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Where late the sweet birds sang pdf

Where Late the Sweet Birds is sometimes sung by Kate Wilhelm, a book only has to get a second chance. An example for this reader: Kate Wilhelm's Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang. When I first started this book about 35 years ago, for some strange reason, I couldn't get beyond page 20 and put it unread back on my bookshelf, where it stayed all the time. Flash forward to last week when I decided to give the book another chance (what about my alleged adult sophistication and mature patience), and guess what? The novel immediately sucked in me, and I moved through the daring in record time, revelling in its beautiful prose and completely entangled in its multigenerational narrative. Go figure! Although it wasn't the author's first book on cloning (that would be her debut 1965 sci-fi novel, The Clone), Wilhelm's 1976 work was named by the American Fanzine Locus as the best novel on cloning to date, and I'm not going to argue with that assessment. Wilhelm's novel is divided into three discrete sections. The first, Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang (the title derives from Shakespeare's Sonnet 73), originally appeared in 1974 in the semi-regular anthology of author/editor Damon Knight's new science fiction orbit (it was Orbit #15, to be exact). Here the reader meets David Sumner, who lives with his very large, extended group of families in the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia. Faced with global famine, drought, plagues of new diseases, climate change, crop shortages, mineral scarcity, impending warfare, and other global disasters, Grandfather Sumner quickly realizes that families must stay in their valley and build facilities to ensure the group's survival ... including a fully equipped hospital and laboratories for carrying out cloning research. In this first section, which spans a large number of years, the programmes are implemented and the cloning process proves to be successful. But problems arise when a caste system arises between the cloned individuals and the so-called elders, when David begins to fall in love with the clone of his late girlfriend Celia, and especially when David decides that the increasingly detached cloned beings must be eliminated. In the second section, Shenandoah, the cloned community thrives and sends an expedition of six, by boat, to find out if anyone else lives on Earth, and to explore nearby Washington, D.C. This section focuses on a young clone named Molly, who begins to suffer strange symptoms during the harrowing expedition when it first comes from five identical sisters. In this section it is revealed that the cloned brother and sister units have what can almost be called bee spirit; if they are Siblings, Molly begins to function and think for the first time in her 26 years as an individual. Upon her return to the community, she is branded oddball; to live alone in the ancestral Sumner farmhouse; has a secret child, Mark, with one of their other estranged expedition members; and is later drugged and forced to become a breeder, a human baby machine for implanted, cloned embryos. In the third section, At Still Point, we follow Mark's progress after his mother is expelled from the community, and experience his growth from a young child to about 40 years. Mark is even more of an independent loner than his mother Molly had been, but he possesses woodman skills that still make him of great value to the valley. In this section, Mark and others undertake another exploration trip to D.C., then Mark travels alone to the radioactive wreck of Philadelphia and the glaciated surroundings of New York City. Ultimately, we discover that the clones have no imaginative abilities – they can only learn and copy, but not create – a fact that can lead to the community's demise unless something is done quickly... For the life of me, I can't imagine what originally made me this book when I tried it out for greatness in 1981, unless it was the large number of characters that William presents to us on the opening pages, OR the complex scientific chatter about hereditonyness (A, A1, A2, A3 and A4 clones with their a , a1 , a2, a3 and a4), with which the author rebukes us. This time I had no problem at all with both aspects and found Wilhelm's work quite fascinating indeed. Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang is beautifully written, with an emphasis on the natural beauty of the Virginia landscape, and David, Molly and Mark are all incredibly sympathetic characters. William does not shy away from the subject of sex in her novel, and in fact the clones are exposed as a rather promiscuous group (all in the name of survival of the species, of course), which even regularly interferes in incestuous, homosexual, six-way orgies! The expedition sequences are often exciting and even exciting, and the early romance between David and Celia is beautiful and ultimately heartbreaking. As I mentioned earlier, this time it was a compulsively readable affair for me, and yet ... there are some problems. I'm not the first to point out how compact this novel is (it spans about 70 years of history in less than 200 pages). The Scottish critic David Pringle, on the one hand, said that it was a sensitive, thoughtful work, but that (given the long of history) is perhaps too compressed, and I would agree with it. (Pringle has discarded the novel elsewhere, calling it a disjointed book in a distant key. I am not so inclined, inclined, with THE statement.) For me, this feels like a job that could certainly have benefited from a longer treatment. In the course of the book, years often pass between one paragraph and another, and just as we develop a real connection to, say, David or Molly, the character disappears from the plot, his final fate remains unknown. Other seemingly important characters die shockingly, but before the reader can really hang on to them, too. And for all William's focus on nature descriptions (at least 20 different tree varieties are mentioned throughout history), their ability to adequately describe the exact layout of the clone community and its surroundings was completely lacking for this reader; Good luck trying to imagine the hospital, the laboratory, the dormitories and the boat dock of the community in relation to each other! Still, these are little quibbles, I suppose, when they are stacked against the whole. Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang was, of course, the winner of the prestigious Hugo Award for Best Novel of 1976, Joe Haldeman's Mindbridge (of which I had never heard of), Frank Herbert's Children of Dune (ugh, sorry, never cared), Fredrik Pohl's Man Plus (still waiting on my bookshelf; Man Plus DID beat Kate's novel for this year's Nebula Award) and Robert Silverberg's Shadrach in the Furnace (which I loved ... You can read Kat's and my FanLit reviews for this one here). Personally, I would have awarded the Silverberg novel – it is a more satisfying book overall – but I certainly would not have bemoaned Ms. Wilhelm with her award for an undeniably memorable science fiction contribution in the apocalyptic vein. In fact, I look forward to reading another Wilhelm novel in the near future; it will most likely be her 1979 offering Juniper Time, which pringle has selected for inclusion in its excellent cover book Science Fiction: The 100 Best Novels. And I feel like when I sit down to read Juniper Time, it won't be 35 years before I'm done... Sandy Ferber Like Sandy, I struggled to break into Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang when I tried to read it in the late 1970s. In my case, I wasn't mature enough at the time to get into a book that didn't seem to have a conventional hero in the early pages, and that gave me many, many characters to follow. Luckily, I grew up and grew into it. I first read this two or three months ago. Like Sandy, I see some flaws in the overall length of the book and in its pace; for me and Sandy, his strengths outweigh the weaknesses. In the late 1970s, when Wilhelm Most American science fiction readers lived in fear of a thermonuclear holocaust, and the vast majority of apocalyptic fiction posed the final countdown as the cause. William was more visionary and postulate a combination of environmental collapse and disease as triggering factors of near extinction. The wealthy and professionally diverse Sumner family retreats to their home in a remote part of the Shenandoah Valley and prepares to survive the devastation. I found this the least plausible part of the book, but it moved quickly; through page 42 of a 200-page book, we have the last few apocalypse survivors who raise – and will – raise the first generation of clones. Each of the three sections of the book focuses on a different aspect, the opening part deals with preparation and allows us to see the posthuman clones through the eyes of someone who is more like us. The middle section follows an expedition of cloned people daring out of their valley, with unforeseen consequences for one of the clones, Molly. The third section follows a child from Molly to adulthood. William explores the nature of individuality and questions what would happen if sickle from people cloned from the same source material developed an empathic or even telepathic connection. While other sci-fi writers - I don't call names "oughRobertSilverbergcough" - imagined that their main characters had lustily greeted sexy ancestors because of time travel, William asked what sex would be like if it were completely disconnected from the reproductive process – and what it would be like to share consciousness with his sex partners. In the sexually liberal era of the 1970s, William is thoughtful and honest about these questions and about the less than shiny aspects of human nature. In the first section, our main character David approaches the clone of the first generation of his true love, Celia, for sex. The clone shows horror at the thought of copulating with one of the old, uncloned people, but we also realize that in David's eyes she is not a person, the same – it's just a copy of someone he loved. We don't see David at his best here, but at the same time we can empathize. When the clones are in charge, sex often takes place in a festival-like environment, but the rare fertile female clone is locked up and restricted, treated like cattle. There are no villains, no utopia and no easy answers... but there are thoughtful questions. Through the character of Molly, Wilhelm also explores the role of artistic impulse in humans. As the clone generations continue, the group spirit they share limits innovation and imagination. William shows us the clones that recognize this, see the problem and can't fix it... they lack the imagination. Is the choice the Summers made the right choice? Are the clones really post-humans? What would be the fate of humanity in the face of the global collapse of the environment? All in all, this short book, with all its flaws, is fleshy and thoughtful and deals with problems. Problems. are now perhaps even more Germanic (that's a pun) than at the first cameo. Marion Deeds SHARE: FOLLOW: If you plan to buy this book, you can support FanLit by clicking on the book cover above and buying it (and everything else) on Amazon. It doesn't cost you anything extra, but Amazon pays us a small referral fee. Click any book cover or link. We use this income to keep the website running. It pays for website hosting, postage for giveaways, and bookmarks and T-shirts. Thank you very much! You!