



The Book on Fire

Keith Miller

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Balthazar, book thief and bon vivant, arrives in Alexandria to steal from the famous library. But from the moment he steps off the boat, a veiled figure shadows him. Zeinab, literary prostitute and avenging ghost, will be his chaperone through the city of books. With her help, he succeeds in penetrating the underground library. But once inside, instead of ransacking it, he becomes obsessed with the youngest librarian, Shireen, who was born in the library and is herself more than half book. Their love story forms the heart of the novel. Balthazar schemes to get Shireen out of the library. But Zeinab has plans of her own . . . In sumptuous, evocative prose, *The Book on Fire* explores the relationships between creation and destruction, between belief and imagination, between desire and fulfillment. This new edition contains a bonus story, "City of Bones."

Ursula K. Le Guin said of Keith Miller's first novel, *The Book of Flying*, that it was "original in concept and elegant in language," and *Booklist* called it "A beautiful and haunting modern fable that reads like exquisite poetry." This second novel amply fulfills the promise of the first.

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