

Aladdin And The Wonderful Lamp

(Based on the Arabian Nights tale)

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ALADDIN AND THE WONDERFUL LAMP PRODUCTION NOTES:

CHARACTERS:

ALADDIN

ZARITA, his mother

SULTAN BAHMAN AL BHARAT Of BAGHDAD

PRINCESS BADROULBOUDOUR, his daughter

MARIZAYDAH, the princess's favorite Lady-In-Waiting

PUNJAB, a young man attached to the Sultan's household

ESMERALDA, the gypsy fortune teller

THE GENIE of The Lamp

THE EVIL MAGICIAN, THE MAGHRABI of THE INNER SUNSET
LAND

SCHEHEREZADE, the Narrator of the play

NOTE: The actress who plays the Princess can also double as Esmeralda.
The actress who plays Marizaydah can also double in the gypsy role.

The Genie may be portrayed by an actor or by the means of special effects.
If possible, the voice of the Genie should not be pre-recorded; it should be
performed live through the sound system.

The voice of Scheherzade can be pre-recorded, or played "live" by casting
an additional actress.

PLACE and TIME: THE CITY OF BAGHDAD many centuries ago.

CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS:

ALADDIN – a young man of Baghdad. He is very poor, but has a
wonderful imagination and a great deal of daring.

ZARITA – his mother, a woman of great common sense, who fears for her
son and his ambitions.

SULTAN BAHMAN AL BHARAT of BAGHDAD – a man of great
wealth and dignity. His greed almost destroys his entire life.

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PRINCESS BADROULBOUDOUR – the Sultan’s daughter. A young girl of considerable beauty and surprising courage and sense.

MARIZAYDAH – the Lady-in-Waiting for the Princess. A pleasant girl, easily impressed and not particularly intellectual.

PUNJAB – a young man in the Sultan’s retinue. An ambitious boy, though not terribly clever, devious or subtle.

ESMERALDA – the Gypsy fortune teller, (can be doubled), an opportunist. She has genuine fortune-telling abilities, though her powers are limited.

THE EVIL MAGICIAN, THE MAGHRABI Of THE INNER SUNSET LAND – the villain of the story. His ambitions and magical powers are enormous, but his conceit leads to his downfall.

THE GENIE Of THE LAMP – can be played by an actor or represented by a series of special effects, i.e., lights, fog, etc.

THE “VOICE” Of SCHEHEREZADE – is the Narrator for this play. All the narrative material can be prerecorded so that appropriate background music can play behind the story telling. Any one of the three actresses in the play could perform the narration, though possibly the voice of the actress who plays the princess would be the most appropriate. Some companies may prefer to add another actress to the cast, and have a “live” Scheherezade.

COSTUMES:

The original Arabian Nights story places the tale in the ancient Persian capital of Baghdad. Therefore, the styles of clothing can be taken directly from illustrations of dress of the period. In that era, baggy trousers and tunics were the female garb, and men of rank dressed in long robes and loose trousers. Head gear for women consisted of veils, and for men, turbans.

SETTINGS AND SET CHANGES:

For the first act, a multiple setting is the simplest means of staging the scenes. Location constantly shifts in this act, and the entire play can’t stop

for a set change each time. The first act can be entirely preset. Locations required are the Magician's workroom, a street area, an interior representing the poor home of Aladdin, a room in the palace, and the treasure cave. The second act requires just one setting, Aladdin's palace. This setting should be a suggested exterior, a protected garden, perhaps with the rest of the palace suggested or represented in the background. The street is nearby. Special light and sound effects and possibly the changing of some surrounding scenery can accomplish the necessary "magical" removal of the palace from Baghdad to Africa and back again.

The portions of narration by Scheherezade can be used to cover the action of scene changes and the adjustment of lighting used to indicate a change from one area to another. In some cases the narration may be longer than what is needed. In such circumstances judicious cutting within the narration paragraphs may be advisable or necessary.

SPECIAL SCENIC EFFECTS:

The Treasure Cave – the magic door can be rigged a number of ways. If there is an overhead rigging system, the door can be lifted from above. In other situations, the cave door can be pulled open or closed from backstage, or even manipulated through the use of a trap door, if there is one available.

The use of music, live or taped, greatly enhances the production of this play.

NOTE: At the end of the script (page 52) there is an alternative/ shorter version of the Act One opening narration spoken by the VOICE OF THE NARRATOR (SCHEHEREZADE).

ALADDIN and THE WONDERFUL LAMP

(On Stage! – E-mail: classtage@aol.com – protected by copyright)

By Michele L. Vacca

ACT I

(OVERTURE: THE CITY OF BAGHDAD. MULTIPLE SET: ALADDIN'S HOUSE, THE STREET, THE PALACE OF THE SULTAN, THE TREASURE CAVE, AND THE MAGICIAN'S LAIR.)

VOICE OF NARRATOR: Greetings and salutations! Across many centuries I speak to you. My name is Scheherezade. Let me share a tale with you. Once upon a time very long ago there lived a King of Persia, and his name was Shahriar. This King had a wife whom he deeply loved. Then one day he discovered that his beautiful wife had plotted against him – and so King Shahriar had the Queen put to death. From that time on, he vowed he would trust no woman ever again. Each day he married a lady of the kingdom, and then had her put to death the next day. Thus he took his revenge. The people of the country grieved for their King and for their lost daughters. Then one day I – Scheherezade – went to my father, who was the King's Prime Minister. I asked my father if he would allow me to be the next bride of the King. My father tried to persuade me to forget this plan, but I would not. Therefore, at last I became the bride of the King. Since my youngest days I had been a student of books. Every story and poem that I had read, I remembered always. When the King and I came to his chamber, I asked if he would permit me to tell him a story, and the King agreed to let me do so. For a thousand and one nights I told many tales to the King – tales of magic and adventure, and at the end of that time, the King vowed to keep me as his wife to the end of our days. And that is how I saved my own life, and the lives of the other daughters of the kingdom. The tales I told King Shahriar have been read by many people through the centuries. Sometimes they are called The Book of a

Thousand Nights and a Night, or more simply, The Arabian Nights. Today I shall tell you one of those tales – the story of a boy named Aladdin, and a wonderful lamp, which he found. The story begins with the Great Magician, the Maghrabi of the Inner Sunset Land. He is about to summon Esmeralda, the Gypsy Fortune Teller –

(AS THE NARRATION ENDS, MYSTERIOUS LIGHTS COME UP IN THE MAGICIAN’S LAIR. HE APPEARS, A STRANGE AND FEARSOME FIGURE.)

MAGICIAN: (MUTTERS TO HIMSELF AS HE LIFTS HIS ARMS IN A CONJURING GESTURE.) Alf Laylah-walaylah!
Shah-zaman kamar al-zaman-KHALIFAH!

(A PUFF OF SMOKE, A FLASH OF LIGHT AND THE MAGICIAN CHUCKLES TO HIMSELF. AS THE SMOKE CLEARS AWAY ESMERALDA THE GYPSY APPEARS. SHE IS DRESSED IN VIVID COLORS AND HER FACE HAS A WILD, ALMOST INSANE LOOK AS SHE EMITS A LOUD MOCKING LAUGH)

ESMERALDA: The Evil Magician calls his servant, Esmeralda!

MAGICIAN: Yes, yes, that is so. You must look into the future for me.

ESMERALDA: (LAUGHS.) The great powers of the Maghrabi of the Inner Sunset Land – cannot bring him all that he desires?

MAGICIAN: No! They cannot!

ESMERALDA: (MOCKING.) And so the great magician needs the assistance of Esmeralda, the lowly gypsy fortune teller, eh?

MAGICIAN: Yes! Yes, I do!

ESMERALDA: (LAUGHS WILDLY.)

MAGICIAN: Esmeralda! Do not try my patience! Even though my magical powers cannot bring me all that I wish to have –

ESMERALDA: (LAUGHS AGAIN.)

MAGICIAN: Silence! (SHE STOPS LAUGHING.) I do possess enough magic to be able to remove the power of speech from you.

ESMERALDA: No! You would not!

MAGICIAN: Ahhh, but I could. Or perhaps I might merely wish to change your form. Perhaps you would like to finish your life in the form of a spider?

ESMERALDA: No!

MAGICIAN: Or a toad?

ESMERALDA: No!

MAGICIAN: (CHUCKLES WICKEDLY TO HIMSELF.) Or an elephant perhaps? You'd make a charming elephant, my dear Esmeralda.

ESMERALDA: No! Please! I will do as you wish.

MAGICIAN: (WITH AN EVIL LAUGH.) I thought you would.

ESMERALDA: What does the great Maghrabi require from his humble servant, Esmeralda?

(LIGHTS CHANGE AND MUSIC PLAYS AS HE SPEAKS.)

MAGICIAN: I will tell you. I have attached myself to the court of the Sultan of Baghdad. He knows me by the name of Ayubb bin Kulubah.

ESMERALDA: (GOING INTO A TRANCE-LIKE STATE.) Yes, I see this.

MAGICIAN: The Sultan consults me often on matters concerning the stars and their meanings and omens. (LAUGHS.) He trusts me as a wise man.

ESMERALDA: Yes, I see this, too.

MAGICIAN: But I am not satisfied.

ESMERALDA: No, I see that you are not.

MAGICIAN: Magical powers are not enough. I wish to be powerful in the eyes of the world. I wish to be more than the Sultan's servant. I wish to be as powerful – nay, more powerful than he. I would marry his daughter, and so rule the world.

ESMERALDA: (BREAKS HER TRANCE.) You wish for many things, Maghrabi.

MAGICIAN: And why not?

ESMERALDA: Ah, why not, indeed? (GOES BACK INTO HER TRANCE.)

MAGICIAN: It is written in the ancient books of magic that somewhere a great treasure is hidden. A treasure so vast that no man could ever begin to count it.

ESMERALDA: Yes, I have heard this also.

MAGICIAN: However, no book of magic reveals the location of this treasure. For centuries it has remained hidden. And no one knows where to find it.

ESMERALDA: I can tell you where to find the enchanted treasure, oh Maghrabi.

MAGICIAN: You can? Tell me, where is it?

ESMERALDA: (CONJURES A “VISION” OF THE CAVE FOR HIM TO SEE.) You see? There is the treasure.

MAGICIAN: Yes, yes, I see!

ESMERALDA: Even so it will do you very little good to know the hidden place.

MAGICIAN: What do you mean? You speak in riddles!

ESMERALDA: Nay, I do not. It is also written that no man may seek the treasure for himself.

MAGICIAN: Yes, yes, I know.

ESMERALDA: And it is also written that the treasure must be given willingly by another.

MAGICIAN: Yes, yes, I know that also.

ESMERALDA: Therefore, Maghrabi, you must find someone who will give the treasure into your hands – for you cannot take the treasure for yourself.

MAGICIAN: Yes, yes – that is why I need your help. I must find that one person who will give the treasure into my hands.

ESMERALDA: Ah, that is indeed a difficulty. To find someone who is so foolish and so generous. It does not seem possible that there could be such a person.

MAGICIAN: There must be someone! There must be!

ESMERALDA: But there is.

MAGICIAN, Who? Tell me where to find him. Who is he?

ESMERALDA: He is a boy named Aladdin. (SHE SHOWS HIM A “VISION” OF ALADDIN IN THE STREET, PLAYING.)

MAGICIAN: Aladdin!

ESMERALDA: He lives in the street of the Clothing Makers.

MAGICIAN: Ahhh!

ESMERALDA: This boy is the one you need to help you gain the treasure. He is the right combination of honesty and foolishness. (SHE LAUGHS.)

MAGICIAN: Excellent!

ESMERALDA: Listen to me, Maghrabi. You yourself must not enter the treasure cave. Only one who is young and innocent of the ways of magic may enter there.

MAGICIAN: Yes, Yes –

ESMERALDA: First you must have the boy fetch you the lamp which lies within the cavern. (LIGHTS UP ON A “VISION” OF THE LAMP IN THE CAVE.)

MAGICIAN: A lamp?

ESMERALDA: (SEEING THE VISION.) The lamp has great power. It is worth more than the rest of the treasure combined.

MAGICIAN: How can that be? A lamp?

ESMERALDA: The lamp contains a powerful genie. (A “VISION” OF THE GENIE APPEARS.) This genie could grant any wish a man may think to ask.

MAGICIAN: Hmm. A lamp. A genie. Excellent. (THE GENIE DISAPPEARS.)

ESMERALDA: One thing more.

MAGICIAN: Now what?

ESMERALDA: (TRYING TO “SEE” MORE CLEARLY.) Beware . . . Beware . . . Beware of . . .

MAGICIAN: Beware of what?

ESMERALDA: I tell you, Maghrabi – beware of anger.

MAGICIAN: (ANGRY.) What do you mean?

ESMERALDA: A moment of anger may cost you much. You could lose everything you most desire, and you could lose that which you already possess. Beware.

MAGICIAN: Nonsense! I have magic powers! I am not an ordinary man!

ESMERALDA: (SMILES.) Ah, no, you are not an ordinary man. Though perhaps someday –

MAGICIAN: Someday – what?

ESMERALDA: I can only tell you what I see, Maghrabi. (AS ALL THE POSSIBLY LINGERING “VISIONS” OF OTHER CHARACTERS DISAPPEAR.) Now, perhaps, Maghrabi, you will cross my palm with silver? Eh?

MAGICIAN: Yes, of course. Here you are. (AS SHE LAUGHS.) Now, off with you. You and your riddles!

ESMERALDA: (TAKES HER MONEY AND LAUGHS AGAIN.) Perhaps someday soon you will be able to answer the riddles, Maghrabi. You are so wise, are you not? (LAUGHS.) Farewell, evil one. May the good fortune you deserve accompany you! (LAUGHS.)

MAGICIAN: Begone! Begone, I say! Kamar-al-zamah! KHALIFAH!

ESMERALDA: (LAUGHS.) Farewell, great one! (SHE DISAPPEARS IN A PUFF OF SMOKE ACCOMPANIED BY A CRASH OF MUSIC.)

MAGICIAN: (ALONE.) What prattle! Riddles! When I possess that treasure no man on earth will be more powerful than I!

Even the Sultan will be glad to touch the hem of my robe.
(LAUGHS.) Enough of this! (CALLS OUT.) Punjab!
Punjab, come here!

PUNJAB: (NOW ENTERS: HE IS A YOUNG MAN ATTACHED
TO THE SULTAN'S HOUSEHOLD – AMBITIOUS
AND BASICALLY WELL-INTENTIONED.) Yes,
Master Ayubb?

MAGICIAN: (ASSUMING A GENIAL ATTITUDE.) Punjab, my boy.

PUNJAB: (LOOKING AROUND CURIOSLY.) What a strange
room. What are those bottles for?

MAGICIAN: Oh, those are for my spells – ah – that is – they contain
healing potions for the benefit of those who are ill and
unhappy.

PUNJAB: Oh, I see. You are so very good and wise, Master Ayubb.

MAGICIAN: (CHUCKLES.) Good and wise, eh? Well, thank you,
Punjab. Ah, tell me, would you care to assist me in a little
scheme – ah – that is – a little charitable project of mine?

PUNJAB: I would be honored to assist you, sir.

MAGICIAN: Excellent! Not only will you feel the satisfaction of
performing a good deed, my boy, but if all goes well, you
may also reap more tangible rewards.

PUNJAB: I don't understand, sir.

MAGICIAN: Gold, my boy! That's what I mean. Gold!

PUNJAB: Gold? For me?

MAGICIAN: Of course! (TO HIMSELF.) Why not? There's certainly
going to be enough of it. (HE CHUCKLES.)

PUNJAB: But I thought this was a deed of charity, sir.

MAGICIAN: (TO HIMSELF, AS HE CHUCKLES WICKEDLY.) It is!
Charity for me!

PUNJAB: I beg your pardon, sir?

MAGICIAN: Hmmmm? Oh, yes. Charity. Naturally. But I can't expect
you to work for me for nothing, my boy.

PUNJAB: What am I to do, Master Ayubb?

MAGICIAN: Later today you must go to the street of the Clothing
Makers, and find out all you can about a boy named
Aladdin

PUNJAB: Aladdin. Yes, sir. Is that all?

MAGICIAN: That's all for now.

PUNJAB: Thank you, sir. I can hardly believe my good fortune!

MAGICIAN: Run along now, Punjab, before the Sultan misses you.

PUNJAB: Yes, sir!

MAGICIAN: Oh, and Punjab –

PUNJAB: Yes, sir?
MAGICIAN: Say nothing about this to anyone. You understand?
PUNJAB: It shall remain a secret, sir.
MAGICIAN: Good. Until later.
PUNJAB: Yes, sir! (DASHES OUT.)
MAGICIAN: The fool! The greedy young fool! The treasure will be mine! All mine. It's only a matter of time! (AS THE LIGHTS FLICKER.) Khem, zem, laruba!
Zhar-alabu-larah-zenai! KHALIFAH!

(WITH A CRASH OF THUNDER, HE DISAPPEARS.)

(THE SCENE CHANGES; THE STREET NEAR THE HOUSE OF ALADDIN. MUSIC PLAYS.)

SCHEHEREZADE: In the street of the Clothing Makers Aladdin lived with his widowed mother, Zarita. They were very poor, and though Aladdin was a good son and loved his mother, he was very lazy. Whenever his mother looked for him, he was not to be found. He spent his days playing in the streets with other idle companions. His mother did not know what to do with him . . .

(ALADDIN HAS APPEARED ON THE STREET. HE LOOKS OVER HIS SHOULDER CAUTIOUSLY.)

MOTHER: (OFF.) Aladdin! Aladdin! (ENTERS.) Where are you? Aladdin?
ALADDIN: Uh-oh. I'd better hide. I forgot to go to the market for her this morning.
MOTHER: Aladdin? Oh, that boy! He's a good son, but if only he would work once in a while! Aladdin! (SHE STARTS OFF.) Well, perhaps he's down the street. (GOING IN THAT DIRECTION.) Aladdin! You promised to go to the market for me!
ALADDIN: (WATCHES HER GO.) She'll be back in a moment. Then I'll have to go to the market. (SIGHS.) Oh, well. (SIGHS AGAIN.) I wish we weren't so poor. I wonder what it's like to live in a palace and wear silks and satins and count gold all day long. If I were a great lord of the city, I would ride through the streets during the day, and fling shining coins at the people. I would have feasting

and dancing and singing every evening. People would come from far and wide to bring presents to me – Aladdin, Lord of Baghdad!

MOTHER: (OFF.) Aladdin? Aladdin! Where are you?

ALADDIN: Over here, Mother.

MOTHER: (ENTERS.) Aladdin! Where have you been?

ALADDIN: Right here, Mother. I was waiting for you.

MOTHER: Hmph! A likely story. You mean you were hiding from me, don't you?

ALADDIN: Well, Mother, you see, I –

MOTHER: Oh, never mind, son. You're a good boy –

ALADDIN: Thank you, Mother.

MOTHER: But a lazy boy!

ALADDIN: Yes, Mother.

MOTHER: Well, come along. Remember, you promised to go to the market for me today.

ALADDIN: Yes, Mother, I remember.

MOTHER: I finished some sewing, so we have enough gold to buy food.

ALADDIN: Good! I'm hungry!

MOTHER: Yes, son, I know. It seems as though you are always hungry.

ALADDIN: We won't always be poor, Mother. I promise you!

MOTHER: (SIGHS.) Yes, son. Come along.

ALADDIN: I mean it, Mother!

MOTHER: (SIGHS.) Yes, Aladdin. I know. (THEY GO OFF.)

(THE LIGHTS COME UP ON THE SULTAN'S PALACE.)

SCHEHEREZADE: The Sultan of the city of Baghdad was a very rich and powerful man. The Sultan had a daughter, the beautiful Princess Badroulboudour. He was very fond of his daughter, and since she was his only child, he took great care that no harm would come to her. Everyone knew that someday the Princess would marry a Prince of much wealth and greatness. But until that time, she must spend most of her days protected by the high stone walls of the Sultan's palace . . .

– END OF E-MAIL SEGMENT –

THERE ARE 52 TOTAL PAGES IN THE
FULL VERSION OF *ON STAGE!* ALADDIN
AND THE WONDERFUL LAMP.