

Discussion board

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The Hounds of the Baskervilles in relation to Twenty Rules for writing Detective Stories

The Hound of the Baskervilles is a criminal book written by Conan Doyle published in 1902. It talks about a mad dog that supposedly haunts a family, a ghost that has done so for many years. Starring Sherlock Holmes, the master of solving crimes, the book attempts to investigate the mystery surrounding the death of Sir Charles Baskerville. In the end, Holmes manages to solve the crime, portraying Jack as the killer and the mastermind behind the 'ghostly' happenings.

According to Van Dine's rules of writing detective stories, both the detective and the readers of the story should have equal opportunities for solving the mysteries in the story. The Hounds of Baskerville do not conform to Dine's rules concerning this rule. This is because the audience was not given the chance to solve the mysterious death of Sir Charles. In addition, Dine proposes that the writer must not play tricks on the readers. Criminals, however, can trick detectives. With respect to this rule, Doyle conforms as he got Jack tricking Holmes until the last minutes. Dine also purports that detective stories should not have romance. Doyle breaks this rule by introducing Beryl to Sir Henry's life. Their affairs occur despite Beryl being Jack's wife. Failure to conform to this rule strengthens the story since Beryl later on warns Henry of Jack's intentions. The criminal in Hounds of Baskerville was discovered by logic deduction as opposed to accidental or coincidental circumstances. Doyle also conformed to other Dine rules including lack of supernatural solutions, presence of only one detective who must solve the crime. In addition, the crime must be murder, and the murderer must be familiar to readers.

Doyle's concentration on plot and development of only Sherlock and Watson's characters is a strategy that complies with Dine's twenty detective story rules. This bias functions to eliminate deviations from the story. Doyle provides character description that is efficient for readers' understanding.

Work Cited

Doyle, C. The Hounds of Baskerville Web Retrieved 14 February from Online Literature Library, link <http://www.literature.org/authors/doyle-arthur-conan/hound/>