

Below the Beanstalk

EXT. MULLRIK MOUNTAIN CLIFF - DAY

A harsh wind blows against the monstrous rock towering over the clouds. A tribe of armored GIANTS somberly stand amongst each other staring at something just off of the cliff.

A BEANSTALK violently whips back and forth as something unseen crawls down it, below the clouds.

CORMELIAN, 40s, commoner's clothes, pimpled sharp cheek bones and a large cleft chin. Her sunken oval eyes hold on to a pending fear as she stares at the swaying beanstalk.

CRACK. The beanstalk does a final sway and rockets toward the ground, disappearing into the bed of clouds.

JERALDO, 60s, permanent scowl, grotesque teeth, moles on his crooked nose, clenches his helmet in a quiet anger.

JERALDO

Seize her.

Jeraldo's soldiers grab Cormelian. She doesn't fight. Her tearful eyes are stuck on the cliff as she's dragged away.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY

Thousands of giants jeer at Cormelian, who stands on the execution stage with a noose around her neck. Jeraldo and a band of soldiers stand beside her.

GIANTS

Fee-Fi-Fo-Fum! Fee-Fi-Fo-Fum!

JERALDO

(addressing the crowd)

When she was just a girl, Blunderbore found her in the darkest dungeons of Rislings. She was jailed for thievery. A pick pocket. But Blunderbore domesticated this sneak thief.

GIANTS

Sneak thief! Sneak thief!

JERALDO

And look how she repaid him. This woman allowed an Englishmen into their home, whom stole from them, aided it on its escape down the monstrous evergreen, which led to Blunderbore's demise.

Debris is thrown at Cormelian. Jeraldo grimaces at her.

JERALDO (CONT'D)
She will hang until death.

The crowd cheers.

JERALDO (CONT'D)
Your last words, sneak thief?

Cormelian looks over the angered mob.

CORMELEIAN
My actions killed my husband.
(beat)
But those were my actions, and mine
alone. I spoke with this Englishman.
Jack, was his name.

Angry murmurs all around.

CORMELIAN
And he had no malicious intent.
Jack was hungry. He had family.
Children, just like you all. The
Englishmen are no different. Don't
allow my husband's death to be a
false martyr for this pointless war!

Cormelian's words fall on deaf ears, for the mob gets louder.

GIANTS
Fee-Fi-Fo-Fum! Fee-Fi-Fo-Fum!

CORMELIAN
I beg you, do not wage war on the
Englishmen! The enchanted beans
they used are of no more!

Jeraldo stares at Cormelian with interested eyes. He steps
closer to talk, as the crowd is still wild with blood lust.

JERALDO
Enchanted beans?

CORMELIAN
The large beanstalk that fell.

JERALDO
So the Englishmen have an endless
supply of means to invade our land?
How are you sure they're depleted?

CORMELIAN
Jack told me he used them all.

JERALDO

And you hold the word of an
Englishmen?

Jeraldo contemplates over something. He whips out a dagger
and cuts Cormelian down. She falls to her knees.

The crowd riots. Jeraldo's soldiers go and calm them down.
Jeraldo bends down and grits through his teeth.

JERALDO (CONT'D)

You have better remembered that
Englishmen's face. My men will escort
you onto their land, and you will
return with any information you have
of these beans, and Jack's head. Or
we will descend on them and eradicate
their kind. Do you understand?

Cormelian coughs and nods as she rubs her neck.

INT. LABORATORY - DAY

Cormelian is buckled to a table. FAHVOL, 40s, a brute knight,
and four other soldiers willingly strap themselves down. A
HUNCHBACK SCIENTIST approaches Cormelian with a syringe.

CORMELIAN

Is that it? What you all use to
infiltrate their lands? Cause chaos
amongst them? Turn men against men?

HUNCHBACK SCIENTIST

... This will hurt, sneak thief.

The hunchback scientist injects the syringe into Cormelian's
arm. Cormelian SCREAMS as heat rises out of her body.

INT. BECKONING'S CAVE - NIGHT

Dark and wet. Cormelian jerks up, but she's still restrained
to a table on the cave's floor. Cormelian's features are
human now, and she's the size of a giant's forearm.

She gapes at Jeraldo, still in giant form, walking away.

Fahvol, in commoner's clothes, unbuckles Cormelian's
restraints. He, and the other soldiers are human as well.

CORMELIAN

Please. Don't do this. You've walked
amongst the Englishmen before. Tell
Jeraldo they're innocent people.

FAHVOL

Sorry to disappoint you, love, but
this is our first time around. We've
sent plenty of my boys down the hole,
but they've never come back up.

A soldier hands him a tiny bag of white pills. Fahvol grins.

FAHVOL (CONT'D)

But not this time.
(holds up bag)
Grounded bones of an Englishmen.
From my great-grandfather's time,
when they ain't take no shit from no
Englishmen. One bite and we convert
back to our natural selves. Instantly.

Speechless, Cormelian stares at Fahvol as he tucks the bag
into his breast pocket and walks over to a pit.

Cormelian slides off the cot and joins him as they look down.

A deathly drop leads into a raging river.

CORMELIAN

Are we expected to jump?

Fahvol keeps his eyes on the rapid waters.

CORMELIAN`

If you've been wondering where your
people have disappeared to, I think
I've found the answer!

FAHVOL

(to soldiers)
Ready boys!

The solders jump in for the exception of Fahvol and Cormelian.

CORMELIAN

This is madness! Do you hear me?!

FAHVOL

But yet we still descend.

Fahvol grabs Cormelian and falls in. They plummet together.

INT. CAVE'S RAPID WATERS - CONTINUOUS

SPLASH. Cormelian hits the water. She whips around in every
direction. There's no sense of up or down.

Cormelian sucks into an underwater hole. She rushes through,
on her last breath, but she's pitched out of an opening.

EXT. OCEAN SIDE COVE - NIGHT

Cormelian washes up on shore. The rest of the soldiers gain their footing. Cormelian hacks out water and sand. Fahvol aids her up, but she falls into him, gasping for air.

FAHVOL

Mind your footing, woman.

Fahvol straightens Cormelian up, and then removes a compass from his breast pocket as he starts walking.

FAHVOL (CONT'D)

We'll start at drinking holes, food and rests, brothels. I'm sure a man with a goose lying golden eggs ain't one to keep his mouth shut. After we find the Englishmen, we find the beans. If anyone gets in our way....

Fahvol nods to his men. They understand.

FAHVOL (CONT'D)

Everyone will see the sun tomorrow.

Fahvol tucks his compass back in his breast pocket but stops. Pats it. He turns around in shock.

Cormelian tosses the tiny bag of pills into the ocean.

FAHVOL (CONT'D)

What have you done?!

CORMELIAN

I had to get rid of the temptation.
We won't need them, I promise you.

Fahvol tackles her into the sand and pulls out his dagger.

FAHVOL

You've put my men at risk, all for
your love of these barbarian critters?

CORMELIAN

They're harmless!

FAHVOL

I should cut your throat right here!

SOLDIER (O.S.)

Sir!

Fahvol turns. The soldiers look up at a weathered billboard of Jack standing over a dead giant. It reads 'Jack Spriggins Presents: Jack the Giant Killer ' at Spriggins theater.'

CORMELIAN

I - I don't understand. It was only yesterday. How could this be?

Fahvol gets up and dusts his clothes. He sheaths his dagger.

FAHVOL

You've killed us all, sneak thief.

The men move forward, leaving Cormelian speechless.

INT. SPRIGGINS TAVERN - NIGHT

A band plays on stage while people drink ale, eat large pieces of meat, kids have fun pushing a large ball down the aisles.

Cormelian and the soldiers walk in, eyeing the place.

FAHVOL

(to Cormelian)

Is he here?

Cormelian scans the crowd. Her eyes land on JACK, 30s, the man of the hour, in his own personal section with plentiful ale and naked women. No-nonsense guards patrol the area.

Cormelian swallows her anger. She starts to remove non essential clothes. The soldier's jaws drop.

FAHVOL (CONT'D)

What in heavens are you doing, woman?

CORMELIAN

Follow me. But keep your distance.

Cormelian, sexier, struts her way toward Jack.

The soldiers await Fahvol's orders. He reluctantly follows.

INT. JACK'S THEATER - CONTINUOUS

Cormelian grabs a drink and loosens her hair as she giggles and "drunkenly" bumps into one of Jack's guards. She touches the guard's chest, bats her eyes, and then moves past him.

Cormelian plops in a seat next to Jack. Jack doesn't notice. She crosses her legs, leaving herself open for a compliment.

Nothing from Jack. Cormelian starts to rethink her strategy.

JACK

That was a brave move.

Cormelian looks up in surprise.

JACK (CONT'D)
Making your way across the room like
that. I was sure my guards would
have stopped you.

Cormelian's face drops. Jack turns toward her.

JACK (CONT'D)
But I'm elated that you did. I
couldn't take my eyes off of you.

Jack takes her hand and kisses it. She sighs in relief.

JACK (CONT'D)
Jack. Jack the Giant Killer.

CORMELIAN
I've never met a giant killer before.

JACK
You and everyone else that hasn't
met me, love.

CORMELIAN
Did you really sprout a tree, piercing
the clouds? To lure him down here?

Jack looks her over, suspiciously intrigued. His blue eyes
pierce into Cormelian's. Jack signals for another drink.

JACK
Not a tree. A beanstalk.

CORMELIAN
How did you come across such a massive
beanstalk? It must have taken ages --

JACK
Do you know how I killed it?

BEAT. Jack doesn't break eye contact. He seems to be fishing
for something. Cormelian uncomfortably shifts in her seat.

CORMELIAN
He... fell off the beanstalk.

JACK
Yes. He.
(beat)
Did. But the dumb oaf was still
alive when I found it.

Cormelian takes a sip from her drink, keeping her composure.

CORMELIAN

I - I didn't know that --

JACK

I slit that giant's throat.

(touches her ears)

From ear to ear.

Cormelian nods, struggling to maintain her cool.

JACK (CONT'D)

But, you know, it wasn't easy. I had to hack, and hack, and hack my way through its thick, grotesque neck. It begged for it's life, for it was paralyzed from the drop, you see. I had to cover my nose because the stench almost drove me mad. Not from the amount of blood pulsing out of its butchered throat, but from the piss. The fucking giant pissed its pants, a fucking joke, isn't it?

Jack chuckles as he drinks. A tear rolls down Cormelian's cheek. Jack is too deep into his story to notice.

JACK (CONT'D)

And the funny thing is, the whole while I was hacking away at its gurgling throat, I thought, its stupid giantess wife let me go. I stole from them, twice, and that dumb bitch let me leave. I just walked out. Just as simple as you walked in here, disguising yourself as one of us.

Jack looks at Cormelian again with undivided attention. Cormelian's eyes are red-rimmed and raw.

JACK (CONT'D)

But the difference is, I'm not a stupid fucking cunt.

Jack spreads a devilish grin. Cormelian can't find her words. Jack suddenly spikes his cup down and jumps on the table.

JACK (CONT'D)

Seize and search them! Make sure they don't carry the tablets!

His guards slam Cormelian down and frisk her. Fahvol and his soldiers are disarmed, thrown to the floor, and searched.

The music halts, and the band plays a slower beat. A spotlight hits Jack as he struts on the bar with arrogance.

JACK (CONT'D)

(singing)

Did a dirty giant think they could
dupe me? I bring terror to their
parts, it be best to all flee!

The crowd cheers.

JACK (CONT'D)

(singing)

Round them in the center, I want to
see the lot of them!

Cormelian and the soldiers are thrown together on the ground.

JACK (CONT'D)

(singing)

"Giants infiltrate the south" I bet
we'll never hear that plot again!

(crowd cheers)

But why not? Let's be hospitable.
We might as well let them in! Because
we need more decorations. How about
another giant's skeleton!

Jack points to the ceiling. Several giant's skeleton hang
about. Cormelian can't believe her eyes.

JACK (CONT'D)

(singing)

Why the wide eyes? Was it a surprise
that your giant wasn't my first feat?!
Of course not, my dear! My people
are hungry, and giant's meat makes a
particularly good feast!

All the Englishmen eat slabs of meat. Chewing, licking
fingers. A family eats a roasted giant's toe.

Cormelian and the soldiers gape in horror. Kids roll a large
ball into Cormelian. The linen falls off of the ball.

Her husband's eye stares back at her.

Cormelian shudders. She's as pale as a ghost. She throws
up. The crowd roars in laughter. Cormelian falls into
Fahvol's arms, sobbing. Fahvol puts his arms around her.

JACK (CONT'D)

(singing)

I am Jack the Giant Slayer! I slay
all threats! I don't mince my words.
Let's take all bets! I am feared
across the giant's land! I --

CORMELIAN

How?

Jack stops his boasting, surprised that he was interrupted. Cormelian has her head down, holding on to Fahvol.

CORMELIAN (CONT'D)

How did you defeat us? Surely it was not through combat.

JACK

Unlike you barbarians, we use our heads. A slip of poison, here. A trap laid out, there. Once we --

Cormeleian hysterically guffaws. Jack stares in perplexity. Cormelian turns. Tears, mucus, and vomit run down her chin. But she bares an insane smile, and her eyes burn with madness.

CORMELIAN

(crazed)

You barbarians...

(beat)

We will consume you all...

Cormelian drops a puked covered bag of pills.

A pill is crushed in between Cormelian's teeth.

CRACK! PSST! Steam pulses out of Cormelian and the soldier's bodies as they grow into beasts and ROAR.

Everyone flees for the exits, but the giants cut them short. Men are smashed. Women are squeezed. Children are ate.

Jack scrambles under a table and hides. He sees feet being lifted into the sky, and then blood gushing like a waterfall.

All the screams wither down to nothing. It's quiet.

Jack holds a hand over his mouth, trying to contain his snivels. He hears a giant's feet approaching.

CORMELIAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Fee-Fi-Fo-Fum.

Cormelian leans down. Her giant salivating teeth appear just below the brim of the table. SNIFF. SNIFF. Her nostrils flare.

CORMELIAN (CONT'D)

I smell the blood of an Englishmen.

The table is ripped off. Jack SCREAMS in pure horror.

FADE OUT