

SORRY

I PEED  ON YOU

(and Other Heartwarming Letters to Mommy)



Jeremy Greenberg

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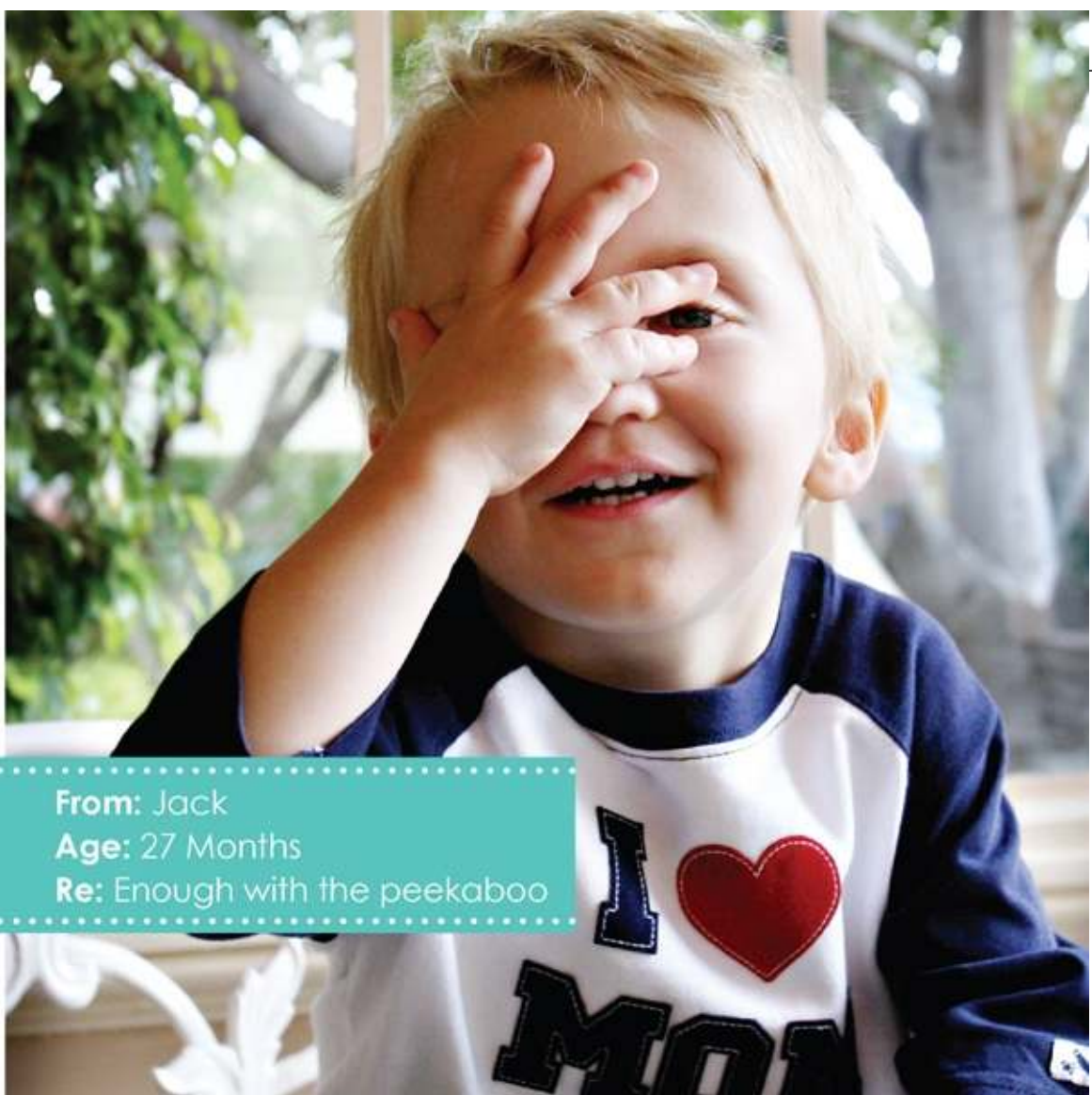
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For my wonderful sons, Ben and Seth



From: Jack
Age: 27 Months
Re: Enough with the peekaboo

Dear Mommy,

Listen, I don't want to hurt your feelings, and I know that you're just doing it out of fun, but don't you think I'm getting a bit old to be playing peekaboo? Shutting your eyes does not make you invisible. I know you're there. When I was younger, I totally bought it. But I've used the big-boy potty seven times now, and I can point to anything that's yellow. Clearly, my intellect has moved on. Sure, just the other day, you covered your eyes and asked "Where's Mommy?" to remove your hands only seconds later and say, "Here I am!" and giggled hysterically. But remember that I paused a second before giggling—it was a polite hint.

There are a lot of new games we can play, Mommy. I'm tall enough to reach the countertops now, so how about "Where's Mommy's Cell Phone?" Or now that I can open the childproof cabinets, we can play "Mommy, Look What I Found in the Garbage."

You're the best mommy in the whole world, and I appreciate your understanding. Please don't get too upset. The last thing anyone wants is a repeat of "I Got Your Nose."

Love,
Jack



From: Kole

Age: 22 Months

Re: Food contamination alert: The fish sticks have touched the ketchup—evacuate the high chair

Dear Mommy,

There's been a breach in sector 2 of the fish stick containment unit. My fish sticks touched the ketchup and have been rendered inedible. Analysts are trying to figure out how the French fry barrier was breached. Be careful, Mommy. Just to be safe, I'm not going to eat another bite. I know that you're trying to say it's going to be okay, that it's just a little ketchup and that I love ketchup on my French fries. Duly noted, but as a precaution, I think I should evacuate the high chair.

Love,
Kole



From: Macy (and Buddy)

Age: 4 Years

Re: Me and my Buddy

Dear Mommy,

Do you think Buddy knows he has four legs? How come Buddy's bed has his name on it, but mine doesn't? I want my name on my bed. If I had four legs could I pee in the yard? Can I pee in the yard if it's my birthday? When is Buddy's birthday? Did Buddy wear diapers when he was a baby? How come Buddy doesn't have any friends? Is Buddy a loser, Mommy?

Buddy and I like to play chase. I chase him, and then he chases me, then I chase him, then he tries to take a nap. I think, "Why is Buddy taking a nap? I've only been chasing him for three hours. Maybe he's hungry." So then I ask you for a snack but throw it on the floor for Buddy. But I think Buddy's still tired. Can you make him a cup of coffee? I gave him a sip of yours while you were in the bathroom, but he just stuck his tongue in it once, sneezed, and went back to sleep—but I think that's because he didn't want to drink your germs.

Love,
Macy



From: Madeline

Age: 17 Months

Re: If Daddy's not a jungle gym, what else could he be?

Dear Mommy,

Something's wrong with my jungle gym. It keeps saying "Daddy's out of breath," and "Oh, be careful, honey. Daddy's going to tear his rotator cuff." Why doesn't the jungle gym understand that if it tears its cuff, you'll just hem it like you do your pants? But there's a lot that I love about my jungle gym. The top half can turn bright red when I hang on its neck too long. The jungle gym at the park can't change colors, and the one at the park can't scream "Ow, honey, that hurts!" either. I am very lucky!

Mommy, I really love my jungle gym, and climbing is very good for my motor skill development. So if the jungle gym is running out of breath, can you tell it not to waste any time by complaining about back spasms or slipped discs?

Love,
Madeline



From: Miles

Age: 16 Months

Re: *Marinara on a Voyage through Space and Time*

Dear Mommy,

You don't seem very happy that I tossed my food against the wall. But please see it not as a wanton act of toddler vandalism. Rather, it is an act of creative expression.

When you're my age, you don't have too many ways to tell the world who you are. I can cry, use the three words I know, or throw food. I call this particular fresco *Marinara on a Voyage through Space and Time*. Many things inspire toddler-food art. I derived my inspiration for this piece from finding a chunk of green bell pepper in the sauce.

One of the things art is supposed to do is create an emotional response in the viewer. Judging by your response, I'd say my creation was a success! Though not all people respond the same. For some reason, my masterpiece made Daddy thirsty, because he stood up and said he needed a drink.

Love,
Miles



From: Sophia
Age: 2½ Years
Re: Couch-jumping intervention

Dear Mommy,

Just because I jump higher and giggle louder every time you yell “Sophia, stop jumping on the couch!” it doesn’t mean I’ve got some couch-jumping *problem*. I can stop anytime I want, Mommy. I just jump on the couch to relax, and see what’s on the kitchen counters. The fact that makes you and Daddy have faces like you need your diapers changed is an added bonus.

Not only is couch jumping satisfying to me, Daddy says if I keep it up, I’ll probably satisfy his insurance deductible. So please, Mommy, don’t worry. I’ve been jumping on the couch since I was in diapers—I know what I’m doing.

Love,
Sophia



From: Elyzabeth

Age: 5 Years

Re: The preschool teacher knows karate.

How come you don't know karate?

Dear Mommy,

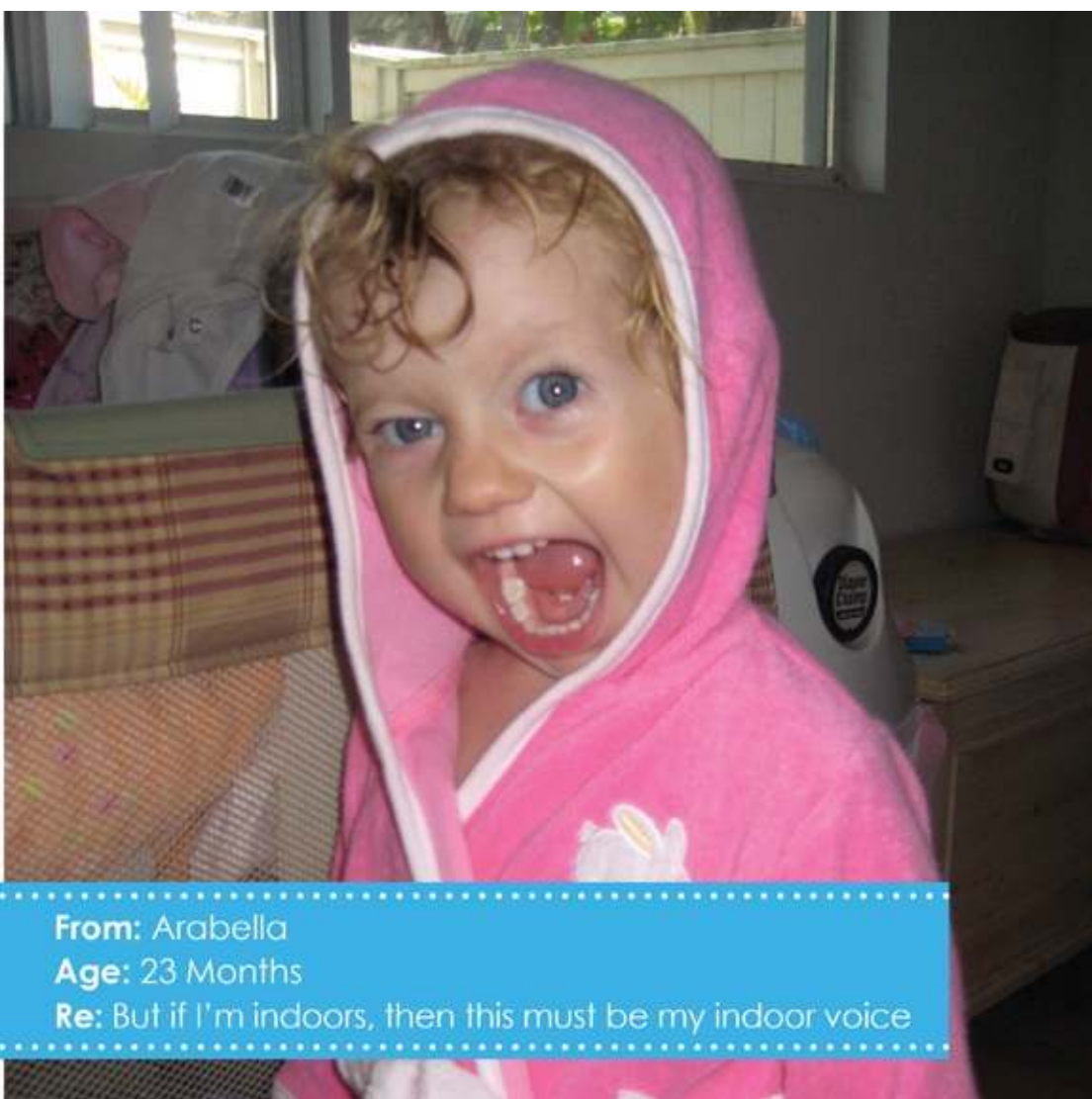
Today Ms. Jenny, the preschool teacher, brought her special hairless cat to class, and we all got to pet it. Ms. Jenny sneezes at other types of cats, and I think I do, too. If we got a cat I'd want one just like Ms. Jenny's, and she could come over and bring her cat, and the cat could play together.

And you should hear how Ms. Jenny reads books, Mommy. She has the most beautiful voice. Not that you don't. But it's like she sings the words. She says she learned to sing from the birds in her yard when she's gardening. Ms. Jenny can talk to birds, Mommy, and they land on her fingers as she sings and walks through her garden.

Ms. Jenny says that everyone should care about the environment, and that's why she rides her bicycle to work. Why don't you ride your bike to work? How come you don't garden? Why can't you talk to birds? Can we get a cat?

But even though Ms. Jenny is super-amazing, she isn't there for me when I have the sniffles or when I'm hungry, so I still love you more.

Love,
Elyzabeth



From: Arabella

Age: 23 Months

Re: But if I'm indoors, then this must be my indoor voice

Dear Mommy,

You know how you keep telling me "You don't have to yell"? I know I don't have to yell. I want to yell. Mommy. I *want* to.

Sometimes I think that you don't like it when I yell, even if I'm piercing your eardrums. But then I think about the words you're so happy I'm learning, such as "No!" and "More!" and not just shrieks and shouts. But then I think, "How could that be?" I love to yell, so why wouldn't you love to hear me yell?

I think you should just relax and learn to enjoy my long, shrill, high-pitched shrieks. I won't have impulse control until I'm at least three years old. You know how Daddy can't stop saying those bad words when his favorite team is on TV? That's how I'll be until I start preschool.

Love,
Arabella

From: Ben
Age: 21 Months
Re: It's too hot for pajamas



Dear Mommy,

I don't know if you noticed, but Daddy's been wearing shorts for at least a month now, and during the day you can hear the bigger kids swimming in a nearby pool. It's summertime, Mommy; please don't bundle me for bed as though we live in an igloo.

I know that I'm small, so you can't tell how warm I am. But I was hoping the pools of sweat in my footsies might be a clue. When I started squirming as you were putting me in my PJs last night, it wasn't because I wanted to stay up later. I didn't want to be cocooned in my winter sleeper after a day when you could fry an egg on the sidewalk.

Why don't you just let me sleep in my diaper but put some blankies in the crib; I can grab them if I get cold. Now you can feel like you're doing your best to keep me from getting sick, and I can stop having weird dreams about being in a sauna with Elmo.

Love,
Ben



From: Ethan
Age: 4 Years
Re: Daddy said *shit*

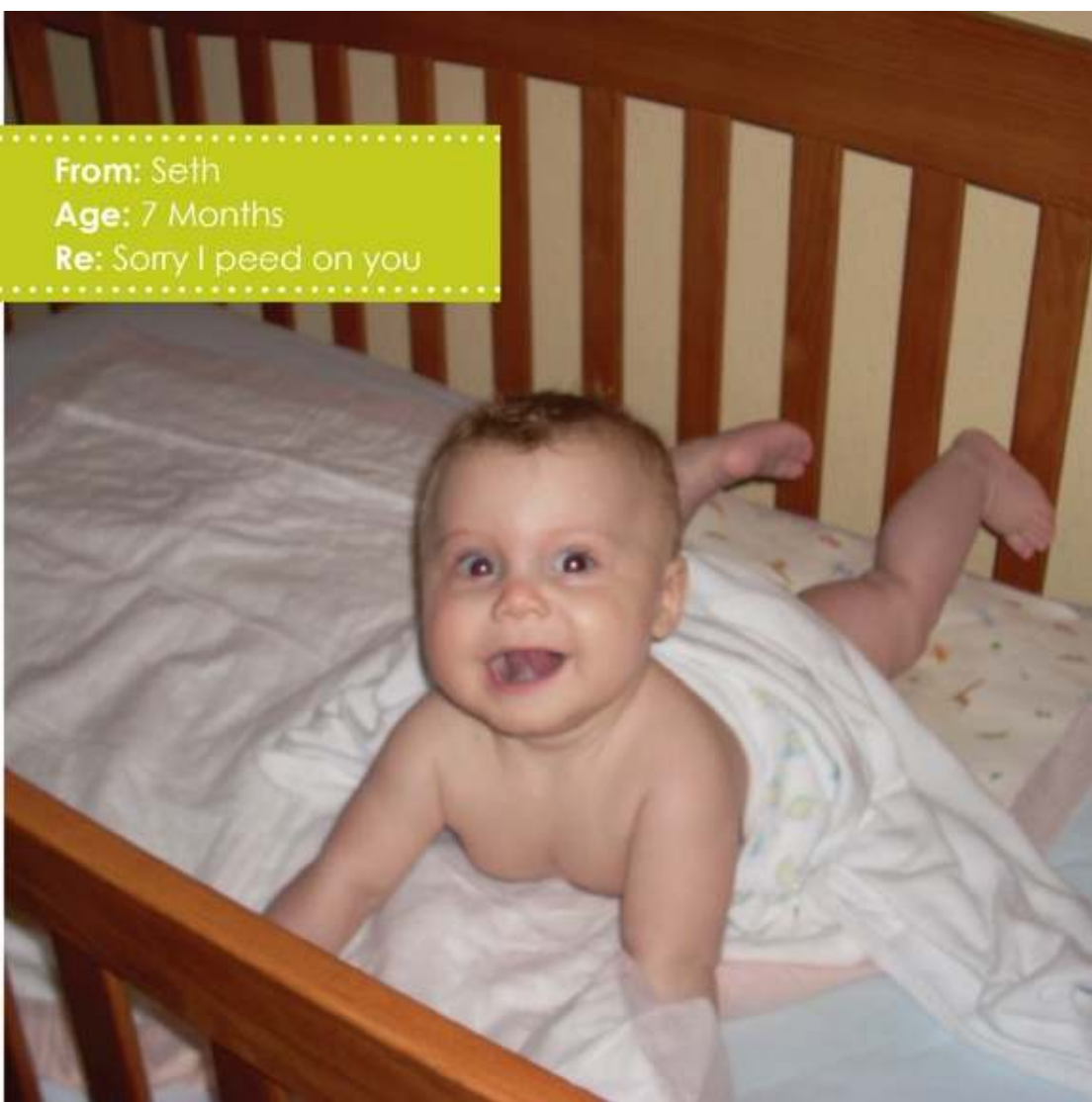
Dear Mommy,

Yesterday, Daddy said *shit*. He told me not to tell you that he said *shit* in front of me, because he said that you'd be upset, because then I'd copy him and start using *shit* when I talk. But he told him he didn't have to worry, because I know *shit* is a bad word. I'm only using *shit* right now so I can tell you that Daddy said *shit*—right after he accidentally backed over the trash cans.

Please don't be too mad at Daddy. He doesn't know why this *shit* always happens to him. He just knows that *shit* happens. Then Daddy's boss called him as he was picking up the garbage. Mommy, why does *shit* roll downhill? Does *shit* have to wear a helmet like I do when I ride my bike down our hill? Who is rolling *shit* downhill? Judging by the look on your face, I'd say that you don't know about half the *shit* I'm talking about. That's okay. I guess that's just the way *shit* is sometimes.

Love,
Ethan

From: Seth
Age: 7 Months
Re: Sorry I peed on you



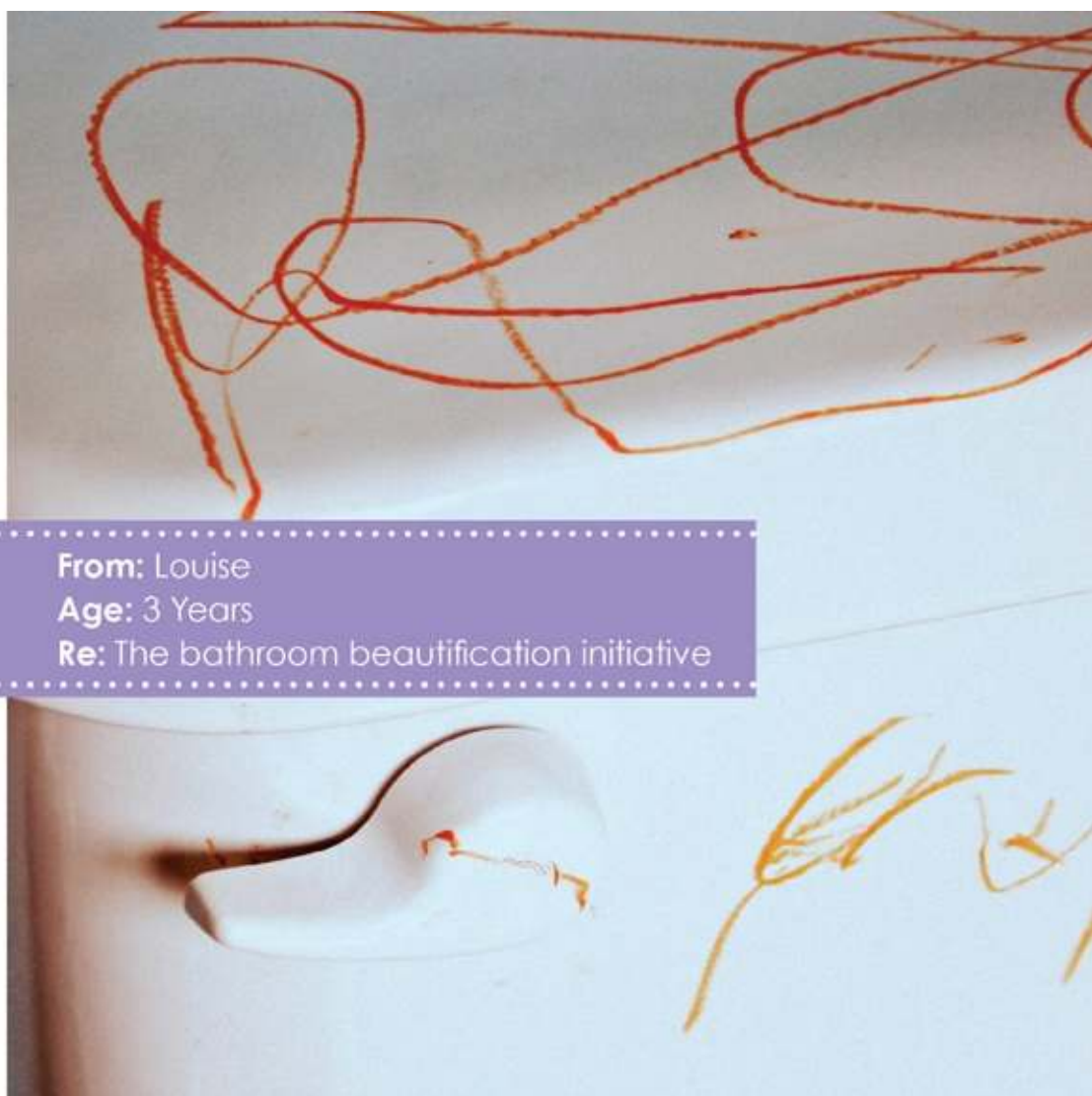
Dear Mommy,

First of all, let me tell you that I was just as surprised as you were. No baby ever wakes up one morning and thinks “Today is the day I’m going to pee on my mommy.” Someone must’ve left a window open, because that breeze hit just as the diaper came off, and before I knew it, I’d entered you in a wet T-shirt contest. I’m too young to know what embarrassment is, but as someone who pees on himself all day long, I can tell you that I know what it’s like and it’s not pleasant.

I won’t be able to control my pee muscle for at least another year, and probably longer. Remember how when I was a newborn you’d keep a towel handy in case I sprung a leak? You may want to start doing that again. It will greatly reduce the chances of my first words being “Crap! This was my last clean shirt!”

I’m truly sorry, Mommy, and will try not to pee on you ever again unless I have a very good reason.

Love,
Seth



From: Louise

Age: 3 Years

Re: The bathroom beautification initiative

Dear Mommy,

Remember yesterday when we accidentally got off the freeway in the part of the city where Daddy always says to lock the doors? And on that wall was an amazing mural? It had all kinds of names, and I think I saw what looked like a hand with one finger? Well, when I saw that, I thought, "Why can't our toilet be as colorful as an inner-city freeway underpass?" So earlier today when you became distracted by answering the phone, *voilà!*

I have lived in this house for three years now, Mommy, and I thought it'd be nice to draw something that tells the world a toddler is part of this community and that she's committed to transforming her environment.

I suppose if you don't want me to represent my toddler culture, you can use a blow dryer to melt off the crayon. I just thought it'd be nice to make my mark.

Love,
Louise



From: Gage

Age: 22 Months

Re: Look how far I can throw my sippy cup

Dear Mommy,

I have something amazing to show you! Look at how far I can throw my sippy cup! I can throw it from my high chair clear across the kitchen table. And if I aim perfectly, I can knock over any water glasses and ketchup bottles. And that's with the sippy cup half full. Can you imagine the distance I'd get if I actually drank all my milk?

But I wonder why you and Daddy never throw *your* cups. I'm guessing the reason is that you just haven't had a knowledgeable toddler explain how to do it. There are two perfect times to hurl your sippy cup. First is when people are least expecting it. Just right in the middle of a meal, pick it up and throw it on the floor, toward the dog's head, or across the table. Second is if someone asks, "Do you need more milk?" you can answer the question with a simple chuck of the sippy cup.

With a little practice, Mommy, you'll be able to throw your sippy cup so hard against the floor that you'll be able to dent the hardwoods just like I can.

Love,
Gage



From: Zach

Age: 3 Years

Re: Is this crowded supermarket the right place to ask what a vagina is?

Dear Mommy,

There's something I've been meaning to ask you, and now that we're in a busy supermarket full of strangers, I think it's finally the right moment. Mommy, what's a vagina? Last time I asked, you said, "Honey, ask me about that later," as everyone stared at us in the doctor's office. I'd still really like to know.

Apparently, a lot of people want to know what a vagina is, Mommy, because everyone is looking at us, and a few are laughing. So, is this a good place to tell me what a vagina is? Do I have a vagina? Does Daddy have a vagina? What about Princess the cat? Do they see vaginas at this store? Everyone keeps staring, so maybe we all need to know. Would you tell the entire store what a vagina is, Mommy?

Love,
Zach



From: Wyatt

Age: 2½ Years

Re: Preschool gives me a tummy ache

Dear Mommy,

Thank you for picking me up early from preschool. Something about that place was giving me a tummy ache. I don't know what. All I had to eat today was my normal food that you packed me, plus two crayons, three ounces of Elmer's glue, a piece of construction paper, three boogers, and an ounce of glitter. What do you think it could be? And what's a culinary academy? The teacher says that's what I've confused her class for.

Anyway, it's great to see you. Why are you all sweaty and wearing a jog bra and running shoes? Were you doing something?

Love,
Wyatt



From: Alexis

Age: 15 Months

Re: I'm sorry I cried, but you were gone for five minutes.
What was I supposed to do?

Dear Mommy,

Why do I cry *every* time you leave me at the YMCA day care? Well, have you asked yourself how you'd feel if I *didn't* cry, and played nicely as though you weren't the center of my universe? The fact that you haven't been able to get a workout in since I was born is a sign of love, Mommy.

I know you still want to exercise, so I have created the "never leave my sight" workout just for you! Every day, I'll make sure you do at least ten pick-me-up-for-no-reasons, three clean-up-the-blocks-after-I-scatter-them-needlessly-about-the-house, and twenty-five ah-ah-ahhh's which involve seeing me about to toss my food on the floor, so you run as fast as you can over to the high chair yelling, "Ah-ah-ahhh, don't!"

One day when I'm a teenager, I'll cry if I *can't* leave your sight. You should appreciate the barnacle years.

Love,
Alexis



From: Max

Age: 18 Months

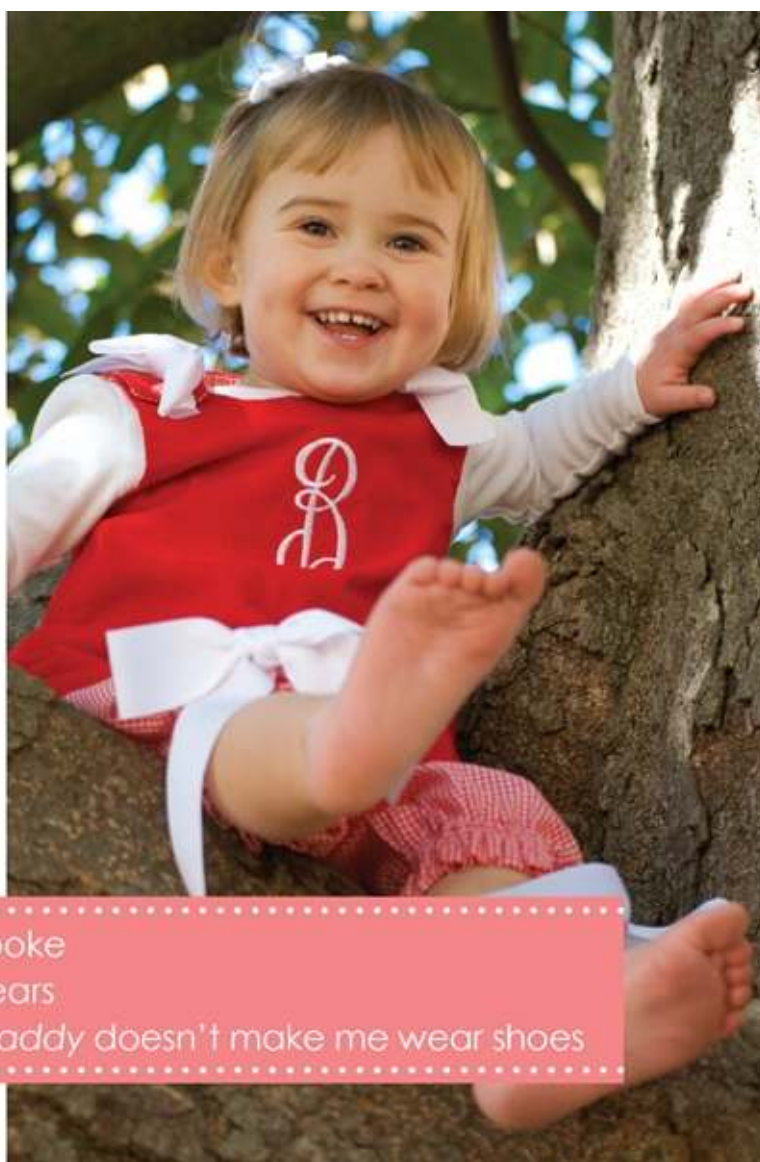
Re: Please let me go down the slide by myself

Dear Mommy,

Okay, maybe running away from you at the park yesterday was a bit childish. And I do regret tossing my shoe in the trash. I honestly didn't know someone had just thrown out day-old potato salad. But what else could I do? I'm almost 20 months old, and you still won't let me go down the slide by myself! It's embarrassing, Mommy. That little toddler girl in pink bowed pigtails didn't even look at me once while we were at the park—and that's even after I'd demonstrated supreme agility by running across the bouncy bridge. How am I ever going to get bitten or chased by a girl if she thinks I still need to slide with my mommy?

I'm ready to go down both the straight and curly slides by myself. But we can just start with the straight slide. And you can even wait at the bottom of the slide and say "Come with Mommy." You don't have to. But I know this might be a tough transition for you, so I'm willing to let you take baby steps.

Love,
Max



From: Brooke

Age: 2 Years

Re: *But Daddy doesn't make me wear shoes*

Dear Mommy,

I am so excited that you're taking me to play in the yard! I will try to stay out of the garden and will be respectful of which balls belong to the dog and which are mine. I also have some great news! I no longer have to wear shoes while playing in the backyard. Yesterday, when you were out shopping, Daddy took me outside to play. He was about to put my jacket on but couldn't find it, so he said, "It's pretty warm out." Then he asked, "Brooke, honey, where are your shoes?" He looked for about two seconds and then was like, "Forget it. It's just grass."

That's why I'm wormy-squirmy as you try to cram my feet into shoes. I just prefer to be barefoot—like Daddy lets me. Also, Daddy lets me eat while standing up in the kitchen. I like that, too. Next time Nana comes over, can we all eat standing in the kitchen?

Love,
Brooke

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