

The Story of a Genie and a Kind Man

by Eli Jacobs

Near an Indian village in the 19th century, a man flees for his life from rapidly fired arrows. A regiment of soldiers are hot on his heels because just moments before, he had stolen a bowl of curry chicken from a local merchant. He was discovered in an alley while eating his meal, but dropped his bowl to escape the soldiers who sought his life. Fatigued from the run, the new criminal flung himself over one last wall only to spy a curious cave just beyond the edges of town. He had no time to waste running because the arrows were still whizzing past his head.

Suddenly, he felt a sharp pain, as if he were stung by a bee, but it was ten times worse than any bee sting. He looked, in agonizing pain, to find that one of the soldiers who shot at him, had successfully lodged an arrow in the back of his leg. The frightened man staggered in a few steps, while arrows bounced off the mouth of the cave. Because of his injury and exhaustion, he collapsed onto the floor. Through the searing pain, he saw a flash of blinding, golden light, and then, total blackness. He woke in a hazy blue smoke, and found both the arrow and the gash on his leg were gone without a trace of pain.

When his eyes adjusted to the dark, the man could make out the shape of a genie watching him from the back of the cave. The genie was a pale bluish color, and he had eyes that matched his skin. The genie had healed the man's wound while he was unconscious. After thanking the genie for his act of kindness, the man noticed an oil lamp close to him and inquired about it. After learning the secret, he quickly wished for the genie's freedom and bashed the lamp onto a nearby rock. The genie expressed sincere gratitude for both breaking the curse and ensuring no one else would be able to

use that terrible magic again. Neither the genie nor the man would ever forget the other's unconditional kindness.