



The Sacred Night

Tahar Ben Jelloun

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The Sacred Night continues the remarkable story Tahar Ben Jelloun began in *The Sand Child*. Mohammed Ahmed, a Moroccan girl raised as a boy in order to circumvent Islamic inheritance laws regarding female children, remains deeply conflicted about her identity. In a narrative that shifts in and out of reality moving between a mysterious present and a painful past, Ben Jelloun relates the events of Ahmed's adult life. Now calling herself Zahra, she renounces her role as only son and heir after her father's death and journeys through a dreamlike Moroccan landscape. A searing allegorical portrait of North African society, *The Sacred Night* uses Arabic fairy tales and surrealist elements to craft a stunning and disturbing vision of protest and rebellion against the strictures of hidebound traditions governing gender roles and sexuality.

The Sacred Night Details

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Author : Tahar Ben Jelloun
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Huy says

Ti?p n?i "?a tr? cát", "?êm thiêng" k? v? hành trình c?a Amed/Zhara sau ?êm ???nh m?nh mà ??i v?i cô
"ch?m d?t" v?i ng?i này nh?ng gi?i thoát cho k? khác. Cô ti?p t?c ?i tìm l?i b?n thân và gi?i tính th?c c?a
mình khi nó b? giam hãm quá lâu trong cu?c ??i c?a m?t ng?i ?àn ông.
"C? th? tôi ng?ng không tí?n hoá: nó không l?t xác, nó t? l?i ?? kh?i b? xô ??y và ?? không c?m th?y gì h?t;
nó ch?ng ph?i là m?t c? th? ?àn bà ??y ??n và ham mu?n, c?ng ch?ng ph?i là m?t c? th? ?àn ông thanh th?n
và kho? m?nh; tôi ?ng gi?a c? hai, ngh?a là ??a ng?c."
Tôn giáo và nh?ng suy ngh? c? h? có th? hu? ho?i cu?c ??i con ng??i m?t cách v?nh vi?n, dù h? có ???c t? do
thì bóng ma quá kh? v?n không th? buông tha.

S.Stein says

Worst book in ages. Didn't manage to finish the last 20 pages.

Abir Harara says

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Noor Baher says

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didn't like it

it was ok

liked it

really liked it

it was amazing

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amazing

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Dagio_maya says

“sono incapace di dirvi se si trattasse di una visione, di un incubo o della realtà”

Il silenzio stanca nell'animo e può diventare un sacco di sabbia.

La storia della ragazza Ahmed comincia nel romanzo “Creatura di sabbia” dove vicende concentriche s'intrecciano dando molteplici versioni su quello che successe. Un finale aperto dove io personalmente avevo già collocato delle immagini come se avessi davanti un puzzle da ricostruire. Ma cosa accadde veramente solo la diretta interessata può raccontarlo.

E' una storia che sa di magia e di sogno.

E' una storia che fa assaggiare il bene ed il male e nessuno di quelli che ha voluto raccontarla ne è uscito bene: chi folle, chi senza memoria.

Premetto che non sono d'accordo sulla lettura di questo romanzo senza aver letto “Creatura di sabbia” perchè se è vero che Jelloun tratteggia ciò che era stato allo stesso tempo c'è un filo conduttore emotivo che ha senso solo con le due letture.

In “Notte fatale” il sogno diventa un incubo in cui c'è un alternarsi di realtà e stati allucinatori e preveggenti.

La 27° notte del mese di Ramadam è la notte in cui si suggellano i destini.

La notte della confessione di un padre sul letto di morte.

La notte di una figlia che deve perdonare.

La notte fatale.

Dopo questa notte, a 20 anni, Ahmed si sveste degli abiti maschili e rinasce un'altra volta donna.

Il padre le impartirà una sorta di nuovo battesimo: Zahara.

Da qui un viaggio dentro e fuori di sé.

Un bagno in una mitica fonte dell'oblio per cancellare il ricordo di una vita passata non voluta.

La conquista della libertà da costrizioni sociali, religiose e familiari, tuttavia, non è cosa facile e soprattutto non è gratuita.

E' sufficiente allontanarsi perché il ricordo non faccia più ombra sull'anima?

Victor Morosoff says

Quel beau voyage entre le rêve et la contrée insoumise des dunes et de l'amour. 4,5/5

Anya says

This is the second novel that I've read by famed Moroccan author Tahar Ben Jelloun. I must confess that I wasn't quite a fan of his more recent novel, "Le Bonheur conjugal". However, "La Nuit sacrée", his 1987 Prix Goncourt-winning novel is a completely different story. For me, "Le Bonheur conjugal" and "La Nuit sacrée" are two worlds apart. I critiqued "Le Bonheur conjugal" for being conventional, slow moving and repetitive. "La Nuit sacrée", however, I found incredibly bold, gripping and out-of-the ordinary. But perhaps I'm getting ahead of myself...

This novel is about a young woman (she is not named in the novel, which is in itself significant) who strives to begin life anew after her young life is ruined due to a horrible and secret family tragedy.

Now the way that she endeavours to break with her past is in itself very interesting. We follow her through a series of hallucinatory scenes which could either be fantasy or reality. In fact, throughout the novel, the woman is constantly dipping between reality and fantasy, life and death, and she tries to break away from the chains of her past and present circumstances.

Along the way, she meets with more tragedy, and one incredibly beautiful and poignant love story. There is also a horrific scene towards the end of the novel that was difficult for me to read through (so reader discretion is advised: there is a lot of disturbing violence against women in the novel).

This novel is complex and merits a second reading. One of the novel's themes seems to be how women are so undervalued in the society where this woman comes from. They are even referred to at one point as nothing more than "a hole between legs".

I loved the dreamy, hallucinatory feel of this novel and the love story. The closest novel that I could compare to this one is Marcus Malte's "Le Garçon", which is also about the main character's dream-like journey through life. As was the case for "Le Garçon", I think this novel merits a full five stars.
