

The Long Commute Home

Wax Lips and False Teeth

One day, my brother Neil and my Dad took a ride together to our family's chiropractor. Enroute, Neil asked Dad to stop off at a convenience store so that he could buy a bottle of tonic....that's soda to some of you, and pop to others of you. But in the Northeast corner of Massachusetts, where we grew up, we called coca cola, pepsi, etc...tonic.

Dad pulled into the convenient store parking lot and happened to park behind a station wagon. In the back of the wagon were two little boys.

The time of year was fall, nearing Halloween. Stores were selling those red, wax lips that kids find so amusing.

Well, these little boys thought they were clever. They kept laughing, and putting on their wax lips. They would turn around quickly, as if that would scare my Dad.

Dad watched them with amusement; remarking under his breath, "Ya little buggers." But, Dad being Dad, you knew he couldn't just leave it at that. The little boys continued on with their antics for a few more minutes before Dad hatched his plan.

Dad reached in and yanked out his top false teeth. He waved them at the little boys, while grinning from ear to ear. The little boys screamed, but never took their big eyes off of my father. They scampered from the back of the station wagon to the back seat. You couldn't hear them, because the windows were rolled up, but you could see that they were hooping and hollering and trying to explain to their mother what had just happened. My father sat with his teeth back in place and a shit-eating grin on his face.

After retrieving Neil, Dad pulled out of the parking lot, passing by the station wagon. He didn't need to turn his head, for he knew both sets of eyes were upon him. My father just put his thumb on his nose and waved his fingers, as if to say....na na na na na.