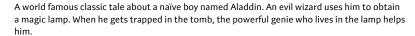


Aladdin and the Magic Lamp

Courage, Generosity

Never lose your faith, even in hard times. Good will always win in the end.





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Far, far away, in a land where the sunbeams are much hotter than here, there once lived a boy named Aladdin. The boy came from a poor family, and most of his free time would be spent roaming around the marketplace, looking at all the beautiful goods and enjoying the hustle and bustle of **ancient city life**.

One day during his marketplace wanderings he bumped into a fascinating man, who looked like a nice and kind person (at first). As they were strolling through the city together, the man told Aladdin many exciting stories of adventures he had had. The boy hung onto his every word, and had no idea that the man was an evil wizard, who was trying to **gain his favour.** He saw a friend in him or maybe even the father he had never known. Aladdin lived alone with his mother in a shack.

When Aladdin returned **home that evening**, he told his mum about his new friend straight away. His mother wasn't happy about his newfound friend, though, and warned him to be cautious. Not all people were honest and kind-hearted, she said.

Aladdin, of course, didn't listen to his mother, and the next day he went to meet the man again, eager to hear more tales of mystery and battles and glory. This time, as the sun sat, the wizard took the boy for a walk a bit further out from the centre of town. When they passed the city walls, the man showed him a snake charmer, who **played his flute** and made his cobra dance to the rhythm of the song while Aladdin was watching.

It was already dark by the time they arrived at a mysterious door in the middle of the desert. Aladdin started to get nervous, and it occurred to him that his mother might have been right. But the wizard asked the boy for a favour in the kindest voice. Something valuable had been stolen from him -

a golden lamp - and it was lying hidden in the cave behind this door. The door was too small for the man to go through, so he was hoping Aladdin would help him.

"When you hear me saying a spell, you'll have to open the door and enter", the wizard explained. "Be cautious, though! The passage is going to be **full of traps.** You must tread carefully and not pick anything up except the golden lamp. It'll be at the far end of the tomb... I mean, cave." He corrected himself quickly. "Just take the lamp! Don't touch anything else."

Aladdin had a few questions. He didn't entirely understand what he was about to do and he could have sworn he'd heard the old man saying "a tomb". It didn't sound good. But suddenly the wizard started **reciting the spell**. Aladdin hesitated for a while, so the old man grabbed the door, pulled it open, and nudged the boy in. The boy was scared, but he walked down the stairs to the very bottom of the tomb, where he saw heaps of gold. Remember, Aladdin was very poor, so this was indeed a sight to behold. He had never seen such incredible riches in his life! Everywhere he looked, there were golden jewels and goblets and vases **and statues...**

"Don't stop! Bring me the lamp!" The wizard's voice echoed angrily around the chamber, as if he was inside.

Aladdin obeyed and hurried to the far end of the passage, where a golden lamp stood proudly on a pedestal. He grabbed it and turned to head back, but his eyes fell on a golden ring inlaid with sapphires and rubies. He picked it up, slipped it on his finger and made for the door. As soon as he touched the ring, the ground started to shake and rumble like an earthquake.

"Quickly, boy, throw me the lamp!" The wizard shouted. "The tomb's about to close!"

Aladdin rushed to the door, but it was already **closing**.

"Give me that!" said the wizard, reaching out.

"Help me out and you'll get the lamp!" said Aladdin. He wasn't going to be tricked this time!

The wizard had no choice. He grabbed Aladdin's arm and pulled him out, but as soon as Aladdin was outside, the wizard grabbed the lamp from his hand.

"Well, now I don't need you anymore!" he said cruelly. He grabbed the boy and tried to push him back into the tomb as the door hadn't closed yet. Panicking, Aladdin clutched the wizard's robes, and only just managed to snatch the lamp from him before falling back inside. **The door slammed shut**. The wizard seethed with anger. He was standing outside, with no lamp and no way to get it back. Poor Aladdin was trapped inside the tomb.

Desperate and starving, Aladdin tried the whole day to get out of the tomb. Banging on the door, or trying to pry it open didn't help. And there was nothing in the tomb he could use, just the lamp and a pile of jewels. He picked up the lamp and turned it over. It was pretty plain, he thought.

"What kind of a lamp are you?" he said aloud. "Why did the old man want it so badly?" He rubbed the lamp with his sleeve to wipe off the dust, but the moment his fingers slid on it, it began to shake. Startled, Aladdin dropped the lamp on the ground and backed up. The last thing he needed was another earthquake!

The lamp started glowing, and it began to smoke. Then, suddenly, a ghost appeared right **in front of the boy**. It was hovering in front of him, huge but oddly not scary at all. In fact, it had a very friendly face.

"I have spent hundreds of years trapped in this lamp. My purpose is to serve the one who frees me. From now on, I will be your servant," the spirit said.

"Um, I'm sorry, but what are you?" Aladdin asked. "And how did I free you?"

"I'm a genie, of course!" the spirit said. "And I would imagine you rubbed my lamp to free me. That's how it usually works."

Aladdin thought he must be dreaming. He'd been in the tomb for a long time with no food or water, after all. But the genie was real.

"What would you like to do first?" the genie asked.

"Well, can you get me out of here? And can I take all the treasure with me?" asked Aladdin.

Before he knew it, he was back home in his mother's tiny kitchen, heaps of jewels and golden coins right next to him. He couldn't believe how miraculously powerful the genie was. He ran to hug his mother, the house clattering as he waded through **all the jewels**.

"We're never going to be poor again, mum!" he promised.

From that day on, Aladdin could afford anything he liked at the market. He bought beautiful clothes for his mom and himself, and every day he **enjoyed delicious food.** Meanwhile, the genie lived with Aladdin and his mother, occasionally doing tasks for them but, for the most part, sleeping in his lamp.

After a while, Aladdin started to feel like he was lacking something. His life was perfect, but he'd fallen in love with the sultan's daughter. The princess was incredibly beautiful and kind, and since Aladdin had first laid eyes on her he'd been able to think of no one else.

"I'm going to try my luck," Aladdin told his mum one day. "I'm going to ask the sultan for her hand. After all, we're rich now, and there's no way the sultan could ever know that we used to be poor.

He got up his courage and went to see the sultan. He wore his nicest clothes and brought a chest of gold **as a gift**. The Sultan immediately took a liking to Aladdin and introduced him formally to the princess. The young woman also liked Aladdin, and her father gave them his blessing.

Aladdin was overcome with joy. To prove his love to his bride-to-be, he decided to build her the most beautiful palace in the realm. He went home

and told the genie the good news, and together they found the perfect place for the genie to magically make a marvelous palace.

The evil wizard had not forgotten Aladdin, however. He had used the time to come up with a masterful plan to get the **magical lamp back.** And so one day he disguised himself as a merchant and headed to the palace where Aladdin lived with his new wife.

When he arrived, Aladdin was not at home. Instead, he spoke to the princess.

"New lamps for old! New lamps for old! Good morning, beautiful lady! I'm offering this beautiful new lamp decorated with rubies and sapphires in exchange for any old one covered with dust you have at home," said the wizard. "How about that one over there?" He pointed at the genie's lamp.

Of course, the princess had no idea that it was a magic lamp, and it seemed perfectly reasonable to trade it for a nicer lamp. The moment the old wizard held it, he **cackled maliciously**, polished the lamp to wake the genie up, and ordered him to take him, the princess and the palace to the country where he had come from.

You can imagine Aladdin's shock at returning home to find no home! As soon as he found out what had happened, he leapt on his horse and galloped away in search of **his beautiful wife**. He rode and he rode, but he had no idea where the wizard had taken her. He got off his horse, feeling as though he had failed, but suddenly he remembered that he was still wearing the ring he had found in the tomb.

"If the lamp was magical, maybe this ring is as well," muttered Aladdin.

He polished the ring and firmly said: "Bring me back my beloved wife and our palace."

Suddenly the dust started rapidly **swirling around him**. More and more whirls formed until it became a sandstorm and, just like that, his palace materialized around him and his wife fell right into his arms.

Aladdin and his wife rejoiced. Aladdin called his guards and together they captured the wizard and threw him into the dungeon forever.

From that day on, nothing but happiness filled the palace walls. Aladdin never forgot that once he had only been a poor street urchin, and he and the princess made sure to rule kindly and responsibly and always take **good care of their people**.