

Vlogentia: A Tale of Second World

WM W. Somers

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Vlogentia is an exciting fantasy novel in which people from parallel worlds face each other down.

In WM W. Somers's fantasy novel *Vlogentia*, people from Earth are abducted by those attempting a power grab in a parallel world.

In the sixteenth century, representatives of the Spanish Inquisition begin a siege of several Mayan villages. In the process, a priest stumbles across a floating sphere; it transports him to a parallel world that's orbited by twin moons. The priest ushers the villages through the portal, leading to the formation of a new civilization: Vlogentia, named after one of the priest's family names.

Vlogentia ushers in an era of relative peace in the Second World. But during one of the celebratory events honoring the new year, a girl, Bianca, is kidnapped and thrust into a royal plot to seize power. The plot involves abducting Jason, a doctor from Earth, and forcing him to concoct poisons. Jason and his wife Margaret believe they are working under legitimate contract until their host turns on them, after which they, with Bianca, race to foil the plot.

The Second World is constructed in creative ways, making use of a handful of historical seed elements in establishing its colonies and blending elements of Mayan and Spanish cultures in. But there are also fantastical creatures present, including feathered dragons, vicious unicorns, and intelligent wasps known as faeries. Most life in Second World came through the portal, but proceeded to evolve to fit the different environment, including its people and cultures. The particulars of Vlogentia's culture are further explained in several hefty glossaries that cover all aspects of its society, alongside a detailed cast of characters.

Attention to detail is a major facet of the writing, and important plot twists are foreshadowed early and often. Action scenes also arise on occasion; they stand out from the rest of the book thanks to their precise positioning and thrilling sequences. A football-like game played during the New Year celebrations is tense and cheer-inducing as Bianca's team overcomes beefier teams, while a showdown between a dragon and Bianca unfolds with intensity as she bests the creature using her wits and agility. But the story loses steam in its last third, and its conclusion is rushed.

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JOHN M. MURRAY (April 23, 2021)

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