



Under a Pole Star: Shortlisted for the 2017 Costa Novel Award

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COSTA WINNING AUTHOR Stef Penney returns to the wild Arctic setting she brought so vividly to life in *THE TENDERNESS OF WOLVES*, in an epic story of ambition, perseverance and love against the odds. Perfect for fans of *TO THE BRIGHT EDGE OF THE WORLD* and *THE ESSEX SERPENT*. 'A supreme storyteller' *Sunday Times*

Flora Mackie first crossed the Arctic Circle at the age of twelve. In 1889, the whaler's daughter from Dundee - dubbed by the press 'The Snow Queen' - sets out to become a scientist and explorer. She struggles to be taken seriously but determination and chance lead her back to northern Greenland at the head of a British expedition, despite the many who believe that a young woman has no place in this harsh world of men.

Geologist Jakob de Beyn was raised in Manhattan. Yearning for wider horizons, he joins a rival expedition, led by the furiously driven Lester Armitage. When Jakob and Flora's paths cross, it is a fateful meeting.

All three become obsessed with the north, a place where violent extremes exist side by side: perpetual night and endless day; frozen seas and coastal meadows; heroism and lies. Armitage's ruthless desire to be the true leader of polar discovery takes him and his men on a mission whose tragic outcome will reverberate for years to come.

Set against the stark, timeless beauty of northern Greenland, and fin-de-siècle New York and London, *Under a Pole Star* is a compelling look at the dark side of the 'golden age' of exploration, a study of the corrosive power of ambition, and an epic, incendiary love story. It shows that sometimes you have to travel to the furthest edge of the world in order to find your true place in it.

Under a Pole Star: Shortlisted for the 2017 Costa Novel Award Details

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Penney

From Reader Review Under a Pole Star: Shortlisted for the 2017 Costa Novel Award for online ebook

Gill says

Review added October 20th 2016

'Under a Pole Star' by Stef Penney

4 stars/ 8 out of 10

I read and enjoyed Stef Penney's first novel 'The Tenderness of Wolves', so was interested in reading her latest work 'Under a Pole Star' (to be published in October 2016).

This novel tells the story of Flora Mackie, whose first journey to the Arctic as a young girl started a lifelong relationship with the area and its people. It is a fascinating historical novel, set in the late 19th century, a time of exploration and discovery.

This is a long novel, more than 600 pages, covering many areas, and I can see that different aspects of the book will appeal to different people. For me, the sections relating to Louise and others' personal relationships were the least interesting part of the book.

I was mainly interested in the parts relating to exploration. I thought the part covering Louise's childhood and whaling was excellent, as were the parts relating to the various trips to the Arctic (and the organisation necessary prior and post these trips). Penney's research has been meticulous, and her writing ability made these sections completely believable. I was especially interested in all the sections relating to 'Eskimo' life. The descriptions of life and nature in the Arctic were excellent.

Penney uses a framing technique that links the main narrative to a return trip to the Arctic in 1948. For much of the book, I wondered whether this added to the novel. However, by the end of the book, I could see the ways in which it had enhanced the story.

Stef Penney can be well pleased with this novel, and I look forward to reading future work by her.

Thank you to Quercus Books and to NetGalley for an ARC.

Austra says

Jau pasen gribu izlasīt šīs pašas autores "The Tenderness of Wolves", bet sanāca tomēr sēkt ar šo grāmatu. Gribētos teikt, ka tie autori, kas raksta vienu grāmatu piecos gados, nevis divas grāmatas gadā, ar to vien jau parāda citādāku pieeju un kvalitāti. Šis stāsts ir par 19. gs. Arktiskajām ekspedīcijām - par apsēstību bēti pirmajiem, gēti slavu un atzinību. Par to, uz ko cilvēks (lielkoties - vārietis) ir gatavs, lai tiktu pie tām iepriekšminētajām un noslēptu savas neveiksmes. Par šiem baltajiem vāriešiem un par zemķēm pasugām - sievietēm un mežoniem (piem., eksimosiem). Un par tiem, kurus tīlā sniega un ledus pasaule apbur ar savu neskaidrību, neparastumu un skaistumu.

Autorei ir brīnišķīga valoda. Viņa var vienā teikumā aprakstīt ainavu vai personu, vai cilvēka dziļākus ilgus tē, ka lasītājam ir sajūta, ka viņš atrodas šai vietā, redz šo cilvēku un šīs ilgus ir viņa paša ilgus. Kas

man šaj? gr?mat? nepatika - ka autore ik pa laikam maitek?o n?kotnes notikumus. T?d?? man p?d?j?s 60 lpp. neizlas?tas nost?v?ja 2 m?nešus, jo man negrib?j?s t?s beigas. Un tom?r t?s bija skaisti uzrakst?tas. Otrā neforš? lieta - gr?matai tr?kst dinamikas, t? ir l?na un br?žiem ir pagr?ti sisties cauri t?m 600 lappus?m, ja notikumū virz?ba ir tik gausa. Un tom?r, bija v?rts. Pie nosac?juma, ka pat?k las?t par leduti?iem un sen?m eksped?cij?m.

"You could not marry without income and expectations. If you wanted a woman, you had to provide for her, whether it was for an hour or for a lifetime."

Hannah Eve says

Contains spoilers

This book is about sex. It's sometimes about Greenland, glaciers and death. But mostly, it's about sex.

And yet I was disappointed.

The sheer amount of sex scenes in the novel serves to celebrate the sexual emancipation of a young and oppressed Victorian woman. Where Flora feels the disadvantage of her gender, she improves herself sexually, graduating from utter ignorance to finally lying comfortably in Jakob's naked lap, sniffing his penis. The point of it seems to be that Flora discovers her capacity to love through these moments, and in so doing becomes remarkably courageous.

What bothered me was the language used throughout the novel. Sex is difficult to write, and I'm always uncomfortable with certain cliché metaphors like 'her juices' and 'nectar' (I mean, we're not picturing honey...). It's intimate in the extreme, so much so that I'm tempted to congratulate Stef Penney for being so unapologetically bold. But many of the more elaborate metaphors such as 'she was his homecoming, his harbour' etc. felt lengthy and contrived. Moreover, there was an odd contrast between the overdone figurative language and unexpectedly explicit words like 'cunt' - particularly when narrated from Flora's perspective, it felt inappropriate.

In more than a few other areas, the writing seemed sloppy, as if Penney was getting fed up with it herself. But at 596 pages I don't blame her. Are authors getting paid by the word again because it feels like the art of concision is fading? Under a Pole Star's actual plot is brilliant and, in fact, far more satisfying than her previous novel. It could just have been 200 pages shorter. Having said that, Penny's talent for recreating a time and place is compelling, and, as with *The Tenderness of Wolves*, I did find myself immersed in the latter half of the book.

Manchester Military History Society (MMHS) says

Overlong, but glad I made the journey.

Steff Penney's epic Arctic romance centres around Flora who spent a large part of her childhood in the Arctic onboard her father's whaling boat resulting in a love of the Arctic and the native people that lived there. An older Flora returns to the Arctic as an adult meeting the American explorer and romantic interest in the novel, Jakob.

I wanted to like this, but the book is quite variable. Some passages are very good, but it loses its way too often and I was tempted to put it down.

The author's descriptions of the Arctic are very good, with particularly strong imagery and prose, however, the book isn't gripping and I did find some of the secondary characters uninteresting and one dimensional. Indeed, I found Flora a rather enigmatic character and difficult to empathise with.

A major part of the book covers Flora and Jakob's childhood and university experiences which could have been seriously edited. The later sections are the most compelling with the development of the relationship between Flora and Jakob which do contain some graphic sex scenes.

In summary I was glad I'd finished it, and there's some beautiful descriptions of the Arctic, but the length and characterisations don't work in its favour.

I received this book free from the publisher and was not required to write a positive review.

Magdalena aka A Bookaholic Swede says

I was instantly intrigued by the cover and the blurb of the book when I first saw it on NetGalley and I was thrilled to get a chance to read it. However, I had some serious problem with the story. 2 times during the book was a very tempted to give up the book. First, at around 30% and then around 60%. But, I felt that I had gotten so far that I wanted to finish the book and I wanted to know the ending.

Now, the book isn't all bad. There were moments in the story I liked. But, after the intriguing intro, did the book lose some flow and for 30% it was just an introduction to the two main characters, Flora and Jacob. And, it's a thick book 608 page long and 30% of that felt a bit too much for just reading about people growing up. It got a bit better when the Flora and Jacob finally met during two separate expeditions. However, I could never really get into their great romance and the book felt way too long.

I did like reading about the expeditions, the will to find new land and the life of the Inuits. I think I would have preferred reading the book if it had focused more on the exploration of Arctic than Flora and Jacob life and tribulations. I did find Flora's life interesting to read as a woman in a man's world. It was just that sometimes it got a bit dull and I didn't find Jacob's life as interesting. Sometimes the story felt like it just went on and on. A bit too wordy for my taste.

I want to thank Quercus Books for providing me with a free copy through NetGalley for an honest review! To be reviewed!

Kate says

THOSE THREE STARS ARE NOT A RECOMMENDATION TO READ THIS BOOK, okay?

This book is not a book that can easily be recommended to anyone because the target audience that this was written for is, um, well, I am trying to figure it out still.

This book confuses me. It is more than a third of the way into a pretty thick book before it turns from arctic explorer/female outsider finding her way in the big male world book into erotica - so that is a pretty big buy in for the erotica reader. The sex scenes are led by the trope (is this a named trope yet?) where the male hero is allowed a sexual past that involves learning all the ways to please a woman from an unemotionally attached married woman so that he can go on to teach our female hero how to orgasm and love her sexuality. That is a thing, right? And the arctic explorer story line is not furthered by any of the long (and they are long) sex scenes. So if you are only in for one of the types of story, you will dislike big sections of the book. If you don't mind either type of writing, you will probably tire of each as well.

The story is okay. There was something interesting about it.

The audiobook is better than the paper version.

This is a good audiobook to listen to when you have the flu and cannot sleep because you are so fucking cold buried under every blanket in your home for hours and hours on end.

Cphe says

A novel set in the Arctic Circle in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Wonderful descriptions of snow and ice, an unforgiving, brutal environment.

This story tells of the fated romance between Flora Mackie and Jacob de Beyn. Flora is unusual for the time depicted, no narrow insular world for her. Flora becomes a Meteorologist and leads her own expedition into the Arctic Circle. Jacob de Beyn is a Geologist with a fascination with the glaciers and ice formation in the Arctic Circle. Both are driven characters in their own field.

I suppose some may be disappointed by the "romantic" component but I felt it complimented the story and the the characters overall.

However for this reader it was the visceral descriptions of the landscape, the Eskimo way of life and the times that kept me reading.

Paromjit says

Stef Penney returns to the Arctic in this intense and epic novel that looks at the darker side of the golden age of explorers in the nineteenth century. It begins with a group visiting the Arctic, amongst which is the elderly Snow Queen, Flora Cochrane, and Randall Crane who is intent on getting close to Flora and finding out about her expeditions and life. The story then goes back to Flora, who from 12 to 18 years of age went whaling in the Arctic with her father. From this deeply unconventional background, at 18 she is expected to return to the limiting and conventional life expected of a woman. Needless to say, Flora struggles to adapt and wants nothing more than to return to the Arctic. She trains as a meteorologist and marries a man who facilitates her return as the co-leader of a scientific expedition. New Yorker, Jakob de Beyn, is a geologist with an American expedition to reach the North Pole under the leadership of Lester Armitage. The two competing parties meet and despite all that stands between them, Flora and Jakob fall for each other. A life consuming love affair ensues fuelled by letters, riven with insecurities and obstacles. This is a story about their love and passion for each other and for the Arctic.

The Arctic is a harsh, savage and unforgiving place for all who encounter it, with so many suffering dreadful privations. Death constantly looms over all who live and visit there as depicted by the many who lose their lives in the novel. The cold and dark are constant challenges. The Eskimos talk of a winter madness with symptoms of violent mania. The relationship outsiders have with the Eskimos are careless, often perfidious, shameful and exploitative. Eskimo mummies and Eskimos are gawped at and viewed with contempt and horror by mainstream society. The absolute inequality means that Eskimos cannot afford to offend and put up with despicable behaviour. The explorers, like Armitage, are exemplified as unpleasant, selfish, conceited, elusive and ruthless with glass egos. It is a man's world and Flora does not go unscathed in this milieu. Her achievements are seen by men to diminish their own. The reputation of a woman is exceedingly fragile and easily wrecked through rumour and gossip. Amidst this background, Flora is an extraordinary woman. Randall Crane turns out to have secrets that make Flora open up about her lifestory. Murder, blackmail, tragedy, lies and secrets emerge. What is not in doubt is the love Flora and Jakob have for each other amidst the spellbinding Arctic which is home to both of them.

Flora is a flawed and driven character who is often careless of others. For example, she does not understand what her father has to give up when he gives her a considerable sum of money so that she can realise her ambitions. Although perhaps this can be forgiven given what it takes in that era to be an explorer. Fundraising and money compromise the nature of exploration, often making it a grubby affair. This is an absorbing and atmospheric love story that grabs the attention. A brilliant novel that focuses on the frontier of Arctic knowledge and driven by the characters created. Highly recommended read. Thanks to Quercus for an ARC.

Chris Mara says

There were some reviewers that said they had a hard time with this one (getting through it or chucking it completely); or the content was too wordy or there were too many characters. So I was put off by that thinking that for sure that was going to be me. But as we all know, some books can resonate with one person and not the other. So I started reading and never got to a point of frustration where I wanted to give it up and made it to the end.

Yes it's a large book - 61 chapters and 578 pages! ? Quite honestly, I've been ignoring reading this book from my last big library haul, pushing it to the back shelf, renewing it, pushing it back again, til the library police started fining me. Why did I even check this book out? Because there was a show on TV about Arctic explorers and it struck an interest. I happened upon this one at the new books library section and so there ya go.

Well, it's quite a tale! Flora Mackie crosses the Arctic Circle at 12 years of age on a boat that includes her father, who is a whaler, and its crew of men, of all ages and backgrounds, some questionable in nature. With her mother's passing when she was a child, her father wanted to keep her near him, so he brought her aboard his whaling boat to go on ocean excursions. He did have his regrets all along about whether this was the right thing to do for him and for her. She took to the north atmosphere and ocean environment like a sponge. We then read about her growing up, her formal education, love and loss, making difficult life choices. But the pull of the land of ice is ever strong and is thick in her blood. She is ambitious. She wants to go back. She is "the Snow Queen."

After a failed romantic relationship, she meets a fellow colleague/scientist, Freddie. They are ambitious and have much in common however, It should be noted that theirs was a marriage of business and comfort, friendship, not of a true love or sexual consummation. Turns out Freddie has syphilis and is just, a very odd

individual and they have a most unusual relationship. We are given deep intimate insight into this and other relationships through the book.

In 1892, she and her husband, Freddie, procure funds from solicitors and begin to restore and prepare a ship and hired crew to set sail north, but this time, she, as an adult female polar explorer and scientist, leading her own exploration team.

In addition to the British explorations, the Americans have been exploring out north with their research teams as well. They view and at times, meet each other carefully but competitively. Information or discoveries are not shared openly or readily. The native Eskimo people are friendly with all and are the conduit between the British and American teams.

The quest for a significant discovery/discoveries is for only one country or one explorer/team to proclaim. And that, my friend, is the key to what all happens through the rest of the book. That claim to fame (greed, ambition) causes jealousy, blackmail, deceit, discrimination, stealing, adultery, lies, murder, illness, and death.

I thought this was a very good book and felt it was important to provide a lot of extensive detail to this story. Otherwise we would not have a clear idea of what the author intended us to experience as a reader, on these excursions and to understand the personal lives of the people who were an important functional part of these explorations. It was different and it was very interesting.

Sarah says

I have an image of Stef Penney sitting down to write this book. 'Well everybody loved the cold, haunted darkness featured in 'The Tenderness of Wolves', so my next novel will be set in the Arctic'. After a bit of Google procrastination Stef hits upon that the biggest book sales in recent years have been murder/mysteries and, of course, E L James with titillating erotica. 'OK then, I shall give the readers what they want – my next bestselling novel will be Arctic Mystery Porn.'

The tale starts with the Snow Queen, or Flora as she is known throughout the rest of the book, being taken to the North Pole in 1948. There is the reference to the mystery: what happened to her fellow explorers all those years ago?

We then go back in time to 1883 (split timeframe books also seem to be the thing this year) and to a young Flora with her father in Greenland. Also in New York, an introduction to Jakob, a boy with a fascination for the Arctic and lots of relatives. At one point I was drunk on characters; it was like a party with so many new people that I couldn't work out who was worth really getting to know and who I would never see again. Time goes on and finally Flora and Jakob meet. At this point we enter the '50 Shades of Ice' section of the book. They are a young, fit couple who like sex, so they have sex regularly and being a modern open minded audience we read all about it. One sentence did get my 'Laugh out Loud Award 2016' – 'by taking it inside her mouth, where he fits as snugly as an acorn in a cup'. Let us hope that Jakob did not mind being compared to an acorn.

Having fully mined the thesaurus for alternatives to 'bulbous' Stef realises that the mystery element of the tale had been neglected. This was a relief as I felt the need for a story at this stage, the book had got lost in an Arctic winter and we all needed rescuing.

This book would benefit from some judicious editing, as it stands I think many readers will flag after the second or third expedition. But who knows, maybe Arctic Mystery Porn will be a hit for Stef Penney.

Nigel says

In short - A great tale of the Arctic, exploration and particularly Flora, a character I really liked, a British explorer at the end of the 19th century.

In full

The start of this book introduces us to The Snow Queen, a now aging Arctic explorer, going to Greenland on another Arctic expedition in 1948. There is a reporter at the 1948 event who is interested to know Flora's take on some controversies about American expeditions that took place towards the end of the 19th century. The book then moves back in time to Flora Mackie in 1883 as a 13 year old on her first Arctic voyage on her father's boat. This is before she becomes The Snow Queen in the press of the 19th century. With short periods spent at the 1948 event the book focuses in the main on the life of Flora Mackie and her explorations in the Arctic in the late part of the 19th century. The book also covers the stories of American expeditions at the same sort of time and particularly those involving Jakob de Beyn. It becomes increasingly obvious that there may have been something unusual about the American expeditions.

I really loved the account of Flora as a teenager and the development of her life and interests. She is a strong and very well written character who will stay with me for some time. The accounts of the expeditions are detailed and extensive. Jakob is an important part of this narrative (as to some degree is Armitage, an American who led an expedition with Jakob and undertook another without him). I found Jakob a less vivid character than Flora though still interesting. In a sense this feels almost a biography of Flora - covering intimate and personal aspects of her life as well as the Arctic experiences. I really did find Flora's life from 13 to her meeting with the reporter in 1948 enjoyable and I became happily immersed in it. The writing is of a very high standard. If I have any issues with this book it would be about the pace. The descriptive writing is great however, at times, it seemed to slow the book down for me. The inside story of those early expeditions is fascinating as the tale is gradually told. I would imagine this book would be a "must" for many Steff Penney fans.

Note - I received an advance digital copy of this book from the publisher in exchange for a fair review

<http://viewson.org.uk/historical-fict...>

Tim says

Under A Pole Star by Stef Penney is shortlisted for the 2017 Costa Novel Award.

2.5 stars

Flora Mackie, daughter of a Dundee whaling captain, first crosses the Arctic Circle in 1883 at the age of twelve. Her mother has died, and her father sees no option but to take her on his voyages, trying to shield her eyes from the brutal realities of whaling. Yet, the land and its people enchant her, and she determines to become a scientist and explorer. She enrolls at a coeducational college in London to read meteorology, and enters a pragmatic marriage to a wealthy husband, Freddie Athlone, whom she likes well enough, but above all, who accepts her ambition and is determined to realize plan for a British expedition. Despite her struggle to be taken seriously as a woman in a rough man's world, she returns to northern Greenland and is left to lead the expedition after her husband's accident during the voyage at the young age of twenty. Geologist Jakob de Beyn, raised in Manhattan by a devout Lutheran uncle, is tired of surveying the

mountains of Wyoming and Montana. In search for adventure, he joins an American polar expedition led by ruthless Lester Armitage the same year as Flora sets out. It is there, that they meet, an encounter that is set to influence both of their lives to the end.

Under a Pole Star is beautifully written. The landscape is evoked until it becomes a character: a place of violent extremes, the beauty, the perpetual night and endless day. And it is gentle and thoughtful in the way it describes the Inuit, and the bonds they form with the expedition members.

I was really looking forward to this book since I was fascinated by the polar expeditions in the late nineteenth century as a child, and this book certainly is a great read in the way it covers the British and American expeditions. Stef Penney does a great job at laying bare the individual motivations that drive the explorers: the unscrupulous search for fame, the need for adventure, and in Flora's case, the escape from a conservative society that expects of her as a woman to stay silent and obedient.

Stef Penney, more ambitiously maybe, also tries to navigate Flora's conflict between her escape to the solitude of the north with her growing sexual desires following several tempestuous affairs with fellow students and explorers. Here, in my humble opinion, she drops the ball a little. Although her desires are understandable and relatable, Penney failed to preserve the balance between budding romance, sexual desire, and the narrative of polar exploration and adventure. The way she fully flopped from one narrative to the other, to the third felt heavy-handed and, particularly towards the end, drove me up the wall. About half-way through I was pleasantly surprised how good this book was, but the last 250 pages or so didn't do much for me or the overall narrative.

Trigger warning: graphic description of rape.

Joanne says

Under a Pole Star is a much bigger book than I have read for some time at over 600 pages, but I loved every page of it. Stef Penney returns to the frozen settings she described so convincingly in *The Tenderness of Wolves*. I was quite surprised to learn that, like me, she is from Edinburgh. I was sure that she must have been from the cold places she writes about so beautifully. However, although she has been to the Scandanavian Arctic she hasn't been to the North Pole, the ultimate aim of the characters in this book. Like me, and not surprisingly, she loves snow! I really enjoy books set in very cold climates. It always fascinates me how people can survive in such harsh conditions and it must have been even more difficult for the early Arctic explorers without modern clothing and technology.

This is such an epic book that it is difficult to summarise in just a few sentences but I will try. Dundee born Flora Mackie has had an unusual childhood, travelling with her whaling-ship captain father to the Arctic on several occasions during the second half of the 19th century. She is called *The Snow Queen* by the press. When she becomes an older teenager, her father refuses to take her anymore feeling it unsuitable for a young lady. She is furious about this and determines, despite being a woman, that she will return to the North to lead her own expeditions. Jakob de Beyn is a geologist from New York travelling with Arctic explorer Lester Armitage. When they meet, an emotional bond is formed which will change their lives forever.

Stef Penney has written an epic novel detailing the lives of Flora and Jakob before they met, their passionate relationship and their shared obsession with the Arctic. Flora is a wonderful character: strong, clever, determined. It must have been hard for intelligent women in the 19th century who had ambition but were held back simply because they were women. Flora is practical and realises that she will only be able to travel back to the North as a married woman, but even then she faces hostility and prejudice. Jakob is the one who

sees her as she is and recognises and respects her abilities. The love between the two develops achingly slowly before they finally give in to their emotions. The passion between them leaps off the page with such intensity. Scattered throughout the book, there are sections with Flora as a much older lady returning to the Arctic, having been married three times, discussing her life with a journalist and reminiscing about the great loves of her life - Jakob and the frozen north. Through these, we begin to find out what happened between Jakob, Flora and Lester Armitage.

Despite never having been to the North Pole, the author has clearly researched thoroughly so I felt that I had a good idea of how difficult life was, and probably still is, in the very cold regions of the world. She describes the whaling industry, the expeditions and the preparation required to optimise survival, the health problems faced by the explorers and their obsession to push further and further north, aiming for the ultimate goal - the North Pole. The relationship between the explorers and indigent Inuit people was really interesting to read about. The Inuit, of course, were invaluable to the explorers yet weren't always treated with the respect they deserved. As you might expect though, Jakob and Flora have a very respectful attitude towards them and value their contributions, something which doesn't always endear them to their fellow scientists and explorers.

But what Stef Penney does best is write about the vast, bleak yet beautiful Arctic landscape. This is a book to read by a fire, imagining the beauty of snow and ice while immersing yourself in this epic story of adventure and love.

My thanks to the publishers Quercus for allowing me to read a copy via Netgalley.

Maggie says

What an amazing book! Stef Penney captures the world of the far North brilliantly and lyrically. (Reading it during a cold snap I'm sure added to my enjoyment!)

The story follows Flora's life. She first went North with her father who was a Dundee whaling captain and fell totally under its spell. She spent the rest of her days trying to get back there and to learn more about the place and its people..

Jakob deBeyn is a geologist. He is part of an American expedition to attempt to reach the North Pole. He and Flora meet and are instantly attracted.

Their love story, the accounts of the expeditions and how the desire for fame can sometimes blank out truth form a captivating narrative. Thanks to Netgalley and the publisher for giving me the chance to read and review this stunning book. It will take a while before I forget this one.

Jeanette says

No rating from me. Stef Penney has exceptional writing ability and it isn't the book as much as it is myself and when this book and I met. It's a tome and at the half way point, I will leave it. Flora is just not a character of great interest to me or even of moderate imaginative inquiry. Explorers and intrepid personality quotient is not enough either way. Does she ever want a woman friend? Or feel any desire to intersect/ cross with over 1/2 the human race in some female chatter? And where is any of the inquisitiveness to "other"? She seems attracted to the frozen outside world and having small concerns for the many layered or emotionally based

warmth capacity for an individual woman? And the males aren't exactly depth charges either.

Too much cold and ice and it's September already. So I'll be getting more of those very specifics in my own sight before you know it. I would have probably trudged until the end if I hadn't had 4 other books that are superior right now and at least 5 more in the pile beyond those 4 that look much better to my current interests. Far more intriguing.

Stef Penney, I may come back to this one some day. But I probably won't. Life is too short and I have way too much more on the joy and intellect scale for some crafty tales pounding their hooves WAY ahead of this one. Some components are worth the time and reading efforts here absolutely. But not for me.

Great writing skills and just not a particular glacier I choose to climb to grasp the shards. Both the mental and physically based components are too sharp and crudely cored for me to desire the hike.
