



## THE GIANT BEET

Once upon a time there was an old man who lived with his wife in a small house. The house was surrounded by a big garden where the old man grew all kinds of delicious fruits and vegetables.

One day, when the winter snows finally melted and nature began to wake up, the old man went outside to stretch his muscles and warm up under the spring sun. As he was enjoying the fresh air, he suddenly noticed a small seed lying on the ground at his feet.

“Oh my, what a tiny seed!” he said. “Where did you come from? Well, let’s find you a nice spot in the garden and we’ll see what you turn into.”

He picked the seed up gently and took it to his garden, where he dug a small hole and put the seed in. Then he covered it with soil and sprinkled it with a tiny bit of water. Now all he had to do was wait to find out what kind of a surprise the wind had left him.

Every day the old man watered the seed, and after a week of sunshine, a little green sprout started breaking through the ground. Soon, two tiny leaves appeared. The old man kept watering the sprout and caring for it, eager to find out what kind of plant it would become. Day and night, he thought about the seed, racking his brain and trying to guess what it might be. He still had no idea what it was going to turn into. The tiny plant was a mystery!

## THE GIANT BEET

More leaves quickly appeared on the sprout, but it wasn't until a big white root grew below it that the old man finally figured out what the seed was – a beet! But this wasn't any ordinary beet; it grew and grew, as fast as a weed, and before long, the beet was the size of an elephant.

When the day came to pull the gigantic root out of the ground, the old man rolled up his sleeves, grasped its huge leaves, and pulled with all his might. But the giant beet wouldn't budge. He tried again, planting his feet firmly on the ground and pulling as hard as he could until his face was as red as the beetroot itself.

“Hmph!” the old man grunted. “I will get you out of the ground somehow, even if it takes me all day!” He stood right over the beet and grabbed all its leaves with his both hands again, took a very deep breath, and puuuulled... but the root still wouldn't move. He tried again and again, but he couldn't move the beet. Finally, he called to his wife to come outside.

“Please help me! I can't do it by myself, it's too big! No matter how hard I pull, it won't move even a little. I'm sure we can pull it out together.”

The old woman rolled up her sleeves and went outside to help her husband. The old man grabbed the beet by the leaves, his wife wrapped her arms around his waist, and together they pulled as hard as they could. They pulled and pulled, but it was all in vain. The beet was still in the ground, and it hadn't moved an inch.

The old man was very frustrated. “We need someone else to help us,” he said, and called out to his granddaughter to come and help them.

“It's so huge!” the girl exclaimed when she saw it. “I've never seen a beet so big! What are we going to do with it? And how in the world are we going to get it out?”

Once again the old man grabbed the beet by its leaves. His wife held onto his waist, and the girl wrapped her arms around her grandma. Then they all took a deep breath and pulled as hard as they could. But the beet still wouldn't budge!

“Let's try it again,” panted the old man, and they all pulled with all their might. But nothing happened. The beet didn't move even a tiny bit.

Their dog, a big strong farm dog named Buddy, had been watching them pull from the other side of the garden, wondering if he could help. The old lady called

## THE GIANT BEET

out to him, “Buddy, come and help us! You’re as strong as a horse!”

Buddy wagged his tail, barked and ran over to them, excited to be included. The old man pulled the beet, his wife pulled him, her granddaughter pulled her, and Buddy pulled the granddaughter. They pulled and pulled and pulled, huffing and puffing, but the beet still wouldn’t budge.

“What are you doing?” asked their cat, Kitty, from the roof.

“Come help us!” Buddy called out. “We’re trying to pull this giant beet out of the ground but it won’t move!” Kitty looked at him cautiously, not sure if it was a trick, but she could see the giant beet and the old man and his wife and their granddaughter and she decided to help. She meowed, carefully climbed down, and grabbed onto Buddy. Buddy held onto the girl, the girl held onto the old lady, the old lady held onto old man, and the old man grasped the leaves of the beet. Three, two, one... and they all pulled as hard as they could. One more time! Three, two, one... and when they pulled again the beet shook a little!

“It moved!” shouted the old man. But the beet was still firmly rooted in the ground.

Suddenly, Kitty noticed a little mouse cleaning up her tiny hole. “Hey! Come help us pull this beet!” she said.

“How do I know you won’t eat me?” the mouse asked.

“I promise I won’t eat you,” Kitty said, and the mouse joined them. Three, two, one... the mouse, the cat, the dog, the girl, the old lady and the old man pulled and pulled and pulled, and suddenly the beetroot moved again!

“One more time!” yelled the old man from the front.

They all planted their feet and pulled one more time and – wham! The beet came loose and all of them fell down with a thud. The old man fell on the old lady, the old lady fell on the girl, the girl fell on Buddy, Buddy fell on Kitty, and Kitty fell on the ground. The mouse had cleverly jumped out of the way as soon as they started to fall!

“Hooray! We all pulled it out together!” the old man shouted happily, and they invited everyone they knew to a big party, where they celebrated their success with delicious beet soup.