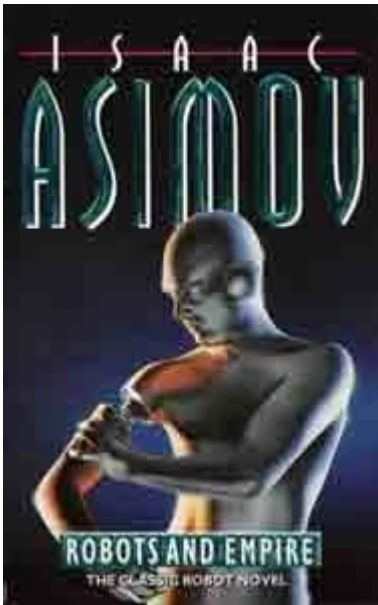


# Robots and Empire

Contributors to Asimov



**Robots and Empire** is a 1985 science-fiction novel written by [Isaac Asimov](#). It is part of the [Robot series](#).

The main scope of this book is to reconcile two of Asimov's main series, the *Robot* series and the *Empire* series (continued later in the *The Foundation Series* series). That is, to understand the transition from a mixed humanity-robot universe, dominated by the increasingly robotic societies of the Spacer Worlds, to a human-only [Galactic Empire](#).



This article, **Robots and Empire**, contains spoilers. **Be forewarned, plot and/or ending details follow.**  
Asimov says *you* decide.

## Summary[ ]

It has been 198 years since the events of [The Robots of Dawn](#), 158 years since the death of [Elijah Baley](#). Throughout that time, Earth has been conducting a massive expansion wave. The inhabitants of the new worlds, the Settlers, are shunning robots and tend to ignore Spacers. They have developed a quasi-religious reverence of Earth.

It is now 4922. While Doctor [Kelden Amadiro](#) has eventually recovered from the defeat in *The Robots of Dawn*, due to Doctor [Han Fastolfe](#)'s talent and Giskard Reventlov's telepathic abilities, he was unable to force the Spacer worlds to take an active position against the Settlers. Nor was he able, even with Fastolfe's help, to force the Spacers into their own expansion. The Spacers, predictably, were reluctant to leave the comfort of their worlds, and refused to accept the humaniform robots which could have built the new worlds for them.

Now, the events are reaching a critical point. Doctor Fastolfe had died in the last year, leaving his party weak, and Amadiro the most powerful Auroran politician. In addition, the youngest of the Spacer worlds, [Solaria](#), was abandoned, forcing the other worlds to consider the possibility of their own death. However, a direct confrontation with the Settlers seems unlikely. While the Spacer worlds are still somewhat stronger, they are much less prepared for the casualties of war. Yet a hidden plot to shift the odds is at work

**Part I: Aurora[ ]**

[Gladia](#), a former friend and lover of Elijah Baley, is now a middle aged (by Spacer standards) well-off woman. She spent the majority of the past two centuries married to Santirix Gremionis, but a few decades ago, the marriage was dissolved by mutual consent and with no hard feelings on either side. [R. Daneel Olivaw](#) and [R. Giskard Reventlov](#) were part of her household for many years by now; now, with Fastolfe dead, she had inherited them officially.

One morning, she is visited by [Levular Mandamus](#), a young man who is a close associate of Amadiro. Nominally on official business, he uses the opportunity to inquire about a private matter. He is a fifth generation descendant of Gladia. While that causes some problems between him and Amadiro, he claims the latter suspects something even worse; that Gladia's son and Mandamus' ancestor is actually a son not of Gremionis, but of Elijah Baley, who, on his way to his new home on a Settler world, stopped at Aurora's orbit and was visited by Gladia.

Gladia provides some evidence, but Mandamus states none of it will suffice for Amadiro. However, he seems triumphant. Only later do Daneel and Giskard figure out the reason; the evidence was enough to convince the young man himself. Mandamus intends to gain Amadiro's favor by striking against Earth, and would not have been able to do that if he was closely related to an Earthman.

Before Mandamus leaves, he takes care of the official business. A Settler wants to talk to Gladia.

The next day, the Settler arrives. His name is Daneel Giskard (D.G.) Baley, a seventh generation descendant of Elijah. He wants to discuss the matter of Solaria. The Settlers intend to claim the now empty world - after selling to the Spacers all the robots left behind. Two ships have landed recently, intending to carry off some of the robots, but both were destroyed within hours. D.G., a captain of his own Settler ship, wants to try landing himself, and believes that having a native of Solaria with him might help. With a slight telepathic nudge from Giskard, Gladia agrees.

**Part II: Solaria[ ]**

D.G.'s ship arrives at Solaria. Upon landing, Gladia attempts to question the local robots, and it turns out quickly that no robots know where their masters went. Nor is there a single robot who knows Gladia. D.G. attempts to question the estate's overseer, a woman, but is attacked at once. The overseer turns out to be a humaniform robot like Daneel, named Landaree. Somehow, she refuses to recognize D.G. and Daneel as human beings, and while she admits the humanity of Gladia, it's not enough to override her instructions to destroy intruders. Daneel manages to fight her off for a short while, but eventually she overpowers him. At the last moment, she suddenly shuts down.

The heroes and the rest of the crew leave, after taking from two robots a device which was intended for destroying their ship. It is a nuclear intensifier; a device intended for forcing fusion reactors into explosive overloading. The Settlers have such devices, but they are much less compact, so this one would be invaluable.

They reflect upon the overseer's behavior, but cannot understand how she could have attacked D.G. despite the First Law. Daneel provides an explanation. The overseer had a modified definition of human, only recognizing as such beings who, like Gladia, spoke with the distinct accent of Solaria. D.G. finds the concept disturbing as well as highly dangerous for the Solarians themselves, since they might get attacked at the slightest accidental slip from their accent. It is therefore concluded that the Solarians had, indeed, abandoned the planet, and that it is too dangerous to remain.

The overseer's destruction is explained by Daneel as caused by the conflict between her instructions and Gladia's orders.

Gladia is skeptical, but since no one can think of a better idea, it is accepted. In reality, R. Landaree was shut down by Giscard, who arrived at the scene not a moment too soon.

**Part III: Baleyworld[ ]**

Gladia arrives at Baleyworld, a honored guest. During a public speech, the more hostile elements of the government attempt to corner her into a blunder, but she manages to fight them off, promoting peace between Settlers and Spacers. In the aftermath, Daneel assumes it was Giskard who managed to shift both Gladia and the crowds, but is surprised to learn that very little manipulation was, in fact, required. Giskard himself is surprised at how much easier it is to manipulate crowds than individuals.

Soon after, Gladia is informed a message arrived from Aurora, requesting she returns. The message comes from the Chairman himself, which is puzzling; the current Chairman is considered little more than Amadiro's puppet, and Amadiro is the one person who should be perfectly content with Gladia being as many light years away from Aurora as possible. She speculates about the reasons, as do the robots, but can't think of anything.

**Part IV: Aurora[ ]**

The viewpoint switches to Kelden Amadiro, on Aurora. He reflects on his past defeats, but also on how, a few years ago, Mandamus had offered him to cooperate with his plans to destroy Earth. All he needed was to provide the now mothballed humaniform robots built a century and a half ago, to send them to the planet and carry out the plan.

Recently, Vasilia had returned to Aurora, after a tour through the Spacer worlds. She was gathering data on their scientific achievements. One world had shared nothing: Solaria. Despite spending more time there than on any other planet, all she has is speculations. Vasilia presented four such speculations to Amadiro: Solarians have made a semi-portable nuclear intensifier, they are building humaniform robots, they are working on telepathic robots, and they intent to leave the planet. Amadiro is skeptical about all the points, but the last one is soon confirmed.

Soon after Gladia leaves with D. G. Baley, Vasilia comes to Amadiro, uninvited. She had realized why she assumed Solarians were working on telepathic robots; a pattern she saw a Solarian working upon was similar to the one she installed in Giskard centuries ago. She had figured out his abilities and manipulation. Amadiro is skeptical, but once (as Vasilia predicts) news arrive of an Auroran ship destroyed on Solaria and the Settler ship lifting off safely, he is willing to discuss the matter.

Once Gladia returns to Aurora, she is interviewed by government officials, including Amadiro and the Chairman. She states her intention to visit Earth. From the emotions of Amadiro, Giskard figures out his plans seem to involve both nuclear intensifiers and humaniform robots. Neither he nor Daneel can figure out more yet.

Vasilia goes to confront Giskard and Daneel. She want Giskard back, and threatens to destroy Daneel. As they argue, Daneel, based on his old discussions with Elijah, comes up with the [Zeroth Law of Robotics](#). He attempts to convince Giskard of its validity, but the law's abstractness prevents it. Giskard does, however, accept it enough to stop Vasilia and remove her memory of his powers.

**Part V: Earth[ ]**

Gladia and the robots arrive in the Solar System on D. G. Baley's ship. They are then intercepted by an Auroran warship demanding they turn over Giskard, claiming he is broken and capable of harming people. Gladia refuses to give Giskard up, so the captain threatens to ram the Auroran ship with his. The Aurorans jump away, and the Settlers land of Earth safely. D. G. confesses his love to Gladia, and the two agree to pursue a relationship.

Soon after they land, they learn that the Auroran ship had deployed a smaller vessel which made landfall at an unknown location.

Daneel and Giskard continue speculating on the nature of Amadiro's blow against Earth. Since the plans seem to involve intensifiers, Daneel first assumes they intend to blow up Earth's fusion reactors, but it turns out the planet doesn't use fusion power on large scale. He asks Earth's Undersecretary of Energy, Sophia Quintana, about the matter, and she explains early experiences with fission energy left the inhabitants reluctant to use nuclear energy in general, and completely refusing to use fission.

As Gladia is making a speech before Earthmen, a blaster is fired from the crowd, aimed at Giskard. The would-be-assassin is captured, and turns out to be a humanoid robot. Vasilisa tries to question him about the location of his base, but he shuts down after attempting to say some word combination containing "mile".

Daneel and Giskard come to Quintana to see if she can help, and together, they manage to figure out the robot meant Three-Mile-Island, a place all but erased from collective memory due to the nuclear accident there.

The robots finally figure out Amadiro's plan. Earth's crust is much richer in uranium and thorium than other planets, so it is possible to set up nuclear intensifiers and either blow up the crust, or make the planet uninhabitable due to radiation levels.

The view then switches to Mandamus and Amadiro. The robots sent to Earth years ago have managed to build the devices needed to render the planet uninhabitable, but an argument breaks out between the two men. Mandamus insists that the intensifiers must be set to perform their task in a century to a half to two centuries, so as to prevent suspicions about Spacer involvement and allow people to be evacuated. Amadiro, however, due to the typical Spacer individualism, cannot handle the thought of Earth being destroyed by anyone but him, and demands to reduce the time by an order of magnitude. As he threatens Mandamus at blasterpoint, the two are stopped by Daneel and Giskard.

Giskard renders Amadiro unconscious and removes his memory of the events, but Mandamus manages to stall him for a short time. He states that the way he is setting the dials, the outcome will be beneficial. The Spacers will no longer feel threatened by Earth, while the Settlers will no longer be held back by their quasi-religious reverence to it. While Mandamus believes the actual outcome will be the fracturing and weakening of the Settlers, Giskard believes the outcome he presents aloud is the more likely one, so he lets Mandamus activate the nuclear intensifiers before erasing his memory as well. However, he cannot be certain about the actual outcome, so the resulting contradiction destroys his brain. His final action is to modify Daneel to have the same abilities and carry on as the guardian of mankind.

**Characters[ ]**

- [Gladia](#)
- [R. Daneel Olivaw](#)

- [Han Fastolfe](#)
- [Elijah Baley](#)
- [R. Giskard Reventlov](#)
- [Levular Mandamus](#)
- [Kelden Amadiro](#)
- [Darrel Gremionis](#)
- [Bentley Baley](#)
- [Daneel Giskard Baley](#)
- [Jezebel Baley](#)
- Jamin Oser
- Chandrus Nadirhaba
- Eban Kalaya
- Landaree
- Niss, First Class Shipper
- Sindra Lambid
- Tomas Bistervan
- Genovus Pandaral, Senior Director
- Nephi Morler
- Maloon Cicis
- [Vasilia Aliena](#)
- [Rutilan Horder](#)
- Nadila
- Sophia Quintana
- Stephen Byerly
- Edgar Andrev
- R. Ernett Second