

Death by Banshee

"History Will Vindicate."

A murder with weapons that aren't a day older than when they were forged in the Civil War? Slowly, inexorably a Banshee (harbinger of death to the Druid faithful) guides the victim's grandson back in time to discover the truth about his family – and herself. Inspired by actual historical and personal events.

Who: A Civil War history teacher makes one last round of the Vicksburg battle theater before he keels over. However. If he wasn't dying, it would be disappearing anyway.

What: An angry Confederate general's ghost is on the rampage because his miraculous defense of Vicksburg (against a Bluecoat army larger than that assembled at Gettysburg) on Christmas Eve 1862 is no longer in the history books. Truly, Christmas is dead. God is dead along with it.

When: Set in the modern day, on the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Vicksburg, we experience the chaos – and spiritual consternation – of a daring enemy attack on Christmas Eve, of all days. Were they desperate or what? Why, exactly, have they erased that from history?

Why: What's scarier than a Confederate general rampaging a quiet southern town like a human hurricane on horseback? War is bloody. War is Hell. You see it all. Feel it all. Hate it all, too.

How: ROWDY's brain tumor (on the optic nerve, causing past memories to juxtapose on the present visual field) confuses re-enactors celebrating the battle with the actual Civil War events. The rebel herring that makes his possible is the discovery of actual Civil War weapons (not a day out of the smithy) at his grampa's murder scene.

Yawn: Nothing boring about this project. Lots of hard facts both historical and personal.

Sad fact: I grew up in the Old South, and have lived elsewhere since. Yeah, I know the Confederacy was evil (what's new?) and Evangelicals are almost as bad (they mean well) but there ain't no place on Earth like it, folks. The culture, the fabled southern matters. People are nice – too nice! – their hearts are open, and they're just good people. Can't we keep that part?

Subtext: Confederate monuments are being pulled down in every crook and corner of the nation. Confederates are terrorists, our own home-grown Nazis. But the South isn't the Confederacy now. It's worse: blacks vs. whites, culture wars, all inflamed by self-righteous politicians. Will blacks and whites ever be able to live in peace? To talk! What they need is common ground. TEAM ZYKLON is a sequel, where the male lead has "escaped from Hell."

Diversity: I'm a 100% disabled veteran, and consulting engineer. I've published two textbooks on energy conservation with McGraw-Hill, age 66.

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