

THE DIABOLICAL Dr. NoNoNo

OH, I'M
NOT THAT
BAD 

HAVE YOU EVER FELT COMPELLED TO MIX HANDFULS OF GRASS WITH COLORED WATER AND PEPPER?



WHEN WAS IT (EXACTLY) THAT MOST OF US STOPPED VIEWING RABBITS AS MYSTERIOUS VISITORS AND STARTED SEEING THEM AS GARDEN PESTS?



ME? I'M A SCIENTIST. EXPERIMENTATION AND WONDER ARE MY BUSINESS.

THAT'S WHY I BECAME A BIOLOGIST. I LOVE THE CREEPY, CRAWLING THINGS THAT MOST PEOPLE OVERLOOK.



SURELY, GIVEN MY INTELLECTUAL PREDILECTIONS, I WOULD MAKE A PERFECT MENTOR FOR THE BUDDING YOUNG SCIENTISTS IN MY FAMILY...

MAX! JACK!
NO! NO! NO!

BUT
DAARD...

'NAKENS!
DADDY!



THEY'RE HAVING
SO MUCH FUN.

BUT
THEY'LL
GET
DIRTY!



LISA IS PATIENT WITH ME.

SO, WE'LL
CLEAN
THEM.

BUT...
...they'll
get
dirty...



* NAKENS = SNAKES
(JACK THINKS WORMS ARE SNAKES)

OF COURSE, GETTING "DIRTY" IS THE POINT WHEN YOU'RE DOING SCIENCE. AT THE START OF EACH SEMESTER, I PASS OUT SMALL BALLS OF KOOL-AID PLAY-DOUGH (MADE BY MAX AND JACK) AND ASK THE STUDENTS TO RESHAPE THE BALLS INTO CUBES. THERE ARE ONLY TWO SIMPLE RULES:

- ① YOU CANNOT TOUCH THE BALL WITH ANYTHING.
- ② YOU CANNOT MOVE IT IN ANY WAY.



IT'S IMPOSSIBLE, OF COURSE.

CLAY IS OFTEN USED AS A METAPHOR FOR THE BRAIN. THE ONLY WAY TO RESHAPE BOTH (AND MAKE NO MISTAKE, LEARNING IS THE RESHAPING OF YOUR BRAIN)

THE ONLY WAY TO RESHAPE BOTH IS TO BE ACTIVELY INVOLVED WITH THE MATERIAL.

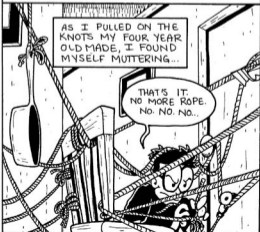


NOT LISTENING TO HIMSELF.

A FEW NIGHTS LATER, AFTER THE BOYS WERE IN BED, I WAS BUSY TRYING TO TAKE APART ONE OF MAX'S "CONTRAPTIONS." THESE USUALLY CONSIST OF A PIECE OF STRING OR ROPE WOUND AROUND SEVERAL CHAIRS, DOOR KNOBS AND A WAGON. THEY ALSO OFTEN EMPLOY HIS PULLEY, SOME TAPE AND SOMETIMES POTS AND PANS.

AS I PULLED ON THE KNOTS MY FOUR YEAR OLD MADE, I FOUND MYSELF MUTTERING...

THAT'S IT. NO MORE ROPE. NO. NO. NO...



AND THEN I LOOKED AT IT. IT REALLY WAS QUITE A FEAT OF ENGINEERING. I'M NOT SURE WHAT IT WAS SUPPOSED TO DO, BUT IN MAX'S EYES IT WORKED PERFECTLY.

AND THEN IT DAWNED ON ME:

He is actively involved with the material...

THE NEXT DAY I FOLLOWED JACK AROUND THE YARD. HE KNOWS WHERE ALL THE RABBIT HOLES ARE AND CAN SPOT RABBITS MY IMPATIENT EYE MISS.

RAB!

UP TO THAT POINT I HAD DELUDED MYSELF INTO THINKING I WAS THE MENTOR. BUT THE TRUTH IS, I HAD A LOT TO LEARN ABOUT SCIENCE FROM MY SONS.

AS Dr.NoNoNo, I OFTEN GUIDED THEM AWAY FROM DISCOVERY AND TOWARD NICE, CLEAN OUTFITS THAT THEY WILL OUT-GROW NEXT WEEK.

I NEED THIS FOR MY FORMULA...

ANT-ENS!*

EVERYONE KNOWS KIDS ARE NATURAL SCIENTISTS, BUT I THINK I NOW KNOW WHY THEY'RE SO GOOD AT IT.

DADDY! ANT-ENS!

* ANT-ENS = ANTS

LIKE THE BEST SCIENTISTS, KIDS SEE SCIENCE AND PLAY AS THE SAME THING. FORGET THE CONTROLLED EXPERIMENT. KIDS FIND JOY AND DISCOVERY IN THE OUT-OF-CONTROL EXPERIMENT. IN FACT, MY BOYS ARE LIVING THE WALT WHITMAN POEM I PUT ON MY SYLLABI EACH SEMESTER.

BEGINNING MY STUDIES

BEGINNING MY STUDIES THE FIRST STEP PLEASED ME SO MUCH,

HEE
HEEEE.

THE MERE FACT CONSCIOUSNESS, THESE FORMS, THE POWER OF MOTION,

THIS
IS MY
SMELL PRESENT
INVENTION.

WATERMELON
SCENTED HAND
SOAP SQUIRTED
INTO A BALL
OF (CLEAN)
TOILET PAPER.

THE LEAST INSECT

OR ANIMAL,

THE SENSES, EYESIGHT, LOVE,

MO'
NAKENS

THE FIRST STEP I SAY AWED ME AND PLEAS'D ME SO MUCH,

I HAVE HARDLY GONE AND HARDLY WISH'D TO GO ANY FARTHER,

I NEED
THESE FOR
MY NEW
FORMULA.

BUT STOP AND LOITER ALL THE TIME TO SING IN ECSTATIC

SONGS

MY SONS HAVE REMINDED ME OF THE WONDERS THAT DREW ME TO SCIENCE.

OF COURSE, I STILL HAVE TO SAY NO
EVERY ONCE IN AWHILE.



THEY MAY BE SCIENTISTS, BUT THEY AREN'T ROCKET SCIENTISTS.
(NOT YET ANYWAY)

WHICH REMINDS ME.

DID YOU KNOW THERES A
GIGANTIC, GLOWING ROCK
CIRCLING OUR PLANET?



Mooo!



MAX AND JACK
SHOWED IT TO US
LAST NIGHT.