



KANTCHIL'S PIT

One day, a monkey named Kantchil wandered through a village. Passing a farmer's house, she noticed a sweet smell. She carefully stepped closer and looked inside through a window. The house was empty since the farmer and his wife were still working on a nearby field. A banana pie carefully wrapped in banana leaves, sat on the table in the kitchen, smelling delicious. Kantchil made sure that the coast was clear, then she entered and took the pie. The smell coming from the banana-leaf wrappings was so yummy that the monkey started stuffing herself right away.

But as she was gulping and chewing loudly with her head stuck deep inside the banana leaves, she failed to notice a large pit the farmer dug behind the house, and before she knew it, she fell in. Sure, Kantchil was a really good jumper, but jumping out of a pit this deep was beyond her capabilities, so she had to come up with a different plan to get out.

Suddenly, she heard somebody's footsteps coming closer and closer and with her eyes pinned to the banana leaf, pretending to be reading it, she started screaming from the top of her lungs: "Save yourselves!" It was a boar, who was just passing by. He carefully peeked over the edge to see who was screaming and why.

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“What are you doing down there?” asked the boar.

At first, Kantchil didn't answer. Weirdly mumbling, she kept staring into the banana leaf, still pretending to be reading.

“The world is going to end today and only those taking shelter in this sacred pit will save themselves,” replied Kantchil after a while.

“How do you know that?” said the boar, perplexed.

“It's written in the holy book,” answered the monkey, still eying the leaves as if she were reading.

“Well, then I'm joining you,” said the boar, rushing down into the pit.

“No, you're not!” snapped the monkey.

“Why?” asked the boar baffled, shaking his head.

“You're ill and you sneeze all the time,” retorted the monkey.

“I'm not sick, I promise, just let me climb down,” the boar begged her.

Finally, Kantchil allowed the boar to join her and he clumsily tumbled into the pit. With a solemn expression on her face, she kept pretending to be immersed in reading. Before long, a tiger appeared. His roar announced him long before he emerged above the pit.

“Hey, you two! What are you doing down there?” he wanted to know.

The boar told him about the upcoming end of the world and about the safety of the sacred pit while Kantchil kept staring at the banana leaves, anxiously shaking her head.

“I'm coming down,” said the tiger with determination.

“No, you're not!” yelled the two in unison.

Tiger paused in surprise. “And why is that?” he asked.

“You sneeze a lot!” they yelled again.

“If anyone sneezes in the pit, it will lose its protective powers,” explained the boar.

“I won't sneeze, I promise!” begged them the tiger. When they finally agreed, he landed right next to them with just one elegant leap.

Soon, the pit darkened and an elephant's head appeared right above it.

“Good gracious! What happened to you!” asked the elephant.

The boar started explaining again while Kantchil kept her head buried in the

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banana leaves and the tiger just shrugged. Upon hearing about the forthcoming doom, the elephant got scared and slowly started climbing down the pit.

“No!” roared the trio.

“Why not?” he asked, hanging from the edge.

“You sneeze!” yelled the animals in unison and the boar explained what a disaster it would be if one of them gave even just a tiny little sneeze.

“I swear I won't sneeze even if my trunk was about to burst. Just let me in.”

Kantchil nodded in agreement and the elephant noisily tumbled down into the pit. After a long while of pretending to be reading, she suddenly looked up at the elephant.

“You have to leave, clearly you were about to sneeze just now,” she said.

“No, I wasn't, I swear! Look! I'm standing on my trunk. I couldn't sneeze even if I wanted!”

So Kantchil kept eying the banana leaves. After a while she looked at the tiger:

“What did I hear just now? You sneezed! Leave!”

“No, I did not! I was just sniffing,” said the tiger in his defence.

Kantchil went on reading when she finally screamed: “Oh, no! No, this cannot happen! My nose is starting to itch! I swear, I'm going to sneeze!”

She kept yelling and screaming and then she loudly sneezed.

“She sneezed and desecrated the sacred pit!” screamed the other animals, horrified. They grabbed her and threw her out of the pit, but Kantchil just picked up her banana leaf again and left, grinning from ear to ear.