

The Two Corpses

By Unknown

A soldier had obtained leave to go home on furlough—to pray to the holy images, and to bow down before his parents. And as he was going his way, at a time when the sun had long set, and all was dark around, it chanced that he had to pass by a graveyard. Just then he heard that some one was running after him, and crying:

‘Stop! you can’t escape!’

He looked back and there was a corpse running and gnashing its teeth. The Soldier sprang on one side with all his might to get away from it, caught sight of a little chapel, and bolted straight into it.

There wasn’t a soul in the chapel, but stretched out on a table there lay another corpse, with tapers burning in front of it. The Soldier hid himself in a corner, and remained there hardly knowing whether he was alive or dead, but waiting to see what would happen. Presently up ran the first corpse—the one that had chased the Soldier—and dashed into the chapel. Thereupon the one that was lying on the table jumped up, and cried to it:

‘What hast thou come here for?’

‘I’ve chased a soldier in here, so I’m going to eat him.’

‘Come now, brother! he’s run into my house. I shall eat him myself.’

‘No, I shall!’

‘No, I shall!’

And they set to work fighting; the dust flew like anything. They’d have gone on fighting ever so much longer, only the cocks began to crow. Then both the corpses fell lifeless to the ground, and the Soldier went on his way homeward in peace, saying:

‘Glory be to Thee, O Lord! I am saved from the wizards!’