



Dispatches From **Shanghai**

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No.02

Halloween

There was no excuse for my laziness and utter apathy. It was 6:00 Halloween evening and I was collapsed on my couch, unwilling to move after an arduous week at work. Some friends stopped by, put a beer in my hand, and began discussing what my costume should be. All of the usual getups for the unprepared were mentioned: homeless person, punk-rocker, or California Raisin (i.e., tights and a garbage bag stuffed with newspapers). None of these were acceptable. There was a witch's hat available, so I consented to some heavy eyeliner, pulled on a black dress, and jumped into a cab.

The evening's destination was a club hosting a Clash cover band. There are many magazines and websites catering to the expats in Shanghai, and their reporters were out in full force. Before I could order a drink I was accosted by three magazine photographers, all in rapture over my costume. Not long after that came all of the glittery, cute Chinese girls wanting their picture taken with me.

My friends, all in far more imaginative costumes than myself, were bewildered by my popularity. I wondered myself why I was getting all of the attention. Is it that witches are iconic, a Halloween staple? Was I, at that moment, the embodiment of western Halloween tradition? Or was it the irresistible way I tilted my pointy hat and smiled wide for the camera? I hope that the next issue of City Weekend will have the answer.