

JACK LONDON

JERRY OF THE ISLANDS



Classical literature (Капо)

Джек Лондон

**Jerry of the Islands / Джерри-
островитянин. Книга для
чтения на английском языке**

«КАРО»

1917

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Лондон Д.

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Предлагаемая вниманию читателей повесть знаменитого американского писателя Джека Лондона «Джерри-островитянин» – одна из четырех его повестей о собаках. Повесть вышла в свет уже после смерти писателя, в 1917 году. В книге представлен неадаптированный текст повести, снабженный комментариями и словарем.

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Джек Лондон
Jerry of the Islands / Джерри-островитянин.
Книга для чтения на английском языке

Комментарии и словарь Е. Г. Тигонен

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Об авторе

Знаменитый американский писатель Джек Лондон родился 12 января 1876 года в Сан-Франциско. Родители разошлись до рождения мальчика. Позже его мать Флора Чейни вышла замуж повторно за овдовевшего фермера Джона Лондона. Денег в семье было мало, и Джеку, не доучившись в школе, пришлось с ранних лет зарабатывать себе на жизнь. Чем только он не занимался – продавал газеты, трудился на джутовой и консервной фабриках, зарабатывал в качестве «устричного пирата» – нелегального сборщика устриц в бухте Сан-Франциско, матроса, позже охотился на морских котиков в Тихом океане в берегов Японии, побывал на Аляске в качестве золотоискателя, был гладильщиком и кочегаром. Весь этот огромный жизненный опыт позднее нашел отражение в его литературном творчестве.

Джек Лондон – человек, сделавший себя сам. Не получив систематического образования, он с детства очень много читал – как художественную литературу, так и философские и социологические труды. Самостоятельно подготовился и поступил в Калифорнийский университет, но из-за отсутствия средств вынужден был оставить учебу после третьего семестра. Умелец, моряк, впоследствии фермер, познавший тяжесть физического труда, Лондон всю жизнь жадно поглощал знания и уже в ранние годы загорелся мечтой стать писателем, благо ему было что сказать читателям.

Он был очень плодовит, работал по 15–17 часов в день. Из-под его пера вышло более 200 рассказов, первый из них, «За тех, кто в пути» увидел свет в 1899 году, после возвращения Лондона с Клондайка. Сборники рассказов «Сын волка», «Бог его отцов», «Дети мороза» и другие, героями которых стали волевые, мужественные люди, осуждающие трусов и предателей, принесли ему широчайшую известность.

Дальнейшая литературная карьера Джека Лондона сложилась удачно, он получал безумные по тем временам гонорары – до пятидесяти тысяч долларов за книгу. Однако это не помешало ему продолжать писать в «социалистическом» духе, обличая социальную несправедливость.

Джек Лондон рано ушел из жизни – ему было всего сорок лет, – отравившись прописанным ему морфием (он страдал тяжелым почечным заболеванием). Некоторые исследователи полагают, что это было самоубийство, что, впрочем, ничем не подтверждено, так как он не оставил предсмертной записки. Но, безусловно, мысли о самоубийстве у него были – достаточно вспомнить Мартина Идена, альтер эго писателя. Его герой сознательно покончил с собой, разочаровавшись в ценностях своего собственного круга и буржуазного мира, в котором, даже разбогатев и прославившись, он не смог жить.

* * *

Повесть Джека Лондона «Джерри-островитянин», предлагаемая вниманию читателей, вышла в свет уже после смерти автора, в 1917 году. Эта одна из четырех повестей писателя о собаках.

Foreword

It is a misfortune to some fiction-writers that fiction and unveracity 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 reality¹ – 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 on², 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 blackbirder³, the *Minota*, it was Captain Kellar, master of the blackbirder, the *Eugénie*, 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-plenty⁴. 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

¹ As regards reality – (разг.) Что же касается реализма

² with nothing on – (разг.) голышом

³ the blackbirder – (уст.) судно, вербовавшее чернокожих рабочих

⁴ a-plenty – (уст.) в изобилии, в избытке

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 I

Not until Mister Haggin abruptly picked him up under one arm and stepped into the sternsheets⁵ 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 terrier⁶.

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 sound⁷, 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 oars⁸, 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 Biddy 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 Biddy, 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. Biddy 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

⁵ into the sternsheets – (мор.) на корму

⁶ Irish terrier – ирландский терьер, гладкошерстная порода собак золотисто-рыжего цвета, 18 дюймов в холке

⁷ By word and sound – (уст.) Одним словом

⁸ bent to the oars – (мор.) налегли на весла

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.¹⁰ 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 Biddy 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 Biddy, 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 thrashing¹¹, 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*. Biddy, 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 Biddy, miles and miles along the beaches or through the avenues of cocoanuts, side by

⁹ 'Ware niggers! – (разг.) Опасайся негров!

¹⁰ Still more. – (разг.) И это еще не все; мало того.

¹¹ given him a delightful thrashing – (разг.) задал ему восхитительную трепку

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 afinities¹²,” 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 Biddy 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 him¹³.

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 Biddy, 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 Biddy sprung upon the black, receiving without wince or whimper¹⁴ 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-nilly¹⁵ 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

¹² **Proper afinities** – (разг.) Отличная порода

¹³ **adding weight to his sure intuition that dire fate, he knew not what, was upon him** – усиливая предчувствие того, что злая судьба – он не знал, какая – надвигается на него

¹⁴ **without wince or whimper** – (разг.) не пискнув и не поморщившись

¹⁵ **willy-nilly** – (разг.) поневоле; хочешь не хочешь

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 action¹⁶, 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 unknown¹⁷, 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 course¹⁸ 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 blackbirder 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 Charon¹⁹ sculled across the Styx²⁰ 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*.

¹⁶ **lazily resolved upon no course of action** – (разг.) лениво отказывался от какого-либо действия

¹⁷ **Out of the unknown** – (уст.) Неведомо откуда

¹⁸ **as a matter of course** – (разг.) как дело само собой разумеющееся

¹⁹ **Charon** – (греч. миф.) перевозчик умерших через реки земного царства до врат Аида

²⁰ **Styx** – (греч. миф.) Стикс, река в царстве мертвых

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 II

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 bronze²¹, 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-houses²². 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 forecabin, 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 moment²³," 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'²⁴ 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 Biddy 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."

²¹ a fin-keel of bronze – (мор.) медный киль

²² the cross beams of her crown deck had not been weakened by deck-houses – (мор.) палубные надстройки не ослабляли подпалубных бимсов

²³ your heart'd failed you at the last moment – (разг.) в последний момент у вас не хватит мужества

²⁴ barrin' – (разг.) не считая; за исключением

“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 men²⁵ they put them on the *Sandfly* that was lost on the way to the Santa Cruz. They’ve got a jack-pot over there on the weather coast – my word, the boy that could get my head would be a second Carnegie²⁶! 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 fear²⁷,” 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 precautionous 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 tomcat. 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 Tulagi,” 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 manny’s the head that goes to Malaita, manny’s the time untooken; but, like the old pitcher, it’s tooken in the end.”

“But I’ve got their goat²⁸,” the captain insisted.

“When trouble’s hatching, I go straight to them and tell them what. They can’t get the hang of it²⁹. Think I’ve got some powerful devil-devil medicine.”

Tom Haggin thrust out his hand in abrupt goodbye, 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 overside. 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.

²⁵ **being salt-water men** – (разг.) были хорошими моряками; знали морское дело

²⁶ **Carnegie** – Эндрю Карнеги (1835–1919), американский бизнесмен, филантроп, мультимиллионер, занимался благотворительностью, на его деньги был построен Карнеги-Холл (огромный концертный комплекс в Нью-Йорке)

²⁷ **No fear** – (разг.) Я и не боюсь

²⁸ **I’ve got their goat** – (разг.) Козыри у меня на руках

²⁹ **can’t get the hang of it** – (разг.) не могут понять, в чем тут дело

“Don’t forget the agreement,” Tom Haggin called back across the widening water. “If aught happens you³⁰, 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 sunburnt 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 Rembrandt³¹ 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 Amsterdam³². 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, Biddy, 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, Caruso³³ didn’t have anything on³⁴ Jerry. But the song was too much for Haggin, who, as soon as he had landed, whistled Biddy 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

³⁰ **If aught happens you** – (уст.) Если с вами что-нибудь случится

³¹ **Rembrandt** – Рембрандт ван Рейн (1606–1669), голландский живописец (портреты, религиозная и мифологическая тематика)

³² **New Amsterdam** – до английской колонизации эта территория была заселена голландскими поселенцами, которые называли ее Нью-Амстердам

³³ **Caruso** – Энрике Карузо (1873–1921), итальянский певец

³⁴ **didn’t have anything on** – (разг.) и в подметки не годился

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!³⁵ 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 trade³⁶ 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 blue³⁷, 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.

³⁵ **Get him! Shake him down! Sick him!** – Хватай его! Вали! Кусай его!

³⁶ **gust of the south-east trade** – (мор.) порыв юго-восточного пассата

³⁷ **like a bolt from the blue** – (разг.) как гром среди ясного неба

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 traveller³⁸, 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 unknown³⁹.

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

³⁸ **with a second crash of blocks on traveler** – (мор.) раздался еще один треск блока на бугеле

³⁹ **to grapple with the huge unknown** – (разг.) схватиться с чудовищным неизвестным

Chapter III

Jerry quite forgot Meringe for the time being⁴⁰. 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 again⁴¹, 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 Biddy 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 stern⁴², 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 southeast 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.

⁴⁰ **for the time being** – (разг.) на какое-то время

⁴¹ **the mainsail was ever swooping across from port tack to starboard tack and back again** – грот то и дело перелетал с левого галса на правый и обратно

⁴² **to starboard or to port, at the bow or over the stern** – (мор.) кренился ли корабль направо или на левый борт, зарывался носом в волны или вода покрывала корму

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 odds⁴³. 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 nature, in a cruel and ignoble environment, where the prize of living was to be gained, in the main, by the cunning of cowardice, and, on occasion, by desperateness of defence when in a corner.

But Jerry had been love-selected and courage-selected. His ancestors had been deliberately and consciously chosen by men, who, somewhere in the forgotten past, had taken the wild-dog and made it into the thing they visioned and admired and desired it to be. It must never fight like a rat in a corner, because it must never be rat-like and slink into a corner. Retreat must be unthinkable. The dogs in the past who retreated had been rejected by men. They had not become Jerry's ancestors. The dogs selected for Jerry's ancestors had been the brave ones, the upstanding and out-dashing ones, who flew into the face of danger and battled and died, but who never gave ground⁴⁴. And, since it is the way of kind to beget kind, Jerry was what Terrence was before him, and what Terrence's forefathers had been for a long way back.

So it was that Jerry, when he chanced upon the wild-dog stowed shrewdly away from the wind in the lee-corner made by the mainmast and the cabin skylight, did not stop to consider whether the creature was bigger or fiercer than he. All he knew was that it was the ancient enemy – the wild-dog that had not come in to the fires of man. With a wild paean of joy that attracted Captain Van Horn's all-hearing ears and all-seeing eyes, Jerry sprang to the attack. The wild puppy gained his feet in full retreat with incredible swiftness, but was caught by the rush of Jerry's body and rolled over and over on the sloping deck. And as he rolled, and felt sharp teeth pricking him, he snapped and snarled, alternating snarls with whimperings and squallings of terror, pain, and abject humility.

And Jerry was a gentleman, which is to say he was a gentle dog. He had been so selected. Because the thing did not fight back, because it was abject and whining, because it was helpless under him, he abandoned the attack, disengaging himself from the top of the tangle into which he had slid in the lee scuppers. He did not think about it. He did it because he was so made. He stood up on the reeling deck, feeling excellently satisfied with the delicious, wild-doggy smell of hair in his mouth and consciousness, and in his ears and consciousness the praising cry of Captain Van Horn: "Good boy, Jerry! You're the goods⁴⁵, Jerry! Some dog, eh! Some dog!"

As he stalked away, it must be admitted that Jerry displayed pride in himself, his gait being a trifle stiff-legged, the cocking of his head back over his shoulder at the whining wild-dog having all the articulateness of: "Well, I guess I gave you enough this time⁴⁶. You'll keep out of my way after this."

⁴³ **had never voluntarily fought against odds** – (разг.) никогда по своей воле не бились с превосходящими силами противника

⁴⁴ **never gave ground** – (разг.) никогда не отступали (не сдавались)

⁴⁵ **You're the goods** – (сленг) Молодчина

⁴⁶ **I gave you enough this time** – (разг.) на этот раз ты получил достаточно

Jerry continued the exploration of his new and tiny world that was never at rest, for ever lifting, heeling, and lunging on the rolling face of the sea. There were the Meringe return boys. He made it a point to identify all of them, receiving, while he did so, scowls and mutterings, and reciprocating with cocky bullyings and threatenings. Being so trained, he walked on his four legs superior to them, two-legged though they were; for he had moved and lived always under the aegis of the great two-legged and be-trouser'd god, Mister Haggin.

Then there were the strange return boys, from Pennduffryn and the Bay of a Thousand Ships. He insisted on knowing them all. He might need to know them in some future time. He did not think this. He merely equipped himself with knowledge of his environment without any awareness of provision or without bothering about the future.

In his own way of acquiring knowledge, he quickly discovered, just as on the plantation house-boys were different from field-boys, that on the *Arangi* there was a classification of boys different from the return boys⁴⁷. This was the boat's crew. The fifteen blacks who composed it were closer than the others to Captain Van Horn. They seemed more directly to belong to the *Arangi* and to him. They laboured under him at word of command, steering at the wheel, pulling and hauling on ropes, healing water upon the deck from overside and scrubbing with brooms.

Just as Jerry had learned from Mister Haggin that he must be more tolerant of the house-boys than of the field-boys if they trespassed on the compound⁴⁸, so, from Captain Van Horn, he learned that he must be more tolerant of the boat's crew than of the return boys. He had less license with them, more license with the others. As long as Captain Van Horn did not want his boat's crew chased, it was Jerry's duty not to chase. On the other hand he never forgot that he was a white-god's dog. While he might not chase these particular blacks, he declined familiarity with them. He kept his eye on them. He had seen blacks as tolerated as these, lined up and whipped by Mister Haggin. They occupied an intermediate place in the scheme of things, and they were to be watched in case they did not keep their place. He accorded them room, but he did not accord them equality. At the best, he could be stand-offishly considerate of them.

He made thorough examination of the galley, a rude affair, open on the open deck, exposed to wind and rain and storm, a small stove that was not even a ship's stove, on which somehow, aided by strings and wedges, commingled with much smoke, two blacks managed to cook the food for the four-score⁴⁹ persons on board.

Next, he was interested by a strange proceeding on the part of the boat's crew. Upright pipes, serving as stanchions, were being screwed into the top of the *Arangi's* rail so that they served to support three strands of barbed wire that ran completely around the vessel, being broken only at the gangway for a narrow space of fifteen inches. That this was a precaution against danger, Jerry sensed without a passing thought to it⁵⁰. All his life, from his first impressions of life, had been passed in the heart of danger, ever-impending, from the blacks. In the plantation house at Meringe, always the several white men had looked askance at the many blacks who toiled for them and belonged to them. In the living-room, where were the eating-table, the billiard-table, and the phonograph, stood stands of rifles, and in each bedroom, beside each bed, ready to hand⁵¹, had been revolvers and rifles. As well, Mister Haggin and Derby and Bob had always carried revolvers in their belts when they left the house to go among their blacks.

Jerry knew these noise-making things for what they were – instruments of destruction and death. He had seen live things destroyed by them, such as puarkas, goats, birds, and crocodiles. By

⁴⁷ **the return boys** – (зд.) рабочие, возвращающиеся домой

⁴⁸ **if they trespassed on the compound** – (зд.) если они выходили за границу своей территории (на корабле)

⁴⁹ **four-score** – (разг.) восемьдесят

⁵⁰ **sensed without a passing thought to it** – (разг.) чувствовал, хотя и не задумывался над этим

⁵¹ **ready to hand** – (разг.) всегда под рукой (заряжены и готовы к бою)

means of such things the white-gods by their will crossed space without crossing it with their bodies, and destroyed live things. Now he, in order to damage anything, had to cross space with his body to get to it. He was different. He was limited. All impossible things were possible to the unlimited, two-legged white-gods. In a way, this ability of theirs to destroy across space was an elongation of claw and fang. Without pondering it, or being conscious of it, he accepted it as he accepted the rest of the mysterious world about him.

Once, even, had Jerry seen his Mister Haggin deal death at a distance in another noise-way. From the veranda he had seen him fling sticks of exploding dynamite into a screeching mass of blacks who had come raiding from the Beyond⁵² in the long war canoes, beaked and black, carved and inlaid with mother-of-pearl, which they had left hauled up on the beach at the door of Meringe.

Many precautions by the white-gods had Jerry been aware of, and so, sensing it almost in intangible ways, as a matter of course he accepted this barbed-wire fence on the floating world as a mark of the persistence of danger. Disaster and death hovered close about, waiting the chance to leap upon life and drag it down. Life had to be very alive in order to live was the law Jerry had learned from the little of life he knew.

Watching the rigging up of the barbed wire, Jerry's next adventure was an encounter with Lerumie, the return boy from Meringe, who, only that morning, on the beach embarking, had been rolled by Bidy, along with his possessions into the surf. The encounter occurred on the starboard side of the skylight, alongside of which Lerumie was standing as he gazed into a cheap trade-mirror and combed his kinky hair with a hand-carved comb of wood.

Jerry, scarcely aware of Lerumie's presence, was trotting past on his way aft to where Borckman, the mate, was superintending the stringing of the barbed wire to the stanchions. And Lerumie, with a sidelong look to see if the deed meditated for his foot was screened from observation, aimed a kick at the son of his four-legged enemy. His bare foot caught Jerry on the sensitive end of his recently bobbed tail, and Jerry, outraged, with the sense of sacrilege committed upon him, went instantly wild⁵³.

Captain Van Horn, standing aft on the port quarter, gauging the slant of the wind on the sails and the inadequate steering of the black at the wheel, had not seen Jerry because of the intervening skylight. But his eyes had taken in the shoulder movement of Lerumie that advertised the balancing on one foot while the other foot had kicked. And from what followed, he divined what had already occurred.

Jerry's outcry, as he sprawled, whirled, sprang, and slashed, was a veritable puppy-scream of indignation. He slashed ankle and foot as he received the second kick in mid-air; and, although he slid clear down the slope of deck into the scuppers, he left on the black skin the red tracery of his puppy-needle teeth. Still screaming his indignation, he clawed his way back up the steep wooden hill.

Lerumie, with another side-long look, knew that he was observed and that he dare not go to extremes. He fled along the skylight to escape down the companionway, but was caught by Jerry's sharp teeth in his calf. Jerry, attacking blindly, got in the way of the black's feet. A long, stumbling fall, accelerated by a sudden increase of wind in the sails, ensued, and Lerumie, vainly trying to catch his footing⁵⁴, fetched up against the three strands of barbed wire on the lee rail.

The deck-full of blacks shrieked their merriment, and Jerry, his rage undiminished, his immediate antagonist out of the battle, mistaking himself as the object of the laughter of the blacks, turned upon them, charging and slashing the many legs that fled before him. They dropped down the cabin and forecastle companionways, ran out the bowsprit, and sprang into the rigging till they were perched everywhere in the air like monstrous birds. In the end, the deck belonged to Jerry, save for

⁵² **from the Beyond** – (эд.) из внешнего мира

⁵³ **went instantly wild** – (разг.) тут же взбесился; немедленно пришел в бешенство

⁵⁴ **vainly trying to catch his footing** – (разг.) тщетно пытаюсь встать на ноги

the boat's crew; for he had already learned to differentiate. Captain Van Horn was hilariously vocal of his praise, calling Jerry to him and giving him man-thumps of joyful admiration. Next, the captain turned to his many passengers and orated in *bêche-de-mer* English.

"Hey! You fella boy! I make 'm big fella talk. This fella dog he belong along me. One fella boy hurt 'm that fella dog – my word! – me cross too much along that fella boy. I knock 'm seven bells outa that fella boy.⁵⁵ You take 'm care leg belong you. I take 'm care dog belong me. Savve?"

And the passengers, still perched in the air, with gleaming black eyes and with querulerus chirpings one to another, accepted the white man's law. Even Lerumie, variously lacerated by the barbed wire, did not scowl nor mutter threats. Instead, and bringing a roar of laughter from his fellows and a twinkle into the skipper's eyes, he rubbed questing fingers over his scratches and murmured: "My word! Some big fella dog that fella!"

It was not that Jerry was unkindly. Like Biddy and Terrence, he was fierce and unafraid; which attributes were wrapped up in his heredity. And, like Biddy and Terrence, he delighted in nigger-chasing, which, in turn, was a matter of training. From his earliest puppyhood he had been so trained. Niggers were niggers, but white men were gods, and it was the white-gods who had trained him to chase niggers and keep them in their proper lesser place in the world. All the world was held in the hollow of the white man's hands. The niggers – well, had not he seen them always compelled to remain in their lesser place? Had he not seen them, on occasion, triced up to the palm-trees of the Meringe compound and their backs lashed to ribbons by the white-gods? Small wonder⁵⁶ that a high-born Irish terrier, in the arms of love of the white-god, should look at niggers through white-god's eyes, and act toward niggers in the way that earned the white-god's reward of praise.

It was a busy day for Jerry. Everything about the *Arangi* was new and strange, and so crowded was she that exciting things were continually happening. He had another encounter with the wild-dog, who treacherously attacked him in flank from ambush⁵⁷. Trade boxes belonging to the blacks had been irregularly piled so that a small space was left between two boxes in the lower tier. From this hole, as Jerry trotted past in response to a call from the skipper, the wild-dog sprang, scratched his sharp puppy-teeth into Jerry's yellow-velvet hide, and scuttled back into his lair.

Again Jerry's feelings were outraged. He could understand flank attack. Often he and Michael had played at that, although it had only been playing. But to retreat without fighting from a fight once started was alien to Jerry's ways and nature. With righteous wrath⁵⁸ he charged into the hole after his enemy. But this was where the wild-dog fought to best advantage – in a corner. When Jerry sprang up in the confined space he bumped his head on the box above, and the next moment felt the snarling impact of the other's teeth against his own teeth and jaw.

There was no getting at the wild-dog⁵⁹, no chance to rush against him wholeheartedly, with generous full weight in the attack. All Jerry could do was to crawl and squirm and belly forward, and always he was met by a snarling mouthful of teeth. Even so, he would have got the wild-dog in the end, had not Borckman, in passing, reached in and dragged Jerry out by a hind-leg. Again came Captain Van Horn's call, and Jerry, obedient, trotted on aft.

A meal was being served on deck in the shade of the spanker, and Jerry, sitting between the two men received his share⁶⁰. Already he had made the generalization that of the two, the captain was the superior god, giving many orders that the mate obeyed. The mate, on the other hand, gave orders to the blacks, but never did he give orders to the captain. Furthermore, Jerry was developing a liking

⁵⁵ **I knock 'm seven bells outa that fella boy.** – (мор. руг.) Я выбью из него семь склянок.

⁵⁶ **Small wonder** – (уст.) Неудивительно; не стоит удивляться

⁵⁷ **treacherously attacked him in flank from ambush** – (разг.) предательски напала на него сзади из засады

⁵⁸ **With righteous wrath** – (разг.) В праведном гневе; со справедливым негодованием

⁵⁹ **There was no getting at the wild-dog** – (разг.) Дикую собаку было никак не достать

⁶⁰ **received his share** – (разг.) получил свою порцию еды

for the captain, so he snuggled close to him. When he put his nose into the captain's plate, he was gently reprimanded. But once, when he merely sniffed at the mate's steaming tea-cup, he received a snub on the nose from the mate's grimy forefinger. Also, the mate did not offer him food.

Captain Van Horn gave him, first of all, a pannikin of oatmeal mush, generously flooded with condensed cream and sweetened with a heaping spoonful of sugar. After that, on occasion, he gave him morsels of buttered bread and slivers of fried fish from which he first carefully picked the tiny bones.

His beloved Mister Haggin had never fed him from the table at meal time, and Jerry was beside himself with the joy⁶¹ of this delightful experience. And, being young, he allowed his eagerness to take possession of him, so that soon he was unduly urging the captain for more pieces of fish and of bread and butter. Once, he even barked his demand. This put the idea into the captain's head, who began immediately to teach him to "speak."

At the end of five minutes he had learned to speak softly, and to speak only once – a low, mellow, bell-like bark of a single syllable. Also, in this first five minutes, he had learned to "sit down," as distinctly different from "lie down"; and that he must sit down whenever he spoke, and that he must speak without jumping or moving from the sitting position, and then must wait until the piece of food was passed to him.

Further, he had added three words to his vocabulary. For ever after, "speak" would mean to him "speak," and "sit down" would mean "sit down" and would not mean "lie down." The third addition to his vocabulary was "Skipper." That was the name he had heard the mate repeatedly call Captain Van Horn. And just as Jerry knew that when a human called "Michael," that the call referred to Michael and not to Biddy, or Terrence, or himself, so he knew that Skipper was the name of the two-legged white master of this new floating world.

"That isn't just a dog," was Van Horn's conclusion to the mate. "There's a sure enough human brain there behind those brown eyes. He's six months old. Any boy of six years would be an infant phenomenon to learn in five minutes all that he's just learned. Why, *Gott fer dang*⁶², a dog's brain has to be like a man's. If he does things like a man, he's got to think like a man."

⁶¹ was beside himself with the joy – (разг.) был вне себя от радости

⁶² *Gott fer dang* – (нем. воскл.) Господи помилуй

Chapter IV

The companionway into the main cabin was a steep ladder, and down this, after his meal, Jerry was carried by the captain. The cabin was a long room, extending for the full width of the *Arangi* from a lazarette aft to a tiny room for'ard. For'ard of this room, separated by a tight bulkhead, was the forecastle where lived the boat's crew. The tiny room was shared between Van Horn and Borckman, while the main cabin was occupied by the three-score and odd return boys⁶³. They squatted about and lay everywhere on the floor and on the long low bunks that ran the full length of the cabin along either side.

In the little stateroom the captain tossed a blanket on the floor in a corner, and he did not find it difficult to get Jerry to understand that that was his bed. Nor did Jerry, with a full stomach and weary from so much excitement, find it difficult to fall immediately asleep.

An hour later he was awakened by the entrance of Borckman. When he wagged his stub of a tail and smiled friendly with his eyes, the mate scowled at him and muttered angrily in his throat. Jerry made no further overtures, but lay quietly watching. The mate had come to take a drink. In truth, he was stealing the drink from Van Horn's supply. Jerry did not know this. Often, on the plantation, he had seen the white men take drinks. But there was something somehow different in the manner of Borckman's taking a drink. Jerry was aware, vaguely, that there was something surreptitious about it. What was wrong he did not know, yet he sensed the wrongness and watched suspiciously.

After the mate departed, Jerry would have slept again had not the carelessly latched door swung open with a bang. Opening his eyes, prepared for any hostile invasion from the unknown, he fell to watching a large cockroach crawling down the wall. When he got to his feet and warily stalked toward it, the cockroach scuttled away with a slight rustling noise and disappeared into a crack. Jerry had been acquainted with cockroaches all his life, but he was destined to learn new things about them from the particular breed that dwelt on the *Arangi*.

After a cursory examination of the stateroom he wandered out into the cabin. The blacks, sprawled about everywhere, but, conceiving it to be his duty to his Skipper, Jerry made it a point to identify each one⁶⁴. They scowled and uttered low threatening noises when he sniffed close to them. One dared to menace him with a blow, but Jerry, instead of slinking away, showed his teeth and prepared to spring. The black hastily dropped the offending hand to his side and made soothing, penitent noises, while others chuckled; and Jerry passed on his way. It was nothing new. Always a blow was to be expected from blacks when white men were not around. Both the mate and the captain were on deck, and Jerry, though unafraid, continued his investigations cautiously.

But at the doorless entrance to the lazarette aft, he threw caution to the winds and darted in in pursuit of the new scent that came to his nostrils. A strange person was in the low, dark space whom he had never smelled. Clad in a single shift and lying on a coarse grass-mat spread upon a pile of tobacco cases and fifty-pound tins of flour, was a young black girl.

There was something furtive and lurking about her that Jerry did not fail to sense, and he had long since learned that something was wrong when any black lurked or skulked. She cried out with fear as he barked an alarm and pounced upon her. Even though his teeth scratched her bare arm, she did not strike at him. Not did she cry out again. She cowered down and trembled and did not fight back⁶⁵. Keeping his teeth locked in the hold he had got on her flimsy shift, he shook and dragged at her, all the while growling and scolding for her benefit and yelping a high clamour to bring Skipper or the mate.

⁶³ the three-score and odd return boys – (зд.) более шестидесяти рабочих

⁶⁴ made it a point to identify each one – (разг.) решил научиться по запаху отличать каждого

⁶⁵ did not fight back – (разг.) даже не защищалась 55

In the course of the struggle the girl over-balanced on the boxes and tins and the entire heap collapsed. This caused Jerry to yelp a more frenzied alarm, while the blacks, peering in from the cabin, laughed with cruel enjoyment.

When Skipper arrived, Jerry wagged his stump tail and, with ears laid back, dragged and tugged harder than ever at the thin cotton of the girl's garment. He expected praise for what he had done, but when Skipper merely told him to let go, he obeyed with the realization that this lurking, fear-struck creature was somehow different, and must be treated differently, from other lurking creatures.

Fear-struck she was, as it is given to few humans to be and still live. Van Horn called her his parcel of trouble⁶⁶, and he was anxious to be rid of the parcel, without, however, the utter annihilation of the parcel. It was this annihilation which he had saved her from when he bought her in even exchange for a fat pig.

Stupid, worthless, spiritless, sick, not more than a dozen years old, no delight in the eyes of the young men of her village, she had been consigned by her disappointed parents to the cooking-pot. When Captain Van Horn first encountered her had been when she was the central figure in a lugubrious procession on the banks of the Balebuli River.

Anything but a beauty – had been his appraisal when he halted the procession for a pow-wow. Lean from sickness, her skin mangy with the dry scales of the disease called bukua, she was tied hand and foot and, like a pig, slung from a stout pole that rested on the shoulders of the bearers, who intended to dine off of her⁶⁷. Too hopeless to expect mercy, she made no appeal for help, though the horrible fear that possessed her was eloquent in her wild-staring eyes.

In the universal *bêche-de-mer* English, Captain Van Horn had learned that she was not regarded with relish by her companions, and that they were on their way to stake her out up to her neck in the running water of the Balebuli. But first, before they staked her, their plan was to dislocate her joints and break the big bones of the arms and legs. This was no religious rite, no placation of the brutish jungle gods. Merely was it a matter of gastronomy. Living meat, so treated, was made tender and tasty, and, as her companions pointed out, she certainly needed to be put through such a process. Two days in the water, they told the captain, ought to do the business. Then they would kill her, build the fire, and invite in a few friends.

After half an hour of bargaining, during which Captain Van Horn had insisted on the worthlessness of the parcel, he had bought a fat pig worth five dollars and exchanged it for her. Thus, since he had paid for the pig in trade goods, and since trade goods were rated at a hundred per cent. profit, the girl had actually cost him two dollars and fifty cents.

And then Captain Van Horn's troubles had begun. He could not get rid of the girl. Too well he knew the natives of Malaita to turn her over to them anywhere on the island. Chief Ishikola of Su'u had offered five twenties of drinking coconuts for her, and Bau, a bush chief, had offered two chickens on the beach at Malu. But this last offer had been accompanied by a sneer, and had tokened the old rascal's scorn of the girl's scrawniness. Failing to connect with the missionary brig, the Western Cross, on which she would not have been eaten, Captain Van Horn had been compelled to keep her in the cramped quarters of the *Arangi* against a problematical future time when he would be able to turn her over to the missionaries⁶⁸.

But toward him the girl had no heart of gratitude because she had no brain of understanding. She, who had been sold for a fat pig, considered her pitiful rôle in the world to be unchanged. Eatee she had been. Eatee she remained. Her destination merely had been changed, and this big fella white marster of the *Arangi* would undoubtedly be her destination when she had sufficiently fattened. His

⁶⁶ **parcel of trouble** – (разг.) куча проблем (неприятностей)

⁶⁷ **intended to dine off of her** – (разг.) собирались ею пообедать

⁶⁸ **to turn her over to the missionaries** – (разг.) передать ее с рук на руки миссионерам

designs on her had been transparent from the first⁶⁹, when he had tried to feed her up. And she had outwitted him by resolutely eating no more than would barely keep her alive.

As a result, she, who had lived in the bush all her days and never so much as set foot in a canoe, rocked and rolled unendingly over the broad ocean in a perpetual nightmare of fear. In the *bêche-de-mer* that was current among the blacks of a thousand islands and ten thousand dialects, the *Arangi*'s procession of passengers assured her of her fate. "My word, you fella Mary," one would say to her, "short time little bit that big fella white marster kai-kai along you." Or, another: "Big fella white marster kai-kai along you, my word, belly belong him walk about too much."

Kai-kai was the *bêche-de-mer* for "eat." Even Jerry knew that. "Eat" did not obtain in his vocabulary; but kai-kai did, and it meant all and more than "eat," for it served for both noun and verb.

But the girl never replied to the jeering of the blacks. For that matter, she never spoke at all, not even to Captain Van Horn, who did not so much as know her name.

It was late afternoon, after discovering the girl in the lazarette, when Jerry again came on deck. Scarcely had Skipper, who had carried him up the steep ladder, dropped him on deck than Jerry made a new discovery – land. He did not see it, but he smelled it. His nose went up in the air and quested to windward along the wind that brought the message⁷⁰, and he read the air with his nose as a man might read a newspaper – the salt smells of the seashore and of the dank muck of mangrove swamps at low tide, the spicy fragrances of tropic vegetation, and the faint, most faint, acrid tingle of smoke from smudgy fires.

The trade, which had laid the *Arangi* well up under the lee of this outjutting point of Malaita, was now failing, so that she began to roll in the easy swells with crashings of sheets and tackles and thunderous flappings of her sails. Jerry no more than cocked a contemptuous quizzical eye at the mainsail anticking above him. He knew already the empty windiness of its threats, but he was careful of the mainsheet blocks, and walked around the traveller instead of over it.

While Captain Van Horn, taking advantage of the calm to exercise the boat's crew with the fire-arms and to limber up the weapons, was passing out the Lee-Enfields from their place on top the cabin skylight, Jerry suddenly crouched and began to stalk stiff-legged. But the wild-dog, three feet from his lair under the trade-boxes, was not unobservant. He watched and snarled threateningly. It was not a nice snarl. In fact, it was as nasty and savage a snarl as all his life had been nasty and savage. Most small creatures were afraid of that snarl, but it had no deterrent effect on Jerry, who continued his steady stalking. When the wild-dog sprang for the hole under the boxes, Jerry sprang after, missing his enemy by inches. Tossing overboard bits of wood, bottles and empty tins, Captain Van Horn ordered the eight eager boat's crew with rifles to turn loose⁷¹. Jerry was excited and delighted with the fusillade, and added his puppy yelpings to the noise. As the empty brass cartridges were ejected, the return boys scrambled on the deck for them, esteeming them as very precious objects and thrusting them, still warm, into the empty holes in their ears. Their ears were perforated with many of these holes, the smallest capable of receiving a cartridge, while the larger ones contained clay pipes, sticks of tobacco, and even boxes of matches. Some of the holes in the ear-lobes were so huge that they were plugged with carved wooden cylinders three inches in diameter.

Mate and captain carried automatics in their belts, and with these they turned loose, shooting away clip after clip to the breathless admiration of the blacks for such marvellous rapidity of fire. The boat's crew were not even fair shots, but Van Horn, like every captain in the Solomons, knew that the bush natives and salt-water men were so much worse shots, and knew that the shooting of his boat's crew could be depended upon – if the boat's crew itself did not turn against the ship in a pinch.

⁶⁹ had been transparent from the first – (разг.) были ясными с самого начала

⁷⁰ the wind that brought the message – (здесь) ветер, который донес запах земли

⁷¹ to turn loose – (здесь) стрелять

At first, Borckman's automatic jammed, and he received a caution from Van Horn for his carelessness in not keeping it clean and thin-oiled. Also, Borckman was twittingly asked how many drinks he had taken, and if that was what accounted for his shooting being under his average. Borckman explained that he had a touch of fever, and Van Horn deferred stating his doubts until a few minutes later, squatting in the shade of the spanker with Jerry in his arms, he told Jerry all about it.

"The trouble with him is the schnapps, Jerry," he explained. "*Gott fer dang*, it makes me keep all my watches and half of his⁷². And he says it's the fever. Never believe it, Jerry. It's the schnapps – just the plain s-c-h-n-a-p-p-s schnapps. An' he's a good sailor-man, Jerry, when he's sober. But when he's schnappy he's sheer lunatic. Then his noddle goes pinwheeling⁷³ and he's a blighted fool, and he'd snore in a gale and suffer for sleep in a dead calm⁷⁴. – Jerry, you're just beginning to pad those four little soft feet of yours into the world, so take the advice of one who knows and leave the schnapps alone. Believe me, Jerry, boy – listen to your father – schnapps will never buy you anything⁷⁵."

Whereupon, leaving Jerry on deck to stalk the wild-dog, Captain Van Horn went below into the tiny stateroom and took a long drink from the very bottle from which Borckman was stealing.

The stalking of the wild-dog became a game, at least to Jerry, who was so made that his heart bore no malice⁷⁶, and who hugely enjoyed it. Also, it gave him a delightful consciousness of his own mastery, for the wild-dog always fled from him. At least so far as dogs were concerned, Jerry was cock of the deck⁷⁷ of the *Arangi*. It did not enter his head to query how his conduct affected the wild-dog, though, in truth, he led that individual a wretched existence. Never, except when Jerry was below, did the wild one dare venture more than several feet from his retreat, and he went about in fear and trembling of the fat roly-poly puppy who was unafraid of his snarl.

In the late afternoon, Jerry trotted aft, after having administered another lesson to the wild-dog, and found Skipper seated on the deck, back against the low rail, knees drawn up, and gazing absently off to leeward. Jerry sniffed his bare calf – not that he needed to identify it, but just because he liked to, and in a sort of friendly greeting. But Van Horn took no notice, continuing to stare out across the sea. Nor was he aware of the puppy's presence.

Jerry rested the length of his chin on Skipper's knee and gazed long and earnestly into Skipper's face. This time Skipper knew, and was pleasantly thrilled; but still he gave no sign. Jerry tried a new tack. Skipper's hand drooped idly, half open, from where the forearm rested on the other knee. Into the part-open hand Jerry thrust his soft golden muzzle to the eyes and remained quite still. Had he been situated to see, he would have seen a twinkle in Skipper's eyes, which had been withdrawn from the sea and were looking down upon him. But Jerry could not see. He kept quiet a little longer, and then gave a prodigious sniff.

This was too much for Skipper, who laughed with such genial heartiness as to lay Jerry's silky ears back and down in self-deprecation of affection and pleadingness to bask in the sunshine of the god's smile. Also, Skipper's laughter set Jerry's tail wildly bobbing. The half-open hand closed in a firm grip that gathered in the slack of the skin of one side of Jerry's head and jowl. Then the hand began to shake him back and forth with such good will that he was compelled to balance back and forth on all his four feet.

It was bliss to Jerry. Nay, more, it was ecstasy. For Jerry knew there was neither anger nor danger in the roughness of the shake, and that it was play of the sort that he and Michael had indulged in. On occasion, he had so played with Bidy and lovingly mauled her about. And, on very rare

⁷² **it makes me keep all my watches and half of his** – (зд.) мне приходится нести свои вахты, да еще и половину за него

⁷³ **his noddle goes pinwheeling** – (сленг) голова его идет кругом

⁷⁴ **in a dead calm** – (мор.) в мертвый штиль

⁷⁵ **will never buy you anything** – (разг.) до добра не доведет

⁷⁶ **his heart bore no malice** – (разг.) не держал на сердце зла

⁷⁷ **was cock of the deck** – (разг.) был героем палубы

occasion, Mister Haggin had lovingly mauled him about. It was speech to Jerry, full of unmistakable meaning.

As the shake grew rougher, Jerry emitted his most ferocious growl, which grew more ferocious with the increasing violence of the shaking. But that, too, was play, a making believe to hurt the one he liked too well to hurt⁷⁸. He strained and tugged at the grip, trying to twist his jowl in the slack of skin so as to reach a bite.

When Skipper, with a quick thrust, released him and shoved him clear, he came back, all teeth and growl, to be again caught and shaken. The play continued, with rising excitement to Jerry. Once, too quick for Skipper, he caught his hand between teeth; but he did not bring them together. They pressed lovingly, denting the skin, but there was no bite in them.

The play grew rougher, and Jerry lost himself in the play. Still playing, he grew so excited that all that had been feigned became actual. This was battle, a struggle against the hand that seized and shook him and thrust him away. The make-believe of ferocity passed out of his growls; the ferocity in them became real. Also, in the moments when he was shoved away and was springing back to the attack, he yelped in high-pitched puppy hysteria. And Captain Van Horn, realizing, suddenly, instead of clutching, extended his hand wide open in the peace sign that is as ancient as the human hand⁷⁹. At the same time his voice rang out the single word, "Jerry!" In it was all the imperativeness of reproof and command and all the solicitous insistence of love.

Jerry knew and was checked back to himself. He was instantly contrite, all soft humility, ears laid back with pleadingness for forgiveness and protestation of a warm throbbing heart of love. Instantly, from an open-mouthed, fang-bristling dog in full career of attack, he melted into a bundle of softness and silkiness, that trotted to the open hand and kissed it with a tongue that flashed out between white gleaming teeth like a rose-red jewel. And the next moment he was in Skipper's arms, jowl against cheek, and the tongue was again flashing out in all the articulateness possible for a creature denied speech. It was a veritable love-feast, as dear to one as to the other.

"*Gott fer dang!*" Captain Van Horn crooned. "You're nothing but a bunch of high-strung sensitiveness, with a golden heart in the middle and a golden coat wrapped all around. *Gott fer dang*, Jerry, you're gold, pure gold, inside and out, and no dog was ever minted like you in all the world. You're heart of gold, you golden dog, and be good to me and love me as I shall always be good to you and love you for ever and for ever."

And Captain Van Horn, who ruled the *Arangi* in bare legs, a loin-cloth, and a sixpenny under-shirt, and ran cannibal blacks back and forth in the blackbird trade with an automatic strapped to his body waking and sleeping and with his head forfeit in scores of salt-water villages and bush strongholds, and who was esteemed the toughest skipper in the Solomons where only men who are tough may continue to live and esteem toughness, blinked with sudden moisture in his eyes, and could not see for the moment the puppy that quivered all its body of love in his arms and kissed away the salty softness of his eyes.

⁷⁸ **he liked too well to hurt** – (разг.) слишком любил, чтобы причинить боль

⁷⁹ **in the peace sign that is as ancient as the human hand** – (разг.) жест примирения, такой же древний, как и рука человека

Chapter V

And swift tropic night smote the *Arangi*, as she alternately rolled in calms and heeled and plunged ahead in squalls⁸⁰ under the lee of the cannibal island of Malaita. It was a stoppage of the south-east trade wind that made for variable weather, and that made cooking on the exposed deck galley a misery and sent the return boys, who had nothing to wet but their skins, scuttling below.

The first watch, from eight to twelve, was the mate's; and Captain Van Horn, forced below by the driving wet of a heavy rain squall, took Jerry with him to sleep in the tiny stateroom. Jerry was weary from the manifold excitements of the most exciting day in his life; and he was asleep and kicking and growling in his sleep, ere Skipper, with a last look at him and a grin as he turned the lamp low, muttered aloud: "It's that wild-dog, Jerry. Get him. Shake him. Shake him hard."

So soundly did Jerry sleep, that when the rain, having robbed the atmosphere of its last breath of wind, ceased and left the stateroom a steaming, suffocating furnace, he did not know when Skipper, panting for air, his loin-cloth and undershirt soaked with sweat, arose, tucked blanket and pillow under his arm, and went on deck.

Jerry only awakened when a huge three-inch cockroach nibbled at the sensitive and hairless skin between his toes. He awoke kicking the offended foot, and gazed at the cockroach that did not scuttle, but that walked dignifiedly away. He watched it join other cockroaches that paraded the floor. Never had he seen so many gathered together at one time, and never had he seen such large ones. They were all of a size, and they were everywhere. Long lines of them poured out of cracks in the walls and descended to join their fellows on the floor.

The thing was indecent⁸¹ – at least, in Jerry's mind, it was not to be tolerated. Mister Haggin, Derby, and Bob had never tolerated cockroaches, and their rules were his rules. The cockroach was the eternal tropic enemy. He sprang at the nearest, pouncing to crush it to the floor under his paws. But the thing did what he had never known a cockroach to do. It arose in the air strong-flighted as a bird. And as if at a signal, all the multitude of cockroaches took wings of flight⁸² and filled the room with their flutterings and circlings.

He attacked the winged host, leaping into the air, snapping at the flying vermin, trying to knock them down with his paws. Occasionally he succeeded and destroyed one; nor did the combat cease until all the cockroaches, as if at another signal, disappeared into the many cracks, leaving the room to him.

Quickly, his next thought was: Where is Skipper? He knew he was not in the room, though he stood up on his hind-legs and investigated the low bunk, his keen little nose quivering delightedly while he made little sniffs of delight as he smelled the recent presence of Skipper. And what made his nose quiver and sniff, likewise made his stump of a tail bob back and forth.

But where was Skipper? It was a thought in his brain that was as sharp and definite as a similar thought would be in a human brain. And it similarly preceded action. The door had been left hooked open, and Jerry trotted out into the cabin where half a hundred blacks made queer sleep-moanings, and sighings, and snorings. They were packed closely together, covering the floor as well as the long sweep of bunks, so that he was compelled to crawl over their naked legs. And there was no white god about to protect him. He knew it, but was unafraid.

Having made sure that Skipper was not in the cabin, Jerry prepared for the perilous ascent of the steep steps that were almost a ladder, then recollected the lazarette. In he trotted and sniffed

⁸⁰ **alternately rolled in calms and heeled and plunged ahead in squalls** – (мор.) то затихало в штиле, то кренилось и ныряло под ударами ветра с дождем

⁸¹ **The thing was indecent** – (разг.) Это было просто неприлично (недопустимо)

⁸² **took wings of flight** – (разг.) взлетели в воздух

at the sleeping girl in the cotton shift who believed that Van Horn was going to eat her if he could succeed in fattening her⁸³.

Back at the ladder-steps, he looked up and waited in the hope that Skipper might appear from above and carry him up. Skipper had passed that way, he knew, and he knew for two reasons. It was the only way he could have passed, and Jerry's nose told him that he had passed. His first attempt to climb the steps began well. Not until a third of the way up, as the *Arangi* rolled in a sea and recovered with a jerk, did he slip and fall. Two or three boys awoke and watched him while they prepared and chewed betel nut and lime wrapped in green leaves.

Twice, barely started, Jerry slipped back, and more boys, awakened by their fellows, sat up and enjoyed his plight. In the fourth attempt he managed to gain half way up before he fell, coming down heavily on his side. This was hailed with low laughter and querulous chirpings that might well have come from the throats of huge birds. He regained his feet, absurdly bristled the hair on his shoulders and absurdly growled his high disdain of these lesser, two-legged things that came and went and obeyed the wills of great, white-skinned, two-legged gods such as Skipper and Mister Haggin.

Undeterred by his heavy fall, Jerry essayed the ladder again⁸⁴. A temporary easement of the *Arangi's* rolling gave him his opportunity, so that his forefeet were over the high combing of the companion when the next big roll came. He held on by main strength of his bent forelegs, then scrambled over and out on deck.

Amidships, squatting on the deck near the skylight, he investigated several of the boat's crew and Lerumie. He identified them circumspectly, going suddenly stiff-legged as Lerumie made a low, hissing, menacing noise. Aft, at the wheel, he found a black steering, and, near him, the mate keeping the watch. Just as the mate spoke to him and stooped to pat him, Jerry whiffed Skipper somewhere near at hand. With a conciliating, apologetic bob of his tail, he trotted on up wind and came upon Skipper on his back, rolled in a blanket so that only his head stuck out, and sound asleep.

First of all Jerry needs must joyfully sniff him⁸⁵ and joyfully wag his tail. But Skipper did not awake and a fine spray of rain, almost as thin as mist, made Jerry curl up and press closely into the angle formed by Skipper's head and shoulder. This did awake him, for he uttered "Jerry" in a low, crooning voice, and Jerry responded with a touch of his cold damp nose to the other's cheek. And then Skipper went to sleep again. But not Jerry. He lifted the edge of the blanket with his nose and crawled across the shoulder until he was altogether inside. This roused Skipper, who, half-asleep, helped him to curl up.

Still Jerry was not satisfied, and he squirmed around until he lay in the hollow of Skipper's arm, his head resting on Skipper's shoulder, when, with a profound sigh of content, he fell asleep.

Several times the noises made by the boat's crew in trimming the sheets to the shifting draught of air roused Van Horn, and each time, remembering the puppy, he pressed him caressingly with his hollowed arm. And each time, in his sleep, Jerry stirred responsively and snuggled cosily to him.

For all that⁸⁶ he was a remarkable puppy, Jerry had his limitations, and he could never know the effect produced on the hard-bitten captain by the soft warm contact of his velvet body. But it made the captain remember back across the years to his own girl babe asleep on his arm. And so poignantly did he remember, that he became wide awake, and many pictures, beginning, with the girl babe, burned their torment in his brain. No white man in the Solomons knew what he carried about with him, waking and often sleeping; and it was because of these pictures that he had come to the Solomons in a vain effort⁸⁷ to erase them.

⁸³ **if he could succeed in fattening her** – (разг.) если ему удастся ее откормить

⁸⁴ **essayed the ladder again** – (мор.) снова полез вверх по трапу

⁸⁵ **needs must joyfully sniff him** – (уст.) радостно обнюхал его

⁸⁶ **For all that** – (разг.) Несмотря на то, что

⁸⁷ **in a vain effort** – (разг.) в тщетной попытке

First, memory-prodded by the soft puppy in his arm, he saw the girl and the mother in the little Harlem flat. Small, it was true, but tight-packed with the happiness of three that made it heaven.

He saw the girl's flaxen-yellow hair darken to her mother's gold as it lengthened into curls and ringlets until finally it became two thick long braids. From striving not to see these many pictures he came even to dwelling upon them in the effort so to fill his consciousness as to keep out the one picture he did not want to see.

He remembered his work, the wrecking car, and the wrecking crew that had toiled under him, and he wondered what had become of Clancey, his right-hand man. Came the long day, when, routed from bed at three in the morning to dig a surface car out of the wrecked show windows of a drug store and get it back on the track, they had laboured all day clearing up a half-dozen smash-ups and arrived at the car house at nine at night just as another call came in.

"Glory be!" said Clancey, who lived in the next block from him. He could see him saying it and wiping the sweat from his grimy face. "Glory be, 'tis a small matter at most⁸⁸, an' right in our neighbourhood – not a dozen blocks away. Soon as it's done we can beat it for home an' let the down-town boys take the car back to the shop."

"We've only to jack her up for a moment," he had answered.

"What is it?" Billy Jaffers, another of the crew, asked.

"Somebody run over – can't get them out," he said, as they swung on board the wrecking-car and started.

He saw again all the incidents of the long run, not omitting the delay caused by hose-carts and a hook-and-ladder running to a cross-town fire, during which time he and Clancey had joked Jaffers over the dates with various fictitious damsels out of which he had been cheated by the night's extra work.

Came the long line of stalled street-cars, the crowd, the police holding it back, the two ambulances drawn up and waiting their freight, and the young policeman, whose beat it was, white and shaken, greeting him with: "It's horrible, man. It's fair sickening. Two of them. We can't get them out. I tried. One was still living, I think."

But he, strong man and hearty, used to such work, weary with the hard day and with a pleasant picture of the bright little flat waiting him a dozen blocks away when the job was done, spoke cheerfully, confidently, saying that he'd have them out in a jiffy⁸⁹, as he stooped and crawled under the car on hands and knees.

Again he saw himself as he pressed the switch of his electric torch and looked. Again he saw the twin braids of heavy golden hair ere his thumb relaxed from the switch, leaving him in darkness.

"Is the one alive yet?⁹⁰" the shaken policeman asked.

And the question was repeated, while he struggled for will power sufficient to press on the light. He heard himself reply, "I'll tell you in a minute."

Again he saw himself look. For a long minute he looked.

"Both dead," he answered quietly. "Clancey, pass in a number three jack, and get under yourself with another at the other end of the truck."

He lay on his back, staring straight up at one single star that rocked mistily through a thinning of cloud-stuff overhead. The old ache was in his throat, the old harsh dryness in mouth and eyes. And he knew – what no other man knew – why he was in the Solomons, skipper of the teak-built yacht *Arangi*, running niggers, risking his head, and drinking more Scotch whiskey than was good for any man.

⁸⁸ 'tis a small matter at most – (разг.) дело совсем пустяковое

⁸⁹ he'd have them out in a jiffy – (разг.) он мигом вытащит их

⁹⁰ Is the one alive yet? – (разг.) Кто-нибудь живой?

Not since that night had he looked with warm eyes on any woman. And he had been noted by other whites as notoriously cold toward pickanninnies white or black.

But, having visioned the ultimate horror of memory, Van Horn was soon able to fall asleep again, delightfully aware, as he drowsed off, of Jerry's head on his shoulder. Once, when Jerry, dreaming of the beach at Meringe and of Mister Haggin, Biddy, Terrence, and Michael, set up a low whimpering, Van Horn roused sufficiently to soothe him closer to him, and to mutter ominously: "Any nigger that'd hurt that pup⁹¹..."

At midnight when the mate touched him on the shoulder, in the moment of awakening and before he was awake Van Horn did two things automatically and swiftly. He darted his right hand down to the pistol at his hip, and muttered: "Any nigger that'd hurt that pup..."

"That'll be Kopo Point abreast," Borckman explained, as both men stared to windward at the high loom of the land. "She hasn't made more than ten miles, and no promise of anything steady."

"There's plenty of stuff making up there, if it'll ever come down," Van Horn said, as both men transferred their gaze to the clouds drifting with many breaks across the dim stars.

Scarcely had the mate fetched a blanket from below and turned in on deck, than a brisk steady breeze sprang up from off the land, sending the *Arangi* through the smooth water at a nine-knot clip⁹². For a time Jerry tried to stand the watch with Skipper, but he soon curled up and dozed off, partly on the deck and partly on Skipper's bare feet.

When Skipper carried him to the blanket and rolled him in, he was quickly asleep again; and he was quickly awake, out of the blanket, and padding after along the deck as Skipper paced up and down. Here began another lesson, and in five minutes Jerry learned it was the will of Skipper that he should remain in the blanket, that everything was all right, and that Skipper would be up and down and near him all the time.

At four the mate took charge of the deck.

"Reeled off thirty miles," Van Horn told him. "But now it is baffling again. Keep an eye for squalls under the land. Better throw the halyards down on deck⁹³ and make the watch stand by. Of course they'll sleep, but make them sleep on the halyards and sheets."

Jerry roused to Skipper's entrance under the blanket, and, quite as if it were a long-established custom, curled in between his arm and side, and, after one happy sniff and one kiss of his cool little tongue, as Skipper pressed his cheek against him caressingly, dozed off to sleep.

Half an hour later, to all intents and purposes⁹⁴, so far as Jerry could or could not comprehend, the world might well have seemed suddenly coming to an end. What awoke him was the flying leap of Skipper that sent the blanket one way and Jerry the other. The deck of the *Arangi* had become a wall, down which Jerry slipped through the roaring dark. Every rope and shroud was thrumming and screeching in resistance to the fierce weight of the squall.

"Stand by main halyards!⁹⁵ – Jump!" he could hear Skipper shouting loudly; also he heard the high note of the mainsheet screaming across the sheaves as Van Horn, bending braces in the dark, was swiftly slacking the sheet through his scorching palms with a single turn on the cleat.

While all this, along with many other noises, squealings of boat-boys and shouts of Borckman, was impacting on Jerry's ear-drums, he was still sliding down the steep deck of his new and unstable world. But he did not bring up against the rail where his fragile ribs might well have been broken. Instead, the warm ocean water, pouring inboard across the buried rail in a flood of pale

⁹¹ **Any nigger that'd hurt that pup** – (разг.) Пусть какой-нибудь негр хоть тронет его

⁹² **at a nine-knot clip** – (разг.) со скоростью девять узлов в час (1 узел = 1852 м/час, единица скорости на море)

⁹³ **throw the halyards down on deck** – (мор.) сбросьте фалы на палубу

⁹⁴ **to all intents and purposes** – (разг.) на деле; по существу

⁹⁵ **Stand by main halyards!** – (мор.) Быстро к грота-фалам!

phosphorescent fire, cushioned his fall. A raffle of trailing ropes entangled him as he struck out to swim.

And he swam, not to save his life, not with the fear of death upon him. There was but one idea in his mind. Where was Skipper? Not that he had any thought of trying to save Skipper, nor that he might be of assistance to him. It was the heart of love that drives one always toward the beloved. As the mother in catastrophe tries to gain her babe, as the Greek who, dying, remembered sweet Argos, as soldiers on a stricken field pass with the names of their women upon their lips, so Jerry, in this wreck of a world, yearned toward Skipper.

The squall ceased as abruptly as it had struck. The *Arangi* righted with a jerk to an even keel, leaving Jerry stranded in the starboard scuppers⁹⁶. He trotted across the level deck to Skipper, who, standing erect on wide-spread legs, the bight of the mainsheet still in his hand, was exclaiming:

“*Gott fer dang!* Wind he go!⁹⁷ Rain he no come!”

He felt Jerry’s cool nose against his bare calf, heard his joyous sniff, and bent and caressed him. In the darkness he could not see, but his heart warmed with knowledge that Jerry’s tail was surely bobbing.

Many of the frightened return boys had crowded on deck, and their plaintive, querulous voices sounded like the sleepy noises of a roost of birds. Borckman came and stood by Van Horn’s shoulder, and both men, strung to their tones in the tenseness of apprehension, strove to penetrate the surrounding blackness with their eyes, while they listened with all their ears for any message of the elements from sea and air.

“Where’s the rain?” Borckman demanded peevishly. “Always wind first, the rain follows and kills the wind. There is no rain.”

Van Horn still stared and listened, and made no answer.

The anxiety of the two men was sensed by Jerry, who, too, was on his toes⁹⁸. He pressed his cool nose to Skipper’s leg, and the rose-kiss of his tongue brought him the salt taste of sea-water.

Skipper bent suddenly, rolled Jerry with quick toughness into the blanket, and deposited him in the hollow between two sacks of yams lashed on deck aft of the mizzenmast. As an afterthought, he fastened the blanket with a piece of rope yarn, so that Jerry was as if tied in a sack.

Scarcely was this finished when the spanker smashed across overhead⁹⁹, the headsails thundered with a sudden filling, and the great mainsail, with all the scope in the boom-tackle caused by Van Horn’s giving of the sheet, came across and fetched up to tautness on the tackle with a crash that shook the vessel and heeled her violently to port. This second knock-down had come from the opposite direction, and it was mightier than the first.

Jerry heard Skipper’s voice ring out, first, to the mate: “Stand by main halyards! Throw off the turns!”¹⁰⁰ I’ll take care of the tackle!”; and, next, to some of the boat’s crew: “Batto! you fella slack spanker tackle quick fella! Ranga! you fella let go spanker sheet!”

Here Van Horn was swept off his legs by an avalanche of return boys who had cluttered the deck with the first squall. The squirming mass, of which he was part, slid down into the barbed wire of the port rail beneath the surface of the sea.

Jerry was so secure in his nook that he did not roll away. But when he heard Skipper’s commands cease, and, seconds later, heard his cursings in the barbed wire, he set up a shrill yelping and clawed and scratched frantically at the blanket to get out. Something had happened to Skipper. He knew that. It was all that he knew, for he had no thought of himself in the chaos of the ruining world.

⁹⁶ **in the starboard scuppers** – (мор.) в ватервейсе у борта

⁹⁷ **Wind he go!** – (искаж.) Ветер тут как тут!

⁹⁸ **was on his toes** – (разг.) насторожился

⁹⁹ **the spanker smashed across overhead** – (мор.) контрбизань пронеслась над головой

¹⁰⁰ **Throw off the turns!** – (мор.) Отдать фалы!

But he ceased his yelping to listen to a new noise – a thunderous slatting of canvas accompanied by shouts and cries. He sensed, and sensed wrongly, that it boded ill¹⁰¹, for he did not know that it was the mainsail being lowered on the run after Skipper had slashed the boom-tackle across with his sheath-knife.

As the pandemonium grew, he added his own yelping to it until he felt a fumbling hand without the blanket. He stilled and sniffed. No, it was not Skipper. He sniffed again and recognized the person. It was Lerumie, the black whom he had seen rolled on the beach by Biddy only the previous morning, who, still were recently, had kicked him on his stub of a tail, and who not more than a week before he had seen throw a rock at Terrence.

The rope yarn had been parted, and Lerumie's fingers were feeling inside the blanket for him. Jerry snarled his wickedest. The thing was sacrilege. He, as a white man's dog, was taboo to all blacks. He had early learned the law that no nigger must ever touch a white-god's dog. Yet Lerumie, who was all of evil, at this moment when the world crashed about their ears, was daring to touch him.

And when the fingers touched him, his teeth closed upon them. Next, he was clouted by the black's free hand with such force as to tear his clenched teeth down the fingers through skin and flesh until the fingers went clear.

Raging like a tiny fiend, Jerry found himself picked up by the neck, half-throttled, and flung through the air. And while flying through the air, he continued to squall his rage. He fell into the sea and went under¹⁰², gulping a mouthful of salt water into his lungs, and came up strangling but swimming. Swimming was one of the things he did not have to think about. He had never had to learn to swim, any more than he had had to learn to breathe. In fact, he had been compelled to learn to walk; but he swam as a matter of course.

The wind screamed about him. Flying froth, driven on the wind's breath, filled his mouth and nostrils and beat into his eyes, stinging and blinding him. In the struggle to breathe he, all unlearned in the ways of the sea, lifted his muzzle high in the air to get out of the suffocating welter. As a result, off the horizontal, the churning of his legs no longer sustained him, and he went down and under perpendicularly. Again he emerged, strangling with more salt water in his windpipe. This time, without reasoning it out, merely moving along the line of least resistance, which was to him the line of greatest comfort, he straightened out in the sea and continued so to swim as to remain straightened out.

Through the darkness, as the squall spent itself, came the slatting of the half-lowered mainsail¹⁰³, the shrill voices of the boat's crew, a curse of Borckman's, and, dominating all, Skipper's voice, shouting:

"Grab the leech¹⁰⁴, you fella boys! Hang on! Drag down strong fella! Come in mainsheet two blocks! Jump, damn you, jump!"

¹⁰¹ **that it boded ill** – (разг.) это было дурное предзнаменование

¹⁰² **went under** – (разг.) пошел ко дну

¹⁰³ **the slatting of the half-lowered mainsail** – (мор.) хлопанье полуспущенного грота

¹⁰⁴ **Grab the leech** – (мор.) Хватай за ликтрос (мягкий трос, которым обшивается кромка паруса)

Chapter VI

At recognition of Skipper's voice, Jerry, floundering in the stiff and crisping sea that sprang up with the easement of the wind, yelped eagerly and yearningly, all his love for his new-found beloved eloquent in his throat. But quickly all sounds died away as the *Arangi* drifted from him. And then, in the loneliness of the dark, on the heaving breast of the sea that he recognized as one more of the eternal enemies, he began to whimper and cry plaintively like a lost child.

Further, by the dim, shadowy ways of intuition, he knew his weakness in that merciless sea with no heart of warmth, that threatened the unknowable thing, vaguely but terribly guessed, namely, death. As regarded himself, he did not comprehend death. He, who had never known the time when he was not alive, could not conceive of the time when he would cease to be alive.

Yet it was there, shouting its message of warning through every tissue cell, every nerve quickness and brain sensitivity of him – a totality of sensation that foreboded the ultimate catastrophe of life about which he knew nothing at all, but which, nevertheless, he felt to be the conclusive supreme disaster. Although he did not comprehend it, he apprehended it no less poignantly than do men who know and generalize far more deeply and widely than mere four-legged dogs.

As a man struggles in the throes of nightmare, so Jerry struggled in the vexed, salt-suffocating sea. And so he whimpered and cried, lost child, lost puppy-dog that he was, only half a year existent in the fair world sharp with joy and suffering. And he wanted Skipper. Skipper was a god.

* * *

On board the *Arangi*, relieved by the lowering of her mainsail, as the fierceness went out of the wind and the cloudburst of tropic rain began to fall, Van Horn and Borckman lurched toward each other in the blackness.

"A double squall," said Van Horn. "Hit us to starboard and to port."¹⁰⁵

"Must a-split in half just before she hit us," the mate concurred.

"And kept all the rain in the second half –"

Van Horn broke off with an oath.

"Hey! What's the matter along you fella boy?" he shouted to the man at the wheel.

For the ketch, under her spanker which had just then been flat-hauled, had come into the wind, emptying her after-sail and permitting her headsails to fill on the other tack. The *Arangi* was beginning to work back approximately over the course she had just traversed. And this meant that she was going back toward Jerry floundering in the sea. Thus, the balance, on which his life titubated, was inclined in his favour by the blunder of a black steersman.

Keeping the *Arangi* on the new tack, Van Horn set Borckman clearing the mess of ropes on deck, himself, squatting in the rain, undertaking to long-splice the tackle he had cut¹⁰⁶. As the rain thinned, so that the crackle of it on deck became less noisy, he was attracted by a sound from out over the water. He suspended the work of his hands to listen, and, when he recognized Jerry's wailing, sprang to his feet, galvanized into action.

"The pup's overboard!"¹⁰⁷ he shouted to Borckman. "Back your jib to wind'ard!"¹⁰⁸

He sprang aft, scattering a cluster of return boys right and left.

¹⁰⁵ **Hit us to starboard and to port.** – (мор.) Ударил и с левого и с правого борта.

¹⁰⁶ **undertaking to long-splice the tackle he had cut** – (мор.) стал сращивать снасть, которую вынужден был разрезать (во время шквала)

¹⁰⁷ **The pup's overboard!** – (мор.) Щенок за бортом!

¹⁰⁸ **Back your jib to wind'ard!** – (мор.) Вынести кливер на ветер!

“Hey! You fella boat’s crew! Come in spanker sheet! Flatten her down good fella!”

He darted a look into the binnacle and took a hurried compass bearing of the sounds Jerry was making.

“Hard down your wheel!” he ordered the helmsman, then leaped to the wheel and put it down himself, repeating over and over aloud, “Nor’east by east a quarter, nor’east by east a quarter.”

Back and peering into the binnacle, he listened vainly for another wail from Jerry in the hope of verifying his first hasty bearing. But not long he waited. Despite the fact that by his manoeuvre the *Arangi* had been hove to¹⁰⁹, he knew that windage and sea-driftage would quickly send her away from the swimming puppy. He shouted Borckman to come aft and haul in the whaleboat, while he hurried below for his electric torch and a boat compass.

The ketch was so small that she was compelled to tow her one whaleboat astern on long double painters¹¹⁰, and by the time the mate had it hauled in under the stern, Van Horn was back. He was undeterred by the barbed wire, lifting boy after boy of the boat’s crew over it and dropping them sprawling into the boat, following himself, as the last, by swinging over on the spanker boom, and calling his last instructions as the painters were cast off.

“Get a riding light on deck, Borckman. Keep her hove to. Don’t hoist the mainsail.¹¹¹ Clean up the decks and bend the watch tackle on the main boom.”

He took the steering-sweep and encouraged the rowers with: “Washee-washee, good fella, washee-washee!” – which is the *bêche-de-mer* for “row hard.”

As he steered, he kept flashing the torch on the boat compass so that he could keep headed northeast by east a quarter east. Then he remembered that the boat compass, on such course, deviated two whole points from the *Arangi*’s compass, and altered his own course accordingly.

Occasionally he bade the rowers cease, while he listened and called for Jerry. He had them row in circles, and work back and forth, up to windward and down to leeward¹¹², over the area of dark sea that he reasoned must contain the puppy.

“Now you fella boy listen ear belong you,” he said, toward the first. “Maybe one fella boy hear ’m pickaninny dog sing out, I give ’m that fella boy five fathom calico, two ten sticks tobacco.”

At the end of half an hour he was offering “Two ten fathoms calico and ten ten sticks tobacco” to the boy who first heard “pickaninny dog sing out.”

* * *

Jerry was in bad shape. Not accustomed to swimming, strangled by the salt water that lapped into his open mouth, he was getting loggy when first he chanced to see the flash of the captain’s torch. This, however, he did not connect with Skipper, and so took no more notice of it than he did of the first stars showing in the sky. It never entered his mind that it might be a star nor even that it might not be a star. He continued to wail and to strangle with more salt water. But when he at length heard Skipper’s voice he went immediately wild. He attempted to stand up and to rest his forepaws on Skipper’s voice coming out of the darkness, as he would have rested his forepaws on Skipper’s leg had he been near. The result was disastrous. Out of the horizontal, he sank down and under, coming up with a new spasm of strangling.

¹⁰⁹ **had been hove to** – (мор.) стал двигаться назад

¹¹⁰ **long double painters** – (мор.) длинный двойной фалинь

¹¹¹ **Don’t hoist the mainsail.** – (мор.) Грот не ставить!

¹¹² **up to windward and down to leeward** – (мор.) шел по ветру и против ветра

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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