Has been a gorgeous blue sky and billowy, pillow cloud kind of day, Helena— now 2 and a robust towheaded brute— and I are out in the yard and she is ambling over inquisitively toward our small garden plot, bee-lining, in fact, straight at a recently planted maroon and forest-green shock of leaf-blades.

“Do NOT pick my Chard!” I preemptively scold, nearly adding “or I will spank your bottom,” though I do not ultimately add that last part because I know how deadly serious I am, and I sense how deeply uncomfortable it would feel to threaten a child with violence over a salad.

Little backstory, recently she has been insisting on picking the buds and leaves off all of our botanicals almost as fast as we plant them. I, being somewhat more experienced with these kinds of things, find this approach to gardening messy and self-defeating.

We had a similar difference of opinion just the other day about whether or not it was appropriate to re-pot a goodly amount of loamy topsoil into my tantalizingly sweating mason jar of chilled water.

Years ago, before I had kids, I was once at a brunch get-together where I observed one of my friends, who was already the father of three, being a little short with one of his girls over some issue with a cup of orange juice or something. At the time I remember feeling kind of surprised at how impatient or even almost unkindly you were addressing your angelic little Tomte. Maybe, he’s having a particularly stressful day I had thought at the time. Now I realize he definitely was having at least a partially stressful day because, you know, he had children and he was likely not being mean to his child at all, but was, in fact, exerting incredible, if not saintlike-level patience, artfully teasing out and expanding just a bit more your reservoir of that most precious of parental commodities, that greedily gobbled up resource that well before this cup of juice or even this very morning had been pulled and stretched as thin as a gossamer shroud though still somehow holding— together and true through some miraculous act of superhuman effort. Love?

I also now realize that our children are in essence sociopaths that we have been charged with by fate to reform as penance for our own past, if not present, sociopathic behavior. Which is certainly not to say don’t have children, but just, you know, brace yourself… for love.

Best,

05/02/2021

Picked her up at her place right by Lauganitis and wend down to see Anna and Paul and their kids for a Sunday hang.

05/02/2021

* Visited Anna and Paul and their kids in Beverly.
* Beautiful, breezy day with the wind high in the trees and the May canopies already sounding heavy and full. The whooshing of schools of fish in the sky a one and many undulation of the currents of the wind.
* Touched a fish, picked up chickens, chased them around and caught them.
* Play hide and seek with Ren and Sonya.
* Drinking beer and standing in the grass.
* Talking about the butterfly garden at the Library in Blue Island.
* Language Arts and history, middle school teacher. Why didn’t I ask him about the topics? The Technology? Why am I throwing my ideas out there. The ideas that I am not even happy with. I don’t even want to accept. Can’t accept.
* I should have asked Daniel if he knows the basics of HTML. I should put together my WEB page launch kit. Package it not as a full education in web development, but a pragmatic toe-hold that delivers immediate functionality and competency.
* Images and impressions of Italy, so wonderful that you were able to take that trip, inspiring to think about traveling with one of the girls. Or even betsy! Turning a lot of things off. Putting things off. Pruning. Simplifying. Focusing. Resigning. Trying not to worry about.
* Hymns in you cozy living room. Your kind, thoughtful kids.
* Kids being kind and thoughtful and tired and cuddly and grateful and kind. Helping each other and treating each other with respect.

So good to hear that RUSH has been a good move. So impressed with your manuvrering. Getting a vision and going after it. Gives me encouragement, inspiration and a feeling of kinship. Reinvention, change, shifting is hard, it takes time, but it can be done, and greener pastures, better employers, more settled living situations and senses of space and place are possible.

**Trump**. The word in such phrases as a *trumped up affair*, *trumpery*, etc., is the same words as *trumpet*; from Fr. *trompe*, a trumpet, whence *tromper* which, originally meaning “to play on a trumpet,” came to mean to beguile, deceive, impose upon.

**The last trump*.*** The final end of all things earthly; the Day of Judgement.

*We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump. – 1 Cor. Xv, 51,52.*

**To play one’s last trump.** To be reduced to one’s last expedient: a phrase from cardplaying.

**Trumpet.** *See* Trump *above*.

**To blow one’s own trumpet**. To publish one’s own praises, good deeds, etc. The allusion is to heralds, who used to announce with a flourish of trumpets the knights who entered a list. Similarly, *your trumpeter* *is dead* means that you are obliged to sound your own praised because no one will do it for you.