

From *The Tale of Jester Marvel* –

“Granny, what goes on?”

She is hunched on a bale of hay, puffing away on her clay pipe.

“You’re to stash the baccy in Buckle Beacon Tump before the Roundheads search the village again.” Granny casts a bright black eye up to the hayloft where four sacks of dried tobacco are hidden.

“Granny, please don’t make me go there alone,” I beg. My heart raps against my ribs. I know well enough the whereabouts of the burial mound known as Buckle Beacon Tump. It’s haunted by the ghosts of the ancients. Those unfortunates who were sacrificed to the gods of old.

“You must, Jester,” says Granny, struggling to her feet.

“But rumor has it the chamber’s filled with bones!”

“Pah!” she snorts. “A few bones never hurt.”

If only Ned weren’t faraway with the King’s army. For Ned can outwit roving brigands, wild animals, and no doubt even those ancient sprites loose upon the woods.