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Book Reviews: Electronic Books Section



...GUARANTEES FULL ENTERTAINMENT ...The story has been woven around the 'Dead Sea Scrolls' which are the largest and oldest body of manuscripts relating to the Bible and to the time of Jesus of Nazareth...

Dead Sea Murder *by* Amanda Dickerson (E-book format: Adobe Acrobat®).
Rogue Publishing, 228 Glen Street, Marlborough, MA 01752-1955, USA. http://www.roguepublishing.com. Contact: info@roguepublishing.com.

Category: Roleplaying adventure, Genre: Pulp mystery, Page count: 47, File size: 1447k. Estimated Download Times: with 28.8 kbps - 14 Min 17 Sec; with 56 kbps - 7 Min 21 Sec, with Cable/DSL - 49 Sec. Price: $4.00 electronic copy

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The electronic book 'Dead Sea Murder' is an exciting unsolved piece of history.

The story has been woven around the **'Dead Sea Scrolls'** which are the largest and oldest body of manuscripts relating to the Bible and to the time of Jesus of Nazareth.

As the legend says, in 1947, a young Bedouin shepherd accidentally reached a cave near the dead sea and found few leather scrolls. The entire search yielded thousands of scrolls from 11 caves. Later, archaeologists excavated the Qumran ruin near these caves.

Both paleographic evidence and carbon -14 dating shows that these scrolls date back to the time of Jesus of Nazareth, hence they are so crucial in history. These scrolls are one of the most ancient records that throw light on the history of Judaism. The inhabitants of **Qumran** had believed in the system of written laws. They believed that some day the 'sons of light' will defeat the 'sons of darkness'.

The scrolls were written and stored at hidden places to protect them from the Romans. After the Roman invasion, only the **rabbinic Judaism** survived. The scrolls contained both biblical and non-biblical text. Of the biblical text, they contain the entire Hebrew bible except Esther. The text quoted in the scrolls mentioned beliefs, hymns, psalms. It also had information about treasure (copper scroll), book of job etc.

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They were written in Hebrew.

What is most intriguing for the researchers is why exactly were they hidden, who had placed them there and of what significance are the scrolls to Judaism and Christianity? Or are the scrolls a guide to some hidden treasure. About 15% of the scrolls are still unidentified.

To answer the puzzle, researchers have postulated various views. The most widely accepted is known as the Qumran-Essene Hypothesis. Essene was a sect belonging to Judaism. They had

written the scrolls to protect them during the Roman invasion. However, considering the opposition that this theory faces, what most scholars now agree to is called as the 'Qumran-sectarian theory'.

...'Dead Sea Murder' happens to be a thriller which spins around the secret of these ancient scrolls. The story begins with the confirmation of death of Sister Frances Agnes, cartographer and a member of the National Archaeological, Geographic and Submarine society (NAGS). She was currently investigating around the dead sea and had returned after the discovery of few scrolls...
'Dead Sea Murder' happens to be a thriller which spins around the secret of these ancient scrolls. The story begins with the confirmation of death of Sister Frances Agnes, cartographer and a member of the National Archaeological, Geographic and Submarine society (**NAGS**). She was currently investigating around the dead sea and had returned after the discovery of few scrolls. She had shared the details of her success with her colleague, Sister Mary Elizabeth who is a paleographer. But before Sister Frances could reveal the location of the secret scrolls, she is found murdered.

It is now the duty of Sister Elizabeth, who informs the NAGS campus about her murder and requests them to conduct an inquiry into the case. As a responsibility, the team also decides to continue the search of the scrolls, which Sister Frances had begun.

The adventure thus begins with two-faceted task, that of solving the murder and of continuing the expedition.

To complete the inputs, the author introduces all important characters which are linked to the mystery.

They are namely

- Professor Larry Fitzpatrick - Sister Frances' colleague and competitor. He had been taking quite interest in the Dead Sea expeditions recently.
- Muhammad Haddad - the Bedouin guide who had accompanied Sister Frances on her mission to the Dead Sea.
- Inspector Calvin Davies - the investigating officer.
- Joseph Solomon - leader of the 'Sons of light'

There are certain minute details, which are mentioned to the reader as the plot is explained further. These include information about each of the characters listed above, their motives for murder, clues in favour and against etc.

...The reader is exposed to a lot of options to choose from and plan the course of the investigation. He is actually a game master. He has to decide how to proceed and solve the mystery. He can choose his murder suspect. He can also add complications for the players to handle. These can include problems with the local Bedouins while investigating, or the hardships to the journey of Dead Sea and the caves...
To make the picture simple, an outline of the map of Qumran, dead sea and a map of Sister Frances neighbourhood has been provided.

With this basic information, a game can be played.

The NAGS is a society of scientists dedicated to exploring the unknowns of the Earth - **Terra Incognita** .

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There are few outcomes which have been mentioned at the end. The game master can choose from the available outcomes or he can come with an entirely different and challenging one.

The game can be played with a **fudge** dice - a six sided dice with plus and minus signs indicated. The game master can decide the difficulty level. He can assign tasks and then measure the attributes or skills of his players. Like every game, this one too promises both 'gifts' and 'faults' for every right or wrong step taken respectively.

As per historical records, no doubt that the 'Dead Sea scrolls' have been an enigma in themselves. And to solve any linked piece of fiction is a challenge in itself.

The present compilation thus guarantees full entertainment, keeping up the spirit of a game.



-Aashima Gupta,
Dr. Aashima Gupta is a graduate from Maulana Azad Medical College, where she consistently toppped in every subject. She was chosen as the best student of the Maulana Azad Medical College. A keen learner, she pursues reading with great zeal. She can be contacted at aashima82_gpt@yahoo.co.in

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Dead Sea Murder by Amanda Dickerson

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