



# The Beginner's Book of Dreams: A Novel

*Elizabeth Benedict*

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# The Beginner's Book of Dreams: A Novel

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**The Beginner's Book of Dreams: A Novel** Elizabeth Benedict

**This celebrated coming-of-age novel moves from Manhattan during the early days of *Mad Men* to the swinging, chaotic 1970s: A sensitive girl burdened with her mother's drinking and long string of husbands becomes a special young woman when her best friend's family opens her eyes to art**

Esme Singer is a resilient girl from Los Angeles, new to Manhattan, who takes better care of her beautiful, alcoholic mother than her mother does of her. A former fashion model and extra in the movies, her mother attracts a series of husbands and boyfriends as Esme watches in fascination and sometimes horror. Esme's father comes and goes, forever riding the wave of the latest get-rich-quick scheme. As Esme becomes a teenager, she turns to her friend Leah's cultured, exotic family for inspiration and solace—especially Leah's father, a well-known photographer who encourages Esme to cultivate her gifts. Might art—and a favorite teacher—become the answer to some of her troubles?

*The Beginner's Book of Dreams* is an insightful, sophisticated, sometimes wickedly funny, always sharp-eyed portrayal of a young woman inventing and discovering her own independent spirit.

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