How to Carve a Pumpkin

by
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For the One Week Challenge

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INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Black and white 50s style, though it’s present day.

STANLEY JONES stands in a kitchen with a cigar in hand. His hair is slicked back and he is dressed in a formal attire.

He stands behind a MOTHER and SON. The son works on carving a jack-o-lantern. He looks up at the camera.

STANLEY
Oh, hello. I’m Stanley Jones. You’re probably here to learn how to carve a jack-o-lantern, hm? Well, it’s as easy as 1, 2, 3. Let’s get started.

Stanley walks off screen. BOBBY (12) walks into the kitchen.

STANLEY (V.O.)
This is Bobby. He’s planning on buying a pumpkin today to later turn it into a jack-o-lantern.

BOBBY
I’m off to buy a pumpkin, Mom.

MOTHER
Be careful.

His mother kisses him on the cheek.

Bobby attempts to open the door, but it won’t budge. He tugs on it, but the door refuses to open. He finally jerks the door open.

The door smacks him in the head. He stumbles back and lands on the table. The table collapses beneath him.

It launches a prop carving knife through the air. The knife lands in Bobby’s neck and slices it open. The camera faces the mother and she screams.

CUT TO:

A new table has replaced the old one. The mother and son are in their same positions. KYLE (13) walks in.
STANLEY (V.O.)
This is Kyle. He’s planning on buying a pumpkin today to later turn it into a jack-o-lantern.

KYLE
I’m off to buy a pumpkin, Mom.

MOTHER
Be careful.

The mother kisses him on the cheek.

Kyle turns around to open the door, but accidentally knocks over a large glass of water. The glass shatters and water splashes all over the floor.

The water splashes on a power cord from one of the stage lights. The cord is partly cut open, and Kyle gets electrocuted. He sizzles as he falls to the floor.

CUT TO:

The mother and HENRY (12) face each other.

MOTHER
Be careful.

The mother and Henry shake hands nervously. He walks through the door.

EXT. FARM - DAY

Henry walks through a field of pumpkins. Stanley stops him.

STANLEY (V.O.)
Now it comes to picking out the perfect pumpkin. Remember to find one without bruises, one that’s nice and round, and one that is the perfect size.

Henry searches for the perfect pumpkin.

STANLEY (V.O.)
If you have trouble looking for one, always consider asking for help.

HENRY
(To camera)
Great idea!
Henry walks up to a Hispanic WORKER who plows the field.

HENRY
Excuse me sir. Do you know where I can find the perfect pumpkin?

WORKER
¿Qué?

STANLEY
(Chuckling)
Go back to college, Pablo.
(To Henry)
Henry, maybe you should ask a professional.

A FARMER walks up behind Henry.

FARMER
You here to purchase a pumpkin?

HENRY
Yes sir.

The farmer pulls out a nice, juicy, clean pumpkin.

HENRY
Gee wiz! It’s perfect! I’ll take it!

FARMER
Seven dollars.

Henry pulls out his money, but Stanley stops him.

STANLEY (V.O.)
Hold on there, Henry. Before you purchase that pumpkin, you should look around other places. There may be pumpkins just the same for a lower price.

HENRY
Golly, you may be right.

Henry walks off. The farmer glares at him.

FARMER
(To himself)
Get your ass back here.
EXT. GHETTO AREA - DAY

Henry walks into a rundown street. A black MAN hollers at him.

    MAN
    Hey! You looking for a pumpkin?

    HENRY
    (To camera)
    Uh oh! A Negro! What should I do?

    STANLEY (V.O.)
    Who the hell cares! He has pumpkins!

Henry walks up to the man.

    HENRY
    One pumpkin, please.

    MAN
    Fifty bucks.

    HENRY
    Holy moly! I only have ten dollars!

    MAN
    You got a sister?

CUT TO:

The man stands on his porch with a young teenage girl. He slowly pulls her into his home. Henry walks off proudly with his pumpkin.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Henry now stands in his kitchen with the pumpkin on the table.

    STANLEY (V.O.)
    Congratulations, Henry! You now have your pumpkin. Now it’s time to carve. First, you’ll need newspaper...

Henry produces newspaper from underneath the table.

    STANLEY (V.O.)
    ...a carving knife...

Henry produces a carving knife.
STANLEY (V.O.)
...and a large spoon.

He produces a spoon.

Stanley walks into view and stands next to Henry.

STANLEY
Alright, Henry! Are you ready to carve your jack-o-lantern?

HENRY
Am I ever!

STANLEY
Alright, first we need to spread out the newspaper.

They unfold the newspaper and set it on the table. Henry picks up a piece of newspaper off the floor and holds it up. A few rolls of dog poop splatter on the table.

HENRY
Sparky!

CUT TO:

Stanley holds the carving knife. The mother and younger son stand behind them.

STANLEY
Next, you want to cut open the top of the pumpkin, but be cautious to those around you. Now, who wants to cut the top open?

SON
I do!

Stanley whips around, but accidentally stabs the son in the eye. He screams in pain.

CUT TO:

The son now has a bandage taped over his eye.

STANLEY
Now, who wants to cut the top open?

HENRY
I do!
Stanley carefully sets the knife on the table. Henry grabs it and begins to cut the top open. The others look on as he cuts it open. He finally finishes.

**STANLEY**

Now that he’s finished, you use the large spoon to scoop out the pumpkin seeds.

Henry scoops out the seeds and sets them on the newspaper.

**STANLEY**

While Henry is cleaning out the inside of the pumpkin, here’s a tip you mothers could use at home. Cook the pumpkin seeds to make a delicious meal everyone will enjoy.

**MOTHER**

I think I’ll do that now!

While Henry scoops out the seeds, the mother scoops them into a small cooking tray. They both finish up. The mother sets the seeds in the oven and switches it on.

**STANLEY**

Now it’s time for carving. To make it easier, first draw the face you want as your jack-o-lantern design.

Stanley turns the pumpkin towards the camera. A normal, smiling jack-o-lantern design has been drawn.

**STANLEY**

Remember, when you cut, you always make sure you do it nice and slow, so you don’t hurt yourself or others. Henry, would you like to cut?

Henry takes the knife while Stanley holds it. The knife slides through the left eye of the jack-o-lantern design rather quickly.

Henry jerks the knife down which severs Stanley’s thumb. Blood squirts out everywhere.

Stanley’s hand retreats. Blood sprays on everyone in the face, and they all scream.

**CUT TO:**
Stanley holds on to the pumpkin with a bloody bandage around his hand. Henry slowly cuts through the jack-o-lantern design.

Henry pushes out the cut out pieces and sets them on the newspaper. He sets the mouth piece on the table on a piece of newspaper that hangs off the side of the table.

SPARKY, the dog, jumps up and chews on the paper. It falls off, and the mouth piece falls on the floor. Sparky jumps onto the table.

Henry picks up the pumpkin and looks at it.

HENRY
Finished!

The four look at it in awe.

Stanley wipes his hands off with a cloth and steps to the side. He slips on the mouth piece and lands on the table.

The table launches Sparky into the air. He yelps, but is cut off when he flies into the ceiling fan. Blood sprays and rains down on the four. They all scream in horror.

CUT TO:

Stanley smiles while he stares at the camera. The other three force a smile, but are obviously scared and grossed out. Blood decorates their surroundings.

The finished jack-o-lantern sits on the table, also covered in blood.

STANLEY
Well, we’re finally finished carving our jack-o-lantern! How do you feel, Henry?

HENRY
(Uncomfortably)
I...love...it...

STANLEY
What about you, Mom?

MOTHER
(Uncomfortably and monotonous)
I’m so proud of my oldest son.
STANLEY
And what’s a jack-o-lantern carving without celebrating with delicious cooked pumpkin seeds? Mom?

MOTHER
Right. Son, would you like to get the seeds?

The younger son walks over to the oven and opens it up. The seeds look as they were when they first put them in. A faded hissing sound emits from inside the oven.

SON
The seeds look the same.

Stanley stops smiling. He looks at the son and stomps his foot on the ground.

STANLEY
Just get the fucking seeds out!
(Back at the camera)
And last, but not least, brighten up your evening by having a lit candle bring your jack-o-lantern to life.

He pulls out a candle and sticks it in the jack-o-lantern. He pulls out a matchbox.

STANLEY
Harry, will you do the honor?

HENRY
It’s Henry.

Stanley shoves the matchbox in Henry’s face. Matches fall to the floor.

Henry pulls out a match. He takes a deep breath and slides the match across the box. It lights up.

EXT. HOUSE – DAY

The house explodes into a gigantic fireball. Debris shoots through the air.

FADE OUT.