

Watch out world, Griffin's out to conquer you



From Where I Live

Bruce Stapley

It would appear that my fourth and final contribution to the world's population is the product of a hitherto uncharted end of the gene pool.

Not only do 15-month-old Griffin's blonde curls, blue eyes and lily white skin stand him in stark contrast to his dark skinned, brown eyed four-year-old brother Drew - the first byproduct of my second kick at the family can - but he has a demeanour about him that suggests the stork must have plucked him up from a planet where life is lived a little differently than here on earth.

Griffin gives the term 'hard-headed' a whole new meaning. Whenever he's so delirious with joy that he just can't contain himself, he bends over frontwards until his hands touch the ground, then proceeds to administer a series of head bonks to the floor, smiling widely all the while. Like most 15-month-old boys, he has been taught to do that high five thing guys do as a jock greeting. But his preferred method of bonding with his dad is to engage in some sort of tribal head butting ritual.

His love of water also sees him put his best face forward, as it were. When exposed to the gentle ocean surf of Prince Edward Island's south shore this summer, Griffin would fearlessly sally forth and plunge his head in the water, paying no mind to the salty taste or the severe limitations this placed upon his ability to draw in air.

When it comes to mobility, this kid is like an all terrain vehicle. His determination to take the most direct route from point A to point B often sees him walk over arms, legs, heads or any other body parts that happen to lie in his way. Actually, he doesn't walk, he wobbles like a punch drunk boxer. According to his care giver, the good natured lady who puts up with his assortment of novel quirks five days a week, Griffin sets the other, older kids to scattering in fear whenever he starts trundling recklessly across a room, colliding with every open cupboard door while tripping over any toys, animals or feet lying in his path. His standard peer greeting sees him barge enthusiastically into his unsuspecting fellow toddler, arms outstretched and smiling, causing both youngsters to fall floorward. It's no wonder the kid bears more scratches, scrapes and bumps on the head than a third rate

hockey player! Ever the quintessential little boy, he has already acquired many of the traits associated with the lesser males of the species. He's drawn as if by magnet to the TV remote control, always pulls his feet up when the vacuum cleaner comes anywhere near him, and gives forth with a most pig-nacious snort whenever he hears the word pig spoken!

As for his own vocabulary, he has mastered two words to this point - mōmma and dadda. While Momma is the word he uses to melt his mother's heart, dadda is a multi-purpose utterance only rarely used to identify his old man. Usually said in the form of a question, his voice rising steadily as he blurts it out, we have been led to wonder if it's an attempt to communicate with the father-ship connecting him with that other planet. Whatever it is, it became the source of a little embarrassment for my wife Susan

during a recent outing. Encountering a man she had never seen before, Griffin proceeded to accost the unsuspecting fellow with a repeated cry of "dadda? dadda?" Susan started to explain, but eventually turned Grif's stroller around and simply bolted the scene, not wanting to risk further miscommunications.

All of which has caused his teacher-mother, who has by now mastered the art of diplomatically relaying the less than endearing class room traits of students to their doting parents, to lie awake at night envisioning the wording his kindergarten teacher will use to alert us to his own unique brand of creativity.

Thankfully, though, we've got another four years to impose at least a minimal degree of civility upon our lovable little monster before sending him out into the world.

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