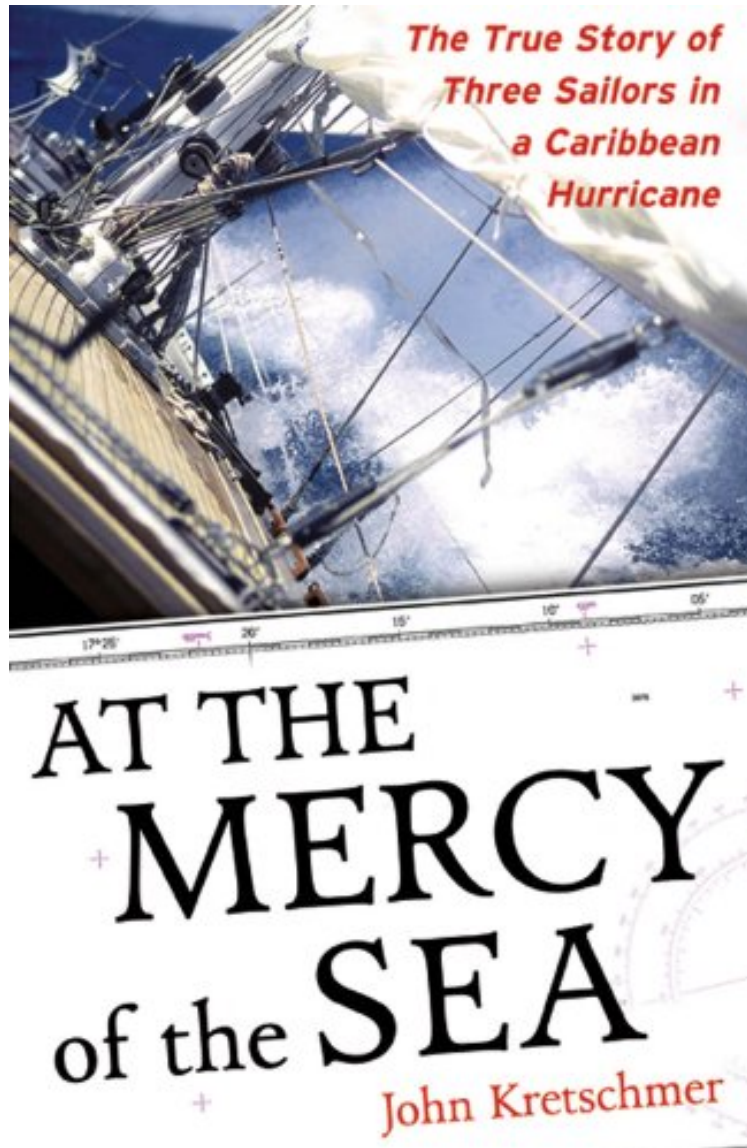


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## At the Mercy of the Sea: The True Story of Three Sailors in a Caribbean Hurricane

*John Kretschmer*

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**John Kretschmer** : **At the Mercy of the Sea: The True Story of Three Sailors in a Caribbean Hurricane** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised At the Mercy of the Sea: The True Story of Three Sailors in a Caribbean Hurricane:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Should Be Required Reading By Robert L. Bayliss, CI, PAC, CMTEvery sailor and want-to-be sailor should read this book and learn from it. Kretschmer really is a sailor who

knows what he talks about. I totally enjoyed his writing even though the book leads ultimately to the death of Carl Wake, my very best friend from age 8 through high school. Ironically, Carl and I both chose the path of sailing the sea. I've sailed through storms with waves to 25 feet, but never sailed in a hurricane and Carl didn't intend to. He got caught, mostly through inexperience. The sea is no respecter of soles. It will take everyone that it can. Sail on, my friend and I'll look for you beyond the sunset. My only regret about buying this book is that I wish the events described in it had never happened.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A great read! By JTCI finished reading this last night, and am sorry that I'm done. It is a great read. In my opinion it is John Kretschmer's best book, so far. The story is very well written and kept me turning pages. I ended up staying awake longer than I'd intended for multiple nights...just to read a bit farther. I didn't want to put it down. Congratulations to the author and the editors on a fantastic book. I'm a sailor and recently completed an intense 6-day maritime meteorology course. The stories in this well-written book reinforced my view that one should take all precautions to stay away from the possible path of tropical cyclones.

11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Great story for sailors and non-sailors alike By A. Stapleton Like the other reviewers, I really enjoyed this book and had a hard time putting it down. I wanted to mention that I believe this book will be a good read for both sailors and non-sailors. Kretschmer doesn't assume knowledge of sailing procedures and lingo. He does a good job of explaining sailing concepts so as not to lose readers with less exposure to the jargon of the sailing world. For experienced sailors, though, the description of what the various captains went through during their ordeals is gripping and informative. Kretschmer does an especially good job of putting together the pieces of what likely transpired during the various stages of each of the captains' journeys. Based on limited facts, Kretschmer relies on his vast knowledge of sailing vessels, weather, Caribbean locations, and the human psyche to extrapolate not only what the captains did during their last fateful days, but also what they must have been thinking. Kretschmer shows where each of the captains made their mistake, and explains the probable reasons for their decisions. He neither glorifies, nor condemns, his subjects. He shows that they are human. In the case of his friend Carl, he recreates Carl's final great achievement and, by doing this, celebrates that greatness that lies in every person, but that so often remains dormant and unseen. The fact that Kretschmer could bring all the individual pieces of these men's lives together into a cohesive, compelling story is, I think, the real achievement of this book.

"The tale of Carl Wake and the hurricane that was waiting for him goes straight to the heart of the greatest sea stories: they are not about man against the sea, but man against himself. John Kretschmer's book is as perfectly shaped and flawlessly written as such a story can be. In addition to being the best depiction I have ever read of what it is like to be inside a hurricane at sea, *At the Mercy of the Sea* is as moving a story of a man's failure and redemption as can be found anywhere in the literature of the sea. This book is surely destined to become a classic."

—Peter Nichols, author of *Sea Change* and *A Voyage for Madmen*

"John Kretschmer has transformed this story of three men on a collision course with a hurricane into a modern seafaring classic."

—Peter Nielsen, editor of *SAIL* magazine

"With expert analysis and taut writing, he draws readers into that mad storm. You can't turn away. You keep reading until it breaks your heart."

—Fred Grimm, columnist for the *Miami Herald*

"Once begun, his vivid and powerful narrative is impossible to put down."

—Derek Lundy, author of *Godforsaken Sea* and *The Way of a Ship*

"I felt I knew Carl Wake, because John Kretschmer found in him an archetypal— an aging sailor with an age-old dream."

—Jim Carrier, transatlantic sailor and author of *The Ship and the Storm: Hurricane Mitch and the Loss of the Fantom*

"A remarkable book, impossible to put down."

—Herb McCormick, sailing journalist