



day after I start to leave him at daycare and whisper, "I love you, Mommy." He is sweet but he has also got the dickens in him.

One morning, when we were running late and I was trying to get John to put his socks on and he kept hiding his feet. I repeatedly told him, "John, you have to put your socks on." He adamantly told me, "No!" each time. Finally, I asked, "Why don't you want to wear socks?" He replied with an exasperated tone, "I'm already wearing underwear."

How his mind works baffles me almost every day. Apparently, no socks required if you're wearing underwear, which makes me wonder if the opposite is also true.

Ella was talking about what she wanted to be when she grew up one night as we sat around the dinner table. After she finished talking, my husband, Ben, turned to John and had the following conversation.

*Ben: What do you want to be when you grow up?  
John (after a moment of intense thought): Ummm... a wolf.  
John: What do you want to be when you grow up?  
Ben: When I was a kid, I wanted to be a truck driver.  
John: Nah, you should be a wolf with me.*

Although John wants to be a wolf when he grows up, he is currently flanked by a brigade of imaginary monkeys wherever he goes. There is a whole sector of evil monkeys who are responsible for all messes, broken items and screams from his sister. There are also good monkeys that fix things and build cars in John's pants pockets. He carries them around in his pockets and lets them out to entertain him when he's bored.

The "monkeys," although sometimes destructive and very messy, often bring laughter into our household. Recently, I walked into John's room and found every book off the bookshelf and papers strewn everywhere. I asked John what happened and completely matter-of-factly, John replied, "Oh, my monkeys did that. Don't worry, Mom, I already put them in time out."

In addition to the monkeys, he has various super-hero friends who hang out with him. There is Spider-Man, Batman and a made-up super hero he calls Power Jay.

And then there is the Cheeto Man. The first time he mentioned this guy, I thought maybe it was a ploy to get me to buy him Cheetos. But when I asked him who the Cheeto Man was, he said he was a small man who lives in his pocket, fixes boats and eats donuts. And then tragedy struck.

John pulled air out of his pocket like he was holding a tiny man by the top of his head and said, "This is the Cheeto Man."

His sister Mary having not heard the spiel about the Cheeto Man's role in Johns' life, reached over as if grabbing the Cheeto Man and pretended to pop him into her mouth. John instantly began crying and Mary said, "Sorry here's your Cheeto back," as she pretended to spit something into her hand.

John said, "That wasn't a Cheeto, that was the Cheeto Man and now he's dead."

Fortunately, the next day the Cheeto Man was back in John's pocket and all was right in the world.

by Tera Schmidt

Let us know about the cute, crazy, silly, adorable things your kids, grandkids, neighbors, nieces and nephews say and maybe they'll be printed in the next edition of Her Voice magazine. Make submissions to the Kids page online at [hervoiceonline.com](http://hervoiceonline.com).

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