

I'm baaaack!

Written by L. J. Smith

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Just wanted to let everyone know that I am back from my holiday vacation in southern California. Victor was an absolute angel on both the trip down and the trip up. He was rather depressed over the holidays, and I think he believed that he was once again being moved to a new house. When, after a seven-hour drive he began to recognize landmarks he started to dance in the car and once we got inside the house he tore up and down the stairs like a crazy dog. I had to take him into the backyard and throw his ball for him to help him get rid of his excess energy. He's usually so reserved that he seems all grown up, but he made it clear that he was only a puppy when he saw his old licked-to-death bunny and his bed. He now knows too many words to count and will understand and obey "Where's your bone," "Get your bunny," and "Where's Hedgy?" (One of his new favorite toys is a hedgehog which makes a disturbing noise when squeezed. He got lots of treats down in Villa Park, including many oranges which fell from trees and which he eventually threw up. He also learned how to thrash his head like a shark while pulling on a pull-toy . . . so hard that on my second to last day there, he managed to rip off my fingernail. Fortunately, the bit that came off was fake, and it will be a funny story to tell my manicurist.

I had the usual great time with my father, sister, brother-in-law, niece and nephew, and got some beautiful decorations for the new house (NO, I am still not moved in and I don't want to hear anything more about it.) I watched lots of lively football games and extremely conservative political rhetoric with my father, worked with my sister on a manuscript she has written about her experiences with melanoma, and caught occasional glimpses of my niece and nephew. I was amazed at how warm and peaceful it was at my mother's grave site--usually violent winds blow over Christmas decorations, but this year it was remarkably still and sweet.

I hope that my readers each had a wonderful holiday, no matter what they were celebrating, and I wish them all a great 2012!

One more thing that I wanted to mention is that starting with today, January 4, 2012, all contests will be held exclusively in the Forum. Members who have been contributing, you are about to get your reward. Your posting is appreciated, and I hope you like the first contest!

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