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# THE CHEERIO CASTAWAYS!

By FRANK RICHARDS.

## What Fatty Fritz Saw!



F  
RITZ!"  
"Splitz!"

But answer there came none.

The golden beach of Castaway Island, shimmering under the blaze of the West Indian sun, echoed the voices of Jim Dainty & Co. But only echo answered. The fat squeal of Fritz von Splitz

was not to be heard. If Fritz Splitz heard, he heeded not.

"My giddy goloshes!" exclaimed Ginger Rawlinson. "The Boche bloater is fairly asking for it. Here comes Sammy!"

Dr. Sparshott, headmaster of Grimslade School, came down from the castaways' hut, with a book in his hand and a bamboo under his arm.

There was only one Latin book on the island, and sometimes the shipwrecked schoolboys rather wished that there was none. Dr. Sparshott had not brought a cane with him on the holiday cruise which had ended in shipwreck and a Crusoe life for the Grimsladers, but he found that bamboo answered the purpose admirably—and so did the juniors when Sammy had occasion to administer "six."

"Where is Splitz?" barked Sammy Sparshott, as he arrived under the shade of the palms, where the castaway schoolboys were accustomed to taking their daily lesson.

"Echo answers where!" murmured Jim Dainty.

Dr. Sparshott glanced up and down the beach, at the shadowy jungle that clothed the sides of the island mountain, at the tall cliff behind the hut. He did not glance at the bay. Fritz was not likely to be there. The other fellows enjoyed revelling in the blue waters that lapped the sandy beach, but not Fritz. Bathing was too much like washing to have any appeal for Friedrich von Splitz!

The headmaster's face set grimly. Fritz was dodging class again. At Grimslade School, on the moors of far-off England, Fritz hated class, but never dreamed of dodging it. On Castaway Island the matter was different. Fritz could always tell a tale of having missed his way in the jungle, or slipped down a rock, or forgotten the time. Naturally, there was no bell to ring for class.

Sometimes Fritz got away with it; but rarely, for Sammy Sparshott was too wary a bird to be caught with chaff. The look on Sammy's face at the present moment told that Fritz was for it when he did turn up.

For the present, however, as Fritz was not there, Dr. Sparshott proceeded to deal with a class of five—Jim Dainty, Dick Dawson, Ginger Rawlinson, Sandy Bean, and Streaky Bacon.

With the sea murmuring on the beach, the wind rustling the branches of the trees, the five rather envied Fritz his freedom, though there was a whooping to follow. They wondered where he was, not expecting to see him again till class was over for the day. But it was the unexpected that happened.

Latin verbs were suddenly interrupted by a shout from the top of the cliff behind the hut. It was a shout from Fritz Splitz.

"My hat!" exclaimed Jim Dainty. "There he is!"

The cliff was high—a good sixty feet. It was not like Fritz to clamber up anywhere if he could help it. Evidently, he had taken a lot of trouble this time to keep out of sight of Sammy. The juniors stared up at the fat, tubby figure that suddenly rose into view. Dr. Sparshott stared up at it.

Why the fat junior, safe in hiding, had shown up when the lesson was not yet over was a puzzle to both headmaster and pupils. But there he was, waving his fat hand, gesticulating wildly, in a state of great excitement, and shouting at the top of his squeaky voice.



"What on earth's the matter with him?" murmured Dick Dawson, in wonder.

"Balmy!" suggested Streaky Bacon.

"Looks it, and no mistake!" said Jim Dainty.

At the distance Fritz's excited shout could be heard, but the words could not be distinguished. Dr. Sparshott shouted back, and his voice carried better than Fritz's fat squeal.

"Splitz! Come down at once!"

Fritz continued to shout and gesticulate. With a fat hand he pointed in the direction of the sea. The bay on the coast of Castaway Island faced the east and the rolling Atlantic.

**BELIEVE IT OR NOT—  
FRITZ VON SPLITZ IS BOOKED  
FOR A HEFTY WALLOPING FROM  
HIS HEADMASTER—SO FRITZ,  
THE WORLD'S WORST FUNK,  
WALLOPS HIS HEADMASTER  
FIRST!**

At the southern end great rocks and reefs were piled, stretching far into the sea, broken with rugged channels and clefts.

In that direction the view of the sea was barred from the beach. It seemed, from Fritz's frantic gesticulations, that he had spotted something seaward to the south, which was hidden by the rocks from the fellows on the beach. Dr. Sparshott laid down his book and the bamboo.

"Splitz has apparently seen something," he said quietly. "Possibly it is a sail. We must hope so."

"A sail!" repeated Jim Dainty, with a deep breath. Except for the visit of the schooner,

which had brought a gang of lawless treasure-hunters to the island, the castaways had seen no sail since their raft from the wreck had landed them on that lonely island. The cheery castaways enjoyed their Crusoe life on the tropical isle, but the thought of a sail made their hearts beat.

"Dismiss!" barked Dr. Sparshott.

Never had a class at Grimslade dismissed so rapidly. The five fellows fairly bolted. It was a race to the cliff to meet Fritz on his downward path. Excited as he was, and for once in a great hurry, the fat German's descent was laborious and slow. Cliff-climbing was not Fritz's long suit.

In a joyous, whooping bunch, the juniors passed the hut, reached the cliff, and started scrambling up. Sammy Sparshott was following them with long strides—probably as excited as the schoolboys, though his calm, cool face did not reveal it.

Jim Dainty was first up, Ginger Rawlinson close behind him. After them went the other three. The face of the tall cliff was steep, but they clambered up like monkeys. Fritz was half-way down when the juniors were half-way up, and Jim Dainty grabbed him by a fat arm.

"Ach! Mein gootness! Careful!" squealed Fritz. "Make me not to fall mit meinself, you dummkopf Tainty!"

"What's the row?" demanded Jim. "Quick!"

"Ach! It is vun sail!"

"A sail?" roared Jim.

"Ja! Ja woh! I see vun sail on te sea!" gasped Fritz. "I see tat sail gum towards tis island! Now ve shall be daken off tis peastly prute of an island, and ve shall have some goot grub, instead of tose peastly gokernuts and pananas."

"Come on!" yelled Jim.

He scrambled on, the other fellows after him. Fritz, gasping for breath, wiped the streaming

perspiration from his fat brow. A stone, dislodged by a clambering foot from the cliff above, hurtled down and tapped Fritz Splitz on the spot where he had recently packed away his breakfast. He gave a gasp and a jump, and rolled.

"Ach! Help!" yelled Fritz. "I fall mit meinsel after—Yaroooh!"

He clutched and grabbed, in vain. Down the steep cliff went the fat German, rolling and howling. It was fortunate, or unfortunate, according to the point of view, that Dr. Sparshott was following the juniors up and was below Fritz. It was fortunate for Fritz, whose fall was broken as he landed on the headmaster of Grimslade. It was unfortunate for Sammy, who went rolling, with Fritz rolling after him. Sammy gave a roar, and Fritz a squeal.

Sammy landed first on the beach. Fritz landed on him. Between the beach and Fatty Fritz, Dr. Sparshott felt rather like a pancake.

"Ach! Mein gootness!" gasped Fritz. "I fall! I vas injured! I vas all proken into leedle bieeces, mit meinsel after!"

"Get off!" gurgled Sammy.

Fritz, too breathless and confused to stir, sprawled on Sammy's crimsoned face. But a shove sent him rolling off, and Dr. Sparshott staggered to his feet. He glared at the gasping Fritz.

"Splitz!" he roared.

"Ach! It vas a sail! I see vun sail tat gum!" gasped Fritz. And Sammy, leaving him to gasp, scrambled up the cliff again.

The juniors were already at the summit. They leaped to the rugged top of the cliff, and turned eager eyes to the south. From that height they could see over the high rocks at the southern end of the bay.

Far and wide, the glimmering sea, shining in the tropical sun, met their eyes, but no sign of a sail. Right and left they searched the sea with their eyes, but no sail, no boat, no ship, broke the blankness of the horizon. And from all the disappointed juniors, at once, came the exasperated yell:

"Spooofed!"

Dr. Sparshott joined them on the cliff-top. He gave one long, searching glance across the wide, empty waters, and his lips set hard. Without a word the headmaster of Grimslade started to descend the cliff again. And, exasperated as they were with Fatty Fritz, the expression on Sammy's face made Jim Dainty & Co. sorry for him at that moment.

### A Surprise for Sammy!

Fritz Splitz grinned.

Fritz looked bucked.

He was still rather breathless from his tumble. He still gurgled a little. Otherwise, Fatty Fritz seemed pleased with himself, and with things generally. Which was rather remarkable, if Fritz had been pulling the leg of so tough a customer as Dr. Samuel Sparshott.

Fritz watched the headmaster descend the cliff. Dr. Sparshott reached the beach and came towards him, with a deadly glint in his keen, grey eyes.

"Splitz," he said quietly, "go and fetch the bamboo I left under the palms."

"Tat pampoo," repeated Fritz, blinking at him with his saucer-eyes. "Vy for you vant tat pampoo, sir?"

"Fetch it at once!" barked Sammy; and Fritz Splitz jumped in alarm, and scuttled away to fetch the bamboo.

Jim Dainty & Co. were coming down the cliff. They came down much more slowly than they had gone up—reversing the usual order of things. The disappointment was keen and bitter. Only when, by chance, a

sail came by that solitary island in the Atlantic wastes could they hope to get into touch with civilisation again. And there was no sail. Not a fellow doubted that, having cut class, Fritz had spun this yarn, as he had spun many a one before, to avert wrath. If it was a lie, it was a clumsy one; but then all Fritz's many lies were clumsy.

The juniors reached the beach as Fatty Fritz came back with the bamboo in his podgy hand. He came slowly. No doubt he guessed to what use Dr. Sparshott was going to put that bamboo, and was not enthusiastic. He handed it to Sammy at last, and the headmaster of Grimslade made it whistle in the air.

"Bend over, Splitz!" barked Sammy.

No Grimslade man ever disobeyed an order of Sammy's. Fritz Splitz was the least likely to venture to do so. Yet for once an order of Sammy's was disobeyed, and it was Fritz who did it. Instead of bending over as commanded, Fritz backed away, blinking in surprise and indignation at the grim face of the headmaster.

"Vy I pend ofer?" squealed Fritz. "Vat have I tun pefore? I see tat a sail gum—"

"You have cut class," said Dr. Sparshott quietly. "For that I should give you six, Splitz. But you have also made a false announcement, and raised hopes of rescue from this lonely island without grounds. You have inflicted a bitter disappointment on your school fellows. For that, Splitz, I shall give you such a thrashing that you will never be likely to commit such an unfeeling prank again. Now bend over."

Fritz backed farther away instead of bending over. There was no sign of a grin on his face now. Deep alarm was pictured there. From old Fatty Fritz knew how Sammy could lay it on, when he considered that a severe punishment was merited.

Dr. Sparshott followed him up as he backed away. Jim Dainty & Co. looked on in silence.

"I have ordered you to bend over, Splitz," said Dr. Sparshott, in a deep voice.

"But I will not be vopped!" gasped Fritz. "I tell you tat I see vun sail tat gum—"

"You young rascal!" roared Dr. Sparshott. "Do you dare to repeat that statement, when I have myself ascertained that there is no sail in sight?"

"Vat!" Fritz jumped and blinked at his headmaster in amazement. "You see no sail, sir? Are you plind?"

If Fritz was acting, he was doing it uncommonly well. His fat face registered astonishment as perfectly as any film actor's. He still backed away from his advancing headmaster.

"I tell you tat tere vas a sail!" howled Fritz. "I see him after from te top of te cliff. He gum towards tis island. I tink tat you must be plind pefore if you see him not. You go oop and look again, sir. Mein gootness, I see tat sail so blain as neffer vas."

"If any of the other boys told me such a story, Splitz, I should think that he had made a mistake," said Dr. Sparshott quietly. "But I have heard too many false statements from you to give you the benefit of the doubt. You did not see a sail."

"But I see him!" wailed Fritz. "I see him. Perhaps he put down to sail, sir. Perhaps he run among te rocks and lower te sail."

"Likely," murmured Ginger Rawlinson.

And the juniors grinned.

Any sail making for Castaway Island was surely certain to head for the bay, where there was a safe anchorage. Any boat's crew that ran a craft into those dangerous channels among the sharp rocks would take their lives in their hands.

Even if the lawless crew of treasure-seekers had returned, with Ezra Sarson, the old enemy of the castaways, they would have had nothing to fear from sailing into the bay—the unarmed castaways would have had to flee from an armed crew. Fritz's suggestion sounded simply incredible.

Dr. Sparshott, out of patience, made a stride towards the fat German to grasp his shoulder. Fritz made a swift backward jump and avoided the grasp.

As he did so his feet caught in trailing seaweed on the beach. He staggered backwards, and sat down with a bump.

"Ach!" gasped Fritz.

"For the last time, Splitz, I order you to bend over!" said Dr. Sparshott.

"But I tell you te troot!" howled Fritz. "I will not pe peaten because I tell te troot!"

"That is enough!"

Dr. Sparshott, with the bamboo in his right hand, stooped over Fritz Splitz, and grasped him by the shoulder with his left, to heave the fat German to his feet.

What happened next was a surprise to Sammy, and utterly amazing to Jim Dainty & Co. Fritz, as if in sheer desperation, lunged out with a fat fist that caught Sammy under the chin as he stooped. Taken quite by surprise by the sudden thump the headmaster of Grimslade toppled over, and sat on the sand.

For a split second Fritz sat and blinked, petrified with terror at what he had done. Then, with a bound, he was on his feet and running. Dr. Sparshott sat on the sand for a moment or two, too astounded to move. But Fritz was moving. Never had Fritz been seen to move like this before. He fairly flew; his feet hardly seemed to touch the ground. Heading for the jungle Fritz covered the ground like a scared rabbit.

"Great gad!" ejaculated Sammy, at last. He leaped to his feet. "Splitz!" His roar woke most of the echoes of Castaway Island. "Splitz, come back at once!"

Fritz flew on. Really it was no wonder, for the look on Sammy's face at that moment was truly terrific. Sammy made a stride in pursuit. Then he stopped as the flying fat figure vanished into the jungle.

Jim Dainty & Co. looked at their headmaster in awe. They had seen Sammy Sparshott punched—actually knocked over before their eyes. After that it seemed to the Grimslade juniors time for the skies to fall. What was to follow they could hardly imagine.

To their surprise, though they need not have been surprised knowing their Sammy as they did, Dr. Sparshott resumed at once his habitual calm, dismissing the matter on the spot. He glanced at the juniors, and spoke in his usual calm, half-drawing tone.

"Class has been interrupted! We will now resume!"

And the juniors went back to the shade of the palms—which was the class-room of Castaway Island—and Latin verbs were resumed, just as if nothing had happened.

Not a sign on Sammy's face indicated that he gave a single thought to Fritz von Splitz, or remembered the incident of that amazing punch. But nobody doubted that the warmest of warm times awaited Fatty Fritz when he turned up again.

### A Fearful Discovery!

"MEIN gootness!" groaned Fritz Splitz. The afternoon sun slanted across Castaway Island. Fritz Splitz, from the cover of the jungle, had taken several surreptitious peeps at the castaways on the beach; but he had not ventured in sight. For his fat life he dared not face Sammy and the consequences of having punched Sammy!

He found forgetfulness of his dire position in a long nap in the shade, in the heat of the day. That was all very well; but when he woke he was hungry—fearfully hungry. He gobbled coconuts and bananas, which grew in profusion on Castaway Island; but these were trifles to Fritz! He wanted solid food, and he wanted it badly—and he wanted a lot of it. He fancied that he could scent the aroma of broiled fish when the castaways lunched, and it was terribly tantalising. But he dared not approach.

After the tropical heat of the day had passed Dr. Sparshott and the juniors worked in the garden the Head had laid out near the hut, which they were going to cultivate to supply many of their needs. Jim Dainty & Co. laboured cheerfully under the eyes of Sammy, who worked the hardest of all.

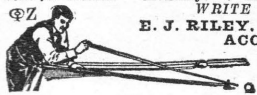
Fritz certainly had no desire to share in the work, as he would have had to do had he turned up. Neither did he desire to share the swim in the bay that followed work. But supper was the next item on the programme, and Fritz longed, yearned, and pined to share in that!

"Mein gootness! Vat gan I do?" groaned

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Fritz. "I gannot go pack, or tat peast and a prute Sammy vill vhop te skin off mein pones! I like not to have te skin vhopped off mein pones! But I must eat—gootness, how I vish to eat! I would giff all te treasure tat tose peastly prutes tink is on te island for vun goot Cherman sausage!"

And Fritz groaned again at the tantalising thought of the rich, fat sausages of his native land.

Half a dozen times at least he almost made up his podgy mind to go back and chance it! But not quite! He dared not—and that was that! But in this awful extremity—the dreadful prospect of missing supper spurring on his podgy intellect—Fritz did some thinking.

The whole trouble had arisen because Dr. Sparshott did not believe he had seen a sail from the cliff-top. And Fritz had seen that sail! For once he had not been lying!

Now a glimmer of an idea came into his mind. If he could prove that he had told the truth, surely that proof and the happy news of a sail in the offing would earn his pardon! And when that idea had fairly penetrated Fritz's rather fat head, he decided what he was going to do—and did it!

He was certain that he had seen a boat's sail dancing across the water towards the island, and as it had disappeared before the other fellows climbed the cliff, the only explanation was that the boat had run in among the rocks and dropped the sail. Why, Fritz could not begin to guess; but the fact seemed certain to him.

Fritz clambered over rocks, waded through shallow water on reefs, stumbled over seaweed, trod on crabs, slipped into channels and spluttered out again, with a determination very unusual in the fat German. He did not like it, but anything was better than taking a terrific whopping from Sammy Sparshott.

"Ach! I vas derribly dired!" groaned Fritz, sitting down to rest on a rock and mopping his perspiring brow. "I vas so derribly dired as neffer vas pefore! Vere vas tat peast of a poat? I see him—das ist gewiss! But vere and oh vere gan he be, mein gootness?"

The sun was sinking behind the hill, and shadows lengthening on Castaway Island. The shipwrecked schoolboys would be sitting down to supper now, and Fritz groaned at the thought. There was no supper for Fritz, unless he could take back news of a sail as a peace offering!

Suddenly, as he sat resting, he jumped at the sight of a dingy Panama hat rising into view from behind a rock not ten yards away. His fat face brightened. All he could see was the hat—but the hat, evidently, was on a head—and the head belonged to some man who was standing up in a boat floating in a water channel by the rock, with mast and sail lowered.

Joyously Fritz blinked at it with his saucer-eyes. Here was proof positive to take back to the doubting Thomases at the camp. He jumped up, waved a podgy hand, and squealed:

"Ach!, Mein goot man!"

He saw the man in the dingy Panama give a violent start. Then the face under the hat was turned on Fritz, and he saw it—hard, bony, tanned, with glittering sunken eyes and a gash of a mouth. And a shudder of utter terror ran through Fritz's fat limbs!

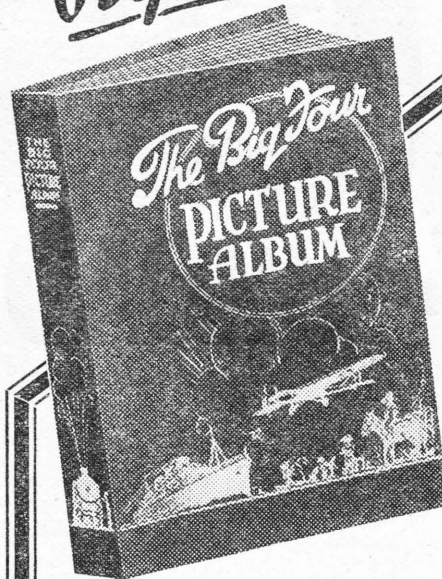
For he knew that face—the face of Ezra Sarson, the 'Frisco ruffian who had scuttled the Spindrift on the holiday cruise, and had been a bitter enemy of the castaways on the island, till he had gone in the schooner in the hurricane.

If the schooner had gone down, evidently Sarson had not gone down with it, for here he was, back on Castaway Island! And now the disappearance of the boat from sight was explained, for assuredly Ezra desired to keep his return a secret from the castaways till he could deal them some treacherous blow; and that was why he had approached the island on the southern side, where no foot ever trod, and run his boat as soon as possible out of sight among the dangerous rocks. But for the chance that Fritz Splitz, dodging class by climbing the high cliff, had seen him from the summit, no eye would have beheld the 'Frisco ruffian's return.

With a shrill squeal of terror the fat German

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bounded away like a frightened rabbit, and fled across the rocks to the shore. Sammy, and Sammy's whopping, would have seemed a blessing to Fritz Splitz now could he have got back to them!

"Stop!" came a husky, savage shout behind him.

Friedrich von Splitz was not likely to stop. With an activity of which no one who knew him would have dreamed that he was capable, he leaped from rock to rock, bounded across chasms, plunged through heaped sand. Sarson, pursuing him with savage hurry, hardly kept pace with him. But desperate as Fritz was, wind failed him, and the ruffian began at last to gain.

Up the rugged, broken shore went Fritz, leaping, bounding, spluttering, gasping, squealing; after him rushed the 'Frisco ruffian, gaining now hand over hand.

"Mein gootness!" gurgled Fritz. "I vas vun tead Cherman! Ach! Help! Help! Gum! Oh gum!"

But he was too far from home for the loudest shout to be heard by the castaways, and all that Fritz could utter was a breathless squeal. Tramping feet behind him grew closer.

The terrified Fritz put on a desperate spurt. If he could but have gained the cover of the jungle!

But a heavy hand clawed his fat shoulder from behind.

"I guess I got you!" hissed the hoarse voice of the scuttler. "I guess you ain't singing out that you seen me— Oh, great horned toads!"

Fritz, in utter desperation, clutched up a

lump of rock, turned, and struck. The blow landed on Ezra's brawny chest, sending him spinning backwards. He gave a howl of pain and rage as he went down; and in a split second Fritz was bounding on again.

Sarson scrambled to his feet, spitting with fury. Fritz had a chance now—a chance of reaching the jungle, of dodging out of sight of his pursuer. The ruffian gritted his teeth, and he, in his turn, clutched up a fragment of rock.

With all the strength of his arm he hurled it at the fleeing Fritz. It struck the fat German behind the knees, and knocked his legs from under him. With a shrill squeal Fritz von Splitz crashed down on his podgy back, bowled over like a fat rabbit.

Ezra came tramping on. Fritz was still gasping on his back when the ruffian reached him. A grasp on his fat shoulder dragged him, shuddering with terror, to his feet. He was not thinking of resistance now. He sagged in the ruffian's senevy grasp.

And Ezra Sarson, with a savage grin on his stubby face, his knuckles grinding into Fritz's fat neck, marched him back down the rugged shore, back to the rock where the boat was moored out of sight, and with a swing of his arm tossed the fat German like a sack of yams into the boat. And Jim Dainty & Co., waiting for Fritz to return to camp, were likely long to wait!

**(The Grinslade Castaways can look out for trouble now that their old enemy is back again—and RANGER readers can look out for thrills in next week's story—and another set of Free Gifts!)**