In the Shadow of Man

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Jane van Lawick-Goodall's account of her life among the wild chimpanzees, illustrated with photographs by her husband Hugo van Lawick, is one of the most enthralling stories of animal behavior ever written. It is unique in dealing with the member of the animal kingdom closest to man. So complex is the social organization of a chimpanzee community, so obvious are the many parallels between chimpanzee and human relationships, that the author sometimes felt as if she were making a study of village life.

For a human being to become accepted by a group of wild animals is a major achievement. The author's adventure began in 1960, when the famous anthropologist, L. S. B. Leakey, for whom she was then working, suggested that a long-term study of chimpanzees in the wild might shed light on the behavior of our stone-age ancestors. Accompanied only by her mother and her African assistants, she set up camp in the remote Gombe Stream Chimpanzee Reserve in Tanzania on the shores of Lake Tanganyika. For months the project seemed hopeless; out in the jungle from dawn till dark, she had but fleeting glimpses of frightened animals. At last came the day when she was accepted, and no longer feared. She was able to record previously unknown behavior, such as the use -- and even the making -- of tools, hitherto considered an exclusive skill of man. As the chimps began to come into her camp, she became increasingly aware of them as individual beings.

Though Jane van Lawick-Goodall started on her own, the full success of the enterprise was made possible by the early arrival of Hugo van Lawick, an expert wildlife photographer sent to her by Dr. Leakey. The couple promptly fell in love, were married in London, and returned for their honeymoon to their chimps at Gombe Stream.

The lessons to be learned from chimpanzee behavior are endless. In simplified form, their behaviors parallel ours, while the differences allow us to reflect on man's uniqueness.

Other Books

The Shadow of a Man, This early work by Ernest William Hornung was originally published in 1901 and we are now republishing it with a brand new introductory biography. Ernest William Hornung was born in Middlesbrough, England in 1866. After working briefly as a journalist, and publishing a series of poems in The Times, Hornung created the character for which he is best-remembered: A. J. Raffles, a "gentleman thief" plying his trade in Victorian London.

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