

The Jungle

by

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Illustrated by

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THE JUNGLE

By BEATRICE REDPATH

How many of us have our own particular "jungles," and often feel their pull? Anyway, you'll sympathize with the little elfin waif, Is'bel.

ILLUSTRATED BY
NORMAN PRICE

The book store was half way down a short blind street. This cul-de-sac was a backwater of respectability. Its old brown stone fronts had somehow managed to resist the on-creeping tide of slum districts which were steadily devouring the avenues and streets on all sides of it. House fronts in the other streets showed signs of degradation and decay; dirty children swarmed in the gutters; push carts blocked the curbs; and on warm summer evenings when the door of the store stood open Ian Dale could hear the quarrelling voices of drunken men, or the discordant shouts of angry women piercing the lanes that led from his remote backwater into the very heart of the slum district.

No such sounds disturbed him this evening. The door was fastened against the gusts of wind weighted with rain that beat against the windows, sliding down the panes in long white syrupy streams. A reading lamp at his elbow threw light on the pages of a book on his knee. He sat comfortably tilted back in his swivel chair, his eyes lit with an intense eagerness as he read an account of an expedition through the African jungle.



“Where’s old Samuel?” she inquired in her odd, quick tones. “I thought he kept the store. A frosty old bird he was too.”

It was a world of twilights in which he was held; of creeping things that slid away out of sight with only a faint indeterminate stirring; of the slow stealthy movement of black bodies; of eyes peering through the undergrowth; of the weird cry of some feathered creature high in the branches; of the poisonous breath of blooms; of the drip of dank waters; of the heavy miasma of the jungle settling down over everything that lived or moved.

Fascinated, he read on and on, while the little nerves all over his body grew taut. He loved to read of the jungle, yearning always a little for a life of adventure, from the sanctuary of his book store in that quiet backwater. It was never the sea that called him; it was always the dark impenetrable paths of the jungle, the deep green twilights, the sense of the unknown and hidden terrors that stalked so stealthily abroad.

A movement at the front of the store, the sound of a gentle stirring, made him start violently. The book slipped from his knees. He jumped to his feet, staring as though it were an apparition that he saw before him.

It was only a young girl, standing shaking the drops of water from her cap, a half-amused expression on her face as she noticed his startled look.

“I guess I startled you. I thought I’d just come in here for a spell until the rain passed over. It’s something terrible outside. You were so taken up with your book that you didn’t hear me open the door.”

Her short brown hair hung in wet strings on either side of a pale, oval face. He could see how the rain had soaked through the skimpy black-and-white checked skirt she was wearing. Her thin blouse clung wet to her skin. She had restless brown eyes that roved around the store as she shook her cap.

“You’re soaked through,” Ian said, stooping first to pick up the book that had fallen on the floor, then moving towards the stove. “I’ll make up a good fire and you can dry yourself.”

She accepted his offer gratefully. He laid and lit the fire with a speed that showed long practice, and she crept close to the stove and sat down. She gave a little shiver of satisfaction as the blaze leapt up and stretched out her feet towards it. Her boots were like clinging wet pulp.

“Take them off,” ordered Ian. “You’ll never get them dry that way.”

She did as he told her, stooping to untie the laces. She looked up at him as she unlaced them.

“Where’s old Samuel?” she inquired in her odd, quick tones. “I thought he kept this store. A frosty old bird he was, too.”

“He died a month ago. I’m his son.”

She dropped one boot on the floor and looked at him in mild surprise.

“However did he come to have a son like you?”

“Why, like me?”

“Well, you seem sort of human,” she said naively. “Do you live here alone by yourself?”

He nodded.

“With just all these books around you?”

He nodded again, following her glance that swept over the dim, untidy store piled so high with books in every direction. They appeared to be thrown about in hopeless confusion, but Ian knew just where he could find each particular volume.

He had lived the whole twenty-five years of his life among these books; played behind them as a child; learned to read from the large volumes on those far shelves; and now his life was lived almost entirely between their pages. It would appear a strange existence to the girl crouching before him.

She was like a little elf, sitting there with her wet stockinged feet thrust forward to the blaze in the stove, her wet hair hanging around her face. The glow of the stove flushed her cheeks, lit up her eyes.

“Where do you live?” he inquired.

“Delaware Alley. I board with Mrs. Snodgrass. A stuffy old dame she is, too. I’m checker in one of the stores. My name’s Is’bel Rooks.”

He smiled at the epitomised statement.

“Where are your people?”

“Never had any that I know of.”

He pulled up a chair and sat down opposite to her. Those restless brown eyes roved over him now as though she were cataloguing him as he had catalogued the books on the shelves. He could see himself through her eyes, and was painfully aware that he was not much to look at: small, thin, with very fair hair, and gray green eyes. His shoulders stooped just a little, and at times he wore glasses which had given a pinched-in appearance to his nose.

“You look as though you spent too much time with these old books,” she said, with the natural frankness that he liked in her. “It’s dusty here. It will get into your lungs if you don’t watch out.”

He was amused at the tone of maternal solicitude in her voice, liking it all the same.

“I’m stronger than I look. You don’t seem any too strong yourself. You shouldn’t be out in a storm like this.”

“I’m wiry. Never had a day’s sickness that I can remember. Tell me about your books,” she went on, looking at the high shelves that touched the ceiling; “what’s in them? I don’t know a thing about books. Never had much time for them. Can’t see what you get out of them. None of it’s true. What were you reading when I came in?”

“I was reading about the jungle.”

“What’s that? Never heard of it.”

He tried to tell her, endeavoring to make her see that world of twilights and dark slipping fears.

“Once you’ve gone into the jungle,” he went on, seeing that she was interested, “you are always being drawn back to it again. I read about a man who went there on an expedition to look for ivory. And he hated it; hated the uncanny feel of it, the awful naked savagery, the mystery and the stealthiness. All the time that he was making his way through the jungle he would think of his little home in a city suburb; of the garden planted with tulips; of the blessed peace of a Sunday afternoon at home. When he finally got back home he found he couldn’t stay. The jungle pulled him back.”

“That’s sort of queer,” she said with deep interest, “and you say that he went back still hating it?”

“Yes, always hating it. Lying awake at nights with the sweat pouring out on his face, listening to the uncanny noises, dreaming of the tulip beds at home. But he couldn’t go back to the things he loved. The jungle was too strong for him.”

“He must have been a queer one. But tell me more—tell me all you can.”

And she sat with her eyes riveted on his face, drinking in every word, occasionally breaking in with some exclamation, but for the most part silent, while he talked on and on, forgetting the advancing hour.

A clock somewhere in the back of the store began to strike. She sprang to her feet in quick alarm.

“My, I never knew it was so late. How will I ever get to work in the morning?”

“Come again,” he said as she stood pulling her cap down over her brown hair.

“I’d like to come.”

“And I’d like to have you.”

A strange friendship began to grow up between them. Two or three times a week Is’bel Rooks would come to the book store in the evenings. If there were customers in the store she would stand and wait until they left, turning over the leaves of a book, wandering about looking at the names of the

books on the shelves. But if Ian were alone she would immediately throw off her cap and seat herself with her feet tucked up under her.

“Tell me some more,” she would always insist. “I want to hear some more about that old jungle of yours. It kind of fascinates me.”

She had been coming every week for several months when one week she did not come. Ian became restless and uneasy. He couldn't settle down to read in the evenings. He kept incessantly walking to the door and staring down the street, hoping to see the flash of her black and white checked skirt.

He began to imagine that all manner of terrible things had overtaken her. She was so eager and impetuous, she might have darted across the street in front of a motor; something might have happened to her in those dark streets through which she had to pass on her way home. How careless he had been to allow her to go home alone every night. What had he been thinking about? Her blithe independence had made him forget that she was only a child after all. He had been lacking in the very first decencies of behavior.

He couldn't stand the suspense. On Saturday night he put on his hat immediately he had finished his supper and started out to look for the lodging house kept by Mrs. Snodgrass.

Is'bel had told him the number on Delaware Alley, but he had never been in that direction before. He had always avoided the district to the east and south. When his father had been alive he had been in the habit of walking through the park. Both he and old Samuel had tried to ignore the fact of the slum's steady encroachment.

He found himself in an unfamiliar atmosphere, and the further he went the stranger it became. The streets were so narrow and the lights appeared to give less illumination in this neighborhood. In reality it was the absence of shop lights which made the streets so dark and gloomy.

Dark shapes merged into the shadows of doorways at the sound of his feet striking on the pavement. A silence went before him and followed after him, as though the neighborhood was on the alert at his approach. There was a sense of furtiveness in these foul lanes that opened into the narrow alley way. He felt as though eyes were peering at him from between closed shutters and from the cracks of doorways.

He turned a corner sharply and a bulky figure lurched up against him, slipping away into the shadows again, leaving a foul oath lingering on the air. A woman's scream rang out from the mouth of an alley, and was cut off suddenly. The silence that followed was more terrifying and ominous than

the scream. He remembered tales of people who had ventured into neighborhoods like these and had never been heard of again. His pace increased until by the time he had reached Delaware Alley he was almost running.

Compared to the streets through which he had passed Delaware Alley was comparatively decent and respectable. On the steps of the lodging house he found a group of women, the light from the hall behind making their figures stand out like huge clumsy silhouettes. He paused at the foot of the steps, while they stopped talking and eyed him inquiringly.

“Does Miss Rooks live here?”

The women only continued to stare at him in silence. Then one of them giggled, nudging the women sitting beside her.

“Look who’s here. A perfect little gentleman. Who’s your swell friend, May?”

He felt himself grow hot with anger and embarrassment.

“If you’re meanin’ Is’bel,” another woman broke in, “you’ll have some little walk to-night to see ’er, I’ll tell the world.”

A loud chorus of laughter greeted this remark which was meaningless to Ian. Mrs. Snodgrass took heavy pains to explain.

“You’ve perhaps noticed,” she said in a thick beery voice, “that our Is’bel has takin’ little ways with ’er. Between you and me, dearie, the shops don’t like it.”

“I’d be much obliged,” Ian broke in losing all patience, “if you’ll tell me where I can find Miss Rooks.”

“So you’d be much obliged, would you?” mocked Mrs. Snodgrass, rocking her heavy body to and fro. “Dearie me, dearie me. Well, I can’t tell you the number of ’er room never ’avin’ been there myself.”

“Is’bel’s been sent up for two months for shoplifting,” explained a more decent-looking woman.

His feet felt glued to the dirty sidewalk. He stood immovable. The laughter of the women still echoed through the dark street.



The women only continued to stare at him in silence. Then one of them giggled, nudging the women sitting beside her.

It couldn't possibly be true. They were simply making game of him. He turned slowly without another glance towards the grinning group, and walked slowly towards the mouth of the alley.

"It isn't true—it isn't true," he kept repeating to himself, denying the awful fact that beat like heavy hammers against his brain. "It couldn't be true. Is'bel wasn't that sort. Little Is'bel couldn't have done a thing like that."

If it were true then he was to blame. If he had taken more interest in her affairs he could have saved her from this. He had been so wrapped up in his books that the practical side of the girl's life had never entered his mind. He had hardly known her manner of living, whom she met, the friends she had. Poverty had driven her to do this thing, while he had plenty.

The shock of what he had heard drove out all thought of the streets through which he passed. He was almost surprised to find himself back at the store. He let himself in and sat down drearily beside the cold stove, staring vacantly into the shadows around him. They seemed to accuse him, like long pointing black fingers. Perhaps Is'bel had been starving, and she had never told him. She had an odd little pride of her own. She had chosen to steal rather than to beg. But he should have asked; somehow he should have found out how the child lived and whether she was in want.

The night was not cold, but he shivered; shivered at his own folly and selfishness; shivered at the thought of Is'bel shut into that place; shivered at

the memory of those ghoulish women on the steps.

Then slowly, back into his mind came the impressions of that walk to Delaware Alley; those lurching, slipping shadows; creeping things that slid away out of sight; eyes that peered at him through open cracks; the drip of dank cisterns; the poisonous breath of lanes; the terrible cry of that woman. And this was where little Is'bel belonged.

“Poor little girl,” he murmured to himself.

He did not go to see Is'bel. He wanted to spare her from any feeling of shame that might come over her were he to see her shut in that place. At moments he could scarcely bear to think of it at all. He lost all interest in his books. Instead of reading he spent the evenings prowling around those dreadful streets, drawn there by an awful fascination. He told himself that he wanted to know the full horror of that place where she had lived.

After one of those walks he would come back to the store and sit with his head in his hands, lifting it at last to stare at the calendar on the wall. Four more weeks—three more weeks. At length he could number the time in days. And then, the day that she was to come out.

At first he had planned to meet her outside the gates. He wanted to make sure that she was not going back to the horror of that lodging house. He could not bear to think that she should even step inside it. He would save her from that. But he knew he couldn't say what he wanted to say outside those grim gates. It would leave an impression that would cling to them all their lives. Is'bel would be embarrassed. He decided finally to wait until he could see her that evening.

He never knew how he managed to get through that day. To each customer he gave the impression that he was hurrying them out of the store. At six o'clock, just as he was locking the door of the shop behind him on his way to look for her, a gay laugh sounded beside him.

“Well, and how's your old jungle? Have you got any more to tell me about it?”

He was thankful, so thankful that she had not mentioned anything about where she had been. He was quivering with suppressed emotion. He reopened the door with fingers that shook and drew her inside.

“Is'bel,” he cried, catching her hands and staring down into the pallid face, from which the brown eyes looked back at him with the same old unabashed frankness, “Is'bel——”

The color flooded her face. The frank look gave way to one of shyness. Her eyelashes fluttered over her eyes.

“Is’bel,” he said with a ring of finality in his voice, “you’re going to marry me.”

He had taken her away from it all. She would never be driven by the cruel goad of poverty again. He did not mention to her anything about what had happened, and she never spoke of it to him. He wanted her to forget all that she had ever known of ugliness and poverty. He did not want her to remember that there were people like Mrs. Snodgrass and her kind.

And she had forgotten them. He saw that in her laughing eyes; heard it in the gay notes of her voice as she called to him through the store. She was like a little spring breeze, he thought, invading it, driving away the dust before her with a huge feather duster with which she vainly tried to reach the top-most shelves. Her slang speeches amused him and made him laugh joyously. Life seemed to him to be just a delightful game planned for two.

“I was always playing at keeping house when I was a kid,” she told him one day when he had protested against the fervor with which she swept and cooked and dusted, thinking that she would tire herself with the energy she expended on these things. “I found a little set of kid’s dishes once that had been thrown out in the barrels. Great fun I had pretending to serve a swell meal on them.”

“You poor little kid—oh, you poor little kid.”

“Poor, nothing,” she cried, tossing aside her duster to wind both arms tightly around his neck. “A queen has nothing on me. Hold me tighter,” she whispered against his cheek as his arms went around her. “I’m not marked ‘fragile, with care’.”

The wall papers in their flat up-stairs distressed her. They were blackened above the radiators, and the colors had faded out. Ian found her one day scrubbing them with bread crumbs in a vain effort to restore them.

“Why, you can have all the new papers you want. Why didn’t you tell me before.”

Her face lit up, although she looked doubtful for an instant.

“You’re not kidding me, are you? Could I really have papers with roses on them, big pink roses just as real as real? Oh, you must be fooling.”

“Just as many roses as you want,” Ian said, choking as he always did when she said something that showed him the bare nakedness of her short life.

She transformed the rooms into bowers of roses. Ian could scarcely keep from laughing when she displayed it all with pride.

“Why, you can’t step without treading on them,” he exclaimed finding such happiness in her happy face.

She clasped her hands with delight and rearranged a bunch of bright pink artificial roses in a vase on Ian’s dresser.

“Aren’t they fine? ’Course they’re not quite as good as the real ones, but you’d have to be made of money to have fresh ones all the time. Oh, isn’t it great to be happy?” she said turning and giving his arm an ecstatic squeeze.

She liked to send him out on messages while she looked after the store; was so proud when he came back to tell him that she had made a sale; to show him the money in the till for which she was responsible.

“He was a game old duck,” she said of a customer whom she had inveigled into buying more books than Ian had ever known him to buy at one time. “Seemed to think it a bit of a joke to find me here. I knew as soon as I set eyes on him that he was a swell. I showed him all the books with the fine new bindings, but would you believe it was those frowsy old editions for him. It seemed a crime to take good money for books with the corners all rubbed. Why, one page was torn clean in half. I told him I’d make a bit of a reduction for that one. He seemed to think that was a joke too.”

But there were times when she would sit with idle hands, a curious listlessness over her whole body, looking before her, silent. And Ian would have a queer fear take hold of him. Was she missing the old environment? Little wild creatures taken away from their surroundings sometimes pined and died.

“Why don’t you go to a theatre to-night?” he suggested, finding her this way one day. “I can’t leave the store myself to-night, but there’s that nice woman who lives next door. She’d be pleased to go with you.”

“What would be the fun if you weren’t there?” she asked, her candid eyes lifted to his face. “There’s never any fun in anything if you’re not ’round.”

A glow of happiness passed through him that dispelled the strange fear that had taken hold.

“Then why don’t you buy yourself some more frocks,” he went on trying to bring the gaiety back into her face, “you’re always wearing that one.”

“It’s pretty, isn’t it?” she asked quickly, looking down at herself a shade doubtfully.

“Yes, of course it’s pretty. Anything would be pretty on you.”

“Then what’s the good of buying another? I can only wear one at a time, can’t I?” she laughed, with all the cloud gone, her eyes dancing with light again.

“There’s no vanity about you at all, dear. That’s the trouble. You’re too thrifty and saving. I want to see you in silks and laces. I want you to have all the things you’ve never had.”

But she scoffed lightly at this.

“Silks and laces in this old store. Nice they’d look with all the dust around! No, some day I want to sail on a ship,” she said delicately touching his face with her fingers, “and we’ll go and see your old jungle. We’ll save it all for that.”

He wanted to take such cherishing care of her because she had never had care taken of her before. He would not even allow her to stay up late at night. He would make her drink a glass of milk at nine o’clock and shortly afterwards he would send her up to bed. She was always tired and yawning by that time. She raced around the shop so hard all day making work for herself to do.

When he came up to bed he would find her curled up asleep, one little white arm flung out towards him, as though even in sleep she wanted to be sure that he was near. The street light at the corner silvered the coverlet that scarcely stirred with her light breathing. As he slipped his arms around her she would give a faint sigh and creep closer to him, settling down contentedly into a deeper sleep.

They were sitting in the store one evening, Ian idly smoking and swinging himself back in his chair, while Is’bel sat with her feet on the rungs of a chair opposite to her while she did some darning. Ian was vaguely staring in front of him as he talked, when suddenly she made an abrupt movement, dragging down her short skirt to cover her legs. Looking at her face he saw that she had flushed a painful scarlet.

“What’s the matter, dear?” he inquired curiously.

Her face had grown white again. Even her lips seemed white.

“Nothing,” she said in low tones. “Why there’s nothing the matter.”

“Then why——”

He glanced back at the offending legs. He noticed then that she was wearing a pair of stockings he had never seen before, elaborate affairs, delicately embroidered and inset with lace, very different to those she usually wore.

He looked back again at her face as she bent low over her darning. The natural color was coming back into her cheeks. But why had she blushed and then grown so white? Fear seemed to catch him by the throat and shake him until even his hands trembled. He had always told her to take all the money she wanted from the till. He was just imagining things, that was all. It was contemptible of him even to have had such a thought. Why should not she have bought herself a pair of lace stockings? She had blushed because he had noticed her small vanity. That was all it was.

He forgot the incident completely. Some weeks later another incident recalled it, making the little happening have a cumulative force.

Mrs. Drury, an old and valued customer of Ian’s, had come into the store to look over his latest acquisitions to add to her collection of Americana. Ian was showing her some volumes, taking them down from the shelves, while she examined them with the aid of a lorgnette, when he happened to glance across the store. He noticed that the velvet bag she had been carrying and had carelessly laid on a pile of books, had slipped to the floor.

He was starting towards it to pick it up when Mrs. Drury asked him a question about the volume in her hand. He paused to answer her.

Is’bel was just coming through the store. He saw her stop beside the bag and expected to see her pick it up and bring it to Mrs. Drury. Instead, with a swift movement of her foot she kicked it behind the counter and continued on her way to the opposite side of the store.

“I think that was your bag that fell over there,” Ian said, in a voice which he scarcely recognized as his own.

Mrs. Drury laid down her lorgnette and stared around her short-sightedly.

“Why, yes, I did lay it down somewhere I believe,” she said, vaguely looking around her.

Ian walked across the store and stooped for it, brushing off the dust that clung to it, before he handed it back to Mrs. Drury.

“Thanks so much. I’m always losing my things,” she said with a good-natured laugh. “It would be just like me to have forgotten where I left it.”

He did not look at Is’bel, who was standing quite still, her back turned towards them. His hands were shaking so that he could scarcely take down the books from the shelves. He could not make out what Mrs. Drury was saying and responded to her remarks haphazardly. It was like being a wooden figure, wearing a wooden smile.

Mrs. Drury stayed on for some time, buying a great number of books. At another time these purchases would have delighted him. But he was wishing every instant that she would go. He almost felt inclined to tell her that he was too busy to attend to her just now. He noticed that Is’bel was no longer in the store. She must have quietly slipped away up-stairs. He felt almost a relief at her absence. He didn’t know what he was to say to her when he was alone with her.

And yet when Mrs. Drury finally departed he remained in the store, putting back the books on the shelves, tidying them, anything to keep himself employed. He was delaying the moment when he would have to meet Is’bel. He knew he would have to say something. It couldn’t just be passed over as though it had never happened.

And then it was that he recalled the incident of the stockings and Is’bel’s scarlet face. He could not understand it. She had everything she wanted; she had all the money that she would take.

At last he could not put it off any longer. He went up to their room and slowly and miserably opened the door. The room was empty. Clothes were flung around in confusion as though she had dressed for the street in a hurry. He went forward and picked up a little blouse that lay on the carpet. It felt limp in his hands. He put it carefully away in a drawer, picked up a pair of slippers and put them in the cupboard. Where had she gone at this hour? He closed the door behind him and went heavily downstairs.

But she didn’t come in. Supper time came and went and still she didn’t appear. He paced nervously up and down, his hands clenched behind his back, becoming more and more worried and nervous every moment. At length, when nine o’clock struck he put on his hat and went out.

He was back in those horrible streets. He passed doorways from which eyes peered at him; saw dark shapes slip away into the shadows; breathed

again the terrible breath of foul lanes. The dark alleys seemed to be filled with stealthy figures. He caught a glimpse of an old wizened face looking out from behind a blind; heard the sharp piercing cry of a child; saw a lean cat slipping from beneath his feet. And the darkness seemed to be thick in his throat, choking him. A curious thought came to him. This was the jungle—this was a jungle more terrible, more awe inspiring, more awful than any jungle of which he had ever read. And Is'bel, little Is'bel, was learned in the ways of the jungle to which she belonged. She had run back to Mrs. Snodgrass and her kind, to those who practised the ways of the jungle, to those horrible jungle folk.

He walked quickly, his head back, his eyes steady, indifferent to those black slipping shapes and shadows; to the noisome smells; to a flung oath or a shrill scream. He felt so set now in his purpose, so determined, so sure.

Mrs. Snodgrass's doorstep was empty, the door standing open. A dirty faced child was sucking a filthy stick of candy, crouching against the dirty wall paper, looking at him with large inquisitive eyes. He inquired if Is'bel had come back. The child pointed to a door at the back of the hall.

“She's in there.”

He opened the door of the room quietly and as quietly closed it behind him. Then he stood trying to make out the shapes and shadows that hung over the room. He could see a figure flung across the white bed, although there was no light in the room, and he went towards it, and stooping over touched a wet face.

“Is'bel,” he said in almost a whisper, “Is'bel.”

He felt her limbs stiffen as she shrank away from him, her face hidden in the pillow. But he sat down on the edge of the bed and drew her resisting body towards him. A wild fit of sobbing shook her. He could hear the sobs strangling in her throat.

He held her close against him until the violence of those sobs passed.

“Don't come near me,” then she gasped, trying to get her breath, “you saw what I did to-day. I've done the same thing over and over. I don't know why I do it. It's just as though something was whispering to me all the time, telling me to steal, telling me to lie, telling me to do anything that's dirty and mean.”

“Is'bel—little Is'bel.”

“Go 'way. Go back to your store. I'll stay here where I belong.”

“Do you remember,” he began slowly, trying to keep his voice steady because the pity that was rising in him was threatening to choke him. “Do you remember, little Is’bel, when I told you about the jungle—about the man who hated it and yet how it drew him back. Do you remember all I told you about the terrible black power of the jungle?”

She was listening intently, her sobs growing quieter.

“This is a blacker jungle than the one I told you about, and it’s trying to draw you back to it again. It doesn’t want you to live in the clear open spaces. It wants to draw you away to the stealthy darkness, where evil things slip away in the shadows.”

His arms closed more tightly around her.

“This is our jungle, little Is’bel, and we’re going to fight it together—and win. We’re going to make you forget that you ever belonged to it. You’re not coming back here to be one of the jungle folk. You’re coming home with me.”

In the darkness of the quiet room he felt a little kiss dropped in the palm of his hand.

THE END

TRANSCRIBER NOTES

Mis-spelled words and printer errors have been corrected. Where multiple spellings occur, majority use has been employed.

Punctuation has been maintained except where obvious printer errors occur.

Illustrations have been relocated due to using a non-page layout.

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[The end of *The Jungle* by Beatrice Redpath]