**Decameron Summaries**

# First Day



The basilica of Santa Maria Novella, with a Renaissance façade that was completed about 100 years after *The Decameron* was written

Before beginning the story-telling sessions, the ten young [Florentines](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florence), seven women and three men, referred to as the *Brigata*,[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Summary_of_Decameron_tales#cite_note-1) gather at the [Basilica di Santa Maria Novella](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basilica_of_Santa_Maria_Novella) and together decide to escape the [Black Death](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Death) by leaving the city to stay in a villa in the countryside for the next two weeks. Each agrees to tell one story each day for ten days. The stories are told in the garden of the first villa that the company stays at, which is located a few miles outside the city.

Under the rule of Pampinea, the first day of story-telling is open topic. Although there is no assigned theme of the tales this first day, six deal with one person censuring another and four are satires of the Catholic Church.

**First tale (I, 1)**

Ser Cepparello, commonly known as Ciapelletto, a notoriously wicked man, travels on business to [Burgundy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Burgundy_%28region%29), a region he is unknown in, as a favor to Musciatto Franzesi. Once there, he soon falls terminally ill. The two [Florentine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florence) brothers who were housing him during his stay bring a [friar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friar) from a nearby convent to hear his confession and give him his [last rites](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Last_rites). Ciappelletto proceeds to tell the friar lies about his life that make him seem very pure, while pretending to cringe over venial sins. He is completely believed by the friar, who preaches a sermon on his life after he passes away. The townspeople who hear the sermon believe that he was a holy man and revere him as a [saint](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint) long after Ciapelletto dies.

Panfilo is the storyteller of the first tale of the entire collection, which is also the first tale ridiculing then-current practices of the [Roman Catholic Church](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Catholic_Church) (in this case [canonization](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canonization) by the people). The earliest source of this story is found in chapter eight of Saint [Sulpicius Severus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sulpicius_Severus)'s biography of Saint [Martin of Tours](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_of_Tours). The biography dates from around 400 AD.

**Second tale (I, 2)**

Abraham, a Jew of Paris, is the friend of Giannotto di Civignì, who for years has urged him to become a Christian. One day Abraham departs for Rome, telling Giannotto that he wants to see the leaders of the Church – the [pope](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pope) and the [curia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Curia) – to decide whether or not he wants to [convert](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious_conversion). Giannotto, knowing of the debauched and decadent ways of the Roman clergy, fears Abraham will never want to convert after witnessing the corruption of the Church. But when Abraham returns, he converts, concluding that if Christianity can still spread even when its hierarchy is so corrupt, it must be the true word of God.

Neifile tells both the second story of the book and the second anti-Catholic story. In this caustic story, the Jew converts because he logically concludes that only a religion supported by God could prosper despite the corruption of its leadership. The earliest source of this tale is in Busone da Gubbio's "Avventuroso Ciciliano", written in Italian in 1311. This tale has also been told about Muslims, including [Saladin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saladin).[[*citation needed*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia%3ACitation_needed)]

**Third tale (I, 3)**

Saladin, a powerful [sultan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sultan), finds that his treasury is exhausted. Melchizedek, a Jew, has money enough to cover the shortfall, but Saladin believes he is too avaricious to lend it fairly. Saladin tries to trick Melchizedek into giving offense (and justifying the seizure of his wealth) by asking him whether [Judaism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judaism), Christianity, or [Islam](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islam) is the true Word of God. Melchizedek evades the trap by comparing it to the story of a merchant who had a precious ring and three virtuous sons. Having promised the ring (and with it, his estate) to all three, the king had two equally precious copies made and gave one ring to each son. Thus it could not be determined who was heir to the estate. Likewise, it cannot be determined which faith is the truth. Saladin appreciates Melchizedek's wisdom and decides to be honest with him. In the end, Saladin gets his loan and repays it and Melchizedek gets Saladin's respect and gifts of praise for his intelligence.

Filomena narrates this tale, which portrays the main character as wise and in a positive light. Unlike other Medieval and [Renaissance](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Renaissance_literature) authors, Boccaccio treats Jews with respect. Boccaccio may have had contact with Jews while living in Naples as a young man. The oldest source is found in a French work by [Stephen of Bourbon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stephen_of_Bourbon) called *The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit*. However, a slightly younger (c. 1321) Italian story in Bosone da Gubbio's *L'avventuroso siciliano* was Boccaccio's probable source. This tale was especially popular in the Renaissance and can be found in many versions all over Europe. It is also referred to as "The Tale of the Three Rings" and "The Legend of the Three Rings" and, according to [Carlo Ginzburg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carlo_Ginzburg), was quoted in the [heresy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heresy) trial of the Italian miller [Menocchio](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Menocchio).[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Summary_of_Decameron_tales#cite_note-2)

## Second Day

Filomena reigns during the second day and she assigns a topic to each of the storytellers: Misadventures that suddenly end happily.

**Fifth tale (II, 5)**

Andreuccio da Perugia comes to Naples to buy horses, meets with three serious adventures in one night, comes safe out of them all, and returns home with a ruby.

Fiammetta tells this story which is actually a combination of two earlier tales. The beginning of the tale is first recorded in about 1228 by Courtois d'Arrass in his "Boivin de Provins." The portion of Andreuccio being trapped in the tomb of the archbishop and how he escapes comes from the [Ephesian Tale](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ephesian_Tale) by [Xenophon of Ephesus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xenophon_of_Ephesus), which was written in about 150 AD. That portion of the tale is so memorable that it was still being told as a true story in the cities and countryside of Europe in the early 20th century

**Ninth tale (II, 9)**

Bernabò of Genoa, deceived by Ambrogiuolo, loses his money and commands his innocent wife to be put to death. She escapes, habits herself as a man, and serves the Sultan. She discovers the deceiver, and brings Bernabò to Alexandria, where the deceiver is punished. She then resumes the garb of a woman, and with her husband returns wealthy to Genoa.

Filomena tells this story, which is best known to English readers through [Shakespeare](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Shakespeare)'s [*Cymbeline*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cymbeline). The oldest known version of this story is a French romance from the 13th century called *Roman de la Violette ou de Gerard de Nevers* by Gilbert de Montreuil.

**Tenth tale (II, 10)**

Paganino da Monaco carries off the wife of Messer Ricciardo di Chinzica, who, having learned where she is, goes to Paganino and in a friendly manner asks him to restore her. He consents, provided she be willing. She refuses to go back with her husband. Messer Ricciardo dies, and she marries Paganino.

In the last tale of the second day Dioneo begins his pattern of telling the last tale of the day, which he will continue until the end of the *Decameron*. The moral of the story – that a young woman should not marry an old man – is common in late medieval [vernacular literature](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vernacular_literature).

## Third Day

Neifile presides as queen during the third day. In these stories a person either has painfully acquired something or has lost it and then regained it.

**First tale (III, 1)**

Masetto da Lamporecchio feigns to be mute, and obtains a gardener's place at a [convent](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Convent) of women, who with one accord make haste to lie with him.

Filostrato's tale of a man's devices that he employs to enjoy the physical company of a convent of [nuns](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nun) was also in *Cento Novelle Antiche* from the 13th century.

**Fourth tale (III, 4)**

Dom Felice instructs Friar Puccio how to attain blessedness by doing a penance. Friar Puccio does the penance, and meanwhile Dom Felice has a good time with Friar Puccio's wife.

Panfilo narrates.

**Ninth tale (III, 9)**

Gillette of Narbonne cures the King of France of a [fistula](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fistula), craves for spouse Bertrand de Roussillon, who marries her against his will, and hies him in despite to Florence, where, as he courts a young woman, Gillette lies with him in her stead, and has two sons by him; for which cause he afterwards takes her into favour and entreats her as his wife.

Neifile narrates this tale, which was written first by the Sanskrit [dramatist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Playwright) and [poet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poetry) [Kālidāsa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K%C4%81lid%C4%81sa) in his [*The Recognition of Śakuntalā*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shakuntala_%28play%29).[[*citation needed*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia%3ACitation_needed)] The time of Kālidāsa's life is uncertain, but some scholars think that he lived in the 5th century. Boccaccio may have taken the tale from an 11th-century French version. This tale is the basis for [Shakespeare](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Shakespeare)'s play [*All's Well That Ends Well*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/All%27s_Well_That_Ends_Well).

**Tenth tale (III, 10)**

Alibech, a non-Christian girl of [Gafsa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gafsa), turns hermit, and is taught by Rustico, a monk, how the Devil is put in hell. She is afterwards conveyed thence, and becomes the wife of Neerbale.

Dioneo narrates what is by far the most obscene and bawdy tale in the *Decameron*. Alibech, a naive young woman, wanders into the desert in an attempt to become closer to God. She happens upon the monk Rustico, and he deflowers her under the pretense of teaching her how to better please God. Alibech becomes more enthusiastic about [putting the Devil back into Hell](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sexual_intercourse) than Rustico, almost to the point of his ruin. Meanwhile, her family and family home are incinerated, leaving her the only heir. Neerbale kidnaps her, much to Rustico's relief and Alibech's displeasure, and Alibech is made to marry Neerbale. The night before the wedding, she is questioned by other women as to how Alibech served God in the desert, and upon explaining to her ladies how the Devil is put back into Hell, is informed that Neerbale will surely know how to help her serve God once more.

Because of its "graphic" nature, this tale has at times been translated incompletely, as in [John Payne](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Payne_%28poet%29)'s translation, where Alibech's sexual awakening is left untranslated and is accompanied with this footnote: "The translators regret that the disuse into which magic has fallen, makes it impossible to render the technicalities of that mysterious art into tolerable English; they have therefore found it necessary to insert several passages in the original Italian."[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Summary_of_Decameron_tales#cite_note-3) No known earlier versions of it exist.

## Fourth Day

Boccaccio begins this day with a defense of his work as it is thus far completed. Although he says that portions of the earlier days were circulating among the literate citizens of [Tuscany](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuscany) while the work was in progress, this is doubtful. Instead, Boccaccio is probably just shooting down potential detractors. The reader must remember that [vernacular](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vernacular) fictional prose was not a respected genre in 14th century Italy and some of the criticisms Boccaccio combats in the introduction to the fourth day were common attitudes towards the genre. Others, however, were specific to the *Decameron* itself.

One criticism of the latter type was that it was not healthy for a man of Boccaccio's age – approximately 38 – to associate with young ladies, to whom the work is supposedly written. To defend against this criticism, Boccaccio tells a story explaining how natural it is for a man to enjoy a woman's company. In this story, Filipo Balducci is a hermit living with his son on Mount Asinaio after the death of his wife and travels occasionally to Florence for supplies. One day his son – now eighteen and having never before left the mountain – accompanies him because Filipo is too infirm to make the journey alone. While there the son becomes fascinated with women, even though he had never seen one before and Filipo regrets ever bringing his son to Florence.

This is commonly referred to as the 101st story of the *Decameron*. The story originates in the [*Ramayana*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ramayana), a Sanskrit [epic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epic_poetry) from the 4th century BCE. The tale was quite common during the medieval era, appearing in [*Barlaam and Josaphat*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barlaam_and_Josaphat) (written in the 8th century), an [exemplum](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exemplum) of [Jacques de Vitry](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacques_de_Vitry) (13th century) and *Cento Novelle Antiche* (also 13th century), *The Seven Wise Masters*, and Italian collection of fables called *Fiori di Virtù* (14th century), [Odo of Shirton](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Odo_of_Cheriton)'s "De heremita iuvene" (12th century), and a French [fabliau](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fabliau) (13th century). The last two are the most probable sources for Boccaccio because in them the father refers to the women as "geese", whereas in the earlier versions he calls them "demons" who tempt the souls of men.

Filostrato reigns during the fourth day, in which the storytellers tell tales of lovers whose relationship ends in disaster. This is the first day a male storyteller reigns.

**First tale (IV, 1)**

Tancredi, Prince of [Salerno](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salerno) and father of Ghismonda, slays his daughter's lover, Guiscardo, and sends her his [heart](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heart) in a golden cup: Ghismonda, the daughter, pours upon it a poisonous distillation, which she drinks and dies.

Fiammetta narrates this tale, whose earliest source is a French manuscript written by a man named [Thomas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_of_Britain). However, it is referred to in the early 12th century of [Tristan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tristan) and [Iseult](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iseult).

**Second tale (IV, 2)**



The Angel Gabriel in an [*Annunciation*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Annunciation) by [El Greco](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/El_Greco)

Friar Alberto deceives a woman into believing that the [Angel Gabriel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gabriel) is in love with her. As an excuse to sleep with her, Friar Alberto tells her that Gabriel can enter his body. Afterward, for fear of her kinsmen, he flings himself out of her window and finds shelter in the house of a poor man. The next day the poor man leads him in the guise of a wild man into the piazza, where, being recognized, he is apprehended by his fellow monks and imprisoned.

Pampinea tells the second tale of the day, which is a very ancient tale. Supposedly it comes from an episode in the life of [Alexander the Great](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_the_Great). Other notable previous recordings of it include [Josephus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Josephus)'s *Jewish Antiquities*, the *Pantschantantra*, and [*One Thousand and One Arabian Nights*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/One_Thousand_and_One_Arabian_Nights).

**Fifth tale (IV, 5)**



*Isabella and the Pot of Basil* by [William Holman Hunt](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Holman_Hunt)

Lisabetta's brothers slay her lover. He appears to her in a [dream](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dream) and shows her where he is buried. She disinters the head and sets it in a pot of [basil](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basil), whereon she daily weeps a great while. Her brothers take the pot from her and she dies shortly after.

Filomena tells this story, one of the most famous in the *Decameron*, and the basis of [John Keats](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Keats)' narrative poem [*Isabella, or the Pot of Basil*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isabella%2C_or_the_Pot_of_Basil).

## Fifth Day

During the fifth day Fiammetta, whose name means small flame, sets the theme of tales where lovers pass through disasters before having their love end in good fortune.



Rhodes, from a 1493 woodcut

**Fourth tale (V, 4)**

Ricciardo Manardi is found by Messer Lizio da Valbona after an affair with his daughter, whom he marries, and remains at peace with her father.

Filostrato narrates this tale, which some claim bears a resemblance to "[Lai du Laustic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La%C3%BCstic)" by the famed late 12th-century poet [Marie de France](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marie_de_France). However, the resemblance is not strong and the story may be of either Boccaccio's invention or may come from oral tradition.

**Sixth tale (V, 6)**

Gianni di Procida, being found with a damsel that he loves, and who had been given to King [Frederick](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frederick_III_of_Sicily), is bound with her to a stake, so to be burned. He is recognized by Ruggieri dell'Oria, is freed, and marries her.

Pampinea narrates this tale.

**Eighth tale (V, 8)**

In his love for a young lady of the Traversari family, Nastagio degli Onesti squanders his wealth without being loved in return. He is entreated by his friends to leave the city, and goes away to Chiassi, where he sees a female ghost cursed to be hunted down and killed by a horseman and devoured by a pack of hounds every week. He finds out that the cursed horseman was in a similar situation to his own, and committed suicide while the woman died afterwards unrepentant for her role in his death. Nastagio then invites his kinfolk and the lady he loves to a banquet at this same place, so the ghost woman is torn to pieces before the eyes of his beloved, who, fearing a similar fate, accepts Nastagio as her husband.

Filomena's tale may originate from the early 13th century [*Chronicle of Helinandus*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/H%C3%A9linand_of_Froidmont). However, the tale was a widespread one and Boccaccio could have taken it from any number of sources or even oral tradition.

**Ninth tale (V, 9)**

Federigo degli Alberighi, who loves but is not loved in return, spends all the money he has in courtship and is left with only a falcon, which, since he has nothing else to give her, he offers to his lady to eat when she visits his home; then she, learning of this, changes her mind, takes him for her husband, and makes him rich.

Fiammetta's tale (she is the speaker in this story, contrary to what a couple of incorrect sources may say) is also told about the legendary [Hatim Tai](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hatim_Tai), who lived in the 6th century and sacrificed his favorite horse to provide a meal for the ambassador of the Greek Emperor. This earliest version of the tale is of Persian origin.

## Sixth Day

During the sixth day of storytelling, Elissa is queen of the *brigata* and chooses for the theme stories in which a character avoids attack or embarrassment through a clever remark.

Many stories in the sixth day do not have previous versions. Boccaccio may have invented many of them himself. He certainly was clever enough to have created the situations and the retorts.

**First tale (VI, 1)**

A knight offers to carry Madonna Oretta a horseback with a story, but tells it so badly that she begs him to let her dismount.

Filomena narrates this tale, which many see as revealing Boccaccio's opinion of what makes a good or bad storyteller, just as portions of [*Hamlet*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hamlet) and [*A Midsummer Night's Dream*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Midsummer_Night%27s_Dream) contain Shakespeare's opinion of what makes a good or bad actor.

**Tenth tale (VI, 10)**



[Saint Lawrence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lawrence_of_Rome) on trial. The saint figures in tale VI, 10.

Friar Cipolla promises to show certain country-folk a feather of the Angel [Gabriel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gabriel), in lieu of which he finds coals, which he claims are those with which [Saint Lawrence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lawrence_of_Rome) was roasted.

Dioneo narrates this story which mocks the worship of relics. The story originates in the Sanskrit collection of stories called *Canthamanchari*. This story—a classic from the collection—takes place in [Certaldo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Certaldo), Boccaccio's hometown (and the location where he would later die). Friar Cipolla's name means "Brother Onion," and Certaldo was famous in that era for its onions. In the story one can sense a certain love on Boccaccio's part for the people of Certaldo, even while he is mocking them.

## Seventh Day

During the seventh day Dioneo serves as king of the *brigata* and sets the theme for the stories: tales in which wives play tricks on their husbands.

**Second tale (VII, 2)**

Her husband returning home, Peronella hides her lover in a barrel; which, being sold by her husband, she claims she had already sold to someone currently examining it from the inside to see if it is sound. The lover jumps out, and the husband searches the barrel for him while he has his way with the wife, and afterwards has the husband carry it to his house.

Filostrato narrates this tale, which Boccaccio certainly took from Apuleius's *The Golden Ass*, the same source as tale V, 10.

**Fourth tale (VII, 4)**

Tofano one night locks his wife out of the house. Finding that she cannot convince him to let her in, she pretends to throw herself into a well, throwing a large stone inside. Tofano comes out of the house, and runs to the spot, and she goes into the house, locks him out, and hurls abuse at him from within.

Lauretta is the narrator of this very old tale. The earliest form of it is found in the Sanskrit [*Śukasaptati*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C5%9Aukasaptati) (*The Parrot's Seventy Tales*), which was compiled in the 6th century AD. A later version from the 11th century is found in *Disciplina Clericalis*, which was written in Latin by [Petrus Alphonsi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Petrus_Alphonsi), a Jewish convert to Christianity. The tale was very popular and appears in many vernacular languages of the era.

**Ninth tale (VII, 9)**

Lydia, wife of Nicostratus, loves Pyrrhus, who to assure himself thereof, asks three things of her, all of which she does, and therewithal enjoys him in presence of Nicostratus, and makes Nicostratus believe that what he saw was not real.

Panfilo narrates. Boccaccio combined two earlier folk tales into one to create this story. The test of fidelity is previously recorded in French (a [*fabliau*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fabliau)) and Latin ([*Lidia*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comoedia_Lydiae), an [elegiac comedy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elegiac_comedy)), but comes originally from India or Persia. The story of the pear tree, best known to English-speaking readers from [*The Canterbury Tales*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Canterbury_Tales), also originates from Persia in the *Bahar-Danush*, in which the husband climbs a date tree instead of a pear tree. The story could have arrived in Europe through the [*One Thousand and One Nights*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/One_Thousand_and_One_Nights), or perhaps the version in book VI of the [*Masnavi*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masnavi) by [Rumi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rumi).

## Eighth Day

Lauretta reigns during the eighth day of storytelling. During this day the members of the group tell stories of tricks women play on men or that men play on women.

**Second tale (VIII, 2)**

The priest of Varlungo lies with Monna Belcolore: he leaves with her his cloak by way of pledge, and receives from her a mortar. He returns the mortar, and demands of her the cloak that he had left in pledge, which the good lady returns him with a gibe.

Panfilo tells this story, which can be considered a variation of VIII, 1.

**Third tale (VIII, 3)**

[Calandrino](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calandrino), Bruno and Buffalmacco go in quest of the [heliotrope](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heliotrope_%28mineral%29) (bloodstone) beside the Mugnone. Thinking to have found it, Calandrino gets him home laden with stones. His wife chides him: whereat he waxes wroth, beats her, and tells his comrades what they know better than he.

Elissa narrates this tale, the first in which Bruno and [Buffalmacco](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buonamico_Buffalmacco) appear. The two were early Renaissance Italian painters. However, both are known far better for their love of practical jokes than for their artistic work. Boccaccio probably invented this tale himself, though, and used well known jokers as characters.

**Eighth tale (VIII, 8)**

Two men keep with one another: the one lies with the other's wife: the other, being aware of it, manages with the aid of his wife to have the one locked in a chest, upon which he then lies with the wife of him that is locked therein.

Fiammetta narrates this tale. Like many of the eighth day it has a theme in common with many tales from the ancient and medieval era and it is not possible to point to one source that served as Boccaccio's inspiration.

## Ninth Day

Emilia is queen of the brigata for the ninth day. For the second time there is no prescribed theme for the stories of the day (the only other time was during the first day).

**Second tale (IX, 2)**

An abbess rises in haste and in the dark, with intent to surprise an accused nun in bed with her lover: thinking to put on her veil, she puts on instead the breeches of a priest that she has with her. The nun, after pointing out her abbess's head covering, is acquitted, and thenceforth finds it easier to meet with her lover.

Elissa is the narrator of this tale which was either taken from a fabliau by Jean de Condé written between 1313 and 1337, or from a story about Saint [Jerome](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jerome) in [*The Golden Legend*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Golden_Legend), written about 1260. The former was the more likely source for Boccaccio.

**Sixth tale (IX, 6)**



Geoffrey Chaucer, whose *Canterbury Tales* shares many sources with various *Decameron* tales, including IX, 6

Two young men lodge at an inn, of whom the one lies with the host's daughter, his wife accidentally lying with the other. He that lay with the daughter afterwards gets into her father's bed and tells him all, taking him to be his comrade. They exchange words: whereupon the good woman, apprehending the circumstances, gets her to bed with her daughter, and by divers apt words re-establishes perfect accord.

Panfilo's tale comes from [Jean Bodel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean_Bodel)'s fabliau *"Gombert et les deus Clers"*, a story also used by [Chaucer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geoffrey_Chaucer) for [*The Reeve's Tale*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Reeve%27s_Tale).

**Tenth tale (IX, 10)**

Dom Gianni at the instance of his gossip Pietro uses an enchantment to transform Pietro's wife Gemmata into a [mare](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mare); but, when he comes to attach the tail, Gossip Pietro, by saying that he will have none of the tail, makes the enchantment of no effect.

Dioneo's bawdy story from a French [fabliau](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fabliau), "De la demoiselle qui vouloit voler en l'air."

## Tenth Day

Panfilo is the king of the last day of storytelling and he orders the company to tell stories about deeds of munificence. These tales seem to escalate in their degrees of munificence until the end, where the day (and the entire *Decameron*) reaches an apex in the story of patient [Griselda](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Griselda_%28folklore%29).

**Fifth tale (X, 5)**



*The Enchanted Garden of Messer Ansaldo* by [Marie Spartali Stillman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marie_Spartali_Stillman)

Messer Ansaldo is in love with Madonna Dianora, a married woman, and often sends her messages of his love. She does not return his affections, and in an attempt to put him off says that she will only be his if he can prove his love by providing for her a garden as fair in January as it is in May. Messer Ansaldo hires for a great sum a [necromancer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Necromancy), and thereby gives her the garden. Madonna Dianora tells her husband of her promise, and he says that, while he would prefer that she remain faithful to him if possible, she must keep her word to Messer Ansaldo. When Messer Ansaldo learns of this he releases her from her promise and she returns to her husband. From then on Messer Ansaldo felt only honorable affection for Madonna Dianora. The necromancer is impressed by this and refuses to take any payment from Messer Ansaldo.

Emilia narrates. This tale is found in later manuscripts of the [*Śukasaptati*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C5%9Aukasaptati). It is found in several story collections from Asia and in many languages.

**Sixth tale (X, 6)**

King [Charles the Old](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_I_of_Naples), being conqueror, falls in love with a young maiden, and afterward growing ashamed of his folly bestows her and her sister honourably in marriage.

Fiammetta narrates.

**Tenth tale (X, 10)**



Detail from *The Story of Patient Griselda*, painted c. 1500

The Marquis of [Saluzzo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saluzzo), Gualtieri, overborne by the entreaties of his vassals, consents to take a wife, but, being minded to please himself in the choice of her, takes a husbandman's daughter. He has two children by her, both of whom he makes her believe that he has put to death. Afterward, feigning to be tired of her, and to have taken another wife, he turns her out of doors in her shift, and brings his daughter into the house in guise of his bride; but, finding her patient under it all, he brings her home again, and shows her children, now grown up, and honours her, and causes her to be honoured, as Marchioness.

Dioneo tells the final (and possibly most retold) story of the *Decameron*. Although Boccaccio was the first to record the story, he almost certainly did not invent it. [Petrarch](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Petrarch) mentions having heard it many years before, but not from Boccaccio. Therefore, it was probably already circulating in oral tradition when the *Decameron* was written. Petrarch later retold the story in Latin,[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Summary_of_Decameron_tales#cite_note-7) which is probably the biggest factor that contributed to its huge popularity in subsequent centuries.

Conclusion

he work concludes rather abruptly. Boccaccio, as he does in the introduction of the fourth day, defends his work against detractors. However, this time he does it in a humorous and sacrilegious way