

A Pair of Thick, Woolen Socks

I just finished watching a fascinating interview on Oprah. I am not a regular viewer by any means but she seems to be going out with a bang. I could not pass up the opportunity to watch her sit and chat with the world's first self-made billionaire author. If ever J.K. Rowling has her memoirs published I will be in line to snatch it up. Just one hour totally fascinated me. How from very humble beginnings to a 13 month and one day marriage to the death of her mother and the estrangement from her father all combined to give her the ammunition to create what has become a worldwide juggernaut.

The term "phenomenon" came up in one intriguing moment. Remember back in the mid 80s when Michael Jackson's *Thriller* was declared the phenomenon of the day. At the time, the concept did not enter the King of Pop's head. And neither has it entered Rowling's. If it had, she feels that she would now be trying to do herself one better. Attempting to create the next great world and leaving Harry Potter by the wayside. Incidentally, the author turned down Jackson's offer to turn her world into a musical.

Did you know it took Jo twelve rejections before, on the lucky 13th publisher, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (which we blokes know as the *Sorcerer's Stone*) saw the light of day? Even then, she was warned that children's books make little to no money. Well... after seventeen years, 7 books, 6 movies (with two coming), millions in collectibles, and the theme park... who is laughing now?

She even detailed some of the downside of her life that is very much a part of the masterpiece. In her eyes, every other page seems to point to her mother's failing from MS. The dementors (who prey upon the happiness of their victims and seek to suck out their soul) represent her own battle with depression. However, the prevalent theme throughout the

(his mother than burned them), there was nothing happening about discovering the mystery death.

Quite frankly, I've been using this book to help me get to sleep. I stopped doing that because I was afraid I would drop my nook off the bed. That got me to the start of chapter 7. Yawn... I'm getting tired writing about it...

If you need an insomnia cure, run out to the library and see if they have Timothy Frost's "Final Passage". Cheaper than sleeping pills. Just don't load it on a book reader, you may fall asleep and then break your reader when you drop it.

Good point – It was free... ☐

Confusion in the world of Nook

I made a purchase for my nook reader over the weekend that made reading with the Nook just one step closer to the books it is replacing. And it does have the smell of a new leather bound book.

I picked up a protective cover for it. A nice leather cover that opens up like a book. Holding the leather gives the Nook a different feel. Less like a piece of electronic equipment, and yes more like a book. I was surprised at how close to a book it was when I tried to turn the page. I actually tried to flip non-existent pages in an electronic book. I'm not sure if it was the feel of the cover, or the material I was reading.

Anyway the book I was reading was another free download from B&N. The author is Lee Child and the book was the 9th in a

series of murder mysteries with the lead character being Jack Reacher.

It was a gripping novel that had me not wanting it to be time to sleep. Very hard to put down. It also made me want to look up other works of this author. While I haven't been disappointed in any of the free books I've had the chance to read, I did notice the special free selections seemed to be aimed at getting the reader to buy other books. Excellent marketing ploy. Free books to download on Fridays and for a limited time more free books to download when you go into a B&N store. Most have been a good first representation of a particular author/style. A couple have been books I wouldn't normally look at, but I try at least the first chapter to see if I care for it at all.

Not much in the way of a book review, but I thought that it was interesting that I tried to turn a physical page after I put the Nook in a cover.

Not just a book reader

Yes, I realize you may be getting tired of my Nook posts. But I am discovering new things about it all of the time.

The kind folks that do the programming for the Nook gave it a few updates recently. I don't really play the games, but I did find the web browser useful in scanning my email. Don't think I will use it to reply to email, but reading it was fine. That is not what I wanted to write about.

This summer Barnes and Noble is running a free e-book promotion. Go to a B-N store with your Nook or some other electronic gear with the free Nook reader installed, and you

can get a free e-book. Since I was picking up my daughter in Fort Wayne, I stopped to get the free e-book. And then I noticed there was a coupon on my Nook. I could go up to the coffee bar and get a free 7-layer bar. Not knowing exactly what it was, I went over to find out. It was a chocolate/coconut desert bar. Very tasty. So in addition to more reading than I will ever be able to finish, I get desert with my nook. Who know what it will be next time I am in.

As far as the free book. I haven't read it yet, I was still reading the Friday Free Ebook. Someday maybe I will buy an ebook, but not yet. ☐

And of course while visiting a B-N store, you can read ebooks for free. They even tell me that your place is saved for the next time you go in.

And I also heard that more libraries are getting into e-book lending. I think I will have a full summer of reading ahead of me.

I didn't know that.

A few years ago a movie came out and was release to critical defeat. As for myself I enjoyed the movie except for a few minor problems. I found it to be an enjoyable waste of time (just what I like in most movies).

The movie was [The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen](#). One of the biggest things that bothered me was the introduction of Tom Sawyer into the movie. On top of that he was a Pinkerton agent. I kept saying to myself, why bring in that character as a detective. Didn't make much sense to me. Of course Dorian Grey wasn't in the original comic either, but that didn't

bother me as much.

Then I got my Nook! (Yep, another Nook post. Think I could get money to write reviews for my Nook?) I just finished a short story, from Mark Twain, that I never read or heard of before. The story was called [Tom Sawyer, Detective](#). While he was not a Pinkerton agent, he did use observation to solve a crime. So now after the years I've complained about Tom Sawyer being a detective in that movie, I guess that following the path that Twain left, it isn't that far out into left field.

There is another story that I have yet to read about Mr Sawyer and Mr. Finn called [Tom Sawyer Abroad](#). Tom and Huck are on a balloon expedition in Africa. I guess that allows the trip to England for Tom anyway.

Just one question about the movie, if the film people actually knew about these stories: Where was Huck? ☐

Nook again

I currently have around 200 books/stories on my Nook. I have read or started to read about 20 of those books/stories. I also have a number of MP3's. So I do have a wide selection to read or listen to. I can add research books that are available. I have new authors who started by publishing free books. I have old authors whose works are now being digitally archived and made available on the internet. A wonderful array of things to keep this old mind busy.

There is no physical way that I would have been able to read the past few selections in paper. Living in rural America, our local libraries can not be expected to have complete libraries of old classic books, they can't be expected to have all of

the latest authors. And if a book is out of print? How will the get it? That doesn't even include books that are found only on the web. Stories only found in back issues of old magazines. Nope, I would not have been able to find all of the things I've read.

In my lifetime, I've had to move a 'library' of books from place to place. I've moved, my children have moved and we all have had books. A box of 20 hardbound books is heavy. 200+ books would be almost a truckload. I can carry them in the palm of my hand. And I can and will put more books on the Nook. I'm not sure I will ever read all of them, but it will give me something to do.

And I am assuming that in the years to come, more books will be available in electronic format. I will probably still buy books, go to the library or borrow a book or two from friends. Hard copy books and the feel in my hand are things I don't want to give up just yet. But I'm thinking if the improvements to the reader itself and the books available, I may be able to carry a complete reference, entertainment library wherever I go. I think that is a wonderful thing.

And the movies never did it justice.

and probably never could, but I haven't seen the TV series.

What am I talking about?

I just finished reading [Alexandre Dumas'](#) book ['The Count of Monte Cristo'](#). This is a very long book. It loops here, there and everywhere. Characters have many interactions with others.

There are friends, sons, daughters, parents and of course enemies involved. Plot twists abound.

I remember back many years ago, I read this book for High School. It was just after we moved out into the boonies. The house had no heat, it was the middle of the winter and my parents and younger sister were living in a camper. With very little room to move around, reading was the activity of the day. It took me a weekend, plus a day or two to finish the 1000+ page book. I enjoyed it, but all recollection was pushed aside. I saw at least [one movie](#) and a [TV adaptation](#) of the book and enjoyed those too. I even liked the [‘Mr. Magoo’](#) version.

I will tell you that as an adult (maybe in name only), I enjoyed this book more than any of the previous encounters with the work. Maybe I got a better translation this time, but the writing was crisp and clear even when the plot was not (and the plot was meant to be foggy).

I knew the story, but was compelled to turn to the next page and read the next chapter. I will recommend this book to anyone with some lonng reading time they want to fill.

Oh, and the best thing about this. I was reading it on my Nook and I wasn't trying to hold up pounds of paper. ☐

Now there is a twisted mind I can admire.

Not really an e-book review, since I've read or heard the various stories since my childhood, but I've been reading selections from Edgar Allan Poe on my Nook for the past week

or so.

What I really enjoy about Poe, is the variety of writing I can read from him. He wrote short stories, poetry, black comedies. He wrote mysteries, horror and love poems. He wrote about real life mysteries. But he is mainly remembered for his stories and poems of the macabre and a lone visitor to his grave years after his death.

This past week I've been reading stories I've remembered from my youth. For those who don't know the story, my older brother would read me Poe for bed time stories. He was 12 years older than me and had been reading Poe for school. For some reason he thought that these stories were fine his 4/5 year old kid brother. While there were a couple that kept me hiding under blankets for many nights (Tell Tale Heart, Pit and the Pendulum), I remember most of the stories and poems with great affection. I have to thank my brother for enlightening me at such a young and impressionable age. I'm sure this help/hindered? in my becoming who I am today. ☐

This past week, I've revisited the above mentioned stories and many others. 45 years and many readings later, these stories still hold my attention.

This is another look into the writing styles of the past. Think back to these stories being printed in various magazines. Then they are read in a time without electric lights. Candles, oil lamps and some gas lamps, plus the fire in the hearth, were the lighting of the time. All of these lamps were darker than our current electric lights. They make moving and shifting shadows on the walls. Poe's stories of Horror and the Macabre read in those settings still can give a chill to the bones. With story telling/reading, the imagination of the listener/reader are key to the sense of the story. Poe's stories readily help feed a fertile imagination.

Looking for a bit of that evening thrill, read 'The Tell-Tale

Heart' by the light of a hurricane lamp. Or read "The Cask of Amontillado" in a damp cool cellar under candle light. Or how about "The Raven" in dim light during a wind/rain storm. Let your imaginations go, pick up some Poe and enjoy a shiver or two. Of course, you may need to read them alone...

New for the Nook

Barnes and Noble is really making headway with their book reader. Today I just got a software update for my Nook. They made somethings easier like connecting to Wi-Fi sites and loading music. And they added a thing or two. The first was a section for Games. So far there are only two games, but I'm sure they will add more. I'm sure part of it will be a money maker for them too. I can see them charging for 'Game' apps. They said they did some changes to make the page turning quicker. All good right!

Then there is the big change. I can now access the internet on my Nook. I was able to read blog posts, check up on email and some other things you can do on the web. I don't think it is made to play movies or things like that, but it does handle basic text and graphics very well. I don't think I would ever use it for more than quick replies. The data entry is a bit rough for me. I did try to reply to a blog, but it said I was posting from a spam site, even when I was logged in as me. Hmmm.

Big problem though, the Web seems to eat battery life. I guess I will need to keep my charging cord available at all times if I want to scan the web often.

I just hope the ability to store my books in files, or give them tags will be available soon.

Not just one book

There are times I will recommend an author to someone just to make sure they read the whole series. Of course, I would recommend the complete “Lord of the Rings” books by Tolkien and The 7 Harry Potter books by Rowling. There are other authors I have talked about too.

My recommendation this week is not for a series of books, even though this author did have a few books that had a continuing story line. No, I started to read some of his other works, and I found them to be just as gripping as any other stories I read by him.

Look up the works of [Sax Rohmer](#). He is chiefly remembered for his [Fu Manchu stories](#), but he wrote other mystery novels that were as compelling. Stories are generally set in the early 1900’s through the 1930’s. This week I finished the stories [“Bat Wing”](#) and [“Brood of the Witch Queen”](#). They are mystery/suspense stories with a little bit of the Occult or Voodoo thrown in. Both can be found at www.feedbooks.com.

I found that while I expected certain endings to both stories (I tend to do that reading mysteries), I was kept in the story by the plot and characters. I will be reading more of his books/stories in the future. I’m glad I took the time to examine his stories that did not involve Fu Manchu.