



Blood and Ice

Robert Masello

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Journalist Michael Wilde—his world recently shattered by tragedy—has come to the South Pole looking for solace and a new lease on life. But what he finds on a routine dive in the polar sea is something else entirely: the bodies of a young man and a young woman, bound with chains and sealed forever in a block of ice. Beside them is an ancient chest filled with a sinister cargo. Wilde's search to unravel the mystery of this doomed couple will lead from the battlefields of the Crimean War to the unexplored depths of the Antarctic Ocean, where an age-old curse survives to this day. And as the ice around the lovers begins to melt, Wilde will witness what may be a miracle—or a nightmare—in the making. What is dead, it turns out, is not always gone.

Blood and Ice Details

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Γι?τα Παπαδημακοπο?λου says

Υπ?ρχουν βιβλ?α απ? τα οπο?α ?χεις μεγ?λες προσδοκ?ες, ακ?μα και ?ταν δεν υπ?ρχει κ?ποιος συγκεκριμ?νος λ?γος, ακ?μα και ?ταν δεν γνωρ?ζεις καλ?-καλ? περ? τ?νος πρ?κειται. ?να απ? αυτ? ε?ναι το "Α?μα Και Π?γος" που απ? το μαγευτικ? του κι ?λας εξ?φυλλο σε προκαλε? να το διαβ?σεις και να χαθε?ς στις σελ?δες του. Και η αλ?θεια ε?ναι πως, παρ? τον αρχικ? μου π?θο, η απογοητευτικ? ?ποψη μιας πολ? καλ?ς μου φ?λης, την ?ποψη της οπο?ας κι εκτιμ? ιδια?τερα, με προσε?ωσε απ?τομα και ?τσι, ?ταν π?ρα το βιβλ?ο στα χ?ρια μου, οι προσδοκ?ες μου ε?χαν μειωθε? ?δη στο ελ?χιστο. Τελικ?, και ?χοντας πλ?ον προσωπικ? ?ποψη π?νω στο θ?μα, και ?σο και να μην θ?λω να την συγχ?σω, μπορ? να πω ?τι ξεκιν?ντας να διαβ?ζω το βιβλ?ο επ?λθε η ανακο?φιση και στην πορε?α, ?σο περισσότερο εμβ?θυνα σε αυτ?, ?ρθε η γοητε?α η οπο?α και περ?μενα.

Ο Roberto Masello ξεκιν?ει να αφηγηθε? την ιστορ?α του πηγα?νοντ?ς μας αρχικ? στα 1856 ?που ?να νεαρ? ζευγ?ρι που επιβ?νει σε ?να πλο?ο της εποχ?ς παρασυρ?μενο μακρι? απ? την αρχικ? του πορε?α, βρ?σκεται ?ξαφνα αλυσοδεμ?νο για να καταλ?ξει στο κρ?ο βυθ? της Ανταρκτικ?ς. Στην συν?χεια βρισκ?μαστε π?σω στο σ?μερα ?που ο δημοσιογρ?φος και φωτογρ?φος Μ?ικλ Γου?ιλντ, προσπαθ?ντας να συν?λθει απ? ?να τραγικ? γεγον?ς που ?φερε τα π?νω κ?τω στην ζω? του, αναλαμβάνει για λογαριασμ? του περιοδικ? στο οπο?ο κι εργ?ζεται μια αποστολ? που θα τον οδηγ?σει μ?χρι την παγωμ?νη ?πειρο της Ανταρκτικ?ς. Και ?σο και αν αυτ? το ταξ?δι φ?νταζε αρχικ? για τον Μ?ικλ μια ελπ?δα να ξεφ?γει απ? τα προβλ?ματ? του και να καθαρ?σει το μυαλ? του, αυτ? με τα οπο?α θα βρεθε? αντιμ?τωπος ε?ναι πολ? περισσ?τερα απ' ?σα θα περ?μενε ? απ' ?σα θα μπορο?σε να διαχειριστε?. Στο βυθ? της θ?λασσας και μ?σα σε ?να κομμ?τι π?γου, ανακαλ?πτει το νεαρ? ζευγ?ρι που αναφ?ρθηκε παραπ?νω και απ? εκε? ξεκιν?νε ?λα.

Ο συγγραφ?ας χωρ?ζει το βιβλ?ο του σε τ?σσερα διαφορετικ? μ?ρη, επιλ?γοντας στα δ?ο πρ?τα απ? αυτ? την μ?θοδο της παρ?λληλης αφ?γησης. Μας ταξιδε?ει συνεχ?ς απ? το σ?μερα στο 1854, προσπαθ?ντας με αυτ? τον τρ?πο ?χι απλ? να μας μεταφ?ρει τα γεγον?τα του σ?μερα αλλ?, και τα γεγον?τα εκε?να που οδ?γησαν στη γνωριμ?α των δ?ο ν?ων και την πορε?α της ζω?ς του μ?χρι την στιγμ? που καταδικ?στηκαν στον παγωμ?νο θ?νατ? τους. Με γλαφυρ? τρ?πο, αναπαριστ? την Βικτοριαν? Αγγλ?α αλλ? και τους ανθρ?πους της εποχ?ς, κ?νοντας ξεκ?θαρες τις διαφορ?ς στα ?θη και στα ?θιμα του τ?τε με του σ?μερα αλλ?, και των αντιλ?ψεων των ανθρ?πων. Με αυτ? τον τρ?πο, αν και σε κ?ποιους μπορε? να φ?νεται κουραστικ?, μας βοηθ?ει να κατανο?σουμε καλ?τερα τους λ?γους που τα πρ?γματα οδηγηθηκαν στο σημε?ο ?που κι ?φτασαν εν? μας αφ?νει να κατανο?σουμε καλ?τερα τους εγκλωβισμ?νους στον π?γο χαρακτ?ρες, για ?ταν θα ?ρθει η ?ρα τους να αποτελ?σουν ουσιαστικ? κομμ?τι της δρ?σης στο παρ?ν.

Σε ?τι ?χει να κ?νει με το παρ?ν, ο συγγραφ?ας αναφ?ρεται σε πληθ?ρα τεχνολογικ?ν και επιστημονικ?ν λεπτομερει?ν τα οπο?α, για να ε?μαι απ?λυτα ειλικρινε?ς, μπορε? να προκαλ?σουν αν?α σε ?σους δεν ενδιαφ?ρονται καθ?λου σχετικ? με το θ?μα αλλ? απ? την ?λλη, θα γοητε?σουν και θα εντυπωσι?σουν με τον τρ?πο που παρουσι?ζονται και αναπτ?σσονται, ?λους εκε?νους που ?χουν περ?σει αρκετ?ς ?ρες παρακολουθ?ντας National Geographic ? ?λλα παρεμφερ?ς θεματολογ?ας ντοκιμαντ?ρ. Φ?νεται ξεκ?θαρα πως ο δημιουργ?ς του εν λ?γου βιβλ?ου δεν ?γραψε απλ? μια ιστορ?α που διαδραματ?ζεται στην Ανταρκτικ? αλλ?, μελ?τησε πολ? προσεκτικ? το περιεχ?μενο αυτο? που ?θελε να παρουσι?σει στο κοιν?, παραθ?τοντ?ς του επιστημονικ? στοιχε?α που αν και περ?πλοκα, εξηγο?νται με αρκετ? ικανοποιητικ? τρ?πο ?τσι ?στε να μην

μπορούμε μεν να γίνουμε επιστήμονες αλλ', να κατανοήσουμε εν τέλη την ουσία και την σκοπιμότητά τους. Μαγευμάστε απ' την Ανταρκτική και τον παρ'ξένο κ'σμο της εν' παρ'λληλα, γιν'μάστε μ'ρτυρες μιας επιστημονικ'ς θεωράς η οπο'α θα μπορούσε να 'χει β'σει αφο' βασ'ζεται σε μια ιδι'ατερη και απ'λυτη λογικ'.

Η δρ'ση 'ρχεται εκε' 'που ο π'γος λ'νει, απελευθερ'νοντας το νεαρ' ζευγ'ρι που με 'ναν μυστ'ριο τρ'πο επαν'ρχεται στη ζω'. Αυτ' ε'ναι το σημει'ο 'που η τεχνολογ'α και η επιστ'μη, 'ρχονται να συναντ'σουν τις αιματηρ'ς και θαν'σιμες προεκτ'σεις μιας ιστορ'ας αι'νων που θ'φτηκε μαζ' με τους εμπλεκ'μενους. Το απομονωμ'νο, ψυχρ' και τρομακτικ' περιβ'λλον της Ανταρκτικ'ς λειτουργε' καταλυτικ', προκαλ'ντας μια α'σθηση κλειστοφοβ'ας αφο', τα γεγον'τα συνεχ'ς εξελ'σσονται, ν'οι κ'νδυνοι και ελ'χιστες προοπτικ'ς ανο'γονται μπροστ' μας εν' παρ'λληλα, τα περιθ'ρια να ξεφ'γεις απ' 'σα σε καταδι'κουν ε'ναι πολ' στεν', μην 'χοντας πουθεν' να πας. Εκε' αρχ'ζει το θρ'λερ, εκε' περιορ'ζονται οι επιλογ'ς και παρακολουθε'ς με κομμ'νη την αν'σα, αναζητ'ντας δι'ξοδο και λογικ' σε μια ιστορ'α της οπο'ας οι 'ποιες προεκτ'σεις φαντ'ζουν καταδικασμ'νες.

Το "Α'μα Και Π'γος" δεν ε'ναι 'να ε'κολο βιβλ'ο και σ'γουρα απευθ'νεται σε 'να πιο 'ριμο αναγνωστικ' κοιν' και 'χι σε εκει'νο που περιμ'νει 'να κοιν'τυπο και αν'λαφρο μεταφυσικ' ρομ'ντζο για να ικανοποι'σει τις αναγνωστικ'ς του αν'γκες. Η σ'γχρονη επιστ'μη και τεχνολογ'α συναντο'ν την ιστορ'α που π'ρασε εν' παρ'λληλα, 'χουμε το π'ντρεμα διαφ'ρων λογοτεχνικ'ν ειδ'ν αλλ', και 'να ταξ'δι στον χ'ρο και τον χρ'νο, το π'ρασμα μ'σα απ' την ιστορ'α, φτ'νοντας στο σ'μερα, προσπαθ'ντας να δοθε' μια λογικ' εξ'γηση και μια λ'ση σε 'να φαιν'μενο το οπο'ο 'χει παρουσιαστε' με πολλ'κις και διαφορετικ'ς τρ'πους. Ε'ναι 'να επιστημονικ' θρ'λερ 'που η δρ'ση σχετ'ζεται με τον μαραθ'νιο αγ'να ε'ρησης μιας λ'σης η οπο'α μπορε' να μην προσφ'ρει την λ'τρωση αλλ', μ'νει πιστ' σε 'λα 'σα παρ'ουσασε απ' την αρχ' της. Αυτ' γ'νεται ξεκ'θαρο και απ' το φιν'λε της ιστορ'ας που δεν 'χει happy end με την κυριολεκτικ' 'ννοια του 'ρου, αφ'νοντ'ς μας με μια γλυκ'πικρη γε'ση ρεαλισμο'. Κατ' β'θος 'μως, ε'ναι μια ιδι'ατερη ιστορ'α αγ'πης που αποδεικν'ει 'τι το π'ντα μπορε' να 'χει πολλαπλ'ς διαστ'σεις.

The Eleventh Hour says

Ugh. Great, wonderful idea but BAD execution. This story suffered from some serious plot pacing and character problems which made this book a chore to read. When a book is still, on page 300, setting up atmosphere and introductory relationships... Really? I mean, come on. The book could have used some serious editing. I like lush prose as much as the next person (read: quite a bit), but not every single character action and thought needs to be described in meticulous detail. I don't need to know every detail, all the time, of what the character is wearing, their inner thought process, what the wall looks like, the sound of their shoes on the metal hallway...especially when the author keeps repeating the same basic details over and over again.

The characters were completely lackluster, as well. The only thing we get to know about the main character is that he has long, black hair and his girlfriend is in a coma. He has no personality, no family or friends or interests or anything that would make the reader care about him. The couple in the ice are equally poorly drawn; they were stock characters devoid of any real, consistent characterizations.

The writing structure, the actual sentences, were well-constructed, but everything else was utter crap. Pass on this. Total dud. 2 stars = D grade.

Barbara ★ says

Michael Wilde has the chance of a lifetime to go to Antarctica as a photojournalist. He has many adventures and photo opportunities until he makes the biggest discovery of his career. While scuba diving in the ocean beneath Antarctica, he sees a woman frozen in the ice. A huge block of ice is cut around her and she is brought to the surface and put in a huge tank in order to melt the ice. The group of scientists leave her unattended while the ice melts. However when they return, the ice has melted, and Sleeping Beauty (as they are calling her) has disappeared.

This is a great adventure reminiscent of Matt Reilly and James Rollins with a very surprising paranormal twist. The author has obviously researched the climate of the Antarctic and the special needs of anyone spending even the littlest time there. A great read and I wonder what author I will be reading again and again.

A B says

Warning: don't read anything on the back cover or any author blurbs. They contain huge spoilers. Fortunately, I didn't read the back of the book until I'd already figured out what the blurbs spoil, but still, that is very frustrating. Any spoilers in my review will be hidden, so you're safe reading on. I will only mention what is covered in the Goodreads description.

This is a good book that should have a higher rating on Goodreads. Perhaps other readers did not appreciate the author's detailed research about Antarctica and the Crimean War, which is a shame because it is skillfully presented and very interesting. Make the world a little less dumb, people!

The book opens with the unusually cruel murder of a British military officer and his sick wife. (view spoiler) In just a few pages, I'd grown fond of the couple. So it was a melancholy read as the book rewound a bit and covered their lives prior to the murder. The book switches between Sinclair and Eleanor's story and a modern day journalist visiting an Antarctic research station. We spend a long time learning about all three characters before they "meet" in a chance encounter during a scuba dive. Michael, the journalist, is stunned and longs to know who they were and how they came to be murdered at the ends of the earth.

I'll admit that there are some flaws and plot holes, but the setting and intrigue more than make up for it. This is a good read for the dog days of summer or if your air conditioning breaks.

Now spoiler time for those who've read it: (view spoiler)

Carolyn Storer says

"Blood & Ice" is quite an original vampire story. It intertwines the past and the present day to give us two stories which run parallel to one another. The story of Sinclair and Eleanor in Victorian England and the other of Michael Wilde, present day photographer and journalist, who travels to a remote research station in Antarctica to write a story for a magazine.

I much preferred the present day and found the characters to be interesting. I liked the background to Michael, the main protagonist, who's girlfriend and soulmate is in a coma after a tragic accident while hiking. The author does a terrific job at explaining Michael's feelings and emotions. The other scientists, doctors and workers at the station, especially Darryl the biologist who is a quirky little character, are also an interesting bunch and I enjoyed reading about them.

Masello does a really great job describing the desolate, but spectacular, icy lands of the Antarctic - what an amazing and terrifying place to be. Unfortunately, it is interrupted with that of Victorian England, which although by itself is detailed very well and gives us the story and background of Sinclair and Eleanor, to me it is an unwelcome intrusion and interrupts the flow of the main story. It didn't help me get to know Sinclair or Eleanor in any real depth so seemed rather pointless and offered far too many passages about their surroundings and the wars of the time period.

I didn't really need to know about the Crimea war, which had no real bearing on the story at all and could, and should in my opinion, have been omitted. It wouldn't have taken anything away from the main story and in fact would have made the book that much tighter and shorter, and therefore a more enjoyable read.

The summary suggests danger with regards to the two bodies found deep in the freezing cold waters but it couldn't be farther from the truth. There's no real blood sucking, except from a bottle Eleanor and Sinclair carry with them - which isn't very chilling is it. There are a few sections that spice things up when a couple bodies rise after death with the thirst for blood and attack a few people, but on the whole it is pretty tame.

I think that by getting to know Eleanor and Sinclair in the flashbacks, it took away the sinister element of the unknown. I knew they wouldn't hurt anybody from the outset, as they are both very nice people, so I didn't feel any tension when the scientific crew raised their bodies from the icy depths.

"Blood & Ice" is quite a dense book and with just being five pages shy of five hundred, a bit too long. I did enjoy it but I wasn't riveted and it didn't particularly excite me. There are too many passages of descriptive prose that although are well written bored me slightly and my mind drifted to other things on several occasions.

My two favourite aspects to the story are Michael Wilde who is a very interesting character and I really enjoyed learning about him and his sad background. He's a very realistic character as is the beautiful Antarctic landscape around him. Antarctica plays such an important role in this book with trying to keep it as original as possible, that it is almost like another character.

The ending is very far fetched and something as complex as finding a "cure" wouldn't happen in a few days. However, the conclusion to each individual character is satisfactory and I closed the book pretty satisfied, albeit with a small "role of the eyes".

VERDICT:

"Blood & Ice" held my interest at the same level throughout - it has a monotonicity about it as nothing really happens - there are no real highs or any real lows.

After reading the quote on the front cover, "Stunning... will chill you to the bone" from Lisa Gardner, I was hoping for something a little bit more unnerving and creepy, but instead I didn't find this book chilling, frightening or horrific on any level. It may contain vampires but as we get to know them through the back flashes to the 1800's we realise they aren't really menacing at all and therefore no real threat.

However, even with all its faults "Blood & Ice" certainly isn't a bad book, and I did find myself enjoying it - Michael Wilde and the glorious Antarctic the main reasons - and I would still recommend it.

Nikoleta says

Γκουχου... γκουχου... ντρεπομαι που θα το πω αλλα ναι, το παρατησα στη μεση. Διοτι εχει τοσες αδιαφορες, ασχετες λεπτομερειες οι οποιες τρωνε τα δυο τριτα του βιβλιου που αμαν! Δεν με ενδιαφερει να μαθω για την μαρκα του ελικοπτερου που τους μετεφερε κ πως χρησιμοποιηθηκε εως τωρα επι μιαμιση συνεχομενη σελιδα, επισης ποσο κουραστικο ειναι που για 130 σελιδες η δραση ειναι στασιμη, ναι, δεν συμβαινει τιποτα, απλως ταξιδευουν...ουφ! Ισως πιο κατω να γινοταν ενδιαφερον αλλα δεν ηθελα να το ριξω στα οينوπνευματωδη!

Jeannie Mancini says

Love Enchained Through Time-

In 1856 the HM Brig Coventry, tossing in a wild maelstrom is thought to be cursed by two unwanted passengers. When an unusual bottle of wine is found by one of the crew members, the captain is hailed and warned that Mr. and Mrs. Copley are of evil nature. To save the ship from plummeting down to Davy Jones Locker, Sinclair and Eleanor Copley are bound in iron chains and with their sea chest of strange wine bottles, are tossed overboard to drown in icy seas.

In present day Antarctica young wilderness photographer Michael Wilde is on location to shoot some underwater photographs for Eco Travel magazine. He has a two month pass to work with researchers and scientists assisting with various projects of weather, wildlife and the natural habit conditions at the South Pole.

While diving beneath the polar ice cap with high hopes of stunning photographs, Michael unearths an antique bottle of what appears to be Madeira. Putting the old bottle in his scavenger sack and swimming further, he finds an entire sea chest of them, and nearby, within a sunken iceberg, the haunting face of a beautiful woman. Thinking his oxygen level must be affecting his coherency, he resurfaces topside to inform the crew of what he thinks he saw. Armed with ice cutting equipment and additional oxygen, Michael and another researcher dive again beneath the frigid waters and uncover the find of a lifetime. Two people, a man and a woman, frozen in time, enchained together in a block of ice for centuries. Cutting them free, hauling them above to safety, has the Antarctic team in awe and bewilderment at what they have found. Secrets are kept from the outside world, and decisions are made after careful contemplation on the best way to thaw

these icy specters from the past without decomposition. The Victorian lovers are placed in a saltwater bath for what should be a slow and carefully timed melting process. But....while Michael and the team patiently wait, and do some lab tests on the wine bottle contents, Sinclair and Eleanor Copley not only defrost, but come...alive!

Robert Masello has penned a phenomenal suspense horror novel that I doubt any reader could contemplate putting down for one minute. His talent to slowly build the tension as he alternates the story from the Victorian past with Sinclair as a soldier in the 17th Lancers Division during the Crimean War, and Eleanor as a nurse working side by side with Florence Nightingale mending wounded soldiers, to the shocking and violent events in the present as the researchers at the South Pole are under attack and fight one nightmarish battle after another. As the famous Charge of the Light Brigade serves up a battlefield of dead and bloodied soldiers, a sinister entity feeds on the flesh and turn Eleanor and Sinclair into thirsty immortals damned for all eternity.

Two entwining stories chained together for a future revelation offer up a superb blend of history, romance, science, and horror. The way this story unravels, is not what you may think, it does not follow the usual rule of thumb, and what I really loved was that the author took an age old story we've all read before and spun a really cool new twist that ended in a most unique way. Robert Masello gives us a well written complex plot, wonderful endearing characters fully developed, and a suspenseful horror novel blended with a surprising integration of love and tenderness amidst the horrors of war and amongst the philosophies of what it means to be human. Where the dividing line between man and monster lies, is brilliantly found between the pages of Blood and Ice.

I LOVED this book !!!!

Margery says

The first half of the book was a "4". Well written, exciting, well paced. However, the second half turned into a "2" when the vampire/weird science fiction theme emerged. I found the ending very disappointing and I felt duped that such a good beginning could fall so short of its earlier promise.

Sharon says

Completely unputdownable! So this book has sat on its shelf for several months as I have become totally bored by the whole vampire/werewolf subject, I decided to give it a go yesterday and couldn't put it down...seriously, you know its a good read when you are cooking/cleaning/brushing teeth/driving whilst carrying this book pressed right up to your face (Ok so not driving) ...by 2.00am this morning and after telling myself 'ok, just one more chapter' about 3,678 times I finally gave in to sleep. The only reason I'm not finishing the book now is because I'm sitting in work, thinking about the book and writing this review about it!!

This is not your ordinary 'run of the mill' vampire story, if you open this book expecting to be regaled with tales of heartache between 'hero' type vampires, sexy werewolves and a selfish & moody teenage girl who (for some unfathomable reason) is irresistable to the entire human and supernatural race(Ahem...detect

Twilightesque undertones here) Well...you may aswell stop reading before you start. It is not wall-to-wall vampirisms...and in fact, you should read this book simply expecting to read a great story and forget the vampire thing altogether. This may not suit those looking for a quick trashy vampire-romance novel as it is slightly more sophisticated.

It is so refreshing to see a completely different take on a truly overdone subject matter. Blood and Ice is two completely contrasting stories set in the present and in the past, that are eventually linked by the discovery of the bodies in the ice. The description of the surroundings, the personality of the characters, the equipment, the historical references are unlike any I have read in a long time, I have a perfectly formed picture of the story in my head because of such excellent writing. Unlike some other reviewers, I believe that the switch from Victorian England to modern day Antarctic surroundings is fantastic...and imperative to explain the back story (and the curse that befalls)the characters and in credit to the author, it is beautifully done...Don't you want to know how it is they came to be trapped in the ice? And even if you do assume from the start that the two trapped in the ice are vampires...Don't you want to know which version of turning into a vampire has been resurrected in this book?

So in short, a unique take on a popular theme, extremely original setting, some serious research work done on part of the author (Hats off to you sir) fantastic historical references and excellent writing has encouraged me to seek out more books by Robert Masello.

Barbara says

I definitely made a bad choice when I decided to read this book. Yuk.

Miriam says

Bloat is increase in size without corresponding increase in density. I feel a little unfair characterizing Blood and Ice as bloated, because Masello clearly put in some serious research time on Antarctica and the Crimean War and photography and mountain-climbing and

But. Unless you want to read lengthy descriptions of frozen terrain or the rotting limbs of wounded brigadiers, about half the words in this book can be skipped. And the ones that you are left with aren't that great. There are some interesting ideas, but the characters just aren't very interesting and the plot isn't that tight and as thrillers go this book isn't very thrilling. It isn't scary and there was only the briefest scene (with no people in it!) where I felt any tension or suspense.

I think it says a lot, given the body count, that I only felt sad for the dog.

Rusty says

Alrighty then. Where to start...

My dad lived in Antarctica for around a year, a few years before I was born. All I know about it can be summed up pretty succinctly:

- * It's really cold
- * it's really dry
- * 6 months of darkness, followed by 6 months of light (give or take)
- * Its stupidly hard to spell

That's about it. I mean, there are other things, now that I think about it. Penguins live there. It's an actual continent, you know, with land and stuff under all that ice.

So my dad would always tell me these stories when I was a kid about it. He was a military guy and did his part to run the base to support the scientists that were working there. He said they'd play these games where they'd run outside naked and see who could stay there the longest before having to go back in, some game that involved frozen piss, everything else revolved around getting drunk.

He told me recently that he'd read this book and that it contained the most accurate description of what the conditions were like there, what they were actually like, that he'd ever read. He went on and on about it. As someone who is always looking for a way to connect with his father, I told him I'd like to read the book.

And it was sitting in my mailbox a week later.

It starts as a two stories, one being, more or less, set in the present day and involving a photojournalist that is grieving over the accident that turned his loving girlfriend into a coma patient in a vegetative state with no hope of recovery. He's been given an opportunity to visit the Antarctic for some magazine.

The second storyline is about a young man and woman in the mid-1850's that end up being tossed overboard when the ship they took passage on has been lost at sea during a horrific storm (that happens in the prelude, so I don't think I'm giving much of a spoiler).

The story, as far as that goes, is nice. The author describes things well, and I'm interested enough in both stories being told that I don't mind the fact that I have no idea what the larger plot of the novel is. It's all a lovely digression about life in the 1850's London, or in the present day Antarctic (hint: they both suck).

By the way, I typically don't read the cover copy of a book if I've already decided to read it. So I don't know if what happened was hinted at on the jacket or not. Oh... Spoilers are coming.

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Ready for them... SPOILERS

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Halfway through the book. The photojournalist finds the corpses of the young couple frozen in the ice while diving there. Finally, I understand, kinda, that he'll be investigating the mystery of the couple that died 150 years earlier.

Except, no, that isn't it. They're vampires. They are goddamned vampires. Son of a bitch. Ruined my week. The thing is, they weren't... I mean... they really sucked as vampires. They were stupid vampires. It was stupid because... argh. Just trust me. It was stupid.

Most of the second half of the book reminded me of those movies where someone opens a door to look for someone, but the person they're looking for isn't there because they're looking for a magazine under their bed, so when they hear the door shut, they get up and wonder what that sound was, and they open the door to see who was there but the first person is already gone, looking for the second person in another room. So the second person goes to the first person's room to see if they were the one at their door, but, of course, person number one isn't there, because they're in a third room looking for the second person.

I mean, that shit gets old. Fast. And I had about 250 pages of that sort of thing. Back and forth and back and forth. People just barely missing each other, people that keep leaving dead bodies alone and wondering off, even though they suspect they might come back to life, they just don't put any thought into it. Also, a station chief that insists that everyone keep everything an absolute secret, and then decides that even the people that he's sworn to secrecy don't know any information besides whatever they've discovered on their own.... in other words. It's one of those plot-only-works-because-every-character-is-a-moron stories.

Yay. My favorite kind of plot.

In the end. It sucked. hard. The thing that keeps this from being one star is that it is actually very well written, and the first half of the novel is pretty good. Until the author got bored with it and threw in some lame-assed vampires that, incidentally, it took the lab folks about 10 minutes to 'cure.' So. Whatever. Really stupid. Like a different person wrote the second half of the book.

Margaret says

A new goodreads friend reminded me of this book and I remembered I adored it! What can I say? I love every thing with an accurate description of Antarctica and it was awesome !

Hannah says

I feel like I'm being a little harsh by giving Masello two stars, because I appreciate the difficulty of the writing process and two stars? Really? Well, I did lose interest by the middle of the book and I had to hang on to get to the end. Why? After you realize what is going on, the balloon is deflated...there is nothing spectacular to keep the story moving forward at the same speed to sustain curiosity. On a brighter note, I did appreciate the historical aspect of the book and for those who enjoy American Civil War era history, Masello's book may be one to check out.

Verdict: Intriguing plot with memorable characters but story fizzles out too quickly. Great Civil War era references. Read it only if you have nothing left on your to-read list.

edifanob says

I won this book at a bookspotcentral giveaway.

Anyway I could resist to start reading the book immediately and I didn't regret.

About the book

The title makes good in his promise. There is a lot of ice because most of the story takes place in the present Antarctica. And there is blood. We find a lot but it is important.

There are two story lines which converge after a while.

One takes place in the middle of the 19th century. We follow cavalry officer Sinclair Copley and the nurse Eleanor Ames.

The other takes place in present days. There is troubled Journalist Michael Wilde.

The book is a great mix of different genres. You find history, science, action, love and mystery.

Based on his marvelous prose Robert Masello spins a gorgeous story. I didn't want to put down the book. Beside the fascinating story you learn a lot about the Antarctica and also about the Crimean War.

I was thinking whether to give 4 or 5 stars. last year I would have given 5 stars. But in the meantime my criteria changed a bit.

Now I would give 4.75 stars because there are few questions for me without answer.
