



The Agent Gambit

Sharon Lee , Steve Miller

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Two space adventure novels in the popular Liaden Universe® series in one popularly-priced Omni-trade edition:

Agent of Change: Once a brilliant First-in-Scout, Val Con yos'Phelium was “recruited” by the shadowy Liaden Department of Interior and brainwashed into an Agent of Change—a ruthless covert operative who kills without remorse. Val Con has been playing a deep game, far from the orderly life of clan and kin. Fleeing his latest mission, he saves the life of ex-mercenary Miri Robertson, a Terran on the run from interplanetary assassins. Thrown together by circumstances, Val Con and Miri struggle to elude their enemies and stay alive without killing each other-or surrendering to the unexpected passion that flares between them. Which name – or face – will the agent choose when the game gets tough and an escape for only one of them seems possible?

Carpe Diem: On the run from interplanetary assassins and a ruthless interstellar crime cartel, covert operative Val Con yos'Phelium and former mercenary sergeant Miri Robertson formed an alliance of necessity and wound up stranded on a planet with no rescue in sight. Their on-world problems were looking manageable after they assumed new identities as musicians, that is until a local war forced them to reveal their alien combat skills – and doubt their own growing partnership of trust and love. By then the relentless hound of an agent on Val Con's trail was closing in with the very weapon Val Con and Miri most feared, and the game got very rough indeed.

“I rarely rave on and on about stories, but I am devoted to Lee and Miller novels and stories.” —*Anne McCaffrey*

The Agent Gambit Details

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From Reader Review The Agent Gambit for online ebook

Michelle Fitzgerald says

A great place to start the Liaden books. Love the characters and the universe, and the books are well-written.

Margaret Smith says

Action from start to finish

Opening with a firefight, followed by fleeing from the interstellar mafia, meeting with giant turtle-like aliens, marooned in space, shipwrecked on a backward planet that has only reached the radio level of development, all while one of the heroes is struggling to free himself from brainwashing by a mysterious evil government organization. Really fun.

Edward Harrison says

reas all these individually...

Holly says

This Spring (2013)! is a Liaden one for me. Having back in March decided to read through the Liaden Universe series I have my first post review on my blog Thank the Maker regarding it. Basically I love fest it without really trying to break things down too far. Check it out! <http://www.girlsguidetoscifi.blogspot...>

Angela Boord says

5 stars for spy-space opera- romance fun. I've seen this series described elsewhere as "elves in space".

Kate says

I think I liked this the best out of all the Liadan novels I've read. Plenty of action thrown in with the angst and romance ... and a good, strong female character who doesn't just learn from the man, she teaches him something about himself too.

Carolyn F. says

I only read *Carpe Diem* in this omnibus because that's all my library had available.

There were a lot of mentions of about how plain and unattractive Miri was in this book that I didn't get from the previous book. Also, cover artist! Miri's hair is so long she can braid it and make it into a crown. The hair on girl on the cover is too short!

I loved how this couple/relationship is developing. Very sweet, romantic moments.

Libby says

Remarkably consistent for a book written so early. Of course that means the same flaws are still in evidence -- all of the male characters are similar, all of the female characters are similar, there are points that show a real lack of thought (Val Con is learning this language from scratch at a farmhouse and he knows the word "recoil"? And whatever happened to Zhen Trelu anyway?). But there are also points of cleverness and interesting complications, and the turtles rock my world.

Beth says

How do I love the Liaden series? Let me count the ways! My favorite thing about these delightful books, I think, is that every single one of them has been about characters from vastly different backgrounds (clan, culture, planet; even species) learning to live and work and love together--sometimes in the face of formidable opposition. They forge alliances, create families and trade routes. They understand that we are better and stronger when we strive together in pursuit of common goals.

Until now, that is.

There's always been friction between Terrans and Liadens, of course--starting with Terran scholar Anne Davis' controversial research in *Local Custom*. But the publication of her work was a stone cast into still water, creating ripples that continue to gain momentum a generation later. And in *Agent of Change*, we learn that her foster son, Val Con yos'Phelium, has been subverted and brainwashed by a shadowy fascist faction within Liad's government, bent upon purging their culture of un-Liaden elements.

Fortunately, Val Con has far better resources than the average Agent. He's got the assistance of ex-mercenary Miri Robertson, as well as the completely delightful Clutch Turtles (proving, to my great surprise, that Terry Pratchett doesn't have a monopoly on spacefaring chelonians after all.) *Agent of Change* introduces this motley crew and kindles the love affair between Val Con and Miri; the sequel, *Carpe Diem*, gives us an intimate look at the kind of work the oft-mentioned Liaden Scouts actually do--enduring shipwreck on an interdicted planet, figuring out how to survive there without breaking the Liaden equivalent of the Prime Directive, and how to signal for help without attracting the notice of the Department of the Interior, which wants them all dead.

I didn't enjoy these books *quite* as much as the ones that came before (chronologically speaking); I think that's mostly because so much of the action takes place far from Liad, and we get only the briefest glimpses

of the rest of the family. (And of the time we spend amongst Clan Korval, *way* too much of it is with Priscilla, whom I find irritating.) The ending is awfully abrupt, too--but it promises much excitement and (literal?) upheaval in the next book, *Plan B*.

Kathleen says

Enjoyable pair of books featuring **Agent of Change** and **Carpe Diem**. (By the way, "Agent of Change" is FREE on Amazon, and at Baen.)

This is adventurous, romantic space opera, where Val Con and Miri meet for the first time, and subsequently pair up against galactic mobsters (similar to the mafia), Yxtrang warriors, and brainwashed agents of the Dept of the Interior.

Falling in love along the way.

Who is watching their backs? Why, a few new friends on a restricted planet (Vandor) and some ancient 8-foot Clutch Turtles — especially Edger and Sheather. These benevolent but powerful beings love Val Con and Miri and treat them like esteemed (and interesting) siblings.

Carpe Diem picks up exactly where *Agent of Change* left off. Together, the two stories include good descriptions of Val Con nearly losing his mind — and nearly dying — from the Loop programmed into his brain.

Scattered across these two books are some great scenes with the yos'Galan ladies, Nova and Anthora, who are guarding the home fires on planet Liad, assisted by Jeeves and Tree. Shan and Priscilla also get plenty of air time (still not crazy about the goddess thing).

Quibbles: Formatting issues with hyphen versus m-dash throughout this e-book collection, *The Agent Gambit*. The incorrect punctuation marks caused some confusion, because I thought the authors were signaling a compound phrase, when instead they were signaling an abrupt break in thought or speech (the reciprocal occurred, too). Several times I had to re-read the sentence.

Also, the ending of *Carpe Diem* is disappointingly abrupt. It feels incomplete. But see below.

Next up? *Plan B* picks up where *Carpe Diem* ended. It is really good! So, there are four books in this one tight sequence: *Agent of Change*, followed by *Carpe Diem*, then *Plan B*, followed by *I Dare*. Additionally, several brief novellas fall within this sequence, including *Skyblaze* (a single story) and *Halfling Moon* (both stories) as well as *With Stars Underfoot* (not *This House*, only *The Lord of the Dance*). The novellas belong after *I Dare*. I would read *Halfling Moon* first.

Mandapanda says

Agent Of Change - 3.5 stars

Carpe Diem - 3.75 stars

ms bookjunkie says

Agent of Change

Carpe Diem: Fascinating, exciting, totally believable. I liked their growing relationship, the world building, the fact that they ended up on a planet that wasn't Earth (because what would be the fun in that?) and I liked their different learning methods.

Side note: Baen needs to reformat its ebooks for smoother usability. Their ebook omnibus "binding" is ugly and crude, and I had to scroll over blank pages between chapters.

Dlora says

Good old space opera science fiction of the type made popular by E.E. Doc Smith and Edgar Rice Burroughs from my youth, including action, romance, and honor. This book is actually two novels: *Agent of Change* and *Carpe Diem* telling the story of Val Con yos'Phelium, a Liaden covert operative, and Miri Robertson, a Terran mercenary, joining forces to stay one step ahead of the Juntavas, an organized crime clan, not to mention staying out of the clutches of the bloodthirsty warlike Yxtrang race or Val Con's own Department of Interior.

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.

Joe Martin says

Another fun entry in the Liaden universe. I enjoyed the story of Val Con and Miri.
