



Sherlock Holmes: Gods of War

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1913. The clouds of war are gathering and Europe is in turmoil. A body is discovered on the shore below Beachy Head, just a mile from Sherlock Holmes's retirement cottage. Suicide, or murder? As Holmes and Watson investigate, they uncover a conspiracy with shocking ramifications: men who welcome the idea of a world war are seeking divine aid to make it a reality.

Sherlock Holmes: Gods of War Details

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From Reader Review Sherlock Holmes: Gods of War for online ebook

Rhiannon Grant says

This book was exactly what I wanted it to be. I do not claim to have highbrow tastes in fiction! I thought this would be trash when I found it in the library, I hoped it would be trash when I picked it to take with me to read over a weekend of work, and it is indeed top-notch silly allusion-dropping complete trash. I'm a sucker for all these Sherlock Holmes pastiches/profics/lost adventures, and this was just the comfort reading I was looking for.

Patrick Hayes says

A highly entertaining read until Chapter 31 and then the book just crumbles.

Watson and Holmes haven't seen each other since Holmes retired to the countryside ten years ago. The two reunite for a fun quick case involving missing gemstones, before deciding to spend a week at Holmes's house. After watching one of those "new" airplanes fly about in an unusual pattern, the pair go to the cliffs where a body has been washed to shore. Holmes is then approached by the pilot of the plane, the dead man's father, to see find the cause of the boy's death.

The dialogue between Holmes and Watson was electric, especially as they commented on each other's age and brought up classic, previous cases. I enjoyed this very much.

However, Chapter 31, which was a lead up to the climax, was stolen out of John Hughes's *Home Alone* franchise and then the villains of the piece were barely mentioned before their reveal. There was not enough background on the villains for me to believe in their doings or to care if they lived, died, or were successful. I honestly just wanted to end the book by the time all were in a car. The battle in the house was just silly.

This was extremely disappointing. Everything was pointing toward a classic Holmes adventure until the last 50 pages.

I would go elsewhere for a new Holmes adventure.

Victor Gentile says

James Lovegrove in his book, "Sherlock Holmes: Gods Of War" a Book in the Encounters of Sherlock Holmes series published by Titan Books brings us a new adventure featuring Sherlock Holmes.

From the Back Cover: An East Wind

It is 1913, and Dr. Watson is visiting Sherlock Holmes at his retirement cottage near Eastbourne when tragedy strikes: the body of a young man, Patrick Mallinson, is found under the cliffs of Beachy Head.

The dead man's father, a wealthy businessman, engages Holmes to prove that his son committed suicide, the result of a failed love affair with an older woman. Yet the woman in question insists that there is more to Patrick's death. She has seen mysterious symbols drawn on his body, and fears that he was under the influence of a malevolent cult. When an attempt is made on Watson's life, it seems that she may be proved right. The threat of war hangs over England, and there is no telling what sinister forces are at work.

This is quite unexpected Holmes has been hired to verify that the death of Patrick was, indeed, suicide. The problem is the investigation proves it was murder. And Holmes and Watson get involved in a conspiracy that just might get them killed. This is an intriguing, well plotted and fast paced mystery. Mr. Lovegrove has given us a page turning thriller that will not disappoint any Sherlock Holmes fan. "Sherlock Holmes: Gods Of War" is great fun. Let me assure you if you like Sherlock Holmes then you are going to really enjoy this.

Disclosure of Material Connection: I received this book free from Titan Books. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed are my own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255: "Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising."

Michael Brown says

Another is this series of newer tales either relating some of those hinted adventures from the Conan Doyle stories or all new cases filling in between previous ones. This is another of those dealing with Holmes after he retired from London. A bit over drawn but well presented as Watson shows more his age and Holmes a bit less up to his old level of deduction.

Rose says

I think it was the 1998 film version of "The Man in the Iron Mask" that led to my fascination with the "Aging Hero" trope -- the idea of characters in their latter years traveling one more time down the Hero's Journey road. The film itself is of debatable quality, but as a lifelong Musketeers fan, I ate up the story of jaded, aging warriors making a final attempt to fight for the ideals of honor and justice they'd spent their lives defending.

Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes story "His Last Bow" is somewhere in my top five favorite Holmes stories for precisely this reason, as Conan Doyle writes about his 60-year-old retired consulting detective coming out of retirement in 1914 to apply his unique talents to aiding Britain during World War I. It's an ominous, bittersweet story that tugs at my heartstrings (particularly that last paragraph!), and is, chronologically-speaking, the final Sherlock Holmes story -- one that still leaves the door wide open to further possibilities of adventure. (Which is how I best like my stories to end.)

It always amazes me that pastiche writers don't do more with this period of Holmes's life -- so when I saw that this book was set in 1913, and was written by the same author as the highly-enjoyable "The Stuff of Nightmares," snatching it up was a no-brainer. Of course, any time I pick up a pastiche, I do so with breath half-held, wondering how far the writer will take the characters from their true selves, or how much the plot will be able to equal the fun and intricate twistings of a Conan Doyle tale. It's a big deal when I find one that manages to mostly avoid both such pitfalls. And if it is a great story on its own merit, to boot, well ...

Well, then. We have a book like this one.

I LOVED this book. Aging heroes? Check. Ominous pre-war epic stakes? Check. High-thrills action that is actually exciting and heart-pounding to read?? Double check. Witty banter? Triple-check; I laughed out loud several times while reading this one. (It was very easy for me to picture aged versions of my favorite on-screen Holmesian duo, Robert Downey Jr and Jude Law -- there was very much a touch of those portrayals.)

The mystery was (fairly) neatly done, but I find myself wanting to rave more about the setting. England on the brink of war, the cliffside Sussex town, the post-Victorian technology and developments -- of course I love Victorian!Holmes, but I so enjoyed seeing this different side of the character, and this different world around him. The atmosphere was spot-on; I kept turning the pages to see what happened, but I kept picking the book up in the first place because I was deeply enjoying spending time in this world.

The character portrayal of Holmes and Watson was not 100% perfect. Holmes utters a small handful of sentences that don't sound quite right to me, and Lovegrove has a tendency to add an Adrian-Monk streak of nervousness to his Watson (although it was DECIDEDLY less present than in his previous book, much to my delight). No pastiche ever perfectly captures every nuance of Conan Doyle, after all. But it was damn close -- and the thing that matters most to me, the friendship between Holmes and Watson, was once again perfectly captured and elevated within the story. These are two old friends, indeed, and their interactions are at turns hilarious and heartwarming. We've even got a pretty great (by which I mean, pretty evil) bad guy.

My highest praise to give? One morning, when I was about a third of the way through the novel, I was overextended from weeks of long work hours and my stress levels were through the roof. I was near tears of exhaustion and could not imagine getting through a work-packed weekend before I could take some time off; it just seemed an impossible duty to cope with. I did have a couple of hours before I had to start getting ready, though, and so I picked up this book and read for the next hour. By the time I put it down, the exhaustion had faded and the stress had melted away. I don't know if I would've been quite so enamored with this book if I hadn't come to it at just the right time and had it save me from a mental and emotional meltdown -- but it did, and I'm grateful. I'll be reading this one again.

And let's give it up for Sherlock Holmes taking a note from Kevin Macallister, thank you ... ;-)

Claire N says

I picked this particular novel to start with because I a) enjoyed the title b) it had an airplane on the cover c) it features late Holmes (1913) d) the description on the back seemed not completely farfetched. (Disclaimer, though it features late Holmes, there is one major mistake that contradicts the canon -- it claims the events take place in 1913, when that wouldn't be possible since Holmes was undercover for two years (1912-1914), as discussed in 'His Last Bow'.)

First, the novel is written in the traditional Watson as narrator style and Lovegrove pulls it off fairly well. Despite the date conflict, he makes constant references to the canon (many of the chapter titles are modified story titles) and fleshes out older, retired Watson. It opens with a quaint classic Holmes small crime 24-hour investigation and then jumps into the main plot. The plot clips along, though like Hound Holmes is absent for a good part of the novel, which is odd, but probably more realistic (Watson can't follow him undercover). The main villain appears human, though the lack of characters makes it pretty clear who is responsible. The most interesting scenes include a car chase, airplane flying and Holmes setting off traps outside his Sussex home.

Overall, the writing is pretty good and the plot holds together at the end (though not necessarily the point or a characteristic of a good mystery novel, but that's for another discussion). Unfortunately, the motives of the main characters are a little out there for my taste, though the title and its relation to the plot were fascinating to me. If you're looking for a Holmes book that stretches the limits and isn't a long read (the book comes in at 296 pages), try this one.

If you love a good pre-war conspiracy theory (along the lines of the RDJ Sherlock movie, *Game of Shadows*), this novel is definitely for you. I will definitely be getting more books from this series (both by Lovegrove and others), mostly because I'm running out of Holmes to read.

Sissy says

I completely understand that no author 100% is going to write Sherlock Holmes and John Watson exactly how Sir Arthur Conan Doyle did. However, when you get books like Lovegrove's *Gods of War* and Laurie King's *The Beekeeper's Apprentice* where Watson is made out to be naught but some old obtuse fool, I draw the line.

Watson is not stupid; he is a medical doctor, for God's sake. A decorated war veteran. While not as cunning or as observant as Holmes, he is of above average intelligence and capable of putting two and two together, understanding what puzzle pieces fit where and to not try to jam them into place when they don't (as is the case in *Gods of War*).

Maybe I'm being a bit touchy, maybe I'm not. All I know is that I am sick and tired of authors casting Watson in the role of dumb sidekick when he is in reality anything but. I was able to follow the clues, the oddities and coincidences that Watson noted but for whatever reason utterly failed to connect to one another until Sherlock came along and explained it out to him.

Perhaps that is what I found most infuriating—that I was able to notice these things and Watson, or at least this version of him, wasn't. The reader is supposed to connect with Watson, seeing what he sees, knowing what he knows, following what he follows. I was able to reach the same conclusion as Holmes with a great less bit of the information he had access to just based on what Watson took in firsthand. That Watson was unable to come to the same conclusion as I despite being presented the same exact material is a mite disheartening.

The female lead—if you could call her that, since she's barely in it—Elizabeth is a delight. Even Holmes admires her, considering her a close second to the esteemed Irene Adler.

Aside from this rather unfortunate degradation of Watson's character, I found *Gods of War* entertaining enough, if not predictable. Certainly not one of the best Holmes stories out there, but not the worst. This is a case that reminds the reader that Sherlock works for justice itself, not for the police or any physical embodiment of the law. While I'm certainly not condoning such acts as he perpetrated or allowed to happen, in a world where the wealthy get off with a slap on the wrist and the poor are punished to the full extent, it was a satisfying end to a rather anti-climatic and humdrum mystery.

Eukaryote says

Better than *The Stuff of Nightmares* but not as good as *Labyrinth of Death*. It was simply okay. There were parts I liked a lot, and parts I didn't. The characters felt out of character at times, especially Holmes. Though I understand that Lovegrove was trying to portray that Holmes is getting older here, I don't think he would be quite this dumb just yet. Maybe when he's 80, yes? 1913, no. Holmes wouldn't be so slow yet.

This was also the first time I ran into books in this series contradicting each other. In this story, Mycroft is dead. In *Patchwork Devil*, Mycroft is still alive and it's 6 years after this story takes place. I know it's different authors, but it bugged me a bit.

It's okay. Not intolerable, but not many memorable moments either. Onto the next.

Mabji says

Sehr gut!

Ich konnte in keiner Weise vorhersehen, in welche Richtung sich diese Geschichte entwickeln würde! Ewig lang habe ich gegrübelt, wie es denn nun zu diesem Titel gekommen ist, die Auflösung war total überraschend!

Wirklich gelungen! Ich liebe es, wenn ich auf die falsche Fährte geführt werde!

Laura says

When you actually find out who the killers are and what the reasons are for the killings you will think the killers need a psychiatrist.

Carolyn Rose says

Good setting and description and a puzzling case, but Holmes didn't seem as prepared as I felt he should be. Maybe I'm not making allowances for aging.

edifanob says

This was the second time I read a book by James Lovegrove starring Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson after ***The Stuff of Nightmares***.

Set in 1913 and taking place in the surrounding of Sherlock's retirement cottage, **Gods of War** gives on possible answer of the following question:

How will Sherlock Holmes (age of 59) and Dr Watson (age of 61) cope with their advancing age and inventions of the twentieth century on the eve on an upcoming war in Europe.

James Lovegrove did an excellent job with his answer to the question.

I loved the story from beginning to the end. I have had a great time to follow both gentlemen in a fresh and entertaining story with unexpected twist and full of stuff which will take easily one day to google them all.

Karen says

I was disappointed. There are so many small errors that I was never able to get into this. I dislike books where Watson is portrayed as an idiot. Sure, he is not as smart as Holmes. However, Watson should be at least as smart as the reader so we can identify with him. The reader should not be thinking, "oh no, why are you doing THAT?" If a writer can't make Holmes truly brilliant, he won't get the proper effect simply by making everyone else stupid.

In addition there are several anachronisms that spoil the atmosphere. "Infrastructure" was not in use until 1927. Acetaminophen was not patented until 1956. A writer should do his research or it is jarring.

I doubt I shall read anything else in this series as I expect the editors are not working with the authors for authenticity, just to make money on the current craze for Holmes.

Tac Anderson says

A really fun read.

Derek Mcknight says

I agree with previous reviewers that this book was a bit slow in the middle and while it is very much in the ACD style it is not quite there. Still it was a good read with a good climax and I would recommend it for those that enjoyed the original Sherlock books
