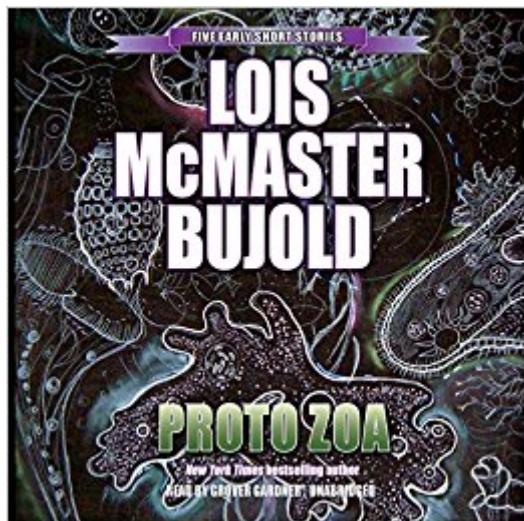


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# Proto Zoa: Five Early Short Stories



## Synopsis

'Protozoa' is a word from biology via the Greek meaning "first animals." These short stories were indeed among the first life spontaneously generated in Lois McMaster Bujold's nascent writing career. Along with an introduction by the author, this collection features the short stories "Barter," "Garage Sale," "The Hole Truth," "Dreamweaver's Dilemma," and "Aftermaths."

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The contents (besides a short introduction and a note about the cover), are all from other works - four short stories that appear in Dreamweaver's Dilemma ("Barter", "Garage Sale" "The Hole Truth" and "Dreamweaver's Dilemma") and the short piece "Aftermaths", which also appears at the end of Shards of Honor. So if you have those books, then this offers nothing new. Even if you don't have those books, the price for this volume is a bit steep for what you get. It is interesting to read the early efforts of a great writer, if only to see how far she's come. Dreamweaver's Dilemma in particular provides insight into the Vorkosiganverse pre-history. But unless you are already a die-hard Bujold fan who wants to complete their collection, probably best to give this one a pass. I do wish she had added even one new story - that would've made it worth the price of admission!

I adore Lois McMaster Bujold's Vorkosigan universe and just recently re-read all the Miles books to capture Mirror Dance & Cryoburn. (NB: have read all her other stuff too, except The Curse of Chalion, which I am saving.) Some of you may share my reluctance to totally END an author. So the

first time through, I just dabbled in Mirror Dance. Then when Cryoburn came out I just dabbled in that. BUT-- it gave me new hope that she would be writing more in this universe: so I started at the beginning and read everything again straight through. WHAT a treat! Then I went on line to see if there was -- perhaps -- a new Miles coming along after Cryoburn. What I found was Proto Zoa. Which is a collection of her early work. GET IT NOW. A nice insight into the beginnings of a major author. But not just that. Each short story stands alone as an enjoyable read. And why did I say: who me, Kindle? because I almost always invariably read the end of a book first: just to see if I want to read it. This holds true w/ established authors, too. But I am MUCH more lenient w/ the short story format! LOL. So my Kindle purchases tend to be only novels that I have read before and want to enjoy again. Promise: you will enjoy Proto Zoa without knowing the ending.

I've been a fan of Lois Bujold since her first published novel in 1986. I'd not seen most of these early writings, much less published in one volume. For fans, it's a required purchase. For fans of science fiction and fantasy, it's a recommended purchase. If you are not familiar with Lois' style, her stories have a wry sense of humor that is not quite evident when first read. Sometimes it's a couple of sentences later that I have to stop and re-read and chuckle at her clever turn of the phrase. Dreamweaver's Dilemma was published as a NESFA Press souvenir book when the author appeared at Boskone, a long running and well known regional convention among science fiction and fantasy fans. Dreamweaver's Dilemma gives some background to the Vorkosigan universe and Beta Colony, the setting for Bujold's popular series about Miles Vorkosigan. My favorite is the first story, "Barter". Parents can relate to this one about a way to keep your children and spouse under control. If you have ever had an unpleasant neighbor, "Garage Sale" will illuminate a desired course of action. Anyone living in an area that has sink holes or chuck holes from winter weather will find "The Hole Truth" very true. "Dreamweaver's Dilemma" and "Aftermaths" are in the genre of fantasy/science fiction that Bujold is the most well known for writing. Both are enjoyable and thought provoking. "Dreamweaver's Dilemma" gives a sample of Beta Colony, the birthplace of Bujold's successful Vorkosigan series. "Aftermaths" always seemed out of place following her "Shards of Honor" novel. Reading it separately let me appreciate it more as a sample of her writing style and amazing imagination. Highly recommended.

I am an avid and loyal fan of Bujold and bought this to pass the time while waiting for her next book. Clearly the publishers knew this and because I am a fan of Bujold, I think she wanted to show her fans, that her work was not always as polished as it now is. (Those of us still getting "pink slips" take

heart.) A collection of short stories, some funny, some extremely short, some really old fashioned.... Not my favourite Bujold at all, but it does offer an insight to the creative mind and it was certainly entertaining.

I love Bujold's writing, so it was a pleasure to find this volume of her earliest works, finally gathered together. I could see the potential in these early stories, especially the novella, Dreamweaver's Dillema. It was fascinating to read the earliest story set in her incredible Vorkosigan universe! I had to give the book 4 stars because she has so much improved her craft since these were written. Any Bujold fan should enjoy this book, and anyone who picks it up to sample her works, rest assured: as enjoyable as this is, it's not nearly as good as it gets!

I am a great fan of Bujold's, but this is a grab bag of early efforts which could have stayed in the drawer. As much as I read and reread her Vorkosigan saga, or the Chalion books, I had to force myself to finish these stories, hoping to find them interesting...but no. I'm only keeping this in my Kindle because I can't help collecting Bujold books.

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