

Chapter 3 - The Call of the Jungle

Chapter 3 - The Call of the Jungle begins with Tarzan, stirred from rest by an instinctual yearning that pulls him from the security of his camp into the dark heart of the jungle. The familiar sounds and scents awaken something deep within him, a primal force stronger than reason. Without hesitation, he slips through the trees, his movements graceful and precise, each leap a reflection of years spent among the apes. His senses sharpen as the night deepens, drawing him into the rhythm of the wilderness. The air carries the scent of Bara, the deer, triggering a focused hunt that reignites his bond with the land. He tracks silently, his every motion guided by instinct and experience, until, with one sudden pounce from the canopy, he brings down his prey. This moment of triumph is both natural and necessary, reinforcing his dual identity as both predator and protector.

The celebration is brief. Numa, the lion, lured by the scent of fresh blood, enters the clearing with unmistakable intent. Tarzan senses the challenge before the lion even appears. Rather than risk an immediate confrontation, he offers part of his kill to Numa, an act that reflects not weakness, but wisdom earned from years in the wild. The jungle operates on a code, and Tarzan knows the balance must be respected. However, when Numa oversteps, growling with increasing boldness, Tarzan's response is swift. Without fear, he asserts his dominance—not through force, but by striking the lion with fruit from above. The jungle understands such language, and so does Numa. This unspoken negotiation is less about the meat and more about the pecking order. In the end, Tarzan keeps what he needs, maintaining his role as king of a domain where strength and intelligence rule together.

Their tense standoff is soon interrupted by a new presence—a man unfamiliar to this corner of the jungle. The rustle of leaves and scent of unfamiliar herbs alerts Tarzan to the arrival of a native witch-doctor. He watches from above, his instincts curious and

alert. When Numa catches the same scent and gives chase, Tarzan reacts instantly. In a display of fearlessness, he intervenes, engaging the lion in a second confrontation. The fight is savage, fueled by reflex and rage, but Tarzan's skill prevails. With each blow, he reminds the jungle—and himself—of his place within it. The witch-doctor, stunned by the spectacle, watches as the beast falls, eyes widening at the sight of this mythic figure.

As silence returns, the witch-doctor approaches, awe replacing fear. He mutters ancient words and kneels, recognizing Tarzan not just as a man, but as a living legend—a forest god said to walk with beasts. This recognition is more than reverence; it is confirmation that Tarzan belongs to both worlds. The man is no stranger to tales of the ape-man, and now, face to face, he sees those stories brought to life. Tarzan does not revel in the attention. Instead, he listens as the old man speaks of omens and warnings. The jungle may crown Tarzan as its own, but danger stirs beyond the trees. The witch-doctor's words carry weight, even if Tarzan pretends not to be swayed by prophecy.

With the rising sun casting light on the broken leaves and bloodied earth, Tarzan departs, his thoughts conflicted. The jungle called, and he answered—not just with tooth and claw, but with purpose. What began as a hunt became something greater: a confrontation with himself, with fate, and with the delicate line between savagery and sovereignty. As he vanishes into the trees once more, the reader is left with a sense that Tarzan's journey is far from over. The call of the jungle is not merely a sound; it is a summons of identity, power, and destiny. And Tarzan, lord of both man and beast, must walk the line between them, one breath, one battle, one instinct at a time.