



# DragonFly

*Charles A. Cornell*

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**DragonFly** Charles A. Cornell

2018 Reader's Favorite Silver Medal - Young Adult - Action

A young woman with the fate of a nation in her hands. An aircraft designed by science, fueled by magic and flown with passion. A World War re-imagined like never before.

In 1942 an unlikely heroine changes the course of history. Twenty-two year old RAF pilot Veronica 'Ronnie' Somerset is determined to overcome every obstacle to become Britain's first female combat pilot. When 'Ronnie' is assigned to Enysfarne, a mysterious Royal Navy base off the coast of Cornwall, fate places her inside the cockpit of a revolutionary new aircraft powered by quadra-hydrogen, the DragonFly, a plane that carries the hopes of Britain on its blue and silver wings.

Across the English Channel, Reichsführer Bernhardt Morax, Hitler's personal sorcerer prepares his army of Blutskriegers for the invasion of Britain. The Blutskriegers are bio-mechanical warriors created by a Nazi occult science whose dark secrets cross the boundaries of evil.

As the German invasion fleet gathers off England's shores, will the Druid wizard, Affodill whose ancestral home of Enysfarne has been expropriated by the Royal Navy join forces with the British or will he make a pact with the evil Morax? Can Princess Victoria and Ronnie Somerset convince Affodill to place his magic in the service of a nation that has betrayed his Druid ancestors for centuries?

## DragonFly Details

Date : Published October 23rd 2015 by CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform (first published March 1st 2014)

ISBN : 9781518630316

Author : Charles A. Cornell

Format : Paperback 386 pages

Genre : Historical, Historical Fiction, Fantasy, Science Fiction, Steampunk

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# From Reader Review DragonFly for online ebook

## Lexie Conyngham says

I received a free copy of this for review (partly because I failed to read the small print!)

This is an alternative reality scenario but set against a Royal Naval station in Cornwall in the Second World War, where rather strange things are happening. The Germans have been developing some alarming aircraft which are devastating the RAF and Navy, but a Naval boffin has a surprise up his sleeve and it's related closely to the mysterious and lengthy history of the castle in which they are based. Pilot Officer Veronica Somerset, who has some influential connexions, is fighting against a degree of discrimination and her own history with the RAF to prove her worth as a pilot, and the boffin persuades his commanding officer to accept her as a test pilot for his new aeroplane. I don't often read books with illustrations but found these very interesting: alongside imagined depictions of both German and British experimental aircraft are contemporary photographs of personnel and aircraft which, if the writing were not enough, would keep us firmly in context. The writing is enough, however: from the setting of a heavily-bombed Cornwall to the excitement of test-flying a new aircraft, fast-moving aerial combat and even Druidic ceremonies, it's convincing. If I'm going to be picky, the Latin needs looking at, and there are a number of Americanisms – most are ignorable (after all, this is an alternative reality and the narrator has been hanging out with an American squadron) but having the narrator describe an aeroplane as like a 'sexy roadster' grated rather. There are also a couple of odd Australianisms – from reading Ngaio Marsh you can see that 'too right' was not a British expression at the time, though it would be an easy mistake to make these days, overinfluenced as we are by Neighbours! I wasn't entirely convinced by the woman-to-woman conversation in the pub, either. But for the overwhelming most part I rocketed through this and am looking forward to the promised next one. I understand the genre is diesel punk – I may well be reading much more of it, if this is an example. It was thrilling.

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## Brendon says

I received this e-book for free after participating in the E-Book Miner's Book of the Month program. This is my full and honest review and opinion of the book.

I must say I really enjoyed this read. The story had a great balance of action, character development, fantasy/magic, and science fiction technology. This was my first historical fiction book I have read that mixed the genres of scifi, fantasy, and steampunk.

When I rate scfi/fantasy novels, I really look for two things. The first is a compelling story. Do I lose myself in the chapters or do I find I am forcing myself to finish the book? In this case, I found it very easy to pick up this book. The story was well written (I personally liked the writing style) and the novel had a certain beat – a smooth flow. The action sequences kept me very engaged and I found myself reading large chunks of this book in single sittings. The second thing I look for is a compelling but believable magic system (fantasy novels) or new technology (science fiction). In this book, the technology of the DragonFly was believable and interesting. We all wish we could invent an engine that runs on water, right?! The magic was explained less and I really do hope the Druid race makes an appearance in the remainder of the trilogy. My only critique with the story was how magic was used at the end of the story – a little cliché and predictable.

Finally, I want to commend the author for writing a compelling and strong female lead placed in a time where women were not particularly not seen as capable, especially in the air force / any military branch. It's characters like Ronnie and the courage of authors like Cornell (to write such characters) that will help change the face of the scifi/fantasy/steampunk genre.

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## **Stefanie says**

(Gifted from the author for my vote in the Ebook Miner group.)

DragonFly is a wild AU WWII adventure that takes the British Navy, Air Force, and Hitler himself from our own history and throws in heavy doses of Hitler's mysticism and army of talented humans and genetically modified monsters along with some pretty impressive British forces of sassy ladies (including Princess Victoria), powerful crystal-harvesting druids, and fantastic diesel punk aircraft.

It is a refreshing break from the over-saturated market of WWII fiction that focuses on true events and lets the reader experience the war as it could have been under futuristic circumstances, and its wonderful female pilots do a great job of showing that women in the air are just as tough as men without taking away their femininity. Ronnie is a smart-mouthed pilot who is a delight to read, and it was fun to watch her interact with her fellow pilots and the DragonFly scientists and mechanics. I loved the way the illustrations and photographs displayed the characters; it added a lot to the story for me to be able to see the aircraft as well as I have no background in it.

Would recommend to people wanting a grown up version of Scott Westerfeld's Leviathan, a new take on historical fiction, some fun diesel punk, or a good action story.

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## **C.J. Anaya says**

I've got to say it's been a while since I've read a book as well written as DragonFly . There are so many items I wish to discuss in regards to my enthusiastic approval, I hardly know where to start. I must advise anyone reading this that there will be plenty of spoilers. Consider yourself warned. Now on to the good stuff. Dragonfly is a unique story of an alternate World War II view involving mysticism, dieselpunk technology, science and thrilling action.

Veronica (Ronnie) is a woman struggling to assert herself in a man's world as a fighter pilot for the Royal Army. Her beginning is a bit rocky due to some bad press from a jealous rival and a rather stupid ex-lover. I am such a fan of these types of conflicts where the underdog is given a chance to exceed everyone's (including the readers') expectations, and exceed them she does, over and over and over again.

She quickly befriends a scientist working on combining science and magic to fuel a new technologically advanced aircraft called Dragonfly. Ronnie soon becomes indispensable as a fighter pilot in the war against Hitler. My girl power senses were tingling all over the place as she and her two girlfriends, one being the future queen of England, kicked Hitler's fanny throughout the entire book. The obstacles, fight scenes and overall storyline were expertly weaved into a novel I simply could not put down. Read it in five hours.

The author's ability to paint a picture and make the reader feel as if they were in the heart of the battle was

wonderful. The use of imagery and his attention to detail made me feel as if I'd been visiting Great Britain for years, even though I've never once set foot upon that wonderful country. The language was poetic, but not too flowery. I often felt a bit mesmerized whenever the landscape was described. The picture in my mind was a setting like nothing I'd ever before experienced.

Other descriptive phrases were more gruesome in nature but certainly painted a picture of war. The book starts out with a bang, quite literally, when the train Ronnie is on is pelted by bullets. A little girl is injured and the author describes her as "...a bloody bundle of laundry that had grown arms and legs."

The dialogue furthered the development of each character, and never for one moment did I feel like a scene, a description or a line of dialogue was a waste. One particular quote I loved was when Ronnie and her friend Busbee are in the Portcullis Inn having a drink and talking about the war and Busbee is telling Ronnie she has to focus on now instead of how things could be in the future. Ronnie asks, "And what about our hopes, Busbee? When did dreams become such a luxury?" To which Busbee replies, "I guess when nightmares became so cheap."

The author seems to have quite the mechanical mind and an expansive understanding of aircraft and engineering. I must admit there was plenty of terminology I just didn't quite understand, but it didn't keep me from finding a dictionary. I'm not one for ignoring the unknown word and continuing on. I can't keep going until I know exactly what the author is talking about. I found it all fairly educational. Even the mystical aspects of it and the way the bodies of the mechanical soldiers were set up was really intriguing material.

My copy of this book had full illustrations, another plus for me since the descriptive terminology for all of the aircraft in the novel was something I didn't fully understand. Every illustration gave me a perfect frame of reference as the battle scenes unfolded and the Dragonfly Squadron fearlessly fought off Hitler's military with all of their bells and whistles. Beautiful illustrations, by the way. Loved every single one of them as well as the pictures at the beginning of each chapter.

In other words, this was a freaking awesome book, and I can't wait to read the next one in the series. Ronnie rocks, girls rule, Hitler drools and God save the queen!

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## **Veronica ?? says**

I really enjoy stories written around the world wars. However, this is the first story I've read that combines the historical elements of WWII with Science Fiction/Fantasy elements of engineering and a little magic.

Veronica 'Ronnie' Somerset, an RAF pilot, is sent to Enysfarne, a Navy coastal outpost.

*"The castle of Enysfarne was a dark and towering force that hovered over what was left of my innocence. It contained my destiny, of that I had no doubt whatsoever; a fate that threatened to wipe the blush off my face and turn me into the man my father always wanted me to be."* - Pilot Officer Ronnie Somerset.

The station Commander has already written her off as a scatterbrain female and of no use to them.

*"There may be a shortage of pilots but if it was up to me, I wouldn't let you fly a kite for the Royal Navy!"* - Station Commander Commodore K C Lowndes

However, when the situation becomes desperate Ronnie and her two best friends, also accomplished pilots, are given the opportunity to prove their worth and take the three DragonFly planes into battle.

Ronnie proves herself as a top pilot and a great female lead – asserting herself at all the right times. Ronnie and her co-pilot Dr Nigel Pennbridge, creator of the DragonFly, have a great chemistry and I applaud Cornell for not pushing their partnership into a romance.

Planes, their workings and aerial combat figure highly in this reimagining of WWII with metal wasps, planes that run on water, telepathy, cyborgs and druids this is a highly recommended read for both WWII and Science Fiction fans alike.

*"It's magic", I said. "Not magic, Ronnie. Science."* - Dr Nigel Pennbridge.

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### **Hákon Gunnarsson says**

I got this book through ePub Miner in exchange for an honest review. While reading it I felt like the writing style reminded me of something, and it finally dawned on me around the halfway mark. It feels a bit like some of the books I read as a kid. Books that had heros which were very good role models, kids or teenagers trying to take first steps in an adult world and proving themselves. In DragonFly there are young women in similar steps, while fully adult they are trying to make their mark on a very male oriented environment and doing it quite well. Ronnie, Busbee and Vicky are quite positive role models.

It is an exciting yarn which I enjoyed reading. The narrative moves at a brisk pace, and has plenty of action. I found the way it mixes together dieselpunk and fantasy rather interesting. One thing though, alternative history can be tricky to write, especially when dealing with real people. I'm not sure about all the departures from history the author makes in DragonFly, like the way King George is handled, but the world still works for me. It is consistent, and that is the main thing. The author has created a world full of mystery and menace, where his heroines have a place to shine.

It's a fun book, but not a flawless one. There are times when the dialog was a little too formal for the situations the characters where in, and one can find the occasional stiff sentences that could have been improved. I really didn't feel this was a major problem. On the whole the proof reading and editing seems to have been done competently and the book flows rather nicely apart from these minor lapses.

I read the illustrated edition, and even though I'm not sure how much the illustrations actually add to the narrative, they are good. And it was interesting to see how the author visions his retro futuristic planes on both side of the war. So the bottom line is that despite some minor flaws I enjoyed this book and I will read the next in the series when it comes. According to the end of DragonFly the sequel will be called Spies in Manhattan and I'd really like to know what Ronnie will be doing on the other side of the Atlantic.

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### **Charles Cornell says**

Of course I think this is five-star. What author wouldn't? I really want to know what you think. This is a dieselpunk novel... a blend of science fiction and fantasy in a world of an alternative history. So if it is anything, it is unique!

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## **Laura says**

I received this for review through the Goodreads group ebook miner!

After pondering it for a while, I found there were two main problems I had with this book that made it less enjoyable.

First, there was a lack of clarity throughout the book. Some things weren't thoroughly explained (like the whole sorcerer bit and Veronica's past) and it just wasn't clear. Sometimes the plot and what was happening to the characters was a bit fuzzy as well. It sometimes felt like the author had taken a two month break between writing chapters and didn't remember what had happened from one to the next.

Secondly, there was a lack of emotion that's needed for me to connect with the characters. There were few, if no emotions thoroughly expressed throughout the book which led the characters to be 2D and unreal.

However there were things I enjoyed. I loved the whole idea of the book. How the author mixed fantasy and history without ever really changing history itself. The plot was also very exciting and engaging.

The Final Verdict:

Overall, this book was just okay. It was engaging but not a page-turner. There was a distinct lack of clarity and emotion that had be detached and sometimes confused. The idea of the book was fabulous though!

3 stars

Quotes:

"The challenge of a journalist is to condense a thousand thoughts into a single sound bite. The challenge of an author is to place a simple idea on a canvas as infinite as your imagination. No doubt about it. I have the easier job."

"The castle of Enysfarne was a dark and towering force that hovered over what was left of my innocence. It contained my destiny, of that I had no doubt whatsoever; a fate that threatened to wipe the blush off my face and turn me into the man my father always wanted me to be... Veronica Somerset, Dragonfly."

"And what about our hopes Busbee? When did dreams become such a luxury?"

"I guess when nightmares became so cheap"

"Come in, Berlin. Do you read? This is Flight Lieutenant Veronica Somerset, Royal Bloody Air Force, flying up your arsehole in DragonFly One. Okay, Herr Hitler, send up your worst... if you dare. Because this girl's not going to back down from a fight!"

“The fuel for imagination comes from the feeling in your heart.”

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## **John Catton says**

This first volume of the series "Missions of the Dragonfly Squadron" has well-rounded characters, a strong plot and a superb doom-laden atmosphere. It can be regarded as a complete success in building an alternative reality World War Two that lives and breathes.

When I sat down to write a review of this book, I realized that this was going to be difficult, because there is so much going on in the plot. But on the other hand, this book is an omnibus edition of two stories, "To Hell and Back" and "Victory or Death", so basically I'm reviewing two books in one.

The setting is an alternate history version of World War Two, where the USA has reversed its position and pulled out of the conflict. To place the UK in further danger, Operation Barbarossa was cancelled and Germany never invaded Russia, leaving Hitler free to concentrate on the subjugation of the British Isles. This places our central characters under inconceivable stress, and for most of the story the reader is thinking 'how on earth can they get out of this one?'

As far as characterization is concerned, the story rests on the chemistry between Veronica Somerset and her Dragonfly co-pilot, Dr. Nigel Pennbridge. He's not the love interest - spoilers forbid me to say who wins Ronnie's heart - but these two spend a lot of 'screen time' together flying the experimental Dragonfly plane. Nigel is a character not only warm and sympathetic but also quick-thinking and cunning, and miles away from the stereotyped British boffin. Ronny, however, is the soul of the book, and the reader cheers as she stands up for herself, her friends and her country in a society still dominated by male chauvinists. In fact, one of my wishes is that Ronnie could get more breathing space in the story; the plot is so fast-paced, she spends most of her time racing from one crisis or weird event to another. She needs a few more quiet, introspective scenes, so the reader can learn more of her complex personality.

Having mentioned the plot - yes, Cornell certainly throws a lot of mind-boggling concepts at the reader. There are the experimental aircraft such as the Platzi, Wasp, and Keg fighter planes, and the Stratojager rockets - but there are also the Nazi occult projects, such as the Nachtjagers and the Blutskriegers. This sounds like it would overbalance the plot but it doesn't; I mentioned before this is an omnibus edition, and part of an epic story arc - and also in real life, the Nazis were trying to do a million things at once anyway! On that note, the Nazis have hardly been depicted as deadly and murderous as they are here. They are upped to a new level by the antagonist Reichsfuhrer Morax, whose dedication to the victory of the 'master race' is utterly believable. Hitler is used sparingly, but when he appears, his speeches are chilling. There is sadism, there is despair, there are battles of desperate individuals against unbelievable odds ... but to me, that's what a World War two story should be.

The research is solid. The experimental Nazi technology are mostly Cornell's original creations, although the 'Platzi' look similar to Rudolf Schreiver's real-life 'Flugdiskus' project; all of the machines, however, look and sound plausible. Furthermore, Cornell gives a painstaking build-up to the supernatural elements of the book, so they don't feel like a Deus Ex Machina.

Finally, to fully enjoy the scope of this story, the reader must buy the illustrated version. That's the only way to get the full glory of the Weird World War experience. Kudos to Jose Garcia, Jordy Lakiere and Andrew Lounds for creating detailed images that I could stare at until I lose track of time.

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## **Laura says**



DragonFly starts off with a bang – the train carrying Pilot Officer Veronica (Ronnie) Somerset to her newly assigned post is attacked by Nazi planes. She makes it to the station, then on to the Royal Naval Station Enysfarne, a castle high above the Cornish coastline.

After establishing she is indeed a pilot, not a cook, Ronnie learns she will be testing the latest British plane, the DragonFly. It is the furthest thing from ordinary. Able to travel on land or under the sea, it boasts the ability to refuel either in the sea or during a rainstorm because runs on ordinary water. Nigel Pennbridge, the resident scientist/inventor introduces Ronnie to the “War Office’s Department of Experimental War Technology”. It is used to create powerful shells and bombs to use against the impending Nazi invasion of Britain.

Hitler depends upon the occult to advise him in battle. The cards warn him of the women that will get in his way. He is not concerned, because the Nazi’s have secret weapons of their own. Imagine robots created out of human prisoners of war that can no longer think for themselves then enhanced with robotic parts. The Blutskreiger are all that and horrifyingly more.

Cornell’s battle scenes remind me of Clive Cussler’s style. Just when your heart stops thumping, thinking the good guys are finally safe Cornell ramps up the action again. The excitement and tension created puts the reader in the jump seat right next to the fearless pilots of the Dragonfly.

DragonFly is so much more than battles, Cornell touches on the occult, a sect of Ancient Druids, a connection to the Royal Family and a love interest or two. It was satisfying to have a woman RAF Pilot expertly fighting against the enemy. I think the YA audience will love this book. It has something for everyone. History wrapped in mystery draped in SciFi makes DragonFly a fast-paced winner.

I would be remiss if I didn’t mention the beautiful artwork of Jose “Cutangus” Garcia, Jordy Lakiere and Andrew Lounds bring the scenes to life. The illustrations at the beginning of each chapter as well as the vintage photographs enhanced my reading experience to the next level. I can imagine Dragonfly as a summer blockbuster at my local theater in the not too distant future.

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DISCLOSURE OF MATERIAL CONNECTION: I have a material connection because I received a review copy that I can keep for consideration in preparing to write this content. I was not expected to return this item after my review

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## **The Author Visits says**

Note – The Author Visits received this book from the author in return for an honest review. These opinions are solely our own.

Review by Kristin Lundgren on behalf of The Author Visits

Veronica "Ronnie" Somerset, is a ferry pilot of Lancaster bombers from the factories in Canada to England, or flying the 'grumpy hippo', the Sunderland flying boat, on mail runs. Known for speaking her mind, she is sent down to Enysfarne, down by Penzance - a radar station and outpost, but also what was to be her

headquarters for the duration of this part of the war. It is also the birthplace of the Dragonfly, a "special" plane, highly experimental, and mysteriously powered. Here she will live up to all that was the British spirit of have a cuppa, and save the homeland.

Joining her in this wild ride of a diesel punk WWII alternative history combat story is her best friend Busbee Collins, Dr. Nigel Pennbridge, the inventor of the Dragonfly and it's special mechanics, and the girls' childhood friend, Vicki, HRH Victoria, Princess of Wales, and heir to the British throne, who also happens to be a damned fine pilot.

With an assortment of characters on both the British and Nazi side, and a slew of planes both real and invented, this story takes off and doesn't stop except to refuel. We go behind the scenes with Hitler and his inner circle and his obsession with the mystical, and are treated on both sides to some interesting and inventive inter-weavings of truth and "fiction."

Cons: Although there were some areas where it could be tightened up, and a few loose threads snipped, a few leaps in action without explanation, a few misspellings that could be British or jokingly said (cow-towing), and a few references that are un-PC, but probably okay for the time period in question, overall it was more than a decent job.

Pros: Here's why I have them backwards (pros v. cons). Although I noticed most of those cons in the beginning, by the middle of the story, either they disappeared, or I was so caught up in the story, and in the wonderful flying world the author invented, as well as the incredible illustrations that can be blow up much bigger of the "new" aircraft by "Cutangus" that I never noticed any more issues.

I flew through the book like one of the pilots, nimbly jumping from one sortie to another, from Cornwall to Devon, from Jutland to the Baltic Sea, and back to England to be one of the main reasons the great Nazi invasion of Britain was fought back, esp. after the Americans caved, and made a truce with Germany, withdrawing all their aerial support of the B-17s, the Lancaster bombers, and other aircraft in service at the time, leaving England to stand on it's own, even as most of the royal family, including the King, went via submarine to safety in Canada.

This is a book about WWII, and the planes and aerial combat figure prominently in it, but with the illustrations, and the website full of additional supporting information on the crew and team members of both sides, the aircraft from both (also experimental, but incredible), and the main hero(ines) being three indomitable young ladies with great talent at the stick, this book would appeal to most people. I'm a 50 something woman, and I really enjoyed it, and would give it the highest praise a reader could - I'd love to read more in the series, and I'd read it again!

My Rating: 5 loop-the-loop stars

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## **eBook Miner says**

**Straight off the bat, we like to admit that we have not read this book.**

However, our community has read it (in excess of well over 30 times) and we give an average rating based on what they say.

The real rating based on the average our community reviewed was 4.5 stars.  
Our readers all rated the book between 4 and 5 stars which is a phenomenal effort by this author.

DragonFly was chosen quite convincingly as our August 2014 book of the month.  
Charles A. Cornell enthralled voters by his description of his book and the unique genre it sits in, "Diesel Punk."

Charles is an intelligent author who has managed to come up with a brilliant concept, matched with an above average writing skill set.

Charles is a great guy and we wish him all the best in the future. He was an absolute pleasure to work with as our August 2014 book of the month winner.

If you would like to see what our community thought in greater depth, please read the reviews or check out our thread below:

<https://www.goodreads.com/topic/show/...>

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## **Jonah Gibson says**

DragonFly is a romp! World War II re-imagined in a proto-feminist, diesel punk fantasy world. A little science fiction. A little Druid sorcery. A whole lot of Nazi excesses to fuel the narrative. Pilot Officer Veronica "Ronnie" Somerset must overcome the entrenched 'good-old-boy' misogyny of the RAF and the Royal Navy to land a job piloting a flying boat out of a remote naval base off the Cornish coast. When her assigned plane is destroyed in a surprise Luftwaffe raid she thinks she's out of a job.

By force of will and a stroke of fortune she instead finds herself piloting the Dragonfly, an experimental fighter/bomber with a revolutionary new propulsion system and a host of innovative features that promise to even the odds somewhat against what seems to be insurmountable Nazi air superiority.

Ronnie acquits herself with pluck and valor in a series of increasingly dangerous missions as events accelerate toward an inevitable Nazi invasion of Britain which will deploy horrific new weapons systems. So dire is the situation that it seems at times that she and her wonderful aircraft are the only things standing in the way of a total German victory. Ronnie Somerset carries the fate of the world in the cockpit with her as she fights planes, rockets, amphibious landing craft, and deadly bio-vulcanized robo-warriors to a cataclysmic conclusion.

If you like adventure, you'll like this book. If you thrive on non-stop action, a healthy dose of retro-futuristic science, a little magic, and fully realized characters, you'll like this book. If you like a heroine who can do everything a man can do and then some with grace and determination, yet without losing her essential femininity, you'll like this book. If you like a truly imaginative narrative set in an alternative universe that still manages to be familiar, then you'll like this book. And . . . it's illustrated! There are 60 stunning graphics in the illustrated edition at least half of them from graphic artist, Cutangus, that will leave you a little breathless.

I received my copy of DragonFly for free from the author as part of a Book of the Month event through the Goodreads group, ebook miner. That said, I am glad to have read it, happy to recommend it, and I'm looking

forward to more books in the DragonFly series.

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## **Kristin Lundgren says**

This review was done for TheAuthorVisits.com, a website for authors and readers.

Here's the review. It's a dieselpunk, alt. history WWII story about aerial combat between Germany and Britain. Early on, I was going to give it 4 stars, but I so enjoyed it, and wanted to read the next book, and knew I wanted to reread this one, that I had to give it 5 stars. Very inventive, and with lovely illustrations that can be zoomed in on.

Title: DragonFly (Missions of the DragonFly Squadron #1) Illustrated

Author: Charles Cornell, Jose "Cutangus" Garcia, Illustrator

# of Pages 365 (no pages on ebook)

Synopsis:

Veronica "Ronnie" Somerset, is a ferry pilot of Lancaster bombers from the factories in Canada to England, or flying the 'grumpy hippo', the Sunderland flying boat, on mail runs. Known for speaking her mind, she is sent down to Enysfarne, down by Penzance - a radar station and outpost, but also what was to be her headquarters for the duration of this part of the war. It is also the birthplace of the Dragonfly, a "special" plane, highly experimental, and mysteriously powered. Here she will live up to all that was the British spirit of have a cuppa, and save the homeland.

Joining her in this wild ride of a diesel punk WWII alternative history combat story is her best friend Busbee Collins, Dr. Nigel Pennbridge, the inventor of the Dragonfly and it's special mechanics, and the girls' childhood friend, Vicki, HRH Victoria, Princess of Wales, and heir to the British throne, who also happens to be a damned fine pilot.

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## **Bard Constantine says**

Dragonfly is a dieselpunk/alternative history novel set in WWII. It follows the harrowing adventures of Veronica 'Ronnie' Somerset, a mail drop pilot who is thrust into the spotlight when she becomes the first female combat pilot in the face of a looming Nazi invasion of Britain. Her fearless example leads to an additional pair of women pilots, forming the Dragonfly Squadron.

There is a lot to like about Dragonfly. Mr. Cornell has a firm grasp of the time period, putting the reader in the air and on the ground in the midst of razing bullets, exploding shells, and techno-zombie super soldiers. That's right, this is dieselpunk, where the speculative intertwines with the historical. Captain America would have been right at home in this novel, but he's not needed because Veronica and her crew are holding down the fort. Hitler had better look out.

There is some mystical linings that spice the tale up a bit, but the story is solidly footed in the struggle between Britain and Germany in a world that doesn't particularly follow the history that we know. There are surprises, there is intrigue, and there are those aircraft.

Mr. Cornell takes obviously delight in the design of his nifty fighter planes, from the zippy Dragonfly to the menacing craft of the Nazis. This is an illustrated version, and the designs are outstanding. One can only hope there will be a Hollywood adaption one day, because this story would look outstanding in the same style as the movie Sky Captain. The great part about this story is that it is just the first of a series of books. Personally, I'm looking forward to more of Mr. Cornell's dieselpunk world.

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