



CROCODILE ISLAND



“What shall we do tomorrow”, John asked his friend Tim.

Tomorrow was going to be a day off for both boys. They always loved Saturdays.

“How about a little cruise in a dinghy?” Tim, responded.

“We haven’t even got one. So how do you propose to have a trip in a dinghy?”, John asked Tim.

“I know of a place where we could easily find one and then we could just use it and bring it back when we are finished with it”, Tim suggested.

“No, we can’t do that. That is not allowed.

If my parents knew about it they would never approve of it”, John said. “No, just forget it.

There must be other things we can do on our day off”.

But Tim was convinced it would be quite alright. After much talking he finally managed to persuade his friend John.

So it was decided.

Tim knew where to go so he took the lead and John followed. John was still not really convinced in his heart. But he went along with the idea hoping that it would work out alright and that nothing would go wrong.

After about half an hour walk they came to the river and there they found several dinghies.

So they could even choose.

There was nobody anywhere near the place where the dinghies were lying on the bank of the river.

So they were able to pick one out and nobody could even see what they were up to.

They quietly slipped one of the dinghies into the river and then jumped into it.

They found the oars on the bottom of the boat and soon they were on their way.

It was amazing how strong the current was in the middle of the river. But they were not so concerned about that as they were both very strong lads and they knew how to handle the dinghy.

While John was doing most of the rowing Tim started to eat one of the apples they had taken with them. They had taken enough food along for one day.

So they would not get hungry.

The weather was beautiful and both boys truly enjoyed themselves. On both sides of the river they observed lovely trees and they also saw many water birds such as the egret, the white faced heron and even a sea eagle.



Egret



White faced Heron



Sea Eagle



There were also mangroves growing on the side of the river. They had learned at school that mangroves grow on sheltered shores and river mouths around most of Australia. There are about thirty species of mangroves according to their teacher. They were floating along quite fast now in the direction of the ocean. But they were not worried. After all they were both quite experienced in handling dinghies.

Now and then John had some regrets when he thought about what his parents would think about what they were getting involved in.

But these thoughts soon disappeared again when he looked at the water and the beautiful weather.

And when he thought about how Tim was really enjoying himself he banned all worries from his mind.

After about an hour of rowing they came to the river mouth and the wide ocean stretched before them.

What a lovely sight. The sea looked so calm.



It did not take half as long as they had expected mainly because of the strong current. John did not want to think about the return journey yet.

They would worry about that later.

They were both strong and tough and were quite confident they would manage to row back again.

Of course it would take a bit longer against the strong current.

They would just have to remember to keep an eye on their watches and also on the weather.

It was not long and they were out into the open sea.

That was not really part of their plan but the sea looked so calm and inviting.

They could not resist going just a little further into the open water.

In the distance they saw a great number of islands, small ones and big ones.

“Why don’t we row to the nearest island and have our lunch there”, suggested Tim.

And that’s exactly what they did.

They steered into the direction of the nearest island.

The sea looked so blue and very calm.

They were both quite impressed with the beauty of this part of their country.

They lived in the Northern part of Queensland, one of the states of Australia.

They had such a lovely and peaceful time together.

Why hadn’t they thought of such a bright idea before?

This was really great fun!

“It is much further than it looks, though, don’t you think?” said Tim.

“Yes, it does. When you think you are getting closer then it doesn’t look as if you made much progress. The shiny water is deceiving”, said John.

And so it was that they went further and further than they had planned.

John was already feeling quite guilty and wished they had never started this adventure.

They would never get back on time for on the way back they would be rowing against the current.

But he kept these thoughts to himself.



Tim was quite optimistic, and sure enough after a while they were getting very close to the island. They could see trees on the



island and on the side where they would probably land there were quite high rocks.

“John, just keep rowing a bit longer and then it will be my turn again”, said Tim.

“I’ll be glad when you will take over for a while for my muscles are aching so much”, answered John.

John rowed for a while longer and just when Tim was about to take over there was a loud bang.

The dinghy had hit a rock which was hidden just below the surface under the water.

Both boys were thrown over board by the sudden impact.

Fortunately they were both good swimmers.

As they looked around they saw the dinghy disappear towards the nearest island.

They had to swim as fast as they could to catch up with it. After a half an hour of fast swimming they reached the dinghy.

But they were shocked to find that the dinghy was filling up with water.

It must have been damaged by the rock.

“Oh, what now”, said John. “Now we will never be able to go back to shore”.

“Well, let’s not worry about that now. It is more important to get solid land under our feet and then we can do some thinking and planning”, responded Tim.

After a few more minutes they finally landed on the little stretch of sand.

“What now”? said John.

“We can’t stay here on this little beach.

We just have to climb to the top of this rock.

There is no other way.

Our dinghy is lost so we can’t go around the island and land on a better spot”, remarked Tim.

Tim always had his answers ready, John thought.

“Let’s try and climb up”, said Tim. “We can do it”.

It didn’t look easy but Tim, being quite light and agile, quickly climbed to the top.

“I’m there”, he called from the top.

John could not see Tim now but he could only hear him.

Now it was John’s turn to scale the steep rock face.

John was heavier than Tim and he had quite a struggle to hoist himself up onto one of the ledges.

His feet were dangling down.

He tried to climb up higher and higher but it was quite a difficult task.

He did not make much progress.

In fact his hands and fingers were getting so tired and much of his skin was coming off his hands.

It looked hopeless.

DANGERS

His fingers started to lose its grip on the rocky ledge and some of the rock even started to crumble.

He couldn't possibly hang onto the ledge much longer.

Tim tried to encourage him from the top but unfortunately he could not do much to help.

"I can't hang on any longer, Tim," said John.

He was getting very scared and anxious.

It was not such a big drop. But if he fell he would most likely get hurt.

He looked down to see how far down it was and then his breath choked in his throat.

There right beneath him was a large salt water crocodile just waiting patiently for him to fall down right into his big jaws.



John screamed with fright and nearly lost his grip.

"What's the matter", asked Tim from the top.

"Can't you see that huge crocodile down below?" said John.

Tim crawled to the edge of the cliff and looked carefully over the edge and there he saw the great monster.

The crocodile's mouth was watering in sheer anticipation of the lovely meal that was about to come down to him.

But the fright gave John renewed strength and encouraged by Tim he tried even harder to climb to safety.

But when the crocodile saw that John was going to make an even bigger effort to get to the top and escape the dangerous and hungry jaws of the beast then he suddenly jumped up and tried to reach John's legs that were dangling down.

He managed to get dangerously close but John saw the danger just in time and quickly lifted his feet as high as he could.

However, the sudden movement nearly cost him his life for he just about lost his grip again on the crumbling rocks.



The crocodile tried to get closer but again John moved his legs away just in time.

This could not possibly last much longer.

John was so very frightened.

And on top of that he was so exhausted. He could not hang on any longer.

He didn't know what to do any more.

Yet there was something he could do. He could pray to the Lord for help.

“Oh, Lord, please help me. I am so very scared. Please deliver me from the jaws of this dangerous monster”, prayed John.

Tim looked over the edge to see how John was going. He noticed how he was absolutely scared out of his wits.

What could he do to help?

He had no rope or anything that he could use to get John out of trouble.

John was so exhausted from the rowing and because of the long swim so he could hardly hang onto the rock any longer.

He waited for a while.

Then he took a deep breath and tried to climb a little higher.

At least now he was out of the reach of the crocodile's jaws.

At least, that is what he thought.

The crocodile saw his prey disappearing and made another effort to grab John's legs.

Again John noticed it in the nick of time and pulled up his legs as high as he could.

At the same time he managed to get a little higher.

Then his fingers found another ledge.

He managed to get a good grip this time and that gave him a chance to have a little rest.

He looked down towards the little beach and saw that the crocodile was still patiently waiting for his meal.

He could nearly read its mind.

He was sure the monster was thinking that he was not going to make it and sooner or later he was going to fall right down into the jaws of the crocodile.

Carefully John moved higher and higher.



Then from the corner of his eye he noticed a movement.

There about half a meter from his hands was a most dangerous snake.



It frightened him so much that he nearly lost his footing.
He screamed to Tim: “Tim there is a snake here right near my hands”.
Tim heard the scream and carefully looked over the edge again.
He too saw the dangerous snake.
What could he do to help John?
He straightened up and looked around for a rock.
“Ah, there was a good one”, he thought.
He picked it up and carefully went on his tummy again and moved closer to the edge.
He carefully looked over the edge and saw that the snake was still in the same place except a little closer to John’s hands.
“Don’t move now, John”, said Tim.
Tim carefully aimed and then threw the rock right on top of the snake.
The poisonous animal had its back broken, they thought.
The sudden injury caused it to fall off the ledge onto the beach down below.
Both boys breathed a sigh of relief.
One danger was gone but the other danger down below was still there.
The crocodile was still hoping for an easy catch.
But John was now more determined than ever to get to the top.
Would he be able to manage to get to the top?
He wished now he was not so heavy, and more athletic like Tim.
He climbed higher and higher and then he could feel Tim’s hand reaching out for him.
With Tim’s help he now managed to climb over the edge.
”Thanks Tim”, John said.
At last he was safe.
There was a quiet prayer of thanks in his heart.
“God saved me, Tim”, John said thankfully.
They both looked over the edge of the rock and saw the crocodile retreat disappointed that his lunch had escaped.
They just saw him disappear into the water.
Then they both were struck by the thought that a little while ago they were themselves in the water after they had been thrown out of their dinghy.
They sure had a miraculous escape for the crocodile could have easily attacked them while they were in the ocean.
Again they realised how thankful they should be.



ALL ALONE ON THE ISLAND

“Here we are”, said Tim.

“What now?”, responded John.

“Let us sit down and take stock of our situation”, answered Tim.

“We don’t have any food. So that is not very good. How are we going to survive without anything to eat?”

“We better not worry about food right now”, said John, who under normal circumstances was always hungry.

But his scary adventure with the crocodile and the dangerous snake had temporarily put him off his food.

“We should first check out the island. We should know how big it is for a start. And who knows we might even find some edible plants or roots.

We have learned quite a lot on that camping trip last year. So we should be able to put that knowledge to good use now”, John said.

“I suppose you are right”, said Tim. “Let’s go and see what we can find”.

They walked for about half a kilometre when all of a sudden they both got a creepy feeling.

It just felt as if they were no longer on their own.

They looked around, but could not see anything.

Then they heard a muffled noise.

It sounded like the voice a man.

Could it be?

It was hardly possible.

Yes, it was the voice of a man and it sounded very anxious.

It sounded like someone in really bad trouble.

They looked around and still could not detect anything.

Then they heard it again and they both looked into the direction of the noise.

And there close to some overhanging branches of a tree there was a man’s face.

But where was the rest.

Carefully they approached the face.

Both of the boys were quite apprehensive.

And no wonder.

Who would expect anybody on this deserted island?



As they came closer they saw why they could only see a man's face.

The rest of his body was buried in the sand.

"How cruel", said Tim. "Who would do something like that?"

As they came closer to the man they thought for a moment he was dead.

"Yes, I think he is dead", said Tim.

"No, he couldn't be for he moved his mouth and tried to speak. And remember we heard a noise just a moment ago", said John.

He could hardly make a sound, though, for his throat and lips were so very dry.

His lips were even cracked badly.

Ants were crawling all over his face and into his eyes and nose.

That's, of course, why he didn't open his eyes.

"How long have you been here?", asked Tim.

The man tried to answer but they could not understand what he was saying.

His throat was so dry and his voice was croaky.

And his blistered lips hurt with every movement.

"We ought to try and find a little bit of water for this man", said John. "He seems like a very sick man. I wonder how long he has been buried like that".

"You know what, John?", said Tim, "You go and find some water while I try and uncover this poor man. He needs water quickly".

"OK", said John, and he rushed off in the direction of a nearby creek.

Fortunately the creek was not dry.

There was still some water in it.

But how am I going to take the water to this sick man, John thought.

Then he had an idea.

He took a very large leaf of a nearby tree and filled that up with water.

It could not hold much water but it was better than nothing.

He might have to make several trips to the creek but it would be worth it if they could save this man's life.

He carefully carried the leaf with the water back to where Tim and the sick man were anxiously waiting for the water.

On his return he found that Tim had worked hard and had nearly finished digging the man from out of this 'grave'.

"He better have a little to drink first", said John, "and then I'll quickly go back for more water".

When he came back to the creek he suddenly realised how thirsty he was himself.



He had only thought of the sick man and he wanted to help him first.

Now he quickly went on his knees and took a few sips of water.

It was cold and it tasted delicious.

Now he quickly filled up his leaf again and went back to the sick man.

By now Tim had cleared all the sand away and with Tim's help the poor man tried to sit up carefully.

But every movement hurt him.

All his muscles ached.

So Tim first massaged the man's calf muscles, his arms and shoulders and after a while he managed to sit up.

He took a few more sips from the water John had brought him and soon started to feel a bit better.

He was a strong and healthy man and it was not long before he could even stand up already.

He carefully took a few steps but then he had to quickly sit down again.

John went to get to some more water from the creek and after that the poor man felt much better.

Tim also went to the creek for a drink.

Things did not look so hopeless now that they had found water.

If they could only find something to eat later on they would be very happy and thankful.

The three of them sat down on a nearby log.

Tim asked the man for his name.

"My name is Frank and I am a detective with the Queensland police Force", he said.

"But how did you get on to this island?", asked John.

"OK, I'll tell you", said Frank. "But I can't tell you everything for that is strictly confidential".

"But why don't you first tell me how you got here".

So Tim told them how they had been disobedient and had taken or borrowed a dinghy and finished up into the open sea.

They had hoped to be back in time for dinner and nobody would have known about it.

"But then", Tim said, "We hit a rock which was hidden under the water".

So we lost our dinghy and now we will never be able to go back to shore.



We will never see our parents any more”.

Both boys got tears in their eyes when they thought about home.

John told Frank how frightened he had been when he was hanging onto the rock ledge with the crocodile trying to grab him by the legs.

“I never realised there were crocodiles in this area”, said Tim.

“There sure are”, answered Frank. “I have seen quite a few of them even in the ocean.

They are the salt water crocodiles.

They live along the coastal areas and often venture far out to sea.

Salt water crocodiles feed on fish, other reptiles and mammals.

So it is not so strange to find them here near this island.

They are very dangerous, though, and very fast over short distances, even out of the water.

They have extremely powerful jaws and sharp teeth”.

“How big can they get?” asked Tim.

“Very big”, answered Frank.

“Adult crocodiles can grow up to five or six meters but when they are born they are only twenty centimeters long.

In the town of Normanton there was once a very large crocodile.

It was shot in 1958 by someone who found it on a sandbank on the Norman River.

This particular crocodile was 8.63 meters long”.

“Wow that is big”, said John. “I would not want to meet one of those characters”.

“Nor would I”, reacted Tim, remembering how not so long ago they had been swimming to this island without realising that these dangerous animals could have been all around them in the water.

“Are you able to walk a little now, Frank”, asked Tim.

Then we can walk to the creek altogether, drink some more and at the same time refresh ourselves.

You will feel much better then, I’m sure”.

“Yes, let’s do that”, said Frank, “and then I will tell you a bit more about myself on our walk”.

“Good idea”, said Tim, “for we asked you how you arrived on this island”.



FRANK'S STORY



“As I already told you”, said Frank, “I am a detective with the Queensland Police Force. I had been given a special project. Our task was to discover how more and more drugs were entering into our state.

The project was given a code name which for security reasons I better not tell you.

I discovered an empty and deserted warehouse somewhere in Cairns.

For quite some time I had been keeping my eye on that warehouse because I was suspecting that something illegal was going on in there late at night.

And I was right.

For several nights I had been watching the goings on around that warehouse. I was very well hidden behind some bushes so I was quite safe and could not be seen from the warehouse.

I discovered some very interesting things and even started to recognise some of the shady characters who were walking around.

They were busy moving large cartons into a truck which was parked near the gate ready for a quick take-off.

I was quite sure that I could not be seen because the moon had not appeared yet. So it was quite dark.

I became more and more confident and moved closer to the truck hoping I would be able to pick up some of the conversation.

Some unexpected information could have been very helpful, I thought.

“Yes, that would indeed be very helpful for your investigation”, said Tim.

“So I sat there behind a tree very close to the truck”, Frank continued.

But because I had to sit very still for such a long time I got cramp in one of my legs. As I tried to straighten my leg I accidentally made some gravel pieces roll down the bitumen.

I did not think anybody would have heard it.

But next moment I heard a movement behind me and before I realised it someone pushed a rag into my face.

The rag had a strange smell.



That I remember. But that is all.

The rag must have been soaked in some liquid that caused me to become unconscious. So what happened after that I don't even know".

"So when you woke up you were here buried up to your face in the sand?", asked John.

"Yes, I suppose that is what happened", said Frank.

"When I woke up from my unconsciousness I was already buried up to my face.

Three men were standing near me.

I recognized one of them.

They must have taken me to this island on a motor boat for when they left I could hear the engine of the boat.

The name of the man I had recognized was Thomas and he is very, very mean and dangerous.

Police all over Australia are after him for several crimes.

Thomas told me then what they intended to do with me. He told me how lucky I was still to be alive.

We could have thrown you to the crocodiles he told me.

But that was too easy.

They wanted to teach me a lesson, they told me, for I had been too nosy.

By now I knew too much of what they were up to.

I was becoming a problem to them".

"So they were going to leave you there without food and water?", asked Tim.

"Yes, that's right. That was their plan.

They were going to let me die slowly.

They promised to come back now and then to check how I was going.

After a while they left me.

They returned to their boat and I could still hear them laughing for quite a long time.

They must have thought it was quite funny to leave me there to die.

Most of those drug dealers are ruthless men, you know.

They are in the grip of the devil.

And they are all driven by greed.

They always want more.

Their conscience no longer warns them.

Therefore even a murder doesn't really bother them.

If a person is in their way then they simply get rid of him.



Sin breeds sin.

GOD'S CARE

Both boys were happy and thankful to have found this man and that they were able to rescue him from his ordeal.

If they had not come onto this island then without any doubt he would have died within the next few days.

They were very happy that they were not on their own now.

And they felt much more secure now on this island with an older man with them.

Things did not seem so hopeless now.

All three were silent for a while, each of them occupied with their own thoughts.

Then Tim said: "This is God's care for you, Frank, and for us as well. He brought us together so that we could help you and you could be of help to us".

"Yes, you are right", said Frank with his croaky voice.

"This is God's providential care for all three of us.

I would not have lasted much longer without some water and without your help.

Thanks and praise be to God".

By now it was getting later. It was already close to four o'clock.

They still had not had anything to eat. The boys had lost all the food they had brought along when they fell into the ocean.

Their dinghy with all their belongings was lost.

So they walked across the island for a while to see if they could find anything to eat.

After a while they found some blackberries as well as some edible roots.

The boys didn't think it tasted very nice but Frank thought it was quite reasonable.

They were glad they had something in their stomachs.

It made them feel better and more optimistic.

They continued their search for food and fortunately they found some more.

By the end of the day they had even found enough for the following day.

The sun had not gone down yet so they decided to investigate the layout of the island.

It was not so hot now and they started to enjoy their stroll across the island.

"Look at that", said John suddenly.

He pointed at something on the beach.



“That looks like our lost dinghy”, said Tim.

“That would be fantastic”, said Frank. “For that will help us to get away from the island”.

“Let us have a closer look”, suggested Tim.

Yes it was indeed their lost rowing boat.

As they came closer they soon realised that the rock had caused quite some damage.

“It’s not going to be of any use”, said John.

“Don’t speak too soon”, said Frank. “I am sure that together we can fix the damage and then we will soon be on our way back to the mainland.”



“We should first pull it onto higher ground and then we can have a closer look tomorrow and look for material to fix the damage”, said Frank.

The three of them soon had the boat onto higher ground safe from the rising tide.

Then they decided to go back to where they had first found Frank for there was a suitable place where they could camp for the night.

They found some sheltered spot amongst some rocks and made themselves comfortable for the night.

Together they thanked the Lord for His protection and for the food they had found.

They realised how worried their parents must be so they asked the Lord to care for them too. They also thanked the Lord that they had found the boat. They were so glad and thankful for that.

Soon they were all fast asleep. For they were so tired from their ordeal.

Next morning Frank woke up first and decided to leave the boys sleeping for a while.

He realised they had been through some harsh experiences.

So he walked back to the place where they had left the boat on the beach.

He had a drink from the creek on his way and soon he came to the place where they had pulled the boat onto higher ground.

But suddenly Frank stopped. He could not see the boat.

It was no longer there.

How could that be possible? They had pulled the boat up high enough.

At least that’s what he thought.

Obviously the tide had risen higher than he had expected.

He could not find a trace of the boat.

The high tide must have washed it away.



“What now?”, Frank mumbled to himself.

This was their only way of getting back to the mainland.

Sadly he walked back to where the boys were sleeping.

In the meantime they had woken up and wondered where Frank was.

At that moment Frank turned up.

He looked quite sad.

“What happened?”, asked the boys.

“I have sad news, boys”, said Frank.

“The boat is gone. The tide must have gone higher than we had expected and washed our boat away”.

This sad news shocked the boys. They had high hopes of returning to the mainland once the boat had been repaired.

Now there would be no chance.

There high hopes had been dashed.

All three were silent for a while absorbed in their own thoughts.

“Let us go and find some breakfast”, said Frank.

“Just worrying about it is not going to help our predicament”.

So this time they walked into a different direction and after a while they found some more blackberries and edible roots.

Doing something made them forget their difficult situation.

Even though they still had some food left from the day before Frank thought it was better to do something and then hopefully the boys would forget about their plight.

As they walked along there was a silent prayer in Frank’s heart.

He was confident that the Lord Who was on their side would somehow provide a way out of their troubles.

A VISITOR

That night they slept under the stars again.

They went to sleep early for again they were very tired.

The sunshine and fresh air, as well as the lack of proper food, had made them tired.

In the middle of the night Frank suddenly woke up.

He did not know what had woken him up but he soon realised what it was.

“Wake up quick, boys”, Frank said. “I can hear something”.





A motor boat was approaching. It must have a very powerful engine for it sounded as if it was moving fast across the water. Who could that be, they asked themselves. “I think it will be one or more of those men who tried to kill me”, suggested Frank.

“It sounds like the same engine I heard before”, he added.

“I think you are probably right”, said Tim. “They are coming to see how you are”.

“Yes”, added John. “Didn’t they say they would come and check?”

“What should we do?”, asked Tim. “Perhaps we should all hide”.

“No, let us first see how many men there are”, said Frank.

“As soon as we know that, we can make our plans”, he added.

So they decided that the boys would hide somewhere so that the man or men would still think that Frank was the only person on the island.

In the meantime Frank went to the landing spot.

The boat was nearly there already.

Someone turned the engine off and one man jumped off the boat to tie it up. He had a rope in his hand and tied the boat to a nearby tree.

Frank had heard no talking so it was very likely that this was the only man on board the boat.

But Frank was a very careful man and did not want to take any risks.

As the man walked onto the beach Frank carefully went as close as possible to the boat to see if he could hear any voices.

Fortunately there was not a sound.

So now Frank was positive that there was only one man to deal with.

Then he quietly followed the man through the trees.

The man was obviously quite sure of himself.

He made no effort to be quiet thinking, of course, that Frank was buried up to his face into the sand.

And naturally he also thought that Frank was the only person on this island.

The drug dealer, for that is what he was, walked up to the spot where they had buried Frank.

The two boys, Tim and John, saw him come and they also noticed Frank approaching not so very far behind the man.

When Frank was only a couple of steps behind the man he pulled his revolver out of his pocket and told the drug dealer to stick up both hands.

Luckily the criminals had not found his revolver when they buried him.

But Frank had underestimated this cunning man for he turned around so fast that it took Frank by surprise.



And before he realised it the man had knocked his revolver out of his hands.

In the next instant the man, who was younger and fitter than Frank, jumped towards Frank and hit him in the face.

Next moment they were both on the ground.

As they were rolling over the ground the man tried to grab the revolver which he had knocked out of Frank's hand.

He nearly succeeded.

But the boys saw the danger from their hiding place and Tim quickly rushed out and kicked the revolver away from the man's hand.

At the same time John also rushed out and jumped onto the man's back.

This gave Frank an opportunity to get his breath back. And soon they had overpowered this strong man.

Frank took some handcuffs out of his pocket and put them on the drug dealer's hands. Now he could not escape. Frank was so thankful that the criminals had not checked his pockets before they buried him for then they would certainly have discovered the handcuffs.

"Where do you people hide the drugs?", Frank asked the man.

"What drugs?", said the man. "I know nothing about drugs. What are you talking about?"

"Do you realize", Frank continued that dealing in drugs is the same as murder? The only difference is that selling drugs to some people causes them to die slowly.

Murdering someone with a bullet or a knife is instant.

So you are involved in some very wicked and dirty business.

I shall have to hand you over to the police on the mainland as soon as we can get away from this island".

"He might have a radio on board", Tim suggested.

"Yes, why don't we first check that out?", John remarked.

"Do you have a radio on your boat?", Frank asked the man.

"I am not saying anything", said the drug dealer stubbornly.

"You can find out for yourself", he said.

"And don't forget you will be in great trouble when the police find out that you are holding me prisoner without any good reason. I have nothing to do with drugs and I don't want to either", he added.

"We will leave that for the police to decide", Frank answered.



They decided to walk to the boat altogether. The drug dealer walked in between Frank and Tim, and John followed behind.

The drug dealer was not being very cooperative so they had to find out things for themselves.

There was a radio on board but Frank had no idea how to use one of those.

He always left the operation of those things to others.

Then he saw that there was also a telephone.

Of course, these rich drug dealers had everything,

Fortunately he had a good memory.

Particularly phone numbers he always managed to remember.

So he quickly dialed the number of the detective's branch at the Cairns police station.

He explained to them that there was a well organized group and that it would be wise to take every precaution as these people would most likely be armed.

He said to them that there would be a few men at least somewhere near the river mouth because they can't be far from the island he was on as they had just sent one man to investigate.

He also gave them directions to the island they were staying on.

"Oh, by the way, could you also please let Tim and John's parents know that they are safe. They must so anxious about them".

He passed the phone number to them which the boys had given him.

So after that phone call Frank and the boys were quite confident that they would be rescued very soon.

FRIEND OR ENEMY?

Then they waited and waited for a few hours. They were all getting quite hungry and thirsty.

After they waited a bit longer they heard the engine of a powerful motor boat far in the distance.

"Could the police be there so soon?", asked Tim.

"I certainly hope it is the police", said Frank. It must be them for they have had a few hours to prepare themselves".

"Let's just wait and see".

As the early sunlight started to appear they saw a fast boat approaching.



Frank, always observant, noticed that the drug dealer had a wicked grin on his face. This bothered Frank very much.

He also started to get doubts about the boat. The longer he looked at it across the water the more sure he became that it was not a police boat.

But if it was not a police boat who was it then?

Frank became quite worried.

Then suddenly the drug dealer shouted at the top of his voice.

He had not failed to recognize his mates' boat.

Frank regretted that he had not put some tape over the man's mouth.

The men on the other boat had heard the shout and slowed down immediately.

Now Frank realised what was happening.

These men must have been getting concerned about their mate.

They must have been wondering why he was not coming back.

So they came to investigate.

"What now?", thought Frank. "This is getting quite dangerous".

He counted only two men on the boat. If they were not armed he could keep them under control with his gun.

But if they were armed then their situation was becoming quite desperate.

Frank was not only worried about himself.

He also felt responsible for the two boys.

Would they ever be able to return to their parents now?

He knew these drug dealers.

They were extremely wicked and dangerous.

His fears were soon confirmed.

Both men stood on the boat and pointed a gun at them.

"If you have a gun throw it in the water", they called out.

Frank suddenly jumped behind some rocks and the boys quickly followed his example.

Now the men on the boat hesitated for a moment.

Then they both jumped into the water and started to walk toward the beach. Both had their gun in their hand.

Frank knew that these men would not only shoot out of self defence but they would shoot to kill.

For there was much at stake for these drug dealers.

Frank told both boys to remain hidden behind the rocks.

In the meantime he tried to aim his gun at the men.



Perhaps he could disarm them both.

He waited a bit longer as they were still too far away for an accurate shot.

He could not afford to miss now.

His life was now in danger.

But the lives of the boys were also in great danger.

He was now responsible for the boys and he became quite worried about the situation.

The two men from the boat approached slowly.

They were desperate men.

Suddenly from the left there was quite a commotion in the water close to those two drug dealers.

Their mate on the island shouted a warning but it was too late.

Two big crocodiles suddenly appeared on the scene and dashed across the water towards the two drug dealers.

They quickly tried to swim back to the boat, back to safety.

They realised they had no chance with such dangerous creatures.

Their guns had accidentally dropped into the water and Frank did not fail to notice it.

Within an instant the fast moving crocodiles were onto the men and snapped their jaws shut.

Both men had severe injuries resulting from these sharp teeth.

Fortunately they were close to the boat and tried to quickly get back onto the boat.



But the crocodiles were not going to let them escape that easily.

They quickly followed in pursuit of their easy meal but then

Frank's gun bellowed and both crocodiles were temporarily put off guard.

“What did you do that for, Frank?”, asked Tim angrily. In this way we would have had two enemies less to deal with”.

“I could not do it”.

“It would not be the right thing to do, boys”, said Frank. “We could not just stand there and watch them being attacked by the crocodiles”.

“They are human beings, too. They might have a wife and children.

Now they have an opportunity to think about their crooked dealings and who knows that they might even repent”.

“Yes, but they would have killed you and us if they had a chance like that”, argued Tim.



“I’m sure they would have done that quite happily but that still does not give us the right to act against God’s commandments”, replied Frank.

The boys had to think about that for a while.

In the meantime, while the crocodiles were distracted, the two men had climbed back on board.

And now they just lay there totally exhausted from their efforts to escape and from the loss of blood.

The crocodiles swam away into deeper waters.

They were disappointed because they missed their chance for a meal.

RESCUED



Then from across the water the boys suddenly heard more boats approaching.

They also heard a helicopter in the sky.

These were fortunately Police Boats and the helicopter was also from the Police. They felt such great relief.

Now their rescue was close.

Soon several policemen climbed on board the boat of the drug dealers. They realised that both men had been badly injured by the crocodiles but they still had a task to fulfil. So they gently handcuffed both men and carefully took them on board one of the Police yachts.

They rowed to the island in a small dinghy and helped Frank and the boys into the dinghy. They did not want to take any risks now with all these crocodiles in the water. You can never see them as they are usually under the water but they are very fast in the water and are close before you realise.

Two policemen, who had come along in the dinghy, stayed behind to guard Thomas, the drug dealer.

They could not afford to take any chances with this dangerous criminal.

Then the dinghy returned to collect Thomas and the two policemen.

They all climbed on board the Police boat.

The helicopter also stayed close to them to make sure nothing unforeseen was going to happen.

Then they set course for the mainland.

“Boy, this boat can go fast”, Tim said to Frank.

“Yes, the Police usually have good equipment”, Frank responded.

“They need to because the criminals very often are also well equipped”.

At this speed it did not take them very long to cross the distance between the island and the mainland.

“This is better than rowing Tim”, said John.

“It sure is”, reacted Tim.

Soon they observed more police boats and police vehicles as well as many policemen walking around.

As soon as they jumped ashore they were told that the whole operation of the criminals had been cleaned up. Many prisoners were already on the way to the lockup and more were still being held waiting for more vehicles to arrive.

Frank also mentioned to the boys that he heard that they discovered many kilos of amphetamine.



“What’s that?”, asked the boys.

“It is a drug which can be used by the doctors but can also be used illegally and is very dangerous when you use too much of it”.

“This drug is becoming more and more popular”, Frank explained to the boys. Some people even refer to it as the Next Drug Epidemic. It is taking over from heroin and is just as deadly”.

“Yes, I have heard of heroin”, said Tim.

“In September 2006 the police in Indonesia discovered a shipment of 960 kilos of this dangerous amphetamine drug. You can imagine how many people would have been killed by that. That is why drug dealers should really be dealt with as murderers”, said Frank.

“Sports people use it to get more physical energy and therefore better results such as higher scores.

This is, of course, also illegal”.

While they were talking about this drug another police car arrived and guess who jumped out of this vehicle?

It was John and Tim’s parents.



They were overjoyed to have their boys back in good health.

There was laughter and tears of joy all around.

The Police thanked the boys for their contribution, particularly for saving Frank's life and Frank himself also thanked the boys wholeheartedly.

Even though the boys had been disobedient in taking a dinghy that did not belong to them, the Lord turned it into a blessing.

For if they had not come onto the island Frank would have surely died.

In their own way, Frank, the boys as well as their parents expressed their joy and thankfulness to the Lord Who had made all things well.

To Him be the glory.

April 2007