



THE POT OF GOLD, AN IRISH FOLKTALE

Retold by Dianne de Las Casas

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Dan Kelly was the laziest man in all of Ireland. He lived alone because no woman or girl would marry him because he was so lazy. Dan Kelly would never do any work around his house or tend to his field. All of his other neighbors tended their fields and harvested delicious crops but not Dan Kelly. Oh no. He didn't tend to his fields because it was too much work. He let it overgrow with weeds and ragwort. Dan Kelly was the laziest man in all of Ireland. Besides, he was going to be rich one day. All it would take was a bit of luck.

One day, Dan Kelly decided that he was going to the fair at Bally Cahill. While his neighbors were working, he was going to have some fun. Dan Kelly put on his best suit and his favorite tie, a bright red tie.

He went on his way to the fair. As he was passing his field, he noticed that his shoe was untied. He bent down to tie his shoe. It was then that he heard a noise. Tic, tac, tic, tickety tac tic. Was it a grasshopper? No, it was louder and sharper. He heard the noise again. Tic, tac, tic, tickety tac tic. Was it the sound of a beetle's wings? No. It didn't sound like that either. Dan Kelly followed the sound. Tic, tac, tic, tickety, tac, tic. He found out the source of the strange noise. It was a wee little man hammering on a small shoe. It was a leprechaun!

"Ho!" Dan Kelly cried. Look what I found in my field. A leprechaun! Hasn't my luck changed." The leprechaun looked up from his work.

"Oh, hello, Dan Kelly. There's a rock behind you. Why don't you sit down?" the leprechaun suggested.

Dan Kelly knew that if he looked away for even a moment, the leprechaun would disappear. Dan Kelly wasn't going to let a leprechaun make a fool of him. Nosiree. Dan Kelly continued to stand.

"What are you making?" Dan Kelly asked.

"A pair of shoes for the queen of the fairies," answered the leprechaun.

Dan Kelly looked at the leprechaun with squinted eyes. "Well, it's not shoes I'm looking for."

The leprechaun sighed, "I thought not."

"I know what I want," Dan Kelly cried, "I want your pot of gold!"

The leprechaun put his hammer down and asked, "What makes you think I have a pot of gold? Can't you see that I am a working man? If I had a pot of gold, would I be working this hard?"

Dan Kelly answered, "All leprechauns have pots of gold and I know you do too. Now tell me where it is!" Dan Kelly stooped down and grabbed the leprechaun in his fist. When he did, Riiiiiiiiiiiiip! The back of his trousers had a huge hole. It didn't matter to Dan Kelly though. For soon, he would be buying himself a new suit!

The leprechaun squirmed in Dan's hand. "Let me go!" he shouted.

Dan Kelly gripped tighter. "I'll let you go when you show me exactly where the gold is." "Okay. Okay," the leprechaun agreed. "I'll show you."

Dan Kelly put the leprechaun down and followed him to a spot in the middle of his field. "There," the leprechaun pointed, "that is where the gold is buried."

Dan Kelly groaned. He was already tired from following the leprechaun to the middle of the field and he didn't have a spade or shovel to dig up the gold. Then he had an idea. Dan Kelly grinned and took off his tie. He bent down and knotted it around a piece of ragwort. He looked at the leprechaun and said, "Promise on your honor that you will not touch that tie."

The leprechaun smiled and looked at Dan Kelly, "Oh, I promise."

For being such a lazy man, Dan Kelly moved rather quickly. He trotted to his house, grabbed a shovel, and ran back to his field. When he reached his field., he dropped the shovel. A surprise was waiting for Dan Kelly.

The leprechaun was, of course, gone. And red ties were knotted around ten thousand clumps of ragwort, fluttering cheerfully in the breeze.

Dan Kelly didn't go to the fair at Bally Cahill that day. In fact, he spent the entire afternoon sewing the seat of his trousers. A few times he thought he heard someone laughing but it was only the wind in the chimney. Or was it? He never did buy another suit but Dan Kelly never ran out of ties to wear!