

LEVELED BOOK • M

JACK'S TALE



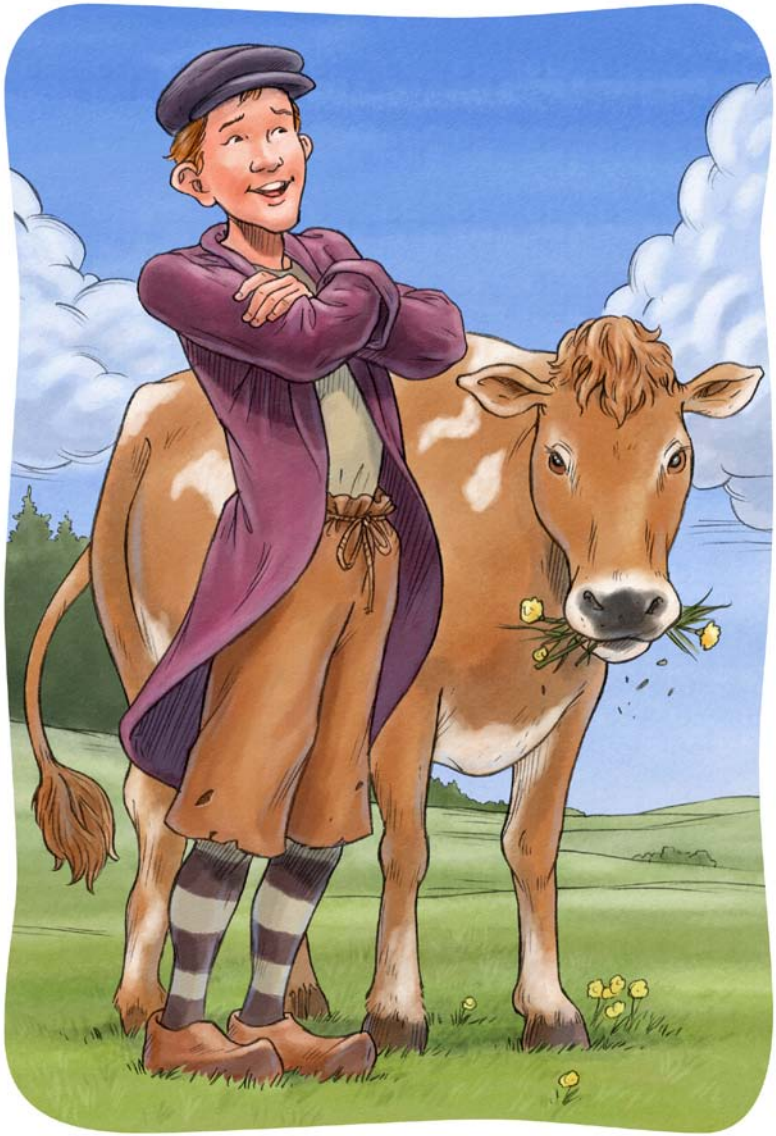
Written by Karen Mockler • Illustrated by Robert Squier

JACK'S TALE



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Howdy! I'm Jack. Mom and I used to be poor. We didn't have much except one cow.

One day, Mom said, “We have no money for food. We’ll have to sell the cow.”

So I took the cow to **market**. On the way, I met a funny little man.

“If you give me your cow,” said the man, “I’ll give you five **magic** beans.”

“What do they do?” I asked.

“Wait and see,” said the man. “But know this, Jack. They’re magic.”

He knew my name! I love magic! I **traded** the cow for those beans and ran home as fast as I could.

“What did you get for the cow?” Mom asked.



Proudly, I showed her four of the magic beans. (The fifth was stuck deep in my pocket.)

Mom was hopping mad. Hoo-wee! She threw those beans out the window.



During the night, the magic beans grew and grew. When I woke the next day, I saw a **beanstalk** that reached into the clouds.

I climbed it. Up and up. At the top, I found a castle!



Sure, I went inside. I wanted to look around, but the floor began to shake and rumble.

I hid in a cupboard. Nearby, a voice roared,

“Fee-fi-fo-fum,

I smell the blood of an Englishman!

Be he alive or be he dead,

I’ll grind his bones to make my bread!”

I peeked around the cupboard door.

I saw a goose. And a giant!

The giant sat down and ate a huge meal of doughnuts. He fed one to the goose. Then the giant fell asleep.

While he slept, that goose laid a perfect golden egg. Then another.



I stepped out of the cupboard. I grabbed the goose (and a doughnut) and tiptoed away.

But the giant woke up. He chased after us, roaring all the way. He was almost as mad as my mom. Hoo-wee!

I ran for my life. **Scrambling** down the beanstalk, I shouted, "Mom, Mom, bring the **ax!**"

She brought it. I grabbed it. Then I chopped the beanstalk with all my **might**.





The beanstalk **toppled** to the ground, and the giant fell from the sky. He landed with a crash.

“Ow-wow-wow-wow!” he moaned.
“I think my leg is broken.”

Mom and I crept forward. The giant groaned and moaned some more.

“He’s hurt,” she said.

“He’s dangerous,” I said.

“He’s a thief,” said the giant. “My goose lays golden eggs, and he stole her.”

“He’s a man-eater,” I said.

The giant shrugged. I shrugged. My mom looked from the giant to the goose to me, and back again. All the while, the giant kept moaning and groaning.

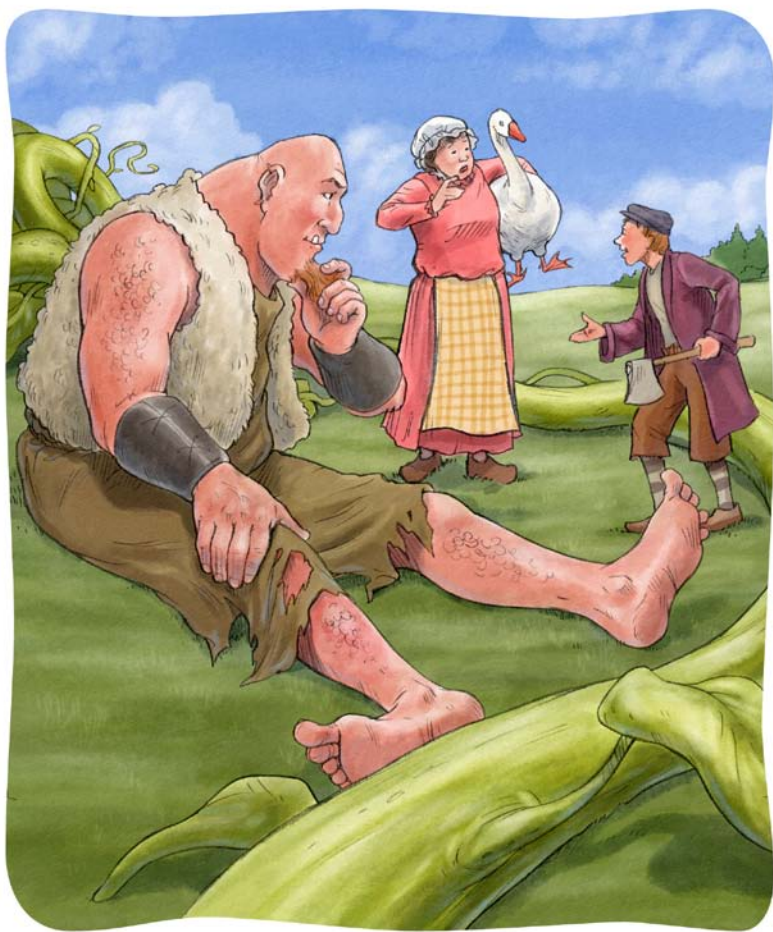
“I can fix your leg,” she said at last.

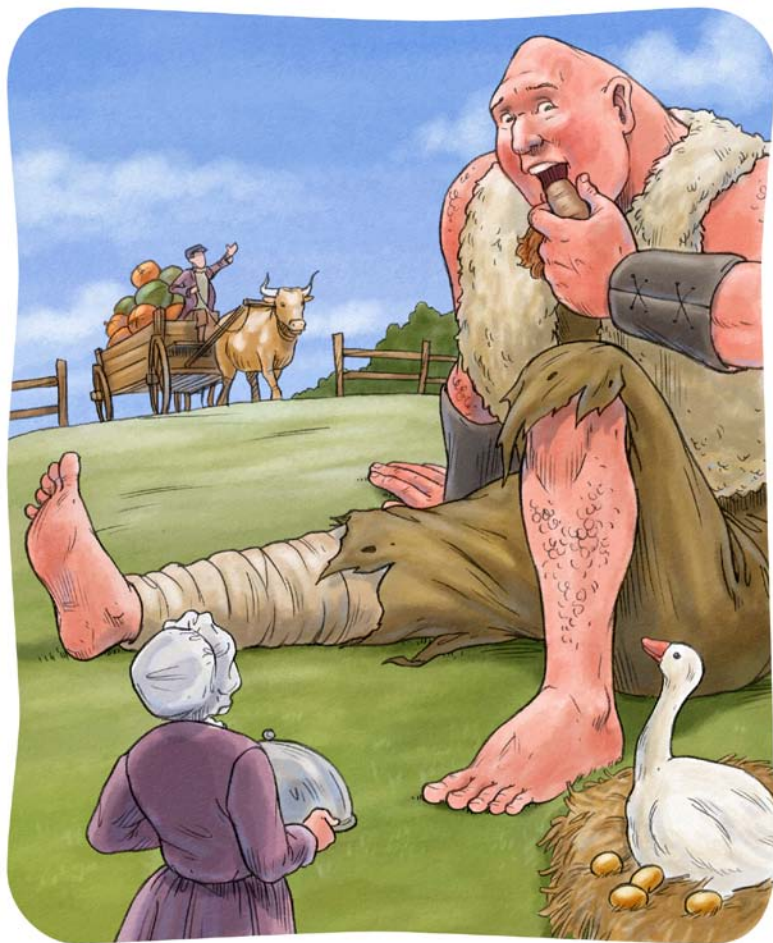
“But you’ll have to stay here until it heals.”

“Then what?” he groaned. “How do I get back to my castle?”

I dug the fifth bean from my pocket.
The giant looked surprised.

“Fine,” he grumbled.





For the next six weeks, George the Giant stayed with us. He ate a wagonload of food every day. But the goose laid golden eggs every day. Pretty soon, Mom and I weren't poor any more.



When George was healed, he stuffed the goose in his pocket and climbed back up to his castle. But sometimes the two of them drop by. Always at dinnertime. And when they do, we all enjoy a bowl of Mom's green bean soup.

Glossary

ax (<i>n.</i>)	a tool often used to chop wood (p. 10)
beanstalk (<i>n.</i>)	the stem of a bean plant (p. 7)
heals (<i>v.</i>)	becomes well or healthy again (p. 12)
magic (<i>adj.</i>)	having special or supernatural powers (p. 4)
market (<i>n.</i>)	a public place where people buy and sell things (p. 4)
might (<i>n.</i>)	strength or power (p. 10)
scrambling (<i>v.</i>)	moving in a hurried or awkward way, usually on all fours (p. 10)
toppled (<i>v.</i>)	collapsed (p. 11)
traded (<i>v.</i>)	exchanged one thing for another (p. 4)

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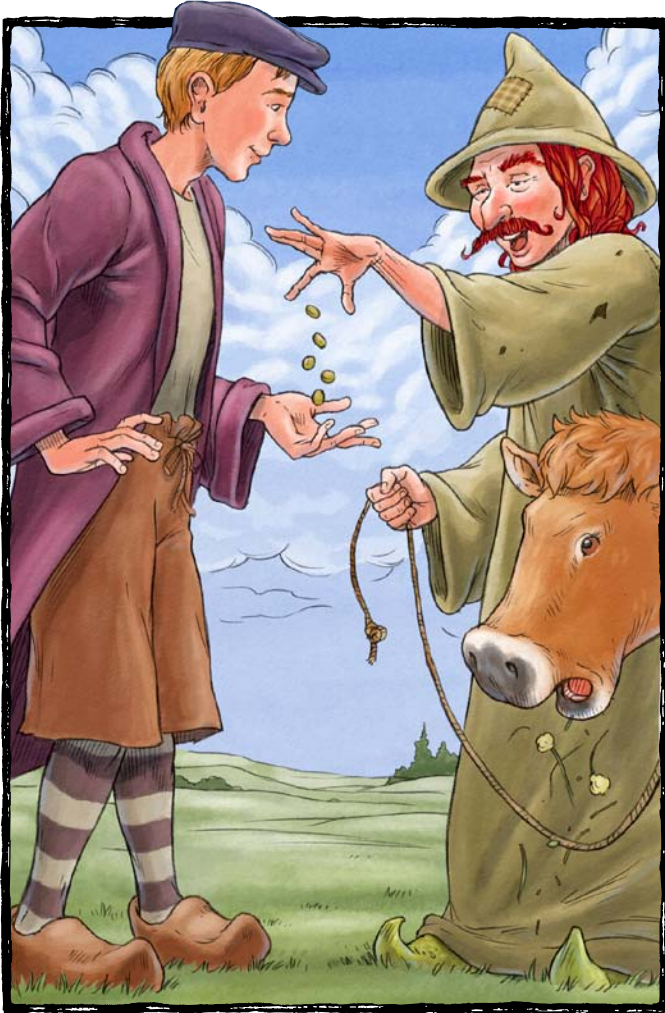
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