



*The townspeople believe Greta's an evil witch! Doesn't sound too bad, until kids are throwing rocks at her, teenagers are teasing her, and women are casting her out!*

## **The Witch Story**

By Jackie Adams

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JACKIE ADAMS

A close-up portrait of a woman with dark, wavy hair. Her face is vertically split down the middle. The left side of her face is covered in green, wrinkled, textured skin, resembling a witch or a creature. The right side of her face is her natural human skin, with dark eyes and a slight smile. She is wearing a dark, textured garment.

The  
WITCH STORY

What lies in the spells of this book?

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## Chapter 1

What's a confused woman to do when she and her husband are no longer compatible? It's been years coming they should've divorced, but they held on longer than either of them should have. The blind leading the blind. Trouble finding more trouble. Each of them had their affairs with others. What's left for the two of them that time and letting others close hadn't taken from them?

Greta packs her last bag and wipes away a tear. She looks at the house they shared together for ten long years. She remembers singing Patsy Clive in the kitchen while doing dishes. She remembers Geo drinking his beer and sitting on the same couch she's staring at as he pretended to love her more.

Geo had been the only love she had let close enough to her to feel anything, and even that wasn't enough. It wasn't enough to erase the damage caused in the beginning. Maybe a fresh start is just what Greta needs! Besides, Geo's still with the blonde he can't hardly wait to get back to. It's time Greta realized she wasn't really wanted. If Geo had wanted her, he wouldn't have started the affairs all those

years ago. Greta needs more than a broken promise. Maybe even more than the so-called love has to offer.

As she follows Geo's shadow reflecting on the floor's reddish hall rug through to the chilled kitchen tile to the fluffy throw carpet in the living room, Geo stops in his tracks. He turns around and looks Greta in the eyes, "After all these years, with this move we made closer to your aunts and uncles, why do you want to leave now?"

It's a question that would stick with Greta for years. She bites her lower lip debating the right words and softly says, "It's been a long time coming, Geo." She sucks in her breath as she feels her heart break, putting her back towards him when his next question takes place.

He turns her around by her arm and asks, "Do you still love me?"

The biggest lie she'd ever have to tell, she sucks in her next breath and as she exhales, she says, "no." With that she walks out the door, she's sure not to look back, and steps down the front porch she'd been walking over for the past ten years, and strides to her 80s style squared truck. She doesn't have a lot of cash, but she managed to pull together enough to get her back to her dad's house.

She thinks of how her dad and her uncle live on Aunt Greta's farm as their sister's caretakers. Yes, she was named after her Aunt Greta, because her mom loved her Aunt Greta so much. Greta loves her name and loves her Aunt Greta just as much, so she's not bothered sharing a name, even if the family still associates her as being little Greta.

She starts the engine, looks back at the house, and sees Geo looking out the window. Greta can't help but wonder if he's taking one last look at her and the truck or if he's counting down the seconds, he can be with the blonde again. Maybe he'll call the blonde over to the house this time now that Greta will be gone. She backs the truck out, and from the rearview mirror she watches the home they shared together for the past decade get smaller and smaller.

As she takes the two-hour drive through curvy country roads and even curvier highways to her father's ranch style home, she thinks about everything that's taken place between Geo and herself. She wonders if living with her dad will be possible or if she'll find herself back in Geo's arms. She sure hopes not. She blasts the music on the truck's radio and sings the rest of the way to her dad's house. Her dad and uncle are the caretakers of one hundred acres.

Greta pulls up to the entrance that is off a busy highway called Southern County Road. She opens the truck door that makes a creaking sound and steps out to open the rusted iron gate. As it squeals open, she can see her dad at the screened porch door. He waves at her as she climbs back into the truck and pulls through the small, curvy gravel road entrance leading to the ranch house.

Her dad spares no time walking to the truck, even before Greta gets out, he's standing by the driver's side window and says, "I've missed you, daughter. Welcome home." He always did have the best dad smiles.

He never had much money due to his mental condition. Dad has schizophrenia, but he sure always had plenty of love to give her. There were hard times when he'd pick and dry roots just to give Greta a little cash in her pockets. They may not have had everything but one thing for sure, they had each other.

Dad takes Greta's bag full of clothes, "How was the trip here?"

Greta shakes her head and says, "A lot of curves, dad, but the prettiest drive ever." She looks around the property and feels like she's walking in a Thomas

Kinkaide painting. “It’s beautiful here. I can’t believe how much you and uncle fixed it up.”

Dad opens the screen door that creaks as much as the truck’s door does, “Wait ‘til you see the inside! By the way, I thought you could use my room. I’ll take the guest room for a while.”

Greta frowns, “I don’t want to do a takeover. I’m so sorry.” She looks at the floor.

“It’s fine, really. I don’t mind, and I don’t need privacy like a young lady does.” He carries Greta’s bag to the room and sits it on the bed. “I washed the covers. Everything’s ready for you.”

Greta takes the bag off the twin size bed and unpacks it in the little dresser that sits on the opposite side. She sees the bed situated in front of the window with the side of the mattress facing it. She loves that. She’ll be able to lie down and look out with roaming eyes.

She stares out of it now and can see a small clearing outside, and the clearing is backed with various sizes of trees. Mainly tall trees. She’s not sure of all the names of the trees, but she can see some oaks, cedars, and pines. She spotted some walnut trees in the front yard. She can’t wait to collect and

eat some of those. “It’s beautiful, dad. I love it here already.”

Dad says, “I’ll leave you to it. Once you rest you can join Uncle and me in the kitchen. We’ll fix some sandwiches, and after we eat, I’ll show you the fruit trees.” He rubs his hands together.

My dad’s excitement always tickled me from childhood through to my adulthood. He always loves the little things in life. They used to be little, but now they seem so much bigger to me.

I’m still thinking where I went wrong in my marriage as I finish unpacking the few things I brought. I wanted out of the house my ex-husband and I shared as fast as I could possibly leave.

I put the bag in the tiny closet, and land back on the bed with a thud. It’s right next to the window I’m staring through lost in thought when there’s a knock at the door startling me to the here and now. “Yeah?”

“Uncle wanted me to tell you he’s made us some roast beef. He has to go into town, but he wanted me to let you know before it gets cold. He said it’s some good eating.” I hear my dad step away from the door and each of his steps echoing down the hall to the kitchen.

I've missed my dad. I suppose I shouldn't coop myself up in this bedroom wondering all the same questions I may never have the answers to. Come on, woman, snap out of this funk. Be in the here and now. Accept the changes and move on.

After the self-pep talk, I walk down the hall with my nose leading the way as it takes in all the different smells of herbs Uncle must have used in the roast beef. "Wow, it smells good in here."

Dad smiles at me as he pulls some potato chips from the cabinet. "I'll have you know I grew those herbs fresh!" He shakes his head, "I was never much in the kitchen, but the garden is a whole different story."

"I remember." I take a seat at the yellow oak country style bench table. "The whole time growing up mom would be cooking while you were playing in the garden."

He pushes the potato chips towards me, "At one time your mother loved to garden, too." His eyes go distant, "I'm not sure what changed her in those years."

"You're right, she's not much of one to garden now." I laugh, "If she had the choice, she wouldn't be

back home in Delma. She'd probably be hailing taxis in New York City."

Dad nods his head, "You got that right. She sure grew to hate the life she once loved."

I put my hand over his, "We all change, pops. She just changed faster."

He shrugs, pulls his hand away, and walks over to the crock pot. "I suppose you're right, daughter. Now, are you ready for some good fixings?"

As we're making our sandwiches I ask him, "Are you happy, pops?"

He puts his bread down grabbing a spoon to get some au jus sauce. "I wish things would've worked out different with your mother, but we're better friends than we ever were as a married couple. But yeah, I'm very happy. Why do you ask?"

I also spoon some au jus sauce in a small bowl to dip my sandwich in. "I guess coming out of this divorce is a little scary. I mean, I went from mom and you straight into college where I had a dorm roommate to being married and living with Geo the following year. I've never actually been single. Will I even like living alone?"

“Honestly,” he leans into whisper, “I loved the bachelor life before Uncle moved in. Don’t get me wrong, I love having him here, but there’s nothing like living at your own pace, in your own space, in your own thoughts.”

Dad and mom have been divorced for nine years. As soon as I moved into a dorm at college, they went their separate ways. Dad lived single for over five years before Uncle fell on hard times. Uncle’s wife cheated on him with a wealthier man, and Uncle fell into a depression. He gave up the job he worked at for over twenty-five years and came to live here with dad.

Dad shrugs, “Besides, if you ever decide you don’t like it, get a roommate. No big deal really.”

I take my sandwich and sauce to the table. “Yeah, I guess you’re right. Maybe I’m just thinking too much.”

He brings his food over to the table, too. “You get that from me.” He takes a seat. “After losing your mother, it caused me to question everything about myself. Who I had been, who I was then, and who I would become. I blamed myself for years, until I finally realized we just grew apart. Do me a favor and don’t do that to yourself.”

After we clean up our breakfast dishes, we make our way outside to the field at the middle left of the house. As we're passing the front porch, I see dad has a red hammock hung between two trees. "I see you finally got around to hanging it."

"I've been keeping myself as busy as my old body will let me. I love growing older, but my body doesn't always agree with my heart. There's so much to do before winter sets in."

I spot the baby trees in the left field next to the gravel road leading in. There must be twenty of them. "Wow, pops, I'm impressed. Are all these fruit trees?"

He nods and says, "Sure are! They're apples, pears, and peaches. We'll have enough fruit to last decades." He laughs and says, "Uncle is even playing with the idea of parking a truck out front and loading the back of it with fruit to sell."

"Actually, that's not a bad idea. A lot of farmers are doing that these days."

"Oh, I don't know, daughter. Maybe."

After we walk through the fruit trees, we make our way back to the house. "What happened between Geo and you if you don't mind my asking?"

I'm not surprised he asked. He was close to Geo. They always got along fine. Which is why it breaks my heart when I had to tell him we were divorced. "I guess you could say that while we grew apart, he grew closer to a blonde he had been having an affair with."

"I'm so sorry, Greta. I know that must have been difficult. How did you find out?"

I take in a deep breath hating having to remember the night he came in smelling like a bottle of cheap perfume, "Late nights and lipstick prints."

Dad shakes his head, "It's hard finding loyalty these days."

I could tell him I thought after I had a revenge affair, I thought would straighten Geo up, but I bite my lip instead. Some things you don't tell your father, and my flings aren't one of them.

"Yeah, I know that now. I just wish I knew that then before I quit college. By now, I'd have my doctorates degree in psychology."

Dad puts his hand on my shoulder, "Keep your chin up, kid. It gets easier. Did you know the suicide rate..."

I interrupt him, “It’s okay, dad. I’m learning to look at now and the future. It’s still kind of hard letting go of the past, but I’m learning.”

It’s an autumn day. Leaves from various trees are falling gently to the ground all over the property. It literally looks like it’s raining-colored leaves. Beautiful, to say the least. Sadly, though, it’s also getting darker earlier. I’m lying in my bedroom trying to sleep, but all I’m doing is tossing and turning. Thinking, thinking, thinking.

I finally get up, get dressed, and throw my hair in a loose, messy bun. I don’t know what got into me. Dad and Uncle are sleeping. I get in my truck and head into town.



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