

7 quick takes Friday (Vol. 15)

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When I came across this scrub in a store attached to a restaurant in Lancaster, Pa., last weekend, I had to have it. Because I don't use non-stick pans, I often resort to using steel wool, especially when I've been scrambling eggs for the boys. But this! I can use it again and again and run it through the dishwasher or microwave to clean it. And it's even attractive.



I still prefer cooking to washing dishes, but this does make it easier. My favorite kitchen item is still my scoop colander, which I can't find online so I had to photograph myself. If you look closely, you can see my reflection.



I even gave a few of these scrubs as part of a gift for the wedding we're attending tomorrow. John and I going to a wedding! And we're going without the boys, so it's like a date. As wonderful as it was to be there for my sister Treasa's wedding last fall, it will be fun to be at a wedding simply as guests. And when one of my 7 quick takes is about dish washing, I think we're overdue for an outing.

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Last week I invited you to vote on the appropriate age for introducing children to the original *Star Wars* films. Most of the responses—many written in extraordinary detail, which reminded me that I was barely qualified to ask the question—came not on the poll, but on Twitter and Facebook.

Not surprisingly, the most passionate readers felt *Star Wars* could not be introduced too soon—and that in utero might be the best time, though a few days after birth might be acceptable. I was leaning toward joining the 7- or 8-year-old camp, but I was willing to consider that a younger age might be OK.

Then I went to my college reunion on Saturday. When I came home, John gave me the summary of his day with the boys. Almost as an afterthought, he said, "Oh, and we watched *Star Wars*."

How did it go? Well, our 3-year-old didn't really watch the movie. He just wandered around the room and played with toys. Our 5-year-old said he liked it.

"What was the best part?" I asked.

The guns and lasers, he said.

"What was the worst part?"

"The good guys," he said.

"What? Why?"

“Because they didn’t have capes. Except Obi Wan Kenobi.”

So maybe 5 ½ isn’t the ideal age if you’re hoping your child will appreciate the good guys. Or maybe George Lucas should have given them capes.



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Speaking of movies, the boys and I were watching *Our Friend the Atom* the other day when a scene featuring a genie started. (It’s about 5 ½ minutes into the movie, which I don’t have the attention span for, but you might.)

“The genius came out of the lamp,” Daniel said.

Suddenly I remembered a conversation we had with him recently.

“Is that what you meant when you said you were a genius?”

“No, Mama,” he said. “I meant I am a *real* genius.”

Well, there’s nothing wrong with his self-confidence. I still don’t think our 3-year-old knows what genius means. I just know he doesn’t think he’s a genie. Oh, and he has been telling us that he’s big enough to go to college. And maybe he is. But we’ll have to teach him his letters first.

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It was bound to happen.

You travel to the other side of the world to adopt these amazing children, bring them home, and teach them to use their words to express themselves.

Then one day you’re making dinner when you realize those sweet, adorable voices coming from the other room aren’t just speaking flawless English.

They are speaking with Baltimore accents.

If you have experienced the Baltimore accent, you know what I mean. I don’t think John and I have pronounced Baltimore accents, though I suppose I could be wrong. It doesn’t matter, though, because our sons are at preschool most of the day, and they are going to talk the same way their peers do.

So the other day when Leo and Daniel were pretending to explode something in the other room, I could hear them yelling “Boom!” and it sounded like “BOE-ewm!”

It’s actually really cute. And it makes me think that when people say to them, “Where are you from?” they might not always mean “which Asian country,” but rather “Where in the world did you learn to talk like that?” And that, my friends, would be Baltimore.

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I really enjoyed this post, “Six Words You Should Say Today.” It is not at all surprising to me that it was apparently published in April and I am just seeing it. Maybe it will be new to you, too.

— 6 —



For Father's Day the boys couldn't wait to give John the fire hydrant sprinkler and Speedracer DVD we bought for him. Then yesterday at their preschool's Father's Day Breakfast they gave him gifts they had made at school. So all we have left to give are cards. We'll probably take him to one of his favorite restaurants this weekend.

Now I just need to figure out what we will give my father. He likes new cars, old country music, Wonder Woman, and afternoon naps. If we do find a gift, it won't be strawberry cobbler.

What are you giving your dad for Father's Day?

— 7 —

Even before we were married, as I watched John play with our nieces and nephews and friends' children, I knew he would make a fantastic father.

Even in the early days of parenting, when I often felt I was stumbling through, making it up as I went along, John was a natural father. He walked into fatherhood ready, confident, and full of love to shower on our boys. And they adore him.

By our second day with Leo and our first with Daniel John was "Baba," the Chinese word for Daddy. And "Baba" fits him in a way that "Dad" or "Daddy" just doesn't.

Watching my husband become a father has been such a gift.

As Leo says, "I love you more than you love me." Because that's what love is about—not winning, which I think may be what our bigger boy has in mind—but learning to love infinitely, almost unimaginably as Our Father in Heaven does. We are so blessed to be on this journey together.

Happy Father's Day, Baba.



Read more quick takes on Jen's blog.