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## *It's Not in the Script*

BY JOHN F. DOWNES



HISTORY and literature are full of events that did not

appear in the script. Columbus sails forth to encircle the globe, and a new world blocks his way. Indians are about to do in Captain John Smith when Pocahontas steps forth to claim him for her own. John Alden is making a good case for his friend Miles when Priscilla asks why he doesn't speak for himself.

So I've found it to be with our family, which ranges upward from two year old Eddie, through seven sisters, to sixteen year old Mary.

For instance, not long ago we embarked on a post-dinner discussion regarding kidnappers. I explained at length how these sinister people might pass themselves off as friends of the family or how they might want a sweet girl to come and visit their poor sick little daughter or how they might offer some deserving child a doggie.

The lesson was going over fine. The little ones were properly pale

and impressed. Even the big girls were paying attention. A little taken up with my own success, I decided that for the finale I would go all out and do a little role-playing. With that I explained that the salt shaker in my hand was an imaginary bag of candy and that my chair was a black sedan. I started with the older girls. First I offered the candy to Mary and Peg both of whom, properly horrified, exclaimed that under no circumstances would they get in the car. All went well until I worked my way down to three year old Nancy, and the script slipped. "Come into my car, little girl", I said. "I have some nice candy for you". She hesitated, eyed me quizzically, and then asked, "Daddy, do you suppose the man might have *marshmallows* in the bag?"

We wandered from the script on another occasion when mamma, a practical person, decided to teach the girls a lesson in economy. It was an early July evening, and we all piled in the car for a ride to the ice cream store. En route we ap-

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proached a bakery, and Margaret said, "Girls, fresh bread costs twenty-five cents a loaf, but often-times bakeries have day-old bread they sell for less. Now, we're going to stop, and you may all go in the bakery with Daddy to see how he buys bread at half price."

We clambered out of the car, and I must mention that none of us were dressed particularly well. For my part I had been working around the house and wore old overalls. After we entered the bakery, I approached the man in charge and, in a voice loud enough for the girls to hear how well I handled these situations, asked if he had any day-old baked goods. He looked us over in the manner of a war lord distributing rice, eyed my well worn overalls, and then moved by a spirit of magnanimity, said, "Oh, I guess I should be able to dig you up a couple of loaves."

The script suffered horribly one rainy evening when we were all out riding later than usual. For some reason, now unremembered, the family conversation turned to "bums". Even though it was late, dark and wet, I turned to the girls and said, "All right, since you're all so interested in bums, I'll show you what they really look like. Everyone lock your door and roll up the car windows".

With that, we turned from our regular homeward route and detoured through that part of Syracuse that sociologists euphemisti-