Once there was this guy named Aladdin. Not *that* Aladdin. That Aladdin had no **stuff**, no stuff at all. *This* Aladdin was different. This Aladdin **had** stuff.

Stuff like a red bicycle with a small dent in the fender, a soccer ball that was autographed by a really famous soccer player and had a stain of some kind on it, a cowboy hat with no feather in the hatband...some pretty nice stuff. **A**

You’d think that having some pretty nice stuff would have made Aladdin happy. But you’d be wrong. It didn’t, so he wasn’t. **“Some”** stuff wasn’t good enough for Aladdin.

**“If I had a lot of stuff, maybe I’d be happy,”** he told his mother.

And he sighed a deep sigh, frowned a sad frown, and started **moping** around the house. **B**

Now, when I say Aladdin **moped** around the house, I mean exactly that. He actually went outside and walked in a circle around his house, all the while repeating the word “**mope**” over and over again.

Of course, this upset Aladdin’s mother quite a bit. She wanted her son to be happy and smiling.

“Okay,” she said. “You say having a lot of stuff might make you happy? Then I will get you a lot of stuff!” **C** And she wasn’t kidding around. She got Aladdin all the stuff she could afford. And when she ran out of money, she
sold the car, their house, and even her favorite earrings so she could get him even more stuff.

She got him a new bicycle without a dent, a new autographed soccer ball without stains, and a cowboy hat with a feather in its hatband. And that was just for starters.

I could tell you everything she bought him, but that would take way too long. D Let’s just say that she got Aladdin so much stuff that it would have been totally impossible to fit it all into their house...if they still had one.

Aladdin’s mom was sure that he’d be happy now. But he wasn’t.

“Mom,” Aladdin said, “You’ve gotten me a lot of stuff, and I really appreciate it. But I am still not happy! Of course, maybe I would be happy if I had a lot more stuff...” E

And then he said, “Excuse me, Mom, I’ve got to go do that sighing, frowning, moping thing again, if it’s okay with you.”

“No problem,” his mom said. “In fact, I think I’ll join you.”

And she did. But because they no longer had a house, they had to mope around the pile of stuff, which was now as big as their house used to be. “Mope, mope, mope!” they said. F