

Name _____



Unseen Dread

The night was dark, and the wind howled outside the small house of the White family. Inside, the fire crackled, casting long shadows on the walls. The family sat close together, listening to the deep voice of Sergeant-Major Morris. He told them a strange and eerie tale about a dried-up monkey's paw, a magical object said to grant three wishes. But his voice grew serious as he warned them: "Be careful what you wish for. The paw brings misfortune."

Mr. White, ignoring the warning, took the paw and made a simple wish for two hundred pounds. The wish seemed harmless, yet as the words left his lips, the room grew cold. The flames flickered wildly, and a sudden gust of wind rattled the windows. The family laughed nervously, but a feeling of unease had settled in the air.

The next day, a man from Herbert's workplace knocked at the door. His face was pale, his hands shaking. With a heavy heart, he delivered the terrible news—Herbert had died in a tragic accident. As compensation, the company was offering the family two hundred pounds. Mr. and Mrs. White were devastated. Their wish had come true, but at a terrible cost.

Grief-stricken, Mrs. White became desperate. Late one stormy night, she begged her husband to use the second wish: "Bring our son back!" Mr. White, filled with dread, slowly raised the paw and whispered the wish. Silence followed. Then, a deep, heavy knock echoed through the house.

The knocking grew louder. Mrs. White rushed to open the door, but Mr. White held her back. His hands trembled as he fumbled for the monkey's paw. The house seemed to shrink around them, the air thick with fear. Just as Mrs. White unlocked the door, Mr. White made a final, desperate wish.

The knocking stopped. Mrs. White flung the door open, but nothing was there—only the empty, moonlit road.

W.W. Jacobs builds tension and suspense through eerie settings, unexpected noises, and the growing fear of the unknown. With each wish, the atmosphere becomes heavier, and the silence between each event makes the reader hold their breath. In the end, the unanswered question—was it really Herbert knocking?—leaves a lingering sense of dread.