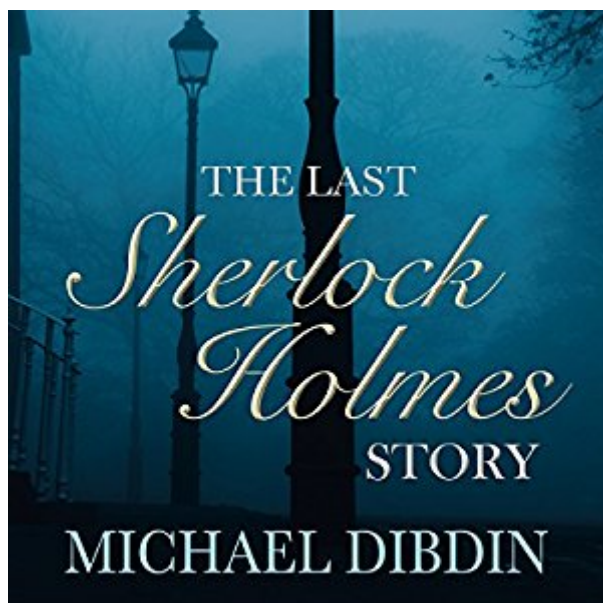


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The Last Sherlock Holmes Story



Synopsis

For fifty years after Dr Watson's death, a packet of papers, written by the doctor himself, lay hidden in a locked box. The papers contained an extraordinary report of the case of Jack the Ripper and the horrible murders in the East End of London in 1888. The detective, of course, was the great Sherlock Holmes - but why was the report kept hidden for so long? This is the story that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle never wrote. It is a strange and frightening tale ... --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 6 hours 43 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Audible Studios

Audible.com Release Date: April 30, 2010

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B003KJM4VQ

Best Sellers Rank: #81 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Language Instruction > English

#240 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Language Instruction > Other Languages #731

in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Nonfiction > Language Arts & Disciplines

Customer Reviews

...interesting."I had rather be taken for a fraud, than have seen the many for whom Sherlock Holmes was an ideal and an example shattered and embittered on learning the horrible truth about their paragon." Michael Dibdin's John Watson says on the last pages of this book. Sadly the author didn't share these feelings. While quite well written the book is unlikely to win any "Best Pastiche"-awards, as the author seems to be among the fans who insist that John Watson was the "real hero" of the Sherlock Holmes canon and sets out to prove his point by utterly ruining Holmes' reputation. Certainly an arguable take on the matter and the author is within his rights, but this SH-fan is unlikely to reread this tale within her lifetime.

Dibdin does an incredibly astute impression of "Watson's" writing style but beyond that, it's just recycling and re-interpretation of a lot of Holmes stories, completely devoid of any exploration of the

fact that Sherlock Holmes is a classic Sociopath. Again, not a bad read, but except for the "twist" regarding the identities of both Moriarity and Jack the Ripper, most disappointing.UNCLE FOX

For as long as memory serves, this has been a controversial book in Holmesian circles, one which I was warned off reading many years ago, and since being informed of the blasphemies within, have avoided like the plague. I do not appreciate new "interpretations" of the Canon that play with the characters to such an extent as to make them consistently unrecognizable, but herein lies the crux of it. Dibdin is one of a scant few authors with the uncanny ability to summon the very essence of the Great Detective and his doctor - yet while I normally delight in such talent for penning an authentic Watsonian narrative, there was no such elation to be had in these pages. The tone throughout is bleak and somber, though knowing what was to come made it an emotionally difficult, oft times disturbing book to get through. The most unnerving part of it all is the way in which the Ripper clues are made to run parallel to what we know about Holmes, even several of his cases. Such was never more apparent as in the first 'Dear Boss' letter, which actually gave me chills when read in the context of the book. And it is not necessarily the nature of the explosive plot reveal that was so upsetting, but that the solid facts of both worlds were so eloquently intertwined. In short, this was in character and at least in the book's setting, was remotely plausible. That, I think, is what unsettled me so badly. Even at this juncture, I am unsure how to rate it. It was exceptionally well written. It was suspenseful, evoked the mood of the Ripper's Whitechapel district, and for the first half of the book, with the investigation still underway, was unquestionably the best Holmes vs. Ripper novel I have read to date. However, if you love Holmes, this is bound to be a profoundly affecting, disturbing book that tosses your emotions into the proverbial wringer. Admittedly, the ending had me in tears. I loved it, while utterly despising it at the same time, especially the way in which it ended. Even then, there is one last act by Holmes that makes you want to love it all over again... while still seething in boiling hot hatred. Needless to say, after coming to the end, I felt like I had been hit by a truck. It is not the sort of book one can really recommend, only advise other readers what it was and was not. For my own part, I only continued reading because the plot hinged on the final few pages of SIGN, where I can remember being very angry with Watson for so blithely overlooking that statement revealing the extent of Holmes' pain over his impending marriage. It is a point I have only ever seen touched on superficially, while the "what if's" are thoroughly rummaged through here. What I will state is that it is not a sensationalistic or trashy book intended to profit off Holmes, but be aware if you do decide to give it a chance, it *is* as profoundly disturbing as most Holmesians claim it to be. Dibdin is a genuine (if heretical) devotee of Sherlock Holmes, who is also

very well versed in his 'Ripperology', though I think it is fair to say he has written something that has to be the product of the most pernicious plot idea to ever haunt an author. Certainly, it will haunt me for a long time to come.

I am a true and loyal fan of Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes, however, I can accept Holmes as portrayed by other writers. Some other writers, that is, but not this one. I wanted to like this book but I couldn't. Michael Dibdin was a fine writer and I was fully expecting to enjoy this book. After all, it has great subject matter...Sherlock Holmes and Jack the Ripper. It turns out I didn't enjoy anything about this book. There is no mystery in this novel because the mystery is given away halfway through the book. Reading the book from then on is anticlimactic. I didn't like the treatment of any of the main characters, not even Lestrade. The author's treatment of Watson is most unforgivable. Watson's comments and attitude regarding the Ripper's victims, for instance, were most disturbing; he seems to have no mercy at all for them and indeed, wonders why anyone would care if they died, including the victims themselves. No, not my Watson. Overall, it is a book both boring and disturbing. As for his treatment of Holmes...all I can say is what the hell did Holmes ever do to Michael Dibdin?

I find some of the more over the top reviews of this a bit funny. This is only a riff pastiche on a fictional character for goodness sakes, so I don't take the ending as personally as some of the reviewers. That said, however, the book still stank. The point of a good Holmes pastiche is that it follows the canon. Even the books that supposedly don't follow the canon, like the Laurie King Mrs. Holmes books, really do, because everything Holmes does in those books is Holmes-like. Here, nothing Holmes does is Holmes-like, so the pastiche fails miserably. A definite time waster.

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