

## (1) Giant's Tale

Hello. I'm George the Giant. Morning, noon, and night, I used to eat nothing but sheep. I was sick of sheep, even in my dreams. One day, out in my yard, I met a funny little man. I was holding some beans in my hand at the time. I was thinking of starting a vegetable garden.

“Those are some fine-looking beans,” he said.

“Thanks,” I said.

“If you give me those beans,” said the man, “I'll give you a special goose.”

“What's so special about her?” I asked.

“Wait and see,” said the man. “But know this, George. She'll cure you of sheep.”

He knew my name! I'd had it with sheep! I traded the beans for that goose and returned to the castle. I set her on the kitchen table.

“Now, Goose,” I said, “do your stuff.”

The goose just looked at me.

“Pretty please,” I said.

Nothing.

I thought about roasting her up for dinner. But during my afternoon nap, she laid three golden eggs. I traded those eggs for a wagonload of doughnuts. No more sheep for me! For months, I ate nothing but doughnuts. Then one day, coming into the kitchen for lunch, I smelled a weird smell. Stinky. Wrong. Human. Some giants like the taste of humans. Me, I've never tried one. I can never get past that smell. Still, I sang the song all giants learn in school to scare humans away.

“I smell the blood of an Englishman! Be he alive or be he dead, I'll grind his bones to make my bread!”

I sat down and ate some doughnuts. Then I took my nap so Goose could lay more eggs. Suddenly, I woke to that human smell. I saw a boy grab Goose and tiptoe away. I shouted and chased them. The boy jumped onto a beanstalk I'd never noticed before. He and Goose dropped into a cloud. I was halfway down after them when I heard him shout to his mom. For an ax. The beanstalk toppled. I fell from the sky and

landed with a crash. Wow! The boy and his mom stepped forward. His mom looked from me to Goose. I looked at my leg. It was broken.

“I can fix your leg,” Jack's mom said at last. “But you'll have to stay here until it heals.”

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

Jack pulled a bean from his pocket. It looked just like the ones I traded to that funny little man.

“Fine,” I grumbled.

That first night, they didn't know what to feed me.

“Anything but sheep,” I said. “Or doughnuts.”

Turns out they didn't have sheep, doughnuts, or much else. So the mom threw a bunch of green beans in a pot. She cooked up the best soup I've ever tasted. For the next six weeks, Jack took Goose's eggs to market almost every day. He brought home a bunch of different foods. Jack's mom cooked and cooked. By the time my leg was healed, I'd had some of the best meals of my life.

Now Goose and I are back at the castle. But Jack's mom is teaching me how to cook. When we visit, Goose always lays them a golden egg. And when we sit down to dinner, we all enjoy a bowl of green bean soup.