

**ADRIFT IN THE WILDS: OR,  
THE ADVENTURES OF  
TWO SHIPWRECKED BOYS**

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Adrift in the Wilds: Or, The Adventures of Two Shipwrecked Boys by Edward S. Ellis

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**EDWARD S. ELLIS**

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TWO SHIPWRECKED BOYS**





"MAY THE GOOD LORD PRESERVE US! THERE ARE INJUNS," SAID TIM."

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OR,

## The Adventures of Two Shipwrecked Boys.

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BY EDWARD S. ELLIS.

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# ADRIFT IN THE WILDS;

OR,

## The Adventures of Two Shipwrecked Boys

### CHAPTER I.

#### HO, FOR CALIFORNIA.



NE BEAUTIFUL midsummer night in 18—  
a large, heavily laden steamer was making  
her way swiftly up the Pacific coast, in the  
direction of San Francisco. She was opposite the Cali-  
fornia shore, only a day's sail distant from the City of  
the Golden Gate, and many of the passengers had  
already begun making preparations for landing, even  
though a whole night and the better part of a day  
was to intervene ere they could expect to set their  
feet upon solid land.

She was one of those magnificent steamers that ply  
regularly between Panama and California. She had  
rather more than her full cargo of freight and passen-  
gers; but, among the hundreds of the latter, we have to  
do with but three.

On this moonlight night, there were gathered by

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themselves these three personages, consisting of Tim O'Rooney, Elwood Brandon and Howard Lawrence. The first was a burly, good-natured Irishman, and the two latter were cousins, their ages differing by less than a month, and both being in their sixteenth year.

The financial storm that swept over the country in 18—, toppling down merchants and banking-houses like so many ten-pins, carried with it in the general wreck and ruin, that of Brandon, Herman & Co., and the senior partner, Sylvanus Brandon, returned to his home in Brooklyn, New York, one evening worse than penniless. While he was meditating, dejected and gloomy, as to the means by which he was to keep the wolf from the door, his clerk brought him a letter which had been overlooked in the afternoon's mail, postmarked, "San Francisco, Cal." At once he recognized the bold, handsome superscription as that of his kind-hearted brother-in-law, Thomas Lawrence. His heart beat with a strong hope as he broke the envelope, and his eyes glistened ere he had read one-half.

In short, it stated that Mr. Lawrence had established himself successfully in business, and was doing so well that he felt the imperative need of a partner, and ended by urging Mr. Brandon to accept the position. The bankrupt merchant laid the epistle in his lap, removed his spectacles and looked smilingly toward his wife. They held a long discussion, and both decided to accept the offer at once, as there was no other recourse left to them.

It was evident from the letter that Mr. Lawrence had



some apprehensions regarding Mr. Brandon's ability to weather the storm, but he could not be aware of his financial crash, as it had only become known on the street within the last twenty-four hours. Mr. Brandon deemed it proper, therefore, before closing with the offer, to acquaint his brother-in-law with his circumstances, that he might fully understand the disadvantage under which he would be placed by the new partnership.

The letter was written and duly posted, and our friends rather anxiously awaited the answer. It came in the gratifying form of a draft for \$1,000 to defray "his necessary expenses," and an urgent entreaty to start without delay.

The advice was acted upon, and within two weeks of the reception of the second letter, Mr. Brandon and his wife were on board the steamer at New York, with their state-rooms engaged for California. They had but one child, Elwood, whom they had placed at a private school where he was to prepare himself for college, in company with his cousin, Howard Lawrence, who had been sent from California by his father and had entered the school at the same time.

Mr. Brandon learned that Mr. Lawrence was a brother indeed. The position in which the two men were placed proved so favorable to the former that in a few years he found himself almost as wealthy as in his palmiest days, when his name was such a power in Wall Street. He had come to like the young and growing State of California, and ere he had been there two years both him-

self and wife had lost all longings for the metropolis of the New World.

In the meanwhile, Elwood and Howard were doing well at their studies in Brooklyn. They had been inseparable friends from infancy, and as their years increased the bonds of affection seemed to strengthen between them. They were the only children of twin sisters, and bore a remarkable resemblance in person, character and disposition. Both had dark, curling, chestnut hair, hazel eyes, and an active muscular organization that made them leaders in boyish pastimes and sports. If there was any perceptible difference between the two, it was that Elwood Brandon was a little more daring and impetuous than his companion; he was apt to follow out his first impulses and venture upon schemes without deliberating fully enough. Both were generous, unselfish, and either would have willingly risked his life for the other.

Thus matters stood until the summer when our young heroes had completed their preparatory course, and were ready to enter college. It was decided by their parents that this should be done in the autumn, and that the summer of this year should be spent by the boys with their parents in California. They had been separated from them for five years, during which they had met but once, when the parents made a journey to New York for that purpose, spending several months with them. That visit, it may be said, was now to be returned, and the boys meant that it should be returned with interest.

And so Tim O'Rooney, a good-natured, trustworthy Irishman, who had been in the employ of Mr. Lawrence for eight years, almost ever since his arrival in America, was sent to New York to accompany the boys on their visit home.

Howard and Elwood were standing one afternoon on the corner of Montague Street, in Brooklyn, chatting with each other about their expected trip to California. They had closed their school studies a week before, and boy-like were now anxious to be off upon their journey. Suddenly an Irishman came in sight, smoking furiously at a short black pipe. The first glance showed them that it was no other than Tim O'Rooney, the expected messenger.

"Isn't that good?" exclaimed Elwood, "the steamer sails on Saturday, and we'll go in it. Here he comes, as though he was in a great hurry!"

"Don't say anything, and see whether he will know us!"

"Why shouldn't he?"

"You know we've grown a good deal since he was here, and the beard is getting so stiff on my chin that it scratches my hand every time I touch it."

"Yes; that mustache, too, is making you look as fierce as a Bluebeard; but here he is!"

At this instant Tim O'Rooney came opposite them. He merely glanced up, puffed harder than ever and was passing on, when both burst out in a loud laugh.

"Be the powers! what's the mather with ye spalpeens?" he angrily demanded. "Can't a dacent man be