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April—always a dynamic month, and out of the Archives @ ROARSHOCK PAGE CENTRAL we present part two of something we hope you'll really like.

THE LIVING CAVE

By

Danny Wilson

Part 2

"It seems to me that something must be causing these accidents," said Tad. "Not something—*someone*," said George. "I didn't hit my head—I was hit." "I tend to agree," said Harold. "This is too much to be coincidence. There's a mind behind it." "I've been feeling watched since yesterday," said John. "The point is, what do we do about it?" "Well," said Tad, "I recommend we keep exploring until we find him. He is evidently associated with caves since he never bothers us unless we are in or near them. If we keep looking we should find out why." "You mean them. There must be more than one to hit George and roll the rocks at the same time," said John. "How do we keep from getting killed while exploring?" asked Jim. "We wear hard hats and watch each other carefully," said Tad. "So much for tonight. Tomorrow we hunt."

The next morning they returned to the crater, but instead of entering the tubes they sighted in the direction of the second tube and set off in search of other vents. About one and a half miles from the crater they found an opening. The vent was very deep and required the explorers be lowered on a rope. It was decided that only two would enter the cave and the other three would stay above ground to help hoist them out. Tad and Jim, equipped with flash lights, jackets and rock helmets set out walking down the tube. That same strange smell was again in the air, stronger now but still illusive and hard to identify. The tube dropped fast, with several steps to lower levels. Soon there was water, first shinning from the walls, then running as an ever enlarging trickle on the floor of the tube. It was very cold. "The floor of this tube seems to have been cleared into a trail," said Tad. "Look there, someone has used dirt to fill in between the stones." "Do you suppose that smell could be cooking?" queried Jim. "It has the elements of smoke, herbs and roasted meat." "That's it!" said Tad. "This cave is actually some ones front hallway. And they don't particularly want visitors. No wonder the tube was blocked after that first day." "Yeah, and that explains the accidents," said Jim. "It all falls into place." By this time they had penetrated over a mile into the cave and the stream had become fairly large. Over its noise they could hear the sound of a much larger stream, the same one they had heard on their first cave search. All at once they came to an opening into a lower level. From the sound of the water, this one contained what amounted to an underground river, and was an extremely large cave. "We better leave the rope here," said Jim. "It will mark the exit and also make the climb out easier." "Smell those cooking fires," said Tad. "We must be close to the kitchen." The main cave was

about 100 feet wide and the floor fairly flat. They couldn't see the ceiling. A light breeze carried the cooking smell toward them. It was warmer. As the two were about to set off in the direction from which they had come, Tad thought he heard a slight noise from the direction of the cave they had just left. "Probably just a bat," said Jim. "Bat nothing. They don't make noise you can hear. I'll bet it's the rope," said Tad. Sure enough the rope was gone. "What now?" said Jim. "It's a cinch we can't get back up there without the rope." "Who ever made those cook fires gets in and out of here," said Tad. "Let's go find out how."

Back at the cave entrance the three fell into a discussion of how to get to know more about their unseen watchers. "Why not two of us go away and the third pretend to fall asleep. Then he would come in closer and the two could circle him," said John. "Good idea, John," said George. "You and Harold go and I'll fake a nap. Stay close though, because I can't fight very well with this hole in my head." Harold and John got up and loudly bid George fare well and left the cave entrance. George stretched and lay back against a tree. Soon his eyes began to close. After about 15 minutes the brush behind his tree began to wave slightly and a sun-bronzed hand holding a stout club raised above his sleeping head. As the club began to descend a shout rang out. George rolled smoothly to his left and came to a crotch, facing his assailant. He launched himself in a low flat dive and tackled the stranger around the knees. John and Harold moved quickly in and soon the three of them had the stranger securely bound. The stranger was an Indian, dressed in the clothes of Indians before the coming of white men. He was about average height and build and much stronger than any of the three white men. His face was painted and he had feathers in his hair. His eyes burned with a fury that indicated that though roped he was not defeated. "Who are you and what's the meaning of these attacks?" demanded George. "I don't think he understands English," said Harold. "He doesn't indicate any comprehension at all." "What do we do with him now?" queried John. "We sure don't want him loose with that club, and if we can't talk it will be hard to explain to him that we needn't be enemies." "You are right about not being able to explain to me about not being my enemies," said the Indian, "I've known white men before and none have convinced me yet." "So you do speak English," said George. "What's the idea of trying to club me?" "And to roll rocks on us?" said Harold. But the Indian sat, his face impassive, refusing by his silence to speak any more. And the three friends were left with their problem—what to do with this hostile captive.

Jim and Tad moved slowly towards the smell of cooking. They used their flash lights sparingly so as to not alarm whoever lived in the cave. Soon the river moved over and touched the wall on their side and they were forced to cross over. A faint glow became visible ahead. "I think I see the fire," said Jim. "Good. Turn off your light and we'll move up quietly," said Tad. However, a moment later Jim, who was in front, stumbled over a rock and fell loudly to the floor of the cave. Tad was able to see the flitting shadows of moving figures around the fire for a moment—then all was still. "They're all hiding," said Tad. "I guess we had best walk on in and announce our friendliness." The two stood erect and walked toward the fire. No one moved to greet them. "Hello, my name is Tad and I want to be your friend." Tad announced to the seemingly empty cave. Still nobody moved. "Whoever they are, they don't seem impressed by your

friendliness.” said Jim. Suddenly rude hands seized the two and after a brief struggle they found themselves bound and faced by a growing crowd of shadowy figures. The Indians spoke to one another in a language quite unknown to the two friends, but their gestures made their meaning plain enough. It appeared to be but a matter of time before the Indians clubs finished what the accidents had only hinted at.

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Meanwhile, after some deliberation George, Harold and John had reached a decision. “We can’t expect this fellow to trust us when we keep him trussed up like this.” said Harold. “Let’s turn him loose and take our chances.” They untied the captive and he rubbed his wrists. “You may go if you wish.” said George. “We have no right to keep you tied.” “You don’t fear my club?” said the Indian. “Why should you club us when we’ve shown you we mean no harm by untying you?” The Indian considered this thought for some time before replying. “My name is Grey Cloud.” he said. “I am a sub chief of my people, who once were related to the Nez Perce tribes. We were driven out of the council before the coming of the white man and have lived in these caves ever since. You are the first people to have stayed around here long enough to find out about us.” “And yet you speak excellent English.” said John. “I went to live on the Nez Perce Reservation when I was six. They don’t know about us, but it’s a large reservation and many of the Indian families are strangers to each other. We speak the same Indian language.” “I hate to change the subject,” said George, “but it’s been three hours since the others left and that’s too long.” “My people have planned to trap and capture them.” said Grey Cloud. “You see, we think a lot alike.” “Is there anyone else in the tribe who speaks English?” queried Harold. “No one but me. I guess we better get down there and have a pow wow.” He got to his feet and lead the way down the hill.

* * * * *

Jim and Tad were roughly dragged to the fire and were tied to large stones just outside the circle of warmth. After several attempts to communicate with the Indians they realized that no one spoke English and gave it up. The Indians were holding a council in which it seemed that about half were in favor of settling with Tad and Jim quickly. They kept gesturing at the two with their clubs and it took no knowledge of the language to guess their meaning. The whole search of the caves suddenly had taken on a new and ominous tone and the friends were only too aware of their danger. It appeared that the figures around the fire were reaching a conclusion, and one that bode no good for the two white men. They were dragged closer to the fire’s light and the apparent leader of the Indians, a wizened old man stood before them and shook his club. He began to shout and gesture in a very threatening manner. After several minutes of this they felt steel like fingers again on their arms. “I guess this is the finish.” said Tad. But the hands were untying their bounds, and soon they found themselves free.

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At that moment George, John and Harold came running up led by Grey Cloud. Grey Cloud held a rapid conversation with his people and then turned to the white men. “I guess we are a lot alike.” he said. “My people have decided that they must stop short of killing and that the only way to bring peace is to free your friends and show that they wish you no further harm.” Then the whole crowd turned and headed for the lower entrance to the cave.

* * * * *

Several days later as the five friends took their leave of the Indians, Tad looked back at the mouth of the cave with a speculative expression. “I wonder if they can keep their culture, now that they are found.” he said. “Perhaps they can save at least the best parts.” said George. “The park will protect their lands and this area isn’t likely to attract many people. Anyway, it’s their only chance.” And with that the five shouldered their packs and headed into the west.

-END-

By Danny Wilson as told to John O. Wilson
on November 8, 1973 and January 11, 1975

APRIL ALMANAC

- 04/01 1854 Charles Dickens’ novel *Hard Times* began serialization in his *Household Words* magazine.
- 2015 APRIL FOOLS DAY
- 2015 37th Annual St. Stupid’s Day Parade occurred in San Francisco @ crack of noon.
- 04/04 2015 FULL PINK MOON
- 04/05 1922 American Birth Control League (Planned Parenthood forerunner) was incorporated.
- 04/07 1827 English chemist John Walker sold the first friction match (his invention).
- 04/14 1927 The first Volvo car premiered in Sweden.
- 1939 *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck was first published by the Viking Press.
- 04/16 2010 Daniel Patrick Wilson died.
- 04/18 2015 NEW MOON
- 04/19 2012 Logan Daniel Farmer was born.
- 04/20 1745 Philippe Pinel was born.
- 2015 FOUR-TWENTY!
- 04/22 1979 Brent Mydland’s debut gig with The Grateful Dead in San Jose, California.
- 2015 EARTH DAY
- 04/25 1792 *La Marseillaise* was composed by Claude Joseph Rouget de Lisle.
- 04/26 1958 Daniel C. Nettell was born.
- 04/28 1947 Thor Heyerdahl and crew set out on the *Kon-Tiki* from Peru to Polynesia.
- 2001 Dennis Tito became the world’s first space tourist.
- 04/30 1877 Alice B. Toklas born in San Francisco.
- 2015 WALPURGISNACHT

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