



# Alphabet of Dreams

*Susan Fletcher*

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## Alphabet of Dreams Susan Fletcher

Mitra and her little brother, Babak, are beggars in the city of Rhagae, scratching out a living as best as they can with what they can beg for--or steal. But Mitra burns with hope and ambition, for she and Babak are not what they seem. They are of royal blood, but their father's ill-fated plot against the evil tyrant, King Phraates, has resulted in their father's death and their exile. Now disguised as a boy, Mitra has never given up believing they can rejoin what is left of their family and regain their rightful standing in the world.

Then they discover that Babak has a strange gift: If he sleeps with an item belonging to someone, he can know that person's dreams. Mitra believes that they can use this gift to find passage back to the city of Palmyra and their remaining kinsmen. But soon Babak and his abilities come to the attention of a powerful Magus -- one who has read portents in the stars of the coming of a new king and the dawn of a new age. Soon Mitra and Babak find themselves on the road to Bethlehem...

The acclaimed author of *Shadow Spinner* returns to ancient Persia in this spellbinding saga -- a tale filled with the color of the caravansaries and the heat of the desert, a tale that reimagines the wonder and spirit of a lost age.

## Alphabet of Dreams Details

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Author : Susan Fletcher

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I might not have read this book had I known how girly it was. This is a story about two children of royal blood: Mitri, fourteen-year-old girl, and Babak, four-year-old brother of Mitri. After a disastrous attempt by their father to seize the throne, Mitri and her brother are reduced to thieves and beggars. Mitri, determined

for her and Babak to rejoin their family in a faraway city, starts selling her brother's dreams (which are prophetic) to earn passage. They end up on a series of adventures including the three famous magi, who brought the three gifts to baby Jesus.

It is a girly book, like I said. Mitri struggles trying to keep disguised as a boy throughout the story, and her changes into adolescents are making that difficult. Her emotional story is what makes this a girl's book. Also, I have to warn all readers, that this doesn't end like a traditional fairy-tale. It ends happy, but not without disappointing and sorrowful losses.

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### **Richard says**

This novel is supposed to be for middle-school-aged readers or, perhaps, teens. However, it is vividly imagined with living, breathing characters plus a realistic setting and historical background. Thus, the tale should appeal to adults as well. And, of course, the novel is a new take on an ancient story that journeys to the world at that time and depicts it as the dangerous place that it was.

I was pulled in as well as many others should be.

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### **Michelle says**

This book was really great. Mitra was a great sympathetic narrator and I really enjoyed learning more about ancient Persian culture. I did give it four stars because at times she became a little obsessed with whether or not certain young men thought she was a boy or a girl (she's really a girl hiding as a boy). Most of all I loved how the Magi were portrayed, each with a distinctive personality and each taking something from the miraculous meeting with the infant-king-to-be. Good read.

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### **Shannon says**

My feelings about this one are complicated. On the one hand, the setting was wonderful and vivid, and it wasn't as preachy as I'd feared it could be. On the other, Mitra drove me crazy. She was a selfish bitch, and while that was very true to character and her motivations were understandable, I still wanted to strangle her. Oh, and this one features a tacked-on love triangle with an ending romance that should have worked for me but didn't. So... all in all... meh.

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### **Jacquelyn says**

A great story about the journey of the Magi to visit the newborn Christ. Taken from a new, unexpected perspective of a young lady who's young brother has a gift for prophetic dreams. They join the caravan of one of the Magi and journey across Persia with him. Loved the story.

Ms. Fletcher is also kind enough to have a notes section at the end of the book filling us in on some of the

research that she did in order to write a book that had the right feel for the time, culture, and geographic area that she was portraying.

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### **Annette says**

"Pray to the Wise God - that is my counsel. Though his plans for us may not be what we wish, prayer may lead us into his light."  
- Balthazaar, in Alphabet of Dreams

Although certifiably no longer a "young adult," I thoroughly enjoyed Babak and Mitra's story. Excellent writing, dialog, character development, and description of place and time. I plucked the book off the library shelf with no foreknowledge of the story, and I was fully committed to their tale before I realized it would overlap with a well known historical journey. Mitra's internal journey through anger, hope, fear, bitterness, loss, and eventual acceptance of her situation was compelling. I would definitely recommend this story to tweens and teens, as well as adults.

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### **Aida says**

The plot was certainly interesting, there are however a few things that were so horribly wrong with the book. For instance, you're talking Iran! The description of camels and sand and desert, that's Arabia!!!!!! Seriously get it together. And it had rather strong feminism, she was treated with a lot of respect. It was an interesting way to look at things, but the plot was vague and boring with the 3 men and when it became important one barely recalled much about it. Again, the descriptions were nothing similar to what Iran was. For one thing at their time there were places to rest at between times designed for such purpose so their struggle or finding ways and lack was water was ridiculous!! The Author had to do her research way better!

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### **Zahra Dashti says**

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### **Allen Steele says**

This book surprised me, after all the beginning mess of the first few chapters, you settle into a very interesting book complete with wise- men, baby Jesus, then king Herrod killing the baby's of Bethlehem to try to get rid of Him. told from the point of view of a girl/boy? around 12ish and a smaller boy of 5-7. Happy ever after with them getting a new family in the end.

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**Annajune says**

Recommended as good Christmas reading from Brooke. Great story. This is one I will think about for awhile. I keep varying between 4 and 5 stars. Fictional story of the Magi traveling to see a new great king but told from the perspective of a kid traveling with them. So much in here. The version I had of the book included a series of questions she poses that she used to help in her writing of the story which was quite interesting as well. Definitely good seasonal read!

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**Erin Bow says**

A solid, juicy middle grade historical with a realistic, well-researched setting. I ate this one up.

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