

296 Trinal

Great New
Story of

BIGGLES & CO. IN SPAIN!

MODERN BOY

EVERY
D.
2
SATURDAY



Ginger to the Rescue—Exciting Moment from WINGS OVER SPAIN!

The WORD WAS "DANGER!"

From the Island of the Wolf it came, grim warning to steer clear of that forbidden spot. But on Kit Hudson it acted like a magnet, drawing him on, leading him to quarrel with his skipper

High Words!

By CHARLES HAMILTON

"HUDSON ahoy!" shouted King of the Islands.

The boy trader had come hurriedly on the deck of the Dawn, lying at anchor in the lagoon at Mu'a. He ran to the rail. A long canoe, with six brown-skinned Mu'a boys kneeling to the paddles and Kit Hudson, the mate of the Dawn, sitting in the stern, was heading for the passage in the reef and passing within half a cable's length of the anchored ketch.

Hudson heard his shipmate's voice and saw him waving. But he made no sign to the brown crew, and the canoe paddled on. There was a smile on Ken's face as he waved; but Kit Hudson's brows were knitted.

An hour ago there had been high words between the skipper and mate of the Dawn. Hudson was determined to return to Suta, a long and weary trip against the wind, and Ken had made up his mind to sail without his mate. But when he had come on board to get the anchor up he had made a discovery that quite altered the complexion of affairs. The injured man whom he had picked up at sea had spoken at last, and Ken had learned that he was the man whom Hudson was going back to Suta to seek! Ten minutes more and Hudson would have been turning his back on the man he sought. But there was time to stop him.

"Ahoy!" roared King of the Islands. "Hudson! My sainted Sam!" he went on, as the canoe glided on its way. "Hudson, you fool, do you hear me? This way, I tell you!"

The mate of the Dawn frowned, but he made a sign to the Mu'a boys, and the canoe swerved towards the Dawn. The brown boys took in their paddles as it rocked under the rail, and Hudson stood up, still frowning.

"What's the good of wasting time?" he exclaimed, before Ken could speak. "I've told you that I'm making Suta. I know that the girl on Ku'u gave Prado a message for a man at Suta, and I'm going to Suta to find that man! That's that!"

Ken laughed.

"Washy-washy!" snapped Hudson, and the canoe began to move. Then Ken leaped!

"Ay, ay!" he answered. "But—" "You fancied that Prado was pulling my leg to get shut of me!" went on Hudson hotly. "Well, I've been asking some questions, and, if you want to know, there really is a man named Dick Valentine at Suta. He's a planter there—a young fellow, but in a good way of business, and they speak of him well here."

"I shouldn't wonder! You see—" "How he ever got in touch with the girl at the Island of the Wolf I don't know—but she gave Prado a message for him, and I'm going to carry it," said Hudson. "I'm sorry to turn the Dawn down, and if you want me I'll join up again later, but—" "You'll join up again now, you ass!" said Ken.

Hudson's jaw set. "Is that what you called to me to say?" he demanded.

"Yes. You see—" "I can't and I won't! I've told you so! If that's all you had to say you're wasting

time for nothing!" Hudson turned to the paddlers. "Washy-washy along reef!" he snapped.

"I tell you—" roared King of the Islands. "You've told me enough—"

"Will you listen—" "No!"

The canoe glided away from the ketch. In another moment it would have been gone. King of the Islands put his hand on the rail and leaped. He crashed into the canoe, stumbling among the bare brown legs of the paddlers.

There was a startled howl from the Mu'a boys as the canoe rocked wildly and shipped water. Hudson uttered an exclamation and stared blankly at his shipmate. Ken struggled to his feet.

"You silly swab!" he gasped. "What the dickens are you up to?" roared Hudson. "Do you fancy that you're going to stop me from going back to Suta?"

"Yes!" gasped Ken. Hudson's eyes gleamed.

"You fool!" snapped King of the Islands. His temper was not at its best. "You're making Suta to look for a man who's not there."

"I've told you what I think about that! You can think what you like! Are you going back on the Dawn or into the lagoon?"

Ken looked at him and breathed hard and



THE WORD WAS "DANGER!"

deep. Hot and angry words trembled on his lips. But he choked back his anger.

"Listen to what I have to say, and then you can go to Suta, or to Davy Jones if you like!" he snapped. "Have you forgotten that we picked up a man last night on a wrecked canoe after we left the Island of the Wolf?"

"Yes, I had forgotten—I've got something else to think of," grunted Hudson. "And I don't want to hear about him—"

"I think you do!" snapped Ken. "He's come to at last, and he told me his name—"

"Hang him, and his name! Will you get back to the ketch and let me go on my way?" roared Hudson. "I know what you think, Ken King—I'm a romantic fool to throw over the Dawn and the trade and carry a message for a girl I've never spoken to, and don't ever expect to speak to and have only seen from a distance through the binoculars! Well, think as you like—I'm going my own way! Get back on your ship!"

"His name—"

"I don't want to hear his name or anything about him! Get back on your ship or go into the water!"

"His name's Valentine!" yelled Ken. Hudson almost staggered.

"What?"

"He's named Dick Valentine—and he's the planter of Suta! He's the man you're going to look for! Got that, you dummy?"

Hudson only stared. The canoe was under the rail again, and King of the Islands clambered on board without another word or another look at his mate. He had seldom been so angry, and he did not want to give way to his anger. Hudson stood as if transfixed in the rocking canoe, staring blankly after King of the Islands.

Then he clambered up the side and swung himself to the deck, leaving the canoe and its crew to wait.

The Wolf's Orders

"GOOMOO!" roared O Lobo. The man who had been called the Wolf when he sailed the Pacific stood in the green-painted veranda of the house on the island of Ku'u.

His voice was powerful and rang far down the beach and across the lagoon. Seventy years and more had not tamed the fierceness of O Lobo or sapped his strength. His hair and beard were white, in startling contrast to the dark swarthinness of his face; his eyes sunken almost to pin-points, but gleaming and glinting from their wrinkled sockets. At his call a brawny black Ysabel boy came running up the beach.

The brawny Solomon Islander ducked his fuzzy head and stood almost cringing under the glaring eyes of the old Portuguese. There were a dozen Solomon Islanders, from the island of Ysabel, on Ku'u, and the old Wolf was the only white man. Many strange tales were told of the Island of the Wolf, on Pacific beaches, and the strangest of all was that he ran the island with a bunch of black cannibals, who trembled at his frown. He ruled them as he had ruled his crew, long years ago, when he had sailed as a slave-trader.

The black boys dived for pearl-oysters in the lagoon. Once in six months Pedro Prado came to Ku'u to buy pearls. No other visitor ever landed on the island. Even for stores, when they were needed, O Lobo dispatched a whaleboat to Suta, with a black crew—he never left the island, or allowed any craft in the lagoon.

Even old Prado's boat was no longer permitted to enter since some of his boat's crew had once ventured to land on the beach. That was why the pearl-buyer had paid his last call in the Dawn—King of the Islands standing off the reef while he landed. And so it was that the mate of the Dawn had, by chance, seen the mysterious girl of Ku'u, whose existence was rumoured on all the beaches, and regarded more or less as a fable.

"You see the senhora, eye belong you?" snapped O Lobo, glaring down at the Ysabel boy.

"Yessar!" faltered Goomoo. "That feller

Mary go along reef, sar, along feller cave he stop!"

O Lobo made a gesture of dismissal, and tramped heavily down the steps from the veranda. With a stride that was swift and vigorous, in spite of his age, he passed along the beach and entered a path in the palm groves.

The path led through the trees to the outer reef. Ku'u was an atoll; merely a circle of rock and earth around a lagoon. On the inner rim was the beach; on the outer, rugged coral rocks that fronted the surf of the Pacific. From the inner beach, it was little more than half a mile, through the trees, to the outer reef. Much of the reef was submerged, but here and there some volcanic action had forced up the rocks. And on the north side of the island there were craggy cliffs of mingled basalt and coral, in wild confusion. It was to this spot that the path led that O Lobo was following.

From the path he came into a narrow way, little more than a fissure between high rocks. Beyond lay the open reef and the sea. The fissure opened wider towards the reef, and in the high rock a great cave yawned, facing towards the Pacific. At the mouth of the cave a slim and graceful form stood—the mysterious girl of Ku'u, with her eyes fixed on the sea.

So intent was her gaze that she did not see or hear the old Portuguese. O Lobo came to a halt at a little distance, his sunken eyes fixed on her. For several minutes he stood in silence, the girl, still unaware that he was there, gazing fixedly at the sea, motionless as a statue. There was a cruel, sneering grin on the old brown, wrinkled face as O Lobo watched. It was possible that O Lobo had some spot of affection for his dead brother's granddaughter. But his savage old heart was not one to be deeply touched by any emotion. He broke the silence suddenly.

"Catalina!" His voice was like a savage bark.

The girl turned swiftly. Her large dark eyes fixed on O Lobo with a strange mingling of terror and defiance.

He came tramping towards her over the rough coral.

"Elle ja voltou?" grinned O Lobo. Catalina did not answer, and the old slave-trader's savage scowl grew blacker.

"Will you speak?" he snapped in English. "You know that he has not come back!" said Dona Catalina. "Why do you ask me? I hope that he will never come back, now that you know."

"And I," snarled O Lobo, "hope that he will come! I shall be glad to see this young senhor whom I have never seen, and welcome him to my island!"

"Your island!" said Catalina, in a low voice.

"Neither you nor he will dispute it with me if I lay hands on him!" said O Lobo grimly. "What is he? Who is he? I have asked you many times—his name?"

"I will not tell you."

"Did you tell Prado when he was here to buy my pearls?" snarled O Lobo. "You found opportunity to speak to him—what did you tell him?"

The girl did not answer.

"If you told him, he will not dare to carry a message," said O Lobo. "I would wring his skinny neck with these hands if he babbled of my affairs on other islands! Do you think that he would dare?"

The girl did not speak, but her look told how little she expected to come of the appeal she had made to the old pearl-buyer.

"A sailor, perhaps?" O Lobo's pin-point eyes watched her face. "Perhaps on the ketch that brought Prado here to buy my pearls."

She did not speak.

"You think he will come back?" said O Lobo. "It is because you fancy that he will come back that you come to this cave to watch the sea. How often has he come, and you have seen him in this cave?"

No answer.

"Go!" The old ruffian raised his hand and pointed to the narrow way between the rocks. "Go! I will wait and watch for this unknown senhor—rely upon it that he shall be welcomed to Ku'u"

For a moment or two the girl hesitated. Then, as the old desperado scowled more blackly and threateningly, she turned and followed the path through the rocks and disappeared. O Lobo watched her, scowling, then sat on a coral rock at the mouth of the cave, and watched the sea in his turn. But only the rolling blue waters met his eyes.

Hudson Carries On

"DANGER!"

"That was the message!" said Hudson. He stood by the bunk in the little state-room in which lay the man who had been saved from the sea.

Dick Valentine, the planter of Suta, was a stalwart fellow, in the early twenties; but he was almost as weak as an infant now. He had spent long, long hours in the Pacific, with an injured leg, clinging to his wrecked canoe, till the Dawn had picked him up. He had lain unconscious through the day, and now that he had his senses again, he could hardly move.

Kit Hudson was eyeing him rather curiously and uncertainly. He liked Valentine on his looks, but the lovely face of the girl on Ku'u had made a deep impression on Hudson's rather susceptible mind, and all sorts of romantic ideas had been forming vaguely in his thoughts. So it was not exactly gratifying to him to discover that there was a "Dick Valentine" in the business at all!

"But how—" asked Valentine.

"The girl got a word with old Prado, at Ku'u—I watched through the binoculars, and saw her making some appeal to him," Hudson explained. "I made him cough it up. That was it."

"I see!" The planter drew a deep breath. "It must mean that O Lobo has found out—his niggers were always watching—he knows that I visit the island, and Catalina would have sent me warning—"

"Catalina!" repeated Hudson. "That is her name—"

"Oh!"

King of the Islands, standing in the doorway of the state-room, smiled faintly. He had guessed what was in Hudson's thoughts, with regard to the girl, though the man from Suta obviously had no idea of it. The fact that the young planter spoke of her as Catalina showed fairly plainly how matters stood.

"But I must go!" said Valentine. "Danger or no danger, I must go! She must have waited for me in the cave, and I was drifting on the water, after some fool ran down my canoe in the dark. What will she think if I do not return? That danger has frightened me away, perhaps!"

He made a movement to rise from the bunk. The effort sent a pang of pain through his sprained leg, and he sank back again, white as chalk, shutting his teeth on a groan.

"You can't go," said Ken. "It'll be a week before you can stand again, Valentine."

"She must know!" muttered Valentine. "I can send her no word—no man dare land on Ku'u. Oh, what foul luck that I was wrecked last night. I have made the run a dozen times—and now—"

"If that old pirate knows that you visit Ku'u, your accident may have saved your life," said Ken. "He fired on my boat there, simply for putting into the lagoon. He would shoot you down at sight—"

"I know. I have risked it often enough. He never knew—"

"From that message, you can guess that he knows now."

"Yes, yes; some of the Ysabel boys have watched, and found out. And last night was to have been the last time," groaned Valentine. "I should have taken her away—safe back to Suta. Once in Suta, O Lobo could rage as he liked. I had it all fixed. She was to stay with the missionary and his wife at Suta. She has promised to marry me—"

"Oh!" murmured Hudson.

"Then she would be safe from that old villain. She is willing to let him keep the island for as long as he lasts, if he will let her go. But he would not believe that, of course. That is why he guards her there.

Why, he trusts no man, and no woman, either. His brother's granddaughter, Ku'u belongs to her. She is a prisoner on her own island. And I lie here like a log—” He broke off.

“Put me ashore here at Mu'a, Captain King,” he went on. “I must make Ku'u, whether I can stand or not. Now that I know that the old pirate knows, I shall take care; but I must go. She will believe that she is deserted—that I dare not come. She will watch at the cave—”

He broke off again, a flush in his pale face. He had been speaking rather to himself than to the shipmates.

“I must go,” he said. And he made another effort to drag himself from the bunk. He sank back again, almost fainting. “I'll put you ashore here, if you wish,” said Ken. “My Kanakas will carry you. You cannot walk, but—”

“But you can't make Ku'u,” said Kit Hudson quietly.

“I must, I tell you!” groaned Valentine. “You can't! But if you're anxious, you can send word to—Miss Catalina—”

“I tell you, no man dare land on that island!”

“I dare!” said Hudson.

Valentine stared at him.

“I'll make Ku'u, and carry any message you like,” said the mate of the Dawn, and he avoided glancing at King of the Islands as he spoke. He knew, however, that Ken had compressed his lips.

The planter lay breathing hard and painfully. Twice he shook his head, but his eyes were fixed eagerly on Hudson all the time.

“It is death if O Lobo should see you, and the message shows that the old Wolf is now on the watch,” he muttered.

“I can take care of myself,” said Hudson carelessly. “I've a canoe at hand. Give me my bearings, and I'll make Ku'u.”

King of the Islands did not speak. He turned quietly, and went on deck. He had taken it for granted that when Hudson had delivered the warning message to the planter, the matter would be at an end, and that his mate would sail with him, the dispute forgotten. Only too clearly, however, it was not at an end.

On deck, Koko, the boatswain, gave him an inquiring glance. All the crew were wondering why the Dawn did not sail.

“Feller hook he comey up, sar?” asked Koko.

Ken shook his head. He stood by the taffrail waiting for Hudson. Below, there was a murmur of voices.

The canoe still waited under the rail, one of the brown boys holding on. That canoe had been hired for a run down to Suta. Ku'u was less than half the distance, but it was a long trip. Ken had a kind heart, and he could feel for the young planter who lay helpless in the bunk. But he was a trader with dates to keep, and to hang on for days at Mu'a while Kit Hudson carried a lover's message was rather too much for his patience. The Dawn was ready for sea, and had to pull out.

It was a quarter of an hour before Kit came on deck. Without looking at Ken he crossed to the side.

“Hudson.” Ken's voice was very quiet.

The mate looked round. His face was set and obstinate.

“Well?” he rapped.

“Are you sailing?”

“Not unless you wait till I get back from Ku'u.”

“The hook comes up as soon as I've landed Valentine!” said Ken sharply.

“That's that, then!” said Hudson.

And, without another word, he dropped over the rail into the canoe, and the brown boys paddled away for the reef passage.

Deserted by His Crew

“No can, sar,” said Ulumo, chief of the canoe crew. And the Mu'a boys, taking in their paddles, looked at the mate of the Dawn, their brown faces expressing very clearly the fact that they were in full agreement with Ulumo.



THE EDITOR TALKS

Address your letters to:
The Editor, MODERN BOY,
Fleetway House,
Farringdon Street,
London, E.C.4.

THOUGHT that when Barry Joynson was writing for MODERN BOY a few weeks ago, he must be one of the youngest authors working to-day. Eighteen is certainly an early age at which to get one's work published, but Barry will be sorry to learn that his record has been easily beaten. David Statler, of Memphis, Tennessee, is only eleven years old, but he has just had his first novel printed. It is called “Roaring Guns,” and it has caused a sensation in America.

It all started when David's aunt arrived on a visit. She read the book that he had written about cowboys and Indians, and knowing that the public is always glad to read something unusual, showed it to a friend of hers who was a writer. In a short time a firm of New York publishers had “Roaring Guns” in their possession and decided to print it. They did, and there was a rush to buy it.

Now here I should tell you that “Roaring Guns” isn't an ordinary Western tale. Tom Mix films and radio plays gave David his background, and then he began to write about the West as he imagined it. In an ordinary cowboy story it's not surprising if somebody gets shot in the course of a chapter—in fact, you almost expect it. You'll gather that “Roaring Guns” is full of action when I tell you that, in one chapter more than eight hundred characters are shot, tomahawked, or otherwise disposed of. Moreover, the hero—Tom—is definitely tough. Here's an extract, given word for word as David wrote it, that shows you just what happens when he goes into action:

“Tom was on his horse with the bandits after him. Suddenly a million Indians rushed at him. The air was thick with arrows and shots . . . knives were shattered into bits, guns were lost, axes were broken, rifles were splitting in two, and men were shouting.

Kit Hudson's jaw squared.

“Too much fright along Portugee feller, sar,” said Ulumo.

“Plenty too much fright along that feller island, sar,” said the other boys, in a sort of chorus.

The canoe was already far from Mu'a, which had sunk out of sight on the sunset-reddened sea-rim. So far, the brown boys had paddled swiftly and cheerfully. They were getting good pay for the trip, and they were satisfied. But when Hudson gave steering directions for the Island of the Wolf, there was a sudden change.

The reputation of that mysterious island was known, and the eyes of the brown boys fairly popped at the idea of making Ku'u.

Hudson had not given the matter a thought when he changed his plans after seeing the young planter on board the Dawn. Not that it would have served him, had he thought about it; for there was not a brown boy on Mu'a who could have been hired, for love or money, to make the trip to the dreaded Island of the Wolf. The mere name of Ku'u made them take in their paddles.

“White master he say Suta,” complained Ulumo. “Now he say Ku'u. This feller too much fright go along Ku'u.”

“Too much fright along Portugee feller, sar,” chorused the crew. “Too much fright along Solomon Island feller.”

Kit Hudson breathed hard and deep. Sitting in the stern of the canoe, while the brown boys paddled, he had not been in a happy mood. He had parted with his

Tom jerked a rifle up to his shoulder and began shooting lead in every direction. Men fell to the ground with Tom's bullets in their hearts.” Well, he could hardly miss, if there were a million of his attackers, could he?

Incidentally, David draws the illustrations for his own stories, and you can believe me when I say that they've got as much life as his writing. One of the best things in the book is the fact that the villain, Bill Jhonson (author's spelling) is killed twice in three pages. This is unusual, but, as I've said before, “Roaring Guns” is an unusual book.

I was talking to Murra Roberts the other day, when a letter from a reader named Douglas Weedon, who lives in Luton, was delivered. Douglas asked some interesting questions about the early Captain Justice stories. That set me thinking, and I realised that there must be thousands of you who have often wondered much the same things, so I'm taking this opportunity of telling you something about those early stories.

Captain Justice first appeared in “Captain Justice—Modern Pirate,” published in MODERN BOY in November, 1930. Forced to resign his commission in the Navy, Justice was fighting the men who ruined and killed his father. In those days, Justice and his comrades were outlaws, fighting a lone fight against the world. It was not until two years later, in 1932, that Professor Flaznagel joined the band in “The Flying Cloud,” which appeared in the paper in October of that year. And while I'm talking about Captain Justice, here's a reminder that he'll be back with you very shortly in a great new adventure. Don't miss it!

Your sincere friend,

THE EDITOR

shipmate in anger. But anger had not lasted long. He could understand Ken's feelings. But Ken, after all, had not seen the girl on Ku'u. Hudson had seen her, and that made all the difference. He could see still that lovely, frightened face, full of distress as she made her appeal to the old pearl-buyer. It lingered in his memory, and in his heart, and he was going to help her if he could. Day after day she would watch the sea for the man who could not come. Quixotic or not, he was going to Ku'u, taking his life in his hand, and, though it was heavy on his heart that he had parted with his shipmate, he did not regret his resolve for a moment.

He roused himself from rather gloomy meditations at the words of the brown boys, and his eyes glinted at them under knitted brows. The crew were within their rights. They had been hired for Suta, and they dreaded to go anywhere near Ku'u. But if he had not let loyalty to his shipmate and skipper stand in his way, he was not likely to be stopped by the terrors of the crew.

“You feller boy makee Ku'u!” he snapped. “Two pieces gold money stop along every feller boy, along you makee Ku'u.”

The eyes of the brown boys snapped at the mention of “two pieces gold money.” But all the fuzzy heads were shaken.

“No can, sar,” said Ulumo. “Gold money no good along this feller, s'pose this feller makee kai-kai along Solomon Island boy.”

THE WORD WAS "DANGER!"

"Washy-washy along Ku'u!" roared Hudson.

"No go along Ku'u, sar," said Ulumo. He made a sign to the crew; the canoe swung round, and the brown boys started paddling back to Mu'a.

Kit sprang to his feet, his eyes blazing, his jaw jutting. He had handled rebellious Kanakas before. The fact that there were six of the brawny islanders made no difference.

"You hear me—ear belong you?" roared Hudson. "Washy-washy along Ku'u, along you no wantee me knock seven bells outer you!"

"No washy along Ku'u!" retorted Ulumo. "You no knock seven bells outer this feller, sar. Too much boy along this canoe."

The next moment Hudson's grip was on his brown neck. Ulumo, brawny as he was, sagged and yelled to his comrades. Instantly the paddles were laid in, and the whole crew were clutching at the mate of the Dawn.

The canoe rocked wildly and shipped water as Hudson struggled in the midst of the mob of excited brown boys, his clenched fists hitting like flails. Ulumo went down in the bottom of the canoe half-stunned by a crash between the eyes. Another Kanaka rolled over him, yelling, and then another.

But there were, as Ulumo said, "too much boy along canoe" for one white man to knock seven bells out of them! Hudson crashed down, brown boys sprawling over him. A deep wash of the Pacific came over the gunwale unheeded. What might be the consequence of handling a white master, the crew cared little, in comparison with their fear of approaching the Island of the Wolf.

Hudson got his hand to his hip-pocket and wrenched out his revolver. Crack!

The bullet grazed a brown shoulder. It brought a startled, frightened howl from the Mu'a boys, and the mate of the Dawn was released suddenly. He scrambled to his feet, ankle-deep in the water that had washed into the canoe. He fired again, cutting a chunk of thick hair from a fuzzy head. In terror, the brown boys scrambled along the canoe, and Hudson brandished the smoking revolver at them.

"You feller washy-washy along Ku'u!" he roared savagely. "My word, you no washy plenty too quick, you makee kai-kai along feller shark! You hear me, ear belong you?"

"Oh, yessar!" gasped Ulumo. "You not shootee along this feller boy, sar—this feller washy along Ku'u."

"Get to it!" snapped Hudson.

Unwillingly the brown boys knelt to the paddles again. Fear of O Lobo gave place to fear of the angry white master, with the smoking revolver in his hand. Slowly, the canoe swung round to the south-west.

Hudson sat in the stern, the revolver resting on his knee. He had the canoe crew in hand—so long as he was watchful. But at intervals, a dark eye gleamed round at him, and he knew that if he was off his guard for a moment, a paddle would crash on his head. But they were not going to take him off his guard.

The sun dipped and the canoe paddled swiftly on and on. Whenever the pace slackened, Hudson's voice was heard, and if it was not heeded, a drive from his foot or his fist backed it up.

In the dusk of the stars he heard a low murmuring among the paddlers. Once they ceased to paddle, and looked round at him—threatening shadows in the gloom. But the revolver rose, and they paddled again. Had he closed his eyes for a moment, they would have been on him like so many wildcats, for it was plain that their terrors increased the nearer they drew to the Island of the Wolf.

He was glad when the moon came up. The crew were weary, but there was no rest for them. Hudson had to make Ku'u before dawn. To approach the forbidden island in the daylight was to ask for disaster. Even at night, it was likely that the wary old Wolf was on his guard.

Hudson knew of the cave in the rocks; he knew where to look for the rocky headland in which it opened. It was past midnight when palm-trees standing black against the stars warned him that he was approaching the island. Far out from the shore stretched the coral reefs, through which, as Valentine had told him, ran a narrow channel practicable for a canoe. But it was not easy work in the light of the moon. In rough weather, it would have been impossible to approach the cave—the canoe would have been dashed to fragments on the rocks. But the night was calm, the Pacific rolling peacefully, the tide running in over the reef.

Standing in the canoe, Hudson fixed his eyes on the rocky headland, black against the stars. There was a sudden bump as the canoe scraped on coral, and he staggered.

In a moment he would have recovered his balance, but that moment was enough for the canoe crew, watchful as cats for a chance, palpitating with terror at their near approach to the dreaded island. Two or three of the brown boys shoved him at the same moment, and he toppled over the gunwale. He splashed into a foot of water on the reef, bounding to his feet almost as soon as he fell.

But swift as he was, the terrified Mu'a boys were swifter. The canoe shot away. Swift as an arrow in its flight it fled into the night, and Hudson was left standing knee-deep in water on the reef of Ku'u.

Hudson breathed hard and deep. He had landed on Ku'u, but how he was going to get away again was another matter. Not, it was certain, in the Mu'a canoe!

But he gave that, at the moment, no thought. The water was deepening round him as the tide came in, dashing up the base of the rocky headland. Before long, he would be swimming, if he remained there, and he had to find the cave. The man from Suta had been accustomed to reach it in a canoe. It was, as he had told Hudson, barely above high-water mark at the entrance, though higher farther back in the rock. Kit Hudson had to reach it on foot—or drown on the reef.

The reef ran out from the headland, and at low water, doubtless, could be followed on foot for a considerable distance. But it was all deeply covered now—and in the coral there were fissures, crevices and gaps, hidden by the rolling water.

Again and again, as he picked his way shoreward, Hudson plunged into a hollow in the reef, scrambling out again, drenched and dripping. Only the dark headland, jutting against the stars, guided him. But with steady determination, he kept on, the water now well up to his armpits. It was up to his neck when, at last, his groping hands fastened on what seemed like a shelf of rugged rock, deep in the dark shadows of the headland.

He clambered up. He could see nothing, but he knew that this must be the cave. He stood on solid rock, the water washing almost at his feet.

For several long minutes, he stood there, pumping in breath after his struggle. Then he moved farther into the cavern.

He could not see its extent, but he knew that it was of great size. Behind him, the tide boomed and moaned on the reef. Only a glimmer of the moon came in at the cave-mouth—beyond, all was the densest darkness.

Hudson gave a sudden start and bent his head to listen. From the blackness of the cave came a sound in the silence.

It was no echo of the tide on the reef—it was the sound of a movement—the soft and stealthy tread of a human foot.

He felt his heart beat. According to what the planter had told him, the girl was accustomed to wait at dawn in the cave, when the fierce old-pirate was still sleeping, and the Ysabel boys had not yet left their huts. It was yet an hour to dawn, and Hudson had expected to have to wait. But he knew now that he was not alone in the cave.

He opened his lips to speak—and shut them again. He listened! The sound he had heard was not repeated, but it seemed to him that he could catch suppressed breathing in the darkness. Someone, he was certain, was in the cave, and close at hand. He spoke at last, in a low voice:

"Dona Catalina!" A footstep followed his words. It was as if the one who lurked unseen had been waiting for guidance. Even as he heard the footstep, the mate of the Dawn felt the sudden clutch of grasping hands. He staggered in that sudden powerful grasp.

He knew then that it was not the girl who waited in the cave. Who was it—O Lobo, the fierce old buccaneer himself, or one of the Solomon Islanders? He could see nothing, but he could feel the grip of a man at least as strong as himself. He gave grip for grip, struggling savagely in the darkness.

No word came from the unseen enemy who had attacked him. He caught a sudden gleam of rolling black eyes, and could hear the fierce panting breath, but that was all. The hands that gripped him were strong and powerful, and he needed every ounce of his strength for that desperate struggle, and with gritted teeth, he struggled and fought, reeling to and fro on the rugged coral of the cave floor.



Making Horace Happy!

Harry Wharton & Co., of the Greyfriars Remove, and Horace Hacker, master of the Shell, have never been the best of friends. Hacker—more commonly known as the Acid Drop

—has got the idea into his head that the Removites are a shady lot. Consequently the Famous Five lead Horace "Up the Garden" with a vengeance. Laugh! You'll roar when you read "The Hoaxing of Hacker!" the amusing and amazing school yarn of Harry Wharton & Co., the world-famous chums of Greyfriars. It's a FRANK RICHARDS' story!

The HOAXING of HACKER!

Why not read
it today?

The MAGNET

Of all Newsagents. Every Saturday 2d

Next Week :
MASTER OF MYSTERY ISLAND