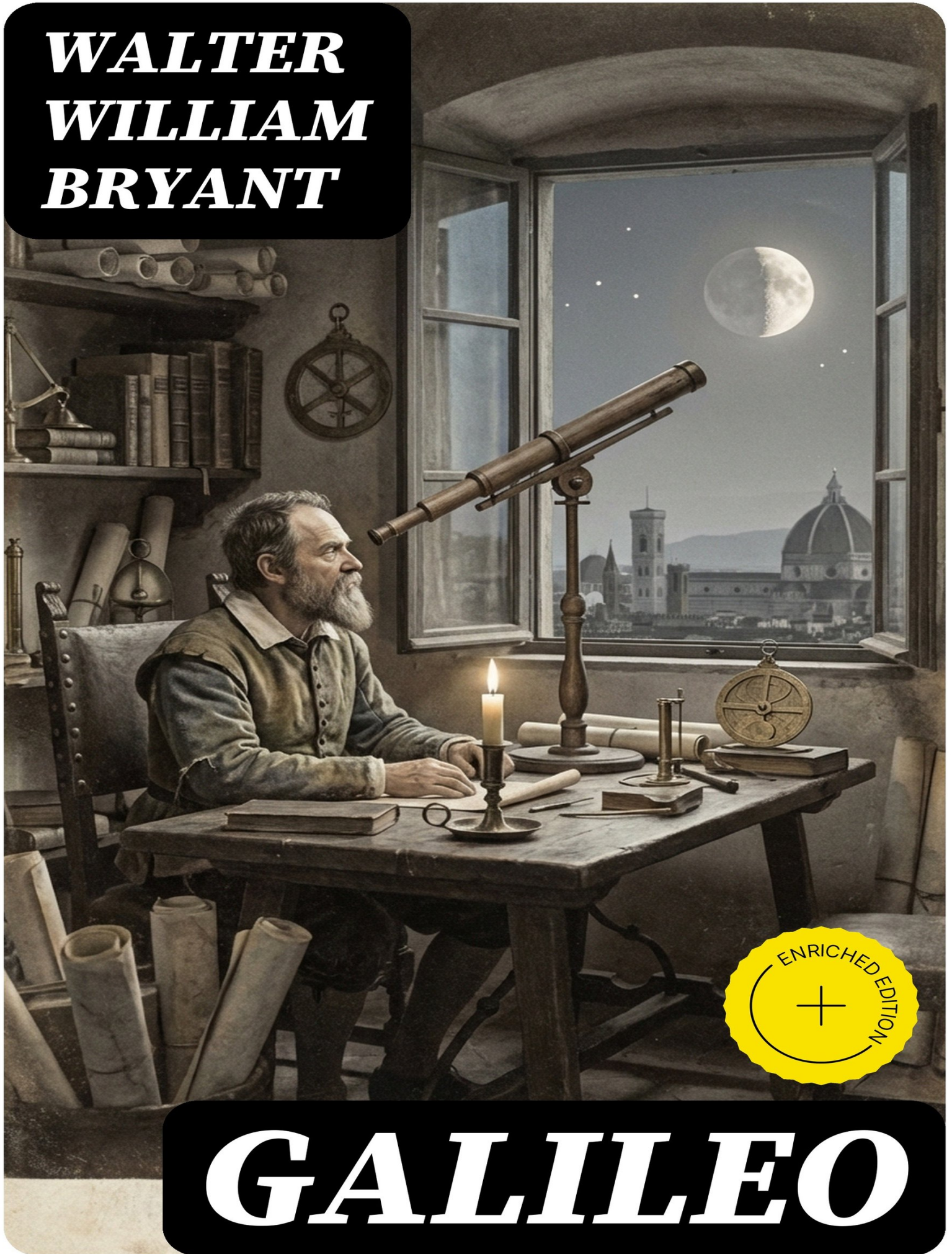
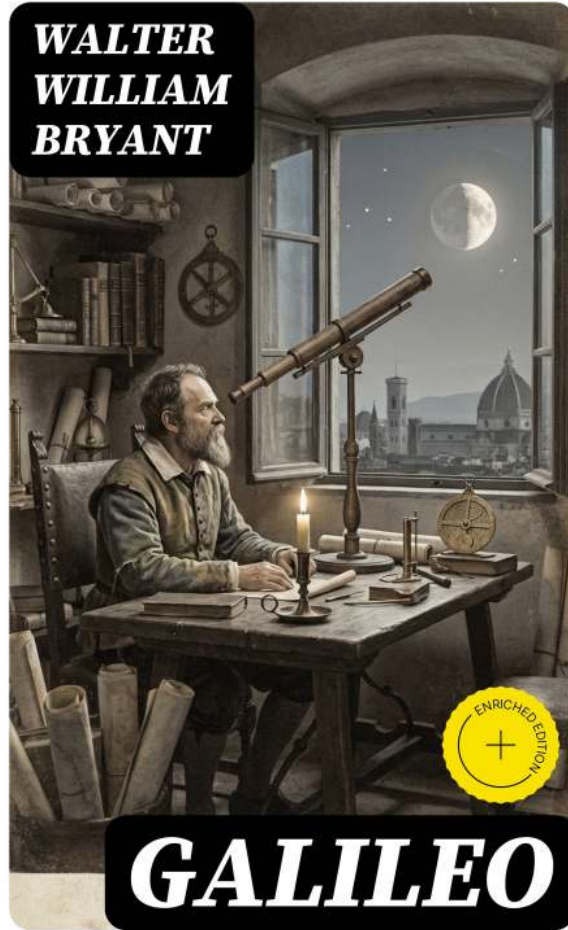


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GALILEO

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GALILEO

Walter William Bryant

Galileo

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Birth and Education

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CHAPTER I.—BIRTH AND EDUCATION.

IN the year 1343 one Tommaso Bonajuti, being elected to the Council of Twelve in Florence, changed his family name to Galilei. His grandson, Galileo Galilei, a century later, was a celebrated physician, professor of medicine at the University of Florence, and became chief magistrate of the Republic. This Galileo's brother had a great-grandson Vincenzo, the father of the great Galileo, whose life forms the subject of this volume. We shall consistently drop the surname in our references to him, following a custom of the Italians in speaking of their great men; such as Dante, Raphael, and Michelangelo.

Vincenzo Galilei was a skilful and accomplished musician, with a good knowledge of classics and mathematics, but want of means and the expense of a growing family had sent him into commercial life, and induced him to choose for his eldest son's future career the business of a cloth-dealer, as something of fairly good standing and also lucrative.

This son Galileo was born in Pisa on February 15, 1564, the year that saw the birth of Shakespeare, and his education began in a day-school there with some assistance from his father at times when business did not take him away from Pisa. Vincenzo's help with lessons seems to have been confined to Greek and Latin to the exclusion of mathematics. It may sound odd to modern ears, but there is no doubt of the fact that in those days the objection to the