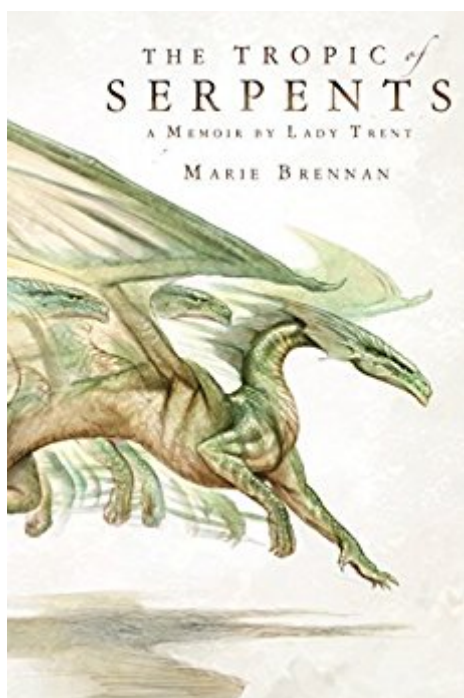


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The Tropic Of Serpents: A Memoir By Lady Trent (A Natural History Of Dragons Book 2)



Synopsis

The thrilling adventure of Lady Trent continues in Marie Brennan's *Tropic of Serpents* . . . Attentive readers of Lady Trent's earlier memoir, *A Natural History of Dragons*, are already familiar with how a bookish and determined young woman named Isabella first set out on the historic course that would one day lead her to becoming the world's premier dragon naturalist. Now, in this remarkably candid second volume, Lady Trent looks back at the next stage of her illustrious (and occasionally scandalous) career. Three years after her fateful journeys through the forbidding mountains of Vystrana, Mrs. Camherst defies family and convention to embark on an expedition to the war-torn continent of Eriga, home of such exotic draconian species as the grass-dwelling snakes of the savannah, arboreal tree snakes, and, most elusive of all, the legendary swamp-wyrms of the tropics. The expedition is not an easy one. Accompanied by both an old associate and a runaway heiress, Isabella must brave oppressive heat, merciless fevers, palace intrigues, gossip, and other hazards in order to satisfy her boundless fascination with all things draconian, even if it means venturing deep into the forbidden jungle known as the Green Hell . . . where her courage, resourcefulness, and scientific curiosity will be tested as never before. At the Publisher's request, this title is being sold without Digital Rights Management Software (DRM) applied.

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Customer Reviews

I received this book as a gift, and found it surprisingly delightful. It's written from the point of view of the protagonist, Isabella Camherst, a woman living in a universe that appears to be much like that of late 19th century Europe. From childhood, she has a fascination with dragons, which exist in this alternate world in a variety of forms, from tiny "sparklings" that are mistaken for insects, to large, predatory reptiles with toxic breath living in remote corners of the world. Unfortunately the constraints of her gender and class at first appear to prevent her from following her passion in the way that is available to male adventurers and explorers, but like the legendary Isabella Bird in our own universe, Isabella Camherst finds a way around them and begins a lifetime of adventure looking for dragons and studying their habits and morphology. Her voice is humorous in a late-nineteenth-century way; she creates a persona who is appealing and sympathetic. The book has numerous illustrations allegedly taken from her field journals that also fit the steampunk style of this novel. It draws readers in; I recommend it.

Without shame I have posted the same review for each of the three books in this series because you really can't read just one. The irresistible heroine combines Jane Goodall, Margaret Mead and Shirley Temple. Set in a Victorian-like era when women wore long skirts and aspired for no more than a good marriage, this adventurer overturned social mores by wearing slacks and venturing on horseback or sailing ship to remote jungles and islands. When cultural scrapes, political intrigue or the occasional battle threatens the quest, the heroine's sensitivity, diplomacy and sharp wit rescue the expedition. Though dragons make an exotic subject, Lady Trent puts the scales under microscope, takes casts of bones, dissects specimens and observes behavior with the no-fuss objectivity of an entomologist studying a fly. Back in her day, well before the advent of evolutionary theory, much less conservation, Lady Trent had the foresight to realize that the species was rare and probably in danger. Her race against time to learn seems poignant now that we know dragons are extinct, gone the way of other exploited creatures. For fantasy, these books are content heavy. The characters have three dimensional personalities and complex psychological motivations. The settings, though fictional, ring with historic realism and the cultures are anthropological tapestries. If anything the exhaustive detail, descriptions of people, places, scientific method and events, overshadows the adventure, but according to Lady Trent, the adventures are secondary to

gathering knowledge and the lessons are the point of the story.

This book itself is amazing and it feels like I'm actually having the adventures of the character. The reason I gave this 3 stars is because of how the book was handled. I was only expecting the top and bottom to have small crinkles when it was shipped. It did have these, but very extensive. In addition to this, there is an area in the back that is also crinkled and damaged that it looks like this book has more of a status in being "used" when I ordered this "Brand New."

A wonderful new adventure with Lady Trent looking for dragons in the tropics. I love the artwork inside that helps the reader see what she is describing. The pace was a bit slower than I would have liked, but overall I enjoyed it.

I love this whole series. I finished book 1 in a few days and quickly finished this one too. It reads like historical fiction and the setting is similar to our Victorian era. If you love historical fiction, fantasy, dragons, adventure, and strong female characters, you'll love this book.

I am glad that Isabella Camherst was allowed to come into her own in this installment. I felt that the thin romantic angles in this story were a boon to what the story became. It is great having a strong female character in a role in a fantasy novel that would normally be held by a man.

This series is very enjoyable. There is a mix between steam punk, our modern world and urban fantasy. Tropic of Serpents is the second book in the series. In this story, Isabella is once again defiant of the cultural norm and embarks on a field study. She is ridiculed and harassed by her family and society as a whole for not conforming to the societal norm. The trip takes her to a remote land that is very tropical and has several conflicts in progress. Her group is immediately brought to the local king's palace and over time he requests that the price for their admission to the swamp area (where the focus on the dragons will take place) is to bring back an egg for the palace. Once in the jungle she suffers tremendous hardship and wins a nominal status among the indigent tribe. Her team gets up close and personal with the dragons of the region and along the way becomes involved in the conflict. In the end, she gets more attention from the higher ups than she was bargaining for but achieves her goal of studying the dragons. The story and characters are really well developed and the read is wonderful.

This is the second installment of Brennan's "natural history" series, and it's just as enjoyable as the first. In book two, Isabella and companions journey to the "Green Hell" of a pseudo-Africa; there, they discover the secret behind the great Moulsh swamp-wyrms. Additionally, Isabelle continues her journey of self-discovery. She lives with a simple jungle tribe, whose attachment to "things" is dictated by what they can carry. She is captured by enemy warriors, saves the colony, and is not thanked (much) for her endeavors. The authentic voice in these books reminds us that it's not so long ago that women were expected to stay home and raise babies. Even in Isabella's alternate world, the heroine must struggle with a male-dominated society that doesn't expect a woman to possess a scientific mind. I await the next installments of this series with pleasure.

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