

---

Subject: Re: Snow Queen/World's End  
Posted by [psc](#) on Sat, 16 Mar 1985 21:36:01 GMT  
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

---

Article-I.D.: Izmi.340  
Posted: Sat Mar 16 16:36:01 1985  
Date-Received: Tue, 19-Mar-85 05:24:46 EST  
References:  
Organization: AT&T-IS Enhanced Network Services  
Lines: 50

> Snow Queen is kaleidescopic, and I mean that literally as well as  
> colloquially. The plot lines twist and turn and settle into new  
> patterns, but they all connect subtly to the other lines until  
> they meet at the end. Well done, and enjoyable.

I thought SNOW QUEEN was kaleidescopic, too: pretty and colorful,  
but not very interesting after a while. The characters were tissue  
paper (I.E., too thin to be cardboard), the interactions and plot  
predictable.

(\*MILD SPOILER OF A BAD AND NONESSENTIAL SCENE - SKIP NEXT PAGE\*)

One scene in particular bothered me a *lot*. A kid gets cornered  
in an alley by a bunch of uglies with knives, who threaten to carve  
him up. They approach; end of chapter. Next chapter, we have a  
cop walking his beat. He wanders around for a while. About halfway  
through the chapter, he hears a struggle in an alley. He runs into  
it, in time to stop the uglies from touching their knives to the kid.  
This is literary cheating! That unannounced flashback and "don't  
worry, the kid *does* get rescued in the nick of time" garbage really  
hurt the book for me. It wasn't the only time it happened, either.

(\*END OF SPOILER - RESUME SPEED\*)

Perhaps one of my problems is that I've come to expect so much of  
Vinge. I read her Analog stories and liked them a lot. SNOW QUEEN  
was a real letdown, to my mind, the worst piece of writing she's ever  
done. (The best were two novellas: "Tin Soldier", her first sale,  
and "Firestorm", a flawed but brilliant story man/machine symbiosis,  
second only to Verner Vinge's "True Names" as the greatest SF story  
of all time about computers. Damn, what a book *that* would be!)

> I wish I could say the same for World's End. A novel (:-) approach,  
> but poorly done in comparison to Heart of Darkness, which it emulates

> (see the opening quotes). Maybe I wouldn't be so critical if it  
> didn't aspire so high...  
> glenn kapetansky ...ihnp4!ihu1j!gek

I, on the other hand, wasn't expecting WORLD'S END to be Conrad; I was expecting it to be another SNOW QUEEN. I was pleasantly surprised. Admittedly, the story is a bit muddy, the plot lost among the vivid mental scenes. But this is good stuff: original ideas, interesting characters (not great but not stereotypes), and Vinge's razor sharp writing style.

--

-Paul S. R. Chisholm

...!{pegasus,cbosgd}!lzmi!psc The above opinions are my own,  
...!{hocsj,ihnp4}!lzmv!psc not necessarily anyone else's.

---

Subject: Snow Queen/World's End  
Posted by [gek](#) on Tue, 24 Sep 2013 18:36:38 GMT  
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

---

Message-ID:

Date: Mon, 11-Mar-85 13:53:42 EST

Article-I.D.: ihu1j.150

Posted: Mon Mar 11 13:53:42 1985

Date-Received: Tue, 12-Mar-85 22:11:45 EST

Organization: AT&T Bell Laboratories

Lines: 19

I just read Joan Vinge's two books, and I just wanted to put in my two petro-dollars' worth.

Snow Queen is kalaidescopic, and I mean that literally as well as colloquially. The plot lines twist and turn and settle into new patterns, but they all connect subtly to the other lines until they meet at the end. Well done, and enjoyable.

I wish I could say the same for World's End. A novel (:-) approach, but poorly done in comparison to Heart of Darkness, which it emulates (see the opening quotes). Maybe I wouldn't be so critical if it didn't aspire so high...

--

glenn kapetansky

"Think of it as evolution in action"

...ihnp4!ihu1j!gek