

Peter Peter Pumpkin Eater and Sir KWAIN  
by Karl M. Kindt III  
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Once upon a time I rode into an old village and came to the water well. There were some women there weeping.

“What is wrong, my ladies?”

“Oh Sir Knight, over these few hills there is a poor woman whose husband has put her in a pumpkin shell and it is said she cries out for help but no one will help her there. Will you go to her and help her Sir?”

“Why of course I will!”

I rode over the hills until I came to a place where there was a clearing in the woods and there was a pumpkin patch. These were no ordinary pumpkins, let me tell ya. These were gigantic pumpkins, most taller than a man they were! As I rode through the pumpkin patch I suddenly heard some one yell out to me.

“Help me! Help me! Set me free! Please come here and get me out of this pumpkin!”

I looked this way and that and then saw a giant pumpkin with a small hole cut into the side and there staring out was the face of a poor woman in tears.

I rode over to her and saw that she could not get out of the giant pumpkin for the lid of the pumpkin had been locked with a chain.

“My lady who has put you here, is it your husband then that did this to you?”

“Oh yes, kind sir, my husband is Peter, Peter Pumpkin Eater. He put me here when I tried to run away.”

“But why did you try to run away from your husband, my lady?”

“Oh, sir, he will not let me cook anything for him except what is made of pumpkin stuff. So I cook and cook the pumpkins. Pumpkins mashes and pumpkins fried and pumpkin pies and pumpkin chips and pumpkins scrambled. But only pumpkins I cook day after day. I get tired of this and plead with him to please let me try to make something for you out of some other good thing to eat. But he says `No, I am Peter Peter Pumpkin Eater and I only eat Pumpkins. There is nothing good to eat unless it is made of Pumpkins.` So then I try to run away but he always catches me for sir he is a giant, a big, very big giant of a man and he can run so fast with his giant legs that I can never get away. So then he puts me in a pumpkin shell and comes to feed me every day of pumpkin stuffs and says unless I will promise to make him pumpkin foods he will not let me out. So then, after some days, I say I will and I do but then I get tired of pumpkin cooking and run away again and oh, sir, oh, it is like this now for so many years.”

And she began to sob and cry and so I said:

“My poor lady, I will help you. If I go to Peter and tell him you will cook him pumpkin things from now on IF he will just try one thing you make for him out of something else and if he doesn't like it then you will not run away - will you promise this to him if he will try something besides pumpkin to eat?”

“I suppose I would promise this to him, but he will never eat anything but pumpkin. And kind sir, he is a giant and he will beat you and you will be so sorry for trying to help me.”

“Oh, no, my lady. He will not beat me! I have beaten many giants before. Do not fear I will be beaten by him. And perhaps I can talk to him to try something without having to fight him.”

So I put the lady on the back of my horse and we rode up to Peter Pumpkin Eater's House. Well, it wasn't a real house, it was a gigantic pumpkin he carved out for himself and his wife. I knocked on the pumpkin door and Peter came. I could hear him coming! Boom! Boom! Boom! went his foot setps and then he swung open the door and looked down at me.

“What do you want little knight?”

Oh was he a gigantic giant of a man - he was taller than two houses and his voice was a booming voice that almost knocked me over.

“Peter Pumpkin Eater I have come to tell you that your wife ...”

“WHAT! Why you have taken my wife out of the pumpkin shell where I was keeping her very well, why you....”

“Now Peter, please, listen to what I have to say. Your wife promises to you that if you will try to eat just one thing that she cooks for you that is not made out of pumpkin stuff and if you don't like it why she will never run away again and will stay with you cooking your pumpkin feasts. So will you at least try something she will make for you?”

Then his wife said:

“Peter I will make you a wonderful apple pie. You will like it so much!”

“NO! I will never eat anything but pumpkin stuff. Pumpkin, pumpkin, pumpkin, that's the only food for me. So knight you go away before I beat you.

“NO Peter. I will not go. I challenge you to battle. When I defeat you and you surrender to me then you promise you will try something besides pumpkin to eat?”

“Oh, I will fight you tiny knight and if you would ever beat me I would try something else to eat but you will NEVER, no NEVER, defeat me you puny man!”

So Peter grabbed his giant club - bigger it was than a telephone pole - and he warned me....

“No one last chance for you to flee or I will knock you down with my club? 1- 2 -3

But I did not flee and I stood my ground. Peter swung his giant club at me and knocked me down. He came over and looked down at me.

“There you silly knight all knocked on the ground. Now go away.”

“No, Peter, I am not through with you yet. I am still fighting you!”

“Fighting me! Ha! You are lying flat on your back on the ground. Do you want me to beat you while you lie there sir?”

“Yes Peter, you must keep in beating me for I have not surrendered to you.”

“Oh, so then I will and here take that and that and that and that and that and that.....”

Soon he was very tired and he said...

“Oh, no and am so tired for beating you oh, noooooo!”

And Peter fell to the ground so tired out he was. I got up and put my foot upon him and said, there, now Peter I have won. And you have promised to try something else to eat. Will you be a giant of your word?”

“Yes, I will try something else for I keep my promises. BUT I WILL NOT LIKE IT. And this wife has promised she will then give up trying to get me to eat things made of anything but pumpkin and she won't run away so go wife, make something you think I will like and I won't like it and then this pesky tiny knight will go away.”

So Lady Peter Peter Pumpkin eater went into the house and cooked a delicious apple pie. She brought it out to Peter and he smelled it.

“Hey that smells good, that must be pumpkin in this pie.”

“No Peter it is apple - it is an apple pie.”

“Well, it might smell good but it won't taste good. But I will try one bite as I promised.”

So Peter took his hand and scooped out a big piece of apple pie and put it into his mouth.

“Hey! HEY! HEEEEY! This is good. This is very good. This is better than pumpkin pie! Much better. I love apples. From now on I will not longer be called Peter Peter Pumpkin Eater. From now on I will be called Peter, Peter Apple Eater! Nothing but apple stuff - that's right!

Wife from now on you may stop making things out of pumpkins and only make me apple things.!”

“OH NO!” his wife sobbed.

“No, Peter, No!” I said.

“Peter, there are many things that taste good! You should try not just apples but lots of things to taste and you will see how good so many things are!”

So Peter bent down and stuck out his big giant tongue and licked my armor!

“UGH! That armor doesn’t taste good! UGH!”

“No, Peter, I didn’t say everything tastes good! Let your wife help you decide what to try and taste. She will know.”

“Yes, kind Sir Knight I will help Peter. But you haven’t told us your name!”

“Oh, my lady, I do not like to tell my name to folks. They don’t think it a very interesting name when I tell it and nor do I.”

“Oh please tell us your name.”

“Very well, my name is Sir KWAIN - K for Knight, W for without, A for An, I for interesting and N for name, Sir KWAIN the knight without an interesting name.”

“Kind, kind sir, you have it all wrong. Your name is interesting but you just don’t know how to say it properly. You are Sir KWAIN - K for Knight, W for WITH, A for AN, I for Interesting, N for Name - the knight WITH an interesting name!”

“Oh, you are right, my lady! All of these years and I have thought my name was of no interest and now I see it is! Thank you so very much.”

Now dear friends I have told you this silly story to teach you an important lesson about chivalry. One thing chivalry means is that you do not try to use your power and strength and your muscles to make someone else do what you want them to do. It was not right of Peter the giant to put his wife in a pumpkin shell until she would do what he wanted. Instead, think of how you can use your strength to help others and serve them and do good for them and you will find this a much happier life than if you try to make others make you happy.