



Last to Rise

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The concluding volume of the Rojan Dizon series where magic must save a city on the eve of its destruction.

The towering vertical city of Mahala is on the brink of war with its neighbouring countries. It might be his worst nightmare, but Rojan and the few remaining pain mages have been drafted in to help.

The city needs power in whatever form they can get it -- and fast. With alchemists readying a prototype electricity generator, and factories producing guns faster than ever, the city's best advantage is still the mages.

Leading the alchemists is Rojan's sister, with a risky plan to help tap the mages' strength and overcome the armies marching towards them. With food in the city running out and a battle brimming that no one is ready for, risky is the best they've got . . .

Last to Rise Details

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From Reader Review Last to Rise for online ebook

Rachel says

This book was recommended for me via Flipboard.

I personally loved this entire trilogy. The dystopian world is gritty and detailed, the storyline is entertaining (while somewhat predictable in places) and the main characters are beautifully flawed and interesting.

While several reviews have hinted at misogyny and potential religious slander, there are plenty of little gems about this book that I loved. An awesome femme fatal, a brilliant bromance between the two main characters and an unexpected twist at the end of the trilogy.

Dark Faerie Tales says

Review courtesy of Dark Faerie Tales

Quick & Dirty: A city under siege and desperate times calls for desperate measures.

Opening Sentence: "There is perhaps, some universal truth that no has seen fit to tell me about."

The Review:

Rojan is back, his brother Perak is the Archdeacon, and being a Mage is no longer illegal. Sadly the enemy is literally at the gate and times are quite crazy! This book picks up not long after the end of book 2, which I think I have reviewed all three books for you guys! Rojan definitely hits the ground running, while tracking someone he stumbles across a powerful female mage, Halina, whom he convinces to return to the top with him. Together all of the pain Mages will play an important part in the safety of Mahala.

The Storad have been besieging Mahala for weeks now, and food is running out and power is running out. The tunnels have provided a sneaky way for the enemy to enter, and Pasha, Jake and Rojan must find away to keep them out. Battles ensue, tunnels collapse, but when the Storad come right through the main gate they all know the real fight is on. How many will die trying to save this city?

My biggest problem with this series is that Rojan is a bit of an jerk. It works sometimes, and other times I think this guy can't be a more stereotypical guy than that. The second book Before the Fall was definitely my least favorite book of this trilogy, it suffered greatly from feeling like just filler. I really enjoyed the first book, and I really did enjoy this book. I was totally shocked and dismayed by the ending. Rojan grows a ton in this book, which I was so glad to see. We even get to see whom he really loves, and what he is willing to do for everyone.

This is an action packed book from the start, it will keep you on the edge of your seat waiting to see who is going to make it through, will anyone even make it through? Will the city fall? I feel like I had so much to say until I sat down to write this review and drew a blank. All the things I want to talk about, rave about, are like major spoilers. Seriously, so much mind blowing stuff happens in this book. Honestly I liked this book, but was more than a little disappointed in book 2, so I had decided to not finish the series. I am so glad this was in my review stack. This book really brought back what I enjoyed about this series. That despite the jerky things Rojan thinks he really is a Mage with a heart of gold. He truly cares about so many and despite

being afraid he continues to move forward and keeps going until the bitter end.

In that aspect he is everything you want in a heroic main character. I was a little upset by how unrealized his romance and love was until it was almost too late. It did add an element of tragedy to the story though. This was a great last book, sometimes they just leave you hanging. And while this does, it really kind of doesn't, and it isn't the typically way to wrap up a trilogy. If you looking for a interesting science fiction/fantasy trilogy look no further.

Notable Scene:

"If that point made it easier to stay alive, well, that's always a bonus."

"We were legal, most of them said, because the Archdeacon was too pure and holy to understand how evil we were, and also he was cursed with a merciful heart and a mage for a brother."

"I've always been a superb liar."

"There were on their way through them."

"Peace was what I wanted a respite from the ever present fear, a respite that I'd only ever found in two places."

"It was black, had never really been away, was singing sweet nothings in my ear."

"It was down to me."

FTC Advisory: Orbit/Hachette Book Group provided me with a copy of Last to Rise. No goody bags, sponsorships, "material connections," or bribes were exchanged for my review.

Arthur Zhang says

The Rojan Dizon series was always packed with dark emotion and barely contained rage, and I enjoyed every second of all 3 books.

The worst thing I can say about this book is that it was predictable. But that's to be expected as the events have been building up for the past 2 books, and for Pasha, Jake, and Rojan, they're just too broken for redemption or salvation. Pasha and Rojan both fall into the black; something not unexpected in the least, and Jake is just too brittle to go on.

The ending is sad but powerful, and Rojan finally gets the rest he wants and deserves. He never wanted to be a hero, do great things, or anything. He just wanted to rest, see the sun, and be happy. But he was dealt a shit hand in life and fought against it his entire life. And in the end, he changed the world for the better.

Henry Lazarus says

Francis F. Knight has another strange background, a city built on the edge of a cliff and magic that requires pain to work. Mahala is under siege by enemies determined to destroy their new acceptance of the wizards of

pain. Rojan Dizon apparently was responsible for the rise of these wizards in the first two books of this series. In *Last to Rise* (paper from Orbit) he, not only has to find potential wizards, he has to find a way for his city to survive and face a major sacrifice himself. I'm thinking about reading the first two tales in this dark, albeit fun tale. Review Printed in Philadelphia Weekly Press

Trish says

Rounds off the series with a decent conclusion (although it dragged a little bit in places), and perhaps leaves it open to revisit the world again.

Josh says

My oh my! I think that my favorite series of books in recent memory are the 3 books in the Rojan Dizon series. The ending of the this book is so satisfying that I actually cried. It's hard to write a synopsis of the 3 books, but I wanted to inform anyone who enjoys a good dystopian yarn should read all three. The setting is the key: Mahala, a city built in a valley that outgrew its boundaries by building up, very far into the sky. It lies in the middle of a trade route so a monopoly is achieved, creating all of the necessary wealth and divisions that the most powerful cities have. The lower classes are really low and the upper classes are literally as high as can be. Fear rules everything, and the people are despondent. Needless to say, that's a perfect setting for a revolution, and boy, does the author deliver. Her language is understandably coarse for she's writing from our hero's perspective, one of the downtrodden. Her command of language is excellent, funny and poignant at all of the right times. The dialogue rolls right off of the page in a fast-paced adventure that never lets up. You feel goopy and dirty as Rojan takes on the powers that be and himself. This isn't your typical hero-story so start at page one of *Fade to Black* and hop on for the rise. You won't regret it.

Daniel says

Last to Rise is the final book in a trilogy (all published in 2013), and I'm sorry to say that I never read the first two books. This was a review copy, provided by the publisher. I figure that if the publisher thinks it's fine to read only the last book, then that's what I'll do. But I always felt a little behind while reading this. That I wasn't 'in' on the story that was central to getting to this point.

That said, I found the characters and the world-building extremely well-crafted and enticing. Despite feeling 'behind,' I kept reading because I wanted to learn more about the blending of magic and science. I also found the gritty world, built up, out of a valley where social status is literally equivalent to the physical living status to be very intriguing. It's a perfect set-up for a civil revolution. The city (Mahala) is as much a character in this book as the human kind. This was an area that I suspect we learned more about in previous books.

The use of magic is certainly not new in fantasy (in fact it's hard to find a book without it!) but the idea that using one's magic actually causes pain in the user, is a new and quite wonderful concept. (Okay, I now anticipate my blog readers sending me emails about all the other times it's been used, trying to show me how much I don't know!)

The characters themselves, particularly our main character, Rojan Dizon, seem unique and perfectly suited to this fantastic world. Here again, though, I felt as though the crucial information about who he is, came in the

earlier books. I recognize that authors need to find that right balance of not boring the readers of early novels with redundant information, but informing the new readers of all that's necessary.

There's a lot to admire here, but I think it would behoove anyone considering this, to check out the earlier part of the trilogy first. I know I intend to do so.

Looking for a good book? Wonderful world-building and characters make this a strong book, but check out the first two parts of the trilogy before making the journey.

This review originally published in blog Looking For a Good Book.

Sine says

Fazit:

Und auch im dritten und letzten Teil geht es spannend weiter und es läuft auf ein Showdown hinaus. Das Ende ist wirklich überraschend und ich habe einfach nur mitgefiebert. Eine Reihe die wirklich gewachsen ist.

Bewertung:

Das ist der dritte Band der Reihe.

Ich kam wieder super in die Geschichte rein, da ich mich noch sehr gut an Teil 1 und 2 erinnern konnte. Auch an den gewöhnungsbedürftigen Schreibstil habe ich mich bereits gewöhnt.

Es geht weiter mit den Storad, die vor der Tür stehen und in die Stadt wollen. Dadurch werden die Lebensmittel auch knapp. Weiterhin sind jetzt endlich Magier erlaubt, aber nicht jeder traut sich zu erkennen zu geben und auch nicht jeder weiß davon. Aber diese werden unbedingt gebraucht. Also geht Rojan mal wieder los und versucht die Stadt zu retten.

Dieser letzte Teil ist einfach nur noch spannend. Ich warte darauf, wie alles gelöst wird. Letztendlich wird am Ende noch einiges offen gelassen, welches mich aber nicht so gestört hat.

Wieder dabei mein Antiheld Rojan. Der natürlich wie eh und je eher schlecht gelaunt ist und irgendwie doch immer was nützliches tut. Irgendwie produziert er viele Probleme auch selber, aber er auch irgendwie seinen guten Kern. Bei ihm ist eben vieles einfach "irgendwie". Er ist meistens total selbstsüchtig und denkt nicht nach, aber er ist eben kein Held und auch keine Figur, die zum Lieben geschrieben worden ist. Er ist eben der Antiheld, den ich trotzdem in mein Herz geschlossen habe.

Natürlich sind auch die altbekannten in perfekter Manier dabei.

Erlat finde ich immer noch sehr cool, auch wenn ich sie nicht so recht durchschauen kann. Und auch habe ich ein Herz für Pasha entwickelt, was ich ja im ersten Band nie so gedacht hätte.

Neu dabei ist Halina, sie ist schlagfertig und eine Magierin. Ich mag sie wirklich sehr gerne, weil sie so Taff ist und sich nicht die Butter vom Brot nehmen lässt. Eine wirklich starke Frau.

Erica Wagner says

A satisfying conclusion to a wonderful trilogy. A compelling and well-rendered world, a wonderful magic system, and an intriguingly flawed protagonist. Francis Knight is definitely a new star in the genre, and I hope she writes some more fantasy soon.

Warning, this review does contain spoilers.

This installment keeps the wry, snarky tone of the earlier volumes, but it's darker overall. Things are very desperate for Mahala and the characters, and there is little breathing space between crises. The three volumes read more like sections of one long book than three stand alone stories, so Last to Rise really reads as the climax of an epic length novel. This is, perhaps, a mild flaw for it as a stand-alone. I missed the little bits of daily life and the interactions between the characters. Except for one interlude between Rojan and Erlat, there really wasn't any time for banter or connection between characters.

I was steeling myself for a tragic ending to the tale, though I was also wondering how the author would pull this off in a first person, past tense narrative. I expected Rojan to sacrifice himself to either Namrat or the Black, and there were plenty of hints that the story was heading in one of these directions. Still, I'm a sucker for happier endings, so I'll admit I was hoping he'd manage to pull something off and escape with his mind mostly intact at least.

And I really did want him to get with Erlat at the end. He acknowledged his feelings for her before he stepped into the machine, at least, but it's hard to know for sure if this was just one more of Rojan's "always wanting a woman he can't have" sorts of things.

Erlat was really a fascinating character, and I wish we could have seen a bit more of her.

So overall, I was a bit let down by the ending. Felt pretty unsurprising. But there was a poignancy to it. The ending with Rojan telling the Lady to F off while in the black worked well and was just what he'd do. I have mixed feelings about the pov shift to Allit at the end for the epilogue. The scene explained what actually had happened, but it did leave things a bit ambiguous.

Overall, though, it was a very good conclusion to a very different and refreshing sort of second-world fantasy novel.

Whatever Knight writes next, I must read it!

Nikki Albert says

The city rises upwards not across. Those at the bottom, as you might imagine are rather downtrodden and rarely see light, or much of it anyway. Those at the top, in the clouds, are living on cloud nine; that would be the Ministry. You do Not cross the Ministry. Rojan freed the Downsiders from the Pit they resided in and when doing so he doomed the city to starvation unless he can do something about it. He may act like he doesn't care about much but people are beginning to crack the code about him. Pain mages have been made legal in order to get the city running, which they must because they have an army at both their gates ready to pick the city apart should they fail. They desperately need power, and more pain mages to help.

There is a great deal about this novel that just works. It is a great last novel. The second novel was one of those typical build-up novels where nothing too much happens but it builds up in tension to this novel. So

from the start we have a 'situation' and a lot of tension. In the last novel Rojan was betrayed by Dench, who now works for the army waiting outside of the city and has some rather hateful feelings towards Rojan now. Speaking in general terms though this novel has love found, friends lost and sacrifices made. All powerful concepts to include into a novel. So it is fast paced and powerful. The ending is perfect for the trilogy.

Worth getting to. Great read.

Adam Whitehead says

Mahala is under siege. The Storad are poised to storm the city and seize its monopoly on trade across the continent. The Archdeacon is powerless to stop the cardinals and other high-ranking members of the city's elite from fleeing. It falls to Rojan Dizon and his accomplices to find a way of saving the vertical city or seeing it destroyed.

Concluding the Rojan Dizon trilogy, Last to Rise picks up on dangling plot threads from Fade to Black and Before the Fall and attempts to tie them together nicely in a suitably epic conclusion. It more or less succeeds. Character arcs are concluded - in some cases rather tragically - and the underlying social and economic problems of the city are used to fuel a transformative finale.

Knight continues to build on the successes of the previous volume: Rojan Dizon's character growth into a more mature individual continues and there is further development of the worldbuilding and feel of the city, which actually feels more like a place where people could live and work now than in the first volume, when it felt like a bit more of a painted backdrop. The magic system continues to be innovative and well-thought-out (and it's a nice twist that Rojan actually can't use anywhere near as much of it as the other, more inexperienced mages due to his own psychological issues). Where the book falters is its pacing and how it impacts on the characters. There's a huge amount of plot going on here and this pushes some of the supporting cast into the background. Most surprisingly, we still get very little in the way of appearances from Jake, one of the major and more interesting characters of the first novel, who has now been relegated firmly to the sidelines.

The ending of the novel is interestingly ambiguous, balancing tragedy with moments of triumph, and leaves things open-ended enough so that future books with these characters remains possible. But for now, this is a reasonably satisfying ending.

Last to Rise (***/2) is a worthy conclusion to an intriguing debut trilogy.

Timothy Pecoraro says

"Goddess save me from idiots and holy men.."

Rojan, Last to Rise.

I have to admit that Last to Rise was a very anticipated novel for me. It is the third and as far as I know final book in a trilogy of books, which the first one was Fade to Black which came out back in January of this year. Yes an entire trilogy in a year. The book, as part of the trilogy is amazing. Everything is coming to a

head, the Storad are at the gate; literally. Things are going to get much worse before they get better. The story is well handled and while there are new characters introduced. None shine as brightly as the characters who have been there from the beginning. I find myself at a loss when I talk about Last to Rise because with the trilogy over I mostly think about the trilogy as a whole. Nothing ends the way one might expect and I have to admit Last to Rise has one of the best Epilogues I've ever read. No matter what Francis Knight writes next, I definitely NEED to read it.

Cameron says

A solid enough conclusion to the series. The writing kept getting better and better, though I felt the plot strayed from time to time, and occasionally I even got lost as to where the characters were and what was going on. I realized, though, that these were merely quick transitions meant to jar the reader a bit, as I sensed a pattern to them as the book went on.

I enjoyed the series, especially the expansion of the world the story was set in. I wouldn't mind seeing even more of this, as well as stories of the relations between the central characters of the Mahalians and the neighboring civilizations. Stories set in their historical past would make for pretty interesting reads as well, I think.

Overall the author has created a pretty rich world to explore, and I'd definitely pick up more books set in this world.

Normalene says

This is the third in the series about Rojan Dizon and the vertical city of Mahala. The city is under siege by the invading Storad, the few remaining and mostly-untrained mages are lost as to how to save the city and it seems only a miracle will do the job. But that is Rojan's stock-in-trade and the miracle that he pulls off is both massive and heartbreaking at the same time. This is another of those books where it seems no one wins at the end; but getting there was a total rush. The whole series has been very dark with only a few glimpses of the lighter side of Mahala, but as with Janine Cross's dark Dragon Venom series, life is not always a box of chocolates and the hell the main character goes through shows his or her character off to its best or worst as they strive to overcome what seems insurmountable. I can't wait to see what Mrs. Knight will write for us next.

Rusty's Ghost Engine (also known as..... Jinky Spring) says

So..... um..... man this book was such a boring finale there was just too much description of pointless mundane things and the term "we are screwed" was used far too much.

What happened in this series:

Basically everything started when Rojan's niece was abducted and taken down to the pain factories. Then the archdeacon (city's ruler) who turned out to be Rojan's father was framed and killed by Rojan when he made his father's face look like his using his pain magic when he discovered his father was the one who invented

the pain factories. His father had had Rojan's niece abducted especially to get Rojan down in the pit to help with the pain factories and promised him a life of power. Rojan then destroyed all the Glow which was made from the suffering of children causing the city to black out and making two neighboring nations the storad and the mishans realize the city wasn't powerful anymore. The archdeacon was then killed by his own guards after Rojan had destroyed the Glow thinking it was him, Rojan's brother Perak became the new archdeacon and also promised to make a fairer city but was faced with a lot of opposition from other officials and cardinals who had different views of how the city was to be ruled. This caused the storad to want to destroy the city of Mahala or at least take it over so that it wouldn't be in the way of its trade route.

What happened in this book wasn't much just that there was a vast over description of fear as the Storad slowly broke their way into the city and made their way to the topmost part of the city, top of the world the heart of the ministry. It was described that a lot of cardinals escaped to outside with the mishans by bribing them with a lot of goods and money, it was not clear however what happened to them once they left. To bring the war to a close Rojan hooks himself up to an unpredictable machine his sister the genius Lise made that uses pain magic to make a kind of force field of sorts to keep the enemies out. Rojan's friend Pasha died in this machine and when Rojan hooks himself up he finally gave in to the black (a kind of blissful madness that came with using pain magic) turning himself into an unresponsive vegetable but still alive and in enough pain to power the machine that kept out the storad. Oh and he also triggered a load of explosions that got rid of the upper levels of the city which not only destroyed the ministry but it also let in light to under. There were statues made of him in the martyr sections of the temples. That's it.

Well my first thought on finishing was that this book could have been made shorter. Like I said before it just felt like the book focused too much on the everyday lives of the characters when it could have been more sped up towards the action at the end. I liked how Rojan came to be a better person and how he developed through the series because I really didn't like him at first. I also feel that to make it more exciting the last two books could have been squeezed together into one so that more would have happened. I also would say that the narrative and descriptions weren't very good because I never really felt I could connect with the characters and the city (even if in a fantasy world) could have been better explored. The idea of a vertical city was just too wasted here..

Here are a few pictures I have from my Facebook that remind me of Mahala:

This made me think of Mahala once I knew it was a fantasy world dunno why but there are similarities....

This definitely makes me think of Mahala once the upper levels were destroyed allowing those under to see the sky. Hehe it was even snowing during the final events of this book what a coincidence (even though the figure kind of reminds me of slender man)

shrug
