



The Repossession

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~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

Spurlack, an old gold-mining town in British Columbia, is a community where people don't bother to lock their doors during the day. But 16 children have disappeared in six weeks. The Reverend Schneider is driving round in his Mercedes-Benz condemning some children as the 'Devil's own' as he gathers support for his Church of the Free Spirits, and mysterious experiments are taking place at the large quasi-military complex ('the Fortress') outside the town. Fifteen-year-old Genie Magee, a descendant of the town's founder, is literally imprisoned by her mother who, under Schneider's influence, believes her to be 'possessed'. Genie's boyfriend, Rian, lives with his mother, who is disabled as a result of his father's drink-driving, and argues with her new male friend over dinner. Through the unexpected intervention of a flash-flood, Genie and Rian find themselves at the centre of these apparently random factors, most of which are closely related.

Hawksmoor keeps the pot boiling in this tale which, in the true tradition of adventure-yarns, blends the extraordinary and the probable. The central theme is 'teleportation', the immediate movement of people through space (as demonstrated in Star Trek's 'Beam me up, Scotty!'). Here, the idea is extended to 'genetic holding patterns' and the digitisation of human DNA 'necessary to keep the human body whole when it is 'beamed up'. But what then happens to a person's DNA? There is genuine strangeness in the scene where a group of children who for some time have existed only in cyberspace awaken in the real world with subtle changes to their bodies.

This is the real world of the American Dream (despite the Canadian setting) 'bald eagles circle over the cliff-tops, deer roam the woodland and true happiness is found on the farm bringing in the apple-crop. Yet we also witness the corruption of a declining pioneer-community by snake-oil religion and the brutal power of a mysterious corporation.

Genie and Rian are pleasant companions for sharing this adventure, and are sketched in sufficiently for us to care about them. With such a satisfying story-line, it comes as something of a disappointment to find that there is no satisfactory conclusion here. Although the book ends with a double cliffhanger, it is to be hoped that the second instalment is equally ingenious if it is not to be simply the further adventures of Genie and Rian. Nevertheless, the book should prove intriguing for readers of 12 and more.

Links:

[1] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/the-repossession>

[2] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/193>

[3] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/ruth-taylor>