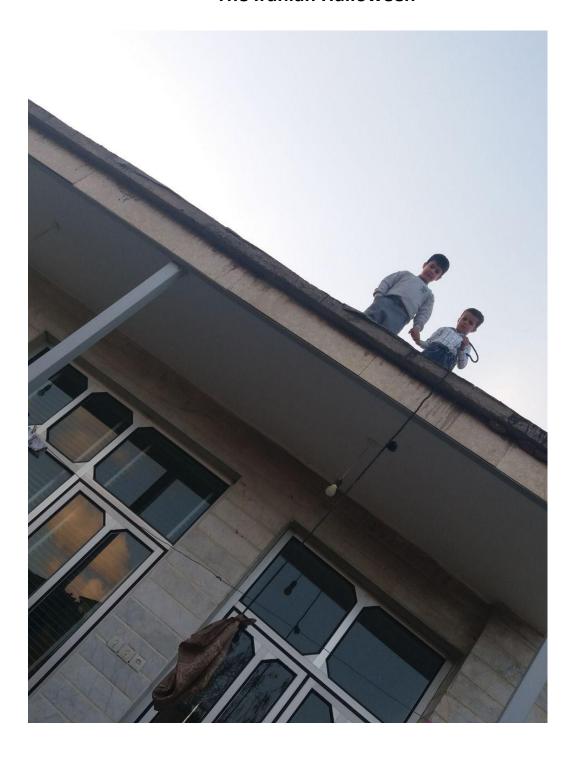# The Iranian Halloween

Synopsis

In the past, Halloween was a celebration Iranians watched just in movies. However, in recent years, it has been turned into a celebration for some Iranians. They celebrate the event as a reunion in which foods and deserts made from pumpkin is served. Halloween is an annual holiday, celebrated each year on October 31, which has roots in age-old European traditions. This day marked the end of summer and the harvest and the beginning of the dark, cold winter, a time of year that was often associated with human death.

Iranians in different regions celebrate New Year in different ways. There are so many songs for New Year and so many traditions which are still practiced in villages but has been forgotten in cities. A tradition which is so similar to Halloween is "Kerkerebandi" mostly practiced in central Iran, in villages like Jouneqan, 50 kilometers southwest of Sharekord. This short piece is all about Kerkerebandi in Jouneqan where young and old still remember how they used to practice such tradition. We tried to bring in the details of how they do the tradition which is similar to Halloween in the way children recite a poem like trick or treat and get sweets and chocolates.

Producer & Director: Fatemeh Rafiee

Duration: 7:40

Script

Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari province, Jouneqan city, an old everlasting tradition, an interesting game for having fun on the Eve of Norouz.

Norouz has special traditions which one of them is a kind of game which is a very old tradition called "Kerkereh Shobandi". (Kerkereh is a pice of cloth or a basket which is taken to receive goods in it.)

(0:50) about one month before Norouz we managed to go for Kerkereh.

Those neighbors whom we had a common rooftop with would come.

(1:00) There were some old heaters which were through the wall; they would come in through the pipe.

(1:06) For fun and entertaining and being together.

(1:12) This is how its done. Some people go to rooftops of their neighbors on the Eve of Norouz.

(1:20) Around 9 or 9:30 the youth go to rooftops and stick a plastic to a rope and sing a song while rolling down the plastic.

(1:32) Then we knock on the window. On that night they all know that they have to put something there. They put them on the Kerkereh and they pull it up meaning that we have put something in it, now you can take it.

(1:46) I'll roll down the bag, you sing the song but you have to change your voice; it shouldn't be your own voice.

(1:58) I would put in an egg fro the kids.

(2:05) Old woman singing a New Year's song.

(2:30) This old tradition is filled with gifts given to the kids by the elderly. Full of everlasting memories.

(2:35) Once I went with my cousin, two or three years ago. They put in rotten oranges for us! When we pulled it up and saw the rotten oranges we laughed so much.

(2:48) Once they came to my rooftop and sent down their basket. I put two oranges and a 5 touman coin and sent it up to them. When I did that, they said: "May God bless you for the money you gave us."

(3:05) Do you know what they put in our Kerkereh? Oranges, money and also colored eggs. What did they put in your Kerkereh? I'm talking to you! What did they put in it?

(3:16) The best gift that I got was when we sent a Kerkereh in my uncle's house. At that time, he put two 5 Tuman coins in our basket. My cousin was from Kuwait! It was a lot at that time. My best memory was at my uncle's house.

(3:30) Once I went to roll down a Kerkereh some friend of mine said I want to come with you. I told him that you don't know how to do it. When he came with us, he rolled down the Kerkereh, a boy hanged to it and made him fall down from the rooftop and broke his leg. We laughed so much.

(3:45) We had some seeds in our Kerkereh. When we rolled it down, they even took the seeds from it!

(3:54) whatever they put in our kerkerehs, we should distribute them equally between ourselves.

(3:58) One would give eggs, one would give money and one wouldn't give anything at all! We would even shout but they wouldn't give us anything. When we came back home, we would distribute them, the eggs and coins. We were so happy that we had got these things.

(4:20) Once I was 15 years old, I went to my uncle's rooftop. When they rolled down the Kerkereh, my uncle recognized me. He put a shirt in my Kerekereh.

(4:32) When the kids would come down to our house I would give them some eggs and they would become so happy and they would leave.

(4:42) Once we went to a two story building. They asked us how did you go up this two story building?!

(4:48) Come down! What are you doing? It's already New year, let's go!

(4:52) It's a tradition from the past that the kids go on roof tops on new year's eve and tie up a piece of cloth to a string and let it go down and sing: "Kerkerake Showandi, Har chi darin bebandid." [It's a night basket, put in whatever you wish.] So we put in some fruits or money in there for the sake of joy and happiness.

Norouz Music

(5:45) Norooz is not only a ceremony, Norooz is a national identity and cultural element which has passed through the pages of history and now arrived in our hands. Dr. Abbas Ghanbari, a Cultural expert:

Those who know about the tradition of Shalandazi know that this happens in different parts of Iran as a desirable tradition. It is done mostly by the youth and boys on the rooftops of houses, they attach some scarves and roll it son from some ways to tell the landlord that we have come to benefit from your generosity and kindness. The host sends anything he wishes to the person who has rolled down the scarf to share his/her happiness and celebration with the guest who knows himself so close that he's asking for a gift, he sends this gift.

(7:08) Children singing together:

Kerkerake Showandi, Har chi darin bebandid."

[It's a night basket, put in whatever you wish.]

- We used to go to Kerkerebandi with our cousins.
- It's a tradition from the past, we want to maintain it.
    - Kerkerake Showandi, Har chi darin bebandid."
    - [It's a night basket, put in whatever you wish.]

The End