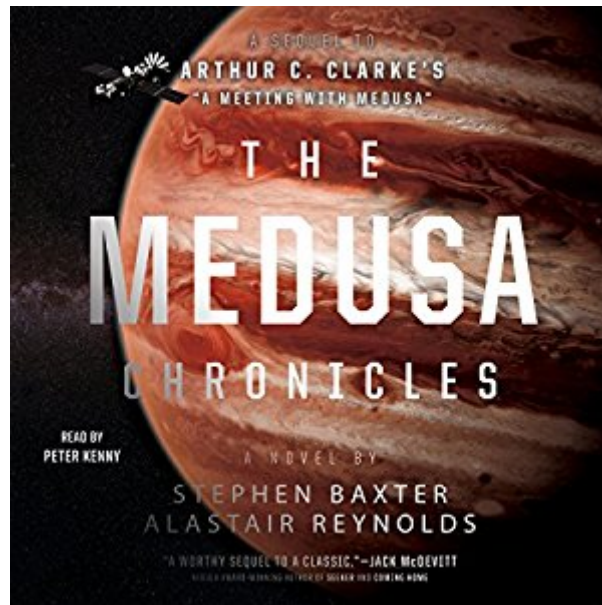


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# The Medusa Chronicles



## Synopsis

A sequel to Sir Arthur C. Clarke's Nebula Award-winning novella *A Meeting with Medusa*, this novel is a continuation of the thrilling adventure of astronaut Howard Falcon, humanity's first explorer of Jupiter, from two modern science fiction masters. Howard Falcon almost lost his life in an accident as the first human astronaut to explore the atmosphere of Jupiter - and a combination of human ingenuity and technical expertise brought him back. But he is no longer himself. Instead he has been changed into an augmented human: part man, part machine, and exceptionally capable. With permission from the Clarke estate, Stephen Baxter and Alastair Reynolds continue this beloved writer's enduring vision and have created a fresh story for new listeners. The *Medusa Chronicles* charts Falcon's journey through the centuries granted by his new body but always goes back to the mysteries of Jupiter and the changing interaction between humanity and the universe. A compelling listen full of incredible action right from the beginning, this is a modern classic in the spirit of *2001* and *The Martian*.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Although the book started a bit slowly and was taking place in an alternative history it eventually became an awe-inducing adventure ride into future realms of science. Oh yeah, I liked it! It is actually a sequel to Arthur C Clarke's award winning novella, "A Meeting With Medusa", but you don't really need to read this story. In addition to the sentient Medusae within Jupiter's upper atmosphere we also encounter sentient chimps, sentient Machines, and another sentient race within Jupiter. The reluctant hero of this book is Howard Falcon, who due to a tragic accident is a cyborg.

This story chronicles his long life and his attempts to mediate the conflict between Man and Machines. And to top it off the book has a great and very satisfying ending.

I'm an Alistair Reynolds fan-boy. I have bought every one of his previous books and short story collections. Including his Dr. Who book. In general I order the UK version of the Reynolds' books, because they come out earlier. While I thought that the Dr. Who book was OK (I'm not a Dr. Who fan), I have liked every other book that Reynolds has written. In some cases I've read the books multiple times. Until *The Medusa Chronicles* I have finished every one of Reynolds' books. Sadly, I found *The Medusa Chronicles* not worth finishing. The book reads like poorly written 1960s science fiction. This book is far below the quality of Reynolds' other work (even the Dr. Who book). In this case, his collaboration with Baxter is disastrous. It is hard to imagine the author of the novella *Diamond Dogs* writing a book like this. *The Medusa Chronicles* is supposed to be an extension of Arthur C. Clark's story *A Meeting with Medusa*. Before reading Baxter and Reynolds' *The Medusa Chronicles* I read Clark's story, which is much better than this sequel. Why is the book so bad? The characters are wooden stereotypes without any depth. The plot is shallow, unsurprising and tedious. The dialog is weak. In short, if Baxter and Reynolds set out to write an example of bad amateur science fiction, they succeeded. If you're a Reynolds fan, don't make the mistake I did. Don't buy this book. Save you money and buy his next (solo) book. Perhaps I should have given this book one star, but I'm biased by my affection for Reynolds. Also, this book is not as bad as Neil Stevenson's book *Sevneves*, which I did give one star.

So reads the dust jacket review by another author...and I'll agree that it truly is. The story by Arthur C. Clarke on which this is based merits the label "classic." If you've not read that story, do seek, find and read first. Clarke's short fiction provided my effective introduction to the genre so very long ago. I don't read nearly as much in the genre as I used to. I've read some by Baxter and not nearly as much by Reynolds. I got the distinct impression each tried as best he could to emulate Clarke's style. Homages abound both in the main plot and sub-plots. Towards the end it gets a just a touch Stapledonian, but that's in keeping with the conflict that the protagonist Howard Falcon faces throughout the centuries, and possibly an homage to *2001: A Space Odyssey*. Of course Jupiter figures mightily in the telling of the story. One very minor quibble but a quibble nonetheless: The story is set in an alternate timeline that occasionally jars the narrative. There are references to John Young (he of Gemini, Apollo and the Space Shuttle) being the first human to have walked on Mars. And Baxter had to have contributed a sub-sub-plot that reminded me more of his novels *Voyage*

and Titan.

Two of my favorite authors in one book. I have not read the story it was based on but that is not necessary to fully enjoy it. Given this story spans many normal lifetimes it is a little slow getting started but once underway it flies to an interesting ending. Just enough science is hinted at to be a tiny bit plausible but not hinder the story of man vs machine. It does suggest a difficult future for mankind that unfortunately appears to be very possibly coming true.

The Medusa Chronicles (Hardcover) by Stephen Baxter and Alastair Reynolds This is a sequel to A Meeting With Medusa by Arthur C. Clarke. I think that perhaps it more of a love letter from the authors to Uncle Arthur. Honestly, the first two thirds of the book I found uninspiring and plodding. I particularly found the various iterations of our hero's machine body to be cumbersome and mostly felt like a 1980's one off? Also, the idea of Machine sentients was not really well thought out. But I stuck with it, and the final third was well written indeed. That's when I could really sink my teeth into this, so to speak. So I was going to give it a Two Star rating, but the last part pulled it up a notch.

this was a complicated book that took several twists and ended up in a very different place than I expected. I think we ended up meeting a God like race, not sure if they created man or the universe, but they were at a very different level than the rest of us. I felt this was dark as we watch mankind go obsolete and a race of machines take over and destroy our world and solar system. If you like a book that challenges the imagination, this one is for you.

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