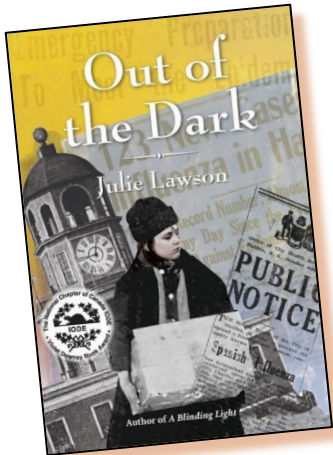




IODE Canada *Express News*

Winner of the 2024 IODE Violet Downey Book Award for Children's Literature



Out of the Dark by Julie Lawson

Publisher: Nimbus Publishing Limited

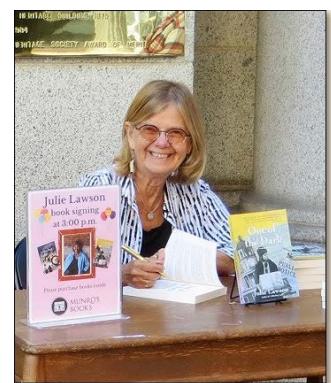
A follow-up of the bestselling, Geoffrey Bilson Award and Victoria Book Prize nominated *A Blinding Light*, focusing on the aftermath of the Halifax Explosion and the onset of the Great Influenza Pandemic.

When Jane Mooney's older brother Connor lies about his age and enlists in the Great War at age fifteen, she can't imagine ever being more devastated. But on December 6, 1917, when two ships collide in Halifax Harbour, the resulting explosion proves her wrong.

An injured Jane awakes to discover that the North End of Halifax, including her home, has been destroyed; her father and three of her brothers have been killed; her mother, recovering from a head injury, has been left confused and forgetful; and her two surviving brothers are looking to her for guidance. Like so many Explosion survivors, Jane and her family are forced to start over. This means accommodation in a newly-constructed apartment block, clothing and furniture from donation centres, and a new school. Unfortunately for Jane, the school she must now attend is in the prosperous South End. How will she fit in with her uppity classmates?

The only bright light is that Jane now lives closer to her best friend, Livy Schneider. Livy's older brother, Will, a student at the same school, gives Jane a job at the school newspaper. The start of the 1918 school year appears more hopeful until Jane hears rumblings of a new enemy at their door and this one is contagious. The Great Influenza Pandemic has reached Halifax's vulnerable shores. In a time of financial and emotional strain, and with this terrifying new threat, how will Jane keep her family safe? And why hasn't Connor written to her? Will he ever return from the trenches?

Julie Lawson is the award-winning author of many books for young people. No Safe Harbour, also about the Halifax Explosion, won the Hackmatack Award. Julie has a personal connection with the tragic event and writing this novel allowed Julie to delve into the history behind many of the stories she'd heard as a child. A former elementary teacher, she balances her time between presenting in schools and libraries throughout the country, travelling the world, and writing from her home in Victoria, BC.



Founded in 1900, IODE Canada is a national women's charitable organization dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for individuals through education support, community services and citizenship programs.

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