



# Moonwar

*Ben Bova*

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## **Moonwar** Ben Bova

Ben Bova's extraordinary Moonbase Saga continues with a breathtaking near-future adventure rich in character and incident. The action begins seven years after the indomitable Stavenger family has realized its cherished dream of establishing a colony on the inhospitable lunar surface. Moonbase is now a thriving community under the leadership of Doug Stavenger, a marvel of scientific achievement created and supported by nanotechnology: virus-size machines that can build, cure, and destroy. But nanotechnology has been declared illegal by the home planet's leaders. And a powerful despot is determined to lay claim to Stavenger's peaceful city...or obliterate it, if necessary. The people of Moonbase--a colony with no arms or military--must now defend themselves from earth-born aggression with the only weapon at their disposal: the astonishing technology that sustains their endangered home.

## **Moonwar Details**

Date : Published November 1st 1998 by Harper Voyager (first published 1997)

ISBN : 9780380786985

Author : Ben Bova

Format : Paperback 512 pages

Genre : Science Fiction, Fiction, Science Fiction Fantasy, Fantasy, Space, Hard Science Fiction, Near Future, Science, Technology

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## From Reader Review *Moonwar* for online ebook

### Jim says

The nanoluddites on the Earth are unhappy about those on the Moonbase of a nearish future using nanotechnology and they have a champion in the meglomaniac leader of the UN, who assembles a "peacekeeping" force to destroy the Moonbase. The Moonbase has no weapons only a charismatic young leader, Doug, and some clever scientists. The science is plausible and the action increases to a climatic ending as the residents of Moonbase prepare their defence against the World.

Classic science fiction, an enjoyable read but not 100% gripping. I would have awarded 3.5 if it were possible, it's good but not that good.

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### Andy says

Picking up fairly recently after the events of *Moonrise*, the citizens of Moonbase continue to live and operate their colony while fighting (politically and ultimately physically) the forces of the U.N. back on Earth, which is trying desperately to shutdown their base due to their fear of nanotechnology, among other motivations. This is an excellent tale of how the people of Moonbase use their wits and courage to repel the bigger and stronger forces of the U.N. Peacekeeping soldiers to survive and eventually live on their own on the moon as an independent nation. The conclusions of this book ultimately set in motion many of the future tales of Bova's Grand Tour, which makes this book a real critical pivot point in this saga.

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### Dan says

Bova cannot write a female character to save his life! They were all two-dimensional and their entire being centered around the male characters.

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### Doc Kinne says

It's too bad you can't give fractional ratings. While I rated this book a "3," I really wanted to rate it a "3.5."

Why not higher? Well, honestly the book suffers a bit from what I like to call "the Star Wars lack of imagination" - in the end the basic plot outline is just too similar to *Moonrise*. While the details are different, you get the distinct impression you've been here before, in the same way that those of us who watched *Jedi* years ago said, "Wait? They're going against the Death Star. Didn't they kill that two movies ago?"

That being said, *Moonwar* is good, basic, hard, space opera science fiction, and that is never unwelcome. Bova's science is good and he nicely describes technical scenarios which we could do *today* if we just had correct priorities and got off our lazy butts.

Beyond the technical, Bova's characters in this case are drawn well and easily differentiated, and there doesn't seem to be many extraneous characters to confuse us.

All in all a solid piece of work and recommended.

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### **Henry says**

This was no where as great a book as "The Moon is a Harsh Mistress" and was a bit slow at times.

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### **John says**

Read Moonrise before this novel, it will be easier to follow the characters and issues. Bova will never disappoint you if you like your science fiction to be close to scientific possibility.

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### **Will Hudson says**

This was better than the last one. Ben really needs on developing characters that are not so one dimensional. Which seems to be a theme in my Sci Fi book reviews of late. The premise is great and the writing is good. You end up though with a couple of characters that are well fleshed out and then the rest end up being stereotypes of one kind or another. Granted, we are all that way in the real world to some degree, but you expect more from a book. LOL!

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### **Andreas says**

Fairly interesting tale about the colonization of the moon. Although he might not have planned it that way originally, Moonwar kicked off Bova's "Grand Tour of the Solar System" series. All in all, the Moon books are enjoyable, but not outstanding. The rather bleak ecodisaster future for the Earth often used as a backdrop by Bova is, I think, first portrayed here.

<http://www.books.rosboch.net/?p=479>

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### **Kris says**

As good as its predecessor Moonrise, it tells the story of the small outpost Moon Base gaining independence from the increasingly technophobic "flat-landers". The Earth is increasingly falling under the influence of scientifically illiterate fundamentalist religious groups and the struggling Moon Base, humanity's foothold in the final frontier, is economically and physically attacked by the UN in an attempt to bring them to heel and exert control over one of the last bastions of free thought and scientific inquiry.

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## Emma says

### 3.5/5 stars

How many times have I picked up an adult SFF book and read it, completely oblivious to the fact that it was the second, fourth, seventh (?! This actually happened) book in a series?

HMM LET ME COUNT.

Fine. This is only the fifth time. But I want to start at the beginning, darn it. Do you know how hard that is when the book doesn't tell me where the beginning is at? I have to actually look on Goodreads or Google the book or something. Ain't nobody got time for that!

Alright, that mini-rant aside: This was a really good book! At least, it was as a person who:

- a) rarely reads adult
- b) rarely reads Sci-Fi.

And the genre of this book was Adult sci-fi. So.

BUT. My opinion is of a high mark.

I liked a lot of things about this book. It was my first book I've read by Ben Bova, and luckily the little library room at the clubhouse down the road has like, (view spoiler) all of his books. SO YAY.

I think the next book of his I'll be reading is *Saturn* since that's the other one I picked up at the same time. BUT GUESS WHAT.

IT IS LITERALLY THE FOURTEENTH (14TH!!!) BOOK IN A SERIES.

Why do I do this to myself.

ANYWAY. Enough of that. You're probably reading this for a review. (Maybe not. Who knows. You could very well be reading this because you *enjoy* listening me ramble about my difficulties. Who am I to judge?)

### HERE IS MY REVIEW FINALLY.

Ben Bova has a certain style of writing, and it sucked me in. I was entranced by this world and it really convinced me that it was possible, all of this moon base stuff and people surviving on the moon. It was cool and felt valid (because I am highly uneducated about the physics of such things. Shh.)

The characters were so very excellent. I loved them. Even though I kind of wished that the Main Character had a bit of a more exciting name than 'Doug'. (No offense meant to all the 'Doug's of the world, of course!) I wish there was a third book in this series because at the end I wanted to know what happened to all the characters after.

ALSO. BEN BOVA, PEOPLE. HE IS RUTHLESS. I won't spoil anything outside of spoiler brackets, but guys. People. He killed them. He killed people whom I had grown fond of. And it entirely surprised me when it happened. Also it made me feel emotions. (view spoiler)

The plot was very fast-paced and interesting, and there was this constant tension that had me wired up and on edge the entire time I was reading this book. Very nerve-wracking, Moonwar.

I love books set in space, and just the title alone drew me in on this one. I mean, a war on the moon? Come on. I'm so down for that. And it delivered exactly what it promised!

I was highly satisfied with this book and will be giving some of his other books a try!

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## **Steve Goble says**

I really, really wanted to like "Moonwar."

Near- future science fiction by a guy who knows his science, writing a tale of a Moonbase embroiled in political battles and a takeover threat by Earthers who fear the nanotechnology used at the lunar site? Espionage? Battles? I figured it would have to be good.

It isn't.

### **SPOILERS BELOW**

I gave up on page 281, about midpoint. What started it downhill it for me was Bova's portrayal of journalism and interpersonal communications. The book was published in 1998, but it seems to not have taken the Internet into account. The Moonbase declares independence from Earth, and the U.N. sends a military team to take over the base, and there is no media outlet on Earth willing to report the damned story, because they are all in lockstep with the U.N. Secretary General? Really? And the Moonbase folks have trouble getting this story out to the public, even though people on the moon are able to conduct interpersonal communications with people on Earth? And that story didn't spread online like a bad itch and get the world's attention? Really?

Even though a global media network had a reporter embedded with the military force ( and by embedded, I mean the reporter slept with the Secretary General to get herself on the flight ... ), that global media network sat on the reports she sent back to Earth? Really? I am a career journalist. No publisher is going to pay the insurance bill to send a media darling to the fricking moon and then decide not to publish her reports. Really.

In the reporter's defense, she slept with the leader of the Moonbase, too, so there was at least a nod toward the notion of journalistic balance ...

I tried to ignore all that and just concentrate on the cool nanotechnology and the challenge of defending a weaponless Moonbase from a vastly superior force. I really did. And then one of the plotters slept with a woman -- a woman with known, well publicized and deep connections to the fricking Moonbase -- and in a state of post-coital bliss reveals to her the existence of a hush-hush force of soldiers being quietly assembled at a Japanese moon base. And so, of course, she goes and blabs this to her buddy at Moonbase.

I tried to convince myself the guy was just feeding false information to the woman, in an effort to disrupt whatever defense Moonbase was cooking up. But then I remembered how ineptly Bova was handling journalism and communications in the story, and decided not to read any further. Maybe, just maybe, Bova

handles espionage better than he handles journalism -- but I decided it was not worth my time to find out.

Bova knows his hard science, but in this novel, he does not seem to understand how people work.

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## **Tate Shannon says**

Update, about halfway through:

I'm not sure what to think about this book. The plot is quickly paced and interesting; for some reason I keep reading chapter after chapter.

Here are the negatives:

Most blaringly, this is the most racist, sexist book I've ever read (and I've read some doozies). The most prominent black character is most frequently called "the mercenary" and lives with a chip on his shoulder because of his "color problems" back on Earth citing that every black man on Earth has color problems. This is almost a noble statement but the shoulder chip gets heavier when he asks a woman (explicitly described as having stereotypical Caucasian traits) to go to dinner with him. The woman hesitates for a few moments and the man interprets this to mean that she doesn't want to be seen eating with a black man. It's more likely that she's thinking about her schedule, considering if she wants to go to dinner with the man, or, most likely of all, she's a little disconcerted by the creep messing with the space suits asking her out on their first meeting pretty much out of the blue.

But it gets worse. There is a Muslim character—a profit-hungry, mother-hating, sex-crazed, harem-keeping, resentful, revengeful, lying, hateful Muslim character. Enough said.

Every woman in the book, especially the major ones, is sexualized. Bova isn't even subtle about it! The only one not explicitly described having sex was a lesbian who when she shrugged her shoulders it was "very delicious" for the males who saw it.

The plots a little crazy too. The politics are oversimplified and the plot goes from zero to ten thousand without any in between. One moment we're walking on the beach, the next there's a very graphic description of a murder/rape (committed on one of the super sexy women by a man who belongs to a zealous religious group only described as "nano-luddites" who do "God's will").

There are more examples, but I'm done for now. I wouldn't write a review like this one if I didn't want to like the book, but, at this point, I can't.

Update, finished book.

Okay, there was some redemption by the end, but it didn't make up for the first part of the book. As I said before, I really wanted to like this book. I can't though. Three stars because it's well written and a good story.

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## **AndrewP says**

Another in the Grand Tour series and the direct sequel to "Moonrise". Best to read them in order as this books features the same characters and it it would not make as much sense without the whole background story of 'Moonrise'.

Another good edge of the seat story with the fledgling Moonbase struggling against corporate takeover, political demands from the U.N. and people with personal vendettas. Most of the book was a real page turner and I read through this in a couple of days.

As usual, Ben Bova delivers a story with just enough factual science and technology to make it all very believable. The ending felt a bit rushed and there is plenty of room for a sequel. The next book in the Grand Tour series moves out to the asteroids so is probably not connected to this book in any way.

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## **Gibreel says**

Loved it! I would like to say that not only is it wonderful that you can imagine the Moon being populated by people as independent as the people of Earth, I would like to continue reading this author for reason that have included the idea that finding life on other planets is not a once attempted once accepted but a challenge for many and for many times over.

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## **Geoff Battle says**

Moonwar jumps right in to the action, following on from the scenario laid out in Moonrise. Once again Douglas Stavenger, the man in symbiosis with nanobots, is protecting his father's dream, now his own, of a sustainable colony upon the moon. Bova weaves a tale of a political as well as conventional warfare, with Moonbase on the short end of the stick. As Doug tries to rally support the scientists upon the moon must create a way to prevent disaster, without any weapons at their disposal. A clever story, entwined with treachery and betrayal, continues to deliver the action right until the end. There are some leaps of faith required along the way as Bova puts his hero through the motions and there are a few plot elements that will raise an eyebrow in bewilderment, yet on the whole Moonwar in inventive in the right ways and for all the right reasons. An enjoyable sci-fi blast and a decent entry in the Grand Tour series.

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