



Professor Moriarty: The Hound of the D'Urbervilles

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Imagine the twisted evil twins of Holmes and Watson and you have the dangerous duo of Prof. James Moriarty - wily, snake- like, fiercely intelligent, unpredictable - and Colonel Sebastian 'Basher' Moran - violent, politically incorrect, debauched. Together they run London crime, owning police and criminals alike. Unravelling mysteries -- all for their own gain.

A spin-off from Titan's highly successful Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes series, The Hound of the D'Urbervilles sees acclaimed novelist Kim Newman (*Anno Dracula*) take on the fiendish Professor Moriarty.

Professor Moriarty: The Hound of the D'Urbervilles Details

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From Reader Review Professor Moriarty: The Hound of the D'Urbervilles for online ebook

Natalie says

There are books that you just EXPECT to love. For me this is one of those. The narrative itself mirrors the basic line of the infamous Watson/Holmes stories.. but with a intriguingly different slant. Instead of the familiar John Watson - a wounded soldier presenting us with stories of his adventures with Sherlock Holmes - we have Colonel Sebastian 'Basher' Moran - a wounded soldier presenting us with stories of his adventures with Professor James Moriarty. And, honestly, it's an angle I just couldn't refuse the temptation of.

So, I'm going to write a little review after each of the short stories I read. All of which are named perfectly - A Volume in Vermilion, A Shambles in Belgravia, The Red Planet League, The Hound of the D'Urbervilles, The Adventure of the Six Maledictions, The Greek Invertebrate and The Problem of the Final Adventure.

SPOILERS AHEAD!

A Volume in Vermilion -

A wonderful little story in which Stamford introduces a scarred, dissolute Moran to the ever-fascinating Moriarty - a man with a spare room. It's a meeting that will change both of their lives and it kicks the book off wonderfully. The whole reading process is made twice as glorious because you know, in the back of your mind, that somewhere out there another Stamford is introducing John to Sherlock - who just happens to be yet another man with spare room and a gap in his life. It's all so familiar, and yet so entirely unfamiliar, that it feels like coming home and exploring a dreary, derelict house all at once. Moran's voice and story are both engaging and interesting and there are beautiful examples of what Moran himself calls 'purple prose'. While the initial conversation between Moriarty and Moran shows the sparks that will become a blazing fire, after all, they ARE the most dangerous men in London.

NOTABLE QUOTES:

'I am not a conjurer, Colonel Moran. I am a scientist.'

'Moriarty smiled his adder's smile. And I relaxed. I knew. My destiny and his wound together. It was a sensation I'd never got before upon meeting a man. When I'd had it from women, the upshot ranged from disappointment to attempted murder.'

'[Moriarty] was something man-shaped that had crawled out from under a rock and moved into a manor house. But, at that moment, I was his, and I remain his forever. If I am remembered it will be because I knew him. From that day on he was my father, my commanding officer, my heathen idol, my fortune and terror and rapture.'

'Did I omit to mention [the specifics of the job]?'

'You know damn well you did!'

'Murder, my dear Moran. It's business is murder.'

'Even if I died, Moriarty would use spiritualists mediums to lay hands on my ectoplasm and double my sufferings.'

A Shambles in Belgravia-

The one where: Irene Adler cons Moriarty and Moran; we learn that Moriarty has a thing for wasps and bee metaphors; and that Moran is desperate to see the full body 'artistic shots' of Irene (While the 'bloodless' Moriarty doesn't care too much because there are greater plans afoot) and they cause quite a stir across the ocean. Though, I doubt that matters to Moriarty because he is a wasp, not a bee, and he's just been stung by a woman who he now only refers to as 'that bitch'. I particularly liked the instances in which Moriarty waxed lyrical about bees and wasps, the little moment in which Moriarty stops Moran from shooting unnecessarily and the observation that Moriarty has taken to chewing violet pastilles in a bid to stop smoking because he has deemed tobacco too hazardous to his health. I'm a sucker for the little things. Smart writing, a little gem.

NOTABLE QUOTES:

'To Professor Moriarty, she is always that bitch.'

'Moriarty sniffed haughtily. "Scotland Yard have never heard of Professor Moriarty." "For someone as crooked as you, I call that a recommendation.'

'Moriarty rarely smiled, and then usually to terrify some poor victim. The first time I heard him laugh, I thought he had been struck by a deadly poison and the stutter escaping through his locked jaws was a death rattle.'

'As often, Moriarty had contrived not to be noticed. Like those lizards who can blend into greenery, he had the knack of seeming like a forgettable old stick, someone who has got off the omnibus two stops early and wandered into a bloodbath which was none of his doing.'

'When the Professor was unhappy, other creatures - animals, children, even full-grown men - tended to learn of it in extreme and uncomfortable manners.'

The Red Planet League-

This short story is something of a crossover. Stent, the Astronomer from H.G Wells' 'War of The Worlds' makes an appearance as Moriarty's rival. Stent publicly ridicules and laughs at Moriarty's greatest work, his magnum opus, 'The Dynamics of an Asteroid' and leaves the master criminal plotting his bitter revenge against him. There's notably a section of this story that's told through Stent's own words/journal notes - and I really, REALLY missed Moran during it. I found myself fully agreeing with the Colonel afterwards: 'Pah! Ever read such rot, eh? Believe me, those were the interesting pages. The rest of Stent's journal is fit only to start fires.' And I particularly enjoyed Moran's opening banter and his frank opinions - portraying Moriarty as a genius who is genuinely hated across the board. Though, the scene where Moriarty witnesses Stent disregarding his work is the moment that lingers the longest; as does his revenge. Where a humiliated Stent is carted away and a happy Moriarty - with his 'eyes lit up like Chinese lanterns' - has the last laugh and the last word. I found Moriarty the scholar and Moriarty the mathematician fascinating. And I'm currently living for the little moments between Moriarty and Moran.

NOTABLE QUOTES:

'First off, other crooks hated him. Get your regular magsman or ponce on the subject of Professor Jimmy

Bleedin' Moriarty, and you'll expand the old vocabulary by obscenities in several argots.'

'By now, you've heard the twaddle.. vast spider squatting in the centre of an enormous web of vice and villainy.. Napoleon of Crime.. Nero of Naughtiness.. Thucydides of Theft, et cetera, et cetera. Detectives of all stripe loathed the unseen King of Krooks, and blubbed to their mummies whenever they had to flounder around after one of his coups.'

'Of course, Ogilvy Threw a sulk about that, he did. Still, can't make an omelette and all that. In Ogilvy's case, it's true. He lost the use of his hands and so literally can't make an omelette or perform many other everyday tasks. That's what you get for volunteering.'

The Hound of the D'Urbervilles -

This title story is a satisfying blend of a rural detective adventure and the works of Thomas Hardy. Particularly prominent is the ghost of Tess - who roams around in The Chase rather ominously. The story itself begins with the increasingly familiar banter between Moriarty and Moran, who agree to hunt a hound, and ends with a rising body count. Something seemingly inevitable at this point. Colonel Moran remains interesting throughout - particularly as he discusses his love of guns, reaffirms his connection to tigers, and interacts with Moriarty and the damaged Mattie. There's even a scene where he gets to exchange old scar-stories - something which seems particularly fitting. As does the scene in which Moriarty offers Moran a box of silver bullets, while reminding him that they cost and that all need to be individually accounted for. While a moment in which Moran's hands are trampled on can be felt by the reader. Initially, Moran believes he is being sent to Wessex alone and that Moriarty has palmed the job off on him. Of course, Moriarty has been around the entire time and even squeezes himself into a dress - to play the role of the ghostly Tess - when the action begins to climax. A wonderfully humorous and engaging adventure in the wet, English jungle.

NOTABLE QUOTES:

'All we know is that he has lived the greater part of his life in the Americas, North and South. He intends to take possession of his family seat and assume the life of a country gentleman.'

'You deduced this from his bloody walking stick?'

'No, I read this in the bloody Times.'

'No crime to small' was never exactly Moriarty's slogan, but the criminal genius would apply himself to minor offences if an unusual challenge was presented.'

'Since that day, the legend goes, Red Shuck has lived in The Chase, snacking off lost children, feasting on d'Urberville meat whenever the family produces a tyrant or villain. Which, as you might expect, has happened often.'

'Mr Stoke-d'Urberville, when it comes to trampling through mud and muck after ferocious beasts, the Colonel has far more experience than I.'

'Dullards would have you believe that once you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth.. but to a mathematical mind, the impossible is simply a theorem yet to be solved. We must not eliminate the impossible, we must conquer it, suborn it to our purpose.'

'I like jungle, but The Chase was a Pit of Hell on a wet Wednesday.'

'He would never admit it, but I knew Moriarty derived some thin, watery thrill from 'dressing up!'

The Adventure of the Six Maledictions -

This is a little gem of a story about, well, gems. Professor Moriarty hatches a new plan - which involves gathering a number of precious items - within the very limited period of two days. All of the gems hold various superstitious powers over the people who desire them .. and it's this knowledge that Moriarty uses to his advantage. Naturally. Anything less would be wasteful. While Moran makes his very dramatic début at the opera and barely escapes mummification. It's all in a days work for him, really. We also learn more about Moriarty's mathematical mind and lecturing habits - something Moran admires but often questions. And the climax of the case is something of a spectacle to behold - a bloodbath commences right outside their front door. It chaotic and only serves to highlight the utterly bizarre nature of their work, lives and personalities. A good little read.

NOTABLE QUOTES:

'How cursed did Professor Moriarty want to be by the end of the week?'

'We have no cause but ourselves. We have no politics, we have no religion. I believe in sensation. Moriarty believes in Sums. That's about as deep as it needs run.'

'That is how I made my début at the Royal Opera.'

'If enough people pray to the things, maybe they pick up ju-ju the way a blanket gets wet if you empty a bucket of water on it?'

'Moriarty took to the speaking tube and ordered Mrs Halifax to bring him his nightly cocoa. I was not surprised Moriarty could sleep. This time, he really had thrown all the pieces up in the air just to see where they'd come down.'

The Greek Invertebrate -

This story is essentially a gloriously entertaining and thoughtful Moriarty family reunion. The three Moriarty sons are all, interestingly, named James.. but that is not the only thing they share because as Moran points out they all, rather notably, oscillate their necks in a certain way. The initial meeting between Moran, Professor Moriarty and Colonel Moriarty is bordering on hilarious. And the Colonel leaves Moran feeling so infuriated that he offers to murder him on behalf of the Professor, for free, with his bare hands. Ah, those little bonding moments! And thus our adventure begins. The plot itself centres around the idea that the youngest James Moriarty requires help with a 'worm' which in this case means a dragon. There's a typically sarcastic Moran response to this but regardless they both (Moran and Moriarty) go to his aid. It turns out that the dragon is not a dragon at all but is in fact a war machine... and the intriguing passengers on the train? They're all spies. This little story combines a face-off, a runaway train and an unusually subdued Moriarty. All of which makes for a quick and compelling read. This penultimate story also offers a new insight into the mind and motives of Professor Moriarty. It's thoroughly entertaining.

NOTABLE QUOTES:

'James' the Professor said.'

'James.' his brother acknowledged.'

'You've not met my associate.' Moriarty said. ' Colonel Moran, Colonel Moriarty.'

'Colonel.' nodded the thin-faced cove.'

'Colonel.' I responded.

'Somehow, the notion that Professor Moriarty had parents - might have been a child - never sat right. A viper is a snake straight from the egg. I couldn't help but picture little Jamie as a balding midget in a sailor suit, spying Cook and the baker's boy rolling in the flour on the kitchen table through his toy telescope, and blackmailing them for extra buns.'

'Are you familiar with that breed of novel heroine who prefaces a chapter of awful experiences with 'had I but known..?' Well, had I but bloody known.'

'His brothers set him equations for which there were no solutions, but which prompted endless, futile calculations.'

'How did your parents come to be "lost at sea", Moriarty?' The professor paused, and said, 'Mysteriously, Moran.'

The Problem of the Final Adventure -

As Colonel Moran is quick to point out, we know how this story ends. This story takes place ten years after the initial meeting between Moriarty and Moran and, though they remain much the same, their relationship has inevitably changed. Not that Moriarty keeps Moran informed. Not that Moran trusts Moriarty completely. But, regardless, they have a thing and it's them and they come to an alleged end here. There are some great visuals throughout: the bizarre tomb meeting, Moran's unexpected birthday, the inevitable meeting between Sherlock and Moriarty and the end itself. But the ending so so abrupt; I just wanted more. I wasn't ready for it to be over. I want to know so much more about their criminally inclined adventures together. I suppose it had to happen eventually.. even if it was suitably vague. Hopefully, one day, Colonel Moran and Professor Moriarty will have their 'Empty House'. Fingers crossed!

NOTABLE QUOTES:

'You know how this ends. Someone goes over a waterfall.'

'Colonel Moriarty and the Fat Man of Whitehall - who turned out to be the brother of the Thin Man of Baker Street - exchanged cryptic, terse, bitter communiques under the letterheads of the Department of Supplies and the Diogenes Club, respectively.'

'The only other person to declare the Firm defunct was a certain John H. - or James H., to cloud an already fogbound issue - Watson M.D, whose literary prospects had just washes over the Falls.'

'The Devil knows where he found time to give lectures, mark papers and expel slackers, but he did.'

'I think of this as Moriarty's Unfinished Symphony of Crime.'

'You can hear bells and birdsong and voices in the waterfall if you let yourself.'

'I saw two masterminds, two hunters, two tigers.'

'Professor Moriarty and Sherlock Holmes rushed at each other. Moriarty raised his arm - the signal! I took

my shot.'

With great difficulty I've arranged the stories in order of personal preference:

- 1.A Volume in Vermilion
- 2.The Hound of the D'Urbervilles
- 3.The Greek Invertebrate
- 4.A Shambles in Belgravia
- 5.The Problem of the Final Adventure
- 6.The Adventure of the Six Maledictions
- 7.The Red Planet League

Stephen Robert Collins says

If love Sherlock Holmes this anti hero book because this other side of the coin.
Instead of Holmes & his dective solving this Moriarty & crime

Vaughn Entwistle says

More than just a spoof of Sherlock Holmes stories. in in this inverted tale told from the criminal point of view, Professor Moriarty is the hero with the "thin man" Sherlock Holmes more nuisance than Nemesis of the Napoleon of crime. Colonel Moran, the crackshot criminal who brought back Sherlock Holmes from the presumed dead in the in "The Adventure of the Empty House" plays a meaner, deadlier Watson to Moriart's "consulting criminal." Author Kim Newton's novel is a hilarious mash up of victorian detective diction that riffs off H.G. Wells' War of the Worlds, Hound of the Baskervilles, "Tess of the D'Urbervilles served up with liberal lashing of Rudyard Kipling's ripping yarns.

You read this book for Moran's first person narrative, an ironic and perversely idiosyncrantic voice which is relentlessly hilarious and probably best suited for Anglophiles who grew up loving Monty Python and who have some grasp of British slang and it's delightfully twisted argot. I laughed from beginning to end.

James says

I'd put off reading this one for a while, faced with the obvious fact that no book could ever live up to a title like *Hound of the D'Urbervilles*, but of course I am now filled with chagrin for underestimating Newman's literary skill. The underlying concept (what if Professor Moriarty had had his own Watson, a rough second back from the wars and given sometimes to scribbling accounts of *his* boss's similar and often-in-fact-analogous clever exploits) never descends into any rote formula. Newman's careful to make each story stand completely on its own, never content to rest on its parody, inversion, or subversion of the original Conan Doyle, Sir Arthur Dr. John Watson text.

Here's some *exemplia gratia* for you, by the way, carefully chosen to avoid spoilage:

1. parody: *"Only an idiot guesses or reasons or deduces," the Professor said, patiently.*

OR

In a battle which might interest scholars of modern urban warfare, the Conduit Street Comanche whipped the tar out of an irregular band of crybaby destitutes who pledged allegiance to the Watson's departed mucker-wallah.

2. inversion: *To Professor Moriarty, she is always that bitch.*

OR

well, the entire personality of Colonel Sebastian Moran.

3. subversion: *"Dullards would have you believe that once you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth... but to a mathematical mind, the impossible is simply a theorem to be solved. We must not eliminate the impossible, we must conquer it, suborn it to our purpose. Whatever remains, however dully probable, will satisfy earthbound thinkers, while we have the profit of the hitherto inconceivable."*

OR

the Truth of What Happened at Reichenbach Fall, and just exactly What It Signified.

But my point is, even if you'd never read the originals and didn't chuckle at each new twist, almost every story in this book stands well on its own, while several (especially "The Adventure of the Six Maledictions" and "The Greek Invertebrate," despite the clearly telegraphed conclusion of the former) defy any categorization shy of "ripping yarn." Colonel Moran, sadistic thrillseeker and thorough degenerate, remains a charming narrator throughout, demonstrating enough development as a personality to avoid easy dismissal as Watson-through-a-glass-darkly but nonetheless deliciously roguish to the last page. Moriarty himself is developed splendidly, and comes closer to effecting a three-dimensional Bond villain than anything Fleming or his imitators have attempted-- just wait for the story that explores his family background. And the cases themselves, though frequently constructed around a formulaic combination of a Doyle Watson original and another contemporary literary or historical allusion, are well-executed to a one. Hell, there's even some contemporary social relevance, as in Moran's disparagement of the Pinkerton Agency: *if you operate in a country where captains of industry and hogs of politics make murder legal as long as it's a union organizer being murdered, what's the point, eh?*

A+, would lose a few long summer afternoons to again.

Quirkyreader says

This story is a very imaginative story from the what if genere. Read my complete review on my book blog: <https://www.goodreads.com/review/edit...>

Elizabeth says

If you love Holmes, you really must get Newman's latest. Colonel "Tiger" Moran, aka "Basher" Moran to the ladies, tells his side of the Moriarty story. As always, Newman is extremely erudite (the footnotes alone are worth the price of the book) and, compared to Professor Moriarty's evil ways, Moran is patriot and a saint. Hound of the D'urbervilles bears more than a passing relationship to the Flashman novels (in at least one of which, Flashman and the Tiger, Moran makes an appearance). So be warned, this is no PC novel. Moran is inappropriate, vile, and a through and through bounder. But oh, Moriarty is so much worse! The ladies get their fair share of exposure, in every way. You'll have the pleasure of meeting an Irene Adler who truly is "The Woman," or "That Bitch" as Moriarty calls her. Someone who can more than hold her own among both the crowned heads of Europe and the warlords of London, as well as some other famous notorious characters. Discovering who they are is half the fun of the read, so I'll leave you to it. It's a wonderful jaunt through a black-hearted version of Conan Doyle's London that shouldn't be missed.

K.J. Charles says

A collection of Victorian pulp adventures from the viewpoint of Moriarty's sidekick Colonel Sebastian Moran, parodying vast swathes of Victorian and Edwardian pulp and lit. The title pretty much covers the basic principles at play here but we also get HG Wells, Raffles, Dr Nikola, Riders of the Purple Sage, the Prisoner of Zenda, much Hardy, Fu Manchu and a zillion minor pulp villains playing their parts. The story about the one eyed yellow idol to the north of Kathmandu is a particular bit of genius.

It's...hmm. In some ways brilliant fun although tbh probably only if you're steeped in pulp and Victoriana; if none of the above rang bells it's probably baffling nonsense. Well. Moran mentions

the affair of the Mountaineer's Bum, a tale for which the world will never be ready

and either you laughed like a drain at that or you won't see the point of this book at all. Niche is the word.

Also. Moran is an absolutely vile piece of work. None of your Flashman charm, he's a racist sexist homophobic sociopathic murderer, a bully, braggart and rock solid club bore. He is everything loathsome about Empire and colonialism, quite deliberately. But he's also our narrator, and we're stuck with him for the whole book and, as is inevitable in these cases, the villain feels like an antihero. There are some great jokes in his narration, it's very hard not to identify with him given he's the viewpoint character, and fundamentally it's not very much fun identifying with someone who cheerfully talks about shooting 'natives' as his life's goal.

Put it this way: if you didn't know a straight white man had written this, it wouldn't be hard to guess. You can have a lot more of a laugh with a monstrous villain hurting people if you're not in the class of people he's hurting. There's no question but that Moran is a monster, but Newman does have a laugh with him all the same, and reading enjoyment will depend on whether this is something you can take as a literary device or not.

I enjoyed it hugely the first time I read it, a good few years ago; it was a lot more problematic this time around. YMMV, basically.

Walt O'Hara says

Initial response: *So far, pretty darned funny. Like a Holmes and Watson through the looking glass, with a sprinkling of Flashman for fun!*

Final Review:

Professor Moriarity: The Hound of the D'Urbervilles is a collection of short stories by Kim Newman, the author of the Anno Dracula novels. The collection features a series of tales recounting the memoirs of Colonel Sebastian Moran, being written or dictated in some remote spot, long after retiring. The seven stories and introductory material recount a ten year period in the criminal career of Colonel Moran, with a large part of the narrative focusing on the exploits and actions of James Moriarity, the villain of the Sherlock Holmes stories.

Every tale is a pastiche (or homage through a dark mirror) to a particular Holmes story or some other famous Victorian fictional reference-- "A Shambles in Belgravia" for "A Scandal in Bohemia", the titular "Hound of the D'Urbervilles" as a stand in for "the Hound of the Baskervilles", etc. In this reverse mirror of the Holmes stories, it is Moran who acts as Boswell to his mentor, Moriarity, exactly as Watson does for Holmes.

If you've ever read any of the novels set in Kim Newman's **Anno Dracula** universe, you already know that he can weave a tale laden with references that will have you scurrying for Jess Nevin's The Encyclopedia of Fantastic Victoriana. He is more than a one trick pony here; we are given the references in an offhand manner, it's up to us to be in the know about what Colonel Moran is narrating. For a reader like me, it's just ducky discovering Victorian references I have had no notion of (as in the Vivisectionist Doctor Jack Quartz, Professor Moriarity's American rival) or Madame Sara, "The Sorceress of the Strand". I never tire of such references; this is why I read and enjoy Kim Newman's books. Interestingly, Sherlock Holmes himself is hardly mentioned in these stories, he doesn't make an appearance until the last one.

On top of all the fun name dropping is a meta-level where the reader gets a distinct sense of Moran coming to grips with his own mortality.. an encroaching feeling that he is becoming a heroic dinosaur in the face of the Modern Age. As A.C. Doyle does not portray Moran as anything but a one-dimensional villain, I preferred this version.

Professor Moriarity is a very fast read, I had it done in about a day and a half, and I found it thoroughly enjoyable. Highly Recommended.

Colin Garrow says

Professor Moriarty and his new sidekick Colonel Sebastian (Basher) Moran take on a whole series of dastardly deeds in this tale of Victorian ne'er-do-wells. They team up with a variety of villains, including the wicked Irene Adler (when she turns up with an interesting proposition), encounter the likes of Black Michael (The Prisoner of Zenda), jewel-thief Raffles and his daft side-kick and end up doing battle with the Thin Man and Doctor Watson in a showdown at the Reichenbach Falls.

Taken from the secret journals of sharp-shooter Colonel Moran, Kim Newman has taken a clever idea and given it a fairly decent outing. I say fairly decent, as it didn't quite hit the mark for me, and while I enjoyed the seven adventures (especially the fake Martian invasion), the narrative did become a tad repetitive, which might otherwise have prompted me to skip along to the next story. However, it's a lot of fun and I really

liked this version of Moriarty and his various quirks.

Marijan says

Tko god je žitao pustolovine najpoznatijeg detektiva svih vremena sjeća se i pukovnika Sebastiana Morana i njegove zračne puške.

E, pa, ovo je Moranov osobni dnevnik kroz deset godina provedenih uz bog Napoleonu Zločina. Auto se trudio, uz puno humora, kroz naslove i reference napisati zrcalnu sliku H&W slušajeva. Knjiga je zanimljivo pisana, i preporučam ju svakom tko voli ovakva djela, puna posuđenih ideja, likova i aluzija. da ne spominjem mračni humor...i TU ženu...odnosno u ovom slučaju k***u.

Kristen says

I thought this sounded quite interesting - an opportunity for a Sherlock Holmes fan to find out more about the nefarious Professor Moriarty. I had high hopes for the book, but found it very disappointing.

First off the book is written - in style similar to the Holmes stories - by Moriarty's version of Watson. Colonel Sebastien "Basher" Moran is a former soldier turned hired assassin, who's become Moriarty's second in command in the Professor's criminal corporation. Moran is a singularly rude, violent and unlikeable character. I found nothing at all about him to be intriguing or quirky, or anything but distasteful.

Of Moriarty himself, there is surprisingly little. We are treated to some of his oddities through Moran's narrative, and there are one or two aspects that I found interesting, but on the whole, there was very small presence of the man who is ostensibly the title character of the book.

The stories themselves - again, similar to the Holmes stories - are presented as individual "operations" or crimes that Moriarty and Basher get up to, and they weren't terrible. There was some creativity in the author's creation of the criminal enterprises Moriarty takes on. But even these were mostly just angry, in Moran's case, and superficially necessary, in Moriarty's, situations for either pleasure or profit. These stories are peopled end-to-end with unpleasant, nasty characters and they are not softened in any way by quirks or idiosyncracies that might make a reader want to like them

You might say: "but this IS a book about a criminal mastermind! What else did you expect?!" Well, I'll tell you what I expected - I expected some level of quirkiness or style on the part of the most well-known and fearsome criminals in the history of fiction! If you're going to write a book purporting to tell the other side of the Holmes mystique, then I expect there will be something about the characters that will somehow make me want to read about Moriarty in the same way that scores of readers devour the Holmes stories year-after-year. That simply was not here for me.

The best part of the entire book, in my opinion, is the preface, which is set decades after the events of the main story, in which a university professor is asked to meet with the last remaining member of the Box Brothers Bank, which has been accused of fraud and is systematically being sold off to pay debtors. Box Brothers is the known favourite of every criminal who wants to keep his ill-gotten gains safe and secret from authorities, but now that there's not much left, the current CEO - Philomela Box is selling off everything she can find - including anything that might have been left in safe deposit boxes at bank headquarters. One of those things is the manuscript written by Moran, which she wants the professor to authenticate so it can be sold for publication. The interaction between these two women, which totals only nine pages of the 476-page

book, but is the only portion I would say I thoroughly enjoyed.

There are, admittedly a few quite good lines in the book. My absolute favourite is: "Crooked as a corkscrew but not half as handy, he'd done some minor minionage about town . . ." As a former, but unwilling minion myself, I found that quite amusing. Also a pretty good line is this: "Les Vampires are French, no more need be said of them!"

On the whole, this book was a big disappointment, and I would not recommend it, particularly if you are hoping for anything even slightly resembling the quirky, off-centre but clever aspects of the Sherlock Holmes stories. I found none of that here.

Margaret says

"The Hound of the d'Urbervilles" is a wonderful novel by Kim Newman set (more or less) in Conan Doyle's world of Holmes and Watson, but follows the exploits of Professor James Moriarty, as seen through the eyes of his Number 2 – Colonel Sebastian 'Basher' Moran.

The book is several novellas linked together to make a novel. I originally came across two of the stories in Charles Prepolice's "Gaslight" anthologies and fell in love with Kim's Sebastian Moran. An utter rogue who would make a good running mate for Harry Flashman.

Kim Newman's Moriarty is a chilling snake of a man and his Moran is actually terribly human, and actually rather likeable.

A parade of Conan Doyle characters wander through the stories, as do characters from other books – Raffles makes an appearance, as does Thomas Carnaki and Simon Carne.

In the story "The Greek Invertebrate" I was delighted to find a character from Billy Wilder's movie "The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes", to wit, Madam Gabrielle Valladon aka Ilsa Von Hoffmannstal.

"The Hound of the d'Urbervilles" is a feast for all Sherlock Holmes fans, even though the man himself is never mentioned by name, only obliquely referred to as 'The Thin Man of Baker Street', as well as Mycroft being known only as 'The Fat Man in Whitehall'.

Kim Newman has written a book that is charming, entertaining, funny and poignant by turns. If you are not sure if you will enjoy it, I will point out that two of the people he thanks at the end are Mark Gatiss and Neil Gaman.

I would recommend the book to anyone who loves Victorian adventure stories, BBC's "Sherlock" and Sherlock Holmes in general. A sense of humor and the ridiculous is a must. If you do read it (and I really think you should), make sure you keep a bookmark in the back of the book and read the footnotes as you go. They are amusing, witty and really add to the joy of reading the book.

"The Hound of the d'Urbervilles" is one of those rare books that, when given the chance, will enchant and delight the reader over and over again.

David says

You're a mean one, Mr. Grinch.
You really are a heel.
You're as cuddly as a cactus,
You're as charming as an eel,
Mr. Grinch.

I discovered Sherlock Holmes at about age 12, when I read Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's entire collected Holmes stories. Brilliant gems of Victorian literature, and fortunately for Hollywood and Kim Newman, now long in the public domain, Sherlock Holmes occupies a place in modern Western mythology not far below Santa Claus, and probably above Uncle Sam and Ronald McDonald.

There have been many, many Holmes stories written by other authors, and hundreds of film and radio adaptations, both of Doyle's original stories and of new ones. I've only read a few — some are good, some not so much.

Kim Newman did something entirely different, though. He wrote about Moriarty. Not just that — he rewrote the entire Holmes canon from the viewpoint of Professor Moriarty, the notorious villain who only showed up in a handful of Doyle's original stories, and Moriarty's sidekick, Sebastian "Basher" Moran, who was an even more minor character in the later Holmes stories, but for *Moriarty: The Hound of the D'urbervilles*, becomes the first-person narrator of the "true" story of the Napoleon of Crime and his exploits against the Thin Man of Baker Street.

And it. Is. Brilliant.

Starting with Moriarty.

It was hard to miss the small kitten pinned to the mantelpiece by a jackknife. The skewering had been skilfully done, through the velvety skinfolds of the haunches. The animal mewled from time to time, not in any especial pain.

"An experiment with morphine derivatives," he explained, following my gaze. "Tibbles will let us know when the effect wears off."

That's how Colonel Basher Moran, big-game hunter, hero of the British Empire, and thoroughly loathsome cad, bully, murderer, card-shark, and unreliable narrator, meets the only man in England more loathsome and dangerous than himself.

It is an unsentimental but enduring partnership as perfect as that bromance over on Baker Street.

This book collects seven short stories which fit together chronologically, each one expanding Moriarty's world and his criminal empire:

Chapter One: A Volume in Vermilion
Chapter Two: A Shambles in Belgravia
Chapter Three: The Red Planet League
Chapter Four: The Hound of the D'Urbervilles
Chapter Five: The Adventure of the Six Maledictions
Chapter Six: The Greek Invertebrate
Chapter Seven: The Problem of the Final Adventure

You can see that these are distorted twists on the Holmes stories. Just as Moriarty doesn't actually appear in the original Holmes stories until late, and usually only by mention, so do the first few chapters of *Moriarty* not even mention the Baker Street detective, and then at first it's only by inference. Only in the very last story is the Great Detective mentioned by name, when Professor James Moriarty and Sherlock Holmes finally meet.

The stories are instead about how Moriarty runs his Firm, a criminal enterprise spanning across England and with tentacles all over the world. But he is not the only criminal overlord out there, and Moriarty's nemeses are not at first a private detective and his medical sidekick, but equally villainous masterminds like the Lord of Strange Deaths, Le Vampires of Paris, and *that bitch* (as Moriarty and Moran both come to refer to her), Irene Adler, the New Jersey Nightingale and the only woman who could ever get under Moriarty's skin.

Newman's stories are brilliantly plotted and as clever and full of twists, crosses and double-crosses, mysteries to be solved and incredible howdunits as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's detective tales. Not only that, but Newman doesn't just use Doyle's characters. He brings into this world an incredible range of Victorian and pulp era characters, seamlessly blending actual history with fictional history, with copious footnotes. For example, the first chapter, *A Volume in Vermilion*, pits Moran against Jim Lassiter, the hero of Zane Grey's *Riders of the Purple Sage*. *The Red Planet League* is a tribute to H.G. Wells, in which Moriarty, normally involved in great crimes for profit and intellectual stimulation, instead devotes all his energies to discrediting a scientist who has pricked his pride. Spectacularly.

No one would have believed, in the next-to-last years of the nineteenth century, that his lecture was being watched keenly and closely by an intelligence greater than his own; that as he blathered on and on he was scrutinised and studied, perhaps almost as narrowly as a berk with a microscope might scrutinise the tiny wriggly bugs that swarm and multiply in a drop of water. With infinite complacency, Stent read from his little sheaf of notes, serene in the assurance that he was royalty among astronomers.

Yet, across the gulf of the lecture hall, a mind that was to Stent's as his was to those of the beasts that perish, an intellect vast and cool and unsympathetic, regarded the podium with envious eyes, and slowly and surely drew his plans against him.

A host of other villains and protagonists from late 19th and early 20th century writers make their appearance, all copiously detailed by Newman in the appendix. Many minor characters that appeared in only one Doyle story become supporting cast here, from Irene Adler to Sophy Kratides. This is truly a brilliantly researched book that pays respectful homage in tone, style, and wording, to its sources.

Moriarty is an evil, cunning monster through and through, and Basher Moran is a murderous thug. He tells his version of the story in an obviously self-aggrandizing way, and the allusions to Harry Flashman are obvious and occasionally explicit. Yet they're both so endearing in their charmless, villainous way that you

enjoy reading about them even though they would not hesitate to loot orphanages, shoot old ladies, and steal candy from babies.

This was a fun book, exquisitely modeled after the original Holmes stories they subvert. If you are a Sherlock Holmes fan, then this is a must-read.

Gianfranco Mancini says

"Dullards would have you believe that once you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth... but to a mathematical mind, the impossible is simply a theorem yet to be solved. We must not eliminate the impossible, we must conquer it, suborn it to our purpose." - Professor James Moriarty

"You know how this ends. Someone goes over a waterfall." - Colonel Sebastian "Basher" Moran.

A brilliant and hilarious retelling/parody of holmesian tales (just look at the titles) telling the rise and fall of Professor James Moriarty's, the Napoleon of Crime, criminal empire, narrated by the point of view of his infamous sidekick Colonel Sebastian "Basher" Moran, a darker, deadlier and much funnier first-person narrator than usual doctor John Watson.

Two secondary characters in Sir Conan Doyle's Holmes stories (Moriarty appeared just in a few ones and Moran was just in "The Adventure of the Empty House", the story who took back Holmes from death after his author killed him not wanting to write anymore about his most famous character) here depicted as main ones in all their delicious wickedness.

Chapter One: A Volume in Vermilion: 3 stars

The first meeting of the two most dangerous men in London, a nice tribute to Doyle's "A Study in Scarlet", the first Sherlock Holmes story ever.

Chapter Two: A Shambles in Belgravia: 3 stars

In this story inspired by inspired by "A Scandal in Bohemia", Irene Adler hires the two villains to have back some embarrassing "artistic shots" of her, and stirring Moran's luxury and much more in the process.

Chapter Three: The Red Planet League: 5 stars (already read in the anthology Gaslight Grimoire: Fantastic Tales of Sherlock Holmes)

A funny and hilarious crossover with H.G Wells' 'War of The Worlds', setting Moriarty against his most hated nemesis... and he's not the famous detective of Baker Street.

Chapter Four: The Hound of the D'Urbervilles: 5 stars

Essentially a funny version of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's 'Hound of the Baskervilles' with darker twists, "ghosts" and laughs.

Chapter Five: The Adventure of the Six Maledictions: 5 stars

Inspired by "The Adventure of the Six Napoleons" with mentions of The Jewel of Seven Stars by Bram Stoker and much more, it's the mother of all victorian criminal masterminds/pulp villains battle royals... just outside Moriarty's "Firm" front door.

Chapter Six: The Greek Invertebrate: 4 stars

Things are going to blow up for good when there is a family reunion of the three "James Moriarty" (they have all the same name) brothers!

A funny tale, inspired by "The Greek Interpreter", about the Professor's personal story with spies warring for a war machine disguised as a dragon... and the two cameos of Madam Gabrielle Valladon aka Ilsa Von Hoffmanstal, a character from Billy Wilder's comedy movie "The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes" and William Hope Hodgson's occult detective Thomas Carnacki (view spoiler) were just unexpected at all!

Chapter Seven: The Problem of the Final Adventure: 5 stars

"That such a creature should esteem himself capable of destroying me! I allowed him the comfort of the weapon. I enumerated dates upon which he had meddled in our affairs, emphasising occasions when he thought his part unknown to me. You should have seen his eyes. He has a drug addict's eyes. He uses cocaine, and lies to his doctor about the dosage. Thirty-seven per cent solution, I should say. I told him he must drop the case."

At last Professor Moriarty's criminal empire is crumbling under the strikes of his archenemies and he finally meets "The Thin Man of Baker Street", depicted as just a mere growing nuisance in this retelling of Doyle's "The Final Problem".

As Moran said in the start of this final tale "You know how this ends. Someone goes over a waterfall.", but just wait and see how it ends...

A must read for all Sherlock Holmes fans, but reader enjoyment can vary according to its knowledge and familiarity with all the cross-media/victorian references and characters, sometimes just too many and confusing. But for that, I really enjoyed the ride.

Els says

My overall impression with Newman's novel is mostly "meh" but also a lot of eye-rolling. I found that I was initially excited for Moran's viewpoint and then everything sort of fell flat. From the forced slang, to the descriptions of, "Look how bad I am, I'm so bad I drown puppies," to the weird reptilian thing Moriarty had going on.

Oscillation is not a word you use or read that often but the number of times I read that word in reference to Moriarty probably filled my quota of how many times I need to come in contact with 'oscillation' in a lifetime. And the "Basher Moran Special" or BMS has Moran likes to abbreviate it to. Apparently everything in a skirt is liable to fall victim to Moran's special form of bedroom antics and that includes Irene Adler (who has a relatively small role in the novel).

I understand that making Moran appear vile is all part of the character and he's racist, and sexist and a bunch of other "-ism's" and "-ist's" that'll take up too much room going over but none of that really added to the character I felt. He is a product of his "time" so Newman making a special point to use a racist phrase but ex out the word (view spoiler) when using Moran's voice was, to me, the equivalent of a fart joke. It's shocking

and uncomfortable but overall immature and rarely gets the reactions it intended.

All those things aside though I think the best way to tackle this novel is to talk about the three main characters: Moran, Moriarty and Irene. It's debatable if Irene is really a main character but she does crop up at least once in each story, either in passing or because she's directly involved in that particular storyline. I think Newman did a great disservice to Irene Addler (*Chapter Two: A Shambles in Belgravia*) and reduced her to a bawdy version of herself that merely traipsed about shaking her boobs at people for amusement. This is supposed to be an alternate universe sort of thing but that doesn't excuse the fact that an intelligent female character was reduced down to a fetishization. I was not amused.

Now as far as Moriarty I'm not really sure what to make of him. The best "performance" Moriarty has is in *Chapter Three: The Red Planet League* (probably the only chapter worth reading to be honest) where he systematically tears down Sir Nevil Stent. This chapter, out of all seven, shows a Moriarty everyone is more familiar with. He's cold, calculating, and exacts his own personal form of vengeance in the best way he knows how: elaborately. I wish that all the chapter's had been this well thought out, maybe not in the same pattern because that would get old, but it would have made the stories a lot more bearable and less like Newman pasted together individual stories he had written with some transitional sentences. Other than that I didn't find Moriarty terribly impressive or overly diabolical. The thing with the kitten in the first chapter, that was definitely evil (you'll know it once you read it) but for a character that was constantly referred to as being devoid of most emotions and all empirical I didn't see it.

I could rant about Moran but as one review put it, he's an old dog at the end of his glory days. This doesn't really come in to play until the last two chapters but *Chapter Seven: The Problem of the Final Adventure* really hits you over the head with a hammer about it. It actually creates a problematic overtone because when you reflect back over the other stories there really are not many tie-ins for that sort of arch. Allegedly the seven chapters are suppose to be Moran's coming to Jesus moment wherein he realizes, "I'm too old for this shit," and his number is up. It's also difficult for the reader to grasp time in this universe because the stories are told in a way that makes it feel these events happen in rather close proximity but by the end you realize Moran has been with Moriarty for ten years. Now, there are two arguments for this time displacement. One: is that it's editors oversight. Two: Newman was genius by pulling the reader into this time warp so that when Moran realizes he's spent ten years with Moriarty, the reader is just as shocked as Moran that some much time has gone by. I am disinclined to believe Newman was so forward thinking.

My last comment about the book is really about Newman I think. *The Hound of the D'Urberville's* is probably enjoyable for people who are familiar with Newman's other novels and are use to his writing style. Having never read anything else by Newman I'm not sure if this is a common thing with his writing but I found the extent to which Newman name dropped other fictional characters a bit exhausting because I had to constantly stop and look these people up to understand the references. The fact that the fake endnotes didn't help were more aggravating than informational because many of the endnotes needed to be looked up as well (with the exclusion of all the Sherlock Holmes references).

I believe it would have been beneficial for Newman to have continued the theme of diary/memoir turned pseudo-autobiography throughout the whole novel. The very beginning introduces Moran's manuscript via a Dr. Christina Temple and I would have liked to see at the end of each chapter a summary or helpful footnotes about the chapter using Dr. Temple's voice. I would also have appreciated an epilogue by Dr. Temple but maybe some pages were torn out of my copy. I can only hope.