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## THE BOOK

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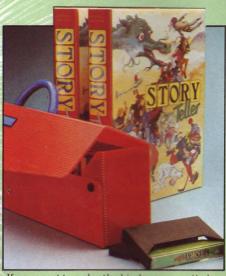
### THE TAPE

Recorded at The Barge Studios, Little Venice, London: Produced & Directed by **Joa Reinelt** Engineered by **John Rowland** 

A Creative Radio Production

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Why the Giraffe Can't Speak: Carole Boyd
Sindbad: Brian Blessed
The Book of Beasts: John Baddeley
Car Attack: Carole Boyd
Heidi: Denise Bryer
Hedge's Problem Tree: Carole Boyd



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# JACK部BEANSTALK

nce upon a time, there was a poor widow who had an only son called Jack. Jack was not much help to his mother. He did not earn any money, and the two of them were very, very poor. Then, one day, their one cow finally became too old to give any more milk.

"It's no use," said Jack's mother. "We'll just have to sell her."

So Jack led the cow off towards the market, promising to get the best possible price for her. But the journey was long and boring, and Jack passed the time dreaming about what he would buy if he were rich.

On his way he met a funny little man with a big head and a tiny body, who offered to buy the cow.

"Give her to me and I promise you'll

be rich to the end of your days," he said, holding out a small drawstring bag.

Jack could hardly believe his ears. But when he opened the bag instead of gold coins, he found it contained only five shrivelled beans!

"Those beans are magic," said the little man. "Plant them and they'll grow right up to the sky!" And before Jack could say anything he vanished — and so did the cow!

Jack ran back home, wondering what would happen when he planted his magic beans.

"You were quick," said his mother, when Jack arrived home. "How much did you get for the cow?"

"I struck a wonderful bargain," he said. "Look at this!"

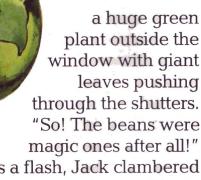




When his mother looked inside the bag she was furious. "Beans! Beans? You stupid, lazy good-for-nothing boy! Do you want us to starve?"

Jack tried to tell her that the beans were magic, but she would not listen. She flung them out through the window, then beat poor Jack and packed him off to bed without any supper.

The next morning, a very hungry Jack woke early. At least he *thought* it must be early because the room was so dark. But when he turned over he saw



Quick as a flash, Jack clambered out through the window and on to the enormous beanstalk. Stopping only to wave goodbye to his astonished mother standing below him, Jack began to scale the giant plant.

He climbed and he climbed. He even climbed right through the clouds.



Then, suddenly, a long wide road stretched out in front of him. Jack walked for hours, and just as he was thinking of turning back he saw a great castle. Tired and hungry, Jack knocked on the towering door. It was opened by a huge woman. She looked down at him and Jack looked up at her.

"Please could you give me something to eat?" he asked. "I'm very hungry."

"Be off with you. My husband will be back soon and he eats little boys like you for dinner."

But Jack pleaded with her, and in the end she let him in and gave him some bread and cheese. He had almost finished, when he heard great footsteps thudding along the passage.

"Oh dear!" cried the giant's wife.
"It's my husband. Quick, hide in the oven."

Jack just had time to scramble into the oven when the kitchen door flew open and a great big bald-headed giant burst in. He sniffed the air and 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.

"No, no, no, dear," said his wife calmly. "You're mistaken. Now sit down and eat your meal."

When the giant had finished his colossal dinner he took out a vast box full of bags and sat down to count his money. Peeping out from the oven, Jack caught his breath at the sight of so much gold!





Soon, the giant's head began to nod and he dropped off to sleep. Jack leaped out, threw one of the bags over his shoulder and sprinted out of the castle. He ran all the way along the road, then dropped the bag down on to the ground far below and clambered through the greenery of the beanstalk to his house.

For months Jack and his mother lived very well, but soon only a few gold coins remained. And one day, when his mother went to wake him, she found he had gone back up the beanstalk to find more gold.

"Oh, it's you again, is it?" said the giant's wife when she opened the castle door. "The last time you were here my husband lost a bag of gold."

"Really?" replied Jack. "How strange! Perhaps I can help you look for it. I'm small enough to fit into all the nooks and crannies you giants can't reach."

So the foolish giant's wife let Jack into the house again, and she even gave him some bread and cheese.

Jack was still pretending to look for the lost gold when he heard the footsteps of the giant coming home. He just had time to dive into the oven when the door burst open and the giant sniffed the air and 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!
"No, no, no, my dear. I think you're
mistaken. There's no-one here. Now sit

down and eat your meal."

The giant held a little white hen in his hand, and when he had finished his meal he put it on the table. "Hen, hen, one two three, lay a golden egg for me!" and the hen laid the strangest egg Jack







had ever seen. It was made of solid gold! The giant chuckled greedily and then nodded off to sleep, clutching the golden egg.

Jack sneaked out of the oven, clamped his hand round the hen's neck and sprinted out of the castle, along the road and back down the beanstalk.

With the magic hen strutting around their yard, Jack and his mother were rich at last, and they said they would be happy for ever. But one morning, when his mother went to wake him, Jack had gone!

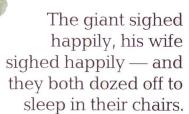
This time when Jack climbed the beanstalk and reached the castle door, he did not dare to knock, but crept inside while the giant's wife was fetching in the washing. And instead of hiding in the oven, he hid in the washtub.











Soon, he heard the footsteps of the giant in the passage and the door burst open. The giant sniffed the air and 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!

"Surely not," said his wife. "But if you *can* smell that thieving boy who stole your bag of gold and your hen, he'll be hiding in the oven for sure."

The giant pounced on the oven door — but of course Jack was not inside.

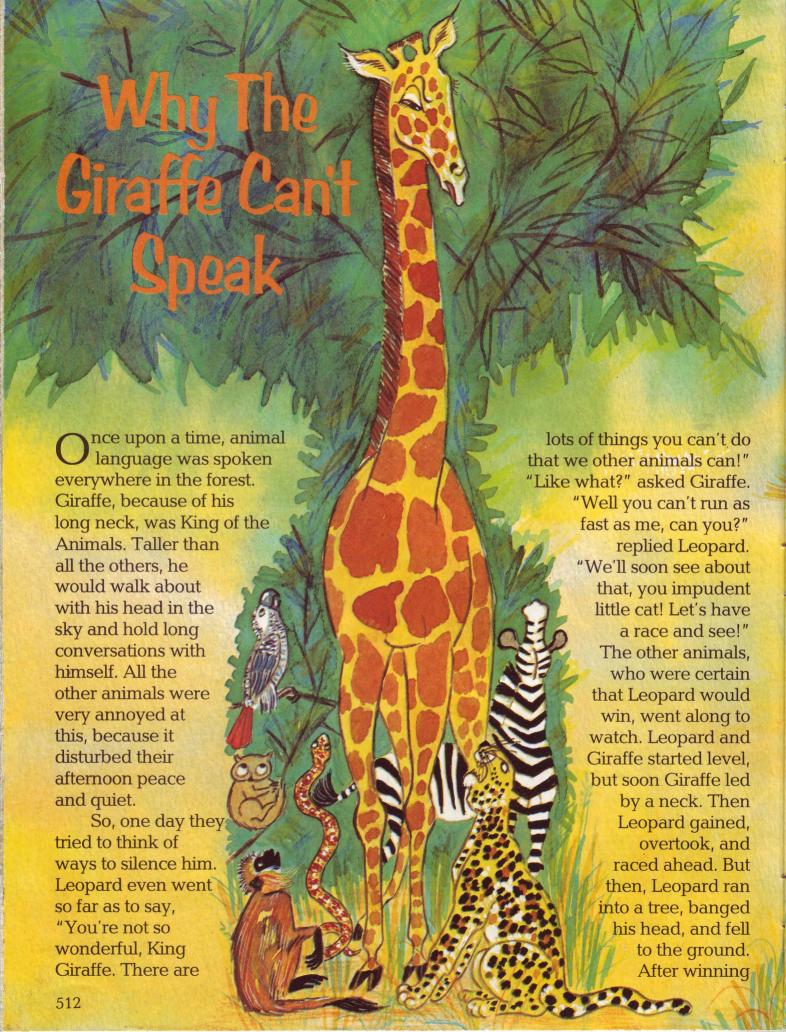
"You really shouldn't upset yourself like that," said the giant's wife. "Now, why don't you get out your little harp?"

So the giant did. "Play," he said. And the little harp began to play sweet music. Quick as a flash Jack jumped out of the washtub, snatched up the harp and ran out of the door. Then, suddenly, the harp cried out, "Master! Master! I'm being stolen!"

The giant woke up with a start. "What! Hey you! Stop! Bring me my axe!" Jack sprinted down the long road, the giant gaining with every stride, his massive feet pounding and his huge voice roaring for Jack's blood.

Jack reached the beanstalk just a few paces ahead of the giant, threw himself into its green mass, and slithered down the trunk. The bellowing giant tumbled after him, crashing through the

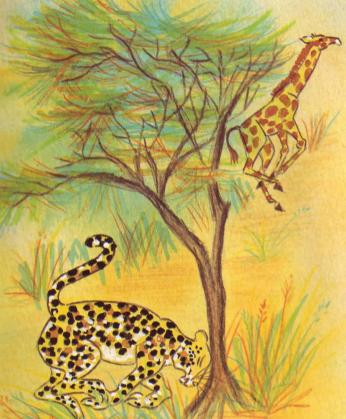




the race, Giraffe grew even more vain. He walked around with his head in the air, praising himself and boasting how very much better he was than all the other animals. Soon the forest was full of Giraffe's vain chatter.

A few days later, the animals met again to decide what to do about Giraffe. But only Monkey had a plan.

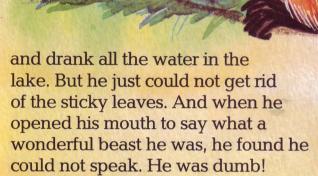
He collected gum from the rubber



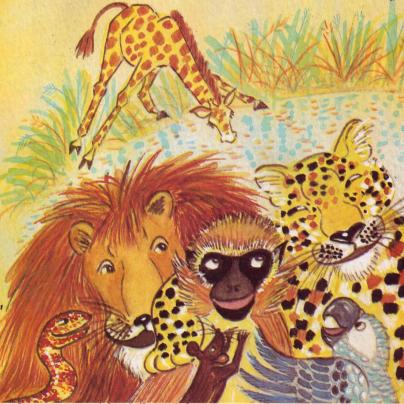
plant and climbed up with it into the trees. Spreading gum over every leaf, he swung from tree to tree, doing the same to each one in turn. Before very long, Giraffe came by and began nibbling at the leaves.

But with every mouthful he took, the gummy leaves stuck in his long neck. And no matter how much he swallowed and coughed and swallowed, the leaves just would not move.

Giraffe shook his neck



All the animals thanked Monkey for silencing the boastful Giraffe. And after that they slept away every afternoon while Giraffe loped about, mouthing silent words into the topmost branches of the trees.





# SINDBAD ? And the Amazing Islands

T am Sindbad, the merchant of Baghdad. You may remember me. My voyages have carried me into all kinds of danger. But have I ever told you of the time we moored alongside . . . No, I don't believe I have. Well, let me begin at the beginning.

After my adventures in the Valley of Diamonds, I was so rich that I thought I would never again set foot outside Baghdad. But soon I began to miss the sea, so I decided to travel down to Basra and take a foreign ship in search of adventure.

The ship was small and the sun was hot, and before long the crew grew tired and irritable. So when the look-out sighted a

small island on the horizon, we all let out a cheer and leaned over the side, peering across the water.

"I can't find it on any of my maps," said the captain anxiously.

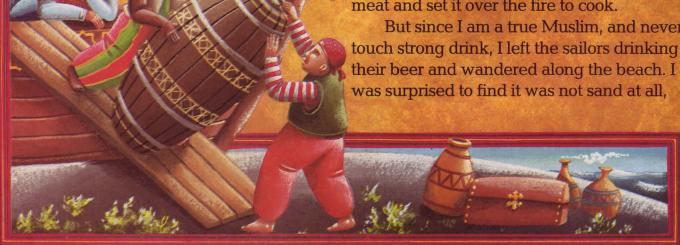
"Never mind," I said. "At least we can go ashore and stretch our legs."

So the captain steered his ship towards the island, which seemed almost to be moving as it shimmered against the sky. Its steep shores were grey, but the low hills inland looked green and inviting, with flocks of birds circling overhead.

"Can we take a barrel of beer ashore, cap'n?" asked a sailor. The captain agreed and we moored alongside the island.

All of us except the captain scrambled on to the beach and set about building a fire from driftwood. We skewered some meat and set it over the fire to cook.

But since I am a true Muslim, and never touch strong drink, I left the sailors drinking their beer and wandered along the beach. I was surprised to find it was not sand at all,







In one terrible, blood-chilling moment, I realised the truth! It was not an island we were on at all, but the back of a gigantic whale! In the middle of the wide, silent ocean, it had slept, its hump gathering the barnacles, seaweeds and wind-sown grasses of seven seas. Now the sailor's fire had scorched its back and it woke in a rage.

And I, Sindbad, was standing on its massive head as it spouted breath through its great blow-hole. Fear froze my body and gripped my heart as the whale lifted its mighty tail and thrashed the waves into

white foam. It was going to dive!

Some sailors were able to swim to the ship. Some were dragged down by the whirling current to the bottom of the sea. And me? I was struggling in the water, praying for my life, when the empty beer barrel bobbed up beside me — and I dragged myself thankfully across it.

Exhausted, I floated and bobbed on the surface of the unfriendly ocean, calling for help. But the ship had long since sailed away and I was adrift, alone, hundreds of miles from home.

All night long the fishes nibbled my trailing feet. Then, as dawn rose, a small island appeared on the horizon, like a green cloud. I stared in delight, then paddled wearily towards it with my hands and feet.



thumped with amazement and terror. "I have found either my fortune or my death," I cried, "for this is the Land of Sea Serpents, where every grain of sand is pure gold dust — and guarded by monstrous sailor-eating snakes!" My barrel touched the beach and I tumbled off it. Sweet fresh water ran in rivulets down the beach from a spring among the trees and bushes. And in it floated fresh fruit — plump peaches and luscious berries. Offering up thankful prayers, I quenched my parching thirst and satisfied my ravenous hunger.

Only then did I realise just what great riches lay around me. Instead of sand, dunes

Only then did I realise just what great riches lay around me. Instead of sand, dunes of gold-dust were heaped from end to end of the beach. "I'll build a raft," I thought, "and take as much as I can back to Baghdad."

It did not take me long to collect enough driftwood for a small raft held together with strong strips of cloth torn from my trusty turban. I filled the barrel with fruit for the long journey ahead, put it on the raft and then began stuffing handfuls of gold-dust into my baggy trousers until my legs could hardly move.

It was then that I heard a great hissing. I looked up and saw the trees at the top of the beach begin to sway. A great striped and gleaming head rose high above the tallest trees, and a pair of glittering eyes watched me, unblinking. Six, seven, eight great serpents then slithered down the beach, their forked

tongues darting.





At the water's edge, I flung myself in panic on to my raft and paddled furiously out to sea. But the sea serpents followed me through the surf!

Their rainbow-scaly bodies circled me round and round and round. Then their jaws snapped — and broke the raft like so many twigs. Poison spurted from their hideous fangs.

In desperation, I emptied the barrel of fruit and squeezed inside it. There I crouched, like the yolk in a wooden egg. The serpents snapped and spat and hissed. The barrel began to spin as they swam round and round it.

One of the serpents even closed his jaws around the barrel. But it was too large to swallow. The monster spat it out and swam off, hissing angrily. One by one, each serpent tried to eat me, but none could swallow the barrel. So at last they left, and snaked back through the shallows to the shores of the Land of Sea Serpents.

The tide took me back out to sea, where I drifted for three nights and three days. I was dozing when, suddenly, the barrel banged into the side of a wooden

ship and I heard a voice overhead.

It was my very own ship! The captain was still searching for survivors of the whale. He was amazed to see me poke my head out of the beer barrel — and even more amazed to see me covered with gold!

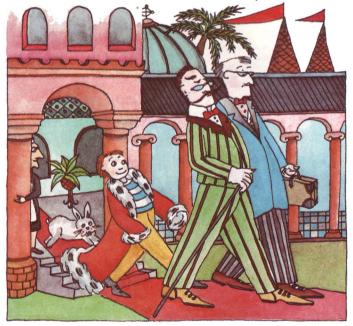
And I am still amazed to find myself back here in Baghdad, safe and sound — and even richer than before!



# The Book of Beasts



One fine day, Leo was busy trying to catch his pet rabbit when his friend, Nanny Moss, called out to him. "Leo, the Prime Minister and Chancellor are here to see you."

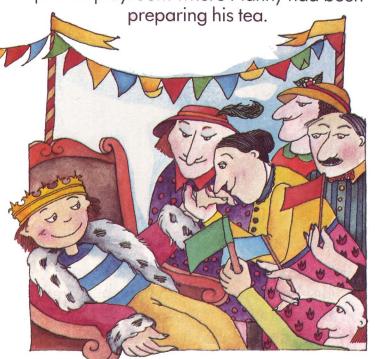


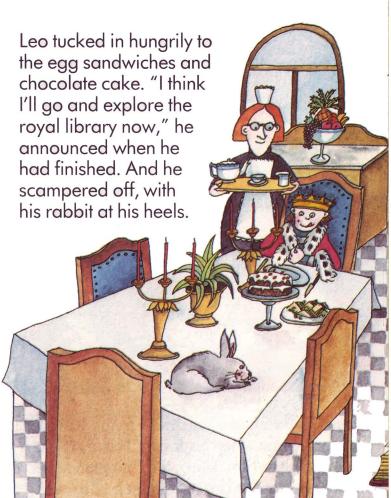
"Does that mean I can do whatever I like?" asked Leo. "Um, yes sire, but now you must come and be crowned." And they led him away to a coach drawn by six grey horses.

Ambling into the sitting-room, Leo met two very grave-looking gentlemen. "Sire," said the Chancellor. "As you know, you have long been heir to the throne. Your subjects have at last saved enough money to buy you a crown, so you are now our King."



On the way Leo had to pinch himself and his rabbit to make sure it was really happening. Bells rang out and all the people shouted, "Long live Leo, our little King! Long live King Leo!" So Leo was crowned King that very afternoon. But what with wearing the royal robes and having his hand kissed by so many people, Leo felt quite worn out, so he was very glad when he got back to the palace playroom where Nanny had been





"Really? But can't I just



When he got there, he found the Prime Minister and Chancellor. "What a lot of books!" cried Leo. "I'd love to read them all." "Your majesty," said the Chancellor. "We would advise you *not* to read them. The old king was, well, a little strange. Some people even called him a wizard."



On the first page he saw a beautiful butterfly, so vividly painted that it looked real. "Isn't that lovely!" said Leo. And, as he spoke, the butterfly rose up out of the book and flew straight out of the window!





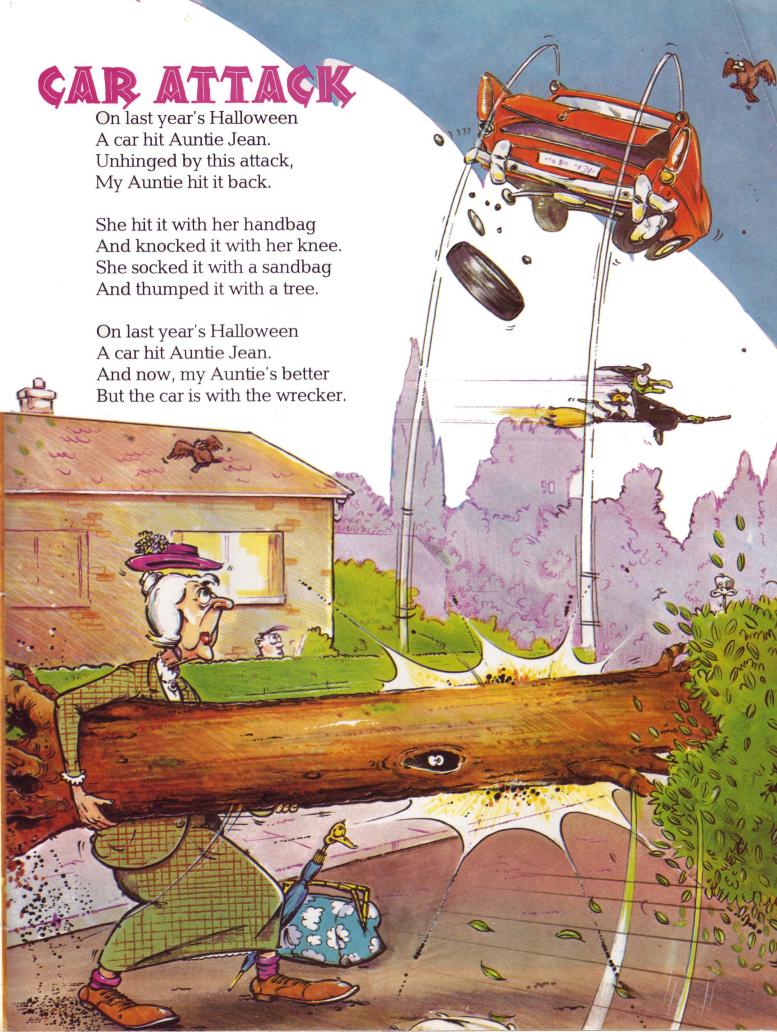
And when he turned to the next page, there was a shining bluebird, complete in every detail! And as he gazed at it, the beautiful creature fluttered its wings, spread them wide and flew out off the page!







Suddenly, the dragon lurched out of the book. Smoke billowing from its mouth, it spread its vast wings, and soaring up over the trees, flew across the fields to the distant hills. Leo was horrified at what he'd done. He had let loose a fearsome dragon to cause havoc among his faithful subjects. "And I've only been King for a day," he said, bursting into tears. "What am I going to do?"



HIEIDI

At Home With Grandfather

Heidi woke up in her new home feeling very happy.
Then she heard a whistle outside. It was Peter, the boy who looked after the goats, who had come to collect Little Bear and Little Swan and take them to the high mountain pastures.

Heidi quickly dressed and rushed outside.

"Would you like to go up the mountain with Peter and the goats?" asked Uncle Alp.

Heidi was delighted and clapped her hands. "Oh, yes please, Grandfather."

"Look after Heidi," the old man said to Peter as he gave him a linen bag containing Heidi's lunch. "And mind she doesn't fall or come to any harm!" It was a beautiful morning. The sun shone brightly on the green mountain slopes and sparkled on the snow-capped peaks. Heidi ran and skipped and sang among the wild flowers. She stopped and picked dark blue gentians, delicate red primulas and dainty little rock-roses, gathering them up in her apron. She would take them home and stick them in her bed of hay to make it look like the meadows.

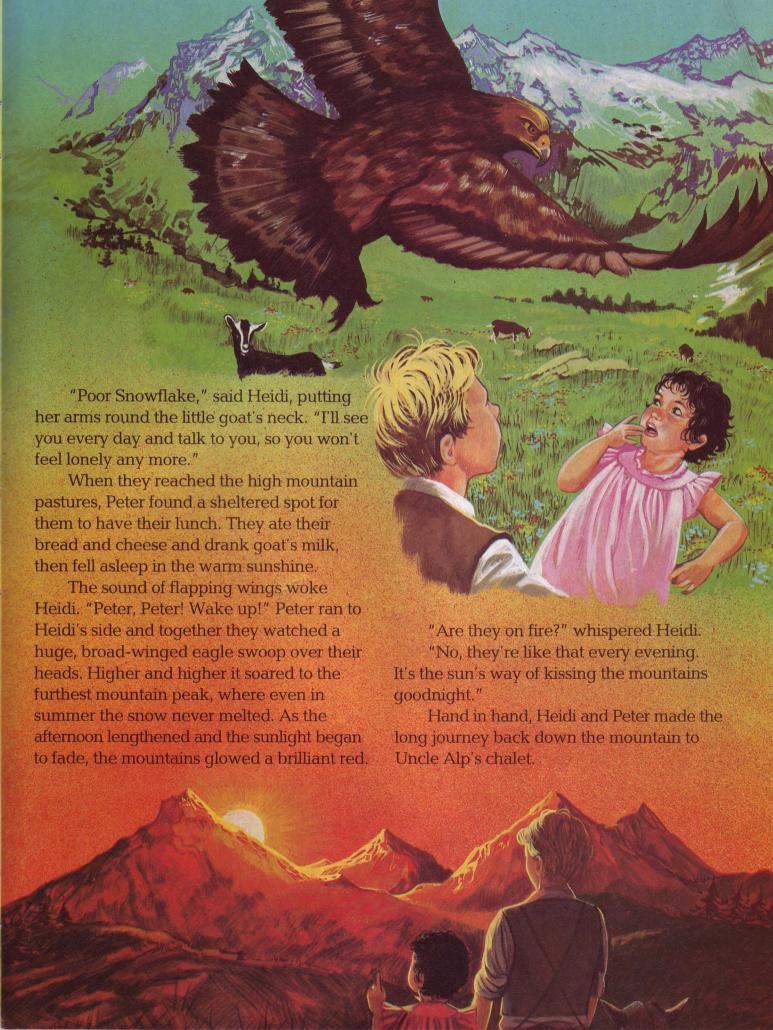
Peter was glad of Heidi's happy chatter on the lonely mountainside. And he was pleased to show her all the things he knew.

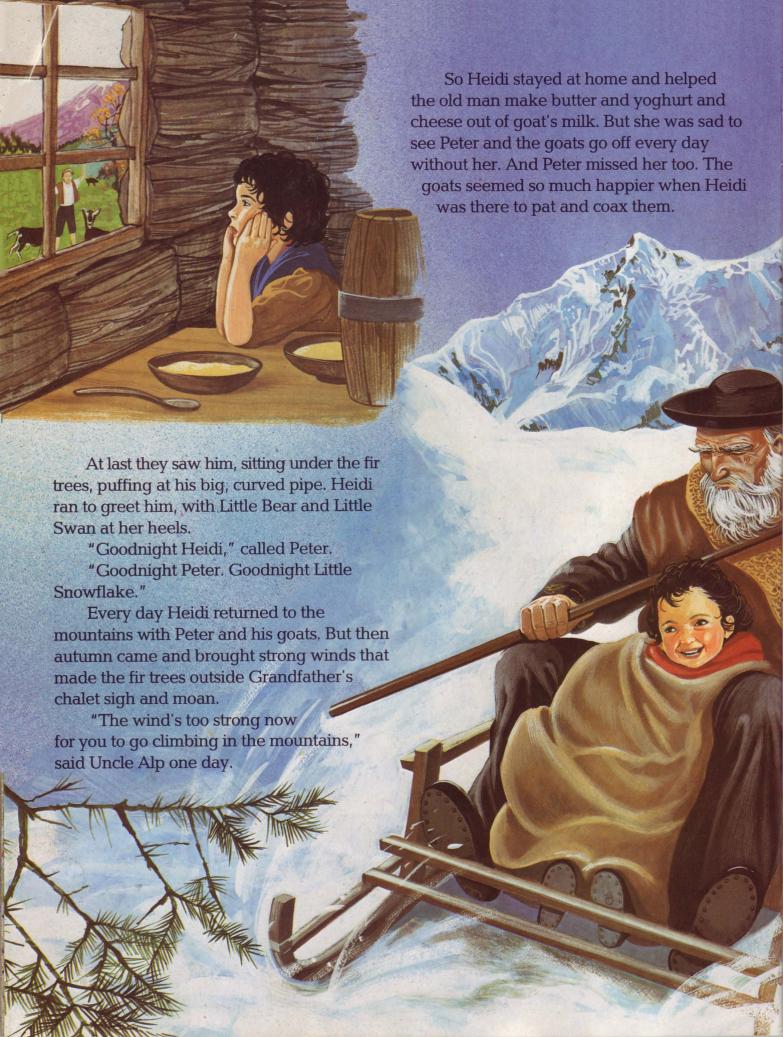
He showed her a hollow where flowers of a dozen different colours turned their faces to the sun. He showed her where the wild sweet-smelling herbs grew. He taught

her the names of the goats and how to whistle and call them. Heidi ran in and out among the animals, talking to each in turn. Then Little Snowflake, the smallest goat of all began to bleat.

"Why's she crying?" she asked Peter.
"Her mother was sold in town last
week. I think she must be feeling lonely."







Then, one morning, Peter did not come for Little Swan and Little Bear. The school in Dorfli had opened again and Peter had to go there each day for his lessons. Autumn turned to winter, and Heidi had to stay indoors, for the snow lay thick and heavy all around the lonely mountain chalet. "Can I go and visit Peter and his Granny?" said Heidi one day. "The path's blocked," said Uncle Alp, trying to put her off. "But I'd really love to go." "Well I'm not taking you. People don't think much of me, down in Dorfli. And I've no time for people." But Heidi would not be put off. So, muttering and complaining, Uncle Alp took out his big wooden toboggan and fetched a thick flax blanket. Wrapping Heidi in it, he held her in his arms then climbed on to the toboggan. The toboggan slipped over the snow so fast that Heidi gave a shriek of joy. "Oh Grandfather! It's like flying!" He sat her down at the door of Peter's cottage. "I'll come back at five o'clock, Heidi. Meet me at the top of the path." Then he turned back up the mountain,

pulling the toboggan behind him.

"We've heard so much about you, Heidi," said Peter's mother, opening the door. She turned to a frail old lady sitting in a

wooden chair. The old lady put her hands out towards Heidi. "What does she look like, Ursula?"

"She's got dark, curly hair, and a mischievous little face," said Peter's mother.

"If I bring the lamp closer," said Heidi, "you'll be able to see me yourself."

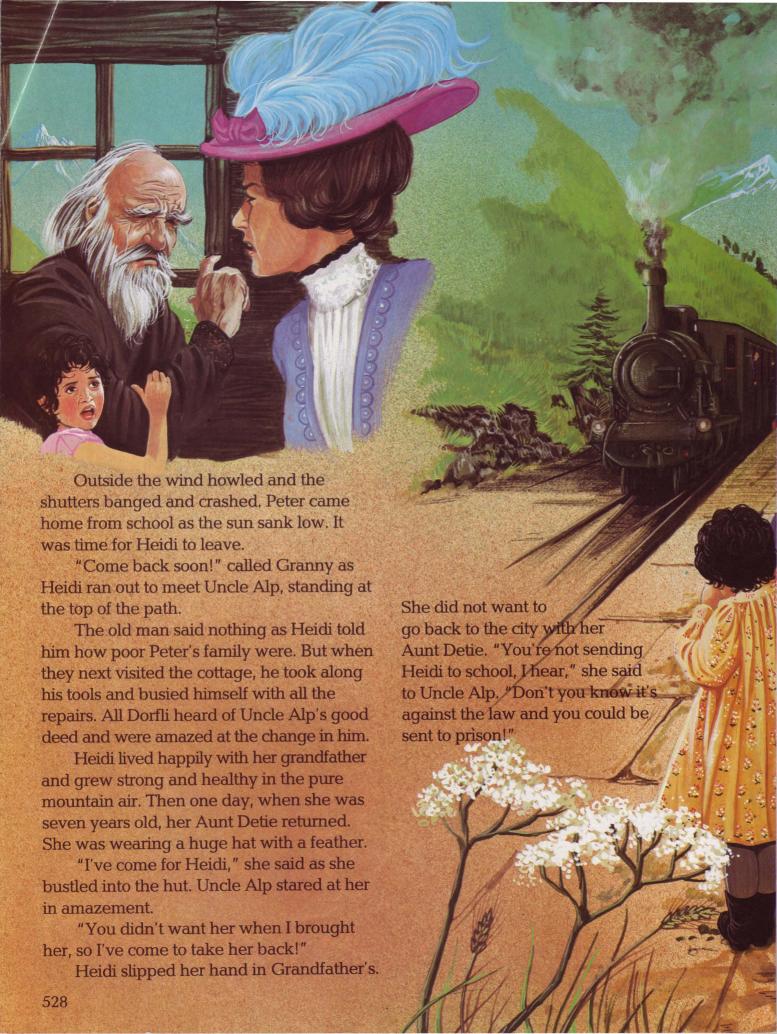
But Granny shook her head. "I'm afraid my poor old eyes haven't seen a thing for years."

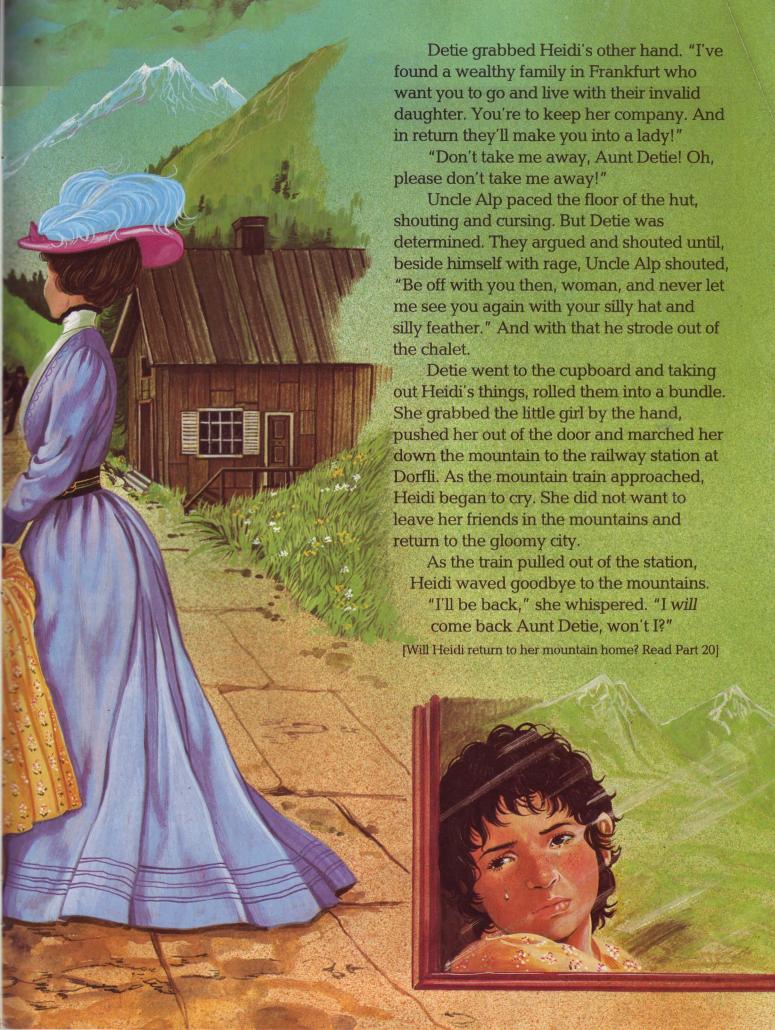
"What?" said Heidi, looking at her in horror. "Not even the snow — or the fiery mountains when the sun kisses them goodnight?"

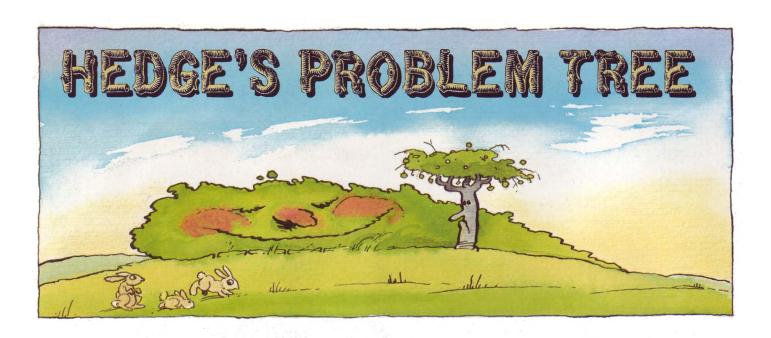
"No, child. I'm always in the dark now. But it's not so awful. If only Peter would learn to read. I miss hearing the words of my old books."

Heidi could not bear the idea. She rested her head in Granny's lap and burst into tears.









Tree was always moaning, and Hedge was getting very tired of it. As trees go, Tree was small — only a crab apple tree, and not much bigger than Hedge. He was not very grand, for his branches were black and twisted, his fruits bitter little apples that nobody wanted.

It was Spring, and Tree was still moaning. "It's going to rain later today and probably most of tomorrow. The wind's going to blow, too. He might even break some of my branches . . ."

"But the wind brings warmer weather," said Hedge.

"What's more," Tree went on, ignoring Hedge, "those horrible birds will be nesting soon, eating our buds . . ."

"I'm getting tired of your moaning, Tree. If you have nothing good to say, I'd prefer you said nothing at all."

Tree muttered moodily to himself, looking around for more gloomy things to moan about. The field would soon become muddy, and the cows were sure to break the hedge, and the crows would flock into the field. The gate would be left open and sheep would be sure to come in. In May, far too many rabbits





would come and cause all kinds of havoc. Worst of all, they would make it difficult for Tree to do what he liked doing best ... which was thinking of things to moan about.

Hedge decided something really had to be done about Tree's complaining. But what?

Now, Hedge's best friend was Old Crow, who liked hopping among her different shrubs and plants looking for worms and scaring off blackbirds and bluetits. When he got tired of that, he would perch on top of Hedge, enjoying the view and chattering.

One day, when Old Crow came by, Hedge explained her problem. "How can I stop Tree moaning?"

Crow had a think. Eventually he said, "Tree's got no reason for living. That's why he complains so much."

"But where do you find a reason for living?" asked Hedge.

"Usually right under your nose."





Spring gave way to Summer, and Hedge grew green and full. As usual, wild honeysuckle grew among her leaves, entwining its scented flowers. Bumblebees hummed in the warm evening air.

"Tree," said Hedge boldly one day.
"What's the most terrible thing about
your whole life?"

Tree was struck dumb by the question. There were so many things . . . and he started to make a list of them.

"No, the worst thing."

Tree was silent for days. Finally, he whispered in a very sad voice, "The worst thing is that nobody likes me. And they don't like me because I'm ugly. My blossom only lasts a few days before it blows away. My leaves aren't pretty, and my crab apples taste terrible."

"That's easily solved!" said Hedge.
"I could ask Honeysuckle to grow up
your trunk and all over your branches.
Then you would be covered with scented
flowers and thick leaves for most of the
year. The only trouble is . . ."

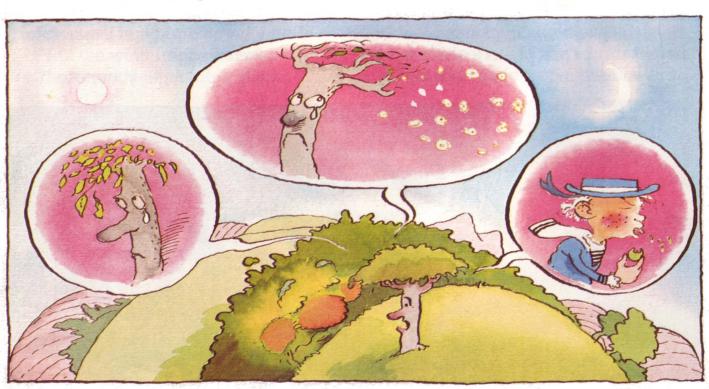
"Yes, go on," urged Tree.

"Well, Honeysuckle isn't interested. She says you *moan* too much."

Tree was silent. Eventually he said, "If I promise to moan less, could you persuade her to grow over me?"

"If you didn't moan for a whole year, she just might," replied Hedge.

So for a whole year Tree did not moan once. Even when Summer drought came. Even when it rained all October. Even when bitter Winter winds blew.



And one day, the following Spring, Honeysuckle sent out a tiny shoot. As the days passed, she grew more quickly. She entwined Tree's trunk and weaved among his branches. Her green leaves set off his white blossom in May. When the June wind blew Tree's blossom away, Honeysuckle opened her pale yellow and pink scented flowers and Tree was the most beautiful of all the trees in the field.

Tree never moaned after that. Not once. Not ever.

One Winter's day, Old Crow came by and said to Hedge, "I never hear Tree moaning these days. He must have found a reason for living. What is it?"

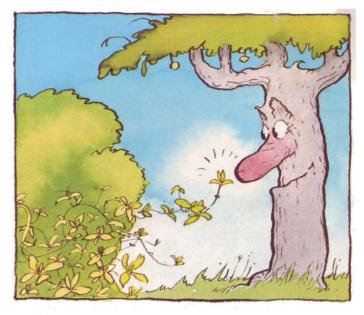
"Ask him," said Hedge.

So Old Crow flew up and asked Tree what reason he had found for living.

"Can't talk now, Crow. I'm protecting Honeysuckle from the wind."

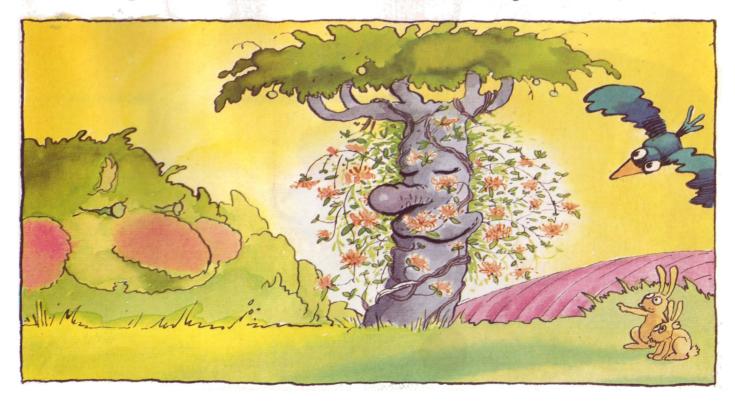
"But she's all brown and shrivelled now it's Winter."

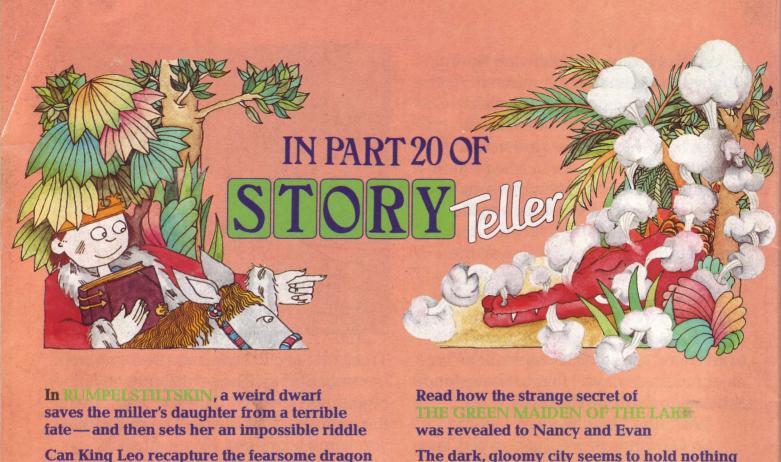
"She may look like that now," said



Tree, "but she's relying on me to protect her until Spring. Then she'll grow even bigger and stronger than last year. And the year after that, she will be so big that you won't be able to see me at all for Honeysuckle. And the scent, Crow! Have you any idea how lovely it will be . . .?"

Old Crow and Hedge were very happy. Now, and for ever more, Tree was so busy with his reason for living that he never moaned again.





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**PLUS: IT MAKES A CHANGE** 

