



Eric's Nappy

The baby sat in the bouncer chair crying and screaming. Its face had turned bright red, and a long yellow line snaked down from its nose.

In front of the bouncer sat Martin Meyer and his wife Maria. They stared at the squealing child. Both looked alarmed and neither knew what to do.

"Erika, bambino," said his mother, stroking his short blond hair.

Her voice was falsely calm, and she sounded like it could break into a scream at any moment.

"Vipe his eyes," Martin said, pushing her arm towards Eric's face.

Maria bent forward and dabbed a tissue over Eric's eyes.

"And his nose."

Maria pulled away and gave the tissue to her husband. It was accompanied with a look that told him she had limits.

After Martin had wiped Eric's nose, he looked desperately at this wife. The child was still squealing.

"Vere are Andrea's instructions?" he asked loudly, trying to make himself heard above Eric.

Maria took a piece of paper from the armrest and placed it between the two of them. They read in worried silence.

If Eric cries follow the instructions below:

1. Feed him milk from the bottle until he pushes it away. The bottles are located in the fridge.
2. Pat his back until he burps.
3. Rock him.
4. Change his nappy/diaper. See reverse for more instructions on this procedure.

Points 1 to 3 had been successfully completed, in the minds of the Meyers. This left only point 4.

Martin turned over the paper and, with his wife, studied the nappy changing diagrams that Andrea had left for them. He picked up Eric and carried the crying baby to the dining table. His wife followed with the instructions. He lay Eric down on the mahogany, and Maria put the instructions beside him.

Eric was manoeuvred out of his baby grow, and Maria slowly unfastened the nappy. As it fell open, she recoiled in horror.

"It's yellow!" she exclaimed theatrically. "His kaka is yellow. Call our pediatician!"

"No, wait," Martin replied. "Andrea writes, 'if the excrement is yellow or a mustard colour do not be alarmed. This is normal.'"

"But it's disgusting! I can't go on. You'll have to continue."

Martin pulled the nappy out from under Eric's bottom, as if he was removing a playing card from the deck. He wrapped it into a ball and slid it across the table.

"Pass me ze other one," he told his wife.

"What other one?"

"Ze other diaper."

Maria looked lost until she saw a stack of them piled up against the wall.

Martin lifted Eric's legs, and as Maria put it under his bottom, Eric peed. A long stream of urine shot into the air like a fountain. It splashed off Martin's cheeks and onto Maria's lips.



Martin dropped Eric onto the table, fell backwards onto the marble floor and looked completely bewildered. Maria ran around the table, slapping her lips and screaming.

Just then Andrea walked in.

“In future, I will not go out until Eric is asleep,” she told them and picked up Eric.

By the time the clean nappy was on, Eric was quiet, and the Meyers were sipping at strong Vodka Martinis.

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