

Booklist

Advanced Review – Uncorrected Proof

Issue: October 1, 2021

The Return of the Pharaoh: From the Reminiscences of John H. Watson, M.D.

By Nicholas Meyer

Nov. 2021. 272p. Minotaur, \$25.99 (9781250788207); e-book, \$13.99 (9781250788214)

Meyer returns to his Journals of John H. Watson, M.D., series, which began in the '70s with the bestselling *Seven Percent Solution*. This time Meyer continues the fictional frame story in which he is asked to turn journal excerpts into a book. Having nothing on his plate during COVID lockdown, Meyer agrees immediately. This hitherto unknown Sherlock Holmes story takes the great consulting detective to Egypt, where his investigation into the disappearance of an English duke who fancies himself an Egyptologist turns into something altogether different and more unsettling. The literary conceit that Watson is the author and Meyer merely the editor once more provides much of the book's charm, with editor Meyer dutifully correcting Watson's factual errors in droll footnotes. Reading a good Holmes and Watson story, whether the real thing or a pastiche, is like reuniting with old friends, and this is certainly a good one. Meyer's writing is impeccable, and his imagination is definitely—to borrow a phrase from a Star Trek movie he cowrote—operating on all thrusters. Top-drawer entertainment for Holmesians.

— *David Pitt*