

A Tale of Two Jacks

Ron Greene

Born in May some years back
Two baby boys whose names were Jack.
Each was healthy, a real delight
Everything normal — at first sight.

3/4 p3 capo 2
C C G C
F F/C C C^{maj7}
F G A_m D_m
G⁷ G⁷ E_m C

The first Jack he was Boston born
Of liberal parents who let him play
With any toys he chose each day.
The other Jack was of Texas stock
With traditional parents who picked his toys –
Only those that are meant for boys.

C C G G
F F/C C C^{maj7}
G G C C
F F/C C C
G G C C
G G E_m C

By the time both were two,
Strange behavior had shown through:
As their personas did unfurl
Each Jack behaved more like a girl.

C C G C
F F/C C C^{maj7}
F G A_m D_m
G⁷ G⁷ E_m C

Their parents' responses were much alike.
With loving concern they did enforce
Masculine traits as a matter of course –
Fatherly attention, more rough and tumble
Football, trucks, and other such toys.
And as for playmates, nothing but boys.

C C G G
F F/C C C^{maj7}
G G C C
F F/C C C
G G C C
G G E_m C

This regimen ruled years three through eight.
Each Jack, though, protested his fate –
Long bouts of crying, emotional torrents,
Miserable sons, mystified parents.

C C G C
F F/C C C^{maj7}
F G A_m D_m
G⁷ G⁷ E_m C

At eight in Boston, help was sought
To calm their troubled home for a while.
What should they do with a trans-gendered child?
Upon advice, Jack became Jacki.
She got her longed-for dolls and dresses,
Female playmates and golden tresses.

C C G G
F F/C C C^{maj7}
G G C C
F F/C C C
G G C C
G G E_m C

Texas counseling came at nine.
The advice they got was to tow the line.
"Boys must be boys" the doctor said.
To give an inch meant a life of dread.

C C G C
F F/C C C^{maj7}
F G A_m D_m
G⁷ G⁷ E_m C

So Jack was given unwanted guns.
Surrounded by mates who liked to play rough,
And occasional beatings to make him tough.
It apparently worked: the tantrums ceased.
Jack quit asking for girlish toys,
And even learned to play with boys.

C C G G
F F/C C C^{maj7}
G G C C
F F/C C C
G G C C
G G E_m C

For Jack and Jacki, life seemed carefree.
Nine, ten, eleven passed peacefully.
Their parents' angst remained unstirred,
And of the turmoil, nothing was heard.

C C G C
F F/C C C^{maj7}
F G A_m D_m
G⁷ G⁷ E_m C

Jacki had blossomed – all laughter and smiles.
With close girl friends her life she did share,
And happily savored her parents' care.
Jack, by contrast, entered a shell.
A solemn boy, who in secret cried;
Turned thirteen, by his own hand died.

C C G G
F F/C C C^{maj7}
G G C C_{note}
F F/C C C
G G C C
G G E_m C_{pinch}