JUNE 29 1988

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Category: Africa

Spent most of the day trying to get the house looking less like a building site and more like a home. Emile and Gilbert are both convinced that I am incapable of doing anything, ... every time I put my hand to a job, they come and take it over from me. Iâ€™m left wandering around the house like a lost soul, trailing half completed jobs around behind me.

In the afternoon I was whisked off to another house for what reason I couldnâ€™t tell. When we got there, rather breathless, we found a baby, who was obviously not well, and her worried parents. What to do? I had no medicine with me and wouldnâ€™t have known what to give even if Iâ€™d had some. Itâ€™s at this sort of point where you realise how little preparation youâ€™ve really had. Four years to get to this point and the first time any one in the village needs me Iâ€™m stuck. I suggested that we pray for the baby, and then I held her for a while, and told her parents how to keep her fever down. As I left they were squirting some foul vegetable preparation into her eyes, the poor little thing was in agony.
Church; lots of singing, none of which I could understand, I reintroduced myself and spoke about the fatherhood of God, with Emile translating. It was rather discouraging to have him translate the one word of Kouya that I used, (hello) because no one understood it.

Emileâ€™s family gave me my evening meal, rice and peanut sauce, a pleasant relief from sardine sandwiches.