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The Arabian Nights





Synopsis

Full of mischief, valor, ribaldry, and romance, The Arabian Nights has enthralled readers for centuries. These are the tales that saved the life of Scheherazade, whose husband, the king, executed each of his wives after a single night of marriage. Beginning an enchanting story each evening, Scheherazade always withheld the ending: A thousand and one nights later, her life was spared forever.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition Listening Length: 11 hours and 35 minutes Program Type: Audiobook Version: Unabridged Publisher: Audible Studios Audible.com Release Date: March 5, 2012 Language: English ASIN: B007HCVQW0 Best Sellers Rank: #22 in Books > Literature & Fiction > History & Criticism > Regional & Cultural > Middle Eastern #272 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Fiction & Literature > Literary Criticism #925 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Fiction & Literature > Classics

Customer Reviews

Richard Burton's translation of "The Arabian Nights" is one of the oldest in existence and some people have a problem with this version; it's too old, antiquated, etc.; but for this reviewer, the very fact that it's an early translation lends the tales much of their charm; it underscores the fact that "The Arabian Nights" go back for hundreds of years, all the way back to "once upon a time". Richard Burton introduces us to Sharazad, that seductive storyteller who took the bull by the horns and dared to marry the sultan Shariyar who had been driven mad by the infidelity of his former wife and tried to exorcise the demons of her adultery by marrying a new wife every morning and slaying her that same night. Sharazad knows that a good tale can tame the savage beast much in the way music can, and she keeps the Sultan enchanted night after night with the tales that still enchant us in our own time. We all know about Aladdin and his magic lamp, and Ali Baba and the forty thieves, but there are loads of other treasures in this collection; my personal favorites, aside from Ali Baba, are the story of Ali the Persian (short, succinct, and very funny), and The Lady and Her Five Suitors, a hilarious tale of a woman who lures five men into a trap and then runs off with her boyfriend. And

Sharazad, smart lady that she is, took care to insure her own future; not only does she regale her sultan with a thousand and one tales in as many nights, she also presents him with three children during that time, wins the heart of the sultan, and, we suppose, lives happily ever after.No one knows where the tales originated. Burton suggests that the earliest may date from the 8th century A.D.

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