



# The Cat of the Baskervilles

*Vicki Delany*

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The show is coming to town on Cape Cod. The West London Theater Festival is putting on a stage production of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Gemma Doyle is excited and participating with her friend Jayne Wilson, whose mother, Leslie, just happens to be volunteering with the company. Leslie arranges a fundraising tea party at the home of the festival organizer, catered by Mrs. Hudson's Tea Room. The tea is a rousing success, but Sir Nigel Bellingham, the famous star cast as the lead of Sherlock, goes missing. And Gemma finds him at the bottom of the cliff. Dead.

Before the tea, Sir Nigel had come by the Sherlock Holmes Bookshop, only for Gemma to realize that he's not at all suited to the role. But as Gemma and Jayne investigate, the list of suspects just grows longer. Long past his prime, Sir Nigel was second to a younger actor who had first been given the role. The festival's executive director also expressed that he had been hired over her objections. Then there are the slew of people to whom Sir Nigel was rude. They all have motive, but then a scrap of Leslie's apron caught on a bush by Sir Nigel's body is found. And the police are set to pounce as she becomes suspect #1.

It's up to Gemma and Jayne to team up again and clear Jayne's mother's name in *The Cat of the Baskervilles*, the delightful third Sherlock Holmes Bookshop mystery.

## The Cat of the Baskervilles Details

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Author : Vicki Delany

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## From Reader Review The Cat of the Baskervilles for online ebook

### ?Dani? ?Touch My Spine Book Reviews? says

I thoroughly enjoyed this Sherlock based Cozy! Even though this is the third installment, this story can easily be read as a standalone. I always enjoy a good cozy that involves books and this story surely delivered. The mystery was somewhat easy to figure out but overall this was a good read and I would recommend to cozy lovers.

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### Kathleen says

“The Cat of the Baskervilles” earns 5/5 Deerstalker Hats...Elementary Fun!

What a delightful twist for fans of Sherlock Holmes to enjoy! In “West London,” Massachusetts, Gemma “Doyle” owns the “Sherlock Holmes” Bookshop and Emporium at 222 “Baker Street” with her shop cat name “Moriarity,” and next door her BFF Jayne Wilson owns the “Mrs. Hudson’s” Tea Room. All delightfully fun references sparking my interest to read more! But, my newbie status was not a handicap, I was engaged from the start with enough references to background without spoilers and revisiting character connections. Delany gives us a quaint town excited about the West London Theater Festival set to perform a favorite Holmes mystery, “The Hound of the Baskervilles,” and an aging British actor Sir Nigel Bellingham is set to star. Not the best casting, Gemma thought, when his drunk state is an embarrassment at a fundraising event catered by Jayne. But is being drunk, flubbing lines, and being an all-around arse a motive for murder? Maybe. But, when Nigel is found dead at the bottom of the cliff and evidence implicates Jayne’s mother Leslie, Gemma and Jayne must take an active role in the investigation to find other suspects and motives.

The Sherlock Holmes’s hooks got me involved, but Delany’s well-written, steady-paced story kept me engaged. She wove an entertaining story with twists and turns that led to a “Wow” ending for which I literally dropped my jaw! Gemma and Jayne, like Holmes and Watson, compliment each other’s personality and investigative style. Gemma is straightforward, detail oriented, sometimes a know-it-all, while Jayne is more flexible, but these opposites work well. Unlike the literary Holmes and Watson characters, Gemma and Jayne find success as amateur detectives often by circumventing law enforcement providing for some entertaining conflicts and predicaments. Beyond the murder mystery and the investigation, Delany does well with her description, but doesn't rely on a narrative style; the dialogue adds humor and illustrates personality and emotion...very enjoyable! I highly recommend joining Gemma and Jayne.

“Disclosure: I received an advanced copy through NetGalley. However, my review is voluntary, and my insights and opinions are honest.”

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### Lesa says

I love Gemma Doyle's mind. I love the way she thinks. Vicki Delany's third Sherlock Holmes Bookshop Mystery, The Cat of the Baskervilles, is another treat for those of us who enjoy Gemma. And, this time, Gemma's caught up in a mystery involving theater. A true treat for me.

The local summer theater in West London, Massachusetts has three plays scheduled for the season, but "The Hound of the Baskervilles" will be the highlight. And, Sir Nigel Bellingham has agreed to reprise his role from years earlier. Sir Nigel and the play will be good for Gemma's business, the Sherlock Holmes Bookshop and Emporium, and Mrs. Hudson's Tea Room, the tea shop run by her business partner, Jayne Wilson. But, everyone is shocked when Sir Nigel arrives, and turns out to be an aging drunk who is rude to everyone.

Jayne agrees to cater a fundraising tea for over a hundred, and ropes Gemma into assisting. That's why Gemma is on the scene and finds Sir Nigel's body at the bottom of a cliff. And, Gemma takes a minute to hide a piece of evidence, ribbon from an apron worn by one of Jayne's servers. Unfortunately, even without that evidence, the police zero in on Jayne's mother. And, Gemma won't let Mrs. Wilson be railroaded.

As I said, I love Gemma's mind. She has no filter when she tries to reveal her information. But, she's canny in avoiding the wrong conversations with the police. One investigator dislikes and distrusts her, while the other one was almost engaged to her once. And, Ryan knows a little too much about Gemma's ways of thinking.

I also enjoy the humor in this series. Besides the police detective, Gemma has another enemy, the bookshop cat named Moriarty. He likes everyone except Gemma and Ryan, and they often end up with bloody hands.

In addition, I have a major peeve with cozy mysteries in which the amateur sleuth leaves their business. Gemma knows about that problem. "Running a business interferes with one's detective work. Not that I am a detective, nor do I want to be one, but sometimes it seems that I can't help myself." And, later, she admits she's neglecting her store as she snoops. How can I object to the actions of a sleuth who acknowledges her bad behavior?

Pick up an intelligent cozy mystery with a fascinating amateur sleuth and a fun cast of supporting characters. Humor, a touch of romance, and Gemma's intriguing mind. The Sherlock Holmes connection, and theater in this book, add to the enjoyment of *The Cat of the Baskervilles*.

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### **Jessica Wilhoite says**

This was my favorite of Gemma Doyle's adventures so far. Vicky Delany makes it appear as if the crime is solved, but then a shocking twist and boom! Murderer and motive finally revealed. Add Moriarty, the cat who loves all but Gemma and a couple of love twists, this makes for a great third book in this series!

I voluntarily reviewed this book on Netgalley.

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### **Mayda says**

In this third installment in the Sherlock Holmes Bookshop Mystery series, Gemma and Jayne have a vested interest in solving the mysterious death of an aging theatre star. Why? Because the police are circling Jayne's mother as their primary suspect. A past secret was divulged, giving her a motive for murder. Though this is part of series, it works as a standalone. However, you will miss seeing the characters' growth and development if you skip the first books. The mystery is a credible one, but the real enjoyment of a cozy is the

interaction of the characters as they go about their everyday lives, which, of course, include murder. This is a series you don't want to miss.

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### **Lorraine says**

"The game is afoot" again for Gemma Doyle, owner of the Sherlock Holmes Bookshop & Emporium & partner of Jayne Wilson's Mrs. Hudson's Tea Room. Vicki Delany's *The Cat of the Baskervilles* (Sherlock Holmes Bookshop Mystery #3) is great fun for anyone who enjoys Sherlock Holmes & cozies. Summer Stock theater productions are a tremendous draw for locals and tourists all over The USA, and as Cape Cod prepares for its main attraction, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, everyone is beyond excited except Gemma Doyle who is definitely expecting increase in sales and adjusts her inventory accordingly. The main attraction of the production - well, you will have to read this charming cozy mystery to discover this as I do not read and tell! Needless to say, Gemma becomes involved in the mystery to the consternation of Detective Ryan Ashburton. Remember him? He & Gemma were an item before the series started! Gemma has an extraordinary sense of observation, and she uses it particularly well which, I believe, Det. Ashburton truly does understand, but how does the investigation center on Leslie Wilson, Jayne's mother? This cannot be so Gemma throws herself into discovering the true culprit? The ending left me with, "Please do not end THERE!" Watch Gemma shine! A fun read. Highly recommended! 4.5-5 stars!

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### **Karen says**

New years day I read Vicki Delany's upcoming February release *The Cat of the Baskervilles*. This is the third book in the A Sherlock Holmes Bookshop Mystery series. This was my favorite story in the series so far. It had a compelling mystery, great cast of characters and a very fun setting.

I like main character Gemma very much and her friend Jayne as well. They have a lovely relationship and yet a complicated one. I liked that this mystery did not feel rushed, or resolved too early in the book, the plot twists were subtle but delightful. This one is out February 13th by Crooked Lane Books and was a very enjoyable read.

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### **NicoleG says**

Another well planned mystery by Vicki Delany! The setting is so much fun it makes me want to visit Gemma and Jayne! I could go for a scone and some Sherlock Holmes pastiche!

I was not a fan of this particular narrator and I think I would have enjoyed it more if I read a print copy.

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### **Kimberly says**

*The Cat of the Baskervilles* by Vicky Delany is the third installment of the Sherlock Holmes Bookshop Mystery series. The series pays homage to the great Sherlock Holmes and creatively entwines Sherlock facts throughout the books. As the series progresses and the author digs deeper into the lives, loves and murder in West London it keeps getting better! Delany's writing style uniquely adds trivia, humor and love to each murder mystery.

Gemma, the main character, is acutely observant, cognitively on a different level and blunt, however those are exactly the traits that make her a great main character and amateur sleuth. Her sensible friend and usually unwilling accomplice, Jayne, is a good balance to Gemma, just like Holmes and Watson.

This book introduces the reader to additional residents of West London and continues to develop the existing characters. Jayne's family is a central focus which allows for a deeper understanding of her character and family.

Gemma's love triangle continues to blossom with a cliff hanger at the end that will leave the reader, especially this one anxiously awaiting book 4!

I received an advance copy of this book from the author in exchange for a fair and honest review.

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### **Amy says**

This is the third book in the series and definitely my favorite! I have read the prior two in order. While this book can be read as a standalone, I recommend reading books one and two to see how the characters develop and connect with each other. I really disliked the protagonist's character, Gemma Doyle, in the first two books. I understood the Sherlock analogy but thought she overanalyzed everything and it really annoyed me. In this book, her character develops and she shows a more human and compassionate side of herself. For example, she learns a secret that would really hurt a close friend if revealed to her. But Gemma decides not to share that information whereas, I think she would think she had to in prior books.

The pace was just right and I was not overwhelmed with the number of suspects. The romantic tension between Gemma and Detective Ashburton which has been building since the first book continues to develop and the end has a number of surprising plot twists.

I received a complimentary copy of this book. My review is voluntary.

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### **Juli says**

West London, MA is gearing up for the tourist season. The West London Theater Festival will feature the stage production of The Hound of the Baskervilles, starring an aged British film star, Sir Nigel Bellingham. Gemma Doyle, owner of the Sherlock Holmes Bookstore and Emporium, and her friend Jayne, who runs the Mrs. Hudson's Tea Room next door, volunteer to help with fundraising and publicity for the Festival. At an afternoon tea fundraiser catered by Jayne, Sir Nigel is obviously drunk and completely flubs his lines during an short performance for guests. After the fundraiser, Sir Nigel can't be found. The actor is found dead at the bottom of a nearby cliff. Could he have been drunk enough to fall? Or did someone push him over the edge? Sir Nigel was obviously a cantankerous, alcoholic, washed up actor....but did someone have enough of a grudge against the old man to kill him??

I enjoy this series. I'm a big Sherlock Holmes fan, so I like the idea of a Sherlock themed bookshop and tea room. The Hound of the Baskervilles is also one of my favorite Holmes stories. The mystery in this latest book moves along at a nice pace and there are plenty of suspects and plot twists, including Jayne's mother Leslie being a prime suspect. I like the background theme and the characters (although I think Gemma is a tad on the rude side). Moriarty the shop cat is awesome and shows much cattitude. The background characters are all quirky and interesting. I like how the two main characters complement each other. Gemma

is direct, very organized and details oriented, and very observant. Jayne is a bit ditzy, tends to fall for the wrong type of men, and is more flexible and impulsive. As best friends and business partners, they work very well together. Where one is weak, the other is strong. All in all, a nice entertaining cozy mystery!

The Cat of the Baskervilles is the 3rd book in the Sherlock Holmes Bookshop Mystery series. Vicki Delaney is the author of many mystery novels, including the Year-Around Christmas cozy series and the Constable Molly Smith series.

**\*\*I voluntarily read an advanced readers copy of this book from Crooked Lane via NetGalley. All opinions expressed are entirely my own.\*\***

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## **Tari says**

Ohhh this was so good! I literally couldn't put this book down. This was actually the first one of this series I've read so I was just curious enough to read it first. As with other books this author has written, this can stand perfectly on its own. The author gives enough backstory so that new readers aren't lost but there aren't any spoilers from other books' mysteries.

Gemma Doyle is helping her friend Jayne cater a fancy tea for the local theater group that happens to have a famous old actor playing Sherlock Holmes. When the actor turns up dead later and all fingers point to Jayne's mom Leslie, Gemma once again decides she has to do some private investigation in order to come to the truth. Her friend Grant who owns a rare book shop is around to help her at times all the while that Jayne is trying to make her see that police detective Ryan still likes her a lot even though his partner Louise isn't very nice to Gemma. Gemma is convinced it's because she (Gemma) and Ryan were close once and either Louise is jealous or she's bitter that Ryan got lead detective instead of Louise getting it. Gemma is always worried Louise is trying to find a reason to get him demoted.

After some investigations, leads and the premier play night, everything is revealed at the end in true Sherlock style and the ending is a very nice one!

I'm so anxious now to read the other two books in this series since I have really gotten to know and like these characters. I hope this series continues for a long time. The idea of Gemma and Jayne owning a bookstore/tea room is such a fun one and now that Gemma is a little more in tune to how Ryan still feels about her. It'll be interesting to see how that works out.

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## **Betty says**

Vicky Delaney is one of my favorite authors, this is not a cat book, regardless of the title and cover. The name of the book is a play on the Shakespeare tale of HOUNDS OF THE BASKERVILLE. It is a very good book with twists and turns that will keep you occupied until the book is finished.

Aging actor, Sir Nigel Bellingham is hired to play the lead role in the Cape Cod stage production of the HOUNDS OF BASKERVILLE. Sir Nigel is a surprise visitor to the bookstore causing an attraction and excitement. It is decided to have a fundraiser tea before the opening of the play. Mrs. Hudson Tea Room will cater the event. At the tea Sir Nigel is disgraced and after the tea is over, he is found dead below a cliff. Jane's Mother, Leslie Wilson becomes a person of interest as she was the last to see him before Sir Nigel

disappeared. Gemma Doyle investigates to clear Leslie's name. I highly recommend this book and series.

Disclosure: I received a free copy from Crooked Lane Books through NetGalley for an honest review. I would like to thank them for this opportunity to read and review this book. The opinions expressed are my own.

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### **Laura says**

Cape Cod welcomes stage and movie star Sir Nigel Bellingham, who is set to star in a stage production of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* put on by the West London Theater Festival. When Sir Nigel, some of the cast, and the director visit the Sherlock Holmes Bookshop at 222 Baker Street, Gemma Doyle realizes that Sir Nigel is not at all suited to the role. He is long past his prime and an old drunk to boot. The cast, in particular the much younger actor who previously had the role, are not happy, but the show must go on.

Sir Nigel fumbles his lines at a fund-raising tea, catered by Gemma's best friend Jayne, things turn bad. Then Sir Nigel disappears after the tea, right after Gemma noticed Leslie, Jayne's mother, talking with him. When Gemma and her friend Grant find Sir Nigel at the bottom of the rocky cliff, dead. Along with the dead body, Gemma finds evidence incriminating Leslie Wilson. When the police focus on Leslie it's time for Gemma to go into action and prove Leslie's innocence.

This series gets better with every book. The mystery in this one is wonderfully crafted and kept me guessing. I like the way Ms. Delany works up to the murder, letting us get to know the characters and their backgrounds before the murder takes place.

I like Gemma, despite the fact she can be overbearing and a bit of a know-it-all. She is, as Jayne says, blunt. I like the way she faces things head on and doesn't take risks that put her in the category of heroine that makes me scream at the book.

I love Morarity the cat, and the Sherlock Holmes Bookstore and Emporium, and the Mrs. Hudson Tea Shop. With every book I read in this series I wish this was a real place where I could visit and examine all the Sherlock Holmes books and trinkets.

As always I look forward to the next book in this series, to see what mystery Gemma finds herself involved with next.

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### **Monnie says**

This is the third book in this highly entertaining Sherlock Holmes Bookshop Mystery series; I've read one other and enjoyed it, so when I was lucky enough to be approved by the publisher to read and review an advance copy in exchange for an honest review, I was a happy camper. When it turned out to be even better than that other one, well, my smile widened.

The cozy mysteries follow the amateur sleuthing of Gemma Doyle, co-owner of the Sherlock Holmes Bookshop and Emporium in West London, Massachusetts. Another of the three owners is Jayne Wilson, who also owns and operates a tea shop/bakery that's attached to the bookstore. Originally from England, Gemma



has a nose for details and, it seems, loves nothing better than sticking it into the business of the local police (sometimes unintentionally, sometimes not). That both annoys and pleases police detective, Ryan - a former lover who "dumped" her and left the area for another job. Now he's back and the attraction is there, but they've since been holding each other at arms' lengths.

As this begins, the community is excited to learn that a well-known but aging stage actor, Sir Nigel Bellingham, will be in town to star in a local theater production of Holmes's *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. As rehearsals begin, organizers decide to hold a fund-raising English tea at the home of one of the well-heeled theater-loving ladies - and Jayne convinces Gemma that their shops should handle the catering. Gemma is less enthusiastic, but she agrees. After all, it's a private event for about a hundred local hoity-toits - what could possibly go wrong?

Make that plenty - starting with the fact that Sir Nigel turns out to be a nasty old drunk. Still, everyone expects that his professionalism will surface long enough for him to get through the play; that is, until he's found quite dead at the bottom of a cliff on the property. To make matters even worse, if that's possible, the primary suspect is Jayne's mother Leslie.

Gemma is certain Leslie is innocent, and of course, she sets out to prove it while trying to keep her poking nose out of the sight of law enforcement. That proves next to impossible most of the time, which strains the already fragile relationship between Gemma and Ryan (as well as with Ryan's partner, who has butted heads with Gemma on more than one occasion and isn't fond of her meddling).

More details I must necessarily leave for other readers to discover, but I will say that anyone who enjoys an occasional respite from heavier reading (as I do) or simply the more lighthearted approach of an interesting cozy mystery won't go wrong by picking this one. Thoroughly enjoyable!

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