

The Transformation of Adam Higgins: The Corin Chronicles, Volume 2

Marvin Amazon

Corinthians Publishing (May 31, 2013)

Softcover \$14.99 (400pp)

978-0-9572985-9-0

Colorful characters, escalating pace, and the fate of the Earth highlight this exciting space opera.

It's a theme as tried and as true as *John Carter of Mars* or *Flash Gordon*: A man (or a boy, in this case) from Earth is somehow catapulted across the galaxy to become the reluctant hero in somebody else's war. In *The Transformation of Adam Higgins: The Corin Chronicles, Volume 2*, author Marvin Amazon manipulates a "ripple in the universe" to toss his titular teen smack into a holy war waged by the gods themselves.

Why should it matter to the reader who wins this epic conflict on a planet in a galaxy "millions of miles from Earth"? To sweeten the plot, Amazon makes the survival of Earth dependent upon the outcome of the battle for the soul of planet Corin. This draws readers deeper into the story as it gives them something to identify with and to care about. Adam Higgins is fighting not only for his own survival but also for everyone he cares about back home (some of whom eventually get plucked up in the "ripple" to join him on Corin).

This is the second in a series; the author promises to deliver the third installment, *The Rebels of Crandor*, in 2014. Amazon crafted his Corin corner of the universe with its living gods and their minions in *Volume 1: The Light and the Dark*. The current volume builds upon and enriches his creation through the addition of numerous colorful characters whom the author tosses into troubling and tricky situations.

There is the plucky Prince Ramon, who needs the help of Earth boy Adam Higgins to save his parents, the king and queen, and his lovely sister, the petulant princess, from the elderly, evil, traitorous, and lecherous Abaros, who with the complicity of an evil god named Eclipse has taken power through a coup. These are familiar situations populated by very recognizable characters; most enjoyable among them is Lady Xantia, a sexy Amazon queen who is so smitten with the Earth boy that she sneaks into his bedroom to seduce him.

Amazon writes at an escalating pace; starting at a very slow speed in the modern world, he picks up momentum when he gets to Corin, downshifts when Adam returns to Earth, and moves into high gear in the last half of the novel. Although none of the characters seem to grow beyond how they are initially presented, Adam and Ramon bond in a buddy-movie kind of way that makes the story more enjoyable and engaging.

Except for a few brief sexual interludes, the book is suitable for young adults, although older fans of the genre will find it inventive enough to keep their interest, provided they can get through the opening fifty pages, also known as Part I. That initial section, set in Los Angeles, gives no hint of the science-fiction/fantasy epic that Amazon begins to unfold in Part II. A prologue teaser would have let readers know that they had boarded the right train for their journey. That journey, once it starts, is a lively one, with enough action, battles, and mystical creatures to satisfy those with a craving for such treats.

MARK MCLAUGHLIN (July 3, 2013)

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