



Aladdin

by Stephen Duckham

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Aladdin

CAST

ABANAZAR	
SLAVE OF THE RING	
PC SWEET	A Policeman
SERGEANT SOUR	A Policewoman
ALADDIN	
WISHEE WASHEE	
WIDOW TWANKEY	
EMPERESS	
PRINCESS JASMINE	
MARSINAH	Her Handmaiden
GENIE OF THE LAMP	

CHORUS OF TOWNSPEOPLE, SPIRITS OF THE CAVE, SLAVE GIRLS AND GUARDS

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT ONE

SCENE 1	ABANAZAR'S LAIR
SCENE 2	OUTSIDE THE TWANKEY LAUNDRY IN CHANDRA
SCENE 3	BEHIND THE LAUNDRY
SCENE 4	THE PRINCESS' BOUDOIR
SCENE 5	INSIDE THE LAUNDRY
SCENE 6	THE HILLS OUTSIDE CHANDRA
SCENE 7	INSIDE THE ENCHANTED CAVE

ACT TWO

SCENE 1	FLYING HIGH
SCENE 2	OUTSIDE THE TWANKEY LAUNDRY
SCENE 3	THE STREET OF A THOUSAND TAKEAWAYS
SCENE 4	ALADDIN'S PALACE
SCENE 5	THE STREET OF A THOUSAND TAKEAWAYS
SCENE 6	ABANAZAR'S PALACE
SCENE 7	BEHIND THE LAUNDRY
SCENE 8	ALADDIN'S PALACE

CHARACTERS

Aladdin:	Loveable dreamer, but with ambition. Can be played male or female as a Principal Boy. Important to be a good singer.
Widow Twankey:	Big-hearted and comic. Always larger than character life, and of course, has an outrageous wardrobe. Should always be played by a man for full comic effect.
Wishee Washee:	Aladdin's younger brother. Knock-about comic with a good rapport with the audience. Needs to be a good all-around entertainer.
Abanazar:	The villain of the piece. Interacts with the audience and must always retain the upper hand when the 'boooing' starts.
Princess Jasmine:	Principal Girl. Lovely to look at, but with a mind of her own and a determined nature. Strong singing voice required.
Emperess:	Fussy and authoritative mother figure. <i>[NOTE: This character can be the Emperor, with little alterations to the text.]</i>
Marsinah:	Handmaiden to the Princess. A forthright 'jolly hockey-sticks' type of girl. Comedy interaction with Wishee Washee.
Sergeant Sour:	A Policewoman. Knock-about comedy part with a sharp 'official' delivery.
PC Sweet:	A Policeman. The other half of a comedy duo. Slow on the uptake. It is funnier if he is taller than Sour.
Slave of the Ring:	Rather than be the 'typical' type of magical character, she should be played as though things are a bit of a chore for her – especially with Abanazar.
Genie of the Lamp:	Physically, he should be quite stunning. He is a 'cool' character and makes much of the rap dialogue.

A note about the rap.

If, in rehearsal, more modern rap phrases or words are found to work, please feel free to alter them. But always keep in mind that 'less is more' and don't overdo the speeches.

Aladdin is first and foremost a pantomime adventure, and the action should not let up for a moment. Every pantomime needs pace, and this one in particular relies on speed of dialogue.

The comedy sequences, of course, must be timed, but the rest of the action must move swiftly along to ensure the maximum audience enjoyment.

The placing of musical numbers and who sings them is suggested in the script, but it is up to the director to decide what to use. A word of advice: Pantomime audiences – particularly the younger members – like the story to keep moving, so don't make the musical sequences too long, especially the ballads. I recommend that no number should be more than two minutes.

SCENERY

The Pantomime calls for a feel of the Mystical East to the sets. I have set the story in a fictitious country called Chandra, so designs can be as lavish as you wish. Sets don't have to be complicated. Front cloths can be played on tabs if flying or swiping is not practicable. Full sets can simply display the various locations with furniture, set pieces, props and minimum scenery.

ACT ONE

SCENE 1	This can be played on black tabs.
SCENE 2	A typical town square with the Laundry to one side.
SCENE 3	Front cloth or tabs
SCENE 4	A small inset on the 2 nd tab and just a chaise or couch.
SCENE 5	A half set on a cloth or cyc and a laundry machine.
SCENE 6	Front cloth or tabs.
SCENE 7	Full set with rock pieces.

ACT TWO

SCENE 1	House Tabs into a flying carpet scene on black tabs. <i>[Please note: If this scene is too complicated, it can be omitted, and the Second Act starts with Scene 2]</i>
SCENE 2	As Act 1 Scene 2
SCENE 3	Front cloth or tabs
SCENE 4	Full set with set pieces and backed by a cyc or cloth.
SCENE 5	As Act 2 Scene 3
SCENE 6	As Act 2 Scene 4 with added Tomb in the background
SCENE 7	As Act 2 Scene 3
SCENE 8	As Act 2 Scene 4 – or a lavish finale set!

I hope you enjoy doing this version of 'Aladdin' and have a great success with your production.

Stephen Duckham

ACT ONE
SCENE 1 ABANAZAR'S LAIR

[A dimly lit scene taking up the area Down Left. The imposing figure of ABANAZAR stands holding a large, ancient-looking book. On the middle finger of one hand HE wears an impressive ring. HE reads, quickly turning the pages until he finds what he is looking for.]

ABANAZAR At last! At last! The ancient rhyme to complete the puzzle that I have been trying to solve for years. The whereabouts of a magic lamp. A lamp that holds the power to make me the greatest magician in the whole of the Universe! *[HE recites, reading from the bottom of the left-hand page.]*

From ancient times, a hidden cave
 Holds wonders to behold.
 Jewels and rings, exquisite things
 Of silver and of gold.
 But most of all, a magic lamp
 With powers beyond compare,
 Lies deep within its rocky walls
 Just outside – *[HE looks up at the right-hand page for the rest of the rhyme.]*
 Weston-Super-Mare!

That can't be right. *[HE looks again and then exclaims.]* Oh no! A page is missing! All these years of searching, and I still don't know the answer. *[HE snaps the book shut.]* I know, I'll get my servant – the Slave of the Ring – to tell me. *[HE rubs the ring on his finger. The SLAVE OF THE RING appears down right. She is a voluptuous vision with heavy makeup and long, fluttering eyelashes. She poses seductively against the proscenium arch.]*

ABANAZAR *[Taken aback.]* Great heavens! What happened? Are you the same person?

SLAVE *[As common as muck!] Yeah, it's me chuck! I decided to have a makeover since I started watching Love Island!*

ABANAZAR Well, I must say I somewhat approve of the change.

SLAVE Yeah, it's really got the boys in the – *[Local Nightclub.]* – excited! Yer know wot I mean? *[SHE gives a raucous laugh.]*

ABANAZAR If only we could do something about the voice!

SLAVE Wot yer mean? What's wrong wiv me voice?

ABANAZAR Nothing that a course in elocution wouldn't solve!

SLAVE 'ere, I've been elocuted!

ABANAZAR Yes, by – *[Name of Eastenders character.]* no doubt! Anyway, enough of all this. I need to know the last line of the rhyme.

SLAVE What rhyme is that?

ABANAZAR *[Impatiently.]* The rhyme in this book. It tells me where the Magic Lamp is.

SLAVE Ooh, the Magic Lamp. I can't help you there, dear.

ABANAZAR Why not?

SLAVE That information is way above my pay grade!

ABANAZAR Oh, you're no use to me at all.

SLAVE Well, if that's how you feel, I'm off.

ABANAZAR No. Wait. *[Attempting to be nice.]* I acquired this book on my travels in the mystical east. Do you think the lamp could be found there?

SLAVE Well, I did 'ear a rumour that a small country, almost hidden from the outside world, holds many strange and exotic mystical tales. And a few strange geezers as well!

ABANAZAR What country is that?

SLAVE *[Thinking.]* Ooh, now let me see.

ABANAZAR *[Getting excited.]* Think, slave. Think.

SLAVE All right, don't get yer beard in a twist. *[She thinks.]* It began with C. Cheltenham, Chester, Cardiff, Chippenham. Ah! I remember. Chandra!

ABANAZAR Chandra? I've never heard of it.

SLAVE Not many people have.

ABANAZAR *[Delighted.]* I must go there straight away. And when I get the lamp, I shall be even greater.

SLAVE But you've got to get it first.

ABANAZAR That'll be easy. I know the magic word to open hidden caves, and then I'll just walk in and claim it for myself.

SLAVE *[Slowly shaking HER head.]* Oh no no no no

ABANAZAR No?

SLAVE That ain't no good dear.

ABANAZAR What do you mean?

SLAVE Well, if memory serves – *[SHE recites the next part monotoned, as though remembering the rule.]* The cave has a protective power surrounding it. Only an innocent youth who has no prior knowledge of what the lamp can do may enter the cave. *[In her natural voice again.]* If a scheming old sorcerer like you should go in, all the treasures would vanish into the mists of time, and the cave will reseal itself. *[SHE gives another piercing laugh.]*

ABANAZAR *[Angry at what she called him, but restrains himself.]* Then, Slave of the Ring, I command you to locate such a youth who will assist me in my quest.

SLAVE I have heard of a cute geezer what resides in the city.

ABANAZAR *[Frustrated.]* Well? His name? His name?

SLAVE His name is Aladdin, son of a laundry woman.

ABANAZAR Then take me to his home straight away.

SLAVE What right now?

ABANAZAR This very minute.

SLAVE But I'm meeting the lads!

ABANAZAR This instant. Do my bidding or suffer the consequences.

SLAVE Alright. Alright. Calm yerself, or you'll have another turn. *[SHE looks off stage, puts her fingers in her mouth and gives a loud whistle.]* Ere lads. Get me a Voddie and tonic. I'll be back soon.

ABANAZAR Now, Slave. Now!

SLAVE *[SHE clears her throat and chants.]*
Out to the mystic East we fly,
In but a twinkling of an eye!

[SHE makes a pass and the lights blackout. The scene changes to

SCENE 2 OUTSIDE THE TWANKEY LAUNDRY

[Stage left is Widow Twankey's Laundry. Stage right features other buildings, all of which have an Oriental design. The backcloth depicts a continuation of the street, and in the distance we can see the EMPRESS'S Palace. Other buildings' facades are seen up stage, including the Imperial Baths up right. Other entrances are down stage right and left. A ledge is attached to the false proscenium down right, on which is situated an oriental tea urn and cup. A sign above it reads. "Chandra Tea. – Soothing and Calming." As the scene opens it is a hive of activity with the CHORUS singing the opening song.]

OPENING NUMBER

[After the number, a police siren is heard off. Music from a TV Police Series is played. The lights black out, and SERGEANT SOUR enters. SHE is wearing a British police outfit, but with added comic trimmings. A British police helmet with a flashing blue light on top. SHE is a typical sergeant, full of self-importance and always on duty. As SHE arrives centre stage, the lights return.]

SOUR PC Sweet? PC Sweet, where are you?

SWEET *[Off.]* Coming Sergeant. *[HE runs on, also wearing a comic police outfit, British helmet, but only one glove. Quite the opposite of the Sergeant HE treats everything as a bit of a joke. HE bumps into SOUR and EVERYONE*

[laughs.]

SOUR What do you think you are doing?

SWEET Sorry, Sergeant.

SOUR We are the pride of the Chandra Police Force, not some pantomime knockabout team!

SWEET *[Having heard it all before.]* No Sergeant.

SOUR We must conduct ourselves with the utmost professionalism.

SWEET *[Rolling eyes.]* Yes Sergeant.

SOUR What's the motto of the Chandra Police Force?

SWEET *[Not listening.]* Three bags full, Sergeant!

SOUR WHAT?

SWEET *[Realising.]* Er – I mean – always do your duty.

SOUR Right. And don't you forget it. *[Notices his gloved hand.]* Why are you only wearing one glove?

SWEET Well, I heard the weather forecast this morning. *[Gestures with glove-less hand.]* It said it was going to be warm – *[Holds up gloved hand.]* – but on the other hand, it might turn cold! *[ALL laugh.]*

SOUR You idiot! *[SHE addresses the CHORUS.]* Now listen, everyone. I have a special announcement. As protectors of the royal personages, it has come to our attention that a stranger has been climbing the tree outside the Palace garden to get a quick butchers at her Highness, Princess Jasmine.

SWEET *[Not hearing correctly.]* Princess Has Been?

SOUR Jasmine, idiot.

SWEET You can't call the Princess an idiot.

SOUR Shut up! *[Continuing.]* As I was saying, a stranger has been seen trying to look at the Princess, which, as you all know, is a very serious crime with the most severe punishment. *[ALL react.]*

SWEET Ohhh yes. It's horrible. *[HE starts to describe graphically.]* First, they hang you upside down by the ankles and throw rotten vegetables at you. Then they put you in the stocks and throw rotten meat at you! You end up in a right stew! *[HE comes face to face with SOUR, who is staring at him.]*

SOUR When you've quite finished.

SWEET Sorry, Sergeant.

SOUR There is a price on this ruffian's head, so if anyone sees a lad in –

[At this point, ALADDIN enters up right and waves to the crowd.]

1st VOICE Hey, Aladdin.

SOUR [Not seeing ALADDIN.] - yes, a lad in the vicinity of the Royal Palace, they must report it to one of us at once. [ALADDIN moves to one side. SOUR and SWEET are not aware he is there.]

1st VOICE But who is he?

2nd WOMAN What does he look like?

SOUR Ah ha! We have an eyewitness description of him.

SWEET Yes. [Consults his notebook.] My mother's next door neighbour's second cousin's number one son told my mother's next door neighbour's second cousin, who told my mother's next door neighbour, who told my mother, who told me!

SOUR [Grabbing the notebook and hitting SWEET. ALL laugh.] He is believed to be wearing – [SHE now describes what ALADDIN is wearing.] Has anyone seen him?

ALL [Ad lib.] No sorry. Doesn't ring a bell. Not anyone from around here.

SOUR Well, keep your eyes peeled. This villain must be apprehended. [To SWEET.] Come on, Sweet, we must be on our way. At the double. [SOUR and SWEET run at double time around the stage, bump into each other and exit.]

ALADDIN What an idiotic pair. How did they ever get into the police force?

1st VOICE They did a crash course at somewhere called Scotland Yard!

2nd VOICE Aladdin, have you been climbing the walls of the Palace again?

ALADDIN Well, maybe just for a quick peek into the garden.

3rd VOICE One of these days, the Police will catch you.

1st VOICE And then you'll be for it!

ALADDIN [Hand to his throat.] Mm, I know. But it's worth it if I can see Princess Jasmine.

1st VOICE Oh, you have got it bad.

ALADDIN [Sighing.] I know. But she is the most beautiful girl in the whole of Chandra.

2nd VOICE And you're just the son of a lowly washerwoman, so you stand no chance with the Princess, even if you did get to meet her.

ALADDIN Don't be too sure of that. I intend to make something of myself. Become someone important, and then I can ask her to marry me! Just wait and see.

SONG – ALADDIN AND CHORUS

[At the end of the number, a lot of noise and shouting is heard off, and WISHEE WASHEE enters on an old broken-down bicycle with a laundry basket piled high with washing attached to the front.]

WISHEE *[As he enters.]* Watch out. Runaway laundry basket approaching. Help! Clear the road. *[The CHORUS runs off as HE circles the stage, narrowly missing ALADDIN and disappears into the wings. There is a sound effect of him crashing into all sorts of things.]* Owwww.

ALADDIN Wishee, what are you doing? *[WISHEE staggers back on with various articles of washing around his shoulders and carrying the rest in the basket.]*

WISHEE Mum asked me to collect the laundry from our regulars, so I thought I'd use that old bike.

ALADDIN But the brakes on that haven't worked for years.

WISHEE So I've just found out!

ALADDIN Here, let me give you a hand. *[HE takes some of the washing and puts the basket by the laundry door.]*

WISHEE Thanks, Aladdin. Although Mom did ask you to do this job. Where have you been all morning?

ALADDIN Oh, just out for a walk.

WISHEE A walk, eh? *[Suddenly in a panic.]* Oh no, not to the Palace again. You've been looking at the Princess, haven't you?

ALADDIN Oh, Wishee, she's so beautiful. I couldn't resist it.

WISHEE But can you resist being arrested? If you're caught, you'll be strung up and.....

ALADDIN So everyone keeps telling me. But what else can I do? I've just got to meet her.

WISHEE You may as well put that idea right out of your head. Even at today's Royal Parade, our exalted Empress has insisted that all eyes be averted when she passes by.

ALADDIN *[Surprised.]* Royal Parade? You mean she'll be walking through these very streets today?

WISHEE *[Wishing he hadn't said that.]* No! No, I didn't mean that. I meant the other side of town. *[Pointing into the audience.]* Way, way over there.

ALADDIN You said these very streets.

WISHEE No – no I didn't. *[Pushing his hands to his mouth.]* Look – I'm eating my words! Rewind! I never said anything.

ALADDIN This is just the chance I've been waiting for. I'll try to attract her attention and get her to talk to me.

WISHEE NO!!

ALADDIN Thank you, Wishee. *[HE exits into the house left. WISHEE paces around the stage.]*

WISHEE Thank me? For what? Giving them a reason to arrest you? Then what will happen? I'll have to do all the work – that's what! *[Dithering all over the stage.]* Oh, I'm all of a dither – *[To someone in the audience.]* – are you all of a dither, missus? No? Well, you should be. This is a worrying situation. My lovesick brother could get himself into a lot of bother. I must calm down. *[Sees the sign down right.]* Hello, what's this? *[Reads.]* "Chandra Tea – Soothing and Calming". Just what I need. *[HE pours himself a cup, drinks and starts to relax.]* Ha! That's better. I feel much calmer now. I must remember this. Never know when I might need another one. I know – do you think you could help me? *[Audience reaction.]* When you see me getting all of a dither about something, and I say "I'm worried" – will you remind me to have a cup of tea? *[Audience reaction.]* Will you? Oh, that's wonderful. Just shout out "have a cup of tea" and that will remind me. Shall we have a trial run? When you hear me say, "I'm worried" shout out, "have a cup of tea". Here we go then. *[HE walks around the stage.]* Oh, that brother of mine. He gets himself into all sorts of trouble. I do worry about him – I'm – I'm worried. *[Audience shouts out, but WISHEE doesn't hear them. HE crosses down stage.]* Did you shout? Well, I didn't hear you. You'll have to shout really loud to remind me. Let's have another go. *[HE resumes walking around the stage.]* I wish Aladdin wouldn't go looking at the Princess. If he gets caught, it'll be the end of him. Oh, I am worried. I'm really worried. *[Audience shouts out and WISHEE turns, smiles and pours a cup of tea.]* That was much better. *[HE drinks.]* Now I've got nothing to worry about!

TWANKEY *[Off left.]* Wishee. Wishee, where are you?

WISHEE That's Mom. She'll be wanting all this laundry. *[The door to the left house opens, and WIDOW TWANKEY enters. SHE holds up an enormous pair of brightly coloured bloomers in front of her.]* Mother! Pull your skirt down when you bend over!

TWANKEY *[Lowering the bloomers.]* They're not mine, you cheeky young thing. They're from a new client. *[Reading the label. This should be of a famous female and in the news. SHE gives him the bloomers.]*

WISHEE *[Wide-eyed in amazement.]* Mum, you know who that is?

TWANKEY Yes, and you'd better get them back to her before she realises they're missing! Now I want you to help me hang out the last lot of washing.

WISHEE But Mum

TWANKEY Don't "but Mum" me. It's a beautiful day. Really good drying weather.

WISHEE *[Crossing to the house, left and picking up the basket.]* All right, Mum.

TWANKEY *[Calling after him as he exits.]* And get that brother of yours to give you a

hand. *[To the audience.]* He's a good lad, really. *[SHE peers out into the auditorium.]* Well, it's nice to see you all. Are you all together or haven't you been introduced? What? Don't you know each other? We can't have that. Here in Chandra, we're a friendly lot, so let me introduce myself. I'm Widow Twankey, and I run this Garment Cleansing Establishment! That's laundry to you lot! Now what are your names? Come on, don't be shy. Everyone shout out their name after three. Ready? One – two – three. *[The audience shouts out.]* There we are. Now all of you know me, and I know all of you! But do you know each other? *[Audience reaction.]* That's easily solved. Turn to the person next to you. *[SHE encourages them to do so.]* Now repeat after me. *[SHE should wait until the audience responds to each phrase.]* Hello. – How are you? – I'm very pleased to meet you. – Do you come here often? – Lend me a fiver! *[Audience reaction.]* WIDOW TWANKEY quietens them down and continues. There – now we're all friends. I like to have friends – 'cos I was very lonely as a child. *[Ah's from audience.]* I was! Nobody would talk to me 'cos I was so ugly. When I was born, the midwife slapped my parents! And they never bothered with me. They were in the iron and steel business. Mom used to iron, and Dad used to steal! Then I met my husband. What a charmer he turned out to be. When we got married, he told me my life would be like a fairy tale. He was right, it was Grimm! I had to tell the neighbours that he had royal connections. He was always away at Her Majesty's pleasure! But I do have my two sons who give me a hand in the laundry – now and then. Talking of them, where have they got to with the washing? *[SHE crosses to the house left and calls.]* Wishee. Aladdin. Where's that clothesline? *[SHE crosses back to down centre.]*

ALADDIN *[Off.]* Coming Mum. *[HE enters and crosses down to TWANKEY. WISHEE follows him, holding the end of a washing line that has to be long enough to stretch across the stage into the wings. On the line is a varied assortment of clothes.]*

WISHEE We've pegged all the clothes on.

TWANKEY *[Pointing off right.]* Tie it off over there.

WISHEE Right O, Mum. *[HE exits right, pulling the washing line. During the next dialogue HE should run around the set to re-enter through the laundry door. Stagehands keep the line travelling across the stage.]*

TWANKEY *[To ALADDIN.]* And where have you been since first thing this morning?

ALADDIN Just around and about.

TWANKEY Yes – around and about the vicinity of the Palace, I'll bet.

ALADDIN Well, I may have passed by.

TWANKEY Aladdin, what have I told you? You'll get caught one day, and then where will I be? No number one son to carry on the business.

ALADDIN Oh Mum, I don't want to spend the rest of my life working in a laundry. I've got ambitions. I've got dreams.

TWANKEY Dreams are all well and good, but they don't pay the off-licence bill ... I mean the rent.

ALADDIN One day, I'll have enough money to buy a hundred laundries.

TWANKEY You'd better buy a farm as well to keep all those flying pigs in! *[SHE crosses right and calls off.]* Have you tied that line off, Wishee?

[WISHEE enters from the laundry holding the other end of the line.]

WISHEE Nearly there, Mum. *[HE crosses right, trips and falls, and the line goes whizzing off.]*

TWANKEY Now look what you've done. All the washing's fallen onto the dirty street. I'll have to do it all again! *[SHE starts to push them both off right.]* Come on. There'll be no lunch for either of you until it's done. *[With ALADDIN and WISHEE protesting, they ALL exit right. The lights dim slightly, and ABANAZAR enters down left.]*

ABANAZAR *[Looking around.]* Chandra. My search for the lamp is nearing its end. Now all I have to do is find this boy Aladdin and persuade him to retrieve the lamp from the cave. I'll summon my slave of the ring to guide me to where he is. *[HE holds up his hand and rubs the ring. The SLAVE OF THE RING appears down right.]*

SLAVE Here I am to do your bidding, master. But be quick about it, will you, the East Enders omnibus *[Or another TV programme.]* is about to start!

ABANAZAR This boy, Aladdin. I wish you to find his home. Where is it?

SLAVE Is that all? Have you dragged me out here just for that?

ABANAZAR Don't speak to me like that! You are my slave, now answer my question.

SLAVE All right, dearie. Keep your wig on! It's where you'd expect it to be in pantomime.

ABANAZAR Eh?

SLAVE *[Slightly sarcastically.]* It's behind you!

ABANAZAR What? *[HE turns and sees the laundry.]* Widow Twankey's Laundry. Ah yes. The son of a washerwoman. This must be the place. *[To the SLAVE.]* That will be all. *[SHE rolls her eyes at the audience and exits down right.]* Now I can get to the boy, gain his confidence and have him retrieve the magic lamp from the hidden cave. And then the whole world will be mine. *[HE laughs evilly. Audience 'boo' and HE turns on them angrily.]* Oh, be quiet, you pathetic lot, or I shall turn you all into – *[Names a creature from a scary movie. Then does a double take at someone in the audience.]* – which in your case would be an improvement. *[There is a commotion, and WISHEE and ALADDIN enter right, both carrying a large pile of washing. WIDOW TWANKEY follows.]*

TWANKEY I want every bit of this washing done again before tonight, or else there'll be no lunch, no dinner and no supper! Go on, get in there and get started. *[WISHEE and ALADDIN exit into laundry - ad libbing.]*

ABANAZAR *[Approaching TWANKEY.]* Madam, do I have the honour of addressing the

owner of this fine establishment?

TWANKEY *[To the audience.]* Oh, girls, it's - *[Name of film or pop star.]* Yes, that's right. I am Tomasina Twankey, widow of the parish.

ABANAZAR Splendid. I've just come

TWANKEY You've come to get your laundry done. *[SHE sniffs at him.]* And not a moment too soon! We've got a special offer this week. Cut price deals on all underwear. Knickers are down!

ABANAZAR No, madam, I've not come about laundry, I've come about your son Aladdin.

TWANKEY Aladdin? What do you want with him? *[Suddenly thinking he is with the police.]* Oh, it's not about him trying to get a look at the Princess, is it? I've told him about it, and he's promised never to do it again. *[SHE falls to her knees.]* Please don't take him away from me! *[SHE starts pleading and wailing.]* I need him here to help me with the laundry. I'm an old woman, and I need all the help I can get.

ABANAZAR Madam I

TWANKEY *[Suddenly normal voice.]* Hang on, I haven't finished yet! *[Back to pleading.]* It's hard enough trying to make ends meet. Ever since my husband passed on, life's been getting more and more difficult. *[SHE clings to his robes. Big dramatics.]* Oh, sir, please don't take him, I beg you. Please! Please! PLEASE!! *[Normal voice again as SHE gets up.]* All right - you can carry on now.

ABANAZAR I merely wanted to tell him that I am his long-lost Uncle. Uncle Abanazar.

TWANKEY Uncle Howsyerfather? I've never heard of you.

ABANAZAR That's because I've been away for many, many years, roaming the globe in search of gold and jewels.

TWANKEY Gold and jewels? Does that mean you're rich?

ABANAZAR Filthy rich!

TWANKEY And you've come to us for a good wash!

ABANAZAR I've realised all too late in life that no matter how much money you have, you're penniless without a family around you.

TWANKEY I should be so poor!

ABANAZAR So you see, as Aladdin is your eldest son and I have no one else in the world, he will be heir to my fortune.

TWANKEY Well, that'll be nice for him *[Realising what he has said.]* Heir to your fortune? You mean he's going to be rich?

ABANAZAR Eventually.

TWANKEY *[Running to the laundry door.]* Aladdin! Aladdin, come here – quickly.

ALADDIN *[Off.]* I thought you wanted me to do the washing.

TWANKEY Never mind the washing. Come here. *[ALADDIN enters and crosses down to them. WISHEE follows.]* This is your long-lost Uncle Aberystwyth!

ABANAZAR Abanazar.

TWANKEY He's come all the way from sunny Wales to meet you! *[Aside to ALADDIN.]* And he's got some very exciting news.

ALADDIN Long lost Uncle? I didn't know Father had a brother.

TWANKEY *[To ABANAZAR.]* Come to think of it, he never mentioned you.

ABANAZAR I was the black sheep of the family. I left home many years ago.

WISHEE *[Aside to ALADDIN.]* I don't know whether you should trust him, Aladdin. He looks a bit mysterious to me.

ALADDIN What do you mean?

WISHEE I don't know, but I'd be careful. He looks scary. I'm worried he's not who he says he is. I am – I'm very worried. *[Audience calls out. WISHEE has a cup of tea.]*

TWANKEY *[To ALADDIN.]* He's very rich and wants to share his lolly with us.

ALADDIN Really?

ABANAZAR Life has been good to me, my boy. And as recompense for deserting the family all those years ago, I want you to benefit.

TWANKEY Oh, just think of it. No more washing and ironing.

WISHEE No more scrumping and saving!

ALADDIN So, Uncle, this fortune you say you've amassed. When are we going to see it?

ABANAZAR Soon. Very soon. There's something I want you to do for me first.

ALADDIN I thought there'd be a catch.

ABANAZAR No, there's no catch. I just want help with a little job, and as a reward, you'll have wealth beyond your imagination.

TWANKEY 'ere, you don't want him to rob a bank, do you?

ABANAZAR *[Laughing.]* Rob a bank – you'll be able to buy your own bank this time tomorrow.

WISHEE I say! Do you need a hand?

ABANAZAR [Sharply.] No! [Softly.] No, thank you. Aladdin will be able to manage on his own. [Taking ALADDIN to one side of the stage.] I'll explain everything later. Meet me at sunset behind the laundry.

ALADDIN Sunset behind the laundry.

TWANKEY [Hearing this and turning to WISHEE.] Sunset behind the laundry.

WISHEE [Turning to no one.] Sunset behind the [HIS voice trails off.]

ABANAZAR Soon, everything you've ever wished for will become a reality. Until later. [To the others.] Goodbye – family! It was a pleasure to finally meet you all. [Laughing evilly towards the audience, HE exits down left.]

ALADDIN Mum, I can hardly believe it. We're going to be rich!

TWANKEY And I shall finally have enough money to subscribe to Spotify! [Or paid for TV channel.]

WISHEE And I can get a – [Name of a young children's toy.]

[ALADDIN and TWANKEY give him a strange look.]

TWANKEY Come on. Let's go and start making plans. [ALL THREE exit into the laundry. SOUR is heard calling off stage.]

SOUR [Off.] Make way for her exalted Highness, the Empress of Chandra and the Princess Jasmine. [The CHORUS enters excitedly. SOUR and SWEET enter up stage end cross down centre.] Stand aside, all you rabble. Her Celestial Highness comes.

SWEET [Pushing the crowd back.] That's right – make way for her Cholesterol Highness!

ENTRANCE OF THE EMPRESS AND PRINCESS – CHORUS

[The EMPRESS enters and crosses down centre. SHE carries a large fan. PRINCESS JASMINE follows him. SHE has a veil covering her face. MARSINAH, her handmaiden, accompanies her. As the number ends, the EMPRESS bows to the ensemble left then right and in doing so bumps into SWEET.]

EMPRESS Oh! My royal dignity has been damaged. [She regains his composure.] Good and loyal citizens of Chandra. I come among you today for a very special reason. Sergeant Sour, read the proclamation.

SOUR [Bowing.] At once, O mighty one. [SHE unrolls a scroll.] Her Imperial Highness decrees that, as Princess Jasmine has reached her twenty-first birthday, a suitor for her hand will be sought.

SWEET What about the rest of her?

SOUR [Pushing him over.] Be quiet – idiot. [Continues reading.] Candidates will only be considered if they are of a highborn family. [Begins to roll the scroll.]

EMPERESS [Aside to SOUR.] And have pots of money!

SOUR And have a personal fortune.

EMPERESS That's right. No time wasters, please! [To SOUR.] Continue Sergeant.

SOUR As the ancient law of this land decrees that no one may look upon the face of the Princess until the marriage ceremony, all must avert their eyes and retire.

SWEET But I'm only twenty-six. I'm too young to retire.

SOUR Retire from this place, nincompoop.

SWEET Oh, I see. [To the CHORUS.] All right, everyone scarper. No peeking at the Princess. [SOUR and SWEET disperse the crowd.]

SOUR Move along now.

[The CHORUS exits.]

SOUR No one around, Highness.

EMPERESS Thank you, Sergeant. [SOUR goes to exit. SWEET just stands there. The EMPRESS glares at him.] Well?

SWEET Yes, thank you, your Mountainship, although I have had a bit of a twinge in my left leg!

SOUR [Shouting.] PC Sweet! [SWEET crosses to her.] Move it! [SHE pushes SWEET into the wings and they both exit.]

EMPERESS Now, Jasmine, you may remove your veil. We are quite alone.

JASMINE [Removing the veil.] This law is quite ridiculous mother. Why do I have to keep myself covered up when all the other girls can show their faces to anyone?

EMPERESS You are not like all the other girls. You are a high-born Princess and must behave like one. This tendency you have of disobeying convention is most worrying. You must change your ways if we are to make a successful marriage for you.

JASMINE And that's another thing. Why can't I choose whom I am to marry?

EMPERESS [Getting exasperated.] There you go again. The law states quite plainly that as your poor father is no longer with us, I shall decide who will have your hand. Besides we need to make a good match with someone who's got a bit stashed away! The royal coffers are in dire need of an injection of cash!

JASMINE So that's it. I'm just being sold off, am I?

EMPERESS I didn't meanIt's just thatOh, Jasmine, just do what the law dictates and let that be an end to it. Now I'm going to take my morning constitutional at the Imperial Baths. When I get back, I hope you will be in a more agreeable state of mind. [SHE exits into the building up right, bumping into the door as

she goes.]

JASMINE *[To MARSINAH.]* Oh, did you hear that, Marsinah?

[MARSINAH is a girl who is full of life and fun. Possibly a "jolly hockey sticks" type. A good friend and companion to the Princess.]

MARSINAH Certainly did your Highness.

JASMINE Sold off to the highest bidder. It's just not fair. *[SHE starts to cry, and MARSINAH comforts her.]*

MARSINAH I'm sure it won't come to that, your Highness.

JASMINE Oh, Marsinah, you don't know how long I have dreamed of being free to live a normal life. Free from the pressures of Royal protocol. Free to be just me!

SONG JASMINE

[As SHE begins the song, MARSINAH moves to one side. At the end of the song, ALADDIN enters from the laundry.]

ALADDIN *[To HIMSELF.]* It's the Princess, and she seems upset. I must speak to her. *[HE comes out.]* Your Highness.

JASMINE *[Turning away and replacing her veil.]* Oh!

MARSINAH *[Stepping between them.]* Who are you? Don't you know to look at the face of the Princess is against the law?

ALADDIN I would gladly break the law to gaze on one who is so beautiful.

NOSOSHY How do you know her Highness is blessed with such beauty?

ALADDIN Because I have seen her.

JASMINE *[Turning round.]* What?

MARSINAH How could you? Her face is never revealed to anyone outside the Imperial Court.

ALADDIN No, but when she is walking in the Palace gardens, she is plainly visible from the branches of the large willow tree.

JASMINE You have climbed that tree? But it's very dangerous.

ALADDIN I would climb a thousand trees just to get a fleeting glimpse of you, your Highness.

JASMINE *[Aside to MARSINAH.]* He is rather handsome, don't you think?

MARSINAH Your Highness, remember what your Mother said.

JASMINE But she's not here. *[SHE crosses to ALADDIN.]* So if you have already seen me, there's not much point in my wearing this veil. *[SHE removes the veil.]*

ALADDIN None whatever.

MARSINAH I say, your Highness. We could be getting into hot water!

JASMINE *[Turning to her.]* Keep a watch for my Mother. I want to talk to this headstrong young man.

MARSINAH But think of the trouble we could all be in.

JASMINE Oh, please, Marsinah, let me have a little adventure. Leave us alone for just a few minutes.

ALADDIN *[Leading MARSINAH towards the entrance to the baths.]* Yes, Marsinah, leave us alone for just a few minutes.

MARSINAH Don't think you can get around me that easily.

ALADDIN *[With a wink and a smile.]* I would never presume such a thing! *[MARSINAH exits into the baths and ALADDIN returns to JASMINE.]*

JASMINE Would you really risk everything – just to see me?

ALADDIN Indeed.

JASMINE What is your name?

ALADDIN Aladdin.

JASMINE Aladdin. *[Laughing.]* I don't know whether you are very foolish or impetuously exciting.

ALADDIN The latter, I assure you. Princess, you don't know how long I've dreamed of this moment.

JASMINE I too, have dreamed that one day I would meet someone. Someone very special.

[MARSINAH comes running on from the baths.]

MARSINAH Your Highness, your Mother is returning.

JASMINE Aladdin! Quick, you must hide.

ALADDIN But I can't leave you now.

JASMINE You must, or else you will be arrested.

MARSINAH Yes. And they'll perform the most awful torture on you. Really gruesome with thumbscrews and hot pokers!

JASMINE Marsinah. Don't.

MARSINAH Well I was only saying

EMPRESS *[Off.]* Jasmine. *[JASMINE quickly replaces her veil, and MARSINAH runs over*

to ALADDIN, pushes him behind her as the EMPRESS enters. SHE is not carrying her fan.] Jasmine, you'll never guess who I've just bumped into in the baths. Prince Pekoe. And what do you think – he's looking to get married again.

JASMINE Prince Pekoe? But he's very old.

EMPRESS Yes, dear – and very rich. I've invited him round for tea so you can get properly acquainted.

JASMINE Mother!

EMPRESS No arguments. This may just be the chance we've been waiting for. Come along; let us get back to the Palace. *[SHE starts to leave, then turns back.]* Oh, I've left my fan in the baths. Fetch it for me, will you, Marsinah?

MARSINAH *[Dithering about. Still hiding ALADDIN.]* Erbut um –

EMPRESS Quickly. We haven't got all day. *[MARSINAH tries to back off with ALADDIN behind her.]* What are you doing girl? *[SHE sees ALADDIN.]* Who's that?

ALADDIN *[Coming into view.]* My name is Aladdin, your Imperial Highness, and I am in love with your daughter.

EMPRESS *[Open-mouthed.]* You? My daughter? *[SHE calls.]* Police! Sergeant Sour, where are you?

JASMINE Aladdin – run. *[TWANKEY enters, followed by WISHEE.]*

TWANKEY What's all the shouting about? *[Sees the EMPRESS.]* Oh, it's your Royal Flush! *[SHE curtseys.]*

EMPRESS Stop that boy.

[Pandemonium breaks out as ALADDIN tries to get away. SOUR and SWEET enter and get caught up in the melee, as do the CHORUS. Everyone is bumping into everyone else. ABANAZAR enters down left to see ALADDIN almost caught.]

ABANAZAR *[Casting a spell.]* Abracadeeze. Everyone freeze! *[ALL become statues in ridiculous poses except ALADDIN.]*

ALADDIN Uncle! What's happened?

ABANAZAR Temporary paralysis! Quick run, but don't forget our rendezvous later.

ALADDIN I won't – and thank you. *[ALADDIN runs off.]*

ABANAZAR Let's see if you'll still be thanking me when your usefulness comes to an end. *[HE laughs evilly and turns to the ensemble.]* Abracadoove. Everyone move! *[HE exits down left. EVERYONE unfreezes, and the pandemonium continues as the lights fade and the scene changes to ...]*

SCENE 3 BEHIND THE LAUNDRY

[A front cloth scene. As the lights come up, ABANAZAR is discovered down left.]

ABANAZAR That foolish boy almost ruined my plans by nearly getting himself caught. I shall have to keep an eye on him until he has served his purpose. Now all I need to know is where the magic cave lies hidden. Time to once more summon the Slave of the Ring. [HE rubs the ring and the SLAVE appears down right.]

SLAVE [Yawning.] Ohhh, I was just having forty winks when I got this wakeup call! I was dreaming that - [Name of film star.] – and me were all alone on this desert island. Me doin' me actual body therapy. Rubbin' oil into his muscly chest! Just us and the sea and the sand!

ABANAZAR I'll give you sand. You'll be buried up to your neck in it if you don't do what I ask.

SLAVE All right, chuck. All right, don't get excited! What are yer after now?

ABANAZAR I have found the boy Aladdin. Now I wish to know the whereabouts of the magic cave.

SLAVE Oh, you do, do you? Well, I hope you've got a good pair of walking boots.

ABANAZAR Why is that?

SLAVE Because it's high in the mountains outside the city. I mean, I couldn't do it – not in these shoes. They're yer actual Jimmy Choo, yer know!

ABANAZAR Just tell me where.

SLAVE To the West of the town, climb a steep mountain pass,
There at the top in a deep, cold crevasse
The cave that you seek behind a rock is concealed,
Open the cave, and your prize is revealed.

ABANAZAR [Rubbing his hands.] My prize. The magic lamp! All these years of waiting, and very soon it will be mine. Then nothing can stop me from becoming Abanazar, the most powerful man.

SLAVE Oi! Can I go now? I want to get back to dreaming about– [Name of film star.]

ABANAZAR [Irritably.] Yes, yes. Go! [The SLAVE exits.] I must go too and prepare for tonight and the final part of my plan to become ruler of the universe. [The audience 'boo'. HE snarls at them and exits left. WISHEE runs on from stage right, out of breath.]

WISHEE Oh, boys and girls. Did you see what happened? Aladdin managed to escape, but only just. I was worried for him – I was very worried. [Audience shouts, and WISHEE has a cup of tea.] That's better. Mother has gone for a lie down, and I said I'd go and look for Aladdin and try to keep him out of trouble. [HE looks off stage.] Here he comes now. [ALADDIN comes running on.]

ALADDIN Wishee. You haven't seen the police, have you?

WISHEE No, but they're looking for you all over Chandra.

ALADDIN I'll have to find somewhere to hide. Any ideas?

WISHEE No, but you'd better find somewhere soon – *[HE looks off stage.]* – 'cos here they come.

ALADDIN *[Running behind WISHEE.]* Quick, hide me.

WISHEE Oh dear. I'll try to distract them. *[To the audience.]* Will you help me? *[Ad lib with audience. SOUR and SWEET come running on.]*

SOUR Hey, you there. Has a young lad come running this way?

WISHEE A young lad?

SOUR That's what I said.

WISHEE What did he look like?

SWEET Well, he had a body, two legs, two arms – *[SOUR hits him.]*

SOUR He's a young ruffian who has broken the law by looking at the Princess.

WISHEE Oh, no one around here's looked at a Princess, *[To the audience.]* has there? *[Audience reaction.]*

SWEET Are you sure about that?

WISHEE Quite sure. My friends would have seen him too, and they haven't – *[To audience.]* – have you? *[Audience reaction.]*

SOUR *[Peering out at the audience.]* Are they all to be trusted?

WISHEE Oh yes, they're from *[Name of local area.]* They're all very honest folk – *[To audience.]* aren't you? *[Audience reaction. SOUR and SWEET now look out at the audience. During the next sequence, ALADDIN makes his escape.]*

SOUR I'm not so sure about that. They look a dodgy lot to me. What do you think, Sweet?

SWEET I think you're right, Sarge. I think this fellow here and that lot out there are hiding something. *[WISHEE now starts an "Oh no we're not" sequence. Towards the end of it, WIDOW TWANKEY enters.]*

TWANKEY What's going on?

WISHEE These two are looking for the boy who looked at the Princess this morning.

TWANKEY Oh, he's not around here.

SOUR How do you know that?

TWANKEY *[Pointing in the opposite direction to where ALADDIN went.]* Because he's over there.

SWEET Where?

TWANKEY By that big willow tree near the Palace wall.

SOUR He's going to have a butchers at the Princess again! After him. *[In an effort to make a quick exit, SOUR and SWEET fall over each other.]*

WISHEE Mom, do you know where Aladdin is?

TWANKEY Yes. He's back in the laundry. No one will think of looking for him there.

WISHEE I hope not. All this fuss has got me very worried. Very worried indeed. *[Audience reacts, and WISHEE has a cup of tea.]*

TWANKEY I don't know about drinking tea. You've got to pull yourself together and be more assertive in life. Stop panicking every time something happens. Be bold. Be strong. Be like me. Be a man! *[SHE realises what she has just said.]* That didn't quite come out right!!

DUET – TWANKEY AND WISHEE

[The song ends and the scene changes to....]

SCENE 4 THE BOUDOIR OF THE PRINCESS

[A small inset tastefully decorated with an oriental chaise covered with pillows of various sizes and colours. JASMINE is sitting on the chaise with the EMPRESS standing to one side. MARSINAH is in attendance.]

EMPRESS Jasmine, this won't do. At least see Prince Pekoe and talk to him.

JASMINE Mother, how could you even think that I would want to marry him? He's older than you!

EMPRESS Jasmine!

JASMINE Well, he is. And he's deaf. I'd be hoarse in a week trying to make myself heard.

[MARSINAH giggles and gets a look from the EMPRESS.]

EMPRESS I'll admit he's not much of a catch, but he's rich. And a marriage like that would benefit our country.

JASMINE But what about me? I don't want to marry for money; I want to marry for love.

EMPRESS I'm afraid in affairs of state, you have very little to say on the matter. Now, be a good girl and tidy yourself up. I shall expect you to join us shortly.

JASMINE But

EMPRESS Jasmine, that is a royal command! *[SHE exits.]*

JASMINE *[Almost in tears with rage.]* Oh, how could she? How could she?

MARSINAH Steady on there, your Highness. There must be a way out of all of this.

JASMINE *[Defiant.]* I'll run away. That's what I'll do. I'll go where no one knows me.

MARSINAH Very few people know you now, your Highness, as you are forbidden to appear in public.

JASMINE That's right. I shall finally be free to come and go as I please.

MARSINAH Then there is the problem of where to live.

JASMINE *[With a frown.]* Oh – yes.

MARSINAH And what to do about food.

JASMINE Well

MARSINAH And what to wear. Your fine clothes would be a dead give-away in the streets of Chandra.

JASMINE *[Deflated.]* Oh, Marsinah, you're right. I'd be found out in no time.

MARSINAH I'm afraid so, your Highness.

JASMINE What am I going to do? *[A thought comes to her.]* If only Aladdin could come and whisk me away.

MARSINAH *[Shocked.]* Aladdin?

JASMINE Oh yes. You must admit that he is handsome.

NOSOSHY Well, I suppose so, in a *peasanty* sort of way.

JASMINE And so exciting. Imagine him climbing trees to catch a glimpse of me and declaring his love for me to my father.

MARSINAH Bid of a chump, I'd say.

JASMINE Why is it that the one man I feel something for is likely to be arrested at any minute?

MARSINAH *[Her hand to her throat.]* Oh, your Highness.

JASMINE What am I going to do?

NOSOSHY Well, right now your Mother will be expecting you.

JASMINE Don't remind me.