THE BLACK LILY

(Continued from Page One)

The tall figure in priest's robes held the serpent out and away from was—Pather Jose. His noble head him, then downward. was held high. His venerable white beard fell in a cascade of silver far below his waist. The shock of white half hing, unshaven, over his broad shoulders.

The quick, powerful swing and jerk, accompanied by the tightening of the above his head in a sweeping gesture sharply spoken word that preceded of greeting. It was as if some untile just below the neck, loosened some presence stood before him. The accompanied by the tightening of the accompanied by the accompanied by the accompanied by the tightening of the accompanied

man raised his hand high above his head.

In it writhed and squirmed the small brownish-green serpent

The menacing growl died on a long hissing gasp of amazement That serpent was so deadly that That serpent was so deady that never in the history of the jungle had one been known to survive its bite, and yet, even as they looked, the old man's other hand steadily approached to within striking distance of those deadly fangs. Deliberately he held the small serpent in sight of all that vast throng Dein sight of all that vast throng. De-liberately he invited the darting blow of the lightning-like thrust of the small wicked head, into the bare palm of his extended hand.

Serpent Dashed to Pieces

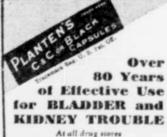
Not once but several times did they see that darting, powerful blow of the evil head attached to the slender sinuous body so tightly wrapped about the high held forearm. After each blow two spots of blood leaped to the surface to tell that the fangs had "gone home." Then with a sud-



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den whirling and snapping motion the old man threw the arm that

olike the feathers on an excited hen. oaround inside the misting glass. But the man in the High Priest's globe, the ivory face went rigid, then robe did not move from his place: slowly—slowly—the whole body reinstead, he only leoked out over the laxed and lay inert and unmoving. people with a sweeping gaze of absolute authority.

Black Flower Petals Move

The sun was almost at the mid by

hair hung, unshaven, over his broad shoulders.

As the roar rose to a bellow and eyes began to gleam redly, the old



The tall figure in priest's robe was Father Jose

the man's heel was placed on its from that tall figure—Lord even of head and was grinding it to a flat-tened pulp on the marble. the Death that not even Jonthra, who should have stood in that place

The action had not taken a minute even now, dared to challenge, "Jonut in that minute the roar had led down to a breathless, whispersound of amazed fear,"

Who should have stood in that place even now, dared to challenge, "Jonut thra?" The very stillness seemed to shout the unasked question that, after what they had seen, his staunchdied down to a breathless, whisper-ing sound of amazed fear.

The reddening eyes had become glazed with a sort of wondering terror, as they fixed themselves upon the tall grey-clad figure. For a brief space they waited. The hot silence was broken only by sharply indrawn breaths. Then breaths. Then-

The hooded figure in the throne like chair uttered a deep cry of ur- in the same direction. gent questioning fear. It was directed to the old man, but the hooded face as turned toward the glass enclosed altar top.

The outer petals of the BLACK LILY were loosened and puffed up

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A groan came from the throned Dolores moved her head feebly and futilely the fraction of an inch back-ward from the swelling bud. But the slender steel cord and the heavy glass globe held her securely. Under

the flowing veil the golden chains kept her body almost rigid. Suddenly, as a hand might open and fling powdered dust upward, the fluffed petals of the magnificent blossom flung outward. There was a quick puff of smoke-like vapor straight into the face and nostrils

John Northington uttered a deep urse and turned eyes of futile threat

of the beautiful girl. A gasping, smothered cry was merged and was lost in an uproar of sounds from the watchers. While the vapor curled and moved lazily

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With a strangling cry the man in the threne chair would have tried to rise, straining against the crossed-ropes that meant his certain death by strangulation—the Death meted out to forsworn priests instead of the

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The old man paused; there was a

straining forward of the great crowd-a sort of waiting of puzzled and expectant wonder. Someone out in the crowd half whispered, half shouted a single questioning word-"Jonthra?" The vast concourse of people echoed it hesitantly—"Yes, where is Jonthra?"

The High Priest of the FLOWER? An evil low-browed priest nearest the altar added the descriptive words

The white-haired old man turned a straight look of grim meaning in his direction. For a moment the looks crossed. Then the other lowered his eyes as one lowers a sword in defeat.

The girl lay motionless still.

Defies Jonthra

The old man, not looking at the altar group, spoke out in a loud carrying voice: "Aye Jonthra! Know ye not, oh, ye foolish ones, that the SACRED PLOWER metes its own punishment and its own rewards? Know ye not that in the secret chambers of the Temple it holds the wisdom of the ages, and that they who administer that wisdom are ever inviolate of death, even such death"
—he pointed to the dead serpent at
his fect and held aloft the hand it had wounded.

The silence deepened. 'It is decreed that ye shall see and

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Sloan's Liniment

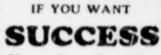


Swelling Reduced And

men bound to the altar, although one could only sense its meaning by the tone. On the same breath he spoke to the people.

"THE GODS HAVE SPOKEN!" At the uplifted hands and raised voice of the old man the people were stilled to so deep a silence that the slithering of the still squirming body of the crushed serpent could be heard on the marble floor.

"THE BLACK FLOWER has jected the marble floor.



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