

The Magic Genie

Once upon a time in a far distant land, there was a farmer working hard in his field. It was hot, very hot, and dry. As he worked and sweated, he kept thinking about an old lady in a neighboring village who had a magic genie, who could do almost anything.

The harder he worked in his field the more he thought to himself, “I wish I had a magic genie. If I had a magic genie I would plant this whole field and rest all day under a shade tree.” The more he worked, the more he thought of what he could do with the magic genie.

One miserably hot day he could stand it no longer. He threw down his hoe and starting walking into the forest to find the old lady in the nearby village with the magic genie. When he found her, he asked to take the genie back to his own field. The old woman refused, and they argued.

Finally, the old lady agreed to loan him the genie, but gave him this chilling warning: “*You must give the genie work or he will eat you.*” This didn’t seem like much of a problem. He had lots of things for this genie to do. He took the lamp with the magic genie back through the forest and out to the center of his own field.

He plopped down on the ground with the lamp and rubbed it purposely. Out popped the magic genie, tall as a building and as wide as a tree. “GIVE ME WORK OR I WILL EAT YOU,” bellowed the genie.

“First, I want you to hoe and plant this entire field.” The genie clapped his hands loudly and shouted, “DONE! GIVE ME WORK OR I WILL EAT YOU.”

The man was startled at the speed of this huge accomplishment. He settled into a comfortable position to think what else the genie could do when the genie stared directly into his face and yelled, “GIVE ME WORK OR I WILL EAT YOU!”

The man stammered, “And I also want you to build me a palace with plates of gold and silver.” He thought this would keep the genie busy. But the magic genie clapped his hands together loudly and shouted, “DONE! GIVE ME WORK OR I WILL EAT YOU!”

The man, fully aware of his serious predicament, swiftly ran down to the river where a holy man was bathing, the genie in hot pursuit. The farmer begged, “Master, you must help me. There is a magic genie who will eat me if I don’t give him work. Help!”

The master waded to shore just as the genie arrived to shout his command into the back of the head of his new owner. “GIVE ME WORK OR I WILL EAT YOU!”

The master plucked out a curly hair from the back of his own head and handed it to the terrified farmer and said gently, “Have him keep this hair straight.” The farmer turned around to face the genie who was now nose to nose.



Sheepishly he said, “Here, keep this hair straight.” The genie grabbed the hair, a hand pinching it on each end and slowly tried to straighten it until it would slip loose with a almost audible “boing”. This happened over, and over, and over. The man breathed a sigh of relief. Then he turned back to face the master.

The master slowly explained, “The genie is like your own mind that can eat you if you don’t give it something to do. When danger threatens, have your genie repeat a task, like a beautiful mantra. Repetitive work pacifies all types of genies. And when you need work done, call the genie away from his repetitive task, have him do the work, and then return him to the mantra so he doesn’t eat you.”

The farmer dropped into deep thought. Awareness dawned. He began to master not only his new genie, but his own mind. The world got a little brighter that day.