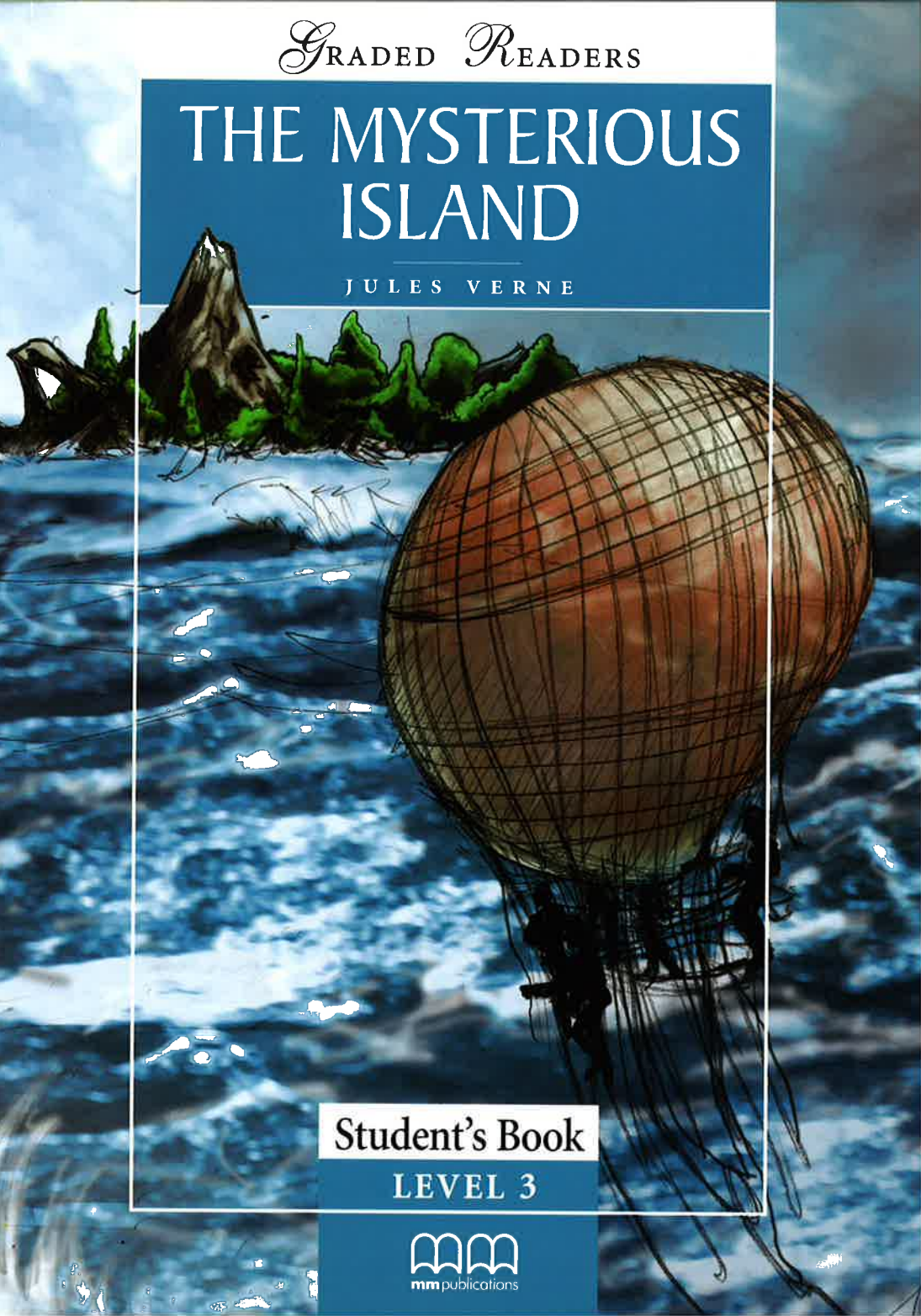
GRADED READERS

THE MYSTERIOUS ISLAND

JULES VERNE



Student's Book

LEVEL 3

mm publications

For teachers' inspection ONLY

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CHAPTER 1

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"WE'RE GOING TO HIT THE WATER!" A MAN'S POWERFUL voice came over the strong storm winds. His voice grew louder as he shouted, "Throw every heavy thing out of the balloon!" Four other men jumped into action, throwing everything from weapons to equipment into the ocean below them.

Without the weight to push it down, the balloon rose high into the air again. The men watched all their possessions hit the Pacific Ocean. They were glad it was not their balloon falling into the water.

The storm continued all night. Although they feared for their lives, the men had hope. They were glad Cyrus Smith - the engineer who had shouted the order - was with them. Tall, thin and forty-five years old, Cyrus Smith was a born leader. He was fit, he enjoyed action, and he was a man who knew what was right and what was wrong. So, it was not surprising that he had fought in the American Civil War: a war where Americans fought against Americans because the people in the North were against slavery, while people in the South wanted black people as slaves. Cyrus Smith was one of those who believed that all men should be free, no matter what their colour is. Cyrus had fought bravely in the war until he was injured and caught by Southern soldiers. While he had been recovering in a town called Richmond, Smith had met another man who had the same ideas: Gideon Spilett, a reporter. Spilett was also very clever, energetic, and brave. He had been reporting on the war when he too was shot, injured and taken to Richmond. The two men wanted to escape, but the town was well guarded by Southern soldiers.

One day, as Smith was walking down the street, a tall, strongly-built man approached him.

"Mr. Smith, do you want to get out of Richmond?" he asked. Surprised, Smith asked the man what he meant.

"My name is Pencroff," said the man. "I am a sailor from the North. I've sailed around most of the world, but I've had the bad luck to be trapped here while on business. I've heard you are a good and brave man. As to how we can escape..." He pointed to a balloon tied down in the



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middle of the town square. The Southerners had made it. The Northern soldiers had surrounded Richmond and no one could get in or out. So the Southerners built the balloon to fly outside the walls of Richmond and call for assistance. However, they hadn't used the balloon because the weather was stormy. Pencroff was not afraid of the weather, however. He enjoyed an adventure, and so he told Smith his plan.

Smith listened silently. He said, "But I'm not alone. There is my friend, Spilett and my servant, Neb."

"Well, that's three, and with me and my young friend, Harbert, we're five. The balloon can hold six. So, let's meet at ten tonight!" Pencroff smiled as he looked at the balloon.

On 20 March 1865, the five men, along with Smith's dog Top, found themselves in the basket of the balloon, ready to leave in the middle of a terrible storm.

Now, three days later, they were in trouble. The balloon had lost air and it was flying just above the water. They had already thrown everything out, so there was just one thing to get rid of: the basket! The men climbed up the ropes of the balloon and cut the basket free. The balloon rose up, but then it began to fall to the sea again. Suddenly, Top started barking. Looking to see what it was, one of the men shouted excitedly: "Land! Land!" At that very moment, a huge wave hit the balloon. It rose again, and the wind pushed it to the shore. Safe on land, the exhausted men helped each other get free of the ropes. Then, as they looked at one another, they were shocked to see they were four instead of five. They cried out: "Where is he? What if he fell in the water? We must rescue him!"

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CHAPTER 2

CYRUS SMITH AND TOP WERE MISSING! THEY HAD FALLEN OUT of the balloon when the wave hit it.

Night was falling, but the four men set off to find their friends. However, they soon realised they were on a tiny island. They spent a cold night with no fire. In the morning, the men were glad to see there was land close by, across a channel of water.

"We have to find Mr. Smith!" cried Neb, who was still very upset. Neb had been born to slave parents, but Cyrus Smith had freed him. Neb loved Smith so much that he chose to stay with him as his servant.

Thinking only of finding his master, Neb jumped into the fast moving water and swam to the other side. The other men were impressed by his courage, but they decided to wait for low tide to cross the channel. A few hours later, Pencroff, Spilett and Harbert were on the other side. As soon as they were on dry land, Spilett left them to look for Neb and Smith.

"Should I go with him?" Harbert asked Pencroff. He shook his head.

"We'd better look for shelter, fire, and food. Those things will be useful to our tired, hungry friends!"

"In that case," Harbert said, "let's look for a place to stay."

So the two men walked up and along some rocks hoping to find shelter. Suddenly, Harbert called Pencroff to him.

"What have you got there, boy?" Pencroff asked Harbert as he stared down at what looked like a type of shellfish. "Can they be eaten?" Harbert nodded. At school, he was an excellent student and knew a lot about different kinds of plants and animals.

"Good work," Pencroff told him, impressed. Harbert was like a son to him. His father had been Pencroff's captain and when the captain had died, Pencroff could not turn his back on the young orphan. Together they ate some of the shellfish, but they had to find more food. So they continued walking along the shore, until they came to a small cove where a river emptied. Near the river, there were trees.

"We've found water and firewood!" shouted Pencroff excitedly. "Now what we need to do is find a shelter!" On they went until they reached the