



Fallen

Tim Lebbon

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From award-winning author Tim Lebbon comes this harrowing tale of an epic journey, crossing the forbidden boundary separating us from all we fear the most....

To the unknown corners of Noreela, the Voyagers have traveled, returning with fantastic tales of their journeys and discoveries. But no one has ever returned from the Great Divide: a sheer cliff soaring miles above the clouds and rumored to be the end of the world. Until now.

Voyagers Nomi Hyden and Ramus Rheel would be mortal enemies if their lives and fates weren't so closely entwined. But now the unlikely pair are brought together for what will be their greatest—and perhaps final—journey. When a grim wanderer named Ten arrives with an ancient parchment he claims to have brought back from the Divide, its arcane glyphs hint at the existence of a realm most consider a myth...and at something amazing sleeping there.

Accompanied by the warrior Beko and his band of armed Serians, Nomi and Ramus set out to discover the truth behind the legends. But soon ambition drives them apart, this epic Voyage becomes a race...and each Voyager is faced with a choice that may alter the history of Noreela forever.

Fallen Details

Date : Published April 29th 2008 by Spectra (Bantam) (first published January 1st 2008)

ISBN : 9780553384673

Author : Tim Lebbon

Format : Paperback 413 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Horror, Dark Fantasy, Fiction, Supernatural, Science Fiction Fantasy, Science Fiction

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From Reader Review Fallen for online ebook

Amanda says

Not for me. I could not engage with the writing style. I gave up after a few chapters.

Hayley says

Overall, I enjoyed this book. It's dark and gritty and mysterious, exactly what it said it would be. A quote on the back cover said "If there was ever a natural successor to HP Lovecraft, Tim Lebbon has to be it." and I could certainly see the Lovecraftian influences coming through.

But I can only rate it three stars. The characters were great, diverse, mysterious, and their complex relationships and histories made for interesting. The general plot line was easy enough to follow - a group of people venturing to 'The Great Divide', which to them signifies the end of the world - but of course things don't go as planned. It was a gripping narrative, and after a bit of a slow start, I was drawn into the world of Noreela and engaged in the plot.

But it didn't quite have that 'wow' factor, and even though I enjoyed what I read, I found it easy to put down, and when I wasn't reading I also wasn't really wondering what would happen next, or eagerly awaiting the moment when I could sit down and finish reading.

So with about 50 pages to go, I thought I would give this book a four. Then I read the ending.

Sure, I hadn't expected an happily ever after, with everyone riding off into the sunset together, and the dark and hopeless ending fits in well with the course of the book, and its Lovecraftian roots. But I found it too depressing, too hopeless - there wasn't a single silver lining in how it ended, and I can't see a single character living out the rest of their lives in anything but misery and despair. It was rather abrupt, and I can see several ways it could have been tweaked just a little to make it a little more satisfying. Overall, I think it lacked closure.

But it's still a good book, and if you're into Lovecraftian horror, than this is definitely the book for you.

Richard Wright says

The third Noreela book, I think, set a considerable time before the Dusk/Dawn duology. I had a mixed experience with that story, but not this one - it's a fantastic, thrilling story. Lebbon has firmly established his world of Noreela now, and feels a lot more comfortable. It feels like a place, where before it felt like an impressive invention, and the warring explorers Nomi and Ramus are a gripping pair as they race for the greatest, most terrifying discovery in their world's history. Their rivalry plays the quest theme out in more sophisticated ways than the usual quest yarn, and the conclusion is fitting, impressive, and horrifying. Brilliant stuff.

Sandy Lender says

In the fantasy novel *Fallen*, Tim Lebbon tells a great story that I felt compelled to keep reading long after I'd grown unhappy with the characters. To be honest, I wanted them all to die. Unfortunately, that would have left no one to propel a truly interesting story forward. And Lebbon is such a good story-teller that I wanted to see how *Fallen* would end. A group of money-driven and fame-driven characters go through an intricate and detailed journey in a world of dangers and double-crossers to get to their goal. I don't want to give it away, but the ending came a little quickly. The good news is I felt one of the characters got exactly what she deserved. Kudos for Lebbon.

From Fantasy Author Sandy Lender

Dave says

This one was a bit of a plodder. The first Lebbon book I've been disappointed with. It had a pretty good finish, though.

Traummaschine says

3.5 stars:

This is set in a distant past of the other 3 Noreela books, where the known world is small, superstition abounds, and a huge physical barrier separates the northern tip of the continent from the rest. Our heroes have no idea what lies at the top of the miles-high cliff face, but they have a map...

The book starts a little slowly, but Lebbon spends this time developing the complex relationships of the group. He does a great job, especially for an author who primarily writes horror. As the journey progresses members of the group become lovers or friends, mourn when a comrade falls, betray and kill one another. Sometimes a single relationship can span both extremes, and Lebbon does a great job developing these changes in attitudes.

Unlike the prior Noreela stories, the living machines are absent here, but the new horrific creatures more than make up for it. This is dark fantasy, so let the unjaded beware.

This is a solid entry in the Noreela tales, and I'm looking forward to *The Island*.

Lori says

I came across *Fallen* by Tim Lebbon pretty randomly, just browsing the 'new release' section at my local library. I was sort of between books, in that the three I had been reading off and on for a while had lost my interest and the book I had put on hold hadn't come in yet, so I decided to check it out and give it a read.

Fallen is a stand-alone book, and something of a prequel to Lebbon's Dusk and Dawn. Although all three are set in the world of Noreela, the events in Fallen take place long before the other two (to the tune of 1000-4000 years, not sure exactly).

Fallen follows Ramus and Nomi, a pair of rival explorers with a very love-hate sort of relationship, as they embark upon the greatest voyage of their lives. At the southern edge of Noreela stands The Great Divide, a cliff face so high that it is eclipsed by clouds. It is a looming barrier that no one has ever crossed--or at least no one has ever returned from trying to cross, until a mysterious wanderer appears with pages containing cryptic writing that supposedly comes from beyond the Divide. Although their reasons are very different, it is a challenge that neither Ramus nor Nomi can refuse. But what begins as a joint venture soon becomes a race across a treacherous landscape as each Voyager strives to beat the other to the top and beyond.

While this might sound like pretty standard fantasy fare, this book is something of an anomaly. It's pretty dark and has some pretty classic horror elements. Although not a lot of time is given to world building, Noreela is quickly established as a pretty darn scary place. Venturing out into the wilds is dangerous, and it seems like every other page the group is encountering a deadly new plant, creature or band of murderous cannibalistic human marauders. This is a world where a darkening sky could mean a coming rain storm or a of swarm of insects, snakes or lizards carried on the wind to rain down from above. When things turn violent, people die... messily. It's horrifying and tragic to watch (so to speak) a well-developed character get dismembered, beheaded, and dropped off a cliff. But I have to give the guy a nod for being willing to do it.

The characters in this book are pretty well developed, but for the two main characters (Ramus and Nomi) the more they are developed the less I sympathize with them. They have a past, and it isn't a very pretty one. They've both done terrible things to one another, and it makes their hired Serian bodyguards much more sympathetic--which is a shame because they're basically the "red shirts" of the story.

I really enjoyed reading most of this book, and thought for sure I was going to be able to give it a four or even five paw rating. Unfortunately, the ending fell a bit short. I didn't much care for the final confrontation with the 'big bad' and the results were pretty confusing and left a lot of questions unanswered. On top of that, I had to re-read a few pages twice because it just wasn't clear what the author was 'getting at'. In the end, I still think that it had the potential to be an awesome book and instead ended up just being OK. I will probably give Dusk a read because I like the style of Lebbon's writing and I'm willing to give him another chance. His chapters are long, but they're split up into sections small enough that it's easy to find a pause point. His characters are interesting and come to life easily, and his descriptions (other than a few notable exceptions) make it easy to visualize the events as they unfold--which can be both a good and bad thing, when you consider the horror elements of his writing. *shiver*

Lorinda says

Remus is a voyager,(explorer, adventurer, mapmaker and scholar) he also has a sickness growing in his head and has been told it will kill him. His friend Nomi and fellow voyager has asked him to partner her in the greatest voyage imaginable, to the Great Divide. Here follows a story of unrequited love, friendship, betrayal,competition, tragedy and pain.

I liked this story as a bit of a change from recent diet of mostly YA. This is a much more grown up story demonstrating the worst in humankind and the likelihood of more disasterous consequences of the choices made. Definately not a "happy ending" kind of book, but enjoyable all the same.

Mark says

Award-winning writer Tim Lebbon's latest visit to the world of Noreela (his fourth novel) is an interesting one, in that, like the recent *After the War*, it is a prequel to the best selling books *DAWN* and *DUSK*.

It is also a different style of novel to *DUSK/DAWN*, being a Fantasy quest-archaeological novel – a sort of Indiana Jones meets *The Twilight Zone* type story. In my opinion, it's gripping stuff.

The story's pretty straightforward – in the earlier expansionist days of Noreela, a discovery of map extracts and legends of untold treasure lead to two close friends - Ramus Rheel, an aging explorer battling cancer, and Nomi Hyden, a younger rival - taking an expedition to the mysterious Great Divide – a massive cliff, Jurassic Park style, which has never (in recent memory) been scaled – and, despite a number of frankly worrying precursors, the expedition sets off well.

Unfortunately tensions between the two leads (and a pretty flabbergasting revelation on the part of one of the characters) mean that the expedition soon divides, with each then racing the other to the anticipated prize. However, as in the best action novels, what they discover should perhaps have been left undisturbed – the awakening of a legendary Sleeping God whose re-emergence has consequences for the whole of Noreela...

What makes this such a rollicking read is not only the plot – a fast-moving story, laced with action, a smattering of sex and a very pleasant sense of wonder – but also the way that Tim has used his obvious writing skills to produce a damn good yarn. What is further interesting is that to my mind, though *DAWN* was good, this is a much more consistent novel. Though the story has a broad scale, it concentrates on a relatively small cast of participants, with some nicely developed characters that as the story progresses the reader slowly begins to care about. What Tim has been able to do here is spend less time on world-building and more on characterisation, focusing on the two explorers and their Serian expedition guides.

I'm pleased to say I read the first 100 pages in pretty much one go, and then following that fine tradition of 'read-it-or-dump-it' I was hooked.

If I'm looking for criticism, then some may find that in places the developed characterisation can still be a little wobbly and the situations can be a little unrealistic – would an expedition, arranged at great expense, really break up in less than two days? - I guess stranger things can happen. In contrast, the pace of the journey can be seen as a little slow for some - there is a lot of journey here - yet in the book's defense, it is a

measured pace, in that such a progression allows a sense of unease to build that Tim constructs from the beginning. This is clearly a skill from his horror background which is used to good effect here, building on that until the scary climax.

The ending is everything you thought it could horrifically be. Suffice it to say there's not much remaining at the end. Despite the Indiana overtones mentioned earlier, this is definitely not a book for younger readers.

All in all, for the uninitiated, this is a good place perhaps to start your view of Noreela. For those who've visited before, in my opinion, this is the best yet. I actually think that Fallen could be a 'best kept secret' - one that eventually will be seen in the future as very cool to have been 'in at' in the beginning. It's not only that we've read it, but it's pretty good when we find 'a goodie' first and can tell others about it.

This, in my opinion, is one.

Sylvia Marquez says

Lebbon has this way of making you feel like you can see and smell what the characters are experiencing. I met huge insects, birds resembling bats, and as big as people. Friends who are no worse than enemies. This book is full of mythical creatures that you must meet for yourself to get a feel for this land. I imagined the soldiers hired to accompany the voyagers looked somewhat like they stepped out of Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome, minus the road/flying vehicles. Events occurred in ways that you would have not expected, which makes it that much more interesting. The ending too has an unexpected outcome. Makes me want to go out and buy the other books linked to that particular world.

This was such a great read. I could not put it down which is why I consumed it in 2 days.

Alan Baxter says

This is a very well-written and engaging dark fantasy. Great setting, good world-building and pretty solid characters. For the most part I really enjoyed, but a few niggles knock this down to a three star book. I would give it two and a half if I could.

For example, there was a distinct over-emphasis on what the party ate on their travels with a strange obsession with herbs and spices. More fine detail in the world-building, perhaps, but it struck me as out of place.

But the real problem for me was the ending. After a great build-up and an excellent journey narrative, the

ending seemed faintly ridiculous and left us with more questions than it answered. Of course, we don't need all the questions answered, but SPOILER ALERT!

Why did the god run off with Nomi? Why did it kill Sorlon but leave Ramus alive? Where was it going? What was it anyway!? After all the effort that went into the story, the last twenty pages or so were mystifying.

Oh, and lastly, the whole climbing the Great Divide thing would have been excellent if Lebbon didn't keep referring to characters hammering crampons into the rock face to tie their ropes to. Crampons are spiky accessories for boots for ice-climbing!

Still, all that aside, it's a good read and very well-written. The ending is a let down, but the rest of the book was a gripping read and lots of pretty cool stuff happened along the way.

Rodolfo says

I really liked this book. So far this is my favorite Lebbon book. I like Dusk/Dawn, but this is the one I liked best. Even better than Berserk. This book made me want to know more about Noreela and the people/Gods that live there. The whole book is tragic. There aren't really any heroes. Just people. I like that. There isn't really anyone in the book that you would want to be. If you were you would have to take the good with the bad and there is plenty of bad for each character.

I want more stories of Noreela! On to "the Island".

Ti says

Ich habe selten die Protagonisten eines Fantasy-Romans so unsympathisch gefunden. Nomi und Ramus sind nicht komplex, sondern arschig. Viele ihrer Handlungen für mich nicht nachvollziehbar. Das Gegenteil von spannend. Ein paar Nebencharaktere sind ansatzweise interessant. Aber die sterben oder verschwinden alle, sobald der Autor mit ihnen nichts mehr anzufangen weiß.

Danach hatte ich tatsächlich Probleme, das Buch noch zu Ende zu lesen, obwohl es wirklich kein Wälzer ist. Nomi und Ramus waren mir total egal. Da war keinerlei Spannung mehr, weil ich über wirklich Alles, was ihnen passieren hätte können, nur mit den Schultern gezuckt hätte. Geschieht ihnen Recht!

Ein paar Details der Welt sind ganz cool. Aber sie wirken, wie Alles in Fallen, nicht ausgearbeitet. Manches ist unglaublich. Selbst der Horror wird eher angedeutet. Soviel passiert in Fallen gar nicht.

Logikfehler sind auch vorhanden. Spoilerfreies Beispiel: Nomi wird anfangs als visuell denkend beschrieben, sie liebt Karten. Später wird diese Eigenschaft Ramus zugesprochen und Nomi jede Vorstellungskraft abgesprochen. Ich glaube, da ist jemand mit seinen Charakterskizzen durcheinander gekommen. Selbst dem Autor sind die Protagonisten so fremd, so egal, dass er einfach mal ihre Traits verwechselt hat.

Wirklich nicht gut. Dabei finde ich die Kombi Fantasy/Horror manchmal ganz geil. Clive Barker kann das

zum Beispiel. Imajica fand ich ziemlich gut. Stephen King kann es ebenfalls. Gibt sicher noch mehr. Tim Lebbon kann es (zumindest in Fallen) leider nicht.

Pavlo Tverdokhlib says

Another solid entry into the Noreela world.

The story takes place way before the events of "Dusk". it sheds some light onto one of the places in "Dusk-Dawn" is as important as it is.

The book has pretty good pacing. Lebbon's description of the weird, dark and dangerous world of Noreela is superb as always. The plot starts out as a very typical questing story, but it very quickly takes a much darker turn. The characters, whose history and motivations are revealed slowly, are all kinds of messed up, which makes the story absolutely fascinating. And Lebbon throws in some really tense moments, and some moments of epic fighting as well.

strongly recommended to those who like their journey fantasy dark.

Jason says

5 Stars

I am a huge Tim Lebbon fan. Not only is he a great horror Author, with this book he has proven to me that he can write amazing dark fantasy. I really enjoyed the Dusk/Dawn duology, and as a result wanted to seek out more from Lebbon. This book is set in the same world as the duology, only it takes place more than one thousand years earlier. Fallen is similar in that it is a dark and adult oriented fantasy that is not really suitable for the young adult crowd.

The plot of this book is a simple adventure of two "Voyageurs". Ramus and Nomi are competing adventurers, both trying to make themselves famous. Ramus is the learned one, the educated one, who is more interested in learning and making his legacy famous than he is in material possessions and riches. Nomi uses here voyaging to find and exploit treasures, to get rich, and to be famous. Each envy the other for they look on the world through such different points of view. Their relationship was one of love, hate, competition, and understanding. A long past filled with many crossings and cooperation has led these two down a path of hidden feelings and emotions. Although, they never do get romantically involved, they both clearly feel for each other. Lebbon let us the reader see this dynamic relation through both a positive view, and also one of poison.

"It's almost like we are the same person," Nomi said, trying to move the conversation back around to where it had been heading originally, even though part of her truly wanted it to stay there. "We are friends like brother and sister are friends. Intense, but warring. Loving, but sometimes we get so angry at each other that..." she trailed off, not sure how to translate her thoughts into words."

The story is straight forward, an adventure to reach the Great Divide, to scale it, and to be the first to live to

tell about it. Add in the awesome horror elements...would you awaken a sleeping fallen God?, and you have a dark quest that is a lot of fun to read. Lebbon's world is raw and scary and filled with cool details, creatures, and places.

There are many strong themes that permeate this book and fill it with both good and wonder, but also with evil, selfishness, and betrayal.

The pacing is not for everyone. Lebbon shows his roots in horror by making things slowly smolder. The tension ramps up as the story moves forward, but never really comes to head until nearly three quarters of the way in. Plot twists set the final portion of the book off with great speed and tension. The ending is simply marvelous and it fully realizes the potential set forth from the beginning.

This novel is a great place to start reading Tim Lebbon. After this one than you can go on to Dusk and Dawn. If you like adult oriented fantasy/horror, filled with graphic violence, sex, deep meanings, and are not afraid of things not ending up sweet and rosy, than Lebbon should not be missed by you...My highest recommendations. One of my favorite reads in 2012.
