

**Jack Honest or The Widow and Her Son
by William Topaz McGonagall**

**Jack Honest was only eight years of age when his father died,
And by the death of his father, Mrs. Honest was sorely tried;
And Jack was his father's only joy and pride,
And for honesty Jack couldn't be equaled in the country-side.**

**So a short time before Jack's father died,
'Twas loud and bitterly for Jack he cried,
And bade him sit down by his bedside,
And then told him to be honest whatever did betide.**

**John, he said, looking him earnestly in the face,
Never let your actions your name disgrace,
Remember, my dear boy, and do what's right,
And God will bless you by day and night.**

**Then Mr. Honest bade his son farewell, and breathed his last,
While the hot tears from Jack's eyes fell thick and fast;
And the poor child did loudly sob and moan,
When he knew his father had left him and his mother alone.**

**So, as time wore on, Jack grew to be a fine boy,
And was to his mother a help and joy;
And, one evening, she said, Jack, you are my only prop,
I must tell you, dear, I'm thinking about opening a shop.**

**Oh! that's a capital thought, mother, cried Jack,
And to take care of the shop I won't be slack;
Then his mother said, Jackey, we will try this plan,
And look to God for his blessing, and do all we can.**

**So the widow opened the shop and succeeded very well,
But in a few months fresh troubles her befell--
Alas! poor Mrs. Honest was of fever taken ill,
But Jack attended his mother with a kindly will.**

**But, for fear of catching the fever, her customers kept away,
And once more there wasn't enough money the rent to pay;
And in her difficulties Mrs. Honest could form no plan to get
out,
But God would help her, she had no doubt.**

**So, one afternoon, Mrs. Honest sent Jack away
To a person that owed her some money, and told him not to
stay,
But when he got there the person had fled,
And to return home without the money he was in dread.**

**So he saw a gentleman in a carriage driving along at a rapid
rate,
And Jack ran forward to his mansion and opened the lodge-
gate,
Then the gentleman opened his purse and gave him, as he
thought, a shilling
For opening the lodge-gate so cleverly and so willing.**

**Then Jack stooped to lift up the coin, when lo and behold!
He found to his surprise it was a piece of gold!
And Jack cried oh, joyful!, this will make up for my mother's
loss,
Then he ran home speedily, knowing his mother wouldn't be
cross.**

**And when he got home he told his mother of his ill success,
And his adventure with the gentleman, then she felt deep
distress;
And when Jack showed her the sovereign, the gentleman gave
him,
She cried, We mustn't keep that money, it would be a sin.**

**Dear mother, I thought so, there must be some mistake,
But in the morning, to Squire Brooksby, the sovereign I'll take;
So, when morning came, he went to Squire Brooksby's Hall,
And at the front door for the Squire he loudly did call.**

**Then the hall door was opened by a footman, dressed in rich livery,
And Jack told him he wished Mr. Brooksby to see;
Then to deliver Jack's message the footman withdrew,
And when the footman returned he said, Master will see you.**

**Then Jack was conducted into a rich furnished room,
And to Mr. Brooksby he told his errand very soon,
While his honest heart, with fear, didn't quake,
Saying, Mr. Brooksby, you gave me a sovereign yesterday in a mistake.**

**Why, surely I have seen you before, said Mr. Brooksby;
Yes, Sir, replied Jack Honest, bowing very politely;
Then what is your name, my honest lad?
Asked Mr. Brooksby; John Honest, sir, replied Jack, right fearlessly.**

**The, my brave lad, you are Honest by name, and honest by nature,
Which, really, you appear to be in every feature,
But, I am afraid, such boys as you are very few,
But, I dare say, your mother has taught you.**

**Then Jack laid the sovereign down on the table before Mr. Brooksby;
But Mr. Brooksby said, No! my lad, I freely give it to thee;
Then Jack said, Oh, sir, I'm obliged to you I'm sure,
Because, sir, this money will help my mother, for she is poor.**

**Mrs. Brooksby came to see Mrs. Honest in a few days,
And for Jack's honesty she was loud in praise;
And she took Jack into her service, and paid him liberally,
And she gave Mrs. Honest a house, for life, rent free.**

**Now, I must leave Jack Honest and his mother in fresh found glory,
Hoping my readers will feel interested in this story,
And try always to imitate the hero-- Jack Honest--**

And I'm sure they will find it the safest and the best!