



The Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night (Illustrated) (Volume 2)

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- The book includes 10 unique illustrations that are relevant to its content.

One Thousand and One Nights (Arabic: *Kitāb al-Filāh wa-laylah*) is a collection of Middle Eastern and South Asian stories and folk tales compiled in Arabic during the Islamic Golden Age. It is often known in English as the Arabian Nights, from the first English language edition (1706), which rendered the title as *The Arabian Nights' Entertainment*.

The work was collected over many centuries by various authors, translators and scholars across the Middle East, Central Asia and North Africa. The tales themselves trace their roots back to ancient and medieval Arabic, Persian, Indian, Turkish, Egyptian and Mesopotamian folklore and literature. In particular, many tales were originally folk stories from the Caliphate era, while others, especially the frame story, are most probably drawn from the Pahlavi Persian work *Hazār Afsān* (Persian: *Hazār Afsān*, lit. A Thousand Tales) which in turn relied partly on Indian elements.

What is common throughout all the editions of the Nights is the initial frame story of the ruler Shahryār (from Persian: *šāhryār*, meaning "king" or "sovereign") and his wife Scheherazade (from Persian: *šāhryār*, possibly meaning "of noble lineage") and the framing device incorporated throughout the tales themselves. The stories proceed from this original tale; some are framed within other tales, while others begin and end of their own accord. Some editions contain only a few hundred nights, while others include 1,001 or more.

Some of the stories of The Nights, particularly "Aladdin's Wonderful Lamp", "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves" and "The Seven Voyages of Sinbad the Sailor", while almost certainly genuine Middle-Eastern folk tales, were not part of The Nights in Arabic versions, but were interpolated into the collection by Antoine Galland and other European translators. The innovative and rich poetry and poetic speeches, chants, songs, lamentations, hymns, beseeching, praising, pleading, riddles and annotations provided by Scheherazade or her story characters are unique to the Arabic version of the book. Some are as short as one line, while others go for tens of lines.

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