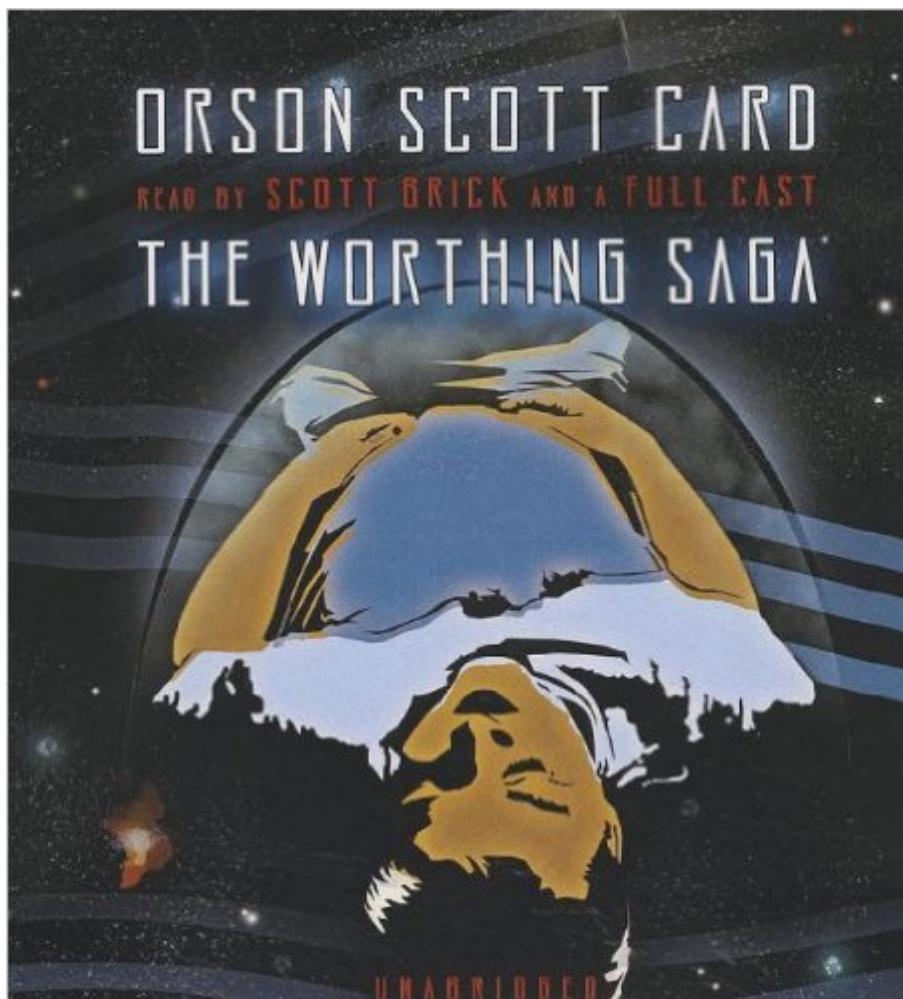


The book was found

The Worthing Saga



Synopsis

It was a miracle of science that allowed human beings to live, if not forever, then for a long, long time. Some people, anyway. The rich and powerful lived at the rate of one year every ten. Some created two societies: that of people who lived out their normal span and died, and those who slept away the decades, skipping over the intervening years and events. It allowed plans to be put into motion and interstellar empires to be built. And it nearly destroyed humanity. After eons of decadence and stagnation, a few seed ships were sent out to save our species. On each ship was one man. This is the story of one of these men, Jason Worthing, and the world he found for his seed.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (112 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #5,357,704 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #42 inÂ Books > Books on CD > Authors, A-Z > (C) > Card, Orson Scott #1865 inÂ Books > Books on CD > Children's Fiction > Fantasy #9661 inÂ Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Science Fiction > Hard Science Fiction

Customer Reviews

The synopsis described above isn't really all that accurate. This first half to 2/3 of this book is a single story composed of about a dozen vignettes, united under the premise of a boy being given these scenes as dreams by two strange space travellers. The common theme of this story is that suffering exists because it enables us to grow. The characters in the vignettes suffer, and the dreaming boy suffers with them in his dreams, which causes problems in his waking life. The last third of the book is a series of (9?) short stories set in the same universe. Some stories are new, some elaborating on stories told briefly or mentioned in the first part. The short stories don't concentrate on suffering so much as escaping reality, and how that lessens us as human beings. Most of them have down endings, but are no less thought-provoking than the main tale. I didn't agree with Card's premise, that God allows suffering because it makes us stronger. But I found the religious ideas presented in a comfortably secular way, such that I didn't feel he was pushing

religion on the reader, but instead encouraging the reader to think about it, and consider his premise. Card's writing style is always easy to get into, and I tore through the first hundred pages before I realised that I'd been sucked in. Hearing that Card is a devout Mormon might scare away some potential readers with strong religious views of their own, but I feel that his style transcends divisions such as this. Card is an expert storyteller, and is worth reading regardless of one's own theology.

This popped up on the "Page you made" box a few minutes ago, and I just had to stop and write something about it. The Worthing Saga was among the earliest of Orson Scott Card's books I read and I remember it fondly. Together with Ender's Game and Treason, it made me realise this writer had something to say that I wanted to read. Many people I know dismiss science fiction as a genre - I guess they've been scared off by some representations of aliens and robots and stuff. They don't realise what a wide range of work falls into this category, and even though I have become a SF fan over the past 20 years or so, there is a lot of stuff in the genre that doesn't interest me. But there is no other form of fiction that sets my mind working the way SF does, and I will never stop trying to get people to experience that for themselves. Because I want people to read something that opens up their minds to possibility (without scaring them off) and want to share Card's writing, I recommend this book without mentioning anything about SF. After the initial shock of finding they've been tricked into reading SF, they usually realise they're reading a wonderful story, intelligently and skilfully told by one of our time's great storytellers. Somehow, people who have no problem reading fiction about people pioneering the vast, unexplored spaces of America, Australia, or any other earth-bound place, seem to have a problem reading of space pioneers. That's why I call this "entry level SF" - basically, this story is not so dissimilar from many of those stories of pioneers; the trials, tribulations and perseverance of the characters differ only in the technical details. However, this story has the good fortune of being told by Orson Scott Card, a writer who manages to make me feel I have only gained from seeing life from his viewpoint.

I first picked up this book in the mid 1980's when it was published as 'The Worthing Chronicle' by Ace publishing (c 1983). At the time Card was unknown and most large bookstores did not carry him. I read the book at least six times, and gathered new meaning each time. The timeline spans several eons and the social commentary runs deep. His illustrations on the key role of pain reflect almost an eastern expression of the yin and yang. The beginning of the book talks of full time 24 hour real life stars that are followed by remote camera, a spooky concept that continues to edge

toward reality. From the wild west/frontier settings of a new planetary colony (ie the exodus of the Mormons) to the magic abilities of Alvin Maker, you can see many of Card's basic themes in one place in 'The Worthing Saga'. I don't want to give up too much of the plot as it is as enjoyable a read as any, and in my mind even superior to his excellent Ender series (although I haven't read the fourth). For new Card readers this is a must, and for those who have devoured his other novels this will show a genesis of many of the ideas expressed in his later series. All in all a great read.

This is my all-time favorite OSC book, and I have just about everything he's written. Broken into three sections, these masterful stories begin with the Day of Pain, in which a world that never knew physical or mental pain -- due to the watchful eyes of a powerful race of mutants -- is suddenly left unprotected. As the people of this planet come to grips with their new reality, they are visited by the man (Jason Worthing) who caused the Day of Pain - a man who has slept for thousands of years while his offspring developed their strange powers and began watching the world, removing pain. The second section visits the world where Jason Worthing was born, and tells why he left it. The third section takes place while Jason sleeps at the bottom of the ocean, and is an account of the trials his descendants go through, coping with the powers that make them different - and separate from the rest of the world. All in all a fantastic story, and a highly recommended book!

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