DYNAMITE DON: THE FLYING SHERIFF IS INSIDE!



CHEERIO

By FRANK RICHARDS.

The Dumb Messenger!



CRATCH, scratch. scratch!

Dr. Samuel Sparshott heard the faint sound in the silence of the tropic night on Castaway Island. And as he heard it, he raised himself on his elbow and listened, his hand stretching out to the revolver that lay con-

veniently close beside his hammock.

In the adjoining room in the hut, three Grimslade juniors were sleeping soundly, Streaky Bacon, Sandy Bean, and Dick Dawson. But "Sammy" Sparshott was sleeping very lightly that moonlight night—in fact, he seemed to sleep like a weasel, with one eye open—and his quick ears caught that sound of scratch—in the stream of t ing and shuffling at the barred door of the

But he relinquished the butt of the revolver, and settled back in the hammock. His instant thought had been of danger that the convict crew whom he had driven off the island at the muzzle of his gun had returned. But it was not that-whatever measures the Devil's Island gang might have taken, certainly none of them would have been scratching at the door, like a lost cat seeking admittance. The headmaster of Grimslade School settled down to sleep again.

Scratch, scratch, scratch! It was some animal scratching and clawing at the barred door. And that was strange enough, were few animals on Castaway Island—chiefly monkeys. Whatever animal it was, it was the control of the con persistent. Sammy Sparshott sat up again.
Scratch, scratch! Shuffle, scuffle! A body

was brushing and bumping on the door, as if to attract attention from within. What it could mean, was a mystery. Dr. Sparshott resolved to discover what it meant, anyhow.

He slipped from the hammock, hastily drew on a few clothes, grasped his revolver, and stepped into the outer and larger room of the hut. The three juniors were fast asleep, and he moved quietly, so as not to awaken them, as he stepped to the door. There, with the revolver gripped in his hand, he stood listenrevolver gripped in his hand, he stood listen-ing to the incessant scratching and scuffling outside. In the door was a slit, used as a spy-hole, covered by a little shutter that fitted into sockets. Dr. Sparshott softly slid the shutter aside, and looked through.

Outside, the moonlight lay in a sheet of silver on the beach, sloping down to the broad bay that fronted the Atlantic. In front of the hut was a strange, startling figure, the sight of which made Dr. Samuel Sparshott start, and catch his breath. It was the figure of a hairy monkey, oddly clad in cotton shirt and trousers and a tattered hat!

For a long moment, Sammy Sparshott stared at that strange figure, his heart beating like a hammer. For he knew that queer figure he knew Friday, the monkey, who had gone with Jim Dainty and Ginger Rawlinson and Fritz Splitz, when they had been blown out to sea in the gale. Friday, the monkey—back on Castaway Island—there was no mistake

about that!

Sammy Sparshott almost wondered whether he was dreaming this. If Friday had survived, then the juniors in the lost boat had survived, and the dread that had lain like lead on his



heart, that they had gone to their death in the storm at sea, was lifted.

The bars clattered down from the door in Sammy's eager hands. He flung the door wide open, and, with a squeal of delight, the monkey hopped into the doorway. Dick Daw-son and Streaky and Sandy started up in their bunks at the sudden noise. They gave a yell at the sight of Friday, and bounded out of their bunks.

"They've come back!" yelled Streaky. Where's Ginger?"
"Jim!" exclaimed Dick breathlessly.

PERIL ON CASTAWAY ISLAND!

Sammy stepped out of the hut. He stared about him in the moonlight. There was no living soul to be seen on the shelving beach; no sign of a boat on the shore or in the bay. Friday was there, but of Jim Dainty and Ginger and Fatty Fritz there was nothing to be seen.

"It's Friday, sir!" gasped Sandy Bean.
"It's the jolly old monk that went in the boat with them! They've come back!"

"It is the monkey, my boys," said Dr. Sparshott. "But he has come alone. I cannot understand it."

"He couldn't have come back unless the boat came back!" exclaimed Streaky. "The fellows must have returned, but—" He ran out of the hut, with the other two juniors, and stopped short in sheer astonishment.

The monkey was there, but how he had come there was a complete mystery. Seldom had Dr. Sparshott been so utterly puzzled and perplexed. But his face was bright—brighter than it had been for many days—ever since the castaways' boat had been blown out to

sea. "What does it mean?" gasped Dick Dawson

blankly.

"It means this much, my boys—that they are living!" said Dr. Sparshott. "For some reason they have not landed in the bay—but they must have returned to the island, or the interpretation of the land. Their times have monkey could not be here. Their lives have been spared!"

old Friday could only talk!" said

Friday was doing his best! He was chat-Friday was doing his best! He was cnat-tering, jabbering, and squealing, hopping with excitement. Dr. Sparshott thought hard. Jim Dainty and his companions, as they returned, might have sighted the convicts' boat, and changed their course to avoid it. That would account for their having made their landfall at a distance, out of sight of the hut on the bay. But it did not account for the monkey coming alone. What reason was the monkey coming alone. What reason was there why the boys should not have come with him? If Friday could but have spoken—

But Sammy realised very quickly that if Friday's human companions had not come back with him, it must be because they could not—something had happened to prevent them, since they had landed once more on Castaway Island. And the thought of the Devil's Island gang haunted him. He had driven them off island-but had they returned in the

right?
Friday was clawing at him, hopping and capering and jabbering, and Dick Dawson gave a sudden shout:

He wants you to go with him, sir!" Sammy stared at the excited monkey. Friday was grabbing at him, clawing at him, trying to drag him down the path from the hut. Dick was the first to guess what was in the intelligent animal's mind. But the moment

the intelligent animal's mind. But the moment he had spoken, it was clear to the others. "You are right, Dawson!" said Dr. Sparshott quietly. "Something has happened to the boys. It is clear that they have succeeded in getting back, but something has happened since they landed. Friday knows where they are! He cannot tell me—but he can guide me."

"And us!" exclaimed Streaky.
Sammy shook his head.

Sammy shook his head.

"You will remain to guard the hut," he said. "This may mean that the convicts have returned. Keep the door barred when I have gone—and fire if you are attacked. I trust you to keep watch."

A very few minutes later, Friday, jabbering with satisfaction, was hopping down the path with Sammy Sparshott. The door of the hut was barred, the juniors within keeping watch and ward.

Friday, loping on ahead, looked back every now and then with his twinkling red-rimmed eyes to make sure that Sammy Sparshott was

following. He was soon satisfied that the head-master of Grimslade understood what was wanted-and scuttled on faster, Sammy break-

wanted—and scuttled on laster, Sammy breaking into a trot to keep pace with him.

The monkey plunged into the jungle, following a trampled path, made by the castaways, that led to the southern shore of the island. With his revolver gripped in his hand, Dr. Sparshott followed, sure that the intelligent ape was leading him to the lost schoolboys, and little doubting that the was being leading. and little doubting that he was being led also to the Devil's Island gang. For what else could have prevented the boys from coming back with Friday?

Had they, landing at last on Castaway Island, landed only to fall into those desperate hands? What had been their fate? Sammy's face was grim, and his eyes glinting, as he tramped on after his monkey guide.

In the Shadow of Death!

giddy goloshes!" Rawlinson. Y giddy Ginger sell!" murmured "What a

Jim Dainty gritted his teeth.

Fritz von Splitz groaned.

The three juniors were tied together in a bunch, Jim's left arm to Ginger's right, his right to Fritz's left, and another rope was knotted round the three of them.

On the shores of Castaway Island, which they had reached after so many perilous adventures on the wide Atlantic, this was what had awaited them! The storm and the ocean had spared them, but now they had fallen into the desperate hands of the convicts after they had

landed. Hardly a mile away, round the circling shore of the bay, was the hut where their friends were—the friends who would have flown to their aid had they known. And they were helpless prisoners, their lives hanging on a thread.

As they stood bunched together, the five French convicts stood in a tattered group near them, muttering together in their own language. In the glimmer of the moon they looked a fearful crew-tattered, bearded, shaggy, haggard from their hardships in the boat in which they had escaped from Devil's Island, far away on the coast of Guiana.

Island, far away on the coast of Guiana.

As they muttered they cast evil looks at the bound schoolboys, and it was easy to see that four of the gang would have disposed of them swiftly enough; but the black-haired man, Lautrec, held them in check. It was not from motives of mercy, for he was as savage and desperate as any of the crew, though he seemed a more intelligent and educated man than the a more intelligent and educated man than the others. The prisoners were pawns in his game "Mein gootness!" moaned Fritz Splitz,

"Mein gootness!" moaned fritz Splitz, quivering with terror under the dark, threatening looks of the convicts. "Ve vas all tead!" "Keep a stiff upper lip, fatty!" grunted Ginger. "My giddy goloshes! If Sammy only knew we were here, and how we were fixed—""

"Sammy will save us," muttered Jim, "if—if they let us live!"

The talk among the convicts was growing angry and excited. The juniors caught words here and there, in the rapid French, as the ruffians gabbled together. The word "tuer" came to their ears more than once, and they knew that "tuer" meant "kill." "La mort" (death) was enabled again and again by one (death) was snarled again and again by one or another of the savage gang.

Evidently the ruffians had not forgotten the fight out at sea, when they had striven to seize the Grimslade boat and had been driven off. Some of them showed marks that they had

received in that struggle.

The black-haired man was gesticulating angrily, his eyes flashing, his voice rising shrilly. He was the leader of the gang, but he had a mutinous set of followers. But his influence and his arguments seemed to convince the ruffians at last, and there were sullen grunts and growls of assent, though savage eyes, under beetling brows, still gleamed menace at the prisoners. Lautrec, leaving the others in a growling group, stepped towards

Fritz Splitz almost collapsed with terror as he approached. Jim and Ginger stood steady, though their hearts were beating painfully. "Allons! You live!" said Lautrec, with a mocking grin. "Mes camarades, they would kill, but I make them to believe that you are useful to live. Comprenez?

He laughed.
"The tall one—that Sparshott—he has taken from us our knives, or, ma foi, you are cut to pieces when we seize you!" he went on. "For you it is bonne chance that the tall one take our knives! But couper la gorge-that is not the only way to die, mes enfants! If you do mot serve my purpose, you die—terribly! You—your name?"
"Dainty!"
"Bon! Vous venez le bateau avec nous—you come in the boat with us—les autres—the

others remain! We go to the hut where your schoolmaster, he sleep. You knock at a door—comprenez? That tall one, he open at your voice. He shall not see us till we seize him, and all is done!"

Jim Dainty's eyes flashed.
"You shall kill me first!" he said, between his teeth.

Lautrec laughed again-a low,

Lautrec laughed again—a low, ferocious laugh that was blood-curdling to hear.

"Nous verrons—we shall see! There are the other boys, who remain here; and if a single shot is fired at the hut, the man I leave with them, he kill! I leave with them le petit Goujon, who go to the Devil's Island because, in Paris, he strangle one gendarme!"

Jim Dainty was untied from the other two, his arms remaining bound. Two of the con-

his arms remaining bound. Two of the convicts came to him, and, taking his arms, dragged him roughly down the shore to the crazy old boat in which the gang had come. Lautree followed with another. The man he called Goujon—a thick-set ruffian, with the face of a wolf—remained with Ginger and

Fritz.

The boat was dragged from the rocks of the headland into the water, and Jim thrown roughly into it. Lautrec and his comrades followed him in and pushed off.

Ginger Rawlinson, his face white as chalk,

stared after the boat as it disappeared in the moonlight across the gleaming bay. The moon was sinking now, the light not so clear, and the boat was soon lost to sight, and the rattle

of the oars in the rusty rowlocks died away. Ginger's heart was like lead in his breast. He could have no doubt that he had looked on Jim Dainty for the last time in life; for he was certain that Jim would never lend himself to the treacherous plan the black-haired scoundrel had formed.

Ginger gave a groan. Jim Dainty had gone to his death—and it was death for those who remained behind! The convict who remained to guard them had his orders if a shot was fired at the hut-orders that he was only too

fired at the hut—orders that he was only too keen to carry out. His evil, threatening face told that only too plainly.

Fritz Splitz, overcome by fear, leaned back feebly against a shadowy trunk, his fat legs hardly supporting him.

"Mein gootness!" he groaned. "Tat Sammy vill shoot ven tey are at te hut—and ve vas tead—ve vas bofe tead! Mein gootness!"

Ginger made no answer. As the long, long

Ginger made no answer. As the long, long minutes passed he listened with feverishly strained ears. Goujon, standing a few yards from him, was listening, too. If a shot was

What was going to happen at the hut? Ginger's feverish thoughts followed the boat as the long, long minutes crawled by. They must have got across the bay by this time, landed on the beach, gone up to the hut. What would happen then? The minutes seemed like hours. Suddenly there came a sound through the silence.

Faintly, but clearly, from far across the bay, came the ring of a pistol-shot. The shot had been fired at the hut!

There was a mutter from Goujon. turned on the two prisoners. His savage eyes were blazing under his shaggy brows. His comrades had been fired on, and Lautrec had told him what to do. With the spring of a tiger, the convict leaped at the prisoners.

The fingers were already at Ginger's throat when a shot rang out close at hand. The grasp of the convict fell from Ginger as Goujon staggered, groaned, and crashed over, and lay on the sand with a bullet in his heart. And Ginger Rawlinson, staring round with wild

eyes, saw a monkey in tattered trousers skipping in the moonlight, and after him came the tall figure of Sammy Sparshott, with a smoking revolver in his hand.

Jim Dainty's Ordeal!

ICK DAWSON caught his breath. "They're coming!" he breathed. His eye was to the spy-hole in the door of the hut. One or another of the schoolboys had been watching there ever since Sammy had gone. They were not likely to close their eyes again that night. An hour had passed—more than an hour—and the three Grimsladers in the hut watched and listened, eager for Sammy's return, eager for news of the lost juniors.

Faintly through the silence there came a sound of a boat thudding on the shore, and dark figures came up the path from the beach -wild, tattered figures, casting long, black

shadows in the moonlight.
"The convicts!" muttered Dick. "They're coming!"

They knew now that the Devil's Island gang had returned. As they peered through the slit they recognised the wild figures, led by the black-haired desperado, Lautrec. There were five figures in the bunch; but, as they neared the hut, the amazed juniors discerned that only four of them were convicts. The fifth was a boy, and his arms were bound, and a gleam of moonlight on his face revealed familiar features

"Jim!" breathed Dick Dawson. It was his

"Jim Dainty!" muttered Streaky Bacon.
"And—and those brutes have got him!
Where's Ginger?"

"Get your gun ready!" whispered Sandy

The bunch of figures came without a sound, creeping up the path. They halted a few yards from the hut. Evidently they believed that the occupants were sleeping—as, indeed, they would have been had not Friday given Sammy Sparshott the alarm. The three within heard

a whisper from Lautrec:
"On dorme! Mais pas un mot!"

Streaky & Co. caught that whisper, in the deep silence: "They sleep, but not a word!" What treachery was the black-haired villain planning? He must believe that Dr. Sparshott was there. He could know nothing of the He could know nothing of the monkey's intervention.

The juniors in the hut waited breathlessly. Streaky and Sandy grasped revolvers. Dick Dawson had an axe. His heart thumped at the sight of his chum, bound, in the midst of the Devil's Island gang. Why the convicts had brought their prisoner there he could not, for the noment grees, but he was gaing to for the moment, guess; but he was going to rescue his chum, if he could.
"Listen!" breathed Streaky.

Lautrec was speaking, in a low whisper, to his prisoner, the other convicts standing silent. The juniors strained their ears to catch the words.

"You Dainty! Comprehen?" You go to

catch the words.

"You Dainty! Comprenez? You go to a door—you tap. Yes. We keep out of sight till a door is open. You make the school-master to open a door. Will he not open a door at the sound of your voice, thinking that you come alone—yes?"

Jim Dainty did not reply. His face was white as chalk. Like the convicts, he supposed that Dr. Sparshott was in the hut, sleeping.

white as chalk. Like the convicts, he supposed that Dr. Sparshott was in the hut, sleeping. There was no sound to hint that wakeful eyes were watching there. He had been brought there to trick Sammy into opening the door—to betray his friends into the hands of his enemies. He knew only too well what would happen once Sammy had opened the door. A rush by the convicts, and then the occupants of the hut, taken by surprise would be quickly of the hut, taken by surprise, would be quickly overpowered.

Lautrec's grasp was on Jim, his black eyes Lautree's grasp was on Jim, his black eyes gleamed murderous menace. He made a gesture to his associates, and they slunk into the cover of the walls of the hut, to keep out of sight when the door was opened. "Your comprenez?" Lautree's voice was a faint whisper, like the hiss of a serpent. "Your

life, the lives of your friends, if you fail me. Comprenez, mon cher? I leave with them Goujon. And if he hear a shot he has his orders—you know what!"

Jim stood silent.

Better a hundred deaths than to betray his friends to the Devil's Island gang. But he was thinking not only of himself, but of Ginger and Fritz—bound, helpless, watched by the ruthless ruffian, Goujon, to be murdered without mercy if a shot was fired from the hut. And if he gave the alarm there was no doubt that shots would be fired.

With a face like chalk, wet with perspiration, Jim stood silent, in anguish. Lautrec's He whispered tightened on his arm.

"Allons done! You obey, or—"
"Never!" breathed Jim. "Villain—rascal—rotter—never! You shall kill me first!"

But his voice was subdued. He dreaded to But his voice was subdued. He dreaded to give the alarm, to risk causing the shot that would be the signal for Ginger's death. Lautree read his thoughts easily in his tortured face. His grip on the boy's shoulder tightened till Jim gasped with pain. The other three convicts, crouching by the wall, suppressed their breathing, watching Lautree and the boy with eyes that gleamed in the moonlight like the eyes of wild heasts. light like the eyes of wild beasts.

"Your life, and the lives of the others!" hissed Lautrec. "You tap at the door with your foot; you call—take care what you call, mon cher! One shot, and your friends yonder—Goujon twist them the neck! Venez!"

He dragged Jim Dainty closer to the door. Within the hut the three juniors had strained their ears, to hear the low whispering without. A word or two reached them. Enough, added to Lautree's action, to make them understand why Jim Dainty had been brought there.

Leaving him standing in front of the door, Lautree crouched to one side, to keep out of sight, with his comrades, when the door was opened, ready for an instant rush. Jim stood motionless, silent, the perspiration streaming down his face. For Ginger's sake he dared not give the alarm, but not to save his own life and Ginger's would he have obeyed the orders of the convict. Lautrec's black eyes glittered at him.

Within the hut, Streaky whispered to his comrades.

There was a sudden sound in the hut as the bars of the door clattered down. Even as that sound warned Jim and the convicts that the occupants of the hut were not asleep, but wakeful and watching, the door flew open and Dick Dawson grasped Jim and dragged him headlong inside. With a howl of surprise and rage Lautrec leaped up. Bang!

Streaky fired point-blank at the leaping figure in the doorway. Lautree bounded back, not quite escaping the bullet that gashed along his swarthy cheek and drew a spurt of blood. The next instant the door was slammed and

The next instant the door was slammed and Sandy Bean jammed a bar into the sockets. Outside, the four convicts howled with fury, like wolves.

"Jim!" panted Dick.

Streaky lighted a candle. Dick caught up a knife and cut his chum free. Jim Dainty staggered against the table, white as death.

"Ginger!" he groaned.
"What about Ginger?" panted Streaky.
"Have they got him?"
"They left Ginger and Fritz with one of the gang, to kill them if a shot was fired!"

"Oh, heavens!"

Lautrec's savage voice came in a scream from without.

"Name of a name! Nom d'un nom! Les autres—the others—you have given them to death!"

The yelling voice broke off as there came, ringing across the silent bay, the sound of a pistol-shot from the distance.

Home Again!

" AMMY!" panted Ginger Rawlinson. "Mein gootness!" gasped Fritz Splitz.

"Oh, my giddy goloshes! It's Sammy!" yelled Ginger, mad with delight. "Good old Sammy!"

Friday, chattering and squealing, capered round the two prisoners. Dr. Sparshott came up, with his long strides. He did not waste a glance on the figure of Goujon, sprawling motionless in the sand. He snatched a knife from his belt and cut Ginger Rawlinson and Fatty Fritz free of their bonds. Friday hopped and skipped, squealing loudly. He had missed his master. his master.

"Where is Dainty?" rapped Sammy.

"They've got him!" panted Ginger. "They've gone in the boat, taking Jim with them, sir!"

He panted it all out in a few words.

Sammy Sparshott's face set hard as he stared across the moonlit bay. He had heard the shot from the hut, which was followed by his shot from the hut, which was followed by his own, aimed at Goujon. One of the desperate gang had gone to his account, but the other four were at the hut—with Jim Dainty in their hands. Friday had led them to the rescue, and he had saved the two prisoners. But what had been Jim Dainty's fate?

"Mein gootness!" mumbled Fritz Splitz. The fat Rhinelander hardly knew whether he was on his head or his heels. "Ve vas safed. Ach himmel! Ve vas safed pefore! I tink tat I tie, but I vas safed mit meinself after! Ach! How I vish tat I vas pack in Chermany!"

"Follow me!" rapped Sammy.

He was gone the next moment.

"Come on, Fritz!" panted Ginger Rawlinson.

He dashed after Sammy.

"Ach! Mein gootness!" gasped Fritz. "Go not mitout me, mein goot Chinger! Peast and a prute, do not leaf me alone mit meinself after! I gum!"

And Fritz Splitz started after Ginger as fast as his podgy legs would carry him.

Ginger was good at sprinting, but he found it difficult to keep pace with Sammy Sparshott. It was a mile to the hut, and seldom had even Sammy's legs covered a mile so

The dawn was breaking over Castaway Island, a faint, rosy flush creeping over the sea, the foliage of the wooded hill gleaming in the early rays. Breathing in gulps, streaming with perspiration, Sammy Sparshott came out on the beach, at last, before the hut. In the glimmering dawn he saw the dingy old

boat on the water's edge, and four tattered savage figures gathered before the hut. But of Jim Dainty he saw nothing.

Crack! Crack! Crack! rang his revolver, pitching bullets at the bunch of convicts as he ran. And there was a startled yell from the Devil's Island gang.

They spun round at Sammy-running towards them like a deer, his revolver spitting fire as he came. He was between them and their boat. Their escape to the sea was cut off. One look at him was enough for the gang. They scattered like rabbits, racing away into the palms, disappearing from sight almost in a moment. Sammy, panting, ran on to the hut. The door was flung open and the juniors ran out.

"Dainty!" roared Sammy.

He could hardly believe his eyes as he saw Jim with Streaky and Sandy and Dick.

"Dainty's here, sir!" panted Streaky. "But

"Ginger!" groaned Jim Dainty. "They left him— Why, what— Oh, my hat! Look! Ginger!"

Ginger Rawlinson, his red head gleaming in the rising sunshine, came panting breath-

lessly into view.
"Ginger!" yelled Streaky.

"Ginger and Fritz are safe!" said Sammy Sparshott. "Friday guided me to them. But thank Heaven, I find you are safe also, Dainty!"

Ginger came panting up. Streaky and Sandy rushed at him and hugged him in their delight.

"Grimslade wins!" panted Ginger. "Hurrah!"

"Hurrah!"

Sammy Sparshott's face was bright. The headmaster of Grimslade fairly grinned as he looked over his flock, happily reunited once more. Fritz Splitz, gasping and gurgling, came staggering up. He yelped as Dick Dawson greeted him with a smack on a fat shoulder. shoulder.

"Mein gootness!" gasped Fritz. "Knock me not ofer, plockhead! Ach! I vas so dired tat I tink tat mein legs trop off after mit temselves. Also, I vas ferry hungry!"
"Good old Fatty!" chuckled Streaky. "Never thought I should be so jolly glad to see your podgy old chivvy again! Which will you have—supper or brekker?"
"Bofe!" soid Fritz.

"Bofe!" said Fritz.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The rising sun shone down on happy faces on Castaway Island. In their rejoicing, the Grimslade Castaways almost forgot the existence of the convict crew, fleeing to the interior of the island. But they had not yet done with the gang from Devil's Island.

Not by a long way, for Lautree and his fellow-convicts were already plotting afresh to capture the hut and to kill the Grimslade defenders. And burning arrows had something to do with it!

Don't miss next week's wonderful chapters of this great story, boys.



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