

Costumes have been selected, candy's been bought, and decoration's done. What's left to celebrate this spooky season?

Trick or Treat

R. Timkin was an elderly man who lived alone. He was a retired Navy man and had spent many years sailing all over the world under the United States flag.

Every day Eddie passed Mr. Timkin's house on his way to and from the school bus. On nice afternoons Mr. Timkin always sat on his front porch. At first Eddie and Mr. Timkin just waved to each other as Eddie went by. But after a while Eddie began to stop on his way home now and then to chat with Mr. Timkin. He liked to listen to the exciting stories that Mr. Timkin told about life on the sea and in strange faraway ports. One day Mr. Timkin taught Eddie how to fold a piece of paper and make an airplane. Soon Eddie and Mr. Timkin had become very good friends.

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As Halloween drew near, Eddie made plans to go trick or treating once again with his friends Boodles and Anna Patricia and Sidney. On Halloween night, the four children, dressed in their Halloween costumes, met at Sidney's house. Eddie, of course, was a sailor, Boodles was a hobo, Sidney was a ballet dancer, and Anna Patricia was an Indian.

Anna Patricia, the great talker, said, "I'm really an Indian princess. My name is Minihaha."

"Oh," said Eddie, who liked nothing better than to tease Anna Patricia, "so you're a little ha ha. I guess that means we'll be laughing a lot tonight. "



Trick-or-treating is one of the main traditions of Halloween. It has become socially expected that if one lives in a neighborhood with children to purchase candy in preparation for trick-or-treaters.

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Anna Patricia tossed her head and rattled her strings of beads. "I am an Indian princess," she repeated with great dignity.

"Well, Haha!" said Eddie. "Let's get moving along. We need lots of time if we're going to get any treats and do any tricks."

"Come along, Haha!" said Boodles, as he opened the door.

The four children went outside. Each one had a shopping bag for candy and a UNICEF box for pennies.

"Now," said Sidney, "where shall we go?" "Wherever we go," said Boodles, "I hope we get some peanut bars. I sure like peanut bars!"

"Boodles!" said Anna Patricia. "Don't you ever think about anything but candy?"

"Sure, Haha!" said Boodles. "Sometimes I think about ice cream."

"Look," said Eddie, "are you and little Haha going trick or treating or are you just going to stand there talking about food? We'll never get anything if we don't go soon. Remember, we're not the only kids out tonight."

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"Where shall we go first?" Sidney asked. "Let's go to Mr. Timkin's," said Eddie. "He's a friend of mine. He was a Navy man."

"Oh, I know who Mr. Timkin is," said Sidney.

"I see him sitting on his porch. He always waves to me."

"Okay, Eddie!" said Boodles. "Is that why you're dressed up like a sailor? I hope he won't give us hardtack or bully beef."

"What's that?" Anna Patricia asked.

Boodles laughed and said, "It's the grub that sailors always get in sea stories, and it doesn't sound as good as peanut bars!"

Eddie led the way to Mr. Timkin's house.

They climbed the steps onto the porch, and Eddie rang the bell. Soon footsteps sounded inside the house.

"He's coming!" said Anna Patricia.

"Yeah, I sure hope he has peanut bars for us," said Boodles.

In a moment, the porch light was turned on, the door opened, and Mr. Timkin appeared in his bathrobe. When he saw the children, he cried, "Oh, Halloween! I forgot all about it! Seems I can't keep track of the days. Being all alone, there's nobody here to tell me. Probably miss Christmas if somebody doesn't tell me in time." Then he threw up his hands and said, "I haven't a thing to put in your bags. I'm sorry."

"That's all right," Sidney said. "Do you have any pennies for our UNICEF boxes instead?"

Mr. Timkin felt in his pockets. "Not a cent," he said. "Not a cent to put in your boxes. I just forgot about Halloween. I'll do better next year if someone will just tell me."

Then Mr. Timkin held his hand out to Eddie and said, "I'm glad you've joined the Navy, Eddie."

"Sure!" said Eddie. "Someday I'll be Admiral Edward Wilson."

"Says you!" said Anna Patricia.

"Haha," said Eddie, "I'll be an admiral before you'll be an Indian."

Mr. Timkin laughed and closed the door.

As the children left the porch, Anna Patricia said, "Now we have to play a trick."

"Yes, a trick!" said Boodles and Sidney.

"He just forgot," said Eddie. "If he had remembered, he would have had something ready for us."

"That isn't any excuse," said Anna Patricia. "If I forgot to do my homework, I wouldn't be forgiven and neither would you, Eddie."

"I know a good trick," said Sidney. "My cousin told me about it."

"Well, what is it?" said Boodles.

"You take the gate from the fence and hide it.

It's a great trick."

"Let's do that!" Anna Patricia cried.

Eddie looked out toward the street. "I don't see how we can take his gate away, when he doesn't even have a fence."

"Oh!" exclaimed Eddie's three friends.

"We'll think of something else," said Anna Patricia.

"We could upset his rubbish cans," said Sidney. "That's another good trick."

"Great!" said Anna Patricia. "Let's do that." "We'll have to find the rubbish first," said Boodles, as they all ran off the porch.

They went completely around the house, but they couldn't find any rubbish cans.

"Oh, shucks!" said Sidney. "Rubbish must be in the garage."

"Too neat!" said Anna Patricia. "That's what this guy is, too neat."

"I know a good trick," said Boodles.

"What is it?" asked Anna Patricia.

"You push the doorbell," said Boodles, "and then you put a pin in it. The doorbell goes on ringing and ringing. It's a good trick."

Anna Patricia squealed. "Let's do it!" she cried.

"It sounds great. Who has a pin?"

"Not me," said Sidney.

"Gee!" said Boodles. "I thought girls always had pins. How about you, Eddie? Do you have a pin?"

"What would I be doing with a pin?" Eddie answered, "Sailors don't carry pins."

Anna Patricia pointed to Boodles' tattered jacket and said, "You look as though you were put together with pins, Hobo. Can't you find one?"

Boodles looked at the lapel of his old jacket.

"What do you know?" he cried. "Here's a pin."

The children ran up to the front door, and Sidney pushed the doorbell button as Boodles put the pin in the crack. "Beat it now!" he said to his friends. "Beat it!"

The children ran off the porch and down the steps. At the foot of the steps, Anna Patricia tripped and fell. When she hit the ground, one of her strings of beads broke and the beads scattered all over the ground. As Eddie helped her up, Anna Patricia cried, "Oh, no! I've broken my mother's string of beads, and I'll never find them in the dark. Oh, what will I do?"

Just then Mr. Timkin answered the ringing bell. "What's the matter out here?" he called.

"Anna Patricia fell down," said Eddie.

"Oh, did she hurt herself?" Mr. Timkin asked. "No," said Eddie, as loud as he could above the ringing bell. "She just broke her mother's beads."

"Eddie Wilson!" cried Anna Patricia. "How do you know I didn't hurt myself? My leg hurts. Maybe I broke it."

"You're standing on your legs," said Eddie, "so I don't think you broke it."

"Well, I broke my mother's beads," said Anna Patricia, "and I can't find them."

Then Mr. Timkin said, "If I can stop this blankety-blank bell from ringing, I'll get a flashlight and I'll help the little girl find her beads."

As the children watched guiltily, Mr. Timkin examined the doorbell and easily pulled out the pin. Now there was quiet again. Without saying a word, he disappeared and soon was back with the flashlight and a paper bag. He flashed the light all around and helped the children hunt for the beads. As they found them they put them into the paper bag.

When all of the beads were recovered, Anna Patricia said, "Oh, thank you, Mr. Timkin. I never could have found them without your flashlight. "

"Glad to help!" Mr. Timkin was laughing as he looked at the children. "That was a good trick you played on me. I used to stick pins in bells when I was a kid too. Serves me right for not having anything for you on Halloween. But you come back later. I'll see if I can find something in my freezer. Maybe I have something there that I can give you."

"We'll be back, Mr. Timkin," said Eddie.

"Come on," he called to his friends, "we better go see what stuff is left."

The children needed no urging, and they quickly ran off to make more calls. All of them were uneventful, and they gathered their treats without any further problem. About an hour later, they were back on Mr. Timkin's porch. Boodles rang the bell, but this time he did not put a pin in it.

A few moments later Mr. Timkin opened the door. "Well now," he said, "if you children will come into the house, I think I have something for you."

The children entered the house, and Mr.

Timkin led them to the kitchen. On the table there was a beautiful chocolate cake covered with chocolate icing and decorated with nuts. Mr. Timkin pointed to the cake and said, "My daughter baked that for me some time ago. I decided to put it into the freezer and keep it for some special occasion, and tonight is a very special occasion."

Soon Mr. Timkin had cocoa ready to pour into five mugs. Then he cut five large pieces of cake, and the children sat down to a real party. At last Mr. Timkin said, "Must be nearly your bedtime."

"Guess so!" the children agreed.

"It's been a wonderful Halloween!" said Anna Patricia.

"Best chocolate cake I ever ate," said Boodles. "It was a great Halloween!" said Sidney.

"Thanks for the treat."

When Eddie thanked Mr. Timkin, he saluted him, and Mr. Timkin returned Eddie's salute with a flourish.

Outside Anna Patricia said, "I'm glad we didn't play a bad trick on Mr. Timkin. He's such a nice man."

"He's a great guy!" said Eddie. "I wish I could have served on the same ship with him."