

a late party tonight after
"midnite" mass, but I didn't
think we'd make it. gave
Assisi & her mom each a
Foyers t-shirt - they were
thrilled. Dinner tonight with
Adia & family. I figured
Adia especially would have
been hurt if ~~I~~ we hadn't
suggested something for Christmas
with the family. This is such
a divided family though that
organizing an all-family
gathering is a bit of a feat.
Managed to get 2 pintards
& got a duck as a gift the
other day. Plan to BBQ the
pintards. Meanwhile Jonangma
is too drunk to kill the
birds, Adia has disappeared,
Adema still isn't back from
Yembow, and mom figures
it's Adema's problem, not
hers, to fix the food.

Visitors announce their
presence here by clapping,
a light, tapping sound,
repeated over & over at short
intervals until someone comes.
Knocking on doors never

developed here, as in a society where people often live outdoors, there are often no doors.

This sound drives me crazy; I hear it and I want to scream "shut up!". I guess I associate it with all the obnoxious problems & requests visitors bring.

Banano, the chief's son we are helping through school in Dapaong, got his grades yesterday. He brought over his card to show us. He is first in his class of 40 students! He was so proud & happy, and we're very happy for him. It's hard to express, I mean what exactly could we say? That must be how parents feel when their kids bring home good grades.

Showers are once again a chilling experience, and we usually heat water. But it's the wind when you're wet that gets you.

Been enjoying the company of Pangma, Adia's 2 yr old boy. He laughs & giggles & makes funny noises & is a lot of fun.

I've never spent so much daily time with the same kid, and they have a way of growing on you. It's made me wonder if maybe I do want a kid or two after all. Thing that scares me is how people change when they have kids, and I don't particularly like the way people I know with kids act. It also means rethinking work & lifestyle options.

Sat. Dec. 27 1986

Lomé. Arrived yesterday after about 10 hrs. in Mike & Karen Barnes' truck. Felt nauseous all the way down. Got very warm & humid towards the south, and here in Lomé it's miserable - about 99% humid. We're at the abri now and there's a saving sea breeze. Staying at a recently discovered hotel - the Lindano. 2800 dbl., hot water, and right by the grand marché, a good location. Feel much better today.

Spent Christmas eve at Adia's for a family dinner. We ended up making the rice & sauce, as Adema got back from Yembour about 8! It was good, but "not enough hot pepper"! The BBQ pintard Adia made was excellent.

Christmas morning opened presents with each other. We both bought each other a handwoven cloth, and Mike bought me a whole bunch of little things, which he thoughtfully wrapped with colorful paper & clever, homemade cards. Drove up to Dapaong about noon. Stopped at Mme. Honkoui's to say hi and give her a Soyuz + shirt for Christmas. She was really touched we'd remembered her. Then went to Rob Deutsch's for dinner. About 10 people came, incl. several Togolese. Had a potluck with stuffed peppers, potato salad, etc., and lots of deserts. Also made some brandied eggnog, which was delicious. But saw

eggs can be dangerous here,
and I wonder if that's what
made me sick.

On the drive down
yesterday we had a very close
call, as an overloaded taxi
swerved into our lane and
kept straight at us. Mike
was able to swerve out of
its way, and luckily the
shoulder was wide there so
we didn't go in the ditch.
Driving here is so dangerous!
Many drivers have never
learned rules of the road,
or safety tips.

Noticed many new
constructions along the way,
esp. in Lomé. This country
is very affluent, judging
from all the new bldgs., and
the quantity & diversity of
merchandise for sale. Lomé
is especially overwhelming -
the streets are overflowing
with consumer goods. We're
told a new grand marché
has been built about 5 miles
out of town, and the old one
will be gone by 13 Jan. The

taxi station has already been moved out of town.

Sunday Dec. 28 1986

Chloroquin-resistant malaria has at last reached Togo - but more quickly than anyone thought.

The treatment - Fansidar - is quite potent and can be dangerous. It is not recommended prophylactically.

Steve Gerardo had it and was very ill. It took a week on Fansidar in

Lomé and a good month after that to recuperate. No one knows if it will be recurring.

It's scary. Also - seems it's currently just in the Lomé area.

Takes 10 days or so to incubate, so we'll just have to cross our fingers & see if we have symptoms in 10 days!

After hanging out at the Hotel Benin pool all afternoon, we were walking home through the grand marché, and ran into a

traditional Ewe funeral festival.

A young woman sang a refrain which was answered by male

Voices behind a bldg. Then a group of women with their shoulders & arms painted with tan

designs began dancing & singing to the beat of maracas & drums. Then the dancers came out & danced in the circle.

They wore short, "tutu"-like skirts made of many layers of folded pages, so they stood straight out. They also wore colored grass leggings that flared over their feet, cloth "bloomers", several scarves tied around their chests & shoulders, and cloth caps on their heads.

Most wore earrings & make-up as well, and stuffed their cheeks with something, all to make them look feminine. Why, I don't know.

The music / rhythm was very pleasing, and the dancing varied & interesting to watch.

The southern peoples, esp. the Guo, tend to be much more developed culturally, more educated and vastly more affluent

than the northern peoples. The money evident in Lomé continually astounds me. There are many wealthy

people here, who would fall into the upper middle & upper classes in American society.

Clothes & mode of dressing are one of my favorite aspects of life here in Africa. Traditional clothing is colorful, exotic, comfortable. Business clothing is the same, not drab & confining like western business garb. Western-style clothing is abundant and if used, very inexpensive. People mix & match colors & styles into delightful, eye-catching combinations.

Crowds are a kaleidoscope of color & patterns. I'll miss that in the states, where you can dress outlandishly & comfortably, but where you aren't taken very seriously, esp. in the job world, if you do.

Dinner at the Abri Sat. night (their shrimp sauté is excellent) so we could watch "A Passage to India" on their video. Unfortunately the T.V. set wasn't working properly, and flickered through the entire film, leaving us with quite a headache. But it was a good film, if rather sad.

Last night

Mon. Dec. 29 1986

Saw "The Color Purple" at the Cultural Center last night. It was very good, but also a disappointment, as it didn't stick closely to the book, and left out a lot. If I hadn't read the book, I think I would have been totally lost.

The movie is stunning visually, but loses some of its believability in the process. ~~Some~~ Some of the book's main issues got lost in the movie. Dinner at Petit Cabanon, where I felt a bit crummy, so didn't linger. Pizza was yummy though.

Tuesday Dec. 30 1986

Still in Lomé. Dinner at Nurse Chen's new Chinese restaurant last night with Sheila, the new PCMO, and Cheryl Loveday. It was good, but pricey. I prefer the other Chinese restaurants.

Lomé has been decorated to the hilt for Christmas +

New Year's, and at night the city is ablaze with colored lights.

Very lovely.

Dinner at Italiano da Silva's. Very good food & excellent, friendly service, & pleasant, formal atmosphere.

Wed. Dec. 31 1986

New Year's Eve. ~~For~~ Found Martine, Assili's sister at the house where she works, and we had a nice chat. Then headed for "the" party in Kpalimé. There's a long line of people at the station, so 5 of us rented a van & driver & split the cost. Pretty reasonable.

While in Lomé visited the Atonkou family (old agent in Bogou). They seemed to be doing well, and Brigitte is much happier living the fonctionnaire life in Lomé!

Many people told us tales about the 23rd of Sept. "coup" attempt. Atonkou's roof got "pinged" by bullets, Joe & Gail nearly got shot at trying to cross the lagoon.

Party for New Year's Eve at Andy's. Nearly 50 volunteers showed up. Close to midnight (most everyone left to go dancing. For 8 of us stayed behind to listen