



# One Thousand and One Nights (Modern Plays)

*Hanan al-Shaykh, Tim Supple*

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One of the world's great folk story-cycles adapted for the stage by leading theatre maker Tim Supple, from the stories written by the seminal Lebanese novelist Hanan al-Shaykh. This unique edition will unlock the ancient tales for a new generation of readers and performers.

Written by Arabic writers from tales gathered in India, Persia and across the great Arab Empire, the *One Thousand and One Nights* are the never-ending stories told by Shahrazad night after night, under sentence of death, to the king Shahrayar who has vowed to marry a virgin every night and kill her in the morning. Shahrazad prolongs her life by keeping the King engrossed in a web of stories that never ends - a fascinating kaleidoscope of life, love and destiny. The tales that unfold are erotic, violent, supernatural and endlessly surprising.

The web of tales woven by Shahrazad were exoticised and bowdlerised in the West under the title of the *Arabian Nights*. This adaptation unearths the true character of *One Thousand and One Nights* as it is in the oldest Arabic manuscripts. In turns erotic, brutal, witty, poetic and complex, the tales tell of love and marriage, power and punishment, rich and poor, and the endless trials and uncertainties of fate. The great cities and thriving trade routes of the Islamic world provide the setting for these stories that employ supernatural mystery and intense realism to portray the deep and endless drama of human experience.

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