



The Lion of Comarre and Against the Fall of Night

Arthur C. Clarke

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This volume is a collection of two early works by Arthur C. Clarke. Originally published in 1968, it has been reprinted several times. Both concern Earth in the far future, with a utopian, but static human society.

Against the Fall of Night was later expanded and revised into a novel as *The City and the Stars*, one of Clarke's best-known works.

The Lion of Comarre has a similar theme. It is about a dissatisfied young man in search "something more" in a future society that believes it has discovered everything and ceases to advance. The two are not, however, in the same future history.

The Lion of Comarre and Against the Fall of Night Details

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Author : Arthur C. Clarke

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From Reader Review The Lion of Comarre and Against the Fall of Night for online ebook

Marie Winger says

Nice to read some vintage Clark. One of the highlights of my college career was the chance to hear him speak. These are wonderful stories. The first is the older and second is a novella length re-imagining of the same story. The first is a neat, tightly written short story. The second a more meatier tale. I liked Against the Fall of Night better. Both gave themes of future man becoming bored, complacent, uncreative and losing their curiosity as sentient machines run everything for them. Of course there will be one curious one born to upset the system.

Barbara Dycus says

I think I prefer the City in the Stars - mainly because I like how they travel to the different planets and describe them all. Make you wish we really could travel like that.

Mike says

This book contains 2 stories The Lion of Comarre and Against the Fall of Night. Both were written about the same time and there were some similarities in that they were both about civilisations on the decline and exploring cities that may or may not have held secret from the past.

The Lion of Comarre: When I read this I could have sworn that I had read it before, but I can't find it in any of my Clarke books or collections. It's not a bad story, but nothing to me jumped out as something that moves it above other similar stories.

Against the Fall of Night: I have read The City and The Stars before I read this and may be that coloured my views. This needed to be longer. There was so much potential that could have been expanded. That's not to say there was anything wrong with it, but it just didn't go far enough.

Charles Harrison says

I take back what I previously said about utopias. They can be interesting if they have a good enough twist like these two short novels have. 'The Lion' is solid and makes its point without dragging it out. The question of whether artificial bliss is morally ok is tackled well.

Against the Fall of Night portrays two conflicting utopias, immortal sophistication versus rural idyll. The constantly expanding viewpoint gives an impressive sense of scale and the end leaves you with a sense that is part of a much wider story. Any book which references millennia is going to be ambitious but this really gives that sense of enduring time.

Ralph Carlson says

I don't read Clarke as much as I used to and it is always nice to visit him again.

Javier Yáñez says

Dos novelas cortas, imaginando una humanidad en eras más allá de lo que podemos imaginar. Similares a lo que presenta El Fin de la Infancia o Cánticos de la lejana Tierra, personas viviendo en un mundo donde todo ya está resuelto por las máquinas (sin entrar en detalles innecesarios) pero que sin embargo tienen problemas humanos.

Son relatos extraños, no tienen nada que ver con sus cuentos o con historias como Rama en donde hay más "ciencia". Puede no gustarle a muchos de los amantes de la ciencia ficción, pero deben darle una probada y decidir.

Dave Creek says

Arthur C. Clarke's THE LION OF COMARRE and AGAINST THE FALL OF NIGHT are the real thing. They really are. Stories like these are the reason I love SF. Just spotting this volume at a used book sale made all the memories of when I first discovered the genre come rushing back. It was one of the first SF books I ever read, one of many I checked out from the Crescent Hill Library in Louisville, KY, and even just catching that first glimpse of this book's cover after all those years, plain and unadorned as it is, stopped me in my tracks.

THE LION OF COMMARRE is the story of Richard Peyton III, who defies both his family and his society to find the "dream city" of Comarre. No one who discovered it ever returned, and Peyton is determined to find out why.

AGAINST THE FALL OF NIGHT is the better-known work, if nothing else because Clarke later expanded it into the novel THE CITY AND THE STARS. Clarke himself in the introduction to this book says, "One day I would like to conduct a poll to discover which is the more popular version; I have long ago given up trying to decide which is the better one."

This is the story of Alvin, a resident of the city of Diaspar uncounted centuries from now. He's found a place where he can catch a glimpse of the "unending deserts" that surround the city. It's a place of perpetual wonder for him, and his curiosity leads him to want to leave Diaspar and discover the nature of the rest of the world.

Society doesn't look kindly on Alvin, either, and he ends up making several daring escapes in the course of the story.

Clarke acknowledges the similarities among the stories, saying, "Both involve a search, or quest, for unknown and mysterious goals. In each case, the real objectives are wonder and magic, rather than any material gain. And in each case, the hero is a young man dissatisfied with his environment."

Both these tales are pure "sensawonda" SF, and AGAINST THE FALL OF NIGHT, in particular, is one of

my favorites. Highly recommended.

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James Oden says

I must say I enjoy Arthur C. Clarke's writings. His crisp, articulate prose has an emotive effect that I just really dig. Also, of the sci-fi authors out there his generally falls into the category of hard sci-fi. Nothing seems magical other than the human condition (which is to say there is still a sense of wonder in his writing). This particular book is set of short stories that take place at what would seem the end of human history. In both cases he explores the juxtaposition of a stagnate society versus mans innate desire to explore and to grow. In each story the protagonist is a young man born into a world that has seemingly lost that explorers heart who by luck of the draw has this same heart. Each story the young man disillusioned by the stasis that has become human society follows the trail of some mystery that will lead the world back into a period of growth. Sometimes this trail is followed just out of pure instinct to explore, sometimes with rebellion, and always success is achieved despite the young characters naivete. That said the stories are definitely different and both merit reading. In some ways Arthur C. Clarke created a sort of Hebrew thought rhyme, but with two whole stories instead of just two lines, such that shared points are magnified.

Dean Parker says

Against the Fall of Night 214pages hardcover. It was o.k. but most action was done on hunches without due regard for hazards and risks. So much available technology, but no one remembers how it works, nor their own history. Too many leaps of faith to easily suspend disbelief. I'm hoping for more in The City and the Stars.

Kieran says

It's been years since I read any Clarke, but his sense of awe and wonder, combined with his imagination, has reminded me why I loved his works in the first place.

Shari Scott says

The Lion of Comarre was ok...familiar sci fi. Against the Fall of Night was a fascinating mystery, with lots of adventure and intrigue until the end. The end was terrible! I hate it when a good story is ruined by a rushed and incomprehensible ending. Darn!!

Matt says

Wow! My father read these two books to my brother and I when we were children. I remember at the time

being thoroughly enchanted, looking forward to the continuation of the story each night. Nearly 20 years later I re-read the two stories on my own and found them as amazing, imaginative, and well-crafted, as I had those 20 years earlier. These two stories are a couple of the greatest SF stories ever written. This is Clarke at his best.

Abel says

Dos relatos muy similares en temática y estructura, aunque más profundo el segundo (A la caída de la noche) sentí más emotivo el primero (El león de Comarre). Buena y recomendada lectura que mezcla la filosofía más simple con la ciencia ficción.

Raj says

This volume contains two of Clarke's earlier short works: *The Lion of Comarre* and *Against the Fall of Night*. I mostly acquired it for the latter, as its expanded version, *The City and the Stars* is one of my favourite stories and I wanted to see how the original compared.

I wasn't disappointed, either. The two stories are actually pretty similar, although obviously *Night* has less depth to it. Characters and broad plot outlines are pretty similar but *City* gives them more space to breathe and fills in details skimmed over in *Night*. Comparing the two, I think I prefer *City*, although this may be because it was the one that I encountered first, although I think that the larger word count does give the story more breadth and depth, particularly in the Seven Suns section.

I enjoyed *The Lion of Comarre* as well. The two stories were put together because they share similar themes, although *Lion* is set in the nearer future than *Night*, but also looks at a utopian society that may be stagnating and introduces change to it. I was quite amused by the opening sequence where Richard Payton's father tries to talk him out of joining a lowly 'engineering' profession in favour of the arts. Its inversion of roles reminded me of Monty Python's Nothern Playwright sketch and made me smile.

Daniel Kukwa says

An entertaining two-story collection, with the common theme of battling isolation, decadence & the evils of simply settling for ease and comfort. Clarke is just as enjoyable in concise format as he is in novel form; it's fascinating to compare "Against the Fall of Night" to the larger, more famous novel it inspired. This volume is Clarke as enthusiastic moral crusader, in distilled version...and that's absolutely OK by me.
