July 10, 2016

Cordie,

I was in a thrift shop many months ago, and I found a brass lamp. Having listened carefully to many fairy tales, I rubbed it and a genie appeared. As is to be expected he offered me three wishes, but as it was an old lamp and missing many parts, he advised me to keep my expectations low.

He wasn’t kidding. I told him that my granddaughter, Cordie, would have a birthday this summer, and that it would be really great if she could have a robot of her own. He said that this was absolutely possible, but hiding behind low expectations, he said that it would have neither arms nor legs. I asked what is the use of that, and he replied that it could be a wise robot that would expound the wisdom of the world.

I thought that would be acceptable. I mentioned that you admire Steam Punk, so could it be some somewhat Steam Punky. He said of course, and slyly added that this was another wish so I would only be due one last wish. I though this was rather cheap, but I don’t make the rules.

I though hard, and asked if it could look like you. He told me not to press my luck, he was not the most proficient or capable genie in the world, and given that it was an electric lamp, the magic was not the same as was in the olden times. So I backed off and asked if it could have some fun lights and a clock so it could at least be useful telling the time a date. He agreed and disappeared, having granted the third wish and not wanting to be around when I figured out that I had been scammed.

His magic was meager. I had to work over the lamp myself. I cleaned the brass so that it would shine. I rearranged the parts and figured ways to connect them. But it needed more. It had to be wise, and the only way for it to show this would be to speak, so I gave it a voice. It had to have shining eyes, so I put those in too. To make those parts work in harmony, I found a computer to give it a brain.

The wisdom though is a tad lacking. You’ll see as you listen. I wanted to do more, but the brain I gave it can’t cope. It also does have a clock, but its memory capacity is too small to use it. The choice seemed to be lights, clock, voice, pick any two. I chose the lights and voice. Perhaps I will have to do a brain transplant someday.

I did think it tacky that the genie promised me my wishes and then made me do all the work, but had it been otherwise, it would have been a fairy tale.

Happy Birthday and lots of Love,

BTW: As he disappeared, the genie suggested I name it “Cordie-Bot”.

Addendum:

Alas, after several years the genie relented and returned to help me do a brain transplant on the CordieBot. The new brain has far more capabilities, and can now not just tell the time, but also the weather and words of wisdom found on the web. Its capability to speak is much improved, and its messages augmented with special and mysterious features as you will discover.

The genie did not make this process easy, but required that I go on numerous quests to prove that I could overcome cryptic messages on the internet and discover how to make the new features work.

I have now succeeded, and the new CordieBot is ready for you to enjoy.