

"A Visit I Didn't Want to Make, and the Grace I Didn't Expect"

- By Anna M.



Precious & Anna - 2016



Precious & Anna - 2025

I met Precious* nine years ago. She quickly took up a big space in my heart. She's just one of those warm, lovely people. Super hard not to love. Last year at camp, I spent almost every free minute with her. Sitting with her face to face I learned her story. A story about a broken family, of uncertainty, of pain and fear, but overwhelmingly from her perspective, of God's faithfulness and provision. Some of her story made me angry. But the more I know her, the more I love her. She truly is a gift.

This year the very first day and the very first person our team would visit was Precious' dad, one of the people who let her down, one of the people that I am angry with. We wanted to bless as many families as we could fit into 3 days with some flour, rice, oil, soap and bread. Three big loaves of white fluffy bread are a real treat. I love this idea. So many families could really use help. But does this guy deserve a blessing? Precious thought so. She chose him, over an auntie she often stays with, to receive the gifts we would be bringing.

There was some confusion about the actual location of Precious' dad's house. I have no idea how the drivers navigate in the first place. There are no street signs off the main road, they are just hard packed red dirt roads that would be great if it didn't rain and create large stream beds running crisscross along the way. I kind of enjoy the system that they have adopted. Near the main paved road chaos reigns. There are shops of every kind, people walking everywhere, and boda drivers darting in and out of the side streets. About a half mile in, the chaos calms and you are immersed in the countryside with homes scattered about. You can hear the birds and see all the green that the land boasts. But it's confusing and an adventure in itself. Eventually, with a few phone calls and backtracking a couple times we find the house.

Travel took at least an hour. And all the time I'm wondering how to feel about this man. What should I say? I thought about telling him my husband's story, his story pertained to Precious' dad on a few levels. I was thinking about all the people on this team traveling with us to the same location. Every

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one of them would be at this house. It was a big group. I do not love large groups, especially when I know I'm going to have to talk in front of them. I thought of the amazing prayers of Ugandans. I don't pray like them. But all the thoughts are quiet as I walk around the corner to where he will be.

This man looks just like the girl that I love so much. There was no doubt who he was. He had the biggest smile on his face. I think he was every bit as overwhelmed with the large group as I was, maybe more. But I walked up to him and told him who I was. He looked me in the eye and called me "sister". Someone asked how we could pray for him. We gave him a large supply of food that I hope will last until Precious returns from school. I didn't tell him any of the things that I thought I would say. But I prayed for him.

I prayed for the man whom God used to bring Precious into this world. God let me see this small, broken man in need of a Heavenly Father, just like Precious and just like me. I prayed that God would fix his boda boda, and that He would make his new home a safe place. I thanked God for him and I thanked God for his daughter. I prayed that God would use Precious to redeem this man's life and to change Uganda with her sweet quiet strength that she knows is from the Holy Spirit within her. And I believe that prayer is being answered as we speak.

I am grateful to have met Precious' dad. I loved seeing a space that is familiar to her. Although she has moved around a lot, right now this is home. I am grateful for Hands of Love USA and Uganda for all that it took to make the family visits possible. I'm thankful for all the sponsors. I see God's hand. His love for the kids is clear.

*Name Changed for Privacy

