

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR

NAOMI NOVIK



LEAGUE *of*
DRAGONS

THE FINAL TEMERAIRE NOVEL

This is the ninth and penultimate book in Naomi Novik's engaging and quietly bold Temeraire series. (Think Horatio Hornblower...with dragons.) Even ardent fans will admit that Novik seemed a bit adrift for a book or two in the series. (Notably the sixth and seventh ones.) But she refocused and rediscovered what was truly energizing about this world and delivered in spades with the last title. Indeed, she followed that up with the Nebula Award-winning stand-alone fantasy "Uprooted." And now comes League Of Dragons. With just one more novel to go, Novik is flying towards the finish line. We can now see that the real heart of the story is the dawning recognition of the dragons themselves that they deserve the same rights as humans. If that sounds tedious and "lessons-are-learned," well the books are anything but. Napoleon is determined to conquer the world in this alternate history and his masterstroke here is to woo the dragons of the world to his side, both the ones previously aligned with their "masters" and the wild, feral dragons that can create all sorts of havoc. The dragons are talking, thinking quarrelsome characters and bursting with all too human qualities like pettiness, greed and -- sometimes -- begrudging respect for one another. Our hero is Temeraire who does quite like amassing a fortune but is adaptable enough to appreciate a bulging bank account almost as much as a pile of gold and silver coins and objects. If you haven't read any of the books, you should start at the very beginning. This novel starts mid-action and ends mid-action and my only complaint is that the final novel isn't coming out next week. Fans will be thoroughly pleased. And everyone will appreciate a new dragon sprung into their mix, character so self-assured and blithely self-serving that they threaten to supplant Temeraire in my affection. It leads me to believe that in the final novel the suspense is not which great power the dragons align with but whether they'll wake up to realize they are their own power, and don't need humans so very much after all. Witty, exciting, filled with grand battles and well-grounded humor. Novik keeps getting better. -- Michael Giltz