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FUN ON A HOLIDAY BARGE!— See page 4

ROARING DEMON!

KING OF THE ISLANDS, boy skipper of a South Seas trading ketch, is a magnificent seaman. An ordinary storm is nothing to him. But this trip he has two demons to reckon with—one aboard, the other that awful demon of the Tropic Seas, a hurricane. And when the hurricane bursts in all its terrible fury the boy skipper is bound to his own mast—helpless!—COMPLETE

The Kolo Trader.

"BIG feller wind comey, sar!" remarked Koko, the brown bo'sun of the ketch Dawn.

King of the Islands had been aware for some time that a "big feller wind" was coming, though at the moment there was hardly a breath on the sea.

Kit Hudson, the mate of the Dawn, fanned himself with his hat, and murmured:

"It's hot!"

"Too much plenty hot altogether, sar!" said Koko.

The brown boatswain's face gleamed with perspiration. Even the South Sea crew of the ketch Dawn were feeling the heat.

But Ken King, the boy skipper of the Dawn, was not thinking of the heat, though every now and then he had to brush away a trickle of perspiration with the back of his hand. His eyes were fixed on the horizon to the south, as he stood on the teak deck, and there was a shade of anxiety on his boyish brow.

For three days out of Kolo the Dawn had sped before a favourable wind, making good way to distant Ronga. One more day with fair weather and the same favourable wind would have seen the ketch at Ronga, and relieved of her unwelcome passenger, Mr. Bristowe Holt, the trader of Kolo.

But early on the fourth day the wind had dropped to a mere whisper, and the ketch crawled through a glassy sea. It was not quite a calm, and it was anything but a calm that was coming, if King of the Islands knew anything about weather signs.

Over the Dawn the sky was a vault of burning blue. But to the south it had turned a brassy colour. The sun, which for hours had flamed like a ball of fire, had taken on a coppery tinge. Long before Koko the Kanaka spoke, King of the Islands knew that a big blow was coming—one of the sudden hurricanes of the Pacific.

"Keep her steady, Koko!" said the boy trader. He turned his head and looked to the north-east, the direction in which the ketch was slowly gliding, where in the distance nodded tall palms. Due east lay the course to Ronga, but the ketch was no longer keeping to her original course. King of the Islands hoped to get shelter from the coming storm in the lagoon of Tuvima. He was calculating now whether he would make Tuvima before the storm burst.

Ken King was a good seaman, and had little to learn about handling a ship in a gale. He had ridden out many a savage storm in wild waters.

But it was no ordinary blow that was coming, and he would have been deeply thankful to drop his anchor in the lagoon at Tuvima, safe inside the reef till the hurricane was over.

If the storm burst before he could make the lagoon, however, he did not want to be anywhere near the reefs of Tuvima. Only with plenty of sea room could he hope to ride it out.

It was a problem to which the boy skipper had to find an answer, and he had settled it by heading for the atoll. Slowly the ketch was approaching the bunch of palms that nodded over the Pacific, marking where Tuvima lay.

"We'll make it, Ken?" asked Hudson, still fanning himself with his hat. In the blaze of breathless heat the Australian mate of the ketch felt like welcoming even the big blow that was at hand.

"I reckon so," answered Ken.

"Big feller wind he comey plenty soon!" murmured Koko, his bronze hands on the spokes of the wheel.

Ken watched the south again. Kit Hudson glanced, with a grin, at the passenger of the Dawn, who lay

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CHARLES HAMILTON

sprawling in a deckchair under an awning—Mr. Holt, of Kolo, a portly gentleman, fleshy and rather flabby. He felt the burning heat more than the shipmates of the Dawn, though they found it hot enough. He gasped for breath as he sprawled. And Tao, the Tonga boy he had brought on board with him, fanned his master with a withered pandanus leaf.

The breathless heat seemed to occupy all Mr. Holt's attention. He did not seem, so far, to have noticed the fact that the course of the Dawn had been changed for some time.

The Kolo merchant was no seaman; but he knew that Ronga lay due east of Kolo, and had he sat up and taken notice, he would certainly have become aware that the ketch was no longer heading due east. The mate of the Dawn was amused, wondering what would be the effect on Holt when he made the discovery.

Holt had bargained with King of the Islands for a straight run to Ronga, without stop or delay of any kind. According to his own account, he had big business to bring off at Ronga, with big consequences hanging to it; and Ken had agreed to make the run. But that bargain, of course, was subject to wind and weather, like all sea bargains.

Hudson wondered whether Mr. Holt would understand that. Not that he would be given a voice in the matter.

The mate of the Dawn noticed that Tao, the Tonga boy, while he fanned his master, glanced round several times, as if suspicious. When his eyes fell on the distant palm-tops of Tuvima, Tao started and stared. It was dawning on the Tonga boy that the course was changed.

Hudson saw him lean over to the sprawling man in the deckchair, and heard the murmur of his voice.

Holt sat suddenly bolt upright. His fat face was crimson with heat. He looked flabby and exhausted. But a new and sudden energy seemed to have been imparted to him by the whisper of the Tonga boy. He stared round him, with a glint in his eyes.

Hudson grinned. If the Kolo merchant did not understand the necessity for changing course, as probably he did not, an outburst on his part was fairly certain. Hudson was tickled by the prospect of the fat man from Kolo attempting to bully Ken King on his own deck.

King of the Islands was giving the man no attention. He had far more important matters to think of. Holt had forced himself on board the ketch, an unwelcome passenger, at Kolo, sending back his boat, and thereby making it impossible for the boy trader to get rid of him. He had persuaded Ken to run for Ronga, instead of making Sua, where he had been bound, and he had left the people on Kolo believing that he had gone to Sua to take the Sydney steamer there.

For reasons of his own, his voyage to Ronga was a dead secret from all on Kolo. Why, the shipmates did not know. But since Holt had been on board they had grown vaguely suspicious, and were more than anxious to get rid of their passenger at the earliest possible moment.

Holt rose from the deckchair, and puffed for breath as he came aft and stared at the binnacle card. Then he stared at the nodding palms of Tuvima, closer now and in easy view. The crimson in his fat face faded. He was almost pale with rage as he turned at last to King of the Islands, who, standing with his eyes fixed on the darkening copper of the southern horizon, did not seem aware of his movements, or even of his existence.

"Captain King!" said Holt sharply. Ken did not seem to hear. At all events, he did not heed. The merchant of Kolo swung towards him and dropped a fat and heavy hand on the boy skipper's shoulder.

"Ken King!" hissed Holt. Ken gave him a glance at last, then turned his head and gave Holt a tap on the wrist that shifted his hand very quickly from the boy trader's shoulder. Holt yapped with pain as he received it.

"Hands off, Mr. Holt!" said Ken quietly.

The Kolo trader trembled with rage. He lifted a shaking hand and pointed to the palms of Tuvima.

"That's not Ronga!" he snarled.

"We're a day's sail from Ronga yet, Mr. Holt" Ken gave a short laugh.

"What is that island?"

"Tuvima."

"You've changed your course!" exclaimed Holt. "You hound—you double-crossing hound! You're betraying me! You're breaking your word! You're letting me down, you

spluttering man and gave him no further heed.

Running for Shelter.

TAO, the Tonga boy, padded softly aft, and picked up his master. Bristowe Holt stood unsteadily, leaning on the bare black arm of the Tonga boy, panting for breath.

King of the Islands seemed already to have forgotten his existence. But Kit Hudson made a step towards him.

"Better go down below, Mr. Holt," said the mate of the Dawn. Holt gave him a bitter look. "You don't catch on." Hudson spoke kindly enough. "There's a big blow coming on—a tremendous big blow! We've got to get shelter in the Tuvima lagoon. We've no time to lose—it's touch and go."

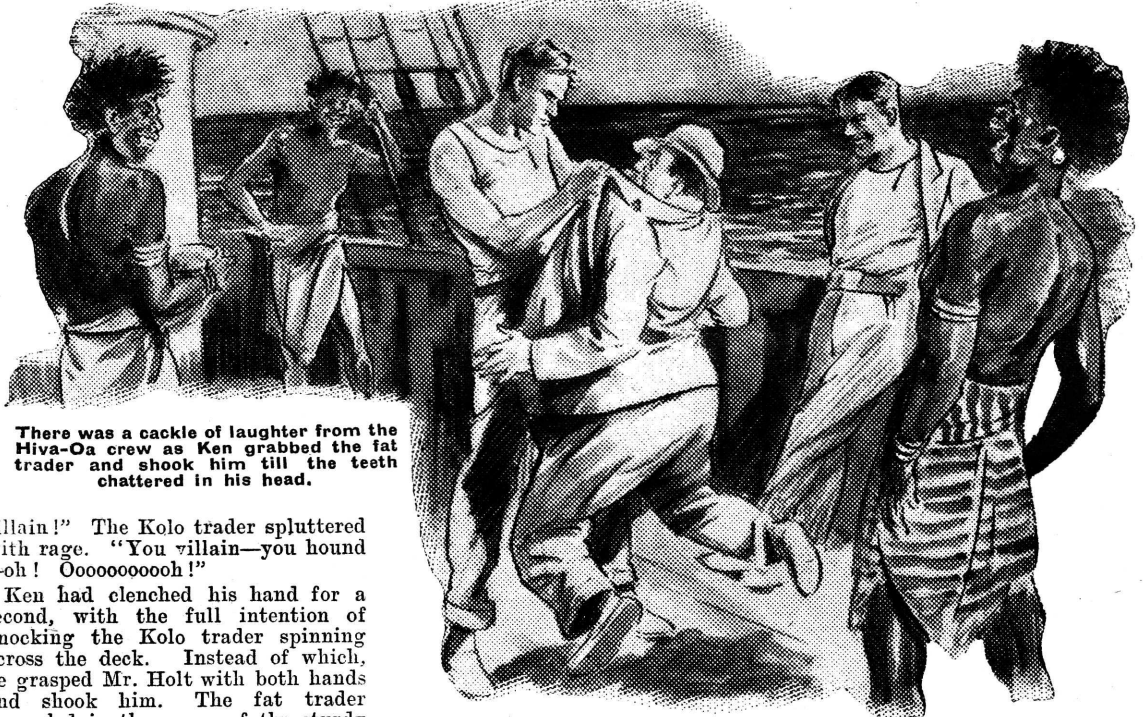
Hudson laughed. "You don't know what's coming! Look to the south."

Bristowe Holt did not trouble to turn his head. It was clearly fixed in his mind that it was not weather that was causing King of the Islands to run for Tuvima.

Even the Kolo trader was aware that something unusual was coming. But he did not realise that, when the big wind came, the Dawn would be tossed like a cork on mountainous seas, and that every life on board would be in the direst danger.

Indeed, his mind was so engrossed by his own affairs, whatever they were, that he could give little thought to anything else.

"It's a trick!" he muttered. "I know King of the Islands—the boldest sailor in the Pacific! And he pretends to be afraid of a blow! It's a trick—you're double-crossing me!"



There was a cackle of laughter from the Hiva-Oa crew as Ken grabbed the fat trader and shook him till the teeth chattered in his head.

villain!" The Kolo trader spluttered with rage. "You villain—you hound—oh! Ooooooooooh!"

Ken had clenched his hand for a second, with the full intention of knocking the Kolo trader spinning across the deck. Instead of which, he grasped Mr. Holt with both hands and shook him. The fat trader crumpled in the grasp of the sturdy skipper of the Dawn and spluttered and stuttered as he was shaken like a rat till the teeth chattered in his head.

There was a cackle of laughter from the Hiva-Oa crew. A wide grin showed all Koko's magnificent set of teeth. Even the Tonga boy grinned. Kit Hudson chuckled. But Ken's face was grim.

He shook the fat trader, and shook again, Holt sagging and spluttering in his grasp, with all the scanty breath shaken out of his fat body. Then the boy trader released him, pitching him to the deck, and his eyes gleamed down at Bristowe Holt.

"Now keep a civil tongue in your head, you swab!" he snapped. "I'm skipper of this boat and I allow nobody to talk to me like that on my own deck. Get below out of the way if you can't be civil!"

Ken turned away from the gasping,

"You're afraid of a wind?" The Kolo trader snarled. "You call yourself a sailor, and you're running for shelter because a wind's getting up!"

"It's a hurricane that's coming!" Hudson was still patient with the man who did not, or would not, understand.

"You've never ridden out a hurricane before?" jeered Holt.

"Many a time!" Hudson smiled.

"But—" "You've agreed to carry me to Ronga without touching anywhere on the way! Keep your word!" hissed Holt.

"If we keep on to Ronga in what's coming we're more likely to hit Davy Jones' locker than Ronga!" said the Australian. "Is that what you want?"

"I'm a landsman, and I'm not afraid!" the other retorted.

"It's because you're a landsman that you're not afraid, Mr. Holt."

Hudson shrugged his shoulders. It was useless to argue with a man who could not, or would not, see facts that were plain to every man in the crew.

"You'd better go below!" repeated Hudson. "When the wind hits us, if it hits us before we reach Tuvima, it won't be a sight for a landsman's eyes—and you'll be in the way."

Hudson turned away with that. The Kolo trader gave him a look of bitter animosity, and went slowly below, signing to the Tonga boy to follow him. For several minutes Bristowe Holt tramped to and fro in the cabin, his face pale, his brows knitted.

Tao stood watching him in silence. The Tonga Islander, who had come with him from Kolo, knew his secret reasons for desiring to make a straight and swift run to Ronga. He was in Holt's confidence. He spoke at last, breaking into Holt's black and bitter thoughts.

Roaring Demon!

"Feller King of the Islands tellee tluth mouth belong him, sar!" ventured Tao. "Big feller wind comey plenty quick."

The Tonga boy knew the weather signs, if his master did not.

"Are you afraid of a blow, confound you?" Holt turned on him with a snarl.

"Me no flaid, sar! But me tinkee—"

"She's running on an even keel!" snarled Holt. "They're not afraid of a storm! It's a trick! Ken King knows—or guesses! He's selling me out! They've taken away my gun, but I've another packed in my suitcase!"

He ceased his hurried pacing, and fixed his eyes on the Tonga boy's startled face.

"Tao, you're standing by me! I brought you along in case there was trouble! I'm taking you with me to the Melican country, on the big steamer from Ronga. You wantee comey along master?" Holt came nearer to him, his eyes gleaming.

"Stand by me, Tao!" He sunk his voice. "You know what it means if we run into Tuvima and lose time! If I lose the San Francisco steamer at Ronga, I am a lost man!"

"Me savvy, sar!"

"There's no other steamer for a week, and in less than a week they'll get the news at Ronga. They may have it at Tuvima already. There's a steamer from Kolo to Tuvima, and it may have brought the news. If I'm taken into Tuvima, and they've got the news from Kolo, they will never let me sail again."

"Me savvy!"

"It's life or death!" muttered Holt huskily. "I tell you, I'd sooner go to the bottom in a hurricane than go back to Kolo in irons. Those two swabs on deck don't know, but they suspect something, and they're planning to throw me over."

The Tonga boy stood silent.

"You've not forgotten how to handle a knife, Tao?" whispered Holt.

The islander grinned, and touched the knife that was stuck in the back of his loincloth.

"They've asked for it!" muttered Holt. "They agreed—and they're going back on me! I'm not a man to be double-crossed! I'd sink the ship and every man on board, myself included, rather than go back to Kolo. Get those two swabs out of the way, and I can handle the Kanaka crew—with a gun in my hand. You savvy?"

"Savvy plenty, sar!"

"We can run down to Ronga, scuttle the ketch as soon as we sight the island, and get away in the boat—us two!" breathed Holt.

"Me savvy, sar! But me tinkee velly big wind comey—"

"Cut it out!" snarled Holt.

The Tonga boy was silent again. With his mind concentrated on his own desperate plans, the Kolo trader was blind to every other consideration.

The Tonga boy knew better, but he

was accustomed to obeying his white master without question.

"I'll get a gun out of my suitcase." Holt's voice was a husky whisper. "You get the mate, I'll get the skipper! The Kanakas are nothing. Get a rope from somewhere. If they knuckle under, tie them up, and we'll take the ketch into our hands. If they kick—"

He did not finish the sentence, but the glitter in his eyes told his meaning.

"Me savvy, sar!"

Holt tramped into the state-room and fumbled in a suitcase.

He drew out a six-chambered revolver and examined it carefully. It was loaded in every chamber. His eyes glinted as he slipped it into his pocket.

He rejoined the Tonga Islander in the cabin. The ketch was still gliding on an even keel on a glassy sea, drawing slowly nearer to Tuvima. The contrast between the stillness round the ketch and what was coming up from the south was grim enough to the seaman on board the Dawn, but to Holt it was nothing.

"The hounds!" the Tonga boy heard him mutter. "Running for shelter—any excuse better than none—"

"Me tinkee, sar—" ventured Tao again.

"What? What you tinkee, head belong you?" muttered the Kolo trader.

"Tinkee plenty big feller wind comey soon, sar—tinkee no ship live along sea, along big feller wind—"

"That's enough!" hissed Holt. "Follow me—and get the mate!"

The fat trader tramped up the companion, with the Tonga boy at his heels.

Master of the Ship!

KING of the Islands stared grimly to the south. Hudson's brow was anxious. Silence had fallen on the Hiva-Oa crew, generally talkative enough. Danny, the cooky-boy, looked out of his galley with a troubled face. A strange and deadly calmness was round the ketch, the wind so light that it hardly pushed her through the glassy water.

But the whole horizon to the south was coppery now. From that direction the blast would come—suddenly, terribly, when it came. But the palm-trees of Tuvima nodded in view ahead.

"We makee Tuvima, sar!" said Koko, his brown hands on the spokes of the wheel.

"Touch and go—but we shall make it!" said Ken. Hardly ever in his sailor life had Ken been so keen to get within the sheltering circle of a coral reef. Once in the lagoon, the ketch was safe, though round the barrier reef the Pacific would be rolling and roaring in mountains of wild water.

Given no choice, Ken would have ridden out the storm on the open sea. But he would have ridden it out with his life in his hand, the

fate of his trim little ship on the knees of the gods. When the "blow" was over, there would be many a wreck drifting on the swell of the Pacific.

"We'll make it!" said Hudson. Not a thought did the shipmates of the Dawn give to the enraged trader below. That he was almost frantically eager to reach Ronga without touching at any intervening island they were aware, and it made them vaguely suspicious. But that he was contemplating desperate measures while the fate of every man on board depended on the seamanship of the skipper was not likely to cross their minds.

It was a case of fools rushing in where angels feared to tread. Holt, it was true, was no fool. But he was a landsman, and his thoughts were concentrated on his own plans. And he, a landsman ignorant of the sea, was taking risks from which the hardiest seamen might have shrunk.

The fat face, set and savage, glimmered out of the companion. The shipmates did not even look at Holt as he came on deck—did not even notice him or the Tonga boy at his heels.

There was a sudden sharp gust of wind—the first hint of what was coming. The ketch shivered and rocked, and Koko's brawny brown hands tightened on the spokes of the wheel. Holt, his mind concentrated on other things, did not observe it.

He acted suddenly, swiftly, without warning. His sudden grasp fell on King of the Islands from behind, and the boy trader went heavily to the deck. As he sprawled, the muzzle of a revolver was jammed to his breast.

"Move a finger, and you're a dead man!" hissed Holt.

At the same instant the Tonga boy had leaped on Hudson with the spring of a wild animal. The mate of the Dawn staggered back to the taffrail, the Tonga boy's knife at his throat.

Tao did not speak, but his eyes glinted. Hudson did not need telling that the lifting of a finger spelled instant death.

The surprise could not have been more complete. Holt planted a knee on Ken's breast. His revolver touched the boy trader, the finger on the trigger.

"Death—if you lift a finger! Death, you dog!" snarled Holt. "I'm a desperate man—running for my liberty! Get that? Give me trouble, and you die on your own deck!"

Koko, at the wheel, stared blankly.

"You plenty bad feller!" he gasped. But he dared not let go the spokes. The Hiva-Oa boys—Lompo and Lufu, Tomoo and Kolulo, and Danny—stared on as if transfixed.

"Order your Kanakas to keep off, Ken King!" said Holt. He had an eye on Koko at the wheel. "You're a dead man if they lift a hand! Tao! Kill the mate if he stirs!"

"Yes, sar" said Tao calmly.

The keen knife was on Hudson's throat, and the mate did not stir.

"You—you mad fool!" Ken gasped. "Release me!"

Lompo, at a sign from Koko, stepped aft and took the wheel. But Holt was watching, and snarled:

"Stand back, you Kanaka scum! Your master dies if you take a step!" That every word was uttered in deadly earnest was plain enough. The hammer of the pistol was rising under the pressure on the trigger. The life of King of the Islands hung on a thread.

Koko stood fast, his eyes burning at the Kolo trader.

"Little white master—" he breathed.

"Stand back, Koko!" Ken's voice was calm. There was deadly rage in his eyes and in his heart. But he was at the mercy of the Kolo trader, and if his life went out his ship was lost, with every soul on board, including Holt himself. Ken knew that if Holt did not.

And nothing could save him from the bullet if Holt's finger pressed a little harder on the trigger—no effort of his own, and not the swiftest spring of Koko's. But he was cool. Fiercely enraged as he was, he kept cool. He had to keep cool to save his ship.

"You madman!" His voice came calm and tense. "You mad fool! The hurricane is coming!"

"Keep that!" Holt laughed savagely. "You can't fool me, King of the Islands! You're no more afraid of a blow than I am!"

"If the wind strikes the ship while you're playing the fool, Mr. Holt, we go to the bottom like a stone, with all hands!"

"Talk's cheap! I've sailed a cutter, and I can sail a ketch! If orders are needed, you can give them. I'm going to tie your hands, but not your tongue!" jeered Holt. "Tell your Kanakas to keep back!" Tomoo was making a creeping move towards him, a belaying pin in his hand.

"Stand back!" called the boy trader. And the Hiva-Oa boy stood back.

"You're giving in!" snarled Holt. "Take your choice! I'd as soon blow out your brains as not—rather, much rather, than run into Tuvima! Say the word."

Ken did not move.

"Danny!" snarled Holt.

"Yes, sar!" gasped the cooky-boy.

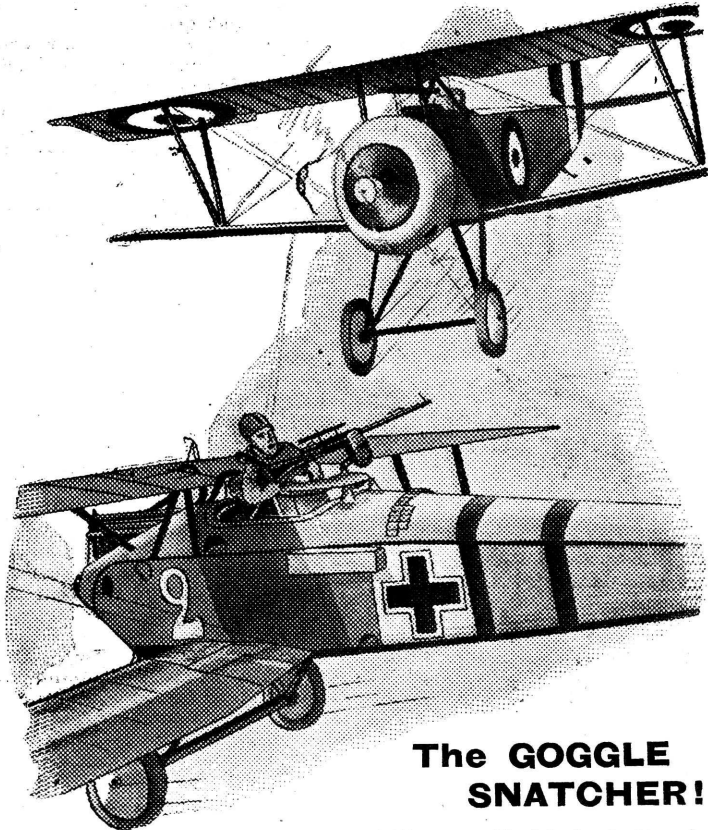
"You come here, take feller rope belong Tao, fasten along King of the Islands."

Danny looked to his master for orders. Ken gritted his teeth hard. His eyes met Hudson's. The Australian was pale with rage. But the knife edge pressed his throat.

"Say the word, Ken, and we'll—" began Hudson.

"Kill him if he stirs, Tao!" Holt ordered.

"Holt!" Ken still spoke calmly. "You're mad. You don't understand. We're on a lee shore when the wind strikes us, if we don't make the reef passage into Tuvima! Can't you understand?"



The GOGGLE SNATCHER!

Madon, a French "ace" of the Great War, won 36 victories in the air by sheer daring. His method was to rush the enemy and shoot from point-blank range. On one occasion he tackled in that way a German two-seater plane. One of his bullets struck the observer's goggles and sent them whirling into the air. As Madon zoomed over the other plane he flew into the goggles, and returned to his own aerodrome with the German's goggles—**Flying-Officer W. E. Johns** sticking to his bracing wires!

"That's enough from you, Ken King! Move a finger and you're a dead man! One move from your Kanakas, and I'll kill you like a dog!"

Ken's eyes flamed. The man did not understand—he could not understand. It was death to resist. And the loss of the ship would follow! It was useless to ask for a bullet through the head, leaving his ship at the mercy of the sea.

To Danny's scared, inquiring look, he gave a brief nod. The cooky-boy took the rope Tao had brought up from below and dropped on the deck. Under Holt's savage, watching eyes he looped it round the boy trader's wrists and drew it to a knot.

The knot was loose, and Holt spotted it instantly. He struck the cooky-boy with the barrel of the revolver, and Danny reeled away with a howl, half-stunned. The muzzle was jammed again into Ken's face the next instant.

"Keep still!" With his left hand, Holt drew the knot tight. Not till he had secured it did Holt withdraw the revolver from the boy's face. "That fixes you!" he snarled. He leaped up. The revolver bore on Koko. "Go forrard, and stay there!"

Koko hesitated.

"Go!" gasped King of the Islands.

barely in time to save the life of the faithful Kanaka.

With a savage face, Koko tramped forward.

Holt stepped to Kit Hudson. He grinned savagely at the deadly stare of the Australian mate. The muzzle of the revolver was jammed into Hudson's ribs.

"Bind him, Tao!"

"Yes, sar!" grinned the Tonga boy.

A length of rope was swiftly knotted round Hudson's wrists.

"Bind them both to the mizzen, along plenty feller rope, Tao!"

With their hands bound, and the revolver bearing on them, the shipmates could not resist. The grinning Tonga boy hustled them to the mizzen-mast, ran a rope round them and the mast, and knotted it.

With his finger still on the trigger, Holt glared at the staring Kanakas.

"You feller boy! You obey order along me now, you savvy? You no jump along order, along me, me shoot along gun, plenty quick! You savvy?"

"Savvy, sar!" gasped Lompo.

Bristowe Holt was master of the ketch! And from the south came a low, deep growling sound, growing louder and louder with every minute that passed, like the growl

Roaring Demon!

of a savage beast. The hurricane was coming!

The Universe Gone Mad!

THE boom rattled and swung, the canvas roared, as Holt rapped out sharp orders, and the Kanakas obeyed them. Holt was no seaman, but he had sailed a cutter on the Kolo lagoon, and he knew how to set a course. In fair weather he could have sailed the ketch to Ronga. It seemed that the man was deaf and blind to everything outside the purpose on which his mind was concentrated.

Tuvima was near now; but the ketch no longer glided north-east. As the course was changed, she swung away to due east, the course for distant Ronga. The reefs of Tuvima—no longer offering a protection against the coming storm—gleamed dangerously to port, a deadly leech-rose when the wind came.

Holt was blind to it, but every other man on board prayed that the ketch, on her new course, might be past Tuvima before the hurricane broke. Only sea-room could save her now that it was no longer possible to run into the lagoon for shelter. Gust after gust of wind came now, and the ketch moved more swiftly than before.

Holt, revolver in hand, kept a wary eye open on the Kanakas. He would have driven them below, but he needed them at the sheets. He grinned savagely at King of the Islands.

"No Tuvima for you, Ken King!" he said. "I'm master of this ship now! Put that in your pipe and smoke it, you double-crossing dog!"

"You lubber!" Ken said. "You unseamanlike lubber! You don't know what you're doing, though your own nigger could tell you."

Holt snarled at Lompo, at the helm.

"Keep her steady! By thunder, I've a mind to shoot one of you dead as a warning to the rest! Keep her steady!"

"Yes, sar!" faltered Lompo.

The Kolo trader turned to Ken again.

"Your boys would let me down if they dared! They'd rush me and let you loose if they dared! By gum! If you want to see me pot them like rabbits, give them the word, Ken King! I may not be great shakes as a sailor, but I can hit the bull's-eye nine in ten with a revolver! Their lives won't be worth much if they give me trouble."

"Fool! No life on this packet is worth much now! In five minutes we're all for Davy Jones, unless we clear the Tuvima reef before the blow breaks!"

"I'm chancing it!" grinned the Kolo trader. "If I'm no sailor, I'm not afraid of a little wind! You've driven me to this, Ken King. I'd have played you fair and paid you a hundred pounds for the run to Ronga, but you've let me down, and you take

your chance now! I fancy you guess, now, that I'm running—and can't afford to stop!"

Ken breathed hard. It was getting clear in his mind now, as the Kolo trader said. He had been vaguely suspicious, uneasy, anxious to be rid of his unwelcome passenger, realising that something was wrong somewhere. He might have jumped at the truth, but for the fact that Bristowe Holt was the richest man on Kolo. A trader with wide connections in many of the islands, his word was supposed to be as good as his bond, his bond as good as gold.

For long years the name of Bristowe Holt had been a powerful name in the islands, and Ken had never heard a whisper of a crash coming. But he knew now. The thing leaped to the eye. Only a fugitive, and a desperate fugitive, would take such measures as Holt was now taking.

Bristowe Holt was on the run! That meant a crash on Kolo, with dire consequences in many places. Ruin, perhaps, for many, though not for Holt! Holt was the man to get out while the going was good, and leave the crash to fall on others.

Ken understood—at last! He had been made use of by the wily trader, keeping up to the last the manner of an important merchant; and but for the hurricane coming up from the south, he would have landed Holt at Ronga—in time, as he now divined, to escape by the steamer for San Francisco.

He gritted his teeth as he thought of it. That was Holt's big business at Ronga, which had to be kept so secret—catching the steamer for 'Frisco, to vanish suddenly from the Island world, probably with his suitcases packed with plunder!

Tuvima drew farther away on the port bow. If only the ketch was past the island before the wind came—if only she had sea room to fight for her life in the maddened tangle of raging elements that was coming!

Gust after gust came, as if in warning, and canvas bellied and ropes rattled. But warnings were lost on Holt. All he cared was that the Dawn was gathering speed. He eyed the masts, and Ken could read in his face the thought of shaking out more canvas. More canvas—when in a few minutes every rag would be blown out of the bolt-ropes, and as likely as not the masts whipped out in the same moment.

"Holt!" breathed the boy trader. Life was dear to him, and his ship almost dearer.

"Talk all you like, Ken King!" the Kolo trader chuckled. "You won't frighten me into Tuvima."

"Fool! It's too late to run for shelter now—we could never beat back and raise the reef passage! But—"

"We're for Ronga!" Holt gritted his teeth. "Let it blow, if it blows us to Ronga! You've asked for this, Ken King! You know now what I want at Ronga—the 'Frisco packet. You guess why I'm running from Kolo. I've had bad luck, Ken King—speculations in Sydney, a law-suit

instead of cash from an insurance company on a ship that was piled up. Then the fall in copra, and a deal in rubber!"

"It's been coming on for a long time, and I've got ready for it, I'm not going empty-handed! But at the finish I had to cut suddenly—I had cut it rather fine. You never knew that—but you'd begun to suspect something—and you fancied you'd throw me over at Tuvima."

"If we'd run into Tuvima, the game would be up. Likely as not they know already—if the packet's come in from Kolo. I left them believing on Kolo that I'd run in your ketch for Sua—they'll figure that I took the Sydney steamer there—that's the direction the hunt will take!"

"Let them hunt Sydney way, while I'm running for the States! I'd have played you fair. But now—now"—his teeth set—"now, Ken King, you know too much! When we raise Ronga, I'm taking your boat with my Tonga boy—and leaving you tied up on your ship! I'll leave her scuttled, and with her sails and ropes cut to tatters—I'll leave you to stop a leak and rig her afresh—I'll leave you to lie like a log on the sea for days after the Frisco steamer has left Ronga with me aboard."

"You get me, Ken King? You've asked for this, and, by gum, you're getting it. It's in my mind to send you and your crew to the bottom when I take the boat and leave you. Thank your lucky stars that I don't go so far as that!"

THE man had laid his desperate plans with cunning. He had it all cut and dried. With a fair wind or even with half a gale he might have carried on and got through. But what was coming was one of the fiercest hurricanes that had ever swept the Pacific. And Holt did not realise it!

"Oh, you fool—you fool!" said the boy skipper of the Dawn. "You're dreaming of raising Ronga. You'll never see Ronga. You'll be food for fishes in ten minutes from now, barring a miracle."

"Keep it up!" jeered Holt.

Again and again that low, beast-like growl had come out of the coppery south. Now, suddenly, came a howl—the howl of the unloosed wind.

It struck the sea and it struck the ketch. It hurled Bristowe Holt headlong on the deck as it would have hurled every other man had he not been watching and holding on.

The ketch leaped like a wounded animal. The sea ran into a mountain round her. The little vessel tossed like a cork, her bowsprit high in the air, her deck at an angle of nearly forty-five. In the same instant every rag of canvas that was set was blown out, flying away on the sudden blast and vanishing into space.

Bristowe Holt, reeling and rolling and tumbling, brought up against the rail, stupefied. He clutched hold and stared. Blood was running

town his face from his fall, but he did not heed it—did not even know it.

With white face and palsied lips, stupefied by the shock, he stared, hardly knowing what had happened—what was happening. It seemed to him that sea and sky—that the whole universe—had suddenly gone mad.

A few moments before he had been standing on a level deck. The gusts of wind that fanned him had been welcome in the burning heat. But now—

Lompo was staggering at the wheel. Koko leaped to take his place.

Holt, half-crouching, stared. The revolver was still in his hand. His grasp on it was convulsive. But Tao, the Tonga boy, had tucked away his knife, and was holding on to a stanchion. The ketch tossed like a cork. Every moment the deck was at a fresh angle, and every angle steep.

Blow after blow, like the smiting of a giant's hammer, came crashing. The wind was like a powerful savage beast, rending, tearing, biting, snarling.

he stood as calm as a statue in bronze, drenched from head to foot, while he knew that every plunge of the tormented vessel might be her last.

The crew held on for their lives, washed by the seas that broke over the plunging bows. Bristowe Holt, helpless, breathless, dizzy, and dazed, pitched across the deck, rolling like a keg, and he would have plunged headlong over the dipping rail into the sea had not Tao caught him in time and dragged him back.

Holding on with one hand, the Tonga boy held his master with the other, the fat trader sagging helplessly in his grasp. The revolver had

him at last, and cut through the ropes that bound the skipper and mate.

There was no interference to be looked for from the man who had seized the ship. Holt did not even see the Hiva-Oa seaman's action. He would not have cared had he seen.

Breathless, exhausted, terrified to the very marrow of his bones, the Lolo trader sagged in the grasp of the Tonga boy. So far from seeking to intervene, whatever might happen, Holt was unable to save even his own life. Only the tenacious grip of Tao held him back from death.



Came the howl of the unloosed wind. Every rag of canvas was torn from the ketch and hurled into space—and King of the Islands and Kit Hudson were still lashed to the mast!

Lompo, holding on with his left hand, pitching to and fro, sawed through the ropes with his knife, and Ken and Kit dragged themselves free. Both of them had received more than one deep scratch from the Hiva-Oa boy's knife, but they did not heed.

To speak was impossible—a megaphone would not have been heard in the roar of the wind. Ken and Kit struggled towards Koko, still standing steady at the wheel, though his powerful form bent before the blast like a swaying palm. Ken signed to Lompo to give the brown boatswain an extra hand on the wheel.

He was free now to do what he could. But there was little to be done. Only with deep thankfulness he saw that Tuvima had vanished in the mist and spray, and the ketch was no longer threatened by a lee shore. But he knew, though he could not have seen, that the Dawn must have swept perilously near the Tuvima reefs as she tore before the hurricane.

Ken's teeth were set hard. His eyes flashed for a second at the crumpled fat figure of the trader, a helpless burden on the Tonga boy. But for Holt, the Dawn would have been riding a sheltered lagoon, careless of the mad weather that raged outside the reef.

(Continued on page 18.)

Foam-topped waves, tossing madly as high as the mastheads, roared round the ketch, where a few minutes ago had been a glassy sea only stirred by catpaws. It was the hurricane!

Fighting the Storm!

TOSSING high on frothy billows, the storm-driven ketch plunged on through the wild Pacific. The sun that had burned like a glowing copper ball was blotted out by driving clouds, banked black and thick. Koko, grasping the spokes of the wheel with a giant's strength in his brawny arms, kept the ketch steady, running before the maddened wind under bare sticks.

It was all that Koko could do, and

fallen from Holt's hand now. His face was colourless, his look stunned. Every moment he expected the heaving deck to disappear from under him, leaving him in the wild waters. He understood at last. But he understood too late.

The Dawn might have been riding safe at anchor in the lagoon of Tuvima. Now she was booked to ride out the hurricane on the open sea, and sudden destruction for all on board might come with every roar of the mad wind—every heave of the mountainous billows.

King of the Islands, wrenching at the rope that bound him to the mizzen, shouted to his crew. But in the roar of the wind he might as well have whispered. But Lompo came crawling to him and reached

Roaring Demon!

(Continued from page 15.)

On Tuvima, palm-trees were crashing, nuts scattering like hail, roofs of grass-houses flying before the wind. But every craft in the lagoon was safe. And a fugitive swindler's mad folly had left the Dawn to fight for her life in a hurricane that was strewing every beach for a hundred miles with wreckage.

But only for a second Ken heeded the existence of the man whose folly had wrought such harm. Holt passed from his mind, and was forgotten. Whether the Tonga boy held him fast, or whether he was swept overboard to the fate he deserved, mattered little.

King of the Islands was thinking of his ship. The native crew, hanging on for their lives, watched him, quick to read his signs—struggling at instant risk of life and limb to obey. The hatches were secured to keep the washing seas from flooding the ketch, lashing ropes cleated, guy-ropes rove to the boom that threatened every moment to break loose and roar like a mad thing across the deck.

Ken's eyes swept the mountainous seas. Tuvima was gone far astern, the fatal reefs no longer threatened. From the bottom of his heart the boy trader was thankful for that mercy. But the ketch tore on like a frightened bird, and Ken was glad to know that only the open ocean lay before her and around her now. He had the sea room which was all that could save his ship, if yet she could be saved.

Ken knew the seas he sailed like a book. For a clear hundred miles, he knew, there was no reef, or even a shoal. But if any other vessel crossed the bows of the racing ketch in the howling murk, it was sudden destruction to both.

His eyes dwelt anxiously on his masts. A rag of canvas would have helped to steady the ketch, but it was futile to think of it. Indeed, every moment he feared to see the sticks whipped out by the wind.

Many a time Ken was up to his neck in billowing, bellowing water. Everything that was loose had long been swept away. Each time the sharp prow cut into a roaring billow it seemed as if the plunge must be the last.

Roaring wind like a million unchained demons, a slanting deck where no man could keep a footing, breaking seas that thundered fore and aft, death and destruction in every fleeting moment! Many a wild storm had King of the Islands ridden out in the mis-named Pacific. But never such a storm as this.

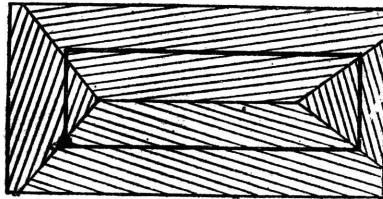
The crash of the top-mast, as it went, was unheard in the roar. The clatter of the whaleboat, as it was dashed away, tearing away a length of the teak rail, seemed soundless. The air was filled with incessant sound that deafened and stunned without a moment's respite, and it drowned all lesser sounds.

It seemed beyond possible belief that the ketch would withstand the

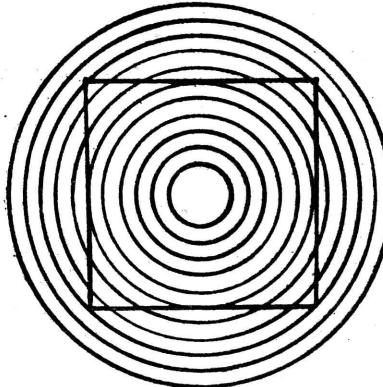
buffeting of tons of water that hurled on her. Yet from every mighty buffet she rose gallantly. The shadow of the wings of the Angel of Death was over the brave little craft. Yet she lived.

There was one hope—it was too fast to last. The hurricane in its mad fury was blowing itself out. Minutes seemed hours, and every minute was packed with horror. But every minute that the struggling ketch

Do your eyes play you tricks? They most certainly do! The evidence is below.



What's gone wrong with these oblongs? Nothing whatever. It certainly looks as though our artist had made an awful mess of the drawing, but he hasn't. He is very cunning with his shading, however, and that is what makes these oblongs look as though they have been punched and sat on. Try them with your ruler.



Say what you like, this square inside the circles is as good a square as ever was. All four sides are perfectly straight and the circles are perfectly round. In fact, a perfect instance of a perfect optical illusion! (Award of Five Shillings—2s. 6d. for each of the above—to C. Barnett, R. P. V. School, Wandsworth Common, London, S.W.18.)

lived in the raging seas gave hope of riding out the storm.

Ken caught a dawning grin on Koko's drenched face, and saw the Kanaka's lips move as he shouted. He did not catch a word, but he knew what Koko was saying. He, too, had noted the first sign of a slackening in the force of the terrible wind.

And a few minutes later he could hear the boatswain's voice:

"Big feller wind he no stop!" The hurricane was blowing itself out. Slacker and slacker, till it was only a gale, and from the rift in the black

clouds a stream of sunlight suddenly danced on the roaring sea.

"Suffering cats!" Ken heard Hudson's voice. "Ken, old bean, that was a blow!"

Ken nodded. His heart was almost too full for words. His brave little ship, that he loved almost more than his life, had lived through the wildest hurricane he had ever faced, battered and beaten and dismantled, but still riding the waters like a thing of life. And the boy trader of the Pacific, at that moment, had nothing more to ask.

BRISTOWE HOLT opened weary eyes and blinked round him in the sunshine. The wind had fallen, but it was still blowing hard. The seas ran high, but sail had been bent, and the ketch was running swiftly under bright sunshine that gleamed on the tossing sea. The trader of Kolo, sunk into semi-unconsciousness, had lain unregarded. Now he staggered feebly to his feet and stared round him dizzily. Ken's glance turned on him.

"Koko, put that dog in irons!" Ken ordered.

"Yes, sar!" grinned Koko. If Holt had thought of resistance, he was too spent. Tao, the Tonga boy, had his hands bound already and could not help him. With the brown boatswain's grasp on his shoulder, the man from Kolo was taken below and the irons locked on his limbs. It was the end of the flight of the defaulter from Kolo. Ronga and the steamer from San Francisco he was destined never to see.

The Dawn headed for Ululo, the nearest island, for repairs, and the following morning ran into the lagoon. At Ululo there was a white magistrate to whom Bristowe Holt was handed over. As he was rowed ashore, still with irons on his wrists, the man from Kolo made a last appeal to King of the Islands.

"Ten thousand pounds for my freedom, Ken King!" he whispered huskily. "Ten thousand pounds—"

"Whose?" said Ken dryly. "Twice as much—I have it here, in my suitcase—"

"You feathered your nest pretty well before you ran from Kolo!" said King of the Islands contemptuously. "My ketch has been knocked about, and I shall have a long bill to foot. But I'm glad of the hurricane that stopped you from getting clear, you scoundrel."

"I'll pay every penny—and ten thousand pounds beside—"

"Belay it!" snapped King of the Islands. And Holt said no more.

It was many days before the Dawn was able to put to sea again. Before that time came, the steamer from Ululo had sailed, taking away Bristowe Holt, a prisoner—back to Kolo. And no one envied him the reception he would meet with on his return!

(The next trip of the ketch takes Ken King into more adventures—in which you can join in another rousing story by CHARLES HAMILTON in next week's MODERN BOY.)