Lost in the Jungle

Lost in the Jungle



Paul du Chaillu

Illustrated by John Edward Gray

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* * *

"PAUL'S LETTER TO HIS
YOUNG FRIENDS,

IN WHICH HEPREPARES THEM FOR
BEING "LOST IN THE JUNGLE"

* * *

Introduction

MY Dear Young Folks,—In the first book which I wrote for you, we traveled together through the Gorilla Country, and saw not only the gigantic apes, but also the cannibal tribes which eat men.

In the second book we continued our hunting, and met leopards, elephants, hippopotami, wild boars, great serpents, etc., etc. We were stung and chased by the fierce Bashikouay ants, and plagued by flies.

Last spring, your friend Paul, not satisfied with writing for young folks, took it into his head to lecture before them. When I mentioned the subject to my acquaintances, many of them laughed at the notion of my lecturing to you, and a few remarked, "This is another of your queer notions." I did not see it!!! I thought I would try.

Thousands of young folks came to your friend Paul's lectures in Boston, Brooklyn, and New York; not only did my young friends come, but a great many old folks were also seen among them.

The intelligent, eager faces of his young hearers, their sparkling eyes, spoke to him more eloquently than words could do, and told him that he had done well to go into the great jungle of Equatorial Africa, and that they liked to hear what he had done and what he had seen.

When he asked the girls and boys of New York if he should write more books for them, the tremendous cheers and hurrahs they gave him in reply told him that he had better go to work.

When, at the end of his third lecture, he made his appearance in the old clothes he had worn in Africa, and said he would be happy to shake hands with his young hearers, the rush then made assured him that they were his friends. Oh! how your hearty hand-shaking gladdened the heart of your friend Paul; he felt so happy as your small hands passed in and out of his!

Before writing this new volume, I went to my good and esteemed friends, my publishers in Franklin Square, and asked them what they thought of a new book for Young Folks.

"Certainly," they said;

"by all means, Friend Paul. Write a new book, for STORIES OF THE GORILLA COUNTRY and WILD LIFE UNDER THEEQUATOR are in great demand."

I immediately took hold of my old journals, removed the African dust from them, and went to work, and now we are going to be LOST INTHE JUNGLE.

There are countries and savages with which you have been made acquainted in the two preceding volumes of which you will hear no more. Miengai, Ngolai, and Makinda are not to lead us through a country of cannibals. Aboko will slay no more elephants with me. Fasiko and Niamkala are to be left in their own country, and to many a great chief we have said good-by forever.

If we have left good friends and tribes of savage men, we will go into new countries and among other strange people. We shall have lots of adventures; we will slay more wild beasts, and will have fierce encounters with them, and some pretty narrow escapes. We will have some very hard times when "lost in the jungle;" we will be hungry and starving for many a day; we will see how curiously certain tribes live, what they eat and drink, how they build, and what they worship; and, before the end of our wande-

rings, you will see your friend Paul madeKING over a strange people! It makes him laugh even now when he thinks of it.

I am sure we will not always like our life in the woods, but I hope, nevertheless, that you will not be sorry to have gone with me in the strange countries where I am now to lead you.

Let us get ready to start. Let us prepare our rifles, guns, and revolvers, and take with us a large quantity of shoes, quinine, powder, bullets, shot, and lots of beads and other things to make presents to the kings and people we shall meet. Oh dear, what loads! and every thing has to be carried on the backs of men! I shudder when I think of the trouble; but never mind; we shall get through our trials, sickness, and dangers safely. *En avant!* that is to say, forward!

ON THE REMBO RIVER

THE sun is hot; it is midday. The flies are plaguing us; the boco, the nchouna, the ibolai are hard at work, and the question is, which of these three flies will bite us the hardest; they feel lively, for they like this kind of weather, and they swarm round our canoes.

I wish you could have seen the magnificent canoes we had; they were made of single trunks of huge trees. We had left the village of Goumbi, where my good friend Quengueza, of whom I have spoken before, and the best friend I had in Africa, reigned.

Our canoes were paddling against the current of the narrow and deep River Rembo. You may well ask yourselves where is the place for which I am bound. If you had seen us you might have thought we were going to make war, for the canoes were full of men who were covered with all their war fetiches; their faces were painted, and they were loaded with implements of war. The drums beat furiously, and the paddlers, as we ascended, were singing war-songs, and at times they would sing praises in honor of their king, saying that Quengueza was above all kings.

Quengueza and I were in the royal canoe, a superb piece of wood over sixty feet long, the prow being an imitation of an immense crocodile's head, whose jaws were wide open, showing its big, sharp, pointed teeth. This was emblematic, and meant that it would swallow all the enemies of the king. In our canoe there were more than sixty paddlers. At the stern was seated old Quengueza, the queen, who held an umbrella over the head of his majesty, and myself, and seated back of us all was Adouma, the

king's nephew, who was armed with an immense paddle, by which he guided the canoe.



THE ROYAL CANOE.

How warm it was! Every few minutes I dipped my old Panama hat, which was full of green leaves, into the water, and also my umbrella, for, I tell you, the sun seemed almost as hot as fire. The bodies of the boat paddlers were shining with the oil that exuded from their skin.

If you had closely inspected our canoes you would have seen a great number of axes; also queer-looking harpoons, the use of which you might well be curious about. We were bound for a ri-

ver or creek called the Niembouai, and on what I may call an African picnic; that is to say, we were going to build a camp on the banks of that river, and then we were to hunt wild beasts of the forest, but, above all, we were to try to harpoon an enormous creature called by the natives *manga*, a huge thing living in fresh water, and which one might imagine to be a kind of *whale*.

The distance from Goumbi to Niembouai was about fifteen miles. After three hours' paddling against a strong current we reached the Niembouai River. As we entered this stream the strong current ceased; the water became sluggish, and seemed to expand into a kind of lake, covered in many places with a queer kind of long tufted reed. For miles round the country looked entirely desolate. Now and then a flock of pelicans were seen swimming, and a long-legged crane was looking on the shore for fish.

At the mouth of the Niembouai, on a high hill, stood an abandoned Bakalai village called Akaka; the chief, whom I had known, was dead, and the people had fled for fear of the evil spirits. Nothing was left of the village but a few plantain-trees; the walls of the huts had all tumbled down.

How dreary all seemed for miles round Akaka. The lands were overflowed, and, as I have said before, were covered with reeds. Far off against the sky, toward the east-northeast, towered high mountain peaks, which I hoped to explore. They rose blue against the sky, and seemed, as I looked at them through my telescope, to be covered with vegetation to their very tops. These mountains were the home of wild men and still wilder beasts. I thought at once how nice it would be for me to plant the Stars and Stripes on the highest mountains there.

As we advanced farther up the river the mountains were lost sight of, and still we paddled up the Niembouai. Canoe after canoe closed upon us, until at last the whole fleet of King Quen-

gueza were abreast of the royal canoe, when I fired a gun, which was responded to by a terrific yell from all the men.

Then Quengueza, with a loud voice, gave the order to make for a spot to which he pointed, where we were to land and build our camp. Soon afterward we reached the place, and found the land dry, covered with huge trees to protect us from the intense heat of the sun, from the heavy dews of night, and from slight showers.

The men all scattered into the forest, some to cut long poles and short sticks for our beds; others went to collect palm-leaves to make a kind of matting to be used as roofing. The first thing to be done was for the people to make a nice olako for their king and myself.

Our shelter was hardly finished when a terrible rain-storm burst upon us, preceded by a most terrific tornado, for we were in the month of March. By sunset the storm was all over; it cooled the air deliciously, for the heat had been intense. At noon, under the shade of my umbrella while in the canoe, the thermometer showed 119° Fahrenheit.

We had brought lots of food, and many women had accompanied us, who were to fish, and were also to cook for the people. The harpoons were well taken care of, for we fully expected to harpoon a few of the *mangas*.

The manga canoes were to arrive during the night, for the canoes we had were not fit for the capture of such large game.

In the evening old Quengueza was seated by the side of a bright fire; the good old man seemed quite happy. He had brought with him a jug of palm wine, from which he took a drink from time to time, until he began to feel the effects of the beverage, and became somewhat jolly. His subjects were clustered in

groups around several huge fires, which blazed so brightly that the whole forest seemed to be lighted by them.

I put my two mats on my bed of leaves, hung my musquito nets as a protection against the swarms of musquitoes, then laid myself down under it with one of my guns at my side, placed my revolvers under my head, and bid good-night to Quengueza.

I did not intend to go right to sleep, but wished to listen to the talk of the people. The prospect of having plenty of meat to eat appeared to make them merry, and after each one had told his neighbor how much he could eat if he had it, and that he could eat more manga than any other man that he knew, the subject of food was exhausted. Then came stories of adventures with savage beasts and with ghosts.

We had in company many great men. The chief of them all was good old Quengueza, formerly a great warrior. After the king came Rapero Ouendogo, Azisha Olenga, Adouma, Rakenga Rikati Kombe, and Wombi—all men of courage and daring, belonging to the Abouya, a clan of warriors and hunters.

We had slaves also; among them many belonged to the king—slaves that loved him, and whose courage was as great as that of any man belonging to the tribe. Among them was Etia, the mighty and great slayer of gorillas and elephants. Etia provided game for Quengueza's table; he was one of the beloved slaves of the king, and he was also a great friend of mine. We were, indeed, old friends, for we had hunted a good deal together.

On a sudden all merriment stopped, for Ouendogo had shouted "let Etia tell us some of his hunting adventures." This order was received with a tremendous cheer, and Etia was placed in the centre. How eager were the eyes and looks of those who knew the story-telling gift of their friend Etia, who began thus: "Years

ago, I remember it as well as if it were but yesterday, I was in a great forest at the foot of a high hill, through which a little stream was murmuring; the jungle was dense, so much so that I could hardly see a few steps ahead of me; I was walking carefully along, very carefully, for I was hunting after the gorilla, and I had already met with the footprints of a huge one. I looked on the right, on the left, and ahead of me, and I wished I had had four eyes, that is, two more eyes on the back of my head, for I was afraid that a great gorilla might spring upon me from behind."

We all got so impatient to hear the story that we shouted all at once, "Go on, Etia, go on. What did you see in the bush? Tell us quick." But Etia was not to be hurried faster than he chose. After a short pause, he continued: "I do not know why, but a feeling of fear crept over me. I had a presentiment that something queer was going to happen. I stood still and looked all round me.

"Suddenly I spied a huge python coiled round a tree near to a little brook. The serpent was perfectly quiet. His huge body was coiled several times round the tree close to the ground, and there he was waiting for animals to come and drink. It was the dry season, and water was very scarce, and many animals came to that spring to drink. I can see, even to this day, its glittering eyes. Its color was almost identical with that of the bark of the tree. I immediately lay down behind another tree, for I had come also in search of game, and I could do nothing better than wait for the beasts to come there and drink.

"Ere long I spied a ncheri 'gazelle' coming; she approached unsuspicious of any danger. Just as she was in the act of drinking, the snake sprang upon the little beast and coiled himself round it. For a short time there was a desperate struggle; the folds of the snake became tighter and tighter round the body of the poor animal. I could see how slowly, but how surely the snake was sque-

ezing its prey to death. A few smothered cries, and all was over; the animal was dead. Then the snake left the tree and began to swallow the gazelle, commencing at the head. It crushed the animal more and more in its folds. I could hear the bones crack, and I could see the animal gradually disappearing down the throat of the snake."

"Why did you not, Etia, kill the snake at once?" shouted one man, "and then you would have had the ncheri for your dinner?" "Wait," replied Etia.

"After I had watched the snake for a short time, I took my cutlass and cut the big creature to pieces. That night I slept near the spot. I lighted a big fire, cooked a piece of the snake for my meal, and went to sleep.

"The next morning I started early, and went off to hunt. I had not been long in the forest before I heard a noise; it was a gorilla. I immediately got my gun ready, and moved forward to meet him. I crept through the jungle flat on 'my belly,' and soon I could see the great beast tearing down the lower branches of a tree loaded with fruit. Suddenly he stopped, and I shouted to him, 'Kombo (male gorilla), come here! come here!' He turned round and gave a terrific yell or roar, his fierce, glaring eyes looked toward me, he raised his big long arms as if to lay hold of me, and then advanced. We were very near, for I had approached quite close before I shouted my defiance to him.

"When he was almost touching me, I leveled my gun—that gun which my father, King Quengueza, had given me—that gun for which I have made a fetich, and which never misses an animal—then I fired. The big beast tottered, and, as it fell, one of his big hands got hold of one of my legs; his big, thick, huge fingers, as he gave his death-gasp, contracted themselves; I gave a great cry of pain, and, seizing my battle-axe, I dealt a fearful stroke and

broke its arm just above the joint. But his fingers and nails had gone deep into my flesh, which it lacerated and tore."

Etia pointed to his leg, and continued: "I have never gotten over it to this day, though it is so long ago that very few of you that are here to-night were born then. I began to bleed and bleed, and feared that the bone of my leg was broken. I left the body of the gorilla in the woods, but took its head with me, and that head I have still in my plantation; and at times," added Etia, "its jaws open during the night, and it roars and says, 'Etia, why have you killed me?' I am sure that gorilla had been a man before. That is the reason I am lame to this day. I succeeded in reaching my pindi (plantation), and my wife took care of me; but from that day I have hated gorillas, and I have vowed that I would kill as many of them as I could."

The story of Etia had the effect of awakening every one. They all shouted that Etia is a great hunter, that Etia had been bewitched before he started that time, and that if it had not been for Etia having a powerful monda (fetich), he would have been killed by the gorilla.

Our story-telling was interrupted by the arrival of canoes, just built for the fishing of the manga. These canoes were unlike other canoes; they were flat-bottomed, as flat as a board; the sides were straight, and both ends were sharp-pointed, and, when loaded with two men, did not draw in the water, I am sure, half an inch. They glided over the water, causing scarcely a ripple. There was no seat, and a man had to paddle standing up, the paddle being almost as long as a man. These canoes were about twenty-five feet long, and from eighteen to twenty inches broad. In them were several queer kinds of harpoons, which were to be used in capturing the mangas.

HUNTING FOR MANGA

THE next morning, very early, if you had been on the banks of the Niembouai, you would have seen me on one of those long flat-bottomed canoes which I have described to you, and in it you would likewise have seen two long manga harpoons.

A man by the name of Ratenou, who had the reputation of being one of the best manga harpooners, and of knowing where they were to be found, was with me. He was covered with fetiches, and had in a pot a large quantity of leaves of a certain shrub, which had been mashed with water and then dried. This mixture, when scattered on the water, is said to attract the manga.

When we left the shore, being less of an expert than Ratenou, and not being able to stand up so easily as he did, I seated myself at the bottom of the canoe. Ratenou recommended me not to move at all, and while he paddled I could not even hear the dip of his paddle in the water, so gently did our boat glide along.

We crossed the Niembouai to the opposite shore, where we lay by among the reeds. By that time the twilight had just made its appearance, and you know the twilight is of short duration under the equator; indeed, there is hardly any at all.

Ratenou threw on the water, not far from where we lay in watch, some of the green stuff he had in the pot, and we had not waited long before I saw, coming along the surface of the water, a huge beast, which gave two or three puffs and then disappeared. My man watched intently, and in the mean time moved the canoe toward the spot. We came from behind, so that the animal could not see us, and, just as the manga came to the surface of

the water once more, and gave three gentle puffs, Ratenou sent the harpoon with tremendous force into his body. The huge creature, with a furious dash and jerk at the line, made for the bottom of the river. Ratenou let the line slip, but held back as much as he dared, in order thus to increase the pain inflicted on the beast. The suspense and excitement were great. The animal dashed down to the bottom with impetuous haste, but the harpoon was fast in him, and held him. We watched the rope going out with the utmost anxiety. The harpoon has hardly struck the manga when our canoe goes with fearful rapidity. The native's rope proved too short; there was not enough of it to let it go. Every moment I fully expected to upset, and did not relish the idea at all. Finally the rope slackened; the manga was getting exhausted. At last no strain was observable; the beast was dead. Without apparently much effort, the line was hauled in, and presently I saw the huge beast alongside the canoe.

"Let us upset the canoe," said Ratenou.

"What!" said I.

"Let us upset the canoe." The good fellow, who was not overloaded with clothes, thought that to be an easy task; but I did not look at the proposal quite in the same light; so I said, "Ratenou, let us paddle the canoe to the shore, and I will get out." It was hardly said before it was done. I landed, and then the huge manga was tied to the canoe, the latter was capsized over its back, and then we turned it over again.

This was a big prize, for there is no meat so much thought of among the savages as that of the manga. We immediately made for the camp, and were received with uproarious cheers.

The canoe was upset once more, and the big fresh-water monster was dragged ashore. It was hard work, for the huge beast must have weighed from fifteen to eighteen hundred pounds.



THE MANGA.

What a queer-looking thing it was? The manga is a new species of manatee. Its body is of a dark lead-color; the skin is very thick and smooth, and covered in all parts with single bristly hairs, from half an inch to an inch in length; but the hairs are at a distance from each other, so that the skin appears almost smooth. The eyes are small—very small; it has a queer-looking head, the upper and lower parts of the lips having very hard and bristly hair.

The manga is unlike the whale in this, that it has two paddles, which are used as hands; and, when the flesh or skin is removed, the skeleton of the paddles looks very much like the bony frame of a hand. I have named this curious species after my most esteemed friend, Professor Owen, of London, *Manatus Oweni*.

The skin of the manga, when dried, is of a most beautiful amber color; the nearer the middle of the back, the more beautiful and intense the yellow. The skin is there more than one inch in thickness. When fresh it has a milky color, but when it dries, and the water goes off, it turns yellow. That part of the back is carefully cut in strips by the natives, who make whips with it, just in the same way as they do with the hippopotamus hide, and these whips are used extensively on the backs of their wives.

The large, broad tail, which is shown in the engraving, is used by them as a rudder, while their hands are used as paddles. These hands, unlike those of seals, have no claws or nails. This manga was eleven feet long, and the body looked quite huge.

Mangas feed entirely on grass and the leaves of trees, the branches of which fall into the water; they feed, also, on the grass found at the bottom of the rivers.

In looking at such curious shaped things, I could not help thinking what queer animals were found on our globe.

The doctor was greatly rejoiced at our success. Then name the ceremony of cutting up the beast; but, before commencing, Ratenon, the manga doctor, went through some ceremony round the carcase which he did not want any one to see. After a little he began to cut up the meat.

It was very fat; on the stomach the fat must have been about two inches thick. The lean meat was white, with a reddish tinge, and looked very nice. It is delicious, something like pork, but finer grained and of sweeter flavor. It must be smoked for a few days in order to have it in perfection.

We out the body into pieces of about half a pound each, and put them on the oralas and smoked Master Manga. The fragrance filled our camp.

The manga belongs to the small but singular group of animals classed as SIRENIA.

I have often watched these manga feeding on the leaves of trees, the branches of which hung close to the water. The manga's head only shows above the water. When thus seen, the manga bears a curious resemblance to a human being. They never go ashore, and do not crawl even partly out of the water. They must sometimes weigh as much as two to three thousand pounds.

INTO THE FOREST

SEVERAL weeks have passed since we left the Niembouai.

I have been alone with my three great hunters, Querlaouen, Gambo, and Malaouen. We are sworn friends; we have resolved to live in the woods and to wander through them. Several times since we left our manga-fishing we have been "lost in the jungle."

We have had some very hard times, but splendid hunting; and on the evening of that day of which I speak, we were quietly seated somewhere near the left bank of the River Ovenga, by the side of a bright fire, and, at the same time my men enjoyed their smoke, we talked over the future prospects of our life in the forest.

That evening I said, "Boys, let us go into the forest and look for ebony-trees; I want to find them; I must take some of that wood with me when I go back to the land of 'the spirits.'" Malaouen, Gambo, and Querlaouen shouted at once, "Let us go in search of the ebony-tree; let us choose a spot where we shall be able to find game." For I must tell you that good eating was one of the weak points of my three friends.

The ebony-tree is scattered through the forest in clusters, It is one of the finest and most graceful among the many lovely trees that adorn the African forest. Its loaves are long, sharp-pointed, and of a dark green color. Its bark is smooth, and also a dark green. The trunk rises straight as an arrow. Queer to say, the ebony-tree, when old, becomes hollow, and even some of its branches are hollow. Next to the bark is a white "sap-wood." Generally that sap-wood is three or four inches thick; so, unless one knows the tree by the bark, the first few blows of an axe would

not reveal to him the dark, black wood found. inside. Young ebony-trees of two feet diameter are often perfectly white; then, as the tree grows bigger, the black part is streaked with the white, and as the tree matures, the black predominates, and eventually takes the place of the white. The wood of the ebony-tree is very hard; the grain short and very brittle.

Yon can see that it is no slight work to cut down such big trees with the small axes we had, such as represented in the accompanying drawing. I show you, also, the drawing of a mpano, which is the instrument used in hollowing out the trunks of trees to make canoes.



After wandering for some hours we found several ebony-trees. How beautiful they were, and how graceful was the shape of their sharp-pointed leaves! These trees were not very far from the river,

or I should rather say from a creek which fell into the Ovenga River, so that it would not be difficult to carry our ebony logs to the banks and there load them on canoes.

We immediately went to work and built a nice camp. We had with us two boys, Njali and Nola, who had been sent with a canoe laden with provisions from one of Querlaouen's plantations, and which his wife had forwarded to us. Some bunches of plantains were of enormous size. There were two bunches of bananas for me, and sundry baskets of cassava and peanuts. There was also a little parcel of dried fish, which Querlaouen's wife had sent specially to her friend Chally.

We set to work, and soon succeeded in felling two ebony-trees. We arranged to go hunting in the morning, and cut the wood into billets in the afternoon. As we were not in a hurry, and it was rather hard work, we determined to take our time.

By the side of our camp we had a beautiful little stream, where we obtained our drinking water, and a little below that spot there was a charming place where we could take a bath.

Not far from our camp there was a creek called Eliva Mono (the Mullet's Creek), so named on account of the great number of mullets which at a certain season of the year come there to spawn. Besides the mono, the creek contained great numbers of a fish called condo. Large and tall trees grew on the banks of the creek.