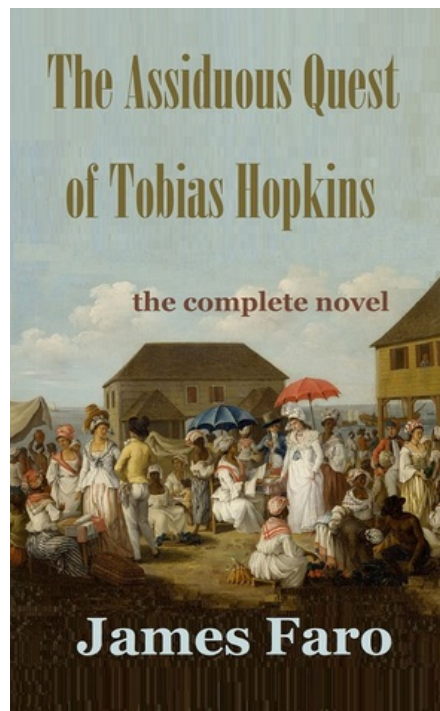




The Assiduous Quest of Tobias Hopkins: The Complete Novel

James Faro

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The Assiduous Quest of Tobias Hopkins - The Complete novel

The first volume in the Tobias Hopkins series.

It is October in the year 1675. New England trader, Tobias Hopkins, arrives in Jamaica to discover the truth about his missing father. It transpires that, not only has the man been dead for six years, but he has left Toby with a half-brother and the clue to an inheritance which promises to change the course of their lives.

However, Toby's inquiries have attracted the attention of others who will stop at nothing to achieve their aims. Will the cryptic message written by his father lead him to a promised fortune, or will it lead him into the hands of those who aim to destroy him?

Haunted by nightmares from his past, Toby continues with his quest. But who can he trust? His faithful associate, John? the astute businesswoman Elizabeth? or Magdalena, mother of his half-brother Eduardo? Some of those around him are not what they seem to be, and it soon becomes clear that Toby and those closest to him are in imminent danger.

His quest leads him to the Island of Nevis where he reaps the fruits of his search. All appears well until he travels to Virginia. It is only at this point that Tobias Hopkins is forced to face the consequence of his actions.

The Assiduous Quest of Tobias Hopkins: The Complete Novel Details

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From Reader Review The Assiduous Quest of Tobias Hopkins: The Complete Novel for online ebook

T.K. Lukas says

In the opening paragraph, author James Faro poses a question that promises an adventure, and he doesn't disappoint. In a compelling tale of a young sea-faring captain named Tobias Hopkins who goes in search of his father, one can see clearly that Faro is well-versed in the language of the sea and all things nautical. Everything about his voice is authentic, written in the classical style, and his descriptions of the ships, the places, and the people draw you in and keep you turning the pages. With a seventeenth century maritime history lesson (and a vocabulary lesson, to boot) interwoven throughout the narrative, Faro manages to keep it entertaining and never pedantic. A wonderful story complete with a believable hero, pirates, whores, stow-aways, hold-your-breath action, and secret codes, this book has it all. And as a word of caution, if a pirate ever offers to take you to "the bathing pool," run like hell the opposite direction.

Caroline Jayson says

I cannot praise this book highly enough. This book will transport you to the Jamaica of the late 17th century, making you feel you're really there. The story is gripping and keeps you guessing. Tobias Hopkins is looking for his father. I don't want to give away what he finds, but I can say that several other characters have an interest in his search. There is so much contained in this book, suspense, deception, trickery. The main characters are varied whilst the protagonist, Tobias, has an air of mystery about him. He's an interesting and complex person, with many layers to his character.

Without wanting to give anything away, there is a brilliant scene where one of Tobias' enemies gets his comeuppance.

This book would make a brilliant film.

Sue Wyshynski says

I enjoyed this book of treasure, pirates and the high seas very much.

James Faro sets the tone right from the start with a disaster aboard a ship, where the captain finds a missing arm and plucks a ring from one of the fingers to return to its owner. Now that's a pair of hardy seamen!

The tale takes place in the Caribbean during a time when Europe was still colonizing the Americas. It has a wild west meets the islands feel, particularly in one town that's populated with bawdy saloons, sailors, prostitutes and other interesting characters.

Toby is on the hunt for his long lost father. But his quest coincides with a mystery surrounding some gruesome murders and some super shady bad guys. As the story builds, it all comes together in a clash of forces.

I like historical fiction a lot, and James Faro has a nice tone to his writing. He uses a nice, almost old-fashioned style, which suits the narrative very well. It draws you in so that you want to curl up and disappear into the world he's created. He clearly knows his stuff when it comes to boats and that was particularly

enjoyable to read.

All in all a great story that I think many readers will enjoy. A great tale to read in the cold winter months! Grab a copy and dream of warm, distant shores!

I received a copy of this book in exchange for my honest opinion. All views are my own.

Robert Case says

The author's passion for seafaring, tall ships, and trade shines throughout this page turning yarn of risk and reward on the high seas of the seventeenth century Caribbean. The compelling main character, Tobias Hopkins, is more of an innocent than a swashbuckler. He is young, puritanical, and over his head from the opening chapter until the final pages. It was both entertaining and fascinating to read and observe as the plot unfolded and he matured as both a ship's captain and a man. Detailed descriptions of the characters, culture, and politics of the era add to the suspenseful flow. I recommend this book to students of history and lovers of a good seafarin' tale.

Ju Ephraime says

James Faro's portrayal of 17th century Jamaica in, *The Assiduous Quest of Tobias Hopkins* is a colorful picturesque narrative. Fargo brings the reader into the scenes with his well-crafted, easy flow writing. Through the pages of the book, I was transported to Jamaica as it were in the 17th century. I smelled the food, witnessed the beautiful scenery, the pain, the hurt, I experienced it all. What a quest for poor Toby. The author portrays him true to cast. Actually, the entire cast of characters was well-developed, which adds to the authenticity of the story. What can I say, other than: *The Assiduous Quest of Tobias Hopkins* will keep you turning the pages until you come to the wonderful end. Brilliant!

☆?☆RaeleighReads☆?☆ says

Hmm, where to start with this one? *Assiduous Quest* is a good little read. For those who like the *Pirates of the Caribbean* franchise, you will enjoy the setting of this novel. Although I suspect Faro is more historically accurate.

I was utterly impressed with the writing itself in this novel. The prose flowed nicely, pacing was good, dialogue was character-appropriate and consistent, characters showed depth and growth, and the plot took quite a few meanders off its main path.

My criticisms are that it lacked action for the main character (If you've been following along, you know I really like action!), and the ending felt too abrupt.

This novel absolutely built suspense, particularly toward the very end, but it was missing a bit of spark as far as the action of the main character was concerned. Many of the side characters experienced quite a bit of actual, physical action in their parts, but Mr. Tobias Hopkins was more of an internal character. Even during the climax of the novel, he didn't seem as involved physically as I would have liked. Now, there will be those of you that argue with me and say that Tobias is an internal kind of guy, and so him not experiencing a whole

lot of running about, pistol shooting, sword chopping, etc. is absolutely within character. And you would be totally correct. Tobias is an introvert. I love that about him, but since he didn't engage in much action, things somehow fell a little flat with him.

My only other quibble was that there was not nearly enough of this book! After things come to a head and the seamen arrive in the colonies, it's like we got in a very big hurry to wrap things up and have done with it! I wanted more -- more explanation, more time for things to play out with Toby's and John Fowler's separate ventures, I wanted to know what happened with Elizabeth, and I was not satisfied with how things went with Mr. Groot. It just all felt too rushed. Now, I consider that criticism a testament to how wonderful the rest of this novel was. I wonder, if perhaps the author would consider turning this into a series. I know I would keep reading to find out what happens to everyone. You made me feel invested in the characters, please don't leave me hanging like this. :)

I would absolutely recommend this book to those who like historical fiction of the 17th century. Those who like *Pirates*, as I mentioned above, will enjoy being thrust back into the realm of Port Royal, Tortuga, and the colonies. And those who like a book with a bit of mystery and suspense will likely enjoy this very much. Another series that came to mind while reading this was *Master and Commander*. If you liked those books, you will probably like *Assiduous Quest*.

I received a copy of this novel in exchange for an honest review.

Ronesa Aveela says

This story is set in the late 1600s with much of the story taking place in Jamaica. The author's extensive research into that era and culture shows in the wonderful descriptions that transport you to that time and let you live among the people. You see the corruption and decadence of the port city, and can smell its stench.

The writing style as well makes you feel as if you are reading a classic novel from the past. I happen to be one who enjoys this type of writing, so I applaud the author for his style.

Tobias Hopkins is the captain of an ill-fated vessel, captured by pirates. He and his crew suffer much before finally arriving in Jamaica. At times, the author uses much nautical language as would be expected, but for the most part it is easy to understand what is happening even for a land-lubber like me.

The story of Tobias searching for his father is mingled with a series of brutal murders that have taken place over several years. The author skillfully weaves the two together in this intriguing novel. It kept me interested from start to finish. I can easily see a sequel to find out what one character says, "That is another story."

The characters are well developed. I found Tobias annoying in his attitude and reserve, but this flaw only made him more real. Even the minor characters have personalities. My favorite was a prisoner who called out to Tobias from his prison cell.

This novel is certain to please people interested in nautical or historical stories. I highly recommend it.

Matt Abraham says

Some reviewers have been likening this novel to Pirates of the Caribbean, however I feel that it's far more similar in tone, pacing, and authenticity to Master and Commander. The story begins with a cannon bang that hooks the reader and drops them head first into a journey that does not disappoint. And I have to say it's impressive because my tastes usually run to detective novels and science fiction, not turn of the century sea faring tale, but good writing is good writing and this story's quite gripping.

What I found most impressive was the authenticity of the milieu. I don't know much about the author, however he must've done a tremendous amount of research into the era to paint such a realistic picture. From the sailing ships to the islands we're treated to realistic scenes, but that doesn't just stop at the descriptions. The motivations, the character goals, and especially the dialogue all reflect the time in which the story takes place. I think that's what's usually missing from a lot of indie author's books when they do period pieces. Like when a tribal chief from five hundred years ago says "he'll bleed out" or a pirate says "no problem" will cause a seam within the story and pull the reader out, but where many have failed Mr. Faro has succeeded.

I also like the characters. They had depth and were believable. Granted, I wish Tobias had been a bit more proactive in his 'quest', I still found his introspection interesting, and more importantly, steady throughout the tome. Besides, the supporting cast more than makes up for it. Thus I'd recommend this for any genre fan, it's a novel that can keep anyone engaged with its solid storytelling.

Yaron Glazer says

The Assiduous Quest of Tobias Hopkins is a historical thriller set in and around Jamaica in the 17th century. It narrates the travails of the titular Toby as he engages with a colorful assortment of sailors, prostitutes, and pirates, all while chasing the buried treasure of his estranged father.

There is much to like about The Assiduous Quest. The prose is clear and flows well, and the style transports the reader to the 17th-century setting of the novel. There were few false notes to this reader's ears. The author paints a vivid portrait of the Caribbean of that era, with well-utilized historical detail and excellent command of sailing concepts and terminology. A few of the characters feel stock, but on the whole there is a rich assortment of supporting players around Toby.

The one flaw in the novel, and for me a significant one, was the straw-man nature of the main character. Throughout the novel, major plot points turn on Toby's stupidity, prejudice, or carelessness, incidents that could have been dispelled with a few words or actions that would have occurred to any reasonable person. That they did not occur to Toby, and repeatedly drove the plot towards contrived complication, became increasingly annoying over the course of the novel. It left me fairly disappointed with the plot.

For those readers who don't mind this sort of contrivance, the novel will be an enjoyable read.

Bianca Kent says

I really enjoyed this. I thought this might be heavy going as it's set several hundred years ago but the writing is clear and the story is easy to follow. The book is about Tobias Hopkins, a sea captain, who sets out to find his missing father. Now, I don't have any interest in ships or sailing and whenever I've been on a boat I've always been incredibly ill, but I found this book very readable and I enjoyed reading the ship scenes, especially when the character Beatrice, is on board. Beatrice has to be my favourite character. She's brave,

feisty and determined and is always taking risks.

There is so much going on. There are some gruesome episodes with some quite graphic violence, but there is plenty of humour. I liked the episode where Tobias and John are searching for new recruits for the ship.

I think Tobias is quite a lonely person. He has nightmares of his past and is a very troubled man. He's searching for answers or maybe, for some kind of peace. I loved Magdalena and La Bruma, her farmhouse, and when Tobias goes there, it's as though he's arrived home and can find peace.

I like the way the author has created several very interesting and strong female characters. It really annoys me when I read a book with weak and helpless females!

Nothing bad to say about this. All I can say is just go and read it!

Susan Day says

If you like swash-buckling adventures you are going to love this book.

There is no doubt that the author's naval history provided him with the knowledge and experiences to bring this tale to light.

Our hero is Tobias Hopkins, who we meet when he arrived in Jamaica to discover the truth about his missing father.

After finding his father had been dead for six years, Tobias also discovers he has a half-brother.

However, the adventures really begin when Toby receives clues about the possibility of an inheritance.

The sub-plot is used to weave a series of murders around Tobias' adventures and, without giving anything away, really adds to the value of this novel.

James Faro's visually inspired language would enthrall any land-lover to set sail upon the rich and tempting seas.

Give The Assiduous Quest of Tobias Hopkins a read – I'm sure you won't be sorry.

Erik Volk says

What a gloriously crafted novel! Mr. Faro's writing style mesmerized me throughout and completely transported me back to 17th century Jamaica. Although historical novels can often be drawn out, boring and the author so infatuated with historical accuracy that the story line becomes secondary to the historical references, this novel is so intriguing, mesmerizing and engaging that the reader cannot help but be drawn into it. The characters are colorful and engaging and often surprising! Love, money, pirates, prostitutes, rejection, murder, forbidden love, prejudice, revenge..and I could go on and on! In some ways a simple story of a man's search for his father, acceptance and success but each of its characters provides another layer making the story intriguing and unforgettable and most certainly "assiduous" with the historical details and writing style.

Leon Huet says

A terrifically well-written novel that immediately immersed me within the 17th century Caribbean, with all the swashbuckling and adventure that brings to mind. The author writes in a lyrical, literary way that brings the story to life from the first page, plunging us into the sights, sounds and tastes of another world. Some might not be accustomed to (or like) a narrator who doesn't spell everything out, but for me it really adds to the colour and believability of a tale – one you're given fleeting glimpses into. In fact, I'd go so far to say that this author has crafted a compelling and distinctive 'voice'; something not many are able to claim.

I wouldn't normally opt for a historical novel about seafaring adventures, but I hugely enjoyed the story and the characters. I'm also not hugely clued up on naval traditions, but from a land forces military perspective, a young man of the right class in the 17th century could certainly expect to be in command of older and more experienced men, such as the seadogs who follow the protagonist Hopkins – something questioned by other reviewers. I found him to be an interesting, appealing and principled character who was realistically tempered by the older, but lower class, John Fowler.

The author has a tremendous ear for the stilted, precise dialogue of the 17th century (particularly when it is mixed with seafaring slang), as well as detail and original metaphor. Furthermore, as is frequently the case with more literary novels, it is often the quality of writing amongst all else that compels one to keep reading. To marry it with a well-drawn cast of characters, mystery, drama, intrigue, adventure and a vivid, vibrant world, is hugely commendable.

Shwetha H.S. says

All my previous reviews have been so formal, but this book needs special treatment. Let me be informal with this awesome book which deals with life on and off sea where sailors are jovial.

When I started reading this book, I had no idea what it is about. Soon I felt like it is all about gory on sea. The story is set on the backdrop of colonial life and piracy. The protagonist of this story, Tobias Hopkins aka Toby, a captain and master of ship by profession, seems to be too nice of a person, innocent, too principled and a prick too; all at a time. His fellow sailors seem to be normal and good sailors. As soon as they survive and reach land, everybody shows interest in Toby and he is worried about how strangers already know about him. His back story is that he is looking for his long lost father. Side by side, there is a range of murder cases which need to be solved. The story never loses its pace; never slows down.

Even while writing this review I am amazed by the puzzle and its clue given in the letter written by Edward Hopkins to his family which Toby finally cracks. Of all the points, this puzzle and its clue give an authentic touch to the whole story. I am always disappointed if there are too many characters in the story. This story too has too many characters, but they all have a purpose and not thrown around just to make the story complicated. The mannerisms and language of each character described in the book fuel the reader's imagination to build the character in his or her mind. This shows that the author knows what he has written about. No overlapping s and confusions in the storyline. It is a fantastic book. Don't miss reading it.

Tassa DeSalada says

It's the seventeenth century and the it's The Golden Age

Of Piracy. The story is set in the Carribean, specifically Jamaica, specifically Port Royal. That's the same place that Blackbeard and his peers hung out, when they weren't out at sea, sinking merchant ships. I've heard so many pirate stories (one of my fave subjects) that it's nice to read a more mundane exploration of that same time period and area.

Jamaica used to be a very rough place. This story effortlessly and thoroughly describes the swashbuckling fierceness of those times. It's a terribly thrilling, exciting, and interesting read. Tobias is a normal guy who keeps learning about life and all it's hardships. In that sense, it's a tough read because I like Tobias. I see a lot of myself in him. Just like that baby sea turtle, you just have to pick yourself up and keep going.

This book is a great escape into one of my fave eras and places. I've heard many accounts of pirates in the Carribean, and it's terribly interesting to read a learned person's account to what he thought those days were like. Lots of research has gone into this book. It's a wealth of detail and intrigue that surpass any other same-era story I've read.

Uma says

Let me begin by stating that the writing is flawless. The authenticity and the tone to the writing is exceptional and commendable! While reading, I could picture Jamaica and its inhabitants clearly. That's how wonderful and amazing James Faro's descriptions are!

Honestly, when I first started reading the book, I had no idea what it was about. I just knew from the title that Tobias Hopkins was going on a quest. What kind of quest, I did not know. But because the writing was well executed, I kept flipping the pages. The story is easy to follow. Boy goes in search of dad and makes some discoveries.

I did not like Tobias (Toby) in the beginning - mainly because of his prejudice nature. Perhaps it was his age that made him react the way he did towards others. But that's not a bad thing. His character was believable! I started liking him more towards the end. especially during the ending :-). All the other characters were believable too - John, Magdalena, Edo (loved him the most), Mr G, Beatrice. The supporting characters were not thrown in for fun. They all had a role to play in the story, and that made everything seem real. Not only that, each character developed well throughout the book. Even the loud-mouth prisoner who calls out to Toby and John during their search for a new vessel added humour to the smooth sailing plot.

Being that the storyline was set in the 17th century, I did not fail to notice to Mr Faro made his female characters powerful and feisty. That earned him an extra star!

I've always enjoyed historical fiction, and it was clear to me that Mr Faro is a remarkable researcher. I can only imagine how much time he had put into his research to make this book a wonderful read. If you love quests and mysteries and thrillers, then this book is a must read! Doesn't matter if you are 10, 15, 25, 40 or even 70, you'll definitely enjoy reading this book. If Toby is going on another quest, I definitely want to join him and experience the 17th century sea life all over again! He should fall in love right, Mr Faro? Perhaps during his next quest :-)

Michael Sahno says

I received The Assiduous Quest of Tobias Hopkins by James Faro in exchange for an honest review.

I don't often get a chance to read historical fiction, and know little about Jamaica in the late 17th century. So I was interested in reading this well paced adventure.

The protagonist of this story, Tobias Hopkins, a.k.a. Toby, is a complex character, by turns likable and annoying. Overall, I really enjoyed the story, and it was a quick, easy read.

Faro's understanding of the 18th century Caribbean is very thorough, and I think he researched his adventure novel well.

Davyne DeSye says

This book certainly lives up to its description as a “historical thriller.”

The writing is impressive – a bit formal, which makes it absolutely perfect for a story set in the 17th century. The writing itself (the author’s word choices, sentence structure, etc.) adds so much to the book that I almost want to classify it as a character. Really well done. I loved the dialogue which seemed true and appropriate to each person.

Also, I very much enjoyed the vivid descriptions of life on a ship and in Jamaica. The scenes absolutely come alive without having too much exposition. With prostitutes, murderers, pirates, mistresses, the characters are a lively and well conceived.

My only complaint about the book is related to some of the characters themselves. The main character, Toby, seems a very proper, honorable fellow that I want very much to like, but I also want to know more about his past, his feelings about his dead mother, sisters and finally, father, how he feels about Sarah, or Elizabeth, etc. Also, while we are introduced to some spectacular characters in Elizabeth, Magdalena and Beatrice, I feel like I didn’t get to see enough of them or learn enough about them. I guess, in the end, this says a lot about the quality of the writing, since I wanted more!

This was a fun read. I felt absolutely plunged into each scene and the excitement of fights, storms, etc. I strongly recommend this book to anybody who enjoys a historical thriller.

David Carter says

Having just recently returned from Jamaica, I was interested to see that this book is partly set there during the 17th century. One of the strengths of the author is the way in which he makes you feel you are there, with the characters, you feel you're following in their footsteps. The detailed descriptions are very strong, and I particularly enjoyed the episodes set in Port Royal, in Jamaica.

It's not easy to predict what's going to happen in this book, there are many twists and turns. Some excellent descriptive writing, the storm at sea for instance, and the ending of the book which I won't reveal.

The attention to detail in this novel is outstanding and I imagine the author must have done a great deal of research. Historical fiction is not an easy genre to write but I think, an extremely important one. It's only by seeing how the world used to be, that we can really understand contemporary life. History teaches us lessons for the future and this novel draws the reader in and paints a vivid picture of life in the 17th century.

If you only read one historical novel this year, make sure it's this one.

Terry Sprouse says

This tale is a classic “Hero’s Journey” story, what Joseph Campbell refers to as “mankind’s one great story.” All the archetypal components are here. The young sea captain, Tobias Hobias, undertakes a dangerous quest to Virginia, fraught with peril. In the process, the course of his life is changed forever as Tobias is required to 1) solve a series of perplexing mysteries, 2) advance his spiritual growth, and 3) ascend to his rightful role in life.

Tobias is a sailor in the 17th century who is haunted by dreadful memories from his past. He is strong and determined yet there is also an air of mystery about him. Tobias, his first mate John, and crew encounter a permeating sense of danger and foreboding as they unravel the mysteries that drive them relentlessly on.

There is plenty of action and humor to keep us glued to the story and on the edge of our seats.
