

## **676 See Type 954.**

### **954 The Forty Thieves. (Ali Baba.)**

(Including the previous Type 676.)

The tale consists of two parts:

(1) A poor man (woodcutter) witnesses robbers entering into a mountain by pronouncing magic words like "Open, sesame" [D1552.2]. He then tries the formula [N455.3], enters the mountain, and finds a huge amount of gold [F721.4, N512] which he takes home.

(2) His greedy brother, who lends him money scales, discovers his secret when a piece of gold remains in the scale [N478]. The brother goes to the mountain, but he is dismembered by the robbers because he forgets the formula for opening the mountain [N471]. At the request of his sister-in-law, the woodcutter fetches his brother's corpse, tells a cobbler to mend it and buries it.

The robbers plan to take revenge. With the cobbler's help they find the house of Ali Baba and mark it with a chalk circle, whereupon his maidservant (daughter) marks all other houses in the same way. The robber chief disguises himself as a merchant and asks the woodcutter for lodging for the night for himself and for his mules laden with jars (casks) of oil. When the maidservant goes to take some oil for her lamp, she realizes that only one jar is filled with oil, and that the robber's companions are hidden in the others [K312]. She heats the oil, pours it into the jars, and kills the robbers.

The robber captain escapes and comes back in disguise (as a suitor). At dinner he asks for a meal without salt (in order not to be obliged to his host). Thereupon the maidservant becomes suspicious, recognizes the robber, and kills him. As her reward the woodcutter marries her to his son (nephew).

Combinations: 613, 735, 950, 956B, and 1535.

Remarks: Popular as a proverbial phrase.