

sherlock holmes and the sign of four

****Sherlock Holmes and the Sign of Four: A Timeless Detective Adventure****

sherlock holmes and the sign of four is a captivating tale that continues to enthrall readers and mystery enthusiasts alike. As one of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's most celebrated works, it offers a blend of suspense, intricate plotting, and the brilliant deductive prowess of the iconic detective Sherlock Holmes. This novel not only deepens our understanding of Holmes's character but also introduces intriguing new elements that have made it a cornerstone of detective fiction.

The Origins of Sherlock Holmes and the Sign of Four

Published in 1890, **The Sign of Four** was the second novel featuring Sherlock Holmes, following the success of **A Study in Scarlet**. At a time when detective stories were gaining popularity, Conan Doyle's creation stood out for its unique combination of logical reasoning, forensic science, and compelling storytelling. The novel was originally serialized, captivating readers with its mystery and complex narrative.

Unlike some of Holmes's other adventures, **The Sign of Four** delves deeper into themes of loyalty, betrayal, and justice, weaving together a story that spans continents and generations. The introduction of Holmes's famous companion, Dr. John Watson, serves as an essential narrative device, providing a relatable perspective for readers while highlighting Holmes's extraordinary talents.

Plot Overview: What Makes The Sign of Four Unique?

At its core, **Sherlock Holmes and the Sign of Four** revolves around a mysterious treasure, a secret pact, and a complex murder case. The story begins when Mary Morstan approaches Holmes and Watson with a perplexing problem: her father vanished years ago, and she has been receiving anonymous gifts of rare pearls annually. Now, a new mystery emerges involving a coded message and a hidden fortune.

The investigation leads Holmes and Watson through a labyrinth of clues, revealing a story of colonial intrigue, stolen treasure from India, and a deadly pact among four conspirators. The narrative's pacing is brisk, with moments of tension balanced by Holmes's trademark analytical insights and Watson's grounded observations.

The Role of the Treasure and the Sign of Four

The “sign of four” refers to a pact made between four men who shared the spoils of a treasure stolen during the Indian Rebellion. This pact, symbolized by a unique tattoo, becomes central to the unfolding mystery. The treasure itself acts as a catalyst, driving the characters into a web of deception and danger. This element adds a layer of historical context and adventure that distinguishes the novel from more straightforward detective stories.

Character Dynamics and Development

One of the most engaging aspects of **Sherlock Holmes and the Sign of Four** is the development of its characters, particularly the dynamic between Holmes and Watson. Their partnership is showcased with greater depth here than in some earlier stories, revealing nuances in their personalities and approaches to problem-solving.

Sherlock Holmes: The Analytical Genius

Holmes’s deductive reasoning shines throughout the novel. His ability to notice minute details and draw logical conclusions exemplifies why he remains one of literature’s most enduring detectives. In **The Sign of Four**, Holmes is portrayed not only as a cerebral mastermind but also as someone capable of intense focus and even moments of vulnerability, especially as the case hits close to home.

Dr. John Watson: More Than Just a Sidekick

Watson’s role in this novel is crucial. Beyond being Holmes’s chronicler and confidant, he emerges as a heroic figure in his own right, displaying courage and empathy. His budding romantic relationship with Mary Morstan adds emotional depth to the story, providing a human element amid the intrigue. Watson’s perspective also helps balance Holmes’s sometimes cold logic, reminding readers of the importance of compassion in the pursuit of justice.

Thematic Explorations in Sherlock Holmes and the Sign of Four

The novel touches on several themes that resonate beyond its mystery plot, including colonialism, loyalty, and moral ambiguity.

Colonialism and Its Shadows

The backstory involving treasure stolen during the British Raj in India raises questions about imperialism and its consequences. The characters' motives are intertwined with colonial history, adding complexity to the narrative. This context enriches the story, inviting readers to consider the ethical dimensions of empire and the lingering effects of past injustices.

Justice Versus Revenge

Another compelling theme is the tension between justice and revenge. Some characters act out of a desire for rightful compensation, while others seek vengeance, blurring the lines between lawful retribution and personal vendetta. Holmes's commitment to truth and order contrasts sharply with these conflicting motivations, highlighting the detective's role as an impartial arbiter.

Why Sherlock Holmes and the Sign of Four Endures

More than a century after its publication, *The Sign of Four* remains a favorite among fans of detective fiction. Several factors contribute to its lasting appeal.

Engaging Storytelling and Pacing

Conan Doyle's narrative style is both engaging and accessible, combining suspenseful moments with detailed descriptions that immerse readers in Victorian London. The pacing keeps readers hooked from the mysterious pearls to the climactic chase, making it an exciting read for both newcomers and seasoned fans.

Rich Characterization and Relationships

The interplay between Holmes, Watson, and Mary Morstan adds layers of emotional resonance. Their interactions provide insight into Victorian society and the complexities of human relationships, elevating the story beyond a simple whodunit.

Influence on the Detective Genre

Sherlock Holmes and the Sign of Four helped define many conventions of detective fiction, from the use of forensic science to the classic "locked-room" style mystery. The novel continues to inspire adaptations across various media, including film, television, and

theater, underscoring its cultural significance.

Tips for Reading and Appreciating Sherlock Holmes and the Sign of Four

Whether you are a first-time reader or revisiting the story, here are some helpful tips to enhance your experience:

- **Pay attention to details:** Holmes's success depends on noticing small clues. Reading carefully will help you appreciate the cleverness of the plot.
- **Consider historical context:** Understanding Victorian England and British colonial history adds depth to the story's themes.
- **Observe character development:** Watch how Holmes and Watson's relationship evolves, providing emotional grounding to the mystery.
- **Explore adaptations:** Watching film or stage versions can offer new perspectives and highlight different facets of the story.

Exploring *Sherlock Holmes and the Sign of Four* is more than just solving a mystery—it's a journey into the mind of an extraordinary detective and a window into a fascinating era. Its blend of adventure, intellect, and human drama ensures it remains a timeless classic in the world of literature.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the main plot of 'Sherlock Holmes and the Sign of Four'?

'The Sign of Four' revolves around Sherlock Holmes investigating a complex case involving a missing treasure, a secret pact between four convicts, and a mysterious woman, Mary Morstan, who seeks Holmes' help to uncover the truth behind her father's disappearance.

Who are the key characters in 'The Sign of Four' besides Sherlock Holmes?

Besides Sherlock Holmes and Dr. John Watson, key characters include Mary Morstan, the client; Thaddeus and Bartholomew Sholto, brothers connected to the treasure; Jonathan Small, one of the convicts; and Inspector Athelney Jones.

How does 'The Sign of Four' explore the theme of colonialism?

The novel touches on British colonialism through the backstory of the Agra treasure and the involvement of Indian characters and settings, highlighting issues of imperialism, cultural clashes, and the consequences of British rule in India.

What role does Dr. John Watson play in 'The Sign of Four'?

Dr. John Watson acts as Holmes' loyal companion and chronicler, providing a human perspective to the investigation, assisting in the detective work, and developing a romantic relationship with Mary Morstan.

Why is 'The Sign of Four' significant in Sherlock Holmes literature?

'The Sign of Four' is significant because it is the second Sherlock Holmes novel by Arthur Conan Doyle, introducing enduring elements such as Holmes' use of forensic science and deduction, and establishing character dynamics that define the series.

Additional Resources

****Sherlock Holmes and the Sign of Four: A Timeless Detective Classic****

sherlock holmes and the sign of four stands as one of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's most compelling works in the Sherlock Holmes canon. Published in 1890, this novel not only solidified Holmes's reputation as the quintessential detective but also expanded the narrative complexity and emotional depth of the series. As a cornerstone of detective fiction, *The Sign of Four* blends mystery, adventure, and psychological insight, offering readers a richly layered experience that resonates even over a century later.

Exploring the Narrative Depth of Sherlock Holmes and the Sign of Four

At its core, *Sherlock Holmes and the Sign of Four* unfolds the story of a mysterious treasure, a secret pact, and a series of murders entwined with colonial history. Unlike Doyle's earlier short stories, this novel delves into a sustained plot that intricately weaves personal motivations with broader social themes. The narrative begins with Mary Morstan seeking Holmes's help to unravel the enigma of her missing father and the anonymous gifts she receives. From there, the plot escalates through a web of deceit, betrayal, and revenge linked to a stolen treasure from India.

The novel's structure is notable for its balance between suspenseful detective work and character development. Holmes's use of forensic science, acute observation, and deductive

reasoning is on full display. However, it also introduces a more humanized side of Holmes, particularly through his interactions with Dr. John Watson and Mary Morstan, his eventual love interest. This emotional dimension deepens the reader's engagement, distinguishing *The Sign of Four* from more straightforward mystery tales.

Thematic Significance and Historical Context

The novel's title, *The Sign of Four*, refers to a secret pact among four convicts and two corrupt officers who conspired to steal a treasure during the British Raj in India. This backstory brings a colonial dimension to the tale, subtly reflecting Victorian anxieties about empire and justice. The treasure symbolizes greed and the destructive consequences of colonial exploitation, themes that enrich the narrative beyond a mere whodunit.

Additionally, *Sherlock Holmes and the Sign of Four* examines themes of loyalty, justice, and moral ambiguity. The characters are not simply good or evil; their motives are complex, and Doyle invites readers to grapple with questions of right and wrong within the framework of Victorian society. This nuanced approach enhances the novel's literary value and its appeal to modern audiences interested in historical and ethical contexts.

Character Dynamics and Development

One of the most significant aspects of *Sherlock Holmes and the Sign of Four* is the evolving character dynamics, especially between Holmes and Watson. This novel marks Watson's first romantic involvement with Mary Morstan, adding a personal subplot that contrasts with the mystery's darker elements. Their relationship provides insight into Watson's character beyond his role as Holmes's chronicler and assistant.

Holmes himself is portrayed with greater complexity. While his legendary intellect and deductive prowess remain central, *The Sign of Four* reveals his occasional impatience and emotional detachment. This humanization of Holmes makes him more relatable and adds depth to his iconic persona.

Supporting Characters and Their Roles

- **Mary Morstan:** A pivotal figure whose mystery triggers the investigation. Her character embodies Victorian ideals of femininity and virtue but also exhibits courage and determination.
- **Jonathan Small:** The antagonist whose tragic backstory and quest for revenge add moral complexity to the narrative.
- **Dr. John Watson:** Holmes's loyal friend and narrator, whose romantic subplot introduces a tender dimension to the story.

- **Thaddeus and Bartholomew Sholto:** Brothers with conflicting personalities, their involvement in the treasure's secret adds tension and intrigue.

These characters enrich the plot and highlight different facets of Victorian society, from colonial legacies to personal loyalties.

Comparative Analysis: Sherlock Holmes and the Sign of Four in the Canon

When compared to other Sherlock Holmes works, **The Sign of Four** occupies a unique position. Unlike the episodic nature of the short stories such as **The Adventure of the Speckled Band**, this novel offers a more elaborate and sustained investigation. It also introduces recurring elements that would become hallmarks of the series, such as Holmes's use of disguise, his chemical experiments, and his occasional reliance on opium.

From a stylistic perspective, Doyle's prose in **The Sign of Four** is more descriptive and atmospheric than in earlier works. The vivid depiction of London's foggy streets, the Thames's murky waters, and the exoticism of Indian culture add to the novel's immersive quality.

Furthermore, the novel's pacing is carefully calibrated, balancing moments of intense action with reflective passages. This rhythm enhances suspense and keeps readers engaged throughout the narrative.

Pros and Cons of Sherlock Holmes and the Sign of Four

- **Pros:**

- Rich, multi-layered plot intertwining mystery with historical intrigue.
- Complex character development, especially Holmes and Watson.
- Exploration of moral and ethical dilemmas beyond a typical detective story.
- Evocative descriptions that bring Victorian London and colonial India to life.

- **Cons:**

- Certain colonial attitudes and racial stereotypes reflective of the era may feel outdated or problematic to modern readers.
- The pacing, while generally effective, occasionally slows due to detailed

exposition.

- Some plot elements rely on coincidence or convenient revelations, which may challenge suspension of disbelief.

Despite these minor drawbacks, *Sherlock Holmes and the Sign of Four* remains a vital and engaging read within detective literature.

The Enduring Legacy of Sherlock Holmes and the Sign of Four

The significance of *Sherlock Holmes and the Sign of Four* extends beyond its initial publication. It has inspired countless adaptations across film, television, radio, and theatre, each interpreting the novel's intricate plot and characters through different lenses. The story's blend of intellectual challenge and emotional resonance continues to captivate audiences worldwide.

Moreover, the novel's influence can be seen in the broader crime and detective genres. Its emphasis on forensic science, psychological insight, and layered storytelling set a standard that many subsequent authors have emulated.

For modern readers and enthusiasts of detective fiction, *Sherlock Holmes and the Sign of Four* offers a compelling blend of suspense, historical intrigue, and character study. Its place within the literary canon is secured not only by its narrative strengths but also by its reflection of societal attitudes and complexities during the Victorian era.

As interest in Sherlock Holmes endures, *The Sign of Four* remains a testament to Arthur Conan Doyle's storytelling prowess, inviting readers to unravel mysteries alongside one of literature's most iconic detectives.

Sherlock Holmes And The Sign Of Four

sherlock holmes and the sign of four: The Sign of Four Conan Sir Arthur Doyle, Arthur Conan Doyle, Sir, 2008-01-01 First published in 1890, The Sign of Four is Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's second book starring legendary detective Sherlock Holmes. The story is complex, involving a secret between four ex-cons from India and a hidden treasure. More complex than the first Holmes novel, The Sign of Four also introduces the detective's drug habit and leaves breadcrumbs for the reader that lead toward the final resolution. Readers are offered an explanation of the mystery from the killer's perspective, encouraging a sense of sympathy with the condemned that the previous book also lacked. Any fan of the mystery genre should consider this book a must-read. Scottish surgeon and political activist SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE (1859-1930) turned his passions into stories and novels, producing fiction and nonfiction works sometimes controversial (The Great Boer War, 1900),

sometimes fanciful (*The Coming of the Fairies*, 1922), and sometimes legendary (*The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, 1892).

sherlock holmes and the sign of four: *The Sign of Four - Gift Edition* Arthur Conan Doyle, Ian Fox, 2014-01-24 In 1888 Mary Morstan comes to Holmes with two puzzles. The first the disappearance ten years earlier of her father Captain Arthur Morstan in 1878. The second puzzle is that she has received a pearl in the mail every year for the last six years. Accompanying the last pearl was a letter remarking that she had been wronged and requesting a meeting. Originally published in 1890 'The Sign of Four' is the second novel featuring Sherlock Holmes written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Includes article on the history of the novel.

sherlock holmes and the sign of four: Sherlock Holmes - The Sign of the Four Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, 2010-09-22 This eBook edition of an intriguing Sherlock Holmes case has been specially formatted for today's e-readers. The Sign of the Four is a popular Sherlock Holmes book written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Set in the late 1880s, the case features a complex plot involving stolen treasure and a secret pact by four ex-convicts. The book is set in Colonial India, and is critically acclaimed for how well it humanizes the character of Sherlock Holmes (including his drug habit!). This eBook is highly recommended for all fans of the famous detective, and fiction lovers in general.

sherlock holmes and the sign of four: The Sign of the Four Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, 2015-04-08 The Sign of the Four is Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's 2nd novel featuring Sherlock Holmes. In the Sign of the Four, Sherlock must unravel a plot involving a missing British officer and stolen treasure. This Xist Classics edition has been professionally formatted for e-readers with a linked table of contents. This eBook also contains a bonus book club leadership guide and discussion questions. We hope you'll share this book with your friends, neighbors and colleagues and can't wait to hear what you have to say about it. Xist Publishing is a digital-first publisher. Xist Publishing creates books for the touchscreen generation and is dedicated to helping everyone develop a lifetime love of reading, no matter what form it takes

sherlock holmes and the sign of four: *The Sign of Four - Large Print Edition* Arthur Conan Doyle, Sir, Ian Fox, 2014-02-04 In 1888 Mary Morstan comes to Holmes with two puzzles. The first the disappearance ten years earlier of her father Captain Arthur Morstan in 1878. The second puzzle is that she has received a pearl in the mail every year for the last six years. Accompanying the last pearl was a letter remarking that she had been wronged and requesting a meeting. Originally published in 1890 'The Sign of Four' is the second novel featuring Sherlock Holmes written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Includes article on the history of the novel. Large Print edition uses 16 point size lettering in Tahoma font as recommended by National Association for Visually Handicapped. Gift Edition includes a section for a personal inscription.

sherlock holmes and the sign of four: *Sign of the Four* Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, 2009-03-14 Sign of the Four is one of the outstanding novels of the Sherlock Holmes series. It is a brilliant mixture of suspense and action with the protagonist disentangling an apparently unsolvable mystery and catching the criminal with great panache.

sherlock holmes and the sign of four: The Sign of Four Arthur Conan Doyle, Sheba Blake, 2017-07-08 The Sign of Four is the second novel featuring Sherlock Holmes written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Doyle wrote four novels and 56 stories starring the fictional detective. The story is set in 1888. The Sign of Four has a complex plot involving service in India, the Indian Rebellion of 1857, a stolen treasure, and a secret pact among four convicts (the Four of the title) and two corrupt prison guards. It presents the detective's drug habit and humanizes him in a way that had not been done in the preceding novel, *A Study in Scarlet* (1887). It also introduces Doctor Watson's future wife, Mary Morstan. According to Mary, in December 1878, her father had telegraphed her upon his safe return from India and requested her to meet him at the Langham Hotel in London. When Mary arrived at the hotel, she was told her father had gone out the previous night and not returned. Despite all efforts, no trace has ever been found of him. Mary contacted her father's only friend who was in the same regiment and had since retired to England, one Major John Sholto, but he denied

knowing her father had returned. The second puzzle is that she has received six pearls in the mail from an anonymous benefactor, one per year since 1882 after answering an anonymous newspaper query inquiring for her. With the last pearl she received a letter remarking that she has been wronged and asking for a meeting. Holmes takes the case and soon discovers that Major Sholto had died in 1882 and that within a short span of time Mary began to receive the pearls, implying a connection. The only clue Mary can give Holmes is a map of a fortress found in her father's desk with the names of Jonathan Small, Mahomet Singh, Abdullah Khan and Dost Akbar. Holmes, Watson, and Mary meet Thaddeus Sholto, the son of the late Major Sholto and the anonymous sender of the pearls. Thaddeus confirms the Major had seen Mary's father the night he died; they had arranged a meeting to divide a priceless treasure Sholto had brought home from India. While quarreling over the treasure, Captain Morstan-long in weak health-suffered a heart attack. Not wanting to bring attention to the object of the quarrel-and also worried that circumstances would suggest that he had killed Morstan in an argument, particularly since Morstan's head struck a table as he fell-Sholto disposed of the body and hid the treasure. However, he himself suffered from poor health and an enlarged spleen (possibly due to malaria, as a quinine bottle stands by his bed). His own health became worse when he received a letter from India in early 1882. Dying, he called his two sons and confessed to Morstan's death and was about to divulge the location of the treasure when he suddenly cried, Keep him out! before falling back and dying. The puzzled sons glimpsed a face in the window, but the only trace was a single footprint in the dirt. On their father's body is a note reading The Sign of Four. Both brothers quarreled over whether a legacy should be left to Mary Morstan, and Thaddeus left his brother Bartholomew, taking a chaplet and sending its pearls to Mary. The reason he sent the letter is that Bartholomew has found the treasure and possibly Thaddeus and Mary might confront him for a division of it.

sherlock holmes and the sign of four: The Sign of the Four Arthur Conan Doyle, 2018-07-22 This is Book 2 of the series The Chronological Sherlock Holmes. The Sign of the Four (1890), also called The Sign of Four, is the second novel featuring Sherlock Holmes written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Doyle wrote four novels and 56 stories starring the fictional detective. The story is set in 1888. The Sign of the Four has a complex plot involving service in East India Company, India, the Indian Rebellion of 1857, a stolen treasure, and a secret pact among four convicts (the Four of the title) and two corrupt prison guards. It presents the detective's drug habit and humanizes him in a way that had not been done in the preceding novel A Study in Scarlet (1887). It also introduces Doctor Watson's future wife, Mary Morstan.

sherlock holmes and the sign of four: The Sign of the Four Arthur Conan Doyle, Sir, 2016-06-06 The Sign of the Four (1890), also called The Sign of Four, is the second novel featuring Sherlock Holmes written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Doyle wrote four novels and 56 stories starring the fictional detective. The story is set in 1888. The Sign of the Four has a complex plot involving service in East India Company, India, the Indian Rebellion of 1857, a stolen treasure, and a secret pact among four convicts (the Four of the title) and two corrupt prison guards. It presents the detective's drug habit and humanizes him in a way that had not been done in the preceding novel, A Study in Scarlet (1887). It also introduces Doctor Watson's future wife, Mary Morstan. In 1888 a client, Mary Morstan, comes with two puzzles for Holmes. The first is the disappearance of her father, British Indian Army Captain Arthur Morstan, in December 1878. According to Mary, her father had telegraphed her upon his safe return from India and requested her to meet him at the Langham Hotel in London. When Mary arrived at the hotel, she was told her father had gone out the previous night and not returned. Despite all efforts, no trace has ever been found of him. Mary contacted her father's only friend who was in the same regiment and had since retired to England, one Major John Sholto, but he denied knowing her father had returned. The second puzzle is that she has received six pearls in the mail from an anonymous benefactor, one per year since 1882 after answering an anonymous newspaper query inquiring for her. With the last pearl she received a letter remarking that she has been a wronged woman and asking for a meeting. Holmes takes the case and soon discovers that Major Sholto had died in 1882 and that within a short span of time

Mary began to receive the pearls, implying a connection. The only clue Mary can give Holmes is a map of a fortress found in her father's desk with the names of Jonathan Small, Mahomet Singh, Abdullah Khan and Dost Akbar.

sherlock holmes and the sign of four: The Sign of the Four Arthur Conan Doyle, 2015-10-03
The Sign of the Four (1890), also called The Sign of Four, is the second novel featuring Sherlock Holmes written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Doyle wrote four novels and 56 stories starring the fictional detective. The story is set in 1888. The Sign of the Four has a complex plot involving service in East India Company, India, the Indian Rebellion of 1857, a stolen treasure, and a secret pact among four convicts (the Four of the title) and two corrupt prison guards. It presents the detective's drug habit and humanizes him in a way that had not been done in the preceding novel, A Study in Scarlet (1887). It also introduces Doctor Watson's future wife, Mary Morstan.

sherlock holmes and the sign of four: *The Sign of the Four* Arthur Conan Doyle, Sir, 2016-10-22
The Sign of the Four By Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
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sherlock holmes and the sign of four: The Sign of the Four (Annotated) Arthur Conan Doyle, 2016-04-27
The Sign of the Four (1890), also called The Sign of Four, is the second novel featuring Sherlock Holmes written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Doyle wrote four novels and 56 stories starring the fictional detective. The story is set in 1888. The Sign of the Four has a complex plot involving service in East India Company, India, the Indian Rebellion of 1857, a stolen treasure, and a secret pact among four convicts (the Four of the title) and two corrupt prison guards. It presents the detective's drug habit and humanizes him in a way that had not been done in the preceding novel, A Study in Scarlet (1887). It also introduces Doctor Watson's future wife, Mary Morstan.

sherlock holmes and the sign of four: *The Sign of Four* Arthur Conan Doyle, 2011-02-07
A new edition of The Sign of Four, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's second full-length novel featuring Sherlock Holmes. This book is controversial for Holmes' use of cocaine.

sherlock holmes and the sign of four: The Sign of Four Arthur Conan Doyle, 2017-11-11
You Know My Methods The Sign of Four The second Adventure written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle to feature Sherlock Holmes and Dr John Watson. The disappearance of a young woman's father and a mysterious note years later after the strange regular annual delivery of valuable pearls to her puts Sherlock Holmes on the case. One of the most read novel in the history of English literature. And the best place to start a love of Sherlock Holmes.

sherlock holmes and the sign of four: The Sign of Four Arthur Conan Doyle, 2017-02-11

The Sign of the Four (1890), also called The Sign of Four, is the second novel featuring Sherlock Holmes written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Doyle wrote four novels and 56 stories starring the fictional detective. The story is set in 1888. The Sign of the Four has a complex plot involving service in India, the Indian Rebellion of 1857, a stolen treasure, and a secret pact among four convicts (the Four of the title) and two corrupt prison guards. It presents the detective's drug habit and humanizes him in a way that had not been done in the preceding novel, A Study in Scarlet (1887). It also introduces Doctor Watson's future wife, Mary Morstan. According to Mary, in December 1878, her father had telegraphed her upon his safe return from India and requested her to meet him at the Langham Hotel in London. When Mary arrived at the hotel, she was told her father had gone out the previous night and not returned. Despite all efforts, no trace has ever been found of him. Mary contacted her father's only friend who was in the same regiment and had since retired to England, one Major John Sholto, but he denied knowing her father had returned. The second puzzle is that she has received six pearls in the mail from an anonymous benefactor, one per year since 1882 after answering an anonymous newspaper query inquiring for her. With the last pearl she received a letter remarking that she has been wronged and asking for a meeting. Holmes takes the case and soon discovers that Major Sholto had died in 1882 and that within a short span of time Mary began to receive the pearls, implying a connection. The only clue Mary can give Holmes is a map of a fortress found in her father's desk with the names of Jonathan Small, Mahomet Singh, Abdullah Khan and Dost Akbar. Read the book for the complete story.

sherlock holmes and the sign of four: The Sign of the Four Arthur Conan Doyle, Sir, Richard Gutschmidt, 2014-02-05 The Sign of the Four (1890), also called The Sign of Four, is the second novel featuring Sherlock Holmes written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Doyle wrote four novels and 56 stories starring the fictional detective. The story is set in 1888. The Sign of the Four has a complex plot involving service in East India Company, India, the Indian Rebellion of 1857, a stolen treasure, and a secret pact among four convicts (the Four of the title) and two corrupt prison guards. It presents the detective's drug habit and humanizes him in a way that had not been done in the preceding novel A Study in Scarlet (1887). It also introduces Doctor Watson's future wife, Mary Morstan.

sherlock holmes and the sign of four: The Sign of the Four Arthur Conan Doyle, 2015-08-14 First published in 1890, The Sign of Four is Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's second book starring legendary detective Sherlock Holmes. The story is complex, involving a secret between four ex-cons from India and a hidden treasure. More complex than the first Holmes novel, The Sign of Four also introduces the detective's drug habit and leaves breadcrumbs for the reader that lead toward the final resolution.

sherlock holmes and the sign of four: Sherlock Holmes Arthur Conan Doyle, 2018-11-21 The Sign of the Four (1890), also called The Sign of Four, is the second novel featuring Sherlock Holmes written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Doyle wrote four novels and 56 short stories featuring the fictional detective. The story is set in 1888. The Sign of the Four has a complex plot involving service in India, the Indian Rebellion of 1857, a stolen treasure, and a secret pact among four convicts (the Four of the title) and two corrupt prison guards. It presents the detective's drug habit and humanizes him in a way that had not been done in the preceding novel, A Study in Scarlet (1887). It also introduces Doctor Watson's future wife, Mary Morstan. This book is a reproduction of an important historical work. We believe this work is culturally important and have elected to bring the book back into print as part of our continuing commitment to the preservation of printed works worldwide.

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