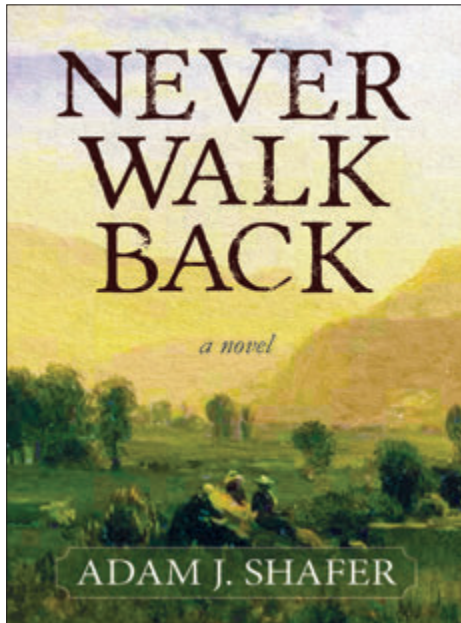


FORTHCOMING OCTOBER 13, 2020

Historical Fiction



All Ruth Casper wants is to make her mark on the world, but in the post-Civil War South she's considered a person of no consequence. After witnessing a speeding locomotive massacre a herd of wild elk, she conjures up the design for an improved railroad brake. It's based on an invention that her husband, Henry, a tinkerer and a dreamer, has been unable to bring to reality. Ruth encourages him to construct the brake, and the two of them undergo a perilous trip north to Washington to have it patented. There they encounter Augustus Windom, the man-child heir to his father's railroad empire, who's obsessed with establishing his own legacy. When he decides that he'd rather steal Henry's creation than pay for it honestly, the three of them set upon a collision course with each other that has far-reaching consequences. Rich in historical details, this novel will appeal equally to railroad enthusiasts and readers who enjoy stories about women who chase their dreams with boldness and grit.



Adam J. Shafer's short stories have appeared in a number of literary magazines. His story "Brushed Nickel" received Honorable Mention in the *Carve Magazine* Raymond Carver Contest in 2013, and he received *The Jabberwock Review* Nancy D. Hargrove Prize for Fiction in 2014 for his story "Fugue."

This is his debut novel. He lives in Chicago with his family.

Advance praise for *Never Walk Back*

"In his debut novel, Shafer deftly sets Ruth and Augustus on a collision course, each aiming for glory; Augustus may marshal the machinery of wealth and power against Ruth, but she will use her wits to restage that battle...A compelling showdown between honor and ambition set against an exciting historical moment." —*Kirkus*

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