

The Warrior's Apprentice

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Vintage paperback

This volume is a high-quality hardcover reprint of the novel previously published by Baen in mass-market paperback form. Author's Note:

The Vorkosigan Saga Reading Order Debate: The Chef Recommends

Many pixels have been expended debating the 'best' order in which to read what have come to be known as the Vorkosigan Books, the Vorkosiverse, the Miles books, and other names, since I neglected to supply the series with a label myself. The debate now wrestles with some fourteen or so volumes and counting, and mainly revolves around publication order versus internal-chronological order. I favor internal chronological, with a few caveats.

I have always resisted numbering my volumes; partly because, in the early days, I thought the books were distinct enough; latterly because if I ever decided to drop in a prequel somewhere (which in fact I did most lately with Captain Vorpatril's Alliance) it would upwhack the numbering system. Nevertheless, the books and stories do have a chronological order, if not a strict one.

It was always my intention to write each book as a stand-alone so that the reader could theoretically jump in anywhere, yes, with that book that's in your hand right now, don't put it back on the shelf! While still somewhat true, as the series developed it acquired a number of sub-arcs, closely related tales that were richer for each other. I will list the sub-arcs, and then the books, and then the caveats.

Shards of Honor and Barrayar. The first two books in the series proper, they detail the adventures of Cordelia Naismith of Beta Colony and Aral Vorkosigan of Barrayar. Shards was my very first novel ever; Barrayar was actually my eighth, but continues the tale the next day after the end of Shards. For readers who want to be sure of beginning at the beginning, or who are very spoiler-sensitive, start with these two.

The Warrior's Apprentice and The Vor Game (with, perhaps, the novella "The Mountains of Mourning" tucked in between.) The Warrior's Apprentice introduces the character who became the series' linchpin, Miles Vorkosigan; the first book tells how he created a space mercenary fleet by accident; the second how he fixed his mistakes from the first round. Space opera and military-esque adventure (and a number of other things one can best discover for oneself), The Warrior's Apprentice makes another good place to jump into the series for readers who prefer a young male protagonist.

After that: Brothers in Arms should be read before Mirror Dance, and both, ideally, before Memory.

Komarr makes another good alternate entry point for the series, picking up Miles's second career at its start. It should be read before A Civil Campaign.

Borders of Infinity, a collection of three of the five currently extant novellas, makes a good

Miles Vorkosigan early-adventure sampler platter. I always thought, for readers who don't want to commit themselves to length. (But it may make more sense if read after *The Warrior's Apprentice*.) Take care not to confuse the collection-as-a-whole with its title story, "The Borders of Infinity".

Falling Free takes place 200 years earlier in the timeline and does not share settings or characters with the main body of the series. Most readers recommend picking up this story later. It should likely be read before *Diplomatic Immunity*, however, which revisits the "quaddies", a bioengineered race of free fall dwellers, in Miles's time.

The novels in the internal-chronological list below appear in italics; the novellas (officially defined as a story between 17,500 words and 40,000 words, though mine usually run 20k - 30k words) in quote marks.

Falling Free
Shards of Honor
Barrayar
The Warrior's Apprentice
"The Mountains of Mourning"
"Weatherman"
The Vor Game
Cetaganda
Ethan of Athos
Borders of Infinity
"Labyrinth"
"The Borders of Infinity"
Brothers in Arms
Mirror Dance
Memory
Komarr
A Civil Campaign
"Winterfair Gifts"
Diplomatic Immunity
Captain Vorpatril's Alliance (upcoming in late 2012)
CryoBurn

Caveats:

The novella "Weatherman" is an out-take from the beginning of the novel *The Vor Game*. If you already have *The Vor Game*, you likely don't need this.

The original 'novel' *Borders of Infinity* was a fix-up collection containing the three novellas "The Mountains of Mourning", "Labyrinth", and "The Borders of Infinity", together with a frame story to tie the pieces together. Again, beware duplication. The frame story does

not stand alone, and generally is of interest only to completists.

The Fantasy Novels

My fantasy novels are a bit easier to order. Easiest of all is *The Spirit Ring*, which is a stand-alone, or aquel, as some wag once dubbed books that for some obscure reason failed to spawn a subsequent series. Next easiest are the four volumes of *The Sharing Knife*--in order, *Beguilement*, *Legacy*, *Passage*, and *Horizon*--which I broke down and actually numbered, as this was one continuous tale divided into non-wrist-breaking chunks.

What have come to be called the *Chalion* books, after the setting of its first two volumes, were also written, like the *Vorkosigan* books, to be stand-alones as part of a larger whole, and can in theory be read in any order. (The third book actually takes place a few hundred years prior to the more closely connected first two.) Some readers think the world-building is easier to assimilate when the books are read in publication order, and the second volume certainly contains spoilers for the first (but not the third.) In any case, the publication order is:

The Curse of Chalion
Paladin of Souls
The Hallowed Hunt

The short story collection *Proto Zoa* was an e-book experiment; it contains five very early tales--three (1980s) contemporary fantasy, two science fiction--all previously published but not in this handy format. The novelette "Dreamweaver's Dilemma" may be of interest to *Vorkosigan* completists, as it is the first story in which that proto-universe began, mentioning Beta Colony but before *Barrayar* was even thought of.


My latest original e-edition is *Sidelines: Talks and Essays*, which is just what it says on the tin--a collection of three decades of my nonfiction writings, including convention speeches, essays, travelogues, introductions, and some less formal pieces. I hope it will prove an interesting companion piece to my fiction.

Happy reading!

-- Lois McMaster Bujold.

Other Books

The Warrior's Code, Kai is a warrior! And as a warrior, Kai has a code to live by and share with others. This is the warrior's code: to be peaceful, to be kind of heart, and to respect all living things. An empowering "code of conduct" book that teaches kids age 4-8 that bravery and courage mean treating others with kindness, standing up for what's right, and demonstrating peace and self-respect. Inspired by the classic spiritual text, *Shambhala: Sacred Path of the Warrior*, this uplifting story for children will build self-esteem, cultivate kindness, and instill values of compassion, nonviolence, and honoring. Written by a 7th degree *Kajukenbo* black belt, *The Warrior's Code* distills the ethics of traditional martial

arts into a simple and clear message that kids can memorize, embody, and understand. Kids who follow the code of the warrior can become more mindful, resilient, and confident.  . 2022 NAPPA Award winner Kai is a warrior! And as a warrior, Kai has a code to live by and share with others. This is the warrior's code: to be peaceful, to be kind of heart, and to respect all living things."