

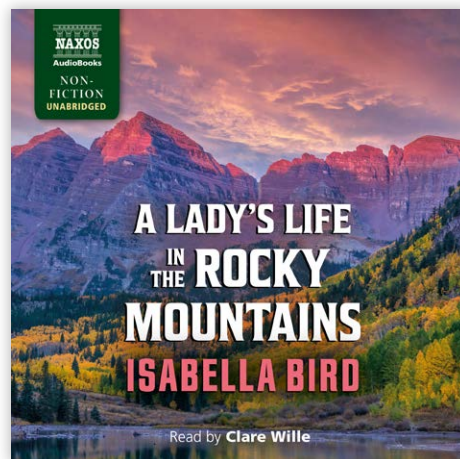
A LADY'S LIFE IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS ISABELLA BIRD

Read by **Clare Wille**

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From sickly child to pioneering Victorian explorer, Isabella Bird defied convention. After back surgery in 1850 and the recommendation of life in the open air, she finally looked her malaise and her pain in the eye and set off across the world completely alone. In Colorado she covered 800 miles on horseback, climbing mountains, wrangling cattle, sleeping in snow and finding herself drawn to a violent, one-eyed outlaw with a soft spot for poetry, known as 'Mountain Jim'. With the writing skills to match her spirit of adventure, she documented her journey in these letters to her sister, which were published as a collection in 1879. She was a true trailblazer – a Victorian woman of 4'11" with debilitating pain who chose to blow open life's limits.



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Clare Wille was born in Manchester, studied English Literature at Bristol University and trained at RADA. She was series regular DS Dawson in ITV's 60s police drama *Heartbeat*. Other drama credits include *Housewife 49*, *Coronation Street*, *Silent Witness*, *Vera* and *Victoria*. Her work in comedy includes *Lovesick* on Netflix, Channel 4's *Gameface*, Channel 5's sketch show *Swinging* and the BBC's rolling news spoof *Broken News*. She was Camilla, Prince Charles's private secretary, in the hit BBC satire *W1A*. On radio, Clare joined Stephen Mangan in the comedy *Elvenquest* for Radio 4. She also performed in the radio sketch shows *Spats* and *Watercooler*. For Naxos AudioBooks she has recorded *Cranford*, *North and South* and *Oroonoko*.

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3	Letter II	11:02	12	Letter XI	24:19
4	Letter III	24:36	13	Letter XII	25:05
5	Letter IV	14:31	14	Letter XIII	22:57
6	Letter V	37:34	15	Letter XIV	20:40
7	Letter VI	37:25	16	Letter XV	27:31
8	Letter VII	34:56	17	Letter XVI	21:30
9	Letter VIII	38:35	18	Letter XVII	18:48

The Soundhouse, London

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