



Darkness Visible: A Novel of the 1892 Homestead Strike

Trilby Busch

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Tensions escalate in a wage dispute between Carnegie Steel and unionized workers in the gritty mill town of Homestead, Pennsylvania, during the spring of 1892. When the company's contract with the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel workers expires at the end of June, Carnegie's partner, H.C.Frick, locks out workers at the mill. This move to break the union sets the stage for a confrontation that makes headlines around the world. The story of the 1892 Homestead Strike is told primarily from the points of view of two characters living in Homestead. Disowned by his minister father, university student Emlyn Phillips has forsaken the bleak coalfields of South Wales to make a fresh start. Aided by his brother-in-law, Gwyn Jones, Emlyn finds work as a laborer at Open Hearth #2 in the Homestead Works. As Emlyn struggles to find a niche in the New World, he must wrestle with the demons that drove him from the Old. Homestead doctor William Oesterling tries to negotiate the conflicts between his daughters: Sarah, an elementary school teacher, and Carrie, the wife of an attorney for H.C. Frick of Carnegie Steel. These characters, their families, and all the residents of Homestead are forever transformed by a defining moment in American history: the battle between workers and company-hired Pinkertons on July 6, 1892.



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