



THE BIRTHDAY STEALER

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1

One ugly and disgusting monster called Victor lived in a dark and large cave.

Victor was very different from other monsters.

He was not even truly naughty ; unless you annoyed him of course.

Above all, he would always smell good.

He would never leave his cave before putting rose oil on himself.

2

But what made Victor even more different from all other monsters is that he had a strange power.

He could steal birthdays !

Why? He did not know.

What was sure is that he really loved to do it.

3

Stealing birthdays is not a matter of stealing cakes or even gifts...

Any monster could have done that.

Victor would come at night when children were heavily sleeping and suck their birthdays with a simple straw.

4

Children would have no more birthdays after that disastrous night.

Their family, their friends, their teachers and even them completely forgot to celebrate this wonderful day.

Big parties with friends, sweets, cakes, streamers and gifts disappeared.

But there was something even worse...

5

Children stopped growing up.

They were doomed to have the same age forever. They could never become adults.

They would never fulfill their wildest dreams such as becoming plane pilot, teacher, vet, star dancer or fireman...

And they would have to go to school all their life of course.

6

One starry night, Victor entered Bastien's bedroom.

Bastien was a little boy of eight.

Victor was about to steal his birthdays when Bastien woke up...

7

Bastien was afraid of nothing; so he asked the monster:

- What are you doing in my room, Mister Monster ?

Victor was very confused. He babbled :

- Er...er...I...am...here...to...er...steal...hem...borrow...your...birth...days.

Bastien folded his arms with a frown and severely said:

- It is not nice to steal other's birthdays ! I do want to celebrate my birthdays with my friends ! Why do you do that ?

8

Victor sat on Bastien's bed and started to think.

He thought for a long time, a very long time.

One hour later, he still had not answered the question.

Then, Bastien tenderly whispered in his ear :

- You did celebrate your birthday with your family. Why could not I do the same ?

9

Victor suddenly remembered that his parents were naughty monsters even if you did not annoy them.

And they never wanted to celebrate Victor's birthday.

So he started to cry his heart out.

Bastien gave him a tissue and asked him why he was crying.

The monster told him why, sniffing.

10

Bastien jumped off his bed and started rummaging in his toybox.

He took a beautiful soft toy out of it and held it out to the monster and told him :

- I'm giving you a present because your mom and dad never did.

And I will give you one present every year from now on !

The monster was so happy he took Bastien in his arms and kissed him.

Bastien was very surprised to see that the monster smelled like rose.

11

Bastien asked his new friend a little favour in return.

Victor was holding tight his soft toy against his heart and accepted with great pleasure.

And all children got their birthdays back within half an hour.

Victor did not forget any birthday at all !

12

All of a sudden all children grew up !

Alas, it caused a huge chaos...

13

It took a lot of patience and energy for all these brand new adults to behave in society like they should. But all got back to normal, well almost...

14

The years passed.

Bastien is now the father of two sweet girls called Mathilde and Morgane.

Victor never forget their birthday !

Not to steal them of course but, to celebrate them !

He kept his promise, and so did Bastien...