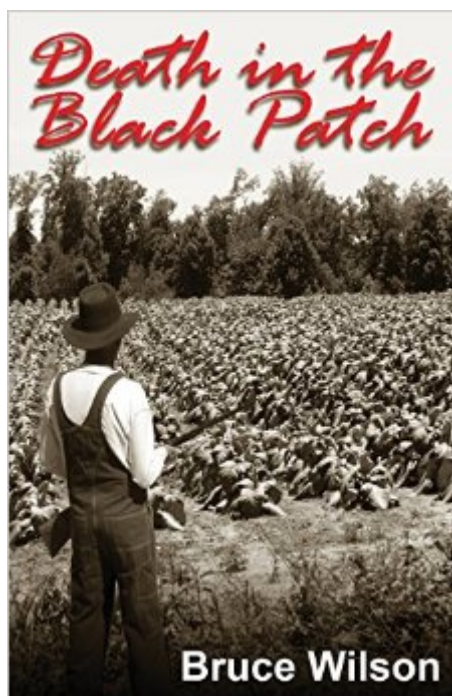


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Death In The Black Patch



Synopsis

In the spring of 1906 in western Kentucky, Wes Wilson stands in his freshly plowed field gazing at furrows that will soon be filled with row after row of young dark-leaf tobacco plants. This crop is his life's blood, the one product that allows him to feed and clothe his family. And he is determined that nothing--not the powerful monopoly trying to drive prices down, or the growers' association that wants farmers to hold back their crops--will stand in his way. But these forces and the secrets and lies which plague the divided community of Lynnville smother Wes as he struggles to decide whether he should join the Association or sell out to the tobacco company. Despite his resolve, Wes can't control the world around him and soon other events fill his already crowded mind. His life grows more complicated, his drunkenness only making things worse and Wes slowly spirals into madness. In the days that follow, Wes meets with a farmer whose crop has been destroyed by the Association's vigilante Night Riders. Angered by what he's seen, Wes decides that he'll kill anyone who tries to take his crop from him. But he realizes that his actions and attitudes are a real threat to his family's peace. So, like the Night Riders who wear masks to hide their identity, he puts on a mask of control to hide his troubled mind. Wes's pride tells him he can control what happens, but it also blinds him to the dangers he faces and these dangers grow more intense the longer he takes to decide what to do with his crop. His darkest moment comes when the mask crumbles. Trapped by a driving rain and the storm in his head, he struggles with his pride and the pain of his present choices. The next morning, having made his decision, Wes begins to focus on the people who stand in his way: the devious tobacco buyer; the ever-present Night Riders; and the cousin who is hiding a deadly secret. Following an afternoon of drinking whiskey, the conflict erupts with a result that is as surprising as it is tragic.

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