



City of Hawks

Gary Gygax

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The young adventurer named Gord has stirred the imaginations of thousands of readers with his exploits. *City of Hawks* takes you to an early time; it is the action-filled tale of how Gord the waif grows into Gord the man. Unknown to him, the skinny boy who struggles to stay alive in the slums is destined to play a pivotal role in the fate of his world.

His obsessive desire to find out about his heritage thrusts Gord into a series of strange and dangerous encounters, some of which take place in a realm unlike any that readers of fantasy adventure have ever visited before.

City of Hawks Details

Date : Published November 1987 by ACE New Infinities Productions

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Author : Gary Gygax

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From Reader Review City of Hawks for online ebook

Francisco says

Another Gygax Greyhawk book. It's a prequel to the Gord the Rogue novels, that he's written so far, although it ends up kind of catching up with the previous books. As always Gygax is fascinated by alternate planes, and here we get not only the normal mortal realm, but also the catsrealm and the shadowrealm. And Gord goes through adventures in each. What is most interesting is the fleshing out of Gord's early childhood. Gygax isn't a great stylist, the book is also not a page-turner, but it's enjoyable nonetheless.

Ross says

Forced myself to finish this one, much to my surprise. I had previously read Gygax's *Saga of Old City* and *Artifact of Evil*, and expected more of the same. Instead, I got what may be considered a reboot of the previous novels, except fleshed out to include many (IMO) completely boring details of the behind-the-scenes machinations that turn what was a great Gord-the-Rogue character study in the original books into a giant, grand-scale Good vs. Evil conflict where at least 3/4 of Gord's life is plotted out for him with the aid of various benefactors, changing him from a featured figure (who grows and evolves on his own merits) into a pawn in a greater game. While some folks may enjoy that, I enjoyed the bootstraps-style improvement of Gord found in Gygax's original books, and didn't find the additional background details to be of much interest.

There were definitely some areas of interest in this novel that I appreciated, especially details later that filled in some of the gaps in Gord's magical items and weaponry, but overall I found myself just skipping complete paragraphs of exposition in an attempt to push through to the end. The only reason I continued to read to finish the entire novel is that I already have two other Gord the Rogue books that I plan to check out, having heard they are a little more interesting than this one.

If you haven't read any of the Gord series, I'd recommend skipping this one and getting your hands on *Old City* and *Artifact* instead. Sure, the writing is campy and could use a good editor, but then again, so could many other fantasy series of the '80s. The plot and cast is a little more streamlined, though, and keeps moving forward fast enough to keep your interest.

David Sarkies says

Another book exploring the background of Gord the Rogue

6 October 2012

Once again the other comments on Goodreads have saved me from stretching my brain even more to try to work out what a book that I read a long time ago was actually about without wasting the time reading it again. These days there is so much to read, with the internet and other magazines and newspapers that seem to land up in my hands, that reading a pretty substandard book that I read back in my teenage years to me is a complete waste of time, particularly since there are a lot of other more interesting writings out there to consider.

Anyway, apparently this book is about how Gord the Rogue became Gord the Rogue. Well, it suggests that he was always a thief of some sort, growing up in the slums of the City of Greyhawk, the major cosmopolitan city in Gary Gygax's world. Personally, I cannot remember too much about this book so unfortunately I cannot actually recall much of his background, and whether this background really created a solid character. The questions that are generally raised, at least by me, are who were his parents and did he know them, who were his friends, and who were the major influences in his life.

Apparently this book also deals with how he came to get some certain items, and also proves to be of a prequel to the Artifact of Evil Greyhawk Adventures 2. However, as others have also commented, Saga of Old City Greyhawk Adventures 1 probably did this just as well. Some have also mentioned large chunks of what could be called information dumps. These tend to hurt novels as they come across as almost dry, non-fiction accounts of something. I am currently reading a book where the author spends quite a long chapter with an information dump that pretty much outlines the history of the world. While this may be necessary, sometimes it needs to be shortened, or broken apart, so that the novel isn't thrown away in disgust.

Mind you, some non-fiction writers are able to write quite an intriguing and enjoyable account of some historical, scientific, or political fact, and also can use a style that keeps the reader interested and hungry for more, but that does take a lot of skill. However, having a rather dry and boring character performing what can be called an information dump, or even having the narrator give this in a rather dry and boring way, can pretty much undermine what could have been a really good novel. One way would actually keep it hidden and only revealed bit by bit as the novel progresses, keeping the reader intrigued and hungry for more.

Allen Garvin says

This is partially a rewrite of The Old City, partially a reboot that changes a lot of the factors of Gord's early life. The writing is vastly improved, and generally very good through the entire book. Perhaps he got a competent editor for this one. It's really rather a lot of fun.

Derek says

[the most important person in the universe (hide spoiler)]

Keith says

Now I know why so much of this book felt familiar: it fills in lost of little crevices between and beyond the episodes of the rest of the series to date. Starting from shortly before the events of Saga of Old City, it later alludes to the Artifact of Evil and culminates (it seems) just after Sea of Death.

Apart from the disjointedness resulting from jumping over material already presented, this is the best of the Gord books I've yet read, and the one least like reading a transcript of a role-playing game. Giving a third-person nearly-omniscient view of the machinations taking place "behind the scenes" of the preceding books gives it a depth of plot previously lacking.

That said, it's still fantasy pulp, not literature. But even I can't spend all my time on Nabokov and Kafka.

