

Name _____



Changing Beliefs

At first, the White family did not take the monkey's paw seriously. It was just an old, shriveled thing, a souvenir from a faraway land. When Sergeant-Major Morris told them that it could grant three wishes but with terrible consequences, they laughed. "It sounds like something out of a fairy tale," Herbert joked. Mr. White, intrigued but doubtful, retrieved the paw from the fire where Morris had thrown it.

He made a simple wish—for two hundred pounds.

Nothing happened, and the family soon dismissed the paw as nonsense. However, the next day, their laughter turned to shock. A man from the factory where Herbert worked arrived with terrible news—Herbert had died in an accident. As compensation, the factory offered them two hundred pounds. Mr. and Mrs. White were horrified. The wish had come true, but at a terrible cost.

Now, the monkey's paw no longer seemed like a silly superstition. Mrs. White, overcome with grief, believed it could bring her son back. She begged Mr. White to use the second wish. Although afraid, he held the paw and whispered the wish.

Moments later, a slow, heavy knock echoed at the door. The sound filled the house with fear. Mrs. White, desperate to see her son again, rushed to open the door. But Mr. White was terrified. He had wished Herbert back, but what if he had not returned as the son they knew? Frantically, he grabbed the paw and made the final wish.

The knocking stopped. When Mrs. White flung open the door, no one was there. Only the cold night air greeted them.

At the start of the story, the Whites saw the monkey's paw as a joke, a curiosity. But by the end, it had become something terrifying, something powerful and uncontrollable. Their changing beliefs reflect an important lesson—sometimes, things that seem harmless can have dangerous consequences.