



**Title:** Sweet Dream Baby

**Author:** Sterling Watson

**Description:**

Sent to live in the humidity of rural Florida with his grandparents and his sixteen-year-old Aunt Delia for the summer, twelve-year-old Travis becomes absorbed in the closed ways of small-town life. Captivated by Delia, Travis watches her attempt to find a place for herself in the socially stunted, gossip-driven town. Delia's secrets go beyond what Travis can understand, but he believes that he alone can save her—a belief that not only forces him to grow up fast, but one that builds to a dangerous and disturbing climax. In trying to free Delia from her past, Travis leads her into a shocking present and a most uncertain future.

In a work at once honest, chilling and compulsively addictive, author Sterling Watson has created a time and place where rock n roll hums from AM radios, steam rises from a secluded riverbed and violent summer storms threaten the peace of silent nights. Watson's characters are brought vividly to life through Travis's touching, powerful and intensely personal voice. A dark and evocative coming of age tale, *Sweet Dream Baby* begins steeped in innocence and ends in a dramatically different place.

**Reviews**

**Elmore Leonard:**

I can't remember a book that sneaked up and grabbed me the way *Sweet Dream Baby* did. It's a real shocker by a very good writer.

***Publishers Weekly:***

America's loss of innocence in the rock and roll 1950s parallels one boy's painful transformation into a man in Watson's affecting fifth novel. The suspense builds to an explosive ending, and Travis's coming of age is brutal, touching and memorable. Watson ... proves himself a first-rate storyteller.

**Dennis Lehane:**

Sterling Watson's *Sweet Dream Baby* is one of the finest novels I've read in years, an incandescent blend of gothic noir, Faulknerian dreamscape and bittersweet coming-of-age story. Months after reading it, it haunts me still.

**Michael Connelly:**

*Sweet Dream Baby* is a beautiful book. Sterling Watson is surehanded and telling in a story that is as elegiac as it is gripping.

**Kirkus Reviews:**

A southern boy's fantasy of coming of age under the guidance of his languorous older aunt could make this a sneaky sleeper.

**Fred Chappell, author of *Look Back All the Green Valley*:**

Sterling Watson's *Sweet Dream Baby* brings us the words and music, the tastes and smells of that special time as well as its heartache and secret shame. I was utterly absorbed in the fierce pages.