

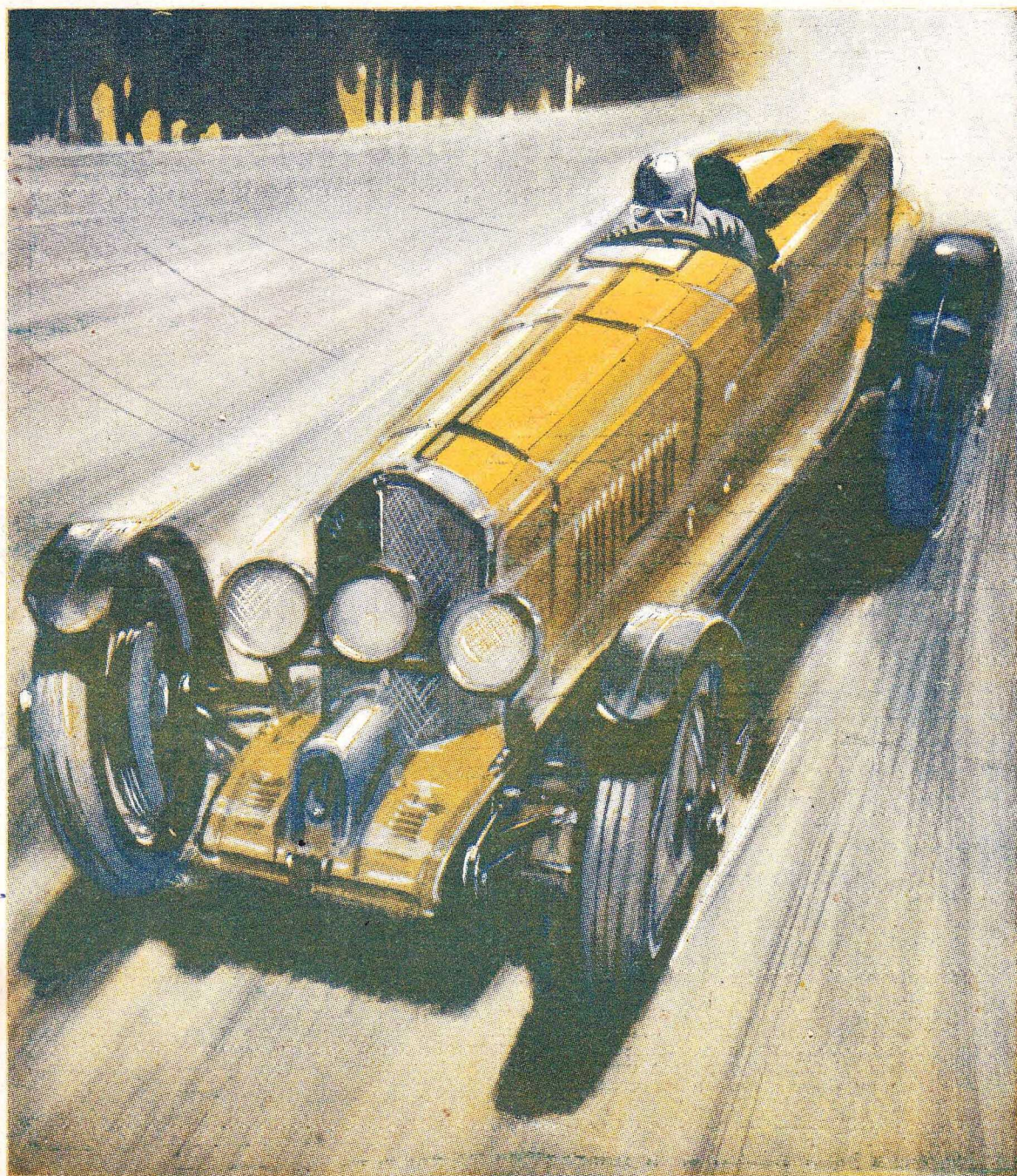
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DEFYING DEATH ON THE SPEED TRACK!—See page 3.

A staggering surprise comes to the chumz of the South Seas trading ketch Dawn in this great story which might have been called "The Thousand-Pound Girl!" - - - COMPLETE



Black and grim, the island of Maia rose sentinel-like from the Ocean. . . . King of the Islands stared at it through the murk.

Out of the Storm!

KIT HUDSON, mate of Ken King's ketch, the Dawn, grasped the young skipper's arm, and, pointing suddenly to a grim rock that rose above the tossing sea, exclaimed excitedly, "A man!"

Ken stared incredulously, and was about to speak when Koko, the giant Kanaka bo'sun, who was at the wheel, chimed in:

"No man stop along Maia!"

"But I saw him!" declared Kit positively. "A shipwrecked man, I suppose. Nobody else could be there!"

Ken, puzzled, stared through the murk. Black storm-clouds lowered over the Pacific, and the ketch tossed like a cork on the mighty rollers. An angry blood-red sun was setting in the west. Under a rag of canvas the Dawn was running before the wind, and to the ears of all on board came the roaring boom of the surf on Maia. In addition to the mate and the bo'sun, the Dawn carried a crew of five, all natives of Hiva-Oa—Lompo, Lufu, Tomoo, Kolulu, and Danny the cooky-boy.

Maia, a lonely rock that rose sentinel-like from the ocean, a hundred miles from all other land, was uninhabited, save by lizards and crabs and sea-birds. A few palms clustered at the foot of the towering rock, but there was no water save rain-pools in the crevices. And far around Maia ran coral reefs, many of them submerged, others jutting with knife-edges above the water, perilous to approach. No skipper ever came near Maia if he could help it, and King of the Islands was giving it a wide berth as he passed, running before the wind.

His eyes on the half-sunken reefs, he was anxious to leave Maia astern.

But now his attention had been called to the summit of the high rock. Black and grim, it stood dark against the darkening sky, backed by black clouds. Round it the wind howled and roared.

"I see nothing, Kit."

"I saw him, I tell you! Just for a second he stood clear against the sky. I reckon he can't stand against the wind! It must hit him like a hammer up there."

King of the Islands scanned the rock again, towering seventy feet above the sea. His look was dubious.

to give Koko his full name—in astonishment. The figure, fighting the wind, waved frantically to the ketch far below. Ken waved back, but it was doubtful whether his answering signal was seen. The ketch was speeding on. Already the figure was growing smaller in the increasing distance, and suddenly it vanished.

The shipmates of the Dawn guessed why. The furious wind had hurled the castaway over, and he was now probably sprawling on the uneven summit, out of sight. There was no longer any doubt that there was a man on Maia!

"My sainted Sam!" King of the Islands compressed his lips. "A shipwrecked man, Kit—and we can't take him off! No ship, no boat, could live near the Maia reefs in this sea!" muttered King of the Islands.

Then, far in the distance, the figure in ragged shirt and duck trousers reappeared, on his knees now, hands clasped together and stretched out towards the ketch.

It was an appeal no sailorman could have resisted, least of all King of the Islands. But the boy trader was helpless, for the approach to Maia was fatal except in the calmest sea. Even in a calm the currents that boiled among the long lines of reef were deadly.

"You feller Lompo!" shouted Ken. "You fetch feller gun along cabin, along deck plenty too quick altogether."

"Yes, sar!"

Lompo darted below, to reappear swiftly, a loaded Winchester in his hands.

King of the Islands took the rifle and fired shot after shot into the air. The reports were swept away on the wind.

"That white feller heard that feller

Luck o' the South Seas!

By Charles Hamilton

"A man on Maia!" he said slowly. "If you're sure, Kit—"

But the rock seemed absolutely bare. There was no sign of life on it. Even the gulls were clustering down in shelter from the fierce wind.

"Look!" shouted Hudson as, struggling against the wind that seemed to be tearing him away, a figure suddenly stood out distinct on the summit of the rock—a slight figure in tattered ducks that fluttered in the wind. A red-spotted handkerchief was bound over the

Luck o' the South Seas!

gun speakee, car belong him!" said Kaio-lalulalonga. The signal shots told the castaway on Maia that he was seen—that there was hope for him. More Ken could not do. He could not reach Maia—could not approach the storm-swept rock, could not even leave the ketch to the Dawn rushed on, and the figure crouching on the summit of the desolate rock grew toy-like in the distance.

Darkness rushed down on the sea. Maia and the castaway, clinging to rock, were lost to sight.

Ken, his brows knitted, handed the rifle back to Lompo.

"We can do no more, Kit! He knows now, at any rate, that white men have seen him! We've left him with hope, at least."

"Thank Heaven we could do as much!" said the mate. "A shipwrecked man on that horrible rock—not a sail to be seen in three months! Ken, we've got to save him!"

"No doubt about that, Kit!" Ken smiled faintly. "But when this gale has blown itself out, Kit, it will still be days before any craft can get near Maia. And—"

He broke off. Ken King was a trader, and to a trader time was money. Saving the man on Maia meant beating back against adverse winds, day after weary day, with trade going to "pot," appointments postponed, cargo lost! It meant heavy loss to the traders of the Dawn. And there were many trading skippers in the Pacific who would have contented themselves with reporting what they had seen on Maia, leaving the rescue to others—to chance!

But that was not the way of King of the Islands!

"I'll Leave it to You!"

BLACK FURLEY stepped from his whaleboat to the deck of the Dawn, which had just dropped anchor in the lagoon at Lukwe. King of the Islands eyed him grimly, and Kit Hudson gave his belt a hitch to bring his six-shooter a little nearer to his hand. They were a lawless crew on the island of Lukwe, and Black Furley was the roughest and most lawless of the lot.

Pearler, pearl-poacher, kidnapper, and many other things, the black-bearded ruffian of Lukwe had a bad reputation all through the Islands. Ken had had trouble with the man before, and had got the better of him, which did not make Black Furley feel kindly towards him. As Furley came out in his whaleboat, the shipmates of the Dawn watched him warily.

Black Furley grinned as he saw Hudson's action.

"I ain't come aboard for trouble, shipmates," he said. "You don't want that gun, Hudson."

"What do you want, Furley?" asked King of the Islands crisply. Ken had business with some of the traders of Lukwe, but Black Furley certainly was not among the number.

"News!" answered the Lukwe pearler promptly.

"Little enough news," said Ken. "We're on a round trip among the Islands, and we've seen no news since month-old papers at Fushima. You don't want me to tell you there has been a gale—I reckon it's been scattering the nuts on Lukwe."

"You're last from Fushima? The Flamingo went down in the waters you've sailed over," said Black Furley. "You've heard?"

"Not a word," answered Ken. "They hadn't the news at Fushima when we left. But that's a good time back. The Flamingo of Sydney?"

"Lost with all hands!" replied Black Furley.

"That's bad."

Ken was concerned to hear of the loss of the Sydney steamer, but he was surprised to see the black-bearded pearler of Lukwe concerning himself about it. He had never expected to hear of Black Furley troubling himself about the fate of shipwrecked seamen and passengers.

"It was a month and more ago," said Black Furley. "Reported lost with all hands! One of her boats was picked up, stove in. That's all that's known of what happened to the Flamingo of Sydney. But there's people who reckon—or hope, at least—that there may be survivors." He eyed the shipmates narrowly.

"I'll give you the office, Ken King—you'll hear all about it as soon as you step ashore, anyhow. If you choose to join in, there's nothing to stop you."

"Join in what?" asked Ken, puzzled.

"The hunt for the girl." Black Furley grinned. "One of the lost passengers of the Flamingo was a girl—Miss Edna Lennox, daughter of old John Lennox, the richest man in Sydney. She'd been on a trip in the Islands, and had taken the steamer home."

"Poor girl!" said Ken. "There isn't a chance in a thousand that a girl has survive."

"Everybody knows that—except old Lennox! He's offering a thousand pounds reward for news of his daughter."

"Oh!" King of the Islands understood now. "That's your interest in the Flamingo, is it?"

"Just that!" answered Black Furley coolly. "I'm not worrying a whole heap about the fore-castle hands and Kanakas that went down, nor yet about the after-guard, nor about the passengers, either. But I reckon I'd like to handle that thousand."

"Little enough chance," said Kit Hudson.

"I know that! But there's a sporting chance! A boat may have got away. They'd save the girl if they could. There's a sporting chance that the girl's still living. I can tell you that since the news came from Sydney, plenty of skippers are looking round, and asking questions of every trading schooner and native canoe they meet. If the girl's alive, the man who finds her gets a

thousand pounds. You've seen nothing?"

Ken shook his head.

"No floating wreckage—"

"Nothing."

"Well, I reckoned I'd ask. Plenty of lubbers ashore will be asking. No craft can come in to Lukwe now without being asked for news of the Flamingo."

"She was last heard of at Lolo," he went on, "and would have called at Fushima if she hadn't gone down in the hurricane. She may have been driven off her course and hit a reef somewhere. Her engines ought to have been scrapped ten years ago. She can't have been far off Fushima when she went down. Heard of any wreckage going ashore there?"

King of the Islands shook his head.

"Of course, she's a goner!" grunted the pearler. "There were other women passengers, and nobody reckons they've survived. It's only that old Lennox at Sydney has money to burn, and a thousand quid is a thousand quid. I reckon I'll lose a week's time for nothing running across to Fushima in my lugger." He grunted again, and stepped back to the rail.

Evidently the Lukwe pearler was giving no thought whatever, personally, to the lost passenger of the Flamingo. His only thought was of the remote chance of picking up the reward offered by the Sydney merchant.

"Hold on!" said Ken.

Black Furley turned back eagerly.

"If you know anything—if you've seen anything—" he began.

"Nothing, as I told you! But if you're running down to Fushima, you'll pass in sight of Maia."

"I reckon not! I'm giving the reefs of Maia a wide berth."

"The gale's over," said Ken. "You'll find calm waters round Maia now. There's a man on Maia—"

"What about it?" asked Black Furley, staring at him.

"We sighted him, but we couldn't take him off in rough weather," explained King of the Islands. "But if you're running to Fushima, you can put in at Maia by losing only a few hours."

"To take off a castaway?" asked Furley derisively. "Catch me trusting my lugger among the reefs of Maia! I reckon the man can stay there till he grows a white beard before my lugger takes him off!"

Ken compressed his lips. He was willing, at any cost, to run back to Maia, as soon as the weather permitted, to rescue the hapless castaway, but his course was set for Lalinge, in the opposite direction. The wind was favourable for Lalinge, but the return to Maia meant days of weary tacking, a heavy loss to the boy trader.

But any craft booked for Fushima could raise Maia at the cost of only a few hours lost.

"Look here, Furley," said the boy trader. "That man on Maia has got to be saved. You know what it means to me if I tack back to Maia. If you're for Fushima, you can do in a few hours what would cost me a

week. It's up to you, as well as any other skipper, to take a starving castaway off a lonely rock."

"You're thinking of chucking away a week, beating back to Maia to take off some scarecrow of a beggared sailorman?" Black Furley laughed.

"Yes, if there's no other way. But you—"

"I reckon I'll leave it to you, King of the Islands!" grinned the Lukwe pearler.

"Do you call yourself a sailor-man?" snapped King of the Islands scornfully. "Look here, Furley, it would cost you a few hours—"

"And the chance of piling up my lugger! Forget it!" said Black Furley. He stepped down into his whaleboat, and his Lukwe boys pulled for the beach.

Coral Reef Perils!

KING OF THE ISLANDS had a busy day at Lukwe. The shipmates of the Dawn had agreed that the man on Maia had to be saved. And if he was to be saved, they had to save him. But it was not a light matter to the boy traders.

The return to Maia meant at least the loss of a week. And apart from loss of time and loss of trade, there were other considerations. Besides copra and pearl-shell, which could wait, the ketch carried goods booked for Lalinge that could not wait.

Ken drummed the Islands for all kinds of cargo, and a trader who consigned a packing-case to his care had a right to expect its delivery according to schedule, wind and weather permitting. And King of the Islands was not the man to fail to keep his compacts.

The result was that a number of packing-cases had to be unloaded from the ketch in the lagoon at Lukwe, and loaded again on a schooner that was leaving for Lalinge. Which meant that King of the Islands had to pay the freightage on them. Which again meant that a big hole was made in the profits of his last trip round the Islands.

It could not be helped if the man on Maia was to be saved, and the shipmates took it as cheerfully as they could. The recollection of that appealing figure, kneeling on the summit of the desolate rock with clasped hands, was fresh in their minds—an appeal they could not think of resisting.

But Ken knitted his brows as he saw a lug-sail dancing out of the lagoon while he was superintending the transference of cargo. Black Furley was starting for Fushima.

It was up to Furley, as much as to any other skipper in the South Seas, to rescue a castaway on a lonely rock. And what meant a heavy loss to King of the Islands would have meant only a few hours' time to the Lukwe pearler, for Maia lay only a score of miles off his course to Fushima.

"The swab!" growled King of the Islands, as his eyes fell on Black Furley's lugger gliding out of the lagoon.

"The lubber!" said Kit Hudson. "I rather wish we'd chucked Black Furley into the lagoon now."

"Well, that wouldn't have helped," Ken smiled. "We've got to make up our minds to it, Kit."

And having made up their minds to it, the shipmates of the Dawn groused no further.

On Lukwe, they found that the chief topic was the loss of the Flamingo, and the hunt for the "thousand-pound" girl, as Edna Lennox was called on the beach.

Many skippers were keeping a keen eye open for traces of the wreckage

of the reef there was plenty of wind, though it was not the wind that King of the Islands wanted. He suppressed a sigh as he saw a Lukwe schooner speeding before the wind for Lalinge, making nine or ten knots. The wind that sped the schooner had to be fought against by the ketch, beating back wearily for Maia.

There was still a heavy swell on the sea from the late gale, but Ken had no doubt that the sea would be calm enough by the time he made Maia. It was not likely to be a rapid run, and it proved to be far from rapid. The Dawn could sail as near to the wind as any ketch in the Pacific, and King of the Islands knew how to get every ounce of speed out of his craft.



Ken placed a tin pannikin to the lips of the castaway, who seemed unable to realise that it was rescue at last—life instead of death!

of the steamer, in the faint hope of picking up the reward offered by the Sydney merchant for news of his lost daughter.

But of all the skippers that used Lukwe as a port of call, only Black Furley thought it worth while to make a special trip Fushima way. And Furley was influenced rather by the largeness of the offered reward than by any real hope of picking up news of the lost passenger of the Flamingo.

King of the Islands heard plenty of talk on the subject, but gave it little heed. He had other matters on his mind.

Early the following morning the Dawn sailed out of Lukwe. Outside

But adverse winds were adverse winds, and it was long and weary work.

The Hiva-Oa crew, lazy, like all Kanakas, jumped actively to work under the eye of the boy skipper, cackling cheerily to the incessant swing of the boom. But even the light-hearted cackle of the Kanakas died away when the sun set and the tall hill of Lukwe was still in sight astern.

The next day a sail was sighted on the rolling sea.

"Feller lugger he stop, sar!" said Kaio-lalulalonga. "Feller Furley belong Lukwe!"

Ken stared across the heaving waters at the lugger, and smiled
(Continued on page 16.)

Luck o' the South Seas!

(Continued from page 13.)

rather sourly at sight of the black-bearded Furley, who scowled at the ketch that was passing him on the same tack.

Black Furley was not getting an easy run to Fushima, and the Dawn easily out-sailed the lugger.

"The swab!" grunted Ken. Days of weary tacking lay before him, due to the selfishness of the Lukwe pearler. Easily enough Black Furley could have taken in Maia on his course down to Fushima.

It was some satisfaction to the shipmates to leave the lugger labouring behind as the Dawn beat on. After Black Furley and his lugger had disappeared, no sail was sighted on the lonely waters. Sails were rare enough in those solitary seas, and steamers almost unknown.

Each day, only the waste of rolling waters met the eyes that stared from the ketch. Steadily blew the adverse winds, and by long, long tacks the ketch fought her way to Maia. The swell left by the gale had gone, and the Dawn's prow cut through a calm and sunny sea. With a favourable wind, King of the Islands would have made nothing of the run. But the wind did not shift, and every foot of the way had to be fought for.

It was on the fifth day out from Lukwe that the high rock of Maia was raised on the sea-line ahead. Seldom did any skipper's eye fall gladly on that desolate rock, surrounded by dangerous reefs, but Ken King and Kit Hudson were deeply thankful to see it at last.

King of the Islands brought his binoculars to bear on the tall rock, scanning it eagerly for a sign of the castaway. Over the high summit the gulls were screaming, but that was all.

The boy trader's brow was clouded. He had done his best, all that skipper could do. But seven days had passed since the castaway had been seen signalling from Maia, and in that time it was possible that the man had perished.

The rock rose nearer and clearer to view. But if the castaway was there he was not on the look-out, and had not seen the ketch. No sign of him was to be picked up.

"If we're too late—" muttered Ken, lowering the glasses. "Poor chap! He may have fancied himself abandoned—left to his fate!"

"If he's a sailorman, he would know that no craft could get near Maia in rough weather," said Hudson. "If there's food on the rock—"

"There's a bunch of palms, a few coconuts, and plenty of shell-fish," said Ken. "And rain-pools in the rock—he's got water. But—"

Slowly, laboriously, the ketch beat down to Maia. Every brown face on the ketch was grave now. Well the Kanakas knew the peril of the long lines of coral-reef over which the Pacific creamed!

Kaio-lalulalonga stood at the wheel, his strong brown hands on the spokes. King of the Islands watched the sea intently. A half-mile from the tall

rock the Dawn was hove to and anchored, and King of the Islands ordered the whaleboat to be lowered.

"Give Me Water!"

"WASHY WASHY along Maia!" rapped King of the Islands, and Koko and Lompo, Lufu and Tomoo pulled steadily at the oars, while Ken steered.

Even in the calmest weather the surf broke with a thunderous roar on the reefs of Maia. Creamy foam surged round the whaleboat and on all sides the teeth of the coral threatened her timbers. No skipper, if he could have helped it, would have risked a boat in such wild waters. It was not surprising, perhaps, that Black Furley had laughed at the idea!

More than once the whaleboat scraped on iron-like coral, and the hearts of the boat's crew leaped to their mouths. But under the boy trader's eye, the Kanakas pulled steadily on.

High over the reefs towered the great rock, honeycombed with fissures where gulls had their nests. Not a blade of vegetation grew there. But on one side, at the foot of Maia, was a tiny beach, heaped with sand driven up by the Pacific rollers. There some earth had found a place, and a few stunted palms grew, with patches of straggling bush. There, if anywhere, the castaway would be found.

On the little beach the rollers came in, breaking with incessant thunder. The whaleboat threaded a perilous way, and a heavy roller bore her on to the little beach and bumped her there.

The Kanakas jumped out, grasped the boat, and dragged her on the sand. King of the Islands, drenched to the waist, stood on the beach and looked round.

"That white feller he no stop, sar!" said Kaio-lalulalonga, with a shake of his dusky head. Save for the roar of the surf, to which the ear was accustomed, there was silence. Sea-gulls, squatting on the rocks, blinked at the boat's crew.

"Ahoy!" shouted King of the Islands. But no reply came, save for the booming of echoes from the hollows of the high rock.

The boy trader tramped up the beach. Alive or dead, he was there to find the man on Maia. Not until he had made certain of the castaway's fate could he return to the waiting ketch. He could see no footprints in the sand. But the base of the rock was broken into fissures and caves, and it was likely enough that the man had selected one of the caves as a shelter.

Kaio-lalulalonga followed his white master, the other Kanakas remaining by the boat. There was a sudden exclamation from the brown boatswain:

"Feller foot he stop along this place, sar!"

Ken glanced quickly at the spot to which Koko's brown finger pointed—a faint mark in the sand. Keen as

his eyes were, Ken would hardly have taken it for a footprint.

"You tinkee feller foot he stop, Koko?"

"Me tinkee, sar—one day, two day before," answered Kaio-lalulalonga.

Ken nodded. If the mark was a footprint, it was an old one, almost obliterated by wind and spray—one or two days old, as the boatswain declared. If the castaway was in one of the caves at the foot of the rock, it seemed that he could not have stirred out of his shelter during the past day or two. That was strange enough, as the weather had been fine and sunny since the end of the gale. It could only mean that he was unable to stir.

"'Nother feller foot he stop!" said Kaio-lalulalonga. It was another faint trace in the sand. "Plenty feller foot belong that feller, sar."

It was a small footprint, strangely small for a sailorman. Taking a line from the first footprint to the second, Ken tramped on towards the great cliff at the back of the beach. Under the towering rock a cave opened before him, and, according to the footprints, the castaway must have entered the cave and never emerged again.

King of the Islands passed from brilliant sunlight into the deep shadow of the hollow rock, then made a sudden exclamation.

"White feller he stop!" said Kaio-lalulalonga, with satisfaction.

A dozen feet within the cave, stretched on a bed of sun-dried seaweed, lay a haggard figure. Evidently it was the castaway of Maia. He was not sleeping, nor completely unconscious. Through the half-closed eyelids the eyes glimmered feverishly in the shadows.

But the recumbent form made no movement, the pallid lips uttered no word, as the boy trader approached. The castaway lived, but it was clear at a glance that he had suffered severely, and that he had lain down to die in the cave.

The face, worn and haggard as it was, looked strangely young, without a sign of beard or moustache. Ken judged that the castaway was a boy, probably younger than himself. His look was not in the least that of a sailor. A passenger, perhaps, from some wrecked ship, who by strange chance had been cast ashore at the foot of the lonely rock by one of the currents that raced round Maia.

The hands and the bare feet were thin, and the duck trousers and loose shirt seemed hardly half-filled by the form within. If the castaway had found food on Maia, he had found barely enough to keep body and soul together. And body and soul were near to parting when King of the Islands looked down with compassionate eyes on the castaway he had come so far to rescue.

Ken knelt by the seaweed bed, and touched the recumbent figure lightly on the shoulder.

"Shipmate," he said, "can you speak? We've come to take you off!"

The voice seemed to penetrate the mists of unconsciousness, for the

half-closed lids opened a little wider and the feverish eyes stared at King of the Islands with understanding in them. The pale lips moved, but Ken had to bend his head low to hear the faint whisper that came:

"Save me! Water—give me water!"

"Koko—" But Koko was already running down to the boat. He came swiftly back with water, and Ken placed a tin pannikin to the dry lips of the castaway, who leaned back, resting on the seaweed, after he had drunk. The eyes, large and dark, were fixed on Ken's sunburnt face. It seemed as if the hapless castaway could not realise that it was rescue at last—life, instead of death!

"I reckon I'll carry you down to the boat," said King of the Islands. "My ship's in the offing—we'll have you aboard pretty soon. You're saved now, shipmate."

The colourless lips moved again.

"I saw a ship—a ketch—it was long ago—" The husky whisper was barely audible.

"A week ago," said Ken, "but we couldn't put in then. We had to run before the gale. We got back as soon as we could. We saw you signalling from the top of the rock. We came back for you."

"Heaven bless you!" whispered the castaway. "How long—how long have I been here—on this terrible rock?"

"What ship were you on?" asked Ken.

"The Flamingo." King of the Islands started.

"The Sydney steamer? A passenger?"

The castaway nodded.

"The Flamingo went down—with all hands, it is said—well over a month ago," exclaimed Ken. "Maia is sixty miles out of the Flamingo's course—I reckon no one would have thought of looking for a survivor of the Flamingo on Maia. Was the steamer piled up here?"

"On the reefs!"

"I reckon the engines broke down, then, and she was driven far out of her course in the hurricane. You're alone here?"

"Alone—yes—alone!" The castaway shuddered. The solitude of the desolate rock had been, perhaps, more terrible than the scanty food and the brackish water in the rain-pools.

"But you got ashore," said Ken. "I reckon it was a miracle that you got through alive!"

"I had a lifebelt—the mate put it on me when the ship struck. I was thrown on the sand—"

Ken nodded. He knew now the fate of the lost Flamingo. And if

the steamer had come to grief on the reefs of Maia, it was not surprising that all hands had gone down. It was only surprising that even one of the ship's company had been cast ashore living. Some chance current had caught the boy, floating in the lifebelt, and carried him past the teeth of the coral where all others had been dashed to death.

The castaway sat up on the seaweed bed, supported by Ken's strong arm round his shoulders. There was a trace of colour in his cheeks now. He had half starved on Maia, but it was despair, and the hopelessness of solitude, that had stretched him on the seaweed bed in the cave to die. With hope came new life. He drank again from the pannikin, and a faint smile came on the wasted face.

Ken glanced round the cave. Close by the seaweed bed lay a seaman's dunnage bag, evidently cast ashore from the wreck of the Flamingo. The castaway followed his glance.

"That was all that came ashore—"

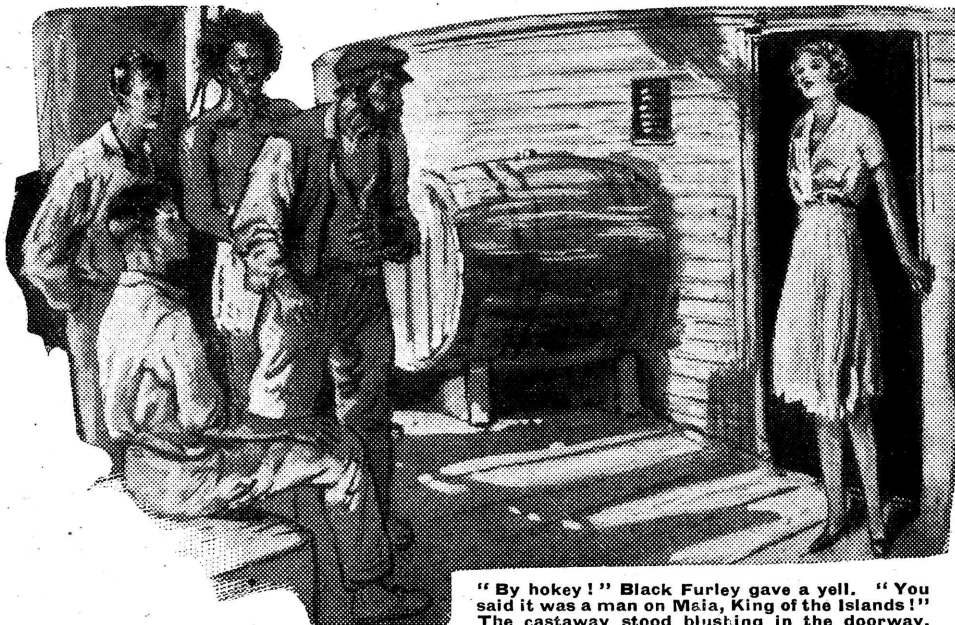
"You feller Koko, you bring the dunnage!" Ken said.

With the castaway in his arms, he strode out of the cave, followed by Kaio-lalulalonga with the dunnage bag.

A Change of Clothing!

KING OF THE ISLANDS laid the castaway on a boat-cloak in the whaleboat, and the Kanakas ran the boat into the water and shoved off, fighting against the rollers that boomed on the little beach. The oars dashed, and King of the Islands steered through the reefs. Surf creamed and foamed round the boat, roaring and echoing.

Ken saw the castaway raise his head, look round him with terrified eyes, then withdraw his face into the cover of the boat-cloak, evidently preferring not to look upon the perils that surrounded him. But the boy trader had no time to give much attention to the castaway. All his



"By hokey!" Black Furley gave a yell. "You said it was a man on Maia, King of the Islands!" The castaway stood blushing in the doorway.

all that came from the wreck!" he said. His voice was stronger now. "I found these clothes in it, and a knife that I used on the shellfish—"

Ken had wondered to see the boy, evidently no sailor, dressed in the duck trousers and shirt of a seaman, half a dozen sizes too large for him.

"Your troubles are over now," said Ken gently. "You can't walk, I reckon, but I'll carry you down to the boat."

"No! No!" The castaway flushed. "I can walk—help me, and I can walk to the boat."

Ken gave him a hand to rise, but he tottered and leaned heavily on the boy trader. Ken smiled.

"I reckon you've got to be carried," he said. "Your weight's nothing to me—here goes!" And he lifted the castaway like an infant.

"Anything you want to take aboard?" he asked.

"The bag—do not leave it! My own clothes are in the bag!"

attention was needed to get the boat safely back to the Dawn.

It was a long pull, and perilous. Getting off Maia was more difficult and dangerous than landing on the desolate islet. A cool head and an iron nerve were needed. King of the Islands had both. Cool and steady as he was, however, he was glad when the whaleboat emerged, at last, from the inferno of wild waters and ran under the quarter of the Dawn.

Hudson was looking down over the rail, his eyes on the castaway rolled in the boat-cloak.

"You've got him, Ken! Good luck!"

The castaway was helped on board, the mate of the Dawn eyeing him curiously; the whaleboat was swung up to the davits, and the Dawn made sail. Calm as the weather was, Ken was anxious to get out of the dangerous vicinity of the lonely rock.

Hudson had taken the castaway

Luck o' the South Seas!

down into the cabin, and Danny, the cooky-boy, set before him the best that his galley could provide. The mate of the Dawn returned to the deck, leaving the man of Maia to his meal.

The ketch was already leaving Maia astern. Glad enough were the shipmates to see the desolate rock sinking into the waves behind them and to feel the ketch running swiftly before the wind. The wind, against which they had struggled so many weary days, was now in their favour, and the Dawn flew over the sunny waters like a thing of life, under a white cloud of canvas. Far behind the creaming white wake of the Dawn, Maia sank into the Pacific.

"A quick run to Lalinge at this rate, Ken!" said Hudson. "We've lost plenty of time and money—but it was worth it to save that poor fellow. He looks little more than a kid. Who is he?"

"I haven't asked him his name, but he was a passenger on the Flamingo," said King of the Islands.

"She went down on Maia, then?" exclaimed the mate.

"So the boy says."

"Sixty miles out of her course, at least! Not much use Black Furley rooting about Fushima waters for the thousand-pound girl!" said Hudson.

"Not much use looking for that poor girl at all, or any other passenger of the Flamingo," said Ken. "The bones of the Flamingo lie under the reefs of Maia, and the castaway we've rescued was the only one that was thrown ashore."

"All we can do for Mr. Lennox, at Sydney, is to let him know for certain his daughter's fate, now that we know what happened to the Flamingo. I wish we could send him better news—but there was only one survivor of the steamer, and that's the boy below."

"Feller lugger he comey along sea!" shouted Kaio-lalulalonga.

"Suffering cats!" exclaimed Hudson. "Furley again!"

From the rim of the sea the Lukwe lugger, beating up against the wind, came in sight. Maia was below the sealine now. Swift knots were reeling off as the Dawn flew before the wind. Black Furley, left far behind by the ketch when she beat up to Maia, was still labouring on his course to Fushima, and once more his lugger came in sight. Ken turned a grim look on the distant lug-sail.

"That's Furley's hooker, right enough!" he declared. "He's got four or five more days of beating up to Fushima—and for nothing! Serve the swab right!"

"Right as rain!" agreed Hudson.

Now that the shipmates knew, from the man of Maia, the fate of the Flamingo, they knew how vain was Black Furley's quest in Fushima waters. He was not likely to find any trace of the wrecked steamer there—still less the thousand-pound girl!

"The swab!" repeated Ken. "If he'd consented to run into Maia for the castaway, like a decent sailorman,

he would have learned what we've learned and saved himself a useless run to Fushima. Now let him run, and be hanged to him!"

Danny, the cooky-boy, came on deck and picked up the bag of dunnage that had been brought aboard at Maia. Apparently the castaway had sent him for it.

King of the Islands followed him below. The castaway had made a good meal, and looked much the better for it. There was colour in his cheeks, and the feverish light was gone from his eyes. He stood up as Ken entered the cabin.

"Feeling better?" asked Ken, with a smile.

"I can't tell you how much better!" The castaway's voice came clear and strong. "You've saved my life, Captain—"

He paused.

"King!" said Ken. "Sometimes called King of the Islands."

The dark eyes looked at him with new interest.

"I've heard of you, Captain King—your name's well known in Sydney. From what I've heard of you, it was like you to come to my help on that fearful rock. If you could get me to a steamer for Sydney—"

"We're making Lalinge now, in good time for the Sydney steamer,"

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answered Ken. "When we hit Lalinge I can fix you up for the voyage, and you need not worry about your passage-money—we'll manage that, somehow."

The castaway smiled.

"I have nothing," he said. "But—"

"That's all right—don't worry!" said Ken reassuringly. "You're safe for Sydney!"

"Once in Sydney, I have more than I need," said the castaway. He paused, and the colour deepened in his cheeks. "You—you don't know—you haven't guessed—"

He broke off.

"What?" asked Ken.

He looked at the castaway in surprise, wondering what was the cause of the deepening crimson in his cheeks.

"I—I—my clothes are in the dunnage bag," he stammered. "I saved them, to use if I should ever be taken off that awful rock. I—I—" he stammered.

Ken looked more and more surprised. He understood why the castaway had donned the seaman's clothes from the dunnage bag, keeping his own for use if he was taken off Maia. He would naturally want to make as decent an appearance as possible, if he was taken off on a

ship. But Ken saw no reason for the confusion in the castaway's looks.

"You can change in my state-room," he said, and threw open the door from the cabin to the state-room. "While you're on the Dawn you'll berth in this state-room. There are two bunks, you see. You can have one, and my mate and I will take turn and turn about with the other. Why, what's the matter?"

The castaway did not answer. With the bag of dunnage in his hand, he stepped quickly into the state-room, and closed the door almost on the nose of the boy trader.

"My sainted Sam!" Ken ejaculated, as he stared at the door.

He returned to the deck, wondering whether the castaway of Maia was quite in his right senses.

"There's Furley!" said Kit Hudson, as the boy trader came on deck. Ken glanced at the lugger. Black Furley could be seen standing on her deck. King of the Islands gave the black-bearded pearler a grim look. Then a thoughtful expression came over his sunburnt face. Hudson, watching him, grinned, reading his thoughts.

"After all, we may as well give the swab a word," said Ken. "He would not put in a few hours to save us a week, but—but we're sailormen, and Furley's a lubberly swab. I reckon we'll give him news of the Flamingo, and save him that run to Fushima."

Hudson nodded. At a word from Ken, the course of the ketch was changed to bring her down to the labouring lugger. The two vessels drew nearer and nearer, Black Furley watching the ketch with a scowling face. Probably he guessed that King of the Islands might have news for him, for the lug-sail dropped. The ketch hove to, and the black-bearded pearler stepped into his gig, two black Lukwe boys pulling him to the Dawn. Black Furley swung himself on board.

"Picked up news?" were his first words. "News of the Flamingo?"

"Ay, ay!" answered Ken. "We've learned that the Flamingo went down on the reefs of Maia."

"Maia's a long way out of her course," said Black Furley. He eyed the boy trader suspiciously. "I reckon she must have driven a long way, if she piled up on Maia. How'd you know?"

"I told you we were taking a man off Maia. He turned out to be a survivor of the Flamingo—the sole survivor."

"Got him on board?" asked Furley. "He's below now."

"Well, let a man see him," grunted Black Furley. "Mebbe he knows what became of the girl. No harm in asking him a question, I reckon."

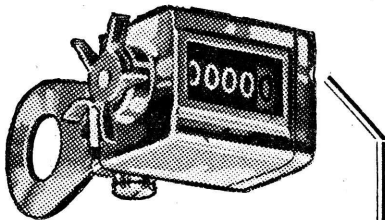
"You can see him if you like," answered Ken. "Koko, ask the man below to step on deck!"

The boatswain went down the companion. A moment or two later his feet came pattering up, and he showed an astounded face on deck.

"Oh, sar!" gasped Kaio-lalulalonga. "Me no savvy this thing! Feller white Mary stop along cabin."

"What?" yelled Ken.

(Continued on page 26.)



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Flyers of the Northland

(Continued from page 24.)

"I don't care!" growled Phillips. "If I tackle this Cloud Mountain country, I'm tackling it for Airways Exploration—not for some sneakin' horse-thief who can't or won't do his own prospecting!"

Blowing a fierce cloud of smoke, he leaned back while the others exchanged glances. Phillips was one of the finest experts in his profession, and much depended on his work. His emphatic protest deepened the lines of Buck's broad forehead, while Horse grunted.

It was then that Babe Darrell had a brain-wave. Before anyone else could speak, he butted in excitedly:

"I've got a scheme, Buck. It might come off—one that'll lead Creedon right up the garden. Listen to this!"

Jumping up, he led the way to a wall-chart of the Barrens, drawn by Phillips and Frazer. For several minutes his boyish voice held the thoughtful men, heads nodded and

tanned faces grew keen. When he had finished Buck lit his pipe and pondered:

"Ye-es, it's sure a scheme, Babe. I reckon, though, it'll mean some real tricky night work."

"You bet. But we'll do it!" grinned Babe confidently.

After another long pause, during which the youngster was on tenterhooks, Phillips smiled, too.

"Right!" he said, to Babe's breathless relief. "It's a go, Buck! We'll start to-morrow. Send Horse out to Seal River, and I'll take two men from the base here and pick up another at Camp Two on our way. I don't care whether Creedon follows Horse or not. I'm not very hopeful of Mick Riley's country at all. But Cloud Mountain—providing we can bluff Creedon off our trail—"

There followed a long and thorough palaver in front of the wall-chart.

(Things are warming up for Babe and his comrades, and they become warmer still in next week's exciting long instalment!)

Luck o' the South Seas!

(Concluded from page 18.)

"Feller white Mary, sar—" The shipmates stared blankly at Kaio-lalulalonga. In the language of the Kanakas, a woman was a "feller Mary." They wondered whether the brown boatswain had gone suddenly insane.

"What the thump do you mean?" roared Hudson. "No feller Mary step along this hooker!"

"Feller Mary along cabin, sar—" There was a step on the companion. Ken King and Kit Hudson looked at the figure that emerged on deck, and they could not believe their eyes.

It was a woman—a girl—who stepped from the companion into the brilliant sunlight on the deck! Her cheeks were pink, but there was a smile in her eyes. The amazement of the shipmates evidently entertained her.

"Who—who—what—" babbled King of the Islands.

And then, as he stared, he understood. The girl's face was the face of the castaway of Maia, whom the shipmates of the Dawn had rescued from the desolate rock in the Pacific!

The seamen's clothes from the dunnage bag had deceived them. They had not had the faintest suspicion. But now that the castaway had changed she had changed with a vengeance!

"By hokey!" Black Furley gave a yell. "You said it was a man on Maia, King of the Islands!"

"It was—I thought it was—my sainted Sam!" gasped Ken, still bewildered. "Who—who—"

"My name is Edna Lennox," said the castaway.

"The thousand-pound girl!" roared Black Furley.

"Suffering cats!" gasped Kit Hudson.

"Edna Lennox!" said King of the Islands, like a man in a dream. "My hat!" We—we beat up to Maia to save a shipwrecked seaman, and—it's the thousand-pound girl!"

Black Furley spat out abuse. King of the Islands turned on him.

"Silence, you swab! Get back to your lugger! You lubberly scum, if you'd been willing to put in a few hours saving a castaway, you'd have handled a thousand pounds for your trouble!"

Black Furley, gritting his teeth, tramped back to the gig without another word. No one on the Dawn gave him further heed.

The lugger stood back to Lukwe, with the most savagely disappointed swab in the Pacific on board—while the Dawn flew on for Lalinge, bearing the rescued "man" of Maia, otherwise the thousand-pound girl.

KEN and Kit berthed in the cabin during the run to Lalinge. The state-room was given up to the castaway from Maia.

Naturally, the arrival of the thousand-pound girl caused a sensation at Lalinge. The whole island hummed with the news, and Ken King's luck was soon the talk of a hundred beaches in the Pacific.

The Sydney steamer bore Edna Lennox back to her home and her father, and when the steamer touched at Lalinge again it carried a letter for King of the Islands which contained a draft on the Pacific Company for the amount of the reward—one thousand pounds—and the grateful thanks of the old man whose daughter had been restored to him.

The shipmates of the Dawn shared the reward, with a liberal sum for every Kanaka on board. And while Black Furley still cursed his luck on Lukwe, King of the Islands and his crew were more than glad that they had fought against adverse winds and braved the reefs and the surf to rescue the "man" on Maia!

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