



RAFIKI FOUNDATION MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER

October 2019 – Shakiyla Solomon

Dear friends and family,

I find myself in a state of reflection, peace, and joy as I begin writing newsletters to send to you all. As commencement begins for the last term of the year, I'm able to sit back and thank God for an abundance of provision, discernment, peace, but more than anything, support from you. November 28th marks one year since I left my home in Louisiana and began the task of building a home here in Jos. Thank you for the encouragement. I get sporadic letters in the mail that push me to stay the course when things get hard and remain in a state of gratefulness. Many of you have sent messages through my mommy or the boys and those, too, mean more than you'll ever know.

These past few months have been filled with many different things, and I hope I can give you a glimpse of the highs as well as the lows.



The van is packed and they are ready to head off to technical college

Last week, four of our boys, alongside two of their older brothers, left for Bukuru Technical College. There, they will learn a vocational trade in order to further their careers in the area they most desire. As an educator in the States, I and my partners in service made sure to celebrate the many different paths our students took after graduating high school. It's easy to focus on those going to university, but it is necessary that we emphasize and rejoice, in the same way, when our students seek other career paths. These boys loaded up the van and with smiles, and certainly some anxiety, were off to start anew.



RICE students

During the same week, I was able to see off three of my students from the Rafiki School of Classical Education (RICE). These three girls were among the most quiet when they first joined our teacher training college, but they opened up bit by bit while in attendance. Their quietness makes a complete shift when they teach, and the beauty of education shines through. They are all such amazing examples of the diligence, gentleness, and love necessary in teaching. *Please pray that they return to us safely in order to finish their first full year of study and receive their certification to teach Pre-Primary education in Nigeria.*



Mommy Sarki

This is Mommy Sarki. She is what I would consider a Jos "hidden treasure." She owns a small restaurant downtown where she makes the best of everything Nigerian. I fell in love with egusi soup and pounded yam at her restaurant. She has since started teaching me how to pound yam so I can, one day, do it on my own. I didn't share her picture as a business plug though. Last week her shop was robbed, and she lost lots of

her property. When I asked her how she was handling it, she said, "It's hard, but God will provide. Vengeance is not mine, Aunty. So I will do my job and pray for change."

She probably makes the equivalent of \$400 a month, so anything lost is felt immediately. It was so encouraging to be reminded that we live in a world where things are out of our control, and her immediate response was, "God will provide." Her smile and her heart are infectious, and I pray for her everyday. I ask that you do the same. About a week ago she was asked to host a party that paid her more than three times what she had initially lost. God surely provided in more ways than one. I'm grateful to have been able to witness it.

Seeing God's provision when things look chaotic to the world, is something I'm learning here. I've lost a couple of sponsors while serving, and honestly, I freaked out when it first happened. My faith was shaken. When I noticed the change, received the text messages, and responded to the emails, I was in steady disbelief. Shortly after, and through Mommy Sarki, God reminded me that "He will provide." My faith is being molded in ways that could only happen here, and I'm humbled to surrender all my anxiety, fear, and doubt of the future at the feet of His throne. I encourage you, in whatever you may face, to draw it near to our Father, pour it out, and leave it there.



Rafiki Village Kenya

I will be leaving in the beginning of November to attend Rafiki's Christian Classical Education conference "The New Old Way" in Nairobi, Kenya. I'm excited to visit another African country, and alongside my colleagues, learn more about the education system we use at Rafiki and how it can impact all of Africa. *Please pray for the travel safety of the missionaries coming from all ten countries to Kenya, perseverance in what I'm sure will be a busy week, and complete reliance on God for all of the leaders involved.*

I am always in awe when I see how He has continued to protect this Village. A couple of weeks ago, there were multiple kidnappings in our neighboring village,

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Dutsen Kura. If you follow my website, Shakiyla.com, you've seen me make mention of Sarah. Sarah lives in Dutsen Kura and has asked for constant prayer. There are young men who kidnap any woman or child, and demand payment for their return. There have also been many armed robberies in the village where most of us do our shopping. These generally take place in the evening, so we are sure to get home before dark. With all of that, sometimes it's hard to see the beauty around us, but God has, in more ways than one, reminded me that He is moving, He is changing things, and His name will be made known. *Pray for our continued protection, discernment, and boldness to go forth with the Gospel.*

Thank you again for trusting God's call over my life. Please continue sharing these newsletters with your friends and family and if He prompts you, encourage them to join me in serving Nigeria. We are such small pieces in God's plan of restoration for His world. I very seldom use the Bible app on my phone, but today I opened it and the daily verse was "For his anger is but for a moment, and his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning" (Psalm 30:5). I am praying that there are no pillow-soaked nights for you but am confident that when those nights may come, God's truth will remind you that joy is but a day away. Press on.

Please be praying for:

- Peace within our community.
- Continued unity among my team.
- God to send more educators to Nigeria.
- Peace and understanding for me and my family as I walk into major life changes.
- The senior students' transition into university and out of the Rafiki Village, and their subsequent adulthood.

With all eagerness,

Shakiyla

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