



# The Librarian of Basra: A True Story from Iraq

*Jeanette Winter*

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"In the Koran, the first thing God said to Muhammad was 'Read.'"\*

--Alia Muhammad Baker

Alia Muhammad Baker is a librarian in Basra, Iraq. For fourteen years, her library has been a meeting place for those who love books. Until now. Now war has come, and Alia fears that the library--along with the thirty thousand books within it--will be destroyed forever.

In a war-stricken country where civilians--especially women--have little power, this true story about a librarian's struggle to save her community's priceless collection of books reminds us all how, throughout the world, the love of literature and the respect for knowledge know no boundaries. Illustrated by Jeanette Winter in bright acrylic and ink.

*Includes an author's note.*

\*From the *New York Times*, July 27, 2003

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