

The Aardsma Weekly

December 31, 2006

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Christmas

Christmas celebrations over here began on Christmas Eve. In the afternoon, David and Kathryn came over to visit and bring presents. They also brought a big fruit basket and a large ham. We had a lovely time talking with them and hearing all the news. Laura and Phillip came over as well, bringing a basket full of cookies, candies, and Christmas treats. It was fun seeing how big Kelsey was getting, and nice to catch up with Laura and Phillip.

After a supper consisting of anything we could find, we gathered in the living room. Matthew and Freckles shared the couch, while I bundled the cat into a blanket and snuggled with her in the rocking chair. Caleb was clinging to his chosen present, and bouncing around the room. Timmy was all smiles, and someone was always saying something to make us laugh.

Dad got out the Bible, and read Luke 2, to help us keep in mind the reason we celebrate Christmas in the first place. And then I made an announcement: this year we were going to start at the top and work down to the bottom. In other words, Mom, being the oldest, would open a present first, and then we'd each take a turn down the line. Caleb protested, but I won in the end.

We all opened a gift, and then helped Timmy and Caleb build their model airplanes.

Mom and Dad went to bed early, after we had all reminded them to fill the stockings, and Timmy and Caleb were hustled off to bed soon after. I joined Beka and Matthew in Beka's room, and watched Matthew play a hunting game until well past my bedtime. Then I dropped off to sleep, promising myself I would wake up early the next morning.

You see, its always been my tradition to get up really early on Christmas morning to open my stocking before the rest of the family woke up. This year that wasn't hard, as Timmy and Caleb weren't allowed up before 7:00, and Beka and Matthew always sleep in on the holidays.

I woke up at 6:30, and went to see what 'Santa' (a.k.a Mom and Dad.) had left for me. And there were the green and red stockings. Next to my stocking was a square, hard package that said: "To Beka and Rachel" on it, but I left it there until Beka got up.

The cat watched with interest as I opened my stocking, to reveal an orange, a small container of yogurt, a little can of grape juice, a granola bar, a toothbrush, and a handful of chocolate coins. This was our Christmas breakfast. I ate my breakfast, and then decided to perform my M.O.M. (Mission Of Mercy) for the year, so I cleaned up the house and kitchens so Mom wouldn't have to do them when she got up. The house was trashed because of the guests the day before, but it didn't take me long to get everything presentable. By this time, the boys were up and they opened their stockings with delight. They discovered Lego cars and enjoyed an hour of reading and re-reading directions, and building and re-building the cars.

After Beka had gotten up and we discovered a candle-making kit, and Matthew got up and found a yo-yo, we all waited for Mom and Dad to appear. They did this shortly, and after they had breakfast, we all gathered around the tree in the living room.

Then came two hours of laughter and presents. Everything from a sifter to a pair of earrings appeared from the various packages, and when it was all over, we all began to help Mom make lunch. By 12:00 everything was on the table, we were absolutely starved, and everything was perfect. Mom took some pictures of us all sitting around the table. Timmy mischievously opened his mouth wide just as she clicked the button.

After the delicious meal, we were all too entirely stuffed to do anything but collapse onto chairs. Mom started on the dishes, refusing all offers of help. Beka started building a mystery puzzle (the kind where you read a mystery, build the puzzle, and look for the clue in the completed puzzle).

We spent that afternoon building the puzzle (it turned out Mr. Green was the terrible villain), talking on the phone to Jennifer and her kids, and eating pumpkin pie with whipped cream. Matthew, Mom, and Timmy went on a walk, so Dad and I decided to watch 'The Nutcracker' video.

It was suppertime by the time the ballet was over, and Mom made supper. We enjoyed Christmas leftovers, and then everyone did whatever they wanted until 8:30, when Mom called us all into her bedroom and we read a book about R. G. La Touneau (I think that's a French name). When she finished, we were all half asleep not because the book was boring, but because it had been a long day and we were all exhausted. I went to bed as soon as she finished reading. The cat curled up in bed beside me, something she rarely does, and I fell asleep with the realization that Christmas was only 365 days away.

The Weekly Bible Verse

Psalm 91:1-2: You who live in the shelter of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty, will say to the Lord, "My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust."



Bits and Pieces



This week has flown by. It was the get-back-to-real-life-after-Christmas week. After sleeping in all during the holidays, I had to get back to getting up at 6:00. I didn't succeed to well, so at the moment, I'm making a feeble attempt at 7:00.

We got rid of the tree, took down the decorations, and are devoting ourselves to finishing off the Christmas treats.

And now I can stop writing about Christmas and move on. I'm glad... I was beginning to run out of the good Christmas clip-art.



A Word About The Weather



Well, its been everything from rainy, ugly winter, to balmy, fresh spring. One day we talk about swimming in the puddles, and the next day we're all out to soak up the sun. So I can't say anything about the weather, except that this is entirely typical for Illinois. (Out here, we've got a saying that goes: If you don't like the weather, stick around until tomorrow!)



A Word of Wisdom



A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up the batter. (Proverbs 15:1 variation by Matthew, about seven years ago!)