

Rejoice with me – Lost and Found (subtitle: Living with Termites)

And when she has found it, she calls her friends and her neighbors together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost. Luke_15:9

We have moved into House 6 as of Saturday! (Sigh of relief.) We are still unpacking, but everything is under one roof except for the last boxes of sciencey things from the admin building (one of which is the suitcase of bones I need tomorrow morning to begin our study of the skeleton).

We have both been noticing some mild gingivitis (apologies to Dr Moe) after manually toothbrushing for 3 weeks. After multiple visits to House 4 to pick up this and that, the 220 volt electric toothbrush we had left here for our return could not be found. We had left it plugged in to a power strip along with our two rechargeable floor fans to keep the batteries alive, but things had been moved multiple times as there was work done in the room and a new ceiling put in, and the fans had been loaned (transferred) to the new House 4 tenants, so I had no idea what had been done with the toothbrush and did not have high hopes. Eventually I found the charger in a bucket with cleaning supplies, but still no toothbrush. HOWEVER, after moving, though not immediately after, as I was putting Dave's rubber boots in the back entry, I noticed a couple of what looked like white plastic toiletry bottles that didn't need to be put away with the boots. One was an almost empty bottle of sunscreen (how did it end up there?). BUT LOOK! The other isn't a bottle at all. IT'S THE TOOTHBRUSH!! Our teeth and gums are already the happier for it.

There are a lot of good qualities about House 6, and I will try to focus on those rather than any perceived shortcomings, but for one. I somehow have to mention the termites (bug-a-bugs in local parlance). The house is much larger – not necessarily an advantage for the two of us, as far as it is from one end to the other, but pleasantly expansive. The master bedroom feels more like sleeping in a gymnasium or maybe a corporate boardroom, or at least the CEO's office, as there's a massive desk in the middle of the room that fits four chairs. We're still working on getting a mosquito net mounted. Who knows; it could happen even this week. The master bathroom, and the previous half-bath that backs up to it and opens into the hall, have both been remodeled so that they both are full bathrooms with very nice, newly-tiled walk-in showers, done by narrowing the master bath (noticeably more than the other) and removing the tub/shower unit. Ours is cozy but works. Well, except for the toilet, which does have its issues and wasn't part of what changed in the remodel. There are bright and wonderful new LED lights throughout and new ceilings that don't even have holes or missing tiles for bugs and other varmints to enter from the open attic. And, joy of joys, working ceiling fans in the living room and master bedroom. With power all day now except on Sundays, that's very nice, and we splurged on a new rechargeable floor fan for the overnight hours but haven't needed it yet. We get much more exercise since it is twice as far from the chapel and classrooms as House 4 (maybe 3 or 4 times more than House 1 – too spoiled there), and there really aren't particularly more creeks to ford after a rain – like it's doing right now, Liberia-style. I literally tend to look and see if it is raining actual cats and dogs. At home the noise would certainly indicate at least large and heavy hailstones coming down hard, morphing into the sound of a flashflood coming through the house as the ground gets wetter. Amazing thunder cracks, too. Speaking of thunder, a week ago Friday, as I was standing on the path behind House 1 with Jonathan (the campus transportation officer and excellent rough-road driver) we both just about jumped out of our skin with the loud crack-bang of a very close strike. Haven't heard that kind of thunder except once when hiking over a pass in the High Sierras at 10,000 feet during a thunder and hailstorm with lightening flashing off the peaks around us

and even a spark ascending from my big brother's hat. Well, except for the one that hit on campus (I did mention that was right outside House 6, didn't I), but we were inside, not out in the open, when that one hit.

Okay, so now we get to the bug-a-bugs. Previous tenants who are considering whether or not to return again asked if there are still termites living in the kitchen cabinets. I had been told that the cabinets had been replaced with concrete. I wasn't sure what that would be like and was dubious as to whether I would be pleasantly inclined towards whatever those might be. But no, in fact the old cabinets remain. Along with their long term tenants. It is actually the bug-a-bugs that live in House 6, and we are just sharing the space with them. I had our helper sprinkle all the shelves and drawers with boric acid powder while we were waiting to move in with the hope that it would help as much as it does with cockroaches, and she said it made a huge difference. I'm glad, because we can still expect that, however often we might choose to clean it away, the shelves and drawers and their contents and the counters under the cupboards will be covered with a dusting of sawdust from the bug-a-bug activity. And they are, of course, the reason that more than half the drawers don't work, because the framework is sufficiently eaten away that there are no supports for them to slide on.

There's a large full bathroom with a big walk-in shower that opens off the kitchen entry, unlike House 4, which had a tiny hovel of a bathroom for the house help that opened only to the outside of the house. That means we don't have a walk-in pantry in the entry, but there's a pantry cabinet in the kitchen that will suffice and a long counter on that far wall that works for lining up our six-packs of water bottles. And, that means we don't have to walk all the way to the far end of the house with its two sets of stairsteps down the hallway to use the bathroom.

We are having a great time. School is moving FAST. First midwifery workshop this Saturday at a new village not visited before. Following weekend, WAIT, do I actually have one weekend off? And the following mid-week through the end of the week heading across the country to the CC Women's Conference and back.

We were blessed to attend CC Yekepa on Sunday (forgetting, of course, to grab my phone/camera to take a photo or two – hope I remember next time). Crammed into Ma Rebecca's house were two dozen worshippers (half of them kids) with young Richmond doing an impressive job of leading the church and preaching the Word. We are so impressed with him and excited to be able to encourage and support him.

Pray for us, as we do for you.

In His Hand,
The Foxes

Art gallery below

Found online, titled "Serbian Art"



I beg to differ; this definitely looks like Liberian art; multiple examples throughout House 6. Just a few below:

