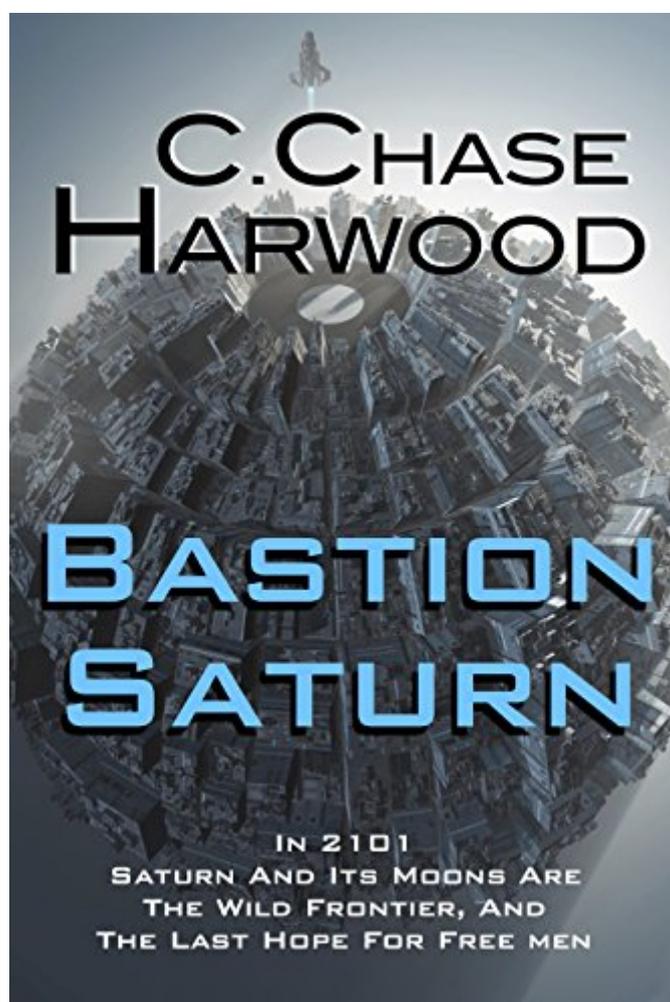


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Bastion Saturn



Synopsis

A swashbuckling space opera, *Bastion Saturn* is a dramatic, often humorous, action-packed romp that explores the best and worst of humankind while questioning the very definition of humanity. In 2101, having conquered the Solar System, most humans are choosing to tie their minds to an Artificial Intelligence. The only place to be free of AI is living off-world, with Saturn and its vast system of moons serving as the wild frontier. The only caveats to living there: the funds to fly a billion miles into space and a pledge to keep vigil against the threat of AI. Otherwise, what you do out there is your business. Career petty-thief Caleb finds himself broke and unemployed when he arrives at his new home among the colonists of Saturn's moons, so he takes a job as a cop. When law enforcement takes a turn for the less-than-just, Caleb refuses to sit idly back. After rescuing and escaping with several civilians, Caleb and his new comrades are now fugitives who must beg, borrow, and steal their way across Saturn's moon colonies to survive. Tensions rise as Earthlings begin looking at Off-Worlders as threats. Keeping his friends safe among Saturn's moons is no longer Caleb's only challenge--he must find a way to protect the last vestige of remaining free humans if they all want any hope at staying alive.

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Customer Reviews

My interest in this novel was peaked when I read about it on the Kindle Scout page. I voted for it and received a free copy when it won the contest for publication. Having read Chase Harwood's *Of Sudden Origin*, I already knew the potential for a good read was there. I wasn't wrong! *Bastion Saturn* is about Wild West Cowboy Space Pirates and Evil Artificial Intelligence! Well, not exactly, but the elements are there. The action is pretty much non-stop, which made it a page turner for me. The background setup is of an AI + Human Hive-Mind Singularity in 2101 forcing non-conformists to escape to space. The AI feels threatened by their very existence and takes steps to remove the threat. That dread permeates the entire work. The struggle to establish a viable existence on the many moons of the Saturn ring system encapsulates the actions of the main characters. They come at you fast paced and fully formed. Caleb Day, the petty thief and general wanderer, annoyed me at first. I guess he was supposed to though. He finds himself in the middle of a corrupt Police action where - finding his conscience isn't as sadistic as the other participants - he ends up throwing his lot in with the fleeing refugees. One of those, a very attractive woman named Jennifer, is also somewhat more than she lets on at times. They end up in a series of unpleasant moon hopping situations as they try to find a new way to make it in the Saturn system. Character development isn't a main component of the book, although there is some, especially for Caleb. The general direction of change is more of a getting-to-know-each-other kind progression where familiarity and acceptance between them bonds the gang together in a way that works. There is quirky humor employed in the book.

First thought: That was fun! Second thought: That was hilarious and fun! Third thought: Wow. A lot of that was actually terrifying. But what fun! A friend of mine introduced me to Mr. Harwood's books, and I have thanked them for it many times since. They seem to all have a cinematic feel, and a rapid pace that I quite enjoy. I've given his books as gifts multiple times. I think Mr. Harwood has found something special in this latest book. It is thoroughly entertaining. You can read the premise above, and I don't intend to spoil any of the plot, because I spent the majority of my time reading this book not being able to wait to see what happened next. This book doesn't dwell on itself. It moves quite fast. The concept is solid, and the research and thought Mr. Harwood has put into *BASTION* make the situations the characters find themselves facing to be absolutely incredible but completely believable at the same time. There is a deceptively tricky balance that has been pulled off in the style Mr. Harwood has used to craft his story. He introduces the technology of this 22nd-Century frontier, and the ways in which humans interact with machines or robots in a way that

is appropriately sterile for a futuristic story set among the moons of Saturn. He will then lampoon that same style of narration in the way the book's main protagonist, Caleb, interacts with others, or even in the way he thinks of himself in a way that I found to be very funny. Harwood doesn't back off for one instant from the fact that the characters' environment is unforgiving, and the dangers facing them are serious, even though the book as a whole doesn't take itself too seriously.

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