



City of Bones

By Martha Wells

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City of Bones By Martha Wells

Khat, a member of a humanoid race created by the Ancients to survive in the Waste, and Sagai, his human partner, are relic dealers working on the edge of society, trying to stay one step ahead of the Trade Inspectors and to support Sagai's family. When Khat is hired to find relics believed to be part of one of the Ancients' arcane engines, they are both reluctant to become involved. But the request comes from the Warders, powerful mages who serve Charisat's Elector. Khat soon discovers that the deadly politics of Charisat's upper tiers aren't the only danger. The relics the Warders want are the key to an Ancient magic of unknown power, and, as all the inhabitants of Charisat know, no one understands the Ancients' magic.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Wells's second novel (after *The Element of Fire*) is a delight: an SF adventure with complex characters, archeological puzzles, a dash of mental magic and a lot of fast-paced action. Khat and his partner, Sagai, make their living finding relics that survived the destruction of the Ancients and selling them to the highest bidders. Khat is a Krisman (a bioengineered human whose race was designed for the grueling desert environment most of his world has become), which places him even lower on the social scale than his foreign-born partner. The two are coerced into working with the Patrician Warder, Elen, who is searching out a specific relic for her mentor, the Master Warder. Warders have certain mental powers, although overusing these powers can cause them to go mad. The Master Warder believes that this particular relic will enhance his powers without causing insanity, but Khat and Elen discover that there is a terrible price to be paid for using the artifact, one that may bring about the final destruction of their already ailing planet. This finely crafted novel expertly combines several genres—SF, fantasy, horror—and, perhaps most impressive of all, even manages to avoid an overly sentimental ending.

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From [Booklist](#)

Wells' second novel is a reasonably original postholocaust fantasy. The holocaust in this case caused the sea to dry up and left a good number of relics of the ancient days. There has grown up a trade in the latter, and as in all times and climes, archaeology attracts criminals, pretenders, and well-meaning amateurs as well as strict professionals. Mix those kinds of characters up in palace intrigue with mad or at least obsessive wizards, beautiful maidens, and a hunt for the Secret of the Remnant, and you have the makings of a decent adventure tale with an Arabian Nights flavor that Wells has the technical skill, as well as the verve and wit, to bring off quite nicely. *Roland Green*

Review

"This finely crafted novel expertly combines several genres—SF, fantasy, horror—and, perhaps most impressive of all, even manages to avoid an overly sentimental ending." ---Publishers Weekly Starred Review

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