



Sudden Sea: The Great New England Hurricane of 1938

R. A. Scotti

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On September 21, 1938, the fastest hurricane on record caught the Northeast by surprise and left a wake of death and destruction across seven states. Traveling at record speeds, the storm raced up the Atlantic coast, reaching New York and New England ahead of hurricane warnings and striking with such intensity that seismographs in Alaska registered the impact. Winds clocked at 186 miles per hour stripped cars of their paint. Walls of water fifty feet high swept homes and entire families out to sea. Drawing upon newspaper accounts, personal testimony of survivors, and archival sources, *Sudden Sea* recounts that day in terrifying detail. The Moore family climbed up to the attic of their oceanfront home as the waters rose, only to find themselves launched on a roiling ocean. Joseph Matoes watched as the bus carrying his children home from school stalled on the causeway just as the ocean surged into the bay. Three friends, separated in the fury of the storm, found themselves reunited on a beach a state away. These and other tales of heroism, terror, and survival form the heart of this incredible account. At the same time, R. A. Scotti uncovers the unlikely alignment of meteorological conditions that conspired to bring about the unthinkable: a tropical cyclone on the Northeast coast. The Great Hurricane of 1938 scarred a landscape and a generation. R. A. Scotti has written an extraordinary account of an ocean rising up to wreak total destruction on a way of life the world would never see again.

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