

## What Rubbish!

**W**E WERE BABYSITTING recently. For No.2 Son & Wife. Although, given that their youngest kid is eight-going-on-nine and their older kids are teens-going-on-adults, 'babysitting' is hardly the word. We felt more like Camp Mum'n'Dad on an exhausting school trip. Anyway, late one night en-route to my bed, I checked the 'dormitory' and discovered that the youngest kid was missing. His blankets were balled-up on the floor and his mattress was empty!

I panicked – thinking he'd escaped, been kidnapped, or worse. But then, in the half-dark, I noticed a lumpy bump in his mattress. Turns out there were two mattresses, and when I lifted the top one, there was the missing boy – stuck between the slabs of foam like meat in a giant sandwich. I panicked again – thinking he'd suffocated. But, as I dragged his sweaty body into the open-air, he breathed, grunted, opened one eye, then went back to sleep.

Next morning, when I asked him why – why were you sleeping under your mattress? – he explained matter-of-factly, "Oh, it helps me hide my imagination."

This delightful young grandson lives in his own head-space, prone to colourful imaginings and overactive dreams. And that's hardly surprising, because his father was exactly the same ...



We adopted No.2 son when he was just weeks old. And, from the outset, he marched to the beat of a different drum, rewarding us with mischief and fun and an imagination that knew no limits. Now an overgrown 40-year-old, he's too big to sleep under mattresses. But he loves alarming unsuspecting friends with a cock-and-bull story about his adoption:

"I was an abandoned baby ..." he tells them. ("Oh NO," they respond. "How SAD!")

"and Mum and Dad found me," he reveals, "in a rubbish bin ..." ("Oh NO," they cry, "that's AWFUL!")

"I was wrapped in fish'n'chip paper ..." he continues (*his listeners, by now, have TEARS in their eyes*)

"and I was sucking on a Moro Bar ..." he concludes (*and I kid you not: SOME OF THEM BELIEVE HIM!*)

Oh dear! If you should ever meet our imaginative No.2 son, you have been warned!

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JOHN (GRAPEVINE'S FOUNDER), WHO HAS IMAGINATION PROBLEMS OF HIS OWN, SAYS, "IT WASN'T A MORO BAR: IT WAS A LIMP STALK OF CELERY!"

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