

Belsnickels

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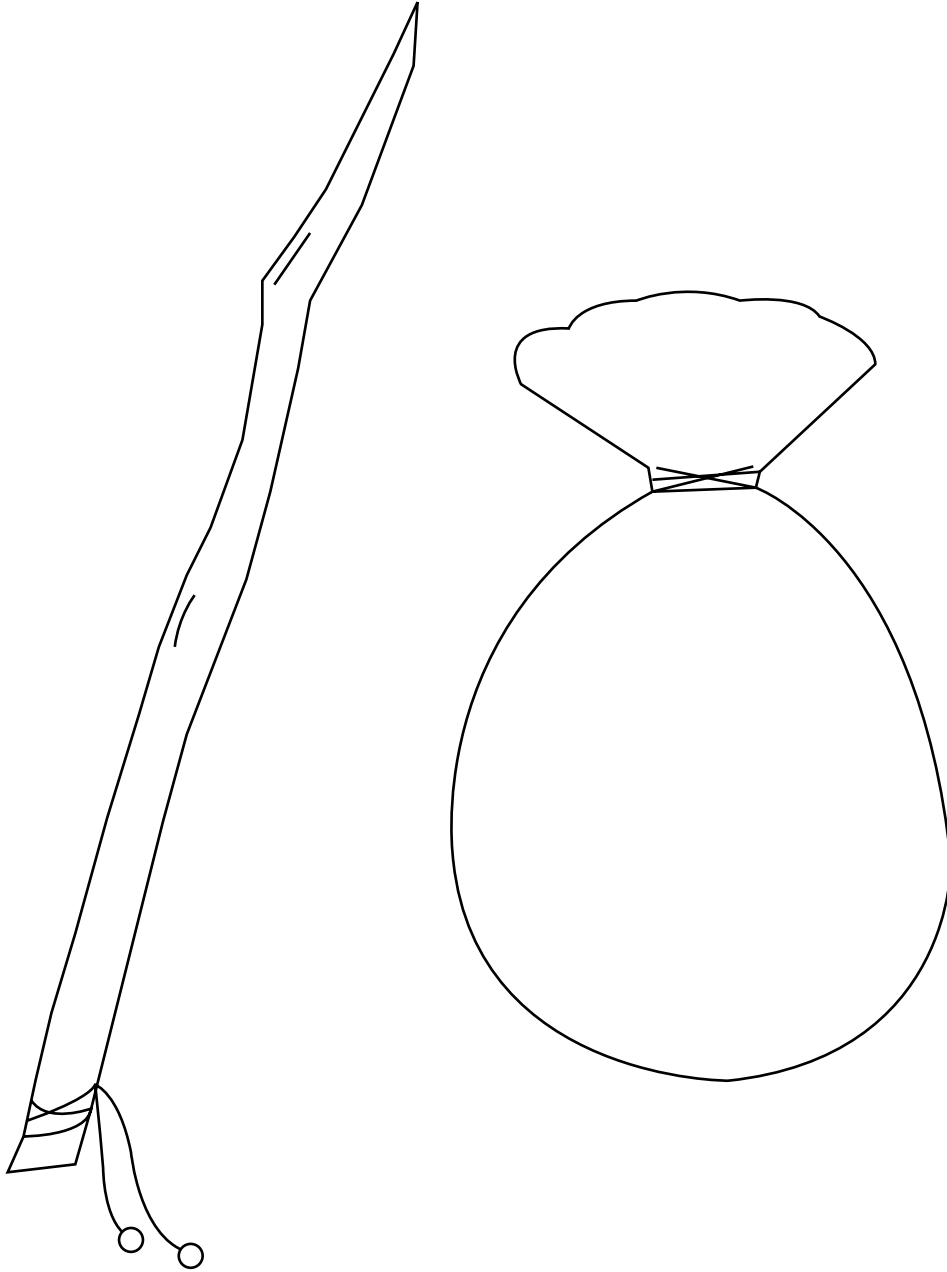
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Special thanks to Ravenfox from Hobsgreen.com
for drawing the bellsnickel.

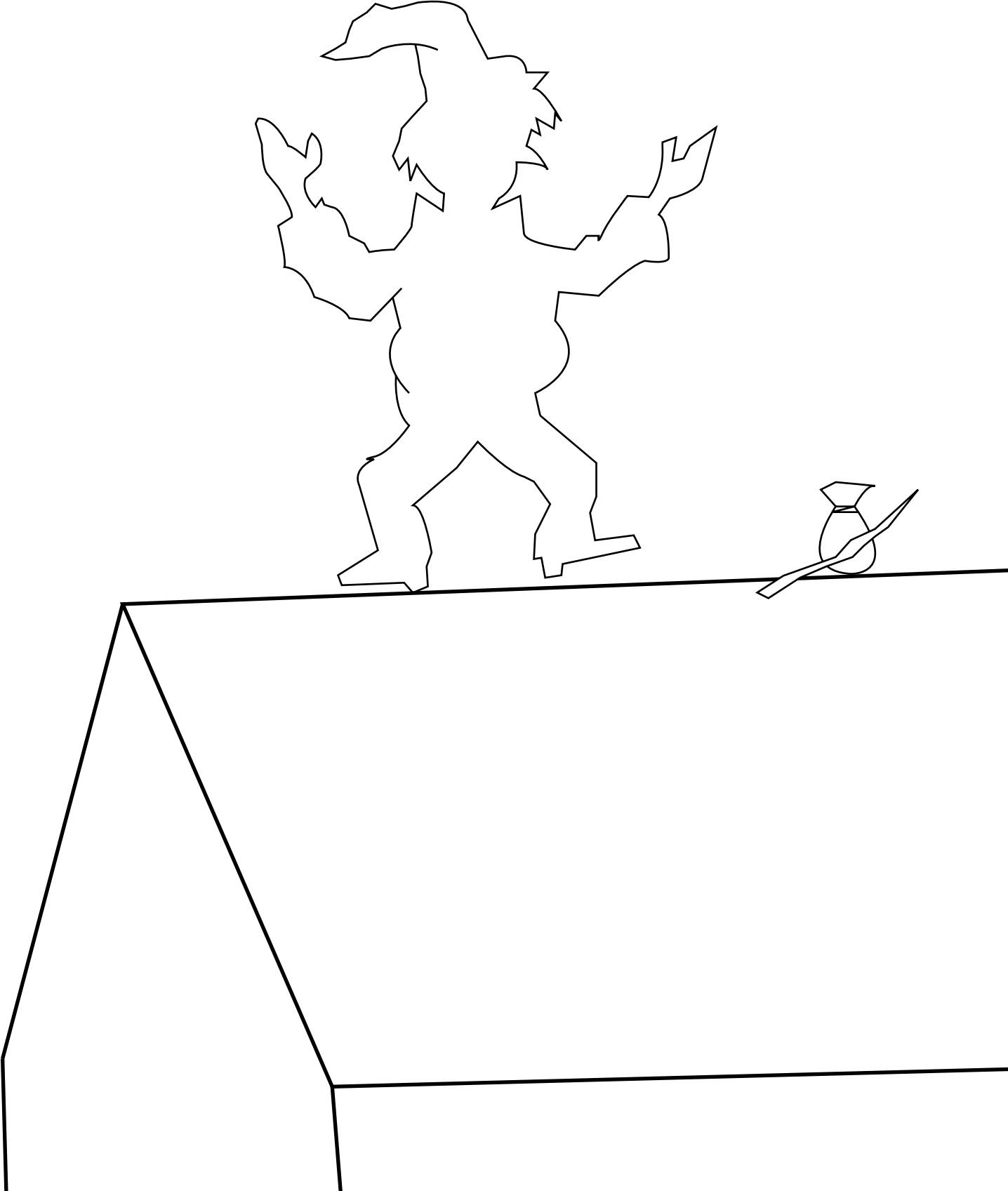
The belsnickels come in all shapes and all sizes



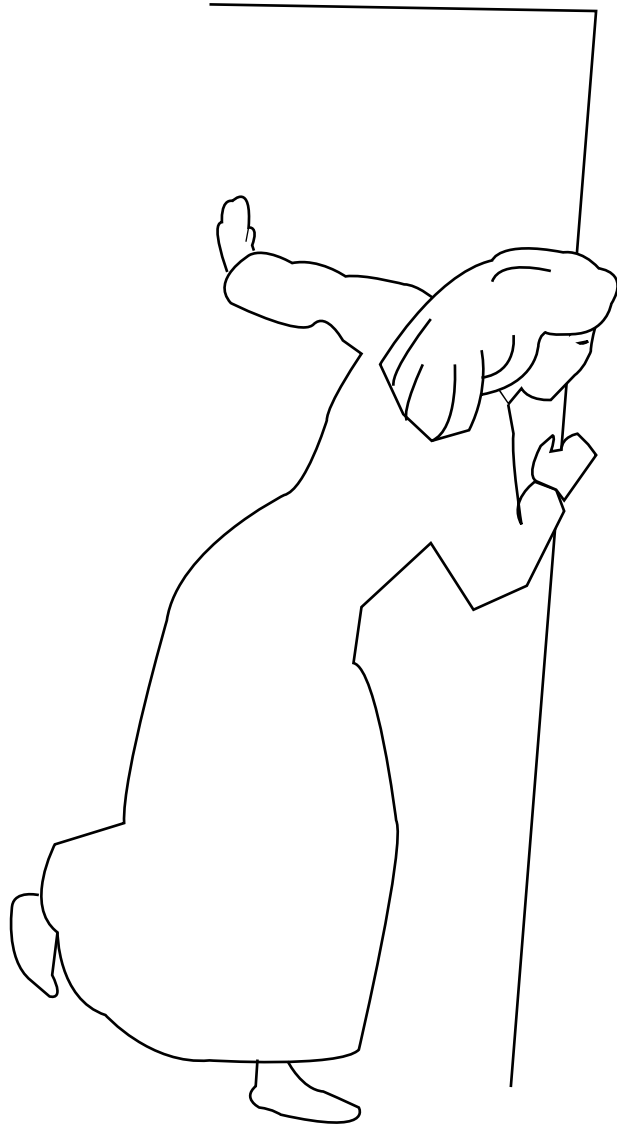
Carrying sticks and candy surprises.



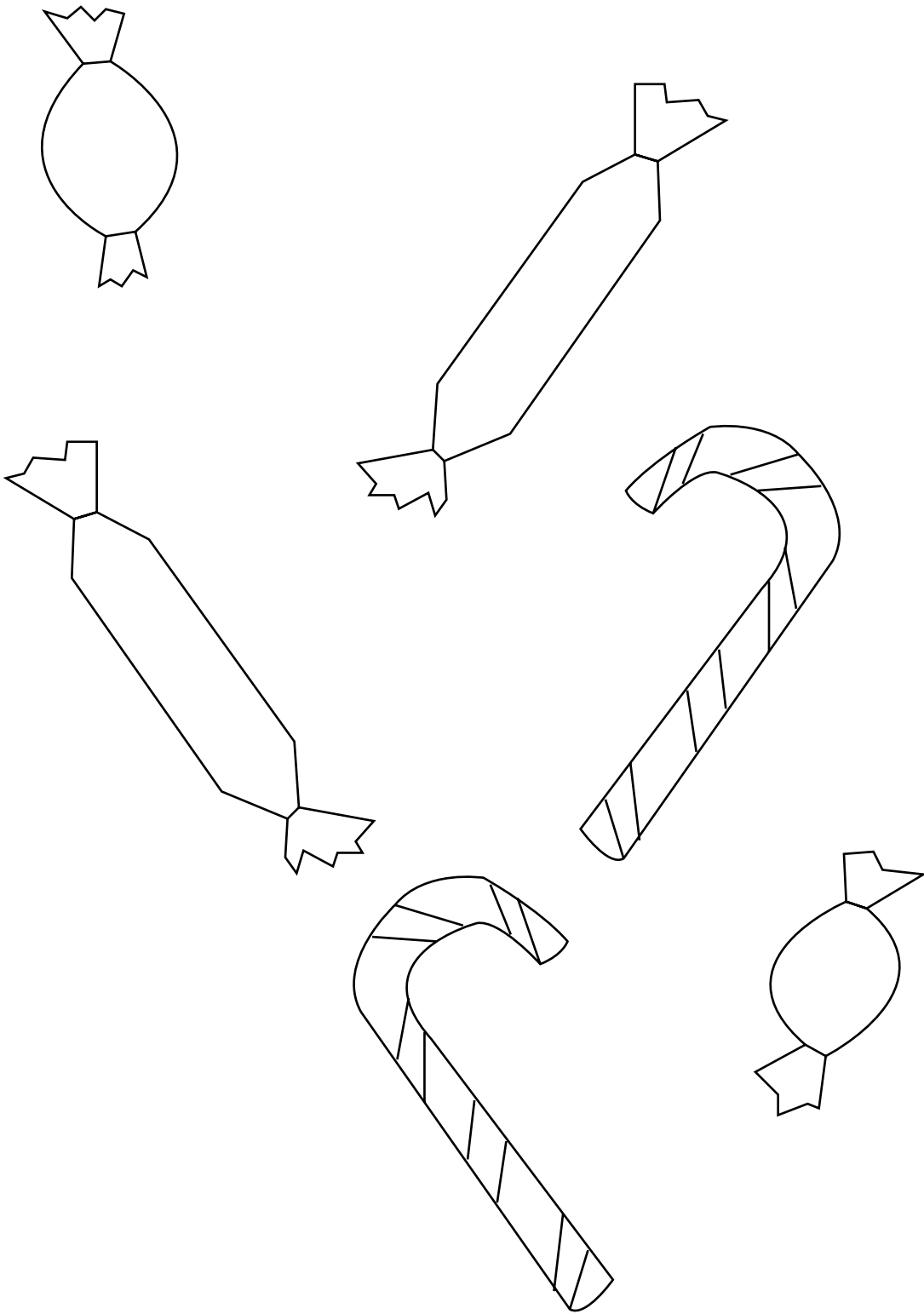
They bang on the roof and they scratch at the doors



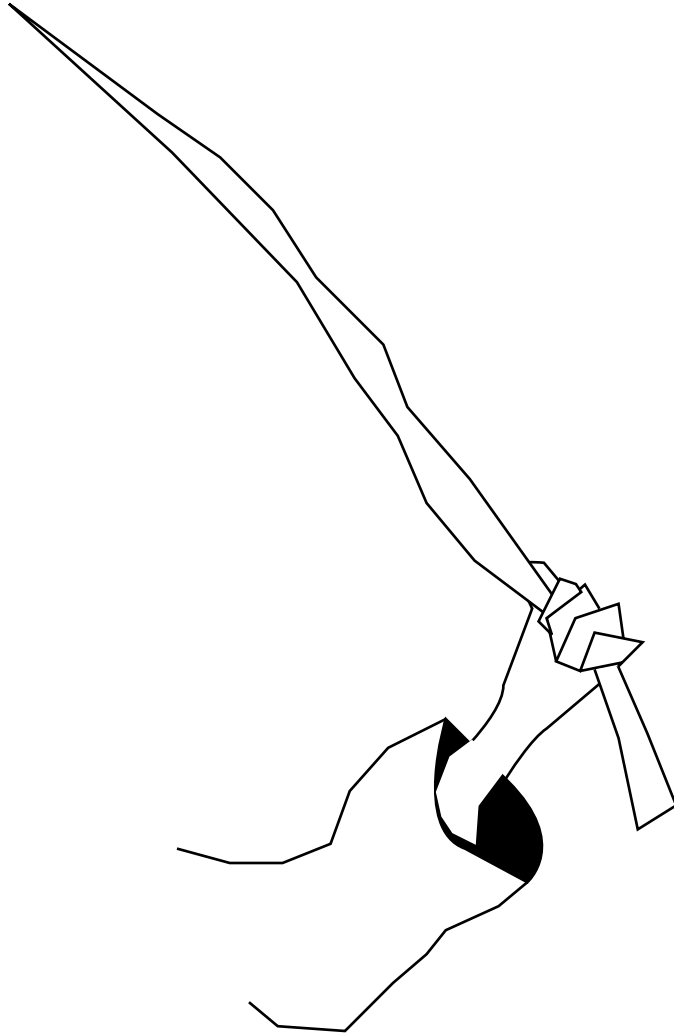
Frightening children awake before Yule.



They throw candy in houses where good children lie.



But bad children **BEWARE**
of those sticks they hold high!



Who are the Belsnickels?

Belsnickels are a part of the old Pennsylvanian German tradition. Every Christmas year, Belsnickels would go around, house to house, carrying sticks and candy. Good little children were given candy and the bad children were hit with the sticks. Sometimes there were parades with the Belsnickel present, tossing candies and nuts out to the children. The children who grabbed for the treats were also rapped across the knuckles by the switch the Belsnickel carried. It is said that most children had mixed feelings about Belsnickels, being both frightened of them and yet wanting the sweets that they tossed out to them.

When my father was a young boy, his uncles would come to the house and play Belsnickels by throwing stones onto the roof of the house and scratching at the windows. They would then open the door and throw candy inside the house for he and his brothers.

There are many descriptions of the Belsnickels. Mostly, they are short little men dressed like elves or women or in raggamuffin clothes. Some say they dress like chimney sweeps. They carry a switch or sticks and a sack of candy and nuts.