



The Fall: The Land of Amun Saga: Book Two

Alex Mizgailo

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Allied adventurers develop strong camaraderie in the face of ongoing conflicts in the jovial fantasy novel The Fall.

Set in the aftermath of a battle, Alex Mizgailo's sprawling fantasy novel *The Fall* concerns the death of a wizard and ongoing adventures.

In the aftermath of the undead wreaking havoc upon the village of Springdale in the Land of Amun, and as villains and dungeon wolves close in, people are left to fend for themselves. Lycah, an ancient werewolf and the last apprentice to the wizard Tarthal, is desperate to find an antidote to her sudden, worrying signs of aging. And deep underground in the mountain dungeon, adventurers—a dwarf, a young soldier, an alien assassin, a healer, and an elf, led by a satyr—trek deeper into treacherous caverns.

Filled to the brim with magic and the rules of alchemy and elixirs, the book is reminiscent of role-playing games. Its action evokes strategic problem solving and unique mixes of teamwork between the unlikely allies. The magic and abilities displayed by Lycah are expansive too, ever adapting to new conflicts. Meanwhile, the visceral worldbuilding conveys the gore of magical sacrifices while fleshing out a bevy of climates and referencing a variety of creatures (including orcs, unicorns, and cerberuses) encountered in the dungeons.

The story is narrated from a variety of perspectives, including those of the adventurers, Lycah, a chieftain of bandits and heretics, the Springdale tavern keeper, and members of the warriors' guild. A great deal of the conflict between different factions of creatures is suggested through these narrations. However, the dispersed focus also results in an overcrowded narrative. With so many viewpoints included, and with so many jumps between narrative arcs, the consistency of the book's action and character interactions falls to the wayside. Further, individual characterizations are rushed through, their inner worlds and interpersonal relationships neglected as the book works to be all-encompassing. Indeed, the characters' voices are often too interchangeable to help with distinguishing among them.

Still, interest is generated as the allied adventurers develop strong camaraderie in spite of their differences. As the story continues, they begin to change their behaviors and learn to trust one another. The book's tonal shift from dark and threatening to jovial is jarring, even though the cast choosing to laugh in the face of death is compelling. The foreboding ending revives earlier concerns, though: Springdale careens toward another perhaps devastating battle as those in power clash, threatening all those in between.

In the busy fantasy novel *The Fall*, ongoing battles are the backdrop for magical trickery, entertaining fights, and a new quest.

NATALIE WOLLENZIEN (April 30, 2026)

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