

ERB

The Epic Parallel Universe Life
of Edgar Rice Burroughs
the
King of Pulp Fiction

as imagined by

Woodrow Edgar Nichols, Jr.

PART ONE:
ZODANGA

Woodrow Edgar Nichols, Jr.
2141 Tuolumne St., Ste. "O"
Fresno, CA 93721
E-mail: woodrownichols@aol.com

FADE IN:

ONSCREEN: IN A PARALLEL UNIVERSE...

EXT. A FEW HUNDRED FEET ABOVE THE NORTH POLE, JUNE 1928 -
JUST AFTER MIDNIGHT - MAIN TITLES

The black air dirigible, O-220, its number painted in big red Gothic numerals on the sides of its hull, circles in a slow spiral a few hundred feet above the North Pole.

The ship's hull is cigar-shaped, 997 feet long, 150 feet in diameter. There is a small observation and gun cabin at the top, a gun turret near the tail. Eight air-cooled motors and propellers are arranged in pairs upon either side of the ship, staggered so that the air from the forward propellers does not interfere with the air of the rear.

The main cabin is an integral part of the keel, running along the bottom of the craft. Six large heavily tired landing wheels project from the bottom of the main cabin.

The night sky is clear, the white light of the summer Arctic sun illuminates the ice below in an eerie glow.

INT. FORWARD CONTROL CABIN OF THE O-220 - JUST AFTER
MIDNIGHT - TITLES CONTINUE

The forward control cabin is full of personnel, in the background, the constant RRUMMMMM of the propellers.

In command is TARZAN OF THE APES, 35, dressed in civilian safari gear. Next under him is the German captain, ZUPPNER, 50, the main designer and builder of the craft.

Next are the German first mate, LT. VON HORST, early 30's, and the navigator, LT. HINES, late 20's. Finally, there is the young American inventor of the Gridley Wave from Tarzana, JASON GRIDLEY, 25, and the African warrior, MUVIRO, 35, in charge of NINE WAZIRI WARRIORS, 20-35. The Germans speak English in thick German accents.

ZUPPNER

My ship is performing magnificently, don't you think, Herr Tarzan? We are the first to fly over the North Pole. What a splendid achievement for mankind!

TARZAN

More than splendid, Captain Zuppner. And we've made it in record time.

GRIDLEY

My calculations indicate that we are getting close to the entrance to Pellucidar. The opening in the Earth's crust is in the vicinity of 85 north latitude and 170 east longitude.

TARZAN

Did you hear that, Captain Zuppner?

ZUPPNER

(nodding)

Lt. Hines, steer the ship under that heading.

LT. HINES

Aye, aye, sir.

ZOOM on the cabin clock, the hands move swiftly forward five hours. Outside the forward cabin window, the sky has clouded heavily and there is a HOWLING WIND all around the ship, making it unstable.

GRIDLEY

Hold her steady, Captain, for if I am correct, we are now going over the top of the polar opening.

GRIDLEY

(continuing)

From now on the compass will become more and more erratic and unreliable as we spiral down into the hole.

(pauses)

Pellucidar is five hundred miles below the crust and exactly at our half-way point, approximately 250 miles down, our ship should flip over. However, it will appear to us to be right-side-up, for we will then be ascending out of the inner ocean of Pellucidar.

TARZAN

It is only now that I truly believe in the Gridley Wave, Jason.

VAN HORST

The Gridley Wave?

GRIDLEY

It's a previously unknown radio wave that hides in the static. I discovered it in my Tarzana laboratory. It's how I was able to communicate with Pellucidar.

ZUPPNER

It is so hard to imagine. Begin the descent, Lt. Hines.

HINES

Aye, aye, sir.

GRIDLEY

When in doubt, keep steering to starboard.

EXT. 0-220 SPIRALLING DOWN THROUGH THE OPENING - NIGHT
TURNING INTO DAY - TITLES CONTINUE

The aircraft slowly descends against a very strange
background of RUSHING WATER, WIND, AND CLOUD.

Suddenly, the ship turns upsidedown, the camera turns with
it, rights itself, the craft now ascends out of the hole
into the inner world. Below, formerly above, the distant
light from the sun on the outer surface fades from view at
the bottom of an endless dark tunnel.

INT. FORWARD CABIN - DAY - TITLES CONTINUE

The clock shows that several more hours have passed. The
visibility outside the window has begun to clear.

HINES

Look, Captain, there is open
water just ahead of us!

ZUPPNER

And that looks like land
over there. But how do we
know it is not really
Siberia?

The ship nears the land, the excitement inside the cabin
grows. The central sun of Pellucidar shines brightly.
Everyone on board can now plainly see that the land around
them curves upwards and outwards in all directions, as if
they they are inside a gigantic bowl.

The Earth is indeed hollow. They have entered Pellucidar!

VON HORST

My God, how can such a world
exist? How can the gravity
be reversed like this? It
is physically impossible!

GRIDLEY

And yet, Lt. Von Horst, here
we are.

The land below turns from barren to wooded plain, then a row of forested hills, beyond that, a smooth well-watered plain perfect for landing. At one end of the plain, game herds graze, at the other, many streams empty into a large river.

TARZAN

This looks like Heaven to me.
Let us land, Captain.

The ship SUCKS air into its lower vacuum tanks, makes a LOUD MECHANICAL-PNEUMATIC SOUND, descends slowly, lands perfectly on the plain.

EXT. PELLUCIDAR - HIGH NOON - TITLES CONTINUE

Short ladders run out of the cabin six feet off the ground. The crew descends, stands in the tall grass of the plain.

MUVIRO

The sun is in the middle of
this world and stationary.
How can there ever be any
night or way of measuring
time?

GRIDLEY

It is always high noon in
Pellucidar, Muviro.

TARZAN

We have been awake for over
two days now. We must rest
before we begin the
expedition to rescue David
Innes from the dungeon of
the Korsars.

ZUPPNER

I concur.

The crew ascends the ladders back inside the ship.

INT. TARZAN'S CABIN - HIGH NOON - END TITLES

Tarzan awakes on his bunk. He looks at the clock. Several hours have passed. Eager to hunt, he rises, dresses in his jungle outfit - a deerskin thong - arms himself with hunting knife, spear, bow and arrows, a long rope. Satisfied, he leaves the cabin.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE SHIP - HIGH NOON

Tarzan descends a ladder, heads toward the forest. He leaps into the first tree, swings from branch to branch, recognizes some of the trees, others are totally foreign to him.

He sees a well-marked game trail below, descends from the trees. He looks around, tries to orient himself.

TARZAN

(amazed; to himself)

How long have I been gone from
the ship? I've lost track of
the time.

His mind distracted from his natural instincts, he wanders casually down the trail, unaware of the hidden rawhide noose snare hidden in the dirt.

ZOOM on his feet as he steps into the noose, he triggers the snare, SNAP! he is lifted from the ground, the noose pins his arms to his sides. He spins around six feet off the ground, head down, totally helpless. Every effort he makes to free himself draws the noose tighter around him.

Tarzan SNIFFS the air, a look of apprehension on his face. The NOISE OF HOOFS THUNDERS down the trail, he spins around, he spies the source, a great ox-like animal with shaggy coat and widespread horns approaches like a locomotive. It is a Bos Primigenus of the Ice Age, long extinct on the outer surface.

EXT. TARZAN'S POINT OF VIEW - HIGH NOON

The scenery spins dizzily before Tarzan's eyes, the rawhide rope CREAKS as he tries to concentrate on the great ox heading his way.

He can only see it briefly each time he spins into view, CREAK, CREAK, but each time, CREAK, CREAK, the beast appears closer.

EXT. THE GAME TRAIL - HIGH NOON

The beast notices Tarzan, comes to a halt, UTTERS LOW GRUMBLES, SNORTS, PAWS the ground with a hoof, lowers its head, GORES the ground with its massive horns.

The beast BELLOWS, rushes the defenseless ape-man still spinning round and round. Tarzan closes his eyes, CREAK, CREAK, waits for sudden death.

EXT. TARZAN'S POINT OF VIEW - HIGH NOON

The rope turns, CREAK, CREAK, Tarzan spins away from the beast. A TERRIBLE SCREAM rings through his ears, mingles with the BELLOWS of the beast, rises higher and higher in fever pitch.

CREAK, CREAK, Tarzan must wait to come full circle before he can see what has happened. He opens his eyes in total amazement.

A massive saber-tooth tiger clings to the back of the great ox, its massive fangs dig deep into the beast's neck. The ox SHAKES its head back and forth trying to gore the tiger.

The tiger readjusts its position, reaches down with a massive paw, delivers a single, deadly blow to the side of the beast's head, BAM! brings it down, they fade from view.

The next time the tiger comes into view, CREAK, CREAK, he is stands over his prey, devours it, CRUNCH, CRUNCH. It settles in to eat, the rawhide CREAKS, the tiger looks up at the sound, sees Tarzan spin hopelessly round and round.

The tiger stops eating, lowers and flattens its head, turns its lower lip back into a HIDEOUS SNARL. LOW, MENACING GROWLS come from its throat, its tail LASHES around as it comes to its feet, stalks slowly towards Tarzan.

A strange RUSTLING overhead in the branches. The tiger looks up.

Tarzan spins slowly, CREAK, CREAK, looks up into the branches, spies the face of a GORILLA-LIKE CREATURE staring out at him.

EXT. THE GAME TRAIL - HIGH NOON

Suddenly, a SCORE OF THE CREATURES appear in branches all around the trail. The creatures are brown and shaggy and in some respects more manlike than gorilla, and in others more gorilla than manlike, each carries a great club.

With eyes of hatred, the tiger GROWLS AND SNARLS at them, continues to move toward Tarzan.

It stops, hunches its back, readies, pounces, at the same time, one of the gorilla men grabs the rawhide rope and YANKS it up, raises Tarzan above the tiger's reach at the last second, the tiger's claws rakes empty space, WHISH!

The gorilla men hurl their clubs at the tiger, BAM, BAM, knocking it senseless as it comes to ground. Tarzan is raised higher into the branches and confronts three of the hairy creatures.

Two grab his arms, pin him back, the third grabs his throat, raises his club menacingly over Tarzan's head.

THIRD CREATURE

Ka-gota!

TARZAN

You speak the language of the Great Apes?

THIRD CREATURE

Ka-gota?

The language of the Great Apes is a series of GRUNTS, GROWLS, and BARKING NOISES, punctuated at times by SHRILL SCREAMS, wholly unintelligible to modern man; ENGLISH SUBTITLES.

TARZAN

I forgot I was speaking in English. Ka-gota!

THIRD CREATURE

Who are you?

TARZAN

I am Tarzan, mighty hunter,
mighty fighter!

THIRD CREATURE

What are you doing in
M'wa-lot's country?

TARZAN

I come as a friend. I have
no quarrel with you people.

The rest of the shaggy creatures surround them. The third creature lowers his club.

THIRD CREATURE

How did you learn the
language of the Sagoths?

ANOTHER CREATURE

Who cares? He is only a
Gilak. Let us kill him like
the rest.

THIRD CREATURE

Not yet. Let us take him
back to M'wa-lot so the whole
tribe can join in the killing.

TARZAN

Do not bind me. I will go
freely.

HOSTILE CREATURE

It is a trick. Kill him
now!

THIRD CREATURE

No! M'wa-lot put me in
charge. Do not bind him. He
will not flee.

The two creatures face off in disagreement, the third creature is bigger than his challenger and backs him down. They leave Tarzan unbound, escort him to M'wa-lot.

EXT. THE TRIBE OF M'WA-LOT - HIGH NOON

The Sagoths push Tarzan into a large clearing in the forest. A LARGE BULL descends from the trees, approaches. He has a blue taint to his complexion, many gray hairs surround his face.

M'WA-LOT

I am M'WA-LOT. With me are
the people of my tribe.

THIRD CREATURE

I am TAR-GASH. With me are
the other bulls of the tribe
of M'wa-lot.

M'WA-LOT

(pointing to Tarzan)

What is that?

TAR-GASH

It is a Gilak that we found
caught in our snare.

HOSTILE CREATURE

Tar-gash had mercy on him, my
King! You should have put me
in charge of the hunt.

TAR-GASH

Silence, TO-YAD! Mind your
place.

To-yad loses control, rushes forward, his club raised to bring it down on Tar-gash's head. Tar-gash is looking the other way and does not see it coming. Tarzan shouts out a warning.

TARZAN

Kreegah! Tar-gash!

Tar-gash ducks just in time, moves away, Tarzan springs forward, brushes To-yad aside with a single sweep of his giant arm, BAM, knocks him senseless to the ground. M'wa-lots eyes open wide, he realizes that Tar-gash has sided with the Gilak over his own tribe.

M'WA-LOT

Tar-gash is on the Gilak's
side! Kill him!

M'wa-lot raises his club at Tar-gash, Tarzan springs on him, grabs him by the neck in a chokehold. As the other bulls begin to move in, Tarzan picks up M'wa-lot, hurls him at the feet of the others, CRASH, scattering them back.

TARZAN

Shall we remain and fight,
Tar-gash?

TAR-GASH

They will kill us. If you
were not a Gilak, we could
escape through the trees, but
as you cannot escape we will
have to remain and fight.

TARZAN

Lead the way. There is no
Sagoth trail that Tarzan
cannot follow.

They take off into the trees. M'wa-lot and his bulls pursue them for awhile, tire, give up. Tarzan and Tar-gash come to a halt, catch their breaths.

TAR-GASH

Why did you warn me?

TARZAN

I warned you because it was
you who kept the bulls from
killing me.

TAR-GASH

Where do you want to go now?

TARZAN
Back to my people.

TAR-GASH
Where are they?

Tarzan looks up at the sun, all around him. Nothing is familiar.

TARZAN
I have no idea. I am lost.

EXT. PELLUCIDAR -- HIGH NOON

Tarzan and Tar-gash walk briskly in a steep canyon below the Mountains of the Thipdars -- prehistoric Pteranodons -- extinct on the outer surface.

A PIERCING SCREECH fills the air. Tar-gash halts, presses his free hand against Tarzan's chest, stops him, points his finger towards the noise.

TAR-GASH
A Dyal, and it is angry.

TARZAN
What is a Dyal?

TAR-GASH
(puzzled)
It is a terrible bird but its meat is good, and Tar-gash is hungry.

Tarzan looks up at the sun, strokes his chin.

TARZAN
The sun does not move and
I cannot tell the time, but
my stomach says I am hungry.

Moving swiftly, they stalk their dinner. Tarzan SNIFFS the strange new scent in the breeze.

Tar-gash, in the lead, runs to the base of a large boulder, peeks around the edge, motions for Tarzan to have a look.

Tarzan shows no emotion as he takes in the sight.

Fifty feet in front of him is a gigantic flightless bird -- a Phororhacos of the Miocene -- also extinct on the outer surface.

It has a huge crested head the size of a horse, towers eight feet above the canyon floor. Its powerful curved beak gapes wide, it SCREECHES in anger, BEATS its useless short wings, STRIKES at something hidden inside a crevice in the cliff.

Its massive three-toed talons make a SHARP SCRATCHING SOUND like fingernails across a blackboard.

ZOOM on the crevice: a wooden spear held by human hands jabs at the bird.

Tarzan's eyes grow wide in astonishment.

Tar-gash sneaks to a closer boulder behind the Dyal, Tarzan quickly follows. Nodding to each other, they rush it. Tar-gash grasps his club by the small end, Tarzan fits an arrow into his bow.

The Dyal hears their approach, turns, charges them, beak first, makes a HIGH TERRIFYING SHRIEK!

Tar-gash twirls his club over his head, aims, hurls it at one of the Dyal's legs as it bears down on him, SWISH! the club misses the mark.

Tarzan shoots two arrows, THWIP! THWIP! both sink deeply into the bird's breast, the beast keeps coming at them at full speed. At the last second, Tarzan and Tar-gash leap out of the way in opposite directions.

With a LOUDER SCREECH! the Dyal wheels around, stirs up a large cloud of dust. Tar-gash throws a large stone, THUMP! hits the bird on the side of the head.

Tarzan shoots two more arrows, THWIP! THWIP! they both find their mark, the bird keeps coming.

A spear flies past Tarzan's shoulder, SWISH! deeply penetrates the Dyal's breast, SQUISH!. It lets out a TERRIFYING SCREECH, begins to fall.

Tarzan rushes forward, SLASHES the bird's windpipe with his knife, jumps out of the way as the monster CRASHES to the ground, a huge dirty cloud rises into the air.

The dust settles, reveals the STRANGER, early 20's, who threw the spear. He is a tall, bronze-skinned human with long shaggy hair tied back with a deerskin band, he is armed with a stone knife sheathed in a girdle supporting a deerskin G-string.

Tar-gash recovers his club, approaches the stranger, twirls the club over his head.

TAR-GASH

I am Tar-gash. I kill.

The stranger draws his stone knife, confronts the Sagoth, Tarzan intervenes, steps between them.

TARZAN

(faces Tar-gash)

Wait! Why do you kill?

TAR-GASH

He is a Gilak.

TARZAN

I too am Gilak. This one saved us from the Dyal. If he had not thrown his spear one or both of us might have died.

TAR-GASH

(scratches head)

But if I do not kill him he will kill me.

TARZAN

(turns to stranger)

I am Tarzan. This is Tar-gash.

STRANGER

I am THOAR of Zoram.

TARZAN

Let us be friends. We have
no quarrel with you.

THOAR

Why should we be friends?

TARZAN

Why should we be enemies?

THOAR

I do not know. It is always
thus.

TARZAN

Together we have slain the
Dyal. Therefore we should
be friends, not enemies.
Where are you going?

THOAR

(points)

To Zoram.

TARZAN

We too are going that way.
Let us go together. Six
hands are better than four.

Thoar glances at Tar-gash with obvious distrust.

TARZAN

(continuing; to Tar-gash)

Shall we go together as
friends, Tar-gash?

TAR-GASH

It is not done.

TARZAN

We shall do it then. Come!

Tarzan turns, butchers the dead bird. Thoar and Tar-gash stare suspiciously at each other, their hunger, the smell of fresh meat, gets the best of them, they join Tarzan.

PAN up the cliff to the lofty peaks of the Mountains of the Thipdars.

EXT. INSIDE A THIPDAR NEST ON A HIGH PEAK -- HIGH NOON

Tarzan, Thoar, and Tar-gash rob a Thipdar nest of its gigantic eggs. Thoar stiffens, cocks his ear. In the distance, the RISING SOUND OF HEAVY FLAPPING WINGS. Thoar lifts his head over the edge of the nest, points to a large approaching flying object.

THOAR

A Thipdar, and there is no shelter for us.

TARZAN

There are three of us. Why should we fear?

THOAR

You do not know them. They are hard to kill and they are never defeated until they are killed.

TARZAN

How do you know it will attack us?

THOAR

It is coming in this direction and cannot help but see us. Whatever living thing they see, they attack.

Tar-gash notices that they are in mortal danger, lifts his eyes from the egg he has been devouring, points to the Thipdar, near enough to make out its terrible symmetry.

It is an enormous flying reptile, the SOUND OF ITS HUGE FLAPPING WINGS resemble the WHOOSHING HISS of a steam engine.

Everything is silent except for the RISING NOISE OF WINGS.

TAR-GASH

It comes.

THOAR

It has seen us.

Thoar grips his spear, Tarzan drops his, plucks a handful of arrows from his quiver, places one into the bow, smiles.

TARZAN

As long as we live, there is
hope.

Tar-gash GROWLS, rises, swings his huge club to and fro.

ZOOM on the black menacing eyes of the Thipdar -- they reflect the three anthropoids -- it comes closer and closer, the sound of its approach LOUDER AND LOUDER.

The Thipdar SWOOPS down, Tarzan shoots an arrow, THWIP! into its breast. The huge creature SCREECHES IN EAR-SHATTERING RAGE, does not slow its attack.

Tarzan shoots two more arrows, THWIP! THWIP! into the Thipdar.

It rises suddenly, brushes over their heads in an upward curve, WHOOSH! wheels back down, WHOOSH! grabs Tarzan by the shoulders with its razor sharp talons, SQUISH! FLAPS OFF.

Thoar and Tar-gash stand dumbfounded as the Thipdar FLIES AWAY with Tarzan in its mighty grip. Neither moves until Tarzan and the Thipdar disappear over a far mountain peak.

TAR-GASH

Tarzan is dead. I go now.
I not kill.

Thoar nods, watches the Sagoth as he climbs out of the nest, descends from the summit. Thoar shrugs, turns the other way, heads back to his own country.

EXT. TARZAN IN THE GRIP OF THE THIPDAR, THOUSANDS OF FEET ABOVE THE GROUND -- HIGH NOON

Tarzan's face is calm and resolute, he ignores the extreme pain from the deep wounds in his shoulders, they bleed all over him. He hangs limp knowing that any escape means falling to his certain death.

The Thipdar FLIES on and on, a majestic panorama of mountain peaks pass beneath. Then, an enormous gorge, and on the other side, a lofty granite peak a few yards wide.

At the top of the peak, another Thipdar nest, full of baby Thipdars, their large sharp-toothed beaks point upwards, SNAP as they open and close, they SHRIEK MADLY in hunger.

The mother Thipdar SLOWLY FLAPS her way down into the nest.

CLOSE on Tarzan's right hand, it reaches down, withdraws his steel knife from its sheath.

EXT. IN THE GRASP OF THE THIPDAR -- HIGH NOON (TARZAN'S POINT OF VIEW)

SNAPPING baby Thipdar beaks fill the screen, get closer and closer...

TELEPHONE (OFF SCREEN)
RING...RING...RING...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. OFFICE OF ERB, INC., 18345 VENTURA BLVD., TARZANA, CALIFORNIA, NOVEMBER 1928 -- DAY

EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS (ERB), 54, balding, dressed smartly in a gray three-piece suit, sits in a leather chair behind an enormous, ornately carved mahogany desk, SPEAKS into a Dictaphone. The RINGING PHONE is a black up-right, long-stemmed device, with a dial at the bottom and a conical speaking tube at the top. A side-cradle holds the receiver.

ERB

(dictates)

Tarzan's feet were almost
in their jaws when he struck
suddenly upward with his
blade at the breast of the
Thipdar. Period.

Pausing, immensely annoyed at the RINGING, ERB looks up at his secretary and man Friday, RALPH ROTHMUND, 31, a good-looking man, standing in front of the desk. Rothmund, dressed in a dark one-piece business suit, taps his fingers along the seams of his slacks, watches the RINGING PHONE.

ROTHMUND

Shall I answer that, Mr.
Burroughs?

ERB

Would you please, Ralph! I
need to finish this part.

Rothmund walks around to the side of the desk, picks up the stem with his left hand, takes the receiver out of the cradle with his right, puts it against his ear.

CLOSE on the round white center of the dial where the telephone number, 0-220, is printed in black.

ROTHMUND

(speaks into tube)

Hello, ERB, Incorporated.

ERB

(into Dictaphone)

It was no random thrust.
Period.

ROTHMUND

Yes...yes...okay.

Rothmund holds the tube against his chest, looks at ERB, waits for an opportune moment to interrupt.

ERB
(still dictates)
What slender chance for life
the ape-man had depended
upon the accuracy and the
strength of that single blow.
Period.

ROTHMUND
Mr. Burroughs, you need to
take this.

ERB pounds the desktop with his left fist, BANG!

ERB
Goddammit, Ralph! I'm just
about to kill a Thipdar!

ERB holds the Dictaphone in his right hand as if it were a
steel knife.

ROTHMUND
Sorry, Mr. Burroughs.

ERB
It's bad enough that the
most invasive invention in
the history of man constantly
interrupts my thoughts, but
do you have to rub salt in
the wound by calling me "Mr.
Burroughs"? Good God, man,
you've been working here for
over a year, when are you
going to start calling me
"Ed"?

ROTHMUND
Sorry, Mr. -- er, Ed, but
it's really important that
you take this call. It's
your lawyer.

ERB
It better be, this is one of
my best stories yet.

ERB swings the Dictaphone away from his face, takes both the stem and receiver from Rothmund's hands.

ERB

(continuing; into phone)

Hello, Edgar Burroughs here
 ...oh, hi, there...no, no,
 you're not interrupting at
 all. I was just dictating
 part of my new story, Tarzan
at the Earth's Core. It's a
 real corker. I'm using a
 character's radio invention
 to link the Tarzan, John
 Carter, and Pellucidar series.

Rothmund, unable to hide the concern on his face, strolls to a side wall, reads a series of newsclippings from the Los Angeles Times that are framed and hung.

PAN over headlines as ERB HEMS AND HAWS in the background on the phone. The first appears next to an aerial shot of a large hilltop Spanish hacienda, previously owned and built by Harrison Gray Otis, the deceased publisher of the Times.

They read: FROM MIL FLORES TO RANCHO TARZANA: CREATOR OF TARZAN BUYS OTIS RANCH FOR \$125,000. Another: BURROUGHS SUBDIVIDES RANCHO TARZANA: TURNS OTIS MANSION INTO EL CABALLERO COUNTRY CLUB. And another: TARZAN INCORPORATES HIMSELF: MOVES INTO NEW OFFICE IN TARZANA.

Beneath the pictures is a large table, on top of which sits a massive wooden RCA radio, PLAYS A PEPSODENT COMMERCIAL from the Amos 'n' Andy radio show.

ERB SLAMS! the receiver into the cradle, BANGS! the long-stemmed base onto the desk top.

ERB

Goddammit!

ROTHMUND

What is it, Ed?

ERB

The club's gone under.
They couldn't get enough
members to make it solvent.
If I don't take it back, it
goes into foreclosure.

ROTHMUND

Is taking it back a good
idea? Don't forget what a
nightmare it was the first
time around.

ERB

You don't have to remind me
about my nightmares, Ralph.
I still have them every
night. It's no laughing
matter when I start screaming
and thrashing all around in
the middle of the night.
Old Dr. Freud would have a
field day with my mind.

ROTHMUND

Still, on the light sight,
Ed, it's probably where your
vivid imagination comes from.
It's the money-maker, why
knock it?

ERB

What to do, what to do?

ROTHMUND

It would be hard to rename
it Tarzana after your sub-
division unified itself under
that name. Besides, the
mansion is a dump.

(nervous cough)

I must tell you, Ed, in your
current financial situation,
you just can't afford it.

ERB

Well, I'll just have to write more stories then! I still have a few more left in me before I'm done. Hell, I'm not going to let this new Tarzan go for anything less than \$60,000! It's the first cross-over I've ever done and my best story yet.

ROTHMUND

You'll be lucky to get five for it. Come on, Ed, you have to learn how to be more realistic. Accept yourself for who you are. You need to stop worrying about meeting those impossible high standards your father was always setting for you.

ERB

The Old Major was a real task-master, a real no nonsense man. He tried to drive the adventure out of my life.

ROTHMUND

Yes, but what can you expect after all those years he fought in the Civil War?

ERB

From First Bull Run to the very end, and he never let anyone forget it.

(sighs)

Look, Ralph, I don't really consider all of this success. My goal is to break into the slicks before I die! You're supposed to be encouraging me.

Rothmund waves his arms in a circular motion to encompass the domain.

ROTHMUND

Come on, Ed, if all of this is a failure, then it's the most spectacular failure in history! You're the undisputed King of Pulp Fiction!

ERB

Call it what you will, Ralph. But I'll never give up.

ROTHMUND

How's the autobiography coming? There's a real demand for it.

ERB nods to several Dictaphone cylinders on the desktop.

ERB

On that one, I'm with "B" Troop of the 7th Cavalry at Fort Grant, Arizona, chasing that wily bastard, the Apache Kid. At the time, it was the worst job in the Army, and we never did catch the son of a bitch. It was six months of pure hell under the blazing Arizona sun...

DISSOLVE TO:

ARIZONA DESERT NEAR THE LITTLE COLORADO RIVER, OCTOBER 1896
- DAY (FLASHBACK)

ERB, 21, is on horseback patrol with "B" Troop, comprised of an OFFICER and 19 TROOPERS, the White Mountains and Little Colorado River loom in the background. An Apache scout approaches the column, the Officer calls for the troop to HALT.

ERB

(to nearest trooper)

Do you think its news of the Kid? I've almost given up hope. Most people out here believe he was killed two years ago.

TROOPER

He used to be one of us, a first class scout, until that drunken brawl that started this whole mess. He's such a tricky bastard, no one who really knows him believes he's dead.

The scout takes the lead, the troop rides off in a gallop. They pass a dead horse, follow a blood trail, come across a lone figure staggering under the blazing sun, a good-looking Apache woman with a gunshot wound in her shoulder.

The officer and scout dismount, seize the woman, she swoons from lack of blood.

They lower her to the ground, the scout INTERROGATES her, gives the information to the officer, the officer faces the men.

OFFICER

Okay, men, listen up. This woman rode with the Kid. He shot her when her horse died and left her for dead. You three men treat her wound - it's a through and through - and guard her while the rest of us go after the Kid.

ERB is one of the three men chosen. He is unhappy, feels cheated, feels that guarding the woman is beneath him, he sulks by his horse.

"B" Troop rides off, one of the troopers gets a bandage, tears open the woman's blouse, exposes her large blood covered breasts, she is exceptionally thin, the bones in her ribcage stick out. He cleans the wound with his canteen, stops the bleeding with a bandage, binds the wound with a cloth, the other trooper stares at her large brown nipples, unfastens his belt.

The trooper treating the wound looks up, shakes his head.

FIRST TROOPER

What da ya think you're doin', Dean?

DEAN

Just lookee at them thar' tits, Bill. I'm gonna fuck the Kid's Injun' whore, that's what I'm a gonna do.

BILL

No, you ain't. We have our orders.

DEAN

Fuck our orders! The Apache Kid has fucked with us long enough! Now I'm a gonna fuck with him.

Dean shoves Bill out of the way, pulls out his revolver, points it at Bill, motions for Bill to raise his hands.

DEAN

Stay the fuck outta the way, Bill!

Dean drops his trousers, he has an erection. ERB watches, still sulks.

Keeping a bead on Bill, Dean squats between the woman's legs, pulls down her riding pants, she has very little pubic hair, he rubs the tip of his penis between her labia, over her clitoris; the woman stares at Dean in resignation, her eyes scan, fix on ERB, she pleads with her eyes.

ERB pulls out his revolver, aims it at Dean.

ERB
Put your dick in there and
I'll blow you all to hell,
Dean! Don't move!

Dean freezes, looks over his shoulder.

DEAN
Keep outta this, Goddammit,
Burroughs.

Dean makes a slight pelvic move, tries to slide his penis in her vagina, ERB fires, BANG! the bullet WHIZZES past Dean's head by an inch, Dean turns into a statue, his penis goes soft.

ERB
I said don't move, mother-
fucker! I was taught to
shoot by Texas Pete, so
when I say don't move, I
fuckin' mean it! Bill, take
his gun and help me tie him
up! One more move, Dean,
and I'll blast you, I
swear to God I will.

Bill takes over guarding Dean, they tie his hands behind his back, bind his feet. ERB gets his canteen, offers the woman water to drink, she sips, he helps her up, helps her pull up her pants, put back on the blouse, covers her breasts as best as he can, she has a native nobility that he finds attractive.

He talks to her in sign language, offers her some food; she is famished. She eats, falls asleep.

ERB
(continuing; to himself)
I guess this job ain't so bad.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ERB, INC. - DAY (PRESENT)

ERB

Dean swore revenge on me,
but I was discharged on
account of a heart murmur
before he got out of the
stockade. Even with the
heart murmur, it took every
bit of pull the Old Major
could muster to get me out
of the Army.

ROTHMUND

Not everyone gets to ride
with the 7th Cavalry, Ed.
By the way, I really liked
the Whiskey Jack episode.

The SOUND OF A CAR ENGINE comes up the driveway outside the office window. ERB and Rothmund look out at a brand new 1929 Nash Roadster coming to a stop. Inside are ERB's daughter, JOAN (pronounced "Jo-Ann"), 20, and her new husband, part-time actor JIM PIERCE, 27.

ERB's eyes light up at sight of his daughter.

ERB

It's Joan and Jim!

ROTHMUND

Jim's a sycophant, Ed. His
film career's gone belly-
up since he played Tarzan in
The Golden Lion.

ERB

Well, you have a point. Joe
Kennedy and FBO weren't very
enthusiastic over his acting
ability.

ROTHMUND

And you were? Come on, Ed, I know you gave him the rights to the next Tarzan movie as a wedding gift, but let's face the facts! Ever since he turned down that role in Wings, the one that made Gary Cooper famous, in order to star in The Golden Lion, he is thought of as a loser. You know how Hollywood is, Ed.

ERB hangs his head, frowns, lifts it, happy again.

ERB

He made the wrong choice because he was in love with Joan. Look, Ralph, I know how you feel about him, but he's my son-in-law. The moment I first laid eyes on him at Joan's graduation party, I knew he was my perfect Tarzan.

(sighs)

He's taking lessons, he'll get better. And Hollywood be damned! I'm no Indian-giver. A deal is a deal. He has great potential. He was All-American center at Indiana, going to law school.

ROTHMUND

Which he never finished. Look, Ed, I know a gold-digger when I see one.

ERB pounds the desk with his right fist, BANG! raises it, extends the forefinger, drives his point.

ERB

Look, Ralph, Joan loves him,
and I love Joan, and that's
all there is to it!

(sighs)

I'll never forget that first
day we met...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE POOL AT EL CABALLERO COUNTRY CLUB, JUNE 1926 -- DAY
(FLASHBACK)

ERB, 52, sits under an umbrella table at pool-side, dressed in shorts, untucked summer shirt, straw hat, sips on a cold high-ball. Next to him are his wife, EMMA, 51, a pudgy matronly woman, showing obvious signs of alcoholism, also drinking, and youngest son, JOHN COLEMAN ("JACK"), 13.

ERB stares at the pool where a big, handsome young man, Pierce, 25, shows off on the diving board in front of A BEVY OF YOUNG AVAILABLE GIRLS in fashionable swim suits -- including Joan, 18 -- gathered at the pool's shallow end.

ERB's oldest son, HULBERT ("HULLY"), 17, also at the shallow end, tries to impress one of the older girls, a very pretty buxom blonde in a wool swim suit, her hard nipples jut out against the wet fabric.

Jack, jealous of his brother, stares at the same blonde, under the constant eye of his mother.

Emma is perturbed at the attention Joan is giving to Pierce, her drink sloshes back and forth in her hands.

EMMA

(slurs)

I don't really care for that
young man, Eddie. You can
never trust a show-off.

ERB

But just look at him, Emma.
He's big, smooth-limbed, and
very athletic. He was All --

EMMA

Yes, yes, he was All-American
at Indiana. How many times
are you going to remind me?

ERB

What do you think, Jack?

Jack is not paying attention.

Emma misses the table with her glass, it spills over the
top. ERB snatches up his notepad and pen.

ERB

(continuing)

Goddammit, Emma, when are you
going to learn how to hold
your booze!

EMMA

Don't you dare talk to me in
that tone of voice in public,
Edgar Burroughs! Why - why -
I just won't stand for it.
Jack, take me home at once!

Jack has tried to ignore the whole thing, his eyes still on
the girl.

JACK

Aw, Mom, do I have to?

Emma rises in a huff, staggers off towards the parking lot
where ERB's big Packard is parked. The girl Hully fawns
over, looks, smiles at Jack.

JACK

Come on, Dad, do I have to?

ERB

Do as your Mother says, Jack.
Besides, you're always asking
to drive the car. Here's the
perfect opportunity.

Jack rises from his chair, tears his gaze away from the sexy girl.

JACK

Just when things were looking
up.

ERB

Trust me, Jack, she's too old
for you. She's just trying
to make Hully pay more
attention to her by making
him jealous of his brother.
It's a game girls play.

JACK

Don't guys play them too?

ERB

Yes, they do, Jack. But
don't you think it's better
to learn the rules before
you play?

Jack shrugs, shuffles toward the parking lot.

ERB

(continuing)

Hey, one thing before you
leave. What do you think of
the big guy over there on the
diving board?

They both look at Pierce as he smoothly dives into the pool,
SPLASH! swims across the water like an Olympic champion.

JACK

He sure is showing off in front of Joan. Just watch the way she looks at him, Dad. I think she really likes him.

ERB

Yeah, I see what you mean. But just look at the way he moves in the water. Don't you think he'd make a swell Tarzan?

JACK

I dunno, Dad, I always think of myself as Tarzan.

They LAUGH.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ERB, INC. -- DAY (PRESENT)

ERB and Rothmund LAUGH at the amusing story.

ERB

Well, the rest, as you know, is history. Say, Ralph, did I ever tell you the story of Jack when he was a young boy at the ranch?

ROTHMUND

Which one?

ERB

Early one morning, as we were walking to the stables for our morning ride, I turned around and found him on all fours sniffing my footprints. I said, "Jack, what in God's name are you doing?" He answered, "I'm Tarzan, Dad, and I'm following your spoor."

They LAUGH, but Rothmund's face turns cold as Pierce gets out of his car on the other side of the window.

ROTHMUND

My God, he even dresses like you!

EXT. DRIVEWAY OF ERB, INC. -- DAY

ERB, Inc., is a low-slung Spanish-style building.

Pierce, handsome and tan, wears an open sport's shirt, riding jodhpurs, boots, walks around the front of the car, opens the door for Joan. She is in a fashionable hat and suit, looking pretty and animated.

PIERCE

I just love your father's office.

JOAN

He hated to give up the old one at the ranch.

(sighs)

Oh, Jim, those were such golden days. We'd rise up every morning at the break of dawn and go horseback riding in the Santa Monica hills, sometimes all the way to Malibu. Popsy would spend all kinds of time with me, showing me how to read the animal signs on the bridle trails.

Pierce helps her out of the car, they walk to the front door. Pierce opens it, follows Joan inside.

INT. ERB, INC., RECEPTION ROOM -- DAY

Pierce closes the door, his attention focuses on a group of framed pictures on the wall depicting the various actors who played Tarzan in the silent movies: the first, ELMO LINCOLN, with ENID MARKEY as Jane; next, GENE POLLAR; then P. DEMPSEY TABLER; and finally, JIM PIERCE.

PIERCE

Gee, Joan, do you think I'll ever get to play Tarzan again? Frank Merrill's playing him in the Tarzan the Mighty serial.

JOAN

Be patient, Jim. Popsy just hates the way Hollywood keeps butchering Tarzan. He gets very angry that no one has gotten him right yet. And I don't see Merrill's picture up there yet, do you?

PIERCE

Good point. But if your Dad hates Hollywood so much, how come he keeps taking its money?

They LAUGH KNOWINGLY, stop when the door to ERB's office opens. Rothmund enters the reception room, firmly shakes their hands.

ROTHMUND

Joan and Jim, what a pleasant surprise. Come in, Mr. Burroughs is expecting you.

INT. ERB'S OFFICE -- DAY

ERB stands in front of his desk as they enter. Joan embraces him, kisses him, Pierce shakes hands.

ERB

Have a seat. So good to see the both of you again.

ERB returns to his chair, Joan and Jim sit down, Rothmund stands behind Joan and Jim.

ERB

(continuing)

That's quite a machine you're driving, Jim.

PIERCE

It's not like one of your
Packards, Mr. Burroughs, but
she rides like the wind.

ERB makes no effort to tell Pierce to call him Ed, he and
Rothmund share a knowing glance.

ERB

My new Cord L-29 is coming
in next month. We should
race them and see what they
can do.

PIERCE

I've had her up to ninety.

JOAN

I'll say. He nearly scared
the hell out of me, Popsy.
We just came from showing it
off to Mom.

ERB

How is she?

JOAN

She was barely coherent.
I found the bottle under the
couch in the living room.

ERB

Joan! You know we agreed
never to discuss this in
front of anyone outside of
the family.

PIERCE

Hey, I'm family, aren't I?

ERB and Rothmund share a glance. Hiding his smile, Rothmund
moves to the side of the desk, picks up the Dictaphone
cylinders.

ROTHMUND

Which of these is the Apache
Kid, Mr. Burroughs?

ERB

(points)

That one there, I believe.

JOAN

Oh, Popsy, are you working on
your autobiography again?

ERB

I'm trying, Joan, but it is
the most boring thing I've
ever undertaken.

JOAN

Tell Jim the story of Texas
Pete, Popsy, please?

ERB

You always did like that one,
but perhaps Jim has other
things to do?

PIERCE

No, Mr. Burroughs, I'd love
to hear it.

ERB

Oh, all right, if you insist.

ERB, a natural story-teller, leans back in his chair, folds
his hands behind his head, goes down memory lane.

ERB

(continuing)

It was June of 1891 on my
brothers' Bar Y Ranch in
Idaho. The "Y" was for
Yale, their alma mater. The
Old Major and Mother sent me
to the ranch to avoid an
epidemic that had broken out
in Chicago.

ERB

(continuing)

It seems that my early life was spent avoiding one kind of epidemic or another.

(sighs)

Life on the Bar Y was the most enjoyable experience of my life. It was there that I learned how to ride and break horses. Oh, and what horses they were. My first challenge was the Black Pacer, who'd killed the last man who'd tried to bust 'em.

ERB sits up in his chair, rubs his hands together, his mind full of past victories.

ERB

(continuing)

I really earned the respect of the bunkhouse boys after I broke that black demon. But the worse of the worse was old Whiskey Jack, the meanest thing on hooves that ever roamed the West. He too had killed a man and maimed several others....

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BAR Y RANCH, IDAHO, JUNE 1891 -- DAY (FLASHBACK)

SEVERAL COWHANDS are trying to put a saddle on Whiskey Jack, a big, angry black horse, he STOMPS, BUCKS all over the inside of a corral, stirs up great clouds of dust. On a rail sit ERB, 15, his older brother HARRY ("COLEMAN"), 22, and TEXAS PETE, 30, looking Gary Cooperish. Everyone is dressed in Western gear.

TEXAS PETE

Put a blindfold on 'em, boys!

COLEMAN

Is this such a good idea,
Pete? My Ma would kill me
if anything happened to
Eddie.

TEXAS PETE

A bet's a bet, Coleman.
And my five dollars says he
ain't a gonna do it this time.

ERB

Say goodbye to your fiver,
Pete. I'm gonna break that
son of a bitch.

TEXAS PETE

Why, Eddie, what would yer Ma
say if she heard ya talkin'
like that?

ERB

My Ma ain't here, Pete.

COLEMAN

I'll say.

The cowhands get a blindfold on the horse, he holds still
enough to mount. ERB climbs down the rail, approaches, rubs
his hands together. He is scared, tries not to show it.

ERB

Wish me luck, Pete.

TEXAS PETE

Why? So ya can take my hard-
earned money?

ERB mounts Whiskey Jack, leans back in the saddle, takes the
reins from the cowhands.

ERB

Okay, boys, let 'er go!

The cowhands take their hands off the horse, he bucks all over the corral. ERB holds on, swings his big cowboy hat high in the air with his free hand.

TEXAS PETE

Yee-haww! Ride 'em, cowboy!

Whiskey Jack trips, falls on his side, CRASH, on top of ERB. Whiskey Jack stumbles to his legs, jumps up, runs around the corral. Coleman and Pete rush to ERB, pick him off the ground. He breathes hard, winded from the fall.

COLEMAN

You okay, Eddie? Tell me you're okay?

ERB

(wheezes)

I'm gonna break that Goddamn son of a bitch!

TEXAS PETE

That's the spirit, Eddie!

COLEMAN

You sure nothin's broke, Eddie? That was a hell of a fall.

ERB catches his breath, motions to the cowhands.

ERB

Bring that black bastard over here, boys!

The cowhands retrieve Whiskey Jack, ERB mounts him, after a furious battle, he breaks him. Everyone CHEERS.

ERB

(continuing)

I own the son of a bitch now!

ERB rides Whiskey Jack over to Coleman and Pete.

COLEMAN

You did it, Eddie. You're one hell of a cowboy! The Old Major would be proud.

TEXAS PETE

Yep, Eddie, yer a regular equestrian, ya are. Let's go into town and celebrate yer winnings! If yer gonna spend all a my hard-earned money, well, then, Godammit, I'm a gonna be with ya.

COLEMAN

Be back by sunrise. We've got lots of work to do.

Texas Pete mounts up, they ride toward American Falls.

EXT. AMERICAN FALLS, IDAHO -- DUSK (FLASHBACK)

American Falls is a typical western railroad town on the Snake River. The Snake River Mountains and Grand Tetons loom majestically in the distance.

After a hard ride, ERB and Texas Pete enter the main street at a slow trot, tired and weary from the thirty mile trip.

TEXAS PETE

Time ya had yer first drink and piece 'a ass, Eddie.

ERB

Why, Pete, what would my Ma say?

TEXAS PETE

She ain't here, Eddie, and don't ya ever forget, when yer on a roll, yer on a roll.

They pull up in front of a saloon, tie up their horses to a rail, walk inside the half-swinging doors.

It is the final days of the open range, there is a noticeable tension in the room. The saloon is FULL OF COWHANDS AND BAR PROSTITUTES, they look as if they have seen better days.

Everyone looks at Pete and ERB as they enter. ONE OF THE WHORES, INDIANA SUE, 18, catches ERB's eye, he stares at her nearly exposed breasts. Pete pushes ERB up to the bar, raises his hand, motions to the BARTENDER, 40's.

TEXAS PETE

Bartender! Two whiskeys!

The bartender walks up, eyes ERB with suspicion, pours them each a shot of whiskey from a bottle. Pete shoots his down in a single gulp, ERB does the same.

ERB

Whooooo! Goddamn!

TEXAS PETE

Thatta boy, Eddie. Good job!
Now its time fer ya to have
yer first pussy. Which one's
it gonna be, slick? It looks
like ole Indiana Sue has an
eye fer ya. She's the best.

The bartender catches Pete's eye, nods to the MAN, 30, at the end of the bar. Pete looks over his shoulder at the man standing there.

TEXAS PETE

Oh, shit!

ERB

What's the matter, Pete?

TEXAS PETE

It's PAXTON. He was hired ta
kill me an' I was hired ta
kill him in last year's range
war.

ERB

But that war's over, ain't it?

Paxton BANGS! his glass down hard on the bartop, walks around, stands between the bar and the front entrance.

PAXTON

Well, lookee' here what the cat done drug in. If it ain't that yellow-bellied bastard, Texas Pete. I put word out that if I ever saw yer cocksuckin' face again, I'd blow it all to hell!

Texas Pete stares straight ahead at Paxton's reflection in the big mirror behind the bar.

ERB

You don't have to do this, Pete.

TEXAS PETE

I ain't afeared of nuthin', Eddie. I ain't never run from a fight yet, and I'll be Goddamned if I run now.

PAXTON

Hey, fuck face, I'm talkin' to you!

Pete turns, faces Paxton, moves his belt so that his big Colt revolver is easier to draw.

TEXAS PETE

I am the original bad un, I am. I eats 'em alive an' I don't give a damn. Fer how fast they come er how many they be, of all the bad hombres the wust one is me.

BARTENDER

Take it outside, boys!

Both men go for their guns, BANG! BANG! Paxton's shot goes wide, WHIZZES by ERB's head, SHATTERS the mirror. Pete's goes through Paxton's heart, drops him THUD! to the floor. Thick blue gunsmoke curls, swirls in the air. Pete runs for the door.

TEXAS PETE

Give my regards to Coleman,
Eddie!

ERB

Goddamn!

Pete jumps on his horse, takes off at a hard gallop in a cloud of dust. The bartender moves quickly around the bar, stoops over the body of Paxton, checks him for signs of life, the other patrons gather around.

BARTENDER

He's deader 'n' a doornail.

He examines the body, reaches inside a pocket, pulls out a large wad of cash, counts it out.

BARTENDER

(continuing)

This should just about take
care of the mirror.

Indiana Sue bends over Paxton's corpse, her large full breasts are exposed, they make ERB's young mouth water. She looks up, catches ERB's eye, smiles, jiggles her breasts, ERB smiles back.

ERB

Bartender, another whiskey!

BARTENDER

You best be high-tailin'
your young ass out of town,
sonny!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ERB'S OFFICE -- DAY (PRESENT)

Joan, Jim, and Rothmund CRACK UP. ERB looks pleased.

ROTHMUND

That's not exactly how you
told it last time, Mr.
Burroughs.

ERB

It's so boring to tell it
the same way twice. Besides,
I didn't have to worry about
the censors this time.

PIERCE

I guess that's why so many
people think that you just
make these things up!

His attempt at humor goes over like a lead balloon.

PIERCE

(continuing; saving face)

Say, what ever happened to
Texas Pete?

ERB

He collected the money for
killing Paxton, then, in
April 1892, he fought in the
Johnston County War. Nate
Champion killed him with a
lucky shot at the KC Ranch.

Joan and Jim stare in disbelief.

ROTHMUND

You should put that in the
autobiography, Mr. Burroughs.

ERB

Perhaps, but don't you think
it kills some of the romance?
(pauses)

ERB

(continuing)

Anyway, when the Old Major found out I'd been drinking with Texas Pete when he killed Paxton, he shipped me off to military academy.

PIERCE

Is it really true, Mr. Burroughs, that you were selling pencil sharpeners when you wrote your first story?

ERB reaches to the front of his desk, picks up a pencil sharpener, holds it up for all to see.

ERB

Here it is. It was a damn good one, too, but no one wanted to buy it.

ERB sets the sharpener back in its hallowed place.

ERB

(continuing)

I nearly failed at everything before then. I mined with my brothers in Idaho, sold stationary, was a cop for the railroad in Salt Lake City, worked for Sears, and then sold these damn sharpeners. I had a wife and two babies to feed, trying to make ends meet.

ERB stands up, turns around, rifles through the large wall-sized bookcase behind his desk, finds what he's looking for, holds up a stack of pulp magazines.

ERB

(continuing)

I'd been advertising in the pulps, like these.

He shuffles through one, finds one of his ads, holds it up.

ERB

(continuing)

One day, while waiting for my salesmen to bring in some orders, I started reading them to get an idea of my customers. After reading a stack, I thought, hell, anyone can write this kind of paid-by-the-word fodder. So, taking pen in hand, I started to write a Western about a gentleman from Virginia named JOHN CARTER, a Civil War veteran, fleeing Apaches in Arizona. But then I came across this article about the canals on Mars and it got me to thinking: why not do a Western on Mars?

(smiles)

To get Carter to Mars I had to cheat a little by using the Hindu technique of astral-projection. Thus, from being trapped by Apaches inside a cave, Carter's astral double leaves his body, rises into the heavens, flies to Mars. He becomes immediately involved in an epic war between Helium and Zodanga, the principal power players on Mars, over Dejah Thoris, a Princess of Helium. The war comes to a bloody climax during the Sacking of Zodanga...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BARSOOM, THE PALACE GARDENS OF ZODANGA -- MIDNIGHT

John Carter leads a rescue team of FIFTY GREEN MARTIANS against the Red Martian city of Zodanga - the Chicago of Mars - infested with crime and political corruption.

The Red Martian woman Carter loves, Princess DEJAH THORIS of Helium, the most beautiful woman on Barsoom, is about to marry the heir to the throne of Zodanga, Prince SAB THAN, son of THAN KOSIS, Jeddak of Zodanga, allegedly to bring peace between Helium and Zodanga.

Red Martians are human, have light copper-red skin, black hair and eyebrows, are otherwise void of body hair. Their ages are hard to determine, an average life span is a thousand years, and they only show signs of age at the end of their lives. Like all Martians, they are hatched from eggs which incubate for five years, are born perfectly proportional, grow into full maturity within a year.

Like all inhabitants of Barsoom, they are naked, wear only arm and leg ornaments, the men and women wear leather shoulder-and-waist harnesses signifying rank, ornamented with precious stones; among the women the harnesses accentuate rather than conceal their breasts.

The harnesses support a dagger and pocket pouch for the women, for the men, a long-sword, short-sword, dagger, and pocket pouch.

Martians have no body shame; fornication is not regarded as a sin and is universally practiced in public and in private. There are no sexually transmitted diseases on Mars.

Fertility is regulated and controlled telepathically by the women, a woman produces about thirteen eggs a year, which she passes unless she wills them to be fertilized after copulating with a man.

Martian culture and politics are centered around seizing the Princesses of other city-states and making wives or slaves of them. The national game of Mars is called Jetan, it is like chess, but the seizure of the piece known as the Princess is more important than the checkmate of the Chief.

A woman shows her approval of a man's fighting prowess by masturbating him, thus giving the man permission to claim her. A man claims a woman as a prize of war by copulating her in front of witnesses; he can either claim her as a wife or as a concubine.

Green Martians are monstrous humanoids, the males reaching 15 feet high, their smooth skin a dark olive green. They have an extra set of arms midway down their elongated torsos, used as arms or legs. Their protruding eyes are set at the extreme sides of the head, allowing them to look in any direction without turning their heads. Their irises are blood red, with dark pupils, their eyeballs very white. Their ears are cup-shaped antennae located slightly above the eyes. Their noses are two longitudinal slits in the center of their faces. They have white teeth the color of ivory, with two enormous tusks on either side of their mouths, curving upwards to the level of their eyes.

They wear similar harnesses, are armed with short and long swords, radium rifles firing radium bullets that explode on impact.

Carter and the Green Martians ride thoats - the Martian horse - enormous eight-legged beasts, standing ten feet high at the shoulders. They have broad flat tails, larger at the tip than at the root, which stand straight up when they run. They have gaping mouths which split their heads from the snout to the their long, massive necks. Their slate-colored, hairless hides are smooth and glossy. They have white bellies, their legs are slate at the top, bright yellow at the feet, which are large, heavily padded and nailless.

A calot is a six legged Martian dog the size of a Shetland pony. A Martian inch is called a sofad; a foot, an ad; a mile, a haad; an hour, a zode; a minute, a xat; a second, a tal.

All Martians are telepathic, guide their Thoats by their thoughts. The Red Martians can guard their thoughts from outside influence. This practice does not work with John Carter; he can read minds, no Martian can read his.

John Carter has superhuman powers on Mars; he can kill a man with one punch; leap thirty feet into the air because of the lesser gravity; weave a net of steel with a sword.

The rescue team gallops through the palace gardens, the great palace rises majestically before them with towers, domes, and spires.

The first floor windows expose the brilliantly lighted audience chamber of Than Kosis.

Carter calls the procession to a halt, slides off his thoot, it SNORTS, he addresses the Jeddak of the Green Martians, TARS TARKAS; the thoots SNORT, make LOW GUTTERAL GROWLS in the background.

CARTER

Tars Tarkas, we must stop this marriage. Jeddak Than Kosis and Prince Sab Than have deceived Princess Dejah Thoris into believing it will bring peace between Helium and Zodanga. The Prince must therefore die, but if I kill him I will forfeit my right under Martian custom to marry the Princess. However, if he lives, all will be in vain. Now, more than ever, I need your help.

TARS TARKAS

Never fear, John Carter. You are the greatest fighting man on Barsoom. It will be my honor to slay the Prince for you. The woman you love will soon be yours by right.

INT. AUDIENCE CHAMBER OF THAN KOSIS -- MIDNIGHT

The immense hall is CROWDED WITH NOBLES AND THEIR WOMEN. At one end, on a platform, on massive golden thrones, encrusted with diamonds, sit Than Kosis and HIS CONSORT, surrounded by OFFICERS AND DIGNITARIES OF STATE.

Before the throne platform is an enormous aisle lined on either side with SOLDIERY. Than Kosis waves his arm as a signal.

THAN KOSIS

Let the marriage begin!

At the far end of the aisle EIGHT OFFICERS bear two large serving trays; each tray carries a silken scarlet cushion. On top of the first cushion, a thick golden chain, a collar and padlock on either end.

On the other, the magnificent ornaments of a Prince and Princess of the reigning house of Zodanga.

Behind the trays stream A PROCESSION OF MORE DIGNITARIES AND OFFICERS OF THE PALACE AND ARMY, at the end, TWO FIGURES totally shrouded with scarlet robes.

The officers bearing the trays stop at the foot of the platform, part, stand on either side of the aisle, the rest of the procession follows suit, until the robed figures stand alone before the thrones.

THAN KOSIS

Remove the robes!

Two officers advance, remove the robe from one of the figures, revealing Sab Than. Than Kosis rises from his throne, walks to the cushion on his right, picks up the golden chain, fastens the collar around the neck of his son, the padlock makes a loud CLICK! as it springs shut.

THAN KOSIS

Sab Than, my son, receive now
your bride.

Two more officers advance, remove the robe from the other figure, disclosing Dejah Thoris, the most beautiful woman on Mars.

The Princess is tall, has a slim figure, heavily lashed bedroom eyes, long coal-black hair woven with jewels, large upturned breasts crowned with large thick ruby-red nipples, she wears precious jewels set in a woven gold necklace around her neck, a sapphire in her navel.

She has large ruby-red labia folded under a prominent clitoris, is known as The Red Flower of Helium.

Most of the men in the audience are instantly aroused at the sight of her. With collar in hand, Than Kosis approaches her, he has a noticeable erection.

John Carter SHATTERS! CRASH! TINKLE! the window with the hilt of his long sword, storms through the breach, leaps to the platform in a single bound.

Than Kosis holds the open collar in front of Dejah Thoris's neck, stands amazed; Carter swings his long sword, HACK! splits the chain in two, the links hit the floor, CLANG!

Every one draws swords, SCHWING! they attack Carter from all directions. Carter, a swashbuckler from the Douglas Fairbanks/Errol Flynn tradition, fights off the attackers with relish and a killer smile, CLANG! CLANG! CLANG!

Sab Than grabs a jeweled dagger from the cushion, leaps onto Carter, plunges down with his dagger-hand. Carter grabs Sab Than's wrist just in time, holds it tight, SNIFFS his breath, his eyes widen in understanding, points with his sword towards the end of the hall.

CARTER

Perhaps the Zodangan liquor
has dulled your senses, Sab
Than, but look for yourself:
Zodanga has fallen!

All eyes turn in that direction as Tars Tarkas and his fifty warriors CRASH! through the windows on their mighty thoats, they GRUNT AND ROAR as their riders HACK AND HEW their way through the crowd indiscriminately.

All hell breaks loose.

Carter exerts his superior strength, lifts Sab Than, thrusts him headlong from the platform, draws the Princess to his side, SNIFFS her breath, his eyes open even wider.

DEJAH THORIS

I knew you would come, my
Chieftan!

CARTER

You must focus, my Princess!
You must overcome the sweet
intoxication of the sompas
fruit.

DEJAH THORIS

Help me, John Carter; I am
so woozy.

Carter has no time to reply, he keeps the Princess behind him, crosses swords with the mighty blade of Than Kosis, they have an epic sword fight, CLANG! CLANG! circle the platform again and again.

Sab Than recovers, rushes up the steps to stab Carter in the back, Dejah Thoris springs on him, his blade rakes the air a foot away, SWISH! it distracts Than Kosis, Carter takes the opportunity to run his long sword through Than Kosis's heart, SQUISH! amazed, Than Kosis falls dead to the floor, THUD!

Sab Than, the new Jeddak, throws the Princess aside, she CRASHES into several warriors; four other officers press Carter back against one of the thrones. Unable by law to kill Sab Than, Carter fights with a handicap, holds his own with vicious parries and thrusts, CLANG! CLANG! disarms two warriors, CLANG! CLANG! kills one in a matter of seconds, SQUISH! Other officers replace them, CRY OUT:

OFFICERS

The woman! The woman!
Strike her down; it is her
plot! Kill her! Kill her!

CARTER

My Princess, get up!

Dejah Thoris stands groggily to her feet, shakes her head, grabs a dagger, stabs the nearest warrior in the back, SQUISH!, fights her way back to Carter's side.

CARTER

(continuing)

Stay behind me, watch my
back!

She obeys, Carter works his way to a doorway behind the throne, CLANG! CLANG! a throng of officers realize his intention, rush to the doorway, cut him off.

Tars Tarkas moves down the aisle like a gigantic harvesting machine, BZZZZZZZZZZ! laying waste to all to his right and left, HACKS the Red Martian enemies down like pygmies. There is the SICKENING SOUND OF STEEL CUTTING THROUGH SKIN AND BONE, blood and body parts SPATTER! in all directions.

In a moment, he stands next to Carter on the platform, he SLICES AND DICES all who dare approach. Sab Than attempts to engage Carter, Tars Tarkas intervenes.

TARS TARKAS

For John Carter of Barsoom!

Tars Tarkas swings his sword, SPLAT! splits Sab Than in two from head to groin, both halves of his body fall in opposite directions. A second later the battle is over. Only Carter, the Princess, Tars Tarkas, a few Green Martians survive. Dejah Thoris, overjoyed, rushes into the waiting arms of John Carter. Both are covered in blood and guts, thick rivulets run down her proud breasts.

CARTER

Oh, my Princess, at last I can claim you.

DEJAH THORIS

I am free now, John Carter. Never before in the history of Barsoom has there been such a fighting man as you.

She embraces Carter tightly in her arms, kisses him passionately on the lips, she reaches down, masturbates him.

DEJAH THORIS

Claim me now, my Chieftan!

Carter sits on the Throne of Zodanga, Dejah Thoris faces away from him, lowers herself onto his lap, impales herself on his penis, they copulate.

CARTER

I, John Carter, claim the
Princess Dejah Thoris as my
wife by right of conquest.

TARS TARKAS

You have the Princess! A
game of Jetan well played,
John Carter.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ERB'S HOUSE, CHICAGO, NOVEMBER 1911 -- DAY (FLASHBACK)

ERB, 36, waves a check over his head, rushes into the
kitchen where EMMA, 35, is stirring a BOILING POT over the
stove. A small child, Hully, CRIES OFF SCREEN.

EMMA

(over shoulder)

Jo-an! You will leave your
brother alone right this
minute!

She turns and looks at ERB, ladle in hand.

ERB

Emma! Emma! I sold it!
Metcalf at All-Story bought
the Martian Princess story!
I have conquered Zodanga!

EMMA

How much did he pay you?

ERB

Four hundred dollars!

Emotionless, Emma stares at ERB, goes back to stirring the
pot.

EMMA

I hope you don't plan on
quitting your job at your
brother's stationary store.
We'll starve to death on
that kind of money.

Hully still CRIES.

EMMA

(continuing; yells)

Jo-an, did you hear me?

ERB

This is just the beginning,
Emma. It won't be long
before we're living in Oak
Park and driving a Packard.

EMMA

Whatever you say, Eddie.
Supper will be ready in
twenty minutes.

INT. COLEMAN'S STATIONARY STORE, FEBRUARY 1912 -- DAY
(FLASHBACK)

ERB sits at his desk reading a rejection notice from
Metcalf. On top of the desk are books that he has been
reading to alleviate his boredom, among which are Jack
London's Before Adam and Rudyard Kipling's Jungle Book.

His brother, COLEMAN, 43, stands nearby with a clipboard
filled with new orders, taps his fingers on it while he
waits for ERB to finish reading.

Angry, ERB CRUMPLES the note into a ball, throws it across
the room, Coleman catches it in midair with his free hand.

ERB

Goddammit! How can Metcalf
reject a story he suggested?

Coleman UNCRUMPLES the note, reads it. He looks up, stares
at ERB, puzzled.

COLEMAN

It says here that he's willing to pay you a hundred bucks to let someone else finish The Outlaw of Torn. What's wrong with that? It wasn't your idea to begin with.

ERB

It's an insult, Coleman. It'll doom my writing career! I don't want to be writing pulp fiction for the rest of my life.

COLEMAN

Well, why don't you write a story of your own, then? How about a sequel to your Mars story?

ERB looks at the books on the desk, raises his eyes in thought. He holds up the London book.

ERB

You know, London invented a whole new language for his primitive men to speak in this story. He really knows how to write adventure, too. After all, he started out in the pulps, just like me.

COLEMAN

It's hard to believe that a good Republican like you can idolize that damned socialist. Don't forget, he stole that monkey-talk idea from Kipling.

ERB fondles London's book in his hands, looks at it with eyes of wonder.

ERB

Well, he may profess
socialism, but he sure as
hell lives like a capitalist.
And whatever your political
leanings, his struggle-for-
survival stories are nearly
impossible to put down once
you start reading them.

(pauses)

You know, Coleman, that's got
me to thinking.

ERB grabs some of his brother's stationary, furiously writes
down some notes. Coleman shakes his head, picks up his
clipboard.

COLEMAN

Let it go for awhile, Eddie;
we've got a lot of orders to
finish by the end of the day.

ERB

In just a minute.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. EQUATORIAL AFRICA, FEBRUARY 1909 -- DAY

JANE PORTER, 19, of Baltimore, marooned on a jungle shore,
gathers fruit with her black maid, ESMERALDA, 30, under a
triple canopy of trees. Jane is a strikingly beautiful
buxom blonde, dressed in a now-tattered suit, she speaks
with a Southern Belle accent.

Esmeralda is dressed like Solomon in many colors, wearing a
bandanna around her head, a red apron around her waist. The
women flinch every time a lion ROARS in the distance.

ESMERALDA

Lordy, Miss Jane, this jungle
be filled with carnivable
animals.

JANE

Keep picking, Esmeralda.
After those horrible men
marooned us here, what choice
do we have? Until we are
rescued, we have to eat.

They both flinch as a lion ROARS nearby.

INT. A CABIN NEARBY ON THE BEACH -- DAY

In the cabin built by his father twenty years earlier, Tarzan, 20, in leopard-skin loincloth, sits at the table, writes a love letter to Jane. He is unable to speak English but has taught himself to read and write it with the help of primers, visible on the table. He prints each word slowly and carefully.

CLOSE on letter: I am Tarzan of the Apes. I want you. I am yours. You are mine. I will bring you the best of fruits, the tenderest deer, the finest meats that roam the jungle. I will hunt for you. I am the greatest of the jungle hunters. I will fight for you. I am the mightiest of the jungle fighters. You are Jane Porter. When you see this you will know that Tarzan of the Apes loves you.

EXT. THE NEARBY JUNGLE -- DAY

The Great Ape TERKOZ lurks in the trees above Jane and Esmeralda, with evil eyes, he watches them pick fruit.

The Great Apes are the creation of ERB's imagination, huge arboreal beasts that are half-human, half-gorilla, covered in thick black hair.

Terkoz DROPS to the jungle floor at Jane's feet.

She turns, SCREAMS IN TERROR at his hideous face and SNARLING mouth inches from her own. Terkoz grabs her arm, swings her neck to his fangs, begins to bite, sees her ample cleavage, he gets an erection, changes his mind.

He rips off her blouse, exposes her large upturned breasts and pink nipples, he squeezes a breast, likes what he sees, grabs her in his arms, takes to the trees, leaves the SCREAMING Esmeralda behind.

ESMERALDA

Oh, Gaberell! Oh, Gaberell!
A gorilephant!

Esmeralda rolls up her eyes, swoons, falls unconscious to the ground.

EXT. THE CABIN -- DAY

Tarzan stands outside the cabin door, waits for the women to return. He hears their HORRIBLE SCREAMS in the nearby jungle. Dropping his love letter, he takes off for the trees like a panther.

EXT. IN THE TREES -- DAY

Terkoz flees as fast as he can through the trees, holds Jane in one of his massive arms. Jane is conscious but still in shock, unable to cry out or struggle, her mind fights with the idea that she is bare breasted, half naked in the arms of an Ape intent on raping her.

EXT. JUNGLE FLOOR -- DAY

Tarzan, on all fours, SNIFFS around the still unconscious Esmeralda, searches for clues. Still SNIFFING, he climbs a nearby tree, inspects the branches and their leaves.

CLOSE on his face as it all becomes clear to him.

With grim determination, Tarzan swings off in the direction Terkoz took Jane.

EXT. IN THE TREES -- DAY

The race is on between Terkoz and Tarzan. Terkoz realizes that Tarzan is hot on his heels, speeds up, flies through the branches with reckless abandon. Tarzan relentlessly follows, gains on the ape.

Terkoz gives up the chase, DROPS to a small open glade, RIPS the remaining clothes from Jane's body, Jane STRUGGLES, he bashes her in the side of the head, POW! she is stunned.

Terkoz bends Jane over, pushes her down on her hands and knees, he mounts her, Jane STRUGGLES, Terkoz tries to get his penis inside her, she won't stay still, he almost gets it in, Jane JERKS her hips, Terkoz runs out of time.

Tarzan DROPS from the trees a few feet behind him, PLOP!

Foiled and angry, Terkoz turns on Tarzan, charges him with bared fangs. Like two wolves they COLLIDE, POW! POW! seek each other's throat. Tarzan uses his steel knife, SQUISH! SQUISH!

Jane crawls to the trunk of a massive tree, watches in fear and fascination, her hands tightly pressed over her rising and falling breasts.

Again and again, Tarzan's knife plunges, SQUISH! SQUISH! into Terkoz as they roll about on the jungle floor. Terkoz stiffens, collapses, his legs twitch furiously, go still.

Jane, unable to contain herself, rushes into the arms of the bloodied Tarzan. Tarzan receives her, smothers her lips with his own.

He gets an erection, it raises his loincloth.

He moves his left hand to Jane's right breast, he rubs it, his right hand moves smoothly down her side to her buttocks, he lowers his left hand from her breast, grabs her right hand, places it on his penis, she masturbates him.

Jane, a virgin, slowly comes to her senses, feels guilty, pushes the ape-man away, covers her face with her hands in shame. Tarzan is confused.

Transfixed by her naked flesh, he reaches out, takes her hand, tries to put it on his penis, she shakes him off. It is too much for Tarzan. He grabs her, takes to the trees.

EXT. THE DUM-DUM AMPHITHEATER -- DAY

The Dum-Dum amphitheater is a large, almost perfect circular clearing in the jungle, surrounded on all sides by thick vines and vegetation. The only way in and out is through the trees. It is a ceremonial place for the Great Apes, Tarzan brings Jane to it for her safety.

The natural arena is covered with soft green grass, in the center, an enormous earthen drum. The NOISES of the jungle seem far and remote.

Tarzan puts Jane down on the grass next to the drum, takes off into the trees, disappears, leaves Jane alone and afraid. In her mind, the jungle NOISES become LOUDER, more threatening. After a few minutes, she SHIVERS in fear.

She hears a NOISE behind her, springs to her feet, it is only Tarzan, arms laden with fresh fruit.

Jane nearly faints, Tarzan DROPS the fruit, catches her before she falls. She clings tightly to him, shudders, trembles in his arms.

He strokes her hair, makes SOOTHING SOUNDS in her ear, kisses her forehead. She makes no attempt to pull away. A new feeling has come over her.

Tarzan's hands begin to roam, he rubs her between the legs, she pants, he takes off his loincloth, slips a finger inside her vagina.

CLOSE-UP: Jane's face in ecstasy, she MOANS, has her first orgasm, stares wide-eyed in shock, she pushes him gently away, smiles.

She has totally forgotten that she is naked in front of a strange man, sits wantonly on the edge of the earthen drum, stares at his penis, remembers that she's hungry, points to the fruit.

She LAUGHS, rubs her stomach.

JANE

Let's eat first, monkey man.

Tarzan pricks his ears to the sound of her voice, cannot understand a word, but he gets the idea. Recovering the fruit, he puts it at her feet, prepares some choice morsels with his knife at her side.

They eat, occasionally steal glances at each other.

JANE

I wish you spoke English.

She speaks to him in FRENCH and then in GERMAN, but still Tarzan is without a clue.

Tarzan uses SIGN LANGUAGE to explain to Jane that he needs to go away for a short time. Jane nods her head in understanding.

Tarzan leaves, after a short time, returns with branches, he constructs a rough shelter for her to sleep in. He makes a few more short trips, he lines the floor of the shelter with soft ferns and grasses, covers the outside with huge leaves from the elephant ear plant.

He finishes eating the fruit with Jane, gets an idea, with a twig, writes on the ground, You are Jane, I am Tarzan.

Jane is shocked. She looks at the ape-man in wonder.

With her finger, she points to each letter and gets Tarzan to make THE SOUND OF EACH LETTER, emphasizing the letters of her own name as she points to herself.

JANE

(continuing)

Jayyy-nnnn. Jane.

TARZAN

(rubs Jane's breast)

Jayne!

She nods in excitement, points out the letters of his name, then points to him.

JANE

Tarrrr-zzzz-annnn. Tarzan.

TARZAN

(thumps chest)

Tarzan!

He takes the twig, writes: mighty fighter, looks at her, beats his chest.

He writes, Tarzan loves Jane, points to his noticeable erection, puts her hand on it, she masturbates him, sounds out the letters.

JANE

Tarzan luuuu-vvvvvv-ess
Jane. Tarzan loves Jane.

TARZAN

Tarzan loves Jane.

They look at each other. They kiss.

It gets dark. Tarzan rises, motions for Jane to enter the shelter. Jane starts for the shelter, looks in at the grassy bed, feels a strange sense of moral guilt, shrinks away from him.

Tarzan understands her fear. In a noble gesture, he removes his knife from the sheath, hands it to her hilt first, motions again for her to enter the shelter.

Jane smiles, takes the knife, makes her bed inside. Tarzan stretches out in front of the shelter's door. As he falls asleep, he dreams of the Dum-Dum....

EXT. DUM-DUM AMPHITHEATER, SEVEN YEARS EARLIER -- NIGHT

It is TARZAN's, 13, first Dum-Dum. He has finally earned enough respect in the TRIBE OF KERCHAK to attend. The occasion for the night's celebration is the killing of a giant ape from another tribe.

Tarzan and his surrogate mother, KALA, drop into the clearing as TWO BULL APES carry the corpse of the DEAD APE to the foot of the earthen drum, squat over it, stand guard, wait for the moon to rise.

The moon rises, the WHOLE TRIBE gathers in a circle around the drum. The females and young ones squat at the outer part of the circle, the males stand in front of them, wait.

THREE OLD FEMALES, each armed with a large knotted branch, fifteen to eighteen inches long, slowly and softly begin beating the branches on the drum, BOOM! BOOM!

The light of the moon increases in the amphitheater, the females pick up the tempo of the beat, BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! they fill the forest all around with a WILD, RHYTHMIC DIN!

As the SOUND BECOMES NEARLY DEAFENING, KERCHAK springs in the open space between the males and the female drummers. Standing erect, he throws back his head, stares at the moon,

beats his chest with his hairy paws, emits a FEARFUL ROARING SHRIEK! three times in a row.

He crouches, keeps his eye on the dead ape, he circles, slinks, stalks his prey. It is the challenge and the hunt.

Another ape jumps in, repeats the chest beating, ROARS. One by one, all of the males join in, including Tarzan.

Kerchak seizes a club from a huge pile in front of the drum, rushes the corpse, gives it an enormous blow, BAM! he SNARLS, GROWLS in mock combat.

The Death Dance begins. All of the apes lunge forward, BEAT the dead ape with clubs, BAM! BAM! BAM! the drum gets LOUDER AND LOUDER, FASTER AND FASTER, BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

The wild dance continues for half an hour, everyone is sweaty, foams at the lips. At a sign from Kerchak, the females cease beating the drum, run for the outer circle.

The males rush in to devour their enemy.

It is tooth and claw, GNARLS AND GRUNTS, the males compete for the choicest pieces of flesh from the bloody pulp of the ape's corpse.

Tarzan fights his way to the body, cuts off a forearm with his knife, scurries away.

Old TUBLAT feasts on some of the choicest cuts of meat, sees Tarzan with the forearm.

He becomes incensed with rage, drops his food, charges after Tarzan.

Tarzan spies Tublat, tries to hide amongst the females and young ones, Tublat is hot on his tail. Tarzan leaps into a giant tree with a single bound.

Tublat follows, is unable to climb as high as Tarzan, the lighter branches will not support his great weight. He comes to a halt fifty feet below the young ape-man.

Tarzan munches on the forearm, hurls INSULTS AND TAUNTS at the angry beast below him. It drives Tublat mad.

DROPPING from the tree, Tublat rages through the terrified crowd, SCREAMS, ROARS, TEARS great pieces of flesh, RIP! from anyone unlucky to be near. All of the apes run for cover.

Kala is slower than the rest, Tublat turns his great rage against her. Tarzan DROPS from branch to branch like a stone, lands on the ground between Kala and Tublat, PLOP!

Tublat ROARS in triumph, leaps upon the ape-man. Tarzan grabs the ape by the throat with a mighty grip, plunges his knife again and again, SQUISH! SQUISH! a dozen times, into its great broad breast. Tarzan keeps stabbing until Tublat falls dead at his feet.

The body rolls to the ground, Tarzan places his foot on it, looks up at the moon, beats his chest, BELLOWS OUT THE WILD AND TERRIBLE CRY of his people.

One by the one, the tribe returns, forms a circle around Tarzan, he speaks to them in the language of the Great Apes, requiring ENGLISH SUBTITLES.

TARZAN

I am Tarzan. I am a great
killer. Let all respect
Tarzan of the Apes and Kala,
his mother. There be none
among you as mighty as Tarzan.
Let his enemies beware!

Tarzan looks straight into the wicked eyes of Kerchak, emits his SHRILL CRY of total defiance.

EXT. DUM-DUM AMPHITHEATER, PRESENT - NIGHT

CLOSE on Jane's arm as it reaches out of the shelter, pulls Tarzan inside.

JANE
Come inside, monkey-man;
I'm cold.

INT. SHELTER - NIGHT

In the dim light of the shelter, Jane lies on her back, spreads her legs, Tarzan mounts her, inserts his penis, Jane MOANS.

JANE
(continuing)
Be gentle, mighty fighter.

In the background, the earthen drum starts to beat on its own, softly at first, BOOM, BOOM, BOOM, Tarzan copulates Jane, gently at first, then savagely as the drum picks up, BOOM, BOOM, BOOM. The camera PULLS BACK, the MOANS of Jane become louder, closer together.

EXT. DUM-DUM AMPHITHEATER - NIGHT

The camera PANS out of the shelter.

AERIAL SHOT of amphitheater, the shelter near the earthen drum in center view, the drum beats louder and louder, BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!, Jane's MOANS become louder. The drum builds to a crescendo, BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! suddenly GO SILENT...

THE LOUD CRY OF A WOMAN IN ORGASM pierces the jungle night.

DISSOLVE TO: