

Raja Nasr

30

SHORT  
STORIES

# THIRTY SHORT STORIES

RAJA T. NASR, M.A., ED.D.

*Professor of Education and  
Chairman, Department of Education  
Beirut College for Women  
Beirut, Lebanon*

*Drawings by Ciré*



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## FOREWORD TO TEACHERS

This book is a collection of thirty short stories written within a vocabulary of about 2,000 words. The stories are international in character. The real life stories are ones of men and women who have distinguished themselves in different fields in different parts of the world. The fiction stories, similarly, represent a number of different cultural backgrounds.

Teachers will find the Exercises at the end of each story of help in making the book a *language learning* device as well as a source of interest to students. The Exercises may be used for oral or written work to develop and test the students' comprehension and expression in English as related to the stories.

The author wishes here to express his gratitude to his wife, Bonnie K. S. Nasr, who contributed much to the writing of these stories, and whose unfailing encouragement made this work possible.

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## 1. *A Shepherd's Dream*

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**flock**

**jar**

**shepherd**

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A simple shepherd looked after a flock of sheep for a very rich man. He was a poor but happy man. Part of his pay from the rich man was in butter. He saved the butter each week. He carefully stored it in a big jar that hung in his hut.

One evening he stood at the door of the hut. He had his stick in his hand. As he watched the sunset, his eyes moved to the butter jar. He began to wonder what he could do with all the butter.

Then he said to himself, "I will sell my butter and buy a sheep with the money. In time this sheep will give me a little lamb. The lamb



**shepherd**

will grow and it will give me another lamb. In a few years, I will own a big flock of sheep and will be a rich man.



**flock**

“Then I will buy a big house with the best furniture. And I shall have a beautiful garden. When my son grows up, I will get a teacher for him. He will learn how to read, write, and be wise. Of course, my boy will have to listen to me.

If he is a good son, I will give him half of my sheep. But if he is not a good son, I will hit him with this stick!”

As the shepherd said this, he raised his stick and hit the butter jar. It fell to the floor and broke, and all the butter was wasted.

He was very sad and could not believe what had happened. “I was a fool,” he thought. “I went too far in my dreams.”

#### EXERCISES

1 Use the following words in sentences:

simple  
save

money  
grow

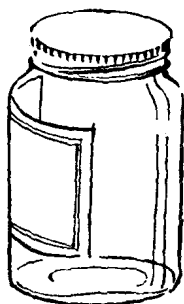
sell  
learn



part	another	raise
hut	store	bring
evening	begin	sheep
stick	lamb	jar
shepherd	fine	furniture
butter	poor	pay
sunset	flock	rich
wonder	careful	waste

2 Answer the following questions:

1. Did the shepherd own the sheep?
2. Who owned the sheep?
3. Was all the shepherd's pay in butter? What else did the rich man perhaps give him?
4. Where was the shepherd when he thought of becoming rich?
5. What was he doing with his stick?
6. What time of day was it?
7. What did he decide to do with the butter?
8. What was he going to buy with the money?
9. Did the shepherd want to buy a big house? What kind of garden did he want to have?



jar

4

10. Did the shepherd have any children? How many?
11. What will the teacher teach the son?
12. What will the shepherd do if his son is good?
13. What will he do if his son is not good?
14. What did the shepherd do when he thought all this?
15. What happened to the butter in the jar?

3 Tell the story in your own words.

#### 4 Written Exercise

Pattern: If he is a good son, I will give him half of my sheep.

Complete the following sentences:

1. If he is not a good son, I will .....
2. If my teacher is in class, I will .....
3. If his son comes home late, he will .....
4. If she feels hungry, she will .....
5. If I get the money today, I will .....
6. If we eat too much food, we will .....
7. If there is no water here, they will .....
8. If the teacher asks us a question, we will .....
9. If I have much money, I will .....
10. If he knows English well, he will .....

## 2. *The Lady of the Lamp*

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### **patient**

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“Be a lady, dear. That’s what we want!” How many times pretty young Florence Nightingale heard these words from her father and mother! But for her, being a lady was not enough. She wanted to do something for others.

Florence’s father was a very rich man. Florence took lessons in music and drawing, and read great books. She could speak French, German, and Italian as well as English. And she travelled a great deal with her mother and father.

As a child she felt that visiting sick people was both a duty and a pleasure. She enjoyed helping them. As often as she could, she visited hospitals in other countries. She saw so much suffering that she knew she must help.

At last her mind was made up. “I’m going to be a nurse,” she decided.

“Nursing isn’t the right work for a lady,” her father told her.

“Then I will make it so,” she smiled. And she went to learn nursing in Germany and France. When

she returned to England, Florence started a nursing home for women. Here she did everything—from washing floors to giving her patients new hope.



During the Crimean War in 1854 many soldiers were wounded or became ill. News reached England that they were receiving very little care. At once Florence Nightingale wrote to the War Office and offered her services. She went with a band of thirty-eight nurses to

the hospitals at Scutari.

What they saw there was even worse than they expected. Dirt and death were everywhere to be seen—and smelled. The officer there did not want any women to tell him how to run a hospital, either. But the brave nurses went to work.

Florence used her own money and some from friends to buy clothes, beds, medicines, and food for the men. Her only pay was in smiles from the lips of dying soldiers. But they were more than enough for this kind woman.

She fell dangerously ill herself, but she did not stop working. Her thin hands worked day and night. Even in the last hours of night she could be seen



walking with a lamp past each bed. The soldiers often kissed her shadow as "the lady of the lamp" went by.

After the war she returned to England and was honoured for her services by Queen Victoria.

But Florence said that her work had just begun. She raised money to build the Nightingale Home for Nurses in London, and she asked young girls to learn nursing there.

She also wrote a book on public health, which was printed in several countries.

Florence Nightingale died at the age of ninety, still trying to serve others through her work as a nurse. Indeed, it is because of Florence Nightingale that we honour nurses today.

## EXERCISES

I Use the following words in sentences:

lady	decide	offer
lamp	mind	service
lesson	work	expect
music	learn	friend
travel	start	soldier
duty	wash	war
help	hope	often
suffer	floor	honour
nurse	during	age
hospital	hurt	patient

**2 Answer the following questions:**

1. What did Florence's mother and father want her to be?
2. What did Florence want to do most in her life?
3. What did Florence learn?
4. Why did Florence visit sick people?
5. What did she see in the hospitals she visited?
6. What did she decide to be?
7. What did her father think about nursing?
8. Where did she learn nursing?
9. Why did Florence offer her services to the War Office?
10. How many nurses went with her?
11. Where did they go?
12. Why do you think Florence fell ill at Scutari?
13. Why did the soldiers call Florence the "lady of the lamp"?
14. Who was Queen of England at that time?
15. Why are nurses honoured today?

**3 Tell the story in your own words.****4 Written Exercise**

Florence said that her work had just begun.  
Her real words were: "My work has just begun."

What were the real words in the following sentences?

1. John said that he had lost his money.
2. Mary whispered that her mother had seen a mouse.
3. My friend told me that he had bought a car.
4. You said that you had always wanted to travel.
5. Ben said that he had paid for his uncle's watch.
6. I told you that I had been there twice.
7. He whispered to his wife that he had covered the food.
8. She told me that she had arrived late.
9. We said that we had thought about them, too.
10. Alice said that she had sold her pen.



### 3. *To the Stars and Back*

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<b>millions</b>	<b>object</b>	<b>pill</b>	<b>rocket</b>
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It was a cold, clear night. The sky was bright with stars—small, silvery stars that formed a shining path from the earth to the moon.

“What a beautiful sight,” thought Rolph, who was driving alone in the country. “There must be millions of stars up above. People have tried to study them since the beginning of history, but they are still a wonder of science. I wonder what it’s like up there. Oh, I’d give anything if I could travel to the moon!”

He laughed at himself for thinking like that, but at the same time he knew he would go if he only had the chance.

Rolph stopped his car and got out to have a better look at the beautiful sky. One star caught his eye. It was much larger and brighter than the rest. It even seemed to be moving towards him! As it became larger, he saw that this was no common star. It was a strange object flying through space.

In a few minutes the object was on the ground. It looked like a large white ball. It was only a short