



Cold-Forged Flame

Marie Brennan

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The sound of the horn pierces the apeiron, shattering the stillness of that realm. Its clarion call creates ripples, substance, something more. It is a summons, a command. There is will. There is need. And so, in reply, there is a woman.

At the beginning—no—at the end—she appears, full of fury and bound by chains of prophecy.

Setting off on an unexplained quest from which she is compelled to complete, and facing unnatural challenges in a land that doesn't seem to exist, she will discover the secrets of herself, or die trying. But along the way, the obstacles will grow to a seemingly insurmountable point, and the final choice will be the biggest sacrifice yet.

This is the story of a woman's struggle against her very existence, an epic tale of the adventure and emotional upheaval on the way to face an ancient enigmatic foe. This could only spun from the imagination of Marie Brennan, award-winning author and beloved fantasist, beginning a new series about the consequences of war—and of fate.

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Cold-Forged Flame Details

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Author : Marie Brennan

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From Reader Review Cold-Forged Flame for online ebook

Kaitlin says

I'd give this novella a solid 3.5*s overall as it's not quite what I expected and it does have some unique moments, but the present tense writing style can be a little jarring at times as it is a little unusual. This is a novella I picked up because I knew I liked Marie Brennan and Tor.com and so it just seemed like a match I needed to sample. I don't think this is the sort of story you should go into knowing too much, and so I won't tell you much, other than it's exciting, mysterious and definitely I can't wait to read the sequel :D

Elisa says

I really enjoyed this novella, and what looks like the start to a series. It is only 100 pages, and it is amazing how much Brennan fits into this story.

Just go with it, our lead is missing her memory, so you don't know what is really happening for quite some time. I found the story completely worth it. Just immerse yourself in the rich fantasy trappings, that are surprisingly short on words.

Bring on book 2!

The Captain says

Ahoy there me mateys! I received this fantasy eARC from NetGalley in exchange for an honest review. So here be me honest musings . . .

I had previously read this author's warrior/witch duology and the first novel in her Lady Trent series. I wanted more of her work and this book sounded amazing. I read this in a sitting and adored it . . .

The worse thing I can say about the reading experience was that I didn't know it was a novella! I finished the e-book version and was convinced that I had somehow gotten a weird version. So I re-downloaded in another format. Same. Where were the rest of the chapters? The story was just getting started. I wanted the rest. Grrrrrr! I was confused as to why me book was so short.

Well, the interwebs then told me it was a novella. Silly Captain. However I wouldn't change me reading experience. Also I recommend if ye choose to read this, other then the little book blurb (if ye wish), read no details before beginning. The way the story unfolds is delightful because I had no clue what the hell was going on. And even the answers ye do get by the end only whet the appetite for more. I want the next novella!

If ye want to see me other reviews go to [https://thecaptainsquartersblog.wordpress...](https://thecaptainsquartersblog.wordpress.com)

Kayla Eklund says

I've heard great things about Marie Brennan's books. My husband has read her The Memoirs of Lady Trent series, and loved it. It was one of his favorite fantasy series that he read in 2016. He has talked so positively

about her books that I've really wanted to read them. I was looking through her backlog, and decided to try Cold-Forged Flame. It's a Tor.com novella, which I've read a lot of recently. It's short, so I figured it would be a quick read to get a taste of her writing style. Unfortunately, I didn't like it at all.

I had so many problems with Cold-Forged Flame. I think the main problem I had with the book was that it was so boring. Nothing happened. There was no plot advancement at all. Every time I felt like something exciting was going to happen, the book went down a different path, and nothing happened. It left me feeling frustrated, and very disappointed. It just felt like a waste of time reading one hundred and four pages. I understand that a lot of that was because of world building, and that it's very hard to build a complex world in a little over one hundred pages. If the book was longer, it might have held my interest more because it probably would have had some action. It was starting to have some at the end of the book, but at that point, I just didn't care and wanted to be done reading it.

Cold-Forged Flame was incredibly disappointing to me, especially after my husband had hyped up how good Marie Brennan's books are. It was so incredibly boring. Even though I didn't like this book, I probably will give at least the first book in her The Memoirs of Lady Trent series a try. Cold-Forged Flame is the first book in a series, but I don't foresee myself ever picking up the rest of the series with as much as I disliked this book. I've learned over the last year that with Tor.com novellas, I have a love/hate relationship. Some of them, I become obsessed with and want to read multiple times. Others, I hate. There is no in between. Unfortunately, this was one of the ones I hated. I do still plan to make my way through all of the Tor.com novellas though. There are a lot of hidden gems in there. This just wasn't one of them.

Barb (Boxermommyreads) says

I'm trying to read a little outside of my comfort zone this year and I thought this novella from Tor.com was a perfect place to start. A woman wakes up surrounded by a clan of people whom she doesn't know. She doesn't remember her past or her name but suddenly she is given the task of obtaining a few drops of blood from an ancient entity who lives on an island in the middle of basically nowhere. During the way she encounters threats and forges a new alliance. As she struggles to complete her task, she also struggles to figure out who and perhaps what she really is.

I have to admit I've never read any other works by Brennan but now I really want to do so. I loved her writing style and the novella kept me interested from start to finish. I believe there may be more to this series and I seriously hope there is because I can't wait to find out more. I possibly could have even went with 5/5, but I have to admit I sometimes struggle with novellas because I love character and world building and I often think these aspects take longer to develop. However, in a limited amount of time, Brennan does a pretty bang-up job. I'm sure the people who already love her will devour this upcoming release and people who haven't been introduced to her will probably want to learn more after reading "Cold Forged Flame."

I was provided this from Tor.com in exchange for an honest review.

Nikki says

Received to review via Netgalley

I was so excited to receive this: I love Marie Brennan's work, and by coincidence my request was even approved on my wedding day. So of course I've hurried to read it, and I wasn't disappointed at all — it's part

of Tor.com's novella series, so it is short, but for me it avoids the issues of many other novellas by being both a whole story in itself but with scope for more stories. I think that's partially what makes it satisfying: it leaves space for more without feeling unfinished, rather than tying things up neatly with a bow or leaving too much undone. I don't think more stories are necessary: the questions the story poses are answered.

I like the set-up, and to say too much about it would probably spoil the story. The main character doesn't know what is happening any more than the reader does, and what she remembers or realises is revealed at more or less the same pace as the reader discovers it. It's an interesting world, one which I'd gladly read more of with other characters too, and Marie Brennan's writing makes it a smooth and engaging read. This is probably among my favourites of the Tor.com novellas so far, and it's not just because it's Marie Brennan's work — it's also because it does a really good job with the form.

Originally posted here.

Jasmine says

A really interesting idea, but I would have liked this more as the first arc of a novel rather than a stand alone story. Well done, just not really my thing?

Joseph says

She is summoned, bound to a task and sent on her way with (at first) no idea of who (or what) she is, nor why she has been sent. As she traverses an implacably hostile (and not all that fair-playing) island, she may or may not be discovering some of the answers ...

A shorter novella, this one, but intriguing, and I look forward to the sequel.

Solseit says

[it ends with the door open to many more stories to follow (hide spoiler)]

Linda says

This is an interesting story with an intriguing main character. The story's main shortcoming is...that it's short. It comes in at about 60 pages on my iPad mini screen, a long short story or a very short novella. At \$2.99, it's a bit pricey for what you get.

The story ends with a promising set-up for further adventures, and this story would work well as a prequel to a series. If this is, indeed, the case and the next book (due out next spring) is a full-length novel, I will look forward to it. If the series continues with more short stories at \$2.99 a pop, coming out one every several months, I doubt my interest will continue despite the intriguing start.

Mike says

I much enjoyed this author's A Natural History of Dragons, which some people found dull. This is not dull. It's a fast-moving novella with plenty of action and conflict.

The plot is straightforward and doesn't break new ground (fetch quest with obstacles to overcome), and it begins with amnesia. Neither of these things are promising on the face of it. Main-character amnesia, in particular, is a cliché start, and is sometimes an inexperienced author's way of dealing with the fact that they don't know who their character is either. In the hands of an experienced author like this one, though (or like Roger Zelazny, who pulled it off wonderfully in Nine Princes in Amber), it can work, and here it did, for me.

Even though none of the individual elements shows us anything new, they're executed so well that I still enjoyed it. In particular, I liked the defiant punk-rock attitude of the main character, which elevated her from an amnesiac blank slate/standard-issue kickass warrior chick to someone I wanted to cheer for. When faced with decisions, she considers carefully and chooses well and bravely, for clear reasons.

Overall, then, proof that you don't have to innovate to craft an enjoyable story, though I would have preferred more innovation, on the whole.

Karina Read says

Struggling to find something positive to say. I finished it? That's why it gets two stars instead of one. The writing was very wooden and it wasn't compelling or intriguing... sorry, not at all for me.

Sarah says

Well that was fun! And really suspenseful! When's the next one coming out? Immediately, right? Because that was fun!

A woman wakes on a slab of rock and remembers nothing of her life, although she remembers places and objects and such. She finds that she's essentially been conjured into being and is bound to a quest to obtain some blood from a cauldron on a mysterious island that is only there sometimes. The trip to the cave on the island is full of many traps and tests and it manages to create a great deal of suspense for pretty much 2/3 of the novella.

Truly fun and it only took an hour to read.

DarkChaplain says

Review also published here

Disclaimer: I received an ARC of this novella from the publisher. Keep that in mind while reading the review.

Cold-Forged Flame is a very different story from Marie Brennan's *Lady Trent Memoirs*, which I adore (and eagerly await the final book of!). What the story *does* have in common with the series is that it is about a girl/woman on the journey to self-discovery - although in a different manner than the Lady Trent's.

The originally unnamed protagonist is summoned and bound to a task set for her: To retrieve a vial of blood from a cauldron in a cave, on an island that defies logic. She knows nothing about herself, or how she knows even things such as language. Forced to obey against her will, with the doubtful promise of freedom upon completion, she sets out to the mysterious island.

At first, I felt it difficult to connect with the story. It is very different from what I've come to expect from Marie Brennan (which doesn't say much, since I have only read one of her series, I admit). Having a blank slate character with a rebellious attitude worked against the story at first, in my eyes. Confronted with a new, unknown fantasy world, I find it easiest to use characters and their roles within their world to anchor myself while discovering the setting. This was difficult at first, as the protagonist was learning along with me, herself a stranger.

Once the adventure really began, and the plot kept rolling, and even introduced a supporting character to drip-feed answers as more questions opened up and the protagonist's identity seemed to return bit by bit, I fully settled into the tale. I got invested in the two's trials, and the woman's dilemma. By the final steps of their quest, I wanted more and was comfortable with the way Brennan constructed this novella.

The book plunges the reader into an unfamiliar situation, mirroring the protagonist's own position. We follow her, discovering things at a steady pace with her, ask the same questions about her summoners' motives and the task at hand, and as a result, fear for her when things get dicey. The story grows stronger along with the central characters, raising the stakes along with her knowledge of self, and ends on a note where I'd undoubtedly want to read more about them.

With growing knowledge of the setting and characters, I grew fond of the concepts Brennan presented. Granted, the adventure itself was fairly straightforward (if you can even say that about a mysterious island that tries to trick your mind!), but that allowed for more introspection and growth, discovering what kind of person the protagonist is. It worked, despite the shaky start for me.

I am curious to see where all of this is headed, and what magical aspects will come up in following works in the series. *Cold-Forged Flame* provides a solid foundation for hopefully many more adventures to come.

Alexander Páez says

Reseña completa

Imaginad que os despertáis rodeados de gente que os observa con hostilidad, con reverencia, y con temor. No recordáis nada, ni quién sois, ni cómo habéis llegado allí, ni de dónde venís. Pero sí que hay ciertas acciones o pensamientos que fluyen solos. La confusión es enorme, pero hay otra amenaza, y esto sí que lo podéis afirmar. Esa gente os ha traído allí, os ha encadenado, y os pide un trato. Un trato en el que no tenéis oportunidad de elegir. Conseguir un objeto a cambio de respuestas, y quizá, la libertad. O quizá a cambio de nada. La protagonista de *Cold-Forged Flame* vive todo esto en las primeras páginas de esta novella publicada por Tor.com en su estupenda colección de novelas cortas a la que estoy tremendamente aficionado y a la que doy prioridad en mi pila. Textos de entre 60 y 200pgs máximo que son puras delicias en el 70% de los casos.

#LeoAutorasOct Mi primero de la lista. Interesante, entretenido, y misterioso. Me lo he pasado en grande aunque se me ha desinflado un poco al final. Prometía "más".

Reseña completa
