

Chapter 2 - On the Road to Opar

Chapter 2 - On the Road to Opar begins with a telling glimpse into Tarzan's character—though surrounded by the comforts of civilization, his heart remains tethered to the wilderness. He ignores the familiar fruits, insects, and wild fare that once sustained him, choosing instead to revisit the world of men out of love for Lady Jane Greystoke. Civilization may offer structure, but to Tarzan, it's only worth tolerating because of her. Deep within, he yearns for the untamed freedom of the jungle. That call of the wild never weakens, even as he walks among men. His restlessness becomes the seed for his decision to revisit Opar, drawn by necessity and the promise of adventure buried beneath ancient stone.

When Tarzan notices a party approaching from the plains, he anticipates a peaceful visit. Among them is M. Jules Frecoult, a supposed French gentleman who claims to have lost his way in the African wilderness. Welcomed into the home by Tarzan and Lady Jane, Frecoult hides a darker truth—he is actually Werper, a cunning criminal seeking fortune through deception. At first, Werper finds no opening to act. Tarzan's presence and the loyalty of the Waziri offer Jane an unshakable layer of protection. The opportunity to execute his plan seems elusive, and so he waits, playing the role of a grateful guest. His mind, however, stays fixed on personal gain. Beneath every polite exchange lies calculation and quiet plotting.

Fortune tilts in Werper's favor when he overhears news of Tarzan's recent financial hardship and his intention to journey back to Opar in search of treasure. Seeing this as a path to far more than ransom, Werper begins to move carefully. He requests permission to hunt in Waziri territory, a request Tarzan grants without suspicion. Once away from Greystoke's home, Werper dismisses his guide, citing illness, and sets his own plan in motion. A spy is sent to trail Tarzan, to signal his movements, allowing Werper to shadow the journey. The criminal's ambition grows with each step. Ransom

has been replaced by visions of Opar's fabled wealth—gold beyond measure, waiting to be claimed by a man bold enough to steal it.

Meanwhile, Tarzan ventures forward unaware of the shadow trailing him. To him, the expedition is not a mission of desperation but a return to something pure. The jungle is not a place of fear—it is home. His mind is unburdened, filled with the quiet anticipation of reconnecting with the wild, of feeling the earth beneath his bare feet and the vines in his hands. He does not sense Werper's deception, nor suspect the betrayal blooming behind every polite gesture back at the bungalow. While Tarzan sees the trip as routine, the reality is anything but. This journey carries the weight of schemes, greed, and potential ruin—though Tarzan senses none of it.

The narrative sets two opposing forces in motion. On one side, Tarzan—guided by simplicity, loyalty, and the rhythm of nature. On the other, Werper—driven by greed, deception, and blind ambition. As they move separately toward Opar, the contrast between them becomes more distinct. Tarzan's trust and openness highlight Werper's deceit, creating a layered tension. It is not only a journey through the jungle but through the hidden intentions that define the men making it. The closer they get to Opar, the more inevitable their confrontation becomes.

This chapter frames the beginning of a larger conflict rooted in human nature itself—between purity and corruption, between purpose and manipulation. As Tarzan moves deeper into the forest with no thought of betrayal, Werper draws closer with secrets, ready to claim what he has not earned. In the raw landscape of Africa, stripped of social pretenses, true character is exposed. The road to Opar is not merely physical—it is a path that will reveal each man for who he truly is. And in the untamed jungle, intentions are tested, and survival is reserved for those who understand both the wild and the people who enter it.