

The Giant Who Threw Tantrums

by David Harrison

At the foot of Thistle Mountain lay a village.

In the village lived a little boy who liked to go walking. One Saturday afternoon he was walking in the woods when he was startled by a terrible noise.

He scrambled quickly behind a bush.

Before long a huge giant came stamping down the path.

He looked upset.

“Tanglebangled ringlepox!” the giant bellowed. He banged his head against a tree until the leaves shook off like snowflakes.

“Franglewhangled whippersnack!” the giant roared. Yanking up the tree, he whirled it around his head and knocked down twenty-seven other trees.

Muttering to himself, he stalked up the path towards the top of Thistle Mountain.

The little boy hurried home.

“I just saw a giant throwing a tantrum!” he told everyone in the village. They only smiled.

“There’s no such thing as a giant,” the mayor assured him.

“He knocked down twenty-seven trees,” said the little boy.

“Must have been a tornado,” the weatherman said with a nod. “Happens around here all the time.”

14 The next Saturday afternoon the little boy again went walking. Before long he heard a horrible noise. Quick as lightning, he slipped behind a tree.

Soon the same giant came storming down the path. He still looked upset.

16 “Pollywogging frizzelsnatch!” he yelled. Throwing himself down, he pounded the ground with both fists.

Boulders bounced like hailstones.

18 Scowling, the giant puckered his lips into an “O.”

He drew in his breath sharply. It sounded like somebody slurping soup.

“Pooh!” he cried.

Grabbing his left foot with both hands, the giant hopped on his right foot up the path towards the top of Thistle Mountain.

The little boy hurried home.

“That giant’s at it again,” he told everyone. “He threw such a tantrum that the ground trembled!”

“Must have been an earthquake,” the police chief said. “Happens around here sometimes.”

The next Saturday afternoon the little boy again went walking. Before long he heard a frightening noise.

He dropped down behind a rock.

Soon the giant came fuming down the path. When he reached the little boy’s rock, he puckered his lips into an “O.”

He drew in his breath sharply with a loud, rushing-wind sound. “Phooey!” he cried. “I *never* get it right!”

The giant held his breath until his face turned blue and his eyes rolled up.

“Fozzlehumper backawacket!” he panted.

Then he lumbered up the path towards the top of Thistle Mountain.

The little boy followed him. Up and up and up he climbed to the very top of Thistle Mountain.

There he discovered a huge cave. A surprising sound was coming from it. The giant was crying!

“All I want is to whistle,” he sighed through his tears. “But every time I try, it comes out wrong!”

The little boy had just learned to whistle. He knew how hard it could be. He stepped inside the cave.

The giant looked surprised. “How did *you* get here?”

“I know what you’re doing wrong,” the little boy said.

When the giant heard that, he leaned down and put his hands on his knees.

“Tell me at once!” he begged.

“You have to stop throwing tantrums,” the little boy told him.

“I promise!” said the giant, who didn’t want anyone to think he had poor manners.

“Pucker your lips . . .” the little boy said.

“I always do!” the giant assured him.

“Then blow,” the little boy added.

“Blow?”

“Blow.”

The giant looked as if he didn’t believe it. He puckered his lips into an “O.” He blew. Out came a long, low whistle. It sounded like a railway engine. The giant smiled.

He shouted, “I whistled! Did you hear that? I whistled!”

Taking the little boy’s hand, he danced in a circle.

“You’re a good friend,” the giant said.

“Thank you,” said the little boy.

“Perhaps some time we can whistle together. But just now I have to go. It’s my suppertime.”

The giant stood before his cave and waved goodbye.

The little boy seldom saw the giant after that. But the giant kept his promise about not throwing tantrums.

“We never have earthquakes,” the mayor liked to say.

“We haven’t had a tornado in ages,” the weatherman would add.

Now and then they heard a long, low whistle somewhere in the distance.

“Must be a train,” the police chief would say.

But the little boy knew his friend the giant was walking up the path towards the top of Thistle Mountain—whistling.

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