

Will and His Dog and the Halloween Adventure

Copyright 2020 Paul Cook

Cover Image by Paul Cook

### **Smashwords Edition License Notes**

Thanks for downloading this ebook. You are welcome to share it with your friends. This book may be reproduced, copied and distributed for non-commercial purposes, provided the book remains in its original form. Thank you for your support.

Will and His Dog and the Halloween Adventure

It was late in the afternoon on Halloween. The street lights were on and it was going dark.

Will and his best friend Charlie had been allowed out to go trick-or-treating until five o'clock. They were only allowed to visit houses that they knew the occupants of and they were not allowed to venture more than two streets away from Will's house.

Charlie was dressed as a zombie and Will was wearing a ghost outfit with a mask which made him look very scary. Every house that the boys had visited that day so far had been empty because the occupants hadn't returned from work yet.

"I think we should visit Mrs Green's cottage," said Will. "I know her and she is a friendly, nice old lady who will give us some sweets."

"Ok," said Charlie, "is it far?"

"No," replied Will, "it is just on the other side of the park."

The boys didn't really want to walk through the park in the dark because sometimes older boys and girls went there. They approached the gate that led into the park and had a look around. There were some kids on the swings just chatting but they were far away on the other side of the park. The path that Will and Charlie would need to take did not go near them.

Will and Charlie entered the park and began to walk quickly along the path. The kids on the swings hadn't appeared to notice them until they were halfway through the park. Two of older boys suddenly got up from the swings and started walking towards Will and Charlie.

"What do we do now?" said Will in a worried voice.

The older boys started shouting "Wooh! A zombie and a ghost! Wow, we are so scared."

They started pretending to cry with fear. The other kids on the swings started to laugh loudly and made silly noises to pretend that they too were scared of Will and Charlie.

Will knew one of the boys was called Peter Proctor. Peter was a nasty boy and he was known for picking on younger kids whenever he saw them in the village. Will's mum didn't like him or his mother.

Peter Proctor and his friend started running towards Will and Charlie.

"Run!" shouted Charlie.

Both boys knew that the older kids would be able to run faster than they could. Hopefully they had enough of a head start to get out of the park and onto the street where there were adults around.

Will and Charlie crashed through the gate that led them from the park and onto the street. The older boys gave up their chase and went back to the swings.

Will, who was panting said, "that was close. Right, there is Mrs Green's cottage over there."

Will and Charlie walked over to the cottage, which looked old and opened the creaky garden gate. They walked up the garden path and knocked on the old wooden door. A few moments later the door creaked open and an old lady, who Will knew to be Mrs Green, stood before them.

“Trick-or-treat!” both boys shouted together.

Mrs Green shouted, “get away from here you horrible lot or I’ll set my dogs on you.” She hit Charlie over the head with her walking stick and started waving it in the air whilst shouting at them. Will didn’t think that Mrs Green had a dog but he wasn’t about to wait around and find out.

Will and Charlie ran back down the garden path, through the gate but didn’t shut it. They ran for about a minute before they stopped.

“Ow, my head,” moaned Charlie.

“What a miserable old woman,” said Will.

“She is probably a real life witch,” replied Charlie. The boys looked at each other, both out of breath from the running, and started to laugh.

“That was the last house that I know,” said Will sadly. “We haven’t done very well with our first trick-or-treating.”

“I know of one more house where we could go,” said Charlie excitedly. “It is around the corner and my mum knows the people there. Mr and Mrs Prior live there and they are nice.”

Will thought about it and agreed that it would be worth a try.

The boys walked down the street and turned left into the adjoining road. The third house on the left was their destination and Charlie stopped at the bottom of the drive. The house had lights on in several rooms and so the boys knew that somebody was home.

Will followed Charlie up the path to the front door and whispered, “do you think they will be friendly towards us?”

Charlie replied, “they have two older boys who aren’t very nice but the mum and dad are fine. I know them because they go to our church.”

When Charlie pressed the doorbell, Will noticed that there wasn't a car on the drive. He was just about to mention this to Charlie and that perhaps the lack of car meant that the mum and dad were not home.

Suddenly the front door opened. There, stood before them, was one of the older boys. He grinned and said, "hello lads, are you here to trick-or-treat us?" Will and Charlie nodded.

"Ok," said the older boy, "wait here and I'll go and get you a treat from the kitchen." Will and Charlie looked at each other and both felt excited that they were going to finally be given some sweets.

Will heard a window opening immediately above the front door where the boys were stood waiting for their treat. Another boy leaned out of the window and emptied a large bucket of freezing cold water over Will and Charlie. They shrieked with surprise and were soaking wet and freezing cold.

The boy who had gone to the kitchen returned and threw a bag of flour at Will and Charlie. The flour stuck to the water on their costumes.

Will and Charlie turned and ran back down the path. The boy with the flour chased them and threw an egg which hit Will on the back of his head. The egg cracked and the yolk stuck to his hair. Will and Charlie could hear the older boys laughing but they didn't stop running until they reached Will's house.

When Will's mum opened the front door to let the boys in, she took one look at them and threw her hands up in the air in despair.

"Whatever happened to you?" she cried.

Will started to cry and he told his mum what had happened. Will's mum was very angry and said that his dad would be even more angry when he returned home from work. She made Will and Charlie stand in the kitchen on some newspaper and take off their costumes. The costumes were put into a plastic bag and taken out to the bin.

Will had a shower while Charlie drank a cup of hot chocolate. Then, Charlie had a shower while Will had a cup of milk.

Charlie went home wearing some of Will's clothes and Will sat with his mum and waited for his dad to get in from work.

When Will's dad had come home and he learned what had happened he was very cross. Will's dad rang Charlie's dad and they both left their houses and went to the house where the older boys lived to speak to their parents.

Will was so very tired and he just wanted to go to sleep. He hadn't had time to carve up the pumpkin that his mum had bought so she suggested telling him a story about a pumpkin instead. Will settled down beside his dog on the carpet in front of the fire.

Will's mum began her story.

“One morning in early October a pumpkin was growing on the soil in a field somewhere in the middle of nowhere. This pumpkin was with lots of other pumpkins. All of the pumpkins growing in the field were more or less the same size, colour, weight and shape.

This particular pumpkin was large, fat and orange, as most pumpkins are, and had a little stalk sprouting from the top of its head. The farmer who owned the field grew pumpkins only once each year, and just for Halloween, which falls on the last day of October.

It is traditional to buy a pumpkin for Halloween each year, carve out the middle, cut scary eyes and a mouth into one side of it and place a lit candle inside. The pumpkin is then placed in the window on Halloween when it goes dark so that anything scary will see it and not bother that house.

Later that morning the farmer and his two lads cut the stalks of all the pumpkins from the field. It took the three of them about an hour as there were about one hundred pumpkins and they were very large and very heavy. All of the pumpkins were laid out in rows beside a barn on the lane. When the pumpkins were all finally cut away from their stalks, one of the lads sprayed them all with a power hose to wash the soil and dirt off. The pumpkins were then loaded onto a trailer which was coupled to a big green tractor and then they were driven into town to the grocers.

The pumpkin that we are following in this particular story was placed right on the top of the big pile of pumpkins on the back of the trailer. As the tractor transported the pumpkins into town, the pumpkins on top of the pile had the best view and they could see the fields and trees, rivers and houses as they drove down the lanes. A cheeky robin landed on one of the pumpkins and hitched a ride for a while as it obviously couldn't be bothered to fly and wanted a rest. Clever robin.

It began to rain lightly and all of the pumpkins were very clean by the time they reached the town because the rainwater had washed away all of the soil on them that the farmer's lad had missed when he had sprayed them with his hose earlier that morning.

The grocer was waiting for the tractor to arrive at his shop and was very cross with the farmer who apparently was late. The grocer called out two of his assistants to help the farmer and his lads unload the pumpkins from the trailer and put them into some very large boxes. By the time all of the pumpkins had been unloaded there were five enormous boxes full of pumpkins. The farmer didn't know how the grocer expected to sell them all but he knew that he would because the kids from the town and surrounding villages always came to this shop to buy their pumpkins for Halloween ever year.

The grocer made his assistants place the boxes in various places around his shop; one box was placed outside on the pavement.

Many people came into the grocers over the next few days, people who didn't usually come into the shop, but who came just to buy the grocer's pumpkins at Halloween. Some shoppers were adults on their own who were stopping off on their way home from work to buy a pumpkin for their house. Some shoppers were kids who would take ages hunting for the largest pumpkin and comparing their ideas about where to carve the eyes or how many teeth the mouths would have. However, most people who came in to the grocers to buy a pumpkin were parents with their children.

By the end of the first day, two boxes had been completely emptied of pumpkins. By the end of the second day, all of the pumpkins in the third box had been bought and so had half of the pumpkins in the fourth and fifth box. The grocer was very pleased with how well the pumpkins had sold and couldn't remember a year when he had sold so many so quickly.

When the shop had closed he moved all of the pumpkins from the fourth box and put them in with the pumpkins in the fifth box. He threw the fourth box out the back with the other three now empty boxes for the dustbin men to come and take away the following day. The grocer knew that he would most probability not have any pumpkins left by the end of the next day because it would be Halloween and nobody ever bought pumpkins after that.

The next morning was the thirty-first and final day of October: Halloween. Shortly after the grocer had opened his shop many people had come in to buy a pumpkin and by ten o'clock was only one left; our pumpkin, the pumpkin about which this story is about. So far that morning the grocer had only sold one bunch of bananas but seventeen pumpkins.

At three minutes past ten o'clock a little boy walked into the grocers with his mum. Will, the boy, was eight years old and had made up his mind that this year his house would have the scariest pumpkin in the window to make sure no witches came to get him; many little boys are scared of witches.

Will's dad had been to the local supermarket and to the supermarket in the next town and the town along from that but he had not been able to buy a single pumpkin as they had all been sold. Will's mum knew how disappointed he would be if a pumpkin couldn't be found because Will was a good boy and it was her fault that she hadn't thought to buy a pumpkin earlier in the week.

Ten earlier, Will's mum had bundled him into her car and driven, rather too fast, to the town, parked on the High Street and dragged him to the grocers in the hope there may still be some pumpkins unsold.

As soon as Will and his mum entered the shop the grocer knew what they wanted. The grocer picked the pumpkin out of the box and handed it to Will's mum who paid for it, thanked the grocer and was very, very relieved. She rang Will's dad to tell him to come home and that, thank goodness, they had found and bought a pumpkin. The grocer smiled and told Will what a lucky boy he was because this was probably the last pumpkin anywhere in the county and probably all England that hadn't been sold by now.

Will couldn't believe his luck and he felt so pleased that he smiled as he travelled back to his house in the car. When Will arrived home he tried to lift the pumpkin out of the boot but he couldn't lift it because it was so heavy. Will's dad was already home after his wild goose chase around the supermarkets and so he carried the pumpkin inside.

Will's mum washed the pumpkin even though it was already clean. She laid out some newspaper on the kitchen table and placed the pumpkin on it. Will traced a circle around the top of the pumpkin and his dad drew a line with a pencil where Will's finger had gone. Once the line was a complete circle and so Will's dad took a carving knife, cut all the way around the pumpkin along the line and removed the top of it.

Will looked inside the pumpkin and couldn't believe how many seeds and strands there were; he thought it would have been empty. His dad gave Will a serving spoon



so that he could start hollowing it out. It took Will a long time to remove all of the seeds and strands, in fact most of the morning. His arms and shoulders ached with the effort but he was very pleased with himself. Will's dad removed the flesh around the inside of the pumpkin and put it in a bowl.

Will drew two eyes, a small triangular nose and a mouth with jagged teeth with a pencil. His dad cut away the flesh of the pumpkin where Will had drawn and everyone was pleased with how the pumpkin looked.

By the time all of the pumpkin preparation had finished it was lunchtime. Will's mum had made a soup from the flesh of the pumpkin. Will and his dad enjoyed the soup so much that they had two bowls each.

Later that day, when it went dark, Will placed a candle in the pumpkin and his mum lit it. Will couldn't believe how scary the pumpkin looked and he was certain that no witches or ghouls would be bothering his house that night.

The next morning a lady and two gentlemen knocked on the front door of Will's house. They explained that they were from the local parish council – Will's mum knew them. Every Halloween the parish council had a competition to see who could have the scariest pumpkin.

Last night they had walked around the village looking in the windows of houses to find the scariest pumpkin and had all agreed that Will's pumpkin was the winner. Will was given a book token for ten pounds as a prize and they took a photo of him standing beside his pumpkin which was then put in the parish magazine the following month.

Will had enjoyed Halloween so much and gave his mum and dad a long cuddle. Everyone was so pleased and Will's mum decided to take them all out for supper to the local pub.

Just then a postman tripped over a kitten while walking up a garden path to deliver someone's letters. He fell head first into a pond and a fish nibbled his ear. He was soaking and had to go home and change.

Oh dear.”

Will had fallen asleep in front of the fire and his mum gently placed a cushion under his head.

Will's Dad returned and said that the parents of the two older boys had been very cross about what they had done to Will and Charlie. The older boys had been made to give Will and Charlie twenty pounds each out of their pocket money. The parents, Mr and Mrs Prior, had also arranged for their sons to come and wash Will and Charlie's dad's cars every Saturday morning until Christmas.

It had been a strange Halloween.

The End.

Copyright © 2020 Paul Cook.

*Any references to historical events, real people or real places are used fictitiously. Names, characters and places are products of the author's imagination.*

*Front cover image by Paul Cook*