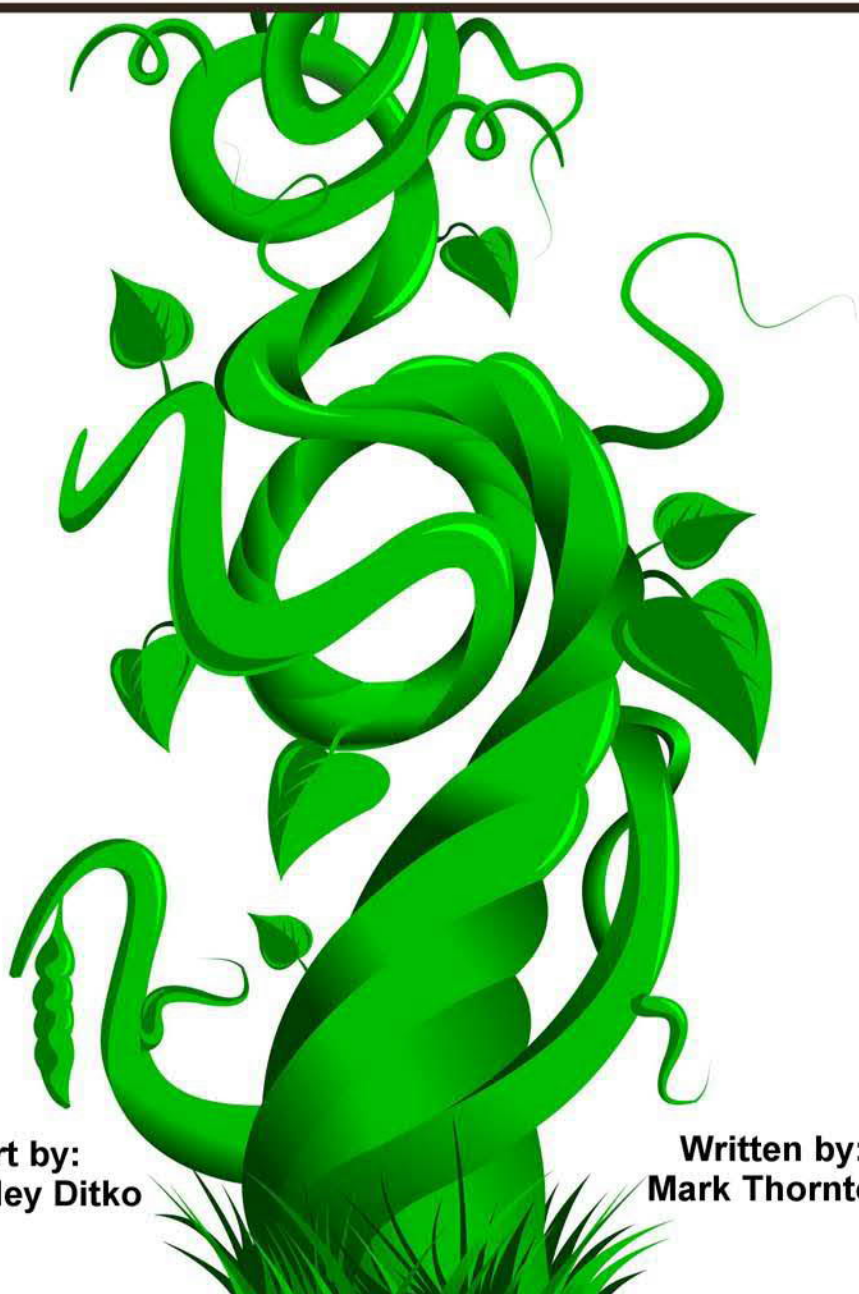




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Khaghbboommm
Press

Bean Stalk

A
Tunnels
& Trolls
Adventure
Gaming
Solo



Art by:
Stanley Ditko

Written by:
Mark Thornton



A Tunnels & Trolls Adventure Gaming Solo

(For 1st to 3rd Level Characters)

Credits

Written by:
Mark Thornton

Covers & Art by:
Stanley Ditko

Published by:
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**Tunnels and Trolls is a game created
by Ken St. Andre and published by
Flying Buffalo, Inc.**



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Branches crackle while logs smolder contently in the grate. It is the night of Halloween, a night when all sensible souls seek the warmth of the hearth while the braver ones gather for a story of things that go bump in the night. Daisy, the comely barmaid loved by one all, gives a wiggle of her full hips and a pout of her ruby lips as she makes her way back to her side of the bar. Heads nod sagely as some of the patrons of the Patted Calf whistle in appreciation at the warmth and charm available after a long day in the muddy paddocks of their familiar, bucolic hamlet home. These folk are farmers or farm laborers and their pleasures run no further than the tap room of the only tavern in Mucklepuddle Marsh. Very few of these country yeomen have broader horizons and not one of them has traveled more than half a day's ride on a shire horse from the little village tucked away from sight in the wet hill country to the extreme south-west of the sprawling Kraken continent.

Even half a day's journey away – half a day and no more because these simple folk do not like to sleep in any bed except for their own – there is nothing but a livestock and produce market and another functional but less cheering hostelry. There they meet and barter with their neighbors from the other hamlets of this boggy region, exchanging the surplus raised under their care for those products, grown and fashioned by hand, that others need not to stay alive in a land where the only help for the needy and the sick comes from kith and kin.



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Fortunately – Trollgod be praised! – barley and malt thrive in these parts so beer is both cheap and potent. Those two qualities so often go hand in hand when it comes to strong drink. The landlord of the Patted Calf, Lardy Corpuscles, pulls a decent pint and offers a shoulder to lean upon and an ear to bend. He is the local celebrity and knows everyone, children included. This is because his wife is Mucklepuddle Marsh's one and only school teacher - he knows his neighbors as well as he knows his own family. A big man with a weak will when it comes to cakes and ale, Lardy is slow to offer advice. When he does, it is given with the circumspect wordplay of an astrologer or soothsayer. He has a reputation for never being wrong and he understands perfectly well that the less precise his advice, the more it lends itself to fitting any set of facts.

Lardy and Daisy make a great team. She bubbles with the love of life and has the looks to make a prize heifer's milk churn with envy. Daisy attracts many proposals of marriage but prefers, in her early twenties, to leave doors open. She knows just how Lardy likes things done and conducting herself this way has earned her a good deal of latitude in how she goes about her duties and how she relates to the paying customers. She earns good tips, does Daisy! That means that Lardy does not have to waste much time on



negotiations for pay rises. For his part, Lardy is no slacker. He can see that Daisy keeps people, men and women, out that extra hour. Rather than going home to be tucked up in bed, many gladly give up an hour's sleep to bathe in the fireside chat and Daisy's glow a little longer. That means the beer kegs need changing more often and the clink of coin in the till continues on towards midnight most nights. If Daisy is turning on the charm, Lardy is not above clearing away the glasses and washing them too.

Trollworld is, of course, a magic-rich world but you would hardly know it out here in the back of beyond. There is no Wizards' Guild for many a mile and the big city of Portree is not quite so distant as to encourage bandits and monsters to roam these swampy hills with unfettered freedom. The hobbits of the Mire sometimes travel through this backwater but they are the only non-humans these farmers grow



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up knowing. No other creature finds reason to come to this nowhere land. No elves, no dwarves, no fairies, no uruks. These kindreds are the stuff of legend to the lads and lasses of Mucklepuddle Marsh, myths told by grandfathers to eager young ears or tales told by irritated mothers to frighten unruly offspring into docility. There once was a dragon that flew over these parts, many moons ago, so the old folk do say, but it was so high up that it looked barely bigger than a swallow. What it dropped as it passed by did leave a hole in the roof of Nobby Clutterbutt's hay barn though.

Tonight is an no ordinary night at the Patted Calf. Not only is there the usual laughter a-plenty, entertainment from a bard whosesongs change verses every other night and the prodigious number of pints consumed by the average customer (five, give or take the occasional whiskey chaser) but there is the hushed expectation of tales of hauntings and horrors from the void. The big, open fire is roaring now and Daisy is well satisfied that it will provide a compelling backdrop to her flirtations. This is where you come in, dear player.

Heads turn as the door creaks and it swings open. Heads always do turn here where everyday life is the only theatre. Who could it be, coming so late in the piece? Surely no bad news of an infant choking on a cowbell or a grandmother afflicted by a stroke? Perhaps you are a wandering storyteller, if everyone's hopes are to be met. These are the thoughts behind most of the eyes that turn.



The tall fellow in the old Hessian smock embroidered with shooting stars is the first to find his tongue and stand to greet you as you bow your head and stoop to pass through the low door. Daisy and Lardy are occupied with their work and it is a cardinal rule here that strangers be shown true hospitality on the rare occasions that they pop, unbidden, into the steady rhythm of country life.

"Welcome, friend!" he says with a wave of a horny hand. "Welcome to the warmth of the Patted Calf and welcome to the village of Mucklepuddle Marsh. Your business is not ours and if we do not ask, it is just because we do not pry and not because we do not take a friendly interest. Will you take a mug of ale? We think it is very good and that we are fortunate to live where such fine beer is brewed. We would value your opinion."



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He pauses to allow you to respond and when you accept his honest good cheer, Lardy stops polishing glasses and sets to pulling you a generous pint with a creamy, foamy head. When it is clear that you have brought no ghostly tales with you, an introduction takes place.

"I am Jack Simnpleton," the man tells you.

Jack quickly gives you the plain facts of village life and you understand that these people all make their living from raising cattle. Milk and beef are the mainstays of life here. Everyone has a second skill, whether it be carpentry, masonry, needlework, tinkering or any one of the many things knowledge of which makes life pleasant rather than something only to be endured. Jack's words paint a bright picture with many different colors until he touches upon his own life story.

"I am an oddity," he declares unashamedly, to the approving nods of his near neighbors. "I left this village when I was a boy and traveled to the big city. I studied at Wizard School!"

At this, Daisy leans her elbows on the bar and settles into a repose that is always well appreciated. She has heard Jack's story many times before and knows her customers never tire of hearing it. Lardy takes his pipe and drops heavily into the old, well-worn rocking chair at the fireside which he reserves for his end of evening break. He knows that Jack's memory is not good and that his imagination will triumph over it. That means the story will not be quite the same as any version heard here before. A happy, deeply contented glaze settles on Lardy's pudgy face as he puffs on the hickory pipe, filled with mellowweed from the Mire. He is a man who would not swap his life for that of any other, wizard or no.

Taking a deep swallow from the overflowing tankard an eager friend presses upon him, Jack rests on his elbow against the bar and begins his tale.

"I was the favored son, I always was. My father was happy when my eldest sister was born and he was hardly less delighted when another girl came a year later. But as two more came and still no son, he chided my mother and hardened his heart against her.

She was a strong, proud woman, not afraid to help the men pull the plough when the oxen were sick, but she was devastated when my father turned his back on their love. She hid her pain well and my sisters grew up without knowledge of her heavy burden. But it never lessened, always troubled her in her secret thoughts. After ten years of carrying this crushing weight in her heart, she took advantage of a rare journey to her own mother's hearth and home when her own sister died after eating toadstools in the wetlands about their home.



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On the way back, she took a barely discoverable path to an old crone who lived in the boggiest part of the swamp, alone save for the company of a thousand noisy slime-toads. This old witch took pity on my mother and bade her bathe with the toads in the swamp under the twin moons, while she sang an unintelligible lament until she lost her voice. There was no catch – the hag acted only out of mercy, without asking anything in return.

When my mother returned to her family, instead of berating her for tarrying, my father welcomed her with a kindness he had kept from her for more than a full decade. Life sweetened from this juncture for my parents and my sisters too. None were surprised when, some ten months later, my mother produced her fifth child.

That, my friends, was me. My father was elated and threw a party that some of you still remember despite drinking the Calf dry that night. My father had no more to his name than any of us do now but everything he had, he showered on me. He taught me whatever he could and he was an excellent teacher. When there was something he could not impart to me himself, he cajoled his friends and neighbors to pass their knowledge on to me. I was never short of company, never unoccupied and I grew into a quite precocious youth.

When I was fifteen, two things happened that set the course of my life and left me as you see me now. A census was made by the Lord of Portree. I was tested for signs of magical potential when a splendid company of wizards and warriors passed through these lands. For the first time in generations, a child of Mucklepuddle Marsh was deemed to be worthy of the Portree Wizards School! Money was not a problem – if the education was not funded by the Guild itself, the village would have pulled their resources to see one of their own take such a momentous step.

The second life-shattering event of that year was much less to be cherished. A dreadful stroke struck my father and left him a poor shell of the man he had been. He lived but another two years – not long enough to see me graduate – and the malady caused him to sell





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everything we had to make my life as comfortable as might be for me in the great city. As no poor country bumpkin would I take my place in the academy! My mother and my sisters had to find places in neighbors' homes because of his rigid determination to give me the best start possible for what he was sure would be a grand career in magic.



It was very hard on me when he died. He fell into a stream no deeper than my knee and drowned as a final stroke left him unable to raise his head from the water. I took a break from my training, an absence that the Guild sympathetically sanctioned. I knew that to fail in my studies would be to dishonor my father's legacy so after six months I resumed my apprenticeship and accelerated my progress towards its completion.

With magic at my fingertips, I had a choice to make. A post with the Guild, as a house-wizard for a wealthy merchant or the life of an adventurer? For me, it was an easy choice. I took the direct route of the dungeon delver and set out for fame, fortune and glory. Alas! It did not transpire that these were to be the fruits of my harvest.

I fell at the first hurdle. No disgrace, you may say, but that has been but small a consolation! All that my father sacrificed, all that my mother and sisters went without, for what? Nothing! The first room I entered with the five other delvers reeked of magic. They looked to me to make sense of the strange artifacts tantalizing us, teasing us with the unasked question: which would make us powerful?



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As a freshman magician, I lacked the more sophisticated spells that would have revealed the knowledge we needed to keep us safe. I felt the pressure of my peers and I made a wild guess. The dwarf warrior – Grogguzzler was his name – was decent and brave but the sword I told him to withdraw from the corpse of an albino elven princess unleashed a swarm of ghosts that sucked the life from him and our comrades. Then they played with me like a cat clawing at a mouse in no need of a meal but only sport.



I was chased remorselessly through endless tunnels, wheezing from exhaustion, until I didn't know my right from my left. I was forced to scale a sheer wall, digging my fingernails into the bare rock to get away from those floating fiends. When I reached the top, they were there again and I had to jump back down to escape them. My poor ankles! They were so nearly broken I had to crawl from then on until my knees were chaffed to the bone. Those ghosts drove like an animal to the slaughterhouse, all the while howling with bloodcurdling malice. I begged for mercy, I offered to sell them my soul, but they would not listen.

After hours of torment, they grew bored and left me to make my way home with one parting 'gift'. It was a curse, a curse that meant I would lose my mind whenever I cast a spell. That curse has never been lifted and I have never lost my desire to do magic!



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That is why you gave me the name I have now, a name I truly deserve. I know you will keep me safe when my mind crumbles as I cast a spell. I must choose to accept the cost of making magic to repay my father and show everyone that his generosity was not misplaced.

Friends, I have drunk enough tonight and know you will carry me home so now watch! I will make lights for you and then you must put me in my bed.”

When Jack, no old man but carrying a burden of cares greater than anyone present, finishes up, he screws his face up and flexes his fingers with the effort of summoning magic. Immediately, his friends rush to prevent him from harming himself. To no avail – the incipient spell carries force enough to repel them like butterflies in the breeze. Suddenly his face contorts into a ghastly grin of ecstasy and lights erupt all over the Calf, dancing here and darting there, colors flashing too fast for human eyes.

Stunning a sight as it is, all turn their gaze on Jack, who is now sitting cross-legged on the sawdust floor, cooing like a baby and rocking fiercely back and forward. The sane man who spoke so well mere moments before has gone and it is as he foresaw: he has to be carried home to his bed by his good neighbors.

Jack’s departure – body and spirit – is quite enough for Lardy. He bids Daisy collect the tankards as he begins his closing routine. Before Daisy has washed up while Lardy sweeps the floor and lays down fresh sawdust for tomorrow’s resumption of trade, the drinkers slip away into the night, every last man jack, and the Calf itself is ready for sleep. It is a sleep that will not see the dawn in though. The night has a surprise in store for Mucklepuddle Marsh and its farming folk. Not a surprise that will bring cheer. Quite the reverse. A surprise that will demand action just as soon as someone can determine what action it is that is appropriate. Halloween is almost past but not yet. There is still a sting in the tail for the sleeping village, as they are soon to find out.

But Jack is not the only person able to cast magic in Mucklepuddle. You think I misled you before? No, indeed not. Jack is the sole native of the Marsh who can perform arcane incantations but there are two others, two brothers, who were not born here, who learned far more magic than Jack Simpleton ever did. Fuddle and Duddle by name, rather more advanced in years than Jack but no more useful in magical mysteries than that sad, scarred fellow in all honesty. They are considered, by the reckoning of their Guild, to have reached the third peak of mastery but they have both lost whatever



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vigor they may once have had when it comes to using their knowledge.

They worked for more than two decades for the Guild in Portree and both were presented with golden egg timers when they retired and took early pensions. For the last decade of their service to their brother wizards and sister witches, they wrote reports and recorded inventories of magical items, potions and the like. Perhaps it was genetic and perhaps it was moral decay but they came to dislike the temporary discomfort that comes with expending khremmatic energy to cast spells. So they stopped, and eventually they came even to tire of writing reports and counting things.



Fuddle and Duddle read though. Oh, how they read! Not of dragons and knights, dungeons and adventure as literate school boys and girls might but of farming. They liked the idea of growing things and of raising animals to produce milk and cheese or for meat. Their pensions were modest and stretched only so far as taking up an abandoned craft and small-holding in Muckpuddle Marsh. However, life is seldom as it appears in dreams, especially the idealized ones. They were no more farmers than they were spellcasters and they would soon have exhausted their funds and fallen to begging if it had not been for the one spell they both still loved to cast.

Zapping creatures might have held some attraction for the folk of the Marsh farms. Some might have employed them to put a humane end to sick livestock, but not many. They knew how to open and lock



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doors but in Mucklepuddle there were neither invisible things to reveal nor were there things to invisibly hide from.

Most of the spells so useful to dungeon delvers were next to useless on the farm. The spell Fuddle and Duddle loved was the one for flying – can you imagine how much that aided the process of rounding up cattle? They found their place in the small, rural community and earned their keep.

And as the surprise for Mucklepuddle unfolds, it is Fuddle and Duddle who are called upon to investigate.

At around 4am, before the cockerel leaves the roost, explosions wake a startled population of the Marsh. Not just one but no less than fifteen. And with these barn-shaking detonations comes the most awful smell ever to be smelled in a village well used to malodorous marsh gases.

Lardy is one of the first to get out of doors, always a light sleeper. He is joined by those patrons who were less enthusiastic in their ale-swilling a few hours earlier. As they light torches and survey the scene for damage, what they find are smoking, stinking craters filled with living creatures. On closer inspection, once they rub their eyes raw in ridding them of sleep and pinch themselves mercilessly to check they are not dreaming, they see something they have never seen before and never thought to. The creatures writhing and growing in the pits left by the bomb blasts are not human, not even humanoid. Not animal even. What then can they be? Plant-life perhaps? Something of that order.

It is Lardy who puts a label on the shocking sight and he should know. He eats enough of them. What Lardy knows them to be is this: they are beans. Not ordinary beans but beans with eyes and arms, legs and mouths. They are an abomination and the people of Mucklepuddle Marsh become frenzied in their attempts to destroy these horrors, these vile intruders. Soon mattocks are beating and threshers are threshing and beans are dying, squashed into hummus.

Come dawn's first light, the villagers see where the bombs and the beans have come from. Above their homes, circling their farms, is a group of low, dirty clouds. There are twelve in the outer rings and an ominously larger one at the center. As they watch, trying to understand what this all means, keen eyes can make out details, objects traveling out from the center cloud to each of the outer islands. Once each cloudlet has received its delivery the people of the Marsh are forced to take cover. Bombs start falling again and people start dying. Earth starts flying and beans begin growing. The living



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wield their mattocks once more and what soon becomes rhythmic takes its toll.

After the second attack, lives are not lost. The villagers know better. They bide their time behind hastily constructed earthworks and rush out to the newly blasted craters to crush the life from their inhabitants as soon as the smoke clears. The people feel jubilant at their success in inflicting death upon the invaders but this rush of pride soon turns cold as they realize an end is not in sight. They face an implacable enemy with seemingly limitless resources, regarding individual lives as freely expendable coppers.

As the day draws on to its midpoint, Lardy acts decisively and calls for Fuddle and Duddle. These two grockles, as the Marsh people call immigrants, are not keen to be summoned. They have been conspicuous in their absence from the battlefield, preferring to keep their heads down in a hayrick. They cannot run and they cannot hide and so they listen to what is required of them: Lardy demands that they fly a reconnaissance mission. The farmers need to know what they face to fathom out how to conquer it at source. Insufficient data is an unacceptable state from which to conduct a counter-offensive.



Quickly calculating the consequences of refusal, Fuddle and Duddle agree, delaying only to put their affairs in order and make their wills, leaving the little they own to the stone-hearted Head of the Portree Wizards' Guild in a futile attempt to make her feel shame for the neglect and misuse they suffered those long years of service. Fuddle puts on his cleanest underpants while Duddle dons a Viking horned helm, simply because he has always wanted to look more of a hero than he has ever felt.

And all this while Jack Simpleton sits in his garden counting bomb blasts and talking to his cabbages.

Fuddle and Duddle's part in this drama does not take long to complete. They rise up into the air, a feat always a marvel to children and grown ups of the Marsh alike, nervously flying in tandem, a



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snippet of security for the skitterish pair. They circle the cloud islands from what they hope must be a safe distance and then accept that they need to zoom in closer if they are to obtain useful information. They know that to return empty-minded would inevitably see them sent up for a second time with a flea in their ears and a boot on their rumps.

They do not toss a coin – they might drop it and suffer financial loss! – because Fuddle always wins. Duddle pins his ears back since there is no flea abiding there and does what he has to, passing above the central cloud. He finds there is no roof to block his view and is able to call out what he sees to his anxious brother, his words born on the winds. Then a purple light flashes from the cloud, striking Fuddle on his furrowed brow, and the farming wizard simply disappears into oblivion.

Before Duddle can even register shock, let alone begin grieving, he discovers that he is not at a safe distance at all. There must be something on that central cloud that has been roused - unwisely, dangerously - because a second bolt of energy scorches the air itself as it flashes towards Duddle and strikes him too. He begins to fall instantly. There is hard earth beneath him, not soft cloud island. But he is falling and has not been obliterated. It seems that the ray has a range and that he was on the periphery of its potency.

Badly burned, Duddle manages to land with no worse than a broken pelvis. As friends and neighbors rush to his stricken form, he is able to gasp out what his brother, poor, obliterated Fuddle, saw before he departed for the care of the Soulkeeper. The villagers learn that a malevolent creature is in occupation, the central cloud being some sort of nefarious control room or laboratory, and that the smaller clouds all house smaller beans. There are bombs a-plenty up there.

Lardy looks on as Sophie Softpillows, generally acclaimed village planner for these last seven years, ponders what is to be done now. She scratches her sun-leathered nose as she winkles out a course of action. Then she speaks.

“Bring me Jack Simpleton! He must be able to do something to help. Something. Anything. Anything is better than nothing. We will not submit. We will not abandon our homes, our livelihoods!”

It is not a plan that inspires confidence. Lardy sighs heavily. Relying on Jack at the best of times is hazardous and in his present cabbage-condition it is irresponsible! If only he could think of something better... But, of course, he can't and so Jack is fetched and Sophie begins slapping him about the cheeks to knock some sense back into him as she demands magical action.



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Jack does not flinch under the rain of blows Sophie lands, her frustration at the incomprehension in his eyes lending a furious strength to her already well-developed muscles. Jack's face turns scarlet and his head rocks on his neck but still he stares right through her, not falling because he is held upright by two strong farmhands. True, his fists are clenched tight but, as Daisy noticed, they were knotted before the barrage of blows begun.



When Sophie at last runs out of steam and takes a step backwards, Jack reacts. He shrugs off the arms binding him with a prodigious surge of strength and then he throws his hands skywards, opening his fists as he does so. Simultaneously, a stream of sound flows from his lips, wizarding words, and Jack Simpleton casts another spell before collapsing comatose in the mud.

The villagers soon see what it is that Jack has cast, for green shoots immediately spring up from the soil the beans he held have landed in. They grow like there will be no tomorrow, which may quite possibly be true for the folk of Mucklepuddle Marsh. They do not stop growing, thickening as they rise up, until they reach the twelve smaller bean-clouds high above the village. Twelve clouds are linked to the earth by Jack's beanstalks and only the central cloud is left untethered.

What has he done, this simpleton? Has he given easy passage down to the Marsh for the waiting bean enemies? Lardy sees what he has provided his village with,

just as Sophie shouts out the orders for a counterattack.

"Get the Harvest Sickle, summon the Dirty Dozen. We are going to make those bean bastards sorry they ever set eyes on Mucklepuddle Marsh! We're going to ram it down their throats, so we are!"

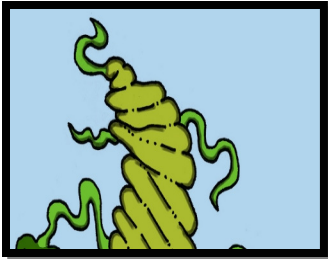


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The Dirty Dozen is the Mucklepuddle equivalent of the National Guard or Territorial Army. Young lads, fit and strong, chosen because they can throw a cow further than their fellows. And the Harvest Sickle? The village's one magical heirloom, communally owned, a blade that never dulls and cuts through corn like a scimitar through semolina. It is not harvest time and the Sickle has never been used for any other purpose in all the two hundred years since its forging. However, the fat is in the fire and the chips are down. It is a moment of crisis and needs must in such a dire emergency. The captain of the Dirty Dozen, Chuffer Wheycurds, will be allowed to carry the Sickle into battle for the first time ever.

Chuffer's task is to sever the beanstalks once the enemy has been defeated. No one wants the risk of more bean attacks with the beanstalks left for a second wave to use in the night to descend onto the sleeping residents of Mucklepuddle Marsh. If there is any bean up there that cannot be defeated with ordinary weapons then Chuffer has been given special dispensation to use the Harvest Sickle as a last resort to defend liberty and all that is decent. You see a ruddy sheen of pride on his rugged face as he hefts the Sickle.



The plan looks doomed to failure as the lads of the Dirty Dozen make their attempt to shin up the beanstalks. These rubbery tendrils wobble hideously and their sleek, smooth exterior makes it hard to gain purchase. The local likely lads are not going to reach those clouds any time soon it seems!

As worried frowns turn into harsh words of rebuke, Daisy points to you. "Let the grackle try. Can't do no worse and someone who has been dungeon delving ought to do better than those clods!"

Daisy's offering is taken up smartly by the majority of Mucklepuddlers and soon helping hands are giving you a leg up. The Dirty Dozen get new orders – "Defend against anything coming down!"

It is hardly ideal. The lads will be on the receiving attack of another artillery blitz unless you get up there quickly and turn the tables on the infiltrators. You know that the hopes of Mucklepuddle Marsh rest squarely upon your shoulders.

Time for action! **Go to 1.**



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1

Now you are standing beside it, the beanstalk seems colossal. It is! It towers above you, reaching skywards to the bean clouds lurking ominously over your head. The stalk is twice as thick as Chuffer's brawny frame and it sways as you look on. Clearly this is going to be a task that requires strength to scale the heights.

Make the best SR you can on STR and record either the level you make or how much you miss by if you fail at L1. **Go to 5** unless you roll the dreaded 1-2 critical fumble, in which case **go to 15**.

2

Best not be hasty, eh? The roots flick out to snatch the blade and then the hilt but if you can make a L1 SR on INT you will have seen this coming and can flip the ring out.

If you fail, there is no second chance as the roots envelop the ring (and they are not flammable and they regenerate too quickly for you to hack

through them all). Go to [paragraph 100](#) and select a new destination.

If you succeed, you have gained an interesting prize. Of course you slip it on to a finger! **Go to 59** find out what effect this has on you...

3

Sterling stuff! Those farmers can depend on you to keep going through thick and thin and come up smelling of roses.

Go to 95.

4

How very sensible. The roots flick out attempt to lock your eyes and limbs with a hypnotic movement pattern but if you can make a L1 SR on CHR you will be able to resist for long enough to flip the ring out.

If you fail, there is no second chance as the roots sway rhythmically and fix you in a hopeless trance (and they are not



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flammable and they regenerate too quickly for you to hack through them all). They wrap about your larynx and squeeze until your eyes pop and your heart stops and your brain dies.

If you succeed, you have gained an interesting prize. Of course you slip it on to a finger! **Go to 9** find out what effect this has on you...

5

If you made the SR, **go to 65**. If you failed but did not roll a critical fumble, **go to 75**.

6

This is where the real action is going to be – this is where the strings are being pulled as Mucklepuddle Marsh waits below in growing horror. If you are to prove to be the hero of the hour, the time has come to roll up your sleeves and dig down deep.

The bean at the helm is gigantic by bean standards, some 10' broad and 15' tall. Its malevolent eyes bore into you, the alien intelligence at boiling point as it operates a jumble of levers and knobs on a humming control desk.

Before you can move, the bean begins to speak and its words grate at the base of your skull.

"You will be assimilated; you will be the blueprint for the destruction of your kind and the rise of the Bean Empire."

Its voice is toneless, steamrolling over you, forcing you to your knees.

"I have given you the means to teach me everything I need to know to sprout beans that your kind will not be powerless to resist. Now make your best effort to vanquish me – I will siphon what I need from you as you labour in vain."

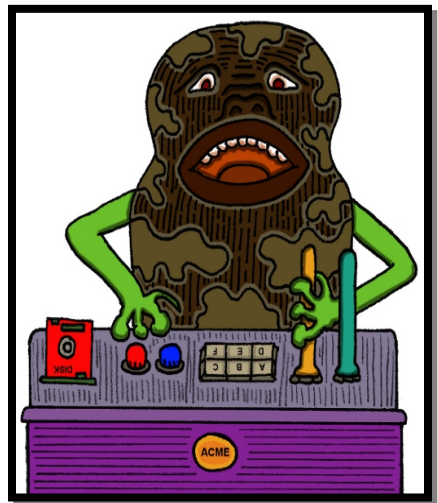
Wasting no more words on you, the Big Bean leaves the control desk and advances on you, heedless of any entreaty you might make.

If you meet the bean in combat, **go to 11**.

If you use magic, **go to 99**.

If you use a missile weapon, **go 21**.

If you attempt to evade the bean, **go to 48**.





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7

If you have not defeated the bean stationed on this cloud go to the [Bean Encounter Table](#) at the back of this solo to find out what you are up against. If you vanquish the bean you find here you should return to this paragraph. If you have defeated the bean bomber of this cloud then read on.

You see that there is a glowing, smoking bowl at the center of the cloud and when you look inside, you see a tangle of roots clutching a silver ring.

If you want to reach to take the ring, **go to 16**.

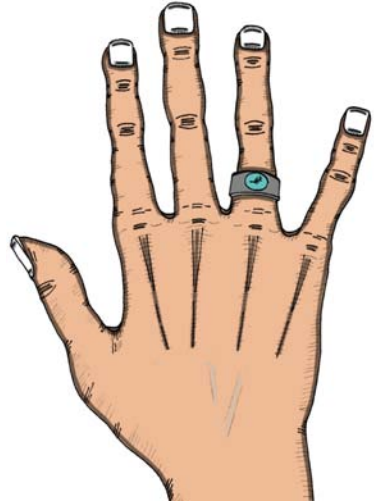
If you want to fish it out with a dagger or some other tool, **go to 26**.

If you wish to leave it alone and go seek the next bean opponent, go to [paragraph 100](#) to set your course.

8

Fists fly and nails bite. Blood flows. Yours.

You take 1d6 damage when Sophie has the bright idea to send you up the beanstalk again. You are lifted bodily to the beanstalk you climbed before and have no choice but to go up again (**go to 1**).



9

You feel a strange duality to your being. At first it is incomprehensible and then the penny drops... This ring allows the wearer to become almost weightless at will. It is a ring of Feather Falling. You need not worry about falling to the distant ground now – but you might need to factor in any strong winds.

Now you can go to [paragraph 100](#) to choose a new destination (look at the map at [paragraph 50](#) first if you like).

10

Choose the cloud island you wish to travel to (the map is at [paragraph 50](#)).

Now let's see if the conditions are favorable. Make a L1 SR on LK. If you succeed, **go to 20**.

If you fail you should roll 1d6 and follow the instructions below:



Bean Stalk



- 1 – The winds are extremely gusty – **go to 40.**
- 2 – You see a bean coming towards you on a cloud raft – **go to 51.**
- 3 – You hear the sound of wings – **go to 60.**
- 4 – You see a whirlwind homing in on you – **go to 70.**
- 5 – The skies suddenly darken and thunder cracks above your head while lightning flickers out across the skies – **go to 80.**
- 6 – As you scan the skies, you spot two beans arrowing at you on their rafts – **go to 90.**



11

The Big Bean's body is much tougher than skin. Its arms are likewise potent weapons, primed for destruction. In combat, the Big Bean can be treated as having MR140 so it gets 15d6 plus 70 and takes 70 hits.

If you are killed in the first round of battle, the ease in which you were dispatched frustrates the bean, your scant consolation for falling when truly tested.

If you killed the bean, **go to 71.**

If the fight is unresolved, **go to 81.**

12

As soon as you reach for the ring the roots wrap around your wrist. Unless you are really nimble you will be no more than a captive awaiting whatever grisly end fate has decreed.

You need a L2 SR on DEX to slip away from the roots (which are not flammable nor can they be hacked away as they regenerate so quickly) in which case you can return to **paragraph 73** with a lesson learned.

13

Your muscles spasm and you just have to let go...

The fall is from far enough up the tree to present real risk of injury or worse. Make a L1 SR on DEX and **go to 35.**



Bean Stalk



14

As soon as you reach for the ring the roots spring erect and turn to steel. Then six spikes are fired at you. Unless you can make a L2 SR on SPD you will have to take 6d6 damage with armor counting for protection.

You then need a to make a L1 SR on LK to have been knocked or jumped out of the line of fire in which case you can return to **paragraph 47** with a lesson learned. If you fail the LK SR, you are pierced by some many spikes it is pointless to total up the damage.

15

I think we both know that you are falling...

The question is, how high did you get before you had your calamitous moment? This time, make the best SR you can on LK and **go to 25**.

16

As soon as you reach for the ring the roots snake out and grab your wrist. Unless you are very strong you will be no more than a captive awaiting whatever grisly end fate has decreed.

You need a L2 SR on STR to break free in which case you can return to **paragraph 7** with a lesson learned.

17

If you have not defeated the bean stationed on this cloud go to the [Bean Encounter Table](#) at the back of this solo to find out what you are up against. If you vanquish the bean you find here you should return to this paragraph. If you have defeated the bean bomber of this cloud then read on.

You see that there is a glowing, smoking bowl at the center of the cloud and when you look inside, you see a tangle of roots clutching a jade ring.

If you want to reach to take the ring, **go to 36**.

If you want to fish it out with a dagger or some other tool, **go to 46**.

If you wish to leave it alone and go seek the next bean opponent, go to [paragraph 100](#) to set your course.



Bean Stalk



18

“Bah! (S)he’s worse than useless, worse than a cow with frozen udders! Compost – that’s all that one’s any good for!” Chorley Grizzlewort passes judgment and all around him echo their agreement.

Without delay, a hole is dug next to the cabbage patch and you are inserted. Wet earth soon lies heavily upon you.

At least you had a decent burial!

19

You feel neurones switching on and sparking with life in a strange but wondrous blaze of activity. This ring boosts the INT of the wearer by 100%. Suddenly everything is much clearer to you and your thoughts slice through the problems ahead of you like a sickle reaping cotton candy.

Now you can go to [paragraph 100](#) to choose a new destination (look at the map at [paragraph 50](#) first if you like).

20

It looks like the coast is clear and winds are being kind. Let’s see if you possess the innate power to energize a cloud raft to traverse the void between the islands in the sky. Make a L1 SR on WIZ.



If you succeed, you may proceed to your destination [paragraph](#) (find this via [paragraph 100](#)).

If you fail you must either spend 1 point of WIZ to energize the raft or give up on the attempt to defeat the bean menace and climb back down the beanstalk to confess to your failure (**go to 30**).



Bean Stalk



21

You will need to be very accurate indeed to hit the bean as it is able to shift its position by mere thought in a variation of the Wink-Wing spell.

You need to make a L5 SR on DEX.

If you miss, you are in combat (**go to 11**); if you hit, **go to 78**.

22

How very sensible. The roots seek to ensnare you but if you can make a L1 SR on DEX you will be able to evade them for long enough to flip the ring out.

If you fail, there is no second chance as the roots will not let go once they take a hold (and they are not flammable and they regenerate too quickly for you to hack through them all). They will hold you immobile until hypothermia sets in up here at a higher altitude.

If you succeed, you have gained an interesting prize. Of course you slip it on to a finger! **Go to 79** find out what effect this has on you...

23

Now you have something to hold on to, the last part of the climb is a doodle.

But what is waiting for you? **Go to 43** and we shall find out together.

24

Smart move. The roots stand up and point at you, turning instantly to steel with a deadly tip. If you can make a L1 SR on SPD you will have time to flip the ring out and duck down and be safe.

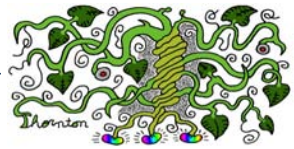
If you fail, you will have to take 6d6 damage with armor counting for protection as the spikes are fired ferociously at you.

You then need a to make a L1 SR on DEX to get out of the line of fire in which case you can return to [paragraph 100](#) to pick a new destination as there is no chance of seizing the ring now. If you fail the DEX SR, you are pierced by some many spikes it is pointless to total up the damage.

If you did succeed with the SPD SR, you have gained a valuable reward. Of course you slip it on to a finger! **Go to 19** find out what effect this has on you...



Bean Stalk



25

If you rolled another critical fumble, you fell from a very great height, spun round in mid-air and the impact as you hit the ground rammed your head so far into your body that, were you not dead, you would be able to speak out of your own ass quite literally.

If you made L3 or better, the fall is from such a low height you are fine – **go to 1** and try again.

If you made L2, the fall is from far enough up the tree to present real risk of injury or worse. Make a L1 SR on DEX and **go to 35**.

If you made L1, you got a long way up the beanstalk before disaster struck. Make a L3 SR on DEX and **go to 45**.

If you did not make L1, you plummet from an alarmingly great height. Make a L5 SR on CON and **go to 55**.

26

You might just manage this. The roots attempt to wrap themselves around the blade and then the hilt but if you can make a L1 SR on DEX you can skewer the ring and flip it out.

If you fail, there is no second chance as the roots envelop the ring (and they are not flammable and they regenerate too quickly for you to hack through them all). Go to [paragraph 100](#) and select a new destination.

If you succeed, you have gained an interesting prize. Of course you slip it on to a finger! **Go to 52** find out what effect this has on you...

27

If you have not defeated the bean stationed on this cloud go to the [Bean Encounter Table](#) at the back of this solo to find out what you are up against. If you vanquish the bean you find here you should return to this paragraph. If you have defeated the bean bomber of this cloud then read on.

You see that there is a glowing, smoking bowl at the center of the cloud and when you look inside, you see a tangle of roots clutching a brass ring.

If you want to reach to take the ring, **go to 56**.

If you want to fish it out with a dagger or some other tool, **go to 66**.

If you wish to leave it alone and go seek the next bean opponent, go to [paragraph 100](#) to set your course.



Bean Stalk



28

"Too bad you had to stop. You were on top. They didn't like the medicine you were dishing out! Pity you ran out of steam". The farmer holding you by your sagging shoulders looks despondent.

Then his wife reaches deep into the bosom of her smock and takes out a tiny phial containing a sparkling, bubbling clear liquid.

"Drink this," she tells you. "It will give you a boost. It's a tonic brewed by my great-grandmother. I was saving it for my deathbed but never mind!"

She uncorks the little glass tube and presses it to your lips. At once you feel life effervesce throughout your body. You receive a 2d6 permanent increase to WIZ.

The villagers see the spark return to your eyes and usher you back to the beanstalk, sending you aloft to rallying cheers. Up you go! **Go to 1.**



29

An electric surge of khremm courses through your veins as you put the ring on. This little marvel triples the WIZ of its wearer.

Now you can go to [paragraph 100](#) to choose a new destination (look at the map at [paragraph 50](#) first if you like).

30

The faces of the farming folk switch from eager smiles to hostile grimaces. Giving up is not what they expected. How many beans did you destroy? What is your WIZ now?

Write down these details and **go to 53.**

31

The Big Bean has MR 140. If you destroy it or neutralise it somehow, go to 91. If it is still in a position to fight, **go to 11.**



Bean Stalk



32

As soon as you reach for the ring the roots stand up tall and start swaying rhythmically. Unless you can force your eyes away from their hypnotic pattern you will be no more than a captive awaiting whatever grisly end fate has decreed.

You need a L2 SR on CHR to ward off the trance-attack in which case you can return to **paragraph 83** with a lesson learned.

33

Perhaps it is overconfidence or perhaps something snaps. At any rate, let's hope you don't do exactly that!

As Tom Petty could tell you, you are now free falling.

Make a L2 SR on LK and **go to 45**.

34

As soon as you reach for the ring the roots spring erect and turn to steel. Then six spikes are fired at you. Unless you can make a L2 SR on SPD you will have to take 6d6 damage with armor counting for protection.

You then need a to make a L1 SR on LK to have been knocked or jumped out of the line of fire in which case you can return to **paragraph 47** with a lesson learned. If you fail the LK SR, you are pierced by some many spikes it is pointless to total up the damage.

35

If you made it, you land cat-like on your feet to the relief of the men and women of Mucklepuddle. You do get a bit wet because you land in a very muddy puddle but no harm done! Go to 1 and try again.

If you failed, you land on your tailbone, not your feet, and take 1d6 damage. If you can make a L1 SR on CON after the damage then you get to try climbing again (1) – if not, you broke an ankle and are out of the game (take 100 APs for giving it a go, albeit a pretty pathetic one).

36

As soon as you reach for the ring the roots snake out and grab your wrist. Unless you are very fast you will be no more than a captive awaiting whatever grisly end fate has decreed.

You need a L2 SR on SPD to break free in which case you can return to **paragraph 17** with a lesson learned.



Bean Stalk



37

If you have not defeated the bean stationed on this cloud go to the [Bean Encounter Table](#) at the back of this solo to find out what you are up against. If you vanquish the bean you find here you should return to this paragraph. If you have defeated the bean bomber of this cloud then read on.

You see that there is a glowing, smoking bowl at the center of the cloud and when you look inside, you see a tangle of roots clutching a mithril ring.

If you want to reach to take the ring, **go to 76.**

If you want to fish it out with a dagger or some other tool, **go to 86.**

If you wish to leave it alone and go seek the next bean opponent, go to [paragraph 100](#) to set your course.

38

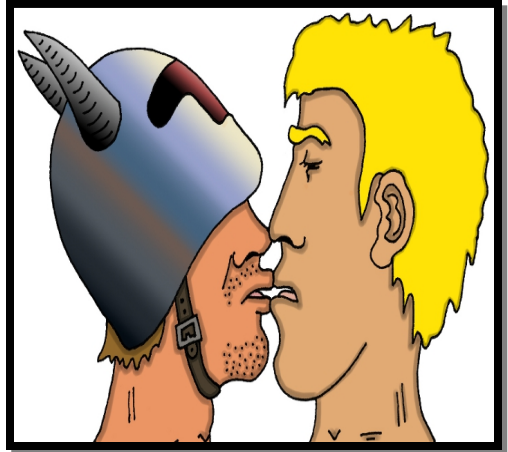
“You’re amazing! A hero, my hero!” Daisy rushes forward and kisses you passionately.

Not to be outdone, Lardy rushes forward and kisses you with equal ardor, albeit a little more sloppily.

There is silence about you. This lewd behavior in public has shocked the prurient villagers!

Old Mother Catterwail totters her way forward to restore decency.

“That’s quite enough of that sort of behavior, impending disaster or no impending disaster! Here – swallow this and get on with you.”



With surprising speed and strength she bangs a little green pill into your mouth and smacks you sharply on the back so that you swallow.

“My old Dad found that in a cowpat and gave it to me on my 13th birthday. I knew it was magic and I saved it for a rainy day. Well, there was one the very next day and I didn’t want to use up so quickly. I decided to keep it until the end of the world was nigh. This is the nearest thing to ‘nigh’ my old eyes have ever clapped upon and no mistake!”



Bean Stalk



The bitter pill adds 1d6 to every attribute.

Seeing you so chipper, the villagers escort you with hearty cheers ringing in your ears back to the beanstalk and send you up again (**go to 1**).

39

You feel a jolt of powerful magic as you put the ring on a suitable finger. This magic surges throughout your body and then discharges itself into your best weapon (it will even give you a broadsword if you have no weapon). The weapon is now three times as effective as normal (i.e. 9d6 +12 for a broadsword) and is both very light and extremely durable. It does not work on the Harvest Sickle.

Now you can go to [paragraph 100](#) to choose a new destination (look at the map at [paragraph 50](#) first if you like).

40

You are being blown away from these clouds that are threatening Mucklepuddle!

Roll 1d6: this is the amount of WIZ you must expend to get back on track. You must attempt a L1 SR on your remaining WIZ to establish whether or not this cost will be permanent or temporary: succeed and it will return just as it does for wizards but if you fail you will not recover it.

If you do not possess the required WIZ you are lost in the sky! A lonely death through hypothermia, dehydration or starvation with only the birds to witness your end...

If you get the back to the cloud mass, go to [paragraph 100](#) to find just which cloud you dock at.

41

The bizarre machine blinks and beeps, waiting for further programming. You have three choices basically.

You can try to operate it yourself (**go to 101**); you can choose not to tamper with it and descend the beanstalk (**go to 102**) or you can seek to smash it beyond repair, either using your own weapon (**go to 103**) or the Harvest Sickle (**go to 104**).

42

How very sensible. The roots flick out attempt to lock your eyes and limbs with a hypnotic movement pattern but if you can make a L1 SR on CHR you will be able to resist for long enough to flip the ring out.



Bean Stalk



If you fail, there is no second chance as the roots sway rhythmically and fix you in a hopeless trance (and they are not flammable and they regenerate too quickly for you to hack through them all). They wrap about your larynx and squeeze until your eyes pop and your heart stops and your brain dies.

If you succeed, you have gained an interesting prize. Of course you slip it on to a finger! **Go to 69** find out what effect this has on you...

43

You clamber up to the top and find the surface of this 'cloud' is quite solid. On the other side is a bean, lying on its front on the other side of the floating island. You can see he is pushing something heavy towards an object hidden from your view by his body and what he is struggling with. A bomb!

Go to the **Bean Encounter Table** to find out what you are up against (it is at the end of the text).

You have a chance to stalk this bean. You can sneak up and stop him before he can drop another bomb on the folk below. Much rests upon your shoulders.

If you defeat the bean **go to 61**.

44

Smart move. The roots stand up and point at you, turning instantly to steel with a deadly tip. If you can make a L1 SR on SPD you will have time to flip the ring out and duck down and be safe.

If you fail, you will have to take 6d6 damage with armor counting for protection as the spikes are fired ferociously at you.

You then need a to make a L1 SR on DEX to get out of the line of fire in which case you can return to [paragraph 100](#) to pick a new destination as there is no chance of seizing the ring now. If you fail the DEX SR, you are pierced by some many spikes it is pointless to total up the damage.

If you did succeed with the SPD SR, you have gained a valuable reward. Of course you slip it on to a finger! **Go to 39** find out what effect this has on you...

45

If you make the roll, you manage to catch the elephantine ears of Hilary Glint, the village gossip. Swinging deftly through 360 degrees on Hilary's powerful ear flaps, you land safely to a rousing round of applause and can set about climbing up again (**go to 1**).



Bean Stalk



If you failed, you must take 2d6 damage from a nasty fall. If you can make a L1 SR on CON after the damage then you get to try climbing again (**go to 1**) – if not, you broke an ankle and are out of the game (take 100 APs for giving it a go, albeit a pretty pathetic one).

46

This looks promising but is no give me. The roots attempt to envelop the blade and then the hilt but if you can make a L1 SR on SPD you can skewer the ring and flip it out before they trap you.

If you fail, there is no second chance as the roots engulf the ring (and they are not flammable and they regenerate too quickly for you to hack through them all). Go to [paragraph 100](#) and select a new destination.

If you succeed, you have gained an interesting prize. Of course you slip it on to a finger! **Go to 62** find out what effect this has on you...

47

If you have not defeated the bean stationed on this cloud go to the [Bean Encounter Table](#) at the back of this solo to find out what you are up against. If you vanquish the bean you find here you should return to this paragraph. If you have defeated the bean bomber of this cloud then read on.

You see that there is a glowing, smoking bowl at the center of the cloud and when you look inside, you see a tangle of roots clutching a silver ring.

If you want to reach to take the ring, **go to 96**.

If you want to fish it out with a dagger or some other tool, **go to 4**.

If you wish to leave it alone and go seek the next bean opponent, go to [paragraph 100](#) to set your course.

48

You can't afford to hesitate to elude the bean's grasp. It moves in a way that suggests it is not governed by the laws of classical physics. Make a L4 SR on SPD.

If you fail, you are in combat (**go to 11**); if you succeed, you may make a run for the control desk (**go to 89**).

49

You feel supple and in supreme control of your body. This magic ring doubles your DEX.



Bean Stalk



Now you can go to [paragraph 100](#) to choose a new destination (look at the map at [paragraph 50](#) first if you like).

50 (Cloud Map)

From your perch in the sky you can get the lay of clouds. What you see is this:



Now you have seen what's up here, **go to 10**. Remember this reference – you can come back to check when you need to.

51

Consult the [Bean Encounter Table](#) to see which type of bean is coming to take you out. You cannot surprise this bean. If you survive the fight in the sky over Mucklepuddle you may go on to your destination (see [paragraph 100](#) for directions).

52

Immediately, you feel pumped up – bursting with vim and vigor, ready to rumble. The ring doubles the STR of the wearer.

Now you can go to [paragraph 100](#) to choose a new destination (look at the map at [paragraph 50](#) first if you like).



Bean Stalk



53

If your WIZ is higher than 1, **go to 63**. If it is 1, **go to 72**. If it is zero then wake up! You are dead!

54

As you reach for the ring the roots they secrete a viscous fluid. Unless you are quick to spot this change and fast, you will be no more than a captive, glued to the roots, while the corrosive goop slowly dissolves every last ounce of your flesh.

You need a L2 SR on INT and a L1 SR on SPD to avoid this dire end, in which case you can return to **paragraph 77** with a lesson learned.

55

If you made the SR, you land spread-eagled in a gooey cowpat and suffer no more than embarrassment (but you do need to clean up). You can shrug off the titters and the doubts (mainly from Thomas C'ingisb'lieving, the village sentry) and have another crack at shinning up the beanstalk (**go to 1**).

If you failed, you must take the difference in damage. You may well be dead. If not, if you can make a L1 SR on CON after the damage then you get to try climbing again (**go to 1**) – if you fail, you broke your skull and are out of the game (take 100 APs for giving it a go, albeit a pretty pathetic one).

56

As soon as you reach for the ring the roots snake out and grab your wrist. Unless you are very strong you will be no more than a captive awaiting whatever grisly end fate has decreed.

You need a L2 SR on STR to break free in which case you can return to **paragraph 7** with a lesson learned.

57

If you have not defeated the bean stationed on this cloud go to the [Bean Encounter Table](#) at the back of this solo to find out what you are up against. If you vanquish the bean you find here you should return to this paragraph. If you have defeated the bean bomber of this cloud then read on.

You see that there is a glowing, smoking bowl at the center of the cloud and when you look inside, you see a tangle of roots clutching a wooden ring.



Bean Stalk



If you want to reach to take the ring, **go to 14.**

If you want to fish it out with a dagger or some other tool, **go to 24.**

If you wish to leave it alone and go seek the next bean opponent, go to [paragraph 100](#) to set your course.

58

To redirect the bloodcurdling assault of the Beans Talk, you must make a L4 SR on CHR.

Fail and you liquefy under the evil word storm; succeed and it is the Big Bean that is reduced to curd – **go to 88.**

59

You feel sharp! Not much will take you by surprise now. This magic ring doubles your SPD.

Now you can go to [paragraph 100](#) to choose a new destination (look at the map at [paragraph 50](#) first if you like).

60

You have attracted the attention of an aerial predator. Roll 1d6 to find out what is intending to peck and claw the living daylights out of you:

- 1 – A were-sparrow: MR: 10, regenerates instantly if not reduced to -5 or lower by any damaging strike
- 2 – A hawk: MR: 15
- 3 – An eagle: MR: 25
- 4 – A harpy: MR: 35 (claws carry disease so if you receive a wound you need to make a L1 SR on CON or you are infected and die)
- 5 – A gryphon: MR: 60 (you can get in a free strike if you make a L2 SR on DEX)
- 6 – A roc: MRL 200 (you can distract this gargantuan creature with L1 SRs on both INT and LK).



If you beat off the attack then carry on to your destination using [paragraph 100](#) for directions. You receive APs equal to the MR of the creature you survive.



Bean Stalk



61

Look at the cloud map at [paragraph 50](#). We must determine which cloud you have reached. You can either roll 1d12 or (if you don't have one) roll 1d6 twice:

1-3 means the second roll indicates a cloud in the range 1-6
4-6 means the second roll indicates a cloud in the range 7-12

You should now go to [paragraph 100](#) to find the paragraph reference for the cloud you have ascended to.

62

A curious feeling of being untouchable washes through you as you settle the ring on to a finger. This ring doubles the LK of the wearer.

Now you can go to [paragraph 100](#) to choose a new destination (look at the map at [paragraph 50](#) first if you like).

63

The villagers soon work out from your description of events that you quit before you had to. Their fate was in your hands and you threw it away. Anger boils over and hands seize you.

You are given a choice: either go back up and do the job properly this (go to 1) or take a beating (**go to 8**).

64

You weren't born yesterday, were you. The roots secrete an acidic pus but the metal of your blade is not harmed by it. Getting the ring out of this mucus is not easy now – you need to make a L1 SR on DEX so that you can flip it out.





Bean Stalk



If you fail, **return to 77**.

If you succeed, you have gained an interesting prize. Of course you slip it on to a finger! **Go to 29** find out what effect this has on you...

65

If you made L1 **go to 85**.

If you made L2 or better **go to 95**.

66

A much the better option. The roots attempt to wrap themselves around the blade and then the hilt but if you can make a L1 SR on DEX you can skewer the ring and flip it out.

If you fail, there is no second chance as the roots envelop the ring (and they are not flammable and they regenerate too quickly for you to hack through them all). Go to [paragraph 100](#) and select a new destination.

If you succeed, you have gained an interesting prize. Of course you slip it on to a finger! **Go to 82** find out what effect this has on you...

67

If you have not defeated the bean stationed on this cloud go to the [Bean Encounter Table](#) at the back of this solo to find out what you are up against. If you vanquish the bean you find here you should return to this paragraph. If you have defeated the bean bomber of this cloud then read on.

You see that there is a glowing, smoking bowl at the center of the cloud and when you look inside, you see a tangle of roots clutching an ivory ring.

If you want to reach to take the ring, **go to 34**.

If you want to fish it out with a dagger or some other tool, **go to 44**.

If you wish to leave it alone and go seek the next bean opponent, go to [paragraph 100](#) to set your course.

68

The vile diatribe spewed at you by the Big Bean could spell out your obituary. This die is cast – death or glory!

You will only survive the withering effects of Beans Talk if you can make a L4 SR on INT. Good luck!

If you make it, **go to 88**.



Bean Stalk



69

You feel confident and ready to take control of this situation or any situation. This magic ring doubles your CHR.

Now you can go to [paragraph 100](#) to choose a new destination (look at the map at [paragraph 50](#) first if you like).

70

You don't want to get caught up in that! Roll 1d6: this indicates how many points of WIZ you need to expend (permanently) to power your cloud to safety. You may take 50 APs for each point you burn then go on to your destination with directions from [paragraph 100](#).

71

The control desk is still operational – clearly you must put an end to whatever mischief it can wreak on the people below.

It would seem to be at your mercy but is it?

Make a L4 SR on WIZ and **go to 88**.

72

If you took out no beans, **go 18**.

If you took out between 1 and 6 beans, **go to 28**.

If you took out more than 6 beans, **go to 38**.

73

If you have not defeated the bean stationed on this cloud go to the [Bean Encounter Table](#) at the back of this solo to find out what you are up against. If you vanquish the bean you find here you should return to this paragraph. If you have defeated the bean bomber of this cloud then read on.

You see that there is a glowing, smoking bowl at the center of the cloud and when you look inside, you see a tangle of roots clutching a gold ring.

If you want to reach to take the ring, **go to 12**.

If you want to fish it out with a dagger or some other tool, **go to 22**.

If you wish to leave it alone and go seek the next bean opponent, go to [paragraph 100](#) to set your course.

74

As soon as you reach for the ring the roots wrap around your wrist. Unless you are really strong you will be no more than a captive awaiting whatever grisly end fate has decreed.



Bean Stalk



You need a L2 SR on STR to break free of the roots (which are not flammable nor can they be hacked away as they regenerate so quickly) in which case you can return to **paragraph 87** with a lesson learned.

75

If you failed the SR then you lost your grip and fall...

Whatever you missed the roll by equates to 1d6 damage x 1d6. Hope it wasn't a big drop or you may well be just so much splat on the ground. If you lived through the fall, you can try a L1 SR on CON after any damage. If you succeed then you get to try climbing again (**go to 1**) – if not, you broke a femur and are out of the game (take 100 APs for giving it a go, albeit a pretty pathetic one).

76

As soon as you reach for the ring the roots leap for your wrist. Unless you were really paying attention you will be no more than a captive awaiting whatever grisly end fate has decreed.

You need a L2 SR on INT to have anticipated that attack in which case you can return to **paragraph 17** with a lesson learned.

77

If you have not defeated the bean stationed on this cloud go to the [Bean Encounter Table](#) at the back of this solo to find out what you are up against. If you vanquish the bean you find here you should return to this paragraph. If you have defeated the bean bomber of this cloud then read on.

You see that there is a glowing, smoking bowl at the center of the cloud and when you look inside, you see a tangle of roots clutching an ebony ring.

If you want to reach to take the ring, **go to 54**.

If you want to fish it out with a dagger or some other tool, **go to 64**.

If you wish to leave it alone and go seek the next bean opponent, go to [paragraph 100](#) to set your course.

78

The Big Bean has MR 140. If you destroy it or neutralise it somehow, go to 91. If it is still in a position to fight, **go to 11**.



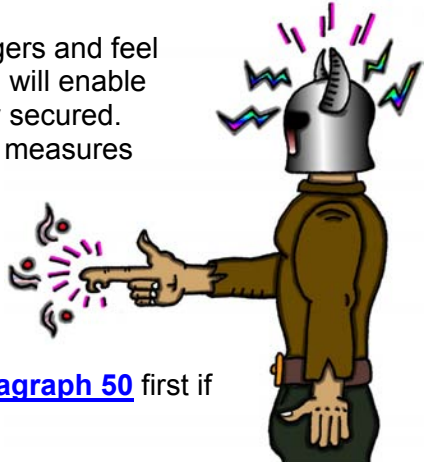
Bean Stalk



79

You hear a 'click' from your fingers and feel a fizz in your brain. This magic ring will enable you to open locks even if magically secured. You will be able to bypass security measures taken by sorcerers up to twice your own level and no mechanical lock will keep you out.

Now you can go to [paragraph 100](#) to choose a new destination (look at the map at [paragraph 50](#) first if you like).



80

Things look very dark for you – although the lightening crackling about you is currently making your eyeballs ache from its ominous display.

You need to be lucky or very sprightly to avoid being fried. Either a L2 SR on LK or L2 SRs on both DEX and SPD are called for.

If you survive you may take 100 APs and go on to your destination with directions from [paragraph 100](#).

81

With the contest in the balance, the Big Bean backs off and abandons physical conflict. Now you must face Beans Talk.

You may have stood your ground against the little beans but can you withstand a whole dictionary of Beans Talk? **Go to 89.**

82

You instantly feel rejuvenated – and then some! This ring doubles the CON of the wearer.

Now you can go to [paragraph 100](#) to choose a new destination (look at the map at [paragraph 50](#) first if you like).

83

If you have not defeated the bean stationed on this cloud go to the [Bean Encounter Table](#) at the back of this solo to find out what you are up against. If you vanquish the bean you find here you should return to this paragraph. If you have defeated the bean bomber of this cloud then read on.



Bean Stalk



You see that there is a glowing, smoking bowl at the center of the cloud and when you look inside, you see a tangle of roots clutching a platinum ring.

If you want to reach to take the ring, **go to 32**.

If you want to fish it out with a dagger or some other tool, **go to 42**.

If you wish to leave it alone and go seek the next bean opponent, go to [paragraph 100](#) to set your course.

84

Good thinking. The roots flick out to snatch the blade and then the hilt but if you can make a L1 SR on DEX you will have seen this coming and can flip the ring out.

If you fail, there is no second chance as the roots envelop the ring (and they are not flammable and they regenerate too quickly for you to hack through them all). Go to [paragraph 100](#) and select a new destination.

If you succeed, you have gained an interesting prize. Of course you slip it on to a finger! **Go to 49** find out what effect this has on you...

85

You get half way up when your arms begin to tire. The good news is that the climbing is easier this far up the beanstalk because offshoots grow from the main trunk at this elevation.

Make a L1 SR on CON.

If you make it **go to 3**.

If you fail **go to 13**.

86

A wise choice. The roots flick out to snatch the blade and then the hilt but if you can make a L1 SR on INT you will have seen this coming and can flip the ring out.

If you fail, there is no second chance as the roots envelop the ring (and they are not flammable and they regenerate too quickly for you to hack through them all). Go to [paragraph 100](#) and select a new destination.

If you succeed, you have gained an interesting prize. Of course you slip it on to a finger! **Go to 92** find out what effect this has on you...



Bean Stalk



87

If you have not defeated the bean stationed on this cloud go to the [Bean Encounter Table](#) at the back of this solo to find out what you are up against. If you vanquish the bean you find here you should return to this paragraph. If you have defeated the bean bomber of this cloud then read on.

You see that there is a glowing, smoking bowl at the center of the cloud and when you look inside, you see a tangle of roots clutching a ruby ring.

If you want to reach to take the ring, **go to 74**.

If you want to fish it out with a dagger or some other tool, **go to 84**.

If you wish to leave it alone and go seek the next bean opponent, go to [paragraph 100](#) to set your course.

88

The Big Bean is attempting to re-germinate! If you made a L4 SR on WIZ you will have prevented its innate magic from firing (**go to 41**).

If you failed, you once again face the Big Bean and this time its MR has grown by 2d6 (DARO) %. **Go to 11**.

(The good news is that it can only rise up again once.)

89

The Big Bean snorts, either in rage or in derision, it is hard to tell. But no matter, you have more on your mind than amateur psychotherapy. As you approach the desk it utters a stream of invective that could warp even the scales of a great dragon.

You must decide how you try to resist the mental violence being done to you up here on Cloud Base.

If you wish to steel your mind, **go to 68**.

If you wish to get involved in a spiritual struggle along classic Good v Evil lines, **go to 58**.

If you can do no better than trust to good fortune, **go to 98**.

90

Consult the [Bean Encounter Table](#) to see which type of beans is coming to take you out (roll twice). You cannot surprise these bean. If you survive the fight in the sky over Mucklepuddle you may go on to your destination (see [paragraph 100](#) for directions).



Bean Stalk



91

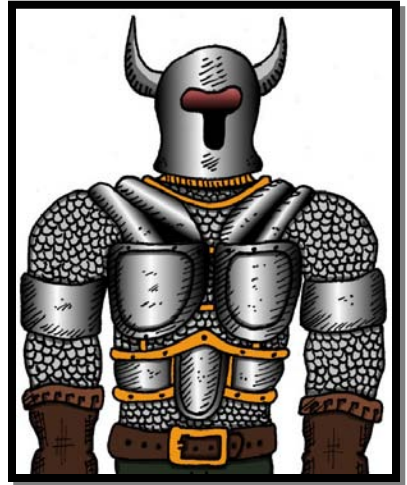
You can see from the control panel display that you have mastered the technique of making and controlling clouds! What a phenomenal opportunity you now hold in your hands!

The cloud you are on is very durable, not at all easy to destroy. Your adventures may just be starting! Well done! You have succeeded in your mission and can now climb down the beanstalk at a leisurely pace to the acclaim of the anxiously watching villagers. **Go to 105.**

92

You look like a tank! This ring doubles all armor of the wearer. What's more it replaces anything you have with a suit of mithril scale (very light!) which takes a base 12 hits.

Now you can go to [paragraph 100](#) to choose a new destination (look at the map at [paragraph 50](#) first if you like).



93

As you approach Cloud Base Control you get an uneasy feeling. There is great power here and it would be unwise to penetrate the thick wall of marshmallow vapor without feeling very powerful yourself.

You may change tack and make for other clouds not yet visited if you wish (go to [paragraph 100](#) to set your course). If you feel ready for the boss fight, **go to 6.**

94

As soon as you reach for the ring the roots leap for your wrist. Unless you were really paying attention you will be no more than a captive awaiting whatever grisly end fate has decreed.

You need a L2 SR on INT to have anticipated that attack in which case you can return to **paragraph 97** with a lesson learned.

95

You get up beyond the halfway point and are still going strong. The ground is far below you but the clouds are still way out of reach. Still, the climbing gets easier here because there are branches growing out from the main stem at this lofty vantage point.



Bean Stalk



Try a SR on DEX to use these to your advantage.

If you make it **go to 23**.

If you fail **go to 33**.

96

As soon as you reach for the ring the roots stand up tall and start swaying rhythmically. Unless you can force your eyes away from their hypnotic pattern you will be no more than a captive awaiting whatever grisly end fate has decreed.

You need a L2 SR on CHR to ward off the trance-attack in which case you can return to **paragraph 47** with a lesson learned.

97

If you have not defeated the bean stationed on this cloud go to the [Bean Encounter Table](#) at the back of this solo to find out what you are up against. If you vanquish the bean you find here you should return to this paragraph. If you have defeated the bean bomber of this cloud then read on.

You see that there is a glowing, smoking bowl at the center of the cloud and when you look inside, you see a tangle of roots clutching a sapphire ring.

If you want to reach to take the ring, **go to 94**.

If you want to fish it out with a dagger or some other tool, **go to 2**.

If you wish to leave it alone and go seek the next bean opponent, go to [paragraph 100](#) to set your course.

98

We all know what the Trollgod says – better to be lucky than good!

To over-the-top flabby-mouthed hatred that comes your way you need to make a L4 SR on LK.

Fail and the Beans Talk is all you get as an epitaph; succeed and it is the Big Bean that is eating its own words, getting a bad taste of indigestion and drowning in its own vomit – **go to 88**.

99

The big Bean is highly resistant to magic. Its WIZ is 50 and yours has to be greater to stand a chance of affecting it with a spell or to cast a spell on yourself or an item in its vicinity.

If you fail to cast you are in combat – **go to 11**.

If you succeeded in casting, make the best SR on WIZ you can and go to 31.



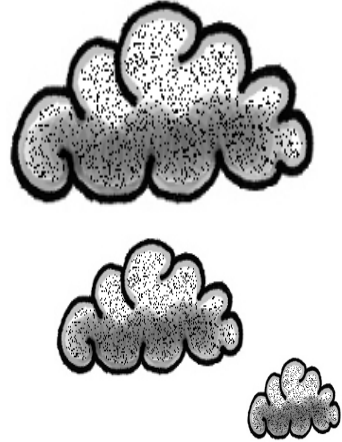
Bean Stalk



100

You can find the paragraph you need to go to for particular clouds here:

Cloud 1 – **go to 7**
Cloud 2 – **go to 17**
Cloud 3 – **go to 27**
Cloud 4 – **go to 37**
Cloud 5 – **go to 47**
Cloud 6 – **go to 57**
Cloud 7 – **go to 67**
Cloud 8 – **go to 77**
Cloud 9 – **go to 87**
Cloud 10 – **go to 97**
Cloud 11 – **go to 73**
Cloud 12 – **go to 83**
The Big Cloud In The Center – **go to 93**



101

You can certainly try but what might you do?

Try a L6 SR on INT and a L3 SR on LK – make those and you perform a miracle – **go to 91**. Fail and the machine detects unauthorised usage and acts as pre-programmed: an electrical discharge of sufficient voltage to fry an army fries you to a crisp. Too bad!

102

As you turn your back, you hear a mechanical voice intoning, “The self-destruct sequence has begun...10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5,,,,”.

Your only hope is to run like the wind! If you are going to manage to avoid the holocaust that this part of the sky will suffer then you need to make a L4 SR on SPD and a L3 SR on DEX. If you achieve that exceptional feat **go to 105**.

103

The instant your weapon touches the machinery, a protective force field of violet energy flashes over its surfaces. Protective for the machine maybe but not for you!

An electrical discharge of sufficient voltage to fry an army fries you to a crisp. Too bad!



Bean Stalk





Bean Stalk



104

As you swing the Sickle down at the machinery you realise this is the moment of truth...

The Harvest Sickle does not let you or the village of Mucklepuddle down, slicing through the bean machinery and wrecking it beyond recognition let alone repair.

Well done! You have succeeded in your mission and can now climb down the beanstalk at a leisurely pace to the acclaim of the anxiously watching villagers. **Go to 105.**

105

When you get back onto terra firma you draw a hearty breath of relief. For a moment there is a profound silence and then Jack Simpleton tells you to use the Harvest Sickle to sever the beanstalk. If you have managed to master the cloud base by working out the control desk you will then be able to convince the villagers that a path of prosperity lies ahead with this unlikely asset in your hands. If not, best heed that instruction and consign the terror of the beans and their beans talk to the garbage bin of history.

Gratitude for your heroic achievement is deep and sincere. There will always be a bed for you in the Marsh and a beer on the counter of the Patted Calf. Lardy gives you the key to his cellar door and Daisy the key to her heart and more. You will never go hungry for want of turnips.

If you do rule the airways with the cloud base of the beans, the world awaits you and glory beckons. Mucklepuddle may well be destined for a period of prosperity and the Patted Calf may give way to hotels, banks and fancy restaurants.

If the cloud base was destroyed, the village at least can face future fearlessly, with no dark shadow casting its gloom over it. Beans will probably become the local specialty dish as people feast on the memories of this wondrous triumph and the local youth become bean counters.





Bean Stalk



You get 1,500 APs for completing the rescue mission (with an additional 500 if you mastered Cloud Base). You also have a talent for Bean Stalking, something that can be applied to anything stalkable. You can base it on INT or DEX and the plus can equal every type of bean you defeated x 2.

You may also have learnt Beans Talk. You need a L2 SR on INT for this and can try for each type of bean you faced. If you succeed, you can do as each type of bean could.

I hope you have enjoyed the tale of Mucklepuddle Marsh and participating in its life or death struggle. Perhaps we shall meet again one fine day when the dice are rolling...

Options for Living in Mucklepuddle Marsh after the Adventure

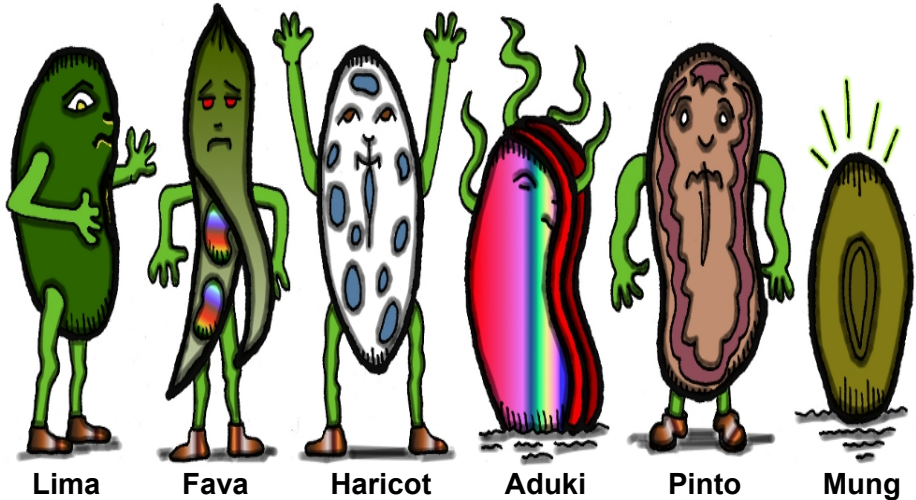
1. Settle down and marry Daisy, allowing Lardy to sit back and drink himself into oblivion (L2 SR on CHR)
2. Buy a small holding and become a tuber grower (100 GPs purchase price and L1 SR on INT to learn the techniques of good tuber growing)
3. Have Jack Simpleton adopt you and train you up for Wizard School in Portree (L1 SR on CHR and then L1 SRs on INT and DEX provided that these attributes are high enough to cast magic)
4. Become apprentice to Sophie Softpillows and help her develop Mucklepuddle into a centre of commerce and tourism (L2 SR on CHR and then on INT and LK to make the grand scheme bulletproof)
5. Join Chuffer Wheycurds as the village plough team (L2 SR on STR to pull the plough through the sticky clay and L2 CON to maintain the health and stamina to keep up with Chuffer)
6. Become back-up to Thomas C'ingisb'lieving as village sentry (L2 SRs on INT and CON to be vigilant enough for long enough, night after night, not to be eaten by wolves, gnawed at by wandering wildebeasts or licked by poisonous toads)
7. Help Chorley Grizzlewort extend his cabbage patch to encircle the village and then establish a workshop making cabbage patch dolls for the tourist trade (L2 SR on DEX to master the fine art of doll making)
8. Join Old Mother Catterwail in running the village school, catering for yokel children from 2 to 16 (L2 SRs on STR and INT to be able to physically restrain the unruly whelps and to spot the many cunning traps they set for their teachers)



Bean Stalk



Bean Encounter Table



Encounter Dice Roll	Type of Bean	PC Method of Defence (<i>Beans' Talk</i>)	Bean Vulnerability (<i>Bean Stalk</i>)	Bean MR	Bean AP Value
1	<i>Lima</i>	WIZ	INT	10	50
2	<i>Fava</i>	INT	LK	16	60
3	<i>Haricot</i>	CON	DEX	20	70
4	<i>Aduki</i>	CHR	SPD	24	90
5	<i>Pinto</i>	WIZ or INT	SPD or DEX	30	120
6	<i>Mung</i>	CON or CHR	INT or LK	40	150

Roll 1d6 to find out which sort of bean you encounter. All the beans in the table above attack by *Beans' Talk*. This vicious, slanderous aural assault can be defended against by making a L1 SR on the attribute given for that bean. In the event of a successful defense, you may engage the bean in normal combat. If you fail the SR, you will not be able to defend yourself and will have to take the bean's full attack in damage less **half** any armor protection. However, on each subsequent round you may try the SR again if you survive the bean's previous attack.

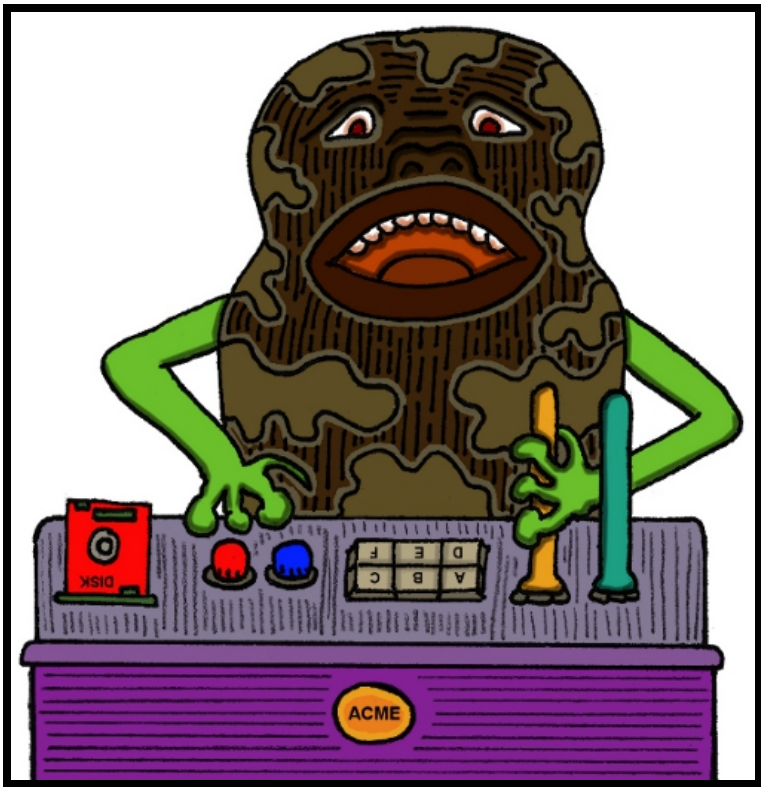


Bean Stalk



You will **probably** get the chance for a surprise attack yourself (*Bean Stalk*). Unless the text indicates that this is not possible, you need to throw 7 or better (DARO) on 2d6. The table gives the method you will need to adopt to gain surprise (a L1 SR is what is required). If you succeed, you get an undefended full attack against the bean. If not, you must face *Beans' Talk*. Beans have no armor protection unless the text says otherwise.

You should also make a L1 SR on LK at the end of each fight. If you fail, the combat has taken you to the very edge of the cloud. You need to make a L1 SR on DEX if you are teetering on the brink – the killing stroke might well see you plunge off balance to the distant land far below. A fall from here will be fatal unless you can take 6d6 damage and make a L1 SR on your remaining CON. Such a fall will see you either having to quit the field or start again at paragraph 1 (but it will give 200 APs if you survive!).





Bean Stalk



Option to Play the Horn-Helmeted Hero of Stan's Imagination

Level: One

Kindred: Human

Type: Warrior

Stats:

STR – 14

WIZ – 11

INT – 11

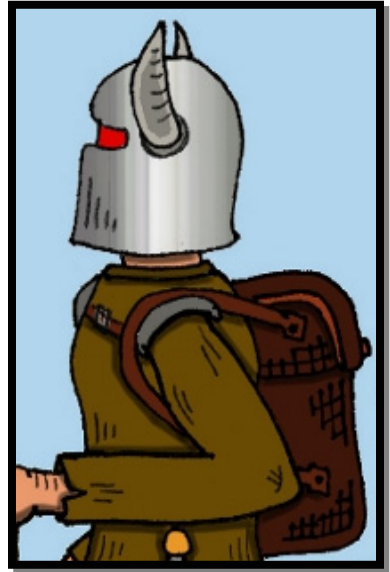
LK – 15

CON – 12

DEX – 15

CHR – 12

SPD – 13 (adds + 9)



Armour:

Horned helm (takes 6 hits for a warrior), leather vest and pants (takes 4 hits for a warrior)

Weapons:

Broadword (gets 4d4 +4 for warrior), 2 poniards (get 3d6 each for warrior)

Talent:

Bullrush (+5 on STR) – does damage equal to 1d6 x level of SR made but doubles when horned helm is worn (opponent needs to at least equal the DEX SR the charger makes to dodge charge)

Notes:

Let me tell you a story about a village in the middle of nowhere. It's ordinary, simple life is one day turned upside down by an unexpected attack...

That's where you come in. You need to turn the tables on the attackers. Even though you are no Jack and there is no giant, you must climb a beanstalk and take on the unknown foe high above the farming folk of Mucklepuddle Marsh - and hope not to come crashing back down to them at breakneck speed!

