



The Duchess of the Shallows

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A game is played in the fog-shrouded city of Rodaas, and every citizen, from the nameless of the Shallows to the noblest of the Garden, is a player or a pawn. And no one is as he appears.

Not Minette, brothel-keeper and obsessive collector of secrets. Not Uncle Cornelius, fearsome chief of the gang of brutes and murderers known as the Red. Not the cults of Death, Wisdom, and Illumination, eternally scheming and plotting along the Godswalk.

And certainly not the orphaned bread girl known as Duchess.

Yet armed with nothing more than her wits, her good friend Lysander and a brass mark of dubious origin Duchess will dare to play that game for the most coveted of prizes: initiation into a secret society of thieves, spies and rumormongers who stand supreme in a city where corruption and lies are common coin.

The Grey.

The Duchess of the Shallows Details

Date : Published March 2nd 2012 by Peccable Productions

ISBN : 9780985014902

Author : Neil McGarry , Daniel Ravipinto

Format : Paperback 306 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Fiction



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From Reader Review The Duchess of the Shallows for online ebook

Rebekah says

What worked: I really, really enjoyed this story! I loved the world-building and the fact that it actually reminded me of a Tudor London. The characters were all fleshed out and at one point in particular I found myself saying out loud "No....please don't let them do what I think they're going to do...." To say I was invested in the story would be an understatement.

Duchess is a poor man's Celaena Sardothien. She can kick ass, she knows exactly what she needs to do and she isn't afraid!

Lysander, oh man I had a little swoon over this guy. I just wanted to put him in a room with Duchess and force them to talk, like really talk.

I'd definitely read the sequel to find out a bit more about the world, the people in it and what on earth will cross Duchess' path next!

What irked: There were quite a lot of references to the past that could have been condensed and rumours Duchess had heard which were a bit more drawn out. Yes, they added to the story but I found myself skimming over them so I could get back to the job at hand.

Recommended to: Fans of urban fantasy would enjoy this. It's a more understated fantasy story in that you don't have mages and the like in your face. There are a few swear words in there so you have been warned :) I would give this book***4 Stars - This book is really good, a definite re-reader.***

Daniel says

This book is smartly written, well paced, and entertaining, with a plausible world and some intriguing mysteries. But what really shines about the book is the characters. I tend to read for character more than plot, and I really like the characters in this book. Duchess makes for a very appealing heroine, plucky and bold without being idealized. In particular her relationship with Lysander, her closest friend/ally, is a wonderful depiction of a relationship I've only seen in real life, not in fantasy. I'm very invested in the two of them, and I want to see what happens to them next.

Pauline Ross says

Some books draw you in with some dramatic piece of action right at the start; a battle, perhaps, or something intriguing and unexplained. Some start off slow and gentle, and build up to the action later. This one starts with the characters, with Duchess and Lysander, a relationship, a little bit of history and yes, a bit of a mystery, too. And within a chapter, it's tugging at me, making me care about these people. Some books take their full length to do that, and some (quite a few actually) never do it, but these two authors have a sure touch for creating the emotional resonance that I look for in a book.

The heart of this book is Duchess, the sixteen year old orphan from a noble family, who was brought up in

anonymity by a baker and has now been turfed out to make her way on the streets. This all sounds fairly ho-hum, but it's given a fresh and original twist here, and the mystery of what really happened to Duchess and her family underpins the whole book. Then there is Lysander, her sort-of-but-not-really boyfriend, who is, to be honest, more interesting than she is. Or maybe I'm just naturally drawn to roguish, amusing, charming men rather than to sixteen year old girls, who knows. But their relationship is lovely, most unusual, and beautifully revealed.

The world-building is, in one sense, limited, because all the action takes place within the city of Rodaas. However, the city is well described, with all its different districts, each with a very distinct feel. I'm not sure I find it totally credible that they would stay so separate (in real life they would blur at the edges and blend together, I would think), but I suppose it all happens by imperial edict. Still, it worked very well to give the city a believable feel, and the very nice map helped. I also liked the atmospheric fogs that roll in from the sea at regular intervals - that's a very evocative idea, which works well to give the place an other-worldly quality, mysterious and slightly creepy.

In some ways this is a conventional setting for a fantasy novel. There's an Empress and the nobility, where men rule the roost and women do what they're told; there are merchants and craftsmen and traders and guilds, and all the usual paraphernalia; and at the bottom of the heap are the thieves and street urchins and beggars. There is law and order (of a sort) but also corruption and a degree of brutality. And there are prostitutes (male and female) who tread an uneasy path between the classes, being low in the social standing themselves but taking their clientèle from the upper ranks. There's religion, too, three main ones, recognised by the empire, and numerous minor or unusual ones, and again there are intriguing but well delineated differences between them. Magic? Possibly, but it's not very clear.

Then there's the plot. The premise is that Duchess has been thrown out of the bakery (for unknown reasons) but has been given a special coin which might allow her to join one of the elite gangs of the city, the Greys. To do this she has to undertake an initiation test. Now, there's a long tradition in the same vein: the hero (or heroine, in this case) is called upon to undertake a seemingly impossible task, and this has certain advantages. It drives the plot, for one thing, and it ramps up the tension, by setting up the possibility that if she fails, she will die (or worse). I'm not a big fan of this kind of plot device. For one thing, it always seems so much more sensible to just say no, and settle for a nice respectable job, or at least guaranteed survival. And of course no one really believes she's going to fail. So it's all a bit artificial. But never mind.

Once the Impossible Task (tm) gets under way, there are a few contrivances to allow Duchess to get to where she needs to be, and to case the joint, as it were, and this part is all a bit predictable. But once things start moving, the story hits the turbo button and becomes a terrific page turner, and not predictable at all. In fact, there's a moment in the middle of the action where Duchess has to make a difficult decision. I expected the authors to opt for cheap sentimentality here and take the easy route, but no, not at all, and they faced up to the consequences too. This was a very nice piece of writing. Details: (view spoiler)

The ending was neatly done, even if very slightly predictable (well, even I guessed bits of it), and it did seem sometimes as if things just worked out a little too conveniently, although partly that was just the complications of the various factions. I'm not sure that I've got them all clear in my head, even now (it was complicated), but even so I liked the way it all felt like a whole array of multi-layered games going on simultaneously, with only odd moves becoming visible here and there. To say that everyone's motives were questionable would be an understatement. But the authors managed to create a satisfying resolution for this book, while also laying the foundations for future books, not always easy to do.

I have a few minor quibbles: I would have liked to see something of the world outside Rodaas, for example.

The city felt just slightly claustrophobic. And while I don't normally comment on cover images, this one, while it nicely depicts Duchess herself, is a bit too much the conventional fantasy-character-in-a-hood. I would have liked to see Lysander on there too (but maybe that's just me!), and also something of fog-bound Rodaas as well. Also, although the authors have attempted to create something of a past for Rodaas, the few snippets of events and stories we get don't really give the impression of a fully realised history.

On the plus side, the writing is excellent, drawing out the atmosphere of Rodaas and creating fully rounded characters. There are virtually no typos or clunky moments. I particularly liked the subtleties of the exchanges with Minette and Uncle Cornelius, with all their double meanings and innuendo, where the reader is given just enough information to work out what is really being said without being spoonfed. Duchess is a sympathetic main character right from the start, and did I mention that I really like Lysander? I think I may have... A really enjoyable read. Four stars.

Opal says

Review originally published on The Akamai Reader.

Actually a 4.5 star rating.

The Grey is a network of thieves and spies as well as secret traders. Duchess believes her entrance into their society will give her the answers she seeks about her family. Entrance into The Grey is hard to come by and her task is dangerous to say the least. She needs to rob a nobleman's house while he's having a party. Not easy.

Duchess is very ambitious and she's driven by a need to know what exactly happened to her family when she was a small child. She's also extremely resourceful and smart. I grew to admire her as the book went on. Not only that, she was handy with a knife. Duchess had a good network of people in the Shallows to rely on. There was Minette, the brothel-keeper and there was Lysander.

Lysander was disarming with his sweet charm. I really enjoyed reading about him. He is a ganymede or a male prostitute. He's made his living on his looks and his wits for more years than Duchess can count. They've been friends since they were young children. Best of friends. Lysander taught Duchess much about the way of the Shallows.

This book was fast paced and I was easily absorbed by the well developed plot and characters. The world building was exceptional. There are layers of social classes and religious sects, including criminal elements. I was disappointed when the story ended purely because I wanted to keep on reading about Duchess and Lysander. I look forward to the next book in the series!

*I received a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

Laura says

I read this book in under a week and, on the whole, really enjoyed it. Duchess' story is an easy one to become

sucked into, as a spunky, wise 16 y/o with still a touch of innocence about her. I really enjoyed reading through her decision making and her interactions with the other key characters. I am someone who has to connect with the characters in order to carry on reading, and I wanted to know what would happen to her throughout, rooted for her during the heist, and am still curious as to what fate has in store for her next. I also found the character of Lysander brilliant, too, in a sweet but tragic way.

The element that sets this book apart for me was the world building, though. I feel I know Rodaas more than I know Lincoln (which I moved to, three months ago). The setting isn't forced on us, but it's cleverly woven into everything that Duchess does. It's certainly given me food for thought with my own fantasy novel, which jumps from one location to the next, with the world building a secondary thought to most other things. I really enjoyed getting to know Rodaas, its religion, its varied districts, and the different groups of people within it.

I would agree with other reviewers that there was too much exposition. It was necessary in parts, such as understanding the religion, but then too much in other places. There were a couple of moments where secondary characters reveal secrets in long spurts too... It's a shame, because I think some of that could have remained a mystery to learn about in future novels, too. It certainly wasn't too overbearing though.

Over all, a really good book. I will likely read the second in the series.

Ross says

The Duchess of the Shallows came my way through GoodReads after reading some very good reviews. Initially I was a bit skeptical due to the fact that it's a "self-published" book, but after finishing it I can confidently say that it holds its own alongside some of the best sellers out there. Reminiscent of Scott Lynch's *Lies of Locke Lamora* this is top notch cloak and dagger fantasy.

Duchess is the last surviving member of her family, and after a tragic accident she is adopted by a simple baker. Given a strange coin she seeks entry into the mysterious Thieves' guild known as "the grey". In order to gain entry into this exclusive club Duchess must steal a dagger from one of the city's most dangerous nobleman. Duchess has a best friend named Lysander who is an "escort" of sorts and he was a great secondary character. Lysander's group of "ganymedes" put an interesting twist on clichés that we are used to seeing in fantasy. The relationship between Lysander and Duchess was believable and felt very authentic. The plot is pretty straightforward and moves along at a quick and urgent pace. This is all killer and no filler, and the chapters seem to fly by. I finished the book in two sittings.

The Duchess of the Shallows was written for fantasy fans by a fantasy fan, you can just tell. It has the charm that we all love in a medieval setting. The Imperial City of Rodaas was wonderful and filled with carts and vendors selling their wares, pickpockets sneaking along cobblestone streets, mist raining down, and knives hiding behind every ally. This medieval setting has been done a million times, and yet it still feels new and refreshing, something I wasn't really expecting.

Sure this novel isn't as gritty and dark as a lot of other stuff out there, but it makes up for it by its charm and simplicity. This is the first self-published book that I would totally recommend to other fantasy fans, especially those who enjoy a good thief tale. Check it out and support these two authors, they have something good here.

David Meredith says

If you had but one chance at greatness, would you take it?

That is the question young Duchess must answer for herself. Despite her grandiose name, she is little more than an orphaned baker's assistant living among a family of strangers in an ill-reputed corner of the capitol city known inauspiciously as "The Shallows". She lives on the margins of a corrupt society, the friend of beggars and thieves, prostitutes and gigolos, the victim of brutal street brigands, lecherous nobles, and corrupt politicians. When a mysterious letter and enigmatic token thrust her from her home, she is forced to decide – will she continue her poverty stricken existence of quiet desperation or will she risk everything in a single daring attempt to better her station? On the one hand is the paltry monotony of backbreaking if reliable subsistence, on the other near certain death. However, if she can brave the dark currents swirling seductively at her feet and persevere over the great and powerful to whom she is naught but a pawn in their fathomless game not only will she achieve the wealth and status she yearns for, but also discover the long kept secrets of her own difficult past.

I came to this tale knowing little more about it than the title, but must admit being blown away. Duchess of the Shallows is a masterful example of dystopian world building and political intrigue at its finest. The City of Rodaas is gritty, dirty, dangerous and unsavory – no stranger to desperation, murder, and betrayal, but also unquestionably exudes an aura of homeliness and familiarity to the characters who reside within its dark and foggy walls. One is struck quite starkly by both feelings of profound disgust and simultaneous affection for this nearly lawless ghetto of a city where the privileged sequester themselves high upon their hilltops and spies and thieves rule the streets.

The characters in general and Duchess in particular are believable, engaging and the dialog natural and masterfully written as was all of the prose. The delineations of disparate factions, convoluted political alliances and rivalries of the city, along with the resulting intrigue were very well portrayed. One definitely gets the sense that there is a much bigger game being played than is revealed in the scope of this single novel. Rodaas is a city with secrets, but the authors do not fall into the trap of revealing too much too quickly. The reader is left satisfied in the end, but with a slew of unresolved questions demanding answers and wanting more. I had planned to read this novel over the course of several days, but instead was so engrossed and enthralled by the expert storytelling that I finished it in a matter of hours. The Duchess of the Shallows is a wonderfully complete tale begging for a sequel and I would be most pleased to spend a little more time in the strangely affecting den of sin and villainy that is Rodaas.

I have long been a fan of the fantastic political intrigue and courtly espionage of Robin Hobb and now, in much the same way, I am a fan of Neil McGarry and Daniel Ravipinto as well.

Jefferson Smith says

After growing up in hiding, a letter with a peculiar talisman changes everything for a young baker's girl named Duchess, and leads her into a dangerous world of thievery and intrigue, where the only thing she has at stake is her place in the world. And the truth about that terrible childhood night in which she lost

everything.

Duchess of the Shallows is a deceptively simple book, but rich in details. The plot revolves around Duchess, once the youngest child of a wealthy family, but now living in secret, disguised as the daughter of a baker after the horrifying death of her father and family. The story is driven by a single heist mission in which Duchess, assisted by her street-friend, Lysander, must pull off an impossible robbery in order to gain Duchess admission to the secret world of thieves.

But despite the simplicity of the plot, the world woven around Duchess, and the characters that inhabit her world with her, are anything but simple. Political maneuvering between different factions of society, and the power-players calling the shots, all serve to create a textured backdrop, giving the story depth and appeal. While I found the exposition a bit heavy in one or two places, the characters soon had me rooting for them, and I was carried along quite happily, all the way to the end.

I was a bit disappointed that there wasn't more story after the heist. In a way, it felt like one long, drawn out act, rather than the three-act pulse of most modern fantasy, but it definitely left me liking the characters and wanting to hear more.

Oj Stapleton says

I wish Goodreads allowed for half stars, because this book was better than a three-star but not quite a four-star review. But, if you go by the phrases Goodreads assigned to the star ratings, I liked it, but didn't quite really like it - so that's why I gave it three stars.

I liked the main character quite a bit. She was interesting and compelling. But I found the whole "steel" and "silk" aspects of her personality a little bit bothersome. I think the author brought that up a little too much and a little over halfway through the book, I felt like I was being beaten over the head with that point.

Some of the minor characters I liked a lot. Especially the Uncle and Minette. Even Noam the baker, who doesn't actually appear in the story, but is just talked about in third person mostly, I found interesting. Not so much with Lysander, which was disappointing. In one review I read before this book, the reviewer loved that character and thought he was the best in the book. Maybe my expectations were too high for him though. I just found him kinda one-dimensional and uninteresting. He was just the buddy willing to help Duchess. I didn't really understand their relationship at all, which was bothersome. Maybe that was the point though.

The heist was fun. But it felt like Duchess was able to get the information about the job a little too easily. Everything fell into place for her during the planning stages way too perfectly.

I quite liked the city the story was set in a lot. I enjoyed visiting the different quarters - especially the foreign quarter. The worldbuilding of this novel was one of the high points.

Overall, it was a good story. I enjoyed it. But there were flaws. Not enough to keep me from liking it, but enough to keep me from really liking it. I'm a hopeful sort when it comes to books, so I'll probably buy the next one in this series and hope the things I liked remain while some of the things I didn't get better.

William says

“The Duchess of the Shallows” follows the adventures of a young woman living a deceptively simple life under a false identity who one day gets a message from a mysterious benefactor offering her the chance to join the secretive and powerful underground organisation known as ‘The Grey’. As a test of her abilities she is asked to steal a valuable antique dagger recently acquired by a wealthy noble, as an extra challenge she is commanded to do it during a party the noble is throwing to show off his newest acquisition.

As a fantasy novel set in a large city with a heist at the centre of the plot, the premise did remind me a bit of Scott Lynch’s “The Lies of Locke Lamora”. This does have some similar strengths. It has good characterisation; both Duchess and her friend and partner-in-crime Lysander are interesting and likeable characters, and there are several interesting minor characters. The world-building is also good, although city-building might be a better description since virtually the entire novel takes place in the city of Rodaas which is described in vivid detail. It’s mostly a fairly standard fantasy city, but there are a few interesting touches, particularly an intriguing backstory which described the city as having been mysteriously abandoned overnight by its original inhabitants. One small downside to the world-building is that although the exposition is clear and concise, at times it does feel like more time is spent on world-building than the main plot.

The heist itself is suitably tense and does feature a moral dilemma as Duchess has to balance achieving her goal with putting her friend in danger. On the downside, only occasionally does it feel like she is in genuine peril. Compared to “The Lies of Locke Lamora” the stakes don’t feel as high and the heist isn’t as complex, but I think this is a side-effect of Duchess being much less experienced and capable than Locke and his gang.

Although this would work well as a stand-alone story, it is obviously intended as the first book in a series and some of the most interesting aspects of the story are left unresolved – it is clear that Duchess is a pawn in a much larger game and there are hints that the fate of the entire city may be at stake. Many of the characters have their own agendas and while we do find out what some of them are during the book, some key characters do remain enigmatic. Duchess’ backstory also gets a lot of attention, during the book she unravels some of the reasons behind her childhood journey from a comfortable life among the nobility to having to pretend to be the child of a baker and this backstory does provide explanation for why she’s willing to take huge risks to move up in the world.

In summary, this is an entertaining debut fantasy novel that has plenty of potential for interesting sequels.

Brian Foster says

In *The Duchess of the Shallows*, Mr. Ravipinto and Mr. McGarry tell of a young woman who, though born into nobility, fell into hard times. The book tells of her attempt to rise above her current lot in life regardless of the danger.

Why to buy this book: The book is fast paced and well written.

Why not to buy the book: My biggest problem with the book is that it took me quite a while to relate to the POV character, perhaps because the authors did not have her struggle enough at the start. Once I did, the

book grabbed me. I also had some minor quibbles: 1. The character's name is Duchess. It wasn't clear to me at the beginning that it was her name and not a title. I had that moment where I wondered, "Why is a Duchess working in a bakery?" 2. What's with all the authors lately who overuse semicolons? It's a minor deal, but I found it distracting. 3. The "gangs" in the story are all referred to by a color like the Red and the White. If the names are based on color, why do the authors describe things as "gray" but the gang is "the Grey?"

Bottom Line: Though I spent much more time above on the negatives than the positive, I found this book, overall, an enjoyable read – well worth what I paid for it. I give it 4 stars.

Andrew says

Street urchin attempts to inveigle her way into the Thieves' Guild in a fantasy city. Expected trimmings include prostitutes, secret societies, priestesses, and a theft caper through high society.

The book does a decent job of solidifying these stock elements. Duchess is an orphan but not a street orphan; she's been working in a bakery since she was seven. (Yay for baking in fantasy, although this (sadly) does not achieve *Sunshine* levels of pastry obsession.) The setting is non-magical (so far) fantasy; the city has a history, with class tension and revolution hovering (so far) in the background. And there are several shady-and-or-criminal organizations in the city, with complicated interactions. This book most directly shows us the Red, a straight-up protection racket, but the interesting folks are the Grey. Schemes are clearly afoot. Sequels to follow.

The strong points here are lots of politicking and negotiation, not just within the underworld but at and between every level of society. Shopkeepers pay off the Red, brothel-keepers manage rich clients, nobles hire poor workers as servants. The book gives good glimpses of all these facets. On the down side, the setting a little too unexamined-standard-Euro-fantasy, and the Grey -- which ought to be the most distinctive element -- is underexplained and taken for granted by the narrative. Should have had either more focus or more sense of mystery. But this is a marginal complaint.

(Interest: I know Daniel Ravipinto on the Internet, and he sent me a free copy of the book.)

Neil McGarry says

[image error]

Will Knight says

Originally posted at Bibliophilia, Please.

I'm not going to lie, this book was a struggle. It's a good book, I just couldn't get into it for at least 3/4 of it. Not sure why, 'cause I ended up liking it.

I assumed this book to be YA, considering the age of the main character, but it didn't read like it. There were male prostitutes, female prostitutes, torture, theft, gangs, drinking and intrigue up to your ears. I liked it. Even if it took me a while to get into it, the ending made the read worthwhile for me.

I liked the characters, good and bad. I liked Minette, the mistress of the Vermillion, the brothel of the Shallows. I liked the bad guy, Baron Eusbius, even though he doesn't get much play in the story, I liked to have him there as someone to dislike. I liked Lysander, the main character's companion and all around awesome dude. Forget the fact he runs a group called Ganymedes, who are young male prostitutes. You're going to like him.

I liked Duchess. She didn't drive me crazy, head over heels, I love this character. But I did like her. She's smart, courageous and resourceful. Everything you'd want in a strong female lead, except for one thing. The authors kept referring to her "Silk" and "Steel", the weak and strong portions of her personality. That annoyed the crap out of me. That aside, I enjoyed the writing.

They didn't get much into races and extensive world building, but it's definitely there. Several races, religions, gods (who appear to have a bigger role than just worship objects), a rich and long history to draw upon. Several gangs: Ganymedes, Lightboys (rich people escorts when the high and mighty go slum diving for a thrill. Assholes.), the Reds, the Blackarms, the Imperial Whites and of course, the Grey.

The Grey is the secret, not so secret as every character in the book knows about them, guild of thieves, rumor-mongers, secret hoarders that permeates the city. Duchess' struggle to join them throughout the book is what drives the story. Her wish for information about her family and their tragic end. She finds it in the end, and let me tell you, I did not see that coming.

Like I said, took me a while to get into the book. Several reasons, chief amongst them was the fact that I've been SWAMPED with work and the time I had free was spent resting, and reading came at night and I was falling asleep already. Which is why it took me a while to read all of it, but, and this is a big but (and I cannot lie), the ending kept me up until 2 AM so I could finish it and find out what was going on. I had an early day next day, but damn it, I had to know what the whole thing was about!

And I did. And it was good. I enjoyed the way things wrapped up, which wasn't the way I expected, but fitting nonetheless. I enjoyed the place Duchess was at by the end, and how her interplay with all the characters throughout the story brought her to the place she ended up at.

I'm curious where it'll go from here. I do hope they stop it with the Silk and Steel, thing, 'cause I didn't like it. At. All. But I am looking forward to walking through the Shallows with Duchess and figuring out what to do next. Pretty much all her driving goals were met, one way or another, and now she's in it for herself. No more mysteries, except that big one I avoided mentioning until now. There's a big shadow, supernatural creature lurking about and Duchess is somehow connected to it. Whaaaaaaa? I know! What's up with that!

Read the series and find out!

Bob Milne says

Character-driven, tightly-plotted, and propelled along by an intriguing central mystery, *The Duchess of the Shallows* is a refreshing addition to the fantasy genre. Neil McGarry and Daniel Ravipinto demonstrate their

love for the genre, as well as their talent for creating living, breathing, identifiable characters. By the time the opening chapter is done, you can't help but want to see Duchess succeed, and it doesn't take more than a few chapters more for the likes of Lysander and his fellow ganymedes to endear themselves to the reader.

In many ways, this is a typical fantasy novel, complete with the young protagonist who is destined for greatness. What sets Duchess apart, however, is the well-played mystery of just who she really is, and precisely how she fits into this new world into which she's trying to gain entry. The setting is typical too, a medieval-like city, separated by class, but there's a novelty to the overall cascading design, as well as to the elements within it. The mysterious fog that regularly rolls in, disguising and transforming the town, is a very nice touch, enhanced by Duchess and her connection to it.

The plot had me concerned at first, with things working out a little too conveniently - and coincidentally. Once the story gets going, and new elements begin to be layered upon the opening quest/task, however, McGarry and Ravipinto find their stride and seem to settle into a smarter, more comfortable plot. I quite liked the way the story developed, and the conclusion managed to play to my expectations while somehow managing to surprise me at the same time.

I think what really put it over the top, though, was the intelligence and creativity involved in the dealings, negotiations, and manoeuvrings. This is a world where nothing is free, and no good, no service, and no snippet of information is exchanged without wringing every ounce of value from it. Manipulation is the name of the game, and just about everyone is playing it.

Originally reviewed at [Beauty in Ruins](#)