

*THE
DAY THE
WORLD
CAME TO
TOWN*

9/11

IN GANDER, NEWFOUNDLAND



JIM DEFEDÉ



The Day the World Came to Town

9/11 in Gander, Newfoundland

Jim DeFede



ReganBooks

An Imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers

Dedication

For my mother, and in memory of my father

Contents

[Cover](#)

[Title Page](#)

[Dedication](#)

[Introduction](#)

[Day One](#)

[Chapter One](#)

[Chapter Two](#)

[Chapter Three](#)

[Chapter Four](#)

[Chapter Five](#)

[Day Two](#)

[Chapter Six](#)

[Chapter Seven](#)

[Chapter Eight](#)

[Chapter Nine](#)

[Chapter Ten](#)

[Day Three](#)

[Chapter Eleven](#)

[Chapter Twelve](#)

[Chapter Thirteen](#)

[Chapter Fourteen](#)

[Chapter Fifteen](#)

[Day Four](#)

[Chapter Sixteen](#)

[Chapter Seventeen](#)

[Days Five and Six](#)

[Chapter Eighteen](#)

[Chapter Nineteen](#)

[Epilogue](#)

[Acknowledgments](#)

[About the Author](#)

[Credits](#)

[Copyright](#)

[About the Publisher](#)

INTRODUCTION

Where are you going?”

The man sitting next to me was curious, since we'd both been on the same plane from Miami to Montreal, and now, by coincidence, we were sitting next to each other on a connecting flight to Halifax, Nova Scotia. It was early February and he was on his way home after vacationing in the Caribbean.

“Gander, Newfoundland,” I said.

Because of the lack of a regional accent in my voice, the man could tell Newfoundland was not my home. “Why would anybody leave Miami to go to Gander in the middle of winter?”

This was certainly a reasonable question. When I had left Miami it was warm and sunny and about eighty-five degrees. The forecast in Gander called for temperatures somewhere around minus ten degrees Fahrenheit, with a windchill of minus thirty.

“Don't get me wrong, amazing people in Newfoundland,” he quickly added. “I used to live there. Friendliest people you will ever meet. Strangest, too.”

The man was a civil engineer and he offered a story as proof. “We had a crew that was working in this remote town in the far northern end of the province,” he began. “The only way to reach this town was by airplane. There were no roads into it at all. And no hotels. So while the crew is working up there, they live with families in the area. The couple they were staying with was really nice, and at the end of the job the company, as a bonus, offered to fly them to Florida for an all-expenses-paid week-long vacation.”

The man laughed, recalling what happened next. “The couple turns it down,” he explained. “They say, ‘But we don't know anyone in Florida, why would we want to go there?’ So we ask them if there is someplace they would rather go instead. And they name this town that was about twenty minutes away by plane. They had friends there they hadn't seen in a while.