



## **Night & Horses & the Desert: An Anthology of Classical Arabic Literature**

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# Night & Horses & the Desert: An Anthology of Classical Arabic Literature

## Night & Horses & the Desert: An Anthology of Classical Arabic Literature

Spanning the fifth to sixteenth centuries and societies that range from Afghanistan to Spain, this anthology is a testament to the astonishing grandeur and variety of classical Arabic literature. Here are excerpts from dozens of works—both renowned (*The Qur'an*, *The Thousand and One Nights*) and esoteric (Ibn Washshiyya's "Book of Poisons"; a 10th-century poem in praise of asparagus)—all accompanied by Robert Irwin's erudite commentaries that illuminate readers on the vanished world in which they were written.

In **Night & Horses & the Desert** we encounter the dashing Byronic poetry of Imru' al-Qays and a treatise on bibliomania by Al-Jahiz, possibly the only writer to have been killed by books. There's a sorcerer's manual from 11th century Spain and an allegory by the mysterious "Brethren of Purity," in which animals argue their case against humanity. Encompassing piety and profanity, fables and philosophy, this volume is a thrilling and invaluable introduction to one of the world's great bodies of literature.

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