Jungle Breath

by Ben Lucien Burman

THIS HAS HAPPENED

Attempts have been made on the life of Elise Marberry, who owns considerable property near Porto Verde, Brazil. Several mysterious deaths occur, and Vilak, Elise's cousin and protector, believes Gaylord Prentiss is responsible. Vilak, Elise, and Lincoln Nunnally, an elderly chemist, ride and warn Prentiss of a plot by the natives to murder him. They defend Prentiss' fazenda. Prentiss disappears. The next day Elise's little baby nephew, Tinky, is kidnapped, and Vilak learns that Prentiss has been seen deep in the jungle with a white child. An expedition is formed. They follow Prentiss' trail and finally come upon a native village, where they stay overnight.

NOW BEGIN THE STORY

CHAPTER XXXVI.

The caravan set out next morning. The withered chieftain, clutching the box of matches tight against his breast, sadly bade them goodby. "You never come back," he murmured. "Devil gods on red mountain kill you. Kill sure. Better, much better, come and live with Bagarundi. Me, Bagarundi, never hurt."

The travellers saw him watching until the thicket blotted him from view.

Up to this time they proceeded without accident. But they had been out of Baragundi's tiny settlement only three or four hours when they met disaster.

They had reached another river lined on both sides by low cliffs of the interminable red volcanic rocks. Paulos and one of the Indians were standing on an apparently solid rock at the edge of the nearer bank, looking down at the brown water below. Without warning, the rock toppled and dropped into the stream.

The two men tried to leap to safety. But their panic-struck efforts were too late; both tumbled to the water thirty feet below. They were rescued by Vilak and one of the Indians after twenty minutes of strenuous and dangerous labor in beating off the cruel piranhas, the small but fierce flesh-eating fish that infest most of the waters of the Amazon valley.

When they were finally brought to shore, Vilak, examining them expertly, found that Paulos had suffered a badly broken leg in falling against a projecting rock; the Indian was bleeding at the mouth from serious internal injuries caused when he struck flat against the surface of the stream. Obviously they could not accompany the expedition further.

He gave medicine to one, made a splint for the other, and sent a messenger back to Bagarundi to send bearers to bring them to his village. Thus having made sure that they would not be left to the mercy of some strange beast, he gave the order to proceed. Several times in the afternoon, Nunnally noticed him wheel round and glance quickly up when there was a slight crackle or rustle in the black mat of vegetation hiding the sky.

Calamity, once it had showed its ugly head, began to strike repeatedly. The next night they were compelled to pitch camp in the midst of a huge swamp, where great stretches of enormous reeds alternated with patches of gigantic water-lillies, beautiful with brilliant but unwholesome coloring. The following morning Schwartz, Wilson, and one of the half-breeds were helpless with fever, and after a vain attempt to carry them with the expedition, had to be left behind in the care of natives who would take them back to Bagarundi's. More men were lost a day or two later when two of the Indians, who had gone off on the pretext of searching for some berries when the expedition was halted at noon, failed to return. From their actions a few hours previous, Vilak was certain they had deserted.

The losses necessitated a readjustment of the caravan; some of the mules and the canoes which had proved an onerous and practically useless burden were abandoned. The reorganized train pitched its first camp on a low, wooded ridge. Elise and Vilak silently played Canfield by the light of the flickering fire.

The old man, who in the unpacking had noticed a small harmonica about to be thrown away and under a sudden impulse had thrust it into his pocket, now drew it out and after considerable hesitation put it into his mouth and began to play. He ceased after a few plaintive and discordant attempts, despite the vigorous applause of the two card players, and off in a corner, began listening to the muttered conversation and the blood-curdling stories of the superstitious natives huddled in a fantastic circle a few yards away. A little while later he arose and walked over to Vilak.

"I think . . er . . we're going to have trouble," he said furtively. "You had better . . . better keep a sharp watch on those two . . er . . fellows." He cautiously indicated the two albino-like halfbreeds who were sitting near a pot of their favorite touchino and talking in low tones with their motley companions.

"I heard them . . er . . talking a little while ago when they were playing cards. They didn't know I was listening. I couldn't hear what they said. It was something about . . er . . killing, I think. And then robbing. They say we have much . . er . . . money with us . . . Much money."

Vilak tossed the stone of a fruit he had been munching into the brush. "I've been keeping an eye on them. I've begun to think lately from a little I've noticed that they might be working for our . . . friends . . . ahead, and came with us just for that reason. Though I'm not at all sure.

"The guide, too, has been developing some rather queer habits. Schwartz said these fellows were bad, but I didn't believe they could be as bad as they've proved. I certainly would rather have gone without any men. They've been absolutely useless. Worse than useless. A lot of my energy that I could be devoting to something else I have to expend in watching so that they don't get a good chance to put a knife into our ribs."

The trail, still continuing unbroken and always to the west, for the first part of the next morning led them through a sea of green and dun-colored thistles, each covered with fire ants which stung vigorously when the travellers unwittingly brushed against them.

Once they passed an open spot where a number of cigaret stubs like those they had seen some days before lay on the ground. Vilak stooped and picked up several. The tobacco was rolled in small printed squares of paper which were the checking forms used in the warehouses on Elise's fazenda and which Limey Potts, like all the other foremen, generally carried in his pocket.

At dusk they camped on the shore of another river, wide, clear, attractive. Vilak and the old man decided to take advantage of the few remaining minutes of daylight to bathe. They strode up the bank to a grassy spot a few hundred yards above the camp. They stripped. Vilak peered into the depths of the shining water, then, satisfied that no piranhas were about at the moment, stepped in.

"We're taking chances, Nanny," he said to his companion as they waded out toward the middle where the water was deeper and the bottom lined with smooth white pebbles. "There isn't one of these rivers that isn't cursed with piranhas. But I do need a bath. And I think you do, too." He drew a deep breath of contentment. "Um-m. This is luxury. Splash around as much as you can. Noise is apt to keep them off. They're afraid of it."

He was assiduously scrubbing himself with a thick bar of soap when he turned sharply to glance at one of the albinos who had followed them up the shore and taking a seat at the water's edge had begun lazily to whittle a twig with a knife.

Wonder what that chap's up to?" he murmured.

He went on with his washing. Suddenly he commenced speeding toward the land, taking great plunging steps through the water which came half way to his waist. The albino saw him; began to run. Swiftly Vilak caught up with him. The other wheeled; struck viciously with his knife. But Vilak was too quick. In an instant he lay on the ground, whimpering with pain as Vilak's steely fingers dug into his flesh.

The old man had followed at a curt command from his friend. He noticed that the water at the river's edge was tinged with red; saw that the albino's finger was bleeding profusely. "What's he done? . . er . . done?" he stammered.

Vilak did not answer, but motioned that he wanted a stout, rope-like liana hanging from a nearby pecova tree. Nunnally cut a section of it free. Vilak bound it securely about his captive's quivering limbs. "I'd be justified if I hung you for this," he grunted.

(To be continued.)

"I couldn't hear what they said. It was something about . . er . . . killing, I think."

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AFTER EVERY MEAL

ISSUE No. 31—'30

Diphtheria Curbed By Use of Toxoid

Winnipeg—Wide-spread use of diphtheria toxoid is successfully curbing a spread of that disease, which had penetrated into scattered Manitoba municipalities. The provincial department of health believes the scourge is definitely on the wane.

For the entire province 33 new cases were registered during the first 15 days of July, a decided decrease from the preceding half-month period.

Prompt measures adopted for immunization in some localities is resonsible for improvement in the situation, says Dr. F. W. Jackson, director of the communicable disease division of the health department. He recommends province-wide immunization through the use of toxoid before schools re-open for the fall term.

What New York Is Wearing

BY ANNABELLE WORTHINGTON

Illustrated Dressmaking Lesson Furnished With Every Pattern

A daffodil yellow and white printed gimity with crisp white organdie capelet collar and yellow grosgrain ribbon tie, that is very, very French.

The full-gathered skirt emphasizes the normal waistline of the little basque bodice. The scalloped hem of skirt may be picot-edged or finished with bias binding.

Style No. 3376 comes in sizes 2, 4 and 6 years. It takes but 1⅛ yards of 35-inch material with ⅜ yard of 20-inch contrasting and 1½ yards of 2-inch ribbon for the 4-year old.

For parties, it is adorable made of pink taffeta. Bind scallops of collar and skirt with bias fold of the taffeta. Choose turquoise blue grosgrain ribbon for tie.

Orchid and white gingham check is very quaint and pretty with white pique collar.

Nile green organdie, pale blue linen and tub silk in sprigged pattern in pink tones are darling combinations.

HOW TO ORDER PATTERNS

Write your name and address plainly, giving number and size of such patterns as you want. Enclose 20c in stamps or coin (coin preferred; wrap it carefully) for each number, and address your order to Wilson Pattern Service, 73 West Adelaide St., Toronto.

SUNSHINE ON THE SHELF

When one jar is empty
There are many more,
Open yet another
As fragrant as before.

In the time of summer
You gathered from the briar
These berries, red and ripe
With the sun-fire.

If you are true woman
And no mere lazy elf,
You will always have sun-clear
Glasses on a shelf.

—Isabel Fiske Conant.

"Waiter, a beefsteak—but not a small one; I am so terribly nervous that every little thing upsets me."

Gandhi says he dreamed he was being arrested. When he awoke he probably pinched himself.

Where No Wind Stirs

I love it here
Amid the firs
Where no wind stirs.
I love the calm,
The redolent
Spice of balm;
I find content
Amid the firs
Where no wind stirs.
I love the song
The hermit-thrust
Hurtles along
Across the hush
Amid the firs
Where no wind stirs.
I love the light
Slant-stealing in,
Now faint, now bright,
Eerie and thin
Amid the firs
Where no wind stirs.
And so I wait
Till dips the dark,
Alert, elate,
To hear—oh, hark!!—
The first faint whip-poor-will
Behind the hill
Amid the firs
Where no wind stirs.

—Clinton Scollard.

Alum Will Help

Alum can be used very effectively for mending broken china, glassware, etc. Melt a little in an old iron spoon over the fire, apply it to the broken parts, and leave till it hardens. This holds the pieces together as effectively as the strongest cemnt.

A solution of alum and water will not only clean a ceiling, but also prevent the whitewash from peeling off.

A small piece of alum added to the vinegar when pickling helps to make the pickles nice and crisp.

Should you happen to cut your finger, rub a little powdered alum over the wound. This will stop the bleeding.

Tepid water in which a little alum has been dissolved makes a very effective throat gargle.

For Blisters — Minard's Liniment.

Rheumatism?

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JAPAN TEA

'Fresh from the gardens'

Christening in the East

In some foreign lands the baby's name is chosen in strange ways. The poor little Chinese girls are thought of so little importance that they rarely get a name at all as infants, but are called No. 1, 2, 3 or whtever their place in the list of daughters may be

Chinese boys are given a name, by which they are called till they attain the age of twenty; then their father gives them a new name.

Japanese girls have pretty names, usually those of some flowers—"Mimosa," "Chrysanthemum," "Cherry Blossom," and in some parts of the country the little Japs do not receive a name until they are five years old, when their father chooses one for them.

Hindu babes are named when they are about twelve days old, and it is usually the mother who chooses the name. They, too, are fond of pretty flower names for their little girls.

The Egyptians have an odd way of choosing a baby's name. They light three candles, giving a name to each; but they always call one after some deified or exalted person. The baby is called by the name borne by the candle which burns longest.

Mohammedans sometimes write suitable names on slips of paper, which they insert between the pages of the Koran. The first slip drawn out gives the name to the baby.

Minard's Liniment for Lumbago.

Penknife

The term penknife, now used to mean a pocketknife, is a relic of the time when one of the uses of the knife was to mend quill penpoints.

Capital Punishment

Denmark, which recently abolished capital punishment, had not inflicted this penalty for 30 years.

"But your wife said she'd forgive and forget." "Yes; she forgot she'd forgiven."

"Literature may be called the all-seeing eye of the world, whose glance penetrates into the deepest recesses of the human spirit."—Maxim Gorky.

Minard's Liniment for Neuralgia.

Now that some of the women are wearing longer skirts, we miss a great many of the old joints.

"What should I take when I'm run down, doctor?" "The number of the car, of course."

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