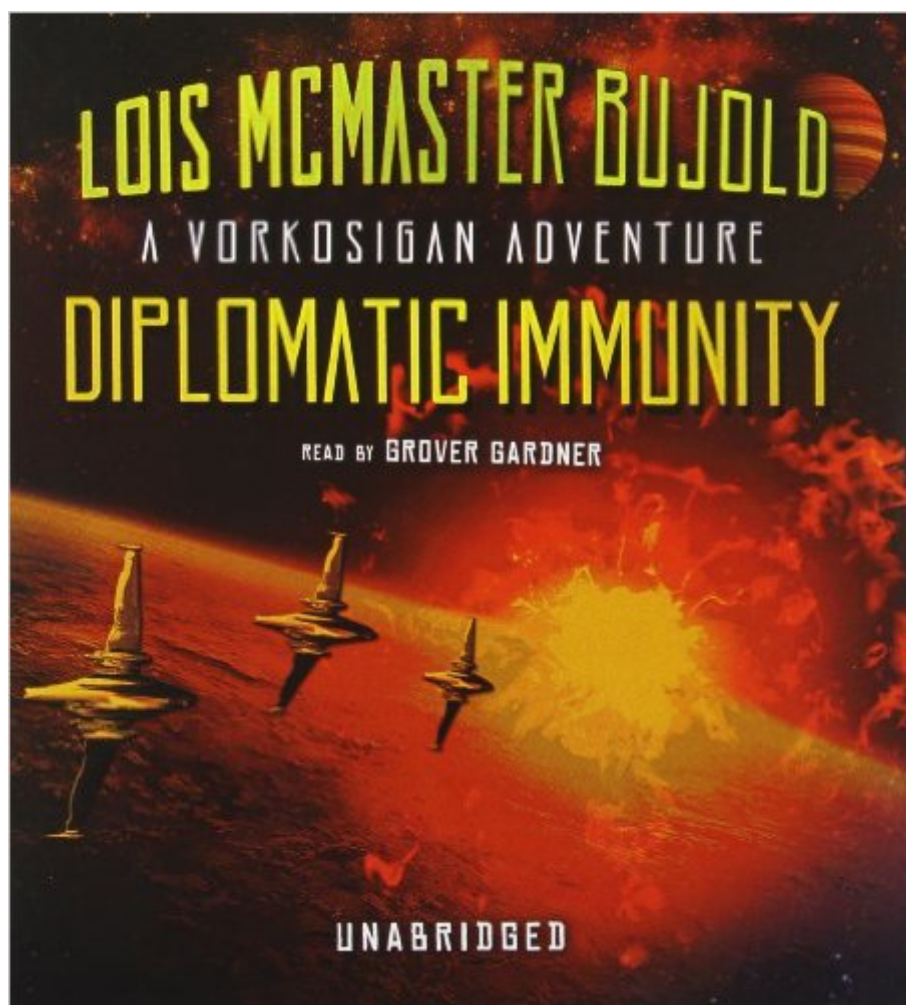


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Diplomatic Immunity (Miles Vorkosigan Adventures)



Synopsis

[Read by Grover Gardner]A rich Komarran merchant fleet has been impounded at Graf Station in distant Quaddiespace after a bloody incident involving the convoy's Barrayaran military escort. Lord Miles Vorkosigan and his wife, Lady Ekaterin, have other things on their minds, such as getting home in time to attend the long-awaited births of their first children. But when duty calls in the voice of Barrayar's Emperor Gregor, Miles, as imperial auditor, has no choice but to answer. -- Waiting on Graf Station are diplomatic snarls, tangled loyalties, old friends, new enemies, racial tensions, lies and deceptions, mysterious disappearances, and a race with time for life against death in horrifying new forms. The downside of being a high-level troubleshooter comes when trouble starts shooting back.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

As I've grown older, I've grown more selective of the science fiction that I've read. But I still rush to the web whenever a new Lois McMaster Bujold novel comes out. I'm still amazed that Bujold doesn't have a wider following among science-fiction fans. Given her four Hugo awards, Bujold should roll off the tip of the tongue as quickly as Heinlein, Asimov, or Bradbury. **DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITY** is another book in the Miles Vorkosigan series. Like other Bujold heroes, Miles does not conform to the standard space opera hero stereotype. Debilitated by a terrorist attack while in vitro, Miles is a brilliant, devious, hyper-energetic mind trapped in an abnormally short, hunch-backed,

fragile body. In this addition to the series, the Emperor of Barryar interrupts Miles and his new wife on their honeymoon to embroil him in a convoluted diplomatic struggle involving the 'quaddies' (a race of humans genetically modified for optimal zero-G living who have arms in place of legs), the Cetagandans (the ancient enemies of Barryar), and a mysterious cargo. As Miles pulls the threads to this knot all hell breaks loose, and Miles must use his lightning wit and endless energy to somehow prevent a new war between his planet and the Cetagandans and a bio-terrorist threat on the entire quaddie race. Bujold has chalked another of my sleepless night up to her exciting and fast-paced novels. Even though I was vastly entertained, I found this book a little disappointing. While other Miles books often had a more serious undercurrent of the difficulties of Miles living in the militaristic Barraryaran society and his unquenchable desire to succeed despite his handicaps, this book is more of a straight adventure story with little character growth.

Lois McMaster Bujold's first new Vorkosigan novel in two and a half years not only moves the story line to nearly two years after Miles and Ekaterin have been married (a story, presumably, to be chronicled some time in the future), but is the first novel since *Mirror Dance* to take place primarily outside the Barraryaran Empire. In brief, it is a story of Miles playing troubleshooter for a diplomatic incident gone horribly wrong in Quaddiespace - home of the quaddies first introduced in the novel "Falling Free". With tensions between quaddie and the Barraryarans stretched, tensions between Cetaganda and Barrayaer taking a turn for the worse, tensions between the trader Komarrans and the militaristic Barraryarans never far below the surface and a deadline for Miles and Ekaterin to return home for the birth of their first children, and deaths reported on the Quaddies' Graf Station, everything seems stretched to the breaking point even in the first chapter. As Miles investigates the situation, a relatively simple murder mystery rapidly transforms into a very palpable suspense with ties to many aspects of Miles' past. As implied, it helps greatly to be familiar with Bujold's Vorkosigan Saga universe before reading this book. In particular, the events of "Falling Free", "Cetaganda", "Mirror Dance" and "A Civil Campaign" all feature with varying degrees of prominence in the story. While one could take the novel on its own merits and probably enjoy it very much, it is much more effective when taken within previously established history. While not her singularly finest Vorkosigan book to date, it is nonetheless quite good and is certainly better than the majority of science fiction available today and ranks in quality with most of the rest of her series.

Diplomatic Immunity is the latest book in the Miles Vorkosigan science fiction series. Lois McMaster Bujold has created, in Miles, one of my favourite characters in the genre. All of the books she's

written in this series have been very good, most of them great. I can't recall a clunker in the bunch. With Diplomatic Immunity, I'd say she's still on that streak, though it's not as good as the most recent books have been. This is yet another winner, but it somehow felt less consequential than most of the Vorkosigan books. The previous books have almost been "event" books in Miles's life, while this one just seemed a bit ordinary. Sure, there is the birth of their children, but that mainly provides an impetus for Miles and Ekaterin to finish the problem as soon as possible, rather than being an event in itself. It's nice to see Miles again, but I guess we've been spoiled by the previous books into expecting even more. Perhaps that's not this book's fault, though. The mystery itself is very intriguing. Bujold provides lots of twists and turns. Miles gets to use his vast intelligence to solve the problem and there's a bit of action. Bujold excels at creating characters, and that's definitely shown here. We already love Miles and Ekaterin, but the old friend of Miles who shows up is also wonderfully portrayed. Even the new people (mostly Quaddies) are well done. You can clearly see the frustration and desperation in the Quaddie security chief, Venn, as events spiral out of his control. There is not a false character in the bunch. The only minor annoyance is that there is no reason to make the Barrayaran Admiral a relation to Miles's cousin Ivan. Nothing is made of it and it just seems a bit too cute.

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