

Jane of the Apes

Ever since she was a young girl growing up in England, Jane Goodall has loved animals. When she was a year old, her father gave her a stuffed chimpanzee doll. The doll was Jane's favorite toy and still sits on her dresser just as it has for more than 70 years!

Jane Goodall was born in 1934 in London, England. From her earliest days, Jane wanted to know all about animals. "Quite apart from Jubilee (the toy chimp), I have been fascinated by live animals from the time when I first learned to crawl," Jane says. For instance, when she was 5 years old, Jane and her mother were visiting Jane's grandmother in the country. Jane had been told that eggs came from hens, and she was curious to know how that happened. "I hid in a small henhouse in order to see how a hen laid an egg, and I emerged after about five hours." Jane was surprised to find that her mother had been worried sick about her. No one knew that Jane had gone to the henhouse. "My mother had even called the police to report me missing!"

When Jane was still a young girl, World War II began. She and her parents moved from the city to the country. Jane had a beloved pet dog named Rusty. Spending time with Rusty, Jane saw that animals are a lot like people. Even though they cannot talk or use tools, animals have personalities, minds, and emotions, Jane thought.

On Christmas in 1942, when she was 8 years old, Jane received the book *The Story of Doctor Dolittle* as a gift. It soon became one her favorites. The Doctor Dolittle books are fantasy stories about an animal doctor who would rather be with animals than humans. Doctor Dolittle teaches himself how to talk to animals in their own languages. Jane became fascinated with the idea of "talking" with animals.

A few years later, Jane read the Tarzan adventure novels. They are about a man who was left in the jungles of Africa as a baby and was raised by apes. The Tarzan books captured Jane's imagination. She dreamed that one day she, too, would explore Africa.

Jane graduated from high school in 1952. Although she was very bright and had been an excellent student, she did not go to college. Her family could not afford it. But Jane did not give up her dreams. She studied hard to develop her work skills, then moved to London and got a job as a secretary.

In May of 1956, an old friend of Jane's named Clo Mange wrote Jane a

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letter. Clo had moved to Kenya, in Africa, where her family owned a farm. She was writing to invite Jane to visit the family in Kenya. Jane was thrilled—visiting Africa would be her lifelong dream come true.

Jane quit her job in London and moved back to live with her mother. She got a job as a waitress and saved every penny she earned. A year later, Jane had saved enough money to buy a round-trip ticket to Africa. She left London on a ship called the *Kenya Castle* and arrived in Mombasa, Kenya, three weeks later.

Jane had a great time exploring Africa over the next few weeks. But the biggest thrill of her trip came on May 24, 1957. That's the day she met the world-famous scientist Louis Leakey.

When Jane met Dr. Leakey, he was studying the fossils found in a place called Olduvai Gorge. Leakey was exploring the oldest known remains of human beings. The fossils in Olduvai were millions of years old.

Jane joined Dr. Leakey and his wife Mary on a trip to Olduvai Gorge. There, she helped them dig up and sort fossils. Jane impressed Dr. Leakey with her intelligence and hard work. He hired Jane to become his assistant and secretary. Jane jumped at the chance.

After Jane had worked with him for a few months, Dr. Leakey made her a huge offer. He wanted to know if Jane would go to study a large group of chimpanzees living in the forests near Lake Tanganyika. Jane was overjoyed when Dr. Leakey asked if she would take on the job. After all, she had always hoped to travel to Africa and study animals. For a while, when her family could not afford to send her to college, it looked as though her dream was impossible. Now she was going to have a chance to make it come true! She left Africa and returned to England to prepare for her adventure.

There were still hurdles in the way, though. At that time, the British government controlled the country Jane wanted to live in. The people in charge would not let her live all on her own in the wilds of Africa. They insisted that someone travel with her. Jane got around this by asking her mother to make the trip with her. So in the summer of 1960, Jane and her mother arrived at the Gombe National Forest on the shore of Lake Tanganyika.

Jane's mother stayed with her for just a few months. After her mother left, Jane was alone with the chimpanzees living in the forest.

At first, the chimps were afraid of Jane and kept away from her. Jane would leave her campsite and sit near the edge of their forest home. She would watch the chimps through binoculars. After a few weeks they grew less afraid of Jane. She was able to get nearer to them, without frightening them.

Jane kept careful notes of every one of the chimps and how they

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behaved. Most scientists in her place would have identified the different chimps with numbers. Not Jane. She saw that each of the chimpanzees had a unique personality. Jane gave the animals names, not numbers.

By October of 1960, the chimps of the Gombe reservation let Jane live right among them. As she sat watching them, the chimps went about their business as if they were alone.

On November 4, Jane sat down to watch two of the chimps who lived at the reservation. She called them David Greybeard and Goliath. The two animals stood near a large mound of earth. The mound was like a giant anthill, only filled with termites instead of ants. Jane knew that the chimps often ate termites. As they stood near the mound, she wondered how the two chimps would manage to feed themselves.

What happened next astonished Jane, and would totally change the way scientists viewed apes—and human beings. As Jane watched, the two monkeys David Greybeard and Goliath . . .

What monkey business do you think Jane saw the two chimpanzees get up to? Make a prediction. Then turn the page to see if your prediction was right!