

The Real Tale of Jack and Jill
by
Gene Kato

Based on the Nursery Rhyme as told by that well-known
liar. . .
Mother Goose!!

The Real Tale of Jack and Jill

THE REAL TALE OF JACK AND JILL

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The Real Tale of Jack and Jill

Cast of Characters

Jack

Jill

Dave

George

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THE SCENE: The interior of a small bedroom in a ramshackle hut. The furnishings are not stylish at all and reflect the lack of income that its owners are obviously suffering from. The room is flanked by two beds. One labeled "JACK" and the other labeled "JILL". The floor is somewhat dirty and the whole atmosphere is somewhat grungy.

AT RISE: The beds are occupied by JACK and JILL, both twenty-five. As the lights come up full, we see that JACK is having a difficult time sleeping because JILL is snoring loudly. He tosses and turns in the bed until he has had enough. He sits up and glares at JILL with fury in his eyes. He takes a pillow and hurls it at her, missing her entirely and causing himself to fall from the bed and thunk his head against the floor. His feet remained tangled in the blankets and as he tries to get up, he falls backwards over the edge of the bed, hitting his head again. JILL babbles something in her sleep and turns over comfortably. JACK glares at her again and goes over and gets his pillow. On the way back he picks up the blankets and tosses them back onto the bed. One of the sheets gets tangled under his feet and he tugs and tugs and finally succeeds in ripping the sheet in half. He looks around the room, very frustrated. Finally, he takes what's left of his sheets and blankets and lies them across his bed and turns his attention to JILL who is now snoring louder than ever. He takes

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his pillow and puts it over her face. JILL becomes very quiet. JACK smiles at the lack of sound, but then becomes worried about suffocating her and takes the pillow off. He stares at JILL for a second . . .she isn't breathing. He listens for a sound, there doesn't appear to be one. He panics and begins blowing in her mouth. JILL springs to life, again . . .but she's still fast asleep.

JILL. (Eyes closed) FRESH! (JILL slaps JACK and he tumbles over her bed and hits his head on the floor. JILL lies back down and begins snoring again. JACK gives up and tries to wake her up.)

JACK. Jill? (No response) Jill? Wake up. You're snoring. (She rolls over and snores louder) Jill?! I haven't been to sleep all night! I'm tired! Wake up! (No response) Okay, I gave you the chance to get up. (JACK goes out of the room and re-enters with a pail of water. He walks directly over to her and dumps the water on her. She doesn't move. JACK stares at her. She continues to snore.)

JILL. When is the frogman gonna live like a menace to the hill people, Barney?

JACK. Jill? Please? I'm tired! Not to mention that my legs hurt from . . .nevermind! Please! WAKE UP! (A rooster crows. JILL'S eyes open and she stretches.)

JILL. Good morning, Jack. Did you sleep well?

JACK. Of course not! It's hard to sleep in the same room with a sonic boom!

JILL. Oh, goodness? Was I snoring again?

JACK. When are you not snoring?

JILL. When I'm awake, silly.

JACK. It's driving me crazy, Jill. We have to do something about those sinuses of yours.

JILL. I couldn't have been all that loud.

JACK. Are you kidding? I was pacing around in the middle of the night and looked toward the ocean . . .ships were turning back out to sea because they thought they were being warned of dangerous

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rocks!

JILL. Well, I didn't hear a thing. (Pause) How's your crotch?

JACK. It hurts.

JILL. Well, it serves you right. Honestly, Jack, jumping over a candlestick at your age.

JACK. I didn't see it! Besides, I was carrying a tank of gasoline. If I hadn't jumped over it, I could've blown the entire house up. Although, around here, an explosion could be mistaken for you taking a nap.

JILL. That isn't funny!

JACK. You think I'm joking? My loins are scorched! Men with scorched loins never lie.

JILL. Don't be crude!

JACK. I'm being honest.

JILL. You're such a baby!

JACK. Sorry. I guess I just need a good nap. Preferably one that could take place away from you. (Pause) Are you up for good? Because, if you are then I'm going to try to lie back down.

JILL. No, you can't.

JACK. Why not?

JILL. We're expecting company today.

JACK. I'm not expecting anyone. I expect to take a nap.

JILL. No, you have to be a gracious host.

JACK. I will be. . .after I take a nap.

JILL. Jack.

JACK. Jill, don't start with me.

JILL. I haven't started anything.

JACK. You're starting to.

JILL. I'm starting to what? Start?

JACK. How can you do this?

JILL. Do what?

JACK. Babble incessantly.

JILL. Well, you fall down a lot.

JACK. I can't help it! I have an equilibrium problem!

JILL. It's because you have big ears.

JACK. My ears are no bigger than anyone else's.

JILL. Yeah, they are. Just a little. And it's a proven fact that the

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bigger something is . . .the better chance there is for infection.

JACK. Yeah, well your mouth ought to be loaded with it!

JILL. No reason to be mean, Jackie!

JACK. Stop calling me that! Jilly Bean!

JILL. I hate when you get up on the wrong side of the bed.

JACK. Get up? I haven't even been to sleep!

JILL. Maybe you should try to dream about sheep! Just like weird Uncle John. . .you know the one that's in to animal husbandry.

JACK. A man is supposed to count sheep! Not dream about them!

(Pause) Who's coming over?

JILL. Cousin Dave from Methesda.

JACK. What?

JILL. Yeah, he's gonna stay with us for the weekend.

JACK. Why?

JILL. I guess he needed someone to freeload off of and Mom and Dad said that he could.

JACK. Mom and Dad have enough freeloaders around here.

JILL. Yeah, that's what Mom said, but Dad told her that one more was no trouble.

JACK. He's weird.

JILL. Yeah.

JACK. He farts in the river and tries to bite the bubbles. I saw him do it a couple of summers ago.

JILL. He's just lonely, I guess.

JACK. And for good reason! (Pause) I mean, what is that supposed to be? A party trick?

JILL. Maybe he just needs a good woman by his side.

JACK. No woman with any sense would go out with Dave. He'd do something stupid like . . .like . . .honk their breasts in public.

JILL. He would not!

JACK. Well, Jill, you know plenty of eligible girls. Why don't you take the risk and set him up with one of them?

JILL. Maybe I will.

JACK. Okay, I was kidding. That's great. I can see it now. This place is packed wall to wall with women and passers-by will think we have a traffic jam in our living room.

JILL. You're being very hard on him.

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JACK. This is the same cousin that put sleeping pills in Little Boy Blue's Hawaiian Punch. He's a dork!

JILL. I didn't know that.

JACK. Yeah, he also scratches his butt in public and tells everyone that he has a problem with crack!

JILL. Does he?

JACK. No Jill! His ass just itches!

JILL. Oh, good.

JACK. I don't like to shake hands with him, though. I'm not gonna do it. No way!

JILL. Fine. Don't shake hands with him.

JACK. I'm not.

JILL. Okay. (Pause) Maybe I'll set him up with Mary.

JACK. The one with the lamb or the gardener Mary?

JILL. Does it matter?

JACK. It might to the lamb.

JILL. Then I'll set him up with the gardener Mary.

JACK. Great. I see some serious deflowering attempts in the near future.

JILL. Jack!

JACK. Jill!

JILL. He should be here by lunch.

JACK. Terrific. Just in time for a meal. How convenient.

JILL. We're just having cottage cheese with seasoned salt.

JACK. I love that! He's eating the stuff that I love! Great!

(Pause) Why can't it be on a night that we're having seafood or something?

JILL. I don't make policy around here, Jack.

JACK. I know. You just snore.

JILL. Look, Mom and Dad will be back tomorrow and . . .

JACK. Be back? They're going someplace?

JILL. Yeah. They're going to Glo'ster. They're suing the pieman for all of that food poisoning that Dad suffered when he ate that bad pie made from those rancid prunes. You remember that, don't you?

JACK. Of course I remember it! That was when God decided to hold back the winds for two days. Nothing worse than stench in

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the stillness. What I wonder, though, is how can Dad afford to sue anyone? We're poor! We drink well water for god's sake! (Pause) Not to mention the fact that we're being left alone with Dave!

JILL. We'll manage.

JACK. It's worse than getting a bad case of the mysterious itchy twitchies! (The doorbell rings to the tune of "London Bridge")

JILL. There's that song again. Every time I hear that music someone comes to the door. (JACK stares at JILL) I should probably go wait and see who comes by. (JILL exits)

JACK. Okay, Jack. Just be calm. All you need is a good nap and you'll be as good as new. Dave is only going to be here for a very short time and you can handle it. Remember, we are never given more than we can handle. That's the rule. (A beat) On the other hand . . . Rules are made to be broken. (JACK seizes the chance to lie down.) Oh, just for a second. This is going to feel good. It's quiet. (JILL re-enters with DAVE and another young man, GEORGIE PORGIE (GEORGE))

DAVE. There he is! My favorite cousin! (To JILL) Present cousin excluded, of course! (DAVE laughs. GEORGE laughs. JACK sits up, grumbling.)

JACK. Dave.

DAVE. Let me introduce you to my friend George.

GEORGE. Hi. I'm George. (Long silence. Everyone stares)

DAVE. So. What'cha doin' there, Cubby?

JACK. Trying to sleep.

DAVE. Uh-huh.

JACK. I'm tired.

DAVE. Uh-huh. (Long silence. More stares.)

JACK. That's pretty much the whole shebang.

DAVE. But you can't sleep, now. It's early in the morning.

JACK. We weren't expecting you until lunchtime.

DAVE. We got here early so that we could spend more time with you.

JILL. We?

DAVE. Yeah, George is going with me to Waxahatchie to be a professional kisser.

JACK. No kidding?

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GEORGE. I kiss so good, I bring tears to women's eyes.

DAVE. He's a pro.

GEORGE. I got my technique down.

DAVE. He's good with his tongue. (JACK and JILL stare at DAVE.) Or . . .so I've been told.

JACK. Look, this is fascinating, but I need to get just a little shut-eye. I've been up all night.

DAVE. Well, so have we!

JACK. Really? Doin' what?

DAVE. Tomcattin', Cuz! Dancing! Doin' the Humpty-hump! Living! I'm a living fool, Man! A living fool!

JACK. Well, who are we to argue with you?

GEORGE. (To JILL) You're kinda cute. You ever had a bad case of the locklips?

JILL. No. My Dad had a bad case of lockjaw once.

GEORGE. I love sensuality. It's my calling in life.

DAVE. That's right! He's a pleasure mobile! Born to love and lovin' every minute of it!

JACK. How about that, Jill? We get to spend some time with a...pleasure mobile and a living fool.

JILL. Do I need to set some more diner plates? (Long pause. JACK stares at his sister.)

GEORGE. I'm the hurricane of love! The twister of amore! I'll blow through this house like a Texas tornado and leave all the girls in shambles and beggin' for mercy! That's why I'm worth the money. One kiss . . .two dollars!

JACK. (To JILL) I'd give him three to shutup.

DAVE. He's who I'd want to be if I weren't me.

JACK. No kidding?

DAVE. That surprises you?

JACK. Not really. (To GEORGE) However, George, there's only one woman in this house for you to . . .blow . . .through and that's Jill.

GEORGE. You're a lovely woman of the world aren't you, Jill? I can tell it.

JILL. Tell what to who?

GEORGE. A fine, sophisticated vixen such as yourself has to

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have covered a lot of ground in her life.

JILL. Well, I used to help Dad in the garden.

GEORGE. (Laughing lightly) There's such a complicated simplicity about you. Something I've not seen in years.

JACK. Yeah, I know what you mean. Unfortunately, I see it every day.

GEORGE. Would you take a stroll with me, Jill? I would be ever so honored to spend the day in the company of an angel that has fallen to Earth.

JILL. Am I really a fallen angel?

GEORGE. For certain. I think I'll call you Angelica. It makes you seem closer to your celestial resting place.

DAVE. He's good. He's real good.

JACK. He's shoveling verbal manure all over the room.

JILL. I could never change my name. I'm used to going by Jill.

GEORGE. Alright. How about . . .Anjillica? Close enough?

JILL. It's better.

GEORGE. A woman like you could blow me out of my trousers.

JACK. That's what he's banking on.

JILL. I'll try not to. (JILL and GEORGE exit.)

DAVE. He's a smooth talker. The girls just love him.

JACK. He's a jackass and the girls cry because they either think that he's too tragic to be around or maybe he suffers from Halitosis.

DAVE. What's that?

JACK. His breath may stink.

DAVE. Oh. (DAVE scratches his rear, then smells his finger.

JACK stares at him blankly.)

DAVE. I have a problem . . .

JACK. (Overlapping) With crack, I know.

DAVE. It's an oldie but a goodie.

JACK. Look, Dave, I know you're family and all - but you really had no right to just bring this stranger into our home to stay here without our permission.

DAVE. That's not a stranger . . .that's Georgie Porgie puddin' and pie!

JACK. He kissed the girls and made them cry?

DAVE. He's my friend, Jack. I couldn't not ask him along.

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Besides, he's havin' a little trouble in his life right now and I need to be there for him.

JACK. Trouble? What kind of trouble?

DAVE. Nothing to really be worried about.

JACK. Why am I getting worried all of the sudden?

DAVE. Because you are a chronic worry wart, Cuz.

JACK. What did he do?

DAVE. He's accused of double exposure.

JACK. What?

DAVE. He exposed a part of himself in public.

JACK. Twice?

DAVE. No. Just once.

JACK. How is that double exposure?

DAVE. He has two John Hancocks.

JACK. I'm not hearing this.

DAVE. It's an admirable quality.

JACK. It's a birth defect!

DAVE. It's unusual.

JACK. It's obscene!

DAVE. Why are you being like this? Jealous? Maybe?

JACK. Of course not!

DAVE. Are we suffering from a little you-know-what envy? Is that it? Gone a little limp in the saddle, huh?

JACK. That's not it!

DAVE. No, with a name like Jack I wouldn't think so, but . . .you never can tell.

JACK. You're demented, obscene, and . . .

DAVE. A LIVIN' FOOL! (Pause) Do you want to dance?

JACK. Let me add retarded to that list.

DAVE. Oh, come on, Jack. Lighten up, Cuz. I like to pick. Just like Peter Piper.

JACK. Peter Piper was arrested for stealing wallets! He's not exactly the greatest role model in the world.

DAVE. He's got style, though. He's got finesse.

JACK. He's got six months in jail. (Pause) Look, I need to go and fetch a pail of water.

DAVE. Uh-huh. Where you gonna get it from?

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JACK. The well at the top of the hill.

DAVE. You're kidding me, right?

JACK. No. I need to get some water. I don't feel very fresh today. So, I thought maybe a bath would help.

DAVE. So, you're going uphill to get this water?

JACK. Yeah.

DAVE. Why?

JACK. Because that's where the well is, Stupid!

DAVE. It's on top of the hill?

JACK. Are you deaf or something? Yes!

DAVE. And just who designed this well?

JACK. What?

DAVE. Designed the well! Dug it! Who put it up there?

JACK. I did. Do you have a problem with that?

DAVE. No. It just doesn't make any sense.

JACK. What doesn't?

DAVE. Well, if you had to dig a well, wouldn't you want it as close to sea level as possible? Besides the fact that water, if it was on a hill- would run to the bottom. So, what's the point?

JACK. Our well works just fine!

DAVE. How long is the rope attached to the pail?

JACK. What do you work for O.S.H.A.?

DAVE. No, I'm just curious as to how long the rope on the inside of the well is?

JACK. Well, it's not . . .terribly long.

DAVE. What? Twenty? Twenty-five feet?

JACK. More like . . .seventy-one.

DAVE. Jeez! Louise! Seventy-one feet!

JACK. (Rather hesitant) And eleven inches.

DAVE. Where did you get a rope that long around here?

JACK. I tied three twenty-five foot ropes together and hooked them to the crank spindle.

DAVE. I have to see this. I'm going with you. (JACK picks up a small bucket from the corner.)

JACK. Fine. Come on.

DAVE. Wait a minute. That's all you're taking?

JACK. It's all that I have.

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DAVE. One bucket!

JACK. A pail. I'm fetching a pail of water.

DAVE. How long does it take you to fill up a bathtub?

JACK. About an hour and a half.

DAVE. My God! Isn't the water cold by then?

JACK. No colder than when I pulled it out of the well.

DAVE. How can you live like this?

JACK. It's just temporary. Dad's supposed to finish the plumbing sometime this fall.

DAVE. So, until then, you just hot to trot up the hill every ten minutes?

JACK. (Hesitantly) Yeah.

DAVE. What a dumbass.

JACK. I'm outa here. (JACK takes the pail and heads out of the shack. DAVE follows. The shack disappears and we follow JACK and DAVE to the base of the hill. GEORGE and JILL are there. JILL is staring at GEORGE, blankly, as he sings to her.)

GEORGE. *I made it though the wilderness*

Somehow I made it through

Didn't know how lost I was

Until I found you

I was beat. Incomplete

I'd been had, I was sad and blue

But you made me feel, yeah you maaaaade me feel

Shiny and newwwwwwwwwwwww

Hey! Like a virgin, touched for the very first time.

DAVE. He's good.

JILL. Why are you singing?

GEORGE. I'm in love. I'm overflowing with emotion. I need a release and only you can help me.

JACK. Oh, brother!

GEORGE. Hey! Guys! I was just, umm . . . what's up?

DAVE. We're going up a hill. Ask why.

GEORGE. Why?

JACK. To fetch a pail of water.

GEORGE. Uphill? Why uphill?

DAVE. (With a wink to GEORGE) Because Jack says that's where

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the well is.

GEORGE. (Joining the joke) Ohhhhh. I see. Well, in that case. Fabulous. Mind if I tag along?

JACK. You can all come if you want, but I'm just going to the well. It isn't all that interesting. Is it, Jill?

JILL. No, it's wood. (JACK stares at JILL)

JACK. Look, I'm going up the hill.

DAVE. But will you come down a mountain? (DAVE and GEORGE laugh at their joke. JACK and JILL don't get it, however, and they just stare.)

DAVE. Hill humor is mounds of fun.

JACK. Excuse me, but I must go and fill my bucket.

DAVE. And what a nice bucket it is!

GEORGE. All others "pail" in comparison! (They laugh some more. JACK starts up the hill. JILL follows. DAVE and GEORGE fall to the ground in hysterics.)

JACK. I hate them, Jill. I hate them both!

JILL. Breathe, Jack. Just be calm and breathe.

JACK. They've only been here for a few minutes and I already want them gone!

JILL. They're not gonna be here long.

JACK. I'm gonna have a stroke!

JILL. Can I ask you a question and you not get mad at me?

JACK. What?

JILL. Why did you put the well on top of the hill?

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