

...isn't every dang day Grandparent's Day?

The other day, Abby suggested she might like to live with Pop. This stroke of genius came to her right after I told her she was grounded until further notice and right before she slammed her bedroom door. You need to know... this desire for a change of address is not a groundbreaking event; she comes from a long line of my children who think their grandfather's house is their best shot at happiness.

I'm not gonna lie... I'm tempted to give it a go. I mean if anybody knows what she's in for – it's me and I'm thinking it won't be the youtube-watching-oreo-eating-nap-taking good time she thinks it'll be. Oh no... I've seen the man in action.

Memories of my childhood are but a blur of weekends spent cutting firewood, evenings spent watching westerns and mornings spent without him because he was up and out long before I got up. And as far as giving him sass... no thank you! HA! let her roll her eyes at him ONE.TIME.

But the more I think about it, the more I realize there is no way that man will let me win – and trust me when I say I'm using the term "win" VERY loosely; as a matter of fact, let me rephrase – there's no way Pop will allow MY home to be the lesser of two evils... he will absolutely bring out the big guns. This... I've also seen in action.

When my kids spend time with their grandfather it's all 4-wheelers, *Weekend at Bernie's* and 3 course breakfasts. Obviously, it's the nature of the beast that allows grandparents to have bigger "guns" to bring out. They have less obligations resulting in more patience. They have less mouths to feed resulting in more disposable income. And frankly, they have immeasurable free time to orchestrate an indefensible vendetta against the very people who thought THEIR house was the **greater** of two evils. Those facts alone make for an unfair fight... but then we Gen Xers find that we are at war with a Baby Boomer enemy who can, and will, change the rules of engagement on a whim.

Suddenly, the same guy who mockingly pranced around with 'Jordache' written on a piece of masking tape, stuck to his backside thinks nothing of dropping \$500 on "THE" softball bat of the year (which he determined after *hours* of internet research). The guy who grounded his kid for simply opening and plucking a handful of candy from his bag of Rolos is now winking at the grandchild who finished off his pack of oreos ("it seems I have a little mouse who loves cookies... I guess I'll have to buy a bigger pack next time" *HUH?????*).

Looking back on it, I'm fairly certain my father never carried on a single conversation with any of my friends or their parents during my high school years; these days we walk into any of my kids' school events and the guy is Mr. Popularity – everybody knows Pop, and everybody wants to chat with Pop. I half think they'd crown him Homecoming King if they could...

I can't honestly venture a guess as to his stance on bedtimes; it was never an issue in my childhood home, faced with another episode of *GunsMoke* or Casey Kasem on my bedroom

stereo... well, suffice it to say I was always in bed at a respectable time. So, while I'm not sure if he'd impose a bedtime on his new roomie – what I DO know is... boring tv wouldn't drive anybody to bed. For a guy who couldn't even tolerate the theme music for *Three's Company* – he sure can quote some *SpongeBob SquarePants*.

And let's just see if he "makes things happen" like I do. Filling out forms on the fly, sending notes for doctor's appointments, running forgotten items to the school... although... he was the person we relied on to get each of them to 95% of their appointments before they could drive themselves. And to be fair... he was the one who took them to get their learner's permit and/or license which enabled them to get themselves to appointments. And apparently, he's been known to swing by the house to deliver a forgotten jersey to the school every now and again...

Ok maybe that round is his.

I still contend that it's easier for grandparents to do all that stuff – *because they don't HAVE to*. When a parent is tasked with raising a child – all that stuff is **necessary**. Dan and I are expected to enforce early bedtimes, serve healthy meals, adhere to a strict budget, and impose discipline... And Pop is expected to ignore every rule we've ever put in place. And let me say this about that...

He's the right man for the job.

When my mom was still with us, she was the perfect blend of spoiling and rule abiding. Sure, she'd let them eat 4 ice cream sandwiches for dessert – but first they'd eat a meal with at least a smattering of nutrition. The kids were much younger, so bedtimes not only existed but were reasonable. And she didn't buy them everything they wanted... oh... wait... she actually did do that. But these days?

Well... take for instance Father's Day. The kids stayed the night at Pop's. Back in the day if he was hosting them, he'd get a frozen lasagna and they'd watch a movie. This year the kids picked up the lasagna and instead of a movie the four of them stayed up half the night drinking soda and playing poker... I'm sorry... I cannot compete with that. For starters – I don't even really know how to play poker – but mostly it's because a family-sized lasagna would have me sacked out in a recliner by 8:30.

Clearly my crappy, middle-aged metabolism is to blame for Pop's status as the favorite.

I don't know... the more I write about him – the more I think I want to move in with Pop. That guy seems like a heckuva lot of fun. 'Course he'd probably make me clean and do the mowing... in rag tag clothes... after eating brussels sprouts and liver...

On second thought – I think I'll stay put.

Truth be told... I don't even know why I'm fighting Abby's suggestion. Those two are made for each other – cut from the same cloth. It would take less than a week and she'd beg to come back home; and I would be crowned the victor! (as an aside – this is a perfect example of the type of success I achieve – winning back somebody who doesn't want me).

Come to think of it... Grandparent's Day is coming up. What better way to mark the occasion then to scoop up every item she's ever owned off her floor and throw it on HIS floor; not to mention, it will be less than 3 weeks from Homecoming – he can deal with all that entails: organizing group pictures, getting-ready-meltdowns, buying a dress.

Meh... he can pick up the dress when he's getting his suit... Mr. Fun guy has probably been invited to guest chaperone.