



Children's Stories That Never Grow Old.

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK

IN A village, far, far away, there once lived a poor woman with her son, Jack. While Jack at heart was a nice boy, he was heedless and naughty.

One morning his mother said, with tears in her eyes: "Jack, you are a very bad boy. You have brought us to ruin by your bad tricks. We have no money, and nothing is left but the old cow. We must now starve for want of food."

This made Jack very sad, and started him to think how he could mend matters. At last he thought of the cow, and his mother agreeing, he started off to market to sell her.

He had not driven the cow very far, when he met a butcher, who asked him how much he would take for her.

"What will you give me?" said easy-tempered Jack.



"**Y**OU may have these beautiful colored beans for her," said the butcher.

Jack thought the beans were very pretty, and said, "All right, the cow is yours." Jack hastened home with the beans to his mother. But when his mother saw what he had brought home in return for the cow, she kicked the old hat in which he held the beans, and away they rolled in all directions.

In the morning Jack went out into the garden, and what was his surprise to see that some of the beans had taken root and that the stalk was so thick that it made a kind of ladder, which reached to the sky.

He at once climbed up the beanstalk, and there at the top a strange country spread out before him. Jack was taken aback by all



"**I** AM tired and hungry; will you please let me go in for the night?" he said to her.

"My boy, a cruel and strong giant lives here, and he will eat you up if he finds you," she replied.

Jack was very frightened, but he remembered what the fairy had told him, and said to the woman: "Take me in for the night and hide me, so that the giant will not see me."

At last the woman agreed. They went along dark, long halls and past doors with iron gratings in front. Jack was in terror when he heard groans and cries as he passed by.

After supper a knock was heard at the gate, and so loud that the house shook. Jack, in great fright, ran and hid in the oven of the range, and the woman let her husband, the giant, in.



THIS, and sat down to think what best to do. He was very hungry and sad, for he knew his mother was hungry also, and it was all his fault, too. All at once, as he looked up, he saw a beautiful young woman standing near him. She had a small white wand in her hand, at the top of which was a peacock, made of pure gold.

"I am a fairy, and if you do as I tell you, I will help you, but if you do not obey me you will die," she said to Jack. "In this strange country there lives a very wicked giant. He is so wicked and cruel everybody is afraid of him: You, Jack, must kill this giant, and then you can have all his riches. I will help you, but you must be brave. Follow this road, and soon you will see the giant's house. You must go in and kill him." She then disappeared.

Jack walked a long time, and at last came up to a very large house, at the door of which stood a woman.



"**W**IFE! wife! I smell human flesh!" he cried. "Oh, no! my dear, it is only the people in the dungeon," she said.

This quieted the giant, and he seated himself before the fire. His wife served him with supper, while Jack watched him with horror.

After the giant had eaten his supper, he put before him on the table a queer-looking hen, which laid a golden egg every time the giant told it to. By and by his wife went to bed, and the giant went to sleep. He soon began to snore, and so loudly that it sounded like the roar of cannon.

Then Jack crept out of his hiding place, and, seizing the hen, ran off with her as fast as his legs could carry him to the beanstalk, and climbed down quickly. He ran to his mother at once, who was very glad to see him again, and said:

"I have brought you home something which will make us all rich."



THE hen laid golden eggs whenever they asked her to, and they soon were very well-off people.

But Jack, not content, went back to the giant's home again, and asked for a night's lodging, just as he had done before.

"I am afraid to let you in, for a boy I took in once before for a night stole one of the giant's treasures, and ever since he has been more cruel than ever," the giant's wife said.

But at last she let Jack in. After the giant had eaten his supper, his wife brought him his bags of gold and silver. The giant soon fell asleep, and Jack, who was hiding in the oven again, then crept out quietly from his hiding place, took the bags of gold and silver and ran quickly home with them. His mother cried with joy at his safe return, and for a long time they lived in great happiness.



ONCE more Jack felt he must take another trip up the beanstalk. The woman took him in again, and this time hid him in a large wash boiler.

When the giant came in, he called loudly: "Wife! wife! I smell human flesh!" and with this he jumped up and looked all around everywhere. Poor Jack was ready to die with fear, but by some lucky chance the giant did not look into the boiler. At last, he called for his supper, and told his wife to bring him his harp.

Jack peeped from his hiding place and saw on the table by the giant the beautiful harp. It played the sweetest music Jack had ever heard. The music quieted the giant, and soon he was sound asleep. Jack then crept out and took hold of the harp, but no sooner had he done so than the enchanted harp called out loudly:



"**S**TOP thief! Stop thief!" The giant awoke and started after Jack, who was running fast toward the beanstalk; but he was so sleepy and heavy that Jack easily outran him, and was down to the bottom with the harp in his arms just as the giant, his loud voice crying out like thunder, reached the top.

When Jack landed at the bottom of the beanstalk he picked up a hatchet and began chopping at the beanstalk close to the roots, and soon down it fell with the giant, who was killed.

Jack begged his mother's pardon for all the pain and want he had caused her, and said he would be a good and dutiful son always, and so they were rich and happy ever after.