

A Princess of Mars

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By
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Author of
Tarzan of the Apes

"I AM YOURS."

Synopsis.—The author tells of his acquaintance with the hero of one of the most remarkable adventures ever recorded. From a manuscript left by his friend he has vividly set out the strange happenings which brought together a brave Virginian gentleman and a Princess of Mars. In the Arizona hills John Carter, mining prospector and ex-Confederate soldier, fleeing from a war party of Apaches, takes refuge in a cave the atmosphere of which has a remarkable effect on him. Yielding to its influence he sinks into unconsciousness, his last thoughts centered on the glow from the planet Mars. Awakening, Carter realizes that he has, in some incomprehensible manner, been transported to Mars. He is captured by Tars Tarkas and a party of Martian warriors. He is conveyed, a prisoner, to a Martian city. Three days later a fleet of airships from the neighboring state of Hellum is attacked by Carter's captors, the green Martians. One of the airships is captured. Among the prisoners is a young woman of a race different from the green Martians and closely resembling the women of the earth. Carter ascertains that the fair prisoner's name is Dejah Thoris, granddaughter of the jedak, or ruler, of Hellum. According to custom she is doomed to die by torture. He fights for her and assures her of his sympathy. John learns the language and becomes a chieftain, though still a nominal prisoner. Dejah is put in charge of Sola, a friendly woman. The two prisoners plan to escape before Dejah Thoris is taken before the supreme ruler of the green Martians, Tal Hajus. John fights a sword duel to the death.

CHAPTER VIII—Continued.

"Is she injured?" I asked of Sola, indicating Dejah Thoris by an inclination of my head.

"No," she answered, "she thinks that you are dead. I do not understand either her ways or yours, but I am sure the granddaughter of ten thousand jedaks would never grieve like this over the death of one she considered beneath her, or indeed over any one who held but the highest claim upon her affections.

"Tears are a strange sight upon Hellum," she continued, "and so it is difficult for me to interpret them. I have seen but two people weep in all my life, other than Dejah Thoris: one wept from sorrow, the other from hatred. The first was my mother, years ago, before they killed her; the other was Sarkoja, when they dragged her from me today."

"Your mother," I exclaimed, "but, Sola, you could not have known your mother, child."

"But I did. And my father also," she added. "If you would like to hear the strange and un-Barsoomian story come to the chariot tonight, John Carter, and I will tell you that of which I have never spoken in all my life before."

"I will come tonight, Sola," I promised. "Be sure to tell Dejah Thoris I am alive and well. If she would speak with me I but await her command."

Sola mounted the chariot, which was swinging into its place in line, and I hastened to my waiting mount and galloped to my station beside Tars Tarkas at the rear of the column.

We made a most imposing and awe-inspiring spectacle as we swung out across the yellow landscape; the two hundred and fifty ornate and brightly colored chariots, preceded by an advance guard of some two hundred mounted warriors and chieftains riding five abreast and one hundred yards apart, and followed by a like number in the same formation, with a score or more of flankers on either side; the fifty extra mastodons, or heavy draught animals, known as zittidars, and the five or six hundred extra throats of the warriors running loose within the hollow square formed by the surrounding warriors. The gleaming metal and jewels of the gorgeous ornaments of the men and women, duplicated in the trappings of the zittidars and mounts, and interspersed with the flashing colors of magnificent silks and furs and feathers, lent a barbaric splendor to the caravan which would have turned an East Indian potentate green with envy.

The enormous broad tires of the chariots and the padded feet of the animals brought forth no sound from the moss-covered sea bottom; and so we moved in utter silence, like some huge phantasmagoria, except when the stiffness was broken by the guttural growling of a goaded zittidar, or the squealing of fighting mounts. The green Martians converse but little, and then usually in monosyllables, low and like the faint rumbling of distant thunder.

We traversed a trackless waste of moss which, bending to the pressure of broad tire or padded foot, rose up again behind us, leaving no sign that we had passed. We might indeed have been the wraiths of the departed dead upon the dead sea of that dying planet for all the sound or sign we made in passing. It was the first march of a large body of men and animals I had ever witnessed which raised no dust and left no spoor; for there is no dust upon Mars except in the cultivated districts during the winter months, and

even then the absence of high winds renders it almost unnoticeable.

We camped that night at the foot of the hills we had been approaching for two days and which marked the southern boundary of this particular sea. Our animals had been two days without drink, nor had they had water for nearly two months, not since shortly after leaving Thark; but, as Tars Tarkas explained to me, they require but little and can live almost indefinitely upon the moss which covers Barsoom, and which, he told me, holds in its tiny stems sufficient moisture to meet the limited demands of the animals.

After partaking of my evening meal of cheese-like food and vegetable milk I sought out Sola, whom I found working by the light of a torch upon some of Tars Tarkas' trappings. She looked up at my approach, her face lighting with pleasure and with welcome.

"I am glad you came," she said; "Dejah Thoris sleeps and I am lonely. I promised to tell you my story, or rather the story of my parents. From what I have learned of you and the ways of your people I am sure that the tale will not seem strange to you, but among green Martians it has no parallel within the memory of the oldest living Thark, nor do our legends hold many similar tales.

"My mother was rather small, in fact too small to be allowed the responsibilities of maternity, as our chieftains breed principally for size. She was also less cold and cruel than most green Martian women, and caring little for their society, she often roamed the deserted avenues of Thark alone, or went and sat among the wild flowers that deck the nearby hills, thinking thoughts and wishing wishes which I believe I alone among Tharkan women today may understand, for am I not the child of my mother?"

"And there among the hills she met a young warrior, whose duty it was to guard the feeding zittidars and mounts and see that they roamed not beyond the hills. She trusted him and told of the awful repugnance she felt for the gentleness of their kind, for the hideous, loveless lives they must ever lead, and then she waited for the storm of denunciation to break from his cold, hard lips; but instead he took her in his arms and kissed her.

"They kept their love a secret for six long years. She, my mother, was of the retinue of the great Tal Hajus, while her lover was a simple warrior, wearing only his own metal. Had their deflection from the traditions of the Tharks been discovered both would have paid the penalty in the great arena before Tal Hajus and the assembled hordes.

"The egg from which I came was hidden beneath a great glass vessel upon the highest and most inaccessible of the partially ruined towers of ancient Thark. Once each year my mother visited it for the five long years it lay there in the process of incubation. She dared not come oftener, for in the mighty guilt of her conscience she feared that her every move was watched. During this period my father gained great distinction as a warrior and had taken the metal from several chieftains. His advance was rapid, and he soon stood high in the councils of Thark. But one day he was ordered away upon a long expedition to the ice-clad south, to make war upon the natives there and despoil them of their furs.

"He was gone for four years, and when he returned all had been over for three; for about a year after his departure, and shortly before the time for the return of an expedition which had gone forth to fetch the fruits of a community incubator, the egg had hatched. Thereafter my mother continued to keep me in the old tower, visiting me nightly and lavishing upon me the love the community would have robbed us both of.

"She taught me rapidly the language and customs of my kind, and one night she told me the story I have told to you up to this point. Impressing upon me the necessity for absolute secrecy and the great caution I must exercise after she had placed me with the other young Tharks to permit no one to guess that I was further advanced in education than they; and then drawing me close to her she whispered in my ear the name of my father.

"And then a light flashed out upon the darkness of the tower chamber, and there stood Sarkoja, her gleaming, baleful eyes fixed in a frenzy of loathing and contempt upon my mother. That she had heard the entire story was apparent, and that she had suspected something wrong from my mother's long nightly absences from her quarters accounted for her presence there on that fateful night.

"Sarkoja hastened to Tal Hajus to report her discovery, and while she was gone my mother, wrapping me in the silks and furs of her night coverings, so that I was scarcely noticeable, descended to the streets and ran wildly toward the outskirts of the city, in the direction which led to the far south, out toward the man whose protection she might not claim, but on whose face she wished to look once more before she died.

"As we neared the city's southern

extremity a sound came to us from across the mossy flat, from the direction of the only pass through the hills which led to the gates, the pass by which caravans from either north or south or east or west would enter the city. My mother from her hiding place saw that the expedition was the returning caravan bearing the young Tharks. Instantly her plan was formed, and as a great chariot swung close to our hiding place she slipped stealthily upon the trailing tail board, crouching low in the shadow of the high side, straining me to her bosom in a frenzy of love.

"She knew, what I did not, that never again after that night would she hold me to her breast, nor was it likely we would ever look upon each other's faces again. In the confusion of the plaza she mixed me with the other children, whose guardians during the journey were now free to relinquish their responsibility.

"I never saw my mother after that night. She was imprisoned by Tal Hajus, and every effort, including the most horrible and shameful torture, was brought to bear upon her to wring from her lips the name of my father; but she remained steadfast and loyal, dying at last amidst the laughter of Tal Hajus and his chieftains during some awful torture she was undergoing.

"I learned afterward that she told them that she had killed me to save me from a life fate at their hands, and that she had thrown my body to the white apes. Sarkoja alone disbelieved her, and I feel to this day that she suspects my true origin, but does not dare expose me, at the present, at all events, because she also guesses, I am sure, the identity of my father.

"When he returned from his expedition and learned the story of my mother's fate I was present as Tal Hajus told him; but never by the quiver of a muscle did he betray the slightest emotion; only he did not laugh as Tal Hajus gleefully described her death struggles. From that moment on he was the cruellest of the cruel, and I am awaiting the day when he shall win the goal of his ambition, and feel the carcass of Tal Hajus beneath his foot, for I am sure that he but waits the opportunity to wreak a terrible vengeance."

"And your father, Sola, is he with us now?" I asked.

"Yes," she replied, "but he does not know me for what I am, nor does he know who betrayed my mother to Tal Hajus. I alone know my father's name, and only I and Tal Hajus and Sarkoja know that it was she who carried the tale that brought death and torture upon her he loved."

We sat silent for a few moments, she wrapped in the gloomy thoughts of her terrible past, and I in pity for the poor creatures whom the heartless, senseless customs of their race had doomed to loveless lives of cruelty and of hate. Presently she spoke.

"John Carter, if ever a real man walked the cold, dead bosom of Barsoom you are one. I know that I can trust you, and because the knowledge



"You Are a Queer Mixture of Child and Man, of Brute and Noble. I Only Wish That I Might Read Your Heart."

may some day help you or him or Dejah Thoris or myself, I am going to tell you the name of my father, nor place any restrictions or conditions upon your tongue. When the time comes, speak the truth if it seems best to you. I trust you because I know that you are not cursed with the terrible trait of absolute and unswerving truthfulness, that you could lie like one of your own Virginia gentlemen if a lie would save others from sorrow or suffering. My father's name is Tars Tarkas."

CHAPTER IX.

We Plan Escape.

The remainder of our journey to Thark was uneventful.

Not once did I have speech with Dejah Thoris, as she sent no word to me that I would be welcome at her chariot, and my foolish pride kept me from making any advances.

Just thirty days after my advent upon Barsoom we entered the ancient city of Thark, from whose long-forgotten people this horde of green men have stolen even their name. The hordes of Thark number some thirty thousand souls, and are divided into twenty-five communities. Each community has its own jed and lesser chieftains, but all are under the rule of Tal Hajus, jedak of Thark. Five communities make their headquarters at the city of Thark, and the balance are scattered among other deserted cities of ancient Mars throughout the district claimed by Tal Hajus.

We made our entry into the great central plaza early in the afternoon. There were no enthusiastic friendly greetings for the returned expedition. Those who chanced to be in sight spoke the names of warriors or women with whom they came in direct contact, in the formal greeting of their kind, but when it was discovered that they brought two captives a greater interest was aroused, and Dejah Thoris and I were the centers of inquiring groups.

We were soon assigned to new quarters, and the balance of the day was devoted to settling ourselves to the changed conditions. When I had put my house in order, or rather seen that it had been done, it was nearing sunset, and I hastened out with the intention of locating Sola and her charges, as I had determined upon having speech with Dejah Thoris and trying to impress on her the necessity of our at least patching up a truce until I could find some way of aiding her to escape. I searched in vain, until the upper rim of the great red sun was just disappearing behind the horizon and then I spied the ugly head of Woola peering from a second-story window on the opposite side of the very street where I was quartered.

Without waiting for a further invitation I bolted up the winding runway which led to the second floor, and entering a great chamber at the front of the building was greeted by the frenzied Woola, who threw his great carcass upon me, nearly hurling me to the floor; the poor old fellow was so glad to see me that I thought he would devour me, his head split from ear to ear, showing his three rows of tusks in his hobgoblin smile.

Quieting him with a word of command and a caress, I looked hurriedly through the approaching gloom for a sign of Dejah Thoris, and then, not seeing her, I called her name. There was an answering murmur from the far corner of the apartment, and with a couple of quick strides I was standing beside her where she crouched among the furs and silks upon an ancient carved wooden seat. As I waited she rose to her full height and looking me straight in the eye said:

"What would Dotar Sojat, Thark, of Dejah Thoris his captive?"

"Dejah Thoris, I do not know how I have angered you. It was furthest from my desire to hurt or offend you, whom I had hoped to protect and comfort. Have none of me if it is your will, but that you must aid me in effecting your escape, if such a thing be possible, is not my request, but my command. When you are safe once more at your father's court you may do with me as you please, but from now on until that day I am your master, and you must obey and aid me."

She looked at me long and earnestly and I thought that she was softening toward me.

"I understand your words, Dotar Sojat," she replied, "but you do not understand. You are a queer mixture of child and man, of brute and noble. I only wish that I might read your heart."

"Look down at your feet, Dejah Thoris; it lies there now where it has lain since that other night at Korad, and where it will ever lie beating alone for you until death stills it forever."

She took a little step toward me, her beautiful hands outstretched in a strange, groping gesture.

"What do you mean, John Carter?" she whispered. "What are you saying to me?"

"I am saying what I had promised myself that I would not say to you, at least until you were no longer a captive among the green men; what from your attitude toward me for the past twenty days I had thought never to say to you; I am saying, Dejah Thoris, that I am yours, body and soul, to serve you, to fight for you, and to die for you. Only one thing I ask of you in return, and that is that you make no sign, either of condemnation or of approbation of my words until you are safe among your own people, and that whatever sentiments you harbor toward me they be not influenced or colored by gratitude."

"I will respect your wishes, John Carter, because I understand the motives which prompt them, and I accept your service no more willingly than I bow to your authority; your word shall be my law. I have twice wronged you in my thoughts and again I ask your forgiveness."

Further conversation of a personal nature was prevented by the entrance of Sola, who was much agitated and wholly unlike her usual calm and possessed self.

"That horrible Sarkoja has been before Tal Hajus," she cried, "and from what I hear upon the plaza there is little hope for either of you."

"What do they say?" inquired Dejah Thoris.

"That you will be thrown to the wild colots (dogs) in the great arena as soon as the hordes have assembled for the yearly games."

"Sola," I said, "you are a Thark, but you hate and loathe the customs of your people as much as we do. Will you not accompany us in one supreme effort to escape?"

"Yes," cried Dejah Thoris, "come with us, Sola, you will be better off among the red men of Hellum than you are here, and I can promise you not only a home with us, but the love and affection your nature craves and which must always be denied you by the customs of your own race. Come with us, Sola; we might go without you, but your fate would be terrible if they thought you had connived to aid us. I know that even that fear would not tempt you to interfere in our escape, but we want you with us, we want you to come to a land of sunshine and happiness, amongst a people who know the meaning of love, of sympathy and of gratitude. Say that you will, Sola; tell me that you will."

"The great waterway which leads to Hellum is but fifty miles to the south," murmured Sola, half to her-



She Drew Upon the Marble Floor the First Map of Barsoomian Territory I Had Ever Seen.

self; "a swift thought might make it in three hours; and then to Hellum it is five hundred miles, most of the way through thinly settled districts. They would know and they would follow us. We might hide among the great trees for a time, but the chances are small indeed for escape."

"Is there no other way we might reach Hellum?" I asked. "Can you not draw me a rough map of the country we must traverse, Dejah Thoris?"

"Yes," she replied, and taking a great diamond from her hair she drew upon the marble floor the first map of Barsoomian territory I had ever seen. It was crisscrossed in every direction with long straight lines, sometimes running parallel and sometimes converging toward some great circle. The lines, she said, were waterways; the circles, cities; and one far to the northwest of us she pointed out as Hellum.

After studying the map carefully I pointed out a waterway far to the north of us which also seemed to lead to Hellum.

"Does not this pierce your grandfather's territory?" I asked.

"Yes," she answered, "but it is two hundred miles north of us."

"They would never suspect that we would try for that distant waterway," I answered, "and that is why I think it is the best route for our escape."

Sola agreed with me, and it was decided that we should leave Thark this same night; just as quickly, in fact, as I could find and saddle my mounts, Sola was to ride one and Dejah Thoris and I the other; each of us carrying sufficient food and drink to last us for two days, since the animals could not be urged too rapidly for so long a distance.

I directed Sola to proceed with Dejah Thoris along one of the less frequented avenues to the southern boundary of the city, where I would overtake them with the mounts as quickly as possible; then, leaving them to gather what food, silks and furs we were to need, I slipped quietly to the rear of the first floor, and entered the courtyard, where our animals were.

I called softly to my two beasts. How I thanked the kind providence which had given me the foresight to win the love and confidence of these wild dumb brutes, for presently from the far side of the court I saw two huge bulks forcing their way toward me through the surging mountains of flesh. Opening the gates I ordered the two great beasts to pass out, and then slipping quietly after them I closed the portals behind me.

"Goodby, my princess!"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Exactly.

Bobby—Pop, what is it that counts in poker?
Pop—A good deal, my son.

In older days, thrifty people saved more money; but they had nothing.

MRS. ALICE GRESHAM DODD, mother of the first American soldier killed in France, who gives entire credit for recovery of her health to the well-known medicine Tanlac.



The following remarkable endorsement of Tanlac was given recently by Mrs. Alice Gresham Dodd, at the Gresham Memorial Home, Gavin Park, Evansville, Ind., which home was presented to her by the patriotic people of Indiana, as evidence of their appreciation of the services rendered to his country by her son, Corporal James B. Gresham, the first American soldier killed in France. Expressions of sympathy were received by Mrs. Dodd from all parts of the United States, and the newspapers of the country carried the story of the first "war mother."

The shock of her son's death resulted in the serious breakdown of Mrs. Dodd's health, but everyone will learn with interest and pleasure that she is now in splendid health again. When seen at her home recently she made the following statement, giving the entire credit for her recovery to the well-known medicine, Tanlac.

"After my dear boy's death I had a general breakdown in health," said Mrs. Dodd. "At first it was just indigestion. My food used to upset me and I had to diet myself very carefully, which wasn't much hardship, as I lost all desire to eat. Then I had an attack of rheumatism, with severe pains in my shoulders, back and arms. Sometimes I used to suffer a great deal, and my joints would get all swollen up and stiff. I was able to do very little about the house, and at times couldn't even cook a meal. I got very nervous and restless, and at night would lay awake for hours, and lost many a night's sleep as a consequence.

"A friend of mine had received a great deal of help from Tanlac, and it was she who advised me to try it. I am so glad I did for it proved the best medicine I have ever taken. It soon gave me a good appetite and seemed to settle my stomach so that I was no longer troubled with indigestion. I don't know what it is to have rheumatic pains now, the swelling and stiffness has all gone out of my joints and I am able to do the work of the house with the greatest ease. My nerves are now steady and strong. I sleep fine at night, and I feel better in health than ever before in my life. I shall always be grateful for what Tanlac has done for me, and shall recommend it every chance I get."

Tanlac is sold by leading druggists everywhere.—Adv.

The Supreme Test.

Deacon Gildrow says that if a man loves a woman well enough to cheerfully write a check in payment for her new fall suit, though he knows it means that he will have to make his old overcoat do another winter, it is safe to marry her.

And Mrs. Deacon Gildrow says that if you love a man well enough to think you would like to see the floor of the closet littered with his old shoes it will be perfectly safe to marry him.—Houston Press.

WOMEN USE "DIAMOND DYES"

Dye Old Skirts, Dresses, Waists, Coats, Stockings, Draperies—Everything.

Each package of "Diamond Dyes" contains easy directions for dyeing any article of wool, silk, cotton, linen, or mixed goods. Beware! Poor dye streaks, spots, fades, and ruins material by giving it a "dyed-look." Buy "Diamond Dyes" only. Druggist has Color Card.—Adv.

Soft Music.

One of the piano instructors at the Music School Settlement recently was consulted by a young man who desired a list of "good piano duets."

"Exactly what kind of music do you want?" inquired the instructor. "How difficult? Classical? Operatic?"

"I want some duets," explained the young man, "to play with a young lady I want to marry. I leave it to you."—New York Evening Post.

Every department of housekeeping needs Red Cross Ball Blue. Equally good for kitchen towels, table linen, sheets and pillowcases, etc.

Window Shopping.

"Why do you stare so at that fur coat?"

"That's the one my husband is going to give me."

"Eh?"

"When fur coats are cheaper."