



A Natural History of Dragons: A Memoir by Lady Trent (The Lady Trent Memoirs)

By Marie Brennan

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Marie Brennan begins a thrilling new fantasy series in *A Natural History of Dragons*, combining adventure with the inquisitive spirit of the Victorian Age.

You, dear reader, continue at your own risk. It is not for the faint of heart?no more so than the study of dragons itself. But such study offers rewards beyond compare: to stand in a dragon's presence, even for the briefest of moments?even at the risk of one's life?is a delight that, once experienced, can never be forgotten. . . .

All the world, from Scirland to the farthest reaches of Eriga, know Isabella, Lady Trent, to be the world's preeminent dragon naturalist. She is the remarkable woman who brought the study of dragons out of the misty shadows of myth and misunderstanding into the clear light of modern science. But before she became the illustrious figure we know today, there was a bookish young woman whose passion for learning, natural history, and, yes, dragons defied the stifling conventions of her day.

Here at last, in her own words, is the true story of a pioneering spirit who risked her reputation, her prospects, and her fragile flesh and bone to satisfy her scientific curiosity; of how she sought true love and happiness despite her lamentable eccentricities; and of her thrilling expedition to the perilous mountains of Vystrana, where she made the first of many historic discoveries that would change the world forever.

"Saturated with the joy and urgency of discovery and scientific curiosity."?Publishers Weekly (starred review) on *A Natural History of Dragons*

An NPR Best Book of 2013

The Lady Trent Memoirs

1. *A Natural History of Dragons*

2. *The Tropic of Serpents*
3. *Voyage of the Basilisk*
4. *In the Labyrinth of Drakes*
5. *Within the Sanctuary of Wings*

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 7 Up-Isabella, Lady Trent, opens her memoir by warning readers that, "this series will contain frozen mountains, foetid swamps, hostile foreigners, hostile fellow countrymen, the occasional hostile family member, bad decisions, misadventures in orienteering, diseases of an unromantic sort, and a plenitude of mud." Writing in an ornate, Victorian style with painstaking attention to detail (but also a generous leavening of dry, self-deprecating humor), the fictitious "author" describes how her girlhood obsession with dragons led to her career of studying and drawing them and her first foreign expedition to the mountains of Vystrana. Although her story takes place in a fantasy realm, readers familiar with the worlds of Jane Austen, Georgette Heyer, and the like will understand the tropes and norms of high-society Scirland. Similarly, Drustanev, where dragons are supposed to lair, is reminiscent of imperialist Russia, from the geography of snow-capped mountain villages to the depictions of surly peasants and power-hungry boyars. Sketches of the various dragons and dragon-related scenes that Isabella encounters are scattered throughout the narrative. The pen-and-ink documentary style, which echoes textbook illustrations, adds to the atmosphere of scientific reality, which will appeal to fantasy readers and those who enjoy books such as Pierre Dubois's *Great Encyclopedia of Faeries* (S & S, 2000). The one criticism devoted dragon fans might have is that more attention is paid to establishing Isabella's entry into the world of scientists than to the magical beasts and their behavior.-Evelyn Khoo Schwartz, Georgetown Day School, Washington, DC(c) Copyright 2013. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

Review

"Her Ladyship is a determined and canny woman in search of dragons--I wholeheartedly approve!" *Melanie Rawn*, bestselling author of *Touchstone*, on *A Natural History of Dragons*

"Saturated with the joy and urgency of discovery and scientific curiosity." *Publishers Weekly* (starred review)

"If you've ever secretly wished dragons were real, this story is for you. Fans of Naomi Novik and Mary Robinette Kowal will especially enjoy this book." *RT Book Reviews*

"Told in the style of a Victorian memoir, courageous, intelligent and determined Isabella's account is colorful, vigorous and absorbing. A sort of Victorian why-what-whodunit embellished by Brennan's singular upgrade of a fantasy bromide and revitalizingly different viewpoint." *Kirkus Reviews*

"Lady Trent is the Jane Goodall of dragonkind, and I'm glad she's finally sharing her story with the world." *Jim C. Hines*, author of *Libriomancer*

"*A Natural History of Dragons* stands somewhere between Naomi Novik and Elizabeth Peters, but rock-solidly in its own world and on its own terms. Highly recommended." *Daniel Fox*, author of *Dragon in Chains*

About the Author

MARIE BRENNAN habitually pillages her background in anthropology, archaeology, and folklore for

fictional purposes. She is the author of the Onyx Court series (*Midnight Never Come*, *In Ashes Lie*, *A Star Shall Fall*, and *With Fate Conspire*) and the Doppelganger duology (*Warrior* and *Witch*), as well as more than thirty short stories.

Users Review

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