

PERSONALITY PROFILE

Adam

Sandler

By Erin Dionne

Just hanging out with my friends, whether it's riding around in the car or alone or whatever—we're always trying to make each other laugh." That's how Adam Sandler gets his ideas for his goofy characters and bizarre scripts. Some of his characters' memorable traits, like Lonely Nicky's speech impediment from his latest film, are taken from his life. "My friend from high school talked like that," Sandler says.

Steamtunnels trekked to Los Angeles for a sneak peek of *Little Nicky*, and had a chance to talk to Sandler, Kevin Nealon (the Gatekeeper), Patricia Arquette (Valerie), Alan Covert (Todd, Sandler's roommate) and Stephen Brill the director. The film premiered on November 10th. It's the story of the dysfunctional family from Hell—literally. Harvey Keitel plays Satan, ruler of all things fire and brimstone. He has three sons: Cassius (Tommy "Tiny" Lister, Jr.), Adrian (Rhys Ifans) and Nicky (Sandler). Satan's been ruling for 10,000 years and it's about time for retirement. However, he feels that none of his sons are ready to take over, and decides to continue his rule for another 10,000 years. With this decision, all hell breaks loose in the family. Cassius and Adrian take off to create their own hell on earth—New York City. When they leave, the gates of Hell freeze over and Satan begins to deteriorate. Nicky must leave and go to New York to bring his brothers back in order to save his father and the world.

Family issues, often disguised as silly situations, populate most of Sandler's work. The recent *Big Daddy*, and films like *Billy Madison* and *The Wedding Singer*, feature characters struggling with their place in the family. Sandler grew up in Manchester, New Hampshire, and draws on some of his own family experiences when writing his characters. "My father's a nice guy, and we were writing this character [Keitel's Satan] as strict, but nice to his kids—he loves his kids," Sandler says. Sandler's own father is fair and strict, but "he's a loving guy and his family came first and I think that's what we're trying to do with Keitel."

Little Nicky is true to the Sandler mold, featuring his trademark sophomoric jokes and gross-out humor. But the film also explores the idea that there's a little bit of good inside of everyone—even if you're the son of the Devil.

DOB: September 9, 1966

College: B.F.A. from New York University

Pets: Meatball, a bulldog given to him by the dog trainer who worked on *Little Nicky*.

Writing/Co-writing Credits: *Billy Madison*, *Happy Gilmore*, *The Wedding Singer* (uncredited script work), *The Waterboy*, *Big Daddy* (screenplay) and *Little Nicky*

Got his start: His brother pushed him to do stand-up at a comedy club in Boston; he was "discovered" by SNL star Dennis Miller while working the clubs in L.A.

Fun fact: Had a recurring role on "The Cosby Show" as one of Theo Huxtable's friends.

SNL history: Was a writer first, then worked his way on to the show as characters such as Opera Man and Canteen Boy.

Down to earth: "I hang out with all the same people I always have. I do my movies, hang out with my girlfriend, and work all the time. I have no time to be psychotic. My friends, my movies, my family are most important to me."

Favorite flick: "*Billy Madison*. It's the first one I got to do, and it's my mother's favorite, too. I don't watch my own movies very often, and I don't like seeing myself being 'nice' on screen." •



Adrian Covert/In Focus

For the full interview, go to
www.steamtunnels.net
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"Adam Sandler."