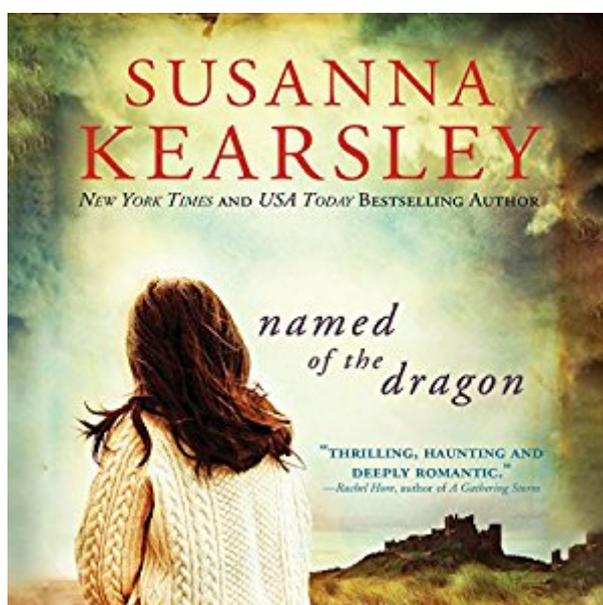


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# Named Of The Dragon



## Synopsis

The charm of spending the Christmas holidays in South Wales, with its crumbling castles and ancient myths, seems the perfect distraction from the nightmares that have plagued literary agent Lyn Ravenshaw since the loss of her baby five years ago. Instead she meets an emotionally fragile young widow who's convinced that Lyn's recurring dreams have drawn her to Castle Farm for an important purpose - and she's running out of time. With the help of a reclusive, brooding playwright, Lyn begins to untangle the mystery and is pulled into a world of Celtic legends, dangerous prophecies, and a child destined for greatness.

## Book Information

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Whispersync for Voice: Ready

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## Customer Reviews

I've read them all. That means everything Susanna Kearsley has written (with the exception of her 2 very first novels which, on her website, she discourages her fans from looking for or reading).

Well, *The Firebird* will be out in June 2013, so that's less than a half year to wait for another Kearsley fix. (If I were living in the UK I'd have the new book by Jan. 28, 2013. Is it worth the move?)

This particular book from 1998 is her 4th successful novel, following 1994 *Mariana*, 1995 *The Splendour Falls*, and 1997 *The Shadowy Horses*. It is not my favorite of all she has written. That would have to be 2008 *The Winter Sea*, but it is an enjoyable read nonetheless. The setting is Wales, the small town of Angle, near Pembrokeshire and historic Pembroke Castle. (BTW, do go to this book on the author's website to view photographs of this historic place. They're lovely.)

The heroine Lyn is a widow still grieving the loss of her baby 5 years ago. She's a literary agent

invited by one of her authors to spend Christmas at the home of another famous British author. She also discovers that a very famous reclusive Welsh playwright lives nearby. Add to the mix Lyn's disturbing dreams, an emotionally-fragile widow Elen, who's fearful for her infant son's life and believes Lyn has been sent to protect him, legends and prophecies with ties to King Arthur, Merlin and dragon kings, and you've got another Kearsley novel with a bit of romance, a bit of the paranormal, and a bit of history. As has been stated by many a reviewer, Kearsley is probably the modern writer closest to Mary Stewart in topic and style of writing and that's a big part of the reason I'm so fond of her work. Reading Kearsley is almost a nostalgic trip down the memory lane of my teen years when I loved Mary Stewart so. As I said before, this is not my favorite of her books but it is quite good. The mystery and paranormal element is the weakest part of the book. I enjoyed it more for the characters and their interactions and for the history of the locale. And now there's that wait for the next book.

I've read all of Kearsley's books. Some are fabulous (Firebird; A Winter Sea); some less so (A Desperate Fortune; The Shadowy Horses), but even the not-so-great ones are usually enjoyable. Not Named of the Dragon This book is just awful. A group of generally unpleasant/uninteresting people (including the narrator) come together in Wales for Christmas. Each one is a stock, cliché'd character: the snooty writer who drinks and smokes too much, spouting nasty quips; a not-so-mysterious brother; the sex kitten (she even purrs); the brooding but inscrutable hero (and I do mean inscrutable - we never learn much about him or why he is the love interest); the entirely predictable villain. Even the protagonist is boring and, perhaps, a bit of a judgmental prig. And nothing happens. They eat, they drink, they talk obscure Welsh history, they gossip, they go to church, they go shopping, they take walks. This would be bearable if their conversation was interesting or moved a plot along, but it doesn't. That's all they do until the last chapter or two (and there are a LOT of chapters), when (the entirely predictable) denouement occurs. I listened to this on Audible and the reader is another problem - she is entirely unsuited to the character. The protagonist/narrator is 29; the reader is very obviously an older woman (as am I) with a deep gravelly voice. I was shocked when I learned, about 1/3 through the book, that she was voicing a young woman. I could never reconcile the two. I've been an Audible subscriber for almost 20 years; this was the very first time I returned a book after listening to it. I suggest you skip it.

Lyn is a literary agent who has been haunted by the death of her baby for a long time. Lyn's friend Bridget writes children books. Bridget is tough, mad about men and loves to create scandals. She

invites Lyn to spend Christmas in Wales with her and two other writers, James and Gareth. Bridget has her reasons for inviting Lyn along, but my impression is that a power much stronger than a best selling writer has something to do with her trip. Lyn feeling a trip would do her good accepts Bridget's offer. Once there she meets a neighbor who swears Lyn was sent to be a guardian and a writer who believes she is only there to convince him to sign with her company. Lyn finds herself pulled into a mystery that is beyond her control. Now her dreams are not just disturb by the haunting cries of her own lost baby, but by someone else's child as well. What do they want? Why does she keep seeing people in her dreams that do not exist? Susanna Kearsley's writing impressed me greatly! The first page captured me immediately; once drawn in I couldn't let go. Although Named the Dragon is a contemporary novel, the historical aspects of Wales, its castles, its myths and its royalty, along with the quotes at the beginning of each chapter by Shakespeare, W.B. Yeats, and Lord Tennyson made the read that much more delightful for me as a historical buff. Susanna Kearsley's writing has been compared to Barbara Michaels and Mary Stewart. I have to agree - it is that good.

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