



The Blue Tattoo by Steven Laffoley

About the author:

Born in Taunton, Massachusetts, Laffoley was educated at Saint Mary's University. He moved to Canada in 1982 and lives in Halifax, Nova Scotia with his wife and daughter. He has been a lecturer at Saint Mary's University and a teacher at King's-Edgehill School. He is currently Head of Middle School at the Halifax Grammar School, a position which he has taken up since the middle school's establishment in September 1997.

A freelance writer for more than twenty years, Laffoley has written numerous essays for print and online magazines, newspapers, and radio. He is the author of seven books: *Mr. Bush, Angus and Me* (2005), *Hunting Halifax* (2007), *Death Ship of Halifax Harbor* (2009), *The Devil And The Deep Blue Sea* (2011), *Shadowboxing* (2012), *Pulling No Punches* (2013), and "The Blue Tattoo" (2014).

Laffoley has been lauded for his signature cinematic retelling of historical events by interweaving himself into the story as a writer/detective character. He often chooses stories lesser known to the public, predominantly Canadian in subject, and almost always set around the turn of the 20th century.

Source: Author's website (<https://stevenlaffoley.wordpress.com/>)

About this book:

From award-winning author Steven Laffoley comes a compelling tale of love and loss, despair and hope, based on real people and real events, that brings to life one of the most extraordinary stories of our time — The Halifax Explosion of 1917. The Great War has given rise to unprecedented prosperity to staid, Victorian Halifax. It has also given rise to an explosive desire for change. Medical student and daughter of a prominent Halifax family, Elizabeth Beckett dreams of bringing equality to woman in an age when men alone control the world of work and politics. She fights for suffrage to give women a voice in the politics of war.

April 2016



At the same time, sugar refinery worker Danny Cohen dreams of leaving Halifax and a deadly war machine that he sees as only serving the wealthy. He fights to make the money he needs to help himself escape. When their lives collide, their dreams and their views of the world are challenged by the promise of love. Yet their different views on the world prove too explosive. They are torn apart by the collision of their disparate dreams. Elizabeth returns to her suffrage movement for women. Danny escapes to Boston for a better life. However, when two ships collide in Halifax Harbour on December 6, 1917, and the greatest explosion the world had ever known is unleashed on the city, their eyes are opened to new truths. Elizabeth is swept up in the chaos that follows the Explosion and works courageously at a local hospital, overrun with the horribly injured, with dwindling medical supplies and worsening conditions, only to face a once-in-a-generation snowstorm that promises to take away whatever hope remains. Without fresh medical supplies, hundreds will soon die.

Meantime, desperate to return home, Danny hears of a medical relief train leaving Boston and conducted by Christopher H. Trueman, a man with with dark past, who promises to make Halifax in record time. Danny manages to make the train, only to face a snowstorm that stops the train in its tracks. Without action and personal sacrifice, the train may never make it.

Filled with a cast of unforgettable characters — from Boston mayor James Michael Curley to Group of Seven painter Arthur Lismer — *The Blue Tattoo* tells the sweeping story of the lives caught up in the unbelievable horror of The Halifax Explosion.

Source: Author's website (<https://stevenlaffoley.wordpress.com/>)

Discussion Questions:

No discussion questions available.

Other formats available at Halifax Public Libraries:

No other formats available at this time.