

Dreams Denied
A novel of Reconstruction
Stratford Books
November, 2007

The tragedy of the Civil War is over. A new era of reconstruction has begun. When Max Hutchinson arrives from Washington as Bureau commissioner for the refugees and freedmen in Charleston, he is driven by dreams of democracy, fairness and justice.

Max finds allies in Susannah Edwards of Boston, come to teach in the new black schools, powered by her own dreams of legalizing a woman's right to vote. And Simon Alston, the New York banker who dreams of building South Carolina's first railroad. And even Jake Johnson, an ex-slave whose dreams of racial justice are forged on the hot anvil of his black militia.

But they are soon confronted by a potent clash of cultures when forced to fight the likes of Harold Tinsdale, a racist governor who dares to defy the Federal government with his Black Codes. And Clayton Farnsworth, a cunning and corrupt carpetbagger defined by deceit and fraud. And Billy Ray Dawson, a drunken descendant of the South's very Lords and Proprietors, who creates his own clan of Rebel nightriders to harass and threaten the former slaves with intimidation, violence and murder.

The reformers battling for South Carolina's newly emancipated blacks have no idea how twisted and unjust the entrenched Southrons can be.

Their dreams may have been powerful. But they would be dreams denied.