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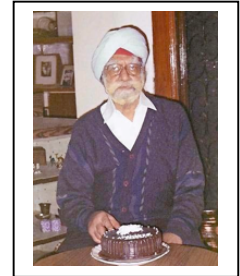
Marching (Blazing) Through the Middle Ages

It is here, the end of yet another year, and time to do book-keeping again. After a year-and-a-half of living together in Phoenix (Mesa), AZ, the kids seem to be settling down. Susmita has been trained to state that she “lives in Phoenix with her Mama, Priyanka and Daddy . . .” And Priyanka now claims that hers is “the best room in the world,” (albeit much smaller than the one in Cincinnati).

Priyanka is now in 4th grade and is evolving into a smart young lady. In academics and other non-sports activities, she has grasped the idea of “putting in effort.” She is taking her piano lessons in a stride, having become self-motivated. In school she is shooting for straight As. Based on some contractual agreement made at a moment of weakness, we receive an “Invoice” from her every quarter to pay a certain amount for her performance (i.e., half a dollar earned for every “A” attained).

Susmita is like a smart (she has her adoptive parents genes) frisky pup, who tends to emulate her big sister as much as possible, yet has a strong personality of her own. She will be four in March 2007, attends pre-school, and has learned her “A, B, C s” and counting, as well as the body parts. Her body has decided to keep growing tall, but not increase in weight—her pants are getting shorter but keep sliding off since she is so thin. Her favorite activity is a weekly gym class, where she can burn calories and lose a lot of pent-up energy. (It is never really pent up. It always bursts out.)

AnnElise and the kids spent 2 months in Germany in their private resort with “Oma”, to refresh the connection with their maternal roots, as well as escape the Arizona heat (nominal temperatures 110 °F [43 °C]). A lot of soccer was going on at that time, and also bear Bruno was roaming the Alpine meadows before being hunted down. Inder made two trips to India, on short notice, to spend time with his father. It still makes us very sad to think that Daddyji passed on in August.



AnnElise is continuing to keep the household together and is juggling a few assignments to stay in touch with her profession (journalism and photography). She did, indeed, finish her novel (in German) and is looking for a publisher. All this while, Inder is missing from home and is either stuck in the office/lab, or traveling to one of the collaborating sites. Inder has been involved in helping develop ultrasound-based cosmetic devices that are currently being tested on patients in the clinic (and might hit the market during the coming year).

The Makins recently took a vacation on the beach, Puerto Peñasco, Mexico, together with Oma. They were blown right back home to Mesa when a nasty wind swept in across the ocean. Oma really got to enjoy the jingle bells and starry lights around town, baked a ton of cookies, and is still amazed at “What cactus world, what cactus world . . .” Top this with a green-colored cast on Priyanka’s arm that just got broken in time to avoid the piano recital—and it was the season to be jolly.

This was the year of coming of age, and the realization that we are definitely in the “middle” phase of our lives—especially when we begin to consider someone in their 30s as being “young.”

This year has swept us by, yet we hope that the coming one will bring us and All of You the very best in your lives. Happy New Year!

AnnElise, Priyanka, Susmita, and Inder

