

# Open Sesame!

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*After Mumbo Jumbo pulls off a successful heist, stealing millions from the Bank of Perez, the Teen Titans are on his trail, but little do they know that the infamous magician has planned an ingenious scheme to try and outwit them involving a magic lamp, a Persian rug and an adventure they won't forget...*

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<b>Chapter 1 - The Three Wishes</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Chapter 2 - Arabian Knights</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Chapter 3 - Mid-Noon At The Oasis</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Chapter 4 - Just A Mirage</b>	<b>15</b>

# 1 - The Three Wishes

**After I enjoyed writing "And Now For My Next Trick..." and Another British Invasion so much, I decided to write a longer fanfiction, focusing on my favourite villain from the series. In this story, I've done a different take on Mumbo's magic. I love his magician persona, but there's only so much you can do with stage magic. On the other hand, there are plenty more tropes to play with when it comes to Arabian Nights magic...**

Chapter One:

The Three Wishes

"I can't believe I let him get away with it!" ranted Robin, who was pacing up and down the Teen Titans' sitting area, his brow knitted in frustration.

"Robin, you should not blame yourself for our misfortune," said Starfire calmly, sitting on the sofa, "There was no way you could have known the Mumbo Jumbo would plant a decoy of himself in the 'Jump Park' while he was robbing the millions from the Bank of Perez."

Robin only seemed to have caught the last word. "Mumbo is getting cleverer. I should have known there was something not right when the decoy didn't do any of his usual tricks..."

Cyborg walked through the door leading into the main room. "What's going on?" he asked, seeing Robin at the other end of the room, "Did you catch that crazy magician guy, Robbie?"

"Don't ask," said Raven, who was sat in the dining area reading a book.

"...Mumbo may think he can evade justice this time, but believe me, the next time I see him, he'll be wearing a prison jumpsuit before he can say, 'Abracadabra!'" Robin went on, Starfire's eyes having blanked out.

Cyborg's eyebrows rose. "I'm gonna get back to fixing the T-ship..." he said, turning to exit the room. Raven closed her book and followed him through the door.

Meanwhile, Beast Boy was opening the fridge. "Oh, man! We've run out of tofu!" He raced out of the kitchen. "Guys, we have an emergency! There's no more..." He collided with an exasperated-looking Starfire, who was making her way towards the exit. "What's up, Star?" he asked.

"Robin is being a complete *zarbnarf!*" cried the Tamaranian super-girl. Beast Boy hadn't a clue what that was supposed to mean, but when he turned to look at Robin, he got a pretty good idea.

"I'll show that cunning conjuror who's boss!" Robin continued to fume, placing a finger under his chin. "I need to think of a plan that will wipe that smile off his blue grease-paint face." Actually, he wasn't certain if Mumbo really was wearing blue face-paint that he'd made appear on his skin or whether he'd changed his skin pigmentation using his magic, but in all honesty, that wasn't something he was in the mood for thinking about. "He can run, he can hide, but he can't escape the law!"

"No kidding," muttered Beast Boy to Starfire.

"I am going to retire to my room of the bed," said Starfire, floating towards the door, "Goodbye, friend Beast Boy." She sailed through the exit.

Robin was totally oblivious to the fact his friends had all left the room and was now silently trying to think of a plan to outwit Mumbo. Beast Boy, however, had no idea what was on his mind and thought now might be a more appropriate time to approach him about the fridge's current tofu deficiency.

"Dude, did you realise we're all out of tofu?"

"NOT NOW, BEAST BOY!" thundered Robin. Due to the show's anime-influenced animation, the Boy Wonder's head suddenly turned huge with a monstrous expression and Beast Boy became a cowering

chibi, assailed by flames spurting from Robin's mouth.

Once the pair had turned back to normal, Beast Boy was left stunned by Robin's explosive behaviour. "There are more important matters at stake!" barked Robin, "Mumbo's pulled off a major heist, stealing millions from the Bank of Perez, and he's still on the street. I've got to work out where he is and how to apprehend him before he makes a quick getaway." Robin headed towards the door, no doubt with the intention of going to his bedroom, where he carried out all of his major strategies. When he was working on a particularly challenging case, his walls were bound to be plastered with plans and sketches and often he would spend long hours inside without contact from the other Titans, but if the alternative was him being a "zarbnarf" to them, Beast Boy wasn't going to start complaining!

After Robin had left, Beast Boy stood in silence for a few moments, before deciding to play a video game and forget about Robin's unpleasantness. He played "Super Ninja Fury" for about ten minutes before his stomach began rumbling loudly and he slunk back to the kitchen for some grub. Unfortunately, he couldn't find anything in the fridge or the cupboards that looked particularly appealing. There was no way he was going to eat a mouldy sandwich or some of Starfire's leftover Glorg Surprise (drizzled with lashings of mustard)!

His stomach rumbled louder. "Oh man...I sure wish I had a tofu pizza right now."

"Did somebody say 'I wish'?" said a voice all of a sudden.

"What? Who's there?" Beast Boy looked around at the seemingly empty room. There was no-one in sight wherever he turned. Had his imagination been playing tricks on him? It seemed like the only explanation, yet the voice had been so vivid and also, as he would painfully recall later, somewhat familiar.

He was just thinking it might be a good idea to call the others, when all of a sudden, just above the kitchen counter appeared a golden oil lamp, floating a few centimetres in mid-air. Beast Boy's eyes widened dramatically.

"What is it that you wish, O Green One?" came the voice again, this time from the lamp. It was a lively, pleasant tenor with a slightly nasal tone. "I am a genie of mighty power with the ability to grant any wish your heart desires!"

"You're a genie?" Beast Boy stared at the lamp. "Aw, sweet!" He grinned. "I wish that..."

"Now wait a moment, young man!" A miniature ghostly blue arm shot out of the lamp, the index finger on his translucent hand raised in a "stop" gesture. "There are four conditions."

"Four conditions?" repeated Beast Boy.

"One – I cannot kill anyone. Two – I cannot make anyone fall in love. Three – I cannot bring anyone back from the dead. And four – once you make a wish, it cannot be undone."

Something about the first three rules gave him déjà vu, but he ignored it. "Oh man, I cannot wait to tell the others that I found a genie! ...or well, actually a genie found me. How did you get here?" Beast Boy drew closer to the lamp.

"I have travelled all over the globe, granting wishes to worthy humans. I am aware of the many good deeds you Teen Titans have performed...protecting Jump City and foiling the plans of criminal masterminds..." There was briefly a hint of disapproval in his voice. "...and now you are going to be rewarded for your efforts with three wishes! What do you desire for your first wish?"

"I wish for...a tofu pizza!"

"Your wish is my command, O Green One!" The genie gave a thumbs-up sign.

Promptly a hot, delicious tofu pizza materialised on the breakfast bar beneath the lamp, complete with a cardboard box that said, "Genie Express". Beast Boy shoved a slice into his mouth and managed to Hoover up half of it in five minutes flat. He gave his stomach a satisfactory pat. "Oh boy, that was so good!" He scratched his chin. "Hmm...what do I wish for next?" A lightbulb appeared above his head. "I know! A moped! The girls will go crazy if I have one of those." He imagined them chasing after him on

his cool ride. "I wish for a moped!"

"As you wish, young master!" The genie swept out his palm.

A white moped straightaway appeared on the red carpet between the kitchen and the dining area. Beast Boy jogged over to it and clambered onto the black leather seat. He turned on the engine and giggled with excitement. "This is so *awesome!*"

*Vroom, vroom!* went his new moped and though it was tempting to try it out there and then, there wasn't really enough room to take it for a spin and he knew Robin would annihilate him if he got tyre tracks on the floor, so he had to pass.

"I am so pleased to see you are happy with your wishes!" said the genie, "Being a genie is a very rewarding occupation. Now, what do you desire for your third and final wish?"

Beast Boy got off the moped and walked over to the lamp.

He placed a finger on his chin, resting his elbow on the palm of the other hand. "Can I think this over or do I have to wish right now?"

"Oh no!" Both the genie's ethereal hands emerged from the lamp and he shook them emphatically.

"Take your time – there is no need to rush!"

A thought bubble appeared above the young shapeshifter's head, displaying all the things he knew he could wish for: a mountain of waffles, the latest video games, to play the greatest prank on Cyborg ever...when suddenly he realised there was something, or rather somebody, he wanted more than anything.

"Raven..." he mused.

"Uh, uh, uh..." The genie waved his pointer finger. "As I stated in my rules, I can't make anyone fall in love."

Beast Boy blushed. "That's not exactly what I meant. I...er...would really just like to have her laugh at my jokes for once, or not call me an immature brat, or maybe..."

"Go on..."

"...I'd like her to see I'm not just a silly kid who cracks jokes instead of dealing with life. I want her to know that I can be a hero...and I respect her."

"Perhaps I would suggest an adventure of some sort...one that would prove to her that you are not whom you appear to be?"

"Yeah! I wish we could go on an adventure like that."

"As the young master wishes, it shall be granted!" The genie's finger pointed upwards, the other hand gesturing to his wrist in a majestic expression.

No sooner had he said this, the lamp began to glow. It floated upward into the centre of the room, only a metre below the giant ceiling-light, which promptly blacked out. Beast Boy gazed in fascination as streaks of light shot out from the lamp; striking random corners until, without warning, one of them hit him. He yelped in fright as his world was suddenly plummeted into darkness.

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When Beast Boy awoke, he could sense something was not quite right. Maybe it was because the temperature had inexplicably become much hotter and the ground seemed rather sandy or perhaps an instinctive knowledge that genies were prone to play tricks on unwitting mortals had stirred deep within his mind, but Beast Boy could tell his wish had not worked out like he was expecting. Where was he, for starters?

He appeared to be in some kind of village filled with exotic and rather middle-eastern-looking buildings in a mixture of bright and pastel colours. It was market day and dozens of people were milling around various stalls, selling ornate jars, beautifully decorated rugs and appetising fruit. There were even carpets set out with lone tradesmen sat upon them, surrounded by piles of spices ready to be scooped up and sold.

The villagers wore various exotic-looking clothes, including turbans, harem pants, tunics, thick belts, crop tops and flowing head-scarves; and there were delicious, piquant scents in the air from the food stands. Beast Boy was utterly transfixed by his surroundings for a solid minute. It was like he'd fallen into the movie *Aladdin*!

What exactly was he doing here? Had the genie mixed something up and accidentally taken him back to his home country? Speaking of which, where was the genie? He looked around to see if he could spot the lamp anywhere but instead got a tremendous shock when he noticed that not far away from him lay four familiar figures – the other Teen Titans. The genie had transported all of them to the Middle East! But why? Was this the “adventure” Beast Boy had wished for? He then began to feel very silly. Of course! There'd been no mistake. The genie had somehow whisked them off to the Middle East for their adventure. It wasn't quite what he was expecting, but he knew he should be grateful they hadn't been thrown into some distant galaxy. At least from here they would eventually be able to get home to Jump City...he hoped.

As if his change of location was surprising enough, Beast Boy found he wasn't wearing his regular clothes. Instead, he was wearing a long-sleeved purple tunic, a small black waistcoat, a dark green sash tied at his left hip and a pair of loose-fitting black trousers, with his feet left bare on the sandy ground. The others began to stir and Beast Boy noticed they were not wearing their usual getup either – rather, they were all clad in outfits similar to the other people in the marketplace.

Robin sat up, nursing his head. “What's going on?”

He was wearing a red waistcoat that exposed his bare chest, as well as fairly baggy green trousers, black boots and a layered yellow belt, upon which was attached a curved sword.

Raven stared at the market scene. “I seriously have *no idea*...”

Atop her head sat a shimmering dark blue turban with a large ruby at the front and a deep purple plume. A gauzy blue scarf was draped under her chin, supported by the turban, and she was wearing a short-sleeved navy robe over a light blue baggy-sleeved top and a pair of sapphire harem pants. Her curl-toed shoes were also violet, as was the belt across her middle, which was decorated with rubies. Cyborg was the first to notice his sudden change of attire. He was wearing an ankle-length brown jacket over a V-necked, overlapping tan robe. He had a thick blue layered belt and orange curl-toed boots, as well as a fez for good measure. “Oh man...what am I wearing? I look like I'm supposed to be fightin' Darth Vader!”

Starfire was also confused. Her waist-long red hair was formed into a large bun on the top of her head and was also wearing what appeared to be a cross between a tiara and a golden necklace. She was dressed in a lilac outfit consisting of a crop top, harem pants (which had a thick sky blue waistband, ornamented with three emeralds), a long scarf extending from the back of her hairstyle to her midriff and a nearly transparent veil over her nose. She was also wearing light blue wristbands and slippers.

“Why are we not wearing our usual outfits? And what is this curious place?”

“It looks like the Middle East,” responded Robin, “But how did we get from Titans Tower to here...”

Beast Boy began to feel guilty. “Er...guys? There's something I need to tell you...”

“Welcome, travellers!” came a loud voice, catching the attention of the Titans. It seemed to come from nowhere until they looked upward and caught sight of a Persian rug, floating several metres above their heads, with a figure sat upon it cross-legged. He was wearing an oversized beige turban with a red jewel on the front, a small black waistcoat with gold trimming (revealing his bare chest), a pair of brown harem pants and orange curl-tipped boots. His skin was turquoise, his white hair stuck up on either side of the turban, he had a pencil thin moustache and a goatee and he was wearing a cat-eye domino mask.

Beside him was sat a familiar lamp. “I do hope you had a safe and comfortable journey! After all, you are quite a long way from home...”

All of the Titans were stunned, but none were more horrified than Beast Boy because finally he'd

realised something that had been on the back of his mind since he'd first encountered the genie. That voice *had* seemed familiar, but only now did he know why – it belonged to none other than the infamous Mumbo Jumbo.

## 2 - Arabian Knights

### Chapter Two: Arabian Knights

"Mumbo!" cried Robin, "Why have you brought us here?"

"Your little friend made a wish for an adventure, so here we are! *Shazam!*" said Mumbo quickly, pulling a sheet of paper out of nowhere, which instantly unfolded into a comically lengthy list. "Wishes are subject to approval, genies will not be held accountable for any thefts or damages, no refunds, terms and conditions apply." The document disappeared. "I suggest you prepare yourselves, as what an exciting adventure it will be! I must be going now, as I have many things to attend to. *Shazam!*" Promptly, the magician and his mode of transport vanished into a puff of turquoise smoke.

"I did not like the sound of that," said Robin, standing up.

"What did he mean by our 'little friend'?" asked Starfire, who was behind him.

Beast Boy's pixie ears drooped in shame. "It's all my fault, guys. A magic lamp appeared in the kitchen and this genie said I could have three wishes, so I did...I didn't know he was really Mumbo."

"Way to go, Beast Boy," said Raven, eying him disapprovingly.

"What were you thinking?!" exploded Robin, the anime style causing his head to increase in size, "This lamp appears out of nowhere while there is a magic-using felon on the loose and you actually believe there's a genie inside who's going to grant you three wishes?"

The other three Titans were reduced to chibis in the background.

"Well, you're the one who thought that hologram was Mumbo!" replied Beast Boy angrily, his head now dwarfing Robin's, "If you hadn't fallen for his tricks, I would have never found that lamp?"

"You're blaming ME now?!" thundered Robin, his head outsizing Beast Boy's again before Starfire pushed in between the furious teenagers.

"Please stop this raising of voices!" she begged, "We need to work together to outwit the Mumbo and his evil plan...what is his evil plan this time, exactly?"

"Good of you to ask," replied a familiar voice. The Titans swiftly looked upward to see Mumbo had reappeared, still riding on his magic carpet. "The green one wished for an adventure that would prove to Raven that he isn't all he appears to be. Now that she knows how foolishly he mistakenly trusted *the Amazing Mumbo Jumbo*, I should think that has been accomplished. As a result of his unfortunate third wish, you are now trapped in my world forever more and I will do with you as I please." A cruel expression crept onto his face.

"You don't scare me, Mumbo!" responded Robin boldly, "What's with this whole genie act, anyway? Getting sick of pulling rabbits out of hats?"

"Do not question the ways of the great genie *Mumbo Jumbo*! I have now perfected traps for you bratty teenagers that will seal your doom. *Shazam!*" Robin suddenly vanished from the marketplace. "Observe – Robin, the Boy Wonder, an expert in combat, especially one-on-one." Robin reappeared in a deserted town, against a backdrop of colourful Middle Eastern buildings. There was, however, one bearded swordsman wearing a chest-plate, bowl-shaped helmet with a spike and baggy trousers tucked into black boots, brandishing a curved sword threateningly. Robin drew out his own weapon, ready to defend himself. "But will this trained fighter be able to stand against *an entire army*?" Promptly the swordsman duplicated into three dozen soldiers. Robin's masked eyes narrowed in concentration, focusing on the enemy. The army readied themselves to strike at any minute.

"As for the lovely *Princess Starfire*...SHAZAM!" continued Mumbo. The Tamaranian girl disappeared

before the very eyes of the other three remaining Titans, before she rematerialized in a dark and claustrophobic cavern. “How long will this damsel in distress fare in a cave with no food and water and seemingly no way out...” There was a slight rumble and a rock fell from the ceiling, landing a few metres away from Starfire. “...especially when this cave is slowly filling with sand.” Out of where the rock had once been poured a fountain of sand. “Time’s ticking, my pretty!” The show’s anime style made a metaphor appear of chibi Starfire trapped in the bottom of a giant hourglass, sand drizzling in from the top half.

“And now for you three...” went on the villainous magician. Cyborg, Beast Boy and Raven couldn’t see him any more – rather his voice came from all around them, creating an eerie and threatening atmosphere. “I’m afraid I didn’t have the time to plan anything majorly spectacular to finish you off...but – *SHAZAM!*” The three Titans found themselves on top of a dune, surrounded by nothing but sand. “...I thought you wouldn’t last very long in the desert! Please look out for cobras, vultures, scorpions, spiders and sandstorms.”

Meanwhile, the army were closing in on Robin and the first swordsman had raised his weapon at the young superhero. Robin blocked the blade with his own sword and the battle commenced, thirty-odd soldiers against one boy.

In the cave, the sand was pouring in rapidly, but Starfire was able to find a loose rock, which she tugged at until she discovered a secret tunnel just big enough to squeeze through. She clambered inside and crawled through it on her hands and knees as fast as she could, desperate to find a way out. All the while, she tried to make sense of the Titans’ situation. She’d heard of genies before (and knew a little bit about the Arabian Nights, thanks to Beast Boy and Cyborg showing her “Aladdin” and “I Dream Of Jeannie”) and knew that the scheming magician Mumbo had masqueraded as one to trick friend Beast Boy, but she did not understand why the Middle East seemed exactly how it was on the television. Until recently, Starfire might not have batted an eyelid at this, but she’d seen some videos of Qurac on the news and it didn’t look anything like it did in Western entertainment. For starters, there were no flying carpets or brightly coloured buildings! Something was definitely not right, and she knew there was only one person to blame...

Suddenly, she fell through a hole in the tunnel and plunged into the dark depths beneath her with a loud shriek. She landed face-first on a sandy floor of a much larger cavern. Once she’d picked herself up, she could see the cave was light and almost...glowing. All around her were piles of gold coins, fancy jewellery and fine gemstones in every colour imaginable. It wasn’t a stretch to say it felt as though she’d fallen into Aladdin’s cave!

“This is most curious...” she mused, taking in her surroundings, “I do believe I have fallen into a cave of treasures...but how do I escape?” Though the mountains of valuables meandered in many directions, she could not see if any of them led to anything that looked remotely like an exit. She began walking through the labyrinth to see if she could eventually find a way out.

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In the desert, Cyborg and Raven rode on top of Beast Boy (in the form of a camel) over dunes in the sweltering heat for what seemed like ages, looking for an oasis. Along the way, they saw scorpions darting through the sand (and made an effort to stay out of their way) and the occasional lizard, but there wasn’t the slightest trace of any vegetation. Mumbo had planted them in the most inhospitable desert conceivable – there was nothing but dunes no matter which way they looked!

“This is crazy!” exclaimed Cyborg, “How can those scorpions live here without any water? Even I can’t last without it for very long!”

Suddenly, he and Raven toppled to the ground, landing on top of Beast Boy, who’d inexplicably reverted to his humanoid form.

“Hey! What’d you do that for, BB?” said Cyborg crossly.

"I was getting tired! Can't you guys let me have a break?"

Raven looked disapproving.

"Come on, Raven! A guy's gotta-" Abruptly he twigged what she was thinking. "Hey, wait a minute! Are you still angry with me for the whole genie business?"

"How you could have mistaken Mumbo Jumbo for a Djinn – when you knew perfectly well he was out of gaol – is beyond me."

"I made a mistake, Rae – please forgive me. I can be an idiot sometimes, OK?"

"Correction, Beast Boy – you are an idiot nearly all of the time."

*It looks like Mumbo really did end up granting me the exact opposite of what I thought I wished for!* thought Beast Boy sadly.

"But at least you have the strength to admit it," continued Raven, "I forgive you Beast Boy, but remember it was your poor judgement that led us here in the first place. I should not really judge you for your actions – you may not have understood there are certain indicators of a true Djinn and I doubt Mumbo did either, for neither of you are familiar with the ways of real enchantment."

"Wait...are you sayin' that genies are real?" butted in Cyborg, his eyes widening.

"Should it come as any surprise when you know I am half-demon? Djinn are spirits lower than angels that can take many forms, who carry out the bidding of mortals that summon them and are *occasionally* found in lamps or rings."

"Man, I sure wish we had a genie – a real genie – to get us out of this mess right now..." Beast Boy looked at the sprawling desert. "Wait a minute...why can't you use your magic to zap us out of here?"

Raven closed her eyes and focused. "Azarath, Metrion, Zinthos..." she chanted.

Beast Boy and Cyborg didn't know what to expect, but they were nonetheless surprised when nothing happened.

"What's wrong, Raven?" asked Cyborg, "I may not know much about magic, but I can tell something's up with your powers."

"Ever since we arrived here, I sensed that something was preventing me from using my powers. I was not certain at first, but now I know I am unable to use my abilities."

"How can Mumbo do that?" asked Beast Boy, "I thought all his tricks were just hocus-pocus."

"I have no idea..."

While this was going on, Robin furiously battled against the army, climbing onto roofs and being chased across them by the soldiers, who clambered on at all sides. He leapt across the rooftops but they continued to pursue him, swords brandished.

In the treasure cave, Starfire had finally found large opening in the rock-face...which was blocked by a massive boulder. She pushed with all her might against it, but even her Tamaranian strength was no match for the stone. She blasted it with her green fire, but it didn't leave as much as a dent.

"How is it that the face of the rock can withstand my powers?" she wondered aloud, "Is it protected by the magic of a genie?" Suddenly, she remembered a story she had read whilst studying the folklore of Earth's cultures. "Maybe it is like that story of the forty thieves! What was the password they used?"

She racked her memory, trying to recall what they had said...it was something she'd heard Mumbo say before as well. Open...something. Some kind of seed, if she remembered correctly. "Open the seed?" she tried. There was no response from the boulder. "Open the...fennel? Open the poppy?" Still nothing happened.

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Back in the desert, Cyborg, Raven and Beast Boy were continuing to trek across the scorching sand, a slight breeze now cooling the air, when they noticed a rather disconcerting sight in the distance. A great cloud was forming on the horizon, but not a cloud made of water vapour – a cloud made of swirling sand.

“Guys...” said Cyborg, “Is that what I think it is?”

“A sandstorm!” squeaked Beast Boy.

“We need to take cover,” said Raven, remaining calm as usual.

“Where?!” panicked Beast Boy.

Raven closed her eyes and focused. “Azarath, Metrion, Zinthos...”

“Raven, you know that’s not working,” interrupted Cyborg.

Raven ignored him. “Azarath, Metrion, ZINTHOS!”

“Is there anything I could turn into that would protect us?” said Beast Boy.

“Yeah, a tent,” responded Cyborg.

“Dude, that’s not an animal!”

Raven adjusted her scarf so it covered her nose and mouth. “We need to get to higher ground!”

They ran up the nearest sand dune. The wind grew increasingly stronger and Cyborg had to grab onto his fez to stop it from blowing away.

Once on top of the dune, they gazed out into the approaching storm, hardly feeling any safer from the grey-brown churning mass.

“Beast Boy, turn yourself back into a camel,” Raven instructed, “They are well equipped for surviving sandstorms.”

The green shapeshifter promptly obeyed and crouched down so Raven and Cyborg could hide behind him. The storm drew closer at a rapid pace, roaring and rolling and appearing more threatening than ever.

“Are you sure we can survive that thing?” asked Cyborg.

“I do not know,” responded Raven, sounding slightly less composed than normal.

“What do you think is wrong with your magic, anyway? Is there anything that can influence how your powers work?”

“My powers are connected to my emotions. I don’t think there has been any difference to my emotional state since we first arrived in Arabia.”

Cyborg wasn’t entirely convinced that last part was entirely true, but he was less concerned by it than something he remembered Mumbo saying.

“But we’re not in Arabia! Back in that marketplace, Mumbo said something about us being ‘trapped in [his] world’. Do you think somehow that’s affecting your powers?”

“It is possible. I do not feel as though they are entirely annulled – rather, I am just unable to use them.”

“Mumbo seems to have no trouble using his magic. Maybe magic in this world he’s created only works on his terms – in an Arabian Nights style. What if you tried doing spells his way?”

“I doubt *very much* that imitating his silly hocus-pocus will have any effect whatsoever...”

“You’ve got to try, Raven. It’s our only chance out of here.”

The storm was closer than ever and the three Titans had to close their eyes to keep sand from getting in them. Cyborg was covering his nose and mouth with his coat sleeve. Any moment now, the mass of whirling sand would hit them. Raven knew copying Mumbo’s superficial incantations would make her feel ridiculous, but what if Cyborg’s crazy theory was right – when you were in Mumbo’s “Arabian Nights” world, magic only worked according to his primitive understanding of the subject. She really had nothing to lose by trying...

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“Open the sunflower!” Starfire tried next, “Open the grass!” No, wait – it was something that began with ‘s’. An edible seed – one that was used in cooking, one the humans made oil out of...WAIT! She’d remembered now. “Open the sesame!” she cried. Nothing happened. “Open the sesame!” she repeated, but still the rock would not move.

What was she doing wrong? She was almost certain she’d got the right seed. Was there something

else she was saying wrong? How did Mumbo say the phrase...?

“OPEN SESAME!” she cried, lifting her arms majestically.

With a thundering crunch, the gigantic boulder shifted from blocking the cave’s entrance, almost blinding Starfire as it let in a pillar of sunlight. Through the hole, she could make out a patch of sapphire blue sky. She clambered out of the cavity and flew upward to see if she could work out where she was. The hole was located in a large mountain in the middle of a desert. She could not see her friends anywhere or anyone who looked like they could help her...or anyone at all, actually. She could, however, just about make out what looked like a city in the distance and decided to head in its direction to see if she could locate any of the other Titans.

As she flew towards the city, she became increasingly aware something was not quite right about it the nearer she got. Unlike the other town, the inhabitants of this one were not milling around a market, but rather seemed to be engaged in a battle of some sort, which involved jumping over rooftops and pursuing each other, swords raised – no, wait! They weren’t chasing each other, they were chasing one particular person, and that one person looked immediately familiar.

“Robin!” she shrieked, swooping down his aid.

The boy wonder had been reduced to climbing onto the circular dome roof of the highest tower in the city, fending off any attackers with his curved sword, barely able to hold on any longer. Starfire snatched him off the rooftop, zapping his assailants with her fiery powers.

“Starfire?!” exclaimed a bewildered Robin, “How did you –”

“There is no time to explain – we must find the others!” cried the alien super-girl, as Robin knocked swords with one daring soldier who’d leapt into the air after them.

“Do you know where they are?” he asked, slipping his weapon into his waistband. They were flying over the city’s wall now, out of harm’s way.

“I am not certain, but I believe they cannot be far away. This is not the real Middle East – I reckon it is only a pigment of the Mumbo’s imagination.”

“*Figment*,” corrected Robin, “But then how come Mumbo hasn’t stopped you from using your powers? The last time he trapped us in his world he made them go berserk.”

“I do not fully understand, friend Robin, but my first priority is to locate where the others are!”

“Once we find Cyborg, Raven and Beast Boy, we need to form a think tank to outwit Mumbo and work out how to get out of his world.”

“Oh, I don’t think so!” suddenly said a voice they dreaded the very sound of. Not far in front of them was a flying Persian rug with a familiar blue-skinned figure stood upon it, still wearing his full genie getup, the lamp beside him. “You’re not going anywhere...” Mumbo smiled menacingly.

### 3 - Mid-Noon At The Oasis

Chapter Three:

Mid-Noon At The Oasis

Meanwhile in the desert, the storm had hit the Titans full on. Cyborg had buried his face in camel Beast Boy's side, but Raven was sat cross-legged, meditating in preparation for the crazy thing she was about to attempt. How did Mumbo's magic work, exactly? He just waved his wand, said a nonsensical incantation and hey presto! – the whatever-it-was-he'd-wanted had appeared. There was no concentration, no emotional influence and he didn't even always employ specific words. He certainly hadn't since he'd taken on that genie persona; all he had to say was "Shazam!" and whatever he'd said – no wait, whatever he'd *thought* – immediately happened. Was that all she had to do? Raven pictured in her trained mind a Persian Rug, big enough to fit the three of them on that could take them away from the sandstorm.

"Shazam," she uttered.

There was a sudden blinding flash and her eyes snapped open, forgetting entirely that she was supposed to be protecting them from the airborne sand. She'd needn't have worried, however, as the sight she opened them to was spectacular. They were no longer surrounded by the sandstorm – rather, the sandstorm was now below them and the intricately decorated carpet they were now riding on top of. The sky above them was clear and blue, but there was still a strong wind pushing against them – in fact, it seemed to be making them glide along the top of the swirling sands.

Cyborg and Beast Boy sensed that the storm was no longer battering them and uncovered their eyes too, Beast Boy turning back into his usual form.

"Oh man, I don't believe it..." said Cyborg, "This is AWESOME!"

For once Raven had to agree with his terminology. She pulled down her scarf, revealing her face once more, and closed her eyes.

"We're so high up!" said Beast Boy excitedly, looking over the side of the carpet.

Cyborg rolled up his left sleeve, revealing the screen built into his arm. "I'd better run a system diagnosis. I don't want any sand to have gotten into my circuits."

"Dude, you're waterproof!"

"But am I sand-proof? I can't take any chances, bro!"

"Guys, could you let me concentrate?" interjected Raven, "I'm trying to locate Robin and Starfire." The boys promptly silenced and Raven focused on the thought of finding their comrades. "*Shazam!*"

...

"You may have evaded my plans for your annihilation," went on Mumbo Jumbo, "But I have a few more tricks up my sleeve." He pointed to his left wrist. "Or at least I would if I had a sleeve! That is the only disadvantage to my genie disguise." His masked eyes narrowed and he started rubbing his hands together calculatingly. "Now, what would be the most satisfying end to you bratty teenagers?"

"SHAZAM!" said a voice. Starfire and Robin braced themselves for the worst, but then they realised the voice hadn't actually come from Mumbo...unless of course he'd managed to perfectly mimic Raven's raspy tone (which they wouldn't put past him if it wasn't for the fact imitating it would serve no purpose whatsoever!)

Even more bewilderingly, it appeared whoever had uttered the spell had been directing at the faux-genie, because he and his magic carpet had inexplicably been turned quite literally upside-down. Mumbo took a couple of seconds to register what had happened to him before looking upward – or

rather downward – only to have the first law of cartoon physics come up against him. He dropped like a stone, grabbing his lamp hastily as he tumbled through the air with a bloodcurdling scream, landing awkwardly on top of another carpet below him.

“Nice of you to drop by, Mumbo!” teased Beast Boy.

“What? How did you-” Mumbo was stunned. He then clapped a hand on his bald head. “My turban!” “Is this yours?” asked Cyborg, removing his fez and replacing it with the turban, “You know what, I think it kinda suits me.”

“Give me that!” shouted Mumbo, snatching it back.

Starfire, still carrying Robin, had glided down to meet them. “Friends Raven, Cyborg and Beast Boy – we are so pleased to see you!”

“Raven? What just happened there?” The last time Robin had checked, her magic words had been nothing like Mumbo Jumbo’s!

“Let’s just say I picked up a few tricks from Mumbo,” replied Raven, eying the blue magician, who was sat beside her re-adjusting his turban.

“You may think you can play games with me, Raven,” said Mumbo, “But you do not know what you are up against. When you are in my world, you go by Mumbo’s rules!”

“Shazam,” said Raven dryly and the troublesome magician vanished in a puff of smoke.

Everyone froze in silence for a few moments.

“What did you do with him?” asked Robin, sounding surprisingly concerned.

“One of his usual tricks – I made him disappear. I doubt it will be permanently, though.” She looked upward at the still upside-down carpet. “He has a great deal of power over this world of his.”

Starfire set herself and Robin down on Raven’s Persian rug. “We need to work out a plan to defeat Mumbo while he’s gone,” Robin instructed, before breaking off abruptly. The Titans were just trying to make sense of his uncharacteristic behaviour when he collapsed onto Starfire’s side.

“Robin!” cried his sweetheart, patting his cheeks.

“He’s suffering from heat exhaustion,” explained Raven, “We must find an oasis where there will be water and shade.”

Starfire nursed Robin’s sweaty brow. His fair skin was already developing a tan from the exposure he’d had to the burning sun whilst battling Mumbo’s army. Raven was glad her outfit was very covering or else her ethereally pale skin would have surely acquired a terrible sun-burn.

She closed her eyes and pictured a large pool of sparkling azure water, surrounded by shady palm trees. “*Shazam!*”

“Friend Raven, you have truly mastered the art of the abracadabra!” was the next thing she heard.

She opened her eyes to see exactly what she’d imagined in her mind – down to the last detail, in fact. It appeared Mumbo’s ridiculous, culturally-appropriated world was now being influenced by her powers. After all he’d subjected them to over the last hour; it was about time he got a taste of his own medicine! The carpet drifted towards the oasis and parked itself neatly on the sandy poolside, underneath the shade of the palm trees. Beast Boy rolled up his trousers and splashed around in the lake with glee, while Raven leant over the edge and dipped her cupped hands into the water, from which she drank. Cyborg filled his fez with cool water and handed it to Starfire, who was attending to the now conscious Robin. He drank gratefully, resting against a palm tree.

Beast Boy paused, up to his knees in the refreshing pool, watching Robin and feeling rather guilty about his condition. “I’m sorry I got you into this, guys. I should have realised that genie was a phony from the start – he never even showed his face. Me and my stupid wishes...”

“I do not begrudge you, friend Beast Boy,” responded Starfire, caressing Robin’s brow, “If it was an adventure that you wished for, we have most certainly received one!” Her optimistic attitude made Beast Boy feel a little less uncomfortable.

“Feeling better, Robbie?” asked Cyborg, who was crouched at his side.

“Yeah...I’ve just got a slight headache. I’ll probably be fine.” He rose back to his feet. “Right, team. Our first priority now is to escape from Mumbo’s world. Do we even know how we got here?”

“All I remember is a great flash of light,” said Starfire, “Before I awoke on the bed of sand and cobbles.”

“That was from the magic lamp,” explained Beast Boy, “After my last wish, there was this freaky glowing and I got hit by one of the beams and then everything went black!”

“Then it is as I suspected,” said Raven, who was walking towards them, looking truly stunning with the flaming sun as her backdrop, in Beast Boy’s opinion. She was beautiful, powerful, wise – how he longed to earn her respect! You never know, maybe – *just maybe* – there was still a chance...“We are trapped in a pocket world inside the oil lamp. Mumbo’s understanding of the Djinn may be primitive, but he must be aware this is a common feature of their magic.”

“Like the Tardis!” exclaimed Beast Boy.

“I suppose...there are some similarities.”

“And how are we gonna get outta this dimension?” probed Cyborg.

Robin snapped his fingers. “Why didn’t I think of it before? To defeat Mumbo, all you’ve got to do is destroy the source of his power – his wand!”

“But where is his wand?” asked Starfire, “I have not seen him use it since we arrived in his world.”

“You’re right Starfire...” Robin’s brow knitted. “...but that’s not because he doesn’t have it on him.

There is one item we haven’t seen him without so far – his lamp!”

“Are you sayin’ Mumbo disguised his wand as a lamp?” confirmed Cyborg.

“I’ll bet Mumbo was trying to throw us off the scent. We’ve taken his wand away from him every time we’ve come up against him in the past. He thought that if he didn’t appear to have it on him, we wouldn’t know how to defeat him, and what better item to masquerade his wand as than another object typically associated with magic?”

“Knowing Mumbo, it’s probably the reason for this whole ‘Arabian Nights’ charade,” added Raven.

“I think you’re right, Raven. Mumbo hasn’t been up to his usual tricks during this scheme of his. He must have worked out the one way we’re always able to defeat him and come up with a plan to avert it, getting more twisted ideas in the process. He may be crafty, but he’s no match for the Teen Titans! Our mission now is to do whatever it takes to capture that lamp...but first we need to find Mumbo.”

“That shouldn’t be a problem...”

...

Meanwhile, in a sandy alleyway of the market town the Teen Titans had landed in upon first arriving in Mumbo’s world, there was suddenly an almighty CRASH! as a figure toppled onto a cluster of porcelain jars.

“Curse those pesky Titans!” shouted Mumbo, “Just wait until I get my hands on them! I’ll teach them not to mess with the AMAZING MUMBO JUMBO!”

He got back to his feet, dusted off his waistcoat and inspected his lamp. Once he had ascertained it was undamaged, he put two fingers into his mouth and whistled. His Persian rug flew back to him as quickly as it could and Mumbo hopped onto it, sitting cross-legged.

“Now to find those meddling brats. They may think they have seen the last of me, but they’re about to find out that I’m not the only one who can do a disappearing act!” He began laughing wickedly as the carpet rose into the air, amongst the circular dome rooves of the city. The Titans had to be out there somewhere – his world was only so big – and wherever they were hiding, he was going to find them.

## 4 - Just A Mirage

Chapter Four:

Just A Mirage

As it happened, the Titans weren't very far away at all; in fact, they were right below Mumbo, hidden behind stalls or inside jars.

"Raven – now," hissed Robin, who was concealed with a large pot.

Raven crawled out from behind several carpet rolls, which were stacked against a wall, and flew up to the Persian rug suspended in the air. Mumbo had his back to her, but somehow seemed to be aware of her presence.

"Aah, Miss Raven!" He twisted his head round without moving his body in a rather horrific fashion, a mischievous expression upon his face. "Nice of you to drop by. As you can see, your little vanishing trick did not work for long. My powers in this world are far stronger than your pathetic hocus-pocus!"

*You're one to talk*, thought Raven.

Mumbo suddenly vanished, leaving Raven bewildered for a few seconds before she heard a voice whisper directly into her ear, "Peek-a-boo." The young enchantress swung round to see Mumbo was right behind her, stood upon his carpet.

"You do not scare me." Raven raised her hands, ready to cast another spell.

Even so, her confidence did not faze Mumbo. "Being a genie has many benefits. *Shazam!* I can be here..." He made himself appear behind her. "There..." He materialised beside one of the circular dome rooves. "EVERYWHERE!" A dozen Mumbos unexpectedly surrounded Raven on all sides, in various dramatic, threatening poses. Raven looked a little disconcerted, but kept her cool.

"Quick! While he's distracted," signalled Robin to Starfire and Beast Boy, who flew out of their hiding places in a direction Mumbo wasn't looking.

"Nothing can stand against the power of the AMAZING MUMBO JUMBO!" ranted the now un-duplicated magician, "I'm in control of this entire world. *Shazam!*" He conjured a little dome on top of his outstretched palm, inside of which appeared holograms of the deserts and cities found inside the dimension he'd created. "I can command the elements according to my will and pleasure." He fluttered his other hand over the facsimile, making the city disintegrate into dust, blown away by the wind. "You are my puppets to do with as I please. That includes you, Starfire and Beast Boy!"

*Does that dude have eyes in the back of his head or what?* thought Beast Boy, in the form of an eagle. He wouldn't put it past him, knowing Mumbo!

Starfire shot at him with her green fire, but it had no effect on the smug magician, who merely waved his hand ("*Shazam!*") and sent the discharges flying back in her direction. They hit the alien super-girl head on, knocking her SMACK! into the side of a building. Funnily enough, none of the market-goers seemed to notice, but mind you, they hadn't paid much attention to the fight that was going on above their head full stop. They were merely background characters of Mumbo's creation, only programmed to do what he wanted.

Beast Boy swooped down at his enemy, turning into a cobra, fangs bared and ready to sink into the flesh of Mumbo's arm. However, the genie just cried "*Shazam!*" again, conjuring a basket and a bansuri. He started charming Beast Boy with a rendition of the "Snake Dance" song. The young shapeshifter landed in the container and was immediately thrown into a hypnotic trance, his eyes turning black and white psychedelic patterns.

Cyborg had been hiding behind the display of carpets and knew he had to act fast. "Come on, baby! We

gotta do this thing,” he said to Raven’s Persian rug. The rug flew out of its hiding place and Cyborg hopped onto it, flying towards his friends. “Take that, Jafar!” He fired at Mumbo with his built-in artillery, but the magician called out “*Shazam!*” once more and a brick wall appeared in front of him. It was no ordinary wall either – Cyborg was unable to penetrate it, no matter how much energy he put into his sonic cannon.

Mumbo laughed menacingly. “You cannot defeat me!” He paused all of a sudden. “Wait...how are you trying to defeat me?” Why were they attacking him...for no reason? It didn’t make sense. Unless they had figured out the only way they could get home...

His head swivelled to see where he’d left his lamp. To his horror, it had vanished – right under his nose! “My lamp!” he yelped.

“Thanks for the present, Mumbo!” said a voice above him. He looked upward and saw Robin – hang on a minute – *floating* in the air, clutching his precious lamp.

“What?!” spat Mumbo, “But how...?”

“It looks like Raven’s ‘pathetic’ spells got the better of you after all. I didn’t think you’d expect me to be able to fly or turn invisible...” He demonstrated this ability, only the lamp not disappearing with the rest of him. “You’ve been beaten at your own game.” He re-materialised with a sly smile upon his face.

Raven was now hovering behind a rather unsettled Mumbo, her arms crossed in a stereotypical genie pose, Cyborg and the carpet beside her, an intimidating expression upon his face. Starfire had picked herself up from her dent in the wall and was now heading to Robin’s side.

“I wonder what will happen if I rub this lamp...” said Robin, doing just that.

“DON’T DO THAT!” hollered Mumbo, shaking his hands.

The lamp had started glowing and already beams were leaking from underneath the lid. Robin’s masked eyes narrowed, smirking in satisfaction. “*Open sesame!*”

That was when everything became engulfed in light.

...

Back in the main room of Titans Tower, there was a massive flash of light, spouting from the oil lamp in the middle of the floor, and the five teenagers suddenly landed awkwardly on the carpet, wearing their usual clothes (with the exception of one shapeshifter, who was still a hypnotised snake). Beast Boy’s moped was parked not far away from the lamp and the half-eaten pizza had now cooled, having been left open on the breakfast bar during the Titans’ adventure. What is more, a rather disorientated Mumbo, still dressed in his genie disguise, turban and all, had also been thrown out of the magical world.

Cyborg whispered something in snake Beast Boy’s ear (or at least where one would be) which made him laugh and snap out of his trance, turning back into his regular form.

Robin was still holding the lamp and it didn’t take long before he noticed something very odd.

“Hey...wait!” he exclaimed, catching the attention of the other Titans, “There are two lamps?” Sure enough, the lamp he cradled in his arms was not the same one that Beast Boy had found earlier, but the mystery didn’t last long, as the lamp Robin was clutching soon turned into a black wand with white tips and the other lamp became a black top hat with a grey band – Mumbo’s signature items.

“The hat of magic!” cried Starfire, picking it up before Mumbo realigned himself.

Now everything made sense! She knew from his previous schemes that it was not a mere stage prop – much like his wand, it was an object of immense power. She was aware that it could create a pocket dimension of Mumbo’s design, or apparently multiple ones, as they had been privileged to discover today.

“Is there anything in here?” she wondered aloud, turning the hat upside-down and shaking it.

“DON’T DO THAT!” shrieked Mumbo, abruptly coming to his senses.

Out of the hat tumbled a pile of playing cards, several bouquets, a few pennies, a remarkably long chain

of scarves, a straitjacket, a pair of doves, a cloud of glitter and an adorable white rabbit, who started nuzzling Starfire's feet, not to mention heaps and heaps of dollars stolen from the Bank of Perez, which fluttered into every corner of the room. Mumbo looked very sheepish.

Robin jerked up his right knee and smacked the wand upon it, breaking it in two. Mumbo's hat and paraphernalia vanished in an instant (much to Starfire's disappointment in the case of the bunny she had started cuddling), the would-be genie now stripped of his exotic disguise. He had now reverted to his human appearance of a balding, grey-haired man wearing black trousers, a short-sleeved white shirt and a pair of braces, hanging his head in shame.

Robin pulled a pair of handcuffs out of his utility belt. "Your evil dream was just a mirage, Mumbo. You're going right back to Jump City penitentiary and don't think you can '*Shazam!*' your way out of this one." He clamped the handcuffs onto the elderly man's wrists.

"I suppose my plan was a risk, but it was still awfully fun pretending to be a genie," said Mumbo reminiscently, "I wanted my plan to be just like a real Arabian Nights adventure – that's why I didn't annul your powers. It's more fun when the heroes in a story have magic they can use to combat their foes." He looked nostalgic. "I've been fond of the Arabian Nights stories ever since I was a little boy." "You'll have plenty of time to read them where you're going," said Robin, picking up his com badge with one hand, gripping Mumbo's shirt with the other. "Calling 911 – this is Robin of the Teen Titans! We've managed to apprehend Mumbo Jumbo and need you to get to Titans Tower on the double. Over and out."

It was then Beast Boy noticed something was missing from the lounge. "Dude? Where's my moped?"

"It vanished with the rest of Mumbo's tricks, buddy," explained Cyborg.

"Oh, yeah..." Beast Boy's ears drooped a little.

...

The police came soon afterward and escorted Mumbo into a prison van, to continue his sentence for the string of crimes he'd already committed, before he would face trial for his latest offense. Robin returned back into the main room after handing their foe over to the authorities, knowing he had an apology to make.

"Do you think that's the last we'll see of Mumbo?" asked Cyborg.

"Ha! No chance!" replied Robin.

"How does he keep getting new magic wands, anyway? Does he have a secret supply or somethin'?"

"Maybe if we keep breaking them, he'll eventually run out." Robin gave a wry smile, before remembering why he was there. "Guys? Can I now apologise for earlier? I was a jerk."

Starfire immediately flew over and smothered him in a loving embrace. "Oh, you are definitely forgiven, friend Robin! You are certainly not the *zarbnarf* after all."

"Amen to that, Star!" said Cyborg, giving Robin a fist-bump (which was very difficult to return when he was being cuddled by an alien with super-strength!)

"You're totally forgiven, dude!" said Beast Boy, "It was so neat how you snuck up on Mumbo when he didn't know that Raven had given you superpowers. You really kicked his butt!" He turned to Raven.

"You made one super-cool genie, Rae! Who'd have guessed you could outwit Mumbo with his own magic words?"

"I would prefer it if you didn't remind me of that," responded Raven, hiding her face underneath the hood of her cloak.

"I'm sorry I shouted at you earlier," said Robin, escaping from Starfire's tight hug to place a hand upon Beast Boy's shoulder, "I'm the team's leader – I should have known better."

"That's OK, man! I really messed up too today."

"No sweat, BB!" said Cyborg, "You did your part to help stop Mumbo."

"Not only that," added Robin, "But if it wasn't for your wish, I wouldn't have this wicked suntan!" He

pulled off his right glove, revealing a perfectly browned arm, which he flexed proudly.

“Man, I sure wish I could tan like that!” said Beast Boy jealously.

“Your skin’s green,” said Raven.

“So what?”

“Ya know what, I actually kind of miss my fez,” said Cyborg, fingering his bald head, “I never knew Mumbo had such a great sense of style, creatin’ those outfits for us. You looked like a real swashbuckler, Robbie.”

“Come to think of it, I am starting to miss my sword...” Robin slipped his glove back on.

“Raven, you looked truly enchanting in a costume of the genie!” Starfire complimented her friend.

“Er...thank you,” replied Raven, unsure what to make of her comment.

In his heart, Beast Boy utterly agreed with Starfire. Raven had looked stunning in that outfit – breath-taking, even. Mind you, Beast Boy thought she looked beautiful in anything. Raven herself was breath-taking.

He thought about how she had forgiven him for his folly when they were walking in the desert. She didn’t have to, but she’d tried not to judge him for his mistakes. She’d gone out of her way to see from his point of view. Maybe his wish had come true after all – he really had earned respect from Raven! You just never know, one day he could show to her that he really could be a hero...

In the meantime, however, he was going to have to do something about the alarming gurgles coming from his stomach.

“Hey guys!” he said, “Do you think we could go out for pizza? I got Mumbo to magic me one but I think it’s vanished from my tummy!”

“Great idea, Beast Boy!” said Robin.

“I have the rumbles of the stomach too!” Starfire’s belly demonstrated loudly. “We were without food in Mumbo’s world for a long time. It is no wonder we are famished. Let us go to the place of pizza!”

“You can count me in!” said Cyborg.

With that, the Titans headed out of the room, laughing and chatting, no longer stressed by the day’s events.

THE END

### **Note:**

Here are two rather unimportant but interesting things that happened while I was writing this story: I listened to a lot of cheesy disco music on Spotify whilst writing it, all thanks to a brilliant idea I had to look for some Arabian Nights-themed music. I found a song called “Open Sesame” by Kool And The Gang and an album called “Arabian Nights” by the Ritchie Family which got me in the mood for some disco!

One of my inspirations for writing this story, along with Disney’s Aladdin (Mumbo reminds me somewhat of the genie – they’re both blue-skinned, complete hams and have crazy magical powers!), was a segment regularly featured on the classic Hanna-Barbera programme “The Banana Splits Show” called “The Arabian Nights”. I have to admit, it’s a pretty good series with decent characters, storylines and humour. (Google it if you’re interested!) Something surprising I noticed while planning this story was that I could draw parallels between the characters of Teen Titans and the Arabian Nights. Robin is like the heroic Prince Turhan, who has no magic powers but is a skilled swordsman, just like how Robin has no superpowers and instead is an expert fighter. Starfire is similar to Princess Nida as both of them look dainty and feminine, but they are also pretty tough when they need to be and valuable members of their teams. Beast Boy has the same power as Bez the Beast – they can both turn into animals! Bez even wears a green outfit. Cyborg and Rasime are both the muscles of their teams and as for Raven, there is a sorcerer in the Arabian Nights named Fariiek. (I suppose Zazu the donkey could also be compared

to Silkie, but Silkie didn't appear in this story – there wasn't really anything for him to do!)