

CAPT. JUSTICE, BIGGLES, and KEN KING Stories—Inside!

The MODERN BOY

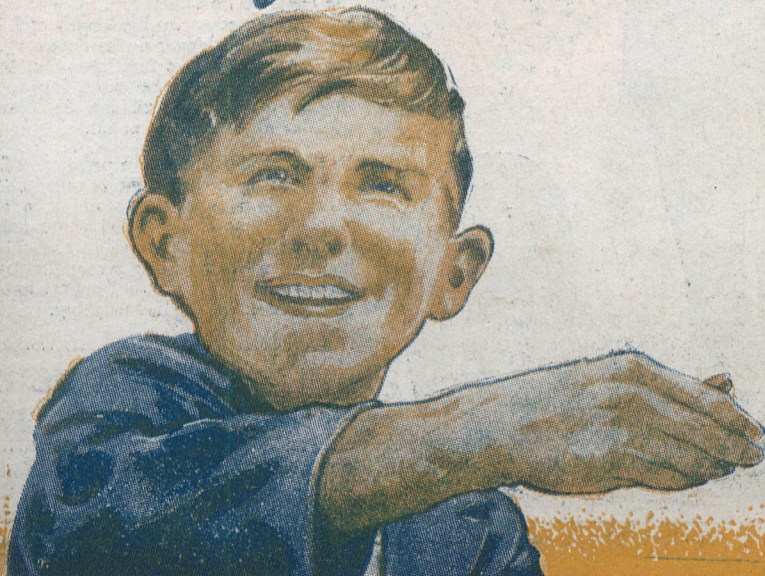
EVERY SATURDAY.
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THERE'S
ONE
for
YOU!

SEE SPECIAL
OFFER
INSIDE!



A lump of coral rock came whizzing down the hot lava slope as Ken advanced towards the wild figure on the ridge. The Kanakas stared with awed, scared eyes.



KEN KING'S LUCK!

A KING OF THE ISLANDS
Story—COMPLETE

Almost crushed by misfortune, the Boy Trader of the South Seas suddenly meets with the most amazing Good Fortune that ever came to Adventurers in those sun-scorched, lawless Seas!

BY CHARLES HAMILTON

A Mysterious Light.

"LOST!" King of the Islands muttered the word between his teeth. Darkness lay like a black cloak on the Pacific, and Ken King stared savagely through the gloom, searching for the tall sails of the ketch Dawn. But the ketch had vanished, and he searched in vain.

Kit Hudson steered the motor-boat on. Koko the Kanaka scanned the sea, with eyes even keener than his white master's. But even he failed to pick up a sign of the fleeing ketch now that night had shut down on the ocean.

"No see, eye belong me!" he muttered.

Ken clenched his hands. It was bitter luck. The tropic night had shut down on the sea in time to save Dandy Peter Parsons, sailing the stolen ketch, from the pursuers. Kit Hudson drove the swift motor-boat in widening circles, searching for the vanished ketch. But it was easy to guess that the man who was sailing a stolen ship had changed his course when the night blotted him from sight.

In less than an hour it was moon-rise, but half that time would be enough for Dandy Peter! Unless the shipmates of the Dawn found him by chance in the darkness, he would be far away when the moon silvered the sea.

"We're not beaten yet, Ken!" muttered Hudson. "We may pick him up when the moon rises! Anyhow, we've spotted him, and if we lose him this time, we'll get on his track again!"

Ken did not answer. The disappointment was deep and bitter. So close had the pursuers been that the boy trader had seen every face of his old crew on the ketch—Lompo and Lufu, Kolulo and Tomoo, and Danny the fat cooky-boy. They had seen him in pursuit; had even ventured to wave, in spite of their fear of Dandy Peter. Ken had hoped that, cowed as they were by the desperado, they might attempt something to delay the flight of the ketch and give him a chance to overhaul her. But it seemed that Parsons had them too well in hand.

It was long and weary weeks since the boy trader of Lalinge had trodden the deck of his own ship. He owed it all to Dandy Peter—the loss of his ship, trade, and cargo—weary weeks of solitude on Maroon Island, in danger from the wild man of the island—and now that he was afloat again, hunting for his own ship, Parsons had escaped him by a hair's-breadth.

"After all, we've had luck, Ken!" said Hudson.

"Luck!" growled King of the Islands. "That ship-stealing swab Parsons has all the luck!"

"We might have been still on Maroon Island," said the mate of the Dawn, "if Barney Hall hadn't happened along in his lugger. And we might have been knocked out by the wild man of the island—he tried it on often enough. We've had a lot of luck."

Ken smiled. It was the cheery Australian's way to look on the bright side of things. It was Ken's way also, as a rule; but just at the

moment he found it hard to look on the bright side. He had been so near to recapturing his ship, the Dawn—so near, and yet so far.

"You're right, Kit, old man," he said. "But we so nearly had that sea-thief! If only the Hiva-Oa boys had lifted a hand—"

"They're unarmed, and Parsons would shoot them like pigeons if they tried it on!" replied Hudson. "But we'll get him yet! One swallow doesn't make a summer."

"I know! But how long can we keep this up, Kit?" asked Ken. "Money's running out! All we had left was put into hiring this motor-boat at Uta, and fixing her up for

hunting that thief. And we've found that he traded our cargo for supplies at Lola! When we get the Dawn back, we shall have our ship and nothing more! And we've not got her back yet."

"We shall have to pick up trade again! Or—" Hudson paused, and grinned.

"Or what?" queried Ken.

"Peter Parsons stole the ketch to hunt for Grant Blake, the Sydney millionaire, who was lost on the Mindanao a year ago," answered Kit. "There's a reward of five thousand pounds offered in Sydney for him. We might have a shot at that, old bean. From what Barney Hall let out, Dandy Peter has a clue to the man—knows that he's alive, and cast away on some lonely reef. According to Hall, Parsons found a message from Blake in a floating bottle, and I reckon it's true. He wouldn't take the risk of being strung up as a pirate without something pretty solid to go upon. He's stolen our ship, and if we get him that message is the spoils of war! If we could pick up that five thousand, it would set us on our feet again, what?"

Ken gave an impatient laugh.

"It hasn't been much use to Parsons, so far. He stole our ship to hunt for Grant Blake, but he hasn't found him! If the man was to be found, Parsons would have picked him up before this. If Grant Blake's really alive and on some reef, he couldn't have given its bearings in his message, or Parsons would have raised the reef before this. Parsons can afford time to go on a wild-goose chase with a stolen ship, and a stolen cargo to trade for supplies—we can't! We've got to try to pick up our trade again."

"Feller light stop along sea, sar!" said Koko suddenly.

Ken spun round to the Kanaka.

"Where? What place that feller light he stop?"

Koko pointed with a brown finger. "It can't be the Dawn," said Hudson. "Parsons wouldn't show a light. He's not such a fool!"

But Ken stared hard in the direction pointed out by the Kanaka. Far away, gleaming on the shadowed sea, a light was moving, as if it came from a lantern swinging to and fro. Ken gave a sudden start as a distant sound came crackling through the silence. It was a succession of shots far away on the sea.

"My hat!" muttered Hudson. "Is that the Dawn—is that scoundrel Parsons shooting?"

Ken's heart beat fast. He had hoped that his native crew might make some attempt to delay the flight of Peter Parsons. Did the firing mean that they were making the attempt—and that Dandy Peter was shooting? What else could it mean? Yet the gleaming of the light, evidently waved over the side of a vessel, was inexplicable. Someone was signalling with a lamp.

"Put it on, Kit!" breathed the boy trader.

Hudson was already "putting it on." A deep-throated roar came from the engine as the motor-boat

tore through the sea in the direction of the distant waving light.

The boat rocked and quivered like a thing alive. The firing had died away, but the light still waved and gleamed, nearer and clearer. Had there been a struggle, and had Dandy Peter had the worst of it? Were the Hiva-Oa boys signalling to their white master? It looked like it, and Ken's heart beat almost to suffocation as the boat tore on.

The Man in the Sea!

"HELP!" King of the Islands jumped.

"Help! Ahoy!"

Ken's eyes were fixed on the waving light. But he stared round, almost in stupefaction, as that faint cry came from the darkened sea. It was a cry for help from the bosom of the Pacific—the cry of some desperate swimmer at his last gasp.

In the gloom, Ken's quick glance picked up a glimmer of a white, despairing face on the black waters.

"Hold on, Kit!" he shouted.

"White feller stop along sea!" exclaimed Koko, in utter amazement. "Me no savvy what name white feller stop along sea."

Hudson shut down the engine. It was a hard thing to have to do, for it seemed certain now that the vessel from which the light was waving was the Dawn, and every moment might be precious. But to leave a drowning man sinking in the sea was impossible. Neither of the shipmates could think of that, whatever was at stake. The motor-boat throbbed to a stop, and

three pairs of keen eyes scanned the water.

The white face showed again. Ken threw a line, and it was grasped by desperate hands. A minute more, and a drenched figure was dragged on the boat, to sink down exhausted in a pool of water. A second more, and the boat was rushing on again towards the waving light—while King of the Islands bent over the man who had been so narrowly saved from the sea. A yell of astonishment broke from him as he scanned the white, drawn face of the man he had saved.

"Dandy Peter! It's Peter Parsons!" gasped Ken.

"Parsons?" stuttered the mate of the Dawn.

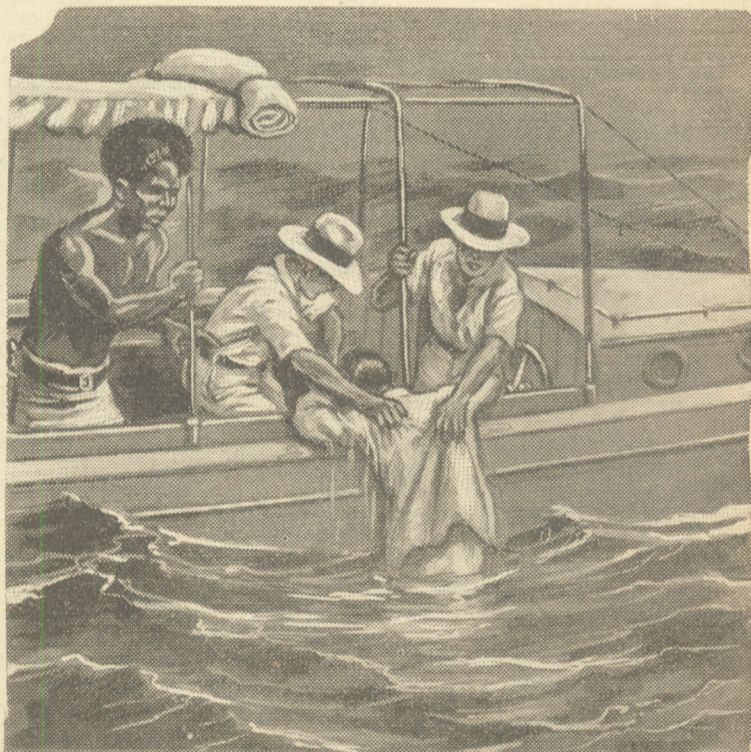
"Feller Parsons, belong Lukwe!" ejaculated Koko, in wonder. "Me savvy that feller plenty too much! That bad feller no stop along boat belong white master. That feller go back along sea, close-up, makee kai-kaik along shark!" and Koko's sinewy hands grasped the half-drowned man.

Dandy Peter made no resistance. The last ounce of his strength was gone, and he was sinking into insensibility. But King of the Islands caught the Kanaka by a brown shoulder, and dragged him back.

"Belay that, Koko!" he rapped.

Koko grunted discontentedly, but he obeyed the order of his white master.

Ken's eyes were fixed on the light again. He knew now that it was a signal from the Kanaka crew of his ship, the Dawn. Evidently the Hiva-Oa boys had turned on Dandy Peter, and he had gone overboard. He guessed that the firing had been a signal from the ketch. The voices of



The motor-boat throbbed to a stop, and the drowning man was grasped and dragged on board. A yell of astonishment broke from King of the Islands as he scanned the white, drawn face. "It's Dandy Peter!"

Ken King's Luck!

the Hiva-Oa boys came ringing across the sea, shouting to him.

King of the Islands' eyes danced. "The Dawn!" he exclaimed. "It's our ship. Kit—we've got her back at last!"

The ketch hove-to. Lights were burning, and Danny the cooky-boy, a huge grin on his fat face, was waving a hurricane-lamp over the side. Hudson ran the motor-boat under the rail, and Koko hooked on. With a bound, King of the Islands was on the teak rail, and jumped down on the deck of his own ship. It seemed almost like a dream to him—this moment that he had thought of by day and dreamed of by night. Once more King of the Islands trod the deck of the Dawn.

THE crew crowded round him, with grinning faces. They were mighty glad to see their white master again—there was no doubt about that. They grinned and cackled with glee. But they were hardly so glad as Ken at that joyous moment.

"White master comey back along ship belong him!" chuckled Lompo. "This feller too much glad to see you, sar!"

"Plenty too much glad, sar!" said Lufu. "That feller Parsons stop along sea, sar."

"This feller makee that feller Parsons walk about along sea!" exclaimed Danny. "White master give this feller Danny plenty big stick tobacco, feller tick-tock, feller knife, plenty too much thing, along he makee that feller Parsons walk about along sea!"

King of the Islands laughed. "How you makee that feller Parsons walk about along sea, Danny?" he asked.

"This feller Danny plenty too clever feller, sar," Danny chuckled gleefully. "Brain belong him tinkee altogether too much! This feller Danny chuck saucepan belong him along head belong feller Parsons, sar!"

"Knock that feller along feller rail, sar," said Tomoo, taking up the tale. "Us feller jump along that feller plenty too quick, along saucepan belong Danny bang um head belong him! Us feller send that feller along sea along feller shark! That feller Parsons no stop any more altogether, sar!"

King of the Islands could see now what had happened on the Dawn. The Hiva-Oa boys, long held in subjection by Peter Parsons, had been eager to break out, and when they saw their white master in the offing, Danny the cooky-boy had "got" him from behind. The crew had needed only that chance to fling their tyrant into the sea.

The Hiva-Oa boys stared blankly when the half-senseless man was handed up the side of the ketch.

"What name that feller stop?" gasped Lompo. "You feller Koko, what name that feller Parsons stop?"

"That feller stop, along white master sing out that feller stop,"

Koko grunted. "Me no likee him stop! Me likee plenty too much send that feller along sea, along shark, my word!"

"Take him below, Koko," said King of the Islands. "He will go into irons as soon as he comes to. Put him in the cabin now."

It was with no gentle hand that Koko heaved the half-conscious man down the companion and pitched him on the lockers. Koko would have preferred to drop him over the side. Peter Parsons, sprawling on the lockers, stared at him with dizzy eyes. His senses were reviving, and he realised that he was on board the Dawn again. Before leaving him Koko searched him for weapons.

"You seum!" muttered Parsons faintly. "If I had a gun—"

"Feller gun no stop along you any more, you plenty bad feller Parsons!" answered Koko scornfully. "You feller prisoner on this hooker, sar! Tinkee p'l'aps white master hang you, sar, along boom, along rope along neck belong you!" And Koko stalked away.

Parsons sank back on the lockers with a groan. His life was saved, but all else was lost! The hunt for Grant Blake in a stolen ship had come to a sudden end, and prison stared him in the face, if King of the Islands chose to hand him over to the law for piracy!

Just Like Ken!

MORNING gleamed on the Pacific. The wind had changed in the night, and was coming out of the west in strong gusts, whipping the spindrift over the gliding ketch. The sunburnt face of King of the Islands wore a cheery expression—though there were grave thoughts in his mind. He had his ship back, but his cargo was gone. Months of trade had been lost, trading connections broken, and the ship-mates were very near the end of their tether. The ketch was running to the east. Ken was anxious to return the hired motor-boat to its owner at Uta, and cut short that expense. Expenses had to be calculated now with great care.

"The swab!" muttered Hudson as the clinking of Parsons' irons floated up from below. "We're down nearly to bedrock, Ken—hardly a rag of cargo left on the ship."

"We'd have been absolutely down and out if we hadn't recaptured the Dawn," answered Ken. "We shall pull through, Kit, but it will be a scrape." He turned to the boatswain. "Bring that feller Parsons along deck."

"Yes, sar!"

Koko descended the companion and came up with a sinewy hand grasping the shoulder of Dandy Peter, whose wrists were in irons. Ken was taking no chances with the sea-thief. So long as Peter Parsons remained on the Dawn, he remained in irons.

The dandy of Lukwe was looking little like his usual natty self. His clothes were crumpled and dragged, his unshaven chin bluish, and his face haggard. But he stared with savage defiance at King of the Islands

"You've got me, hang you!" he snarled. "Are you going to chuck me over the side?"

"You deserve it, and more, you scoundrel," said Ken. "I've a right to swing you up to the end of the boom for stealing my ship."

"Have I asked you not to?" sneered Dandy Peter. "Get on with it as soon as you like. I've played a big game and lost. You seem fated to beat me, you swab! I'm asking nothing at your hands."

There was no fear in Dandy Peter. He had lost the desperate game he had played, but he was not the man to flinch from what was coming to him.

"You stole my ship to hunt for Grant Blake," said King of the Islands. "You've got some sort of a document giving some sort of a clue to him?"

Parsons laughed mockingly. "I had!" he answered. "You should have clapped the irons on me a little sooner! Do you reckon I didn't know what your game would be? I had the letter I found in the bottle, and as soon as I was left alone below, I tore it to fragments. Look for the fragments in the bilge, if you like." He laughed again. "I remember every word written on it, King of the Islands, but no eye will ever read it again. Chew on that, you swab!"

"Take me to Fiji, if you like," went on Parsons. "You've lost enough already, now waste weeks more of your time in handing me over to the law! They won't keep me long! I'll get loose again, and hunt for Grant Blake till I find him—I'll make a fortune, while you're drumming for copra and pearl-shell!"

Ken looked at him steadily. "I'm not taking you to Fiji," he said. "I've no weeks to waste on that. I'm dealing with you as you dealt with me. I'm going to maroon you."

Dandy Peter shrugged his shoulders.

"Get to it, then," he sneered. "You got off Maroon Island, where I reckoned you were fixed for keeps, and I reckon I'll get off wherever you strand me."

"You'll take your chance of that," said Ken, "the same chance that you left us, you swab." He glanced at Koko. "Search him for the paper—you findee little feller paper stop along feller Parsons."

"Search all you want!" grimed Dandy Peter. "It's gone! You'll never get a clue to Grant Blake, and never touch the reward."

Ken gave a contemptuous laugh.

"I'm not thinking of that," he answered. "If I had the paper, I should send it to Grant Blake's firm at Sydney, and give them the chance of hunting for him. That's all I wanted it for—I've no time for wild-goose chases all over the South Seas, myself. If you've destroyed the paper, you've done Grant Blake an ill turn, but you haven't hurt me, Peter Parsons."

Koko searched, but no paper came to light. It was clear that Dandy Peter had destroyed it—no loss to him, as he had pored over it so long and so often that every syllable was imprinted on his memory.

"Take him below!" said Ken. And Parsons was taken down to the cabin again, his irons clinking as he went. Ken glanced over the sea, and at the tall cedar masts, with their bellying sails. The Dawn was doing ten knots before a stiff breeze. There was a thoughtful shade on Ken's boyish brow. Thoughts had been working in his mind, since he had stepped once more on his own deck, that he had not yet uttered to his shipmate. He coloured as he caught Hudson looking at him.

"You've got something on your mind," said the mate of the Dawn. "What is it?"

"I've been thinking, Kit," said King of the Islands slowly. "It may seem a bit fatheaded, but I can't help thinking of that wretched swab we left behind us on Maroon Island. Black, white, or brown, whatever he is—savage brute as he was—he's a human being. We got off that desert island ourselves, Kit, and we ought to be thankful for our luck, hard as we've been hit by that piratical swab Parsons. I know we can't afford to waste time—but—but—"

"Ken, old man, you're talking rot!" said Hudson quietly. "We're ruined, or next door to it. We've got about enough left to pay the planter at Uta for the hire of his motor-boat, and nothing with which to renew our stores when we get through the lot Parsons took on board at Lola. We're bound to make Uta, but after that we owe it to ourselves not to lose a day—not an hour, Ken! We can't afford to play the fool."

Ken was silent.

"If it was a shipwrecked man, a castaway, I'd say let everything go and save him!" went on Hudson warmly. "But the wild man of Maroon Island—a yelling savage, who tried to knock our brains out with lumps of coral! Ken, are you mad?"

Hudson spoke hotly. Koko, looking on, did not speak, but the expression on his brown face told plainly that he agreed with Hudson's view. Koko had had more than enough of the wild man of Maroon Island.

"What are we to do with him if we get him?" demanded the mate of the Dawn. "Put him in irons like Dandy Peter? Only that will keep him from jumping at us, or jumping overboard. He's not only a savage, but crazy, too, I firmly believe."

Ken did not speak. He realised that Hudson had right and reason on his side. Yet the thought of the unhappy wretch, far away on that lonely speck of land in the solitary Pacific, haunted him.

"And getting him—what about that?" went on Hudson. "Weeks perhaps, wasted in getting back to the island, and how many weeks hunting him in the bush, and up and down the lava peak? Wash it out, Ken. We've got to think of ourselves—of saving what's left of our trade. It's pretty well gone to pot already."

"You're right, Kit!"

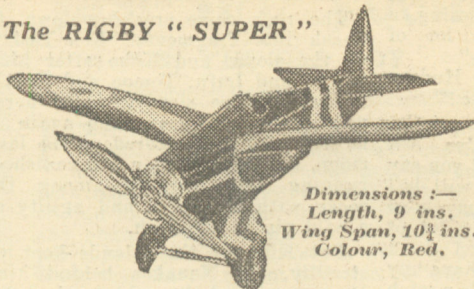
"I'm glad you can see it!" snorted Hudson.

"You're right," repeated Ken,

(Continued on next page)

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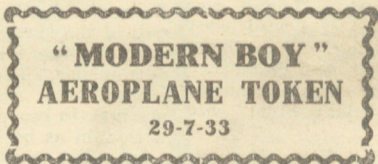
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HERE.

Ken King's Luck!

"and I'm afraid I'm a fool. But we've lost so much that losing a little more won't make a lot of difference. Kit, old man—"

"You're skipper!" broke in Hudson gruffly. "Have it as you like!"

"Cut that out," said Ken quietly. "We're partners, and you've lost nearly as much as I have. If you say wash it out, washed out it will be! But Kit, old man, give me my head in this—it won't make such a lot of difference in the long run. I don't feel that we shall deserve to have any luck if we leave that miserable wretch to end his days like a wild beast in the bush on Maroon Island."

Hudson was silent for a moment or two. Then his face broke into a grin.

"You're an ass, Ken! But it's like you—and I give in! Eastward-ho for Maroon Island and the wild man, and if he wrings your head off as soon as we get him on board, thank yourself."

Ken laughed. It was eastward-ho, with a fair wind, for the Dawn. Under two days, Uta was raised, and the motor-boat handed over and due payment made. After which the ketch stood on to the east, in lonely, un sailed seas, to save a wild savage who had imperilled the lives of the maroons on the solitary island. But it was like Ken King, and his shipmate, having got over his grouse, backed him up without a grumble. And Hudson had at least one consolation—Dandy Peter was going to be marooned on that lonely speck of land where he had marooned the shipmates—stern justice on the sea-thief.

The Wild Man Caught!

THE yell that rang through the bush on Maroon Island was more like that of a wild beast than a human being. Ken King started as he heard it, and grinned.

"Feller wild man sing out plenty too much, mouth belong him!" said the bo'sun.

"No likee hear that feller sing out, ear belong me," said Lompo, with a shiver. "No likee that black feller."

Crash! The lump of coral rock came whizzing, and rolled down the hot lava slope. Overhead, on a lava ridge, a wild figure stood against the sun and the blue sky—the wild man of Maroon Island! Tall, gaunt, bearded to the eyes and the ears, the shaggy beard covering his chest like a mat, his fierce eyes blazing, his brawny form clothed only in a bark kilt, he was a fearful vision. The Kanakas stared at him with awed, scared eyes.

Outside the reef, the Dawn rode the water. Kit Hudson and Danny remained in charge of the ketch. King of the Islands, with Koko and four Hiva-Oa boys, had landed to search for the wild man. They had been ashore for two days and nights—it was now the third day—and they had sighted the strange, wild denizen of Maroon Island at last. Now he stood on the lava ridge, up the hill, with another lump of jagged rock

grasped in his hand, prepared to hurl it.

"Look out!" snapped Ken.

The rock came crashing down, to smash into fragments. Ken rushed up the slope, and Koko after him, Lompo and Lufu, Tomoo and Kololu following more slowly. The fierce yell of the wild man rang again as he fled. They clambered on the lava ridge, but the wild man had vanished, running and jumping among the rocks with the speed and agility of a wild pig in the bush.

But King of the Islands kept on steadily, the Kanakas behind him. He remembered the wild man's den—the cave high up the lava slopes, which the shipmates had discovered during their sojourn on the island. It was likely that the hunted savage had taken refuge there. Ken stood at last in the narrow opening of the cave, scanning the dusky interior. Bones of animals and fish cumbered the floor of the cave, but he could see nothing else in the deep gloom. And then suddenly from the darkness within he caught a glitter of wild eyes, watching. The wild man was there—run down like a wolf in his lair.

"That feller stop!" said Ken quietly, though his heart was beating fast. "You feller look out, eye belong you."

"Yes, sar!" mumbled the uneasy Kanakas.

Ken, with his eyes fixed watchfully on the half-seen glittering orbs in the darkness within, called out:

"You feller along cave, us feller friend along you!"

But he had little hope of being understood. He had tried to talk to the wild man before, in his days on the island, without getting any answer but a savage howl. And that was the answer he received now. From the depths of the cave came the yell of the savage, echoing and booming. It was followed by a panther-like spring. The wild, shaggy figure leaped into view, in a desperate attempt to escape, and Ken grappled with him as he tore past.

Strong and sturdy as he was, the boy trader would have been tossed aside like a child. But the powerful grasp of Koko was added to his, and the savage was held. But the two of them were not too much for the wild man of Maroon Island. He struggled and tore and wrenched, and they rolled over with him on the lava rocks, Ken shouting to the Kanakas to help. Unwillingly, but obedient to their skipper's voice, the Hiva-Oa boys seized on the shaggy figure. But even in six pairs of hands, the herculean savage still struggled desperately. And Ken knew then what he had suspected before—the man was crazed. It was the strength of a madman that he was exerting.

In a panting heap they rolled on the rocks, but with all his insane efforts the wild man could not break loose. Tomoo grasped a loose lump of rock, and brought it down with a crash on the shaggy head of the wild man. It was a terrific blow, and it stunned the hapless denizen of Maroon Island. His frantic struggles ceased,

and he lay inert. Ken stood over him, panting, streaming with perspiration. He had hoped to secure the man unhurt, but he could not blame Tomoo for that blow.

The wild man was stunned and senseless. It was likely to be some time before he came to after that crashing blow. At least it gave the boy trader a chance of securing him, and conveying him to the ketch. Black man or white, mad or sane, he should be saved from the terrible solitude of the desert island. And if it was the solitude that had crazed him, there was no reason why he should not recover in friendly hands and with friendly care.

Ken scanned the senseless face with curious eyes. It was the first time that he had been able to examine the man closely. The skin was a coppery colour, as dark as a Polynesian's, but he could see that the features were not native. Most of the face was hidden by the wild, shaggy beard, and the head covered by a matted mop of hair. But Ken had little doubt that it was a white man who lay there—some shipwrecked white man, burnt brown by the tropic sun, crazed by solitude, sunk to the level of a savage animal in the bush.

And from the bottom of his heart he was glad that he had sailed back to Maroon Island, little as he could afford it, to save the unhappy wretch from death-in-life on that lonely speck of land.

The senseless man showed no sign of returning consciousness as he was carried through the thick bush down to the beach of the lagoon. There the whaleboat was waiting, and the wild man was lifted into it.

"Washy-washy along ketch!" said King of the Islands, and he steered the whaleboat out of the lagoon. Koko's keen eye was on the wild man, and a rope was ready to bind his limbs if it was needed. But the man did not stir.

The whaleboat pulled to the ketch, watched over the side by Kit Hudson, Danny, and Peter Parsons, who was in irons and allowed the run of the deck. There was a sneering grin on his face as he watched. From the talk of the shipmates, he had heard of the existence of the wild man, of whom he had known nothing when he landed them on Maroon Island long ago. And Dandy Peter did not conceal his contempt for a ruined and beggared trader who wasted time and stores in rescuing a black savage from a desert island.

"You've got him?" Kit Hudson hailed the boat as it came in.

"Ay, ay!" called back King of the Islands.

The boat pulled under the rail, and the wild man was handed up. He was still senseless. Dandy Peter stared at him curiously, and broke into a sardonic laugh.

"You're down to your uppers, and you've spent time and money to pick up that nigger, King of the Islands!" he jeered.

Ken made no reply.

"Kit, old man, I think you'll be as glad as I am that we came back

for him!" said Ken to Kit. "He's mad, poor chap, but he's a white man! Heaven knows how long he was on that island before we got there—years, perhaps—and it turned his brain! I dare say he was a tough character to begin with—he looks it! I'm glad we've saved him, though, and hang the trade!"

"Same here!" said Hudson. Then his eyes turned grimly on Peter Parsons. "We're leaving that swab here, Ken! He will be better off than we were—there will be no wild man on the island!"

Ken nodded. Dandy Peter's irons were unlocked, and the Kanakas dropped him into the boat. His handsome face was pale, but he would not ask for mercy. The whaleboat pulled shoreward, and landed him on the reef. Standing there against the blue sky, Parsons shook his fist after the boat as it pulled back to the Dawn. With despair in his heart, but defiance in his face, he stood watching the ketch, prepared to see her make sail, and abandon him to his fate, as he had relentlessly abandoned the shipmates long weeks ago. But the ketch did not sail.

An Amazing Discovery!

NIGHT had fallen on the Pacific. Maroon Island and its lava peak were blotted out from sight, though the ketch lay only a mile off the reef. King of the Islands had not yet made sail. Kit Hudson, who knew what was in his mind, did not urge him to do so. Dandy Peter, marooned on the speck of land where he had marooned the shipmates of the Dawn, deserved his fate, but the sight of the wild man—a white man crazed and sunk into savagery on that lonely island—gave the shipmates pause.

At the last pinch they could not resolve to do as they had been done by. And though they had said nothing on the subject, both knew that Parsons was to have only a night on the island, and that he would be taken off when the Dawn sailed.

Now King of the Islands was watching by the side of the wild man, lying in his own bunk in the little state-room. He had not come to his senses, although his eyes were slowly opening. Ken had done all for him that could be done. He had been washed and shaved by Danny, and where the shaggy beard had grown the skin now showed white, in startling contrast to the dark copper of the exposed part of his face. Looking at the unconscious man, Ken could not think that he had been a pleasant or likeable man at the best of times. Every feature was harsh, every line in the face hard. A hard-fisted man, and a hard driver of men, he looked, and there was little doubt that that was what he had been.

It was the solitude, the silence, and despair of the lonely island that had robbed him of his senses. But likely enough, it was the hard, grim character of the man that had caused his madness to take the form of fierce violence and enmity.

But that made little difference to Ken's pity for the poor wretch. He was watching the signs of returning

Just My Foolin'

By THE OLD BOY



I AM sorry to announce that Theophilus, my pet tortoise, is in hospital undergoing repairs to his chassis. He was coming down the garden path when he developed a speed wobble, and crashed into a geranium, fracturing three tonsils and cracking the genuine tortoise-shell case in which he lives. His last words were: "That's Shell, that was!" I am told that he will never be the same tortoise again.

YOU may guess how thrilled I was to discover that I had admirers in such an out-of-the-way corner of the globe as China. I received a letter this week which I perceived at once (with my quick sight) was written in Chinese.

I TOOK it to our Chinese expert and asked him to translate it. He studied it gravely, and said:

"This was written by someone who knows you well."

"Yes," I said, quite pleased. "What does it say?"

He coughed.

"Ahem! The translation is as follows: 'Honourable Sir, This Unworthy Slug, who presumes to address you, craves permission to say that the Inspired Blitherings from your August Pen have shed the refulgent light of day into the heart of This Worm and have made his Loathsome Existence exquisitely bright.—Signed, YU YUNG CHUMP.'"

I take that very kindly of Yu Yung Chump, and I hope that my writings will continue to make the Slug's life as bright as ever.

FORMERLY inspectors were always called "overseers." One night, Overseer John Diddlewiddy put up at a small country inn, called the Caterpillar's Arms, intending to stay until morning. At that inn was a notorious criminal who had served many sentences for

soda-water smuggling, pulling communication cords, walking on the grass, and other vile crimes.

HE recognised Diddlewiddy as the overseer who had put him in prison for six months for boot-snatching, so in the dead of night he sneaked into the overseer's room and stabbed him in the funny bone with a tuning-fork, causing the overseer to die of laughing. For many years afterwards the fearful phantom of the defunct overseer haunted the inn—as per pictorial masterpiece—scaring unwary visitors so much that they forgot to pay their bills when they left.

SOON "Old Overseer Diddlewiddy, the Inn Spectre," became a byword in the country—or, rather, six bywords—and gradually all other overseers were nicknamed "Inn Spectres." From that form the word slowly passed into the "inspector" we know to-day!



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consciousness. Koko was at hand in the cabin. If the wild man awakened violent, he had to be secured. Ken watched the eyes as they slowly opened, and saw in them a dazed stare, and not the mad glitter he had feared to see. He wondered whether the shock of that crashing blow on the head had worked some change in the man. He moved a little nearer.

The dazed eyes fixed on him. But the man made no movement. He seemed weak—strangely in contrast to the herculean strength he had dis-

played in his last struggle. His breathing was low and steady. He gazed up at Ken in silence.

"You're among friends here." King of the Islands spoke in a soothing voice. Kit came down from the deck, and stood looking in at the doorway, a glance telling him that there was no violence to be feared now. "Can you understand me?"

The man nodded feebly. "You speak English?" Ken placed water to the man's lips, and he drank. Then he made an attempt to speak.

Ken King's Luck!

The words came husky and broken, like those of a man who had almost forgotten the use of his voice.

"Who are you?" he asked.

"I'm called King of the Islands!" answered Ken.

A gleam of intelligence showed in the sunken eyes. The man had heard of the boy trader of Lalinge, yet in the days on Maroon Island he had attacked Ken more than once, knowing nothing of him in his blind hostility. It was proof that the time of unreason had passed!

"You're on my ketch, the Dawn," said Ken. "We've taken you off an island. You understand?"

"Heavens!" breathed the man in the bunk. "The solitude—the silence—months and months—it may be years since she went down in the typhoon! How many times have I feared that my brain would go—!" He shuddered. Obviously he remembered nothing of the immediate past. "Did you find the message?" he added suddenly.

"The message?" For a moment Ken feared that the hapless man's mind was wandering again.

"Yes! Did you find it?"

"No," said Ken soothingly. "But we found you, shipmate. A rascal marooned us on the island. We got away, and came back for you."

"You'd been hunting for me?" asked the man, his voice still slow and cracked and husky, but gathering strength. "You heard that I'd been cast away, and were hunting for me? Well, I'll reward you!"

King of the Islands smiled. Hudson, in the doorway, grinned. The wretched figure in the bunk did not look like rewarding anybody. The shipmates had no doubt that he was a penniless castaway, and that they would have to provide him with clothes to land from the ketch when they reached a port.

"You know who I am?" he snapped. "You don't know? You say you came to the island for me—to pick me up! You did that without knowing—"

"How should we know?" said Ken, smiling. "It was enough for us that you were a shipwrecked castaway. We'll fix you up somehow to go ashore when we make Lalinge—and put something in your pocket."

"You fool!" exclaimed the man, and Ken stared at that unexpected answer. The man raised himself on his elbow.

"You don't know who you've picked up!" he rasped. "But I'll make it worth your while to have taken the trouble. If you're making Lalinge, I reckon there's some there that will know me. You'll get the reward I promised in my message. Don't stare at me, man! I'm not wandering! A few days after I was thrown on that horrible island, I found an empty bottle on the beach, and I wrote a message and sent it afloat in the bottle. I reckon it's never been found, but what I said in it holds good. I'll reward the man who took me off the island. What you've done will be worth five hundred pounds to you!"

"We could do with it," said

Hudson, with a grin. "Who may you be when you're at home, my man? Some bloated millionaire?"

The man in the bunk turned his grim face to Ken.

"How long have I been on that infernal island?" he asked.

"How should I know?" asked Ken, in astonishment.

"I reckon you should know! I lost count of time—but I suppose you haven't! How long is it since the Mindanao went down?" snapped the man.

"The Mindanao?" Ken stuttered.

"You've heard of her, I suppose?" rasped the rescued man. "She was down from Honolulu to Sydney when the typhoon struck her east of the Marshalls. How long ago?"

Ken gazed at him. Kit Hudson caught his breath. The man was a survivor of the Mindanao! Startling thoughts leaped into their minds. It seemed impossible, and yet the man had spoken of committing a message to the sea in a bottle. And it was from a message in a bottle floating in the sea that Dandy Peter had found a clue to Grant Blake! Was it possible? The shipmates gazed at him, almost dumbfounded at the thought.

"Can't you answer?" growled the man.

"More than a year ago," said Ken.

"Who are you? Tell me your name!"

"Grant Blake!" came the reply.

"My sainted Sam!" yelled King of the Islands, and jumped to his feet. The wild man of Maroon Island was Grant Blake! Dandy Peter had been searching westward along the Marshalls and the Gilberts, and it was to the eastward that the sole survivor of the Mindanao had drifted on a spar. If Dandy Peter had only known it, the castaway he sought was on the very island where he had marooned the shipmates of the Dawn!

"Grant Blake!" stuttered Hudson.

"Ken, old man, kick me—kick me from the taffrail to the bowsprit and back again! You win, old man! I thought you a fool for coming back to pick up a black savage in the bush—and we've picked up a bloated millionaire—and five thousand pounds!"

Grant Blake, from the bunk, stared at him grimly. Of his mad, wild life in the bush on Maroon Island he remembered nothing. Months were missed from his life, and he had taken it up again at the point where he remembered. And he was, as the shipmates easily saw, worthy of his reputation as the grimmest, hardest-fisted man in the Pacific.

"Go slow, my man!" he said, with a jeer in his voice. "I said five hundred pounds, and good pay, too, for picking up a castaway and giving him a passage on your packet."

Hudson laughed.

"You can say what you like, Grant Blake, and keep your five hundred pounds, and spend it on cigarettes!" he said. "Nobody wants you to pay that, Mr. Blake. For a year past there's been a reward of five thousand pounds offered by Grant Blake & Co., shippers, of Sydney, Australia, for any man who found you alive and picked you up. I reckon they never fancied the reward would be earned;

but we've earned it, Mr. Blake, and we're going to handle it. And you can put that in your pipe and smoke it, Mr. Millionaire of Sydney!" And Hudson turned away and went back whistling to the deck.

"The reward is offered by your firm, Mr. Blake," explained Ken. "We shall claim it, of course. We fancied we were rescuing a castaway without a bean, and this is rather a surprise! And we shan't charge you anything for your passage on the Dawn—if that's any comfort to you!"

Grant Blake grunted.

DANDY PETER came back in the whaleboat at sunrise, and the ketch made sail from Maroon Island. The shipmates had already relented towards the sea-scoundrel who had harmed them so much, but since the amazing discovery that the wild man of Maroon Island was Grant Blake, the Sydney millionaire, they felt that they could forgive him everything. Wickedness, as often happens, had worked out to good in the end. But for Dandy Peter's rascality, the shipmates would never have seen Maroon Island and been able to rescue the wild man.

If Parsons needed punishment, he had it during the long days of that run to Lalinge. He learned with utter amazement that the rescued castaway of Maroon Island was the man he had sought in the wrong quarter, and Dandy Peter tasted the full bitterness of defeat and disappointment. At the first white man's port the ketch raised, he was put ashore, and the shipmates were glad enough to be done with him. Then the ketch sailed on to Lalinge, with a joyous crew on board.

Grant Blake was fully recovered by the time the Dawn ran into the lagoon at Lalinge. He was not a pleasant passenger. The shipmates were glad that they had saved him, for his sake and their own; but they could not like him, and when he went ashore they were almost as glad to see the last of him as of Dandy Peter.

It was a joy-day for the shipmates when the reward came through the Pacific Company's agent at Lalinge. They had lost almost everything, but the loss was repaid twice over by the reward for the rescue of the Sydney millionaire. And every man on the ketch was given solid reasons for sharing in their satisfaction.

"Money to burn now!" said Kit Hudson, with a chuckle. "What about going in for a gas engine on the Dawn, old bean, eh?"

King of the Islands laughed and shook his head. Wind-jamming was his trade, and he was sticking to wind-jamming!

* Good-bye and Good Luck, Ken *
* King—till we meet again in *
* MODERN BOY! And until you *
* come back we'll thrill to the *
* adventures of CRACKER- *
* JACK CHARLIE—driver of the *
* Six-Dog Express, the smartest *
* husky team in all the Yukon! *
* The first of these magnificent *
* Yukon stories appears NEXT *
* SATURDAY! *
