

SHADOW SPINNER

SUSAN FLETCHER

Based on ancient Middle Eastern tales

SETTING: a Persia-like city, harem, and bazaar, anytime?

**CHARACTERS:**

Marjan - 13 year old girl, has a crippled foot, mother died, talent for storytelling, poor, sometimes called "Little Pigeon", lives with Aunt Chava and Uncle Eli, they are not her real aunt and uncle but they took her in as a servant when she was 8 years old, idolizes Shahrazad for her bravery

Aunt Chava - Jewish, treated Marjan as a daughter, sold her personal treasures at the harem to raise money for taxes

Uncle Eli - Jewish, lost his fortune when a merchant ship sank

Old Mordecai - messenger? toothless

Shahrazad - a princess married to the Sultan, has 3 sons, tells stories to the Sultan every night for 1001 nights, brave for trying to prevent the Sultan from killing more wives

Dunyazed - Shahrazad's younger sister, going to marry Sultan's younger brother

Abu Muslem - used to be the Sultan's vizier, responsible for obtaining wives for him. Owned a purple robe of honor given to him by the Sultan. Now an outlaw who helped women escape from becoming wives of the Sultan. He is also the storyteller

Aga Jamsheed - married to Marjan's mother, she was his fourth wife, he refused to smuggle Marjan and her mother out of the city

Madar - what Marjan called her mother

Khatun - Sultan's mother, the "Crown of Veiled Heads," most powerful woman in the harem, fat, had three sons, oldest poisoned by jealous co-wife, doesn't trust her son's wives

Shahryar (Sultan) - hated deception, first wife deceived him so he kills his other wives so they won't have a chance to betray him

Soraya - copper haired girl, Khutan wanted her to marry the Sultan, but instead had her killed

Ashraf - beak nosed servant of Khatun

Zaynab - lady in charge of messenger pigeons, knew the Abu Muslem from years ago

Mitra - girl with the gazelle, comes to rescue Marjan after the Khatun locked Marjan up.

Ayaz - nephew of Abu Muslem (storyteller), takes Marjan to him

Badar Basim - merman

Princess Julnar - mermaid

Nasim - one of Shahrazad's sons

Kansbar - scar faced man, friend of storyteller

Farah - serving girl of Marjan's mother, husband sells firewood in the bazaar

#### QUOTES:

"Look to your own survival" Aunt Chava

"Chew your words before you let them out" Aunt Chava

"There's nothing wrong with loving someone. It's hating—that's what's wrong"  
Shahrazad

#### VOCAB:

jinn, vizier, midak, sharbat, ablutions, eunuch, moazzen

#### In what book:

- does Marjan escape from the harem but return to tell the Sultan a story
- does Marjan leave coins for Farah
- does Soraya smuggle food to Marjan and the Khatun had Marjan locked up
- do we read about the rich women and poor beggars
- does a girl finally forgive her mother for maiming her
- does the term shadow spinner mean storyteller

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