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Ayer's Pills, PREPARED BY Dr. J. C. Ayer & Co., Lowell, Mass. Sold by all Dealers in Medicine.

The Canadian Post. LINDSAY, FRIDAY, JAN. 31, 1890.

QUATERMAIN'S WIFE. By H. RIDER HAGGARD.

Author of "Colonel Quatermain, V. C.," "Mrs. Meeson's Will," "A Tale of Three Lions," "Allan Quatermain," "She," "Jean," etc.

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My wife and Tota had been carried off by the baboons. As yet they had not been killed, for if so their remains would have been found with those of the dogs. They had been carried off. The brutes, acting under the direction of the woman-monkey, Hendrika, had dragged them away to some secret den, there to keep them till they died, or kill them!

For a moment I literally staggered beneath the terror of the shock. Then I roused myself from my despair. I made the native men and women at the kraals, telling them to come armed, and bring me guns and ammunition. We went like the wind, and I turned to follow the spear. For a few yards it was plain enough. Stella had been dragged along. I could see where her heels had struck the ground; the child had, I presumed, been carried; at least there were no marks of her feet. At the water's edge the spear vanished. The water was shallow, and they had gone along in it, or at least Hendrika and her victims had, in order to obliterate the trail. I could see where a moss-grown stone had been freshly turned over in the water bed. I ran along the bank some way up the ravine, in the vain hope of catching a sight of them. Presently I heard a bark in the cliffs above us; it was answered by another, and then I saw the smokes of bonfires were hidden about among the rocks on either side, and were slowly swinging themselves down to bar the path. To go on unarmad as I was would be useless. I should only be torn to pieces as the dogs had been. So I turned and fled back toward the huts. As I drew near I could see by my messenger had roused the settlement, for natives with spears and knives in their hands were running up towards the kraals. When I reached the hut I met old Indaba-zimbi, who wore a very serious face.

"So the evil has fallen, Macumazahn," he said. "It has fallen," I answered. "Keep a good heart, Macumazahn," he said again. "She is not dead, nor is the little maid, and before they die we shall find them. Remember this, Hendrika loves her. She will not harm her or allow the baboons to harm her. She will try to hide her away from you—that is all."

I had to draw all the healthy strength and life from my body in order to gather power to speak with the Star. It was a dangerous business, Macumazahn, for I had let things go a little further than you would have liked. And there would have been an end of Indaba-zimbi. Ah, you white men, you know so much that you think you know everything. But you don't! You are always staring at the clouds and can't see the things that lie at your feet. You hardly believe me now, do you, Macumazahn? Well, I will show you. Have you anything on you that the Star has touched or worn?"

I thought for a moment, and said that I had a lock of her hair in my pocket-book. He told me to give it to him. I did so. Going to the fire, he lit the lock of hair in the flame, and let it burn to ashes, which he caught in his left hand. These ashes he mixed up in a paste with the juice of one of the leaves of the plant I have spoken of.

"Now, Macumazahn, shut your eyes," he said. I did so, and he rubbed his paste on my eyelids. At first it burnt me, then my head swam strangely. Presently this effect passed off, and my brain was perfectly clear again, but I could not feel the ground with my feet. Indaba-zimbi led me to the side of the stream. Beneath was a pool of beautifully clear water. "Look into the pool, Macumazahn," said Indaba-zimbi, and his voice sounded hollow and far away in my ears.

I looked. The water grew dark; it cleared, and in it was a picture. I saw a cave with a fire burning in it. Against the wall of the cave rested Stella. Her dress was torn almost off her, she looked dreadfully pale and weary, and her eyelids were red as though with weeping. But she slept, and I could almost think that I saw her lips shape my name in her sleep. Close to her, her head upon Stella's breast, was little Tota; she had a skin thrown over her to keep out the night cold. The child was awake, and appeared to be moaning with fear. By the fire, and in such a position that the light fell full upon her face, and engaged in cooking something in a rough pot shaped from wood, sat the baboon-woman, Hendrika. She was clothed in baboon skins, and her face had been rubbed with some dark stain, which was, however, wearing off.

In the intervals of her cooking she would turn on Stella her wild eyes, in which glared visible madness, with an expression of tenderness that amounted to worship. Then she would stare at the poor child and gnash her teeth as though with hate. Clearly she was jealous of it. Round the entrance arch of the cave peeped and peered the heads of many baboons. Presently Hendrika made a sign to one of them; apparently she did not speak, or rather grant, in order not to wake Stella. The brute hopped forward, and she gave it a second rude wooden pot which was lying by her. It took it and went. The last thing that I saw, as the vision slowly vanished from the pool, was the dim shadow of the baboon returning with the pot full of water.

Presently everything had gone. I ceased to feel strange. There beneath me was the pool, and at my side stood Indaba-zimbi, smiling. "You have seen things," he said. "I have," I answered, and made no further remark on the matter. What was there to say? "Do you know the path to the cave?" I added. He nodded his head. "I did not follow it all just now, because it winds," he said. "But I know it. We shall want the ropes."

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I gained the cliff. It was a mere arched passage cut by water, ending in a gully, which led to a wide open space of some sort. I looked through the passage and saw that the gully was black with baboons. On they came like the hundred. I unslung my elephant gun from my shoulders, and waited, calling to the men below to come up with all possible speed. The brutes streamed on down the gloomy gulf towards me, barking, grunting and showing their huge teeth. I waited till they were within fifteen yards. Then I fired the elephant gun, which was loaded with slugs, right into the thick of them.

In that narrow place the report echoed like a cannon shot, but its sound was quickly swallowed in the volley of piercing human sounding groans and screams that followed. The charge of heavy slugs had plowed through the number of the baboons, of which at least a dozen lay dead or dying in the passage. For a moment they hesitated, then they came on again with a hideous clamor. Fortunately by this time Indaba-zimbi, who also had a gun, was standing by my side, otherwise I should have been torn to pieces before I could reload. He fired both barrels into them, and again checked the rush. But they came on again, and notwithstanding the appearance of two natives with guns, which they let off with more or less success, we should have been overwhelmed by the great and ferocious apes had I not by this time succeeded in reloading the elephant gun. When they were right on to us I fired, with even more deadly effect than before, for at that distance every slug took its long line. The howls and screams of rage and fury were now something immoderate.

One might have thought that we were doing battle with a host of demons; indeed in that light—for the overhanging arch of rock made it very dark—the gnashing snouts and somber glowing eyes of the apes looked like those of devils as they are represented by monkish fancy. But the last shot was too much for them; they withdrew, dragging some of their wounded with them, and thus gave us time to get our men up the cliff. In a few minutes all were there, and we advanced down the passage, which presently opened into a rocky gully with shelving sides. This gully had a water way at the bottom of it; it was about a hundred yards long, and the slopes on either side were topped by precipitous cliffs. I looked at these slopes; they literally swarmed with baboons, grunting, barking, screaming, and beating their breasts with their long arms in fury. I looked up the water way; along it, accompanied by a mob, or, as it were, a guard of baboons, came Hendrika, her long hair flying, madness written on her face, and in her arms was the senseless form of little Tota.

She saw us, and a foam of rage burst from her lips. She screamed aloud. To me the sound was a mere inarticulate cry, but the baboons clearly understood it, for they began to roll rocks down on to us. One boulder leaped past me and struck down a Kaffir behind; another fell from the roof of the arch on to a man's head and killed him. Indaba-zimbi lifted his gun to shoot Hendrika; I "knocked it up so that the shot went over her, crying that he would kill the child. Then I shouted to the men to open out and form a line from side to side of the shelving gully. Furious at the loss of their two comrades, they obeyed me, and keeping in the water way myself, together with Indaba-zimbi and the other guns, I gave the word to charge. Then the last battle began. It is difficult to say who fought the more fiercely, the natives or the baboons. The Kaffirs charged about the slopes, and as they came, encouraged by the screams of Hendrika, who rushed to and fro holding the wretched Tota before her as a shield, the apes bounded at them in fury. Scores were killed by the assegais and many more fell beneath our gun shots, but still they came on. Nor did we weary. Occasionally a man would slip, or be pulled over in the grip of a baboon. Then the others would fling themselves upon him like dogs on a rat, and were very soon at death. We lost five men in this way, and I myself received a bite through the fleshy part of the left arm, but fortunately a native near me assailed the animal before I was pulled down.

At length, and all of a sudden, the baboons gave up. A panic seemed to seize them. Notwithstanding the cries of Hendrika they thought no more of fight, but only of escape; some even did not attempt to get away from the assegais of the Kaffirs, they simply hid their horrible faces in their paws, and moaning piteously, waited to be slain. Hendrika saw that the battle was lost. Dropping the child from her arms, she rushed straight at us, a very picture of horrible insanity. I lifted my gun, but could not bear to shoot. After all she was but a mad thing, half ape, half woman. So I sprang to one side, and she landed full on Indaba-zimbi, knocking him down. But she did not stay to do any more. Walling terribly, she rushed down the gully and through the arch, followed by many of the surviving baboons, and vanished from our sight.

CHAPTER XIII. THE FIGHT WAS OVER. In all we had lost seven men killed, and a very 1 more were severely bitten, while but few had escaped without some tokens whereby he might remember what a baboon's teeth and claws are like. How many of the brutes we killed I never knew, because we did not count, but it was a vast number. I should think that the stock must have been low about Babyan's peak for many years afterwards. From that day to this, however, I have always

remained unconquered, feeling more afraid of them than any beast that lives. The path was clear, and we rushed forward up the water-course. But first we picked up little Tota. The child was not in a swoon, as I had thought, but paralyzed by terror, so that she could scarcely speak. Otherwise she was unhurt, though it took her many a week to recover her nerve. Had she been older, and had she not remembered Hendrika, I doubt if she would have recovered it. She knew me again, and flung her little arms about my neck, clinging to me so closely that I did not dare to give her to any one else to carry lest I should add to her terrors. So I went on with her in my arms. The fears that pierced my heart may well be imagined. Should I find Stella alive or dead? Should I find her at all? Well, we should soon know now. We stumbled on up the stony water-course; notwithstanding the weight of Tota, I led the way, for suspense lent me wings. Now we were through, and an extraordinary scene lay before us. We were in a great natural amphitheatre, only it was three times the size of any amphitheatre ever shaped by man, and the walls were formed of precipitous cliffs, ranging from one to two hundred feet in height. For the rest, the space thus inclosed was level, studded with park-like trees, brilliant with flowers, and having a stream running through the center of it that, as I afterwards discovered, welled up from the ground at the head of the open space.

We spread ourselves out in a line, searching everywhere, for Tota was overcome by her able to tell us where Stella was hidden away. For nearly half an hour we searched and searched, scanning the walls of rock for any possible opening to a cave. In vain—we could find none. I applied to old Indaba-zimbi, but his fore-sight was at fault here. All he could say was that this was the place, and that the "Star" was hidden somewhere in a cave, but where the cave was he could not tell. At last we came to the top of the amphitheatre. There before us was a wall of rock, of which the lower parts were here and there clothed in grasses, lichens and creepers. I walked along it, calling at the top of my voice.

Presently my heart stood still, for I thought I heard a faint answer. I drew nearer to the place from which the sound seemed to come, and again called. Yes, there was an answer in my wife's voice. It seemed to come from the rock. I went up to it and searched among the crevices, but still could find no opening. "Move the stone," cried Stella's voice, "the cave is shut with a stone."

I took a spear and probed at the cliff whence the sound came. Suddenly the spear sank in through a mass of lichen. I swept the lichen aside, revealing a boulder that had been rolled into the mouth of an opening in the rock, which it fitted so accurately that, covered as it was by the overhanging lichen, it might well have escaped the keenest eye. We dragged the boulder out; it was two men's work to do it. Beyond was a narrow, water worn passage, which I followed with a beating heart. Presently the passage opened into a small cave, shaped like a pickle bottle, and coming to a neck at the top end. We passed through and found ourselves in a second, much larger cave, that I at once recognized as the one of which Indaba-zimbi had shown me a vision in the water. Light reached it from above—how I know not—and by it I could see a form half sitting, half lying on some skins at the top end of the cave. It was Stella! Stella bound with strips of hide, bruised, torn, but still Stella, and alive.

She saw me, she gave a cry, then as I caught her in my arms she fainted. It was happy indeed that she did not faint before, for had it not been for the sound of her voice I do not believe we should ever have found that cunningly hidden cave, unless, indeed, Indaba-zimbi's magic (on which be blessings) had come to our assistance.

We bore her to the open air, laid her beneath the shade of a tree, and cut the bonds loose from her ankles. As we went I glanced at the cave. It was exactly as I had seen it in the vision. There burnt the fire, there were the rude wooden vessels, one of them still half full of the water which I had seen the baboon bring. I felt awed as I looked, and marveled at the power wielded by a savage who could not even read and write.

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LINDSAY PLANING MILL. No more trouble in securing Dry Lumber for building purposes, as the NEW DRY KILN lately erected is now in running order. Sash, Doors, Blinds, Mouldings, etc. guaranteed dry, and prices right. Lindsay, June 7th, 1889-90. Cor. Wellington and Cambridge-sts.

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