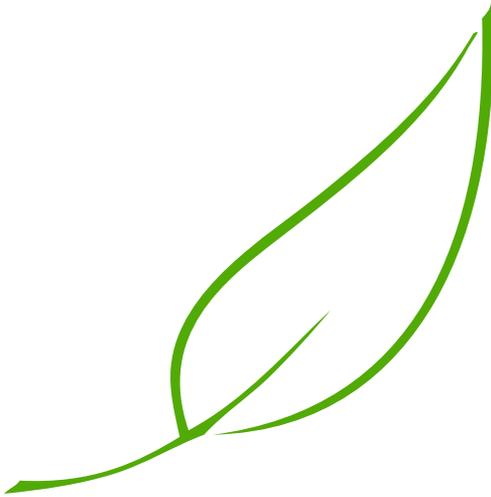


# BOBBY MALONE

by Ken Bradbury



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**BOBBY MALONE**  
by **Ken Bradbury**

**BOBBY MALONE***A Prose Reading***by Ken Bradbury**

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“Dance, Bobby! Dance!”

The row of taunting children lined the streets of the little village as the shabby, old man ambled his way toward the church. “Dance, Bobby! Dance!”

His stocking cap pulled down tight against the spring chill, Bobby Malone made his way through the taunts and jeers. “Dance, Bobby! Dance!” Their cries following him down the street ... this old, wrinkled and weathered man with the worn, gray coveralls, bundled up against the weather. His ears, long deaf to the noises of the world, still caught the meaning of their wicked teasing. “Dance, Bobby! Dance!”

Then, stopping in front of the cathedral doors, he turned to the children, smiled a sad smile and jumped into the air, his feet twisting and turning in the morning air. Landing as lightly as a fairy from the children’s bedtime stories, Bobby Malone danced a

small jig for the children then bowed his funny bow and entered the church, the gales of derisive laughter following him into the sanctuary.

Born without hearing the birds in the spring, Bobby Malone lived alone on the hillside, the meadowlarks and mountain squirrels his only companions.

Three generations of townsfolk had watched the old man trudge down through the village each Sunday morning. Three generations of children had dared him to dance his dance in the muddy streets ... “the dancing bear” they shouted... “Poor dumb Bobby, the dancing tramp.”

“Dance, Bobby! Dance!”

Nobody bothered to try to get near him. How could you talk to man who could hear no words? No one was sure how he lived his life on the hilltop.

But his lantern ... Oh, they knew his lantern well. It was the late night sport of every young boy and girl to walk into the dark streets before bedtime and look toward the hills. And there ... up high on the

hilltop, the sight of Bobby's lantern, making its way across the high meadows, twirling and twisting and turning and whirling ... Bobby was dancing his dance all alone.

"Dance, Bobby! Dance!" they'd shout up the valley.

"Dance, Bobby!

Dance!" they'd shout to the hills. Every night, just a bedtime, old Bobby was

dancing. Bobby Malone, all alone on the hill.

The meeting was held late that spring in the village. The parson held court with committees to spare. "Bobby's disgracin' our church and our village!"

"What must other folks think when they see him entering our church?"

"There are places for those such as him. Why ain't he there?"

Parson McCord listened with sadness. "Surely," he said, "there's a place in God's kingdom for Bobby."

"That ain't the place I was thinkin' of. What if he was to harm one of our little ones?"



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*BOBBY MALONE*

*by Ken Bradbury.*

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