Meet the Smith Family

By Nina Dos Rios

The Smith family lives in the United States of America. They are a close-knit, fun-loving family who enjoy spending time together. They also enjoy adventures.

Sometimes, however, an adventure begins at home.

It was Saturday morning at the Smith house.

Dad was sitting at the kitchen table, reading a book. Dad is Pastor Smith at the local Baptist Church. Mom says he is "tall, dark, and handsome." He is thirty-seven years old. He is studious and hard working. When someone is in need, he is always ready to help generously.

Dad likes to laugh, too. He just doesn't always see the funny side as quickly as Mom does.

Mom was making breakfast. She is two years younger than Dad. She is tall, but not as tall as he is. She works part time as a nurse in a nursing home. She is sensible, calm, and generous.

Mom also has a quick wit and a good sense of humor.

Their oldest child is Jackson. Jackson is twelve years old, athletic, and caring. He grew tall this summer. Now that he is going into the seventh grade, he is almost as tall as Mom. He watches out for his younger brothers and sisters.

Jackson is usually patient.

Usually.

The twins, Ethan and Emily, are eight years old. They are both four feet eight inches tall— exactly the same height. They both have sparkling blue eyes and blonde hair like their mother.

Ethan is fun loving and mischievous. He usually leads the twins' pranks. He has a quick sense of humor and is very good at coming up with ideas with Emily.

Emily is fun loving, too. She and Ethan often have the same ideas at almost the same time. But Emily is not usually in charge when the twins get into mischief.

Still, when trouble comes, Emily usually has second thoughts.

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Their little sister, Sophia, is six years old, small, and dark like Dad. She likes to wear her long, straight hair tied in pretty ribbons.

Sophia is serious and calm. She is inquisitive and studious.

The Smith children were very different from one another.

But they all love one thing: Adventure.

And on this Saturday morning, the adventure began with a dog.

"Skip!"

Jackson was standing in the hallway.

"Skip! Where are you?"

No one answered.

Ethan came running into the hallway.

"What's happening?"

"Skip is missing."

Emily followed him. She asked Jackson. "Where did you last see him?"

"I don't know," Jackson said.

Ethan grinned. "Maybe he's hiding."

Emily looked at him. "Maybe."

Sophia appeared behind them. "Dogs don't usually disappear," she said seriously.

Ethan smiled. "Skip does."

Jackson sighed. "Come on. Help me find him."

The children spread out. Jackson went into the bedroom.

He looked beside the bed. "Skip?"

Nothing.

Then he heard a noise. Scratch, scratch, scratch!

Jackson looked under the bed. "There you are!"

But Skip was already moving. The mischievous dog jumped on top of the bed.

"Skip!" Jackson reached for him. Skip jumped down and ran out of the room.

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Ethan laughed. "He fooled you!"

"Ethan!" Jackson called. "Help me catch him!"

Ethan and Emily ran after Skip.

Sophia followed at a much slower pace.

Skip raced down the hall and into the living room.

"Where did he go?" Emily asked.

Ethan looked around. Then he pointed. "There!"

Skip was sitting quietly between the chairs.

Emily giggled. "He thinks we can't see him."

Ethan whispered, "Let's sneak up on him."

Emily started toward the chairs. Then she stopped. "Maybe we shouldn't."

Ethan looked at her. "Why not?"

"Because Jackson is going to blame us if Skip gets away again."

Ethan thought about that. "Good point."

Then Skip jumped up and ran. "SKIP!"

The twins chased him down the hall.

Mom looked up from the kitchen. "What is going on?"

"Skip!" Jackson shouted.

Mom smiled. "I see."

Dad came out of the kitchen, still holding his book. "What's happening?"

"Skip is running away," Jackson said.

Dad watched the dog disappear around the corner. "Perhaps he wants some exercise."

Mom laughed.

Dad looked at her. "What?"

"Nothing," Mom said, still smiling.

Dad looked puzzled.

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Sophia followed the sound of Skip's collar. She quietly walked toward Skip's crate.

"Everyone," she said.

Nobody heard her.

"Everyone!"

The others stopped running. Sophia pointed at the crate. "Look."

Jackson walked over. He looked inside.

There was Skip. He was sitting quietly in his crate, looking as innocent as possible.

Jackson put his hands on his hips. "Skip, you are a very naughty dog."

Skip wagged his tail.

Ethan laughed. Emily laughed, too. Even Sophia smiled.

Mom laughed.

Dad looked at everyone. "What?"

Mom shook her head. "Nothing, dear."

Dad looked at Skip. Then he looked at the children. "I think we have a very clever dog."

Sophia nodded. "Very clever."

Jackson sighed. "And very naughty."

Skip wagged his tail. He didn't look sorry at all.

And that was how the Smith family's Saturday morning began— with a mischievous dog, six family members, a lot of running, and the first of many adventures.

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