

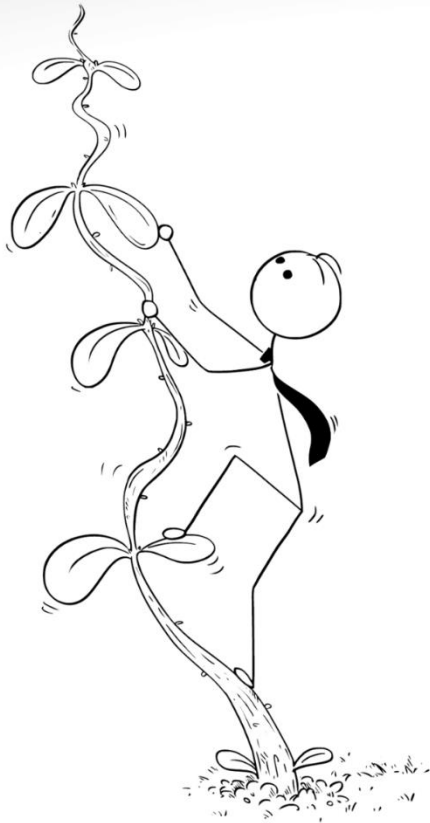


# Jack and Dear Raven

A short play

by

Tara Meddaugh



**JACK AND DEAR RAVEN**  
by  
**Tara Meddaugh**

A 10-minute play

**EXCERPT**

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*Jack and Dear Raven* is included in the collection, *When Fairy Tales Falter: The Prettiest Duckling and Other Moral Ambiguities* (previously titled, *When Fairy Tales Falter: The Devious Duckling and Other Untold Adventures*).

For permission to perform, contact [tmeddaugh@gmail.com](mailto:tmeddaugh@gmail.com).

## EXCERPT

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## EXCERPT

**A Note About  
*Jack and Dear Raven***

*Jack and Dear Raven* stands alone as a ten-minute piece but is also included in a 4-piece collection of short plays which follow unexpected dilemmas of fairy tale characters titled, [\*When Fairy Tales Falter: The Prettiest Duckling and Other Moral Ambiguities\*](#)

If you would like more information about the entire play, [\*When Fairy Tales Falter: The Prettiest Duckling and Other Moral Ambiguities\*](#) please visit:

[www.tarmeddaugh.com/when-fairy-tales-falter-the-prettiest-duckling-and-other-moral-ambiguities](http://www.tarmeddaugh.com/when-fairy-tales-falter-the-prettiest-duckling-and-other-moral-ambiguities)

**EXCERPT**

*Jack and Dear Raven* was first performed June 11, 2022 in Harrison, NY, as part of *The Devious Duckling and Other Untold Adventures*, (since titled *The Prettiest Duckling and Other Moral Ambiguities*). It was produced by Free Space Theater with the following cast:

Jack.....Mohammad Saleem  
Raven.....Susan Kay

Directed by Nathan Flower  
Costume Design by Georgia Evans

## EXCERPT

*Jack and Dear Raven*

Cast

JACK	A boy, in his teens or early twenties. Straight-forward, open-hearted.
RAVEN	A middle-aged scholarly and sophisticated raven.

Setting

A giant beanstalk, into the clouds.

**EXCERPT**

## EXCERPT

AT RISE: JACK is on a beanstalk. He has been climbing for hours, but now he is not moving. He hangs on tightly. A scholarly RAVEN flies by. JACK waves frantically at the raven. RAVEN circles back to come closer to him.

JACK

Oh, thank goodness you came back!

RAVEN

Do you know you're 30,000 ravens' feet into the air right now?

JACK

Oh, is that how high? I lost count.

RAVEN

You're in the clouds! Didn't you notice?

JACK

I—well, yes, I did rather notice, as a matter of truth, Dear Raven.

RAVEN

Am I dear to you? You don't even know me.

JACK

Well, you're dear to me because you're the first living thing that has bothered to stop and talk to me since I left home in the middle of the night.

RAVEN

Was something chasing you?

JACK

No.

RAVEN

Did your parent kick you out of your nest?

JACK

I don't live in a nest, Dear Raven.



RAVEN

It's a figure of speech.

JACK

Oh—well no. My mother wishes me to live with her forever. And I very well might have—except for the fact that—

(holding back tears)

I hate to say it, but—

(holding back tears)

I guess I live in this Cloud now!

(cries)

RAVEN

Oh, please. Stop crying or tweeting or whatever it is you're doing. You're not going to live in the clouds for the rest of your life. You'd certainly fall to the ground and die before you'd set up a real home on a—on a---what is this thing that you've...wrapped yourself around?

JACK

A beanstalk...

RAVEN

A beanstalk?

JACK

A giant one.

RAVEN

I should say so.

JACK

I didn't mean to get up here, Dear Raven!

RAVEN

I highly doubt this was an accident.

JACK

Well, I guess I did mean to, because I can't deny my feet and arms are what climbed me up. Last night, I went out to visit Brown Cow, just at the turn of the moon, when I saw a giant beanstalk in the back yard, growing faster than mold on a blackberry! I didn't even think about it, but just started climbing. I've always liked climbing but I've never liked thinking! Mother keeps telling me that's my problem—and I guess she's right... because now that I do think about it...not thinking has landed me in quite a few pickles. Even just yesterday, I chased after what I thought was a sack of coins, but don't you know, Dear Raven, I chased that sack of coins right into a cave and turns out the sack of coins was a black bear!

(pause)

RAVEN

You know this beanstalk of yours is blocking an important flight path.

JACK

I'm sorry. Well...maybe you could assist me...

(pause)

RAVEN

Of course this would happen when I'm just about to start my 134<sup>th</sup> draft of my novel, *Aviary Ethics*.

JACK

I didn't know birds were interested in books!

RAVEN

Truthfully, most of them would rather eat a mouse than read my book, but I won't let apathy stop me.

JACK

I'm only a human, but I would love to read it! Or perhaps you could read it to me right now!

RAVEN

I write it with my beak in the sand and I can't carry a beach of sand up here to read to you. To be honest...it mostly gets washed away by the tide every day anyhow. Hence, my 134<sup>th</sup> edition.

JACK

I'm sure you could recite some of it to me by memory. It will be entertainment in my new home!

RAVEN

I suppose I could quote from Chapter 1, but—no! No story! No entertainment! You don't live here! Don't you have a real home to go back to? This—this mother of yours you mention?

JACK

I do! I have a wonderful home with Mother and Brown Cow and Turkey and even Fence Post.

RAVEN

Then why did you climb so far away from them?

JACK

I wasn't trying to leave them, but when I started climbing, the air was colder and...I felt an excitement I'd never felt on the ground before...like riding a wild horse through the forest—out of control! But the forest was a cloud! And the higher I got, I started to see the world from another view.

RAVEN

A bird's view. Once you've seen it, you'll never be the same.

JACK

Yes! And it made me feel...powerful but small, yet special, very special...And I liked that feeling. So I kept on going, because the feeling kept on going! It was the start of some kind of magnificent adventure—just for me!

(pause)

But...I can't see Mother's house anymore. I'm too far away. I'm cold and hungry and I want to feel dirt on my feet again. I even miss Fence Post.

RAVEN

Well, a good Fence Post is hard to find.

JACK

But I can't get back! The whole village is right! They all say I'm a dull boy! And this will certainly prove them right because—I don't know if you can tell or not. But—

(pause)

I'm stuck.

(pause)

Can you bring me some beef stew?

RAVEN

(pause)

No!

JACK

I've got to get used to eating on my beanstalk. It's my home now!

RAVEN

It most certainly is not! You can't stay here. You don't belong in the sky. What's your name, Human?

JACK

Jack. What's yours?

(RAVEN whistles a tweet)

Oh, it's a whistle! Like this?

(whistles)

RAVEN

Nothing like that.

JACK

Then this?

(tries various whistles)

RAVEN

Please, stop! Stop mangling my name chirp! You can simply—go ahead and call me “Dear Raven,” if you must.

JACK

I like “Dear Raven” because it’s true. If you can’t bring me stew, perhaps a loaf of bread?

(pause)

RAVEN

Jack.

JACK

With butter.

RAVEN

(pause)

I’m a bird.

(pause)

I’ll bring you a worm, if you like. Maybe a chipmunk. But no bread.

JACK

No thank you then.

RAVEN

Look, you’re not stuck. I can see your feet moving. So—move. Go down the beanstalk.

JACK

It’s not that simple. See...

(JACK looks around but holds tightly to the stalk)

## END OF EXCERPT

For the [complete play, visit:](https://www.tarmeddaugh.com/the-beanstalk-10-minute-play)

<https://www.tarmeddaugh.com/the-beanstalk-10-minute-play>

For more information on the collection, [THE PRETTIEST DUCKLING AND OTHER MORAL AMBIGUITIES](#), in which *Jack and Dear Raven* is comprised, please visit:

[www.tarmeddaugh.com/when-fairy-tales-falter-the-prettiest-duckling-and-other-moral-ambiguities](http://www.tarmeddaugh.com/when-fairy-tales-falter-the-prettiest-duckling-and-other-moral-ambiguities)

## ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT



Tara's plays have been presented by theater companies such as Fusion Theatre, Mosaic Theater Company of DC, The Directors Company, Le Petit Theatre de Terrebbonne, Theatre One, Tutti Bravi Productions, Westchester Collaborative Theater, Possibilities Theater, Tagragg Productions, One Armed Man, Oracle Theatre, Inc, The Acme Theatre Company, The Harlequin Players, Woman Seeking..., and numerous schools, universities and colleges including Gardner-Webb, Prince Williams, and Colgate. Her work has showcased at festivals such as the Artists of Tomorrow Festival in NYC, The Bangkok Community Theatre Fringe Festival, the Pittsburgh New Works Series and the Last Frontier Theatre Conference in Alaska. Tens of thousands of teachers, actors and students world-wide have utilized her monologues for competitions, course material, auditions, performances, and showcases. Tara has taught Playwriting at Carnegie Mellon, the Pittsburgh Public Theatre, and for The Westport Country Playhouse, and she has led Creative Dramatics Workshops for children in underserved areas throughout New York and New Jersey. Additionally, she has script consulted on several animation and VR projects. Tara's work has been published by Smith & Kraus, YouthPLAYS, Oxford Press South Africa, the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts (LAMDA), Limelight Editions/Applause Acting Series, The Hunger Journal, Meriweather Publishing, Applause Theatre & Cinema, Performer Stuff and Ace-Your-Audition. She is a recipient of the Shubert Fellowship in Dramatic Writing, the Sloan Screenwriting Fellowship, the New Works for Young Women [Actors] Award, The Write Stuff Award, and is a member of the Dramatist's Guild. Tara holds her MFA in Dramatic Writing from Carnegie Mellon University.

For more information about Tara Meddaugh or her work,  
visit her website at [www.tameddaugh.com](http://www.tameddaugh.com).