

172 Hours on the Moon, by

Johan Harstad, Young Adult –

Horror, 368 Pages

Johan Harstad is a 31-year-old Norwegian author, graphic designer, playwright, drummer, and international sensation. He is the winner of the 2008 Brage Award (Brageprisen), previously won by Per Petterson, and his books have been published in over 11 countries. In 2009, he was named the first ever in-house playwright at the National Theatre in Oslo. His first novel *Buzz Aldrin, What Happened to You in All the Confusion*, originally published in Norway by Gyldendal in 2005, was made into a TV series in 2009 starring *The Wire*'s Chad Coleman. Harstad lives in Oslo and is working on his next novel.

It is February of 2010 and "172 Hours on the Moon" begins with men high in governmental power here in the United States deciding to celebrate the 50th anniversary of landing on the moon. There will be a world-wide contest for three teenagers to be a part of a space shuttle to the moon that will attract media attention which in turn will secure money for backing the search for rare minerals found on the moon. But there is an unspoken problem. There is something dangerous there on the moon of which former shuttle operators are all too aware. However, that was back in the 1970's and now that it is 2010, three teenagers, Mia Nomeland from Norway, Midori Yoshida from Japan and Antoine Devereux from France are chosen to be the teenagers who will land on the moon for 172 hours along with the shuttle crew. But what will happen once they are there?

"172 Hours on the Moon" is well-written and well-edited, and the book's plot moves smoothly to its conclusion. But there is a burning issue with the book's theme. The three teenagers, Mia, Midori, and Antoine, are not supposed to return from their space flight. Death of main characters, especially teenagers or children, is not a good theme for a book. The idea of a doppelganger taking the