

THE ORPHEUS DESCENT PDF, EPUB, EBOOK



Tom Harper | 496 pages | 24 Oct 2013 | HODDER & STOUGHTON | 9781444731378 | English | London, United Kingdom

The Orpheus Descent by Tom Harper | Hachette UK

The Orpheus Descent Twelve golden tablets sit in museums around the world, each created by unknown hands and buried in ancient times, each providing the dead with the route to the afterlife. Archaeologist Lily Barnes is working on a dig in southern Italy and she has just found another Has she walked out of her job, marriage and her life? Her husband Jonah, refuses to believe it but no one can help him: not the police, not the secretive foundation that sponsored her life All Jonah has his belief, and a determination to do whatever it takes to get Lily back. Stress-Free Returns. Together Rewards. Something huge had to have happened and in this book, we see the hugeness of it, without becoming lost in dry explorations of man and mind. This book is unique in many ways. I thoroughly enjoyed it, and recommend it highly. This was a great story AND I learned some

stuff. I wasn't really sure what to expect with this, I had just heard that it was an ancient mystery thriller type story and had a Dan Brown feel to it so I was looking forward to it.

I'll admit I wasn't immediately hooked and I was feeling a bit lukewarm towards it until I got three or four chapters in but from then on I could hardly put it down. It's a dual timeline story and a lot of the time it felt like I was reading two separate tales but they were. This was a great story AND I learned some stuff. One aspect I was a bit worried about was that one storyline was told from the point of view of Plato, and his part of the tale is filled with Greek God's and philosophers and in truth I thought a lot of it might go over my head as the closest I've come to anything remotely like that was the time I watched Disney's Hercules. My fears were unfounded though, Plato and his contemporaries were a joy to read about.

Interesting, puzzling, fascinating I loved all of it. When we first meet Plato he is setting off from Greece by ship to meet his friend in Italy who has asked him to bring funding for a special book he has found but can't afford. The rendezvous hits a setback from the very start and Plato's task is to try and find his friend and solve the mystery surrounding the book he wanted to buy. Plato's modern counterpart in alternating chapters is Jonah, a band member who has recently come off tour and is keen to reunite with his archaeologist wife who he hasn't seen for the 6 weeks he's been off touring Europe. Like Plato his meeting doesn't go smoothly when his wife goes missing and as he tries to piece together the mystery that surrounds her disappearance we see the parallels to Plato's story start to unfold. The two stories are set more than years apart but by alternating chapters we see how closely they are intertwined and riddles posed in Jonah's chapters were usually answered in Plato's chapters and vice versa.

It's very well done. The only thing I wasn't keen on was the ending. The book held my interest right up to the conclusion but I found the ending unsatisfying. It just seemed a bit rushed and I just wasn't as enamored with it as I was the rest of the story. All in all a great story though and I plan to read all the other author's works too. Note: I received a free copy of this title from the publisher. I surrender! Picked this one up with the intention of giving something new a bash and find I am waving the white flag in shame after reading less than a hundred pages. The premise is an interesting one, with missing artefacts, time lapses, action and ancient philosophy, but the writing doesn't quite deliver.

I found Jonah, one of the leads, to be incredibly dull and a little simple, he didn't feel real enough for me to take him seriously and he kept making daft mistakes. On this basis I struggle I surrender! On this basis I struggled to feel involved as a reader and none of the other characters stood out at all. I suppose there is a chance that the writing gets better as the novel progresses, but as I got a quarter of the way through and saw no real improvement I had my doubts, so I didn't finish it. It feels like a bit of fiction released to offer as an alternative to Dan Brown fans that are looking for a different author that would be perfect as a beach read, not my cup of tea at all. Review I was really not sure what to expect with Orpheus Descent, I have to admit to owning all of Tom Harpers Books and reading none until now. They languish in my mountainous TBR to be read pile. So this was always going to be a new experience of style and plot.

Add to the above my love of ancient Greece, thrillers and the glowing praise filtering thr Review I was really not sure what to expect with Orpheus Descent, I have to admit to owning all of Tom Harpers Books and reading none until now. Add to the above my love of ancient Greece, thrillers and the glowing praise filtering through on Twitter, what choice did I have but to make Orpheus Descent my first Tom Harper read. For anyone not sure of Tom Harpers writing, go read this, it had me hooked from page one. It is however a teaser for the modern era side of the time-slip tale only but gives a great insight into Greek tycoon who acts as principle antagonist in both stories. The main thrust of the plot follows the two distinct and yet gradually blurring timelines. In the alternate plot-line Plato leaves Greece for Italy, to search for his friend Agathon.

It covers many myths and the thinking of the classical man. But while for me this slowed the pace of the plot, it also gave it a very very different edge and a much greater depth. The philosophical elements made you stop and contemplate what was meant, what was hidden, what was the meaning behind it. Writing this review is making me stop and re-examine some of the points of the book and its meaning all over again.

I think you could re-read the book and find something new every time. The story is very much a product of you the reader, at the time you read it, in the emotion that you read it in as much as what was written by the author. So do I recommend it... Of course. Any book that you can read again and again is right up there on the go read it list. Just go in with an open and inquisitive mind. Two time lines more than years apart, but still intertwining. The musician Jonah in present day and Plato many many years ago, are both looking for something. Their stories take turns, and as soon as you finish one chapter, you want to keep going with the same character, then you get sucked into the other character's story again and so on. There were questions from Jonah's chapters which you discover the answers to i3.

There were questions from Jonah's chapters which you discover the answers to in Plato's. It was really interesting to see how the world had changed during those years in the imagination of the writer. The book has also awoken my interest in Ancient Greece, which has been sleeping for more than 10 years. I'm thankful to the author for describing which characters were real and which weren't in the acknowledgements, to make it easier to hunt for more knowledge. The premise was promising but it fell flat. Messy plots and messed up characters. I don't see how the past and present connected at all. Was so thrilled with the archaeological bit but some where along the book, it lost its thrill. It was more of a philosophical book for me, which so many quotes from Socrates, Plato and the whole Athenian clan.

The soul being immortal was thought provoking. Would have loved the incarnations bit being explored further. The voices of Will, Reason and Desire was good. The premise was promising but it fell flat. The voices of Will, Reason and Desire was good. The rest was just meh. I seem to have hit a dual-timeline streak in my reading. Of the past dozen or so books I've read, at least five had dual or multiple timelines.

It's an interesting realisation, and while probably not indicative of a trend in publishing — dual-timelines have been around for ages — as a reader, it does give me a clearer view of what can go wrong or right when such a construction is used. Tom Harper's *The Orpheus Descent* is another dual-timeline book and one which does it very well, in my opinion I seem to have hit a dual-timeline streak in my reading. Tom Harper's *The Orpheus Descent* is another dual-timeline book and one which does it very well, in my opinion. The two timelines are clearly linked, but not dependent on each other, however, the braiding of the two narratives enriches the story as a whole and gives it added depth. The earlier timeline follows Plato, one of the most important philosophers in Western history. One of Socrates' disciples, he was hit hard by his teacher's execution by

his beloved Athenian state and for years he's set adrift, as were many of Socrates' other pupils.

This results in Plato taking ship for Italy after receiving a cryptic letter from one of his closest friends and one of Socrates' star pupils, Agathon. He sets out on a ship in the — rather unwanted — company of Euphemus, a sophist, someone who embodies everything Plato and Socrates before him disapproves of heartily. What follows is a long game of chase across the Greek colonies in Italy, one in which Plato never quite manages to catch up to Agathon, but does manage to piece together the mystery his friend has unearthed. It's a fascinating journey, not just in a physical sense, but also on a meta-physical level, as Harper manages to incorporate the seed questions to Plato's best-known teachings.

As such, he makes a convincing case for how Plato's departure from his Socratic principles came about. As the first-person narrator Plato is the character the reader becomes most closely connected to and he's a sympathetic and likeable character. Given to deep contemplation, he is a surprisingly action-driven character, who doesn't hesitate to act in any given situation. The more pragmatic and opportunistic Euphemus starts out as an unlikeable sod, but gradually becomes more sympathetic as Plato's perceptions of him and his ideas change. A more mysterious character whose motives remain somewhat obscured is Diotema. She possesses almost supernatural powers and while ostensibly she champions a good cause, I never came to trust her, even if Plato did. Plato's storyline ends where it began, in the Piraeus, the Athenian harbour, but the Plato who returns is a completely different person from the one who left, having learnt of mysteries beyond the ken of his contemporaries and going on to teach what he'd learnt in one of the greatest schools Athens would ever know.

The other timeline is contemporary and focuses on the story of Jonah, a musician who goes looking for his missing wife. Lily has discovered the same golden tablet as Agathon had and seemingly as a result has vanished. Foul play or not, Jonah is determined to find Lily, if only to get some answers, but in truth because he can't imagine living without the love of his life. Jonah was immediately sympathetic, you can't help but like him in his bewildered, grief-stricken state and tenacious faith in Lily. His story is a real thriller, including a secretive foundation, a cabal of Oxford friends, and a mysterious voice on the phone offering him help. The mystery surrounding Lily's disappearance is tangled, but Harper teases out the knots without leading the reader by the nose. Jonah is surrounded by frustrating characters: Lily's Oxford friends who seem to be hiding things left, right, and centre. None of them came off as very likeable, except for Julian, as you'd expect more of a sympathetic reaction to Jonah's plight instead of the rather callous brushing off he receives, telling him to let it go, because Lily has simply left him.

Similarly, Lily's mother and sister are as easily dismissive of Jonah, despite not having spoken to Lily themselves. In fact, other than Jonah, Lily, and Jonah's unexpected ally, Ren, the contemporary timeline is rather devoid of sympathetic characters. In essence, this serves to emphasize Jonah's increasing isolation as he searches for Lily. The contemporary timeline has more immediacy to it, which is logical due to its thriller-nature. However, even if Plato's timeline is of a more historical bent, it is still an exciting read, and no less enthralling than its companion.

In *The Orpheus Descent*, Harper blends historical fiction and thriller elements with classical Greek mythology, which ends in a gripping denouement in which the mystery of both timelines is revealed in a sequence that sucked me in and wouldn't let go for the last four chapters of the book. About this book Summary.

Book Summary. More about membership! Reviews Media Reviews Reader Reviews. Media Reviews "Starred Review. Author Information Biography. Tom Harper Tom Harper has written eleven historical thrillers - including *Lost Temple* and *Secrets of the Dead* - which have been translated into twenty languages. More Recommendations More Books. Readers Also Browsed. Find out more. Du Bois explores the Black experience in *Beautiful World, Where Are You* centers around four key characters, the most prominent of which are In the annals of Nazi crimes, the industrialized killing of human beings didn't begin with the Book Club Discussion.

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The Orpheus Descent a book by Tom Harper

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Many of these romantic liaisons occur in caves, caves carved out by the ceaseless flow of millennia of ocean currents. Their literary implication is obvious; Lily and Jonah frolic in the same water that Plato, and even perhaps Orpheus, knew. Knowledge defies time in continuous patterns; what we sought after then, we seek today. What better transitional device to establish the Platonic parallel story.

The novel is well paced, and both male protagonists experience terrifying odysseys in caves although they live 2, years apart.

The Orpheus Descent - Historical Novel Society

His books have been translated into twenty languages. He lives in York, England, with his wife and two sons. Description A cerebral literary thriller in the vein of Dan Brown, Matthew Pearl, and Sam Bourne, *The Orpheus Descent* follows classical philosopher Plato on a mysterious journey to Italy that will ignite a conspiracy that burns into the present. Product Details Price. Thrillers - Historical. Thrillers - Suspense.

Earn money by sharing your favorite books through our Affiliate program. Become an affiliate. Reviews "A cracking thriller. As such, he makes a convincing case for how Plato's departure from his Socratic principles came about. As the first-person narrator Plato is the character the reader

becomes most closely connected to and he's a sympathetic and likeable character. Given to deep contemplation, he is a surprisingly action-driven character, who doesn't hesitate to act in any given situation. The more pragmatic and opportunistic Euphemus starts out as an unlikeable sod, but gradually becomes more sympathetic as Plato's perceptions of him and his ideas change. A more mysterious character whose motives remain somewhat obscured is Diotema. She possesses almost supernatural powers and while ostensibly she champions a good cause, I never came to trust her, even if Plato did. Plato's storyline ends where it began, in the Piraeus, the Athenian harbour, but the Plato who returns is a completely different person from the one who left, having learnt of mysteries beyond the ken of his contemporaries and going on to teach what he'd learnt in one of the greatest schools Athens would ever know.

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While one of the books on my Anticipated Books List for the first half of the year, this book exceeded all my expectations and while this is the first book I've read by Tom Harper, I definitely hope it isn't my last. With *The Orpheus Descent*, Harper has firmly placed himself on my must-read list. This book was provided for review by the publisher. Jun 02, Joseph rated it it was ok. A tale of two men. One adventures through ancient Greece, fencing with thoughts. The other is a bit of a modern day dullard I never connected with.

I removed one star because of the latter but I did genuinely enjoy the other bits. Tom Harper has deftly blended fact, history, conjecture, maths, music, philosophy and modern day intrigue into a very cohesive whole. The narrative flits between Jonah's current search for his missing wife, Plato's historical search for his friend and an elusive book that allegedly shows the entrance to the underworld, and the days leading up to Jonah and Lily meeting and falling in love.

I wouldn't say the plot is as fast moving as something like the Da Vinci Code but it's as mysterious and intriguing. Tom Harper has deftly blended fact, history, conjecture, maths, music, philosophy and modern day intrigue into a very cohesive whole. I wouldn't say the plot is as fast moving as something like the Da Vinci Code but it's as mysterious and intriguing. *The Orpheus Descent* is more a book to be experienced and savoured like a good gourmet meal rather than rushed through like fast food. Some of the discussions on philosophy went a bit over my head, I've never studied any philosophy, but the main gist of it seemed to come down to one main thing: would a good man do something bad to do good?

Plato is searching for love, beauty and truth very bohemian! There are gods and goddesses, secret artefacts, people trying to prevent Jonah from finding both the artefacts and his wife, but Jonah is a man who never gives up. The author has taken Jonah's grief and shown it to us on the page, from every time he opens the door to his empty flat, wondering if this time he'll see her, or the way his heart jolts when the phone rings, hoping it is Lily.

It's a wonderful, engaging read and makes me want to learn a bit more about philosophy. I'd heard of Plato and Socrates, but that was about it. This book brings them and their philosophies vividly to life and it's a book you think about long after the last page is turned. Review copy from amazon vine UK Aug 05, Victoria rated it it was ok Shelves: mystery-thriller, fictional-history, italy. This mystery opens slowly - eventually weaving together its past and present mysteries. But this is not a quick path by any means. The pacing drags on in both plots. In the historical section, Plato narrates his journey through Italy in search of his friend - surviving many mishaps shipwrecks, falling bricks, etc while in the modern storyline rockstar Jonah searches for his archaeologist wife, who has disappeared along with a golden tablet that gives instructions to journey to the Afterworld.

The modern storyline is the stronger of the two in many ways with characters that feel more authentic and well-rounded, though the historical sections they alternate are fascinating in their own way and feel well-researched though there are some definite distracting vernacular phrases and such that stick out as anachronisms. It is a nice blend of history and mystery, though it unfolds at a pretty glacial pace. As it approaches five hundred pages, it is easy to become somewhat impatient with both plot lines, though the book as a whole becomes more engrossing as the plotlines begin to overlap and connect. This is my first experience with Harper, and while I did enjoy this one, I am not dying to read his earlier novels. The female characters, in particular, are underdeveloped. This is even more frustrating in the modern storyline. I certainly will not be holding my breath for more from this author. Sep 13, Sara rated it it was ok. The historical details felt convincing, but I just never got into this one.

I had a hard time relating to the characters, the plot turns felt forced, and the entire story felt like it was trying to build to a big reveal that never came. The story centers on two searches one in each of the dual timelines for characters we've never met. The historical search was fine but the modern storyline fell flat; although we meet Lily through multiple flashbacks, her character was two-dimensional and I never The historical details felt convincing, but I just never got into this one.

The historical search was fine but the modern storyline fell flat; although we meet Lily through multiple flashbacks, her character was two-dimensional and I never felt any concern for her or Jonah. In each timeline, we're introduced to a far-too-convenient female character with a flimsy backstory. The central villains are almost afterthoughts; we don't even learn of their existence until more than halfway through the story, and one we barely even meet at all. The climax was somehow completely random and utterly predictable at the same time. Overall, it felt hastily thrown together, too shallow and underdeveloped to even be a fun page-turner.

Jul 10, Pamela rated it it was ok. Parallel story lines set two millennia apart. Two men, each seeking someone who has disappeared after encountering a mysterious grave tablet with instructions on how to navigate a Persephone journey through an otherworld. Ancient philosophers, mystics and a modern archaeologist endangered by an unscrupulous foundation seeking the totem. Interesting premise, great elements but dramatic arcs don't mesh organically. Minimal character development, flat storytelling and cardboard interesting concept. Minimal character development, flat storytelling and cardboard characters. Jul 03, Adite rated it it was amazing. Simply brilliant. This is the first book I have read by Tom Harper and I'm well and truly bowled over by not just his storytelling but his magnificent chutzpah! Imagine trying to blend Greek philosophy into an action-thriller.

And imagine being able to pull it off without boring the heck out of his readers! I am going to read every book that Mr. Ha Brilliant. Harper has written! A mesmerising novel, interweaving the travels of Plato and present day Jonah to Athens and southern Italy. Each is on a quest - dangerous, deeply personal and inspired by love and truth. Not a book to forget in a hurry but one that will not let you put it down. I can't recommend it enough. Aug 26, Ana Mello rated it it was ok. There are 2 story lines. Plato in ancient times, and Jonah in modern times. Jonah story is annoying. Very interesting at first but the ending was too confusing for me I really liked the beginning of this book.

And even further in it was very interesting. But as it started to wrap up I don't know, I guess I'm not smart enough to understand what the author was trying to say. So I can't really recommend it and I can't say that I enjoyed it. I couldn't even tell you what actually happened in the end to resolve the conflicts. The final chapters were too confusing. Left me saying, huh? Mar 16, Jestingsp89 rated it it was ok Shelves: owned, waste-of-my-time. When I first read the plot summary, it seemed to be like a Dan Brown type of Novel. It started out interestingly, the writing is good.

It build up good suspense and kept the mystery alive and kept us engrossed in the 1st half. Later on, it just kept on dragging the story with unnecessary philosophy, alternating between past and present. Read our full returns policy. Save even more for every purchase by becoming a Together Rewards member. Receive reward vouchers up to 4 times a year to spend on anything you like in-store or online! The Orpheus Descent. Sign In or register to save products to your account. Simply tap the heart again to remove. Paperback by Tom Harper.

a book review by Janet Levine: The Orpheus Descent: A Novel

I was not helped by the propensity of the characters, both modern and ancient, to engage in long philosophical arguments and experience strange hallucinatory dreams. The novel culminates underneath Mount Etna — yes, literally — when the husband rescues his wife from a vent in the volcano during an eruption. The book is beautifully written, and there is a fine sense of place in the Greek and Italian locations. Toggle navigation.

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