

SEVEN WONDERFUL STORIES AND GRAND FREE GIFT PICTURES INSIDE!

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

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**12**  
*more*  
**WONDERFUL  
FREE GIFT  
PICTURES  
INSIDE**



**BLACK WHIP  
of ARABIA!**

# THE CHEERIO CASTAWAYS!

By FRANK RICHARDS.

## The Unseen Foe.



**B**EATEN!" muttered Sammy Sparshott.

Dr. Samuel Sparshott's square jaw set grimly. The headmaster of Grimslade was not a man to be beaten; he was the man to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat. And yet—

The mystery of Castaway Island baffled him. Jim Dainty & Co. had disappeared, and he did not know how, or where, or why!

The more he tried to think it out, the more hopeless it seemed. Swinging to the slanting trunk of a palm-tree, sixty feet from the ground, with the activity of a monkey or a schoolboy, Sammy Sparshott scanned the island, north and south, east and west, in search of a sign of the missing schoolboys.

Eastward lay the wide bay and the rolling, endless Atlantic; southward, long lines of rocks and reefs stretching into the sea; northward, the swamp; westward, the great hill that filled the centre of the island.

Sea and sky, woods and jungle, chattering parrots and clambering monkeys, met Dr. Sparshott's searching, scanning eyes in the bright sunlight. But not a sign of the six schoolboys who were shipwrecked with him on that lonely West Indian island.

Where were they? What had become of Jim Dainty & Co.?

First of all, Fritz Splitz had vanished, then Jim Dainty and Dick Dawson, finally Ginger and Bacon and Bean! They were gone, leaving no trace behind, except here and there a footprint on the beach.

Hanging to the high palm, swaying in the wind, Dr. Sparshott searched with his keen eyes, and found no sign, and wondered. If there had been some enemy on the island—

But there was no enemy. The Grimslade castaways had the solitary island to themselves. It was long weeks since their enemy, Ezra Sarson, the man who had scuttled the Spindrift, had gone. He might have returned, drawn by the legend of the treasure hidden on the island, but nothing had been seen or heard of him—by Dr. Sparshott, at least.

But a conviction was growing in Sammy's mind that there must be an enemy of some kind on Castaway Island; in no other way was it possible to account for the disappearance of the schoolboys. Yet what unknown and unseen enemy?

"Beaten!" muttered Sammy again, between his teeth.

He scanned the sea. There was no sign of a sail; no sign of a ship. If Captain Luz and his crew had come back, and Sarson with them, they would have come in a vessel, and a vessel would have been seen. There was no anchorage, save in the East Bay, in sight of the castaway's hut.

A small boat might have run in along the rocks on the south shore, and hidden there. But who could have sailed endless miles across those lonely waters in a boat? But it was in Sammy's mind that Fritz Splitz had declared that he had seen a sail, which nobody else had seen, and nobody believed.

Was it possible that the fat German had been right, and that an enemy had run in secretly, unknown to the castaways?

If that was it, all the boys had fallen into his hands—dead or alive! Dr. Sparshott alone was left, and it was easy to guess why the



unknown foe had left him to the last. Even unarmed, he was a dangerous man to tackle, and he was to be tackled alone, unaided.

Sammy set his teeth hard.

He had to solve the mystery of the schoolboys' disappearance. He had to find the hidden enemy—if there was an enemy—and deal with him. From the tall palm he could see nothing that gave him a clue. Solitude, silence save for the chattering of the monkeys and the boom of the eternal surf on the rocks. It seemed to the headmaster of Grimslade, as he clung there, that he was alone in an unpeopled universe.

## THE GUNMAN WHO BUMPED OFF A DUMMY!

Something brushed by his cheek.

For a fraction of a second he fancied that it was an insect, stinging as it passed. Then, from the silence of the hill, came the echoing crack of a firearm.

Crack-ack-ack!

It rolled away in a thousand echoes. It was a bullet that had grazed him as he hung to the high palm. It resolved all his doubts on the instant. There was an enemy on Castaway Island, and that enemy was watching him from cover, and had fired at him.

Sammy was swift to act.

Even as the echoing report of the revolver reached him he slithered down the slanting trunk of the palm.

Crack! came again from the depths of the green jungle, where the sniper was hidden. The bullet crashed on the palm a yard above the schoolmaster's head. But for his prompt action, it would have crashed through flesh and bone.

Like a streak of lightning he shot down the slanting trunk, and landed rolling on the earth. Crack, crack, crack! Three swift bullets were searching, and, swift as he was, they went very close. A second more and he had rolled over into a thicket, and lay panting—in cover.

"By gad!" breathed Sammy.

He had not seen his enemy. Whether it was Sarson, or another, he had no means of guess-

ing; but he knew that the man, whoever he was, was armed and ruthless—that his life hung on a thread, and the lives of the boys whose safety depended on his. The enemy had shown his hand at last.

Sammy gritted his teeth. He was warned now; he knew what he had to look for. If he had only been armed! If he had had but a single cartridge for his revolver! With one shot at his disposal he would have hunted the ruthless rascal like a wild beast in the jungle. Even as it was he was strongly tempted to seek him out and come to conclusions. But other lives depended on his, and he shook his head as he lay in thick cover and listened.

There was a rustling sound at a little distance. The hidden enemy was coming—creeping like a jaguar, with wary eyes and ready revolver. Sammy breathed hard through his nose. It went against the grain to retreat, but he had to retreat. It was not for him to hunt. He was hunted. He was hunted for his life, with sudden death his portion if the desperado sighted him.

On hands and knees, wily as a snake, the headmaster of Grimslade crept away through the bushes. Again and again he heard a rustle—now nearer, now more distant. Twice he heard the ring of the revolver, as the unseen man fired—perhaps at random, perhaps at some moving shadow. But neither bullet went anywhere near Sammy.

For long hours that silent but terrible hunt went on, and it was not till the hot sun of noon was blazing down on Castaway Island, that Dr. Sparshott's keen ears picked up no longer a sound of his enemy.

## Hunted in the Jungle.

**E**ZRA SARSON gritted his tobacco-stained teeth. Hot and weary, stung by mosquitoes, the Frisco ruffian was still hunting for the man who had eluded him in the jungle. Now that he had at last made known his presence on the island, he dared give Sammy no rest.

His fear of the headmaster of Grimslade was deep. It was only fear of Sammy that had caused the ruthless ruffian to spare the lives of the schoolboys who had fallen into his hands. Well he knew how dearly he would have to pay for harming them, if Sammy survived.

But he was sure now that the schoolmaster was unarmed. Armed, Sammy Sparshott would

never have fled before him. Even with a loaded six-shooter in his grip, he feared Sammy at close quarters. He was not going to get to close quarters if he could help it. All he wanted was a clear sight of the headmaster—a chance to pitch lead at him.

Once he had that chance, he would be master of the island—free to search for the lost treasure of King Christophe of Hayti, free to carry it off, when found, in the boat he had hidden among the rocks on the south shore.

His prisoners would not trouble him, once the headmaster had fallen; the desperate rascal would leave them to perish in the tunnel in the cavern wall, where he had blocked them in.

Savage as a jaguar of the South American wilds, and as watchful and wary, Ezra hunted through the steaming jungle for the man who had escaped him.

"Dog-gone him!" muttered Sarson. "I reckon he's this way!"

He paused, and scanned a footprint in the soil. It was clearly marked—as clearly as if it had been left intentionally to guide him. A jungle spider was spinning a web across the depression; it was, some time since the headmaster of Grimslade had trod there. But it was an unmistakable sign—and the ruffian crept on with renewed hope.

Dark shadows fell on the steaming jungle, and he looked up at the branches of a great coiba-tree. Vast masses of foliage shut off the blaze of the sun, and Ezra gasped with relief from the glare. But he was silent—very silent! If the hunted man had stopped to rest, it was likely that the shade of the coiba might have tempted him—he might be close at hand. Finger on trigger, the ruffian crept on.

The jungle thinned away near the massive trunk of the coiba. He could now see more than a yard or two, between the high stalks of the great tree-ferns. Watchful as a cat, silent as a serpent, he crept on—till suddenly he stopped, catching his breath.

"By the great horned toad!" breathed Ezra. His eyes fixed on the trunk of the coiba—on a figure that sat, drooping as if with utter weariness, against the trunk.

His eyes blazed. Well he knew that figure—the torn cotton shirt, the dingy duck trousers, the worn shoes, the mortar-board which Dr. Sparshott always wore, even on Castaway Island. The mortar-board, tilted on one side, concealed the head and face of the figure sitting against the trunk—the head seemed to have fallen forward on the breast in slumber.

For a full minute Ezra Sarson crouched motionless, watching, scarcely believing in his good luck. Many a weary mile had the headmaster of Grimslade wound through the trackless jungle, and then, no doubt, he had believed that he had thrown his enemy off the track, and had ventured to stop and rest in the pitiless blaze of tropical noon.

But his enemy was more tireless than he had dreamed. Savage eyes were on him now—and a revolver was lifted, taking careful and deadly aim, the ruthless eyes of the 'Frisco tough gleaming along the barrel. He pulled the trigger!

Crack!  
At the same moment Ezra leaped to his feet, running forward, and firing again and again as he ran. Bullet after bullet smashed into the slumbering figure under the coiba, through head and body and limbs, riddling it with lead. Ezra's yell of triumph rang far through the jungle.

"I guess I got you, Sam Sparshott! By the great horned toad, I guess I got you!"

Six shots in swift succession crashed into the figure under the coiba in less than as many seconds. Not a bullet missed, as the ruffian ran up, pumping out lead as he came. Riddled with bullets, torn by the whizzing lead, the figure crumpled against the tree, and Ezra reached it, and shot out his foot in a brutal kick.

But it was not a dead body that rolled over from the kick. The mortar-board pitched off, revealing a stick on which it had been lodged. The cotton shirt and the duck trousers sagged over, revealing that they were stuffed with grass.

And at the same moment, a stalwart figure, clad only in a singlet, leaped on Ezra Sarson, and he went crashing to the ground, in the sinewy grasp of Dr. Samuel Sparshott, headmaster of Grimslade School!

#### The Upper Hand.

"MY turn!" said Dr. Sparshott coolly. A yell of mad rage broke from Sarson.

He was down on the earth, the stalwart Sammy over him, his wrist grasped, the revolver wrenched away and thrown aside.

In rage, in amazement, in terror, he glared up at his enemy, knowing—too late—how he had been tricked! Knowing—too late—that the hunted man had left sign for him, to lead

him on, and had stuffed his clothes with grass and left the figure sitting under the tree, to meet his eyes and draw his fire, and then—

Sammy grinned down at him. "My turn—what?" he said cheerily. "Dog-gone you! You've double-crossed me, you geek!" snarled Ezra hoarsely. "I guess—"

He broke off; he needed all his breath for the struggle. Desperately, madly, he strove. But the grip on him was like iron; strong as he was, the headmaster of Grimslade was stronger. Coolly, grimly, mercilessly, Sammy crushed him down, planting a knee on his chest, pinning him to the earth. Wildly and savagely the ruffian struck at the face above him; like a madman he struggled to tear himself free.

For ten minutes and more it went on—struggling, panting, straining in the tropical heat—till Ezra, exhausted at last, lay helpless under the knee that ground into his chest. Helpless, panting, streaming with perspiration, he lay; and he could make no resistance when Dr. Sparshott dragged his thick wrists together and bound them with his own neck-cloth. Then the Head of Grimslade, breathing hard after his exertions, rose to his feet, leaving the ruffian lying.

"Grimslade wins, I think!" said Sammy genially.

Sarson panted. Coolly the headmaster wiped away the streaming perspiration, shook the stuffing out of his clothes, and put them on, then placed the shady mortar-board on his head.

Ezra watched him with burning eyes. Tricked—tricked and beaten—and the game was up! There was a bullet-hole through the crown of Dr. Sparshott's hat; there were five bullet holes in his clothes. Not a shot had been wasted, had it only been Sammy Sparshott that received the fire!

Dr. Sparshott picked up the revolver and put it in his belt. He unfastened Sarson's cartridge-belt and slung it on himself. The ruffian watched him in bitter silence.

"And now," said Dr. Sparshott quietly, "where are the boys?"

Ezra snarled. "You figure that they're alive?" he hissed. "Yes," Dr. Sparshott nodded. "I think that you would not have dared to harm them, you scum; for you knew what to expect if you did, if I gained the upper hand of you. If you

## THE CHIEF RANGER IS AT HOME!

Write to him about yourself, your adventures, misadventures: about the RANGER stories, and so on. He's always pleased to hear from readers, and, each week, he awards Magnificent Surprise Prizes to the senders of the best 50 letters received.

**H**ALLO, EVERYBUDDY!—Well, what do you think of this week's set of coloured pictures? Great, what! And don't forget there will be another set of pictures in next week's grand record-breaking number of RANGER. Aren't you glad you're a reader of the world's most up-to-date boys' paper? I'll say you are—and I'm mighty pleased, incidentally, to be the Editor of it. The best stories, best pictures, best free gifts—that's what you get with the RANGER. By the way, I've a new series of stories for you starting next week. Something in a lighter vein with plenty of fun and light-hearted adventure. Samson is the star turn in this new series—Samson, leader of a gang of cheeky youths who are out to make the world smile. Look out for Samson & Co. next Saturday. In case some of you new readers wonder why it is the following readers are booked for big surprise Gifts, let me hasten to inform you that each week I select from my mail-bag the best fifty letters. Next I trot round to my store cupboard of Surprise Prizes and select fifty suitable awards. Any reader who writes to me has an opportunity of bagging one of these fine prizes. Space is short so I'll get busy with my "usual fifty" right now. For a start a really

He'll be pleased to learn that his wish about Black Whip has been granted, for this popular character is doing great things in Arabia, as all of you know. Black Whip's next adventure is a real thriller, so don't miss next week's fine story.

#### "TIGER MOTH" CONSTRUCTION SETS

have been awarded to L. Bass, Bournemouth, Hants; J. Dobson, Godreamon, Aberdare, S. Wales; L. Parker, Melton Mowbray; R. Russell, Smethwick, Staffs.; and R. Stevens, Kingsdown, Bristol.

#### CONJURING OUTFITS

are now in the post to: R. Morgan, Blaina, S. Wales; A. Philpott, Beckenham, Kent; F. Witts, Radstock, Bath; G. Gray, Edinburgh, Scotland; and W. Thorne, Edgware Road, London, N.W.8.

#### TABLE TENNIS SETS

will be received by: A. Skelding, Old Swinford, Stourbridge, Wores.; H. Farmer, Puttenham, nr. Guildford; A. L. Green, Maidstone, Kent; F. Smith, Heywood, Lancs.; and D. Johns, Edinburgh, Scotland.

#### POCKET WALLETS

are already in the post to: D. Minchener, Chingford, London, E.4; D. Parker, Bedford; A. Knowles, Sherwood, Calne, Wilts.; R. Knight,

Westliff-on-Sea; "Rangerite," Llandaff, Cardiff; N. Williamson, Carshalton, Surrey; H. Bawtree, Wallington, Surrey; K. Pickersgill, Blundellsands, nr. Liverpool; C. Mills, Lushington Hill, Wootton, Isle of Wight; and F. Plumridge, Clacton-on-Sea.

#### POCKET KNIVES

have been awarded to: J. Fillery, Crabbet Park, Worth, Sussex; G. Storey, Horley, Surrey; F. Weall, Plaistow, London, E.13; W. Fagg, Birchington, Thanet; D. Yardley, Coventry; B. Allen, Kingsbury, London, N.W.9; J. Sampson, Southsea, Hants; K. Fogden, Chesterton, Leamington Spa; J. Smurthwaite, Guisborough, Yorks.; E. Dixon, Purley, Surrey; R. Howlett, Gt. Kingshill, High Wycombe; J. Brickett, Esher, Surrey; G. Phipps, Leasebourne, Campden, Glos.; F. Green, Sheffield; T. Jones, Colwyn, N. Wales; and P. Venables, Tettenhall, Wolverhampton.

#### VANITY CASES

go to these girl readers: Betty Blacktop, Merton, London, S.E.19; Eileen Jameson-Davis, Brighton; Alicia Dark, Battersea, London, S.W.; and Yvonne Thorne, London, W.11.

#### SPECIAL PRIZES

are now on the way to: J. Salt, Toronto, Ontario, Canada; J. Bourke, Tramore, Co. Waterford, Ireland; L. Wartski, Durban, Natal, S. Africa; H. Rosen, Surrey Hills, Sydney, Australia; and E. Moraes, Bangalore, India.

#### THE CHIEF RANGER.

(All letters should be addressed to: The Chief Ranger, "The RANGER," The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.)

**HANDSOME WATCH**  
goes to J. Pedley, of Basford, Stoke-on-Trent, who wrote me a particularly cheery letter.

have hurt them, Sarson, I am going to hang you from a branch of the tree under which you lie!"

The headmaster of Grimslade spoke quietly, but his quiet tone sent a shiver through the ruffian at his feet. He meant every word he uttered; and from the bottom of his savage heart Ezra was glad that he had not harmed the prisoners in the cave.

"They live?" barked Dr. Sparshott.

"Yep!" muttered Ezra.

"I thought so—and it is well for you! Where are they?"

"Find them!" snarled Sarson. "They're alive, dog-gone you—and I guess they're powerful hungry by this time! Find them, you geck!"

"I will proceed to find out without delay," said Sammy Sparshott.

He unbuckled the ruffian's belt and took it off. Ezra, wondering, watched him as he jumped up, caught the end of a bough of the great tree, and dragged it down. Over the end of the branch he looped the belt.

"What the great horned toad—" muttered Sarson.

Dr. Sparshott did not speak. Holding the belt on the branch with one hand, he stooped and grasped Ezra's left ankle with the other. Then slowly and carefully he thrust Ezra's ankle into the belt, and buckled it tight and hard to the end of the branch.

Understanding was dawning on the ruffian's mind now, and his face grew white under its tan, but his teeth remained shut hard with savage obstinacy.

Dr. Sparshott released the bent branch. It shot up again, dragging the ruffian by one leg into the air. Ezra's body dangled some eighteen inches above the ground, the branch sagging under his weight. His left leg was secured in the buckled belt, his right crumpled. Upside down, he glared in mad rage at the headmaster of Grimslade.

Dr. Sparshott stepped back and looked at him quietly but mercilessly; then he threw himself into the grass and rested his head on his arm.

"In tropical climates," remarked Dr. Sparshott casually, "the midday sleep, or siesta, is not merely a luxury, but a necessity. And I have had quite a tiring morning. I am going to sleep now, Sarson. When you are tired of your present position, and have decided to guide me to my missing young friends, you may give me a call."

The headmaster of Grimslade closed his eyes; in less than a minute he was sound asleep. As he had said, he had had a tiring morning, and he was in need of a siesta.

Dr. Sparshott slept peacefully—while the desperado swung on the branch, head down, with aching limbs, steaming with heat, the centre of a swarm of biting mosquitoes. Minute after minute, till the wretch—desperate as he was, hard as he was—could endure it no longer. He yelled and howled for release.

The headmaster's eyes opened; without stirring he looked at the sweating, squirming ruffian.

"Is that surrender?" he asked calmly.

"Dog-gone you, yep!" howled Ezra. "I guess I'll make it a trade. Let up on a galoot, durn your hide, and I'll sure do what you want! Let up, you dog-gone geck!"

The Head of Grimslade yawned and rose.

"I'll give you a chance," he said. "Waste one minute after I free you, and I will not give you another!"

He unbuckled the belt from the branch, and Ezra thumped on the ground, gasping and groaning. Dr. Sparshott swung him to his feet.

"March!" he said tersely.

One bitter look of hate the ruffian gave him, and then he marched. With bound hands and scowling face, he tramped away by the weary, hot jungle, Dr. Sparshott following him. They reached the stream and tramped up the shallow water to the cascade in the ravine. By that time Dr. Sparshott guessed.

"In the cavern?" he asked.

"Sure!" snarled Ezra.

"Lead on!"

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## Rescued!

"LIGHT!" "What?" gasped Ginger Rawlinson.

"That villain coming back!" groaned Dick Dawson.

Jim Dainty clenched his hands.

"Ach!" groaned Fritz Splitz faintly. "I was so hungry before! Neller, neller was I so derribly hungry! If he bring us somethings to eat I forgiff him eferying!"

In the dense darkness in the rock tunnel the dizzy eyes of the prisoners caught a glimmer of moving light. It came through some rift where the great rock closed the mouth of the tunnel and barred them in. Weak and hungry as they were, they were desperate, and ready for the most reckless attempt if it was Sarson coming back. There was a grinding sound as the great rock rolled aside.

"My giddy goloshes!" gasped Ginger Rawlinson. "The way's open, you men! We've got a chance! We— Why, what— Hark!"

A deep voice rang down the rock tunnel.

"Hallo, Grimslade!"

It was the familiar old hail of Grimslade School! It was the voice of Dr. Samuel Sparshott, headmaster!

"Sammy!" yelled Jim Dainty.

"Sammy!" roared Ginger.

"Mein goodness! It is tat Sammy!" gurgled Fritz Splitz. "Tat Sammy has safed us—safed our lifes! Mein goodness! I hope tat he have something to eat in his bockets!"

In wild haste the juniors crawled and scrambled along the rock tunnel. Even Fritz Splitz was quick and active. The rock was rolled away, the opening was free; and as they emerged they saw Dr. Sparshott standing, there, lantern in hand, and Ezra Sarson, scowling and gritting his teeth, with his hands bound behind his back. Dr. Sparshott's stern face relaxed as they came into the light.

"All safe?" he barked.

"Yes, sir! Hurrah!" roared Ginger.

"You've saved us, sir!" gasped Jim. "I knew you would! I told the fellows you would!"

"What-ho!" chuckled Dawson.

"I am glad," said Dr. Sparshott, "to see that you had so much confidence in your headmaster. I am glad that it has proved to be justified. Are you hungry?"

He threw off his rucksack and opened it.

"Mein goodness! I was so hungry tat I tink tat I tie!" gasped Fritz Splitz, and he made one jump for the food.

But the other fellows were very quick after him. And in the shadowy cavern there was a sound of champing jaws, much too busy for speech—Ezra Sarson looking on with a scowl, and Dr. Sparshott with a smile.

*(Ezra Sarson a prisoner—and one menace is removed from the castaways' path. But there is an even bigger menace lurking on Castaway Island, unsuspected by Jim Dainty & Co., Read all about it in next week's RANGER.)*