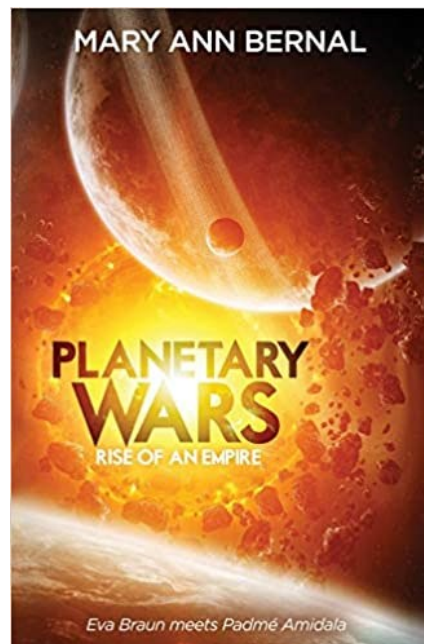


The Coffee Pot Book Club
WEDNESDAY, 18 MARCH 2020

#BookReview — Planetary Wars Rise of an Empire by Mary Ann Bernal #scific
@BritonandDane



Planetary Wars Rise of an Empire
By Mary Ann Bernal



Caught up in a whirlwind romance, Anastasia Dennison, M.D., does not realize her husband is the terrifying dictator, Jayden Henry Shaw, who rules the galaxy with an iron fist while pretending to defend the vulnerable against the Imperial Forces of the Empire.

Denying the existence of widespread suffering, Anastasia ignores her principles as she embraces the spoils of war and takes her rightful place among the upper echelon of Terrenean society.

Will Anastasia continue to support her husband's quest for complete domination of every world within the cosmos, or will she follow her conscience and fight the evil invading her home?



"It was only a matter of time before the inhabitants succumbed to the oppressor, yet with tyranny came dissension. In the end, freedom had to prevail, whatever the cost."

But when Doctor Anastasia Dennison falls in love with a handsome stranger, the last thing on her mind is the freedom of her planet. All she can think about is Henry, and when she will next see him again.

But while Anastasia dreams of a happy-ever-after, she ignores the subtle warnings that whisper to her that Henry is not who he is pretending to be.

With the future of her planet at stake, will Anastasia's eyes be opened in time to see the monumental mistake she is making? Or will she continue to turn a blind eye and embrace the life that Henry has promised her?

Filled with strife, tested loyalties and subtle acts of defiance, *Planetary Wars Rise of an Empire* by Mary Ann Bernal has a lot to recommend it. In this majestic universe Bernal has created, there are two opposing sides — The Imperial Forces verse the Freedom Fighters. While The Imperial Force has the military advantage, the Freedom Fighters are determined not to be thwarted. This intense and violent struggle between the two sides is a theme that one often finds in Science Fiction novels which gives this book a sense of comforting familiarity.

Bernal has given us a host of characters in this book, some I liked, some I loathed and others I had mixed feelings about. But, each character, whether it be the protagonist, the antagonist or the supporting characters, brought something rich to this tale.

Talking of characters... For a brilliant and capable woman, Doctor Anastasia Dennison is incredibly naive. She is an incurable romantic who lets love blind her to the truth. This is a time of desperate war, but Anastasia is very free with the information she gives to a man she had just met — a man she has never seen before — which left me slightly bemused. She is either very trusting or a complete and utter fool. At least her friend and colleague, Doctor Sophia Loft, had the sense to question this stranger's motives. But, even then, Anastasia brushes Sophia's concern aside. She refuses to pause and take a moment to consider if the story her beloved told her about himself is credible. Her inability to see Henry for who he really was baffled me because all the signs are there. Yes, Anastasia had never seen a photograph of the dictator of the universe, but still...! Anastasia is completely taken in by the story Jayden Henry Shaw has woven, and she is, for want of a better word, brainwashed. Bernal has not given us a strong and determined character in Anastasia, but instead, she has given us a woman who allows herself to be so blinkered that she no longer sees the suffering around her — her life is perfect, therefore what does it matter if other lives are being crushed? And for that reason, I found myself annoyed with her rather than sympathising with her plight. This, I think, is exactly what Bernal wants her readers to feel.

Jayden Henry Shaw is a compelling antagonist. He is incredibly ambitious and is not the sort of man who takes no for an answer. He is determined to not only rule the universe but to do so on his terms, and if anyone dares to oppose him, he quickly vanquishes them. He can be cruel and yet when it comes to Anastasia, we glimpse a different side to his character. Bernal has made Shaw real in the telling by giving him the ability to love, and despite all the lies, Shaw does love Anastasia. Shaw really closed the deal on this book for me. I thought his depiction was brilliant and demonstrated Bernal's ability at creating very flawed characters.

If you are looking for a gentle introduction into Science Fiction, then check out *Planetary Wars Rise of an Empire* by Mary Ann Bernal.

I Highly Recommend.

Review by Mary Anne Yarde.

The Coffee Pot Book Club.

Pick up your copy of
Planetary Wars Rise of an Empire
[Amazon UK](#) • [Amazon US](#)



Mary Ann Bernal

Mary Ann Bernal attended Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, NY, where she received a degree in Business Administration. Her literary aspirations were ultimately realized when the first book of The Briton and the Dane novels was published in 2009. In addition to writing historical fiction, Mary Ann has also authored a collection of contemporary short stories in the Scribbler Tales series. Her latest endeavor is a science fiction/fantasy novel entitled Planetary Wars Rise of an Empire. Originally hailing from New York, Mary Ann now resides in Elkhorn, Nebraska.

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