



The Demon's Dance

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Polish

Intermediate
5 min read

When the wind throws the dust up in the air, and whirls it round in a dry eddy, it shows the dance of an evil spirit. Whenever you see this, shut up at once all the doors and windows in your hut, or it will certainly do some mischief to your bones. If, however, you are courageous, and wish to obtain riches at the sacrifice of your soul, take a new knife that has been sprinkled with holy water, and throw it dexterously into the very middle of the whirlwind.

One day, a fearless young peasant, angry with the demon, who, in the shape of a hurricane, had blown off the roof of his barn, took up a new, consecrated knife, and stuck it in the ground in the very centre of the dust-eddy. In a moment the demon appeared, bent double, as if suffering great pain, and trembling with fear. He asked the peasant what he wanted with him.

“Mend my barn,” cried the man in a great fury. “Fill up my potato hole with gold; then bring to my hut a keg of brandy and three sides of bacon.”

“I will do it all,” answered the demon; “but first take the knife out of the ground. It hurts me cruelly.”

“No!” cried the peasant; “first do what I tell you.”

The obedient spirit did all that was demanded of him. Some time after this the young peasant fell sick. As he was about to die, his friends, who were gathered round him, saw the demon standing at the head of the bed

waiting for his soul. They all lamented his miserable fate, and his godfather said,—

“If, instead of asking for money, he had shot the demon with a silver button, he would have lived to be an old man, and have saved his soul.”

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