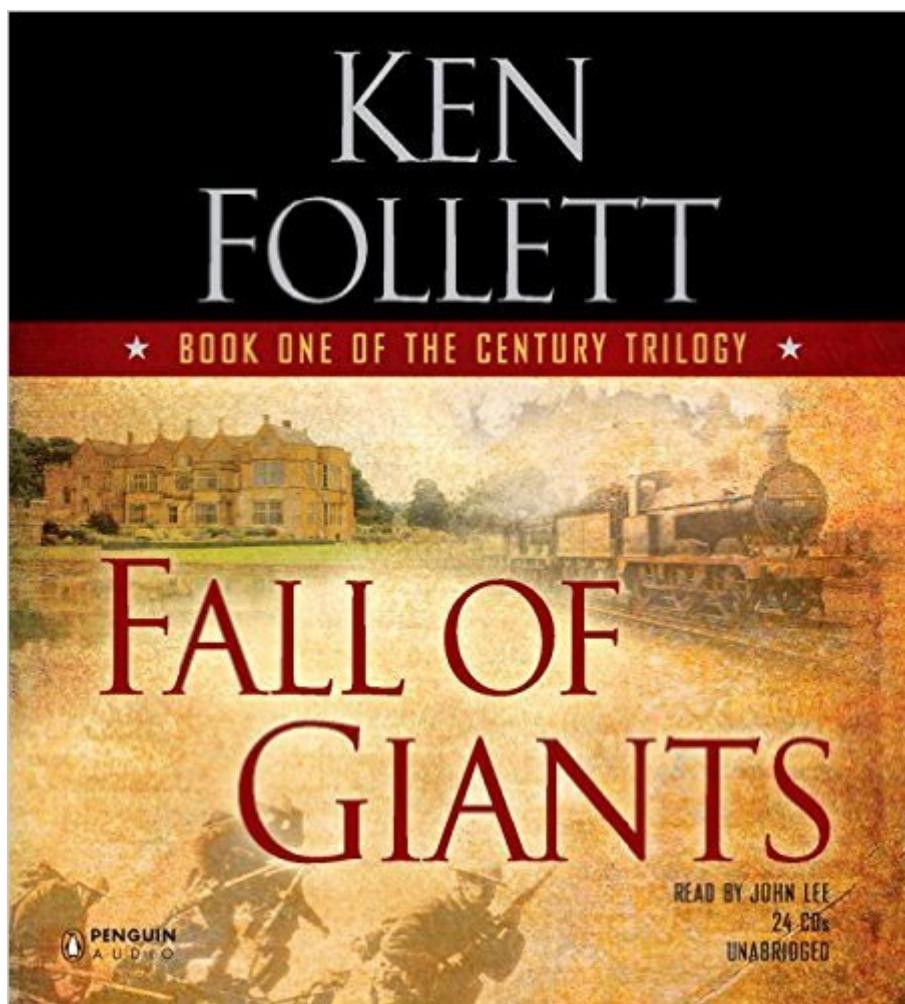


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Fall Of Giants (Century Trilogy)



Synopsis

Unabridged, 24 CDs, 31 hours Read by TBA Ken Follett's *World Without End* was a global phenomenon, a work of grand historical sweep beloved by millions of readers and acclaimed by critics. *Fall of Giants* is his magnificent new historical epic.

Book Information

Series: Century Trilogy (Book 1)

Audio CD: 31 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (6,864 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

I thoroughly enjoyed Ken Follett's epics, "Pillars of the Earth" and "World Without End". Though they are hefty tomes, the pages flew. Thus I jumped at the chance to read and review Follett's latest epic, "Fall of Giants" which promises to be the first in The Century Trilogy. When it arrived from at ~1000 pages and 4 inches thick, I found myself contemplating one of the advantages of having a slim Kindle (I don't). When the thing comes out in hardback in September it could be used a murder weapon! But we all know that size doesn't matter when you've got an expert storyteller weaving an enthralling tale. I became so engrossed that I'd look up and 100 pages would have flown by. What is it that makes Follett so consistently "readable"? In "Fall of Giants" it's because the book is so well researched about the period (early 20th century especially WWI) with information on coal mining, trade unions, women's suffrage, protocols and manners of the minor royalty, politics, government, revolution and war. The story flows from this rich period but the riveting characters are at the forefront. Even the largely unsympathetic characters, such as the Earl, are made at least understandable because Follett thoughtfully portrays their motivations. There are few totally good or evil characters here, as it should be. (Though Follett seems none too fond of Russians and priests -

be they Catholic, Anglican or Orthodox!) In past reviews I have criticized authors that I believe would benefit from more editing (e.g., Steven King, John Irving) so why don't I find Follett's book to be too long? Because there are no slow spots, no political point pushing, and no self-indulgent purple prose.

This is a fantastic epic, the first in a planned trilogy by the author of *The Pillars of the Earth* (now a miniseries) and *World Without End*. I simply raced through the pages, unable to put this book down even though it was a hefty nearly 1000 pages. The story moves seamlessly and logically, starting in 1911 and ending in 1925, and has a large cast of characters -- all so beautifully developed that the reader comes to care about each one -- the good and the bad. A helpful **CAST OF CHARACTERS** is provided at the beginning of the book that may be copied and used as reference, but it is really not needed as the reader is introduced to each and they are so memorable that it's easy to keep them straight. The families are American, English, Scottish, French, German and Austrian, Russian, and Welsh. There are Lords and Ladies, Dukes and Duchesses, Kings, Queens, Earls, Dukes -- even the servants, miners, and other assorted people populate this work of fiction. The author has also inserted real historical figures into the story, and their interaction with Follett's characters is very well done. Book one of the **CENTURY TRILOGY** is set in Europe before, during and after World War I. From a mining town in Aberowen, South Wales, to the drawing rooms of the privileged aristocracy in Russia, Britain, Germany, and to the War Room in the White House of Woodrow Wilson -- the narrative captivates as it tells the tale of the people involved in the conflict and their lives during this period of change in the world.

When Ken Follett's *Fall of Giants* arrived I was stunned at the size of the book. Nearly a thousand pages were before me. Then I wondered why I was surprised. We're talking Ken Follett here. Regardless of size, Follett's books are imminently readable and *Fall of Giants* is no different. Perhaps the most amazing fact is that *Fall of Giants* is simply the first installment of a promised Century trilogy. Amazing, but not surprising. I can't wait. The story revolves around five European families from 1911 to 1925. This period of time encompasses the First World War. The period of late the Victorian Age was a time when society was rigid with "manners". The upper classes new their place and weren't shy about letting everyone else know their place as well. If the code of conduct was firmly set for the upper classes and royalty, so was it set for the lower classes as well! If you were a member of the "working" class you knew who your "betters" were and behaved accordingly. Life was hard and took its toll on the masses. Follett does a masterful job at describing the world as

it existed at that time and he spends a good deal of time examining the class struggle which went on in much of Europe during this time. His characters are so numerous that he provides an index of them at the book. In most cases he provides us with clear descriptions of those who inhabit his fictional world. I can only assume that character development will continue in the two additional books we are promised. I thought this was a strong point in Pillars of the Earth. The Fall of Giants is a sweeping novel not because of the time period it covers, only 14 years, but because of the story he is telling and because of the era in which it happens.

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