

“Be Careful What You Wish For: A Halloween Story”

Elizabeth and her family had just moved to a new town. It was a nice little town, very different than the big city she had lived in since she was just a baby. She was nervous though – would she make friends, would her new school be harder than her old school? Luckily she had one really special friend – a fuzzy orange kitten named, “Pumpkin.” Elizabeth spent hours playing with that crazy little Pumpkin cat and they even slept together under Elizabeth’s warm covers at night.

Elizabeth was a tall for her age and really good at all kinds of sports and games. She loved to play kickball and soccer and stuff like that, but her favorite thing to do was to climb trees. On the very first day of school, they had something called a “field day” where all the kids ran races and went through obstacle courses and climbed ropes and shot free-throws and all that sort of thing.

Elizabeth was awesome: she was the fastest kid in her grade and won almost all of the races – and even set a new school record for rope-climbing. She was very proud of herself, and felt brave enough to start making new friends.

But everyone she tried to talk to was mean to her. The boys, perhaps because they were embarrassed at getting beat by a girl, called her “Tomboy, Tomboy” whenever they saw her. They even pretended she smelled funny – which she didn’t! And the girls were no better – when Elizabeth asked them to play foursquare with her they just turned up their noses and said “oh no, we only like to play girl games – like house and Barbies – with real girls, not tomboys.” How do you think this made Elizabeth feel?

Halloween was coming up, and Elizabeth decided to prove to everyone she was a “real” girl. So she got a beautiful pink gown like a princess would wear. It was very uncomfortable compared to her jeans and t-shirts, but, looking at herself in the mirror, she did have to admit she looked just like a princess. She even combed her hair and tied it with a shiny pink ribbon. She was just about ready to go trick-or-treating when she suddenly became very afraid that even with her beautiful costume, the other kids might still be mean to her. Tears started to well up in her eyes as she remembered all the mean things they said.

She looked into the mirror through her tears and said, “I wish this wasn’t a costume – I wish I really was a princess-type girl!” What Elizabeth didn’t know was that the mirror she was looking at herself in was very very old and very very powerful. It was a magic mirror – and this time, it granted her wish.

She went outside, still feeling pretty much like herself. A roll of thunder cracked in the sky, and she saw that it was getting very dark. A storm was coming!! She definitely wouldn’t be trick-or-treating. But then she heard some yelling over by the giant oak tree by her house. Elizabeth ran over to the enormous old tree and saw that way high up in the topmost branches, was her best friend – Pumpkin, her little fuzzy kitten! Pumpkin

must have been scared by a dog or the thunder or something and had climbed way too high in the tree and couldn't get down!

There was a crowd of kids there, but everyone was too afraid to climb up such a big tree. But Elizabeth was a master climber. She took a running start and jumped for the nearest branch – but she couldn't do it. Her body felt strangely weak and uncoordinated, as if she had never climbed a tree in her life! She tried and tried, but she just couldn't do it. The thunder was getting much louder and the storm was getting worse. And then she heard a voice inside her head, "Princesses don't climb trees."

Elizabeth ran back to the house as fast as she could. She ran right up to the magic mirror and yelled, "I don't want to be a princess I just want to be me!!!" Suddenly she felt much, much stronger. She raced back out to the tree and was up in the blink of an eye. Poor little Pumpkin was trembling with fear. Elizabeth took the kitten and held him under one arm as she used the other arm to carefully climb back down.

All the kids were amazed. Nobody had ever climbed the big oak before. They all crowded around her and petted her cat. None of the kids were mean to Elizabeth after that – she was a real cat-rescuer after all! And Elizabeth decided that she really did like herself just as she was – she didn't need to wear a costume or pretend she was somebody else.

But sometimes, just for fun, she would still put on her dress and wear it around. And even though she always did prefer to wear jeans and a t-shirt, she would often tie her long brown hair into a ponytail with that shiny pink ribbon, just because she liked to.