



## Chapter I

# Treasure in a cave

This exciting story happened in a town in Persia very long time ago. Two brothers – Kasim and Ali – lived there. Time passed, they grew up and got married. Kassim's wife was a rich woman. So Kassim became a successful salesman and had his own shop where he sold carpets.

Ali Baba became a woodcutter and worked very hard but his family was very poor. His wife worked hard too, she looked after their small house and brought up their little son, Khaled.

Brothers had different lifestyles and did not get on well.

Ali Baba's everyday duty was to go to the forest with his three donkeys, cut down the trees to sell them at the market. He loaded the wood into the baskets on the donkeys' backs and then led the animals into the town.

One day, when Ali Baba was working in the forest as usual, he suddenly heard the sound of horses' hooves and saw a huge cloud of dust far away. Then he noticed lots of horsemen and got scared.

"I must find a place to hide my donkeys! These men may steal them! And I need a place for me to hide because they may kill me!" Ali Baba thought.

At first Ali Baba hid his donkeys among the bushes, then looked around and saw a tall tree near a big grey rock. He immediately climbed the top of the tree. Nobody could notice him there among the branches but he could see the horsemen well. They came nearer and nearer.

"Thirty-eight, thirty-nine...forty!" he counted them. "Forty horsemen! Why are they here?"

Meanwhile the horsemen reached the big grey rock, jumped off the horses and tied them to the tree, where Ali Baba was sitting on. He was looking very attentively. The men

untied the saddlebags and went towards the big rock dragging them.

"They are very heavy!" Ali Baba thought about the bags. "What is there?"

Suddenly a flash of sunlight made him close his eyes. "What is it?" he looked closer and saw a gold bar in one of the bags.

"Gold! That's gold!" whispered Ali Baba.

At last the men reached the grey rock and stopped. Then, to Ali Baba's great surprise, one of the men cried, "Close, Sesame!" and a door opened in the rock. All the men walked through it into a cave.

"Close, Sesame!" shouted the same man – their leader – and the door closed.

"They are thieves and they hide their gold in this cave!" Ali Baba whispered.

He sat on the tree and looked at the rock waiting for the thieves.

At last they appeared. Their leader cried again "Close, Sesame!" The door in the rock closed with a bang.

Ali Baba paid his attention to the bags and noticed that they were empty! By the way the men untied their horses, jumped onto their backs and galloped away.

Ali Baba stayed on the tree until the last man disappeared. Then he slowly climbed down and walked to the rock.

"Can I open the door?" Ali Baba thought.

"Open, Sesame!" he cried as the thief did.

Amazingly, but the door in the rock opened. Ali Baba smiled and went in. Then he cried, "Close, Sesame!" and the door closed behind him. He expected the cave would be dark inside but there was a hole in the rock above Ali Baba's head and lots of light came through it. He looked around. The cave was very large and ... full of treasure! He was amazed by what he saw: bunches of gold and silver bars, plenty of gold coins, rolls of bright silk! There were emerald necklaces, bracelets, rings, crowns with diamonds and rubies!

"What great treasure!" Ali Baba smiled! "Those thieves will not get all this treasure, I will take some of the gold for myself! I have a plan!"

Then he said the password and the door opened. Ali Baba decided to go back to the forest and get his three donkeys from the bushes.

"I have a surprise for you!" he told the animals. "Today you will carry gold!"