

Blue Window

Adina Rische Gewirtz

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Thirteen-year-old Susan begins Adina Rische Gewirtz's *Blue Window* "because Susan is the one who names things." One long December evening, during the span between day and night that she calls "blue window time," her family room window actually glows an opaque cobalt color. Susan and her four siblings investigate, never suspecting that they'll fall out the other side into the strange world of Ganbihar, where prophecies speak of the five powerful ones who will bring hope of light when the danger grows.

Susan and her twin, Max, are as different and alike as they are from the rest of their siblings—eleven-year-old Nell, eight-year-old Kate, and seven-year-old Jean. But as the oldest, they're the de facto leaders, even when they find themselves out of their depth in the Domain of Ganbihar.

Surrounded by deformed, animalistic humans who have survived the Destruction and the Change under the leadership of the Genius, none of the siblings knows whether they'll survive a place where magic seems real, focused intention grants power, and appearances aren't what they seem.

Each sibling is given a section of the novel to narrate, and as perspectives shift, who these siblings are and who they're becoming is continually reconfigured. As they learn about the Genius, the Fanatics, the Sleepers, and the Slashers who inhabit this world, each must construct new notions of good and bad, even as Ganbihar offers or denies them power, privilege, safety, and security according to terms they've never before known.

A classic portal fantasy, *Blue Window* reveals the intricacies of individual experience. As each sibling wrestles to understand Ganbihar's societal ethics and values, divergent realities are created. Ultimately, the five siblings must reconcile these truths and their relationships to each other if they're going to get home—or even survive.

LETITIA MONTGOMERY-RODGERS (March/April 2018)

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