

# Our son's unscripted love on Father's Day

You can try to create the perfect Father's Day weekend.

You can let your husband sleep in.

You can commission your sons to help you make Baba's favorite cupcakes with chocolate frosting.



You can take the man of the hour to lunch at Matthew's Pizza and leave a hefty tip to cover whatever damage your family of four might have done.



You can give him a stomp rocket knowing he will enjoy it at least as much as his sons do.



And, after months of hearing him hint that he'd love a fondue dinner, you can finally come through for him.

But there's no way you could script the dinnertime conversation Leo treated him to this evening.

Toward the end of the meal, Leo insisted on getting up and going to give his father a spontaneous hug. Then he made his way back to his seat.

"Baba," Leo said, "I love you more than the universe."

John thanked him beautifully, and I assumed the conversation would move on to another topic.

"Baba," Leo said, "I love you more than the planet earth."

“Well,” John replied, “I love you more than the planet earth, the moon, and the sun.”

“Baba,” Leo said, “I love you more than all the things God created.”

For a few moments, neither John nor I could speak. We were so overcome with emotion. Through my tears, I marveled at our older son, the one who first called John “Baba”—the Chinese form of “Daddy”—in a hotel in China two and a half years ago.

“You win,” I finally said. “There’s no way Baba can top that.”

The conversation took another path, and a few minutes later, I suggested to Leo that, if he didn’t want the shrimp on his plate, his father might like it.

“Baba,” Leo said firmly, “you can never steal my food.”

That’s parenthood for you. There are touching moments when you realize your children love you with a heartwarming, infinite love—well, infinite as long as we’re not talking about food.

