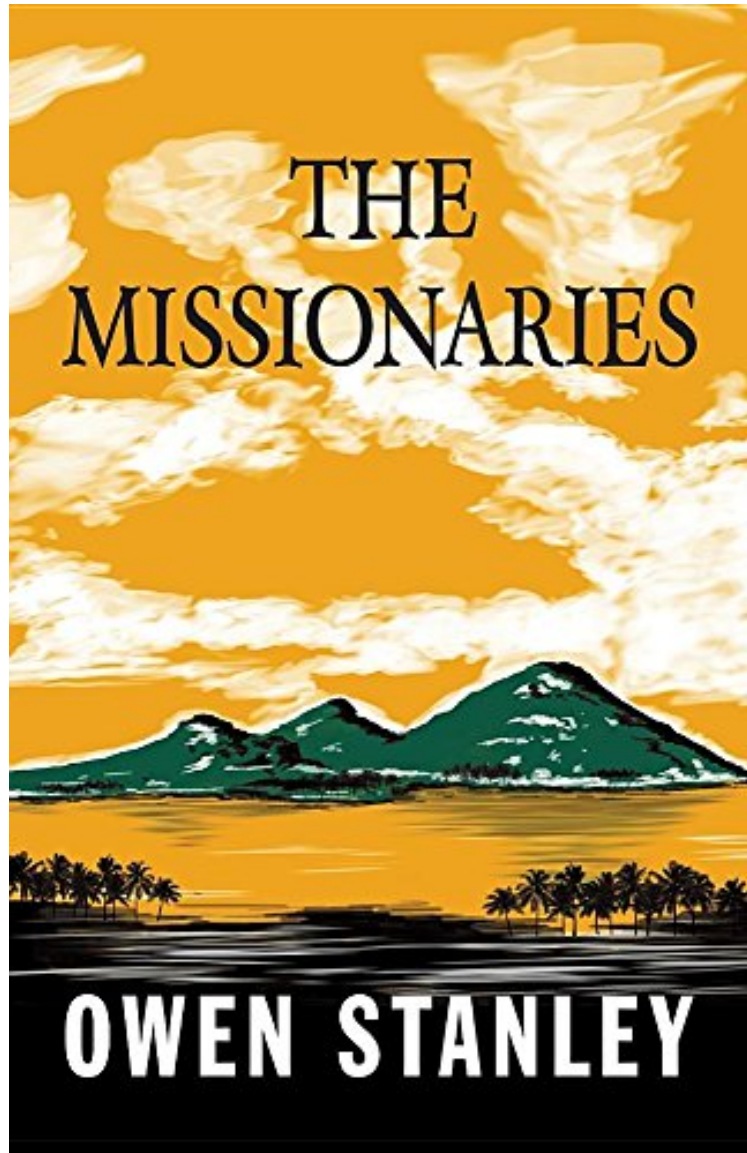


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The Missionaries

Owen Stanley

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Owen Stanley : The Missionaries before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Missionaries:

22 of 22 people found the following review helpful. Laugh-out-loud funnyBy Rawle N. LucasA clueless UN bureaucrat tries to modernize a remote tribe while an old colonial administrator opposes him. The way the bureaucrat reinterprets everything to fit his academic theories will leave you rolling on the floor; it's like the guy couldn't see what was in front of him.15 of 15 people found the following review helpful. Hitch Hikers Guide meets social justice

warriors in a United Nations 3rd world development project. A former island outpost of the British Empire then Australia is to transition from rule by "old school realist" colonial officials to independence. A group of idealistic but hopelessly naive UN administrators come in to administer the change in government. Hilarity ensues due to clashes of culture and world views. This is the first book Douglas Adams (Hitch Hikers Guide fame) would have written if he were a United Nations field worker in the 3rd world or a Peace Corps volunteer. 34 of 35 people found the following review helpful. Modernity collides with tradition leading to hilarity. By Vanhelmont. Elephant Island in the South Pacific is the home of Morok tribes living their traditional lifestyle under an Australian colonial governor, but the missionaries of the title (United Nations variety) are on their way to free them from oppression and bring them into the modern world. Their arrival brings both hilarity and catastrophe. Subject matter and writing reminded me of Waugh's "Black Mischief," which I also highly recommend. Both books may (no, will) trouble the politically correct, but like Waugh in "Black Mischief," Stanley invites us to laugh at everybody, so there's equal opportunity. Also who shows more respect for the Moroks, the governor who takes time to understand them and lets them live as they please while moderating disputes and preventing things like cannibalism, or the missionaries who are determined to drag them into a modernity they don't understand, and might not even want if they did. Before the arrival of the missionaries Elephant Island is home to a variety of odd characters, both expatriot and aboriginal. Communication between the two groups is in Pidgin, and your visit to elephant Island will be more enjoyable if you can understand this interaction. "Belong" is a preposition like "of" or "for," so "Stanley's book" is "book belong Stanley," but don't let it worry you, there's not a lot, most of it's pretty obvious, and if you don't get the Pidgin you can get the meaning from the context. There's also Australian slang, and weights in stone, which all contributes to the atmosphere. It'll probably be the funniest book you read all year.

The Missionaries is a story of the collision of three cultures. A brilliant tale of ineptitude, self-righteousness, and human folly, it combines the mordant wit of W. Somerset Maugham with a sense of humor reminiscent of P.G. Wodehouse. When Dr. Sydney Prout is named the head of the United Nations mission to Elephant Island, he believes he is more than ready to meet the challenge of guiding its primitive inhabitants into the post-Colonial era, and eventually, full independence. But neither his many academic credentials nor the Journal of Race Relations have prepared Dr. Prout to reckon with the unrepentant bloody-mindedness of the natives, or anticipate the inventive ways their tribal philosophers will incorporate the most unlikely aspects of modern civilization into their religious lore and traditional way of life.

A former island outpost of the British Empire is to transition from rule by old-school colonial officials to independence. A group of idealistic, but hopelessly naive UN administrators come to the island to administer the change in government. Hilarity ensues due to clashes of culture and worldviews. This is the book Douglas Adams would have written if he had been a Peace Corps volunteer. About the Author Owen Stanley is an Australian explorer, a philosopher, and a poet who speaks seven languages. He is at much at home in the remote jungles of the South Pacific as flying his Staudacher aerobatic plane, deep-sea diving, or translating the complete works of Charles Darwin into Tok Pisin.