

The Scholast in the Low Waters Kingdom

Max Gladstone

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A stranger claiming knowledge of realms beyond the known world attempts to stop a war.

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The Scholast in the Low Waters Kingdom Details


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From Reader Review The Scholast in the Low Waters Kingdom for online ebook

Anurag Sahay says

Amazing novella - I'm already a fan of Gladstone, and this story hits all the beats that I like from his writing. The writing style in particular is a little more poetic than his usual novels, mostly due to the narrative frame, I think.

The story itself is not as compelling as the ideas it puts across, and the beautiful world-building that it belies, but in a story of this length it doesn't detract from enjoyment too much. The story also interests me because it's based on Mohism, according to the internet, and makes me want to read more about Mohism as well.

Highly recommended read.

XX Sarah XX (former Nefarious Breeder of Murderous Crustaceans) says

Actual rating: 2.5 stars

Kes says

This was way too brief - it felt as though there was a rich, unexplored world that was not dealt with. Even the relationship between Jane and Princess Martial was hinted at; hardly explored. Ultimately dissatisfying.

daisy says

2.5 stars? It wasn't bad, exactly, it just felt incomplete. I'm relatively inexperienced with short fiction, so that might just be me not having an appreciation for it yet. idk.

Athena says

Scholast has hugely intriguing world-building which finally became a problem for this as a short story. There's just too much implied *there* there: it reads like a creative brainstorming session for Gladstone's next series of books and becomes almost a taunt.

Huge worlds aren't necessarily a bad thing for a short story but in this case the plot was subsumed by the world-build and it flattened the ending: what should have been a revelation became trite.

Some writers of 'big' novel arcs, like N.K. Jemisin, can still handle the short story format. Either Gladstone

needs to work on the format or he needs to leave it alone.

It's a free read at Tor.com:

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John says

Short story, one of those artful productions that tell one tale in the guise of another. Here a mysterious savior appears to rescue a city from raiders—on what is evidently an ancient generation ship with a regressed population. Reminiscent of Cherryh's "Morgaine" series.

Hannah says

"Stories about the Scholast proliferate among the uneducated. They say she was a god, or not. She seduced the Princess Martial, or was saved by her. She has been credited with miracles. But history owes its pride of place to the truth of its tales, and since many of the war's principles will soon pass beyond reference, your humble scholars have prepared this meticulously sourced account to endure for future generations."

Although the story's tone begins as a legend or myth, the Scholast (Jane) quickly becomes a vivid being in the telling of the guidance and help she gives before and during a vicious battle.

The story is wonderfully paced by sounds and rhythms—the ko drums in the throne room and in battle, the silence of a prison, the beating of a solitary heart. These rhythms, and at times even the absence of sound, make this "legend" feel incredibly present and real.

Gladstone gracefully toes the line between dialogue and exposition--not too much worldbuilding and not too little character development. I especially enjoyed the interactions between the Princess Martial and the Scholast--just lovely.

The legend of the Scholast reads like a recording of an oral history that you might happen upon when doing research. In that way, Gladstone creates a unique world without leaving you wanting more. I'm not sure I would enjoy an entire book or series written this way, but the style is perfect for a short story.

Here's the link to read the story for free on Tor.com: <http://www.tor.com/2017/03/29/the-sch...>

Julie (Manga Maniac Cafe) says

3 stars

I'll give this 3 stars. It is so short that there is really no plot development, but I found the basic premise interesting. I wish it had been longer. As it stands, it's more of a teaser than a complete story

Brent Lambert says

Max is one of my favorite writers so I really wanted to enjoy this wrong. Don't get me wrong. The story

telling was definitely intriguing and fast paced. But it felt like there was something missing at the heart of this story. Like there was a revelation around the corner that just didn't get a chance to flourish. So it was hard for me to really invest into this story.

Miriam says

I liked this a lot, but the whole set up and even the main character reminded me awfully much of Cherryh's Morgaine series.

Jamie Sidey says

Like just about everything from Max Gladstone, I enjoyed the hell out of this.

I hope he revisits this world in full book form... not necessarily a full book about this story, but perhaps the claw back from the disaster that created this world

Andy says

Another enjoyable short story from Tor.com

Told in the style of a journal chronicling a historical event, a being - The Scholast - appears on a world, at first revered like a god, mostly due to her appearance and in the way in which she arrives, but soon just treated like an outsider as she tries to win over the trust of the ruler, Princess Martial, of the land she's arrived in, in order to warn and prepare them for an incoming attack.

The story is fairly quickly paced, as we jump from the preparations for the battle to the conflict itself quickly, as such there's not much time for character development or world building. But even so, there's still enough of a sense of what the world is like to make it interesting.

The main focus is on the interaction between the Scholast, known as Jane and the Princess, which feels like just glimpses. Maybe because of the way the story is written, and perhaps if the story was a bit longer, things could've been flesh out a bit more, as I would've liked to have seen more. But it's still an enjoyable read and is available to read on the Tor.com website.

Ron says

“I don’t understand.” “Those are the first words of the wise.”

Vintage Gladstone is a one-gulp package. All the best of Gladstone’s world creation and social consciousness in thirty-six pages.

“Lies are particularly suited to the situation. Like art.”

Well drawn characters. Threads into other realms, clearly defined enough to make this story a pleasure.

“What’s the good of this friendship of yours if you don’t trust me?”

Amy Mills says

So good. Much as I like Yoon Ha Lee's works, I feel like this is what he often tries to do, and just doesn't quite succeed. There's too little to connect to. Gladstone creates a world with so much to connect to and draws you in immediately.

Maggie Gordon says

Gladstone's short isn't really a story so much as an experiment in world building that might lead to an interesting story one day. But this is not that story. Stuff happens, the world is intriguing, but it's hard to care since we don't know quite enough. The characters are flat and I never really grasped what was at stake. Alas!
