

See a Penny

By Joan Black

See a penny, pick it up – all day long you'll have good luck.

Hand it over to a friend & your luck will never end.

See a penny, let it lie – you'll have bad luck by & by.

STOP! Wait. Consider your options before swooping down on that penny blocking your path. Debate the pros and cons. Weigh the advantages versus the disadvantages. Is it worth the effort? If you decide "yes" then the recommended course is to gracefully squat, snag the coin between thumb and forefinger then slowly rise to an upright position. Yeah! Right! How many of us can squat let alone gracefully? The alternative is to bend at the waist and grumph and humph until an outstretched hand can grab the coin – and then what? You're stuck bent over in your Bend-Over brand jeans. If you are 'lucky' there is a bench or a tree handy to act as a fulcrum to assist your maneuver back to the vertical. Was the penny the source of that piece of luck? If so, then your exertion is already being rewarded.

But before starting to feel smug remember the next line of the poem – the one about handing your find to a friend? There are some who insist "NO! No, no – you have to hand it to a stranger!" Again it is time to stop and do a little mulling. Just imagine yourself walking up to an unknown passer-by, you grasp his arm and press a grimy one-cent piece into his hand, smile sweetly and murmur "Good Luck Stranger." Wham! Bang! Before you know it the Swat Team in full riot gear is swarming the street and your picture goes viral on U-tube for assaulting an innocent bystander. Definitely not worth the risk and the resultant bad publicity.

Yet another consideration – if you should be of Irish or Scandinavian descent and believe in Leprechauns and Trolls, then the politically correct procedure with found money is to first spit on it and then toss it into the nearest bush where a lurking Leprechaun or Troll will find it and put it to good use – or is that just a waste of good spit?

Oh, another bit of info – isn't there always a caveat? Never, ever retrieve a penny that is tails-side up. In fact, turn your gaze away and run, don't walk, from the scene – it is evil incarnate. Latch on only to pennies where you can look eye to eye with Honest Abe.

Find 350 pennies - you'll have almost enough money to buy a cup of coffee at Starbucks.