



Beans From Heaven

Many years ago, a man named Joan and his bad tempered wife named Vicenta, lived on a piece of land in the hills of Spain. They had a lot of children. Joan was a hard worker and was nice to everyone. Vicenta was always arguing with her husband because they only ever ate bread and fish. Joan was always ignoring her!

Joan found a bean one day and said to Vicenta, "I am going to plant this bean." Vicenta obviously argued back but Joan planted the bean anyway, in a small patch of land in front of his house.

The next morning Joan, who had been a little worried about the plant as it had rained heavily the night before, opened his curtains. When he looked out he saw the biggest and strangest tree ever. Its leaves were shaped like a stairway and were very stiff, strong enough to hold a man. As he was already dressed, he decided to leave a note for his wife and climb up the tree. It went all the way up to the clouds. He crept out of the house, silently closing the door behind him.



(Illustration by Jack Robinson)

Joan gathered up all his courage and went up the tree. When he got to the top, he went all shaky. At the top there was a big door, which looked a bit like a church door. Joan thought it must be heaven. He knocked on the door and waited for the sound of someone's footsteps. He had a shock because Saint Peter opened the door! Joan dropped to the floor and begged for food.

Saint Peter said, "Very well." He handed Joan a wand and told him what to do with it. Joan thanked him and ran down the leafy stairs. He commanded the table to be set. He waved the wand and shouted, "Work up wand!" All of a sudden their table was covered with all sorts of food they had never seen before.



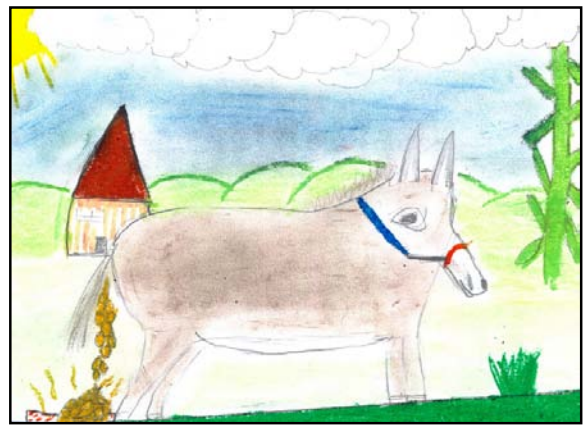
(Illustration by Jasmine Turner)

Then their neighbour Miquel, who was rich, greedy and jealous, came over and said, "What's all the laughter for today, has something happened?" Then the nasty neighbour stole the wand and replaced it with a stick. The next morning Joan picked up the wand, but Vicenta was in her usual mood and snatched it off him.

"You're no good at anything," she moaned. She waved the wand and said, "Work up wand," but nothing happened at all. Joan took the wand and said, "Work up wand." Still nothing happened, so Joan went out of the house and back up the tree.

When he got to the top, Saint Peter was already waiting for him, and he was smartly dressed as if he was going somewhere important. Joan explained all that had happened with the wand. Saint Peter gave him a donkey and instructions about what he had to do. Joan listened, and then took the donkey down the tree. He laid a blanket out on the ground, then said, "Do it over here, donkey," in a sweet voice. The donkey screwed up its face and started 'pooing' golden coins! Joan and his family were delighted. They had lots of money so they bought loads of food and clothes.

The neighbour had been watching all this. He came up with a plan, which was obviously evil and nasty, to steal the donkey. That night the neighbour stole the donkey and replaced it with an ordinary donkey. The next morning, Joan went to the donkey and said, "Do it over here, donkey," in a sweet voice, but nothing happened.



(Illustration by Charlie Webb)

Joan went back up the tree to heaven. Saint Peter gave him a heavy club and said, "Invite your neighbour in and tell him you have something special. Hand him the club and say, 'Work up club' and let the club do its work.



(Illustration by Luke Gaskin)

Joan went back down the tree and said to his neighbour, "Here's something special. Hold it and say, 'Work up club'. He did so, and the club hit him and beat him until the neighbour said that he would give all the gifts back; the wand, the donkey, everything.

Joan and his family lived happily ever after.

Story retold by Sinead O'Sullivan