

Dear Sweet ladies,

The last 2 weeks have been very full, busy, wonderful weeks for us. We met some new friends who live about an hour and a half away just across the border by Al Ain, in Oman – Carl and Roslyn Yoder. They came for dinner since they were in Abu Dhabi for new visas (not the credit card kind). The border is becoming more difficult to cross between here and Oman so they may not be able to come often, but it appears we can go there a bit easier so we'll try that. We found we had a great deal in common and it was a wonderful evening.

The next day we picked up our two oldest children: Ben and Robyn. That began my driving career in earnest since we needed to rent a car so we'd all be able to go places. I kind of drive by sound, but so far so good. I really have to learn to be able to describe where I am when I call Mark to tell him "I'm lost" again. When he asks me "What do you see?" I tend to tell him things like "sheep" (in the truck next to me). But I knew telling him "sand" wouldn't help.

We've been showing Ben and Robyn around our favorite places here. I know it's kind of overwhelming, but at least they have guides 📖🗺️🕒 . Once we get in the elevator, and after the usual fight over who pushes the buttons (I won today), and are outside, the weather is much more like a nice Minnesota summer day now, rather than a sauna. In fact, though it rarely rains, and when it does, it's usually just a little, once a year if that, Dec. 2 was so rainy all day that there were large puddles, vast amounts of water coming out the street drains into the ocean (displacing silt), and it all smells clean and wet around here. Now that is an unusual thing here.

The "Zone" report:

-Don't ever assume a one way street will mean you won't find folks driving down the wrong way. Regularly.

- Do not step off the curb without checking thoroughly first. What we Americans call "jaywalking" is safest. Crosswalks tend to be more dangerous than a random spot because at a crosswalk you are also next to the turn lane.

-It is a big deal to be in an accident. Anyone involved must wait for the police to get there. There can be no autobody type repairs of any kind without a police report. ...and yet – every weekend (usually after the cricket game) we watch, from the balcony, a number of accidents. From mere fender benders to needing an ambulance. But all usually involve at least 3 cars per incident.

-If you should come upon an accident where somebody has been hurt, it is not legal to assist them. You can only call for help. (this one flies in the face of instinct so I hope I don't have to "decide" ever).

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Be assured that my "logic free zone" section is all in fun (albeit true). This is actually a very beautiful, and fascinating country in quite a few ways.

We have been able to meet quite a few nationals (Native to U.A.E.), and the boys go down every day to learn Urdu and Arabic from the security guards. This gives them a chance to get to know them as well. Mark keeps tabs on it, and the boys are actually learning these 2 difficult, yet similar in some ways, languages. Cab drivers usually speak Urdu (Pakistani) so this has already reaped benefits.

Kim and I finally got the neighbors to take our offering of a plate of sweet rolls. It turns out it was their maid who told me to go away. We tried on a weekend when I knew the parents would be home. The man who answered asked if we were bringing them for Halloween (it was about Nov. 11<sup>th</sup>). sigh. So we told them that it was just something we made for them, for no special day. I'm not sure if he understood, but their children didn't run from us with fear in their eyes the next time I came across them in the hall. It looks now as though they have moved from here. I sure hope it wasn't the sweet rolls.

Thanksgiving was a normal work day for Mark. Rather than wait until the next day, we decided to just get it all ready and have dinner when he got home in the evening. It was a lovely evening with lots of food, and our whole family all in one place. Sometimes people have asked how I keep track of all these children, or once, a long time ago I recall someone implying that I can't have enough love or time for all these (and I don't believe I even had all nine yet at that point), but I know that you, my fellow moms, know that I know each one by name, and love each one of them more than my life. When even one is missing (even under these best of circumstances), I miss them. But we want them to be happy, and to help them prepare for life. This is how the Lord has seemed to lead. But oh how good it is to have Ben and Robyn here along with the rest of us.

And with those small pieces of our life this past little bit, I will leave you for another month. I pray God's blessings on each one of you and your families. As we head into the Christmas season, let's not forget Christ, who was born, lived a sinless life, died to save us, rose again on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day, and sits at the right hand of God in Heaven interceding for us.

And let's continue to tell "The Story" so others can know about and receive this free gift of salvation.

Peace be upon you.

~Pam.

Psa 61:2 "From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I"

