

Foreword

It is a misfortune to some fiction-writers that fiction and unverity in the average person's mind mean one and the same thing. Several years ago I published a South Sea novel. The action was placed in the Solomon Islands. The action was praised by the critics and reviewers as a highly creditable effort of the imagination. As regards reality—they said there wasn't any. Of course, as every one knew, kinky-haired cannibals no longer obtained on the earth's surface, much less ran around with nothing on, chopping off one another's heads, and, on occasion, a white man's head as well.

Now listen. I am writing these lines in Honolulu, Hawaii. Yesterday, on the beach at Waikiki, a stranger spoke to me. He mentioned a mutual friend, Captain Kellar. When I was wrecked in the Solomons on the blackbirder, the *Minota*, it was Captain Kellar, master of the blackbirder, the *Eugenie*, who rescued me. The blacks had taken Captain Kellar's head, the stranger told me. He knew. He had represented Captain Kellar's mother in settling up the estate.

Listen. I received a letter the other day from Mr. C. M. Woodford, Resident Commissioner of the British Solomons. He was back at his post, after a long furlough to England, where he had entered his son into Oxford. A search of the shelves of almost any public library will bring to light a book entitled, "A Naturalist Among the Head Hunters." Mr. C. M. Woodford is the naturalist. He wrote the book.

To return to his letter. In the course of the day's work he casually and briefly mentioned a particular job he had just got off his hands. His absence in England had been the cause of delay. The job had been to make a punitive expedition to a neighbouring island, and, incidentally, to recover the heads of some mutual friends of ours—a white-trader, his white wife and children, and his white clerk. The expedition was successful, and Mr. Woodford concluded his account of the episode with a statement to the effect: "What especially struck me was the absence of pain and terror in their faces, which seemed to express, rather, serenity and repose"—this, mind you, of men and women of his own race whom he knew well and who had sat at dinner with him in his own house.

Other friends, with whom I have sat at dinner in the brave, rollicking days in the Solomons have since passed out—by the same way. My goodness! I sailed in the teak-built ketch, the *Minota*, on a blackbirding cruise to Malaita, and I took my wife along. The hatchet-marks were still raw on the door of our tiny stateroom advertising an event of a few

months before. The event was the taking of Captain Mackenzie's head, Captain Mackenzie, at that time, being master of the *Minota*. As we sailed in to Langa-Langa, the British cruiser, the *Cambrian*, steamed out from the shelling of a village.

It is not expedient to burden this preliminary to my story with further details, which I do make asseveration I possess a-plenty. I hope I have given some assurance that the adventures of my dog hero in this novel are real adventures in a very real cannibal world. Bless you!—when I took my wife along on the cruise of the *Minota*, we found on board a nigger-chasing, adorable Irish terrier puppy, who was smooth-coated like Jerry, and whose name was Peggy. Had it not been for Peggy, this book would never have been written. She was the chattel of the *Minota*'s splendid skipper. So much did Mrs. London and I come to love her, that Mrs. London, after the wreck of the *Minota*, deliberately and shamelessly stole her from the *Minota*'s skipper. I do further admit that I did, deliberately and shamelessly, compound my wife's felony. We loved Peggy so! Dear royal, glorious little dog, buried at sea off the east coast of Australia!

I must add that Peggy, like Jerry, was born at Meringe Lagoon, on Meringe Plantation, which is of the Island of Ysabel, said Ysabel Island lying next north of Florida Island, where is the seat of government and where dwells the Resident Commissioner, Mr. C. M. Woodford. Still further and finally, I knew Peggy's mother and father well, and have often known the warm surge in the heart of me at the sight of that faithful couple running side by side along the beach. Terrence was his real name. Her name was Bidy.

JACK LONDON WAIKIKI BEACH, HONOLULU, OAHU, T.H. June 5, 1915

Chapter 1

Not until Mister Haggin abruptly picked him up under one arm and stepped into the sternsheets of the waiting whaleboat, did Jerry dream that anything untoward was to happen to him. Mister Haggin was Jerry's beloved master, and had been his beloved master for the six months of Jerry's life. Jerry did not know Mister Haggin as "master," for "master" had no place in Jerry's vocabulary, Jerry being a smooth-coated, golden-sorrel Irish terrier.

But in Jerry's vocabulary, "Mister Haggin" possessed all the definiteness of sound and meaning that the word "master" possesses in the vocabularies of humans in relation to their dogs. "Mister Haggin" was the sound Jerry had always heard uttered by Bob, the clerk, and by Derby, the foreman on the plantation, when they addressed his master. Also, Jerry had always heard the rare visiting two-legged man-creatures such as came on the Arangi, address his master as Mister Haggin.

But dogs being dogs, in their dim, inarticulate, brilliant, and heroic-worshipping ways misappraising humans, dogs think of their masters, and love their masters, more than the facts warrant. "Master" means to them, as "Mister" Haggin meant to Jerry, a deal more, and a great deal more, than it means to humans. The human considers himself as "master" to his dog, but the dog considers his master "God."

Now "God" was no word in Jerry's vocabulary, despite the fact that he already possessed a definite and fairly large vocabulary. "Mister Haggin" was the sound that meant "God." In Jerry's heart and head, in the mysterious centre of all his activities that is called consciousness, the sound, "Mister Haggin," occupied the same place that "God" occupies in human consciousness. By word and sound, to Jerry, "Mister Haggin" had the same connotation that "God" has to God-worshipping humans. In short, Mister Haggin was Jerry's God.

And so, when Mister Haggin, or God, or call it what one will with the limitations of language, picked Jerry up with imperative abruptness, tucked him under his arm, and stepped into the whaleboat, whose black crew immediately bent to the oars, Jerry was instantly and nervously

aware that the unusual had begun to happen. Never before had he gone out on board the Arangi, which he could see growing larger and closer to each lip-hissing stroke of the oars of the blacks.

Only an hour before, Jerry had come down from the plantation house to the beach to see the Arangi depart. Twice before, in his half-year of life, had he had this delectable experience. Delectable it truly was, running up and down the white beach of sand-pounded coral, and, under the wise guidance of Bidy and Terrence, taking part in the excitement of the beach and even adding to it.

There was the nigger-chasing. Jerry had been born to hate niggers. His first experiences in the world as a puling puppy, had taught him that Bidy, his mother, and his father Terrence, hated niggers. A nigger was something to be snarled at. A nigger, unless he were a house-boy, was something to be attacked and bitten and torn if he invaded the compound. Bidy did it. Terrence did it. In doing it, they served their God—Mister Haggin. Niggers were two-legged lesser creatures who toiled and slaved for their two-legged white lords, who lived in the labour barracks afar off, and who were so much lesser and lower that they must not dare come near the habitation of their lords.

And nigger-chasing was adventure. Not long after he had learned to sprawl, Jerry had learned that. One took his chances. As long as Mister Haggin, or Derby, or Bob, was about, the niggers took their chasing. But there were times when the white lords were not about. Then it was "Ware niggers!" One must dare to chase only with due precaution. Because then, beyond the white lord's eyes, the niggers had a way, not merely of scowling and muttering, but of attacking four-legged dogs with stones and clubs. Jerry had seen his mother so mishandled, and, ere he had learned discretion, alone in the high grass had been himself club-mauled by Godarmy, the black who wore a china door-knob suspended on his chest from his neck on a string of sennit braided from cocoanut fibre. More. Jerry remembered another high-grass adventure, when he and his brother Michael had fought Owmi, another black distinguishable for the cogged wheels of an alarm clock on his chest. Michael had been so severely struck on his head that for ever after his left ear had remained sore and had withered into a peculiar wilted and twisted upward cock.

Still more. There had been his brother Patsy, and his sister Kathleen, who had disappeared two months before, who had ceased and no longer were. The great god, Mister Haggin, had raged up and down the plantation. The bush had been searched. Half a dozen niggers had been

whipped. And Mister Haggin had failed to solve the mystery of Patsy's and Kathleen's disappearance. But Bidy and Terrence knew. So did Michael and Jerry. The four-months' old Patsy and Kathleen had gone into the cooking-pot at the barracks, and their puppy-soft skins had been destroyed in the fire. Jerry knew this, as did his father and mother and brother, for they had smelled the unmistakable burnt-meat smell, and Terrence, in his rage of knowledge, had even attacked Mogom the house-boy, and been reprimanded and cuffed by Mister Haggin, who had not smelled and did not understand, and who had always to impress discipline on all creatures under his roof-tree.

But on the beach, when the blacks, whose terms of service were up came down with their trade-boxes on their heads to depart on the Arangi, was the time when nigger-chasing was not dangerous. Old scores could be settled, and it was the last chance, for the blacks who departed on the Arangi never came back. As an instance, this very morning Bidy, remembering a secret mauling at the hands of Lerumie, laid teeth into his naked calf and threw him sprawling into the water, trade-box, earthly possessions and all, and then laughed at him, sure in the protection of Mister Haggin who grinned at the episode.

Then, too, there was usually at least one bush-dog on the Arangi at which Jerry and Michael, from the beach, could bark their heads off. Once, Terrence, who was nearly as large as an Airedale and fully as lion-hearted—Terrence the Magnificent, as Tom Haggin called him— had caught such a bush-dog trespassing on the beach and given him a delightful thrashing, in which Jerry and Michael, and Patsy and Kathleen, who were at the time alive, had joined with many shrill yelps and sharp nips. Jerry had never forgotten the ecstasy of the hair, unmistakably doggy in scent, which had filled his mouth at his one successful nip. Bush-dogs were dogs—he recognized them as his kind; but they were somehow different from his own lordly breed, different and lesser, just as the blacks were compared with Mister Haggin, Derby, and Bob.

But Jerry did not continue to gaze at the nearing Arangi. Bidy, wise with previous bitter bereavements, had sat down on the edge of the sand, her fore-feet in the water, and was mouthing her woe. That this concerned him, Jerry knew, for her grief tore sharply, albeit vaguely, at his sensitive, passionate heart. What it presaged he knew not, save that it was disaster and catastrophe connected with him. As he looked back at her, rough-coated and grief-stricken, he could see Terrence hovering solicitously near her. He, too, was rough-coated, as was Michael, and as

Patsy and Kathleen had been, Jerry being the one smooth-coated member of the family.

Further, although Jerry did not know it and Tom Haggin did, Terrence was a royal lover and a devoted spouse. Jerry, from his earliest impressions, could remember the way Terrence had of running with Bidly, miles and miles along the beaches or through the avenues of cocoanuts, side by side with her, both with laughing mouths of sheer delight. As these were the only dogs, besides his brothers and sisters and the several eruptions of strange bush-dogs that Jerry knew, it did not enter his head otherwise than that this was the way of dogs, male and female, wedded and faithful. But Tom Haggin knew its unusualness. "Proper affinities," he declared, and repeatedly declared, with warm voice and moist eyes of appreciation. "A gentleman, that Terrence, and a four-legged proper man. A man-dog, if there ever was one, four-square as the legs on the four corners of him. And prepotent! My word! His blood'd breed true for a thousand generations, and the cool head and the kindly brave heart of him."

Terrence did not voice his sorrow, if sorrow he had; but his hovering about Bidly tokened his anxiety for her. Michael, however, yielding to the contagion, sat beside his mother and barked angrily out across the increasing stretch of water as he would have barked at any danger that crept and rustled in the jungle. This, too, sank to Jerry's heart, adding weight to his sure intuition that dire fate, he knew not what, was upon him.

For his six months of life, Jerry knew a great deal and knew very little. He knew, without thinking about it, without knowing that he knew, why Bidly, the wise as well as the brave, did not act upon all the message that her heart voiced to him, and spring into the water and swim after him. She had protected him like a lioness when the big puarka (which, in Jerry's vocabulary, along with grunts and squeals, was the combination of sound, or word, for "pig") had tried to devour him where he was cornered under the high-piled plantation house. Like a lioness, when the cook-boy had struck him with a stick to drive him out of the kitchen, had Bidly sprung upon the black, receiving without wince or whimper one straight blow from the stick, and then downing him and mauling him among his pots and pans until dragged (for the first time snarling) away by the unchiding Mister Haggin, who; however, administered sharp words to the cook-boy for daring to lift hand against a four-legged dog belonging to a god.

Jerry knew why his mother did not plunge into the water after him. The salt sea, as well as the lagoons that led out of the salt sea, were taboo. "Taboo," as word or sound, had no place in Jerry's vocabulary. But its definition, or significance, was there in the quickest part of his consciousness. He possessed a dim, vague, imperative knowingness that it was not merely not good, but supremely disastrous, leading to the mistily glimpsed sense of utter endingness for a dog, for any dog, to go into the water where slipped and slid and noiselessly paddled, sometimes on top, sometimes emerging from the depths, great scaly monsters, huge-jawed and horribly-toothed, that snapped down and engulfed a dog in an instant just as the fowls of Mister Haggin snapped and engulfed grains of corn.

Often he had heard his father and mother, on the safety of the sand, bark and rage their hatred of those terrible sea-dwellers, when, close to the beach, they appeared on the surface like logs awash. "Crocodile" was no word in Jerry's vocabulary. It was an image, an image of a log awash that was different from any log in that it was alive. Jerry, who heard, registered, and recognized many words that were as truly tools of thought to him as they were to humans, but who, by inarticulateness of birth and breed, could not utter these many words, nevertheless in his mental processes, used images just as articulate men use words in their own mental processes. And after all, articulate men, in the act of thinking, willy nilly use images that correspond to words and that amplify words.

Perhaps, in Jerry's brain, the rising into the foreground of consciousness of an image of a log awash connoted more intimate and fuller comprehension of the thing being thought about, than did the word "crocodile," and its accompanying image, in the foreground of a human's consciousness. For Jerry really did know more about crocodiles than the average human. He could smell a crocodile farther off and more differentiatingly than could any man, than could even a salt-water black or a bushman smell one. He could tell when a crocodile, hauled up from the lagoon, lay without sound or movement, and perhaps asleep, a hundred feet away on the floor mat of jungle.

He knew more of the language of crocodiles than did any man. He had better means and opportunities of knowing. He knew their many noises that were as grunts and slubbers. He knew their anger noises, their fear noises, their food noises, their love noises. And these noises were as definitely words in his vocabulary as are words in a human's vocabulary. And these crocodile noises were tools of thought. By them he weighed and judged and determined his own consequent courses of action, just

like any human; or, just like any human, lazily resolved upon no course of action, but merely noted and registered a clear comprehension of something that was going on about him that did not require a correspondence of action on his part.

And yet, what Jerry did not know was very much. He did not know the size of the world. He did not know that this Meringe Lagoon, backed by high, forested mountains and fronted and sheltered by the off-shore coral islets, was anything else than the entire world. He did not know that it was a mere fractional part of the great island of Ysabel, that was again one island of a thousand, many of them greater, that composed the Solomon Islands that men marked on charts as a group of specks in the vastitude of the far-western South Pacific.

It was true, there was a somewhere else or a something beyond of which he was dimly aware. But whatever it was, it was mystery. Out of it, things that had not been, suddenly were. Chickens and puarkas and cats, that he had never seen before, had a way of abruptly appearing on Meringe Plantation. Once, even, had there been an eruption of strange four-legged, horned and hairy creatures, the images of which, registered in his brain, would have been identifiable in the brains of humans with what humans worded "goats."

It was the same way with the blacks. Out of the unknown, from the somewhere and something else, too unconditional for him to know any of the conditions, instantly they appeared, full-statured, walking about Meringe Plantation with loin-cloths about their middles and bone bodkins through their noses, and being put to work by Mister Haggin, Derby, and Bob. That their appearance was coincidental with the arrival of the Arangi was an association that occurred as a matter of course in Jerry's brain. Further, he did not bother, save that there was a companion association, namely, that their occasional disappearances into the beyond was likewise coincidental with the Arangi's departure.

Jerry did not query these appearances and disappearances. It never entered his golden-sorrel head to be curious about the affair or to attempt to solve it. He accepted it in much the way he accepted the wetness of water and the heat of the sun. It was the way of life and of the world he knew. His hazy awareness was no more than an awareness of something—which, by the way, corresponds very fairly with the hazy awareness of the average human of the mysteries of birth and death and of the beyondness about which they have no definiteness of comprehension.

For all that any man may gainsay, the ketch Arangi, trader and black-birder in the Solomon Islands, may have signified in Jerry's mind as much the mysterious boat that traffics between the two worlds, as, at one time, the boat that Charon sculled across the Styx signified to the human mind. Out of the nothingness men came. Into the nothingness they went. And they came and went always on the Arangi.

And to the Arangi, this hot-white tropic morning, Jerry went on the whaleboat under the arm of his Mister Haggin, while on the beach Biddy moaned her woe, and Michael, not sophisticated, barked the eternal challenge of youth to the Unknown.

Chapter 2

From the whaleboat, up the low side of the Arangi, and over her six-inch rail of teak to her teak deck, was but a step, and Tom Haggin made it easily with Jerry still under his arm. The deck was cluttered with an exciting crowd. Exciting the crowd would have been to untravelled humans of civilization, and exciting it was to Jerry; although to Tom Haggin and Captain Van Horn it was a mere commonplace of everyday life.

The deck was small because the Arangi was small. Originally a teak-built, gentleman's yacht, brass-fitted, copper-fastened, angle-ironed, sheathed in man-of-war copper and with a fin-keel of bronze, she had been sold into the Solomon Islands' trade for the purpose of blackbirding or nigger-running. Under the law, however, this traffic was dignified by being called "recruiting."

The Arangi was a labour-recruit ship that carried the new-caught, cannibal blacks from remote islands to labour on the new plantations where white men turned dank and pestilential swamp and jungle into rich and stately cocoanut groves. The Arangi's two masts were of Oregon cedar, so scraped and hot-paraffined that they shone like tan opals in the glare of sun. Her excessive sail plan enabled her to sail like a witch, and, on occasion, gave Captain Van Horn, his white mate, and his fifteen black boat's crew as much as they could handle. She was sixty feet over all, and the cross beams of her crown deck had not been weakened by deck-houses. The only breaks—and no beams had been cut for them—were the main cabin skylight and companionway, the booby hatch for'ard over the tiny forecastle, and the small hatch aft that let down into the store-room.

And on this small deck, in addition to the crew, were the "return" niggers from three far-flung plantations. By "return" was meant that their three years of contract labour was up, and that, according to contract, they were being returned to their home villages on the wild island of Malaita. Twenty of them—familiar, all, to Jerry—were from Meringe; thirty of them came from the Bay of a Thousand Ships, in the Russell Isles; and the remaining twelve were from Pennduffryn on the east coast

of Guadalcanar. In addition to these—and they were all on deck, chattering and piping in queer, almost elfish, falsetto voices—were the two white men, Captain Van Horn and his Danish mate, Borckman, making a total of seventy-nine souls.

"Thought your heart 'd failed you at the last moment," was Captain Van Horn's greeting, a quick pleasure light glowing into his eyes as they noted Jerry.

"It was sure near to doin' it," Tom Haggin answered. "It's only for you I'd a done it, annyways. Jerry's the best of the litter, barrin' Michael, of course, the two of them bein' all that's left and no better than them that was lost. Now that Kathleen was a sweet dog, the spit of Bidy if she'd lived.—Here, take 'm."

With a jerk of abruptness, he deposited Jerry in Van Horn's arms and turned away along the deck.

"An' if bad luck comes to him I'll never forgive you, Skipper," he flung roughly over his shoulder.

"They'll have to take my head first," the skipper chuckled.

"An' not unlikely, my brave laddy buck," Haggin growled. "Meringe owes Somo four heads, three from the dysentery, an' another wan from a tree fallin' on him the last fortnight. He was the son of a chief at that."

"Yes, and there's two heads more that the Arangi owes Somo," Van Horn nodded. "You recollect, down to the south'ard last year, a chap named Hawkins was lost in his whaleboat running the Arli Passage?" Haggin, returning along the deck, nodded. "Two of his boat's crew were Somo boys. I'd recruited them for Ugi Plantation. With your boys, that makes six heads the Arangi owes. But what of it? There's one salt-water village, acrost on the weather coast, where the Arangi owes eighteen. I recruited them for Aolo, and being salt-water men they put them on the Sandfly that was lost on the way to the Santa Cruz. They've got a jackpot over there on the weather coast—my word, the boy that could get my head would be a second Carnegie! A hundred and fifty pigs and shell money no end the village's collected for the chap that gets me and delivers."

"And they ain't—yet," Haggin snorted.

"No fear," was the cheerful retort.

"You talk like Arbuckle used to talk," Haggin censured. "Manny's the time I've heard him string it off. Poor old Arbuckle. The most sure and most precautious chap that ever handled niggers. He never went to sleep without spreadin' a box of tacks on the floor, and when it wasn't them it was crumpled newspapers. I remember me well, bein' under the same

roof at the time on Florida, when a big tomcat chased a cockroach into the papers. And it was blim, blam, blim, six times an' twice over, with his two big horse-pistols, an' the house perforated like a cullender. Likewise there was a dead tom-cat. He could shoot in the dark with never an aim, pullin' trigger with the second finger and pointing with the first finger laid straight along the barrel.

"No, sir, my laddy buck. He was the bully boy with the glass eye. The nigger didn't live that'd lift his head. But they got 'm. They got 'm. He lasted fourteen years, too. It was his cook-boy. Hatcheted 'm before breakfast. An' it's well I remember our second trip into the bush after what was left of 'm."

"I saw his head after you'd turned it over to the Commissioner at Tullagi," Van Horn supplemented.

"An' the peaceful, quiet, everyday face of him on it, with almost the same old smile I'd seen a thousand times. It dried on 'm that way over the smokin' fire. But they got 'm, if it did take fourteen years. There's many's the head that goes to Malaita, many's the time untooken; but, like the old pitcher, it's taken in the end."

"But I've got their goat," the captain insisted. "When trouble's hatching, I go straight to them and tell them what. They can't get the hang of it. Think I've got some powerful devil-devil medicine."

Tom Haggin thrust out his hand in abrupt good-bye, resolutely keeping his eyes from dropping to Jerry in the other's arms.

"Keep your eye on my return boys," he cautioned, as he went over the side, "till you land the last mother's son of 'm. They've got no cause to love Jerry or his breed, an' I'd hate ill to happen 'm at a nigger's hands. An' in the dark of the night 'tis like as not he can do a fare-you-well over-side. Don't take your eye off 'm till you're quit of the last of 'm."

At sight of big Mister Haggin deserting him and being pulled away in the whaleboat, Jerry wriggled and voiced his anxiety in a low, whimpering whine. Captain Van Horn snuggled him closer in his arm with a caress of his free hand.

"Don't forget the agreement," Tom Haggin called back across the widening water. "If aught happens you, Jerry's to come back to me."

"I'll make a paper to that same and put it with the ship's articles," was Van Horn's reply.

Among the many words possessed by Jerry was his own name; and in the talk of the two men he had recognised it repeatedly, and he was aware, vaguely, that the talk was related to the vague and unguessably terrible thing that was happening to him. He wriggled more

determinedly, and Van Horn set him down on the deck. He sprang to the rail with more quickness than was to be expected of an awkward puppy of six months, and not the quick attempt of Van Horn to cheek him would have succeeded. But Jerry recoiled from the open water lapping the Arangi's side. The taboo was upon him. It was the image of the log awash that was not a log but that was alive, luminous in his brain, that checked him. It was not reason on his part, but inhibition which had become habit.

He plumped down on his bob tail, lifted golden muzzle skyward, and emitted a long puppy-wail of dismay and grief.

"It's all right, Jerry, old man, brace up and be a man-dog," Van Horn soothed him.

But Jerry was not to be reconciled. While this indubitably was a white-skinned god, it was not his god. Mister Haggin was his god, and a superior god at that. Even he, without thinking about it at all, recognized that. His Mister Haggin wore pants and shoes. This god on the deck beside him was more like a black. Not only did he not wear pants, and was barefooted and barelegged, but about his middle, just like any black, he wore a brilliant-coloured loin-cloth, that, like a kilt, fell nearly to his sun-burnt knees.

Captain Van Horn was a handsome man and a striking man, although Jerry did not know it. If ever a Holland Dutchman stepped out of a Rembrandt frame, Captain Van Horn was that one, despite the fact that he was New York born, as had been his knickerbocker ancestors before him clear back to the time when New York was not New York but New Amsterdam. To complete his costume, a floppy felt hat, distinctly Rembrandtish in effect, perched half on his head and mostly over one ear; a sixpenny, white cotton undershirt covered his torso; and from a belt about his middle dangled a tobacco pouch, a sheath-knife, filled clips of cartridges, and a huge automatic pistol in a leather holster.

On the beach, Bidy, who had hushed her grief, lifted it again when she heard Jerry's wail. And Jerry, desisting a moment to listen, heard Michael beside her, barking his challenge, and saw, without being conscious of it, Michael's withered ear with its persistent upward cock. Again, while Captain Van Horn and the mate, Borckman, gave orders, and while the Arangi's mainsail and spanker began to rise up the masts, Jerry loosed all his heart of woe in what Bob told Derby on the beach was the "grandest vocal effort" he had ever heard from any dog, and that, except for being a bit thin, Caruso didn't have anything on Jerry. But the

song was too much for Haggin, who, as soon as he had landed, whistled Bidy to him and strode rapidly away from the beach.

At sight of her disappearing, Jerry was guilty of even more Caruso-like effects, which gave great joy to a Pennduffryn return boy who stood beside him. He laughed and jeered at Jerry with falsetto chucklings that were more like the jungle-noises of tree-dwelling creatures, half-bird and half-man, than of a man, all man, and therefore a god. This served as an excellent counter-irritant. Indignation that a mere black should laugh at him mastered Jerry, and the next moment his puppy teeth, sharp-pointed as needles, had scored the astonished black's naked calf in long parallel scratches from each of which leaped the instant blood. The black sprang away in trepidation, but the blood of Terrence the Magnificent was true in Jerry, and, like his father before him, he followed up, slashing the black's other calf into a ruddy pattern.

At this moment, anchor broken out and headsails running up, Captain Van Horn, whose quick eye had missed no detail of the incident, with an order to the black helmsman turned to applaud Jerry.

"Go to it, Jerry!" he encouraged. "Get him! Shake him down! Sick him! Get him! Get him!"

The black, in defence, aimed a kick at Jerry, who, leaping in instead of away—another inheritance from Terrence—avoided the bare foot and printed a further red series of parallel lines on the dark leg. This was too much, and the black, afraid more of Van Horn than of Jerry, turned and fled for'ard, leaping to safety on top of the eight Lee-Enfield rifles that lay on top of the cabin skylight and that were guarded by one member of the boat's crew. About the skylight Jerry stormed, leaping up and falling back, until Captain Van Horn called him off.

"Some nigger-chaser, that pup, some nigger-chaser!" Van Horn confided to Borckman, as he bent to pat Jerry and give him due reward of praise.

And Jerry, under this caressing hand of a god, albeit it did not wear pants, forgot for a moment longer the fate that was upon him.

"He's a lion-dog—more like an Airedale than an Irish terrier," Van Horn went on to his mate, still petting. "Look at the size of him already. Look at the bone of him. Some chest that. He's got the endurance. And he'll be some dog when he grows up to those feet of his."

Jerry had just remembered his grief and was starting a rush across the deck to the rail to gaze at Meringe growing smaller every second in the distance, when a gust of the South-east Trade smote the sails and pressed the Arangi down. And down the deck, slanted for the moment to forty-

five degrees, Jerry slipped and slid, vainly clawing at the smooth surface for a hold. He fetched up against the foot of the mizzenmast, while Captain Van Horn, with the sailor's eye for the coral patch under his bow, gave the order "Hard a-lee!"

Borckman and the black steersman echoed his words, and, as the wheel spun down, the Arangi, with the swiftness of a witch, rounded into the wind and attained a momentary even keel to the flapping of her headsails and a shifting of headsheets.

Jerry, still intent on Meringe, took advantage of the level footing to recover himself and scramble toward the rail. But he was deflected by the crash of the mainsheet blocks on the stout deck-traveller, as the mainsail, emptied of the wind and feeling the wind on the other side, swung crazily across above him. He cleared the danger of the mainsheet with a wild leap (although no less wild had been Van Horn's leap to rescue him), and found himself directly under the mainboom with the huge sail looming above him as if about to fall upon him and crush him.

It was Jerry's first experience with sails of any sort. He did not know the beasts, much less the way of them, but, in his vivid recollection, when he had been a tiny puppy, burned the memory of the hawk, in the middle of the compound, that had dropped down upon him from out of the sky. Under that colossal threatened impact he crouched down to the deck. Above him, falling upon him like a bolt from the blue, was a winged hawk unthinkably vaster than the one he had encountered. But in his crouch was no hint of cower. His crouch was a gathering together, an assembling of all the parts of him under the rule of the spirit of him, for the spring upward to meet in mid career this monstrous, menacing thing.

But, the succeeding fraction of a moment, so that Jerry, leaping, missed even the shadow of it, the mainsail, with a second crash of blocks on traveller, had swung across and filled on the other tack.

Van Horn had missed nothing of it. Before, in his time, he had seen young dogs frightened into genuine fits by their first encounters with heaven-filling, sky-obscuring, down-impending sails. This was the first dog he had seen leap with bared teeth, undismayed, to grapple with the huge unknown.

With spontaneity of admiration, Van Horn swept Jerry from the deck and gathered him into his arms.

Chapter 3

Jerry quite forgot Meringe for the time being. As he well remembered, the hawk had been sharp of beak and claw. This air-flapping, thunder-crashing monster needed watching. And Jerry, crouching for the spring and ever struggling to maintain his footing on the slippery, heeling deck, kept his eyes on the mainsail and uttered low growls at any display of movement on its part.

The Arangi was beating out between the coral patches of the narrow channel into the teeth of the brisk trade wind. This necessitated frequent tacks, so that, overhead, the mainsail was ever swooping across from port tack to starboard tack and back again, making air-noises like the swish of wings, sharply rat-tat-tatting its reef points and loudly crashing its mainsheet gear along the traveller. Half a dozen times, as it swooped overhead, Jerry leaped for it, mouth open to grip, lips writhed clear of the clean puppy teeth that shone in the sun like gems of ivory.

Failing in every leap, Jerry achieved a judgment. In passing, it must be noted that this judgment was only arrived at by a definite act of reasoning. Out of a series of observations of the thing, in which it had threatened, always in the same way, a series of attacks, he had found that it had not hurt him nor come in contact with him at all. Therefore—although he did not stop to think that he was thinking—it was not the dangerous, destroying thing he had first deemed it. It might be well to be wary of it, though already it had taken its place in his classification of things that appeared terrible but were not terrible. Thus, he had learned not to fear the roar of the wind among the palms when he lay snug on the plantation-house veranda, nor the onslaught of the waves, hissing and rumbling into harmless foam on the beach at his feet.

Many times, in the course of the day, alertly and nonchalantly, almost with a quizzical knowingness, Jerry cocked his head at the mainsail when it made sudden swooping movements or slacked and tautened its crashing sheet-gear. But he no longer crouched to spring for it. That had been the first lesson, and quickly mastered.

Having settled the mainsail, Jerry returned in mind to Meringe. But there was no Meringe, no Bidy and Terrence and Michael on the beach; no Mister Haggin and Derby and Bob; no beach: no land with the palm-trees near and the mountains afar off everlastingly lifting their green peaks into the sky. Always, to starboard or to port, at the bow or over the stern, when he stood up resting his fore-feet on the six-inch rail and gazing, he saw only the ocean, broken-faced and turbulent, yet orderly marching its white-crested seas before the drive of the trade.

Had he had the eyes of a man, nearly two yards higher than his own from the deck, and had they been the trained eyes of a man, sailor-man at that, Jerry could have seen the low blur of Ysabel to the north and the blur of Florida to the south, ever taking on definiteness of detail as the Arangi sagged close-hauled, with a good full, port-tacked to the south-east trade. And had he had the advantage of the marine glasses with which Captain Van Horn elongated the range of his eyes, he could have seen, to the east, the far peaks of Malaita lifting life-shadowed pink cloud-puffs above the sea-rim.

But the present was very immediate with Jerry. He had early learned the iron law of the immediate, and to accept what was when it was, rather than to strain after far other things. The sea was. The land no longer was. The Arangi certainly was, along with the life that cluttered her deck. And he proceeded to get acquainted with what was—in short, to know and to adjust himself to his new environment.

His first discovery was delightful—a wild-dog puppy from the Ysabel bush, being taken back to Malaita by one of the Meringe return boys. In age they were the same, but their breeding was different. The wild-dog was what he was, a wild-dog, cringing and sneaking, his ears for ever down, his tail for ever between his legs, for ever apprehending fresh misfortune and ill-treatment to fall on him, for ever fearing and resentful, fending off threatened hurt with lips curling malignantly from his puppy fangs, cringing under a blow, squalling his fear and his pain, and ready always for a treacherous slash if luck and safety favoured.

The wild-dog was maturer than Jerry, larger-bodied, and wiser in wickedness; but Jerry was blue-blooded, right-selected, and valiant. The wild-dog had come out of a selection equally rigid; but it was a different sort of selection. The bush ancestors from whom he had descended had survived by being fear-selected. They had never voluntarily fought against odds. In the open they had never attacked save when the prey was weak or defenceless. In place of courage, they had lived by creeping, and slinking, and hiding from danger. They had been selected blindly by

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