



Hottentot Venus: A Novel

Barbara Chase-Riboud

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It is Paris, 1815. An extraordinarily shaped South African girl known as the Hottentot Venus, dressed only in feathers and beads, swings from a crystal chandelier in the duchess of Berry's ballroom. Below her, the audience shouts insults and pornographic obscenities. Among these spectators is Napoleon's physician and the most famous naturalist in Europe, the Baron George Cuvier, whose encounter with her will inspire a theory of race that will change European science forever.

Evoking the grand tradition of such “monster” tales as **Frankenstein** and **The Hunchback of Notre Dame**, Barbara Chase Riboud, prize-winning author of the classic **Sally Hemings**, again gives voice to an “invisible” of history. In this powerful saga, Sarah Baartman, for more than 200 years known only as the mysterious lady in the glass cage, comes vividly and unforgettably to life.

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