

Transcript for The Who's Dat Phat Girl Podcast - With Brooke Hoover
EPISODE #33- HALLOWEEN SPECIAL: PART 1 - SEXY HAREM GIRL

Hey y'all, I'm Brooke Hoover. A Louisiana native, actor, writer and comedian. I've lost 100 pounds through diet and exercise or shall I say "lifestyle changes". My twenty-year and counting health journey has taught me that just like taking a diet pill for weight loss, body positivity doesn't magically happen overnight. I'm working on re-gaining my self esteem and re-kindling my love affair with Cajun and Southern comfort food in a healthier way all the while juggling eating as clean as I can, re-establishing myself in the entertainment industry which, as we know, is historically fat phobic all the while showing my inner phat girl some love - that's phat with a PH - pretty hot and tempting. Let me tell y'all a tale or two...

In honor of the Hoover's favorite holiday, Halloween, the next three episodes will be a three-part saga of Halloween costumes and body confidence inspired by my solo show PHAT GIRL COSTUMES! There's a lot of scary shit that goes along with Halloween - brain sucking zombies, Jamie Lee Curtis and Michael Meyers and basic b*tches in overly generic clichéd basic costumes. But I think the most frightening thing for me was that it marked the time of me going from childhood naïveté of loving myself as I was to the doom of self-deprecation.

As a pre-teen and teenager, self-deprecation was my shield. It was my defense mechanism to make fun of myself before someone else could. Like I was already in on the joke that I was fat, flat footed and rizzy haired. As an adult, it sort of became my shtick for comedy's sake. But, as a child, I was never self-deprecating. None of us were. I believe we are born innocent until someone else taints our views. And the worst part, we allow them to get tainted. Yes, I just used the word "taint" twice in a row - well now technically three times.

In childhood, I freaking LOVED myself. I was cool, unique and beautiful. I didn't let anyone else define me. Why the HELL am I letting them do it now? Please, friends, travel back in time with me!

INSPIRATIONAL STOCK 80S MONTAGE MUSIC

Mermaid. Flapper. Snow Queen. Those are the types of costumes that come in plastic bags that you find in the seasonal aisle at Eckerd Drugs and still smell like plastic bags when you wear them. And, these are also Halloween costumes that I wore before the age of ten. But, mine weren't purchased in a plastic bag. Lord, no. My costumes were designed and hand stitched by my momma, Anne Olivier Hoover.

My skimpy, sexy, (air quotes) "body conscious" costumes were well thought out. Just so we are on the same page, "body conscious" is a term in fashion meaning form fitting, body hugging. Use that in a sentence, please. You'll see many a Kardashian sister in a body conscious ensemble.

Did y'all know that Macy's starts planning their Christmas catalogue in April? Well, my Momma and I began thinking about Halloween costume ideas in late May, the minute school got out, had decided on the actual costume itself by Fourth of July and then spent the rest of our summers planning and prepping my Halloween costumes because, as Momma would say, (imitates Momma) "you can't do fabulousness last minute, baby."

Momma loved taking me to Hancock Fabrics on Druscilla Lane in Baton Rouge to check out the chiffon, velour and notions. Y'all, notions are things like ribbons, buttons, bobbles. Basically, all the fun shit. Momma highly frowned upon costumes in a bag because, (imitates Momma) "That's just unoriginal shit, Baby. The amount of thought you put into a Halloween costume directly relates to the amount of thought you put into life, baby." And, Little Brooke was just big on feeling proud and free and showing some skin while the other parts of my skin that were covered were rubbing on some high quality chiffon.

I owe my bout at exhibitionism to growing up (Tennessee Williams character voice) in the warm sultry Southern bayou. I was comfortable with myself and with my body and I liked "airing it all out". I'd strut around in my birthday suit when I was at home alone with Momma and the dogs. Why? Because, I was a cat (cat is said in Tennessee Williams character voice of course), jumping and scratching all over the chairs and couches buck naked because cats don't wear clothes but dogs oftentimes wear sweaters, of course. As a kid, I'd think nothing of going over to my parents' friend's house, sneaking out during dessert, yes, I skipped dessert, don't look so damn surprised (See, Self deprecation, y'all.) I'd start tearing off my clothes and jump into their pool, skinny-dipping no matter the occasion. The only reason Momma and Dad didn't approve was because we were with company. In the privacy of our home, they let me do my thing. But, this exhibitionist beast couldn't be contained. I never let Momma and Dad's fussin' stop my quest for body liberation. (In Momma's Voice) "Brooke Anne, get your naked butt out of that pool right now! Sorry Buzzy and Dee, she's got a bad case of Only Child Syndrome and we can't fix it." (In Dad's Voice) "Damn it, Brooke. We just wanted to eat our Mississippi Mud Pie in peace and now you gotta go streakin' like a college frat boy." Momma and dad were dumbfounded that they couldn't tame their buck-naked daughter among the Baton Rouge elite. And, maybe my momma and my dad were a little embarrassed. But, I wasn't. Hate it for 'em!

Halloween was the one month that our Acadian style home located at 19526 Creekround Avenue was guaranteed to win yard of the month; hay bales, corn stalks, mums, pumpkins and later on the blow up spooky creatures which Momma never really approved of. The Hoovers LOVED Halloween because it didn't come with the drama and sadness that Thanksgiving and Christmas can sometimes bring. Halloween is all about expressing our inner crazy and hey, the freakier, the better. My inner Jean Benet Ramsey (bless her heart) was able to go out in a skimpy costume and strut my stuff and, at the same time, not get Momma or Dad reported to Department of Social Services. The average temp for Halloween in South

Louisiana is 85 degrees. So, it makes sense that all my costumes were breathable and skimpy...and I made them WERK !!!

However, one Halloween changed all that. It changed my life in fact. I promise this won't be the rhyming section. This show ain't headed in that direction. I'm not the mastermind Lin Manuel. However, I hear he's doing pretty well. I digress.

INSPIRATIONAL STOCK 80S MONTAGE MUSIC

It's 1988: ping-pong becomes an Olympic sport. Rick Astley's "Never Gonna Give You Up" is topping the charts. I am seven years old. It's the year of my favorite Halloween costume EVER: Sexy Harem Girl.

Quick pause. Some of y'all may know this is just the first time I'll dress up as a prostitute. My acting coach tells me not to judge my characters. Just like Momma taught me not to judge myself. At the age of seven, I wanted to dress up as a genie but my dad being a lawyer and Momma being Momma, were worried we would go down the I Dream of Jeanie route which in their words would be "potential copy wright infringement and just plain copy catting, baby." So, we went with Harem Girl...which I NOW know is basically a hooker with puffy pants.

So, after about five months of planning and prepping the Sexy Harem Girl Halloween Costume, we are finally ready. At 5:45 a.m. on October 31, 1988, I go into hair and makeup and then wardrobe. Momma helps me put on my pink chiffon pants, pink veil and pink lame top with green bobbles - NOTIONS! Y'all remember those?!- hanging from it. I look like an Arabic Delta Zeta and I feel extra sexy.

Momma takes the annual picture on the porch. Go to my Instagram @br00keH00ver to check out the photo y'all. Clearly, I am feeling it! I am officially ready for "Wear Your Halloween Costume to School Day". One slight wardrobe malfunction I should let y'all know about - my underwear keeps peaking out a little from my genie pants. Momma says, "Just lose the drawers, baby." But I say "No Momma, the chiffon itches me down there on my chunky." I figure better to be comfortable than to itch my chunky. No one will notice my drawers.

At school, I walk past the lockers to go line-up for homeroom, feeling like I am the Queen of Sheba. And, two California Raisins who are actually two of my best friends Matthew and Peter come up to me. Matthew, Peter and I are thick as thieves. I am a sexy seven year old but I'm also one of the boys. These boys mean so much to me that I had named our two dogs after them. While I can appreciate Matthew and Peter dressing as pop culture icons, their costumes are glorified polyester sacks that were purchased last week when their moms went to buy frozen corn dogs for them at Wal-Mart. I know I am going to amaze them with my custom made ensemble.

Hey boys...(Imitating Matthew and Peter) "Brooke! You look weird! Your underwear is showing! Everyone can see your fat!"

I feel this horrible ache in my solar plexus. It's like all my light and happiness has become pitch black. Which actually makes sense because your solar plexus is a really important chakra. (Hitting solar plexus energy point.) Do this with me. You can do this for twenty seconds and instantly feel better. Come on, y'all. Don't you feel good? Imagine a golden light emanating from this point. It is where your will, assertiveness and power live. Take a breath. It feels good right? Now stop tapping. Imagine someone now covers up that good feeling with clouds, darkness and runny caca after bad chimichangas.

That's the best way I can describe it. This is my first memory of feeling shame. It's also the first time that I am called FAT. Santa Claus, Jolly from Candyland and Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dum are fat. And, I love them. But, I'm learning that fat is actually a bad thing- that's why Momma and Nanny drink Tab because it has no calories. And, now I am learning that I am fat - but not in a good cozy Santa Claus way. Matthew and Peter are only ribbing me like one of the boys, it's something we do. But, this time, they've clearly crossed a line.

See, the thing is, I think Anne and Bob thought my chubbiness was baby fat that would just go away on its own. It's not like we had cupcakes lying around the house. The sweetest things in our pantry were Fruit and Fiber cereal and Grape Nuts. But, see, why am I justifying this to you? If I were skinny or "normal sized" I wouldn't really have to do that, would I?

Up until now, I never realized there was anything wrong with me strutting my baby fat or the costumes I wore or with just me in general. Until these friends of mine tell me so and until I accept their word as truth and truth as "You're a fat loser.". All I can say to them is, "Guys, I can't believe I named my Pomeranians after y'all!" I walk the walk of shame to Ms. Maveaux's homeroom class, tugging up my genie pants.

I manage to make it through the rest of the day because later that night, it's trick or treat in my aunt and uncle, Nanny and GG's neighborhood. I prefer trick or treating in their neighborhood in the Millerville subdivision (a) because my little cousin Brendon gets to go trick-or-treating with me and (b) because in their neighborhood, it's a whole neighborhood block party. Y'all, take notice, I didn't say, "I go for the candy." I may be a chubby kid. But, I like to go trick or treating for the camaraderie. Not the candy. Yet again, if I were a skinny person, I wouldn't really have to make a point of that, would I? Though the earlier events have forever changed me, I try not to let it get me down. I've got to be a good older cousin for Brendon. But throughout Trick or Treat 1988, I am trying hide something I have just been told I should be ashamed of.

From October 31, 1988 onward, I let shame get the best of me and I gave up on prancing around in creative scantily clad costumes. Instead of thinking of myself as totally rad and awesome, I convince myself I'm too fat to have fun like the skinny normal kids. And, shortly thereafter my baby fat starts turning into big girl fat, fat

that's much harder to get rid of.

In all the new age self help books that I'm addicted to, it says that often times weight gain happens because you're carrying around some emotional baggage, usually guilt or shame. And, that guilt, for putting an abrupt end to Momma's costume making and shame, for being a fatty who dared to show off her sexy side start manifesting their nasty selves in my lack of original Halloween costumes. This forces Momma to go on hiatus and start using her time and creative genius to select appropriate perfumes and colognes for our dogs which isn't quite as fun as shopping the notions section at Hancock Fabrics.

I must let y'all know this is a mini Halloween costume themed saga in three parts. If you want to hear how Little Brooke comes through, tune in next week and the final podcast will happen on Halloween day.

Thanks so much for listening, y'all. It is my hope to inspire, uplift and entertain you with this Who's Dat Phat Girl podcast. So, if you're HUNGRY for more, you can book me to speak or perform my solo show that inspired this podcast Phat Girl Costumes written by yours truly and directed by my best bud Brian Lady at your virtual or in person event. Please visit BrookeHoover.com/fluffybuttproductions or email me at contactbrookehoover@gmail.com for more information. And, let's follow each other on instagram - I'm @Br00keH00ver and those 0's are not the letter O but they're ZEROS. Not because I want to be a size 0 but because I guess I'm just so clever with my late 90s Yahoo! self

And, if you like this podcast, please give me a five star rating and write a review on Apple Podcasts and, please, most importantly, share with your friends, family and other people you may know who are as phat as we are - that's phat with a PH.

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