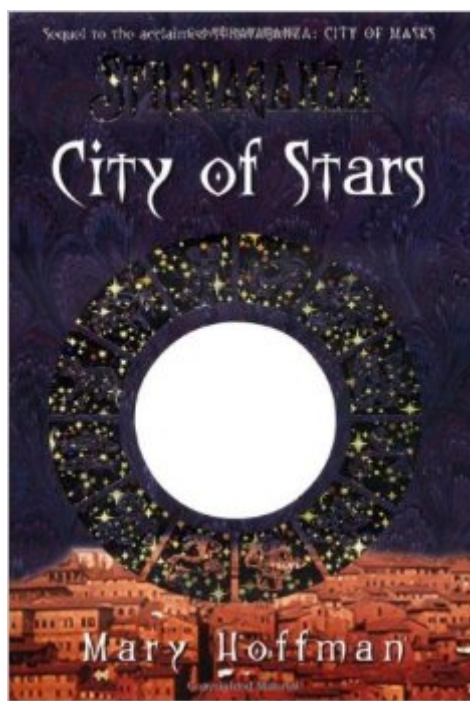


The book was found

Stravaganza City Of Stars



Synopsis

Georgia is an ordinary girl, living in London with her mother, stepfather and bully of a stepbrother and coping with the difficulties of growing up. But all that changes when she buys a tiny figurine in the form of a winged horse and suddenly finds herself swept up into the world of the Stravagante. Her talisman, the figurine, transports her to Remora the Talian parallel to Siena, Italy. There she meets Lucien, the Stravagante we first met in City of Masks and many other fascinating people who are in the midst of preparing for the Stellata, the city's annual horse race. Intrigue, romance, and the rare appearance of a true winged horse ensure an exciting adventure to rival the first in this captivating series.

Book Information

Age Range: 12 and up

Series: Stravaganza

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Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (23 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

"City of Stars" is the second in Mary Hoffman's Stravaganza series (of which there are currently five installments), following on from City Of Masks. The basic premise of the story is based on people known as the Stravagante: a select group of individuals from our world who can transport in their sleep to the country of Talia, an alternative version of Italy in the sixteenth century. Armed with a unique talisman that enables passage between the worlds, the young Stravagante inevitably find themselves caught up in the political intrigue and power mongering that goes on in the beautiful cities of Talia, whilst simultaneously trying to deal with the repercussions of their normal lives in the waking world. The previous book centered on a terminally ill boy called Lucien and his permanent

transition into the city of Belleza in which he is able to live out his life free of cancer, even if it means leaving his family behind him. In this sequel the perspective shifts to a shy, quirky girl called Georgia O'Grady who is trying to cope with her mother's remarriage and the presence of a bullying stepbrother in the house. She has just saved up enough money to buy a beautiful winged horse ornament at the local antique store. Unbeknownst to her it is a talisman that allows her to transport to Talia that very night. Specifically, to the capital of Talia: the city of Remora. Here the city is divided up into twelve wards, each aligning to a sign of the Zodiac, where rivalry between each faction is rife. This unrest provides a breeding ground for the likes of the ambitious di Chimici family to work their manipulations.

Middle books in trilogies often suffer the problem of being just a "bridge" work that adds very little to overall plot or characterization within the main storyline. Hoffman manages to avoid this pitfall nicely but making wholesale changes in focus for her sequel to *City of Masks*. The story still involves travel between our world and Talia, an alternate 16th century Italy, though the specific setting is no longer Bellezza (Florence) but Remora, a parallel Siena about to run its most famous and important horse race. And while *Mask* characters reappear, the major focus is on several brand new characters: Georgia, a young girl from our world unhappy with her step-brother and overall social situation; Cesare, a young Remoran jockey, and several new di Chimici's, whom fans will recall are the villains of the series, though this novel shows that not all family members have the same goals. *City of Stars* displays the same descriptive strengths as *Masks*, with Remora visualized in vivid, detailed splendor, though at times while the many twists and turns of the factions in Remora are explained the reader may wish for slightly less detail or complexity. The plot of *Stars*, while centered on a lot of political intrigue as in *Masks*, is more concrete and focused and with the addition of a few characters whose allegiances remain unknown, overall more interesting and compelling, though the book suffers from the same abstractness with regard to the Stravaganti themselves. The plot is also hurt a bit by the book's length, which is overlong by about a 100 pages I'd say--detracting from the suspense and creating a few scenes that bog the reader down while seeming superfluous. Characters remain a bit thin.

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