

Once upon a time, there was a girl called Katie. Katie was seven and she lived in nice house with her mom and a dog called Muffin. It was all quite normal really. Except for one thing, they were witches. Well, except for Muffin, who was a dog who casts spells. Being a witch wasn't so bad. Mom would just twitch her nose and all the cleaning would get done. Dad would wave his stick, and the lawn would cut itself. Muffin would click his paws, and a few dog treats would tumble out of the sky. They'd even taught Katie some magic. She knew how to make her homework do itself and her room got tidied just by twitching her ear. But, there was just one thing Katie really didn't like.

Halloween.

Once a year, when the leaves were falling off the trees, and the nights were getting longer, all the children in her school and along her street would get terribly excited about Halloween. They made costumes of horrible looking witches with long pointy noses, and spots, and nasty black hats, and broomsticks.

Katie said, "Witches aren't like that, really. My mom looks quite nice." All the other girls fell about laughing.

"Katie thinks she's a witch," they laughed. "She's ugly and horrible, just like a witch."

When Katie went home that day, she was really upset. She cried and cried and cried. Her mom asked her what the matter was, and she said, "Everyone hates witches and they especially hate them at Halloween." Her mom tried to explain that although some people didn't like witches, it was also quite useful sometimes, like when the washing up got done all by itself.

"I don't ever want to have anything to do with witchcraft again," said Katie angrily.

On Halloween night, all the girls from her school were organizing a trick or treat tour of the street. Katie didn't want to go, but her mom said she had to because a witch can hardly stay in on Halloween. As she left, she whispered something in Katie's ear and Katie went to join the other girls. Some of them started laughing at her.

"Katie doesn't have to dress up, because she's already a witch," they laughed. Katie felt cross and embarrassed, but she decided to say nothing.

As they trick or treated, they got so much candy! At one of the houses, there lived a man called Mr. Bones who didn't like children.

"Trick or treat, trick or treat..." cried the girls when he opened the door.

“Yes, well, I think I’ll take the trick, if it’s all the same to you because you don’t scare me,” said Mr. Bones as a horrible smile creased up his face.

“But one of us is a real witch,” said Amelia, the biggest of the girls.

“Yes, yes, Katie’s a real witch,” they all cried but Mr. Bones just laughed and laughed.

“That’s the dumbest thing I ever heard,” he said.

“Go on, Katie,” said Amelia. “Let’s see if you really are a witch.” Katie stepped forwards.

“You don’t look scary to me,” said Mr. Bones. “You’re just a little girl.”

But Katie remembered what her mom had whispered in her ear. Do you know what it was? A special spell. So right then, Katie recited the magic words and she wriggled her ear. All the girls gasped in amazement because suddenly Mr. Bones wasn’t Mr. Bones anymore! He was a little brown, fluffy hamster inside a cage running around and around on a wheel. All the girls laughed and laughed.

Katie leaned into the cage and asked, “Is it fun being a hamster?” The little creature squeaked and shook its head. Then she recited the magic words and Mr. Bones was turned back into a man again.

“I’ll get you some treats, girls,” he said very quickly and nervously. He came back with tons of chocolate bars, fizzy drinks, cookies, and even a new Barbie DVD for each girl. “Please come back next year girls,” he said. “I’ll have even better stuff for you.”

Then he went back inside, looking very nervous. As they went down the rest of the street, everyone heard there was a real witch out trick and treating tonight, so they all gave the girls even more sweets than usual, and even some toys.

From then on, Katie was the most popular girl in her class.

“You know, maybe it’s not so bad being a witch after all,” she said when she got home. “And I think I’m going to enjoy Halloween from now on.”