

Boy at War

By Harry Mazer

Everything happened at once. The plane... bullets darting across the water... screams... the boat shooting up into the sky. Adam hung in the air. He saw the red circle on the fuselage, he saw the gunner in his black helmet, and below him he saw the empty rowboat. Then he was in the water, down under the water. Water in his nose and in his throat. He came up next to the boat-it was almost on top of him. He clung to the side, choking and spitting.

The boat rode up and down with the waves, and he hung there, staring at the ragged row of holes along one side. They were so regular they could have been made by a sewing machine needle.

Something awful had happened. The sky was black where the Arizona had been. "Oh, no. Oh, no. Oh, no." He clung to the side of the boat thinking, It's Sunday morning, and we were fishing.

Suddenly there was silence. He could hear the wind. The planes had cleared from the sky. Our side is coming, he thought, and he pulled himself half out of the water and looked around for Martin and Davi. He was afraid. He wanted to see them, and when he didn't, he let himself think what he was thinking-that they were dead.