

Fantasy Fiction Did Not Cease with the Final Harry Potter & Twilight Sagas

"Power, eternal life, and wealth – it is all possible for the one who possesses the spellbook." These are the words used by Kamsa, "the Pariah", to justify a life spent researching and recording magic spells while neglecting his family. When Kamsa decides to sell his life's work to provide a suitable dowry so his only child could have a suitable marriage with an Indian such as herself, he is stunned by her refusal. Instead Rani demands the right to learn magic herself, escaping to begin a quest to find the bamboo grove at the top of Himalayas where sorcery could be learned. Her journey is ended when she meets and learns to love Li Shen, a Chinese general. Once again Rani defies tradition by joining with Li Shen in a mixed race marriage. The birth of their beautiful daughter, Tien Ming, expands their happiness. Until, that is, Kamsa tracks down his daughter, tearing her away from her new family. Trying to follow them, Li Shen is lost in a snowstorm, but not before securing the infant in bushes outside a mountain village.

Tien is discovered and raised by Wise Woman, an elder of the village. Taunted by the village children due to her mixed heritage, she learns much from her godmother. The misery of Tien's life changes when strange dark men come demanding the maturing girl be sent to find the missing spellbook of her grandfather. An evil Force is also seeking the book, and legend says only Tien could know the password, which would open the spells. Legend also has told that soon the moon and sun would occupy the sky at the same time, an event of great power. Should the Force hold the spellbook when this occurred, the world will turn dark, and all will die!

Thus begins the journey of the young sorceress, Tien, who is soon met by Zharabi the shape shifter, and Daya a golden snow leopard, to assist her in their quest for the fabled spellbook. Battling minions of the Force takes them from the magical bamboo grove to the Crystal River, the Sacred Forest, and finally to the Ghost Monastery, a breeding place for evil where phantom monks capture souls and keep them there for all eternity.

Novelist Ketaki Shriram uses the startling power of her imagination to humanize this stunning tale with talking animals, ghosts, faeries, unicorns, dragons, and other magical creatures. The adventure twists and turns through a variety of dangers and betrayals. Remarkably mature in her prose, Ketaki delivers a series of moral lessons as her characters rise above prejudice and malice to create a timeless, immortal world of hope. Intended for mature young readers, this adult found it as enjoyable as any of the many fantasy fiction tales I have read!

About the Author

Ketaki Shriram has been crafting compelling stories from the tender age of eight, when she completed her first short story for a local book fair. Over the next few years her love of writing grew so intense that by age 10 she had completed her first long form fictional story. By 13 she had completed her first novel, *Sorceress of the Himalayas* (Crystallius Press, \$17.95), which she is now publishing at age 16. When she is not writing, Ketaki, an outstanding student, is highly active in her high school's student government (as student body president) and is opinion editor on her school newspaper. She is currently working on her next novel. www.sorceressofthehimalayas.com

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