



Ririro

READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

On Halloween Night

Laura Rountree Smith

In the quiet woods, under the pale, bright moon of Hallowe'en night, six witches assembled. Clad in long black capes and pointed hats, they gripped broomsticks firmly in their hands. Their presence filled the still night air with an eerie essence as they recited haunting rhymes, their voices overlapping and echoing in the emptiness around them.

They warned of the fright they would cause to any mortals who dared to venture out on such a night. Each of them took turns sharing tales of misbehaved children: a boy who cries when he goes upstairs, a boy who never says his prayers, a girl who never ceases her teasing, and another who never says "Please". With a sinister laugh, they finished their recitations and broke into a song. Their harmonies merged with the rustling of leaves, and their bodies swayed, moving in a ghostly dance, two by two, until they disappeared into the night.

In stark contrast, the following day held a much different scene. Within a schoolroom, a stern teacher admonished a group of students. Among them were the four children who had been subjects of the witches' tales. There was Little Boo-Hoo, who was perpetually late; Little Never-Care, who was careless enough to forget his prayers; Miss Teaser, who derived pleasure from annoying others; and Mr. Never-Say-Please, who often neglected politeness.

The students, who had been kept after school for their poor behavior, were urged to run home as it was Hallowe'en and the witches were believed to be out. Little did they know, the witches were peeping through a window, their eyes gleaming with mischief. The children merely laughed, claiming they weren't afraid of "silly witches".

Later that day, the children were hurrying through the woods, four of them lagging behind. As they made their way, they sang songs of autumn and Hallowe'en, unaware of the lurking witches. Suddenly, strange sounds filled the woods - owls hooting and cats meowing in an uncanny language that only the witches seemed to understand.



Emerging from the darkness, the witches circled the children, reciting an enchanting spell. The spell turned the children into doll-like statues, a cruel punishment for their ill-mannered ways. The witches then summoned owls and cats who joined the witches in their Hallowe'en revels, leaving the transformed children behind.

Eventually, the silence of the night was broken by the sound of trumpets, signaling the arrival of Columbus and his sailors. They were a lively bunch, their songs and dances echoing through the woods. The discovery of the statue-like children perplexed them, prompting Columbus to call for a breaking of the magic spell cast by the witches.

As if heeded by an unseen force, the witches, owls, and cats reappeared. They shared valuable lessons with the children, warning them to be good and polite and to remember the Hallowe'en night. With their message delivered, the magical creatures retreated, leaving the children with Columbus and his sailors.

The determined Columbus devised a plan. They brought out a large flag, its colors bold under the moonlight. As the sailors formed a circle around the children, they recited verses and sang the Star-Spangled Banner. To their surprise and relief, the children gradually came back to life, joining in the chorus.

The enchanting night ended with Columbus and the children waving the flag in unison, a symbol of their triumph over the Hallowe'en spell. The children learned their lesson, forever marked by the peculiar events of that Hallowe'en night.

Stories help us explore cultures, learn moral lessons, connect with nature — or simply have fun. That's why ririro.com offers 3,000+ free stories — fairy tales, fables, bedtime stories, myths and more — for every age, in 13 languages, with free printable PDFs and often audio. Reading should be a right, not a privilege. Share ririro.com and spread the joy of reading.

Instagram: @ririro_reading · Pinterest: pinterest.com/ririrocom