



Crescent City Rhapsody

Kathleen Ann Goonan

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

Crescent City Rhapsody

Kathleen Ann Goonan

Crescent City Rhapsody Kathleen Ann Goonan

What would it feel like to live through a biological revolution? Many science fiction writers chronicling a vast technological shift lose sight of the people who would have to deal with it. Not so Kathleen Ann Goonan, whose *Crescent City Rhapsody* is the third of her Nanotech Cycle novels. Each of her characters is profoundly real, and the things that happen to them are as confusing, awe-inspiring, and terrifying as you might expect.

Goonan's story begins with the assassination of Marie Laveau, New Orleans cyber-entrepreneur and grand-niece of the famous voodoo queen. By prior arrangement, Marie is resurrected into a cloned body and prepares for revenge, but she awakens into a world beset by the Silence--periodic bursts of microchip-destroying radiation from space. Enter Dr. Zeb Aberly, a bipolar astrophysicist whose manic episodes help him understand that the Silence contains an alien message and perhaps the potential to change humanity's biology radically. Meanwhile, in Japan, a young biotechnician seals her fate when she helps steal the recipe for a Universal Assembler, a nanotech tool of fearsome power and destructive capability. The stage is set for a revolution, and Goonan delivers, with complex, interwoven story lines that resemble the rhythms and structure of a jazz composition.

Brightly colored lines were inching their way up buildings like plants in a fast-growing jungle. She moved briskly, but her heart was lifeless. She was looking at her past and seeing a future that she was not a part of.

People sat leaning against buildings here and there, which was the hardest to see. They were not begging. Their brains were changing.

They were adapting to the new city.

As cities become organisms, a new generation of profoundly *different* humans comes of age and hope dawns in Crescent City, and Goonan directs the show with artistic flair. *Crescent City Rhapsody* is confusing and delightful, a swoony harmony of words swirling around crisply melodic ideas. --*Therese Littleton*

Crescent City Rhapsody Details

Date : Published 2000 by Gollancz

ISBN : 9781857988888

Author : Kathleen Ann Goonan

Format : Paperback 576 pages

Genre : Science Fiction, Fantasy, Fiction, Science Fiction Fantasy

 [Download Crescent City Rhapsody ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Crescent City Rhapsody ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Crescent City Rhapsody Kathleen Ann Goonan

From Reader Review Crescent City Rhapsody for online ebook

Karen Ireland-Phillips says

This series worth a second look.

Morris Nelms says

Kathleen Ann Goonan, the author, majored in English Literature and Philosophy at Virginia Polytechnic Institute.

Her writing is eloquent, thoughtful, and often profound. Her love of jazz and music in general gives it yet another dimension.

Her main interest in this book is in biotechnical advances, which have the potential to make and unmake our world in ways that strain credibility. Yet I believe she's done her homework, and that a large percentage of what she writes about here can indeed happen.

My favorite passage from the book takes place in New Orleans.

Kita: "...we still have a challenge."

Marie (the most powerful person in New Orleans): "What's that?"

Kita: "This new metaperomone mix is activated in human brains by the repetition of a certain strong rhythm."

Marie: "We can do rhythm."

This is an outstanding novel. Thanks to Adam Booker for recommending it to my wife, who recommended it to me.

Kend says

Why don't we write about nanotech anymore? This book, while it certainly has many failings, creates a fascinating mashup of biotech and nanotech in a future where an unknown alien signal wipes out ... well, the electrical grid. Kind of. But people find a way around that super fast. Rich people, anyway. Hm. In any case, a fascinating premise for a book which fails to deliver on character development, plotting, and ... well, atmosphere. The world felt empty, and the depictions of mental illness were deeply troubling to me, a person with Major Depressive Disorder who has lived with family members and friends exhibiting a whole spectrum of neurodivergences, from Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) to Bipolar Disorder. We put up with enough crap from our own brains that I don't want to foister this book and its problematic depictions of mental illness on top of all that.

Morgan McGuire says

The book was interesting, but failed to make me care about the characters or the plot. I think that the slow pacing and flipping back and forth between radically different storylines (both with non-sympathetic protagonists) did me in. I just couldn't finish it, even though I liked the world that she created.

Angela says

I hoped that I would like *Crescent City Rhapsody* more than I did *Mississippi Blues*, and thankfully it turned out that I did. The third installment in Goonan's Nanotech Cycle was a much more solid story than its predecessor, thanks to tighter characterization and a lot less delving into paragraphs of Telling Rather Than Showing Technonobabble.

There were fewer instances of her lyricism this time around, but at least for me the portrayal of several characters I liked helped make up for that. I've seen people posting on Amazon.com that they had a hard time following the storylines of so many characters, and one person even complained that there were not one, not two, but three love stories in the plot. The multitude of characters didn't bother me in the slightest; for one thing, it had a sort of *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* feel to it, bringing together several disparate characters and showing us how this huge thing changing the world affected them all, and I didn't think that was a bad thing in the slightest. Moreover, it fit in with the whole "rhapsody" point of the title--taking all these disparate lives and weaving them together into one big story. I liked that a lot, even though it took a while to bring all the viewpoint characters together.

Also--I definitely disagree with the person who was complaining about the love stories. Sure, there are multiple instances of characters becoming lovers, and actually there are more than three: Zeb and Ra, Jason and Abbie, Kita and Hugo, and Illian and Artaud. That reviewer seemed ready to dismiss this story as a romance just because of the number of pairings in it, but I don't think that does it any justice. This smacks of the attitude that an SF story can't be "serious" if it has a love story in it, and I think that's bullshit, as I have ranted before. None of these pairings dominate the story at any time; they are merely single themes in the overall greater piece telling the reader about these people's lives. And let's face it, folks, falling in love *is* a regular part of people's lives. With the time frame this story covers, and the number of people it introduces to the reader, it's inevitable that we're going to see some of them in relationships--especially in the context of how the changes sweeping the world affect those relationships. And we do get a lot of that.

One point I saw raised on the Amazon.com reviews holds true, though, and that is that because of the number of viewpoint characters, some of the depth of characterization does suffer. We get several things hinted at but not touched on with any detail at all--we don't have time because Goonan's switching back and forth between her viewpoint characters more often. Some of them are interesting side details about relationships between the characters; some of them are larger details about the disintegration of the political climate all over the world, things that would have been nice to see spelled out a little more. And one major plot detail from *Mississippi Blues*, the creation of the New Orleans Plague and who was responsible for it, was only very briefly mentioned at all in this story--which seemed odd to me given that the whole point of *Crescent City Rhapsody* was supposed to be Marie Leveau's using New Orleans as a jumping off point to get Crescent City created. It would have been nice to see the creation of the plague touched on a little more to tie the previous books better into this one.

And I was vaguely disappointed to see not one mention of what happened to Cincinnati at all--or even a mention of Abe Durancy.

All in all... some rough spots, but not nearly as many as in *Mississippi Blues*, and a lot more tightly put together.

Mitzi McMahon says

I wanted to like this more than I did. There are some very interesting characters and story lines (Zeb and his brilliance-tinged-with-mental-illness; the strange and amazing abilities of the children in utero during the initial Pulse), and these are what kept me from shelving this mid-book. But, ultimately, there were too many different threads and too much time spent on the ones that didn't interest me. The author tries to tie them all together by the book's end, but it wasn't enough for me to overlook all the time and effort spent on the plot lines that were less engaging for me (the nanotech angle, the biocities). I was much more drawn to what happens in the opening chapter: a pulse of some sort washes over the earth and silences everything electrical, and Zeb, a radio astronomer, has a dipole antenna set up that records incoming information during the silence. Had the book opened with one of the other story lines, I probably would have put it down.

Shifra says

very interesting tale of possible future ... lots of interweaving characters. this was one of the few books i've ever encountered where i wasn't sure if i was enjoying it, but yet i was enthralled enough to keep reading.

Jason says

This book is an attempt to translate jazz music into a science fiction novel. I think it is quite successful at that and I fully appreciate the artistry that it required. The only problem is that I don't really like jazz.

The story follows many separate characters over the course of twenty or so years from around 2010 to 2030. Each chapter follows a different set of characters and is set a year or two after the preceding chapter. There's no real plot to speak of, very few of the characters overlap in any significant way, and the term "Crescent City" isn't even mentioned by any character at all until page 290. The theme is the exploration of the many different ways nanotechnology might be incorporated into daily lives across the world and how different societies will evolve based on those applications. Some societies weaponize the technology. Some use it to try to build utopias. Some use it to control the masses and establish dictatorial governments. The subtle progression of the technology over time is interesting to watch and some of the technological innovations that Goonan writes about (she has an invention almost identical to Microsoft Surface) were almost prescient considering she published this in 2002 and obviously wrote it even earlier than that, but I had a lot of trouble changing focus from chapter to chapter without any indication as to where the story was eventually going to lead me.

This being novelized jazz, obviously all of the disparate pieces have to come together to form a whole by the end, and they do that in a very satisfying manner. The attention to detail displayed to get all of the characters into place over the span of a few decades is admirable, and much like jazz the separate parts all collide to make a conclusion moreso than The Ending, but I just didn't care enough about any of the characters or the loosely formed story to want to read any more in this universe.

Alex says

So many great ideas, so many fantastic places, but I wish I had a character to really connect with.

Susun says

Not one of my favorites. It was too disconnected for me, and I had trouble interpreting her phrasing.

Rynne says

Interesting, but could have been better. Too many characters, unnecessary romances and sex scenes, incomprehensible techno babble, sudden time skips, and too much elaboration. Could have been told just as well with half the page count if all these were trimmed.

Lisa says

Crescent City Rhapsody by Kathleen Ann Goonan (2000)

Rick Smith says

Not a bad stab at Technological Singularity without electronics. 'New Age' isn't really my cup of tea though.

Would've rated it three stars were it not for the phrase 'this is a map from light-years ago'. Yuk!

Sarah Rigg says

I didn't realize I was jumping into the middle of a series, but you don't actually need to have read #1-2 to enjoy this one. In this book, a pulse comes from outer space and interferes with radio communication, causing worldwide havoc and forcing the governments of the world to find alternative means of communication. Additionally, children who were conceived at the time of the first pulse grow up to have altered brains that give them special abilities but also leave them writhing in pain when radio and other broadcast signals do manage to be sent out. Goonan not only gives us a wonderful "idea" story but does a great job of creating complex characters who aren't all good or all bad, and definitely aren't stereotypes. I loved this so much that I am planning to read the next in the series very soon. Highly, highly recommended to fans of spec fic.

Rd says

I took this with me on vacation and didn't put it down the whole time.
