



The Monkey's Paw

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Writer W. W. Jacobss haunting tale of how a mans cavalier wishes are tragically granted by an exotic but cursed talisman, wreaking havoc on what was previously a content family.

The Monkey's Paw Details

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From Reader Review The Monkey's Paw for online ebook

Carol says

A **dark stormy night** with a night visitor sets the stage for the telling of this short **creepy** tale of woe, and.....

A **magic spell** from days of old granting three wishes on a mummified paw comes with the warning **not to interfere** with fate, but oh the temptation is just too great to pass by.....

The **first wish** causes shock and unrelenting despair.

The **second wish** brings a man to his knees in overwhelming fear (**huge creep factor here**) and.....

The **third wish**, well, read it to find out what happens.

The **moral of the story** in **THE MONKEY'S PAW**.....Be careful what you wish for, you just may receive it!

(.- Jared -.) ? Book Nerd ? says

Personal Remarks:

This book was very a entertaining short read! It is actually a semi-horror but it has more of a tragic fable-like feel to it making it a, more or less, modern parable. In reading up on it, it is apparently a classic of the horror genre that has been copied and adapted numerous times in the century since it was first published. Having no idea of this beforehand, I found that fact rather impressive.

Brief Analysis:

Present in it are many familiar motifs, themes, and symbolisms. Some of these include the dangers of wishing, and the clashes between the home and domestic vs the dangerous outside world. We also see the typical grouping of three associations that are common in Western culture, not only in the wishing but also in the structure of the story and in the characters involved. Some literary allusions are made to the One Thousand and One Nights - Complete Arabian Nights Collection (Delphi Classics).

Conclusion:

Even being entirely ignorant of its literary and historical significance, I actually enjoyed the story. Now, being made aware of this, I appreciate it even more! I highly recommend this classical horror book. By today's standards it might strike one as being cliché but only because it is the originator of the clichés. Worth the read if not just for the classical and historical significance of the work.

Komal says

Short-stories are always great for emergency reading if you find you have a few minutes to spare, perhaps while waiting for your dentist's appointment, and would want to have an experience of another realm. The

Monkey's Paw allowed me to do just that.

With a classical narrative and a tone that suits the sobriety of the story, it's one that holds a moralistic value and aims to warn its reader about and against greed and selfishness.

It kept me hooked and I recommend it to every classical or/and short-literature reader.

Apatt says

You probably already know this story. A monkey's paw that can grant wishes but always at a horrible cost. Unfortunately, I can't write any kind of synopsis without totally spoiling the story. In any case, it is a classic and highly influential supernatural horror story. If you are familiar with Stephen King's much more horrifying Pet Sematary you will probably find that *The Monkey's Paw* is its direct inspiration.

Certainly *The Monkey's Paw* is a great little story but not particularly scary for today's sensibilities. The hint at something unspeakable lurking behind a closed door just does not work anymore, to be honest, it never worked for me to begin with. If you got it flaunt it. For me, the (anti)climax of the story is a bit of a cop out. The author should have gone all the way and show us some messed up monstrosity that will drive the reader insane just from the description, but he pulled back at the last minute.

Still, it's a nice and quick read with some good spooky atmosphere. An OK Halloween read I think. It probably seems terrifying a century ago.

Notes:

- Read The Monkey's Paw free online
 - If you like spooky stories about wishes gone wrong check out Robert Louis Stevenson's excellent *The Bottle Imp*.
-

***TANYA* says**

“Be careful what you wish for!!!” That's the moral of the story and it was eerily great. Super short but very good.

Brian says

Stephen King in a past life? This story impressed me. I didn't expect this kind of boldness of horror for that time. The Monkey's Paw gives three wishes, with a demented twist.

Stephen says

Atmosphere, subtlety, thought provocation, quality prose and lingering horror...these are the “**Table of**

Contents” of the best of the classic early horror stories. Admittedly, my “modern” 21st century sensibilities and the red-meat need for high body counts, buckets-o-blood and levels of **in your faceness** that go to 11 occasionally has me looking at the early spook tales with **PFFT** on my lips.

But then I stop being so dense and remember how much the classic chillers have much to offer in the way of story-telling awesomeness.

The Monkey’s Paw is one of the most adapted, re-imagined and lampooned horror stories of them all and I am glad I finally got a chance to read it. The tale is only about 10 pages long so the plot is fairly straight-forward. The moral is that those who would try and cheat Fate, are just asking for their lives to be **blowed up** and rearranged into **SHAMBLES**.

Mr. and Mrs. White share a home with their adult son Herbert (don’t ask, this is “back in the day” where shit was strange and different). A friend of the family, Sergeant-Major Morris, pays a visit to the Whites upon his return from serving in India as a member of the British Army. Morris has with him a mummified Monkey’s Paw that he acquired while overseas. Morris spills that the Monkey’s Paw was created by an old fakir (i.e., a wondering wise man/teacher), who imbued it with a spell that grants the possessor 3 wishes.

However, Morris goes on to explain that the wishes bring nothing but bad tidings because the fakir’s purpose was “to show that fate ruled people’s lives, and that those who interfered with it did so to their sorrow.” (**cue sinister music and chorus of Mwhahahahahahs**) In fact, Morris came into possession of the artifact after his comrade “wished for death” as his final wish following the disaster of the first two.

The family, being skeptical of the Sergeant-major’s claim (and also none too bright) keeps the Monkey’s Paw and you can guess what happens from there...

Most of us have seen this kind of story before in one form or another given how many times it has been interpreted over the years. However, it was nice to finally read the source code and I thought the restrained manner in which the “horror” elements were handled was excellent.

HOWEVER....before I finish, I do have a few **WTF** comments to say about the character of Sergeant-Major ~~asshat~~ Morris that I would like to get off my chest before I finish. DUDE....DUDE....DUDE, what exactly were you thinking? Why may I ask did you still having the Monkey’s Paw when you knew it was not a source of happy? Why oh why did you just “allow” the Whites in their “horror short story” stupidity to keep the Monkey’s Paw. Finally, are you normally this big of a **DOUCHEosaur** to your “friends.” If so, please remove me from your Christmas card list.

Sorry, but that needed to be said. Other than Sergeant-Major **SUCK-a-lot’s** inexplicable actions in passing the Monkey’s Paw to our main characters, I thought this was a textbook example of how good horror stories can create the atmosphere and the events of the story and then allowing the reader to draw the elements of horror in their own mind making for a much scarier and more lasting terror.

4.0 stars. **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED!!**

Sarah says

i love short stories and liked this one so much ..

moral of the story : it is never good to change things and sometimes what u wish for can be the end of ur life or the end of people u love the most ...

but wait a second

only 3 ppl who actually used the monkey paw given by an indian old man ... the first man they told us nothing about his wishes except his third wish which is his death because he suffered enough from his first 2 wishes...

now Mr. morris wished for a car and money... he lost his wife and son .

Mr. White wished for 3 thousand pounds and his only son died and the factory gave them the same amount of money he wished for ... really

now .. all their wishes were materialistic what if i use the monkey paw and wish for something emotional like finding someone who will truly love me what will i lose for such a wish ??

Meli says

Siempre amé esta historia.

A Jacobs le bastan dos palabras para crear una atmósfera entera, y solo necesita un puñado de páginas para contar una historia de horror completa y profunda, que transmite todo tipo de emociones.

Lo amo, en serio.

Arun Divakar says

For as far as I have been reading, the medium of the short story has held me in thrall. A short tests the ability and craft of an author for it is not so very easy to pack some serious dynamite into a few pages. Which also explains why the number of super effective short story writers are less. In 32 pages and one story, W.W. Jacobs proved to be in top notch form in this short horror story. Three ingredients namely : ambiance, character and mood all blend incredibly well in this story. The story of one happy family's tryst with an accursed talisman is now common fare in horror fiction but this is a master at work and the story is stuff of legend.

What attracted me most was in how effectively the characters are used in this story. We come into a home full of light, sound, laughter and good cheer and leave behind a house infested with darkness, silence and depression. The talisman which ushers this all in plays a surprisingly tiny physical role in the story. It is always there in the background, lurking and whispering its malevolence. The way the family's life derails is written with a class of its own. There is no blood and gore and in fact the horror is only hinted at. But I am a sucker for such horror and it to me is more effective than blood spattered pages of horror. It is the atmosphere that really does the work here. For a reader whose sensibilities have been honed by horror and slasher porn from today, this might seem to be an anti-climactic story but the thrill of the tale is in the mood it creates.

Recommended. Short and evocative.

Scarlet Cameo says

English review at the bottom

Una de esas historias que todos conocemos por su inclusión a la cultura pop en muchas formas pero que sigue causando una fascinación diferente cuando una se acerca a ella en su forma original.

La atmosfera lograda es fantástica, se presta a ser empático con el hombre protagonista y con su esposa, esto logra que fácilmente el cuento sea aterrador la primera vez que lo lees (o lo escuchas a través de un buen narrador) aun cuando explícitamente no se nos describa lo que esta pasando, queda en el lector imaginar lo bueno o malo que puede ser lo que espera tras la puerta (basándonos en circunstancias anteriores concluyó que es algo horrible y el mundo debía temer lo que se avecinaba) por lo que nos enfrentamos, como el protagonista, a nuestra propia psique y finalmente nos reitera el conocido dicho "Ten cuidado con lo que deseas".

One of those stories that we all know for its inclusion in pop culture in many ways but that continues causing fascination when one approaches to the original form.

The atmosphere is fantastic, it lends itself to being empathetic with the protagonist and his wife, this makes the story easily frightening the first time you read it (or listen narrated by a good storyteller) even though it isn't explicitly to describe what is happening, it is left to the reader to imagine what good or bad may awaits behind the door (based on previous circumstances concluded that it is something horrible and the world should fear what was coming) so we face. As the protagonist, to our own psyche and finally we rejoice the well-known saying "Be careful with what you want".

Fernando says

La pata de mono es uno de los mejores cuentos fantásticos que he leído. Los poderes de la pata, la historia y el final me remiten a "El Diablo en la Botella", de Robert Louis Stevenson o a los cuentos contenidos en "Azazel", el libro de Isaac Asimov. Este cuento era uno de los preferidos de Jorge Luis Borges y Adolfo Bioy Casares y está incluido en un libro genial que se llama "Antología de la literatura fantástica", editado en 1940. Forma parte de una selección perfecta que en la que eligieron grandes genialidades del cuento fantástico junto a una de las mejores escritoras argentina de todas las épocas, famosa por sus oscuros cuentos y novelas: Silvina Ocampo.

Quirkyreader says

This was an oldie but a goodie. If first read it during my youth and was intrigued. Upon reading it a second time I understand it more and still love this creeper.

Laura says

Free download available at Project Gutenberg.

Opening lines:

Without, the night was cold and wet, but in the small parlour of Laburnam Villa the blinds were drawn and the fire burned brightly. Father and son were at chess, the former, who possessed ideas about the game involving radical changes, putting his king into such sharp and unnecessary perils that it even provoked comment from the white-haired old lady knitting placidly by the fire.

♥ Emm ♥ says

[when they wish for their dead son to come home (hide spoiler)]

Zuky the BookBum says

“He wanted to show that fate ruled people's lives, and that those who interfered with it did so to their sorrow. He put a spell on it so that three separate men could each have three wishes from it.”

Can you believe that I'd never heard of this short before and knew nothing of the plot what-so-ever, before today? Well it's the truth. I think being so ignorant to it made me love it more. I got completely immersed in the story and the lives of our caring and lonely White's.

The panic felt in this book translates to the reader so much so that you find yourself short of breath, praying, hoping, that the front door *stays shut*.

Excellent horror short, well worth taking 10 minutes out of you day to read.

Shovelmonkey1 says

As a general rule of thumb (or paw), magical charms dished out by sombre old men are usually more trouble than they're worth. And if said sombre old man says "listen up folks, this thing will only get you into trouble and running around wishing for wealth and power will only end in tears", then it's probably best to listen. Literature has a well established tradition of morose old codgers who know what they're talking about... although since they seem to be the source of the charms they should probably heed their own advice and stop handing them out like buns at a bake sale.

As a vegetarian I am a fan of rabbits feet, monkey paws and foxes tails... but only if they remain attached to the animals in question. My gran has this creepy fox fur stole (posh old lady scarf) still complete with four legs, a tail and face. Eeeek! It's not cursed to the best of my knowledge (although presumably the fox was singularly unlucky in its own lifetime) but it is a creepy looking thing and the fur probably looked a lot better

on the animal than draped around my grandmothers neck. I still avoid it now - it resides at the end of her bed for some inexplicable reason - and I'm 30 for gods sakes.

This short story is an excellent example of how things which are omitted from the text can be more scary than a bloody big gore-fest being described in mind boggling and nauseating detail.

For this to have full effect you should include the following details:

Creepy house at the end of the road - check

Strange and wise old traveller from abroad - check

Mangy dismembered animal limb with magical properties - check

Inappropriately thought out wish making - check

Ambiguous ending with possible zombie inference - check

For a less traditional take on lucky animal limbs check out this clip of Supernatural from the Bad Day at Black Rock Episode

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wfq2ty...>

Any excuse to look at Jensen Ackles.

Mizuki says

I remember reading this story (or a slightly modernized version of it) as a child, and I'm happy to tell you after reading the original version of the story it is still as impressive and outstanding as I've remembered.

It's a peerless piece of short story, the elements of horror and suspense are used masterfully by the author, it's nearly impossible to add more words into the text nor taking words away from it without damaging the story---The Monkey's Paw is perfect as it is. No wonder it's a classic.

Paula W says

Wtf I would like to sleep at some time but I guess not.

Ahmed Ejaz says

"Be careful what you wish for, you may receive it."

Couldn't be any better epigraph for this story.

Monkey's Paw is one of the most amazing short stories I have ever read. The writing is so terrifyingly enjoyable. The atmosphere is one of the darkest ones I have ever read! I loved the atmosphere, loved the plot, loved the writing and loved everything.

OVERVIEW

Mr and Mrs White get a talisman which is a mummified monkey's paw from the friend of Mr White. This Monkey's Paw can fulfil three wishes of yours. But for a very heavy price that you will regret your wish...

This story shows that if you interfere the working of Fate, you will regret it.

The ending is little vague. Not that confusingly vague. But vague in a good manner. I liked this thing particularly in the story.

I will highly recommend this to everyone.
