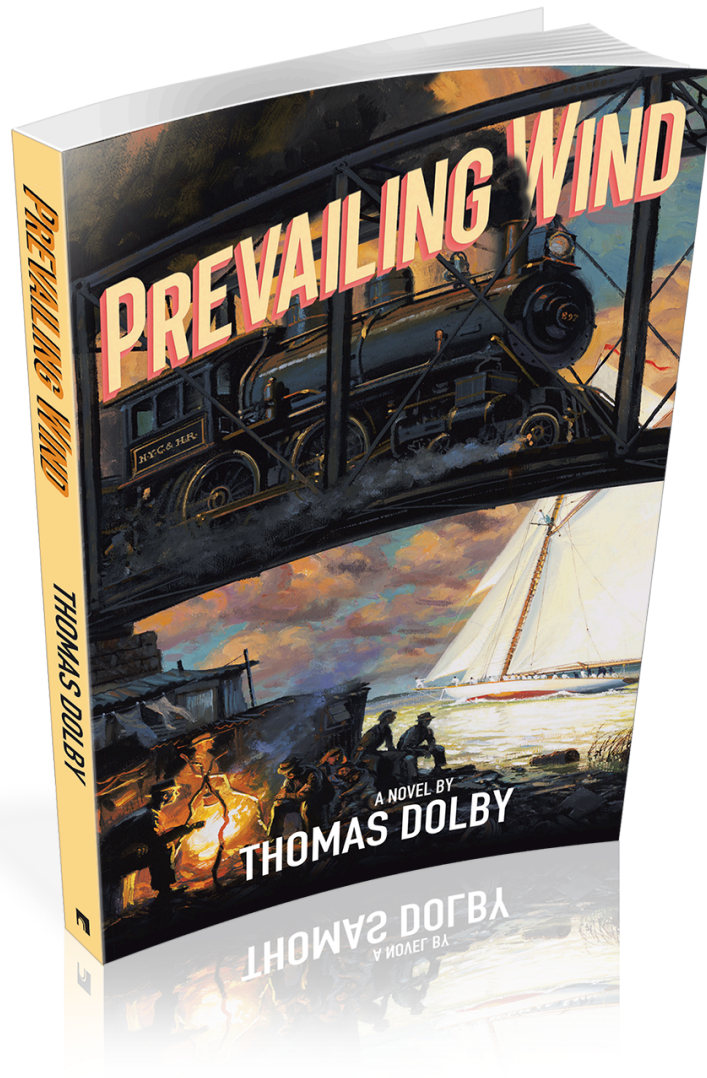


# PREVAILING WIND

THOMAS DOLBY

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Publisher: Archway Publishing

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Genre: Historical Fiction | Sea Stories | 20th Century Historical Fiction | Historical Thrillers

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## Overview

It is 1913, and the plutocrats of the New York Yacht Club have amassed more power and wealth than the US Treasury itself.

Davey and Jacob Haskell, brothers from a poor lobster fishing community in Maine, have a single shot at greatness when they try out for the sailing crew of a NYYC millionaire's luxury racing yacht.

Honor, betrayal, and the cruelty of an egomaniacal skipper put the brothers' family loyalties to the test as they set out to expose a dark secret covered up for years in the corridors of the New York Yacht Club.

## Author Biography

Thomas Dolby is a trailblazing musician, producer, and technology innovator whose impact on the music industry has been profound and enduring. Born Thomas Morgan Robertson, Dolby first made his mark in the early 1980s with a series of hit singles, most notably "She Blinded Me with Science," which reached the Billboard Top 5 and became an iconic part of the MTV era. His innovative approach to synthesizer-based music earned him five Grammy™ nominations and established him as a pioneering figure in electronic music.

Beyond his success as a solo artist, Dolby has collaborated with some of the most influential musicians of his time. He has played synthesizer for world-class artists such as David Bowie, Stevie Wonder, Joni Mitchell, Roger Waters, and Foreigner, contributing his unique sound and technical expertise to their projects.

Dolby's career extends beyond music performance and production. He has made significant contributions to the field of music technology, founding Beatnik Inc., a company that developed audio software for mobile phones and other devices. This entrepreneurial venture highlighted his foresight in recognizing the potential of digital music long before it became mainstream.

In addition to his technological endeavors, Dolby has served as a professor at Johns Hopkins University, where he has shared his knowledge and passion for music and

technology with a new generation of students. His role as a teacher reflects his commitment to fostering innovation and creativity in others.

Dolby's transition into literature with his debut novel, *Prevailing Wind*, showcases his multifaceted talent. The novel blends elements of adventure, mystery, and emotional depth, reflecting the same creativity and narrative skill that have characterized his music career. Set for release in June, *Prevailing Wind* is a testament to Dolby's ability to tell compelling stories across different mediums.

A keen sailor from an early age, Dolby has also cultivated a passion for classic racing yachts. He has won regattas at the helm of his own wooden sailboat, further demonstrating his diverse interests and talents.

Thomas Dolby's career is a testament to his relentless curiosity and innovative spirit. Whether through music, technology, education, or literature, he continues to push boundaries and inspire others with his work.

### **Key Themes and Messages**

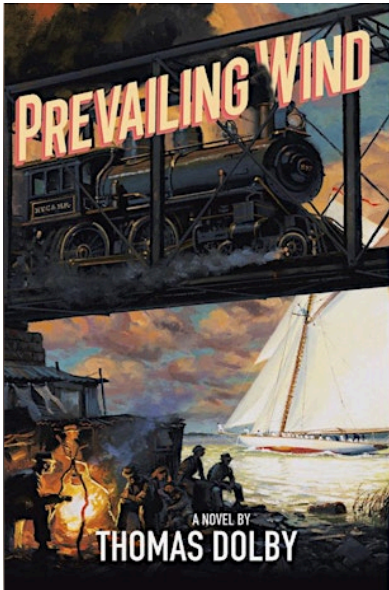
- The quest for sporting excellence.
- Family honor and betrayal.
- The vast chasm between rich and poor during the Progressive Era.
- The beauty of classic sailboat racing and yacht designs.

## Press Coverage

[Thomas Dolby Announces Release of New Historical Novel "Prevailing Wind"](#)


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[Thomas Dolby: "Prevailing Wind"](#) - Writers Live! At the *Enoch Pratt Free Library* on July 15 at 7:00 - 8:00 pm EDT


The book cover for 'Prevailing Wind' features a steam locomotive crossing a bridge over a body of water. In the foreground, a group of people is gathered on a shore, and a sailboat is visible on the water. The title 'PREVAILING WIND' is written in large, stylized letters across the top of the cover. Below the title, it says 'A NOVEL BY THOMAS DOLBY'.

**Writers LIVE!**

Monday, July 15, 7:00 p.m.  
Central Library | 400 Cathedral St.

A circular portrait of Thomas Dolby, a man with short, light-colored hair, wearing a dark jacket.

**Thomas Dolby**

The logo for Enoch Pratt Free Library, featuring a stylized 'E' and the text 'ENOCH PRATT free LIBRARY'.

[Thomas Dolby on His New Book, 'Prevailing Wind'](#) - A Book Signing Event at the *Westport Library* on July 16 at 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm EDT

# Thomas Dolby on His New Book, 'Prevailing Wind'

Tue, July 16 @ 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm EDT



## Advance Praise & Reviews for 'Prevailing Wind'

"Dolby takes us behind the scenes as an intense competition evolves into a high stakes grudge match. The quest for victory is an emotional roller coaster ride. Once you start reading you won't want to stop."

- Gary Jobson, multiple America's Cup winner and Hall of Fame Inductee

"A ripping yarn... full of mysteries, passion, class struggle, and ruthless competitive spirit. *Prevailing Wind* is an absolute blast!"

- J.J.Abrams, Filmmaker

"A breathless grudge match, set against a slice of American history that I was happy to learn about. I could smell the fish and taste the salt, and always from the edge of my chair! This is a terrifically entertaining nautical novel by a man who seems to be good at everything he does."

- Danny Rubin (*'Groundhog Day'*) BAAFTA Award-winning Screenwriter and Playwright

“Written with deeply felt emotion and intricate detail, Thomas Dolby's gorgeous novel PREVAILING WIND is a work of historical fiction that speaks directly to the present day in its thematic explorations of class, competition and brotherhood.”

- *Abdi Mazemian, Stonewall and Lambda Literary Award Winning Author of Like a Love Story and Only This Beautiful Moment*

“A sparkling gem of a seafaring novel, riveting and authentic. Dolby catapults the reader into a lost era of America's Cup history, when the finest sailors were Maine fishermen and the pace of technological and social change was as fleet and mercurial as the wind.”

- *Meg Rosoff, award-winning author of How I Live Now and Friends Like These*

## Excerpts

### EXCERPT #1

Davey finally let out his breath. He noticed his hand was tightly gripping Edith's. He pulled it away, embarrassed. She looked up at him and smiled—but it was a kind, sisterly smile; not what he would have wanted. He mumbled something about needing to balance the boat, and shuffled aft to sit on an empty lobster trap.

“Thank you,” she said, turning from him to Jacob. “Both of you! Thank you so much.”

The moist night air cooled them. Jacob rowed the skiff across the wide harbor, his broad back making easy work of it despite the heavy payload. The oars dipped, and dipped again. The moon was higher now, more silver than orange. A flock of noisy Canadian geese crossed the dark sky overhead; the surface of the water reflected their passage like a pewter-stained mirror.

Edith leaned back on her elbows and closed her eyes. She pulled a pin out of her hair, and let her shining golden locks fall loose. Davey couldn't take his eyes off her pale neck, and the small bumps of her breasts under the lace apron. *When she opens her eyes again*, he thought, *she'll believe she's dreaming.*

Something otherworldly was happening to the dark waters of the harbor. The brothers had seen it before. Each time the tips of Jacob's oars dipped, they were illuminated by a bright green glow, a pool of brilliant flecks like a spotlight from the blackness beneath. The drips from the oars were made of the same sparkle.

"Psst, Edith! Look..." Jacob whispered.

She opened her eyes and gazed around; then she sat up, blinking in amazement. There was a long trail of bioluminescence in their wake, with pairs of wider green splotches wherever Jacob's oars had dipped. It was as if the skiff was floating above the dark expanse of the water on a cloud of glowing fireflies.

A corner of Jacob's mouth flicked into a smile. When he spoke, his voice was deep and guttural.

"I'm a magician, Edith."

His words seemed to hang in the air. The waters beyond their luminous green cocoon became darker and flatter still, so that Jacob's chiseled face was underlit by the soft glow. For a second, Davey saw him through Edith's eyes—the muscular arms, the calm expression, the shirt open to the waist—and he felt his stomach turn.

He said quietly, "You're pretty handy with your legs wrapped round a lump of wood too, aren't you, Jake?"

The spell was broken. Jacob fixed his black eyes on Davey's. "I could sail circles around you, little brother, and you know it."

"Except when we're sailing backwards, eh?" he said, grinning. Edith looked baffled.

"Why don't you tell her yourself."

Jacob said nothing, so Davey carried on with the story. "We had a wager, see, against some West Bay buggers—first boat back to Powder House Island from the Ledge, sailing backwards. It ain't easy to do, Edith. You have to balance the rudder, and force the boom out to windward." He mimed the moves, as if the little rowing skiff had a

sail. "Tell her what happened, mate! We licked 'em by a country mile, didn't we? And who was steering, eh?"

Jacob blew his hair away from his face and lengthened his stroke.

"Ayuh, did you ever get the stink out of your toenails?" Davey chuckled, feebly.

"Sailin' backwards is about the only way you'll ever beat me, tadpole," Jacob muttered.

"Aww, he's just sayin' that, Edith, cause he's never had the feel for it."

## **EXCERPT #2**

"Nooo-ooo-oo!" the Scot screamed.

Davey saw the fearful reality flash across Jacob's face like an electric bolt. This was the worst possible moment to tack the yacht through the eye of the wind. In another instant the sails and spars would crash violently over to the opposite side, and the bow could be pulled completely under.

Just as the *Westward* began the hard turn through the wind, a powerful gust hit her sails from a new direction. The trimmers were unprepared, and the foresail and jib, with their sheets still cleated hard, backed awkwardly, plunging the yacht's head down into the rolling swell.

*Westward's* bow bucked wildly in the chop. At first Davey thought he could hold on. But in the maelstrom of broken water, the safety line seemed to slacken. He lost his grip, dropped the knife, and fell backwards. He would have been washed clear into the boat's wake, but his right foot jammed in the angle between the bobstay and the boat's hull. As the schooner accelerated on the new tack, the sheer force of the water pinned his head and shoulders under the hull. He flailed his arms, struggling to free his ankle; but with each ducking his nostrils filled with water, making breathing impossible.

A blind panic overtook him. Blood was pumping behind his eyes. There was the blurred outline of his brother above him, yelling, trying to grab onto any part of his



clothing. Then he felt something give in his leg, and a searing pain shot right through him. He knew he couldn't hold his breath any longer—his ribcage was ready to burst apart. He saw his hair float upwards like a weed, and the daylight seemed to get further away. For an instant he wondered what actually happens when you breathe in a whole lungful of the Atlantic Ocean.

Then, nothing but whiteness.

The whiteness was like a cloud, and when it cleared, he was staring down at the *Westward* as if from the tip of her mast. She was in full bloom, a sumptuous array of white cotton. He could see her entire sail plan laid out like the diagrams in the library books, with the name of each rope and sail labeled in Latin. Her white hull was a scimitar, carving a foamy groove in the dark seas. He floated effortlessly on the vortex of her sails, gravity-free. Men were running like frightened mice around the schooner's deck; yet up here it was all tranquility and silence, with only the soothing hum of the wind in his ears, and the occasional seabird's cry. He smiled when he saw Cochran, rigid at the wheel, his legs wide apart to brace himself against the boat's heel, and a wild, intense look on his face. Mr. Vanderbilt had been thrown to his elbows and knees, pipe in teeth, spectacles askew, still clutching his chart and the stopwatch. He spied his brother hanging off the bowsprit, drenched through, hair matted, reaching into the water, reaching again. The faint yellow of his own oilskin jacket was just under the surface. He saw Jacob drop like a rapier to the lowest part of the bobstay and grab desperately at the yellow splotch with both hands, yanking with all his might. And there now was his own water-logged body, with the foot jammed unnaturally in the martingale. Jacob screamed noiselessly for help, gulping air and spray; men were lying on the rail above, trying to stretch down an arm—a hand—anything, but unable to reach them. Davey wanted to call out, Hey Jake, I'm actually not bothered! Let it go!

He wafted downwards, closer to the foredeck. From somewhere, his brother found a superhuman burst of strength, and hauled the sodden torso up above the surface. He got the body wrapped in his arms, and turned to scream something. Davey read his lips: "Pass me a line! A line!" Someone loosened a coil of rope from its cleat. Jacob looped it under the cadaver's armpits, and half a dozen men were able to haul the

lifeless lump of flesh over the bow, reaching down to grab any part of it, or its clothes, and lay it out on the planks. He hovered a few yards above them, watching with detached interest. The headsails were shivering, loose sheets cracking noiselessly on the deck: the racket should have been tremendous, but there was only silence and peace. The men just stood staring at the flaccid body in a stunned circle. Uriah Rhodes pushed through the crowd, and knelt to loosen the cadaver's collar. Its eyes were open, but unseeing. Rhodes slapped its face. No response. Slapped it again; then thumped its chest with both fists, while others helped Jacob clamber back onto the deck.

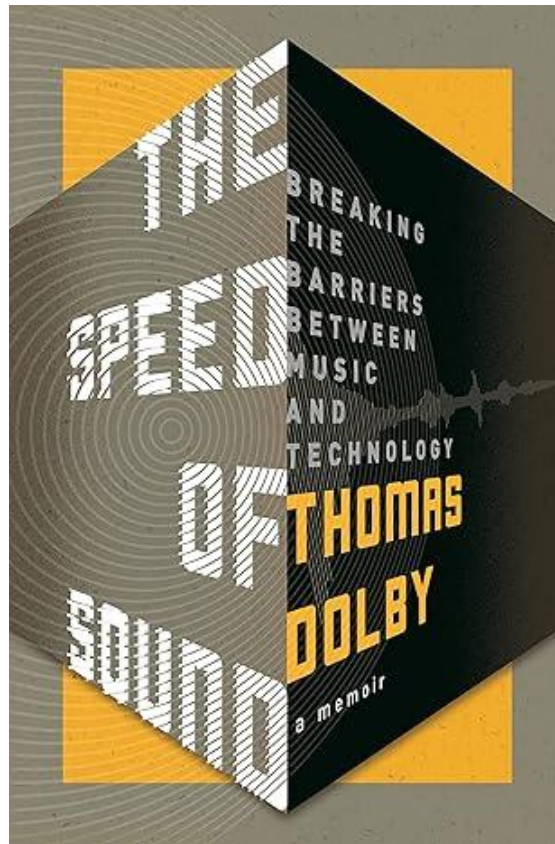
Jacob fell to his knees next to the body, and turned to Rhodes in desperation. Closer now, Davey could hear his voice; but it was many octaves too deep, and the sound didn't match the shape of his lips: "Is he alive? Tell me he's alive!"

For a few seconds the nothingness lingered, yet now the white mists were dispersing. He was gliding downwards, sucked towards the buckled corpse, until he was staring right into its lifeless eyes; then with a sickening crunch he was back inside the body, fused again to his own skeleton, his own blood and skin. He was choking and sputtering; his lungs burned like lava. The pain hit him like a bombshell and jerked his eyes open.

He heard Rhodes say, "He's alive, all right, Haskell. But he'll soon be wishin' he wasn't. Look at his leg."

## **Previous Literary Works**

Thomas Dolby's literary journey began with the release of 'The Speed of Sound: Breaking the Barriers between Music and Technology: A Memoir' in 2017 (Icon Books). A #1 Amazon bestselling memoir.



In 'The Speed of Sound,' Dolby invites readers into the captivating world of the music industry during the vibrant eighties, offering a behind-the-scenes glimpse into his remarkable career. Drawing from meticulous notes and journals, Dolby's memoir chronicles his journey from Silicon Valley in the nineties to the forefront of the mobile phone revolution at the turn of the millennium. It was Dolby who created the synthesizer installed on most mobile phones today, showcasing his groundbreaking contributions to technology.

With wit, humor, and considerable storytelling panache, 'The Speed of Sound' unveils the inner workings of the music industry while providing a unique history of technology over the past three decades. From rubbing shoulders with Bill Gates over Chablis to encounters with icons like Michael Jackson, Dolby offers a firsthand account of his experiences as both an insider and a technology pioneer. His groundbreaking ideas have left an indelible mark on society, shaping the way we live and interact with technology today.

## **Praise/ Reviews for The Speed of Sound**

“Engaging, emotional, funny and surprising!”

- *J. J. Abrams Filmmaker*

“His journey is as amazing as the book is well written. From start to finish, I thoroughly enjoyed every page... Brilliant.”

- *Henry Rollins*

“Well-written, fast-paced... what a ride.”

- *Elmore Magazine*

“Among the boldest and brashest of a very bold and brash era.”

- *The Baltimore Sun*

“Dolby’s style—understated but acute—and wealth of anecdotes make for an enjoyable narrative... the bespectacled Brit is more Renaissance man than one-hit wonder.”

- *Publisher’s Weekly*

“A Quixotic figure in a whirlwind of chance, great talent, and impeccable timing... rarely fails to amuse.”

- *The Austin Chronicle*

“Innovative accomplishments, rendered in fascinating detail here... legendary.”

- *Kirkus Reviews (starred review)*

“Wildly entertaining.”

- *Salon.com*

## **Media/Press Inquiries**

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For review copies, please go to:

<https://reviews.bookwhisperer.ink/prevaling-wind-thomas-dolby>

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