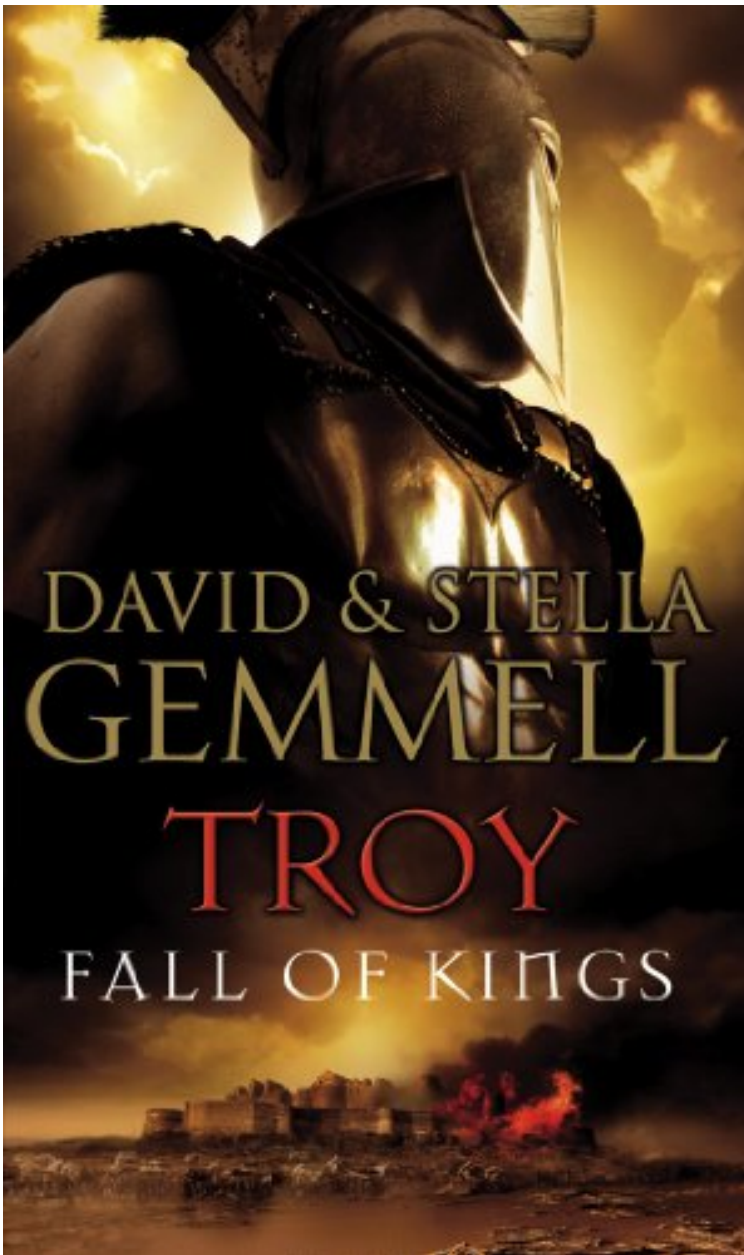


(Mobile ebook) File size: 71.Mb

# Troy: Fall Of Kings



*Par David Gemmell*  
*ePub | \*DOC | audiobook | ebooks |*  
*Download PDF*

Dtails sur le produit Rang parmi les ventes : #154494 dans eBooksPubli le: 2009-09-15Sorti le: 2009-09-15Format: Ebook Kindle

(Mobile ebook) Troy: Fall Of Kings

**Par David Gemmell : Troy: Fall Of Kings** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Troy: Fall Of Kings:

 Download

 Read Online

**Description :** Description du produitThe war to end all wars. High adventure and epic storytelling combine in the final novel in David Gemmell's bestselling Troy trilogy.

Prsentation de l'diteurDarkness falls on the Great Green, and the Ancient World is fiercely divided.On the killing fields outside the golden city of Troy, forces loyal to the Mykene King mass. Among them is Odysseus, fabled storyteller and reluctant ally to the Mykene, who knows that he must soon face his former friends in deadly combat.Within the city, the Trojan king waits. Ailing and bitter, his hope is pinned on two

heroes: his favourite son Hektor, and the dread Helikaon who will wreak terrible vengeance for the death of his wife at Mykene hands. War has been declared. As enemies, who are also kinsmen, are filled with bloodlust, they know that many of them will die, and that some will become heroes: heroes who will live for ever in a story that will echo down the centuries.

Chapter One Farewell to the Queen Helikaon stood at the stern of the Xanthos, staring back at the burning fleet. He felt no satisfaction as the flames lit the night sky. Removing his helm of bronze, he leaned against the stern rail and turned his gaze toward the east. Fires also were burning in the distant fortress of Dardanos, and the Xanthos headed slowly back toward them. The breeze was cool upon his face as he stood alone. No one approached him. Even the sailor at the great steering oar kept his gaze firmly fixed to the east. The eighty oars of the great vessel slid rhythmically into the night-dark water, the sound as regular as heartbeat.

Halysia was dead. The queen of Dardania was dead. His wife was dead. And his heart was a ruin. He and Gershom had climbed the steep cliff to where her body lay, little Dex snuggled up beside her, the black stallion waiting close by. Helikaon had run to her, kneeling and lifting her into his arms. There had been a savage wound in her side, and the ground around her had been slick with blood. Her head had flopped back, her golden hair hanging loose. Dex had cried out, Papa! and he had hugged the three-year-old to him. We must be very quiet, Dex whispered. Sun Woman is sleeping. Gershom lifted the boy into his arms. We jumped over it, Dex said excitedly, pointing to the chasm and the burned bridge. We ran away from the bad men. Helikaon cradled Halysia to him. Her eyes opened then, and she smiled up at him. I knew . . . you would come, she said. I am here. Rest. We will get you back to the palace and staunch your wounds. Her face was pale. I am so tired, she told him, and his vision misted as tears formed. I love you, he whispered. She sighed then. Such a . . . sweet lie, she said. She spoke no more, nor ever would, and he knelt there, holding her close. Across the chasm the sounds of battle grew closer. He did not look up. Hektor and the Trojan Horse had driven the Mykene along the defile toward Parnios Folly, and there the enemy had made its last stand. But Helikaon did not care. He stroked his fingers through Halysias golden hair and looked down into her dead eyes. Other men came climbing the cliff. They stood around him silently. At last he closed Halysias eyes. He gave orders for her body to be carried back to the fortress, then slowly made his way to meet Hektor. There is still some fighting to the northeast, Hektor told him. The enemy general tried to battle his way to the coast. We have them penned. Helikaon nodded. We took a few prisoners, Hektor said. One told us Agamemnon and a war fleet are on Imbros. I dont think we can hold here if they come. The Seagate is ruined, and my men are weary. I will deal with them, Helikaon said coldly. You finish the resistance here. Calling his men, he had returned to the Xanthos and set sail into the night. He had expected to face battle with a screen of war galleys protecting the main fleet, but the Mykene, with the arrogance of conquerors, believing themselves safe from attack, had beached their entire fleet on Imbros for the night. It was a mistake Agamemnon would rue. The Xanthos sailed serenely on, the burning fleet lighting the sky behind the great ship, the screams of the dying like the cries of distant gulls. The weight of guilt settled on Helikaon as he stood alone, and he remembered his last conversation with Halysia the previous spring. He had been preparing to raid along the Mykene coastline, and she had walked with him down to the beach. Be safe and come home to me, she said as they stood together in the shadow of the Xanthos. I will. And know as you journey that I love you, she told him. The words surprised him, for she never had said them before. He stood there in the dawn light like a fool, not knowing how to respond. Their marriage had been, as all royal weddings were, a union of necessity. She laughed at his confusion. Is the Golden One speechless? she asked. I am, he admitted. Then he kissed her hand. It is an honor to be loved by you, Halysia. I mean that with all my heart. She nodded. I know that we do not choose who to love, she said. And I know I have always known that you yearn for someone else. I am sorry for that. I am sorry for you. But I have tried, and I will continue to try, to bring you happiness. If it is just a portion of the happiness you have brought me, then you will be content. I know this. I am already content. No man could have a finer wife. With that he kissed her, then climbed aboard the warship. Such a . . . sweet lie. Memories cut into him like talons of fire. He saw black-bearded Gershom walking down the central deck. The big Egypteian climbed the steps to the stern. She was a great woman. Fine and brave. That was a mighty leap across that chasm. She saved her son. The two men stood in silence, both lost in their own thoughts. Helikaon stared ahead at the flames in the sky over the fortress. Warehouses had been set ablaze, along with many of the wooden buildings beyond the palace. Women and children had been killed, as well as many of the defenders, and the fortress city would be shrouded in grief this night and for many nights to come. It was close to midnight when the Xanthos finally beached again on the rocky shore directly below the ruined Seagate. Helikaon and Gershom walked slowly up the steep path. At the gate they met soldiers of the Trojan Horse, who told them Hektor had captured the

Mykene leader and several of his officers. They were being held outside the city. Their deaths should be long, their screams loud, Gershom said. Fewer than twenty Mykene had been taken alive, but they included their admiral, Menados. He was brought before Hektor on the open ground before the great Landgate. The few captured Mykene warriors, their hands bound, sat huddled close by. Hektor removed his bronze helm and ran his fingers through his sweat-streaked golden hair. He was tired to the bone, his eyes gritty and his throat dry. Passing the helm to his shield bearer, Mestares, he unbuckled his breastplate, lifting it clear and then dropping it to the grass. The Mykene admiral stepped forward, touching his fist to his own breastplate in salute. Ha! Menados said with a grim smile, the Prince of War himself. He shrugged and scratched at his black and silver chin beard. Ah, well, it is no dishonor to lose to you, Hektor. Can we discuss the terms of my ransom? You are not my prisoner, Menados, Hektor told him wearily. You attacked Helikaon's fortress.

You killed his wife. When he returns, he will decide your fate. I doubt ransom will be in his thoughts. Menados swore softly, then spread his hands. He stared hard at Hektor. It is said you don't approve of torture. Is that true? It is. You had better make yourself scarce, then, Trojan, for when Helikaon returns, he'll want more than our deaths. Doubtless he will burn us all. And you will deserve it, Hektor replied. Then he stepped in close, keeping his voice low. I have heard of you and of your many deeds of courage. Tell me, Menados, how does a hero find himself on a mission to murder a woman and a child? Menados gave Hektor a quizzical glance, then shook his head. How many dead women and children have you seen in your young life, Hektor? Scores? Hundreds? Well, I have seen thousands. Lying twisted in death on the streets of every captured city or town. And yes, at first it turns the stomach. At first I pondered the waste of life, the savagery and the cruelty. He shrugged. After a while and more mountains of corpses, I no longer pondered on it. How does a hero find himself on a mission like this? You know the answer. The first duty of a soldier is loyalty.

When the king orders, we obey. You will pay a heavy price for that loyalty, Hektor told him. Most soldiers pay a heavy price in the end, Menados replied. Why not just kill us now, cleanly? I ask this one warrior to another. I do not want to give the evil bastard the pleasure of my screams. Before Hektor could answer, he saw Helikaon walking past the captured men, the big Egyptian Gershom with him. Behind them came a score of angry Dardanians, knives and cudgels in their hands. Menados drew himself up to his full height and placed his hands behind his back, his expression stern and his face unreadable. Helikaon halted before him. You came to my lands with fire and terror, he said, his voice as cold as winter. You murdered my wife and the wives and children of my people. Is murder the only skill you Mykene ever seek to master? Ah, Menados said, we are to have a debate about murder? Had I won here, I would have been declared a hero of the Mykene, having defeated a king of evil. But I lost. Do not seek to lecture me, Helikaon the Burner. How

many helpless men have you killed? How many women and children died in your raids on Mykene villages? Beyond them the mob of Dardanians was moving in on the bound Mykene prisoners. Back!

Helikaon yelled, turning toward them. There are buildings burning in our city, and many there need help. Go! Leave these men to me. Helikaon stood in silence for a while. He glanced at Hektor. What do you say, my friend? he asked. You captured him. Hektor looked at his friend, seeing his anger and his need for vengeance. The road a soldier walks is narrower than a sword blade, he said. A step one way, and he weakens, becoming less of a fighter; the other, and he becomes a monster. Tonight he strayed from this path and is cursed for it. Menados' tragedy is that he serves Agamemnon, a man without pity, a man devoid of humanity. In any other army Menados would have remained true to his heart and been remembered as a hero. Before you make a judgment on the matter of his death, I will tell you one story, if I may. Make it brief, Helikaon replied. When I was a boy, Hektor went on, I heard the tale of a Mykene galley beached on the isle of Kythera, close to a fishing village. A fleet of pirate vessels came into sight, ready to raid the village, kill the men and the children, and enslave the women. The captain of the galley, though he had no links to the village or any friends there, led his forty men into battle against great odds. Twenty-two of his men died, and

he was severely wounded. But the village was saved. The people there still celebrate their day of deliverance. And that was you? Helikaon asked Menados. I was younger then and knew no better, he answered. Back in the summer, Helikaon said softly, I saw a soldier weep because in the midst of battle he accidentally killed a child. I led that soldier into the fight. I took him to that village, and I made him a murderer. You are correct, Menados. I have no right to lecture you or any man on the vileness of war. He fell silent and turned away. Hektor watched him, but his expression was unreadable. Finally Helikaon swung back to Menados. For the sake of that child and the villagers of Kythera, I give you your life. He turned to

Hektor. Have your men escort the prisoners to the shore. There is a damaged Mykene galley there. It is barely seaworthy. But let them take it and try to reach Imbros. Menados stepped forward and was about to

speak. Helikaon raised his hand, and when he spoke, his voice was cold. Do not misjudge me, Mykene. If ever I see you again, I will cut out your heart and feed it to the crows. The men of the Trojan Horse rode southwest from Dardanos until the city of Troy came into sight. Only then did Hektor ordered them to make camp in a wood just outside the city. There they sat, the night cold, a bitter wind leaching the heat from their campfires, their thoughts grim. Just beyond the hill their families waited, loved ones they had not seen for more than two years. On the brow of the wooded hill Hektor stood silently, a deep sadness clinging to his spirit. Tomorrow there would be a parade for those survivors, their entry into the city met with cheers. But the men who had given the most to this ghastly war would not ride through the flower-strewn streets or have garlands placed over their shoulders by adoring young women. The lifeblood of those heroes already had soaked into the soil of distant Thraki, their ashes scattered by the winds of a foreign land. Or they had drowned in the Hellespont or fallen before the walls of Dardanos. Even among the survivors there were those who would not enjoy the acclaim they deserved. A victory parade, according to Priam the king, was no place for cripples and amputees. By the gods, boy, no one wants to see the truth of war. They want to see heroes, tall and strong, striking and handsome. The comment had angered Hektor not because it was harsh and ungrateful but because it was true. And so he had ordered the wounded and the maimed to be taken to the healing houses after dark, ferried into the city in secret, as if covered in shame. Hektor glanced toward the wagons recently arrived from the city. Only one had brought food for his men. The other two were filled with two thousand new white cloaks so that the crowds would not see weary men exhausted by years of battle coming home bloodstained and filthy. Instead, they would gaze in wonder at shining heroes. His brother Dios climbed the hill to stand alongside him. A cold night, he said, drawing his white cloak more tightly around him. I do not feel it, answered Hektor, who was dressed in a simple knee-length tunic of faded yellow. From Publishers Weekly

In this last installment of David Gemmell's Trojan trilogy (following *Troy: Shield of Thunder*), Helen is a plain, mousy woman whose beauty is entirely of the inner sort, and Hektor is a cuckold left raising another man's son. Agamemnon is depicted as a rapacious predator seeking the riches of Troy to support the armies he needs to hold the territories he has conquered, and Priam a shadow of his former glory, brought low by an Alzheimer's-like disease. Strong characterizations and sturdy plotting evoke the horror of the conflict, and the story's mythic power. David Gemmell left the novel uncompleted upon his untimely death in 2006, but his wife, Stella, who did most of his research, has brought the books to a satisfactory conclusion. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.