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A Civil Campaign (Miles Vorkosigan Adventures)



Synopsis

Lord Miles Vorkosigan, youngest Imperial Auditor to be appointed by the Emperor since the Time of Isolation, has a problem that all his new power can't solve: unrequited love for the beautiful Vor widow Ekaterin Vorsoisson. Ekaterin is violently allergic to marriage as a result of her first exposure. But as Miles learned from his late career in galactic covert ops, if a frontal assault won't do, go to subterfuge. Miles has a cunning plan, which, of course, has to be worked out in between District succession scandals and plans for the Emperor's wedding. And if no battle plan survives first contact with the enemy, just imagine what all Miles' friends and relatives can do to his romantic strategy.

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Customer Reviews

If you relish costume adventure in an intergalactic society starring strong, convincing male and female characters, you'll adore the Vorkosigan Series. If you haven't met Miles Vorkosigan, whose brilliance, manic energy, and unstoppable determination make him a larger-than-life hero despite his dwarfish stature, pick up *Komarr* and *A Civil Campaign*. Read them, and then go back and catch the previous nine books (10 if you count *Ethan of Athos*, which features not Miles but his partner, Ellie Quinn); or read the series in order, starting with the romance of Miles's parents in *Shards of Honor*. *A Civil Campaign* opens where *Komarr* ends, with Miles determined to court Ekaterin. Unfortunately, his approach is described as "General Romeo Vorkosigan, the one-man strike force." By his father.

The potential for comic disaster increases when Miles's clone brother Mark arrives. He's brought a brilliant but scatterbrained scientist who's created a bug producing a perfect food: bug butter. They set up a lab in the basement of Vorkosigan House. Mark has also found a nice Barraryaran girl--she even likes the bugs--with whom he got together on the sexually liberated world of Beta. But now Kareen's living at home. Naturally, disaster strikes, repeatedly and on all fronts. Bujold unfolds her comedy of manners while continuing to explore familiar themes: the difficulties in becoming a strong adult woman in a patriarchy, the need for trust and honesty in relationships between the sexes, the difference between appearance and identity, and the impact of advanced biotechnologies on society. *A Civil Campaign* is a sure-fire Hugo and Nebula nominee, likely to add another statue to Bujold's already full shelf. It's charming, touching, and quite funny too. --Nona Vero --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Bujold dedicates her new novel to the Brontës, Georgette Heyer and Dorothy Sayers, which gives a pretty good indication of the territory she's staked out in this well-done addition (after *Komarr*) to her popular Miles Vorkosigan series. Miles, forced by ill health to give up his military career and having embarked on a second career as an Imperial Auditor (a kind of peripatetic judge and ambassador), is madly in love with the beautiful and brilliant Ekaterin Vorsoisson. Unfortunately, Ekaterin is the recent widow of a crooked government official whose death Miles holds himself partially responsible for. Their courtship is made even more difficult by a series of interrelated events. First, Emperor Gregor is getting married, and Miles, like everyone else in the government, is caught up in the complex social and diplomatic whirl surrounding the impending nuptials. Second, Miles's disaster-prone clone brother, Mark, has concocted a scheme to make a fortune marketing "butter bugs," unattractive, cockroachlike creatures that secrete a bland tofulike food product. Worse, Mark has set up his laboratory in Vorkosigan House, the bugs have gotten loose and Miles's parents, Lord Aral and Lady Cordelia, are due home any second. And then there's the dirty infighting going on in the Council of Counts over who should inherit two vacant districts, plus an attempt to frame Miles for murder. Through all these often hilarious and occasionally dangerous incidents, Miles strives heroically to keep his eye on the prize--the winning of Ekaterin's hand in marriage. Bujold successfully mixes quirky humor with just enough action, a dab of feminist social commentary and her usual superb character development in a sprightly SF romance that her many fans will find enormously satisfying. (Sept.) FYI: Bujold has won four Hugos and two Nebulas for books and stories in the Miles Vorkosigan series. Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

I'm going to post the same review for the entire Vorkosigan saga. MANY years ago (shudder to think - we only had books made of paper) I was stuck at an airport with nothing to read. The only book I could find in the store was named Cordelia's Honor. It was about a woman and written by a woman. From what I could discern from the cover, it was a combination of books from some sort of "Vor" series. With no intent to offend anyone, for me back in those days the book had 2.9 strikes against it before I read the first word: it was about a woman, science fiction written by a woman, and this stupid sounding "Vor" word. I very reluctantly bought it. I sat down in that miserable airport (aren't they all?) and started reading. On that day, the fickle finger of fate was FINALLY pointing favorably for me. The book had rich and deep characters, complex plot, thought provoking ideas and statements, a different way of "seeing" things, it forced you to think instead of numbly process words - it was everything I love about my life long relentless pursuit of reading. I've read the series several times. They still make me think, they still make tears, and I keep finding little tidbits that I missed. I could write much more but I'm going to try to imitate a wonderful author named Lois McMaster Bujold and use just the right amount of words - no more, no less. Please read these in order. I promise you won't regret it. I'm ashamed of myself for not writing a review years ago. I feel that I did a great author a disservice by not giving her a few timely words after the thousands of wonderful words she's given me.

I didn't mark this book as space opera, because it takes place almost entirely on Barrayar, and explores Barrayaran politics in significantly more depth than do the preceding books. I am not especially good at keeping track of political intricacies, but Bujold managed to carry me along without losing me in any of the convolutions. We also get further character development of some key characters, the right amount of suspense, and perhaps the best apology letter I've ever read in any setting. A few secondary characters were a bit close to social stereotypes, but unfortunately, not unrealistic.

For those of you familiar with the books of author Bujold there is no one like her. A series of books containing her protagonist Miles, have been purportedly space opera in genre although as Miles has grown his book structure has morphed and stretched to contain other book forms. Here we have Jane Austen meets Steven Weber with a dash of political thriller for seasoning. Miles an adventurer who is growing up, desires to court a woman, recently widowed. However he might have forgotten to tell the widow of his intentions as she is marriage shy, the survivor of a disaster of a

husband. Enter rival bachelors, The Iothoreo Ivan cousin to Miles, and a plot to incapacitate Miles politically as he assumes his place in his culturally powerful family on planet. Add in the return of the clone brother of Miles with a hord of genetically engineered bugs, the start of a new business venture. Enter friends, relatives, and various current and past employees. Stir with a plot to frame Miles for murder and we have Miles going courting. For those of us who know and love Ms. Bujold and her writting this is part of the unique maturation of her protagonist Miles and makes perfect sense. If you are not as familiar the blend of comedy of manners and science fiction may be unique. This author is always worthwhile, however this book will make even more sense if you begin one book back with Komarr. This is a unique offering from a unique author with brains and heart all her own. All though all her book are written as stand alone novels, I might recommend starting one book back as I mentioned earlier. Or give yourself a real treat and read them all.

Any who read any of the books of this series before will be hard put to keep their seats while reading, but new comers to the series will find an easy introduction here, a very funny story and if they liked it will want to go and read all the other stories alluded to in passing. Have read the book over 5 times (that I remeber to count) and every time it's just as much fun as before - the highes and lows of Miles courting with all of his "Forward Momentum". Knowing what's coming not only doesn't demeanish the reading experience, the anticipation of what will happen next (bug butter projectiles for example) is only enhancing it.

This book has a brilliance that compels me to write my first review ever. I have recently discovered Bujold, and the last couple of months I have listened to Gardner's wonderful narration of the Vorkosigan books. I love the series dearly, and nothing compares to the "Butterbug Banquet" scene in this book. It is the funniest and most inspired writing that I have encountered in years. The skill with which Bujold weaves disaster is unparalleled. Had the preceding books been dry and boring (which they certainly were not), this scene would have made it all worth it.

I am gleefully enjoying the entire Vorkosigan Saga. Bujold is an excellent writer of multiple genres. That being said, I enjoyed the other 11 books of this series better. This one was just somehow not as up to snuff as the others - yet it was a way to get Miles from one stage of life to the next. I'll certainly read the rest, and you do need each book (read in chronological starting with his parents then up through, not published order! - author provides the best order in the notes at the back of the book) to know where you are picking up the story. This isn't a bad book, just a bit more comic and

rom-com than the others, which are far more drama oriented, yet maintain an excellent sense of Miles wicked humor and self-deprecation. I'm digging into book 13 currently and it is great.

One of the best sci-fi series I've ever read; Bujold is amazing at crafting characters you love. I highly recommend the Vorkosigan saga. Do begin at the beginning with the two novels about Cordelia Naismith!

It is a good read.

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