



UTAN

Friendship



Utan became an orphan at a young age. He was very lucky to find Duna a high ranking female that took care of him, Duna is infertile and didn't have children on her own. Utan was always a little bit of a day-dreamer and would not follow Duna at close range but got distracted with other things easily and stayed behind. Utan could often not keep up with Duna but would follow me instead as he knew I would follow Duna. Sometimes, when Duna would suddenly speed up or when the vegetation would become very dense, I would lose her. Most of the times, Utan would then look at me expectantly, waiting for me to go on, but when he realized that I didn't have a clue where Duna was, but he still knew where she was, he would take the lead and I would follow him.



One day, in the late afternoon I lost Duna again Utan did not take the lead but instead sit down next to me. He clearly didn't have a clue either where she was. I felt a panic rising in me since I knew that if night fell and we hadn't found Duna, I would have to stay in the forest with Utan, there was no way that I could have left such a small chimp alone for the night. Utan however didn't seem to be very worried, he just sat next to me and waited. We sat at the same spot for more than half an hour until we finally heard chimpanzee calls from very far away. I took the compass bearing and headed in the direction of the calls with Utan following me. Twenty minutes later, when the two of us rejoined the group, I was very relieved to be able to hand Utan back into Duna's custody.