

Legend of the Ringing Anvil
Or
Why We Ring Our Anvil and, Whence Comes The Luck of the
Horseshoe

Imagine.....

THE old blacksmith is “sitting” with one hip propped on his anvil. Gathered around his feet are three or four little barefoot children. Obviously one of the kids has asked a question because in a deep Irish brogue, you here the blacksmith saying....

“So you want to know why we sometimes tap our anvil while we work do ya?”

WELL then, Once upon a time long long ago and far far away: on an island where the grass is emerald green,

A VILLAGE SMITH was shoeing a horse at his open air shop. His large anvil rang with each blow to the shoes. Standing quietly in the shade of the spreading chestnut tree, the horse waited patiently.

THE DEVIL, passing by, heard the ringing of the anvil and decided to see what was going on. He stood watching as the blacksmith made a wonderful set of new shoes for the horse.

THE SMITH then proceeded to trim the horse’s hooves and nail the shoes in place. The horse stood quietly as this was done, and when the smith finished, the owner of the horse mounted his steed and took him for a trot down the road.

THE HORSE was noticeably happy with his new shoes, for he danced and he pranced all the way to the corner and back.

SEEING THIS, the Devil being a hoofed creature himself, decided that he must have a set of these wonderful shoes. He approached the smith and told him to prepare a set of shoes for him.

THE SMITH (realizing that this was the Devil himself), made a set of shoes too small, trimmed the hooves too short and drove several close nails in each of the devils hooves. He also clichéd them quite heavily so they would not come off easily. The Devil in terrible pain, lame and very sore footed went running away and suffered for many days.

SO to this very day when ever the Devil hears an anvil ringing he makes it a point to stay as far away as possible.

THIS is also why hanging a horseshoe over the door keeps the Devil away!

THERE be two ways to hang a shoe. The blacksmith will hang a shoe with the heels down, so that the luck of the shoe may pour over his forge. But YE must hang the shoe with the heels UP so that the luck will remain in your house!

AND ye canna just use a shoe ya find by the side of the road. For when the shoe was lost, the luck was also lost form the shoe. Instead, you must go to the blacksmith and buy an old shoe that he has taken off of the horse’s hoof. For when he removed the shoe, he removed the luck with it, and tis still in the shoe!

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