

Jack Lowe

Jumping Jack and the Magic Bouncing Shoes

The night before, right before bedtime, Jack found a strange, glowing gold gem in the garden mud. To keep it safe from his sister, Polly, he hid it under his pillow.

The second Jack woke up, he grabbed the gem. It sparkled brightly. It was shaped just like the badge near the heel of his favourite trainers.

He pushed it in.

ZAP!

Two big, bouncy metal springs shot out from the soles!

Jack bounced across his bedroom, through the door, and straight down the stairs.

BOING! BOING! BOING!

“Yippee! I can jump over the fridge!”

He reached for his breakfast spoon, but a big splash of chocolate cereal flew up and hit the ceiling!

“Too bad I can’t eat my breakfast!”

“Jack, stop jumping!” screamed Mum.

“I can’t! It’s the shoes!”

CRUNCH.

Jack landed right on Princess Polly’s feet. “DADDYYYY!” cried Polly.

“Jack hurt me!”

“It wasn’t me. It was my bouncing shoes!”

Dad stared at his feet. “Where on earth did you get those things?” “Don’t look at me,” said Mum. “It’s probably your mother!” “I want his bouncy shoes!” Polly frowned.

“You can’t have them!” yelled Jack. “They’re stuck to my feet!” *BOING!*

Jack bounced through the back door and straight into the garden.

“Stay where we can see you!” called Mum.

“I am!” shouted Jack, leaping right over the flowerbed.

Polly ran after him. “Jack, wait for me!”

Jack landed with a thud by the bushes. “Did you know there’s a story about a girl who wore magic shoes and couldn’t stop dancing?” “Jack, stop making up stories,” Polly groaned.

“I didn’t make it up! I heard it at school! And do you know—” “DO YOU KNOW THE MUFFIN MAN?!” screamed Polly.

“Stop it! I was going to say—”

“THE MUFFIN MAN WHO LIVES ON DRURY LANE!”

Jack opened his mouth to shout back but stopped. A trail of tiny golden footprints was glowing in the grass.

“Look!” whispered Polly.

They followed the footprints around the shed, past the ivy, and right to an old apple tree.

There tucked in the bark was a tiny green door.

Jack bent down and tapped the door once.

The door flew open!

Standing inside was a tiny garden fairy in a golden hat, holding a wand with rainbow ribbons. She beamed at them. "Do you want to come in?" "Yes!" said Jack and Polly together.

The fairy handed them a tiny cup of fizzy magic drink. One sip, and then the whole world grew huge as Jack and Polly shrank down small! She led them inside to a cosy room with a hay rug and baskets full of shiny pennies.

"Hello! I'm Fairy Penny," she said. "I've lived in this garden for sixty thousand years, longer than your parents! But right now, my family is in big trouble. We lost our magic stone in the mud. Without it, our magic won't work!"

Jack looked down at his foot. "Like this one?"

He lifted his trainer and showed her the glowing gem.

Fairy Penny gasped. "You found it! Where did you get it?"

"In the mud!" said Jack. "It put giant springs on my shoes! Look!" He gave a tiny hop, barely missing the low ceiling.

"That stone makes our flowers bloom and keeps the garden green," Fairy Penny whispered. "Without it, everything loses its sparkle."

Jack looked down at his amazing bouncing shoes. Then he looked at Fairy Penny. He gave a little sigh, but then he smiled.

"Here," said Jack. "You can have it back."

He gave the gem a tug. Pop! The springs vanished into thin air!

"Huh," sighed Jack. "I thought I was stuck dancing forever! Do you know ___"

Polly twirled on the grass rug and belted out: "DO YOU KNOW THE MUFFIN MAN?!"

Fairy Penny giggled. "Of course I do! He bakes wonderful muffins."

Jack stared. "You really know him?"

"Magic folk know everyone," Fairy Penny said. She reached into her pocket and pulled out two sweet smelling little muffins. "Freshly baked with his secret recipe. A thank you for returning our treasure!"

Jack and Polly took a bite. "Mmm!"

Suddenly, Mum's voice could be heard in the distance: "*Jack! Polly! Time for school!*"

"We're coming!" they yelled.

"She can't hear you while you're this tiny!" Fairy Penny laughed. "Hold tight!"

She waved her wand.

In a blink, Jack and Polly were back to their normal size, standing on the lawn. The tiny green door had turned right back into plain tree bark, leaving only a pinch of golden dust on the grass.

"Do you think we'll ever see her again?" asked Jack, chewing his muffin.

Polly grinned. "I think she's watching right now."

