

HALLOWEEN SPOTLIGHT

Cast a spell or two

Brooms, cauldrons and the sound of cackling, along with the sight of a black cat trailing away — indeed a familiar imaginary figure pops up: someone who has the power to alter hearts, snatch away precious items and sometimes, help the hero in need, for a price that is!

Would you not want some 'practical magick' like this in your life? Order your broom to sweep up last night's mess, a flick of your wand to sort out all your chores or maybe a drop of soothing potion for your ever troubled bestie —

what a life! But alas, other than the sole purpose of scaring the children to bed, the cloaked figures in dark garbs and the pointed hats have no purpose.

You would think a spell circle or two in the right side of the last quarter of the moon

could at least guarantee a light traffic on your way to work! Again, no such luck... probably because you used your least favourite shade of nail



ish to draw the signs instead of the required blood sacrifice of the black chicken born in Mars Retrograde. Hey we get it; you have to make do with what you have at hand.

What you would not do a for a modern spell or two, even just a tiny one to give you eight hours of sleep when you have to get up at seven in the morning and it's already reaching the witching hour on your clock. If only!

As Halloween is tomorrow, your spells and chants and potions may not work (for the tenth time), but trust in yourself for the fun you will have!

By Iris Farina
Photo: Collected

Halloween myths and why they exist

HOW IT ALL STARTED

The origin of Halloween comes from the land of the Celts, now modern day France and the British Isles. According to Celtic myths, the dead reside in a faraway land of eternal youth and happiness, called Tir nan Og, and that one could only communicate with the dead during the turning of the year.

So, during the end of the Celtic Year, the veil separating the land of the dead and living was considered to be at its thinnest, thus allowing the spirits of the dead to roam the earth and communicate with the living.

The date 31 October was highly feared by the native Celts as it was the night of Samhain, where they worshipped the Lord of the Dead.

The druids (Celtic priests) made huge bonfires of oak and sacrificed criminals, prisoners, and animals to honour the gods and the spirits. As the victims burned, omens of the future were foretold by the druids by observing the fire. They believed that the spirits would punish the people if they felt dishonoured in any way.

THE DRESSING UP

Dressing up for Halloween is also something the world inherited from the Celts. As the ghosts returned to the land of the living, people were afraid that spirits with a grudge would come to haunt them. So, they would wear masks after dark to trick the spirits into thinking that they were one of their own!

Of course, by the time Halloween spread across the world, the masks evolved into an elaborate costume culture.

THEM APPLES

The Celts are also the reason why apples are so popular during Halloween. Apples were considered sacred for being associated with female deities. Samhain also marked the end of

summer, meaning it was the end of the harvest season. As the cold dark winter approached, the Celts prayed to the sun deity to return quickly by burning apples tied to branches. By the time Halloween reached the rest of the world, candy apples were integrated into the tradition.

THE PUMPKIN MYTH

Hard to imagine Halloween without Jack-O'-Lanterns is it not? This one is an Irish favourite called 'Stingy Jack.' The Irishman Jack had trapped the Devil in an apple tree (another reason for apples being so popular in Halloween) by tricking him. This had angered both God and Satan, and because of that, he was not allowed into heaven or hell after this death, but instead, was forced to walk the earth endlessly. The devil gave him a piece of burning coal out of pity, and as Jack put that inside a hollow turnip, Jack-O'-Lantern was born.

FOR THE SPOOKS

What is Halloween without some sinister spooky myths? Whether it is spiders in wigs to scare arachnophobes, or creepy clowns, these stories are what make Halloween so exciting.

Have you ever heard of the Bloody Mary? This ancient urban legend states that if you stare at a mirror and say 'Bloody Mary' three times, a demonic woman, or Bloody Mary herself, will try to drag you into her world.

How about the origin of the most famous vampire Dracula?

Dracula is based on a prince who ruled Romania and had a thirst for blood. In fact, you are not just limited to European legends. Our subcontinent consists of myths of the Acheri, who comes in the form of a pale sickly girl, or the rompo, who feeds on human flesh.

Of course, each region has countless ghostly myths. Why not spend this Halloween looking up your favourite creepy monsters, or find their regional counterparts? After all, human beings are mostly scared of the same stuff.

By Adiba Mahbub Proma
Photo: Collected



Are you in love with horror movies, spooky stories, and clever costumes of your favourite ghosts?

What about the

mouth-watering

chocolate bars, candy apples and fruit punches? If you have

a knack for everything

supernatural, then surely, you

must be super excited as

Halloween is right around the

corner. From blood-sucking

vampires to sinister ghouls, let

us find out what makes

Halloween so special.