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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Twinkling Feet's Halloween

On a certain Halloween, happy little elves danced around a bright green ring in the meadow. In the center stood the Little Fiddler, the music elf, playing cheerful music and keeping time with his head and his little foot. The faster he played, the happier the creatures danced. How wonderful it was to dance and spin to the Fairy music that the happy little elf conjured from his little instrument. No wonder the elves laughed until they couldn't anymore. And so did their little musician, laughing very hard.

Now, there was an elf named Twinkling Feet who was the best dancer in the ring. He made such funny jumps that his companions screamed with laughter as they watched him. Suddenly, he thought about how fun it would be to play a trick on all the little dancers.

Slyly, he tripped his dancing partner and the two fell into the grass, dragging one little elf after another until everyone in the circle lay flat on the ground. There they were, a writhing mass of green



jackets and red caps. It took a while for them to get back on their feet. Many of them laughed hard, but some were so badly injured that they had to slip away and wash their wounds in the evening dew.

"Who stumbled first in the ring?"

"Who made us fall on our jackets?"

"Who ruined our Halloween dance?" one little elf asked after another.

"Twinkling Feet and I were the first to fall," said the dancing partner. "I don't know what got our feet tangled, do you?" he asked, laughing.

But Twinkling Feet's face looked so strange and sad that his companion quickly asked, "What's wrong with you?"

"I don't know," said the little elf.

"Yeah, look at him," another little elf cried.

"Does something hurt you?" several other creatures asked.

"I feel very strange," said Twinkling Feet.

"Do you have what mortals call 'pain'?" his companion asked.

"I don't know what that is, but I feel very, very strange. Please ask Little Fiddler, the music elf, if he knows what's wrong with me."

The group of elves that had gathered around Twinkling Feet immediately went to fetch the music elf. Little Fiddler stared at the elf, shook his white head, and said slowly, "Something terrible has happened. Twinkling Feet has lost his smile!"

"Yes, he's lost his smile!" all the other elves screamed.

"He really has lost his smile," repeated Little Fiddler.

"Oh, I've lost my smile," groaned Twinkling Feet. "Oh, please tell me what to do."

"There's nothing else to do but search. You can't dance in an elf ring without your smile, and be careful, you must find your smile before midnight."

"But what if I can't find it?" cried the frightened elf.

"Then you're an elf without a smile, that's all," explained Little Fiddler.

At these awful words, the faces of all the elves became very serious. They looked at each other very concerned and said, "An elf without a smile! How terrible!"

Then they cried, "Go search, Twinkling Feet. Maybe you'll find it before midnight. Start now. Think how sad it will be if you can never dance in the ring again."

"Where should I go, Little Fiddler?" Twinkling Feet asked.

"Well, you could ask Jack O'Lantern," the music elf said. "He flutters around the meadow all night. Look, there he goes by the brook."

The little elf ran as fast as his legs could carry him. It was not easy to get close enough to Jack O'Lantern so he could hear him. Twinkling Feet was almost about to give up the chase when Jack stopped, stuck his head out of his lantern, and shouted, "Do you want to talk to me?"

"Don't you know me?" shouted the elf. "I'm Twinkling Feet."

"What happened to you?" Jack asked. "You're the strangest creature I've ever seen."

"I've lost my smile. Please tell me, Jack O'Lantern, have you seen my smile?"

"Your smile lost!" repeated the lantern man, looking serious. "No wonder I didn't recognize you. I'm sorry to say I haven't seen anything of your smile."

"Do you know anyone who could help me, Jack?" asked Twinkling Feet. "Oh, please help me find my smile."

"Well, let me think...You could ask the Happy Little Witch. Her eyes are very sharp. She's in the meadow now, looking for a good rice straw to use as a broomstick. When she finds one, I'll take her to the village where she'll have a lot of fun at the children's party. It's Halloween, you know. Come on, jump in my lantern and I'll take you to her."

Twinkling Feet jumped into the small lantern, and together they set off for the meadow. As they approached, the Happy Little Witch shouted, "I've found a good rice straw for a broomstick, Jack, but I've lost my glasses. Come on, maybe you can help me find my glasses. I can't go to the village without my glasses. Who's that with you in the lantern?"

"An elf who wants to ask you something," said Jack the Lantern, as he opened his door to let Twinkling Feet out. Then the lantern man hurried off to look for the witch's glasses.

"Please help me, Happy Little Witch, I've lost my smile," said Twinkling Feet.

"Your smile lost! And on Halloween! Well, no wonder I didn't recognize you. You're the strangest elf I've ever seen. Tell me how you lost your smile."

But Twinkling Feet didn't answer her question. He said meekly, "Have you seen my smile?"

"No, my little man. I'm sorry to say I haven't seen your smile," said the Happy Little Witch.

"An elf can't dance without his smile," sighed Twinkling Feet.

"No, he really can't. Goodness gracious, I feel sorry for you," said the Happy Little Witch, shaking her head.

"And if an elf loses something on Halloween, he has to find it before midnight or give it up forever."

"I could have helped you any other evening, but you see, I always spend Halloween in the village with the children. I'll be late tonight if I don't find those glasses." And she began searching for her glasses again. The elf looked at her for a moment. Then he asked, "Do children laugh a lot on Halloween?"

"Well, my little man, it's the time of year when they laugh the most. Tonight there's a witch's party. I'll secretly join the children and play all kinds of tricks for their pleasure. It's just too bad that I lost those glasses."

"I'll help you look, Happy Little Witch," said the elf. "I suppose I must give up my smile because I can't ask anyone else. Please tell me

what your glasses look like."

"They're two round glass windows that I wear in front of my eyes when I fly through the air on my broomstick," said the Happy Little Witch.



Immediately the elf began to search. He looked carefully at every stem in the meadow, but he couldn't find anything that looked like "two round glass panes."

"Maybe you can't find anything lost on Halloween," he said to himself.

He slowly walked back to the place where he had left the Happy Little Witch. When he saw her, he stared at something above her head.

"Please tell me more about your glasses," said Twinkling Feet. "Are your glasses like the two glass panes on the front of your hat?"

"On the front of my hat!" exclaimed the witch, reaching her hand to her hat to figure out what the little elf meant. Then she burst into laughter and said, "Well, well! Strange things happen on Halloween! Come on, Jack O' Lantern. Come here! The elf has found my glasses. My glasses have been on top of my head the whole time!" And she turned to Twinkling Feet and said, "Come with us to the village to see the children's merriment. I'm sure Jack will carry you in his lantern."

"Of course I will," said the lantern man. "And while you're playing tricks at the children's party, I'll take him wherever he wants to go. It's still early before midnight."

"I want to see the children and hear them laugh," said Twinkling Feet.

The Happy Little Witch put on her glasses and climbed onto her broomstick. The elf jumped into the lantern and the three sailed away through the air. When they

approached the village, the Happy Little Witch descended to the ground.

"We'll meet here again before the party's over, Jack O' Lantern," she said. "I'll leave before the children take off their masks. Meanwhile, let Twinkling Feet see how much fun the children are having at the party."

Then she ran down the village street where she joined a group of merry little boys and girls on their way to the party. They wore black dresses, tall pointed hats, and funny masks. No one spoke a word, but Twinkling Feet heard their cheerful laughter.

He slipped out of the lantern and ran as fast as he could to the children. But before he could reach them, a tiny creature that somersaulted rapidly approached him. The creature climbed onto the small elf and... disappeared into his mouth. Twinkling Feet burst into the happiest laughter ever and ran back to Jack Lantern.

"I've found my smile again, my own sweet little laughter! Oh, I'm so happy! Jack, please take me back to the fairy ring. Hooray, I've found my smile again!" He jumped into the little man's lantern and they flew away over the meadows. When they approached the green ring where the elves were still dancing, the elf happily shouted, "I've found my laughter! I've found my own sweet little laughter!"

"Welcome back, Twinkling Feet," answered the dancers. He jumped out of the lantern and joined the other cheerful elves. After a while, when they stopped dancing, Little Fiddler slipped up to Twinkling Feet and slyly whispered, "Always keep a good eye on your smile while you dance."