

# FOR THE CHILDREN

## THE STORY OF PETER PUMPKIN—TOLD BY HIMSELF

**A** COW ate part of me as the fruit course of her breakfast. But before this happened I had several adventures. In the beginning I was just a little seed. One spring, about the first of June, Uncle Jerry put me in a warm bed in the ground and I began to grow. For weeks and weeks nobody took any notice of me and I felt hurt. I became a vine with large green leaves and bright golden blossoms. The blossoms contained such sweet honey that the bees came to see me. Of this I was glad, for I got lonesome waiting for three little boys by the names of Tom, Dick and Harry.

These were the little boys to whom Uncle Jerry had said before bringing me to my home in the garden: "This is going to be a Jack-o'-lantern."

Then the boys shouted and made fun. "Who ever saw a Jack-o'-lantern like that?" and they laughed.

But Uncle Jerry promised them, and the boys said they would be there to see me next Hallowe'en. So I waited. It did seem an awful long time. I didn't see that I was growing into anything like a Jack-o'-lantern. I was sorry, too, for I wanted to surprise the boys.

One day Uncle Jerry came out to the garden and, looking at me, said, "You'll make a fine Jack-o'-lantern." I felt glad, although I couldn't for the life of me understand how it was going to happen.

After that Uncle Jerry came often. When I got thirsty he brought me water and every little while he shook up my bed so that it felt soft. I tell you I felt fine. Nothing to do all day but to eat and grow.

At last I wondered if by any chance one of those large green things, which were where the golden blossoms had been, were what Uncle Jerry meant. One of these was larger than the others and growing fast.

Uncle Jerry was pleased when he saw this. I decided to surprise even him and make that green thing grow as large as could be.

Many weeks passed and then the nights began to grow cold. Sometimes I shivered a little. It was hard to grow when you felt so cold and I must have pretty nearly stopped.

Then a queer thing happened. The large green thing was changing to beautiful gold. Day after day passed and finally from my great yellow face I could look out over the garden. It was then that Uncle Jerry came with the boys.

"Here he is," said Uncle Jerry.

"My! Isn't that a dandy?" said Tom.

"Won't that make a fine Jack-o'-lantern?" said Dick.

"We'll call him Peter Pumpkin," said Harry.

So I became Peter Pumpkin. Uncle Jerry cut a circle about two inches around my stem and took off a sort of cover. Then he let the boys take turns digging me out with a big spoon.

Uncle Jerry made a great big picture of a face on me and carefully cut my rind so that it was very thin where the nose, eyes and mouth were.

A sort of a candlestick socket was made inside of me and around it were cut small holes to admit the air so that the candle would burn properly. In the cover were holes to allow the hot air and smoke to pass out.

The boys were much pleased, but how were they to carry me around? I was far and away the largest Jack-o'-lantern they had ever seen. I was too large for even Harry, the largest boy, to carry.

"I'll tell you what let's do," said Tom. "I will get my cart and we can put Peter on a box."

Uncle Jerry helped. He took an old soap box and fastened it securely to the bottom of the cart with screws. Upon the box he placed me, securing me with four sticks which were inserted in holes in the corners and tied together over my head.

I enjoyed this hugely. The boys shook hands, forming a ring, and danced around me and sang:

Peter, Peter, Peter;  
Peter Pumpkin Eater;  
Peter—Pumpkin—Peter.

Then Dick and Harry ran to the store to get a supply of candles while Tom carefully backed the cart into the garage to hide me from the other children until night. Tom must have been in a hurry for evening to come, for every once in a while he came and peeked in at the door.

When Dick and Harry came back with the candles Uncle Jerry showed them how to put them in and how to light them. Then they shut the door while Uncle Jerry lighted a candle. I guess I must have grinned in a funny way, for every one laughed.

Then the boys ran away and I became more and

more impatient for the fun to begin. I did seem a long time to wait, but I wasn't disappointed.

As soon as it was dark Tom and Uncle Jerry came and then Harry and Dick. Harry lighted the candle inside of me and put the other candles in his pocket.

Dick brought some old sheets and the boys dressed up in them. You ought to have seen that procession when it started out. I was clearly the centre of interest. I grinned at people until they either laughed or ran away frightened.

Tom had an umbrella, which he put over me as we went down the street. There were some little girls and boys on the next street who went to the same school and I just shook with joy, thinking of the surprise we were going to give them.

As we turned the corner we came right upon the whole crowd of them. Tom pulled away the umbrella and all the boys howled. You ought to have seen those little children run.

Then the boys shouted and sang:

This is Peter, Peter, Peter;  
This is Peter Pumpkin Eater;  
Peter—Pumpkin—Peter.

At that the little folks came back and joined Dick, Harry and Tom. Then we went from house to house. How the babies squealed, and how the kiddies cried, and how the mammas and papas laughed!

As soon as one candle burned out Dick put in another and lighted it. I guess the good time would have gone on until now if we hadn't tried to cross the vacant lot and scare crotchety old Miss Morrell. She didn't like children and they kept clear of her except at such times as this. Tom and Harry had just lifted the cart over an uneven place under Miss Morrell's window when the old lady herself appeared. I don't know whether she was frightened or not but the boys were and they started on a run.

The cart turned over and I was broken in several pieces and left behind on Miss Morrell's vacant lot. The boys didn't even look back. It wasn't long before all those little folks were tucked shivering with fright into their little beds.

And this is the way it happened that Miss Morrell's cow, Jenny, had me for part of her breakfast.—*The Circle*.

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### CRACKER-JACK PARTY FOR BOYS

**A** LARGE room with an open fireplace is best for this entertainment. Pad the floor of the room with soft rugs or blankets. Request the invited guests to come in cracker-jack costumes, or, in other words, dressed as clowns. Of course, the funnier the dress, the better.

Let the boys do all kinds of stunts. Leaping, somersaults, standing on their heads, walking on their hands, in short, all sorts of things, known only to the inventive mind of the small boy. If agreed upon, an amateur show could be improvised, some of the guests performing and the others composing the audience.

Supper should be served in the dining-room, the boys sitting around the table. It should be remembered that the average small boy possesses a voracious appetite and a bountiful supply of good things should be provided, not forgetting the inevitable ice cream and cake, for boys, as well as girls, have a weakness for this popular combination. Sandwiches of all kinds, cold turkey and cranberry sauce, ham or tongue, olives, fruit, lemonade, and plenty of cracked nuts would be acceptable. Add a box of candy for each, for most boys have a sweet tooth.

After supper, have the lads gather about a roaring log fire (no gas abomination), crack nuts, pop corn, toast marshmallows and tell stories. A limited time should be agreed upon for each relater, and the stories confined to those of sport and adventure. A prize can be given to the one telling the best story, this to be decided by a vote from the whole party.

The prize should be something peculiarly attractive to boys. A bat and ball, tennis racket, fishing pole, or anything calculated to please the up-to-date youth.

A cracker-jack party will not fail to appeal to lads between ten and fourteen, and is both novel and amusing.

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### FALSE FACES

Here comes two eyes and a grinny mouth  
And a face all fierce and black;  
But it's only my braver playing ghost wif me,  
So 'at shivers 'll run down my back.



### PUMPKIN TIME

**A** DOZEN little pumpkins lived in a field, In a field where sugar-corn grew, And the corn was young, and very, very green, And the pumpkins—they were green, too. Up to the summer sky the sugar-corn stretched, And rose so sturdy and tall, And the dozen little pumpkins hidden out of sight. Were they still green and small!



Why they grew broad while the corn grew high,  
And when husking time came 'round  
And the corn was cut and the field laid bare  
Lying there on the ground  
Were a dozen large pumpkins, beautiful and round  
And golden as the autumn sun,  
But pumpkins don't all turn to pumpkin pie,  
For this was the fate of one.



Now Hallowe'en is coming, with its taffy and its spooks,  
You'll be looking for a jack-o'-lantern, too.  
Wouldn't it be funny if you came across the field  
Where the other 'leven golden pumpkins grew!