



Sherlock Holmes Plays the Game

Leslie Coombs

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Sherlock Holmes Plays the Game is an interesting new collection of the further adventures of Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson. It is unique in combining the style and intrigue of Holmes and Watson stories with the developing technology of turn-of-the-century Victorian England. Written in the original Strand Magazine style and told by Holmes' companion, Dr John Watson, these previously untold tales unfold with wit and humour. Although conveyed in the classic Holmes style, these adventures see the pair involved in tracking down a lost Shakespeare manuscript, illusions, railways, airships, kidnap of animals, and people, testing of alibis, coded messages, advanced communications and electric weapons. Holmes applies his highly developed powers of deduction to whole new fields of understanding, and the stories deftly mingle fiction with facts and events of the day.

Sherlock Holmes Plays the Game Details

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From Reader Review Sherlock Holmes Plays the Game for online ebook

Dale says

Reflects the hand of Conan Doyle!

My thanks go out to Steve and Timi at MX Publishing for my review copy of this excellent anthology.

This book contains two two-part stories and an additional eight short stories. The stories vary in length, pacing and plot, yet I feel they all have been well written in the style of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

They introduce a new Scotland Yard contact in the person of Superintendent Shershay. Unlike Lestrade who has to be pushed into accepting Holmes' solutions, Superintendent Shershay makes Holmes' ideas the working hypothesis. Holmes must be proven wrong for Shershay, while with Lestrade Holmes is the last resort for a detective who feels superior.

The stories also include a new antagonist, Moriarty's protégée Tresscot-Jones, a man who appears multiple times in these stories...

I give the book five stars!

"The Lost Play" starts with the theft of a supposed lost play of Shakespeare. The plan was too perfect not to have been carefully thought out. Once the theft takes place, Holmes must search for a collector who would finance such a theft. Only such a collector would dare take possession of this forgotten play...

"The Dark on Dark Mystery" is an investigation into an impossible theft. For the job to be pulled off, the most careful planning and timing must be followed. It helps a lot that the thief seems to be both invisible and able to slither through openings deemed too small to admit a human form...

"The Wrecker" is the tragic tale of someone who is purposeful in causing train wrecks. All of the trains are from the same Railway Company, Central British Railway. The Wrecker sends the railway a ransom note, offering to cease and desist for £10,000...

"An East Wind" concerns a body near the railway which could not have been taken to that spot by any murderer. There are no traces of footprints, drag marks, or indications of it being thrown from a train. A balloon would have had to tack against the wind, which would seem to rule out dropping from above. Then there is the fact that the dead man wears clothes not tailored for him and therefore much too small...

"The Devil's Tooth" involves a stolen racehorse. A ransom of £5,000 must be paid, left atop The Devil's Tooth, a natural rock formation nearby. The rock seems fully visible at all times, yet a horseman snatches the ransom in broad daylight...

"The Chevereux Letter" is about a stolen painting by Rubens. The nephew of the owner is suspected, but released for lack of evidence and a proven alibi. But Simon de Chevereux's servants state that the nephew of the owner is likely guilty. They indicate he probably was looking for a letter from Mary, Queen of Scots, passed down in the family for decades...

"The Barred Door Puzzle" has to do with Professor Sylvanus Tommason of St. Edmonds, Cambridge. The Professor was discovered in his room shot through the skull, slumped in a chair with the gun still in his hand.

The door had been barred by moving a chest of drawers to block it. Inspector Naoks of the local police thinks something isn't exactly cut and dried with the death. For one thing, the gun is in the wrong hand...

"The Whistles that Did Not Sound" is the incident of a bank robbery, complete with the kidnapping of the Banker and his family! The Banker is forced to aid the robbers, who show him the cut-off finger of his wife to back up their ill intentions. Trying to pinpoint the thieves' hideout requires listening to railroad engine whistles, and for the one which were not there...

"The Tarrant Valley Alibi" revolves around the theft of a Viking Hoard discovered recently after a landslide. Joel Hedger is suspected due to his club-foot, as the thief wore a special shoe. The accused was supposed to be playing ballinhol at a tavern with friends. They remember because a fire broke out in a nearby woodshed and Hedger helped put it out.

(Note: The case is brought to 221B via telegram from Holmes' cousin Wellbos, Chief Constable of Wessex.)

"The Electrified Cannon" ends the book with a tale of military intrigue. A cannon has been created that can fire a shell fifty miles. Someone has stolen a key element of the gun, and it is feared that the information will pass on to an enemy of Britain...

Quoth the Raven...

Marc Williams says

This book is a pleasant amble through Sherlock Holmes territory written by someone who obviously loves Arthur Conan Doyle writings and who has researched the times in which the stories were written.

The stories convey the atmosphere of the era, the gentlemanly way in which the crimes are investigated and the criminals brought to justice. There are sufficient twists and turns to keep the reader interested and guessing.

The language is beautiful and conveys a sense of the language structure of the times. This is what I really read a book like this for. I can sit back and enjoy the flow of the prose. There are the words of the times casually thrown in that would only be known with careful research if the era. 'Manufactories' was a personal favourite.

There are times where it feels as if the author is looking back on the era from our times but it is only occasionally. One example was when Watson remarks that he had read that if there were no coal fires in London there would be none of the thick polluting fog. Of course we know that now coal fires have been banned.

If you like Sherlock you will enjoy these tales.
