

Scene 2: Outside MRS HAKIMI's laundry.

Clothes and sheets are hanging across the stage. There is much street noise and various citizens are circulating. ALADDIN's mother, MRS HAKIMI appears from behind some garments. There is a bench at one side.)

MRS HAKIMI: *(Looking in all directions.)* Where have they gone? Aladdin and that funny fellow Abanazar left ages ago and there's no sign of them anywhere.

Two palace GUARDS enter.

GUARDS: Left –right, left – right, left – right! Halt!

CHIEF GUARD: The Vizier of the Sultan will make an important announcement. Listen well!

GUARD: Listen well to the announcement of the Vizier!

MRS HAKIMI: What's he going to announce?

CITIZENS: What's all the fuss about?

CHIEF GUARD: The Vizier will be here in a moment.

GUARD: So show some respect.

CHIEF GUARD: He's a very important man. People say he has the Sultan's ear.

MRS HAKIMI: That doesn't sound very nice. Where does he keep it?

GUARDS: Silence! Make way for the Vizier of our great Sultan!

The GRAND VIZIER enters and is a stately figure.

CITIZENS: Ooooh!

GUARDS: Silence!

VIZIER: *(Holding an impressive document.)* Listen good people to the decree of the mighty Sultan of Oberan. The Sultan's daughter, the Princess Habibah, will be passing this way shortly. No person is to be on the streets. Any person spying on the princess will be arrested and taken before the Sultan to be sentenced to death!

CITIZENS: Sentenced to death for being out on the streets in daylight.

MRS HAKIMI: That doesn't sound very nice!

VIZIER: It is not meant to be nice! It is the Sultan's decree so that his daughter is safe!

MRS HAKIMI: And she'll be passing this way?

VIZIER: In a little while!

MRS HAKIMI: Right past my laundry! How exciting! I do feel honoured.

VIZIER: Then show your honour by making sure your face is not seen! Guards! Onwards!

GUARDS: Make way! Make way for the Vizier of the Sultan!

(The GUARDS and VIZIER depart. The CITIZENS disperse discussing the decree.)

MRS HAKIMI: Oh where is Aladdin? If he's not careful he'll come home at the wrong time, see the princess and be sentenced to death!

ALADDIN, carrying his bag, enters with ALI BABA.

ALADDIN: Mother! Mother! I am here!

MRS HAKIMI: There you are! I've been so worried about you! Where's that strange man Abanazar and what's Ali Baba doing here?

ALADDIN: Abanazar shut me up in a cave. Ali Baba rescued me!

MRS HAKIMI: I knew there was something odd about Abanazar.

ALADDIN: Robbers came to the cave as well. So Ali and I hid. We found all these things. *(He shows the jewels.)*

MRS HAKIMI: What's the use of them? That's just a load of coloured glass!

ALI BABA: No, Mrs Hakimi. These are diamonds, rubies, emeralds and sapphires!

ALADDIN: We are rich mother!

MRS HAKIMI: But won't the thieves come after you once they see their jewels are missing? I've heard there's forty of them

ALI BABA: No, there's just four of them. They steal tea from passing caravans!

MRS HAKIMI: That must spoil a lot of holidays. People must be very upset when they find all of the tea's been stolen from their caravans. Did you bring me some?

ALADDIN: No mother. Ali thought it would be best to leave it for the thieves.

MRS HAKIMI: That's a pity. I have very little tea in my caddy and there's none for sale in the market. Didn't you think of your poor mother?

ALADDIN: You'll be able to buy all the tea that you want!

ALI BABA: We did bring something else.

MRS HAKIMI: What was that?

ALADDIN: *(Pulling the lamp out of the bag.)* I picked up this dirty old lamp. I thought we could sell it or it might be useful at night.

MRS HAKIMI: I'm not having that dirty old thing in my house until it's much cleaner. Give it a polish now! *(She gives ALADDIN a cloth.)*

ALADDIN: Very well! *(He rubs the lamp with the cloth.)*

There is flash, a whoosh and the Genie of the Lamp appears behind some sheets and struggles out. He is holding his rulebook.

MRS HAKIMI: *(Hot and bothered.)* Oh, my goodness! I think I'm having one of my funny turns again. There's a peculiar man standing in front of us.

LAMP GENIE: You rubbed the lamp and so I came, you are my master, what's your name?

ALADDIN: *(Aside.)* What is happening to me? Suddenly I am being called 'master' by strange people! *(Aloud.)* My name is Aladdin. Who are you?

LAMP GENIE: I am the Genie of the Lamp. *(In agony.)* It's tight in there; I've got the cramp! *(He hobbles about and loosens up.)*

ALADDIN: *(Exasperated.)* Another genie speaking verse!

LAMP GENIE: *(Sadly.)* Sorry master, it's our curse!

ALADDIN: Are you a powerful genie?

LAMP GENIE: Indeed, good master, my power's immense; no other's power is so intense.

ALADDIN: Then, why are you holding that Rulebook for Genies?

LAMP GENIE: For years with no work I've been trusted, and so my powers are somewhat rusted! That is why I have to look and check my powers within my book. *(He holds it up again.)*

ALADDIN: You mean that you are powerful but you are not bang up to date in terms of genie power?

LAMP GENIE: I must be sure my power is strong or my magic might go wrong.

ALADDIN: That will be great if we are in a hurry! Just imagine it. I rub the lamp, you appear, I say 'Bring me a sword, I'm in trouble!' And you say, 'Just a moment for I must seek, the power I need, back next week!'

LAMP GENIE: Master is harsh, please be kind, I am willing you'll soon find.

ALADDIN: Very well, let's test you! Mother, what shall we ask him to do?

MRS HAKIMI: Oh, dear! I'm not sure!

ALI BABA: He says he can do anything.

MRS HAKIMI: Can he really? That's amazing! Well, strike me pink!

LAMP GENIE: *(Holding an arm up high.)* Very well! Then as you wish! I'll do that magic with a swish! *(He brings his arm down; there is a swishing noise, and all lights dim except for a pink spot on MRS HAKIMI,)*

MRS HAKIMI: Ooh! Ooh! I didn't mean that! I feel all peculiar again! I'm getting hot! *(She starts shaking dramatically.)* Ooh! That's enough!

(The lighting returns to normal.)

ALADDIN: We must be careful what we say.

MRS HAKIMI: What did he do that for?

ALI BABA: You asked him to.

MRS HAKIMI: Did I really? Well send me to the moon!

LAMP GENIE: To do that I will have to look, at the rules within this book. *(He starts looking through his book.)*

ALADDIN: Take care mother!

MRS HAKIMI: What do you mean?

ALI BABA: He thinks it's a command!

LAMP GENIE: *(Lifting MRS HAKIMI.)* To the moon you asked to fly ...

ALADDIN: *(Alarmed.)* Stop! She didn't mean it!

LAMP GENIE: *(Dropping MRS HAKIMI.)* Then why, great master, may I ask, was I given that great task?

ALADDIN: It wasn't meant as an order! It's just one of her expressions. You'll just have to ignore her when she makes silly comments. Think before you obey her!

LAMP GENIE: On any day, at any hour, thinking's not a genie power.

ALI BABA: This could lead to problems!

There is the sound of a gong offstage.

GUARDS: *(Off stage.)* Make way! Make way! Make way for the Princess Habibah! *(Gong.)*

MRS HAKIMI: Quick we must all go inside the house!

ALADDIN: What's happening?

MRS HAKIMI: The princess is passing through the streets! Nobody can see her.

ALADDIN: Why is that? Is she very ugly?

MRS HAKIMI: I don't know! But I do know that we mustn't be seen here!

All hasten inside the laundry. The GUARDS sound the gong and enter with PRINCESS HABIBAH. She is luxuriantly dressed and with a veil. Every time the gong is struck she shakes violently.

GUARDS: Make way! Make way! *(Gong!)* Make way! Make way for the Princess Habibah! *(Gong!)* Make way!

HABIBAH: Do you have to be so noisy? It's rather frightening and there's no one here to listen to you.

CHIEF GUARD: We have to clear the streets.

HABIBAH: But the streets are clear. There's not a person in sight!

GUARD: That show's we're doing our job well. *(He hold's up the gong.)*

HABIBAH: Don't strike that gong again!

GUARD: But we like bonging the gong!

CHIEF GUARD: And it's my turn to bong the gong now! *(Trying to take it.)*

GUARD: But I've only bonged the gong ninety eight times today. We're supposed to have a hundred bongings of the gong every day.

CHIEF GUARD: You can't count! Any way I am a much better gong bonger than you. I really know how to bong a gong!

GUARD: For how long have you bonged the gong?

CHIEF GUARD: For seven years long I've bonged the gong and I never go wrong.

GUARD: Just because you have bonged the gong seven years long, never going wrong, you don't have to do it all along.

CHIEF GUARD: Don't be so headstrong about the bong of the gong. My father did it all lifelong and taught me to give the gong a strong bong and the sound to prolong.

HABIBAH: *(Aside.)* I wonder how long they'll continue this ding-dong about how to bong the gong?

GUARD: But sometimes when you bong the gong your bong is too strong and so you give a wrong bong of the gong that goes on too long.

CHIEF GUARD: How dare you say when I bong the gong it's too strong and so the bong of the gong goes on too long!

HABIBAH: *(Aside.)* What a silly sing-song about the bong on the gong!

GUARD: The right to bong of the gong does not just to you belong.

CHIEF GUARD: I did not say that the right to bong of the gong just to me does belong.

HABIBAH: *(Aside.)* This is just verbal ping-pong!

GUARD: How then, do you get such a strong bong on the gong and the sound prolong?

CHIEF GUARD: *(Demonstrating.)* With your arm out long, the gong is held by the thong, keep it straight, not sidelong, then with a sweep that's strong you bong the gong.

GUARD: *(Taking the gong.)* Arm out long, I hold the gong by the thong, straight not sidelong, then with a sweep that's strong I bong the gong. *(Gong!)* Am I right or wrong about how to bong the gong?

CHIEF GUARD: That was right, long and strong. We must get along. *(He takes the gong.)*

GUARDS: Make way! Wake way for the Princess Habibah! *(Gong!)*

HABIBAH: *(Angrily.)* I am sick of this silly sing-song, ding-dong verbal ping-pong about how long and strong you should bong the gong!

The GUARDS are shocked by this outburst and stand swaying in shock.

GUARDS: *(Quietly.)* Is there something wrong?

CHIEF GUARD: We have to clear the streets of the throng as you go along.

HABIBAH: *(Commandingly.)* I hate all the noise! You go and clear the streets and I will rest here and wait for you. Then, return when you are ready and we will pass silently on our way. Now go!

CHIEF GUARD: I am sure this is wrong.

GUARDS: We'd better get along. *(Muttering to themselves they leave.)*

HABIBAH: Peace at last. Why do they have to make so much noise? I'll rest here in this quiet place until the ghastly Guards come back. *(She sits down at the side of the stage and opens her veil.)* That's better, now I can breathe without sucking silk into my mouth.

ALADDIN comes out of the house and looks around but does not notice HABIBAH. The lamp is on his belt.

ALADDIN: All's quiet now! They've gone. I wonder what the princess looks like. I would love to see her. *(He suddenly sees HABIBAH.)* What are you doing here? Did you see the princess?

HABIBAH: No I didn't.

ALADDIN: Has she passed by? Nobody is supposed to see her. That seems stupid to me.

HABIBAH: It seems stupid to me as well.

ALADDIN: How are we supposed to know that we have a princess if we are never allowed to see her?

HABIBAH: You are so right!

ALADDIN: Thank you! Most people think I'm stupid.

HABIBAH: You're not stupid. I think you are very clever and sensible.

ALADDIN: You do say nice things!

HABIBAH: What is your name?

ALADDIN: My name is Aladdin. What's your name?

HABIBAH: My name is Habibah.

ALADDIN: Habibah! What a lovely name!

HABIBAH: I'm glad you like it.

ALADDIN: It's lovely! It's the same as ... the ... prin ... cess's ... name.

HABIBAH: So it is! But that doesn't matter.

ALADDIN: *(He looks at her luxurious garments.)* Are you ... the ... the ... princess? She was meant to pass this way.

HABIBAH: As a matter of fact I am Princess Habibah. I told my Guards to go on ahead because they are so noisy.

ALADDIN: But I've seen you! That means that the Sultan will sentence me to death.

HABIBAH: Are you going to tell him you've seen me?

ALADDIN: Of course not!

HABIBAH: Then how will he find out because I shan't tell him either!

ALADDIN: That's very kind.

HABIBAH: It's so nice to be out of the palace for a while.

ALADDIN: Why? What's wrong with life at the palace? I would have thought life in a palace was wonderful!

HABIBAH: It can be very comfortable but also very dull. I also have a problem.

ALADDIN: I am very sorry to hear that. Can I help?

HABIBAH: I doubt if you can. My father, the Sultan, insists that I must marry the Grand Vizier tomorrow. I really don't like him but he is rich and so my father thinks he would be a good match for me.

ALADDIN: That's terrible! Is there nothing that we can do?

HABIBAH: My father insists that the marriage will go ahead unless before sunset tomorrow a very wealthy prince presents himself at the palace and begs for my hand in marriage.

ALADDIN: A wealthy prince? Where can you find a wealthy prince in little more than a day?

HABIBAH: You seem to understand my problem.

ALADDIN: How will your father know that the prince is wealthy?

HABIBAH: I suppose the prince must be dressed in rich clothes and bring with him plates full of jewels.

ALADDIN: Plates full of jewels? Where would any one find them?

HABIBAH: The Sultan would expect nothing less.

GUARDS: *(Offstage.)* Make way for the princess! *(Gong.)*

HABIBAH: You must go! The Guards are returning.

ALADDIN: I can't leave you when you are in such distress!

HABIBAH: Don't be silly! *(She replaces her veil.)* Go! *(She turns away from ALADDIN.)*

ALADDIN: Stop worrying, princess, all will be well!

As the GUARDS enter ALADDIN dashes off, but straight into the arms of the GUARDS.

GUARDS: *(Holding ALADDIN firmly by the shoulders and speaking loudly.)* Stop!

CHIEF GUARD: *(Very loud.)* I arrest you in the name of the Sultan.

ALADDIN: *(Shouting.)* You can't arrest me I've done nothing wrong!

(The CITIZENS enter hurriedly.)

CITIZENS: What's going on? What's the noise for?

CHIEF GUARD: This bad, bad boy, this vile, vile boy, this wicked, wicked boy, this evil, evil boy, has been arrested for ...

GUARD: ... for being very naughty, very, very naughty!

CITIZENS: Naughty! Naughty!

CHIEF GUARD: He has done wrong!

GUARD: He'll be punished with a prong!

CHIEF GUARD: Because he was headstrong!

GUARD: Then he won't live for long!

HABIBAH: *(Aside.)* Here we go again!

MRS HAKIMI appears.

MRS HAKIMI: *(Seeing what's happened.)* What's going on? What's happening?

CHIEF GUARD: I regret to say that this bad, bad boy, this vile, vile boy, this wicked, wicked boy, this evil, evil boy has been arrested for spying on the Princess Habibah!

MRS HAKIMI: *(Alarmed.)* Oh dear! What a state to find a lad in!

GUARD: He's been a naughty, naughty boy!

MRS HAKIMI: Naughty! How naughty?

GUARD: Naughty, naughty, naughty, naughty.

MRS HAKIMI: That's a lot of naughty.

CHIEF GUARD: You will be taken before the Sultan himself!

CITIZENS: *(Aghast.)* Taken to the Sultan!

GUARD: How lucky you are!

ALADDIN: Lucky? How am I going to be lucky?

CHIEF GUARD: You'll see inside the palace!

GUARD: Not many people see inside the palace!

CHIEF GUARD: And you'll see the Sultan!

GUARD: Not many people get to see the Sultan.

CHIEF GUARD: How exciting for you!

ALADDIN: I've already had quite enough excitement for one day! Can't you save some of the excitement for another day? I am happy to wait for it! I'll wait as long as you like!

CHIEF GUARD: You can't save excitement!

ALADDIN: I didn't even know the princess was a princess!

CITIZENS: Save Aladdin! He's done nothing wrong!

GUARDS The law is the law!

HABIBAH: *(Aside.)* Whilst there's all this noise I can escape! *(She slips away.)*

CHIEF GUARD: *(Rhythmically.)* To the Sultan you must go!

GUARD: Ee-eye, ee-eye, ee-eye oh!

ALADDIN: Mother! What can I do?

MRS HAKIMI: Call that funny man who was with us!

ALADDIN: *(Rubbing the lamp.)* Genie of the Lamp! Come to my aid!

There is a flash of light and the LAMP GENIE appears. The crowd is dazzled.

CITIZENS: *(Dazed.)* Who is this? Where did he come from?

LAMP GENIE: You have the lamp, you are my master, I came so fast that no one's faster.

ALADDIN: Genie! Save me! Or I'll be executed!

CHIEF GUARD: Don't get so excited! There's no need to lose your head over such a little problem.

LAMP GENIE: *(Looking in his book.)* Master, with my power I you can save; just let me check how to behave.

GUARDS: Come along now! We mustn't keep the Sultan waiting.

CHIEF GUARD: It's nearly time for his afternoon tea!

ALADDIN: Genie! Stop reading and take these Guards away from me.

LAMP GENIE: *(Striding to the GUARDS and pointing at them.)* Unhand Aladdin, leave him be! *(The GUARDS arms drop down.)* Because of that he now is free! So you'll not follow him with ease, for thirty seconds you shall freeze!

The lighting turns to blue. The GUARDS shudder and are then motionless.

ALADDIN: That's amazing!

LAMP GENIE: Hurry master! There's not long! My magic was not very strong.

CITIZENS: Hurry! Escape!

ALADDIN, MRS HAKIMI and the LAMP GENIE leave quickly, the citizens disperse chattering about the LAMP GENIE and the GUARDS are left on their own.

GUARDS: Brr! Brr! *(They start moving again. The lighting reverts to normal.)*

CHIEF GUARD: It's forty-seven degrees in the shade but we have been shivering. What's been going on?

The GUARDS look around, puzzled.

GUARDS: Where is everybody?

CHIEF GUARD: What's happened to us? *(He gasps.)* Where's the Princess Habibah?

GUARD: She's gone along!

CHIEF GUARD: Without us? That's wrong!

GUARD: We'll be in trouble before long.

CHIEF GUARD: And punished doing wrong.

GUARD: *(Shaking.)* Punished all night long with a prong.

CHIEF GUARD: She's so headstrong!

GUARD: We'll be sent to a dungeon that's oblong and it will pong.

CHIEF GUARD: And we'll never again be allowed ...

GUARD: Oh no!

GUARDS: We'll never again be allowed to bong the gong! No more bong of the gong! *(The GUARDS exit shaking and feeling very sorry for themselves.)* No more bong of the gong! Etc.

MRS HAKIMI peers from between sheets and checks that all is clear.

MRS HAKIMI: You can come out! No one is here! *(She comes out.)*

ALADDIN and ALI BABA follow her.

ALADDIN: Gosh, that was a narrow escape. Thank goodness the genie could save me!

MRS HAKIMI: Where has he gone?

ALI BABA: Back in the lamp.

MRS HAKIMI: Doesn't that make the lamp heavy to carry? After all, he's quite big.

ALADDIN: No, he's not heavy. As he is the Genie of the Lamp he's actually a light genie.

MRS HAKIMI: I don't understand that.

ALADDIN: Mother, I have seen the Princess Habibah and I am going to marry her!

MRS HAKIMI: How can you marry a princess?

ALADDIN: The Sultan wants her to marry the Grand Vizier.

MRS HAKIMI: Then give up now!

ALADDIN: No! The Sultan has said that if before sunset tomorrow a very wealthy prince presents himself at the palace and begs for the princess's hand in marriage then she need not marry the Grand Vizier.

MRS HAKIMI: You are not a wealthy prince. You are a poor good for nothing, lazy lay-about.

ALADDIN: I have bags full of jewels. All I need now is to be clothed like a prince.

ALI BABA: Have you any luxurious clothes so that you can be dressed like a prince?

ALADDIN: Well, I'll need a bit of help.

MRS HAKIMI: We could have a look in the market but I haven't got any money.

ALI BABA: You could ...

ALADDIN: Yes? What could I do?

ALI BABA: You could try rubbing the lamp!

ALADDIN: Ali Baba, that's a brilliant idea!

ALADDIN grabs the lamp and rubs it. There is a flash of lights and the LAMP GENIE arrives.

MRS HAKIMI: Where have you sprung from? You keep popping up from nowhere.

LAMP GENIE: My master called so I am here, who knows where I'll next appear! *(He yawns.)*

ALADDIN: Why are you yawning?

LAMP GENIE: My master calls but never thinks; I might be having forty winks! *(He yawns again.)*

ALADDIN: *(Rather cross.)* Well, you can't have forty winks now. I need your help again.

LAMP GENIE: What magic do you now request? You can be sure I'll do my best!

ALADDIN: I need to visit the Sultan in his palace.

LAMP GENIE: You need me to whisk you there? Then for your journey now prepare! *(He raises his arms.)*

MRS HAKIMI: Put your arms down! That's not what he wants, not just yet!

LAMP GENIE: *(Tetchily.)* You are getting hard to please, that's a trick I'd do with ease.

ALADDIN: *(Ignoring him.)* I need to become a great prince. I need to wear the clothes of a great prince! I also need two richly dressed servants to carry trays of jewels. Then you must transport me to the throne room of the Sultan's palace.

MRS HAKIMI: And I could do with a nice cup of tea. I've just enough tea to brew a few cups.

ALADDIN: Be quiet, mother.

LAMP GENIE: Master, what you ask, is a truly mighty task!

ALADDIN: Will it take long? I haven't got much time!

LAMP GENIE: *(Checking in his book.)* Here's a task that will stretch my limits!

ALADDIN: Can't you do anything without using that book?

LAMP GENIE: It will take me ... *(He pauses.)*

OTHERS: *(Gasping.)* Yes?

LAMP GENIE: ... twenty minutes.

ALADDIN: That's not long! That will be fine. The princely clothing will be mine! *(Aside.)* This rhyming speech is quite catching, soon his verses I'll be matching!

MRS HAKIMI: *(To ALI BABA.)* Twenty minutes? That suits me; come and have a cup of tea!

ALI BABA: That's an offer I'll take up; I will join you in a cup.

MRS HAKIMI: I've just enough tea for two.

ALI BABA: Then I will come along with you.

LAMP GENIE: And so good master, with your permission, *(He bows to ALADDIN then plainly indicates the audience.)* They can have ... an intermission!

Gongs and drums sound as the scene ends.

CURTAIN