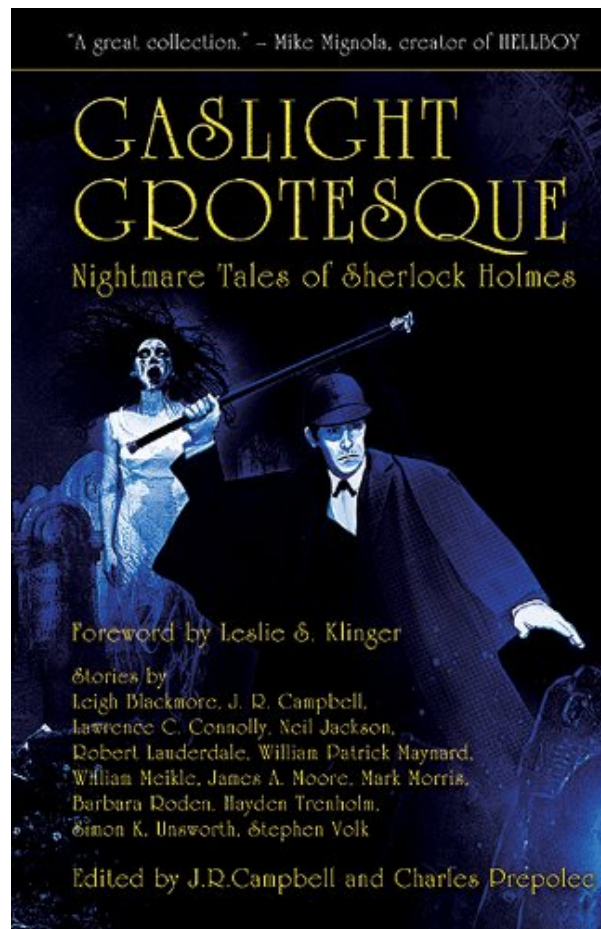


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GASLIGHT GROTESQUE

Nightmare Tales of Sherlock Holmes

Foreword by Leslie S. Klinger

Stories by

Leigh Blackmore, J. R. Campbell,
Lawrence C. Connolly, Neil Jackson,
Robert Lauderdale, William Patrick Maynard,
William Meikle, James A. Moore, Mark Morris,
Barbara Roden, Hayden Trenholm,
Simon K. Unsworth, Stephen Volk

Edited by J.R.Campbell and Charles Preplee

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About the Author

Jeff Campbell's fiction has appeared in a wide variety of publications including *Spinetingler Magazine*, *Wax Romantic* and *Challenging Destiny*. From time to time his writing can also be heard on radio's *Imagination Theater* and *The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. In addition to writing, he has co-edited the *Sherlock Holmes anthologies Curious Incidents 1 and 2* with his good friend *Charles Prepolec*.

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Contributors Include:

Leslie S. Klinger - "Foreword"

Charles V. Prepolec - "Introduction"

Stephen Volk - "Hounded"

Lawrence C. Connolly - "The Death Lantern"

William Meikle - "The Quality of Mercy"

James A. Moore - "Emily's Kiss"

William Patrick Maynard - "The Tragic Case of the Child Prodigy"

Hayden Trenholm - "The Last Windigo"

Neil Jackson - "Celeste"

Robert Lauderdale - "The Best Laid Plans"

Leigh Blackmore - "Exalted are the Forces of Darkness"

Mark Morris - "The Affair of the Heart"

Simon Kurt Unsworth - "The Hand-Delivered Letter"

Barbara Roden - "Of the Origin of the Hound of the Baskervilles"

J. R. Campbell - "Mr. Other's Children"

Jeff Campbell & Charles Prepolec, editors

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Most helpful customer reviews

24 of 26 people found the following review helpful.

Grotesquerie with Sherlock

By Philip K. Jones

Gaslight Grotesque: Nightmare Tales of Sherlock Holmes

Type of material: Trade Paperback

Publisher: Edge Science Fiction and Fantasy Publishing

Year: 2009

Author: J. R. Campbell and Charles Prepolec, eds.

Price: \$19.95

Review: This is a collection of Sherlockian tales in which, to quote Leslie S. Klinger's Forward, "...the pillar of Victorian reason and intellect, Sherlock Holmes, would be called upon to confront the forces of darkness in every form." Make no mistake. This is a collection of horror stories, not the usual Sherlockian investigations of human crime. In this book, Holmes and Watson deal with monsters, not twisted humans, but horrors out of myth and nightmare

In the opening tale, "Hounded," by Stephen Volk, Watson attends a seance. What he finds there is what he had hoped to escape, his own memories of The Hound. Once confronted, they lead him to his only escape. "The Death Lantern," by Lawrence C. Connolly, tells of a magician who filmed himself practicing one of his illusions, catching an explosive bullet in his teeth. The early silent movie is destroyed after Holmes, Watson and Lestrade witness the death(?) of the magician. William Meikle's "The Quality of Mercy" is a story of an old Army friend of Watson's yearning for a dead sweetheart. The form that desire takes is gruesome to say the least.

"Emily's Kiss," by James A. Moore, is one of the most horrifying tales in my opinion. The events are described but the cause and explanation are never stated explicitly, leaving the imagination of the reader to fill in the blanks, over and over and over again. "The Tragic Case of the Child Prodigy," by William Patrick

Maynard, has an Aleister Crowley surrogate, disguised as one "Christopher Frawley," preying on an ambitious 'stage mother' to control the income generated by a young violinist. "The Last Windigo," by Hayden Trenholm, has Holmes and Watson sent to Canada by Mycroft on The Queen's Business. While waiting for the situation to develop, they stumble on a land theft scheme that is being contested by the local natives. Resolving that dispute requires more than logic and diplomacy.

In "Celeste," by Neil Jackson, Holmes and Watson work, at the request of The Prince of Wales, to put a final end to the recurring nightmare of a ghost ship. "The Best Laid Plans," by Robert Lauderdale, presents an alternative view of events in "The Final Problem," as seen through the eyes of Inspector Lestrade. The view is neither pretty nor simple. "Exalted Are the Forces of Darkness," by Leigh Blackmore introduces Aleister Crowley, this time as an ally of Holmes in dealing with a conjured Demon attacking members of The Golden Dawn. "The Affair of the Heart," by Mark Morris, introduces Holmes to a sort of time travel, which engulfs him and Watson in a trap of double jeopardy. "The Hand-Delivered Letter," by Simon Kurt Unsworth, brings back Moriarty, in a truly stunning and terrifying revenge. "On the Origin of the Hound of the Baskervilles," by Barbera Roden, fills in the untold bits of HOUN deftly and seamlessly and horribly. J. R. Campbell's "Mr. Other's Children" finishes the book on a note of true terror. It's villain escapes and leaves the world at risk.

Sherlockians are not as likely to recognise many of the authors, other than Barbera Roden and J. R. Campbell, since most have worked in the horror genre rather than in detective tales up to this time. That takes nothing away from their abilities and the errors for purists are mostly confined to the villains and 'ghosties' introduced, rather than to Canonical problems. In addition, most are not Americans, so the 'slanguage' problems are not nearly so much in evidence as in most recent anthologies.

Reviewed by: Philip K. Jones, November, 2009.

15 of 16 people found the following review helpful.

Gaslight Ghastly ...

By Dave Jeffery

It seems apt that with a new adaptation of Sherlock Holmes once more about to hit the silver screen, a review of a new collection of short stories featuring the venerable Victorian detective should feature in the annuals of [...].

Edited by JR Campbell and Charles Prepolec, Gaslight Grotesque contains thirteen tales of horror and ghostly goings-on, and boasts some highly acclaimed authors to boot. In his introduction, co-editor Charles Prepolec notes that whilst Arthur Conan Doyle never had his historical creation going head to head with the fantastic, the detective did flirt with myth and lore during several of his adventures. And Doyle himself wasn't shy of penning the odd tale of terror.

In the spirit of this philosophy, Gaslight Grotesque pitches the detective against ghouls and ghosts; secret societies, zombies and fantastic beasts of myth and folklore. Stand out tales for this reviewer include: William Meikle's The Quality of Mercy, a pulp tale of lost love and the desire for its return no matter what the cost; Stephen Volk's Hounded; a beguiling tale told from the perspective of Dr Watson, and Neil Jackson's Celeste, a subtle tale of conspiracy in the vein of Holmes meets the X Files.

This said, all the tales come with a degree of quality and as an overall read, Gaslight Grotesque presents the reader with a tome crammed with both intrigue and gruesome discovery. Even if the reader is new to the world of Sherlock Holmes, there is enough here to entertain and enthrall.

Dave Jeffery

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

Sherlock Holmes + Monsters

By Nick Howes

Sherlock Holmes famously rejected the supernatural when he said "ghosts need not apply" but in this collection, 13 writers ignore his rationality and pit London's master detective against not just the supernatural, but against monsters.

Was the hound of the Baskervilles a ravenous beast disguised as a supernatural devil dog, or was it something else entirely?

Another variation on the subject offers a different explanation of what the Hound actually was, an explanation that leaves Watson with nightmares that only end with his death, following a terrifying nocturnal visit.

Holmes and Watson encounter Aleister Crowley during an investigation of murders that stem from a demon-summoning ritual.

Holmes investigates the mystery behind the Mary Celeste, secretly towed by royal instruction to a small English harbor and discovers the bizarre explanation for why everyone onboard suddenly disappeared.

In Canada, Holmes and Watson investigate a series of murders that may have been committed by a windigo.

Demons, zombies, even short-term time travel are the grist for excellent stories of the great detective. An excellent collection of stories. Worth getting.

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