

# Frog Head Key

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By Eric Douglas



## Chapter 7

“I don’t know who you people are, but you’re snooping places you don’t belong. Now move!” Billy barked at Jackson and Kia. He had snuck up behind them through the mangrove and was pointing a shotgun at them

“Look mister, me and my girlfriend were just looking for a place to party. Honest, we don’t want no trouble from you guys,” Jackson said, trying to act innocent.

“I don’t care what you wanted, you’ve got trouble from me now. Now go!” he said, jabbing Jackson in the ribs with the gun barrel.

“All right, all right, just don’t hurt us,” Jackson said.

They stood up and walked toward the inlet. Tommy looked relieved when he saw them emerge from the trees with Billy behind them.

“Glad you got them, man,” Tommy said. “I was going to have to go in after them.”

“Yeah, right,” Billy said seeing Tommy was soaking wet. “Looks like you’re doing a great job so far.”

“So, what do we do with them now?” Tommy asked, ignoring the slight. “Should we call Snake?”

“Nah, I don’t want to talk to that crazy son-of-a-bitch right now,” Billy said. “We can handle things ourselves.”

“Where’s your boat?” Tommy asked Jackson. “How did you get out here?”

Jackson didn’t answer. He just glared at Tommy. Billy swung the butt end of the shotgun and cracked Jackson in the kidneys. The blow knocked him to his knees. Still Jackson didn’t answer.

“Well, maybe we’ll just have to get it out of your pretty little girlfriend here,” Billy said, grabbing Kia by the hair. “We’ve been out here on the island working for a long time. It would be kinda nice to have a woman around, for a little while anyway.” He pulled Kia close to him and put his other arm around her waist. Kia struggled and tried to knee him in the groin, but that only earned her a blow from the shotgun, too. She went down on her hands and knees beside Jackson.

“Maybe I’ll just have to take care of you too right now. You first boy and then Tommy and I will take care of your girlfriend in our own special way,” he said leering at Kia’s legs.

With an ear splitting crack, the boathouse exploded knocking Tommy and Billy to the ground.

“What the hell was that?” Kia yelled to Jackson.

“I don’t know but I have a hunch. Either way, it’s our exit out of here. Get in the water and swim down to your gear. Do not come back to the surface. Now run!” Jackson yelled as he scrambled to his feet, pulling Kia with him. They both ran into the water and stroked across the surface until they got to the dock.

“Stop! Stop!” Tommy yelled from the water’s edge. “You can’t get away!”

Jackson and Kia both took a deep breath and dived for the bottom just as Billy cut loose with the shotgun. The shot pellets ripped chunks of wood from the dock pilings to Jackson’s right as he inverted and swam down.

Kia was on the edge of panic. She was tough, but she had had a completely unexpected day and was struggling to keep up. She had been beaten, threatened, nearly blown up and now shot at. Like most cops she had never actually had to fire her weapon in the line of duty. Beyond that, she hadn’t had a chance to get a good breath before attempting to swim down and she didn’t think she could make it. She couldn’t see well because they had left their masks on the bottom with their dive gear. The last thing she wanted to do though was to return to the surface with the lunatics with guns.

Kia saw a hand come out of the shadows from beneath the now-broken dock and she almost screamed until she realized the hand was holding a regulator and shoving it into her mouth. She quickly blew out the last of her breath and took a welcome draw of fresh, clean air. The next thing she felt was a mask being shoved against her eyes. She pulled the strap in place as

she cleared the water from her mask. It was Littlebear. Jackson swam over with his own gear and finished putting it on while Littlebear helped Kia.

The water over their heads exploded with shotgun blasts as Billy released his frustration. Striking the water, the pellets slowed immediately. The three divers were in no danger, but the men on the surface didn't know that.

When Jackson and Kia had their gear in place, Littlebear led them back out of the inlet. He left *Daydreamer* tied off to the other small island and swam over. They were going to have to swim across the short channel between the two islands. Kia swam behind Littlebear and Jackson took up a position in the rear.



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“What the hell is going on? Where did they go? Did you kill them?” Tommy shouted at Billy as the two men stared at the water.

“I don’t know, but get a bucket. Get some water on that fire!” Billy shouted back, pointing at the burning boat house. “See if you can salvage anything in there.”

He continued to stare at the water, looking for any movement so he could kill whoever had done this to them. He was furious, but he was also scared. He knew he was going to have to call Snake in a few moments and tell him what had happened. If those two bodies didn’t float to the surface in a few minutes, their operation was completely blown. It remained to be seen if Snake would even come out and get them, or just leave them to get caught. The explosion in the boat house had to have been the boat and with it, their only means of getting off the island went up in smoke.

“We need to get out of here,” Tommy said, when he came back from trying to put out the fire in the boat house before realizing it was futile. “This is getting too dangerous. Too many people are snooping around here. We’re gonna get caught.”

“You better start swimming then, because we’re stuck here for a while,” Billy said as he sat down on the ground. He really didn’t want to make that phone call.

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The three divers made their way to *Daydreamer*. Littlebear and Kia quickly climbed out of the water, but Jackson lingered for a moment.

“Jackson! What are you doing? We need to get out of here,” Littlebear shouted as he tied off his dive gear before heading for the stern line to get them underway.

“Gonna need a little help here, pal,” Jackson said, quietly.

“What is it?” Kia asked as she looked back over the railing.

“What do you need?” Littlebear asked, moving to the side railing as well.

“Feels like I caught some shot in the leg,” Jackson said.

“You’re shot?” Kia asked. “Oh God!”

“It’s all right. I’ll be fine. Take my gear and then help me up the ladder. My leg isn’t quite working like I want it to,” Jackson said as he struggled to get out of his BC.

Kia reached over the side and hauled his scuba unit into the boat while Littlebear grabbed Jackson under the arms and dragged him into the boat.

“We’re going to need some help with this one,” Jackson said as he sat on the deck of his boat, applying pressure to the hole in his leg.

“That’s the understatement of the week,” Littlebear said with a laugh. “The good news is, those boys aren’t going anywhere. I blew up their boat.”

“You did what?” Kia asked incredulously. “And where did you come from anyway?”

“I got kind of bored and thought you guys might need some help,” Littlebear said with a shrug of his shoulders.

“Is he always like this?” Kia said, turning to look at Jackson. “Are both of you always like this?”

“Honestly, Kia, we take things as they come,” Jackson said with a laugh. “Littlebear, let’s get back to the houseboat so I can get my leg cleaned up and we can call the sheriff. We’re going

to hand him one on a silver platter, but I want to be in on it, too.” He reached over and pulled Bo’s hat from his BC pocket. This should be the proof we need.