



SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE MYSTERY OF HAUT-KOENIGSBOURG

Genre(s):

- Detective fiction
- Sherlock Holmes pastiche

Keywords:

- Sherlock Holmes
- Investigations
- Victorian Era
- Wilhelm II
- The Holy Lance

Audience: suitable for all audiences; fans of historical fiction, investigations, and Sherlock Holmes pastiche.

Right sold abroad: /

Concept

Five years before the Great War, Sherlock Holmes is sent to Continental Europe to thwart the plot of England's future enemy: Wilhelm II.

Universe and references

- In the great tradition of detective fiction (Sherlock Holmes, Arsène Lupin, Hercule Poirot...)
- Film *Sherlock Holmes – A Game of Shadows* (Guy Ritchie)
- Belle-époque, Victorian Era
- The first volume of a successful series of investigations by Jacques Fortier (The Adventures of Jules Meyer)
- This novel has been adapted into a comic published by Verger
- The Haut-Koenigsbourg castle, a popular tourist site

Pitch

1909. France has lost the War of 1870 and Alsace-Lorraine is now part of the Second Reich. Its new leader, Wilhelm II, is investing his energy and precious goldmarks in the reconstruction of the Haut-Koenigsbourg castle. But since the site was inaugurated, why has he been secretly receiving his military staff there?

Ever since his victory over Moriarty, Sherlock Holmes has distanced himself from crime and his investigations, but this case of espionage will force him to go back on the job...

Author

Jacques Fortier is a journalist at *Dernières Nouvelles d'Alsace* in Strasbourg and a correspondent for *Le Monde*. He wrote this novel to pay homage to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1859-1930) for the 150th birthday anniversary of the man who would bring the great detective to life.

At a glance

- Novel
- Word count: 276,000 characters including spaces
- Available material in English: this presentation (including an overview of the work's characteristics) and a translated excerpt

Excerpt

“Well done, Holmes ! But how did you deduce that it was the priests?”

“It was slightly more complicated than that. Look.”

Holmes took a folded piece of paper from his pocket. He opened it: small, whitish bits that looked like...

“Wax! Holmes, it's wax!”

“Right! Bits of cold wax. It would seem that one of the visitors had some on his clothes. As he went from the bathroom to the room, he had to move aside – maybe to let an acolyte through – and he brushed up against the edge of the armoire. A small amount of wax fell to the floor. Now think about it: who would have wax on his sleeve in a hotel with electricity? And at the noon hour? Have you read Voltaire?”

“Some...”

“When he pokes fun at people who light candles at noon, he's referring to priests. I immediately thought of that: wax on a sleeve means the presence of an officiant. None of the women noticed a stained jacket at lunch, so the minister of the cult was single, which rules out the hypothesis of a Protestant pastor. I can't imagine a priest launching such an expedition with a group of parishners to whom he would have to justify an intrusion into the rooms of respectable subjects of her royal British majesty... It was therefore a group of priests on a secret mission following orders from a higher authority. But they needed to be young enough to hoist themselves up using a rope, which led me to believe they must be deacons or semanians working under the Catholic hierarchy, the Roman curia!”

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