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Would they be the apes that

starring

RODDY McDOWALL
&

KIM HUNTER
would destroy the earth?

ESCAPE FROM THE PLANET OF THE APES
enticingly feminine despite her appearance. “Probably to our deaths,” said the second astronaut. “But just possibly.” Whatever words of assurance he might have uttered were lost in a blinding white glare. And when they could see again, nothing remained of the plant they were orbiting but an incandescent blob from which was rising toward them a great mushrooming cloud of flame and smoke.

“The fools!” cried an awed voice. “They’ve finally destroyed themselves.”

“My God! The Earth is no more!”

The shock wave hit then, tumbling the spacecraft like a leaf in a hurricane but in gyrations of hundreds of miles. The first violence swept by and they were engulfed in slower-moving heat-waves that charred the capsule and blackened the windows but did not sear through the heat shield. Instinctively the captain hit the Automatic Re-entry button, realizing even as he did so that they had nothing to re-enter but cosmic ashes. Yet as the craft stabilized itself, and the course needle held steady on the computerized re-entry path, he said with satisfaction, “We’re descending.”

And the second astronaut was again pointing at a furiously spinning Date meter. When the dial finally clicked to rest, it read: “Earth Time: 1973 Space Time: 3955.”

“I don’t understand,” he gasped. “The shock must have unbalanced the mechanism.”

The force of gravity replaced weightlessness, slamming them tight in their seats, followed by a second shock as the chutes opened. They blacked out.

The splashdown took place just off the tidal flats of California and almost directly in front of a helicopter pilot of the U.S. Marine Corps. As though this were something that happened everyday, the pilot radioed his base. “Tower, this is Red Baron Five. I have an object, uh, seemingly one of our spacecraft.” He gave his position and agreed to hover over the spot until rescue teams could arrive.

Fortunately for the astronauts, the duty officer put rescue first, sending out two helicopters loaded with frogmen and trained salvage workers to effect the recovery before notifying the base commander. For that worthy colonel was immediately suspicious and called the Pentagon. The Pentagon went through laborious channels and called NASA. NASA went through channels and in time reported that it had to be a practical joke because it had no spacecraft aloft. That did not satisfy General Brody. In the past few years, as must happen, NASA had lost a few capsules in space, and just as the Americans had recovered a lost Russian space ship, so might the Russians have recovered one of ours. He used his red phone to call the President.

The President reacted calmly, agreeing that the Russians might well have retrieved a missing space ship and, being unfamiliar with its navigational devices, splashed down by accident in American waters. “If they’re alive,” he said, “you may tell Colonel Winthrop at El Palomar to welcome them with caution. And until we know more, I want a full security clampdown on the entire operation. You understand me, General,” he added dryly, because the general had a fondness for displaying his medals on television, “this is not for the networks.”

By that time the astronauts could have suffocated in their burnt-out craft had not the rescue operation gone on apace. And inside the capsule, the three had recovered enough to hear the voices of their rescuers and plan accordingly.

“They speak our language,” said the captain. “At least they have intelligence.”

That did not reassure the second astronaut. “Then at least let us conceal our intelligence from our captors,” he urged. “Our safety may lie in silence.”

There followed some sickening tossing about as their craft was towed through high surf, and then much banging and crashing as they were dragged between the rocks and finally beached. Then the hatches were snatched open, and eager hands lifted them out. More eager hands fumbled with their sealed helmets, and the Colonel stepped forward pompously as the head of the reception committee.

“Welcome, gentlemen . . .” He stopped, his mouth agape.

- Around him the men stood in stunned silence. Then came a roar of laughter.

Here the Russians were playing the practical joke of all time. No astronauts were inside those space suits.

Just three sea-sick chimpanzees who had been through much.

Well, there was only one thing to do with the chimps, and that was to rush them off to the Los Angeles zoo where they could be properly caged and fed. In the meantime, the space experts of the nation had to be summoned to identify the capsule and determine from whence it came and where it might have gone. At which point the President’s order for secrecy arrived, and not a moment too soon. Colonel Winthrop was already seeing himself stealing General Brody’s thunder by reaching the television cameras first.

The chimps did reveal one peculiarity. Stripped of their space suits, they showed embarrassed confusion, especially the female, and by vigorous signs made it evident that they wanted a suitcase from within the capsule. With this provided, they removed their civilian garments and dressed hurriedly.

“They’re pretending to dress,” said an awed aide to the colonel.

“What do you mean, pretending?” gasped the colonel, no less awed. “They are dressing. Where’d they get those clothes?” For the texture and style were such as he had never seen before.

“They brought them with them. In a suitcase . . .”

It was too much, and the colonel asked no more lest he endanger his sanity which was not of the strongest.

Because it was a matter of routine to place astronauts from outer space in quarantine, the chimpanzees were caged in the infirmary of the zoo with an ailing gorilla on one side and a despondent fox on the other. For nourishment they were given bananas and oranges which proved acceptable, but only after the female pointed to and got the wondering keeper’s tableware on which the food could be properly served. But not until the lights were out and the keeper retired for the night was a word exchanged.

Then Zira said with disgust, “This cage stinks of gorilla. Cornelius, where are we? What’s happened?”

- But Cornelius could only shrug, and look hopefully to their companion, Milo. For these three were from the planet of the apes, in the year 3955, by which time the human race had sunk into bestiality and the chimpanzees were the dominant
species. Below them in intelligence, but above them in their lust for power and dominance were the gorillas and orangutans whose show-down battle had produced the destruction of Earth as already shown. Of all life, then, there remained but these three fugitives from outer-space, except for the evident fact that they had landed in a well-populated world.

Cornelius and Zira were the top psychiatrists and psychologists of their world, but their advanced knowledge was of no help here. Milo was the physicist, the great mind who had restored the space ship to working order and launched them hours before the catastrophe. Now Milo nodded.

"I know where we are. I know what has happened," he said. And possibly it was all clear to him who had worked out the Space-Time theory that explained how Captain Taylor has brought his spaceship through a convulsion in Time to land, after a week's journey, on target, but in Year 2450. But when he sought to explain his theory—that the great cataclysm that destroyed the earth had hurled the spaceship back through the same convulsion in time to land them in Year 1975—he had lost his audience.

"But we saw Earth destroyed," Cornelius protested.

"And Earth will be destroyed, just as we saw it,'" pursued Milo patiently. "That is another reason for keeping silent. Our human captors would not be edified to learn that one day their world will fry to a cinder because of an Ape war of aggression. Apes at this instant in time cannot yet talk," he continued reasonably. "We should follow their example."

Lights blazed all the night in the Pentagon and at NASA headquarters in Houston and finally pieces of their incredible story were being fitted together. The spaceship was identified beyond doubt as that commanded by Colonel Taylor and lost in space with one other for more than a year. How three chimps came to pilot it back was still a mystery, but since the beasts had to be intelligent enough to press the right buttons, arrangements were hastily made that they be tested by Dr. Lewis Dixon, one of the foremost animal psychiatrists in the country, and his female assistant, Stevie.

They arrived early, before feeding time at the zoo, hunger being a big stimulant in intelligence tests on animals. And Zira being the smallest and looking to be the most amiable of them all, using the usual colored squares, triangles, and circles to be matched. Zira whipped through these with ease, her reward to come if she could pile enough oddly shaped heaped into the box to reach a banana at the top of the cage. Zira made no ordinary pile. She created a work of cubic art atop the box which she perched on with an expression of utter disdain.

"Why doesn't she take the banana?" wondered Stevie.

Zira had had enough. "Because I loathe and detest bananas," she said. "Zira!"

And Milo forgot himself enough to shout, "Zira, are you mad?"

But Stevie had already fainted dead away, and the stunned Lewis and a keeper were rushing her to the human infirmary, not forgetting to lock the cage.

Milo was furious. Silence had been broken, but such being the case, "Now that they know we can speak, how much shall we tell them . . ." he sighed back against the bars, lost in thought.

"Milo!" screamed Zira.

Too late. The ailing gorilla, hungry and made more irritable by the noise and the scent of chimpanzees, reached through the bars and crushed Milo's neck like a straw. Thus did the humans lose the one being who could have explained everything.

... Even after something like order had been restored, Lewis and Stevie, animal psychiatrists that they were, or perhaps because of it, could not believe they were in the presence of articulate, intelligent beasts. They continued to talk professionally as together as two keepers removed Milo's body.

"If we shall want a full autopsy," he said. "With particular emphasis on the cranial and oral areas," added Stevie.

"Keep him in cold storage." He saw the horror reflected on the faces of Cornelius and Zira and stopped, aghast at the unfeeling crudity of his words. "We mean you no harm," he pleaded. "Do you understand that?"

"I should," said Zira, the first to recover. After all, she is a professional, too, and dissection and vivisection were essential to the advancement of science. "I've been doing it half my life to humans." That, she realized as she spoke, was exactly what Milo had warned her against. "I'm a psychiatrist, too," she added quickly, hoping to win his professional understanding and respect.

All was not that easy. To Cornelius and Zira, humans were the dumb beasts who had lost the power of speech, but at least they had had Colonel Taylor to prepare them for the fact that humans had once been intelligent, Lewis and Stevie, and the rest of their world, for that matter, had had no such preparation. That the apes were the dominant race—or would be—was utterly . . . But Lewis and Stevie had the living evidence in front of them, and as they warmed to the two strangers in their midst, they suddenly discovered they were talking as to old friends just met after years of separation.

Just the same, Lewis left to make his report shaking his head. "Nobody's going to believe it," he muttered.

The President didn't have to believe it, but he had to do something about it. Accordingly he called a secret meeting of his Chiefs of Staff, his scientific advisors led by Dr. Hasslein, and his personal advisors. "Gentlemen," he began, "I am aware that what I have to tell you will create a credibility gap somewhat wider than the Grand Canyon, but . . ." And he gave them such facts as had crossed his desk thus far. "I have therefore decided to convene a Presidential Commission of Inquiry in Los Angeles tomorrow consisting of leading experts." The details were time consuming, threshed out amongst mature leaders who felt silly discussing chimps as though they were, ah, relevant in a human world. But in the end they agreed with the President when he said, "The two surviving chimps will be produced for the Commission's inspection. No television coverage. The Press will be invited to attend but not participate. I see no reason any longer to conceal this extraordinary discovery from the rest of the world."

The story, released simultaneously to national and world news mediums, got the attention it deserved, but mostly in the form of a loud, derisive laugh. Much play was made over spaceships "manned" or "monked" by chimps, and "Ape-Onauts" was used so much as to enter the English language.

All this was changed when Zira and Cornelius appeared before the Commiss-
sion, Lewis standing by as their friend and counselor. The first half-hour, under the direction of a chairman convinced the whole thing was a farce, was spent in proving that Zira, first on the stand, could not talk but was skilled in mimicry. "Does this satisfy Mr. Cornelius?"

"Only when she lets me," responded Cornelius promptly. Much laughter, but much sudden attention, too.

When the questioning got around to whether the fifty-foot-Cornelius had to admit he was not sure but Zira spoke up. "Dr. Milo was sure," she said. "We came from your future.

"It doesn't make sense," snorted the Chairman.

"It's the only thing that does," said Dr. Hasslein quietly, speaking for the first time.

But now the questions were coming from all sides, with an Army officer wanting to know about the ultimate bomb that destroyed the world, and an outraged CBS commentator who said their country could get the idea they were created in the image of God, and a NASA scientist demanding to know how a chimp like Milo could repair and launch a super-sophisti-
cated spaceship that a brilliant man like Colonel Taylor had spent ten intensive years of training learning to fly.

"Who won the war?" the insistent Army officer wanted to know.

"How should we know?" asked Corn- elius mildly, patiently explaining again that when Earth turned to ashes, it was hard to tell victor from vanquished in the dust.

And Zira said, "We are peaceful creatures. We are happy here. May we be unchained?"

And she held up the manacles that had been removed as she talked. They were chained to all wild beasts in spite of Lewis's protests.

It was their day in court, and they won it completely in spite of a few die-hard members of the prosecution who thought it had to be some fantastic trick in ventriloquism staged for some still unknown purpose.

"We love you," said the enthusiastic Lewis, removing their manacles.

"You were both fabulous," echoed Stevie. They returned to the infirmary cage at the zoo, but now it had decent bedding and was large enough, and the assurance it would not be for long.

And that night they watched as Dr. Hasslein went on television to explain why the apes had to be chained. They were not even successful in explaining the Time-Space theory than Milo had been, he did make it clear that the impossible had happened. "In the dark and turbulent corridors of Our Solar System, the impact of some distant planetary or even galactic disaster 'jumped' the apes from their present into ours. And indeed, the proof lies even in their own testimony. And their spoken—I repeat, spoken—testimony."

For once the best anchor-men of all the television networks—learned men who had covered the ten years of television—had no questions to ask. They didn't understand enough to know where to begin. At last their spokesman said, "Thank you, Dr. Hasslein. It has to be the most incredible story of the year. That's why—why it was even covered.

The rest could only nod silent confirmation.

For Cornelius and Zira there now began a fantastic round of debriefing sessions mixed with public appearances and speeches to a variety of organizations. Be- fitting their new station as international celebrities, they stayed with a suite at the Beverly-Wilshire Hotel, gowned and suited in the Hollywood tradi-
tion, and even introduced to California champagne which Zira found to be almost as good as some of her own concoctions. That it was a strenuous life they took with high good humor, their willingness to oblige and their ready wit making them the darlings of press, television and public. Until one day the ever-curious Dr. Hass- lein, again, in the wake of the publication of Natural History to see how their knowl-
edge of the future checked with their knowledge of the past. From dinosaurs to prehistoric man to modern humans and apes.

At the sight of a stuffed gorilla the over-taxed Zira gave a gasp and fainted. Dr. Hasslein caught her as she fell, con-
demning the museum specimens he had mounted specimens of her own kind. "It must have been the shock," he muttered. "Shock, my foot," said Zira, recovering fast.

Now it was Dr. Hasslein's turn to regis-
ter shock, and he was strangely silent in returning her to the hotel. But he did agree that a sip of champagne might be the best thing for her. He helped her stand by to serve her until Cornelius should return. And as Zira relaxed and became more talkative, he toyed with a package of cigarettes though he refused to light one, explaining, "In view of your condition, I shouldn't smoke." He was so considerate, and when he asked about the war, and the ultimate explosion, it was just a glass of champagne that had been covered in debriefing sessions. Small talk to kill time until Cornelius returned from, of all things, a prize fight. Astronauts were supposed to love prize fights.

Cornelius was not of like opinion. The sight of two humans battering each other to pulp brought from him only one word.

"Beatiful!"

Dr. Hasslein pocketed his package of cigarettes and the tape recorder he concealed and took himself off. Off to Wash-
ington to meet the President.

For his seemingly innocent questions to Zira in her champaigne-relaxed state had produced answers previously not given or, more likely, cleverly evaded.

- The theory he had formed, based on his taped interview with Zira, was as plausible to him as it was impossible to the people. As he outlined it to the President, it was that sometime in the 21st century, or as early as the year 2000, the apes had learned of their past, and by means unknown to them, were able to acquire the gift of speech—before, and after, it had been covered. Held back since the dawn of time by their inability to communicate, they had suddenly ac-
quired the gift of speech—or been taught —and the knowledge that had been covered for centuries, had burst through with the violence of an explosion. This, coupled with their physical vigor and superb co-
ordination, had made the apes, for centuries, the dominant race in just a few generations.

- "So you have the evidence, Mr. Presi-
dent," he concluded, "that one day the apes will dominate the Earth and destroy it, the year thirty-seven to be exact."

The President was fascinated by the theory, but not alarmed. "I doubt we shall still be in office by then," he said. "Now what do you want, Dr. Hasslein?"

Dr. Hasslein told him. The articulate, intelligent Cornelius and Zira might well be—had to be—the very ones to release the apes from their intelligence-stilling note.

The President looked horrified. "Alter what you believe to be the course of the future by slaughtering two Innocents or rather three since one of them's pregnant?"
Herod tried that, and Christ survived."

"Herod lacked our facilities," said Dr. Hasslein coldly. He wasn't being ruthless about it. Just impersonally scientific. "Do you want them to dominate the world?"

"Well, not at the next election," said the President, smiling faintly. "But one day they might make a better job of it than we have been doing."

But there Dr. Hasslein had the ultimate logic. "By destroying the world?"

"And do you truly believe we can alter the whole program?"

"I do," said Dr. Hasslein firmly. "I've wrestled with this. If I urge the destruction of these apes, am I defying God's will or obeying it? Am I God's enemy, or His instrument?"

It was a religious point too deep for either of them, and in the end they compromised. The President, from what he had seen of Cornelius and Zira on television, had been becoming fond of them, but if they were to be the progenitors of Earth's destruction.

And Dr. Hasslein, as impersonal as a test tube, was scientifically convinced that his theory to the test, convinced of its rightness. Thus the compromise they reached seemed fair enough. Since all the de-briefing sessions thus far had been confidential, no one knew how Zira came and how they got here, they agreed to recall the original Commission and pursue Dr. Hasslein's theory. Could these be the apes who would one day form a planet of the apes? And if so, what would be done with them? Both agreed to abide by the decision of the Commission.

As released to the public, Cornelius and Zira were to be given the privacy of a government rest camp, there to relax after their arduous weeks of public exposure. Actually it was a prison camp, however. They were placed in a cell of maximum security where they were given the full treatment, some details of which had been perfected by Hitler. Bright lights, harsh interrogators, and long hours of grilling by skilled interrogators of the C.I.A., who in turn were coached by Dr. Hasslein. Truth drugs, psychological pressures, everything except electric shock treatment, were tried of course. But none of these things had been of much use to them, for neither Lewis was there at the President's orders to see that nothing was done to harm Zira's unborn child.

Yes, there was that unborn child that the decision of the Commission was most crushingly brought. A decision that as usual with such Commissions decided nothing but was an expedient compromise. In the end it was agreed that Cornelius and Zira were friendly and cooperative chimpanzees whose intelligence "can still be employed to set the standards to which their undoubted talents are best suited." But in deference to Dr. Hasslein's theory, the Commission also ruled that since the progeny of these Apes could, in the event of increasing threat to the Human race, the baby should be humanly aborted and the male and female rendered incapable of breeding.

"They're savages," raged Cornelius when they were returned to their cell. "Brutes!"

And because he was still raging when an orderly brought them their tray of food, he had spilled his porridge in notoriety. "What's Zira saying when it happened. The orderly slipped on the spilled food, fell heavily against the corner of a metal table, and landed facedown in scattering of broken glass.

"Ought we to call for ...," began Zira.

"We call for nobody," said Cornelius, seeing the open door. "We leave."

prison for humans was just a childish obstacle course for Cornelius and Zira, or would have been but for her condition.

Her orders were that they reach the freedom of an adjoining forest than she gave a cry of pain and fell.

"I think my pains have begun," she gasped.

But that time the body of the orderly had been discovered in the empty cell of the chimpanzees, to all appearances killed by a savage blow to the head followed by a more brutal one over the back of the neck, Zira as the next victim. When notified, Dr. Hasslein felt as vindicated as he felt the justness of his next decision. No examination of the evidence, of course, nor any trial. Just the report of the C.I.A.

"Now they've killed him," he gritted, and must be killed. It has to be done, and done quickly, before we start a stone rolling, it'll gather enough momentum to roll itself to the sea."

Nevertheless, he was cautious enough to call the President for confirmation of his "shoot-to-kill." order. To his shocked disbelief, they had no sooner reached the freedom when supplied with such details as Dr. Hasslein could provide, "In a democracy we do not shoot unarmed suspects on sight for a murder in which their participation has not been determined - that's murder taken, but taken alive. Is that clear?"

It was clear enough, but nevertheless, Dr. Hasslein proceeded to arm himself. For self-defense.

As Zira's labor pains increased in frequency, Cornelius reached a decision. I'm going back to the camp to find Lewis. We can go on.

"No..." protested Zira.

"Look, I only lost my temper with the boy and hurt him. It isn't as though I'd killed him. But we go on like this, it may kill you!" And Cornelius started for the road back to camp.

At the first alarm Lewis and Stevie had been summoned but only Stevie could be heard. No one changed it to the scene when her station wagon was blocked by an Army convoy loaded with searchers. Cornelius arrived just as the captain was saying, "Better be careful, Ma'am. There's been some trouble." The monkeys had killed their orderly and escaped.

Cornelius sank back into the bushes in horror. But it had been an accident! And Lewis, "We can't go on.

Tersely he explained. "Please believe me..."

"I do. But they won't. Where's Zira?"

"Sorry, you won't take us back to the camp?"

She was taken by a happy thought, and could almost smile. "No. I have a better idea."

Just a few days before they had delivered a chimpanzee baby at "Armando's Sensational Circus," and it was to this small caravan camped at the edge of town that they delivered the Zira. The baby was born.

Said the dapper, handsome Armando, white teeth flashing in a Latin face, "You are asking me to risk imprisonment for the sake of two fugitive apes? The answer is definitely yes."

By that time Stevie had located Lewis and now he arrived with his obstetrical bag. Armando greeted him warmly. "You clever fellow, to have delivered our next." He led the way into the menagerie tent with its meager collection of caged lions, tigers, one leopard and one jaguar, and, tethered, a zebra and a baby elephant. At the far end was a price
exhibit, the cage containing Heloise and her infant, Salome. At the sight of the expectant Zira, Heloise held up her infant in high excitement and for a moment the mother and the mother-to-be were in silent communication.

"Mama," said Zira to the infant. "Say it. Say ma-ma-ma."

"Zira, don't waste your breath," cried the frantic Cornelius. "You know primitive apes can't talk.

"I'm getting into practise," said Zira, and at that moment her time had come.

By morning Dr. Hasslein had broken his version of the accident to the news services, and the ape hunt was on, the radio being especially vociferous with news bulletins every few minutes. One such included the announcement that since apes would seek their own kind, all zoos and circuses were to be searched.

"The bastards," stormed Armando. "I had planned it all so well. But now? What can I do?"

"You have done enough to make us grateful to you forever," said Cornelius.

Zira wanted but one more favor. As a new mother, she wanted a few minutes alone with Heloise and Salome, there to learn what only one ape mother could teach another, no matter how wordlessly. She went off with her baby son, named Milo, wrapped in a blanket. Minutes later Lewis had them concealed in his car while Stevie shopped for supplies the trio would need for a week in hiding. At nightfall Lewis dropped them off on the edge of an eerie oil field packed with derricks.

"Here's as far as we dare take you," he said, handing Cornelius the knapsack of supplies. "The police have road blocks on all the exits from town, but once you're over that hill, and he explained that in a sediment-filled harbor was to be found a graveyard of old ships in which they could find shelter for a week.

"A week?" asked Zira dismally.

"Until the commotion has died down a bit and we can come for you. It's time to be moving."

"Lewis," said Cornelius, facing the truth. "If they find us, we shall be killed?"

Lewis had to admit there was that possibility.

"Then give us the chance to kill ourselves," pleaded Cornelius.

Reluctantly Lewis produced a pistol. "It was loaned to me by the C.I.A. for my own safety. Now it's for yours and Zira's."

He watched them disappear amongst the derricks, knowing that all was wrong.

Armando, on the other hand, was feeling better. For the police in glowing terms he described how Heloise had produced the first chimpanzee baby ever born in a circus, in the meantime bringing out his press clipping, birth certificate, and the report of Dr. Lewis Dixon on the extraordinary event. He was still talking when the police left in disgust, and a slow smile spread over his face.

For reasons of female vanity and no other, Zira had clung to a valise containing her new attire but now, weakened by her ordeal and burdened by the baby, she could no longer carry it. Quietly, saying nothing to Cornelius, she concealed it in the workings of a silent derrick where it was found the next morning by the workman assigned to check the pumps. By that time they were safely concealed in the officer's quarters of an ancient ship.

The discovery of Zira's valise had concentrated the search on the oil field and adjoining ship graveyard, still a large area with countless hiding places that would take weeks to search. And with their intelligence, eye-sight and sense of smell the chimpanzees could have remained very elusive quarry. What Cornelius had no way of knowing was that all was visible, as to God, to binocular-armed observers in high-hoevering helicopters. Though he never exposed himself to observers on shore as he sought any suspicious movements, he was almost conspicuous to watchers from above. Dr. Hasslein himself was first to home in on the position reports radioed from above.

Zira heard his footsteps as he mounted the sagging gangplank but such was her confidence in his husband's alertness that she called out, "Cornelius," as a summons to bring him to her side.

But Cornelius was high above, on the bridge, and it was Dr. Hasslein who answered her call, peering down at her from the head of the companionway.

"I see you've had your baby, Zira," he said in that coldly impersonal voice of his. "Give it to me. The Presidential Commission has empowered me to take it in my care."

Zira's moment of stunned shock was followed by an instinctive dash for freedom, baby clutched to her breast. Hasslein might just as well have tried to clutch at a whirlwind.

"Cornelius!" screamed Zira, lunging into the shelter of an array of deck pipes.

Cornelius sprang to the edge of the bridge and peered down, but now all was happening at once. From the sky dropped the helicopters into the murky water beside the hull. From the beach came police cars with Lewis in the lead.

"Thank God," gasped Cornelius. At least the might of the law would prevail, and they would be given a fair hearing.

Exactly those same thoughts were racing through Hasslein's head. And that could not be. As a scientist, he had arrived at his own verdict, unhampered by mollycoddling justice.

"I want that baby," he called. "If you don't give it to me, I'll shoot."

Zira started to run, and he shot. And shot. And shot. Into Zira's back. Into the squirming bundle she carried. With her dying breath, Zira cast the bundle over the side.

From aloft Cornelius fired twice, killing Hasslein with the second shot just as a soldier's bullet brought him crashing to the deck beside Zira, joining them in death.

"Oh, my God! Why?" sobbed Stevie. And Lewis could only hold her close, having no other answer to her question. Thus ended the threat to the world launched from the planet of the apes. Or did it?

Armando was moving his sensational circus to winter quarters in Florida with more than a smug idea of just how sensational it might be in future years. He was standing in front of H eloise's cage where her baby was nursing contentedly. "Intelligent creatures," he mused, and to the baby he said, "but then, so were your mother and father."

The baby looked at him, and turned back to H eloise. "Ma-ma-ma," he said.

THE CREDITS
A TWENTIETH CENTURY-FOX RELEASE—Produced by APJAC PRODUCTIONS—Directed by DON TAYLOR—Adapted for SCREEN STORIES by GEORGE SCULLIN.