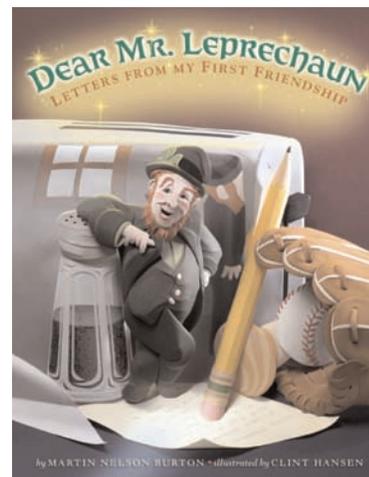


The Five Things to Remember When You Catch a Leprechaun

BY MARTIN NELSON BURTON

*As a child, Martin Nelson Burton used to write to a leprechaun. He is the author of the classic St. Patrick's Day book, **Dear Mr. Leprechaun: Letters From My First Friendship.***



Catching a leprechaun is easy, compared to what you have to do to keep him. Follow these tips to make sure he doesn't get away until he grants you three wishes!

1 **Never take your eyes off him.**

Your gaze holds him as a magical prisoner. This is harder than it looks, for leprechauns are professional ventriloquists, and can throw their voice to make it seem as if a wildcat is snarling behind you, ready to attack. Don't turn your head!

2 **Take away his bagpipes.**

If a leprechaun brings out his bagpipes, you need to grab them—quick! Once he starts playing, he'll put you under his spell, and then your legs will stop listening to you and start listening to the music. You'll find yourself dancing all night to the "Leprechaun's Reel."



3 **Don't get too greedy.**

A leprechaun who is caught must grant you three wishes. Almost everyone uses one wish to ask for the leprechaun's pot of gold. That is wise.

Leprechauns hold vast storehouses of gold, so why ask for just one pot? Because every leprechaun knows that if he is careless and gets caught, he must surrender one pot of gold. That is punishment enough for a miserly leprechaun. But if you ask for too much, the whole leprechaun kingdom is likely to hear about it, and when they do, there's no end to the mischief they might cause you until you give it all back. Fair is fair—if you catch a leprechaun, you're entitled to one pot of gold. Use your other two wishes for a big house and a jet plane.

4 **Never make a fourth wish.**

After granting your first three wishes, a leprechaun will always ask you to make one more. Don't! The fourth wish destroys the other three.

5 **Don't accept new shoes from him.**

A leprechaun is a cobbler, to be sure, but the shoes he'll make for you will be enchanted. Put them on and they'll move on their own, making you run and hop and do all sorts of silly dances, until the leprechaun is laughing so hard you'll see tears run down his eyes.