

# **WHY ARE YOU AFRAID?**

A Sufi tale

Adapted by Carole L. Cooney

**Setting:** A Genie's cave

**Characters:**

**Narrator**

**Genie**

**Little Jack**

**Narrator:** Once upon a time, there was a Genie who lived in a deep, dark cave. One day a young boy named Little Jack wandered into the Genie's cave.

**Little Jack:** (calling out with an echo) Hello, Hello, Hello, hellooooo.

**Genie:** (big, booming voice) WHO CALLS?

**Little Jack:** (trembling) It's just me, Little Jack.

**Genie:** (loudly) WHO ARE YOU AND WHY ARE YOU HERE?

**Little Jack:** I'm just a little boy from the village below. (crying) I was walking through the hills and I got lost. I am very thirsty. Could you please give me some water?

**Genie:** I have no water in my cave but there is a little pool not far from here.

**Little Jack:** But it is so dark outside. I am afraid.

**Genie:** Then I will go and get you some water. Just stay here, Little Jack.

**Little Jack:** No! No! Please don't leave me in this dark cave. It's too scary.

**Genie:** Here is my sharp knife. Use it if anyone comes to harm you. Since no one has ever come to my cave, I know you are safe here.

**Narrator:** Genie walked slowly to the pool for Little Jack's water. While he was gone, Little Jack began to imagine all sorts of strange creatures hanging from the ceiling, crawling up the walls and running across the floor. His fear grew and grew. Soon, Genie returned with the water.

**Little Jack:** (screaming) STOP! STOP! DON'T TAKE ANOTHER STEP!

**Genie:** Little Jack, it is only me, the Genie. I have your water.

**Little Jack:** You are saying that to trick me. You could be one of the monsters I've been seeing in this cave. (waving the knife to defend himself) Stop where you are and leave me alone!

**Genie:** (calmly) Little Jack, Little Jack, you are filled with fear. Fear – it is making you do foolish things. Put the knife down and come here to drink the water.

**Little Jack:** NO! I AM TOO AFRAID! GO AWAY!

**Genie:** I see. I am sorry for you. I hope someday you will be rid of your fear.

**Narrator:** The Genie knew it would take time for little Jack to overcome his fear. In order to help him, the Genie left Little Jack in the safe cave and started to look for another place to live.