

# **ADRIFT IN THE PACIFIC**

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Adrift in the Pacific by Jules Verne

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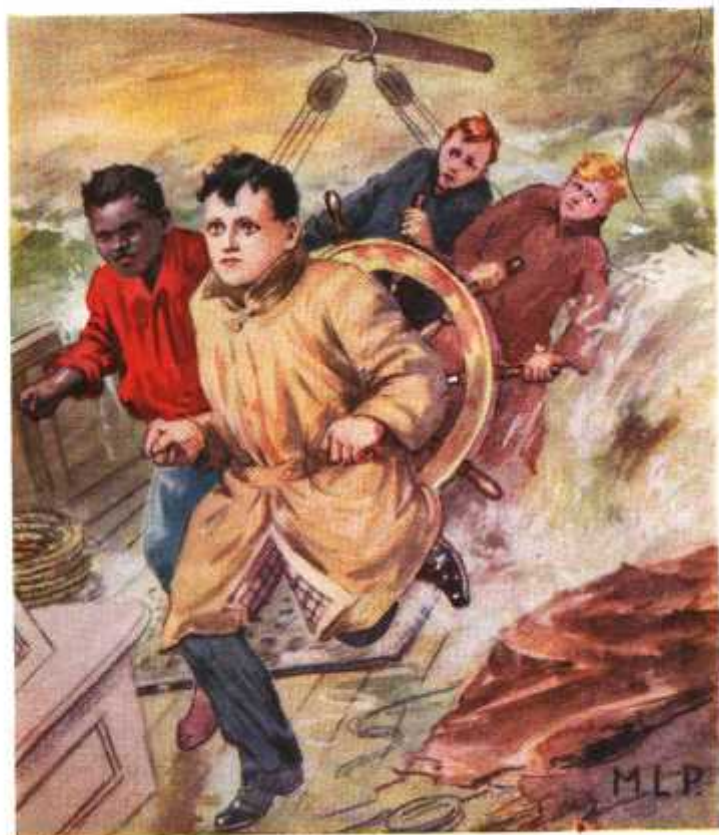
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**JULES VERNE**

**ADRIFT IN  
THE PACIFIC**



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"Briant and the negro rushed forward."

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# ADRIFT IN THE PACIFIC

BY  
JULES VERNE

AUTHOR OF  
"THE CLIPPER OF THE CLOUDS," "THE VANISHED DIAMOND," ETC.

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# ADRIFT IN THE PACIFIC.

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## CHAPTER I

### THE STORM

It was the 9th of March, 1860, and eleven o'clock at night. The sea and sky were as one, and the eye could pierce but a few fathoms into the gloom. Through the raging sea, over which the waves broke with a livid light, a little ship was driving under almost bare poles.

She was a schooner of a hundred tons. Her name was the *Steuth*, but you would have sought it in vain on her stern, for an accident of some sort had torn it away.

In this latitude, at the beginning of March, the nights are short. The day would dawn about five o'clock. But would the dangers that threatened the schooner grow less when the sun illumined the sky? Was not the frail vessel at the mercy of the waves? Undoubtedly; and only the calming of the billows and the lulling of the gale could save her from that most awful of shipwrecks—foundering in the open sea far from any coast on which the survivors might find safety.

In the stern of the schooner were three boys, one about fourteen, the two others about thirteen years of age; these, with a young negro some twelve years old, were at the wheel, and with their united strength strove to check the lurches which threatened every instant to throw the vessel broadside on. It was a difficult task, for the wheel seemed as though it would turn in spite of all they could do, and hurl them against the bulwarks. Just before midnight such a wave came thundering against the stern that it was a wonder the rudder was not unshipped. The boys were thrown