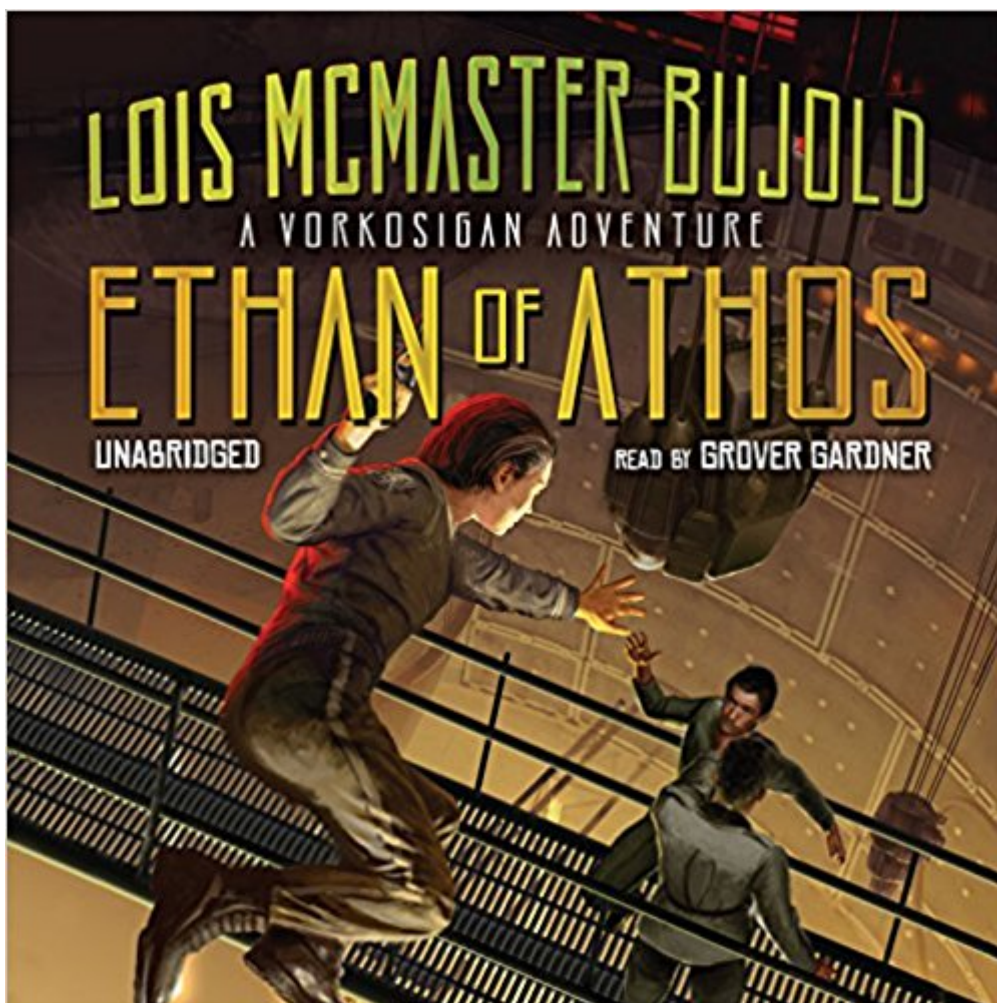


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Ethan Of Athos (Miles Vorkosigan Adventures)



Synopsis

On Athos, a world without women, Dr. Ethan Urquhart delivers babies from uterine replicators. But when the ovarian cultures start dwindling, he is sent abroad on a mission to replenish the planet's stocks.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Our hero is a quiet, upstanding citizen of Athos, an obstetrician in a world in which reproduction is carried out entirely via uterine replicator, without the aid of living women. Problem: the 200-year-old cultures are not providing eggs the way they used to, and attempts to order replacements by mail have failed catastrophically. But when Ethan is sent to find out what happened and acquire more eggs, he finds himself in a morass of Cetagandan covert ops and Jackson Whole politics--and the only person who's around to rescue him is the inimitable--and, disturbingly, female--Elli Quinn, Dendarii rent-a-spy. --This text refers to the Mass Market Paperback edition.

Fortunately for sf aficionados, Reader's Chair is wending its audio way through the canon of esteemed Hugo and Nebula Award-winning author Bujold. Hard upon the well-received release of Cetaganda comes this rendition of one of her earliest works. Ethan Urquhart is an obstetrician and chief of biology at the Severin District Reproduction Center on Athos, a planet forbidden to women. When the centuries-old cultures used to provide eggs for the uterine replicators start going south

and a replacement shipment is inexplicably flawed with bogus surrogates, the Athosian Council dispatches Urquhart on a galactic quest to retrieve new ovarian tissue cultures for the survival of Athos. Along the way, he encounters twisted interplanetary political machinations, Cetagandan covert operatives, and, perhaps most disturbing, Elli Quinn, a Dendarii mercenary?and woman. The in-house reading tandem of Michael Hanson and Carol Cowan collaborate on another professional effort. The mellifluous Hanson is dead-on as Urquhart, but Cowan comes off a little too matronly as Quinn, especially given the cybervixen graphic on the cover. The plot-driven story moves swiftly and will engage sf fans of all subgenres. Recommended for all collections.?Barry X. Miller, Austin P.L., TX Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This is far from the best by McMaster Bujold. And not for the reasons most would probably give of the homosexuality of Ethan's planet and their naivety to the Galaxy at large. I think she did make her point in that Athos's reasons for no women are as stupid in their way in this book as the current lack of tolerance of same sex pairings, but I think other authors have probably said it better or maybe more clearly. or not more clearly, more subtlety. I fricken hate feeling like I'm being preached to or patronized and this was made me want to throw it almost as bad as the one Dara Joy wrote about the men on the planet having the hymens. Argh! I did very much enjoy learning more about Miles 2nd in command and her life growing up aboard a space station, and the Cetagandans are always interesting in a ruthlessly alarming way. it was worth a read, and I have it added to the rest of her series, I just have preferred the subtlety of her vision and characters in other parts of the series more.

It is a very good story in the Miles universe, but Miles is not in it - Elli Quinn is. The story is told from the viewpoint of a Ethan from Athos, a planet started by religious men who taught their descendants that women were EVIL and SEDUCTIVE and COULD DRIVE A MAN CRAZY WITH LUST, and turn him into a SLAVE (religious preachers all seem to have this problem, but this is a whole planet of them). Ethan's planet uses the replicator to deliver only male children and he must go out into the universe to find new female parts to continue making babies. He meets Quinn and is, of course, afraid of her for being female, but she helps him a bit, which causes him to get involved with her mission and he becomes hopelessly confused. But, of course, all is right at the end. Would need Miles in story to get that 5th star

I am a huge fan of this series and of McMaster. It was a surprise to find a story in the saga that was just ok. It was an interesting premise, a cult-like religion on a remote planet that includes only men. But, in the end, the protagonist just wasn't as compelling as the usual central characters, the Vorkosigan family. The main character starts out naive and doesn't learn very much from his adventures. Maybe the short length of the book didn't allow for enough character development. Perhaps the secondary character, Commander Quinn, is meant to be the character that lingers in the reader's mind, as she does appear in the next novel in the series. So many of the others have been so good, I am not deterred. I've already started the next in the saga, and it holds promise.

Excellent science fiction novel that raises questions of genetic engineering, religion, and ethics while being a good mystery as well. Contains a novel way to dispose of a body too. This was the first LMB book I read, picked up by chance at a grocery store checkout. After that I haven't missed a single Vorkosigan-universe book.

This book is plainly written to make a point, but it's still a good, enjoyable read and it skillfully avoids or turns on their head the various goofy "man meeting women for the first time" tropes that might otherwise have turned this story into a farce. It's not a farce--it's a serious novel. It's also nice to encounter a male protagonist who is neither steeped in machismo nor a professional warrior. Nor is Ethan effete helpless. He's an ordinary-enough guy who takes his responsibilities seriously and winds up in a nasty situation beyond his understanding, but not, as you'll discover, beyond his abilities.

This "sidebar" novel in the Miles Vorkosigan universe is really a fun reversal of classic sci-fi pulp of decades ago. Back then, a common concept of pulp sci-fi was the "planet of women" discovered by men and the results of the two sexes (re)introduced to each other. Ethan of Athos takes that premise and reverses it, giving us a protagonist from a planet of men founded by a religious denomination that believes that women lead men into "sinful" behavior. This is a male-only utopian socialist society where reproduction is taken very seriously from a social and economic perspective. But Bujold steers clear of any deep sociological musings here. As with original pulp this premise is simply used to provide some fun in a space detective story, and create a different dynamic between the male and female protagonists in the story. Bujold does tap into some interesting questions but sadly does not explore them deeply. The men of Athos take into account the full personal, social and economic cost of raising children, rather than simply assuming that women will somehow

manage to handle most of the effort involved (since they don't have any women). One must earn the right to father children through community service and partnerships are often centered on a male couples' combined ability to meet their parenting obligations. Eugenics is practiced to produce sons better suited for various social roles. This could have been a chance for a serious examination of how parenting is managed in our society but Bujold doesn't go there, which is a negative. It's a fun novel for a leisurely Saturday afternoon read. Not deep and not very serious. But quite fun. Elli Quinn lovers will enjoy it.

How the heck did I miss reading any of these in SciFi reading career? I cut my teeth on Tom Swift, first editions I bought with lawn mowing income. This is hands down the best SciFi series of books I've ever read. I bought the first one and simply couldn't stop. The Flying Spaghetti monster only knows how many hours of sleep I missed and how much work time I procrastinated to read these books. I read them in the order the author recommended and they were right on target. Don't put it off, just buy them all now, tell your wife and kids goodbye and read your heart out.

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