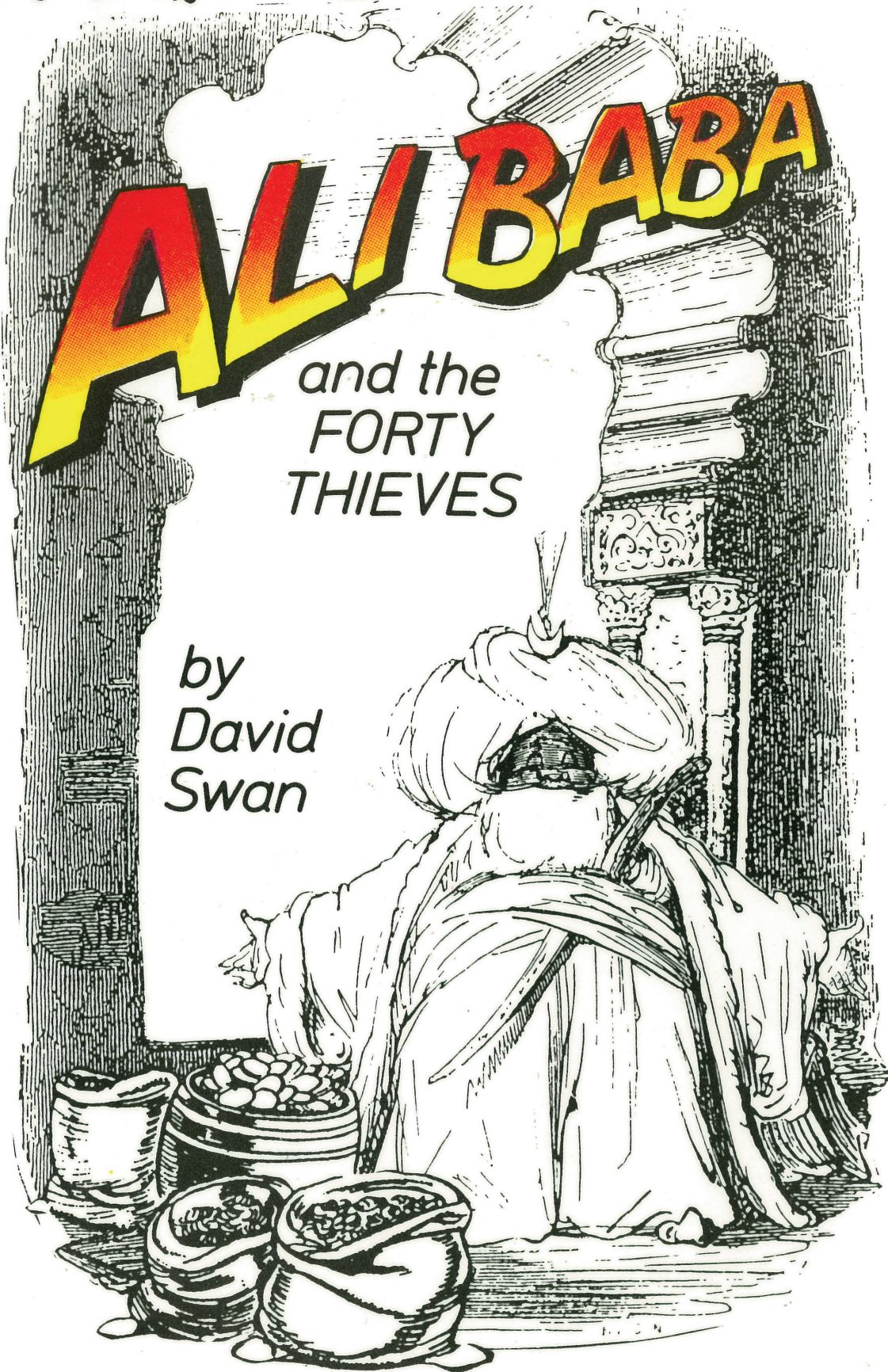


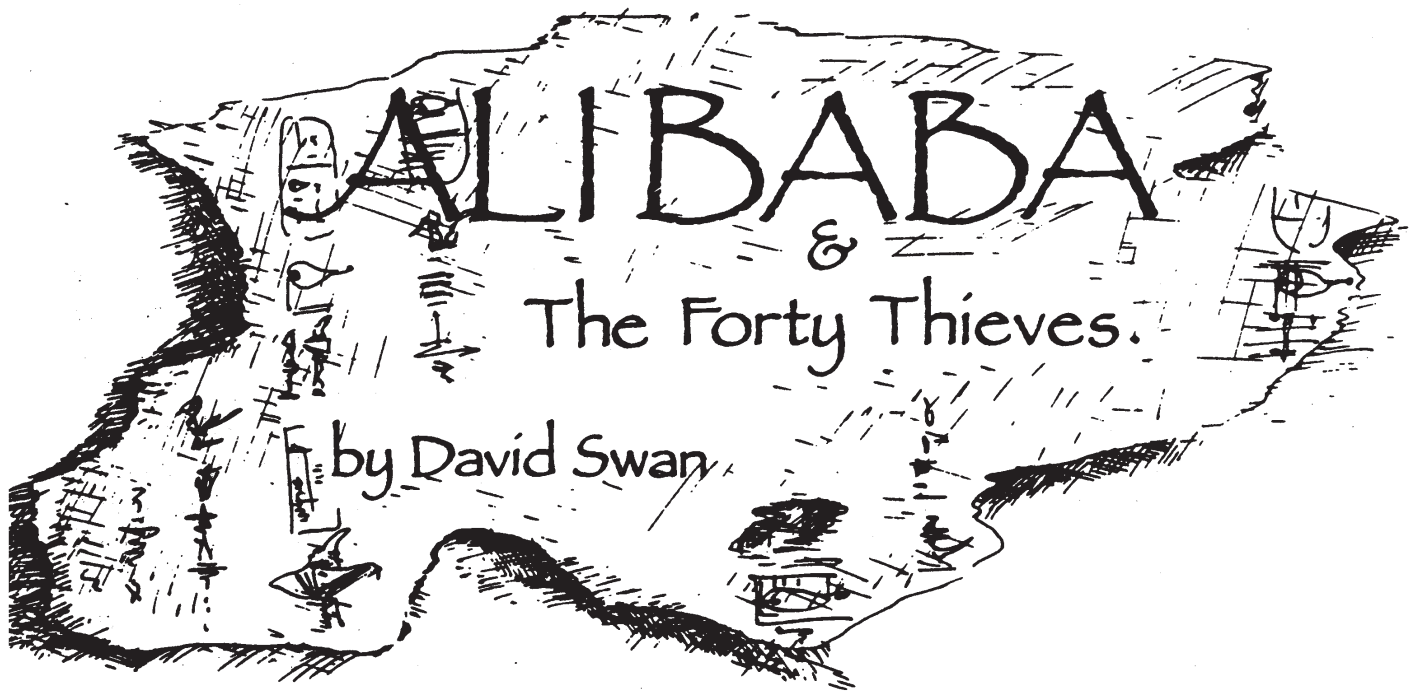
NODD & PANTOMIMES

ALI BABA

and the
FORTY
THIEVES

by
David
Swan





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for my brother, Tony

Suggestions For Musical Numbers

Most of the suggestions listed here will be familiar to audiences and are therefore more likely to be enjoyed. Authorization to use any copyright songs and music must be obtained from: **The Performing Rights Society Ltd., 29-33 Berners Street, London W1P 4AA.**

Song A	"Guys and Dolls" (<i>"Guys and Dolls"</i> - Loesser)
Song B	"Money, Money" (<i>Cabaret</i> - Kander & Ebb)
Song C	"Little People" (<i>Les Miserables</i> - Bloubil, Schonberg & Kretzmer)
Song D	"Gotta Pick A Pocket Or Two" (<i>Oliver</i> - Bart)
Song E	"We're in the Money" (<i>Film: Goldiggers of 1933</i> - Harry Warren & Al Dubin)
Song F	"I Hear Music / You're Not In Love" (<i>Call Me Madam</i> - Irving Berlin)
Song G	"Big Time" (<i>Mac & Mabel</i> - Jerry Herman)
Dance A	"The Bacchanal" (<i>Samson and Delilah</i> - Saint Saens)
Song H	"Together Wherever We Go" (<i>Gypsy</i> - Sondheim)
Song I	"A Wonderful Day Like Today" (<i>Roar Of Grease Paint</i> - Newley & Bricusse)
Song J	"Consider Yourself One Of Us" (<i>Oliver</i> - Lionel Bart)
Dance B	"The Stripper" (David Rose)
Song K	"The Frog Song" (Paul McCartney)
Song L	The Songsheet
Song M	"They're Doing It In Baghdad" (reprise)

CHARACTERS

Ali Baba	<i>a poor barber</i>	(M)
Rhum Baba	<i>his son (principal boy)</i>	(F)
Kasim Baba	<i>Ali's rich brother</i>	(M)
Olive Baba	<i>his wife</i>	(F)
Fatima Kebab	<i>a 'gourmet' cook (dame)</i>	(M)
Professor Jones	<i>an archaeologist</i>	(M)
Polly Jones	<i>his daughter (principal girl)</i>	(F)
Crystal	<i>The Spirit of the Cave</i>	(F)
Bubble	<i>a thief</i>	(M/F)
Squeak	<i>a thief</i>	(M/F)
Vanilla	<i>a belly dancer</i>	(M/F)
Delight	<i>a belly dancer</i>	(M/F)
Mustapha Nana	<i>a merchant</i>	(M)
A Camel		

Chorus and Dancers: *(including some small speaking parts)* Citizens of Baghdad, Merchants, Belly Dancers, Thieves, Spirits of the Cave, and a Mummy.

13 Principals (excluding camel) : 5 male , 4 female, 4 either
Note: some doubling-up is possible.

ACT I

Scene 1	The Old Bazaar in Baghdad	<i>(full set)</i>
Scene 2	A Street in Baghdad	<i>(front of tabs)</i>
Scene 3	The Oasis of Paradise	<i>(cloth)</i>
Scene 4	A Street in Baghdad	<i>(as above)</i>
Scene 5	The Old Bazaar in Baghdad	<i>(as above)</i>

ACT II

Scene 1	King Pomegrante's Tomb	<i>(full set)</i>
Scene 2	Outside Ali's Mansion	<i>(cloth)</i>
Scene 3	Ali Baba's Mansion	<i>(full set)</i>
Scene 4	Songsheet	<i>(cloth)</i>
Finale	Ali Baba's Mansion	<i>(as above)</i>

Note: The scenes are designed to blend into one another: full set, front of tabs, full set, etc. They offer the opportunity for elaborate and imaginative staging but are equally suitable for a small-scale production.

Description of Characters

Ali Baba, “the barber of Baghdad”, has an irrepressible sense of fun and is the central comic character. He should be at ease chatting to the audience and give the impression that most of his comments are “ad libs”. He is optimistic, generous and genuinely likeable.

Rhum Baba, Ali’s policeman son, is full of vitality and at times gets carried away by his own enthusiasm. He is brave, forthright and has a cheeky sense of humour.

Kasim Baba, Ali’s rich brother, is greedy, miserly and utterly ruthless. He will go to any lengths to satisfy his lust for money. Squeezing pennies from his poor tenants isn’t enough ... disguised as “El Scorpio”, leader of the forty thieves, he can rob them as well!

Olive Baba, Kasim’s wife, is selfish, cantankerous and full of “airs and graces”. She is a spoilt brat who never grew up. In the end, she learns the virtues of kindness and charity. She is not consciously malevolent and the audience should be capable of forgiving her. Could be played as an alternative, or additional, dame.

Fatima Kebab, the dame, though kind and sympathetic, has a quick wit and a sharp tongue when needed. Her café is a disaster, mostly because of the disgusting nature of her recipes. She is often the butt of Ali’s jokes but is never genuinely offended by them. Their friendship is one of good-natured banter.

Professor Jones, is a brilliant but bumbling archaeologist. He is short-sighted in more ways than one and is in constant need of guidance to keep him out of trouble. He should have some strong physical mannerisms (see Camel below).

Polly Jones, the Professor’s daughter, is not a “helpless romantic heroine” and can definitely stand on her own two feet! It is *she* who infiltrates the forty thieves, exposes El Scorpio and “saves the day”. American accents would be appropriate for both father and daughter.

Crystal, the Spirit of the Cave, masquerades as an fortune-teller and manipulates the human characters so that good will triumph in the end. In her ‘true colours’ she is an ethereal, mystical creature.

Bubble & Squeak are a “dimwit-duo”. Neither are convincing accomplices of El Scorpio. They are naughty rather than villainous and the audience should warm to their antics. Bubble is the “brainer” of the two.

Vanilla & Delight are owners of the *Folies Baghdad*. They are ageing show-girls: once customers would have flocked to watch them dance but now they are past their prime. Vanilla is brazen and brassy. Delight is cute and cloying.

The Camel. The performers should always remember that they are supposed to be “Professor Jones” and attempt to incorporate his mannerisms.

Act One

Scene 1

The Street of the Bazaars, Baghdad

(The skyline of Baghdad is in the background: a jumble of roofs, hanging gardens, palm trees, mosques and minarets. The bazaar is a clutter of ramshackle stalls, laden with merchandise. The overall impression should be one of colourful profusion.)

ALI BABA's tiny "Barber Shop" is D.S. It has a curtained entrance, representing the door, and a prominently displayed barber's pole. Inside is a chair and a table with a variety of props ... See Appendix D.

"The Sunset Café", owned by FATIMA KEBAB, has a display of revolting looking dishes. A menu reads: "Camel Burgers, Eyeball n' Chips, Cockroach Kebabs, Snake Pie". The café sign incorporates a pictorial sunset.

A curtained doorway leads off into VANILLA and DELIGHT's dance hall, "The Folies Baghdad".

See Production Notes (Appendix A) for details.

The overture begins and house-tabs open on an empty stage. It is dawn. As the music continues, the stage slowly fills with merchants (principals and chorus) opening their stalls for business. The following production number introduces each of the principals in turn. During the song, the remaining citizens enter and join the action. The CHORUS should be assigned specific characters and tasks to ensure that the scene "comes to life": see Appendix A for suggestions.)

SONG A

"They're Doing It In Baghdad" - Ensemble

(lyrics by Bill Slater)

Nana & Crystal	When from near and far They come to the Bazaar You can bet that Bazaar is in old Baghdad. You'll find slaves and knaves <i>(Enter BUBBLE & SQUEAK stealthily)</i> Tycoons, cleaners and clerks: They know at the Bazaar It's cheaper by far Than shopping at Marks!
Bubble	When you see a thief With a silk handkerchief
Squeak	And a chain made of gold, Though he's not well clad. <i>(Enter RHUM in policeman's uniform)</i>
Bubble & Squeak	If his pockets are a-jingling Everybody knows he's been mingling With the toffs who are shopping in Old Baghdad! <i>(They spot RHUM and mingle U.S.)</i>
Nana & Rhum	If your hair needs dressed Have it trimmed by the best Ali Baba's the barber of Old Baghdad.
Ali Baba	I do spikes and curls Any hair cut to suit

- Doesn't matter a fig
If under your wig
You're bald as a coot!
- Rhum** If you want to see
Lovely maidens ...
- Vanilla & Delight** Like me!
- Rhum** Then the place you can see them is Old Baghdad!
- Vanilla & Delight** And men turn to jellies
When we wiggle and jiggle our bellies:
You can see us twice nightly in Old Baghdad!
- (The Dance Troupe enters. VANILLA and DELIGHT join them in a short Belly Dance. KASIM and OLIVE enter. KASIM leers and OLIVE looks shocked)*
- Nana & Rhum** If you like fried rice
Served with juicy young mice
Then you simply must come to Fatima's cafe.
- Fatima** Try my snake souffle or my porcupine pie
Egon Ronay once said
My pickled pig's head
Brought tears to his eyes.
- All** Why not come along
For a smile and a song
It'll soon cheer you up if your feeling sad
If you want fun and laughter
And a happily ever after
You can bet you'll be getting it in Baghdad
Baghdad! Baghdad!
You can bet you'll be getting it in Baghdad!
- (The song ends. Exit BUBBLE & SQUEAK, RHUM and CRYSTAL. There is a brief pause in the action as the audience starts to applaud. ALI BABA steps forward and business continues in the bazaar)*
- Merchants** *(variously, over applause)* Step right up! This way ladies! Come and buy! Special offer, today only! Don't miss this great opportunity! Cut price! Look at the quality! Roll up, roll up! Bargain prices! The chance of a lifetime! Etc. *(all spoken together)*
- Citizens** *(simultaneously)* How much is that? That's too dear! I'll give you fifty! What a load of rubbish! That's nice! I'm just looking. Is it guaranteed? It's not worth that! It's cheaper over there! Etc. *(all spoken together)*
- Ali Baba** *(shouting over this to the audience)* Hello, everybody. Welcome to Baghdad! *(he covers his ears)* What a racket! I can't hear myself think!
(ALI closes the "door". Instant silence. Business in the bazaar continues unobtrusively in mime)
- Ali Baba** *(wiping brow)* Phew! That's better! *(moving D.S. again)* Now I can have a little chat with my friends. *(to audience)* Hello! I was hoping you'd come. Did you get here alright?
- Audience** Yes.
- Ali Baba** Good. I'm Ali Baba ... the barber of Baghdad! *(waving)* Hello, everybody!

- Audience** *(weakly)* Hello ...
- Ali Baba** *(limp imitation of audience)* "Hello..." You can shout louder than that! Come on, let's try it again and this time I want to see your tonsils! My name's Ali Baba. *(waving)* Hello, everybody!
- Audience** Hello, Ali Baba!
- (MUSTAPHA NANA approaches the barber shop)*
- Ali Baba** That's better! This is my barber shop. I live here with my only son ... Rhum. *(short pause as if expecting a laugh)* That's "Rhum Baba". *(pointing at someone in audience)* Oh good, someone's got it! He's not here right now ... he's gone out to look for a job. Well, we need the money. We're so poor, we've had to live on a tin of beans for a whole week. It wasn't so bad ... but we kept falling off! *(shaking head)* Business is terrible. I've only had one customer today. *(NANA opens the "door". Instant noise, as above)*
- Ali Baba** *(wincing and shouting)* Shut that door! *(NANA shuts the "door" . Silence. To audience)* A customer! *(to NANA)* Sit yourself down, sir. *(to audience)* That's our local fruit merchant, Mustapha Nana. *(explaining joke to imaginary simpleton in audience)* Do you get it? "Must-have-a Nana" ... **fruit** merchant! *(giving up)* Oh, forget it! And what can we do for you today, sir? *(drapes sheet over NANA)*
- (The following section should be fast-paced)*
- Nana** A haircut, please.
- Ali Baba** Certainly, sir. *(he lifts NANA's turban ... there is a shower of white confetti)* Oh dear! You've got a teensy touch of dandruff. *(using feather duster)* We'll have to do something about that. *(drops duster and picks up a bottle)* May I recommend this, sir? Gets rid of dandruff in *three* seconds.
- Nana** Three seconds!
- Ali Baba** *(sprinkles the contents of the bottle onto his hair)* Yes. It's strong stuff.
- Nana** *(wincing)* Ouch! It stings.
- Ali Baba** *(wraps his head in a towel)* Don't be such a cry-baby.
- Nana** *(wailing painfully)* Arrgh! *(ALI counts slowly as NANA squirms)*
- Ali Baba** One. Two. Three. *(a cymbal)* All done.
- Nana** *(stamping feet in agony)* Ow! Take it off!
- (ALI pulls at the towel, removing NANA's wig at the same time ... he is bald)*
- Ali Baba** Ooops!
- Nana** *(touching scalp)* I'm bald! Totally bald!
- Ali Baba** *(squinting at scalp)* Not totally. There's a little bit left here. *(whacks him prop club)* Got it!
- Nana** *(angrily)* You nincompoop!
- Ali Baba** Alright, keep your hair on! *(to audience)* "Keep your hair on"! Ha ha!
- Nana** *(tearfully)* Nobody will love me anymore. *(screws his face up and sobs)*
- Ali Baba** They won't love you if you look like that. What you need is a happy, smiling face. *(slaps a large, 'smiling face' sticker on his scalp)* There we are. How's that? *(ALI holds up the mirror and NANA lowers his head to face the audience)*
- Nana** *(cheerfully)* That's lovely, thanks. *(stands and gives ALI a coin)* There you are. Keep the change. *(puts turban on)*

- Ali Baba** Ta very much. (*puts coin in piggy-bank*)
(*NANA opens "door". Instant noise. NANA closes the "door". Silence*)
- Ali Baba** Every little helps. (*shakes piggy-bank*) I hope I've got enough money to pay the rent. (*moving D.S. and gossiping to audience*) My brother, Kasim, owns every stall in the market. He's the richest man in Baghdad. And the *meanest*! He goes to fancy dress parties as Napoleon (*puts hand inside tunic*) just so he can keep his hand on his wallet. He'd even throw me into jail for not paying the rent. His own flesh and blood! So I'd better stop gossiping and try and make some more money. (*moving to "door" and calling*) Haircuts!
(*ALI opens the "door" and steps outside. Instant noise, more subdued this time*)
- Ali Baba** (*joining in*) Get your haircut here! This way gents! Special offer!
(*FATIMA leans out of the café and waves to him*)
- Fatima** (*shouting*) Yoo-hoo! Ali Baba!
(*ALI sees her, stops shouting, pulls a face and shuts the "door". Silence. FATIMA continues shouting and waving in mime*)
- Ali Baba** (*to audience*) Oh no! It's Fatima Kebab! I hope she didn't see me. (*As he talks, FATIMA holds up a hand mirror and touches-up her hair*) That's her café over there ... "The Sunset Café". She serves instant food ... you get sick the instant you eat it! (*FATIMA steps into the bazaar*) Everyday she comes in here trying to tempt me with her latest dish. (*FATIMA picks up the "snake-pie" from the counter and sniffs it*) What a woman! She dresses to kill ... and she cooks the same way! She's got a black-belt in cookery ... one chop from her could kill a man! (*suddenly serious*) Can you see her?
- Audience** Yes.
- Ali Baba** Is she coming this way? (*FATIMA moves towards Ali's shop*)
- Audience** Yes.
- Ali Baba** Oh, no! (*looking around desperately*) Where can I hide?
(*He sits on the chair and covers himself with the sheet. FATIMA enters, closing the "door" behind her. Noise and silence from the CHORUS, for the last time. During the next section, the CITIZENS leave a few at time. The MERCHANTS remain*)
- Fatima** Yoo-hoo! Ali Baba! I've got something for you. (*to audience*) That's funny, he was here a moment ago. Have you see him anywhere?
- Audience** Yes.
- Fatima** Where is he?
- Audience** Behind you!
- Fatima** Behind me? (*ALI rises out of the chair, draped in the sheet. She jumps back*) Arrgh! It's a ghost!
- Ali Baba** (*removing sheet*) It's only me!
- Fatima** What a fright. I almost dropped this pie.
- Ali Baba** (*aside, grimacing*) I wish you had!
- Fatima** (*sharply*) What was that?
- Ali Baba** I said ... "that's really sad!"
- Fatima** (*coyly*) I baked it specially for you. (*to audience*) I always say, "the way to a man's heart is through his stomach".

Ali Baba (*pulling face*) What is it this time?

Fatima Snake pie.

Ali Baba (*cheering up*) Steak pie? Yum yum ... I love steak pie!

Fatima Not steak ... **snake!** (*puts pie down*)

Ali Baba Ugh!

Fatima Why don't you have a bite?

Ali Baba A bite? (*steps back fearfully*)

Fatima (*producing a flute from her apron pocket*) It's **pip**ing hot. I'll show you!
(She crouches and plays the flute. "Snake-charming" music. A snake rises out of the pie. It is attached to the tip of the flute with nylon thread ... see Appendix A. The snake reaches it's full height as FATIMA stands. She bows, detaching the thread from the flute. ALI encourages the audience to applaud)

Fatima (*ecstatically*) Thank you! Thank you! (*she tugs on the thread, making the snake wriggle out of the pie*)

Ali Baba (*pointing*) Look out! It's after you!

Fatima Arrgh! Help! Help!
(She runs around, pulling the snake after her. ALI grabs the prop club)

Fatima Hit it! (*he misses and clubs her foot*) Ouch! (*hops around. ALI whacks the snake*)

Ali Baba I got it! (*picks up the snake. FATIMA lets go of the thread*)

Fatima Thank goodness.

Ali Baba (*making the snake wriggle in his hand*) It's still alive. Eeek! (*he tosses it off-stage*)
 That's got rid of that!

Fatima (*fawning on him*) My hero! You're so strong.

Ali Baba Get off!

Fatima (*cute*) Ali, baby ... we were made for each other. Whisper something soft in my ear.

Ali Baba Alright. (*loud whisper*) Marshmallow!

Fatima (*hitting him playfully*) You do say the sweetest things!

Ali Baba And how's business with you today, Fatima?

Fatima Terrible! I haven't sold a thing.

Ali Baba (*shaking head*) No-one in Baghdad's got any money to spend.

Fatima Yes, it's all been pinched.

Ali Baba You know who by, don't you? (*with emphasis*) El Scorpio and his forty thieves!
(BUBBLE and SQUEAK appear stealthily and tip-toe across to the shop)

Fatima (*alarmed*) Shsh! Don't talk so loud! (*dramatically*) Walls have ears!
(BUBBLE and SQUEAK put their hands to their ears and listen)

Ali Baba (*bragging*) I'm not frightened of the forty thieves! I'm not stupid, you know ... I keep my money safe in the **bank**.
(BUBBLE and SQUEAK look disappointed)

Fatima Which bank ... Barclays?

Ali Baba (*lifting piggy-bank*) No ... Piggy! (*jingles the coins*)
(BUBBLE and SQUEAK point at ALI and giggle)

Fatima (*alarmed*) Listen! *(BUBBLE and SQUEAK stop giggling)*

- Ali Baba** What is it?
- Fatima** There's somebody outside. (*nervously*) It must be thieves.
- Ali Baba** (*putting piggy-bank down*) Do you think so? (*to audience*) Can you see any thieves?
- Audience** Yes!
- Ali Baba** Where are they? (*audience responds*) Are they outside?
- Audience** Yes!
- (*BUBBLE and SQUEAK move upstage behind the shop and exit as ALI moves to the "door"*)
- Ali Baba** I'll go and have a look! (*opens the "door" and peeps out*) There's nobody here. (*leaves "door" open*) You must have been imagining things.
- Fatima** (*to audience*) There were thieves outside, weren't there?
- Audience** Yes.
- Fatima** (*to ALI*) I told you so!
- Ali Baba** (*worried*) Oh dear! (*to audience*) Tell us if you see them again. (*to FATIMA*) We can't be too careful.
- (*BUBBLE and SQUEAK appear with a fishing rod. The audience reacts. ALI and FATIMA ignore them and chat to each other*)
- Fatima** Baghdad's full of shady characters.
- Ali Baba** They're everywhere.
- Fatima** You can't trust anyone.
- Ali Baba** What's the world coming to?
- (*As they chat, BUBBLE and SQUEAK mime casting a fishing line and reeling it in. A duster flies off the table ... a swanee whistle. They catch it and look disappointed. Exit*)
- Ali Baba** (*to audience*) What is it?
- Fatima** Did you see some thieves?
- Audience** Yes!
- (*FATIMA moves left, to examine the table as ALI talks to the audience. Unnoticed, she clips a nylon thread to her skirt*)
- Ali Baba** Why didn't you tell us? You'll have to shout louder than that! Won't they?
- Fatima** Yes. That was pathetic. (*puts hands on hips*)
- Ali Baba** (*during next*) 'Coz if you don't shout we might get everything nicked. I haven't got eyes in the back of my head, you know.
- (*BUBBLE and SQUEAK appear with the fishing rod and cast it once more. FATIMA loosens the velcro fastening on her skirt. The audience shouts. ALI and FATIMA look around, frown and shake their heads. The line is reeled in and FATIMA's skirt is pulled off, leaving her standing in a pair of gaudy bloomers. BUBBLE and SQUEAK catch the skirt, shake their heads and exit. FATIMA shrieks and chastely tries to cover herself. ALI laughs and wolf whistles*)
- Fatima** (*moving D.S., to audience*) It's not funny! Stop laughing. Someone's nicked my frock!
- Ali Baba** (*laughing*) You'd better watch out. They might nick your knickers next.
- (*BUBBLE and SQUEAK appear and cast the fishing rod. The audience reacts. FATIMA holds onto her bloomers. The piggy-bank lifts off the table*)

Ali Baba *(over the shouting)* What is it? Is it the thieves again?
(He sees the piggy bank moving, dives for the table ... too late. BUBBLE and SQUEAK grab it and dodge through the bazaar. ALI and FATIMA run out of the shop)

Ali Baba Thief! Thief!

Fatima Stop them! Don't let them get away!

Ali Baba They've got my piggy bank!

Merchants *(variously)* Get them! Grab them! Thieves! Don't let them get away! Stop! Etc.
(spoken together)
(The MERCHANTS move forward to intercept them. VANILLA, DELIGHT and their Dance Troupe emerge and join in. DELIGHT clutches a cash-box. Exit BUBBLE and SQUEAK through the auditorium, pursued by ALI and FATIMA. The Merchants return U.S., shaking their heads and grumbling)

Vanilla *(clapping hands)* Alright, girls ... the excitement's over! Back to work. *(groans of disappointment from the Dance Troupe as she ushers them into the Night Club)*

Delight What's Baghdad coming to?

Nana Yes. The forty thieves are everywhere! *(picks merchandise up)*

Delight Well, we don't have to worry!

Nana Why not? *(VANILLA returns)*

Delight We've got nothing worth pinching. *(shakes cash box)*

Vanilla Speak for yourself. *(pinches DELIGHT's bottom)*

Delight Eeek!

Nana *(calling)* Coconuts! Dates! Figs! *(joins the other merchants)*

Vanilla How much money have we made today?

Delight *(opens box)* Just one of these pound coins. Catch. *(VANILLA misses)* Clumsy clot. *(searching desperately on knees)* Now where's it gone?

Vanilla Don't worry. A pound doesn't go very far nowadays.

Delight *(peering over edge of stage)* It's gone down the drain. *(tearfully)* Now we haven't got any money to pay the rent. Kasim Baba will throw us in jail. *(wailing)* Waah!

Vanilla *(pointing at audience)* Delight! Look!

Delight What is it?

Vanilla Customers!

Delight *(standing)* Oh yes! Hundreds of them.

Vanilla Let's fleece them. *(to audience)* I'm Vanilla.

Delight And I'm Delight.

Vanilla And this is our nightclub.

Delight "The Folies Baghdad".

Vanilla It's only ten pounds to get in.

Delight *(waving tickets)* Do you want to buy a ticket?

Vanilla The show's about to begin.

Delight Roll up! Roll up!

Vanilla Step this way!

Delight *(preening)* Lovely ladies!

Vanilla *(revealing leg)* The greatest show on legs!

- Delight** (*miserably*) It's no use, Vanilla. They're not interested.
- Vanilla** I know! Let's tempt them with one of our exotic dances. (*wiggle*) They'll rush to buy tickets. We'll make a fortune! (*Music. She dances and stops. To DELIGHT*) Hurry up. Get dancing.
- Delight** I can't. My feet are killing me.
- Vanilla** What's wrong with them?
- Delight** Tim fell on them.
- Vanilla** Tim who?
- Delight** (*lumberjack shout*) Tim-ber! (*VANILLA hits her*)
- Vanilla** No wonder you can't dance. You've got your shoes on the wrong feet.
- Delight** They're the only feet I've got.
- Vanilla** Hurry up. Get 'em off (*"The Stripper" music. DELIGHT swaps shoes round. VANILLA shouts offstage*) No, no, no. Stop. (*music stops*) "The Dance of the Seven Veils" comes later! (*to DELIGHT*) Are you ready yet?
- Delight** Ready. (*"Belly Dance" music. They perform a short dance*)
- Olive** (*voice off*) Giddy-up! Tally-ho!
- Vanilla** (*stopping*) Stop!
- Delight** What is it?
- Olive** (*voice off*) Faster! Faster!
- Vanilla** It's Kasim and Olive Baba.
- Olive** (*voice off*) Giddy-up!
- Delight** What are we going to do? We can't pay the rent!
 (*VANILLA and DELIGHT hide U.S. as KASIM enters, carrying OLIVE on his back. Both are richly dressed. KASIM wears a turban and a reversible cloak. He has a money bag and a sabre slung from his belt. OLIVE carries a scroll which she is using as a riding crop*)
- Olive** Faster, Kasim. Mush! Mush!
- Kasim** (*stopping, out of breath*) I can't "mush" any faster ... I'm exhausted. (*sets her down*) You'll have to walk from now on.
- Olive** I keep telling you ... ladies don't walk! (*loping gracelessly across the stage*) They ride about on camels and wave at the peasants. (*waving snootily at the audience*) Hello, peasants! (*to KASIM, suddenly petulant*) I want a camel!
- Kasim** You're not having one. They're too expensive!
- Olive** You old skinflint! (*pouting*) You love money more than you love me.
- Kasim** That's true. (*OLIVE gasps. He builds to a crescendo of "money-lust"*) I love gold and diamonds and emeralds and rubies and pearls ... I'm money-mad!
- Olive** (*to audience*) He's a dough-nut!
- Kasim** I've got to have it!
- Olive** (*to audience*) He's got to have it!
- Kasim** (*shouting at MERCHANTS*) Today is rent day and I want all your money! Now! (*The MERCHANTS groan*)

SONG B

Kasim and Olive

(During the song, the MERCHANTS come D.S., reluctantly give KASIM money and exit. OLIVE checks names off the "rent-scroll". The song ends. VANILLA and DELIGHT start to tip-toe off)

Kasim *(closing money bag)* That's all the rent collected.

Olive *(checking scroll)* No it isn't! *(pointing at VANILLA and DELIGHT)* Vanilla and Delight haven't paid yet.

Kasim *(holding out hand)* Hand it over!

Vanilla I'm sorry, Kasim Baba ... we haven't got any money. *(DELIGHT shakes her head)*

Kasim *(raging)* Send for the police! Throw them in jail! Boil them in oil!

Vanilla *(encouraging audience)* Boo!

Audience Boo!

Kasim *(to audience)* Oh, shut up!

Delight Please don't send us to jail.

Vanilla Anything but that!

Olive Anything? *(They nod. She whispers briefly to KASIM)*

Kasim What a good idea! *(to VANILLA and DELIGHT)* You will be Olive's slaves from now on.

Olive *(gleefully)* And you've got to do what you're told or you'll go straight to prison!

Vanilla & Delight Yes, Madam. *(bowing together)*

Olive Go home immediately and run me a nice hot bath of milk.

Vanilla Pasteurised?

Olive No. Just up to my knees!

(Exit VANILLA and DELIGHT. Enter ALI and FATIMA at opposite side, breathlessly. OLIVE consults the "rent-scroll")

Fatima *(to audience)* It's no use. We couldn't catch the robbers.

Ali Baba *(to audience)* I'll never see my piggy-bank again.

Fatima You should worry! At least you didn't lose your shirt! *(hitches her bloomers up)*

Kasim *(sickly sweet)* Good day to you, brother Ali.

Ali Baba *(to FATIMA)* Oh no, it's them!

Olive Yes, it's us!

Kasim Your rent is in arrears.

Ali Baba In her ears? *(examines FATIMA's ear)* I can't see it!

Kasim No, no ... you've got a little behind.

Fatima *(wiggling)* How nice of you to notice!

Kasim We want our money!

Ali Baba Money?

Kasim Rubels! *("roo-balls")*

Ali Baba And the same to you.

Kasim Pounds! Dollars! Dinars!

- Fatima** *(going to stall)* I can give you some dinners. *(produces a massive bread bun with humps)* How about a nice, juicy camel burger? No? *(shows other dishes)* Fresh eyeballs? Cockroach Kebabs?
- Olive** I want something I can get my teeth into.
- Fatima** *(producing tumbler)* How about a glass? *(ALI and FATIMA laugh)*
- Kasim** Enough of this nonsense! If you don't pay your rent, I'll have you boiled in oil!
- Ali Baba & Fatima** Have mercy on us. *(together, on their knees)*
- Olive** Don't listen to them, Kasim.
- Ali Baba** *(clutching at KASIM's cloak)* Dear, brother. You're so rich and I'm so poor. *(pathetically)* The only thing I've eaten today is flakes.
- Kasim** Corn-flakes?
- Ali Baba** No. Soap-flakes!
- Kasim** You must be mad!
- Ali Baba** Mad? I was foaming at the mouth! *(laughs)*
- Olive** It's your own fault that you're poor.
- Kasim** You could be rich if you were honest and hard working, like me! I throw myself into everything I do.
(ALI and FATIMA stand)
- Fatima** Go and dig a hole then!
- Ali Baba** *(to audience)* The only reason he's rich is 'coz he married a big bag of money! *(points at OLIVE)*
- Olive** How dare you! *(raising fist)* I'll teach you to call me names!
- Ali Baba** I wish you would ... I've been trying for ages!
- Olive** *(to KASIM)* Don't just stand there ... say something!
- Kasim** Don't speak to Olive like that ... she's one in a million!
- Fatima** Really? I thought was she won in a raffle! *(ALI and FATIMA laugh)*
- Olive** Oh! I've never been so insulted. *(ALI pulls a rude face as they move away)*
Come along, Kasim ... let's go and find a policeman.
- Kasim** Good idea. We'll have them arrested and thrown in prison!
- Ali Baba** *(encouraging audience)* Boo!
- Audience** Boo!
(KASIM and OLIVE poke their tongues out at the audience and exit)
- Ali Baba** I don't want to go to prison. *(moves away)*
- Fatima** Where are you off to?
- Ali Baba** I'm going to run away and hide.
- Fatima** *(following)* I'll come with you. Wait for me!
(Enter RHUM swinging a truncheon. He wears a policeman's fez, a pair of sun-glasses and has a whistle round his neck. They collide with him)
- Rhum** *(deep voice)* Hello, hello, hello ... what's going on here then?
- Ali Baba** Run! *(they run in the opposite direction)*
- Rhum** Halt in the name of the law! *(blows whistle)*

SONG C

Rhum and Juniors

(At the end of the song, the JUNIOR DANCERS march past RHUM, salute and exit)

Rhum *(to ALI and FATIMA)* I've got a plan to catch El Scorpio and the forty thieves. I'm going to ask the girls and boys to help me. *(to audience)* You will help me catch El Scorpio, won't you?

Audience Yes.

Rhum You don't seem very sure. I said, "You will help me catch El Scorpio, won't you?"

Audience YES!

Rhum That's better. *(blows whistle)*

(Enter two policemen carrying a large, golden egg which they give to RHUM)

Fatima What's that for?

Rhum *(sets the egg front of house-tabs)* It's a trap for El Scorpio. He's crazy about gold.

Ali Baba Yes. He's got a "gilt complex". *(they laugh)*

Rhum He won't be able to resist this golden egg. *(to audience)* So if you see anyone touching it, I want you to shout out "Thief!" at the top of your voice. Will you do that?

Audience Yes.

Ali Baba I think they'd better have a practice.

Rhum Good idea. *(moving D.C.)* I'll go over here.

Ali Baba *(to audience)* And I'll pretend to be El Scorpio and when you see me grab the egg, you shout "Thief!" Are you ready? *(he sneaks up to the egg and touches it)*

Audience Thief! *(FATIMA blocks her ears)*

Rhum *(clubbing ALI)* Gotcha!

Ali Baba *(staggering)* Oo-er!

Fatima *(to audience, uncovering ears)* Oh ... you almost deafened me!

(Enter CRYSTAL, the Spirit of the Cave. She is disguised in a grey wig, a long cloak and wears red gloves. She hobbles over to the golden egg on a walking stick)

Ali Baba Yes, they were loud, weren't they?

Rhum With such good helpers on my side, I'm bound to catch El Scorpio.

(CRYSTAL prods the egg with her walking stick)

Audience Thief!

Rhum *(seizing her hand)* Caught you ... *(holds her gloved hand up)* red handed!

Crystal *(croaky voice)* Let go of me, young man!

Rhum Sorry! I thought you were El Scorpio!

Crystal Do I look like El Scorpio!

Rhum No. *(pointing at cloak)* But that could be a disguise.

Crystal I am Gypsy Crystal.

Ali Baba A gypsy?

Crystal Yes ... I tell fortunes.

Rhum Prove it.

Crystal Very well. Show me your palms. *(ALI and RHUM hold both hands out)*

(They stop and cling onto each other fearfully. RHUM strides towards them, taking out a notebook and pencil)

Fatima Oh dear!

Ali Baba Now we're in for it!

Rhum I'm going to take down your particulars.

Fatima *(pushing him)* Don't be rude!

Rhum You're under arrest!

(ALI and FATIMA cling onto each other and wail. RHUM laughs and points at them)

Fatima What are you laughing at?

Ali Baba It's not funny.

Rhum Don't you recognise me?

Ali Baba I don't know the voice but the *fez* is familiar. *(points at RHUM's hat)*

Rhum *(removing sunglasses)* Hello, Dad! Hello, Fatima!

Fatima

&

Rhum! *(together)*

Ali Baba

Rhum All our worries are over, Dad. I've got a job!

Ali Baba That's wonderful.

Rhum The Sultan has made me a "spud".

Fatima You've got a job as a potato?

Rhum A "spud" ... S.P.U.D. ... "Special Police Undercover Detective".

Ali Baba Allah be praised!

Rhum *(proudly)* We're going to be rich. I'll get a huge reward when I catch El Scorpio and the forty thieves.

Fatima

&

El Scorpio! *(together, horrified)*

Ali Baba

Fatima You can't do that! He'll roast you alive!

Ali Baba Then you'll be a roast "spud".

Fatima He'll chop into little pieces.

Ali Baba And then you'll have had your chips!

Rhum I'm not going to catch him single handed. I've got help!

Ali Baba *(relieved)* Oh, good!

Rhum *(expansively)* The bravest policemen in Baghdad. With nerves of steel and muscles of iron! *(flexes muscles)*

Fatima Ooo ... strong arm of the law! I love men in uniform.

(RHUM blows his whistle. The JUNIORS march on, dressed as policemen and carrying truncheons. FATIMA looks disappointed)

Rhum Hup, one, two, three! Hup, one, two, three! Company halt! *(they stop)* Attention! *(they stand at attention)*

Ali Baba They're a bit titchy, aren't they?

Fatima What good will they be against forty thieves?

Rhum You'd be surprised what little people can do!

Fatima I used to tell fortunes, you know.
Crystal Did you?
Fatima Yes, but I had to give it up ... I didn't see any future in it! *(laughs)*
(CRYSTAL slaps ALI and RHUM's palms)
Crystal Eeny, Meeny, scorpion's tail: catch a thief and go to jail. *(to ALI)* You're first.
(examines his hand and groans) Ahhh!
Ali Baba What is it?
Crystal *(tremulous voice)* Everything is black and murky!
Ali Baba Wait a minute. *(spits on palm and wipes it down costume)* Is that better?
Crystal *(normal voice)* Oh yes. It's clearing. *(dramatically)* I can see stars ... lots of stars!
Ali Baba *(looking at palm)* Where? I can't see any stars! *(CRYSTAL thumps him on the head with her walking stick)* Ouch! You're right ... I see stars ... lots of stars! *(he staggers)*
Crystal Keep still! *(taking his palm again and moaning)* Ahhh ... eeee ... oooo! *(trance-like)* There's good news and bad news in Paradise!
Ali Baba "In Paradise"? I'm going to die and go to Paradise! *(sobs)* Waah!
Fatima What a load of rubbish!
Crystal How dare you! *(dignified)* I am the greatest medium in Baghdad ... and I'll be happy to prove it! *(FATIMA hits her)* What did you do that for?
Fatima I always like to strike a happy medium! *(laughs)*
Crystal And now it's your turn, young master.
Rhum *(giving her his palm)* I hope she'll tell me that I'll catch El Scorpio.
Crystal *(shaking head)* Oh dear, dear, dear ...
Rhum What is it?
Crystal It is written here that you will lose your head.
Rhum Lose my head??
Ali Baba El Scorpio's going to chop my baby's head off! *(ALI and FATIMA sob)*
Crystal Wait! *(they stop bawling)* I haven't finished yet ... it says: "You will lose your head but live happily ever after!"
Ali Baba How can he be happy without a head?
Fatima Yes ... he'd have nothing to put his hat on.
Rhum It doesn't make any sense.
Crystal It is written! *(moving away and calling)* Fortunes told! Fortunes told! *(exit)*
Fatima *(following)* Here, wait a minute. You haven't told my fortune yet!
(Enter PROFESSOR JONES. He is very short-sighted, wears large spectacles and is searching for clues with a magnifying glass. His daughter, POLLY, follows close behind, consulting an ancient map. Both wear European 'tropical' outfits with sun-helmets)
Ali Baba *(examining palm)* There's good news and bad news in Paradise.
Rhum *(examining palm)* I'll lose my head but live happily ever after.
Fatima *(returning)* I wonder what it all means?
(JONES discovers the golden egg)
Jones Look, Polly. I've found the lost treasure! *(touches the egg)*
Audience Thief!