

Patrick Kennedy

## JACK THE MASTER AND JACK THE SERVANT.

There was once a poor couple, and they had three sons, and the *youngest's* name was Jack. One harvest day, the eldest fellow threw down his hook, and says he, "What's the use to be slaving this way? I'll go seek my fortune." And the second son said the very same; and says Jack, "I'll go seek my fortune along, with you, but let us first leave the harvest stacked for the old couple,"

Well, he over-persuaded them, and bedad, as soon as it was safe, they kissed their father and mother, and off they set, every one with three pounds in his pocket, promising to be home again in a year and a day. The first night they had no better lodging than .a fine dry dyke of a ditch, outside of a churchyard. Before they went to sleep, the youngest got inside to read the tombstones. What should he stumble over but a coffin and the sod was just taken off where the grave was to be. "Some poor body," says he, "that was without friends to put him in consecrated ground: he mustn't be left this way." So he threw off his coat, and had a couple of feet cleared out, when a terrible giant walked up. "What are you at?" says he; "The corpse owed me a guinea, and he sha'n't be buried till it is paid." " Well, here is your guinea," says Jack, "and leave the churchyard, it's nothing the better for your company." Well, he got down a couple of feet more, when another uglier giant again, with two heads on him, came and stopped Jack with the same story, and got his guinea; and when the grave was six feet down, the third giant looks on him, and he had three heads. So Jack was obliged to part with his three guineas before he could put the sod over the poor man. Then he went and lay down by his brothers, and slept till the sun began to shine on their faces next morning.

They soon came to a cross-road, and there every one took his own way. Jack told them how all his money was gone, but not a farthing did they offer him. Well, after some time, Jack found himself hungry, and so he sat down by the road side, and pulled out a piece of cake and a lump of bacon. Just as he had the first bit in his mouth, up comes a poor man, and asks something of him for God's sake. "I have neither brass, gold, nor silver about me," says Jack; "and here's all the provisions I'm master of. Sit down and have a share." Well the poor man didn't require much pressing, and when the meal was over, says he, "Sir, where are you bound for?" "Faith, I don't know," says Jack; "I'm going to seek my fortune." "I'll go with you for your servant," says the other, "Servant *inagh* (forsooth)! had I want a servant--I, that's looking out for a place myself." "No matter. You gave Christian burial to my poor brother yesterday evening. He appeared to me in a dream, and told me where I'd find you, and that I was to be your servant for a years So you'll be Jack the master, and I Jack the servant." "Well, let it be so."

After sunset, they came to a castle in a wood, and "Here," says the servant, "lives the giant with one head, that wouldn't let my poor brother be buried." He took hold of a club that hung by the door, and gave two or three *thravallys* on it. "What do you want?" says the giant, looking out through a grating. "Oh, sir, honey!" says Jack, "we want to save you. The king is sending 100,000 men to take your life for all the wickedness you ever done to poor travellers, and that. So because you let my brother be buried, I came to help you." "Oh, murder, murder, what'll I do at all at all?" says he. "Have you e'er a hiding-place?" says Jack. "I have a cave seven miles long, and it opens into the bawn." "That'll do. Leave a good supper for the men, and then don't stir out of your pew till I call you." So they went in, and the giant left a good supper for the army, and went down, and they shut the trap-door down on him.

Well, they ate and they drank, and then Jack *goth* all the horses and cows, and drove them *over an hether* the trap-door, and such fighting and shouting, whinnying and lowing, as they had, and such noise as they made! Then Jack opened the door, and called out, "Are you there, sir?" "I am," says he, from a mile or two inside. "Wor you frightened, sir?" "You may say frightened. Are they gone away?" "Dickens a go they'll go till you give them your sword of sharpness." "Cock them up with the sword of sharpness. I won't give them a smite of it." "Well, I think you're right. Look out. They'll be down with you in the twinkling of a harrow pin. Go to the end of the cave, and they won't have your head for an hour to come." "Well, that's no great odds; you'll find it in the closet inside the parlour. D--do 'em good with it." "Very well," says Jack; "when they're all cleared off I'll drop a big stone on the trapdoor." So the two Jacks slept very *combustible* in the giant's bed--it was big enough for them; and next morning, after breakfast, they dropped the big stone on the trap-door, and away they went.

That night they slept at the castle of the two-headed giant, and got his cloak of darkness in the same way; and the next night they slept at the castle of the three-headed giant,--and got his shoes of swiftness; and the next night they were near the king's palace. "Now," says Jack the servant, "this king has a daughter, and she was so proud that twelve princes killed themselves for her, because she would not marry any of them. At last the King of *Morôco* thought to persuade her, and the dickens a bit of him she'd have no more nor the others. So he fell on his sword, and died; and the old boy got leave to give him a kind of life again, to punish the proud lady. Maybe it's an imp from hell is in his appearance. He lives in a palace one side of the river, and the king's palace is on the other, and he has got power over the princess and her father; and when they have the heads of twelve *courtiers* over the gate, the King of Morocco will have the princess to himself, and maybe the evil spirit will have them both. Every young man that offers himself has to do three things, and if he fails in all, up goes his head. There you see them--eleven, all black and white, with the sun and rain. You must try your hand. God is stronger than the devil."

So they came to the gate. "What do you want?" says the guard. "I want to get the princess for my wife." "Do you see them heads?" "Yes; what of that?" "Yours will be along with them before you're a week older." "That's my own look out." "Well, go on. God help all foolish people!" The king was on his throne in the big hall, and the princess sitting on a golden chair by his side. "Death or my daughter, I suppose," says the king to Jack the master. "Just so, my liege," says Jack. "Very well," says the king. "I don't know whether I'm glad or sorry," says he. "If you don't succeed in the three things, my daughter must marry the King of Morocco. If you do succeed, I suppose we'll be saved from the dog's life we are leading. I'll leave my daughter's scissors in your

bedroom to-night, and you'll find no one going in till morning. If you have the scissors still at sunrise, your head will be safe for that day. Next day you must run a race against the King of Moroco, and if you win, your head will be safe that day too. Next day you must bring me the King of Moroco's head, or your own head, and then all this bother will be over one way or the other."

Well, they gave the two a good supper, and one time the princess would look sweet at Jack, and another time sour; for you know she was under enchantment. Sometimes she'd wish him killed, sometimes she'd like him to be saved.

When they went into their bedroom, the king came in along with them, and laid the scissors on the table. "Mind that," says he, "and I'm sure I don't know whether I wish to find it there to-morrow or not." Well, poor Jack was a little frightened, but his man encouraged him. "Go to bed," says he; "I'll put on the cloak of darkness, and watch, and I hope you'll find the scissors there at sunrise." Well, bedad he couldn't go to sleep. He kept his eye on the scissors till the dead hour, and the moment it struck twelve no scissors could he see: it vanished as clean as a whistle. He looked here, there, and everywhere--no scissors. "Well," says he, "there's hope still. Are you there, Jack?" but no answer came. "I can do no more," says he. "I'll go to bed." And to bed he went, and slept.

Just as the clock was striking, Jack in the cloak saw the wall opening, and the princess walking in, going over to the table, taking up the scissors, and walking out again. He followed her into the garden, and there he saw herself and her twelve maids going down to the boat that was lying by the bank. "I'm in," says the princess; "I'm in," says one maid; and "I'm in," says another; and so on till all were in; and "I'm in," says Jack. "Who's that?" says the last maid. "Go look," says Jack. Well, they were all a bit frightened. When they got over, they walked up to the King of Moroco's palace, and there the King of Moroco was to receive them, and give them the best of eating and drinking, and make his musicianers play the finest music for them.

When they were coming away, says the princess, Here's the scissors; mind it or not as you like." "Oh, won't I mind it!" says he. "Here you go," says he again, opening a chest, and dropping it into it, and locking it up with three locks. But before he shut down the lid, my brave Jack picked up the scissors, and put it safe into his pocket. Well, When they came to the boat, the same things were said, and the maids were frightened again.

When Jack the master awoke in the morning, the first thing he saw was the scissors on the table, and the next thing he saw was his man lying asleep in the other bed, the next was the cloak of darkness hanging on the bed's foot. Well, he got up, and he danced, and he sung, and he hugged Jack; and when the king came in with a troubled face, there was the scissors safe and sound.

Well, Jack," says he, "you're safe for one day more." The king and princess were more *meentrach* (loving) to Jack to-day than they were yesterday, and the next day the race was to be run.

At last the hour of noon came, and there was the King of Moroco with tight clothes on him--themselves, and his hair, and his eyes as black as a crow, and his face as yellow as a kite's claw.

Jack was there too, and on his feet were the shoes of swiftness. When the bugle blew, they were off, and Jack went seven times round the course while the king went one: it was like the fish in the water, the arrow from a bow, the stone from a sling, or a star shooting in the night. When the race was won, and the people were shouting, the black king looked at Jack like the very devil himself, and says he, "Don't holloa till you're out of the wood--to-morrow your head or mine." "Heaven is stronger than hell," says Jack.

And now the princess began to wish in earnest that Jack would win, for two parts of the charm were broke. So some one from her told Jack the servant that she and her maids should pay their visit to the Black Fellow at midnight like every other night past. Jack the servant was in the garden in his cloak when the hour came, and they all said the same words, and rowed over, and went un to the palace like as they done before.

The king was in a great state of fear and anger, and scolded the princess, and she didn't seem to care much about it; but when they were leaving she said, "You know to-morrow is to have your head or Jack's head off. I suppose you will stay up all night!" He was standing on the grass when they were getting into the boat, and just as the last maid had her foot on the edge of it, Jack swept off his head with the sword of sharpness just as if it was the head of a thistle, and put it under his cloak. The body fell on the grass and made no noise. Well, the same moment the princess felt any liking she had for him all gone like last year's snow, and she began to sob and cry for fear of anything happening to Jack. The maids were not very good at all, and so, from the moment they got out of the boat, Jack kept knocking the head against their faces and their legs, and made them roar and bawl till they were inside of the palace.

The first thing Jack the master saw when he woke in the morning, was the black head on the table, and didn't he jump up in a hurry. When the sun was rising, every one in the palace, great and small, were in the bawn before Jack's window, and the king was at the door. "Jack," said 'he, "if you haven't the King of Moroco's head on a gad, your own will be on a spear, my poor fellow." But just at the moment he heard a great shout from the bawn. Jack the servant was after opening the window, and holding out the King of Moroco's head by the long black hair.

So the princess, and the king, and all were in joy, and maybe they didn't keep the wedding long a-waiting. A year and a day after Jack left home, himself and his wife were in their coach at the cross-roads, and there were the two poor brothers, sleeping in the ditch with their reaping-hooks by their sides. They wouldn't believe Jack at first that he was their brother, and then they were ready to eat their nails for not sharing with him that day twelvemonth. They found their father and mother alive, and you may be sure they left them comfortable. So you see what a good thing in the end it is to be charitable to the poor, dead or alive.

In some versions of "Jack the Master," &c, Jack the servant is the spirit of the buried man. He aids and abets his master in leaving the giants interred alive in their caves, and carrying off their gold and silver, and he helps him to cheat his future father-in-law at cards, and bears a hand in other proceedings, most disgraceful to any ghost encumbered with a conscience. As originally told, the anxiety of the hero to bestow sepulchral rites on the corpse, arose from his wish to

rescue the soul from its dismal wanderings by the gloomy Styx. In borrowing these fictions from their heathen predecessors, the Christian storytellers did not take much trouble to correct their laxity on the subject of moral obligations. Theft, manslaughter, and disregard of marriage vows, often pass uncensured by the free and easy narrator.

Silly as the poor hero of the next tale may appear, he is kept in countenance by the German "Hans in Luck," by the world-renowned Wise Men of Gotham, and even the sage Gooroo, of Hindoostan. In a version of the legend given by a servant girl, who came from the *Roer* in Kilkenny, and had only slight knowledge of English, Thigue distinguished himself by an exploit more worthy of his character than any in the text. He stood in the market, with a web of cloth under his arm for sale. "Bow wow," says a dog, looking up at him. "Five pounds," says Thigue; "Bow wow," says the dog again. "Well, here it is for you," says Thigue. His reception by his mother at eventide may be guessed.

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