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Thrill-Packed CAPTAIN JUSTICE Adventure Starts To-day!

# MODERN BOY

EVERY  
2  
SATURDAY



Breathless Incident from the Captain Justice story—"CITY OF SECRETS"



# SHARK BAIT!

By  
**CHARLES  
HAMILTON**

"The name!" cried the Wolf. "Give me the name of the man who visits my island in secret, or——" His pointing finger completed the threat. The temptation to speak was strong, but Kit Hudson bit back the words that trembled on his lips

## At the Last Moment

**T**HE black fin glided hardly a couple of fathoms from Kit Hudson. It seemed to him for one fearful moment that the shark was turning over to bite. But the fin glided on; the hideous shape disappeared in the blue waters of the lagoon of Ku'u. And the mate of the Dawn, lying in the lapping tide on the edge of the lagoon, drew a deep breath. It could not last much longer now—only minutes.

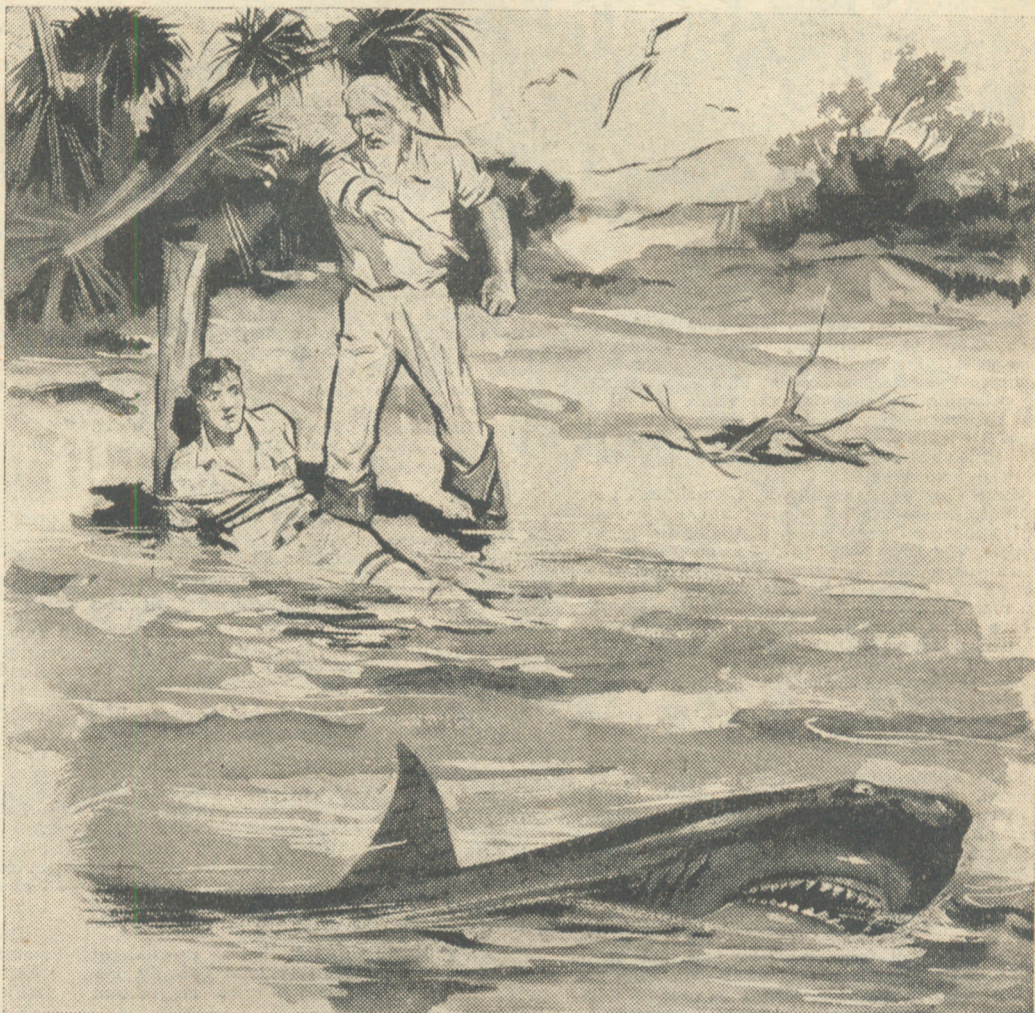
A tapa cord secured him to a stake driven in the sand. One end was knotted round him, the other to the stake, and during long hours in the burning sunshine he had exerted all his strength on it in vain. But his strength was almost gone now—his throat parched, his brain dizzy with the burning heat. But in spite of the heat, a cold sweat broke out on his forehead as the shark glided by so near him.

A crunching footstep in the sand caused him to turn his head. O Lobo was coming—the fierce old buccaneer who ruled that island of mystery and terror; the old Wolf who was still as savage and as ruthless as in the days when he had sailed as a pirate and slave-trader, though his head was white with his seventy-five years.

The tide washed past Hudson, reaching the sea-boots of the old slave-trader as he came to a halt, fixing his pin-point, glittering eyes on the mate of the Dawn. In the heat of the tropic midday it was the old Wolf's custom to take his siesta in the shady veranda of the house on the beach, but he had tramped down for a last word with the mate of the Dawn. His seamed, wrinkled old face grinned down at the bound man.

"The name, my young friend!" said the old Wolf. "Will you give me the name now of the cavalier who visits my island secretly—who would take away Dona Catalina, and claim my island from me?"

Kit Hudson did not speak. He lay half-submerged in the lapping tide, which deepened and deepened. The shark had scented prey, and the black fin glided close again. But the water was not yet deep enough for the demon of the lagoon to reach him; and again the shark passed on—Hudson feeling



his motion in the water as he passed. But he did not speak.

"You came in his place, if you have told me the truth," said O Lobo. "You came with a message for the minha senhora, because her cavalier could not come. If that is the truth, tell me his name, and where I may lay hands on him, and I cut the rope—before the shark reaches you."

Kit Hudson shut his teeth.

The temptation to speak was strong. On Ku'u there was only one to pity his fate—Catalina, the girl to whom he had brought a message which he had not been able to utter. But she could not aid him; she was little more than a prisoner on the island, in fear of the savage old man. His shipmate, King of the Islands, was far away, and could not even know his fate. If he gave the name of Dick Valentine, the planter of Suta—

"The name!" repeated the old Portuguese, watching the changes in Hudson's face. "The name!"

But Kit Hudson did not speak. Dick Valentine lay disabled at Mu'a—defenceless. To give his name was to betray him to death. The mate of the Dawn had known, only too well, that he was taking his life in his hands when he came to the island, and not to save his life could he betray the man who had trusted him. He shut his teeth hard and was silent.

O Lobo waited. Then, with a shrug of the

shoulders, he turned away, and his sea-boots crunched the sand as he tramped up the beach.

A wash of the tide passed over the bound man, and a hideous snout nosed in the sand, but still it did not reach him. A shudder ran through Kit Hudson. It would not be long now.

With an effort, he lifted his head and stared round him dizzily in the blinding sunshine. He had a glimpse of the massive figure of the old pirate disappearing into the veranda of the house a distance away along the beach. Of the man's Ysabel boys he could see nothing. Out on the lagoon he fancied that he glimpsed a tiny canoe, but he was not sure. His head sank again. He leaned it against the stake to support it above the water. Death was at hand—a terrible death—yet from sheer instinct he clung to the last few minutes of life.

His thoughts turned to his shipmate, King of the Islands, with whom he had quarrelled when he had taken up that quixotic mission for a man he hardly knew, to carry word to a girl to whom he had never spoken. He thought of the ketch, of King of the Islands pacing the deck, of the brown face of Koko, the boatswain; of the Hiva-Oa crew—he would never see them again—and Ken King would never know what had happened.

(Continued on page 14)



## SHARK BAIT! (Continued)

There was a splashing from the lagoon, and he shuddered. The shark would not be long now. The splashing drove ripples over his face, and something that glided through the deepening water touched him. He gave himself up for lost—it was the shearing jaws of the shark at last! And then, in wonder, he realized that it was not. It was not the rending jaws—it was the prow of a canoe!

He raised his head. A shadow fell on him; the shadow of a figure in a canoe. The splashing was caused by a paddle beating the water to scare away the shark. Scarcely able to believe his eyes, Kit Hudson looked at the figure in the little canoe—it was that of Catalina, the mysterious girl of Ku'u. He gazed at her, speechless. She was there to save him, if she could! He did not need telling that!

She laid down the paddle, and there was a flash in the sunshine as she leaned over the side of the canoe, a knife in her hand. With one hand she held to the stake to keep the canoe steady, with the other she cut and cut at the rope. It parted—he was free from the stake. The keen blade still cut and cut, and the ropes dropped from his aching, bound arms. She did not speak, but passed the knife into his hand, and he reached down and cut the rope on his ankles. Then her voice came in a soft whisper:

"He sleeps—O Lobo sleeps! I have been waiting till he slept—I could not come while his eyes were open. The black boys cannot see us—at least, I think they cannot."

"Thanks!" muttered Kit Hudson. He could hardly stir his limbs, numbed and aching from the ropes. But he held to the low gunwale of the canoe.

"You will take the canoe!" she breathed. "They will see you when you leave the beach—but it is a chance; it may be death on the sea, but it is death to linger on this terrible island." Her dark, frightened eyes shot a glance up the beach, but there was no sign of a peering black face. "There is food and water in the canoe—it is a chance."

"Thanks!" repeated Hudson in a choking voice.

"You came from him—from the *senhor* of Suta?" whispered Catalina.

"Yes, yes! From Dick Valentine," muttered Hudson, "with word from him."

"Why did he not come?"

"He was wrecked in his canoe—we picked him up at sea, on the Dawn. He was hurt—a sprained leg. He is at Mu'a now—he'll come when he can. I came to tell you—and fell into the hands of that demon—" Hudson broke off. "But leave me—leave me! If he should see you here—"

The girl was trembling. It was amazing, to Hudson, that she had found the courage to help him, so deep was her terror of the old Wolf.

"Take the canoe, and Heaven help you!" she whispered.

He held the canoe while she leaped lightly to the sand, and his eyes followed her graceful figure until she disappeared up the beach.

### A Race for Life!

**K**IT HUDSON lay in the little canoe, waiting for the strength to revive in his aching, exhausted limbs. As he lay, he drank fresh, cool water that was sweeter than nectar to his parched, cracked lips. Until he pushed out from the beach, he would not come into view of the blacks, and the Wolf was sleeping. He had time—and he waited to recover his strength, to make a desperate attempt to escape from that island of terror.

There was food, and there was water, packed in the little canoe. Dona Catalina had done all that she could—more than Hudson had ever dreamed that she would dare to do, at the risk of rousing the fury of the savage old pirate. To slip out to sea in a tiny canoe with such supplies was hardly more than asking for death on the Pacific; but it was a chance of life, and it came almost like a miracle to the mate of the Dawn. If he escaped from the lagoon, he was willing to chance the rest.

He knew the reef passage, but it was across the lagoon from where he lay. The moment he was seen, there would be fierce pursuit, and whizzing bullets. He knew, only too well, how slight the chance of escape was. But it was like wine to him to feel himself free, and able to fight for his life. The knife that had severed his bonds lay in the canoe. It was a weapon, if the worst came. And if he failed to escape from the lagoon, there was yet a chance of going to cover in the bush, and waiting for dark to make another attempt.

He sat up at last and grasped the paddle. The disappointed shark was still nosing about the stake under the deepening water. He gave a glance up the beach. No one was in sight. The quenching of his thirst seemed to have given him new life, and he was ready for the effort.

The paddle flashed in the water, and the canoe shot out from the beach. He had taken hardly half a dozen strokes, when there was a startled shout from the palms up the shore. He was seen!

Shout on shout came from the startled Ysabel boys. Some of them ran down the beach. Goomoo ran up to the bungalow to call his master. Hudson paddled hard.

There was a splash in the water close by the canoe, then a crash at his side. The black boys were hurling fragments of coral. They dropped all round the canoe. Some crashed into it; one came on his shoulder with a hard knock. He paddled desperately, and shot out of range of the whizzing rocks.

The broad lagoon was before him. Far across it the tide of the Pacific, foaming and bubbling in the reef channel. Fragments of coral dropped into the water behind him. All the better, so long as the fuzzy-headed blacks did not rush for the whaleboat, moored near at hand, and pull after him. He was already well out from the shore, but there came a roar of rage that told him that O Lobo was awakened.

He gave a swift glance at the veranda high above the beach. The dark, bronze face, with its bristling, white beard, was glaring over the rail. He caught a glint in the sunshine. O Lobo was jamming a rifle to his shoulder, and taking aim. Hudson drove at the paddle with desperate strength.

Crack, crack, crack! came the rifle-shots, the bullets spattering the water all round the canoe. A bullet tore away a fragment of wood, another grazed Hudson's cheek. Another and another struck the canoe.

While O Lobo blazed away, the Ysabel boys were running for the whaleboat. Looking back, Hudson could see the boat in motion, with six brawny blacks straining at the oars, and Goomoo standing up watching, a spear in his black hand, a savage grin on his face.

Bullets still splashed; but the range was growing too long now, and they missed the canoe by yards. The whaleboat was a greater peril, and Hudson knew that there was no chance. Madly as he paddled, the whaleboat drew nearer and nearer. And Goomoo stood, spear in hand, to thrust him through as he was overtaken—and they were overhauling him fast.

Hudson was not beaten yet. If he paddled on for the reef passage, he would be run down before he was half-across the lagoon. He knew that now. He swerved from his course, to strike the beach at the nearest point. Back of the beach were the thick palm woods—wild and tangled bush where there was a chance of going to cover.

There was a yell from the whaleboat as he changed his course. The blacks knew his game as well as if he had told them. Fast on his traces came the boat—faster and faster.

He had a glimpse of O Lobo striding on the beach, rifle in hand. He, too, had seen Hudson's intention, and was tramping round the beach to intercept him, if he could. But Hudson had no fear of that. He was aiming at a point far distant from the Wolf. If he reached it at all, he would do so long before the old buccaner. It was the pursuing whaleboat that was his danger.

To his ears, as he paddled madly, came the dash of oars. The whaleboat was almost upon him now, Goomoo's hand drawn back for the thrust of the spear.

But the nose of the canoe was grinding into sand. Hudson dropped the paddle, caught up the knife, and leaped out, knee-deep in water, trampling ashore. It seemed hardly a moment later that the whaleboat crashed on the beach, and the yelling blacks were tumbling out. Twenty yards of shelving sand, and then the cover of the trees.

Hudson pelted up the beach, with the patter of bare feet behind him. He felt, rather than knew, that Goomoo was upon him, that the spear was about to drive. He was still only half-way to the palms, and he spun round, the knife gripped in his hand. The spear missed him by a yard as he turned.

From Koko, the brown boatswain of the Dawn, Hudson had learned the Kanaka trick of throwing a knife. It stood him in good stead now. Like a flash of light, the whizzing knife flew, crashed on a bare, black shoulder, and was buried almost to the hilt.

Yelling, Goomoo staggered back, and fell. Before he touched the sand, Hudson was running again, the whaleboat's crew whooping after him up the beach. They passed the sprawling Goomoo unheeded, panting after the mate of the Dawn. But Kit Hudson had reached the palms now, and darted in among the thick, slanting, bewildering trunks. He was at home in the bush—the equal of any black man at the bush game.

From the distance came the enraged roar of O Lobo, answered by the yelling of the blacks. But Kit Hudson was gone from their sight, winding in the deep recesses of the tangled bush—breathless, sweating, panting, torn by thorns, but out of the sight and out of the hands of his enemies.

"Corpo de Deos!" The words came plainly to the ears of Kit Hudson, lying silent, still. Death was as close to him at that moment as when he had lain on the edge of the lagoon, and the shark had nosed in seeking him.

The hot afternoon was wearing on, and the hunt had been hard and fierce. Through bewildering palms, by tangled bush where there was no path, the mate of the Dawn had twisted and turned, never out of sound of the howling Ysabel boys, but never in their sight.

He was spent, and despair was in his heart when the howling hunt, closing on him, drove him back from the bush to the beach. They were close after him. In a few minutes they would know that he had quitted the bush, and would be howling after him in the open.

On the sand lay a draggled patch of seaweed, left by the high tide. It put the sudden idea into Kit Hudson's head, and he acted on it. On his knees, he scooped a hole, then plunged into it, covering himself from neck to feet, and dragging the shaggy straggle of seaweed over his head.

The heat, in the hot sand, was baking; the smell of the seaweed over his head poisonous. But it was the last chance of life. His heart beat like a hammer at the padding of bare feet on the sand. The running feet passed; the Ysabel boy swerving to avoid planting his naked feet on the rough seaweed, never dreaming of what it hid!

Minutes passed, but the yelling and howling of the Ysabel boys still came to Kit's ears. Then came the heavy tramp of sea-boots, and the snarling, growling voice of O Lobo.

"Corpo de Deos! Em breve estara escuro!" The old Portuguese was muttering savagely in his own tongue. Hudson did not know the language, but he could guess that O Lobo was saying that it would soon be dark. After dark it would be useless to prolong the hunt. He would be safe till daybreak. Might, perhaps, have a chance of getting hold of the canoe again. If only the night would come!

O Lobo was standing hardly six feet from him—that patch of seaweed fairly under his beak of a nose. He did not dream that it hid the head of a man whose limbs were buried in the soft sand.

Padding bare feet came out of the bush. "You feller boy, you see that white feller, eye belong you?" O Lobo shouted, in the *beche-de-mer*.

"No see that feller, sar, eye belong me."



"You find that feller, close up!" roared the old Wolf. "You kill dead that feller, or you go finish along sting-ray tail, you feller boy. S'pose you no findee that white feller, me kill you plenty too much!"

The padding footsteps scattered again. For two or three minutes the Wolf stood, cursing in Portuguese. Then, with infinite relief, Hudson heard the heavy sea-boots tramp away.

But he did not stir. Night was at hand, but the red sunset still burned. Faintly, but unceasingly, came the calling and howling of the Solomon Island boys, scattering round the circling beach of the lagoon, hunting and tracking in the bush. But no footstep came near to the hidden mate again, and slowly the red faded out of the sky, and the dusk deepened and darkened over the terrible island of Ku'u. But it was not till the stars were shining down from the dark blue that Kit Hudson ventured to slip the foul seaweed from his head, and crawl out of the hot sand, sweating, aching, but with a night, at least, of life left to him.

## Whizzing Lead

**K**ING OF THE ISLANDS stood on the deck of the Dawn, and in the glimmer of sunrise, looked at the island in the offing. Ken's eyes had not closed during the long and weary night, while the ketch was beating down from Mu'a to Ku'u. And with the first ray of the rising sun, he saw the Island of the Wolf, far on the starboard bow. He rapped an order to Koko at the wheel, and the ketch ran on for the reef passage, though, as Ken knew, that passage would not admit his ship. It would admit his boat, however, and his boat was going in. King of the Islands was going to demand an account of his shipmate from the Wolf.

"That's the island!" Dick Valentine, the planter of Suta, lay in a Madeira chair on deck, his bandaged leg stretched before him. "Half an hour more, King of the Islands—"

Ken nodded. He had taken a revolver from his pocket, and was examining it with care. He knew that he would want it when he pushed into the lagoon. O Lobo would fire at sight. But O Lobo's rifle and the knives of the Ysabel boys would not stop King of the Islands seeking his shipmate.

"Your mate's on the island," muttered Valentine, his eyes turning to the surf that creamed over the reef, and the palms that nodded against the lightning sky. "You may find him alive—" But his voice faltered as he spoke.

A day and a night had passed since the canoe crew from Mu'a had deserted the mate of the Dawn on Ku'u, and it was scarcely possible that the Wolf had not discovered him. And if he had, Kit Hudson was a dead man.

"If he lives, I shall find him," said Ken quietly. "If not, O Lobo shall pay. For twenty years he's lurked on that island, and the law has forgotten him. But if I've lost my shipmate at his hands, I'll hang him from the boom of my ketch!"

The Dawn ran down to the reef, and hovered opposite the passage. Ken rapped an order, and the whaleboat was lowered. Valentine made an effort to rise from the Madeira chair.

"You'll give me a place in your boat?" he said.

"You're in no state for a scrap," said Ken. "There'll be fighting as soon as my boat pushes into the lagoon, and if the blacks back up their master, it will be hard fighting."

"Lend me a revolver, and give me a place in your boat!"

"As you like."

Koko and Lompo lowered the planter into the whaleboat. He sat in the stern, a revolver in his hand. Koko followed his white master into the boat, and rifles were handed down for the boat's crew—Lompo and Kolulo, Tomoo and Lufu. Only Danny, the cooky-boy, was left on the Dawn. Ken needed all the force he could muster. There were a dozen black boys on the island—fierce Solo-

mon Islanders—and there was little doubt that they would fight. Even the disabled planter was likely to be useful. He could not stand upon his feet, but he could handle a revolver.

The Kanakas pulled for the reef passage. From the interior of the island came a report. Ken started as he heard it.

Again and again came a ringing rifle-shot. It was the Wolf. The black boys were not likely to be handling firearms. At what, at whom, was O Lobo loosing off his rifle? The Dawn's boat, as yet, was unseen. Did it mean that Hudson—

"Pull!" rapped King of the Islands. "Washy-washy along lagoon, you feller boy. Washy plenty too quick!"

The Hiva-Oa boys strained at the oars. The boat swept into the reef passage. Ken King stood up, revolver in hand, finger on trigger as it swept into the shining lagoon.

Kit Hudson lay on the white beach in the glimmer of sunrise, his eyes on the lagoon, lightening and brightening as the sun came up. Far out on the water a moving object drifted and bobbed, and for some time the mate of the Dawn wondered what it was. And then he knew—it was the canoe. After he had had to abandon it, the blacks had not stopped to secure it, and it had floated off. It was far out, but Hudson's eyes gleamed as he watched it, and his resolve was taken at once. There were sharks in the lagoon, and a swimmer ran deadly risks. But in the distance he could hear the roar of O Lobo, the calling voices of the Ysabel boys. To twist and wind and turn in the tangled bush during a long, burning day—that was a less hopeful prospect than a swim out to the drifting canoe.

Hudson slipped into the water. The canoe was a quarter of a mile out—a tiny object, bobbing on the water. He swam with steady, powerful strokes.

He was close to the canoe when something brushed by him, sending a chill of horror to his heart. He knew what it was as he felt the rasp-like scrape of the rough skin. A shark had slid by, so close that it touched him. Next moment, he knew that the fish had turned on him, and he caught a gleam of white on the water. He dived on the instant and heard the snap of the jaws as he went deep down.

He came up panting, staring round for the canoe. He was almost touching it. He grasped the low gunwale, and scrambled in. And even as he did so, it rocked as the shark struck it in snapping again. But he was in the canoe, and the terrible jaws had missed him.

He lay panting, his heart beating in great throbs. Over the gunwale he could see the shark circling round, hungry for prey. Another and another hideous shape loomed through the clear water. But they could not reach him. He was safe from those fearful teeth. He dragged himself up at last. The paddle was still lying where he had dropped it the previous day. He grasped it, and dipped it into the water. As he did so, there came the roar of a rifle from the beach, and a bullet clipped by his head.

O Lobo had seen him. He stood on the beach, the rifle to his shoulder, firing. Up and down the beach were scattered the Ysabel boys. They were at a distance from the house opposite which the whaleboat was moored, and he saw the whole mob go scuttling along the beach for the boat. But they were far from it. They could never get the whaleboat out before he made the reef. If he escaped the bullets of O Lobo's rifle—

Keeping as low as he could, he paddled for the reef. O Lobo was not firing again. For a moment Hudson fancied, and hoped, that he had gone round the lagoon with the black boys for the boat. Then he saw that the old slave-trader was striding along the beach in the opposite direction—towards the passage in the reef! The mate of the Dawn gritted his teeth. The old ruffian knew, as well as he did, that the boat could never be launched in time to run him down, and was hurrying to the reef passage, there to riddle him with bullets as he headed for the open sea.

He paddled desperately. Almost at the

passage in the reef, he saw the massive figure of the old slave-trader halt. Bang! roared the rifle—and bang again! Hudson felt the bullet clip a lock of hair from his head—and then there was a numbing shock in his hand as a bullet crashed on the paddle, smashing it from his grasp.

He gave a groan of despair as the broken paddle slipped away, his last chance of life gone. He heard a yell of savage triumph from the old slave-trader, and his glittering eye gleamed along the rifle as he took aim for the death-shot. And even as Kit Hudson looked for death, a whaleboat came sweeping in from the sea. And standing in the stern, Kit Hudson saw King of the Islands.

"Hudson!" cried Ken. "O Lobo!" breathed Valentine, pointing to the tall figure on the rock.

King of the Islands threw up his revolver and fired.

Rifle and revolver rang together, the two reports blending into one. But Ken's shot was a fraction of a second the swifter, and the rifle sagged, even as O Lobo pressed the trigger.

Kit Hudson felt the bullet whip past his ear, missing him by inches. But Ken King had not missed. It was a hasty shot, and it gave but a slight wound—but it saved the life of his shipmate. The rifle fell from O Lobo's hands, clattering on the rock, and he staggered. On the very verge of the high rock, over the lagoon waters, he staggered and lurched, crashing headlong into the lagoon.

"Pull!" shouted Ken, "Washy-washy along feller stop along water."

The whaleboat shot on. Ken leaned over the gunwale with hand ready to grasp as the boat surged on to the spot where the old buccaneer had crashed into the water. But neither his eyes nor any other eyes were ever to see again the fierce old Wolf. The sharks had got him!

The whaleboat surged on to the canoe. The planter, with a pale face, watched the reddened water where O Lobo had disappeared—and shivered. But Ken King was grasping the hand of his shipmate. Like a man in a dream, Kit Hudson stepped into the whaleboat. He looked at Ken—he looked at Koko's grinning brown face—at the Hiva-Oa boys sitting to the oars—and his eyes came back to King of the Islands, who was still gripping his hand.

"Ken!" he muttered. "You came—"  
"Did you think I should leave you to it when I learned that you were stranded here? The Dawn's outside the reef," said Ken, "waiting for her mate to rejoin, Kit."

Hudson pressed his hand. "But we're pulling on to the beach," said King of the Islands. "Somebody's there that our friend Valentine wishes badly to see—and O Lobo will not stand in his way now; and I fancy the black boys won't give any trouble without him. Washy-washy along beach, you feller boy."

The whaleboat pulled on across the lagoon. Dick Valentine's eyes were fixed on the veranda of the house, where a figure in white could be seen.

A hand was waved, and the planter waved back. Scuttling black figures vanishing into the bush was all that was seen of the Ysabel boys. The boat came to the landing-place, and the shipmates helped the planter ashore and up to the veranda. There they left him. They did not reckon that they were wanted on the scene when he met Dona Catalina.

**A** COUPLE of days later, the Dawn was pulling out of Suta. From the window of the missionary's house, Dick Valentine waved farewell, and by his side a graceful figure stood and waved.

Kit Hudson was still looking back, when the faces at the window faded, and could no longer be seen. King of the Islands glanced at him, but Hudson was deep in thought, and the boy trader wondered whether his shipmate was thinking of that quarrel at Mu'a. But he caught a grin on Koko's brown face.

"Tinkee along feller Mary, sar!" murmured Koko.

And Ken grinned, too.

THE END