



An update...

Yet, O Lord, you are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter, we are the work of your hand. Isaiah 64:8

This morning while jumping on the trampoline with Flora, I put my arm around her and said, "Mummy just loves staying home with you everyday." To which she snuggled in and said, "Ooooh that is very kind of you to say that Mummy".

These are the moments that make me advocate so hard for this precious little person that God has entrusted into my care for life.

To those of you who emailed and assured us of your prayers and love for us - we say thank you - we can socially isolate but not socially distance - we feel loved and supported. To those who messaged today, apologies for short 'forwarded' messages. I try so hard not to be on my phone when I am in the presence of a little person, and I knew I had every intent of adding detail to an email tonight - but thank you for showing your love and support to us today as well.

It was a positive meeting...

It felt like I was awake more than I was asleep but when I opened my eyes and checked the time it was 12:28am and I had set my alarm for 12:30am. So I quickly switched it off and put on 'clothes' (not t.shirt and shorts for around the house) and make up for the first time in the past month. I figured I was paying a lot of money for this 'power hour' so I needed to make a positive first impression that hopefully will last.

So I met with an immigration lawyer from Sydney, on a Zoom meeting - seriously who had even heard of 'Zoom' three weeks ago - I've already had three this week!

Without going into too much detail, basically what happened in November was that the NCC and FACNSW had both agreed in theory that Flora is in the best care she can be in and that I am legally her parent. Sounded nice for a little while, then more recently I heard news that while NCC accept my adoption and that I am Flora's legal guardian they are still refusing to give her a passport. This may not be a big deal for some, but two weeks ago when boarders closed and I couldn't leave because I wouldn't leave her here, it became a very real reality that I will continue to advocate for her to have the same rights as any birth child, and in my world that is the rights to a passport.

So what my now new Sydney Lawyer is suggesting is that Flora can apply for a Permanent Residence Visa so that she can obtain Australian Citizenship. The story gets complicated, but she doesn't have citizenship of Rwanda because she doesn't have a Rwandan parent. She said looking at the criteria we have a 'Very arguable case' and she can see that we already meet all the criteria. This was something I was of the understanding would only happen, once we were in Australia, with a passport and an inter country adoption.

When she has an Australian Citizenship, we can then apply for an Australian passport and if that is not approved straight up, we could possibly travel on a travel document. But that is all in the future.

I guess, until it is in my hand, it is still not a given that it will happen, but we (I) have to believe and live in Hope that this may be the answer for my sweet girl to gain a nationality and those rights to international travel.

It should take a month to prepare the application and then it may take up to a year for it to be received and God willing approved. So while we have some light on our story, it does mean we will possibly be staying here longer than we were anticipating back in November.

I think that is as clear as I can write it - it was 2:15am when I went to bed, so I hope it all makes sense. It makes sense to me and it renews my hope, that we are not at the end of the line of her story, hopefully we are just about to start writing a whole new beautiful chapter.

Thank you for walking alongside us over the past 48 hours and as we, all around the world, navigate this COVID19 lockdown, I for sure have been a much happier Mumma today, without the dark cloud of worry of my head.

Bless you for blessing us,

Michele and Flora.

