

Ali Baba & The Six Thieves

A pantomime

By Dave Buchanan

Spotlight Publications

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Ali Baba & the Six Thieves

CAST (in order of appearance)

Herald

Len)

Borro) the Double Decorators

Nesta, a tea-shop owner

Ali Baba, a poor camel-driver

Said Baba, Ali's son

Mario Marconi, a shopkeeper

Mariana, Mario's daughter

Al Kapoun, the robber chief

Die Hard, his second-in-command

Nasty Ned, a robber

Phil the Felon, a robber

Robber Dick, a robber

Little Creep, a robber

Abdullah, a citizen of Baghdad *

Sounah, a dancing girl

Leita, a dancing girl

Sergeant, a policeman *

A camel

A gorilla

* These two parts can be doubled up

Chorus of Townspeople and Entertainers

Place - in and around Baghdad

Time - whenever

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

A C T 1

Scene 1 - A street in Baghdad

Scene 2 - Outside the robbers' cave

Scene 3 - Nesta's parlour

Scene 4 - A street in Baghdad

A C T 2

Scene 1 - Interior of the robbers' cave

Scene 2 - Front of curtain

Scene 3 - The chase, front of curtain

Scene 4 - The desert

Scene 5 - The desert, plus oasis

Scene 6 - Interior of Nesta's shop

Scene 7 - Ali Baba's stable

Scene 8 - Interior of Nesta's shop

Scene 9 - Front of curtain

Scene 10 - Interior of Nesta's shop

MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT 1

1. Opening Number (Dancers & Chorus)
2. Skaters' Waltz (J Strauss) (Len & Borro)
3. "If I Were a Rich Man" (Fiddler on the Roof) (Ali Baba)
4. "I'm in Love with a Wonderful Guy" (Rodgers & Hammerstein) (Mariana)
5. "In a Persian Market Place" (Chorus & Dancers)
6. "Goodbye" (Ali, Said & Chorus)
7. Camel Dance (Camel)
8. "Gotta Pick a Pocket or Two" (Bart) (Al Kapoun & Robbers)
9. "Simply The Best" (Tina Turner) (Nesta)
10. "No Matter What" (Boyzone) (Said & Mariana)

ACT II

11. "In the Old Bazaar in Cairo" (Robbers)
12. "Always Look On The Bright Side" (Monty Python) (Ali, Said & Mariana)
13. Belly Dance (Dancers)
14. "Rock-a-Bye Baby" (Mariana)
15. "I Got You Babe" (Sonny & Cher) (Ali & Nesta)
16. "Consider Yourself" (Lionel Bart) (Ensemble)

N.B. This list of songs is only the author's recommendation. All songs are at the discretion of the Musical Director.

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A NOTE ON THE PRINCIPALS

Herald. For male or female, a small but spirited part.

Len & Borro are a pair of amiable bungling idiots, who need a strong sense of comic timing, and, for the wallpapering scene, a certain athleticism. Their costumes should be boiler suits and bowler hats.

Nesta. Traditional dame, can be played by a male or female.

Ali Baba, the main part, needs to be played by an actor of considerable energy and personality. Needs to be a good singer.

Said Baba, the principal boy, can be played by either male or female. Heroic but definitely not “wet”, and has some good comic lines. Singing part.

Mario Marconi. Major part for a mature man with a strong sense of character. Mario tends to bend with the wind, but is not unsympathetic, and has good comic lines to deliver.

Mariana is the principal girl, a lively part with no sickly sweetness or coy lines to deliver. Also has songs to sing.

Al Kapoun is the traditional comic baddy He needs to be played by a someone with an ability to bluster convincingly and yet have *rapport* with the audience. Singing part.

Die Hard. Simple idiot part, ideal foil to Al Kapoun.

Sounah & Leita are dancing girls who must (obviously) be balletic and glamorous.

Sergeant. Small but solid PC Plod role.

Abdullah appears in one scene only, and can be doubled up with the Sergeant.

ACT 1

Scene 1

A street in Baghdad, with various shop fronts

UL is "Nesta's Old Tea Shoppe", and UR "Mario's Chip Shop"

There is a large notice board UC

A crowd is assembled for the opening number

Song 1

After the song, the Herald appears with a box and bell, which s/he rings lustily

Herald Hear me, good people of Baghdad!

Bystander 1 And what if we don't want to hear you?

Herald Well you're going to hear it anyway. *(Fumbling in box)* Now where are those - ? Ah, it's all right. I've got the scrolls.

Bystander 2 Well keep away from me. It might be contagious!

Herald Very funny. Not! *(He reads)* "Whereas and whereunto his Pre-Eminence the Sultan, Sun of Suns, Prince of the Universe, and Lord High Panjandrum of Uttar Pradesh -

Bystander 1 Utter rubbish, you mean! Look, why don't you cut the cackle?

Bystander 2 Aye, in a nutshell, what's in it?

Herald Right. In a nutshell - I've forgotten! Wait a minute, and I'll have a quick butcher's.

S/he reads it with elaborate emphasis, interspersed with oohs and ahs. The crowd reacts to each of these

Herald Well I never!

Crowd Come on, come on!

Herald Well. *(They all huddle round)* It seems that this highwayman called Al Kapoun -

Crowd Al Kapoun!

Herald - and his bunch of cut-throats have stolen a golden crown which was a gift to the Sultan from Sheikh Itolla Bout.

Bystander 1 Who?

Herald Sheikh Itolla Bout.

Bystanders 1& 2 You do the Hokey Cokey and you turn around,

That's what it's all about - Say!

Oh Hokey Cokey Cokey,

Oh Hokey Cokey Cokey,

Oh Hokey Cokey Cokey,

That's what it's all about - Say!

Herald Have you finished?

Bystander 2 No. You put your left foot in,

Your left foot out -

Bystander 1 Give over! Let the wo/man speak.

Bystander 2 I'm not stopping him/her.

Herald As I was saying, the Sultan's gold crown has been stolen by this criminal Al Kapoun. The Sultan is offering a reward of 1,000 piastres -

Crowd 1,000 piastres!

Herald Tax free - for the recovery of the crown. And a further 1,000 piastres -

Bystander 1 Tax free?

Herald Tax free - for any information leading to the arrest of Al Kapoun.

There is a buzz of talk as the crowd slowly drift away

The Herald goes over to the notice board and sticks up the notice

You know, it's a funny thing being a herald. When you're Act 1 Scene 1

speaking, people hang on to your every word. But when you've finished, you might as well not have been there. It's like you had B.O. Ah well, time to go. *(He looks at watch)* I'll just make the end of Eastenders. Toodle-oo.

S/he exits R just as Len and Borro enter UL, on roller blades

They perform a ballet to the strains of "Skater's Waltz"

Song 2

At the end of the ballet, they career offstage DR

There is an almighty crash as of breaking glass

They emerge, staggering

Len Gosh, I feel like Russell Grant.

Borro What do you mean?

Len Seeing stars!

He collapses in a heap

Borro Trust you to smash *(local shopkeeper's)* window. Of all people!

Len It wasn't my fault!

Borro Never mind. We'd better get that notice up. We need the customers.

He begins to hammer the notice up vigorously

Enter Nesta, from the Tea Shoppe, with a broom, and in a rage

Nesta Will you stop that racket!

Borro hurriedly gives Len the hammer

Borro Pardon?

Nesta I said stop that blinking racket or I'll thump you one!

Len I beg your pudding?

Nesta What did you call me, you twerp?

She bashes Len with her broom

Len I've a good mind to -

Nesta Yes?

Len To tell you what I think of you, lady.

Nesta (*rolling up her sleeves*) And what do you think of me, sunshine?

Len -Er -er

Borro He thinks very highly of you. (*Digging him with his elbow*) Don't you, Len? (*Aside*) She may a customer.

Nesta Well, I don't think very highly of you two. In fact, people who disturb me and the whole neighbourhood by hammering nails in notice boards get *right up my nose!*

Borro Quite right, madam. My card.

He gives her a card

Nesta What's this?

Borro Len and Borro -

Len The Double Decorators.

Borro Jobs around the house done with efficiency.

Len Decorating - plastering.

Borro Getting plastered is great fun!

Nesta As a matter of fact, I have a little job needing done.

Borro We have very competitive rates.

Len And discount.

Nesta How much?

Borro -Er 5 per cent?

Nesta How about 25?

Len What?

Borro 10 per cent?

Nesta 20.

Borro 15?

Nesta Done. Tomorrow at nine, and don't be late. Goodbye, -er gentlemen.

She exits into the shop

Len I think we was done.

Borro Not at all. We got a customer, didn't we?

Enter, through the auditorium, Ali Baba, jogging, to suitable music, and in appropriate gear

He goes on to the stage and does a circuit of it

He produces skipping ropes, and skips, not very well. Then he shadow-boxes, and runs on the spot etc.

Len Ali, you don't have to impress us, you know. We're your friends.

Borro I didn't know you were a fitness fanatic, Ali.

Ali (*puffing and panting*) I'm not, boys.

He flops down

This diet'll be the death of me yet. You know, boys, Nesta's banned me from the shop for a fortnight. No chocolate eclairs, no cream doughnuts, no custard slices, and no strawberry tarts. I mean, it's enough to make you cry!

Len Poor Ali!

Ali If I could win the Lottery, I could buy my own shop. Nice thought!

Song 3

After the song, Len & Borro are reading the notice board

Borro Hey, Ali, come and see this.

Ali What? (*He goes and reads it*) 1,000 piastres.

Len All you've got to do is recover the Sultan's gold crown.

Borro Or catch Al Kapoun.

Ali Or both. The problem is, how?

Len Tell you what. We'll be your consultants.

Ali I don't like the sound of that.

Borro We'll give you the benefit of our expertise.

Ali I'd rather have Nesta's teas. In any case, if you mean what I think you mean, it's no dice. If you think you're going to share the loot while I take all the risk, then you're barking up the wrong mulberry bush!

Len and Borro go into a huddle

Len Ali, we're with you, to the end.

Borro Come hell or high tide. Or low tide. Or Crimson Tide!

Len One for all and all for one!

They put their right hands together

Enter Said Baba, Ali's son, R

Said Hi Dad, hi Len, hi Borro. Have you heard the latest about Al Kapoun?

Borro Have we heard? Not only have we heard, but we're going to go out there and do something about it.

Said You are?

Len Your dad, Borro and I are going to recover the Sultan's crown and claim the reward.

Ali And capture Al Kapoun and claim the other reward.

Said Are you crazy? Dad, I think you should come in out of the sun.

Ali No no, Said, it's true. Just think, we'll all be rich. And I won't

have to do any more camel-driving.

Said Dad, Al Kapoun would make mincemeat of you lot! Do you know what he did last week?

Ali No, what?

Said Three of the Sultan's men were captured by Al Kapoun and their bodies have just been recovered. One had been flayed alive, one boiled in oil, and another stretched out on an ant-hill. They were not pretty sights.

Len and Borro go ashen-faced

Len Well, Ali, my friend, it's time we were off.

Borro We have a pressing engagement on the far side of town.

Len It'll keep us busy for months.

Len and Borro exit hurriedly L, tripping over each other in the process

Said bursts out laughing

Said Did you see their faces when I told them that little lie?

Ali You mean it wasn't true?

Said Of course it wasn't. I just wanted to show you what a crazy idea it was. Come on, Dad, we have a pressing engagement, too.

Ali We have?

Said Yes. Three bales of silk to deliver to Mukka-Dada. We leave in an hour. Come on. And no more talk of capturing Al Kapoun.

They exit R

Enter Mario Marconi, from his shop. He is middle-aged, and typically, grumbling. He has two large pills

Mario *Mamma mia!* I think I take-a da wrong pill. I take-a two pink pills and one orange one instead of two oranges and one pink. My memory is not so good. Usually, last thing at night, I switch off

the telly, make a cup of coffee, and put out the cat and the milk bottle. Well, last night I switched off the milk bottle, put out the telly and made the cat a cup of coffee!

Enter Mariana, Mario's daughter

Mariana Hello, Papa! How's things?

Mario Business is bad, *carissima*. And Inter Milan lost 3-0 yesterday. At home!

Mariana You need cheering up, Papa. And I have just the news to do it.

Mario Don't tell me. The Houses of Parliament 'as been blow up.

Mariana No, no. Something much better than that.

Mario There could be something better than that?

Mariana Papa, I'm engaged to be married.

Mario You're too young to be married.

Mariana Just wait till you meet Said. I'm sure you'll like him, Papa.

Mario Said? Which Said?

Mariana Said Baba. He has a good job with his father Ali.

Mario Ali Baba? The camel-driver?

Mariana *Si*.

Mario Your future husband is a camel-driver?

Mariana Yes, but he works hard. And he has good prospects.

Mario Camel-driving is a deadend job. And his father Ali is a layabout.

Mariana Papa, that's not fair!

Mario You marry him over my dead corpse. I gotta go take a pill and lie down. No, two pills. *Mamma mia, vermicelli! Pasta ravioli spaghetti bolognese!*

He goes off jabbering into the house

Mariana Poor Papa. He isn't himself today. But he'll soon come round. Once he meets Said and sees what a wonderful person he is.

Song 4

Enter Said R

They embrace

Said Did you ask your father, Mariana?

Mariana Si.

Said Well, what did he say? Does he approve?

Mariana Not in so many words.

Said You mean, he disapproves.

Mariana Well, let's say it'll take time. It'll be all right once he meets you, Said.

Said Look, why don't we go and see him now?

Mariana No, that wouldn't be a good idea. Papa is a bit low today.

Said Okay. I came to say goodbye. Dad and I are off to Mukka-Dada, for a delivery. We'll be gone about four days. *Ciao*, Mariana.

Mariana I'll come and see you off. Then we say *ciao*. I wonder what I'll do for four days.

Said You'll think of something. Come on, I'm late.

They go off L, arm in arm

Enter a large number of street-entertainers, accompanied by the Chorus

The entertainers alternate their acts throughout the number

Song 5

(A production Number consisting of:

(1) dancers (2) acrobats (3) jugglers (4) magician (5) snake- charmer)

Ali Baba & The Six Thieves

The familiar plot, interspersed with the comic capers of the robbers. Plus, exotic locations, dancing girls, a camel and a gorilla!

Plot Summary

Poor camel-driver Ali Baba stumbles across a cave containing the loot of local mobster Al Kapoun. Ali becomes famous when he restores the Sultan's crown, but is captured by the robbers when he returns to the cave for more loot. He escapes, but is tracked down by evil Al, bent on revenge. After the big showdown, good finally prevails.

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