

SECTION ONE

All of the stories in this section actually happened to the author's family.

SLOW RIDE—FAST RIDE

Slowly, slowly, the old black car went *rattle, rattle, bump, bump* over the rough stones. A man held up a red flag, and Daddy stopped the car. A long string of cars passed in the other direction. Now the car could go a little way again. Now Daddy had to stop to let a big machine pass.

"I'm hot and sticky. I don't like this bumpy road. Let's go faster," begged tiny Linda.

"I think this is fun," said Wayne, the mechanic of the family. "I wish we would have to stop right beside one of those great big machines so I could watch it work."

Slowly they went on until Daddy saw a sign. "End of construction, resume speed," he read.

"Here we are, Linda," said Daddy. "See the nice smooth road ahead. That is what they are doing to the road back there. They will make it nice and smooth like this road." Daddy

stepped on the gas, and the car seemed to fly after the slow bumpy ride.

“Give it the gas. Give it the gas. Step on it,” cheered Wayne and Larry.

Daddy laughed. “Here we go,” he said.

Suddenly a gray car with the letters, **P-O-L-I-C-E**, on the back shot past them.

“Say, that’s a policeman,” said Wayne, his eyes getting big and round. A siren sounded and the police car pulled to the side of the road. The signals flashed for Daddy to stop too.

“Well, I guess I went too fast,” said Daddy, pulling off the road.

“Will he make you go to jail?” whispered Larry in a worried voice.

Kathy took a tight hold on Mother’s arm. Linda put her arms around Mother’s neck. Eight brown eyes were big with wonder.

The policeman climbed out of his car and walked over to Daddy’s window. How tall he looked with his policeman’s hat and suit. “May I see your driver’s license, sir?” he asked.

Daddy reached into his pocket and pulled out his billfold. “Here it is, sir,” he said.

“What model car is this?” asked the policeman.

“This is a 1988 Ford,” replied Daddy. Mr. Policeman looked into the backseat and began to count. Then he looked into the front seat, three, four, five, six—six people in the car. “You mean to tell me you drive at 75 miles an hour with a nice family like that in an old car?”

he asked. "If you love your family, you should be more careful than that."

"Well, I certainly do love my family," answered Daddy. "And I am sorry I forgot to watch my speedometer."

Linda began to sob. Kathy stood up on the seat so she could get her arms around Mother's neck. Her hair tickled Mother's face. Larry's eyes blinked like the policeman's signal lights. Wayne's eyes were wide open.

"It's all right," Mother whispered in the girls' ears.

The policeman wrote Daddy's name down in a little green notebook. He took off his policeman's cap and put it back on his head, adjusting the strap under his chin. "I warn you, sir, that if I ever catch you again driving at that speed, it will mean more than merely talking to you. Watch your speedometer and take care of your family."

The policeman walked back to his car. With a wave of his hand and a friendly smile, he was gone.

Linda's hold on Mother's neck relaxed. Kathy sat down on the seat between Mother and Daddy. Wayne and Larry leaned back against the seat and sighed big sighs of relief.

"He didn't hurt us, did he? He was even a little bit friendly."

Daddy smiled and sighed. "No, he didn't hurt us. Policemen are here to help us, not to hurt us."

"I didn't like the policeman," said Linda.

“Why did he make you stop and scold you, Daddy?”

“Daddy needed to be scolded, dear,” Daddy explained. “The Bible tells us to obey the laws. I should not have gone more than 60 miles an hour. That is the speed limit here. So you see, I was wrong, and Mr. Policeman was only doing his duty to make me stop.”

Linda sighed a big, big sigh of relief. “I’m glad he didn’t spank you,” she said.

“Next time I will help you remember not to go too fast,” said Kathy.

“That will be fine,” laughed Daddy. “We want to obey the laws. When we go too fast, we make it dangerous for other people too.”

Wayne was thoughtful. “I am glad for policemen who make people obey the laws.”