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# The Untold Story of Hansel and Gretel

"Daddy," said Cancer Jim, "tell me a story. Tell me a story about candy."  
"Cancer Jim, you know very well that you can't have candy because you've got cancer," his father replied a bit too loudly.  
"I know daddy, I just wanted a story to help me forget the pain."

"Very well: Once upon a time there was a poor stuttering wood-cutter who lived in the forest with his wife, two children, and a humpback whale. His children were named Hansel and Gretel, and the humpback whale was named Benjamin. They were impoverished, and often starving. They couldn't even partake of the abundant forest plankton, because Benjamin had The Insatiable Hunger Of The Depths. 'Curse you Benjamin! Stop eating all of the plankton!' they would say. 'I will shred your ramshackle cottage with my baleen if you anger me!' Benjamin would bellow in a mighty voice that emanated from deep within his sizeable blowhole.

One night, during a particularly bad spell of poverty and famine, the humble wood-cutter's wife yelled, 'All is lost! We

*Now that you children have eaten so much candy, you will, in several years, develop debilitating cases of adult onset, or Type II, diabetes! Every day will be an agonizing process of monitoring sugar versus insulin intake!*

must take the children out into the forest, and leave them there with not but a change of clothing and two sticks of butter!' 'Y-You're mad, woman! How will that solve our problems?!' stammered the wood-cutter, aghast. 'BUTTERRRR!' shrieked his wife. 'Silence, mortals! The Ancients demand my slumber!' rumbled



Benjamin. 'Yes! He must slumber!' demanded the Ancients. 'I am not in this story,' stated Meatloaf.

The next day, the wood-cutter took his children deep into the forest and left them there, dressed in their finest German lederhosen and clutching a stick of butter apiece. 'What ever shall we do, Hansel?' asked Gretel. 'I don't know Gretel,' he replied. 'Well that is easy for you to say Hansel,' Gretel responded, 'because you are made of metal and do not have feelings. Anyway, I suppose we should begin walking, in hopes that we will find our way.' 'I will kill this rabbit,' agreed the unfeeling robotic Hansel.

And so the two set off through the forest, and soon came upon a small house made entirely of candy. There were peppermint windows and gumdrop shingles, and a large sign that read, 'Warning - Do not eat if you have cancer.' Gretel let out a shout of glee and ran ahead to gnaw on

the oversized doorknob. 'Don't eat that Gretel!' warned Hansel, 'that is the only part of the house not made out of candy.' 'Oh,' replied Gretel, who was now missing several teeth. Just then a ferocious bear poked its head from the cottage. 'Dearie me', it squeaked, 'visitors! My, and you are wearing fine German lederhosen! You children look hungry, just continue to eat my house...yes, that's right, eat the house....now kiss each other...' 'What?' asked Gretel, looking up from devouring the chimney. 'Nothing,' replied the bear 'Please just come in for some tea!'

As soon as Hansel and Gretel were inside the cottage, the ferocious bear transformed into an evil witch. 'A witch! I thought you were just a ferocious bear!' Gretel screamed in terror. 'Actually you were wrong about that, I'm a witch now!' said the witch, 'and now that you children have eaten so much candy, you will, in several years, develop debilitating cases of adult onset, or Type II, diabetes! Every day will be an agonizing process of monitoring sugar versus insulin intake!'



'BUTTEERRRR!' yelled Gretel. 'What?' exclaimed the witch, confused. Hansel, however, knew just what his sister was talking about. 'That's right Gretel! I've heard that all witches turn into harmless mulberries if they touch butter!' 'That isn't true,' said the witch. 'Hee-yaw!' shouted Hansel, launching their last stick of butter right at the witch's face, while simultaneously launching an inward plea for the ability to experience friendship. 'Oh, gross,' said the witch in disgust, 'now there's butter all over my face. That's it, out of my house!'

Hansel and Gretel scampered quickly out of the witch's cottage while the witch tended to her despoiled personal hygiene. Then the twins turned into forest plankton and were eaten by Benjamin, who had been biding his time since The Prophecy. The End."

"Daddy, that is the worst story ever," said Cancer Jim.

"Shush, my son. It is the story of love," replied his father, coddling his ailing son's head as though it were a very sedate cat.

"Someday I will change my name to Lance Armstrong and bring hope to millions," mumbled Cancer Jim as drifted off, dreaming sweetly of whales and bicycles. ☺



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