

In These Days of Mostly Darkness There are
Moments when the Clouds Part, the Sun
Winks and a Rainbow Appears, Briefly

#1

Franklin is energetically cleaning the formica countertop when I enter our kitchen on my morning tea run. She looks up, probably sensing the vibration from my steps on the tile floor, smiles, and gives me her usual two thumbs up greeting before returning to the task at hand.

Early 20's I'm guessing, lives in our housing and just became a naturalized citizen. I remember two things from the day she showed me her citizenship papers; noticing on the document that she'd taken Franklin as her new 'American name' and was beaming with pride.

When the Universe left out sound from Franklin's personal equation she added something special to the eyes. That's where Franklin's smile emanates from. For those of you brought up in the 'radio era' it qualifies as one of those 100,000 watts ones - broadcasting from Boston to Chicago.

As I step into the stairwell adjacent to the kitchen Nadége is descending.

"Good morning Mr. Jim."

"Hey, Nadége, how you doin' today?"

Late 50's, early 60's, first generation, arrived here from the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, got connected with us through Project Able, works in the Housing business office.

I gaze out the glass door toward the side parking lot, intensely debating, for at least the 50th time when or if I should suggest to Nadége that she can drop the 'Mr.' from her salutation.

Then I turn to glance into the kitchen before climbing the stairs back to my office.

Franklin and Nadége are locked in what only can be described as a joyous embrace.

That is the vision of America I believe in.

Jim Cuddy
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