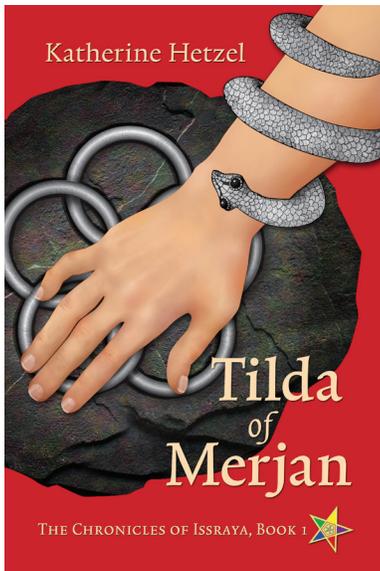




## Reading Guide



### Tilda of Merjan

by Katherine Hetzel

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#### The Chronicles of Issraya, Book 1

Tilda has been angry with the Power and its mages ever since Pa died. Why didn't the mages use the Power to save him?

Determined to find out, she sails to Ring Isle with her Uncle Vanya, steward to the mage Silviu of Ambak. But finding answers isn't easy, especially when a rogue mage attempts to steal all the Power of the five rings for himself and leaves the remaining four mages trying to cope with the aftermath of the attack.

When Tilda tries to return a snake torc to Silviu, she is accidentally pulled through a Power-fueled portal and finds herself in Ambak. There, she realizes she's the only one who can find the hidden ring of Ambak to restore the balance of Power to all the mages. As she tackles this challenging quest, Tilda discovers more about herself than she could ever imagine.

#### From the author

Tilda's story has been a long time in the making. It came about because as a child, I was a definite bookworm, and my mum used to say to me "You'll get lost in a book one of these days." The original (badly written!) story was literally that; a boy fell into a book he was reading, and had to find five rings in that world to set himself free. Over the years, as I learned how to improve my writing, the story and characters changed—many times—until they became too big for one book and became a whole new world for me to write about. This is just the first of Tilda's adventures as a result.

It just goes to show that no idea is ever wasted—persistence pays off. Never be afraid to keep working on something you believe in, to make it the best it can be. Even if that means it takes years and needs some drastic changes.

#### Discussion Questions

1. Tilda begins this story angry at the Power and the mages for not saving her Pa. What do you think are the real reasons behind Tilda's anger? And was she right to be angry?
2. The powermages' initiation robes reflect the regions they represent, as well as a little of their personality. If you had an initiation robe to show where you come from, what would it look like? Have fun drawing it.
3. Tilda discovers an ability that few others have, which ultimately helps her in her quest. Can you think of a skill or ability that you have, which makes you pretty unique and helps you to achieve things? Don't worry if you can't think of anything – you might not have discovered it, yet!
4. Curiosity—nosiness, even—is what gets Tilda dragged through the portal. Have there been any times where your curiosity got you more than you bargained for?



5. Towards the end of the story, Tilda has the feeling that she's been used by Silviu. Is she right to feel this way? How do you think the story might have been different if Silviu had asked Tilda to help instead?

### **About the author**

Katherine Hetzel has always loved the written word, but only started writing “properly” after giving up her job as a pharmaceutical microbiologist to be a stay-at-home mum. The silly songs and daft poems she wrote for her children grew into longer stories. They ended up on paper and then published. (*Granny Rainbow*, Panda Eyes, 2014, *More Granny Rainbow*, Panda Eyes, 2015) Her debut novel, *StarMark*, was published by Dragonfeather in June 2016 and her second stand-alone novel, *Kingstone*, in June 2017. She sees herself first and foremost as a children's author, passionate about getting kids reading, but she also enjoys writing short stories for adults and has been published in several anthologies. A member of the online writing community Den of Writers, Katherine operates under the name of Squidge and blogs at Squidge's Scribbles. She lives in the heart of the UK with Mr Squidge and two children.