



Good Night  
Stories  
FOR  
REBEL  
GIRLS  
100  
TALES  
OF  
EXTRAORDINARY  
WOMEN

920  
F274  
2016  
V.1

ELENA FAVILLI AND FRANCESCA CAVALLO

 TIMBUKTU LABS





Copyright © 2016 by Timbuktu Labs, Inc.

Timbuktu supports copyright. Copyright fuels creativity, encourages diverse voices, promotes free speech, and creates a vibrant culture. Thank you for buying an authorized edition of this book and for complying with copyright laws by not reproducing, scanning, or distributing any part of it in any form without permission. You are supporting indie writers and allowing Timbuktu to continue to publish books for rebel girls wherever they may be.

Timbuktu Labs and *Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls* are registered trademarks.

*Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls* is available at special quantity discounts for bulk purchase for sale promotions, premiums, fundraisers, and educational needs. For details, write to [hello@rebelgirls.co](mailto:hello@rebelgirls.co)

This is a work of creative nonfiction. It is a collection of heartwarming and thought-provoking bedtime stories inspired by the life and adventures of one hundred heroic women. It is not an encyclopedic account of events and accomplishments of their lives.

[www.rebelgirls.co](http://www.rebelgirls.co)

FIRST EDITION

10 9 8 7

Editorial Direction + Art Direction by Francesca Cavallo and Elena Favilli

Cover design by Pemberley Pond

Graphic project by Cori Johnson

*Good Night Stories For Rebel Girls* is FSC certified. It is printed on chlorine free paper made with 100% post-consumer waste. It only uses vegetable and soy based ink.

Printed in Canada



# • CONTENTS •

## PREFACE xi

|                                               |    |
|-----------------------------------------------|----|
| ADA LOVELACE • MATHEMATICIAN                  | 2  |
| ALEK WEK • SUPERMODEL                         | 4  |
| ALFONSINA STRADA • CYCLIST                    | 6  |
| ALICIA ALONSO • BALLERINA                     | 8  |
| AMEENAH GURIB-FAKIM • PRESIDENT AND SCIENTIST | 10 |
| AMELIA EARHART • AVIATOR                      | 12 |
| AMNA AL HADDAD • WEIGHTLIFTER                 | 14 |
| ANN MAKOSINSKI • INVENTOR                     | 16 |
| ANNA POLITKOVSKAYA • JOURNALIST               | 18 |
| ARTEMISIA GENTILESCHI • PAINTER               | 20 |
| ASHLEY FIOLEK • MOTOCROSS RACER               | 22 |
| ASTRID LINDGREN • WRITER                      | 24 |
| AUNG SAN SUU KYI • POLITICIAN                 | 26 |
| BALKISSA CHAIBOU • ACTIVIST                   | 28 |
| BRENDA CHAPMAN • DIRECTOR                     | 30 |
| THE BRONTË SISTERS • WRITERS                  | 32 |
| CATHERINE THE GREAT • EMPRESS                 | 34 |
| CHOLITA CLIMBERS • MOUNTAINEERS               | 36 |
| CLAUDIA RUGGERINI • PARTISAN                  | 38 |
| CLEOPATRA • PHARAOH                           | 40 |
| COCO CHANEL • FASHION DESIGNER                | 42 |
| CORA CORALINA • POET AND BAKER                | 44 |
| COY MATHIS • ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT        | 46 |
| ELIZABETH I • QUEEN                           | 48 |
| EUFROSINA CRUZ • ACTIVIST AND POLITICIAN      | 50 |



|                                          |     |
|------------------------------------------|-----|
| EVITA PERÓN • POLITICIAN                 | 52  |
| FADUMO DAYIB • POLITICIAN                | 54  |
| FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE • NURSE             | 56  |
| FRIDA KAHLO • PAINTER                    | 58  |
| GRACE HOPPER • COMPUTER SCIENTIST        | 60  |
| GRACE O'MALLEY • PIRATE                  | 62  |
| HARRIET TUBMAN • FREEDOM FIGHTER         | 64  |
| HATSHEPSUT • PHARAOH                     | 66  |
| HELEN KELLER • ACTIVIST                  | 68  |
| HILLARY CLINTON • PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE | 70  |
| HYPATIA • MATHEMATICIAN AND PHILOSOPHER  | 72  |
| IRENA SENDLEROWA • WAR HERO              | 74  |
| ISABEL ALLENDE • WRITER                  | 76  |
| JACQUOTTE DELAHAYE • PIRATE              | 78  |
| JANE AUSTEN • WRITER                     | 80  |
| JANE GOODALL • PRIMATOLOGIST             | 82  |
| JESSICA WATSON • SAILOR                  | 84  |
| JILL TARTER • ASTRONOMER                 | 86  |
| JINGŪ • EMPRESS                          | 88  |
| JOAN JETT • ROCK STAR                    | 90  |
| JULIA CHILD • CHEF                       | 92  |
| KATE SHEPPARD • SUFFRAGETTE              | 94  |
| LAKSHMI BAI • QUEEN AND WARRIOR          | 96  |
| LELLA LOMBARDI • FORMULA ONE RACER       | 98  |
| LOZEN • WARRIOR                          | 100 |
| MAE C. JEMISON • ASTRONAUT AND DOCTOR    | 102 |
| MALALA YOUSAFZAI • ACTIVIST              | 104 |
| MANAL AL-SHARIF • ACTIVIST               | 106 |
| MARGARET HAMILTON • COMPUTER SCIENTIST   | 108 |
| MARGARET THATCHER • PRIME MINISTER       | 110 |
| MARGHERITA HACK • ASTROPHYSICIST         | 112 |



|                                             |     |
|---------------------------------------------|-----|
| MARIA CALLAS • OPERA SINGER                 | 114 |
| MARIA MONTESSORI • PHYSICIAN AND EDUCATOR   | 116 |
| MARIA REICHE • ARCHAEOLOGIST                | 118 |
| MARIA SIBYLLA MERIAN • NATURALIST           | 120 |
| MARIE CURIE • SCIENTIST                     | 122 |
| MARY ANNING • PALEONTOLOGIST                | 124 |
| MARY EDWARDS WALKER • SURGEON               | 126 |
| MARY KOM • BOXER                            | 128 |
| MATILDE MONTOYA • DOCTOR                    | 130 |
| MAUD STEVENS WAGNER • TATTOO ARTIST         | 132 |
| MAYA ANGELOU • WRITER                       | 134 |
| MAYA GABEIRA • SURFER                       | 136 |
| MELBA LISTON • TROMBONIST                   | 138 |
| MICHAELA DEPRINCE • BALLERINA               | 140 |
| MICHELLE OBAMA • LAWYER AND FIRST LADY      | 142 |
| MILLO CASTRO ZALDARRIAGA • DRUMMER          | 144 |
| THE MIRABAL SISTERS • ACTIVISTS             | 146 |
| MIRIAM MAKEBA • ACTIVIST AND SINGER         | 148 |
| MISTY COPELAND • BALLERINA                  | 150 |
| NANCY WAKE • SPY                            | 152 |
| NANNY OF THE MAROONS • QUEEN                | 154 |
| NELLIE BLY • REPORTER                       | 156 |
| NETTIE STEVENS • GENETICIST                 | 158 |
| NINA SIMONE • SINGER                        | 160 |
| POLICARPA SALAVARRIETA • SPY                | 162 |
| RITA LEVI MONTALCINI • SCIENTIST            | 164 |
| ROSA PARKS • ACTIVIST                       | 166 |
| RUTH BADER GINSBURG • SUPREME COURT JUSTICE | 168 |
| RUTH HARKNESS • EXPLORER                    | 170 |
| SEONDEOK OF SILLA • QUEEN                   | 172 |
| SERENA AND VENUS WILLIAMS • TENNIS PLAYERS  | 174 |



|                                  |     |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| SIMONE BILES • GYMNAST           | 176 |
| SONITA ALIZADEH • RAPPER         | 178 |
| SYLVIA EARLE • MARINE BIOLOGIST  | 180 |
| TAMARA DE LEMPICKA • PAINTER     | 182 |
| VIRGINIA WOOLF • WRITER          | 184 |
| WANG ZHENYI • ASTRONOMER         | 186 |
| WANGARI MAATHAI • ACTIVIST       | 188 |
| WILMA RUDOLPH • ATHLETE          | 190 |
| XIAN ZHANG • ORCHESTRA CONDUCTOR | 192 |
| YAA ASANTEWAA • WARRIOR QUEEN    | 194 |
| YOKO ONO • ARTIST                | 196 |
| YUSRA MARDINI • SWIMMER          | 198 |
| ZAHA HADID • ARCHITECT           | 200 |

#### WRITE YOUR STORY 202

DRAW YOUR PORTRAIT 203

REBELS' HALL OF FAME 204

#### ILLUSTRATORS 209

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS 210

ABOUT THE AUTHORS 211



## • PREFACE •

**T**here are many reasons why this book will always be special to us.

Some are obvious: the record-breaking amount of money we raised through crowdfunding (more than one million dollars! *Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls* is the most funded original book in the history of crowdfunding), the astonishing number of backers from more than seventy countries, and the privilege of working with dozens of unbelievably talented female artists from all over the world.

Some reasons, though, are less obvious: the messages of soon-to-be moms and dads who told us that this is the first book they have bought for their daughters. The friend of a friend who said that this campaign gave her the confidence to start working on a project close to her heart that she had kept on hold for a long time because “what if I fail?” The email from a mom ecstatic to have a book that could help her share her perspective on the world with her three sons, not only as a mother, but as a woman. Above all, the deep trust that our backers have put in us.

This amount of trust is not something women get to experience very often. We do not take it for granted. How could we? Most of the extraordinary women featured in this book never experienced this kind of trust. No matter the importance of their discoveries, the audacity of their adventures, the width of their genius—they were constantly belittled, forgotten, in some cases almost erased from history.

It is important that girls understand the obstacles that lie in front of them. It is just as important that they know these obstacles are not insurmountable. That not only can they find a way to overcome them, but that they can



remove those obstacles for those who will come after them, just like these great women did.

Each of the hundred stories in this book proves the world-changing power of a trusting heart.

May these brave pioneers inspire you. May their portraits impress upon our daughters the solid belief that beauty manifests itself in all shapes and colors, and at all ages. May each reader know the greatest success is to live a life full of passion, curiosity, and generosity. May we all remember every day that we have the right to be happy and to explore wildly.

Now that you're holding this book, all we can feel is hope and enthusiasm for the world we're building together. A world where gender will not define how big you can dream, how far you can go. A world where each of us will be able to say with confidence: "I am free."

Thank you for being part of this journey.

*Elena Favilli*

*Francesca Cavallo*



# • ADA LOVELACE •

MATHEMATICIAN

Once upon a time, there was a girl named Ada who loved machines.

She also loved the idea of flying. She studied birds to work out the perfect balance between wing size and body weight. She tested out materials and tried out several designs. She never managed to soar like a bird, but she created a beautiful book full of drawings called *Flyology* where she recorded all of her findings.

One night, Ada went to a ball. There, she met a grumpy old mathematician named Charles Babbage. Ada was a brilliant mathematician herself, and the two soon became good friends. Charles invited Ada to see a machine he had invented. He called it the *Difference Engine*. It could automatically add and subtract numbers. No one had ever done that before.

Ada was hooked.

"What if we built a machine that could make more complicated calculations?" she said. Excited, Ada and Charles started working. The machine was huge and it required an enormous steam engine.

Ada wanted to go further: "What if this machine could play music and show letters as well as numbers?"

She was describing a computer, way before modern computers were invented!

Ada wrote the first computer program in history.

---

DECEMBER 10, 1815–NOVEMBER 27, 1852

UNITED KINGDOM

ILLUSTRATION BY  
ELISABETTA STONINICH



"THAT BRAIN OF MINE IS  
SOMETHING MORE THAN MERELY  
MORTAL, AS TIME WILL SHOW."  
—ADA LOVELACE



# JANE AUSTEN

WRITER

Once upon a time, in the English countryside, there was a girl who loved books more than anything else. There was nowhere that Jane would rather be than curled up on a sofa in her father's library, with her nose in a book. She would get so engrossed in the stories that sometimes she even argued with the characters, as though they could talk back.

Jane and her seven siblings would put on plays and charades to amuse themselves and their parents. When she was still very young, she started to write her own stories, and used to read them out to her sister Cassandra to make her laugh. Jane's writing was like Jane herself: bright, inventive, witty, and sharp. To her, every detail counted: how a couple squabbled, how a man walked, what maids said to each other—these were all clues revealing people's characters. Jane jotted down everything in her notebooks, ready to use in her novels.

At that time, girls were expected to get married. But Jane didn't want to get married, so she never did.

"Oh, Lizzy! Do anything rather than marry without affection," she wrote in one of her novels.

Jane Austen came to be one of the most famous writers in the history of English literature. You can still visit the beautiful cottage in the little village where she used to sit, writing at a small desk, looking out of the window and into the flower garden.

DECEMBER 16, 1775–JULY 18, 1817

UNITED KINGDOM



"AH! THERE IS NOTHING LIKE STAYING AT HOME, FOR REAL COMFORT."  
—JANE AUSTEN



## • THE BRONTË SISTERS •

WRITERS

In a cold, bleak house in northern England, there once lived three sisters, Charlotte, Emily, and Anne were often alone and they wrote stories and poems to entertain themselves.

One day, Charlotte decided to send her poems to a famous English poet to ask what he thought of them. His response was, "I do not like your poems at all: literature is a man's business!"

Charlotte kept on writing.

One night, she found a notebook lying open on Emily's desk. "Why have you not shown us your poems before?" Charlotte asked. "They are beautiful." Emily was furious at her sister reading her private papers without her permission. But once Emily calmed down, Charlotte proposed: "Why don't we write a book of poetry together?" Emily and Anne agreed.

When they finally published the book, it only sold two copies. But they still did not give up and they kept working in secret, discussing their writing at the dinner table.

This time, they each worked on a different novel. When the novels came out, they were hugely successful. People at the time couldn't believe that they had been written by three country girls, so the sisters had to travel to London to prove that they were indeed the authors.

Their books have been translated into many different languages and read by millions of people across the world.

---

CA. 1816–CA. 1855  
UNITED KINGDOM

ILLUSTRATION BY  
ELIZABETTA STONICH



"I AM NOT AN ANGEL, AND I  
WILL NOT BE ONE TILL I DIE:  
I WILL BE MYSELF."  
—CHARLOTTE BRONTË



Good Night  
Stories  
for  
Rebel  
Girls

920  
F274  
2016  
v.2

FRANCESCA CAVALLO AND ELENA FAVILLI

 **TIMBUKTU**



# PREFACE

Dearest Rebels,

As you read this letter, the first volume of *Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls* is on the nightstands of about one million people. All over the world, children and grown-ups are talking about their favorite rebel girl. Teachers are designing lessons around these pioneers. Politicians are reading these stories at political conventions, young women are opening the book to cheer up after a bad day, and soon-to-be dads are buying it to welcome their daughters into this world.

*Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls* has been translated into more than thirty languages, and every day we have the feeling that we hear all of your accents when we receive the messages you send us via email, Facebook, and Twitter. When we see the Instagram pictures of this book in your homes, it's a lot like looking at a family album. A family made up of people of every religion, every nationality, every color, every age, every kind. A global family whose members come from small villages (like the ones we grew up in) and from big cities.

One year ago, in our small Los Angeles apartment, we started a little fire. A fire we could gather around to tell each other new kinds of stories.

You joined us. You invited your friends and brought more firewood. You came bringing your hopes, your frustrations, your courage and your fear, your weakness and your strength. You came to listen, but you also came to speak. The fire got bigger. The family grew.

And this is what *Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls 2* is about. It's about the stories you told us by that fire. It's about the Asian American female firefighter whom Christine told us about in New York City. It's about the first all-female anti-poaching unit in South Africa, which Rita told us about



on Snapchat. It's about the Irish pilot who built herself a plane. Aidan told us about her at a signing event.

Some say that stories can't change the world. But we disagree. Time and again, you messaged us to say you had discovered a story in our book, and sometimes the story you mentioned wasn't there. The fact is that *Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls* is training hundreds of thousands of people to see stories they couldn't see before. It's inspiring them to look for talent where they thought there was none. It's making it easier to find potential in unpredictable places.

When we tap into the talent of an entire population—instead of just half of it—endless possibilities open up.

When we see each other for what we are, free of harmful stereotypes, we create real progress.

When we recognize oppression and take action to end it, we all become stronger.

As you rest your head on your pillow after reading one or three of these stories—whether it's after an exhausting day of play or a long day at work, whether you're in Cape Town or Aotearoa, whether someone read you the story or you read it by yourself—know that you've just sat by a fire with hundreds of thousands of fellow rebels who, just like you, are on a journey.

The Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls series is a small part of a conversation that is bigger than each of us. Bigger than our individual hopes. Certainly bigger than our fears.

Thank you for sitting with us by this fire.

Now let's get started.

Francesca Cavallo

Elena Favilli



## MARY SEACOLE

NURSE

Once there was a little girl named Mary who was great at curing her dolls. If one had a fever, Mary would lay a wet facecloth on her forehead. If another's tummy hurt, she'd give her pretend hot tea.

Mary's mother had learned the ancient African art of using herbs to make medicines, and she cured lots of illnesses in Kingston, Jamaica, the town where they lived. By the time she was twelve, Mary was already helping her cure real people!

When she grew up, Mary started to travel, which was very unusual for a woman at the time. She went to the Bahamas, Haiti, and Cuba to find out how the people there used herbs to treat the sick. In Panama, she risked her life to help local nurses and doctors cure patients during a cholera epidemic.

When the Crimean War broke out, Mary traveled to London to ask if the British Army needed help on the battlefield. The army said no because they were suspicious of women practicing medicine, so Mary went to Crimea on her own and opened the British Hotel, a place where wounded soldiers could recover their strength before making the long journey home.

Mary traveled right to the front lines with two mules to bring medicines and food to soldiers. For her, any wounded soldier was a wounded human being: she didn't look at uniforms and treated men from both sides, often while bullets were flying and cannons thundered all around.

When she went back home, Mary wrote a best-selling book called *Wonderful Adventures of Mrs. Seacole in Many Lands*.

NOVEMBER 23, 1805 - MAY 14, 1881

JAMAICA

114

ILLUSTRATION BY  
ANNA LISA VENTURA

"THE GRATEFUL WORDS  
AND SMILE  
WHICH REWARDED ME  
FOR BINDING UP A WOUND  
OR GIVING A COOLING DRINK  
WAS A PLEASURE WORTH  
RISKING LIFE FOR  
AT ANY TIME."

- MARY SEACOLE





## MARY SHELLEY

WRITER

Once upon a time, there was a girl named Mary whose mother died when she was just a baby. Her stepmother wasn't kind to her, and Mary missed having a mom tremendously. But she found comfort in the huge library they had at home. Every day, Mary would borrow a different book and go to her mother's grave to read it.

The books carried her away, far from the house where she felt lonely and unhappy. Soon enough, Mary started to write her own stories and poems.

One day, she met a young poet called Percy. They had their first date by Mary's mom's grave and fell deeply in love. They ran away to Paris to be together.

As they traveled across Europe, they became friends with many other artists and writers. One stormy night, Mary, Percy, and a few friends started telling one another scary stories. After a while, one of their friends proposed that they all go back to their rooms and write ghost stories, and then see whose story was the most frightening.

That night, Mary came up with the idea of a mad scientist who builds a monster from bits of dead bodies and brings it to life using electricity. Everyone agreed: Mary's story of Dr. Victor Frankenstein was the scariest of them all.

Her novel became an incredible success, and even after two hundred years, people still love to read about Doctor Frankenstein and the terrible monster he created—all dreamt up by the amazingly imaginative Mary Shelley.

AUGUST 30, 1797 - FEBRUARY 1, 1851  
UNITED KINGDOM



"BEWARE; FOR I AM FEARLESS,  
AND THEREFORE POWERFUL."

- MARY SHELLEY