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Jack and the Beanstalk

Folk Tale

Once upon a time, there was a poor widow who had an only son named Jack, and a cow named Milky White. And all they had to live on was the milk the cow gave every morning which they carried to the market and sold. But one morning Milky White gave no milk and they didn't know what to do.

“What shall we do? What shall we do?” said the widow, wringing her hands.

“Cheer up, mother. I'll go and get work somewhere,” said Jack.

“We've tried that before and nobody would take you,” said his mother. “We must sell Milky White, and with the money start a shop.”

“All right, mother.” said Jack “It's market day today and I'll soon sell Milky White and then we'll see what we can do.” So he took the cow's halter in his hand and off he started. He hadn't gone far when he met a funny looking old man.

“Oh you look the proper sort of chap to sell cows,” said the man. “I wonder if you know how many beans make five?”

“Two in each hand and one in your mouth,” said Jack, as sharp as a needle.

“And here they are, the very beans themselves,” he went on, pulling out of his pocket a number of strange looking beans. “I don't mind doing a swap with you. Your cow for these beans,” he said.