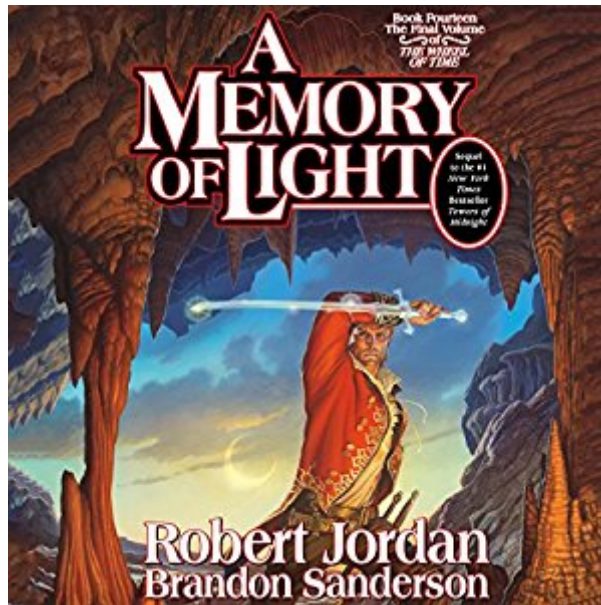


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A Memory Of Light: Wheel Of Time, Book 14



Synopsis

Since 1990, when Robert Jordan's *The Wheel of Time*® burst on the world with its first book, *The Eye of the World*, listeners have been anticipating the final scenes of this extraordinary saga, which has sold over 40 million copies in over 32 languages. When Robert Jordan died in 2007, all feared that these concluding scenes would never be written. But working from notes and partials left by Jordan, established fantasy writer Brandon Sanderson stepped in to complete the masterwork. With *The Gathering Storm* (Book 12) and *Towers of Midnight* (Book 13) behind him, both of which were number-one New York Times hardcover best sellers, Sanderson now re-creates the vision that Robert Jordan left behind. Edited by Jordan's widow, who edited all of Jordan's books, *A Memory of Light* will delight, enthrall, and deeply satisfy all of Jordan's legions of listeners. *The Wheel of Time* turns, and Ages come and pass. What was, what will be, and what is, May yet fall under the Shadow. Let the Dragon ride again on the winds of time.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

NOTE: I tried to make this review as spoiler-free as possible but still enjoyable for people that have read the book. You might not want to read it if you want to go into the book with an absolutely blank slate, but none of the book's surprises are spoiled if you do read it.-----I know there are no endings to the *Wheel of Time* and this is merely AN ending, but I still can't believe the *Wheel of Time* is over. This book is a perfect ending. The main theme of the *Wheel of Time* has always been balance between two opposing forces - saidin and saidar, Darkness and Light, good and evil. The

resolution of the story carries that philosophy to its logical place - there's no other way it could've ended. Don't go into this book expecting all your questions to be answered - some are, but a lot aren't. It feels right, though - there are far bigger things going on. Most of this book involves battles. Tarmon Gai'don is the Last Battle, and the stakes are truly desperate. The book does a great job of conveying the scale of this conflict, even though it's exhausting to read about. Any less, and it would've been too easy to win. The usual "no one dies" approach that the rest of the books have does not apply. Some very bad things happen to very good people, and death seems better than some of them. Our heroes are outnumbered and outmaneuvered, and it shows. Even at the end, you're not left feeling like it's been a great victory - you're horrified. There's still hope, though, and that's what matters. Of course, it's not all bleak - there are several moments where characters are really awesome, including some unexpected ones (Gaul, you are the man).

The *Wheel of Time* is finished. That's a statement that's going to take a while to get used to. The first volume of the series, *The Eye of the World*, was published in January 1990. George Bush Snr. and Margaret Thatcher were still in power and the Cold War was still ongoing. Fourteen books, four million words, eleven thousand pages and over fifty million sales (in North America alone) later, the conclusion has finally arrived. Can it possibly live up to the expectations built up over that time? It is a tribute to the plotting powers of Robert Jordan, the writing skill of Brandon Sanderson (who took over the series after Jordan's untimely death in 2007) and the hard work of Jordan's editors and assistants that *A Memory of Light* is - for the most part - a triumphant finale. Given the weight of expectations resting on the novel, not to mention the unfortunate circumstances under it was written, it is unsurprising that it is not perfect. The novel occasionally misfires, is sometimes abrupt in how it resolves long-running plot strands and sometimes feels inconsistent with what has come before. However, it also brings this juggernaut of an epic fantasy narrative to an ending that makes sense, is suitably massive in scope and resolves the series' thematic, plot and character arcs satisfactorily - for the most part. It is a familiar viewpoint that *The Wheel of Time* is a slow-burning series, with Robert Jordan not afraid to have his characters sitting around talking about things for entire chapters (or, in one case, an entire novel) rather than getting on with business.

I'm in the strange position of being both a fan of the *Wheel of Time* while also sympathizing with the complaints of detractors. While remaining, book after book, emotionally invested in the core group of characters and appreciating Jordan's acute storytelling, some things have to be acknowledged. It was too long. There were too many characters and storylines, and too many scenes inched along to

the point of rendering the reader comatose. In hindsight, then, it shouldn't have been surprising that the chickens came home to roost in "A Memory of Light." Key characters that we've gotten to know and love were killed off with hardly a backward glance, whereas the reunions of those who did survive were emotionally flat. Steven Erickson's mammoth "Malazan" series suffered a similar problem. When you build a big, bloated machine like this, the individual components inevitably get sold short in the end. Throughout the series, I often wondered about the contradiction between the "endless turning of the Wheel of Time" and "The Last Battle." That contradiction is not resolved in a coherent or satisfying manner. I also didn't care for the bargain-basement philosophizing between Rand and the Dark One. Most elementary-school graduates understand that good loses all meaning in the absence of evil, while life loses all interest in the absence of conflict. Surely the Dragon Reborn, with everything he's experienced and endured, and a supernatural being who has existed since the dawn of Creation can do better than this. I don't blame Brandon Sanderson. I think, in many ways, he was given an impossible task.

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