

Clara and the magic beans

Long time ago, in 1939, there was a girl named Clara.

She was born right in the day when World War II started. It was a terrible day. In the UK, where Clara lived, plants were dying, people were dying. It was very sad.

Clara and her mother had to leave their home to escape from the war. But Clara's father had to be left alone to fight and passed away.

Ten years later, in 1949, they lived in France. There was peace and they were free. Clara had a little brother called Henry.

But their life was not as easy as for other people. They were poor. People did not trust them because they looked different and did not speak the same language. They thought Clara and her mother would not do a good job.

One day, very early in the morning, Clara was outside going to the market. It was a beautiful day. The sun was shining, it was not like in the UK in 1939.

In the market, Clara saw Mrs. Maisle, her friendly neighbor. Mrs. Maisle gave Clara eight brown beans. Every time she saw the girl, she gave her a few more. But Clara always put the beans in a drawer and did nothing with them.

One night, Mrs. Maisle appeared to Clara in a dream. It was not a normal dream; it was a special dream. She said to Clara to plant those beans. And in the morning, when the rooster crowed, Clara woke up, got dressed, reached to the beans, put some bread in her pocket for breakfast and rushed to the garden. She made a hole, put the beans inside, watered them and went back home.

On the next day, Clara went outside and saw that in the place of the beans was now a beautiful plant. She could not stop looking at it. Suddenly there was a glow and the

plant started saying something. It said – *“I will give you three wishes but not more. It can be anything you would like. But remember, choose wisely”*. Clara was amazed but she said her first wish right away. She asked for a big house. The plant started to glow.

In the next morning, Clara woke up in a beautiful home with many rooms, dangling chandeliers, beautiful pots of roses and lovely cover sheets in the beds. She saw her brother Henry and her mother very happy.

But then that night something terrible happened. It was raining all night long. Through the roof, water started to come inside the house. It was so much that created a big puddle in the middle of the living room and Henry was soaking wet.

So, Clara decided to ask for another wish. She went to the garden and said, *“I want my beautiful home back and a lot of toys, teddy bears, dolls, cars for Henry, a bicycle, a rocking horse and a playing tea set”*. The plant started to glow.

When Clara went back inside, she saw her room with everything she asked. She started playing. Clara played all day but suddenly she saw her brother Henry crying and coughing hard. He was sick and Clara was so sad she needed to cry. It was like her heart was broken in pieces. She had enough of it.

Clara went to the garden and screamed: *“I don’t want these wishes anymore, just that Henry is well”*. The plant started glowing while Clara continued to cry. After a little bit she fell asleep.

In the morning she woke up in her old bed. Clara went downstairs, rushed to her mother and little brother, and gave them a big hug. All was well now. She said: *“I love you, mummy”*. *“We love you too”*, said her mother. Then, one more time, Clara went to the garden. She whispered, *“I know I have no more wishes; but I really want to go to school”*

so please help my mummy to get a job.” She went back inside. The plant glowed one final time and said, *“for a wise girl; I will provide one last wise wish”*.

After a few days it came true. Her mother got a job and Clara could go to school. She made new friends and had a very nice teacher.

And finally... Clara was truly happy.