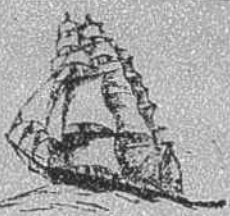


RED HAIR AND BLUE SEA



by **STANLEY R. OSBORN**
ILLUSTRATIONS BY HENRY JAY LEE

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SYNOPSIS

Palmyra 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 door—she sees a huge, fierce, copper-headed man, with a ten-inch knife held between grinding lips. Burke, the stowaway, explains that it is a joke. But Palmyra is shaken. Next day, Burke and the brown man go up on deck. The stowaway entertains them with wild tales of an adventuresome life, which his listeners refuse to believe. Now read on!

Palmyra spends more and more time with the stowaways to avoid Van and John, but when the stowaways are put ashore at Honolulu she decides she loves Van. The night the engagement is announced, the Rainbow hits a reef. In the excitement which follows, John rescues both Van and Palmyra—but Palmyra thinks it is Van who saves her. After three days spent on the uninhabited island, a sail is sighted. It proves to be Ponape Burke. Burke contrives to get Palmyra on board his boat alone—and the boat is under way before anything can be done.

CHAPTER V

Lashed ashore, where the moment of Palmyra Tree's abduction had found her flange so afraid of wounding the girl that he could not raise a rifle in her defense, every passing circumstance was carrying forward the revelation of two characters.

Van, as he saw his betrothed thus torn from him, stood staring after the schooner, his toes convulsed. He had been thrust back into a desolate world that whence the Pioneer of Noah had first arisen.

Not so, however, John Thurston. As he stood Van he knew, something could be done; that he would not resign himself to being thrown back into a desolate world.

He ran across to Captain Peterson. "Captain," he demanded, "what can we do?"

"The simplest sailing vessel looked back at him haggardly. "Nothing." "But as must, I tell you, you must take your boat out to sea today—now!"

Peterson groaned. "I wish to God we could, Mr. Thurston. I'm as broke up as you. But there just isn't no use. Tomorrow, if we're even in gut out, we'll have to knock together some sort of craft from the wreck."

Thurston read out in protest. "No, no, no! You with all your sea experience, you must know what to do, I demand!"

But Peterson shook his head, with whatever could be done. "Simply Thurston's face lighted. He stood in thought, his features taking on a more definite form of clarity. "Be it that," he cried, and whistled away."

The sailing vessel in which the Pioneer navigators of a bygone day covered the Pacific were catamarans. The explorers built two hulls so narrow that neither by itself would float. But when the two were lashed together, they gave buoyancy and stability, the double canoe became staunch, though bobbing to all its parts no hull or other member is fastened by being stronger than breadfruit, gum and twists of cord, its sails no more substantial than platted leaf to traffic all day and across the broad Pacific.

It was Thurston's idea now that placing his four separately worthless boats in tandem, two on each side, he could lash them under a framework of the lighter spars into a machine which would carry a considerable spread of sail.

"If those old catamarans could hold together for a thousand miles," he explained, "ours ought to make the next island."

Work had been going on perhaps an hour when he appeared for the first time to become aware of Van Baren Rater's drooping figure. John had completely forgotten the other man. Convicted, he ran over to him.

But Thurston attempted no explanation. He said that the best, the only way out was to sketch the plan of action, seem to consult the other's judgment. He spoke briefly. "What do you think, Van?" he concluded. "Isn't that as well as we can hope to do?"

Van was silent for a long time; then, unexpectedly laughed. "As, as good as any," he said. "Go on your raft and down, stay, and starve. What's the difference? As regards her—" he caught his breath in a broken exhalation—"she's gone."

Thurston gazed at his somberly. "You mean you won't raise a hand for her?" "I won't," Van answered wearily,

and neither will you. We can't."

"Thurston's face was resolute. "Perhaps you're right," he acknowledged. "Very likely so. But for me, I prefer to die—trying."

"He would have hurried away but the other detained him. "I'm not your kind of an ass," Van said. "You fool, you know there's no hope. Yet, by this silly work, you can kid yourself into a sort of relief. Me?" "It was as if he looked upon the girl lying dead. But he tore himself from this vision, became defiant. "You still think I'm yellow. Very well, then, I'll show you. I'll help now; and when you sail, I, too, shall go."

Thurston urged the men to work with the first color of the dawn touch of the eastern sky the last of the stores and gear was lashed into place.

Thurston stooped over Van, who had fallen in the sleep of exhaustion and waked him. "Say the word," he announced. "We're ready."

Van roused but slowly; then turned upon the stronger man in a little rage at circumstance. "Damn you," he cried. "I'd rather stay here and die like a gentleman—clean and dry." But a moment later he sprang up with his old laugh. "After all, it's not to be the fish or the birds, I'm a braver man than you, you optimistic ass, because I know..."

He did not finish his thought. "Come on—let's get it over." Twelve minutes later they were at sea.

Twelve hours later the catamaran was drifting, dismasted. And Van Baren Rater's fault. He had been given the steering oar. But, sunk in dejection, he had in a moment of inattention, allowed the too heavy boom to go, carrying away the improvised tackle, and scotch the mast overboard. As a result Burke's own boat had pitched free of its lashings and the sail floated a wreck.

Borneo never to rescue Palmyra from the Siblon Rater, John Thurston had yet gladly staked his life to get upon a thousandth chance.

The Pioneer of Noah was flying into the arkway. The face of the man Burke was a thing to wonder at. Under the exclamation of a master idea it had grown strange, compelling. His eyes gleamed, his tongue stammered in his eagerness. For the first time in his life he was in voice that which sound had hidden in his evil mind. What had been only a vision of power was now to become an actuality. And so much so very much, depended on knowing that wild spark he felt to glow within the soul of this girl he had seized for his own—his woman.

"Tanna!" he cried. "Tanna! Ever hear tell of that island, Olive?" He laughed excitedly. "Indeed, and I've took good care to make y'acquaint."

"This for Tanna we'll be having to course, you and me," he went on, with exuberant gesture acquired from the natives. "Tanna, where we'll hold it like born king and queen."

"What a people! What a people! Black with it," his fingers opened and closed antonometrically, with a certain zestfulness. "What can't we do? Taken Papuan wildmen," he cried, "and what can't we make 'em do for us? That's the ticket, Palm."

"Why, kid," he was expostulating a moment later, "this here big idea isn't something that popped into 'n'head just recent. Gosh, no! Had it in mind for years. But..." He hesitated, diffident, a thing so foreign to his usual brazen assurance as to seem historic. "But the fact is I was a-waiting for you!"

She was once more aware how very real his infatuation. "I just had to have a dame for this stunt," he went on passionately. "A real dame, a sure enough queen. And then I meets you. The very first watch I sees y'got the shape for it. And when y'lets out about pirate blood, I knows y'got the heart for it. Cause yer talk's on the square than you yourself realizes."

The girl was increasingly understanding how irrevocably, on the Rainbow, he had been misled by her caprice. Listening at first in a pleased surprise, he had been eagerly self-deceived. Sure that the lawless strain, persisting through environment, had at last roused, he was now convinced she was already in love with the life he typified—though she herself did not as yet perceive the fact—and that, in the glamour this life cast upon himself, she would in time willingly come to be his own.

"And, girl," Ponape Burke was shouting, "there never, never was no king had such a queen as you. Yer hair!" He exulted in the wonder of it. "That's how y'beat 'em all. For, didn't I tell you the Tanna-

men saw red?—grabbed at red calico, smeared their faces bright and gay, rouged up the dead warrior ready to meet his maker, wound their own heads all over with red vine to cover the wool?"

"Don't y'understand? That's what I was waiting on. The queen o' my devil's own mission had t' have red hair. And, Palm, them Tanna-men'll go plumb crazy with pious pagan joy when they see yer locks a-lighting up as the sun hits 'em, like a store full o' coals busting into flame. Hair, I tell you, same as that o' some o' the big buck gods o' Melanesia themselves. Yes, I say it, girl—heather hair!"

"Why, Palm, I wish t'he Lord y'could see yourself. I wish y'could understand yourself. Y'was plain born for the life. When I've waked y'up, you'll be eager for Tanna; for Tanna, where a man can be a man; where there's never a law but the law o' the cookpot and the sun and the wind—and the will o' you and me."

Ponape Burke did a jig step or two across the deck. "Say, Palm, girl," he exclaimed, "say—you and yer heather hair! Did I or did I not mention as how I was going to make y'a real sure-enough queen?"

It was Burke's continuing delight in her every show of angry spirit, his self-restraining sense of complicity to bring the comedy to an end, a moment he chose, that most intimidated Palmyra.

"Wait till I've tamed you," he would laze. "Then we'll get along fine. And you'll sure like Tanna when y'get the taste o' power in yer pretty mouth."

Only once he had laid a hand on her. That was when, in a fury, she had flown at him, clawing his face. He had held her away, loudly, hilariously. "I'd steal a kiss," he cried, "if I wasn't for my sore arm. But no... I can wait till ye come free, poking out yer lips and begging me to take a smack. 'Twont be long."

Nar was her situation made easier by Burke's evil sense of humor. Possibly to hasten her surrender, more probably in a mere arm's amusement, it played upon her fears.

There was, for instance, the occasion when Olive, for the first time about the Pioneer of Noah, spoke to her. "Had it not been for those brown-shot eyes, always so steadily upon her, she would sometimes have thought of this savage as a machine. There was a sort of unhuman precision about him."

And now in this wise the moment Burke had come below, the brown man materialized himself at her side. She was never prepared for the exceeding change from his statuesque silence to the gesticular animation of his speech. He had opened his mouth, apparently forgetting as on the Rainbow that they knew no word in common. Then, realizing, he stopped so a loss.

The girl smacked back, flud, in panic at the very nearness of him, toward the companionway. But there she recollected that Burke was at the foot of the ladder and stood helplessly.

Then the white man came clanking up. "Little vixen," he warned in a malicious enjoyment of the situation, "push me overboard. He interrupted himself with a burst of laughter. "Gad," he cried, "but I'll hate to give y' the chance! Push me overboard, and I'm gone. But Olive's left. Remember that, I am what stands between you. I ain't a-saying as how he'd love a red-headed goddess all his own. Oh, no! But I do see he's got his eyes on y' like a wolf following a nice fat little lamb off into the timber."

The girl shuddered. Burke or Olive? White savage or brown? A cry of despair rose to her lips but she fought it back. Her hand stole up toward the opening of her dress, lingered, fell again to her side.

Since that event—it was now her third day aboard the Lupe-a-Noa—she had been wondering whether Ponape Burke really did stand between her and his man. She had not forgotten Burke's saying that Olive, if he knew his power, could snap his master's back across one of those big brown knees like a piece of kindling. And she suspected at times that Olive might know this quite well.

The day with the disconcerting suddenness of the Equator, had faded and darkness would soon have been upon them. Burke had waved a hand toward the cabin with kingly gesture. "The royal chamber awaits, Queenie," he had said. "Hot as hell down there and you'll soon be squawking for a hammock on deck. But tonight... There's a lock."

The girl had sprung, trembling, panting, for the companion, had slammed it shut and shot home the bolts. Then she had stumbled down the steps and thrown herself, sobbing, upon the bunk. She had borne

up bravely so long as the sun remained, but on the closing in of night, with all its sinister implications, she had given way. Sleep impossible, the night dragged on. Above decks there had been, as it seemed for hours, only the heavy breathing of slumber. At last, like a trapped animal herself, she had begun a futile plying. And then, without warning in that silence there came, quite close at hand, a sound. The girl, crouched, tense. Again it came, hidden, menacing. (Continued Next Week)

APPLE PROFITS CUT BY CODDLING MOTH

Raleigh, April 5.—The coddling moth causes more apples to go to the cull pile in North Carolina than any other insect, yet proper spraying will hold this costly pest in check.

"Injury from the coddling moth is caused by the larva or small pinkish worm," says C. H. Brannon, extension entomologist at State College. "This larva passes the winter sealed in a cocoon under the bark of the trees, in cracks at the base of the tree and in the ground. There are two and sometimes three generations in this state. The moth emerges about two or three weeks after the petals fall and begins to deposit eggs when the temperature warms up in spring. Eggs are laid in largest numbers just after sunset and can be found mostly on the leaves. These eggs hatch in about seven to ten days."

Mr. Brannon states that these worms first feed on the under side of the leaves but later enter the apple at the blossom end. Here they remain for 30 or 40 days and emerge through the side of the fruit. The adult moth lives only about a week after emerging. The second generation of worms enter the apple from the side.

The best way to kill off the first generation is to be sure that the blossom end of the apple is filled with arsenate of lead poison before it closes. The spray may be applied several weeks before the worms seek to enter the fruit. The second spray will kill those worms feeding on the under side of the leaves and those which try to enter the apple from the side and the third is timed to poison the second generation when they are hatching in greatest numbers.

Mr. Brannon states that it is very important to spray the under side of the leaves thoroughly, when attempting to control the coddling moth. The driving force of the spray must be sufficient to turn the leaves when they are hit.

What is the difference between a Tammanyized party of a Simons-best party? Bossism is bossism regardless of the name under which it goes.

MATTHEW 11:28—"COME" have the hair for a wounded world's healing. I have all strength, will you lean upon me? I have known anguish your heart sorrows feeling. Dawn in the garden of Gethsemane. I have known scourging and traitors' kisses. When all deserted, or sought but to kill; Heard the vile threats and the multitude's hisses. Paid your redemption on Calvary's hill.

Flee from a world that has crushed and despoiled you. Learn child of me, for my yoke it is best; Back from the husks and the swine

who have soiled you—"Come unto me and your soul shall find rest." ELLA Z. HARRIS, Lenoir, N. C.

Tom: "Say, did you ever kiss a girl in a quiet spot?" Bill: "Yes, but the spot was only quiet while I was kissing it."

She: "Are you very busy right now, Mr. Barber?" He: "Yes, I'm scraping an acquaintance."

We fail to see the reason for Sanford Martin's questionnaire after the Senator had already expressed himself—Rocky Mount Telegram.



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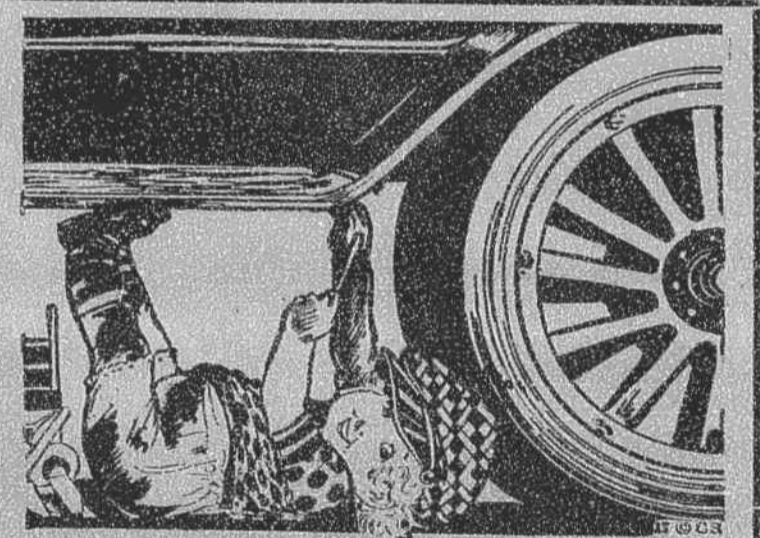
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