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ROYAL SCOT
versus
AMERICAN FLYER

Wild Man of the Pacific!

BY CHARLES HAMILTON

The scrap of paper which the lost millionaire slipped into a bottle and flung into the sea contains many puzzling blanks in the message which forms the clue to a Fortune. But there are no blanks in this great KING OF THE ISLANDS story!

Complete

Clawing Hands, Blazing Eyes!

CRASH! King of the Islands started suddenly out of slumber. In the silence of the tropic night, the sudden crash came like thunder. The boy trader of the Pacific, on his bed of leaves in the palm-pole hut on the beach of Maroon Island had been dreaming that he was once more on the deck of his ketch, the Dawn, the brave little craft that had been stolen from him by Dandy Peter of Lukwe.

But he awoke in the hut on the lonely island where Dandy Peter had marooned him, with Kit Hudson, his mate, and Koko, the brown-skinned boatswain. The sudden terrific crash on the palm-pole wall had awakened his shipmates also.

"Black feller belong island he stop!" came the voice of Koko, the Kanaka boatswain. "Black feller stop along this hut, sar!"

In the darkness of the hut the three shipmates started to their feet. The walls, built of palm-poles planted firmly in the earth, bound together by pandanus fibre, were strong. But the little building almost rocked under the crash.

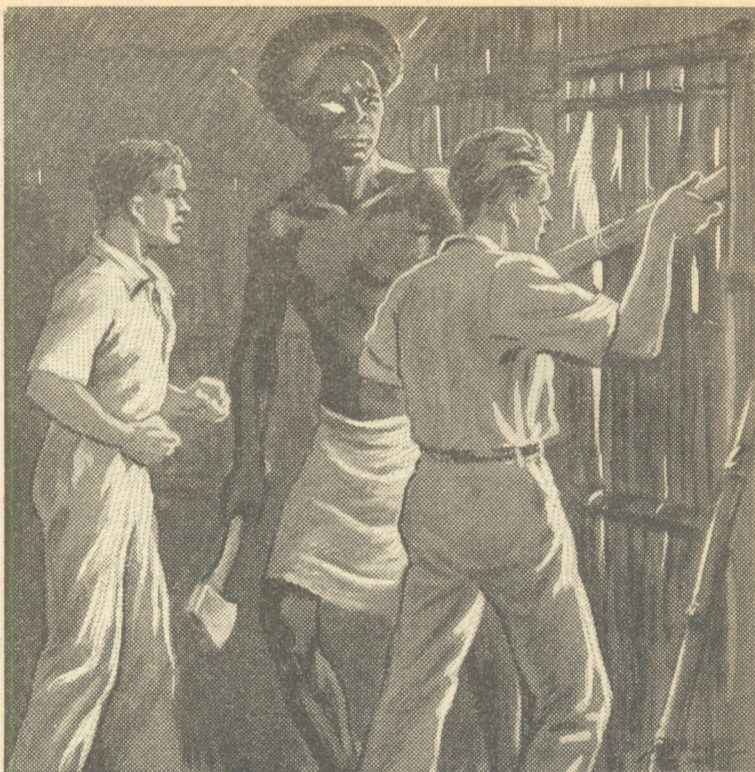
"The wild man!" breathed Ken King.

The crashing came again, evidently from a heavy coral rock wielded in powerful hands. This time it landed on the palmwood door. Three strong bars held the narrow door in place, but it creaked and groaned under the concussion. Then there was a thud on the beach. The heavy rock had slipped from the hands that held it.

"My word!" murmured Koko. "That black feller wantee comey along this place, along killy us feller altogether!"

"The man of the island means business, Ken," said Kit Hudson, with a faint grin in the darkness. "He doesn't seem to want strangers on his jolly old island!"

Ken King stepped to the wall beside the door, where a crack let in a shaft of moonlight. A brilliant moon sailed over the lonely island, turning the lagoon to a sheet of silver, and the powdered coral of



the beach glistened white. He peered from the narrow crack, and a thrill ran through him at sight of the wild figure without—hardly a couple of yards from his eyes.

When Peter Parsons had marooned the shipmates on that speck of land in the vast Pacific, there had been no sign of any inhabitant. Dandy Peter had sailed away in the Dawn, not knowing that he had left the maroons unarmed in danger from a desperate savage. Not, probably, that the sea-lawyer of Lukwe would have cared!

All Dandy Peter cared for was to strand the owners of the ketch in a safe place while he sailed in search of Grant Blake, the lost millionaire. It was since the ketch had dropped below the sea-line that the maroons had learned that they were not alone on the island. And it was this fearful figure that was the companion of their solitude.

Ken shuddered as he looked. The figure might have been taken for that of some giant gorilla. But it was a man—tall, powerful, sinewy, his head a mass of long tangled hair, his face and chest covered by a wild and shaggy beard, dressed only in a short kilt of fibre and bark. If he was a white man, he was burned so dark by the sun that he was as brown as any native.

HE stood in the moonlight, panting from his exertions, his bearded lips drawn back in a fierce snarl. As Ken watched him he stooped and grasped the jagged coral rock again with both strong hands and lifted it for another attack.

"It's coming!" muttered Ken.

"Stand ready!" Ken muttered, as he removed the remaining bars from the hut door. With tensely strung nerves they waited for the next blow.

Again the palm-pole hut shivered under the terrific blow. Koko groped in the dark and picked up an axe.

"This feller hut plenty strong feller hut, sar," he whispered. "But me tinkee that black feller comey along this hut close-up!"

"The door won't stand much more of that, Ken," said Kit Hudson.

"Me killy that black feller, along axe belong me, along he comey," said Koko. "Me cut off head belong him, all same Solomon Island feller."

"We've got to handle him," said King of the Islands; "make him a prisoner if we can! The wretched brute must think we're enemies!"

"Plenty better killy that feller, along axe belong me, sar!" urged Koko.

"Belay it, old coffee-bean! S'pose me makee that feller savvy us feller friend along him, he friend along us feller," said Ken.

"The brute's as savage as a tiger-shark, Ken!" muttered Hudson. "I've heard him prowling round the hut a dozen times since we turned in. He must think we're afraid of him, or he wouldn't be trying this game!"

"An unreasoning savage," said Ken. "But—"

Crash! The door groaned, and one of the bars fell from its fastenings. A shaft of bright moonlight came in at a wide crack. Koko's grasp tightened on the handle of the axe. The hut had been built strongly for defence, but it was not built to sustain an attack from a heavy rock

Wild Man of the Pacific!

wielded in hands of enormous strength. A couple more such blows and it was certain that the door would burst in.

"Stand ready!" muttered the boy trader, as he removed the remaining bars from the door. It was futile to wait till the palmwood was beaten in by the crashing rock, and Ken was anxious to get hold of the wild man and secure him. His panting breath could be heard outside the hut. They waited, with tensely strung nerves, for the next blow. It came, the great rock crashing on the door like thunder. The door, no longer fastened, flew wide open on its fibre hinges, the rock clattered into the hut, and the wild man, taken by surprise by meeting no resistance, staggered after it and fell on his knees in the doorway.

"Get him!" Ken roared. Had Koko been allowed to have his way, the whirling axe would have felled the wild man before he could have gained his feet. But the boy trader's word was law to Koko, and he withheld the blow. Ken and Kit leaped together at the man and grasped him.

THEY strove to drag him into the hut, where with the three against him he could have been secured. But with a strength that was amazing, he scrambled to his feet, with the shipmates clinging to him like cats. Instead of dragging him in, Ken and Kit were dragged out into the moonlight. A claw-like hand tore down Hudson's face, a fierce blow jarred on Ken's jaw, and staggered him.

Involuntarily they relaxed their grasp, and the wild man wrenched loose. The next instant he came at them with clawing hands and blazing eyes—and it was well for the shipmates that Koko dashed from the hut, brandishing the axe. As the giant Kanaka rushed at him, the wild man leaped back, snarling, and fled along the glistening beach.

"If that swab Parsons had left us a gun—" gasped Hudson as he rubbed his face, wet with blood where the skin was torn.

With the speed of a wild pig in the bush, the man of the island fled along the beach. It was useless to pursue him. They returned into the hut, and the door was barred again. But it was not easy to return to sleep.

Ten minutes later there was a whisper from Koko.

"You listen, sar, ear belong you. Black feller comey!"

Ken shivered. From outside the walls of the hut came a sound of feet. The wild man was there again, prowling like a wild animal. More than once they heard his panting breathing through the slits in the palmwood walls. But there came no attack—the wild man seemed to have realised that that was futile. The prowling ceased when the light of dawn glimmered in the sky.

When the door was opened at last, and the maroons came out of the hut into the bright sunrise of the Pacific,

there was no sign of the wild man to be seen.

The Clue in the Bottle!

DANNY the cooky-boy howled, and dodged round the mainmast of the ketch Dawn, then back to his galley, with one brown hand clasped to his ear, ringing from a savage smack. Tomoo and Lufu, Kololo and Lompo, eyed Dandy Peter with uneasy eyes.

The sea-lawyer was in a savage temper, and every Kanaka on the ketch dreaded to catch his eye. Ken King's crew lived in terror of the piratical adventurer who had seized the boy trader's ketch. The hapless Danny had given no offence—he had staggered under that savage smack simply because he happened to be nearest, and because Dandy Peter believed in ruling "niggers" with a heavy hand.

Many a mile had reeled off astern since Peter Parsons had sailed away from the lonely island where he had marooned the shipmates. But the wind had failed him now, and the ketch lay still.

There was land in sight—one of the tiny uninhabited islets on the vast space of ocean east of the Marshalls—where, as Dandy Peter knew, there was fresh water to be had. Only in such an isolated spot could the sea-lawyer fill his casks. In a stolen ship he dared not put into any white man's port.

A calm at sea meant waste of time. And Dandy Peter, with knitted brows and gleaming eyes, stared round at the circle of brilliant blue, and muttered imprecations on King of the Islands' windjammer. In a wind, the Dawn was as good a craft as he could have desired—a ten times better craft than his own cutter, which had been piled on a reef. But without a wind the ketch rocked to the motion of the sea, helpless and useless.

"That feller Parsons plenty mad, along feller wind no comey!" Kololo whispered to Lompo.

"He plenty too much mad," murmured Lompo. "S'pose catchee that feller sleepee bimeby, killy that feller plenty too quick, knife belong me!"

The Kanaka crew had not forgotten King of the Islands. In the happy-go-lucky way of the South Sea Islander, they gave him little thought. But he was not forgotten. And their fear and hatred of the Lukwe skipper were intense. When he slept, it was in the state-room below, with the door locked, and a revolver ready to his hand. Many times when he had been below, the Kanakas had debated in whispers, in their own Hiva-Oa dialect, the idea of fastening down the companion and the lazarette hatch, and thus making him a prisoner below decks. But they feared the desperate rascal of Lukwe too much to make the venture—yet, at all events.

Dandy Peter stared savagely towards the atoll ahead. A whisper of wind came from that direction, hardly enough to fan his face. Save for that speck, the vast space of ocean was empty. That was at least a satisfaction. The sea-lawyer did not want to sight a sail while he was

playing the part of a pirate on another man's ship.

He sat down on the taffrail, and drew from his pocket the paper that he had scanned hundreds of times already—the message written by Grant Blake, the millionaire cast-away, and consigned to a bottle floating in the sea. His brow cleared a little as he glanced over it. Imperfect as it was, it was the only clue that existed to the castaway millionaire of Sydney. Dandy Peter was the only man who had proof that there was a survivor of the wrecked Mindanao, and that that survivor was the richest man in the Pacific.

Sea-water that had penetrated into the floating bottle had obliterated many of the words, leaving blanks that Parsons had to fill in by guesswork. Wreckage of the Mindanao had been picked up on beaches in the Marshalls and the Gilberts, and Parsons did not doubt that it was on some lonely reef in the neighbourhood of those groups that Grant Blake watched the sea with anxious eyes for a sail. What could be read of the message ran:

... finds this message ...
take offices of Grant Blake, Sydney
... believe ... only survivor ...
Mindanao ...
typhoon, after ... far from her course ...
thrown on ... reef after ... for hours on a spar ...
cannot tell what island ... but ... uninhabited ...
no other land in sight ... small island, with ... covered with bush, and ... The finder ...
paper ... richly rewarded, ... rescue.

GRANT BLAKE.

Dandy Peter knew that the message had contained some clue to the whereabouts of the island on which the millionaire had landed. But it was in vain that he strove to decipher the smudges. He would have to search the seas in the hope of hitting upon the island, rescuing Blake, and claiming the reward. And he had the advantage over others, for he was the only man in the Pacific who knew that the millionaire was alive.

He thrust the paper back into a leather case, and rose from the taffrail. Somewhere along by the Marshall or Gilbert groups he would find that lonely reef, he was sure, and the fact that it was out of sight of other land suited his book. He did not want to sail a stolen ship where other men sailed.

Why, it was barely possible that that nameless atoll where he was going to take in water, which lay so irritatingly in sight but unattainable, was the spot where the richest man in the Pacific watched sea and sky for rescue. Parsons turned his eyes curiously on the speck of land as the thought crossed his mind. And as he looked, he saw something that shifted over the reef in the brilliant sunshine.

At the distance the naked eye had not picked up the bare pole that rose beyond the reef, but now that canvas was run up he picked it out, and he knew it for a mast. Behind the coral some vessel lay—a yawl or lugger.

And as he thought of a lugger, Dandy Peter saw that it was a lug-sail that was hoisted, and he remembered Barney Hall, the trader of Tonga.

"Barney Hall! A thousand pounds to a fathom of shell-money it's Barney Hall!" he breathed.

Slight as the wind was, it was enough to move the lugger. Over the coral, Dandy Peter saw the sail in motion. And now the Hiva-Oa boys of the Dawn observed it, and watched it curiously. The lugger emerged from behind the reef at last, and then there was an excited cackle from the Kanakas.

"Feller Barney Hall!" exclaimed Lompo.

In the lugger a burly, rough-bearded figure in a huge grass hat and a loincloth could be discerned, and stirring figures of brown men. They were too far off for recognition, but the Dawn's crew knew the lugger. It was Barney Hall's craft, and the burly man in the grass hat was the bully of Tonga.

Dandy Peter's grasp closed on the butt of his revolver. He knew now that the Tonga trader must have spotted the ketch from the reef, and that was why he was coming out, though the wind was so faint that the lugger seemed to crawl on the face of the Pacific like a fly on a mirror. But that mere breath of wind was in the Tonga man's favour. Such as it was, he had it, and the ketch, which could have walked away from him in a wind, was helpless. Twice already Dandy Peter had dodged the Tonga trader, since he had stolen King of the Islands' ship. But this time there was no dodging for the Lukwe adventurer.

Parsons glanced round at the Kanaka crew. They avoided his eyes, but he could read in every face suppressed excitement and enmity. Barney Hall was nothing to them, but they knew that he was the Lukwe

skipper's enemy, and for that reason they welcomed his coming. Not a man among them would raise a hand against the lugger's crew. Dandy Peter breathed hard and deep.

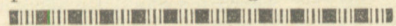
Barney Hall and his crew were coming, and on his own craft five Hiva-Oa boys watched him like cats, longing for a chance to turn the tables on him. It was a situation that might have shaken the bravest man's nerves, but the sea-lawyer of Lukwe did not turn a hair. He picked up his rifle and examined it carefully, and, holding it in the hollow of his arm, stood and coolly watched the lugger creeping down under the whisper of a breeze.

Left to Drift.

"**T**OKALALOO!" grunted Barney Hall to the boat-steerer. "Lay her alongside!" The trader of Tonga fixed his deep-sunken eyes under the shaggy brows on the ketch that lay almost motionless, like a picture on the sea. "By hokey! We've got him this time!"

He glanced round at the brown-skinned, long-limbed Tonga crew. All of them had sorted out knives and hatchets. Lazy good nature had given place to fierce intentness in their brown faces. Barney Hall grinned with satisfaction. Then he watched the ketch again anxiously.

Twice, since he had hunted King of the Islands east of the Marshalls, the Dawn had sailed away from him and left the lugger standing. If the wind came—and it was coming—he would be left standing again if the ketch chose to run before the wind. But the breeze that pushed on the lugger had not yet reached the ketch. Cats-paws ran on the shining water ahead



The wild man flung another lump of rock. It caught King of the Islands full on the chest and knocked him sprawling.

of Barney Hall's prow, but they did not reach the becalmed Dawn.

If, when the wind reached him, King of the Islands turned tail, he would be within easy shot. And Barney Hall had his rifle ready!

As the lugger crawled nearer, he made out the dark, handsome face under the Panama hat, looking at him over the Dawn's rail, and recognised Dandy Peter of Lukwe—the man with the secret learned from the bottle in the sea, of whom he was in quest. But of Ken King or Kit Hudson he saw nothing, as on the two previous occasions when he had exchanged shots with the ketch.

What had become of the shipmates of the Dawn was a mystery to him, though he suspected that Peter Parsons had somehow got the upper hand of them and was in command of King of the Islands' ship.

There was barely a mile to cover from the reef to the becalmed ketch. But the lugger crawled almost like a snail, and minute after minute passed as she drew slowly nearer. The cats-paws running ahead of the lugger reached the becalmed ketch when Barney Hall was at a cable's length. He watched savagely, half-expecting to see the ketch prepare for flight. His rifle was ready to drop the man at the wheel. If the Dawn strove to escape, it would not escape without a running fight.

He saw the ketch stir and the canvas shake under the first puff of wind that reached her. But Dandy Peter gave no orders. He stood with his rifle under his arm, watching the lugger.

Closer the lugger crawled, and now Barney Hall's deep voice came ringing across the water: "I'm coming aboard, Peter Parsons. Where's King of the Islands?" bawled the Tonga trader. "I reckon he's not on board, nor his mate neither. You'd like me to report at Lalinge that you're sailing Ken King's ketch, and giving



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orders to his niggers? By hokey! It will pay you better to come to terms with me, Peter Parsons."

"What do you want, Barney Hall?" Dandy Peter's voice came across scarce ten fathoms of water. "Give it a name."

"I reckon you know!" growled Barney Hall. "Every man on the beach at Lukwe knows that you picked up a bottle from the sea, with a paper in it in Grant Blake's fist, and you know where to pick him up, you swab. There's five thousand pounds reward offered in Sydney for news of him. You're not leaving me out of that. You reckon I don't know your game?" he roared. "You've stolen King of the Islands' ship, to look for Grant Blake. You're liable to be hanged for a pirate at Fiji."

"You won't tell them anything at Fiji, Barney Hall!" said Dandy Peter, between his teeth. "It will be a long time before you see a white man's port again."

"I'm coming aboard!" said Hall doggedly. "I'm having a sight of that paper. Share and share alike—I'll stand by that. And if you don't like it, I'll send you where you've sent King of the Islands, and that's to the sharks, I reckon. You feller Tokaloo, put her alongside."

BARNEY HALL, finger on trigger, watched Dandy Peter. The latter's rifle was still under his arm, and at the first hostile movement the Tonga trader was ready to pull trigger. There was a glint of the sun on the rifle-barrel as Peter Parsons slipped it into his hands. Hall, without a moment's hesitation, fired. The bullet flew over the sea-lawyer's head as he ducked below the rail.

The next instant Dandy Peter was up again and shooting. There was a roar from the Tonga trader as he staggered backwards and fell with a crash into the lugger. A second and a third bullet missed him by inches as he fell.

"By hokey!" panted Barney Hall. He strove savagely to rise, groaned, and fell on his side helplessly.

From the Tonga crew came a wild and fierce shout. Crack, crack crack! came the bark of the rifle from the ketch, and the Tonga boys scrambled wildly for cover. Hardly three fathoms from the ketch, axes and knives were useless against the white man's rifle.

Not till he had emptied the rifle did the sea-lawyer cease to fire. Then he flung the rifle to the deck and drew the revolver from his belt. The lugger drifted helplessly, unguided, yawing with swinging tiller. Leaning over the Dawn's rail, the sea-lawyer emptied the revolver into the lugger, the fusillade answered by howls of pain and fear. The catspaws were ruffling the sea round and beyond the Dawn now, the canvas humming in the rising breeze.

Parsons yelled to Lompo to take the wheel, and Lompo leaped to obey. As the ketch moved through the water the lugger was left helplessly drifting

astern, and Dandy Peter flung back a savage laugh as he left her to drift.

Raining Rocks.

"**L**OOK out, Ken!" yelled Kit Hudson. But King of the Islands was looking out. He dodged as the lava rock came crashing a foot from his head. Brilliant sunshine blazed down on Maroon Island. High over the thick bush the summit of the extinct volcano rose, the bare lava slopes glistening in the blaze, hot and burning to the touch. Far away on the beach Koko was building a canoe for fishing in the lagoon.

Ken and Kit had struggled up the bush-covered hill and passed beyond the bush to the bare lava slopes high above, to light again the signal-fire on the summit. From a lava ridge above them the wild, tangled head and glaring eyes of the man of the island came suddenly in sight, and a lump of jagged lava was hurled.

"That swab again!" panted Hudson. The coppery face, the gleaming eyes glared down at the shipmates, and the claw-like hand grasped another fragment of lava. The wild man was a dozen yards above them, and the slope was steep. They watched him breathlessly, prepared to dodge the missile when it came. There was something appalling in the wild, unreasoning ferocity of the dark, shaggy face.

"Look out!" breathed Hudson. "That mad nigger will get us if he can!" The next moment he was dodging, narrowly escaping the whirling rock. "If a man had a gun—"

Hudson muttered. Ken, watching the wild face above intently, waved his hand. He shouted to the wild man: "You feller boy, us feller friend along you!" It seemed that the copper-faced man did not understand. If he was some native from a remote island, it was likely enough that even the common language of the Pacific was unknown to him. At all events, he made no answer, save a savage snarl.

"You savvy what we say, mouth belong me?" shouted King of the Islands.

This time the answer was a whizzing fragment of lava. Ken dodged, and it crashed past and clattered down the hill. He gritted his teeth, clambered up the slope, and exclaimed: "Come on, Kit!"

The wild man was groping for a fragment of lava. But he seemed to change his mind, and, turning, bounded away like a goat. From one rock to another he leaped with almost incredible speed and activity, which even the active sailormen could never have hoped to equal. In a few moments he vanished from sight. The sloping sides of the lava peak were broken into innumerable fissures and gullies and gaps, and there were a hundred hiding-places at hand for a man seeking cover.

Keeping a careful look-out for the enemy, the shipmates clambered on up the steep slopes of rock to the summit. The ancient crater, choked with lava, had here and there a pool

of rain-water, and in crevices and gullies grew patches of thorny bush. Breathing hard, and dewed with perspiration, the shipmates sat down to rest on a ridge of rock before commencing to gather fuel for the signal-fire.

Crash—clatter! A jagged lump of lava smashed on the rock between them as they sat, scattering fragments over them. The comrades leaped to their feet. From a ridge a dozen yards away, the wild, tangled head of the man of the island rose to view. It was evident that he had been watching them from cover. Another rock was in his hand, and it whizzed even as the shipmates stared round and sighted him.

"King of the Islands gave a cry, staggered back, and fell. The jagged missile had caught him full on the chest, knocking him over like a skittle. A screech came from the wild man as the boy trader sprawled over.

"Ken!" panted Hudson. With fury in his face, the mate of the Dawn clutched up a fragment of lava and hurled it in return as the wild man lifted his hand with another missile clutched in claw-like fingers. There was another screech from him as Hudson's rock crashed on his brawny, bare shoulder, sending him spinning backwards. He disappeared from sight, but his screeching voice could still be heard.

Hudson spun towards his comrade. But King of the Islands was already rising to his feet. His face was pale, and he breathed hard. The heavy blow had severely shaken him.

"All serene, Kit!" he gasped. "Only a bruise. It might have been worse."

Hudson, gripping his loaded lawyer-cane, darted towards the lava ridge behind which the wild man had fallen, clambered over it, and had a glimpse of a shaggy figure vanishing behind a rock in the distance.

FOR the next hour, in the blazing sunlight on the hot lava summit, the shipmates were hard at work, gathering fuel from the crevices and stacking up the fire. Nothing more was seen or heard of the wild man while they worked. He had had a hard knock, and they hoped he was learning to keep his distance. The fire was set going at last, a thick column of smoke rolling against the deep blue of the sky.

From the high peak that volume of smoke was visible from an immense distance at sea, and, lonely as Maroon Island was, there was a good chance that it might be seen from some vessel. But there was little doubt that the savage of the island would scatter the fire, as he had done before, when it was no longer guarded. Instead of descending the hill, the shipmates took cover in a crevice of the rocks at a little distance and remained on the watch.

With dogged patience the shipmates waited and watched. Rescue from Maroon Island depended on keeping the signal-fire burning, and it could not be left at the mercy of the unreasoning savage. The silence was broken only by the crackle of the fire.

But another sound was heard at last—a stealthy, creeping footstep. Ken grasped Kit's arm.

"He's coming!" he breathed. Keeping in cover of the rocks, they watched breathlessly. The wild, shaggy figure appeared in sight, creeping like a watchful animal, his bright eyes glancing right and left. The creeping figure passed within a few yards of the hidden shipmates and stopped. Then he turned towards the fire, his back to them.

"Now!" exclaimed Ken. Like an arrow from a bow, he leaped out from the crevice, and his grasp fastened on the wild man. Hudson was hardly a second behind him. A startled yell broke from the man of the island, and he whirled round, his eyes ablaze, grasping at them.

He went down with a crash on the rocks, the shipmates sprawling over him, struggling like a savage beast. Both the shipmates were strong and sturdy, but the man of the island seemed to have the strength of a maniac. He rolled over and over, dragging them with him, screaming with fury.

In spite of his furious resistance, he would have been made a prisoner had the struggle been fought out to a finish. But as the three rolled and scrambled in that desperate wrestle they pitched together down a steep slope of the lava, landing in a bush thirty feet below.

The fall hurled them apart. Ken rolled in one direction, Hudson in another, and the wild man leaped away like an ape. With amazing agility he scrambled up the slope down which they had pitched, and had reached the top before the panting shipmates were on their feet. Grinning down at them like some savage gorilla, the wild man began hurling jagged lumps of lava. The missiles crashed round them almost like hail.

"Cover!" panted Ken.

With the jagged rocks raining from above, they had to hunt cover. In the thick bush they stopped, screened from the sight of the wild man, and leaned on the trunks, panting and exhausted. From the distance above they could hear the sounds of the wild man scattering the fire they had built with so much labour. Through the branches they saw the column of smoke dissipate into thin wisps and fade away. But they were too exhausted to think of clambering up the steep summit again. The wild man of Maroon Island had beaten them!

The Bully of Tonga!

PROPPED on a heap of tapa mats, his tanned face grim and haggard, Barney Hall stared across the sunlit sea at a tall peak that rose above the waters far away. Tokalaloo, lounging at the tiller, hummed a Tonga song. The other Tonga boys sprawled about the lugger idly. Save for that tall peak that jutted into the blue, there was no sign of land in the rolling waste of waters. But land was there—and Barney Hall was glad to see it.

Land meant food and water, both of which were running short on the Tonga trader's lugger.

How many days had passed since his fight with Dandy Peter, Hall did not know, and could not even guess. For days and nights he had lain half-conscious, disabled by his wound, roughly tended by the Tonga boys. They had done their best for him, but it was only because the bully of Tonga was a giant of strength that he had pulled through.

Barney was recovering, but he was not a strong man again yet. But his mind was clear, and he was able to give orders. He ground his teeth with rage when he found how his crew had been wasting the stores, and that the last keg of water had been started. But he was not in a state to take a belaying-pin and handle his crew with its aid. It was in vain that he questioned the Tonga boys as to the

sprawling and chewing betel. With the wind light but steady, the lugger ran on towards Maroon Island.

Barney Hall watched the bush-covered hill come into sight below the bare lava peak, and saw, at last, the wide reefs on which the Pacific broke in unceasing surf. He rose from the heap of tapa mats, took his binoculars, and scanned the nearing island closely. The soaring peak was a warning to all skippers to steer clear of dangerous reefs. But he had no choice in the matter now. He had to run down to Maroon Island for food and water.

There was no passage for a ship into the lagoon, but he had no doubt that so small a vessel as the lugger could creep in. He was lucky to find a calm sea, a smiling sky, and a fair breeze. In rough weather, the lugger would have been piled up on the coral. With the binoculars clamped



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Will readers intending to send in photographs please note that no more are required for the time being—until those already selected have all been published.

days that had passed while he lay unconscious of time.

He knew that many days must have passed, and that was all. The lugger had been running all that time, generally eastward. It was a speck on the waste of waters stretching from the Marshall group to the far-away continent of South America.

To think of beating northward to Hawaii, or southward to Fanning or Christmas, was hopeless, and no sail or steamer broke the eternal monotony of sea and sky. But the Tonga trader knew of an island in that solitary waste where there was ample fresh water, trees laden with coconuts, and bananas, and plantains, and wild pig in the bush—plenty of food and water, if he could strike Maroon Island before both ran out. It was with deep relief that Barney Hall saw the volcanic peak rising against the blue.

"Feller island he stop!" remarked Tokalaloo, sighting the peak a good hour after Barney Hall had been watching it. Hall snorted. The other Tonga boys rose to stare at the distant peak, and then resumed

to his eyes, Barney Hall watched the reefs and the breaking foam, and snapped orders to his crew.

Over the low reefs he could see the lagoon shining in the sun, and the beach of sand and white, glistening powdered coral. There was no sign of any inhabitant, but Hall knew that Maroon Island had been deserted ever since the ancient days when pirates had marooned their prisoners there. Where the torrent came down from the hill and poured into the lagoon through the channel it had cut in the beach was a dark object that looked like a palm-pole hut. But Hall did not even see it—he was watching the reefs, dangerously near now. It did not even cross his mind that living men might be on the solitary island.

With tense eyes he watched the only break where the lagoon communicated with the sea.

Reefs were taken in the canvas, and under a rag of sail, feeling her way almost inch by inch, every hand ready and every eye on the alert, the lugger crept in on the tide. Brief as the passage was, anxious minutes passed

Wild Man of the Pacific!

before the nose of the Tonga lugger was parting the waters of the lagoon, and Barney Hall wiped great beads of perspiration from his brow.

The cable ran out, and the lugger came to anchor. Half a cable's length away the sand shelved down to the lapping waters, red in the sinking sun, and beyond the sand was black bush, thick and jungly.

"You feller boy, bring feller boat alongside!" snapped Barney Hall. The tiny dinghy towed behind the lugger was pulled under the side, and Barney swung himself into it. One of the Tonga boys dropped in to pull him ashore.

It was sheer joy to the Tonga trader to stretch his legs on the sand of the beach, after the long, weary days in the close space of the lugger. The sun was dipping to the Pacific, and the shadow of the lugger's mast lay a strangely elongated black bar on the lagoon, reaching almost to the beach where the trader had landed.

One of the Tonga boys was left on the lugger. The rest came ashore

with their tapa sleeping-mats, and mats and rugs for their master.

But the sun was gone a few minutes after the crew had landed and the starry night closed in on the lone island. Tokalaloo went along the beach with a can, to fill it at the stream. When he returned with the fresh water, Barney heard a cackle among the brown boys, in their dialect of Tonga, and caught a few words that he understood.

"What thing you talk, tongue belong you, Tokalaloo?" he demanded.

"Me tell other feller, sar, me see hut stop along beach, along water he stop," answered Tokalaloo.

"A hut on the beach!" Barney repeated. "You see any feller stop along that feller hut?"

"No, sar! Feller hut he stop, no feller stop along that hut."

Barney grunted. He concluded that the hut had been put up by some crew that had touched at Maroon Island for water and camped on the beach for the night, as he was now doing. He rolled himself in a blanket, and lay down on a heap of tapa mats at a little distance from the crew. Save

for the unceasing surf, all was silent on the island. Barney Hall was soon asleep, and the cackle of the native boys died into silence and slumber.

Barney came out of sleep with a start and a gasping cry, to feel a fierce grip on him. He rolled over, panting, struggling, fiercely returning grip for grip. His first impression was that one of the Tonga boys had attacked him in his sleep. There was, so far as he knew, no one else on the lone island. But the grip that was on him was stronger than that of the strongest man in his crew—it was like the grasp of a giant. He had a moment's glimpse of a dark face, with fiercely rolling eyes, and lips drawn back in a snarl from gleaming teeth. Brawny as the Tonga trader was, he was like an infant in that terrible grip, and he yelled to his crew as he struggled for his life.

There was a startled cackle from the Tonga boys, the patter of bare feet running on the sand.

"Help!" yelled Barney, struggling wildly. "You feller boy—"

"Me comey, sar!" came back the voice of Tokalaloo. The whole bunch of Tonga boys came up with a rush, knife or hatchet in hand. As they burst on the spot, the terrible grip on Barney Hall relaxed, and his assailant sprang away. The trader sprawled breathless in the sand, still shouting hoarsely. The wild figure of his assailant leaped away, and made for the bush at incredible speed.

The Tonga boys raced in pursuit. But the half-seen figure vanished into the bush, and they turned back, cackling with excitement. Barney Hall, on his feet, rested a hand on a coral rock to steady himself. There was a revolver in his hand now, but it was shaking. He was aching and panting from that brief but fearful struggle with the wild man.

"That feller run along bush, sar!" said Tokalaloo. "He run plenty too quick, all same wild pig he run, my word. No catchy that feller, sar, along he run plenty too quick."

"That feller black feller?" Barney asked.

"No see plenty too much eye belong me, sar, but me tinkee black feller," answered Tokalaloo.

"There's no niggers on the island," muttered Barney Hall, staring with uneasy eyes at the dark bush. "There's never been niggers here!"

He tramped down the beach to the dinghy. It was evident that Maroon Island was not, as he had believed, uninhabited, and what perils the dark bush might hide he could not tell. The rest of the night was spent on board the lugger, and though the Tonga boys were soon asleep, there was little rest for Barney Hall. Propped against the mast, with a revolver in his hand, he dozed by fits and starts, and he was glad when the sun rose over the lava peak and dawn glimmered on the lagoon!

GREAT ADVENTURES.—No. 10

The Story of This Week's Free Photogravure Plate

CAPTAIN SCOTT'S LAST DASH TO THE SOUTH POLE

TO taste the bitterness of defeat even in the moment of his greatest triumph and then to meet death—such was the tragic fate of Captain Robert Falcon Scott, the famous British Antarctic explorer. A Devonshire man, Scott was born in 1868 and entered the Navy when he was thirteen. When he was thirty-three he was chosen to lead an expedition to reach the South Pole—a place no man had then succeeded in reaching—and failed. But he was determined to try again.

In 1910 he left London, in the Terra Nova, for this second attempt, reached Ross Island, in the Ross Sea, in January, 1911, and started on his 900-mile dash to the Pole on November 2nd of that year. Bad weather was encountered, so that most of Scott's sledge ponies and dogs died, and he and his four companions—Bowers, Wilson, Oates, and Evans—had to haul their sledge, with a tent and food and fuel supplies, on the last stage of the journey up the Beardmore Glacier to the plateau stretching to the Pole, which they reached on January 18th, 1912—only to find that they had been forestalled! There they found a tent, and in it a message from Roald Amundsen, the Norwegian explorer, dated December 14th, 1911, bidding them "welcome to 90 degrees." It was a bitter disappointment to Scott, but he faced up to it with his usual courage, and after spending a day at the Pole commenced the journey back to his base.

BLIZZARDS and hurricanes whirled particles of frozen snow into their faces, and the terrific wind made hauling the sledge over the hummocky ice a terribly hard job. Evans, the strongest man of the party, broke down and died on the Beardmore Glacier on February 17th. To make matters worse, Oates was terribly frostbitten and could not help pull, thus making progress even slower. Food was running short, and to give his companions a chance of life, this "very gallant gentleman" walked out of the tent into the blizzard, on March 17th, and died.

Scott and his remaining companions continued their heart-breaking trek until March 27th—until they were within eleven miles of a food depot. Then an even worse blizzard sprang up, compelling them to erect their tent and seek shelter. They had food for only two days, and the blizzard raged for a week! Thus they perished of cold and starvation when within a day's march of safety, penned in their tent by the terrible weather. And there a relief party found them, in the silent tent, on November 12th, and in Scott's own diary they read the story of that tragic dash to the Pole.

NEXT WEEK'S FREE PHOTOGRAVURE PLATE—see page 9.

There are more splendid Adventures for you to enjoy in Next Saturday's story of the Shipmates of the South Seas!