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Johnston Public Library Book Discussion Questions

Daughter of Sherlock Holmes by Leonard Goldberg

Summary

1914, Joanna Blalock's keen mind and incredible insight lead her to become a highly skilled nurse, one of the few professions that allow her to use her finely tuned brain. But when she and her ten-year-old son witness a man fall to his death, apparently by suicide, they are visited by the elderly Dr. John Watson and his charming, handsome son, Dr. John Watson, Jr. Impressed by her forensic skills, they invite her to become the third member of their investigative team.

Joanna and her companions must devise an ingenious plan to catch a murderer in the act while dodging familiar culprits, Scotland Yard, and members of the British aristocracy. Unbeknownst to her, Joanna harbors a mystery of her own. The product of a one-time assignation between the now dead Sherlock Holmes and the equally clever Irene Adler, Joanna has unwittingly inherited her parents' deductive genius.

Discussion Questions

1. How did you experience the book? Were you engaged immediately or did it take you a while to get into it? How did you feel while you were reading it – amused, sad, disturbed, confused, bored ...?
2. Have you read any of the original Sherlock Holmes stories by Arthur Conan Doyle? If so, how did this novel compare? If not, did reading this make you want to read the original source material?
3. If you're familiar with the Sherlock Holmes canon (through books, movies, or television), what did you think of the parallels between the original characters and the characters in this version?
4. Did you find the characters to be well written or were they not developed enough?
5. This book is the first in a series of novels about Joanna Blalock. Will you read more of the series?

6. Did you solve the mystery before the murderer revealed in the book? How easy or hard was it to follow the twists in the story?
7. One reviewer this book said it is “Sherlock Holmes for Dum-Dums.” Do you agree or disagree with that assessment?
8. What will you remember from this book a year from now?
9. If you could ask the author one question, what would it be?
10. Did this book change you in anyway? For example, did it give you a new perspective? Did you learn something new?