05/02/2021

* We’ll have to break out the hymns next time for a sing along when our aesolated breath is not so potentially problematic!
* Thank you for the vote of confidence in Harry Potter. Esme is delighted. I am now keeping an eye out in the free library boxes for HP.
* Culture of reading and books- its such a big part of our day, reading together, Esme’s literacy, enjoying our budding culture of words and stories and ideas we have budding. Its all a garden isn’t it. A plot. What’s the plot going to be like.
* 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.
* The chickens, iridescent green on black.
* The big brick houses up on the hill.
* Thank you for your cheese and fascinating proportions of your spread. You have so many wonderful spots on your property. You back work room, the outdoor covered bungalow, the table and the patio, the grassy lawn, the eat-in kitchen, the grand music and cozy family room, the ever ready dining room, and that’s just the ground floor, your garage that smeels like a garage. Yes, I smelled your garage. There is a certain older construction garage and basement small that is very nostalgic for me. My paternal grandmother live 15 miles north of the trains trop lumber town Newberry which later would work get a regionally important hospital and a State-level psychiatric facility that was late converted into a mid-security level prison. My maternal grandfather had originally moved his family of nine to this far flung corner of Michigan to become the head administrator at the facility because it had become uncomfortable to remain in St. Louis with his burgeoning and increasingly volatile family of 9 children, after he had gone ahead and allowed the playing of “White Christmas” at his hospitals patient’s holiday parties despite the protestations of the St. Louis chapter of the Black Panthers. My grandfather’s actions allegedy brought death theates on him and his family and he decided it was a good idea to get out of dodge. So he moved the whole troup from relatively cosmopolitan St. Louis, to extremely backwoods Michigan at the beginning of the 1970s as my grandfather and grandmother struggled to contend with the fallout of the trials and tripulations of their boys and girls and came of age in the late 60s.

06/14/2021

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,