



Overthrowing Heaven

Mark L. Van Name

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1. Rave reviews for Mark L. Van Name:

- “Van Name has created a hero worth at least a dozen more novels . . . I want this to be a series. I want to read a new one every year.” —**Orson Scott Card**
- “*One Jump Ahead* is like well-aged white lightning: it goes down smooth then delivers a kick that knocks you on the floor.” —**John Ringo**
- “Hard *real* science smoothly blended into action that blazes like a pinball from one exotic setting to another. This one is very, very good.” —**David Drake**
- “Mark Van Name’s headlong pace of story-telling reminds me a lot of Keith Laumer. . . . He’s one of the very few modern authors I’ve seen who can manage that.” —**Eric Flint**

2. Van Name is rapidly establishing himself as the next big name in science fiction adventure, and will attract still more enthusiastic reader attention with this novel that will appeal to readers of other Baen superstars, such as David Drake, John Ringo, and David Weber.

3. Trade advertising.
4. Consumer advertising in *Locus*, more.
5. Distribution of ARCs to top stores and sales reps.
6. Teaser chapter in *Slanted Jack* mass market.
7. BookSense mailing.
8. Co-op available.

It began as a favor to a woman trying to get away from abusive husband.

Jon Moore grew up in a prison laboratory. When he escaped with nothing but his body's nanotech enhancements and more anger than even a long lifetime could wash away, an entire planet died behind him. Memories of the things he'd done still haunted him; because of them, he often ended up helping those in need.

His kindnesses frequently didn't work out well. This one really didn't work out well. It hurled Jon and Lobo, the intelligent assault vehicle and Jon's only friend, down an accelerating, ever more dangerous spiral involving:

- Private armies and government covert ops teams
- A courtesan who always seems a step ahead of him
- Rival superpowers that define Good in terms of their own advantage and Ethics as whatever doesn't get in the way of their Good
- And a brilliant, amoral scientist to whom human beings are just more experimental animals--and who might be Lobo's creator.

Jon and Lobo take the reader on a headlong rush through armed enemies and untrustworthy allies and encounter what just might be the worst danger their partnership will face: the truth.

Overthrowing Heaven Details

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From Reader Review Overthrowing Heaven for online ebook

Jamie Barrows says

This series started off pretty good, but it's gone downhill with each book. This book was particularly bad. For a person who is supposed to be a seasoned mercenary and covert ops expert, the main character does a lot of stupid things and lets his emotions and temper dictate his reactions. It just doesn't hold together well.

Kelly says

This is a solid book, if not a little staid. The plot and action are fairly linear and told only from one point of view, that of Jon Moore. However, he and his companion Lobo are intriguing characters and I felt I got to know them pretty well by the end of the book. I have since discovered that this is the third in a series of books about Jon and Lobo and I'm quite interested in going back to read from the beginning.

I am hoping that prior exposure to the characters and series may raise my rating of this book. However, I did not feel the lack of background material going into this story, it works very well as a stand alone novel, which is an important point in its favor.

8/7/09 - I've just read the first book in this series and indeed it has prompted me to award Overthrowing Heaven with another star. It's a fine addition to the series and a rewarding expansion of the relationship between Jon and Lobo.

Tim Hicks says

More of the same, but not quite.

The formula's the same - wisecracking AI supership and skilled-but-socially-inept human, tackling a problem slowly and carefully.

But as in books 2 & 3 (somehow I missed #1) Van Name stirs in an ethical component.

Also, in this one, we learn more about Lobo's history, and we have new aspects of their relationship to carry forward to the next volume. Van Name has to keep that going, because the books are becoming a bit repetitive.

Lobo is ridiculously capable, but somehow always constrained a little bit by a superior force that always happens to be around. Even though they have no idea that Lobo is so powerful, they always seem to have the very same force they would have on hand if they DID know.

Lobo's "As if I haven't already ..." is getting old, and Jon's social hopelessness is getting tired, not least because there are no prospect for its ever improving. Stop putting him IN these situations, Mark!

Also getting a bit worn is the abundant description of how a competent guard/unit/army would have done

this or that. And the idea that in 2150 or whenever this is set, security and army procedures will be almost exactly as they are now, sir, yes sir, ten-HUT, gimme 20!

Jon also mentions that he is now four or five times the age of most of the characters he meets. It's time for Van Name to make more of this.

Also, the book is refreshingly free of typos and bad usage, EXCEPT right at the end the editor MUST fall on his pen in shame for allowing the book to contain "step foot on," one of the great abominations of modern writing. "Set foot on" is perfectly cromulent, while "step foot" is redundant and inelegant. Pfui. And get off my lawn, you kids!

Leons1701 says

Recently realized I hadn't kept up with Van Name's Jon and Lobo series, in fact, I was two books behind. Since Van Name's One Jump Ahead goes on the shortlist of contenders for Best First Novel, and I thought Slanted Jack was also a fine piece of work, this needed to be addressed. Overthrowing Heaven does not disappoint. Not only is it a perfectly serviceable SF caper novel, it also gives us a window into Lobo's history and marks a distinct turning point in the relationship between a man and his sentient starship/flying tank.

Julie says

Third book in the Jon and Lobo series

Fans of Jon and Lobo will finally get the answer to some of their questions.

Again Jon risks all in a desperate bid to save some children from a fate hauntingly similar to his own, while we begin to find out some of Lobo's past

This book is full of action and fast paced from start to finish.

As always the author does a great job of weaving the high tech of a possible future into this very believable story.

Can't wait for the next installation

Don says

By far Mark's best book of the series (this is #3 and there's a fourth I haven't read yet). The story was very intriguing with lots of great twists and turns that were unexpected. The worlds he created were equally stunning with the previous books, the plot was now on par with the world he created.

I also liked Jon and Lobo's characters much better in this story. Jon was tougher, more like the ex-merc we'd expect him to be. It's nice to see him grow a pair. And Lobo showed some emotion and depth to his character. It's a progression he has these guys growing through their time together and it's enjoyable to watch. You don't have to read the first two books to enjoy this one, but I think there's back story you'd wish you read about once you're into the story line. It was a fun book to read.

Rich says

In the first book, I think Van Name wasn't quite sure what to do with both Jon and Lobo, so he gave them both a smart-aleck personality, and I do miss that. It kind of bugs me with a human playing straight man to a machine.

Also I think Van Name is setting up Jon to become the sci-fi version of Andrew Vacch's Burke--the shadowy, street-wise ex-P.I. who looks out for the kids who was up in the flotsam and jetsam of the underside of New York City. All of his books so far have had kids as the central and motivating factors, and title of the next book is Children No More. Make up your own minds about it.

I liked this one more than the previous one for a couple of reasons: 1) Jon is far less whiny than in the previous book--Slanted Jack. He is introspective, but as he gives us parts of his backstory, he whines less, and lets anger at those circumstances fuel him. And we get enough meat to his background, as well as that of Lobo, to really feel them much more fleshed out. Jon grows, and even has some disquieting moments when he meets a courtesan who is able to give him some moments of actual peace. Which unnerves him. We also understand why there will probably not be any guy/girl relationships. And he's not gay.

2) The action in here, just doesn't really let up. While this book does delve into serious moral questions, it is an action story as well, and the action moves at break-neck pacing.

A solid entry. I miss the smart-aleck Jon, and wish Van Name would bring him back, but this is a better book than the sophomore effort.

Joe Slavinsky says

An extremely fast-paced, roller-coaster ride of a book. I almost read it in one sitting, it was so hard to put down. The 3rd book of the "Jon & Lobo" series, "Overthrowing Heaven" has everything you could ever want, in a space opera. It has both hard & military s-f, emotional turmoil, great action, plotting, & pace. Van Name is really making a name for himself, getting better with each subsequent novel.

FrumpBurger says

This book has such a cliched, horrible sci-fi cover that I am actually embarrassed to be seen in public with it. Yeah, that's right: EMBARRASSED to be seen with the book. Which, by the way, I'm only reading because I have to review it. Thus far, while not great by a long shot, it's much better written than I'd expected based on...well...just *look* at the cover for yourself!!!

The story isn't half bad, though. Not for what it is. Kinda surprising, actually. It sometimes reads like the fantasy of a weakling who couldn't get laid in high school, and the dialogue can be tedious and somewhat redundant, but it's actually not all that bad at all. It actually has kept me mostly entertained while reading, which is more than I can say for some of the other books I've had to read...

2.5 stars, I think that would be fair.

Per Gunnar says

In general I like these books in the Jon & Lobo series but in small doses. It's not my favourite type of story so I only read one now and then, even though there more in the series that have been published already, and the last couple of days have been one of those occasions.

This book is no exception to the above. I did like it but, as with the previous book in the series, I would have liked Jon to "show off" his nano-implants a bit more. Again they where hardly used. Lobo could have been allowed to play a bigger combat role as well.

We do get a few more bits of information as to the origin of Lobo which was interesting although the idea of turning armour into a computing substrate (while keeping the armour function) did sound a bit far fetched to me.

As usual there is the continuous bickering between Jon and Lobo which can be quite entertaining and, of course, Jon gets into trouble with the ladies which is not always as entertaining but that's a matter of taste I guess.

So in short, it's an okay book worth reading.

Taylor Preston says

Not as good as the previous two in the series, but still pretty great. I'm really enjoying Jon's development as a character, and I'm looking forward to Children No More and No Going Back. If you like believable SF thrillers with consistent and likable characters, check out this series. You won't be disappointed!

Dan says

7/12/17 reread.

Joe Martin says

I liked this a little bit more than I liked Slanted Jack, the previous book in the series. I didn't love it, but I liked it just enough to continue reading in the series. The story was okay, but I'm still don't find all of the character interactions to be believable and realistic.

Cathy says

Not entirely a light heist tale like the previous books in the series, this one has more heft to it. Literally and

figuratively! It's longer than it needs to be, with more set up in the first two-thirds of the book than feels necessary to me. Then the last section moves more quickly and gets more serious in theme as well. I like the shift in tone, as long as the humor and buddy bonding doesn't get lost. I am worried that Lobo has shared his deepest secrets with Jon, but Jon is holding out on Lobo for some dumb guy reason, this does not bode well for their friendship.

I'm really looking forward to reading the next book in the series, Children No More. The author is donating all of the proceeds from the book, including his advance, to a charity that helps child soldiers reintegrate into society. If you'd like to learn more, check out <http://childrennomore.com/> .

Nathan says

I really like John Moore, the main character in this series. I like the snarky, hyper-intelligent battle tank that is his best friend.

The plot is cool, the universe is awesome, and you get to the point where you can't put the book down because things are developing so well.

Mark L. Van Name does a great job with his characters and universe. The only down side to this book is that it wasn't quite as good as the first two.

I will be reading more in this series.
