

I know everyone is waiting for more pictures! Here are a few of some of the patients that I took care of, many who are still on the ward. Today was a little harder for me. I had a lot of pediatric patients, which is not really my area. The better part my job for the past



year and a half was spent making people comfortable in their last weeks on earth; now I am taking care of these little children. Many of these children are here having their throats stretched because they have closed from scar tissue because they had swallowed a caustic liquid, like bleach or caustic soda. One of the boys we have on the ward now has spent the last year in a local hospital struggling with this problem. He is a twin and he is not doing well with his surgeries. Worst of all, he was given this liquid to drink to “curse” the family. My heart breaks into a thousand pieces each time I look at him and his mother. What is worse, I think of the families like this who we are not reaching. Mercy Ships leave Monrovia in 6 weeks, and the surgeries will end in 4 weeks.

The supplies are in constant tribulation here too, which really puts things into perspective compared to being back at home. We have had only large gloves for

the past 3 weeks, compared to the never-ending supply at home. We are running out of certain IV tubing and dressing supplies. Here, the medicine cups are washed and reused, you know, like we in our own homes. But at the hospitals at home, hundreds of them are thrown away every day! Makes me thank the Lord that I live where I do, but also, it makes me frustrated at how wasteful we have become, especially when there are countries that suffer like this.

I am not sure how much anyone knows about Liberia, but if you were anything like me before I came, you may have no clue about why Liberia is the way that it is. It hasn't always been like this. As I understand (I am still getting a grasp on a lot of this myself, so some of the facts may be a little off...) Liberia used to be the gem of Africa. All of the countries in Africa strived to be like them. Liberians also consider themselves the grandchild of America because when so many of the slaves were returned to Africa after the Civil War, they were brought to Liberia. (Their flag even resembles ours closely). In the early 80s their leader was overthrown by a rebel group; this sent them in to the first series of wars. After many years, there was a small time of peace then another series of wars began again when



another rebel group rose up. This started a second war, which lasted 12 years! As I understand, the war only ended within the last 5-8 years.

I went to the beach earlier this week (which was wonderful and I got VERY SUN BURNT!) but on the way there you could see so many huge buildings that were just skeletons, bombed out and beyond repair. There are condos, a five-star hotel, fancy restaurants, the



works! But almost every single one of them is forgotten, empty, filled with remnants of mortars and bullet holes. Even now, there are UN trucks roaming the streets with armed soldiers in the back. It is a sickening reality check to see how beautiful this country once was, and the poverty that it has been reduced to today.



But, not to worry! I am safe here, I don't go out alone! The people are so amazingly friendly. Even on the wards, the mommas take care of all the children. Just today, a grandmother scolded a little boy for

being destructive. She didn't know this family, and the mother just thanked her! Could you imagine that in America?! They will scoop up the neighbor's baby and bathe them right alongside their own! They invite each other to their homes for dinner if they haven't got a place to go...it is like going back in time to the era that I always here my grandmother talk about. "The good 'ol days!" I am loving the simplicity of it all.



As always, I miss home; it is easy to know that I am only here for 5 more weeks though. I can't wait for the snow and the cold! It is SO HOT here! The beach was beautiful and I got a chance to go to the markets, which was like a total immersion into the culture! We were shopping for fabric with some Liberian ladies and they told us "You have to lick the lappas (fabric), if it tastes salty, it no good, if salty taste, it a gooood lapa!" So I am in this little back street market, sweating like a dog, licking fabric to find the best stuff! No worries, I didn't get sick or anything. I ate lunch on top of the Palm Hotel in the Bamboo bar; I drank the local beer as I looked out over Monrovia to

the sea. It was truly a moment that will stick with me for the rest of my life. All my



love! -Emily

