

another pSecret pSociety pshort pstory



10 Degrees at Random by Mike Bozart (Agent 33) | OCT 2016

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by Mike Bozart

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It was back in 2010. A mild Sunday autumn evening. Halloween in east Charlotte (NC, USA). I, Agent 33, was taking my 7-year-old son, who liked to be known at the time as Agent 666 (but has since shed a 6 – is now Agent 66), trick-or-treating in our Windsor Park neighborhood.

We started out around 7:00 PM, a few minutes after sundown. He quickly started to fill up his plastic jack-o'-lantern with various candies. I noticed that his haul was mostly the only-seen-at-Halloween types like Dots, Smarties, Bit-O-Honey, Mike and Ike, Charleston Chew, candy corn, and Mary Jane briquettes. *Wow! Mary Jane. Why do they still make that? Does anyone really like it?*

After walking a few blocks, we arrived at Somerdale Lane.

“Well, which way do you want to go, son?” I asked, wondering if he was ready to go back home and call it a night.

“Which way to that house with the scary front yard, dad?”

“Which one, son?” *How could he forget?!*

“Oh, you know the one, dad! It’s like a haunted jungle. The one that is all overgrown.”

“Oh, yes! That one. It’s to the left.”

“How far away is it?”

“About a quarter-mile, [402 meters] son.”

My son paused for a few seconds to think about the distance. “Ok, let’s go to it.”

“Are you sure that you won’t be frightened?”

“No, not with you with me, dad.” *That sure was nice to hear.*

We then proceeded to march down the curvy street, stopping at lighted houses to take in more sweets. Then we climbed up a slight rise, and there it was: the house with the spooky front yard.

There were a plethora of half-size, motionless Halloween creatures – werewolves, vampires, goblins and witches – along the walkway to the front door of the house that had an orange porch light. Some eerie music was playing, but the source was nowhere to be seen.

Once on the black-matted front porch, my son looked at me. “Dad, can you push the doorbell?” *I can tell that he’s afraid.*

“Sure, son,” I said as I pressed the yellow-lighted circle.

Five seconds later, a 40-something Caucasian man in zombie makeup answered the door, and then laughed maniacally. “Well, what do you say?” he asked menacingly, sounding a bit like a drugged Vincent Price.

“Trick or treat?” my son stammered.

Zombie-man then put a handful of small candies in my son’s faux pumpkin pail.

“Thank you,” my son said as we turned to leave.

Suddenly, another man in ragged clothes wearing a black ski mask came charging out of the front woods with a red chainsaw! It was on. He lunged at us and revved the engine.

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