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<Spooky Stories>

by <Growing Desires>

Trick or Treat

Chapter One

The last of the moving boxes, the ones filled with honeymoon souvenirs and things we probably didn't need but couldn't bear to part with, were finally stacked in the garage. I watched Elaine from the kitchen window as she stood on our new lawn, hands on her hips, surveying the street. A cool October breeze was kicking up, rustling the leaves of the big maple tree that had sold us on this place. She was wearing my old college sweatshirt, and it was a little snugger on her than it was a month ago. I smiled to myself. She'd really made the most of that cruise ship's all-you-can-eat buffet, and honestly, she'd never looked better. A little more of her to love.

She turned and caught me looking, a grin spreading across her face.

"Caleb, come look at this. The Hendersons are putting skeletons on their roof. Skeletons... climbing the chimney."

I grabbed two mugs of coffee and joined her on the porch. Sure enough, next door, Mr. Henderson was perched precariously on a ladder while his wife directed the macabre scene from below. Across the street, the Jacksons' house already looked like a haunted mansion, complete with fake cobwebs covering every bush and a giant inflatable spider sprawled over their entryway. It was only the first week of October.

"This street doesn't mess around with Halloween, does it?" I said, handing Elaine her mug.

She took a sip, her eyes sparkling with a familiar, mischievous light. "Nope. And neither will we if we want to fit in." She looked at our bare porch, the uncarved pumpkins we'd bought at the farm stand sitting hopefully by the door. "We have a reputation to build, mister. Our first holiday as the new couple on the block. We need to go big."

And go big we did. The next weekend was a blur of orange and black. We bought a fog machine, strings of purple lights, and a life-sized animatronic zombie that was supposed to lurch out at anyone who walked up the path. By Sunday evening, our house looked like it had been pulled directly from a horror movie set. The pumpkins were carved with maniacal grins, the zombie was wired up, and the fog machine was blanketing the lawn in an eerie mist. We stood on the sidewalk, arms around each other, admiring our handiwork. We fit right in.

"Think we're ready for Halloween?" Elaine asked, a proud smile on her face.

"We're ready for a zombie apocalypse," I laughed.

Just as we were heading inside, a sharp knock echoed from our front door. We looked at each other, confused. It was still three weeks until the big night. I peeked through the living room blinds and saw a small cluster of costumes on our porch—a tiny vampire, a ghost that looked suspiciously like a bedsheet with eyeholes, and a miniature Frankenstein's monster.

"Are they trick-or-treating already?" Elaine whispered, panic flashing in her eyes. "We don't have any candy!"

She was right. In our frenzy to decorate, we'd completely forgotten the most crucial part. A frantic five-minute search of the pantry turned up a box of fancy Belgian chocolates from the cruise and a bag of granola bars. "It'll have to do," she said, grabbing a handful of each and heading for the door.

She swung it open with a wide, apologetic smile. "Hi guys! You're a little early, but we might have something for you."

The little vampire, who couldn't have been more than six, looked up at her, then held out a small, decorated paper bag. "Trick or treat," he said, but instead of holding his own bag open, he pushed his offering towards Elaine.

Elaine froze, her hand full of granola bars hovering in the air. "Oh. For me?"

The ghost nodded. "It's for your first spooky night," she squeaked from under her sheet. "Welcome to the neighbourhood."

Elaine thanked them, closing the door softly as they scampered off into the fog. She peeked inside the little paper bag. "Homemade cookies," she said,

bewildered, pulling one out. It was thick and pale, but instead of chocolate chips, it was studded with glistening, ruby-red orbs that looked like hard candy.

"They smell... weird," I said, leaning closer. There was a cloying sweetness, like overripe fruit and something else I couldn't place, something vaguely earthy. But Elaine brought the cookie to her nose and inhaled deeply, her eyes fluttering shut. "Oh, no, they smell heavenly," she breathed, her voice dreamy. "Like cinnamon and honey."

Before I could say a word, she took a bite. The moment it touched her tongue, a loud, blissful moan escaped her lips, a sound of pure pleasure that made the hairs on my arm stand up. Her eyes went wide, and she devoured the rest of it in three quick, greedy bites, licking a few stray crumbs from her full lips.

"Elaine, maybe you shouldn't..." I started, but the words died in my throat. I was watching it happen. The old college sweatshirt she wore, already snug, began to strain. The fabric pulled taut across her bust and shoulders, the seams groaning. The hem crept upwards, revealing a soft, new roll of flesh blooming over the waistband of her jeans. Her cheeks flushed, rounding out, and her whole body seemed to... settle. She softened, expanded, as if that single cookie had instantly padded her frame with another five pounds of plush weight.

My mind was reeling. I saw it. I wasn't crazy. "Elaine," I stammered, my heart hammering against my ribs. "Your... your sweater. It just... you just..."

She looked down at her newly rounded belly with a lazy, satisfied smile.

"What about it? Oh, it is a bit tight, isn't it?" She patted the soft swell of her stomach. "Wow, that cookie was incredible."

Another knock at the door, and then another. Each time, a new group of costumed children appeared, and each time, Elaine's hands were filled with more strange treats. She sank onto the couch and entered a gluttonous haze; her eyes glazed over with pure bliss as she worked her way through the pile. I could only watch, speechless, as the changes accelerated. A seam under the arm of my old sweatshirt ripped with a soft tearing sound. Her belly grew from a gentle curve into a prominent, soft mound that strained the denim of her jeans. Then, with a sharp ping, the button on her waistband gave way, and her gut spilled forward, a warm, doughy expanse of skin. Her thighs thickened, pressing against the inseams of her jeans, and her arms softened.

By the time the last treat was gone, she was a different woman. She pushed herself up from the couch with a groan of effort, her overstuffed belly jiggling. She waddled toward the bedroom, seemingly oblivious to her unbuttoned jeans or the torn sweatshirt that now looked a size too small.

Later, in bed, she cuddled up against me, her body radiating an intense heat. I wrapped my arm around her, my hand resting on her stomach. It felt incredible. It was tight, the skin stretched taut over the sheer volume of food she'd consumed, yet profoundly soft underneath. I could feel the new, pillowy softness of her hips pressing into me, the heavier weight of her thigh resting over mine. This wasn't just a food baby; this was... more. It felt permanent. My wife had inflated before my very eyes, and as I held her fuller, softer body, a

confusing mix of shock, concern, and undeniable fascination churned within me.

What would tomorrow bring... It's only the 10th of October...

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