



The Tarzan Twins

Edgar Rice Burroughs

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Introduction

The Tarzan Twins, like all well-behaved twins, were born on the same day and, although they were not as "alike as two peas," still they resembled one another quite closely enough to fulfil that particular requirement of twinship; but even there they commenced breaking the rules that have been governing twins during the past several millions of years, for Dick had a shock of the blackest sort of black hair, while Doc's hair was the sunny hue of molasses candy. Their noses were alike, their blue eyes were alike; alike were their chins and their mouths. Perhaps Doc's eyes twinkled more and his mouth smiled more than Dick's for Dick did much of his twinkling and smiling inside and inside the boys were very much alike, indeed. But in one respect they shattered every rule that has been laid down for twins from the very beginning of time, for Dick had been born in England and Doc in America; a fact which upsets everything right at the beginning of the story and proves, without any shadow of a doubt, that they were not twins at all.

Why then did they look so much alike and why did everyone call them the Tarzan Twins? One could almost start a guessing contest with a conundrum like this, but the trouble is that no one would guess the correct solution, though the answer is quite simple. Dick's mother and Doc's mother were sisters—twin sisters—and they looked so much alike that they looked more alike than two peas, and as each boy resembled his mother—the result was—they resembled each other. Their mothers were American girls. One of them married an American and stayed at home—that was Doc's mother; and the other married an Englishman and sailed away to live on another continent in another hemisphere—and she was Dick's mother. When the boys were old enough to go away to school their parents had a brilliant idea, which was that the boys should receive half of their education in America and half in England. And this story will prove that the best laid plans of mice and mothers sometimes go wrong, for no one planned that the boys should get any of their education in Africa, whereas, as a matter of fact, Fate was arranging that they should learn more in the jungles of the Dark Continent than was ever between the covers of any school book.

When they were fourteen years old, Dick and Doc were attending an excellent English school where there were a great many future dukes and earls and arch-bishops and lord mayors, who, when they saw how much Dick and Doc resembled one another, called them "The Twins." Later, when they learned that Dick's father was distantly related to Lord Greystoke, who is famous all over the world as Tarzan of the Apes, the boys commenced to call Dick and Doc, "The Tarzan Twins"—so that is how the nickname grew and became attached to them.