

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MY LIFE...

ULIZA KIATU

Ask My Shoe

KTKenya 2025



MOJO

Dare to live | Dare to love

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO YOU

READ MINE, THEN MAKE YOURS.



IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MY LIFE...

ASK MY SHOE



ASK MY SHOE?

KTKENYA 2025

47 YEARS OLD, FEMALE
BORN BRITISH BUT LIVE IN KENYA
WORK IN SHIPPING
LOVE MY SON & LOVE TO DANCE
AM A LITTLE BIT NAUGHTY





IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MY LIFE... ASK MY SHOE

The shoes in the picture opposite are Michael's - he is over 60 years old and has been my driver for 2 years in Nairobi, Kenya.

We talk a lot (I admit I do most of the talking). One day I asked him, "why do you think I like photos of my shoes so much?" He replied with great simplicity "because it is our shoes that walk with us everyday, they touch the ground. And a shoe can't smile, but a face can even when we are tired and unhappy".

And I realised that's it. Shoes tell the truth and are witness to our life.

He then recalled a song he used to listen to in Swahili "Uliza Kiatu", which means 'Ask my Shoe'. He started to sing and as he recalled the lyrics, I could see the words meant a lot to him...

"Well you see love makes you do crazy things, Ask my shoes, uliza kiatu
And what I went through to buy you those rings, Ask my shoes, uliza kiatu"

This book is born out of that conversation.

Maybe once you read this, you will want to make your own.

You can download a copy at www.ktkenyamojo.com/books





IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MY LIFE... ASK MY SHOE

This is the first photo I ever took of my shoes.

At the time I thought nothing of this photo. But a month later I looked back at it and I loved the way the photo made me feel and made me think. The memories of that whole period of my life came flooding back.

The trainers were my favourite pair. I wore them all the time. The beaded handbag I still have and love. And I always wear jeans. This is me - comfortable and happy.

I took the photo when I was sitting on a bench waiting for my son to finish a horse riding lesson. I used to sit and drink weak hot chocolate from a styrofoam cup (the worst) in the cold drizzly weather that only UK residents understand. I'd sit, watch and wait for him. I enjoyed it and felt like a good mum. These Easter holidays in UK were great, we'd always stay at a cottage called Little Apple Barn in Tonbridge and became friends with the owners Katie and Andrew. These holidays were when the 3 of us were Simon (Ed's dad), me and Ed. In 2019 Simon died and although we did go back once, it felt different. The era of Little Apple Barn had past and would remain a happy memory.

From the beginning I have used this photo as my Instagram profile picture.





IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MY LIFE... ASK MY SHOE

I work as a Ship Agent for Seaforth in Kenya and here I am visiting a Tanker.

These shoes are safety boots I have to wear for work when boarding ships. I don't board them that often, which is shame because each time I do I absolutely love it. This pair of shoes was leant to me by Thelma, our office Manager and defactco 'office mum'. This day I decided to visit one of our ships at the 'new' KOT 2 Terminal, Mombasa Port. MT Norddolphin, was delivering 80,000 tonnes of AGO from the Middle East to Kenya. I was accompanied by two colleagues, Seif and Alex. The afternoon reminded me of just how much I love my job and the shipping industry. On the boat ride out to the Oil Terminal, we past all the ships in port, delivering fertiliser, grain, clinker, steel, cars and containers from all over the World to Kenya.

We arrived at KOT 2 and climbed up the various Terminal ladders to board the ship. On arrival at the ship's deck, we were checked and given security passes. I was given a slightly odd look as I'm one of very few women they see boarding a ship. Moments later we were taken up lots more steep ladders (I panted heavily as I made my way to the top - making a mental note that I needed to get fitter). We entered the control room, which is full of highly sophisticated electronics flashing colourful screens, each one informing us how fast they are pumping out the AGO from each hold to the shoreside pipeline/tanks. Impressive technology. We sat round a table, had some tropical juice and discussed the clearance formalities including the Captain hand over - from a Russian to a Bulgarian (if I recall correctly). Once done we headed back to the office. The vessel sailed just 6 hours later.

My dad was a Captain at sea. Perhaps that's why I love ships so much.



IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MY LIFE... ASK MY SHOE

This is my every day breakfast morning photo whilst living in Karen Nairobi on Bogani East Road (taken March 2024). Sitting at breakfast, I'm wearing my UGS because my feet are always cold. Ace, our little Jack Russel, always waits looking up at Ed hoping to get the crust from his marmite toast. A tradition / treat instigated by Granny Judy (my mum) when she came to Kenya and Ace was just a few months old. Ed's breakfast is usually granola (homemade but he doesn't really like it), plain greek yoghurt, mangoes, passion or raspberries (of late the strawberries taste funny). After breakfast, I drop Ed at The Banda (his school), which happens to border the Nairobi National Park. So baboon sightings are daily and we occasionally get to see warthogs too. Recently a lion jumped into someones garden nearby to school and ate their dog - particularly unusual according to Banda parents (many own safari lodges...) as that is more like Leopard behaviour! Anyway that's a highly unusual thing to happen and even made the BBC news.

The road to school is terrifying. Magadi road has such steep ditches either side I feel like am driving on a tight rope. Massive brightly coloured busses drive at you, crabbing sideways across the road, at speeds so high you'd think they were in a computer game and had many lives to waste. It's stressful! That said, I love to drive Ed to school. We talk and sometimes we take Ace if she is just too keen and overly excited we simply can't leave her at home. The best bit is saying bye bye as I drop Ed at school. We always say "I love you" to each other.

Oh and I bought this red carpet (in the photo) at a shop called "ACTS" in Mombasa for 5,000ksh/= and it was completely brown... so I had it cleaned and it turned out to be quite a nice red carpet - winner!



IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MY LIFE... ASK MY SHOE

I took this photo on a business trip in Switzerland many years ago, I think 2016. I sent this photo to my late husband, Simon. I remember how he jokingly exaggerated how jealous he was to see my boots in snow... You see when you live in Mombasa it's hot all the time, so all you want is to be in the cool surrounded by snow and ice! The boots am wearing I have never been able to replace. They were £20 from Aldo and brilliant, until they fell apart.

I took a train from Geneva, alone, up the mountain. I met no one, which is unlike me. On reaching the top I bought a snow globe for Ed and ate a cheese fondu with red wine. Although lacking company I enjoyed it. It was Christmas time and I visited a Santa grotto - a bit weird once you are over 12years old - but I had no choice, the train had to go through the grotto to get back down the mountain!

It was my last day in Geneva and I decided it would be far more fun to take a train up Mount Blanc (and touch some snow...) than it would be to sit in a hotel room alone or meet another customer for lunch or dinner. Mostly dining out with customers is fun. And I love Cafe de Paris, especially in Geneva. But after the 10th meal out, however nice the people are and however amazing the restaurant is, I just don't want to go. I'd rather eat crisps, drink a coke and watch netflixs in bed! This must be due to the the way we live today - too much constant communication - we burn out and even the most extravert (like me) wants to be alone sometimes!



IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MY LIFE... ASK MY SHOE

This was a boring rainy day at home - I think it was a Sunday.

Ed started making 'water art' by flicking water with a stick on maji chunvi.

The patterns actually looked quite good. But they didn't last as they dried up quickly. Ed said it didn't matter the fun was in the making of the 'art'.

You only really get maji chunvi floors in Kenya - if I buy a house in UK, as a reminder of Kenya, I'd like a verandah with maji chunvi. It has a rough feel that heats up in the sun and is easy to walk on barefoot. Comforting to me.

Ed's wearing football socks that a friend, Ethan, gave him as a birthday present. His mum was a teacher at The Banda, but then she moved to a school in Tigoni.

I have probably just taken Ace for a wet walk on Quarry lane by the look of my shoes.

And James was sitting at the outside dining table in his usual spot, smoking and quietly watching us.



IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MY LIFE... ASK MY SHOE

Ouch these shoes hurt me a lot. I bought them thinking I was still as size 5. I am not. For some unexplainable reason I am now a Size 6. I had to walk round London to find the Holbud office - I have never been good at directions...

This was where I waited for my meeting with Holbud - a big grain trader in East Africa. They had just moved office hence you can see cardboard boxes against the wall. Once inside the meeting room Mombasa magic got to work. The boss remembered my parents, James, friends and we had a great chat. Mostly about who I was rather than what the business can do. After the meeting Seaforth were appointed for two ships. It was very old school. I had a lot of respect.

The pen you can see in my handbag is a LAMY. I was first given a LAMY pen by a work colleague called Kostas back in 2015. We met for dinner at Hotel Les Armures in the centre of Old Geneva. We started talking about Tankers and he was explaining how the trade worked. Then suddenly he just started writing on a table place mat (paper). It was a brilliant moment. Felt so eccentric. I then borrowed his yellow LAMY to annotate his picture and loved the feeling of writing with it. I had to have a LAMY! And now I have 3... a bit excessive, but they are all different colours... at least!

RAFIKI CAFE



IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MY LIFE... ASK MY SHOE

Moi International Airport, Mombasa. Travelling economy class here I am at my usual table at Rafiki Cafe. The crows are the cafe 'assistants', they steal food from us all - a tourist to veteran commuter. Surprising how keen the crows are given the buns are always disgusting, as you eat them a layer of grease lines your mouth. The tea is also never good. I don't know what they do to it but I think it's got to do with the enormous quantity of frothy UHT milk they add to it. Occasionally I treat myself to a twix. Depends if I'll be home in time for dinner or not. And there is always so much beer to choose from at this 'cafe'. Really it should be called Rafiki Bar.

This is me retuning from a trip to Mombasa. Each time I visit I stay at our Mkomani flat opposite the tamarind (owned by Jane). I love it. On this occasion I had had a dinner out with Nirjah, who was GM Sharaff, and then had a completely unexpected impromptu night out with 3 chaps- Jeremy, Alister and Imran. We didn't leave Tamarind till 2am!. The next day I had to attend an MRM. Arlette our HR/Compliance manager insists on face to face meetings and on this day it was painful. I had to be fully engaged and present. So as much as I'd rather do it online, she is right face to face is better as we have to be present throughout the meeting. No turning the camera off and snoozing...

This is the same seat I always sit at. In fact I was sitting here when I found out my late husband had died. This is where I was when I got the call from Philippa. I dropped my phone on the floor in shock. Anyway that's another story.



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This was taken on a trip to Sicily to celebrate James' oldest brother's, (Andrew) 70th birthday with his whole family. The fact Andrew was 70 was a bit of a shock for me... that's my mum's generation! Again another story.

The trip was lovely for James as he could be with both his brothers. But for Ed it was a little dull as he had to hang out with me all the time.

So we decided to hire the local stand-up scooters and spent 4hrs a day on them going around the old cobbled streets of Sicily - getting lost and occasionally stopping for ice-cream. It was actually a lot of fun and at times quite scary!

The weirdest thing about Sicily was the food, most was not that nice in my opinion and they all seemed to love this raw red prawn delicacy... I had such high hopes and was sadly disappointed.

But I did buy some nice flowery, yes flowery, tops.

We spent New Years eve here and I joined in for a quick Jerusalema street dance!



IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MY LIFE... ASK MY SHOE

This is the best place in Nairobi for me to walk Ace - Quarry Lane. Oddly I prefer it and do longer walks now I no longer live there!

Each 4-6km walk I Listen to a podcast, usually The Diary of a CEO. But others too about how to grow a business or get better at marketing. There are so many. By now I should be a millionaire, but am clearly not putting into practice all that I am told!

There is something so enjoyable about these solo walks with Ace. I say hi to passing cars and meet other dog walkers. People I vaguely know always stop and wind down their windows to say hi. There's a lady from S Africa who's tough and walks with two big labs who's always very friendly. And I mustn't forget the security guards that sit in their car on the corner of Kibo lane - I always say Jambo to them too. It's a sort of easy semi-social experience for me and Ace.

Ed occasionally joins me on a Sunday so he can waveboard down the hills. Ace loves to drag him and he calls it "Ace power"! Brilliant.



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This was taken the morning of the Mount Kenya climb! My size 7 shoes - I needed the space for socks and Sophie is next to me in her leopard print leggings!

There were 5 of us that walked the Chogoria route Feb 2024 but only 2 summited - Helen and Steph. We had the best trip ever and we adopted nicknames for each other:

Katy (me) - I was the Entertainer

Helen - The Wise Old Owl

Sophie - Social Media Guru

Steph (the little Ecuadorian) - The Philosopher

Bella (Bella Boo) - The Model (for all the Instagram photos)

It was so much fun, I laughed harder than I think I have ever. And it was so nice to turn off my phone for 4 full days. I loved that more than I could have imagined. It was so freeing not to have it on or near me. How the iPhone has changed how we live.

After the climb I realised that my biggest mistake was not wearing sun screen on my lips. The next morning my lips were so swollen they nearly popped. Sophie was the same - just not as bad... but we could hardly drink our tea and looked like we had a botox job that went seriously wrong! Funny now, not then!

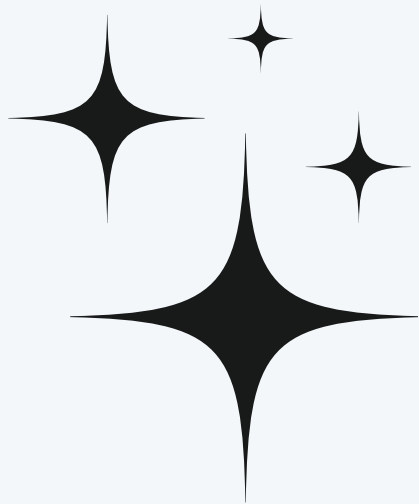




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James and me on a flight to Mombasa together. We are heading down for a staff party. It was good, held at Voyager hotel. Always good to be at the beach because everyone just relaxes. Food, music, dancing, prizes and then the long boring speech by me followed by a few 'quiet' words from James - that's the format.

We stayed at the Mkomani. It was one of the best nights ever. Night time swimming under the stars eating brownies!





IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MY LIFE... ASK MY SHOE

This is me sitting at my special old school desk downstairs in the Bogani East Road house. I have always worked off one of these writing desks. This one I had made in 2012 when we moved to Kenya - it has a small whole in the back for computer wires. I always keep all my 'keepsake' documents in the draws, like photos, certificates Ed wins at school, the letters Ed wrote to Santa, birthday cards, school magazines and other random stuff.

I used to work off a desk like this when I lived in Uplees as a child. I did my GCSE and A level revision at a desk like this. And weirdly unlike most kids I liked revising - making colour coordinated notes with acronyms to help me remember. Uplees was my home in UK, with my 2 grannies, grandpa, my parents and brother. We'd always spend Easter there - it was too hot to stay in Mombasa and my mum always said she needed to refuel back in UK. It was a great house. I miss it.

I think when I sit at this table I feel like am sitting in my small but perfect bedroom in Uplees.



IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MY LIFE... ASK MY SHOE

I walk round and round this track, sometimes 10 times, whilst Ed plays football at GEMS with the 'Elite' team. He used to play with 'Liberty' at GEMS but they went out of business.

Am always amazed to think that this is the track that top Kenyan runners train on. The track is cracked all over. It's terrible and yet this is where the best of the best train. There just aren't the facilities here. Even finding a football pitch is hard or a club to train with. I suppose the upside is that you have to really want to play.

But to be honest it is one the reasons we are taking Ed to UK- the facilities for football and many different sports are so much better - I hope it will give him so much more opportunity. And he may even find a new sport or activity he loves more than football.



IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MY LIFE... ASK MY SHOE

This was taken skiing in chamonix with Ed December 2023.

Chamonix is small and beautiful. Good for a few days but gets a bit boring after 10 days! We stayed for Christmas - just the 3 of us which I don't think we will do again.

As is often the case, the holiday is never as good as one hopes. I had flu and a fever (but that did mean I was pretty warm on the mountains). And Ed got sick Christmas eve - vomiting all over the bedroom. So I cleaned up and didn't sleep at all!

Ed enjoyed snow boarding and was given a Snow King t-shirt by his instructor on the last day, which was very cool. He managed a red slope ... I only managed a blue, but Chamonix is hard as there are cliffs all over the place. It's not the best place for beginners, but we chose it because the first time Ed went snow-boarding I stayed in Geneva meeting customers and he went to Chamonix with James as it was the closest option.

Being up on the ski chairs is always exhilarating. A time to take in the views and rest a little. Depending on where the lift is heading I sometimes start to worry about getting off the chair and the challenge of the next slope. I have definitely not skied enough in my life and can tell it's something I would have enjoyed a lot more if I had. It's why have taken Ed when he's young.



IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MY LIFE... ASK MY SHOE

This is me sitting on a bench watching Ed play football in the middle of Nairobi. We had to drive through a bit of a slum to find the pitch. And it was overlooked by lots of grungy flats. This reminds me of the efforts I go to in order to support his football. It's a healthy passion, so am very happy to support it.

He played for 2 hours as I sat chatting with a few dads. Some of them are impressive having played basketball, football and rugby professionally.

After he finished the game Ed was excited to tell me something his coach had told him. I thought, wow, he's learnt some valuable advice. Sadly not. Rather a pretty gruesome story followed about how his coach had got into a fight over the weekend. He stopped a thief, but in the punch up almost had the end of his thumb bitten off. Ouch!! It explained the bandage his coach was wearing on his hand.

This story reminded me of a tough American lady who'd I'd met in Kenya a few times when she was here working as a consultant. She'd actually had her thumb completely bitten off when working in DRC (Congo). A man tried to grab her handbag and she fought back. He then bit her thumb off. Unthinkable. Amazingly (she must have been in shock) she grabbed her thumb, ran to a hospital and managed to have it sewn on again. When I last saw her it didn't have full movement. But it's there. And she lives to tell the tale.



IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MY LIFE... ASK MY SHOE

This was taken moments before I went for an early evening walk on the beach with my very good friend, Dodi. I was waiting for him to come downstairs so stepped out into his court yard style garden and took this picture.

This sums up what I love about Mombasa.

- Different cultures love each other
- It's hard to feel lonely as everyone has time for you
- There's always 'good' noise reminding us there's life to enjoy

Dodi and I often tell the story of how we met and tell people that God / Allah had a part to play because we met up in the skies. We met on a plane and because my son wanted to sit next to his (on his seat) and watch movies, so we stood at the back and chatted for 5 hours. We've kept in touch ever since then.

And the best thing is that when we meet we nearly always try to do something FUN, something NEW, something different. I've had 6am swims in the sea, a yoga lesson, been on dhows, quad biking in Vipingo, jet skiing, walked streets in Nairobi, met race horses, stayed with him in Dubai, and so much more. Next we plan to visit to Lamu with Ahmed and Ed. But we rarely make plans, so it's more an idea that one day we may just do. Inshallah...

As one gets older we really appreciate true friends. He's one.



IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MY LIFE... ASK MY SHOE

Wow looking smart! Am waiting at the Karen Club for the second round of "entrance interviews" for membership applicants. Rowena was my proposer and Chrissy my seconder. Friends I met through The Banda and Ed playing rugby at Ndume when he was in Year 5. Rugby gets exponentially more scary to watch as a mother after year 5.

The Club is still very old school and women have to wear skirts or dresses. Men have to wear suits and ties. But only for the interview. After that it's a little more relaxed. The best thing about the Club is having somewhere to go and play tennis, padel, have a pedicure, have a drink and the feeling of belonging to something. It makes me feel more grounded in Nairobi that's for sure.

I used the Club a lot when I lived on Quarry Lane as it was literally 2mins away - even started waking at 5am (after reading a Wake up at 5am self help book) and going to the gym. But it didn't last. Too exhausting. And frankly limited benefits. I was still getting fatter and I just seemed to hurt all the time :).

Now I use the Club once or twice a week and have had a few fun impromptu evenings there - the last one was with Zuzannah (my old neighbour) who's Slovakian. We bumped into some Banda dads and just carried on and on and on. In fact I ended up dropping her home and headed for a final one at Axa (next to my house) with one of the dad's who I hardly knew - a strange spontaneous evening! And one of the funnest have had in ages.

On a side note, Zuzannah makes excellent home made pesto (with cashew nuts).



IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MY LIFE... ASK MY SHOE

This was the garden at Quarry Lane. You can feel how cold and damp Nairobi is from this picture. I live in Ugs. The houses are strangely freezing cold inside but outside in the afternoons it gets strangely hot. You can always tell those who have been outside and those who have been working indoors when we arrive at school to collect kids. Those working are in jumpers and Ugs and those who've been outside are in flipflops and summer dresses. By 3pm when matches start the sun is at its hottest and the ones wearing dresses are winning! I now dress as an 'onion' (with many layers) - some great advice I was given by a long term Nairobi resident.

The garden was beautiful, but we hardly used it other than Ed playing football. We built a pond at the back, but rarely went to see the fish. Funny how gardens without a reason to walk in just never encourage me into them. I loved the old garden in Nyali, where we had the pool and maji chunvi table for drinks, a BBQ, Ed's playzone called "little England" which I transformed every 3 months and then there was a junk yard area - always interesting, tortoises, rabbits, fruits trees, a cycle track, etc etc. It pulled us into the garden. I'd like to create a similar 'garden/farm' in Timau.

Anyway it was a good house to live in until I started to feel the damp and mould was effecting our health - particularly Ed and James. So we moved out and then it was sold a month later! I'll never know if the mould was affecting our immune systems, but I think it was as Ed is now able to sleep with Simba again.

This was Dudu's last home and we buried her there. Lovely smiley happy Dudu.



IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MY LIFE... ASK MY SHOE

A raw fire - that's the best thing about Nairobi. I love fires. They change the energy in the room. Make a cold miserable place warm. Bring a sense focus. Bring company to an otherwise empty room. A fire can change the mood from shit to great in an instance. Love building them too - as long as someone else cuts the wood - thank you to Marsha and Anderson for that! And for collecting the twigs from the garden. They set it up perfectly - ready for me to light every night (when its cold enough).

This is at the Quarry lane house in my favourite position. Sitting close to the open fire on my very loved sofa - that's been with me for 14 years! It was a great fire but it sparked a lot and damaged the carpet - hence the Masai rug placed next to the fire to catch the worst of it.

We had a few fun dinners and parties at this house - but it was never that easy to as the verandah was thin and the sitting room more of a walk through. Space makes a difference to how lives are lived. Ida (a friend we lived with in Kilifi) used to say this all the time. She's right. And so does weather. Nairobi for me is far less social than Mombasa. It seems more of an effort and often there's a feeling of really having to entertain and impress guests as opposed to just all joining in and making it good. Might be an age thing too. Or maybe I just don't know people as well!

Just in the corner I can see a Back Gammon game under the table. I learnt to play this at school with my very good friend Alex DDR. She actually came to Kilifi during covid and we met after 10 years. I still play Back Gammon now but am definitely less competitive and less skilled than I was.



IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MY LIFE... ASK MY SHOE

This photo is all about work. My trousers and shoes are the telltale sign that I am off in my Prado with Michael (my driver) to meet a customer.

When you live in Karen and wear ugs and trainers all of the time, you really do get out of the habit of dressing up and meeting people. It takes far more of an effort here to go to meetings than it does in Mombasa. And the crazy thing is even Nairobians say the same. Distance are further, traffic is a barrier too. And people are just busier!

I can't remember which customer I was seeing this day but no doubt it was someone in the oil or fertiliser industry. I like most of my customers so usually the meetings go well, We don't always win a ship but it's rare that I come out feeling deflated. Sales & Marketing has always been what am best at but have not had any formal business training in it either! I think they are essentially intuitive 'skills'.

The keyring in the photo was given to me by Ed. He said it was to help me find my car keys in my handbag - I was always losing them. And it works! So have had it for about 6 years now. Michael (my driver) occasionally removes it as I think he feels it damages his street cred! And I have to say, the few times I have seen the pink panther poking out of his trouser pocket as he walks to pay for the parking - it looks hilarious!

And the red kikoi am sitting on is there to protect the seats - mainly from Ace. But I love having kikois on car seats - makes a car look homely and Kenyan.



IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MY LIFE... ASK MY SHOE

I cannot imagine a study (or work from home office) without a bed. This is me thinking on my bed in the Quarry Lane study. Am looking straight at a Seaforth shipping Calendar (Year 2023 as it has one of James's favourite photos of elephants).

The number plate in the background is a copy and it belonged to my first ever Prado. It was built in 2003 and I loved it. James / Seaforth bought it for me when I was away for 1 million ksh/=. We (Simon, myself and Ed) took our first major Kenyan road trip adventure in it and got our "KC badge" when we made it to the top of Rotundu (log cabins up Mount Kenya where Pince William and Kate once stayed). What a drive and what an amazing experience we had travelling round up country Kenya - Nanyuki & Naivasha. That was in 2015. After that trip we bought a plot in Nanyuki with friends and still have it.

I can see my bead box in the background (rarely use these days) and a magazine 'Courier' about running small business - am always trying to learn how to do things better or at least keep up to date with what businesses are doing.

Ed's school bag seems to be in my study as well!



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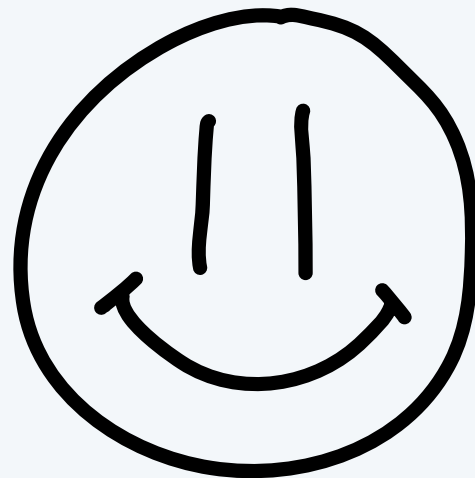
We'd had a "terrible" summer holiday trip to the UK in 2024 so needed some sort of holiday at the end before returning to Kenya.

Sophie - one of Ed's chosen God Mother's has a new travel agency so we decided to book a trip to Dubrovnik through her! This is a photo taken on a beach outside the hotel we stayed at. I am wearing a new pair of beach trousers I bought for the trip - love them but they are too long (or I am too short at 5ft4).

Here I am sitting watching Ed as he played on the floating Jungle Gym in the water. He would be there for 2 hours on his own and loving it. I had a quick swim on a couple of occasions too. The water was so clear and perfectly cool in contrast to the hot days. I decided against the Jungle Gym as the last time I went with Ed to Maji Magic at The Waterfront in Nairobi I fell and pulled a muscle in my shoulder that hurt for almost 6 months!

We jumped off some rocks, went snorkelling and kayaking and ate a lot of lobster, seafood and ice-cream. Ed played quite a bit of pool back at the hotel - one particular game with a kid who we nicknamed 'Switzerland' and Ed then took the nickname "Kenya" ! I enjoyed being commentator. It was a good trip for Ed and me but for James less so... as most of the activities and things weren't really for him and the history was a little too 'Game of Thrones' Disney.

At the end Ed got an ear ache which was a worry due to all the flights but he managed and by the time we were back the ear ache had gone. Phew.



IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MY LIFE... ASK MY SHOE

Im really happy I made this book, as don't want to see any more perfect INSTAGRAM photos of "beautiful" smiling bottoxed faces, amazing views and fabulous sunsets. Perfect can get boring. And annoying.

It's scary how fake our online lives have become. The more miserable you are, the more happy the photos you post - yes that's true. In fact, I remember once texting a friend (after scrolling through all her amazing social media posts) and saying "Wow, looks like life is awesome, am so happy for you". She immediately typed back without a second's thought, "Don't be stupid; that's my online life. Everyone knows that's not real. My real life is shit".

Wow... ummm...



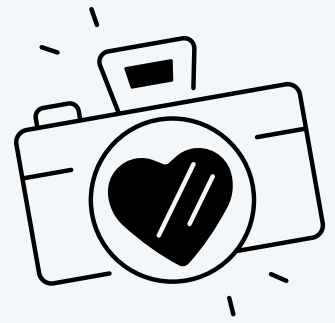
I was momentarily stunned. I wanted to ask "So why post the photos then?" But there was no point. I knew why, just like all of us she needed to see the EMOJI LIKES, she needed the attention... to feel wanted - and even more so because she'd just broken up with her boyfriend... So, instead I semi-laughed and gently smiled as if to say "ok, fair enough, we all do that".

But it's NOT OK.



We NEED things to be more HONEST, more FLAWED, more REAL...





IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MY LIFE... ASK MY SHOE

So to counter this I made this book (mainly for myself). And I think you should to.

This book is a collection of apparently boring photos of my shoes as they walk with me during my normal day-to-day life, with some days being more exciting than others. The thing is my normal is not your normal. And that's what makes it interesting. But also there is something special about the photos themselves. They bring back a different type of memory, a more real unfiltered memory. I don't think you will understand unless you do it... so, **TAKE A PHOTO OF YOUR SHOES, NOW!** Look back at it in a week and you'll see what I mean.

These photos conjure up a real, deep, full meaningful memory. Because the photo itself gives so little away it forces you to think back over the whole period - the smells, the stories, the people, the places... It makes your mind wander. You become more curious and try to remember the smaller details too. I stumbled into realising this by accident, when I was sitting on a bench waiting for my son to finish a riding lesson. I took a photo of my shoes in the sawdust. At the time I thought nothing of it. But a month later I looked back at it and I loved the way the photo made me think and remember. So I started taking more photos of my shoes ...

I hope you enjoyed looking through having a glimpse into my life and maybe it has encouraged you to make your own. It's very easy, just use Canva (www.canva.com).

And if you want to share a copy of your 'Uliza Kiatu' book, send me the PDF and I'll upload to my website. I'd love to get a glimpse into your day to day life.

www.ktkenyamojo.com