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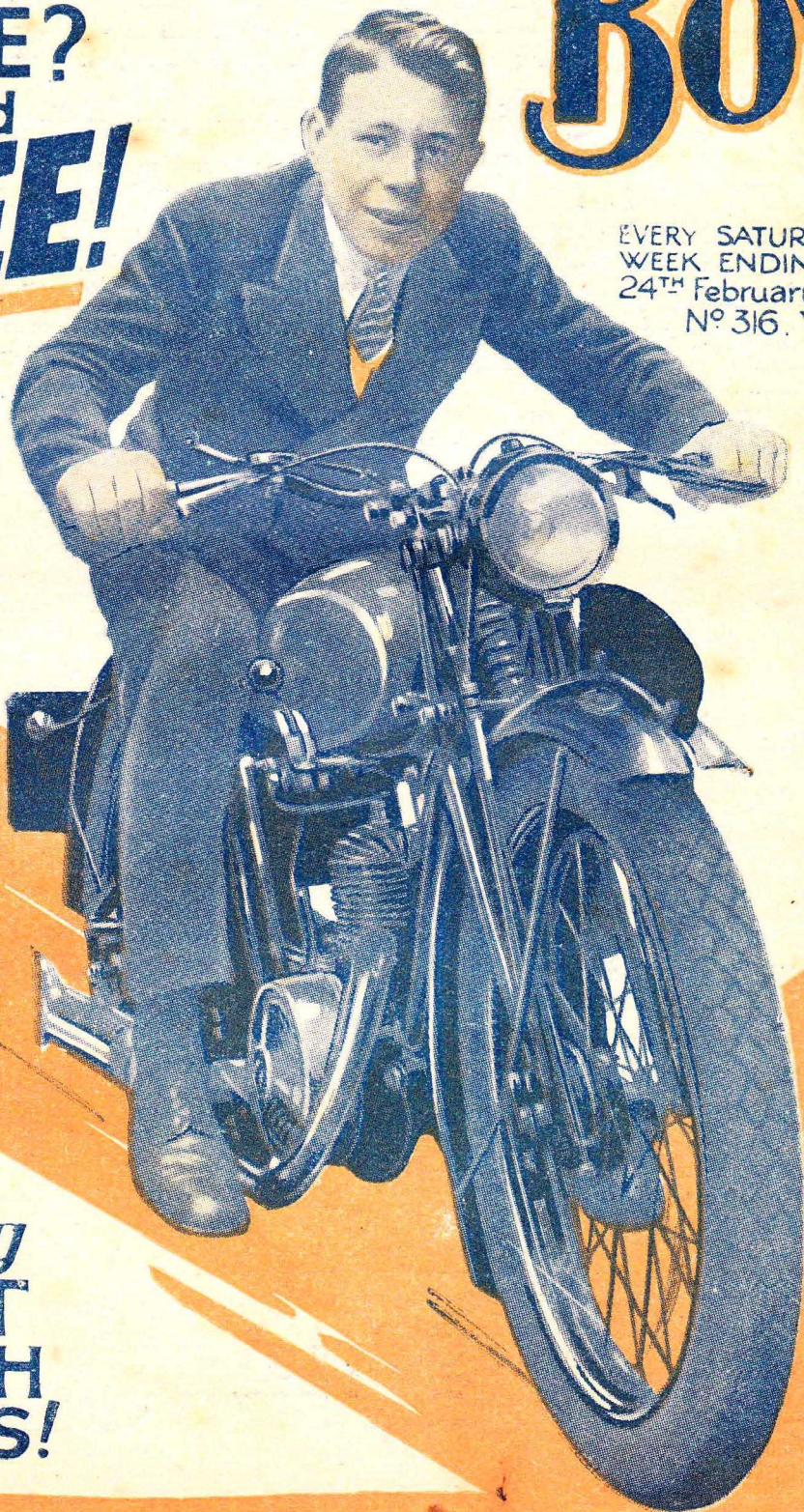
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See  
Inside

# The **MODERN BOY**

2<sup>d</sup>

EVERY SATURDAY  
WEEK ENDING  
24<sup>th</sup> February, 1934.  
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*And  
Topping*  
**WRIST  
WATCH  
PRIZES!**





## Death-Trap of the South Seas!

"Never!" he screamed. "Never in existence shall such state of affair eventuate. So soon as hearing is possibility, this Mr. Jam will bawl with excessive loudness and pertinacity to persons on Tunaviva, and sudden fire from rifle will terminate your obnoxious life."

Hudson did not answer. He had neither time nor patience to waste on Mr. Jam.

"You feller boy!" he rapped to the crew. "You look find lawyer-cane, plenty too quick!"

One of the boys found a lawyer-cane in a very few seconds. Hudson pointed to the fat trader.

"You beat that feller Jam, along lawyer-cane, plenty strong-feller beating!" he snapped.

The Easter boy promptly grasped the fat trader and rolled him over, yelling and shrieking in anticipation.

Down came the thick, flexible lawyer-cane on the fat carcass of Mr. Jam, with a lash that rang like a shot. The Easter boy's arm was strong and sinewy, and he laid it on strong as Hudson directed.

Hudson looked on grimly. The fat man wriggled like a worm, and howled for mercy. But blow after blow descended with all the force of a strong brown arm. Not till twenty lashes had been given did the mate of the Dawn sign to the Easter boy to cease. Mr. Jam, gasping and panting for breath, wriggled at his feet.

"Now, you scum!" said Hudson. "Is that lesson enough, or do you want another?"

"More than sufficiency of instruction has been imparted to this Mr. Jam!" groaned the fat trader, all resistance thrashed out of him.

"Chew on this!" said Hudson savagely. "My shipmate's in the hands of your gang on Tunaviva. I'm going to save him if I can. But if I've lost him, I'll leave not a man alive on Tunaviva. And you, you scum, will go first. If you put any value on your life, play up, and hope that I shall get through!"

"Obedience to order will be prompt and efficacious!" moaned the fat man. "This Mr. Jam will be humble and obedient servant and yours truly." He lay groaning, while the lugger beat on her way down to the reef passage.

And when the time came for Hudson to carry out his plan—the only way by which he could run the reef of Tunaviva and live—the ropes were cast off the limbs of Mr. Jam, and he rose to his feet, still groaning.

He was free—free to bring sudden death on the man who had mastered him. But no such thought was in the fat man's mind. Deadly fear was in the very marrow of his bones, and he took his orders from the mate of the Dawn like a lamb!

### Escape Cut Off!

**K**OKO, the Kanaka boatswain of Ken King's trading ketch, the Dawn, drew a deep breath as he stood on deck staring towards a ledge

high up on the cliff guarding the reef passage of Tunaviva. Strange things had been happening on the ledge. Koko had seen his white master, King of the Islands, his hands bound, led out on to the ledge from a cavern, and knew that Pinto, the Filipino in charge of Mr. Jam's Santa Cruz blacks, was about to carry out his threat and kill Ken King unless he, Koko, surrendered the Dawn.

Suddenly, a black boy had shouted excitedly from the top of the cliff, and Pinto had climbed up to him and started signalling. Looking seawards, Koko had spotted a lugger beating down to the island. Turning his eyes to the ledge again, he was just in time to see Ken King make a desperate rush towards the cavern, the blacks yelling after him.

To the five Hiva-Oa boys who formed the crew of the Dawn, Ken's action was incomprehensible. He was rushing back to the cavern which was his prison! Why, they did not know. But Koko recalled that when Pinto had sent off a messenger to the Dawn, the boat had come from, and disappeared into, a water-channel under the cliff.

And later the messenger had appeared on the ledge. Obviously, there must be some interior way up the cliff—some natural fissure that communicated with the cavern high above—and Koko guessed that Ken meant to escape that way when he dashed to the cavern.

For a time the brown boatswain stood deep in thought, then his mind was made up, his plans laid. He secured his bush-knife to his belt, and turned to the Hiva-Oa boys.

"You feller boy, you stop along ketch," he ordered. "S'pose feller belong Tunaviva comey, you shoot along gun, plenty too much altogether. S'pose Tunaviva feller comey on board this feller ketch, me comey back, cut off head belong you, all same Solomon Island boy!"

Without waiting for an answer, Koko dropped over the rail into the lagoon and swam. The Hiva-Oa boys watched him curiously as he struck out with long, powerful strokes for the beach at the foot of the cliff.

"Tinkee brain belong him no walk about any more," remarked Lompo. "That feller go finish!"

"He go finish, along gun belong Tunaviva feller!" said Danny the cooky-boy. Tomoo and Kolulo and Lufu nodded assent. To the Kanaka crew it seemed assured that Koko had gone deliberately to share the fate of his white master.

Little cared the faithful Koko if death awaited him. He asked nothing better than to share the fate of his white master. But the chance he was taking was not so desperate as the Hiva-Oa boys deemed. Pinto had finished his signalling, and was clambering down from the summit of the cliff to the rock-terrace. He had no eyes for the ketch for the moment, and the blacks had all rushed into the cavern after the fleeing boy trader.

Not one hostile eye was on Koko as he cleft the shining surface of the lagoon with swift strokes.

And his swiftness was almost that

of the lightning flash. A tiger-shark darting on a school of mullet was hardly so rapid as the boatswain of the Dawn. Like every South Sea Islander, Koko was as much at home in the water as on the land, and his strength was immense. Every ounce of it was put into that desperate swim, and it seemed as if only moments had elapsed when Koko vanished from the watching eyes on the ketch into the water-channel that ran under the cliff.

On the rock-terrace, Pinto, surprised and enraged to find his prisoner and crew gone, went shouting into the cavern in quest of them.

Meanwhile, Koko found himself in the channel into which the messenger's canoe had gone. In the sudden change from bright sunshine to deep dusk, the boatswain of the Dawn peered round him. What he would find there he neither knew nor cared—he was there to seek his white master, and no peril would stop him!

The hollow of the cliff echoed with shouting voices, and dim forms started up in the dark on all sides. A swimmer touched Koko's arm, and his hand went to his bush-knife. But he did not draw the weapon, as the half-seen black boy panted in his ear: "You see that white feller, eye belong you?"

Koko's heart throbbed. The "white feller" for whom the blacks were searching could only be King of the Islands. Koko had guessed correctly—it was for this dark den that Ken had been making when he fled to the cavern. And the black boy's question told that the fugitive boy trader had reached the water-channel under the cliff and had not been recaptured.

Koko did not answer. The Santa Cruz boy, in the deep dusk, took him for one of the Tunaviva crew; but his voice might have betrayed him. He swam on up the dark channel. The Santa Cruz boy followed, and caught at his arm again. All he could see of Koko in the shadows was that he was a native, but some suspicion seemed to have flashed into his mind. His grasp closed hard on Koko's brown arm.

"You feller, you speak, mouth belong you!" he panted. "Me no savvy—"

He said no more. Koko's fist, clenched like a lump of iron, struck in the darkness. The sudden blow crashed into the black face, and the Santa Cruz boy, with a gurgle, went under the water. Whether he came up again mattered little to Koko. He did not see or hear him again, and gave him no further thought.

Teeth set, Koko swam on into darkness. Dimly he made out the flitting figures of the blacks, and the shapes of boats and canoes drawn up on the rocky bank of the subterranean channel. The excited yelling of the blacks told of whom they were in search, and told also that they had not yet found him.

Somewhere in that den of darkness and death was Koko's white master, and Koko was there to find him. Six or seven of the blacks were behind him as he swam, cutting off his

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## Death-Trap of the South Seas!

(Continued from page 22)

escape to the lagoon. But Koko was not thinking of escape.

Suddenly, from the darkness came the ruddy glare of a lighted torch, and the voice of the white man of Tunaviva. Pinto, torch in hand, was descending the rock stairway in the interior of the cliff. His voice, booming echoes in the honeycombed cliff, came to the ears of the boatswain of the Dawn:

"You feller boy! You catch so that white feller King of the Islands plenty too quick! S'pose that white feller no stop, me killy you plenty too much, along lawyer-cane—along tail belong sting-ray!"

The voice of the man from Mindanao rang with savage rage. The Santa Cruz boys shouted back, and the Filipino yelled again, the light of his torch flaring nearer.

"You feller takee boat, you stop along boat, you see that white feller King of the Islands no makee along lagoon, you savvy!"

Koko heard a boat slide into the channel from the rocks. The fuzzy minds of the blacks had not thought of guarding the outlet to the lagoon, but they were prompt to obey the order of the man from Mindanao. The boat, with three or four blacks in it, almost blocked the outlet of the water-channel, which was scarcely more than wide enough for a boat to pass.

Escape was doubly cut off now; but what dismayed Koko was the nearer approach of the torch in the hand of the man descending into the lower cavern. If he did not find his white master before the flare of the torch revealed him—

To call aloud was to betray his own presence. But there was no other resource left, and Koko shouted:

"White master! King of the Islands! S'pose you hear this feller Koko, ear belong you, you sing out along this feller!"

A startled cry answered from the darkness, followed by a roar of rage from the white man of Tunaviva and the ring of a revolver. A bullet splashed into the water hardly a foot from Koko's head.

### Koko to the Rescue!

**K**ING OF THE ISLANDS could scarcely believe his ears as he heard the shout from the boatswain of the Dawn. There had been a hope—a faint hope—in his heart that Koko might, somehow, contrive to help him if he eluded immediate recapture. But that hope had been very faint indeed.

In the darkness of the water-cave the boy trader was standing close under a bulging rock, sunk to the neck—escaping, so far, the searching eyes of the blacks, but with little chance of ultimate escape. As he caught the ruddy dancing glare of the torch from the rock stairway there was despair in his heart. With his hands free he might have swum under water and taken a desperate

chance of getting out of that den of death. But with his wrists bound behind him he had no chance.

Crouching there in the blackness, he was thinking of Koko, who would have died to save him. And then, ringing through the gloom, came the deep voice of the boatswain of the Dawn, bringing hope and joy to his heart. Koko was there in the dark waters under the towering cliff—not a dozen feet from him, though unseen! The boy trader called back as the shot from Pinto's revolver rang out.

"Koko! Here! Koko!" shouted King of the Islands. "You hear, you feller Koko, ear belong you!"

"Me hear, sar!" came back Koko's joyous shout; and the giant Kanaka, heedless of the bullet that splashed by his brawny shoulder, swam and groped on in the darkness in the direction of the voice.

"This way!" panted Ken, as he caught a gleam of Koko's eyes in the gloom. "Quick! A knife—I'm bound!"

"Big feller knife stop along this feller, sar!" Koko reached him, and his brown hands groped over the boy trader until they found the bound wrists under the water. A moment more and the razor-edge of the bush-knife was drawn across the cords, freeing King of the Islands.

Ken panted with relief as he felt his hands loose. Now he could strike for life and liberty!

The glare of the torch danced red on the subterranean water. Pinto was on the rocky bank now, tramping along the water-cave to the outlet. His chief thought was to cut off Ken's escape to the lagoon. In the glare of the torch they could see him, though he could not see them. He passed the torch to Ko'oo in the boat, and the black boy held it up while Pinto scanned the channel, revolver in hand.

He knew now that a Kanaka from the ketch had joined King of the Islands, and he had no doubt that it was Koko, the brown-skinned giant who had defeated his attack on the Dawn. No other native in the crew was likely to have made so desperate a venture. He searched the shadows for the dark head of Koko, ready to send a bullet crashing through his brain at sight of him. But Koko and his master were far up the channel in the darkness, and he could not see them.

"Two feller stop along this place!" snarled the man from Mindanao. "S'pose you see that feller, eye belong you, you kill-dead that feller along spear, all same fish along lagoon."

"Kill um plenty too much, sar!" answered Ko'oo. "No see that feller, sar, eye belong me!"

"Watch for them!" snarled Pinto. "You keep eye belong you plenty too much wide open. S'pose that feller run along lagoon, back belong you plenty kill along tail belong sting-ray!"

The blacks in the boat shrank from his savage looks. Probably Pinto's native crew had already experienced a taste of the sting-ray

tail on their backs. There was no doubt that they would watch keenly for the escaping prisoner and the Kanaka who had come to his aid, and spear them like fishes if they approached the outlet.

Three or four brawny hands held the broad-bladed spears ready, while Ko'oo held up the torch. Pinto shouted to Tokoloo to fetch another torch from the upper cavern, and the black boy went pattering up the rock stairs.

King of the Islands shut his teeth hard. Five or ten minutes, perhaps, before Tokoloo came back with light, and then the water-cave would be searched from end to end! Escape was cut off. To approach the boat where the torch glared was instant death or capture. To clamber out of the water was to run into the enemy scattered along the rocky bank—two men against a dozen—Koko's bush-knife against a crowd of spears, knives, and a white man's revolver.

**B**UT Ken's mind was working actively. He surmised that the water-channel had other outlets besides the one on the lagoon—perhaps on the reef passage—perhaps on the seaward side of the basalt cliff. If that surmise was well founded, there was a chance yet. He could swim now his limbs were free. He breathed a whisper to the Kanaka at his side.

"Come, Koko!" And he swam deeper into the blackness. Without even thinking of questioning his white master, Koko swam with him. Faint as was the sound they made, it reached a keen ear, and there was a shout from a Santa Cruz boy somewhere in the darkness.

Something whizzed in the shadows and splashed in the water. It was a spear, and it dropped hardly a yard from the swimmers.

A minute later, hard rock barred the way of the swimmers. They had reached the end of the water-channel in the base of the cliff!

Ken gritted his teeth. If there was another channel—another outlet—it branched off somewhere in the darkness. Groping desperately round, he felt only hard rock. Already a glimmer on the rock stairway told that Tokoloo was returning with a light. And some of the blacks, knowing now where they were, were swimming after them, others pattering on the bank.

The bush-knife was in Koko's hand, a deadly light in his eyes. At close quarters, the life of the giant Kanaka would be sold very dearly.

To remain in the water now was to be surrounded—to be picked off by Pinto's revolver as soon as the torch gleamed on their heads. The last desperate chance had to be taken, and Ken clambered on the rocky bank, followed by the boatswain.

By a miracle of luck, they might yet escape up the rock stairway to the upper cavern. But only too well King of the Islands knew that it needed little short of a miracle. It was the only chance left.

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## Death-Trap of the South Seas!

(Continued from page 24)

There was a thud in the darkness as the boy trader ran into a groping black man. Hands fastened on him instantly, and he was thrown down before he could resist, a brawny Santa Cruz boy on top of him, yelling to the rest. There was a flash of steel in the dark—a choking cry from the black. Koko had been swift with the bush-knife, and a dead man rolled on the rocks as Ken staggered up.

Next moment five or six shadowy forms started up in the darkness, and the bush-knife swept in a circle. With yells and screams, the Santa Cruz boys leaped back from the slashing steel. Tokoloo was at hand now with his torch. Ruddy light glimmered on the scene, and the crack of the Filipino's revolver rang through the hollows of the cliff. Ken felt the sting of a bullet grazing his neck.

Swinging the heavy bush-knife, Koko rushed on, the boy trader at his heels. The blacks broke before them, but closed behind, and Pinto was with them now, his six-shooter spitting fire. Then, with a suddenness that was like the shifting of a scene in a dream, the giant Kanaka vanished from King of the Islands' sight as if the floor of the cavern had opened and swallowed him!

There was a breathless cry—a thud deep down. Ken King halted on the

very edge of a deep fissure in the rugged rock floor—a chasm that the blacks knew, and avoided even in the dark—into which Koko had stepped unknowingly. Crack! came again from the Filipino's revolver, the bullet humming by Ken's ear as he stopped on the rocky verge.

"Koko!" panted King of the Islands.

A cry from below answered him.

"This feller Koko stop! White master run along cave!" The brave Kanaka was thinking only of his master.

Ken gave a desperate glance round. The outstretched hands of the blacks were hardly a yard behind him, and the torchlight danced on him, revealing him to the Filipino, who was taking aim again; but he could leap the fissure—it was barely six feet across. But he did not think of doing it.

Koko had come to his rescue, counting his life as nothing, and Ken could not think of deserting him in that fearful extremity. It was sink or swim together for the skipper and boatswain of the Dawn.

For a split second King of the Islands hesitated, while the blacks rushed on him, and the man from Mindanao pulled the trigger again. Then he swung down into the unknown depths, holding by his hands for a fraction of a second, then falling into the darkness. The Filipino's bullet whizzed past the spot where he had stood.

A dozen feet below the level of the rugged floor of the cave Ken struck the bottom of the fissure with his feet, and rolled over. In the blackness, he felt the Kanaka at his side, and heard his voice:

"Oh, sar, too much good you run along cave—no good you stop along this feller Koko! You go finish along this feller!"

"Sink or swim together!" panted King of the Islands.

The flare of torchlight above struck his eyes as Tokoloo held the torch over the chasm and black faces and rolling eyes peered down. The dusky face of the Filipino looked down at them, his revolver glinting in the light. Koko grasped the dazed boy trader by the arm and dragged him under the cover of the bulging side of the fissure, where the rock overhung and sheltered them. Twice the revolver spat, and the lead crashed a foot from them as they hugged the rock.

"Follow us, you scum!" shouted King of the Islands. He would have given much to get his hands on the dusky scoundrel from the Philippines. But the Filipino was not likely to follow; neither were the blacks. It was not necessary. There was no escape from the pit of darkness into which the skipper and boatswain of the Dawn had fallen—they were trapped! In answer to Ken's challenge there came a mocking laugh from the man of Tunaviva.

"You are safe there, senor—you and your nigger! Remain there till you perish of hunger! Your ketch is at my mercy now—I need your aid no

longer, senor! In an hour from now I shall have taken your ketch or sunk her to the bottom of the lagoon!"

King of the Islands clenched his hands with rage. It was true. Without Koko on board, the ketch was at the mercy of the secret men of Tunaviva. If the Hiva-Oa boys resisted, their resistance would not trouble the Filipino long. He heard Pinto's voice again, rapping out orders to the blacks.

"You feller Ko'oo, you feller Tokoloo, you stop along this place, spear along hand belong you! You see that white feller, that black feller, you kill-dead that feller altogether! You other feller boy, you follow feller white master along boat!" And there was a trampling and pattering of feet on the rocks as the Santa Cruz crew followed Pinto.

King of the Islands leaned on the rugged rock, despair in his heart. Overhead danced the torchlight as Ko'oo and Tokoloo watched, spear in hand, for any desperate attempt to climb out of the chasm. King of the Islands and his boatswain were trapped like wild pigs in a bush-pit—trapped to their death—and the man of Tunaviva and his black crew were already pulling out to capture the ketch.

Koko sensed his white master's despair, and determined to make a last attempt to save him. Death had no terrors for him, but the thought that soon his beloved white master would be dead drove him fighting mad.

With a snarl, he sprang up at the lip of the pit, seeking to gain a hold with his fingers and clamber out. But, high as he sprang, his clutching fingers fell short of the lip. Even had they gained a hold, Koko would never have been able to draw himself out of the pit—the guards would have speared him before that could happen. As it was, Ko'oo and Tokoloo jabbed at his leaping figure, just missing him in the wavering torchlight.

"You black feller, you go finish along you no stop along that place!" warned Ko'oo. "White master say kill dead along you no stop. Me kill dead along he say!"

Ken King laid a restraining hand on Koko's heaving shoulders.

"It's no good, old coffee-bean," he said, a note of despair in his voice. "They've got the whup-hand of us—there's no escape from this death-trap!"

It was the end of all things for the boy trader of the Pacific. The secret men of Tunaviva had won!

And yet, could he but have known it, in those very moments the lugger, with Kit Hudson in command of her, was running down to the reef passage. The mate of the Dawn was coming!



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