

RED HAIR AND BLUE SEA



by **STANLEY R. OSBORN**

ILLUSTRATIONS BY HENRY JAY LEE

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SYNOPSIS

Palmira Tree, aboard the yacht Rainbow, is startled by seeing a hand thrust through the port of her cabin. She makes a secret investigation and discovers a stowaway. She is disappointed in his mild appearance and tells him so. Obeying his command to glance at the floor—she sees a huge, fierce, copper-headed man with a ten-inch knife held between grinning lips! Burke, the stowaway, explains that it is a dead man. The girl smiles. Next day, Burke and the brown man go to the deck. The stowaway entertains them with wild tales of an adventuresome life, which his listeners refuse to believe. Now read on.

CHAPTER III

Enemies and Friends

Some fifteen days later in Mrs. Crawford's cabin a conference was under way.

"But my dear, my dear," Palmira's mother was protesting, "how can you say everything's going right when Palm spends most of her time listening to that—that miserable stowaway, that—human load. Her father is beside himself with anxiety."

The mother made a deprecatory sound.

"Event," said the mother, impressively, "have only too well shown that I, that we, are interested just in time. Your daughter was on the verge of falling in love with John Thurston."

The father entered a protest.

"I don't see we've gained anything."

"But where are your eyes?" demanded the mother. "As I said in California, Van, with his refined personality, fits into the yacht's cabin like the Young King Charles into a gilded frame. Thurston, on the contrary, is a great, robust being. He looks well enough, indeed, but here, in those little compartments, on this narrow deck, his hands and feet seem at the wall."

She paused to smile at them reassuringly.

"Surely, with John at his worst, Van at his best—need we fear?"

Meanwhile, Constance, Crawford was forward at the Rainbow's bow, sailing through the tropic night upon enchanted waters.

When John Thurston presently joined Constance, she looked up with a frown. "I was just thinking," she explained, "that Palm Tree doesn't at all realize what Burke may be getting into his mind. I believe the little fraud's quite perfect up over the idea he's made something of a conquest."

Thurston answered rather absently. "Anyhow," he said, "Burke's over the side at Honolulu and gone for ever."

She assented.

John was silent for some time. Then "Do like to go on," he burst out. "I've been trying to tell you I've taken your advice, asked her to become my wife."

"Yes," she answered without raising her eyes. "I know."

"She told you?" he exclaimed.

"No. You did."

He was chagrined. "Suppose I had look like that," he said.

"On the contrary. You've been splendid!" she plucked up cheerfully.

"But I still think it was the right thing to do. A week or two hence, absolutely no hope. Oh, why didn't you speak in California! She originally told you best. I'm sure of it. Does still, if she only knew. Or," Constance added graciously, "would it be all right if I told her now?"

He laughed with some bitterness. "Oh, I know what you mean."

He fell into a sudden reverie.

When Thurston spoke again it was apparently in an effort to get into a more cheerful vein.

"Sincerely," he said, "I have another well-wisher aboard."

With a pocket flashlight he made visible for her a small object of woven fibre, a back comb wound around a packet perhaps two inches square.

"When I came on deck this morning," he explained, "Olive incarnated himself before me. Looked about furtively, jerked my coat-tails up, fastened this round my waist. Then he gave me a friendly grin and vanished."

"But," she puzzled, "what is it?"

"Inside there's a bit of fine mat, seven hairs and a tooth," a good luck charm.

"But, but why—"

"How should I know?"

She was thoughtful. "At any rate," she said finally, "he seems to be wishing you good luck."

She examined the amulet again with an absent attention. Then, the smile fading from her lips: "John, promise me you will not leave the Rainbow at Honolulu."

The yacht was pushing on at her best pace, setting up such a lively stir at her prow as to achieve the small, private rainbow for which she had been flamed.

Burke and Palmira were on deck—Burke was quizzically regarding the nervous Palmira.

"As though defining her very thoughts," he spoke.

"Excuse me, Miss," he said.

"Those others—a slightly contemptuous gesture. They're tame. That's what I mean. But you? Why, you're different. You're wasn't intended for their little of 'mitage' kind of life. Nature meant you for something lively-like, something up and doing."

The girl laughed. "Nature," she said, "means me for a pirate. It's in my blood," she affirmed. "First, a Norseman ravaging the coasts of England. Then, a British admiral ravaging everything else. And last, old Captain Eberhart, with John Van Jones, descending once more upon the coasts of England."

Burke grinned in admiration.

The girl turned to him then paused laughing back at him over her shoulder. "You, Ponape Burke," she said, "you and I—I'm afraid we were born too late."

At the rate the Rainbow was sailing, it was evident the yacht must soon make a landfall. Indeed, already eyes were peering through powerful glasses seeking for the first shadow silhouette of the peaks of Oahu.

As the Rainbow raised the panorama of dead craters that stands, rather barren, above the verdant town of Honolulu, none upon her decks was so expectant as Palmira Tree. Far from the chaff of Ponape Burke's narration she had witnessed the clean grid of beauty and romance that is the life of this island world of the palm tree. Her imagination was a glow.

Through the gateway of Honolulu she was to sail on into this world where happiness is queen.

She was to sail across the tracks that sea has these brown business of life.

As the girl thus deep in reverie, stood watching the distant peaks, she became aware of a presence at her side. Turning, she started upon encountering the brown man Olive.

He gave tongue to a few syllables, nautic perplexed, then fell back upon silence. The hour of departure had come. Soon Burke and he would go over the side and forever into oblivion.

Palmira smiled. She tried to overcome her aversion to respond to his attempted farewell. As he had done, she moved to speak, found herself helpless, returned the smile.

The brown man thus contented, had the square upper upon her own breast. Having thus identified the girl as the being of the Orona, he raised his hand, with extended arm, straight over his head. She thought he invoked the One above. But she gave this up when she saw that he waggled, flattered the fingers.

When she shook her head, reproachfully, he abandoned the upraised hand as futile. He brought out a ring, Palmira Tree had never seen such a ring, tortoise shell inlaid with silver. There were letters on it, seemingly one word, three repeated and separated by discs—the word "N.Y."

Olive pointed to the letters, then to the girl and once more held aloft the hand with the moving fingers. But again she shook her head.

The brown man stood baffled. Then grinning anew, he hurried away forward.

The savage, presently returning, thrust into the girl's hand a lithograph, an advertisement of Egyptian cigarettes.

He pointed to the silver letters of the ring and pronounced the word "Ni," then to her with a second "Ni," and to the picture with a third. He dropped the ring into her fingers.

At last the girl who was named Palmira understood. For there in the advertisement was a palm tree. The upraised hand had symbolized the palm—herself. Olive had sought

to give her a ring with her name upon it.

When the hour of partaking came, however, he seemed to have re-entered the silence, and the farewells devolved upon Ponape Burke.

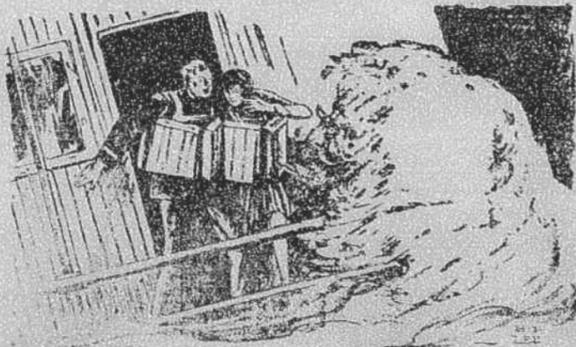
As the little stowaway reached her in his round he achieved a simple eloquence of feeling. "You've been kind, fine, miss," he said. "I ain't a-going to forget it. Nor you."

She shook hands with an unassumed friendliness. "I'm sure," she said, "we shall see you again."

Sharply he glanced at her, as if eager to know whether she really had such a hope. Then he shrugged, island-wise. "It's a large ocean lady. With you and me it's just lights missing in the dark, a hail, and then—nothing."

A minute later Palmira's pirates were swinging over the side into the boat.

Burke raised his hat faintly. But it was rather at the savage the girl looked. Over the white man's shoulder he seemed to be watching her to the end with that strangely expressionless but intent stare.



In the lifting boat, as she knew was that Van's boat were caught here, that he held her fast. Never did she suspect it was in another pair of arms she eyed her life.

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NEWS OF WORLD BRIEFLY TOLD

Outstanding Happenings of Week Gathered from Everywhere Condensed for the Busy Reader

Godman Wanamaker, son of the late John Wanamaker, the merchant prince, died at his home in Atlantic City last Thursday morning. He was 63 years of age and was said to have been the highest insured man in America, carrying some \$7,500,000 life insurance.

Unemployment is in excess of normal throughout the country, according to a report by the president of the national industrial conference board, given out in New York recently. The report stated that there was a decline in unemployment during 1927, but that during 1928 the number of jobless has been increased.

Atlantic City, March 15.—Samuel P. Leeds, president of the Atlantic City chamber of commerce, has admitted that the parade of girls in beach attire in the annual "Miss America" contest, staged here every fall, has been held for the last time. While plans are being drawn for the 1928 "Miss America" contest, no girls will appear clad in bathing suits.

Floyd Bennett and Bert Haden will accompany Richard E. Byrd when he takes off for his attempted flight over the South Pole. In addition to the tri-motored Fokker, Fokker Universal and Bellanca monoplanes have been assembled for the expedition and a tri-motor Ford all-metal plane is being constructed. The expedition is expected to cost \$500,000 and from one and a half to three years will be required.

Miami, Fla., March 15.—With 1,000,000 acres of rich muck lands menaced by incessant fires, solution of the fire prevention problem comparable with that of the national forests was sought here Saturday at

a called meeting of the Everglades fire control board. Experts generally agree that vast tracts of the rich muck lands are threatened with ruin unless some solution is found, while as a side issue the city of Miami is seeking relief from a smoke nuisance which reached the worst stage of the season yesterday when heavy bill of wind-blown smoke, thickened the city for several hours and immobilized traffic and shipping. The muck lands, composed of decaying vegetable matter, much like peat, dry out each winter and fire springs up over the scattered areas and often assume serious proportions. Some students of the swamp lands have

blamed the fires on spontaneous combustion, but the most commonly accepted explanation is that venturied by industrial and agricultural interests that the fires generally start from carelessly attended moonshine still fires or those started by thoughtless campers.

Tourist: "Is the London fog really so awfully heavy?"

Londoner: "Terrible."

Tourist: "How do the vehicles get along?"

Londoner: "Well, the first one makes a tunnel which all the following ones pass through."



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McCONNELL MOTOR CO.

BOONE, N. C.

The VICTORY SIX BY DODGE BROTHERS

NOTICE TO TAXPAYERS

I will make my second call for 1927 taxes on the following dates at places named. All unpaid 1925 and 1926 taxes must be paid on or before date of call.

Again I call attention to the law requiring that all taxes must be paid by the 1st of May. Those unpaid before that time may be turned over to the commissioners, who must order levies to be made on property, thus adding costs. See me at the following places:

- BOONE—First Monday and Tuesdays.
- NORTH FORK, March 8—Thomas' store in the morning and Potter's store in the afternoon.
- MEAT CAMP, March 9—Moretz's store in the morning and Stevens' store in the afternoon.
- BALD MOUNTAIN, March 10—Voting place.
- STONY FORK, March 12—Cook's store in the morning and at Deep Gap in the afternoon.
- ELK, March 13—Trivett's store.
- BLUE RIDGE, March 15—Storie's store.
- BLOWING ROCK, March 16—Holshouser's store.
- WATAUGA, March 17—Collins' store in the morning and Valle Crucis in the afternoon.
- WATAUGA, March 18—Valle Crucis.
- SHAWNEEHAW, March 19—Jones' store.
- LAUREL CREEK, March 20—J. B. Hicks' store in the morning and Ward's store in the afternoon.
- BEAVER DAM, March 21—Sherwood's in the morning and at Hagan's in the afternoon.
- COVE CREEK, March 22—Mabel in the morning and Sherwood's in the afternoon.

L. M. FARTHING, Sheriff, Watauga County.

Seed Potatoes

Cooperating with the Department of Agriculture, I am making arrangements to buy certified seed potatoes for all farmers in the county who may desire them. There seems to be a shortage of seed to supply the demands of Watauga farmers this year and those desiring seed should place their orders with me at once. I am not going into the business to make money but to assist the farmers and only want to buy a sufficient amount to supply the demand.

J. L. QUALES



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— not only gives low 5 year cost, but gives property a moisture-proof protection against decay and depreciation. Saves repair bills! *See how the cost chart at this store proves Quality is a big economy.

FARMERS' HARDWARE & SUPPLY CO.