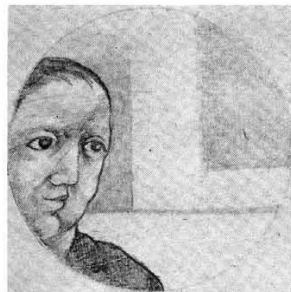
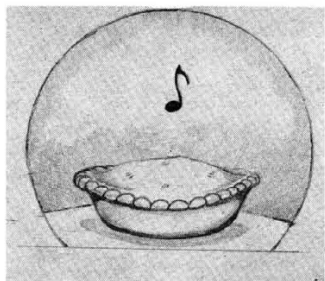


THE MAGIC PIE

by John Zanzal



And so it was as always that two brothers lived in a certain land. The elder's name was Grumpkin and the younger, Bumpkin.

Grumpkin always disliked his younger brother and did everything to make his life hard. He worked him from sun up to sun down. But Bumpkin whistled and sang as he worked and grew happier each day.

Now it was that their business was making pies; the finest pies in the land. Grumpkin gave the orders and counted the money while Bumpkin cooked and cleaned and tended the garden.

One day as he was tending the garden, he heard singing. It was the most beautiful voice he had ever heard.

"Who's that singing?" he asked.

"Tis I, 'tis I —
imprisoned in this cell
I lie," sang the voice.

"Where are you?" Bumpkin asked.

"Within the sound of ears —
Within the sight of eyes —
Oh, find me, one who hears
for you are surely wise."

Looking below his feet, Bumpkin saw a flash of light and digging with his hands he soon uncovered a solid gold pumpkin.

"I'll get you out" said Bumpkin, lifting it over his head, but the harder he tried to dash it against the ground, the more it stuck to his hands.

"You can help me if you try
bake me in your finest pie."

So Bumpkin ran back to the kitchen and prepared the pumpkin. When the pie was done, it had a fine brown crust, but no longer looked gold. The whole house smelled deliciously so that Grumpkin went to the kitchen.

"I found a golden pumpkin," Bumpkin told his brother, "and it told me to bake it in a pie."

"If anyone heard what you've

said they would call you an idiot," replied Grumpkin, who picked up a broom and beat his brother soundly.

After Grumpkin had gone the pie began to sing again.

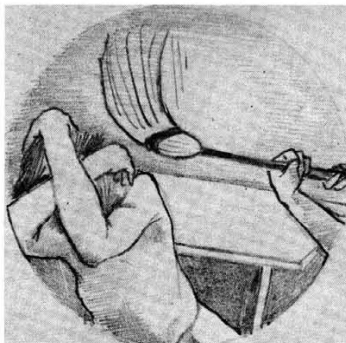
"My poor friend, please do not cry
though truth is punished, not
the lie

if you cut me with a knife
I am bound to take your life—

But if my crust you crumble
nicely—

I will give you wishes thrice."

The sweet voice soothed Bumpkin until he forgot his ill treatment. The promises of three wishes pleased him, but he could not decide, seeing how he did not want for gold nor power. He thought it would perhaps please Grumpkin to share the wishes, so that night at supper, he told his brother about the singing pie.



"If anyone heard what you said they would call you an idiot!" said Grumpkin, who picked up a knife to cut the pie. No sooner did he touch it than he dropped dead. And Bumpkin, who loved his brother, wept for him. The pie sang:

"Woe to he who used the knife
for I was bound to take his life,
but if my crust you crumble nicely:
I will give you wishes thrice."

Bumpkin broke the pie and wished that his brother was alive and well. The pie told him that his brother would recover when he was gone and that he must prepare for a long journey. He must take a bag of beans with him. So, Bumpkin took the pie and a small bag of beans, mounted his horse and rode away. As soon as he was out of sight, Grumpkin awoke.

"Where has that fool brother of

mine gone?" he asked himself. "He'll come back when he's hungry and I'll give him another beating with the broom."

Bumpkin rode off and the pie sang to him and kept him company until they came to a land where everyone wore black. Bumpkin asked an old woman why and she said that it was the King's decree. His only daughter had disappeared and in mourning everyone in the land was to wear black. The pie sang to Bumpkin:

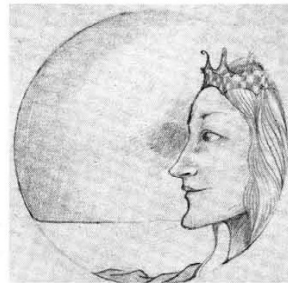
"Sad day, bad day

All my life is locked away

Enchanted daughter of the King
see the trouble that I bring."

Bumpkin went to the King to tell him he would save his daughter, but when the King heard the voice he kept the pie and threw Bumpkin out!

The King put the pie at his bed side and talked and wept to it far



Plant twelve beans and see what grows."

Bumpkin planted twelve beans, then hid behind a tree, just as the Ogre was coming from the cave.

"I smell breakfast near at hand,
I smell the blood of a Christian
man."

From the twelve beans sprang twelve soldiers, each twice as powerful as Bumpkin. They all had suits of armor and swords. On seeing them, the Ogre bellowed:

"There's nothing better day or
night

Than twelve to one in a full fair
fight."

The twelve attacked and all day long they clashed. The Ogre was furious and killed one after the other, and where they fell, a bean sprout grew. At night, wounded and exhausted, the Ogre stumbled back to his cave, leaving twelve bean sprouts.

Bumpkin took his sword and followed him deep into the cave, and when the Ogre lay down to sleep he cut off his head. Then he fetched the pie and went to seek the princess.

He found her asleep in a block of ice, and she was more beautiful than her voice had led him to believe. He loved her so much he could hardly speak a word. Finally, he wished that she be disenchanting, and the ice began to melt.

When it had melted, she opened her eyes, saying:

"I'm very hungry, do you
suppose I could have some of your
pie?"

Bumpkin gave it to her and she ate it all, and when she had done her eyes sparkled for now she knew all he had done to save her.

The two returned to her father who blessed their marriage, and so it was, as always that they lived happily ever after.

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