

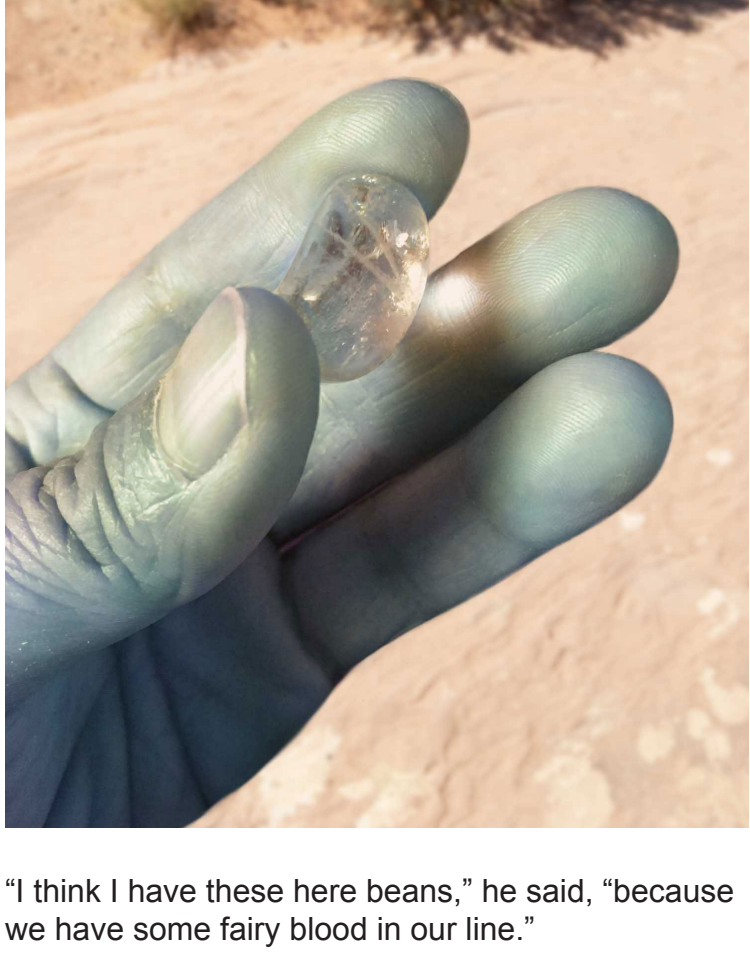
# Right Beam - Hariko Fair



## “Right Beam”

He appeared as a dust devil dissipated, alone with his strange, golden half-apple strapped to his back. Hariko Fair, in search of his stolen horse. “Official story of my family name is that it’s owed to the fact that we were sheriffs and rangers; kept things equitable...”

He pulled some gleaming beans from his pocket. “I think that’s wrong,” he said. The beans were gold and ruby and emerald. All sorts. I picked one up that he dropped; he let me take a photo of it.



“I think I have these here beans,” he said, “because we have some fairy blood in our line.”

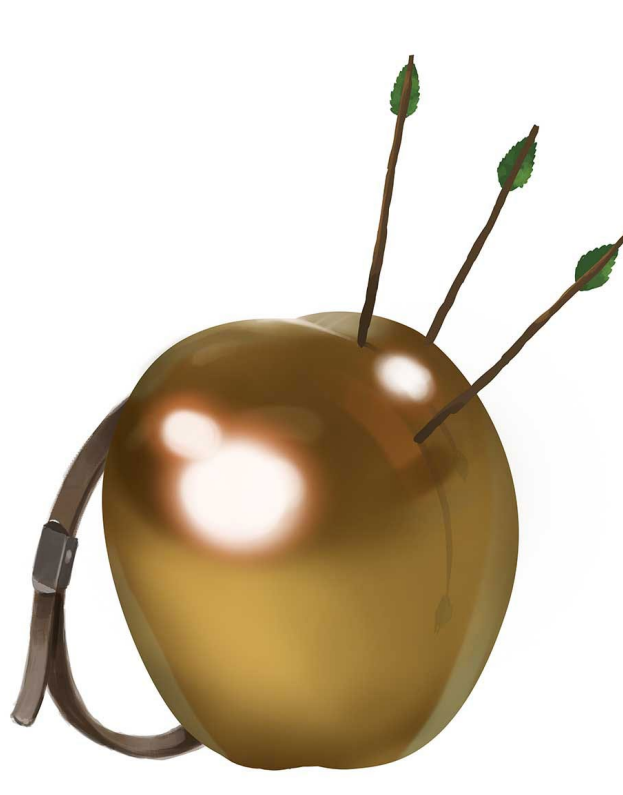
I told him he needn’t pay for help. We’d also had our birds taken. All our animals would probably be found together.

“That’s fair,” he said, “but the beans are for the thieves. Their dark world of wrongs and wranglings is about to get hit with an irresistible Beam of Right.”

“Beam of right?” I said. “Right Beam. You’re Right Beam!”

## “Goadin’ Apple”

“I’ve heard stories from far away of Right Beam” I said, as he unslung the gleaming half-apple backpack.



He was pushing his magic beans into the core. “That’s me,” he said. The apple had wooden shafts sticking out here and there. He explained the apples were grown to produce cattle prods. “Goadin’ apples,” he called them. “But my orchard grows a new variety.”

I asked about the beans. He held one of the ruby ones up for me, then placed it into the apple. By the time he slung the apple to his back, three new shafts had emerged. “Take one,” he said. The shaft wasn’t all that straight. The tip was almost like an arrow-head; sparkling red, just like the bean. “Not always sure what it’ll do. Depends a lot on you,” he said. “Give it a try.”

So, did. Fetched by bow and set my sights on the giant dead tree I’d been putting off pulling out. As I notched the ruby-tipped shaft and drew back, it straightened out! I paused to calm my hand after seeing this, the let it fly. The dead tree burst into flames!

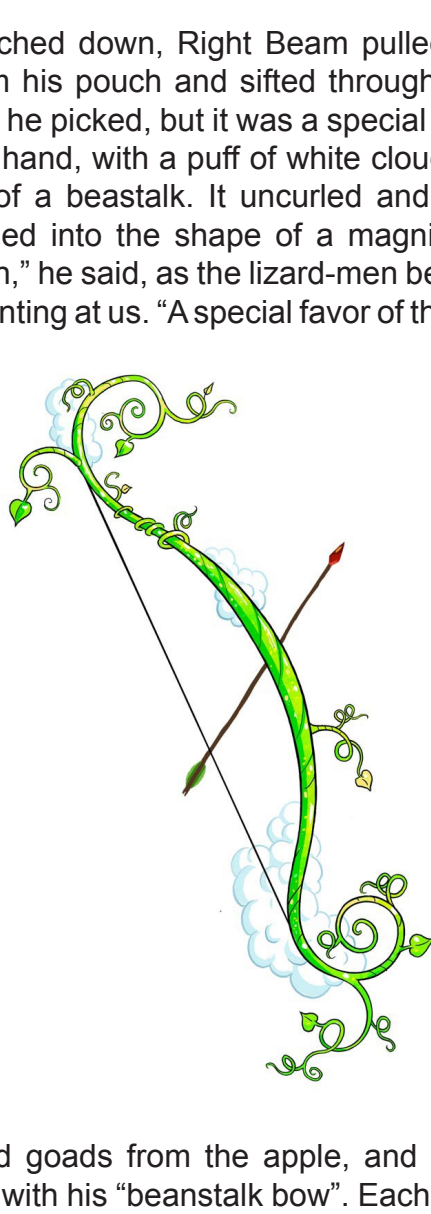
“Man, you must’ve hated that tree!” Right Beam said. “You’ve got spirit. I guess you can come help me get our animals back! But you’d better use your own arrows—I want to haul these thieves in breathing...”

I wondered what the other arrows protruding from this “goadin’ apple” might do.

## “Beanstalk Bow”

The horrible lizard-men who had stolen my birds had left behind a few of the old, scrawny ones. On their backs, Right Beam and I caught up with the wagon train of caged beasts.

As we touched down, Right Beam pulled out more beans from his pouch and sifted through them. Not sure which he picked, but it was a special one. Out of his gloved hand, with a puff of white cloud, sprouted two ends of a beanstalk. It uncurled and furled and finally settled into the shape of a magnificent bow. “Grün Boon,” he said, as the lizard-men began shouting and pointing at us. “A special favor of the beans...”



He plucked goads from the apple, and shot at the lizard men with his “beanstalk bow”. Each missile had a different colored tip; each trounced it’s lizard-man in a different way. Some were knocked backwards as if hit by a bull, some were covered in an instant frost, and others were jolted with eruptions of lightning. Then Right Beam shot at the cages.

“Search the wagons for rope,” he said. “Bind up the lizard-men and I’ll take ‘em back home.” The cage doors fell open and my birds gathered around me. From the last cage, strode out a beautiful mustang. Right Beam’s horse.

It had a peculiar blue horn out the side of it’s head, like that of cattle. Right Beam leapt onto it’s back, explaining that a few lizard men had bolted as soon as they saw us. He notched another goad as the horse galloped off. He’d said he had fairy tales in his blood. It was only right that he’d ride off on a unicorn.

