TERROR ON THE PLANET OF THE APES

PHASE 2

THE MAGICK-MAN'S LAST GASP PURPLE LIGHT SHOW

SOMEBWHERE, A BIRD SHRIEKS. TREETOPS THRASH. AND JASON BELLOWS IN RAGE...

NOOOO!!

IT'S NOT FAIR!! DO YOU HEAR ME, BRUTUS--IT'S NOT RIGHT!!

THEN, SAVE FOR THE SOFT STIR OF LEAVES, AND FALLING ECHOES, THE GLADE FALLS QUIET...

BUT JASON'S RAGE REMAINS. HE HAS TURNED HIS BACK ON HIS HOME AND FRIENDS TO COME HERE--TO THE BIZARRE ARBOREAL BARRACKS, HE HAS COME TO FIND AND KILL BRUTUS, AND HE HAS FOUND NOTHING BUT FRUSTRATION. THE TREEHOUSE ENCAMPMENT IS DESERTED... FOR BRUTUS HAD FLED.
Perhaps Jason is right—perhaps it is not fair. Still, there is little he may do about it...

...to dark visions such as these—

Little, that is, beyond surrendering his mind to the hauntings of nightmazes...

His mother and father—murdered by Brutus' hooded terrorists.

Shaggy, the simple creature who knew innocence best—

—slain by Brutus himself.

Xavier, the Lawgiver's Deputy Administrator also victim to Brutus' hate.

—and the darkest vision of all: feeling vengeance within his grasp—

—and the only to be held back, helpless, restrained and chained, forced to watch Brutus escape.

Visions, yes, or nightmares, but all too real... all too true!
He scales the rickety stairway to the largest of the tree-held dwellings, knowing it is empty, but unable to resist entering.

The signs are simple; there is not much to tell. A hurried, hasty departure... Following Brutus' exile from the city...

A sense of his lingering presence... almost in the form of a stench.

Items left behind, things he must have touched... hundreds of times...

Things fouled by his hands, murdering hands...

But nothing of value, nothing worth rescuing from his taint... Except, perhaps...

Nothing but bitter frustration... and a silent vow to continue the search.

If so, it might prove useful... if one were to adopt a poetic stance when releasing its trigger...

... A crossbow, and a leather quiver of arrows. Is this the weapon which slew his parents? Shaggy? Xavier?

But there is nothing more.

And so, Jason guides to the ground, pondering directions. There are so many... too many...
EAGERLY, HIS EYES SCAN THE PARCHMENT, NOTING THE CITY, WHERE THE LANSERIAN ARMS RULES... AND WHERE HE LEFT ALEX AND MALABREGA IN THE HEAT OF VIOLENCE, TO THE NORTH, HIS PRESENT LOCATION -- BRUTUS' TREEHOUSE ENCAMPMENT...

AND TWO OTHER LOCATIONS: THE FORBIDDEN ZONE TO THE WEST, BORDERED BY THE GREAT SEA... AND AN UNNAMED SITE TO THE EAST, IN THE CENTER OF A RING OF MOUNTAINS, BOTH OF THESE LATTER ARE... MARKED.

SURELY THEN, BRUTUS AND HIS TERRORISTS HAVE FLED TO ONE OF THE MARKED LOCATIONS.

BUT WOULD HE RETURN TO THE FORBIDDEN ZONE-- AFTER BEING DEFEATED BY THE INHERITORS AND THEIR MUTANT-DRONES... AFTER DRAGGING DEATH AT THEIR HANDS...?

NO, IT IS NOT LIKELY.

TO THE EAST, THEN...

...AND TO THE EAST JASON PURSUDES...

...PLACING EVEN GREATER DISTANCE BETWEEN HIMSELF AND THE CITY HE HAS ABANDONED...
CONCERNING JASON, NO DOUBT... FROM THE LOOKS OF YOUR LONG FACES...

YES, SIR. JASON AND I ARE... WERE... BEST FRIENDS... ALMOST SINCE THE DAY WE WERE BORN...

I... I DON'T KNOW IF I CAN JUST LET HIM WALK AWAY LIKE HE DID... HATING ME... I MEAN...

I KNOW, ALEX. IN FACT, I HAVE MYSELF DEVOTED A GOOD DEAL OF THOUGHT TO JASON THESE LAST FEW HOURS. I WAS HOPING YOU WOULD VOLUNTEER TO TRY AND FIND HIM...

YES, I THINK IT IS PROPER, AND IT PLEASES ME TO LEARN THAT YOU SHARE MY FEELINGS... ESPECIALLY AFTER THE WAY JASON TREATED YOU.

BUT YOU, DEAR MALAGUENA... ARE YOU CERTAIN YOU WISH TO ACCOMPANY ALEX IN THIS ENDEAVOR? THE LAND IS WILD AND EXTREMELY DANGEROUS THESE DAYS...

I WOULD NOT ADVISE YOU TO BRAVE THESE DANGERS LIGHTLY. REMEMBER THAT YOU HAVE KNOWN JASON ONLY A SHORT WHILE...

... AND TO LEARN IF WHAT I FEEL IS... TRUE...

THEN YOU BOTH HAVE MY BLESSINGS. I SHALL ARRANGE FOR A GROUP OF ESCORTS TO PROVIDE PROTECTION FOR...

UH, NO THANK YOU, SIR. WE'D RATHER GO ALONE AS JASON'S FRIENDS AND NOT MEMBERS OF A SEARCH PARTY.

JASE IS TOUCHY ENOUGH AS IT IS... WITHOUT FINDING A WHOLE MOB ON HIS TRAIL...
As you wish, when do you plan to leave?

Right now, sir... right now.

I see. Well, good luck then.

I hope you will not need it... but I fear you will.

At one time they might have been horses...

But then, at one time nuclear warfare had been only a threat.

That time has long since passed.

The noosed vine spurts from nowhere, and the weirdling beast keens its panic...

He is tired of walking.

Go on—jump around all you want...

It has been a week since Jason left the treehouse encampment map clutched in his hand...

I'm just as stubborn as you.

And I've got the rope!

Come on now—calm down already! You might as well accept me the easy way...

But the beast refuses to listen...
...until hours later and lathered in froth, the wild beast slump into domesticated steed...

I told you so, friend—warned you you'd get tamed...

Indeed! But you wouldn't have to subjugate poor dumb beasts--

--If you possessed the knowledge of progress... Heh, Heh, Heh.

And who are you—sneaking up on me like that--?!

The name, my belligerent young whipper-snapper--

--is none other than--

--Lightsmith.

Hey! What th--?

You see I am but a humble, enlightened wayfarer who travels the land attempting to dispense the glorious light of knowledge and progress...

Get that out of my eyes, will you--?!

...such as that demonstrated by this magic torch—which, as you've noticed, provides light without burning... Heh, Heh, Heh.

But it's amazing, really, to see how few people are willing to accept progress...

You're blindsing me!
Oh, so you're willing to concede to the effectiveness of progress, eh? Heh heh heh...

I don't know about progress, stranger--

Now, now--no need for barbarism. The creator knows there's enough of that in this poor dark age of ignorance. Besides, since you've gone to the considerable trouble of subjugating that miserable creature--

--but I'll be glad to show you the effectiveness of a good fist in the teeth--!

Ah! A map! And you're headed there? A most felicitous coincidence--that's the region the ancients called old South Dakota, precisely my own destination.

Why do you want to know?

Well...you are a human, so you couldn't be one of Brutus' thugs, I guess it couldn't hurt to tell you...

It seems we are destined to become companions.

Just thought I might be able to help you reach your goal, that's all...but if you don't want the aid of my superior knowledge in arcane progress--

Well, come along, Jason--the wonder wagon awaits us!

And so, not quite knowing what to think of his odd new acquaintance, Jason nevertheless follows Lightsmith...until...

Now--what did you say your name was?

I didn't--but it's Jason.

The wonder wagon?...You'll see.

Wait a minute--there's smoke up ahead! It might be Brutus--!

That is not smoke, my dear fellow...

It is steam.

The wonderful steam of progress.
Yes, you see, as remarkable as the Wonder Wagon truly is, she can sometimes be a bother to get started... Heh heh heh.

So I just let her run when I'm gone for short periods of time. I suspect she enjoys puffing away like that... Heh heh heh.

Well, here she is, Jason--built by my own two hands and just waiting to take us back to old South Dakota. What do you think of her?

Uh... Well... it's fine... I guess... what pulls it?

Progress pulls it--as you will soon see, I wonder where Gilbert is...

Who's Gilbert?

My helper and apprentice in progress--a real bright fellow, but he's dumb.

He can't talk--that's why I'm so glad to have you along on this trip...

Ah... here he comes, the good fellow...

"...He's been out gathering wood for the Wonder Wagon’s stove. Most thoughtful of him... Heh heh heh.

Continued next issue!"
Dear Marvel,

I'm twenty-eight. Am I too old to read Marvel comics? Too bad if I am, 'cos I read 'em anyway. I've been collecting and reading Marvel for about six months now, and I've really got the bug! Five British weeklies and about 18-20 monthlies, not to mention any B & W American mags I can get my hands on.

The reason behind this letter is mainly two-fold. Firstly to congratulate the team behind the art on the new Ape story, "Malaguenas in the Forbidden Zone". It doesn't credit the art in the mag, although I notice the magic word PLOOG working in the bottom corner of the first panel.

This art is really something! Far superior in my eyes to the harsher, more heavilyinked style. It's more like the style in your B & W mags. More subtle, and conveys more atmosphere and feeling to the exciting story.

Talking of American B & W mags, although I think you've scarped a lot of good titles I'm just catching up to SSOC. I've just got issues 1, 2 and 3, and I'm pawning everything I own to get the rest!

Now on to my second point. I must take Mark Lawton to task over his comments in POTA 75 about 'Man-Gods'. This was a great story with spacey art. FANTASTIC!

I've also got this story in Marvel Preview issue 1, which I picked up in the local book shop for 1.5p. What a scoop!

Lastly, a few comments on POTA itself. The ape stories are great, but Ka-Zar, who I like, and Black Panther (who I hate on his own but he's OK with The Avengers) just don't fit in POTA.

Colin Jennings,
26 Albert Road, Tonbridge, Kent.

To paraphrase the great Dr. Johnson, "...when you're tired of Marvel you're tired of life." So relax, Colin. At a mere twenty-eight you're the best of your Marvel years ahead of you. We don't need to tell you (but we're going to, just the same) that inspired art and enjoyed your "Planet" comments (incidentally that was Merry Mike at work on "Malaguenas") and we're suitably awed by the fact that you've managed to lay hold of the first three numbers of the U.S. Savage Sword of Conan. You didn't mention what kind of a hole that little purchase made in your bank-roll, but it must have been considerable. (We recently heard of a S.S.O.C. ish 3 changing hands for a five-pound note.) But you can always console yourself with the thought that you're investing on a rising market.

Dear Super-Stan,

Could you manage to put some of your fantastic ape stickers in POTA? My friend and I both get Marvel and think it would be better if you put more posters in the mags.

I'm not just writing to ask for things, but to tell you something. I get Tittans and I think it's brilliant. You made a good choice with the X-Men, the art's good. I don't like Cap Marvell much, though. I think POTA is good. The art on the ape story at the moment, 'Death on a River Called Simian', is fantastic. I don't like Ka-Zar much, but B.P. is great.

Dear Stan and Co.,

I think POTA is fab, and the stories are out of this world. I've noticed in Apes mail that a lot of people criticise the back-up features, well I think they're just great.

A few issues ago someone wrote and said that the Apes construction kits were available in Britain. Well, this is true. The price, where I buy, is £1.19p, and, believe me, they're just great. And, moreover to your great weekly mag, I was able to purchase all five of the apes films, which were superbly put together.

If anyone wants any colour pics of the apes and information about them, just drop me a line, with a stamp, and I'll be willing to provide it.

Tony Ing,
7 Toland Square, Roehampton Lane, London SW15.

And here's Tony Ing, proving yet again to the world that this is the age of Marvel goodwill to all men. (Well, anyway, goodwill to all fellow Marvelites?)

M.W.O.M. is the last and third Marvel mag I get. I like all the stories, especially The Hulk.

Christopher Hopkin,
3 The Grove, Cooper Road, Guildford, Surrey.

Chris - it's our policy to put goodies into our mags whenever we can. But, as you'll appreciate, we face the perpetual problem of having to pay our way. But, believe us, we're on your side.

Dear Stan and Bullpen,

'Planet of the Apes' is definitely your best comic. The apes are brilliant, especially the film adaptations. But the 'adapayer' story was rubbish.

When making your own stories (generally good) make the apes the heroes as well as the humans. Kindly take the Black Panther out and replace him with Doc Savage, then with the Silver Surfer. 'The Man God From Beyond' was no good, but 'Day of the Titans' was excellent.

Are you going to do other adaptations of books? - '2001', 'The Invisible Man' or 'The Shrinking Man' for example. I have books of four of the films (among other 'ape' books) and would like to know if there is a book of the first film.

James Rooney, KOF,
80 Raynton Drive, Hayes, Middlesex.

Yep - the first Ape film was published as a book, and we've various books under consideration right now with a view to putting them into POTA in picture strip form.

APES FORUM
MARVEL COMICS LTD Room 106
52 HIGH HOLBORN LONDON WCIV 6RZ