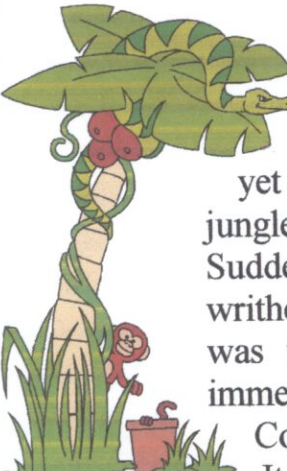


# Tales of The Unexpected

By Michael Colman 8P



Dark and humid, leaves rustling, faint noises all around. I pushed yet another branch aside as I stumbled through the various roots on the jungle floor, how long had I been in that jungle? Two, maybe three days? Suddenly I caught my foot on a huge knot of twisted roots that seemed to writhe at my feet. I tumbled, face-first onto the ground. How many times was that I had fallen over? Too many times to comprehend. With immense effort I pushed myself up and came face-to-face with a King Cobra. Eye to eye we remained motionless. I stared deep into its eyes. It stared back. I started to edge slowly backwards while frantically racking my brains, thinking:

“What was it that the survival guy said about snakes? Oh yeah, I remember. HIT IT WITH A STICK!”

I lunged to my left and grabbed the nearest twig to me. I charged at the snake only to find it had vanished in the blink of an eye. I spun around, waiting for the attack. Nothing came.

Breathing heavily, my skin shining with perspiration, I decided to take my chances while I could. I sprinted through the trees, ducking, dodging, weaving in and out of the tall trunks engulfing me. I caught sight of a white, ghostly figure walking through the trees ahead. I dug my feet into the ground and came to a shuddering halt. I searched frantically for cover but found only a few spindly trees. I threw myself towards one and peered out from behind the crisp, papery bark. The figure was gone. Relieved, I breathed deeply and turned around.

“AARGH!” There was the figure, translucent in the darkness created by the vast canopy of trees. I thrust the stick towards him. It sunk deep into his stomach but created no wound. The figure smiled at me, menacingly, his eyes glazed over. Why no movement, had I killed him? was he already dead? Perhaps there were other tribesmen here, ready to kill me. I had to be alert, on my guard

I picked myself up and started to walk slowly towards a pool of water, I was so thirsty, I had to have a drink. I collapsed onto my knees and cupped my hands full of water. The cool, refreshing liquid was a miracle as it washed over my sticky, leathery skin and refreshed my parched



mouth. I looked for my reflection in the ripples. Instead I was greeted with a paper-white face, gawping back at me. I screamed.

Once again I was stumbling through branches and roots. There was no end to this jungle. It was then I heard it. That ghostly voice saying:

“Thank you for shopping at Harrods, the store will be closing in five minutes. Please come again and be sure to visit our Jungle Survival Department on Level Four. Feel free to lose yourself in our authentic tropical surroundings whilst perusing the latest camping and outdoor equipment .....”

