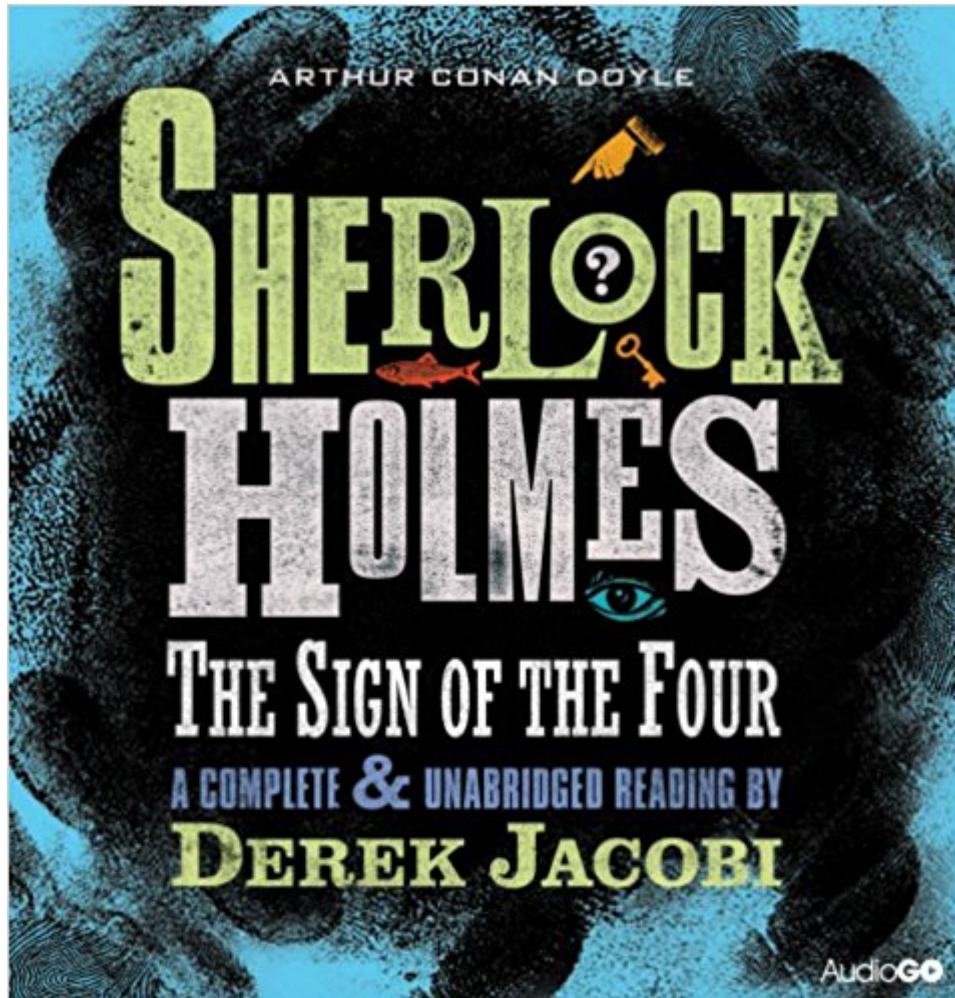




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Sherlock Holmes: The Sign Of The Four



Synopsis

A dense yellow miasma swirls in the streets of London as Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson accompany a young woman to a sinister assignation. For Mary Marston has received several large pearls—one a year for the last six years—and now a mystery letter telling her she is a wronged woman. If she wishes to seek justice, she must meet her unknown benefactor, and she begs the great detective and his friend to accompany her on her mission. Sherlock agrees, and Watson is only too keen to comply with her request, having fallen in love with the beautiful Mary. But unknown to the three companions, others stalk London's fog-enshrouded streets: a one-legged ruffian with revenge on his mind and his companion, who places no value on human life. 4 CDs. 4 hrs 30 mins.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Of all the Holmes stories it is The Sign of Four which remains persistently in my memory. --Graham Greene
Sherlock Holmes is the very foundation stone of the edifice that is crime fiction.

--Times[Holmes] is probably the only literary creation since the creations of Dickens which has really passed into the life and language of the people. --G. K. Chesterton
--This text refers to the Paperback edition.

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Of the novels, *The Hound of the Baskerville* is the best, but this runs a close second. It contains many of the passages which gave us the clearest idea of Holmes - who finds emotion clouds the mind, and 'cannot congratulate' Watson on his marriage for that reason. There's a vehicle chase (the steamers on the Thames) and secret treasures and distinctive, often grotesque characters and Conan Doyle's evocative descriptions of London and landscapes. The scene with Toby the dog on the hunt for a diminutive murderer and how that ends up is still one of my favourite passages, ending as it does with laughter. The years since it was first published haven't diminished the power of the mystery, the personalities of Holmes and Watson (or indeed of London) or Conan Doyle's lively writing style. It remains a great adventure, enormously fun (even with the more awkward passages that appear within the context of its 19th Century origins) and of course a wonderful example of the appeal of the Great Detective, Sherlock Holmes.

The Sign of Four is the second of the four Sherlock Holmes novels to be published. It first appeared in magazine and book form in 1890. The story revolves around the theft of valuable jewels whose original provenance was in India. The plot is relatively simple and straightforward. One night a young beautiful blonde woman named Mary Morstan appears at 221 B Baker Street. A decade previous to her visit, her father Captain Morstan disappeared. Now Mary wants Holmes and Watson to locate his Indian fellow soldier Major Sholto. The major is dead but his two sons are still alive and in London. Holmes and Watson seek them out and this quest begins the adventure. Sholto is based on the real life playwright, poet and essayist the outrageous Oscar Wilde who knew Doyle. The plot culminates in an exciting sea chase down the Thames River. In this book Holmes kills a person which is the only time this occurs in the Holmes novels and short stories. Dr. Watson falls in love with Mary Morstan and the two plan on wedded bliss. The book begins with Holmes reaching for a seven percent solution of cocaine and ends with him enjoying the drug. Holmes is a cold calculating machine who is a misogynist when it comes to the fairer sex. Tonga the Andaman island shooter of poison darts and his evil friend Jonathan Small meet their just reward. Walk again the foggy gaslight streets of Victorian England at the height of the Empire's vast reach and enjoy your perambulation with Sherlock Holmes and Dr. John H. Watson. A good book to read and reread. Enjoy dear reader!

Mary Morstan, years after her father's disappearance in India, mysteriously starts receiving treasured gems from an unknown person who expresses interest in meeting her to disclose her father's story. She seeks help from our very own Sherlock Holmes who, along with his trusted friend Dr. Watson, accompanies her to this meeting. This rendezvous subsequently leads them to a crime scene where a man is found dead in a room locked from the inside. A missing treasure and an inconceivable murder are a perfect recipe for this mystery thriller and Sir Arthur C Doyle has skilfully narrated the story unfolding each riddle one by one and creating yet another page turner. Holmes, an eccentric to most people but a genius in the eyes of Dr. Watson, uses the science of deduction and solves yet another impossible case. He definitely is an outstanding detective and words fail me when I wish to write more about him. Needless to say, it is a treat to read any book by Sir Arthur starring Sherlock Holmes.- Roshani Hingorani

First of all this is a wonderful story and the second in the Holmes canon. This not a short story but a novel, actually the second novel (total of 4 novels) with the other 50+ stories being short stories. This ideally should be read second, after *A Study in Scarlet* (Sherlock Holmes Vol. 1) (where Watson and Holmes meet). *Sign of Four* is where Watson meets his wife but that is not the focus of the story. After reading *The Sign of Four*, and assuming you are still into reading SH, and you will be, your next book should ideally be the short stories in the *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. This is the order in which they were written and the character introduced to readers in the late 19th century. This work is a real page turner with 12 chapters - the 12th and final chapter takes up almost 25% of the novel and is the back story which shows the motivation and context for the crime - much like part 2 in *Study in Scarlet*. The story begins by introducing us to Holmes between cases, where he may sit around all day, everyday, injecting himself with his 7% solution of cocaine to pass the time. Yes, cocaine was legal back then and even Freud prescribed it to patients and used it himself - no wonder he was obsessed with sex. Of course once a case comes his way he no longer needs cocaine or morphine to pass the time and becomes energized unravelling subtle clues missed by Scotland Yard's best. Here is an excerpt..."My mind," he said, "rebels at stagnation. Give me problems, give me work, give me the most abstruse cryptogram or the most intricate analysis, and I am in my own proper atmosphere. I can dispense then with artificial stimulants. But I abhor the dull routine of existence. I crave for mental exaltation. That is why I have chosen my own particular profession,--or rather created it, for I am the only one in the world." "The only unofficial detective?" I said, raising my eyebrows. "The only unofficial consulting

detective," he answered. "I am the last and highest court of appeal in detection..."Regarding this Kindle edition three points. 1) It is well formatted 2) there are NO illustrations in this free version and 3) 'on my Kindle' you cannot 'Go To' the Table of contents directly but there is a TOC. However, once at the TOC page there are no usable links to each chapter but strangely there are links to each chapter on the Kindle app for both my Mac and my iPhone but I read this story on my new Kindle. No big deal just useful to know but you can't beat the price. Wonderful read!!!

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