

# 9/15/01

Saturday morning. It's sunny. Another beautiful day. Cooler. It's only supposed to get into the upper 60s. My friend David calls. I mumble a few words and tell him to call back at 11 and then promptly fall back asleep. However, at 10:30, I'm wide awake. I get up, turn on the radio. Check e-mail. Pick up the Post and the Times downstairs at the newsstand.

NY POST HEADLINES: Photo: President George Bush at Ground Zero with his arm around a firefighter.

Headline: **"UNITED WE STAND"**

DAILY NEWS: Photo: George Bush, waving a flag, standing next to the firefighter:

Headline: "The people who knocked these buildings down will hear all of us soon."

Then I call David back. He urges me to come out to Connecticut for a break. "Not today," I tell him. Maybe tomorrow. Today I am staying close to the Armory. He tells me of his brother-in-law who's now at the Pentagon. A FEMA volunteer, he's been there for a few days. Needs underwear. Replacement contact lenses or his glasses. He, too, is exhausted.

Outside, I scour the neighborhood for red, white and blue ribbon. All gone. Scooped up by other consumers. I walk into six stores — even a couple of florists. To no avail. Stenciled on the sidewalk, in red, white and blue spray-paint is the obituary:

**WTC  
RIP  
9 11 2001**

Earlier in the week, it had read:

**WTC  
RIP  
WEED**

Apparently the author decided not to do any self promotion. In the preceding weeks, we'd see WEED spray-painted in white on the sidewalks, with a marijuana leaf sometimes accompanying it.

Now it is all about — and only about — the World Trade Center.

Heading back into my apartment building, I meet up with Eitan an Israeli neighbor. We talk for a few minutes when Phyllis walks by. Another volunteer who lives in the building. She's not coming today because she'll be attending a wedding.

Despite the admonitions, I'm determined to get back into the Armory. I decide not to wear my New York State Trooper t-shirt again. That might be pushing it. So I pull out my Arapaho County Sheriff's Department t-shirt that my cousin's husband gave me. Yep, another cop in the family. It's dark blue and has a sheriff's insignia on the breast pocket. I add the beat-up nametag and the two red, white and blue ribbons.

Before I leave a bit past noon, I call Michelle on her cell phone. She's already in the Armory. "I'll be there in five minutes," I say. "Come out and get me."

I do, in fact, get past the first checkpoint. But at the Armory entrance, I'm turned back by a female cop. She's polite but firm and insistent. Thanks so much for volunteering, but we're not taking any more people today. But I was here for the past two days, I protest. No luck. She isn't giving an inch. I understand why she is so adamant, but it crushes me.

I am surprised at my reaction. I am overcome with frustration and desperation. I simply HAVE to get inside. Near tears even. How selfish of me, I think, even as I am frustrated.

Retracing my steps, I detour to the MCI Worldcom communications trailer. Free phone calls. I call Michelle on her cell phone again.

"I can't get in," I say. She'll be right out. I return to the Armory entrance and hover, waiting for her to get me.

She is rushing down the steps, waving a new red volunteer tag. The new colors of the day. I step up, past the cops who see that I now have a legitimate entry. She grabs me by the hand and escorts me inside. We hug. Then she has me sign in. The volunteers at the table hand me my own tag. She had used her own as a decoy.

A new sign has appeared in the entryway, directing a new group off to the right:

**FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS AND COMPANIES**

Another sign reads:

**FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE MAY BE AVAILABLE.  
SEE CRIME VICTIMS UNIT**

Yet another reads:

**FREE WORLDWIDE CALLING FOR FAMILIES OF MISSING AND VOLUNTEERS AT THE BIG BLUE WORLDWOM TRAILER NEAR ARMORY ENTRANCE.**

I go straight to work. Inside, there are about as many families as yesterday. There is a new cordoned off area: The **DNA STAGING AREA**. It doesn't bode well and the mood is distinctly more deflated today. Less hope.

Volunteers are swarming around. Clearly too many. What am I doing here? Helping or hindering? I make myself busy. A few volunteers wander by with crates of food and water, but there are few takers. Instead, I grab a few garbage bags and move into the back quadrant.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> street side of the armory, outside the back entrance, while I'm hauling garbage, a prayer tent is set up. I'd seen one earlier at the Easter Day parade. An anti-abortion, conservative group. The signs are the same. Across the street from them is a string trio of musicians, playing classical music. It is wonderfully soothing.

Despite my futile search for ribbons, we are now newly supplied with an entire skein of ribbon. Five of us are recruited to cut them and pin them. Men and women both. We sit in a circle on the floor, cross-legged, like we're around a campfire. A female cop comes over and asks for a bunch of them to give to families as they arrive at the Armory. It means so much to them, she says.

Offhandedly, I mention my muscles that are punishing me, especially as I sit in the Lotus position. An older volunteer immediately drops what she's doing and picks up two aspirin for me from the medical table. What a generous person.

Suddenly, one volunteer comes back to our circle and says "Did you meet him?" Who, we ask.

"Clinton," he replied. In fact, we looked over our shoulder past the food table. Twenty feet away stood Bill Clinton, shaking hands with volunteers. He's tall. Surprisingly thin in person. His face is gaunt. We've seen him on the news the past few days. At the DC memorial service next to the Bush's. He's been everywhere.

Other volunteers get up and try to get near him to shake his hand. Despite the fact that I feel it is somehow opportunistic of me to take advantage of our proximity, I grab some ribbons and head into the crowd. Cautiously, I move toward Clinton's group. I'm hesitant to intrude, though. I end up about three feet from him.

I can't go through with it. I feel so inappropriate. Instead, I offer his nearby Secret Service agents the ribbons. Both have microphones protruding from their ears. They are incredibly nice and one asks me to pin the ribbon on his lapel. Hillary, our New York Senator is here as well, but she's working the other side of the room. Gradually I fade back into the crowd. Michelle asked for, and received, a hug from him. No wonder security is so tight today. I move on.

While handing out ribbons, I talk to another volunteer. "It's a good way to meet the guys," I say. "Well, you certainly don't need ribbons to meet guys. You'll do just fine all by yourself." What a lovely compliment.

Today, families aren't nearly as composed as the past few days. One family shows up, saying they're here again to update their file. They have new info. From the sound of their voice it doesn't sound hopeful. Is it more information about a tattoo, a wedding ring? Or did they possibly hear any news about unidentified victims at a nearby hospital that may give them cause for hope?

Back to picking up garbage, I pass by one detective's table. The family are grief-stricken. Tears are very much in evidence. He's very reassuring. Very positive. "Don't give up hope," he urges them. "Not yet."

Donations are still pouring in. We can hardly stack them up fast enough. Teriyaki Vegetable Sprate? Who uses that? What the hell IS it? Boxes of pizzas arrive fast and furiously.

The computers and printers are all set up in the back south quadrant and data entry people are hard at work. They're entering all the case information. Everything is identified by number, not names. The case number is either coded with a P or T. I'm assuming that it denotes either Pentagon or Twin Towers. I feel for the typists. It's a gruesome task, entering the missing people's blood type, tattoos, scars dental records. Grueling.

At the newly arranged DNA staging area, brown paper bag upon brown paper bag is filled with toothbrushes, razors. Biological family members are used to gather evidence. As I pass by, one cop is explaining to a woman how to take a DNA sample with the cotton swab: Just swab the back of your cheek on each side, three times." It's hard to watch them comply calmly, realizing exactly what the implications are.

Near the DNA Staging Area, along the North Wall is a new addition: The Kids Corner. There are toys, soft benches, rugs. Just like a daycare nursery. As I pass, there are no children there, just a woman reclining on one bench, obviously wracked with grief. A chaplain sits upright, next to her.

Time to move on. I take a quick breath, walk outside and run home. Bathroom. Snail mail. Voice mail at home. Voicemail at work. Voicemail at the cabin. E-mail. I check them all.

I turn on the radio and hear on the news about Canadians who are randomly calling 212 numbers to try to comfort New Yorkers. I also hear President Bush on the radio: "We are ready for war." The hair on my arm raises. I hear of anti-Muslim attacks throughout the country. More in rural areas than around the city. No one is immune.

Back at the Armory, I walk by a large man, colorfully dressed. He's sitting at a table. Cane. Grizzled gray overgrown hair and beard. Big belly. Hawaiian shirt. Camouflage shorts. Sandals. He's eating lunch. Not sure if he's a family member. There's no volunteer tag. He's not a cop. Sitting alone.

"So," he says, "did you see our president?"

"Which one?" I ask.

"Bill Clinton." He tells me that he just met him earlier. Asked Clinton, how can you attack other countries when we've killed as many." This man said Clinton's response was "I know."

Who knows?

Downstairs in the kitchen, the chef from 11 Mad, a trendy restaurant at 11 Madison Avenue, is running a tight ship. They're cooking up soups, casseroles, grilled cheese sandwiches. Not their usual fare, no doubt.

One woman, who seemed to be in charge, is talking to a group of volunteers assembled near the kitchen. She is talking about how hopeful volunteers were clamoring to get in. She strongly advised those of us who had been there for a number of days to step aside and give new people a chance to help. People all around the city desperately want to do something. To contribute. She is right. I felt guilty for resorting to trickery for gaining entrance the past few days. Once again, I make garbage run and haul it outside. Across the street, a woman is snapping pictures of the National Guard. One soldier yells and holds up her hand. No photos, he commands.

Back inside, volunteers are practically tripping over each other. The mood has changed. People are more officious. More regimented. Now the food workers area actually wearing hygienic rubber gloves to serve food. A good thing, that.

I meet one volunteer who had driven down from upstate New York on Tuesday to look for missing family or friends. She couldn't reach anyone by phone, so just

jumped in her car. Luckily, she found her friends and headed back north. She then came down again the next day and had been volunteering ever since.

I escape outside again and check in with my new buddies at the Salvation Army Truck. Sitting on the back of one truck, I decide to have another cigarette. In for a penny, in for a pound. I must have had a miserable look on my face because passing cops give me looks of commiseration. My Salvation Army buddy says "smile." "I try to cheer you up when you come out here. Smile." Now I can't help but grin. "That's it," he says.

Actually, even pre-crash, random strangers would issue the same order to me as I pass them on the street. It is my stone-face, tough New Yorker façade that we all have here. That keeps us on guard.

The brick wall of the Armory has disappeared under a layer of missing posters. Photocopies. Computer printouts. Handwritten notes with pictures taped to them.

In the sea of faces, I pick out the faces of the missing

- **Missing: RAJA EHTESHAM**
- **Missing: PETER ANTON KLEIN**
- **RIVEROSO, World Trade Building #1**
- **On a large 11x17 laminated poster, it reads:  
PLEASE HELP  
Brooke Jackman**
- **There's a picture of Leonard with three kids  
24 years old  
blue eyes  
6' 1"  
blue eyes  
brown hair  
two rings  
101<sup>st</sup> floor  
second tower.**

Other signs and slogans have also taken their place along the walls:

- **Offers of help with counseling are interspersed among the posters**
- **WE ARE STRONG AND WE WILL GET THROUGH THIS.**
- **Signs posted : WTCMISSING.ORG at no charge**

While I'm looking at the pictures a steady stream of cars, SUVs trucks, are dropping off supplies. Food, water. Clothes. Blankets. Boots.

Around the side of the Armory, on 26<sup>th</sup> Street, a new Mural of Hope has been grown up around the wrought iron fence. Poems. Prayers. Best wishes. Candles. Flowers.

A group of vocal pedestrians were changing across the street. At first, I thought they were political protesters. Then I realize that they're yelling to get in. To volunteer. To help. So many had been turned away.

I enter through the back steps, where the soldiers are on their guard. One soldier — Albarran — tells me that of all the things he misses, he'd do anything for dental floss right now. I head back inside and make my way over to the medical supplies table. Incredibly, someone has donated dental floss. Just one package though. The medical attendant pulls out a strand and hands it to me. I ask for another, as well as a bag. I drop the two strands into the paper bag, fold it up and return to the back entrance. Albarran is gone, so I put the bag in my pocket.

I look for the soldier from Thursday — the one who had five family members missing. He's nowhere to be found. No one else has been rescued from the rubble, so I can't imagine that he's had any good news. In fact, it looks like the efforts have now changed from "Search and Rescue" to "Search and Recover."

After hauling garbage, I sit down next to the chaplain in the volunteer area. Later, I find out that he's not really a chaplain — which he explained when someone calls him "father." In fact he's a psychologist. "Call me Jacob," he says. Jacob tells me of his experience earlier with a woman who has four young children. Her husband is missing.

"Of course," he says, "financially, she'll be well taken care of."

Apparently, her husband called from the World Trade Center and told her of his dilemma. "Honey, the flames are all around me. I'm not going to make it." He instructs her, the chaplain says, to be strong for the kids. Even now, four days later, she hasn't told the kids. While with the chaplain, she answered her cell phone; it was her 14-year-old daughter asking whether they'd found her dad yet.

"Not yet," she said. Tears were streaming down her face, but her voice was strong.

Downstairs, in one of the family areas, a door to a restricted area that was previously off limits is now ajar. I peer in to see a block-long basement filled with stacks and stacks of supplies. Soldiers are delivering even more boxes here.

Heading outside the front of the Armory, one cop catches my eye and says: "You have a different shirt on today." I'd put on my Arapaho County Sheriff's Department t-shirt. Good memory. A woman passes by with a nametag that reads: Interpreter: Tagalog. Amazing. It seems like this has touched every nationality.

While taking garbage out the back. I sit down for a smoke with the soldiers. I pull the paper bag out of my pocket — the one with two strands of dental floss — and hand it to Albarran. Surprised and elated, he thanks me profusely.

Nearby, a young man in jeans and a t-shirt asks for some matches. But he has no cigarettes. He is going to buy some at the deli, but I offer him one of mine.

"I'm Alan," he says, extending his right hand. He tells of how he flew up from Atlantic Beach Florida the night before with his friend Joe. They're volunteer firefighters. Joe is in college. Probably 20 years old at most. An arts and music student. They had a 6-hour layover in Memphis. He said they actually flew over the Pentagon and saw the devastation. Amazing that they were allowed in the airspace.

He couldn't say enough good things about New Yorkers. How kind they were. How flight attendants on the plane gave him extra blankets and pillows to take with them to New York. He's bunking down at a nearby high-school gymnasium. "I think I'd like to live here after I graduate," he says.

On the Prayer Wall inside, signs scream out at me:

- **WEBSITE FOR HOSPITAL PATIENT INFO AND UPDATED FROM THE WTC;**  
[www.nyc.gov](http://www.nyc.gov)  
searchable database by last name inquiry

- **FAMILY SERVICES CENTER**  
9/17 MOVE TO PIER 94,  
12<sup>TH</sup> AVE & 54<sup>TH</sup> STREET

- **HAVE YOUR PHOTOS SCANNED AND E-MAILED FOR POSTING ON WWW.WTCMISSING.ORG**  
**AT ANY OF THE FOLLOWING KINKOS LOCATION**  
**AT NO CHARGE!**

Back at the Salvation Army Truck, Joe pulls out a cell phone and tells me of how a patrol car pulled up to him. They were from the Putnam County Sheriff's Department, north of the city. The officer handed Joe the phone and told him that it was pre-programmed. Just press one and we'll be there in 15 minutes with anything you need, he said. Yet another example of the best of humanity rearing

its head. I look to my left and in the window of the truck sits a bottle of Old Spice aftershave. A volunteer next to me laughs at the odd juxtaposition and says "Who do you think donated that?" On the corner, a volunteer calls out for anyone who'd volunteer as an interpreter in Haitian.

My eyes stray to the wall again and words and images pop out at me:

- **Please find my daddy.**
- **I love you. Please come home.**

The names rise from the wall of the missing:

- **JENNIFER WONG**
- **ISAIS RIVERA**
- **JAYCERELL DE CHAVEZ**
- **DAVID WILLIAMS**
- **RAJA EHTESHAM**
- **GUY BARZVI**

There is one particularly heartbreaking sigh that read:

- **MISSING: Please help us**  
**Fabian Solo**  
**Ecuadorian**  
**107 FI**  
**WTC**  
**Window Cleaner, 30 y.o. black hair, brown eyes**

At 10 pm a truck pulls up in front of the Salvation Army truck. The bed is filled with bags. Socks. Clothes. Blankets. Anything and everything. Three of us form a human chain and they toss the bags to us from the truck. "Throw them to her," Joe says. "She can handle it." The TV cameras on the corner train their lenses on us, but I'm behind the truck and hopefully not on any networks.

Not long after this drop-off, another truck pulls up. Fire engine red. It's decked out in American flags. From Hopkinton, Massachusetts. The driver had filled it up with boots and socks and drove straight down. Nonstop. They had announced on the news that they had enough food and water, but that the crews at ground zero need boots and socks.

We offer them some drinks, but the cops have told them to keep the lane clear. They are instructed to pull around to the side entrance, where I meet them with a handful of drinks. The driver asks me: "What else do you need?"

"Carbon filter masks," I reply. Too many Ground Zero workers either have no masks or the basic surgical masks at this point.

“Where do you get those?” he asks. I haven’t a clue. I suggest a mining company. A petroleum company? I shrug my shoulders.

At the side entrance, I hear one soldier — obviously of a higher rank — grilling another soldier about why a truck just took off for Ground Zero. They were bringing coffee downtown, he said.

The higher-ranking soldier looked annoyed. “Too many chiefs,” he says. It seems that they were duplicating efforts. Another soldier is talking about the Armory, called it an old war relic. Just then, a white-haired man in fatigues, obviously their commander, walks by. “Speaking of old war relics,” Albarran says, “here comes one right now.”

Over near the MCI Worldcom trailer, where families can make free calls to anywhere in the world, three guardsmen walk up, obviously back from a grueling day. They huddle together to light up cigarettes. One turns away, and I see a tear streaming down his face. He bolts into the trailer to make a phone call.

An hour or so after Clinton leaves the Yankees show up. A huddled mass of men are huddling in the center of the floor, surrounding the baseball players. Guys around me are saying: “Hey, there’s Derek Jeter!” Joe Torres. Bernie Williams. I wouldn’t be able to pick any one of them out of a crowd. Probably not many of the women here would, except for one volunteer who said that she’d just love to get naked, smear herself with butter and go up and hug Derek Jeter. I can barely get past the team of men with my loaded down bag of garbage. “Excuse me...Pardon me...” I don’t stop to say hello. No doubt my male friends will think it blasphemy.

I walked past one of the players who is leaving, holding hands with his son. Both had business suits on. Very respectful of the families and cops. The boy spied the table with chocolates and treats and I could tell that he wanted to go over an indulge. I overheard the father say “No, that’s not what we’re here for.”

It has been awhile since I’ve checked in on the families downstairs. Do they have enough food? Water. As I walk down the stairs, it happens every time. I’m hit with the Wall of Prayers. Faces everywhere. They’ve become so familiar to me by now.

#### MORE MISSING

- **Bill Tselepsi**
- **Patrick Dwyer**
- **Gregory Milanowycz**

In the bathroom downstairs, there's a notice that announces that interpreters are available. Aside from the standard languages that you'd expect, two jump out at me: Quebecois and ASL American (American Sign Language).

Back upstairs, I actually take a minute to look at the big-screen TV. It has been on all day, but has just been white noise to me. The families, on the other hand, are glued to the images. They show a shot of Ground Zero. We can see smoke still coming from rubble. The area is lit up like day by floodlights. They've been at this around the clock for five days now.

Just a bit past 10 pm, a cop at the podium makes an announcement: "Will the two volunteer firefighters from Florida come to the podium," she says. Does she mean the guys I had met earlier, I wonder? I approach her to find out. "Do you mean Joe and Alan from Atlantic Beach Florida?" I give her the details of what I know about him. Joe's wearing a Chicago t-shirt, she asks. That's the one. I ask why she's looking for them. "We found them a place to stay tonight."

I tell her that I'd recognize them and will go out to track them down. Right before I begin my search, a woman stops by the podium and asks the cop to turn down the volume. "It's upsetting the family," she says. The noise is making them jumpy. The cop shrugs. What can she do? "I don't even know how to adjust the volume," the cop says. She then makes a second announcement: "Will Joe and Alan from Atlantic Beach, Florida, please come to the podium?"

I look in the mezzanine, on the main floor, downstairs, at the side entrance out front. Nothing. Hopefully they'll show up. Near the Worldcom calling center, I abandon my search and pull out another cigarette. Next to me is a representative from MCI Worldcom. He's from Dallas. Classic Texas drawl. It turns out that they packed up the communications center and a huge-ass satellite dish not long after hearing about the massacre on the news. They left Tuesday afternoon and were in New York by Wednesday afternoon. By the end of their first night there, 4,000 calls had been placed. To the Philippines. All over Europe. Everywhere. The guy hadn't slept in ages.

He and his co-worker were staying in a hotel uptown and were each working 12 hours on and 12 hours off. He tells me of one cop who stops by. Tells them he has to talk to his brother in Austria and let him know that he was safe. However, the cop didn't have his brother's number or address on him. The Worldcom people not only helped him track down his brother in Austria, but they tracked down his cell phone number. His brother was so relieved; he'd been heartsick all day and couldn't reach anybody in New York.

As the Texan drawl finishes his story, a woman is pointing her digital camera at him and me. I stand up, turn away and hold my hand up. She stops. "Don't worry," the Texan says, "she works with us." It doesn't matter, as far as I'm

concerned. Respectfully, she lowers her camera. I'm ready to get out of here. A few of us had agreed to get out by 11 pm for a much-needed drink. I am certainly ready.

I'm completely exhausted and ready to pack it in.

At the top of the steps entering the Armory, there's a huge trolley loaded down with boxes. Jacob, the chaplain, is instructing anyone going downstairs to grab a box and pitch in and help. I ran up the stairs, grabbed a few boxes and headed back down, following the line of people out to the street. Three yellow cabs stood at attention. We loaded boxes of drinks, sandwiches and trays of fruit into each car.

The chaplain barked out another command. "One person for each cab."

"Where are we going?" I ask as I jump into the second cab.

"Union Square," he replied.

Ever since Tuesday, there has been a vigil there every night. The last time I was there, on Tuesday evening, a large crowd had already assembled with candles, flowers and were writing inscriptions and sentiments on the papers taped to the sidewalk.

Another volunteer hops into the back of the cab and we're off. As we near the Square, I see that the TV networks have staked out their place as well.

Now I have my second wind. Completely energized.

We pull over to where the cops are directing traffic at Broadway and 14<sup>th</sup> Street. I roll down the window and tell them our mission: to feed the citizens who were participating in the vigil.

"Shouldn't you be going downtown?" one cop asks. I'm tempted to take him up on it. Head to Ground Zero. But I know that I'll cause too much trouble. Instead, we stay here. The cop moves the barrier and we drive into the cordoned off area at the south end of the Square.

We jump out and unload all the boxes at curbside. The cab leaves and we stay. I grab one box of juice and start through the crowd. At first, the people are confused. I could almost hear them thinking: "We're just regular guys. Shouldn't you be handing this out to the soldiers?" I explain to them that we're here to take care of them, on the orders of the people at the Armory.

Still, there's too much here to hand out on our own, so I enlist the help of passers by. I say the magic words: "Do you want to help?"

Everybody is willing. I hand boxes of juice to people and send them off into the crowd. Recruit more people. Send them out. Only one man comes back with a full box and tells me that he has to go. The next cab loaded with food arrives.

Remembering that I have to meet the other volunteers uptown, I jump back into the cab and let the new volunteers take over. In the back window of the cab is a sign that reads: **EMERGENCY VOLUNTEER**. One guy hands me a cab voucher that reads:

**TLC FREE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM.,  
Cab Number 4521 10:47 PM.**

As we head uptown. I discover that these cabs have been working for free for the past three days. My driver had been all over the city. To Ground Zero. Out to Brooklyn to pick up supplies. All over the place.

The cabby rejoins the queue that has been set up for the **EMERGENCY VOLUNTEER** cars on 28<sup>th</sup> Street and Lex. Back at the Armory, I hunt for Michelle. We're ready to pack it in.

By 12:30, six of us head over to Poolbeg Street Pub. I buy the first round. The bill seems incredibly underpriced, so I go back to the bar to thank him. In fact, those were the regular prices. I thought he had done it because we were volunteers. Some of us still had on nametags or Salvation Army t-shirts. And we all looked like shit.

The bartender buys the second round for Monique, Gwen, Joe, Simon, Michelle, Jon and myself. I call Phyllis — my neighbor who couldn't volunteer today because she was at a wedding — and she arrives as we're emptying our glasses.

I still feel guilty that I haven't, even though Monique, who I find out has been recruited by the mayor's office, has asked that we let other people volunteer. That thousands are waiting. I'll miss being with these people. I'll miss not being able to help. I dread having time on my hands. Because that's when it's all going to sink in.

After two pints of cider, it's time to go. Already I'm incredibly tipsy. We actually managed to laugh and make jokes and have fun tonight. We're even silly.

After many hugs, we head out. Phyllis and I head back to our apartment building. At home, I don't even jump into a hot bath. I wash my stinky feet and fall into bed. It's 2:30 am.