

Happy Halloween!: Titania

Once, long ago...there were no devils, vampires, werewolves, zombies, Frankenstein's monsters or frightening fake-blooded masks...No hyperactive children devouring scores and scores of sugar-laden lollies.

Halloween, All Hallows' Eve, also called Samhain {pronounced sow-ain}, is an ancient Celtic Pagan celebration, honouring ancestors who had gone before, paying homage to their hardships and sacrifices so the current generation could have easier lives than their predecessors. No, they did *not* raise the dead or any of that *stupid*, misleading, fear-based Hollywood horror movie rubbish. There's nothing evil or scary about Samhain. It's a peaceful ritual, where participants celebrated the lives of past loves ones, shared home-made food in honour of the dead, meditated and spoke of futures to do their ancestors proud.

Contrary to popular belief, originating from the Dark Ages, Pagans, including witches were not evil and never worshiped the devil. They were and still are peace loving nature people. Before their fallout, people went to the local witch for healing potions, balms, all manner of natural medicines and remedies. One man told me that we wouldn't have medicine today, natural or otherwise, had it not been for witches. Yes, witches have always been real. No, they do not have green faces. I hope you have gathered that they are a *far* cry from the evil, cackling, wart-laden, haggard old hags from fairy tales.

Sadly, with the persecution of Pagankind, Halloween was considered evil and was later, unfortunately commercialised, like Christmas has been in the modern age. The giving of Christmas presents and decorating trees, stems from another peaceful Pagan festival, Solstice, celebrating the life-giving sun. Back in the day, presents of love were exchanged and trees, still growing, were decorated with natural ornaments; no unnatural plastic! These festivals are about honouring and nurturing Mother Nature, her creatures, the Gods they believe in and each other.

Samhain, the second harvest, marks the start of the Pagan new year, celebrated on October 31st in the Northern Hemisphere. It is not commonly known {or commercialised} that Halloween is on the night of April 30th, to May the 1st in the Southern Hemisphere, when Pagans in the Northern Hemisphere celebrate Beltaine, a festival of letting go, celebrated by Southern Hemisphere Pagans on October 31st, as they have entered spring.

I hope you enjoyed and learnt something from my little history lesson, that it has entertained and enlightened you.