

extra fingers

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Oops! . . . I forgot

ISABELLA TO AMELIE, during Amelie's birthday party:
"Why'd you invite Darcy* for? I thought you didn't like her."

AMELIE, her hand over her mouth out of embarrassment: "Oops! . . . I forgot she was mean."

***NOT HER REAL NAME**

It always works

Amelie and I were on a team playing soccer with her sisters Holly and Isabella and Holly's friend Amy.

AMELIE, discussing tactics with me during a break in our soccer game: "Dad, I'll pass it to you, then you go and kick it for a bit up their end, and then you go and put it in the goals. That always works."

Dead giveaway

AMELIE, talking about a birthday present she received that was clearly a regift: "Someone's present to me was really bad."

DAD: "Was it?"

AMELIE: "Yeah. You should have seen it! The wrapping paper was all wrinkly and crinkly, the box it came in was all scratched up, and some of the paints had been used. You could tell! They were all splodgy."

He should tell everyone in the whole entire world

DAD: "Imagine if a UFO came and visited our house tonight and aliens took you up in their ship. Do you think you'd be a bit scared?"

ISABELLA: "I'd be freaked out!"

DAD: "Hmm."

ISABELLA: "Why did God make aliens? They just freak people out. That's all they do. They're born to freak out. Apart from when they're up in space. Then they don't. And, why doesn't God, you know how scientists always want to know answers, why doesn't he tell them? Because, then if he tells them, we could have much better science and much better knowledge. And if he'd done that in the olden days then it would have prevented a lot of people from smoking and dying from

all these diseases. And, it would have stopped people polluting the air. And, it would have stopped them, um, making our world what it is today.”

DAD: “That’s true.”

ISABELLA: “And if he doesn’t warn us for what’s going to happen in the future then we’ll never know and never be prepared. Because no one knows if the environment is going to explode. And all its trees are going to come off. No one knows that. But if God knows that’s going to happen he should come and tell me right now. Because then I can try and prevent it. He should tell everyone in the whole entire world.”

Don’t say ‘sweet dreams’

AMELIE, regarding my usual way of saying goodnight to her: “Don’t say ‘sweet dreams’, Dad, or otherwise it’ll make me sick. Because then I’ll dream of sweets.”

Here comes the dent

ISABELLA, as I was about to leave her bed following our snuggle-cuddle chat: “Oh no, here comes the dent in the bed.”

DAD: “No, it’s not ‘here comes a dent in the bed’; I’ve already made the dent. Now it’s ‘there goes the dent in the bed’.”

ISABELLA: “No, because you’re going to go and I’ll go in the dent.”

DAD: “Oh, you’re going to jump into the dent?”

ISABELLA: “Yeah. It always goes down whenever someone sits on my bed. And then I feel like I’m going to fall down into a hole. Like Alice in Wonderland.”

That’s her point

DAD, regarding a drawing Amelie did that ended up being ‘Drawing of the Week’ in *The West Australian* for July 28-29, 2012: “Excuse me everyone, I’ve got some news. We have a famous person in the house and her name is Amelie. (*Pointing*) See? You’re famous

because you’re in the newspaper. (*Trying to build it up*) Thousands of people in Western Australia have seen your drawing. Look at your drawing, Amelie. What do you think?”

AMELIE: “Um . . .”

DAD: “Are you excited?”

AMELIE: “Um . . .”

DAD: “Do you remember that drawing?”

AMELIE: “You use a pointer, Dad. Because when you point you always point with the pointer finger.”

DAD: “Yeah, alright. But didn’t I use my pointer finger to point to your drawing? I thought I did. Anyway, what do you think of—”

AMELIE: “No, you didn’t. You used ‘tall man’.”

DAD: “What’s that?”

AMELIE: “You used ‘tall man’.”

DAD: “What?”

AMELIE: “‘Tall man’.”

DAD: “What’s ‘tall man’?”

AMELIE, pointing to the middle finger: “It’s that one.”

DAD: “Alright, there. Now I’m using the pointer.”

AMELIE: “Yeah, that’s the pointer. Always point with that one.”

DAD: “Alright, but getting back to what’s important, what do you think of your drawing being in the newspaper?”

AMELIE, without much feeling: “Well, I do think it’s nice.”

But I pushed *really* hard

AMELIE, referring to a sum she had done that she was now using a calculator to check:
“Dad, does six plus two plus one equal nine?”

DAD: “Yes.”

AMELIE: “But the calculator says it’s three.”

DAD: “No, it wouldn’t be saying that, Ams. You mustn’t have done it right.”

AMELIE: “No, I did. I pushed all the numbers *really* hard!”

We have three, so we should be able to have a hundred

AMELIE, pushing hard for an ‘upstairs’ in our house: “We’ve already got three steps [leading from our lounge room to the dining room], so we should be able to have a hundred.”

Wished scaredness hadn’t been invented

Before Amelie goes anywhere in our house when it’s dark that she’s sure will take her away from where everybody else is, she first makes certain her dad, indisputably the biggest organism in the house, does a little reconnaissance for her. The terror that always strikes her very suddenly is so palpable she never has time to reason with it; all she can do is beg. And beg she does.

LAST WORD

None of them are

HOLLY: “I don’t know why some wars are called civil wars for. None of them actually are.”

AMELIE: “Dad, please! Please can you go and turn some lights on for me? I can’t go to my room unless there are lights on and you go with me. I want the light on in the hallway; the one that’s in my room, I want that on as well. And then I want you to stay with me while I get Black Catty [her toy cat].” After a little while, Amelie followed me out of her bedroom, after ensuring I’d first put a light on for her in the hallway and then in her bedroom so nothing scary would ‘steal’ her.

AMELIE: “I really wish scaredness (sic) hadn’t even been invented. Because I *really* don’t like it.”

What the dad does

AMELIE: “You didn’t born (sic) us, Dad. Mum did.”

DAD: “Yes, I know. So what did I do then?”

AMELIE: “I don’t know. You just sat there and waited.”

Sleepovers are better than plays

ISABELLA: “‘Plays’ are never as good as sleepovers.”

DAD: “Aren’t they? Why?”

ISABELLA: “Well, with ‘plays’ friends are always gone really quick. It’s always ‘hello’ and then ‘Ding, oh no, it’s Mum, already.’ If it’s someone you don’t like [that you’ve invited over] it’s always really long. But if it’s someone you really like it ends up being so quick.”