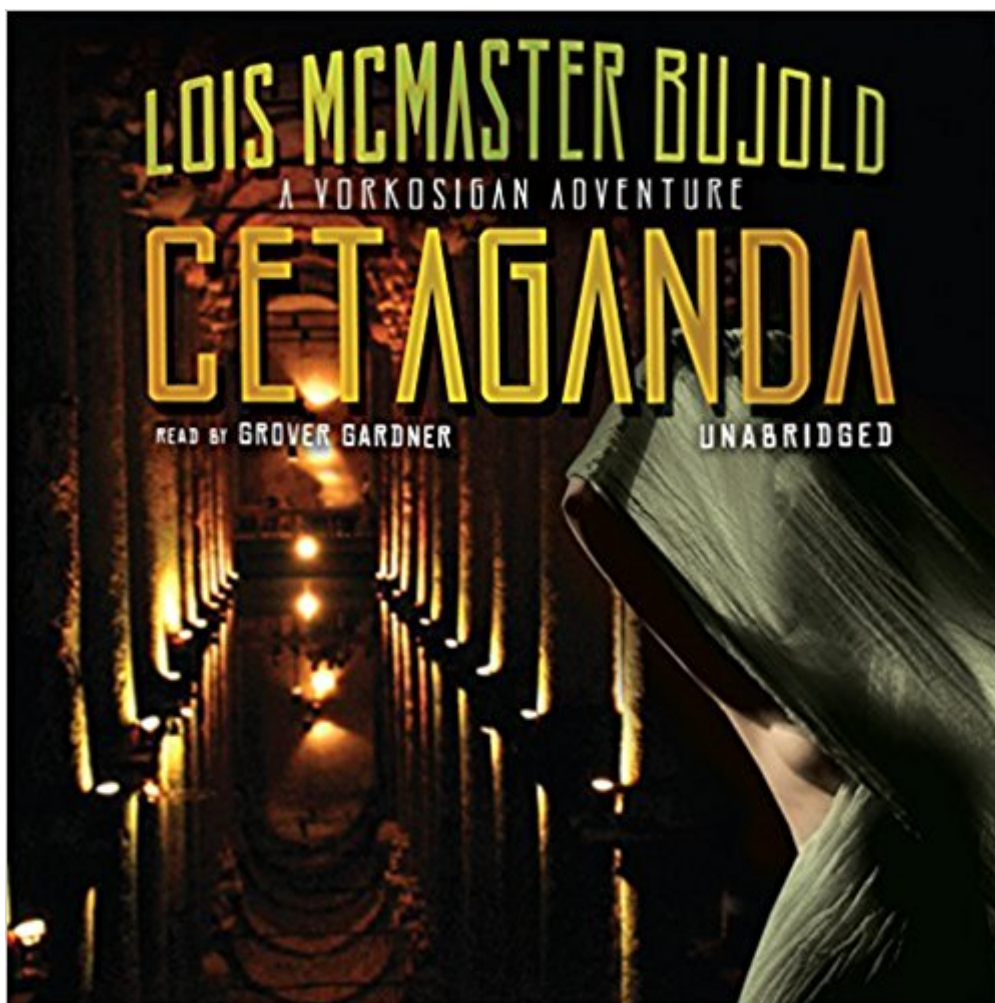


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Cetaganda (Miles Vorkosigan Adventures, 1995)



Synopsis

[Read by Grover Gardner]When the Cetagandan empress dies, Miles Vorkosigan and his cousin Ivan are sent to Cetaganda for her funeral. Upon arrival, the two men are inexplicably attacked by a servant of the late empress.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Miles is stuck visiting Cetaganda with his doltish cousin Ivan, representing Barrayaran nobility at an Imperial funeral. Miles must have suspected that it wasn't going to be dull after the bogus docking instructions and the odd man who launched himself into their ship and started to pull a weapon on them. Three attacks and a mysterious murder later, Miles is juggling two emperors, two secret services, and a half-dozen traitors--and that's not even counting the women. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The power to engineer a civilization's genetic destiny fosters new variations on old struggles for political power in this entertaining space-operatic entry in Bujold's long-running Vorkosigan saga. Miles Vorkosigan, hero of *Mirror Dance* (winner of the 1995 Hugo Award for Best Novel), is on a diplomatic mission to represent his home planet at the funeral of the dowager empress of the Cetaganda empire when an encounter with an assailant leaves him with a piece of computer software. This proves to be a bogus duplicate of a key to the Cetagandan genome, which each new

empress manipulates to produce offspring. With the help of a member of Cetaganda's matriarchal ruling haut, Miles and his cousin Ivan dodge inventive assassination attempts to determine which of the empire's eight governors has tried to pin this "theft" on them in the hope of usurping control of the genome. With her usual skill, Bujold addresses timeless issues of human identity through the personal dramas of her characters, most notably Miles, a deformed mutant whose insecurities afford him insight but sometimes obstruct his investigations. Set in a vividly realized world where Machiavellian intrigues are played out behind a facade of aristocratic discretion, this novel, like its predecessors, blends high adventure with wry commentary on the seemingly unbridgeable gulf between human ideals and political realities. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Another great one in the Vorkosigan saga. I have all of them and just love em. Miles and Ivan are in the heart of the Cetaganda empire. They are there attending the funeral rights of a deceased Empress. Not ImSec business for Miles. Just a boring detail for he and Ivan. Trouble hits the minute they land. They end up in the wrong dock for some reason. Then Ivan is forced to grapple with an armed man who attacks them. Or at least thats the way it seems. The guy leaves as fast as he came. He leaves a disrupter and a tube that neither Miles nor Ivan recognize. Miles is shaking his head on the whole deal. How they ended up in the wrong landing dock is question number one. From there Miles and Ivan are in someones sights. Miles and Ivan are then the victims of several small attacks. Nothing lethal. Just annoying and in some cases painful. The man who attacked them is found dead in the rotunda where the dead empress is laid out. It appears to everyone to be a suicide. Everyone except Miles that is. Miles, ever the ImSec operator is beginning to see a pattern in the attacks and the "suicide". Miles thinks that the tube is way, way, way important. Neither Ivan or Miles can figure out what it is and Miles decides to hang onto it for now. He won't tell anyone about it or about the attack. Miles will tell no one until he figures out what it all means. So begins one good tale. This tale includes murder, attempted murder, treason and some very nasty operators. Miles and Ivan are up against it and they aren't even in Barrayar. Hell. In the course of things Miles could care less about Cetaganda. However, he does know the whole thing was a way to blame Ivan and himself and Barrayar for whatever the hell was going on. Another great Vorkosigan tale. Five stars.

There are few things I can say about Bujold's Vorkosigan books that are not high praise. I've even started reading other military sci fi authors as a result, something I would have never anticipated. But I'll try for an unbiased review all the same. This is the third book I've read, following The Vor

Game. In it, we get to see Miles and Ivan working together on an alien world, and also get our first true impression of what sort of people the Cetagandians really are. Bujold is quite inventive here, creating a race both obsessed with genetic control and yet at times utterly human in its mistakes and misunderstandings. We also see more of the author's awesome character building, something she really excels at. I felt that, by the end, I could have held a conversation with these people, they seemed that real. However, while the last book of hers I read only took me three days, this one did take three months for me to finish. I put it down several times, and though engaging, it just wasn't as amazing in terms of plot as Vor Game was. I'm looking forward to the next though! If you haven't read a book in this series, this isn't the place to start, but if you are currently reading the whole saga, definitely keep going with this one.

This is a fun, standalone adventure with Miles and Ivan. I'm not done with the entire Vorkosigan series as yet, but in this particular novel Miles and Ivan Vorpatril are introduced to the Cetagandan Empire, historical occupiers and enemies of Miles and Ivan's homeworld, Barrayar. This is a nice little work because it establishes the complexities of Cetagandan society, and since the Cetagandans feature as important antagonists in later adventures, this understanding is valuable for enjoyment of those works. It also shows that Ivan is a little more complex than just "that idiot Ivan," and can be a competent officer in his own right. I like to think that Ivan Vorpatril exists as an example of who Miles might have been if he did not have so much to prove in light of his physical deformities. Things you won't find within this book: the Dendarii mercenaries or any of Miles's normal space combat adventures. This is a palace intrigue novel, with Miles and the reader equally clueless about the complexities of Cetagandan society. It's fun, but if space battles are what you're looking for and you don't care about intrigue, you could get away with skipping this one. But you'd be missing out. Especially given the parade of beautiful, complex, and frighteningly strong female characters who show up throughout the novel.

Great characters driving a great plot, great writing, subtle world building more complex than it first appears

His home world is military minded so the stories have some violence, but not an over abundance and any sex is talked of but no graphic descriptions. Miles gets into the middle of a mess and the mystery is how he can get out of it with the least amount of damage. Miles is sent to represent his planet at an extremely important funeral on their #1 enemy's home planet, all pageantry and

extremely polite. Of course, complications arise and Miles ends up solving a murder, stopping a coup, rescuing the kidnapped lady, and returning the stolen key. All for the enemy.

A pageturner that is funny yet full of suspense. I like the way she portrays the alien culture, which is very convincing. I am amazed by the biotech and the society built upon it! However, at certain points the story is not moving fast enough and there are some repetitive descriptions of Cetaganda's social etiquette, which is a little bit tiring. Not as impeccable as intended (as I don't think it's as good as the warrior's apprentice or the Vor game) but it's still a decent read!

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