

Chinese New Year, electricity problems, sewing bunnies, the soup of the day, and a recent brush with fame (7 Quick Takes)

~1~

My favorite holiday is next week—Chinese New Year! We kicked it off with lunch with friends I met through the world of adoption blogging eight years ago. Every year we meet for lunch at a Chinese restaurant halfway between our houses, eat, talk, eat more, talk more, build paper airplanes, and then stand outside in the cold before we realize how frigid it is and part ways until the next time.

When we started, we each had one son from China. Now we each have two sons from China, and our friends have their surprise baby boy who was born last summer.

This year will be the Year of the Dog, and we are excited to celebrate it with some food and fun. I want to share some simple ideas in a post in the next few days.

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Our lights started flickering during the freezing rain/ice/precipitation-that-closed-school the other day. We didn't think much of it, especially when the power didn't go out. The next day, though, when the lights were still flickering, we called the electric company.

A very pleasant man came, checked things out, shut all the power off, and then turned it on again. When he did, some of the lights didn't come back on. Apparently he broke something.

"Sorry I left you with a bigger problem," he said, smiling as he left. He told us to call an electrician to fix the flickering.

So...thanks?

I hope this isn't one of those years where my Lenten sacrifice finds me instead of the reverse. I have a whole plan for Lent! But we'll see what life has in store.

~3~



We've had lots of indoor play this week, especially with two days of school canceled for weather. It's almost a shock on those days when school starts on time.

The stuffed animals have been playing so hard that one of the bunnies sustained an injury and I had to stitch him up. I can't actually sew, but I know just enough to patch up a stuffed animal or add a button or make a pillowcase. And...that's about it.

But all that really matters in the eyes of my children is being able to fix the stuffed friends.

~4~

Last weekend I offered to go get donuts for breakfast.

"I don't really want a donut," one of the boys said. "What's their soup of the day?"

That, my friends, is the cross I bear.

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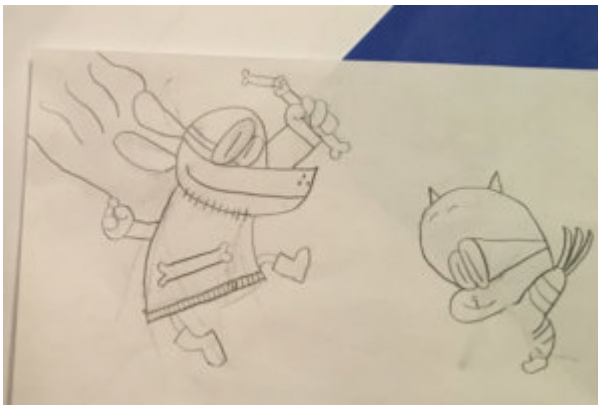
Speaking of crosses, one of my good friends came across some Catholic items and books while clearing out her late mother-in-law's house, and she brought them to me this week. There are some lovely items, and we all enjoyed looking through them.



As we did, Daniel would say, "I dibs this one!" I had never heard dibs as a verb, but language is an evolving thing. So I dibs the cross that opens up and has candles and holy water inside. Actually, I dibs it for the whole family.

We are looking forward to looking through the books together. Maybe they will be part of our Lenten journey.

~6~



Leo found the new *Dogman* book at the school library and brought it home to read. It's his favorite so far! I love *Dogman*, but I'm also a huge fan of the author, who has ADHD and dyslexia and speaks about overcoming those challenges. I find him so inspiring, and I love his work. I mean...a dog and a man are both close to death and the doctors combine them into one being, a dogman! What's not to love?

After reading the book, Leo was doing some sketching, and I posted his drawings to Instagram and tagged Dav Pilkey. And he responded with "EXCELLENT ARTWORK!!!" It was a highlight of our week.

~7~

Last weekend we got together with some of my mother's family. We had a wonderful time catching up with cousins and aunts and uncles—and the boys had a chance to play with a bulldog (Millie) and pug (Clancy).



Their favorite dogs, though, might have been the pigs in a blanket that my cousin Kelly and her boyfriend brought. I'm pretty sure they're all Daniel ate.

But at least he didn't ask the hosts about their soup of the day.

Read more quick takes at Kelly's blog, This Ain't the Lyceum, and have a great weekend!