

FREE GIFTS—BIG PRIZES!

The **MODERN BOY**

EVERY MONDAY.
Week Ending February 7th, 1931.

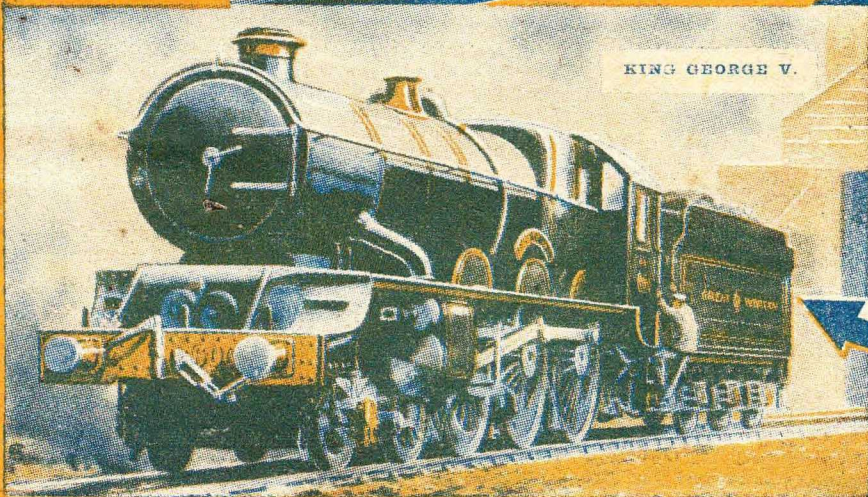
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FREE!

**COLOURED
PLATES**

**THIS
WEEK**

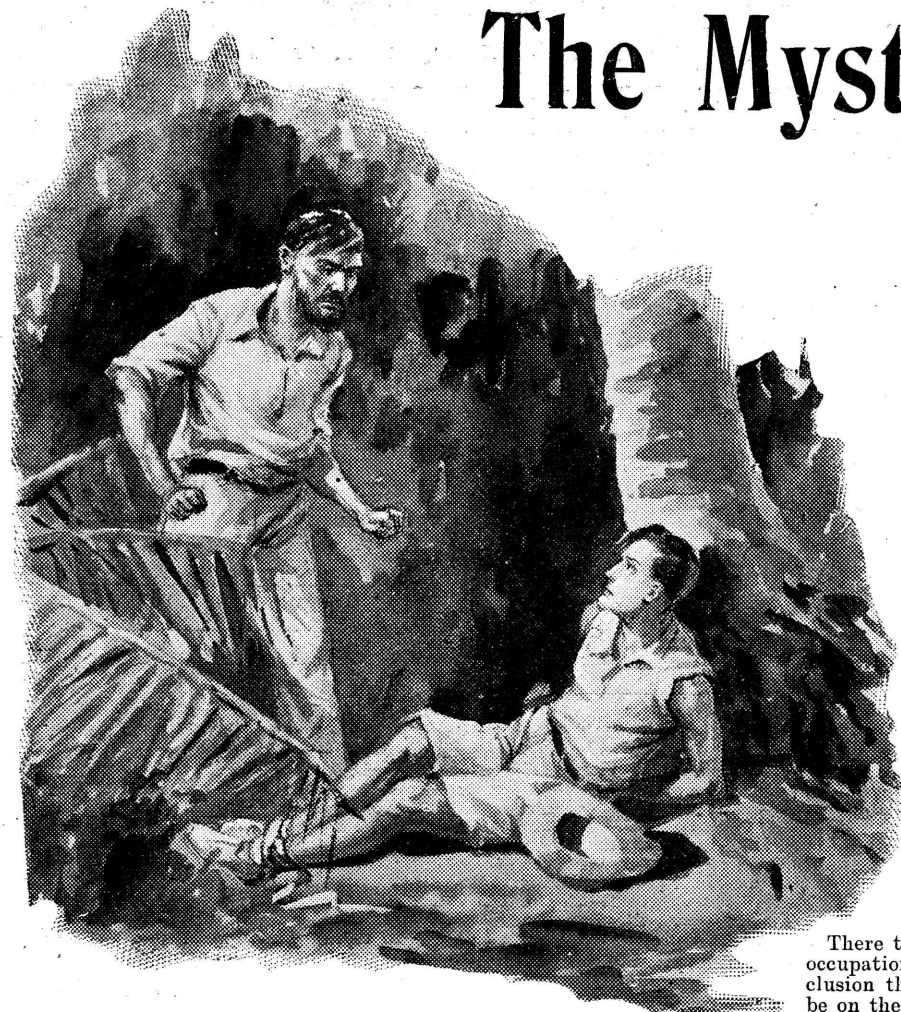


**NEXT
WEEK**

The Mystery Island

The boy trader of the South Seas—famous Ken King—figures in another thrilling yarn that no fellow with a thirst for unusual adventure should allow to go unread!

COMPLETE



"The mate of my ketch will find me," declared Ken, gazing up at the other. "And I'm sorry for you if Kit Hudson runs you down and finds me like this!"

The Ruined Bungalow.

KEN KING, the boy trader of the South Seas—known far and wide as King of the Islands—struggled slowly back to consciousness. The twilight of the bush reigned about him, trees and thickets dim in the dusk.

With a burning ache in his head, he tried to move, and found that his limbs would not stir. He was bound hand and foot. The discovery caused his brain to clear with a sudden leap.

He struggled to a sitting posture, but the blinding pain that shot through his bruised head caused him to fall back with a cry. For some minutes he lay dazed, striving to pull himself together and to recall what had happened.

Then he remembered. He was on the haunted island of Loya! Years ago a white trader and his wife had been killed by their black servants, and afterwards the blacks had been carried off by slavers. Since then the island had been uninhabited. No one would settle there, because the ghost of the white woman was said to haunt the place.

As owner and skipper of the trading ketch Dawn, he had put into the island the night before to refill his water-casks; and in the twilight he

and his crew had seen what appeared to be the ghostly figure of a woman fitting through the ruins of a bungalow ashore. In the morning, leaving only Danny, the cooky-boy, aboard the Dawn, Ken had come ashore with the remainder of the crew to fill the water-casks.

Whilst the four Hiva-Oa boys—Lompo, Lufu, Tomoo, and Kolulu—filled the casks under the direction of Kaio-lalulalonga—Koko for short—the giant Kanaka bo'sun, Ken and his young Australian mate, Kit Hudson, had gone to the bungalow to investigate.

By
**Charles
Hamilton**

There they had seen signs of recent occupation, and had come to the conclusion that a woman castaway must be on the island and had fled at their approach.

Suddenly the black crew had stampeded. They had seen a "feller white Mary," as they called a white woman in their peculiar English, standing near the stream from which they were filling the water-casks.

Ken had driven them back to work and, leaving Hudson in charge, set out on the trail of the woman, following her footprints through the bush. He wanted to assure her that she had nothing to fear from the crew of the Dawn, and to take her back to civilisation. But in the heart of the bush he had been struck down by a blow on the head—a blow that no woman's hand could have dealt!

He knew that the mysterious figure in the white dress had been ahead of him when he fell, and remembered how he had turned at a rustle behind him in the bush, only to receive that crashing blow. Remembered, too, his instant's glimpse of a desperate, bearded face—of light blue eyes that glistened with a strange mingling of ferocity and fear as the blow descended on him. Into what strange hands had he fallen on the haunted island of Loya?

His head ached pitifully, a burning thirst consumed him, and deep rage was gathering in the boy trader's heart. A treacherous blow had struck him down from behind while he was hastening, as he believed, to the aid

of some hapless castaway on the solitary island. If he lived through this, the man who had struck the blow should be called to a bitter account.

His thoughts went to his shipmate. He had told Kit Hudson to see to the filling of the water-casks, and get the water on board the Dawn, riding at anchor in the lagoon of Loya. Then Hudson was to await him on the beach.

It would not be long before his shipmate would be alarmed by his absence, and would seek him in the bush. And guessing that something had happened to Ken, the mate of the Dawn would be on his guard. He was not likely to fall victim to a treacherous ambush, as King of the Islands had done. There was hope in that thought.

The boy trader stirred, to shift the cloud of insects that had settled on his face. But every movement was fraught with pain to his aching head. So far as he could see, he was alone in the bush. But as his dizzy eyes grew clearer he made out the shape of a palm-wood hut at a short distance.

It was a rough and rude construction, with walls of palm-poles and pandanus leaf pinned with thorns—evidently a hasty shelter thrown up for temporary use.

The mysterious denizens of the island had camped on this spot, he concluded. But who were they—what were they—why had they treated him as a foe? Castaways would have welcomed him as a rescuer. Some secret of guilt was hidden on the lone island of Loya.

A throb of pain in his bruised head caused a groan to break from the boy trader. The sound of a movement followed it, and then a voice reached his ears:

"Leave him alone!" It was a man's voice—high-pitched, the voice of a man highly strung, the slave of nerves. A man who might be made savage and desperate from excess of fear.

"Monty!" It was a woman's voice that answered, tremulous, low, but calmer than the man's. A sweet voice, though every tone in it told of fear and trouble. King of the Islands was hearing, at last, the voice of the white woman of Loya!

"Monty! He might die—"

"Let him! We shall be safer then."

Who were the speakers? King of the Islands wondered. There had been two, he knew now, occupying the ruined bungalow on the deserted island. These were the two. But how in the name of wonder came they to a lone island a hundred miles from any other land—a speck of coral lost in the immensity of the Pacific? And why?

What secret had they to keep, that they—the man, at least—feared so terribly the arrival of a white man's ship?

"Monty! We cannot leave him to suffer—perhaps to die! Are you out of your senses? I can hardly believe that it is my brother who is speaking."

"And I can hardly believe that it

is my sister who is so concerned for a greedy rascal hunting for blood-money!" was the savage reply.

"How do we know? They may have had other reasons for coming to Loya."

"What other reasons? No ship ever visits this island. It is far out of the track of trade—believed to be haunted—and no sailorman would come here willingly unless for a powerful motive. Of course he came after me."

"But no one could know—no one could suspect. Did we not take refuge here because no one could trace us here?"

King of the Islands heard sounds

blue eyes rested on him, doubtfully, pityingly, questioningly. In her face, sweet and kind as it was, there was some fleeting resemblance to the hard, cruel visage of the man who had struck him down.

"I am sorry!" she whispered at last. "But my brother, he fears—he has reason to fear—"

"Aileen!" The man emerged from the hut, and Ken's glance turned on him. A haggard figure in tattered ducks, with a beard that was the growth of many months, he strode towards the spot, his eyes glinting.

The girl moved away at once, with a hopeless gesture of sadness that went to Ken's heart. The man stood

The mate of the Dawn fired swiftly in the direction of the treacherous shot. . . . His unknown assailant was in retreat!



of movement from the hut. Then a figure moved in the shadows of the bush.

It was the figure in white that the shipmates had seen moving in the ruins of the bungalow the night before—the ghost of the haunted island!

Ken's eyes fixed on the face that bent over him—a girl's face, beautiful, though clouded with trouble, and full of pity. A tin pannikin of water was placed to his lips.

"Drink!" The voice was soft and sweet. The water was lukewarm, but it seemed like nectar to his parched throat. King of the Islands drank to the last drop.

"Thanks!" he said quietly.

The girl did not speak. Her dark

looking down on him savagely, with hatred burning in his sunken eyes.

"You're here," he said, between his teeth. "Much good may it do you. You dog, it will be lucky for you if you live to leave this island! But for my sister—" He broke off, and stood glaring. Ken's eyes met the angry glare steadily.

"If your sister has saved my life, she has prevented you from committing a crime," he said quietly. "I don't know who you are, or want to know. I came to this island for water, without knowing that any man was here—"

"Liar!"

"Fool!" Ken's eyes gleamed at him contemptuously. "If you were

(Continued on page 16.)

The Mystery Island

(Continued from page 13.)

not frightened by shadows you would know that you had nothing to fear from me. Even now, if you will release me, I will forget what has happened for that poor girl's sake, and go."

"Likely—that I should trust you! Likely!" scoffed the man.

"If you don't release me, you'll fare worse," answered King of the Islands. "Even now the mate of my ketch will be searching for me. He will find me—and I'm sorry for you if Kit Hudson runs you down and finds me like this!"

"You did not give me so much trouble that I should be afraid of your mate!" jeered the man. His hand went to a heavy revolver that sagged in the pocket of his tattered jacket. "Let him come! His best counsel will be to sail away without seeking to know your fate. Let him come—if he choose. I'll deal with him as I've dealt with you."

He strode back to the hut and muttered a few words to the girl within. Her answer was in so low a tone that King of the Islands did not catch the words. The man broke out savagely.

"It is all one, I tell you! If they did not come for me, they know now that I am here. What will happen when they tell of a man hiding on Loya? If they do not know, others will know. Do you want to send your brother to prison?"

The man strode away and disappeared into the bush. The rustling of the thickets died in the distance. From the hut came a low sound that touched strangely the heart of the boy trader—the sound of weeping.

The man was gone, with a deadly weapon in his hand, to encounter the mate of the Dawn if he searched, as certainly he would, for his skipper. The girl remained, a prey to feelings that the boy trader could dimly guess.

What did it mean? Who and what were these secret lurkers on a solitary island lost in the waste of the Pacific? The man a fugitive from justice—that was clear enough—but who—what? Something in the name struck the boy trader as familiar—Monty! Where had he heard it before?

It came to him in a flash. Back to his mind came Barney Hall, the Tonga trader who had attempted to get stores from him by force on his way to Loya, and his talk of the lost man of Apia, whom the trader was hunting for the £500 reward offered by the Pacific Company. The man had fled from Apia with £10,000 belonging to the Pacific Company, and disappeared into the boundless spaces of the Pacific. Monty! King of the Islands knew now. The man who had struck him down was Montague Craye, the lost man from Apia!

The Heart of the Bush.

"AIE! Aie!" moaned Kaiolalulalonga. The brown boatswain of the Dawn, sitting on the sun-scorched beach of Loya, rocked himself to and fro as he

muttered his lament for his white master.

Kit Hudson, pacing restlessly, heedless of the scorching sun, glanced at the Kanaka for a moment, then stared away towards the bush. His face was puckered with anxiety.

The casks had been filled and taken back to the Dawn in the whaleboat. The Hiva-Oa boys remained on the ketch, riding at anchor a cable's length from the beach, after stowing away the casks. But Koko, though his terror of the haunted island was as deep as that of the Hiva-Oa crew, remained on the beach with Kit Hudson.

There was no hope in his breast that he would see his white master alive again. King of the Islands had vanished into the bush of the haunted island, and the "aitoo along bush," as he called the ghost, only knew his fate. And with that belief, the bright sun was darkened for Kaiolalulalonga.

Hudson was troubled and anxious. Why had Ken not returned? He was not the man to lose his way in the bush, and even so, a revolver-shot would have been a signal to his shipmate.

A woman was on the island, and Hudson had a strong suspicion that she had played the part of the spirit haunting Loya intentionally, to frighten away newcomers. Why, he could not imagine, but that was how it looked.

Many a skipper in the South Seas would have shared the superstitious terror of the crew at the sight of that ghostly figure gliding among the ruins of the bungalow, and would have sailed without delay from the island that was believed to be haunted.

If the ghostly trickery had been intended to scare them away, and it had failed, other and more desperate measures might have followed—but by whom? Who and what was it that lurked in the dim interior of the mysterious island? Kit Hudson ceased his restless pacing.

"I'm going to look for King of the Islands, Koko," he said abruptly. "You feller stop along this place—s'pose feller skipper he comey, you tell him this feller go along bush."

"That feller King of the Islands he no comey any more altogether," wailed Koko. "Feller aitoo along bush plenty kill-dead white master. White feller no savvy aitoo. Kanaka feller he plenty savvy. Plenty feller debble stop along this island, sar. All feller along beach along Pacific savvy plenty feller debble stop along Loya. White master he no stop any more! Aie! Aie!"

"Pull yourself together, you swab," grunted Hudson. "If King of the Islands has been hurt, it's a flesh-and-blood aitoo that's done it, and I reckon I'll send him to the spirit world fast enough, and make a real aitoo of him. You stop along this place."

Turning impatiently from the Kanaka, Kit tramped up the beach and entered the bush at the spot where King of the Islands had disappeared from view hours since. Although Koko's superstitious fears

had no effect on him, the Kanaka's belief that King of the Islands had gone to his death added to the sharp anxiety he already felt.

There was some strange secret on Loya—that was only too clear. If King of the Islands, in following the supposed castaway, had gone into some unknown danger, then danger awaited the Australian in the bush. Hudson's revolver was gripped in a tense hand. If there was danger, he cared little for it. But if his shipmate had fallen, he was grimly resolved to exact vengeance.

It was easy for him to follow the way the boy trader had gone. Accustomed to the ways of the bush in his native Australia, Hudson easily picked up signs that told of his shipmate's passage through the disused run-way.

With wary eyes, watchful as a cat, revolver in hand, Kit tramped ahead. Deep in the bush he halted. He had followed a great distance from the spring. So far, he knew by traces of footprints, trampled creepers, and broken twigs, King of the Islands had come.

Now he stopped at a spot where crushed lianas and creeping plants showed that something heavy had lain on the earth—and with a chill at his heart Hudson guessed what it was that had lain there. A man had fallen in that spot.

With a glitter in his eyes that boded ill for the mysterious lurker in the bush, Hudson examined the traces that remained of the attack on his shipmate. He picked up prints of ragged canvas shoes—not the footprints of his comrade.

It was here that the attack had taken place, here that the unknown enemy had suddenly leaped on his prey. There was no doubt in Hudson's mind now. His comrade had been struck down by a foe in the heart of the bush of Loya, and whether he was dead or alive the mate of the Dawn had yet to discover.

Deep footprints led on by the tangled run-way, footprints so deep that they were evidently those of a man carrying a heavy burden. The toe-marks were deeper than the heel-marks, proof that the man had been bending under the weight he bore.

Hudson followed. His comrade had been carried farther into the bush. A score of yards on, the track changed. The burden had been set down and dragged. The unknown man had found it too heavy for him.

Crack! Some faint rustle in the bush warned Hudson ere the shot came, and he threw himself forward, half-falling. The crack of the revolver rang almost like thunder in the drowsy silence of the bush. Hudson felt the wind of the bullet as it hummed by within six inches.

Crack! Crack! rang his own revolver as he fired twice swiftly in the direction of the treacherous shot.

There was a hoarse shout, a trampling in the bush. But the trampling did not approach Hudson. His unknown assailant was in retreat.

Evidently the man had hoped to wing Hudson from ambush, and now that he had failed he had turned tail and fled.

With set teeth the mate of the Dawn rushed in pursuit.

"Stand Back!"

ANOTHER shot came whizzing through the undergrowth, spattering juice from the thick lianas as it tore through. It flew as if it were a bullet, and he hardly heeded it.

The man in advance of him was firing back as he fled. Ahead of him, Hudson could hear the desperate trampling of frenzied feet; once or twice he caught the hoarse panting of breath.

He had his enemy on the run, and he was gaining on him. Through an opening he caught a glimpse of a man in tattered ducks, a glimpse of a bearded, desperate face. He fired, but the man vanished again in the thickets, and ran on.

Kit was gaining at every stride. The laboured, panting breath of his enemy came back plainly to him. The man was close, though still hidden by the thick, tropical growths.

The man was desperate, but Hudson knew that he was in the grip of fear. He had striven to ambush Ken's shipmate in the bush; to shoot him down by treachery, and dared not face an open conflict.

But it had to come. The mate of the Dawn was on his track; as determined, and at that moment as merciless, as the fiercest bloodhound.

Crack! Again the revolver rang, and a bullet clipped leaves and twigs a couple of yards from the Australian. The weapon was held in a shaking hand.

Hudson kept on savagely. Again he had a glimpse of the fleeing, dodging figure, and again he fired. But once more the fugitive plunged into the tangled thickets and escaped. He was close on the man now. A few minutes more—

The mate of the Dawn came round the base of a great bread-fruit-tree that grew high in the bush. Then for a moment he halted, staring before him. A palm-wood hut met his eyes, and in the opening that served as a doorway the tattered figure of a man was disappearing from sight. He had run his enemy down at last—run him down to his camp in the heart of the bush.

Only for a second he halted. Then he rushed on, revolver in hand, eyes blazing. His desperate enemy, driven to his den, would fight like a rat in a corner, firing from the cover of the hut. The mate of the Dawn was not giving him time for that. He heard the hoarse, panting, almost sobbing breath of his enemy as he dashed into the opening of the hut.

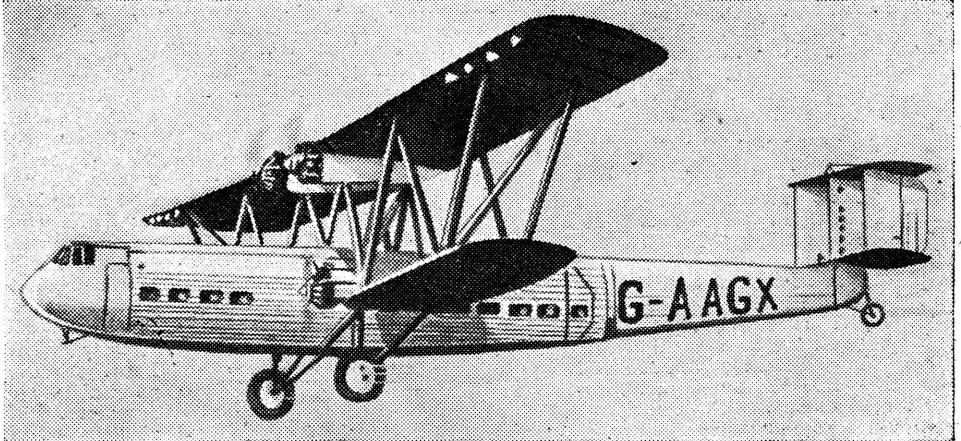
What Plane Was That?

Another picture-talk by Flying-Officer W. E. Johns, showing you how to recognise the forty-seater "Hannibal" when you see it in flight

BUILT by Handley Page's, the famous experts at big aircraft designing, this long-awaited monster, the forty-seater "Hannibal," has only recently been tested, but eight of them are being built for the European section of the India and Africa air route, for Imperial Airways, Ltd.

As you will see, it has four engines. Forward there is the pilot's cockpit for two pilots, behind which is the wireless-room and a forward passenger saloon for twelve people. The next section includes lavatories, bar, and luggage compartments, although on the European section this space will also be used for passengers.

There is a rear saloon for fourteen more passengers where smoking is



The enormous forty-seater "Hannibal" plane. Eight of them are now being built for Imperial Airways, Ltd.

permitted. All these compartments are beautifully decorated, and everything for the comfort of passengers seems to have been thought of.

The undercarriage is of quite simple construction for such a huge machine. You will notice that there are three rudders in the tail, and these all work in unison. The fuel tanks are in the upper centre section and feed the engines by gravity.

A very outstanding feature is the projecting length of the nose, which almost looks as if it might be the hull of a flying-boat.

In the air this big machine looks very impressive, and it is interesting to note that it is the largest machine ever built in this country. The engines are Bristol Jupiters, which together give 2,000 horse-power.

THIS WEEK'S DEFINITION:

PERFORMANCE.—The speed rate of climb to the "ceiling" under certain conditions of load.

The man did not fire. In the dimness of the interior of the hut Hudson saw a huddled form on the earthen floor—panting, gasping, exhausted. He almost stumbled over it as he rushed in. He saw the gleam of wild, light blue, frenzied eyes, saw a hand raising a weapon, and kicked it away across the hut. Then his own revolver was aimed.

"Stop!"

He was staggered. It was a woman's voice—a girl's voice—that called on him, a girl's figure that interposed between him and the cowering man on the earth.

"Stop! Stop! For mercy's sake—will you kill him?" Her voice rose in a cry. "Stop!"

"Good heavens!" gasped Hudson. He lowered his weapon, staring blankly at the face before him. A girl on Loya! The phantom of the

haunted bungalow was a woman of flesh and blood, standing now between him and the coward who had fired treacherously on him and fled.

For some moments Hudson stood dumbfounded. The silence in the shadowy hut was broken by the panting of the wretched man who lay huddled on the floor. Then he pulled himself together. He had all a sailorman's respect for women, but he was there to find his comrade—to save him or avenge him!

"Stand aside!" he said.

"You shall not touch him!" The girl stood firm.

"I am here to find my shipmate, and that dog fired on me in the bush," said Hudson hoarsely. "He fired on me like a treacherous coward. If he has harmed my shipmate I'll make him pay for it. I tell you to stand aside."

"Your shipmate is unharmed—if

The Mystery Island

you belong to the ketch in the lagoon."

"I am the mate of the Dawn! Where is my skipper? Where is King of the Islands?"

"Come!" She laid a hand on his arm

Hudson hesitated. If this was a trick to enable the man to escape— But he looked at the calm, sweet, sorrowful face, and was ashamed of the suspicion. He followed her from the hut, leaving the huddled figure still panting on the floor. The girl led him in silence to the spot where a bound figure lay on the earth.

"Ken!" shouted Hudson. A white face, with a streak of blood on it, was turned to him. King of the Islands gave a glad cry.

Hudson ran to him. In a second his knife was slicing through the tapa cords, and King of the Islands staggered to his feet, with the help of his comrade's strong arm.

"Ken! Thank Heaven! Safe and sound?"

"Only a crack on the head," said Ken. "I was struck down in the bush. I knew you would come, Kit!"

"That scoundrel who fired on me, whom I followed here—who is he? What does it mean, Ken? Who is he, and who is the girl?"

"The girl is his sister," said Ken quietly, "and the man is Montague Craye—the man Barney Hall and half the skippers in the Pacific are looking for; the man who fled from Apia with ten thousand pounds belonging to the Pacific Company. Loya is his hiding-place, and we have chanced on it."

Kit stared towards the hut. There was the sound of a low voice. The girl was speaking, though he did not catch the words. He could not see her, but the sad, sweet face seemed to float before his eyes.

"The man from Apia—the swindler—the thief!" Hudson muttered. "But that girl— It is impossible! She cannot know!"

"I can't say what she knows or doesn't know, Kit, but she is his sister, and the man is Montague Craye. He was afraid that we had come for him. That is why—"

"I understand. But she—"

"She gave me water when I was parched," said King of the Islands, in a low voice. "I owe her my life. I believe that fool, in his fear, would have killed me but for her. If only for that we shall leave them in peace."

King of the Islands moved towards the palm-wood hut, and Kit followed him. From the hut came a panting, desperate voice.

"Stand back! I will not be taken alive! I am armed. I am desperate!"

"Keep cool!" said King of the Islands contemptuously. "No one seeks to take you, or to harm you, Montague Craye. We came to Loya for water—not to earn blood-money. You are safe!"

The girl appeared in the opening of the hut. Her face was white, and her eyes, tense with anxiety, read the faces of the shipmates.

"You will not harm my brother?"

It was because he feared that you were here to take him that—that he—" She faltered.

"He has nothing to fear from us, Miss Craye," said King of the Islands. "We are returning now to my ship. In two hours we shall sail from Loya."

"And in pity for him—for me—you will keep our secret? You will not tell what you have found here on Loya?"

The shipmates exchanged a glance. Aileen Craye made a step towards them, her hands clasped.

"For pity's sake! My brother is innocent. He was falsely suspected, and fled from Apia because he despaired of proving his innocence. There was no one left to believe in him, to help him. But I knew that he was innocent. You will spare him—you will leave him this last lonely refuge? Even if you believe him guilty, why should you not leave him in peace on this solitary island? For pity's sake!"

"We shall say nothing," said Kit Hudson, before his skipper could speak. "You may trust us, Miss Craye."

"We shall say nothing," repeated King of the Islands. "Innocent or guilty, your brother is nothing to us. We shall keep his secret."

"And your crew?"

"My crew are all natives. They believe the island haunted, and you played ghost so well, Miss Craye, that they believe it now more than ever. They will remember only that they have seen the phantom of the white woman of Loya, and that tale has been told on the beaches too often to attract notice. You have nothing to fear."

King of the Islands saluted and turned away. Kit Hudson followed him a pace or two, and then turned back. The girl, standing motionless in the doorway of the hut, looked at him.

"Can we help you?" asked Hudson awkwardly. "Is there anything—if we could serve you in any way?"

"Only forgive my brother, and forget, as soon as you can, that you have seen us on Loya."

"But you will not remain here on this desolate island lost to the world?"

"We must, for his safety's sake."

Hudson turned away reluctantly. He rejoined King of the Islands, but ere they plunged into the bush he looked back at the hut once more. The girl had disappeared from sight. A sigh fell softly from Kit Hudson's lips as he followed King of the Islands into the drowsy shadows of the bush.

"Up Hook, Kit!"

A SMILE broke out on Ken King's handsome face as he emerged from the bush and sighted Koko by the margin of the lagoon. The bo'sun was sitting on the beach just as Hudson had left him, muttering his lament, and mourning for the master he never expected to see again.

There was a shout from the anchored ketch. The faces of the Hiva-Oa boys lined the rail, startled

eyes staring at the skipper and the mate as they came into sight from the shadowy bush.

At the sound of that startled, joyous shout, Koko raised his head and stared towards the ketch.

Lompo waved an excited hand over the rail. He shouted to Kaiolalulalonga, and pointed to the beach behind the Kanaka.

"You feller Koko!" he yelled. "You look eye belong you! White master he comey!"

Koko started convulsively. Not for a moment had he dreamed of seeing his white master again, or doubted that King of the Islands was "kill-dead along aitoo along bush." He stared almost stupidly at the excited, waving Kanakas on the ketch, and then spun round and gazed up the beach.

King of the Islands waved his hand, and at sight of him Koko's black eyes, almost started from his brown face. He stared at Ken like a man in a dream.

"White master!" he babbled. "White master he stop! White master he no kill-dead along aitoo stop along bush!"

"White master he stop, plenty too much altogether," said Ken, laughing, and slapping the Kanaka on his brown shoulder. "Feller aitoo along this island no hurt this feller."

"Me no savvy, sar!" said Koko. "Plenty bad feller debble stop along Loya. All Kanaka feller savvy! Me no tinkee see white feller master any more, eye belong me. This feller plenty too much glad, sar."

The whaleboat was already pulling to the beach. Kaiolalulalonga stood staring at King of the Islands as if even yet he could not believe that he saw his white master alive and well.

But there was gladness in the face of the faithful Kanaka now. Like a true child of the south, he passed at a bound from sorrow to joy. His brown face wore a cheery grin, his black eyes sparkled, and as he followed his master into the whaleboat, he was singing.

The boat pulled for the Dawn. Over the shining lagoon rolled the high-pitched but musical voice of the Kanaka boatswain, singing in the Hawaiian dialect, improvising as he sang in the manner of a Kanaka.

King of the Islands smiled as he listened. He knew enough of Koko's language to follow the words. It was a song of triumph. Koko was joyously chanting the praises of the white master whom even the mysterious "debbles" that dwelt on the haunted island could not harm.

On board the ketch Ken bathed and bandaged his bruised head. Kit Hudson paced the deck, with a thoughtful wrinkle in his brow. His glance turned constantly on the island—towards the deep, mysterious bush that hid the girl.

The sun was sloping towards the west, but there were still several hours of daylight left. Water had been taken on board, and that was all that the boy trader wanted at Loya.

It was up hook now that King of the Islands had learned the truth of

the mysterious happenings on Loya, and knew that there were no castaways to be rescued. Sunset would see the ketch far out on the Pacific.

Somehow, he hardly knew why, it was not a pleasant thought to the mate of the Dawn. A sweet, sad face was haunting his mind—two pleading eyes of blue seemed to be still looking at him. He stared away towards the black bush of Loya as if his eyes, by an effort of will, could penetrate the tangled wilderness. He started as King of the Islands came on deck.

"Up hook now, Kit," Ken said cheerily. "I can't say I shall be sorry to drop Loya astern."

"No?" said Hudson absently. "You're thinking of that poor girl?" Ken followed his comrade's glance towards the bush. "It's hard on her, Kit. She believes her brother innocent—can't believe that her own kin could do what that rascal Craye has done."

"Perhaps he is innocent."
"Perhaps!" said Ken doubtfully. "I suppose it's possible—barely possible. But if he's innocent, why did he run from Apia?"

"You heard what she said. He despaired of proving his innocence."

"Somebody had the ten thousand pounds from the Pacific Company," said Ken dryly, "and the company have offered a big reward for him. They don't believe him innocent, anyhow."

"Mistakes have been made before," said Hudson.

"You seem rather inclined to stand up for Craye," remarked Ken, giving his comrade a curious glance. "From what I have seen of him, I reckon he's more likely guilty than innocent. A guilty man in a blue funk is what I should think him."

"No doubt about the blue funk," said Hudson. "But he may have been in a blue funk when he ran from Apia. A man can be a coward without being a thief."

"Ay, ay," assented King of the Islands, "it's possible. I hope for that poor girl's sake that she is right. The man looks a bad hat to me. But you never can tell. I suppose there must be some good in him somewhere to make that plucky girl stick to him as she's doing. She's the right stuff, anyway."

"She is," said Hudson. He glanced at his shipmate. "You're sailing?"

"We've finished here," answered Ken, in surprise. "Nothing to stop for, is there? We can't help them. All we can do for them is to keep their secret, and leave Montague Craye safe on Loya. He's safe enough here. No craft comes to Loya once in a year, and if a skipper came, I fancy he would be scared off by the phantom white woman of Loya." He smiled. "We're done here, Kit."

"I know. But—"

"But what, old fellow?" asked Ken, more and more surprised. He could not quite make his comrade out, but he noticed that a flush stole into Hudson's sunburnt face.

"I hate to leave her—I mean them—here, on this lonely island," said Kit. "It's no place, no life, for a girl!"

"No good offering Montague Craye a passage on the ketch," answered Ken. "He's sticking to Loya. It's a safe place for him. He wanted to disappear—and he's disappeared here. And it wouldn't be much use offering Miss Craye a passage without him. She's sticking to the swab."

"I know!" muttered Hudson. "But—"

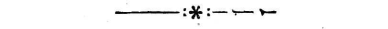
"What's worrying you, old chap?" asked Ken, looking at him curiously. "Looks as if you've got something on your mind. What is it?"

Hudson did not answer, but his colour deepened. King of the Islands gazed at him in growing astonishment. For the first time since they had been comrades, Hudson puzzled him, and he could not understand him at all. Some change—a change that King of the Islands could not comprehend—seemed to have come over the mate of the Dawn in the last few hours.

"Give it a name, old bean!" said



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Ken, as his shipmate did not speak. Hudson drew a quick, quivering breath. His eyes dwelt for a long moment on the distant, drowsy bush of Loya. Then he turned away from his friend.

Ken's perplexed glance followed him uneasily. Never had there been anything but open frankness and complete confidence between the shipmates of the Dawn, but it now seemed as if some invisible division had risen between them.

King of the Islands was puzzled and a little troubled. He made a step after his shipmate to speak again. But at that moment there came a shout from Tomoo.

"Feller canoe comey along lagoon."
"Barney Hall!" ejaculated King of the Islands, glancing towards the reef passage.

From the blue Pacific a long, dark canoe with a high prow came gliding into the lagoon, propelled by the paddles of nearly a dozen black-skinned, fuzzy-haired Solomon Island

boys. In the stern sat a rough-bearded white man—Barney Hall, the trader of Tonga.

The shipmates of the Dawn stared at the Tonga trader. Hall's savage sunken eyes gleamed at them. There was bitter hatred and hostility in his look. He had not forgotten the defeat of his attack on the Dawn, and the punishment that had been meted out. The canoe, once inside the circle of the reef, glided away round the margin of the lagoon, keeping as far as possible from the ketch.

"My sainted Sam!" said King of the Islands. Hudson, breathing hard, clutched him by the arm. His face was tense.

"Barney Hall here!" muttered the mate of the Dawn. "You know what he's after, Ken—Montague Craye and the reward! He's come to Loya for the lost man from Apia."

"He doesn't know—he can't know!" said Ken. "Nobody knows! Barney Hall's short of water and he's run in for supplies as we did, Kit."

"Ay, ay! But when they land, they'll find them!" Hudson's voice was hoarse. "Barney Hall's combing every atoll in these waters for the man from Apia. He'll find traces of them, as we did. And a girl with only that coward to protect her against a crew of Solomon Island cannibals! Ken, we can't sail!"

Ken stood silent. It was an unlooked-for complication, and for once the boy trader was at a loss. Hudson's grasp tightened on his arm.

"We can't sail, Ken!" he repeated angrily. "Look! Hall's making for the beach by the ruined bungalow. He's bound to take a look at the bungalow, and then he'll spot traces of recent occupation, as we did. It'll be all up with Miss Craye if that happens!"

"But if we sail," protested King of the Islands, "Miss Craye can play the ghost again and frighten Hall away. The man can bully his Solomon Islanders into obeying orders in the ordinary way, but I doubt if he'll be able to stop them bolting if they see the ghost!"

"No; our best course is to up-hook now, and clear out before Hall becomes suspicious. If we hang on any longer he'll smell a rat."

"But we must stay, Ken!" said the mate of the Dawn. "Miss Craye is back in the bush. How will she know until too late that Barney Hall and his crew of savages are in the lagoon? The man will discover her before she has a chance to scare him off by playing the ghost again."

"We shall have to stand by ready for action. We can't let Miss Craye fall into the hands of that ruffian!"

The Hiva-Oa crew were waiting for the word to lift the hook. King of the Islands did not give the word. He knew that Hudson was right. While Barney Hall and his crew of cannibals were on Loya, the Dawn could not sail!

(Ken King and his comrades of the ketch have yet to find the nut they cannot crack. Read how they crack the next one in another magnificent Charles Hamilton yarn in next Monday's MODERN BOY.)