

When We Were Clones

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Never Let Me Go, by Kazuo Ishiguro, Random House.

READING THE NOVELS of Kazuo Ishiguro means experiencing, with great intensity, the power of restraint. His reticent narrators conduct themselves with exemplary politeness even when they describe to us their most personal memories and musings. The controlled surface of these novels creates the impression of great psychological and historical depth. By means of their studied formality, the widow Etsuko (in *A Pale View of Hills*), the artist Ono (in *An Artist of the Floating World*), the detective Banks (in *When We Were Orphans*), and the butler Stevens (in *The Remains of the Day*) erect a bulwark against their complicity with historical crimes or else try to keep some deeply felt personal grief at bay. These entanglements inspire pity or condemnation, but they do not inspire confidence in the narrators. All too soon, we come to distrust their reserved dignity and begin to read between the lines. In *When We Were Orphans*, the narrator himself engages in such a reading of a letter sent to him by a former friend: "Perhaps it was my hope that. . . I would discover in those rather formal, almost blandly pleasant lines, some hitherto hidden dimension. But in fact the letter continues to yield up little more than the bare bones of her life." Ishiguro's narrators are masters of precisely such "formal, almost blandly pleasant lines." But they, unlike this letter, do allow for glimpses into some "hidden dimension," a whole complex of historical guilt and personal trauma that gives their restraint its rich and resonant undertones.

At first glance, Ishiguro's most recent novel, *Never Let Me Go*, seems to proceed in a similar vein. It features a narrator who remembers a lost time, the many years spent at a boarding school, Hailsham. As she drifts calmly from memory to memory, we get the distinct sense that something is hidden from our view, that some

deeply seated trauma or guilt might emerge in between these blandly pleasant lines. The great surprise Ishiguro has in store for us is that this time nothing is hidden or repressed. It turns out that Ishiguro has put his characteristic style to a new use: creating a narrator whose feature is a singular, and deeply unsettling, blandness. The blandness, here, is not the product of restraint. Rather, it takes the form of the chatty familiarities of a schoolgirl, whose confiding naiveté betrays a consciousness much younger than her purported age: "My name is Kathy H. I'm thirty-one years old, and I've been a carer now for over eleven years. That sounds long enough, I know, but actually they want me to go on for another eight months, until the end of the year." These casual lines betray no hidden depth, but compose only an enigmatic surface.

Kathy H. has caused considerable consternation among the novel's early reviewers. Frank Kermode, for example, writing in the *London Review of Books*, was irritated by her flat voice, seemingly impervious to moral depth and reflection. But this flatness is the point. Kathy H.'s confidences pose a challenge for the reader because they are so starkly at odds with the world they describe. We gather that Kathy H. and her friends are brought up in what appears to be a normal enough boarding school, making art works and reading classics from Homer through Shakespeare to Franz Kafka and James Joyce. The narrator reports the little rivalries, jealousies, and infatuations that arise among a group of children and young teenagers who grow up in an institutional setting. At the center of the plot is a love triangle comprising Kathy H., her domineering friend, Ruth, and the somewhat awkward Tommy. The teenagers have a keen interest in and a sharpened sense for social codes; small gestures and seemingly minor comments take on great significance. Indeed, for all her blandness and naiveté, Kathy H. is highly attuned to nuances. She may describe her world through a very limited perspective, but within that perspective she exhibits astonishing powers of observation and interpretation.

This familiar world is made increasingly strange, until the brutal facts governing these characters' lives emerge in full force. After

leaving the school, Kathy H. and her friends will initially be trained as nurses, or “carers,” but they will go on to become “donors.” This means that their vital organs will be harvested, one by one, until they die or, as they say, “complete” (unless, as is suggested toward the very end, they are kept in a vegetative state for much longer, “donating” more and more organs). These creatures, it turns out, are cloned versions of humans, brought into this world for the sole purpose of organ donation.

This horrifying world is described almost in passing, as an afterthought. Kathy H.’s chipper tone never wavers for a moment, even when she uses the jargon of caring, donation, and completion. The more one learns about this underclass of organ donors, the more disturbing the casual blandness of Kathy H.’s voice becomes, leading to an ever increasing divide between her disaffected tone and one’s own growing horror and outrage. Kathy H. is apparently undisturbed by what she narrates. This lack of outrage more than anything else makes one wonder whether she is not somehow deficient, perhaps in a way one might expect from a manufactured creature. It is in this sense that Kathy H.’s voice can appear *uncanny*, a term that captures the disturbing mixture of the familiar and the unfamiliar characteristic of nonhuman automata and doubles, to which Sigmund Freud first attributed the term. On the second page, Kathy H. stumbles on the topic of the machine, observing in passing that “carers are not machines.” Do we believe her? In Kathy H., Ishiguro has created a voice that hovers, uncannily, on the edge of the human.



By confronting us with a literary fabrication such as Kathy H., Ishiguro forces us to probe the essence and the limits of humanity. Most readers have shied away from this challenge. Instead, they conclude that Kathy H. is fundamentally a human like us and blame her impoverishment on the dehumanizing system under which she and her fellow clones are forced to live. This reading places *Never Let Me Go* in the tradition of dystopian narratives in which dehumanized humans meekly accept their fate. Of these dystopian scenarios, the

recent film *The Island* (2005) is the most strikingly similar to Ishiguro's novel and can serve as its foil. Two protagonists living in a secluded underground facility discover that they are clones kept to serve as organ donors. The film denounces the repressive system and hails the clones' doubt, rebellion, and final escape to the world above. There is never any suggestion that being a clone makes you different from being a human.

The view that clones are humans who have been degraded by dehumanizing treatment is also advanced within the novel itself, by the reformist teachers who run the school. Miss Emily recalls that the original purpose of the school was to provide the students with a more "humane" upbringing. While earlier the clones had been considered "shadowy objects in test tubes," the school now seeks to prove that they are "as sensitive and intelligent as any ordinary human being." To this end, the teachers encourage students to produce art works, "to *prove you had souls at all*," a belief that may echo W. E. B. Du Bois's declaration that "until the art of the black folk compels recognition they will not be rated as human."

And yet, this talk of art and soul is discredited within the novel because the teachers who employ it are profoundly ambivalent figures. Ishiguro's novel differs from more conventional narratives such as *The Island* because its ultimate goal is to question the status of the clone and, by extension, of the human. While the teachers speak of a shared humanity, they subtly instill in the clones a sense that they are different from humans after all. One of the clones, Tommy, even suspects a concerted effort at subliminal indoctrination: "Tommy thought it possible the guardians had, throughout all our years at Hailsham, timed very carefully and deliberately everything they had told us, so that we were always just too young to understand properly the latest piece of information. But of course we'd take it in at some level, so that before long all this stuff was there in our heads without us ever having examined it properly." For all the goodwill professed by the teachers, who sound like gradualist reformers, the school functions as a most effective means of making the students accept the truncated and limited lives that are imposed on them.

While the school's humanities education is supposed to produce or shape humans, these students are simultaneously made to recognize that they themselves are excluded from humanity. This double message is indicative of the entire novel, which reproduces the difference between humans and clones time and again while also inciting the (human) reader to call this difference into question.

Kathy H. often tries to remember the first time she became aware of the difference between herself and humans, the central difference on which the entire novel is premised. She reports a recognition scene, a standard feature in novels about racism or other forms of discrimination. It is a scene that promises to reconstruct the origin, within her consciousness, of her status as a mere double of the human. Early on in their school days, Ruth and her friends notice that Madame, one of the women who run the school from a distance, seems to avoid any direct contact with them. Trying to prove this observation, whose implication they cannot, at this young age, comprehend, they plot to swarm toward her, avoiding direct contact only at the last minute:

I can still see it now, the shudder she seems to be suppressing, the real dread that one of us would accidentally brush against her. And though we just kept on walking, we all felt it; it was like we'd walked from the sun right into chilly shade. Ruth had been right: Madame was afraid of us. But she was afraid of us in the same way someone might be afraid of spiders. We hadn't been ready for that. It had never occurred to us to wonder how we would feel, being seen like that, being the spiders.

Their hunch proves to be right. In fact this experiment demonstrates to the narrator and her friends, perhaps for the first time, how deeply the humans feel their difference from the clones, a difference that the clones then internalize and accept as unquestioned fact.

The power of indoctrination is confirmed through the absence of external enforcement mechanisms; no patrols or police forces are mentioned anywhere in the novel. There is some kind of fence

around Hailsham, but it does not seem to make escape from the school impossible or even difficult. The only apocryphal story about the fence circulating among the students is that a girl once ran away and wasn't let back in. The topic of the fence comes up again when a schoolteacher mentions electric fences used in World War II prison camps, one of the few moments when historical events from our world make their appearance in the estranged world of the novel. A final, more oblique reference to fences occurs when Kathy H. confides that her favorite movie scene is when the American prisoner of war, in *The Great Escape*, jumps over barbed wire. A great escape, however, is the last thing on anyone's mind. Once the clones become carers they live in small apartments and are furnished with cars to drive from hospital to hospital where their schoolmates are going through their donations and dying. At no point does Kathy H. mention a single instance of a carer trying to save a donor or plotting an escape.

It is at this juncture that *Never Let Me Go* appears most different from *The Island*. The film articulates the clones' humanity through their instinctual rebellion and cunning escape. Ishiguro's novel, by contrast, erases almost all signs of rebellion. Or rather, it performs a kind of balancing act, tempting the reader into comparing clones and humans by including faint suggestions of promethean discontent and hopes of escape. One of them is a rumor, later discredited, that a couple verifiably "in love" could ask for a "deferral," a few years of carefree living before beginning with donations. More indirect are the fits of anger Tommy suffers in the early years of school and that resurface after the deferral scheme falls flat. Prompted by this return of Tommy's anger, the narrator says to him: "I was thinking maybe the reason you used to get like that was because at some level you always *knew*." Tommy's fits echo once more the world of human replicas, specifically Karel Čapek's play, *R.U.R.*, which first introduced the term "robot" and featured robots whose anger was the first sign of their claim to being treated as humans. But these moments of frustration, fantasies of an alternative life, rumors of deferrals, and inexplicable fits of anger, do not amount

to anything like rebellion. Nor do they resemble the type of repression that characterizes Ishiguro's other narrators, for the lack of resistance is not the product of a formal restraint, a skirting of responsibility or the evasion of a childhood trauma. The narrator and the other clones have accepted their fate; or rather they do not even recognize their attitude as that of acceptance; there simply was never any choice. Even Ruth, the most unruly of the three main characters, will declare with chilly calm: "I think I was a pretty decent carer. But five years felt about enough for me. I was like you, Tommy. I was pretty much ready when I became a donor. It felt right. After all, it's what we're *supposed* to be doing, isn't it?" Having internalized their status as clone and double, the clones meekly follow the path that this status implies.

Can so much complacency be attributed to the subtle indoctrination that is, undoubtedly, at work in this school? No matter how useful the reading of the clones as victims of dehumanizing circumstances, the question of whether they are in fact human, and what that status would imply, needs to be asked anew. We should read this novel by taking Ishiguro at his word, namely, that his narrative avatar is a clone, a copy of the human. Much depends, of course, on what we mean when we speak of "copy" and, by extension, of "human."



In order to gauge the status of the copy, we must ask whether it is in fact possible to establish differences between the humans and the clones apart from the fact that the clones have internalized their allegedly inferior status. One differentiating factor is the functionality that governs these clones' lives. Breaking with the practice of subtle insinuation to which most teachers are beholden, a rebel teacher, Miss Lucy, is more explicit: "Your lives are set for you. You'll become adults, then before you're old, before you're even middle-aged, you'll start donating your vital organs. That's what each of you was created to do. You're not like the actors you watch on your videos, you're not even like me. You were brought into this world for a purpose,

and your futures, all of them, have been decided." Miss Lucy links their purpose to their difference from her: the clones are different precisely because of their functionality. This distinction, however, cannot stand up to scrutiny. First, the clones' specific functionality is imposed on them by humans and the human need for organs. Functionality is not an internal and necessary feature of being a clone. Second, humans, too, are functional, playing some role in society. Ishiguro isolates this familiar fact of human life and pushes it to such extremes that it becomes foreign without becoming entirely unhinged from the human.

There is one indirect suggestion that the functionality of the clones is not simply a product of discrimination, but rather part of their very design, a result of deliberate biological manipulation. The schoolteacher who finally describes to the students and to the reader the whole system of donations toward the end of the novel also tells them that Hailsham and similar reform schools have since been abolished. They were closed in reaction to a renegade scientist, who started to produce clones with mental and physical capacities superior to those of humans: "It reminded people, reminded them of a fear they'd always had. It's one thing to create students, such as yourselves, for the donation program. But a generation of created children who'd take their place in society? Children demonstrably superior to the rest of us? Oh no. That frightened people. They recoiled from that." Implied here is the possibility of manipulating clones, of increasing but also of reducing the capacities of cloned creatures. Perhaps being created exclusively "for the donation program" means that these creatures are designed with certain limitations, including limited emotional capacities, a certain inability to mature, and a lack of rebelliousness that makes their policing unnecessary. The novel allows for such a reading but does not encourage it.

While the possibility of biological manipulation, and thus of a biological difference, remains a matter of speculation, there is one fact, apparently necessary and absolute, that stands between humans and clones: clones cannot reproduce. As the only inarguable

difference, sterility is the center of the novel, albeit a hidden one. The only explicit consequence that is spelled out is a changed attitude toward sex. At Hailsham, students receive sex education and are encouraged to engage in casual sex, even though their human teachers continue to be awkward around this topic. The way the students explain to themselves their teachers' awkwardness is tied, once more, to their functionality: "someone else said what we had to remember was that the guardians were 'normals.' That's why they were so odd about it; for them, sex was for when you wanted babies." The clones' theory about human sexuality is a mirror image of their own lives, namely, as something that is determined by functionality. Human sexuality must be limited because it is defined by the function of procreation, while their own sexuality is the only area of their lives that is not subject to a specific function and therefore not subject to control.

Even though sterility is for the most part a submerged theme, it is significantly tied to the scene that features the song from which Ishiguro takes his title: "Never Let Me Go," by Judy Bridgewater. Kathy H. has gotten her hands on an old tape of this song and begins to interpret it in her own, idiosyncratic way. The song, she believes, describes a woman who thought she was infertile but was then able to have a child. Now she is holding this long-awaited child in her arms and hopes that no one will ever take it away from her again. Kathy H. dances to this song while holding a pillow, a longing for what the clones take to be the "normal" purpose of having sex. Is this faint and submerged longing a sign of the gulf that separates humans from clones? Not necessarily. Humans, too, are the product of some sort of biological copying, and human parentage is never entirely free from doubt. We may be looking for parents lost or never known or for some other fantasy of origin and original. Reproduction and the nuclear family are not necessary attributes of the human. The difference Ishiguro presents us with is fundamental at one moment, but at the next it seems to shrink before our eyes into a minor technicality, too weak to ground any ontological difference between clones and humans.



The search for parents resonates powerfully with Ishiguro's recurring fascination with the figure of the orphan, most explicitly in *When We Were Orphans*. The narrator of that novel tells us how he lost his parents, presumably through kidnapping, when he was a child living with them in Shanghai. Yet the precise status of orphanhood remains unclear. Facing the world as an orphan may not mean simply being an orphan, just as the title, *When We Were Orphans*, suggests an odd temporality according to which being an orphan is a thing of the past. The narrator thinks of himself as an orphan even though he remains convinced that his parents are still alive. Although he does not find his parents on a final trip to Shanghai, he does, much later, encounter a woman he thinks is his mother in a nursing home. She does not recognize him and he finally leaves, still identifying himself as an orphan: "But for those like us, our fate is to face the world as orphans, chasing through long years the shadows of vanished parents." Being an orphan is thus a state that is more expansive than simply having lost one's parents, and it includes the search for "the shadows of vanished parents," even if those parents are not, strictly speaking, dead.

The orphan, and more generally the loss of parents, emerges more obliquely in Ishiguro's other novels. In *A Pale View of Hills*, the narrator, like so many children living in Nagasaki at the time of World War II, has lost her parents. The most dramatic event in *The Remains of the Day*, and the linchpin of the entire novel, is the loss of the narrator's father, a loss doubly felt and doubly repressed since the narrator was prevented from helping his father in the hour of his death due to his overidentification with his duties as a butler. In *The Unconsoled*, Ishiguro's most enigmatic novel, the narrator awaits the visit of his parents to the unnamed town in which he is supposed to give a piano recital. But the parents, who keep drifting out of his mind, never arrive. Indeed, there is little evidence that he has had contact with them in a long time or even that they are still alive. In *An Artist of the Floating World*, the suicide of a CEO taking

responsibility for his role in Japan's imperial past is explained by the narrator's potential son-in-law in terms of the orphan: "we all feel as though we've been orphaned."

In *Never Let Me Go*, the word "orphan" never appears in the text. And yet, Ishiguro grounds an entire novel in an extreme form of orphanhood, for here he is dealing with children who never had parents to lose. One might say that they are not even orphans anymore. Without parents and without being able to become parents, the clones are reduced to imitating the biological family, searching for "possibles," as they call humans who might turn out to be their own originals. They also speculate about whether the "normals" from which they were cloned would now be the age of biological parents. "Why would there be a 'natural' generation between us and our models?" the narrator wonders. "Others argued back that they'd use for models people at the peak of their health, and that's why they were likely to be 'normal parent' age." Ishiguro has moved to the outer limits of reproduction and parentage and therefore to the outer limits of the orphan.

Cultural imitation is Ishiguro's second great theme. His characters are often displaced and therefore forced to engage in acts of imitation or copying. In *When We Were Orphans*, the young Christopher Banks, son of British parents living in Shanghai, fears that he has displeased his parents by not being British enough and asks for permission to imitate Uncle Philip (who incidentally is not his real uncle). This concern about not being British enough was first implanted in his mind by a Japanese friend, who in turn worries about not being Japanese enough and who, when sent to school in Japan, finds out that he is not accepted as Japanese by his schoolmates there. Yet when he is sent to England to live with his aunt after his parents' disappearance, his talent for copying seems to be enough to make him fit in. He even brags about how quickly he has managed to imitate the mannerisms of the other boys at school. He is apparently untroubled by the necessity of imitation and even proud of his success at it. The question of imitation also occupies a central place in *An Artist of the Floating World*, where it is transposed to the world

of art. The novel describes three generations of artists, each imitating a mentor only to break, openly and violently, with such imitation in order to arrive at a new and distinct style of their own. Each break is punished by the teacher, most violently so by the narrator himself, who denounces his deviant student to the nationalist police. In *The Remains of the Day*, the butler Stevens never ceases to declare how much he learned by imitating his father, even though he will finally demote him.

In *Never Let Me Go* cultural imitation characterizes the clones through and through. Their language, gestures, and forms of interaction are secondhand, like the tapes, movies and objects they receive from the outside world. What is different in this novel, though, is that imitation concerns not merely cultural difference or generational conflict, but also biology and being. Ishiguro has forged a link between his two master tropes: the orphan and imitation. His characters no longer struggle to imitate what it is to be properly Japanese or British; the act of copying has become a matter of being a copy and of being nothing but a copier.

Imitation defines not only clones in their relation to humans. The instinct to imitate has been central to what it means to be human as well—"man is the most mimetic of the animals," Aristotle wrote, and many have followed this declaration. Given the centrality of imitation for humans, we find ourselves struggling, once more, to establish a firm difference between clones and humans. If both clones and humans are copiers (and products of biological copying of one kind or another), we may have to distinguish not between imitation and original, but among different types of imitation and by extension different types of imitators. Such an expanded concept of imitation troubles the distinction between original and copy. It also has a far-reaching consequence for the strangeness associated throughout the novel with the clones. It turns out that the clones seem uncannily not because of a simple deficiency that makes them markedly different from a firmly established notion of the human, but because Ishiguro has profoundly unsettled what it means to imitate and be imitated, and therefore what it means to be human.

Ishiguro's attempt to unsettle the human as origin and originator, to trouble the category of the human itself, concerns not only the relations between humans and clones inhabiting the world constructed by his novel. It also aims at the seam between that world and ours: the relation between the reader and the cloned narrator. This seam comes undone by Ishiguro's most cunning device: Kathy H. slyly addresses the reader as another clone. Even the first sentences achieve this effect: "My name is Kathy H. I'm thirty-one years old, and I've been a carer now for over eleven years. That sounds long enough, I know, but actually they want me to go on for another eight months, until the end of this year." Kathy H. anticipates surprise in the reader, who, she presumes, knows that the usual length of being a carer is much shorter. The beginning of the second chapter continues in the same vein: "I don't know how it was where you were, but at Hailsham we had to have some form of medical almost every week." The reader is another clone who lived in another school and probably had to submit to regular physical exams as well. At this early point in the novel, the purpose of physical exams, checking up on the health of future organ donors, is still unclear. It is as unclear as the vocabulary Kathy H. uses, such as carers, donors, or indeed Hailsham itself. But this presumed intimacy with the world of organ donors draws readers in without yet letting them know fully what kind of world they are faced with. It is rather like Tommy's speculation that the teachers are feeding pieces of information to the children without letting them know explicitly the reality of their status and expectation.

What kind of emotional and moral attitude toward Kathy H.'s familiar address should we assume? This question goes to the heart of the difference between the human and the clone because once addressed as clone, we are invariably implicated in this difference and the challenge of imitation. At first glance this familiar address seems to evoke, once more, antislavery literature, in particular the tradition of sentimentalism epitomized by *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and its powerful plea for sympathetic identification across racial lines. For sentimentalism, sympathetic identification is a means of establishing

a common humanity even in the face of racist theories and practices. But can this project be easily transposed to the domain of the clone, where the question of the human is deliberately put into question? What Ishiguro effects might be better understood as reverse sympathy: instead of making the reader feel sympathy for the character and thus likening the character to the reader, it is the narrator who assumes an underlying similarity with the reader, a similarity that the reader is then called upon to question or to accept. This may be the reason why some readers, such as Frank Kermode, responded to the novel with irritation.

If *Never Let Me Go* challenges our most cherished beliefs about the human, the question is not whether or not Kathy H. is human. Rather we must respond by abandoning a prior conception of what it is to be human, by imagining an ethics not exclusively based on the human. The most useful model for such an ethics has been developed in the field of animal rights. J. M. Coetzee's *Elizabeth Costello* is a compelling example because of the way it combines ethics and literature. Where Ishiguro troubles the human from the perspective of the clone, Coetzee does so from the perspective of the animal. An avid supporter of animal rights, the character Elizabeth Costello attacks the discipline of philosophy for systematically excluding non-human animals from its concerns, for erecting barriers between humans and animals that then serve to justify cruelty toward the latter. Only the imaginative power of poetry, she argues, allows us to learn how to recognize other animals as bearers of rights. Indeed, most novelists and philosophers who address the question of the rights of nonhumans do so within the field of animal rights and welfare. Their techniques and arguments might prove fruitful for the problem of the clone as well. Both clones and animals are excluded from the domain of the human by different forms of humanism. The point here is not to say that clones are animals, but to learn from the field of animal rights. It shows us that calling for an ethical treatment of a certain class of creatures does not hinge on claiming that they are, simply, humans.

There is one difference, however, between animals and clones

with respect to their relation to humans. In the case of animals, literature must bridge palpable differences including the fact that animals, even though they possess forms of communication whose complexity we are only beginning to fathom, do not produce literature. In the case of the clones, by contrast, the problem is not *prima facie* a question of difference but, rather, of likeness and imitation. This likeness has a much more unsettling effect on the conception of the human. Will human readers, after being addressed as fellow clones, insist on a difference between human and clone, whether it be based on the clones' functionality, the possibility of biological manipulation, their sterility, or their cultural imitations? Or will they respond to the familiarity of this address with a sympathy that bridges these differences in the interest of a larger category that includes humans and clones under an expanded rubric of imitators? Ishiguro's novel gets under our skin because it threatens to turn us into clones.

The ultimate sign of Kathy H.'s uncanny blandness is not the question of whether she can imagine rebellion or escape, but of whether she can imagine death. Among the few key terms Kathy H. uses to comprehend her world, her talk of "carers" and "donors" sounds chilly enough, but these terms are not, in the end, euphemisms. The carers really do take care of the donors and the donors really donate their organs. The third term, "to complete," however, has a different quality. It obscures, displaces, and replaces death. Indeed, the speculation about a continued vegetative state is a hint that the death of these creatures may be as mysterious as their birth. The knowledge of death has been central, though problematic, for many philosophical concepts of the human. Unhinging birth and death from their usual meaning might be the biggest challenge posed to the human. It is, perhaps, the final reason for the uncanny effect of Kathy H.'s memoirs, written in the face of her own approaching "completion." In the last sentence of the book, Kathy H. reports to us that after shedding a tear over Tommy's completion, she "just waited a bit, then turned back to the car, to drive off to wherever it was I was supposed to be." What does it mean to know that one will "complete,"

especially if that is what one is “supposed to” do? By including us in this world of clones, Ishiguro forces the reader to question the essence and the limits of the human. Perhaps that is what we are supposed to do.

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