

Baby Flora...

the daughter of Florence



Please let me introduce to you the new love of my life - Baby Flora...

Why is she so special - well she is just three weeks old today and last week she moved in with my friends Jen and Serge because her Mum was admitted to hospital with malaria. Once she was admitted she soon became unconscious and lay in a coma for four days. I first met baby Flora last Saturday night when she was just two weeks old and I delivered a spaghetti bolognese around for dinner. On Tuesday I asked about her lovely mum and how she was doing and I was told that she stayed in a coma from Thursday to Sunday. Things started to change on Monday when Florence started to gain consciousness and asked about her daughter - baby Flora. There was more improvement on Tuesday and Florence started to eat and regain her appetite. All was going well, and so I left to go away for a night up in Musanze to trek and find the golden monkeys, assuming that Florence was on her way to a full recovery. As we just arrived home and pulled up outside my house after a two hour ride home, I received a phone call on Thursday afternoon from Jen who couldn't speak. It didn't take long for me to realise Jen was upset and so I just asked, "Jen what has happened?" Her response through tears was,

"She died, the babies mother died - can you come around?" I still had mud up to my knees from trekking with the golden monkey's - I said I would be there to love on this sweet baby girl who now will only know life without her biological Mumma. I dropped my bag at the door, cleaned my teeth, a quick squirt of deodorant and I was there by 5pm. Last Thursday Jen and Serge - had NOTHING for this baby, they had to buy a bottle and a bag of nappies / diapers and different friends have donated clothes and bouncers etc to help get by. Hence she is living in some little boy onesies at the moment but we love her from the inside out not the colour of her clothes. She is so precious, bright eyes and a great little snuggler! So I have had the joy of looking after her while Jen and Serge have been helping her Dad organise a funeral which happened on Friday. Then they had a family wedding on Saturday so I had Flora from 8:30am - midnight and we enjoyed loving on each other!

If you are one who might pray regularly please remember little Flora in your prayers this coming week as Jen and Serge need to meet with Flora's Dad and discuss what the options are for her long term. It seems quite complicated and at this stage there is no definite plan for where she will go. Everything in my heart says I would love to take her but everything in my head says she needs to stay with a local family - but then I remember the starfish story and if you can only help one - then it's been important to that one - right! Maybe I can help baby Flora to a better start in life, by just holding her, loving her, feeding her and wrapping her up.

Without her Mumma...

So my random thoughts on Thursday night as I sat holding baby Flora, singing Jesus loves you this I know and feeding her her bottle went something along the lines of this....

I know many children across the world grow up and thrive without a Mum or a parent, but for me who has had quite the idyllic childhood makes it feel quite unimaginable. Growing up without her Mumma just makes me wonder...

Without her Mumma who is going to sit up with her and rock her after the 3am feed?

Without her Mumma who is going to teach her and show her off when she learns how to sit up and clap hands?

Without her Mumma, who is going to gently push her little knees to teach her how to crawl - or share the joy when her first words sound like Dadda?

Without her Mumma who is going to hold her hand as she cruises around the furniture and takes joy in that first step of learning how to walk - there will be no-one to film it on their iPhone and share it with the world on technology.

Without her Mumma who is going to tuck her in at night and tell her every thing is going to be ok - you don't need those friends at school anyway - just be nice to everyone and accept everyone - who is going to tell her that?

Without her Mumma who is going to read her library books before she goes off to sleep?

Without her Mumma who is going to tell her that if she doesn't eat her crusts her hair won't go curly?

Without her Mumma who is going to hold the bucket when she gets malaria and make her vegemite on toast and flat lemonade?

Without her Mumma who is going to clean her grazed knees and apply the bandaids as she runs down the rocky roads to school?

Without her Mumma who is going to help her learn to read and write, make sure her homework is done and that she does well at school?

Without her Mumma who is going to make sure she eats enough greens and good food to keep her healthy and nutritious?

Without her Mumma who is going to explain to her when her body starts changing and what socially acceptable hygiene is all about?

Without her Mumma who is going to tell her about boys and men and how to make wise choices?

Without her Mumma who is going to take her shopping and choose appropriate clothes for a teenage girl to wear and talk about how much makeup you really need on your face?

Without her Mumma who is going to encourage her to stay in school and become everything that God created for her to be?

Without her Mumma who is going to take her wedding dress shopping and help her make all the plans she needs?

Without her Mumma who is going to teach her how to make cupcakes and cookies?

Without her Mumma who is going to teach her how to be a Mumma and love her own little baby when the time comes?

Without her Mumma who is going to make the magic of Christmas and other holidays so special?

Without her Mumma who is going give this little girl the childhood and up bring that she so deserves yet will never receive just because of the circumstances and choices that are surrounding her at the moment. Who is going to love her unconditionally and make their own sacrifices and offer her the world just because they can because they are her 'Mumma' - but today she has lost that opportunity because of a rotten disease called malaria, which two weeks after delivering a healthy, happy and beautiful baby girl was the cause of a life taken away from us way too soon leaving this little girl in a state of hopelessness without a biological Mumma. All we can offer her at the moment is the love, care, compassion, concern that any humane person would do at a time like this - please remember baby Flora this Christmas as we in the west indulge over so much food, material possessions and things that really add no value to our lives. Remember the loved ones around you and value everything you have with you this Christmas.