

From the back jacket

Reach for the Stars!

Freedom City is a metropolis founded upon dreams, a place created by men and women who believe that there are limits neither to what forms humanity can take nor that which it can achieve. Here, it's of little consequence whether a person is a five foot walking rabbit, a beautiful tigress, or a consciousness floating free inside a machine.

Consisting of a series of platforms built above the sparkling Caribbean, Freedom City is in many ways an entirely new world dedicated to promoting innovation and freeing the human spirit. Despite its admitted warts the City has become Earth's economic and technological beacon, standing head and shoulders above second-best.

Second best, however, is less than thrilled at all of this. In fact, they're rather frightened of being left behind. In this final chapter of the Freedom City series, the world is questioning whether or not it can tolerate freedom and success on such an epic scale. So instead of being left in peace to run his bunny themed casino Harvey Foote finds himself not only dealing with an international crisis...

... but waging a war for the soul of all mankind.

My Thoughts so far –

Manifest Destiny sets itself up to be a story of conflicting ideologies, of one side unafraid to move forward, and the other terrified of where that might lead. Humanity has always been afraid of what it does not understand, and this book looks to be an exploration of that time tested theme of history. Reading the first book is recommended, but not essential. Featuring returning characters Harvey Foote, Felix Morris, and Stripes McKee, the second story looks to be an exciting follow up to the first. The back jacket sets up the basic story and all you need to know without giving away too much.

Overall:

This is a thoroughly enjoyable book. It raises several questions about issues of freedom and liberty, and personal responsibility. A well told tale for the general audience, there is something here for everyone to enjoy. All of the characters are well developed and work together in concert to create an overall remarkable narrative experience.

A multitalented work of adventure, drama, and just the right amount of sci-fi, it presents a story you'll want to read over and over again. While not without flaw, it sets the bar for furry writing high to which other writers I would recommend look to this for inspiration.

Characters:

Harvey Foote – The lapine founder of Freedom City and the owner of the Rabbit's Foot Casino, Harvey is an anthro rabbit with a taste for liberty and personal responsibility. After the events of the first book he has made it his personal project to build a rocket to give his people access to the stars. A true leader, he leads from the front and by example, determined to live by his principles at everything he does.

Felix Morris – A former feline and manager of the Cat House, a rival to Harvey's own Rabbit's Foot, he now manages the new version of the same establishment under Harvey's guidance, now an anthro rabbit. He serves as their main manager, operating the business while he and his wife partially retire and work on Conestoga, the rocket project.

Eric – The designer of several of the gaming machines in the casino, he is genengineered into the body of a feral donkey. A total submissive at the mercy of a mistress who does not care about his well being, Eric works at the Rabbit's Foote with the help of specialized equipment. Harvey is hesitant to interfere due to his belief in freedom, but at the same time he hates to stand by and let it happen.

Bea Foote – Harvey's wife who generally exists as a brain in a box, Bea helps Harvey in various ways from psychic support to carrying out numerous functions through the advanced computers at the Foote Institute. Loyal and supportive, she is critical to the running of Freedom City.

Stripes McKee – A former Lobby Cat, Stripes McKee expresses a desire to do something different, having felt she is in a rut with her present career. She joins Harvey's Conestoga project in an effort to help him with her former skills as an engineer.

Analysis: A quality follow up from the first installment, Manifest Destiny fulfills the duty of the second entry into any franchise, which is to expand. The stakes are raised and the universe is given a larger setting in which to tell it's story. Following up after the events of the first, Harvey has been forced to prepare for the reality of the new world in which he finds himself, one where he may need to fight for his freedom as his hopes that the United States would simply allow him to go about his business has proven fruitless.

The story is emotionally moving as this is not one of those stories where there are no consequences, characters risk their lives and die, and are each uniquely introduced to the audience in a manner that makes them all individual presences adding their own flavor to events.

The main character does an excellent job in displaying the struggle between freedom and responsibility, as one cannot have one without the other. Featuring a number of moral and ethical dilemmas that stimulate the reader to think, this is an excellent example of the power of furry literature. Trim and effective, the story is told with perhaps a few scenes that might've been better if there had been a way to show them, but by and large it

introduces the characters well even if you haven't read the first, sends them through a life changing adventure, and leaves them on the other side different than when they entered.

Scifi and drama mixed together without being overly dramatic or heavy handed about it's message, this is one you should read.

Story Structure: The story is told with a clear beginning, middle, and end. The action is broken up into readable chapters from the perspective of the protagonist, Harvey Foote. The world is painted from his view as he is attempting to keep his small nation free from limits.

The story suffers a bit from the natural result of having a single narrator, meaning that some of the events I think would've been helpful to see were unable to be shown due to that restriction, but overall it remains a high quality tale. With a good story flow that keeps things moving, this is a book you'll find easily readable over and over again.

Dialogue: Most of the dialogue is natural and flowing, though at times some of the lines extend into the realm of being a bit too formal sounding. They do not present themselves as out of place but at the same time I had a hard time reading them without thinking it was unlikely someone would probably actually talk that way. With these lines being a rare exception, for the most part each character sounds natural and believable.

Introduction

The prologue features Harvey Foote and several of the characters from the first book sailing on a yacht towards the test firing of a prototypical engine, an investment by one of the visitors to Freedom City.

Plot

Chapter One begins with Harvey and his employees going over some issues they are having with contractors. After determining their course of action, Harvey boards his personal transport to return to Freedom City. Following an uneventful trip through the sub-tram, Harvey arrives at the Liberty Building. There he goes through a meeting with Chairman Anson and Board Member Bill North regarding hydrogen tariffs and the Conestoga Project, Harvey's space rocket.

In the second chapter Harvey visits the Institute, where he checks in on the current Alpha project. Alpha referring to the most important, he arrives in time for a breakthrough from his wife and her team.

The third chapter features Harvey checking in on the latest casino machine, designed by an employee in feral donkey form. After Felix arrives, the two go to lunch and discuss their financial status as well as the likelihood of the possibility of a war.

Chapter four begins with Harvey's visit to the Conestoga facility with Stripes McKee, who confesses to him her interest in her present line of work is waning. He offers her a job as a liaison on his rocket project. The staff finds a potential solution to their mechanical and sourcing issues, while later that evening he discusses the increasing signs that a fight for Freedom City is building.

The fifth chapter features Harvey's musings that they cannot afford to fail, and have no choice but to push forward hoping they have enough time.