

It came at last, and like a flash Hal was up, his pistol was thrust at the hole, he pulled the trigger and there came, with the crack of the explosion, the howl of a man.

Down the youngster dropped again and reloaded without a word. Mackintosh said nothing either, but he smiled approval at the boy. Then looked back at his mirror, and at the same time saw, as well as heard, the crash of wood falling, and knew that the second window had been forced. The blows had been showering on it and on the door all the time, and now they redoubled on the door itself, as if, having forced the second window, the attackers were bent on completing the destruction of the door before trying to carry out any attempt at entry. That, indeed, was their intention, as the next ten minutes or so proved, for with howls of rage, and shouts of warning of what would happen when they did get in, the red men banged away at the door, which shook and shivered and split.

The blows were now mostly hurled at the places where the hinges were, and at last, with great holes hacked about them, smashing the wood on to which they were fastened, they gave way altogether, and the door fell away from the hut.

"Now for it!" shouted Red, and, to the astonishment of Hal, he went springing out of the door, axe in hand. "No good staying in there to be shot down from all sides!" the man called out, and Hal understood the reason for what had seemed a foolish and reckless action. Quite content to