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From the *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Age of Odin* comes a brand new Sherlock Holmes mystery in which Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson must infiltrate a mysterious cult to save a woman's life.

London, 1895, and a widowed gentleman comes calling at 221B Baker Street. Due to his preoccupation with his grief at losing his wife, Fitzhugh Woolfson's daughter Hannah has become estranged from him, and has disappeared from the family home. Woolfson begs Sherlock Holmes to find her. Holmes and Watson soon discover that Hannah has joined a religious sect known as the Elysians - led by the charismatic Sir Philip Buchanan - which conducts secretive rituals in the countryside derived from Ancient Greek myth and religion. Hannah's friend Sophia has disappeared after becoming embroiled with the Elysians, and foul play is suspected. The companions must infiltrate the mysterious cult to discover the terrifying truth..."

Sherlock Holmes: The Labyrinth of Death Details

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From Reader Review Sherlock Holmes: The Labyrinth of Death for online ebook

Chris Wood says

A great read, the story is refreshing if outlandish and clever enough to keep you guessing. The story doesn't falter and keeps you engaged right to the end. The only complaint I have, is that the Watson character comes across as a creepy old perv and at times drifts into sex pest territory, Mr Lovegrove owes our Watson a deuced apology! I look forward to the next.

TheRavenking says

This was my third Holmes-pastiche from James Lovegrove after Gods Of War and The Thinking Machine two books which had several strong individual parts but these did not come together satisfactorily to form a great novel. So, let's see whether The Labyrinth Of Death is more successful in this regard!

Hannah Woolfson, a young woman of independent spirit and great intelligence has disappeared. The trail leads Holmes and Watson to a bizarre cult-like group obsessed with ancient Greek culture and mythology. Are they just a harmless bunch of nutters? Or have they taken the more bloodthirsty rituals and myths too seriously?

The first few chapters move rather slowly. But once Holmes and Watson arrive at the headquarters of the mysterious sect things start to get exciting.

Lovegrove's strength lies in his great ability to bring these classic characters to life. These are the Holmes and Watson we know and love, behaving like they would in the original stories. There is also some wonderfully witty banter between the two friends as in the following passages:

“I know you would prefer me to represent your investigations as if they were treatises, Holmes, with a premise, an explanation and a conclusion. But what would be the point in that? Who would read them bar a handful of academics and intellectual snobs?”

“They would at least have the virtue of serious and lasting scientific value. Thanks to you, I strongly doubt that my achievements will be heralded in the future. Whereas a more sober, factual record of my deeds would live on indefinitely in scholarly libraries, adding to the sum total of mankind’s wisdom and benefiting the student of crime for generations to come.”

He was being ironic. At least, I like to think he was.

“Holmes,” I said, “it is not up to me, or to you, what of us lives on past our deaths and what does not. A higher power determines that.”

“God?”

“Posterity.”

My companion grinned. "Then let us hope that posterity is kind to me and you. Perhaps you are right. Perhaps a century from now or more, my renown will persist through your jottings. Who knows? Other authors might even pick up where you leave off and invent chronicles of their own about me. Since you fictionalise my doings, Watson, who is to say I will not in the end come to be considered completely fictitious, a figment of the imagination, and therefore air game for pasticheurs and homageurs and similar such mountebanks bereft of originality?"

He seemed tickled by the prospect.

"An afterlife as the hero of literary works by diverse hands", he mused. "A very specific Valhalla. My own private Elysium. Ha!"

The story reads like a mixture between Donna Tartt's *The Secret History* and an *Indiana Jones* adventure. Lovegrove creates some atmospheric scenes and presents the reader with enough shifty characters to keep us guessing who is friend or foe. Alas, just like its predecessors *The Labyrinth Of Death* stumbles at the finish line. The identity of the culprit is anything but a huge surprise, and once the mystery plot has been solved the entire last act is taken up by our two protagonists trapped in the titular labyrinth having to escape several death traps. This part feels almost like an overlong Sudoku-puzzle or the ending of *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* stretched out over 60 minutes. Admittedly Lovegrove is very good at setting up these riddles which are all based in ancient Greek mythology. But once we arrive at this part of the story the big bad has already been unmasked and his rather mundane motives have been explained. The result is a lack of tension. It's a shame, really, because there were parts where I thought that this would end up being a winner. Ultimately though it's just a solid but also slightly underwhelming example of a Holmes pastiche.

Rose says

Really more like three and a half stars, but I rounded up because, y'know, it's Lovegrove, and also because that third act was crackerjack.

This is my fifth pastiche by Lovegrove, and it serves to remind me why he's among my favorite of pastiche writers: he writes a bloody good adventure story. There's always a mystery to his Holmes pastiches, don't get me wrong -- but I appreciate that he takes to heart that most of the Conan Doyle stories were given titles that begin with "The Adventure."

The duo of Holmes and Watson are rounded out to a trio in this one, with the addition of (view spoiler) She's operating under the nickname Shirley Holbrook, which she chose as a tribute to Holmes himself -- she's a fan, you see, and quite a capable one of that. Indeed, when the second chunk of the book took place from her point of view (through letters she wrote to Holmes, updating him on her progress), I mostly enjoyed it. I'm not big on letters and flashbacks in stories, because it always seems to slow the pacing down -- but I liked "Shirley" enough here that the letters kept me engaged.

Besides -- damn, it was a great third act. The first two-thirds kept me frantically turning pages, but (view spoiler) is just kind of everything I want in a pastiche.

If Watson is a little more Monk-ish than his canon counterpart, his clear loyalty to his friends assured me this is *our* Watson -- and I always enjoy Lovegrove's Holmes, without any traces of the slightly-too-acerbic characterization that was in one or two of his earliest reads.

(view spoiler)

Plus: Greek myths references! I do love Greek mythology.

So. Not my favorite of Lovegrove's pastiches -- but it kept me smiling during a difficult week, and it certainly earns a fourth star for that. Here's to Shirley Holbrook!

Stephen Robert Collins says

Letters from a female view point here we see Holmes like Hound only in the shadows taking the view that he often did that females are the weak sex. Which was Doyle of course who had that view been typical Doctor in Victorian times who care nothing for women today it would be called MCP but then it was normal.

I am glade that Lovegrove has not as some SH modern books have done change the view so the book is modern. This very Victorian Doyle not twenty first century view of 1895 but the 1895 in Doyle 's style When the rotter is revealed we see an Indiana Jones style twisted Greek games & Holmes & Watson 's maze battle. Another Holmes bits the dust.

Doug Phillips says

I have had the good fortune of reading a few Holmes pastiches, and this one holds its own compared to others. Lovegrove is no stranger to Sherlock, as evidenced by the number of titles he has devoted to the detective and his partner-in-solving-crime, Watson.

As I cruised through the detailed chapters of "Labyrinth", I was impressed by Lovegrove's ability to craft his tales in the style of Sir Arthur. I commend all of today's authors who work to expand the telling of classic Holmes adventures. This title is no exception, with proper development of the characters who interact with Holmes and Watson, and exciting suspense in the latter third of the book.

I'm already on the trail of other Lovegrove pastiches. Fortunately, they're sufficiently discoverable such that I won't need to engage the great detective that resides at 221b Baker Street.

Breakaway Reviewers says

A fantastic Sherlock Holmes adventure

In 1895, detective Sherlock Holmes and his faithful companion, Dr Watson, are called upon by a high court judge who needs their help to locate his missing daughter, Hannah. Upon investigating, Holmes quickly discovers that Hannah has in fact left her father by choice, in order to investigate her friend Sophia's recent disappearance. Following her trail leads the detective to a strange Ancient Greece-obsessed cult who call themselves the Elysians, of which Sophia had recently become a member prior to vanishing. It transpires that Hannah has managed to join the secretive group under a fake name ('Shirley Holbrook' in honour of Holmes himself) to seek out the fate of her friend. Once Holmes and Watson make contact with her, she agrees to work with them to try and establish what has happened to Sophia. However, none of them realises that the seemingly harmless Elysians may have a dark side and as she becomes more involved with them, Hannah

may be putting herself in grave danger.

This was an extremely imaginative and enjoyable mystery story that was packed with high-tension action, shocking twists and exasperating cliffhangers. Written in the first person from the perspective of Watson, the narrative was both easy to read and gave a lot of insight into his thoughts and personality, which added emotional depth to the story. Whilst the characters of Holmes and Watson will be familiar to most readers from other interpretations of the Sherlock Holmes novels (the modern-day BBC adaptation being my sole exposure to the detective duo), the author does an excellent job of rendering their individual personalities in a way that is both faithful to the characters we know and befitting to the time period. The character of Hannah - a feisty, independent and intelligent girl living in a world where women are expected to be meek and submissive - could easily have become a bit cliched but the author made it work and I found all the protagonists likeable and all the potential villains suitably suspicious.

The Ancient Greek theme of the story (with multiple references to some of the many Greek myths and legends) was one of my favourite parts of the book. It added an extra layer of intrigue to an already exciting tale and the myths themselves - sometimes bizarre, sometimes gruesome and unfailingly fantastical - are always fun to read about. The author masterfully creates a building sense of danger and unease as Holmes and Watson learn more about the Elysians, their beliefs and practices and the whole group has a very creepy feel to it that comes through excellently in the writing.

My one criticism of this book would be that a few of the characters existed solely to be red herrings and served no other real purpose in the plot - however, this is probably unavoidable in mystery stories and the author still manages to make these characters fairly multi-dimensional. The big reveal of the person behind Sophia's disappearance was also not entirely unexpected, but the author kept up the excitement and suspense regardless and the last few chapters were so filled with tension and action that the book became almost impossible to put down. The conclusion was satisfying and perfectly rounded off an excellent adventure.

Overall, I really enjoyed this story and would definitely be interested in reading more by this author. Whilst I have regrettably not yet read the original Sherlock Holmes novels, this author has certainly done a brilliant job of creating a story using Arthur Conan Doyle's beloved characters and I would highly recommend it to all.

Daenerys

Breakaway Reviews received a copy of the book to review

Val says

I received this book free from "Good Reads".

Brilliant book, really enjoyed it. I had to read every word, as I could have easily missed important things, if I had skipped bits.

The story is told by Dr Watson and starts by Sir Osbert Woolfson visiting the home of Sherlock Holmes, to report his missing daughter - Miss Hannah Woolfson.

Holmes & Watson find themselves at a large house, near the village of Waterton Parva.

Here they find a group of people calling themselves Elysians, run by Sir Philip Buchanan. these turn out to

be a kind of sect.

The story is brilliantly told, although unbelievable, it really made me feel as if it could really be happening. I would definitely recommend this book to everyone.

Connie says

Sherlock Holmes's new client is a high court judge whose free spirited daughter, Hannah has gone missing. Holmes and Watson discover that Hannah was herself on the trail of her missing friend Sophie, who was besotted with a young man who recruited her into a group known as the Elysians, a sect run by Sir Philip Buchanan who is obsessed by the Ancient Greeks and hopes for a new order of elite citizens.

Hannah has joined the Elysians to try and find out what happened to Sophie and agrees to be Sherlock's spy but how long will it be before she is discovered or betrayed? And will Sherlock and Watson be able to save her?

Dale says

A Cult obsessed with ancient Greece...

Hannah Woolfson has disappeared. Her father, Sir Osbert Woolfson has come to 221B to hire Holmes to find his missing daughter. It is discovered that she was in close contact with Miss Sophia Tompkins. Miss Tompkins had become involved with a sort of cult involving education and fitness training after the example of ancient Greece.

Upon tracing Miss Tompkins, Holmes discovers Miss Woolfson as a member of the cult of Elysians, under the false name of Shirley Holbrook. The cult is led by Sir Philip Buchanan and is located at his estate of Charfrome Old Place. Miss Tompkins is nowhere to be found.

The Elysians train in classical Greek writing, theology, and rituals. There is a huge ceremony that takes place on the full moon. The Delphic Ceremony involves animal sacrifice, apparent passion by the Gods, and the revelation of the two people who will graduate.

The graduates are chosen by a seemingly possessed Sir Philip but are actually chosen in advance by the "elders" which include the ancient scholar Dr. Archibald Pentecost and a young rake named Edwin Fairbrother. Upon graduation, there is one more hurdle. Sir Philip is very much in love with ancient Greece and his favorite Greek hero is Daedalus, who built the Labyrinth of the Minotaur for King Minos. The Labyrinth lies underground beneath Charfrome Old Place...

In this tale, we see more of Watson as a person because Holmes has ordered it to be so. Watson has a new love interest in Miss Hannah and is furious with Holmes for allowing her to continue undercover work inside the cult. Watson is angry, but Sir Osbert is apoplectic! He even threatens Holmes in no uncertain terms to no avail. Holmes will not tell Sir Osbert where his daughter is...

This is a tremendous story! We have the Elysian Cult, the ex-military Guards, the possibly mad Sir Philip, the creepy but friendly Dr. Pentecost, the woman chasing Edwin Fairbrother, and the secrets of surviving the

deadly labyrinth... This is a perfect storm of quality Holmes story-telling! I thought the challenges of the Labyrinth were excellently plotted, along with the clues and methods of solving the Labyrinth. The villains are cunning, the girl is tough, and Holmes and Watson must strive to survive against all odds! My hat is off to you, Mr. Lovegrove!

I give the book five stars plus!

Quoth the Raven...

booksofallkinds says

****RATING 4.5****

I have always enjoyed the tales of Sherlock Holmes and own a couple of different editions written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle but this was my first time picking up one of the adventures written by James Lovegrove, and I am really glad that I did.

In this adventure, Holmes and Watson are on the hunt for a missing woman, Miss Hannah Woolfson, who has vanished into thin air. Her father is distraught and hopes that his daughter has not come to some grisly end. But it is not long before Holmes uncovers the fact that Miss Woolfson has gone into the countryside in the hopes of saving her friend, Sophia, who appears to have gotten herself mixed up in some sort of cult. Soon Watson and Holmes find themselves in dangerous territory, with a group who are obsessed with Greek Mythology, but luckily for them, they are perfectly adept at piecing puzzles together, and they even have help on the inside...

When I was reading THE LABYRINTH OF DEATH by James Lovegrove I fell completely under his spell and felt like I was transported to 1895 with its unique flair, language, and charm. This book is most certainly a must-read for Sherlock Holmes fans with echoes to the originals while also creating a fresh and creative storyline. I loved the characters, especially Hannah who is so independent and unafraid to show the world her intelligence. The story is well-paced with plenty of danger, mystery, and action throughout to keep your eyes glued to the page. This may be the first time that I have read this series but it most certainly won't be my last. SHERLOCK HOLMES - THE LABYRINTH OF DEATH by James Lovegrove is a compelling and exciting riddle that you simply must unravel. Happy reading!!

*I voluntarily reviewed this book from the Publisher

Janice says

I enjoy this series a lot, but this is one of the best. Younger Holmes (and Watson) than many of the recent volumes. Focuses slightly more on Watson than Holmes, but that's not an issue as Lovegrove has always done a very good job of capturing Watson's voice.

Mabji says

Spannend und unvorhersehbar!

Ich hatte mir unter dem Labyrinth etwas ganz anderes vorgestellt, aber so war es auch nicht schlecht und ich finde persönlich, dass in diesem Buch die Charaktere von Snd Watson besonders gut getroffen wurden.

Katharina Stracke says

The Labyrinth of Death just proving once again that any Sherlock Holmes novel is a good novel. I was somewhat worried that the story wouldn't be able to live up to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's standards simply because he's the original author and it would be a difficult quest for anyone to follow in his footsteps. However, the story was as close to the original as it could be while still representing James Lovegrove's style of writing. As you would expect an easy but very enjoyable book that gets you binge reading in order to play your own Sherlock Holmes.

Overall, I recommend reading 'The Labyrinth of Death' if you enjoy somewhat old-english language, the original Sherlock Holmes series, the ongoing relationship ups and downs between Mr Holmes and Dr Watson, a thrilling riddle and the hunt for the truth by playing detective. I've "inhaled" this book within three days, because of it's thrilling, captivating story line making it one of those books you can't put down. Even though I've gone through it quite quickly partly due to the easy writing that is not to say it is plain or underwhelming but rather the opposite. I especially liked the way the first-person narrative was written from Dr Watson's point of view giving it a compelling tone and the impression as if the reader is part of the investigation.

Especially likable was the side plot of Hannah representing an emancipated young woman who doesn't shy away from taking matters into her own hand in an era where such aspirations weren't the norm or tolerated by most men. I'd definitely re-read this one as I firmly believe there are so many more gist that can be found on second reading and give it a permanent space in my bookshelf. Conclusion: Get on it, if you haven't already!

Nadine says

All in all this was an engaging SH pastiche.

BUT it has one major flaw (at least in my eyes). It paints Watson as a lovesick fool, rushing headlong into danger without thinking to rescue the damsel in distress. Next to Holmes he often looks like a complete idiot. That is certainly not the Watson I've come to know and love from ACD stories. This characterization of Watson somehow spoiled the book for me. Holmes on the other hand was mostly spot on.

Monica Willyard says

This Sherlock Holmes pastiche is rather well written. I enjoyed reading it very much. There is a lot of background in this book that is true to the period in which Sherlock Holmes lived. The author has taken pains to use dialogue that feels right in most places. Couldn't escape the feeling that some of the plot was

more appropriate in an Indiana Jones movie, but it was still good reading. All in all, I am inclined to read another title by this author in the future.
