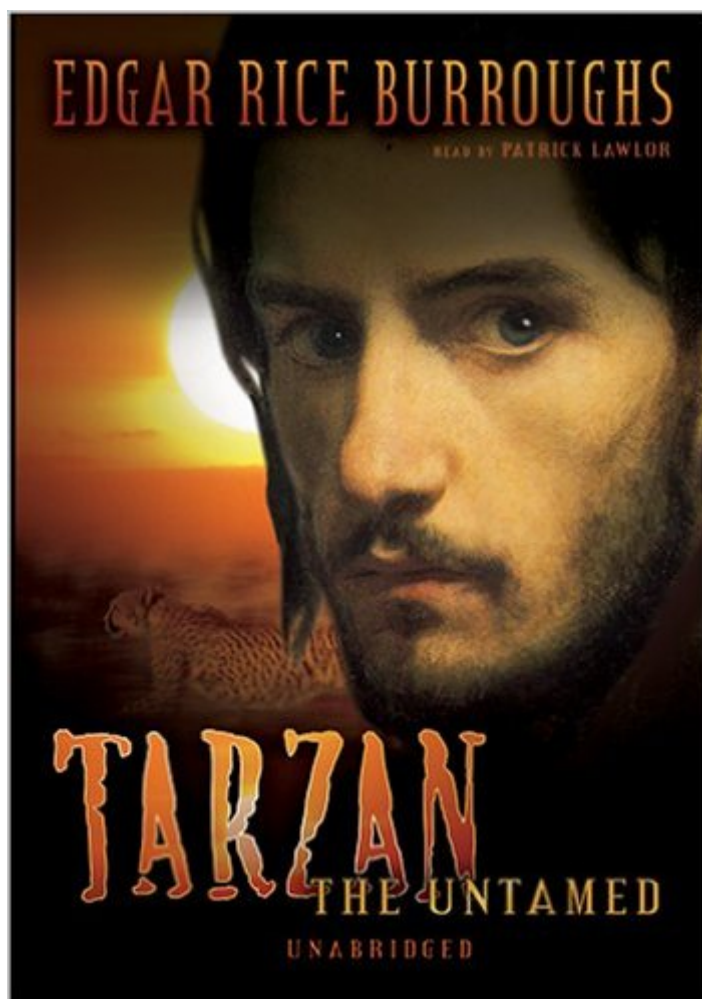


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Tarzan The Untamed



Synopsis

Here is the continuing adventure of fiction's most dramatic hero, Tarzan the ape-man. In this new episode, Tarzan has given up his jungle ways and is living contentedly on a farm with his beloved wife as a wealthy member of British nobility. But when he returns one day from a trip to Nairobi, he finds his farm has been laid waste and no one left alive on it. In grief and rage, he casts off the veneer of civilization to become once again the primitive ape-man, ranging the country in search of those who killed his mate to mete out to them the vengeance of the jungle. Never has the master fiction-writer Edgar Rice Burroughs so skillfully shown the struggles within the breast of his ape-man hero. Through dozens of suspense-filled adventures and hair-breadth escapes from danger, he tracks down his enemies and triumphs over them in a crashing, action-packed climax.

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Customer Reviews

Edgar Rice Burroughs was less than impressed with Jane as the mate for Tarzan thinking that La, the High Priestess of Opar was a better match. With the Germans making themselves international bad guys by starting the First World War, ERB took advantage of their moving against British possessions in Africa to kill off Jane in this seventh novel in the Tarzan series. "Tarzan the Untamed" was first published as a six-part serial in "The Red Book Magazine" in 1919 with the story continued as "Tarzan and the Valley of Luna" in a five-part serial in "All-Story Weekly" in 1920. The result is one of the most atypical Burroughs pulp fiction yarns, in which the standard romantic adventure has the hero (whether he is Tarzan, Korak, John Carter, David Innes, etc.) pursuing his beloved (Jane, Miriam, Dejah Thoris, etc.) across a dangerous environment (darkest Africa,

Barsoom, Pellucidar, etc.). But in "Tarzan the Untamed," the hero is out for revenge. The result is arguably ERB's best Tarzan novel, past paced and with a prose style that rises above his average effort. This is amply proven in the opening chapter. Hauptmann Fritz Schneider and his men stumble upon the estate of John Clayton, Lord Greystoke, in British East Africa in the fall of 1914. Tarzan and his son, Korak, are away, and Lady Jane does not know that war has broken out between Germany and the British Empire, so she welcomes them to her home. Meanwhile, Tarzan learns of the war in Nairobi and hurries home only to find the smoking ruins of his estate when he returns. Wasimbu, the son of Muviro, has been crucified on the wall, and the rest of the natives are all dead. Tarzan also finds the charred body of his wife, recognizable only by the rings on her fingers.

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"Tarzan the Untamed" was published in 1920 and against his publishers' wishes, Edgar Rice Burroughs got a bit political and involved Tarzan in World War I. Ironically, WW I ended in 1918, lasting less than 4 years, so the book was already a tad out of date. The book is a bit of wish fulfillment as Tarzan does a number on the Germans by helping the Brits. In actuality, although the

German's lost the war they trounced the British in Africa. At the start of the book Tarzan returns to his African estate to find it burned to the ground with an unrecognizably burned female body bearing Jane's jewelry and evidence that German's were to blame. Tarzan sets off to wage a one man war against the German army. There are some neat parts of the book but the flow fails. Very early in the book Tarzan manages to exact revenge on the commanders he blames for his wife's death so that problem is solved. There is a long section where Tarzan captures a Lion and places leather bags over its head and paws and trains it to obey. Later he releases it on a group of Germans and the Lion is forgotten about. The payoff wasn't worth the effort. In another part Tarzan makes his way through a desolate part of Africa. He nearly dies from fatigue and thirst but in a move that appears to have later been stolen by the 1982 Conan the Barbarian movie Tarzan feigns death until a buzzard lands on him whereupon he kills the buzzard to sustain him. It's all pretty cool but in the end Tarzan inexplicably ends up where he started making the whole exercise pointless. In my opinion the publisher was correct in advising against politicizing Tarzan. There is a comic cover of an adaptation of the story with Tarzan firing a huge Gatling gun. It just doesn't look right.

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