

1. *The Devil at the Door*

LAST TUESDAY NIGHT the devil rang my doorbell. Yes, children, that's true! The devil rang my doorbell. I saw the devil and I even talked to him. Now I know you're surprised. Well, I was surprised, too. Let me tell you what happened!

I was reading the evening paper and, all of a sudden, the doorbell rang. Well, I hurried to the front door and opened it. And was I surprised? There on the front porch stood a little devil, a devil with horns on his head, a devil with evil eyes and grinding teeth. The devil wore a red coat and red pants, and he had a long, black tail. When the devil saw me, he growled. I waited for the devil to speak but he just growled and moaned.

Finally, I asked a question. "What do you want, Mr. Devil?" and I wondered what he was going to say.

"This is Little Devils' Night," he said in a low voice. "This is Halloween. Tricks or treat?"

Well, I didn't want the devil to play any tricks on me, so I told him that I'd treat him. I invited the devil into my office and he sat on a chair. Can you

imagine the devil sitting in my office? What else could I do? I had to be nice to him.

I treated the devil to a bottle of Coca-Cola and a couple of sandwiches. I guess the devil didn't have any supper, because he was certainly hungry and he finished the sandwiches and drink in no time. But do you know, children, the devil never took off his false face. He raised it a little and I tried to find out just who he was, but the devil was foxy. He didn't want me to know, and he was very careful to keep his face covered.

The devil was pleased with his treat but I wanted to make sure. So, I filled a bag with apples, oranges, walnuts, bananas, and a few candy bars. He was certainly a polite devil, because he thanked me and started for the door.

"Who are you, anyway?" I asked the devil before he left. "What's your name?"

"Guess!" he answered very quickly.

Well, I guessed and guessed while the devil shook his head. I mentioned the names of several boys in our school but every time I was wrong. Maybe the devil was a girl. How could I tell? No, sir! I couldn't guess the devil's name and he wouldn't tell me.

"Thanks, Father, for a swell treat!" said the devil as he walked down the steps. "I must ring more doorbells before it gets too late."

And the devil disappeared in the darkness.

When I went back to my room last Tuesday night, I thought about the devil for a long time. Who was

that devil? What was his name? What boy or girl pretended that he or she was the devil? I wondered and wondered. And I wondered, too, about all the other boys and girls who were pretending that night, boys and girls who were wearing false faces. Some were pretending that they were cowboys, robbers, witches, and ghosts. Others were pretending that they were nurses and old ladies. Halloween is a great night, you know, for pretenders, a night when boys and girls pretend to be what they are not, a night when boys and girls wear false faces. When Halloween is over, off come the false faces.

That little devil, whoever he was, certainly kept his secret. He didn't want me to know and I didn't find out who he was. I don't know yet who rang my doorbell, and I don't suppose that I will ever know the name of that devil. But there is one Person from whom that devil didn't keep his secret, and that Person is God. That devil fooled me, but he didn't fool God, because God sees everything and He knows everything. Why, God looked right under the devil's false face and He knew the child's name. That devil pretended and fooled a good many people last Tuesday night, but he didn't fool God. And God knew the names of all the other boys and girls who pretended on Halloween, because God knows everything. God sees everything.

Children, there are many boys and girls who don't wait until Halloween to pretend. They wear false faces every day. When these children are in school,

they pretend to be very good, but when they are home or with other children, they are sometimes bad. They disobey at home and talk back to their parents. Sometimes they even lie to their fathers and mothers. When they are with other children, they steal, cheat, and say bad words. These children are pretenders. They wear false faces. These children fool the priests and Sisters and even their parents, but they don't fool God. No, sir! God is watching them every minute. God sees everything they do.

It's a good thing to remember that God is always on the job and that He never misses anything. When you do something good, you know that God sees it and that He will reward you. When you're tempted to do wrong, just remember that God has His eye on you, and that thought will help you to keep away from sin.

Boys and girls, you know what is right and what is wrong. Do the right thing every time because God sees you! Don't be a pretender! Don't wear a false face!