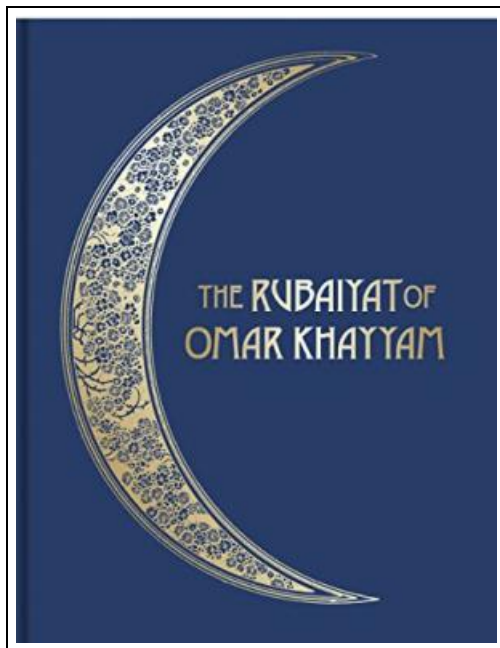


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The Bodleian Library, United Kingdom, 2015. Hardback. Condition: New. Rene Bull (illustrator). Special edition. Language: English . Brand New Book. A Book of Verses underneath the Bough, A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread - and Thou . When Edward Fitzgerald first published his translation of the poetry of Omar Khayyam in 1859 it had little impact on the literary world. But a chance find in a bookshop by a friend of the Pre-Raphaelites led to it being taken up by William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones, and from then on its popularity grew. Since then, it has become one of the most popular poems. In turn, it has influenced writers such as Matthew Arnold and Thomas Hardy, not to mention many musicians and film-makers in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Omar Khayyam (1048-1131) was a Persian poet and philosopher who lived at the court of Malik Shah. He was also an astronomer and a mathematician. A manuscript of some of his rubaiyat (four-line verses) survives in the Bodleian Library and a copy of this manuscript is thought to have inspired Fitzgerald to begin the translation. Fitzgerald s mystical and sensual version of Omar Khayyam s quatrains is freely translated and restructured to follow the course of a day. The epigrammatic stanzas, infused with a melancholy yet consoling philosophy that urges readers to seize the day and `make the most of what we yet may spend , have proved to be enduringly intriguing and popular. Through brilliant imagery they celebrate the sensuous pleasures of life - wine, food, love - while also mourning the painful truth of its brevity. This decorative edition features gorgeous colour illustrations with an oriental theme by Rene Bull, first published in 1913, which provide a perfect counterpoint to the lines of this extraordinarily influential poem.



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