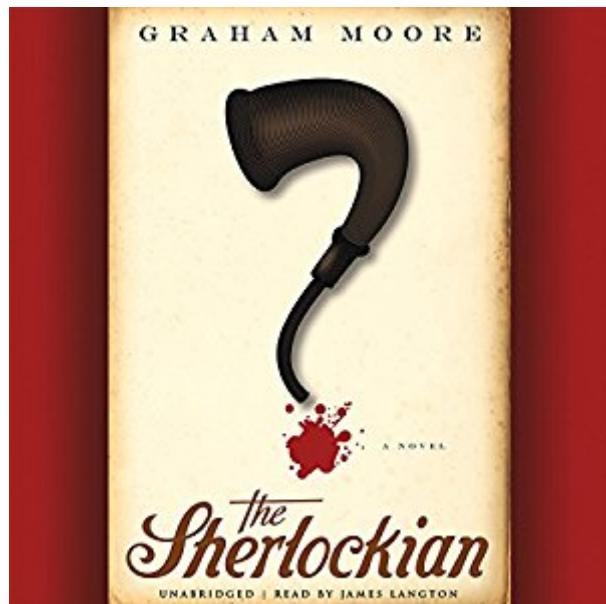


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The Sherlockian



Synopsis

In December 1893, Sherlock Holmes-adoring Londoners eagerly opened their Strand magazines-- anticipating the detective's next adventure-- only to find the unthinkable: his creator, Arthur Conan Doyle, had killed their hero off. London spiraled into mourning -- crowds sported black armbands in grief -- and railed against Conan Doyle as his assassin. Then in 1901, just as abruptly as Conan Doyle had "murdered" Holmes in "The Final Problem", he resurrected him. Though the writer kept detailed diaries of his days and work, Conan Doyle never explained this sudden change of heart. After his death, one of his journals from the interim period was discovered to be missing, and in the decades since, has never been found. Or has it? When literary researcher Harold White is inducted into the preeminent Sherlock Holmes enthusiast society, The Baker Street Irregulars, he never imagines he's about to be thrust onto the hunt for the holy grail of Holmes-ophiles: the missing diary. But when the world's leading Doylean scholar is found murdered in his hotel room, it is Harold - using wisdom and methods gleaned from countless detective stories - who takes up the search, both for the diary and for the killer.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A clever intertwining of a modern day search for a missing Arthur Conan Doyle diary that covers the "rebirth" of Sherlock Holmes and a speculative dive into Doyle's life during that missing period. The plot moves along nicely and the only thing that keeps it from being five stars are the underdeveloped secondary characters and a couple of "Really?" plot twists. Otherwise a very readable, fast-paced tale that alternates between Victorian London and the present day. I am not

normally a fan of historical fiction but I give bonus points to the author for taking time in his notes to specifically identify what is fact and what is speculation. Check out the author's "The Last Days of Night". Definitely a more riveting read.

Moore has entwined two mysteries, then given us the date at the beginning of each chapter so we can keep them straight. I like that this author explores the motivations and relationships of the characters as well as taking us on an action ride. By the way, while there is some violence and blood, there is more deduction. When I discovered how much of the stories were grounded in facts, I wondered how Moore could end them without being totally unbelievable. In my opinion, he found a way.

At the public university where I was an undergraduate, when doing research for papers, about half of the journals I requested at the library could be provided. At Columbia, where this author studied, I found that all the journals I requested were provided. I became annoyed at this showy Ivy power, and challenged it by requesting the most arcane, specialized, and unheard-of journals I could find. Nope! Columbia won. Then while reading some Sherlock Holmes work, I wondered if Columbia was as good at more mundane areas as it was in the esoteric. I went to the library and asked for the Baker Street Journal. Instant result: volumes one to current. I had been treading where this author had, and I wanted very much for this book to work. The grandiloquent dedication put me off, but I got hooked and fascinated for about the first 75-100 pages. The book is much too long. Then I had to skim a lot, but there was too much Sherlockiana to quit. And if you love Sherlock as much as I do, you have to do something like that. Ignoring many impossible coincidences and much unreal behavior, I finished it, and I must say I enjoyed it. I do hope the author never has to walk from Lucerne to the Reichenbach Falls.

The Sherlockian evolves from a clever and engaging premise: the world's foremost Sherlockian is found dead in a hotel room the day he was supposed to reveal the lost diary of Arthur Conan Doyle. Said diary being from the time right before Sherlock Holmes was brought back from the dead. The book is written through alternating stories of a new Sherlockian attempting to solve the mystery of his dead fellow club member and Arthur Conan Doyle embarking on a mystery of his own, often engaging his friend Bram Stoker. The interactions between Arthur Conan Doyle and Bram Stoker are the high point of the book. Both characters are very well drawn and you can feel yourself in the scene with them. For me, the pace was slowed a bit during passages when Arthur was pouring

through different thoughts is his own mind. It seemed like Graham Moore was trying to put as much historical information in the story as possible, but it is a detriment to the story when you pile on too much. I also question the revelation of and lack of development of the villain. Although there is much enjoyment in the journey to the end of the mystery, I felt the villain was very poorly developed in comparison to the other characters in story. Overall, though, there is more that's better than worse in this perspective of the story. I didn't find the part of the story happening in the present as enjoyable. Part of this is that I didn't like most of the characters, although I'm still trying to put my finger on exactly why. There was too much explaining what Harold's thinking as opposed to illustrating that through action, and I didn't feel drawn into his interactions with Sarah. Part of me thinks that it would have been a better (certainly more fun!) approach to have partnered up two of the Sherlockians like a proper Holmes and Watson and played homage that way. The ending of a book is always the most important part - no matter how much you enjoyed everything before it, if the ending is a let down then you feel let down by the whole book in general. I didn't feel completely satisfied by the ending. The Conan Doyle/Stoker perspective wraps up slightly better than the Harold/Sarah perspective. I have no idea what Graham Moore expected me (or other readers) to take away from the ending. Overall, the enjoyment I got out of the interactions between Conan Doyle and Stoker made it a worthwhile read. I just wish there was a little bit more substance there to take away once the book ended.

I actually bought this because I was interested in the author's new book on Edison and Westinghouse, but it is not our yet. So I downloaded this one. For the first 30-40 pages I thought it was a mistake, that the story was downright juvenile, etc. But then I got hooked and ended up enjoying the book very much. And, unlike almost every similarly structured book I've ever read, the parallel stores (the modern story and Conan Doyle's story) prove equally interesting. And the author's ability to make the story so easy to read, etc. was what I at first perceived as juvenile. It is something quite different actually--real artistry. A good read!

Love the mix of historical facts and great reading story. Moore does this very well. I'm always amazed when I get to the end he he lays out the solid facts. Often what I thought he made up was quite true

I found the premise of this book intriguing. The book itself did not disappoint. I need to now read some actual Sherlock Holmes stories, as I only have a vague memory of having read them in the

past. I will have a deeper appreciation for them now that I understand how their creator felt about his creation and the way Sir Conan Doyle was treated by the adoring public.

I really liked the book until the end. The ending did end in a way that would have left me feeling good. The author did talk about the way readers felt when the ending was not a good one. He was right, I do feel that way.

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The Sherlockian

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