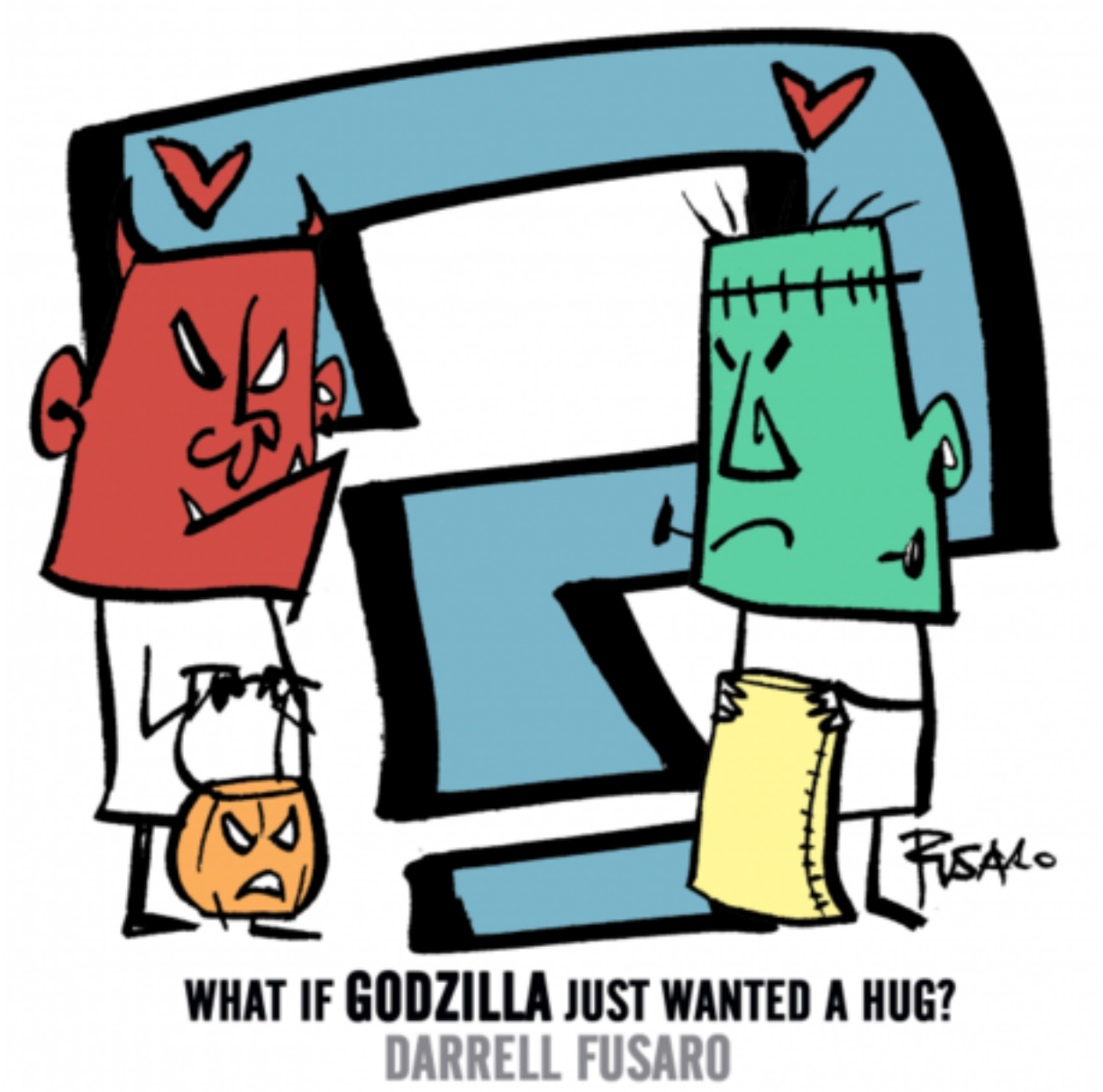
What's The Point of Halloween?

Darrell Fusaro (October 31, 2015)



In our deception we have the opportunity to see each other through innocent eyes.

Halloween offers kids a unique opportunity that leaves a lasting impression. I never felt comfortable in a Halloween costume. Even as a young boy I knew it was just a disguise. But, if that was what I

had to do to amass several pillowcases full of candy, then I reasoned it was worth it.

Motivated solely by this desire, I walked around the blocks of my neighborhood, going door to door in disguise. When my neighbors would come to the door I'd say the obligatory "Trick or Treat" and hold my pillowcase wide open with my little hands. As soon as I received their offerings, I'd say "Thank you" do an about-face and return to my quest.

Then it hit me, while walking down from the porch of a neighbor's home I realized that my disguise gave me a powerful ability. With my identity concealed I was able to get an objective view of them. This glimpse of each individual neighbor's enthusiasm and generosity towards us anonymous kids was incredible.

The person who left the most profound impression upon me was at the house I'd previously skipped on Halloween. That night I left the house with my empty pillowcase disguised as a hobo. It was after one of my routine trips home to empty my pillowcase full of candy and before returning to trick or treating that I decided to change costumes.

I didn't want anyone, especially my mother, to know. I snuck into my bedroom to find an old sheet. I was determined to conceal my identity completely and knew with limited supplies a ghost costume would be the simple solution. Using scissors I cut a sheet in half, cut two holes for my eyes, threw it over my head and slipped out the back door with my pillowcase unnoticed.

Now convinced that I was unrecognizable I joined a group of kids at the sidewalk who were making their way to the front door of my house. My intention was to play a trick on my mother by surprising her, but while waiting my turn with the other kids on our porch I was astonished. My Halloween costume gave me the same objective peek at my mother that I had enjoyed with all my other neighbors. I watched anonymously witnessing her perform magnificently. She responded to each child's costume with an appropriate amount of fear, surprise, and good humor. She let each one pick their treats and then sent them off with encouragement.

I thought I would immediately surprise her when it was my turn, but I didn't. Even though I was only nine years old I knew that this was an opportunity to experience true love in disguise. I allowed her to be her real wonderful self with an anonymous me. I walked away thinking to myself, "My mommy's a really nice lady."

Ironically, it was shortly after this Halloween that my parents divorced and my mother became estranged from us. Happily, in my adult years we've been in touch and recently I shared this story with her for the first time. It was a touching surprise for her.

Halloween is an extraordinary holiday: in our deception we have the opportunity to see each other through innocent eyes.

–Darrell Fusaro

Cartoonist Darrell Fusaro is the co-host of the Funniest Thing! with Darrell and Ed [2] podcast and author of What If Godzilla Just Wanted a Hug? [3]

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