

The MODERN BOY

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"James"
MOTOR CYCLE
and
WRIST WATCHES
TO BE
WON!

BOY

2^d





Koko dragged with all his might on the rope, and Ken was drawn out of the pit.

Comrades of the Ketch!

Kit Hudson is "mad" enough with his enemies to set the South Seas alight if he fails to rescue his shipmate Ken King—KING OF THE ISLANDS—alive!

By CHARLES HAMILTON

Lurking Sharks!

SAILING across the lagoon of Tunaviva, the Mangareva lugger ran alongside the anchored ketch Dawn, and Kit Hudson leaped lightly from the lugger to the deck of the ketch, a rope in his left hand to make the lugger fast, his revolver in his right.

Lialo, the Santa Cruz boy who had been left in charge of the ketch when Pinto, the white man of Tunaviva, and his crew had captured it, stared at Hudson, dumbfounded, his spear sagging in his hand. He was one of the blacks who had hurled the mate of the Dawn into the sea from the cliffs guarding the entrance to the lagoon, and his eyes bulged at sight of the man who should have been drowned.

It was well for him that his terrified amazement prevented him from attempting to use his weapon, for Hudson's finger was on the trigger of his revolver, and he would have shot the black man at the first movement. Hudson had returned to Tunaviva to rescue his shipmate and skipper, King of the Islands, who had been taken prisoner by Pinto and his blacks, and would not allow any man

to stand now between him and his purpose!

"You feller ooy, you drop spear belong you, along deck!" rapped Hudson, making a gesture with his revolver.

The spear clanged on the teak deck of the Dawn, and Lialo backed away from the threatening revolver. Then, with a sudden spring, he leaped into the lagoon and swam. Kit Hudson heeded him no further. His glance went back to the lugger alongside.

"You Easter feller, you make fast along ketch!" he snapped. The lug-sail dropped; the Mangareva craft floated beside the anchored Dawn, and the Easter Island boys made her fast.

Kit Hudson had been lucky. When the shipmates' ketch, the Dawn, had put in at Tunaviva, a supposedly uninhabited island in the wastes of the Pacific, to give Billy the Beachcomber a chance to search for precious pink coral he believed was to be found there, they had discovered that Mr. Jam, a half-caste dealer in false pearls, had some secret business there, and they had fallen foul of Pinto and the blacks Mr. Jam had left in charge.

Ken King and Billy had been captured, and Kit thrown into the sea.

He had been on the point of drowning when the lugger had come along in the night, and he had captured it. Mr. Jam and three Easter Islanders were aboard, and the lugger was making for Tunaviva.

Kit had compelled the half-caste to signal to his men on the island, and then to steer the lugger into the lagoon whilst he himself remained hidden. Had Kit shown himself he would have been shot down by men on the cliffs guarding the lagoon. As it was, Pinto and some of his men had come out to tow the lugger in, but Mr. Jam had not dared to reveal Hudson's presence on board. Not until the lugger was safely in the lagoon had Kit revealed himself, and now he was master of the Dawn!

Mr. Jam stood mopping his brow. His return to Tunaviva had been made in circumstances of which he had never dreamed. Had Kit Hudson perished when he was swept out to sea on the tide, the game would have been in Mr. Jam's hands—King of the Islands doomed, his ship captured, his crew taken. The secret of Tunaviva—whatever that strange secret was—would have been safe. But now—

Comrades of the Ketch!

"Step on the ketch!" Hudson shouted to him. "Look lively!"

The fat man clambered on the Dawn, his black eyes burning with hate. He gave a squeal of fear as the muzzle of the revolver was jammed into his olive face.

"Venerable sir, spare the worthless and unimportant life of this miserable Mr. Jam!" he squealed, in his strange English.

"Stand to the mast, you swab!" ordered the mate of the Dawn.

The fat man backed to the mizzen, and Hudson roped him to it. The pearl-trader was safe now, and Hudson could turn his attention to other matters. He thrust the revolver into his belt, caught up a rifle, hastily examined it, and stepped to the rail. His eyes swept over the sunny lagoon.

Near the reef passage was Pinto's boat. It was pulling towards the beach near the base of the basaltic cliff. Hudson's glance followed it, shot ahead of it, and he discerned Pinto the Filipino's object at once. The Dawn's whaleboat was beached there, and on the sand stood the Hiva-Oa crew in an amazed group, staring towards the ships. They had landed in obedience to the order of Pinto, who had captured the Dawn just as the lugger got to the reef passage. Then came the sudden turn of affairs, and they stood spell-bound, staring. Left to themselves, the five Hiva-Oa boys would doubtless have run the whaleboat out again and pulled back to the Dawn now that they saw Kit Hudson on board. But Pinto's boat was pulling to intercept them.

The mate of the Dawn took in the situation at a glance. He rested his rifle on the rail, took careful aim, and pitched a bullet at the boat. The range was long, but he saw the wide-brimmed hat spin on the Filipino's head. Pinto started up, stared round, yelled to his crew to pull, and the boat shot towards the beach. Twice again Hudson fired, but the distance and the rapid motion of the boat defeated him, and the lead merely knocked up splashes of water over the panting crew.

The boat bumped on the sand, and Pinto leaped ashore. Trampling in the shallows, the blacks dragged the boat up the beach. Hudson gritted his teeth as he watched. Pinto, revolver in hand, drove the Hiva-Oa boys before him, and Lompo and Lufu, Kolulu and Tomoo and Danny disappeared among the rocks, driven like sheep. The black crew followed them. Pinto turned to loose off a futile shot at the Dawn, then disappeared after them.

HUDSON knew they were gone by the hidden path up the steep cliff to the cave which was their den. His captain and crew were prisoners in the enemy's hands, and he alone remained to carry on the unequal conflict. But he did not shrink from it. So long as daylight lasted, Pinto and his crew dared not

attack him, dared not face his deadly shooting.

But when night came he would be overwhelmed by numbers—that, at least, he could guess the Filipino was counting on. But night was yet far off, and plans were forming in Kit Hudson's active brain. He had a hostage in his hands—Mr. Jam was not at the end of his usefulness!

The three Easter boys were talking on the lugger, glancing towards Hudson as they whispered and muttered. What was happening on Tunaviva was a puzzle to the crew of the lugger. They had been hired at Mangareva to run Mr. Jam down to the lonely island, and they unexpectedly found themselves in a very warm corner. They were anxious to get out of it. Lo, the boat-steerer, came to the side at last, and called to Hudson.

"Feller white master listen, ear belong him!" said the Easter boy respectfully. Hudson, reloading his rifle, glanced at him. "This feller, boy no likee Tunaviva," added Lo. "This feller boy likee plenty too much go back along Mangareva. Come along this place, along feller Jam. Feller Jam stop along this place; feller Easter boy go back along Mangareva, s'pose white master likee."

Hudson pointed to the rock-terrace on the cliff overlooking the reef passage. Three or four blacks could be seen there, tiny in the distance, with rifles in their hands. The Easter boys glanced in the direction of his pointing finger.

"What name?" asked Lo.

"S'pose lugger go along reef, black feller shootee along gun," answered Hudson. "Kill dead all Easter feller!"

"White master tinkee?" asked Lo, in dismay.

"White master plenty too much sure," replied Hudson. "Feller belong Tunaviva no wantee Easter boy talk along Mangareva, along plenty feller stop along this place."

Leaving that piece of information to sink into the fuzzy minds of the Kanakas, Hudson turned to Mr. Jam. The fat trader, leaning on the mast to which the rope secured him, was watching him with eyes of hate. Hudson saw him glance to the sky, where the sun was now approaching the meridian. He could guess the thoughts of the trader in false pearls. Mr. Jam looked for an attack by his associates when night fell, and was longing for the long, hot hours of the tropical day to pass. The mate of the Dawn smiled grimly.

"Listen to me, you scum!" he said. "According to what Pinto said when he was towing us in, my shipmate, King of the Islands, and Koko, his boatswain, are at the mercy of your gang in a pit in the cavern yonder. His crew are prisoners. But you are in my hands!"

"Sudden death will approximate with fall of night," said Mr. Jam, between his teeth.

"I'm not so sure of that, you swab. I'd try to hold the ketch against all your crew, and they don't seem keen on standing up to my shooting!" said Hudson contemptuously. "But it's

not coming to that, Mr. Jam! King of the Islands, Koko, and all the Dawn's crew are coming back safe and sound.

"You're master on this island!" went on Hudson. "What your game is here I don't know—and that doesn't matter now. But you're master, and that swab Pinto carries out your orders. You're going to order him to hand over his prisoners."

"Such order will never be given," snarled Mr. Jam. "Also possibility does not exist to convey the same."

"You've a private signal for him," said the mate of the Dawn. "I saw you make it on the lugger when we were beating down to Tunaviva. That signal will be made to bring him off to speak to you."

"There will be no obedience to such signal in present circumstances—"

"I'm sorry for you if it turns out so!" said Hudson grimly. "I'm prepared for an exchange of prisoners—your worthless carcass in return for my shipmate and his crew. Otherwise, I am going to throw you to the sharks."

"Estimable and beneficent sir!" gasped Mr. Jam.

"That's enough!"

Hudson jerked the red cummerbund from the fat trader's waist and ran it up to the mast-head. That was the signal Mr. Jam had made to his men when the lugger was approaching the island.

Mr. Jam wriggled in his bonds, sweating with fear. His eyes roved over the shining surface of the lagoon. There were sharks in the lagoon of Tunaviva, as Mr. Jam well knew—fierce tiger-sharks, avid for prey!

Hudson went into the cook's galley, and came back with Danny's bucket of garbage. He pushed the contents over the rail. There was a stirring in the water. Black fins showed over the glistening surface—snout after snout nosed among the garbage. Mr. Jam trembled from head to foot.

"You'd better hope that your men will take orders from you, you scoundrel!" said the mate of the Dawn. "Unless King of the Islands steps safe on this ship before sundown, you go down into the lagoon with your hands tied—and the sharks will do the rest. Chew on that, you scoundrel!"

"Orders shall be given and obeyed with a prompt dispatch!" panted Mr. Jam.

"I thought so!" said Hudson, with a curl of the lip. "If my shipmate is not on board before sundown, I pity you!" Then he turned his back on Mr. Jam. And the fat trader, in a sweat of terror, fixed his eyes on the rock-terrace on the distant cliff, where many eyes were watching.

"Release All Prisoners!"

FOR an hour the signal had fluttered from the masthead of the Dawn, watched by the men on the cliff, but otherwise unheeded. The fat trader, sweating with fear, leaned on the mizzen, his terrified glance alternately on the distant cliff and the shining lagoon

closer at hand, where the tiger-sharks lurked.

Hudson waited with grim patience. Mr. Jam was his trump card—the last card he had to play! King of the Islands and his crew were at the mercy of the secret men of Tunaviva—but Mr. Jam, their master, was at Hudson's mercy—and his resolve was fixed.

If his shipmate perished in that dark den under the basaltic cliff, the trader in false pearls was going to the sharks. With his shipmate's life hanging in the balance, there was no more mercy in Hudson's heart than in one of the sharks lurking beneath the shining surface of the lagoon! That fixed resolve was plainly to be read in his face, and Mr. Jam groaned with terror as he waited for the signal to be answered.

There was a dash of oars at last, and a boat glided out into the lagoon. The half-caste trader panted with relief as it came. The Filipino seemed to have made up his mind at last. He was coming out in answer to the signal!

It was a relief to Hudson also. For the fat trader's life he cared not a straw, but his heart ached with anxiety for his shipmate, penned in some dark den under the cliff in the shadow of death. If his trump card failed, he had made up his mind to penetrate into the basaltic cavern and make a desperate attempt to rescue his shipmate. But his trump card was not failing. The boat shot out from the beach, with two black boys pulling and Pinto sitting in the stern-sheets holding a white flag.

Hudson picked up his rifle and

leaned it on the teak rail, watching the boat as it came. He was prepared for treachery. In the lugger, on the other side of the Dawn, the Easter boys were stretched on their mats, sleeping in the heat of the tropical day. They had realised that escape from the lagoon was cut off, and with true Kanaka indifference had accepted the situation and gone to sleep. They did not stir at the dash of oars and the sound of voices.

Pinto's dark face was savagely set as the boat drew near the Dawn. The white man of Tunaviva was puzzled and perplexed by the turn of affairs; but there was no doubt that he was under the orders of Mr. Jam, and obedient to his master. His hand was in his pocket as the boat approached, and Hudson could guess what it grasped. A sudden treacherous shot under the white flag might have ended the struggle in favour of the men of Tunaviva. Kit's eye gleamed along his rifle, which bore full on the man in the boat.

"Take your hand from your pocket—empty!" he rapped out. "I give you one second, you swab!"

The hand came out—empty. Under the levelled rifle the Filipino dared not draw the hidden revolver.

"Stand up!" snapped Hudson. "Put both your hands on the rail and hold on. Try any tricks, and I'll blow out your brains where you stand!"

"For the moment, senor, you give orders," said Pinto. He stood up as directed, and held on to the rail of the Dawn. The two blacks sat silent in the boat.

Hudson made a gesture towards

the man bound to the mizzen, on whom Pinto fixed his eyes, a gleam of scorn in them.

"Take your orders from your boss!" snapped Hudson.

"I am here for your commands, senor!" said Pinto to Mr. Jam.

"Illimitable and obnoxious fool, for what reason have you not arrived with dispatch?" snarled Mr. Jam. "Have you no eyes to see the signal displayed for your observation?"

"I am here!" said the Filipino sullenly. "What are your orders?"

"Immediately and with prompt rapidity, you will release all prisoners in your hands and dispatch them to this ship!" snarled Mr. Jam.

"Otherwise," cut in Hudson, "Mr. Jam is going to the sharks in the lagoon—and I shall not wait long!"

A black fin showed beside the boat, and one of the Santa Cruz boys struck at it with his oar. Mr. Jam shuddered.

"You waste time that is of inestimable value, fool that you are!" he snarled. "You hear my order, which you will obey with astonishing rapidity!"

PINTO breathed hard. For a moment a chill of doubt struck Hudson. The Filipino's unwillingness to obey was very plain in his enraged face. Mr. Jam was the master on mysterious Tunaviva, but if his lieutenant refused to obey his order— But enraged and reluctant as he was, the Filipino had his own reasons for obedience.

"It shall be done!" he muttered, his voice thick with rage. "But afterwards—" His eyes glittered at Hudson. "Afterwards, senor—"

ONE GUINEA

has been AWARDED to RONALD REDDY, 20, Spencer Gardens, ELTHAM, London, S.E.9, for this snap of fellows at WOOLWICH COUNTY SCHOOL. Ronald is on the extreme left of the front row of chairs



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Comrades of the Ketch!

"Never mind afterwards, you swab!" interrupted the mate of the Dawn. "Carry out your master's orders!"

"And with unlimited swiftness!" snarled Mr. Jam. "Let there be no unnecessary moment of obnoxious delay!"

"Very well!" muttered the Filipino. "The prisoners—"

"Every prisoner that is in your hands," said Hudson icily. "King of the Islands, and his boatswain, and five Hiva-Oa boys, and Billy the Beachcomber—every man of them—safe and sound!"

"Dispatch!" howled Mr. Jam. "Why do you linger with exasperating slowness, son of a dog? Proceed with extreme rapidity!"

The Filipino dropped back into the boat, and snarled an order to the Santa Cruz boys. The boat shot away from the Dawn. The Filipino looked back as the blacks pulled, and his hand was in his pocket again, his eyes gleaming like a snake's. But the levelled rifle bore on him, with Hudson's finger on the trigger. He had no chance of treachery. The boat disappeared into the water-channel under the cliff, and was lost to Hudson's sight.

The mate of the Dawn waited. Had he won? He could not be sure till he saw his shipmate before him, and the minutes were bitter with anxiety. But his anxiety was no-

thing to Mr. Jam's. The sweat rolled down the olive face in streams as the fat trader sagged against the mast, his anxiety keener even than Hudson's to see King of the Islands step safe on his own deck.

A Staggering Surprise!

KING OF THE ISLANDS!" Ken started as he heard his name called, and Koko flashed a swift glance up from the bottom of the rocky pit in the floor of the sea-cave.

Hours had passed since Ken had made his desperate attempt to escape, and he and Koko, who had gone to his aid, had been trapped in the pit. The boy trader and his boatswain were in darkness, save for the glimmer that came from above, where the guards, Tokoloo and Ko'oo, still watched and awaited their master's return.

Then, from the sea-cave above, his name was shouted, and he recognised the hoarse voice of Billy the Beachcomber. It was the outcast of Tahiti, whom he had last seen a bound prisoner in the upper cave, who shouted.

"Ahoy!" called back Ken, in blank amazement. A torch glared over the edge of the rift, and Koko grasped his bush-knife, a deadly gleam in his eyes. But it was the tanned, stubby face of the beachcomber that looked down, and there was a grin on it. Beside him, a rope dropped over and snaked down.

"Burn my timbers!" grinned the beachcomber. "You're there, skipper. They got you on a lee shore, and no mistake. But get hold of that rope, and the niggers'll pull you out!"

Ken was utterly amazed, and the brown-skinned boatswain stared up at the beachcomber in wonder. Evidently there had been some strange change in the situation for Billy the Beachcomber to be there, free, and hailing them. They did not understand.

"You're free, skipper!" bawled the beachcomber. "The boat's waiting here to run you back to your ship. You can come up. Hudson's come back, and he's got the whip-hand of these swabs!"

"Hudson—he lives!" Ken reeled against the rock, almost overcome

for the moment. "You're sure—you're sure?"

"I tell you he's on the Dawn, skipper, and he's got that swab Jam, and he's trading him for us!" chuckled the beachcomber. "I got it from Pinto. It's honest Injun—and you can come up!"

It was almost too much for the boy trader. Koko caught the end of the rope as it snaked down, and grinned.

"This feller plenty too much glad, sar," he said. "Tinkee go finish along white master—no go finish; my word! White master altogether too much glad see feller Hudson along ketch belong him!"

"You coming up, skipper?" bawled the beachcomber. "The boat's waiting—and your crew."

Koko knotted the rope round his white master. Then he swarmed up, and Billy, grinning, gave him a hand over the edge of the pit. Two or three torches illumined the sea-cave, and the black faces and rolling eyes of the Santa Cruz boys glimmered in the glare. Koko gave one look round, and then dragged on the rope with his powerful hands, and King of the Islands was drawn out of the pit.

Hardly knowing whether he was in a dream, the boy trader stared round the dim sea-cave. In the water-channel was the whaleboat of the Dawn, with the Hiva-Oa crew in it. They grinned and nodded at their white master, not in the least understanding the sudden change in their fortunes, but realising that they were to go back to their ship with their skipper. At a little distance stood Pinto, his dusky face grim with rage, his eyes glittering—but he said no word.

Ken cast off the rope, walked across to the whaleboat, and stepped in, followed by Koko and the beachcomber. It still seemed like a dream to the boy trader. Hudson, his shipmate, had saved him. But he could hardly believe it yet.

The blacks pushed off the boat, and it floated down the dusky water-channel into the brilliant tropical sunlight of the lagoon. The Hiva-Oa boys put out the oars, grinning with glee, and pulled for the ketch.

Ken's eyes danced at the sight of a familiar sunburnt face looking over the rail, and he hardly noticed the fat figure bound to the mast. His dancing eyes fixed on Kit Hudson, the shipmate who had saved him, he stood up in the whaleboat, waving his hand. And Hudson, with a cheery grin, waved his hat. With all their strength the Hiva-Oa boys pulled, and the whaleboat shot across the lagoon like an arrow, bringing the shipmates together again!

United again, the joyful comrades are fully prepared for whatever crops up next—but they don't realise yet the Danger that lies in wait for them Next Saturday!

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