

1001 ARABIAN NIGHTS
A Fairytale Retold
By Dale Ahlquist

Cast of Characters

21 Females; 22 Males; 3 Either

<u>SCHEHERAZADE:</u>	The Sultan's wife, and the storyteller.
<u>SULTAN:</u>	The Sultan, Scheherazade's husband.
<u>MOOLACH:</u>	One of the Forty Thieves.
<u>ARZABAD:</u>	One of the Forty Thieves.
<u>HAKKAMEEM:</u>	One of the Forty Thieves.
<u>BAZEEM:</u>	One of the Forty Thieves.
<u>JALZUL:</u>	One of the Forty Thieves.
<u>CAPTAIN:</u>	Captain of the Forty Thieves.
<u>SAVVA:</u>	A woman who happens to be sitting around.
<u>ELOOSH:</u>	A woman who happens to be sitting around.
<u>BARUHA:</u>	A woman who happens to be sitting around.
<u>ALI BABA:</u>	An olive oil merchant, Kassim's brother.
<u>KASSIM:</u>	Ali Baba's brother.
<u>MORGIANA:</u>	Ali Baba's slave girl.
<u>ZELDA:</u>	A princess.
<u>ZIRHA:</u>	A princess.
<u>ZULA:</u>	A princess.
<u>GENIE:</u>	The Genie in the oil lamp.
<u>SIMON:</u>	A cobbler, Simka's brother.
<u>SIMKA:</u>	A cobbler, Simon's sister.
<u>ABRA:</u>	An evil sorceress.

<u>CABRA:</u>	An evil sorceress.
<u>DABRA:</u>	An evil sorceress.
<u>ALADDIN:</u>	A thief.
<u>ZOHFAR:</u>	Aladdin's friend.
<u>PRINCESS:</u>	The princess.
<u>ASHA:</u>	The princess' attendant.
<u>AHNDDA:</u>	The princess' attendant.
<u>ARDA:</u>	The princess' attendant.
<u>1ST MERCHANT:</u>	A merchant.
<u>2ND MERCHANT:</u>	A merchant.
<u>3RD MERCHANT:</u>	A merchant.
<u>AHMED:</u>	A craftsman.
<u>AHNED:</u>	A craftsman.
<u>AHZED:</u>	A craftsman.
<u>URCHIN:</u>	A strange creature.
<u>UG:</u>	A thug.
<u>THUG:</u>	A thug.
<u>KING:</u>	A wicked king.
<u>NEETA:</u>	A lady who marries the King.
<u>SAREENA:</u>	A lady who married the King.
<u>WOMEN:</u>	Women who are lined up to meet the King.
<u>GUARDS:</u>	Guards who escort Neeta out of the throne room.

Scene Breakdown

ACT I

- Scene 1 – A Street in Some Arabian Town
- Scene 2 – A Place in the Wilderness
- Scene 3 – Outside Ali Baba's Home
- Scene 4 – Inside the Cave of Treasures
- Scene 5 – Simon and Simka's Workshop
- Scene 6 – A Street in Some Arabian Town
- Scene 7 – Outside Ali Baba's Home

ACT II

- Scene 1 – The Sorceresses' Den
- Scene 2 – The Marketplace
- Scene 3 – The Sorceresses' Den
- Scene 4 – The Princess's Chamber
- Scene 5 – Aladdin's Room
- Scene 6 – The B. Brothers' Workshop
- Scene 7 – A Mountain Hideaway
- Scene 8 – The King's Palace

Approximate Length

75 minutes

Time

Ancient Times

Place

Arabia

Scene 3

Setting: Ali Baba's home.

At Rise: ALI BABA is telling the story of his adventures to KASSIM and MORGIANA.

ALI BABA

...and the whole cave was full of treasures that the thieves had stolen!

KASSIM

Open Sesame? That's it? They just said those words and the whole mountain opened up.

ALI BABA

I wouldn't call it a mountain. But it was a wall of rock that an army of men could not have moved.

KASSIM

Magic.

ALI BABA

I think so.

MORGIANA

Master, you do not usually tell lies.

ALI BABA

And I'm not lying now, Morgiana.

MORGIANA

But you're always in trouble.

ALI BABA

No, my brother Kassim is always in trouble. The only trouble I get into is getting him out of trouble.

MORGIANA

Then why are you telling him about forty thieves carrying treasure into a magical cave?

ALI BABA

Because it happened!

MORGIANA

But you're giving him ideas!

ALI BABA

Ideas about what?

KASSIM

Ideas about what?

MORGIANA

Don't you see? He's going to want to— What am I doing? Now, *I'm* giving him ideas.

KASSIM

I'm not getting ideas!

ALI BABA

He's got no ideas.

MORGIANA

He's got no brains.

(Exit MORGIANA)

KASSIM

Ali Baba, you should get a new slave.

ALI BABA

Morgiana is a faithful slave, and she takes good care of me.

KASSIM

But she's always telling *you* what to do. It's not clear who's the slave and who's the master.

ALI BABA

She's very clever. Wise, even. I trust her completely. You're the one I don't trust, Kassim. I probably *shouldn't* have told you about that treasure in the cave.

KASSIM

Well...you have to admit...treasure *would* be useful.

ALI BABA

Kassim, it's stolen. And besides, we don't need treasure. We make enough money selling olive oil. Now don't get any ideas.

KASSIM

I don't have any ideas!

(Blackout)

(*Lights up in Sultan's Tent*)

SCHEHERAZADE

But Kassim had ideas. He sneaked off and found the cave. He said the magic words, "Open Sesame!" and the wall of stone opened up, and he went into the cave, and he found treasures beyond his dreams. He filled a large sack with all the gold and jewels that he could carry. But when he was ready to leave, he could not remember the magic words.

SULTAN

He could not remember "Open Sesame"?

SCHEHERAZADE

He could not.

SULTAN

How could he forget something so simple?

SCHEHERAZADE

Perhaps because all he could think about was the treasure. Now he had his treasure, but he was trapped. Trapped in the cave.

SULTAN

And so?

SCHEHERAZADE

And so it wasn't long before the Forty Thieves returned. And they found him.

SULTAN

What did they do to him?

SCHEHERAZADE

It was worse than you can imagine.

SULTAN

(Leaning in)

Tell me.

SCHEHERAZADE

I will tell you.

(Pauses)

Tomorrow.

SULTAN

Tomorrow?!

BLACKOUT

Scene 4

Setting: Inside the cave full of treasure. Semi-dark.

At Rise: ALI BABA is sneaking around, followed by MORGIANA, calling — in a whisper — for his brother.

ALI BABA

Kassim! Kassim!

MORGIANA

Master, this was a bad idea to come here.

ALI BABA

Of course it was. That's why I told you not to come.

MORGIANA

I wasn't going to let you go alone.

ALI BABA

I appreciate your concern.

MORGIANA

And besides...

ALI BABA

What.

MORGIANA

I wanted to see if it was true.

ALI BABA

You know I don't lie.

MORGIANA

But still. Just saying "Open Sesame!"

(The rumbling starts)

ALI BABA

CLOSE SESAME! CLOSE SESAME!

(Rumbling stops)

Morgiana! You have to be careful what you say!

MORGIANA

Sorry.

Kassim! Kassim! ALI BABA

Oh no. MORGIANA

What. ALI BABA

I found something. MORGIANA

What. ALI BABA

It looks like a leg. MORGIANA

It's Kassim's leg! ALI BABA

And look, here's an arm. MORGIANA

That's his, too! ALI BABA

(Groaning sound. ALI BABA looks down.)

Oh, by all the green-eyed devils! ALI BABA
(He picks up a basket and turns it over on a table. There is KASSIM'S head!)

Oh... KASSIM

Kassim! ALI BABA

I have a headache. KASSIM

You *are nothing* but a headache! MORGIANA

KASSIM

Ali Baba, I've made a terrible mistake. I'm sorry!

ALI BABA

Kassim, what were you thinking?

KASSIM

I lost my head.

ALI BABA

You should never have come here.

KASSIM

I know. But it almost worked. The trouble is, once I got in here, I forgot the magic words, and I was trapped in the cave till the thieves found me here. And they cut me to pieces.

ALI BABA

Haven't I always told you to be honest? You see what happens when you are dishonest?

KASSIM

What's honesty have to do with it?

ALI BABA

Stealing is dishonest.

KASSIM

But the thieves stole the treasure. I wasn't the one who stole it.

ALI BABA

But you came to get it for yourself. It's not yours. And now look at you.

KASSIM

I *am* looking at me! All over the place!

MORGIANA

And look at all the trouble you've caused my master!

KASSIM

I said I was sorry. But as you see, I'm in a bit of trouble myself.

MORGIANA

Quit complaining. Master, what are we going to do?

ALI BABA

We need more light. Morgiana, hand me that lamp.

MORGIANA

What lamp?

ALI BABA

There.

(She hands him the lamp. He sets it down.)

ALI BABA

It's very dusty. This seems to have been sitting here much longer than the stolen treasure.

(He rubs it. There is smoke. And the GENIE appears.)

GENIE

(Bowing)

Master, your wish is my command.

MORGIANA

(Getting in front of ALI BABA)

He is *my* master!

GENIE

If you don't want me to call you Master, I won't. But all the other rules still apply.

KASSIM

It's a genie! Ali Baba, we're saved!

ALI BABA

A genie? You're a genie? Really?

GENIE

At your service. Three wishes. But a word of caution! Don't wish for stupid things. I have made too many people unhappy by giving them what they wish for.

ALI BABA

Well...I don't want to be unhappy.

GENIE

(Pauses)

That's not how it works.

ALI BABA

What? How what works?

GENIE

You can't tell me what you *don't* want. I don't do negative wishes.

KASSIM

Um, Ali Baba...?

GENIE

A talking head! How very clever. Does it bounce?

KASSIM

Hey, wait!

ALI BABA

Kassim, now would be a good time for you to be quiet. You've already caused enough trouble today.

(To the GENIE)

As you see, my brother has lost his head.

GENIE

And we have found it! But how did all of this happen?

ALI BABA

This cave is full of stolen treasure. It is covered by an impossibly large rock and the only way to move it is with some magic words. My rather ignorant brother knew the words to get into the cave, but then he forgot them. So when the thieves came back—

GENIE

Rather ignorant, you say? Does this level of intelligence run in the family?

MORGIANA

Master, we should not stay here any longer. The thieves will be returning.

(Loud rumble)

Oh no! They are already returning!

ALI BABA

Genie! I want you to get us out of here!

GENIE

I can do that. Let's go.

(Starts to leave)

ALI BABA

But...aren't you just going to...snap your fingers or something?

GENIE

You mean you want getting out of here to be one of your three wishes?

ALI BABA

That's...what I was thinking.

GENIE

But I know a much easier way out of here. Secret passage. It won't even cost you a wish. Let's go!

KASSIM

What about me?!

ALI BABA

What about my brother?

MORGIANA

Are you sure you don't want to leave him here?

KASSIM

Hey!

ALI BABA

Well, Genie, I think my first wish has to be that you use your magic to put Kassim back together.

GENIE

You don't want to waste a wish on that. We can fix his problem easily enough. I know a guy.

ALI BABA

You *know* a guy! You know a guy who *what*?

GENIE

Who can put him back together. He's amazing. We should go see him.

MORGIANA

Master! We have to hurry!

GENIE

We should go see him right now. Come on, let's gather your brother up and everybody take some, and follow me.

KASSIM

Don't forget any of my parts!

(Blackout)

*(Lights up in Sultan's Tent. SULTAN is frozen in a dumbfounded stare.
Long pause.)*

SULTAN

The brother's...severed head...was still talking.

SCHEHERAZADE

Yes.

SULTAN

(Pauses)

How am I going to sleep tonight, thinking about that?

SCHEHERAZADE

(Pauses)

Do you want me to continue?

SULTAN

(Snapping out of it)

Yes! Please go on!

SCHEHERAZADE

So the genie brought them all to the humble shop of Simon and his sister Simka.

SULTAN

What were they? Doctors? Magicians?

SCHEHERAZADE

Cobblers.

SULTAN

Cobblers!

BLACKOUT