

Historical Mysteries

THE RETURN OF THE PHARAOH

by Nicholas Meyer

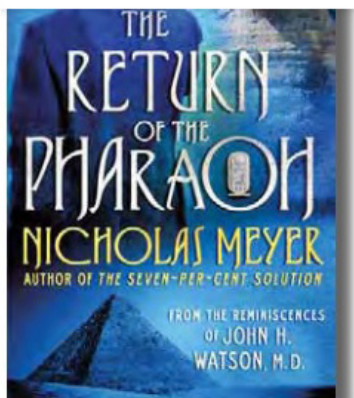
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Rating: B+

Another of Dr. Watson's hidden journals comes to light thanks to Nicholas Meyer, who is known for re-invigorating Sherlockonia back in the 1970s with **THE SEVEN-PERCENT SOLUTION**.

This time it's 1910 and Dr. Watson and his wife Juliet are traveling to Egypt so that she can be treated for her tuberculosis in a dry climate.

With long days to spend on his own, Dr. Watson sets off to explore Cairo. And lo and behold, who should he run



into but his old friend Sherlock Holmes – in disguise as a Colonel Arbuthnot. He's on a case for the Brazilian-born wife of a wealthy English Duke who has disappeared somewhere in Egypt while pursuing his passion for ancient Egyptian artifacts.

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As is typical, they join forces and several other mysteries pop up in due course as well as dead bodies.

The duo learn that the Duke has been traveling in the company of Fatima Gassim, an exotic dancer who may also be a spy. Along the way they pick up an expert in ancient Egypt, one Howard Carter, who a decade later would become world famous for his team's discovery of the tomb of King Tut. The trail they follow eventually leads to a climax in the Valley of the Kings, where Holmes and Watson find their lives dangerously threatened.

The plot of **THE RETURN OF THE PHARAOH** has so much forward thrust, I found that when the murderer is ultimately revealed at the end I had almost forgotten there was a murder mystery involved.

This was a fun romp through early 20th century Egypt with Dr. John Watson and Sherlock Holmes as our guides. You don't have to be a fan of Sherlock Holmes to enjoy this one.

Maggie Mason's Take: I enjoyed this book. I loved the feeling of being in Egypt at an exciting time. Holmes & Watson are shown in a different manner than in the Doyle books, but are nevertheless believable by the change in times and cast of characters. I was especially awed by the efforts to save people from a train disaster.

I'll happily read another reminiscence of Dr. Watson (by Nicholas Meyer) when it appears at some future date.