

Bujold's latest novel examines relationships

BUJOLD from page 8

did I not have integrity all the same?"

Later, after her husband Tien's death, Vorsoisson asks why she needs to remarry again. "Neither of... (their) enthusiastic plans for her future education and employment were distasteful to her... and yet... both somehow implied, *You can become a real person, but only if you play our game.*"

A better, more concise illustration of the feminist polemic could not be stated. And the way Bujold does this is both interesting and enlightening. She takes a woman on the verge of a nervous breakdown and makes her troubled soul understandable, then gives her more and more problems

until they all unravel under their own weight.

Bujold has written 12 novels about Miles Vorkosigan and his family, yet this is the first one in which the purported main character is almost unimportant. Vorkosigan is almost a peripheral character, necessary to unravel the MacGuffin and provide a love interest, but not really propelling or sustaining much action on his own.

This book is excellent, illuminating the plight of a bright, educated woman too soon imprisoned in the wrong marriage, and her fight for redemption. Best of all, the heroine finds a man who appreciates her for being strong, intelligent and confident.

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