

Going a-travelling

There was once a poor woman who had a son, who much wished to travel, but his mother said, "How canst thou travel? We have no money at all for thee to take away with thee." Then said the son, "I will manage very well for myself; I will always say, 'Not much, not much, not much.'"

So he walked for a long time and always said, "Not much, not much, not much." Then he passed by a company of fishermen and said, "God speed you! not much, not much, not much." - "What sayst thou churl, not much?" And when the net was drawn out they had not caught much fish. So one of them fell on the youth with a stick and said, "Hast thou never seen me threshing?" - "What ought I to say, then?" asked the youth. "Thou must say, 'Get it full, get it full.'"

After this he again walked a long time, and said, "Get it full, get it full," until he came to the gallows, where they had got a poor sinner whom they were about to hang. Then said he, "Good morning; get it full, get it full." - "What sayst thou, knave, get it full? Dost thou want to make out that there are still more wicked people in the world is not this enough?" And he again got some blows on his back. "What am I to say, then?" said he. "Thou must say, 'May God have pity on the poor soul.'"

Again the youth walked on for a long while and said, "May God have pity on the poor soul!" Then he came to a pit by which stood a knacker who was cutting up a horse. The youth said, "Good morning; God have pity on the poor soul!" - "What dost thou say, thou ill-tempered knave?" and the knacker gave him such a box on the ear, that he could not see out of his eyes. "What am I to say, then?" - "Thou must say, 'There lies the carrion in the pit!'"

So he walked on, and always said, "There lies the carrion in the pit, there lies the carrion in the pit." And he came to a cart full of people, so he said, "Good morning, there lies the carrion in the pit!" Then the cart pushed him into a hole, and the driver took his whip and cracked it upon the youth, till he was forced to crawl back to his mother, and as long as he lived he never went out a-travelling again.

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