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

as imagined by

Woodrow Edgar Nichols, Jr.

PART FIVE:
MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE

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FADE IN:

INT. CELL ROOM IN CASTLE TOWER, THURIA - DAY

Vandor is dragged by invisible hands inside a room high in one of the great towers, his bonds are cut, he turns to bolt for the door, it closes in his face, SLAM!

The room is large and circular, comprising the entire top floor of the tower, the walls panelled in different colors, it is strangely beautiful. Piercing the walls are a dozen high barred windows, on the floor a pile of furs and silk, against a grey wall, a red bench, with A VERY STRANGE CREATURE sitting on it.

It resembles a man only by way of comparison, it is naked, wears only a short leather skirt held about its hips by a broad belt fastened by a huge golden buckle set with precious stones.

The strange creature is like a chameleon: the upper half of his body blends in with the gray of the wall, his lower body blends in with the red of the bench.

The shape of his skull is human, his features most inhuman; he has a single large eye - three inches in diameter - in the center of its forehead, the pupil is a vertical slit, like a cat's eye.

The Cat-man's fingers and toes are much longer than a human's, his thumbs and big toes extend laterally at right angles from his hands and feet. It has two mouths, one directly above the other, the lower mouth is lipless, formed by the skin of its face into gums, powerful white teeth are set in them, making a permanent hideous, death-like grin.

The upper mouth is round with slightly protruding lips controlled by a sphincter-like muscle. It has a flat nose with upturned nostrils, two small orifices at the top of its head and on either side serve as its ears.

A mane of stiff yellowish hair, staring just above his eye, two inches wide, runs back along the center of its cranium, like a Mohawk.

The Cat-man eyes Vandor, Vandor stares back, remains motionless, not knowing if movement will draw the creature to him.

Slowly, Vandor walks to a window to look out, the Cat-man rises, moves noiselessly, stealthily, cat-like, to the farthest side of the room, all the while transfixing Vandor with its terrible lidless eye.

Afraid the Cat-man may pounce, Vandor takes a quick glance out the window, sees distant hills, below, just outside the castle walls, a river, beyond that a dense forest. Vandor crosses the room, goes from window to window, each time the Cat-man moves opposite to his position. Vandor sees only other towers blocking his view, a loftier tower rises in front of him out the window on the opposite side of the room, not more than ten or fifteen feet away.

He SIGHS, turns to face the creature. The Cat-man is standing before a yellow wall, he is now a vivid yellow. Vandor moves towards him, the Cat-man moves to a blue wall, turns blue.

VANDOR

Kaor! Let us be friends.

Vandor smiles, the creature PURRS, stretches its upper mouth laterally, rubs its palms up and down its thighs, Vandor responds likewise.

The Cat-man's mouth stretches sideways, it approaches Vandor, comes close, reaches out, strokes Vandor's upper arm, Vandor responds in kind.

The Cat-man leaps back, PURRS, breaks into a wild dance, with cat-like movements, it springs, leaps, cavorts about the room in wild abandon, makes three turns about the room, returns to its bench.

The door to the room opens, trays of food and water float mysteriously a few feet off the floor beyond the door, the trays lower themselves on the floor, almost immediately the door closes.

The Cat-man PURRS excitedly, runs to one of the trays, picks up a bowl of food and jar of water, brings them to Vandor, motions with its hands that the food is for him, sets them on the bench beside him. It returns to another tray containing a jar of water, a cage, inside a most remarkable bird-like creature, it has wings, four legs, scales of a fish, the beak and comb give it a bird-like appearance.

Vandor looks in the bowl, inside a mixture of vegetables, fruit, and meat, he drinks from the jar, watches the Cat-man taunt his prey, he pokes his finger through the metal cage bars, the bird-like creature makes STRANGE SHRILL SCREAMS, FLAPS its wings, tries to bite the Cat-man's finger.

The Cat-man PURRS, always manages to withdraw his finger in time, eventually opens the cage, lets the creature out, it FLUTTERS across the floor, jumps to a window, the bars are too closely set for it to escape.

Vandor eats his meal, watches the Cat-man stalk his prey.

The bird-like creature jumps down, the Cat-man pounces, barely misses, repeats the ritual several times, with a HIDEOUS COUGHING ROAR LIKE A LION, it leaps ferociously upon the creature's back, severs its head with a single bite of its lower powerful jaws, CRUNCH! transfers the neck to its upper mouth, SUCKS the blood from the carcass.

It drains the carcass, devours the rest with its lower jaws, GROWLS LIKE A LION, tears at the bird-like creature's flesh, CHOMP! swallows it in great GULPS. When finished, the Cat-man goes to his jar of water, takes a quenching drink down his upper mouth, PURRS, it curls up on the floor in its furs and silks, promptly falls asleep.

Vandor finishes his meal, stretches out on the bench, falls asleep.

He awakes, the Cat-man stares at him with its single eye.

UMKA

My name is UMKA.

VANDOR

And I am Vandor the Panthan.

Who holds us prisoner?

UMKA

The Tarids.

VANDOR

Why do we never see them?

UMKA

I do see them. Don't you?

VANDOR

What do they look like?

UMKA

Exactly like you, but with blue hair; they are not beautiful like we Masenas.

VANDOR

Why cannot I see them?

UMKA

You don't know how; if you did, you could see them as plainly as I do.

VANDOR

Can you teach me how?

UMKA

I can tell you, but whether or not you will be able to see them will depend upon your mental abilities. It is by the power of their minds that the Tarids have willed that you neither see nor hear them. If you can free your mind of this inhibition, then you will see them as plainly as you see me.

VANDOR

But how?

UMKA

You must direct your mind upon theirs in an effort to overcome their wish by a wish of your own. Use nature's forces to help you. If your mind is sufficiently powerful, they will be unable to erect an adequate mental barrier. You must not harbor any doubts, you must believe you can see them. I have told you what they look like, concentrate on the idea of them being everywhere in the castle, direct your thoughts on them.

VANDOR

(to himself)

Like I did with the mechanical brain.

Vandor tries to practice, Umka keeps talking.

UMKA

My people, the Masena, live in the forest in houses built high among the trees. The Tarids were once powerful, but were conquered by another nation and almost exterminated. The remnants were able to overcome their enemies by developing the hypnotic power which renders them invisible. All that remain of the Tarids, about a thousand of them, live in this castle. Whoever enters the castle is an enemy to be destroyed.

VANDOR

They will destroy us, you think?

UMKA

Certainly! They are governed by some strange belief I do not understand, but it controls every aspect of their lives. They say they are guided by the sun, moon, and stars. They will not kill us until the sun tells them too, and they won't kill us for their own pleasure, but because it pleases the sun.

VANDOR

Are you resigned to your fate, or would you escape if you could?

UMKA

I should certainly escape if I had the chance, but I shall not have that chance, neither shall you.

VANDOR

If I could see or hear these people I could talk to them. There is always a way to argue a common cause.

UMKA

You must overcome the suggestion of invisibility that they have implanted in your mind, as well as the suggestion that has made them inaudible to you.

Vandor sits down, meditates, goes into a deep trance, his face distorts, he grimaces, holds his head with his hands, MOANS, WRITHES on the bench, calms, opens his eyes, SIGHS in relief, smiles.

VANDOR

I have overcome the
suggestion. If you don't
mind, I will act as if I
still cannot see them; please
go along with the deception.

A COMMOTION in the corridor, the lock CLICKS, the door opens, TWENTY-FIVE MEN walk in, their skin fair and white, they have blue lips, mouths and tongues, their hair and eyebrows are also blue, they wear short close-fitting skirts of heavy gold mesh, breastplates similarly crafted, each armed with long sword and dagger.

Twelve approach Vandor, the rest approach Umka, they stop just out of reach. Carter can see and hear them, pretends he cannot.

TARID #1

Place your hands behind your
back, Masena scum!

Vandor looks at Umka as if puzzled when Umka puts his hands behind his back.

TARID #1

Half of you get the Masena,
the rest get the black-
haired one. Be careful,
he can neither see nor
hear us and will likely
put up a struggle.

Vandor winces, knows what is coming, keeps in character, pretends to be startled, barely struggles when the Tarids leap upon him, bind his hands, lead him and Umka from the room.

INT. THRONE ROOM OF THE TARIDS - DAY

Vandor and Umka are led into a great room, down a central aisle, MANY PEOPLE OF ALL AGES AND SIZES line the aisle, a rare sight, since the only times Martians show signs of aging is right before they die.

They pass between SOLID RANKS OF WARRIORS dressed in golden trappings, to an open space before the thrones. On a raised dais, on two thrones, A JEDDAK AND JEDDARA sit.

The Jeddak is very fat, showing signs of advanced age, has an enormous penis, the Jeddara is young and breathtakingly beautiful. Like all Tarid women she has blue hair and eyebrows, blue lips, mouth, and tongue, and in her case, large blue nipples on large upturned breasts, she has a prominent blue clitoris, her blue labia fold like the petals of an exotic flower, almost concealing a very blue vagina.

Vandor feels arousal, looks away before his penis betrays him.

In the space before the thrones stand Jat Or, Zanda, Ur Jan, Gar Nal, and Dejah Thoris; Vandor SPEAKS IN THE HOLY TONGUE OF THE THERNS, which all children are forced to learn: ENGLISH SUBTITLES.

VANDOR

Address me as Vandor; speak only in the Holy Tongue of the Therns.

DEJAH THORIS

My Chieftan! Fate is a little kind in that she has permitted me to see you once again before we die.

Dejah Thoris looks bedraggled, hung-over, soiled and used, Zanda is not much better.

VANDOR

We still live!

JEDDAK
(COMMON MARTIAN)

Silence!

Vandor pretends that he does not hear; the others cannot hear. The Jeddara gazes dreamily at Vandor, notices his semi-erection, through heavy lashes of half closed lids, whispers:

JEDDARA
Splendid!

JEDDAK
What is splendid?

JEDDARA
(looks up, startled)
Oh, I said it would be
splendid if you could make
them all stand still. But
how can you if we are
invisible and inaudible to
them; unless -
(shrugs)
you silence them with the
sword!

JEDDAK
You know, Ozara, that we are
saving them for the Fire God -
we may not kill them now!

OZARA
Why kill them at all? They
appear to be intelligent
creatures. It might be
interesting to preserve
them.

Vandor looks at the others, speaks in THERN: ENGLISH
SUBTITLES.

VANDOR
Can any of you see or hear
what is going on?

INT. THRONE ROOM, GAR NAL'S POINT OF VIEW - DAY

GAR NAL
Except for ourselves, I can
see no one and hear no one.

The rest nod their heads in agreement.

INT. THRONE ROOM, RETURN TO NORMAL POINT OF VIEW - DAY

GAR NAL
Why are we speaking in the
Thern tongue?

VANDOR
So they will not understand.
I have a plan, listen! We
are all victims of a form of
hypnosis, which makes it
impossible to see or hear
our captors. Do you
understand, my Princess?

DEJAH THORIS
Yes. I feel there are many
invisible people in this room
right now.

VANDOR
And if I were to tell you we
are presently standing before
the thrones of the Jeddak
and Jeddara of the Tarids -
and, if I may add, that the
Jeddak has what is known in
the vulgar tongue as a thoot
penis - would you believe me?

Dejah Thoris blushes, lowers her eyes.

ZANDA
I sure would.

UR JAN
Tell us more, Vandor!

VANDOR

Listen carefully. I have proven by the exercise of of the powers of the mind that it is possible to free yourselves from this condition. It involves the power of belief. It was not so difficult for me, and, since all Martians are good at telepathy, it should not be too difficult for you. If you can break their mental hold over your minds, our chances of escape will be greatly multiplied.

GAR NAL

We cannot work together while half us have it in our hearts to kill the other half.

VANDOR

Let us call a truce, then, for as long as we are in their power.

GAR NAL

That sounds fair.

VANDOR

(to Ur Jan)

And you?

UR JAN

It suits me.

GAR NAL

(to Jat Or)

And you?

JAT OR

Whatever the - Vandor commands, I shall do.

VANDOR

Let us raise our hands and
swear to abide by the truce
until we have escaped the
Tarids. And further, that
each do what is in his power
to save the others!

The men raise their hands.

UR JAN

The women, too!

The Princess stares at Gar Nal with contemptuous hatred, she looks at Vandor, he knows the look, knows Gar Nal has raped his Princess, he grits his teeth, nods his head for her to agree.

The women raise their hands, all six swear to fight to the death for each other. RETURN TO NORMAL MARTIAN LANGUAGE.

JEDDAK

Come, Come, what are they
jabbering about in that
strange language? We must
silence them!

OZARA

Remove the spell from them.

JEDDAK

They shall see us and hear
us when they are about to
die, and not before.

OZARA

I have an idea the light-
skinned one can see and
hear us now. I sensed it
when his eyes rested on
mine. When you speak,
UL VAS, his eyes travel to
your face, then to your
penis, and when I speak
they return to my eyes.

OZARA

(continuing)

He sees us, Ul Vas, and
he hears us.

Vandor lowers his eyes, flinches as he realizes he has been caught, he lifts his gaze, stares into vacant space beyond the throne.

UL VAS

It is impossible! He can
neither see nor hear us.

Ul Vas looks at Tarid #1, barks an order:

UL VAS

Zamak! What do you think?
Can this creature see or
hear us?

ZAMAK

I think not All-Highest.
When we went to fetch him
he asked the Masena scum
if there were anyone in
the room, although twenty-
five of us were all about
him.

UL VAS

(to Ozara)

I thought that you were
wrong. You are always
imagining things.

Ozara turns away, YAWNS in boredom.

UL VAS

(continuing)

Let us proceed!

An OLD MAN moves into the open space, stands directly before the thrones.

OLD MAN

(sing-song voice)

All-Highest, the day is good,
the time has come. We bring
before you, most august Son
of the Fire God, seven
enemies of the Tarids.
Tell us, All-Highest, if
these offerings look good in
his eyes; make known to us
his wishes, almighty one.

UL VAS

My Father, the Fire God,
wishes to know who these
enemies are?

OLD MAN

These people have trespassed
the Holy City of the Fire
God without permission.

UL VAS

My Father, the Fire God,
demands that the Masena
and four strange men be
destroyed in his honor
at this same hour, after
he has circled Ladan
seven times.

OLD MAN

And the women, All-Highest,
what are the wishes of the
Fire God, your Father, in
relation to them?

UL VAS

The Fire God, to show his
great love, has presented
the two women to his Son,
Ul Vas, to do with as he
chooses. Remove them now!

UL VAS
 (continuing)
 Confine the men in the
 Turquoise Tower, and take the
 women to the Tower of
 Diamonds.

INT. TURQUOIS TOWER - DAY

The guards lead them inside the Tower, lock them in.

JAT OR
 What was that all about,
 Vandor?

VANDOR
 The Jeddak passed the death
 sentence on us all. We are
 to die when the sun has
 circled Ladan seven times.

JAT OR
 What about Zanda and the
 Princess?

VANDOR
 The Jeddak, Ul Vas, is
 keeping them for himself.

JAT OR
 We must save them!

VANDOR
 I know, but how?

GAR NAL
 What is their word for
 Thuria?

VANDOR
 I know not, but I will ask
 Umka, he will know. Umka,
 what does the word Ladan
 mean?

UMKA

That is the name of our world. When the Fire God circles seven times we will be sacrificed.

The door opens, SEVERAL WARRIORS enter, led by Zamak. Vandor pretends not to notice.

ZAMAK

(points to Vandor)

There he is! Fetch him along.

The soldiers approach, seize Vandor's arms, escort him from the room.

JAT OR

Where are you going? What has happened?

VANDOR

I know not, they are taking me away again.

TARID WARRIOR

It is a good thing they cannot see us, I think we should have had a good fight on our hands if they could.

OTHER WARRIOR

I think this one would put up a good one. His arms are like bands of silver.

TARID WARRIOR

He put up a good fight in the courtyard. He killed two men with his sword, and bruised many more.

OTHER WARRIOR

Did you see the beautiful woman warrior that was with him? She killed a man as well. I bet she could keep you up all night long.

Vandor smiles to himself, is led from the room, the door closes.

INT. BEDCHAMBER OF OZARA - DAY

He is led into an opulent chamber, with hangings in colors unknown to earthly eyes, against a background of walls of what seem to be solid ivory. The room is empty, he is led to the center, a door on the opposite side opens, A BEAUTIFUL SLAVE GIRL enters.

SLAVE GIRL

You will wait in the corridor, Zamak; the prisoner will come with me.

Vandor pretends not to see or hear, the girl approaches, the guards relinquish their grips, she takes his hand, leads him into a joining room. Zamak and the guards leave, close the door.

Ozara reclines suggestively on a divan, looks at Vandor under heavy lashes, the slave girl leads Vandor to the center of the room, he stares at Ozara, gets an erection, averts his eyes.

OZARA

You may retire, Ulah.

Ulah looks at Vandor's penis, smiles, bows, leaves the room, Ozara sits up, her breasts harden, their blue nipples swell in desire, she is aroused by his large handsome penis.

OZARA

(continuing)

What is your name?

Vandor keeps up his act, acts blind and dumb.

OZARA

(continuing)

Listen, you fooled Ul Vas,
Zamak, and the High Priest,
but you didn't fool me. I
must admit you have
splendid control, but your
eyes betrayed you. They
betrayed you in the throne
room and -

(looks at penis)

your penis betrays you now.
Let us be honest with one
another for we have more in
common than you can guess.

She sits up high in the divan, spreads her legs lustfully,
lowers a hand between them, spreads apart the petals of her
flower with her fingers, reveals a very wet blue vagina.

OZARA

(continuing)

Behold, the Blue Flower of
Domnia!

Her vagina is a wonder of nature, raw and raunchy, Vandor
feels a craving just as raw and raunchy, he walks forward,
kneels between her legs, his face inches away from her
fountain.

VANDOR

I shall be honored by the
friendship of the Jeddara,
Ozara.

She reaches down, strokes his cheek.

OZARA

There! I knew I was right.
Who are you?

CARTER

I am John Carter, Prince of
the House of Tardos Mors,
Jeddak of Helium.

OZARA

Helium! Where is Helium?

CARTER

On Barsoom, the great planet
you call your greater moon.

She contemplates in silence under dreamy eyes, presses his head between her legs, he feasts on her vagina, reaches up with his hands, cups her breasts, thumbs her nipples, he slakes his thirst, rises up, squeezes her large breasts, bulges the large nipples, he licks, sucks them, French-kisses her, she scissoring her legs around his waist, reaches down, inserts his penis, he enters with a hard thrust, stops, her breasts squash hard against his chest, he looks in her eyes.

CARTER

We can work for a common
good, Ozara. Will you serve
my will?

She moves beneath him, it is her answer, they take their time, move into FRENZIED LOVEMAKING, LOINS SMACK, she MOANS, has an orgasm, he shortly follows, MUFFLED GRUNTS AND MOANS. They stretch out on the divan in each others arms, his penis still in her.

OZARA

That was wonderful, John
Carter. What a great
swordsman you are! A
strange fate has brought
us together, a force
greater than all others
seizes and dominates us
without our volition.

She looks at him with loving eyes.

OZARA

(continuing)

While we surely have this in
common, John Carter, what we
also have in common is that
we are both prisoners.

CARTER

You, a prisoner? I thought you were Jeddara of the Tarids?

OZARA

I am a Domnian, my country lies far away across the mountains that lie beyond the forest outside the castle. Ul Vas is a beast, his agents search constantly for beautiful young women. When they find one more beautiful than the current Jeddara, she is slain and replaced with a new one. My days are numbered. He has found one more beautiful than me. The woman who came in the first ship is the most beautiful woman I have ever seen! Ul Vas cannot get enough of her; he copulates her for hours at a time.

Carter hides his shock.

CARTER

I am beginning to understand. You want to escape and you think I might be able to help you. You think there is a chance to escape?

OZARA

There is still one of your ships left. The Tarids fear it, for two guards entered the other one and it mysteriously lifted off the ground and left them stranded a hundred ads above the castle.

OZARA

(continuing)

They think the ships are
under a magic spell.

CARTER

I think I know how we can
escape. Can you gain
entrance to the Tower of
Diamonds?

OZARA

Yes, I think I can do that.
It is the highest tower in
the castle.

CARTER

Send Ulah into the Turquoise
Tower with files hard enough
to saw through the bars.
Hang a scarlet scarf from
the window in the Tower of
Diamonds so that I will
know where the women are.

OZARA

If I did these things, you
could escape without me.

CARTER

I give you my word, Ozara,
that I will not leave
without you.

He French-kisses her passionately, pinches her blue nipples,
they slowly copulate.

CARTER

(continuing)

Have Ulah disguise the files
inside the food tray jar.

Ozara strikes a GONG! next to the divan, Ulah enters, smiles
discreetly at the copulating couple.

OZARA

Take the prisoner back to
Zamak, and have them
return him to his cell...
after you finish him off.

Ulah walks over, pulls Carter's penis out of Ozara's vagina,
leads him out of the chamber, SNIFFS at his breath, her
breasts harden, they stop before the corridor door.

ULAH

Hmmm, you smell like the
Jeddara.

She kneels, licks his penis, flicks her tongue over the tip,
fellates him, he GRUNTS, ejaculates once, twice down her
throat, Ulah takes his penis from her mouth, he ejaculates
again and again all over her breasts, she rubs the tip of
his penis on her nipples, continues to masturbate him.

ULAH

(continuing)

Are you finished?

CARTER

Yes.

INT. TURQUOIS TOWER - DAY

Carter is led back inside the tower cell, Jat Or waits until
the guards leave, joyfully exclaims:

JAT OR

I can see them now, and
hear them too.

GAR NAL

And I, too.

CARTER

What about you, Ur Jan?

UR JAN

I could see nothing, I
could hear nothing.

CARTER

Don't give up, Ur Jan.
You must see them if
we are to succeed.

(lowers voice)

We still have access to
the ships. I have
arranged for files to
be sent so that we can
saw through the bars.

GAR NAL

How will you get to the
ship?

CARTER

That is not for you to
know, Gar Nal. The fact
is that I can.

Ur Jan goes into a corner, concentrates, the door opens, Ulah enters the tower cell, bears a large earthen jar, sets it down, looks over her shoulder at Ur Jan, he is the only one not staring at her, the only one who didn't get an erection when she entered; she walks to him, he SNIFFS, smells her perfume, gets an erection, she smiles at his size, she masturbates him.

INT. TURQUOISE TOWER - DAY (UR JAN'S POINT OF VIEW)

Ur Jan stares in fascination as the lower part of his penis suddenly disappears in an invisible hand.

UR JAN

By Issus, some one is
masturbating me!

The tip of Ur Jan's formidable penis suddenly disappears.

UR JAN

Now someone is sucking my
penis!

CARTER

Surely you can believe what
you are feeling, Ur Jan!
Keep concentrating; after all,
you know exactly where she is.

The other men LAUGH.

INT. TURQUOIS TOWER, NORMAL POINT OF VIEW - DAY

Ula fellates Ur Jan, he reaches out, feels for her head like
a blind man, finds it, rubs it.

UR JAN

Issus, lift the scales from
my eyes!

CARTER

Concentrate, Ur Jan!

CLOSE ON UR JAN'S EYES: they open wide in wonder, he sees
the beautiful slave girl with his penis in her mouth.

UR JAN

By the Valley Dor, what a
heavenly vision!

Ulah looks up, takes his penis out of her mouth, rubs it
against her cheek.

ULAH

Oh, so you can see me now,
eh?

UR JAN

You are so beautiful; no
wonder you are the Jeddara's
slave girl.

She looks at all the men in the room, smiles, goes back to
fellating Ur Jan, he GRUNTS, ejaculates in her mouth, she
pulls her mouth away, he GRUNTS, ejaculates all over her
breasts, she looks up at him, swallows.

ULAH

My, aren't we the quick one;
but with a penis like that,
you can get away with it.

The men LAUGH.

Like a cat, Ulah licks her hand clean, smiles at the men, they stare at the semen on her breasts, a large trickle forms a drop on her right nipple, she smiles, bows, walks out of the room.

Carter walks to the jar, empties its contents, Ur Jan stares in wide-eyed disbelief.

UR JAN

Was I in a dream?

CARTER

She gave you quite a
compliment.

JAT OR

The mental work is complete!
Now we are all free from that
damnable spell.

Carter distributes the files, they go to work on the bars.

CARTER

Don't cut them all the way
through. Just weaken them
so that we can pull them
away when the times comes.

They work furiously, finish. Night falls.

JAT OR

We can pull these bars
away whenever we wish.
But I do not see the
purpose. The tower is
far too high.

CARTER

Go over there and sit
down and keep still. All
of you keep still. Do
not speak or move until
I tell you to.

Carter goes to the window, concentrates his thought waves on the spaceship's brain, directs it to drop down and approach the window.

Long seconds pass, sweat breaks out on his forehead.

Silently, a great black hulk moves against the night sky, the others see it, are stunned.

Carter directs the ship to come close to the window.

CARTER

There are two Tarid warriors
on board, each no doubt
armed with long sword and
dagger. We are unarmed
and will have to overcome
them with our bare hands.

(to Ur Jan)

When the door is opened,
two of us will have to
leap inside at the same
time to take them by
surprise. Will you go first
with me, Ur Jan?

UR JAN

Yes, and it will be a
strange sight to see Ur
Jan and John Carter
fighting side by side.

CARTER

At least we should put up
a good fight!

UR JAN

It is too bad those two
Tarids will never have the
honor of knowing who
killed them.

CARTER

The rest of you follow on
our heels. The ship is
stocked with weapons. Umka,
do you know what to do
when you see the two Tarids?

Umka's upper mouth stretches, PURRS contentedly.

Carter and Ur Jan jump on the window sill, wait for the ship
to pull up, the hull almost scrapes the side of the tower.

CARTER

(continuing)

Ready, Ur Jan?

Carter directs the ship to open its side door, almost
instantly the door opens, Carter and Ur Jan spring inside
the cabin.

INT. SPACESHIP CABIN - NIGHT

TWO TARIDS face them in the dim light of the cabin, Carter
leaps on one, tackles him before he can draw his sword,
overpowers him, binds him with his harness. Ur Jan
overcomes the second, takes away his dagger, sticks him
under the ribs, into the heart, SQUISH!, removes the dagger,
grins.

The rest file into the cabin.

GAR NAL

What now? How are you going
to get the women?

CARTER

First I am going to try to get your ship. Even if we extend our truce, two ships will increase our chances of returning to Barsoom.

Carter directs the ship to rise so that he can see the entire castle complex, locates the courtyard, spirals down next to Gar Nal's sister ship.

CARTER

(continuing)

Gar Nal, you shall go aboard your ship and pilot it, following me. We are going to get the women in the Tower of Diamonds. As I pull up next to their window, both side doors of my craft will be open. Open the door on the port side of your ship and place it alongside of mine, so that you may pass through my ship and enter their cell. We may need all of the help we have if they are heavily guarded.

EXT. CASTLE COURTYARD - NIGHT

Gar Nal gets out, enters his own ship, it silently rises with Carter's, flies to the Tower of Diamonds.

The ships draw close to the tower, a scarlet scarf hangs from a window, Carter pulls his ship alongside the window, both side doors open, Gar Nal pulls his ship port side to Carter's.

Carter stands on the threshold of his ship's door, peers into the room, his eyes open wide in joy.

INT. CELL ROOM IN TOWER OF DIAMONDS - NIGHT

Carter leaps inside, one of the captured swords in his hand, hears a VOICE AT THE BOTTOM OF TOWER SOUNDING ALARM, sees Dejah Thoris, Zanda, and Ozara in the dim light of the cell.

DEJAH THORIS

My Chieftan! I knew that
you would come!

CARTER

I will go to the end of
the universe for you, my
Princess. Come, we must
board the ship at once,
we have been discovered.

Zanda comes close to Carter, grabs his arm.

ZANDA

I knew you would come for
me, Vandor.

Ozara realizes there is more going on than appears, looks maliciously out through her long lashes.

Carter turns to the window, realizes the ships have gone, he looks to the right, sees the ships moving off into the night, he SMACKS his forehead with his palm.

CARTER

I forgot to tell the ship
to stop!

He concentrates on the ship, orders it to return as fast as possible, FOOTSTEPS APPROACH IN THE CORRIDOR, the SOUND OF METAL ON METAL, he is running out of time.

The ship returns, the SOUND OF THE WARRIORS one level below.

The ships pull alongside the window, Jat Or and Ur Jan stand in the doorway.

CARTER

(continuing)

The alarm had been raised
and warriors are almost at
the door! I will hold them
off while you get the
women aboard. Zanda, there
are weapons on board. Be
quick, arm yourself.

(to women)

Stay close to the window,
board the ship the moment
it touches the sill.

Zanda jumps aboard, Carter crosses the room, sword in hand, faces the door, it opens, in rush TWELVE WARRIORS, Carter runs the first one through with his sword, SQUISH! the warrior makes a SINGLE PIERCING SCREAM, Carter pulls the blade out, the man crumples at this feet.

Another warrior thrusts at Carter, another swings a terrible cut to his head, Carter parries the thrust, CLANG! dodges the cut, CLEAVES one of their skulls, SPLAT!

Carter's lips tense, grin at the joy of battle, his sword inspired, CLANG! CLANG! CLANG! the warriors pile in at him. He moves about, SLICES, HACKS, soon six warriors are dead, SQUISH! he is covered in their blood.

MORE FOOTSTEPS down the corridor: reinforcements!

Three warriors press Carter back, he defends against all three, is hard pressed, there is a movement to his right, Ur Jan, Jat Or, and Zanda are at his side, they make mince meat of the remaining warriors, CLANG! CLANG! SQUISH! SPLAT! dozens more pour in the room.

Gar Nal stands on the window sill, Umka and the women below.

CARTER

Quick, Gar Nal, get the
women aboard!

Carter and his fighting companions are soon surrounded, their swords a blur, CLANG! CLANG! they fight like madmen, they lose ground.

CARTER

(continuing; to Jat Or)

The Princess! She is alone
on the ship with Gar Nal.
If we are both killed, she
is lost. Go to her at
once!

JAT OR

And leave you, my Prince?

CARTER

It is not a request.

JAT OR

Yes, my Prince.

Jat Or fights to the window.

CARTER

Help him, Ur Jan!

They cut a path for Jat Or, CLANG! CLANG! SQUISH! CLANG! he
gets to the window, two warriors grab Ozara on the opposite
side of the room, Carter rushes to her defense.

OZARA

Save me, John Carter, save
me or I shall be killed!

The warriors pause, amazed at the fighting skill of their
foes.

CARTER

(to Jat Or, Ur Jan, and Zanda)

On board with you, quick!
Hold the entrance of the
ship until I can bring the
Jeddara aboard.

Carter proceeds to fight his way to Ozara, CLANG! CLANG!
SQUISH! HACK! Umka is at his side, HE TEARS AND RENDS any
warrior he can catch, he and Carter bleed from a number of
wounds, Carter orders him back to the ship, he reluctantly
obeys.

The reinforcements rush into the room, ignore Carter, rush for the ship.

Carter looks at the two men holding Ozara, they wait for him, he turns, concentrates, orders the ship to depart, sees Ur Jan and Umka in the ship's doorway, as the ship moves away, Jat Or appears.

JAT OR
My Prince, we have been
betrayed! Gar Nal has
fled with Dejah Thoris
in his own ship!

Carter is overwhelmed by the Tarids, he is struck on the head, loses consciousness, goes down, as the ship speeds away.

INT. DUNGEON CELL - UNKNOWN TIME

INFRARED: Carter awakens in pitch black surroundings. There is no way of knowing how long he has been unconscious.

He rises, feels his head, it is covered with dry blood, he stumbles in the dark, feels for a wall, follows it one way, he reaches a massive door, it is securely fastened; he follows the wall all the way around to the door again.

He puts his back to the door for orientation, paces the room from one side to the other. He counts the number of stones in the wall as a diversion, then practices sword-fighting moves to keep mind and body in shape.

Time creeps by. He falls asleep.

A CREAK, bright light wakens him, A GUARD opens the door a few inches, a chain keeps it from opening further, the guard holds a food tray, shines a torch inside the cell.

Carter adjusts to the light, sees the inside of his cell as far up as some large wooden beams spanning the room twenty feet above his head.

The guard sets the tray inside the cell.

GUARD

So you weren't killed after all.

CARTER

That is more than you can say for some of the others who fought in the Tower of Diamonds last night - or was it last night?

GUARD

No, it was night before last. I was not there, but the whole castle has been talking about it ever since. Those who fought against you say that you are the greatest swordsman who ever lived. They would like to have you stay here and fight for them instead of against them, but old Ul Vas is so furious that nothing will satisfy him but your death.

CARTER

I can imagine that he doesn't feel very kindly toward me.

GUARD

No, my life on it, he doesn't. It was bad enough letting all his prisoners escape, but planning to take his Jeddara with you, phew! By my life, that was something. They say that the reason that you still live is because he hasn't been able to think of any death commensurate with your crime.

CARTER

And the Jeddara; what of the Blue Flower of Domnia?

GUARD

He's got her locked up;
she'll be killed, too. I
imagine that he is planning
to put you both to death at
the same time and probably in
the same way, probably as
a ceremonial sacrifice to
the Fire God.

(sighs)

It is a shame to kill such a
swordsman as you, but I am
sure that it is going to be
very interesting. I hope
that I shall be fortunate
enough to see it.

CARTER

Yes, I hope that you enjoy
it.

GUARD

Everyone will enjoy it
except you and Ozara.

The guard closes the door, returns Carter to darkness.

INFRARED: Carter feels his way to the food, eats, drinks,
restores his strength. Slowly, he begins to jump up, arms
extended, a little higher each time, he eventually touches
one of the beams.

He leaps again to confirm its position, then again to the
top of the beam. He stands, reaches up, can't feel a thing.

He jumps down, leaps up to explore another beam, he explores
them all, each time he feels nothing above.

He jumps down, ponders his predicament, falls asleep.

He wakes up, does his exercises by the door, every few
minutes he puts his ear the door.

The SOUND OF SCUFFLING FEET, METAL UPON METAL, a guard
approaches.

Carter leaps up to the beam nearest the door, crouches like a beast of prey, waits.

The door opens, CREAK, it is a DIFFERENT GUARD.

GUARD 2

Hey there! Where are you?

(waits for reply)

By the crown of the Jeddak,
has the fellow escaped?

The SOUND OF A KEY UNLOCKING A CHAIN, the door swings in, the guard enters cautiously, in his left hand a torch, in his right a keen long sword.

He passes beneath Carter's beam, Carter springs on him like a panther, the guard SCREAMS, drops the torch, it goes out.

INFRARED: Carter goes for the guard's throat, strangles him to death.

EXT. PRISON CORRIDORS - DAY

Carter takes the guard's weapons and keys, feels his way to the door, the corridor outside is just as dark, he feels his way to the chain, locks the chain back in place, closes and locks the door.

He takes a guess, turns left, follows the wall in the direction in which he heard the footsteps coming, sees a faint light ahead, comes to a stairway.

Carter ascends the stairs to the level above, it is much lighter, the stairs end in a short corridor with a door on either side, a traverse corridor ahead of him, he takes it, bumps into someone as he enters it.

It is a woman, Carter seizes her, clamps a hand over her mouth to keep her silent, TWO WARRIORS turn into the traverse corridor at one end, he moves back, holds the struggling girl, he whispers in her ear:

CARTER

Keep still and I will not
harm you.

He drags her back, finds one of the two side doors unlocked, opens it, moves inside, closes the door.

INT. WELL-LIT TOWER ROOM - DAY

Carter is in a well-lit room, there are several windows letting daylight in. Carter presses his ear to the door, lessens his grip on the girl's mouth, she speaks softly.

ULAH

John Carter!

John Carter looks at her, it is Ulah.

CARTER

Ulah! Please do not make me harm you. I do not wish to harm anyone; I only wish to escape.

ULAH

You need not fear me; I will not betray you. I love my mistress, Ozara; I would not harm one whom my mistress loves.

She moves against Carter, he feels the sharp points of her breasts against his chest. Carter gets an erection, she takes it in her hand, strokes it.

CARTER

(pants)

Where is your mistress now?

ULAH

She's in this very tower, in the room directly above this one on the next level. Ul Vas is keeping her there until he is ready to destroy her. Oh, save her, John Carter! You must save her. Please tell me you will.

She strokes him harder.

CARTER

How did you learn my name,
Ulah?

ULAH

The Jeddara told me. She
said you are the only man
she has ever loved. The
women of Domnia prefer
the company of women for
pleasure. They only
copulate with men to produce
offspring.

(pauses)

The Jeddara talks about you
constantly, about your...
long sword.

Ulah kneels, fellates Carter, he loses concentration, she
deep-throats him, licks his testicles, masturbates him, he
GRUNTS, ejaculates on her breasts.

She rises, squeezes her nipples, he sucks them; she mounts
his penis, he takes her against the wall, rams up into her,
he French-kisses her, copulates her harder, he GRUNTS,
ejaculates, again and again.

He holds her tight in his arms, she continues to MOAN, he
waits until her ecstasy subsides, his penis goes limp,
slides from her vagina.

CARTER

You are better acquainted
with the castle than I am.
Is there anyway I can reach
the Jeddara? Can you get
a message to her? Could
we get her out of that
room?

Ulah French-kisses him, rubs his back from his shoulders to
his buttocks.

ULAH

No one in all my life has ever copulated me like that, John Carter! No wonder the Jeddara is in love with you. I would gladly give my life for you.

CARTER

You may end up doing that, Ulah. Now, tell me, can we get Ozara out of that room?

ULAH

No, her door is locked and two warriors stand guard outside it day and night.

Carter goes to a window, looks out, then looks up, fifteen feet above is another window.

CARTER

You are sure she is in the room directly above this one?

ULAH

I know it.

CARTER

And you want to help her escape?

ULAH

Yes, there is nothing that I would not do to serve her.

CARTER

What is this room used for?

ULAH

Nothing, now. You see everything is covered with dust. It has not been used for a long time.

CARTER

You think I might be able to
hide here safely until
tonight?

ULAH

I am sure you are perfectly
safe. I don't know why
anyone should come here.

CARTER

Good! If you really want to
help your mistress escape,
you can help her.

Ulah embraces Carter, kisses him on the lips.

ULAH

With all my heart I want to
help my mistress. I could
not bear to see her die.
How can I help?

CARTER

Bring me rope and a strong
hook. Do you think you
can do that?

ULAH

How long a rope?

CARTER

About twenty feet.

ULAH

When do you want them?

CARTER

As soon as you possibly can
without being detected, but
certainly before midnight
tonight.

ULAH

I can get the rope and hook.
I will go at once.

She leaves, Carter finds a bar, drops it into the keeper, secures the door.

He waits, day turns into night, hours go by.

A TAP at the door.

ULAH (OFFSCREEN)
Open, it is Ulah.

He lets her in, she has the rope and hook.

ULAH
(continuing)
Did you ever think I was
going to return, John
Carter?

CARTER
I was commencing to have
my doubts.

She moves against him suggestively, masturbates him.

ULAH
It is not quite midnight.
They have learned of your
escape. They are presently
searching another part of
the castle. Eventually they
will search this room, but
that will be hours from now.
Copulate me again, John
Carter; give your penis unto
me one last time.

She rubs the tip of his penis against her blue clitoris, Carter succumbs to her charms, sucks her ripe swollen blue nipples, turns her around, bends her over, inserts his penis, holds her hips, copulates her like an animal.

They both GRUNT in ecstasy, collapse on the floor in each others arms.

ULAH

I love you, John Carter.
All I ask is that you
save my mistress.

CARTER

You have done well, Ulah.
I am sorry that I can
offer you nothing more
in return than my thanks.

ULAH

I shall be glad to do even
more. There is nothing
that I would not do to
help you and the Jeddara.

CARTER

There is nothing more you
can do. And now you had
better go before they find
you here with me.

ULAH

You are sure there is
nothing more I can do?

CARTER

No, nothing, Ulah.

ULAH

Good-bye and good luck,
John Carter. If I never
see you again, know that
my love for you and the
Jeddara will never die.

Carter closes the door, puts the bar back in place, he fastens one end of the rope to the hook, sits on the window sill, leans far out, holding one end of the rope in his left hand, he grasps the window frame with his right, he lets the hook drop, gives it slack.

He gauges the distance to the window above, stands on the window sill, swings the hook back and forth like a pendulum, swings the hook up and releases it, SWISH!

The hook sails into the lighted window above, strikes the sill with a METALLIC RING, Carter pulls down on the rope, the hook catches, CLUNK!

He pulls hard, it does not give, he swings out upon the rope, climbs slowly, reaches the sill, looks inside.

INT. OZARA'S TOWER CELL - MIDNIGHT

The room is dimly lit, Carter climbs over the sill, pulls the hook inside, a figure rises from a bed, it is Ozara, she looks at Carter with wide, horror-struck eyes, Carter places a finger over his lips, whispers:

CARTER
Make no sound, Ozara! I
have come to rescue you.

OZARA
John Carter!

She falls into his arms, smothers his lips with kisses, pulls back, smiles.

OZARA
You smell like Ulah.

CARTER
She provided the rope and
hook. She is staking her
life upon our escape.
Come, we must get you out
of here at once. Do not
talk; we may be overheard.

Carter takes her to the window, secures the lower end of the rope around her waist.

CARTER
(continuing)
I am going to lower you to
the window of the room below.
As soon as you are safely
inside, untie the rope and
let it swing out for me.

She nods, he lowers her out the window, she reaches the window sill below, unties the rope, swings it free, Carter repeats the procedure, joins Ozara.

INT. CELL TOWER ROOM - MIDNIGHT

Ozara embraces him, French-kisses him, they jump down into the room.

OZARA

I was so surprised to see you, John Carter. I thought that you were dead. I saw them strike you down, and Ul Vas told me they had killed you. I thought at first that you were a ghost.

(shudders)

I was so frightened for you, and to think you took that risk for me when you might have escaped with your friends.

CARTER

I gave you my word that I wouldn't leave without you. Do you know of any way by which we can escape from this castle?

OZARA

There is a secret doorway known only to Ul Vas and two of his most trusted slaves. At least that is what he thinks. It leads out to the edge of the river where the waters lap at the walls of the castle. He uses it to dispose of the bodies of his political enemies. Beyond the river is a terrible forest.

OZARA

(continuing)

I do not know, John Carter,
that we would be much better
off either in the river or
the forest than we are here.

CARTER

If we remain here, Ozara,
we know that we shall meet
death and that there will
be no escape. In the river
or the forest beyond, there
will be at least a chance;
for often wild beasts are
less cruel than men.

OZARA

I know that all too well,
but even in the forest there
are men, terrible men.

CARTER

Nevertheless, I must take
the chance, Ozara. Will
you come with me?

OZARA

Wherever you take me, John
Carter, whatever fate
befalls us, I shall be
happy as long as I am with
you. I was very angry
that you loved that woman
from Barsoom, but now she
is gone, and I shall have
you all to myself.

CARTER

She is my mate, Ozara.

OZARA

You love her?

CARTER

Of course.

OZARA

But a man can love more
than one woman, can he not?

CARTER

You have seen proof of that.
How can we reach this secret
doorway? Do you know the
way from here?

OZARA

Yes, come with me.

Carter unbars the door, the corridor is clear, they leave
the room.

INT. CASTLE CORRIDORS - NIGHT

Ozara leads Carter back down the stairs to the level he was
imprisoned below.

INFRARED: They feel their way down the dark corridor, pass
Carter's cell, cross to the opposite end, a circular
stairway leads to the level above, to a lighted corridor.

OZARA

(continuing)

If we can reach the other
end of this without being
discovered, we shall be
safe. At the far end is
a false door that leads
into the secret passage-
way ending at the door
above the river.

They listen, hear no one, proceed down the corridor, there
are rooms on either side with closed doors, they reach the
halfway point, TWO WARRIORS come out of a room behind them,
they are looking the other way, a THIRD WARRIOR comes out of
the room, looks in the direction of Carter and Ozara,
exclaims:

THIRD WARRIOR

The Jeddara! And the black-
haired one!

The three warriors rush toward Carter and Ozara, they flee for the false door, the warriors SHOUT out for help, a FOURTH WARRIOR steps out of a room to the left of them,

Carter CLEAVES his skull open, WHACK! SPLAT! with his long sword.

They reach the door, Ozara fumbles with the locking mechanism.

CARTER

Take your time, Ozara.

OZARA

I am trembling so. They will reach us before I can open it.

CARTER

Don't worry about them. I can hold them off until you open it.

The three warriors attack Carter. The first is impetuous, rushes Carter, tries to strike him dead with one stroke, Carter side-steps, runs him through the heart, SQUISH!

The other two are cautious, constantly THRUST and CUT, trying to reach him, Carter keeps them at bay, CLANG! CLANG! WEAVES A STEEL NET of defense around him.

Carter parries a thrust, CLANG! PRICKS his assailant sharply above the heart, the warrior involuntarily shrinks back, Carter takes the opportunity to open his companion's chest wide open with the edge of his blade, SLICE! neither warrior is mortally wounded, but blood is flowing freely.

Ozara fumbles at the lock, a DETACHMENT OF WARRIORS turns into the corridor from the opposite end.

The wounded warriors press Carter, he is running out of time, he launches an offensive against them.

OZARA

It is open, John Carter, come!
Hurry!

Carter brings down one with a vicious cut, SLICE! as he falls, he runs the other through the chest, SQUISH!

The new detachment is almost upon them, Carter and Ozara enter the secret passageway, close the door behind them.

INT. SECRET PASSAGEWAY - NIGHT

INFRARED: They are once again in complete darkness.

OZARA

(continuing)

Hurry! The passageway is straight and level all the way to the door.

They run full speed ahead, the door OPENS behind them, the detachment enters the secret passageway, there are TWENTY of them, they rush down the corridor after the fugitives.

Carter runs into Ozara, they are at the end of the passageway, she is standing in the doorway, she opens it, the dark river flows below, Carter takes Ozara in his arms, jumps into the river, SPLASH!

EXT. RIVER AND FOREST OUTSIDE CASTLE - NIGHT

Carter holds Ozara in one arm, strokes with the other, swims across the river to the other side, they climb up on the bank, Ozara looks at Carter, her teeth chatter.

OZARA

(continuing)

What are you going to do now, John Carter? I am so cold.

She embraces Carter for warmth.

CARTER

I would make a fire, but don't you think we should keep moving, they are surely to pursue us?

OZARA

They wouldn't dare to venture into the forest at night, and rarely in the daytime. The beasts hunt through the forest by night; we cannot escape them!

CARTER

Yet you came here willingly.

OZARA

Ul Vas would have tortured us; the beasts will be more merciful. Listen! You can hear them now.

In the distance, STRANGE GRUNTS, a FEARSOME ROAR.

CARTER

They are not near us.

OZARA

They will come.

CARTER

Then I better get a fire started. That will keep them at bay.

OZARA

Do you think so?

CARTER

I hope so.

Carter collects a pile of fallen branches, dry leaves, reaches into his pocket pouch, pulls out the common Martian appliance for making fire, tries to ignite the leaves, they begin to smoke, the smoke curls up into the air.

CARTER

(continuing)

You said that the Tarids would hesitate to enter the forest on this side of the river even by day. Why is that?

OZARA

The Masenas. They often come up the river in great numbers, hunting the Tarids.

CARTER

Why do they hunt the Tarids?

OZARA

Food.

CARTER

You don't mean to say that the Masenas eat human flesh?

OZARA

Yes, they are very fond of it.

The leaves ignite, soon they have a good fire, the flames expose them to the Tarids on the castle wall, they hurl INSULTS, PROPHECY their deaths.

Ozara stretches in front of the fire, her blue hair and nipples turn greenish in the glowing flames.

OZARA

(continuing; points)

Look! They have come for us.

Two huge eyes peer out of the dark, Carter picks up a blazing brand from the fire, hurls it at the eyes, there is a HIDEOUS BLOOD CURDLING SCREAM, the eyes disappear.

Many eyes now appear around the fire, Carter looks overhead at a tall tree, takes two firebrands, hands two more to Ozara.

CARTER

We are going to climb that tree. Perhaps some of these brutes can climb, too, but we shall have to take a chance. They are likely too large and heavy to climb.

They move to the tree, wave their brands to keep the beasts at bay, Ozara climbs up into the nearest branch, Carter follows, they are immediately attacked, Carter swings a brand to keep the beats down.

They climb into the highest branches, out of the reach of the beasts, discover an enormous nest, carefully woven and lined with soft grasses. Ozara jumps inside the nest.

OZARA

A Masena nest. Come, keep me warm, John Carter.

Ozara lies back in the nest, her breasts swollen in arousal, her blue nipples almost burst at the tips, she arches up her pelvis, shows him the Blue Flower of Domnia. Carter moves between her legs, slides his penis inside her blue vagina, takes her to the music of the beasts, they GROWL and GRUNT below the tree in monotonous cadence.

The huge half circle of Barsoom on the horizon suffuses the nest with an eerie red glow, Carter squeezes Ozara's breasts, bulges the large blue nipples, sucks them with relish, she moves beneath him lustfully, they both last a long time, they GRUNT and MOAN into the night, finally collapse. They fall asleep.

EXT. MASENA NEST - MORNING

The sun shines in their eyes, they wake up, the animals have gone, on the castle wall across the river, a grisly sight: out of the window that was Ozara's cell, by the hook and rope Carter used for her escape, by the noose he made, Ulah hangs, swings like a pendulum, her neck at a horrible angle.

Ozara CRIES, Carter comforts her, he sheds tears silently. They climb down, head off in the direction of Domnia.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Ozara becomes happier as they progress through the forest, soon her gloom and pessimism are in the past. The silence of the forest is shattered by the SOUND OF HIDEOUS ROARS, A SCORE of creatures drop out of the trees all around them.

OZARA

The Masenas!

As the Masenas approach, their ROARS cease, are replaced by PURRS and MEOWS. They maneuver Carter under a tree, another pounces out of the tree on top of Carter, he goes down, the rest move in, capture him, disarm him, others seize Ozara.

They PURR even more, drag their prisoners down river, they come to a great park-like clearing, they ROAR, their roar is ANSWERED from the trees around the clearing.

Carter and Ozare are lifted up into a great tree, come to a great platform upon which a strange arboreal house is built.

INT. MASENA HOUSE - DAY

The house is huge inside, a council lodge, is able to hold not only the twenty warriors who captured the prisoners, but FIFTY more, they squat on their haunches, their single eyes give a surrealistic touch.

CARTER

Why have you captured us.
We are not your enemies.
We were escaping from the
Tarids, who are. Do you
understand what I am
saying.

MASENA KING

I understand your words, but
your argument is meaningless.
There are few arguments that
satisfactorily overcome the
cravings of the belly.

CARTER

You mean that you are going to eat us?

KING

Certainly!

OZARA

So this is the end; and what a horrible end! It did us no good to escape from Ul Vas.

CARTER

We have had a day of freedom that we would not have otherwise had; and don't forget the lovemaking. That made the price well worth paying.

A lone Masena enters the lodge, it is Umka.

CARTER

Umka!

UMKA

John Carter! What are you doing here, and the Jeddara of the Tarids? We believed you both were dead.

CARTER

We escaped from Ul Vas, and now we are about to be eaten by your people.

Umka takes the King aside, has a heated discussion with him, returns.

UMKA

You are to be set free in return for what you did for me; but you must leave our country at once.

CARTER

Nothing would suit us better.

UMKA

Some of us are going with you to see that none of our people attack you while you are still in our land.

Carter and Ozara leave with their escort.

EXT. FOREST OF THE MASENAS - DAY

Umka and his men lead Carter and Ozara through the lush forest toward the mountains of Domnia.

CARTER

Umka, what became of you and the ship at the Tower of Diamonds?

UMKA

We drifted about idly in the air for a long time. They wanted to follow Gar Nal and the other ship, but they didn't know where to search. Today, we were over my own country and I asked them to put me down on the ground. They were stocking up on water and supplies not far from here. They also found a great quantity of precious stones. They should still be there.

He leads them to a clearing.

UMKA

(points)

The spaceship is a few hundred ads beyond this clearing. For everyone's safety it is best that we go no further. Good luck, John Carter and Jeddara of the Tarids.

The Masenas wait in the clearing as Carter and Ozara walk in the direction Umka pointed.

OZARA

I am glad that we did not sacrifice him.

They come to another clearing carpeted with precious stones, the spaceship is in the center. Jat Or lifts crates of the stones inside the spaceship, Ur Jan and Zanda stack them inside; Jat Or looks up as Carter and Ozara approach.

JAT OR

By the daughter of the lesser moon, it is good to see that you live, John Carter!

Zanda sees Carter, leaps out of the spaceship.

ZANDA

Oh, Vandor, you live!

She runs to Carter, embraces him, French-kisses him, Ur Jan descends the ladder.

UR JAN

By the tender breast of Issus, you have managed to save the Jeddara. You are a man of marvels, John Carter.

Ur Jan looks around, disappointment on his face.

UR JAN

Where is Ulah?

CARTER

The Tarids killed her; they hung her from the tower wall for helping us escape.

OZARA

You can be sure that they tortured her first. She gave her life for us.

Ur Jan, the assassin of Zodanga, turns his head, chokes back a tear.

UR JAN

She was so beautiful.

Ozara looks at Ur Jan's great bulk, the tear in his eye, lowers her head.

OZARA

I feel the same way; she would be honored to know that such a great fighting man as yourself shed a tear for her.

CARTER

How were you able to operate the ship, Jat Or?

JAT OR

Zanda was the only one who knew anything about the mechanism or its control. She said that you gave her lessons when you escaped Zodanga. After a little experimenting, she found that she could operate it with ease.

JAT OR

(continuing)

We planned on finding Gar
Nal and the Princess, then
returning to confirm your
fate among the Tarids.

Zanda smiles knowingly at Carter, kisses him again.

CARTER

You are a good student,
Zanda.

ZANDA

I look forward to more
lessons from the great
Vandor!

CARTER

More so than your desire
to kill John Carter?

ZANDA

I do not know anyone by
the name of John Carter.

Jat Or and Ur Jan LAUGH

CARTER

I hope for John Carter's
sake that you never meet him,
Zanda, for I am rather fond
of him, and I should hate to
see him killed.

ZANDA

Yes, I should hate to kill
him, for I know now that he
is the bravest man and the
truest friend and lover in
the world.

Ozara listens to the whole thing, she is fascinated by the
way Zanda carries herself in military harness, she walks to
Zanda, embraces her.

OZARA

I have never seen a woman in
a man's fighting gear before.
It is forbidden among the
Tarids. You fought bravely
in the Tower of Diamonds.

She French-kisses Zanda.

JAT OR

Her father was an officer in
the old Zodangan Navy. He
brought her up like an only
son.

OZARA

I can't seem to take my eyes
off you. I thought I knew
you in the Tower of Diamonds,
but this is such a surprise.

ZANDA

You only had eyes for Dejah
Thoris at the time, but, of
course, so did I.

UR JAN

I am furious that Gar Nal
broke his oath to keep the
truce! And I am furious at
myself for wronging you,
John Carter.

He unsheathes his sword, throws it at Carter's feet, CLANG!
falls to his knees.

UR JAN

(continuing)

I swear eternal fealty to
you, John Carter. I hereby
renounce the Guild of
Assassins.

UR JAN

(continuing)

Never in my life have I
fought shoulder to shoulder
with such a swordsman, and
never shall it be said that
I have drawn a sword against
him.

He holds his harness in both hands, bares his chest.

UR JAN

(continuing)

I raped your wife. I repent
and desire that you kill me
now, for I truly deserve it.
I love the Princess Dejah
Thoris with all of my heart.
Kill me and end my shame.

Pursuant to Martian custom, Carter puts his right hand on Ur
Jan's left shoulder, raises him to his feet, replaces the
sword in its scabbard.

CARTER

You did not break the truce,
Ur Jan. For that, I forgive
you. I accept your sword and
I renounce my quest to kill
you and bring the assassins
of Zodanga to justice.

(pauses)

The good I sought has again
caused great evil. It seems
to be some sort of great
natural law learned only
by trial and error over
long periods of time. Let
us take Ozara back to
Domnia. Her family is
powerful; perhaps we can
discover where Gar Nal has
taken Dejah Thoris.

They enter the spaceship, Carter directs it to take off,
they fly over the forest, over the mountains, toward Domnia.

INT. INSIDE SPACESHIP - DAY

The mountains below suddenly disappear, the craft gains speed and altitude, heads back to Barsoom, it will not obey Carter's mental commands.

CARTER

By the shriveled breasts of
Issus, the ship will not
obey me!

ZANDA

The mechanical brain is
originating its own thoughts!

Ozara swoons.

ZANDA

There is no oxygen! We will
all lose consciousness and
die. Can you control the
supply, John Carter?

Carter gives the mental impulse, the oxygen machine kicks in, RRRRRRRR.

CARTER

That is all I can seem to do.

ZANDA

What evil does it have in
mind for us?

CARTER

We will have to wait and
see.

The ship returns at full speed to Zodanga, it is night. The ship pulls up next to the roof hangar of Fal Silvas's residence, backs into the hangar, lowers itself on the scaffolding. Zanda trembles, tries to overcome her fear.

ZANDA

Let me see if I can open the
doors?

She concentrates, the side door opens, the ladder descends.

UR JAN

I'll go first.

INT. RESIDENCE OF FAL SILVAS - NIGHT

Ur Jan jumps down on the hangar floor, Carter, Jat Or, and Zanda jump down behind him. Ozara climbs down the ladder.

The place appears to be empty, they find a note attached to the door of Fal Silvas's sleeping quarters.

CLOSE on note: From Fal Silvas of Zodanga, To John Carter of Helium, Let this be known: You betrayed me. You stole my ship. You thought that your puny mind could best that of the great Fal Silvas. Very well, John Carter, it shall be a duel of the minds - my mind against yours. Let us see who will win. I am recalling the ship. I am directing it to return from wherever it may be at full speed. It is to allow no other brain to change its course.

I am commanding it to return to its hangar and remain there forever unless it receives contrary directions from my brain. Know you then, John Carter, when you read this note, that I, Fal Silvas, have won; and that as long as I live, no other brain than mine can ever cause my ship to move. I might have dashed the ship against the ground and thus destroyed you; but then, I could have not gloated over you, as I now shall. Do not search for me. I am hidden where you can never find me. I have written. That is all.

OZARA

What kind of monster is this man?

ZANDA

Do you not believe him, John Carter. You saw that we were able to control parts of the ship's mechanisms. That means it can think for itself.

JAT OR

You don't seem to be afraid
of it anymore.

ZANDA

It allowed us to live.
Perhaps it became familiar
with our brains, John
Carter; perhaps it likes
us.

Rapas turns into the corridor, sees Carter and the others,
turns, runs away, Carter makes a giant leap, catches him.

RAPAS

Well, Vandor, this is
certainly a surprise.
Why have you changed the
color of your skin?

The rest catch up, at the sight of Ur Jan, Rapas's face
turns ashen.

RAPAS

And Ur Jan! To see you with
Vandor - what am I to make
of it all?

CARTER

What are you doing here?

Rapas stares in astonishment at Ozara.

RAPAS

I came to see Fal Silvas.

UR JAN

Did you expect to find him
here?

RAPAS

Yes.

Ur Jan moves forward quickly, grasps Rapas by the throat.

UR JAN

Listen, you rat! You know where Fal Silvas is! You are his assassin. Tell me where he is, or I will wring your neck.

Rapas appeals to Carter, he makes no move to save him.

RAPAS

If I tell you, will you promise not to kill me?

CARTER

We will promise you that and more. Tell us where Fal Silvas is and I will give you your weight in treasure.

Ur Jan shakes Rapas by the neck.

UR JAN

Speak up!

RAPAS

Fal Silvas is in the house of Gar Nal. He crashed his spaceship on his return. They have agreed to unite forces out of fear of the Warlord, John Carter.

CARTER

You are looking at John Carter, Warlord of Mars.

Rapas SHUDDERS.

EXT. STREETS OF ZODANGA - MIDNIGHT

They arrive at Gar Nal's at 25 xats past the 8th zode, Martian midnight. It is obvious from the collapsed roof hangar and wreckage that Gar Nal had a crash landing. Rapas admits them into the main entrance.

INT. RESIDENCE OF GAR NAL - MIDNIGHT

Rapas leads them through corridors, up narrow ramps, to the third level of the house, halts at a large door, points.

RAPAS

He's in there.

CARTER

Open the door!

Rapas tries the latch, it is locked, Ur Jan pushes him aside, throws his huge bulk against the door, SMASH! the wood SPLINTERS into pieces, they all rush into the room.

Gar Nal and Fal Silvas are seated across from each other at a table, they look up as the door is SPLINTERED, leap to their feet, their faces a study in fear and terror.

Carter leaps across the room, seizes Gar Nal before he can draw his sword, Ur Jan falls upon Fal Silvas, Zanda puts the edge of her sword blade against his throat.

ZANDA

Give the command, John
Carter, and I will put this
calot scum out of his
misery!

Ozara stands in the doorway, hears a MUFFLED SOUND behind a closed dorr from the other side of the corridor, goes to investigate.

Carter stares into Gar Nal's eyes, uses all of his telepathic powers, Rapas takes the opportunity to slip away.

CARTER

Do you know where my
Princess is?

GAR NAL

Yes.

CARTER

Where?

GAR NAL

You would like to know,
wouldn't you? But do not
think that Gar Nal is fool
enough to tell you. No, as
long as I know and you don't,
you will not dare to kill me.

UR JAN

I'll make him talk. Rapas,
heat a dagger for me. Heat
it red hot.

He turns to Rapas, he is gone.

UR JAN

(continuing)

I will do it myself. But
first let me kill Fal
Silvas.

FAL SILVAS

No, no! I did not steal the
Princess of Helium - it was
Gar Nal.

Zanda moves the blade against Fal Silvas's neck, draws
blood.

ZANDA

Hold still!

CARTER

Where is my Princess, Gar
Nal? Tell me that, and I
will spare your life.

GAR NAL

She's still on Thuria.

CARTER

That is your death warrant,
Fal Silvas!

FAL SILVAS

Why? What did I have to do
with it?

CARTER

You prevent me from directing
the brain that operates your
ship, and only thus may
I reach Thuria.

FAL SILVAS

Spare me, and I will turn the
ship over to you and let you
control the brain.

CARTER

I don't trust you.

ZANDA

Turn control of the brain
over to John Carter right
now!

She digs the blade in deeper, draws more blood. Fal Silvas
concentrates on the brain, so does Zanda.

ZANDA

(continuing)

The brain is fond of me, Fal
Silvas; don't try to fool
us.

FAL SILVAS

I have done as you requested.
Let me leave.

ZANDA

It is so, John Carter. We
should kill him now.

CARTER

I return to Thuria at once.
I will take Fal Silvas with
me as insurance against
some unforeseen event.

JAT OR

I am going with you, my
Prince.

ZANDA

And I, too, am going.

UR JAN

(growls)

And I; but first, my
Prince, please let me
run my sword through the
heart of this scoundrel.

Ur Jan advances upon Gar Nal.

UR JAN

(continuing)

He should die for what he
has done. He gave you his
word once before, and he
broke it.

CARTER

No, he told me where the
Princess was; I have
guaranteed his safety.

Ur Jan GRUMBLES, follows Carter out of the room, leads Gar Nal at sword point, Zanda leads Fal Silvas, Jat Or follows as rear guard.

They are met with a bizarre sight: Ozara escorts Dejah Thoris from a room on the opposite side of the corridor, she removes the final bonds from Dejah Thoris's hands, the Princess sees Carter, rushes into his open arms.

DEJAH THORIS

Oh, my Chieftan, I thought I
should not be in time. Gar
Nal had me gagged and bound;
Ozara rescued me.

Ur Jan turns on Gar Nal.

UR JAN

Lying calot scum!

He runs his sword through Gar Nal's heart, SQUISH! Gal Nal falls to the ground, his legs twitch, he dies.

Fal Silvas panics, runs down the corridor, Zanda pulls out her dagger, brings it back over her shoulder, hurls it, it sails through the air, SWISH, pierces Fal Silvas between the shoulder blades straight through his heart, SQUISH! kills him instantly, he falls face forward to the floor, THUD!

ZANDA

Death to calot scum! The mechanical brain is now ours to control, John Carter, Prince of Helium, Jeddak of Jeddaks, Warlord of all Barsoom!

DISSOLVE TO: