

Rhino Country

HAKON SKAFTE



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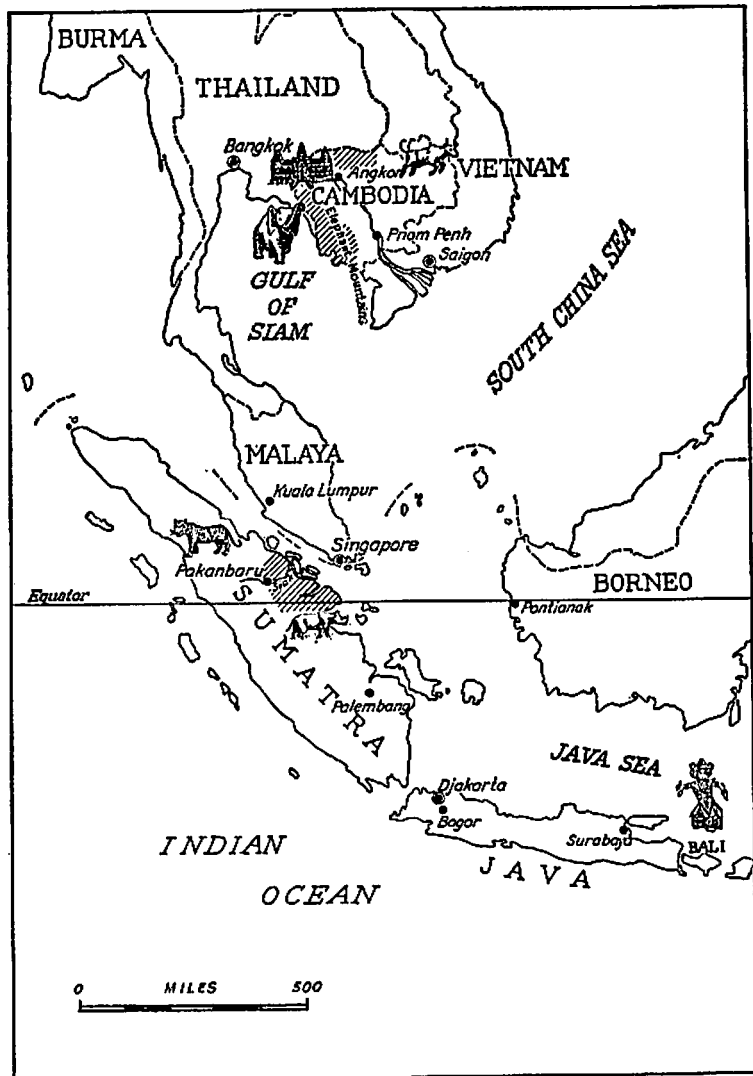
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PART ONE

*On the Trail of the
Hairy Rhino*

IT WAS early noon. The sun was already vertical in the sky above us and the jungle oozed with moist and dampness. Our khaki was wet, sticky and mud-soiled. For three hours we had worked our way, slowly and laboriously, through the swampy jungles of Sumatra. We had set out early from the muddy banks of the River Siak, where the mangrove spread out on the water like a carpet and the gibbons from their seats in the trees abuse any trespasser.

It had been rough going—alternately through moist valleys and across trackless hills, sometimes in a suffocatingly damp semi-darkness where we shambled in water to above our knees, and sometimes exposed to the blaze of the tropical sun between palms and ferns which frequently closed above our heads and made us feel like ants on a garden-lawn.

We had stumbled upon a partly overgrown path. Like most paths in the jungle this was an old elephant-trail. So dense is the jungle that all traffic as a rule follows the beaten tracks of the elephant. Sometimes even the elephants follow their own tracks, but now and then they crash straight through the jungle like giant bulldozers, leaving wild boars, antelopes, tigers, leopards, bears and rhinos to trample the track level—and a new jungle road has been made.

It had rained heavily the night before and animal tracks were

clearly in evidence everywhere around us. The path narrowed and took a sharp turning to the right. The tall elephant-grass thinned out and suddenly we found ourselves in a small clearing, from where all further passage was blocked by a huge palm tree which had tumbled down across the path. Before we set out the native carriers, now winding their way behind us in a long file, had warned us against an old, crazy and outcast male elephant which plagued this particular neighbourhood.

"*Awas, tuan! Gadjah!*" one of the foremost carriers now cried. "Look out, *tuan!* Elephant!" And no mistake was possible here. The old giant had emerged from the thicket, and pausing in the clearing had overturned a palm tree, feasting on the pith and young growth. Around us in the soft soil were numerous hoof-prints—so deep that a grown man could place his arm from the elbow to the fingertips in each of them.

An alarmed murmur ran down the file: "*Gadjah! Gadjah!*" The old brute couldn't be far away. Possibly he was even lying in wait for us in the thicket. I had heard too many stories about old outcast elephants to know that they were not to be joked at. I stole a worried glance at my expedition-partner, taxidermist and big-game hunter Arne Dyhrberg, who had suggested that I take lead of the column.

I climbed over the big trunk, closely followed by Arne Dyhrberg. Our only weapons were big hunting-knives. Behind us the file of native carriers began to follow suit.

"Better look out sharp," Dyhrberg's voice sounded warningly behind me. "If we stumble on to the old brute, the natives will throw everything down and take to their heels. Hide behind a tree then and don't move a muscle—and maybe he'll just walk away and leave us alone."

I kept eyes and ears wide open and advanced slowly. A few yards from the trunk the elephant had returned to the path we were following and had moved on in the same direction. Deep impressions in the mud and fresh pats of dung—as big as footballs—told us that he had passed this way not many minutes ago. We once more found ourselves surrounded by the tall elephant-grass and stopped to see if there were any signs of movement in the

grass in front of us, but everything seemed to be quiet. I proceeded, turning sharply round a bend from where the path wound its way down towards a flat, open plateau.

A dozen yards down the path he was waiting for us. He was tall and towering like a house, and his big yellow tusks bore witness to a venerable age. I stopped petrified and gazed at him. The whole file of natives rounded the corner and bumped into one another, like an accordion being folded up.

For a few seconds everything was quiet. From the column twenty tiny human beings gaped at the giant, and he blinked malignantly back with his small, venomous eyes. Then he raised his trunk and emitted a sound as if someone had let the air out of a hard-pumped car tyre. Our natives howled in alarm, threw their packs on the ground and took to their heels. The giant began to shake his head and emitted further frightening sounds. Then he slowly went into action like a locomotive and bore right down on us. I looked round for a tree to hide behind, but we had surprised him at one of the very few open places where grass and tall ferns were the only vegetation. As if by command Arne Dyhrberg and I turned around and ran for our lives. Behind us we heard the thundering, rumbling sound of the giant. We ran uphill. The tropical sun blazed down on us, and the temperature was about 40° Centigrade. Perspiration sprang out on my brow, ran down into my eyes and blinded me. My heart beat violently and I found it difficult to breathe. The thundering gallop behind me came nearer and nearer. Suddenly Dyhrberg disappeared and I heard a roar behind me. I turned round, expecting to see him writhe in agony under the elephant. But he had merely stopped up in the middle of the path, swinging his hunting-knife above his head, whooping wildly and dancing like a Red Indian.

The giant halted abruptly and eyed him in mute astonishment.

"Howl, confound you!" Dyhrberg cried. "It's our only chance!" I drew my hunting-knife and joined the war-dance in front of the old outcast who raised his trunk and slowly shook his head as if puzzled by such lunatic behaviour. Then he suddenly turned around and shuffled into the thicket, where he momentarily paused to indulge in violent trumpet-calls. Arne Dyhrberg

put his knife away and wiped his brow with the sleeves of his khaki shirt.

"We almost lost our heads there," he said. "We would never have made it, if we had rushed on like that. Let's be quiet now and see what he is up to."

For about ten minutes we and the giant mutually eyed each other, then he shuffled deeper into the jungle and disappeared, accompanied by a crashing sound of snapping twigs and branches. Gradually the noise died away and was superseded by the jeering laughter of the beo-bird.

Some time later our native carriers returned, babbling and discussing. Probably none of them had expected to find us alive. The column was reorganized, but we had some difficulty in getting a move on. Not until Dyhrberg and I had made a reconnaissance and declared the path open did they proceed their slow descent to the big open clearing on the plateau.

We rested a while under a cluster of tall palms. The flasks were produced and the lukewarm tea quelled our immediate thirst. I turned over on my back and gazed up at the blue tropical sky, thinking of the casual conversation which had sent me all the way from Copenhagen to the green hell of Sumatra—hundreds of miles from railways, highways and what we call civilization. This was my first jungle-safari, and the fear of snakes, tigers and wild elephants, of rhinos, malaria, scorpions, poisonous insects and plants and of many other things was still in my blood. I cursed that summer morning in Copenhagen when, during a jubilee-interview with the managing director of Zoologisk Have, Svend Andersen, I had asked him what he most ardently wished for the garden's hundredth birthday.

"To get a specimen of the hairy Sumatran rhinoceros," he answered without the slightest hesitation. And he had added, "But I'll have to dismiss that from my mind, of course."

"Why?" I asked.

"Because it is the rarest mammal in the world, and it will cost

1. A palm-leaf hut in the middle of the jungle was our home for three months. Tigers and violent downpours flooding the forest floor forced us to camp in the trees.





On the Trail of the RARE RHINO

a fortune to catch it. The opportunity is there all right, but we just haven't got the money and we can't get it without money."

Then I got the story about the Danish taxidermist, Arne Dyhrberg, who is employed by the Indonesian government at the zoological museum in Bogor. For several years Dyhrberg had travelled through the interior of the Republic of Indonesia in search of animals for his museum, and he had recognized the fact that the rare rhinoceros is on the verge of extinction. The Chinese harbour an old superstition that a certain powder, made of skin and horn from the rhino, will keep a man young and fit till a very old age. Thanks to this superstition the small horny excrescence which adorns the rhino is one of the rarest and most expensive commercial articles in Singapore. A single horn, so it is said, will fetch the price of a brand-new American car. No wonder that the native population of Sumatra everywhere is poaching what is officially a totally protected animal. It is estimated that these rare animals now number only a few hundred.

Together with Professor Kusnoto, the leader of Indonesia's preservation of natural amenities and of many scientific institutions in Bogor, Arne Dyhrberg therefore devised a plan to catch a few of these rare animals to make them breed in captivity in order to maintain the race in special national and zoological gardens.

This plan was approved, and excited universal interest. It only needed to be carried into effect. As an independent nation Indonesia is merely fourteen years old, and like all young nations it is afflicted with numerous problems. And a relief action to save the rarest mammal in the world naturally must give way to the demand for schools, roads, hospitals and other vital necessities to an ever-increasing population.

Co-operation between the Zoological Garden in Copenhagen and the Baseler Zoo in Switzerland was successfully established, however, and with further financial support from private sources

2. A rhinoceros trap is a big palisade erected around the bathing places of the animals—often several hundred yards in circumference—and equipped with trap-doors where tracks lead through the palisade to the water-holes.

in Scandinavia the future of the expedition was provided for. Three weeks later I found myself on a SAS-plane bound for Djakarta.

After a few days of hectic preparation in Djakarta and Bogor, I proceeded by the local Garuda Indonesian Airways to the landing-place, Pakanbaru, in the Sumatran jungle. As an experienced safari hand, Arne Dyhrberg had arrived a few weeks earlier to make the preliminary arrangements.

Thanks to close co-operation with the Indonesian military and civil authorities—and truly remarkable help from the Caltex Pacific Oil Company—we finally managed to raise an expedition. And now we had set out on what I believe is one of the most exciting big-game safaris imaginable.

Arne Dyhrberg rouses me from these meditations. The worst is over. We have to reach a camp before nightfall.

Leaving the plateau, we cross a boggy valley, balancing on trees across swamp-holes covered by treacherous grass and weed. One false step, and the swamp will suck you down—unless someone is at hand to pull you out again immediately. The scenery is changing now. From the open plateau we move into a dense primeval forest with tall, narrow-trunked trees and a tangle of lianas and undergrowth. We climb over trunks and huge roots, slipping and sliding, and stumble on, damp in spite of the insufferable heat.

Now and then a rustling or a hissing sound is heard from the undergrowth in front of us. But I no longer sense the danger of snakes, tigers or elephants. I am far too tired. We walk on in complete silence as everybody is too exhausted to talk. It is late in the afternoon now, and we *have* to reach camp before nightfall. We cross a little stream, make our way through a tangle of undergrowth—and suddenly we find ourselves in a small clearing where a narrow river has carved out a miniature peninsula. In the middle of this peninsula, and five metres above ground-level, two huts have been erected in the trees. A “hen-coop” ladder leads up to a platform, shaded by a roof of palm leaves. There are no walls—due to the insufferable heat.

We take a plunge into the river then climb up to the huts to

drop on the platform-floor from sheer exhaustion. Darkness falls upon the forest like an eiderdown, and the jungle orchestra begins to tune its instruments: the cicadas sing, the monkeys scream and the frogs croak noisily. Somewhere a scream of agony reveals that the nocturnal hunting has set in.

But we are oblivious to all this—we are too tired. The dangers and fatigues belong to the morning. We have only one thing in mind: to sleep—just sleep.

I woke up as something bit my finger—and hastened to pull my hand away. In the semi-darkness I saw a rat scamper away, run across Arne Dyhrberg's face and disappear up into the palm roof. Apart from that everything was quiet. Even the jungle was silent after the nocturnal hunting. From the other hut, where our Indonesian assistants slept, a bluish smoke spiralled up against the sky, and a few moments later our own hut began to sway rhythmically—a sure sign that someone was climbing our hen-coop ladder.

A brown-skinned head with curly hair appeared above the edge of the floor, and a bucket of tea and two jugs were handed up to us.

“*Selamat pagi, tuan!*” he whispered, observing that Dyhrberg was still asleep.

“*Selamat pagi, Madi! Terima kasih!*—Good morning, Madi! And thank you,” I answered with the few Malayan words I had picked up during my brief stay in Indonesia.

I finally managed to wake Dyhrberg, and a simple breakfast ritual—which was to be repeated every morning for three months—began. A tin of biscuits and a jar of marmalade were opened, a knife dug into the jar—and breakfast was served! The tea looked anything but inviting—it reminded one of muddy water. And as it had by now become light enough to observe the river down below us, I asked suspiciously: “Where do we get the water from?”

Dyhrberg nodded down towards the river—the water of which

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was so muddy that it was quite impossible to see the bottom, although that was only a few inches from the surface. A water-rat slipped out of its hole in the bank and disappeared into the water. In the middle of the stream, and tied to a pole, our khaki shirts and trousers were being soaked, and a few yards from there a couple of natives innocently relieved themselves. I shuddered and regarded my tea with marked distaste.

"The filth is carried downstream. That's why I had their hut built over there," Dyrberg said consolingly. "This little river is comparatively clean as there is no habitation further upstream. And anyway, we cook the water for about twenty minutes. That ought to kill most of the bacteria. The remaining ones will be disposed of by the tannic acid in the tea. You might as well get used to it at once. It's the only drinkable stuff we have, and you've got to consume at least three litres a day to keep fit and replace all the liquid you perspire."

I gulped some of the muddy tea down and almost spat it out again.

"After three months I'll be completely tanned inside," I protested.

"Yes, but in return you'll probably still be alive. Strong tea is the best medicine against an amoeba-dysentery which otherwise would finish you off quickly. I know what I'm talking about. I was carried out of the jungle myself in a dead faint and spent four months at a hospital while they tried to revive me."

After that explanation I drank my tea without further misgivings. It tasted just as horrible as good medicine is supposed to taste.

On this first day in the jungle I learned to say goodbye even to the simplest demands of comfort. In spite of tins, plastic bags and aluminium foil it was quite impossible to keep ants, mosquitoes, flies and countless other insects away from our provisions. I had some difficulty in eating my first portion of rice and dried fish, spiced with ants and other vermin. But you can get used to a lot if you don't want to go hungry all the time. I learned to stop scratching my mosquito-bites in order to avoid big open wounds, and I learnt to move around with a minimum display of energy

On the Trail of the Hairy Rhino

in the oppressive heat. In short: I learned to live in a tropical mangrove swamp, so unhealthy that human beings had deemed it uninhabitable long ago, and with tigers, elephants, snakes, monkeys, crocodiles and millions of ants, mosquitoes and other vermin as daily companions.

But in spite of all the nuisance and discomfort there was nevertheless a certain beauty and cosiness about our small camp. Deep in the heart of the jungle and near a little muddy river some trees had been cleared away—not enough to call the place a clearing, but enough to enable the sun to penetrate through the dense roof of palm-leaves, lianas, moss and many-coloured orchids. Here we had built two little huts in the trees. Each hut was about 9 by 16 feet. Four trees a suitable distance apart had been connected by cross-beams which were tied on with strong palm-fibres. On this framework a number of floor-planks covered with bark had been placed. There were, of course, no walls, but a big sloping roof of palm-leaves offered shelter against the rain and the sun. Below the huts we had placed a table and some coarse chairs.

The reason why we had built the huts in the trees was primarily to get away from the tigers and leopards roaming around the camp every night, and secondly to avoid the unhealthy dampness of the ground.

Life in camp began at dawn. When we had finished our tea, when the gibbons had started their woeful morning-chant: "Woe-oeut! woe-oe-ut! Woe-woe-woe-woe-woet-woet-woet-woet!", when the sun sent its first rays down on the swampy jungle—then the daily expedition started in search of the rarest mammal in the world: the hairy Sumatran rhinoceros.

The African and Indian rhino sticks to the territories between the open savannah and the comparatively dry tableland. The Sumatran rhinoceros, however, is a swamp animal and has its haunts in one of the oldest and most inaccessible tropical jungles in the world. It is the smallest of the three, and the young animal has a hairy coat. It is a fiery and ill-tempered animal—and quick as lightning. I have seen it move in and out between trees, roots and other obstacles in the tangled undergrowth with surprising grace and agility. And I have seen it stop, turn around in the

fraction of a second, and charge ahead with the speed of an express train.

There are not many left of these animals which form a zoological link between the monsters of the past and the mammals of the present. Our task was to study their habits, discover their haunts, catch them alive, and bring them out of the jungle to the zoological gardens of Basle, Bogor and Copenhagen. We were armed only with hunting-knives, because the whole area in which the animals travelled was a kind of no-man's-land between the fighting rebels and the Indonesian government troops, and the possession of fire-arms might easily get us into trouble with either party.

"You are crazy to venture into the jungle without fire-arms," we had been warned. But we always answered: "If the native population can travel around merely armed with knives, so can we. He who comes unarmed comes as a friend. He who comes armed shows suspicion and draws suspicion. We wish to come as friends."

And not for a single moment during our stay in Indonesia did we ever have cause to regret that decision. We had skirmishes with poachers, rebels and soldiers, and dramatic incidents with wild elephants, tigers, bears, snakes and rhinos. No rifle or revolver could have helped us out of these situations—only common sense and a bit of diplomatic tact.

Full of hope and anticipation we set out the first morning to trace the rhino.

It is generally believed that a tropical jungle is only accessible by chopping one's way through with big knives, foot by foot. This situation may arise, of course, but the slow progress is often due to huge, twisted roots, treacherous swamps, and rotten, windfallen trees. A day's march of five or six miles is quite an accomplishment, for even in the lowlands—where thick copses of palms, thorny bamboo and tall grass make a tangled wall—progress is slow.

On our expeditions into the jungle Dyhrberg and I were usually accompanied by our jungle expert from Borneo, Sabran, and one or two native assistants. Attired in our khaki with long trousers

and shirts with long sleeves, and wearing boots with thick rubber soles, we slowly worked our way through the swamps. It was a warm way to dress in a country where the temperature is about 35° Centigrade and the air is saturated with dampness—but it was useful. Thorny lianas tore our clothes, and leeches were ready to drop from the trees and tall grass all the time. Hunting-knives, a compass, whistles (in case we got separated), flasks of muddy tea, a tin of biscuits, a box with dressing materials, snake-serum, a syringe, electric torches, and cigarettes and matches in a plastic bag completed our safari equipment.

We were successful on our very first expedition. No sooner had we passed a thorny bamboo copse and were ascending a slope with tall ferns, when Sabran abruptly came to a halt and explained: "*Badak!*"—the Malayan word for rhinoceros.

In front of us a broad trail, partly covered by withered leaves, wound its way through the ferns. This trail was made by rhinos and belonged to a whole system of similar trails which we were to map out during the following weeks. A newly broken branch and a pat of wet mud on a trec-trunk indicated that rhinos had passed here quite recently.

We followed the trail and came to a small clearing where the sun merely trickled through the thick foliage. The grass was trampled down and bushes and saplings were strewn everywhere, as if giants had been having a party. Big, round tracks in the soft mud showed clear impressions of the rhinos' hoofs.

We hurried down the slope towards a boggy swamp. Here the tracks showed even clearer than before.

For the next two hours we shamled in mud and mire, systematically reconnoitring the swamp and the surrounding hills. We found that several rhino-trails led down to the swamp which evidently was a favourite bathing-place for the animals.

We measured and surveyed and made some quick calculations. This seemed to be an ideal spot for our first trap. But how were we going to make it? The Sumatran rhino had never before been caught alive, and no established catching-method could accordingly be prescribed.

How were we going to set about it? The native poachers used

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a sling of steel wire which automatically laced the snout of the rhino just above its horn. But at the same time this wire cut deeply into its skin, making the animal utterly furious. It charged anything within range, until it finally dropped from sheer exhaustion, half-choked and partly mutilated. To the poachers this mutilation was of no importance. They merely killed the animal to get the horn. We naturally abandoned all thought of this barbaric method at once.

To dig pitfalls across all the trails leading down to the swamp was another solution, but the difficulty in getting the heavy animal up—and the risk that it might break a leg falling down—likewise made us abandon that plan.

After some discussion between ourselves and with our local assistants, we finally decided to build a solid, well camouflaged palisade-fence around the whole bathing-place. Where the fence was to cross the trails, we would make trap-doors which would automatically fall down when the animal passed through the opening.

We drew a rough sketch of the whole area and decided to build an enclosure of about 30 by 30 yards with six trap-doors—one for each of the most used rhino-trails.

No sooner had we returned to our camp, when a faint whistling in the trees announced that rain was approaching. A roar as from a waterfall came nearer and nearer. The first big drops hit us as we hurriedly climbed the ladder to our hut. Although it was still early in the afternoon, darkness had fallen upon the jungle. Lightning tore the sky, a thundering crash reverberated through the forest, and a huge tree fell to the ground not far from the camp.

The roaring downpour was now directly above us and heavy cascades hit the camp. Violent squalls bent the palms and made the huts sway precariously. Only the weight of the heavy downpour kept the light roofs in place.

Through the crashing thunder and rattling lightning I heard cries from the other hut. High-pitched, tremulous voices implored Allah for protection against the storm.

Below us the water in the river rose and rose. After an hour's

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continuous downpour it gradually began to overflow the camp. Before the storm had subsided, the camp was flooded and the jungle converted to one big lake.

The rain calmed down and was superseded by the rushing and seething of the river, as it attempted to empty the forest of water. Trees, branches and palm-tops whirled down the river. The height of the water slowly sank, leaving a muddy forest-floor from which dampness rose against the trees like a fog.

After some difficulty we finally managed to light a camp-fire, and Dyhrberg, Sabran and I were trying to dry our soaked clothes when a violent splash from the river suddenly made us jump. Quick as lightning Sabran pulled out his long Borneo kris and plunged headlong into the river. During the following minutes the water was a seething confusion of brown arms and legs and a two-metre-long monster struggling for life.

When the fight was over, Sabran proudly waded ashore, dragging an enormous lizard with him.

It was instantly skinned and the thick, fleshy tail put into the soup pot, while we discussed the plans for building our first rhino-trap. There were quite a lot of details to take into consideration. Nails and tools had to be transported by river from Pakanbaru and afterwards carried to the camp. We would need several bags of salt to lure the animals into the trap, and more than a thousand young saplings were required to make the palisade. In order not to frighten the animals with the noise, these saplings had to be cut in another area and from there transported to the building-place.

All this required a large staff of native workers—and very few natives cared to leave their villages even for a temporary stay in the jungle. The building of a trap like the one we had in mind would take at least two or three weeks.

Our own crew only numbered five besides Dyhrberg, Sabran and myself. They were: Bocadi, Dyhrberg's young Indonesian assistant who had just graduated from the biological academy, and Madi, Rochmad and Rosad, assistants from the zoological museum in Bogor. And finally there was a coolie—Sani—to do the various chores in camp. None of us knew anything about

forestry, so even though we were perfectly willing to tackle the job ourselves, we wouldn't get far. That much was certain.

After some discussion we decided to apply to an old native called Palewah who lived in a small clearing between our camp and the River Siak. It was hinted that he and his sons were among the most ardent poachers in this area—a further reason for us to try to win them over to our side.

It was late when we finally had our lizard-tail for supper. There wasn't much taste to it, and in spite of the fact that the meat had been simmering for several hours it was still rather tough. But anyway, it did lend some lustre to our rice and dried fish.

We were tired when we climbed the ladder to our hut. A sleepy petrol lamp was placed on the middle step of the ladder to scare away unwelcome animals.

Dyhrberg and I discussed the results of the day for a while. It had been a profitable day. We had found tracks of the rhino, we had discovered a suitable place to build a trap and we had agreed on the further proceedings.

But no sooner had we turned round to sleep, when we heard footsteps in the darkness outside and the snapping of rifle-bolts. We rose silently and peered down. In the dim light from the petrol lamp we saw three sinister-looking persons with levelled rifles sneak into camp.

3

The three intruders stopped a dozen yards from our hut and tried to take their bearings in the dim light from the lamp below us.

I slowly and carefully edged my way across the floor towards Dyhrberg who sat propped up against one of the beams, peering down at the heavily-armed strangers. Besides their rifles each man carried a pistol and a long bayonet in his belt. One of them even had a couple of hand-grenades slung around his waist. None of them wore marks or distinctions of any kind, but were attired in neutral khaki and jungle-boots. All three of them were bare-headed, dark-haired, brown-skinned and—as far as we could see—very young.

"Who are they?" I asked Dyhrberg in a barely audible whisper. "Rebels, I suppose," he replied shortly. "Be careful! They don't know who we are. If they mistake us for a military outpost, they'll shoot first and ask questions afterwards."

"Why not challenge them?" I suggested, at the same time accidentally overturning a tin jug. It clattered down on the floor with an almost deafening noise.

The three men disappeared as if by magic, and we saw their rifles threateningly aimed at us from behind the trees.

"*Selamat malam*—good evening, strangers!" Dyhrberg cried in a loud voice, lighting an electric lamp and thus making us perfect shooting-targets in the black tropical night.

"Either you get a bullet through your heart, or they will step out from the copse and say what they want. We'd better raise our hands to show that we are unarmed."

We waited anxiously for a reply. Then a voice sounded from the darkness: "*Selamat malam*—good evening!", and the three lads stepped out from their cover.

Having placed the lamp in a position that would keep us fully exposed, we climbed down the ladder. It must have been something of a surprise to the rebels—who evidently thought they had stumbled on to a military outpost—to watch two sleepy Danes in striped pyjamas climb down the ladder from a small platform in the trees.

From the other hut, where our native assistants slept, not a sound was heard. They probably held their breath and kept quiet in order not to attract undue attention.

The three rebels discussed animatedly between themselves and showered us with questions. Dyhrberg, who spoke Indonesian fluently, furnished them with a long explanation, from which I only grasped a few expressions like "international expedition" and "no military purpose".

One of the lads climbed up the ladder to examine the hut for hidden arms, while the others notified us that they were hungry and thirsty. Dyhrberg called up to the other hut and our Indonesian assistants came tumbling down almost in a heap.

The camp-fire was lit, the big black pan with rice, dried fish

and lizard-tail was put on the fire, and after a pot of tea had been brewed we all of us settled down comfortably, talking peacefully about anything but the civil war.

After a final loud belching, the oriental approval of a good meal, and puffing at American cigarettes, our three uninvited guests resumed their nocturnal travel through the jungle—while we, tired and weary after this dramatic incident, returned to our mosquito-nets and air-mattresses.

The next morning we set out early to reach the small clearing in the jungle where the old man Palewah and his sons had burned down the trees and planted a few banana-palms. We were anxious to get started with the construction of the first trap, and it was rather important for us to obtain local support and co-operation—especially as we knew that the natives consider the jungle their own private property and look upon any intrusion with suspicion and hostility.

We also eventually hoped to come across the real poachers who for many years illegally had hunted and killed the scarce rhinos. These men knew the jungle and knew more about the haunts and habits of the rhino than any professor in zoology. But as the penalty for poaching was severe, and since our expedition was a semi-official enterprise, supported by the Indonesian government, the task of meeting them openly hardly seemed to be an easy one.

We had devised a plan, however, which we thought rather clever. During the last days of hectic preparations to raise the expedition, we had discussed the rhinos with our native assistants and all their friends in the little villages along the River Siak. And we had soon discovered that it was not the poachers who made money out of selling the coveted horns to the Chinese merchants in Singapore, but that the Chinese go-betweens in Sumatra were the chaps who really got the profit.

We therefore hinted that we were willing to pay a reward for each young rhino which the local population helped us to catch alive. This reward we made a trifle higher than the price offered the poachers by the Chinese buyers. We further hinted that we would defray all direct expenses, such as: construction of traps, transport of materials, provisions for the jungle camps, etc., etc.

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Only a very few natives actually venture into the jungle. The great majority stick to their villages and to the rivers. To them the jungle is not only full of wild animals—it is also, and worst of all, the domicile of countless sinister ghosts and spirits. The assistants we would get through the offering of a reward were therefore almost certain to be experienced hunters—or poachers!

Like all other houses along the rivers and in the jungle-clearings in eastern Sumatra, Palewah's dwelling was a pole-cottage. It was situated on a hill-top in the middle of the clearing, and to reach it we had to work our way up a bare slope in the blazing sun.

Below the cottage was the usual confusion of hens, lean dogs and little naked, brown, slant-eyed and very charming children who swarmed up the ladder in alarm as the mystic bearded strangers appeared.

We called up to the house. A moment later a black, toothless head appeared in the doorway, and Palewah—master of this part of the jungle and of three wives, six grown sons, countless smaller children and grandchildren, and 257 banana-palms—smilingly welcomed us.

We squatted in the grass in the shadow of the cottage—and a long palaver ensued. Wise in the ways of the local population, Dyhrberg made a long speech to which Palewah made a suitable answer.

I was getting impatient and asked what they were talking about and if Palewah was willing to work for us.

"Take it easy," Dyhrberg replied. "We have all day in front of us. We must greet each other nicely first. People have manners out here and don't rush at business. If Palewah likes us, we shall be invited inside first to another palaver. And if we are lucky, we might just get a chance to mention the traps before we leave. That depends on the atmosphere."

There was talk about the seasonal rain, a long time overdue; about the elephants destroying the banana-palms; about the price of a young wife, about wild boars and tigers, about children, hens and mosquitoes, and about the quality of our flasks. When we had talked for about half an hour, we were invited inside—a sure sign that negotiations were proceeding satisfactorily. We were

offered tea and baked bananas. The older sons sat in a semi-circle around the old man. The younger children, gradually working up new courage, gathered around Dyhrberg and me in a narrow circle on the floor. The three wives, as becoming Indonesian women, remained in the background from where they looked on in interested silence. A monkey clung to the beams under the roof, now and then uttering shrill screams in order to attract attention. It was not the least important member of the household, for it was trained to climb the tall coconut-palms, pick the big, heavy nuts and throw them down to Palewah and his sons.

A few plaited mats, two clay jars brimming with rice, a hammock made of palm-fibres, and a fireplace with several pots and pans completed the entire furniture.

After another half-hour's palaver Dyhrberg broached the real purpose of our visit—the construction of rhino-traps.

The old man showed no surprise when hearing about the project. Apparently he had been fully informed of all our movements since we had entered his part of the jungle, and he now anxiously began to discuss how to tackle the problem.

He knew a good deal more about rhinos than he cared to admit, and I had a feeling that this was not the first time he had occupied himself with rhino-hunting. But Palewah was a cunning old fox who knew how to keep his own counsel—even though there was no doubt that the offered reward tempted him. However, he confined himself to expressing his satisfaction that we had applied to him for assistance and promised to aid us with the construction of the traps. After some further discussion about terms and prices, revealing him to be just as active in business as productive in breeding, we took our leave. The work was to begin the very next morning.

Next morning came, but no workers—and I expressed myself strongly concerning my disappointment.

"We are lucky if they turn up within the next few days," Dyhrberg consoled me. "You are in the Far East, you know, and time out here is of very little importance. Tomorrow just means one of the next few days; but don't worry, they'll turn up and the trap is sure to be finished. We've just got to accept their pace and

their method of work, and that after all is the least we can do, considering it is their jungle we are trespassing." I naturally agreed with him.

Three days after our first meeting with the old man, he and four of his sons appeared. Apart from their long knives, parangs—a cross between an old-fashioned cavalry sabre and an executioner's axe—they had brought no tools. We showed them the place where the trap was to be constructed. The old man accepted it as a good place. The shape of the trap was discussed, and work began.

During the next days the long knives sang their monotonous melody in the jungle, and young, springy saplings piled up around the bathing-ground of the rhinos. While the felling of timber took place, Dyhrberg and I walked the long way to the River Siak and sailed down to the nearest town, Pekanbaru, to get provisions. We bought three barrels of nails, four bags of salt, cigarettes and coffee (both included in the daily wages), four bags of rice and several boxes of tinned food and other groceries to keep a dozen hard-working and hungry men alive for another month. One of the boxes contained some bottles of Jamaica rum to remove the worst taste of the muddy tea we had to drink every day.

Two weeks later we were able to open our first trap. Almost hidden in the tangled undergrowth around the bathing-ground a solid palisade-fence had been erected. An ingenious system of trap-doors was contrived across all the trails leading down to the swamp, and in the trees some distance away from the trap a small hut was built, making it possible for us to observe all traffic in the swamp.

The first night-watch in the jungle became a thrilling and unforgettable experience which nearly cost us our lives.

Before darkness fell on the jungle, we had carefully inspected all the six trap-doors. The slightest touch of the thin, almost invisible, steel wire stretching across each opening—and the doors would snap shut. Little blocks of salt were strewn on the trails from the hills and down to the swamp and, following the old man's advice, we had placed some over-ripe durian fruits inside

the trap. The durian is supposed to be a very delicious fruit—something like a nice, seasoned Stilton cheese—that is, if the insufferable odour hasn't scared you away before you get a chance to taste it. A normal human being was inclined to believe that the stench would scare any game out of the jungle, but old Palewah maintained that it was the favourite dessert of the rhino. As it turned out later, however, the durian seemed capable of attracting even bigger and far more dangerous game.

Having finished a solid supper, and with our flasks full of warm tea, smelling faintly of rum, Dyhrberg and I set out for the new trap—a walk of fifteen to twenty minutes through the pitch-black jungle. Each of us carried a powerful electric lamp. Our air-mattresses and mosquito-nets, a petrol lamp and a big can of extra petrol had been transported to the guard-hut by Sani earlier in the afternoon.

The sky was overcast and the night oppressively hot and damp. The fiddle-concert of the cicadas and the hoarse croaking of the frogs sounded everywhere around us. An emperor pigeon started its hollow drumming, some birds twittered, and a lizard peered out from its hiding-place and vanished again without a sound. A cackling sound above our heads made us jump, and a moment later a barking deer gave us another start. We imagined tigers lurking in the thicket, and rhinos and elephants heading for the bathing-ground.

We reached the hut safely, climbed up to the platform and put out all lights. Darkness closed in on us, hot and damp. Not until several minutes later were we able to distinguish each other's features as blurred, pale shadows.

It was only eight o'clock, and rhinos could not be expected around the trap for another couple of hours. We kept up a whispering conversation, smoked an occasional cigarette and listened to the voices of the jungle. An owl settled on the palisade and entertained us with alternate harsh laughter and long, woeful

3. "Mulia"—our first catch—suffered a tragic fate. Native assistants killed her during a nocturnal showdown, but Arne Dyhrberg, the taxidermist, succeeded in saving the precious hide and skeleton for the Zoological Museum of Copenhagen University.





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cries. Mosquitoes swarmed around us but were kept at a distance by the thick cover of jungle-oil we had applied to the exposed parts of our bodies.

A long, whispering sound, the snapping of twigs and a splash in the mud outside the trap made us catch our breath. Was it a rhino? We knew that the call of the rhino is a whimpering sound, and judging by the noise we heard it seemed to be a big animal. Half an hour went by and the splashing in the mud outside the trap continued. Then the noise gradually faded out of ear-shot.

Hours went by and we took turns, sleeping and watching. It was a troubled sleep, though. Excitement and the multitude of unknown sounds prevented us from sleeping deeply. Around midnight it began to rain—not violently as before, but a steady, drizzling downpour. The voices of the jungle died away as if all the animals had taken shelter against the rain, and silence and darkness surrounded us like a threatening wall.

Suddenly from the forest we heard a crashing noise. It was far away, but clear enough to make us prick up our ears. A moment later we heard another crash—nearer this time. We strained our ears. Then it sounded as if someone were trying to turn the whole jungle upside down.

"Elephants!" Dylrberg cried worriedly. "There is a whole herd of them, and they are coming this way. They are probably heading for the bathing-grounds here. Confound them if they hit our trap! If they come too close, we'll have to get down and light fires all around the trap, otherwise they are going to trample it completely flat!"

"Light fires—in this pitch-black darkness and drizzling rain!" I protested. The prospect of getting down there in the darkness among snakes, tigers and wild elephants made me shudder. We could not see more than a few yards in front of us. Up here in the trees I had a certain feeling of security, but down there—in the darkness—no, sir!

4. There is nothing which a rhinoceros enjoys more than a real mud-bath. A thick layer of mud on the back gives protection against the annoying attacks of bot-flies.

"It's our only chance. Would you like to remain up here, waiting for a couple of furious elephants to haul you down and trample you to death?"

I remembered the old giant we had met a few weeks ago in clear daylight. He hadn't been exactly a kind old soul. The thought of being exposed to a whole herd of his kind—about forty big, heavy giants, trampling everything down, sent a cold shiver down my spine.

The following half-hour was like a nightmare. The crashing and cracking noise came nearer and nearer.

When we heard the first violent snorts and the earth began quaking underneath us, Dyhrberg whispered:

"We are right in the line of fire. Let's make a counter-attack. It is better that we surprise them than they surprise us. Light the petrol lamp and follow me."

I lit the lamp, loosened my knife—not that I thought it would be of any great help, but it was the only weapon I had—and climbed down the ladder behind Dyhrberg who carried his electric torch in one hand and the petrol can in the other.

We worked our way through the undergrowth to the place from which the attack might be expected, gathering twigs and withered leaves for three little fires. The task was almost hopeless. Everything was dripping wet and the rain still poured down.

We had hardly finished, when a tall palm in front of us fell to the ground with a thundering crash. The jungle suddenly became alive with elephants, and I caught a glimpse of big tusks and a raised trunk a few yards in front of me. I switched on my torch, unscrewed the petrol lamp and cried out in fright and excitement. I shouted to Dyhrberg, demanding an expert's opinion in this moment of crisis, but darkness had swallowed him up—and from the place where I had seen him last, I heard the furious trampling of the elephants.

I was getting panicky. Almost petrified I sensed what happened around me as in a bad dream. The pitch-black jungle reverberated

with the noise of blows and snorts, of falling trees, and of munching, as the oncoming giants chewed the green sappy branches of the tree-tops.

There was no escape. Behind us rose the solid palisade-fence, the rain poured down, and the soil was muddy and slippery. Even if we tried to run for it, we would soon drop from exhaustion or tumble across treacherous roots and tangled lianas. What were we going to do?

Dyhrberg had already found the answer: a blazing fire lit up the night. In the glare I saw him approach me with the petrol can in his hand. Quickly he poured some on the heap of twigs I had gathered, and rushed on to the next heap. I struck a match and threw it into the explosive fire, and tall, yellow flames shot up around me. A moment later Dyhrberg had lit the third fire, and all of a sudden the jungle assumed an orange-coloured tinge.

The sight was so fascinating that we momentarily forgot all dangers and held our breaths. Looming between the trees were thirty or forty wild elephants. The nearest were only a few yards away from us. A small baby elephant raised its trunk and squeaked, frightened by the strange light and the smell of fire. The whole herd slowly set into motion, like a goods train leaving a station.

With their trunks threateningly raised, and snorting and blowing furiously, the elephants split up in two groups and fell into a slow canter, and suddenly we found ourselves an island in the middle of a river of elephants, rushing down on either side of the trap like a grey stream.

A couple of big males at the back of the herd did not quite make it round the trap—or maybe were unable to resist the tempting smell of the durian-fruits. They pushed their foreheads against a corner of the fence, crushing it to matchwood. A few seconds they stood there, scenting—then their trunks searched the ground, and our durian-fruits, laid out to lure the rhinos into the trap, disappeared down the huge throats of the elephants. A new crashing noise told us that they had left the trap and rejoined the retreating herd in the thicket.

Dyhrberg cursed under his breath as he gazed at the ruined

Rhino Country

trap. It had taken us three weeks to get that far. There would be a further delay now until the damage could be repaired. I gulped down some of the lukewarm tea, wishing I had added some more rum. I needed a drink badly.

The fires were dying out. The rain really poured down now, and soon nothing was left but the smell of old fires. Drenched, we stumbled back to our hut, seeking shelter under the leaky roof. We babbled incoherently from sheer excitement. But the main part of the trap was undamaged, and we thought ourselves fortunate to have escaped alive.

When we returned to camp about an hour later, our assistants excitedly informed us that a whole herd of elephants had passed by in a hurry as if fleeing from something.

Dyhrberg looked at me with a twinkle and said: "It must have been the very herd we drove away from the trap."

And while the Indonesians gaped at him, he climbed up the ladder to our hut, crept under the mosquito-net, wrapped himself up in a blanket and immediately fell asleep. My legs felt heavy as lead as I followed him. The sun was already high in the sky, but neither the heat nor the excited murmur of the natives below the hut could keep me awake.

While the damage was being repaired, Dyhrberg and I made an excursion down the River Siak to Buatan—a small village about ninety miles east of our camp. In Buatan we hired an old truck which belonged to the Lirik oilfields three hundred miles south of Buatan. A pipe-line ran directly from Lirik to Buatan, and along this line the oil company had built a primitive road—the only thoroughfare in this part of Sumatra.

The purpose of our excursion was to question all the natives we might come across as to their knowledge of the rhinos. We hoped to gather sufficient information to form an idea of our possible chances of success. If there was much talk of rhinos and many tracks within this particular district, we would construct new traps there.

We soon realized that one of our main problems would be to have the animals transported out of the jungle. Apart from the

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rivers and the road along the pipe-line, the unexplored jungle stretched for hundreds of miles in all directions. We therefore were interested in finding those rhino bathing-grounds which were nearest to the rivers and the pipe-line.

For about a week we patiently worked our way from village to village along the jungle road. We talked to venerable old men who had hunted in the jungle for ages, and to young settlers who planned to clear the forest and plant rubber and banana trees. All of them had something to tell of rhinos, but only a few offered information of real value.

Still, we returned to camp full of hope and with plans to extend our hunting-grounds even further. Meanwhile, the trap had been repaired, and everything was ready.

The following two weeks were spent in anxious waiting for animals to walk into the trap. In the daytime we made excursions into the jungle to map out the district and gather new knowledge of the habits of the rhino.

On these daily ventures we very rarely came across creatures at all—and then mostly birds and reptiles and an occasional deer or wild-boar. Sometimes we heard the snorting of elephants from the thicket, and one morning we met two bears, jogging along quite unsuspectingly. As soon as they caught sight of us they rose on their hind legs, trying to survey the situation. They are said to be very ferocious and snappish, so we did not try to advance towards them. After a mutual appraisal we agreed that the jungle was big enough for both parties. The bears fell down on all fours and walked growling into the thicket, obviously discussing the strange creatures they had encountered, and we continued our search for the rhinos.

Within half an hour's walk from the camp, and near the little river, we found two more places to put up traps and decided to take advantage of these possibilities.

At night we took turns keeping guard at the trap. Night after night we sat in the hut, straining our ears to catch the faintest noise. We always went out two together, in order that one could keep guard if an animal walked into the trap, while the other under cover of darkness hurried back to rouse the camp.

It was a starry night. Dyhrberg and I sat in the hut, peering down at the trap, the contours of which rose faintly out of the darkness. Suddenly we heard a splash from the river behind us. Very slowly, and careful not to make the slightest noise, we turned round and looked down at the little river.

We did not immediately find out what had caused the splashing noise. Not until we saw a big shadow and heard a sound like a cat lapping up milk did we suspect the identity of our nocturnal visitor. When a moment later we saw two yellowish-green spots in the darkness, we knew for sure that a tiger was down at the river, quenching its thirst. It was obvious that the tiger did not know of our existence, since it lingered and took plenty of time to lick its striped coat.

Another sound from the jungle made us prick up our ears—a shrill, whispering sound, something between the squeak of a little pig and the whine of a big dog. It was followed by a splash in the mud and the snapping of twigs. We held our breaths. At last a rhino was on its way down the trail to the bathing-ground and the trap.

A few thrilling minutes went by. The whimpering sound came nearer and nearer. Now it sounded very near the trap. Then we heard the smack of a trap-door, snapping shut. Impulsively we shook hands in silent congratulation. And now quick action was demanded. We rose silently and walked softly to the ladder in order to climb down and see to all the trap-doors before the precious capture escaped.

5

But down on the trail a big, dark shadow moved towards the trap—a tiger! In all the excitement we had completely forgotten the dangerous beast of prey.

Dyhrberg was already half-way down the ladder. Hesitatingly, and not feeling too comfortable about all this, I fell in behind him.

From inside the trap sounded the noise of splashing and the cracking of branches. Now and then we heard an angry snort and the creaking of the palisade, as if the rhino was trying to break

through it. But it was too dark for us to see what really happened. I hurried up to Dyhrberg who was barely visible in the darkness a few yards ahead of me.

"Where is the tiger?" I gasped.

The big, dark shadow of the beast of prey had frightened me badly. Not one minute ago it had stolen away from below our hut, moving towards the trap.

"I suppose it has walked over to investigate the noise made by the rhino," Dyhrberg answered.

"Hadn't we better light our lamps and scare it away?" I suggested.

"Let us wait until we have fastened the trap-doors so that the rhino can't escape. I'll see to the doors on the right side of the trap. We'll meet again on the other side," Dyhrberg said.

He disappeared in the darkness. I heard the sucking noise from his boots as he walked through a slough.

Momentarily I was completely at a loss. I felt strongly tempted to rush back to the safety of the hut. The very idea that a full-grown tiger was lurking in the shrubbery in front of me sent a cold shiver down my spine.

I do not know how long I remained there motionless, but the sound of a trap-door snapping shut suddenly made me pull myself together. Six weeks' incredibly hard work lay behind us. We had trailed the rhino like bloodhounds. After toilsome wanderings through tangled and swampy jungles we had found a suitable place to constructive the expensive traps. During all that time we hadn't even seen the shadow of this fabulous animal, the horn of which had been the most treasured medicine of the Chinese for centuries. And now a rhino splashed and rumbled inside the trap right in front of me.

Tiger or no tiger—this rhino couldn't be allowed to escape. No doubt it had already discovered that something was wrong and now tried to break out. If just one of the trap-doors gave way, we would lose this rare capture—and the laborious work would have to begin all over again.

I hurried towards the trap. Fortunately I was able to follow a narrow path we had trodden ourselves. When I reached the

palisade I heard a thundering gallop from the other side and saw a big, grey shadow rush towards me with a furious snort. With lowered head the rhino rammed its horn into the palisade right in front of me. The fence creaked, and one of the poles splintered—but it held. The giant veered off and continued in a fast gallop along the fence. Mud and dirt literally shot out between the poles and hit my face with a smack.

As fast as possible I ran along the heavy fence of the palisade towards the first trap-door. It was already closed. Obviously our precious captive had entered here. Still looking around for the tiger I turned sharply around a corner and made for the next door. Having climbed the fence, I cut away the heavy stick of bamboo which kept the door in place. It came down with a sucking splash, the long, pointed poles went deep into the soft mud, and the exit was barred.

Almost at the same time I heard—from the other side of the trap—the snapping of door number two. Four of the six doors were closed now, leaving the rhino only two chances to escape—and poor chances at that, since the remaining doors were supposed to snap shut automatically in case the animal tried to get out. But we took no chances. Even those two doors had to be closed immediately.

Before I got down from the tall fence I heard another snap—and a trap-door came down. But the sound had not come from Dyhrberg's side of the fence. It was the door next to me, and Dyhrberg could not have come that far yet.

What had made that trap-door come down?

I suddenly caught sight of two yellow spots in the darkness below. The tiger, of course. But what now? Do tigers eat rhinos? Would it come to a fight between our first rhino and this most unwelcome nocturnal visitor?

Another snap sounded, and the last of the six trap-doors was closed. The whole trap was now one large enclosure about the size of two tennis courts, and darkness made it impossible to see from one end to the other. Within the solid walls of this trap two of the biggest and most dangerous animals of the jungle walked around—both of them our prisoners. We had carefully planned

what to do when a rhino walked into the trap, but none of us had given tigers a thought, and we simply had not dreamed of catching a rhino and a tiger simultaneously!

Hearing Dyhrberg approach along the fence, I whistled softly.

"Are all the doors closed on your side?" he inquired.

"Yes. But the tiger released the last door, entering," I replied.

"Damn it! Is the tiger inside the trap? We must get it out then. What a damned nuisance!"

Dyhrberg climbed up to me on the palisade, and for the first time we switched on our powerful electric torches.

"Try to flash your light on the rhino while I'm looking for the tiger," he said.

A moment later both our prisoners were caught in the searchlights. The rhino had entered one of the big sloughs and snorted furiously at the light while the tiger peacefully stole away along the fence, as if trying to find an opening in this strange and impenetrable "jungle-brushwood". Caught by the light it turned around and looked curiously up at us, showing neither fear nor resentment but merely blinking like a big tom-cat. Then it turned away from us and resumed its search for an opening. Not being able to find one, however, it turned and came directly towards us. We kept the animal in the searchlight to see what it would do. About twenty yards from the fence it turned around, and suddenly speeding forward with the grace and liveness of a cat, the big, striped animal elegantly jumped across the tall palisade and disappeared into the jungle.

It was an extremely beautiful sight, and that very night I conquered my latent fear of tigers—and of other wild animals as well—because I suddenly realized that human beings by no means are their favourite diet. Only when the tiger is displaced from its habitual hunting-grounds, and no game is available, does it become a man-eater.

That night I felt friendly towards all animals as I sat there on the palisade, listening to the many voices of the night. And I suddenly realized why my previous fears had left me. The different sounds of the night no longer seemed alarming because I was able

the jungle. The ghastly cry came from a peaceful owl, the crazy laughter from the black beo-bird with the red "ear-flaps", and the hoarse croaking was the love-song of the big frogs. With knowledge also followed understanding: the forest no longer closed in on me oppressively, and the warm and damp tropical night suddenly seemed just as comfortable as an eiderdown on a cold Danish winter night.

We climbed down from the palisade and walked along to the corner of the trap where the rhino was taking its mud-bath. Through the solid fence we flashed the lights on our captive—our very first rhino. Only part of its back and head was visible above the mud. Grey mire bubbled out of its big, oval nostrils, and now and then the giant dived under the mud and came up again with a complacent sigh. It was obvious that the rhino really enjoyed its bath.

We made an inspection all around the trap and fastened the doors securely. Here and there we removed splintered poles, substituting them with new ones from our nearby spare stores.

With everything thus apparently under control we returned to the palisade to admire our rhino. We still stood there when the first pale daylight stole through the jungle and our native assistants arrived from the camp with hot tea.

The coming dawn also meant that the mud-bath was over, as the rhino now thought it about time to return to the thicket to get some breakfast. Splashing and snorting, it stumbled up on dry ground. It was a full-grown animal—a female. Our native assistants immediately christened her "*Mulia*"—the Malayan word for "Her Highness".

Mulia stood quiet a moment as if taking a bearing on her further course; then she slowly trotted over to the trap-door which had closed behind her the night before. Not being able to get out, she snivelled at the ground for a moment. Then she made a reconnaissance along the fence, wedging her horn between the poles now and then to see if they would give way.

We hurried up to the fence with new poles in case Mulia tried to break out. One of the natives was sent back to camp to summon

the entire crew in case it became necessary to strengthen the palisade.

No sooner had Mulia scented us, when she rose on her hind legs and pressed the bulk of her body against the fence as if trying to overturn it. The fence held—thanks to four or five supporting pillars which immediately were rammed in to strengthen it.

It was a confused morning. As Mulia became aware that she had walked into a trap, she grew more and more furious. When we called her to make her eat the green leaves and branches we had gathered for her, she came charging against the fence in a blind rage. But having had a couple of tussles, and finding that the fence was the stronger, she eventually confined herself to galloping around in the trap at a speed that would make a racehorse hold its breath.

During our wanderings in the jungle we had learnt which of the bushes the rhino preferred, and this very morning a large store of leaves from these bushes had been gathered. We placed a large supply of fresh leaves in one corner of the trap and retired. Soon afterwards the rhino slowly advanced towards the pile and began breakfast.

Mulia gradually calmed down and even seemed to feel quite comfortable inside the trap. But then, of course, she had everything a rhino could wish for—and more. She had her own private bath, a piece of dry land with bushes and grass and several big trees, and she had all her meals served "in bed".

To our great amazement we discovered that she ate all day and night—merely interrupted by an occasional bath and a little nap. And before long her life went on as by a time-table. She made her own path inside the trap and quickly adapted herself to the limited space. Three of the four corners were used respectively as feeding-place (she always had her green leaves served here), bathing-ground (the slough), and dunghill. The fourth corner was used as an observation post, whenever love of adventure made her leave the beaten track.

Meanwhile the work of our expedition went on as usual. New traps were planned in the Tenajan Ulu district. We wanted a male rhino now to make a married couple. Furthermore we had been

requested to catch another rhino for the new Indonesian zoo in Bogor, and Switzerland was waiting for one as well.

These were long, busy days, and the monotonous work began to get on our nerves. Two of our people had to be carried down to the river on stretchers after severe attacks of malaria—and from there sailed to the nearest hospital.

Our native assistants were getting tired of the game and tried to have their salaries raised. We had already raised their wages several times, and they now made much more money than any other worker in the district, but they still were not satisfied. Dyhrberg and I discussed the situation and agreed that when they could go nowhere in Sumatra and make more money than they earned with us, they would soon submit to our last and final terms.

So accordingly one afternoon we said stop. If they did not want to work for the salary we paid them, they were free to return to their own villages and find themselves other jobs. They looked very hurt, packed their belongings and disappeared. To remain and submit instantly was impossible for them—that we knew. An Asiatic would rather quit a good job than lose face.

The next morning three of our regular assistants came rushing in and cried in great excitement: "Mulia is ill! Mulia is dying!" We hurried to the trap and found our rhino staggering around in a fever. A quick examination showed no external malady. Could she have been poisoned? Had our native workers, seeking revenge, poisoned Mulia after they had left the camp? Or had she suddenly contracted some kind of infection? Everything pointed to the fact that she had been poisoned.

The night before she had been as fit as a fiddle, and now she obviously was very ill. We looked at each other. What is to be done with a sick rhino in the heart of the jungle? There she stood, whimpering and shaking her head in misery. Our task was to catch these animals to preserve them from complete extinction, and now it seemed that we had failed from the beginning and were about to lose our very first rhino—a zoological rarity which had already cost us two months to catch. It was a bitter moment.

And what was more: during the time we had taken care of her,

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Mulia had become so dear to us that we almost looked upon her as a member of the family.

"We must get her a doctor at once," I said.

"It'll take almost a week for a vet to get out here, and by then it will be too late," Dyhrberg answered.

"What about a physician then?" I suggested.

"You'll never get a doctor out here to look at a rhino. There are too many sick people and far too few doctors for that," he said.

"I can ask one of the hospital medics at the Caltex camp in Rumbai. Maybe they can help us."

And half an hour later I was on my way through the jungle towards the river, together with two of our regular assistants. We made the trip in one stretch and arrived in Okura at eleven o'clock in the morning. A few minutes later I found myself in a native sampan. A young native paddled me upstream to Rumba—the Caltex harbour at the River Siak.

I managed to get a lorry from the harbour to the camp, where I immediately set out for the hospital. I looked up a certain Dr. Decker whom I had met before.

"I have got a patient for you, doctor. I believe it's a case of poisoning or of sudden infection."

"Where is the patient?"

"Almost a day's journey from here. It is a rhino."

Dr. Decker rubbed his chin. "We have treated elephants, dogs, horses and birds—but rhinos: never. I can't leave my work here at the hospital—none of us can—although I really would have liked to see your jungle camp. But tell me all the symptoms, then I shall give you the same medicine as I would prescribe a human being—only in proportional doses. There is nothing else we can do."

An hour later I raced down the River Siak again in a Caltex speedboat. In less than thirty minutes we covered the distance it had taken the native sampan five hours to travel.

It was dark when we reached Okura, and my native assistants refused to proceed back to camp through the pitch-black jungle. We set out early in the morning and reached our jungle camp

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shortly before noon. Mulia was still alive, staggering around in the enclosure weak and despondent. The medicine-box was opened, and we slowly advanced towards the sick animal. She allowed us to come quite near her and did not even mind when we tried to find a comparatively thin fold in her armoured skin. But when we attempted to jab the syringe into her shoulder, all her old vitality suddenly came alive once more, and pushing us aside, she set off in a short gallop.

It was impossible to give her a direct injection, so we had to try a different method. Boiled rice, penicillin tablets and little green fruits—her favourite dessert—were kneaded together and made into balls which she greedily consumed together with a large quantity of restoratives.

We had done our best for her. There was nothing else we could do now but wait and see.

6

I woke up as a clap of thunder reverberated through the jungle.

The lightning zigzagged across the black sky, the rain poured down in torrents, and the storm sent withered leaves and broken branches whirling through the forest.

I was alone in the little hut in the trees. Dyhrberg was staying at the trap to guard the sick rhino. After the hurried relief expedition the previous day to get medicine for our precious patient, it was now my turn to get a night's sleep. I listened to the storm and felt the rhythmic movements as the trees swayed in the strong gale.

From the jungle I saw an approaching glare of lights, and a few minutes later two of our native assistants emerged. Even through the storm I heard them crying: "*Tuan*, Mulia is dead! Come out to the trap at once!"

It took me some time to recover from the stunning blow. Mulia was dead! Weeks of toil had ended in disaster, and we would have to start all over again. I must have hesitated too long, for Madi—one of our most loyal assistants—came up the ladder and began to shake me. His voice was broken as he cried through

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the storm: "Tuan, come at once! Mulia is dead, and tuan Dyhrberg is ill!"

I sat up abruptly and dressed in a hurry, not taking time to lace my boots properly. Carrying the black waterproof medicine bag across my shoulder, I ran through the storm, closely followed by Madi, Buadi and Sani who brought our remaining supply of lamps and knives.

Arne Dyhrberg sat on a branch that had been blown down by the wind inside the enclosure. A powerful petrol lamp threw a white, sinister light on the swampy jungle. He sat crouched with his face buried in his hands. In front of him lay Mulia—motionless, and with all four legs bristling out from her body. Eight hundred kilo dead weight, glistening of rain and mud. We should have brought her—one of the rarest mammals in the world—out of the jungle alive. That was our task. And now she lay here in the heart of the jungle—stone-dead!

The rain poured down, but we were already soaked and didn't care. I went up to Dyhrberg and laid my hand on his shoulder.

"What's the matter, Arne?"

He looked up. His eyes were almost glassy from fatigue and disappointment, and his face contorted with pain. I handed him the flask which I had filled with whisky before I left camp.

"Here, drink some of this stuff. It'll do you good."

He took a good pull and staggered away, cursing the weather, the natives who had let him down, and the pains in his abdomen.

"We must cut her up at once if we want to save the hide and the skeleton. Only two museums in the world can boast of possessing a Sumatran rhino today. We just can't leave the hide here to rotten up."

"Can't we wait until tomorrow morning?" I asked.

"Impossible. In this heat and dampness she'll rot in no time. Let's rest for half an hour while our assistants make us a decent fire and see to all the lamps."

"Do you think you can manage the job?" I asked.

"I've got to," he answered firmly.

It was the weirdest night I have ever spent in my life. Fortunately the rain calmed down and the wind fell. But the jungle

KHMO Country

oozed with dampness, and the trap was one big slough. Luckily Mulia had dropped on one of the driest spots in the enclosure. Had she died in the slough, we should have faced the almost super-human task of dragging her heavy body up on dry ground.

A couple of powerful petrol lamps were placed on poles, and a blazing fire on the dry spot below the guard-hut lit up the macabre scenery. Armed with sharp knives, Dyhrberg and his two assistants from Bogor turned up their sleeves and began to cut up the dead animal. A long, hissing sound was heard as the stomach was punctured, and an oppressive stench hit our nostrils. We worked steadily for half an hour. Then the storm returned. Lightning once more tore the sky, and the thunder came nearer and nearer. The wind whistled in the tree-tops, and the rain began—first a few drops, then a torrent, and finally a flood.

In the flickering light of the fire and the lamps the whole scenery looked like a painter's conception of hell. Dyhrberg sat with both arms buried in the gory carcass of the rhino, shouting his orders. No one was allowed to leave the job. Hour after hour we worked, until the big, precious hide finally had been removed from the carcass, and the whole skeleton was cleaned of meat and safely stowed away below the hut.

Then followed the first treatment with a strong alum-solution to conserve the hide. It was an expert's work, and I now understood what a tremendous work Dyhrberg had accomplished to make the large animal-groups in the zoological museum in Bogor. Nothing was left to chance. Every single detail was carefully considered, and not until everything was completely under control did a sick and weary man stagger down to the river in his blood-soiled clothes to take a plunge into the muddy water. Madi waited for him with a towel. Dyhrberg was too tired to say a word. He let Madi dry him and then staggered to the hut, swallowed a couple of pills, was wrapped up in woollen blankets and fell asleep.

5. The Indian tapir is one of the most primitive mammals that exist as well as one of the rarest animals in South-east Asia. I believe this colour photograph is the only one ever published of the Indian tapir in its natural environment.





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A gibbon started its long, woeful morning-chant: "Woo—et! Woo—et!" Other monkeys replied, and soon the jungle resounded with the strange morning-choir—while "the sun broke out like thunder over China 'cross the Bay!" Our little private inferno was over. Out in the trap our native assistants were about to bury the gory remnants of Mulia's mutilated body to prevent the parasites of the jungle from swarming in. And when the sun once more blazed down upon the forest, all traces of the nocturnal proceedings were completely obliterated.

7

We rested a few days to recover from the shock of Mulia's death. Dyhrberg spent most of the time sleeping, and as the pains gradually subsided, his normal, sparkling vitality returned. Meanwhile I had carefully studied the few maps of the district we had been able to acquire, and read through all the notes we had made during our expeditions.

Two months had passed since the expedition set out, and all we were able to account for so far was a conflict with the natives and a dead rhino! We had somehow to make our work more successful, and construct more traps. But how were we to get people, and how were we to get quickly from one district to another?

The problem of labour found its own solution. One morning old man Palewah suddenly appeared and told us he had heard that the rhino was dead. He sat with downcast eyes and looked very sad, as he said this. But didn't we want to catch another? He knew of some very good rhino bathing-grounds, and he was more than willing to co-operate with us. The old fox radiated benevolence and good will. He obviously realized that he had gone too far in his demands and stood in danger of losing a decent profit.

A pot of tea was instantly brewed, and a long palaver ensued.

6. Palewah—the chief of our native helpers—spent the greater part of the money he made by the rhinoceros capture to buy himself a new young wife.

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When dinner was served—and several packets of cigarettes had been smoked—we finally came to terms. A fixed price was agreed upon for the whole duration of the safari. But in addition a handsome reward would be paid to the old man for each rhino brought down to the River Siak alive.

Only the problem of transportation now remained. Our hunting district covered about 30,000 square miles. It was traversed by two big rivers—Siak and Kampar—several tributary rivers and a poor jungle road along a pipe-line.

The following day I walked down to the river and sailed in a native sampan to Rumbai—to the oil-camp where the Caltex Pacific Oil Company had its headquarters in Sumatra. I stated our problems to the management and was met with the greatest sympathy and helpfulness. What did we need?

I opened my mouth rather wide: a speedboat for quick conveyance of passengers down the rivers, a launch for transport of materials, a jeep for jungle road-driving, a power-truck for overland transports, a crane and barges for the transportation of the heavy boxes when the animals were caught.

The answer was in the affirmative. Most of the material would be at our disposal as soon as a transfer from another camp could be effectuated. As for the remainder, we should try to incorporate our transports with those of Caltex's.

Having at last solved our most intricate problems, we now started a new, vigorous offensive. The whole area was split up in four sub-districts: Tenajan (our original main-camp), Gassip, Nilo Ketjil, and Perawang—the three former named after the small rivers traversing the districts, and the latter after a nearby *kampung* (village).

Our original plan of "pacifying" the local poachers now stood a good chance of success. We had our native "scouts" in every village along the rivers, and they reported that several of the men "who knew the jungle well" were willing to work for us.

The following days we were constantly on the move in the large district, trying to find out how much we could rely on the information given us by the local population.

The villages along the rivers were anything but prosperous, and

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our expedition soon became popular. Wherever it was possible, we made our purchases locally—even in the tiniest villages. And all work was executed by the local population and in agreement with the elders of the villages. We listened to their advice and followed them to a wide extent, knowing that these people had a lifelong experience in hunting. But when we knew our own methods to be better, we demanded them carried out to the letter. We sometimes had certain difficulties in making the local people follow our instructions, as they are rather independent by nature, but when they later found out we were right, they never hesitated to show their enthusiasm at the new methods.

We got many friends—real friends—whom I still miss. Ilias, Karim, Paiman, Mustafa and many others. It made no difference that some of them could neither read nor write and had never been outside the local district. They opened their poor cottages for us and shared their homes and fireplaces with us. They guarded our equipment as if it had been their own property, and once when the expedition—owing to failing communications with Djakarta—ran out of money, they lent us every penny they could scrape together and gave us credit everywhere. We were friends and trusted each other.

Back in the main-camp in Tanajan Ulu life went on as usual. When we stayed there we could do nothing but wait for a rhino to walk into the trap.

We still took turns at sleeping and watching, and spent the days in the jungle, trying to find new tracks of the rhinos. But the thrills of the expedition were now becoming daily routine—so many duties to perform.

The first gratifying occurrence happened one day when we were making a short trip to Pakanbaru. As the speed-boat approached Okura—landing-place for the main-camp—we saw our friend Ilias standing on the little jetty, waving his arms excitedly. And long before we reached the shore, we heard him shouting: "*Tanuk—Tanuk! Tapir—Tapir!*"

When we went alongside the jetty he told us so quickly that we had to make him repeat it all, that one of the very rare Indian tapirs had walked into one of our rhino-traps. Dylrberg and I

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looked at each other, and disappointment must have been clearly visible in our faces. A tapir! Yes, it was rare all right, but what in Heaven's name were we to do with it? We had no permission to catch tapirs. The whole purpose of the expedition was to catch rhinos—Sumatran rhinos.

Ilias looked worried. What was the matter? Why weren't we happy? Tapirs are very rare. A jolly fine specimen—a male.

"We'll keep him," I said. "The zoo in Copenhagen has no Indian tapirs. We'll get him home somehow. The authorities no doubt will give us permission when we explain the situation."

When we reached camp everything was in confusion. All hands had run out to trap No. 2 to look at "Tono"—as our assistants had instantly christened him. He *was* a fine specimen and probably weighed over half a ton. But the thought of having him transported all the way through the jungle put a damper on our enthusiasm.

The next morning we were awakened by loud singing and shouting. Dyhrberg and I sat up abruptly. "Either a rhino has walked into the trap, or Mohammed himself has appeared!" Dyhrberg exclaimed.

It was a rhino.

Our native assistants almost tripped up one another in order to be the first bearer of the glad tidings. We dressed in record time and ran through the jungle to trap No. 3 into which the animal had walked early that morning. It was a female—a young and vigorous animal. And not only had she walked into the trap—she had also found her way into the little extra trap within the enclosure, a further precaution to make it quite impossible for an animal to break out.

Our people had already named her "Subur", meaning "The Fertile One". And as she was destined for the Copenhagen Zoo, we hoped that the name was a good omen.

After a brief inspection of the animal, a special guard was organized to take care of the precious rhino night and day, watching over its safety and good health.

The building of a larger enclosure was started right away. When Subur had calmed down a bit she would be transferred to

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this enclosure in order to get used to captivity and to the sight of human beings.

We now had a tapir and a rhino—and one of the problems we had discussed for hours on end suddenly became very pressing. How were we to get the heavy animal all the way out through the jungle? The two boxes, containing the animals, would weigh respectively about a ton and 15 cwt.—not an easy baggage to carry through swamps and tropical jungles.

That night we held a council of war with our best men. Until late in the night we sat around the camp-fire, discussing the pros and cons. Should we drag the boxes through the jungle, or should we clear the river? Would the animals survive the rough overland transport, or would it be necessary to perform large-scale engineering work to get them out?

It was old man Palewah who made the final suggestion.

"Give me fifty or a hundred men for one or two days, and let us see how far they can clear the river during that period. Then we can find out whether it is practicable or not."

His suggestion was accepted. For the first time in its history, the River Tenajan was about to be made navigable from its debouch into the River Siak and to our camp.

"Before we know a word of it, a seaport will have grown up there," I exclaimed. "So we might as well christen it now." And we did. A grog was made, and with raised jugs we proposed a toast to the future of the port, "Badak". *Badak* is the Malayan word for rhino.

8

During all the time we had worked in Sumatra, we had daily prayed to get as little rain as possible. When violent torrents flooded the lowlands, the rhinos stayed away from the traps and remained in the hills. But the drier the forest was, the more traffic moved towards the bathing-grounds in the swamps—and towards our traps.

The rain had often put a stop to our work for days, but now, when we had the heavy animals to ferry down the small river, a

drought set in. The height of the water sank day by day, and finally only a few inches of water was left in the middle of the river bed.

We had three animals now, for shortly after the capture of Subur another female rhino had walked into one of our traps. All our animals—two rhinos and a tapir—were kept in special enclosures we had constructed near the River Tenajan.

The difficulties in getting the heavy animals out of the jungle seemed almost insuperable now. We had once decided to clear the small river of trees and vegetation, but with no water left the task was practically hopeless. The first team of native workers naturally could not do much. The thick and heavy trees had to be sawn through before their removal—and with the primitive tools of Palewah and his son only a very limited area was cleared each day. At a pace like that it would take us about six months to get the animals out.

We had to get more men and better tools. Dyhrberg and I made an excursion to the villages along the River Siak to hire such natives as had formerly worked for the oil companies when the pipe-line was laid through the jungle.

After negotiations with Paiman—the leading, local “contractor”—we finally managed to get things properly organized. Two large teams started from each end of the River Tenajan, and while they step by step worked their way along the riverbed, we hoped the rain would come back before it was too late.

For the transportation problem was by no means solved when we got the animals out to the River Siak. Here another problem would be facing us. How were we to get the animals across the Strait to Singapore? The few Chinese skippers, sailing between Pakanbaru and Singapore, had conspired, demanding rates which we neither could nor wanted to pay.

Caltex Pacific Oil Company was our only hope. They had a small Norwegian freighter, calling at Singapore every second month to get supplies for the oil-camps north of Siak. If we could get the animals transported out within a month, and have all the necessary documents ready in time, Caltex promised to ship the animals gratis to Singapore on the *M.V. Sletter*.

But now it was not only a question of getting the animals out of the jungle, we also had to get them out in time for the next Caltex transport to Singapore. We had only thirty precious days in which to clear the river. Extra rations of rice and cigarettes were issued, and Paiman was promised a bonus if his men got the river navigable in time.

Three weeks later the worst obstacles had been cleared away, but on the other hand the drought had almost dried out the riverbed. If we wanted to get even the lightest native sampan up to the camp, and have the animals ferried to Siak in time, it would be necessary to reclaim the small River Tenajan in several places.

Hundreds of empty bags had already been placed at the most vital spots along the river, and now the men worked day and night to fill these bags and build two dams across the stream.

Four days before the *M.V. Sletter* was due to leave, the freight-canoes arrived at our camp in Tenajan Ulu. The animals were placed in solid crates, especially made for them, and everything was made ready to start the next morning on the ten-mile-long voyage down the river.

That night the rain came—and it came with a tropical violence that none of us had experienced before. The water rose steadily—and we were jubilant. But as the river began to flood the banks and the forest floor we got anxious. The first of the two dams was built half an hour's walk from camp. A quick inspection showed that it was already yielding to the pressure of the water.

Relief-teams were summoned at once, and two dozen men hurried out to the exposed dam. The river roared furiously, and new cascades poured down from the black sky. If the dam collapsed, all our work would be wasted, for we could hardly expect to reach the *Sletter* in time then. There was nothing to do but try to reinforce the dam with heavy tree-trunks.

The native workers, however, faced the situation cheerfully and toiled in the river with water up to their necks.

Just as we thought the situation was under control, the catastrophe occurred. The heavy sand-bags stretched across the river like a wall—a wall from which the water gushed like a miniature Niagara. A couple of bags in the middle of the dam yielded, the

pressure became too great—and the whole dam collapsed in a roaring thunder as the water foamed down the river, washing everything away.

Loud cries of fear and pain cut through the storm. In the darkness and the general confusion it was difficult to see what happened. The powerful electric lamps sent their white spotlights into the seething waters where brown bodies desperately struggled to reach the shore. A quick roll-call was made. Two men were missing. They were shortly afterwards found a bit further down the river. One of them had injured his right leg badly as a heavy trunk had been hurled against him; the other seemed to have broken a couple of ribs and complained of violent pains.

Two stretchers were instantly prepared and the wounded men carried back to camp, where we rendered them first-aid. Early next morning they were carried the long way through the jungle to Siak, where runners during the night had spread the news to the villages. A speed-boat had been stopped and was ready to bring the wounded men to the doctor in Pakanbaru.

The breach made the foaming waters rush down against the other dam with such violence that it burst and was washed away. Hundreds of new bags were brought in to be filled as soon as possible, for we knew from experience how quickly the jungle could be emptied of water after a long drought, and we wanted to keep at least some of the water for further use.

The work was hard in itself, but the short time we had left made it even harder. We managed however. The heavy crates were placed in the frail freight-canoes, and the long voyage down the narrow, winding Tenajan river began.

We reached the River Siak in time, but here we met with new difficulties. Among all the documents required by the authorities to make sure that only legally caught rhinos leave Indonesia, we were suddenly informed that we needed a special export licence from an office in Djakarta—more than five hundred miles away. We naturally moved heaven and earth to get the required document, but time was too short.

It was a bitter moment when the *Sletter* passed us on the river, and the Norwegian captain and the Danish engineer waved us

good-bye. It would be necessary now to build an enclosure for the animals near the River Siak, until the last document was obtained and we had found other transport to Singapore.

As new difficulties meanwhile had arisen concerning permits for the tapir, it was decided that I should go to Bogor and Djakarta as fast as possible to settle the matter, while Dyhrberg remained on the spot to guard our precious captives.

Fortunately, the only aerodrome in central Sumatra was placed near Pakanbaru—our present headquarters. The Indonesian Air-line, Garuda, has two weekly flights between Pakanbaru and Djakarta, but they are generally so much in demand that tickets have to be booked months in advance.

The military as well as the civil authorities here made an effort we shall never forget. They had always done their best to help us and did not fail us this time either. When I arrived at the local Garuda office, a ticket was waiting for me with military priority to travel on the first plane leaving for Djakarta.

Dyhrberg and I did not waste many words saying good-bye. Both of us knew that our task still was not completed. We had caught two female rhinos. And when the precious animals had been transferred to the zoological gardens in Bogor and Copenhagen we would return to get the males.

But many problems still had to be solved before our animals could set out for their new homes. I spent some hectic weeks in Djakarta and Bogor, trying to get the last documents in order, and Dyhrberg was yet to spend two dreary months beside the River Siak until transportation to Singapore could be obtained.

After months of primitive jungle life it was wonderful to return to more civilized circumstances. To my amazement I found that our expedition had excited international attention. Several of the world's leading zoological gardens applied to me for permission to share the endeavours to make the rare rhinos breed in captivity. The American expert on preservation of wildlife from the National Parks Service in Washington, Dr. Rühle, asked for permission to visit our jungle camp and requested us to make a report on our work at the next international congress.

Even though the expedition was only half carried out, we felt

that we were entitled to a short vacation. We had found what we went into the jungle to get—one of the rarest mammals in the world.

The rains put a stop to the work of the expedition for several months. When the following season Arne Dyhrberg came up to Sumatra from Bogor to continue the capture alone, the traps had been partially destroyed. Extensive repair work was necessary, and new traps had to be built.

Our goal was at first to catch two pairs of the rare Sumatran rhinoceros and see how they would manage under the more modest conditions prevalent in the zoological gardens of Copenhagen, Denmark, and Bogor in Indonesia.

In the course of a few months we had caught the two females and transported them to their future homes where to all appearances they were just as comfortable as in the jungle.

With the two young ladies whimpering for mates we tried all the harder to trap the males, but in spite of all our efforts we have not yet succeeded in catching just one male for the two man-hunting shes.

As the purpose of the expedition was to catch the rare beasts in pairs in order that they might breed in captivity, in this way creating a small herd which could be taken under the protection of zoological gardens and national parks and be preserved from dying out, the work will be carried on until the task has been accomplished. So far the Indonesian government which sponsored the expedition has taken over the catching organization built up by us.

I should have liked to continue the work of the expedition in Sumatra and to have participated in the accomplishment of the task which Arne Dyhrberg and I had set ourselves. But a new catching expedition to Indo-China had been planned for a long time and was ready to set out. After a stay at Djakarta and a wonderful vacation in Bali—the Island of the Gods—I headed for the unexplored Elephant Mountains of Cambodia.



First Interlude

The Young Giant