

The World House (review)

Written by Administrator

Sunday, 27 November 2011 17:59 - Last Updated Thursday, 05 January 2012 13:10

I picked up *Restoration* because it looked like interesting scifi, and had a cool cover with an English steam engine on it. It was only when I got home that I realized I got played in the airport bookstore way, that this was the second part to *The World House*. I only figured this out once I started reading and had no idea who all these characters were, and what they were talking about. It's sure not clear on the cover. Anyway, read something else and started *The World House* once it came. Read the set back to back.

It's a good read. Basically, there is a "house" patterned off both a Victorian dwelling and our own nightmares, a place hyperdimensional beings created to imprison one of their criminals. And in our dimension, there is a wooden box that bounces across time, getting picked up by unfortunates who, if holding it while in mortal danger (such as commuting by bicycle) they get transported to the House.

And in the house, horrible things happen.

People die in the worst ways. There are small groups who have formed, a savage band inside the grim conservatory, and a ship sailing about in the endless bathroom tub. Into this come a mixture of characters from the Victorian age to the present. And not only do they have to save their own asses, they also have to keep our reality from being destroyed.

Overall, I liked it. Guy Adam's has a sense of dialog and description that rivals (at times) that greater English Adams. For example, *Her colossal thighs clapping together like retarded seals...*
Loved that. Made me shiver.

Still, the books are not without their blemishes. First off, I could do with a *little* more description. For example, my eyes popped at the fact that the characters appear at Church Street Station in Orlando in 1974 (I remember it from 1980). But there is not a single descriptive note about what it looks like, the Navy Base sailors, the towering CNA building, the bright arcades, the iron pedestrian bridge. Nothing. The characters just arrive, go in, have drinks. And the *Intrepid*, the ship endlessly sailing across a gigantic tub, I have no clue. Is it a sailing ship? A old steamer? I know they were beamed to the house sometime after World War One, and the ship seems to be

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made of wood, but as to what makes it go, I don't remember. Perhaps it should have been christened

Enigma

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But really, the hardest thing about reading this is the punctuation, or lack thereof. Adams seems to be dead-set about using commas; they simply don't show up in the most basic locations. For garbled punctuation, I'll note this prime example...

It wasn't that long a walk back to his apartment thank God - he was sure neither his head nor stomach could deal with taking a tram - but just long enough to brush some of the drunkenness from him; to pull him back from the certainty of heaving up in the gutter and making even more of a fool of himself.

Comma before "thank God", and swap another for that semicolon. Angry Robot Books really needs a sharper editor, I think.

But still, fun reads. I recommend them.