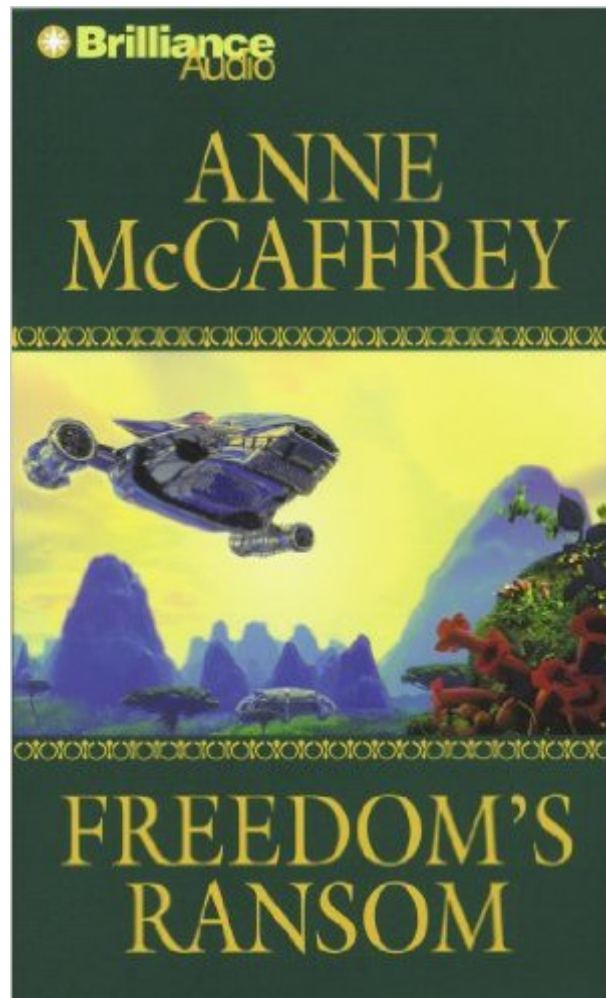


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Freedom's Ransom (Freedom Series)



Synopsis

When Kris Bjornsen and her fellow slaves were dumped on an uninhabited planet by the alien overlords called Catteni, there was no guarantee they would survive. Without the help of Zainal, a renegade Catteni exiled by his own people, they might all have been food for the predators of the new world. But they did survive, building a civilization and a home on the planet they named Botany. In time they were instrumental in driving the Catteni away from Earth and neighboring planets. Botany is free now, and so is the devastated Earth. The survivalist days are over, and the time has come for Botany to find its place in the power struggles of the newly configured universe. As an agricultural planet, rich in resources, Botany has more to offer than the colonists may have thought. A trip to Earth shows Kris and Zainal very dramatically how weakened the home planet is after years of Catteni domination, and how much Earth needs what Botany can give. Other worlds too have had their wealth skimmed away by the Catteni: the nearby planet of Barevi is little more than a corrupt bazaar, where bits and pieces of Earth's once powerful technology can be traded for grain and mineral ores. Earth needs food, and the resources to rebuild. Botany needs technology - from solar satellite panels to simple batteries - and, some say, the will to protect itself from being overrun by refugees who may or may not have strength and skills. As alien influence fades, the people of Botany must decide what kind of world they will become.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I found this book to be very inconsistent with McCaffrey's other writing. Not only was it a much more plodding book, with a ill-defined story line, but it did not continue the series well. Some characters just dropped out of sight. A couple of new characters were introduced for no apparent reason. The characters who continued from previous books didn't have the same voices and went from interesting, unique people to flat caricatures. References to the Eosi who plagued Botany in the first books suddenly had a different name -- an inconsistency that is rather unusual for McCaffrey. I was extremely disappointed and have a hard time believing that this was written by the talented author of the other Freedom books, the Dragonrider books, and all the other wonderful books she's written. She's never told a story so poorly, that I've read.

As a big McCaffrey fan, I had looked forward to this one. Unfortunately, it lacks the depth and character development of the earlier books in the series, and the plot is all over the place and boring at the same time. I found this the most disappointing of any book I have read by this author, and I've read all her SF.

I read the first three books in the Freedom series and while they weren't on par with the Pern or Ship series, they were solid enough to keep me moving on to the next book...up until I came to Freedom's Ransom. It was dragging along so slow that I decided to check here and see whether it picked towards the end. Unfortunately, it appears most of the reviewers agree with me -- this is not a very good book. I've been reading all of Anne McCaffrey's books for a good 15 years now, and I suppose that everyone has to eventually produce a dud. If I were to sum up the plot of the book after 204 of 287 pages, I would only need 2 words: Coffee and teeth. That's it. After everything that's happened so far in this series, that's an awful long plunge back into reality. Sure, there's going to be rebuilding, but this doesn't offer anything in the way of intrigue, excitement, interesting characters...nuthin. Thankfully I got this series at the library instead of spending money on it, but if there is a 5th book in the series I may be hard pressed to check that one out unless I hear glowing reviews first based on number four falling flat.

Anne McCaffrey's Freedom series is a delight, but much of the action culminated in the third book, leaving this one more of an epilogue than a whole other installment. I enjoyed visiting with Kris and Zainal again, and I was intrigued by their visit to Earth and liked seeing how "we" were doing post-Catteni--but I still liked the first three books better. It was worth the reading, though, as Ms.

McCaffrey's books almost always are.

I was pretty disappointed in the fourth book in the Freedom series. For one, it seems like the plot of almost the entire book (obtaining valuables in order to ransom Earth's goods back) is cancelled toward the end with the execution of an audacious and hasty scheme. As always, the Botanists luck out a little too much, a little too often to reflect reality and Murphy's Law. Rarely does even a small thing go wrong in the execution of their grandiose plans. Minor and annoying inconsistencies seem to get worse with this book, and the characters did not seem the same at all. Even their speech seemed different. As others have noted, the constant focus on teeth and coffee got very old, very fast! In some places, I felt like I was reading a coffee ad. Showing how Earth and Botany functioned after the end of Eosi domination was a good idea, in my opinion, but it could easily have been done in a concise, interesting chapter or two. Instead, the series just won't die and continues on in a repetitive, shopping-list fashion. The series overall is pretty good for a light read when one has some time to kill. There are some winning aspects that, for the most part, outweigh the negative aspects, such as the generally believable characters, an imaginative planet, the creative ETs, and the ingenuity and resiliency of humans. However, if you liked the first three books, just skip this one and let your imagination wrap up the series.

Freedom's Ransom is the fourth and final book in this intriguing science fiction series, by Anne McCaffrey. As in the previous three novels the story mainly evolves around Kristin Bjorsen (human) and Zaniel (catteni) and a fair sized mixed population of "dropped" human and alien dissidents. With the planet Botany protected under a bubble shield, the dissidents face the difficulties of setting up a governing body to make day-to-day decisions, while preparing for their first winter. Zaniel has plans to not only keep Botany free from Eosi control, but plans to help earth regain their freedom as well, which requires the technical materials looted from earth and now stored on the planet Barevi. Barevian merchants are insisting on being paid, so Zaniel and Kris must find a way to ransom the materials. this novel contains a very brief summary of the first three books of this series. I would highly recommend this novel for teens and adults.

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