

Guilty as charged!

I'M NOT NORMALLY A GRUMPY grandad. I want my grandkids to like me, not hate me. So, as much as possible, I avoid getting stern and cranky unless it's really warranted. Which it was the other day.

I mean, what would YOU have done?

We had a bunch of them at our place. They'd wandered down to the beach to play. And the tide was out, so it was mostly mud. Being kids, of course, they couldn't resist it. They played in the mud. And then they came back covered in the stuff.

I caught them about to go inside. About to walk on the carpet. About to commit a crime. And I read the Riot Act:

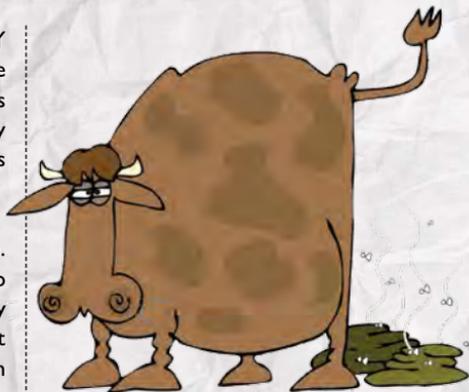
"Stop right where you are! Don't you dare take another step! I can't believe you could be so stupid! You're not going anywhere until that stinky mud is all washed off. So get over there! Use the hose! Start scrubbing!"

It took 20 minutes and numerous leg-inspections before I would give the all-clear.

"Grandad's in a bad mood," I heard one of them tell their grandmother. And she spoke the truth.

Fast forward several hours ...

We were now at their place. A small farmlet in the country. And the eight-year-old asked me to walk with him across the cow paddock to feed the chooks and



collect the eggs. Which I happily did. We came back and took the eggs inside. But my grandson suddenly sniffed, dropped down on all fours, put his nose to the carpet, and declared ominously: "Cow-poo!"

We both looked at the black/green patch on the floral pattern. He looked at my feet. Then he looked at me. "You've got cow-poo on your shoes, Grandad." And he spoke the truth.

It's funny how things come back to bite you!

But guess what? He didn't get stern or grumpy. He didn't even tell on me.

"It's really just grass," he said with a grin. "It'll soon dry ..."

And I knew I was forgiven! ❁

WHEN JOHN (GRAPEVINE'S FOUNDER) WENT EGG-COLLECTING THE NEXT DAY, HE WORE HIS SON'S OVERSIZED CROCS.
