

## **The Monkey's Paw**

On a rainy night in England. Herbert White and his father Mr. White were playing chess as his mother, Mrs. White, was busy knitting by the fire. They were waiting for Mr. White's old friend Sergeant-Major Morris, a war veteran. When Morris arrived, the family offered him a drink, and after a few more, Mr. White inquired about a monkey's paw Morris had mentioned in a previous conversation.

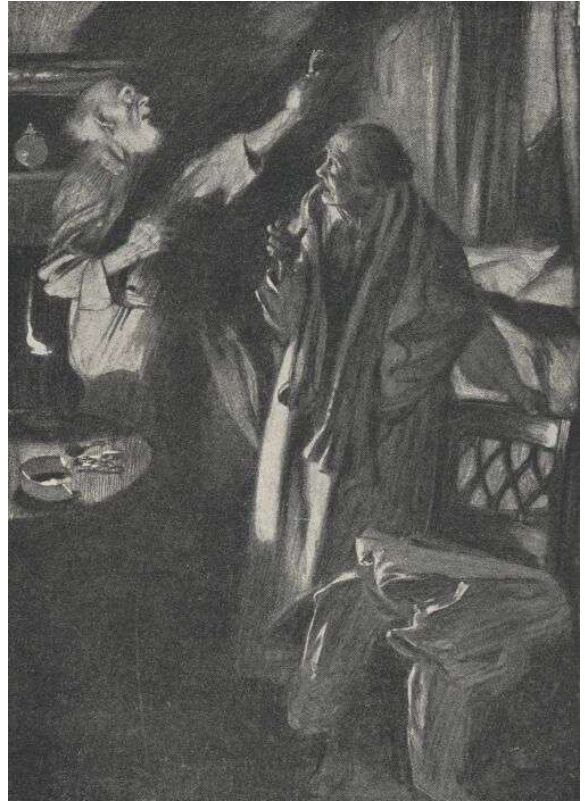
With the rest of the family quite curious, Morris explained that it was a mummified monkey's paw that granted three wishes of the person who possessed it. Morris claimed that he had already exhausted his three wishes and so the paw was useless for him. The lady became quite curious and wanted to have that paw. Mr. Morris warned her of its powers by stating that the previous owner wished death as his last wish.

"Can you imagine that! What do you think might have happened that made the previous owner wish to die?" He said.

After mentioning this, Morris threw the talisman in the fire, but Mr. White ran to retrieve it. Morris warned Mr. White of his fate, and told him not to make any wish.

After dinner, Morris left for home and the family thought about what to wish for. They decided that with more money, specifically two hundred pounds, they could pay off the remaining loan of the house. Mr. White wished for £ 200 with the paw in his hand. Suddenly he was shocked and hastily threw the paw on the floor. The paw, he felt, had moved in his hand. Mr. White was frightened, and the family felt uneasy as they went to bed thinking of Morris' warning.

The next morning, the family laughed at their childish fear of the talisman and wondered how silly it was to think that a wish could harm them. Herbert, the darling son of Mrs. and Mr. White headed to work, while the couple lazily spent their time in their cosy home. In the afternoon, Mrs. White noticed a man by the front gate, struggling to decide whether to enter or not.





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Thinking of the money, Mrs. White ran to the man and brought him in. The man, a representative from Maw and Meggins, where Herbert worked, had come to tell the family that Herbert was killed in a machinery accident. Hearing the news the couple was shocked and dumbfounded. The man went on telling the family how the accident occurred and how bad the owner felt for the family. He then told them that as a compensation they would receive some money. Mrs. White jumped in. "How much" she cried with a faint hope that the wish hadn't been granted. "Two hundred pounds" the reply was enough to make her knees go weak. She fell on the floor. Her heart ached in pain.

The first wish of the White family led to the death of their son. The couple performed the last rites of their son with heavy heart, and soon after, Mrs. White fell into a state of hopelessness. One night, Mr. White was woken by the sound of his wife's voice asking for the monkey's paw. She begged him for it, and demanded Mr. White to wish for their son's return to the world again. Mr. White was hesitant, thinking about his son's mutilated corpse caught in the teeth of the huge machine, but his wife's persistence broke him. He tried to convince his wife not to do so but the grieving mother lay hold of the paw and lo! The 2nd wish was made. Mr. White sat beside her in terror but was relieved when nothing happened in the following few minutes. They headed to bed again.

Suddenly the light went off Mr. White headed downstairs for a candle. As he reached the foot of the stairs, he heard a knock at the door. He ran back to the bedroom. He tried to tell his wife that it was nothing, but Mrs. White knew from the way it knocked that it was Herbert. Mrs. White joyously rushed to open the door but her husband stopped her. He held her tightly but she broke free. Ignoring her husband's pleading she went to unlock the door. She was unable to reach the top bolt and begged Mr. White for help.

Meanwhile, Mr. White feverishly searched for the monkey's paw as the knocking grew louder. Mrs. White grabbed a chair from the kitchen and began to unbolt the door. Mr. White at this very time managed to find the paw and made his third wish. The door opened, and the couple looked down the deserted street. Can you imagine what would have happened if Mr. White had not made his final wish?

Do you know what was the final wish?