



Baby Bug *by Amy Cipolla Barnes*

Peyton Manning in the Corner

We are not football fanatics at our house. While Brian and I were dating, he went to school at Georgia Tech. In two years, we never attended one football game. Joel and Emily do Tae Kwon Do and dance as their "sports" so we aren't even involved in peewee football. To keep updated for conversations in the generally football crazy South, we do occasionally watch enough of big games to be in the know.

The main game that we catch highlights from is the Superbowl. We didn't even have a remote favorite to watch this year so I just tuned in at half time and in the last fifteen minutes. The kids were watching with irritation because it was a switch from whatever they had chosen.

They instantly perked up when a time-out was called. It was in those last minutes where a win for the losing team was remote but still possible under fantastic circumstances. I thought for a moment that my football-challenged children had caught the fever. Instead, they both had wide-eyes and were shocked that Peyton Manning (the one football player that even I know) had gotten a time-out.

The other television program was forgotten as they begin discussing what he could have possibly done wrong, where he was going to take his time-out, and how had he heard his mom on the football field. After I stopped giggling, I had to explain from my limited football knowledge base that he was calling a time-out to figure out his strategy and to stop the clock.

The time-out may have been more interesting because we have had 8 snow days since the first of the year. That means both kids are at home together. Emily doesn't like sharing that time with Joel and I don't have vast teaching resources or time to compile enough stuff to keep them both from getting a little bored. Bored inevitably equals time-out. Suffice it to say there have been a lot of time-outs in our house, public places, and the cars. In Joel's classroom, his teacher even uses time-outs. The kids are so off-schedule that there have been more than the usual time-outs there too.

I read somewhere that mommies and daddies should be able to get time-outs too but that the time-outs could just be time away from the craziness. For kids, the time-out period can be measured by age. Emily probably should get a four-minute time-out and Joel would get eight minutes. That rarely happens as we usually

count to a designated amount. They do not like to be removed from the action and do their best to keep themselves amused even facing the wall. In my case, I am thinking that thirty-nine minutes anywhere quiet might be a good thing.

After we had an in-depth discussion about Peyton Manning's plan for the game rather than his punishment, I took note of the winner and loser of the game and stored the information away for water-cooler conversations for Brian. As I met up with moms the next day, I told them about the time-out corner and Peyton Manning. It was the perfect symmetry. I still can't get the image of Manning's mom standing on the sidelines calling him down with one finger wagging and her mouth counting down his punishment. The kids are still under the impression that a grown-up can in trouble from time-to-time. At that moment in the game, Manning was in trouble. They went on to lose. He probably got a time-out from his coach instead.