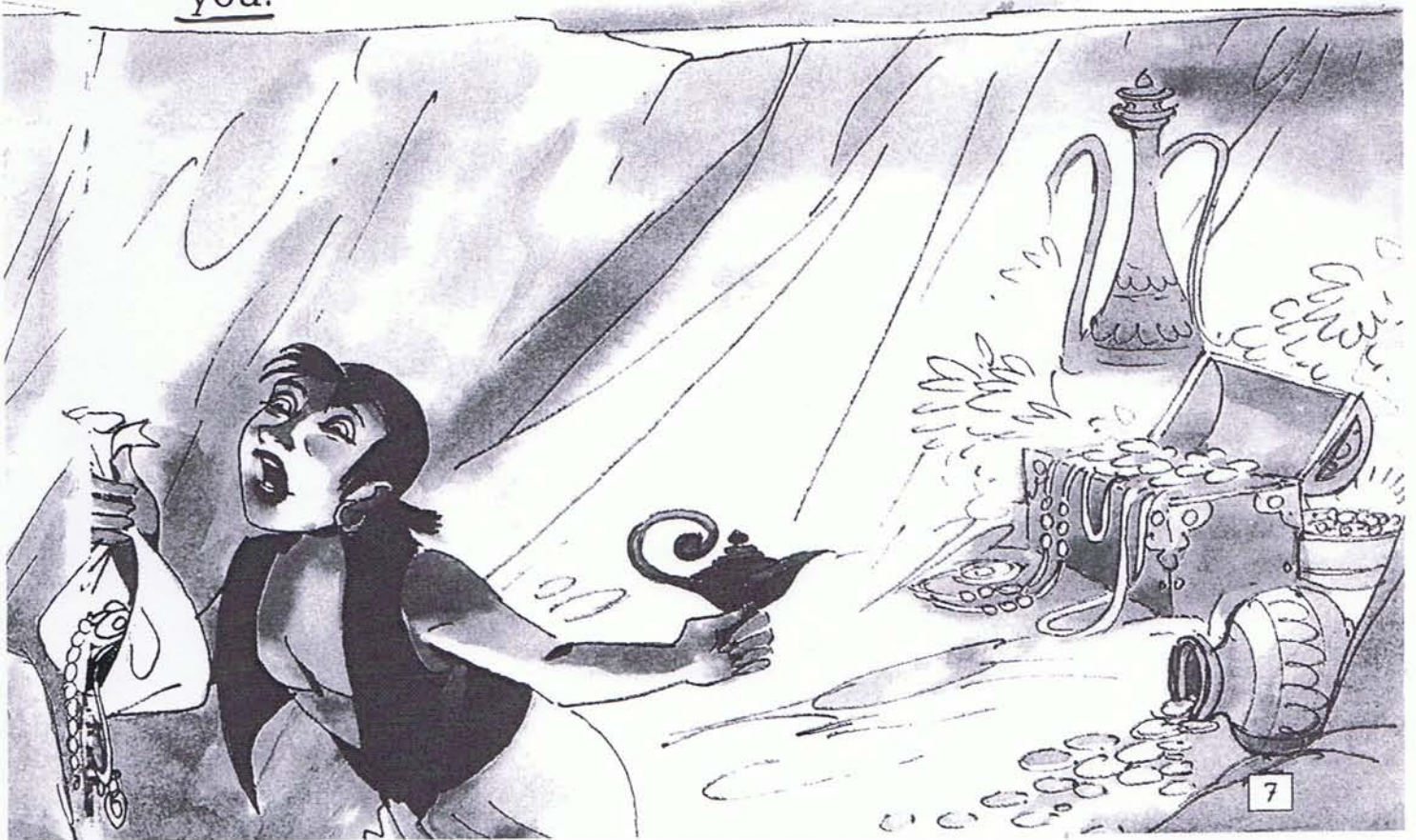


When Alladin wore the ring, he felt a little relaxed and gathered some courage. He descended the flight of stairs and reached the bottom of the cave. As he went through the rooms, he was stunned to see the glittering treasures. He picked up as much treasure as he could. In a corner of the third room, he saw the lighted brass lamp. He put the flame out, threw the wick away and poured the oil out. He then took the lamp and started ascending the stairs. The long flight of stairs was so steep that Alladin was tired And began to pant.

There were only two more steps to climb, but Alladin was exhausted. He called out to the stranger, "Uncle, I am very tired. Please help me to come out."

The stranger saw the lamp in Alladin's hand and said, "Son, first give the lamp to me. I will then help you."



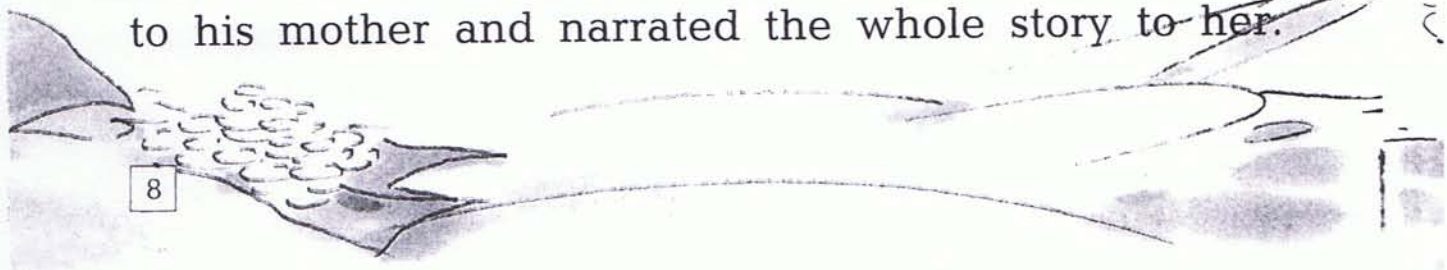
But Alladin had made up his mind to trust the stranger only after he had climbed out of the cave. So, he said, "Uncle, let me come out first and then only I will give it to you."

The stranger became furious. Actually, he was not Alladin's uncle. He was a wicked magician who was only interested in getting the magic lamp. But, he could not get it himself. So, he had pretended to be Alladin's uncle and took advantage of the innocent boy.

The angry magician, once again, muttered some magical words and sprinkled a little powder in the fire. At once, there was a huge cloud of smoke and the mouth of the cave closed tightly. The magician left the place. Alladin was trapped inside the cave! He thought that he would never get out of the cave and so, he started crying. As he was crying, the ring got rubbed against his cheek. And lo! A genie appeared before him and said, "I am the genie of the ring. O master! I am your slave. Your wish is my command."

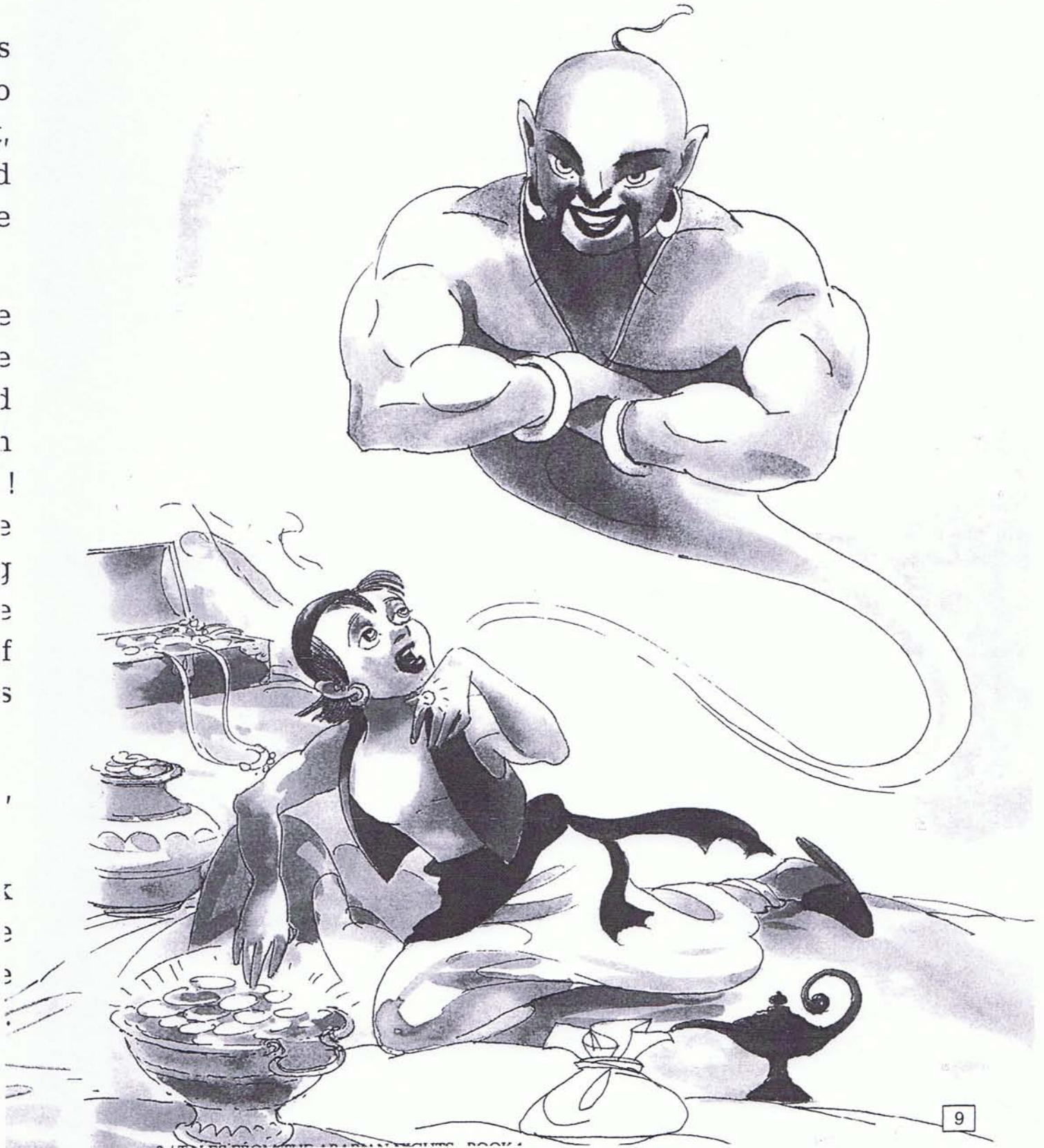
Alladin was dumbfounded. After a while, he said, "Take me back to my mother."

The genie of the ring obeyed at once and took Alladin safely to his mother. Mother was glad to see her son safe and sound. Alladin gave all the treasure to his mother and narrated the whole story to her.



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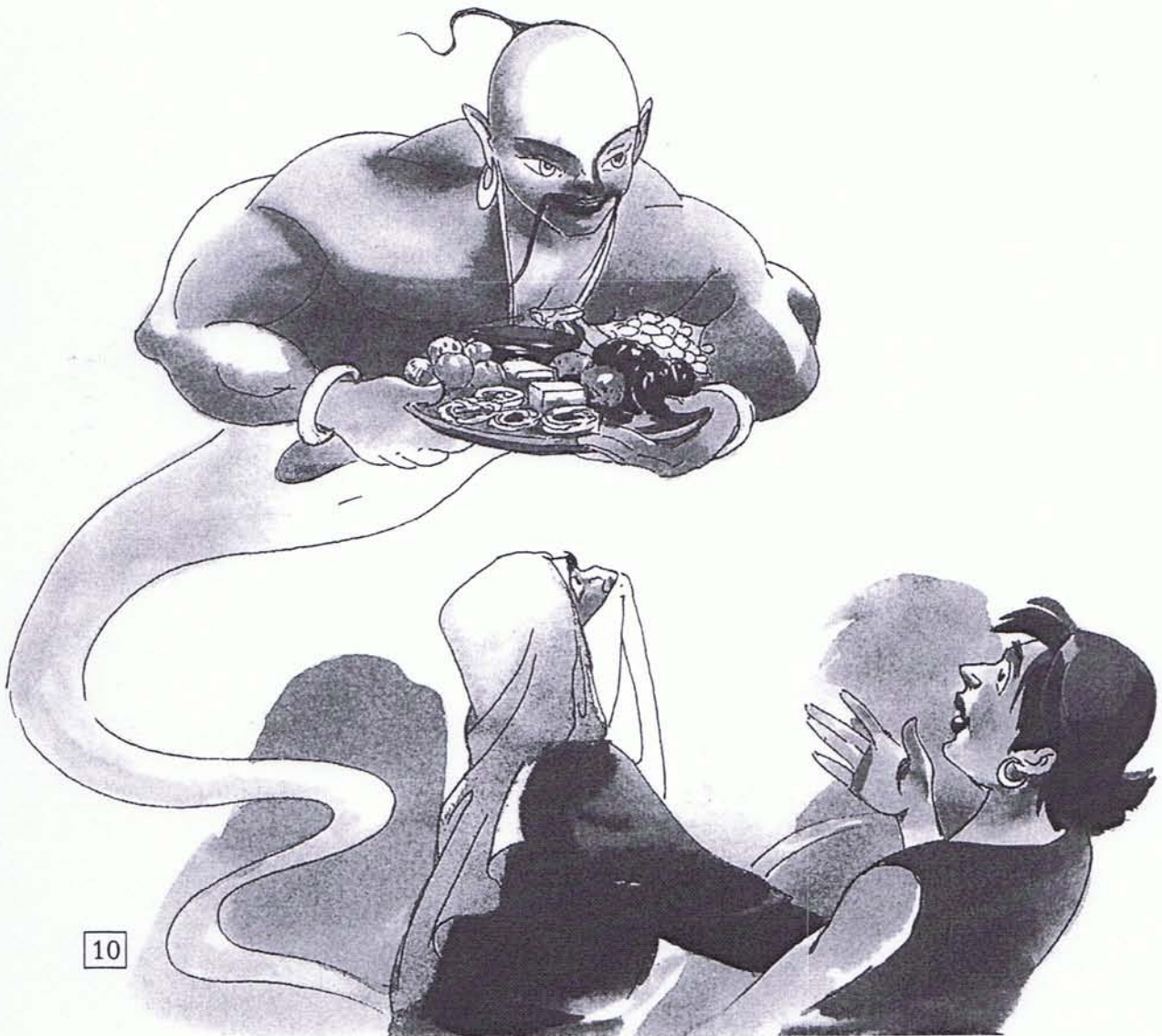
Alladin's mother was pleased to see the treasure.
She said, "Son, you take some rest now. I will prepare
a delicious meal for you."

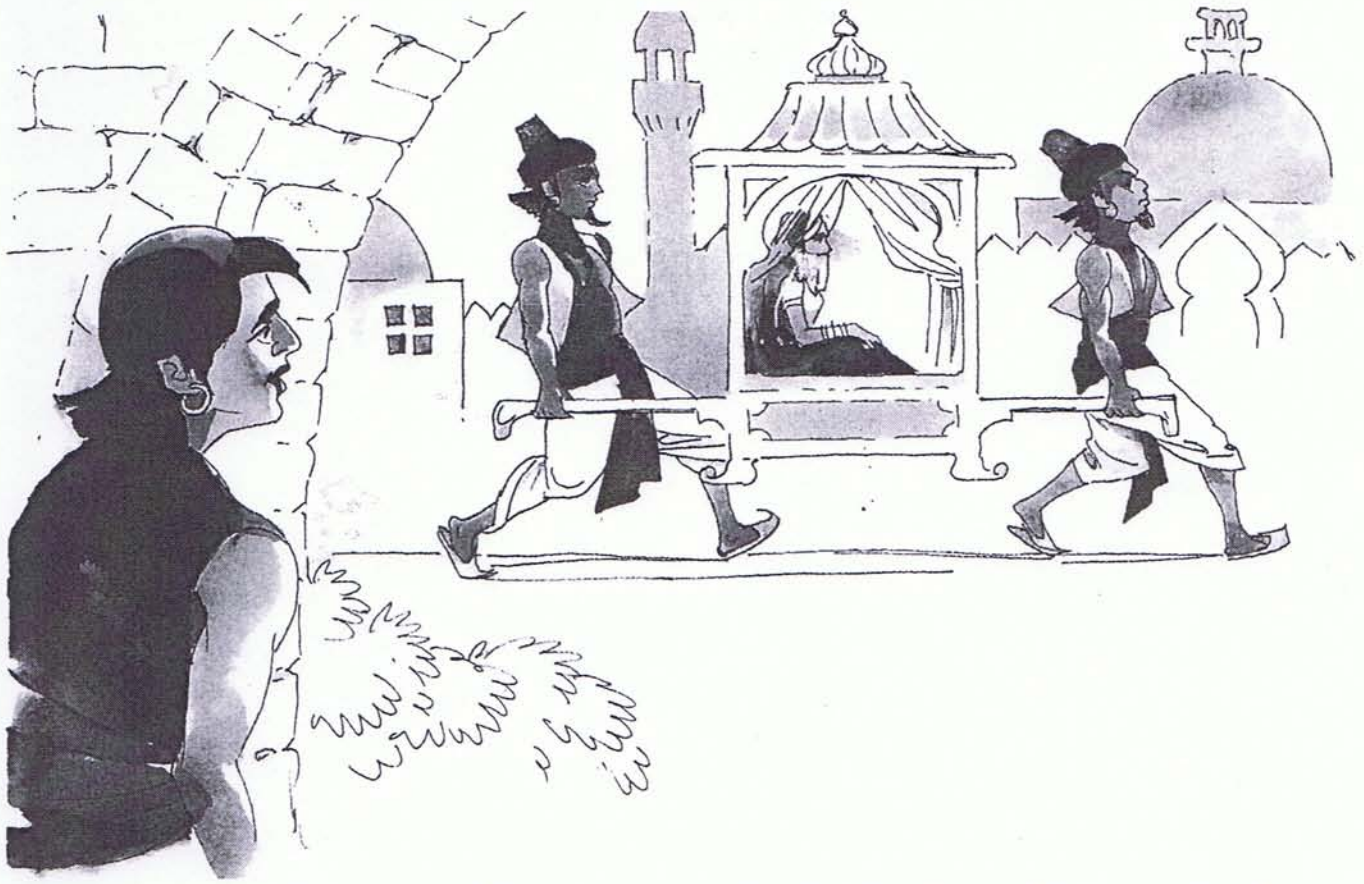


Alladin said, "Mother, henceforth, you will never have to work hard. Our slave will do everything for us."

Saying this, Alladin rubbed the ring against his cheek. The genie of the ring appeared before him and said, "O master! Your wish is my command." Obeying Alladin's command, the genie of the ring appeared with gold plates filled with the most delicious meal. Alladin and his mother had a hearty meal.

With the power of the ring and the treasure of the cave, Alladin and his mother started living happily.





One day, Alladin saw the Sultan's daughter seated in a *palanquin* and passing through the street. Alladin was captivated by her beauty and he fell in love with her. He made up his mind to marry the beautiful damsel.

Alladin came home and said, "Mother, go to the Sultan and ask for his daughter's hand in marriage."

Alladin's mother was a little hesitant to go to the Sultan. But Alladin was adamant. So, she had to fulfil his wish. She took valuable gifts in gold plates and went to meet the Sultan.

Now it so happened that the *vazir* wanted to get his own son married to the princess. So, he did not allow Alladin's mother to meet the Sultan. At last, Alladin sought the help of the genie of the ring to fix a meeting between his mother and the Sultan. [11]