

October 11th 2023

# BLACKIE ON A MISSION

ONE YEAR ON....

Beach days are happy days!

I LIFT UP MY EYES TO THE MOUNTAINS - WHERE DOES MY HELP COME FROM?  
MY HELP COMES FROM THE LORD, THE MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH.  
PSALM 121

# TIME FOR A QUICK UPDATE

How quickly a year has passed!

Flora has just entered term 4 of grade 2 and her early years are all but flying by. She has definitely had some great days at school, but has also found assimilating into a very anglo saxon culture extremely difficult and sometimes as 'white' adults we forget what it must be like when you are the only brown skinned kid. Other kids words and actions can just be mean and she has a lot to process, she will never have a long flowing pony tail like the other girls even if she desperately hopes she will one day.

Yesterday she scored 12 runs on the cricket field when most other kids only managed one or two and her agility and precision with a ball whether it is on a netball court or in the pool for a game of water polo will always be what sets her apart from her peers rather than the long pony tail.

She played netball during the Australian winter and won player of the match twice, her biggest learning curve was learning to pass the ball and not throw it with all of her strength - she could almost throw it the length of the court but the other 7 year olds couldn't catch it. The power she has behind her ball skills is serving her well though for her summer sport of water polo - she plays every Saturday and she can throw that ball down the length of the pool almost in one shot. She's always been a very competent swimmer and the mix of both of these strengths calls me to write - watch this space.....

She's been learning the violin and while she mostly finds it difficult building up those muscles in her fingers she has successfully mastered playing a few familiar tunes like hot cross buns and twinkle twinkle little star.

When we first came home in June 2022, we stayed with my parents and then in January this year we moved back into my property that I had bought back in 2006. I am ever so grateful that I kept it and rented it out while I was away and had it to come back to. Compared to others it's really not much but we are paying it off and we are getting by without the huge debt of what could have been if we didn't have it. Sydney like many places now is just out right expensive. We made a few little modifications and made it our home once again and while it's always

messy or as we prefer to say 'lived in' it is our little piece of paradise for now. We're still living with blank walls but are excited to have some treats come back from Rwanda in a few weeks so we can fill our walls in and showcase our two cultures throughout our home.

I haven't been able to nail a full time job and while that makes me feel a little unsettled if I think about it too much, I am so thankful that I have almost (except for this week hence I have time to write a newsletter) worked every day as a casual teacher. I have been in a private school and I have worked everywhere from Pre K Teacher through to Year 11 Studies of Religion teacher and everything in between. I've taught art to year 6, Japanese to year 2, Music, HSIE and Sport across the grades, Christian Studies to year 7, 8, and 9 - life is never boring and I say yes to any day's work.

It feels like at times, both Flora and I have spent more money and time at Dr, Dentist and Optometrist appointments than we have catching up with people and friends. It's just been one thing after another and I am pretty ready to stop this nonsense. Flora needs to have some teeth removed in hospital and she has a complete phobia of needles sweet girl, so plan A is that she will be put under with a face mask rather than with a needle.

We've continued to keep worshipping at the same church we started attending when we came home last year and Flora is very settled now and even cries and gets upset with me when I tell her it is not Church day today. She's made some great friends there and the children's program is like no other I have ever witnessed. In the school holidays they received 250 kids every day and did a theme of Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory - have you got a golden ticket - I can totally see why she loves it!

I know many people there too especially from my previous life as a teacher in the same local area as the church. I am missing being in a small group but know that for this season of single parenting it is not the right time and that kind of connection will happen again for me in another season.

ADA TWIST SCIENTIST...

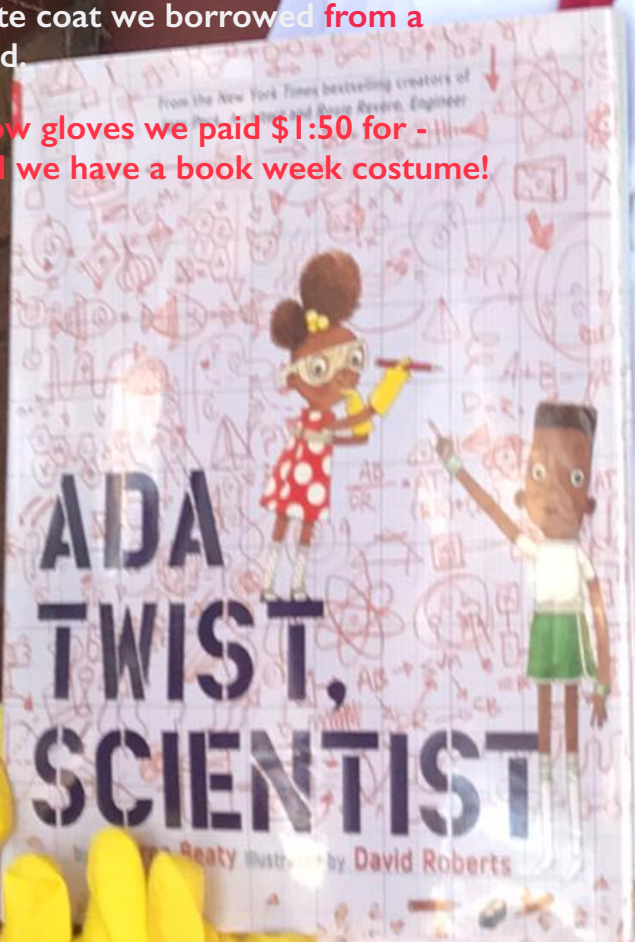
## This Girl Loves Science...

Every year at school for book week you have to choose a book and dress up as one of the characters **from the book** - this year we chose **Ada Twist Scientist**.

Goggles - we found on the side of the road next to a worksite!

White coat we borrowed **from a friend**.

**Yellow gloves we paid \$1:50 for - BAM we have a book week costume!**



Our immigration and citizenship journey is not over yet. Since I have been in Australia for the past 16 months I have been liaising with our immigration lawyer Mrs Joanne Kinslor who graciously agreed to work for me as a family lawyer and process an application for a federal adoption. She usually only does immigration law but after working with us for more than 5 years she was happy to help us.

It's complicated so stay with me - 20th October 2016 in Rwanda we were successful with a domestic adoption. 2021, we were successful with an inter country adoption through the Hague convention which meant that Rwanda would approve a certificate of conformity but unfortunately ticked the incorrect box which would have given Flora automatic citizenship into Australia. Though we tried tirelessly, Rwanda would not change their decision. We needed to apply for permanent residency which is how we got into Australia.

Because this didn't happen, we needed to go to the High Court of Australia to obtain a federal Adoption, to then gain citizenship, which then means I can apply to give her the surname of 'Black' and then an Australian passport.

## Federal Adoption...



## Australian Citizenship...

Why am I telling you all this again? - because on the 18th August after lodging our application, we went to the Supreme Court and received a very promising outcome. His Honour started by saying that he wished to state that he would not get in the way of making orders that are in the best interests of Flora.

On October 20th (Next Friday - 7 years to the date of our first adoption in Rwanda) we have a further directions hearing where His Honour stated that if he is persuaded by our submissions he will dispense the directions hearing and make the orders we are seeking in chambers.

Please pray for favour and finalisation of this long and exhausting story for next Friday. Pray for Flora as she processes it all and pray for the kids at school to be kind and gracious with their words on what could be a very exciting day for Flora.



# PLEASE JOIN US IN PRAYING...

## Praise Points:

- Flora is more settled at school.
- Michele has been working regularly on a casual basis.
- We have made our house a home.
- We have found a new church.
- We have connected with many of you since we returned home - it's almost time to go around again.
- We continue to have relationships with those we love in Rwanda.
- We connected with the Rwandan community in Sydney.

## Prayer Points:

- Please pray for Friday 20th October for favour that the Judge will make the orders in the Chambers.
- For Flora's little heart who desperately wants to return to Rwanda just for one night for her birthday wish.
- That Michele will get sufficient work this school term before the summer break of 6 weeks unpaid.
- Flora's surgery to have her teeth removed will be successful and without trauma.
- We will continue to connect with people in our community.



## Prayer Points

Thankyou once again for being in our boat and following our journey of a missionary life in Rwanda. We value you and appreciate all your support and prayers over the years - bless you - Michele and Flora.



We would love to catch up with more of you for those in Sydney.

Please reach out to us on

0460 346 828

or

[blackieonamission@gmail.com](mailto:blackieonamission@gmail.com)

Michele and Flora.

And yes this is an old photo - she's up to my shoulder now!