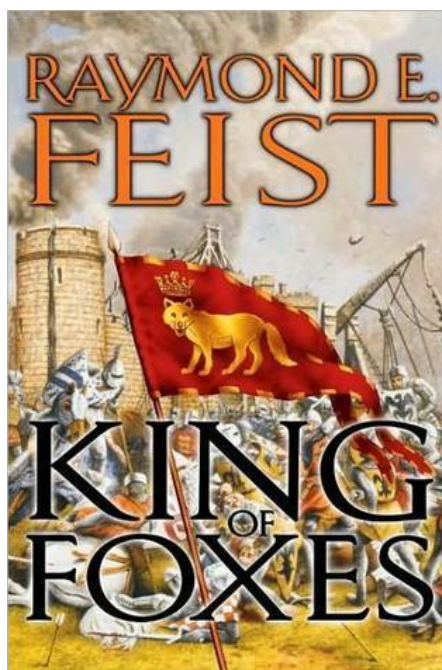




King of Foxes

Raymond E. Feist

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In the mountains of Midkemia,
a boy came brutally of age in blood and
in terror. And now he lives for one
purpose alone ... revenge!

An exceptionally skilled swordsman, young Tal Hawkins was the only survivor of the massacre of his village -- rescued, recruited, and trained by the mysterious order of magicians and spies, the Conclave of Shadows. Now one of the secret society's most valuable agents, he gains entrance into the court of Duke Olasko, the bloodthirsty and powerful despot whose armies put Tal's village to the sword, by posing as a nobleman from the distant Kingdom of the Isles. But the enemy is cunning and well protected -- in league with the foul necromancer Leso Varen, dark master of death-magic -- and to gain the Duke's trust and confidence, Tal Hawkins must first sell his soul.

King of Foxes Details

Date : Published (first published January 1st 2003)
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Author : Raymond E. Feist
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Genre : Fantasy, Fiction, Epic Fantasy, High Fantasy

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From Reader Review King of Foxes for online ebook

Michael says

This second book in the Conclave of Shadows series takes the hero Talwin Hawkins from a shell shocked boy, to a young man driven by revenge to a man who redeems himself and his people. The political intrigues that played out were complex enough to keep the story interesting, but not so deep that they were hard to follow. Hawkins hatches a complicated plan that requires the conclave to assist him in finally carrying out his revenge. Along the way Tal learns that many of the people involved in his life were not individual actors but part of something bigger than themselves as well. Often his "enemies" were simply being used as Tal himself was being used by the conclave. Tal learns that just like the "evil" forces that destroyed his people, Tal had made human life expendable in his quest for revenge. He killed people he had no quarrel with to get close to his eventual target, the Duke of Olasko. The tail ends nicely with Tal achieving some semblance of revenge and redemption.

I did enjoy this book much more than book one but couldn't give it 4 stars for two reasons. First, the author used magic to regenerate lost limbs. And while I guess that was necessary for the dramatic ending, I thought the fact that Tal was damaged in his quest made him more of an identifiable hero. He was in essence a fantasy world 007, a man of many talents and good with the ladies. To have him beaten and broken during book two made him easier to identify with. Things didn't go his way constantly in his pursuit. His eventual redemption would have been even more powerful if things had not been magically fixed. It's easier to forgive if you get all your damaged body parts back and your health is restored. I felt that the scars of his young life would have meant much more. Finally, I think the complex political intrigue the author built up through two books was complex enough to keep me intrigued, but not too difficult to follow. The author chose to wrap things up a little too neatly for my taste in the end. I will hold out that he may revisit some of these issues in the final book.

While these two drawbacks kept me from giving this book 4 stars, it is not enough to deter me from reading the final book in the series.

Sam says

I quickly consumed this Fantasy pap middle chapter after enjoying the paint-by-numbers origin story in 'Talon of the Silver Hawk'.

I wanted to spend more time with our hero Talon (or 'Tal' as he's known now) but his company is starting to wear thin. There's just something so pedestrian about this series. It's enjoyable, and yes, Raymond E. Feist still writes with 'vivid imagination' as the back cover proclaims, but the problem is he already imagined this stuff three or four times before, and now it really just feels like a 'best of' from the past, regurgitated with a minimum of zest and gusto.

Another thing which is becoming clear to me now that I've finished part 2 is that this story feels awfully familiar (I'm looking at you Count of Monte Cristo!) - but that's fine as I love revenge stories, particularly ones which contain an 'escape from prison sequence', which this sequel contains and was the stand-out section for me.

So I will finish this trilogy now that I've committed a few weeks of my life to it already, but I can't help but feel that Mr Feist himself may have grown a little bored of spending time in Midkemia and is therefore unable to make me care much either (or maybe 'Magician' is just as average as this and I view it through the forgiving hue of nostalgia?).

Having said that, the ending was quite strong (I even had that feeling where you hair stands on end when you finish the book), so I have high(ish) hopes for the final chapter.

Susana789 says

Dávam tri lebo sú Vianoce a ja to konzumujem popri iných vianočných dobrotách. Výdatne zaliate domácim kokosovým likérom sa to dalo. Inak je to ne kreatívny stredný medzi-diel, kde sa toho stane veľa až sa z toho hlava točí. Ale superhrdinovia rozchodia všetko a končatiny im dorastajú. wtf kliše.

Gareth says

Enjoyed this book more than I remember doing so the first time I read it, and indeed really enjoyed it. Style of it is more similar to Magician than any of the intervening books I feel, with the various time jumps and quite large ups and downs occurring, albeit mainly to one character, vs Magician's wider cast. Tal I think grows more in this book, and the antagonists for the most part are less one dimensional than in Talon of the Silver Hawk, which makes for more interesting twists and turns. Following this book, have jumped eagerly into the next :)

Jono Lewis says

I enjoyed reading this very much, however, I think you'd have to consider it 'trash fantasy'. This conclave series just follows one character, Talon, so feels quite one-dimensional. Add to that the unfolding story is very predictable, and like Jimmy the Hand, Talon never ceases to pull himself out of a tight spot.

However, it is a fun enough series to read to fill some story space that I imagine must be required for the later series.

Peat says

The central conceit of the book - that to destroy the men he hates most and take his revenge, Tal must serve them with all his heart to gain the intelligence he needs to bring them down, but only once they betray him - is a good one. There's a heady mix of superspy shenanigans and moral questions to it. That part is a solid 5.

Unfortunately, Feist doesn't spend enough time on it, spending a lot of time on the post-betrayal survival and retaliation. This part, and the build up to Tal taking service, is an enjoyable enough 3.

Danielle says

'What did you do over Easter, Danielle?' I will no doubt be asked when I dawdle into work bright and early on Tuesday morning.

'I read', will be my half asleep reply.

And that will be the ridiculous truth. I have done nothing but read, eat, ducked into work to clear the chute, done my washing, and slept. And then I read some more.

"King of Foxes" is the second instalment in the "Conclave of Shadows" series. It continues to follow Talon of the Silver Hawk/Tal Hawkins as he becomes a spy, a prisoner, a mercenary captain, and leader of his people.

In that particular order. And only in this book.

Again, I read this rather quickly and dogmatically. Tal is becoming a character that I adore, but not in the traditional sense. He is certainly not without flaws, but he grapples with them day to day just as any human being would.

In fact, Tal almost takes the full blown step to anti-hero status in this book as he murders, humiliates, and betrays just about everyone he speaks to.

Pug, Nakor, and Magnus all take a back seat as Tal exudes his status as an agent for the Conclave. Caleb and Miranda are completely absent (more's the pity), as Tal finalises his vengeance against the men who wronged and wiped out his people.

It's well written, certainly, but I can't help but see the markings of cliché and trope everywhere I read. An orphaned boy, the last of his race, on a path to vengeance. Will he lose his way on that path and become someone he is not? Will he actually begin to trust and like those that wronged his people? All that kind of thing.

Albeit well written, is still leaves me hollow and wanting more. Maybe I wanted more of the magicians. Maybe I wanted characters I loved and adored back again, even though they're long dead. Who knows.

Still a good read though.

Jayme(the ghost reader) says

This is the second book in the Conclave of Shadows series. Talon or Tal as he is called seems to be moving up into the ranks until he fails to carry out an order and ends up in prison. This doesn't keep him down. He escapes and is still able to fulfill his goal which is to seek revenge on the person who has killed his people. There is more action and character development in the second book. I enjoyed the main character more and overall the second book more. I was happy to see the main character was reunited with the woman he loved.

Ben O'Neill says

In which Raymond E. Feist displays absolutely no creativity whatsoever. Ugh. I know in my review of the first book in the series, I was ranting about what a lovely trait a bit of predictability can be... but seriously, I'm pretty stupid. This book did absolutely nothing I haven't seen in another fantasy novel; furthermore, it did nothing I haven't seen in a FEIST novel. It's pretty bad when you start cannibalizing your own plot lines.

What doesn't suck: Um. Lets skip this part.

What sucked: In the first book, Talon actually developed a little. In this book, he did not change even slightly--but at the end of the book, the reader is expected to believe he has undergone some sort of metamorphosis into a better person. Bullshit. There was no epiphany, no reason his entire outlook would so suddenly change. His entire life revolved around vengeance, and just as he gets it he decides he wants to be the bigger man? No. That's just the author deciding he did in a few sentences. LAME.

The plot was boring to the extreme. Sometimes I don't think you're even trying anymore, Feist. It turns out it's the same Big Bad its been in half of his books, but this time only Talon can save him! Because he doesn't have magic! Or some such crap. It doesn't really matter.

The worst part is I have to read the next one. That's what sucks the most.

Deep Thoughts: This book does not warrant any further thought. Ever.

Rating: Sucked. 1 star.

Sotiris Karaiskos says

In my review of the first part of this series, I have said that the story it tells is more grounded, mainly because of the limited role of magic in it. In the second part, magic has an equally limited role, but that does not mean that the story is just as grounded. I am always lenient at the excesses of some fantasy works, but in the case of this book for the most part the plot did not make any sense. We continue to monitor our hero's attempt to infiltrate the enemy camp, but the general plan behind this choice is not very reasonable. Then the attempt to revenge is done with different rules that are more understandable and finally we end up in a great fight where most issues are resolved to such an extent that I wonder what's left for the 3rd part.

I can not say that I did not like this book, it is certainly interesting, and the ethical dilemmas resulting from the story give a little bit more depth - although certainly their description is not done in the most subtle way - there are important developments that give a different dimension, but I feel that the author does not take advantage of all this to make us more emotionally involved with what we are reading. I have expected something more and finally I did not find it, so I have to go to the third part to see if there is something special.

Στην κριτικ? μου για το πρ?το μ?ρος αυτ?ς της σειρ?ς ε?χα πει ?τι η ιστορ?α που αφηγεται ε?ναι περισσ?τερο προσγειωμ?νη, κυρ?ως εξαιτ?ας του περιορισμ?νου ρ?λου της μαγε?ας σε αυτ?ν. Στο δε?τερο μ?ρος η μαγε?α ?χει εξ?σου περιορισμ?νο ρ?λο αλλ? αυτ? δεν σημα?νει ?τι η ιστορ?α ε?ναι εξ?σου προσγειωμ?νη. Ε?μαι π?ντοτε επιεικ?ς στις υπερβολ?ς κ?ποιων ?ργων φαντασ?ας αλλ? στην περ?πτωση αυτο? του βιβλ?ου στο μεγαλ?τερο μ?ρος η πλοκ? δεν ?βγαζε ιδια?τερο ν?ημα. Συνεχ?ζουμε να παρακολουθο?με την προσπ?θεια του ?ρωα μας να διεισδ?σει στο εχθρικ? στρατ?πεδο αλλ? το γενικ?τερο σχ?διο π?σω απ? αυτ? την επιλογ? δεν ?χει πολ? λογικ?. Στη συν?χεια η προσπ?θεια εκδ?κησης γ?νεται με διαφορετικο?ς καν?νες που ε?ναι περισσ?τερο κατανοητο? και τελικ? καταλ?γουμε σε μ?α μεγ?λη μ?χη ?που τα περισσ?τερα θ?ματα λ?νονται σε τ?τοιο βαθμ? που Αναρωτι?μαι τι μ?νει για το 3ο μ?ρος.

Δεν μπορ? να πω ?τι δεν μου ?ρεσε αυτ? το βιβλ?ο, ?χει σ?γουρα ενδιαφ?ρον και τα ηθικ?

διλ?μματα που προκ?πτουν απ? την ιστορ?α δ?νουνε λ?γο περισσ?τερο β?θος -αν και σ?γουρα η περιγραφ? τους δεν γ?νεται με τον πιο επιδ?ξιο τρ?πο -, υπ?ρχουν σημαντικ?ς εξελ?ξεις που δ?νουν μ?α διαφορετικ? δι?σταση, νι?θω, ?μωζ, ?τι ο συγγραφ?ας δεν εκμεταλλε?εται ?λα αυτ? για να μας κ?νει να εμπλακο?με περισσ?τερο συναισθηματικ? με αυτ? που διαβ?ζουμε. Περιμ?νω κ?τι παραπ?νω και τελικ? δεν το βρ?κα, οπ?τε πρ?πει να προχωρ?σω και στο τρ?το μ?ρος για να δω αν υπ?ρχει κ?τι ξεχωριστ?.

Alisha says

Notes for me:

Well that was a turn around, the first half of the book I didn't like, Tal was strutting around, murdering people barely with a twitch of his conscience and enjoying the "good to be king" lifestyle a bit too much.

Plus Feist used the phrase unnatural reflexes to describe Tal's quickness way too much.

Then it all changed when Tal find himself in the Fortress of Despair. His humility, bravery and resilience in the face of abject misery warmed my heart to him all over again. Quite an exciting storyline with the escape and the storming of Kaspar's castle. I liked the simplicity of how Tal beat Laren. Believable and well earned.

The finale with Eye of the Blue Winged Teal being reunited with Tal was poignant and sweet. I liked seeing Tal reclaim his soul with mercy for Kaspar and forgiveness for Quint.

Now on to Book 3.

Victoria says

This sequel picked up right where *Talon of the Silver Hawk* ended. And as Talon of the Silver Hawk, or Tal Hawkins, developed, he became a stronger and more likable character. Some of the hardships he faced could have made this a much darker book, but lucky interventions in the same vein as the last book, kept Tal optimistic and surprisingly upbeat.

I wonder what will happen in the next book, especially considering the fate of the villain....

My favorite scene, though, was the shark/beach scene - such fun, and totally unexpected for a fantasy novel. I do hope that Nakor and other series regulars play a larger role in the next book! The series seems to be winding (or wending, as this seems to be Feist's new favorite word) down, but I remain curious to see where it all goes!

Gigi says

DNF

This isn't an 'I FINISHED!' it's an 'I'm FINISHED WITH THIS SERIES!'. Ugh. Perfect man-boys who are good at everything and are only interested in women for 'love-making'. Done and done.

Elar says

Book picks up first book pace very well and one adventure follows an other with even a variant of Count Monte Cristo story. There are rough edges and some scenes do not play as well as it might/should.

Karyn Mitchell says

So Whilst I really enjoyed the first part of Talons story in Talon of the Sliver hawk. I struggled through most of King of the foxes before finally giving up around the 300 page mark, because it just got to hard for me to enjoy. The first half of this book continued in the same vain as the first in the conclave of shadows books but this one, I just couldn't enjoy and had to give up. I don't know what it was that made me not enjoy it as it had all the markings of a great read but just didn't coe together for me.
