

Giving Thanks

by Brit

Philippians 1:3

“I thank my God every time I remember you.”

It had been Rosie’s idea—us standing around the dining room table “counting our blessings.” That wasn’t too bad, except she’d insisted we hold each other’s hands. At least I had Rosie on my left and Cal on my right between me and Hutch. I don’t care how good of friends we are, holding my partner’s hand would have been just a little weird, thank you, even if we were saying a prayer.

Apparently, this little ritual was something Rosie did last week in her Sunday School class. All the kids stood in a circle holding hands and praying, giving thanks to God and counting the blessings in their lives. When Rosie made the big announcement that we were going to do this before diving into the spread Edith had laid out, Cal pulled his sister aside and tried to explain that this might not be “cool” for me since I was Jewish. I interceded by scooping up Rosie and carrying her to the dinner table, assuring them both that joining in a Thanksgiving prayer would be “very cool.”

Rosie spoke first, and to hear her sweet little voice thank God for her family brought a lump to my throat. She then thanked the Lord for me and Hutch, then for each of her friends, listing them one at a time. Then her teachers. When she started in on her toys, her mother interrupted, kind of “wrapping it up” on Rosie’s behalf before giving thanks for her own blessings. I was surprised when the captain started in, his voice rough, and he had to stop and clear it more than once. We were supposed to have our eyes closed, but I took a quick look and could tell by the wrinkle in his brow that the big guy was a bit emotional. He thanked God for Edith and each of the kids, and then said how thankful he was for keeping them safe when he wasn’t around to take care of them.

It came around to my partner, and Hutch also counted the Dobeys and his own family among his blessings. The way he reeled off his part of the prayer, I could tell he’d done this before, probably at the huge Hutchinson get-togethers back in Minnesota over the years. He surprised me when he fell into a kind of awkward silence and stammered a little before finally finishing, giving thanks for keeping the two of us safe out there on the streets.

Cal grouched that everyone else had pretty much said what he was going to say, but did come up with a few other things among his blessings, including the chance to start in next week’s basketball game.

I knew it was my turn now, but I was at a loss where to start. Not because I couldn’t think of anything, but because there was so much I was thankful for. When I hesitated,

Rosie tugged at my sleeve and reminded me in a loud whisper that it was my turn. I smiled and thanked her then cleared my throat, even though I couldn't possibly say everything that was rolling around in my heart.

“God, I know I have a lot to be thankful for, and I know I'm going to forget something. But I just want to say thank You for the captain and his family. I'm sure he's never imagined that I'd count him as a blessing.” This brought a chuckle from the group.

“Thank You for Edith, Cal and Rosie, and for them making Hutch and me part of their family. Thank You for Hutch. His friendship means more to me...well...more than anything I can even think of to say.

“Thanks for Ma and Nick, even if he is a pain in the—” Dobby clearing his throat interrupted *that* thought. “Thanks for him, anyways. Thanks for...”

My mind raced and it all came back to Hutch. I was so grateful for him—my partner, my brother, my best friend—for all he'd done for me over the years, everything he's meant to me. The blessings were too many to count. “Thanks for Hutch, God. I...well...*thank You.*”

An “Amen” was said around the table, and Rosie tugged at my sleeve again. “Uncle Dave, you made a mistake. You counted Uncle Hutch twice.”

I glanced over at my partner and saw that funny look he sometimes gets—and tries to hide. I looked back down at Rosie and smiled. “It wasn't a mistake.”

~Brit

Happy Thanksgiving, my friends—I am so blessed.

11/24/2003