

Booklist

Wolf and the Catholic archbishop of Newark's old-fashioned space opera star a delightfully loathsome villain and a hero so good that he keeps to his code even when it nearly causes disaster. Marshal Victor Corsair captures petty crook Gil Terry, en route to stealing Verlinap's mushroom crop. Corsair plans on giving the Verlinapians a heroic show, but then archnemesis Space Vulture shows up and seizes everyone at hand to sell into slavery. Terry, left behind because Space Vulture always leaves one survivor, thinks he's got it made until the two children of Verlinap's chief administrator, Cali Russell, come out of hiding. Eliot's an engineering whiz, and Regin, 7, can melt even the hardest heart. Eliot forces Gil to pursue Space Vulture; meanwhile, Corsair and Cali do their best to escape. This isn't as cut-and-dried as it might have been. Corsair has moments of doubt, and the female lead is tough, dedicated, and doesn't swoon into the arms of the first man she meets. Science fiction legerdemain swashed by a large brush, and a fun read.

— *Regina Schroeder*