25. The Bald Man and his Wife.

There was a man here long ago - we might as well call him The Bald Man - and he had not a rib of hair on his scalp. He was a good age and he was married to a lively woman, young enough, and she was not attracted to him when he had no hair. She had servants around her and it was odd that he was not around to hear them gossip.
He was sitting by the fire one day, himself and herself, and it happened that he had taken his cap off. She looked at his head.
“It is embarrassing for me” she said “your head is so bald and you should go somewhere to find a cure that will make your hair grow.”
“There is no place to get a cure” said the poor old man “and I am not a bit ashamed of my bald head, it’s natural for me to be so.”
That was so. “I am deeply ashamed “ she said “and you will have to go to get a cure that will make your hair grow.
“Well I do not know where that can be?” he said.
He went to mass on the next morning, Sunday, for himself for the love of God.
When he was gone, there was a servant behind at home conversing closely with the woman of the house. When the servant saw him returning he scampered off a different route and made his way home his own way.
The man of the house came in and sat down and he laid his cap on the table as he was sweating: a huge volume of sweat was dripping from the top of his head.
His wife looked at him:
“It is a matter of great shame to me for you to be bald” she said “and I have said it to you many times.”
“Indeed I do not know where I can find the cure to put hair on my head.” said the poor man.
“I know where” she said “there is a man with such a cure in the area” she said “He is six or seven miles from here, and you have to go and see him tomorrow morning in the name of God and seek him out and get the cure that will make your hair grow.”
“That’s too long a walk,” said the man, “I am reluctant to go there.”
“It is nothing” she said “Go in time in the morning and you will have enough of the day when you return.”

That's how it was. In the morning she rose early and prepared breakfast for the old man. He ate his breakfast and off with him and he was walking on his way to the place he intended. He met a gentleman halfway there. He told the gentleman where he was going.

"Oh" said the gentleman "you have no business going there as there is no one like that to be found there. There is no such cure. Turn for home and pay no heed to that woman."

"Mhuise I will take your advice" said the old man.

He turned for home and when he arrived he was there sooner than expected by the (other) man. They did not notice him until he was close to the door. His wife looked out and saw him coming.

"Oh, oh." she said "he is coming now, and he will catch you."

"What will I do?" said the interloper.

"The best idea for you is to jump up onto the loft and see that you don't leave the loft until I tell you." she said.

That's how it was. He took a leap up to the loft and he was up there when the man of the house entered.

"Oh you're home are you?" she said.

"Yes, I came," he said.

"You made great time" she said.

"Oh, Mhuise I did" he said "because I did not go far down the road at all. I had no business there" he said "there was no cure to be found and there is not."

"I tell you, whoever told you that" she said "told you a lie, because I got the cure when you were gone and there is nothing I would prefer than for you to try it."

"That's fine." said the man.

"Now" she said "we will not delay, go on your knees in front of me and I will apply the cure to you."

The old man believed her and he fell on his knees before her. She placed her apron over his head and rubbed it.

"If you hear the house falling now" she said "or whatever you hear, mind your left and right ear, and hold your head or you will break the spell."

All was well. He was on both knees and his head held as she applied the cure.

"The cure I acquired" - she said - "in order to grow your hair soon. Jump out." she said to the man in the loft "jump out."

So be it. The man in the loft got up and jumped out, and if he did, she thus concealed the story of the loft and she called after the man and he on his way out:

"Come Monday or Tuesday
Good or bad. Good or bad."

The man on his knees thought she was beckoning his hair to come Monday or Tuesday but it was the interloper who was ordered to come.

No hair grew on the old man that day or the day after nor any day to his death. But his old woman kept mocking him.