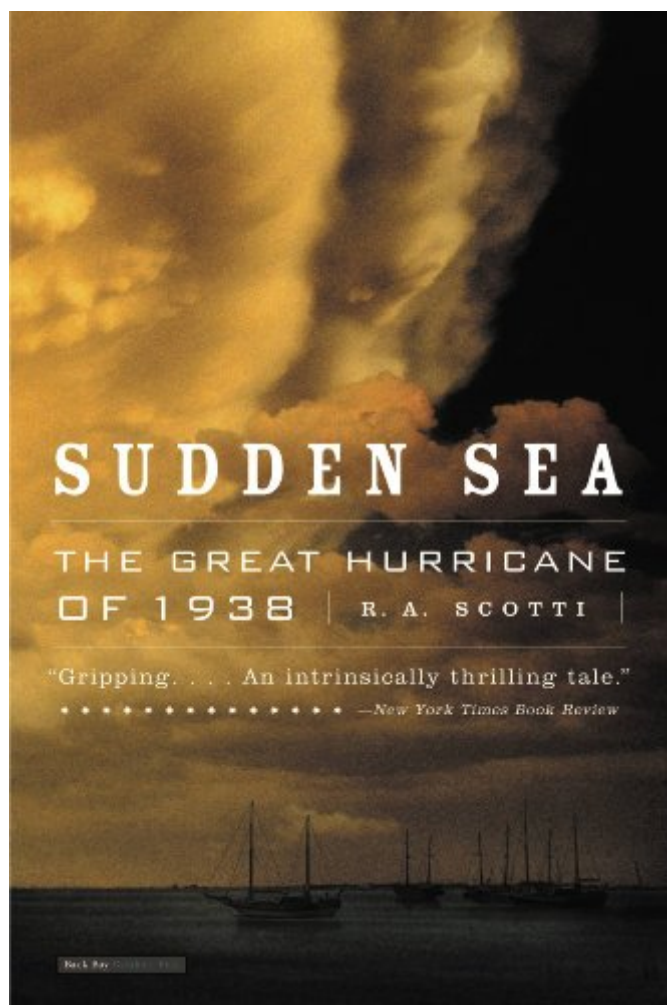


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# Sudden Sea: The Great Hurricane Of 1938



## Synopsis

The massive destruction wreaked by the Hurricane of 1938 dwarfed that of the Chicago Fire, the San Francisco Earthquake, and the Mississippi floods of 1927, making the storm the worst natural disaster in U.S. history. Now, R.A. Scotti tells the story.

## Book Information

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Disasters

## Customer Reviews

Reading Scotti's novel on the sea wall in Narragansett and along the shores of Jamestown provides great context for reflecting on the damage done and the lives lost in the Great Hurricane. While the writing is light and easy, the smell of sea spray comes from the pages and the character's voices echo. Not much has changed since 1938 - the shores are cluttered with homes and many of the families are still prominent in the local communities. It's easy to imagine the school bus filled with children making its way through the salty wind down North Road towards Mackerel Cove. The familiarity of the setting gives Sudden Sea an uncomfortable edge. On the other hand, I found the errors distracting. Does an 800-foot ship only displace 49 tons? No. Google is a useful companion

to this account if you're as interested in the non-fiction as the tale. A bit more research and careful editing would have provided distance between the author's spy novel career and her more recent work."...From Bridgehampton to Port Jefferson is just a short hop - just 12 miles between the two Long Island towns..."They are both towns on Long Island, but there was never a ferry service between them. That Scotti confused the name of a village in the Hamptons with Bridgeport, the Connecticut city with ferry service to Port Jeff, is a minor error. But to confuse the locations makes it clear she is less acquainted with the subject than her writing suggests. Another reviewer referred to this as a "cut and paste" account. As a captivating tale and a light read, *Sudden Sea* works well. Grab a beach chair, plant your feet in the sand, and imagine the towering waves. With any luck (and improved forecasting!) you'll be far away when they return.

I live in RI and found the local references to places extremely accurate...I could vividly picture locations from the terrific descriptions which will draw you into the book with the feeling you are there. You can almost feel the wind, see the walls of water and imagine the helplessness of those who were caught so unprepared. I read this book many years ago and was thrilled to repeat the experience. Vacationing in Bermuda those many years ago, someone recommended the book when they found out my age and where I was from....SO glad I took their advice. TWICE I was 5 when the hurricane of 1954 hit and remember walking around viewing the aftermath with everyone comparing it to the BIG one of 1938. I grew up hearing stories and this book confirms their accuracy and intensity. Good read

Being A Florida Native , I appreciate the devastation a Hurricane can do. This is a well told story of the people who survived and those that did not, the unpredictability of tracking and as much that has been improved it is still worth noting that they are still not able to give precise land fall. You will enjoy reads like a fiction novel, and is well written, commend it highly !

Like the author R.A. Scotti, I am a native Rhode Islander who grew up hearing stories of the great Hurricane of 1938. Take just one look at the photograph on the cover of "*Sudden Sea: The Great Hurricane of 1938*" and you will immediately appreciate the terror that overtook people on that steamy September afternoon. In Rhode Island, it had been a mostly sunny but hot day. All of the sudden the sky turned an ominous yellow. And within a very short time driving rains and winds of well over 100 MPH were pounding the area. And no one, not one single person, had any idea it was coming! Having read a number of books on disasters, I have found that most disasters are usually a

convergence of any number of unfortunate circumstances. And so it was on Long Island and throughout much of New England on that fateful day. While there was some limited ability to forecast hurricanes in those days, no one was prepared for, nor could they have predicted the path, the speed or the destructive potential of this monster storm. The simple fact of the matter is that even in this day and age with all of our sophisticated equipment, experts agree that they cannot forecast the behavior of a hurricane more than 24 hours in advance. R.A. Scotti introduces the reader to a number of families who found themselves suddenly caught up in the Hurricane of 1938. They are a pretty diverse bunch, ranging from well-heeled old money clans on the Hamptons to working class stiffies who owned small cottages on the Rhode Island coast. Some of her subjects would not make it through that afternoon. And for those lucky enough to survive life would never be the same. For instance, in one area in Charlestown RI on the southern RI coast there were 700 summer homes at 3:00 that afternoon. By the time the storm moved away around sunset there was absolutely nothing left! And this was not a unique scenario by any means. It was repeated over and over again throughout southern New England. The storm would claim over 700 people and injure 2000 more. The hurricane cost more than \$4.7 billion (with a "b") in today's dollars. This hurricane was so powerful and fast moving that hurricane winds were felt as far north as Burlington, Vermont. I do a great deal of reading about history, politics and current events. I would have to say that "Sudden Sea: The Great Hurricane of 1938" is the best written book I have read this year. R.A. Scotti is a real wordsmith and I really appreciated her ability to turn a phrase. I could not put this one down. Very highly recommended!!!

A very strong and compelling story. Also so very scary. This shows what it's like to live at sea level and how everything can be destroyed within hours. Lives, homes and even the landscape. I'm so glad I live in a time with this modern technology and can forecast these storms that will give plenty of warning for everyone to evacuate in time. But in 1938, they didn't have this and as a result lives were lost and property destroyed. But the blame lies heavily with the Washington D. C. weather bureau for not passing along this information. One forecaster saw it for what it was and his analysis was pushed aside. This story was hard to put down and I'm glad that I read it.

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