



# The Kraken King and the Scribbling Spinster

*Meljean Brook*

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## **The Kraken King and the Scribbling Spinster** Meljean Brook

A former smuggler and thief, Ariq—better known as the Kraken King—doesn't know what to make of the clever, mysterious woman he rescues from an airship besieged by marauders. Unsure if she's a spy or a pawn in someone else's game, Ariq isn't about to let her out of his sight until he finds out...

After escaping her fourth kidnapping attempt in a year, Zenobia Fox has learned to vigilantly guard her identity. While her brother Archimedes is notorious for his exploits, Zenobia has had no adventures to call her own—besides the stories she writes. But when she jumps at the chance to escape to the wilds of Australia and acquire research for her next story, Zenobia quickly discovers that the voyage will be far more adventurous than any fiction she could put to paper...

## **The Kraken King and the Scribbling Spinster Details**

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Author : Meljean Brook

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# From Reader Review *The Kraken King and the Scribbling Spinster* for online ebook

Isa Lavinia says

## ARC provided by InterMix through Netgalley

Whenever steampunk comes up I think "Meljean Brook". I don't even know if she was the first author I've read of the genre, but she is hands-down the best.

I thought I'd read all *Iron Seas'* books - so when I started this book, which features Zenobia Fox, Archimedes Fox's sister, I was like... "what."

Can you believe I spent ages lusting after *Heart of Steel*, bought the ebook, and then forgot about it and convinced myself I had been waiting for *Riveted* (which is the 3rd book! THIRD! in the series!)?!

My stupidity, thankfully, did not hinder the reading of *The Kraken King Part 1: The Kraken King and the Scribbling Spinster* (which is a title that's too long, and quite frankly too **awesome** to write every time), which can be read without any knowledge of the rest of the *Iron Seas'* series.

Meljean Brook has a super helpful guide about the world she created, anyway, in case of any confusion. Including a map which contains the best copyright notice I've ever read:

**(c) Meljean Brook**  
**Do not reproduce this map, please.**  
**It's too ugly.**

The story starts with Zenobia, travelling to Australia under the assumed name Geraldine Inkslinger, with her friend Helene.

Their ship is attacked and they are rescued by Ariq, the Kraken King, one of the most powerful men in the Horde rebellion.

Things start off well between Zenobia and Ariq - it's not insta-love, but it's insta-lust, and if there is one thing Brook writes well... it's lust. In just a few lines during their first meeting she has me hoping they'll be together forever.

But, of course, misunderstandings arise soon enough...

This is only Part 1, so it's much too short, ending right when I was completely hooked.

And to think I'll have to wait until April 22 to read Part 2!

I don't know how I'm going to wait... well, by finally reading *Heart of Steel*, for one!

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## Beth says

*The Kraken King Part I* gives us a good introduction to the great characters of Brook's next story.

While it is just the first installment in this book, we discover more about Zenobia Fox. She is finally stepping out from behind the pen of her infamous brother's adventures and taking on what she considered a lot less risky trip. Having the ship taken by air pirates, jumping from rescue flyers, plummeting into a kraken filled ocean only to be plucked up by the Kraken King himself...Zenobia is about to face an adventure that will rival her brothers exploits.

I was captivated from the beginning of this adventure but definitely wasn't ready for it to end where it did. Just when I felt myself utterly pulled into the story, I have to wait for part 2. I know its all about waiting when you follow a series but this magnificent snippet was just such a tease to what is sure to be an amazing adventure with characters I want to explore. I will be re-reading part 1 right before I read part 2, I want the beginning of the story fresh in my mind so I don't miss out on any of the adventure. I currently see 8 installments to complete this story starting with the release of Part 1 on April 15 and ending with Part 8 releasing on June 3, 2014.

I received this ARC copy of *The Kraken King Part I: The Kraken King and the Scribbling Spinster* from PENGUIN GROUP Berkley, NAL / Signet Romance, DAW - Intermix in exchange for a honest review. This book is set for publication April 15, 2014.

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Find this book on: Amazon | Barnes & Noble

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## Paula says

I love this authors steampunk books sssooooooooo much. I had to reread The Iron Duke to get another fix after this.

Ok what can i say I just reread this rereading again

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## Douglas Meeks says

I am giving this 5 Stars because I loved the story. This first installment just gives you the basics of a great

story and several mysteries.

The heroine has many secrets and you the reader will only know a few of them, the Kraken King (one of his many titles) is more than a mayor of a town that kills a lot of the krakens.

There is the beginning touches of a good romance but this short story beginning only gives us the very basics, these stories being serialized and released about a week apart might prove to be a source of frustration because this has all the earmarks of a really exceptional story and romance.

I will have to see who I can beg/bribe/threaten to get the rest of these as soon as possible :)

NOTE: Maybe it was just me but the first few chapters brought up memories of Romancing The Stone but now that I have finished I think that was a misconception on my part since our heroine has a LOT of secrets.

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**Jill says**

**3.5 stars**

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**Lynsey (A Bookish Life) says**

**Part I**

Well that's certainly one way to kick off a series - by throwing your heroine headlong off an airship! Part one in this eight-part serial offers a great introduction to heroine Zenobia Fox, who immediately proves herself brave, determined, yet strangely lacking in self-confidence. We also meet Ariq, aka The Kraken king, who was in the right place at the right time and offers refuge to our plucky heroine and crew. Sexual tension is rife between the pair, but trust is another matter. And the big questions posed by this opener to the serial: just who is destroying airships in Ariq's territory, and why? And what is Zenobia Fox (or is it "Geraldine"?) hiding?

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**Rhonda Stees-marcial says**

**Steam punk at its finest**

Zenobia Fox is in dead mysterious. I wonder what else she's hiding. I guess we'll have to read the next installment to find out what our brilliant heroine will do.

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**Talk Supe says**

Even if this is the fourth book in the Iron Seas series, I didn't feel lost jumping into THE KRAKEN KING.

After much research, the common denominator of the series is the setting as all the stories happen in this naval steampunk universe Meljean Brooks created. Aside from a few character connections here and there, every Iron Seas book features a different couple with their own story arc so each installment is a fresh story. I may be speaking too soon but so far, I think I can get away with reading THE KRAKEN KING as stand-alone.

On to the world building.

THE WORLD-BUILDING! We always say that books are awesome vacations, well brace yourselves because MBrook's THE KRAKEN KING will take you to such exotic places you may not want to leave! In this latest Iron Seas novel, we're taken to MBrook's version of Australia and the Pacific made more dangerous by zombies, pirates and Krakens washed ashore a Nipponese (Japanese) island, ruled by a rebel faction led by the infamous Kraken King aka Ariq.

The heroine, Zenobia Fox, is just as infamous as Ariq, The Kraken King. She's the "author of popular serial adventures and the oft-kidnapped sister to one of the wealthiest men who'd ever flung himself to danger," Archimedes Fox (Heart of Steel, Iron Seas 2), and Zenobia finds it prudent to hide her identity for her own safety. Not only that, obviously Ariq also has a rich history so there's a lot of potential complications that can stem from this the revelation alone is worth looking forward to. I'm still in the process of discovery but so far I can confidently say that THE KRAKEN KING will provide a delicious conflict and I'm anxious to read how MBrooks is going to untangle all the threads.

THE KRAKEN KING 1 was such an adventurous read in so few pages. It already gave me wonderful angles to explore starting from the lush and exotic setting down to the colorful and very diverse characters. The romantic tension between Zenobia and Ariq was quick to materialize but it's not an insta-love connection. Zenobia is going to make Ariq work for the nookie and I'm sure the Kraken King will give our scribbling heroine a lot of material for the book she's currently writing. I say that's great motivation to read part 2, don't you think so?

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## Jess says

Review posted: Happily Ever After - Reads  
Blog rating: A-

**His [Ariq] voice lowered. “On the flyer, I liked the feel of you against me. Now I’d like to feel you beneath me.”**

(...)

**“Is this a condition of us staying in this town?”**

**A frown darkened his face. “No. I ask because I would enjoy it.”**

**Of course he would. He was a man. It was common knowledge that they always did.**

**She [Zenobia] pursed her lips. “But would I enjoy it?”**

**He gave a short laugh that spread into a grin. “If you’ll have me, I’ll make your pleasure my only goal.”**

Zenobia Fox has lived through her brother’s adventures for years. Archimedes (Heart of Steel) always finds himself in the craziest situations and has corresponded with Zenobia telling her of his travels while she has turned his tales into stories. She’s now writing about Lady Lynx, a female lead, but she’s tired of not experiencing some adventure herself and although her life is often times in danger due to her brother who has racked up many enemies over the years, she sets off on an airship to Australia with her close friend Helene who’s flying there to see her husband, an ambassador, who she’s been away from for months. Zenobia is hoping for an adventure of her own and longs to see something that her brother hasn’t already described to her, but when their airship is attacked and Zenobia along with her two undercover bodyguards and Helene are rescued by two men, the adventure of her life begins.

Ariq, the Kraken King, is intrigued by Zenobia from the moment he hauls her out of the water after her airship catches fire. He knows she has secrets, he knows she’s hiding something from him (including her real name) and he knows he wants her. He wants to know everything about her and he wants her in his bed, but after some misunderstandings, Zenobia wants nothing to do with the man she’s insanely attracted to. Ariq is the leader of his small town of misfits on the western coast of Australia. He’s welcomed people who had nowhere else to go to Krakentown, so long as they don’t cause trouble. He’s a former thief and Zenobia knows of him through Archimedes and some of his past questionable adventures which involved Ariq and his Uncle (more on him later). After being initially attracted to him, Zenobia’s now shut down towards Ariq after hearing that he and his brother spoke badly of her (a complete misunderstanding) but it’s causing tension between them. However, I doubt Ariq will let that stay between them for long.

I enjoyed Ariq as soon as he came on page. He’s dangerous, adventurous and sexy. That’s quite the trio and he’s completely taken with Zenobia and refuses to stop his pursuit. I’ve liked Zenobia since she was first introduced into the Iron Seas series. She’s funny, has a wicked sense of humor and she’s a heroine that will be easy to cheer for throughout this series.

Part 1 finds our team of characters staying in Krakentown but Zenobia learns the truth as to why it’s so important for her friend to reach her husband as quickly as possible. With tension currently high between Zenobia and the Kraken King, he still remains her only hope of getting them on the move across the dangerous Australian territory. Meanwhile, Ariq is busy trying to figure out who sent the marauders who have been attacking the airships in his area. He needs to do this quickly before the empress takes matters into her own hands because she will level the entire area to end the fighting. As Ariq describes it, the marauders are a splinter and the entire western Australian coast an arm and if the splinter can’t be stopped the empress will just cut off the entire arm. Even with this huge distraction for Ariq, you can bet he will also figure prominently into Zenobia’s travel plans, no matter what she decides to do.

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## **Melindeeloo says**

In the air and on the sea, Zenobia Fox is going to get way more adventure than she bargained for as she falls into the world of the Kraken King...

I am so excited about The Kraken King stories, and as much as I am an instant gratification fan, I think the serial format is fun - and it's going to force me to savor the story instead of my usual gobbling. Another wonderful thing about getting the story in installments is not having to wait months/years for 'more' from this

favorite series and since it is Zenobia's story it seems very fitting that it be episodic.

This first episode does a great job of endearing me to both of the leads: Zenobia Fox (Archimede's sister who is the "Scribbling Spinster" chronicler of his adventures) and Ariq the Kraken King. There is a good chemistry between the pair, but I really like that the first things that attract Ariq to Zenobia - who is traveling 'undercover' as Gertrude Inkslinger (Inkslinger how great a name is that:) - is Zenobia's bravery and her quick mind. I also love that Ariq is very straightforward in his dealings with Zenobia which makes me better able to handle the obstacle to Zenobia acting on her attraction.

It is interesting that this story shows us another portion of the Iron Seas world and it is fun to hear Ariq, who is of Asian decent and who was a leader in the rebellion against the Golden Horde - speak of England as that little work colony (which it really was in the Iron Seas history.) Other than the romance, the thing that I think makes this whole series so much fun is the dash of adventure and it looks like there will be a bit with each installment - here that adventure drops Zenobia in the middle of the 'be careful of what you wish for' excitement she'd hoped to observe from the front row. Can't wait for more.

I do have a helpful hint for those picking up The Kraken King, since there is bonus excerpt for the Iron Duke at the end of this story, scope out the ending percentage ahead (these stories end at between 80 to 90% of the kindle content.) Not knowing this ahead of time, I was surprised to be 'all done' so soon (but then again this could have been ten times as many pages and the end would have still come too soon for me:)

(I received an complementary copy of this for review from the author - but I purchased a copy of this for my very own and have the rest of the eight episodes preordered.)

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## **Deniz says**

So quite frankly reading this was not a good idea in the least....

I was one of the super lucky people who got this as an ARC. Part I and II were part of said ARC, and since I read gobbled up both parts in one go, I wrote a review for both of them. I simply wouldn't be able to separate the two afterwards.

The good news for fans of the series. This is another fabulous addition to an already great series. The "bad" news this will be published as a serial. Which means a lot of waiting time.

Because after finishing this my first reaction.. running to amazon pre-ordering part III and then freaking out because it was weeeeeeeeeeeeks away. So my first thought after reading, maybe I shouldn't have started. Because this left me wanting more- no wait that's not right. It left me needing more.

The world building, is superb. If you read any of the previous books let me reassure you your expectations will be met. It is set in the Iron Seas world, in Australia to be exact and Brook adds her brand of fabulous gadgets and monsters. The world is described in detail and her gadgets are imaginative and a delight to this geeky heart.

The novel is written from Ariq and Zenobia's POV. The character building is as in the previous books slowly built, layer after layer of more depths is added to all the characters. There are actually quite a few support characters, I love how one sees different angles to them when the POV changes from one MC to the other.



The plot is true to Iron Seas form a mix of fantastic action and heart-melting sexy romance. Right from the beginning one is thrown into a whirlwind of action.

The romance just taking off at the end of Part II - the dance between Ariq and Zenobia being in full-force pull and push mode. But one is also left with a great amount of questions, a bit of mystery and worry over several characters wellbeing.

The pace of this is actually pretty amazing! There are rather beautiful moments of stillness alternated with super-exciting super-fast moments of heart-stopping action. Brook has mastered the art of just giving enough time for those more reflective moments to give the novel beautiful depths and throwing in enough action to keep the readers on their toes.

Brook's writing style is descriptive, subtle yet direct, full of depth and simply beautiful. Which is what made her one of my favorite authors in the first place.

I think the fabulously of the Iron Seas novels all lie in the incredibly perfect balance between world building, plot and character building. The Kraken King is another example of Brook's superb knowledge of her craft and talent.

This is part of the Iron Seas series but can be read as a stand-alone as well. If you haven't read any of the previous books in the series following the serial is definitely a great way to start it!

If your a fan- you won't be disappointed.

And the verdict on reading it as a serial? There was never a real choice...

**An absolute MUST for lovers of the genre!**

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## **Kara-karina says**

Joint review on Part I and II with Victoria

Karina:

What an amazing beginning of the serial! I honestly do not mind paying more for excellent writing for that - sharp, tantalizing, vivid and humorous. Zenobia and Ariq are going to be a powerful mix, one of the best couples in Iron Seas if the first installment is any indication of how it's going to proceed. \*grinning\* This is just their first meet and the beginning of the journey, and it's choke full of adventure and excitement. Get ready for airship, pirates and plenty for sexual tension, - it's going to be a bumpy ride!

Vika:

These were a total tease!

Now, I haven't read Meljean Brook's books before. \*looks ashamed\* I should have, I know. If anything, it would've been helpful to have some background on the fictional world of Iron Seas, which is clearly complex and interesting; instead I was feeling a bit lost. But, aside from my lack of familiarity, the characters really grabbed me. They splashed on the scene and were instantaneously vivid. The tension between the main couple was palpable and I couldn't help but smirk and giggle over their banter. I too, as Zenobia, loved

Ariq's blunt style – he was not wasting any time, but making his desires known upfront, which both appalled and attracted Zenobia to him.

Overall, it was a great, action-packed read, and I'm definitely curious to know more!

"Your husband isn't with you."

"No."

"Is he a fool?"

"no. He is dead." Zenobia expected some response to that announcement - sympathy, surprise - but she hasn't anticipated the

governor's smile. "*That* pleases you?"

"Are you still in mourning?"

"No."

"Then it pleases me. I feared I was too late."

"For what?" she had to ask. Her heart thudded when he stepped closer.

His voice lowered. "On the flyer, I liked the feel of you against me. Now I'd like to feel you beneath me."

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## AH says

Oh how much I love Meljean Brook's Iron Seas series. The world building is so detailed, so intricate, and just awesome. This is a world full of steampunky contraptions, megaladons, airships, kraken, and more. This story focuses on Archimedes' sister Zenobia, traveling incognito as Geraldine with her friend Helene, and her bodyguards Mara and Cooper. When their airship is attacked, they are rescued and taken to Krakentown. Zenobia's rescuer is Ariq, the Kraken King. And so begins a delicious and often hilarious attraction between the two. I love the way these two are getting to know each other.

My review copy also included an excerpt from **The Iron Duke**, the first book in the series. As an added bonus, the review copy also contained Part II of the story **The Kraken King and the Abominable Worm**. Not sure if this will be the case for the final copies.

I'm also wondering if this serial will come out later as an entire book. Each serial seems to be 4-6 chapters long. There are 7 parts to this series and at \$2 each, that would make the total cost about \$14, which isn't bad, considering Meljean Brook is one of my favorite authors.

*Thank you to NetGalley and Penguin Group Berkley for a review copy of this book.*

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## Karissa says

I love the Iron Seas series by Meljean Brook and was so excited to get Part 1 of the Kraken King to review through NetGalley. The Kraken King is being released in 8 parts as a serial novel. The first release will be April 15th, then the books will release periodically until Part 8 releases on June 3rd. I read part 1 and really enjoyed it. I just love this world so much.

The story features Zenobia Fox (the sister of Archimedes Fox) as she goes on her first real adventure on her own. She is supposed to be taking a relatively routine trip with her friend Helene to the Red City in Australia. However on the way there things get a bit too exciting and Zenobia ends up with more adventure and excitement than even she wanted from the trip.

The story also features Ariq, who is known as the Kraken King. When he rescues Zenobia from some marauders that attack her airship he is immediately struck by her daring, her intelligence, and her constant scribbling in her notebook. He fears she is a spy, but hopes he can woo her.

This was a wonderful start to a new Iron Seas adventure. There is definitely some romance in here but also a wonderful world and lots of action. We are in yet a different part of the Iron Seas world in this book, Australia. Rather than zombies Australia has a problem with Krakens and boilerworms. The Krakens are amazing to read about.

Zenobia is a wonderful heroine to read about, she writes all of the Archimedes Fox books and has been in and out of the other books in the series. I have always enjoyed her character and am so happy that she finally gets a story of her own.

Ariq is another wonderful character. We have heard about the Kraken King in other books, but to finally meet him is amazing. We don't get to see him in action a lot, but the way he respects his men and admires Zenobia is admirable.

I really enjoyed this beginning. This first part is fairly short, 100 pages or so. It basically sets up the story and introduces the characters. There is definitely quite a bit of action. Like normal there are a ton of fascinating steampunk elements as well. Like all of the books in this series the written flows very nicely and is very pleasant to read.

Overall a fantastic start to an excellent new Iron Seas novel. I continue to adore this steampunk world and love the wonderfully engaging characters. I love the blend of steampunk, adventure, action, and romance....everything is just balanced so well. I am unsure how I will like this novel being released in episodes...but given how much I love this series I am definitely willing to give it a try. I honestly would buy this book in hardcover if it came out anyway, so spending the money on "episodes" instead is fine with me. I am excited to see what happens in the second part of this book.

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## **Laura the Highland Hussy says**

Review posted at Got Fiction? book blog

I love Meljean Brook's Iron Seas series, and only for her would I read a serial.

This is part one, The Kraken King and the Scribbling Spinster. Here we have Zenobia Fox, Archimedes Fox's sister, who in her longing for adventure, accompanies a friend (Helene) to Australia. But their airship is attacked, and for someone who has been kidnapped four times, Zenobia is always ready for a fifth kidnapping.

Ariq is the governor of Krakentown, and has a reputation known as the Kraken King. He watches Zenobia leap from a burning airship as if she hasn't a care in the world. He rescues her and is instantly intrigued by

her. Luckily for him, his interest is returned.

But Zenobia travels with 2 mercenaries who are there to keep her safe, and one has enhanced hearing. Mara overhears Ariq's brother say some unkind things about Zenobia, and slightly out of context it sounds as if Ariq is agreeing with him. But what worries her the most is that Ariq wants to know her secrets, and Zenobia has many.

This could quickly veer into The Big Misunderstanding trope, and it sort of is, technically, but luckily it doesn't read as such. Meljean has such a way with words, and you realize there is really no way to bring up that she overheard him agreeing that she is ugly. (he didn't say that, don't worry!).

This is only part 1, though. And I have up to part 6 ready to go, so be prepared for updates! Because so far I don't want to stop reading this one!

\*\*\*ARC courtesy of Berkley Intermix via netgalley

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