

### **Ali Baba.**

In a town in Persia there lived a man called Ali Baba. He was a poor woodcutter, and he struggled each day to feed his wife and children. All he ever wanted was to own a shop in the town, sell goods to his neighbors, and have plenty for his family. One day Ali Baba was cutting wood in the forest. He saw a troop of men on horseback approaching. Ali Baba thought these men were robbers, so he climbed a tree to hide. Ali Baba counted 40 men. He wondered whether this could be the band of Forty Thieves he had heard so much about, the robbers that all of Persia feared. Their leader got off his horse and stepped around a bush towards a large rock wall. The powerful man faced the wall, and Ali Baba clearly heard him shout, "Open, Sesame!" A door opened in the rock wall! The door revealed a secret opening to a cave. The leader of the thieves stepped in, and the other robbers followed him. Ali Baba waited until the thieves filed out from the cave. The Captain closed the door, saying, "Shut, Sesame!" Then the thieves rode away. When he was sure they were gone, Ali Baba stepped toward the rock and shouted, "Open, Sesame!" And the door opened for him just as miraculously as it had for the Captain of Thieves. Ali Baba stepped through the threshold to find a large room, filled at every inch with all sorts of valuables, so brilliant with gold, silver, and jewels that Ali Baba had to squint. He feared the robbers might soon return. He quickly gathered as much gold as he could carry. Ali Baba remembered to say, "Shut, Sesame!" when he left the cave. Ali Baba did not notice that a single gold coin dropped from his cloak to the base of the bush that covered the secret door. The Captain of Thieves caught sight of the coin glimmering in the sunlight one day. He was very angry. "How could you drop this and risk revealing our hiding place?" he shouted at his 39 companions. "But, Master," the thieves said, "we know that the punishment for such a mistake is severe. Surely, none of us has done this." "Then we have been discovered," the Captain growled. He paced for several minutes with the thieves waiting anxiously for him to speak. Then he announced, "We must learn who has just become rich in town. That man and all his family must die!"