

**Foolish Jack.**

BY LADY BELL

CHARACTERS.

JACK. HIS MOTHER.

MOTHER.--(*Alone.*) Jack! Jack! Where is the boy? He can never stay in the house. He must always be running round to all the neighbours. Ah, there he is at last!

*Enter JACK.*

J.--Well, mother, how are you?

M.--I was getting anxious about you. Where have you been all this time?

J.--Oh, I've been seeing the neighbours.

M.--I thought as much. Which neighbours?

J.--First I went to see Father Clumpylump.

M.--Indeed! Father Clumpylump! Honest man! And what did he say to you?

J.--He gave me a needle for a present.

M.--A most useful present! Where is it?

J.--I stuck it into a bundle of hay that was standing in a cart, and then I could not find it again.

M.--I should think not, indeed! You ought to have stuck it into your sleeve.

J.--That's just what Father Clumpylump said.

M.--And he was quite right. And then?

J.--Then I went to call on Goody Grumbles.

M.--Indeed! Goody Grumbles, dear, old soul! And what had she to say?

J.--Not much; but she gave me a knife.

M.--A knife! Another most useful present! Where is it, then?

J.--I stuck it into my sleeve, and it fell out on the way.

M.--Of course it did. You ought to have put it into your pocket.

J.--That's just what Goody Grumbles said.

M.--And she was quite right. And then?

J.--And then I went to see Uncle Crabstick.

M.--Uncle Crabstick! Did he give you anything?

J.--Yes, he gave me a lamb.

M.--A lamb! How delightful! Where is it, then?

J.--I crammed it into my pocket, and it was stifled.

M.--I should think it was! Into your pocket! Good heavens! Whoever thought of putting a lamb into his pocket! You should have tied a rope round its neck and led it carefully along.

J.--That's just what Uncle Crabstick said.

M.--I should think he did! And then?

J.--Then I went to see Auntie Jumblewig.

M.--That was quite right. Did she give you anything?

J.--She gave me a splendid ham.

M.--A ham! I *am* glad. That *will* come in useful. Where is it?

J.--I tied a rope to it, and led it carefully along the road, but some dogs ate it up while I was not looking.

M.--Of course they did, you foolish boy! You should have carried it on your head.

J.--That's just what Auntie Jumblewig said when she saw me start.

M.--Of course she did! and then?

J.--I went to see Cousin Peter.

M.--Cousin Peter! And what did the good man say to you?

J.--Not much; but he gave me a calf.

M.--A calf! How generous! Where is the calf then?

J.--I tried to carry it on my head, but he kicked my face, so I let him go.

M.--Serve you right! How could you be so foolish as to carry a calf on your head? You should have taken him to the cow-house and settled him in a nice warm corner, with plenty of straw.

J.--That is just what Cousin Peter advised me to do.

M.--He was quite right. And then?

J.--I went to see Rose.

M.--I am glad you went there. Rose is a charming girl. Was she well disposed towards you?

J.--Very. Indeed, she came here with me.

M.--Where is she, then?

J.--I took her to the cow-house, and settled her in a nice, warm corner, with plenty of straw.

M.--In the cow-house! Rose! Wretched boy! You should have brought her into the best parlour, and asked her to marry you.

J.--That's just what she said.

M.--And she was quite right. Quick! Quick! Let us fetch her.

J.--I should like that very much.

M.--Come, then, at once! Oh, you foolish Jack! (*Exeunt.* )