

HEEPIE & JEEPIE: PHANTOM OF THE FALL FESTIVAL



IT'S THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR. NOPE. NOT TALKING ABOUT CHRISTMAS JUST YET. IT'S OCTOBER AND THAT MEANS.. HALLOWEEN! HEEPIE & JEEPIE BOTH WOKE UP BEFORE THE ALARM CLOCK WENT OFF. MOSTLY BECAUSE THEY ALWAYS GOT A BURST OF EXCITED ENERGY WHEN IT WAS THIS CLOSE TO THEIR MOST FAVORITE HOLIDAY. BUT ALSO BECAUSE THEIR DAD WAS PREPARING BREAKFAST AND THEIR STOMACHS GROWLED IN ANTICIPATION. THE TWINS PULLED THEMSELVES FROM THEIR WARM, COMFY BUNK BEDS AND STARTED THEIR MORNING ROUTINE. BEFORE LONG, THEY WERE DOWNSTAIRS. ALL DRESSED AND READY FOR SCHOOL. BUT FIRST.. BREAKFAST.

THEIR DAD HAD THEIR PLATES FULL OF YUMMY FOOD STACKED HIGH. AS THE BOYS TOOK THEIR SEATS. THEIR DAD JOKED HOW HE HAD PREPARED A BREAKFAST THAT WOULD SATISFY HIS LITTLE MONSTERS. HEEPIE WAS ALREADY MID BITE OF HIS MUMMY WRAPPED MUFFIN WHEN HIS EYES WIDENED. HE CHEWED RAPIDLY. NOT WANTING TO WASTE A CRUMB OF HIS MUFFIN. BUT NEEDING TO TELL JEEPIE WHAT HE JUST REMEMBERED WHEN HE HEARD MONSTERS! FINALLY. AFTER WHAT SEEMED LIKE FOREVER. HEEPIE SWALLOWED THE BITE. THEN HE GASPED OUT. "FALL... FESTIVAL... SIGNUPS.." JEEPIE JUMPED UP AND SWUNG HIS BACKPACK OVER HIS SHOULDER AND HEEPIE FOLLOWED BEHIND HIM. GRABBING THEM BOTH A SLICE OF FRANKENSTEIN FRENCH TOAST BEFORE WAVING GOODBYE TO THEIR STUNNED DAD.

"HOLD UP. BOYS. WHY ARE Y' ALL IN SUCH A HURRY?." QUESTIONED THEIR PUZZLED FATHER. "BECAUSE. DAD. THE SIGNUPS ARE TODAY.. FIRST COME. FIRST SERVE.. AND WE BOTH WANT TO WORK THE HAUNTED HOUSE THIS YEAR!" HEEPIE EXPLAINED. HIS EYES PLEADING WITH THEIR FATHER TO LET THEM GO EARLY. AND IT WORKED. OF COURSE IT WORKED.. HE WAS THE YOUNGEST BY 30 SECONDS AND THEREFORE THE BABY OF THE FAMILY. CAN'T SAY NO TO THE BABY. RIGHT? AND OUT THE DOOR THEY WENT.

THE CRISP, COOL AUTUMN AIR BURNED THEIR LUNGS AS THEY HURRIEDLY HUFFED TO SCHOOL. LAST YEAR WAS AMAZING WHEN THEY GOT TO TRICK OR TREAT BY THEMSELVES. BUT THIS YEAR.. THEY WANTED TO SCARE PEOPLE JUST LIKE MR. GENE DID THEM.. AND SO THEY WANTED.. NO. THEY NEEDED TO WORK THE HAUNTED HOUSE.

HOWEVER. THE EXCITEMENT INSTANTLY DRAINED FROM THE BOYS WHEN THEY OPENED THE SCHOOL'S DOUBLE DOORS TO FIND THAT ALL OF THE SIGNUP SHEETS WERE MARKED THROUGH WITH A BIG RED "X.". THIS. CANNOT. BE. HAPPENING.

THE HALLS WERE BUZZING WITH GOSSIP FROM THE STUDENTS. AND WITH EACH GUESS. THE STORIES GREW WILDER AND WACKIER THAN THE ONE BEFORE. "ATTENTION. STUDENTS.. AHEM.. ATTENTION. STUDENTS." THE PRINCIPAL'S VOICE BELLOWED FROM THE INTERCOM SPEAKERS. "WE WILL HAVE AN ASSEMBLY IN FIVE MINUTES IN THE AUDITORIUM." ALL THE KIDS WERE SILENT WHILE LISTENING TO THE ANNOUNCEMENT. HOWEVER. THE MOMENT THE HIGH-PITCHED STATIC FROM THE SPEAKER SOUNDED. THEY ROARED WITH THEIR IDEAS AGAIN WHILE RUSHING TOWARD THE AUDITORIUM. "BRIGHT SIDE: AT LEAST WE'LL GET SOME ANSWERS. HEEPS." JEEPIE REASSURED HIS BROTHER. THEN PLAYFULLY PUNCHED HEEPIE'S SHOULDER AS THEY ENTERED THE AUDITORIUM.

THE PRINCIPAL WAS AT THE PODIUM TUGGING ON HIS TIE WHILE WAITING FOR THE KIDS TO ALL FILE INSIDE. AND THEN HE RAISED ONE HAND UP AND A HUSH FELL OVER THE CROWD. IT SEEMED LIKE ALL OF THE KIDS WERE LEANING FORWARD IN THEIR SEATS. EAGER TO HEAR WHAT WAS GOING ON.. WHAT THIS MEANT FOR THE FALL FESTIVAL.. HOW WERE SIGN UPS GOING TO WORK THIS YEAR.. SO MANY QUESTIONS.. "I HAVE SOME RATHER UPSETTING NEWS FOR ALL OF THE STUDENT BODY AND EVEN THE FACULTY. THERE WAS AN INCIDENT THAT OCCURRED YESTERDAY AFTERNOON WHILE SETTING UP THE FALL FESTIVAL.." THE PRINCIPAL SPOKE LOUD AND CLEAR. BUT IT SEEMED AS IF HIS WORDS WERE GETTING CAUGHT IN MOLASSES.. EVERYTHING WAS SO SLOW.. WHAT WAS HE SAYING? WHAT HAPPENED?! HEEPIE AND JEEPIE EXCHANGED GLANCES AND BOTH COULD TELL THE OTHER WAS WORRIED. "MRS. McINTOSH WAS SPARED WITHIN AN INCH OF HER LIFE YESTERDAY!" THE PRINCIPAL CONTINUED. A COLLECTIVE GASP COULD BE HEARD FROM THE STUDENTS AND TEACHERS. "NOW. NOW.. LET ME FINISH.. SHE WAS PLACING THE APPLES AND WATER IN THE BARRELS FOR BOBBING AT THE FRANKEN-FRUIT STATION AND ALL OF A SUDDEN. SHE FELT AS IF SOMEONE OR SOMETHING PUSHED HER FACE FIRST IN THE BARREL. BUT SHE IS OKAY... AND WELL.. WHEN SHE WAS ABLE TO STRUGGLE FREE FROM THE BARREL. SHE ACTUALLY HAD CAUGHT AN APPLE.. SO GOOD FOR HER.." THE PRINCIPAL CHUCKLED SOFTLY TO

HIMSELF AND THEN PRESSED ON. "IT TURNS OUT THAT IT WAS A ROOM DIVIDER THAT FELL AGAINST HER AS SHE WAS BENT OVER. SO AGAIN, STUDENTS. MRS. McINTOSH IS OKAY. SHE'S JUST AT HOME RESTING. HOWEVER, WITH THIS INCIDENT, THE SCHOOL HAS DECIDED THAT IT IS TOO DANGEROUS FOR US TO HAVE A FALL FESTIVAL.. AND THEREFORE IT IS CANCELLED."

IT SEEMED LIKE CANCELLED ECHOED FOR ETERNITY AS HEEPIE AND JEEPIE SAT THERE IN SHOCK. THIS IS THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR. AND NOW IT IS RUINED! THE PRINCIPAL DISMISSED THE KIDS TO THEIR HOMEROOM CLASSES AND IT SEEMED LIKE THERE WAS A SADNESS HANGING IN THE AIR OF THE ENTIRE SCHOOL. SOURING WHATEVER FUN THE KIDS HAD PLANNED.

LATER THAT DAY DURING LUNCH, HEEPIE AND JEEPIE WERE SITTING AT A TABLE WHEN TWO CLASSMATES WALKED UP TO THEIR TABLE. LOOKING SIDE TO SIDE AS IF THIS WAS A SECRET MISSION. "LOOK, WE KNOW YOU TWO AREN'T AFRAID OF ANYTHING.. WE NEED Y'ALL TO CHECK OUT THE FALL FESTIVAL AND SEE IF THERE IS SOMEONE TRYING TO SABOTAGE IT!" EXCLAIMED THE BLONDE HAIRE D KID. THEN THE BROWN HAIRE D KID WITH FRECKLES SPOKE UP. "AND IF Y'ALL CAN SAVE THE FALL FESTIVAL.. YOU TWO CAN GET FIRST PICK OF ACTIVITY. SCOUT'S HONOR." HEEPIE AND JEEPIE LOOKED AT EACH OTHER. TRYING TO PLAY IT COOL. BUT JEEPIE SQUEEZED HEEPIE'S

KNEE UNDER THE TABLE SIGNALING HIM TO TALK. "OKAY. WE'LL DO IT. WE WANT THE HAUNTED HOUSE IF WE--- "YOU MEAN WHEN WE SOLVE THIS." JEEPIE INTERRUPTED. ALL THE BOYS SHOOK HANDS AND THAT WAS THAT. NOW ALL THAT WAS LEFT TO DO IS WAIT FOR THE LAST BELL TO RING. THEN THE TWINS WOULD GET TO WORK HUNTING WHATEVER IS LURKING IN THE SHADOWS OF THE FALL FESTIVAL.

AFTER SCHOOL, HEEPIE AND JEEPIE EASILY WORKED UP A PLAN BECAUSE THEIR DAD ALWAYS FELL ASLEEP ON THE COUCH AFTER DINNER. IT WAS LIKE CLOCKWORK. SO WHEN THE TWINS HEARD HIS SNORING RUMBLING UP THE STAIRS, THEY SLOWLY TIPTOED THEIR WAY DOWN AND THEN OUT THE FRONT DOOR WITH ONLY THEIR FLASHLIGHTS, COURAGE, AND DETERMINATION.

THE SCHOOL WAS DARKER THAN THEY THOUGHT IT WOULD BE. IT LOOKED EERIE AND SENT A SHIVER DOWN EACH OF THEIR SPINES. "ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THIS, JEEPIE?" HEEPIE ASKED QUIETLY, ONLY GLANCING AT HIS BROTHER FOR A MOMENT BEFORE TURNING HIS EYES BACK ON THE PITCH-BLACK SCHOOL. "POSITIVE, HEEPS. WHAT COULD POSSIBLY GO WRONG?!" JEEPIE SCOFFED AS HE JIGGLED THE DOOR HANDLE TO THE GYM WHERE MOST OF THE FALL FESTIVAL WAS SET UP.

THE DOOR CREAKED OPEN AND THEIR FLASHLIGHTS CREATED TWO SPOTLIGHTS FOR THEM TO LOOK AROUND. THEY SLOWLY STARTED

TAKING NOTE OF WHERE THINGS WERE LOCATED. THIS WOULD DEFINITELY BE IMPORTANT IF THEY GOT SPLIT UP. BUT THEY WOULDN'T. BECAUSE THAT'S RULE NUMBER 1. NEVER SPLIT UP. BUT STILL.. GOTTA BE PREPARED FOR EVERYTHING.

"MIRROR. MIRROR.. ON THE WALL..." JEEPIE CREEPILY CHANTED IN HEEPIE'S EAR. HEEPIE OF COURSE JUMPED. WHICH MADE JEEPIE LAUGH. BUT THEN THEY BOTH TRIED TO QUIET THEMSELVES. THEY NEEDED TO TAKE THIS SERIOUSLY. "SO.. YOU WANT TO START IN THE MIRROR MAZE?" ASKED HEEPIE. "YEAH. IT'S THE CLOSEST HERE. AND IT SEEMS LIKE IT WILL GET US CLOSE TO THE FRANKEN-FRUIT STATION.." JEEPIE SPOKE QUIETLY WHILE HE STILL LOOKED AROUND WITH HIS FLASHLIGHT.

THE TWINS HEADED TOWARD THE MIRROR MAZE AND PREPARED THEMSELVES TO FIRST FIND THEIR WAY OUT OF THE MAZE. THEN SOLVE THIS WHOLE MYSTERY. THE MIRRORS MADE THEM FEEL DIZZY SOMETIMES AND THEY DEFINITELY ROUNDED THE SAME CORNER MORE THAN ONCE. IT WAS HARDER THAN IT LOOKED. THAT'S FOR SURE.

THEIR SNEAKERS HARDLY MADE ANY SOUND ON THE GYM FLOOR. JUST A LIGHT SQUEAK HERE AND THERE WHEN THEY BUMPED INTO EACH OTHER. DON'T JUDGE. IT WAS DARK REMEMBER! THE ONLY LIGHT WAS FROM THEIR FLASHLIGHTS AND THE BEAMS WOULD BOUNCE OFF THE MIRRORS AND CAUSE THEM TO SEE THINGS OUT OF THE CORNER OF

THEIR EYES. IT WAS THEIR FLASHLIGHTS, RIGHT? IT HAD TO BE. IF IT WAS SOMETHING ELSE THEY WOULD HAVE HEARD IT. "WHY DID YOU THINK WE COULD SOLVE THIS IN THE DARK, JEEPIE?" HEEPIE WHINED A LITTLE AS HE QUESTIONED HIS BROTHER. JEEPIE OPENED HIS MOUTH TO ANSWER, BUT BEFORE HE COULD FORM ANY WORDS, THERE WAS A SOUND. A FAINT SOUND. CLICK-CLACK, CLICK-CLACK. AND IT WAS GETTING LOUDER AND LOUDER, WHICH MEANT IT WAS GETTING CLOSER AND CLOSER. CLICK-CLACK, CLICK-CLACK.

BOTH BOYS TURNED OFF THEIR FLASHLIGHTS AND PUT THEIR BACKS AGAINST A WALL OF MIRRORS, CAREFULLY AND QUIETLY MAKING THEIR WAY TO THE EXIT. THEY USED THE MIRRORS AS A GUIDE WITH THEIR HANDS SINCE IT WAS PURE DARKNESS, BUT THEY WERE GOING SLOWER THAN BEFORE BECAUSE THEY DIDN'T WANT TO ALERT WHATEVER WAS IN THE GYM WITH THEM AS TO WHERE THEY WERE. BUT IT DIDN'T SEEM TO MATTER, THE SOUND SEEMED TO FOLLOW THEM. CLICK-CLACK, CLICK-CLACK. IF THE BOYS WALKED FASTER, THE SOUNDS GOT FASTER. HEEPIE AND JEEPIE WERE BOTH BREATHING HEAVIER AT THIS POINT AND WERE ON EDGE, BUT THEN HEEPIE FELT SOMETHING BRUSH AGAINST HIS LEG AND HE LET OUT A LOUD SCREAM. JEEPIE QUICKLY COVERED HEEPIE'S MOUTH BUT LOOKED HIS BROTHER IN THE EYES AND WHISPERED "RUN!" AND THAT IS WHAT THE BOYS DID.. THEY HELD HANDS AS THEY RAN THROUGH THE WINDING

HALL OF MIRRORS. FINALLY, THEY SAW A MIRROR THAT LOOKED DIFFERENT SO JEEPIE TURNED ON HIS FLASHLIGHT TO GET A BETTER LOOK. WRITTEN ON THE MIRROR IN WHAT LOOKED LIKE BLOOD WAS "YOU'RE LUCKY YOU FOUND THE EXIT." THE BOYS FELT LIKE THEY COULD FINALLY BREATHE AGAIN. OKAY, THEY MADE IT THROUGH THE MIRROR MAZE.. BUT WAS THIS A WARNING? A THREAT? OR PART OF THE FESTIVAL? THEY DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO DECIDE. THEY NEEDED TO GET TO THE FRANKEN-FRUIT STATION. AND SO THEY BEGAN WALKING IN THE DIRECTION THEY THOUGHT IT WAS.

UNFORTUNATELY, WHEN THEY GOT TO THE NEXT BOOTH, IT WASN'T THE BOBBING STATION. THIS WAS LABELED THE WITCHES BREW. THEY SHINED THEIR FLASHLIGHTS AROUND, AND IT LOOKED LIKE THIS WOULD BE A HOT CHOCOLATE AND CIDER STAND. THE DECORATIONS WERE KIND OF SCARY AND THE WITCHES LOOKED REAL. WARTS AND ALL! THE BOYS MOVED CLOSER TO THE PROPS SO THEY COULD SEE ALL THE DETAIL. BECAUSE THIS MIGHT BE THEIR ONLY CHANCE. THEY WERE FINALLY ENJOYING THEMSELVES.. BUT THEN THEY HEARD IT AGAIN.. CLICK-CLACK. CLICK-CLACK. "OH NO, JEEPIE! IT'S BACK!! IT FOUND US!!" HEEPIE WHISPERED WITH PURE PANIC IN HIS VOICE. "SHH... IT'LL BE OKAY.. THEY ARE JUST LOOKING FOR US. THEY DON'T KNOW WHERE WE ARE.. THEY CAN'T.." JEEPIE WAS TRYING TO REASSURE HIS BROTHER, BUT ALL OF A SUDDEN, THE BOOTH WAS LIT UP

BY SMOKE AND FIRE COMING FROM THE TWO BIG BLACK CAULDRONS IN THE CORNER OF THE WITCHES BREW BOOTH! HOW DID THE FIRE START?! THE BOY'S FACES WERE WELL LIT NOW FROM THE FIRE THAT MADE THE CAULDRONS BOIL AND BUBBLE. THE SOUNDS OF THE BREW NO DOUBT. "THEY CAN'T FIND US." HEEPIE MIMICKED JEEPIE. "SHHH.. LET'S GO.. WE HAVE TO GET OUT OF THE LIGHT.." JEEPIE INSTRUCTED HEEPIE. BOTH BOYS LOOKED AROUND SINCE THE AREA WAS NOW MORE LIT. AND THEY SAW THE FRANKEN FRUIT STATION IN THE FLICKERING LIGHT OF THE CAULDRON'S FIRE. "THERE! THAT'S WHERE WE NEED TO BE!" AND THEY BOTH STARTED TO TIPTOE OVER TO THE STATION. MAKING SURE TO NOT MAKE A SOUND.. THEY DIDN'T WANT TO ALERT WHATEVER WAS IN THE GYM WITH THEM. THEY EVEN PICKED UP THEIR KNEES AS HIGH AS THEIR CHEST TO MAKE SURE THAT THERE WAS NO SQUEAKS OR ANY SOUND.

THEY MADE IT. FINALLY. NOW THEY HAD TO INSPECT THE ROOM DIVIDER. THE BARRELS. ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING TO SEE IF THERE WAS ANY FOUL PLAY GOING ON. HEEPIE STARTED WITH THE BARRELS. SEEING IF THERE WAS ANY BOOBY TRAPS LIKE HIDDEN STRINGS OR TRIGGER WIRES. JEEPIE WAS INSPECTING THE DIVIDER AND SOME OF THE FRUIT THAT WAS OUT ON THE TABLE. THE DIVIDER SEEMED STURDY. SO IF THERE WASN'T A WIRE RIGGED TO PULL IT DOWN. IT'D BE HARD TO KNOCK IT OVER. SOMETHING REALLY HEAVY WOULD BE THE

ONLY THING THAT COULD DO IT. THE FRUIT LOOKED NORMAL. BUT SOME WERE ON THE FLOOR AND THEY HAD BITES TAKEN OUT OF THEM. JEEPIE LOOKED BACK AT THE FRUIT ON THE TABLE AND SAW THAT THEY HAD BITE MARKS ON THEM. THEY ACTUALLY LOOKED LIKE FANG MARKS. WHAT IF THIS IS A VAMPIRE?! WHAT IF THIS IS A WEREWOLF?! WHAT IF THESE THINGS REALLY EXIST? SHOULD HE EVEN MENTION THIS TO HEEPIE? HE DIDN'T GET THE CHANCE. BECAUSE HEEPIE LET OUT A YELP AND CAME RUNNING TOWARD HIM, PANTING A BIT. "ZOMBIES.. I THINK.. IT.. IS ZOMBIES.." HEEPIE BREATHED. "I WAS BENT OVER IN THE BARRELS CHECKING EACH ONE, AND I FELT SOMETHING SHARP LIKE FINGERNAILS ON MY LEG. BUT JUST FOR A BRIEF MOMENT. I STOOD STRAIGHT UP AND LOOKED AROUND BUT NO ONE WAS THERE. NOTHING.. SO I JUST THOUGHT THAT I WAS IMAGINING IT BECAUSE I'M.. WELL.. I'M A LITTLE SCARED. JEEPIE." HEEPIE FROWNED A LITTLE WHILE RUBBING HIS ARMS WITH HIS HANDS TRYING TO HIDE HIS GOOSEBUMPS. JEEPIE NOTICED AND THOUGHT TO HIMSELF THAT HEEPS MUST HAVE BEEN REALLY SCARED AND HE NEEDS TO PROTECT HIS LITTLE BRO MORE. "WELL. THERE'S MORE. JEEPIE.. I WENT BACK TO LOOKING FOR CLUES. AND THAT'S WHEN I HEARD IT.. I HEARD.. THIS SOUND LIKE.. GURGLING AND HEAVY BREATHING. THEN I PUT IT TOGETHER... IT SOUNDS LIKE ZOMBIES BEFORE THEY EAT PEOPLE'S BRAINS! I'M ONLY IN 5TH GRADE! MY BRAIN ISN'T EVEN

FULLY DEVELOPED YET!" HEEPIE EXCLAIMED. "DUDE. NO ONE WANTS YOUR BRAIN. I KNOW THAT FOR SURE." JEEPIE JOKED AND WINKED AT HIS BROTHER EVEN THOUGH HE PROBABLY COULDN'T EVEN TELL IN THE DARKNESS. "AND BESIDES. ZOMBIES ARE NOT REAL. BUT I'LL TELL YOU. I SAW SOME FRUIT AND IT LOOKED LIKE IT HAD SOME FANG MARKS. AND THE DIVIDER WAS REALLLLLLY HEAVY. SO ONLY SOMETHING REALLY STRONG WOULD BE ABLE TO KNOCK IT OVER." JEEPIE EXPLAINED. "SO. AS SILLY AS YOUR ZOMBIE THEORY IS. I'M GUESSING IT MIGHT BE A WEREWOLF.. SOMETHING BRUSHED AGAINST YOUR LEG EARLIER. REMEMBER?!" "AND WEREWOLVES HAVE CLAWS!! THAT COULD HAVE BEEN WHAT I FELT ON MY LEG." HEEPIE ADDED. THE BOYS WERE PRETTY SURE THEY HAD FIGURED IT OUT. BUT THEY WERE AFRAID NO ONE WOULD BELIEVE THEM. THEY WOULD HAVE TO CATCH THE WEREWOLF.. OR TAKE A PICTURE OF IT.

THE BOYS SEARCHED THE FLOOR FOR ANY SIGNS OR CLUES TO WHERE THE WEREWOLF HAD VANISHED. THERE WERE SOME MUDDY LOOKING PAW PRINTS BUT THEY WERE KIND OF SMEARED SO THE TWINS COULDN'T TELL WHAT DIRECTION TO GO. "WHY DON'T WE USE THIS TABLECLOTH AND HIDE UP THERE? CALL OUT AND SEE IF IT WILL COME TO US LIKE IT DID BEFORE? BUT THIS TIME WE'RE READY FOR IT?" HEEPIE SUGGESTED. "THAT'S ACTUALLY REALLY SMART. BUT

DANGEROUS.. BUT SMART. LET'S DO IT. HEEPS!" JEEPIE TOUSLED HIS BROTHER'S HAIR. THIS WAS HIS WAY OF LETTING HEEPIE KNOW THAT HE WAS PROUD OF HIM COMING UP WITH THIS PLAN.

THE BOYS CLEARED THE FRUIT OFF THE TABLE. THEN REMOVED THE BLACK TABLECLOTH AND CLIMBED UP AND POSITIONED THEMSELVES ON TOP OF THE TABLE. THEY HAD THE TABLECLOTH STRETCHED OUT AS HIGH AND WIDE AS IT WOULD GO. NOT KNOWING HOW BIG A WEREWOLF ACTUALLY IS. AND THEN JEEPIE YELLED OUT "COME AND GET US. WEREWOLF! WE KNOW YOU ARE HERE!" AND JUST LIKE THAT. THEY HEARD CLICK-CLACK. CLICK-CLACK. GETTING LOUDER. GETTING CLOSER. THE SOUND WAS GETTING FASTER AND FASTER. CLICK-CLACK. CLICK-CLACK! CLICK-CLACK!!!! "NOW!!!!" SCREAMED JEEPIE. AND THEY RELEASED THE TABLECLOTH TO THE FLOOR. CAPTURING THE CREATURE. THEY BOTH STOOD ON THE TABLE SHAKING WITH FEAR. THEY WERE SO CLOSE TO A REAL WEREWOLF. "WHAT DO WE DO NOW?" WHISPERED HEEPIE. "I THINK WE HAVE TO TAKE A LOOK. IT'S MOVING A LOT DOWN THERE.. AND I HEAR THOSE GURGLING NOISES YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT." JEEPIE REPLIED. "YOU! YOU HAVE TO LOOK!" HEEPIE DEMANDED. "ME?! WHY ME?!" QUESTIONED JEEPIE. "YOU'RE OLDER. YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE BRAVE AND PROTECT ME." HEEPIE ANSWERED. "UGGGH.. I KNEW THOSE 30 SECONDS WERE GONNA HAUNT

ME!" JEEPIE MUTTERED AS HE CROUCHED LOW ON THE TABLE. THEN SLOWLY LOWERED HIMSELF TO THE FLOOR. NEXT TO THE COVERED CREATURE. IT WAS REALLY MOVING A LOT. "OKAY. I'M GOING TO REMOVE THE TABLECLOTH. SLOWLY. AND IF IT TRIES TO JUMP. WE'LL HAVE TO COVER IT UP AGAIN." JEEPIE EXPLAINED. HIS SHAKING HANDS REACHED OUT FOR THE BLACK TABLECLOTH. THE FABRIC FEELING LIKE IT WEIGHED 100 POUNDS NOW IN HIS HANDS. HE SLOWLY LIFTED IT BACK. JEEPIE WAS ABOUT TO UNCOVER THE CREATURE FOR THEM BOTH TO SEE. AND THEIR HEARTS WERE POUNDING SO HARD AND LOUD THEY COULD HEAR THEIR HEARTBEATS OVER THE CREATURE'S CLICK-CLACK SOUNDS.

THE TABLECLOTH FLEW BACK AS JEEPIE LIFTED IT OFF. AND HEEPIE WAS PUSHED BACK ON THE TABLE BY THE CREATURE BEFORE HE COULD EVEN GET A GOOD LOOK. BUT HE KNEW IT WAS WHITE. HE COULD FEEL THE CREATURE'S FUR AGAINST HIM. AND NOW THE CREATURE WAS LICKING HIS FACE. TASTING HIM. GETTING READY TO EAT HIM FOR SURE! BUT NOW HEEPIE HAD TO OPEN HIS EYES BECAUSE HE HAD TO SEE WHAT WAS GOING TO HAVE HIM FOR SUPPER.

THAT'S WHEN HE SAW IT WAS A FLUFFY WHITE DOG! IT WASN'T A WEREWOLF AT ALL! THE CLAWS HAD BEEN NAILS THAT NEEDED TO BE TRIMMED!! HEEPIE LAUGHED AS THE DOG CONTINUED TO LICK HIM. AND HE THEN SAT UP AND GASPED! THERE WAS JEEPIE AND HE

WASN'T ALONE. HE HAD ANOTHER DOG! THIS ONE WAS BIG. REALLY BIG. AND HE WAS BREATHING HEAVY AND HE WAS THE ONE MAKING THE GURGLING SOUNDS!! THAT MEANS JEEPIE WAS RIGHT AND ZOMBIES ARE NOT REAL! HEEPIE WAS SO HAPPY. AND JEEPIE WAS SITTING ON THE FLOOR PETTING THE OTHER DOG. AND THEY SEEMED HAPPY.

"WHAT DO WE DO WITH THEM? THEY DON'T HAVE COLLARS." HEEPIE ASKED. "WE TAKE THEM HOME TONIGHT AND DAD WILL TELL US WHAT TO DO NEXT." JEEPIE NODDED AS HE ANSWERED HEEPIE. "AND YOU KNOW WHAT? I THINK THIS DOG HERE IS WHAT KNOCKED OVER THE ROOM DIVIDER.. HE SURE IS HEAVY ENOUGH TO KNOCK IT OVER. IT ISN'T HAUNTED AT ALL. THE DOGS JUST WANTED THE FOOD!" JEEPIE SAID MATTER OF FACTLY.

THE BOYS BOTH STOOD AND THE DOGS WATCHED THEM. THE WHITE FLUFFY DOG'S TAIL WAGGING WILDLY AND THE STOCKY BULLDOG'S NUBBY TAIL TWITCHING WITH GLEE AS THEY FOLLOWED THE BOYS. CLICK-CLACK. CLICK-CLACK. THE BOYS LOOKED AT EACH OTHER AND BURST OUT LAUGHING. AND THEY ALL FOUR WENT HOME.

THE NEXT MORNING THEIR DAD DROVE THEM UP TO THE LOCAL VET TO SEE IF ANYONE WAS MISSING A DOG AND TO SEE IF THEY WERE MICROCHIPPED. "THESE TWO DOGS ESCAPED FROM THE SHELTER TWO DAYS AGO AND THEY HAVE BEEN LOOKING FOR THEM. THEY ARE

ALWAYS TRYING TO ESCAPE AND LOOKS LIKE THEY FINALLY DID IT." THE OFFICE MANAGER EXPLAINED.

"SO.. YOU MEAN.. THEY DON'T BELONG TO ANYONE?" HEEPIE EYED THE MANAGER. "NOPE. UNFORTUNATELY. THEY HAVE BEEN AT THE SHELTER FOR A WHILE. BUT THEY ARE BEST BUDS AND APPARENTLY PARTNERS IN CRIME!" THE OFFICE MANAGER LAUGHED AS SHE SHOOK HER HEAD AT THE DOGS.

HEEPIE AND JEEPIE LOOKED AT EACH OTHER THEN UP TO THEIR FATHER. "DAD.. CAN WE ADOPT THEM? THEY REALLY SEEM TO LIKE US.. AND IT WAS NICE HAVING THEM IN THE HOUSE LAST NIGHT. IT IS THE FIRST TIME IT FELT LIKE A HOME SINCE MOM." JEEPIE ASKED AS HE BENT DOWN TO PET THE BULLDOG. RUBBING HIM BEHIND HIS EARS WHICH HE REALLY SEEMED TO ENJOY. THERE GOES THAT GURGLING SOUND AGAIN. HEEPIE WAS HUGGING HIS FLUFFY FRIEND AND SHE WAS STEADILY LICKING HIM. HE LOOKED AT HIS DAD AS WELL.

"PLLLLLLEEEASSSEEEEE? CAN WE?"

"YOU SAVED THE FALL FESTIVAL. NOW YOU'RE RESCUING DOGS. YOUR MOM WOULD HAVE BEEN PROUD OF BOTH OF YOU. I KNOW I AM." THEIR FATHER SAID SOFTLY. NODDING TO THE OFFICER MANAGER. "WE'RE GONNA KEEP THESE TWO. AND WE'RE GONNA NEED SOME

FOOD. THEY REALLLLY LIKE TO EAT." EVERYONE LAUGHED AND THE DOGS TAILS WAGGED.

"WHATCHA GONNA NAME YOURS. HEEPS?" ASKED JEEPIE AS THEY WERE RIDING BACK HOME. "SINCE SHE'S WHITE AND SCARED US. I'M GONNA NAME HER BOO." HEEPIE SAID. PETTING BOO GENTLY AND KISSING HER SOFT FUR. "WELL. IF SHE'S BOO. I'LL NAME MINE BO. HE SCARED US TOO. BUT ISN'T AS FLUFFY SO ONE LESS O!" BOTH BOYS LAUGHED AND THEIR FATHER SHOOK HIS HEAD. BUT STARTED LAUGHING TOO.

"WELL. WE NEED TO GET THEM COSTUMES FOR THE FALL FESTIVAL NOW. THEY'RE LEGENDS THERE." THEIR DAD SAID AS THEY GOT OUT OF THE CAR. WALKING UP TO THE HOUSE.

"WELCOME HOME. BOO." HEEPIE SAID.

"WELCOME HOME. BO." JEEPIE CHIMED IN.

"HAPPY HALLOWEEN." THEIR DAD SMILED. HUGGED HIS SONS AND BENT DOWN TO PAT THE DOGS ON THE HEAD.