

Portfolio Note: This was a piece done for a relatively famous magician, who wanted a script to accompany a deck manipulation trick.

The idea is that the cards are presented to an audience in a certain order, regardless of how the magician shuffles, cuts, or otherwise manipulates the deck. The trick is done seamlessly, but the script is an excuse to present the cards in a certain way and to use all 52 cards (and Jokers) in the deck.

I presented two versions to the magician: One is relaxed and more suited something like a corporate event, where time limits aren't a factor. The abbreviated version cuts out a bit for the sake of time.

The Girl and the Starfish
REVISED & ABBREVIATED SCRIPTS

Card Order: J / 7 / A / JK / 2 / 8 / 4 / 6 / 5 / 3 / 7 / 3 / K / J / 5 / 6 / 9 / 10 / 3 / 7 / K / Q / A / 4 / 4 / 10 / Q-H / A / J / 2 / K / Q / 5 / 8 / 2 / 3 / 10 / 10 / 8 / 7 / 2 / 8 / 4 / 6 / 5 / 9 / 9 / J / 6 / 9 / K / Q / A / JK

The Girl and the Starfish
Abbreviated Version

I want to tell you a story that my grandfather – Jack [J] – told me when I was seven [7] years old. He was an [ace] pilot back in the Vietnam and always of a joker [JK] but before that, he was a kid growing in Oak Island, North Carolina – zip code [28465].

Of course, it wasn't called that, back in ['37]. It was just a little cluster of houses beside a three [3] mile stretch of coast where grandad like to walk. He was just a teenager back then, but he felt like the [KING] of nowhere USA. Of course, if you asked him in his later years, he'd tell you he was more of a [JACK]straw – just another nobody with his head stuck in the sand.

[SHUFFLE / SPLIT DECK / AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION]

He'd get out early, usually around five [5] or six [6] in the morning and walk barefoot on the coast until nine [9] or ten [10]. He loved it. The early mornings. The salty air. The crashing waves.

He used to tell me stories about the summer of ['37], when the Myrtle Beach aristocrats drove up from the city and sat out on the coast in their fancy swimwear. To a country boy from the Carolina coast, they looked like royalty [K-Q].

That never bothered granddad, though. He just flashed a smile at the pretty girls as he passed them by. It was his [ace] in the hole.

Of course, all that changed during the storm of ['44]. It was a bad one. Wind, rain, and high tides – the worst he'd ever seen. Ten [10] hours after the weather had passed, granddad hurried down to the coast.

[SHUFFLE / SPLIT DECK / AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION]

Thousands of starfish were scattered on the shore. He'd never seen so many in all his life. He saw a young woman standing on the beach, a redhead [QUEEN-HEART] about his age, tossing them back into the water.

He walked over with that fresh smile on his face – that old [ace] in the hole – introduced himself and asked her what she was doing and she told him she was putting those starfish back where they belonged.

Granddad looked around. If she wasn't such a pretty girl, he probably would've laughed at her. She could throw them back for a week and she'd never rescue them all.

"There are too many," he said. "It won't make a difference."

But this girl didn't listen. She just threw another starfish and shrugged. "Maybe not, [Jack]," she said, "but it sure made a difference to that one. Now, are you going to help me or not?"

[SHUFFLE / SPLIT DECK / AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION]

One thing I can tell you about my granddad: he loved a challenge. He also loved pretty girls. He bent down, picked up one of those starfish, and hurled it back into the Atlantic. Then he picked up another. And another. They talked while they worked, just the two [2] of them – a [KING] and a [QUEEN] of an empty beach — and that suited granddad just fine.

Before long, it wasn't five [5] in the morning anymore. It was eight [8]AM, then two [2] or [3] in the afternoon! They'd been working for ten [10] hours or more! That's a lot of work, even for a conversation with a pretty girl. But you know, when granddad looked up late that afternoon, he noticed something.

There were twenty-five [10-8-7] more people on that beach, all throwing starfish into the ocean one at a time.

[PAUSE, TALK TO AUDIENCE]

You've probably guessed by now that my granddad made that story up. **[28465]** wasn't even a zip code back then, and Oak Island wasn't officially founded until **['99]**.

It's just an old story. He told it to his son, **[JACK]** – my dad – back in **[69]** to remind him that anyone can make a difference, and they don't have to be royalty **[K-Q]** to do it.

Looking back on it, though, I think my granddad **[ace]**d it. And even though I might change the dates around a little bit, when my kids and grandkids are old enough – and when I'm old enough **[JOKER]** – I'll tell it to them, too.

Thank you.

The Girl and the Starfish
Relaxed Version (Original)

I want to tell you a story that my grandfather – Jack **[J]** – told me when I was seven **[7]** years old. He was an **[ace]** pilot back in the Vietnam and always of a joker **[JK]**. He told me this story, and I'll remember it for the rest of my life.

My granddad grew up on the east coast, in a little North Carolina town called Oak Island – zip code **[28465]**. Of course, it wasn't called that, back in **['37]**. That didn't stop him from walking three **[3]** miles every day in the fresh sand, though.

He was just a teenager back then, but he felt like the **[KING]** of nowhere USA. Of course, if you asked him in his later years, he'd tell you he was more of a **[JACK]**straw – just another nobody with his head stuck in the sand.

[It's funny how age changes our perspective, isn't it? It's easy to look back and see everything you missed the first time around. It makes you wonder if you were dealt a fair hand or if you should have shuffled the deck a little more.]

[SHUFFLE / SPLIT DECK / AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION]

Anyway, grandad loved everything about those early mornings. The salty air. The crashing waves. The horizon just before daybreak. He'd get out early, usually around five [5] or six [6] in the morning and walk barefoot on the coast until nine [9] or ten [10].

During the summer of ['37], he watched the Myrtle Beach aristocrats drive up from the city. They dressed in fancy swimwear and plant umbrellas in ground like flags. It's not so different from what you'd see on the beach today, but to a country boy from the Carolina coast, they looked like royalty [K-Q].

That never bothered grandad, though. He just flashed a smile at the pretty girls as he passed them by. It was his [ace] in the hole. They'd be gone in a few days, anyway, and everything would be back to normal.

Of course, all that changed during the storm of ['44].

Now, if you've never been in a hurricane, grandad would say you've got two options: run or ride it out. For a poor family in the American South, there was only one real option.

So, they hunkered down. Wind and rain battered the coast, and the tide came in. Those beaches that my grandfather walked almost daily were swept clean. All they could do was wait.

[SHUFFLE / SPLIT DECK / AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION]

Fortunately for grandad, Oak Island was spared. The worst of the storm came ashore just north of them, in Wilmington. The very next morning, ten [10] hours after the weather had passed, granddad hurried down to the coast.

What he saw that day stuck with him, and it's why he told me this story.

Starfish – thousands of them – were scattered on the shore. He'd never seen so many in all his life, but here they were, thrown out of the sea by the storm. Standing among them, he saw a young woman, a redhead [QUEEN-HEART] about his age, tossing them back into the sea.

He put on that fresh smile – that old [ace] in the hole – walked over, introduced himself, asked her what she was doing.

"I'm putting them back where they belong," she told him.

Grandad looked around. If she wasn't such a pretty girl, he probably would have laughed at her. There were thousands of starfish on the beach. She could throw them back for a week and she'd never rescue them all.

"There are too many," he said. "Throwing them in one at a time won't make a difference."

But this girl didn't listen. She just threw another starfish and shrugged. "Maybe not, **[Jack]**," she said, "but it sure made a difference to that one. Now, are you going to help me or not?"

[You know, each of us have a moment where we have to make a choice. Taking the road less traveled isn't easy – it's a challenge. Looking the other way other way is easy. Telling ourselves that we'll wait another day is easy. Complaining that we weren't dealt a better hand is easy. All of that may be accurate, but the truth is: we're all playing from the same deck.]

[SHUFFLE / SPLIT DECK / AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION]

One thing I can tell you about my granddad: he loved a challenge. He also loved pretty girls. I'll never know for sure why he decided to help her, but he bent down, picked up one of those starfish, and hurled it back into the water. They talked while they worked, just the two **[2]** of them – a **[KING]** and a **[QUEEN]** of an empty beach – and that suited granddad just fine.

Before long, it wasn't five **[5]** in the morning anymore. It was eight **[8]AM**, then two **[2]** or **[3]** in the afternoon! They'd been working for ten **[10]** hours or more! That's a lot of work, even for a conversation with a pretty girl. But you know, when granddad looked up late that afternoon, he noticed something.

There were twenty-five **[10-8-7]** more people on that beach, all throwing starfish into the ocean one at a time.

[PAUSE, TALK TO AUDIENCE]

You've probably guessed by now that my granddad made that story up. **[28465]** wasn't even a zip code back then, and Oak Island wasn't officially founded until **['99]**.

It's just an old story. He told it to his son, **[JACK]** – my dad – back in **[69]** to remind him that anyone can make a difference, and they don't have to be royalty **[K-Q]** to do it.

Looking back on it, though, I think my granddad **[ace]**d it. And even though I might change the dates around a little bit, when my kids are old enough – and when I'm old enough **[JOKER]** – I'll tell it to my grandkids, too.

Thank you.