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On Halloween, the Retarded

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ON HALLOWEEN, THE RETARDED

keep coming back, pressing
their broad grins against
the glass, bags open
& inviting, like lame excuses
for laughter. They don't wear
any costumes. They seem
to know their inherent fright
when drooling. By the third pass
we have come to know
it's them: they knock harder.
Each time we refuse
they open the bags wider,
stay until we give them more.
Then they shrink
to the edge of our porchlight,
their faces barely sticking out
from the darkness like pumpkins.
The fourth time
we try excuses: that we have
no candy, that the people
next door have more. They fail
to understand. We turn off
the lights, close & bolt the door.
Behind the curtain
we vow to each other
never to admit them again.
Should they return once more,
we will scream
that no one here is home.
They are wrong.
This isn't Halloween.