An Unforgettable Thanksgiving Eve

November 24, 2011 By Shawn Decker

Sitting on my couch, watching Jake manage the after effects of a house party gone wrong thanks to some channel's shared love of my favorite movie, *Sixteen Candles*. Today is Thanksgiving Day, and I'm thankful that my own "house party" couldn't have gone off better last night.

Did I plan a pre-turkey-tofu-whatever-you-eat Day blow out? Not hardly. But Gwenn and I did invite my family (my bro, sister-in-law, two nieces, mom, dad, best friend and goddaughter) over for a Thanksgiving Eve dinner. Well, my brother suggested we host- I didn't offer because our place is so small, and his is so big. And also, over the years, I've gotten lazy with the hosting side of things in general. I know my brother works hard, has a family, and his time gets a bit more crunched up than mine. So the hour drive to his place and back to mine isn't a problem for Gwenn and I, since we're not wrangling two kids and suffering the after effects of a graveyard shift.

So when my brother asked if we'd want to host a Thanksgiving Eve dinner, I stuttered, "Uh... sure!"

Our kitchen table wasn't big enough for 10, though the make-shift flip top is perfect for an 8-person game of cards. A folding table in the shed out back helped, and a table cloth made it fit right in. Everyone brought an item of food, so really, Gwenn and I got off very easy on the preparation side of things. With two 3-year olds coming, I made a little Thanksgiving Day table out of two pillows, several stuffed animals and paper plates and cups, figuring that if they finished up dinner early or it just took a long time to eat after arrival that they'd have something to do.

Aside from the youngins- both of whom I adore- I was also excited to see my parents. I haven't written about any of this since it's their lives, but last year they got divorced. I joked with Gwenn many times since then about writing a book about how to survive a divorce in your mid-thirties... as the child of divorced parents. Anyway, I love them both, and never told either that I think they just work better together: Dad's less of a sad sack and Mom is less aggressive. I can write that because my parents are hanging out again. I respect and love them both, and whatever decision they make from here is theirs. But, I won't lie, I love seeing them together, most importantly because I love seeing them happy.

The night? Well, it went perfectly. It's a Thanksgiving experience I'll never forget- the kids bonded instantly, I joked around with my older niece, who is about to turn 13 and is just a witty, fun person to be around... we all sat at the two tables, crunched up in our small kitchen, of which I was

thankful. I ended up sitting in the best seat by chance, with the ability to swivel between both tables. Everyone just had a wonderful night, and it was enhanced because of the change in scenery... I was so happy, I didn’t even mind when I busted out during the card game later in the evening.

Probably because in life, I’ve definitely hit the jackpot.

Thanks for reading,
Shawn

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