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Dramatic Publishing

Jack and the Wonder Beans

Adapted by
Larry E. Snipes

From the book by
James Still



Jack and the Wonder Beans

*Comedy. Adapted by Larry Snipes. From the book by James Still. Cast: 6m., 3w., or 5 minimum (3m., 2w.) with doubling. In an Appalachian setting, the classic *Jack and the Beanstalk* is enhanced by traditional folk melodies (included in the script) and audience participation. All is well for Jack and his Mam. They have their home, a roof, a patch of land and a cow. One spring, when the cow goes dry, life on Wolfpen Creek has to change. In hard times no one wants to buy a cow “dry as a hat.” Jack trades his bossy to a Gypsy for “seeds”—and Jack is in for trouble. His adventures with the High Tall Giant Woman and her husband teach him that “the simple life is right for Jack.” The call for audience participation is invoked in the nick of time. *Production notes are available in the script containing details on set design and other aspects of production. Single set. Appalachian “fantasy” costumes. Approximate running time: 60 minutes. Music in book. Code: J49.**

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Jack and the Wonder Beans



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Adapted by

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From the book by

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JACK AND THE WONDER BEANS was originally produced in February 1991 at Lexington Children's Theatre. The original production was directed by Vivian Robin Snipes with the following cast.

Jack

Joe Gatton

Storyteller/Musician

Roy Guill

Mam, Chicken Lady and
the High Tall Giant Woman

Evelyn Blythe

Carpenter, Gypsy, Giant

Larry Snipes

For

Erica & Casey
and the "wonder" in their eyes.

CHARACTERS

Storyteller
Jack
His Mam
A Carpenter
The Chicken Lady
The Gypsy
The High Tall Giant Woman
The High Tall Giant

TIME

Way back yonder.

PLACE

In, around and above Wolfpen Creek.

JACK AND THE WONDER BEANS

ALL: *(MELODY #1)*
Set yourself down and put on a grin
Set yourself down and put on a grin
Jack and the Wonder Beans soon begins
Wack Fa La Diddle all day

STORY: We're going to spin a tale for you
& JACK 'Bout a boy,
& MAM his mam,
& GIANT and giants too
ALL You decide if you think it's true
Wack Fa La Diddle all day

STORY: Listen up good you girls and boys
ALL: Keep your eyes on me/him, I'm Roy!
I'll need your help to make some noise
Wack Fa La Diddle all day

STORY: If I make a sound,
ALL: make it back
STORY: If I make a motion,
ALL: give it a whack
We'll sing another song, and you'll catch the knock
Wack Fa La Diddle all day

(MELODY #2)

*(ALL SING EXCEPT THE STORYTELLER WHO
ENCOURAGES THE AUDIENCE TO PARTICIPATE
DURING THE SONG.)*

The wind it blows on Wolfpen Creek
(WIND NOISES)
Dillum Dow Dillum
The rain comes down with snow and sleet

(RAIN NOISES)

Dillum Dow

Flowers bloom in the summertime

(FLOWERS BLOOM IN AUDIENCE)

We hear bees buzz but that don't rhyme

(BEES BUZZ)

Cuttle Dee Cuttle Dow Dillum Dow Day

(MELODY #1)

*(This verse is sung by the STORYTELLER and the
REMAINDER OF THE CAST encourages the audience
to join in for the next verse.)*

There's a song to sing in the middle of the show

I'll teach how the words do go

Then you can sing along I know

Wack Fa La Diddle all day

STORY: *(Sings)* **Night falls by and the beanstalk grown**
(Spoken) Now you try it.

KIDS: *(Sung)* **Night falls by and the beanstalk grows**

STORY: *(Spoken)* Same words again, only higher.

KIDS: *(Sung)* **Night falls by and the beanstalk grows**

STORY: *(Spoken)* Now listen . . .
(Sings) **The beanstalk grows 'til the rooster crows**
(Spoken) Now you try it.

KIDS: *(Sung)* **The beanstalk grows 'til the rooster crows**

STORY: *(Spoken)* You know the last line, sing it with me

KIDS: *(Sung)* **Wack Fa La Diddle all day**

STORY: *(Spoken)* Now lets try the whole thing

ALL: *(Sing)* **Night falls by and the beanstalk grows
Night falls by and the beanstalk grows
The beanstalk grows 'til the rooster crows
Wack Fa La Diddle all day**

COMPANY: *(Spoken)* Good job! Well done! etc.

(All exit except STORYTELLER.)

STORY: **Listen and watch throughout our play
There's more for you to do today
Than you can imagine or I can say
Wack Fa La Diddle all day**

**If you keep your bottoms right on the ground
We'll all be ready for Jack to come 'round
To hear the tale of the beans he found
Wack Fa La Diddle all day**

Way back yonder there was a widow woman

(She enters.)

WIDOW: H'lo!

STORY: and her son Jack

JACK: *(He enters.)* Howdy!

STORY: and they were as poor as Job's turkey. The way some
tell it, their homeseat was here on Wolfpen Creek.

J & W: Or around about.

STORY: Well, all Jack and his Mam had was their home roof, a
cow and a patch of land.

(STORYTELLER exits to get volunteer for the cow.)

WIDOW: Jack, it's gettin' late. Go on out, fetch in the cow and bring in a pail of milk afore it gets dark.

JACK: Yes, mam. Cow! Cow! Now where is that tom fool cow any how? Have you seen a cow. She's about this high and brown and white all over.

(During the above a child is prepared to play the cow. The STORYTELLER explains that the cow should moo every time she hears the word "cow.")

Well, I'll be. There you are. Come on, come on in here cow. *(Moo.) (He leads the COW in a circle around the bucket.)* Now Mam says I'm to fetch her a bucket of milk. *(He picks up the full bucket)* That's good cow *(Moo)*. Now let's get you all settled in for the night, cow.

(The COW is left with the STORYTELLER for security.)

WIDOW: That's a good cow. *(Moo)*

STORY: Now, they had the cow *(Moo)* and the patch of land. They lived on . . .

JACK: garden sass.

WIDOW: and crumble-in!

JACK: Made of plain bread! Thank you, mam.

WIDOW: And milk!

JACK: Thank you, mam. That'll be just dandy.

STORY: Now, hit come a rough winter.

(As set up in the opening song the STORYTELLER solicits help from the children to make sound effects for the cold winter.)

The wind howled about the hills and the valleys.

(MELODY #2)

WIDOW: **Winter howled about them hills**
J & W: **Dillum Dow Dillum**
Winter howled about them hills
Dillum Dow

(During the song JACK returns to the cow and repeats the circle to fill the bucket with more milk.)

JACK: That's a good cow. *(Moo)*

STORY: The rain and sleet fell on the tin roofs.

WIDOW: **The rain and sleet came down so cold**
J & W: **Wolfpen Creek froze up I'm told**
Cuttle Dee Cuttle Dow Dillum Dow Day

STORY: And then the snow drifted down and all was silent quiet.

JACK: Mam, it's cold as doorknobs.

WIDOW: Here, boy, eat some of this corn seed.

JACK: But, mam, what about the . . .

WIDOW: I know, I held it back to plant the sass patch next spring, but it's all we got. You eat, hit'll warm you up some.

JACK; Yes, mam

STORY: And come spring the flowers bloomed all across the mountain.

(MELODY #2)

WIDOW: **Winter finally went away**

J & W: **Dillum Dow Dillum**
The rain and sleet did not stay
Dillum Dow

JACK: Well I'll be.

STORY: Birds sang, and bees buzzed throughout the valley.

WIDOW: **Winter finally went away**
J & W: **Springtime sun warmed up the day**
Cuttle Dee Cuttle Dow Dillum Dow Day

STORY: The sun smiled down and all who saw it were awed by its beauty.

WIDOW: My soul, Jack, what a lovely day. Now you run along and milk the cow (*Moo*).

JACK: Yes, mam. (*JACK returns to the cow for more milk.*)

STORY: But that spring . . .

(*JACK walks the COW in a circle.*)

JACK: Easy now. That's a good cow (*Moo*).

STORY: . . . the cow (*Moo*) went dry.

JACK: dry as a hat.

WIDOW: Dry as a hat!

JACK: Yes, mam. Not a drop.

WIDOW: Nothing to do, but take and sell that cow (*Moo*) so we will have money for bread.

JACK: But, mam, sell this ol' cow (*Moo*). She's been a good cow (*Moo*) all these years.

WIDOW: I know son, but we've nothing else to do. Now go on Jack.

JACK: Yes, mam.

(JACK prepares the cow and MAM clears the area of props for the next scene during the following.)

(MELODY #3)

STORY: **Shady grove on Wolfpen Creek
Shady grove my darlin
Shady grove on Wolfpen Creek
Bound for the shady grove**

JACK: **Jack went out to milk the cow
No milk was there had
Jack went home to tell his mam**

STORY: **Jack was feeling sad**

WIDOW: **Jack go out and sell the cow
Sell the cow I said
Bring a little money home
So we can buy some bread**

STORY: **Shady grove on Wolfpen Creek
Shady grove my darlin
Shady grove on Wolfpen Creek
Bound for the shady grove**

STORY: So Jack hung a sign betwix the cow's (*Moo*) horns . . .

WIDOW: *(As he hangs the sign on the cow.)* Lady . . . cow (*Moo*)
. . . for . . . sale

JACK: Anybody.

WIDOW: Anybody.

JACK: There.

(JACK and COW travel around the audience.)

STORY: He went up the road and down the road, through brush and saw-briar, aiming for to sell the critter.

(MELODY #3)

**Shady grove on Wolfpen Creek
Shady grove my darlin
Shady grove on Wolfpen Creek
Bound for the shady grove**

But dry cows (*Moo*) are hard numbers to unload. And she was all hide and bones. A walking shikepoke. Yet he had bids.

(Enter a CARPENTER. He spills his tool box of wooden folk toys which JACK plays with as he helps pick them up.)

JACK: H'lo!

MAN: Why, H'lo there, Jack

JACK: Let me help you with that.

MAN: Thank you kindly.

JACK: It's my pleasure.

MAN: Jack, you're a long way from home. What brings you to these parts?

JACK: My Mam sent me out to sell the cow. (*Moo*) (*He shows the MAN the sign.*)

MAN: (*Reading*) Lady cow (*Moo*) for sale.

JACK: Anybody.

MAN: Anybody. (*Looking over cow.*) Hmmmmmmmmmm. Scrawny cow (*Moo*).

JACK: But she is nice mannered. How much would you give me for her?

MAN: Hmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmm. Would you took a busted up hammer with one ear gone?

JACK: (*Thinks it over.*) No.

MAN: Boy, that cow (*Moo*) ain't nothing but a bag of bones.

JACK: Yes sir, that's true, but she's real nice and she don't eat much.

MAN: Reckon she's gone dry.

JACK: Yes sir, but she is a likable ol' heifer.

MAN: I'll swap ye for my gee-haw whimmy diddle.

JACK: Now, no.

MAN: Are you sure?

JACK: Not even for a gee-haw whimmy diddle.

MAN: Well, I'll be.

(*MAN exits. JACK continues.*)

STORY: So Jack ambled on down the road a bit further.

(*MELODY #3*)

Shady grove on Wolfpen Creek

**Shady grove my darlin
Shady grove on Wolfpen Creek
Bound for the shady grove**

**Jack went out to sell his cow
Up the road a bit
Came upon some chickens and
A woman who said . . .**

WOMAN: *(Feeding her chickens [the audience])* Here, chick, chick, chick, chick. Here chick, chick, chick, chick.

JACK: Would ya like me to help with that?

WOMAN: It ain't the feedin' I need help with, it's the gatherin'. Every time I say, "Hen, Lay!" sittin' right there in their nests, all these chickens flap their wings and lay an egg.

JACK: They do?

WOMAN: They do! Watch, I'll show ya. Get ready Chickens. "Hen, Lay!"

(When the WOMAN, says, "Hen, Lay" the children will begin to respond to her directions. JACK and the WOMAN should encourage this with improvised dialogue like: "Look at the size of that egg! or "Look at all the eggs!" "Thank you, chickens" is the stop control said whenever JACK and the WOMAN are ready.)

WOMAN: Thank you, chickens!

JACK: Thank you, chickens!

WOMAN: Thank you.

JACK: I've never seen anything like that before. Do it again.

WOMAN: You try it.