



The Fall of Hyperion

Dan Simmons

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

The Fall of Hyperion

Dan Simmons

The Fall of Hyperion Dan Simmons

In the stunning continuation of the epic adventure begun in Hyperion, Simmons returns us to a far future resplendent with drama and invention. On the world of Hyperion, the mysterious Time Tombs are opening. And the secrets they contain mean that nothing--nothing anywhere in the universe--will ever be the same.

The Fall of Hyperion Details

Date : Published November 1st 1995 by Spectra Books (first published March 1990)

ISBN : 9780553288209

Author : Dan Simmons

Format : Mass Market Paperback 517 pages

Genre : Science Fiction, Fiction, Fantasy

 [Download The Fall of Hyperion ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Fall of Hyperion ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online The Fall of Hyperion Dan Simmons

From Reader Review The Fall of Hyperion for online ebook

Ian says

The narrator, Victor Bevine, is one of my favorites. He narrates all the other audio versions of the *Hyperion Cantos*, including the first, dramatized version of *Hyperion* itself. I gave five stars to the underlying written work. I only subtract a star for this audiobook because Mr. Bevine isn't quite up to the task of doing all the characters--particularly all the Shrike Pilgrims--by himself. Still, this audiobook is a great way to re-read *Fall of Hyperion*.

Merged review:

Having read *Hyperion* and *Fall of Hyperion* twice each, and now having read *Endymion* and *Rise of Endymion*, the third and fourth books in Dan Simmons' so-called Hyperion Cantos, I can say my initial reaction to the first two books stands: they're the best pair of books I've read regardless of genre, certainly the most influential books to me personally. Indeed, I now consider the first two books required reading for anyone who enjoys reading contemporary fiction, science fiction, and even non-fiction in the religious, theological, and philosophical veins.

One could read the first two books of the Hyperion Cantos and stop there; they represent a complete, satisfying story that gives you plenty to think about beyond the actual plot-lines themselves. But if you want to get the full meaning, see the entire subtle complexity, understand Dan Simmons' fears for a sickening and stagnant human future as well as his hopes for the fulfillment of human potential, an optimistic utopian outlook that seems at once utterly attainable and so far away, I suggest you read all four books.

I would love to write more about each book individually and the four books taken together, but they are simply too important to me. I read these books over the course of 2010, which is turning out to be the best year of my life in many ways, and the Hyperion Cantos have had an important and positive influence on my thinking about God and religion and love and family. Simply put, these books are close to my heart, and nothing else I say will do them justice.

Ashley says

I'm a visual person. With me, things have to be neat, aesthetically pleasing, and in some sort of discernible order (even if that order is nothing but visually appealing chaos), otherwise I get cranky. I like charts and graphics and brightly colored pictures. This probably has something to do with the fact that I have synesthesia, specifically grapheme → color synesthesia. For me, *everything* has a color, and in turn, colors provoke emotions. My brain also automatically attempts to visualize intangible ideas and concepts and place them in locations in space. If I can't visualize them, it's very frustrating (the best example of this would be the way I visualize the year as months in a rotating oval). This is also why I have trouble with complicated math. Like many people with synesthesia, I didn't realize this wasn't something everybody's brains did until I was around 25, because most people don't just go around saying, hey don't you just love the number 5 because it's so red?? Or, hey, don't Tuesdays just suck, they're so barfy yellow. I can only imagine the incomprehending stares I would have gotten.

The point of this seemingly pointless anecdote of mine is that for about half of this book, I felt completely lost and up in the air because I couldn't find a way to visualize the structure of the story, which made it hard to derive any satisfaction from it, since my brain was so preoccupied with trying to figure this intangible

thing into something more concrete, and it just wasn't happening. But then at about the 60% mark, something just sort of clicked, and my brain goes, *it's a spiral!* And the arms are swirling down to the ground and converging as they go, and at the bottom is the *denouement*, the end of the story. The arms of the spiral, of course, are the pilgrims and their stories, with the addition of a new POV in the hybrid (a cloned human with the consciousness of an A.I., who also simultaneously exists in the physical world and the datasphere), and the stories of the Ousters and the AI's, which we touched on in the first book in various pilgrims' stories. They start out separate, and the swirl of the story pulls them together little by little. It looks confusing as it's happening, but it all works out in the end.

I'm telling you this because I think the book might be just as disorienting for you as it was for me—though probably not in *quite* the same way—and I want to reassure you that everything's going to be okay. I promise that it all makes sense, and all the various threads that don't seem to have any connection to one another at all—the constant literary allusions, the various characters, the musings on artificial intelligences and religion, the Shrike and its Tree of Pain, the time travel, Colonel Kassad's half-real sex goddess Moneta, and most of all, Keats and Hyperion, in all their forms—come together in the end. It gave me that feeling that all book addicts are always chasing, that elusive elation that comes only once every hundred books or so (if we're lucky), where it seems like the universe has converged on us just to give us this wonderful story.

The Fall of Hyperion picks up directly where *Hyperion* left off, with our pilgrims finally approaching the Time Tombs and ready for an imminent meeting with the Shrike. Only, it doesn't quite pick up there, because we're all of a sudden seeing the pilgrims through the eyes of another character, who is having dreams (and waking dreams) concerning everything that is happening to the pilgrims, who are light years away from him. Why he would be having these dreams would be a spoiler, but his identity isn't. SPOILERS IF YOU HAVEN'T READ *HYPERION*: The other characters know him as Joseph Severn, but he's really another genetic double of John Keats, a resurrected artificially intelligent poet/human. He's a sort of brother cybrid to Johnny, the cybrid of Keats we met in the last book, who is now hitching a ride in Lamia's skull back on Hyperion. And since John Keat's famous unfinished poem "Hyperion" is the namesake of this series, you bet it's important. The narrative shuffles back and forth from Keat's waking life to his dreams of the pilgrims, and little by little we get all the pieces to the puzzle END SPOILERS. The result, at least for me, was satisfying on a narrative level, but also on that extra level that really gives you the reader-buzz, the level your subconscious lives on, that just keeps giving the longer you think about it.

I'm really, really glad I read this series, and I'm super excited to read the second duology that with this one makes up the Hyperion Cantos later this year.

Apatt says

The trouble with reading a book like *The Fall of Hyperion* is that whatever book I read next will likely seem like a load of ol' crap. In fact, in a Shrike-like manner this book traveled back in time and slashed my opinion of the book I read prior to this one which now looks shabby by comparison.

The first Hyperion book ends on a (musical) cliff hanger, *The Fall of Hyperion* carries on from there though the first chapter is narrated in the first person by a "new" cybrid protagonist Joseph Severn. While he is not in the previous book he is derived from the same John Keats template as "Johnny", the wavy hair cybrid and lover of the bad-ass Brawne Lamia P.I., one of the seven pilgrims who traveled to confront The Shrike (a real cutting edge guy possibly descended from Freddy Krueger). The wonderful world building from the previous book is further developed in this book, we get more expositions about the Hegemony, the TechnoCore and a little more about The Shrike, not to mention the further adventures of our favorite pilgrims. *The Fall of Hyperion* is structurally different from its predecessor, it is entirely linear though

narrated from several different points of view. While I enjoy the way the first book is structured (The Canterbury Tales style), where the stories are very strong on their own this more conventional structure also works well for me, it is nice and cohesive and a pleasure to follow.

The Hegemony and the TechnoCore remind me of Iain M. Banks Culture society and the AIs that mess about with the poor humans living in these societies. The citizens of the Hegemony are similarly pampered but are not watched over with paternal fondness by the AI like in Banks' books. The Hegemony government is done by human politicians with an AI representative, led by the awesome Meina Gladstone who I picture as resembling actress Maggie Smith at her sternest. The high technology tend to be of the more handwavium variety with FTL travel achieved by "Farcaster" portals, and instant Fatline (FTL) communication, all compliments of the TechnoCore. The social ramification of this technology is very well thought out, the novel is to some extent a cautionary tale about over reliance on technology.

Dan Simmons' prose is deservedly lauded as one of the most literary best in the scifi business, at times lyrical, often witty and evocative. Most of the central characters are already well established in the first book, they are further developed here and the relationship between the pilgrims are much strong stronger. Their loyalty to each other, which slowly developed in the first book, make them much more appealing, even the two that don't get along like Brawne Lamia and Martin Silenus (though the "mouthing off / shut up" running gag gets a little old after a while). The back story of each of the five Pilgrims form plot strands that converge and then beautifully woven together by the epic conclusion. My favorite section of the first book, the poignant story of Sol Weinthrobb and his backward aging daughter is particularly well concluded. I am also glad to see my favorite character Brawne Lamia get spend more time on the centre stage.

I love the literary and pop culture references. To be honest what I know about John Keats and poetry can be written on a postage stamp and leave enough room for the Queen's entire head, but things like The Wizard of Oz (movie) references are more my neck of the wood and I find them very amusing.

The Fall of Hyperion is an entirely satisfactory conclusion to the classic Hyperion. I look forward to reading Endymion and The Rise of Endymion in the near future.

Stephen says

6.0 stars. On my list of All Time Favorites. Viewed as one novel, the Hyperion Cantos (including Hyperion, this novel and the two subsequent novels) comprise, in my opinion, one of the GREATEST works of Science Fiction EVER WRITTEN. Space Opera on a epic scale. Detailed, original and incredibly imaginative world building and a dense, mind-blowing plot. Oh yeah, and it has one of the coolest characters/creatures ever devised...THE SHRIKE!! HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

Winner: British Science Fiction Award for Best Novel (1992)

Winner: Locus Award for Best Science Fiction Novel (1991)

Nominee: Hugo Award for Best Science Fiction Novel (1991)

Nominee: Nebula Award for Best Science Fiction Novel (1991)

Clouds says

Christmas 2010: I realised that I had got stuck in a rut. I was re-reading old favourites again and

again, waiting for a few trusted authors to release new works. Something had to be done.

On the spur of the moment I set myself a challenge, to read every book to have won the Locus Sci-Fi award. That's 35 books, 6 of which I'd previously read, leaving 29 titles by 14 authors who were new to me.

While working through this reading list I got married, went on my honeymoon, switched career and became a father. As such these stories became imprinted on my memory as the soundtrack to the happiest period in my life (so far).

The Fall of Hyperion was one of the six award winners I had read before starting my Glorious Locus Quest (along with 3 other Simmons books, an Asimov and a May).

Occasionally another reviewer sums up your opinion so perfectly; there seems little point in repeating the sentiment.

I felt the same way as Kemper about *Fall* :

“Mr. Kemper had read Simmons before and knew he likes to put a lot of big ideas in his books. But this time, apparently Simmons broke into his house and managed to directly implant much of the book directly into Mr. Kemper's brain via some kind of crude funnel device.”

“His wife said she found him having convulsions and leaking brain matter out his nose and ears.”

“He had told several people that *Hyperion* was just so good that he had to know how it ended, even if it killed him.”

But *Fall of Hyperion* is so Shrike-damned good that I must, out of overwhelming respect, at least try to express my admiration and awe at this accomplishment.

It's a bit of cliché to describe a complex plot in terms of a circus 'plate-spinning' act but it's the most appropriate metaphor that's coming to my sleep-deprived mind this morning. It's the familiar slack-jawed feeling of hypnotic wonder at an artist who knows exactly how long he's got left on each plate before it starts to wobble, exactly how to stabilise that wobble, and exactly how much impetus to impart to allow him to work his way around all the plates before returning again. It's the skill of a juggler with all the balls in the air, but with more calm-control and less frantic energy.

To stretch the analogy even further, Simmons seems to work with plates of different sizes, colours, materials and shape – on sticks of different heights and widths. He takes a difficult job, integrating an intergalactic multidimensional time-travelling space-opera narrative, and makes it even more difficult by populating his universe with intelligent, diverse and contrary characters.

Some of his ideas articulate my deepest held ideals about far-future hi-tech becoming indistinguishable (to us, now) from magic – much as modern tech would be incomprehensible to early man. I already mentioned the awesomeness incarnate that is the Shrike, the Poet and the Cruciform in my review of the first book, but here I'm particularly referring to the Keats cybrids, the treeships and the TechnoCore.

It's a book I would dearly love to re-read, but it looks like I'm going to have to re-buy first because I lent the whole Cantos to a friend who's since moved house and taken it to the other side of the country... (I'm looking at you, Mark)

Fall of Hyperion won the Locus Sci-Fi award in 1991. I'm flabbergasted that the Hugo that year went to *The Vor Game* ! I've since read *The Vor Game* , and I also 5-starred that, but good as that was, this is better. What's even more peculiar, is that the Nebula that year went to *Tehanu* – a mid-series fantasy novel? Clearly I'll need to read it to understand that decision! Ah well, at least my trusty Locus Sci-Fi award recognised and rewarded Sir Simmons' creative genius.

After this I read: The Endymion Omnibus

Conor says

While somewhat uneven at the start this book developed into an awesome story with some of the most distinct, memorable and well developed world-building I've ever read, interesting and sympathetic characters, a strong central plot, cool literary references (mostly stemming from Simmons' serious man-crush on John Keats) and some thought provoking philosophy (although Simmons loses marks for incorporating philosophy into the plot and world in an organic and interesting way rather than through a series of forced monologues from every single character as the great Mr. Erikson has shown us is the best, in fact only, way).

The first 1/2 to 2/3 of the book was probably a 3 star read but towards the end the momentum built and everything came together in impressive fashion. If I was an objective, professional reviewer I would probably be obligated to reflect the weak start in my rating, but the conclusion was so powerful and well done and left me with such a positive feeling about this book that I've decided to be generous (note: this could also apply to pretty much every Malazan book). Also since I'm writing this review at 5 p.m. while eating cereal, in my boxers, and in between trying to play "Tears in heaven" on the acoustic guitar, it's probably fair to say that the "professional reviewer" ship has sailed.

The start of this book was kind of hit and miss. I felt that the pilgrims' storyline lacked the focus and tension of the first book. The tension of the lonely journey and the mystery of the pilgrims combined with the vastly different storylines that each further developed a unique aspect of the world and/or plot were replaced by confused, anti-climactic wandering around. However the new plotline following "M. Severn" was interesting, especially in how it elaborated on the conflict and politics that were hinted at in the first book. The introduction of Meina Gladstone was also cool as she became the strongest and most compelling character in the series.

However from about 2/3 of the way through everything that was set up started to come together and made this book un-putdownable (it's a word because I say it's a word, come at me language police). Most of the Pilgrims finally found interesting, relevant storylines after wandering around aimlessly earlier, mysteries began to be unraveled and the stakes of the political game were raised ever higher. The ending was one of the best I've ever read. It wrapped up pretty much all the loose ends satisfyingly and in style and set the stage brilliantly for the next half of the series. I hadn't been planning to read book 3 for a while but now I'm really intrigued to see what the fallout of the events at the end of this one will be.

Overall this was an epic, memorable and thought provoking SFF tale, that despite it's weaknesses has left a massive impression on me. I'm now really interested to see how this story and world will be further developed in the second half of this series.

Markus says

Buddy read with Athena, Desinka, Gavin & Kaora

"The Final Days are here, priest. The prophecies given to us by the Avatar centuries ago are unfolding before our eyes. What you call riots are the first death throes of a society which deserves to die. The Days of Atonement are upon us and the Lord of Pain soon will walk among us."

The shadow of war has fallen on the Web. The Ousters are initiating a full-scale invasion of the central planets of the Hegemony of Man. Chaos rules in the corridors of power on Tau Ceti Center. Out of reach from the clashing empires, the artificial intelligences of the TechnoCore manipulate everyone and everything. And on Hyperion itself, where battle rages in the skies and the streets alike, the pilgrims fight desperately for their lives in the Valley of the Time Tombs.

The Fall of Hyperion removes itself from the style of the masterpiece *Hyperion* and instead of a collection of short stories with a frame story, we get something a lot more similar to a traditional novel. The second book has only one real protagonist, a character who was also rather significant in the first. Other than that, there are secondary points of view written in third-person narrative through the protagonists's dreams. While very different from the first, this change in style was performed flawlessly by Dan Simmons, and while I did not, and still don't, find the protagonist particularly endearing, this was not a change for the worse.

The storyline was not as enthralling as that of the first book, unfortunately. This is war, pure and simple. And despite that, there are few actual battle scenes. Most of the time, our story takes places in equal parts on Tau Ceti Center and in the Valley of the Time Tombs. In the beginning, the switches between the two locations were praiseworthily interesting, but after a time, very little happened in either of the places. Except for general panic.

Characterisation is in my opinion not one of Dan Simmons's strengths. Even in the first book, there were no truly memorable characters. In a science fiction series an interesting setting can be just enough to keep the reader captivated for one book, but when you get to the sequels, you need to have strong characters who can hold the series on top. And I actually felt that Simmons managed this to some extent. The protagonist, while not my favourite, is an interesting character, mostly because of who he actually is. The Shrike remains an enigma. And while all three of the major powers; Hegemony, Ousters and Core; are difficult to root for, they are all incredibly to find out more about.

And there is one character who stands out from among the rest. Meina Gladstone, Chief Executive Officer of the Senate of the Hegemony of Man and arguably the most powerful human in the universe. Gladstone was a very minor character in *Hyperion*, but rose to the centre of the scene here in the second book. Gladstone is a sometimes ruthless political realist, but all her intentions are as noble as they get. It's amazing to watch her try to save a society crumbling in the flames of war, and remain a beacon of hope for billions of Hegemony citizens.

Writing a sequel to *Hyperion* must have been a difficult job for Dan Simmons, and it shows in the book. *The Fall of Hyperion* is just not as good as the first book. Both the beginning and the ending were up to it, but there's a rather large part in the middle where there is no plot or character development and it's more or less dreadfully boring. Some of the most important scenes in the book could also have been much more climactic if they had been written better.

Still, this was far from a bad book. The *Hyperion Cantos* has still got me firmly on the hook, and I am definitely excited to unveil the rest of the mysteries of the universe Simmons has created for us. His writing is extraordinary at times, and as a taste of it I'll leave you with my favourite passage from the series so far,

which is very reminiscent of a certain fantasy author I've read a lot of books by this year.

In the dead city, screams echoed for another minute, growing fainter and farther away. Then there was a silence broken only by the doves returning to their nests, dropping into the shattered domes and towers with a soft rustle of wings.

The wind came up, rattling loose Perspex panes and masonry, shifting brittle leaves across dry fountains, finding entrance through the broken panes of the dome and lifting manuscript pages in a gentle whirlwind, some pages escaping to be blown across the silent courtyards and empty walkways and collapsed aqueducts.

After a while, the wind died, and then nothing moved in the City of Poets.

3.5 stars

David Katzman says

Hyperion and *The Fall of Hyperion* are two halves of an extraordinarily complex science fiction masterpiece. There are subsequently two more books that appear to follow this series (*Endymion* and *Rise of Endymion*), but they aren't necessary to feel you've gotten a complete story. I will absolutely read them in the future. With elements of horror woven through, it's an extremely twisted vision that takes you to the farthest reaches of science fiction.

The plot is elaborate and multifaceted yet by the end, the many seemingly chaotic inexplicable threads intertwine to a satisfying conclusion. Quite a high wire performance by Simmons. The story surrounds an intergalactic war and a planet key to the various factions. On that planet, there are inexplicable artifacts, environments called the "Time Tombs" that are travelling from the future back in time, but they have not unlocked yet. The various factions feel that when the Tombs open...they will release something so powerful, it will end up deciding the course of the war. Billions of lives are at stake.

A small group of travelers are sent on a pilgrimage from across the human empire to visit the Time Tombs...hence the connection to the "Cantos" from the book titles, a reference to the *The Canterbury Tales*. Each of these travelers has a unique, and often bizarre reason to have been included on the pilgrimage. As characters, they are almost all quite distinct and well delineated. Simmons is equally deft at integrating character, plot, action, theme, and poetic language, often describing the most fantastical scenes. He does so much right.

I have a few quibbles with the book, but it's an overwhelmingly awe-inspiring achievement. One, I found the sex scenes described by the character Fedmahn Kassad to walk too far into porn territory. Sex is hard to write, no doubt, without falling back into stereotype. I don't think Simmons achieved anything new here. My only consolation is that to some degree, the somewhat blatant writing of the sex scenes does play well when they transform into moments of extreme violence and horror. Sex and horror are partners quite commonly in the slasher formula, but in this case it seems to set up rather a contrast or deflation of the pleasure. Even so, I felt those scenes pushed me out of the narrative.

Two, I was not fond of the storyline of Sol Weintraub. He posed as a sort of Wandering Jew character, and his name alone threw me right off the bat. When put up against so many of the other characters that had either abstract future sounding names (like Brawne Lamia), or modestly generic names (such as Paul Duré) "Sol Weintraub" struck me as extremely old fashioned and stereotypical. Even while religion carried through as a significant theme in the story, I could have done without the retro, stereotypical Jew name. But beyond the name, I wasn't fond of his storyline, which struck me as too sentimental. It fit, everything fit together

quite extraordinarily. And yet, of all the character lines, his was my least favorite.

Thematically, Simmons explores the terrain of technology, religion, faith, morality, and the myth of God. Some of his views are crystal clear, others a bit murky, but in either case, he offers enough meat to ponder our own views on these matters.

If you enjoy far-future science fiction or epic science fiction, then this is a series you must try. Highly recommended.

Dan Schwent says

As the pilgrims prepare to enter the Time Tombs, the war between the Ousters and the Hegemony is just hours from breaking out. Can they enter the Time Tombs quickly enough to prevent intergalactic war and the deaths of billions?

Here we are, the second half of the epic Dan Simmons started in *Hyperion*. Kassad, Brawne, and the other pilgrims introduced in the previous book meet their destinies. However, the bigger story is the war between the Hegemony and its enemies.

During my initial read, I didn't like this one as much as *Hyperion*, probably because it lacked the *Canterbury Tales*-like structure of the first book. However, I've softened upon the second read.

Using the dreams of Joseph Severin as a linking device, the story follows the actions of Hegemony CEO Meina Gladstone trying to avert war with the Ousters and frequently cuts to action on *Hyperion*. As the zero hour nears, the truth behind what is happening unfolds and it has wide reaching consequences.

I'm dancing around the actual events of the story to avoid spoilers but I can't imagine reading and enjoying *Hyperion* without devouring this one. People throw the word 'epic' around very lightly these days but *Hyperion* and *Fall of Hyperion* comprise an epic of galactic scope.

Gene Wolfe once said "My definition of good literature is that which can be read by an educated reader, and reread with increased pleasure." *Hyperion* and *Fall of Hyperion* definitely fall into that category. The text of both books is peppered with literary references and lots of Christian symbolism, as well as thought provoking philosophical ideas. There's also a pro-environment message, as well as warnings of becoming too dependent on technology.

I get the feeling that Dan Simmons thought it might be his last big chance to show what he could do and he pulled out all the stops, combining heady science fiction concepts with things he gleaned from being an English major in college and years of teaching. I understood far more this time around but felt like there were still a lot of things I couldn't quite wrap my head around. I guess I'll schedule a reread for sometime in 2025. I hadn't planned on rereading the *Endymion* books but a reread of those is probably happening in 2018.

My second journey to the Time Tombs was even more rewarding than the first. *Hyperion* retains its place next to *The Dark Tower* as one of my favorite epics of all time. Five out of five stars.

Kaora says

The Fall of Hyperion, a sequel to Hyperion, although it doesn't feel like it. The first book was mainly about the history of the pilgrims, and this one has a new protagonist named Joseph Severn, who dreams of the pilgrims. As a result I struggled to get into this one, as I was more interested in the fates of the pilgrims than this new character. There were long sections of dialogue as Joseph sits in on war briefings, which I found uninteresting.

However I feel about halfway through the tides changed and I became completely invested in the fates of this world and the people within it as I got to know the amazing character that is Meina Gladstone, CEO of Hegemony, and a woman that holds the fates of billions in her hands.

You ask, what is our policy? I say to you: It is to wage war, in space, on land, in the air, by sea, wage war with all our might and with all the strength justice and right can give us. That is our policy.

Dan Simmons is again at the top of his game, and had me with his beautiful prose even when I wasn't completely interested in what was going on. But unfortunately I can't say I liked this as much as the first, even after the strong conclusion.

sologdin says

Nutshell: how-to manual that recommends radical luddite social restructuring in order to defeat slave uprising.

Abandons chaucerian structure of first installment and instead alternates between first-person and third person bits. Opening places narration at center of setting (barf) by popping first person narrator adjacent to president. This centralizing of narration is raised to an affirmative law of science fiction here, via repeated quotation of Yeats, and through the proclamation that "right now we have an obligation to be where things are happening" (327).

Love that Simmons catches one of the stupidities of modern science fiction: "Even the spate of recent war [films] showed great fleets battling it out at distances two ground soldiers would find claustrophobic, ships ramming and firing and burning like Greek triremes packed into the straits of Artemisium" (73), which nicely captures how *Star Wars* and *Star Trek* are just Napoleonic warfare with rayguns. It's not like we see a well-described alternative in this story, though when stellar distances regarding combat are noted, it's usually presented in terms of AU, so the distinction is implicit.

We are given a neo-Marinetti, who avers that "warfare is on the threshold of becoming an art form" (105).

Not sure what the big deal about the Shrike has been the whole time. The resolution of that strand is fairly silly. Conceptually, it's annoying: apparently it's part of a far future contest between humans and AIs sent back in time to find something for the human end of the conflict. It's all very nebulous and juvenile.

As though I weren't annoyed enough by the ruling class protagonist, when that protagonist receives perspectival chapters, they are coy, such as when "All she had to do to save a hundred billion lives was return to the Senate floor, reveal three decades of deception and duplicity" (153), but without informing the reader what the deception and duplicity happen to be. This is simply unpardonable faux suspense. Why use the rhetorical sleight of popping the narration on the president of the galaxy, and then give ersatz access? It's just not effective.

Amusing moment when lyrical computer machine explains the entire macroplot, noting that "we constructed your civilization carefully so that like hamsters in a cage like Buddhist prayer wheels each time you turn

your little wheels of thought our purposes are served” (282), which is just taking Douglas Adams and playing him straight (Earth-as-computer was destroyed both times, NB).

Still a very cool setting overall, packed with plenty of more crap about poet Keats. Am pleased to have my hypothesis confirmed that AIs as part of story will produce an AI rebellion.

Recommended for those rich in resurrection insurance, readers who desire a cleansing fire when the forest has been stunted and allowed to grow diseased by overplanning, and people who scribble graffiti on outhouse walls.

Kemper says

"Nurse, this patient's chart is very confusing."

"Which patient, Doctor?"

"Uh..Mr. Kemper. He's the one in the vegetative state."

"Oh, that's a very sad and odd case."

"According to the patient history, he was admitted a few weeks ago with cerebrospinal fluid leaking from his nose and ears, but it seemed like he should recover. But yesterday he was brought in again, barely conscious and then he lapsed into a coma. The really odd thing is that I see no signs of injury or disease."

"That's right, Doctor. It was a book that did this to Mr. Kemper."

"A book? How is that possible?"

"From what we can figure out, the first incident occurred after he read *Hyperion* by a writer named Dan Simmons. I guess it's one of those sci-fi books and apparently the story is quite elaborate. Anyhow, Mr. Kemper had read Simmons before and knew he likes to put a lot of big ideas in his books. But this time, apparently Simmons broke into his house and managed to directly implant much of the book directly into Mr. Kemper's brain via some kind of crude funnel device."

"I find that highly unlikely, Nurse."

"Most of us did, Doctor. But Mr. Kemper kept insisting that Simmons had some kind of grudge against him. He even had a note he said Simmons had left that said something like 'Don't you ever learn? If you keep reading my books, I'll end you someday.'"

"Assuming that I believed this story, I guess that Kemper's current state tells us that he didn't heed the warning?"

"Apparently not, Doctor. His wife said she found him having convulsions and leaking brain matter out his nose and ears again. A copy of the sequel, *The Fall of Hyperion* was on the floor nearby."

"I can't believe that reading a silly sci-fi book could turn an healthy man into a turnip, Nurse."

“Well, when they brought Kemper in, he was semiconscious and muttering. Someone wrote it down. Let see, he kept repeating words and phrases like: Shrike, Time Tombs, the Core, God, uh...no, two gods actually, farcasters, Ousters, religion, pope, death wand, space battles, interplanetary trees, old Earth, AI, mega sphere, data sphere, *The Canterbury Tales*, poetry, John Keats, Tree of Thorns, and Lord of Pain.”

“Jesus! What does all that mean?”

“Someone looked it up on the web and all of that is actually in the book.”

“That poor bastard. No wonder his gray matter is fried. No one could absorb all that without permanent damage.”

“Yes, I’d think that book should have some kind of warning sticker or something on it.”

“One thing I still don’t understand, Nurse. If Kemper knew that this book would probably do this to him, why did he still read it?”

“I guess he had told several people that *Hyperion* was just so good that he had to know how it ended, even if it killed him.”

I think the word ‘epic’ was invented to describe this book.

What Simmons began in *Hyperion* finishes here with a story so sprawling and massive that it defies description. In the far future, humanity has spread to the stars, and maintains a web of worlds via ‘farcasters’. (Think *Stargates*.) On the planet Hyperion, mysterious tombs have been moving backwards in time and are guarded by the deadly Shrike.

Seven people were sent to Hyperion on a ‘pilgrimage’ that was almost certainly a suicide mission, but the Ousters, a segment of humanity evolving differently after centuries spent in deep space, are about to invade. The artificial intelligences of the Core that humanity depends on for predictions of future events and management of the farcaster system can’t tell what’s coming with an unknown like the Shrike and Hyperion in play.

Battles rage across space and time and the virtual reality of the data sphere as varying interests with competing agendas maneuver and betray each other as the pilgrims on Hyperion struggle to survive and finally uncover the secrets of the Shrike. But the real reasons behind the war and it’s ultimate goal are bigger and more sinister than anyone involved can imagine.

I can’t say enough good things about the story told in these first two *Hyperion* books. This is sci-fi at it’s best with a massive story crammed with big unique ideas and believable characters you care about. Any one of the pieces could have made a helluva book, but it takes a talent like Simmons to pull all of it together into one coherent story.

Brad says

The Fall of Hyperion is a sequel. I swear. It says so right there on the cover of my mass market paperback, right above the cheesy artist’s rendering of Sol Weintraub presenting Rachel to a rather unimpressive Shrike.

But I'll tell you, it sure doesn't feel like a sequel. It feels more like the first book, the main book, of a series, and it makes Hyperion feel like a prequel -- a superior prequel, but a prequel nonetheless. And I really wish I had read The Fall of Hyperion before I read its predecessor. I think I would have liked it more.

I did like it, though, despite my negative tone. I even loved some parts of it. The political machinations of Meina Gladstone, the in-fighting between the AIs (Stables, Volatiles and Ultimates), the early battles of Kassad and Moneta, the conversations with Ummon, all of these elements were fascinating, and the radical excision of the Core from all human affairs and the subsequent cost of victory blew my mind. In fact, this latter element may have been my favourite moment in either of the first two installments of Simmons' Cantos.

But these elements don't entirely mitigate my disappointment. I loved the characters from the first book; those who made the Pilgrimage to the Shrike had background stories so rich in detail, emotion, thrills, you name it, that their shift to banal plot devices, players present only to move the action along, disappointed me deeply.

I don't think I'd feel that way, though, if I'd met them in The Fall of Hyperion first. If Simmons had dropped me into the middle of the war between the Hegemony, the Ousters and the Core, if he'd thrown me into the midst of the Time Tombs, if he'd introduced me to the Shrike and the Keats persona and the Pilgrims -- without the baggage of what got them there -- I think I would have cruised through The Fall of Hyperion and loved it with fervor. Then I would have hungered to go back and find out what brought the Pilgrims to Hyperion, and I would have been thrilled by a prequel that was even better than the original.

Sadly, there's no going back now. But if you are someone who's planning to read these books for the first time I beg you to ignore the official order and start with The Fall of Hyperion. I am convinced you'll get more out of it if you've got nothing to compare it to and a healthy sense of wonder and confusion about what you are reading.

I'm really not sure I should continue reading the Cantos, but the temptation of finally understanding the purpose of the Shrike may be too tantalizing to ignore.

Henry Avila says

As the pilgrims seek the Shrike, the ominous thing, in the eerie Valley of the Time Tombs, avoided by the frightened inhabitants, here on the planet Hyperion, it does not appear, what to do? Days pass but still the creature has remained hidden, the letdown effects them, they expected to be killed... The six seekers, the dying priest Hoyt, disillusioned soldier Kassad, sad scholar Weintraub (and infant daughter, Rachel, who becomes dangerously younger, daily), unstable poet Silenus, heartbroken detective Lamia, the no name Consul, he is strangely moody, and the little known Starship Captain Masteen, who vanished on the boat, coming here, is he alive? But his presence is felt, something is out there, is it Masteen or some monster, they become anxious, frustrated, their provisions get low, nerves fray, they start to argue with each other, violence becomes inevitable, their unity is gone. This haunted, lonely place, in the middle of the arid desert, the sun beats down, wind storms bringing sand that cause their skin to turn raw, blind their eyes, gross dirt in their mouths, they can't breathe. And the universe is about to explode into chaos, the barbarian Ousters, have invaded the alliance, CEO, Meinia Gladstone, on Tau Ceti Center (its capital), the legendary head of the 150 billion citizens, of the Hegemony, in 200, dispersed worlds, believes the key to victory is these few humans. War which began because of this isolated planet, both want, threatens to destroy 500 years of progress, even the existence of the race of mankind. "Farcasters", portals to the stars, a type of wormhole, that instantly transports people and objects, food, merchandise, warships, anything essential to the survival of civilization,

to distant locations, without it, darkness. But the powerful, artificial intelligence machines who control these, are becoming tired of being second to the less intelligent, arrogant, weak, unreliable, silly, corrupt people, who call themselves their masters! A widespread secret conspiracy between the Shrike, Ousters, the tree loving, Templar Brotherhood, and evil machines, to eliminate the rule of the descendants, of the lost Earth... Some pilgrims begin to disappear, the Shrike finally is seen, the eight mysterious Time Tombs light up, explored by the group but they find nothing inside. And the battle for the great prize, Hyperion, is observed by the calm pilgrims, her cities pulverized, vulnerable residents, slaughtered, while the rapid spaceships maneuver above, in the night sky, as crew members fight for life, a light show of death, for the unfortunates ones , but strangely below, they are quite indifferent to the outcome, welcome to the 28th Century...A cybrid, part human, and the other machine, the reincarnation of famous English poet John Keats, dreams about the outcome on crucial Hyperion, Gladstone needs him to discover the truth, what she can do to win, maybe...

Michael Finocchiaro says

The sequel to Simmons' classic Hyperion is every bit as engaging and mind-blowing as the first book. The book picks up just where Hyperion leaves off, with the pilgrims at the Time Tombs and war with the Ousters imminent. We are presented with a few new characters - a cybrid named Joseph Severn who is far more than he appears and the CEO of the Web Meina Gladstone. Severn is capable of dreaming the dreams of the pilgrims and we follow their adventures primarily through his connection to them. The story is exciting and a page turner - I risk massive spoilers by going into any details or specifics. There are lots of mind-bending concepts here - farcasting, the All Thing, the metasphere, the River Tethys, hawking drive (and an explicit admission of this homage to Stephen Hawking) - all of which add a fantastic technical edge to the book.

Without going into spoiler territory, I thought I would talk about some of the interesting themes that are addressed in the book. The organized religions here - Catholicism, the Shrike Cult and the Templars - are all interesting studies. I suspect that Simmons is himself a Catholic due to the sympathetic treatment they receive. The Templars are environmentalists (another theme I will address in a minute), whereas the Shrike Cult are fanatical pessimists. The default religion is a form of Zen Buddhism. All of the religions take a big hit in the book. I think that Simmons was trying to show how these various ways that organized religion tries to deal with a catastrophe: denying it, embracing it, trying to manipulate it, and fleeing it. The embracing and fleeing techniques seem to have been the ones that were best rewarded.

I mentioned the environmentalist bent earlier. The Templars seem to accept the judgement in the book as payment for mankind's destruction of the environment in the galaxy, going so far as to calling the human presence a cancer. As Simmons took lots of time describing the beauty of the worlds he invented such as Maui-Covenant with its motile islands replete with dolphins and whales, he also condemns harshly the destruction wrought on them by Web tourism (by extension, the destruction of various tropical paradises by mass tourism on Earth). He seems to be a bit pessimistic about our ability to change preferring a reboot.

The theme that is the most striking and perhaps the most visionary for this work of the early pre-Facebook 90s is the Web and the Core, or TechnoCore. At the heart of these two books on Hyperion is a reflection on our endorsement of technology over humanity - our willingness to give away privacy for the convenience of access to data and experiences. There is a massive warning here of the repercussions of this surrender. Given the power that Facebook (and Apple and Google and Amazon, etc) has over nearly everyone on the planet, the lesson is even more relevant now than it was in the 90s. The nightmarish use of human brain power to feed the intelligence of the Core is has been addressed in dozens of sci-fi (The Matrix being one particularly example) movies since 1990 - I wonder if Simmons was at the origin of this trope or not. In any case, it gives me pause when I think about my own personal investment in social media and its possible long-term impact. It is certainly an aspect of the book that resonates 27 years later.

As for the narrative and the writing, it is just as well-written as Hyperion with some great poetry citations from Yeats and Keats (and my favorite character, the irascible Martin Silenas). I thought that there was a moment where the text plodded a bit towards the end (Keats sections), but I cannot really offer an example. Another thing that struck me was how unpredictable the novel seemed, particularly in the middle. In any case, it did not for me take away from the overall impression I had about this book - fascinating, visionary, and entertaining, a sci-fi classic. I wonder if the two Endymion books are as good...
