



Jack & The Beanstalk

by John Birchley

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CAST

Dame Trott – traditional pantomime dame, mother to Jack and Jez

Jack Trott – he of the beanstalk and our hero

Jez Trott – Jack's younger brother

Jane – the girl next door who is secretly in love with Jack. Jack is also secretly in love with her

Gruffy McGruff-Face – Landlord of Dame Trott's family cottage, villain of the piece

Ding and Dong – Landlord's two henchmen, a menacing presence who don't have a lot to say most of the time

The Oldest Inhabitant of the Village – exactly that, knows everybody and everything about the village

Buttercup the Cow – two-person skin part

Giant Horatio Thunderguts 1 – heard only offstage

Edith, the Giant's wife – quite Pythonesque

Giant Horatio Thunderguts 2 – appears on stage at end of Act Two, smaller than Giant's wife if possible

Ensemble of assorted villagers of all ages from 9 – at present 13 speaking parts.

ACT ONE

Scene 1 – The Village Green

Scene 2 – Inside Dame Trott's

cottage Scene 3 – The

Village Green

Scene 4 – Inside Dame Trott's cottage

Scene 5 – On the way to the Village Green

Scene 6 – The Village Green

Scene 7 – Inside Dame Trott's cottage

Scene 8 – The Village Green

Scene 9 – On the way to the Village Green

Scene 10 – The Village Green

INTERVAL

ACT TWO

Scene 1 – The Giant's Kingdom

Scene 2 – The Village Green

Scene 3 – On the way from the Village Green

Scene 4 – Inside Dame Trott's cottage

Scene 5 – The Village Green

Scene 6 – The Giant's Kingdom

Scene 7 – The Village Green

Scene 8 – Songsheet

Walkdown

Finale

ACT ONE

SCENE ONE

The Village Green

The set comprises the Village Green on which is Dame Trott's cottage.

As tabs open the junior ensemble enter and greet each other, senior ensemble are already on stage. Once everyone has entered opening song/dance begins

| | | |
|----------------|-----------|--------------------------------|
| MUSIC 1 | Villagers | Something bright and welcoming |
|----------------|-----------|--------------------------------|

At the end of the song Dame Trott enters and causes a stir, she is obviously well known and well-liked by the villagers, lots of waving, hellos etc.

DAME TROTT Good morning, everyone! How are we all today?

(Villagers react positively) That's good.

(Sees the audience and is rather surprised by this) Ooo, what are you lot doing sitting out there in the dark? Hello, my name's Dame Trott!

(Audience reaction – however they react will not be good enough for Dame Trott)

Sorry, did someone say something? Right, we'll start as we mean to go on. Let's try that again. I'll say 'Hello, everyone!' and you'll say 'Y'alright, bab?' *(or local equivalent)* *(to ensemble)* You'll all help them, won't you? OK, shall we try it? 'Hello, everyone'

Audience reply – repeat if necessary, it will be necessary, Dame Trott is a stickler

OK, so every time I see you I'll say 'Hello' you'll reply 'Y'alright, bab?' OK? Good.

Here we all are again, it's lovely to meet you and to bring you ten minutes of high-quality entertainment crowded into two and a half hours. Times are hard in the village at the moment. First our lovely village Droitwich in the Dell (*or local reference*) has a very bad neighbour, the Giant Thunderguts, we fell out with him some time ago. He huffs and puffs and takes us all for granted. He really is bad news. He deserves a GASBO, a GIANT ASBO.

I used to be afraid of the dark, but since I've seen the electricity bill, I'm afraid of the light.

I woke up early one morning and wondered where the sun had gone, suddenly it dawned on me.

I've been married sixteen times you know. I know I don't look old enough, do I? (*to audience*) That wasn't up for discussion. Yes, sixteen times, four richer, four poorer, four better, four worse. The only way I have of making money is selling the milk, butter and cheese from my lovely baby Buttercup but since the pandemic and all that malarkey we've hardly sold any of our delicious dairy products. I just don't know how much longer I will be able to keep Buttercup. Oh, you don't know about Buttercup do you? Who's Buttercup I hear you ask?

(*waits for audience to respond – Who's Buttercup?*)

(*Dame Trott goes SL, speaks offstage*) I said they wouldn't be as good as last night's/ last week's/the dress rehearsal, didn't I?

Buttercup is my sweetest baby cow, she really is part of the family. (*looks offstage*). And here she comes now with my two sons Jack and Jez.

MUSIC 2 Dame Trott, Jack, Jez and Villagers and Buttercup

A welcome to Buttercup

DAME TROTT *(to ensemble)* Right, I'm sure it's time for you to go and do something useful, off you go, see you later, kids.

Ensemble open the interior to the cottage as they exit.

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SCENE TWO

Cottage interior

JACK Mum, you're looking radiant this morning.

JEZ Yes, radiant that's the word I'd've used. (to Jack) What's radiant mean?

DAME TROTT It means bright and shining.

JEZ Does it?

DAME TROTT Well, I don't feel bright and shining I must say. You two were up early this morning, where have you been?

JACK We thought that we'd get to market early but no-one wanted any milk or butter.

DAME TROTT Well, times are hard in Droitwich in the Dell, cost of living crisis and all that. Anyway, what do you want for breakfast?

Jack and Jez recoil in horror

JACK Do we have to, Mum?

JEZ Yes, is that **really** necessary, Mum?

DAME TROTT And what's wrong with my cooking? It's almost cordon bleu.

JACK No, Mum, it should be cordoned off.

DAME TROTT Well, if you don't want any breakfast that's alright with me, I have a very busy day ahead, first I have to go to the dentist.

JEZ Are you having your teeth checked?

DAME TROTT No, I'm happy with the colour they are.

JACK and JEZ look puzzled

DAME TROTT Then I have to call at Specsavers, I took my hearing aids in there three weeks ago and I haven't heard anything since.

JACK and JEZ again look puzzled

DAME TROTT And while I'm at Specsavers I need to pick up my new glasses.

JACK Then what?

DAME TROTT I'll see ...

JACK Looks like you will be busy, Mum.

DAME TROTT And so will you, you need to go back to the market and see if you have any more luck selling any of Buttercup's delicious dairy products.

JEZ But we've already done that, Mum.

JACK But nobody wanted anything.

DAME TROTT Well, perhaps they will this time. You know how hard up we are and I just hope we will not have to do something drastic.

JACK

JEZ But, Mum ...

DAME TROTT No arguments, just go!

Jack and Jez untie Buttercup and exit

DAME TROTT I wonder what will become of me and my two boys my life just seems tragic at the moment, tragic.

| | | |
|----------------|-------------------|-------------|
| MUSIC 3 | Dame Trott | Tragic song |
|----------------|-------------------|-------------|

Dame Trott exits as Jack and Jez enter with Buttercup. Jez remains upstage not taking much notice of proceedings

JACK Has she stopped singing? Is it safe to come back? Hello, everyone. I didn't get a chance to introduce myself, did I? My name's Jack.

I'd like you to say 'Hello' to me every time I come on, is that OK?

Audience reaction (hopefully)

Right, let's try it, shall we? I'll say 'Hi folks' and you say 'Hi Jack'

Let's give it a go! (*go over a couple of times until Jack is happy*)

Right, we'll do that every time I see you, OK? Bye, folks!

Ensemble close cottage as they enter

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SCENE THREE

The Village Green

JACK Hiya, folks!

Audience responds – Hi Jack! Jack gives thumbs up. Jez looks panicked at the thought of a hijack.

JACK We need to try to sell something this time, Jez,

JEZ I have an idea. I'll capture their attention with my magnetic personality.

JACK It's worth a try, but it's never worked in the past.

JEZ Right, can I have your attention please ladies and gentlemen. You all know us, don't you?

Ensemble agrees

JEZ But I did you know that along with all my farming talents I also tell jokes?

Ensemble are surprised

JEZ Would you like to hear one?

Ensemble seem quite keen

JEZ Why did the cow cross the road?

ENSEMBLE 1 I don't know why did the cow cross the road?

JEZ To get to the **udder** side.

Ensemble groan

JEZ *(to audience)* Just a warning **UDDER** jokes will feature a lot during the show. What about another one? What do you call a cow that's a great dancer?

ENSEMBLE 2 I don't know, what do call a cow that's a great dancer?

JEZ A **moo-ver** and shaker.

Ensemble groan

JEZ What about this one? What kind of milk do you get from a tiny, tiny cow?

ENSEMBLE 3 I don't know what do you get from a tiny, tiny cow?

JEZ **Condensed** milk.

Ensemble groan

JEZ OK, this will be the last one. I always send Buttercup to bed at seven o'clock.

ENSEMBLE 4 Why do you always send Buttercup to bed at seven o'clock?

JEZ Because eight o'clock is **past her (pasteur)** bedtime. Pretty good, eh?

ALL ENSEMBLE No, it's **UDDER RUBBISH!**

JACK *(trying to rescue the situation)* Thank you for that, Jez, now would anybody like to buy any of our milk or cheese?

Villagers all scatter or find something else to do

Josh and Finley open cottage as they exit

JEZ OK, it's like that is it? Well, we know when we're not wanted, don't we Jack?

JACK Yes, we'll just leave you to it then.

JEZ I suppose that means I must take Buttercup home again, ok, you don't have to answer that. I'll tell Mum you'll be home soon.

Jane comes on SR

JACK Hello, Jane. *(sighs)*

JANE Hello, Jack. *(sighs)*

JACK And how are you today, Jane? *(sighs)*

JANE All the better for seeing you, Jack. *(sighs, stares into space)*

JACK That's good then Jane. *(sighs)*

JANE Yes, it is, isn't it Jack? *(sighs)*

JACK *(turns to audience)* That's Jane, she lives next door to our cottage. Can I tell you a secret? *(waits for audience to respond)* whenever I see her my tummy starts to tingle.

JANE *(turns to audience)* That's Jack, he lives next door to our cottage. Whenever I see him my tummy goes all tingly.

JACK What are you doing today. Jane?

JANE I've such a lot to do today, washing and ironing all that sort of stuff.

JACK And where are you going to do that, Jane?

JANE I was just going to walk back home, will you walk with me?

JACK That's where I was going, of course I will Jane.

JANE OK, come on then.

SCENE FOUR

Inside Dame Trott's cottage

Jack and Jane arrive at the Trott cottage.

JANE I guess it's goodbye then Jack.

JACK Yes, goodbye Jane.

They sigh at each other and then turn to the audience and sigh. Jane exits SR with Jack waving pathetically after her.

By now the cottage is fully opened, possibly by Dame Trott and Jez, Jez enters the cottage having tied up Buttercup as before.

DAME TROTT *(spotting audience)* Hello, everyone.

Audience 'Y'alright, bab?'

Ooo, that's lovely, well done. *(to Jack and Jez)*. Any luck, boys, did you sell anything?

JACK No we didn't I'm afraid, Mum.

JEZ I was wondering if it's because of the milk regulations recently introduced by the government whereby milk quotas are assets which can be sold, acquired or lost and are thereby based on an approved volumetric metering system. Any failure to adhere to these required conditions may result in the quota being summarily withdrawn immediately or legal proceedings.

Dame Trott and Jack look at each other/double take

DAME TROTT *(very Mumsy)* No I don't think so dear. . . Well, we really are in a pickle now. You're growing boys and you eat so much these days and Buttercup is hardly worth what we have to pay out for her.

JACK Mum, you're not going to say what I think you're going to say, are you?

DAME TROTT That would depend on what you think I'm going to say.

JACK You're not thinking about getting rid of Buttercup?

JEZ What!? No, Mum, you can't!

Jez and Jack put their hands over Buttercup's, which startles Buttercup.

JEZ It's alright, baby cow, nothing is going to happen to you. I promise.
(calms her down)

SFX – thunderous knock at door.

DAME TROTT I wonder who that can be at this time of day?

JACK There's only one way to find out, Mum.

DAME TROTT Is there?

JEZ Yes. Go and answer the door.

DAME TROTT Really?

JACK

JEZ **Go and answer the door, Mum!**

DAME TROTT But where is the door? *(looks around the stage in confusion)*

JACK It's over there! It's an imaginary door, the budget ran out before we thought of the door.

DAME TROTT Is our door in the draw? If it is, it might be Davina.

Dame Trott goes to see who is at the door

Gruffy McGruff-Face, Ding and Dong enter the cottage menacingly; Dame Trott, Jack and Jez are taken aback. Gruffy looks round for anything of value in the cottage. Ding and Dong menace silently.

GRUFFY *(he is new to the area)* Are you the well-known and well-loved Dame Trott? I don't think I've had the pleasure.

DAME TROTT No and I don't think you're going to either. *(shudders)* Oh, I'm sure I don't know why a gentleman caller would come to visit an old, poor widow like me.

GRUFFY Could it be something you have forgotten to do?

DAME TROTT Well, I was just about to do my washing and then the dusting and then I must cook lunch for my lovely boys

Jack and Jez recoil in horror at mention of Dame Trott's cooking.

JACK

JEZ Oh, no, Mum, you really don't have to do that.

GRUFFY And when were you going to pay your outstanding rent, Dame Trott?

DAME TROTT **Outstanding** rent, does that mean very, very good?

GRUFFY No, it means you have not paid any rent for the past three months.

DAME TROTT Oh dear, that's not good, is it? Might we be able to come to some sort of arrangement?

GRUFFY And what sort of arrangement were you thinking about?

DAME TROTT Oh, I don't know. Perhaps I could cook you and your associates a little something?

JACK Do you really think that's a good idea, Mum?

JEZ But your cooking's incredible – with a silent 'cr'. Think about it!

GRUFFY No, I don't think that's a good idea. The outstanding rent needs to be paid by the end of next week or you will be looking for somewhere else to live.

DAME TROTT But what will we do then?

GRUFFY That, Dame Trott will be up to you. Good day!

Gruffy, Ding and Dong leave the cottage. Dame Trott, Jack and Jez are left in a state of shock

DAME TROTT *(wailing)* But what's to become of us? Where will we live? We have so many debts, so many things we are behind with. *(gets increasingly hysterical, more wailing, becomes almost uncontrollable)*

Jack and Jez slap Dame Trott several times – bish, bash, bosh, Dame Trott turning between the two as she does with Dame Trott reacting violently to each slap

DAME TROTT What was that for?

JACK It was for your own good, Mum.

JEZ Yes, we need to think of solutions now, Mum.

DAME TROTT OK, but I think there's only one thing we can do. I know you won't like it. *(deep breath)* Buttercup will have to be sold.

JACK No! Isn't there anything else we can do?

JEZ Buttercup's been in the family since before Jack and I were born.

JACK We just can't do that, Mum, what do you think everyone? Should we sell Buttercup?

(turns to audience for their reaction)

DAME TROTT It's the only way, yes we should.

JACK & JEZ Oh, no we shouldn't.

DAME TROTT Oh, yes we should.

JACK & JEZ Oh, no we shouldn't

Keep going as long as audience go with it with Dame Trott bringing it to an end

DAME TROTT **Yes, we should.** Look I've read what passes for a script and I know what's going to happen. No-one is buying her milk or cheese. It might at least give us some cash to pay off some of our debts. There is nothing else for it, off you go!

Jack and Jez are reluctant to go

DAME TROTT I understand what you are thinking but, believe me, it will be better all-round if we do it quickly.

After much sighing Jack and Jez realise Dame Trott is right and untie Buttercup. Buttercup realises something is wrong and is reluctant to go with them. Eventually with a lot of pulling and shoving Buttercup moves.

Woodland cloth comes in

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SCENE FIVE

On the way to the Village Green

Jack and Jez manage to manhandle Buttercup downstage as Woodland cloth comes in.

Jack, Jez and Buttercup move to DSR.

Buttercup senses that something is wrong during the next dialogue, getting increasingly agitated

JACK Hi folks!

Audience respond Hi, Jack! Jez again looks panicked.

JACK I know, old girl, I know. Believe me we wouldn't be doing this unless there was any other way.

JEZ Jack, it's such a sad day. What was mother thinking? I cannot believe she wants us to sell Buttercup. It's an **udder** disaster! (*bursts into tears*).

Jack comforts Jez

JACK It will be alright, bro. Perhaps we could buy Buttercup back one day.

This makes Jez even worse

JACK Here, have this, blow your nose, (*Jack gives him a handkerchief*)

Jez blows his nose and looks at the contents of the handkerchief

JACK What are you doing that for?

JEZ I don't know, it's not nice. (*Jack again tries to comfort Jez, momentarily losing forgetting Buttercup*)

Buttercup has been getting more agitated and realising something is wrong, she takes off towards CSL, just as Ding and Dong enter, in conversation. They catch her and calm her down.

JACK (*realising Buttercup has gone*) Buttercup!?! (*exaggerated looking around, Jez joins in*)

Jez spots Buttercup with Ding and

Dong

JEZ There she is!

JACK Oh, no, they've got her!

They rush over to Ding, Dong and Buttercup

JACK (*comforting Buttercup*) I know you're upset, old girl but you mustn't run off like that.

JEZ Thank you for stopping her.

DING That's alright my young friend.

DONG Yes, we're glad to help, but where are you taking her?

JEZ Well, it seems that we've got ourselves into a bit of bother. After your visit Mum said that we need to sell Buttercup. It's the only way to solve our financial problems. So, we are taking her to the village green to try and do that.

Jack realises that Jez is giving too much away and tries to shut him up.

JACK Thank you, gentlemen, but I don't think they need to know all that, Jez, do you?

JEZ Perhaps not but I'm just saying what Mum said.

JACK I know you are, but . . .

DONG Did I hear you say, my young friend, that you were thinking of selling this fine specimen of a bovine?

JEZ That's what I was just saying, wasn't I, Jack?

JACK You were, but I wish you hadn't.

JEZ But I was only telling them what Mum had said.

JACK But I still wish you hadn't.

JEZ Why?

JACK Because it's private family business.

DING I wonder if we might be able to help you.

DONG Did you say that you were looking to sell Buttercup here?

JACK Well, yes, that's what Mum thinks will be the best thing.

DING And, of course, you'll be wanting the best deal for her.

JACK Yes, we're looking to raise as much cash as possible.

Ding and Dong look at each other sensing an opportunity

DONG But what if we said that we could give you something that money just can't buy?

JEZ What would that be?

DING Something **MAGIC**.

JACK Magic?

DONG Yes, **MAGIC**.

JEZ And what would that be?

DING *(produces a bag)* These!

JACK What are those?

DONG Beans!

JEZ Beans?

DING Yes, beans, but they are **MAGIC** beans.

JACK

JEZ Magic beans?

DONG They will grow anywhere and you will have the benefit of all the crops they will produce over years and years and years.

JEZ Jack, they're **MAGIC** beans!

JACK There's no such thing as magic beans. Beans only have one effect on you.

JEZ But I'm sure I remember reading about them. They would solve all our problems. We could plant them, harvest the beans and sell them or make bean soup and bean stew and other beany stuff with beany goodness.

JACK I'm not sure.

JEZ Oh, Jack, please, it will solve all our money problems, please! Please!

JACK I'm just not sure it's a good idea.

DONG What if we threw in an extra bag of beans? That way you will have double the crops and double the profit.

JEZ That's a bargain! Please Jack!

JACK I just don't know. (to audience) What do you think, folks?

Jack and Jez react to audience members who say 'yes'

JACK Well it looks as like our friends want us to say 'yes'.

JEZ Oh, thank you, sounds like we're doing the right thing.

JACK (*reluctantly to Ding and Dong*) Right, we have a deal then, gentlemen.

JEZ Just one thing, promise me that you will not (*covers Buttercup's ears and whispers*) Let anything bad happen to her.

DING Of course not we are committed vegetarians and will do everything we can to look after our new dear friend Buttercup.

Jack and Jez say their goodbyes to Buttercup amid handshaking and handing over of bags of beans. Ding and Dong congratulate each other

DING Well, there's one born every minute, isn't there Dong?

DONG You don't need to tell me, Ding. You don't need to tell me.

Ding and Dong exit with Buttercup and immediately return

MUSIC 4 Ding and Dong Celebrating all things bad

Woodland glade cloth out

Junior dancers – magic beans dance

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SCENE SIX

The Village Green

JACK Hi folks!

Audience respond Hi, Jack!

JEZ Who are they?

JACK They're my friends.

JEZ *(waves to audience)* Can they be my friends, too?

JACK I'm sure they could.

JEZ *(waves to audience again)* You know that if we weren't brothers we'd be best friends, wouldn't we?

JACK I suppose we would.

JEZ I definitely think we would.

| |
|---|
| MUSIC 6 Jack and Jez Celebrating brotherhood |
|---|

Jez and Jack high five, Jez exits as Jack spots Jane. Ensemble enter

JANE How are you, Jack? I haven't seen you for such a long time.

JACK Well, I'm a bit sad to be honest.

JANE Why's that?

JACK Well, we've just had to sell Buttercup.

JANE That's awful.

JACK Yes, it was, but we got these magic beans in exchange.

JANE *(looks doubtful)* Really? That's . . . unusual.

JACK Yes, we can use the beans to make our lives easier.

JANE *(still doubtful)* Can you?

Ensemble enter variously as does Jez

JACK Right I'm in the mood for celebrating. *(to ensemble)* Right, folks, things are looking up for the Trott family, so it's time to celebrate – it's time for another song and dance! And while you do, my brother and I go for a cup of tea.

ENSEMBLE Oh, no you won't

JACK & JEZ Oh, yes, we will *(Jack and Jez try to exit)*

ENSEMBLE Oh, no you won't

JACK & JEZ Oh, yes, we will *(Jack and Jez try to exit)*

ENSEMBLE Oh, no you won't

JACK Alright, I'll tell you what, we'll watch you.

JEZ Be just like the final of Strictly Come Dancing.

This seems to meet with the Ensemble's approval

| |
|--|
| <p>MUSIC 7 Villagers Another celebratory song</p> |
|--|

If time allows Jack and Jez could enter through the auditorium, as musical number ends Jack and Jez produce Strictly style paddles to assess the Villagers song and dance.

As musical number ends SFX thunder and lightning, villagers cower in fear or run offstage, Jack and Jez enter.

JEZ Oh, no, that's the Giant!

GIANT 1 *(thunderous and echoey, if sound can make the space vibrate all well and good. He is heard off stage, **scary and intimidating**)*

Ah, ha, ha, ha! I'm glad you think you have cause to celebrate. But be under no illusion you are only here because I allow you to be and if I ever decide that you are no longer welcome then something beyond your most horrible