

# *Jock and His Mother*

Folk-Lore And Legends: Scotland

Scottish

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*Easy*  
*5 min read*

Ye see, there was a wife had a son, and they called him Jock; and she said to him, "You are a lazy fellow; ye maun gang awa' and do something for to help me." "Weel," says Jock, "I'll do that." So awa' he gangs, and fa's in wi' a packman. Says the packman, "If you carry my pack a' day, I'll gie you a needle at night." So he carried the pack, and got the needle; and as he was gaun awa' hame to his mither, he cuts a burden o' brackens, and put the needle into the heart o' them. Awa' he gaes hame. Says his mither, "What hae ye made o' yoursel' the day?" Says Jock, "I fell in wi' a packman, and carried his pack a' day, and he gae me a needle for't, and ye may look for it amang the brackens." "Hout," quo' she, "ye daft gowk, you should hae stuck it into your bonnet, man." "I'll mind that again," quo' Jock.

Next day he fell in wi' a man carrying plough socks. "If ye help me to carry my socks a' day, I'll gie ye ane to yersel' at night." "I'll do that," quo' Jock. Jock carried them a' day, and got a sock, which he stuck in his bonnet. On the way hame, Jock was dry, and gaed away to take a drink out o' the burn; and wi' the weight o' the sock, his bonnet fell into the river, and gaed out o' sight. He gaed hame, and his mither says, "Weel, Jock, what hae you been doing a' day?" And then he tells her. "Hout," quo' she, "you should hae tied the string to it, and trailed it behind you." "Weel," quo' Jock, "I'll mind that again."

Awa' he sets, and he fa's in wi' a flesher. "Weel," says the flesher, "if ye'll be my servant a' day, I'll gie ye a leg o' mutton at night." "I'll be that," quo' Jock. He got a leg o' mutton at night. He ties a string to it, and trails it behind him the hale road hame. "What hae ye been doing?" said his mither. He tells her. "Hout, you fool, ye

should hae carried it on your shouther.” “I’ll mind that again,” quo’ Jock.

Awa’ he gaes next day, and meets a horse-dealer. He says, “If you will help me wi’ my horses a’ day, I’ll give you ane to yoursel’ at night.” “I’ll do that,” quo’ Jock. So he served him, and got his horse, and he ties its feet; but as he was not able to carry it on his back, he left it lying on the roadside. Hame he comes, and tells his mither. “Hout, ye daft gowk, ye’ll ne’er turn wise! Could ye no hae loupn on it, and ridden it?” “I’ll mind that again,” quo’ Jock.

Aweel, there was a grand gentleman, wha had a daughter wha was very subject to melancholy; and her father gae out that whaever should mak’ her laugh would get her in marriage. So it happened that she was sitting at the window ae day, musing in her melancholy state, when Jock, according to the advice o’ his mither, cam’ flying up on a cow’s back, wi’ the tail over his shouther. And she burst out into a fit o’ laughter. When they made inquiry wha made her laugh, it was found to be Jock riding on the cow. Accordingly, Jock was sent for to get his bride. Weel, Jock was married to her, and there was a great supper prepared. Amongst the rest o’ the things, there was some honey, which Jock was very fond o’. After supper, they all retired, and the auld priest that married them sat up a’ night by the kitchen fireside. So Jock waukens in the night-time, and says, “Oh, wad ye gie me some o’ yon nice sweet honey that we got to our supper last night?” “Oh ay,” says his wife, “rise and gang into the press, and ye’ll get a pig fou o’ t.” Jock rose, and thrust his hand into the honey-pig for a nievefu’ o’ t, and he could not get it out. So he cam’ awa’ wi’ the pig in his hand, like a mason’s mell, and says, “Oh, I canna get my hand out.” “Hoot,” quo’ she, “gang awa’ and break it on the cheek-stane.” By this time, the fire was dark, and the auld priest was lying snoring wi’ his head against the chimney-piece, wi’ a huge white wig on. Jock gaes awa’, and gae him a whack wi’ the honey-pig on the head, thinking it was the cheek-stane, and knocks it a’ in bits. The auld priest roars out, “Murder!” Jock tak’s doun the stair as hard as he could bicker, and hides himsel’ amang the bees’ skeps.

That night, as luck wad have it, some thieves cam' to steal the bees' skeps, and in the hurry o' tumbling them into a large grey plaid, they tumbled Jock in along wi' them. So aff they set, wi' Jock and the skeps on their backs. On the way, they had to cross the burn where Jock lost his bonnet. Ane o' the thieves cries, "Oh, I hae fand a bonnet!" and Jock, on hearing that, cries out, "Oh, that's mine!" They thocht they had got the deil on their backs. So they let a' fa' in the burn; and Jock, being tied in the plaid, couldna get out; so he and the bees were a' drowned thegither.

If a' tales be true, that's nae lee.

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