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## How the Beans Came Up

*Emilie Poulsson*

Alice May was a little city girl who lived in a brick house which was just like all the other houses on the street, except that some of them had gardens in front, while Alice's house had but a tiny strip of green grass. When the warm spring days came, and all the people along the street were planting their flower seeds, Alice longed for just one little seed to plant, and perhaps some day have a blossom of her own. And one day, when "Uncle Peter," as she called the good old milk man, came along, she told him all about it.

"So you want some seeds?" he said. "Where would you plant them?" "Oh one just here, in this corner by the step," said Alice, "where they would get the warm sunshine, and I could water and watch them every day."

"Well, how will these do?" said Uncle Peter, drawing a handful of Lima beans from his pocket; "I'm taking some home to plant myself, but I guess I can spare you these if you want them."

"May I have them? Oh, thank you, Uncle Peter! I'll plant them right away, and take the best care of them." And as Uncle Peter trudged off, he saw Alice digging holes with a little stick, dropping the beans in and covering them with earth. Then she had to wait for them to come up; it seemed a long time. Every morning the first thing she did was to run out on the doorstep to see if there were any little green sprouts, as she saw in the gardens all along the street. One morning she found — what do you think? No little sprigs of green, but five beans, all split open, out on the ground! "Dear me," she thought, "I didn't plant them deep enough!" So she took a handful of earth and patted it down hard over each bean. But in two or three more days, there they were again, five beans, split in halves, on top of the ground. Alice covered them again, and yet again, for they came peeping up four or five times. Then, after a while, they did not come up any more: there was nothing for Alice to look at but the brown earth.

One morning Uncle Peter came to see how the beans looked, and Alice told him all about it; how they did not send out any green shoots, but just popped up themselves, and how they had not appeared at all since she last covered them. "Dig down and see what you find," said Uncle Peter. Alice found the little beans, all dried and withered; and Uncle Peter said: "You see they are good for nothing now. After you planted them, they sent down little roots to hold themselves firmly in place and pushed themselves up out of the ground. If you had waited,

you would have seen two little green leaves grow from between the halves of each bean, and then two more, and they would have kept growing till you would have had some nice little vines by this time. But it isn't too late to try again. I'll give you some more beans. This time just plant them and leave them alone."

Alice did as she was told. After a few days, the beans popped up, and this time she did not cover them at all but waited and watered them, and the sun shone on them. They sent up first one pair of leaves, then another and another until they were little vines, ready to climb. Then Uncle Peter came and set some poles for them to twine around, and they liked it very much. They climbed and climbed, and soon Alice saw some white blossoms on her bean vines. She did not pick them but waited to see what would come of them. By and by, the blossoms dropped off, and some tiny bean pods grew in their places, and oh, how fast they grew!

At last, one day before Jack Frost came, Alice found that her beans were ready to pick. So she picked them and took them in to her mom who cooked them for dinner. There were enough for all to have a taste — her dad and mom, and all the brothers and sisters, and they thought the beans were very nice.

The next year Alice planted some more beans, and this time she did not cover them up when they popped out of the ground but waited for the green sprouts to appear, and there was time for ever so many beans to grow and ripen before the frost came.



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