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The Fifth Heart

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Synopsis

In 1893, Sherlock Holmes and Henry James come to America together to solve the mystery of the 1885 death of Clover Adams, wife of the esteemed historian Henry Adams--member of the Adams family that has given the United States two Presidents. Clover’s suicide appears to be more than it at first seemed; the suspected foul play may involve matters of national importance.Holmes is currently on his Great Hiatus--his three-year absence after Reichenbach Falls during which time the people of London believe him to be deceased. Holmes has faked his own death because, through his powers of ratiocination, the great detective has come to the conclusion that he is a fictional character.This leads to serious complications for James--for if his esteemed fellow investigator is merely a work of fiction, what does that make him? And what can the master storyteller do to fight against the sinister power -- possibly named Moriarty -- that may or may not be controlling them from the shadows?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Dan Simmons is the award-winning author of several novels, including the New York Times bestsellers Olympos and The Terror. He lives in Colorado.

Dan Simmons is a national treasure. There seems to be no genre in which he does not excel. This novel pivots on the meta-fictional observation of one of the two key characters. "I feel like a fictional character," he says. His name? Sherlock Holmes. His interactions with "actual" historical figures are multi-faceted, and are illuminated by the author’s dry sense of humor. Or is it Holmes’s sense of

humor? One cannot be sure. And that is one of the many pleasures of this novel.

An interesting concept.....Sherlock Holmes creating mayhem in America with the cynical and sometimes adventurous Henry James. Written much in the style of novelists and literary scribes in the late 19th century, Simmons offers intrigue, murder, betrayal, and suspense while once again educating the reader on some real-life events and landmarks of that period. It is a departure from other works by Simmons.....or is it? He is at once several different authors able to write about unique stories in different settings.

Dan Simmons never fails to impress. It was a delight to see him intertwine the metaphysical musings on the nature of the Creator and the Created with a Gilded Age historical fiction mystery novel starring Sherlock Holmes and Henry James.

Haven’t finished it and forgot that I was even reading it until I saw this chance to review the book. I forgot I was reading this! Need I say more?

Dan Simmons, the literary chameleon, once again returns to the "historical fiction" genre where he has fun weaving fictional and historical characters into a story that features mystery, intrigue, action and a smidgeon of meta-surrealism. While the book could have been a bit shorter (duke to Mr. Simmon’s meticulous attention to detail and historical accuracy), the tale is never dull. Fun read in all.

I haven’t quite finished this book yet, so I’ll just say I love Dan Simmons meticulous research and historical context. The premise of the story is just to my taste.

Sometimes you have to fight your way through a Dan Simmons novel to get to the meat. This was no exception for me.It was well worth it. Characters were well realized. Plot meandered here and there, but in a healthy way. Sense of place was astonishing. The Columbian Expo came to life under his pen. And a full fledged Sherlock Holmes story materialised.

This delightful novel simultaneously informs us about all sorts of historical events, mixes "fictional" characters, like Sherlock Holmes (who wonders if he is fictional,or real. He doesn’t seem to consider that the very fact that others -- like Hentry James who are unquestionably real - talk with him &

interact with him, establishes his corporeal reality. I lived in Hyde Park, the Chicago neighborhood just South of the World's Fair Midway, from 1951-1970 and crossed the Midway many times, or wandered along it, and frequented the two Parks at either ends of the Midway and the Island, lagoon and Museum of Science & Industry which are remnants of that Exposition. It was fun to learn more about the construction of that legendary event. The author does a masterful job of portraying men and women who were part of Boston's upper classes and Boston Brahmin intellectuals of that period. His version of a most improbable persona for Henry James is fun as well. This novel is chock full of history and some American movers and shakers -- and robber barons -- at a key time in U.S. history -- and he throws Sherlock Holmes & evil son in for good measure. Take your time reading it. Savor it.

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