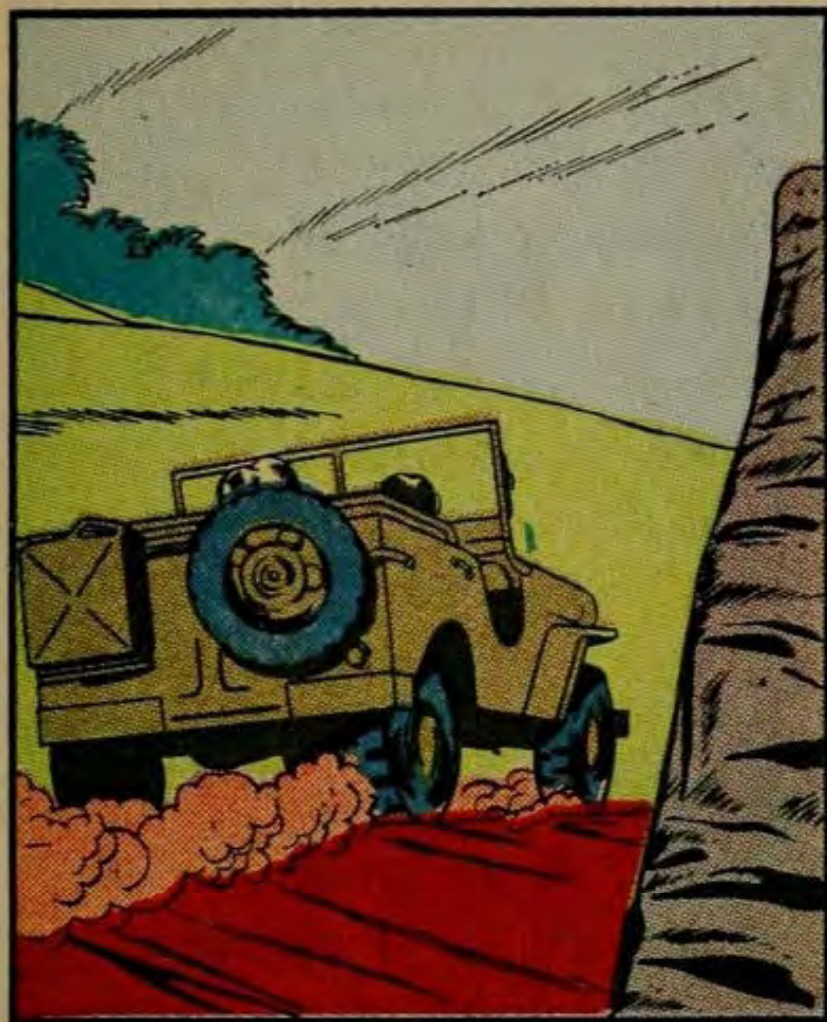
Mike Calls to Paula



shouted, "Hey, Paula! Where are you going?" The girl shifted gears and pretended she didn't hear him. Mike wouldn't approve of her going out on the veld alone, even though a loaded rifle was resting on the backseat.

The giant-size termite nest against which Clarence had bumped his head was still there, but the cross-eyed lion's footprints were no longer visible.

"As I remember, the north water hole is over that way," murmured



Passing the Termite Nest



Paula to herself, swinging the jeep's steering wheel so that the lumbering little vehicle changed direction. A herd of cape buffalo, standing stomach-deep in the grass, watched her weave past. A cow buffalo covered with ancient scars snorted warily, but the rest of the herd paid only passing attention to the fair-haired girl and to the frightened chimpanzee cowering beside her on the front seat. They had seen the game reserve's jeep before and knew it was neither



Cape Buffalo



dangerous nor destructive.

To Paula's bitter disappointment, Clarence was not at the water hole. Because the midday sun was literally scorching the area, she momentarily parked the jeep in the shade of an acacia tree and carefully examined the large body of water. "I've never understood why they call this particular drinking spot a water *hole*," commented the girl. "It's really a small lake, complete with crocodiles and hippos!"



At the Water Hole



As if to emphasize the truth of what she was saying, several hippos surfaced and yawned. Suddenly aware of the jeep, they turned their enormous heads and stared at the girl and the chimp with small, wet eyes.

"Those are all females," said Paula to Judy. "The males always keep to themselves."

The chimpanzee nodded, pursed her lips thoughtfully, then pointed one of her long arms to the left.

"You think we should look for



Yawning Hippo



Clarence in *that* direction?"

Judy nodded her head vigorously.

"I suppose that direction is as good as another," answered Paula.

They searched through hilly country frequented by rhinos. They painstakingly explored ravines in which baboons were foraging for lizards. They drove carefully through sparsely wooded areas, where giraffes nibbled leaves from the tops of trees. But no matter where they looked, they found no



The Search Continues



trace of Clarence. Finally, vultures circling in the sky caught the girl's attention.

"Look over there, Judy!" said Paula as several of the huge birds began to spiral to the ground in the distance. "That means something's been killed!" Cold fear gripped her. "I hope it isn't poor Clarence."



**"Something's Been Killed!"**





An Accident

## CHAPTER 5

### TRAPPED

Judy shrieked, Paula gasped, and the left front tire of the jeep seemed to explode as they accidentally rammed into the warthog hole Clarence had sat next to earlier in the afternoon. While the vehicle lurched to one side and the girl struggled to regain control,



the startled inhabitant of the underground den burst into the open as though shot from a cannon.

“Are you all right, Judy?” asked Paula anxiously as the jeep settled halfway over the hole.

The chimp flung her arms around the girl and screamed. Then she abruptly closed her mouth and stared at the warthog, who was dashing around hysterically in all directions, its short tail straight up in the air.

“I’m afraid we’ll have to remove



Unhurt But Frightened



that damaged wheel and replace it with the spare!" exclaimed Paula as she jumped out of the jeep in order to see how much harm had been done. The slim blond pointed to the emergency wheel positioned above the bumper at the rear of the vehicle. "See if you can twist that wheel off, Judy, while I take the gun and see what those hideous vultures are up to!"

While the ape tugged at the metal fasteners with her powerful fingers, Paula removed the loaded



Judy Tries to Help



gun from the rear seat, carefully cocked it, and gingerly stalked toward the vultures. She hoped against hope it wasn't the cross-eyed lion they were feasting on.

One of the scavenger birds became aware of her approach and spread its tremendous black wings in warning. The others abruptly raised their naked heads from the skeleton and turned to stare at her with hard, expressionless eyes. Then they hopped back a few paces, their cruel beaks gaping open.



Paula Stalks the Vultures



Three spotted hyenas that had been skulking on the outskirts of the feeding flock also pulled back, their teeth bared in sullen defiance.

Paula breathed a sigh of relief. What the birds had been pecking at was the skeleton of a young wildebeest a pride of lions had probably pulled down. Clarence might still be alive. No other clusters of feeding vultures were observable anywhere. If Clarence was still alive he might respond to her signal. She would fire three shots.



A Wildebeest Skeleton



The scavengers scrambled about in confusion as the grim-faced girl's first shot shattered the air. Then there was silence. The gun had jammed.

"Darn it!" exclaimed Paula, vainly pounding the bullet chamber with her fist. "Wouldn't you know something like this would happen!" She turned on her heels and walked back toward the jeep. The vultures and hyenas returned to their bones.

Under the watchful eye of the bewildered warthog, who observed



A Single Gunshot



the proceedings from a safe distance, Judy had succeeded in removing the emergency wheel from the jeep. She was trying to roll it toward the damaged front wheel when Paula walked up.

“Good girl, Judy! I’ll get the tool box that’s on the floor in the back-seat and we’ll take off the front wheel.” Paula’s plans fell apart. The tool box was not in its customary place, nor was the jeep’s walkie-talkie. Both were apparently still back in the equipment shed.



Helpful Chimp

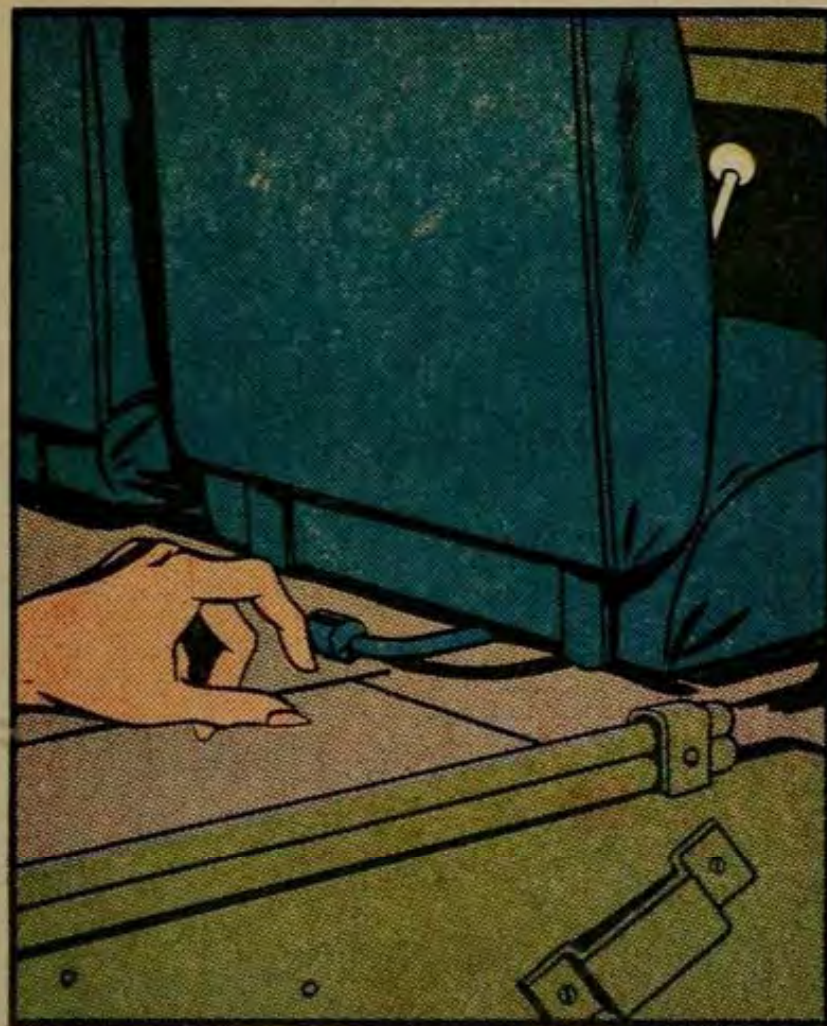


Now they could neither repair the damage nor contact Jack or Mike at the compound. Or, *could* they change the wheel without tools? There *was* a lug wrench under the front seat.

“Judy, if I crouch down in the warthog hole beneath the damaged wheel, do you think you could push the jeep forward a little, so that this wheel hangs free?”

The ape shook her head in confusion.

“Look, Judy, I’ll wriggle down



Finding a Lug Wrench



into the hole like this." Daktari's daughter slid into the cramped den. "Then, if you give the jeep a push from behind, this useless wheel will be hanging in midair just above me. If both of us work hard, we *may* be able to remove the wheel without a bumper jack."

The chimp nodded, shuffled to the rear of the jeep, and pushed against it with one of her hairy shoulders. The vehicle didn't budge.

"Try again, girl!"

Once more, Judy grunted and



Hard Work



shoved against the stubborn device. The jeep suddenly lurched forward, tilted to one side, and settled on top of the hole, trapping Paula inside.

"Pull it back, Judy! I'm trapped in here!"

The note of frozen terror in the girl's voice stood the frightened chimpanzee's hair on end. Seizing the rear bumper of the jeep, Judy pulled back until her muscles knotted and bulged, while Paula strained upward from inside the



Trapped!



dusty den. Their efforts were useless. They might as well have tried to move a glacier.

“Judy, go back to the compound somehow and get help!”

The chimp put her fingers to her twitching lips and whimpered. She knew her way across the veld because she had crisscrossed it many times in the Land-Rover with Dak-tari. But there were wild lions out there—not tame ones, like Clarence. And there were leopards as well as cheetahs who could run like



Whimpering Chimp



the wind! If they were hungry, she might end up as their evening meal!

“Go, Judy! *Hurry!*”

Still whimpering softly, the chimpanzee turned her back on the lopsided jeep and scrutinized the horizon to get her bearings. If she remembered correctly, the giant termite nest was over *there*, and the Wameru Study Center was only a mile or so beyond it. If she could get there before dark, she might be safe!



Getting Her Bearings



“Judy! Please! *Go!*”

The ape screamed and shuffled off as fast as she could, occasionally tottering forward on her crooked legs, more often running on all fours, resting her weight on her knuckles.

“*I must dig my way out of here,*” gasped Paula, her hair tumbling over her dirt-streaked face. She struggled to raise her arms, but couldn’t. The deep, slanting hole was wide enough for a small wart-hog to squeeze in and out of, but



On the Way Home



much too narrow for a human—even though that human was only a seventeen-year-old girl. Her frantic efforts only caused her to slide deeper into the den, whose dirt walls pressed tightly against her shoulders and elbows. Digging sideways into the walls with her fingers, the girl found herself sobbing helplessly.

Several hundred yards away, the last of the vultures heavily flapped off, leaving the wildebeest skeleton smooth and clean. Only the three



Trying to Dig Out



spotted hyenas remained sniffing aimlessly about, their tails between their legs. Although they weighed 150 pounds each, they were normally afraid of their own shadows. Too cowardly to attack healthy animals, they survived by bolting down the scraps that were left when lions walked away from their "kills." Occasionally, when their hunger pangs were intense, they would kill a baby animal or attack a sleeping native. At the moment there were no baby animals or



Hungry Hyenas



sleeping natives in the vicinity. They were about to trot off, when one of them perked up his ears. He had heard a muffled sob in the direction of the warthog hole.

Staring upward from her cramped position in the warthog den, Paula could see nothing but a bit of sky and a portion of the greasy underside of the crippled jeep. It seemed to her that the light in the sky was fading, which meant that it would soon be evening and then dark. If Judy didn't get to the



Paula Stares at the Fading Light



compound before sundown, Paula would be trapped in this dirty prison all night. Biting her lower lip to keep from sobbing uncontrollably, she was about to close her eyes in despair. Just then a grotesque, doglike face pushed its way into the opening.



A Frightening Face





Hedley Pays a Visit

## CHAPTER 6

### LAST CHANCE

With loud grinding sounds, Officer Hedley shifted his jeep's ancient gears and wheeled through the front gate of the Wameru Study Center for Animal Behavior. All day he had been deeply concerned about Paula's frantic radio message and wondered whether or



not she had found Clarence or the baby rhino. Hedley would have dropped by sooner but had been forced to spend the day tracking down some Kikuyu poachers.

“I say there, lads! Did Paula have any luck?”

Jack Dane and Mike M’Kula leaped off the veranda of the main house and ran up to the battered vehicle.

“What do you mean, Officer Hedley?” asked Mike.

“Paula isn’t here,” Jack said.



Jack and Mike Rush Out

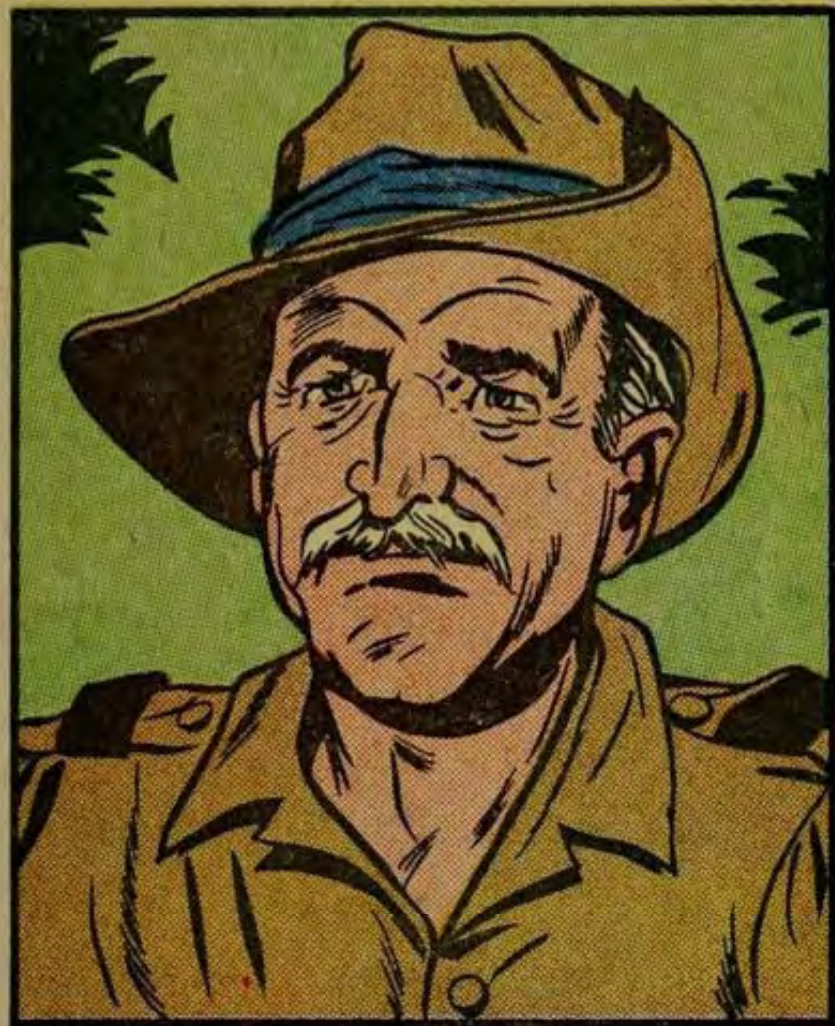


“She took off in one of the jeeps this morning without telling us where she was going. Mike called to her as she drove off with Judy, but Paula apparently didn’t hear him.”

“Didn’t you try to contact her?” Hedley continued.

“We haven’t been *able* to contact her, because she accidentally left the walkie-talkie behind!”

The British officer’s face clouded and his sandy moustache twitched. “You mean she’s still out there on the veld, now that it’s getting



Hedley Is Concerned



darker every minute?"

"We assumed she drove to Nairobi to surprise her dad and listen to his speech!" interjected Mike.

"What about Clarence and the baby rhino?"

"Oh, the baby rhino came back around noon as though nothing had happened! We locked him up in his pen again. Now that you mention it, I haven't seen Clarence all day!" said Jack, knitting his brow.

"We've got to go out in that blasted bush and *find* her!" blurted



"I Haven't Seen Clarence All Day!"



Hedley. "Is the other jeep still in the equipment garage?"

"Yes, it is!" answered Mike, already starting to move in that direction.

"You chaps head southeast across the veld, and I'll head northeast," instructed the game warden. "I'll keep in radio contact with you as we search. Be sure to have your brightest headlamps on. If there's a searchlight attached to that jeep, *use it!*"

"Will do!" exclaimed Jack,

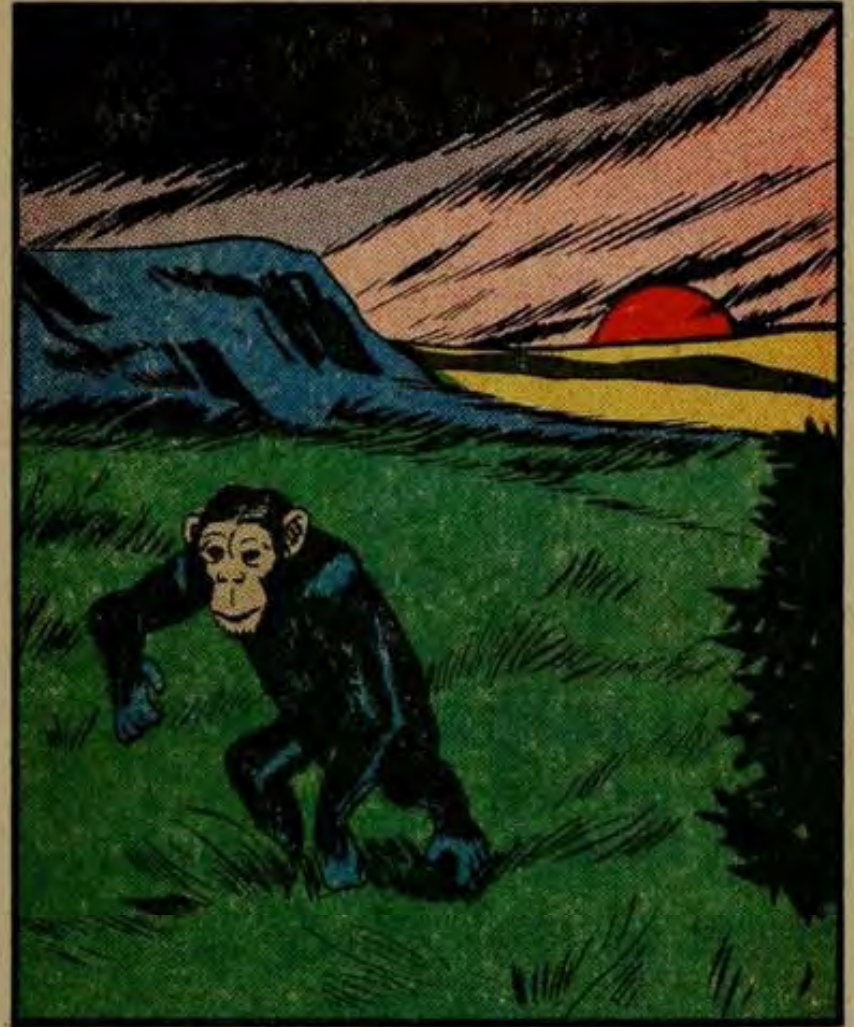


"You Chaps Head Southeast."



sprinting after Mike.

As the two jeeps roared out of the study center and started to search the veld in the thickening dusk, Judy was making rapid progress toward the compound. She had never been so terrified in her short, mischievous life. At the approach of darkness, the flesh eaters who prowl the grasslands from sunset to sunrise had begun to cough and grunt. Each time a leopard signaled to its mate, the chimpanzee's heart flip-flopped wildly.



Terrified Chimp



A group of wary hartebeests (antelopes that look like underfed, long-faced cows) snorted and skittered to one side as Judy plunged through their midst and paused to rest at the base of the giant termite nest where Clarence had banged his head. The chimp heaved a sigh of relief and patted the base of the nest with weary affection. If this was the right termite nest, the Wameru compound was only a mile or so away. Filling her lungs with cool night air, she was ready



A Familiar Landmark



to sprint the rest of the way to her home, when her ears detected the unmistakable grinding of a jeep's gears.

"Blast this machine!" barked Officer Hedley as he quickly shifted gears and forced his shuddering vehicle to climb a bumpy knoll one hundred yards from the termite nest. Although the jeep's probing lights thrust up and down like two skinny fingers, they failed to reveal Judy's wildly leaping figure as the chimp bounded back and



Hedley Crosses the Veld



forth, waved her arms, and screamed. The jeep rolled on into the night, the temporary rattling of its gear box drowning out the ape's disappointed shrieks.

No matter, thought Judy to herself, her lower lip trembling, Jack and Mike would be at the compound! If she screamed and gestured in such a way that they understood what she meant, they would drive her back to rescue the frightened girl from her narrow prison in the warthog hole! The



Unnoticed Signals



chimp scratched her right earlobe, breathed deeply again, and scuttled forward into the inky blackness.

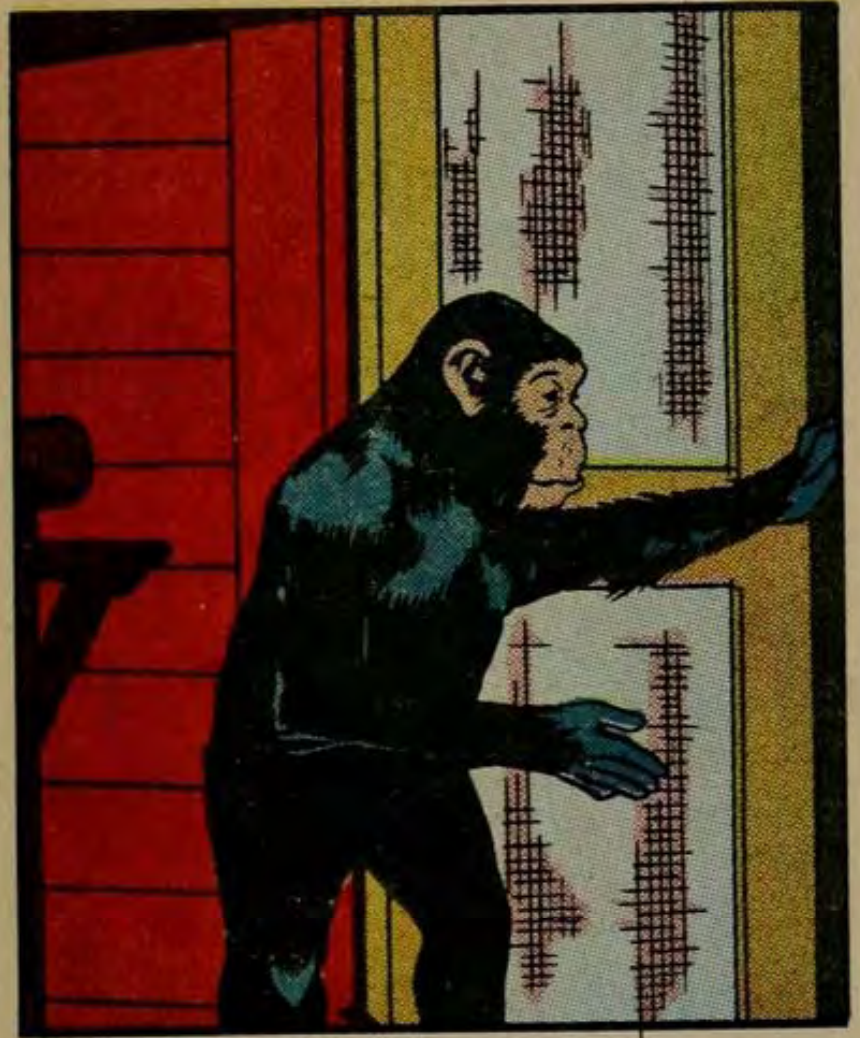
Fifteen minutes later, her arms and legs aching and her panting lungs about to burst, Judy shuffled down the dimly lit street of the deserted compound, dragging her wrists on the ground. She noticed that the baby rhino was back in its pen, but at the moment she did not care. She had to find Jack and Mike! When she realized that they were not there, she pushed open



Deserted Compound



the screen door on the porch of the main house, staggered into Paula's bedroom, and flopped facedown on the crib.



Judy Despairs





The Hyena Closes In

## CHAPTER 7

### NIGHT OF TERROR

Paula crinkled her nose in disgust and turned her head to one side as the hyena's rancid breath blasted her tear-streaked face. Though she had been struggling to crawl *out* of the warthog hole, she now hunched her shoulders together and shrank back as far as she



could. "Ugh!" she gasped, distaste mingling with terror as the hideous scavenger panted in anticipation.

The mangy beast strained its head and neck as far as it could through the partially blocked opening beneath the tilted jeep. It knew the girl was helpless and intended to kill her. "*Judy!*" screamed Paula as the slaver's mouth snapped together a hairsbreadth from her neck.

Realizing that it would have to



Watching Its Prey



dig through some of the surrounding soil with its forepaws if it wanted to drag the girl from the hole, the frustrated hyena whined for a moment and sniffed at its two companions, whose lurking silhouettes loomed in the dusk. The other beasts whined in reply, then the three hyenas scrabbled at the dirt simultaneously, scooping back clods of earth as they worked their way downward toward their trembling victim.

“Daddy!” moaned Paula as the



Enlarging the Warthog Hole



lip of the hole caved in.

With a grunt and a whoosh as air spurted from their deflating lungs, the three hyenas arched violently upward. The irritated wart-hog, who had been watching everything from a safe distance, was unable to contain his pent-up fury any longer. This was *his* den that they were destroying with their ridiculous digging! Slamming into the startled hyenas like a barrel-shaped rocket, the sinewy hog jerked his face back and forth, his



Swoosh!



tusks ripping their flanks.

After regaining their footing, the stunned hyenas wheeled about to snap at the enraged warthog. The odor of his anger was so overpowering that they hesitated, then hastily retreated to the relative safety of a nearby hill, tails tucked between their short hind legs. Perhaps—after they had regained their breath and licked their wounds—the warthog would trot away again. Then they'd slink back to the trapped girl.



Defending His Den



The warthog, astounded at his own courage, snorted with self-satisfaction. He had never dared to attack a hyena before. However, even the most timid coward can be pushed just so far! Walking stiff-legged around the tilted jeep that squatted over the caved-in lip of his den, his nostrils suddenly informed him that something was still in the hole. If he wasn't mistaken, that was a human scent, and he was deathly afraid of humans. He was wondering what to



Inspecting the Jeep



do when his mind was made up for him. A rumbling cough from the darkness told him a lion was approaching. Having no desire to tangle with the king of beasts, the plucky warthog scrambled off as fast as his legs would move, and the hyenas melted into the night.

Paula slowly worked her way free of the dark hole's caved-in dirt which had been blinding her. At last she discovered she could crawl out from under the jeep. Suddenly she felt her heart turn over like an



Free at Last



ice cube in a glass of water. First three starving hyenas, then a furious warthog, and now a prowling lion! She had heard that, when mauled by a lion, one at first feels no pain because of the severe shock. The girl had always scoffed at this old wives' tale. Now, she realized, she was going to find out for herself.

Invisible in the dark, the lion cautiously sniffed one of the jeep's battered fenders. Unaware—because the night breeze was blowing



Lion on the Prowl



in the opposite direction—that the frightened girl was crouching in the hole, the enormous animal flopped heavily on the ground and stretched out. Instead of coughing or roaring, it heaved a rumbling sigh and whimpered.

Breathlessly, Paula waited for the carnivore to discover her, but apparently the animal had fallen asleep. Overcome with bone-weary fatigue, the girl closed her eyelids and edged off into fitful slumber in spite of herself.



Settled for the Night



Daktari's daughter awakened with a start. She was miserably cramped and sore from head to toe. She noticed that the hot morning sun was already evaporating the dew on the grass. She also noticed, with alarm, that the lion was still there. Aware of her stirring, the tawny beast slowly turned its shaggy head and stared at her blankly with its crossed eyes. Then it painfully stood up.

"*Clarence!* Oh, you great big, beautiful alley cat!"



It's Clarence!



The wounded animal lurched forward and licked her forehead with his tongue.

“Don’t, Clarence, your tongue is like sandpaper! Oh, you poor kitten . . . you’re hurt! Did you get into a fight with some other lions?”

Clarence nodded his head as though he understood, and sneezed. Nothing else mattered, now that he had found Paula again!

“I’ll get you bandaged up as soon as I return to the compound!” promised the girl, pity surging



Happy Reunion



through her. She scrambled out of the hole, ducked from under the jeep, and flung her arms around her pet's neck.

Even in its relief, Paula's mind jumped ahead to the work still to be done on the jeep.

"Well, Clarence, the sooner we fix this wheel, the sooner we can get back to the compound."

Glancing quickly at the jeep, Paula noted that it would now be easier to position the spare wheel on the axle, because the warthog



A Warm Hug



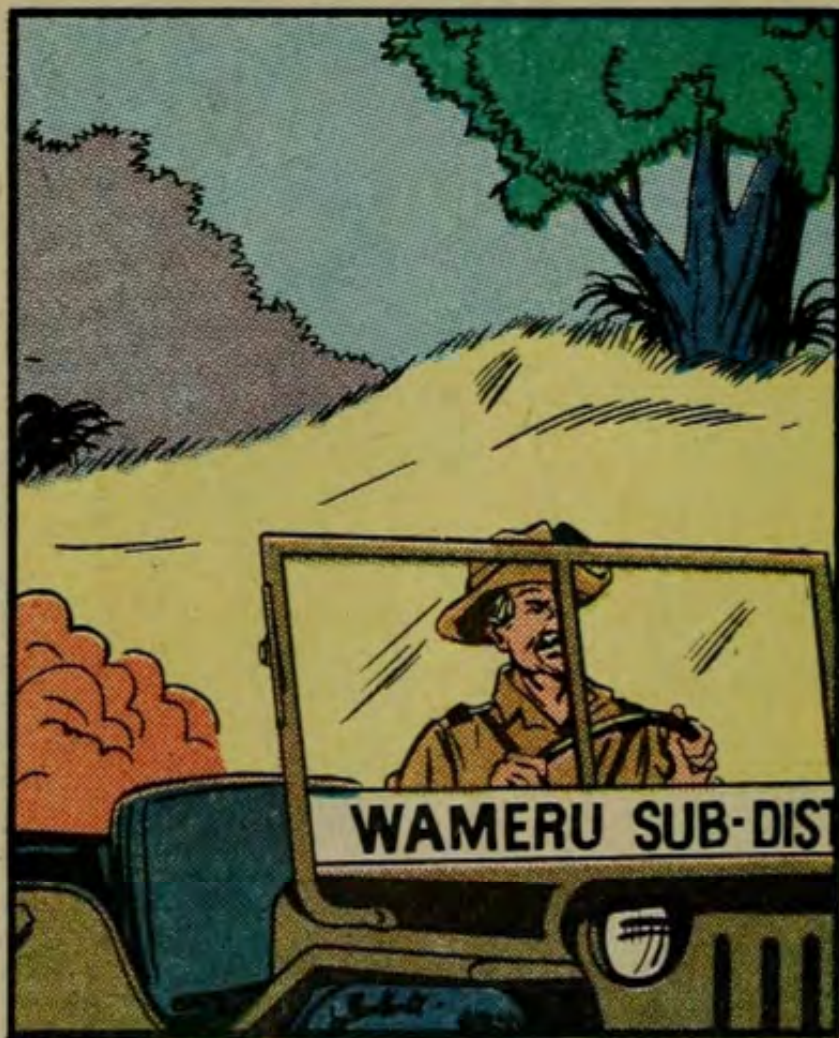
den had been made considerably larger by the hyenas' digging.

With a sigh of determination, she picked up the lug wrench and proceeded to remove the damaged wheel.



Repairing the Jeep





Abandoning the Search

## CHAPTER 8

### HOME AGAIN

With a heavy heart, Hedley absentmindedly ground the gears, swung his dented jeep around, and headed back in the direction of the Wameru Study Center for Animal Behavior. Though he had searched the veld all night—always in radio contact with Jack Dane and Mike



M'Kula—he had found no trace of Paula or Clarence. Both had probably perished. Raising his canteen to his dry lips, he was about to drain what remained of its contents when he noticed a cloud of dust on the horizon. “I say, I wonder what *that* could be,” he murmured, lowering the canteen again.

Shifting the stick shift into low gear in order to negotiate some bumpy ridges, Hedley gunned his protesting vehicle forward at top speed. He was determined to catch



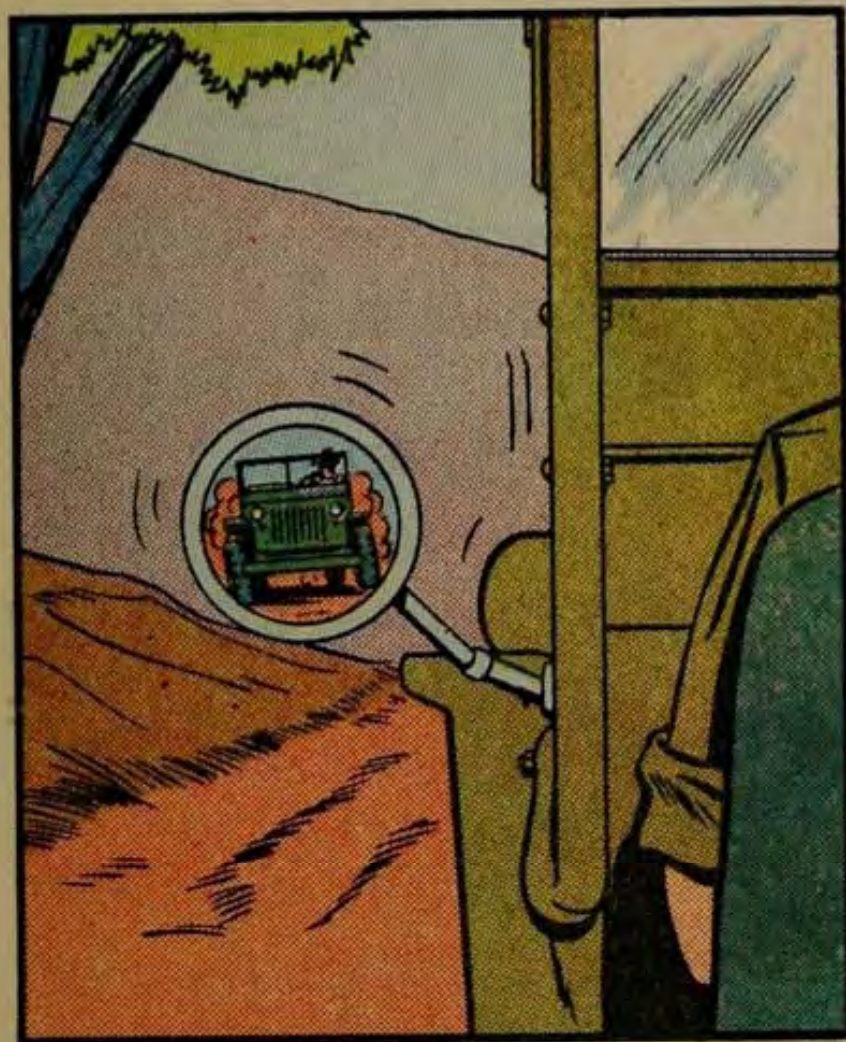
Hedley Pauses



up to that cloud of dust that seemed to be heading in the same direction that he was. "By Jove!" he blurted when he discovered that it was another jeep.

Aware of the frenzied honking behind her, Paula glanced into the rearview mirror of her jeep and broke into a broad grin. It was so good to see a friendly face again! As her vehicle zigzagged crazily through a clump of thorn bushes, she brought it to a temporary stop.

"Miss Tracy, where have you



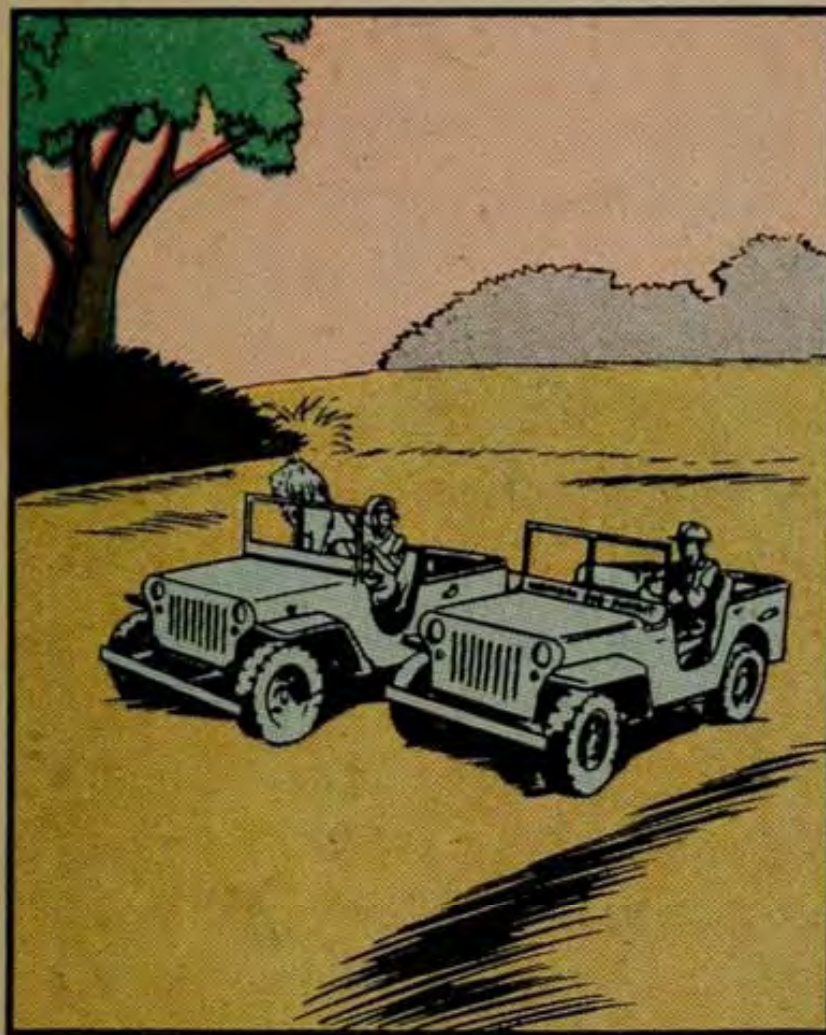
Being Followed



been all night?" queried Hedley, pulling up beside her and twitching his sandy moustache. Clarence, who was sitting gingerly on the front seat beside Paula, turned and stared at him blankly.

Her face caked with red dust, Paula replied, "Officer Hedley, you wouldn't *believe* it!"

"I dare say I *wouldn't!*" ventured the game warden, noticing her bedraggled appearance. "However," he continued, lightly tapping the tip of his sunburned nose with



On the Way Home



the tip of his forefinger, "I'll be most interested in hearing all about it."

"Just as soon as we get back, get Clarence patched up, and I can get cleaned up, I'll give you a blow-by-blow account," Paula replied.

Clarence continued to stare at the dumbfounded officer in his cross-eyed manner, then grunted and impatiently turned his head away. Human chitchat bored him. Besides, his wounds were throbbing, and he was anxious to get



An Absentminded Nose Tap



back to the civilized comforts of the main house.

In the unexpected silence of the normally noisy compound area, Doctor Marsh Tracy stepped out of the Land-Rover and placed his battered suitcase on the ground. A slight frown creased his forehead. Except for native assistants doing routine cage-cleaning chores at the far end of the dirt street, the study center seemed completely deserted. In his momentary puzzlement he forgot how successful his speech



Daktari Returns



had been in Nairobi. His sweeping glance paused on the front porch of the main house as its screen door opened and Judy shuffled out.

Uttering piercing shrieks, the chimp bounded down the wooden steps, did a forward flip-flop, and flung herself into startled Daktari's arms.

"Where is everybody, Judy?" asked the animal doctor, smilingly turning his face to one side to avoid the chimpanzee's kisses. The ape curled back her upper lip, shrieked



"Where Is Everybody, Judy?"



again as though beside herself with rapture, and pointed excitedly over Tracy's shoulder. Daktari turned around.

"Hi, Dad! How was your speech?" exclaimed Paula, halting the jeep in front of her father. Officer Hedley pulled up beside her in his own jeep, a strange expression on his face.

Marsh Tracy thoughtfully pulled a briar pipe from his pocket as Judy slipped from his arms. The ape scuttled forward and leaped



Thoughtful Daktari



hysterically into Paula's lap.

Filling his pipe bowl with shredded tobacco, the doctor surveyed his dusty offspring from head to foot and then noted the ragged scars that made a patchwork of Clarence's hide. He tapped the tobacco with the tip of his thumb. "Anything happen when I was gone?"

"Nothing special, Dad. Just the usual routine!" replied Paula, glancing meaningfully at Hedley.

The officer read the request in



"Anything Happen?"



the girl's pleading eyes. Winking solemnly at her, he pushed a straggly hair back into position in his moustache, then climbed out of his jeep. "I say, old boy! *Do* tell us about your speech!"



Hedley Keeps the Secret