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Death in the Age of Steam: A Mystery

Mel Bradshaw



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Winner of the 2004 ForeWord Book of the Year Award

Toronto in 1856 is industrializing with little time for scruple or sentiment. When Reform politician William Sheridan dies suddenly and his daughter Theresa vanishes, only one man persists in asking questions. A former suitor of Theresa's, bank cashier Isaac Harris has never managed to forget her, despite her marriage to another man. Thrust into the role of amateur detective, he must now struggle with the demands of his job and the shortcomings of the fledgling city police. He also faces the hostility of Theresa's powerful husband, a steamboat and railway magnate. Harris's search takes a grisly turn when, in a valley outside of town, he finds human remains decked in traces of Theresa's finery. If she is dead, who is responsible? And who cares to find out, apart from the man who wooed her too timidly and now would do anything to make up for it? Death in the Age of Steam whirls the reader through a richly realized Victorian landscape, from Niagara Falls to Montreal and north as far as the shores of Lake Superior. It's a world at once near and exotic, a world of noise and smoke and churning pistons, but a world still very familiar to denizens of the 21st century.

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