



Partners In Necessity

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Remember how Miri and Val Con first met? How about the trouble Priscilla was in before she met Shan? Who can forget the way that Edger and Sheather have of coming to a friend's rescue or contemplating the weave of a carpet?

Partners In Necessity Details

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Cinco says

This is a collected edition of the first three Liaden novels (there are several more, as well as some short stories; they can be read out of order). My friend Maggie's mom accosted me one day and said I needed to read them, and she was quite right as I enjoyed them quite a lot. The series is a giant space opera, with tons of main characters and lots of different alien cultures, written in two great genres that taste great together--sci-fi and romance. I'm not saying they're great art or anything, but if you enjoy some pulp sci-fi, try these.

Heather says

This book contains 3 books in one. These are fun space adventure stories with some romance mixed in. We see alien worlds and dive into new cultures. We get introductions to all the characters in the main Liaden universe story line.

Monique says

The Liaden universe is one I return to as often as possible. Not since the Anne McCaffery Dragon series have I been so captivated.

Bobbie Marcus says

Conflict of Honors, Agent of Change, and Carpe Diem, three Liaden Universe books in one cover. Great action, wonderful characters, romance, travel, its all here!

Jim says

An omnibus of three pulp swords & sorcery novels (in space) with a dose of bodice-ripping romance. The first two books in this volume are totally unencumbered by any kind of plot, and after you invest time reading hundreds of these discursive pages the main four characters still feel two dimensional. The third part finally develops a plot, around 650-700 pages into this omnibus, which only seems comparatively engaging because if you can make it that far you'll be starved for something, anything, meaningful to happen. If this was adapted to film, it's the kind of thing that'd get picked up by the Lifetime Network and slotted for 4 pm on a Sunday afternoon. It's hard to recommend this book to anyone much less explain the small but seemingly devoted following these books have. Ridiculous cover art almost goes without saying.

Diane Baker says

This is a terrific book, a fast ride and emotionally satisfying. If you like good space opera, engaging characters and a fun culture to explore, you'll love the Liaden series. Get any and all of them.

Doranna Durgin says

Brain candy and comfort reading for me--and so convenient, to have these three Liaden Universe novels in one omnibus. Frankly, the fun of the stories aside, what startled me was the quality of the production on this book. It's massive at nearly a thousand pages and trade PB size, but I read the whole thing without so much as creasing the spine. I mean, I'm very, very careful with my books--it's rare you can tell I've been through one--but that's pretty amazing.

Stephen says

3.5 stars. I loved, loved, loved the first novel of this omnibus, Conflicts of Honor, and I thought it was great. Anne McCaffrey described these books best when she referred to them in the introduction as here favorite "comfort" books. On the first book, I completely agree. Highly Recommended!!!

2nd and 3rd books were okay, but I did not gel with them the way I did the first one.

Judith Klein-dial says

I liked this book so well I gave remainder copies to people who came in my shop while saying, "If you like it, pay me 1/2 of the cover price, if you don't like it, bring it back." More often than not, I got paid for the book.

Dan says

The first two books were sort of bland romance novels: {rich space merchant | deadly assassin} saves a woman's life, falls madly in love, they spend some time trying not to get killed by bad-guys, book ends. In both cases the woman had a maddening inferiority complex and needed constant reassurance that she was awesome and wonderful.

The series had been highly recommended, and some online reviews suggested the third book was better. The third book was, in fact, better: it took the characters from the first two and had an actual plot with them.

I recommend skipping the first two.

Eliza says

Reading this on Jeannine's recommendation.

The first book in this collection, *Conflict of Honors*, felt very much like *Firefly*. Despite all the descriptions of the captain's dark skin and light hair, he mostly looked like Nathan Fillion when I pictured him.

I saved the third book to read over a long holiday weekend, and I'm glad I did. All three together make a very nice set.

Stan says

The first three novels in the Liaden universe and an introduction to the characters. The first is a prequel of sorts, providing background to the following. The first two of these novels are fast paced; however the third seems to lose a lot of momentum that had built up. Don't let that stop you from reading them though.

Annette says

I essentially inhaled the entire Liaden Universe series in something like 2 months, but I kept putting off entering them into Goodreads for some reason.

Obviously, I enjoyed the series - given the rate I tore through it! Strongly character driven, well written, reasonably clean, and with enough plot to keep me interested, they're pretty much everything I look for in a space opera. I can't remember when I've enjoyed a series as a whole quite so much since the *Vorkosigan Saga* (best starting place: *The Warrior's Apprentice*).

Now, Liad isn't going displace Bararraya in my ranking of favorite imaginary planets, but it is happily joining it.

The friend who got my hooked and then kept me supplied was pretty keen on reading the Liaden books in something close to publishing order, which meant that this omnibus came first. He is probably right if for no better reason than that the authors did improve their craft as they went along. The writing in "Partners" is a little uneven at times, although nothing so bad as I've put up with in numerous other series.

Plot-wise, "Conflict of Honors" is perhaps the least complicated and interesting: it's a fairly basic "lonely misfit finds a home and friends (and romance!)" story. Of course, such stories are popular for a reason: they are deeply satisfying when told well.

"Agent of Change" and "Carpe Diem" have quite a bit more plot excitement, and they introduce my favorite character of the series, Val Con, not to mention the lovely Miri. We also meet the unpredictable, loyal, surprisingly powerful, and (frequently "Deus Ex Machina"-acting) Clutch Turtles, a surprisingly unusual alien species that was quite fun to read.

A couple of quibbles and complaints: none of the books is packed with sexual encounters, casual or otherwise. Nevertheless, the language - especially in "Conflict" - is very sensual. There is one homoerotic scene which I absolutely could have done without, and the tension between Patricia and Shan is - well, let's just say that it is not my favorite of the three. The language remains fairly sensual through the first several volumes of the series, but tones down considerably in the less romance-focused titles immediately following this one (*Plan B* and *I Dare*.) If this sort of thing bothers you, you may need to look elsewhere.

Also, many authors have a word or phrase - usually a synonym for "said" - that they tend to overuse. For Lee and Miller, that word is "murmured." Everyone murmurrs constantly, to the point you're surprised that

anyone ever hears what anyone else is saying. Of course, I've more frequently seen the word "muttered" overused (and often when it doesn't even make sense!), and I frankly find that one considerably more irritating. I just ended up rolling my eyes at the murmuring and moved on.

All in all, a highly satisfying series which I definitely recommend.

D. says

I don't have much to add that others haven't said about this series. It's good, old-fashioned space opera, but it also has strong characterization and lots of interesting twists and turns. Very progressive and interesting.

Well worth reading for fans of Andre Norton, Heinlein, etc.

Estara says

Not only is this edition publishing the three novels in the right order, but there's a scene included that wasn't there in the previous editions. This is so strong a start even though I can see some aspects of the Liadenverse have changed over the years when I read the current books. The strength of the characters and the plot remain the same and yay for the strong women and the men who don't feel weak when they find them.
