

Swami Ram's Reincarnation

By FRANK BLIGHTON

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SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I.—While his train is held on a siding Tom Davengro, engineer of the Pacific Limited, becomes interested in the furtive movements of a small brown man, evidently a foreigner, and investigates. What he discovers sends him back to his cab in a hurry. Buchanan Williams, mining man, boards the train and makes the acquaintance of the stranger. Jallingsrao Jitendra, who proves to be an East Indian. The limited is wrecked.

CHAPTER II.—Williams, though painfully burned, saves Jitendra, who had been pinned under the wreck. The Hindu vows eternal gratitude. Williams receives a message telling him Mexican revolutionists have seized his mine, known as "El Tigre," and killed or driven off the Americans.

CHAPTER III.—On his way to his mine, alone, Williams discovers that Jitendra is following him, and he orders him to turn back. The Hindu apparently acquiesces, but when Williams reaches the mine he finds Jitendra there.

CHAPTER IV.—The Hindu declares Fate has bound him and Williams together, and asserts mysteriously that the gods Vishnu and Siva are with him. Williams, somewhat touched, allows him to stay. While in a sleep of exhaustion Williams is made prisoner by a Mexican force led by Manuel Pacheco, his former mine foreman. With Jitendra also a prisoner, the party sets out for Zapatlillo. On the way Pacheco brutally strikes Williams and almost immediately falls from his horse dead, apparently without cause.

CHAPTER V.—Arriving at Zapatlillo Williams and Jitendra are placed in a filthy cell. Williams is visited by Herbert Hardinge, representative of a rival mining company. He offers Williams his liberty if he will abandon El Tigre and agree to leave the country. Williams indignantly refuses.

CHAPTER VI.—Both men are condemned to be shot next morning. Exhilarated by rage at his impotence, Williams seizes and swears by Jitendra, pushing into his hands a loaded rifle and urging him to escape. After his departure Jitendra converses with the guard whose rifle he had given Williams.

CHAPTER VII.—Hardinge is dumfounded when informed by Moreno of Williams' escape, and visits the jail to make sure that Jitendra is executed. The latter is led out and informed that he has been pardoned and is free, the Mexicans meaning to shoot him as he leaves the prison. Jitendra knows of the plot through the soldier he had intimidated, and has arranged to thwart it. Apparently overjoyed, he turns to leave the prison, at the moment of his departure being a cigarette from the officer in charge of the firing party. He lights it and drops the match on a trail of powder leading to a quantity concealed in proximity to the soldiers and at a distance from Jitendra. Most of the firing party, with Hardinge, are killed by the explosion. Jitendra disappears.

CHAPTER VIII.

Swami Ram Bids Adieu!
"Listen!"
Buck Williams held up a warning hand.

The two score American riders trailing behind him halted in the cover of the thick trees just above El Tigre mine. Some were aching with wounds, others reeling in their saddles with fatigue. But at the signal everything was forgotten except the possibility of another brush with Moreno's men.

Indomitable, resolute expressions replaced the lines which pain had painted on their faces as weapons were loosened and muscles grew taut with the suspense of the moment.

"What the devil is it?" wonderingly demanded Billy Scott.

"Do you hear it, too?" There was a note of relief in Buck Williams' voice. "Scotty, I thought for a minute I had the rams again—and its seven years since I touched a drink. That's the same tune I heard the night I got back to El Tigre, when I dreamed Washington was leading his army of ghosts against Pacheco's peons. Then I woke up to find that lousy thief had me hamstrung for fair!"

"It's a flute or a fife of some sort," averred Fridly Thornton, "playing 'Yankee Doodle,' I guess."

"Git out, Friday," scoffed Tommy Wickwire. "That ain't 'Yankee Doodle' any more than it's 'Lead, Kindly Light,' if that ain't 'Everybody's Doing It,' I'm a greaser myself."

"It can't be any of Moreno's outfit," thoughtfully remarked Scott. "His shogun artists never play nothin' but fustian and guitars."

"Here goes, boys!" shouted Williams, galloping his horse down the hill toward the building. The others followed unhesitatingly. The piping notes grew more clearly audible as they swept up the road to Buck's residence.

The owner of El Tigre was first out of the saddle. He strode into the building, with rifle ready, Scott, Thornton and Wickwire just behind. The quartette burst into the dining room.

Seated cross-legged on the floor was an emaciated, brown-hued little man, naked to the loins, save for an immaculate turban which encircled his head. From a small, reedlike pipe came the music which they had heard and upon which he was still performing vigorously, but with the greatest composure.

On each side of him, swaying in perfect rhythm to the music, were two repulsive king-cobras. A hypnotic spell seemed to fill the room. Neither the piper nor the snakes appeared aware of the intrusion.

"Jitendra!" sharply ejaculated Williams.

The music abruptly ceased. The ophidians, as if sensing possible danger, flattened to the floor and glided with amazing swiftness over to the Hindu. He thrust one nonchalant-

ly into his turban and the other into the neck-cloth he plucked from the floor and adjusted.

The four Americans gasped. It was several seconds before Williams could find his voice. So many weird things had happened that he would not have been surprised to see the little brown man disappear through the floor or dissolve into nothing while they watched.

"I thought you were dead, Jitendra!" at last exclaimed the mine owner.

The diminutive brown man arose and salaamed profoundly.

"The sahib speaks true of Jallingsrao Jitendra, who today exorcised on the Seven Paths from the prison yard of the city—is it not so?"

Buck winced. But his careful scrutiny of the half-starved figure before him removed the sudden doubts which had projected themselves into his mind.

"You're Jitendra, all right," he positively replied. "I know your feet—you loyal little cuss! You cut the soles of them almost to pieces following me from El Paso. Look at them—they're raw yet!"

"Jallingsrao Jitendra has passed on," politely but firmly returned the Oriental, but the flicker of a smile across his mobile face. "But, verily, his soul reincarnated again in my body—but I, sahib, am called Swami Ram."

"I get you, Steve," laughed Buck uproariously. "And I think I savvy another little incident which occurred when the late Jallingsrao Jitendra—gee! what a mouthful that name is—was in my company. If you had that interesting creature around your head when you leaned over toward Manuel Pacheco on the way to jail in Zapatlillo, no wonder he kicked off so mysteriously. I'll match a cobra against a greaser, any day."

"The vengeance of Vishnu is swift and sure," placidly returned the Hindu. "Likewise, sahib, Siva was of some small service to you during the earth-life of the late Jitendra."

"You mean down in the carcel?"

The little brown man bowed low.

"Sahib, when Siva crept under the door where no man might pass, and coiled upon the neck of the guard, think you not there were reasons why he wished, very much, to come inside to have speech with Jitendra?"

"Ugh!" shuddered Buck. "I should think there were—plenty of them. So that was how you nailed the sentry in the corridor. And it was his rifle which the late Jitendra gave me, I suppose?"

Swami Ram nodded. "Vishnu and Siva, sahib, as you will testify, are not without power to succor the deserving in their distress."

"They're a couple of perfectly good snakes," hastily acquiesced the American. "But why did Jitendra die instead of following me out of the prison? And what became of that other Mexican guard?"

"Jitendra had lost caste by being thrust into that foul dungeon by unclean hands, sahib. Also, he had smoked a cigarette, which is likewise forbidden. He was to wed the Princess Indira, but she must now seek another husband. It was needful for him to exorcise for purification."

"But they took you out to shoot you, didn't they? I thought I heard the volley just as I rode up."

"A little patience, sahib. The guard in the hall vowed obedience to Vishnu and Siva in return for his life, thus becoming a novitiate on the Seven Paths. It was he who made ready for Jitendra to pass out by hiding the powder kegs in the old drain beneath the place where the killers of men were accustomed to stand."

"Also he strewed powder to the hole where Jitendra stood when he lighted the forbidden cigarette. Jitendra did not smoke cigarettes, but his act was necessary to carry out the will of the gods. For, sahib, those deluded ones were also fated to seek wisdom elsewhere. Not until they shall raise the veil of Maya from their vision and, perceiving Truth, resolve to kill no more, may they hope to return to earth-life."

Buck Williams grinned at the naive recital. His three friends were too astounded to speak.

"Where are you going now?" queried the mine owner.

"A novitiate of the gods, who was once a jail guard, waits for me with horses in the hills. Sahib, may a poor Swami presume upon your generosity?"

"Anything—up to half of El Tigre."

"I have already appropriated linen from your bed for a new turban, that Swami Ram may re-enter the world properly attired. But Vishnu and Siva are cold and hungry. Warmth they may find from my own body, but food, alas! I have none. Will the gracious sahib grant me the boon of another can of milk ere we journey on to meet the Princess Indira, who awaits a new husband in New England?"

(THE END.)

CONTROL OF GARDEN SLUGS

Control of garden slugs and insecticide spray information on effect of sprayers and how to use them, will be offered in bulletin form to the people of Oregon by the O. A. C. experiment station soon after March 1. These bulletins were prepared by the department of entomology. The preliminary investigations on which they are based were begun four years ago since which time a huge volume of data has been recorded from the poisoning of myriads of insects. The information they contain, presented by A. L. Lovett and his assistants, is expected to decrease the cost and increase the degree of insect pest control.

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"I suffered with indigestion for eighteen years. I would go for two or three days at a time without eating a bite, and when I did manage to force down a little something I would be in the most intense misery afterward. Gas would form and I would bloat so badly I could hardly get my breath and I would have the worst sort of pains over my liver—just a steady, dull pain for two or three days at a time. I used to have the headache every other day regularly and would have such dizzy spells I would have to either sit down or lie down to keep from falling, and I was so weak and run down it was all I could do to do my house work."

"Tanlac was recommended to me by my sister who lives in Oklahoma, who had been greatly benefited by taking it, and I decided to try it. I had taken every sort of medicine I could hear of without any good results, but when I started on Tanlac I knew I had at last found the medicine I needed, for after I had finished the second bottle I had a good appetite, I could sleep better, would wake up greatly refreshed, and was improved in every way. I am never bothered with gas and I haven't had the headache for over two months and never have those dizzy spells any more. I have gained ten pounds in weight and feel stronger than I have in years, and can do all my housework with the greatest ease. My friends all ask me what I have been doing to look so much better and it is always a pleasure for me to tell them I have been taking Tanlac."

Tanlac is sold in Burns by Reed Brothers and at Crane by the Vale Trading Co. Ad.

News Print Hogs

When you read the mammoth Sunday edition of some large city daily paper, do you ever pause to think that the size of that edition is one of the leading factors in the shortage of news print paper? It is quite so.

The publishers of many of these big city dailies are greedy hogs.

They know it is extremely difficult for the country press to secure sufficient print paper with which to put out their limited weekly editions. They know that if the country publisher can not secure the necessary paper stock he must go to the wall.

Yet Sunday after Sunday they continue to issue editions so large that it becomes a physical impossibility to read them. Section after section is placed in the Sunday papers that contains nothing of a news element, and but little of any practical value whatever. Usually it is composed solely of sickening slush which a schoolboy would be ashamed to father. It is a useless waste of material which is already difficult to obtain. It reminds one of the hog that roots the bucket over in its greedy effort to get all of the slop.

Some of the city dailies have Sunday circulations as high as four hundred thousand. One useless eight page section omitted from such an edition would furnish the news print necessary for a week's supply for at least two hundred country newspapers. One such section from the New York and Chicago Sunday papers alone would supply over two thousand country papers.

One section omitted from these papers would hardly be missed. It would create no hardships whatever. The failure of two thousand country papers to make their appearance on press day would create a furor.

The big daily newspapers would have the people believe that the shortage of newsprint is due to under production. As a matter of actual fact, it is due in great part to the hogghishness of the Sunday dailies.

Congress may not realize it, but the thousands and thousands of country editors have their eyes glued on Washington. They are waiting to see what Washington is going to do about it.

Congress can aid the situation very materially by placing a reasonable limit on the size of Sunday papers, varying according to population. This will not infringe upon the legitimate rights of the daily papers. It will protect the rights of the country press.

Already some country papers have suspended publication because they could not secure the paper necessary to print their editions. In the face of such conditions, to permit the daily news print hog to continue his present practice will inflict incalculable damage upon the country press.

Weak kneed officials prattle about the situation working itself out. It will not.

No hungry dog was ever known to voluntarily surrender a juicy bone.

And the news print hog is even greedier than the dog.

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