

Luna: New Moon

Ian McDonald

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The Moon wants to kill you.

Maybe it will kill you when the per diem for your allotted food, water, and air runs out, just before you hit payday. Maybe it will kill you when you are trapped between the reigning corporations-the Five Dragons-in a foolish gamble against a futuristic feudal society. On the Moon, you must fight for every inch you want to gain. And that is just what Adriana Corta did.

As the leader of the Moon's newest "dragon," Adriana has wrested control of the Moon's Helium-3 industry from the Mackenzie Metal corporation and fought to earn her family's new status. Now, in the twilight of her life, Adriana finds her corporation-Corta Helio-confronted by the many enemies she made during her meteoric rise. If the Corta family is to survive, Adriana's five children must defend their mother's empire from her many enemies... and each other.

Luna: New Moon Details


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Author : Ian McDonald

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From Reader Review Luna: New Moon for online ebook

Steve says

3.5 stars, rounded up.

The comparisons for Luna: New Moon are seemingly endless: Tai-Pan, Noble House, A Game of Thrones, The Godfather, Dune, The Moon is a Harsh Mistress (although instead of Heinlein's lunar utopia, Luna is a lunar dystopia). Just like these classics, the Mafia-styled families are doing all they can to increase their wealth and holdings at the expense of everyone else.

As in his book, Brasyl, which is set in a future South America, McDonald uses Brazilians as his main characters, but this time, they are mining the Moon for raw material. Luna is an in-depth tour inside the now-honeycombed Moon with the rich people living deeper under the surface (it's safer) and the poorer people living closer to the surface, much riskier due to the solar radiation and hazardous lunar dust. The scenes set on the surface were among the best in the book.

Even though I see dozens of 4- and 5-stars reviews, I struggled to get into this book. I didn't connect with most of the characters, with the exception of Marina Calzaghe. She's one of the first characters introduced, and is struggling to survive in an extremely harsh physical and economic environment. She's a highly sympathetic character, but unfortunately, very little time is devoted to her story, which only occasionally pops in for an update. Most of the other characters are completely unsympathetic, simple cutthroats with no morals or purpose other than to grab more than the next guy.

The book constantly jumps from viewpoint to viewpoint of the sons and daughters of the Corta family. The thing that bothered me most is that while the Corta siblings are the ones we are supposed to care about, there is little in the story to make me want to care about them. I understand they are competing against each other for the family mining company, while attempting to protect each other from other competing families that want to destroy them, but they really had no redeemable characteristics that drew me to them.

As expected from this author, the world-building is spectacular, which actually increased my rating. McDonald really created an exceedingly harsh, believable world. It reminded me a lot of Los Angeles as depicted in the brilliant movie, Blade Runner.

The writing is interesting, especially considering that it is written in third-person present tense. That took some getting used to, but ultimately, the book is well-written and well-developed. If you enjoy complex storylines that employ mafia-style generational families and all that entails, this one is right up your alley.

Alexander Páez says

Reseña completa

Una portada. Sí, una simple portada fue lo que me llevó a comprar Luna: New Moon de Ian McDonald. Curioso que dejándome llevar por una portada (y, alguna que otra recomendación) haya caído en una de las mejores novelas de ciencia ficción que he leído nunca y entre mis tres o cuatro mejores lecturas de este año. Ian McDonald es un autor de ciencia ficción veterano, y muy conocido entre los lectores asiduos de este

género. No en mi caso, ya que esta ha sido mi primera toma de contacto con el autor anglosajón.

Luna: New Moon recuerda a Dune, de Frank Herbert (la lucha entre casas en un contexto de ciencia ficción y que se perpetúa de forma generacional), y a su vez tiene la complejidad de «Canción de Hielo y Fuego» en cuanto a maquinaciones, giros de guion y tramas palaciegas. Una combinación alucinante. En Luna: New Moon la trama ocurre en la Luna. No hay viajes interestelares, no hay grandes planetas alienígenas. Lo más lejos que ha podido llegar la humanidad ha sido la colonización de nuestro satélite. En la Luna hay cinco familias que gobiernan, apodadas Los Cinco Dragones: los Vorontsov, los Sun, los Mackenzie, los Asamoah y los Corta. Cada una de estas familias tienen su fuente de riqueza y poder explotando de diferentes maneras los recursos de la Luna. En el caso de los Corta, los “protagonistas” de esta primera novela, se trata del comercio de Helio-3 en la Tierra. El Helio-3 es la fuente de energía más potente descubierta hasta ahora por la humanidad.

Reseña completa

Robyn says

This one is hard for me to evaluate. I did not click with the story at all for a good third of the book, although the last third was pretty fantastic. The tech was brilliantly imagined and I appreciated how well thought out the science was (to my untrained eye). I loved some of the characters. Where I didn't enjoy it was exactly why many have loved it - the much acclaimed grittiness just didn't do it for me. Many of the societal structures McDonald imagines, especially the endless parties, didn't resonate with me. (Also, while I appreciated the mystery, I really needed MORE on the whole lunar werewolf thing.) Nonetheless, once I fell for the book - I think it was Adriana's personal history that did it - I was absolutely captured by the Corta family. I'm sure I'll be reading the second.

Tamora Pierce says

When my assistant brought this book home as part of her grad school semester reading, I thought I'd give it a try, remembering how much I liked the author's RIVER OF GODS a couple of years ago. Now I have to say that McDonald is one of the best world builders I've ever read.

This is about the colonization of the moon by industrial entrepreneurs who supply an energy-short Earth where jobs for human beings are scarce and expensive higher education is needed for anyone to get ahead. The cast of characters is perfectly varied. One is a woman newly arrived from the earth and on her way to starving (of food and of oxygen) before she gets a lucky break. Other leads are members of one family, the Cortas, that is trying to claw its way onto the uppermost level of lunar rule, having reached its very outskirts. Most remarkable is the matriarch, who came when the moon is first being colonized/mined and formed as a new social, economic, sexual, and governing system based solely on gain and loss. Others of her family are as diverse as the culture itself: Carlos, the roughneck surface miner and fighter; Lucasinho, the spoiled darling son who bakes cakes, has sex with anyone who allows it, and struggles to defy his family; Lucas, the obedient son who desires more than anything to run the family company, and Ariel, the brilliant attorney who aspires to lunar, not family, power. Arrayed with these people are their servants, their mates, the women who carry, bear, and nurse their children, and the people who maintain their machines and their industries, in addition to their many cyber- and human guards. Against them are the four great families of the moon, who

despise them as social and business climbers with no right to the affairs of the government's top table.

It only takes a few small battles, a few small betrayals, and one shift in the power structure for everything to change, and there's no way to tell if it's for the better or the worst. You'll have to read for yourself. It's fascinating, the culture(s) McDonald has created in this world. Sex is anything goes for anyone. There is an entire group of people that is born with a body chemistry that responds to phases of the moon, and prefers to associate--and run--with one another during some of those phases. There is a Christian Church that ministers to people here, but there is also a Sisterhood that is comprised partly of South American religions with other elements (many of the immigrants to this moon came from Latin America, the first part of the world to lose jobs and education to computers and robots). The world is built in layers tunneled down into the rock, and tunnels are adapted to luxury habitats for the wealthy. Everyone has a fixture in their eyes that registers how much air, water, food, and information they have paid for--and the gods help them if they run out.

Best of all, McDonald is one of those rare sf writers who does not over-indulge in info-dumps. Some are unavoidable in a story about technology, industry, and the medicine of the future, but I am green with envy over how much he conveys within the stream of the story. I've ordered at least three more of his books (yes! hardcover!), plus my own copy of this one to join what I expect will be a growing Ian McDonald shelf.

Mogsy (MMOGC) says

4.5 of 5 stars at The BiblioSanctum <http://bibliosanctum.com/2015/11/12/r...>

If you can imagine the Starks and Lannisters as two rival families with competing mining operations on the moon, I daresay the situation might look a lot like the plot of Luna: New Moon. I can't remember the last time I read a sci-fi novel featuring a richer and more compelling premise, and I am also amazed that the characters are all so developed and well-defined. Where do I even begin when it comes to the many things I loved about this book?

First, the story. The sheer scope of it is simply ridiculous, with a multi-perspective narrative following more than half a dozen characters from three generations of a powerful family. At the center of it all is the matriarch Adriana Corta, who arrived on the moon many years ago and built Corta Hélio, a company and a dynasty. Through her successes, the Cortas became the fifth "Dragon", joining four other lunar families in the control of the moon's trade—the Mackenzies, the Vorontsovs, the Suns, and the Asamoahs.

Of course, not all were happy with the Cortas' rise to power. It's like the mafia, and everyone knows what happens when a new player enters the fold. As expected, several rivalries immediately developed but none were as bitter as the one that sprung up between the Cortas and the Mackenzies. Cortas cut—hard, sharp and fast. But the Mackenzies will always pay back three times. No peace has ever existed between the two families, despite all the political marriages and attempts to reconcile.

Next, you have the setting. You're as likely to die from the harsh conditions of the moon as you are from a rival assassin's blade. On the moon, the Four Elementals are king: Air, Water, Carbon and Data. Without these basic commodities of lunar existence, you are nothing. If you run low on funds to pay for them, then you'd better learn to breathe less.

The only law on the moon is that there is no law—everything is negotiable. For the families of the five Dragons, this means a lot of power...and a lot of danger. However, the Cortas have another saying: Family

first, family always. No matter what, Corta Hélio takes care of its own. And since it is your only protection on the moon and the only thing you can count on to keep you alive, so too must everything be done with the family company in mind.

Which brings me to the characters. Adriana Corta has five children, and they in turn have their own spouses and children, so we're talking about a HUGE cast of characters. And that's not even counting the members of the other four families or the various important figures in lunar society. Thankfully, other than Adriana herself, the narrative mostly focuses on her children (Rafa, Lucas, Ariel, Carlinhos, Wagner) and her grandchildren (Lucasinho, Robson, Luna). Occasionally there are also parts of the story told through the eyes of Marina Calzaghe, a surface worker newly arrived on the moon who gets entangled with the Cortas and their politics.

I won't lie, things were very confusing, especially at the beginning. There was so much going on and a whole village's worth of characters involved, I found myself constantly referring to the Character List until I was comfortable with the names and all the relationships. But once I got that down, I was completely addicted to this book! The story is intensely powerful, with a plot filled with political scheming and Machiavellian designs. There's also a strong focus on the characters. I feel like I got the chance to know each Corta on a deep and personal level, an amazing achievement considering how often we bounced around between perspectives. Adriana also stood out with her first-person chapters. She's an amazing character, a woman who conquered her fear, heartbreak, and the unforgiving landscape of the moon itself.

Finally, the writing. Ian McDonald struck the perfect balance between all the various elements in this story. He tackled a very complicated idea but still managed to make it very easy to understand and enjoy. He also handled difficult themes well. Luna: New Moon wasn't my first book by McDonald, but all I'd read before this were the novels of his Young Adult series, Everness. His Adult fiction is very different from his YA, but I love his style regardless.

If you're a sci-fi fan looking for a character-driven story with complexity, scope and depth, then do yourself a favor and check out Luna: New Moon. This book sucked me in completely and left me hungry for more. I can't wait for the next volume in this two-part series.

Liam says

Reread March 2017 - Still fantastic.

"Nothing tells you that you are not on Earth anymore than exhaling at one price and inhaling at another."

This is easily my book of the year - and so late! Truly, it is the most well-written, intriguing, believable, unique science fiction I have read in a long time, let alone this year - and it is an absolute roller coaster to boot.

Luna: New Moon (the first in a *duology*!!! Hooray for short and sweet series!) follows the lives of the Corta family - a lunar Brazilian dynasty whose fortune is built upon the extraction of Helium-3 from the lunar regolith a-la fantastic film *Moon*. It hops between the 'present', the trials and tribulations of several different members of the Corta family and others, and a retrospective account of the Corta's powerful matriarch

Adriana's rise to prominence.

As literally everybody who has even sniffed the concept of this book has stated, somewhat accurately, *Luna* comes across largely as *Game of Thrones*, but on the moon. It's all there - the complex political web of backstabbing and dealings in a setting where they aren't usually present, a world based predominantly around warring familial dynasties rather than nations, and a gritty, sleazy world filled with violence, sex and debauchery.

Luckily, unlike *Game of Thrones*, this book isn't a heaping pile of overrated horse shit. Whilst the similarities are there, the Cortas and the Mackenzies of *Luna* strike far more fear, love, respect and loathing into my heart than the Starks and Lannisters of George R. R. Martin's (very) extended bowel movement ever did. Much like *The Godfather*, the sheer emotion of the characters leaps off the page (rather than screen), as do the characters themselves for that matter - I was living, breathing the air of João de Deus, feeling every slight and smirking at every revenge.

The world is believable and fascinating to the extreme - familiar AIs for everyone, the entire concept of the Four Elementals; that you are paid with *the air you breathe*!? Get out of here, that had me on the floor straight away. Such an obvious idea, but so well thought out and executed. The different lunar strongholds and cities - stunning Boa Vista and the ceaseless, grinding Crucible, the radiation-soaked Palace of Eternal Light. Amazing.

The five powerful dynasties of the moon - the Five Dragons - are some of the most excellently conceived characters I've experienced. From the strong, hard dignity of Adriana Corta to the grotesque, conniving and controlled hideousness of Robert Mackenzie - *Luna* focuses not on the importance, not of loyalty to country, but to family. Every Corta has a deep love for their family that transcends their differences, and although they may scheme and plot against one another, they are all sympathetic and interesting in their own ways - Rafa the firstborn, the golden child; Lucas the schemer, the second; Ariel the lawyer, the aristocrat; Carlinhos the fighter, the claws of the Dragon; and Wagner, the outcast, the wolf. Rarely have I experienced such rich characterisation - and in so few pages!

The-series-that-must-not-be-named(-or-probably-finished-lets-be-honest-here) feels to have covered less ground in its... 6? 7? volumes than McDonald has covered in this sole, 392 page novel. I felt like I was thrown from pillar to post reading this book. Probably part of why it took me so long - almost a full week! *Luna* is brutal, and I loved it.

A couple of slight annoyances did crop up - the main one being some *very* shoddy editing. A lot of odd little typos and grammatical errors that felt like they should have been caught, and stuff like it being capitalised Mackenzies one sentence and MacKenzies the next, nothing awful. Also the persistent use of Portuguese throughout some parts of the book, while awesome and flavourful, were somewhat lost on me as a lowly English speaker. Regardless, it is fairly easy to extrapolate what they're saying just out of context, and there's a helpful glossary and dramatis personae (which I had to refer to a few times) to help with some of the bizarre concepts and terms. However, this cast contains a couple of light spoilers (i.e. what someone's role is later in the novel is mentioned and so on), which could be a bit irritating if you read through the cast before the novel.

I didn't even touch on some of the weirder stuff - the Lunar Wolves, the Sisterhood, and so on - but I'm up til 2am finishing this book and my brain is starting to shut down. Read it. It's amazing. Arrgghjfhghfgh I can't believe I have to wait for the second one.

Bradley says

All right! What an ending! I won't spoil it, but it's one hell of a satisfying ride.

As I read it, I kept saying to myself, "Damn! This was MADE for HBO. (Or Showtime.) This could be done Brilliantly as a well-funded high-quality production. Hell, this would be even better than GoT, and not only because it's SF instead of F! It's full of glitz, sex, the weight of history, capitalism, and tradition, not to mention all the sprinkling of assassinations and attempted assassinations to liven the party. Plus, it has all the glory of THE MOON. Heinlein, eat your heart out."

First off, expect nothing less than a huge story of dynastic families struggling for control of the moon. There's tons of characters and a great many of them get stage time. That's not really a problem if you're used to some of the great epics. Hell, Even SOIAF (or GoT for everyone else) is rife with it. Tons of characters, lots of build, lots of tearing down, and a sense of something truly grand being laid out before us.

Now, I have to be honest. I've never read Mario Puzo, but I am, like most red-blooded males and females, quite familiar with the Godfather. I've enjoyed the character builds, the struggle for family, business, and love. I've loved the struggle so much that I get giddy even at the flashbacks and the humble beginnings. All these things rambled in my mind as I read Luna. Gloriously.

But.

Ian McDonald's wonderful novel is not a retelling or a knock-off of the Godfather set on the moon. But it is just as deep and complex and wonderfully fleshed out as if I was growing up in New York City, carving and empire out for myself in Adriana's reminiscence, or living in modern day Luna, seeing all the fruits of your labor and feeling a deep pride in your accomplishments, knowing that family, whether by flesh or sentiment, is the most precious thing in either world. Earth is the old world, literally, and the Moon is the New World. It flows very naturally, and all of these wonderful lives made a stunningly detailed tapestry.

I generally don't prefer epic dynasties in my reading habits, but when I do get through them, I'm generally floored by the amount of care and precision placed into every line, every word. There's something truly brilliant about the effort placed into this novel in precisely the same way.

So: Total Respect.

Soon after starting it, I did have to scale back a few expectations. I've read a few of his novels, before, and I've learned to relax into the characters, never expect grand revelations early or even mid-novel. On the other hand, I've learned that I can always expect a huge revelation or an action at the end.

I've learned to be patient. Trying to discover a plot in his books is like digging for clues of a lost civilization in ten meters of sand.

Fortunately, the civilization always exists. We did buy the shovels and dustpans and brooms. And McDonald even provided us a wide cast of characters (read archeologists and interns) to do all the heavy sifting. All we have to do is sit back and enjoy the process in mute admiration. Things have a way of unearthing themselves.

And what a story! I find myself itching all over to pick up the next novel, setting google alerts on his writing status for it, bemoaning the fate that I WILL NOT BE ABLE TO READ IT FOR SOME HORRIBLE FUCK

OF A TIME. Gaaahhhhhrrrrggggghhh!

Did I love this book? You better fucking believe it.

Did this manage to make my list of the best SF of the year? Yes. In fact, I would not be disappointed if it earned itself the Hugo for 2015 for Best Novel. It's hellaimpressive. It's a great epic read. It's also filled to the brim with imminently plausible science. Not a single thing was out of place. No handwavium for 68 thousand kilometers. That's also pretty damn impressive. But the bad? It doesn't break new SF ground EXCEPT in how it teaches SF to fear an awesomely new height in epic familial dynasties. I've seen things like this in Fantasy, too, but this happens to rooted deliciously and consummately in our Earth.

This was totally worth it.

Javir11 says

Al final le he puesto tres estrellas porque dos me parecía demasiado poco, pero si hubiera decimales, creo que 2.75/5 hubiera sido una puntuación más acorde.

Decepcionado es como me he sentido al terminar esta novela. Mis expectativas eran altas y mira que me ha encantado la ambientación Lunar que nos presenta McDonald, pero la trama estilo telefilme malo de antena 3 ha terminado por superarme.

Ni la historia, ni los personajes me han parecido a la altura de la ambientación y es una verdadera pena, porque había material para hacer algo mejor.

La comparación con Juego de Tronos, a parte de absurda, creo que no favorece en nada a la novela.

En definitiva, mucho hype y pocas nueces.

Os dejo un enlace a mi blog por si alguien quiere leer una reseña más completa.

<http://fantasiascifiymuchomas.blogspot...>

Justine says

"The might and magic of money is not what it allows you to own; it is what it allows you to be. Money is freedom."

Truer words were never spoken. People left Earth looking for a new kind of freedom and frontier, not wanting to be constrained by old ideas. On the moon, anything goes, for a price: offer, acceptance and consideration. The only law is the law of contract, enforced by courts and if necessary in bloody trials by combat. In effect, everything is freely available, but nothing comes without a price.

Of course it shouldn't be a surprise then that dynastic corporate families would rise to power in this

environment and that blood feuds would fester and rage as hotly as they ever did on Earth. Environments may change, but people don't.

If this book was set on Earth instead of the moon, it would be a good, old-fashioned story we have all read before about wealthy families fighting each other for more money and more power, with typically bloody results and lots of collateral damage. What makes this one new and fresh is McDonald's fantastic world-building, his wonderful use of almost-here technology, and most importantly, and an amazingly diverse cast of characters that bring the story vibrantly to life.

The only downside, and I feel fair warning people about this in advance:

Cliffhanger ending! So, if you don't like those, I advise waiting for the next book to come out before embarking on this one. Other than that, I would definitely recommend this one.

Mangrii says

Nos situamos en una luna que posee una sociedad completamente ya establecida en un futuro indefinido. Cinco familias pioneras en la explotación de los recursos, conocidos como los Cinco Dragones, ejercen un control sobre los territorios colonizados y parte de la población, mientras que de forma oculta y paralela existe una lucha de poder con intrigas, alianzas y traiciones por doquier. La novela se centra en la familia Corta y en su encarnizada lucha por el poder económico en la Luna, los cuales poseen la empresa Corta Helio creada por la matriarca brasileña Adriana Corta, dedicadas a la extracción de helio-3 destinado a la mayoría de empresas energéticas de la tierra.

Ian McDonald crea una historia compleja llena de giros de guion y tramas palaciegas entre las altas esferas de poder en la luna. El autor tiene un estilo peculiar y personal, cargado de mucho ritmo con situaciones que ocurren al mismo tiempo, estableciendo una novela coral con una enorme cantidad de puntos de vista, donde con cuatro pinceladas es capaz de desarrollar a sus personajes y meternos de lleno en este inhóspito paraje. Reconozco que es duro entrar en la novela, las primeras 100 hojas me resultaron apabullantes, pero traspasada la barrera, se convierte en un relato adictivo plagado de intrigas y giros.

Si algo fascina de la lectura de Luna es su worldbuilding: Un paraje lleno de ciudades subterráneas donde habitan millares de personas; si no tienes dinero para pagar los cuatro elementos básicos (oxígeno, agua, carbono y datos) estas muerto; diferentes detalles tecnológicos como las impresoras de objetos; la sociedad autorregulada por un derecho contractual, el desarrollo de las diferentes generaciones lunares o el tratamiento del sexo e identidad sexual fuera de los tabús habituales.

Luna: Luna nueva cumple con bastantes de las expectativas que prometía, y se coloca de lleno en la lucha por las mejores lecturas de ciencia ficción de 2016. Aparte de la intriga de como continuará tras todos los cliffhanger finales; tengo curiosidad de cómo puede la CBS, que compro los derechos de la novela, enfocar una serie de televisión con una complejidad tan enorme como la que supone la historia y sobre todo su sociedad, veo difícil que un canal que no sea HBO pueda darle la libertad creativa que necesita.

Kemper says

"When the moon hits your eye like a big pizza-pie...That's amore!"

Dean Martin certainly sang how we see the the moon here on Earth. It's a brilliant light in the night sky that is the symbol of romance as well as a tantalizing beacon of wonder and discovery that inspired one the greatest scientific and engineering achievements in human history. However, that's looking at it from a distance. On closer examination it's a lifeless hunk of rock in a vacuum that is irradiated constantly by the sun. And since people suck, when you send a bunch of us there it only gets worse.

In the future the moon has been opened for business and after a couple of generations it's now developed into a feudal state where the five families (a/k/a the Five Dragons) who control its most profitable businesses reign supreme under the watchful eye of the Lunar Development Corporation. The Corta Hélio company mines helium-3 for Earth's energy needs, but the founder and matriarch Andriana Corta is elderly and ill. She fears that her children will fight for control once she dies, and their most bitter rival seems to have made an assassination attempt on one of the family that could turn into open warfare.

It took me a while to warm up to this story, but eventually it did grab my attention thanks to its well thought out sci-fi elements as well as detailed ideas about how a human society would function in that environment. I was particularly intrigued by the notion that there are no laws on the moon, only negotiations where everything is controlled by contracts with a court system dedicated to parsing the fine print, and where a duel might be used to settle a dispute.

Another interesting aspect is that since oxygen and water are the most precious of commodities that everyone is charged for every breath and every drop of water. So having a contract that allows you to pay for these things is very important, and unemployment could turn into an extended death sentence. Everything from the health effects of living in low gravity, the future version of the internet, fashion trends, sexuality, and the best way to make a cocktail are brought up ways that show that McDonald put a great amount of thought into this story.

The one piece I felt short changed on was a sub-plot that involved one character being a 'wolf' who seemingly gains extra intellectual and physical prowess when the Earth is in certain positions. Obviously, this is meant to be a kind of reverse werewolf thing, but it really seems to come out of left field and is never as fully explained as most of the other details.

The story has invited comparisons to other works like *Game of Thrones*, *Dune*, and *The Godfather* and you can certainly see elements of all of those and more in this, but the one that really caught my eye was in an interview that McDonald did where he cited the old TV show *Dallas* as one of his main inspirations. That makes a lot of sense because for big chunks of this I was thinking that it felt like a soap opera with a big wealthy family fighting each other and outsiders, and like a soap opera you'll find yourself rooting for and against various characters.

So that's what this is: *Dallas* on the moon, and just as *Dallas* once captivated the country with its 'Who shot JR?' cliffhanger McDonald tries a similar thing here by not wrapping anything up and leaving the reader with multiple storylines hanging. That's not a fatal flaw, especially since this is supposedly going to be just a two-book story. (Although the sheer number of characters suggest that McDonald may be hoping for a TV deal of his own.) Still, it's irksome to read all of this and end in such an open ended way.

I'll call it three stars for now while reserving the right to adjust once I read the second part.

On a side note, isn't it weird when you get through a whole book and don't realize you read something else

by the author? I got all the way through this one without realizing that I had also read his Brasyl.

Paul O'Neill says

Read all my reviews at <http://constantreaderpauloneill.blogspot.co.uk>

The moon has a cold heart.

For me, this was a frustratingly great read which should have received a full five stars. However, due to the many, many mistakes I had to lower my rating.

Hailed the “Game of Domes”, the story follows one of the five dynasties, or ‘Dragons’, who control the moon. We follow all members of the Corta family, and some others, through their various political, financial and romantic challenges.

McDonald cites the Godfather as a key influence and you can see that throughout. The interfamily struggles and the battles with the other Dragons are all handled superbly and remain intriguing all the way from start to finish.

McDonald won a Gaylactic Spectrum Award in 2016 for this book, which was well deserved. In the world he has created, discrimination against sexuality doesn’t exist and people can marry whoever they want. Reading this gave me hope for what could become a reality, hopefully sooner rather than later.

Another great thing about this story is McDonald’s description of the difference between poor and rich. Anyone who has ever been in financial difficulty will be able to relate to this.

Poverty stretches time. And poverty is an avalanche. One tiny slippage knocks on another, knocks loose yet others and everything is sliding, rushing away.

The might and magic of money is not what it allows you to own; it is what it allows you to be. Money is freedom.

Characters

The characters are sculpted really well, probably one of the crowning achievements of the book is how McDonald is able to write so many good characters, storylines, trials and tribulations within 400 pages. A lesser author might have had to write 800 pages but McDonald is able to write concisely, which moves the story along.

Notable issues

The writing is altogether beautiful, jarring and erroneous. Most frustrating of all is the sheer amount of errors. I’m not sure who is at fault but another pass by the editor should have fixed this.

Forgetting to include full stops at the end of sentences, or place commas anywhere in sentences that clearly need them are huge mistakes in my view. And this happens often.

There is a whole interaction in chapter four where speech marks are totally forgotten about.

There are just some obvious spelling mistakes. *blood oh-two* = O2. *Plashing* = Splashing.

There is an absolute doosey near the end where something is happening between the Cortas and the MacKenzies. *In the Corta dock, Rafa, Lucas, Wagner and Ariel Mackenzie*. It isn't the Mackenzies, it's the Cortas.

Some of the writer's style choices annoyed me, namely his need to say things three times. Every time this happened it jarred me out of the story. To me it was a bit much.

...out of boredom and familiarity and monotony. Flat flat flat. Monotony monotony monotony.

Is it a minimalist refuge from the endless voices and colours and noise and rush of people, people, people?

...all wrong, and real real real.

I just saw faces faces faces, all around me...

...question after question, questions, three hours of questions. Details. Memories. Tell me again again again.

I might just be nit-picking, but all of the above, and the multiple other mistakes throughout the book tear you out of the world in your head and stop the flow of the story. Above all, they could've been easily fixed.

Final thought

You shouldn't let my minor rant about the mistakes above stop you from reading the book. It was a great story and I will be reading the next book very shortly (release date 23 March). This should have been a five star book as it got everything right, it was just too many errors that knocked down my rating.

Richard says

DNF at 31%

I gave it a shot but boy did I not get along with this book. From the off I had no idea of what was happening up to about 10%. Then things sort of slotted into place and I was with it, but by about 25% I lost all interest. I read what could only be a handful of pages last night before deciding to listen to my audiobook in bed which never happens. This was a sign that I wasn't into this book whatsoever and made me realise that it was time to call it quits.

There are some good ideas here from what I could grasp, I like the idea of feuding families on the moon but it was told in such a way that I didn't get who was who or what was what. Probably not the books fault and more my own, a number of highly rated reviews are out there for this.

I feel bad for not finishing as NetGalley gave me a copy as I "wished" for this and it's been out for a little

while now. But time is precious, why waste more time on something you don't like when there are so many things out there that will appeal so much more?

Thanks to NetGalley for a free copy

Chris says

Brilliant!! I devoured this book over a few days, skipping television and movie options to just immerse myself into the low gravity. I'm still depressurizing.

I've seen this book called "Game of Thrones in Space", and I'd have to say not so much. Only in the sense that it would make a fantastic series on HBO which would compare. I've also seen it compared to "Dallas", and there is a bit of that, but the most accurate comparison is easily *The Godfather*. That book/movie's sense of family and survival against long odds and adversaries definitely struck more of a moonbeam here.

When is the sequel coming out?? That one will shoot straight to the top of my TBR as soon as it's available.

Carlos says

This book was confusing, too fast paced and encompassed too many points of view to be really absorbed by the readers. Nonetheless the story of families feuding against each other for power is a classic tale that can be enjoyed by almost everyone, and to its core, this book was exactly that, the only difference is that it happens on the moon in a futuristic society. There are things I had against this book, the use of graphic scenes when there were none needed, the speed in which you were expected to jump from perspective to perspective. But I also liked that it had a sense of family. In conclusion not a great book, not the worst one I have read.
