

Planet of the Apes Study Guide

Planet of the Apes by Pierre Boulle

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Plot Summary

“Planet of the Apes” is a science fiction novel by Pierre Boulle, originally published in 1963. The novel has given rise to numerous sequels, reboots, and spinoffs in film and literature. “Planet of the Apes” recounts the tale of Ulysse who takes on an intergalactic expedition to an Earth-like planet near the star sun of Betelgeuse. There, he discovers that humans are mindless creatures and gorillas, chimpanzees, and orangutans are their masters.

When the novel begins, Jinn and Phyllis are sailing through space when they discover a manuscript in a bottle. The manuscript is the testament of Ulysse Merou, part of a French space expedition launched to find life on other planets. The expedition consists of Professor Antelle, a physician named Arhur Levain, and Ulysse himself, an aspiring journalist. They arrive on an Earth-like planet in the Betelgeuse system, after a voyage of two years. They name the planet “Soror”.

There, they are stunned to discover white-skinned human beings living totally naked like animals in the forest. These humans cannot speak and do not have any recognizable human customs apart from sexual activity. They have no reason, and act only by instinct. Ulysse is particularly taken with a gorgeous young girl whom they nicknamed “Nova”. She appears more inquisitive and approachable than her fellows. She appears to take a liking to Ulysse.

The following morning, Nova’s colony of humans is thrown into disarray. Ulysse is stunned to see gorillas, armed with rifles and nets, rounding up dozens of humans. Levain is gunned down trying to escape. Ulysse, Nova, and Antelle are all captured. Ulysse and Nova are taken to the Institute of Advanced Biological Study, to be tested, studied, and experimented upon like lab rats.

The wing in which Ulysse finds himself is run by an open-minded chimpanzee named Zira. He speaks to her, doing his best to distinguish himself from the other humans, but she and her assistants only assume he is imitating them. They put Nova in his cage, compelling him to have sex with her to study human mating habits. Only when he grabs Zira’s notebook to draw pictures and mathematical diagrams does Zira realize she is truly dealing with a man from another planet.

Zira learns French while Ulysse learns the simian language. He learns that the Institute is operationally run by an orangutan named Zaius. He learns that Zira is engaged to a chimpanzee named Cornelius, who studies biology and archeology. Ulysse also learns that primates have ruled Soror for at least ten thousand years. Cornelius and Zira agree that Ulysse should be freed, and would be an asset to the Institute. A plan is formulated where Ulysse will make his own case at the annual scientific congress.

Speaking to all those assembled at the conference, Ulysse earns public support in addition to his freedom. He comes to learn that the entire planet is ruled by a single government, and that racism among simians legally does not exist, though the three



primary groups of primates – gorillas, orangutans, and chimpanzees – do not always get along as well as they should. Ulysse frequently struggles with feeling superior to the humans, and feeling compassion for them as they undergo sometimes horrifying tests in the name of science and medicine.

Cornelius later reveals the direction of his research. He believes that monkeys did not simply evolve into intelligence, but copied an older, more advanced civilization. It is later determined that this civilization consisted of human beings. When Nova gives birth to a baby boy who is able to cry, Zira and all the others are stunned. Word leaks out. Public opinion changes. Primates worry that Ulysse is going to father a race of intelligent people. Word comes that the Grand Council of Soror is going to have Ulysse, Nova, and their baby either killed or incapacitated. Cornelius and Zira, acting on moral principle, will not be a party to it. They help the family of humans escape to their spaceship.

Ulysse, Nova, and their baby travel for two years. The baby develops fast, learning how to speak very quickly, and teaches Nova to do the same. When they return to Earth, some seven hundred years have passed in Earth time. They are horrified and stunned to find gorillas in uniforms meeting them in Paris. Ulysse, Nova, and their son quickly return to space.

As the novel closes, Jinn and Phyllis have a difficult time believing such a story is true. They are chimpanzees.



Part I, Chapter 1 – Part 1, Chapter 7

Summary

Part I, Chapter 1 – Jinn and Phyllis, a young married couple, cruise through space for leisure on a spaceship fueled by light radiation. The system through which they sail contains three suns. Jinn is an excellent space sailor, and teaches Phyllis how to sail. They see a streak of light across the sky, which turns out to be a bottle of light-colored glass. Inside are a large number of thin, rolled-up pages. Phyllis begs Jinn to read them aloud.

Part I, Chapter 2 – Ulysse Merou explains he is writing the manuscript now being read in order to prevent a scourge from falling on the human race. He is writing from a self-sufficient farming ship that can sail through space for several years at a time.

In the year 2500, Ulysse and two companions fly toward Betelgeuse –Alpha Orionis – three hundred light-years away from Earth. The expedition is funded and led by Professor Antelle, and is joined by physician and protégé Arthur Levain. The ship has the capacity to travel at the speed of light, minus epsilon –a very tiny measurement less. Time moves slower in space. A few minutes at light-speed equals a few months on Earth. Two years will amount to some 700 or 800 years. Antelle remarks that he is tired of mankind, anyway. The trip takes two years: twelve months to accelerate, and twelve to slow down. On board, Antelle, Levain, and Ulysse grow and tend a garden, and Antelle instructs Ulysse on many subjects.

Part I, Chapter 3 – Ulysse, Antelle, and Levain are amazed by the size and brilliance of Betelgeuse when they draw near. Four planets orbit the sun star. One is a planet very similar in size and composition to Earth. The party decides to head for it. They fly over a town and crop fields, and realize how similar the planet is to Earth, but also how different it is geographically. They disembark along with Hector, a trained chimpanzee, in an area that reminds Ulysse of the meadows of Normandy, France.

Part I, Chapter 4 – The weather is warm and the air is breathable, tested first by Hector. Ulysse, Antelle, and Levain christen the planet “Soror”. They head into a nearby forest with weapons. Hector runs on ahead and does not respond to calls from the party. They find a beautiful waterfall, at which Antelle points out a human footprint.

Part I, Chapter 5 – Levain denotes the footprint as being that of a woman. Antelle is disappointed to realize there are humans on the planet. Above them, they see a white, very young naked woman, utterly beautiful, watching them closely. Levain speaks to say he was right, which startles the girl. To let her know they mean her no harm, the party goes swimming. She comes down to them, making animal-like sounds but not speaking. She ends up swimming with them. Ulysse smiles at her. A sound causes her to flee for the shore and hide behind a rock. Hector reappears, and the girl lunges at him,



strangling him in seconds. She screeches and flees into the woods. Ulysse decides to refer to her as “Nova”.

Part I, Chapter 6 – Ulysse writes Nova off as a female savage, like those found in New Guinea and the jungles of Africa. Antelle disagrees, because even Earth’s remotest people have languages whereas Nova does not. The party decides to try to make contact with more inhabitants, but cannot find anyone. Levain suggests their clothes frighten the natives. Removing them and going swimming, they discover Nova has reappeared along with a fatherly figure and numerous other natives. They are very interested in the party. Nova joins in the swimming, followed by many others. They appear to have very weak reasoning, but strong instincts. They all flee the water when Ulysse, Levain, and Antelle laugh. Then the party dresses, some natives become antagonistic. When guns are picked up, the natives all flee.

Part I, Chapter 7 – As Ulysses, Levain, and Antelle make for their ship, they are overcome by hundreds of naked natives who do not harm them, but strip them of all their clothes and possessions. The ship is looted as well. Everything is destroyed. The party is then led into a forest encampment, where the natives live in shelters resembling those built by apes. There, only Nova seems to pay attention to the party. They discover natives eating a deer-like creature raw without their hands. Nova brings the party some fruit resembling bananas. The party then beds down in the soft grass. Nova snuggles up with Ulysse.

Analysis

“Planet of the Apes” is a science fiction novel by Pierre Boulle recounts the tale of Ulysse who participates an intergalactic expedition to an Earth-like planet near the star sun of Betelgeuse, where it is discovered that humans are mindless creatures and gorillas, chimpanzees, and orangutans are their masters. From the very start, the theme of discovery is strong. Three courageous men – a professor, a physician, and a journalist – prepare to travel to an unexplored world. Their decision to do so is reminiscent of the global tradition of exploration, most commonly associated with the Western world.

The journey of discovery itself will take two years in relative time in space to some 700 or 800 years that will pass on Earth. By the time that Ulysse, Antelle, and Levain return to Earth, centuries will have passed. Everyone they know or love will be dead. Yet, this does not bother them in the least. Indeed, Antelle seems to be glad to be rid of the human race as a whole. It is all in the name of discovery and exploration that the mission is undertaken (for Ulysse, it is a chance to advance his fledgling journalism career).

Nevertheless, Ulysse, Antelle, and Levain are stunned to discover that human beings inhabit the planet that they Christen “Soror”. Sorro itself appears to be a similar version of Earth in all ways at first. Antelle is let-down by this discovery, but Ulysse’s interest is certainly piqued. This is largely due to Nova, gorgeous, young, and naked. Antelle’s



interest is ultimately taken not only by the large number of attractive naked girls, but by the fact that they discover that none of the human race on Soror can speak, and that they behave like animals in the wild of Earth.

Repulsed by humanity on Earth, the humanity of Soror comes to fascinate Antelle. Too much human civilization on Earth appears to be deterring to Antelle, while no civilization at all among Soror's humanity is endearing to Antelle. Here, humanity becomes an important issue as Ulysse, Antelle, and Levain seek to understand just how human the Soror natives truly are.

However, apart from mating, the humans of Soror share little in common with the humans of Earth. The humans of Soror eat their meat raw right from the carcasses of animals, wear no clothing at all, and sleep in crude shelters or out in the open. Ulysse and the other two look upon these people with an obvious sense of superiority, but also familiarity. This will be especially important in coming chapters.

Interestingly enough, although the amount of reason the Soror natives have appears to be nonexistent, and despite their animalistic ways, the thought that they might be of a different species never crosses the mind of Ulysse, Levain, or Antelle. Ulysse does consider they simply might be uncivilized savages – not the most reaffirming view in and of itself. It is clear, however, that the people they are dealing with are human.

The reader should note that the time at which the novel was published – in the early 1960s – the Civil Rights Movement, both in America and around the world, was underway. For centuries, many had wondered whether humans of different color skin might be of different species, or might be less or more evolved in some way. Yet even then it was clear to some that skin color was only incidental to the species, that all human beings were human beings regardless of skin color.

In the present situation, Ulysse, Antelle, and Levain are confronted with not only human beings on Soror, but white human beings that behave like animals. In history, many believed that whites were meant to be the dominant race of men on Earth. It was a view carried by many through the 1960s. It is no accident that the author not only subjugated humans to primates, but also made sure they were all white. It is a demonstration of the narrow-mindedness of racism, and how skin color itself does not guarantee supremacy.

Discussion Question 1

Why does Ulysse agree to undertake the expedition with Antelle and Levain? Why is the journey being undertaken at all? What is hoped will be accomplished?

Discussion Question 2

While on Soror, Ulysse, Antelle, and Levain are shocked to find it populated by human beings with no reason, and who live like animals. Why is this so surprising to the Ulysse and the others? How do they react to these human natives? Why?



Discussion Question 3

Why is Antelle let-down to discover there are human beings on Soror? How does he react, however, when he discovers that the human beings of Soror are not like those of Earth? Why does he react in this fashion?

Vocabulary

interplanetary, elastic, rapturous, becalmed, methodically, entreaties, supergigantic, epsilon, infinitesimal, hitherto, cultivated, pernicious, peremptory, imprudence, solemnity, pretensions, discountenanced, obtuse, famished



Part I, Chapter 8 – Part I, Chapter 16

Summary

Part I, Chapter 8 – In the morning, Ulysse smiles at Nova. He puts his hand on her shoulder. She attempts to imitate the smile. She then puts her nose against his and licks his cheek. He does the same. Suddenly, the entire colony of natives panics in an uproar. Ulysse realizes some danger must be approaching. Nova beckons Ulysse, Antelle, and Levain to follow her. They do so, but Antelle falls behind. Ulysse can hear gunfire. He and Levain halt, and climb up a small hill. They are stunned by what they see.

Part I, Chapter 9 – Ulysse is stunned to see the danger is a large, fully-clothed gorilla lying in wait like a hunter for the human natives. His clothing is well-tailored, complete with boots and gloves. Ulysse watches as a human native is gunned down. Ulysse is terrified. He watches as numerous other gorillas appear with weapons to chase and corral other natives. Some manage to escape. Ulysse attempts escape while Levain is killed. Ulysse finds himself caught up in a concealed net.

Part I, Chapter 10 – Ulysse is terrified when the tailored gorillas approach, followed by other gorillas and chimpanzees. The well-dressed gorillas appear to be aristocrats; the others appear to be servants. Ulysse wonders what has become of Nova. He, along with other captured natives, are put into carts. A chimpanzee arrives to take photographs. When he tries to speak, Ulysses has a glove stuffed in his mouth. The natives are brought to a hunting preserve clubhouse, where lady gorillas gather about and chat, and one consumes a drink through a straw. The human natives are all lined up and put on display for the gorillas.

Terrified beyond belief, Ulysse begins laughing. Natives caution him to be quiet. Guards throw fruit to the humans to eat. He is overjoyed to see Nova. When he tries to hug her, she recoils, unused to the gesture. All of the human natives appear consigned to their fate. They all hunker down to sleep. Ulysse does the same.

Part I, Chapter 11 – Ulysse is exhausted and beyond confused. He tries to rationalize what is happening, to remind himself that he is both human and sane. He realizes the primates around him are very reasonable and behave like human beings naturally. Ulysse attempts to theorize how things have worked out – that perhaps the race of beings living in the town trained the gorillas as muscle on their behalf. Nova snuggles up beside Ulysse to sleep.

Part I, Chapter 12 – Moving into town on the carts, Ulysse is stunned to see there are no people living in the town, but monkeys, chimpanzees, and gorillas. Ulysse and the other people are put into cages in a large building resembling a research institute with a courtyard. Ulysse and Nova are put into separate cages. Nova struggles to break free like an animal, but a smile from Ulysse calms her. Ulysse finally speaks to the gorilla



who brings him food, bowing and saying he is from Earth. The gorilla is stunned at first, but then laughs about it with another guard. Ulysse howls and curses them. One of the gorillas makes a notation in a notebook.

Part I, Chapter 13 – The human captives are fed and left alone for the night. A female chimpanzee approaches Ulysse. She is treated with respect by the gorillas. Ulysses introduces himself to her, and begins saying whatever comes to mind, apologizing for being undressed. The chimpanzee is obviously stunned, and takes down some notes. The other humans watch, stunned as well. The chimpanzee introduces herself as Zira, in charge of the department to which Ulysse has been brought. She reaches out and touches Ulysse, then continues to observe the other humans. Nova, jealous or angry or both, goes to sleep with her back to Ulysse.

Part I, Chapter 14 – A second day passes in which food is brought, but the humans are not bothered with. The gorillas go on to offer treats, such as the banana fruit at the sound of whistles, to apparently attempt to train the humans to elicit some kind of behavior, such as watering mouths. They go on to condition reflexes, such as training the human natives to expect an electric shock of pain on the ringing of a bell. Three visitors then arrive.

Part I, Chapter 15 – The three visitors include Zira, a high-ranking orangutan, and his female chimpanzee secretary. Ulysse recognizes hierarchy among the primates, with Zira showing deference to the orangutan. Ulysses immediately speaks to him, giving the orangutan a start. To get further, Ulysse addresses the orangutan as “Mi Zaius”, as all of the other primates have done. All the guards are stunned. The behavioral tests are run, which Ulysse does well. He then disconnects the electric cable to his cage to demonstrate his reason. Zira is impressed. The orangutan is not. He is sweating and shakes his head. Later, after they leave, Zira comes back, and clasps Ulysse’s hand in friendliness.

Part I, Chapter 16 – New tests follow, initiated by Zorom and Zanam, the researcher-guards. A basket of food is suspended from the tops of the cages while four wooden cubes are put in each cell. The human natives lunge without success at the basket, while Ulysse uses the cubes to climb up. Nova attempts to copy Ulysse’s work without success. Ulysse throws Nova some food, which earns the admiration of Zira. It is clear that Nova both resents, and is jealous of Zira. Ulysse goes on to learn some of the words of the monkeys’ language.

Zaius, his secretary, and another orangutan return. Ulysse has generated much discussion. Tests are repeated, which Ulysse handles easily. He also handles another new test from Zira with ease, opening a box containing fruit and then offering it to her. It is clear that the orangutans attribute Ulysses’s abilities to mimicry and instinct. Zira clearly disagrees. The humans are paired up, each male to a female. He realizes the primates want to study human sexual practices. Ulysse is thrown to Nova.



Analysis

The theme of discovery remains strong in this section of the novel. Ulysse, Antelle, and Levain are hoping to continue their scientific research expedition, but are stunned to discover that they are in for a far darker journey than originally expected. Ulysse learns to his horror that it is not human beings which are the dominant species on Soror, but apes of various kinds. The apes, though utterly inhuman in appearance, nevertheless behave in a very human fashion. They wear tailored clothes, use weapons, and hunt like human beings do. Levain is killed by such a hunter as though an animal. Antelle falls behind the herd. Ulysse is netted like an animal.

What human beings have long associated with humanity – reason, civilization, intelligence, culture – appears to be wholly resting with the simians of the planet. Indeed, the human beings themselves have very little seeming humanity about them at all beyond their appearance. Humanity thus becomes an important theme here. Ulysse feels great outrage, as a human, to be treated like an animal.

In a very human fashion, Ulysse does not accept his fate as a captured being the way the others do. Instead, he spends much of his time trying to rationalize what is going on. The apparent illogic of the situation is too much for Ulysse to handle, so at once – like any rational creature – he attempts to understand what is going on rather than to instinctually react to it. Here, the theme of reason, instinct, and imitation comes to the fore in Ulysse's quest to understand. All he can figure is that the gorillas are not necessarily reasonable on their own, but have been trained to merely imitate human behavior by some other human masters.

Beyond hunting and clothing, Ulysse is further stunned to realize that he has been taken to some sort of research center which studies humans. Those conducting the research include gorillas and chimpanzees. Ulysse is stunned to see the same kinds of experiments performed by humans on Earth now being used to experiment on humans on Soror. Ulysse is incensed, and seeks to separate himself from the other humans in cages in order to prove he is not like them.

The only member of the primate staff in the wing in which Ulysse finds himself to be open-minded enough to attempt to communicate with him is Zira. Zira recognizes that there is something indeed distinct about Ulysse versus the other humans – but she isn't totally sold yet. Just as Ulysse considers that perhaps someone has trained the simians to behave like people, so too does Zira perhaps consider that someone has trained Ulysse to behave like primates.

This is certainly the case with Zaius, the manager of the institute. Zaius regards Ulysse curiously, and considers him to be merely capable of mimicry and instinct rather than actual reason. Zaius is utterly closed-minded, and bound by a superiority complex against his fellow primates and the humans in the cages – the same of many people on Earth toward other people and animals. Zaius comes to represent an establishment elitist, someone who maintains the status quo in order to avoid change or controversy.



Zira, however, becomes less and less convinced that Ulysse has merely been coached or trained in mimicry. His ability to handle the wooden cube puzzle, as well as to share food with Nova when he succeeds, earns the admiration of Zira. The act of sharing food is unusual human behavior to Zira; for Ulysse, however, such an act of human kindness is demonstrative of humanity, of personhood, of morality. It is also an act of reason. However, the other monkeys are not convinced, and decide to study one of the basest instincts possible – that of sexual reproduction.

Discussion Question 1

How does Ulysse attempt to account for primate dominance on Soror? Why is it so difficult for him to believe at first that monkeys have come to a mastery over man?

Discussion Question 2

What does Ulysse do to distinguish himself from the other human beings in cages? How do each of the simians react to his attempts? Why do you believe this is?

Discussion Question 3

Zira is immediately intrigued by Ulysse, while Zaius is not. Why is this the case? Why does Zira seem to think there is more to Ulysse than meets the eye, though she is not totally convinced of his reason yet? Why is she not yet totally convinced of Ulysse's reason?

Vocabulary

precluding, stupefaction, maliciousness, frenziedly, imbued, grotesque, macabre, tumult, proximity, impedimenta, chimerical, gesticulate, dumbfounded, repertoire, invective, envisaged, furtive, ostentatiously, jargon, perspicacity, pompous, benevolent, flabbergasted, perturbed, irrefutable, diabolical, discomfiture, adroit, entreaty



Part I, Chapter 17 – Part II, Chapter 7

Summary

Part I, Chapter 17 – Human sexual behavior is studied for several weeks. The men approach the girls in a dance before mating, like birds. Ulysse will not have sex with Nova, even when prodded with a pike. His refusal confounds Zira, who clearly still sees him as an animal. Zaius appears and has Nova switched out for an old woman. Nova is put into a cage with a burly man who begins to dance about her. Enraged, Ulysse rails against the cage. Zaius smiles and has the old woman replaced with Nova. Ulysse then attempts the dance, knowing he has no choice. He is humiliated.

Part II, Chapter 1 – Ulysse settles into a routine in the cage, happy to be with Nova. The monkeys run out of tests to run and struggle to come up with new ones. Ulysse finally see his chance. While Zira is close to the cage, he grabs her notebook and pen, and draws a portrait of Nova. Zira is stunned. Ulysse goes on to draw the Pythagorean Theorem. He continues to draw mathematical proofs and figures, while Nova angrily waits at the far end of the cage. Zira leaves and returns with a large sheet of paper, which Ulysse uses to draw a map of the stars and space around them. Ulysse points to Soror, and then to Earth. He traces the path of the rocket ship. He then points at himself. Zira signals that she understands. When Zaius enters, Zira hides all the drawings. Ulysse plays along, realizing there is a reason behind it.

Part II, Chapter 2 – Zira begins to quietly educate Ulysse on the world around them. They speak in French, as Zira more quickly learns his language than he, hers. She reveals that primates are the superior beings on the planet. She reveals that long ago, they believed God was responsible for all creation, but now believe only natural evolution has led to things as they are. Man and primates, she explains, are believed to have diverged from a common ancestor at some point. She explains there are classes among the monkeys: chimpanzees are great thinkers and discoverers. Gorillas are powerful, power-hungry, and do much physical work. Orangutans are at the scientific top, for they have the best memories and reason. In the past, these classes were divided in racism, but no longer is the racism in principle. It is clear, however, Zira resents the orangutans.

Zira draws the genealogical tree for Ulysse. It is very similar to Earth's. Zira explains that opinion is divided on why simians can talk, but not men. Some believe it is divine intervention, others believe it is a natural trait due to primates having four hands. Her fiancée, Cornelius, is studying such things. Nova continues to resent Zira, and each night after Zira leaves, Nova does all she can to make herself the center of attention for Ulysse.

Part II, Chapter 3 – Zira consents to bringing Ulysse out of the Institute for Advanced Biological Study to show him around the town. This must be done with a leash, which annoys Ulysse. He goes to take her arm, but she reminds him he must behave, for she



is engaged. Knowing that Ulysse is not a local native, Zira determines to help him regain his freedom. They drive around town in her car, and then go to the park. Zira explains she would have brought him to places like the museum, but it isn't yet possible.

Part II, Chapter 4 –In the park, Ulysse and Zira converse. She tells him he is in danger on Soror. She reveals that his launch craft has been found. It has confused many, for it is more advanced than what the primates are capable of. The vessel which brought the launch craft to Soror is still in orbit and has not yet been discovered. She goes on to explain that she has been keeping Ulysse's identity a secret because Zaius is a stupid male set in his ways, and a member of the respected scientific elite. He has declared Ulysse a "tame man". It will spare Ulysse from having serious exploratory science done on his brain the way it has been done to other men. Research in general claims many human lives, which means they need to be rounded up frequently. Many humans are killed purely for sport by the gorillas during such expeditions.

At the coming annual biological conference, Zaius is planning to present Ulysse. It is then that Ulysse must make his case, for public opinion exceeds Zaius's power. Ulysse and Zira then meet with Cornelius in the park. Cornelius is amazed, having been told about Ulysse by Zira. He promises to do all he can for Ulysse. He is also fascinated by how Earth is run by men, and how homo-sapiens evolved. When Ulysse and Zira leave, Ulysse tells her he will owe her his life and liberty if the plan succeeds. He warmly put his hand on hers.

Part III, Chapter 5 – Zira slips Ulysse books to read, which include a history of the monkeys. He has not thoroughly learned their language. Nova is suspicious of the books, but Ulysse makes her see that they are alright. He learns that the planet is overseen by a council of ministers, headed up by a triumvirate of one gorilla, one chimpanzee, and one orangutan. There is a Parliament of three chambers for each group of primates; each group has equal rights and access, but primarily keeps to their own talents and specialties.

The gorillas are the most powerful and least intelligent, originally having run the planet by brute force. Orangutans are culturally elite, engaging mainly in science but also in the arts and politics. They are the fewest in number, arrogant, and traditional. The chimpanzees are noted for being intellectually and critically superior, having corrected the idea that Soror was at the center of the universe. With no standing army or police force, the monkeys are fairly advanced, but lag behind Earth as they have only just begun to put artificial satellites into space. On Soror, there are more men than monkeys, but the human population is on the decline. Only the origin of primate supremacy seems to be unknown.

Part III, Chapter 6 – Zira brings Ulysse to the park often to talk. She reveals Cornelius is eager to press Ulysse's case and then work in collaboration with him. Zira brings Ulysse to the zoo, where he sees many animals similar to those of Earth. He insists on going to the exhibit on man. Visitors throw food and tease the humans. It annoys and angers Ulysse. He is stunned to find Antelle among them, and begins to weep. He explains why



he is crying to Zira, who promises to also see what can be done for Antelle after the convention.

Part III, Chapter 7 – On the third day of the scientific congress, it is time for Ulysse to be presented. Zira encourages Ulysse to be courageous, for people know something is afoot. A large number of reporters and journalists have assembled for Zaius. Ulysse is brought on stage in an amphitheater full of monkeys, mostly orangutans, which amazes him. Also present is the president of the institute, a gorilla. Everyone pays careful attention to him. After Zaius reads a report, Ulysse is set to an assigned task, but instead makes his move. He addresses the audience and the president in their simian language, requesting permission to make an announcement. The president consents.

Analysis

The primates study human sexual behavior for weeks. It is during this time that Ulysse's humanity is truly put to the test. He sees how animalistic human sexual practices have become – the male dances before sexual intercourse as though an animal. Gone is courtship, romance, love, companionship, intimacy, all in exchange for the mere act of reproduction. Ulysse does not perform in the same fashion until forced to. He has grown attached to Nova, and the thought of her mating with another random male is too much for him to handle. His emotional attachment to Nova is certainly something Zira and the others have not seen before. It is not a mere question of animal possession, but emotion and reason.

Ulysse finally seizes his chance to prove his competence and his humanity. Here, the themes of reason and humanity intertwine as Ulysse not only draws a portrait of Nova, but diagrams several mathematical proofs. He even goes on to chart the stars and planets of his solar system, and of Betelgeuse as well. Zira is stunned into believing. She shares this news with her fiancée, Cornelius. The reader should note just how human this practice is – of courtship and engagement and marriage – compared to the base sexual urges of humans of Soror.

Interestingly enough, it is through Zira that Ulysse learns that racism is not merely a human concern. While racism is legally untenable and does not exist in theory, racism among the primates still does exist in practice. It is clear that Zaius holds himself superior to the others around him, gorillas and chimpanzees alike. His superiority comes not only from his intellect and power, but from his existence as an orangutan. It is also clear to Ulysse that Zira clearly resents orangutans, not individually but as an entire race.

Likewise, whereas on Earth in the past, human beings have regarded one another with a way of classifying strengths and weaknesses based on race, the primates regard one another with similar considerations. For example, most gorillas are power-hungry brutes, or so it is assumed – just like at the beginning of the novel, Ulysse writes off all human natives of New Guinea and the jungles of Africa as brute savages. There is no suggestion of common humanity in Ulysse's observation.



At the same time, Zira begins to bring Ulysse out of the Institute, to see the sights of the capital city. He finds monkeys driving cars, parks, museums, and roads – all things he considers distinctly rational and human. These are things which human savages on Earth do not have. Yet, at the same time, he is also stunned to discover how quickly humanity can disappear. Antelle has devolved into the level of a mindless beast amid other animalistic human beings. As a professor, Antelle is considered on Earth to be at the very summit of education, knowledge, and learning – but in a new world in a new situation, he is no more now than animal. It likewise angers him to see human beings treated like animals – a clear lack of humanity on the part of the visitors to the zoo.

Meanwhile, the primates in the sciences are beginning to ask incredibly pressing questions about their origin and about how they have ended up the dominant species on Soror. Science here begins to emerge as a central theme to the book. Ulysses learns that, in addition to seeking the origins of the human-primate gap, the primate researchers are also carrying out chilling and fatal experiments on human beings, leading to the need for so many test subjects. Ulysse is not thrilled with this revelation, but there is no true outward cry from him to stop such practices yet. Additionally, Ulysse will scientifically be presented as a “tame human” rather than a rational man in his own right.

Interestingly enough, despite the advance state of the monkeys on Soror, they still lag behind the humans of Earth in many ways. The monkeys seem intent on retaining their mastery of the world of Soror, but appear to have made not much progress as a whole. To the reader, this brings to question the theme of reason, instinct, and imitation. The question as to whether the primates are developing on their own, or whether they are imitating someone else only naturally arises.

Discussion Question 1

How is Ulysse finally able to convince Zira that he is different from the other human beings? How does Zira react to this revelation? Why?

Discussion Question 2

Why does the sight of Antelle in the cages of a zoo upset Ulysse so much? Likewise, why does the sight of monkey visitors throwing food at Antelle and other humans upset Ulysse so much?

Discussion Question 3

Although the primates of Soror are the master race of beings, how can their humanity be questioned? Provide at least three examples of questionable practices against human beings committed by the monkeys, and how this undermines the idea that the monkeys are humanized.

Vocabulary

recalcitrant, copulation, astuteness, fatuous, remonstrance, effusions, vehemently, categorically, servile, propagating, tumult, discountenanced, cynosure



Part III, Chapter 8 - Part III, Chapter 6

Summary

Part II, Chapter 8 – Ulysse addresses the scientific congress. He begins humbly, saying he knows he repulses all those assembled, but that he has a rational mind. He explains he is a man from Earth, and explains all of man's achievements. He uses a blackboard to draw the journey of his own space travel. He goes on to ask to be freed, to work with the monkeys of the planet. The audience wildly applauds. Sitting in an empty chair, exhausted, Ulysse is given more applause. Zaius is visibly angry and shaken. He then faints.

Part II, Chapter 9 – When Ulysse comes to, he is being tended by Zira and Cornelius. The Grand Council of the planet has ordered Ulysse's immediate release, though some opposed it. Public opinion is strongly in favor of freedom as well. He is given an apartment of his own at the institute. Nova will not be joining him. Ulysse seems to shrug this off.

A tailor is brought in to give Ulysse a suit. Zanam arrives and bows in respect to Ulysse, and says Nova is behaving wildly without Ulysse. She only calms down when Ulysse goes to see her. Cornelius then brings the suited Ulysse to a nightclub to drink and speak with other chimpanzees. Ulysse becomes sad thinking of Antelle, so he, Zira, and Cornelius go to the zoo to let him know he will soon be freed. Antelle does not respond. He has descended to the level of a mindless beast, and howls.

Part III, Chapter 1 – Ulysse's apartment is stocked with everything from books to a television to a bathroom. He has free reign. Zaius has been replaced with Cornelius. Ulysse becomes a collaborator. He finds himself among the people being held captive often, feeling at home among them. Efforts to teach them to speak have so far failed. He does not venture into Nova's cage, however, wondering if she is more animal than human. He withholds emotion from her, thinking it beneath him to associate with other humans. Yet, she clearly wants to be with him, and exceeds all other subjects in tests. Cornelius invites Ulysse to a strange archeological dig which is of great importance to his research. Ulysse agrees to go. He is saddened that Antelle, now in his own cage at the Institute, still behaves like a wild animal.

Part III, Chapter 2 – Ulysse, Zira, and Cornelius travel to the excavations by plane. Cornelius explains that the truth of things on Soror may have been determined by brains of the past. Ulysses mentally notes how this helps lead to a belief in God on Earth. Cornelius is interested in primates imitating people on Earth. He explains that the orangutans monopolize knowledge in books, forcing generations of monkeys to repeat tired old stories, myths, and ideas. From the beginning some ten thousand years before, the monkeys already seem to have been an advanced civilization, before which is prehistory. In ten thousand years, little progress has been made. Cornelius thinks that



the beginning of monkey civilization was the imitation of another earlier civilization, though monkeys are now making progress on their own.

Part III, Chapter 3 – The excavation includes an entire city in the desert. They stay for days. Zira returns to work at the Institute, while Ulysse and Cornelius stay on. The remains of homes, factories, cars, airplanes, and other such things are unearthed. A full kitchen is unearthed. A china doll is discovered – fully clothed and in good condition. The doll speaks, saying “Papa”. Cornelius is amazed. The orangutan in charge of the dig dismisses it as a simple child-monkey’s toy. Cornelius is saddened and disturbed. He announces that Ulysse will be returning home the following day, saying they have more important research that needs tending to.

Part III, Chapter 4 – The idea that men once reigned on Soror is taking root in the minds of both Cornelius and Ulysse. On a place like Earth, Ulysse considers, men are afraid of robots becoming all-powerful. But on a place like Soror, it is possible monkeys could have imitated people – and may only still be imitating people to this day, rather than actually thriving and thinking on their own. It makes Ulysse think about his visit to the stock exchange, about how the monkeys there seemed mindlessly committed to their task. Back at home, Ulysse hugs Zira, glad to be back.

Part III, Chapter 5 – Upon returning home, Ulysse comes down with a bad sickness. During this time, he wonders how easily monkeys seem to be able to imitate human culture. He wonders whether it was a slow decline for people or a sudden disaster in which the monkeys supplanted them. Ulysse wonders if he has been meant to bring humans back from animal behavior. He believes that God does not play with dice, and his trip to Soror is not without purpose. He discovers that Nova’s cage is empty. Zira reveals that Nova is pregnant and is expecting. She also says Cornelius has returned and wishes to speak to Ulysse.

Part III, Chapter 6 – Zira assures Ulysse that Nova is being well-cared for. Ulysse then goes to meet with Cornelius. Things are awkward between them. Cornelius explains he now has irrefutable proof for his theory: numerous human skeletons have been discovered in the city ruins. He goes on to say that simian beings are indeed capable of innovation rather than just imitation, and that one day they shall surpass the men of their planet. He explains that if the human baby Nova is having will talk, it will be difficult to protect them. The birth is being kept secret. The Council is alarmed that such a birth is taking place at all. Ulysse is then taken to see Nova. He comforts her and lays down beside her before being escorted out by Zira.

Analysis

It is in this section of the novel that science becomes central as a theme in the novel. It is through the convention of scientists, researchers, the public, and the media that Ulysse makes his bid for freedom by distinguishing himself as a rational animal. Nearly all those assembled, as well as the vast majority of the public thereafter, move to support freedom for Ulysse. The recognition of reason between creatures is met with

liberty. However, despite the freeing of Ulysse, no such kindness is shown to the other human beings, including Antelle.

Tragically and hypocritically, Ulysse adopts a superiority complex toward his fellow human beings for a short time. It is a form of bigotry, almost as if Ulysse considers himself of a different race. He almost brushes off the fact that Nova – beautiful but clearly not his equal – will not be joining him in his lush apartment. Nevertheless, this superior and condescending attitude toward his fellow man does not last, because Ulysse realizes they matter just as much as he does. He feels a connection to them, a commonality with them, a comfort in their presence. Rational or not, intelligent or not, they are still of the same species.

Indeed, it is reason, emotion, and humanity that naturally compel Ulysse toward his fellow people – especially toward Nova. He is almost ashamed at having considered association with other human beings to be beneath him. Nevertheless, he does not question the fact that there are differences between them, none made more so apparent than by Antelle's devolution.

Antelle is only a microcosm of a larger construct, however. Science and humanity merge in research being conducted in excavations that Cornelius brings Ulysse to. Ulysse learns that Cornelius believes human beings were once the dominant species on Soror, and that at some point, the monkey succeeded them. Cornelius also believes that monkeys gained the upper hand by imitating human beings at first, though he roundly defends the point that monkeys have made original progress on their own since that time. His own racial bigotry is inherent in a natural superiority complex ingrained in him through culture and study of the humans of Soror.

Indeed, in this section of the novel, Zira and Cornelius demonstrate much humanity toward Ulysse. Humanity here returns as an important theme. Ulysse has caused them not only to rethink their assumptions about human beings in the present, but has also caused them to strengthen their opinions on the history of the simian races. Interestingly enough, Cornelius's humanity is tempered by his own sense of superiority, dealing with Ulysse in limited doses. For example, his dismissal of Ulysse to the research institute from the excavation dig is more a gesture of condescending disdain than anything else. Ulysse is separate but equal. He is above the other human beings, but still below the apes. Part of it is pride – the desire to defend oneself and the proposition that man's technological heights can be surpassed, while part of it is specially-racially motivated.

Zira is a different story. She appears to have taken a personal liking to Ulysse, akin to friendship or family relations, recognizing the humanity in not only Ulysse, but in Nova as well. Zira indeed comes to see Ulysse as something of an equal – from a different species, however. Her concern for Nova when Nova becomes pregnant is not just generated from compassion for Ulysse, but for Nova as well.



Discussion Question 1

Describe the interactions between Zira and Ulysse, and Cornelius and Ulysse with respect to humanity and racism. How do Zira and Cornelius differ and compare in their approach to Ulysses? Why do you believe this is?

Discussion Question 2

After Ulysse is freed, for a short while, he considers it beneath himself to associate with his fellow human beings. Why is this the case? What later changes his mind?

Discussion Question 3

Cornelius's theory that monkeys came to power through imitation – though they are now capable of originality – is not popular or well-accepted in scientific circles. Why is this so? What implications could such a theory, confirmed, have?

Vocabulary

bestial, paradoxically, suppliant, obsequious, diminution, abjection, perplexity, diligence, aptitude, antipodes, reticent, prodigious, psychism, incongruous, reminiscence



Part III, Chapter 7 – Part III, Chapter 12

Summary

Part III, Chapter 7 – Zira arranges it so that Ulysse can see Nova frequently. While Cornelius busies himself with work, a chimpanzee named Helius shows Cornelius the encephalic wing, dealing with studies of the human brain. Test subjects are routinely experimented and operated upon. For example, a young boy has had part of his brain removed, leading to his refusal to eat. As a result, he must be force-fed. Another case involves a part of the brain being removed in which the person can no longer handle spatial differences and can no longer reach out and grab something, and one in which a mother no longer wants her young.

It enrages Ulysse. Helius asks if such experiments are done on Earth; Ulysse says they are done on monkeys. Helius counters that they on Soror obviously do better experiments. A very young, beautiful girl is then shown to Ulysse. Electrodes have been attached to her brain, sending impulses to make her body twitch and move. Ulysse shouts for it to be stopped. Cornelius then appears, saying that they experiments can seem cruel, but are important for advancements in science and medicine. He then goes on to say that there is a secret experiment conducted with a gorilla that Ulysse would be interested in.

Part III, Chapter 8 – Ulysse is shown a man and a woman connected to electrodes, made to speak in the simian language. The man has limited speech, but the woman's memory has been accessed. It is a memory of the species and her personal memory as well. The woman relates how humans trained primates as servants, and they eventually became intellectually equal to humans. One day, a chimpanzee even begins to talk. Others follow.

As time passes, human beings become cerebrally lazy. Meanwhile, the monkeys begin to rebel against their masters, refusing to do work and taking over houses. A cancer researcher is overpowered by her test subjects, six gorillas and a chimpanzee, who inject her with cancer. An animal tamer is imprisoned in a cage. Another memory speaks of humans fleeing into the wild, some organizing a defense in places, others grouping together but being unable to defend themselves for laziness.

Part III, Chapter 9 – Word is leaked, probably by Helius, to the public about the experiment. Public mood shifts to uneasiness. Cornelius now has many enemies. Rumors abound of a plot to overthrow the simian race. Nova gives birth to a son. Ulysse is determined to raise him right. He has faith his son will one day speak, for he cries like a human Earth baby. Zira is amazed. She says she sometimes feels as if the child is also hers.

Part III, Chapter 10 – Antelle improves only marginally, when a young girl is put into his cell with him. Cornelius points out how easily intelligence can come and go. Zira reports



that Ulysse's son has begun to speak at only three months old. Word has come to Zira and Cornelius that the Grand Council is going to act on the baby, taking him away from Nova and putting him under guard of the orangutans, courtesy of Zaius. Opinion has also moved against Ulysse, with many thinking he will found a new race of men. It is probable that Ulysse and Nova will both be killed or rendered incapable through scientific experimentation within two weeks.

Cornelius, Zira, and a small group of chimpanzees, will help Ulysse, Nova, and the baby escape to the ship orbiting the planet. They will reach it by launch of a satellite. Cornelius and Zira will not be a party to murder. Ulysse vows in his mind to return to save humankind on Soror. Cornelius exists. Ulysse and Zira almost kiss, but then she tells him he is too unattractive to kiss.

Part III, Chapter 11 – The plan goes off without a hitch. Human subjects are put in place of Nova, her baby, and Ulysse on the planet. Ulysse regrets losing his friendship with Zira, and does not concern himself about the professor. Nova has begun to speak, copying her son. She has taken well to motherhood. Two years later, they land in Paris, France. Seven hundred years have passed on Earth. Two officers arrive to meet them wearing helmets. Their helmets are removed. They are gorillas. Nova, the baby, and Ulysse rush back onto their space craft.

Part III, Chapter 12 – Jinn and Phyllis find it hard to believe such a story. They are both chimpanzees.

Analysis

As the novel moves towards its conclusion, the themes of science and humanity return front and center with respect to the plot. Ulysse is shown some of the crueller experiments being conducted on human beings – removing parts of their brains to study the results. The results are terrifying: mothers that reject their own babies, children that will not eat, and human beings who have no sense of spatial relations.

Ulysse is overcome by a sense of outrage and humanity – of a moral nature. Ulysse does not care to hear how these experiments have benefitted apekind, but rather worries how they are affecting mankind. (Consider how science tests animals on Earth. The reader will recall how Hector was subjected to breathing without his spacesuit before Ulysses and the others removed theirs.) Science here is purely utilitarian – at the expense of some for the benefit of others, the ends justifying the means. But Ulysse knows this is not true science, not a compassionate kind of research that demonstrates any respect at all for the test subjects. Science without a soul is mere cruelty. Science needs some modicum of humanity in its practice.

Humanity isn't merely reason and civilization –it is also morality and emotion. Here, the scientist primates fail miserably in their research. However, Zira and Cornelius buck this trend in a very limited sense when it comes to helping Ulysse, Nova, and their baby escape the planet. They relate that the three humans will either be murdered or



rendered incapacitated through science – and they will not be a party to murder. It is interesting to note here that killing as ordered by their government should be considered murder, but killing done in the name of science is justified morally and legally.

It is easy to see here how fragile humanity actually is. Reason, love, emotion, compassion, understanding, morality, civilization – all of it can come undone. The collective human memories brought out through the girl in the research facility demonstrate this as the downfall of the human race is attributed to laziness, complacency, and a self-entitled sense of racial superiority – one undone by the monkeys kept as slaves and servants. Antelle is contemporary proof of such a possibility. Humanity is something which must be practiced. It is not something necessarily natural or naturally maintained.

As the novel closes, several startling realizations come to light for the reader. First, Jinn and Phyllis are not human beings, but chimpanzees. Much time must have passed since the encounter on Soror between Ulysses and Cornelius, for at the time, Soror's apes had just managed to put an artificial satellite into orbit. Here, Jinn and Phyllis sail a luxury spacecraft. This means either that monkeys on another planet have achieved such success, or the monkeys of Soror have. Secondly, it demonstrates the fate of Ulysses and his family is unknown, for the story contained within the bottle must be quite old to have been found by primates capable of interplanetary travel.

Third, if Jinn and Phyllis are not from Soror or Earth, but from elsewhere, what does that say for humanity? This is an important question to be asked, for just as the tide turned on Soror against humans, so too did it obviously turn against humans on Earth. Can the same fate still be averted elsewhere? Here, readers might replace the primates with any number of issues or concerns: nuclear war, terrorism, extremism, bigotry and racism, greed and narcissism, misusing the environment, and so on. Is humankind fated to lose not just its humanity, but its mastery as well? Or can this fate still be averted no matter the cause?

Discussion Question 1

Why do Zira and Cornelius agree to help Ulysses, Nova, and their baby escape from Soror? Why does the compassion that Zira and Cornelius have for Ulysses and his family not extend to other human beings?

Discussion Question 2

Despite Cornelius's insistence that the cruel research being carried out on human beings has tremendous importance, Ulysses is not convinced. Why?



Discussion Question 3

Among the reasons that Cornelius and Zira agree to help Ulysse and his family escape is that they will not be a party to murder. However, Ulysse considers them instrumental in the murder of human beings in the name of science, while Cornelius believes the killing of human beings in research is for the greater good. Who do you believe is correct? Why?

Vocabulary

encephalic, ablation, occipital, discreet, precocious, aberrations



Characters

Ulysse

Ulysse Merou is the main character and narrator of the novel “Planet of the Apes” by Pierre Boulle. The name “Ulysse” is taken from “Ulysses”, a Greek hero and king known for brilliance and cunning. Ulysse’s exact age is never given, though it can be assumed he is in his twenties or thirties due to the fact that his journalism career is just getting going in France. Ulysse is taken on by Professor Antelle and Levain to accompany and document an expedition to the solar system of Betelgeuse. Ulysse appears to have no family or loved ones, for the trip – two years in relative time, seven centuries in Earth time – does not faze him at all.

Upon landing on the planet they come to call “Soror”, Ulysse and the others are stunned to find naked human beings living like animals in the wild. Ulysse is instantly attracted to a very young woman who is nicknamed “Nova”. Nova appears to take an instant liking to Ulysse as well. Ulysse is stunned beyond belief when armed humanistic gorillas attack, hunting down and capturing human beings. Imprisoned at a research facility, he is grateful to be near Nova, but struggles to rationally make sense of what is going on.

Ulysse comes to befriend Zira, one of the chimpanzee researchers, and is able to prove to her that he is a rational being from Earth through the use of diagrams of interplanetary travel and mathematics. Presented to a scientific convention, Ulysse makes his case to the public, which sides with him. He is ordered free by the primate government. He becomes a researcher at the Institute, working with Zira and Cornelius. For a brief time, he adopts a superior attitude toward his fellow human beings, believing they are beneath him, but later comes around to realize he is wrong in behaving this way. He becomes enraged at their treatment later on. He feels very connected to them, especially to Nova, especially when she becomes pregnant. As he studies with Cornelius, it is learned that humans were once the masters of Soror, but due to laziness and a loss of humanity, lost out to the primates.

When it is learned that Nova is pregnant, forces move against Ulysse. Saying they will not be a party to murder, Zira and Cornelius help Ulysse, Nova, and their baby to escape Soror. When they return to Earth, Ulysse is stunned to learn that the planet has been overrun by primates. Ulysse and his family quickly return to space. On board a spacecraft that can remain in flight for years and years, Ulysse pens his account of the planet of the apes, dispatching it through a bottle in space.

Nova

Nova is a stunningly beautiful human native of the planet of Soror. She appears to be either in her teens or very early twenties, and is the first form of life that Ulysse, Antelle, and Levain encounter on Soror. Nova is very inquisitive, athletic, and warms up to



Ulysse almost immediately. She comes to consider Ulysse her own in a way that most other humans do not claim one another. In captivity, Nova grows increasingly jealous of the time that Ulysse spends with Zira, taking every opportunity to please Ulysse to keep him. She later becomes pregnant by Ulysse, and escaping with him and their baby, takes quickly to motherhood. She even learns how to speak through their son.

Zira

Zira is a chimpanzee and researcher at the Institute of Advanced Biological Study in the capital city of the planet of Soror. She is engaged to Cornelius, and is a compassionate researcher. She is arguably the most open-minded of the primate characters in the novel, immediately realizing there is something different about Ulysse. She is amazed when she learns he can reason, and that he is from Earth. She helps to secure his freedom, and sees to it that he is given his own apartment suite and clothing. When Nova becomes pregnant, Zira oversees her care and safe placement elsewhere. When word comes that the government intends to move against Ulysse and his family, Zira and Cornelius decide they will help Ulysse escape instead.

Cornelius

Cornelius is a chimpanzee and researcher who is studying human behavior, history, and archeology with an interest in origins of primate supremacy. He is the fiancée of Zira, and is a utilitarian when it comes to experimentation, believing killing humans in scientific experiments is necessary for progress. His theory – that man was once master on Soror – is upheld by irrefutable hard evidence later in the novel. Yet this is tempered by pride in that he believes simians will one day outdo humankind. He later coordinates a plan with Zira to allow Ulysse, Nova, and their baby escape the planet.

Zaius

Zaius is an orangutan who is the managing director and scientist for the Institute for Advanced Biological Studies. Zaius is a member of the respected scientific establishment, and he holds to theories of old which maintain that primates have always held the upper hand over people. He is arrogant, closed-minded, and cruel. He dismisses Ulysse as a “tame man”, an aberration of a human being who has managed to master mimicry and imitation. He is later proved wrong at the scientific conference by Ulysse himself. Zaius is removed from his position at the Institute, and he later helps to turn public opinion against Ulysse.

Antelle

Antelle is a French professor who organizes the expedition to the planet that will become Soror. He is immensely intelligent, and as a professor, considered a member of the intellectual elite at the pinnacle of humanity. However, on Soror, he is captured by



gorillas, and thrown in with other human captives at the capital city zoo. Antelle's reason and humanity quickly disappear in the face of the need for survival and the lack of humanity around him. Antelle's devolution provides evidence for just how quickly humanity can be lost. He is fated to spend the rest of his days at the Institute following Ulysse's release.

Levain

Arthur Levain is a young physician who serves as a member of the expedition to Soror headed up by Antelle. Levain and Ulysse remain close as they attempt to escape the gorillas on the planet. Levain is ultimately killed in sport by a hunting gorilla.

Hector

Hector is the chimpanzee that Antelle includes on the expedition to Soror. On the planet, Hector's suit is removed first to make sure the air is safe to breathe. Thereafter, he becomes uncontrollable, perhaps sensing that primates run the planet. He is later killed in panic by Nova.

Ulysse's and Nova's Baby

Ulysse's and Nova's son is only a few months old when the family must escape from Soror. In a furor and in fear over the birth, the monkey government has determined to kill or render incapacitated Ulysse and his family. The son serves as a threat to the status quo: he is able to speak, walk, and understand at a very early age.

Jinn and Phyllis

Jinn and Phyllis are married chimpanzees on vacation when they discover the manuscript written by Ulysse. They ultimately consider it a work of fiction, finding it impossible to believe that it could have been written by a human, or that any such notions – of humans being masters, or capable of speech let alone reason – are possible.



Symbols and Symbolism

Bottle

A bottle the color of light is found and collected by Jinn and Phyllis while they are travelling through space. It first appears as a streak of light. Upon inspection, Jinn breaks the bottle in order to obtain the manuscript found within.

Manuscript

A manuscript is written, put into a bottle, and released by Ulysses so that someone else may find it and be warned of the fate which has befallen Earth and Soror – and may befall elsewhere. The manuscript contains the handwritten account of Ulysses on Professor Antelle's expedition to the solar system of Betelgeuse. The manuscript thus comprises the core and vast majority of the content of the novel.

Footprint

A human footprint is the first indication of life found by Antelle, Ulysses, and Levain while on the planet of Soror. It is discovered in the sandy soil surrounding a beautiful waterfall and lake. Levain identifies the footprint as belonging to a female. The trio then discover a young, beautiful, naked girl high above them, watching from a rock.

Notebook

A notebook full of observations and notes is kept by Zira as she carries out her research. The notebook is seized by Ulysses while Zira is close to his cage. He uses the notebook to draw a portrait of Nova and a series of mathematical diagrams. This helps to convince Zira that Ulysses is a fully-rational, fully-competent human being.

Drawings

Drawings are created by Ulysses in Zira's notebook. These include a portrait of Nova and mathematical figures. The drawings indicate an advanced degree of dexterity, reason, and competence by Ulysses. These help to convince Zira that Ulysses is a fully-rational man, and that he is not like other men. The drawings are hidden from Zaius so he may not exploit or destroy them.



Map

A map of space is drawn by Ulysse for Zira, in which he proves beyond doubt that he is who he says he is. He is superbly able to create a map of the solar system of Betelgeuse, and of Earth's solar system as well. He uses this map to demonstrate where he is from.

Chair

A chair is kept onstage during the scientific convention at which Ulysse speaks to all those assemble. He explains who he is, where he is from, and that he is a fully capable and rational human being. The audience explodes in applause in Ulysse's favor. When Ulysse sits in the chair – a very rational act only simians are supposed to be capable of – he is further applauded.

Spaceship

A self-sustaining spaceship with years and years of fuel is designed and outfitted by Antelle for his expedition to the planet that will become Soror. The spaceship has several smaller launch craft, which Antelle, Ulysse, and Levain use to reach the planet's surface. The self-sustaining ship is noted for having gardens, a chicken run, a library, comfortable accommodations, running water, and so on.

Launch craft

Launch craft are smaller versions of the spaceship which carries Antelle's expedition to the Betelgeuse system. There are several such craft which can dock and launch from the larger mothership. One such launch craft is used to touch down on the planet that will be called Soror.

Skeletons

Human skeletons are discovered at the excavations being conducted by research teams several hundred miles away from the capital city in the desert. The skeletons are human, and prove that the ruined city being excavated was populated by humans, not primates – meaning that humans were once the masters on Soror. The skeletons are the irrefutable proof that Cornelius requires for his theory as such.

Settings

Soror

Soror is an Earth-like planet located around the star of Betelgeuse along with several other satellite planets. Soror is very similar to Earth, with a similar atmosphere, drinkable water, and plants and species remarkably similar to Earth's – such as forms of deer and bananas. Soror is also home to a race of wild human beings, and a master race of monkeys comprising gorillas, chimpanzees, and orangutans. The name of Soror comes from “sorority”, making Soror a sister planet to Earth. Soror was once ruled by man, but due to laziness and a loss of humanity, simians came to rule while men became mindless beasts. The simians have reworked Soror in the image of the men who have come before them, driving cars and airplanes, sowing crops, and building cities with tall buildings, parks, and museums. It is ruled by a governing council of primates, as well as a three-bodied legislature. It is to Soror that Antelle brings his expedition. Soror thus serves as the main setting for the novel, and provides the place from which Ulysse, Nova, and their baby must escape.

Capital city

The capital city is the capital of the planet of Soror. Never named, the capital city is majestic, featuring museums, parks, research institutions and other places of learning. It is the site of an annual scientific convention at the Institute of Advanced Biological Study. It is also the seat of power and government on the planet, and is where the governing council and legislature meet. It is the home of Zira and Cornelius. The capital city is located several hundred miles from the excavation site.

The Institute of Advanced Biological Study

The Institute of Advanced Biological Study is located in the capital city of the planet of Soror. It is overseen by a gorilla president, but run on a day-to-day managerial basis by Zaius, the orangutan. The Institute employs Zira in studying the behavior of human subjects, and later employs Cornelius in plays of Zaius. It is at the Institute where the captive Ulysse makes his case to Zira, who in turn reveals the truth of Ulysse's condition to Cornelius. The Institute hosts an annual scientific convention at which Ulysse makes his case, gains support, and is freed. He later comes to work at the Institute, being given a lush apartment there.

Excavation

The excavation is located in the desert several hundred miles from the capital city on the planet of Soror. The excavation is of an old city in which cars, houses, and associated technology are discovered. The city is held by most to be primate in



composition, but human skeletons later reveal this not to be the case. The excavation is proof that humans once reigned supreme on Soror.

The forest

The forest is the first landscape to be explored by Antelle, Ulysse, and Levain after setting foot on Soror. It is in the forest they find a waterfall and first meet Nova. It is where they are led to a human colony of naked wild people living in ramshackle grass shelters like animals. The forest is later raided by gorillas on a hunting expedition to capture humans for research and other purposes. The forest is where Antelle and Ulysse are captured, and where Levain is killed. It is where they first realize that the master race on the planet is not human, but ape.



Themes and Motifs

Humanity

Humanity is an important theme in the novel “Planet of the Apes” by Pierre Boulle. Humanity, thematically, involves that which makes individuals human or humanlike. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, morality, reason, emotion, compassion, understanding, intelligence, culture, and the attributes of civilization such as written and spoken language. When the novel begins, Ulysse, Antelle, and Levain are sure of their humanity. They hail from the West, from the European nation of France. They are all representatives of respected fields, from science and learning (Antelle, the professor) to medicine and physical knowledge (Levain the physician) to the arts (Ulysse, the writer and journalist).

Their exploration of the planet Soror yields the stunning revelation that the human beings that populate the planet are decidedly inhuman. They wear no clothing, they have no powers of reason, they do not speak, they do not live in any refined structure, they eat raw meat with their hands directly from the carcasses of animals, and appear motivated wholly by survival. Nevertheless, Ulysse and the others cannot help but recognize them as being distinctly human.

This is immediately contrasted with the arrival of the gorillas, who have assumed all the heirs of humanity. They speak, plan, strategize, wield firearms, wear tailored clothing, and hunt human beings as if they were themselves animals. The simians at the Institute for Advanced Biological Studies supplant the gorillas by carrying out scientific experiments –something the humans on Earth do, not the primates. Ulysse is horrified by all of this. He is further stunned to see primates driving cars, visiting museums and parks, and organizing themselves into government – all traces of humanity.

The primates themselves consider the human beings to be disposable mindless beasts. There is nothing human about the human beings to the primates. Yet, the humanity of the primates themselves is compromised in the experiments conducted on human beings. Ulysse is outraged by these experiments which are dismissed as necessary for the common good by Cornelius. Here, the primates may be behaving more like humans than the humans themselves, but there is a lack of humanity in the cruelty and utilitarianism of their science. There is intelligence, but no compassion.

Ulysse himself struggles hard to prove his own humanity to Zira. He does so by demonstrating his reason and intelligence in drawing mathematical diagrams, a map of space, and a portrait of Nova. He further defines his own humanity by the selfless gift of food to Nova when Nova is unable to figure out an experiment to feed herself. Ulysse demonstrates tremendous compassion in this instance, which earns the admiration of Zira.



However, the reader will remember how Hector the chimpanzee is used to test the air on Soror before Ulysse and the others remove their helmets. Ulysse's humanitarian outrage appears to be slightly hypocritical. That human beings conducted similar experiments on Earth's animals compared to those conducted on Soror's human beings also begs the question of humanity on the part of Earth's human population.

However, Zira and Cornelius are not beyond genuine humanity of their own. When Nova becomes pregnant, they hide her away from the reaches of the government and the Institute. When they learn that the government is moving to act against Ulysse and his family, they decide they will not be a party to murder. Cornelius is slightly hypocritical in his contention that death in the name of science is not killing, but that he will not be a party to murder on behalf of the government. A core component of humanity that cannot be forgotten includes morality and compassion – something that the civilized race of primates seems to frequently forget.

Race and Bigotry

Race and bigotry form an important theme in the novel "Planet of the Apes" by Pierre Boulle. Racism is the hatred, mistreatment, or mental state of another based on that individual's skin-color and race. Bigotry includes prejudice against another for a number of reasons, including race, sex, intelligence, and so on. Race, racism, bigotry, and racial attitudes, appear in many ways in the novel and are important as the plot unfolds as a social statement.

When the novel was originally published, the United States of America, as well as many other nations in the world, were in the midst of overcoming racism through Civil Rights and greater public understanding and awareness. Humanity was appealed to in order to overcome racism, and laws were rewritten. Racism and bigotry in the novel are not merely concerns of those on Earth, but occur among the primates of Soror as well.

It is apparent that all primates consider themselves to be the dominant form of life on the planet of Soror. They consider human beings to be well beneath them hierarchically and biologically. This sort of species superiority and bigotry can be reflected in many of the civilizations of Earth, who at one time or another considered themselves the master race –from the Egyptians to the Chinese to the Germans to the Islamic extremists of today. To adopt such racial and bigoted assumptions undermines one's humanity.

In the case of Soror, even the master species – the simians – are themselves broken apart by racial attitudes. Three major classes of primates constitute simian life: orangutans, gorillas, and chimpanzees. Legal racism among these primates has been ended, but racial attitudes and assumptions still exist.

For example, gorillas are seen as power-hungry brutes without much intelligence. The assumption relies on a general classification of all gorillas, rather than acknowledging that intelligence should depend on the individual irrespective of the group. Zira herself



visibly resents orangutans, while chimpanzees look down on gorillas as needing to focus on the primary thing for which they are good – physical work.

Nevertheless, all are agreed that mankind is beneath them. Only Ulysse appears to defy this long and widely-held belief. The public immediately moves in his support when he demonstrates his reason and independence at the annual scientific convention. However, even then, the racial superiority of the primates is still visible.

While Cornelius considers Ulysse to be a fellow in research at the Institute that is above the level of the human natives of the planet, he still considers Ulysse one step beneath himself. He further pridefully contends that, although man may have once had the upper hand on Soror, monkeys have it now – and will exceed man in all ways sooner or later.

Even Ulysse himself is not devoid of bigoted attitudes. Freed and held up by the monkey population, he briefly considers it beneath himself to pay any special attention to Nova, or to associate with the human beings in the cages. He is equal but separate, and is later ashamed of himself for this stance.

Science

Science is an important theme in the novel “Planet of the Apes” by Pierre Boulle. Science, dedicated to the study of the universe and all that it encompasses by way of testable predictions and explanations, becomes central to the plot by the end of the novel. Science is critically examined, in light of itself and in light of humanity.

Science is initially viewed positively, as something done in conjunction with discovery, reason, and understanding. It is seen as a pinnacle of human endeavor. It forms the backbone of the research expedition that Antelle forms to the planet that will become known as Soror. The reader pays little attention to Hector the chimpanzee being used to test the air before Ulysse, Antelle, and Levain remove their helmets. It is in accord with accepted scientific tradition on Earth. Only later, when experiments on human beings are carried out for the good of apekind does the reader reflect on the test conducted with Hector.

Indeed, the tests conducted by the researchers at the Institute for Advanced Biological Study disturb the reader – not just for the fact that the tests are conducted on human beings, but the nature of the tests themselves. Behavioral response is measured with bells and electric shock. Portions of the brain are removed to see what will happen: mothers reject their young, people stop eating, and others lose all sense of spatial relation.

Ulysse is understandably outraged by these experiments. The pinnacle of the intellectual side of humanity – science – is being used to conduct cruel research. Cornelius maintains the research is necessary for the greater good, that the ends justify the means. Yet there is a difference between compassionate and responsible research, and what the primates are carrying on with. Ulysse is unable to make any traction with Cornelius, or Zira.



Nevertheless, Zira and Cornelius agree to help Ulysse, Nova, and their baby escape the planet. They have learned that the government intends to either kill or incapacitate them. Cornelius says he will not be a party to this kind of killing, considering it murder because it is not being done in the name of science. This pragmatic position underscores the importance of the need for more humanity in the conduct of science.

Reason, Instinct, and Imitation

Reason, instinct, and imitation form an important theme with respect to behavior and humanity in the novel “Planet of the Apes” by Pierre Boulle. Instinct involves the natural, automatic response or reaction of an individual or creature to a situation or circumstance. Imitation involves the copying and mimicking of what is being seen or done by one of another. Reason is the capacity to understand, to consider, to make choices, and to innovate. In the novel, these three competing characteristics greatly inform the discussion and theme of humanity, as well as the idea of mastery, civilization, and dominance.

When the novel begins, both the reader and Ulysse – as well as his companions – are assured that humankind is the master species of all others – on Earth or on Soror because of reason. They have used reason to consider a plan, make choices to build a rocket ship and journey, and to land on Soror. As men of science and letters, they use reason to understand, to discover, to interpret, and to determine. Yet their encounter with the human natives of Soror defies all reason.

The human natives of Soror run around naked. They possess no reason at all. They are guided purely by animal instincts in eating, reproducing, and surviving. Fear generates a fight-or-flight herd mentality. Hunger leads to the eating of raw carcasses. Reproduction leads to a bird-like dance prior to sexual intercourse. The human beings exist in colonies that use roughshod shelters to sleep in. There is little human about them except for the fact that they are human.

The primate master race on Soror us picked up the human mantle. They govern, hold elections, rule, make laws, conduct research, drive cars, read, write, produce movies, hunt, farm, fish, and so on. They are human in almost every way except in appearance. Ulysse tries to reason this out as the apes having learned to do these things through imitation. Cornelius agrees, coming to prove his theory that men on Soror were once dominant, and monkeys achieved power through imitating men. However, he maintains that monkeys are capable of more than just imitation, but are capable of innovation as well.

It is difficult for many primates at first to accept that Ulysse is doing anything more than mimicking or imitating them. Only through the demonstration of reason by way of math, art, and a map of the stars does Ulysse demonstrate otherwise. As such, he earns popular support and freedom. He is later targeted, however, when word leaks he has fathered a baby with Nova – a baby who is advanced for his age even by Earth standards, being able to speak at the age of three months. Fear and suspicion overtake



reason, leading the government to seek to act against Ulysse and his family. Only with the help of Zira and Cornelius do they manage to escape.

Likewise, as demonstrated through the devolution of Antelle, reason can be lost if not used properly, or if not maintained proficiently. In Antelle's case, a combination of this and an instinctual urge for survival probably make reason superfluous. However, reason is something which can be gained, as demonstrated by Nova, who begins to learn to speak along with her son while journeying on the spacecraft. However, whether this is mere imitation or will develop into full-fledged reason has yet to be seen.

Discovery

Discovery is an important theme in the novel "Planet of the Apes" by Pierre Boulle. Discovery, thematically, involves exploration and learning, both physically and intellectually – and sometimes, both. Discovery remains an important concept in the novel, especially as it relates to science and history.

When the novel begins, Jinn and Phyllis pick up a manuscript written by Ulysse who explains that all his misfortunes began with an expedition of discovery. Seeking to discover new life, Antelle forms an expedition to head to the solar system of Betelgeuse. There, Antelle, Ulysse, and Levain descend to the planet that will become Soror. It is the first time any human from Earth has been on the planet. The party is thrilled to have discovered the planet to be very much like Earth, but are dismayed to learn the planet's human natives are more like animals.

Their discovery grows horrific when they learn that the dominant race on the planet consists of simians – gorillas, orangutans, and chimpanzees. Their discoveries become only more horrific as the hours pass: the simians wield weapons, dress and behave like people, drive cars, govern, produce cultural works, and carry on scientific pursuits like human beings on Earth.

The primates themselves make numerous discoveries throughout the novel. The biggest is that there are humans capable of reason and rational action from other planets – and that the humans on their planet have the capacity, though unused, for such reason. Through Cornelius's research, the simians are forced to confront the truth that humans were originally the dominant race on Soror. They are also forced to confront the discovery that simians were originally mindless imitators, only later coming into possession of some form of reason.

The discovery of the truth of the past has immediate effects. The monkey population is stunned, enraged, confused, and fearful. In addition to word that Ulysse has fathered a child, rumors abound about a human comeback. The simians do their best to minimize the damage of the discovery of the past, and to minimize damage in the present by turning public opinion against Ulysse. The discovery forces Ulysse and his family from the planet.



Styles

Point of View

Pierre Boulle tells his novel “Planet of the Apes” in the third-person and first-person omniscient reflective narrative mode. The first and final chapters of the novel are told in the third-person narrative, and revolves around Jinn and Phyllis on an interplanetary cruise vacation. They discover the bottle and manuscript containing Ulysse’s account of the planet of Soror, which is itself written in the first-person omniscient perspective from Ulysse’s point of view. This manuscript forms the core, and the majority of, the novel. The section of the novel comprising Ulysse’s account includes the omniscient aspect due to the fact that it is written in reflection long after the events it describes, after which time the manuscript is committed to the bottle, and the bottle to space.

Language and Meaning

Pierre Boulle tells his novel “Planet of the Apes” in language that is traditional and reminiscent of the adventure stories of Jules Verne and Robert Louis Stevenson. This is done for at least three reasons. First, the novel – including themes of discovery and humanity – is in the same vein as the adventure stories of Verne and Stevenson, so it is only natural that the language fit the established genre. Second, the traditional language speaks to the education and skill of Ulysse as a writer. Given that Ulysse is a journalist, it is fitting and realistic to give him a writing style that is reflective of his occupation. Third, the novel was published originally in 1963, at a time when traditional use of language was competing with more contemporary, casual language. Boulle, born in 1912 and familiar with the works of Verne and Stevenson, clearly chose to write in their form of traditional English.

Structure

Pierre Boulle divides his novel “Planet of the Apes” into three primary parts, with each part further subdivided into chapters. Each chapter is relatively short, most lasting only a few pages. The first and final chapters of the novel involve the finding, reading, and opinion of Jinn and Phyllis regarding the manuscript. The manuscript itself comprises all other chapters within the novel. Each part deals with a major development or incident in overall plot. For example, Part I deals with the initial landing on Soror by Ulysse, Antelle, and Lavain, including the capture of Ulysse. Each chapter deals with a smaller portion of the section of the plot each part deals with. For example, Part III, Chapter 7, deals with Ulysse’s ability to see Nova on a regular basis, and his learning about the cruel experiments being conducted on human subjects.



Quotes

I am confiding this manuscript to space, not with the intention of saving myself, but to help, perhaps, in averting the appalling scourge which is menacing the human race.

Lord have pity on us!

-- Ulysse (Part I, Chapter 2 paragraph 1)

Importance: Ulysse's purpose in writing the manuscript is only half-apparent initially. He implores the reader to understand the terror befalling the human race – but initially, this seems confined to Soror. Only later will the reader understand the manuscript is meant to warn humans everywhere of the rise of apes to supplant them.

Stupefaction stifled all other sentiment when I saw this creature on the look-out, lying in wait for the game. For it was a monkey, a large-sized gorilla.

-- Ulysse (Part I, Chapter 9 paragraph 2)

Importance: Ulysse is stunned to learn that the danger pressing in on the human natives of the forest of Soror are gorillas – acting, behaving, and dressing like human beings. It strains all reason for Ulysse, and horrifies him. It demonstrates that the monkeys have somehow become the master race above humans on Soror.

I needed this intellectual exercise to escape from the despair which was haunting me, to prove to myself that I was a man, I mean a man from Earth, a reasoning creature who made it a habit to discover a logical explanation to the apparently miraculous whims of nature, and not a beast hunted down by highly developed monkeys.

-- Ulysse (Part I, Chapter 11 paragraph 1)

Importance: After Ulysse is captured, he struggles in his mind to account for the way things are presently. He imagines that the gorillas are trained by some other race, for there is now way in his mind that animals who are beasts on Earth could hold dominion over man on Earth, or any planet – including Soror.

Yes, I, one of the kings of creation, started circling round my beauty, I the ultimate achievement of millenary evolution, in front of this collection of monkeys eagerly watching me...

-- Ulysse (Part I, Chapter 17 paragraph 12)

Importance: Forced to have sex with Nova or risk losing her to another human native, Ulysse reflects on how humiliated he feels to be so dehumanized. At the top of the animal kingdom on Earth, Ulysse is nothing more than a caged animal on Soror. It cannot be stressed enough how troubling and humiliating this is to Ulysse. It helps to change him as a man, orienting him toward survival.

There'll be a vast crowd and the whole of the press. They're all on tenterhooks and know there's something unusual afoot. It's excellent for you. Take courage.

-- Zira (Part II, Chapter 7 paragraph 4)



Importance: The chance comes for Ulysse to earn his freedom. He will be unveiled at the annual scientific convention hosted by the Institute. During this time, Ulysse will have the chance to address the convention, and demonstrate that he is indeed a sentient being, independently rational and capable of action of his own free will, free of imitation and coaching.

Not only am I a rational creature, not only does a mind paradoxically inhabit this human body, but I come from a distant planet, from Earth, that Earth on which, by a whim of nature that has still to be explained, it is men who are the repositories of wisdom and reason.

-- Ulysse (Part II, Chapter 8 paragraph 10)

Importance: Here, Ulysse makes his case to the scientific convention at the Institute. It earns him thunderous applause, and exhausts him thoroughly. It also earns him the support of the vast majority of the public, which in turn moves the governing council to grant Ulysse freedom.

I often think of Nova. I cannot forget the hours I spent in her company. But I have never again entered her cage; human self-respect forbids me. Is she not an animal?... Since I have changed camps I have even forbidden myself to show her more affection than I show to her fellows.

-- Ulysse (Part III, Chapter 1 paragraph 10)

Importance: Having earned his freedom, and now being seen as an almost-equal among the monkeys, Ulysse adopts an attitude of superiority. It is nearly a bigotry that separates him from his fellow human beings. He now considers them more animal than human – but quickly recognizes his mistake. He is essentially ashamed of the way he has been thinking, having only recently been among those he now holds in contempt. It demonstrates just how quickly superiority and hatred can set in.

For some time I've been harassed by a feeling: - a feeling supported by certain concrete indications – that the key to these secrets, even here on our planet, has been possessed by other brains in the distance past.

-- Cornelius (Part III, Chapter 2 paragraph 7)

Importance: Cornelius begins to present his theory that primates may not have always been in charge on Soror. He has been considering the fact that, with so little progress, with such a short span of history, the intelligence and innovations used by the monkeys have originated with another race. He will need more evidence for this theory, and so he will later travel to the excavation underway with Ulysse.

The toy presents another anomaly, another oddity which makes all the workmen laugh and even provokes a smile from the solemn orang-outang directing the excavations. It talks. It talks like a doll at home.

-- Ulysse (Part III, Chapter 3 paragraph 14)



Importance: The establishment opinion of monkey superiority is so entrenched that even when strong proof arises to challenge it, it is dismissed out of hand. A child's doll which can speak "Papa" stuns both Ulysse and Cornelius – but it makes the others laugh. They are like Ulysse at the beginning of the novel: eminently self-assured, overconfident, and impossible to deter.

Supposing, I argue, that men once reigned as masters on this planet. Supposing that a human civilization similar to ours flourished on Soror more than ten thousand years ago...

-- Ulysse (Part III, Chapter 4 paragraph 1)

Importance: When skeletons – human skeletons – are found, Cornelius has his irrefutable proof. Humans were once the dominant race on Soror. It is a hard truth to swallow, but one now that cannot be denied or avoided. But with truth comes consequences: the lives of Ulysse, Nova, and their baby are now in danger as the government views them as a threat. As a result, they have to flee the planet.

Stop it!

-- Ulysse (Part III, Chapter 7 paragraph 27)

Importance: Ulysse is shown around the lab by Helius. Ulysse is given a firsthand view of all of the experiments being conducted on humans by monkeys. These are cruel and barbarous experiments, which include electric therapy and starving people through manipulation of their brains. The monkeys contend these experiments are for the common good, but Ulysse does not think so. He is enraged, horrified, and can only shout to stop things.

We have decided to save all three of you and we'll be helped by a small group of brave chimpanzees.

-- Zira (Part III, Chapter 10 paragraph 28)

Importance: Ulysse's presence on the planet, as well as the rapid development of his son, has led to chaos and fear among the monkeys. The monkeys believe that Ulysse is going to found a new race of men to wrest away control of the planet from the monkeys. Death seems likely for Ulysse and his family. In response, Zira and a handful of others work to help Ulysse and his family escape. They do not want to see Ulysse and his family killed, and put themselves at great risk in helping Ulysse.