



Sherlock Holmes and the Plague of Dracula

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Bram Stoker's "Dracula" told only part of the story. "Sherlock Holmes and the Plague of Dracula" recounts the Great Detective's search for Jonathan Harker, his confrontation with the Count, the truth behind the Great Hiatus, and Dracula's terrible legacy.

After Mina Murray asks Sherlock Holmes to locate her fiancée, Holmes and Watson travel to a land far eerier than the moors they had known when pursuing the Hound of the Baskervilles. The confrontation with Count Dracula threatens Holmes' health, his sanity, and his life. Will Holmes survive his battle with Count Dracula?

Sherlock Holmes and the Plague of Dracula Details

Date : Published May 28th 2012 by MX Publishing (first published January 15th 2007)

ISBN : 9781780921709

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Format : Paperback 204 pages

Genre : Mystery, Horror, Paranormal, Vampires, Fantasy

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From Reader Review Sherlock Holmes and the Plague of Dracula for online ebook

????? ?????? says

3.5/5

Beth says

This book wasn't quite what I expected and I like it better because of that. Holmes doesn't go up against Dracula directly. Indeed there is only one short confrontation between them.

It starts when Holmes and Watson go to Transylvania looking for Jonathon Harker. Dracula's story follows Bram Stoker's novel, with Holmes and Watson dealing with things outside that story. But these adventures are as interesting and are true to the Holmes canon.

Indeed, Mr. Seitz did an excellent job of reproducing Watson's voice. And the Holmes / Watson relationship is exactly right. All together a good book and a lot of fun.

Riju Ganguly says

My-my! How the art of pastiche has fallen! Once upon a time it had given rise to giants like "The Seven Percent Solution" (Nicholas Meyer) and "The Last Sherlock Holmes Story" (Michael Dibdin). Now we are having sub-human stuff like such drive!

If you are interested in reading some serious crossover between two of the world's most iconic characters, better get hold of Fred Saberhagen's delightful romps under 'Holmes-Dracula Files' series. Even Kim Newman's 'Anno Dracula' stories, which don't show Holmes directly, or Alan Moore's absolutely brilliant first two LoEG books are unbelievably superior compared to this crap.

If you want to read some serious non-crossover pastiche, then I guess you would have to rely on the master of pastiches. Horowitz's 'The House of Silk' and 'Moriarty' are astounding!

As far as this one is concerned, avoid it like plague.

A says

A truly odd crossover that I thought I would never witness stacked on the library shelves, and I'm awfully glad I decided to give it a read.

Once picked up, you simply cannot put it down until you are forced to.

The book provides events that correspond perfectly to both of the original works, albeit the last sighting of Dracula seems uncharacteristic.

A definite recommendation for all lovers of either works

Matt Spencer says

How to get my recommendation across... Well, I've been on a major addictive kick lately of Arthur Conan Doyle's original Holmes stories. When I read pastiches of beloved classic characters and worlds, I tend to be a pretty belligerent nit-picker, especially if I have the originals fresh in my mind. Ask anyone I've gotten into a discussion of fantasy literature with, where Robert E. Howard's Conan has come up. Well, while reading "SHPoD," after getting used to Steve Sietz's somewhat pared-down Watson voice (a wise choice for the benefit of casual modern readers), I quickly felt like I was reading authentic Holmes and Watson, often close to forgetting entirely that I was reading someone's interpretation other than Doyle's. And Holmes and Watson are one of the most distinctive buddy-duos in the history of literature, oh so easy to try to imitate, or so easy to unintentionally parody. Mr. Sietz has got the dynamic down solid, and it's a credit to his use of research that he credibly creates some of those wonderful logic problems that ol' Sherlock breezes through leaving everyone else gaping a big ol' WTF? Too many other Holmes recreators try to smooth out the character's bristly edges, or exaggerate them to the point of revisionist indictment. Sietz jumps off directly from Doyle's characterization, runs with them faithfully, yet is able to portray them a bit more honestly and organically human than the proto-pulp conventions of Doyle's day usually permitted. It's nice to see Holmes and Watson just kicking back before the fit hits the shan and having a conversation like any two best friends, the problem on hand cropping up, but not an immediate concern. And it makes sense that the narrative voice wouldn't entirely match Doyle's... Rather than taking the form of an account Watson has written for the public, the chapters take the form of Watson's private diary (and later, Dr. Seward's). The original stories themselves acknowledged there were "factual" discrepancies between what really happened and what "Watson" has composited to tell us a good story. Here, we get quite a different version of Holmes's final confrontation with Prof. Moriarty, leading to some truly frightening plot twists that Watson would have had good reason to hide from the public.

At the same time, the epistolary format helps it work nicely as a companion piece to Stoker's "Dracula". The Count himself only actually appears in one scene (making the character primarily an ominous off-stage figure is a cue from Stoker, the value of which most imitators miss entirely), but it's one hell a freaky, cringe-inducing scene! After reading it, I shivered, took a long swig of beer, and said aloud to my empty apartment, "CRAP! I think that was more Stoker than Stoker!"

And off-stage or not, this Dracula is one scary, NASTY bastard! The only other Holmes-Dracula cross-over I've made it through more than a few pages of is Fred Saberhagen's... fun enough little read, but DAMN, I'm glad Steve went in the exact opposite direction. Presenting Dracula as Mr. Sad, Suffering, Romantic, Sympathetic Vampire ala Anne Rice is one thing (and even hinted by Stoker, though I wonder if Stoker would have gone even further the opposite direction if he'd done more homework on the historical figure). Francis Ford Coppola's version is still one of my all-time favorite flicks... But having Dracula say, "No, you got me all wrong! I'm completely misunderstood!" is just... well... what's the point of him even being Dracula? Fleshing out Dracula as an anti-hero, I think, was for a while a natural pop-cultural response to the character. He's a dynamic, captivating fellow, that Count, an ultra-warped manifestation of the Leading Man (Christopher Lee and Gary Oldman understood this best, I'd say), and people will want to romanticize that more than it ought to be because they don't want to feel too dirty for falling for their leading man. But let's not forget what great villain the guy really makes. And when you have Sherlock Holmes as your hero (and ol' Sherlock can be a wonderfully shady fellow in his own right), why not go all the way with your villain?

The other characters from Stoker come across well, too, but aren't overused. Mina's role makes the most sense, and the whole idea behind the novel really hinges on her... If you live in Victorian London, and your

fiancé goes to Transylvania on business under mysterious circumstances then disappears... who ya gonna call? Seward comes off most likable, and his character arc from the original novel continues in an interesting direction. Harker's still a hapless, clueless, good-hearted schmow... In Stoker, Dracula duped him all too easily, to his great cost. In Sietz, Sherlock Holmes dupes him all too easily for his own good. Van Helsing makes a fun cameo appearance. Arthur Holmwood always struck me as a spoiled prick, who for some reason had cool buddies like Dr. Seward and Quincy Morris, and for whom hellish circumstances brought out the best in him. Here he's still a spoiled prick with inexplicably cool friends, only now hellish circumstances bring out the worst in him (OK, not entirely fair to say under the circumstances, but he still doesn't come off in the best light... you'll see what I mean).

Steve pulls off a tricky balancing act between scientifically explaining vampires so most of the novel's events fit reasonably well into the rational world of Holmes, without pulling a full-on "Sherlock Holmes goes myth-busters on Dracula".

Most importantly, this is a story that functions on multiple levels, rather than just a horror or mystery story. Aside from Doyle, I can't stand most Victorian-style mysteries, or any mystery that amounts to nothing more than "Whodunit?" (Victorian horror and adventure is another matter entirely). In a Doyle story, yes, puzzling out the mystery's a blast, but it's in the service of watching the interactions of two great characters. An interesting feature about Holmes and Watson's Waterloo conversation is everything it juxtaposes... Historical war as an intellectual fascination vs. Watson's painful, vivid recollections of the nothing-theoretical-or-intellectual-about-it horror of war, on top of how a long-ago epic battle between good and evil is paralleled to the intimate one about to take place... which will lead to equally painful, horrific consequences, particularly to readers like me who bring with them a deep affection for these characters.

If you like detective stories and/or well-done spins on vampire legends, trust me, you'll find this a more than satisfying read.

Matt says

So much promise, but halfway through it takes a turn towards the preposterous

Michael Thompson says

Interesting take and plausible crossover on Dracula and vampirism and an alternative explanation of the great hiatus and Moriarty.

Lesley says

I am a huge fan of Dracula and Sherlock Holmes and I also really enjoy new stories about Holmes. I really enjoyed this book, it wasn't very long, but it kept you interested the whole time and the story moved along well. I think the author stayed close to Conan Doyle's vision of Holmes in this story and I enjoyed the format in which it was told. All the usual characters from both original books are in this one, which makes it fun too.

Amy Sturgis says

I thoroughly enjoyed this crossover between Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes universe and Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. It is told in the same format as Stoker's work, but with Dr. Watson's letters and notes interspersed with the journal and diary entries of the other characters. Mina Murray employs Holmes and Watson to find the missing Jonathan Harker. They travel to Transylvania and have their own nasty encounter, and this puts them on the trail of Count Dracula.

One might expect that Holmes and Watson would join forces with Van Helsing and company, but quite the opposite is true, and here is the great delight of this novel. The reader gets to see both sets of characters from the not always complimentary perspectives of the other. I particularly enjoyed how Watson's fierce brand of personal loyalty and dedication to medicine opposes Van Helsing's -- and saves the day (and ultimately humankind).

I am a great fan of both Conan Doyle and Stoker, and I've reread the Holmes canon and *Dracula* quite recently. *Sherlock Holmes and the Plague of Dracula* provides a clever combination of both with a satisfyingly rational conclusion. One word: *Science!*

Jayaprakash Satyamurthy says

Seitz does a great job of imitating the various narrative voices from his inspirations - Doyle's Sherlock Holmes tales and Stoker's *Dracula*. He weaves an ingenious, gripping plot filled with twists and turns, drawing in Sherlock Holmes, Dr. and Mrs. Watson, Mina and Jonathan Harker, Dr. Seward, Inspector Lestrade, Mycroft Holmes, Count Daracula and a few other familiar figures. The plot is clever and offers a truly interesting take on the nature of vampirism. The characterisation of Holmes, the skeptic to the last, is far more palatable than in David Stuart Davies' 'The Tangled Skein', where Holmes almost immediately accepts the reality of vampires and allies with Van Helsing. My only slight quibble is one commonly found in Holmes pastiche - the attempt to flesh out a 'secret history' giving us a theory of what was really going on behind the scenes of Watson's narratives. While Seitz has a clever take on many things including Watson's war wounds, these attempts to 'explain' the canon rather than work in its gaps make it difficult to reconcile all the different pastiches into one extended metanarrative - a rather subjective niggles, I know.

Charles Prepolec says

It is said that a good idea is worth repeating. However, I am fairly certain that the same notion does not apply to not so good ideas that have already been bludgeoned to death, such as pitting the Great Detective against either Jack the Ripper or, as we see here, that other great bogey man of the Victorian age, Count Dracula. Still, one shouldn't be overly surprised at another go-round of Holmes vs. Dracula since it is surely one of those all too tempting propositions for writers of pastiche, who are likely fueled by the happy and probably deluded notion that this time out they will be the one to get it right. While Stephen Seitz certainly brings a few new ideas to the table in *SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE PLAGUE OF DRACULA*, they aren't necessarily good ones, nor are they particularly well told, but there are some moments of genuine, if

extremely cheesy, fun to be had in this book.

Retaining the format of Bram Stoker's novel, Seitz presents the book as a series of letters and personal journal entries, the bulk of which are Watson's. This has the effect of giving us an unedited view of Watson's inner workings, personal life and private thoughts that apparently include his fears about the disintegration of his marriage based on a suspicion that Mary Watson nee Morstan, is engaged in some sort of affair. Sadly this immediately breaks any illusion that this might feel like a Watsonian narrative and sets an uncomfortably tawdry tone to the proceedings.

In the first part, Castle Dracula, Mina Murray draws Holmes and Watson into a search for her missing fiancé Jonathan Harker. Our duo head off to Transylvania, exchange some embarrassingly bad dialogue with cardboard cutout villagers and gypsies, make their way to Castle Dracula where Holmes has a near fatal, Hammer Films sort of encounter with the Count's "Brides", find little trace of Harker but do find documents that indicate Moriarty is working with Dracula to destabilize a bank, before escaping and making their way back to England. Against all the evidence, being attacked, heavily bled, his remarkable recovery, etc...Holmes is not convinced of the existence of vampires!

The Plague of Dracula, begins with Watson's attempts to find his missing wife who has fled to Mrs. Cecil Forrester's home in Winchester, where it becomes apparent that she has fallen under the sway of Dracula. Holmes arrives, seemingly in the nick of time, but Dracula uses the life of Mary Watson as leverage, forcing Holmes to drop his investigation. On their way to investigate the Silver Blaze case, Holmes and Watson stop to visit the newly married Harkers, meet Van Helsing, and generally become embroiled with the Bloofer Lady aspects of Stoker's novel, until Lord Godalming takes exception to Holmes' interference and has him warned off by brother Mycroft. Still not admitting to the existence of vampires, Holmes instead believes all he has seen to be the result of clever stage trickery.

Finally, in The Great Hiatus, we return to the Canonical events leading up to the Moriarty confrontation at Reichenbach, but with a few rather surprising and largely ridiculous twists, such as Holmes perhaps actually dying, and not just once either! How does it all work out? Not in a satisfying or particularly logical manner, but if you want details, I'm afraid you'll have to find out for yourself.

Bottom line: At best, an Ed Wood-like guilty pleasure that keeps you turning pages, despite the obvious and many failings, but still eventually leaves you with the vague feeling that you've been suckered again! At worst, well, that feeling that you have, in fact, actually been suckered again! For a far better Holmes/Dracula story, go hunt up a copy of Loren D. Estleman's 1978 book, the creatively titled SHERLOCK HOLMES VS. DRACULA.

Parmacendar says

Very goofy, but fun if you're into that sort of thing. Takes the opposite tack to Loren Estleman's *Sherlock Holmes vs. Dracula* -- in Estleman's book (IIRC) Holmes pretty much immediately accepts the existence of vampires and the supernatural, and fights them on their own terms. In this one, he's determined throughout to prove there is some scientific explanation for it all. Does he? Well... that would be telling. I will say that there are some pretty goofy twists; but as I often seek out pastiches specifically *for* the goofy twists I'm not about to complain! Estleman's book is on the whole better written and better plotted, though less appealingly weird. I'm probably giving this book a higher rating than it deserves, but Holmes!crack is my weakness.

Aaron says

An interesting little mashup of these two literary worlds. I'm no Doyle or Stoker expert, but I didn't find any glaring inaccuracies. And it certainly did add something to the Holmes genre mostly, at least from the Watson perspective. Certainly this took a bit of research and having grown up in the Jeremy Brett era of Holmes, I tend to think of him mostly in this regard, and this book does not detract from that. However, I do find Martin Freeman's Watson to be more enjoyable from a more realistically frustrated sidekick to Holmes' arrogance. Anyway, the book is not literary fluff, nor is it groundbreaking. But it is a fun little read and shouldn't detract from your enjoyment of either of the main players.

Derrick Belanger says

While I admit I was a little leery at first of another book delving into the ground so well covered in the novel "Sherlock Holmes Vs. Dracula," Seitz comes up with a different yet equally brilliant take on the battle between the world's greatest detective and the oldest undead Count. Seitz starts with Holmes taking the case of Mina Murray's missing fiance. The book later transitions to Holmes dealing with vampires in England while also explaining the cases going on at the same time, including Silver Blaze. We also get a different picture of what occurred after that final conflict at Reichenbach Falls. Without giving too much away, I highly recommend this books for fans of Sherlock Holmes as well as fans of true vampire stories. These are not your shiny romantic types but real, blood thirsty monsters of lore. Keep the lights on and enjoy!

Thomas Turley says

Stephen Seitz has written an ingeniously plotted, action-packed homage to two of Victorian literature's greatest genre writers. The first half of his book, which follows the original course of Stoker's novel, is absolutely marvelous, with the historical Dracula impeccably researched. The rest of Seitz's story covers more familiar ground. He offers a startlingly different version of the Great Hiatus, one in which Holmes pays a heavy price for confronting Dracula as well as Moriarty. Thanks to a dubious epiphany by Watson, the ending gets the Canon back on track, albeit with some secondary plotlines unresolved. If Sherlock Holmes and the Plague of Dracula is ultimately more faithful to Bram Stoker than to Conan Doyle, the relationship between the great detective and his Boswell remains true throughout, despite the efforts of evil vampires and professors to divide them. –Thomas A. Turley, author of "Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of the Tainted Canister" (<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/2...>)
