

Bad Imaginary Friend

Value: Lying

Lots of us have imaginary friends. John had one and he talked to him every day. John's imaginary friend was named Duncan. Since John was an only child, he had lots of time for Duncan. Whenever mom and dad were too busy, he and Duncan made up lots of fun games together. They would play in the yard and turn it into a wonderful forest full of wild imaginary creatures. Sometimes they were spacemen fighting the evil Lord Gnulle and his army of mutants. Duncan and John always won. Other times Duncan would just get in his jammies and watch movies with John and make funny remarks about the adults.

One day John and Duncan were working on a fort in a part of the yard where nobody ever went. Duncan had already talked John into taking scrap wood from building sites near by even though John didn't really feel ok about it. "Go ahead." Duncan said. "Look, they have so much wood. They won't miss a few boards." John never let himself he had stolen the boards and Duncan said was ok so he took them.

At home, he got busy building the fort. Duncan said it was ok to use John's daddy's tools because they both knew that John's daddy wanted John to learn to use tools so this was a perfect way. Suddenly as he worked, John cut his finger. It was bleeding pretty badly so he ran crying into the house to have mommy fix it. As mommy was putting the band-aid on she asked, "How did you cut your finger John?"

"Don't tell her it was on your daddy's saw." Duncan whispered. "Tell her you cut it stacking firewood."

"But that's a lie." John answered his friend. Mommy didn't see the chat happening because parents can't see what happens with your imaginary friend.

"Don't worry. I have a magic dust and I will throw it on her to turn the lie into the truth." Duncan whispered.

"I cut it stacking up some of the firewood like you wanted me to do mommy." John said feeling really guilty inside and just then, he saw Duncan blow the magic dust.

"Well, I am glad you were doing something good sweetie." Mommy said. "Just try to be more careful next time."

Wow it had worked. John's mom really did believe it and when she did, it almost made it true. Well at least until John went back to building his fort and saw the blood on the saw. So he cleaned it up then the lie became the truth. Duncan and John worked all afternoon but as suppertime came close, it looked like rain.

"We better go in and tell mommy what we want for supper." Duncan recommended. "I want macaroni and cheese." He cheered which seemed odd to John because imaginary friends don't eat.

"Ok, we better put daddy's tools up or I will get caught and be in big trouble." John told Duncan.

"Oh leave them." Duncan said. "We will need them tomorrow to finish the fort and this way it won't take so long getting them out. Anyway, daddy never uses them during the week so we can clean up on Friday." So John listened to Duncan and left the tools out. He thought about it later when he was watching TV with his parents and it started to rain but it was too late to run out there now and daddy would know for sure. Then, just like Duncan said, they used the tools the next day and everything was fine.

Saturday daddy found the tools. He called John into the garage. "John, did you play with my tools and leave them out?" daddy said holding his favorite saw. "See? It's rusting. Was it out when it rained that night?"

"Tell him no." Duncan whispered. "Tell him that he left them out the last time he worked on the fence and that you found them and put them up for him."

"But that's a lie!" John objected to his imaginary friend.

"I will use my magic dust to make it the truth like we did before." Duncan reassured him. So John said what Duncan wanted him to and when he finished the lie, he heard Duncan blow the magic dust. Daddy stared at John like he could see right through him. John even saw daddy's eyes shift like he could actually see Duncan and John got really scared. If daddy has magic and knows about Duncan, he will be in big trouble.

"Ok John, we will talk about it later." Daddy said.

"We did it!" Duncan said triumphantly. "The magic dust worked and changed the lie into the truth." John still felt really bad in his spirit and the play that day was not so fun.

"John lets talk about the tools." John's daddy said coming into his bedroom and sitting on the bed. Then he did something John didn't expect. He picked John up and hugged him and let him sit on his lap. "Now, you have always been an honest boy and you know you can tell me the truth no matter what, don't you?"

"Yes daddy." John said feeling himself close to tears. "Daddy, I left the tools out. I lied to you in the garage." He said sniffling a bit.

"NO DON'T TELL HIM THAT. WHAT ABOUT OUR SECRETS?" Duncan complained loudly but John didn't listen.

"Who taught you to lie like that?" John's daddy asked.

"My imaginary friend Duncan." John said feeling much better getting it out.

"John, remember in the Bible where the serpent convinced Eve to lie? Well that serpent was kind of like Duncan because Eve hid things from those she loved, first her husband and then God. But God can see in our hearts and knows when we lie because nothing is hidden from him. God knows you and Duncan used lies to cover up things." Daddy said holding John so he felt safe even though he was being corrected.

"Yes daddy I know. I have felt awful about it all day." John confessed.

"Well, the Bible teaches us not to listen to spirits that make us sin. If Duncan is making you sin then its time he either met the Lord or you got a new imaginary friend. Maybe one that goes to our church." Daddy said and then he prayed with John and John repented of lying and of listening to a spirit that told him to sin. He hopped down from daddy's knee and ran out to have a snack with mommy.

"Oh and John?" His daddy said standing up from the bed. "Tell Duncan his magic dust doesn't work because I could see him blowing it the whole time." He said and John's jaw dropped.

"You could see Duncan? And you knew about the dust?" he gasped. "How much can mommies and daddies see?" he gasped.

"You never know John." Daddy said chuckling. "You just never know."