



The Tragedy of the Moon

Isaac Asimov

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Science fact-in this fascinating volume one of the greatest imaginative writers in the world of science fiction turns his attention to science fact. Far from the drabness of scientific textbooks, here is a mind bending trip into the world as it is-and as it might have been. What would life on earth be like if we didn't have a moon? Why don't we follow the clear logic of a seasonal calender? Must we computerize the world because we have grown too lazy to run it in any other way? Scientist or non scientist, layman or specialist, asimov invites you to join him on a trip back into the past and forward into the future.

The Tragedy of the Moon Details

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Author : Isaac Asimov

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From Reader Review The Tragedy of the Moon for online ebook

Britt says

A great collection of scientific essays by Asimov ranging from topics such as himself (as always), the moon and how it's effected society in more ways than we can imagine, carbon compounds, and robots. Always with the robots. Very fun read-- his ideas are always refreshing and make you look at things in a bit of a different light.

Réka says

Probably my favourite book from him. This book is about Asimov, we can get a glimpse how his mind works, I must say it works rather marvellously. He has such complexity and capacity for great thoughts and such humour, I was laughing my head off. Rather narcissistic but gotta love the Dude. I would make this a school book in chemistry. After reading this, kids would start to be more interested for sure! Asimov was a chemist and since in this book we get an insight to his life we come across chemistry as well. but with such easiness and playfulness that makes you wanting to know more from this subject. Excellent book!

David Leemon says

I'm not sure if I've read this or not, but I remember reading "Lost in Nontranslation"

Avi says

One of the very best collections of Asimov's non-fiction essays from F&SF.

Nancy says

Asimov's breadth of scientific knowledge is instantly recognizable. The Tragedy of the Moon brings science to a wide readership through a congenial tone and accessible language. Asimov treats his reader with respect, as if she were an intelligent sort willing to go the distance. The stable prose style provides a steady foundation useful in relating aspects of spatial relations in the cosmos and the peculiarities of relativity.

Sam says

A set of short essays, written in the early 1970's. These are non-fiction, science essays, mostly rather speculative, but some of them really describing basic science.

The title of the book comes from the first essays which describe Asimov's speculations on what would have been the effect on scientific and cultural advancement had the Earth lacked a moon. Of particular interest was his quite plausible speculations on how science would have advanced much more quickly if Venus had a moon the size of Earth's moon.

The middle section of the book had essays on microorganisms, on carbon as a basis for life, and on hormones. I read these too quickly, but they are nice, well-written vignettes of the history of science. Quite enjoyable, but some are somewhat dated (especially the microorganisms essays) forty years later.

The best essay is "By The Numbers" on the advantage of having a completely computerized society. This was written well before the advent of the internet, and is prescient in many ways. It is difficult to fully share his unalloyed enthusiasm for the government tracking everyone and everything by computers, but nonetheless he makes a compelling argument. (For a more modern version of this utopian view of the internet, see Brin.)

The last two essays were a lot of fun, especially the essay "Academe and I" about his academic appointment in Biochemistry at Boston University, and how well (or not) it meshed with his outside writing career, for which he is justly famous.

Sharon says

Science fact from a well-loved science-fiction writer. This book is a little treasure, which contains a number of Asimov's short essays from the 1970s. I enjoyed some of them more than others, but I believe there is something for anyone with an interest in science here.

Dorai says

Asimov suggests that the moon's cycle had just the right number of days to induce humans to learn to count. I remember a later book by Leonard Shlain saying much the same thing, so perhaps Shlain got the idea from Asimov. Although Shlain tightens his hypothesis by saying that it was also the fact that the lunar cycle coincided with the menstrual cycle that served as very strong, indeed life-or-death, incentive, for humans, indeed women, to start counting. Both authors then go on with the obvious corollary: counting led to math, science, technology...

Yonatan says

A fascinating collection of essays on a variety of subjects ranging from the Moon's effect on human history to the discovery of viruses to American race relations and the book of Ruth.

Arqui Himself says

Siempre es un placer leer al "*Buen Doctor*", su narrativa me resulta incomparable e irresistible ya sean sus

escritos sobre historia o ciencia, se trate de cuentos o sus famosas novelas de *Ciencia Ficción*. Estos artículos escritos a principios de la década del '70 mantienen una enorme vigencia y abarcan diversas temáticas, incluido el tema preferido de **Asimov**, él mismo.

Carol Last says

En mi adolescencia estudié historia con los libros de Asimov y, de cierta manera, me maravilló con su estilo pedagógico y entusiasmo en su narración.

¡Entusiasmo, energía e inteligencia! era eso lo que me inspiraba al leerlo y hoy, con este libro lo vuelvo a sentir. Dicen que es una de sus obras más personales, en las que deja entrever más su personalidad y en parte, su biografía. De comienzo a fin sé que el autor está inspirado y ama lo que hace, cree en lo que escribe, sabe de qué habla.

Me gusta la sencillez con qué explica temas de la química o de biología, a pesar de (o gracias a) su experticia en esos campos del saber. Aunque, dado el título, esperaba ciencia ficción, resultó una mezcla de ensayos y anécdotas que valieron la pena. Mi favorito es el capítulo en que se refiere a los libros como tecnología de punta y vaticina que en el futuro tendríamos libros digitales (en su mente la pantalla sería un televisor, un poco alejado de los e-readers portátiles de hoy) pero aún con tanto adelanto estos serían irremplazables. Nada como un buen libro, ¿cierto?

Capri Caviedes says

Una recopilación de ensayos de Isaac Asimov; entre los más relevantes para la lectura están los relacionados al "carbono", como elemento de la vida. No es de ciencia ficción, más bien es de divulgación científica.

Tomika says

Surprisingly great book about physics, chemistry, and the universe! It was good to read such after finishing school a long time ago...!!

Domingo says

Divulgación científica muy amena, típica de Asimov

Marc Cooper says

This collection of articles starts off on a terrific high and goes downhill at a constant rate until its finale. The

eponymous starter, *The Tragedy of the Moon*, is worth the price of entry alone. The succeeding *The Triumph of the Moon* is a worthy adjunct and counterpoint. Things get religious for a chapter, then *The Week Excuse* provides interesting food for thought. The rest (thirteen more articles/chapters) have odd nuggets of interest, but are weak by comparison. *By the Numbers*, late on, is an interesting take on the ubiquitous presence of computers written well before it became a reality.

Asimov elides personal anecdotes here and there – especially at the start of chapters – which I presume he thought were quirky and humorous, but instead come across as conceit. He enjoys name-dropping and preening to an irritating degree. This was written in a different age, so perhaps circumstances dictated this.
