

It's that time of year again. As my faithful read this I should be back home, snuggled in bed with the furry one and recovering from a fly-by-night trip to the Columbus airport to drop my better half off for his flight to the Baltimore/Washington Airport. He will then be whisked away by his sister and family to Virginia Beach. Yes, it's time for the fabulous Lotus to dance her heart out, bring home trophies and just generally amaze her uncle. Not that it's that hard. We think she's pretty amazing just by being here.

The trip has become sort of routine for him. He knows what to pack and has already perused web sites to find out what there is to do and see in Virginia Beach. I'm assuming this trip will not include a ride on The Slingshot on the boardwalk. It was a really great youtube video, though.

I, on the other, have been plotting for weeks. I have squirrelled away all my favorite foods he doesn't like and we don't eat very often and I have a stack of paperbacks I'm making it my mission to read.

Visits to friends and perhaps some swimming are on list, too.

I enjoy going places and taking trips but I also like to just stay home, do what I want and not have a schedule. I think it's probably because my professional life is one big deadline. It's nice to just cruise along and take the day as comes, making plans on a whim, or not. Sometimes no plan is the best plan.

I'm sure I will receive daily (sometimes multiple) updates on how Lotus is doing and I'll watch most of her performances online. It really is the next best thing to being there without having to watch a hundred other kids I don't know dance before my Lotus Leaf (my pet name for her) takes the stage.

There will also be the quiet evening calls from my husband filling me on his day and where they went to eat and the stores he shopped in, etc.

Both types of calls are welcome and equally important to me.

We also send a lot of texts. He's not supposed to have his phone on in the dance hall but we've always been a bit naughty when it comes to rules. A quick text to let me know she's getting ready to go on stage is very much appreciated. There have been times I will plan my whole day around a Lotus performance.

This year, I'm ready. I'll have the tissues on hand and phone by my side. I don't know what it is, but every time I see her dance, especially a slow number or ballet, I cry like a little girl.

I guess I'm just a proud aunt. Is there any other kind?