

## Island Nights Entertainments. (Annotated)



I saw that island first when it was neither night nor morning. The moon was to the west, setting, but still broad and bright. To the east, and right amidships of the dawn, which was all pink, the daystar sparkled like a diamond. The land breeze blew in our faces, and smelt strong of wild lime and vanilla: other things besides, but these were the most plain; and the chill of it set me sneezing. I should say I had been for years on a low island near the line, living for the most part solitary among natives. Here was a fresh experience: even the tongue would be quite strange to me; and the look of these woods and mountains, and the rare smell of them, renewed my blood. The captain blew out the binnacle lamp. There! said he, there goes a bit of smoke, Mr. Wiltshire, behind the break of the reef. Thats Falesa, where your station is, the last village to the east; nobody lives to windwardI dont know why. Take my glass, and you can make the houses out. I took the glass; and the shores leaped nearer, and I saw the tangle of the woods and the breach of the surf, and the brown roofs and the black insides of houses peeped among the trees. Do you catch a bit of white there to the eastard? the captain continued. Thats your house. Coral built, stands high, verandah you could walk on three abreast; best station in the South Pacific. When old Adams saw it, he took and shook me by the hand. Ive dropped into a soft thing here, says he. So you have, says I, and time too! Poor Johnny! I never saw him again but the once, and then he had changed his tune couldnt get on with the natives, or the whites, or something; and the next time we came round there he was dead and buried. I took and put up a bit of a stick to him: John Adams, obit eighteen and sixty-eight. Go thou and do likewise. I missed that man. I never could see much harm in Johnny. What did he die of? I inquired. Some kind of sickness, says the captain. It appears it took him sudden.

Seems he got up in the night, and filled up on Pain-Killer and Kennedys Discovery. No go: he was booked beyond Kennedy. Then he had tried to open a case of gin. No go again: not strong enough. Then he must have turned to and run out on the verandah, and capsized over the rail. When they found him, the next day, he was clean crazy-carried on all the time about somebody watering his copra. Poor John! This edition includes: - A complete biography of Robert Louis Stevenson. - Table of contents with direct links to chapters.

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