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The Jumping-Jack

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Little wooden Jumping Jack hung in a shop window, with a string tied around his neck and limp arms and legs. But if someone pulled the string at the end of his spine, they would discover that he was not as meek as he appeared.

Jack wished for someone to pull the string, not only to catch the lady doll's attention but also to showcase his jumping and performing skills. He admired the doll named Rose, who wore a charming poke bonnet and had bright eyes, although she never seemed to look at him.

Jack named her Rose in his little wooden heart and admired her as she wore a pink silk dress and carried a box of pins on her arm, as the parrot had informed him. The parrot also mentioned that Rose considered herself French and was quite proud.

But nobody pulled the string, and Jack didn't have the chance to impress Rose or win her admiration. One day, the shopkeeper took Rose from the window and wrapped her in paper, and she was taken away by a pretty lady.

Jack felt even more limp and believed his wooden heart was broken. The parrot tried to console him, saying there were plenty of other dolls in the world more suitable for him to love.

However, Jack disagreed. While he pretended to forget about Rose, he dreamed of her at night and gazed sadly at the spot where she used to sit during the day.

Then something unexpected happened. A lady with a little boy came into the shop and bought Jumping Jack. He was taken to a big house and placed in a room with many other toys. There were animals and a Teddy bear, but no dolls were present. Although Jack initially jumped high and fast, he eventually grew tired and longed for the window and the parrot with whom he could speak of Rose.

One day, the little boy took Jack out of the room and downstairs. They approached the door of a room, and the little boy informed Jack that nobody was inside. He said they would enter and look out the window to see a little girl in the opposite window. The boy believed she would laugh when he made Jack jump for her.

The little boy knocked on the window, and the little girl looked, laughed, and danced with delight as the boy made Jack jump and kick.

Jack's wooden heart leaped when he saw Rose standing on a dressing table. She looked at him with admiration as he performed his jumps.

Jack jumped and entertained the little boy, who believed he was making Jack perform various tricks. But it was Jack himself who performed more capers than ever before.



Afterward, a nurse took the little girl away, and the little boy grew bored of Jack. He left Jack on the windowsill, dangerously close to the edge. As a heavy team passed by, the house shook, causing Jack to slide down the wall and land on the floor against the wall, with his back resting against it. In the room, he couldn't see Rose.

Jack wished someone would place him on the table beside Rose. Suddenly, something approached him and quickly ran up the table leg. In an instant, a cat entered the room and jumped onto the table.

There was a rattling of silverware, and something fell beside Jack. He witnessed the cat carrying something in her mouth before discovering that Rose had fallen right next to him. Her bright eyes met his, and her little red mouth was close to his face.

In a low voice, Rose asked, "Have I not seen you somewhere before?" Jack excitedly told her how he had always loved her, even during their time in the shop window. He explained how his little wooden heart nearly broke when she left.

Rose had always imagined marrying a sailor, but she understood sailors could be fickle. She realized that Jack loved her with the honest affection of his little wooden heart, and such love should not be disregarded. She smiled, and Jack knew he had finally won the heart of the little French doll.

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