

## Full House Fan Fiction

### Who's In Charge Here?

By: Doug Fowler

*Comet had to be born in September, just after the first 2-3 episodes, to socialize well w/other dogs & people later; they need 4 weeks just so it's okay to have him consistently away from his mother, Minnie. Even then, after the owner comes for Minnie, he'd need constant work. While they teach Comet who's boss, how does it work w/Michelle, who also needs direction to build a concept of right & wrong? She'd need negative consequences from somewhere, though Danny might mistakenly think it's from him. And, the pediatrician would likely find out when discussing behavior. BTW, this could be book universe if the part about Michelle choosing Jesse over Danny on the museum tour is eliminated, though Danny would feel much more like he was on the team, too, w/D.J. as a proactive, mother figure in the books.*

*I fixed the doctor name, sorry; I got it confused with Jese and Becky's doctor name in season 5.*

### Who's in Charge Here?

The toddler yanked playfully at the puppy's tail. Comet, their Golden Retriever, snapped semi-playfully at her, but after several weeks of work, he no longer truly snapped, nor did he come close to touching the toddler, Michelle, who scolded, "That's not nice."

"I saw that!" came the angry voice of her oldest sister, twelve-year-old D.J. Tanner, before Michelle finished talking. She made Michelle look right into her angry eyes. "Michelle, yanking the dog's tail is bad!"

The little girl, who'd just turned three, lowered her head and somberly said, "I sorry" as D.J. picked her up and took her across the hall. Michelle knew what being bad meant, because of what came next when she was told that & picked up like this - she was placed on her bed, and D.J. left, closing the door behind her.

Michelle breathed deeply, sniffing once. She knew her limit - and she was getting it cemented in her mind that yanking the dog's tail was wrong. He hadn't hurt her - but she'd still been punished. It was cemented enough that when she let the class bird fly away a couple months later in preschool, she would say "I'm a bad girl" right away before being told it, and would even sit in the corner sadly for a couple hours without being sent.

Danny, their dad, didn't like seeing Michelle sad. "Honey...do you have to do that?" he asked D.J..

D.J. sighed as she sat back on her bed while Danny and Stephanie - a couple months shy of eight - played happily with the puppy, stroking its back, picking it up and gently

moving it around, just as they had done since Comet was born. “Dad, we’ve been over this before,” she said tiredly.

“I know. Could we go over it once more, though?”

Danny knew he wouldn’t win the argument, and D.J. knew he knew. But, there was some need of assurance on Danny’s part, because his wife, Pam, had died over two years ago.

“Dad, you see how we’re training Comet. I mean, you’re doing it too. That cage we got in the basement; using that cage if he’s naughty; the times we get him playing with other dogs, so he knows when to react and when not to, and just how hard he’s allowed to nibble without biting; trying to get him to go on the paper till we can get him doing it outside; it’s all part of teaching him right from wrong.”

“I know. Because he’s a dog, and you can’t just talk to him like you can a person.” Despite having said this, Danny quickly turned to Comet and complimented him. “That’s right, Comet. That was very good the way you didn’t snap at Michelle this time. I’m really proud of you.” He noticed what he’d done, and joked with a corny smile, “Of course, to Comet I might as well have said the alphabet, huh?”

“He’s starting to be a very good dog. Aren’t you?” Stephanie said as she picked him up. “Aww, he’s so cute.” She hugged the dog very tenderly, as he squirmed to get out of the grip.

Danny took him and said, “Steph, remember, the vet said we shouldn’t hug like we do with people; most puppies don’t like being restricted.” He put Comet down on the floor, and reminded D.J. that he’d stopped Stephanie from doing that easily without ever punishing.

“Right. Because she’s used to obeying you. Michelle’s used to obeying me, too - but she only obeys you because I tell her she has to.”

“Oh, now, there’s where you’re wrong. I mean, I know, you removed her because she pulled his tail. But, I think we’ve made it through the toughest times. Not that I won’t still support you, but...” He sighed. He just didn’t want to see Michelle grow up - partly because she’d been a baby when Pam was around, and that meant one more thing that would remind him Pam was gone, if he had to start enforcing limits.

At least Dad supports me, she told herself as she looked at her watch. “Dad, everyone says I’m doing the right thing.”

Danny arched his eyebrows. “Is this one of those things where two of your friends equals everyone?”

“No, it’s two Junior High guidance counselors.”

“That’s still only two people,” Danny pointed out as D.J. left to let Michelle out of timeout. He sighed and looked Comet as he played with a rubber pork chop. He was really warming to Comet, especially since Comet would listen to him ramble without questioning him. “I guess you can’t win ‘em all, huh?”

They’d found a number of trainers and/or owners who would let their adult dog and/or puppies play with Comet so he could be acclimated to other dogs and people. While the older girls were in school, Danny, Michelle, Jesse, and Joey took Comet to the vet’s. Jesse - Danny’s brother-in-law - and Joey - Danny’s best friend - lived with the Tanners to help raise the girls, and were also advertising partners. Danny had talked the vet into meeting with them to discuss a local ad campaign.

“I never thought I’d be raising puppies when I moved in here,” Jesse mused as they sat in the waiting room. Comet and a couple German Shepherd puppies - owned by the vet - were climbing around a large, female Shepherd, who was lounging on her side while they played.

Another thought occurred to Jesse. “I never thought Kimmy Gibbler could actually be helpful, either,” he said in amazement.

“Well, hey, she was there for D.J. when Pam died, she really helped then,” Joey remarked.

“Yeah, but I mean helping us. Her vet’s been nice, co-operative, helped us every step of the way. Makes me think the Gibblers’ dog’s probably the smartest one over there. It’s San Francisco’s version of Green Acres, except they had a pig.”

Danny agreed. “He has been very helpful. Oh, hi, Dr. Parker,” he said, rising as the doctor came out of the office with another dog and owner. “This is Jesse Katsopolis and Joey Gladstone, the two fellows I was telling you about.”

“Great; I ordered sub sandwiches, I figured since it’s the lunch hour, we can eat in my office and talk, and yet I’ll be ready if there’s an emergency.”

“I came from the station, too,” Danny said by way of explanation as Michelle turned from reading to go pet the puppies. “That way, I can take Michelle home after we’ve gotten Comet used to the puppies a little more. I’m considering obedience school for Comet in a while, but like you say, making sure he won’t...no, Michelle, don’t get your hands too close to their teeth, just in case.”

Michelle looked up, “Okay. Can I have a lollipop?”

“I’m just a pet doctor,” Dr. Parker explained.

“I’ll take the doggy’s lollipop then,” she suggested to counter the comment.

Joey pulled a dog treat out of a jar on the receptionist's desk. "See, Michelle he has these instead, for the dogs. Here, Comet; here boy." He whistled, and Comet came to him. Joey flipped the treat in the air, and Comet nearly caught it. It bounced off his snout, and he got it off the floor, just ahead of the other puppies.

"That's good, he's showing that he responds fairly well to commands. Although, you would be better off waiting till he sits up before actually giving him the treat. Your girl listens very well, too," Dr. Parker complimented. It was the first time Michelle had been with the puppies when they'd brought Comet to play with them.

Danny thanked him. "My oldest daughter works with her; but I keep telling her, just my talking to her and explaining things on her level is what's important. That's why she listens to me."

"Well, it's important to teach them right from wrong, too; I mean, that's why you're doing what you're doing with the dog, just like with her. She's learning that there are consequences to her actions."

"Right, exactly." Danny tried to think if he'd ever enforced a negative consequences - he hadn't. The thought started to gnaw at him a bit, that D.J. could be right; after all. Without Pam, he had to be mom and dad, in a way, even with Jesse and Joey there, since they'd never enforced negative consequences with her, either.

Finally, he said, "She'd still see me as the boss, even if I didn't enforce them, right?"

"Well...it depends on what you mean by the boss. If she knows right from wrong, that's the important thing. Anyway, the sandwiches are ready, gentlemen." Jesse and Joey went back with him for their business meeting.

"You always listen well, don't you, Michelle. I'm so proud." He sighed. Michelle was having fun watching the dogs. He was sure her good nature, her ability to sit and play for a long while for her age, were because of him. It couldn't be all D.J.. Sure, he was without Pam. But, that was part of why he felt he was so good as a parent. He had really been able to get his little princess to listen, even without her. Hadn't he?

A couple weeks later, the Friday after Thanksgiving, Danny pulled up to the pediatrician's office with a big grin on his face. "Okay, here we are, for your three-year-old well-child checkup!" he said happily as he got her out of her carseat. Michelle got out and put her hand on the car as he shut the door. "Wow, that's good; I didn't even think of that."

"Joey says if the adults are busy I hafta hold the car's hand."

"Hold the car's hand; that's cute." He took her hand and they walked toward the building. "I guess that makes sense; I mean, Speed Buggy and KITT both talked; and

then there's the General Lee, which seemed to have wings, and, you probably have no idea what I'm saying, do you?" She shook her head as he opened the door for her, and quickly ran over to the fish tank in the lobby while Danny signed in.

"Hi, Mr. Tanner, how's Stephanie doing?"

"Oh, really well; Dr. Steiner was great. Steph only needed one visit; it was just major stress from the earthquake about six weeks ago, and my being late, so she was afraid of losing me too, like she lost her mom." The receptionist excused herself to answer the phone, but Danny failed to notice, too focused on talking. "But, you never can tell, and it's certainly better to make sure. And, now we know someone just in case..." He noticed the receptionist was busy, and excused himself. "Sorry. I'll be over there."

Danny joined Michelle at the fish tank, and began looking at and pointing to different fish they had. "Wow, look, Michelle, one fish, two fish; red fish, blue fish!" Getting a goofy grin, Danny joked, "Someone should write a book by that title."

"He did. His name is Dr. Seuss."

Danny raised his eyebrows. The voice - though quite unusual, nasal-sounding, one might say - was that of another child, who looked to be Michelle age! "Actually, I knew that. I was just making a joke. I assume you've read it?"

"I prefer comp- comp-, complicated?" He looked at his mother, who nodded. "Complicated plots. My mommy's helping me read Charlotte's Web."

"She is? Oh my!" Danny was visibly stunned now. "My daughter Stephanie's reading it, too, in second grade, but..." Even Stephanie struggled with a few parts.

He glanced at the woman who was praising him for his politeness - likely his mother, Danny thought. "I'll bet you're proud, huh?"

"Yes, I am very proud. I've caught him trying to read the dictionary."

"Do you think he might be gifted?"

"It's hard to say for sure; we're having him tested. He tends to try to blend in with his surroundings, but he's very bright," the woman said. "Dr. Waterson's really been good with helping us with that and referring us for other things."

"Oh, that's nice; Michelle's older sisters go to her, but she didn't have any room when Michelle was born, so she sees Dr. Landress. Anyway, I'm Danny Tanner."

"Alicia Boyd. I think I've seen you, don't you host 'Wake Up, San Francisco'?" He did. "I don't get to catch it too often, Derek really keeps me moving, but I do enjoy it."

“I can imagine.” At that moment, Derek was called back. A short time later, Michelle was, too.

Danny and Michelle were in the exam room moments later when the doctor arrived. “Hi, Dr. Sinclair.”

“Hello, Mr. Tanner. Well, hello, Michelle, how are you doing?”

“I made a new friend,” Michelle remarked.

The doctor began to examine her as he spoke. “That’s wonderful. It’s so much fun making friends. Just wait till you get to school, it’ll be lots of fun.”

“She’ll be going after New Year’s. I didn’t want to let her go before she was three, though I probably could have. But, I think she’s ready to go now.”

The doctor agreed, but before he could say more, Michelle interrupted. “I’d need clothes on to go there,” she blurted. “D.J. says it’s bad to go around in underwear.”

“That’s true.”

“She’s starting to get verbal, though nothing like Stephanie, huh? I remember when she turned 4 and Pam took her, she’d just learned to tell time, and told the doctor how late she was.”

“Well, another nice thing is she knows right from wrong. They start to make connections like that at that age,” the doctor remarked. He was unaware he’d left his stethoscope in his ears, and turned to Danny. “D.J.’s your oldest, right?”

“Right, she’s twelve. Of course, I’ve taught Michelle a lot, too,” Danny said a little defensively, still thinking of what D.J. had said.

“Oh, I understand; she’s probably just repeating something she heard very recently...” Michelle began singing the ABC’s somewhat loudly into the stethoscope. “Oh!” he quickly took his stethoscope out of his ears. “I heard that loud and clear.” Danny discussed the tape recorder - which he spelled - that they planned to get her for Christmas, then the doctor explained part of what he’d do, then they talked a bit more as he looked at her eyes, ears, and so on. When he was about done, he tested her verbal skills a bit more. “What did you have for Thanksgiving yesterday, Michelle?”

“Turkey.”

“Anything else?”

“Potatoes.”

“Anything else?”

“Dumb cranberries.”

The doctor couldn't help but chuckle. As with most three-year-olds, she didn't give a long list, she named one thing at a time; but, she knew in her head there was more than one, so her had asked her to name another, he explained. “Someone in your family doesn't like cranberries, huh, Michelle?”

“Uncle Jesse doesn't like them,” she said, shaking her head.

“Though I have to give him credit, he ate them for the girls' sake,” Danny pointed out.

Asked what else interesting happened, Michelle's mind was still on the cranberries. “Throwing cranberries is bad. D.J. put me in my room.”

“She must have been babysitting, huh, Mr. Tanner.”

Danny hedged, trying to decide how to explain; D.J. had done that the day before Thanksgiving when Michelle tried to pretend a cranberry was a ball and threw it for Comet - though Danny only said it was wrong.

Before he could, Michelle blurted, “Coloring on walls is bad, too.”

“That's right, honey, I'm so proud. You haven't done that in a long time, because I've always directed you toward the paper, right?”

Her mind was on something else. “Pulling the doggie's tail is bad, too.”

“Yes, and we've talked about that, too,” Danny said, pushing a little too hard to get Michelle to admit it was because of him that she obeyed.

Michelle shook her head again. “If I do that, you'd have to tell D.J. I was a bad girl.”

“Has D.J. been watching her a lot lately...?” The doctor was unsure what to make of this.

“Well, actually, Doc...“ Danny didn't know what to say, then finally felt forced to admit, “well, D.J.'s the only one who enforces limits.”

“Aren't your brother-in-law and best friend still there, too?”

“Well, yes, but...I guess they just sort of figure I should be the one to handle things, and, I in turn let D.J. You don't think D.J.'s being too tough, do you?” he said, seeking to protect Michelle if she was.

“Oh, no, Mr. Tanner, actually, this kind of talk is quite good for a child of her age. Not that they will often talk about when they were bad, but when a child of three gets her mind focused on something, they’ll list several instances of it. She recalled a time recently, when she threw a cranberry and was punished, right?”

“Well...“ Danny fidgeted a little as the doctor said the physical exam was over. Michelle grabbed her clothes. “I don’t let D.J. call it punishment.”

“Well, it’s isolation from the group,” he said, assuming putting her in her room meant timeout, which it did. “It obviously isn’t too scary for her, she isn’t bothered by it. But, that conscience is forming, little by little. So, when she thought of that, with her mind still on bad behavior, she next went to something else bad - though she has enough conscience to not boast about it, she just shows she knows it’s wrong.” Danny nodded. “And, then she listed something else, and said that you would have to tell D.J.; which shows D.J. is the boss to her.”

“But, Doc, I’m her boss, I’m her Daddy.” He turned, half pleading, to Michelle and said, “Right, honey? You know you have to listen to me, right?”

Michelle nodded and grinned proudly at knowing this. “‘Cause D.J. says.”

“Oh, boy.” Danny sat in a chair, put a hand to his head, and admitted, “Doc, I know this sounds strange, but, I thought I had a wonderfully behaved little girl, and there wouldn’t be any problems because she just knew to obey me. I mean, I’ve talked about right and wrong with her.”

The doctor tried to point out that it wasn’t as bad as he thought. “Suppose instead of D.J. Michelle had said, ‘Mommy.’ It would sound perfectly normal - ‘Mommy sent me to my room,’ ‘You’d have to tell Mommy I was a bad girl.’ It’s not a big problem - yet.”

“Yet - when will it be?” he asked, rising suddenly.

“Well, right now, Michelle is learning with the two I’s, as some call them, ignoring and isolation. It’s just that D.J. is the only one who isolates.”

“And removes her dessert sometimes.”

“That’s fine as a logical consequence. Michelle knows right from wrong - and, it’s as firmly implanted as it should be for that age. If she is naughty, D.J. will enforce a negative consequence. This keeps her from doing lots of bad things.”

Danny smiled confidently. “I knew Michelle was really a good girl.”

His face fell markedly, though, when the doctor said, “However...”

“Back to however,” he said with a sigh.

“Unlike a mother,” the doctor whispered, out of Michelle’s hearing as she tried to dress herself, “D.J. is not always going to be there. As she gets older, there will be more stresses on her. Not only that, but right now, Michelle’s mind is very black and white - she’s come to realize sooner or later she’ll be punished for what she does. Notice how proudly she said she had to listen because D.J. said?” Danny nodded. “The time will come, as she approaches four, that she’ll realize she can get away with things unless someone starts to clamp down; she sees the rules aren’t always set in stone and pushes limits. That’s when, to keep things from getting out of control - and preserve your oldest daughter’s sanity, you will need to start punishing her yourself.”

“Okay. So, I can just start and that’ll be it?”

“Well, no.” Michelle’s pants were now on backwards, and she was putting her head and one arm through a sleeve of her shirt. “See, she’ll still need a long transition period. You could start right now to...”

“Wait. Honey, here, let me help you with that.”

As Danny helped Michelle get dressed correctly, the doctor continued. “You could start right now and you would still need that transition. The longer you wait, the more difficult it will be, the more D.J. will have to back you up. D.J. can help, too, by telling Michelle when you’re going to start, and by doing things exactly the way you will do them.”

“Okay. Phew, that’s a tall order.” He finished getting Michelle’s pants on the right way, then cuddled her as he sat on the examination table and said, “I can’t imagine ever raising my voice to this little princess.”

“Well...” Dr. Landress tried to imagine what could be stopping him from setting limits; he knew he had with the older two. Getting very somber, he said, “It was very hard to lose your wife, wasn’t it?”

“Was it ever.”

“Mr. Tanner, I’m no psychologist. But, I suspect you’ve allowed D.J. to do what she does, so in your mind, your wife’s still here. Doing just what she’d be doing if she was.” Danny, too, was very quiet for a moment as he put Michelle’s shoes and socks on, and finally agreed that he might be. “It’s working out. But, D.J. can’t replace her forever.”

“Maybe you’re right.”

“Do I get a lollipop?” Michelle asked.

The doctor handed her two. “Give one to your dad. He looks like he needs one,” he said with a grin.

“Thanks, Doc. I’ll think about what you said.”

Late that evening, Danny wandered downstairs. He grabbed a photo albums from the wall behind the TV, and stopped. There were loads of family pictures all along that wall, so one could see them sitting on the couch. He shed a tear as he gazed at one of Pam.

Jesse came downstairs, too. Joey came up from the basement for a midnight snack, and walked into the living room. Danny told them what the doctor said about Michelle as they walked into the kitchen.

“Guys, are we really doing as well as I thought?”

“Well, sure. I’m the one who had Steph call Walter to apologize when she called him names and threw bread at him,” Jesse reminded him.

“And, I’ve managed to learn how to discipline, with how I grounded D.J. that one weekend,” Joey said. “Of course, we did have to compromise on which weekend.”

“I know, but they listen to you because they know I’m the real boss. It’s all turned around with Michelle, though.” He looked at the basement, and said, “Comet’s learning, bit by bit, because of me, but Michelle...she only listens to me because D.J. says she has to.”

“Well, now wait a minute,” Jesse pointed out. “When I made Steph call Walter, she didn’t like it, but you know what? She respects me, and even admitted I did the right thing.”

Joey added confidently, “When you start to put Michelle in her room, or take stuff away, it’ll be the same way. She might need D.J. to say something, just like Stephanie complained to you at first when Jesse made her do that. But, she won’t for long.”

“Yeah but guys...Pam used to have everything all together, things were always under control. And, I thought I had things under control here, too. I guess I never really thought about how what D.J. was doing was so much like Pam.”

“Danny, Pam was a wonderful sister. I mean, there’s a part of me that just feels empty even now. Maybe you haven’t totally filled Pam’s shoes because nobody could.”

Danny nodded slowly. “Maybe you’re right.” He started out at the sky. “I’ve just been trying to make everything perfect, and I figured if I let D.J. put her in timeout, that was fine, I was always talking and saying what was right and wrong. I figured she looked at me and thought I was the leader, the one she’d want to hang around with.” Indeed, it was something that would haunt him even a few years later, when he was so bothered Michelle chose to go with Jesse instead of him when they were choosing groups for a museum tour. “How can I make her see that...?”

Suddenly, the baby monitor sounded; Michelle was crying.

Before they could think Danny was jogging upstairs, with the others right behind. “Hope she hasn’t had a nightmare.” He quickly picked her up, and cradled her in his arms. “It’s okay, honey, Daddy’s right here.” After only a moment, she stopped sniffing. “Those nightmares are scary, huh? I’m glad you don’t have many.”

“I love you, Daddy.”

“There, see, you can be a good father,” Joey emphasized.

“Yeah, ‘cause she responds to you right away. I mean, what the doctor said about her learning right and wrong’s important. But, you know what?” Jesse said. “I know I don’t enforce things like I should, either, and yeah, part of that’s ‘cause I don’t wanna get like my dad, always yellin’. But, a lot of it is, I think as long as there’s someone here to do that - and D.J. is a wonderful, loving enforcer of those limits - then my job’s more along the lines of just caring for her and helping her. I mean, your job description’s gonna get bigger in a while. But, that bond between you two will always be there.”

“You’re right,” Danny said as he gently rocked Michelle back to sleep. “I guess maybe it doesn’t matter too much if she only obeys me ‘cause D.J. says to.”

He told Michelle he loved her, and told her about Pam a little bit. He finished by saying, “Your mother was a wonderful lady. I’m doing my best. Sometimes, I let things go too much. But, the guys are right. What matters is, I’ve not only got them to help, D.J., and even Stephanie, can help you. Pam may be gone. But we’re making it through, and we will, no matter what.” He kissed the now sleeping child on the forehead, put her back to bed, and tiptoed out the door behind the guys. He then looked up, pretending to gaze through the ceiling, and whispered, “We’re gonna make it, Pam. They’re right - I haven’t let you down yet.”