



The Hollow of Fear

Sherry Thomas

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Charlotte Holmes, Lady Sherlock, returns in the Victorian-set mystery series from the USA Today bestselling author of *A Conspiracy in Belgravia* and *A Study in Scarlet Women*, an NPR Best Book of 2016.

Under the cover of “Sherlock Holmes, consulting detective,” Charlotte Holmes puts her extraordinary powers of deduction to good use. Aided by the capable Mrs. Watson, Charlotte draws those in need to her and makes it her business to know what other people don’t.

Moriarty’s shadow looms large. First, Charlotte’s half brother disappears. Then, Lady Ingram, the estranged wife of Charlotte’s close friend Lord Ingram, turns up dead on his estate. And all signs point to Lord Ingram as the murderer.

With Scotland Yard closing in, Charlotte goes under disguise to seek out the truth. But uncovering the truth could mean getting too close to Lord Ingram—and a number of malevolent forces...

The Hollow of Fear Details

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Author : Sherry Thomas

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From Reader Review *The Hollow of Fear* for online ebook

Caz says

I've given this a straight A at AAR.

It seems that my reaction, whenever I finish one of Sherry Thomas' *Lady Sherlock* books, is forever destined to be one of complete awe as I sit stunned, with my brain trying to catch up while I'm also trying to scrape my jaw up off the floor. I'm not sure I'm capable of forming whole sentences just yet, because DAY-UM, but the woman has a devious mind!

The Hollow of Fear is the third in the series, and it opens exactly where book two – **A Conspiracy in Belgravia** – left off. So be aware that what I'm going to say next is a spoiler for that book, and that there are most likely to be spoilers for the other books in this review. Readers should also know that while there is information dotted throughout that supplies some of the backstory, I'd strongly recommend reading all the books in order so as to gain a greater understanding of all the relevant events.

The plotline of **Conspiracy** concerned the search for one Myron Finch, who is Charlotte Holmes' illegitimate half-brother. In a surprise twist tight at the end of the book, we learned that Finch has actually been hiding in plain sight all this time, working as the Holmes family's coachman, and this conversation continues at the beginning of *Hollow*. Finch explains that he's in hiding from Moriarty because he – Finch – has something belonging to his former master and knows that death will be his punishment should Moriarty ever find him. After a daring escape – made with the aid of Stephen Marbleton (whose mother was married to Moriarty at one time) – Charlotte is making her way back to the house she shares with Mrs. Watson when a carriage draws up beside her, the door opens – and the gentleman inside gives his name as Moriarty.

Skipping ahead a few months, we find Charlotte and Mrs. Watson comfortably settled in a cottage situated not very far from Stern Hollow, the country estate of Charlotte's closest friend, Lord Ingram Ashburton. The two have known each other since they were in their teens and it's been very clear from the moment readers were introduced to Lord Ingram – Ash – that there's more lying between him and Charlotte than friendship. But he is married (albeit very unhappily) and Charlotte is... an unusual woman, to say the least, one who does not "*understand the full spectrum of human emotions*", or rather, whose own reactions to those emotions are not always those that are desired or easily understood by others. Lord Ingram and Charlotte know and understand each other on a deep, instinctual level, and their relationship is both beautiful and frustrating; the complementary way their minds work is wonderful to see – when it comes to logic and investigation, their thoughts mesh seamlessly – but their emotional connection is far more complex and Lord Ingram, fully aware of the nature of his feelings for Charlotte, is just as fully aware that they may never be returned as he would wish.

However, the reason Charlotte and Mrs. Watson are sojourning near Stern Hollow is not Lord Ingram, but Charlotte's sister, Olivia, who is staying close by, at a house party being hosted by their father's cousin, Mrs. Newell. Given that Charlotte was disowned after her disgrace (**A Study in Scarlet Women**), she cannot openly contact Livia and hopes she will be able to see her while she is in the vicinity. It looks as though fate is against them when Mrs. Newell's home is flooded and it seems the party must be broken up, but Lord Ingram steps in to offer the hospitality of Stern Hollow to the displaced guests. Livia's enjoyment of her new surroundings is slightly marred by the presence of two of society's pre-eminent gossips, who have alleged that Charlotte and Lord Ingram are lovers and are trying to prove it. Lady Ingram's continued absence – the story is that she has gone abroad for the sake of her health; the truth is that she was divulging

state secrets to Moriarty, and was allowed to leave the country before she could be arrested – produces even more juicy speculation on the part of the two ladies, who are now putting forth the rumours that Lord Ingram may have done away with the wife from whom he was known to be estranged in order to marry Charlotte. When, a day or so later, Lady Ingram's dead body is discovered in the ice house, Livia knows it will look as though those rumours are true – and that there's only one person who will be able to prove Lord Ingram's innocence.

Gah! There's so much more I could say about this book, but I don't want to give too much away. The bulk of the story is devoted to the investigation into Lady Ingram's death – but it's far more complicated than that, and we're gripped by the various twists, turns and discoveries as Sherlock's 'brother' – Sherrinford Holmes – helps Lord Ingram to ferret out and piece together the evidence needed to exonerate him. There's no question the stakes are high; this is the first time we've seen Charlotte even the slightest bit rattled, and the pervasive sense of fear running throughout the story is palpable. For three-quarters of the novel, Ms. Thomas lulls readers into the belief that *this* is the story – only to rip out the carpet from under our feet and show it's been about something else all along, revealing that while Ash's life really IS on the line, he and Charlotte are facing a very dangerous, devious foe and they're out to do much more than bring a murderer to justice. That's not the only twist in the tale however – a couple of chapters later I was reeling from yet another unexpected reveal that had my husband wondering what on earth I was swearing aloud about!

One of the (many) things that marks the ***Lady Sherlock*** series out as superior to so many other historical mysteries is the incredible amount of character development going on. More layers of Charlotte's complex personality are peeled back here, and we learn a lot more about Lord Ingram and his unpopular wife; but most importantly, with Ash and Charlotte together for almost the entire book we get to see the reality of their messy, complicated relationship and to gain a deeper understanding of why things between them are the way they are. Their scenes together are electric, the sexual tension so thick it could be cut with a knife; the author wasn't kidding when she said – *“this is the one in which the romance between Charlotte Holmes and her good friend Lord Ingram really picks up steam”*, so it's not a spoiler to say that there are some interesting developments between them, but there is still much to hope for in future instalments.

Even with the high-stakes plot and the character and relationship development, there's still time to shine a light on Charlotte's family situation; on her plans for Bernadine, the older sister whose mind has never progressed beyond early childhood and on Livia, prone to melancholy and fearful for the future, but fiercely devoted to Charlotte – and, it seems, in love for the first time. Inspector Treadles, who has been struggling ever since discovering Sherlock Holmes' true identity, his judgement strongly coloured by his – probably typical for the time – misogynistic views as to what a woman should and shouldn't be, proves a trustworthy ally, and by the end of the book – thanks to Charlotte – he's realised the need to let go of this preconceived ideas.

The story is very cleverly constructed, making excellent use of flashbacks in the latter part to complete the bigger picture and fill in some of the information the reader almost doesn't realise has been withheld. That's not to say that I felt cheated at any point – I didn't. But I was able to figure out some things and not others, meaning that there were still plenty of surprises in store, and I loved that.

The Hollow of Fear is yet another tour de force from Sherry Thomas – and long may she continue to deliver them. A mystery filled with as many twists and turns as any Conan Doyle fan could wish for, a fascinating character study, and an unusual romance, it's easily the best book of the series (so far) and my only complaint is that I have to wait until next year for another helping.

Giedre says

4.5/5

... don't forget, sir, that I am a queen upon this board—and I do not play to lose.

Fabulous. I find Sherry Thomas's characters fascinating. Not only Charlotte Holmes (aka Lady Sherlock), but all of them. I love the female relationships. I like that these books aren't straightforward mysteries. Kind of angry at myself for not savouring this instalment, though. Oh well. It's not like I won't be re-reading before book four comes out.

Jennifer ~ TarHeelReader says

How fun to review an atmospheric mystery for Halloween! ? ? ? ?

I love the idea behind this series! Female companions Holmes and Watson during the Victorian era- how fun! This is the third installment in the Lady Sherlock series, and while I feel this can be read as a stand-alone, I think my experience would have been richer if I had known more of the backstories of Holmes and Watson, as well as the connections between installments. That said, Thomas includes some backstory as well.

Just as Sherlock did, Charlotte Holmes attracts to her those who need help. A couple big events happen. The first is Charlotte's brother is missing. Shortly thereafter, Lady Ingram, married to Charlotte's friend, Lord Ingram, is murdered...and it appears Lord Ingram is to blame.

Charlotte goes undercover to find out what happened. Will she be successful?

Charlotte is at once awkward and off-putting, but endearing at the same time. She is also highly intelligent and masterful in her analysis. I was especially impressed that she is able to live as an independent woman during Victorian times, which was no small feat. Sherry Thomas writes in a classic style that fits with both the time period and the Sherlock Holmes novels and short stories we all know and love.

Overall, *The Hollow of Fear* is a strong effort filled with a colorful cast of characters, mystery, intrigue, and ultimately, charm. I am ready to read the first two installments now to spend more time with Charlotte!

Thanks to Berkley for the complimentary ARC. All opinions are my own.

My reviews can also be found on my blog: www.jennifertarheelreader.com

OLT says

The fact that I buy Sherry Thomas's historical novels automatically and ignore the price says a lot about my admiration for her writing. Her new Lady Sherlock series costs much more than the arbitrary limit I've set myself for escape reading, but what's a fan to do except buy them anyway?

This third entry in Thomas's gender-bending take on Sherlock Holmes begins approximately where #2 left off, with half brother Myron Finch, once associated with Moriarty and now on the outs, needing to escape. However, that's not really the main thrust of this new chapter in Charlotte's life. Instead, we have her lifelong friend (and love interest, in thought, not deed) Lord Ingram suspected of the murder of his estranged wife. While she is supposedly in Switzerland for health reasons, her body is found at Stern Hollow, Ingram's estate.

Nothing to be done for it but to get Charlotte on the case to prove his innocence. But she does so in the guise of "Sherrinford Holmes", brother to the fictional Sherlock she had invented to allow herself the freedom to solve mysteries. Sherrinford, a rather paunchy young man with a thick beard and a handlebar moustache, is a snappy dresser and a bit of a dandy. He put me in mind of a young Hercule Poirot with a more extravagant taste in clothing.

Disguised as Sherrinford, Charlotte is able to successfully interact with police inspectors and suspects alike as she investigates the murder. Successful, we should say, with the exception of a couple of people who see through her disguise.

There's many a recurring character here. Sister Olivia (Livvy) continues to claim more and more pages in these books, as she worries about sister Bernadine, writes her Sherlock adventure stories, and pines for Stephen Marbleton (who is possibly Moriarty's son). Mrs. Watson continues to give Charlotte companionship and support. Inspector Treadle is here again (with his boss Chief Inspector Fowler) to investigate Lady Ingram's murder. He is in a quandary because of his friendship with Lord Ingram and, in addition, has an unrelated marital problem which is unsettling him.

And then there's Charlotte. She's almost at Maximum Tolerable Chins as the story begins, still enjoying her baked goods, cakes, tarts, etc., going about solving puzzles and mysteries with little emotional investment in their outcome. Then Lord Ingram is accused of murder and it's up to Charlotte to save him.

And what happens? "Miss Holmes, with her otherwise constant and unfailing adoration of baked goods, had lost her appetite." Mrs. Watson and Lord Ingram look on with terror and worry, respectively. Charlotte's chins are disappearing by the day. And we get more insight into Charlotte and the way she handles emotions. Yes, she does feel them. She just processes things differently from the rest of the cast of characters here.

There's really only one mystery to solve in this Book 3, as opposed to the first two books, which had several cases within their pages, some connected to the main mystery of the book, some not. But the mystery of this one is of major importance in Charlotte's life. It's Lord Ingram's freedom and life hanging in the balance. And at the same time, this serious threat to Lord Ingram's reputation and future causes him and Charlotte to take a closer look at their personal relationship.

There is always a feminist theme and tone to much of what occurs in these Lady Sherlock stories. It is not as exaggerated and anachronistically annoying as in several other HRs by a few other authors I've read recently, such as Kelly Bowen's new series, and not preachy like Courtney Milan's writing. It worked for me.

BTW, don't expect everything to be tied up with a bow in this story. We still have unresolved issues with Moriarty, Myron Finch and Stephen Marbleton, for example. To be continued...

Mlpmom (Book Reviewer) says

My most favorite Holmes book to date!
Full review to come.

EDITED TO ADD REVIEW

I know I've said this before but it bares saying again, this series is truly outstanding. So well written, engaging and completely addicting.

With a heroine unlike any 19th century heroine I've meet, not to mention a whole cast of characters that are every bit as irresistible as the main character. Truly a series I adore reading and am on the edge of my seat waiting for the next book, they can never get here soon enough.

I would love to say I relish them and take them slow but I can't help myself and more often than not, devour them in a single sitting. I just can't get enough and The Hollow of Fear has to be my absolutely favorite to date.

To the slow burn romance and sexual tension, to the riveting mysteries, it truly stands out not only in the sub-genre it's in, but the genre as a whole.

Charlotte as a character should be unlikable with her aloofness and almost cold like appearance and actions and yet, she isn't. In fact, she is down right lovable when it comes to her feisty-ness and her unwillingness to let men rule the world. She skirts modern society and laughs in the faces of those that tell her a women isn't able to do something. She is fierce and strong and you can't help but feel for her, her station in life and her pure guts and determination to make it on her own without a man's help or guidance. In short, I adore her and after reading this, I adore Ash every more. *swoon*

This truly went above and beyond my expectations for the series, as a mystery, as a romance, as a whole. I truly am on edge for more.

ARC provided by the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

Holly B says

This is the third in The Lady Sherlock series. We don't have a Sherlock Holmes, but we have Charlotte Holmes - the female sleuth who heads up the investigations. She also has a female sidekick, Mrs. Watson. The gender switch from Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson worked well and made this one even more fun. Go girls!

I'm sure that I should have started with the first in the series because I missed out on some of the background on many of the characters. It also opens with a scene from book two that I would have liked to been "in on". I was able to catch on to the mystery and add up the clues.

The setting was atmospheric with a Victorian flair that I really enjoyed. It was like peeking in on the country

estate of Lord Ingram and listening in on their conversations as the mystery unfolds. A body is found in the ice cellar and the "gossip ladies" start spreading their tales.

I just loved the chemistry between the characters and there is even a bit of steamy romance that sneaks in. I would definitely recommend reading these in order so you don't miss the background stories.

Thanks Berkley for my Arc to read/review.

Mackenzie - PhDiva Books says

I am so excited to finally get to share my review of *Hollow of Fear*. I read this book with the book besties and we thought this would be the perfect day to celebrate such a fun mystery! This one is not chills, but it has tons of thrills—so don't fear if you are someone who doesn't like things that are too scary. This is the type of murder mystery that is perfect for some cozy-in-bed October reading. I absolutely loved this book!

About the Book

Under the cover of "Sherlock Holmes, consulting detective," Charlotte Holmes puts her extraordinary powers of deduction to good use. Aided by the capable Mrs. Watson, Charlotte draws those in need to her and makes it her business to know what other people don't.

Moriarty's shadow looms large. First, Charlotte's half brother disappears. Then, Lady Ingram, the estranged wife of Charlotte's close friend Lord Ingram, turns up dead on his estate. And all signs point to Lord Ingram as the murderer.

With Scotland Yard closing in, Charlotte goes under disguise to seek out the truth. But uncovering the truth could mean getting too close to Lord Ingram--and a number of malevolent forces...

Reflection

It is impossible to read this book and not feel delighted and in awe. Charlotte Holmes is a truly outstanding lead character, made all the more so because she isn't the narrator, and we see her working only through the eyes of others. When we hit the conclusion to the mystery, all of her cryptic behavior and powers of deduction come to fruition and the path she leads us on to the solution is awe-inducing. To say I'm a fan of this series is a MASSIVE understatement.

I am a big fan of Sherlock Holmes and always have been. When I was in high school and college, *The Hound of the Baskervilles* was my go-to book if I was home sick. I've always enjoyed the mental gymnastics of deductive thinking and forensic science that is Holmes' signature sleuthing style. To my absolute delight, Charlotte Holmes is every bit as intelligent and sharp-witted, and she has some alluring feminine wiles to go with it! The writing of this book is very authentic to the style of the original Sherlock Holmes books. I think readers will be delighted to find themselves immersed in Holmes' mystery, and you may even forget that Holmes wasn't a woman all along!

As for the mystery—well it has just enough salaciousness to feed the townsfolk. Lord Ingram is a sympathetic character. Trapped by his own selfishness in youth, and trying to follow through with his commitments. Only to then find himself the center of a murder investigation by a woman who is frankly

deplorable. Then we have the disgraced Charlotte Holmes, who describes her own fall from grace with the intelligence and humility we'd expect from Lady Sherlock. She is a saucy character with the brain of a genius. In fact, I want to end my review with this quote (which I loved):

"The woman was a holy terror: the sweetest face, the pillowiest bosom, and a perspicacity that stripped a man naked in seconds."

Blackjack says

Another phenomenal addition to Thomas's Lady Sherlock series. I did not want this book to end. Though in all honesty, I may have enjoyed the sprawling mystery in *A Conspiracy in Belgravia* just slightly better, *The Hollow of Fear* is nonetheless tightly constructed and complex enough that the big revelations when they come are shocking, somewhat sad, and well worth the wait. The last thirty pages has some truly surprising disclosures. Part of me wants to go back now to the first two immediately for the clues that must be there to explain where we're at by the end of this book. Not only has this addition to the series done a great job all on its own, but kudos to Thomas for bringing the entire series together so cleverly.

I knew in advance that this book would put the romance between Charlotte and Ingram front and center, but still, I was surprised by how much the romance is developed and how brutally honest both characters are with each other about their feelings and expectations. The romance is not resolved by the end and their relationship is left on a bit of a cliffhanger, but I have no doubt that the best is yet to come.

Many times, this book feels like an Agatha Christie murder mystery. The vast majority of the novel takes place at Lord Ingram's lovely estate during a house party where Lady Ingram's body is discovered frozen in the ice house. As evidence mounts and points increasingly to Lord Ingram as the culprit, all eyes turn to "Sherrinford" Holmes, Sherlock's portly younger brother, to solve the case. I do so hope that Sherrinford reemerges in future books, as he is a hilarious addition to the cast.

Of course, only a few select people know that Charlotte is actually Sherrinford under guise, and so much of the fun of this new character is watching how well Charlotte can perform the role of a man, and a congenial and even coarse talking one at that. Gender performativity is quite significant in this book, and in the entire series. Up until now, Charlotte's hyper feminine appearance allows her to look like the conventional Victorian woman. Those who know her best though know that underneath the frilly clothing, bountiful breasts, and curly blond hair, is a woman disconnected from femininity or even beliefs in binary gender. I don't believe that Sherry Thomas is insinuating that Charlotte is transgender either though for Charlotte is just as disinclined to identify as a man. She performs gender because she is forced to be compliant with social norms, but also because performance is the essence of Charlotte. Social rules are more mysterious to her than her most challenging cases as Sherlock Holmes. But she knows how to adjust and fake it in every way. I find this concept, as it is represented in this series, best understood through Ingram's eyes. Charlotte is always somewhat unknowable. It is telling that Ingram thinks of her primarily as "Holmes," and as frustrating as Charlotte is to him, he knows that his rule-abiding behavior and acceptance of social conventions, creates enormous obstacles for a comfortable relationship with Charlotte. It is likely that she might always be a bit out of his reach. I have faith in Sherry Thomas though that she will be able to pull off a world where Charlotte/Sherlock/Sherrinford and Ingram can construct a happy ending, eventually. I don't know how she'll get us there, but I feel strongly she will. Incidentally, I love too in this book that Stephen Marbleton is a quite convincing cross-dresser. Suffice to say that Charlotte, Myron, and Stephen's cross dressing alike threw even the most devious of villains off their game.

I love the complications of characters like Charlotte who test everyone's understanding of what it means to be a woman or "womanly," or even what it means to be neurotypical. One of the underlying assumptions is that Charlotte is on the autism spectrum. That may or may not be true, and I think Thomas points to a problem with how we imagine "normal" when it intersects with gender. Charlotte does not want what most women, claim to want, or are told to want. Therefore, we see Charlotte through the eyes of frustrated people who cannot understand her. Is autism a metaphor for "unnatural" women in this series? I don't know yet, but I have never felt as fascinated by Charlotte than I have from reading this third book.

Lata says

Charlotte Holmes is back, as unintentionally funny and brilliant as ever, along with Olivia and Mrs. Watson. This time, Lord Ingram comes under suspicion of murder when Lady Ingram's body is found on the grounds of his estate. And Charlotte grows concerned about her sisters' safety as Moriarty's search for the Holmes sisters' half-brother picks up.

The story moved along at a good clip, with the tension growing along with each sweet treat Charlotte did not eat while figuring her way through a case with plenty of false evidence piling up against Lord Ingram.

Charlotte and the women surrounding her run circles around Detective Inspector Fowler, who's overly quick to see Ingram guilty. And Treadles finally is thwacked across the head, ok, not really, but is set straight by Charlotte for his judgemental, superior attitude and shaming ways towards women who don't behave as he sees as respectable.

The case was sufficiently complicated to keep me paying close attention, and one really would have to have read the previous instalment to understand some of the situations and references in this story, which was a highly enjoyable entry in the Lady Sherlock series.

Hollis says

Different gradients of incredulity flickered across his face, as he no doubt tried to decide whether she truly was comparing her lack of appetite to an instance of impotence.

Hands down, no question, my favourite of the series. Once again proving why (sometimes) my stubbornness to push on with something I'm not **loving** can actually pay off.

"The Good Lord ought to consider making non-cranky geniuses, for a change."

"I don't mind -- at least he is a genius. Plenty of men are cranky without the least bit of brilliance for excuse."

I think this was the twistiest of Thomas' stories, too. I can't (won't) reveal much but there were some very very satisfying parts in THE HOLLOW OF FEAR. I am a bit miffed about how those same parts resolved in the end but.. yeah, miffed. However the story, the plot, the weaving of clues and misdirection, and everything, was so damn perfect. I wasn't bored a single moment of this one, unlike the ones before, and I can't wait for more from the *Lady Sherlock* series.

4.5 "the woman was a holy terror : the sweetest face, the pillowiest bosom, and a perspicacity that stripped a

man naked in seconds" stars

** I received an ARC from Edelweiss and the publisher (thank you!) in exchange for an honest review. **

Navessa says

I would literally give my first born up for an early copy of this book. I don't even like kids that much anyway.

Magdalena aka A Bookaholic Swede says

The Lady Sherlock series has become a favorite one for me since I read book two, A CONSPIRACY IN BELGRAVIA last year. Since then have I devoured the first book A STUDY IN SCARLET WOMEN and now the latest in the series, THE HOLLOW OF FEAR. It may be prudent to start with the first book to get the backstory of the characters and events, as well as because this book is connected to the story in A CONSPIRACY IN BELGRAVIA.

READ THE REST OF THE REVIEW OVER AT FRESH FICTION!

K.J. Charles says

Vastly enjoyable third installment in this excellent series. Detective novel with real heart, Holmes pastiche with real originality and difference. The romance between Charlotte and Lord Ingram finally comes to a boil here as he is accused of his wife's murder, and a lot of the threads carefully laid in the first two books finally weave into the pattern. (I would strongly recommend reading all three back to back, in order to get the most impact.) The mystery element is very cleverly constructed, and the social elements (particularly the simmering rage about women's treatment in society) are front and centre but Thomas never lets either detract from the human story. Terrific stuff, loved it.

Lady Wesley says

Fabulous, as expected, in both the written and audio versions. Kate Reading narrates, and she is the perfect narrator for this author. I have said the same thing about her performances of Loretta Chase's books, which are nothing like Sherry Thomas's, but that must be evidence of Reading's superlative skills.

This is the best of the series so far, and they simply **MUST** be read in order because in many ways each story is a continuation of the other -- and there are loads of twists and turns. In fact, before I listened to this one I took the time to listen again to the first two and I'm glad that I did.

I don't think that it's an exaggeration to say that this is another masterpiece from Sherry Thomas. I can't wait

until the next one!

Berit??? says

This was an atmospheric captivating story that made me want to say, “Elementary my dear Mrs. Watson.”

This is the third installment in the Lady Sherlock series... admittedly I was a little confused in the beginning, having not read the first two books in this Series... because from what I understand this book picks up where the previous book ends... eventually I got into the swing of it and was completely captivated, however I really would have appreciated it more had i more of the backstory.... I am such a character girl and Charlotte both baffled and intrigued me, I know I would have loved to get to know her better.... SO, I would strongly encourage you not to do what I did and start this book from the beginning!

This book had a little bit of everything murder, romance, secrets, family drama.... all set against the backdrop of Victorian England.... The tone and the language in the story really brought this period in history to life.... The book opens with Charlotte finding her illegitimate half brother, and there is a connection to Moriarty... The boy has something Moriarty Wants... The book goes forward from there... with the murder of Lady Ingram The wife of charlotte's love interest.... Lord Ingram, of course is the primary suspect, so Charlotte takes it upon herself to solve the case... with Mrs. Watson by her side and in disguise as the brother of Sherlock Holmes Charlotte was an extraordinary and exceptional and maybe a little unconventional detective! I have to say my absolute favorite parts of this book were the interactions between Charlotte and Mrs. Watson, I also loved Charlotte in disguise, that was fabulous!

An engaging read that I'm sure any fan of this series will love... i'm hoping to read the first two books in the series before the next one comes out... and I'm pretty certain there will be a next one because it ends on a bit of a cliffhanger just called me Sherlock, or should I say just call me Charlotte!?

*** A big thank you to Berkley for my copy of this book ***
