Sinbad the Sailor

by Stephen Duckham

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Sinbad the Sailor

CAST (in order of appearance)

Genie	
Tinbad the Tailor	
Mrs Sinbad	Sinbad's mother
Macho	A monkey
Sinbad the Sailor	
Black-Eyed Pete	A good Pirate
Mephisto	An evil magician
The Caliph of Chandra	
Princess Parissa	His daughter
Lillie	Handmaiden to the Princess
Slave Seller	
Alessia	Daughter of the Khedive of Egypt
Theo	Her Bodyguard

Chorus and Dancers: People of Chandra, Sailors, Citizens of Cairo, Mummies etc.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT ONE

SCENE 1	THE PORT OF CHANDRA
SCENE 2	THE CALIPH'S PALACE GARDEN
SCENE 3	BEFORE THE BANQUET
SCENE 4	THE GRAND HALL IN THE CALPIH'S PALACE
SCENE 5	THE CALIPH'S PALACE GARDEN
SCENE 6	ON BOARD 'THE GOLDEN VOYAGER'

ACT TWO

SCENE 1	THE OLD BAZAAR IN CAIRO
SCENE 2	THE OUTSKIRTS OF CAIRO
SCENE 3	IN THE AIR
SCENE 4	A DESERT CAMP
SCENE 5	UNDER THE SHIFTING SANDS
SCENE 6	THE TOMB OF THE KHALI
SCENE 7	BACK HOME
SCENE 8	THE HALL OF THE COBRA JEWEL

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PRODUCTION NOTES

This script of Sinbad the Sailor can be staged as lavishly or as simply as your facilities allow. The appendix at the end of the script details how some of the more complicated sequences may be overcome. Suggestions for basic settings are as follows.
Two front cloths and a set of black runners are required down stage. If front cloths are a problem, two sets of running tabs – one black, one brightly coloured – will suffice.
Two cloths halfway up stage are also useful, although these can be replaced by sets of flats or more curtains. A cyc can be used for all full exterior scenes, but a set of flats is required for Act Two Scene 6.

Act One

Scene 1 Full set with backcloth or cyc backing. Tinbad's shop is stage right, and Mrs Sinbad's house is stage left. A simple rostrum across the back serves as the quayside.

Scene 2/5 First front cloth. (Or set of bright tabs.)

Scene 3 Black tabs.

Scene 4 A cloth halfway up stage or a decorative curtain. Palace pillars right and left.

Scene 6 The cyc backs this full scene with the rostrum used as the bridge of the ship. A ship's wheel is centre of the rostrum with steps down either side. If rigging and a sail are possible, this will add greatly to the scene.

Act Two

Scene 1 Full set with backcloth or cyc backing. A beaded opening is stage right, and a wall with a cage for the slaves stands stage left.

Scene 2 Second front cloth. (Or set of bright tabs.)

Scene 3 A completely black stage with a flying carpet device. Or black tabs with a 'trucked' carpet in front. (This scene is optional.)

Scene 4 Cloth halfway up stage or a decorative curtain.

Scene 5 Black tabs.

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Scene 6 A set of flats with a sliding opening in the centre. Flats designed as stone pillars are right and left.

Scene 7 First front clothes – or tabs.

Scene 8 Cloth or cyc backing. Rostrum across the back with steps down. Palace pillars right and left. Up centre is a large cut-out of a Cobra with a stand containing the Cobra Jewel in front of it.

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CHARACTERS

Sinbad He should have great charm and charisma – a typical swashbuckling hero with tremendous energy. Also, a fine singing voice.
Can be played by a man or as a principal boy – (although, at the risk of offending the panto purists, I suggest a man as it is an adventure.)

Mrs Sinbad The typical panto Dame. Larger than life with a twinkle in her eye. Must have a good rapport with the audience as well as the rest of the cast. Her appearance is important to the character, and at almost every entrance, she should have a new costume on.

Tinbad A bustling, business-like character. Good comedy timing required, and also the ability to play the tongue-tied romantic. A small amount of singing.

Parissa Principal girl. Strong-willed but also vulnerable. Good singing voice required.

Caliph Middle-aged. Strong, kindly character. Interacts with Mrs Sinbad, so comedy timing is important.

Lillie Second female lead. Warm-hearted and kind. Good singing voice required.

Mephisto The evil magician. Typical villain of the piece. Strong dramatic voice is essential. Must also have a sense of comedy when interacting with the audience and other characters.

Genie Young female character. Fun-loving and appealing.

Black-Eyed Pete Character with a little mystery about him. Joins in with big concerted numbers.

Macho A monkey. Could be played by a young male or female. Needs to interact throughout with the audience and other characters. Acrobatic and agile.

Alessia Character actress. Strong and determined. Non-singing.

Theo Bodyguard. Strong in character and physique.

Slave Seller Small part. Can be part of the male chorus.

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ACT ONE

OVERTURE

SCENE 1 THE PORT OF CHANDRA

[Across the back is a rostrum creating the effect of a quayside. A cut-out ship should be able to dock behind it. Stage right is a shop front with a practical door and a sign above it that reads "Tinbad the Tailor". There is a window with a display stand in front of it. On this stand is a large hourglass. Various Eastern garments also adorn the wall. Stage left is the house of MRS SINBAD. This also has a practical door.
The scene opens with a short prologue. Down right, sitting on a stool, is the GENIE. She is reading a large book entitled "The Arabian Nights". After a moment, she looks up and notices the audience.]

GENIE Ah, there you are. I've been expecting you. I'm just finishing a chapter in this book. The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad. It's a fascinating read, but I'm not sure it is absolutely accurate. Oh, there are plenty of adventures and fights between good and evil – good always wins, by the way – but some of the facts have been distorted over the centuries. *[SHE puts the book down and looks at the audience again.]* Why do I say that, you ask? Well, you see, I was there! Yes, I was. I was part of the original story. You could say I was instrumental in the outcome. Now that you're here, would you like me to tell you what really happened? *[Audience reaction.]* Would you? *[SHE stands.]* Oh splendid. It's been a good few years since I last told it, but I can remember it as though it were yesterday. Here we go then. It all took place many years ago in the mystical eastern province of Chandra. Chandra was ruled by the Caliph – *[The CALIPH appears in a light on the rostrum.]* – a kindly man who had the interests of his people at heart. He also had a beautiful daughter whom he loved very much. The Princess Parissa. *[PARISSA joins him in the light.]* She was adored, not only by her father, but by the whole population. A graceful, charming young girl – but with a mind of her own. Chandra had been blessed with peace and prosperity because it was protected by the magical powers of the Cobra Jewel. *[The CALIPH holds up a large, impressive jewel on a gold chain. It is shaped like the head of a cobra.]* It was a gift from the Khedive of Egypt, and so long as the Jewel stayed within the boundary of Chandra, the country and all its people would be safe. *[The light fades on the CALIPH and PARISSA. They exit.]* Of course, there were those who wanted the Jewel for themselves and over the years, many attempts had been made to

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steal it, but none had succeeded. One person who wanted it more than anything else in the world was Mephisto, *[The light comes up down left on MEPHISTO.]* an evil magician and one who would stop at nothing to achieve his goal. But he hadn't reckoned on the gallantry and resolve of the hero of our story – Sinbad the Sailor. *[SINBAD appears in a light centre stage.]* His voyages have been well documented, sailing the oceans of the world and encountering adventures with monstrous beasts. He was about to return from his sixth voyage, but his seventh one lay ahead, which would prove to be his most perilous. *[The lights fade on SINBAD and MEPHISTO, and they exit.]* Every year, in homage to the good fortune the Cobra Jewel had brought to the province of Chandra, a great festival was held. People of Chandra put on their best clothes and gathered in the main square near the port. *[The CHORUS enters and moves into position for the opening number. They freeze until the end of the prologue.]* The Jewel in all its splendour was paraded for all to see. And it is there that my story begins – the story of Sinbad the Sailor.

[The GENIE exits, taking her book and stool as the music starts for the opening number.]

OPENING NUMBER – CHORUS (See appendix)

[This is a celebratory number in honour of the festivities and the fabulous Cobra Jewel. At the end of the number, TINBAD bustles on from his shop.]

TINBAD Good morning, all. *[HE bows to them.]* Salaam, salaam.

CHORUS Salaam, Mr Tinbad.

TINBAD Any sign of Sinbad's ship?

1st MAN No, not yet.

1st GIRL Are you sure he's due home today?

TINBAD Yes. *[Picking up a large hourglass and pointing to it.]* July 15th! He definitely said he would be back today to be in time for the Festival of the Cobra Jewel. *[HE returns the hourglass.]*

2nd GIRL I do hope he's all right. He takes such terrible risks on his adventures.

TINBAD Oh, don't worry about Sinbad. He's an excellent sailor.

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2nd MAN What kind of treasures do you think he'll bring back this time?

TINBAD Who knows?

3rd GIRL *[Excitedly.]* Silks and satins for new clothes.

3rd MAN No, fine wines for us all to taste. *[The other MEN agree.]*

1st GIRL Aromatic oils to bathe in!

TINBAD I don't care what he brings back – as long as he brings himself back safely. Why don't you all go to the end of the quay and look for him?

CHORUS Good idea. Let's go. etc. *[THEY all exit excitedly. TINBAD turns to the audience.]*

TINBAD I suppose you've all come to join in the festivities and await Sinbad's return? *[Audience reaction.]* Well, welcome to Chandra, our lovely province in the East. I'm Tinbad the Tailor, local businessman and good friend to Sinbad. I know all you people from *[Local reference.]* have been blessed with considerable wealth, so it is my hope that you will patronise my humble establishment while you're here. For the ladies, I have satins to satisfy and for the gentlemen suits to suit. *[HE peers out at someone in the audience.]* Ah, madam, I see that you shop at - *[Local store.]* One look at my merchandise, and I'm sure I can change your wardrobe. May you be blessed with impeccable taste, and I with a large profit. I have lived here all my life and know everyone. Over the road is Ali – he's a barber. And next door is the milliners, Mustafa Hat! *[HE crosses to MRS. SINBAD'S house.]* This is where my friend Sinbad lives – with his mother. *[HE rolls his eyes.]* More about her later! Our illustrious Caliph is one of my honoured customers. Only yesterday, I delivered a new ceremonial outfit to the palace for his beautiful daughter, Princess Parissa. She is carrying the fabulous Cobra Jewel in today's festival parade. And next to her will be Lillie, her handmaiden. *[HE starts to get flustered.]* Oh dear, I only have to think of Lille and my legs turn to jelly. Every time I see her, she makes my head spin. I've been in love with her for years, but I've no way of knowing if she feels the same way. We've smiled at each other - we've waved. We've even managed a few words, but it's always the same. I just get tongue-tied and lose my bottle. If only I had the courage to tell her how I feel. But I could never expect a lady like her to look favourably on a poor tailor. The only other person who knows about this is Sinbad, and that's how it must stay until I am wealthy enough to ask for her hand. *[Voices are heard off.]*

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MAN *[Off.]* Mind your backs.

2nd MAN *[Off.]* Clear a way there.

TINBAD Now what's going on?

MRS SINBAD'S ENTRANCE

[TWO MEN enter up left, carrying a rolled-up carpet. THEY run around the stage ending down right where they put the carpet down.]

MAN Special delivery for the house of Sinbad.

2nd MAN Lovely carpet. Only one slight flaw – a lump right in the middle of it!

[THEY unroll it. It ends in front of the stage left house, and MRS SINBAD is lying there. SHE is clutching a large handbag containing sweets.]

MRS SINBAD At last! *[Looking at the two men.]* You pair of idiots. *[SHE gets up as the two men start laughing.]* It's not funny. Look at that. *[SHE puts her bosom back into shape.]* You've squashed my Turkish Delight!

TINBAD Mrs Sinbad. What on earth happened to you?

MRS SINBAD I was at the market taking delivery of my new carpet when I was suddenly rolled up and whisked away here. I've heard of flying carpets, but this is ridiculous. *[The MEN are still laughing.]* Oi, Bill and Ben – *[Or two names of a current popular duo.]* – take this into my house – *[SHE points to her house.]* – or the only tip you'll be getting will be the tip of my boot! *[The MEN roll up the carpet and exit with it into the left house. SHE glances down at her bosom.]* Now what am I going to do with this? I don't fancy it now. *[To TINBAD – hands to her bosom.]* Would you like a bite?

TINBAD I beg your pardon?

MRS SINBAD *[Pulls out a bar of Turkish Delight from her bust.]* Of my Turkish Delight?

TINBAD *[Taking the bar.]* Thank you. I'll save it for later. *[Indicates the audience.]* Why don't you say hello to our visitors out there? *[HE exits into his shop.]*

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MRS SINBAD Oh yes, hello. *[Audience reaction.]* You seem like a friendly crowd. And a very good-looking bunch. A bit pale perhaps. Don't you get much sun where you come from? Well, as you've probably guessed, I'm Mrs Sinbad. My son is Sinbad, and my late husband was Mr Sinbad. They say a lot of sin is bad for you, but we seem to have done all right on it! My boy is away at sea, but he's coming home today. Oh, it will be good to see him again. He's a right hunk, girls! Takes after his father. What a gorgeous man he was. Big and strong with those rugged looks, just like – *[TV or film personality.]* But it does upset me when he's at sea. I mean, I can't relax. I'm always wondering if he's all right. All these voyages he goes on really frighten me, and when I get frightened, I eat. I do girls. I know it's naughty and I shouldn't, but I can't stop myself. *[SHE shows her bag.]* I keep a supply of sweets in here, and in frightening situations, my hand just slips in and the next thing you know, I've got a mouthful of sweets. And if I'm not careful, it's going to ruin my figure. *[To a person in the audience.]* What do you mean "it has already"? What a cheek! I say you wouldn't help me, would you? When I get frightened, and you see my hand slip into the bag, would you shout out "naughty, naughty"? Would you? *[Audience reaction.]* That's very kind. Don't forget, when you see my hand reaching into the bag for a sweet, shout "naughty, naughty," and it will stop me.

[TINBAD enters from the shop.]

TINBAD What did you want to buy a carpet for?

MRS SINBAD Well, it was a bargain. It was one of those buy now, pay later deals. The one in my house is nearly threadbare, and I wanted a new one as a surprise for Sinbad when he gets home.

TINBAD He'll get an even bigger surprise when the bill arrives!

MRS SINBAD *[Waving a dismissive hand.]* I don't want to hear any more. I'm too excited about Sinbad coming home today.

TINBAD His ship should be here any minute. Our friends and neighbours have gone to look for it. *[A MONKEY called MACHO comes bounding on from up right and runs down to TINBAD, bumping into him and knocking him over.]* What the .....?

MRS SINBAD Tinbad, are you all right?

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TINBAD Oh, it's you! *[HE gets up. MACHO rubs his stomach.]* Yes, yes, I know it's time for your lunch. Have you seen all our visitors? *[MACHO shakes his head and TINBAD points to the audience.]* This is my pet monkey, Macho! *[To MACHO.]* Wave to the boys and girls. *[MACHO comes to the edge of the stage and waves to the audience. HE then sees someone in the audience with something to eat and mimes that he wants some.]* No, you can't have that nice lady's chocolates. They're not good for you.

MRS SINBAD *[Looking down at the audience.]* I'm not sure they're good for that lady, either!

TINBAD Come here, I've got a banana for you. *[HE pulls a banana out of his pocket and gives it to MACHO.]*

MRS SINBAD That reminds me. While I was out shopping yesterday, I picked up a treat for Macho. *[SHE crosses into her house and comes out with a banana palm tree in a pot.]* There. *[MACHO claps his hands with glee.]*

TINBAD A banana tree. Oh, Mrs Sinbad, you shouldn't. You spoil him far too much.

MRS SINBAD Nonsense. But I'm afraid they're not quite ripe enough to eat. Perhaps they should be out in the sun for a while.

TINBAD *[Pointing to a spot down right by the pros.]* This is a good spot. It gets the sun all day. *[HE takes the tree and puts it down right.]*

MRS SINBAD There you are, Macho. They'll soon be ripe. Now I must go and sort out this new carpet. See you later. *[Waving, SHE exits into her house.]*

TINBAD The only problem is – what happens if someone tries to take one? We don't want anyone nicking Macho's bananas! We shall have to think about this. *[BOTH put a hand to the side of the face and think. MACHO looks at the audience and gets an idea. HE pulls at TINBAD'S clothes.]* Not now, Macho. I'm thinking. *[MACHO moves away, frustrated and then goes back to get his attention.]* Don't Macho. I'm trying to plot a perfect plan. *[MACHO starts to get impatient and jumps about. TINBAD looks at him. He points wildly at the audience.]* Yes, I'm sure our friends are thinking of something too. *[MACHO now starts a lot of gesturing, pointing to the audience, then at the tree.]* What are you doing? I think you must have been out in the sun too long. *[MACHO gestures again, but much longer this time. Slowly, TINBAD realise what MACHO is getting at.]* I know. Why don't we ask our friends to keep watch for us? *[MACHO slaps his hand to*

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his forehead and collapses. TINBAD speaks to the audience.] Now, is that a good idea or is that a good idea? Would you do that for us? Would you make sure no one takes the bananas? *[Audience reaction. MACHO stands.]* Oh, aren't they kind? But what should they shout out? *[HE thinks.]* I know. How about "Macho the ' nanas'? *[Audience reacts.]* I suppose we ought to do the usual now! You know – have a practice. I'm going to pretend to nick a 'nana. You just shout out "Macho the 'nanas' and he'll come running. Will you do that? *[Audience reaction. MACHO runs off.]* Right, here we go. *[HE creeps towards the tree. Audience shouts, but MACHO doesn't appear.]* That's not loud enough. He'll never hear that – *[HE calls off]* – will you, Macho? *[MACHO puts his head around the scenery and shakes it.]* Now let's try again – and much louder this time. *[Again HE creeps towards the tree. Audience shouts, and MACHO runs on and adopts a boxing pose in front of the tree.]* That's much better. Now your bananas will be safe until they're ripe for picking. *[MACHO nods happily and exits. The CHORUS is heard shouting and cheering off stage at the arrival of SINBAD'S ship. THEY run on excitedly.]*

SINBAD'S ENTRANCE

MRS SINBAD *[Running on from her shop.]* He's here. He's here. My big, brave boy has come home to his mother! Oh, I do hope he's all right. I'm frightened to even look. I am, I'm really frightened. *[HER hand goes into her bag. The audience shouts out, and MRS SINBAD thanks them. The ship – The Golden Voyager – draws up against the quay. ALL cheer as SINBAD climbs off the ship and comes down stage, greeting the CHORUS. HE is followed by BLACK-EYED PETE, who wears an eye patch.]*

SINBAD Hello, mother. Salaam Tinbad.

TINBAD Salaam Sinbad. Good to have you home.

MRS SINBAD *[Hugging him.]* Oh, Sinbad, you don't know how much I've missed you. All these weeks of wondering if you were all right. I worried myself sick. I got so frightened. I got really frightened. *[HER hand in the bag. Audience reacts.]*

SINBAD Mother, you really shouldn't worry.

MRS SINBAD It's easy for you to say. Wait until you've got kids of your own! You know I've never left the house. Every night, I sat there all alone, crying myself to sleep, offering up prayers for your safe return.

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1st GIRL Mrs Sinbad, here's your winnings from Bingo the other night! *[SHE gives MRS SINBAD some money.]*

MRS SINBAD *[Quietly.]* Oh, ta!

1st MAN Hoping for another good night at the dogs, Mrs Sinbad?

2nd MAN You backed plenty of winners last week!

MRS SINBAD *[Trying to make light of it as she catches SINBAD'S eye.]* Oh, we'll have to see.

2nd GIRL Are you going to be at the Karaoke evening again this Friday?

MRS SINBAD *[Laughing.]* Me? Karaoke? What are you talking about?

SINBAD *[With a smile.]* So, you stayed in every night, did you?

MRS SINBAD Well, I may have been dragged out under protest a couple of times. But I was always thinking of you.

SINBAD *[Genuinely.]* I'm sure you were, and I appreciate your concern, but you shouldn't worry. After six voyages, I know every part of that ocean.

MRS SINBAD But I do worry. You won't be going off again, will you? You know how frightened I get. I get really frightened! *[HER hand slips into her bag. Audience calls out.]*

SINBAD Mother, you know I could never stop at home. I've always longed for adventure. Out there, there's a whole world to be explored.

SONG – SINBAD AND CHORUS

[SINBAD starts the song and is joined by the rest of the company. At the end of the song, SINBAD is standing by PETE.]

MRS SINBAD *[Eyeing up PETE.]* And who is this fine figure of a man?

SINBAD Everyone - I want you to meet my good friend Black Eyed Pete.

PETE Good day to you all. *[ALL acknowledge him.]*

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MRS SINBAD And where did you come from?

PETE My ship was wrecked in a storm, and all the crew was lost. Just when I thought my time had come, Sinbad sailed onto the horizon and came to my aid.

MRS SINBAD That's my brave boy. Always there to give a helping hand.

PETE If it wasn't for your son, ma'am, I'd have been sharing a cabin with Davy Jones by now.

MRS SINBAD Oh, how awful.

PETE And I would have been deprived of meeting such a charming young lady, like yourself. *[Kisses MRS SINBAD'S hand.]*

MRS SINBAD *[Preening.]* Oh, I say I've gone all of a doo dah!

TINBAD What sort of ship did you have?

PETE I was captain of 'The Bountiful Buccaneer'.

TINBAD 'The Bountiful Buccaneer'? *[Suddenly realising.]* 'The Bountiful Buccaneer'! But that's a pirate ship. *[To EVERYONE.]* He's a pirate!

MRS SINBAD *[In a panic.]* Oh my goodness, we'll all be robbed and made to walk the plank!

SINBAD There's nothing to fear. Pete is a reformed character. *[ALL calm down.]*

PETE Aye. *[HE removes his eye patch.]* Aye, aye! I am that. I thought my life was at an end, and then at the last minute, when Sinbad saved me, I realised I had been given a second chance. From that moment, I renounced my former profession! *[To the audience.]* For all you young people out there, that means I stopped misbehaving. I wanted to make amends for my misguided ways, and I have done that by joining Sinbad as his Bosun and right-hand man on all his future voyages. *[ALL cheer.]*

MRS SINBAD Are you sure you've given up everything? *[SHE moves close to him.]* I've heard tell that pirates not only pillage and plunder ships and quayside taverns, but they mistreat and abuse us poor defenceless women something dreadfully.

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PETE Not anymore, I assure you. I've given all that up. You're quite safe.

MRS SINBAD *[With a big sigh – somewhat disappointed.]* Oh!

SINBAD My friends, if you give Pete a hand to unload, you will see what wonderful things I've brought back for you all. *[ALL chatter excitedly and move towards the ship. MRS SINBAD gets pushed out of the way.]*

MRS SINBAD Just a minute - the honourable mother gets first pick!

SINBAD *[To TINBAD.]* Tinbad, how are things with the lovely Lillie?

TINBAD Still the same. I've still not told her how I feel. I never seem to find the right time or place.

SINBAD Don't give up hope. I'm sure things will work out right in the end. *[The MEN and PETE return, pushing a chest of drawers like a 'whatnot'. They put it downstage of MRS SINBAD'S house. PETE then exits again up left.]* Now ladies. Have you got all you want? Fine silks and satins. Oils and perfumes from distant continents.

CHORUS Thank you, Sinbad. You're so kind. Etc. etc. *[The CHORUS exits with all the gifts.]*

MRS SINBAD *[Looking dishevelled.]* I don't know! The manners of some people. It's worse than being in a rugby scrum! *[The others look at her.]* Not that I have been – well, not for a few years – not on the pitch anyway!

SINBAD *[Crossing down to the chest.]* This is something for you, mother.

MRS SINBAD For me? Oh, Sinbad, thank you. It's what I've always wanted. *[Looks back at SINBAD.]* What is it?

TINBAD It's a whatnot.

MRS SINBAD A what what?

TINBAD Not a what what. A whatnot.

MRS SINBAD What's a whatnot when it's at home?

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SINBAD I don't know. It was with all the other things unloaded from the ship. I didn't recognise it, but the harbour master said it was definitely for me, so I thought you might like it.

MRS SINBAD Thank you very much, son. *[Aside to TINBAD as SINBAD goes back up to the ship.]* A whatnot is not what I wanted, but a whatnot is what I got! A couple of bottles of duty-free would have been better, but beggars can't be choosers!

PETE *[Returning with some rolls of material.]* Where are these bound for, skipper?

SINBAD I'm sure you can make good use of these, Tinbad.

TINBAD Sinbad! They are beautiful. You're too kind. How can I repay you?

[Having picked up an unusually designed bottle from the ship, SINBAD eases back towards TINBAD.]

SINBAD No need. But there is a nasty gash in one of my sails – if you could do a patching-up job.

TINBAD Consider it done. I've got some rearranging to do.

PETE I'll give you a hand, matey.

TINBAD *[Slightly wary.]* Oh. Thank you very much. *[HE and PETE exit into his shop.]*

SINBAD I did find one other strange thing on my voyage. *[HE shows her the bottle.]*

MRS SINBAD What an odd-looking bottle. I've never seen anything like it in these parts.

SINBAD I found it on a beach in Turkey. I wasn't going to bother with it, but when I walked past, I felt sure I saw it move. I also thought I heard a voice calling out.

MRS SINBAD I think you've been at sea too long. Hearing voices and seeing bottles move. Whatever next?

SINBAD It's got some strange writing on it, too.

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MRS SINBAD It's not Johnny Walker, is it? *[Taking the bottle and reading.]* Raeppa! *[Pronounced "Rah – Heepa"]*

SINBAD What's that mean?

MRS SINBAD It sounds like a doctor's prescription! I wonder if it's any good for varicose veins? *[SHE holds it up with the writing facing the audience.]* Can't see if there is anything in it. *[SHE should hold the bottle up in such a way that the sunlight projects the writing onto the downstage wall of her house. The inscription reads 'Appear'. They ad lib, and hopefully, the audience should call out. SINBAD sees the message.]*

SINBAD Mom – look! *[MRS SINBAD lowers her arm and the message disappears.]*

MRS SINBAD What?

SINBAD Hold it up again. *[SHE does so and sees the message.]* See. It's written backwards.

MRS SINBAD "Appear". *[SHE lowers her arm and the message disappears again.]*

SINBAD Mom, you don't think it's magic, do you?

MRS SINBAD Magic?

SINBAD I've heard of certain types of lamps and bottles having magical powers. *[HE takes the bottle.]* Let's open it and see.

MRS SINBAD Oh, be careful, Sinbad. I don't want you releasing any weird creature – it would bring back too many memories of your father!

SINBAD *[Slowly taking the stopper off the bottle.]* Appear.

BOTTLE MUSIC

[A strange-sounding music starts, and then there is a flash, and the GENIE appears down right.]

GENIE At last!

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MRS SINBAD *[Pulling her skirt over her head.]* Ooooh, it's a terrible monster. Oh, I'm frightened. I'm really frightened. *[HER hand goes to her bag. Audience calls out.]*

SINBAD *[To the GENIE.]* Who are you?

GENIE I am the Genie from the bottle and slave to whosoever owns it.

SINBAD A Genie?

GENIE Yes. And you are my master. I am here to do your bidding.

SINBAD I say, Mom, did you hear that?

MRS SINBAD *[Hiding behind SINBAD.]* Are you sure it won't turn us into a stone statue or gobble us up?

GENIE *[Laughing.]* I am here only to obey. Besides, a Genie cannot be used to do harm. But in the protection of my master, my powers are invincible.

SINBAD I can't believe it. And to think I nearly left you on that beach.

GENIE I'm pleased you didn't. I have been confined in that bottle for over a hundred years. I was beginning to think no one would find me.

MRS SINBAD Over a hundred years? Oh, you poor thing. You'll be wanting a wash and something to eat – and I bet you're busting for a ……

SINBAD Mother!

GENIE No need to worry about me. I live on life itself. I am here to carry out whatever task you ask of me. But be advised, I have no ability other than to protect you and all those with you.

MRS SINBAD But you can create a few treats for us?

GENIE With pleasure.

MRS SINBAD Well, I do need a new frock and the kitchen could do with a bit of modernising and –

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SINBAD Mother, I think we ought to think about this. Don't let our good fortune go to our heads.

MRS SINBAD You're right, son. We must think – *[Quickly.]* And I've thought – I also want a sapphire necklace to go with my eyes ……

SINBAD MOTHER!

MRS SINBAD *[In a whisper.]* Sorry.

SINBAD *[To the GENIE.]* So if ever I need you, all I have to do is open the bottle and say "appear" - and you appear?

GENIE That is so master.

SINBAD Thank you very much. *[An attempt at being the master.]* That will be all for the moment.

GENIE I hear and obey, master. *[Lighting effect and the GENIE disappears.]*

SINBAD Well, what a homecoming this has turned out to be.

MRS SINBAD Wait 'til the girls at bingo hear about this. *[They both exit into MRS SINBAD'S house.]*

MEPHISTO'S THEME

[The lights dim, and suddenly the front of the whatnot opens. MEPHISTO the magician appears.]

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MEPHISTO Finally, my journeying has brought me here to Chandra. Not a very interesting place - except for one thing. The fabulous Cobra Jewel. The most sought-after prize in the entire world. Oh, I know it brings peace and tranquillity to the country that owns it, but it can also bring wealth and power to an individual who knows how to harness its mystical properties. An individual such as myself. *[HE starts to get more and more excited.]* I intend to have that Jewel. I must have it! *[Calmer.]* But first I must gain the confidence of the Caliph who owns the Jewel, and I will do that by means of an elaborate magic show that I have devised in honour of today's Festival. This will grant me access to the palace, and once there, I will procure the Jewel by means of a mesmerising trick. It will only be a matter of time before the whole universe kneels before me. *[Voices are heard off.]* Ah, the Festival is about to begin. I will wait for an opportune moment before introducing myself. *[HE exits down left.]*

ENTRANCE OF THE CALIPH AND PRINCESS

[The music comes up as the CHORUS starts to enter. SINBAD and MRS SINBAD enter as do TINBAD and MACHO. The CALIPH enters with the PRINCESS PARISSA. They are accompanied by LILLIE, handmaiden to the PRINCESS.]

CALIPH My good people, thank you for your welcome. As you know, today is the Festival of the Cobra Jewel – a symbol of peace and prosperity for our land. *[ALL cheer.]* And to complement the day, I am inviting you all to a grand feast at the palace this evening. *[More cheers.]* There will be dancing, entertainment and a dazzling display of fireworks. So, my friends, enjoy the day and let us all give thanks for the gift of the Cobra Jewel. *[ALL chatter excitedly and begin to exit, leaving the PRINCIPALS. The CALIPH turns to TINBAD.]* Tinbad, do you have something suitable for me to wear this evening? After seeing the beautiful gown you made for my daughter, I feel quite the poor relation.

PARISSA Father, that's not true. You have a wardrobe full of things to wear.

CALIPH But on such a special day, surely I can be forgiven a little indulgence.

TINBAD I'm sure I can find something to suit your Highness's taste. If you would do me the honour of entering my humble abode, I have just laid out some of the finest materials Sinbad brought back from his latest voyage.

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CALIPH *[Turning to SINBAD.]* Ah, yes, Sinbad. News reached me at the palace that your ship had arrived. I give praise for your safe return.

SINBAD *[Bowing.]* Your Highness is too kind.

CALIPH And I know my daughter also shares my pleasure in seeing you again.

SINBAD *[Bowing to PARISSA.]* Princess.

PARISSA It is good to have you home safe, Sinbad. *[THEY are staring at each other.]*

CALIPH And Mrs Sinbad. How is life treating you?

MRS SINBAD Oh, you know – pains in my legs, pains in my back. Too many bills and not enough wins at bingo. *[SHE gives him a nudge.]* I'm fine!

CALIPH I'm pleased to hear it. *[Slightly aside to her.]* We must have a cup of chrysanthemum tea together and talk over old times.

MRS SINBAD You mean when you were calamitous Cali, the kid from the castle? *[SHE gives him another nudge.]*

CALIPH Shh. Those days are behind me now.

MRS SINBAD Don't worry Cali; your secret is safe with me. *[SHE gives him another nudge – misses and nearly falls over.]*

TINBAD Your Highness. If you would kindly come this way.

MRS SINBAD Shall I come too? Give you the benefit of my expert taste in clothes?

CALIPH *[Glancing at her outrageous costume.]* That would be most useful. *[TINBAD MACHO, MRS SINBAD and the CALIPH exit into the shop stage right.]*

PARISSA *[Wanting to be alone with SINBAD.]* Lillie, I'm sure you would like to visit Tinbad's shop? *[Pointedly.]* See if there is something in there that takes your eye.

LILLIE *[Bowing.]* A thousand thanks your Highness.

PARISSA Go and pick out whatever you want.

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LILLIE Your Highness is too kind. *[SHE bows and exits onto TINBAD'S shop.]*

PARISSA Sinbad, yet another successful voyage.

SINBAD Successful, yes, your Highness, but at times quite perilous.

PARISSA Oh, I don't doubt it. The tales you tell are always peppered with enough adventure to set the heart of any girl racing.

SINBAD Including that of a Princess?

PARISSA *[Slightly aloof.]* Do you think I sit around waiting for your return just to get a thrill listening to your exploits?

SINBAD Don't you?

PARISSA You presume too much. Besides, I'm sure there are any number of girls in the various ports you visit hanging on your every word.

SINBAD Come on, Parissa, stop playing games and tell me how glad you are that I'm home!

PARISSA *[With a toss of her head.]* Ha! I wouldn't have cared if you had been tossed into the ocean by a great wave or kidnapped by pirates.

SINBAD *[Grabbing her hand and pulling her towards him.]* That's not true, and you know it. You must realise how much I've missed you.

PARISSA *[Relenting.]* Then why do you keep going off for months on end and leaving me here?

SINBAD I'm just trying to make my fortune and show your father that I'm worthy of you.

PARISSA But it's always so dangerous. Every time your ship leaves port, I wonder if I'll ever see you again.

SINBAD Nothing on this earth could ever keep me away from you.

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DUET – SINBAD AND PARISSA

[At the end of the song, they embrace. The CALIPH is heard off.]

CALIPH That cloth is splendid, Tinbad. *[SINBAD and PARISSA part as the CALIPH, MRS SINBAD and TINBAD enter.]* It will make the perfect outfit for tonight's festivities. Have it delivered to the palace when it is finished.

TINBAD *[Bowing.]* I grovel to be of service, your Highness.

MRS SINBAD And I've got a fabulous little number that will complement it perfectly. So we won't clash when we dance the Turkish tango together! *[Aside to the CALIPH.]* You know, like we used to! Remember?

CALIPH Vaguely! *[Seeing the banana tree.]* Oh, look, bananas. I just feel like one of those. *[HE goes to pick one, and the audience shouts. MACHO jumps on and confronts the CALIPH with a boxing stance.]* My goodness!

TINBAD Oh, I'm sorry, your Highness, but my pet monkey is very possessive of his new banana tree.

CALIPH So I see. *[Quickly.]* Come along then, Parissa. There is still much to do before tonight.

PARISSA Yes father. *[THEY start to exit as MEPHISTO enters and blocks their way.]*

MEPHISTO Mighty Caliph, may I beg an audience?

MRS SINBAD Oh, look, everyone, it's - *[Name of personality.]*

CALIPH Who are you?

MEPHISTO I am Mephisto the Magnificent, newly arrived on these shores and ever your humble servant.

CALIPH Welcome, Mephisto. And what can I do for you?

MEPHISTO I think, your illustrious Highness, it is what I can do for you.

CALIPH Oh?

MEPHISTO You have a special festival today, do you not?

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CALIPH Yes. The Festival of the Cobra Jewel.

MEPHISTO And tonight a grand occasion at the palace?

CALIPH To which everyone is invited.

MEPHISTO Then may I offer my services – free of charge, of course – as part of the entertainment?

CALIPH I say that's very decent of you, isn't it, Parissa?

PARISSA *[Slightly wary.]* What is it you do, sir?

MEPHISTO *[Getting carried away with alliteration.]* A plethora of prestidigitation. A concoction of conjuring. A whirlwind of wizardry.

CALIPH *[Bemused.]* Come again?

PARISSA *[Not impressed.]* He's a magician father. He does party tricks.

MEPHISTO If your Highness will forgive me, I think my talents are rather greater part tricks, as I hope I shall have the chance to prove to you. *[HE performs a simple trick before her eyes -. turning a handkerchief into flowers, for example.]*

MRS SINBAD *[Clapping her hands together.]* Oh, very good. Do you saw people in half?

MEPHISTO *[Under his breath.]* Don't tempt me.

CALIPH I'm sure your skills will be much appreciated as part of tonight's entertainment.

MEPHISTO Your Highness won't be disappointed, I can promise you. I have been perfecting a new illusion, and you will be the first to see it.

CALIPH Present yourself at the palace tonight. Come, Parissa, it's time for the parade.

[ALL move up stage except MEPHISTO. He crosses down left and speaks to the audience.]

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