Homage to Halloween

Twas the night of Hall’ween, when all through Lev House
Not a creature was stirring, except for one louse.
All my friends had gone out to their classy affairs
While alone in my dorm room I played solitaire.

The costumed kids ‘round the campus sped
While visions of candy bars danced in their heads.
I stayed in to greet those poor little saps,
Since there wasn’t a bar I hadn't unwrapped.

At the door, suddenly, there came such a clatter.
I sprang out of bed to see what’s the matter.
Too late! For someone too unabashed
Stepped over the door so freshly smashed.

His skeleton bod did hauntingly flow
And the holes for his eyes did eerily glow
Conveying a most nefarious milieu:
The Pumpkin King’s aura really chills you.

"Good, sir!" said he, "Why are you so loathe
To romp the cold streets whilst funnily clothed?
Thy liege you must serve, Grand Vizier of the Night,
Minister of Horrors, Master of Fright!"

At this I did shudder a terrible bout
For I knew in my heart without a trace of a doubt
That for this property damage I did not exact
My admission to Harvard the Ad Board'll retract.

I had to get him out so the place could be cleaned,
So in a desperate rage, I answered the fiend:
"On psets! On readings! On midterms! On essays!
I'm much, much too busy, JUST PLEASE GO AWAY!"

Then the piles of work whirled about with a rattle
To duel with the King in an unnatural battle
When with force I jerked my head from my desk,
Awakened from a dream most Franz-Kafka-esque.

'I had fallen asleep,' I thought as I stirred
Though from my desk in my bedroom I swore that I heard
A voice contorted with malice and spite,
"Good All Hallow’s Eve! And to all a good night...
Except you, you overworked pre-med!"

The End
THE PAUL talks midterms

Dear Paul,

How do you study for midterms?

Signed,

TBF

Oh so you think I have to study, do you? Well you’re right. Good looks may come easy to me, but I work for my A’s. Obviously I can’t go to the populated spots like house libraries or Lamont (the paparazzi get to me after awhile) so I have to be a little creative. Have you ever been to Pusey Stacks? Probably not. Let me tell you, there are people down there that haven’t seen the sun in weeks. Some PhD student was down there writing her dissertation; no joke she had two pillows and a suitcase behind her. I’m assuming she has no clue my Yankees aren’t in the Series this year. To be honest, I think she kind of wishes she was one of those Chilean miners...all that seclusion and lack of distraction...but I digress. The Pusey Stacks are awesome, way away from cell phone signal, dining hall distractions and grenade launchers—I find I can do my best work there. Nothing like cuddling up with some index cards and a cheat sheet 15 stories underground. Rumor has it, that’s the place they would take a President if there was an attack while he was on campus. Now that you all know my spot, I’m going to have to switch it up again. I hear Cabot basement is a good spot to get away from it all...

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Halloween: Some Fun Facts

- Halloween was commonly referred to as "All Hollows" Eve. It originated from the pagan holiday honoring the dead. The Roman Catholic Church created All Saints Day (also called Hallomas) on November 1st to honor Saints and All Souls Day on November 2 and to honor and pray for the souls of the dead. These holidays were created by the church, in part to downplay the pagan holidays. Needless to say, it did not succeed. Halloween as we know it today, has grown from the ancient Druid Holiday. Along the way both fun, frights, and Satanic twists have been added to the mix.
- The ancient Celts thought that spirits and ghosts wondered the streets on all Hallows Eve so they began wearing masks and costumes in order to not be recognized as human.
- The jack-o-lantern tradition comes from an old Irish folk tale about a man named Stingy Jack. It was said that he was unable to get into heaven and was turned away from the devil because of his tricky ways. So he set off to wander the world looking for a resting place. For light, Stingy Jack used a burning coal ember in a hollowed out turnip. When the Irish immigrated to the U.S. during the Great Potato Famine of 1845-1850, they found that turnips were not as readily available like they were in the homeland. So they started carving pumpkins as a replacement for their tradition.
- On Halloween, Irish peasants would beg the rich for food. For those that refused, they would play a practical joke. So, in an effort to avoid being tricked, the rich would hand out cookies, candy, and fruit – a practice that morphed into trick-or-treating today.
- Of all the candy sold annually, one quarter of it is sold during Halloween time (September – November 10) making it the sweetest holiday of the year.
- Tootsie Rolls were the first wrapped penny candy in America
- The number one candy of choice for Halloween is Snickers
- There are an estimated 106 million potential treat or-treat stops (i.e., housing units occupied year-round, per the U.S. Census)
- Halloween is the second most commercially successful holiday, beat out only by Christmas
- The U.S. consumer spends upwards of $1.5 billion on Halloween costumes annually and more than $2.5 billion on other Halloween paraphernalia, such as decorations, crafts, etc. More than $100,000 of that is said to be spent online
- Candy sales in the U.S. for Halloween average $2 billion annually
- Halloween is the third biggest party day of the year behind New Year’s and Super Bowl Sunday, respectively
- 86% of Americans decorate their homes at Halloween
- Halloween is the 8th largest card sending holiday. The first Halloween greeting is dated back to early 1900 and today consumers spend around $50 million dollars on Halloween cards each year.
- Of the pumpkins marketed domestically, 99% of them are used as Jack-o-lanterns at Halloween
- Approximately 82% of children and 67% of adults take part in Halloween festivities every year

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Riddle: Horse Race

ANSWER TO LAST WEEK’S RIDDLE:
Make one of the prisoners the "lead" prisoner. This prisoner is the ONLY one who is allowed to turn the light off. Each time any of the other prisoners goes into the lobby, if the light is off, they will turn the light on, but only if they’ve never turned it on before. This means that each prisoner will only ever turn the light on once. Meanwhile, every time the lead prisoner goes into the lobby, he will turn the light off if it’s on. He will keep track of the number of times he has turned the light off. Once the lead prisoner turns off the light for the 99th time, he knows that every other prisoner has turned the light on once (and thus has been in the lobby). At this point, he may say that all the prisoners have been to the lobby, and they will all go free.

THIS WEEK’S RIDDLE:
Two men ride their horses to the town blacksmith to ask for his daughter’s hand in marriage. To help decide who will get to marry her, the blacksmith proposes a very strange race: “You will race your horses down the mile-long road from here to the center of town, and the man whose horse passes through city hall’s gates LAST will get to marry my daughter.”

The men have no idea how to proceed, but after a few minutes of thinking, they come up with a great idea to abide by the blacksmith’s rules. 30 minutes later, one of the men is gloating, having won the daughter’s hand in marriage. What was the idea the men had?