



Praise God for the pantry: A Sandra Baingana diary entry

Dear Diary,

I have been born again three times this week watching this woman restock her pantry 17 times. I am not learning anything. I am grieving.

Her name is Pr Sandra Baingana. The Ugandan woman who, by the grace of God and what appears to be exceptional financial planning, built herself a mansion that contains; among other things; a pantry the size of my sitting room and bedroom combined, an in-house elevator, and a spa. She documents all of this on TikTok in a series she calls My Marriage Diaries, and every single video begins the same way: "Praise God."

Just like that. Praise God. And then she opens a fridge that is organised by colour, category, and apparently by the Holy Spirit, and something in me just breaks.

I said it back, by the way. "Praise God." Involuntarily. Like a reflex. Like my mouth understood something my brain was

still processing. Which is that I was not watching a TikTok. I was attending a church service where the sermon was a pantry tour, and the offering was my self-esteem.

Here is what nobody told us when they handed us the formula. Pray. Work hard. Trust the process. Be a good woman. Fear God. They gave us the steps like a recipe, confident in the outcome, and we followed them faithfully. And yet the process, it turns out, has variations. Some processes end in a *muzigo*, others end in an elevator. Inside your mansion. That you built. Next to your spa. God is not doing the same thing for all of us, and I think we need to convene and discuss this, preferably somewhere with decent seating.

She rolls that trolley through her pantry, the same way some of us roll through China Town looking for discounted merchandise. Except she is not checking prices, and "Praise God" is not irony, it is a full tes-



timony. And you cannot be angry about a testimony. You open your mouth to form a complaint and the Holy Spirit personally

closes it.

The genius of beginning every video with "Praise God" is total and complete armour. Criticism

cannot enter. Envy cannot survive the opening statement. You just have to sit there, in your medium-sized feelings, watching a woman push a trolley through her own supermarket, nodding along because what else are you going to do? Argue with God?

Meanwhile, I am outside negotiating with a boda boda about Shs500 like it is a United Nations summit. The boda man has principles. I have a budget. We are at an impasse. Somewhere across Kampala, Pastor Sandra is selecting ingredients for a dinner that will be filmed, seasoned, and uploaded to the internet for the edification of the rest of us. "Praise God," she will say. I will watch it. Again. Still not learning anything. Still grieving something I cannot name.

And yet.

There is something I keep coming back to, something that sits underneath the comedy of my own suffering. There is something quietly radical about a Ugandan woman just having things. Not hiding them. Not apologising for them. Not making herself small so that the

room feels comfortable. She is living the dream we were told was ungodly. She did not ask for permission to be abundant. She did not shrink the pantry for the camera. She did not caveat the elevator. She just showed us. All of it. And with excellent lighting... and a filming crew!

Maybe what I feel is not grief. Maybe it is recognition. The ache of seeing something you want and have not yet named. Not just the pantry – though I will not pretend the pantry is not a factor – but the audacity. The specific freedom of a woman who has decided that her blessings are not something to manage quietly in private, but something to document, share, and open every single time with two words that shut down every critic before they even clear their throat.

Praise God.

The Pantry giveth, and the elevator taketh us straight to our inadequacies.

XoXo

—TheKat