

THE FIRST CLUE

Recapitulation:

The bush children found a map drawn 100 years ago by Danny O'Canny the bushranger, showing where he had hidden his treasure of stolen gold and jewels. As they studied it, they did not know that they were being watched by Crafty Carson Carpetbag and Old Man Redback. And there was no one near to help them now, for they had just said goodbye to their protector -

(singing) The Flying Dogtor

Crafty Carson Carpetbag hissed to Old Man Redback: "Let's slip out, surround them, stifle them, and steal the map..."

But Old Man Redback said "No; wait. Let's listen first."

So they stayed, silent, behind the wattle bush and listened as the bush children continued to discuss the puzzling map.

"I can't understand anything about it," said Polly Possum.

"Nor can I, yet," said Colin. "Danny O'Canny the bushranger must have meant it to be a secret sort of map."

"What's this say?" asked Liz Lizard, pointing to a line of writing across the bottom.

Colin read it out:

COLIN: "Forty paces after breakfast

"Stop where waters meet

"Join at tea the saplings three

"Dig for seven feet."

There was silence for a little after he had read this rhyme, because no-one could understand a word of it. They sat looking at old Mangrove Mansion on Humpy Hill below them. Then Colin said that they would just have to take the puzzling rhyme slowly and try to solve it one line at a time.

Polly said: "Forty paces after breakfast? - What could that mean?"

Wally B. said: "I suppose Danny O'Canny used to have an early breakfast. Do you think he means a morning walk?"

"That's right," said Colin. "A walk towards the morning sun - forty paces east!"

Then they all started talking at once.

(DIFFERENT VOICES)

"East from where?"

"See these bushy things on the map! They look like mangrove bushes."

"Mangrove Mansion!"

"Right! Well, the first clue means forty paces east of Mangrove Mansion. Let's go there!"

So they scrambled back to the shady side of Mangrove Mansion that was facing away from the afternoon sun.

COLIN: "Now - count forty paces," said Colin.

"One, two, three, four..."

MUSIC briefly

LIZ: "...thirty-nine, forty. Here!" said Liz Lizard marking a place about a yard away.

(DISTANT VOICE, CALLING) "Here!" called Wally B, whose forty hops had taken him to the top of a distant hillock.

"He didn't mean Lizard paces or wallaby paces," said Dan, the dingo pup. "I'll show you how far a bushranger walks in forty paces." And he took forty short bounds out from the wall of the mansion. "Here!"

So the others gathered round him and they spread out the map again. Colin pointed to two wiggly lines drawn on the cloth and read out the second line of the rhyme: "'Stop where waters meet.' Waters could mean rivers - you see? Two rivers meeting."

They looked around them, but there was not even one river nearby: only a small creek a few yards away.

"It's no good," said Polly. "We must be on the wrong track."

"No wait," said Colin, "I'm sure we're getting warm..."

MENACE MUSIC

Crafty Carson Carpetbag was getting impatient.

"Come on," he hissed, "Let'sss sstrike them now!"

But Old Man Redback whispered: "You stupid snake! Why should we do the work of solving the map? Let the little creature creeps decipher the conundrum.

Then we'll jump them!"

MUSIC

Suddenly Colin hopped up from the map. "I think I've got it!" he said excitedly.

VOICE OVER END TITLE Will the bush children be able to solve the riddle of the old bushranger's map? And if they do, will Crafty Carson Carpetbag and Old Man Redback take the treasure from them. See the next ^{exciting} episode of

(singing) The Flying Dogtor