

1. Reading Comprehension

Read the following passage. Then present your interpretation of its connotation in the context of the whole story it belongs to in a passage of about 4-6 sentences in length:

"Dearest ladies, it is fitting that everything man does should take as its origin the wonderful and holy name of Him who was the maker of all things. Thus, since I am the first and must begin our storytelling, I intend to start off with one of His marvelous works so that, once you have heard it, our hope in Him, as in that which is immutable, will be strengthened, and we will forever praise His name."

From "Day 1, Story 1" of Boccaccio's *Decameron*, in the textbook *The Norton Anthology*, vol. B, p. 719.

2. Writing

Write an essay of about 1,200-1,500 words to argue for the following topic:

Magic in the story of "Ma Ha" from *Outstanding Figures in the Vietnamese Zen Community* (Thiền uyển tập anh)