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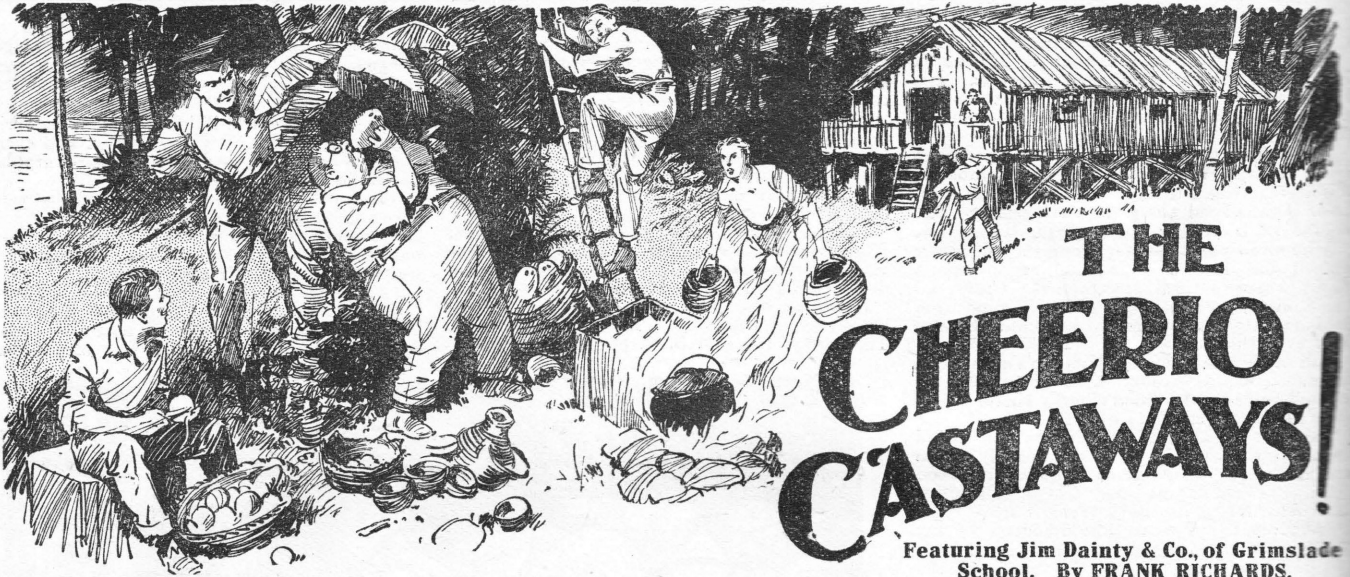


# THE RANGER 2<sup>D</sup>



**BIG GORILLA  
THRILLER INSIDE!**

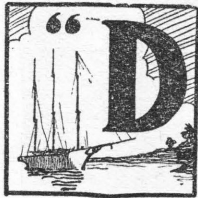




# THE CHEERIO CASTAWAYS!

Featuring Jim Dainty & Co., of Grimslade School. By FRANK RICHARDS.

## Sammy Knows How!



"DAYLIGHT at last!" exclaimed Jim Dainty. "Mein gootness! Tat is goot! But I was derribly dired!" gasped Fritz Splitz.

"Take care!" barked Dr. Samuel Sparshott. Brilliant sunshine streamed down on Castaway Island. The Grimslade castaways blinked

in the bright sunlight as they emerged from the deep darkness of the cavern in the island hill.

From the ravine where they had entered the cavern to this outlet on the eastern side of the mountain they had groped in darkness, step by step, feeling their way. Behind them Ezra Sarson, Captain Luz, and his black crew were in pursuit. But they emerged at last, by a narrow gap, and now they stood on the high hillside amid rugged volcanic rocks and boulders.

Before their eyes stretched the wide Atlantic, rolling blue in the sunshine; the beach where their hut was built, and the wide bay where the schooner Courlis rode at anchor. Glad enough were Jim Dainty & Co. to get out of the gloom of the cavern into the bright daylight again.

Dainty and Dawson, Ginger and Bacon and Bean, stood looking down at the schooner in the bay. Fritz von Splitz dropped on a lava rock, and rested his podgy limbs, mopping the perspiration from his fat brow and grunting. Dr. Samuel Sparshott stood by the outlet of the cave, looking back into the gloomy depths and listening.

From the hollow of the inland mountain came faint, echoing sounds, which told that Captain Luz and his crew were coming, groping through the tunnel-like cave after the Grimsladers. Sammy Sparshott's face was set and grim. The headmaster of Grimslade had saved the six schoolboys in his charge so far. But the enemy were at hand.

"My giddy goloshes!" murmured Ginger Rawlinson. "That's the schooner those villains came in, you fellows. They've spotted us—look!"

Three or four blacks had been left on the schooner. Far off, toy-like in the distance, the juniors could see them crowding to the rail and staring up at the mountainside. They could make out the excited gesticulations of the blacks as they pointed to the hill and jabbered to one another.

"They've spotted us from the ship, sir!" said Streaky Bacon.

Dr. Sparshott glanced round for a moment. "Oh! Quite!" He nodded. "Our immediate concern, however, is with the crew who are following us through the cavern."

"Ach! Ve vas all tead!" groaned Fritz

Splitz. "Neffter more shall I go pack to mein pelofed Chermany."

"Germany will be in luck, then!" remarked Ginger.

"Peastly prute!" moaned Fritz. "I vish tat I neffer gum on tat peastly holiday gruisse! I vish—Ach! Leaf off to pang mein head, you peast and a prutal pounder!" roared the fat Rhinelander.

"Grimslade never grouses!" said Ginger.

"Every time you grouse you get it in the neck."

Fritz rubbed his bullet head and shut up.

"Lend a hand here," said Dr. Sparshott, after a careful survey of the outlet of the cave. "All hands! We're in luck!"

The outlet of the cave was hardly three feet wide, hardly five feet high; the castaways had had to stoop their heads to emerge. Close at hand was a great rugged mass of lava, weighing a good many hundredweight.

Dr. Sparshott grasped it with his strong, sinewy hands, but even his strength was not equal to shifting it. The juniors backed him up with willing hands. The great rock stirred on its base, and heaved towards the dark outlet of the cave. Panting and perspiring with the

inches at the top. The panting juniors chuckled breathlessly.

"I jolly well knew that Sammy would get paid to them!" murmured Dick Dawson.

"Pile up some more rocks," said Dr. Sparshott. "We cannot make too sure."

"Yes, rather, sir!"

Footsteps and voices could now clearly be heard within the narrow cave. With willing hands the juniors piled up the loose boulders round the great lava rock that closed the outlet. In a very few minutes a couple of tons of rock barred the way of the desperadoes in the cave.

It was only in time; for they were at the outlet now.

"Morbleu!" It was the voice of Captain Luz, the treasure-hunter from Martinique. "Voila! C'est ferme! Name of a name, they are gone, but there is not room for a ship's crew to pass."

"I guess they've shifted a rock to stop us," came the hoarse voice of Ezra Sarson, the scuttler of the Spindrift. "Get your niggers to shove it clear."

Dr. Sparshott smiled grimly. All the black crew of the Courlis could never have shifted the obstruction at the outlet of the mountain cave. The Grimsladers heard Captain Luz's shrill voice snarling orders, and the panting of the negroes as they shoved and heaved at the mass of rock from within the cave. But it did not stir! It did not even shake.

"My giddy goloshes! We've jolly well stopped that badger's hole!" chuckled Ginger.

Crack! came a pistol shot from the cave. The bullet whizzed out through the narrow space that remained open. But the castaways were standing well back from the line of fire, and the lead whizzed away seaward, to drop harmlessly into the Atlantic. Following the shot, came the hoarse shout of Sarson.

"Sam Sparshott, you dog-goned schoolmaster, you're there, I guess."

"Here!" answered Dr. Sparshott coolly. Jim Dainty picked up a lump of lava, stepped towards the little opening, and slung it in, jumping back quickly. There was a yell from within the cave. Evidently the missile had found Ezra.

"Good shot!" said Sammy Sparshott. "But keep back—"

"Allons!" It was the shrill voice of Captain Luz. "Non d'un nom! Laissez moi passer, vous Sarson! Give me room!"

From the little space left above the lava rock a hand emerged, with a revolver in it. By stretching his arm to its fullest extent, the captain of the Courlis was able to get his hand out into the open air. He could see nothing of the castaways, and could only shoot at the wildest random; but he pulled the trigger, and a bullet sang away in the sunshine.

Dr. Sparshott stepped quietly up, reached out, and suddenly grasped the revolver by the barrel, jerking it sharply away. There was a startled howl from the man from Martinique.

## YES!

**JIM DAINTY & CO. ARE  
STRANDED ON CASTAWAY  
ISLAND AND BESIEGED BY  
GUNMEN. BUT ARE THEY  
DOWN-HEARTED?**

**NO! NO! NO!**

exertion, the Grimsladers put all their beef into it.

Crack! came from the cavern. It was the report of a revolver. The pursuers, evidently, had seen daylight ahead, and either Captain Luz or Ezra Sarson had loosed off a shot.

The report boomed like thunder in the hollows of the mountain, and the whizzing bullet chipped the rock as the Grimsladers rolled it. Glancing from the rock, it twirled the hat on Sammy Sparshott's head, cutting the brim. The headmaster of Grimslade did not even seem to notice it. He heaved at the great rock with all his strength.

"Splitz!" His eye glittered round at the fat German. "Line up here! You slacking young rascal—"

"Ach! I was so derribly dired!"

"Kick him, Dainty!"

"Yarooooooop!"

Fritz found that he was not too tired to lend a hand. He rolled up and put his weight into the pushing. That little added weight worked the oracle, and the great rock rolled over and crashed at the entrance of the cave. The opening was closed, save for a space of about six

"Thanks!" said Dr. Sparshott cheerfully, as he stepped back with the revolver in his grasp. "Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Grimsladers; and even Fritz Splitz gave a fat chuckle.

"Name of a name!" came a yell of fury from the man in the cave. The empty hand disappeared.

Dr. Sparshott coolly examined his prize. "Five chambers are still loaded," he remarked. "I have five shots here, you rascals. I give you one minute to run, before I begin firing into the cave!"

"Morbieu!"

"I guess we gotter beat it!" gasped Ezra Sarson.

There was a scampering of feet within. Packed in the narrow cave, the enemy were at the mercy of firing from the opening. They realised it promptly, and retreated. Running, stumbling, falling over one another in the darkness, Captain Luz and his crew beat a prompt retreat.

"Interval for tea!" said Dr. Sparshott calmly. "We're ahead on the first innings."

**Holding the Fort!**

"WE can jolly well stall them off!" said Ginger Rawlinson confidently.

"Now Sammy's got a gun!" remarked Jim Dainty.

"What-ho!" chuckled Ginger. "Member old Sammy popping on the range at Grimslade? All bulls! No end of luck bagging that gun!"

Dr. Samuel Sparshott himself was undoubtedly bucked by the possession of the "gun." It was a big Navy revolver, with five cartridges unspent—which meant five lives in Sammy's hand, if it came to the pinch. All Grimslade School knew that Sammy was a crack shot.

The Head of Grimslade examined it carefully, almost lovingly, and rubbed clean the butt, which bore the marks of Captain Luz's unwashed, grubby fingers. With the revolver sticking in his belt, Sammy felt a new man, and the castaway schoolboys certainly felt a good deal more secure.

Hours had passed since the pursuers had scampered away through the cavern. They were not likely to attempt to come that way again; but that they would come another way was a certainty.

In Dr. Sparshott, Captain Luz saw a rival seeker of the treasure which the "Marquis of Marmalade" had buried on the lonely island a hundred years and more ago, at the order of the black king of Hayti. And if he had thought of giving the Grimsladers a rest, their bitter enemy, Ezra Sarson, was there to urge him on.

The castaways had taken a meal—Fritz Splitz groaning dismally over the short rations—but Dr. Sparshott had given only a few minutes to it. He was losing no time in preparing for the next attack.

With a keen eye, the Head of Grimslade picked out a strong position for defence. High up on the rocky hillside, above the belt of jungle, was a small plateau, approached by steep and rugged slopes. There the hunted castaways pitched their camp. It was a difficult spot for the enemy to reach, with the castaways above pitching down rocks, and Sammy with a revolver in his hand.

That a desperate and determined attack, with all the force from the schooner, would carry it, was only too likely; but the enemy would have to pay high for victory—higher than they were likely to feel inclined to pay. During the hot hours of the afternoon the juniors piled up boulders to roll down on the enemy, after which they rested in what shade they could find, and waited.

From the high plateau they had a full view of the jungle below, the beach beyond, the schooner riding in the bay, and the limitless ocean. More than once Dr. Sparshott scanned the wide blue Atlantic through his field-glasses, in the faint hope of picking up a sail or the smoke of a steamer.

But the hope was very faint. The castaways had already been long enough on the solitary island to realise that it was far out of the track of ships. Only some fancied clue to the lost treasure of King Christophe had brought the Courlis there.

Many times faces stared up from the beach, as well as from the schooner, and once Dr.

Sparshott detected a telescope turned on the plateau. Captain Luz knew where to lay his hands on the castaways; they were in view against the rocky background of the hillside.

Many times a rifle-shot had hummed up from the beach, whizzing over the green, thick jungle, and clattering on the rocks, but the range was too long for good shooting. If the struggle was to be decided, it had to be decided at close quarters.

It was weary waiting, and the chums of Grimslade School found themselves wishing that the enemy would get on with it.

"If we give them a jolly good whopping, they might get fed-up, and clear off in the schooner!" Streaky Bacon remarked hopefully. "I'd be jolly glad to see the last of them, and get back to our hut. My word, it's hot!"

It was hot—uncommonly hot even for a tropical island. Never, since they had landed on that lonely shore, had the Grimsladers found the heat so intense, so oppressive, and breathless. Not a whisper of wind came, and the sea was like a glassy pond, rolling heavily with an oily swell. The sun, sloping to the west, burned like a ball of fire.

Ocean and island seemed strangely still, as if Nature was hushed. The juniors saw their headmaster look at the southern sky several times, with a puckered brow.

"Weather breaking, sir?" asked Jim at last. "I fancy so, my boy," answered Dr. Sparshott. "From what I know of these seas, I think that a storm may not be far off."

"Jolly glad if it breaks, if it brings the wind with it!" groaned Sandy Bean, mopping a stream of perspiration from a burning brow.

Dr. Sparshott smiled faintly. "A West Indian hurricane is no light matter," he said. "You remember the storm in which the Spindrift was wrecked? However, it may pass without touching this island—we must hope so."

"Ach! I should like to vind to plow!" gasped Fritz. "I was punning mit heat, and I tink tat I tie!"

"On guard!" rapped Dr. Sparshott suddenly. Jim Dainty & Co. jumped up, ready and active, in spite of the overpowering heat. Fritz did not jump. There was hardly a jump

left in Fatty Fritz. He hugged the shade of a rock, mopped his fat brow, and moaned. The other fellows left him to it. Fritz was not much use in a scrap, anyhow.

A swaying in the jungle below told that the enemy were advancing. Captain Luz had left it till late in the afternoon, till the fiercest heat of the tropical day should be over. It was still fearfully hot; but the enemy were waiting no longer.

From the shadows of the jungle figure after figure emerged on the open, rocky hillside—Captain Luz and Ezra Sarson, and black man after black man. They scattered among the rocks and the patches of bush, taking advantage of all the cover afforded by the rugged, broken hillside. Evidently Captain Luz had not forgotten that one of the castaways now had a firearm.

"Keep in cover!" barked Sammy, as a rifle rang out, and a bullet sang over the little plateau. The lead crashed on the high rocks behind the camp, and dropped, spent. There was a fearful yell:

"Ach! Gootness! I vas tead! Yarooooop!"

"Splitz!" exclaimed Sammy. Kneeling by a rock, his eyes on the enemy, the revolver in his hand, Sammy did not turn his head. "Look to him, Dainty—see if he is hurt!"

"Yaroooooh! I vas killed!" yelled Fritz. "Mein head is plown off all in bieeces, and I vas shot all offer! I tink tat I die!"

Jim Dainty rushed to the boulder that sheltered Fritz from the sun. Fatty Fritz was clasping his little, fat pimple of a nose with both hands, and yelling frantically. Beside him lay a flattened bullet.

"Where are you hurt?" exclaimed Jim. "I am killed! Mein poko is broken off! I vas have vun pullet in te prain!" gasped Fritz. "Ach! Now I tie, far from mein pelofed Chermany!"

"You—you—you fat, funky, frowsy, footling freak!" roared Jim. "You're not hurt! You flabby, funky fathead!"

"Is he all right?" barked Sammy. "Yes, sir! It was only the spent ball dropped from the cliff and tapped his silly nose."

"Is his nose hurt?"



"I hold a white flag. Show yourself and speak!" sneered Captain Luz. Dr. Sparshott put his hat on the end of his stick and pushed it beyond the edge of the boulder. Instantly there came the crack of a rifle, and the hat spun along the plateau with a bullet-hole through it.



"No!"

"Hurt it, then!"

"Oh! Yes, rather!"

"Yaroooh!" roared Fritz, as Jim Dainty promptly punched his nose. "Peast and a prute! Bunch me not te poko, tat is alretty proken pefore! Whoop!"

Leaving Fritz roaring—with some real damage to his nose this time—Jim Dainty rejoined the others. Creeping from rock to rock and from bush to bush, the enemy were coming up the hillside in a scattered line.

Every fellow on the plateau had a rock in his hand now, ready to hurl; but they waited for the word of command from their headmaster. Silent and grim, Sammy watched like a hawk.

When the nearest of the enemy was within fifty feet, Dr. Sparshott's voice rang out like a trumpet.

"Halt! Another step this way, and I shall fire! I warn you that I am not likely to miss!"

"Allez!" came a sharp, shrill yell from Captain Luz. "En avant!"

Black figures leaped from cover, and rushed and scrambled up the hillside. Dr. Sparshott's eye gleamed like cold steel over the revolver, as he took aim.

Crack, crack!

Twice the headmaster of Grimslade fired, and two of the blacks rolled over like rabbits, and went tumbling down the slope. And with a yell of panic, the rest dropped into cover again.

### Fighting for Life!

"En avant!" came the fierce yell of Captain Luz.

But the schooner's crew did not heed it. That sample of Dr. Sparshott's shooting was enough for them, for the moment at least. Neither did Ezra Sarson show himself from cover.

From rock and bush, rifles and revolvers cracked out, loosing off a shower of lead, which hummed and buzzed like angry bees over the plateau. Bullets, flattening on the cliff behind the camp, dropped spent, almost like hail, to an accompaniment of terrified yelps from Friedrich von Splitz. Fritz was jumping about like a scared rabbit—the dropping lead had apparently imbued him with new energy.

But the rest of the Grimsladers kept steady. They were in little danger from the shooting, so long as it came from a lower level, and they kept in cover. Amid the crackling of the firearms, came the sound of the groans of the two wounded blacks, as they crawled away. Even in those desperate moments, the headmaster of Grimslade had not aimed to kill, the blacks had been shot in the leg, disabling them.

Grimly the Head of Grimslade waited and watched. He had three shots left in the revolver, and there were at least fifteen of the enemy. The lives of the castaways hung on a thread. The groaning died away as the wounded men crawled back to the beach. But the popping of firearms went on incessantly.

"My giddy goloshes! The white flag!" ejaculated Ginger Rawlinson, suddenly.

A white strip of linen, on the muzzle of a rifle, was lifted from behind a rock. Captain Luz, in his dingy drill, rose into view, his black eyes glinting up at the defenders. He was not twenty feet from the steep edge of the plateau.

"Allons! Show yourself, monsieur le maitre d'ecole!" he shouted. "You will respect the white flag."

"So long as you do not advance, you rascal!" called back Sammy Sparshott. "What do you want?"

"A word with you, schoolmaster!" snarled the man from Martinique. "Ecoutez! Already I have offered you terms to join with me in the search for the treasure of King Christophe, and take a share."

"I know nothing of treasure on this island, as I have told you, and care nothing."

"Bah! You do not trust me! Listen! I know that the treasure is on this island—I have a man in my crew whose grandfather sailed with the Black Marquis from Port-au-Prince. I have seen the skeleton in the cave—it is that of one of the men who buried the gold. You found it before I did! If you have found also the treasure—"

"Nonsense!" barked Dr. Sparshott.

"Your lives are in my hand! Tell me what you know of the treasure, and when I have unearthed it, I will sail in my schooner, and leave you in peace."

"I know nothing of it!" snapped the headmaster of Grimslade. "Sarson, who was wrecked with us, can tell you as much, if he chooses."

"I hold a white flag, and stand here under your fire! Do you not dare to show yourself and speak?" sneered the man from Martinique.

Dr. Sparshott put his hat on the end of his stick, and pushed it beyond the edge of the boulder that covered him.

Instantly, from another direction, came the crack of a rifle, as Ezra Sarson fired from cover, and the hat spun along the plateau with a bullet-hole through it.

There was a yell of triumph from the half-breed. He had no doubt, for the moment, that Dr. Sparshott's head had been in the hat!

"En avant!" he yelled, and rushed up the slope, tossing aside the treacherous white flag, and drawing his revolver. At the same moment, Sarson leaped up and rushed on, and the whole crew of blacks came clambering and howling to the attack.

"Oh, crumbs!" gasped Dick Dawson. "Look out!"

Had Dr. Sparshott fallen to that treacherous shot, as the enemy believed, that rush would have carried the plateau; the juniors could never have stopped it. But Sammy Sparshott was not lying dead with a bullet in his brain.

### STOP HERE FOR A HEARTY LAUGH! COMPLICATED!



Constable (to professor who has been knocked down): "Did you notice the number of the car, sir?"

Professor: "Well, not exactly, but I remember noticing that if it was doubled and then multiplied by itself, the square root of the product was the original number with the figures reversed!"

(A propelling pencil has been awarded to W. Allford, of Nottingham, for sending in the above rib-tickler.)

as the treacherous rascals believed; he was very much alive, and he proceeded at once to demonstrate that fact.

Crack!

The bark of his revolver was followed by a fearful yell from Captain Luz. With a bullet in his shoulder the man from Martinique went spinning backwards, to crash on the rocks.

Crack! again. Ezra Sarson only dodged down in time, the bullet tearing a strip of skin from the back of his neck as he ducked into cover. At the same moment, a shower of hurling rocks smashed on the rushing blacks, knocking three or four of them right and left.

Back they went again, followed by whizzing rocks, that crashed on them as they dodged. The rush, which had seemed like sweeping all before it, had not lasted a minute. Howls and yells came from the blacks as they dodged into cover, and only Captain Luz, groaning with the pain of his wound, lay in sight. Dr. Sparshott snapped his teeth.

"One shot wasted!" he growled, "I did not get that scoundrel Sarson! He was too quick for me! But I have one shot left for him."

"That sportsman Luz has got his, in the neck!" said Ginger Rawlinson. "He won't be asking for any more trouble for some time to come, I fancy."

Captain Luz lay groaning, and snarling to his men to come to his help. But no man emerged from cover. The half-breed raised himself at last, and began to crawl away. For a long time he was in sight of the castaways

above as he crawled, slowly and painfully, with many groans, but he disappeared at last. In the still air, a sound of rustling floated up from the jungle—a sound of retreat.

"They're going!" said Ginger Rawlinson, jubilantly.

"Going—going—gone!" chortled Jim Dainty. "It was ripping luck bagging that gun! We shouldn't have kept them off without it, sir."

The Grimsladers watched and listened. The captain had settled the matter for the blacks; they were carrying him down through the jungle. A little later, the defenders of the plateau saw them emerge, in the distance, on the beach, and place the wounded skipper in the schooner's boat, which then pulled away to the vessel in the bay.

"They're fed up!" said Jim Dainty. "Let's hope they'll sail."

Dr. Sparshott made no rejoinder to that. He was watching the schooner's boat through his field-glasses. All the blacks had gone in it, with the wounded skipper, and Ezra Sarson could be seen among them. The whole crew had gone off to the schooner. Did it mean that they were abandoning the island? The Head of Grimslade did not think so.

And he was right! Under the setting sun, the schooner remained at anchor in the bay. Figures, tiny in the distance, could be discerned moving on her deck, till the fall of darkness blotted them out.

"They are not going, my boys!" said the Head of Grimslade, quietly. "The fight is not over yet."

"Then we shall see something of them again to-morrow," said Jim Dainty.

"Or before!" said Sammy.

Under the stars, in a night of breathless heat, the castaways ate their supper, and laid down to sleep. Dr. Sparshott did not close his eyes. The schooner was not gone, and the Head of Grimslade was not deceived by the enemy's move in going off shore.

He had little doubt that that move was intended to lull him into a false security; and that he would see or hear something of the enemy again in the hours of darkness. Willingly the juniors would have shared his watch, but it was not needed. He bade them turn in and sleep, and they slept. Fritz Splitz did not need bidding.

Sleepless, watchful, Dr. Sparshott sat on a rock, listening for a sound in the night. In the deep stillness, he could catch the wash of the surf on the distant reef. Closer at hand, the snore of Friedrich von Splitz rumbled and grumbled in the shadows. The Head's face was grim as he watched. There was one cartridge left in the revolver.

Midnight was past, and he had heard no sound of a boat coming ashore. But from the blackness of the hillside below him, his keen ears detected faint sounds of stealthy feet. In the deep darkness the black crew of the schooner were creeping to the attack.

Dr. Sparshott rose to his feet, with a jagged rock in either hand. He waited and watched and listened in the glimmer of the star-shine, he picked out a black figure, and then another.

Whiz, whiz! Crash, crash!

Two black figures rolled over like skittles under the crashing rocks. Wild yells rang and echoed from the darkness.

"My giddy goloshes! They're coming!" yelled Ginger Rawlinson. "Up guards and at 'em!"

The juniors were awake and on their feet in an instant, grasping rocks from the pile to hurl. Rock after rock went whizzing into the gloom, crashing and clattering down the steep. Yells and howls and shrieks came thundering back, and the sound of running feet, of men falling and stumbling.

"A jolly old surprise attack!" grinned Ginger. "But they didn't catch Sammy napping! Catch a weasel asleep!"

Sammy grinned.

The night attack had failed. The Grimslade castaways were still holding their own. But it was with anxious hearts that Jim Dainty & Co. watched for dawn, wondering what the morrow would bring.

(Jim Dainty and Co. make their last desperate stand against Captain Luz and his villains in next week's amazing chapters of this unique "castaway" story. Mind you read all about it.)