

### **Monday 8-15-05**

Grocery day today. Shawnda, Kaela and I headed to the store about 11:30am. We should have waited until tomorrow because today is a holiday and the store was more active than we like. There is a good reason we try very hard to stay away from the grocery store on Saturdays. That is when most of the ex-Pats have off work and the supermarket is packed with white people – it almost mirrors Wal-mart with all that chaos! Almost...but not quite. Nothing is quite like the experience of shopping at Wal-mart on a Saturday! After we went to the grocery we drove downtown and went to the market. Shawnda had to pick up some jewelry she had asked a lady to make for her. I hadn't intended on getting anything but then I saw the raspberries! I didn't even know that they grow raspberries here in Vanuatu but they do! Aaron had been begging for some so I bought the equivalent of about 2 cups for 100 vatu (\$1). They weren't the sweetest I have ever eaten – I think because it is the beginning of the season – but they sure were good! I made a shortcake this afternoon so he could have raspberry shortcake for dessert tonight. My plan is to buy one of the larger containers of raspberries on Friday for 200 vatu and make raspberry cobbler for team night!

### **Wednesday 8-17-05**

What did I do yesterday? I have no idea, but I am sure it was truly exciting!

Today, Shawnda and I talked about how much we appreciate having each other here. Having a friend here that I can do “girl” things with makes all the difference in the world! We talked about one of the realities of missionary work: while you can get close to the women you are working with, there will always be a barrier. We will always be the missionaries. We can't change it. We can only work to make the barrier less noticeable. I admire the courage of women who have braved the mission field with only their husbands and children for moral support. Right now, I can think of several who have done that. Their courage amazes me! While I love my husband and he is my best friend – he isn't a woman (obviously). I am so happy to have Shawnda to go to Women's Bible study with, to bounce ideas for women's activities off of, to go grocery shopping with, to brave an overnight stay in a village, and countless other things! Nothing can replace the company of a best friend who truly loves scrapbooking and watching “Thoroughly Modern Millie” for fun and entertainment!

### **Thursday 8-18-05**

Today I worked diligently in the morning and the afternoon to get our Bible Correspondence Courses ready for mailing. I made lots of copies, stapled, folded and filed about half of what I needed to get done. I ran into the problem that I have all these courses and no where to store them so after lunch Shawnda, Kaela and I went to Nambatu supermarket to get boxes to file them in. We also went to the market to buy lemons and raspberries. Then we drove to the store where Lissie works. Lissie is coming to stay the night with Kaela and I on Saturday and Sunday night. Aaron will be in Paonangisu Village and Eric and Shawnda will be in Epau Village for 2 days. I opted to stay home with Kaela rather than go stay in the village for two nights. I am glad Lissie is always so willing to come stay with me! I think Yoland will be coming to stay too, which will be fun girl time for all of us!

### **Friday 8-19-05**

Today was a sad day. Shawnda and I went this afternoon to the hospital to visit Rahab. She wasn't there and one of the girls told us that she went home because her baby had died. We were so sad to hear this news. She gave us some general directions of how to get to the street where Rahab lives. We found the street with no problem, but asked the wrong person where her house was and were told that they didn't know anyone by that name on that street. We drove around for about 30 minutes, stopping and asking different people but no one really knew her or where she lived. Finally, we ended up back at the same street where we started and found she lived two houses down. One of the women who lives nearby said that Rahab is staying with her aunt. The lady sent one of her young girls with us to show us where the house is. We found Rahab there and were able to visit with her for a while. It was just heart-wrenching to be there and share in her sadness. She told us that on Monday the Dr. told her that he didn't think her baby, Lissie, was going to live much longer. On Tuesday Lissie died and Rahab stayed at the hospital with her until Thursday when her family came to pick her up and take her home with them. They buried the baby Thursday afternoon and she is now living with her aunt for good. I wish there was some way we could have known and gone to see her but, there is no way to change that. We will try to visit her every few days at her aunt's house. Shawnda offered a prayer and we were able to hold her hand and sit with her for a while and that was good.

### **Saturday 8-20-05**

Aaron, Eric and Shawnda all left for the village this morning about 9:00. I worked on my morning chores, put Kaela down for her nap and then after lunch she and I headed out for the grocery store. It was my original plan to catch a bus because Nambatu is a good 15-20 minute walk from our house and Kaela is not a light-weight anymore. Today was just beautiful! Sunny but cool and a nice breeze so, I ended up walking all the way to the store! I was rather proud of myself because that is no easy task. I took a bus back home because I was buying some chop suey for dinner tonight. I made stir fry since I was expecting to cook for Yoland and Lissie both. However, Yoland didn't end up coming and I don't know why. Lissie came after she got off work about 7pm. I told them both to come about 5 or 6. Lissie said that there was a cruise ship in town and she ended up having to work until 7pm. After she came we talked for a while, ate dinner and just had some great girl time. It is kind of lonely around here with everyone gone. Before Lissie came things were just so quiet. Usually if I am alone in the States, I just call my mom or my sister or a friend in town but, here---who am I going to call? No one. You don't use the phone for "chatting" – it's too expensive so you only call someone when you have good reason. I played with Kaela and finally put on a CD because I needed some noise in the house.

### **Sunday 8-21-05**

Mike came over about 8:30am this morning and loaded up all the things to take with us to worship...song books, the sign for the church, communion supplies, stuff for my Bible class, etc. We had a fairly good turn out for worship and my Bible class went great! I was so proud of my 6 kids! Last week I told them they needed to memorize the first 5 books of the Old Testament and they all did it! We are working towards memorizing the

whole thing. After church I made lunch for Kaela, we played for a while and then I put her to bed because Netasha and Aline were scheduled to come at 2pm for Bible study. They didn't show up until 4:30pm and that was kind of a pain because then I had to do the Bible study with Kaela begging for my attention. It doesn't work very well – plus she is a real distraction for the girls. They ended up bringing a friend with them so I was happy about that. Lissie got off work at 7pm but, didn't come to the house until 8:45pm. I wasn't sure if she remembered to come so I was glad that she did! I also found out from her that our neighbors next door just got a security guard and he and his big dog patrol right in front of our driveway! I sure am ready for Aaron to get back.

### **Monday 8-23-05**

This morning I got up early and got busy with my day. It was my goal to take Kaela to the Dr. to get her vaccines and then go to the market. I managed to get my shower in before I got her up for the day so that was nice. After breakfast and my morning routine I got Kaela ready. Lissie stayed at the house, showered and read while I was gone. Kaela and I went to the Dr. to get her vaccines. I only got one of the four that she needed and dropped 8000 vatu (\$80) for it! They have to order the other two and the third one was \$70! I think I am going to talk to Rose-Hanna tomorrow about getting Kaela's vaccines at the hospital. I think the cost will be a lot less. The two vaccines that they need to order are over \$100 each and that sucks up our medical budget for about 3 months! It's time to pursue other avenues! After the Dr. I went to the market to buy some raspberries, lettuce and white bone cabbage. We are going to Food Saver the raspberries and freeze them so we can have raspberry cobbler when raspberry season is over. I made some for team night last Friday and it was YUM-MY! I wanted to get the cabbage to take when we go to visit Rahab tomorrow morning.

Not 10 minutes after we got back Aaron, Eric and Shawnda got home! It is so great to have them back! Then right after that, Eddie and Melinda (from Eton) came over. Melinda is Eddie's 13 year old granddaughter. She is on break from school for 2 weeks, but is taking a computer class in Vila. He asked if she could stay with Aaron and I while she is taking the class for 2 weeks and help me with Kaela while she is here. We said that would be fine. She is a very sweet and quiet girl. She really loves Kaela, but only sees her once in a while so Kaela is usually afraid of her. It will be a good time for Kaela to get used to her.

Once Eddie, Lissie and Melinda all left, we Bakers, and the Brandells got ready and met Mike in town for lunch so they could tell Mike and I all about their trips to the villages. Afterwards, we came home and I put Kaela in bed for her afternoon nap. The day was just flying by! Shawnda and I realized that we really needed to go to the grocery store so we left for Nambatu. Melinda came back about the same time we got home so that was great timing. We started on dinner - tacos with homemade flour tortillas! While we were cooking, Alsen came by to talk to Eric so we asked him to stay and eat with us. He and Melinda both had never tried tacos and they both like them a lot...Alsen especially thought they were "nambawan"! It was a great time to relax and spend together! Shawnda and I talked about our schedule for the week and it is FULL! Tomorrow we are going to see Rahab in the morning and then to Women's Bible study. Wednesday is church, Thursday is Preaching in the Park and then we are having Gomen and Ure's family over for dinner as well as Lissie, Kal and Manu. Friday is team

night, Saturday two girls are coming from Epau to stay with Eric and Shawnda so that they can be here for youth volleyball night, Sunday is church, youth volleyball, my Bible study with Netasha and Aline, and an all-church fellowship at our house, Monday we are having a couple from Australia over for dinner that we really hit it off with when we took our Bislama class! We are SO busy these next few days!

### **Tuesday 8-24-05**

This morning I got busy and really moved to get all my morning chores done. Shawnda and I planned to go to visit Rahab this morning. We left, along with Kaela and Melinda, about 10am. We took a bundle of white bone cabbage and a pa-pa (papaya) with us to give to the family. It was a nice visit and we were glad to hear that Rahab is feeling a little bit better. When we came home I put Kaela down for her nap and then got busy cooking lunch to take to Women's Bible study and lunch for Melinda and Aaron.

Melinda needed to eat before going to her computer class. Bible study was great! I always look forward to the time that we ladies can spend together! None of us had any pressing obligations for the afternoon so after we ate lunch together we were able to visit for quite a while. In fact we were so enjoying the relaxing atmosphere that I got sleepy and laid down on the couch. It wasn't 5 or 10 minutes before Shawnda and Ure followed suite and we just laughed at ourselves laying around Rose-Hanna's house talking! It is always nice to have the kind of friends where you feel comfortable enough with them that you don't mind laying down to spel (Bislama for "rest") while you are at their house! I just love those ladies!

After dinner Aaron, Melinda, Kaela and I all walked down the street to where Lissie, Kal and Manu live. We invited them, along with Bill – Kal and Manu's father – to come eat dinner with our team on Thursday. Our team wants to get to know some of the local Christian families better and we want the old members to get to know the new members and young Christians better so we are having small groups of them come to our house for dinner and fellowship. It seems that when you have a big group it is hard to get to talk with everyone, but with a small group it is possible! We really looking forward to these times of fellowship and are hoping it will help build relationships within the congregation.

### **Wednesday 8-25-05**

Today I devoted my morning to working on my Bible class. Yesterday I really got a big chunk of work done on my lesson as well as on my Bible study for Sunday afternoon. Melinda has been a great help to me in getting ready for my Bible class this week. I had a lot of coloring to do and I have also been making a Bible trivia game for the kids to play. I want them to learn how many books are in each testament, first and last books, oldest man in the Bible, what testament we follow today, etc. without having to actually teach the facts! I am hoping this game will be great for learning as well as fun for them!

Melinda left at about 10:45 this morning and I am assuming she went to her cousin's house (Kal, Manu and Lissie) to shower and then left for her class because I didn't see her leave. I'm not worried though. She is young, but Vila is a perfectly safe place for her to be. She should get back sometime this afternoon. At 11:15am I left with Kaela and we walked downtown to the market to meet Aaron for lunch. The guys had all gone to Nautilus diving company to set a time to take their first dive course.

Some wonderful friends in the States paid for the three of them to get their open water diving license so they can enjoy some diving in their free time while we are living on this tropical island. Vanuatu is world-renowned for its great dive sites! They are all so excited about that! When I got home I did some more work on my Bible class and put Kaela down for her afternoon nap.

While in town I met 2 women and a man (he works for the police here in Vila) that asked me if Aaron and I will come to their village and teach the Bible to their family. It is always so exciting to be reminded of how open people are and interested they are in studying the Bible! Aaron is supposed to contact the man sometime soon and set a time for us to come teach. It will be interesting to see where this opportunity will take us!

### **Thursday 8-24-05**

The big occasion for today was dinner. We invited Gomon and Ure and their kids over for dinner, as well as the two kids (Noel and Renette) that they usually bring to church with them. Also we invited Kal and Lissie to come. (Manu, Kal's twin brother didn't come). It was a great time of fellowship! We ate spaghetti, which everyone really liked and played Uno. They have a similar card game here that people like to play called Last Card. Everything went really well and we look forward to having Steven, Rose-Hanna and their family along with Daniel and Flexon over for dinner next week.

### **Friday 8-26-05**

Shawnda and I got busy this morning and went to the grocery store again. We are doing a lot of meal planning in the next two weeks with Melinda being here, and all these dinners having the local Christians over, more guests coming in tomorrow, etc. We are in need of some major food to feed them all! Afterwards, we took Kaela and went to visit Rahab again today. It was a good visit but, 3 kids there (all about 7 years old) would not stop touching Kaela. I felt bad for her and tried to tell the kids not to do it because she didn't like it. She was getting quite cranky about it. Its not like it is bad for her health or something – it is just annoying to her so I don't want to make a big deal of it and seem like my “American white kid is too good to be touched by a local”. And once again I am faced with the problem of wanting Kaela to be sweet to people but, understanding the reason that she is so cranky!

It's so hard to be far away from home when your loved ones are hurting. Today I got an email from my sister saying that her mother-in-law passed away. She (Marcia) had been in the hospital with cancer for the last few weeks. While my heart aches for the Blackwell family who are just wonderful people, it also aches to be with my sister. I know she is feeling a lot of pain and sadness right now and it is so hard to be miles away. I want to hop in the car and be there in a few hours, but I can't do that. I can offer comfort and love through email, when I call her on the computer but, it isn't the same as seeing her in person and hugging her and crying with her during this time. I guess that is just part of mission work and being so far away from home. Most of the time the distance doesn't bother me but sometimes I feel so far away and helpless.

### **Saturday 8-27-05**

We went swimming today! We went to this wonderful little place called Malapoa Point that is on the lagoon so the water isn't too rough. The sun was nice and hot so the water felt good. However the wind was blowing and when you got out of the water it was so cold! It wasn't long before the sun warmed you back up again, though. It was a great time. The Brandells, Aaron and I with Kaela and Melinda went and met Ure and 3 of their neighbor kids there. The water was a beautiful blue and it was a nice day at the beach! All 4 of us Americans managed to get a sunburn. Kaela didn't though – I kept slathering her with sunscreen! Kaela, as it turned out, was afraid of the water but loved playing in the sand. We went at 11am, ate lunch and then stayed at the beach until 2pm. We all had a great time, it was a good thing we left at 2:00. I was just exhausted by the time we got home. The sun really takes it out of you and when you combine that with swimming...I was really ready for the nap I didn't get!

This evening 2 girls from Epau, Winnie and Nellie, came to stay the night with Eric and Shawnda. They came so they could stay and play volleyball for our youth night tomorrow. They are the sweetest girls and very hard workers. It has been fun having them here!

### **Sunday 8-28-05**

Today is crazy busy but, that is all right! My Sunday school class did great learning the 12 books of History in the Old Testament. I am just so proud of them! After church we came home, heated up some leftovers for lunch and I started getting ready for the fellowship meal tonight. Everyone was supposed to come at 2pm but, no one came till 3pm. It ended up that only the guys came to play volleyball (all of Moses' friends and neighbors). I am not sure why the girls didn't come. We had a great time anyway. After volleyball we had a fellowship meal and invited the whole congregation. You never can tell who will come when you do something like that. We ended up having a good turnout and a lot of food! After dinner Aaron built a fire so we could show everybody how to make S'mores. No one here had ever heard of them – which is probably because you can't get graham crackers or marshmallows here. Wayne had brought some for us for the youth camp (which didn't end up happening) so we had all the makings for S'mores that needed to be eaten! They were a hit! Almost everybody really liked them. It is always fun to watch people try something new. All in all it was a great fellowship and a lot of fun!

### **Monday 8-29-05**

Today I spent all day cleaning house to get ready for our dinner party tonight. We invited our Australian friends, John and Kerrie, over for dinner. They are just the nicest couple. They aren't Christians, which is unfortunate. However, we really enjoy talking with them because life in Australia isn't that different from the States...they are familiar with Wal-mart, McDonald's and Burger King! In some ways they have kind of taken us in and even invited us to come stay with them if we ever come to Sydney. They both took a one year leave of absence from their jobs and will be in Vanuatu until December. Kerrie will be going back to Australia for 2 weeks to get ready for their daughter's wedding and she has offered to bring back anything for us that we might be needing –

that is so nice of her. Anyway, we really enjoyed our dinner and introducing them to our Mexican favorite, fajitas!

**Thursday 9-1-05** – After Women’s Bible study today I decided to take Kaela to the children’s clinic at the hospital to see about getting her the rest of her needed vaccines. I wasn’t quite sure about the process, but Rose-Hanna told me that they set numbers out and everyone takes a number and you go in numerical order. I was number 8 which was encouraging considering they called numbers 1-12 at the same time. Kaela and I waited for our turn and when we finally got to see one of the nurses, he told us that they didn’t have the vaccine that she needed and we would have to go buy it and come back tomorrow. How nice. So, I thanked him politely and said I would see him tomorrow.

After I came home, I put Kaela down for her afternoon nap and then gathered up my things again and headed to town with Shawnda. I went to one pharmacy and they told me that they were out of the vaccine that I was looking for so I went to another one. I was happy to hear that it was in stock but, not so happy to hear that it was going to cost me 9000 vatu (\$90). Oh well. What can you do? So I paid for it and will go back tomorrow to the hospital so Kaela can get her vaccines.

**Friday 9-2-05** - Today has been strange. I am certain that I felt my first earthquake today! Our whole office (the room off the side of the Brandell’s house) shook for about 5 seconds this morning! Aaron and Samson were working in the front of our house and didn’t feel a thing. I figure this is possible because Mike says he feels little tremors every so often at his house when we don’t feel a thing here. I am pretty sure what I felt was a little tremor but, then who’s to tell because I have never experienced an earthquake before!

The other odd and fairly sad occurrence today is that one of our cats, Eliza, died today. She has been very, very sick for the last week. She wouldn’t eat, and just laid around like she felt terrible. We weren’t sure what was wrong with her since she is a community cat but, we imagine she ate something that was poisonous. It is really hard to tell. I saw her this morning laying outside our office and I went to check on her to make sure she was still breathing and she was but, very heavily. Soon after that Shawnda and Eric came home and Shawnda told me she thought Eliza was dead. I went to look and sure enough she had stopped breathing. Poor thing. It is sad because she was always such a personable kind of cat. I guess it is for the best though – she was looking pretty miserable there for a while.

Tonight we are having Steven, Rose-Hanna and their kids over for dinner, as well as Daniel and Flexon. Should be a fun evening. Shawnda and I have our work cut out for us in cooking. We are making yams, pumpkin and Vanuatu stew. The yams and the pumpkin will take quite a bit of work to get ready.

----- (Later) ----- The fellowship went great! It got off to a slow start but, then Eric brought out Uno and got the young guys playing with him (Aaron, Steven, Flexon and Daniel) and they had a lot of fun from what I could tell! The girls played Last Card and Egyptian War and I played Old Maid with the kids. It was very successful for getting the older members of the church to mingle and get to know the newer ones! After it was over Aaron drove Melinda and her uncle Bill (Kal and Manu’s father) out to Eton.

Melinda went back home to her family since she starts school again on Monday and Bill just took a quick trip out to see his wife and then came back with Aaron.

**Saturday 9-3-05** – Today is my birthday! Not really but, we are celebrating it today. My actual birthday was Wednesday the 31<sup>st</sup>. This afternoon our team minus Kaela is going to the cascade waterfalls just outside of town. None of us have seen them before except for Eric. I am very excited to go see them! Ure is coming to stay with Kaela while we go and it works out well because Kaela will be napping during the time that we are gone! Afterwards, we will come back home and have fajitas for dinner and presents afterwards and then games! Should be a fun evening!

Today I went to Nambatu supermarket with Shawnda and Kaela. It is kind of like Wal-mart in that they have a wide variety of merchandise, including a small clothes department. Shawnda and I found a couple dresses that we liked and decided to try on so we went to the dressing rooms to try them. While I was in the dressing room the funniest thought came to me. Something that is just one of those things that to me seems out of place in a missionary wife's journal – so out of place that it is funny! I was trying on my dress and Kaela was sitting on the floor playing with beads that are the kind you hang in a doorway. Only they weren't normal beads – they were in the shape of marijuana leaves. Drugs aren't a huge problem here but many islanders think Bob Marley is just the best. Which is evident in the number of things dedicated to him and his pot smoking habit...T-shirts, hats, posters, stickers and marijuana beads hanging a respectable and clean supermarket dressing room!

**Sunday 9-4-05** – We are all feeling the effects of discouragement in our work today. This is the second Sunday in a row that Netasha and Aline haven't shown up to study. I am not sure as to why because I don't see them during the week. I have a vague idea where Netasha works and I will try to locate her this week. This morning I had three kids in my Bible class and there were no adults that showed up for adult Bible class. It was so disheartening to the guys to arrive at 8:45am and not have anyone show up until 9:45 --- 15 minutes before worship was to begin. I felt especially bad for Mike as he was scheduled to teach and had spent all week working on his lesson in English and then translating it into Bislama – a daunting task. We were all discouraged about the Bible class situation and Aaron made an announcement about it during worship. It wasn't something he wanted to do but, the local members needed to be made aware that Bible class is important for spiritual growth but, if it isn't important to them and they choose not to have it – they need to tell Aaron, Eric and Mike so they won't spend hours working on a study that will never have opportunity to present. After worship there was a fellowship meal and that went well.

On the up side – the cascade waterfalls yesterday were amazing! I have never experienced anything like them! There were many smaller falls and also 3 big ones that poured off the side of a cliff. We were able to walk all the way to the base of the large falls and even could have swum in the pool at the base of them. The 3 large waterfalls were at the end of the trail and we literally climbed up some of the smaller falls to get to them. We climbed stairs that were made of rock and water was just pouring over our feet. It was the most beautiful thing I have ever seen – just like it came from a movie or looking at pictures in a book – only better because it was in real life! I am already



looking forward to taking another trip to see them and next time I am planning to go swimming!

**Thursday 9-8-05** – Look at that. No journal entries since Sunday. My, how the days fly by! I can't even think what I have been doing all week so I must have been busy! I have been working to get caught up on my Bible correspondence course work. It is amazing how quickly I can get behind on that! I guess that is a good thing because we have been getting a lot of courses back in the mail. Usually, at least one everyday. Last week we put a BCC in each mailbox here in Port Vila. So far the response has been good and has show a wide variety of interest from people who attend various churches. From Associated church of Christ to Mormon, quite a wide variety have been gracing my BCC desk. When I first get the introduction course in the mail it has all the information for the student located on it, as well as the answers for the introductory course. After that I enter their information into my excel spreadsheet so we are able to track who our students are. Then, I give each student a number and file a hard copy of their information. After that, I address and envelope to the student and put in Beginner Course #1 lesson booklet and test booklet in the envelope. It costs us 90 vatu to send this envelope. After they send back their BCC I grade it, make corrections and send their test booklet back to them so they can review their answers. I like to make corrections by giving a page number from the lesson booklet and a scripture to support the correct answer to the question. Grading is rather time consuming but, we are hopeful to have the local brethren more involved in grading as we start to receive more BCCs. In the mean time I have to keep up with making copies of the courses so I have what I need ready and available to send out. It's a lot of work, but I have always liked office work so I don't mind doing it!

Aaron, Eric, Shawnda and Mike all leave tomorrow bright and early for Ambae island. They will be there until Monday evening. It's no picnic when everyone is gone – it gets a little lonely around here, but I am sure I will manage fine. Akisa (Gomon and Ure's daughter) is coming to stay the night with me Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights. It will be good to have her company and I will be able to get a good nights sleep!

I had a cooking "first" tonight. I was making dinner and needed to fry up some bacon bits so I could brown my chicken in the grease. Bacon here is a real investment at about \$1 a slice! So, I was really looking forward to having it! However, it is the first time I have EVER had to add oil to the pan to keep bacon from burning! There was so little fat on the bacon that it didn't create enough of its own grease to cook in and I had to add oil to it! That was a first for me! It was well worth my investment – my chicken turned out great and bacon was a real treat for us!

### **Friday 9-9-05**

Never a dull moment. My mom always used to say that if something were to go haywire, it would do it when my Dad was out of town...and I think she is right! This morning I did laundry. Not so out of the ordinary, but, I ran out of room on the clothesline outside our house so I went over to Eric and Shawnda's to hang the rest of my clothes on their front porch line. On the way back through their house I grabbed a movie to watch, closed the door between their house and the office and went back home. Later, when I decided to go back to their house and retrieve my laundry I found

that the door between the office and their house was locked! This was a real problem because there isn't a key for the door. I wanted to back in their house to peruse their movies again because they will help pass the time tonight while I wait for Akisa. There was only one way I was getting in their house and that was through the kitchen window that also links the office to their house. On one side of the window is a large utility sink and on the other side is their kitchen sink. In order to go in through the window I had to remove four panes of glass. Our kitchen windows work something like wooden shutters or blinds. You push a lever up or down to make the panes open and close. (I'm not sure how clear that description is). Anyway, after I removed all four panes, I climbed up on the utility sink to check out the situation inside and make sure I could do it. My initial plan was to step directly into their sink, but wouldn't you just know it there was a spider in it! And not just any spider – one of the 3 inch-legged ones that are a particularly gross variety that show up now and then! I wasn't about to go anywhere near that spider when I had no idea if it might decide to move! Besides that, I wasn't going to leave Kaela hanging around in the office by herself while I went climbing through windows. Luckily, Ure was planning on coming over to bring Akisa's clothes. I called her to make sure she was still coming and waited for her to get here. She arrived about an hour later, held Kaela, and laughed at me while I maneuvered my body through the kitchen window. Of course, first I had to kill that spider. I always kill spiders with fly swatters because I don't like to get too close to them. And that was really difficult to do since I was trying to hit it while it was inside the sink and I was outside the window on the opposite side! I smacked at it about 10 times and finally it died. Being the good friend that I am, I wasn't about to pull it out of the sink (it was half stuck down the drain) so I am leaving it there for the Brandells when they gets home. I have no doubt that Shawnda will be in full support of Eric being the one to remove it! Anyway, I then climbed through the window and was happy to see that the door would unlock from the inside without a key so I wasn't forced to climb back through the window again. To be on the safe side I left that door open and only closed their screen door because I don't care to climb through that window again.

**Sunday 9-11-05** – I noticed on Thursday night that my throat was hurting a little bit so I just assumed I had a small cold. Wrong. I have the flu. I am sure of it. My throat hurts, my body aches, I'm slightly dizzy and very tired. For the last two days all I have done is lay around the house. When Kaela is awake I put 2 of our bench-couch cushions on the floor, get my pillow and a blanket and lay there like a zombie while Kaela plays nearby. Oh how I wish Aaron was here to take care of me! Akisa has been great company, but I am really looking forward to Aaron being home again. On a funny note...tonight while we were eating dinner Akisa and I were talking about movies. She wanted to know if you see movie stars a lot while in America. That is a very common question here in this part of the world – for many people they just can't comprehend that there are thousands of miles that separate the majority of the population from the world of Hollywood. The funny part came when she next asked me if Aaron used to be an actor in the movies "before" (I assume she means before we came here). I worked very hard at not laughing because I didn't want her to think I thought her question was dumb – because it wasn't. I sure did get tickled by it though!

**Tuesday 9-13-05** – What a night. Aaron’s flight came in at 7:20pm last night. I was looking forward to him coming home all day so after dinner I got Kaela and I ready to go. I put her in a cute little outfit and I got all dressed up (Vanuatu dressed up – not America dressed up) to go to the airport. We got to the airport a little early so we waited for about 30 minutes before the plane got in. Finally, I heard it land and people began congregating near the door where the passengers would be coming into the terminal. I was waiting expectantly to see one of the team come through the door and not two minutes before they did – Kaela barfed all over me! Oh yes. It is true. Of course, there were tons of Ni-Vanuatu men standing around waiting and they were all staring at me while I tried to clean us both up with only a small package of baby wipes. I couldn’t help but laugh about it because here came Shawnda, the first to reach me with a big smile on her face and I just smiled real big and said, “Welcome home!” Poor Kaela. Dinner apparently didn’t agree with her and she was sick until about 1am. Aaron, Kaela and I took a taxi home instead of waiting for the luggage and riding home with the rest of the team. The taxi driver was so nice, he pulled over when we needed to, didn’t complain at all and kept asking if she was going to be okay. It was a long night for our little family and none of us got much sleep. So we have been napping off and on all day trying to catch up. Kaela is feeling better today, although she is very tired.