



## **Blind Waves**

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## **Blind Waves** Steven Gould

The author of *Jumper* returns with a near-future SF novel, set in an America whose coastline has been drowned by melting Antarctic ice.

In the world where hundreds of millions of people have been displaced from their homes by the Deluge--a hundred-foot-rise in sea level from melting ice caps--Partricia Beenan is lucky. She is still an American citizen with the right to live on the continent, unlike so many "wetfoots" whose homes lie deep under the waves or the refugees from nations now completely under water.

But Patricia's father chose to live on a floating city of New Galveston, instead of following his congresswomen wife to Washington, and go into the underwater salvage business. Now, several years after his death, it's Patricia's business and her city. She's a wealthy woman, on the city council, well known to local INS commander and the New Galveston police.

But none of that will help Patricia when she stumbles across a recently sunken freighter that has dozens of bodies chained up in its hold and clear evidence that it has been fired upon by an INS ship.

Patricia's evidence of a rogue operation within the INS brings her together with Thomas Beckett, a government investigator assigned to the case. Romance blossoms while they pursue and are pursued by the killers, into the heart of the conspiracy.

## **Blind Waves Details**

Date : Published January 15th 2001 by Tor Science Fiction (first published 2000)

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Author : Steven Gould

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## From Reader Review *Blind Waves* for online ebook

### Susan says

the reader did a good job -- the robot-like tones she used to mimic computers like video-chat windows was a funny idea

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### Karen Niedzwiecki says

A solid 4.5 stars: The more I read by this writer, the more I come to appreciate his style. Initially I think I was a bit closed-off to his writing because I had an unreasonable fear of being duped into reading/enjoying girlie teen pulp Sci Fi (not that there's anything wrong with that!) I didn't really need to worry - when Steven Gould caters to a simpler audience, he does so only lightly, and quickly gets back on track with the forward momentum of the narrative.

I also love how he's a details nerd - if he writes about submarines, he really writes the heck out of the tech! He's always making me wonder if he has built his own submarine/space suit/sailing ship/space station/torture device/stone hut on the side of a cliff etc ... if you want specific technical details regarding the subject he's locked onto in any given moment, he's your man.

To summarise - a very solid, non-silly, details-orientated writer with a flair for naturalistic dialogue and the occasional almost-sex scene. (Only very rarely does the Shakespeare get a bit much)

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### Lianne Burwell says

When the world's ocean rose as a result of melting ice, most of the populated areas of the world became flooded.

Patricia is a jack of all trades (Council Woman, salvager, landlord, school principal) based out of a floating city off the new coast of Texas. On one diving mission, she finds a ship, apparently sunk by the INS, with the bodies of fifty men, women and children still on board. Worse, they were alive when the ship went down. The resulting investigation leads to white supremacists and dastardly plots.

I thoroughly enjoyed the book. Nice fluff reading. The only thing that stopped it getting a four star was the romance, which left me rolling my eyes a lot. Four days from meeting to proposal? Sheesh.

But other than the romance novel style romance, I enjoyed the book, although *Wildside* is still my favorite Steven Gould novel. I look forward to the newest book, which I just picked up this week.

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### Peter Goodman says

“Blind Waves,” by Steven Gould (Tor, 2000). This is an earlier Gould, and either he had not yet found his

stride, or this is what he does. The SF aspect: a Deluge caused by global warming has drowned the world's coastlines, but humans have adapted. They build huge floating cities made of reinforced cement that bob gently on the coastlines, while the cities are not far below: Houston, Galveston, New Orleans, etc. But not all the world has done as well, and there are millions of refugees who want to enter the US---immigrants, who are captured and deported, or placed in huge prisons (one is called the Abbatoir). The culture is Tex-Mex. Technology is slightly more advanced than currently. Entrepreneurs mine the drowned cities for artifacts and equipment. Oil leaks are searched out and to mined or sealed. The Immigration and Naturalization Service is the second largest armed force in the country. Patricia runs a small diving-mining operation, using a mini-sub. One day she finds an oil leak that is coming from a small freighter that has been sunk by artillery, and that is full of bodies. As she tries to get home with this knowledge, she is pursued by an INS ship that apparently wants to destroy her, for some reason. INS Lt. Thomas Becket is called to investigate. Turns out there are some big time crooks and crookedness going on; they solve the problem and fall in love. Actually, rather thin and predictable. Other than the water and the submarines, not much out of the ordinary. Gould tries to spice things up by adding a lot of Shakespeare for no apparent reason. "7th Sigma" is better.

<http://eatourbrains.com/steve/>

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### **Mitchell says**

A fun re-read. It was fun to have a ya style book but with older protagonists. And interesting to see a relatively early drowned world. And to recall that when I read this at first I probably wouldn't have thought of the US government as being evil as plausible. Looking forward to meeting the author on Saturday. The book has a lot of underwater stuff and a bunch of untranslated Spanish. And it kind of ends fairly abruptly. But it basically works and is worth reading. And it would be awesome to see more stories set in this world.

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### **Sam Nyfeler says**

Of all the books I've read by Steven Gould I like this one the least. He's a great writer, but I enjoyed the subject matter of the "Jumper" and "Wildside" books much better. This one is basically a political crime mystery set in a slightly near-future setting. I say future because the ice-caps have melted causing widespread flooding--not because there's any hint of science fiction in the book. Besides the lack of science fiction the main problems I had with this story were the excessive use of Shakespeare quotes and Spanish. I don't know either, so it was a little distracting. For awhile I tried to look up the Spanish using Google Translate, but I eventually gave up and trusted the author would explain things in English eventually. He did, but I still feel like I missed something not knowing Spanish.

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### **Icarus says**

This was Steven Gould trying to break out of the mold/ghetto of YA science fiction. It's okay, but nothing special. It's like a slightly less goody Dirk Pitt novel.

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## Deborah Ideiosepius says

Blind wave is set in a future where a devastating event caused a sudden breaking and melting of ice caps. And a consequent 100 foot rise in seawater in an event known as the Deluge.

It this future world we follow Patricia, who runs an underwater salvage business operating out of the floating city of New Galveston, where instead of moving inland, thousands of people built floating 'hexs' and created an floating city.

In the first part of the fast paced thriller/science fiction, Patricia stumbles upon a recently sunken freighter full of dead bodies and clear evidence that it had been fired upon. In fear of her life, Patricia broadcasts the recording of the even and proceeds to flee INS, a quasi military organisation that was created to handle illegal immigrants.

Enter Thomas, INS CID who aims to get to the bottom of the sunken freighter and the INS involvement, but who in the process becomes very involved with Patricia as well.

This was a very interesting, at times thrilling book, fine science fiction of the best sort. I loved the descriptions of how society changed with the rising sea level, I loved the descriptions of the sunken cities that Patricia and the submarine travel through and the submarine itself. The hypothesis of the floating hex cities, their organisation and success was fascinating as was the sinister development of politics and military to handle the Deluge. All of these were very, very well done.

Things I did not love also existed however: First, as a non American I was not familiar with the places described, no biggie, as the plot increasingly spent time on the well described floating city. Also, that rigid American independence when it comes to measurement.... The writing inched its way around Fahrenheit's and feet as they do. I rarely bothered to look them up, so I often had little understanding of what the author was getting at. I was fine with depths and ordinances, which often do use imperial, but a lot of the rest I had to just ignore. As it is a well structured story this was a bit of a pity.

Similar but worse; I know that Spanish is a big part of American culture, beautiful language that it is I do not speak it at all. In Gould's future world, Spanish is obviously a unofficial second language which most of the characters lapse into regularly. A lot of the time, you can tell what they are saying by context, sometimes I had to google to figure out what was being said and other times I just skipped it. I am still a little aggravated by some of the things I know I did not get, because Google translate was not, at the time, available to me. Now, I have thoughts and opinions about this: If I have purchased a professional book, I may well need internet to help me along. If I have purchased a recreational book, for fun, in English, I should not have to have an internet connection to understand the plot.

The other thing which grated on my reading experience (and which got worse, not better as the plot progressed), was Patricia. She started out really well and I enjoyed her as a character, but, as the relationship between her and Thomas progressed, she became less and less believable as a woman, let alone as the woman from the first few chapters. In the Acknowledgments the author thanks; Melinda, Sage, Pati and Sally. Apparently as proofreaders they had helpful suggestions along the lines of "Women do not act like this Steve!". I, also, thank Melinda, Sage, Pati and Sally, without whom I am sure I would have enjoyed this book a lot less, however I think they either needed to say "Women do not act like this Steve!" more often, or

Steve needed to listen to them more.

So, at the start of the book I enjoyed the character of Patricia more, and at the end that of Thomas eclipsed her and that's ok. I now want to include a somewhat scathing review of the cover art, but don't read it if you don't want to, it does not affect the story in any way (view spoiler)

The author often has little input into the cover anyway, and on the whole it could be worse. So, despite mocking the cover and the wobbly female characterisation, this has been a very well written, very well conceived, quite thrilling science fiction book.

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### **Michael Havens says**

'Blind Waves', by Steven Gould is reminiscent of the golden age of Science Fiction, that is, rather than being futuristic, it is a work of speculation. Let me explain. As far back as Jules Verne and H.G. Wells, Science Fiction gave a purview of where society was heading not only by extrapolating it into the technological future, but by creating a microscope by which to view contemporary issues. Ray Bradbury (Fahrenheit 451), George Orwell (1984), and the many works of Philip K. Dick are excellent examples of recent memory. But also too, a few of the "Hard Science Fiction" writers such as Frank Herbert ('Dune' can be seen through the lens of contemporary issues dealing with the Middle East and Western European/American clashes of economics, politics, and spiritual values, along with the early warning signs of ecological disaster Herbert would have most likely been conversant in in the mid 50's). Gould in this sense poses the difficulty and challenges a society deals with in the face of ecological disaster, and in this case it is with facing an increase in the sea levels caused by the de-icing of the polar caps, creating flood zones around the ocean's coasts, in this case the areas around Galveston (with the area in dry land just outside re-named New Galveston) Texas. The other element added to this is the immigration and racial problems. White Supremacy has not only regained momentum, but has reorganized mafia fashion, infiltrating governmental law enforcement (FBI) and all branches of the military. Their actions are the catalyst for the story as the heroine of the novel, Patricia Beman, underwater salvager in the uninhabitable zones, finds a cargo ship with passengers aboard, apparent victims of murder.

From here on out, the novel acts more like a crime story than a science fiction one. The emphasis is placed on the motives and effects supremacists within the INS (the same immigration service as the real one) are having within the community of New Galveston, though we never really do see much of this community outside Patricia Beman's household, and then all the we see is the congenial relationships she has with her household staff and a little girl who appears at times to tease the heroine and to be teased in turn. We never see the whole underlining potential for violence and conflict that would send red flags up for the sinking of the 'Open Lotus', along with her occupants. While there is a sense of suspense throughout the novel, there are some things that can be elaborated along the way to add depth to the story and the plotline.

For example, very early in the novel, Patricia comes in contact with Thomas, an officer in the INS, an agency which Patricia is more than suspicious about. Having been shot at and vigorously pursued by an INS Fastship, the Sycorax, and having found evidence of a horrendous crime (not to mention the memory of her father, who was lost at sea, the victim of sinking himself), there is more than enough evidence for her to be cautious. But with the meeting of Thomas, an almost 48 hour relationship, sex and all, coincides with her

trying to stay alive, saving the citizens of her district, and solving a crime. The rule of suspension of disbelief seems to be a needed application here, as I was distracted by the "Hollywood pacing". Think Fox's '24' and you know what I mean! for both the issues underlining the plot and for the love affair that ensues, lengthening the novel would have been a good thing. But Science Fiction suffers these days as so many novels do; they need to be a sized enough package in order to enjoy about a 5 hour or so flight (the Star Trek novels I've read are even more guilty than this), and yet plentiful enough (look at the spine of that paperback!) to reach gross sales. I wonder if this is the case with 'Blind Waves'? It seems a fascinating idea of global warming encroaching on civilian life and a worsening immigration problem due to loss of real estate for a book 350 pages to encompass. In the end, I would say this novel has promise, but has missed opportunities for being a great Science Fiction story. This novel has mature themes of race relations, immigration, diminishing resources, and a police force that is troubled by an insurgence of militaristic white supremacy. Yet, it achieves only to aspire to certain flash-pan imagery and prose that script writers of many action drama shows in Hollywood are capable of. And so, with some regret, I give this book a three stars.

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### **Matt Mazenauer says**

Surprisingly quick read, it feels good to have a book really catch you - it's been a while for me. In fact, this probably gets an extra star just for how it broke my readers block, because in reality it has some pretty rough spots. The ludicrously unbelievable (and sudden, and shoved-in) romance is distracting, especially when compared with the more realistic sci-fi parts. Also, despite most of the action taking place in this futuristic floating city, I have no picture in my head of what the place looks like... always confusing descriptions left me clueless. Lastly, the "quoting Shakespeare" quirk of the main character goes from sporadic to omnipresent towards the end. Like, several paragraphs per page of Shakespeare quotes. Good thing the bad guy's plan referred to Shakespeare as well, in the most obviously planted part of the whole book. Regardless of these problems, Gould nails an interesting portrait of a future world, which is the one part of the book fully thought out. And despite borrowing a little from Tom Clancy's writing style in the sub action scenes, they, too, were pretty great. I'd recommend it mildly, only if you're really in the mood for this sort of book, (or perhaps are a big Gould fan - maybe his writing style is just particularly palatable to me, even the bad parts, though this is really nothing like Jumper).

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### **John Loyd says**

Blind Waves (2000) 350 pages by Steven Gould.

The ice caps have melted, sea level have risen by a hundred feet causing coastal cities to be flooded, massive numbers of refugees and the INS has become a branch of the military. The story starts with Patricia Beenan on a salvage mission finding a sunken ship with dozens of dead bodies. INS CID man Thomas Becket is sent to investigate.

The story is a mystery, who were the victims in the ship and who killed them. It's an action/adventure. Patricia in her mini sub is chased by an INS ship, and several other action scenes follow. It's science fiction, raised sea levels, political changes, floating cities. It's a romance.

I had a little trouble following the first chapter or two. Just because of the terminology or visualizing the

scene and having a contradictory element come up so that I had to change my visualization. I got the gist of it because I had read the back cover. After that it flowed much more smoothly.

The story was riveting. I liked the Patricia and Thomas characters. There were no lulls. Fantastic. I'm happy I picked this one up.

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### **Brian Henderson says**

While it wasn't a bad book by any means, there were far too many elements that just made me stop and say "that's a bit ridiculous and/or pointless". It really seems like Gould did a lot of research on submarines and was absolutely going to put every piece of information and terminology into the book, whether it made sense or not. There were far too many elements of the book like that, things that ultimately I thought would mean something, but never did. Why was the hero scarred? Other than to show he was a hero, what was the point? It never played a role. The whole romance was horribly rushed, to the point of being laughable. What point was there in having the heroine being an alternate politician? Or owning a school? Or doing much of anything? It never really impacted the book in any meaningful way.

It wasn't a bad book, it just could have been so much better and more meaningful. It was a short story that ballooned into a story that it just didn't have the substance to support.

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### **Nancy says**

After the brilliant *Jumper*, I really looked forward to this underwater adventure by Steven Gould. While the premise was intriguing, the story was rather a disappointment. The plot started to pick up pace after the early boring submarine scenes, but the science was nearly non-existent, the mystery was predictable and the romance was pathetic. It was a novel that didn't fit neatly into any genre, yet it failed miserably at all of them. The quotes from Shakespeare were irritating and the dialogue between the characters didn't flow naturally to me. While several reviewers seemed to be bothered by the use of Spanish words, I found it to be well done. Some good ideas, like the politics of INS and racism issues were very interesting but not developed well enough.

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### **Jeffrey Grant says**

This is the first standalone book of Gould's that I've read and I'm happy to say it retained its appeal for me. His focus on creating well developed characters who don't behave like idiots in order to create drama is always something I appreciate.

This book had a few more downsides for me than the "*Jumper*" ones. First, the beginning is overloaded with minutiae of how the diving and submersible works. The author is himself a diver and I think he let his obsession bleed into the text overmuch, though I'm sure real divers will appreciate the attention to detail. Second, the relationship seems a bit...teenager-y. I've long since forgiven movies and books that create relationships between protagonists in short periods of time; (proximity + attraction) x adrenaline = oddly sped up courtships. That said, it seems like the protagonists' relationship goes a bit farther than makes sense given two middle-aged, successful adults with previous relationship issues. Lastly, there are parts of the dialogue that take place in Spanish with no translation or contextual explanation most of the time. It came off



a bit like watching a movie where there are brief interludes of another language but no subtitles appear; you don't lose the overall story, but it's frustrating nonetheless.

That said, the book was still a good story, with a believable setup for the post-melting US and realistic attitudes and motivations for all concerned parties.

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**John Smith says**

**OK**

I didn't find the characters as believable as I did with other books of his. Plotting good as usual. I find the interspersing of foreign words aggravating as it breaks the flow.

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