

News From The Homefront

In the past, I've written about the rental inspections they do here at six weeks and then every three months. Frank had to be away; thus, it was up to me to let the lady in and show her around. Though I was sweaty and felt ugly from cleaning, I thought the apartment was in pretty good shape. The lady knocked on the door and then said, "Inspection." Then she took five pictures with her phone. She never introduced herself or said anything else except, "See you next time," as she left. I thought I might be in Twilight Zone as usually we get a greeting of who they are, and a confirmation that we are keeping up the rental property okay. She stood and looked out our balcony window for a while. No small talk. Perhaps she needed a breather and to rest a little while out of the high heat and humidity.

I found one more store here that I enjoy browsing. It's called, "The Emporium." I looked up the word emporium and in case you don't know, it means, "a retail store selling a wide variety of things." This one amazes me because as you walk in, there are pretty vases and artificial flowers. There is also expensive china behind locked cases. Then if you go to the left there is furniture, sheets, towels, pillows, and odd and end things to decorate a home. If you walk in and go right, there are fishing poles, camping gear, work clothes, hats of all types, and then a little farther on are office and craft supplies. Last but not least, our local post office is in the back of the store.

Frank and I can see part of the main port from our apartment building. We found out it is the world's largest bulk export terminal in the Southern Hemisphere, with iron ore miners BHP and Fortescue Metals Group among the key users. We decided to drive over to what looks a little bit like an island on the other side of the port but is actually a finger shaped piece of land. I took my camera in case there was anything scenic, but it was a huge iron ore industry in front of our eyes. I lost count of the many trains and conveyor belts and piles of iron ore. Some places are blocked off to the public and only workers can drive on. There is red dust everywhere and this is a 24/7-day operation. We have counted the ships before that are waiting in line to get to the port. So far, the most has been twenty. They too come and go day and night. I never dreamed I would see such a big export industry.

Most people have heard of the bush fires here in Australia this year that started in early November, and though some are still going, they have slowed down. There have also been cyclones, huge dust storms, unusual fog, tornadoes, floods, and pestilence in the form of hordes of flies and locusts. It has been a tough few months for this country.

We went back to the pizza place I mentioned before. This time we were taking it home to eat. As we waited, another couple got their pizza and started eating it. Out of nowhere, I suddenly heard, "doughy." At first, I wasn't sure I heard correctly, but then it was said a few more times. I looked over at the lady who obviously didn't like her pizza crust. I don't think she spoke much English, but I did catch the word, "doughy." Then finally I heard, "I know what pizza is." Frank and I felt as inconspicuous as a bull in a china closet as we didn't want to be in a place where there is an issue. Especially a small store front. The owners gave the lady her money back and all seemed okay. Then we got home and guess what, the crust was doughy. We tried to fix it by heating it up in a skillet. Now that we know they aren't consistent; we are leery to go back. If we called ahead and asked for a crispy crust, the owners would know it was us because we were the only other ones in the shop when the "doughy" incident happened. 😊

A friend in Christ, Cyd James