



Ririro

READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

The Halloween Picture Show

Elizabeth Frances

Once upon a time in a village not so far away, there was an annual tradition. Every Halloween, the village would put on a special Shadow Picture Show, enchanting and thrilling all the little ones before they were tucked in for bed.

The show began with the enchanting image of Mother Halloween. She was an old, wise crone with a nose and chin as pointy as a nutcracker's. She hobbled along with her knotted cane, which she clung onto for support. Her high, peaked hat made from old newspapers rustled in the wind, and a small shawl kept her warm. Mother Halloween was a spectacle, and every year, as her shadowy figure moved along the curtain, the children's eyes would widen with wonder and a touch of fear.

"Who's next?" they'd ask with hushed excitement. Mother Halloween's familiars were just as mysterious. They saw witches with pointy hats and broomsticks, goblins with wicked grins, elves with pointy ears, bats fluttering, and black cats crossing their paths. There were giants and dwarfs too, and the children were enchanted by the shadows of these magical beings that danced across the curtain.

Suddenly, little boys entered with pumpkins cradled in their arms. They sat down, and in the blink of an eye, transformed the pumpkins into spooky Jack-o'-lanterns. When they lit the candles inside, the children gasped, marveling at the realistic orange glows and eerie faces.

But the show was not all spooky. Next, the villagers acted out their favourite Halloween tricks. There was bobbing for apples, and trying to bite a hanging apple without using hands. A hush fell over the audience as a group of children tried to peel an apple in one long, unbroken strip. They tossed the peels over their left shoulders, causing an uproar of laughter when some landed on unsuspecting spectators.

Then, there was the Fortune Cake, sliced by village girls. Each slice held a different fortune. A ring, a key, a button - it was all part of the fun. Laughter echoed through the night as they acted out the funny fortunes.

As the night grew darker and the village clock struck twelve, a girl walked across the stage, holding a mirror and a candle, walking backward as was the tradition. She was supposed to see the face of her future love, and sure enough, a shadowy figure of a young man appeared behind her. Startled, she screamed, but laughter bubbled up as the young man stepped forward, and they shared a sweet kiss before leaving the stage hand in hand.



One by one, everyone went home, their laughter and chatter fading into the night. Some sauntered romantically under the moonlit sky, while others walked briskly, eager to get home and share tales of the night.

As the night came to an end, a silhouette of a man and a woman appeared, cuddling in a hammock under a smiling cardboard moon. The man in the moon winked at them, his cardboard eyelid moving up and down, causing giggles among the children.

The final act was the shadowy image of a wedding, a natural progression of love and the beautiful ending of a Halloween night. The children clapped and laughed as the wedding unfolded, their eyes wide with delight.

To end the show, nine tiny children stepped forward. They stood in a row and held up large cardboard letters over their heads, spelling out "good night." The crowd erupted in cheers and claps as the lights dimmed. It was the perfect ending to a magical Halloween Shadow Picture Show, a story the children would remember as they drifted off to sleep, dreaming of witches, goblins, elves, and love under the Halloween moon.

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