



The Rafiki Foundation, Inc.

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"If you have raced with men on foot and they have worn you out, how can you compete with horses? If you stumble in safe country, how will you manage in the thickets of Jordan?"
(Jeremiah 12:5 NIV).

Dear Family and Friends,

How do I even begin to tell you what God is doing, not just with me, but with the Rafiki Village Kenya? Woo-hoo, what an adventure!

Let me start by picking up where I left off with my last newsletter.

The month before I was to return to the States for furlough was busy, busy, busy. I did my best to do what I could before I left so my absence wouldn't be a burden to those covering. I was going to fly back to the United States with Melissa Byrd and her fourteen-month-old son, Glen. We lifted Glen up in prayer as I would be playing nanny since Melissa was seven months pregnant at the time and her husband would be coming to the U.S. at a later time. But all our plans were overthrown when we walked in the Nairobi Airport and the computer systems were down. This only began the worst flying experience I have had yet. If I went into detail about all the things that went wrong, I'd take the entire newsletter and then have no space to list the blessings. At one point in the many long lines we stood in, Melissa and I started listing all the ways it could have been worse. Count your many blessings, name them one by one. And Glen was an angel throughout the whole ordeal. We made it to the States with all luggage in tow and practically kissed the workers at the Chicago Airport.

Putting the arrival fiasco trip behind me, I had a great furlough. I tried to see as many of you as I could and it was great to see you in person. I was also able to meet many new people at the coffees and presentations. I enjoyed sharing about what God is accomplishing through Rafiki and showing pictures of the children and Villages in Malawi and Kenya. The ROS Enrichment, held for the last time in Texas, did just as the name implies. It was a fun week of meeting other Rafiki personnel, learning from great speakers, and receiving training to help us out in the field.

Yet, with the eating at my favorite restaurants and catching up on relationships, I missed the children very much while I was away.

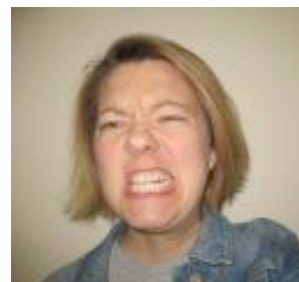
It wasn't long after I arrived in the U.S. before I received an e-mail from a MiniMissionary who was helping with the four-year-old class in my absence. She said an airplane flew over the Village one day as they were outside for recess. The students all stopped, pointed up at the plane and started to yell and wave, "Miss Ellington! Miss Ellington!"

Aw, I think they might have missed me, too. Maybe.



MY EXUBERANT FOUR-YEAR-OLD CLASS

The flights back were gratefully uneventful as I landed with all my luggage. If you've flown recently, you know that is something for which you must stop and thank God.



I have been back a full month and some days, it seems I am unable to do anything right or on time. As I try to fill the large shoes of the ChildCare Director while she is on sabbatical, I feel like I am running around like a chicken and not getting much accomplished—except stronger chicken legs.

Recently, the Village had no power due to several problems with our transformer. And then, because we had no continuous power and were running on generator periodically, the water from our ground tanks wasn't being pumped to our water tower, and

soon we were out of water. My computer caught one of those sneaky little viruses and nothing was working like it should.

That very same week, we were studying the ten plaques of Egypt. Talk about how the circumstances in the Bible can really come to life and drive a lesson home. We were getting a first-hand lesson on the weariness of not having water or light and trying very hard not to complain.

I was about to succumb to hiding under the covers and refusing to come out until the discouraging storm passed, when Isaiah 12:5 was revealed to me during my morning devotion time. This verse is not the first one that comes to mind when you seek encouragement in God's Word. It was an unexpected verse for me. How like God to whisper to you when you are waiting for a roar.

Yet, it has given me support that when there are hard, frustrating circumstances, I can remember I am in training. "For what?," one could ask. I'm not sure I want to know if this is the easy part. But I know that God is stretching and challenging me. When I walk or jog around the Village trail, I am constantly trying to become stronger and healthier. All I can do is keep training with my focus on Him. The encouragement doesn't come because I am getting everything scratched off my list but because He is with me all the time. Whether in a frustrating journey, or handling problems, or in the dark without water, or even without convenient electronics, He is encouraging me—He's right there with me and to keep me going.

In addition, He sends other people to encourage me. I think the most hugs I have ever received in one day was on the second day I got back. I hugged almost all seventy-nine children, plus the nine Rafiki Mothers, and the other staff members in the kitchen and laundry.



And on an especially trying day, I came upon a group of children and received an unsolicited hug from a little girl who usually steers clear of me. Just when God knew I needed it.

SPECIAL HUGS FROM A LITTLE FRIEND

Praises

- Safety to and from the United States (luggage, too!)
- A great time on furlough
- God protects my time so I am still able to co-teach in the PreSchool four-year-old class.
- God gives me discernment, wisdom, and guidance in all the roles I am filling

Prayer

- Continued discernment, wisdom, and guidance in ChildCare Director, Assistant ChildCare Director, and Preschool Teacher roles
- Continued safety and protection for all ROS in Nairobi, Kenya
- Glorify God in everything I do

Until next time,

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P.S. From the Home Office: Julie is at 12% of the total funding needed for her next term which begins in January 2008.