

Roommate, 2006

by Jeanna Goodrich

I love her now, but I used hate her because she'd leave hairs on my bar of soap.

It wasn't cold yet. The wind was chilly but it wasn't cold, and our bare legs skipped with a brisk enthusiasm that comes only when the leaves start to go. We were restless, we were excited, and we wanted candy.

I wonder what they thought of us: she in her pirate dress and I in her leopard leotard; she had a closet that was made for Halloween. She'd toss pieces of it on the floor of the bathroom where they'd lay stagnant, and I'd clean them up. Trick or treat, we said, her voice a much higher pitch than mine. At the end of the evening, our loot, pooled together, barely filled the pumpkin bucket we'd bought to put it in.

She picked out the red Starbursts and the Butterfingers but left me the Milk Ways; the people who walked in and out of our always-open door took the rest. Three in the morning, and we'd be giving candy to strangers with smiles on our faces, neither party asking why the other was still awake.

By the time we both moved out, we'd named the pumpkin Gibson and melted six candles in him—two to smell spicy apples and four to get rid of mosquitos at the beginning of spring. He stayed behind in a trashcan, because we didn't love him as much as we loved each other.

