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From: Brenna Threatt

Stories from South Africa - Meet Motshidisi.

Motshidisi has a gift of bringing joy wherever she goes. She always makes me laugh. I hands down have the most pictures of her because she loves posing for one and is so photogenic.



Motshidisi always makes me laugh. She thinks it's hilarious to talk to me in SeSotho and then stare at me with wide eyes waiting for a response, knowing I can't understand her. One day, she was helping me sort recycling and asked me this long thing in SeSotho and then stared at me. I replied, "no, I'd rather you put that in this bag." She looked shocked and said something else in SeSotho. "No, I can't really understand you, but I can figure out what you're saying." My use of context spoiled her fun, but it didn't stop her from doing it later. :)



Although joy pours out of this girl, her life is far from happy. She and her little brother (shown above) were left by their parents at the grocery store. I don't know their reasoning, but I know that trauma like that deeply affects a person and it causes Motshidisi to shut down, especially when she's corrected.

Motshidisi also struggles academically. She repeated first grade and still really struggled to read. She may have a learning disability and was moved to a special education class (as South Africa does not have academic support and students are either in the general classroom or the special education class). Because Motshidisi shuts down when corrected, her education support needs to be handled delicately. One day, we worked on the word "the" and mixed up the instruction to make it fun and low pressure. We wrote it in custard, used colored pencils, and she made her body in the shape of the letters.



Sweet Motshidisi deals with a lot, but still brings joy wherever she goes. She's creative and active. She loves laughing and having fun. I love spending time with her and look forward to helping her find achievement in school and to bring her gifts to every aspect of her life.

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Our mailing address is:

The Pines - AIMI
P.O. Box 627
Longmont, CO 80502