

James Braun

Nose

What I do is reflect. Write in my daily thoughts. The lovely ones, all in my journal.

I am so blessed. Love is everywhere. God is great, so ever present and watchful. Praise Jesus. Life is of abundance. I have a perfect wifey. Soon to have perfect family. So blessed.

But then Mr. Doctor man walks in, and he doesn't look so blessed. That stern expression of his. Lots of eyebrows on the fellow. His eyebrows looking at me, he says, "The results are in. I'm sorry, sir, but you're sterile."

I hold up a finger. Gotta reflect.

Doc man don't know what he's talking about. I am so blessed. Wifey and I, we're gonna have kids. Kids with the perfect family. Love, everywhere.

"Did you hear me?" Doc man says. "You're *sterile*."

I shake Doc man's hand, leave the overly-white room, and pay the medical bill at the front desk. On the drive home in my wifey's prius, I tap my hand against the steering wheel, beating in rhythm to every song on the radio. Arriving at wifey and I's home, I tuck my notebook and pen under my arm and head inside to meet my wifey, whistling all the way.

Wifey in the kitchen, she sees me and says, "Honey! How did the appointment go?"

And, whistling, I hand her the results. She opens the envelope, reads over the papers, and covers her mouth with her hand. My wifey, she's got the best hands! With her other best hand, she takes off her wedding ring, sets it on the counter, and leaves our house.

Time to reflect!

*Love is gone. So cursed. Life is scarce, God is gone, never present. Wifey is gone too.
Everything, gone, gone, gone.*

Depressed. Some days pass. Wifey wants a divorce because I can't do the reproducing thing. But sitting at the kitchen counter reading the morning paper, there it is. An advertisement for adoption.

First comes Charlie.

Second comes Owen.

Third comes Patrick.

What I do, is I gotta reflect.

Children of abundance. They teach me so much. All my love, all for them. Don't need wifey anymore, anyhow!

My kiddos, they're perfect. Charlie and Owen are seven years old, while Patrick's eight. One day we play a game! Little Owen comes up to me as I read the morning paper—me, looking for more kiddos—and he honks my nostrils and says, "Gotcha nose, daddy!"

Reflect.

Oh no! He's got my nose! Gotta get it back. Gotta get HIS nose!

My little Owen runs away laughing, but oh boy do I catch him real fast! Catch him at *lightning speed!* I scoop him up, cradle him in my arms, and I *get* his nose!

My kiddo, Owen, he stops laughing, but I'm laughing all the way. After all, I got his nose! Setting him down though, my little boy collapses, some red liquid stuffs spouting out his face.

With Owen sleeping real tight on the kitchen floor, I call out, "Patrick! Charlie! Where are you kiddos?"

My boys, they're so good. They come running in at *lightning speed*. They don't see their brother Owen, because Owen's behind the counter. I scoop up Patrick, tickling him, and he laughs so hard, a laugh coming deep from inside him. Patrick's got the best laugh of my boys. I lean in, use my mouth, and pulling back I say, "*Gotcha nose!*"

But setting Patty down, he falls down too! And my boy, Charlie, he runs away with some watery stuffs coming down his face. I say, "Charlie, come here *kiddo*."

I chase him all around the house, but he's got *lightning speed*, so it takes me some time to catch him. But when I do, I scoop him up real fast, and I *get* his nose!

And would you believe it. Charlie, my boy, he goes to sleep right after I get his nose too! Some red pomegranate juicy juice, spraying from his adorable little face.

My boys, they're so good. Resting, staying out of their daddy's hair as I reflect.

Gotta reflect.

Oh, so blessed. These kiddos, they're my whole world. Little Owen, he stole my nose today! But that's okay. I got the noses of all my kiddos. Stole them up lightning fast!

And then, the doorbell rings.

I open the door and a Mr. Policeman man stands there in uniform, stern expression. Almost as stern as Mr. Doctor man. Not so much eyebrows on him, but lots of lips. He looks at me with his lips and says, "There have been some calls, saying there's screams coming from here. Sir, what's that on your mouth? It looks like... blood."

I whisper.

"What's that, sir?"

I whisper.

"Sir, I can't hear you." He leans in next to me.

I whisper.

"You need to reflect?"

And *THERE*. I lean in real fast, *lightning speed*, and I bite his nose! Pulling away with a stream of juicy juice coming from Mr. Policeman's face, I say, "*Gotcha* nose!"

And would you believe it! Mr. Policeman collapses too.

