



## The Bomb

*Theodore Taylor*

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## **The Bomb** Theodore Taylor

Shortly after the first atomic bombs were dropped on Japan, World War II came to and, and the terrible reality of the atomic age began . . .Sixteen-year-old Sorry Rinamu has lived on the Bikini Atoll in the western Pacific all his life. Now the United States government wants to use his home as a site for atomic weapons tests. The islanders are told that they must leave the island in the interest of world peace but can return when the land is safe again. Sorry doesn't believe the story. He is sure that radioactive fallout will poison the warm blue waters and beautiful white sand beaches, and Bikini Atoll will be lost to its people forever. Sorry knows that he has no choice but stop this disaster before it starts -- even if it means standing alone against the U.S. military, and risking his own life to save his ancestral land.

## **The Bomb Details**

Date : Published August 1st 1997 by HarperTrophy (first published October 31st 1995)

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Author : Theodore Taylor

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## From Reader Review The Bomb for online ebook

### John H says

I thought this was a good book. I wanted the big doinker to go off. The tiger shark needed to be a different shade

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### Ted Ziolkowski says

The 4 stars are awarded because the story was well written, contains precise details aligned with the historical context and was gripping. Also, this book engages the reader into a heart wrenching plot, as it focuses on a minority people who are removed from their homes then eventually killed by the atomic bomb. By allowing the reader to view the effects of the end of WWII/atomic explosions through the perspective of a fourteen year old boy, "The Bomb" emphasizes the pain and damage caused. Since the plot of the book ties in greatly with history, some of the outcome could be predicted, which could make the reader less interested. Overall, the book does a great job of highlighting the negative outcomes of the atomic bomb and makes one wish the bomb was never invented.

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### Stella says

Interesting! Ending was expected but also unexpected in a way.

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### Diane says

This is the story of the A Bomb testing on the Bikini Atoll told from the perspective of a young man who grew up on the island. I have a on-going interest in reading about the social side of the atomic bomb in Japan and its effect on the people of Japan and the US. I was drawn to this book because of that interest and also because a friend spent 2 years in the Marshall Island (Bikini is one of the Marshalls) in the 1990s; her husband was part of a team testing the conditions on Bikini. She told us much about the effect of the US culture on the Marshallese people.

The story is interesting and compelling. I was hovering between a 4 and 5 when I read the epilogue. The author was at Bikini for the bomb testing. He saw the island's inhabitants being evacuated. He knows what happened. The book is an apology for his part in his country's atrocity written when he was about 75 years old. He says "This book was terribly hard to write." Clearly a 5-star book.

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### Avocado Songbird says

The author does such a great job at painting a picture verbatim; very dramatic. I enjoyed reading this book.

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### **Sarah says**

I give The Bomb a 4 out of 5. I enjoyed the historical aspect of the book, as well as, seeing the perspective of civilians and not the US or Japanese Military while talking about the dropping of the bombs on Japan and the worldwide effects of the bomb. I also liked the connections at the beginning of every chapter to the real world and a timeline of the discoveries until the end of Operation Crossroads, which made the book sound even more historically accurate. I did not like the beginning of the book at first because it was slightly boring and repetitive, but after I finished the book I realized the significance of the first few chapters in helping the reader understand the severity of making the Bikinians move later on. Overall, this is a good book for anyone who is interested in history and World War 2.

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### **P.D.R. Lindsay says**

This is not an easy book to read, although it is meant for teenagers. Taylor was present at Bikini Atoll for the first atomic bomb test and he says he found it really difficult to write about even after fifty years. You can see why as you follow the story of Sorry Rinamu, and his family, forced, with their whole village, off their home island, Bikini Atoll. Their attempts to stop being moved and then to prevent the bomb being dropped are heart wrenching.

The book is simply written, no sermons or raging speeches by the author, the reader is allowed to see and understand as Sorry sees and understands. This makes their uprooting, and the lying promise about a return in two years, all the more poignant. As a history lesson the book is superb. As a demonstration of the racism, lying and bullying by large nations of smaller ones in the 1950s, it is shamefully truthful. Whilst it would be a good history text, and is excellent YA reading, this novel should be recommended to anyone who is not old enough to remember the first atomic bomb test and all the people who suffered as a result of it.

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### **Rebecca McNutt says**

I bought a used copy of this little novel from a store in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico, and within the first few pages I could hardly put it down! It's a very short yet powerful, gripping and emotional read that features a beautiful island tainted by modern science as nuclear war becomes a depressing reality. It takes place in Bikini Atoll, to be exact. The author's writing style was dramatic, fast-paced and simple yet emotional, and every character was complex and memorable.

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### **Matt M says**

Warning: may contain some Spoiler Alerts

The atomic bomb was a very powerful and dangerous weapon. After the US dropped the bomb on Hiroshima scientist wanted to experiment with the bomb. In order to do experiments they had to find a test location. They located a place called Bikini Island which is in the Western Pacific Ocean. Bikini had great terrain,

weather, and was the perfect size. The only problem was that people inhabited Bikini Island. The US troops lied and cheated the Bikinians out of their lands by promising fake promises and to be returned back on the island in two years. This wasn't actually realistic but the Islanders had no way of knowing this since they didn't speak English and couldn't listen to the radio and understand it. The tests were run using animals and old ships that would be tested for durability and survivability. The animals were compared to humans and how well they would survive.

I would give The Bomb a 2 star rating. The first 9 chapters were very bland and just had background. Basically they just had some fishing trips and explained the island life. The book doesn't get much better from then on but it is somewhat interesting. The ending of The Bomb is not a happy ending which was very unfortunate. This is not a book to expect a great adventure and a great plot. In conclusion, The Bomb is definitely not the bomb.

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### **Aaron Picard says**

The Bomb was a book unlike any I have ever read. The simple plot focused on a native people and their removal for a "greater good" of the world. The main character, Sorry, is a teenage Bikinian resident fascinated by the outside world and is mesmerized by the American might that shows up to liberate his people from Japanese occupation. All seemed well until they were informed by their saviors that their land held a special interest with the Americans. A vote leads to the Bikinians willingly leaving the island, but not in unanimity. The nuclear juggernaut of the world wanted to test their might in the place that hundreds of natives called home. They promise a safe return home in 2 years, but having heard that radiation causes lifelong effects, Sorry knows the truth. Sorry is forced to watch his lifelong home turn into an Americanized experiment. Opposed to this and inspired by the actions of another, Sorry decides that he can no longer sit around and watch this happen and decides to action. Will his heroics be enough to stop this catastrophic event?

I give this book an 8/10 rating. This isn't an overly sophisticated book nor is it a profound piece that will stand the test of time, but it does accomplish its primary goal. It tells the story of those who rarely have their story told. From a modern American perspective, I never considered how our advancement and supremacy had adversely affected others. This story appeals primarily to our emotions of pity, sympathy, and sadness. The characters are understandable and realistic, but underdeveloped. The story is too short to develop characters and to complicate the plot beyond the main conflict. The plot is centered on a unique concept, and takes twists that I hadn't expected. I truly enjoyed reading this book and I would recommend it to anyone looking for a fresh perspective on history and a desire for an easy read.

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### **Zora says**

In 1945, the author was part of the U.S. Naval force that went to prepare Bikini Atoll for a series of nuclear bomb tests. His job was to blow the holy hell out of coral reefs with conventional explosives to prepare for the bomb. Others relocated the indigenous Polynesian people from a place they were able to survive comfortably on fish and coconuts and minimal farming of taro, from their home for hundred of years. Problem is (you can read about this in the afterword to this book or over at Wikipedia), they were relocated to an atoll that couldn't support them. Two years later, a different naval group came by and found 200

starving people there. And they had been lied to about when they'd be able to return to Bikini. So the starving survivors were relocated again, and again. Some returned to the atoll in the 70's, having been told by the U.S. everything was just dandy now, and (you're not going to be surprised at this, are you?) it wasn't, and they had radiation-based illnesses, including miscarriages and birth defects and radioactive food and water; moreover, the culture that had thrived there before we saw fit to poison the atoll had been effectively destroyed anyway. Geez, just an awful story, the sort that makes me hang my head in shame. Even without the story of the abuse of native people, it's an awful tale of wanton ecological destruction of island paradises.

Filled with horror and guilt of his own, the author finally, years later, wrote about the events in this novel, which follows an imaginary teen boy who in the first half of the book lives his island life with some awareness of the war going on but whose main worry is sharks in the lagoon, and in the second half, is not getting on board with the relocation program. (The island chief and some other characters are historical.) Without spoiling it, I can tell you that the last 1/5 of the book is not for the faint of heart. While it's a YA book because of the protagonist, it'd give sensitive adults nightmares.

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### **Diana Rosner says**

Excellent history lesson through fiction about Bikini Atoll and people of the Island in 1945. Heartbreaking.

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### **Alex says**

The Bomb all takes place on a little island called Bikini Atoll. All around the year, Bikini Atoll has warm sunny weather, calm winds, and the island is surrounded by blue water. It's small so everyone knows each other there. One day military arrive on a boat and say to leave because they want to test the new atom bomb on their island. Some are okay with moving, some want to stay to protest. Will the navy call off the bomb test for a couple of lives?

I really like this book because it's something different from what I usually read. It took a while to get going, but once it did, it was interesting. I don't think I could imagine leaving my home so it could just be destroyed. I would recommend this book to someone that enjoys suspense. I would not recommend this to people who don't like bombs.

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### **Bradley says**

I thought the book was OK, but the names were confusing. For example, one of the names is "Sorry". I kind of liked the book because it presented actual facts. One thing I learned is that Atom Bombs are made from Nuclear Fission. Overall, I would give the book a 3 star because of the action and because of the interesting facts.

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### **Garrett says**

The inevitability of this book is really quite something, and the heroic sadness of the main character's arc and mission are not to be missed. This is a YA book in name only, though - it could easily be a kid's book for the level at which it is written; it's only the themes of displacement, war, the bomb of the title and the intimations of rape (the Japanese taking "comfort women") at the beginning that keep this from being an informative book for 4th and 5th graders. Well done but slowly paced.

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