Jungle Breath

by Ben Lucien Burman

THIS HAS HAPPENED

Several mysterious deaths have occurred at Porto Verde, a little town in Brazil, and Elise Marberry, owner of a plantation, has been threatened. Owing to the vigilance and protection of her cousin, Vilak, no harm has come to her. Vilak believes that Gaylord Prentiss is the instigator of all the trouble. Word comes that the dam at Avilos has broken, and Elise, Vilak, and Lincoln Nunnally ride to warn Prentiss. They find it is but a ruse to get Prentiss into the open so he can be murdered by the natives. Vilak tells this to Prentiss and the four then defend Prentiss' fazenda. Vilak blows up a dam and the lake is let loose and floods out the attackers. When the waters go down Prentiss is missing.

CHAPTER XXXII

Vilak continued to light the fires fires until for a quarter of a mile the woods were ablaze. The old man interestedly watched the strange creatures that bolted onto the road to escape the danger suddenly come upon them; the long-legged, crane-like jabiru, the ugly, ungainly pecary, the graceful, agile bush-deer. But he was not long afforded this spectacle, for Vilak had been careful to build back fires and the leaping flames quickly died away. The party returned to Elsi's fazenda.

"Hear anything about the boat yet?" Vilak asked his cousin as he strode upto the veranda and met her carrying her tiny nephew outside to bask in the sun.

"Yes. I certainly did. Word came just after you left. Smashed a paddle-wheel up at Benca, and won't be down for another three days. High water sent her onto some rocks. Water's falling everywhere there. Looks as if the flood danger's over."

"Humph. That's cheerful." He helped her adjust mosquito netting over the child's crib which had been placed on the grass. "Another question. Who knows most about the geography of the country around here?"

She thought a moment. "Senhor de aurenco or Senhor Cojoseria. I'd say Laurenco would undoubtedly have been the best for you. ice chap, too Like him very much. But unfortunately he moved away from here about six months ago and lives about thirty miles down the river now. Cojoseria I don't know so well. He seems pleasant enough to talk to, though some of his fellow-Brazilians haven't a very high opinion of him. But he does know the country and he is nearby. Just a few miles past my place at Vilapa. Do you want to see him?"

"Yes. I want to have a little talk." He drew out his watch. "If it wasn't so late, I'd go out there this afternoon. I'll make it first thing in the morning." His blond brows knitted. "Mighty sorry about that boat. If it doesn't come Friday we can't wait for it any longer. We'll have to get you and Tinky out some other way. Judging by appearances, things have quieted considerably. But appearances are the one thing I never trust."

The remainder of the day passed without incident. In the morning he set off alone to visit the fazenda of Senhor Cojoseria. assing Villapa on the way, he stopped for a moment to converse with Wilson, the carrot-faced superintendent of Elsie's fazenda, then rode on.

The servant of Cojoseria's white, luxurious home who greeted him said that his master had gone to inspect one of his rubber developments up the river and would not return for at least a week.

Vilax rode back the way he had come. He neared the castanho trees which bordered the driveway of the fazenda. To his surprise, he saw Elsie hurry forward from between the trees to meet him. Her lips were gray, drawn. "Tinky's gone again," she said quietly.

He leaped from his horse and took her hand. He pressed it gently. "Steady. Steady," he murmured.

She smiled wanly. "No, I'm not going to break down this time the way I did before. It know that it doesn't accomplish anything. Just makes matters harder for you."

"Good girl. Don't worry. We'll find him. The way we did before." Still holding her hand, he took his horse's bridle, and began to walk toward the house. "Tell me . . . what happened, if it isn't too hard . . . Perhaps you'd better wait a minute or two."

"No. I'll tell you now. I've been waiting here to tell you. I'll not permit myself to break down again."

With an effort she drew herself erect. "It was practically the same this time as it was before. Tinky was in his bed outside, under the trees. Hannah was taking care of him, for I had some things to do in the house. She got up to get him a drink. You know where we keep the distilled water. On the back veranda, just around the corner of the house from where Tinky was lying, not more than thirty or forty feet away at the most.

"Hannah got the drink—it may have taken a few seconds longer than usual because she had to open a new bottle—and hurried back with it toward the trees. She stooped over the bed. And saw that it was empty . . . That's all I know."

"You saw no one lurking around the house?"

"No one. Just the same way as when the rifles disapeared. No footprints of anyone we don't know. Nothing. I looked closely."

They reached the cluster of palm trees under whose shade the child had rested. The old man, who had been on the veranda, came forward to meet them. Vilak looked at the empty cot, then on the ground about. In it were three sets of footprints, one narrow and delicate, which he at once recognized as the impression made by Elsie's pointed shoes, another flat and heedless, the mark made by the slippers of Hannah. The third was the print of a man's working shoe, broad, squarish.

Vilak looked at this closely. "Schwartz has been here, hasn't he?"

Elsie nodded. "Yes. He came when I was taking care of the baby to find out whether I had decided on some changes we had been considering in the warehouse."

"Humph." He stooped, searched among the leaves drifting on the ground, then picked up something and put it carefully in his pocket. A moment later he was quickly folowing a strip of trees which led to the road as he had done after the child's first disappearance.

He reached the highway and after considerable examination found the print of a horse's hoof which led to the trees and then away. Mounting with Elsie and the old man on their horses beside him, he began folowing the trail. For four hours he rode, his eyes ever on the ground, through dense woods, along the edge of seething swamps, past long cliffs of brilliant volcanic rock, over a stretch of green upland where the grass on either side was high as a man's head.

At last, as the setting of the sun was about to put a swift end to their hunting, they reached a narrow swamp which quickly ended and gave way on all sides to matted jungle. Here the trail of the horse's hoofs ended. But new prints, the confused footprints of three of four men, some apparently with naked feet, showed at the beginning of a narrow path that had been freshly cut in the tangle of vegetation.

Vilak dismounted. "Chap got down here. Friends here waiting for him. Let his horse go, and they all went off into that."

He peered into the tangled murkiness where the new path led. He chewed his lip. "No chance of following them any more to-day. Be night in fifteen minutes. I hate to stop, but you know how absolutely futile it is to try to search the jungle at night. Worse than futile. We'd only obliterate the trail. Probably haven't gone far. Get some beaters and come out first thing in the morning. Better for us in that wilderness if we have some natives who know the country. They can pick up a trail where, trained as I am, even I'd lose it. And they can spread the radius of our search if the trail comes to an end. The chaps ahead know where they're going, and we don't."

He turned to Elsie and pressed her hand again. "oDn't you worry about this delay. It'll be all right. Just a little time and we'll find him."

The lines in her delicate face had deepened. "I know you will," she said.

The sun sank behind the horizon as they turned their horses homeward. Back at the fazenda, Elsie selected twenty of the best laborers in her employ, and ordered them to be ready at dawn. Streaks of sunlight were begining to show faintly over the distant mountains when the party set out.

Vilak, Elsie and the old man rode ahead. Behind them tramped twenty picturesquely assorted negroes, half-breeds and Indians, some clad in a cheap red cotton shirt and trousers-some in nothing but the trousers, some in a single robe-like garment made of dirty burlap.

Here a gigantic black chattered with a chocolate-skinned pigmy who hardly reached his shoulder; there a ponderous mulatto argued with a withered old Indian whose gaunt ribs showed clearly tarough his tawny skin. All carried machetes for cutting the brush, a few carried short spears in case of an encounted with the jaguars which were known to infect the neighborhood.

They reached the newly cut path by the swamp which Vilak had marked with a notch in a mango tree. They entered the dark, gloomy fastness. Paulos, the gigantic black, who was one of the ranch sub-foremen, with the chocolate colored pigmy went ahead to swing their machetes at any twisted lianas, or call out the direction if the path seemed to fail. But there was little work for them to do. Those who had passed the day before had taken no pains to conceal their course; there was always a broken branch or crushed leaf under foot to point the way.

They traveled swiftly until noon; the trail showed no signs of ending. Vilak looked at his compass. "Due west," he said. "Almost a straight line."

(To be Continued)

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At home! And worth it all!

Answers—A.M.F.

Idaho Ranchman Uses Plane to Herd Sheep

Scott Anderson, of Rupert, Idaho, is perhaps the first man in the West to use an airplane in herding his vast flocks of sheep. Anderson owns three planes which he uses to visit his different sheep camps, many miles apart, to which he takes supplies for his sheep herders.

The long journeys across mountains and plains to the various sheep camps which require days for wagons and even trucks can be made by airplane in a few hours. The sheep have become used to the airplanes and do not become scared or stampede when they land near them.

The Prince of Wales has set a fine example to the world's big-game hunters by doing a large part of his hunting in Africa with a camera. We hope some day he'll do all of it that way, declares "Our Dumb Animals" Humane Society magazine.

For Blisters — Minard's Liniment.

Beware of Silver Polish–Poisonous

Cleaning Powder Found to Contain 20% Sodium Cyanid

Silver Polish is not intended to be eaten, but unless knives, forks and spoons are carefully washed after polishing, we may swallow some of it. When the polish contains an active poison, trouble results.

A number of cases of acute cyanid poisoning, apparently due to consuming silver polish, are reported from the United States in The Lancet (London). We read:

"In June, 1928, about thirty persons became acutely ill after dinner at a hotel in Utica. No evidence of food deterioration could be discovered, but on examination the powder used for cleaning silverware was found to contain over 20 per cent. of sodium cyanid. It was ascertained that similar cases had occurred at many hotels where this compound and others containing cyanid were used as a routine. Usually the utensils were dipped about once a week in a solution containing the poison, and the result was that ineffective rinsing might easily lead to poisoning of the next guest who used them. Oddly enough, none of the servants employed in cleaning silver seem to have developed symptoms. These were acute gastroenteritis with vomiting, purging, and, later, signs of shock. In one of the cases recorded, diarrhea was violent and persistent. The shock was so severe that in more than one case the illness was critical, with pallor, sweating, dyspnoea, and thready pulse; in several cases also there was albuminuria. The managers of the hotels usually received the explanation with gratitude, and stopped the use of the dangerous preparations. Certain hotels which had received complaints of food poisoning from their guests have been able to record the disappearance of such complaints since these polishes have been abandoned. Legislation to prevent this danger has been attempted in the State of New York, where the sanitary code has been amended to forbid the use of any cyanid preparation or other poison for cleaning nickel, copper, or silverware, or other articles used in the preparation of food. The Department of Health of Newark, New Jersey, has placed a similar ban on the use of poisonous compounds for cleaning silverware, and warnings have been given through the American medical press."

St. Bernard of Alps Ousted by Progress

Shaggy Life Saver Has Rivals in Thermos Bottle and Telephone

Tourists returning from the land of the friendly St. Bernard dog report that his life-saving days are numbered. Science with its thermos bottle, they say, is triumphing over the shaggy hero who, for generations, has valiantly carried his little keg of stimulating liquid to despairing wayfarers storm-bound in the Alps. Recently three travelers, lost during a Swiss snowstorm, were rescued by a monk from the St. Bernard monastery and were revived with hot coffee poured from a thermos bottle carried in the rescuer's knapsack. Vegetable capsules and concentrated meats completed the resuscitation of these three adventuring alpinists.

Despite scienific achievements threatening his romantic career, however, the St. Bernard is still cherished by dog lovers for his benign and gentle manner and his dependability in time of crisis. Dog authorities assert that a St. Bernard cannot be stampeded. And St. Bernard puppies continue to frisk clumsily and to yap boisterously around the hospice at St. Bernard Pass, where patient monks continue to train the dogs to search out travellers lost in Alpine snowdrifts.

Origin of the Strain

The original St. Bernard of the Alps, it is said, was probably the Swiss sheepdog bred with a mastiff in order to obtain greater strength.

For centuries the monks specialized in the breeding of these dogs and eventually got a strain which was one of the finest, if not the finest, in the world. But tragedy came to the monastery kennels. First a bad epidemic of distemper wiped out a large number of the dogs, later an avalanche demolished part of the kennels and killed the dogs. In order to replenish the kennels, the monks then brought dogs from the Pyrenees and bred them with the bloodhound. The result was not the rugged breed for which the monastery had long been notable. According to dog fanciers, its kennels do not to-day produce the fine strain of former years. In fact, England is now said to have the finest St. Bernards in the world. This is due to a strain brought to that country from Switzerland in the seventeenth century. Careful breeding has strengthened and improved the strain.

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Liver Puddings

One pound liver, 1½ tablespoons ground suet, 1½ teaspoons salt, 1 small onion, minced, ¼ tablespoon pepper, 2 eggs, 3 slices stale bread, 1 tablespoon chopped parsley, 1-8 teaspoon nutmeg, ½ tablespoon bacon fat, 2-3 cup flour. Soak the bread in water to cover until soft, squeeze dry and crumble up into small pieces. Put liver through food chopper and add to the bread together with the well-beaten eggs, parsley, nutmeg and minced onion cooked in the bacon fat, and stir in the flour. Drop from a spoon into boiling salted water; cover closely and boil 10 minutes. Drain and serve with baked onions.

Date Squares

One cup brown sugar, 1-3 cup butter, 2 eggs, ½ pound dates, 1¼ cups flour, 2 teaspoons baking powder, ½ cup milk, ½ teaspoon each, ginger, nutmeg and ½ teaspoon salt. Cream sugar and butter, add beaten eggs, next sifted dry ingredients and chopped dates, then the milk. Mix and bake, in shallow pan, about 30 minutes, over 325 degrees. Cut small squares.

Potato Border

Mash 9 good-sized boiled potatoes; add 2 tablespoons butter, 1 good cup boiling milk, 1 large tablespoon salt and the well-beaten yolks of 2 eggs; beat till very light. Pack in to a well-buttered border mould (an inverted dish will do) and let it stand away from the heat, 8 minutes. Beat egg whites stiff an add ¼ teaspoon salt; turn the border on a warm platter, cover it with the beaten white, and brown in a moderate oven. Put meat or fish, heated in sauce, in the centre.

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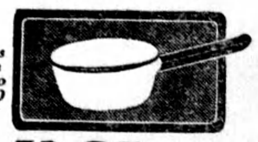

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