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”

THE OLD FISHERMAN & THE BOTTLE.





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A long time ago, in a land called Arabia, there lived an old fisherman





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Although he was old, he still went fishing every day.





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When he had fish to sell, he earned a little money.





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Sometimes he caught lots of fish, but sometimes he caught nothing at all.





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**On the day when our story
begins,**





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**the fisherman hadn't had
any luck at all.**





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**Just when he had given up
hope of catching anything,**





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**he felt a weight in his net.
He hauled it from the water
in the hope**





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**that it was full of fish that
he could sell.**





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He was disappointed to find that the only thing he had caught





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was an old copper bottle.





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**The bottle had turned
green with age,**





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**but the fisherman knew
that if he cleaned it up and
polished it**





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**so that the copper shone
again,**





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**he could sell the bottle in
the market.**





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All of a sudden, the fisherman noticed that





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**there was still a stopper in
the bottle.**





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**He wondered what could
be inside it.**





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He could see that a wax seal was holding the stopper in place to prevent it from falling out.





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The fisherman had never been to school so he could not read,





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and so he did not know what the words on the seal meant.





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The wax showed the royal coat of arms of Suleiman,





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the great ruler of Arabia, who had lived and ruled two thousand years before.





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The fisherman had heard of Suleiman, but he did not recognise the royal seal.





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This particular seal was a sign that





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**no one should tamper with the
bottle;**





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**that no one should ever remove
the stopper**





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but the old fisherman did not know that.





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The fisherman pulled off the wax seal.





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**He tugged the cork stopper from
the copper bottle.**





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Immediately, a magic shape floated out of the bottle.





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**It grew and expanded and
became larger and larger.**





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It was a colossal genie!





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**The old man stared in
astonishment at the enormous
genie.**





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In many old stories, a genie is a kind and magical being who grants three wishes.





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**However, this genie was angry –
after all,**





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**he had been shut up in a tiny
bottle for two thousand years.**





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So instead of granting any wishes,





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**he waved his sharp metal cutlass
and threatened to cut off the
fisherman's head.**





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The old fisherman may not have had an education,





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but he did have a quick brain.





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Instead of showing fear in front of the angry and dangerous genie, he smiled and said:





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‘Oh, genie! I think you are teasing me.





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**You say you were shut up in this
bottle for two thousand years,**





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**how can that be? The bottle is so
small and you are so big,**





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I don't believe you! I will only believe your story if you can show me





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**how you fit yourself into this
bottle.’**





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The genie was not at all happy that the old fisherman did not believe him.





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To show him, he became smaller and smaller until he was tiny enough to fit back into the bottle.





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‘Oh, what a silly genie!’





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**As soon as he was in the bottle,
the fisherman pushed**





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**the cork stopper firmly back into
the neck of the bottle,**





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**and he pressed on the wax seal
with Suleiman's coat of arms.**





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The genie was trapped!





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**The fisherman threw the bottle
back into the sea.**





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**The genie was destined to float
across the oceans forever.**

