



# The Dragon's Hoard

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News & Choice:

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Media type:

Book

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This collection of eleven stories is a wonderful introduction to Viking sagas for children. Lari Don's retellings strike just the right note for her young audience. It is the anecdotes and wry observations that bring these stories to life. They demand to be read aloud. There is everything here from fearsome warriors and feisty women to dragons, monsters and even zombies together with all the excitement, danger and cunning you could want plus a good deal of mischief and humour thrown in. These tales also show us another more caring and softer side to the Vikings. I especially like **The Beserker's Baby** where a fearsome warrior who just can't help himself beserking finds an abandoned baby to care for which changes his life forever. And there's Magnus of Orkney in **Hunting Magnus** who comes to the realisation that he does not want to fight men for no good reason and cleverly works out a way to escape home.

The stories don't always have happy endings as in **The Swan Warrior** and **Tusker Versus the Earl** but they do show often surprising viewpoints or different angles to these sagas. Heroes don't necessarily start off with good or brave intentions as in **The Raven Banner** or **The Boy in The Bones** and Sigurd who although he slays the dragon and claims the gold in **The Dragon's Hoard** does not live a charmed life afterwards.

Evocative illustrations by Cate James complement the stories. Her soft and beautiful colour palette brings out the hues of the Northern landscapes perfectly. And they are not without a touch of humour either - the image of Tusker with his long yellow tooth is particularly arresting especially when you know how the Earl of Orkney gets his comeuppance.

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