

Boys Will Be Boys

Written by Laura Packard



Although, I am not sure what this phrase even means.

I have never raised one so I'm not sure what all the fuss is about. I do know it has something to do with dirt, snails, and pulled puppy dog tails. Later, I know because I have carpooled lots and lots them, come fumes of Axe odor masking body spray that doesn't hide the body odor but makes you roll the window down even in the pouring rain.

Me, well, I've been knee-deep solely in sugar, spice, and everything nice for close to 18 years now. And those who have raised or are currently raising bodies dunked in estrogen know that saying is, well, up for debate.

At its best, I'll give you piggy tails. As in, you can never find a ponytail holder when one is demanded from you. Meaning, if there is a Heaven on earth, like Belinda Carlisle promised, they all went there to live to escape all the hissy fits. Sure, I will even acquiesce that they come with the sweetest of smells. Only, one or more in a group constitutes a walking Bath & Body Works avalanche of Apple Blossom overload hemorrhaging lotions, perfumes, and cash.

Plain truth is if these girls are made of sugar and spice, they also come with a two-decade supply of side eye, eye rolls, scowls, and hysterical crying for absolutely no reason. Ever tried to bathe a cat? That's what reasoning with an adolescent female looks like. And don't get me started on teenage girls and their baths. I don't know what they do in there for an hour. I was one ages ago, but like my social security number and the reason why I even got in my car this morning, it escapes me.

My friends with boys tell me frightening stories which we cannot get into here. But what I do know is they turn the shower on, jump in, then turn the shower off, jump out... all in under 45 seconds. No lie, my daughter's boyfriend who is 19 years old had an epiphany the other day:

“You mean you use soap, not just water, to wash your face?”

I know there are a few of you out there that still have faith in mankind. Maybe you are thinking, well, they are just being frugal with the water bill and the health of our planet, its trees, flowers, and occupants so it endures for a very long time. I am here to tell you, nope, that’s not it. At all.

Case in point: a pool party last Sunday.

In the beginning, this pool party was to consist of adults and few teenage girls. Why were girls invited and not boys? Because as expected, the girls spent three hours in the bathroom blow drying their hair, depleting 4 cans of sensitive skin shave gel, and 2 liters of pre-tanning oil made from some special ingredient that could only be found in the Dead Sea or somewhere near there. Not sure, since I stopped listening at oil.

When they do emerge, playlists are selected, beach towels are laid out, nails are painted, and hair is braided. Not one of the three actually gets in the pool, but they all take 200 pictures in front of it, then depart for sushi twenty minutes in. This means us adults could actually relax, listen to music that is actually music, and drink Pina Coladas until our hearts are content.

Until my brother-in-law asked if his middle school aged son and a friend could join us. Three frozen drinks in, we all stupidly threw caution to the wind and asked, what the heck, how bad could it get?

First off, Bill Clinton caused a few head scratches with, “it depends on what the meaning of the word is, is.” I’m here to vehemently protest there is no other definition for “a”, as in “a” friend. Period. Singular. End of story.

It was like the movie *The Gremlins*. One boy would jump in and three more would pop up. We lost count and the pool lost half its water.

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Someone threw a dog in the deep end, then pretended to go all *Baywatch* saving the thing against its will with a deflated innertube and a busted-up snorkel.

Next, someone's head went through a mesh pool lounge. Not sure how. Or whose. I don't know because they all started to look alike.

One of them wrestled the Polaris cleaning hose like he was Crocodile Dundee. Not sure why or even how this was a productive use of his time. Or mine for that matter, because I couldn't take my eyes off of him making sure he would live another day, not in the Outback, but in a suburban neighborhood pool in the USA.

Another, clearly channeling Tarzan looking for Jane, climbed up the outdoor shower and swung a sec. No Jane in site, he dropped directly onto the metal shower drain cutting open the heel of his foot. Unfazed, and bleeding, he then did a jack knife directly over another one's head.

But before we could shut it all down, the pool guy came by and did it for us. Tests were run and something gross was detected in the water attempting to breed. Chemicals were dumped, no swimming signs went up, and the boys cleared out of there faster than it took them to take their last shower.

Oh well, maybe I lucked out having two girls after all, though the drama-filled days don't make it always feel that way. But then, I will think back on that pool party and get up, dig up the last lost hair tie, simply sigh at the two dozen empty bottles of body wash, and psyche myself up to go bathe the proverbial cat.

Lookout folks, the boys are back for summer.