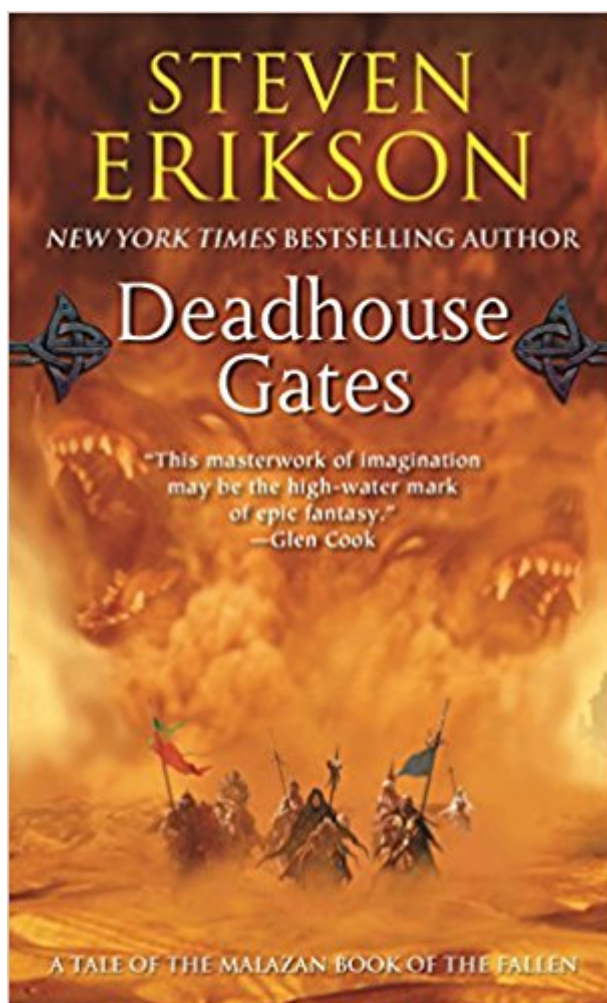


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Deadhouse Gates: A Tale Of The Malazan Book Of The Fallen



Synopsis

In the vast dominion of Seven Cities, in the Holy Desert Raraku, the seer Sha'ik and her followers prepare for the long-prophesied uprising known as the Whirlwind. Unprecedented in size and savagery, this maelstrom of fanaticism and bloodlust will embroil the Malazan Empire in one of the bloodiest conflicts it has ever known, shaping destinies and giving birth to legends . . . Set in a brilliantly realized world ravaged by dark, uncontrollable magic, this thrilling novel of war, intrigue and betrayal confirms Steven Erikson as a storyteller of breathtaking skill, imagination and originality--the author who has written the first great fantasy epic of the new millennium.

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review The second of the projected 10 volumes of the Malazan Book of the Fallen raises the stakes set by Gardens of the Moon [BKL My 15 04]. From the Holy Desert Raraku, in the land of the Seven Cities, the seer Sha'ik sends her followers out on a holy war known as the Whirlwind. It bears more than a passing resemblance to the current violent Islamic jihad, but Erikson's scholarship is sufficiently thorough to enable him to avoid simpleminded likeness making. His imagination is also sufficient to bring the setting of the Seven Cities vividly to life, although his realism is rather literally gritty, including a great deal of sand and gravel that will inevitably recall for some readers a country in which American troops are now fighting. The opposition to the Whirlwind is varied but includes the inevitable mercenaries, limned in the manner that stems from David Drake's sf and in fantasy is practiced particular skillfully by Glen Cook. Erikson is making his dark characters and grisly battles very much his own, however, and fantasy readers with a strong

appetite for world building and action ought to enjoy his efforts. Whether they'll stay for all 10 volumes is another matter, but so far, so good. Roland Green Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

• Give me the evocation of a rich, complex and yet ultimately unknowable other world, with a compelling suggestion of intricate history and mythology and lore. Give me mystery amid the grand narrative. Give me a world in which every sea hides a crumbled Atlantis, every ruin has a tale to tell, every mattock blade is a silent legacy of struggles unknown. Give me, in other words, the fantasy work of Steven Erikson. Erikson is a master of lost and forgotten epochs, a weaver of ancient epics on a scale that would approach absurdity if it wasn't so much fun. • Andrew Leonard, Salon.com on *The Malazan Book of the Fallen* • Steven Erikson afflicts me with awe. Vast in scope, almost frighteningly fecund in imagination, and rich in sympathy, his work does something that only the rarest of books can manage: it alters the reader's perceptions of reality. • Stephen R. Donaldson on *Deadhouse Gates* • I stand slack-jawed in awe of *The Malazan Book of the Fallen*. This masterwork of imagination may be the high water mark of epic fantasy. This marathon of ambition has a depth and breadth and sense of vast reaches of inimical time unlike anything else available today. *The Black Company*, Zelazny's *Amber*, Vance's *Dying Earth*, and other mighty drumbeats are but foreshadowings of this dark dragon's hoard. • Glen Cook on *The Malazan Book of the Fallen* • One of the best fantasy novels of the year. • SF Site on *Deadhouse Gates* • Rare is the writer who so fluidly combines a sense of mythic power and depth of world, with fully realized characters and thrilling action, but Steven Erikson manages it spectacularly. The books are reminiscent of Tolkein's scope, Zelazny's cleverness and wit, and Donaldson's brooding atmospherics; yet all combined with dazzling talent into a narrative flow that keeps the reader turning pages. Some writers open windows on worlds, Erikson opens worlds and makes them so real, so magical, you're not sure if you can escape-and I don't want to. • Michael A. Stackpole on *Deadhouse Gates* • Such is the impact of the first book in Erikson's monumental Malazan saga, *Gardens of the Moon*, that the achievement of this sequel is doubly surprising. Not only is the vigour and sweep of the earlier book effortlessly captured, the complex plot is simultaneously deepened and accelerated, with a grasp of tempo that has the reader inexorably gripped . . . Roll on, book three! • The Good Book Guide on *Deadhouse Gates* • Gripping, fast-moving, delightfully dark, with a masterful and unapologetic brutality reminiscent of George R. R. Martin. Steven Erikson brings a punchy, mesmerizing writing style into the genre of epic fantasy, making an indelible impression. Utterly engrossing. • Elizabeth Haydon on *Deadhouse Gates*

What Erickson does well: Plot, action, world building, conflict

What could use improvement: Characters
I am in awe of Erickson's complex plot and worldbuilding. I'm not so in awe of his ability to create characters that I, as a reader, can become invested in. He eventually wins me over with his characters in the third book (*Memories of Ice*), but there are points in this book where I felt that it was a slog to get through, because I just didn't care about the people he was writing about, even though the plot was incredible. If you like epic fantasy - do yourself a favor and get this series. Read it. Just be patient with the storyline and characters. It takes a bit to get rolling.

I'm not even sure where to begin! The world of the troubled Malazan Empire is so huge and varied that I found myself looking back at the maps every dozen pages or so. The book is told from the perspective of a few characters that are traveling by themselves or in group, scattered all over the map and through warrens. These different story arcs intersect with each other and are touched with memorable moments. The suffering and amazing transformation of some of these protagonists is really, really humbling. More often than not you'll find yourself wondering how long is (s)he going to last or how long can loyalty keep a soldier invested? This is a complex book, for thoughtful readers that don't need everything explained in the smallest detail. If you like mature fantasy, where there's no true good or evil, only people caught in the machinations and vanities of gods, then you'll probably enjoy this book. It would make more sense if you read the first one too: "*Gardens of the Moon*"

Better than the first book, but still kind of dull. Some storylines much stronger than others. I liked the Chain of Dogs storyline the most. It had some awesome moments, particularly at the end of the book. Towards the middle of the book, I started skimming some of the more boring stories to get to the next part featuring Coltaine. It's frustrating because this storyline was brilliant, but it was hidden within pages of boring and seemingly pointless side stories like the Felisin storyline. The whole book should have been about the Chain of Dogs story in my opinion. I liked that story but I don't feel compelled to try the rest of the series.

Definitely for adults, with a strong sense of narrative, solid dialogues, convincing descriptions, characters that come to life and enjoyable prose. Parts of this book I liked very much. Coltaine's long march, for example, which made a weird, heroic kind of sense and is beautifully written. But I tired of magic and supernatural characters popping in and out of warrens and pursuing foggy agenda of

their own. Too many plotlines, too many unconnected characters. You may say this reflects the world as it is, with billions of people pursuing their own goals unawares of the bigger picture, but after a while you cease to care.

I reviewed *Gardens of the Moon* and gave it 3 stars. I gave this one 4 stars. It is better, I liked the change of venues, and the new characters are done better and the already existing ones we get to know much more intimately. I actually began to care a lot about the storylines of Fiddler and Kalam in this one. It would have been nice to see more attention given to Apsalar but she was never miss personality anyway. The world building and lore, the histories, etc., continue to astound. The story seems simpler than in the first book, at least in how it's presented to us, or perhaps those of us who have made it through this far are finally growing accustomed to Erikson's often overly eloquent style of prose. The long march of/in this one seems to go on forever, I mean that figuratively and literally. But what I did not expect was the emotional reaction I would have at it's end, thus, it was a successful, if not drawn out affair. Because the book is 200-300 pages longer than the first I noticed two things that 'Gardens' didn't have. One was pleasant, the other became the beginnings of an annoyance which continues to plague me into book 4. On one hand we get more character development, and thus I liked/hated and was pulled more emotionally by the characters in this book. Erikson continues to throw a lot of characters at you, and to give so many justice, he needs a lot of pages I guess. The trouble is that Erikson seems to have filled much of these extra pages with far more "eloquent" prose which I simply find confusing and pointless. I'm talking about characters talking endlessly to themselves, or having lengthy and baffling dreams. I did not notice this as much in book one, or not enough to become a distraction from the flow of the story. This actually gets worse in book 3, which is, ironically, an even better book overall. Go figure. I found this book marginally better than the 3.5 rating I would have given book one if I could give half stars. Simply because I liked the characters better, and cared for their plight.

The second book in the series takes us to a different continent of the Seven Cities. There are only a few recurring characters in this book as it takes place concurrently with book 3 of the series but in a different geographic location. Expect a lot of the same great writing from the first book with a new cast of characters that suck you in all over again. While I prefer a lot of the characters from the first book over this one, I felt that the story pacing and development of the world/characters was vastly improved in the second book. While you are confused by characters stances in the first book until nearing the end, you feel like you understand each character much earlier on. I absolutely loved

Coltaine's character and we even get to see the famed Icarium mentioned briefly in passing in book one through his companion. Towards the end of book two however you don't yet see the overarching storyline, this issue is fixed in book three and you start to see the overarching narrative there. If you made it through book one, this book won't disappoint. I would say its a definite step up in writing and I haven't been excited to read through a series like this in a long while.

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