

The MODERN BOY

EVERY SATURDAY Week Ending 17th NOV 1934
NO 354 VOL 14

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Britain's Sea Sentinels!



"Good-bye, Ken, old man!" Kit whispered, as if his shipmate could have heard him.

Ken King's Cannibal Hunt!

Kit Hudson's would not be the first White Man's head to be smoked in the canoe-houses of chief Komo-omo. . . . Speed—Speed—and still more Speed!—is the Boy Skipper's prayer in his race to save his old comrade!

By CHARLES HAMILTON

"Where's Your Skipper?"

"THE Sea-Cat!" exclaimed King of the Islands.

"Feller cutter belong Peter Parsons, sar!" said Koko, the Kanaka boatswain of Ken King's trading ketch, the Dawn. "Savvy that feller cutter plenty too much!"

Ken King, the boy trader, stared across the blue waters, shading his eyes from the sun-blaze. The ketch Dawn was standing to the west, heading for the cannibal island of Suna-Suna, as yet far out of sight below the sea-line. John Chin's cargo had been dropped at Santa Cruz, and that trip, far off his usual beat, had given the boy trader the opportunity of running down to the Solomons to pick up news, if he could, of his lost shipmate, Kit Hudson.

Once through the Malaita Strait, he watched the sea for a sign of Dandy Peter's cutter. Many days had passed since Kit Hudson had sailed with Dandy Peter in the Sea-

Cat to seek salvage on the Suna-Suna reef. What had been the outcome of that desperate venture, on a dangerous reef, off the shore of the loneliest and most savage island in the Solomons?

The Sea-Cat would not be the first white man's ship to be cut off by the cannibals of Suna-Suna. Hudson's not the first white man's head to be smoked in the canoe-houses of Komo-omo. Ken King was seeking the Sea-Cat, but with little hope that she yet floated on the blue Pacific.

And there, her tall sail glimmering in the sun as she leaned to the wind, was the Sea-Cat. Even in the far distance he knew that it was the Lukwe cutter.

The cloud that had long darkened Ken King's brow lifted. The Sea-Cat was returning from the trip to Suna-Suna. Successful or unsuccessful, the salvage seekers had left the cannibal island astern. The wind was abeam, and the cutter, making the Malaita Strait, was running on

a long tack that would bring her across the bows of the Dawn.

Every moment she grew larger and clearer, and Ken watched her with shining eyes. There had been high words when the shipmates parted, and Hudson had thrown in his fortunes with Dandy Peter Parsons, the seelawyer of Lukwe. All the more for that reason, Ken longed to grasp his comrade's hand again. His heart was in his eyes as he watched the Sea-Cat. If only his fears had been unfounded—if only he had found his shipmate again!

"White feller no stop along that packet, sar!" said Koko, with a puzzled look on his brown face. "Two black feller stop—white feller no stop! Me no savvy altogether."

King of the Islands turned his binoculars on the cutter. He could make out Toto, the boat-steerer, and Koo. Both the Lukwe boys were staring towards the ketch. But neither Kit Hudson nor Peter Parsons was to be seen.

Ken King's Cannibal Hunt!

They could hardly be in the tiny cabin, leaving the deck and the sailing of the ship to the two black boys. But if they were not on board, where were they? Ken compressed his lips. He knew now that he had not found his shipmate.

The Dawn hove-to, and the whaleboat dropped into the water. The Lukwe boys hove the cutter to and waited for the boat. Koko, at the wheel of the Dawn, watched his white master with anxious eyes as the sinewy arms of Lompo and Lufu pulled at the oars and the whaleboat shot away.

It had hardly reached the cutter when Ken King jumped at the low rail and leaped on board the Sea-Cat. The two Lukwe boys eyed him uneasily, muttering together, evidently in fear of the white man's anger. Ken's heart was as heavy as lead. Where was his shipmate?

"Where's your skipper?" he rapped. "What name feller Cap'n Parsons he no stop along ship belong him?"

"That feller stop along reef along Suna-Suna, sar!" answered Toto.

"And Hudson?"

"Feller Hudson stop along reef, all same Cap'n Parsons, sar."

"Alive? Is he living?" King of the Islands, for the moment, forgot to speak in the queer lingo which the natives understood, and the Lukwe boys only stared. He went on hurriedly: "That feller Hudson he walk about too much?"

"That feller walk about plenty too much, sar, along little feller island along reef he stop!" said Koo.

Ken breathed more freely. The salvage seekers had been alive, on the reef, when the Lukwe boys had last seen them.

"What name you feller boy run along sea, along feller white master belong you stop along reef?" demanded the boy trader.

The Lukwe boys hesitated to answer. They muttered together in the native dialect of Lukwe. King of the Islands made a stride towards them, his eyes glinting under his knitted brows.

"You black feller, you sing out plenty too quick, mouth belong you, along you no want this feller knock seven bells out of you!" he rapped savagely.

"Yes, sar!" faltered Toto. "This feller run along sea, sar, along plenty fright along Solomon Island boy, sar! No likee makee kai-kai along Solomon Island boy, sar! Plenty too much fright!"

"White feller go along reef, along little feller boat, sar," said Koo. "Black feller stop along cutter, sar. Solomon Island boy come along big feller canoe, plenty too much Solomon Island boy, sar!"

So that was it! King of the Islands knew now what had happened. Kit Hudson and Dandy Peter had gone in the dinghy to the reef, leaving the Lukwe boys in charge of the cutter while they hunted for the sunken wreck of the Crackerjack, with its treasure of

£7,000, which they wanted to salvage. Then the war canoes of the salt-water blacks of Suna-Suna had appeared, and the Lukwe boys had fled in the cutter, abandoning the white men on the reef.

Ken clenched his hands, and the Lukwe boys shrank away with scared looks. But he was not thinking of them. His comrade, left on a lonely rock in the Suna-Suna reef, surrounded by a swarm of cannibals—He would never see Kit Hudson again! Dead—or a prisoner in the hands of the cannibals! But if he was a prisoner he would save him, or die in the attempt.

"When did you leave him? What time you run along sea?" His voice came harsh and husky.

"One day before, sar!" said Toto. "Yesterday!" King of the Islands seemed to breathe again. Only a day since. If the two white men on the reef had held off the cannibals for only twenty-four hours, he might be in time to save them yet!

He rapped out a few sharp questions—but there was little more that the Lukwe boys could tell him. They had been chased far across the sea by the war canoes; but the wind had favoured them, and they had escaped; the canoes had turned back at last. Of what had happened to Hudson and Dandy Peter they knew nothing.

Ken sprang into the whaleboat. It shot back to the Dawn. Hardly had it swung to the davits when sail was shaken out. Westward once more, the wind still abeam, tacking wearily, when King of the Islands would have given all he possessed, and ten years of his life, for a gale from the east!

The long hours of hot sunshine seemed endless as he watched the sea with haggard eyes, till at last the black bush of Suna-Suna rose in the far distance across the shining Pacific.

Kit Hudson's Great Fight!

KIT HUDSON passed his hand wearily across his brow, burned by the hot wind. The rocky islet, jutting from the long, sunken reef, was like an oven. Not a tree, not a blade of grass, grew there—it was bare rock, scattered with boulders, with rotting wreckage lying among rotting seaweed.

Overhead, from an unclouded sky, the tropical sun blazed. The unending hours of sunshine dragged by, and the former mate of the Dawn still lived; but he almost longed for a rush of the enemy, and the last struggle, and the finish. For there was no hope.

He was alone on the reef, where he had landed with Peter Parsons to raise the gold of the sunken Crackerjack. Little thought did he now give to the seven thousand sovereigns in the brig that lay under fifty feet of water.

That golden lure had led him to his doom. King of the Islands, in that dispute at far Lalinge, had been right—the game was not worth the candle. A hundred miles from help, surrounded by savages, the gold of the Crackerjack meant little enough to him.

Lying on the calm sea, between the

reef and the bushy island a mile away, were two long, dark canoes, crammed with Solomon Island warriors. The salt-water men of Suna-Suna were watching. Hudson, as he sat on a boulder, his rifle across his knees, getting what shade he could from a rugged jut of rock, watched the canoes.

They kept out of effective range—but he could pick out the black, animal-like faces; his eyes caught the glitter of the polished coffee-can hanging on the brawny black chest of Komo-omo, the chief. Any minute the paddles might flash, and the canoes dart on the rock, like tiger-sharks on their prey. Still they did not come.

THIRST burned in his throat. There was not a drop of fresh water on the reef. Salt water mocked him, stretching for endless miles. But there was no drop to cool his parched lips. If he was hungry, he did not think of it. It was thirst that tormented him.

What had become of Dandy Peter, his companion on the rock when the Lukwe boys fled in the cutter?

He could not tell.

He had slept at night, the Lukwe sea-lawyer taking his turn to watch. He had been awakened by a burst of firing, a demoniac outbreak of yells on the dark sea. The din had died away. Dandy Peter was gone. The dinghy, the keg of water, the sack of provisions had gone also. The sea-lawyer had fled in the hours of darkness, abandoning him. He had not escaped—that uproar from the dark sea told that the deserter had run into the watching savages.

Dead or alive, only the cannibals of Suna-Suna could tell what had become of him. The blackest act of treachery in a life of dark deeds had handed the dandy of Lukwe over to a fate too fearful for words. Dead or alive, he had fallen into the hands of the cannibal blacks of Suna-Suna.

With the morning came the attack. But the deadly rifle, in the hands of the desperate white man on the rock, had daunted the Solomon Islanders. They had fled once more—now they were watching. They knew that he had no food—no water! They had left only to wait. Dandy Peter had left him to this—his reward for breaking with his old comrade, and joining up with the Lukwe desperado.

What chance there was, Parsons had taken, leaving his partner to bear the brunt. There was a bitter satisfaction in knowing that he had failed to get away. Shoulder to shoulder, there might have been a remote hope of pulling through, of stalling off the attacks of the cannibals, of raising a sail on the horizon before the food and water ran out. But the sea-lawyer, no doubt, had believed that the attack, certain to come with the new day, would carry all before it.

Hudson, deserted and alone, had driven it off. But he knew that he could not drive off the next. Aching with thirst, dizzy with the burning heat, weary to the bone with incessant watching, he knew that it would be the end. If they would only come—and end this torture!

The rifle sagged in his hands. He leaned back against the rock behind him. It was burning to the touch; but it kept off the direct rays of the blazing sun. Utter weariness overcame him, and his eyes closed. They opened again. He must not sleep.

Savage eyes watched him across the water—eyes keen as those of an albatross. Only their fear of his rifle held them at bay.

The canoes had moved. Like stealthy creeping beasts, they had edged nearer to the sun-scorched rock. Hudson set his teeth, and raised his rifle. It seemed strangely heavy. The strength was going from his sinewy arms. But they were close enough for a shot; and he took aim, and pitched a bullet at Komo-omo's canoe.

Down the hot wind came a cackling yell from the savages—with a tone of mockery in it. The shot had missed by yards. He could no longer depend on his aim.

They were creeping closer. Again he fired—and missed! Again that yell of savage mockery came back. He slumped on the rock behind him, the rifle idle in his hands, sagging across his knees. Let them come! And they were coming!

THE paddles flashed, and he heard the rapid strokes as the canoes came closer. He waited. At point-blank range he would not miss, though his hands were unsteady, his sight growing dizzy and dim. The canoes glided into the little inlet where the dinghy had lain. Hudson dragged himself from the boulder where he sat.

The end was at hand now! One thought only worked in his dizzy brain—to die fighting—never to fall alive, if he could help it, into the hands of those demons in human form. He stood erect, facing the savage crew as they swarmed out of the canoes, rifle in hand, ready.

"Good-bye, Ken, old man!" he whispered, as if his shipmate could have heard him.

His eyes, fixed on the landing savages, glimpsed something beyond them—far away on the blue shining sea. He started, passed a hand across his eyes, and stared harder. Was it a winging albatross dipping to the sea? Or was it—was it a sail?

A sail in those lonely waters, avoided by all skippers, fearful of the deadly reefs that circled the shores of Suna-Suna! He must be dreaming, for it seemed to him that what he saw was the topsail of the Dawn! It was delirium coming on, from the burning heat and the bitter thirst; for how could the Dawn be in those waters?

In those very days, while he was hunting salvage with Dandy Peter, King of the Islands was booked for the Tahiti voyage, with freight for John Chin. But for this mad adventure, he would have sailed with him—he would be making Papeete, on board the Dawn, with his comrade, and Koko, and the Hiva-Oa boys—hundreds of miles from this burning rock and the crew of yelling cannibals.

FOOTBALL on STAMPS

By DOUGLAS ARMSTRONG, who will answer FREE any Stamp Queries which any reader may care to send to the Editor. If you can, enclose a stamped, addressed envelope for reply by Post

THERE are some specially fine stamps commemorating the World's Football Competition which was played off in several Italian towns some time ago. Get hold of them!

Teams from the United States, Germany, Austria, Brazil, Greece, Hungary, Egypt, Spain, and other countries took part in the contest, the final match between Italy and Czechoslovakia played at Rome being won by the home side, who were presented with a gold cup by Signor Mussolini.

There are nine of the Italian football stamps, five for ordinary postal purposes and four for air-mail letters only. The pictures include the saving of a goal, a tackle, players heading the ball, and a kick-off, and a view of the Mussolini Stadium at Turin, where some of the matches took place. A separate set in different designs was provided for circulation in the Italian colonies, all bearing the inscription: "Campionate Mondiali Di Calcio" (World Football Championship).

Hungary gave us our first football stamp, as part of a series sold in aid of her national athletic associations in 1925. A Soccer player dribbling the ball appeared on one of the Dutch Olympic Games stamps of 1928, and Uruguay celebrated the victory of her football team in the contests with three stamps showing a football balanced on the cross-bar of a rustic goal, in the same year.

A Bulgarian "Alec James" appears on a 2 leva stamp issued in connection with the Balkan Olympiad, held at Sofia three years ago. Shall we ever see a picture of the Arsenal team on our own postage stamps? I wonder!



Left: A fine tackle! One of the special stamps celebrating the victory of the Italian team in the World's Football Championship.

Above: The kick-off. This Italian stamp is for air-mail letters only.

He passed his hand across his burning eyes again. It was not delirium—it was no dream. It was the Dawn that was standing in between the reef and the bushy island—it was King of the Islands' ketch! Miles away, but he knew every line of her—only too well he knew!

She had been in sight while he had been sitting there, watching the canoes, if he had only looked. It was the Dawn—King of the Islands was coming! Too late!

Had Dandy Peter stood by him! The sea-lawyer's treachery had lost them both! For it was too late—too late! Even as he stared, with longing eyes, at that glancing sail, the cannibals were coming. The crowded canoes had disgorged their swarm of black fighting-men, and they were coming.

And Hudson, tearing his eyes away from the sail on the sea, looked along his shaking rifle and fired, and fired again. Too late—too late; it was the finish, almost under the eyes of the shipmate who had come to save him!

Crack, crack! rang the rifle, answered by savage howls and yells. A black man rolled on the rock—another rolled—at point-blank range he was not missing. Then they were upon him.

He fired again, with the muzzle almost touching a black chest, and saw a howling savage crumple at his feet—then the rifle was torn away, and brawny hands were grasping him, and he was down—down on the hot

rock, struggling madly in the grasp of unnumbered hands.

They were taking him alive! He knew why—and he struggled, and fought, and tore and wrenched, till he lay utterly exhausted, half-senseless, while tapa cords were bound with cruel tightness round arms and legs, and he was as helpless as a log of driftwood.

Grinning, ruthless faces circled him as he was lifted and dragged down to the canoes. He heard the mocking voice of Komo-omo, but his brain was swimming, and he did not make out the words. He felt himself flung headlong into a canoe.

Black legs swarmed round him. His dizzy eyes caught the gleam of the polished coffee-can on Komo-omo's chest. He was in the chief's canoe. They were pushing off; the canoes glided out of the inlet, winding through the teeth of the jutting reefs, making for the space of open sea, a mile broad, that lay between the reef and the bushy shore of Suna-Suna.

The paddles flashed. They were making the island—where the dark, dripping mangoes stank in the sun-blaze; where the tortures of the devil-doctor, and the cooking-oven, waited for their prisoner. Hudson groaned and strove to raise his head for one last look at the Dawn.

A sudden howl from the cannibals told that they had sighted the ship. So far, they had been too intent on the white man on the reef to have eyes for the open sea.

Ken King's Cannibal Hunt!

But as the canoes shot across from the reef to the island, they saw the Dawn beating up from the south, and the startled yell, the swifter dash of the flashing paddles, told the bound man lying under the black legs and feet that Komo-omo and his crew were hurrying in flight for the shelter of the mangroves.

Was there a chance yet—a chance that his shipmate would save him?

In Sight of His Shipmate!

UNDER a mountain of canvas the Dawn rushed before the south wind. Westward from the Malaita Strait, to within sight of Suna-Suna, the wind had been abeam; but the ketch had passed the southern end of the long surf-ridden reef, and swung to starboard, bringing the wind astern.

Red in the west, the sun burned over Suna-Suna, casting far out the shadows of the high bush behind the mangrove swamp.

A mile's breadth of calm water lay between the bushy island and the reef, and King of the Islands had intended to run its whole length, of ten miles and more, before the wind, scanning the reef for the white men he hoped were still there. Most of a day had passed since he had spoken to the Sea-Cat, and with every minute his anxiety intensified.

With the wind astern, no sound of the firing came to his ears from the rocky isle ahead; but he picked up moving figures on the rock, and as

the Dawn swept on he saw the two canoes put off and paddle for the island.

He roared to the Hiva-Oa boys to clap on every inch of sail, and Kolulo and Tomoo, Lompo and Lufu jumped to his orders. Koko's bronze statue at the wheel kept the ketch steady. King of the Islands tore a rifle from the rack at the mizzen. He flung himself half over the rail to stare ahead.

Two canoes, crammed with blacks, putting off from the reef! What did it mean, but that the salvage-seekers had held out till then—and that now, at the eleventh hour, the fight was over—the white men killed or taken?

Ken's face was white. His eyes burned. If they were taken, he would save them; if they were slain, not a savage buck of all that foul crew should live to reach the mangroves. The Dawn rushed before the wind, leaning with belying canvas, eating up the distance. His eyes swept the rock from which the canoes had put off; no man remained there, white or black.

If they lived, they were prisoners in the canoes. But the canoes were flying with almost incredible speed. The sight of the Dawn rushing down on them had scared the savages and sent them scuttling back to their lair. Already, before the ketch was close enough for Ken's keen eyes to make them out clearly, they were half-way across; and every paddle was driving with frantic vigour.

Once in the shelter of the mangroves of Suna-Suna, they would be beyond pursuit; and if they had prisoners, the prisoners would be beyond rescue. And there was something in the leading canoe—some-

thing that lay among the legs of the blacks. Ken could guess what it was—a white man—alive or dead!

To his fierce impatience, the racing ketch seemed to crawl. He saw Komo-omo staring. He caught the glare of the polished coffee-can on his black chest. The cannibal chief was yelling rage and defiance and brandishing a spear. But the wind tore his words away; no sound reached the Dawn.

Komo-omo's canoe was leading, the other close behind. Every black sinewy arm was straining at the paddles.

King of the Islands shouted to Danny, the cooky-boy, posted at the mast-head, to keep a look-out, while the crew stood to the ropes.

"You feller Danny, what you see, eye belong you?"

"White feller stop along one feller canoe, sar!" howled back the cooky-boy, holding on with one hand and foot to the tall swaying cedar. "Tinkee feller Hudson, sar—him too much big feller. No see little feller Parsons, sar."

"Him no dead feller, Danny?"

"No, sar! Head belong him walk about too much."

Ken's heart throbbed. Hudson must have seen the ship. Lying a prisoner in the leading canoe, he was trying to look back at the Dawn. He was not dead. He was a living prisoner. Oh, for speed—speed—to run down those black demons before they reached the mangroves! Leaving a streaming white wake behind her, the Dawn fled on. But fast, fast fled the canoes, and they were still distant.

They had been making directly across the channel when they sighted the Dawn; now they had swerved to the north, and were crossing by a diagonal line, their sterns partly turned to the ketch. The paddles flashed, every sinewy arm driving hard. Fast behind them came the ketch, and the intervening space lessened and lessened; but they were drawing close to the mangroves now.

KING OF THE ISLANDS ran forward and threw himself on the fore-castle top, his rifle thrust out before him. Crack! rang the report, and the bullet pitched into the second canoe. Into Komo-omo's canoe he dared not fire, for fear of hitting the bound man sprawling among the legs of the blacks.

He could see Hudson now by glimpses—not close enough for recognition—but he could see that the athletic form was not the dapper sea-lawyer of Lukwe. Dandy Peter was in neither canoe. There was only one prisoner. But of the dandy of Lukwe he was not thinking. It was his shipmate he was there to save, if he could. Crack! rang the rifle again.

The first shot had gone close. The next knocked over a black paddler. King of the Islands shouted, and the strong wind carried his voice down to the fleeing canoes.

(Continued on page 18)

BRITAIN'S SEA SENTINELS!

Our Cover-picture shows H.M.S. Rodney, our mightiest battleship, passing under the tremendous Forth Bridge—with Naval planes in attendance

SIXTEEN years ago—on November 11th, 1918—the sirens of Britain's Fleet shrieked in triumphant celebration of the end of the World War. The Grand Fleet lay at Scapa Flow, to the north of Scotland. Cruisers, gunboats, monitors, mystery-ships, and a host of other armed craft wearing the White Ensign were spread along the coasts and trade routes of the world.

After those grim guns were silenced, the mightiest armada of the world's history began to dwindle. Numbers of warships went to the breakers' yards; others were converted to the peaceable needs of commerce. To-day, the British Fleet is only a skeleton of its former gigantic self—a marine police force to protect our sea-borne trade.

Though our total tonnage is far less than in pre-War days, yet we have added two battleships larger and more scientific in construction than any of the goliaths that Admiral Jellicoe commanded at Jutland in the Great War. These are H.M.S. Rodney and her sister-ship, Nelson.

NINE years ago, 20,000 tons of steel slid down a slipway and floated serenely in the River Mersey. That was Rodney's hull. Then 15,000 tons of steel were added in the form of machinery and guns—and Rodney went a-roving!

Proudly flying the White Ensign, our mightiest battleship visited ports from Iceland to South America. And everywhere her presence has been a reminder to all and sundry that the Royal Navy still quietly carries on with the old job—the oft-times thankless job—of policing the Seven Seas.

In Arctic cold and tropic heat, by day and by night, the patrolling warships keep watch and guard. Like the police ashore, they are there if they're wanted. Always alert—ready to give aid to other ships in case of fire, hurricane, or mutiny; on the look-out to destroy dangerous icebergs and derelicts; to deal with Chinese and Malay pirates; to mark new shoals and other danger areas caused by volcanic action; to protect the Empire's fishing interests against foreign poachers.

These are only a few of the tasks undertaken by the Royal Navy in the peace-time patrol of the high seas. Without thunder of guns or blare of bugles, the naval ships—aided by naval planes—uphold everywhere the high standard of British justice and humanity.

Ken King's Cannibal Hunt!

(Continued from page 14)

"You Suna-Suna boy, you stop along sea, along you no wantee kill-dead along gun belong me!"

A howl, carried back by the wind, was the only answer. The canoes fled on. King of the Islands risked a shot at the leading canoe, pitching it high. He saw Komo-omo stagger, as the bullet tore away a coral comb from his fuzzy mop of hair. But the paddles drove on faster than before.

To fire into the thick of them was to fire on his shipmate. He gritted his teeth, and pitched hot lead into the second canoe. One, two, three of the paddlers dropped, and the canoe lost way. But Komo-omo was fleeing on, and the shadows of the mangroves were very near.

The sweat ran down the boy trader's face. So near—so near! He glimpsed a white face among the blacks as Kit Hudson lifted his head to stare back. It was only for a second, but he knew his shipmate. Closer and closer—fast as the paddles drove, the swift ketch, under bellying sail, was faster. He was gaining hand over fist. But the leading canoe was terribly near the mangroves of Suna-Suna.

The second craft had lost way. Far behind Komo-omo its crew paddled madly on, as the tall prow of the Dawn towered over them. And the white man's face above, set and savage, glared down at them, and he pitched bullets into the thick

of them. There was a fearful, grinding crash as the Dawn struck the canoe, taking it on the port quarter and driving it down. In an instant, as the canoe sank under their feet, the blacks were in the water and swimming.

Through the swimmers the Dawn drove on, driving many of them deep beneath her timbers as she rushed on in the wake of Komo-omo. Cries came down the wind after the ketch as the tiger-sharks rose among the swimmers. King of the Islands did not even hear them. His eyes were fixed on the canoe that was escaping—Komo-omo's canoe, with his shipmate lying bound among the feet of the paddlers.

The evil smell of the mangroves came to his nostrils now. The high prow of the canoe was already entering the shadow of Suna-Suna. A minute more—

Desperately he fired. Better to risk hitting his shipmate—better even to drive lead through him—than to let him be carried captive into the fowl den of the cannibals. Bang, bang, bang! roared the rifle, and every bullet sent a black man sprawling and howling in the rushing canoe. It was losing way. A few seconds more—

KING OF THE ISLANDS groaned as the canoe shot into a narrow channel between lines of reeking mangroves. He heard a voice—a voice he knew—shrieking:

"Shoot—shoot! Ken, shoot—shoot!" Hudson knew that a bullet from his comrade's rifle was better than

what awaited him in the dark dens of Suna-Suna.

The rifle roared. But the canoe was in the mangroves. The tearing lead splattered water and mud, crashing in trunks and roots. The canoe was gone; the mangrove swamp had swallowed it from sight. The howls of the cannibals could be heard, but they could no longer be seen.

Shot after shot King of the Islands pitched after them. But he knew that it was futile, and he threw down his empty rifle and covered his face with his hands. For the moment King of the Islands, in his despair, had forgotten his ship. But Koko jammed down the helm without waiting for orders, and the Dawn glided past the mangroves, so close that her boom snapped trailing branches.

Yell on yell came echoing back from the swamp—the defiant yells of the savages, safe now with their prisoner, howling defiance at the white man's ship.

Ken dropped his hands and stared round him with haggard eyes. The Dawn was gliding past the mangrove-lined shore of Suna-Suna. A mile away to the starboard the surf was breaking in creaming white on the reef, the gulls shrieking and calling.

There lay the Crackerjack, with its golden treasure, that had lured Kit Hudson to his doom. On the sea nothing was to be seen, save far astern the black fins of the tiger-sharks. Not a swimmer remained on the surface. Ken turned his eyes on the mangroves, on the high black bush beyond that had swallowed his shipmate from his sight.

At Lascelles he had found his shipmate, only to lose him again. At Suna-Suna he had found him once more, only to see him carried away to an unspeakable fate in the hands of the cannibals. He tried to pull himself together. His shipmate lived, and he would save him or die with him.

Come what may, he was determined to put up a fight for Kit Hudson's life—to venture ashore and risk the horrible fate of all white men falling into the hands of the cannibal blacks, in an attempt to rescue his old shipmate.

Such a venture was practically foredoomed to failure. How could he hope to win through against the overwhelming odds arrayed against him—one white man against a horde of savage cannibals? But his mind was made up—he was going to rescue his old shipmate or die in the attempt!

His voice was husky as he called to the Hiva-Oa boys to take in sail. Between the island of death and the surf-ridden reef the Dawn lay hove-to, as the sun dipped behind Suna-Suna and night came down black on the Pacific!



GET YOUR DAD to
order Next Saturday's

MODERN BOY

for you—and the Next
Week's, too, and you'll
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COMING the WEEK AFTER NEXT—BIGGLES, the daring
airman whom Flying-Officer W. E. Johns has made famous
in every English-speaking country in the World!

*The most desperate effort of
Ken King's life lies before him!
Only a miracle, now, it seems,
will save Kit from a dreadful
fate in the mangrove swamps.
There's going to be more red-
hot activity Next Saturday!!!*