In 1972, I wrote a book called The Trouble With Tribbles (you may have heard of it). The first line was: "In 1966, I was a rabbit." The book was published (along with The World Of Star Trek) in February of 1973.

In February of 1973, I was a chimpanzee.

You see, at that time, Judy-Lynn Del Rey (who is one-half of Del Rey Books, the other half being Lester Del Rey) was the managing editor of Galaxy Magazine, which was just upstairs from Award Books; both were owned by Universal Publishing and Distributing. Award Books had bid on and secured the rights to publish the novel versions of the Planet Of The Apes movies, and now they were looking for a writer to adapt the fifth and last film into a book so that they could release it simultaneously with the movie.

So, they called upstairs to Judy-Lynn Del Rey and asked her if she knew a big-name science-fiction writer who would work cheap. He had to be (a) good, (b) fast, and (c) know his way around a motion picture script. Judy-Lynn suggested me. And that's how I came to write the novelization of Battle For The Planet Of The Apes.

However, the real reason for doing it was that I wanted to be an ape. Not that that was part of the deal, but it wasn't too hard to arrange. A few phone calls to the studio, a savvy explanation of how I would probably do an article for some magazine or other about what it was like to be an ape in the film—which meant free publicity for them—and it was done.

So, that was why 9:00 AM, one warm California morning in February 1973, I went traipsing out to the 20th Century-Fox Ranch somewhere on the other side of Hidden Hills. The rest of the cast and atmosphere people (extras) had already arrived and been put in costume—they had the six o'clock call; because I was a non-essential part of the picture, I had to wait and come in after the important people were already taken care of.

A publicity man named John Campbell (no relation to the former editor of Analog) took me first to the costume truck. There, the decision was made that I was too tall to be an orangutan. Therefore I would have to be a gorilla. I was a little taller than a chimpanzee should be, but they did have a costume that would fit... so, chimp it was. They found tunic, trousers and shoes to match, and then we were off to the makeup truck.

There, the makeup men started by testing the molded foam rubber pieces, called appliances, on my face to see which ones would fit best; there were six basic models of chimpanzee faces, each for a different face shape or size. Eventually, they settled on the "Roddy-Double" which is the design mask that Roddy McDowall wore in all of the pictures. It would look different on me (or on anybody who wore it) because of the differences in underlying bone structure and facial features.

The chimpanzee makeup takes three hours to put on. The makeup men begin by tying down your hair and then putting a stocking cap over it to hold it flat. It is painful, and at the end of the day, when it is removed, it is even more
matching brown makeup is put on all those parts of the actor's face that still show—eyelids, neck, the places around the edges of the appliance. Hair is then attached around these edges, sometimes only a few strands at a time. Finally ears and a wig are put on over the actor's head and the transformation of the face is complete.

The first thing you do is sit in front of a mirror and make faces at yourself. When you grin, the monkey staring back at you grins—when you puff your cheeks, he puffs his cheeks—when you wrinkle your nose or frown, he wrinkles or frowns. The appliances are extremely flexible and are designed to show the facial expressions of the actor underneath. In fact, the masks only look like masks when they are not moving, so that makeup men recommend that the actor always be doing something—puffing his cheeks or wrinkling his nose or working his mouth so that it looks like he is breathing or sniffing or just moving his lips while he reads.

The final step is the makeup of the hands. Your fingernails are black, your skin is painted brown, and the makeup men then glue a thick mat of black hair to the backs of your hands. The whole process, face, hands, wig, hair, etcetera—is very painstaking—the reason it takes three hours is that most of the makeup men in Hollywood are perfectionists. They have to be: the camera reveals the slightest error. For instance, if I had been playing a speaking part requiring a closeup, they would have had to blacken my teeth so that the camera would not see my own mouth inside the ape's. But, as I was merely an "extra," this step wasn't necessary.

Once the makeup is on, then you get into your costume. That's when I was shown the proper way to monkey-walk ("Crouch low, swing your arms") and turned loose upon an unsuspecting world.

Well, not quite unsuspecting.

We rode a jeep down to the actual location site, which was about a half-mile away, and I was told to report with the rest of the stunt men.

Stunt men?!!

Well, yes, you see—today we're shooting the battle sequences and the only apes we're using are stunt men. But, don't worry, you won't be hurt.

Oh, Terrific.

There were Roddy McDowall and Paul Williams (and somewhere Claude Akins) busy defending some trees—which were supposed to be Ape City—from Severn Darden and a broken down school bus—who were supposed to be the mutant army. That was the battle. That shot was finished, and they began setting up the next. It takes at least a half-hour or more to set up each shot. Most of movie-making is waiting. It's almost as much fun as the army.

I used the time to get acquainted with the "stock company" of regular monkeys, and they showed me some more tricks of the trade—how to run like an ape, for instance. They knew immediately that I was a newcomer to the tribe. With very little practice, you can learn to recognize people very easily—not specifically as people perhaps, but as individuals, definitely. Every monkey has a distinct facial appearance; we did