

Mash Up: A Kandy and Qiqiq Novel

Joe Klingler

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Klingler is skilled at writing action scenes. He puts the reader directly in the line of fire, and he doesn't let up.

Mash Up, the next book in Joe Klingler's series featuring Qiqiq, transplants the main character from Fairbanks, Alaska, to San Francisco. Klingler keeps up the speed and intensity offered by his first book, *RATS*. Thematically, this book focuses on the continuing threat of Internet piracy and offers a rather extreme solution to keep people from stealing others' intellectual property.

Along with the drastic change in venue, Qiqiq now has a partner, SFPD Detective Kandy Dreeson, with whom he must tackle the technological quandary of digital music piracy. Severed body parts in Amazon boxes give this latest book gore along with shenanigans on the Internet, including YouTube videos and ads on Craigslist. As the body pieces pile up, Qiqiq and Kandy are pressured to come up with a fast solution.

Klingler's technological acumen really is the star of the show. The premise of a way to catch those illegally downloading music and make them pay is still a topic of interest, and in Klingler's world, there is a great deal of violence and gore included in that payment. He very adeptly weaves between the world of computer technology and the world of the detective.

Qiqiq is an enigmatic puzzle for those who have to deal with him, although in this book, he is a very complete character. The addition of Kandy for him to play off of adds depth to his character. Kandy never really evolves from more than a stock detective, but she does bring about an interesting change in Qiqiq's character, giving him some softness and humanity. Kandy takes the edge off his technology-driven personality.

Klingler is skilled at writing action scenes. He puts the reader directly in the line of fire, and he doesn't let up. "Greg Simmons' left hand, hidden by his body, came up under his right armpit. Qiqiq recognized the fat cylinder of a silencer beneath the biceps, the barrel aimed at the middle of his chest. ... Veronica squirmed and tried to shake her head, but didn't get far against the knife."

This book runs long, at almost six hundred pages. More careful editing would have streamlined sections where the story lags. Tightening up the story and making events occur closer together in time would help quicken the pace. There is a great deal of action here, but there are long periods of unnecessary repetition.

Anyone interested in thrillers or police procedurals will find much to appreciate in this newest Qiqiq installment, especially if they're not averse to a little blood and gore.

LYNN EVARTS (September 17, 2014)

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