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Calla Lily's Cousin

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One day little Jack-in-the-Pulpit was telling the wild flowers about him how wonderful was the world in which they lived.

"Just think," he was saying, "how fortunate are we to be out here growing in the light and fresh air when all those flowers we can see through the big glass windows have to live inside and never breathe the clear, crisp air.

"And here we are close to this stream, and those poor hothouse plants have to wait until someone brings water to them. We should be very thankful for all our comforts, and though those flowers look very pretty through the big windows, I am quite sure they often wish they were out here with us."

Right near the window of the conservatory, which was what Jack meant by the big glass windows, grew a stately Calla Lily in a big pot. She often looked out at the modest wild flowers that happened to be growing near the little stream which ran along by the conservatory. Often the wild flowers had nodded to the hothouse flowers, and some of them had bent a little in answer, but not the stately Calla Lily. She pretended she did not see them or their friendly nod.

And there was a reason for this, for Calla knew that Jack-in-the-Pulpit was a relative of hers—distant, to be sure, but still, he was related, and if one stopped to look and compare Calla and Jack, they would see at once a family resemblance.



Calla's dainty, wax-like cup resembles Jack's greenish-brown pulpit, and Calla's pretty, yellow, upright center resembles in shape Jack himself as he stands beneath the curved pulpit. And that was the reason Calla Lily did not nod or notice the little wild flowers outside her glass home; she was afraid that someone would know that she and humble little Jack were cousins, for she supposed that Jack knew it and was bragging to the other wild flowers about it.

"They will be sure to tell it to some of the flowers standing near the door some day when the gardener leaves the door open," Calla Lily was thinking to herself, "and I would not for the world have the hothouse plants know that I, the queen of this place, have a relative such as that common little Jack."

The truth of the matter was that Jack knew nothing about the stately relative growing inside the hothouse, and if he had, he would have pitied her, for he was quite happy and satisfied growing out in the air and light and would not have changed places with Calla for all her beauty and stately bearing.

He loved the woods and the moist spot where he grew and his friends that grew about him.

There were the fickle, late-coming windflowers, and though they never tarried, Jack was always glad to see them and hear them prattle of the sights they expected to see, and their farewell flutters as they sailed away always made Jack glad he did not care to roam, as they did.

There were the wild Lilies-of-the-Valley; they were friends of Jack's also, and he felt they had much in common, for their name was as long as his; there were the birds and the trees, too. Jack was happy in his wild home and gave no thought to high-toned relatives.

But if Calla Lily had but known it, there was another Jack not far from the one she could see from the window, of whom she had more to fear, for he bore a much more striking resemblance to the stately Lily than the other Jack. This second Jack-in-the-Pulpit had a greenish-white covering which looked very much like Calla's wax white cup, and if sometime you are in the place where the little Jacks grow, and you look, you may be fortunate enough to find this other Jack under the greenish-white pulpit, though this is not so common a variety as the dark-colored Jacks.

But you can be sure both Jacks would rather live in their airy, light homes in the woods than in the glass house where their stately cousin Calla Lily lives.

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