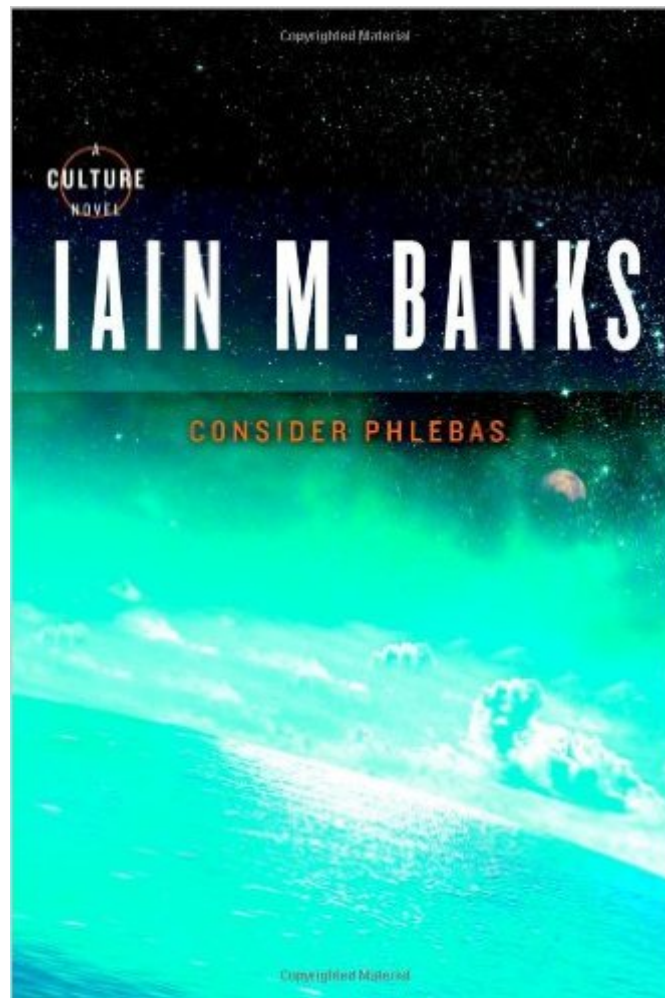


The book was found

Consider Phlebas (Culture)



Synopsis

"Dazzlingly original." -- Daily Mail "Gripping, touching and funny." -- TLSThe war raged across the galaxy. Billions had died, billions more were doomed. Moons, planets, the very stars themselves, faced destruction, cold-blooded, brutal, and worse, random. The Idirans fought for their Faith; the Culture for its moral right to exist. Principles were at stake. There could be no surrender. Within the cosmic conflict, an individual crusade. Deep within a fabled labyrinth on a barren world, a Planet of the Dead proscribed to mortals, lay a fugitive Mind. Both the Culture and the Idirans sought it. It was the fate of Horza, the Changer, and his motley crew of unpredictable mercenaries, human and machine, actually to find it, and with it their own destruction.

Book Information

Series: Culture

Paperback: 544 pages

Publisher: Orbit (March 26, 2008)

Language: English

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ISBN-13: 978-0316005388

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 1.5 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.7 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (452 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #19,790 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #71 inÂ Books > Humor & Entertainment > Pop Culture > Art #125 inÂ Books > Humor & Entertainment > Pop Culture > General #253 inÂ Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Science Fiction > Hard Science Fiction

Customer Reviews

I found it somewhat of a chore to finish this book. The story follows the adventures of Horza, one of the last Changers, people who can alter their physical appearance to resemble others, possess intricate control over physiological processes, and have several built-in weapons, such as retractable poisoned fangs and the ability to produce poison and acid through their saliva or sweat glands. Horza is an agent for the Idirans, a race of large, three-legged aliens who are at war with the Culture -- the most advanced segment of human civilization. Horza despises the Culture for their amoralistic over-reliance on machines and technology. The Idirans dispatch Horza to retrieve a Mind -- essentially an extremely advanced AI created by the Culture to help them win the war -- that has crash-landed on an icy planet controlled by a fearsome, god-like alien power. Horza's main

adversary is an agent of the Culture's "Special Circumstances" unit, who is also charged with recovering the Mind. Although mortal adversaries, the two nonetheless develop grudging respect and even affection for each other. This backstory and tension between the two main characters are the most compelling parts of the book, but they never really get the attention they deserve. Instead, Horza lurches from crisis to crisis, finding himself variously fighting for life aboard a mercenary vessel, locked in a chaotic laser battle in a temple, nearly devoured alive by a horrifying fat man grown to Jabba-the-Hutt-like proportions, and observing a deadly futuristic card game. These random incidents are entertaining and even gripping when considered alone. But as part of the same storyline they seem too disconnected from one another and I kept wondering how they were going to all tie together.

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