

The Golden Ass (Penguin Classics)

By Apuleius

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The Golden Ass (Penguin Classics) By Apuleius

An enchanting story that has inspired generations of writers, including Boccaccio, Shakespeare, Cervantes and Keats

Written towards the end of the second century AD, *The Golden Ass* tells the story of the many adventures of a young man whose fascination with witchcraft leads him to be transformed into a donkey. The bewitched Lucius passes from owner to owner - encountering a desperate gang of robbers and being forced to perform lewd 'human' tricks on stage - until the Goddess Isis finally breaks the spell and initiates Lucius into her cult. It has long been disputed whether Apuleius meant this last-minute conversion seriously or as a final comic surprise, and the challenge of interpretation continues to keep readers fascinated. Apuleius' enchanting story has inspired generations of writers such as Boccaccio, Shakespeare, Cervantes and Keats with its dazzling combination of allegory, satire, bawdiness and sheer exuberance, and *The Golden Ass* remains the most continuously and accessibly amusing book to have survived from Classical antiquity.

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