

**The Curator Says...**After reading Patty Disque's take on Trick-or-Treating, you will have a different view of Halloween. This story is so funny you will likely want to tell your friends about it, your adult friends, not the children. Hilarious, surprising, and unbelievable, Patty brings a wonderful creative imagination and a mischievous sense of humor to the written word. Enjoy!

## **Trick-or-Treating – An Adult Version**

### **Patty Disque**

My husband, Jim, and I were married immediately after I graduated from Auburn in December 1963. Looking back, I realize that we had never discussed Halloween or even given the subject a thought. We moved to the Phoenix/Scottsdale, Arizona, area by the middle of January. After a few months in an apartment in Phoenix, we moved to an apartment in Scottsdale, where I had a job.

That year in the Scottsdale apartment I took note of Jim's reluctance to participate in handing out candy for the Trick-or-Treaters. He was, however, most concerned with what candy I was buying in anticipation of enjoying the leftovers. Whenever our doorbell would ring, he would pretend to be reading so that I would go to the door.

Sometime after 8:45 p.m. I assumed there would be no more Halloween revelers, we turned out the front lights and were bothered no more. I remember asking him why he was so uncomfortable handing out the candy. His answer, while somewhat lame in my estimation, was that he grew up on a farm, and they never had any Trick-or-Treaters, nor had he ever gone Trick-or-Treating. In his defense, he had attended a one-room school through the seventh grade, and he told me that they had a small celebration at school, but they never wore costumes to school.

I remember thinking "Poor Jim" as I recalled my own experiences growing up with the annual parades and the carnivals that took place each Halloween at school. Weird children who did not like Halloween were not foreign to me because my brother, eight years younger, never wore a costume while I was around and to my knowledge never went Trick-or-Treating. However, he always asked me to share my Halloween candy. Fortunately, I had had experience with someone with a Halloween phobia!

The following Halloween was the first in our new house, and once again I found Jim most reluctant to hand out the candy. I think I made some comment about his need to "get over" his fear of Trick-or-Treaters. As the neighborhood Trick-or-Treaters continued to ring the bell until about 8:30 p.m., I became more annoyed.

A few minutes later, I told Jim that I felt sure that all of the neighborhood children had visited our house and at this hour on a school night, the only others might be older junior high or high school kids. I explained that I really needed to get to bed early because I had to be at work early the next morning and I needed a shower. I asked if he would be

ready in case any older kids came to the door. Jim's first thought was to turn out the lights and pretend we had gone to bed. However, I suggested that if he was going to continue to watch TV plus the fact that we had no curtains in the front of the house, anyone approaching the front door could easily tell that someone was home. I could tell that he realized it was possible. I said that there could be some teenagers who were willing to "trick" us if we failed to answer the door. I probably said, "What is the big deal of handing out a hand full of candy?"

I explained that all he had to do was to go to the door, smile, say "Happy Halloween!" as he grabbed a handful of candy from the plastic pumpkin and place it in their bags. Perhaps he felt guilty since he had enjoyed a night of relaxing in front of the TV while I answered the door at least ten times. He agreed and I assured him he would do a fine job.

I went to the master bedroom and turned on the shower with the true intent of taking a shower and getting into bed early. As I took off my clothes a great idea flashed through my head. In a split second I grabbed a long coat that I had not worn in the last year. I found a wide brimmed hat for my head, put a red scarf around my neck, as I pulled the hat down to hide my eyes. Our bedroom had a sliding door to the backyard, and we had no fence. Very quietly, with the shower still running, I went out the door, ran around to the front door, and rung the doorbell.

Smiling Jim was well prepared as he opened the door, immediately putting his hand into the pumpkin. This was just as I opened the coat and in a disguised voice said, "Trick-or-Treat!"

It took him about fifteen seconds to recognize me, find his voice, and let go of the big handful of candy so he could retrieve his hand from the pumpkin. When he did become lucid and his hand was free, he turned off the outside lights, grabbed my hand and pulled me in the door. He was in the first stages of hyperventilating

His comment, as I was doubled over in laughter, was, "I can't believe you did that!" I explained that I had not rung any other doorbell and I had not "flashed" the neighbors. While I was still laughing he went out the side door to check the street to see if any errant Trick-or-Treaters had witnessed that scene.

As I look back on that moment, I am so sorry that I did not have some device to film his reaction to the scene, but then again, I definitely would not want it to be on YouTube no matter how many "views" I received!

After that year and three children later, Jim actually got into handing out candy and answering the door on Halloween. He has even become not completely uncomfortable wearing a costume, but tolerant on occasions when I insist. He actually enjoyed going Trick or Treating with our children. I count that as a "maturing experience."

Frankly, I have thought many times about trying it again, but after 52 years of marriage I think instead of being startled, he would say, "Again, REALLY?" as he would be

wishing for a 24-year-old to ring his doorbell and “flash” him once again! However, I do get a certain bit of pleasure knowing he would have led a very dull life with another wife!



**Patty Disque Says...** I enjoyed my English classes growing up, and I learned quite a bit in the grammar department. However, I never had a teacher tell me that I had a “gift” for writing. I have had people tell me that I can tell a good story, but those stories have all been true and not at all like writing the same story. Writing takes practice!

Having grown up in Montgomery, Alabama, I graduated from Auburn University with a degree in Interior Design when the department was part of the School of Architecture. I married two weeks after graduation, and we moved first to Scottsdale, Arizona, for six years, then Houston, Texas, for four years, and then to Madison, New Jersey, for 37 years. Our son was born in Arizona and the two girls in Texas, but they grew up in the wonderful small town of Madison.

For more than fifty years, I have been in the interior design business that I love. Through the years I have written various doggerel poems for family occasions and friends, but while they were funny, rhyming, and true, those poems were certainly not worth preserving for my ten grandchildren.

Once we moved to Auburn four years ago, my husband began to take a couple of OLLI classes. During the summer he brought home the OLLI class description for fall, and the first class that interested me was Writing Our Lives. I signed up. What a surprise I had at my first class to find there were people in the class who were taking the class for the seventh or eighth year! Now that I have experienced the addiction I understand why it takes so long to write one’s life story. It is fun, and I have only just begun.