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extracts from
Aladdin and the Enchanted Lamp

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He described the whole palace to the Jinnee, who stood shimmering silently in front of him. When he'd finished, he added: "Oh, and I mustn't forget – it's to be done by tomorrow morning, please."

"Nothing could be easier, Master."

Aladdin went to bed happily. When he woke up, he summoned the Jinnee once again.

"All done?"

"I endeavour to give satisfaction, Master. All is complete."

"I don't know how you do it, Jinnee. Have a horse at the door in ten minutes. Better have a retinue of slaves as well. And a nice dress for my mother, and some slave-girls to attend her. And one of those chair things to carry her in."

"Very good, Master."

So when Aladdin rode up to the Sultan's palace at the head of his slaves, no-one in the court had seen such splendour. And the Princess Badr-al-Budur herself, watching from an upstairs window, saw Aladdin curvetting and leaping on his glossy black horse and fell in love with him at once.



you require a splendid palace built for Princess Badr-al-Budur on that patch of empty ground beyond the fountain.”

“H’m,” said the Sultan. “All right, Aladdin, one more little thing. Build a palace for Badr-al-Budur, and then she’s yours, my boy.”

“With pleasure, Mighty Sultan, and I’ll have it done by the morning. Good day to you!”

And with a deep bow he left the Throne Room, and the Grand Vizier and the ten Petty Viziers, the Nabobs and the Emirs and the Pashas, the Janissaries and the Bashi-Bazouks, the Barmecides, the Bimbashis and the Beys all bowed back automatically, because he looked like a prince already.

Back at home, he rubbed the lamp again.

“Yes, O Master?”

“I want a palace built on the patch of ground behind the Sultan’s fountain. I want a dome of gold, and pillars of lapis lazuli and onyx, and a floor of marble; I want gardens and fountains and courtyards planted with jasmine and roses; I want a retinue of slaves and cooks and major-domos and eunuchs and so on.

Each window must be made of a single enormous diamond, and in some fountains I want wine flowing, in some water, and I want one to spray perfume to scent the air; and I want the finest, softest carpets from Shiraz and Bokhara; and I want harps and lutes hanging in every room, so that when a breeze blows, music plays by itself. Now, as for the Princess’s bedroom...”



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