



## Surrender at Orchard Rest

*Hope Denney*

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## **Surrender at Orchard Rest** Hope Denney

Somerset Forrest, a former Civil War nurse, is expected to live up to the legacy of her mother's crumbling society family and restore them to their former prestige, but she yearns for independence. She's never gotten over Eric Rutherford, her first love who disappeared years before in the hills along the Chickamauga. As she struggles to find her place among a family all too adept at keeping secrets and tries to make peace with the past, her fiancé Sawyer Russell reveals a secret that threatens the peace of Century Grove, Alabama.

## **Surrender at Orchard Rest Details**

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Author : Hope Denney

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## From Reader Review Surrender at Orchard Rest for online ebook

### Faith Cummings says

#### Surrender At Orchard Rest: A Story of Reconstruction and Deconstruction

This is a story of a ruined South, and how two families struggled to find a new way of life among the pieces. The characters are complex and real. They struggle to come to terms with the good and evil around them after 4 years of war, and the uncertainty of the years after peace was restored. Now that the country is at peace, they must search for peace for themselves, and reconcile themselves to the life they now live. Some of them will succeed and some will not. I look forward to reading the rest of the series to find out what happens.

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### Abigail Sands says

The first quarter of the book was confusing and hard to follow. The characters would 'jump' into past memories without there being a clear indication that was what was going on or some type of delineation. The other three-quarters of the story is easier to follow and interesting. Over-all I enjoyed the plot, enough so that I moved on to the next in the series.

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### Donna G LaBelle says

#### Orchard rest

Excellent book,, the pain after the war and the struggle to survive as well fighting to still love and support each other after the absolute hell All had been thru and seen was very well described,, the pain was evident we by in each character

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### Charlsie Russell says

Hope Denney's debut novel is a well-crafted Southern Gothic, resplendent with the *dark* elements of the genre.

The novel's setting is Orchard Rest Plantation, home to a dysfunctional Alabama family, which after three years of a somewhat successful struggle with the aftermath of the War Between the States and the exigencies of Reconstruction, has begun to implode.

Well-to-do and, by inference, congenial before the War, losses in property, dignity, and blood are unraveling the threads of the family unit, exposing (and exacerbating) a familial divide created by two women, mother and daughter, long before the War began. From all appearances, the relationships between Blanch Marshall Forrest and her mother and their respective first-born sons (both deceased when the story opens) appear inadvertent, but two generations of favoritism, enhanced by death to the point of obsession, is now telling on the surviving children.

The story centers on Somerset Forrest, second-born daughter of Blanch Forrest, and the oldest daughter still residing on the farm. A strong and well-developed character, Somerset, three years after war's end and six

years after he went missing on the Chickamauga, believes she has come to grips with the loss of her true love, Eric Rutherford, and is determined to find happiness with Eric's cousin, Sawyer Russell. But Eric's metaphorical ghost haunts their relationship, more the reader realizes as the story progresses, for Sawyer than for the resolute Somerset. Eric died under mysterious circumstances while in a combat situation with Somerset's two older brothers and Sawyer. Eric's body was never recovered—a simple fact that has kept Somerset hopeful for six long years he will come limping home.

Key to the mystery of Eric Rutherford's loss is Blanch and Thomas Forrest's second son, the handsome and troubled Joseph who is determined to move Orchard Rest forward through hard work and self-denial. Another excellently drawn character (and my personal favorite), Joseph in tandem with his sister Somerset prove the backbone of the Forrest family. Each burdened by wakeful hauntings of lost hopes, their individual weaknesses are countered by complementary strengths that when combined hold the family together.

But the exorcism required to put all their ghosts to rest lies with the disappearance of Eric Rutherford on the Chickamauga in 1863. This mystery, woven through the book, is a compelling one.

Some historical anachronisms were noted in this story but nothing jarring to the uninitiated eye or detrimental to the quality of the work vis-à-vis the genre. If you like Southern Gothic or a good read in general, you will thoroughly enjoy Surrender at Orchard Rest, and I for one look forward to its sequel.

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### **Afton Nelson says**

A little epic in the scope of the detail. At times I felt like the detail was too much, but other times I felt like every bit of detail was needed. Super enjoyable. Very dramatic.

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### **Selena Oliver says**

#### **Unpredictable**

It took a little bit to get into the book but once I started I couldn't stop. Just when you think you know what's going to happen it surprises you. Anything but predictable.

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### **Lori says**

Amazing. It's so, so good to read historical fiction that combines romance, mystery, and suspense into a saga that has had me up until 3 am for three nights running. So well written that I hardly mind that the author has cost me the entirety of my Mardi Gras holiday. And all to find I'm still awaiting a conclusion that ties up several intriguing mysteries. What a gem of a series. Bravo, Mrs. Denney! Waiting for more!

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### **marie rupert says**

### **Very good**

This was an enjoyable book. It gave the insight of the south and it's traditions and the fight women had to control their own lives and distant. It was a good love story but shows the affects of the war in the everyday lives of the people.

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### **Pam says**

Surrender at Orchard Rest is book one in the Orchard Rest Historical Southern Fiction series by Hope Denny. It is set in post-civil war time. It is a really good beginning to an interesting series. It helps to show how those left behind survived.

Somerset Forrest is a former Civil War nurse who is living with her family on the Orchard Rest plantation which survived the Northern press. She has an older sister, Helen; an older brother Theodore; an older brother Joseph; and a younger sister Victoria. Helen and Theodore are married and living away from Orchard Rest. Joseph is recovering from a wound he received when a tree fell on him; and Victoria is the mother of a small boy who was conceived when she was raped during the war. Her mother has decreed that Somerset will bring the family back into its royal position in Richmond society. Somerset's fiancé, Eric Rutherford, was killed at Chickamauga but his body was missing. He was a sniper along with Somerset's brothers Theodore and Joseph and a friend Sawyer Russell. They stayed together through the war until the ambush which killed Eric. Somerset grieved over Eric's loss; but finally fell in love with Sawyer and they became informally engaged. Before they could announce their engagement, Sawyer broke it off because of a secret he carried.

The story continues to tell Somerset's story and her feelings as she begins to live again and tries to find her place in society at Orchard Rest and in Richmond. Will the secret Sawyer divulged to her keep her from finding happiness?

This is a fantastic start to a new series.

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### **Patsy says**

I enjoy the Civil War era and this was right on. The first couple of chapters were a little confusing but was explained rather quickly. I really enjoyed the book, the chapters were a little long, they could have been shorter.

An excellent book with loads of twists and turns, clean romance, mysteries in abundance, and plenty of historical events the author did a great job. I loved the family and the connection that the families had good and bad, the end was fantastic. The storyline was strong with well defined characters, and events. The story moved at a fast pace, the author is a great storyteller. I enjoyed it.

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### **DonnaJo Jo Pallini says**

I enjoyed this Civil War romantic novel. The twists and turns were surprising. I was expecting something ordinary but was pleasantly surprised.

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### **Traci says**

This has everything a good historical fiction should have: a love triangle, betrayal and suspense. I love anything about the Civil War period and reconstruction so I was excited when I found this gem on Amazon for free. It's a good read that has you wondering what will happen next

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### **Debbie says**

My goodness, this book had more twists and turns than a mountain road. An excellent debut novel. The book centers around Somerset, a 23-year-old who lost the love of her life during the Civil War. She tries to move forward and find a purpose for her life. This book is full of captivating characters, you feel as if you know them and live through the struggles they endure. Rich detail on every page.

Pick up a copy today. You will not be disappointed. I look forward to reading the next book by Hope Denney.

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### **Angie says**

Here I go again ... Historical fiction series that I can't put down !

Loved this book - the characters, dysfunction, time period, the writing, the twists and turns ! I must see what happens .

Excellent debut ;-)

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### **Leah says**

I really got into this book. The first few chapters are a little confusing as to who's who, but it comes together well. Pretty sure there was no editor involved (some repetitions, timeline inconsistencies, etc), but the story really was very well told. The main characters were very real and well thought out. I liked these people so much, as soon as I finished, I bought the second story in the series and read the first few chapters even though it was well past my bedtime.

The twists and turns in this southern story kept the pages turning until my eyes refused to stay open any longer.

I would love to see pictures of the homes and buildings that inspired the old homes in this book.

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