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WAR IN THE NORTH SEA!— SPECIAL FEATURE
THIS WEEK

COOKY-BOY'S TREASURE

There was a catch in it—but Danny, aboard Ken King's South Seas trading ketch, thoroughly enjoyed his visions of wealth when he solved the mystery of the castaway's tobacco-box!

By CHARLES HAMILTON



Ken stared curiously from the deck of the Dawn at the native on the reef.

The Boat-steerer.

THAT nigger's asking for trouble, Ken," remarked Kit Hudson, the young Australian mate of the ketch Dawn.

His skipper and comrade, Ken King, the boy trader of the Pacific—known throughout the South Seas as King of the Islands—nodded as he watched the figure that had suddenly appeared from the shore of uninhabited Kua, and was running swiftly out over the reefs. It was a dark-skinned figure, with a mop of fuzzy black hair, and clad in a loin-cloth.

It was noon on the Pacific. The sun blazed down, and the Dawn moved lazily past Kua under a mere breath of wind. The tide was out, and for a great distance from the shore coral reefs jutted from the water.

Kaio-lalulalonga—Koko for short—the gigantic Kanaka bo'sun, was at the Dawn's helm. On the deck were Lompo, Lufu, Tomoo, and Kolulu, the Hiva-Oa boys who formed the crew, whilst Danny the cooky-boy lolled in the doorway of his galley.

Ken stared curiously at the native on the reef—leaping from rock to rock, splashing through shallow pools left by the tide, stumbling, slipping, but never pausing for a second. In the burning blaze of noon, when no native of the South Seas stirred a finger if he could help it, it was amazing to see this black man racing across the reef.

"He go finish along sun, sar!" said Koko, which was Kaio-lalulalonga's way of saying that the running native might be struck down by sunstroke at any moment.

The crew of the Dawn were grinning at the man on the reef, their untutored minds finding entertainment in the idea that the black man

might go finish under the burning sun.

As the man drew nearer, recognition dawned in the eyes of the boy trader.

"I've seen that fellow before, Kit," he said. "He's a Tonga boy—boat-steerer of Osho Marko, the Japanese pearl merchant. Marko's lugger must be about Kua somewhere."

"Wrecked, perhaps, and the boy

wants to be taken off," suggested Hudson.

King of the Islands rapped out an order, and the ketch was hoisted. Ken was more than willing to take a shipwrecked man off a lonely, uninhabited island, if that was the explanation of the Tonga boy's strange actions.

The running man had almost reached the limit of the low-lying reefs. His black face could be seen clearly, streaming with perspiration, sweat pouring down his bare black limbs. He was staggering with the exertion in the blazing heat, but he still kept on, and reached the last rock that jutted from the water. There he stood on the rough coral and waved his hands to the ketch. The shipmates of the Dawn could see the relief that flashed into his eyes when the ketch stopped.

"You tinkee that feller wantee come along this hooker, sar?" asked Kaio-lalulalonga in surprise.

"What name you tinkee he run along reef, s'pose he no wantee come along this hooker?" laughed Ken.

"Tinkee brain belong him no walk about any more, sar!" said Koko.

King of the Islands laughed again. To the natives on the Dawn, the Tonga boy's frantic race across the reef towards the ketch was merely a performance which they would have watched with idle interest so long as he remained in sight, and then forgotten. Fortunately for the Tonga boy, the mentality of white men worked on different lines.

The Tonga boy plunged from the last coral rock into the sea, and swam towards the ketch, the fuzzy head cutting swiftly across the shining blue water. Danny cast him a line as he came within reach, and the Tonga boy clambered actively over the rail.

Strong and sinewy as he was, the race across the reefs in the blazing sun had exhausted the boy, and he squatted down on the deck, panting, in a pool of water. At a word from King of the Islands, Danny brought him a tin of fresh water, which the black man drank eagerly.

Ken looked towards the rocky shore of Kua. There was no sign of life to be seen on the lonely island. But the fact that Toto, the Tonga boy, was there was evidence that the Japanese lugger had been there. And Ken did not intend to proceed on his way until he knew whether there was another shipwrecked man on Kua.

He gave the exhausted native a few minutes to recover himself, then questioned him.

"You feller Toto, belong Japanese feller?" he asked.

The Tonga boy looked up at him quickly, a glimmer of uneasiness in his rolling eyes.

"Yes, sar, me feller Toto," he said. "Osho Marko stop along this place?" asked Ken.

"That feller no stop, sar." "But you must have come here in Osho Marko's lugger," said Ken, eyeing the Tonga boy keenly. "What place that feller lugger he stop?"

"Me no savvy, sar," said Toto. "That feller lugger, sar, come along Kua, along Osho Marko he look findee pearl along lagoon, sar. That feller sail away two-three day before, leavee this feller along Kua. Osho Marko no likee this feller boat-steerer any more, sar."

"My hat!" ejaculated Hudson. "He means that Osho Marko marooned him on Kua. Rather a drastic way of sacking his boat-steerer!"

Ken nodded thoughtfully. He had heard a good deal of Osho Marko, the Japanese pearler, and he had heard little good of him. It was likely enough that the Tonga boy had stolen pearls, or attempted to do so, and that the Japanese had abandoned him on the lonely island in return. Still, the boy trader was puzzled.

"I don't get this, Kit," he said. "There're no pearls on Kua. There's not a pearl-oyster for a hundred miles. Marko butts into all sorts of out-of-the-way places hunting for pearls, but Kua is right off the pearling map."

He turned to Toto again. "What name Osho Marko he come along Kua?"

"He look along lagoon findee pearl, sar. Me tinkee no findee. Me no tinkee feller pearl stop along Kua."

"And he sailed away in his lugger and left you on the island?"

"Yes, sar!"

"What name he do this thing?"

"He no likee this feller any more, sar."

"Stealing, most likely," said Kit Hudson. "You know the jolly old reputation of Tonga boys, Ken."

"That's it, I suppose," agreed Ken. "But I can't understand a teen man like Marko coming to Kua to look for pearls. Any man on the Pacific beaches could have told him there are no pearls on Kua. Well, if it's not a case of shipwreck, and the Jap's not on the island, the sooner we're under way again the better."

And a few minutes later the Dawn was gliding on her course, and the rocky isle of Kua sank below the sea-line astern.

Toto's Tobacco-box.

A SHRILL yell of anger and a cackle of excited voices broke out forward, and King of the Islands frowned as he stared along the deck of the Dawn.

Sunset reddened the vast ocean. Hours had passed since the reefs of Kua had dropped out of sight astern. Toto had been told to berth forward with the native crew. King of the Islands intended to land him at the first stop, but the next stop was a long way ahead of the ketch, and until Wawa was reached the castaway of Kua had to remain on the Dawn.

That was a matter of indifference to Ken—there was plenty of room for an extra hand on his ship—but trouble had arisen suddenly between the Tonga boy and the Hiva-Oa crew.

King of the Islands strode forward, and found Toto was standing against the little fo'c'sle of the ketch, his black eyes gleaming at Lompo and Lufu, who were glaring at him threateningly. There had been a scuffle already, and Toto had torn himself away from the grasp of the two Hiva-Oa boys. In his black hand was grasped a small tin tobacco-box. That, seemingly, was the bone of contention.

There was no love lost between Hiva-Oa boys, brown men of the Marquesas, and the black men of Tonga. Quarrels were likely enough to arise. But Ken had no use for disputes among his crew, and he picked up a lawyer-cane as he went forward to intervene.

"What name you touch box belong me?" Toto was yelling. "You plenty bad feller Marquesas boy, you no touch box belong this feller!"

"What name you no give this Hiva-Oa feller tobacco, along he wantee tobacco?" roared Lompo.

"Belay there!" rapped out Ken.

The angry voices died down as the

boy trader arrived on the scene with the lawyer-cane in his hand.

"What name you feller boy sing out plenty too much?" demanded Ken sternly.

Every voice cackled at once in excited explanation. Lompo and Lufu spoke together, Tomoo and Kolulu joined in, in support of their comrades, and Danny the cooky-boy added a shrill cackle from the galley. Only Kaio-lalulalonga, looking on with the lofty disdain of a boatswain far above the common herd, said nothing.

With cheerful impartiality, Ken distributed half a dozen whacks with the lawyer-cane among the crew as the easiest and swiftest method of checking their volubility. The chorus died away.

"Now, you feller Lompo, you speakee mouth belong you," said Ken. "What name you makee all this feller trouble?"

Lompo, with a glare at the Tonga boy, explained. He had seen the tobacco-box stuck in Toto's fuzzy hair—a usual place for a Kanaka to carry his possessions—and he had jerked it out. He declared that he had intended to ask the Tonga boy for tobacco, and not to help himself unpermitted.

But Toto had turned on him like a tiger shark, torn the box from his hand, and struck him. Lompo was going on to state what he would do to Toto, with the leave of his white master, when Ken cut him short.

Evidently the Hiva-Oa boy had been the aggressor, though Toto's fury at so slight an offence was quite unjustified. As a castaway taken on board the ketch, Toto might have been expected to share his tobacco with the crew cheerfully enough.



Leaping from rock to rock, splashing through shallow pools left by the tide, stumbling, slipping, but never pausing for a second.

But the Tonga boy's black face blazed with ferocity as he clutched the box and glared at the Marquesas boys.

"You feller no touch tobacco belong Toto," said King of the Islands. "Feller tobacco belong that feller—you no touch."

"You no touch!" panted Toto. "Feller box belong me—you no touch."

"No wantee touchee box belong Tonga feller," sneered Lompo disdainfully. "No likee Tonga feller! Tonga feller eatee long-pig, along island belong him!"

Toto's black eyes blazed. It was likely enough that he had eaten "long-pig" in his time, but, like all South Sea natives, he resented the taunt of cannibalism.

He made a movement towards the Hiva-Oa boy. King of the Islands shoved him back unceremoniously.

"You no makee trouble along this ship, Toto," he snapped. "You good boy, or you get five-five lash along lawyer-cane."

"Yes, sar!" muttered the Tonga boy. But his black eyes were glinting.

"Eatee long-pig!" repeated Lompo, with relish. "All feller along Touga eatee long-pig!"

Whack! Lompo broke off with a howl as the lawyer-cane rapped across his bare shoulders.

"You talkee too much, mouth belong you," said the skipper of the Dawn. "You no makee more trouble along that feller Toto. Any more trouble along this ship and me knock seven bells outer every feller along ketch, my word!"

And having restored order with the help of the lawyer-cane, King of the Islands returned aft.

Toto squatted down by the scuttle with a sullen face. The little oval tobacco-box was thrust back into its place in his fuzzy hair, safe now from the hands of the crew.

Lompo and his comrades contented themselves with giving the Tonga boy glances of contempt and muttering to themselves in the dialect of the Marquesas.

Danny the cooky-boy, from the door of his little galley, watched the castaway for some time, a peculiar glimmer in his eyes. When he turned back to his pots and pans that glimmer was still in his eyes, and his dusky face was thoughtful.

Thinking was not much in the line of any South Sea Islander, but Danny was rather an exception. He had a keen and cunning mind.

Like the other Hiva-Oa boys, he was good-humoured and devoted to his white master. He was, an excellent cook, but he had his faults. Chief among them was stealing, and repeated whackings with a lawyer-cane had failed to cure him.

Ken dismissed the quarrel among the natives from his mind. Kit Hudson gave it no thought at all. If Toto's ferocious resentment of a slight offence surprised them, they gave it no special heed, Toto being an absolutely negligible quantity in their eyes. Moreover, they knew that tempers are fierce among the Tonga

Cooky-Boy's Treasure.

Islanders, one of the most intractable races in the Pacific.

But the cunning mind of Danny was hard at work. He had noted that the Tonga boy had looked scared, as well as enraged, when Lompo laid lawless fingers on the tobacco-box in his hair. Danny knew that Toto had been boat-steerer to a pearler, and he was wondering whether there was something of much greater value than tobacco in that little oval box.

Many times Danny glanced out to where Toto squatted, half-asleep, by the fo'c'sle. The Tonga boy was neither smoking nor chewing tobacco. Apparently he did not care for the weed, though he had been so savagely resentful when Lompo touched his box.

Danny intended to know what was in that tobacco-box, and he was waiting for an opportunity. There was a lurking grin on his chubby face when he served King of the Islands and Kit Hudson with their supper. With the fall of night, Danny thought that his opportunity was coming.

His duties over, Danny retired to his galley, where he generally slept among his pots and pans. On this particular night, however, the cooky-boy rolled a tapa mat out on the forward deck and laid himself down there, as the other members of the crew generally did on a hot night.

But Danny did not sleep. His eyes were fixed on the recumbent figure of the Tonga boy, close at hand on his sleeping-mat.

At eight bells, Kit Hudson relieved Ken on deck, and the boy trader went down to his bunk in the stateroom. Lompo and Lufu were the watch on deck along with the mate. The others slept—Tomoo in the little fore-castle, Kolulu on a tapa mat in the open air.

The Dawn glided on softly under the shining stars and the dark shadow of bellying canvas. Danny stirred at last.

The Tonga boy was sleeping soundly. As he lay on his mat one arm was thrown round his fuzzy head, as if even in slumber he was guarding the precious tobacco-box.

Silent as a shadow, Danny rolled beside the Tonga boy. For a full ten minutes he lay there, his nimble fingers skilfully at work. When he rolled noiselessly away again, there was a small tobacco-box in his thievish fingers, and its place in Toto's fuzzy hair was empty.

A Grand Flare-up.

KING OF THE ISLANDS came on deck at dawn. The rising sun gleamed over the vast rolling waters of the Pacific. The wind had freshened in the night, and the Dawn was gliding swiftly on towards distant Wawa.

It was usual for Danny to bring hot coffee from his galley for Ken and Kit as soon as they were both on deck. But this morning he did not bring it till he was called, and when he came, the coffee was not

quite hot, and he slammed the tray down carelessly.

Ken frowned, and gave the cooky-boy a sharp look. In the ordinary way, that look would have brought Danny back to his usual cheerful grinning self. Now it did not have that effect. He turned away carelessly.

"You feller Danny!" rapped out Ken.

"Yes, sar!" said Danny, over a bare brown shoulder.

"You wantee lawyer-cane?" asked Ken.

"No, sar!" said Danny hastily. "Me no wantee lawyer-cane, sar! Me good boy!"

"Takee that feller coffee, bring um along deck plenty hot."

Danny seemed to hesitate for a moment. But he obeyed, a lurking impudence in his look.

"What the dickens is the matter with him?" asked Hudson, staring after the cooky-boy as he went.

"You never know what a nigger has in his fuzzy head," answered Ken. "Hallo! What's the matter with that Tonga boy?"

Toto had sat up on his sleeping-mat forward, rubbed his eyes, and blinked round him in the rising light of day. Then his hand had gone to his thick woolly hair, feeling in the matted wool for the tobacco-box.

The next moment he leaped to his feet with a frenzied yell.

The shipmates stared at him. So did the native crew of the Dawn. The Tonga boy's face blazed with ferocity, and there was a glare almost of madness in his eyes. He stood for some moments glaring; then, as Lompo broke into a cackle of derisive laughter, he sprang at the Hiva-Oa boy.

Lompo went headlong to the deck, overthrown by the sudden attack. The Tonga boy sprawled over him, catching a knife from his loin-cloth, and the clear steel flashed in the sun as it was thrown up to strike.

Ken and Kit ran forward, startled and amazed; but Kaio-lalulalonga was closer at hand, and he was swift to intervene. The boatswain leaped at the infuriated Toto and swept him aside with a mighty blow of his fist. Toto sprawled over on the deck, the knife flying from his hand.

"No killy this feller!" gurgled Lompo, as he sat up, gasping and spluttering. "My word! That Tonga feller he go killy this feller Kanaka!"

Toto scrambled up, his face like a demon's. He glared round for the knife, which Kolulu promptly picked up and flung into the sea. Kaio-lalulalonga grasped the enraged Tonga boy.

"Hold him, Koko!" shouted Ken. The Tonga boy was sinewy and strong, but the giant boatswain of the Dawn held him as easily as an infant.

Ken fixed his eyes on the enraged face of the Tonga boy, wriggling in the boatswain's powerful grasp.

"You feller Toto, what name you do this thing?" exclaimed Ken. He

was amazed by the murderous outbreak of the Tonga black.

"Feller box belong me!" screamed Toto. "Feller box he no stop! That feller takee feller box belong me, along me sleep!"

"What?" Ken noticed now that the tobacco-box was no longer sticking in the thick fuzzy hair. "You swab, you go killy that feller Lompo along he takee tobacco?"

"Box belong me!" screamed the Tonga boy.

"Lompo! You takee that feller box?"

"No, sar!" gasped Lompo. "Finger belong me no touch that feller box, sar. Me no savvy, sar."

"What name you tinkee feller Lompo takee that feller box, Toto?" Ken demanded.

"Some feller he takee that feller box, along me sleep!" panted Toto.

Evidently the Tonga boy's first suspicion had fallen on Lompo because Lompo had fingered the tobacco-box the day before. And he had not paused to reflect before drawing the knife. He was still eyeing Lompo wolfishly as he wriggled.

It was clear that some thievish hand had deprived the Tonga boy of the box while he slept on the deck. Kaio-lalulalonga was above suspicion, but it might have been any one of the five Hiva-Oa boys.

Ken was perplexed. The tobacco in the little box could not have been worth half a dollar, obviously not worth stealing, certainly not worth the Tonga boy's outbreak of savage ferocity.

"Which feller boy takee box belong Toto?" asked Ken, glancing round at the crew.

There was a chorus of denial. Danny was as voluble as the rest. If the Hiva-Oa boys were to be believed, no hand on board had taken the box from the fuzzy hair.

"One of the swabs must have taken it!" said Hudson. "But that's no excuse for that savage brute pulling a knife!"

Ken knitted his brows in perplexity. One of the Hiva-Oa boys, plainly, had abstracted the tobacco-box while the Tonga boy slept. If so, he was pretty certain to have annexed its contents and dropped the tin box into the sea.

"That feller box he gone, Toto," said Ken at last. "Me givee you two stick tobacco, along um box all samee box belong you."

Ken's offer did not placate the enraged Tonga boy. A new box in place of the old one, and two sticks of tobacco—much more than the old box could have contained—should have settled the matter satisfactorily. But Toto did not even listen.

"Feller box belong me!" he screamed. "S'pose no givee feller box belong me, me killy Hiva-Oa feller!"

"Take a bight of a rope on that Tonga feller, Koko!" ordered King of the Islands grimly.

Toto struggled desperately, and brawny as the boatswain was, it looked as if the frenzied Tonga boy would succeed in breaking loose. But

the crew were only too willing to give Koko aid. Lompo and Lufu and Tomoo laid rough hands on the Tonga Islander, and he was thrown to the deck and bound hand and foot with a tapa rope.

He resisted desperately to the last, not desisting until his limbs were bound and he lay on the deck helpless.

King of the Islands looked down at him as he lay panting and rolling his eyes with fury. The boy trader's face was grim.

"You no killy any feller along this hooker, Toto," he said sternly. "You stop along deck, rope along you, you plenty bad Tonga boy. You stop along rope, along we raise Wawa."

Leaving the Tonga boy panting and squirming in his bonds, the boy trader returned aft.

"No Cooky Any More!"

SINCE he had been overcome and bound, the Tonga boy had uttered no word. He lay on the deck in the shadow of a sail, a picture of savage ferocity. His rolling eyes followed the grinning crew, rage and hatred gleaming in their black depths. But he said no word.

The strange conduct of the castaway from Kua was not the only puzzle Ken had that morning. Something was amiss with Danny, the cooky-boy. Usually civil, grinning with good-humour, and devoted to his master, he had changed strangely.

He was heard singing in his galley in his high falsetto voice as if uncommonly satisfied with himself and everything else. But he seemed deaf to his master's voice and came unwillingly when called. His service was careless, his manner disrespectful, his look impudent.

Ken had had a long experience of Kanakas, boy though he was, and he knew the signs. Danny was asking for the sack!

No Kanaka was likely to have cheek enough to tell a white master that he wanted to leave his service. When a Kanaka servant wanted to go, he would grow careless and disrespectful, thus indirectly asking for the sack till he got what he wanted.

In the clear morning sunlight the palm-trees of Wawa rose over the sea far ahead of the ketch as Ken called to Danny to bring him his binoculars.

Danny came slouching up with the glasses, and dropped them on the deck. Instead of picking them up, he grinned.

Ken was furious. Danny could ask for the sack if he liked, but not by dropping expensive binoculars on a teak deck.

"Koko!" called out King of the Islands. "You takee that feller Danny, give um two-five along lawyer-cane!"

Danny's impudent grin vanished from his face as if wiped off with a duster.

"Oh, sar! Me plenty solly, sar!" he yelled, as the brawny grasp of the boatswain closed on him. "Me plenty good boy, sar!"

"You plenty good boy along you get lawyer-cane!" answered Ken

Koko had a heavy hand with the lawyer-cane. It fairly rang on Danny's hapless back. There was a cackle of laughter from the crew as Danny wriggled and howled in the grasp of the boatswain. Two-five—ten—strokes fell, then the cooky-boy was released.

Still yelling, he bolted into his galley, and disappeared from sight. For some time he was heard howling, then there was silence. Soon afterwards he was heard singing. He had recovered from the lawyer-cane, and his unknown cause of satisfaction, whatever it was, had bubbled up again. In the happy-go-lucky way of a Kanaka, he passed from dismal woe

that he was unlikely to pick up so good a cook as Danny at Wawa, and it puzzled him, too. If Danny had come into a fortune, he might have acted as he was doing now.

But so far as Ken could see, Danny had no prospect ahead except to slip as cook on another trader. But he was fed up with the cooky-boy's vagaries by this time, and quite prepared to kick him off the ketch at Wawa.

In the blazing tropical afternoon the ketch ran into the lagoon at Wawa and anchored opposite the town that sprawled along the beach. Then Ken walked over to the Tonga boy, still lying bound on the forward



The Tonga boy's face blazed with ferocity, and with a frenzied yell he sprang at Lompo as the latter broke into a cackle of derisive laughter.

to exuberant merriment almost at a bound.

The vagaries of the cooky-boy, however, and the savage ferocity of the scowling Toto did not occupy Ken's thoughts to a great extent. He was drawing near to Wawa, and at Wawa he had plenty of business to attend to.

There were boxes and bales to be landed, copra and pearl-shell to be taken on board; copra from the planters, pearl-shell from Benoit, the French half-caste at Wawa, who dealt in pearl-shells, pearls, rare corals, and such things. King of the Islands was thinking of cargo business as the swift ketch ran down to Wawa.

The midday dinner in the cabin was served much more carefully by Danny than the breakfast had been. Evidently the lawyer-cane had done him good. But he still looked sullen. It was clear that he was no longer attached to his job on board the Dawn, and wanted to go.

It was irritating to Ken, who knew

deck. Toto stared up at him with undiminished ferocity.

"Now we stop along Wawa, you go along beach," said Ken, and at a sign from the boy skipper Koko cast the prisoner loose.

Toto staggered up, and rubbed his chafed limbs.

"You give this feller box belong him, sar!" he muttered, showing his white teeth in a savage snarl.

"Box belong you no stop along this ketch, you swab! S'pose you likee, me give two stick tobacco, new box all samee."

"No good—plenty no good!" yelled the Tonga boy. "Me wantee box belong me. You givee feller box belong me!"

"Give him a new box of tobacco, Koko, and put him on the beach," said Ken, and turned away. He had no time to waste on the sullen Tonga Islander.

Koko obeyed. But the Tonga boy, rolling his eyes with rage, dashed the

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Cooky-Boy's Treasure

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new box of tobacco on the deck and ran along to King of the Islands, who was about to step into the whaleboat. He caught the boy trader by the sleeve with a clutching black hand.

"You feller white master, you give this feller box belong him!" he yelled.

"Throw him into the boat, Koko!" was all Ken said.

Kaio-lalulalonga, indignant at the presumption of the black man in laying a hand on his white master, collared the Tonga boy and pitched him headlong into the whaleboat, where he landed with a crash, amid a cackle of laughter from the crew.

Ken was about to follow when there was another interruption. Danny had been busy in the galley, and now he came up, with all his worldly possessions packed in a tapa bag.

"This feller go along boat, sar!" said Danny.

"What you mean, you feller Danny?" snapped Ken. He was in no mood for any more nonsense from the cooky-boy.

"Me wantee stop along Wawa, sar! Me no wantee stop along this hooker any more altogether," answered Danny impudently.

"What name you wantee leave feller white master, Danny?" asked Ken, controlling his annoyance with an effort. "You go along another ship, along Wawa?"

"No, sar!" grinned Danny. "Me no cooky-boy any more, sar! Me go along Hiva-Oa bimeby, island me belong, sar. No cooky any more altogether along white master, sar. Plenty too much work along cooky along galley, sar! This Kanaka no likee work."

"Never have heard of a Kanaka that liked work," grinned Kit Hudson. "But Kanaka feller no work, Danny, Kanaka feller no eat!"

"This feller Kanaka eat plenty too much," said Danny. "This feller savvy. This feller no cooky any more. Wantee stop along Wawa."

Ken turned to the boatswain and repeated his previous order.

"Throw him into the boat, Koko!" There was a howl from Danny as the boatswain grasped him and tossed him over the rail like a bag of copra. There was another howl as he sprawled in the boat.

He sat up breathlessly, clutching at his loin-cloth. Apparently there was some valued possession tucked away in the folds of this loin-cloth. But whatever it was, it was safe, and Danny breathed again.

King of the Islands sat in the sternsheets, and Lompo and Lufu pulled him ashore, Koko steering. The boat bumped on the shelving sand, and the boy trader stepped out on the beach.

Danny scuttled out of the boat and disappeared at a run. Toto scrambled across the sand towards the boy trader as he started up the beach.

"You feller white master——" he snarled.

"Get out!" snapped Ken.

"You give this feller box belong him——"

Toto had no time to say more. Koko had brought the lawyer-cane in the boat, perhaps with an idea that it might be wanted. The cane rang on the Tonga boy's bare back. He yelled, and turned on the boatswain like a tiger.

Koko's mighty arm rose and fell without a pause, and under a shower of hefty blows the Tonga boy ran along the beach, Kaio-lalulalonga pursuing him. King of the Islands smiled, and walked up the beach to the settlement nesting under the palm-trees.

Shattered Dreams!

KING OF THE ISLANDS came out of the dusky office of Benoit, the French half-caste, into the blaze of sunshine, and breathed more freely. He had spent an hour dealing with the cunning half-caste, and Benoit had left an unpleasant taste in the boy trader's mouth. He was glad to get into the fresh air again.

Under the palm-trees, as he left Benoit's office, Ken passed Danny. The cooky-boy watched him with furtive eyes, but Ken gave him no heed, and walked on and forgot his existence. It did not occur to him that the cooky-boy was watching to see him clear of the place—he could never have guessed that Danny had any business with the dealer in pearls and pearl-shell on Wawa!

When the handsome, athletic figure of the boy trader had disappeared among the palms, Danny scuttled swiftly into the pearl-dealer's office. The little wizened half-caste glanced at him carelessly. The Kanaka cook did not look like a customer with whom Benoit cared to deal.

Danny stared furtively round the office, stared out at the sunny beach, and slid a hand into his loin-cloth. It came out with something round and bright glistening in the dirty palm.

The half-caste's eyes grew bright with greed at sight of it.

That a Kanaka cooky-boy could have come honestly by a pearl that looked at first glance worth at least fifty pounds was very improbable. But that made no difference to Benoit—as Danny well knew. With honest traders like Ken King, Benoit traded in pearl-shell and other commodities of the South Seas. With other traders he traded in other things, and it was an open secret on Wawa that any Kanaka with stolen pearls to sell could get a quarter of their value from Benoit.

Danny grinned, and the pearl disappeared into his loin-cloth again. The half-caste understood. He opened an inner door and signed to the cooky-boy to follow him into another room.

The door shut, and a pandanus screen pulled across the window, from the folds of his loin-cloth Danny drew almost a handful of pearls—and Danny's hand was not small. He laid them on the table,

where they glistened and shone in a gleaming heap.

The half-caste caught his breath. Many a hundred stolen pearls had been brought to him for sale in his time, but never had the pearl-buyer of Wawa looked on a heap of treasure like this. The smallest pearl there looked worth twenty pounds—the largest might have run into hundreds. And there were dozens of them!

Benoit stepped to the door and dropped a bar into place. He did not want any risk of interruption now.

Danny chuckled gleefully. The value of the pearls he did not know, but he had no doubt that it ran into hundreds of Australian sovereigns. He was going to leave Benoit's house with a bag of golden sovereigns in his possession, pay his passage on a steamer, like a white master, to his native island of Hiva-Oa, and there be a rich and great man, the admiration and envy of his many relations!

Benoit's manner, and his action in barring the door, showed what he thought of the treasure.

"What place you get this feller pearl?" muttered the dealer, staring with greedy eyes at the heap on the table.

"Me get feller pearl along Tonga boy, along he sleep," answered Danny cheerfully. There was no need to keep secrets from Benoit, and he had to explain, for the half-caste was not the man to take undue risks. Had the pearls been stolen on Wawa itself, Benoit would not have cared to take the risk of touching them.

Benoit fingered the pearls, running them lovingly through his dusky fingers.

"What place that Tonga feller he stop?" he asked.

"That Tonga feller he steal pearl, along master belong him," chuckled Danny. "He keepee feller pearl along tobacco-box, head belong him, stick in um hair. He stop along ketch belong King of the Islands."

Benoit started.

"Feller King of the Islands no savvy," said Danny hastily. "He no savvy pearl. Tonga feller sing out plenty too much along he findee tobacco-box he no stop. He no sing out along pearl. S'pose he say feller pearl along box, feller white master savvy him steal pearl, give um along white master magistrate. He no get pearl. He get too much work along feller prison."

The half-caste grinned. He understood that the Tonga boy, robbed of what he had stolen from his master, had not dared to make his loss known.

"What place that feller Tonga boy he get um pearl?" asked Benoit.

"Along Kua," answered Danny. "Feller pearl no stop along Kua!" said Benoit, giving Danny a sharp look.

"Plenty feller pearl stop along Kua, me tinkee," grinned Danny. "That feller Tonga boy steal pearl along Kua, along master belong him. He say feller master sail away along lugger, leavee that feller along Kua. King of the

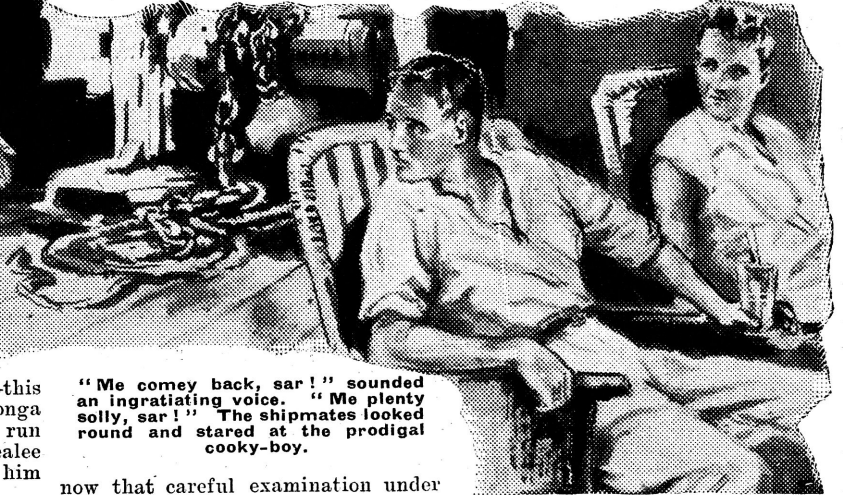


savvy Osho Marko plenty too much. That feller Jap he makee pearl along Kua. No pearl stop along Kua—Osho Marko makee! That Tonga feller plenty big fool tinkee real pearl. You plenty big fool tinkee all samee Tonga feller!”

Danny's jaw dropped, and he stared open-eyed and open-mouthed at the half-caste. He understood

Danny yelled as he landed, and his loot went scattering right and left. He did not even take the trouble to collect the dud pearls. He limped away to the beach, a sadder if not a wiser cooky-boy.

King of the Islands sat in his chair on the deck of the ketch, sipping lime-



Islands believe that feller—this feller Danny no believe. Tonga boy tell plenty big lie. He run away long bush, along he stealee pearl, leavee master belong him along Kua.”

The half-caste nodded slowly. It was likely enough that the Tonga boy had run from his master with a tobacco box crammed with stolen pearls, sighted the ketch passing the island, and obtained a passage by stating that his master had marooned him. What puzzled the half-caste was the fact that it had happened on Kua. No man on the Pacific beaches believed that there were pearls on Kua. Yet if this heap of treasure had come from Kua, the island must be amazingly rich in pearls.

“What name belong that feller master belong Tonga boy?” he asked slowly.

“Name belong him Osho Marko,” answered Danny.

The half-caste jumped. Evidently the name of the Japanese pearler meant more to him than it meant to the cooky-boy of the Dawn. The change in his expression startled Danny.

Benoit picked up the largest pearl from the heap, took a magnifying-glass from a drawer, and stepped to the window. For a long minute he stood there in the bright sunshine, examining the pearl with the glass, Danny watching him uneasily.

There was a sneer on the dusky face of the half-caste as he came back and threw the pearl carelessly on the table. It rolled away and fell to the floor. The half-caste had tossed it down as a thing of no value. Danny jumped after it, clutched it up, and glared in astonishment at the pearl-buyer.

“What name—” he began hotly. “You takee pearl belong you, get out along this place!” snapped the half-caste, taking the bar down from the door. “You tinkee this feller Benoit one small infant? Me

“Me comey back, sar!” sounded an ingratiating voice. “Me plenty solly, sar!” The shipmates looked round and stared at the prodigal cooky-boy.

now that careful examination under the glass! He had heard of “cultured” pearls, and slowly but surely he realised the dreadful truth—which evidently was unknown to Toto. Osho Marko had not discovered a hitherto unknown pearl-oyster bed on Kua. He had “planted” a bed of oysters in the lonely lagoon long ago, with glass beads or similar objects inserted under the shell to give the “pearl” a start. Kua had long since been given up by pearl-hunters, and it was a safe place to grow cultured pearls.

Osho's voyage to Kua in his lugger had not been, as Toto, his boat-steerer, believed, to discover an oyster-bed, but to collect the false pearls from the bed he had planted years before. Toto had robbed his master and fled, and his loot was worth only a handful of dollars to him—unless he had the cunning and duplicity, as Osho Marko had, to dispose of the pearls to tourists as the genuine article.

Danny had robbed Toto, in his turn, of a box of sham pearls! His loot was not worth a month's pay as cooky-boy on board the Dawn!

Visions of wealth, visions of greatness on his native island faded from Danny's dismayed mind.

The half-caste eyed him sneeringly. “You takee pearl belong you; you get out along this place,” he jeered.

Slowly Danny gathered up the “treasure.”

“You tinkee this feller one small child, you bring him dud pearls,” Benoit sneered. “You tink brain belong me no walk about? You tinkee this feller one big fool! You get out along this place!”

The pearl-buyer enforced the order with a sudden kick that lifted the cooky-boy through the doorway and sent him sprawling into the sunshine.

squash under the gorgeous sunset, and talking copra and pearl-shell to Kit Hudson.

A head rose over the rail, and softly Danny the cooky-boy stepped from a Wawa canoe and approached the white masters.

King of the Islands put down his glass.

“That swab Lompo cannot make a lime-squash like Danny,” he remarked, “and we shall have to take pot-luck at supper, Kit!”

“Please, sar—” came an ingratiating voice.

The shipmates looked round, and stared at Danny.

“Me comey back, sar,” murmured Danny, with an ingratiating wriggle. “Me plenty solly, sar! Me savvy me plenty bad feller, sar. S'pose you kickee this had feller, foot belong you, sar, me tinkee plenty too much good. Me altogether too bad feller!”

“You lettee this feller stop along ketch, sar?” pleaded Danny. “Me altogether too much solly me bad feller, sar. S'pose me stop along ketch, me altogether good boy!”

King of the Islands glanced at his shipmate. Their eyes met, and they smiled. They were thinking of supper and the difference between Lompo's cooking and Danny's. Danny had blown in at the right moment!

Ken rose to his feet and solemnly kicked the cooky-boy across the deck and into the galley. Then he returned to his chair. A little later there was a clatter of pots and pans, followed by an appetising odour. Supper that night on the ketch was a masterpiece!

(There's the right real adventurous tang of the wild South Seas here—and there's more of it in another topping King of the Islands yarn next week.)