

p53, Check Your Comprehension: *The Monkey's Paw*

1. The story that the sergeant major tells the Whites is that he came into the possession of the monkey's paw following the death of its previous owner. The paw was a mummified monkey's paw, which was supposedly cursed by a very old fakir, a holy man, to show that fate ruled people's lives and that people should not disturb it. Using the paw, a man is granted any three wishes of their choosing, but at a great personal cost.
2. Mr. White's first wish, for two hundred pounds, is fulfilled after his son is badly hurt in an industrial accident at this job. His company, in consideration, offers a gift of exactly two hundred pounds to his parents for their son's work.
3. Mr. White's next two wishes are that his son would be alive again, and subsequently, that his son would remain dead again. After wishing for his son's revival at the behest of his wife, he nervously awaits the sign of his arrival, which comes as a loud knocking on the door of the house. He tried to get his wife to resist opening the door, but has no luck; so, doing the only thing which he knew would save her from the monstrosity that was surely right outside their door, he quickly wished that his son was gone again right before his wife managed to open the door.
4. The story ends with Mrs. White standing expectantly at the door, when nobody was there to answer, as Mr. White had used his last wish to make his zombie son disappear again, so nobody would again be hurt as a result of his actions.