

Jack and the Jelly Beanstalk

by Jules de Jongh  
Season 2 Episode 4

[opening theme music and strapline]

Nanny Bea: Why I'm Nanny Bea, so pleased you could join us for some tales and tea. The kettle is on and my neighbour Jules should be here with a story any...

[knock sfx]

Nanny Bea: minute now.

Nanny Bea: Hello, who is it?

Jules: Hi Nanny Bea, it's your neighbour Jules with a story.

Nanny Bea: Hello Jules, what a delightful idea! Your story cup never seems to run dry.

Jules: Thank you Nanny Bea. Well today's tale is all about a boy and a giant and a stalk and some jelly beans.

Nanny Bea: Jelly beans? Are you certain?

Jules: Absolutely! I'll tell you all about it, are you ready for a story?

Nanny Bea: Oh, yes please

Jules: Okay then, Jack and the Jelly Bean-stalk

There are many Jacks in the world of well known tales, the nimble one, the friend of Jill, Jack who ate no fat, Jack Horner who merely sat in that corner. But our Jack is a different Jack, not to be confused with the kind and grateful boy who went up the beanstalk either. Our Jack is neither kind nor grateful in fact he's all together disagreeable. And I don't often say that of a little boy but this one, oh he was a one, but I'll let you figure that out for yourself.

Jack and his mother lived all alone in a little hut with a garden in front of it, and they had nothing else in the world but a cow named Sue.

One day Sue went dry; not a drop of milk would she give. "See there now!" said the mother. "If Sue doesn't give us milk, we can't afford to keep her. You'll have to take her off to market, Jack, and sell her for what you can get."

Jack wasn't remotely bothered that the little cow had to be sold, but he was annoyed he had to travel so far.

He had barely walked down the main road, when he met a little old man with a long gray beard.

"Well, Jack," said the little old man, "where are you taking Sue this fine morning?"

Jack was surprised that the stranger should know his name, and that of the cow, too, but he took no notice and carried on.

"Wait up I have some magic beans," the old man shouted; and he drew out a handful of them from his pocket. "If you plant them they will grow right up to the sky in a single night, and you can climb up there and look about you if you like."

Jack carried on mumbling to himself, "Crazy old man, what would I want with magic beans? I couldn't care less about the sky or climbing into it!"

The old man put the beans back into his pocket and waited for a more kind, grateful Jack to pass by.

Our disagreeable Jack made his way to market and drove a hard bargain. Finally one bidder relented and he walked towards home with a treasure in his pocket. He took out a few coins for himself, "Mother will only spend them on patches for her clothes or a spade so she doesn't have to dig with her hands!" Jack said as he approached the sweets and treats stall. Behind the counter was a very small, very old lady you could only just see over the piles of pastry puffs bursting with cream and the scones spotted with sultanas and currents. Behind her were rows of cakes, Victoria Sponge, Lemon Drizzle and a platter of Sticky Toffee Pudding cut into pieces. "How may I help you young man?" she asked. "I'll take one, one of everything!" Jack commanded. The lady quickly packaged up the cakes and scones and pudding and puffs then reached below the counter to grab a handful of sweets. "You seem like the kind of lad who could use some of these, they are jelly beans, they are..." she was going to say, "they are magic jelly beans," but Jack interrupted, "Yes, yes, those too."

All the way home Jack stuffed his gob with the cakes and scones and pudding and puffs. When he was finished, he tore open the bag of magic jelly beans and bunged them all in his mouth, at once, not noticing how they glimmered in the light as if cut from crystal or the brilliant colour of each one, ruby red, royal blue, golden yellow, all the colours of the rainbow in fact. Those 7 beans made their way down his gullet to sit a top of his belly full of goodies. They didn't stay there long though, as he walked the bumpy lane they churned and they sloshed, they rumbled and they tossed until he stopped outside his house, just outside his bedroom window, the mountain of sweets and treats rejected their consumer and came

spewing out all over the ground. Jack felt queasy and his mother ran to his side, "You poor dear, come in and I'll take care of you." Mother tucked him up in bed with a bowl of broth and a cool towel across his brow. She didn't even ask about the cow.

Morning came and Jack awoke much better after his sleep, he stretched and he yawned, opening his mouth wide, then his eyes followed. Once they were opened they slammed shut again for on first morning's sight Jack saw his room glittering with colour, ruby red, royal blue and golden yellow, to name but a few. When Jack developed his nerve, he slowly opened his eyes again. Where was this glaring rainbow coming from? He followed the source of light back to his bedroom window, just outside where he had spewed his treats and sweets.

Jack could no longer see the ground he had soiled, instead he saw 7 giant beanstalks, every colour of the rainbow, reaching for the sky. Mother made the discovery at the same time and burst into his room. "Jack, Jack!" she cried, "you must climb these beanstalks and see where they take you." She was so excited it hurt, thought Jack. "If it will just quiet you down, I will go," he relented. In nothing more than his pyjama top and bottom, Jack climbed and he climbed until he was high above the roof-top and high above the trees. He climbed till he could hardly see the garden down below, and the birds wheeled about him and the wind swayed the bean-stalk. He climbed so high that after a while he came to the sky country, and it was not blue and hollow as it looks to us down here below. It was a land of flat green meadows and trees and streams, and Jack saw a road before him that led straight across the meadows to a great tall castle, sparkling in the distance.

Jack set his feet on the road and began to walk towards the castle.

When he arrived there was a very small, very old lady sweeping the steps, and she looked familiar. "How may I help you young lad?" the lady asked.

"Actually, I could do with some food, I've had no breakfast, and I'm like to drop I'm so hungry. Just give me a bite to stay my stomach." The very small, very old lady invited Jack into the castle for a bit of bread and some cheese.

Jack had hardly set down to it when there was a great noise and stamping outside.

"What is that terrible noise?" Jack asked. "That is the giant, he is very..." she was going to say, "he is very jolly and kind," but Jack interrupted, "Can you not hide me some place?" he demanded.

"Well you could creep into this copper pot," the lady said, taking off the lid. She helped Jack into the pot and put the lid over him, and she had no more than done it before the giant came stamping into the room.

"Fee, fi, fo, fum!  
I smell the blood of an Englishman!"

he laughed.

“Be he short or be he tall  
He’d be crushed if I fall”

“Oh, you and that nose of yours! I don’t know what you are on about,” she said, winking in jest.

“I see,” said the giant, rather jolly and quite green. “There’s no Englishman here, not in this basket!” he said, turning out the knitting onto the floor. “There’s no Englishman here, not in this drawer!” he said shuffling the contents all around. “And there’s definitely no Englishman...” he said searching the room for possible hiding places and landing on the copper pot, “here!” he declared victoriously.

Jack was terrified, “Don’t eat me, I don’t taste so good!” he trembled. The rather jolly, quite green giant rumbled with laughter. “Eat you, now why would I do that!” “Because you’re a terrible, horrible giant, with a useless old lady at your side.”

The giant became a lot less jolly, “Useless! Why she takes care of me, she cooks, she cleans, she keeps me company. How can you speak of her that way?”

“Well when I was hungry, all she offered me was her day old bread and some mouldy cheese...” “That was my finest gorgonzola and my stone baked loaf,” she pleaded in her defence.

“And when I needed hiding from a terrible, horrible giant, she stuffed me in this pot where you found me at once!” Jack complained.

“That’s true,” the lady added, “I am dreadful at hide and seek.”

“Enough!” shouted the giant. “I’ve never heard such poppycock! You my lad need a lesson in kindness and I’m the one who is going to teach it to you!”

The giant stared, Jack stuttered, “Wha, wha, what are you going to do to me?”

“I’m going to torture you of course, isn’t that what terrible, horrible giants do? Now I suggest you run, I’d like to make a sport of this,” the giant said as he stood towering over Jack.

Jack wasted no time, he ran and ran, all the way back to the beanstalks and slid down the purple one as it was nearest. Bumpity, bump, bump he went as he reached each leaf, interrupting his slide. Finally he came to the ground. He grabbed his mother and the money from the cow, “Come mother, the giant is on his way!” They ran for ages into the woods to hide. The giant took three steps and was there before them.

The giant reached down. “Run mother, take the money from the cow, it’s me he’s after,” Jack said as he urged his mother away. “So you do have a heart after all?” the giant commented. “Well, that makes my torture even more satisfying!” he said, grabbing Jack by his trousers.

The giant cupped Jack in the palm of one hand and with his device of torture in his other hand he approached Jack's bare feet. "Time to take your medicine, boy," the giant said. Jack closed his eyes tightly. The giant approached slowly, then tickley, tickley, tickled him with a feather until Jack cried with laughter. It was contagious, the giant started laughing, the mother started laughing and so began a lifelong friendship. The rather jolly, quite green giant employed Jack as his grounds keeper where Jack became kind and grateful, sharing his good fortune with his mother and everyone he encountered.

The end

Nanny Bea: Oh Jules, thank you. Jelly beans are quite extraordinary. I make a point of taking one daily to improve my vision.

Jules: How do jelly beans improve your vision?

Nanny Bea: They pack so much flavour in those little packets, they fill my mouth and my mind with possibilities. All it takes is one jelly bean and I can see goodness all around me.

Jules: Oh, I get it. Well I wear my yellow cycling glasses outside on grey days, they make everything look sunny on the outside and that seeps inside. I can't help but find the joy on offer. It's always there if you look.

Nanny Bea: Somehow I don't believe I could carry off yellow cycling sunglasses. My lycra cycling shorts are fluorescent pink and they would clash terribly.

Jules: If anyone could pull that off it would be you Nanny Bea.

Nanny Bea: Will you come back next week for more tales and tea?

Jules: Absolutely.

Thomas: Go to [NannyBea.com](http://NannyBea.com)

Jules: Go there to find out about all our episodes. Tales & Tea is written for you so please do let us know what you think. You can like or follow us on iTunes and Spotify. As well as contact us through the website and even be part of the show.

[Be on the Show jingle]

Mr Announcer: This has been a Toad in the Hole production for [NannyBea.com](http://NannyBea.com).