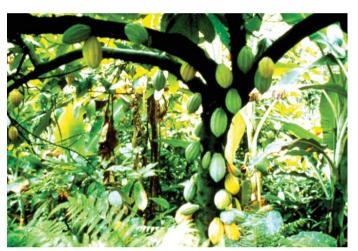
ARBITit happens here...

#LIFESTYLE

RAINFOREST LIFE and **DIET HELP**

Human microbiome in urbanized societies contains a far less diverse array of species than that of people living more traditional, pre-modern lifestyles in the Amazon jungle of Venezuela and Peru.







South American jungle and the high fiber, unprocessed diet of local vilagers, had more diverse gut microbes than before they visited, new research suggests. The findings could have benefits for people with obesi-

immersed

y, type 1 diabetes, and other disorders Researchers followed seven city-dwelling adults and

children who lived in a remote Venezuelan jungle village without electricity, soap, or other amenities for 16 days.

For the children, their microbiome, the beneficial germs in their intestines skin. mouths. and noses. became more diverse, with higher proportions of helpful bacteria. A similar change did not occur in the adults who visited the rainforest.

"The findings suggest dietary interventions to encourage a more diverse microbiome may best succeed in children, while the micro biome of adults may be more resistant to change," says senior researcher Maria Gloria Dominguez-Bello, a professor in Rutgers University-New Brunswick's biochemistry and microbiology department and anthropology department.

Dominguez-Bello found in previous studies that the human microbiome in urbanized, more modernized societies contains a far less diverse array of species than that of people living more traditional. pre-modern lifestyles in the Amazon jun-

gle of Venezuela and Peru. Dominguez-Bello studies the connection between the microbiome and human health and how early impacts



on the microbiome may contribute to the rise of obesity, diabetes, and other conditions n developed countries.

The subjects of the new experiment staved in a rainforest village in southern Venezuela near the border with Brazil. Their daily diet consisted of cassava, fish, a little meat, and a lot of fruit. They adopted the local circadian rhythm with eight hours of sleep and bathed in a river without soap.

Researchers swabbed the subjects' skin, nostrils, mouths, and feces for microbe samples several times during the study, and compared them with samples from villagers. They found that the urban visitors began with a less diverse microbiome than that of the locals. Over the 16 days, the urban children, but not the adults, showed significant microbiome changes, though the health implications are incertain

Dominguez-Bello says more research is needed to better understand the 'age window' at which the microbiome can change, and to separate the various factors, diet. day/night cycles, physiology, and others, that may affect these changes.







The Incomplete Holiday

The path, however, soon began to narrow, becoming less defined and more treacherous. Loose stones shifted underfoot and the incline became steeper. The thick rhododendron bushes, once a source of beauty, now seemed to crowd them, their branches sometimes impeding their progress.



Dr. Goutam Sen CTVS Surgeon Travelle Storvteller

he old Maruti Suzuki Celerio coughed and sputtered in a mechanical protest against the steep incline. Inside, Ananya giggled, her hand lovingly finding Arjun's knee. "Poor thing, she's not used to

such heights, is she?" Arjun, his eyes fixed on the winding mountain road, smiled. "She's doing her best. Besides, it's worth it for this, isn't it?" He gestured vaguely at the panorama of differ ent shades of green outside the window. The air was growing perceptibly cooler with every hairpin

They were on their way to Solan, a quaint hill station nestled in the Himalayas, a much-needed escape from the relentless summer heat of Delhi. Their bags were packed with light woolens and a shared excitement for the unknown. This trip, unlike their usual hurried weekend getaways, was about leisurely exploration. about reconnecting with each other amidst nature's grandeur.

The rhododendron forest began subtly, a scattering of crimson and pink amidst the dominant green. Soon, it enveloped them, a riot of color that stole Ananya's breath. "Stop! Arjun, stop the car!" she exclaimed, her voice bubbling with

delight. He pulled over to the side of the road. The Celerio sighed in relief. The air that wafted in was crisp. carrying the scent of pine and damp earth. And then, they heard it, a soft, persistent murmur that grew into a resonant roar. "A waterfall!" Arjun grinned, unbuckling his seatbelt. "Perfect

timing. They scrambled out, drawn by

the sound. Just a short walk through the dense foliage and they emerged into a clearing. Before them, a magnificent waterfall cas caded down a rocky face, its waters shimmering like liquid silver sheet in the afternoon sun. The rhododendrons here were even more vibrant, a living frame around the natural wonder. Ananya spun around, her arms

outstretched, inhaling the cool mist. "This is incredible, Arjun! Absolutely breathtaking!" He watched her, a warmth

spreading through him. Her infectious joy was one of the many things he adored about her. "It really is something," he agreed, his gaze drifting upwards, tracing the path of the water. "I wonder where it starts.'

Ananya followed his gaze. The waterfall seemed to emerge from a jagged crevice high above, almost swallowed by the towering trees at the summit. A faint, almost imperceptible, trail seemed to snake its way upwards along the edge of the

"Let's go find out!" she said suddenly, her eyes sparkling with a mischievous glint. "Let's climb to the top. Imagine the view from up

Arjun hesitated. "Ananya, it looks a bit... steep. And we're not exactly equipped for a serious climb

"Oh! don't be such a spoilsport!" she teased, already taking a few tentative steps towards the narrow path. "It's not Everest, Arjun It's just a little hill. We'll be careful. Please?" Her lower lip jutted out in a playful pout that he found impos ble to resist

He sighed, a smile tugging at the corners of his lips. "Alright! Alright! But if we break an ankle, it's on vou.'

With a triumphant laugh. Ananya led the way. The initial ascent was deceptively easy a well trodden path through a tunnel of small bushes and pine trees. The air grew cooler, and the roar of the waterfall intensified, a constant companion on their upward jour-



Shimla Stunt ney. They pointed out interesting

rock formations, laughed at their own clumsiness and shared sips from their water bottle. The path, however, soon began

to narrow, becoming less defined and more treacherous. Loose stones shifted underfoot and the incline became steeper. The thick rhododendron bushes, once a source of beauty, now seemed to crowd them, their branches sometimes impeding their progress. "Are you sure about this, Ananya?" Arjun called out, his voice a little strained from exertion. He was walking behind her, his hand ready to steady her if she faltered.

She turned, her face flushed with effort but her eves still bright "Almost there. I can feel it! Look, the trees are thinning out. We must be close to the top.'

He gritted his teeth and pressed on. The sun was beginning its slow descent, casting long shadows that distorted the already challenging terrain. The air was thinner here, carrying a distinct chill that made him shiver despite the exertion. Or was it a premonition?

Finally, after what felt like an eternity, trees gave way to a wider, flatter expanse. They had reached the summit. The view was fabulous. Below

them, the valley stretched out, a patchwork of greens and browns ields. dotted with tiny. toy-like nouses. The winding road they had driven on looked like a slender riboon. From a jagged cleft just metres away, the waterfall plunged down, a dazzling rope of white froth against the darkening rock.

Ananya let out a gasp of pure wonder and joy. She turned to Arjun, her face alight with triumph. "I told you! I told you it would be worth it!'

He laughed, a genuine, unburlened sound. He was tired, but the exhilaration of the climb and the nning vista erased all discomfort. He took a step closer to the edge, peering down at the churning

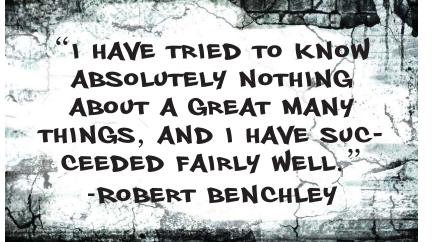
shrieked, her voice hoarse, desperate. "Arjun! Hold on!" She scrabbled at the loose earth, her nails tearing, her mind racing in a frantic, futile search for a way down. But the cliff face was a desperate, unwavering hope. She sheer, unforgiving. Her gaze was

tinued roar of the waterfall, now a

dread seizing her.

THE WALL

Rhododendron Trek.







Wine and Cheese Together

here are some things in the world that were just meant to go together, like Chocolate and Peanut Butter, oil and vinegar, and of course, wine and cheese! For a long time, wine and cheese have been paired together and served at all the most important. of events among the highest class of people. Wine And Cheese Day celebrates this eternal bonding and the elegance it engenders. The best way to celebrate Wine and Cheese Day is by hosting a wine and cheese tasting of your very own! Get together with your friends and plan out the evening with every variety of cheese and wine that you can imagine.



Manikaran Accident

#PRECIOUS



waters below. "It's even more magfixed on the blue speck. It moved again, a slight, almost imperceptinificent from up here." he mur ble twitch. Hope, fragile and desmured, leaning forward slightly his hands instinctively bracing perate, flared within her. He was against a moss-covered rock. alive. He was moving. "I'm coming, Arjun! I'm com-And then, it happened. The rock, seemingly stable ing!" she sobbed, though she knew,

Arjun's foot, placed firmly on the A choked cry escaped his lips, a sound of surprise and disbelief. Ananya's eyes widened, her hand reaching out, grasping at air.

shifted. A shower of loose pebbles

cascaded down the cliff face.

rock, slipped

to help!'

he driver, a middle-aged man with kind eyes and a weathered face, looked at her in surprise. Ananya, gasping for breath, her voice hoarse and broken, spilled out the story, a torrent of words tumbling out in no particular order. "My husband... fell... waterfall... gorge... please, you have

from her face.

Kanchenjunga Trek.

she couldn't.

with a horrifying certainty that

And then, as she watched, help

less, a cold, hard knot formed in

her stomach. The movement

stopped. The blue speck remained

still, utterly, terrifyingly still, swal-

lowed by the now indifferent roar

world, once vibrant and full of

promise, had just plunged into the

deepest, darkest gorge imaginable

Ananya scrambled down the

treacherous path. Her chest heav-

ing with effort. Each slip, each

stumble, sent a fresh wave of terror

through her. The descent was a

blur of thorny bushes and loose

stones, her tears dimming her

vision, vet she pushed on, driven by

saw them, a few cars heading in the

His flailed arms were windmill like while trying to regain his balance. For a terrifying moment, he seemed to defy gravity, suspended between sky and chasm. Ananya screamed, a raw primal sound of terror. And then, he was gone. The silence that followed was afening, broken only by the con-

cruel, indifferent sound. Ananya scrambled to the edge, her heart hammering against her ribs, a cold She peered over, her vision blurred by tears that sprang unbidden to her eyes. Far below, amidst the churning white water and jagged rocks, she saw him. A flash of blue, his shirt. He was moving. A faint, almost imperceptible stirring. "Arjun!" she out the story a torrent of words fall..

of the waterfall. The sun dipped below the horizon, painting the sky ves, that one. in fierv hues of orange and purple a stark mocking contrast to the icy dark despair that consumed her. The rhododendrons, once a symbol f vibrant life, now seemed to mock her, their crimson blooms the mirroring the blood that drained

Ananya remained frozen, clinging to the edge of the abyss, the "We'll go up, Didi," the driver wind whipping her hair around her said, his voice calm and reassurface, the roar of the waterfall a relentless drumbeat against her shattered consciousness. Her

Ananya didn't hesitate. "I'm coming," she choked out, her resolve firm

nore arduous than before. The light was fading fast and the familiar path now seemed alien and hostile. The men, however, moved with practiced ease, their headlamps cutting through the deepening gloom. Ananya followed, spurred on by a grim determination. When

whose name she now knew as Prakash, peered over the edge "There, I see him!" he called out. "He's... he's still there."

Using the ropes, Prakash and his friends carefully began their descent. Ananya watched, her heart in her throat, as they painstakingly made their way down the sheer cliff face. It seemed to take forever. Finally, they reached Arjun. They shouted something up to her, but the wind snatched the words away.

Suddenly, the wail of a siren erced the mountain air. An ambunce appeared on the road below, its flashing light was a welcome beacon in the twilight. The hill rescue team, called by Prakash earlier, had arrived. Working with practiced efficiency, the rescue team. now in contact with Prakash's group via the mobiles, began to set up a more robust rescue operation. Ropes were secured and a makeshift stretcher was assem bled. It was an agonizing wait for Ananya, watching as the shadows

lengthened and the chill deepened. Finally, after what felt like an eternity, Arjun was slowly, painstakingly, brought up from the gorge. He was unconscious, his face pale and smudged with dirt.

The rescue team immediately took over. A quick primary evalua tion was done. "Head injury cause ing unconsciousness," one of the paramedics stated grimly. "And.. looks like a fractured femur'

The journey to the local hospital was a haze. The ambulance swayed and bounced on the winding roads, each bump a fresh jolt of anxiety for Ananya. She sat beside Arjun, clutching his cold hand, whispering words of encourage ment, prayers forming unspoken on her lips. The paramedics worked diligently, their quiet efficiency a small comfort in the over-

The small. local hospital though modest, was a hub of activity upon their arrival. Nurses and doctors moved quickly, a flurry of controlled urgency. Ananya was

Arjun was wheeled into the emer gency room. All she could do was wait and pray that the man she loved would open his eyes again.

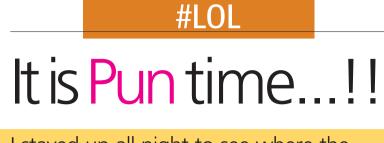
The rhododendron-scented air, the cascading waterfall, the thrill of the climb, all the ingredients for their perfect hill station getaway had dissolved into a stark, painful reality of anguish. The holiday was unequivocally over. Instead of leisurely drives and scenic hikes their days would now be dictated by hospital schedules, doctor's rounds and the slow, arduous process of healing.

Later, as Ananya sat beside Arjun, watching the slow, steady rise and fall of his chest, a differ ent kind of relief washed over her. He was awake. He was here. His eyes, though still a little hazy, met hers, conveying a silent grati tude that transcended words. The terrifying stillness she had with nessed in the gorge was gone. replaced by the undeniable, precious presence of life.

The immediate crisis had passed. Help, in the form of the compassionate locals, the swift rescue team and the dedicated hospital staff, had been given. Rahul, their steadfast friend, was just hours away. The comforting thought that promised not just practical support but also the emotional ballast they would both desperately need. The fracture was set. The head injury while concerning, was being monitored

Their spontaneous adventure had ended in disaster. But it had also, in its own brutal way, forged a deeper connection between them and unveiled the innate kindness of strangers. The mountain, which had taken so much, had also, in the generosity of its people, given something back: hope. Their journev home would be delayed, their plans irrevocably altered, but Arjun was awake, and that, in this moment, was everything. The Almighty was indeed mysterious in his ways.

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I stayed up all night to see where the sun went. Then, it dawned on me!



hat do you call an alligator in a vest? An investigator What did one eve

say to the other? Just between you and me something smells. Don't ever believe an atom they make up everything. I'm glad I know sign language

it is pretty handy. Why did the scarecrow get an award? He was outstanding in his

Be kind to dentists. They have fillings too, you know. What do you call a broken can opener? A can't opener. How do trees feel in Spring?

Releaved. Why do defense lawyers go out for Mexican food when they are feeling down? To get some case- ideas.

Why do Buddhist monks now. avoid sending word documents? They're supposed to avoid attach-

onds

Why do teenage girls travel in odd numbered groups? Because they just can't even. I'm reading a book about anti-

ments.

gravity. I just can't put it down. I stayed up all night to see where the sun went. Then, it dawned on me.

Broken pencils are pointless. I don't enjoy computer jokes. Not one bit. I changed my phone's name to

Titanic. It's syncing now. I got a job at a bakery, because I knead dough

Why aren't depressed people worried about flat tires? They always carrying despair. Did you hear about

banker who left her job? She just lost interest My friend fell into an upholstery machine. He's fully recov-

ered now A clown held the door open for me. What a nice jester!

They say that no two people see color the exact same way, so really, color is just a pigment of vour imagination. Did you hear about the guy

who pickpocketed a dwarf? How could anybody stoop so low? Why don't chemists like puns? All the best ones argon.

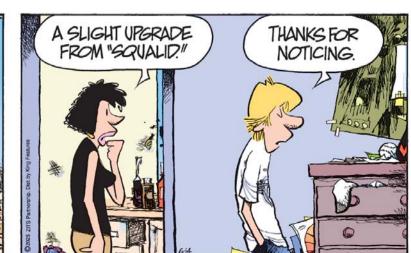
How can you tell when a clock is hungry? It goes back four sec-



tunate

By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott





gently, but firmly, led away as

whelming chaos of her world.

Poon Hill Trek.

ZITS

tumbling out in no particular order. "My husband... fell... water-. gorge... please, you have to help!" Understanding dawned in the man's eyes. He didn't waste a second. Pulling out his old, battered mobile phone, he started naking calls. "Hari, get the ropes! Ramesh, bring the medical kit! Head injury and maybe more injuries! Near the big waterfall.. Within what felt like an eternitv but was probably only twenty minutes, two more men arrived

their faces etched with concern. They were locals, accustomed to mountain's unpredictable nature, and looked unflappable. One carried a coil of sturdy rope, the other a small first-aid kit.

opposite direction, but they

whizzed past, oblivious to her dis-

tress, to the tragedy that had just

unfolded. She waved frantically

but no one stopped. Despair

gnawed at her, a cold, sharp claw.

hope beginning to fade, a delivery

truck, its back laden with sacks,

front of it, forcing it to a halt.

rumbled into view. She swerved in

with kind eyes and a weathered

face, looked at her in surprise.

Ananya, gasping for breath, her

voice hoarse and broken, spilled

The driver, a middle-aged man

Just as she felt the last vestiges of

ing. "You stay here. Or... you can come with us, but it will be diffi-

The climb back up was even

they reached the top, the driver,





Did you hear about the guy who jumped off a Paris bridge? He was in Seine. My favourite dishes are all cooked with petroleum products. guess you could say I have refined taste

My friend David just had his ID stolen. We just call him Dav What do you call it when a cat

wins first place at a dog show? A cat-has-trophy. Why do bulls make terrible

salesmen? They charge too much. Did you hear about the guy who ate six cans of alphabet soup? He had the biggest vowel movement ever. Somebody just broke into my apartment and stole every lamp,

flashlight, and lightbulb. I'm so delighted I was going to tell a joke about sodium, but then I thought. 'Na.' Plateaus are the highest form flattery I don't trust stairs. They're

always up to something. I keep trying to start exercising, but it just isn't working out. What kind of doctor is always on call? An oncologist. Why are noses in the middle of your face? They like to be the scenter of attention. I just opened a fortune cookie with nothing inside. How unfor To be frank...I'd have t

change my name. Why don't tennis players get married? Because love means nothing to them. How does Moses make coffee? Hebrews it.

Never trust a statistician They're always plotting something. Why are two helium isotopes so funny? HeHe!

By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman