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# Book of a Thousand Days

Kate Reynolds

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Hale, Shannon. *Book of a Thousand Days*. Illustrated by James Noel Smith. Bloomsbury, 2007. ISBN 9781599900513. \$17.95. 308 p.

Reviewer: Kate Reynolds

Reading Level: Young Adult

Rating: Dependable

Genre: Fantasy stories;

Subject: Fantasy--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

Dashti swore service to Lady Saren and immediately found herself locked in a tower for seven years, sharing in her mistress's punishment for refusing to marry Lord Khasar and instead choosing Khan Tegus. The fifteen year old maid keeps a journal of their time in the tower and of their adventure after they escape two and a half years into their confinement.

While based on a little-known Grimm fairytale, Hale's story takes on a shape of its own with the maid, rather than the lady, as the central character. The plot is fairly predictable but the characterization and language are the real draw. Hale depicts Dashti as a resourceful young woman whose determination allows the two to survive and even thrive while not allowing her character to become too perfect or unbelievable. Saren's tenuous emotional and mental stability add another aspect of reality.

The greatest weakness of *Book of a Thousand Days* is the pacing. The plot is rather slow until the climax, denouement and resolution all rush in the last 60 or so pages. However, few readers are likely to care much with the excitement of the battle against Lord Khasar and the anticipated fairy tale romance ending. Recommended for preteen and teenage girls, especially fans of Hale's previous works.