

## Aladdin Characters

Aladdin, an incorrigible Chinese lad with no trade  
Aladdin's Mother, a patient, long-suffering woman  
Aladdin's Friends, street Ruffians without responsibility  
Arabian Magician, a crafty villain, out to use Aladdin, posing as his Uncle  
A Peddler, wheeling a barrow of clothing  
Village Youth, tells the Magician about Aladdin  
Clothier, bazaar merchant who outfits Aladdin, and sells him his shop  
Bazaar People, residents and merchants of Aladdin's village  
The Emperor, a kind, but materialistic ruler, easily swayed  
The Dowager Empress, the Emperor's mother, formidable and savvy  
Genie of the Ring, a fearsome being with limited magical powers  
The Tree of Jewels  
(2) Emperor's Heralds/Guards, attend the Emperor, announce his daughter  
Princess Nightingale, the Emperor's beautiful and gentle daughter  
(2) Princess' Handmaidens, her friends and companions as well as maids  
Trader, a seller and buyer of fine things  
Genie of the Lamp, a diminutive being of great power  
Bearers, for Aladdin's gifts to the Princess  
Aladdin's Servants, young valets  
Grand Wazir, jealous and crafty advisor to the Emperor  
Gong, the Wazir's vain son, unofficially betrothed to the Princess  
Wedding Guests, townspeople, combined with relatives and families  
(4) Children  
Musicians, Acrobats and Dancers, performers at the Wedding  
Wizard's Messenger, a young Arabian servant  
Arabian Citizens  
Apothecary

## Aladdin/Magician

**BACKGROUND NOTES:** Magician needs a dupe to help him. He decides to use Aladdin. To get Aladdin to go along, the Magician pretends to be a long-lost, rich uncle of Aladdin.

**Magician:** I believe I will be young Aladdin's uncle—I mean, I believe I am Aladdin's long-lost uncle! Do me a kindness, boy, and fetch Aladdin over to me, so that I may introduce myself to him properly! (The boy runs eagerly off.) Yes! Aladdin will suit my purposes perfectly! (he produces a bag of coins—FLASH—by magic) In my experience, coins always buy cooperation! Hahaha--!

**Aladdin:** I am Aladdin...?

**Magician:** (clasping his hands in false poignancy) Aladdin! Oh, you look just like him--!

**Aladdin:** (puzzled) Who?

**Magician:** Your father! (sniff, sniff)

**Aladdin:** My father? Did you know my father?

**Magician:** Did I know your father? Oh, boo, hoo! He was my brother!

**Aladdin:** My father had a brother?

**Magician:** Yes, Aladdin! I am your—(hugs him fiercely)—UNCLE!

**Aladdin:** (dubiously) My father never said he had a brother--!

**Magician:** (turning it on) Oh, Alas! I am to blame! We had a silly argument, in our younger days. I left this village to explore the world and make my fortune. I have finally come home to make peace with him...and find...(he "cries") that he no longer lives, and has never even told his family that I exist! He never mentioned me at all--?

**Aladdin:** (simply) No.

**Magician:** Never told you he had a brother?

**Aladdin:** No.

**Magician:** --A very *rich* brother--?

**Aladdin:** N—(the magic word)—Rich?

**Magician:** Oh, yes! In my travels I have discovered many treasures—but no treasure compares to family! I would give up all my fortune to be reunited with my brother—or his *family* again!

**Aladdin:** (sensing opportunity) Uncle--!

**Magician:** (false tears as they embrace) Nephew! (wiping his eyes) And your mother, Aladdin, my brother's wife—may I meet her? Will you give her this money and tell her I will dine with you and her this day? (He gives Aladdin the purse of coins.)

**Aladdin:** (juggles the purse as if it were hot) Whoa...I, I, yes! Yes!

**Magician:** Run, tell your mother that your father's brother has returned!

**Aladdin:** I will!—Uncle!

## Aladdin/Genie of the Ring

**BACKGROUND NOTES:** Aladdin is trapped in a cave when the Magicians plan goes afoul. He wears a ring that the Magician had given to him - but does not know what it is for.

**Aladdin:** I *am* a fool! I was a bad son to my mother! I was greedy! I was selfish! I turned away my friends! Now, I will never see my mother, or my friends again! And it is all my own fault! (in wringing his hands, he rubs the forgotten ring on his finger.) Tree, can you hear me? ANYONE???. HELP ME!

(With an enormous explosion, a large and muscular genie appears, right next to Aladdin! The very air around him shimmers. This giant is dour, very like "Lurch.")

**Genie of the Ring:** You rang---?

**Aladdin:** Who are you?!

**Genie of the Ring:** I am the Genie of the Ring, Master.

**Aladdin:** What ring?

**Genie of the Ring:** The ring you wear on your finger, Master!

**Aladdin:** This isn't my ring—(tries to remove it)

**Genie of the Ring:** You *wear* it, Master.

**Aladdin:** You're a genie?

**Genie of the Ring:** Yes, Master.

**Aladdin:** Are you magic?

**Genie of the Ring:** Yes, Master.

**Aladdin:** Why are you calling me Master?

**Genie of the Ring:** Because you called *me*, Master. What is your wish, Master?

**Aladdin:** (quickly) I wish none of this ever happened!

**Genie of the Ring:** You cannot change the past, Master, only the present.

**Aladdin:** In that case, I wish I were out of this cave!

**Genie of the Ring:** Your wish is my command, Master.

(EXPLOSION! Aladdin finds himself outside the cave, holding the jewels and the birdcage. The Genie is gone.)

(Aladdin looks around in amazement; he can't believe what just happened. He puts the birdcage down and stuffs the extra jewels in his pocket. His poor mother lumbers frantically through the countryside, and spies him.)

## Aladdin/Mother/Genie of the Lamp

**Mother:** This lamp is filthy, Aladdin! Where has it been, under the ground?? Here, let me shine it up; if it looks pretty, someone will buy it— (she releases the Genie of the Lamp. An EXPLOSION!)

**Aladdin:** Oh, no, not again! (He looks upward, shielding his eyes, expecting a giant luminescent genie. His mother has dropped the lamp, and is shaking, also looking upward.)

(Pause. Smoke clears. A small female genie walks to Aladdin, hands on her hips. He is still looking up in anticipation. She tugs on his clothing.) (Both Aladdin and his mother stare in astonishment.)

**Genie of the Lamp:** What?! You were expecting, maybe, Robin Williams?? Well, get over it! What you see is what you get--! I AM THE GENIE OF THE LAMP!!

(Fireworks!) (She does an elaborate tumbling routine, combining dance, gymnastics and martial arts.)

**Genie of the Lamp:** See? What I lack in height, I make up for in *pizzazz!* (They are stunned.) Okay, down to business! (notices the lack of response) (to Aladdin) You're kind of the strong, silent type, aren't you?

**Aladdin:** I--I don't know what to say--!

**Genie of the Lamp:** Well, make a wish, Aladdin!

**Aladdin:** Another one??

**Genie of the Lamp:** Alriiight...For all of you magically challenged people, this is the deal: Different Genie, different wish! Got it?

**Aladdin:** (sincerely) I do not deserve another wish. Please, Mother, *you* make the wish!

**Mother:** (nervous) Please, honorable Genie, we are hungry and thirsty...

**Genie of the Lamp:** Very well, what shall it be? Pheasant under glass with twenty rice wines in crystal carafes? Gingered squid for two hundred, on golden plates...?

**Aladdin:** (his mother is looking rather ill) Uh...you decide!

**Genie of the Lamp:** Excellent! I love it when a master lets me use my imagination!--But don't expect me to call you Master, it's embarrassing for both of us! Alright. (pause) Go home!

**Both:** (sharing a look) Go home??

**Aladdin:** But, aren't you going to grant our wish?

**Genie of the Lamp:** What do I look like, a waitress? A dozen servants have prepared and arranged your meal. It awaits you at your home--special delivery!! No tip.

**Both:** (amazed) Thank you--!

**Genie of the Lamp:** That's my job--"Your wish is my command!"—and I AM THE GENIE OF THE LAMP!

(She does gymnastics and back-flips! She lands arms out, facing the audience, to a crescendo!)

**Genie of the Lamp:** Ha! Let's see Robin Williams do *that*--!

(Aladdin's Mother faints.)

Emperor/Dowager/Wazir

**Emperor:** (clapping his hands with relish) Today is the day of the Imperial Audience! Have the peasants lined up with their requests?!

(Wazir steps forward, but is interrupted.)

**Dowager:** Son. You must not call them peasants, even if that is what they *are*! You will be perceived as aloof and insensitive.

**Emperor:** What must I call them--?

**Dowager:** ‘Citizens,’ ‘your people,’ ‘the populace.’ Whatever.

**Emperor:** Very well! Are my ‘people’ ready to speak to me? Send in the ‘populace,’ and I will listen to these ‘citizens!’ (sits back, pleased)

**Wazir:** (stepping forward, awkwardly) Ahem! A thousand pardons, oh Emperor. Might I have a word...?

**Emperor:** Of course, Wazir!—You are my trusted advisor—advise me!

**Wazir:** Emperor, if I might be so bold as to make the first request of the day...?

**Dowager & Emperor:** What? What is it?

**Wazir:** Ahem. Might I dare remind your most gracious and magnificent majesty, that it has been some months since my son Gong’s request was heard for betrothal to the Princess Nightingale...?

**Dowager:** (bored) Oh.

**Emperor:** (disappointed) Oh...

**Wazir:** May we know that he has been accepted, my Emperor? And when the royal wedding will occur?

**Emperor:** Um...(The Emperor looks doubtfully at Nightingale.)

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**Emperor:** Gong, what means have you? Do you have wealth, and “prospects--?”

**Gong:** Huh?

**Wazir:** One and Only Emperor, we have long spoken of the possibility of joining our families. My ancestors are very revered, and we have much land!

**Dowager:** Ah...land!

**Wazir:** (continuing to Emperor) I have been in your loyal service for many, many years. I assure you that my son will continue to serve the Empire in any way that your majesty requires.

## Nightingale/Emperor/Dowager

**Dowager:** This is all well and good, Wazir, but perhaps Nightingale is too young for marriage...she has not had the opportunity to compare other suitors...

**Nightingale:** Yes! How am I to know whom I will love enough to marry?

**Emperor & Dowager & Wazir :** Love??

**Nightingale:** Yes! Love!

(The Dowager laughs.)

**Emperor:** Nightingale, please. Do not talk nonsense. *You* will not decide whom you will marry! A father decides what is best for his daughter, especially if she is a princess! I will decide your betrothal!

**Dowager:** Yes, Nightingale! Learn to respect your elders!

**Nightingale:** But, Grandmother...it's not fair!

**Emperor:** Nightingale! We will discuss your disrespect privately!!

(He claps his hands, dismissing everyone. He is alone with his daughter.)

**Emperor:** Daughter, I am most displeased!

**Nightingale:** Well, so am I!

**Emperor:** (whining) Why are you so troublesome? Why do you not like Gong?

**Nightingale:** He is a peacock, Father! He likes fancy clothes, and expensive foods! He is arrogant and conceited!

**Emperor:** Nobody's perfect!

**Nightingale:** Besides, it's the principle, Father! I want to choose my own husband!

**Emperor:** Daughter! I am the Emperor! If I say it is time for you to marry, then it is time for you to marry! If not Gong, then someone else!

**Nightingale:** *Who?*

**Emperor:** (sighing) I don't know! You are too stubborn and willful--!

**Nightingale:** I'm sorry, Father. I know I am a Princess, and have certain duties, but I just can't help the way I feel--!

(The Dowager breaks in; obviously she has been listening.)

**Dowager:** *Feel?* What do feelings have to do with it?!

**Nightingale:** Everything!

**Emperor:** (the last straw) Daughter! You will go out this very day to the Clothier's! You will choose the silk for your wedding gown! That is all that you will choose! I—

## Nightingale/Handmaidens

**Handmaiden #1:** The Clothier's is closed, Your Highness.

**Handmaiden #2:** Shall I run for the shopkeeper, Princess?

**Nightingale:** No! I am glad it is closed!

**Handmaiden #1:** Glad...?

**Handmaiden #2:** But you will not have the silk for your wedding gown--!

**Nightingale:** Exactly! So this shop can stay closed for a very long time, as far as I am concerned!

(They all laugh, if a little guiltily.)

**Handmaiden #1:** But, Princess! Will you not marry Gong?

**Nightingale:** No!

**Handmaiden #2:** But, your Father the Emperor wishes it!

**Nightingale:** / do not wish it!

**Handmaiden #1:** Then you will never marry, Princess Nightingale?

**Nightingale:** Yes, I will marry. But first, I must find the right husband!

**Handmaiden #1:** (sigh) What will he be like...?

**Handmaiden #2:** Will he be very rich? Will he be handsome? Will he be a Prince?

**Nightingale:** Maybe. Maybe not...He will smile a lot! He will make me laugh!

(They all giggle.)

**Nightingale:** He will not be impressed that I am a princess, or that my father is the Emperor, but...

**Handmaiden #1:** What, then...?

**Nightingale:** --Of one thing I am certain—

**Handmaiden #2:** Yes, yes--?

**Nightingale:** He will love me more than anything in the world—whether I am the Princess or not, and I will love him, whether he is a Prince or not!

**Handmaidens:** Awww...

(At the Palace, the Audience is in progress, in pantomime. Gong exits the Palace, looking for Nightingale; he is attended by the Guards.)

**Gong:** Princess Nightingale! Where are you?

**Nightingale:** Shh! Quick, hide!

**Aladdin/Nightingale/Emperor/Dowager/Gong/Wazir**

(Nightingale bursts in to hear this last exchange.)

**Nightingale:** What is going on?

**Emperor:** Daughter! I wish to present to you your future husband, Prince Aladdin!

**Nightingale:** My *what?*

**Aladdin:** Princess Nightingale. (in bowing, his hat falls off, and she recognizes him.)

**Nightingale:** You! (She is very confused.) You...you are the one who made me laugh—Are these servants yours, all this fortune...?

**Gong:** I can get you more, Nightingale! Marry *me!*

**Aladdin:** (to Gong) Whatever you have to offer, I will offer *more!*

**Nightingale:** Is that what is happening here? I am being *sold*??? To the highest bidder? I will not be bought by land, or jewels, or Palaces! I will marry neither of you! (She rushes to the end of the balcony, and sits, crying. Her handmaidens attend her.)

**Emperor:** Pay no attention to her, Aladdin. She will make you a beautiful bride. Congratulations my son. (hugs him)

**Dowager:** We will expect you to keep your promises, Aladdin! If we are to lose Princess Nightingale, we must gain something in return!

(Aladdin bows.)

**Gong:** (rushing him) You—you--!

**Wazir:** (restraining him) No, my son. We have lost—for now.

**Emperor:** WE MUST PREPARE FOR A WEDDING!!!

(GONG!)

(A cheer goes up from the village, and the citizens rush off to prepare. The royal party disperses, followed by Aladdin's servants, bearing the forfeited treasures. )

(As the stage darkens, Aladdin observes the crying Princess and feels ashamed. He crosses to his home, watching the Palace from the front of his hovel.)

(The moon rises. The nightingale sings; it is very pretty. Nightingale dries her tears.)

**Nightingale:** Listen! A nightingale--!

(Taking the birdcage down, Aladdin walks across the square to the Palace. He smiles and presents the Princess with the nightingale.)

**Nightingale:** This singing bird dries my tears. It is not jewels, or silks, or land. But this is the first present I have ever been given that I think has meaning. Thank you. (Aladdin bows and his hat falls off. She laughs. He exits, smiling.) Aladdin. He's the one...(she smiles.)



## Messenger/Magician

**Messenger:** (panting and nervous) --Oh, Greatest of Magicians...?

**Magician:** (very irritated) What is it?!

**Messenger:** You asked to be informed of any news from Chinaland...?

**Magician:** (suspicious) Speak...

**Messenger:** The Emperor's daughter has married, Your Magnificence--!

**Magician:** Yes? And why should I care?!

**Messenger:** Her husband is a mysterious prince—

**Magician:** So?!

**Messenger:** --named Aladdin!

**Magician:** (sputters and chokes, apoplectic) Aladdin--??!! Aladdin lives--?!

**Messenger:** Yes! And there has been much magic: coins and jewels—servants—an entire palace has appeared!

**Magician:** The lamp...HE IS USING THE LAMP!! AUGHH!!!

**Messenger:** (shaking) W--What will you do?

**Magician:** We must away to Chinaland!

**Messenger:** Yes, Master!

**Magician:** I have a plan! Get me some lamps!

**Messenger:** Lamps?

**Magician:** Yes, *lamps*! I will enter the city, dressed as a beggar, with a barrow of new lamps. I will offer to exchange them for old lamps! *Someone* will lead us to the magical lamp. When I have the lamp that should have been mine, I will ruin Aladdin's life forever! Hahaha!!!

## Aladdin/Nightingale

**Aladdin:** (thinking hard) Take me to Princess Nightingale--!

**Genie:** Your wish is my command, Master!

(Explosion! Blackout.)

(Before the scrim, Nightingale sits on a velvet hassock, crying. Aladdin finds himself deposited on the opposite side of the lip.)

**Aladdin:** Nightingale! (He rushes to her.)

**Nightingale:** Aladdin! What has happened? Why are we here! The Magician keeps me captive!

**Aladdin:** It is because of the lamp, Nightingale. It is a *magic* lamp!

**Nightingale:** A magic lamp? Why did you not tell me so?

**Aladdin:** (admitting) I am not a Prince. I wished on the lamp to get the clothes, and the servants, and the Palace--everything!

**Nightingale:** But—why?

**Aladdin:** I was poor. I was no one! I knew your family would not let me marry you!

**Nightingale:** And what of me? Did you think that I would not marry you without your finery? That I would marry you for the price of a Palace? (bitterly) Do you think so little of me??

**Aladdin:** I did not think that you could love me—

**Nightingale:** Aladdin. Would you love me, even if I did not have the wealth of a princess?

**Aladdin:** Of course!

**Nightingale:** So, too, Aladdin: I do not love you for what you *have*. I love you for who you *are*.

**Aladdin:** I will never make that mistake again; I promise you!