

SKULL of the SKIES! ATLANTIS! HENRY VIII—PAGE BOY! SON of the MYSTERY MAN!
SERGEANT-MAJOR SHERIFF! ON SECRET SERVICE! And the CHEERIO CASTAWAYS!

The RANGER 2^D

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**HENRY
VIII-
PAGE-BOY
ARRIVES
TO-DAY!**

THE CHEERIO CASTAWAYS!

By FRANK RICHARDS.

Who's a Funk?



LOW Sammy!"

Jim Dainty spoke in the heat of the moment.

Jim was as keen an admirer of Dr. Samuel Sparshott, the headmaster of Grimslade, and had as deep a respect for him as any of the Grimslade fellows who had been shipwrecked on the

Sandy West Indian island.

But there was an argument in progress, and in the warmth of an argument a fellow does not always say exactly what he really means.

Perhaps the tropical blaze on Castaway Island had something to do with it. It was always hot—but that special day it was specially hot!

Sammy had given the castaway schoolboys a lesson that morning—and it had been "maths." They had not enjoyed working out a problem chalked on a flat rock. Fritz Splitz, indeed, had fallen asleep over it, and had had to be awakened by a lick from Sammy's bamboo.

After "class" the juniors rested in the shade of the palms and wondered if they would ever feel cool again. Fatty Fritz fanned himself with a palm leaf, groaned, and wished for the twentieth time that he was "pack in Germany." And the other fellows argued.

"Sammy says—" said Ginger Rawlinson.

"But!" interrupted Jim Dainty.

"Look here, Jim—" began Dick Dawson.

"But!" repeated Jim.

"Mean goodness, it was more derrribly hot tan after it was before!" murmured Fritz Splitz. "I was too dired to fan meinsel after! Vill you of you yellows fan me mit tat palm-leaf?"

"Dainty knows better than Sammy!" said Ginger Rawlinson, with deep sarcasm.

"Sammy's only a headmaster—and Dainty's a cheeky tick in the Fourth! I'd like a dip in the sea as well as anybody, but—"

"No jolly fear!" said Sandy Bean. "Sammy knows best."

"Oh, Dainty knows better than Sammy!" said Streaky Bacon. "They all know too much on White's House! Sammy thinks he saw a shark in the bay! What do you think he really saw, Dainty? A kipper?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Or a bloater?" asked Streaky.

"You Redmayes ticks!" said Jim Dainty.

"You're all funky, and that's what's the matter with you! Blow Sammy! Let's go and bathe and chance it!"

Ginger & Co. looked at him. They belonged to Redmayes' House at Grimslade School in far-away England—a fact they never forgot even on Castaway Island. Dainty and Dawson belonged to White's House. A House row might seem rather out of place on a desert island in tropical seas, but in the overpowering heat and the barring of the usual morning dip tempers were growing a little short.

"Who's funky?" hissed Ginger, his face as red as his head.

He got on his feet, glaring. As a matter of fact, they were all disappointed and annoyed at not being allowed a swim. Still, if Dr. Sparshott had seen a shark in the bay, evidently swimming was off. Anyhow, Sammy's word was law!

"You are!" retorted Jim. "A funky Redmayes tick—"

He got no further, for Ginger was jumping



on him. Any reasonable fellow might have considered that it was too hot for scrapping. But Jim Dainty and Ginger Rawlinson seemed to find energy enough from somewhere. They grappled and punched.

"Go it, Ginger!" sang out Bacon and Bean encouragingly.

Dick Dawson was silent. Dainty was his chum, but for once he was rather ashamed of his chum.

"Take that, you Redmayes rotter!" panted Jim Dainty.

"Take that, you White's worm!" howled Ginger.

Thump, thump! Punch! Bang! Bang! They were going it hot and strong under the palm-trees. There was a yell from Fritz Splitz as he was trodden on. Three fellows got out of the way of the combatants, but

Then he rubbed his nose. A thin stream of crimson exuded therefrom.

"Any more of that, and I'll give you six each!" barked Dr. Sparshott, and he turned back into the hut, disappearing from sight once more.

Jim Dainty mopped his nose. Ginger Rawlinson caressed a damaged eye. They glared at one another. But the scrapping was not resumed. Neither of them wanted six from Sammy's bamboo.

"Peasts and prutes and pounders!" moaned Fritz Splitz. "I have a colossal bain in mein dummy! Vy for you gum pumping down on mein dummy! Ach! I have no more te breff! Ooogh!"

Unheeding the fat German, Jim Dainty stood leaning on a palm, dabbing at his nose and looking down the golden, glistening beach towards the sea. Scrapping with Ginger had not improved his temper. He was powerfully tempted to disregard the strict order of Dr. Sparshott, walk down the beach, and plunge into the inviting waters.

Nobody but Sammy had seen a shark in the bay—sharks had never been seen in the bay before. Very likely Sammy was mistaken. Sammy, it was true, was not the man to make mistakes. But Jim was not in a reasonable mood at the moment.

"Peast and a prute!" moaned Fatty Fritz.

"Oh, shut up, you Boche bloater!" rapped Jim savagely.

"Prutal pounder!" hissed Fritz. "I have a bain—a fearful bain in mein pread-pasket! If Sammy was not looking I would get up and peat you till you pellow like a pull!"

"Well, Sammy's not looking now, you blithering Boche!" growled Jim Dainty. "So get up and get on with it—or shut up!"

"It was too hot to peat you, you peast!"

"You mean you're a fat, fozzling, frabjous funk! Dry up."

"Talk apout vunks!" sneered Fritz. "I tink tat you vas vun vunk pefore! You say plow Sammy, and tat it is all rot apout te shark, but you vas too vunky to go for vun swim, all te same, after."

Ginger & Co. grinned. Jim Dainty's eyes gleamed. Fatty Fritz's jeer touched him on the raw, and Ginger & Co.'s grin finished it. His mind was instantly made up.

THE BOY WHO DEFIED HIS HEADMASTER!

Fatty Fritz was too tired, or, at least, too lazy, to shift. Ginger staggered over his sprawling legs and stumbled backwards on him, Dainty following him down.

Fritz gave one yell. Then Ginger landed on his circumference, and the air escaped from Fatty Fritz in an agonised gasp as if he had been a punctured tyre! Squeaking feebly, he collapsed.

"Woooooooggggggghh!" moaned Fritz.

Ginger and Dainty rolled off him. Leaving him for dead, as it were, they got on their feet again, still scrapping.

In the doorway of the hut, at a little distance, appeared the tall figure of Dr. Samuel Sparshott. The headmaster of Grimslade had spotted the row, and he turned a grimly frowning glance on the scrappers. His voice came across to them in a bark:

"Stop that at once! Do you hear? Stop it!"

"Oh, my giddy goshes!" gasped Ginger.

"There's Sammy!"

He released Jim Dainty and jumped back.

Jim Dainty dropped his hands, panting.

"I'm going for a swim!" he said curtly, and he walked down the beach.

"Jim," shouted Dawson after him, "don't be an ass! Jim!"

"Gammon!" grunted Ginger, rubbing his eye. "He's not going! He knows jolly well that Sammy will spot him and stop him! White's House gas!"

Those words reached Jim's ears as he went, and they made his ears burn. He had spoken recklessly, foolishly, but certainly it had not been "gas." He tramped on towards the sea, and an angry shout rang after him from the hut.

"Dainty, where are you going?"

Jim did not answer or turn his head. He broke into a run, and reached the lapping blue margin of the bay. He was clad only in shorts, and he plunged in just as he was—for once heedless of the voice of his headmaster.

"Dainty," roared Sammy Sparshott, "come back at once!"

Jim Dainty swam out.

"My giddy goloshes!" murmured Ginger Rawlinson in dismay. "That's torn it!"

Handling the Rebel!

DR. SPARSHOTT strode out of the hut. His brows were knitted and his eyes gleamed under them. Seldom, or never had the Grimslade juniors seen their headmaster looking so angry.

Ginger & Co., Dawson, and Fatty Fritz stared at him as he strode down to the sea. By the time he reached the lapping water Jim Dainty was a good distance out. Sammy Sparshott's eyes fixed on the dark head of the swimmer—and then his glance swept the blue waters of the bay anxiously.

He was fearful for the wilful boy's safety, as well as tensely angry at his disobedience. But there was no sign of the shark he had spotted in the bay that morning. Possibly the terrible fish had gone out into the deep sea again. Possibly it was lurking somewhere below the surface.

Sammy put his hands to his mouth to form a trumpet, and roared:

"Dainty, I order you to return at once!"

Perhaps Dainty did not hear with the murmur of the sea in his ears. At all events, he did not heed. He swam on. He did not believe that there was a shark—at least, he was determined not to believe so. And he was not going to be called a funk by a Boche bloater like Fritz Splitz!

Sammy's teeth came hard together. The watching juniors thought, for a moment, that he was about to plunge in and swim after the rebel. But Jim Dainty had too long a start for even a powerful swimmer like Sammy to overtake him without a long chase. And if the shark was still in the bay it was a chase from which neither might return alive!

Sammy Sparshott turned to the boat and dragged it down the sand into the water. There was hardly a breath of wind—the sail was useless. He grasped a pair of oars and rowed out after the swimmer.

Jim Dainty had seen that Sammy Sparshott was after him in the boat. He put on speed, swimming with an ease and swiftness that might, in any other circumstances, have drawn commendation from his headmaster. But swift as he was, the boat was swifter, as Sammy's strong, sinewy arms swept the oars. It rushed him down, and Dainty suddenly dived and disappeared. He came up again astern of the boat, grinning breathlessly.

Dr. Sparshott spun the boat round after the fugitive. There was deadly anger in his look now.

"Dainty," he barked, "get to this boat at once." Dainty was six or seven fathoms off.

"I'm having a swim, sir!" called back the Grimslade rebel coolly. "I'm not afraid of sharks."

The boat rushed him down again. Again the rebellious junior dived, and again he came up astern of the boat. But this time Sammy swiftly backed water, and when Dainty's head reappeared astern he was only a yard from the tiller. And Sammy, reaching over swiftly, got a grip on the wet, dark hair.

He jerked the rebel to the boat, grasped his arm with the other hand, and hauled him bodily in. Dainty went with a bump into the bottom of the boat, where he lay gasping for breath.

The headmaster of Grimslade did not speak a word to him. He picked up the oars again and rowed back to the shore. Jim sat up, dripping with water and panting. He made a movement to get on his feet; and Sammy released a foot, jammed it on his chest, and sent him sprawling again.

"Keep there!" snapped Sammy.

Jim panted, his eyes blazing defiance.

"I'd rather have swum back," he said, with a breathless gasp. "There's no sharks. And I'm not afraid of sharks—if you are!"

Dr. Sparshott gave him one look. A minute later Jim could have bitten off that taunt, and almost the tongue that had uttered it. But the boat bumped on the sand and Dr. Sparshott jumped out.

"Get out!" he barked.

Dainty got out of the boat.

"Follow me!"

Sammy did not look back to see whether the rebel of Grimslade was following him. Quietly Jim walked behind the headmaster to the hut. Sammy picked up a bamboo from a corner.

"Bend over that rock!" he barked.

For an instant Jim Dainty hesitated. Then, gritting his teeth, he bent over. From a distance the other fellows watched in silence as they heard the ringing swishes of the bamboo.

It was only "six"—but every one of the six rang like a pistol shot. Never in his study at Grimslade School had the headmaster of Grimslade administered a more severe licking. But Jim Dainty did not, as Fritz hopefully expected, bellow like a bull! He shut his teeth hard and savagely, and bore it in silence.

Dr. Sparshott threw down the bamboo.

"Go into the hut, Dainty!" he barked. "You are detained for the rest of the day. Take one step outside, and I will give you twice six!"

Jim looked at him with a black and bitter look. Then he went into the hut.

A Fight With a Shark!

"VUNK!"

Fatty Fritz was rather enjoying himself!

The hot afternoon hung heavily over Castaway Island. It was hotter than the morning. Jim Dainty found it very hot and very stuffy in the hut—and quite early in the afternoon he was fed-up to the chin.

From the door he watched Dr. Sparshott and the juniors tramp away along the winding shore of the bay. The headmaster gave him no heed, no glance. He simply ignored his existence. Dawson gave him a nod as he went—but even Dick had to admit that the rebel had asked for what he had got. Ginger and Bacon and Bean did not waste any sympathy on him.

The four juniors followed Sammy, who had a long knife buckled to his belt, and the school-boys carried axes over their shoulders. They were going to cut sugarcane, which grew wild in patches and clumps in various parts of Castaway Island.

Fritz did not follow the cane-cutters—he kept out of sight till they had started, and then rolled into Jim's view again and sat down in the shade of a rock near the hut.

Fritz was going to join the cane-cutters on their homeward way later—when the work would be over and there would be sweet, juicy sugarcane for him to chew!

From the doorway Jim gave him a glare, and Fritz grinned and called out "Vunk!" Sammy had promised the detained junior twice six if he left the hut; so Fritz considered that he was safe.

"Vunk!" repeated Fritz, grinning. "Mein gootness, you was not so prave as a Cherman, Tainty! You was vun vunk! You talk ferry pig before, but you do vat you was told after! Yah! Vunk! I tink tat you vill not go for tat swim! If I say tat I vill go, ten I vill go, because I was a prave Cherman! But you was vun vunk!"

Jim Dainty gritted his teeth. Far away along the shore of the calm blue bay, he could see Dr. Sparshott's hat bobbing among the canes. Every now and then he had a glimpse of the juniors, tiny in the distance.

Certainly there was nothing but respect for Sammy's authority to keep him in detention. Fear of "twice six" did not enter into the

matter very much. It was hot and stuffy, he was fed-up, and the calm blue waters seemed to call to him. Why should he not have his swim after all, and blow Sammy?

The boat was beached, high and dry, close by the hut. Sammy was half a mile away. Obviously he could not get after him in the boat again, as he had done in the morning. Jim was sorely tempted. He was still rather feeling the "six"—and, still more, he felt Sammy's contemptuous indifference. Fritz's fat voice came again, jeering.

"It is ferry hot, Tainty! But I tink tat you have cold feet, all to same! Mein gootness! Vat a vunk!"

Jim Dainty, without stopping to think, leaped out of the doorway, and ran across to Fritz. Fatty Fritz started up with a yell of alarm. He had not expected that! "Twice six" was a risk Fatty Fritz would never have taken. He jumped to his feet, yelling with anticipation—and a hefty kick on his podgy trousers sent him rolling.

"Yaroo!" roared Fritz. "Tat you kick me not on mein trousers! I tink you not a vunk, Tainty! You was as prave as a Cherman—Yaroo! Peast and a prute, tat you kick me not after! Whooop!"

Fritz rather wished that he had gone with the cane-cutting party now. He headed for the distant cane-field at top speed, with Jim's lunging boot behind him, helping him rapidly on his way.

Jim Dainty, panting from his exertions, stopped on the beach, and Fritz, still yelling frantically, disappeared along the shore. Jim walked down to the water. He had broken detention now—on account of Fritz—and in his present reckless mood he thought he might as well be hung for a sheep as a lamb.

He plunged into the glistening waters and swam out.

It was a delicious change, after the stuffy hut. Without a thought of what was to follow, the Grimslade rebel proceeded to enjoy himself. Jim was a good swimmer—one of the best at Grimslade. It was sheer enjoyment to revel in the water. Certainly it was more enjoyable than sweating in the hot sun, cutting sugarcane; infinitely more enjoyable than sticking in the hut! He swam out into the wide bay, till the shore where the hut stood was a low, blurred line in the distance.

After a time he raised his head from the water, and looked in the direction where the cane-cutters were at work. He was nearer to them than to the hut.

He saw a tall figure clamber on a high rock near the water, and stare in his direction. His lips curled. Sammy Sparshott had spotted him. Perhaps he had learned from Fritz that the detained junior had "cut." Anyhow, there he was, standing on the rock, shading his eyes with his hand, and staring fixedly towards the swimmer in the bay.

Still watching him, Jim saw the headmaster of Grimslade leap from the rock, and stride down to the water. He gave a reckless laugh. If Sammy was thinking of swimming out to him, he hadn't much chance of making a catch this time!

Turning from the direction of the circling shore, Jim started to swim out farther into the wide bay. As he did so, something hard and rough brushed his leg, and he had a throb of sharp pain. It felt as if sandpaper had brushed off a patch of skin.

For a second he did not know what it was. He realised that his leg was bleeding, where it had been scraped. Then he became aware of a dark shape shooting by under the surface of the water.

His very heart sickened within him.

Sammy had not been wrong, after all! It had not been a false alarm! For there was the shark, passing him so closely that it had touched him, and the rough skin of the monster fish had scraped him till he bled.

For one instant utter horror held the school-boy in a spell. Then, as he realised that the shark was turning on him, that it had detected him, and was coming for him, he pulled himself together. It was death—fearful death—with hardly the remotest chance of escape. He knew it—knew it in his bones—but he braced himself desperately to fight for his life.

Fool, thrice fool that he had been! If he had heeded Sammy—if he had only obeyed his headmaster! It was too late to think of that!

Hardly conscious of what he was doing, acting on instinct, he dived desperately as the shark came, and he knew by the darkening of the water that the fearful brute passed over his head.

He came up, breathing hard through shut teeth, staring round with wild eyes. There was a gleam of white in the sunshine on the surface—the belly of the shark, that had turned over to bite. Only that prompt dive had saved him for the moment—the ferocious jaws had snapped on nothing!

His wild eyes stared round. The shore seemed a distant blur. There was no chance of reaching it—no chance! He must be dragged down before he had covered a quarter of the distance. He could only watch, and dodge, and dodge again, till his strength failed him, and then—

What was that dark object on the glistening surface of the water, speeding towards him like an arrow? Another shark? It was the dark hair on a human head—Dr. Sparshott!

"Dive! Dive for your life!" Jim felt a movement in the water behind him even as his headmaster shouted. The shark was rushing him down again—the fearful brute was behind him. Down shot the junior, desperately cleaving the water, and the dark shadow of the shark passed over the spot where he had been an instant before.

The boy's brain was reeling—his lungs were bursting—this could not go on long! But Sammy was there—Sammy had swum out to save him! Could even Sammy save him?

His face was white as chalk in the tropic sunlight as it came over the water again. He gasped and groaned for breath. Where was the shark—where was Sammy? Something gleamed white in the sun a dozen yards from him. It was the shark, but it was not heading for the schoolboy now. It was rushing away from him; and Jim, with a shudder, knew what it was heading for—Sammy! He had an instant's glimpse of a dark head that vanished.

"Sammy!" panted Jim. He swam, hardly conscious that he was swimming towards the shark. Sammy was gone—the shark was gone. Sammy had dived, and the hideous fish had plunged down after him. Had the shark got Sammy?

The water was agitated, as if by a struggle from below—and a dark stain rolled up through the water—crimsoning the sea round the schoolboy. Blood was reddening the water.

Something was shooting up from the depths. It was the shark, Jim did not care—if Sammy had died for him, in the depths, in the jaws of the sea-fiend, he cared for nothing! But it was not the shark! It was the dark, wet hair of Sammy Sparshott that rose from the sea. His face was white and set. In his right hand was the long, sharp, cane-knife, red to the hilt. He panted and panted for breath.

The shark floated up more slowly, rolling in the sea, and the sun gleamed on white gashed and stained with red. The long cane-knife had sunk deep in the shark's body in that fearful minute under water. The dead shark rolled and pitched like a log on the sunny sea.

"Swim!" barked Sammy Sparshott. Jim Dainty's brain was in a whirl; the strength was gone from his limbs. Without Sammy's help he could never have reached the shore. But he reached it—hardly conscious of the juniors standing on the beach, watching as they came—till Ginger plunged in and relieved Sammy of his weight, and dragged him ashore.

Dr. Sparshott, dripping, emerged from the water.

"I—I—I'm sorry, sir!" Jim stammered.

Dr. Sparshott's eyes fixed on him icily. "You have broken detention, Dainty!" he said quietly. "You have taken the risk of swimming in the bay, in spite of my warning!"

"Yes, sir!" muttered Jim.

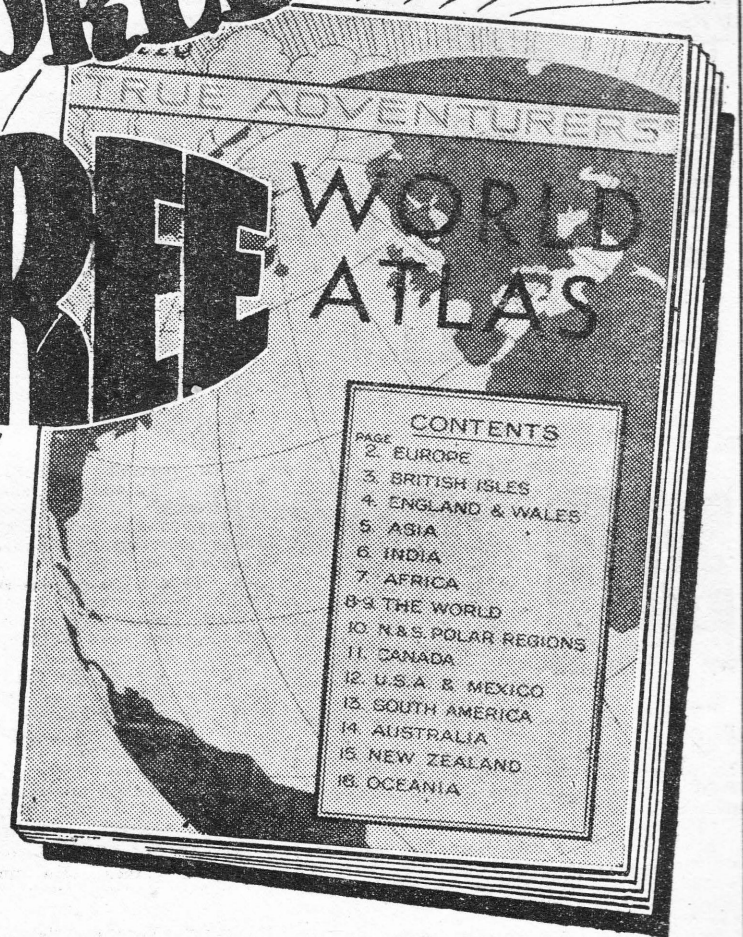
"You have not only risked your life," said Dr. Sparshott, "but you have risked mine—much more valuable than yours, Dainty, as it is essential to the safety of your schoolfellows! I shall have to consider how to deal with you. For the present, go!"

And, with slow and faltering steps, Jim Dainty went.

(How will Dr. Sparshott deal with the rebellious Jim Dainty? Be prepared for surprises and excitement in next week's grand story of the schoolboy castaways!)

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