

JILL TAKES A LEAP

by Scott Mullen

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SYNOPSIS: Bride-to-be Jill climbs up onto a bungee platform, where she has second thoughts about jumping—and about her marriage. She is soon joined by a nervous employee, as well as a drunk couple who are scheduled to actually be married while bungee-jumping. Will Jill wind up taking the plunge?

TIME: Present.

SETTING: Small bungee platform.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(2 females, 2 males)

JILL (f).....20s-30s. Trying to figure out her life.
Wearing a harness, cord trailing behind her. *(51 lines)*

GARY (m)20s. A meek employee at a bungee jump place. His nametag says "GARY".
(51 lines)

CARLEEN (f).....20s-30s. A drunk bride-to-be in a wedding dress. *(13 lines)*

WESLEY (m).....20-30s. Carleen's intended groom, in a tuxedo t-shirt. *(9 lines)*

PRODUCTION NOTES: The play works better the smaller the platform is.

STAGE SETTINGS AND DIRECTIONS: The main set is a platform, with an easy way to climb up in the back. If the actress playing Jill has a bungee rig and a cord realistically trailing off somewhere behind the platform, all the better.

PROPS

- ☐ bungee-jumping rig
- ☐ a half-full bottle of "whiskey"

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AT START: *JILL stands on a small platform, looking down.*

JILL: This was a mistake. It's such a long way down. I mean, it seemed like such a good idea when I saw the sign. Bob's Discount Bungee Jumping! Maybe that should have been my first clue. You probably don't want to cut corners on a bungee jump. I'm getting down. No! I can't. I need to do this. Come on, Jill, pull it together. All you have to do is jump. One, two... it's such a long way down.

Appearing behind her is GARY. Not on the platform yet.

GARY: Ma'am? Ma'am, you need to either jump, or get off the platform.

JILL: Don't call me ma'am.

GARY: There are people waiting.

JILL: I'm going to jump. When I'm ready. It's really high up.

GARY: Thirty stories.

JILL: I can barely see the river down there.

GARY: Ma'am—

JILL: Don't call me ma'am! What's your name?

GARY: Gary.

JILL: Call me Jill. You think the river will save me, Gary? If this cord breaks, and I land in the water—how deep is it?

GARY: Maybe four feet deep.

JILL: Four feet...

GARY: Maybe less.

JILL: Those guys at the county fair, who jump off the platforms into those little wading pools? Like six inches of water, right? And they're fine.

GARY: This is a lot higher than that.

JILL: Yeah—

GARY: I think if the cord breaks, you're toast.

JILL: You're supposed to be making me feel better about this! Have people ever died jumping here?

GARY: I don't know.

JILL: You don't know?!?

GARY: This is my first day.

JILL: What!?!?

GARY: My Uncle Bob gave me the job, on account of I got laid off down at the cat food factory.

JILL: Okay, stop talking.

GARY: I took the training courses. You are properly strapped into that harness. This is a high-test bungee line—it'll hold 800 pounds. Probably.

JILL: Probably!

GARY: That's what the booklet said.

JILL: How many people have you actually watched jump off the platform?

GARY: You're the first.

JILL: I'm the first!

GARY: If you jump. But I think you should climb on down.

JILL: No! I need to do this! Climb on up here and check my harness again!

GARY: I'm not getting up there! I'm not tethered in! And there aren't any railings!

JILL: Why aren't there railings?

GARY: Apparently scared people would just grab on, and have to be pried off. So Uncle Bob got rid of the railings. If you won't jump, I'm supposed to push the button that tilts the platform, so that you'll just fall off.

JILL: Don't push the button!

GARY: I'm not going to push the button! But you need to climb down!

JILL: No! I have to jump! Climb up here and check my harness. Just in the back, where I can't see? Please?

GARY takes a deep breath. He climbs onto the platform with JILL.

GARY: Oh, this is a mistake. Don't look down, don't look down.

GARY grabs onto JILL.

JILL: Don't touch me!

GARY: I'm checking your harness!

JILL: Okay. Okay.

GARY: But if you feel yourself going, don't grab onto me. Because I will die.

JILL: I can feel you shaking.

GARY: I need you to distract me. Tell me why you have to jump.

JILL: It's on my bucket list.

GARY: Oh no—you're dying?

JILL: No! No. I'm getting married. Next weekend. To a wonderful guy. Dean and I have been dating since we were fourteen. And he's awesome. But he's super conservative. So I decided anything I ever wanted to do that's too wild for Dean, I'd better do it now. So I just started driving. Checking items off my bucket list.

GARY: Like—

JILL: I drove 120 miles per hour! I thought my old car was going to explode, but it got up there, just for a moment. Empty road, late at night—and so fast. And I got a tattoo! Well, not a real tattoo, I knew Dean wouldn't approve, so I told the tattoo artist not to use ink. But I wanted to know what it felt like. It hurt! He drew a little heart on my right hip. Soon as it heals, no one will know it was ever there. But I'll know. And I was going to jump out of a plane, but then I saw the sign. Discount Bungee Jumping. I need to do it, to get it out of my system. To know if I like it or not.

GARY: You won't like it.

JILL: But you don't know. You've never done it. I can tell.

GARY: I'm pretty sure only crazy people take this leap. Do you know who's in line down there now? A woman in a wedding dress and her fiancé, who are going to get married while bungeeing. They have a minister with a bullhorn, I think he's already down there, on the bluff—well, I'm not going to look.

JILL: I see him!

GARY: Hopefully he's out of the splash zone.

JILL: Splash zone?

GARY: Sometimes people vomit. Or pee. Or... other things.

JILL: Gary!

GARY: Sorry. Uncle Bob told me not to mention that. Oh no—

Climbing up behind him is CARLEEN, in a wedding dress, half-full bottle of whiskey in one hand.

GARY: Don't climb up here! You're not wearing a harness!

CARLEEN climbs onto the platform, her wedding dress taking up space.

CARLEEN: Whoa! It really is high up here! This is crazy!

GARY: You need to get down!

CARLEEN: Wesley, come up here and see this!

WESLEY climbs up as well. GARY is pushed closer to the edge. He's having a panic attack.

WESLEY: Woo-hoo! This is exactly how I pictured my wedding day!

CARLEEN: Kiss me baby! I love you!

WESLEY: I love you!

WESLEY and CARLEEN kiss.

GARY: You can't be up here! It's too dangerous!

CARLEEN: Look down there, Wesley, I see your mama!

WESLEY: Hey, Mama!

GARY cries out, as he is pushed towards the edge.

GARY: We're all going to die! Except for Jill. Probably.

JILL: Thanks.

CARLEEN: God is not calling us back today! I ain't gonna die until 2087! Psychic told me that!

WESLEY: She was the real deal, too. At least eighty percent gypsy!

GARY: I need to get down!

CARLEEN: You need to relax! If this platform breaks, we'll just all grab onto her.

GARY: No.

JILL: Let's not!

GARY: We won't be able to hold on.

CARLEEN: Sure we will. My thighs have muscles like you wouldn't believe.

WESLEY: She'll wrap them around you like an anaconda. Save everyone. Like a big old snake ball!

GARY: No snake ball!

CARLEEN: Wesley, I just had an amazing idea! What if when we make our wedding bungee jump, we are locked together in sexual congress as we fall!

WESLEY: Making babies as the reverend pronounces us man and wife!

GARY: You can not do that when you bungee jump!

CARLEEN: Party pooper.

WESLEY: Don't poop on our party!

JILL: Okay! You two need to get off the platform right now! This is my time! Go! Shoo!

CARLEEN: I like her. She's feisty.

JILL: Go!

CARLEEN: Fine.

WESLEY climbs down. CARLEEN goes to follow.

JILL: Wait! How did you know he was the one?

CARLEEN: Second date, we stopped at the supermarket, to get some wine and some pie and some whipped cream? But I realize I lost one of my favorite earrings. It was just gone. And this man right here got down on his hands and knees, and searched that whole parking lot, for two hours. Never did find that earring. But it was okay. I was in love.

WESLEY: I love you too baby!

WESLEY helps CARLEEN down.

CARLEEN: Maybe we need to visit the porta-potty. Take care of the baby-making thing before the wedding.

WESLEY: I like the way you think.

WESLEY and CARLEEN disappear. JILL eyes GARY, who is breathing heavily.

GARY: I thought I was going to die.

JILL: Would you do that? Crawl around a parking lot for two hours looking for an earring?

GARY: For the right person I guess. Sure. Would Dean?

JILL: I don't know.

JILL sits on the edge of the platform. Looks down. GARY stands frozen. Then he slowly moves towards her. Sits down next to her.

JILL: Look at you.

GARY: If I pass out, make sure I don't roll off.

JILL: Just breathe the air. Feel the breeze.

GARY: It's nice.

JILL: It is.

They breathe.

JILL: I thought I had everything figured out, you know? Marry Dean, have a bunch of kids, house. PTA... I could be a PTA mom. It's a life, you know? It would be so easy to climb down, right now. Get back in my car, drive home, and check back in to all that. But of the five million possible versions of my life... is that the best one?

GARY: You're asking the wrong guy.

JILL: No. I'm not. At what point do you stop pursuing your best life?

GARY: That's... a good question.

JILL: Scares you, huh?

GARY: Everything scares me.

JILL: But you're still up here. Sitting on the edge of a platform, thirty stories up. It gives you perspective.

GARY: I'm going to quit this job.

JILL: Good. Good! How does my harness look?

GARY: You're still going to jump?

JILL: If I back down now, I'm giving into my fear. I'm settling. I don't want to settle. I want to know what will make me happy.

GARY: And if you take the leap, and you hate it... will you go back to Dean?

JILL: I think I still have some driving to do. A lot of thinking to do. But I'm still going to jump.

GARY: Your harness looks great.

JILL: Live your best life, Gary.

GARY: You too.

JILL: Now get off this platform.

GARY scrambles off the platform. JILL looks down. And then she smiles.

JILL: One, two—

Blackout. And then a scream.

JILL: Woo-hoo!!!!

THE END

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