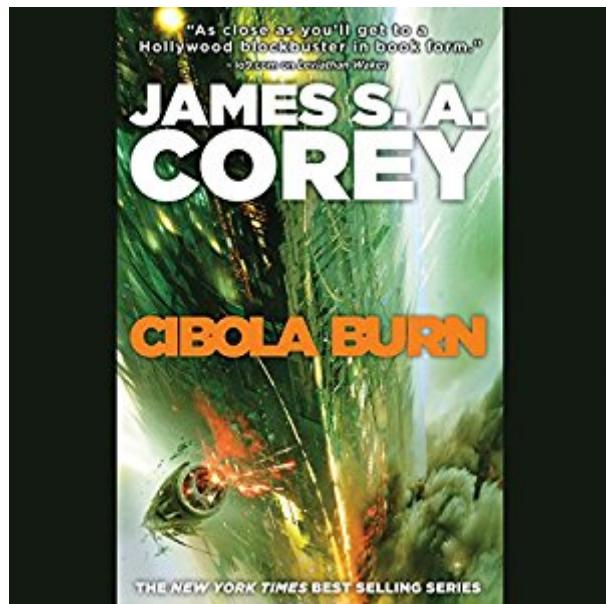


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Cibola Burn: The Expanse, Book 4



Synopsis

Enter a new frontier. An empty apartment, a missing family, that's creepy. But this is like finding a military base with no one on it. Fighters and tanks idling on the runway with no drivers. This is bad juju. Something wrong happened here. What you should do is tell everyone to leave. The gates have opened the way to a thousand new worlds, and the rush to colonize has begun. Settlers looking for a new life stream out from humanity's home planets. Illus, the first human colony on this vast new frontier, is being born in blood and fire. Independent settlers stand against the overwhelming power of a corporate colony ship with only their determination, courage, and the skills learned in the long wars of home. Innocent scientists are slaughtered as they try to survey a new and alien world. The struggle on Illus threatens to spread all the way back to Earth. James Holden and the crew of his one small ship are sent to make peace in the midst of war and sense in the midst of chaos. But the more he looks at it, the more Holden thinks the mission was meant to fail. And the whispers of a dead man remind him that the great galactic civilization that once stood on this land is gone. And that something killed it. Please note: The original recording has now been replaced with a new performance by Jefferson Mays. If you own this audiobook, simply re-download it from your library to access the new recording.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A welcome continuation to the Expanse series. Holden and crew take the center spotlight in this jaunt to one of the new interstellar destinations, along with a Belter/Corporate conflict to keep things interesting. The weakest part is the attempt to portray the alien Miller. The story is a bit more

readable than earlier books, but retains the view switching among principal characters. As a result, this reads a bit like an episodic TV script with a cliff-hanger between sections.

Halfway through another book it dawns on me that I neglected to write up a brief review for *Cibola Burn* by fictional author James S.A. Corey...and that was silly of me. With the fourth installment of *The Expanse* series, the previous novel's full blown space opera narrative leads us to a story that takes place almost exclusively on an unfamiliar planet an unknown distance from Earth. Human nature takes its natural course when early settlers from the devastated Europa base established a colony on the new planet prior to a joint corporate/scientific exploration colony arrives under charter from Earth government. Terrorist acts from the settlers and attempts to establish authoritarian control by the newly arrived corporate interests produce a tense and untenable relationship that prompts the governments of Earth and the outer planets to send James Holden and the crew of the *Rocinante* through the gate and to this planet to serve as a mediator. The whole thing goes about as well as anyone familiar with the previous three books would expect. The shame about this book is that, much like the scientific personnel who arrived, I didn't get nearly enough opportunity to explore the planet. It's a planet which has been geoengineered by the godlike aliens who had created the protomolecule that led to the gate from our solar system into the realm where hundreds of other gates lead to systems with hundreds of other planets. Containing presumably its own biodiversity combined with organic machines developed by the disappeared aliens, it would have been a fascinating planet to have experienced in greater depth. That is my only dissatisfaction with the book, and realistically the authors couldn't have actually written the sort of detail I would have liked without including an actual xenobiology textbook along with the story...and I suspect most people would have been far less inclined to read it if that were the case.

I enjoyed CB much better than I did *Abaddon's Gate*, but it did suffer from identity issues. The world of the protomolecule and its creators gets expanded, but the creators and their enemies are still a mystery. The main identity issue was that the book didn't know if it was about colonization or human nature in times of crises. Perhaps both, but the plot felt just a bit disjointed in that regard. In the other hand, the action sequences were breathtaking, and the exploration of the new planet, Ilus, made this book feel like a grand sci fi space opera once again--something I think AG sorely lacked. The new pov characters were all fairly interesting, though Elvi and Murtry felt a bit like caricatures. Overall, a great addition to the series that is well worth the read if you've enjoyed the series this far.

A low point for a series that started out with a lot of promise and has been sliding downhill ever since. Extremely boring story and totally unrealistic and uninteresting characters who always make the most unrealistic and infuriating decisions made this a tough read. I got through it, but I think I'm done with this series.

Fully developed new characters; more development of old characters. Courageous perseverance in the face of odds that passed "hopeless" long ago. All the standard stuff you've come to expect, but well executed. I think this volume is a bit more mature - the mirroring of the compromises the protagonists and antagonists have to make is well done, but not over done. I started out skeptical of Murty, but then I realized that he was nothing more than my girlfriend's boss with a gun and the whole book got a lot scarier. When I finished this book I had to take a break - I've got about five other books queued up to read, but the emotional impact of this book needed a while to rest. Read it. Or the protomolecule will move into your skull.

Starting to see a lot of decent derivative space opera based on the world building done by the S.A. Corey team. Less light speeding around the universe with lots of tech, instead more involved with believable situations and characters. I see it as a more intimate and realistic backdrop. Can't think of a better game changer for scifi than this series. The field has always had a lot of head but seemed short of heart. Not so with James Holden and crew. Sometimes it was hard telling just who was a good girl/guy and who wasn't. Depth and humanity of the characters seemed a constant. No cardboard cutouts need apply. Cibola Burn may be the Expanse's most enjoyable outing yet. I'll have to read it again to decide. It's in the rereads folder.

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