

Review: The Mourning Wave

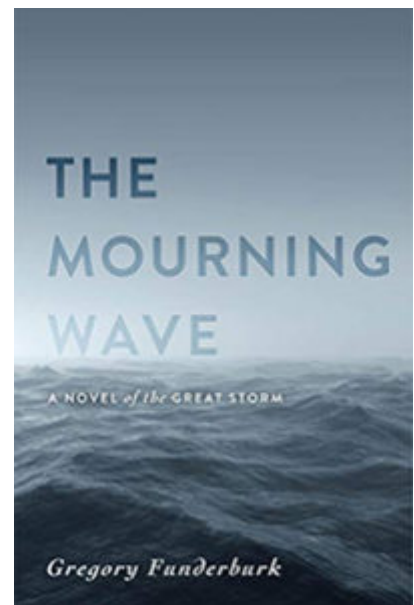
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The Mourning Wave: A Novel of the Great Storm

By Gregory Funderburk (koeblerbooks)

The Mourning Wave begins just as the 1900 Galveston hurricane makes landfall. With this brisk start, the story moves forward at a breathtaking pace through each day from September 8 to 14.

Three boys—Will, Frank and Albert—survived the storm’s destruction of St. Mary’s Orphan Asylum, becoming the central characters among a host of Galveston residents. Will is serious, Albert mystical, and Frank an amiable link between them. Though children in the opening moments, they are quickly thrust into adulthood by the devastating hurricane. Will becomes the main character, his own name signifying what it took—a matter of will—to press through the days after the storm. The recurring character Grace, continuously out of reach and feared lost, promises hope and joy if found.



The Mourning Wave rehearses the psychology and behaviors of shock and trauma. It is an honest and compassionate description of human frailty and shared humanity in the face of overwhelming disaster, plumbing the depth of grief and sorrow following on the heels of catastrophe. Tender attention

is given to the varying struggles and attempts to honor and memorialize those lost. At one point, Will realizes “it was good and merciful that pain did not congregate as people did.” It was individual, while comfort “worked on a different calculus” and “could be gathered” and multiplied (97).

Greg Funderburk has written not just a great work of historical fiction, but a narrative in the vein of classic literature.

Eric Black, editor/publisher/executive director

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