

Odalisque (The Baroque Cycle, Vol. 1, Book 3) By Neal Stephenson Daniel Waterhouse and the Natural Philosophers increase one hundredfold in an England plagued by the impending war and royal insecurities -- as the beautiful and ambitious Eliza plays a most dangerous game as double agent and confidante of enemy kings. It's also so full of interesting plots and twists going back fully into the anti-slavery angle even while whole parts of Christendom want to enslave whole other parts of Christendom just because of their beliefs it feels like an insane move to go any further or wider in scope when there's such dissension everywhere you look. Let me be clear: I read and loved Cryptonomicon which is like an Epic Economics treatise as well as a cryptography primer so getting the early explorations of these same topics but within the frame of Europe during this time is a real treat. So much to learn! I'm really impressed by these and I've still got five more to go! What will happen next to my poor MCs? *cry* Paperback Why do I keep reading these? If I could just have a few hundred pages of Neal Stephenson talking about the history of science and currency without these characters I would be thrilled. Likewise if he could tell me a story about these characters in which I actually believe they have some agency rather than just being pulled along by historical events that already happened. So it involves a fair amount of tying together separate characters and story arcs introduced in the first two books Quicksilver and King of the Vagabonds which is mostly accomplished by having Eliza meet up with Daniel Waterhouse in England. Where in the second book it was Eliza and Jack here it is Eliza and Daniel who are much more similar in temperament and habit --- both are smart cautious characters who observe plan and then act rather than heedlessly throwing themselves into the thick of things. Eliza by now is ensconced in King Louis XIV's court at Versailles where she has a sponsor of sort the comte d'Avaux whom she met in the previous book and who has gotten her a position as governess to the children of some noblewoman. Nearest to the surface she acts as personal finance manager to practically the entire court most of whose members are nearing bankruptcy trying to maintain their households and wardrobes at a suitable level of opulence. Known to fewer people she corresponds with d'Avaux keeping him updated on what goes on at court; she also corresponds with the Natural Philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz who has published his calculus. She uses a couple of different codes to write her letters; the letters she writes to d'Avaux are written in a simpler code that she anticipates will be broken by Dutch spies who are her real audience for those missives. Eliza who has to be the one the title refers to is dizzyingly active ALL THE TIME simultaneously doing two or three incredibly difficult things and making sure no one sees her doing them at any given time. He intercedes on behalf of his fellow Puritans getting them released from jail whenever they get rounded up on suspicion of fomenting another rebellion (remember that in the first book Daniel's father Drake was instrumental in bringing Oliver Cromwell to power and was rewarded for this by having his head cut off once Charles II was restored to the throne). Paperback Neal Stephenson is the author of Reamde Anathem and the three volume historical epic the Baroque Cycle (Quicksilver The Confusion and The System of the World) as well as Cryptonomicon The Diamond Age Snow Crash and Zodiac. Well the history is good but it's not much of a novel or narrative really is it? There are short passages where the author becomes a bit more excited though in general its quantity over quality. For someone who enjoys history this is a pure gem all the references dates impressive figures and sheer research that must've been poured in this book is astounding and something to cheer. I must be honest: I am taking into consideration what could be perceived as flaws like the long paragraphs exhaustive description of science terminology endless minutiae of dates and persons and plots and concepts a fervent follower of Stephenson's work. I admire the depth (maybe not present in all his fictional characters) that his stories have because for the themes to work they must be accompanied by a profound love for knowledge. Paperback This is the final book in Volume 1 of The Baroque Cycle and I am very pleased to say that Stephenson wraps things up very nicely while still leaving me wondering what happens further on. Neal Stephenson writes so clearly about these sophisticated political situations and also the ideas of Natural Philosophy at the time that I have no problem understanding and following along. One thing I would like to mention that this first Volume has taught me and that is that humanity in the late 17th century could be just as polite nice charming

vicious and vile as it is today. There is so much quality to match the quantity of this massive Volume so if the sheer size of the books of The Baroque Cycle scare you I can assure you it is more than worth your time. should science simply try to describe the universe (newton) or try to explain it (leibniz)? what place is left for god (and hence the catholic church) if science can explain the mechanics of the world and even predict the future? in the 1600s being able to predict where a planet would be in the future was viewed satanic sorcery among the religious and an assault on free will among the rest: We have all the characters from the first two books plus a few entries that only deepen the sense of the world of Europe, In the previous two we got to see a lot of England and then a massive amount of the Dutch world in the second but this one focused mainly on the French: Our favorite tease/spy lives her life as a fake noble (but not so fake that no one fails to realize it) but that's all right: We also return in full force to Daniel and while everyone is older the political intrigue is nevertheless as dangerous as ever with the new English king. The immensity of detail is such that I'm thrown deep into the late sixteen hundreds without pause or breath and I feel like I'm getting one hell of an immersion. And then there's the science and the economics and the way that the perennially tapped nobles play the markets in order to regain their wealth: The science bits are always the most fascinating for me but I have to be honest, The economics bits are pretty damn close to the top as a favorite: Paperback Even a well-made clock drifts and must be re-set from time to time. - Neal Stephenson *Odalisque* An odalisque was a chambermaid or a female attendant in a Turkish harem (seraglio) particularly the ladies in harem of the Ottoman sultan: So the book title references Eliza who in book 2: *King of the Vagabonds* is rescued by Half-Cock Jack (*King of the Vagabonds*): Eliza in this book enters the world of European economics and spycraft: She rises from broker of the French nobility eventually earning the title of Countess of Zeur, She also aids William of Orange as he prepares to invade England gaining the added title of Duchess of Qqghlm. I personally missed Jack Shaftoe but that was partially assisted because we were introduced to his brother Bob Shaftoe, I'm a big fan of the Age of Enlightenment and was thrilled to experience of fictionalized Pepys Newton Leibniz William of Orange etc: Paperback *Até pode ser muito interessante pelos acontecimentos descritos mas não cheguei bem a perceber qual era o objetivo desta história, É certo que não li os volumes anteriores e talvez esteja aí o meu problema. Talvez este livro seja melhor apreciado tendo lido os outros.* Paperback This is the third book in the eight-book Baroque Cycle and also the third part of the first volume: (Jack Shaftoe does not appear at all in this book though he is alluded to a few times by other characters: His brother Bob does make an appearance near the end introducing a story arc of his own that intersects with those of Eliza and Daniel.)Structurally this book follows the latter part of *King of the Vagabonds* in switching back and forth between two geographically distant characters' points of view: This makes for more suspense and more sense that each narrative is building toward something as opposed to just listing along from one episode to the next. But it also makes for fewer entertaining incidents so if you really liked Jack's part of the last book you might find yourself bored by this one. That's only a pretext for her to be at Versailles though where she has several more important roles she keeps shrouded in varying degrees of secrecy: (D'Avaux it was revealed in the last book is working to undermine King Louis but is not pro-Dutch either: I'm not 100% sure how much his agenda and Eliza's overlap though I don't THINK he knows the Dutch are reading his correspondence . . .) Anyway at the highest level of secrecy she's spying for William the Prince of Orange who intends to seize power in England. And reading that paragraph you will start to see why I don't like the title of this installment in the Baroque Cycle: An odalisque is a woman whose defining feature is her idleness; she's kept by others to be idle and beautiful for them. Stephenson might well have chosen the title ironically; that's the only way I can see it making any sense: I mentioned that Daniel Waterhouse comes back into play in this book; he does and when we meet him he has come into his own as a political power player, He's still a Fellow of the Royal Society but he doesn't conduct any research of his own, Instead he hangs around King James II's dwindling court watching his doctors try to treat his advanced syphilis and talking with other people about what's going to happen next. While he's watching and waiting the Glorious Revolution happens around him: He knows he has played some role in bringing it about but

he mostly just wanders around dazed once it actually starts unfolding. Mostly he tries to keep an eye on his friend Isaac Newton who is going off the deep end abandoning physics for some sort of esoteric metaphysics. His parts of the book especially compared to Eliza's and especially toward the end are anticlimactic, over the hopefully 40 remaining years of my life; I think I'm done with The Baroque Cycle for this decade anyway. This book contains both the evolving stories of Daniel Waterhouse and Eliza during the tumultuous 1680's. Charles II has died and there is a new king of England however of course things are not that simple: A new word is born Revolution or at least given new meaning. Not only a revolving around but now a Revolution as we commonly know the word today as an uprising. And Daniel and Eliza although both in completely different parts of Europe are quite in the middle of everything. Paperback Finished this 3rd book in the series I enjoyed the book that features things like espionage and science cryptography and political intrigue: The question I have did people really care on this much sexually or is the sex gratuitous: But sex was more free and outrageous than classical so perhaps the author was trying to depict this difference historically: So while I could have done with a bit less sexual detail it does fit the time period. The book is rich in science details features the Royal Society member in the English scientific community: Paperback fictionalized history of europe (actually netherlands england france and germania) during the 1680s. follows the exchange in amsterdam the court of the sun king the short lived reign of james ii and continuing transformation of the scientific world: newton and leibniz struggle to explain gravity and thus the solar system[1]

The trials of Dr. Odalisque (The Baroque Cycle Vol. 1 Book 3)



Still going strong. It's the life of intrigue in Louis the Fourteenth's court. Truly fascinating. The book also brings us back to Daniel Waterhouse. I've enjoyed Volume one. He lives in Seattle Washington. I will read the remaining 5 books . Paperback This is amazing. Anyway I love this book and series. Interesting book. Such characters as Isaac Newton and Leibniz. Its an interesting way to brush up on history. also the characters are very fun. Paperback.