

## NEVER TOUCH THE PUMPKIN

It was a cold Halloween night in the town of Virginia. The streets that night were overcrowded with children asking for candies disguised as vampires, zombies, werewolves... Children ran from house to house, shouting "Trick or treat" while parents chatted from the sidewalks.

Sam and Nicole were best friends. They were waiting for this night all year. Mikel was dressed like a clown with a balloon, Sam like a witch with a black cat and Nicole like a vampire with blood in the neck. They carried pumpkins with many candies.

They had already visited every house on the main street except one- the old mansion of Graham's family at the end of the street. Everyone said it was haunted, but Nicole, the bravest of the group of three, convinced the others to go. "Let's go to the end of the street," Nicole said, pointing to a huge, abandoned mansion.

Its windows were broken, and the paint on the wall had flaked off, and the garden was full of dead trees and rubbish. The main entrance door was very big and dark.

"No" Mikel said nervously. "That place is haunted"

"Haunted houses have the best candies" Nicole said. Sam laughed and the curiosity of three won. The three friends walked to the entrance of the house.

When they came to the front door, it was ajar. They could see an orange light inside, like that of a pumpkin with a candle.

"Maybe some child has already entered the house." said Sam "Let's take a candy and leave, this isn't funny to me"

"The idea doesn't convince me" said Mikel but Nicole said "Well, I will go in alone; if something happens to me, it will be your fault."

In the end, the two friends said OKAY, came on.

The hall of the big mansion was full of mirrors, tall and old mirrors. There was a sign that said that the sweets were at the back of the hall.

Everything was going well until they noticed that the reflection they saw was a little...wrong. Sam reflection in one mirror was smiling, but she was not smiling. In another mirror Mikel reflection moved a second too late.

"Please, can we leave? There is something wrong here" said Sam but nobody paid attention to her.

At the end of the hall, they saw a bowl full of candies under an orange candle. Nicole walked closer to take one.

“Look, nothing happens” said Nicole after taking it.

“Stop” said Sam, but it was too late.

The reflections of the three friends started to move on their own and smile funny. By the time they tried to escape running, it was already too late; the door was closed and they couldn't open it.

A second later they began to run to the end of the hallway because there was another door, but they didn't even make it halfway. The reflections grabbed their hands and pulled them into the mirrors.

The house went silent. The candle went out.

Next morning, the town of Virginia wake up in silence. When a neighbor crossed the road, to collect the newspaper, she noticed something strange on the porch of the mansion. The neighbor found the pumpkins in the porch still full and untouched as if the kids had never been there.

The police searched the house from top to bottom but found nothing. They weren't footprints or fingerprints. The only unusual thing were the mirrors because they seemed as if someone had just cleaned them, but the rest of the house was not clean.

The police searched for weeks, for months... but they never appeared.

Someone said that every Halloween night, if you walk next to Graham's family mansion, you can still heard laughter and screams from the kids inside and if you look into the windows, you will see three children smiling and with their pumpkins full of sweets, waiting for the next trick or treaters to arrive.

A year later, on Halloween night, a group of teenagers also wanted to enter into the mansion but when they were next to the porch they saw something strange.

Next to the three pumpkins of last year, there was a fourth one, empty, waiting. They heard a funny voice saying “trick or treat”

The teenagers ran and never came back to the Graham's family mansion.

To this day, the mansion stands silent at the end of the street. The pumpkins are still there and every Halloween, one more appears.

Nobody knows who put them, or where they went later. But everyone in the town of Virginia knows one thing:

If you ever see another empty pumpkin waiting for you on the porch of Graham mansion... Don't touch it for anything in the world.