



The Spiritglass Charade

Colleen Gleason

Download now

Read Online ➞

The Spiritglass Charade

Colleen Gleason

The Spiritglass Charade Colleen Gleason

After the Affair of the Clockwork Scarab, Evaline Stoker and Mina Holmes are eager to help Princess Alix with a new case. Seventeen-year-old Willa Aston is obsessed with spiritual mediums, convinced she is speaking with her mother from beyond the grave. What seems like a case of spiritualist fraud quickly devolves into something far more menacing: someone is trying to make Willa "appear lunatic," using an innocent-looking spiritglass to control her. The list of clues piles up: an unexpected murder, a gang of pickpockets, and the return of vampires to London. But are these events connected? As Uncle Sherlock would say, "there are no coincidences." It will take all of Mina's wit and Evaline's muscle to keep London's sinister underground at bay.

The Spiritglass Charade Details

Date : Published October 7th 2014 by Chronicle Books

ISBN : 9781452110714

Author : Colleen Gleason

Format : Hardcover 360 pages

Genre : Science Fiction, Steampunk, Young Adult, Mystery, Fantasy, Historical, Historical Fiction

 [Download The Spiritglass Charade ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Spiritglass Charade ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online The Spiritglass Charade Colleen Gleason

From Reader Review The Spiritglass Charade for online ebook

Beth Roberts says

I am not sure how Colleen Gleason pulls these books off, but she does.

First of all, they are such an impractical hodgepodge of genres and ideas. In one book, we have Victoriana, historical fiction, steampunk, paranormal, fantasy, mystery, time travel and a little romance. You would think that would be clunky as hell and overall crap, kind of like if you just took all the random stuff in a kitchen and threw it together. Only rarely does that ever work. But it definitely works here.

Both books in this series so far are well-researched and thought-out. They move quickly without being cumbersomely long with a lot of filler. Things happen quickly and continue to move along. This second one does end with a bit of a cliffhanger, but I've read somewhere the author intends this series to be 5 books in length.

My only complaint with the characters lies in the names, and that's mostly my problem. In the original "Dracula", by Bram Stoker, we have a character named Mina Harker. In these books we have two characters, one who is supposedly the sister of Bram Stoker, named Evaline. Then we have the niece of Sherlock Holmes, Mina Holmes. I keep getting confused on who is who.

There is very little about the characters I don't love, especially the men. How does one choose between Pix, Inspector Grayling and Dylan? If only the real world were populated with men like these.

And then, to top it all off, there are the city and food descriptions. I've been to London. I LOVED London. But it was nothing like this multi-level steampunk version, sadly. And then there are the food vendors. The first book described some kind of carrot thing that made me crave carrots - and that's just weird. This book made me wish for Honeyed Creme Mandarins.

Oh, and my favorite new character of this book? A dog with a mechanical leg!!! Not just any dog, but a beagle puppy. For crying out loud - I hope Colleen Gleason lets us keep Angus!

To say more would just be ruining the fun.

Tinka says

"Coincidence? Uncle Sherlock claimed that was impossible, but for once I wasn't certain."

Second book in the *Stoker & Holmes series*, an urban fantasy time travel vampire mystery steampunk series. Yeah, that's really how I would describe. But hey, it's fun. Messy, but certainly fun.

A month after their first adventure together and the encounter with the mysterious Ankh, Mina Holmes and Evaline Stoker are once again summoned by Irene Adler, to assist in the case of young Willa Ashton, an associate of Princess Alexandra. After the death of her mother and disappearance of her younger brother, Willa seeks help from a medium to contract her mother's spirits and believes that her brother is still alive

and needs her help. The Princess and Willa's family are worried for her well-being and so it is on Mina and Evaline to find out if the spirits are real or if poor Willa is the victim of a terrible fraud. While logical Mina immediately believes that someone is messing with Willa's mind, Evaline considers supernatural beings are involved. Her suspicion thickens when after years of absence vampires return to London and someone ends up murdered.

Like the first book, this one is a light-hearted fun, a quick read and just overall entertaining. Don't expect a literary masterpiece or anything, it is pretty much just fun and nothing with a lot of depth. But sometimes that is all one needs.

The writing is fine enough and the changing perspectives between Mina and Evaline work well. Their voices are distinctive enough and you easily know in which mind you are.

The main mystery of the book is entertaining enough, even if it is easier to figure out than the first one.

In general I think that the first book was a tad stronger. To say the story is messy is probably way too nice. There are so many elements thrown into this book that it is actually impressive it isn't even more of a mess.

Gleason really took everything that sounds 'cool', threw it into a mixer and somehow turned it into a decent book smoothie.

That being said, this book is not without its issues. Funnily enough I almost had the same issues I had with the first one. Not sure if that is a good thing or not, I guess at least I don't have a bunch of new ones.

Let's talk characters first. While reading the first book I preferred Mina's point of view. What can I say? I'm more of a Holmes fan than of vampires. It kind of changed during this book. Not the Holmes/Vampire thing that still holds up, but my view or rather tolerance for the characters. Both Evaline and Mina have their good and bad moments, but Evaline was clearly the more enjoyable point of view this time around.

Ironically I still believe Mina had mostly the more interesting story parts, but oh my God was she whiney. If there is one thing that puts me off a character it's constant whining about something. Mina took the crown in this novel. She is supposed to be logical one, the Holmes archetype and she constantly sees herself as such, expect for when she is not. For someone who claims not to care about what other people think or society expects, she cares an awful lot about her appearance. There is not one chapter from Mina's point of view where she doesn't whine about her looks or her lack of social skills. Honey, make up your mind about what you want. Do you want to be like your Uncle Sherlock? Fine, then stop stressing about what other people think and just be yourself. You decide you don't want to be *such a Holmes* after all? Also fine, than do something about your situation and find out who you truly are. Just stop with the complaining. Evaline has her annoying moments as well, but at least she knows who she is and actually has some development throughout the novel.

Except for Evaline and Mina, the other characters don't have that much to do. Encounters with Holmes and Watson are fun, Dylan actually gets a few nice moments and Pix well, he is frustrating. I get that this is a series and if Goodreads is to be believed it will at least have five books, so I understand not every mystery can be solved yet, but whatever Pix' deal is there needs to be some clarification. It is not a fun mystery anymore to figure him out, it is seriously frustrating because he can't answer one question straightly. The strong cockney accent is also incredible exhausting to read.

Speaking of mystery, I missed some connection to the previous book. The mystery is clearly not as solved as

people think and though Mina had her suspicions that the Ankh might be still involved, it is just briefly mentioned and then dropped.

The return of the vampires allows for some fun action sequences, but I'm still a little bit iffy about it. While premise of the first book already guaranteed that vampires would be an important plot point sooner or later I'm not exactly sure if I like that. I did give Evaline some interesting character development, but so far I'm just don't care that much.

But really let's talk about the Marty McFly in the room, because I think that is something that needs to be discussed.

Ahh time travel, you sweet trope that barely ever works out. Sometimes I believe people are not aware how complicated it is to use time travel in a story, there is just too much you have to think about to avoid plot holes or big question marks over your reader's heads.

The time travel in this story is basically treated as a c-subplot so far and I guess will be an arc that will slowly develop throughout the whole series. I get that and it's fine. If you plan to write at least five books, you need at least some plot points to connect your story. The problem here however is that the time travel doesn't feel like an overarching storyline but rather like something thrown into the mix just because. I at least get the impression that there is no actual plan for Dylan as a character and that his arc, as well as the rules of time travel in this universe are just made up along the way.

While making stuff up as you go sometimes can work, time travel is really way too complicated to jump into it without a clear structure or set of rules.

Dylan does bring up the *Back To The Future* concept of time travelling and tries to explain his unexpected journey with the string theory, but it is all very half-baked.

There is the question if Dylan will mess up the future in case he changes the past, but in the end he does it anyways. He first saves Queen Victoria's life (in such an over the top, ridiculous scene, it's awesome) and then basically goes on and invents blood transfusions. Yeah, no biggie I bet that has no consequences at all.

As Hiro Nakamura would say: *"We must try not to step on butterflies."*

Inventing stuff before it should be invented and walking around Victorian London with a smartphone, that guy doesn't step on butterflies, he steps on *Mothra*.

There's of course also the thought that Dylan was always supposed to come to the past and save the Queen and that it's all a cycle with fixed points. See? That's why you need to think this through, to avoid confusion like that.

Adding to the general wibbly wobbly timey wimey stuff Dylan also hints that he might even be in an alternate Victorian London, because Mina's and Evaline's London, with vampire and you know, a real Sherlock Holmes is not exactly what Dylan learned from his history books.

Time travel to an alternate universe as a c-subplot...why not? If you hear a groan right now, I just needed to let that out.

I genuinely hope that the next book will dive deeper into the time travel story and at least establishes some

kind of rules or explanations.

Before wrapping this up a brief look at the relationships.

Mina and Evaline are two very different young women and more or less reluctant partners. They do respect each other, but at the same time I wouldn't exactly call them friends. They work together better than the last time, but still clash over almost every decision. While that makes for a lot of fun most of the time, I did wish for some more bonding. Unfortunately not many books, especially the YA kind, present strong, healthy female friendships and here the opportunity is a given. Mina and Evaline seem almost cold and robotic around each other except for the occasional snark and while I don't expect them to become best friends out of the blue, I think they need some genuine moments that have nothing to do with the current mystery they are working on. Hopefully the final twist, which was very well executed and surprising, will not only be a sequel hook but also the much needed shift in the girl's relationship.

On the romance front there is thankfully not much to say. Romance takes a backseat in these books and it is a welcome change to other books of similar genres. Evaline and Pix have their little *something* going on and while I don't care all that much, it doesn't bother me either. I could even get behind it if Pix would finally stop being over the top secretive.

Mina is caught in somewhat of a love triangle or more of an impending love triangle. At least I can see it happening. She has a crush on Dylan, one he obviously reciprocates and most of their moments are actually cute and a sweet mix between awkward and exciting. Then there is this weird, kind of even sexual tension Mina shares with Inspector Grayling. I'm not quite sure what to think about that. There is definitely something happening, but like some other plot points I'm not really sure if there is a plan yet or if their relationship will just spontaneously develop. All I know is that I really don't want yet another love triangle.

The ending was nice, even if not as action packed as the first one. The twist was well done and the overall storyline and characters at least keep my interest.

Conclusion: Light-hearted, enjoyable fun with some flaws but overall an entertaining ride.

Recommendation: People who enjoyed the first book will most likely enjoy this one as well.

Christina (A Reader of Fictions) says

3.5 stars

This series is SO MUCH FUN. Like, how can I not totally adore a lady power steampunk fantasy romance extravaganza? There's just so much to love about that.

One of my favorite things is when historical novels focus on people ignored by history, like women. Instead of Sherlock Holmes, we have his equally as logical and observant niece Mina Holmes. Then there's the vampire-killing Miss Stoker, inspiration (in this series) for the only good part of Dracula (personal opinion), which is in the process of being authored by her brother.

In *The Spiritglass Charade*, Stoker and Holmes have really started to become friends. They're also plumbing new depths of character. I love that they're really rubbing off on each other now, with Mina exhibiting some

physicality and Evaline learning the art of deduction. They're still not besties, but they rely on each other now in a way they did not before.

The plot of *The Spiritglass Charade* was much more fast-paced, and I could hardly put the book down. Though the initial assignment (to figure out if a young girl was being duped by spiritualists) was rather unimpressive, the case balloons out into something very intense.

I was a bit worried about how I'd feel when the series got more into vampires and the paranormal, but it actually turned out well so far. I enjoy the steampunk fun, but the fantasy really blends nicely. I'm still waiting to see how the alternate reality/time travel bit will integrate, but I'm pleasantly hopeful that the whole Dylan thing will play out well. He actually seems to be starting to serve a real plot purpose now, and I like that he seems to have been brought in for later plot, which means Gleason probably didn't write herself into a corner with that. Yay!

In forthcoming volumes, I'm really looking forward to learning more about Miss Adler, Mina's mother, and seeing what use Dylan is put to (~~since obviously he won't be Mina's love interest~~). There are some really interesting advances here, and my curiosity has been stoked. Also, Grayling has a puppy and it's the cutest fucking thing that ever happened (~~and Mina clearly you love him please make out with his face~~).

Alicia says

This is the second in the series, and the second time I've wished Miss Stoker were the only narrator. There's no denying my bias here, since I love the Gardella Vampire series and Eva is a direct descendent of Victoria.

With that said, Miss Holmes' narration is just a bit too arrogant for me. I get that she's the niece of Sherlock and is super smart, but she's truly not a pleasant girl to be around. And her detailed, sometimes unnecessary descriptions... sadly they just annoy me. I think the split narration prevents me from truly identifying with Mina, whereas my past experience with the Gardella family has substituted for Eva.

The case in *The Spiritglass Charade* isn't particularly creative or unique. A young girl is being tricked by someone close to her to either get her fortune or otherwise take control of her life. The list of suspects isn't long and both Dylan and the Inspector Grayling are back again. I'm personally a bit frustrated at how the relationships are developing between Mina and these two young men. There's not enough chemistry between Miss Holmes and either of these two to generate feelings of excitement from the reader. In fact, there isn't even enough chemistry for this to feel like a love triangle.

As for Eva, she's still wrapped up with Pix and I am damn near desperate for more information about him and for their relationship to develop further. I will agree with the reviewer who said his accent is annoying but I disagree about his actions... I think they're the greatest mystery this series has to-date and I want more.

While the level of detail Mina gave to describing things was frustrating, I could not find fault with the descriptions of their outfits. Loved. Loved loved loved. Moar please.

Otherwise, this is a fun read and super light. There's not enough character development to truly get attached to anyone, so you won't have your heart wrenched when this one ends, though the last line made my Gardella-loving-heart thump a bit.

Side note: A year or more between publication means you will need to brush up on the ending of the previous story before reading this one. It might not be a bad idea to let all of these come out and read them in one sitting. Otherwise details are easily forgotten. I might skip the next few for just this reason.

Forever Young Adult says

Graded By: Mandy C.

Cover Story: Look Into My Crystal Ball

BFF Charm: Heck Yes x 2

Swoonworthy Scale: 5

Talky Talk: Victoriana

Bonus Factors: Séances, Inventive Bars

Relationship Status: The Watson to Your Holmes (and Stoker)

Read the full book report here.

Cait Brown says

The following text is an honest, spoiler free review. Please enjoy

WARNING: Expect fangirling, romance, steampunky stuff, Twilight reference (I love the author for this one), and plot twists. That is as spoilery as I go which really isn't because if you have read the first book this is generally what these books are about so... yeah.

In an alternate version of our past Evaline Stoker (sister of Bram Stoker author of Dracula) and Mina Holmes (niece of Sherlock Holmes) have been paired up to solve the crimes that no one else can. After they proved themselves in the events of the Affair of the Clockwork Scarab, Princess Alix once again asks for their help. This time with 17 year-old Willa Ashton who stuck in grief of her mother's death and her brother's disappearance she has turned to mediums and seances in order to contact them. When things start escalating from bad to worse they will have to rush to solve this crime before it comes to an end.

To understand my excitement over this book imagine a small petite girl with glasses standing in front of the YA new book section squealing when she sees this book. Then imagine that same girl curled up in a recliner that practically dwarfs her slamming the book down when she is done with it 3 hours later because she can't wait for the next book. Yeah that pretty much sums up that excitement but you have to understand that I love steampunk to no end. Stoker and Holmes series welcome to my #1 position on my favorite books list.

Colleen Gleason you are a literary genius so here is that 5 out of 5 stars you deserve. I got no faults to claim you on :)

For more spoiler free, honest reviews go to my actual blog: <http://sweetendbook.blogspot.com/>

Books, books, and more books, follow me on twitter @SweetEndReviews

For the story behind the reviews check out my facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/SweetEndReviews>

Elevetha says

I continue to adore the atmosphere of the books and the writing, which reads like I always imagined London in the 19th century would look and feel like, with the addition of the steampunk aspect. Additionally, in this installment I liked the case, or at least the last part of it, far more than I did in *The Clockwork Scarab*. Ultimately though, the downfall of this series is the fact that between the two girls, there are three gentlemen that they either have kissed, are kissing, or wish to kiss. The fact that one of these boys basically overlaps between the two girls is even more annoying, though I suppose it helps that their feelings towards him are just mild infatuations. Also unfortunately, the two girls switch narration but their individual voices are not very unique, so occasionally I would find myself looking at the top of the page to ascertain whose POV I was reading. And let's not forget that Dylan and his time-travel plot actually go nowhere in this book, which I found most frustrating. I must confess I was not planning on reading Book 3 until I read (and re-read) the last page of this, and gave in. Darn you, plot twist!!

But there was this:

" The plum-sized orange.."

What? Why? How is this a helpful description? I have seen small oranges and large oranges, but overall they're all decently orange-sized. I fail to see what "plum-sized" adds to this description, other than making me laugh.

Brianna Harmon (Pearl Bayou) says

ADORE this series -- I usually don't care for multiple POVs but I can dig it with Mina & Evaline. The steampunk elements I truly enjoy and all the literary references (varying from classics to mythology to the contemporary). I love the polar opposite personalities of the MCs -- I FELL IN LOVE with Colleen Gleason when I first read "A Clockwork Scarab" and consequently flew thru this book super fast. (Now onto #3!) I think what stopped me from giving this five stars was this:

Too many "suspect characters" in the pool. I got confused at certain points trying to remember which secondary character was which.

That's my ONLY complaint.

((Grayling vs. Dylan ---> eghh. Pick the Scot already, Mina.))

((LOVE me some Pix and Evaline, though -- dreeeeeamy!))

Regan says

HEYOOOO

REVIEW TO COME LATE

Oda Renate says

Fantastic read. Original, fun, fast paced and loved the two kiss scenes this one had.

Also that twist on the last page OMG!

so happy there are 3 more in the series.

Shelley says

I received this book for free from Chronicle Books/Edelweiss in exchange for an honest review. Thank you!! This does not affect my opinion of the book or the content of my review.

Genre Steampunk, Historical, Paranormal, Young Adult

Rating 3.5-4

MY Thoughts

Set in 1889 London, *The Spiritglass Charade* (Stoker & Holmes #2) brings back our dynamic duo of Evaline Stoker (sister to Bram Stoker) and Mina Holmes (niece of Sherlock Holmes). This time out, Princess Alexander asks the girls to help despondent teenager Willa Aston find out what really happened to her brother Robby who disappeared and is presumed to be dead. Willa is so obsessed with finding answers, that she uses mediums and spiritualists to help her search. Something that goes against Mina's analytical mindset. If that wasn't enough, vampires return to London after decades of being gone bringing a secret society along with them.

**Full Review Posted @ Gizmos Reviews* [Link to Follow](#)*

Recvd 05/22/2014 via Edelweiss Expected publication: October 7th 2014 by Chronicle Books

Mary ♥ says

5/5 stars

“Wha--huh? You've made a mistake? You? Wait... The world isn't ending. Big Ben's Infinity Day

Clock has stopped. You can't have made a mistake. It's simply not... possible. It's a day just like any other day."

If I loved Clockwork Scarab once, I loved this ten times more.

I loved how Mina, Evaline and Dylan grew as a group and started to have fun and get to know each other better, and I absolutely loved Mina and Dylan as a couple (there was a special scene and my shipper heart died). I also adored Mina and Evaline's strong platonic bond, and the way they got over their differences and started to find strength in each other. I really, really loved that.

This book, except of the mind-blowing, page-turning mystery, also included tons of humorous scenes and a lot about the past of every character, as well as their deeper thoughts and feelings. This time, it dealt with thoughts on psychics and fortune-telling, as well as science and the way it sometimes got tangled with occult back in these ages, even since the industrial revolution had started. Not only that, but the book brought a subplot of vampires, the reappearing of which was not only genius, but also incredibly original in the way it was portrayed.

The writing, as always, made my eyes fly on every page, as it made everything even more fast paced and exciting, adding some formality in certain scenes and describing certain situations in a different light for each of the protagonists. The difference between Mina and Evaline, mind and heart, was even stronger and I admired the fact that we came to see the way Eva's work takes a toll on her, and the way Mina's thoughts and feelings sometimes turn against her.

Another thing I fell in love with was another great friendship, the one between Mina and Willa, which was adorable, despite its disappointing end. It proved to me that the writer really knows how to write not only romantic but also strong platonic relationships that made me smile and warmed my heart in the best way possible. The only character I despised (and still do) was Pix, who, as I stated in Clockwork Scarab's review, annoys me a lot.

This sequel also helped the reader dive a lot more in characters like Dylan and Irene Adler, because we hadn't seen too much of them before, and it really helped me get to know them better. Last but not least, I have to say that at some point, there was a killing scene, and it portrayed it in a way that made me so happy, because it showed that even if it's necessary as an act, it is never pleasant, and it takes something from the killer, as it is a very heavy experience.

I love, love, loved it, in general, and it kind of reminded me of a Grimm episode (ahhh, I love this series), something that made me even more eager to continue the series. I am infinitely excited to see how the story of these two, kick-ass, amazing heroines, Mina and Evaline, continues, as well as how everything that has happened and is about to happen will affect their friendship and their characters as a whole.

If you are new to the steampunk genre, and want to read something with a great female friendship, mystery, action, romance and suspense, please try this. It will not leave you unsatisfied, I guarantee it. I love it from the bottom of my heart.

Stay strong and keep reading, my friends ♥♥

~Mary

Ferdy says

Spoilers

Liked it, the story was pretty entertaining and most of the secondary characters were good, the main characters weren't all that endearing though. It still didn't have all the greatness, romance, and humour of Gleason's adult *Gardella Vampire Hunters* series.

-Didn't like the dual POV much. Mina and Evaline's narration were mostly similar, even when Mina was deducing and observing things and Evaline was chatting about vampires and killing, they still sounded the same. They both had kind of a similar stilted and monotonous thought process.

Also, both of them spent too much of their time describing guys or clothes or some other pointless nonsense. Both Mina and Evaline were far more interesting when they weren't narrating, Mina was more likeable in Evaline's POV and vice versa. They were both fun and likeable when they weren't the POV character.

-The mystery involving Willa Ashton's craziness and missing brother was quite interesting. It wasn't obvious what was going on or why it was going on or who the bad guy was, it was done rather well.

-One thing that irritated me about Mina was her whining about her looks and how she wasn't marriageable because she was cold and logical or some rubbish. It was hard to believe any of her insecurities when she got emotional over eye contact with one of her love interests and had two guys chasing after her. Also, her Sherlock-like deductions were a bit forced and more smug than intellectual.

-Evaline was a bit cocky and reckless at times, but I didn't mind that too much, it gave her a bit of depth. I wasn't impressed with her behaviour around Pix though, he was too secretive and douchey around her - Evaline should have just told him to piss right off.

-Hated Pix, he was a prick. It pissed me off that he did nothing whilst Evaline was being felt up and threatened. And then him blaming her for the guy feeling her up was fucked up. He went more down in my opinion when he more or less said he was cool with hiring rapists and men who terrorized women. He was a cliched, misogynistic loser.

Also, I hated the way he spoke, his cockney accent/slang was over the top and made him 'sound' like a fool.

-I couldn't take Mina or Evaline all that seriously as investigators/badarses whenever they blushed, swooned and acted hormonal over a touch or a look from one of their love interests. I wanted them to be more cool and collected around the guys.

-Dylan was a decent character, but he didn't fit very well into the story, I didn't see the point of him being there or the whole time travel aspect.

-Grayling was the best character. I loved all his scenes with Mina, they were so sweet and cute together. I especially loved the river/corset scene.

-The world was a bit vague/difficult to picture at times, especially the buildings/walkways/balloon things.

-The Ankh stuff from the last book wasn't really dealt with, I'm guessing that'll be sorted out in the next one.

All in all, an enjoyable enough read.. Just would have liked more detailed world building and Mina/Evaline's

narration to be more gripping and exciting.

Jaylia3 says

With awesome clockwork, a multi-level steampunk London I wish I could inhabit, and two tenacious but mismatched female main characters, *The Spiritglass Charade* has twice its share of fun. Gawky analytical Mina Holmes, niece of Sherlock, and impulsive vampire-hunting Evaline Stocker, half sister to Bram, have an uneasy crime-solving partnership. It's observation, deduction, and carefully laid plans vs. strength, speed, and plunging right on in at the hint of danger.

Irene Adler, known to Mina's Uncle Sherlock as The Woman, brought the two together at the behest of Princess Alexandra, wife of Queen Victoria's son Bertie. In this second adventure the young women are investigating a case that involves wily spiritual mediums, a distraught young heiress obsessed with seances, a missing younger brother, nefarious street ruffians, the possible reemergence of vampires, and of course murder. Both Mina and Evaline are eager to prove their villain capturing prowess, Mina because as a female she hasn't been given many opportunities to employ the skills she's honed, and Evaline because though it's unfortunately quite difficult to find vampires these days she wants to show herself worthy of her vampire vanquishing ancestors.

Their version of Victorian era London is layered with multi-leveled walkways connected by coin-driven mechanical lifts--which keeps the poor on the dirty, darkest lower areas--and skyscrapers so tall they're topped with large balloons to serve as air anchors. I really want to visit the just reopened Vauxhall Gardens, where Mina and Evaline spend an evening chasing after clues. The revamped attraction is full of lovely mechanical wonders like motorized birds and butterflies that dart and flutter about, and gear-ridden fireflies that brighten the sky with colorful little lights.

Notable characters back from the first book include an over-sized Scotland Yard Detective who reluctantly trades investigative insights with Mina and then blasts around London on a gravity-defying steamcycle, an underworld far too appealing Cockney tough guy who banters and bickers with Evaline, and a cute cell phone toting young man from our own era who's been unwittingly time-traveled back to this alternate London and is full of modern ideas that intrigue and inspire Mina.

Chapters alternate entertainingly between the contrasting voices of Mina and Evaline, and the action races along as the young women traipse through drawing rooms and lurk in back alley dives. The mystery is tied up nicely but several personal issues are left dangling and the book ends in a WOW of a revelation that ensures there will be at least one more joint Holmes-Stocker venture. Hurrah!

I received a complimentary copy of this book from the publisher through LibraryThing. Review opinions are mine.

Cora Tea Party Princess says

5 Words: Sherlock Holmes, Vampires, Steampunk, crime.

What a twist at the end!

Full review to come.
