

Abandonment to Hope

# GRETEL AND THE STRING FACTORY



**A NEW FAIRYTALE BASED ON AN OLD ONE**

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## A New Fairytale

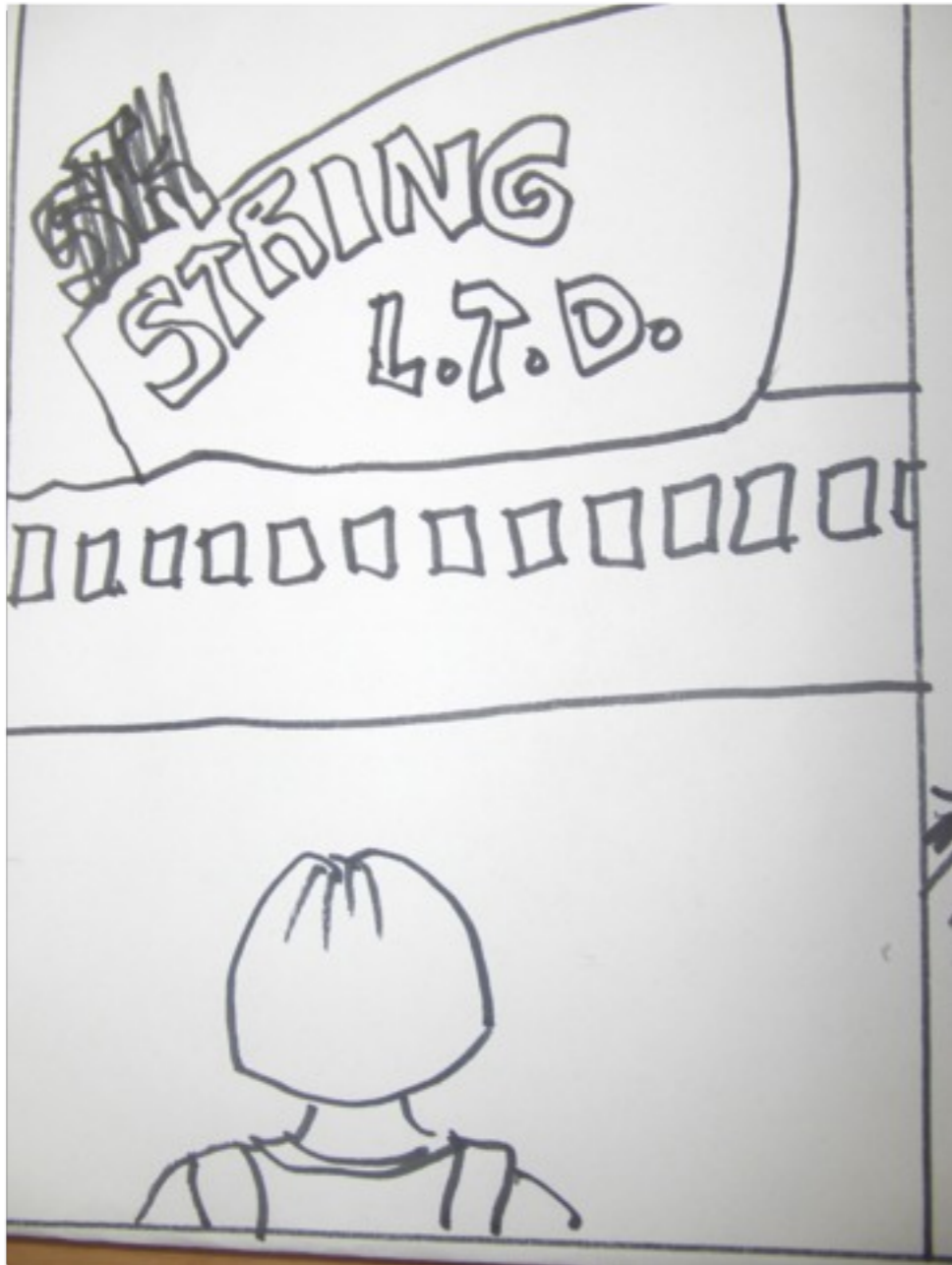
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Once upon a time to come, there lived in a very poor house, a strong girl named Gretel.

When she was old enough to be restless and stubborn, she decided to set off to seek her fortune...

with the noble intent of sending that inevitable fortune home to her family.



When Gretel reached the big, busy city, the first chance she saw to make her fortune was a job at a big factory.

As she was on a shoestring budget, the job seemed to fit.

The owner seemed very eager to hire her on and so, Gretel landed her first job as a string-maker.

Gretel went right to work. She knew that hard work never hurt anyone.



Poor Gretel soon discovered, however, that the string factory was run by a stingy, knotted old man who paid his workers next to nothing and never let them leave.

Anyone caught making a mistake or taking a rest, would have a strong string tied tightly round their finger to remind them....

a string that was tightened every day until, in some cases, the reminder became a string-wrapped finger that used to be there.



The only comfort offered to these string-factory prisoners, was a nightly mug of hot chocolate which they all gratefully drank and then fell fast asleep.

“There must be a way out of here,” thought Gretel, as she sipped her warm chocolate one night. Her bunkmate had already dropped off to sleep and was snoring soundly.

“If I could only stay awake long enough to make a plan, but every night, I’m just so tired...” and she fell asleep in the middle of her thought.



The next night, Gretel poured her hot chocolate into her shoe. Her suspicions were correct. Without the drug-laced drink, she could stay awake and plan.

She went straight into the factory and got to work on the giant string-wrapping machine in the middle of the workroom floor.

She knew a thing or two about gears and levers. Tomorrow things would be different. Tomorrow, all of her problems would be wrapped up in a neat little package.



The next day, the main string-rolling machine gave a shake and a shudder, then clattered to a stop. The owner unraveled in a furious temper.

“You!” he snagged Gretel and thrust her towards the door of the machine.

“Climb in there and fix it now!”





Gretel stuck her head in the door and studied the sabotaged gears, and with a grin made a single adjustment. Then she pulled her head back out, put on a confused look and stammered, “I don’t know what to do. Could you show me first?”

The owner huffed and puffed and stuck his head deep into the machine. With one good shove and a push of a button, the balling machine roared to life.



With their problems all neatly tied up, the string factory workers gleefully pushed their former tormentor to the courthouse.

It was a rather large ball of string and it was quite heavy to push. Imagine their relief to see that the last stretch of road was all downhill, right to the courthouse door.

To make things even better, the road was pockmarked with lots of lovely, deep potholes!



The trial was a short one. The evidence was obvious. The workers pointed accusing fingers (at least the ones they still had) at the owner.

The judge reached a speedy verdict. He did not need to string them along. “Guilty as charged!” and down came the gavel.

“String him up!” yelled the workers.

“I think you have already saved us the trouble,” said the judge. The bailiff rolled the owner off to his cell.



With their tormentor  
securely behind bars,  
and the deed to the factory  
transferred to the workers,  
a celebration was in order.



The good news spread fast:

The imprisoned workers were free! ...

And the factory was under new management.

Their families could hardly wait to see their children once again.



With her fortune made and her freedom won, Gretel wound her way home.

As she caught sight of her old house with its sagging roof and crooked chimney, she began to run.

And there in the front yard, running pell-mell towards her, the family she had missed for so long.

Our story ends in a tangle of arms and hearts and tears; one ball of happiness at the end of a long yarn.