

Eon: Dragoneye Reborn (Eon #1)

Alison Goodman

Reviewed by: Marissa Klippenstein, 21

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12-year-old Eon is in the running to become the next Dragoneye, the intercessor between man and the energy dragons. However, Eon has a secret: Eon is actually *Eona*, a 16-year-old girl forced by qualification to live her life as a boy. Females are forbidden to use Dragon Magic and her consequences would be dire if she were ever discovered. Not only is Eona a female, which is considered back luck, but she is also a cripple, which puts her beneath the other Dragoneye contenders. When the Mirror Dragon, who has been mysteriously absent for the last century, arrives and chooses her at the ceremony, Eona's secrets become even more difficult to hide. Now, Eona must hide her femininity and transcend her disability to avoid suspicion, all while being caught in the middle of a political battle for power divided by the emperor and the ruthless Lord Ido.

This book was a treat to read. I had to take my time with it to truly savor each chapter. I love what Alison Goodman has done with her world. She has taken actual historical practices in Asian culture and acclimated it into her own fantasy. The culture and practices were very believable and obviously well researched. One thing that kept me intrigued throughout was the exploration of gender and what it truly means to be "masculine" or "feminine." Goodman treated the issue of sexism with care and realistic representation. The main character is not a traditional superhero. Eona is crippled, not only physically, but also mentally due to the unreachable standards that society has set – to obtain true masculinity. She struggles to make her way in the male-dominated court, but persistently pushes through.

The only thing I do not care for about this book is the length. The plot is very drawn-out. This could easily be a 400 page book; however, I respect the author's choice of drawing the reader in with detailed descriptions. Otherwise, this book is worth all 500+ pages.

I would recommend this book for ages 14+. Warnings for mild sexual themes (including the exploration of gender differences and sexism) and some violence.

This book would be a great gift to anybody interested in high fantasy and genuine female characters.

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