

B.Yasmin Banu

Assistant Professor

Department of English

Jamal Mohamed College

Trichy-20

The Monkey's Paw Summary

AUTHOR INTRODUCION

W.W. Jacob also known as William Wymark Jacobs was born on 8th of the September in 1863 London in England. in his initial days, he used to live in River Thames Wharf where his father had a job as Manager. From a young age, he loved writing and his first work ("Many Cargoes") was published in 1896, which was successful. He mostly used to write short stories and his best-known short story was a horror story named The Monkey's Paw. Before Monkey's Paw in 1902, he also gave good stories like The Skipper Wooing (published in 1897), and **Sea Urchins** (released in 1898). His every story had the magic of making this fiction a real story and connecting with the readers. The stories were having a warmth and also an amount of gentleness. There are almost 17 such volumes which all were written by him and were having a small amount of humour and adventure in them. He died on 1st September 1943, in London.

In Part-I

The story starts with a dark and very stormy night and a comfortable and warm house in which Mr and Mrs White and their son Herbert White are just relaxing. Inside the home, Mr White is playing chess with his son, whereas Mrs White is near the fire, Knitting something on a chair. The game ends with the win of his son and later Mr. White starts talking to his wife and tells her that the weather is not good so the road (which is not too far away from their home) is deserted.

Suddenly, a new entry happens when Sergeant Major Morris, who is identified as a family friend, reaches out to pay a casual visit. Both friends started drinking

Whisky and he started telling his stories of visiting Abroad. In these conversations, Mr White also told everyone about his desire to visit India, at which his friend told him that he is better at home only. Slowly the talk converted into an argument and in Between the argument Major Morris took out a small, Mummified paw from his pocket. He shared a story in which he said that a Fakir placed a spell on the paw to prove that the almighty himself has decided the fate and it is never a good choice to make a change or compete with change as it may have repercussions.

As per Major, three men can easily place wishes on this paw three times each. The major also told him that he already made his three wishes, but the other person who made use of his third wish asked for death (which gave him a lot of guilt) and this is why he made up his mind to sell it as he is not interested in making much more loss due to it. But sadly no one is really interested in buying that as everyone wants to make sure it works and that is not possible without wishes. While talking suddenly Mr White threw the paw into the fire but Mr White in no time saved it. As he himself wanted to make wishes, Major clearly warned him not to save it three times but in the end, agreed to tell how that paw works and how Mr white can make wishes with it.

Although Mrs White laughed at the story and said that this story only reminds her of "Arabian Nights" and laughed saying that maybe her husband should wish for an extra helping hand as she has a lot of work to do. But Major didn't laugh or even found it funny and tells his friend to use his mind very clearly if he ever wants to make any wish. Later he kept telling many more stories about the country India and in the end left the house. As soon as he left Herbert said that he is only joking and is full of complete nonsense with no logic. He also teases his father and says that his father may try to wish to be a king so that he doesn't have to listen to his mom and can do things according to himself. At which both Father and son started playing and having fun.

Mr. White is not sure what he wants as he already has all his needs and this is why he is not able to decide. Herbert suggested to his dad that two hundred pounds would help them in paying off all the money which is needed to pay their house loan. Mr white agreed and played for this amount aloud while his son stayed with him and played the piano within a very melodramatic chord. Suddenly, Mr White started crying very badly and said that the paw was moving in his hand like any snake. After a while, Mr and Mrs white decided to go to bed but Herbert still stayed on the side of the fire and kept watching the fire. He was able to see a real and moving monkey face in the flames and so he decided to cool down the fire, took the monkey's paw with him, and went to his bedroom.

In Part II

The very next morning, the story's second part started with the sunshine of a winter morning. Till now the family forgets about last night and starts doing their work in a very cheerful and energetic way like every day also the mummified paw is not even looking a bit dangerous (no one can guess how it behaved last night).

When Mr. White thought about his wish he said that two hundred dollars will not cost anything much. Herbert makes a joke about it and says yes it can, but only if the money starts raining from the sky, directly on his father's head. Mr White answered that people facing issues and getting wishes may be just coincidence. Herbert smiles and leaves for work.

After some time, Mrs. White found a stranger outside their house, who was dressed in very well clothes. The stranger with very hesitation knocks at the door three times and then opens and comes inside it. Mrs White helps him in coming inside. He, with so much sadness and nervousness, tells her that he is a representative of Maw and Meggins, who are Herbert's employers. As soon as Mrs White sees him, she asks if Herbert is fine or not. The representative tells him that he is hurt but is not feeling pain. For a while, she was calm and relieved but then she realized that feeling no pain actually means he is not alive. The representative says that Herbert was dead due to being caught in the machinery". After a while, Mr White took a look and said that Herbert was the only hope and their only alive kid. With much sadness and embarrassment, the representative argued that he is just an employee obeying the orders of Maw and Meggins orders. He then told them both that the firm is not responsible for any causality which is done during work and so will not take any responsibility for Herbert's death and only provide two hundred pounds to the family. As soon as they both heard the amount, Mr White immediately fainted, and Mrs White shrieked.

In Part III

After the Whites end all last rituals of Herbert, both parents stop feeling any hope and are tired. After a few days, (almost a week) one day when Mr. White woke up at night and saw that her wife was crying loudly from the window. He went to her and asked her to come back to the bed in a very polite manner. But as she was in so much pain, she refused to come back. He stayed quiet and sad until Mrs White started shouting and crying that she needs the monkey's paw.

Mr White was scared and refused her to come back. She later asked him to go back downstairs and make a wish of bringing Herbert come back to life. Mr White tries to resist and tells her that Herbert's death and the firm's compensation have nothing to do with the Paw and wishes. Mr. White also told her that he didn't want her to know but Herbert's body wasn't in good condition and He wasn't even able

to identify his body by face and took the help of his clothes to tell that he was Herbert.

Mrs. White doesn't want to listen, she continues crying and telling Mr White that he should bring Herbert back to life with the help of Monkey's Paw. Mrs. White this time, forcefully asked him to make the wish and keep making it until he comes back. Without any choice, he made the wish and kept waiting until the candle blew out. They were able to hear sounds like the sound of a clock, the creak of stairs, or even a mouse. And so finally Mr.White decided to go downstairs. As soon as his matches went out and as soon as he was about to use his last wish, he heard a knock on the door. He later heard another knock and this time went upstairs without opening. The next knock was heard by Mrs. White and she in too much excitement shouted that it is Herbert and ran toward the door. She immediately realized that He took a long time to come because he had to walk about two miles from the graveyard.

Mr White again asked her to not open the door as this is not a good idea but she is not in the mood to listen to anything and continue running toward the stairs. Due to her small height, she struggled to open the bolt but the knocking speed was so fast and in the meantime, Mr White started looking for the paw at a very fast pace, which he lost by dropping to the floor with fear. As soon as Mrs White finally pulled the bolt back, at the same time Mr White found the paw and made his last wish.

Immediately knocking stopped and Mrs. White started crying much louder. Mr white came downstairs and found out that on the other side of the door, there was no one and the street was empty and silence was all around.

Conclusion

This story brings out so many emotions and feelings but also lefts us with a very strong lesson on greed and how Humans should never try to play with nature. This story at different stages brings different emotions of characters. The story is based on haunted events and is capable to scare you at some points. In the last part, the story also shows the extreme emotions of the mother and how she stops caring about anything except for his son. It is heart breaking to see how a father became helpless at the hands of destiny and wished for letting his own son go.