



Twin-Bred

Karen A. Wyle

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Librarian's note: Alternate cover edition of ASIN B005VDVHQ2.

Can interspecies diplomacy begin in the womb? After seventy years on Tofarn, the human colonists and the native Tofa still know very little about each other. Misunderstanding breed conflict, and the conflicts are escalating. Scientist Mara Cadell's radical proposal: that host mothers of either species carry fraternal twins, human and Tofa, in the hope that the bond between twins can bridge the gap between species. Mara lost her own twin, Levi, in utero, but she has secretly kept him alive in her mind as companion and collaborator.

Mara succeeds in obtaining governmental backing for her project – but both the human and Tofa establishments have their own agendas. Mara must shepherd the Twin-Bred through dangers she anticipated and others that even the canny Levi could not foresee. Will the Twin-Bred bring peace, war, or something else entirely?

This revised edition removes some unnecessary minor character names, relocates a few scenes into more logical places, and divides chapters that lacked focus as originally organized.

Twin-Bred Details

Date : Published August 2014 by Amazon Digital Services, Inc. (first published October 12th 2011)

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Author : Karen A. Wyle

Format : Kindle Edition 354 pages

Genre : Science Fiction, Fiction, Aliens

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From Reader Review Twin-Bred for online ebook

Sarah (Workaday Reads) says

The summary may sound very sci-fi and off-putting to some readers, but this was a very accessible sci-fi story. It is very character focussed, with very likable characters. I may be a bit biased since I love sci-fi, but found it was a great story that should hold wide appeal to readers.

I loved the extended length of time covered in the book. The story was told over decades, which really allowed the reader to see the longer term effects of the project, and the growth of individual characters. I particularly found myself drawn to Judy and La-ren. They were both strong, intelligent, and likable characters.

One thing I found unusual was the lack of a love story. It seems that almost every book you pick up nowadays has a love story in it, and to read a book without one really stands out.

Overall, this was a great read that should appeal to a wide audience. It was an interesting look at twins, and the bonds they have even over species lines. It also looks at discrimination on a level we have never faced yet, with startling and scary results.

Lynxie says

[(even cross-species) (hide spoiler)]

Jessica says

Mara Cadell is a human scientist on Tofarn. Like every other human, the Tofa, Tofarn's indigenous inhabitants, are a mystery to her. But it's become clear that humans and Tofa are on the path towards conflict if a way of communicating and mediating disputes isn't found. She begins the LEVI project, named after her long-dead twin (who she has kept alive in her mind), in attempt to forge a bridge between species. Human and tofa children will share a uterus and be raised together, in an attempt to create mutual understanding.

Twin-Bred has an interesting premise, but that's where my appreciation of the story ends. Each chapter opens with a snippet of one of Mara's reports on the LEVI project, but Karen A. Wyle may as well have written the whole book in report-form for all the excitement it engenders in readers. The book is written in such a flat, clinical way that I was unable get excited about anything that happened. I was praying for war just so some suspense would be created.

I'm a master at suspending my disbelief, but the plot had so many holes that I just couldn't pull it off for this book. I cannot accept that humans and Tofa are still so ignorant of each other after several generations of co-habiting the same planet. I cannot believe that a random science experiment is the first real attempt at communication. It's just stretching belief too far. Wyle has underestimated her characters and the people who make up her fictional world. If they're smart enough for interstellar travel, they're smart enough to know that good communication is the basis for their survival on Tofarn.

As for characterization, there's both too much and not enough. It seems as though every test subject in the LEVI project gets a chapter. But most of these characters are nothing to readers; readers don't care about them. It becomes painfully monotonous reading the dry conversations between these filler characters. And don't get me started on the authorial choice to create such a terribly boring species as Tofa. They have no facial or body expressions, they don't have sex, and they don't seem to form personal relationships. What kind of entertainment value can a book with Tofa making up half the cast of characters have? There are some moderately interesting characters (Mara, and two of the human host mothers), but you only get to see them on occasion, and they don't really seem to grow or change over the course of the story; their interactions are almost as lifeless as the Tofa's.

If I had been editing this book, I would have told the author to pick a few characters and chronicle their lives during the project, so that readers could see the difference between human life, Tofa life, and twin-bred life, and have the chance to form an emotional bond with the characters. I didn't get to speak to the author, but I do get to speak to you, and I say pass over this one.

To read more of my reviews, visit my blog, [StarLit](#).

Lissette says

Having exhausted Earth's resources, humans have been forced to find another planet which will sustain them. Crossing galaxies, they finally come upon one that looks as if it'll be able to do just that. Unbeknownst to them, another indigenous race already lives there. Nonetheless, the humans will not be deterred and are determined to live amongst these weird, yet intelligent, beings whom they have learned are called Tofa.

Colonizing the new planet is not easy. Relationships between the two races are strained as both seek to govern the other. Communications between both species are practically non-existent as tensions increase and war soon breaks out. The governing power knows that something needs to be done in order to maintain peaceful relations, yet they're unsure of what to do.

Mara Cadell, a scientist in her own right, steps in and suggests that they experiment on whether human and Tofa mothers can carry a set of twins, a child from each species, within their wombs in hopes of broadening their limited communication with the Tofa. She believes that the pairs will allow them to form bonds that may transcend life as they know it so that they can learn more about the perplexing race. Yet what they don't know is that she also has a reason behind wanting to conduct the experiment - one she hopes will help her come to terms with herself and the past she's tried to leave behind.

The experiment is soon underway but the strains between the Tofa and humans continue to escalate. Mara and the surrogate mothers bond with the children, helping them grow along the way. Their plan is to slowly integrate them into society in hopes of gaining a better understanding on how the two races can co-exist.

Yet no one imagined the repercussions of such actions. Mistrust builds on both sides and lives are lost in the process as the scientists seek to better command the already shaky boundaries. Despite this, strong bonds are forged along the way that allow Mara and her subjects to remain close in the face of such adversity.

This was such a unique and quite riveting story. I enjoyed every minute. Karen did a remarkable job in fleshing out her characters and the world they live in. So much so, in fact, that it left me wanting to read more.

Mara's story is very heart-felt and I think we can all relate to losing someone at one point or another. She shows us, though, that anything is possible if you put your mind to it.

The story and history behind the Tofa was also endearing, even if they frustrated Mara and the others, at times, with the fact that they refused to communicate as needed. All in all, it's quite a great read and I truly recommend it to others for reading.

Kat (Kindred Dreamheart) says

Big thanks to the author for entrusting me with an honest review.

From the moment I first saw the cover, I knew this book would freak me out. I'd admit I was kind of scared. Hey cover art is a VERY powerful thing. I've been known to love a book far more than it deserved or pass it up completely as because of the creativity invested in that one single image. But Fear? Fear is an entirely NEW emotion. Therefore true to my nature, no way was I going to let an eerie drawing, as they used to say in my old neighborhood, "punk" me. So I, with much effort, steered my eyes to the synopsis: THIS PEEKED MY INTEREST.

So naturally, I agreed to review the book. From the moment I received the ebook via email, my husband and I were in constant discussion. It reminds me of my high school days on the debate team. This is a debate worthy book. There's a lot of themes that keep your mental wheels turning and launching random conversations with strangers long after the story's over. I won't analyze every political or scientific study depicted in the book. However one rendition that was apparent was the L.E.V.I. or Twin-Bred project. It has such similarities and symbolism to the Biblical story of Jacob and Esau. The "two nations, or species in this case, in the womb" as a means of all the motives posed was genius. The personal and psychological and the public and national dimensions of the twin-bred union between the two species are awe inspiring noteworthy.

This story is told in third person point of view. This was both a positive and a negative. The positive is it allowed an insider view of every mechanic of the story and character. The negative is it made the characters look one dimensional. Even after reading the entire story, I still don't feel as if I know the characters very well. In terms of believable, everyone acted too weird to be considered normal. Heck even the main scientist Mara Cadell was kind of "off her rocker". But I won't get into all that. Mara Cadell was great lead character. She a lonely, crazy, smart, lady engrossed in her work. You can't help but love her.

Overall I liked this story. The ending was very unexpected. The reason I can't give it 5 is because it was slow in places; and I'm an action-loving kind of girl. In Summary: Tofarn is the planet the Humans fled to after they used up Earth. The story doesn't really focus on Tofarn, so you'll only get snippets of this new world. But anyway, they land and see that this safe haven is already populated. Needless to say, there is no peace. The Twin-Bred project was created to link the bridge: one human, one Tofu embryo placed in the womb of a human or Tofu host. The experiment follows the twins from before IVF to adulthood. If you're wondering how this experiment progressed socially and politically. you'll have to read this to find out.

I would recommend this to sci-fi fanatics and adults. YA readers may enjoy it also, but there's very little normal teenage content to relate.

3.5 hearts

Laura Thomas says

Twin-Bred is not my usual type of reading. When I grasped where the story was going I became absorbed in it.

The planet of Tofarn. Humans and Tofa trying to live side-by-side. Lack of communication and social understanding makes them incompatible. One woman's experiment to enable both species to co-exist in harmony.

Filled with characters you can engage with and intricate detail, Karen Wyle has written an edgy story that quickly takes off and makes you believe in the possibilities.

This story is a gem that shines brightly and I hope for a sequel.

Red Haircrow says

Quoting myself from a previous review, “Human and alien interaction in sci-fi is one of my favorite themes when it’s done in an intelligent manner, such as in C.J. Cherryh’s Foreigner Universe and many others by her, or with humor, such as in the League of Peoples series by James Alan Gardner’s, which began with Expendable.”

In Cherryh’s Foreigner Universe, human and alien contact began eagerly on both sides, as they seemed similar superficially similar, yet the situation precipitously dipped into danger resulting in violence and aggression but eventually ended in a wise stalemate and limited contact between the two groups only through a translator/diplomat. In Wyle’s Twin-Bred, the situation is more ambiguous and the solution far, far more distract.

My question was, since the two groups couldn’t readily communicate and understand each other, how did they come to the conclusion something as intimate as shared fetus pregnancies would be a possible solution? How could the aliens agree? Yet it takes place, which of course, is the theme of the book, clearly thought out by the author and intelligently presented.

There were times when the reflection between Mara and her deceased though “present” twin Levi might have been lessened, as I understood the concept through the description of Twin-Bred in the first place, yet I could understand how this relationship was explanatory for other knowledge and emotions experienced throughout, and the scientist’s driving force behind the experiment.

There was believable complexity and conflict in this moderately paced, lengthy novel, and a mature feel to the characters and writing style. None of the truncated or abbreviated feel some books have these days, Twin-Bred is in classic mode, which might certainly be appreciated by those searching for immersive science fiction.

Specifically for Goodreads rating system, I toggled between a 3 and 4 for this book, because I liked it but it is not one I’d likely go back and read, but there was clear enthusiasm by the author within the work. I can appreciate that immensely, which bumped up the score.

Originally posted on my review/interview site <http://flyingwithredhaircrow.wordpress...>

Leslie Barrett Garel says

Karen takes you on a journey that really grips your imagination. I enjoyed it!

Lauren Smith says

When considering the possibility of alien contact, I worry how humanity will behave. As a species, we have frequently proven to be intolerant or hostile when confronted with difference (of race, gender, culture, nationality etc.). Sf has frequently used the alien as a metaphor for the other, exposing and critiquing modes of prejudice and oppression. Less socially conscious tales often reveal our assumptions about the other; consider the stereotype of aliens kidnapping humans for experiments or how many sf stories are about violent alien invaders, portraying other intelligent species as our enemies.

Twin-Bred by Karen A. Wyle is a case of humans behaving badly towards an alien whose motives and culture they do not understand because they can't or won't speak to them. It's an almost embarrassing portrayal of close-minded people encountering a race of technologically inferior beings who might turn hostile.

In the novel, a human colony has been living on the planet Tofarn for 70 years. They share the world with the indigenous Tofa, a race of inscrutable four-armed aliens who don't have any facial features except a blank pair of eyes. The humans do not know how to communicate with the Tofa, and after seven decades of co-habitation the two races still don't understand each other. So far, this hasn't been too problematic and the Tofa didn't seem accepting of the human presence on their planet. But every now and then a conflict arises: the Tofa pack up and leave a village for reasons the humans cannot discern; they complain that humans are shaking hands in public or wearing the colour blue; they make a noise to prevent the humans sleeping at night.

Mara, an ambitious but emotionally dysfunctional young scientist, comes up with a solution: breeding human and Tofa twins. They will not have any genetic relationship; instead, a host mother (human or Tofa) will be implanted with both a human and a Tofa foetus. Mara believes that sharing a womb will forge a unique bond between the twins, finally enabling the two species to communicate. The humans will be able to learn about the Tofa, and the twins will be trained to resolve inter-species conflicts.

Mara's idea is the result of her bond with Levi, her own twin who died in utero. Mara has secretly kept him alive in her mind as an entity who is also her only friend and confidant. Mara even names her twin project after him: the Long-Term Emissary Viviparous Initiative or L.E.V.I.

The Project gets government backing, probably because the government officials all have their own agendas, hoping to use the twins and their abilities to gain power and influence. Even the Tofa seem to be plotting something, not that any of the humans have the means of finding out what they're up to.

Read the full review on my blog [Violin in a Void](#).

Brittany LeMoine says

This sounded interesting on here, and then it happened to be free on kindle at that moment, and it was great. It really pulled me in. Only problem was how it switched characters too suddenly and left me confused a lot.

Rachel Cotterill says

In many ways, *Twin Bred* reminded me of China Mieville's *Embassytown*. In both, humans have reached out into space, forged a home on a planet already inhabited by another sentient species, and struggled with their limited ability to communicate with said aliens. And in both, the proposed solution is a kind of bioengineering involving twins.

Twin Bred starts with the conception of this project, and proceeds with great leaps and bounds through the following twenty or so years. The sparse style makes it a little harder to engage with the characters, but Mara Cadell, main character and the driving force behind the project, is intriguing enough to pull the reader along with her. In the first few pages we learn that Mara lost her own twin brother, who became her childhood "imaginary friend," and it's this experience that shapes her to propose the Twin Bred project.

Every person and group in this novel has their own agenda, and I'm sure the author must be well-versed in the politics around large Government-funded projects, because the layers of complex scheming seem plausible even in the more far-fetched moments of the plot.

All in all, this was an enjoyable and original read, with a novel take on the difficulties of culture and communication which are bound to plague inter-species contact one day.

Miranda says

Twin-Bred was a very interesting read. I started it as something to read while my niece was sleeping. At first, it was hard to get into the story as the formatting for the kindle app on the PHONE was horrible. Once I had it on my actual Kindle paperwhite, I was able to follow the plot and characters more easily. And there's a lot of plot and a lot of characters. There's a handy list of characters at the end of the book, but I didn't know that when I was halfway through.

The actual story is a fascinating one. The world of twins has always fascinated me and I love the sci-fi twist that Karen Wyle takes on intertwin communications. I really got emotionally invested in the kids involved in the Twin-Bred project. It was a little harder to get on board with Mara, but that might just be me. The inclusion of the Shakespeare play at the end was an interesting addition. It definitely clarified an angle of the story, but may have been a bit on the nose for some readers.

Overall, I enjoyed this book, but the phone formatting was misery. I almost gave up!

Jill Elizabeth says

Twin-Bred involves travel into a fantastically inventive world of aliens, twins, and super-science. My review copy of Twin-Bred was oh-so-generously provided by the author, Karen Wyle.

[NB Feb 13: I was just informed by the author that Twin-Bred is now part of KDP Select, which means Amazon Prime members can borrow the book for free, at least from now until May 10, 2012 or so, and everyone will be able to download it for free from Amazon on February 15-16. Happy Reading!! J-E]

This book was fab-you-less. I had a feeling it would be right up my alley when I first saw the blurb describing it. When you start gathering together strings of words that include interspecies diplomacy, intriguing, government, enigma, and ever-cynical (and those are just from the blurb!), you're sure to catch my eye. When you couple that with compelling writing, complex and interesting characters, a plot heavy on intrigue and drama (heavy, that is, without being melodramatic) and a unique setting, well, you're sure to catch much more than my eye. You'll also catch my interest and my admiration.

Wyle's story has it all – laughter, tears, head-shaking, double-takes (literally, teehee), righteous indignation, a teensy bit of shame at the use-it-and-find-a-new-one attitude of all too many people... Twin-Bred is primarily the story of Dr. Mara Cadell, a scientist with a personal interest in twins that leads her to develop a strategy to save the planet.

Not Earth, mind you, we humans abandoned that one ages ago in Wyle's clever creation. No, I'm talking about Tofarn, her decidedly original alterna-world which the humans invaded – wait, um, I mean, moved onto – after the Earth was no longer habitable (you can guess why – humans are humans in every context, unfortunately, even science fictional ones). The Tofa and humans are having issues (surprise, surprise), and the good doctor's plan is aimed at resolving the ever-growing tensions between the races. Tensions that are, in large measure, due to the difficulties of inter-species communication as a result of the Tofa lack of what humans consider a face.

Neato keen, eh?

The aliens are unique, and the world they inhabit is as well. So is the good doctor's plan. She has decided that the solution to the communication gap is to genetically engineer a race of Twin-Bred – twins consisting of one human and one Tofa that are implanted in human and Tofa birth mothers. Why she thinks this will work is one of the more fascinating elements of the story – she bases her belief in the powers of twin communication on the "relationship" she has with her own twin, Levi. Why "relationship" you ask? Well, um, Levi died when Mara was a wee small baby.

Double neato keen, eh? I couldn't agree more.

Nothing like a little dead-twin communication to spark scientific creativity, eh? Then again, is Levi really "dead"? Wyle cleverly weaves a psychiatrist into the mix in a manner that leaves the reader wondering exactly what Levi's status is in this world (or any other) – wonder that only grows as the story develops and the plot thickens.

This is a truly unique trip into a novel, intriguing, and reader-friendly world that is populated by a mixture of good guys, bad guys, and aliens – and believe me, you will shake your head more than once along the way as you try to decide which characters fall within which categories. There are some twists and turns I didn't see

coming (regular readers already know this, but if you are new to my reviews/opinions, let me say this: there is no higher praise from me than when I acknowledge that an author threw me for a loop; when you read as much as I do, that doesn't happen near often enough for my taste!), and the plot moves along at a brisk yet not over-quick pace. There is a nice balance of science and fiction, with an emphasis on the latter. I read a lot of sci-fi, and occasionally find myself lost in the technicalities; Wyle managed to give enough technical details to keep me feeling like I was following why things worked/happened, but not so many that I ever felt adrift in a sea of overwhelming terminology/concepts.

She also sets the ending up nicely for a sequel – and boy oh boy do I hope she's writing one! Don't miss this one kids, I promise you'll enjoy it...

Sandra says

From the blurb:

Can interspecies diplomacy begin in the womb?

In Twin-Bred, the human colony on Tofarn and the indigenous Tofa have great difficulty communicating with and basically comprehending each other. Scientist Mara Cadell, who lost a fraternal twin in utero, proposes that host mothers of either or both species carry twins, one human and one Tofa, in the hope that the bond between twins can bridge the gap between species. Mara has secretly kept her own twin, Levi, alive in her mind as a companion and collaborator.

Mara succeeds in obtaining governmental backing for her project – but both the human and Tofa establishments have their own agendas. Mara must shepherd the Twin-Bred through dangers she anticipated and others that even the canny Levi could not foresee. Will the Twin-Bred bring peace, war, or something else entirely?

Twin-Bred is a fantastic debut novel, set on the planet Tofarn where a human colony is struggling to communicate with and live along the indigenous Tofa. The differences in their species, not only in communication, but also expectations, habits and way of life, coupled with hesitation towards and suspicion of each other, are preventing a harmonious co-existence.

Enter 'mad' scientist Mara Cadell, who lost her own twin Levi before birth but has secretly kept him alive all these years in her mind. Mara suggests a radical project, where human and Tofa mothers are impregnated with twins, one human and one Tofa fetus, in hopes that the special bond and communication methods formed between twins in the womb will help bring about a better understanding and bridge the differences between the two species down the road.

The early chapters of this epic novel are a little difficult to get through, as POVs and time frames jump back and forth while the author gives background history of the humans and the Tofa.

Once the project receives government approval and is underway, the novel really delves into its genre. Human eggs are harvested, not only from the host mothers, and fertilized while the Tofa bring frozen embryos to be implanted into the host mothers. From the get-go, the project runs into difficulties and setbacks, and the reader must pay good attention to all the various subplots that run through the chapters as every little bit of information provided may become important towards the end of the novel. Things that

seemed odd to be mentioned had purpose that wasn't revealed until the final chapters.

There are conspiracies against the project, both from the human and Tofa side, though the Tofa seem much more subtle in their approach. And about 60% into the novel, things turn violent.

In the end, the project is successful and fails at the same time. It's successful in proving the bond between twins, even those of different species, but it fails in uniting the humans with the Tofa.

While this may be billed as a sci-fi novel, and some of the plot points certainly qualify it for that, the book's underlying theme is also very much applicable to numerous conflicts throughout history and even today.

In every situation where a group of people land on foreign shores, the communication with the indigenous people is going to be difficult. An approach full of suspicion will only lead to conflict in the long run. I was reminded of the "White Man" coming to America and being confronted with the Native Americans whose customs and habits and language were certainly different. I was reminded of conflicts today where nations are torn apart by religious conflicts.

Karen A. Wyle weaves a richly imaginative tale of interspecies relations that is, despite its futuristic setting, perfectly applicable to days gone by and even today. The book's descriptive storytelling, as well as the author's extraordinary ability to add numerous thought-provoking concepts throughout made me want to give this debut novel 5 stars. Unfortunately, the anti-climatic ending fell really flat for me and I am thus removing one star. At the same time, the ending, while completing the main story, leaves room for possible extension into another novel, which I'd be very interested in reading, if the author chooses to go that route.

I very much enjoyed reading this book and am glad that I pushed my way through the early chapters. This is one I'll gladly re-read down the road.

Please be aware that I received a complimentary copy of the electronic version from the author in exchange for an honest review.

Kathleen says

After 70 years of colonizing on the planet of Tofarn, humans and native Tofa still can't find a way to communicate or learn about each other in order to live in harmony together. Blended Tofa / Human communities have not done well, some have formally disbanded and others are on the verge of falling apart. Because of continued misunderstandings and communication failures, a new way to learn about each other is needed. Dr. Mara Cadell, a scientist comes up with a plan proposing to have Human and Tofa host mothers carry twin fetuses (one human, one Tofa) in the hope that the Twin-Bred will initiate interactions and communication in utero that will bond them together and bridge the gap between future generations of Humans and Tofa on Tofarn. Mara names the project LEVI (Long-Term Emissary Viviparous Initiative) after her twin brother that died in utero, but to others it is referred to and called "The Project." Will Mara's project succeed as she had planned? Can the Twin-Bred forge a new community of Humans and Tofa that will be able to communicate and understand each other enough to co-exist and live in harmony? Or will the individual plans of the Human and Tofa establishments only serve to destroy both communities and possibly have an irrevocable impact on Tofarn?

Twin-Bred is a unique science fiction novel with an intriguing concept of whether Twin-Bred species can

form a bond in utero and when born, use this twin bond to help create a harmonious society for future generations to come. This imaginative storyline encourages the reader to ponder this concept as they turn the pages. The author creates a lot of interesting characters in the story, in fact I felt the need to write them all down so I wouldn't get confused. It was interesting to follow the characters throughout the story, their individual stories added depth and intrigue, it seems like each of them had their own agenda for "The Project." I liked Mara's complicated and complex character the most, you couldn't help but feel for her as you learn about her own tragic story. The author does a good job of providing the reader with more than just a typical sci-fi story, she provides a thought provoking look into social, political and scientific aspects of humanity.

While science fiction is not one of my favorite genres of books to read, I did enjoy reading *Twin-Bred*. I typically do not like far-fetched stories, but with this story I found myself engaged by the intriguing concept of twin-bred species. *Twin-Bred* is the story of a scientific attempt to promote a stable, peaceful and harmonic society between two species. *Twin-Bred* is a very intriguing and thought provoking novel that Sci-Fi fans should put on their reading list!

RATING: 3 STARS *** (My Rating) / 4 STARS **** (Amazon Rating)

Disclaimer: I received a copy of the book from the author in exchange for my honest review and participation in hosting a virtual book event on my book review blog site.

Virtual Book Event: On Wednesday, May 9, 2012, author Karen A. Wyle participated in a virtual book event with an Author Interview on Jersey Girl Book Reviews.

<http://jerseygirlbookreviews.blogspot...>

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