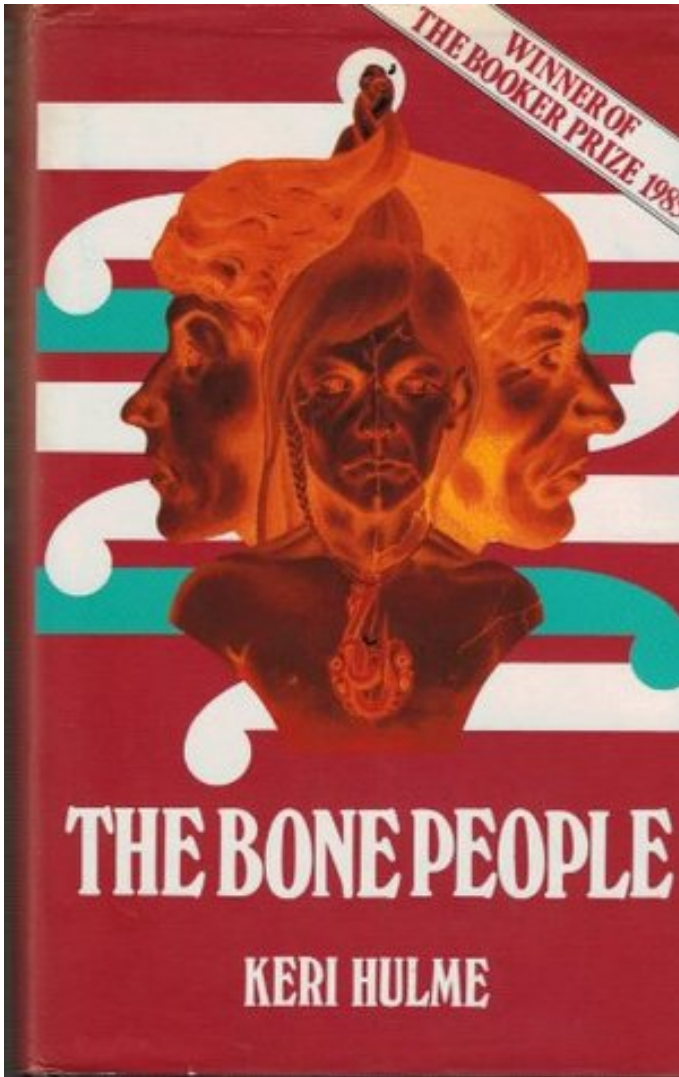

Keri Hulme

The Bone People



Title: The Bone People

Author: Keri Hulme

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Description

Integrating both Maori myth and New Zealand reality, *The Bone People* became the most successful novel in New Zealand publishing history when it appeared in 1984. Set on the South Island beaches of New Zealand, a harsh environment, the novel chronicles the complicated relationships between three emotional outcasts of mixed European and Maori heritage. Kerewin Holmes is a painter and a loner, convinced that "to care for anything is to invite disaster." Her isolation is disrupted one day when a six-year-old mute boy, Simon, breaks into her house. The sole survivor of a mysterious shipwreck, Simon has been adopted by a widower Maori factory worker, Joe Gillayley, who is both tender and horribly brutal toward the boy. Through shifting points of view, the novel reveals each character's thoughts and feelings as they struggle with the desire to connect and the fear of attachment.

Compared to the works of James Joyce in its use of indigenous language and portrayal of consciousness, *The Bone People* captures the soul of New Zealand. After twenty years, it continues to astonish and enrich readers around the world.

Insightful reviews

Booknblues: Three is the magic number of Keri Hulme's book *The Bone People*. Three people, Kerewin Holmes an artist who lives by the sea in an enchanted tower which she built, Joe a Maori man who lives in a house of pain of his own creation and Simon the lost child who searching for a home, band together to form a strange family.

These three become involved with each other in a dance of death and destruction and a battle for redemption of the human spirit. They make up the family of man or the bone people, brittle un-giving beings who are attempting to fight the isolation of their souls and find fulfillment in involving themselves with each other. These three are represented by a woman Keri the artist, a man Joe the lost warrior and the child, Simon the hope for the future. Can they join together and heal each other or will they work to cause each other's destruction. That is the question of the *Bone People*.

Keri Hulme's has a gift with words. Her stream of consciousness writing is beautiful and compelling. Despite the beauty of her words, the story is harrowing and heart breaking. We so often hurt those who we love most. The assault on young Simon is a violence both verbal and brutally physical. Are the young resilient in nature or are they brittle and easily broken? Is the child truly the savior of the man? These are questions which Hulme's seems to ask.

Throughout the book the theme of family is recurrent. What comprises a family and what obligations do family members have to each other. The family is a bright promise kept, a joining of human lives and spirits. The members of the bone people are drawn to their own isolation. They have found diverse methods of self destruction and use them skillfully. The reader journeys through the book simultaneously loving and hating the members of this strange family.

I cannot help but recommend this book, but with the precaution that it is quite difficult reading, both in plot and style.

Kate: I don't much care for the star metric of rating books along the like - dislike spectrum. it is at best an imperfect proxy for communicating both the quality and impact of a book. i can't, for example, honestly say that "i really liked" this book; hulme's narrative left me feeling manipulated and abused.

its a simple enough story of the relationship between a woman, a mute boy and his father. and i think many people might mistakenly assume that this is a story fundamentally about colonialism and the maori people. rather, isolation and the intractability of human dysfunction are much more central. it a hell of a story. be prepared.

okay, comment #1 done. on to the next one...

Lee: When I recommended this book to my book club several years ago, the only other woman who had read it glared at me and said "if we pick this book, I am going to be REALLY mad at you" and so I withdrew the suggestion. This winner of the Man Booker prize is painful to read. It forces the reader to consider the complexity of human nature and behavior -- how thin the line can be between love and abuse. It is set in New Zealand and is about three wounded and likeable characters - a man, a woman, and a child.

Shandy: it is a ebook that individuals both love or hate. It offers with matters which are as a rule in black and white, and paints them in colors of gray. The protagonist, Kerewin Holmes, half white, half Maori, lives by myself in a lighthouse in New Zealand. Set in her ways, she is content material to stay out her days in solitude. sooner or later a mysterious, silent, blonde boy lands up on her beach. uncertain the best way to deal with this situation, she bargains with it the easiest she will by way of taking him in and slowly figures out who his caretaker is. Soon, she meets his adoptive father, Joe, a Maori. Kerewin quickly turns into with regards to Joe and to his son. However, as Kerewin speedy reveals out, the connection among Joe and his followed son is especially complicated, abusive, and heartbreaking. Yet, regardless of the melancholy and the abuse, the reader unearths it very unlikely to contemplate Joe a villain, and likewise will get embroiled within the tangled and fiery courting among Kerewin, Simon, and Joe. This e-book confronts problems with ethnic identity, baby abuse, and alcoholism. once you learn the ultimate chapter, you discover it not easy to shut the ebook and stroll clear of the lives of the 3 major characters. you furthermore mght can't learn this e-book and never be swept away through the writing of Keri Hulme.

Jane: I've simply entire studying The Bone People. I selected it simply because i'm traveling to New Zealand in a couple of weeks and that i locate it enriching to learn books via authors of the rustic i go to. while I researched NZ books, this one was once pointed out as a vintage NZ book. whilst I observed that it was once Booker Prize winner, i used to be ready for a not easy learn with advanced feelings and relationships. And so it is. crucial story, and written fantastically and creatively – I loved using phrases and imagery, and using indented sections for the characters' self-talk. It didn't take me lengthy to develop into absorbed within the tale and characters however it used to be a gruelling kind of absorption. The exact description of NZ crops and coastal environments was once very interesting, and supplied a few emotional aid from the

story. I did consider that the latter a part of the e-book had a touch diversified tone and used to be a section shocked on the quick, most-ends-tied up ending. however it has given me an excellent believe for NZ Maori/Pakeha culture, together with either the great and undesirable features, and the typical environment. it's a e-book that might remain in my brain for it slow and should definitely enhance my journey to NZ.

Janice: i've got a sense this ebook goes to hang-out me for a truly lengthy time. Given that, I should still bump my ranking up a bit higher. Except..... the writing kind was once very diverse from whatever i have learn before. I did get the cling of it will definitely other than that i used to be pressured by way of the Mauri language (in spite of the dictionary on the back) and the symbolism. The subject matters of alcoholism and baby abuse have been disturbing. The characters were not all that likeable, and yet, in a few unusual way, I grew to love them in all their flaws. I suggestion the finishing was once a section unclear. It wasn't wrapped up with a neat tidy bow, although it seemed to be. both the finishing used to be weak, or it was once deliberately written that solution to hold the reader guessing.

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