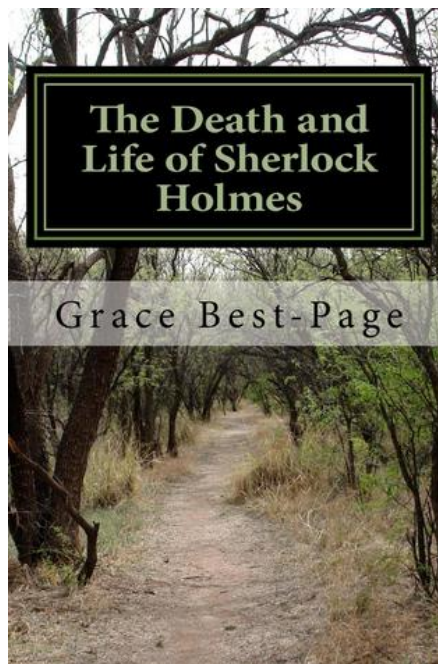




The Death and Life of Sherlock Holmes

Grace Best-Page

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Jackie Bowman, a modern-day American woman, mysteriously time travels to 1891, where she meets Sherlock Holmes at the point of his untimely “death” at the Reichenbach Falls. Disguised as Jack, she and the great detective partner for the next three years travelling, braving dangers, sharing adventures, and facing Holmes’ ultimate challenge: boredom. They depend on each other, they like each other, they get on each other’s nerves. With humor, drama, and poignancy, “The Death and Life of Sherlock Holmes” fills in the details of Holmes’ three-year hiatus and continues beyond his return to Baker St. Discover what made him the man he is, get to know the Baker Street Irregulars, and find the answer to that perennial question: Was he gay? No, sorry about that; rather, did he actually exist? Whether you’re a fan of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle looking to expand your Sherlockian horizons, someone meeting Holmes for the first time, or you’re simply looking for a good read, this light-hearted adventure will both illuminate and entertain.

The Death and Life of Sherlock Holmes Details

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From Reader Review The Death and Life of Sherlock Holmes for online ebook

Beryl says

I have been a SH fan since childhood and will read pretty much anything related to him. I liked the idea of following Holmes' adventures during the great hiatus, and this seemed to have lots of promise. The author certainly knows the canon and writes very well. I appreciate the research that must have gone into it. That being said, this was a SLOW book to read (took me several weeks) and I kept hoping for some sort of mysterious problem that Holmes could use his powers to solve as he and his time-traveling companion journeyed to exotic locations. There was really none, and as the days passed there wasn't much that could be called an adventure (unless you were a modern girl from Tennessee suddenly transported backwards in time, I guess. That would be an adventure). Jackie's habit of calling Holmes by every name she could think of was just annoying.

Some have called it a brilliant character study, but since nearly everything of Holmes' early life was made up by the author, it has little relevance beyond its immediate context. I also had trouble making sense of the ending. As a Sherlock Holmes lover, I am glad to have read this book, and glad it is finished. I am happy to have it in my collection, but I found much of it tedious.

Tracey says

I've never read Sherlock Holmes before but this book grabbed my interest from the beginning and kept it. It is a fun and light hearted read. It is enjoyable to see how Jackie or "Jack" slowly but surely comes to know Sherlock Holmes the man, not just the legend. He is definitely one of those hard to crack cases....those closed individuals who you'd just love to know what makes them tick, why they are the way they are, a mystery himself. I never thought of it until now, but in some ways, Jackie becomes the detective and unlocks the mystery of Sherlock himself. Hmmmmmm..... It is a story of friendship, travel, discovery and taking life as it is handed to you and looking forward, not living in the past.

Jacqueline Wright says

As a hardcore, "puritan" Sherlockian, I am very difficult to please when it comes to original stories and interpretations of Holmes, so the fact this book initially appeared to be a time-travel romance understandably made me wary. But, being a sucker for anything labeled "Sherlock Holmes," I knew I had to give it a chance. I'm so very glad I did! If you're looking for smutty erotica filled with heaving bosoms and cliched writing, this is not the book for you. This story is filled with smart dialogue, vivid description, and colorful mini-adventures. I'd like to emphasize that the plot is merely a playful, and beautiful backdrop which serves to focus the reader on the great detective. This is not a typical Holmes mystery, nor a reinterpretation of him...it is first and foremost a character study, and the first-person point of view really allows the reader to live vicariously and imagine what it might be like to interact with one of the most complex figures in literary history.

The author has my greatest thanks for respecting the character of Holmes, keeping with the spirit Doyle had created, and I am also very impressed by her detailed knowledge of the Holmes universe. It's not only clear that she knows the books inside and out, but she's also taken the time to research and do her homework on 19th century history. Her protagonist is likable and relatable...easy to identify with, but by NO means a Mary Sue. With her flaws and quirks, the developing friendship with the complicated detective is highly realistic and absorbing to follow.

I highly recommend this book for anyone wishing to re-acquaint him or herself with Sherlock Holmes: to flesh out the stereotype, or to reintroduce themselves with the character he was originally written to be. I rate it four stars (and not five) only because I am not used to reading a book without an identifiable story arc - a deliberate choice by the author - just one I'm not 100% comfortable with.

Vanda Bromwich says

Jackie time travels to the past and meets Sherlock Holmes and spends his "lost" three years travelling round with him in the disguise of a man - Jack Bowman. I wondered how this was going to end. The story itself was fine but I thought the way it was all ended was weak and didn't really work.

Bobby says

This was an interesting "take" on the Sherlock Holmes stories. I think people who are more familiar with the character and books will probably get more out of it than I did. Still, the time travel idea was different, in regard to a fictional character.

Diane Alexander says

The Death and Life of Sherlock Holmes, by Grace Best-Page

First of all, I'm a sucker for any book that includes time travel. But a well-written, witty, imaginative story that includes time travel is a real treat. The Death and Life of Sherlock Holmes is such a book. The reader's attention is grabbed immediately when a present-day American woman, Jackie Bowman, is suddenly and mysteriously transported to Switzerland in 1893 where she meets Sherlock Holmes. Yes, the fictional character and greatest detective of all time. He sure seems real to Jackie, though. And Jackie just happens to be a Sherlock Holmes devotee, familiar with all of Arthur Conan Doyle's stories, so she knows what Holmes will do before he does.

Now the real fun begins. The pair travels through Italy, Austria, and points east, ending up in India, then Tibet. Numerous hardships and adventures ensue, and the two become close friends while maintaining Holmes's Victorian-era propriety. Jackie's incessant—one might say merciless—punning causes Holmes to groan or almost grin throughout their travels.

Ms. Best-Page has a knack for clever wordplay and amusing situations. But I don't want to give any more of the plot away; trust me when I say these delightful characters and their remarkable journeys will engage your interest from beginning to end.

Judy says

My Review: I must admit I kept putting this one back down as I went through my TBR pile. I have never really read any Sherlock Holmes adventures or even watched the movies. The little bit I knew about the subject always seemed kind of dry. Finally I knew I had to get to this book. Well I was pleased to see that it exceeded my expectations. I think the concept of a every day woman going through some type of portal into Sherlock's world was so original. Now time travel is one thing but time travel into a supposed fictional world is another thing. I loved the way Jack/Jackie would come up with names for Holmes at the drop of a hat. It kept it light and fun. It did tend to drag a little bit here in there but was an enjoyable read I would recommend, even if you are not into Holmes. The ending was a nice touch. I give this 4 stars.

Srutokirti says

Have you ever wanted to know about Sherlock Holmes' adventures during his hiatus, but Conan Doyle died before you could ask?

Here it is.

The Death and Life of Sherlock Holmes by Grace Best-Page was certainly a decent book—I say so myself, which is a compliment by the way.

How can I help not being a hardcore Sherlockian?

Damn this fandom.

In the synopsis of this book, the time travel and possible romance part made me want to gag, actually. However, the reviews I saw definitely stated otherwise. I want to be clear, if I weren't a Sherlockian, I'd definitely not read it.

I did not intend to read this book, but a glance inside our favorite consulting detective's "hiatus" after Reichenbach? I was so friggin' crazy to get my hands on it.

A review said the author was humorous and witty; I do not disagree. From the very first page, you can see it.

—"Do these hang on the wall?" I regarded the well-dressed woman who had just posed the question and then looked at what she was referring to. It was a dozen plaques—hanging on the wall.

No, Ma'am, I thought, we're levitating them there. Don't break my concentration. But, being the consummate professional that I am, I merely replied, "Yes, Ma'am, they do."

The protagonist – Jacqueline Bowman is a character readers can relate to easily. She's sarcastic, humorous, can think about hundreds of names, shares my love for Star Trek, is a pure feminist and well... likeable.

(Translation: She's not a Mary Sue.)

The other admirable thing about this book is probably that Best-Page managed to keep Sherlock Holmes in his nature. Kudos! The author describes Holmes just as well as John Watson does. Because, to me, portraying a character like Sherlock Holmes is a very difficult job – a very difficult one indeed.

Basically, this book gives Sherlockians a better view of—I shall quote Conan Doyle directly here:

“I took to ten heels, did ten miles over the mountains in the darkness, and a week later I found myself in Florence... I traveled for two years in Tibet, therefore, and amused myself from visiting Lhasa and spending some days with the head Llama. You may have read of the remarkable explorations of Norwegian named Sigerson, but I am sure that it never occurred to you that you were receiving news of your friend. I then passed through Persia, looked in at Mecca, and paid a short but interesting visit to the Khalifa at Khartoum, the results of which I have communicated to the foreign office. Returning to France I spent some months in research into the coal-tar derivatives, which I conducted in a laboratory in Montpellier, in the south of France. Having concluded this to my satisfaction, and learning that only one of my enemies was now left in London, I was about to return when my movements hastened by the news of this very remarkable Park Lane mystery, which not only appealed to me by its own merits, but which seemed to offer some most peculiar personal opportunities. I came over at once to London, called in my own person at Baker Street, threw Mrs Hudson into violent hysterics, and found that Mycroft had preserved my rooms and papers exactly as they always been.”

This doesn't tell us much, but *The Death and Life of Sherlock Holmes* does perfectly.

Our story begins when Jackie's co-worker Alan enters the picture. She notices that his behavior is dissimilar than others and she can relate to him as a friend.

One day, she accidentally time travels to the Reichenbach falls at the start of Holmes' hiatus. She starts to wonder how a fictional character—Sherlock Holmes—can exist in the past.

On the other hand, the said time traveler intrigues Sherlock thoroughly. He decides to bring her with him throughout his journey, but as a man: Jack. He takes her as a replacement for Watson, she for the more comfortable clothes of the Victorian era.

And so the adventure begins.

I shall say no more, read and find out on your own.

I feel the need to say that whether or not you're accustomed with Sherlock Holmes in literature or television doesn't really matter if you're considering reading this. Like light, fluffy yet humorous reads? This is your book, buddy.

Tahlia Newland says

The Death and Life of Sherlock Holmes is a kind of Sherlock Holmes fan-fiction. It uses the well-known character and fills in his story for the three years he was off the map, so to speak. Any die-hard Sherlock fan who wonders what he did during that time might appreciate this imaginative insight, however, they would also miss the mystery and intrigue that fill the actual Sherlock Holmes books, a fact that might turn off the very readers with the potential to like it the most. There's much that is good about this book, but unfortunately, it could have (should have) been much more.

The author clearly knows how to write good prose and the book is free of copy errors, as books should be, but often these days sadly aren't. You can read this assured that it is well-written in terms of the prose, dialogue and characterisation. The problem is with the plot, or lack of it.

The Tibetan part of the journey is interesting as a kind of travel log, but the rest of the travels are fairly incidental to the main thrust, and most noteworthy aspect of the story which is the relationship between the two characters.

The characterisation is excellent. At least it's the kind of Sherlock I always imagined him to be. The author has put Holmes into a journey shared with a woman, a great challenge for such a man, and at first it was enough to hold my interest, especially since the banter between the two characters was highly amusing and sometimes lol-worthy.

Jackie's character, as a modern woman/accidental time traveller, was the only kind of woman that could ever have worked with Holmes, her patience with him and ability to allow him his moods and quirks came from someone who had already read his stories and come to love the character through them. She also knew his feelings about women and so never allowed herself romantic feelings towards him—wise since she would surely have been disappointed. The way she cared for Holmes and how he eventually opened up to her was truly lovely.

The characters and their interactions are excellent and if that is all you require in a story, then you can ignore the rest of my comments.

The main problem with the story is its lack of plot. If you consider that a plot requires a protagonist with an agenda, desire or goal of some kind, and an antagonist to pit themselves against. The antagonist should try to prevent the protagonist from achieving their goal. The result of that is dramatic tension which is what keeps a reader reading. This book has no tension to hold it together. There are small bits of tension between the characters, escaping the one time they have been spotted by Holmes's enemy, and when they lose their cart and almost freeze to death in a blizzard, but there is nothing to give an overall thrust and cohesion to the story, hence it wanders aimlessly as do Holmes' and Jackie's travels.

It needed pursuit, mystery or challenge, and the story presented opportunities for all of these, but none were taken up in a cohesive fashion. Holmes was running from someone who we then practically forgot about. The mystery of Jackie's appearance in Holmes's world should have been an intellectual puzzle that drove Holmes crazy because he could not answer it, but again it was dropped. Jackie could have been much more intent on getting home, they could have tried many things and failed before they gave up, and her desire to get home could have resurfaced once they arrived in London.

As it was, by the time I got to London and were introduced to many new characters, I'd had enough and

nearly put the book down. Instead of new interest, the details of the Irregulars was more of a diversion from what should have been the main thrust ie how is Jackie going to, or will she ever, get home. I skimmed a lot of the chapters in London, only being drawn back in for the final chapters where my question was answered. When readers skim, it means that the pace has slowed down too much, and though I admit I'm not a fan of slow stories in general, had the plot problems been solved the pacing wouldn't have been such a problem.

Even without a stronger plot, cutting back the number of London scenes, and tightening up the events after leaving Tibet would have improved the book enough to have maintained my interest. The scenes with the Count, for example, could have been cut completely in the interests of moving the story along.

If you ignore the seemingly random appearance of time portals, the ending was excellent. However, I find it hard to believe that that Sherlock Holmes would have ignored them as he did. What a great mystery to engage this most wonderful brain, and yet he never stepped up to the task.

This author has great potential and even if you don't find this book to your taste, it is well worth giving her a chance on future books.

I received this book free from the author in return for an honest review. I would loved to have given it more stars simply on the basis of the character study, but I felt that the plot problem was simply too great.

Gaele says

The concept here is taking the 3 years where Holmes was "out of touch" and filling in the blanks, using a modern woman who time travels back to accompany Holmes on his travels. Beautifully written with a really clever set of adventures, I was sad to see that there were no real conflicts or mysteries to solve, and often Holmes was rather uninterested in mundane curiosities that from his history, would feed his obsessions.

Jackie is a modern day American woman, appearing beside Holmes at his 'death' at Reichenbach Falls: the two develop a 'partnership and proceed to travel through Italy and Austria and points east. Grace Best-Page can certainly craft dialogue: Jackie's love of puns and Holmes specifically non-specific declarations are perfectly paced as their interactions show the growing fondness between the two. Banter, bickering and even the occasional 'lecture' from Holmes also pepper the story and provide a sense of the character of Holmes with fresh viewpoint and eyes.

Where I wanted more from the story, and from Holmes in particular, was his apparent willingness to just accept that Jackie was there, real and beside him: even though her mysterious appearance through a time portal should have been driving him absolutely nuts. It feels like he either had time travel as an accepted thought, or felt it was not worth his notice or attention. Then we have multiple scenes set in London: while well written and beautifully described, they felt more like filler and not helping to either place or set Jackie's desires to return home, or to her time. Those scenes served little purpose but to increase the interactions with the character: no new mystery or real adventure was introduced, and the pacing of the story did lag here. However, in the hopes that something would happen, or a new gem of an idea would be unleashed, I read on. Fortunately, the pacing and the story did pick up to bring a conclusion that was mostly satisfactory.

While there were problems, and perhaps concepts that are more foreign to die-hard Holmes fans, this was a book that showed some great potential and ideas, with writing that was polished and professional a great bonus for a debut offering.

I received an eBook from the author for purpose of honest review. I was not compensated for this review: all

conclusions are my own responsibility.
