

IN THE RED

by

Jack Tupp

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FADE IN

EXT - FAIRY TALE COTTAGE - MORNING

A quaint little cottage in the woods. Immaculate landscape, birds sing and squirrels play in the yard.

The mailbox says 'JACK' and has two shingles that hang below advertising 'House Builder' and 'Giant Killer'.

INT - BEDROOM - SAME

JACK, a handsome young man, wakes happily in bed and stretches out his arms. He wears a night shirt and cap.

His Tabby cat PUSS wakes next to him and stretches as well.

JACK

Good morning, Puss! How's my little maiden this morning? It's another beautiful day!

Puss purrs loudly and nuzzles Jack.

Jack gets up, dons slippers and makes the bed as tight as a drum. He walks to and opens the closet.

His clothes are hung with exact spacing and precision. Both his wardrobe and shoes are organized by color and style.

Jack gets a befuddled look on his face and has an outburst of sudden anger. Puss runs for cover under the bed.

JACK

Dammit! Who put this here?!

He pulls a shirt off the rod and moves it one spot over. The shirt is a barely noticeable lighter hue than the next.

Jack stands back and smiles once again in total OCD bliss.

JACK

Ah, that's better.

Puss pokes her head out from under the bed with caution as Jack hums a happy tune and gets dressed.

INT - KITCHEN - SAME

Jack and Puss enter a kitchen with wood stove, ice box and a basin with a hand pump. He opens the ice box.

JACK

Let's see...what would you say to some sausages for breakfast, Puss?

Jack pulls out a container labeled 'Sausage' and opens it. He flies into another fit of instant rage.

JACK

Puss! Did you eat the last of the sausages? What am I supposed to eat now?!

Jack throws the container and just barely misses Puss as she runs out of the kitchen.

He leans on the counter with both hands in seething anger.

JACK

Okay, okay. Simmer down.
(deep breath)

Jack just needs to do a little shopping, that's all.

He stands, smiles, and walks with a bounce in his step towards the front entry.

INT - ENTRY - SAME

By the front door is a sign 'Welcome to the House that Jack Built'.

JACK

Puss, Daddy's going out! You're in charge of the castle while I'm gone!

Puss peeks around the corner and lets out a low growl.

He removes his house slippers, places them by the door, and slips on a pair of galoshes.

JACK

One, two, buckle my shoe.

Jack exits the cottage and closes the door.

EXT - FAIRY TALE COTTAGE - SAME

JACK

Three, four, shut the door.

By the front stoop is an open top keg with an assortment of walking sticks. He selects a beautiful oak staff with a large polished burl on top.

JACK

Five, six, pick up sticks.

Jack walks down the front path, out the white picket fenced yard and starts down the trail whistling.

EXT - TRAIL IN THE WOODS - DAY

Jack continues down the trail with a bounce in his step. Every so often he performs a dance step with his staff.

As he rounds a bend, he meets LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD skipping towards him with basket in hand.

JACK

Good morning, Red! Where are you off to today?

RED

Hi Jack! I'm off to Granny's house. She's not been well so I'm bringing her some treats.

JACK

That's awful sweet of you! You need to be careful though. Have you heard the rumors that there's a wolf in these parts?

RED

Scary, isn't it? Bo Peep has lost some sheep and the three pigs have gone missing as well!

Jack flashes a sinister grin and gets a distant look in his eyes.

JACK

And they were such good little pigs, too.

RED

Jack? Are you okay?

JACK

(snapping out of it)
Yes, of course. Aren't you the least bit worried to be out here all by your lonesome?

RED

Not really. It's been quite a while since the pigs went missing and no one has actually seen the wolf.

JACK

True, true. Well, if it's alright with you, I think I'd feel better if I escorted you to Granny's house.

RED

You are such the gentleman. I'd be honored.

JACK

Excellent. Off we go!

Jack and Little Red Riding Hood hold hands and start to skip down the trail to Granny's house.

Deeper in the woods, the trail takes a dark and ominous appearance. Jack stops whistling.

JACK

What did you say you had in your basket?

RED

I've some fresh bread, wild mushrooms, and some veggies. Carrots and celery.

JACK

That would make for a fine stuffing.

(beat)

Seven, eight, lay them straight!

Jack reels back and swings his staff at the base of Little Red Riding Hood's skull. CRACK!

With her hood in place, the blood-spray jets forward in a fine red mist.

Jack looks down at his shirt

JACK

Huh, how about that. Not a single drop!

He sets the basket atop of her belly and wraps the cape tightly around her body.

He then reaches down and grabs her by the ankles and starts to drag her back to his cottage.

JACK
Nine, ten, a big fat hen! Red,
you've gotten to be such a big
girl!

Jack continues to drag his neat red package down the trail for a short distance and stops.

JACK
Phew! Jack, this will not do.

Jack unwraps the cape and takes out his hunting knife. He kneels beside the body, cuts open the corset and bares her torso.

JACK
Eleven, twelve, dig and delve!

He rolls up his sleeves, thrusts the knife into her abdomen and begins to gut the carcass.

Jack whistles as he is elbow deep in Red.

EXT - FAIRY TALE COTTAGE - DAY

Jack walks up the front path with his staff across his shoulders with a red bundle attached to each end.

INT - ENTRY - SAME

The front door lock CLICKS and swings open. As Jack enters, Puss trots up and gets between his ankles.

JACK
Thirteen, fourteen, maids
a-courting! Hello Puss! Did you
miss daddy?

INT - KITCHEN - SAME

Jack places the bundles on the counter and Puss jumps up to get a closer look. He sneers at the cat.

JACK
Fifteen, sixteen, maids in the
kitchen! Go on, Puss. Scat!

He shoos away Puss. Jack dons a butcher apron and hums happily.

JACK
Time to get to work!

View on Puss as she watches from around a corner. She winces every time a loud CHOP sound comes from the kitchen.

View on a blood splattered Jack in the kitchen as he wields a large cleaver. He grins madly.

JACK
Seventeen, eighteen, maids
a-waiting! Won't be long now, Puss!

He reaches under the counter, pulls out a large meat grinder and sets it on to the edge of the counter.

JACK
And now to get cranking!

INT - DINING ROOM - LATER

Jack is seated on one side of the table and Puss on the other. A plate of sausage steams in the middle.

Puss eats a sausage voraciously whilst Jack puts his fork down, sits back, and rubs his belly.

JACK
Nineteen, twenty, my plates empty!

FADE OUT.