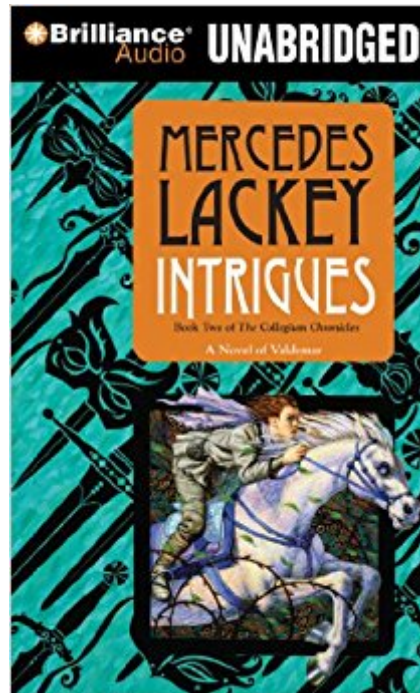




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Intrigues: The Collegium Chronicles (Valdemar Series)



Synopsis

Mags was an orphan and slave of "bad blood" who toiled a gem mine all his young life. He would have died before adulthood, had he not been Chosen and taken to Haven to be trained in the new Herald Collegium. Now, Mags was never hungry and never cold. He slept in a real bed in his own room and, most importantly, he had Dallen, who was like another part of himself. And yet, aside from Lena and Bear, both loners like he was, he couldn't relate to most of the Herald, Healer, or Bard trainees. He was the only trainee who came from what "to the others" was unimaginable poverty. There was another factor that contributed to Mags's isolation. Foreign assassins, masquerading at court as envoys were discovered. As they fled from the Guard, one of them seemed to "recognize" Mags. Now, Mags was an object of suspicion. He had always been curious about his parents, but after the incident it became urgent for Mags to discover exactly who his parents were. And at Haven, he had access to the extensive Archives. Poring through the Archives, he got only incomplete information: his parents, found dead in a bandit camp, had been two of a number of hostages, some of whom had survived. The survivors had told the Guard that Mags's parents spoke a language that no one understood or recognized. This information did not help, for the ForeSeers had been having visions of the king's assassination by "one of the foreign blood." Some had even Seen Mags with blood on his hands. How could Mags defend himself against a crime that hadn't yet been committed?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Praise for the Collegium Chronicles: "Returning to her beloved Valdemar universe, Lackey opens her new series at a pivotal time in the history of Valdemar, when the education of Heralds is changing and dangers from other lands are felt in the court and on the training field. Series fans will enjoy the variations on a familiar theme, while enough information is presented for first-timers to discover a world of high adventure and individual courage. Highly recommended." •Library Journal "A real page-turner.... Outstanding characters, especially Mags, will greatly please Valdemar fans." •Booklist "An enjoyable and pleasant read.... Mags is an appealing protagonist facing challenges (and successes) with which readers will empathize." •RT Book Reviews "Top Pick! ... A wonderful amalgam of fantasy and character study." •Night Owl Reviews --This text refers to the Preloaded Digital Audio Player edition.

Mercedes Lackey is the author of the Valdemar series, including *Take a Thief* and *Exile's Honor*. She is the coauthor, with Andre Norton, of the *Halfblood Chronicles*, including *Elvenborn*. Some of her other novels include *The Gates of Sleep*, *Sacred Ground*, *The Firebird*, *The Black Swan*, and *The Serpent's Shadow*. She lives in Oklahoma.

I am a huge Mercedes Lackey fan and the entire Valdemar series is one of my all-time favorites to binge on every few years. I love the story lines, the mystery, the intrigue, the characters. I pick up one of these books and I am transported to a totally different world and I love it! *Intrigues* is the second in the Collegium Chronicles series and continues to focus on Mags, a former mine slave. I have loved this character from the beginning. He was neglected and abused, as well as woefully under educated, during his years at the mine. He saw things and went through things that would have broken most people, yet somehow his spirit stayed alive and stayed strong. Instead of using his lack of education and lack of knowledge about the world as an excuse to give up or to complain, he finds a way to use it to his advantage. There is an undeniably good message in that. The mystery and intrigue is at high levels in this book, with Mags' past at the center of a lot of it. He is a person without a past. No one knows who he is or where he came from until a foreign operative seems to recognize him. And that moment of recognition puts Mags in the spotlight, and not in a good way. My

Recommendation: I love all of the Valdemar books and this one is an important part of the series. Not only does it give some information about the Collegium, it focuses on a character that is different from many of the others that have been the focus of other series within the saga.

This book is totally skipable. The early reviews were terrible (fully justified in my opinion) so I went straight to the third book and missed nothing. Everything you need to know is told in flashbacks. I eventually went back and got this book for the sake of having the complete set and regret it. Overall I like the series but this book is like a summary of all the flaws in the series blown up to crazy proportions. I've deleted it off my Kindle and wish I hadn't wasted my money buying it.

#2 in the Collegium miniseries inside Lackey's larger "Valdemar" fantasy series. Young student Mag has adjusted to the life of his Herald training but he is still a loaner in many ways. When seers appear to have visions that involve Mag in an attack on the King, the irrational hatred begins to drive him to despair. Evil is still afoot, of course and only Mag's bond with his Companion, Fallen, can keep him going. Exciting enough that I read the whole thing in one day.

I loved Foundation. It introduced my third favorite protagonist in the Valdemar series, the first being Alberich and the second being Karal. Mags has a horrific existence until meeting his big, white, talking horse. Like all Lackey protagonists he is unique in his abilities, the best of the new Trainees. Each Valdemar novel focuses on a Gary Stu or Mary Sue, for crying out loud. It is to be expected. But Intrigues felt rushed and incomplete. SPOILERSSo Mags finally gets fed up with Bear and Lena, two of the biggest whiners Lackey has ever inflicted on us. Given pre-ability Vanyel, pre-mage Elspeth, Pol, and An'desha, that is saying something. So he explodes, and gives them a piece of his mind rather than cater to their fragile little egos. And they give it back to him, taking him to task for not fitting in. Really? Were they raised as slaves in total ignorance for the first 12 years of their lives? Oh, that's right, they just have difficult parents. Boo-freaking-hoo. So Mags accidentally hurts Dallen, and runs away before he can be repudiated. After all, he feels it is what he deserves. When he finally comes back, does he get an acknowledgement of how unfairly he was treated? Nope. He gets a lecture on doing his duty as a Herald, and has to save the day - AGAIN - to prove his worth. END SPOILERSThe editing is problematic as well, though that didn't bother me. It just felt hurried. We don't get any really solid character development. After reading Changes, I wish this could have formed the first part of that novel, with the middle of this book being totally excised. While I'll read this anytime I go back through Mags's story, it is close to being my least favorite of

the Valdemar books. So pick this up if you are already a fan of the series. If you are new to the world of Valdemar, I would suggest starting with Magic's Pawn or Arrows of the Queen. You'll get to this eventually, and will be able to take it for what it is - a mediocre novel from an usually good author.

I beg to differ on the negative feedback. Merc sure gets the spot with a nervous young boy that has his issues fitting in. A lot of ppl say there is missing this bigger picture... I say it hits right on the spot of how a boy that age thinks and it's not further as you can throw a companion. The hardships and emotional chaos even the way it seems Mags is often more detached from himself is such a great take on how a abused child might feel. Not trusting his happy days to last enjoying in a very deep level having food but missing the glee of other areas ;) There was spots where I was torn inside between wanting to box Mags ears and crying for him. Read and enjoy I take every book from Mercedes as it is a different look thru different eyes... I'm happy Valdemar is back :)

Mercedes Lackey has captured my imagination and interest through so many generations of the Valdemar series. You cannot go wrong with this series. I own every single book in the series - and will keep it that way until there are no other books to purchase. I do wish that the Kindle version (and some of the "standard" versions) included Larry Dixon's art. Amazing Artists!!! The both of them! Mags is the main character in this book and to be honest - I dreaded it a little when I found out how far back in the Valdemar time line he appeared. I thought, how can you have a strong character with a strong story line despite not being mentioned (so far) in the future Valdemar books? Thankfully Mercedes Lackey proved me wrong in a huge way. You will find yourself rooting for Mags throughout the entire time. I was crazy to doubt the abilities of Mercedes Lackey for even a moment.

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