



Father and Son

Donna watched the father and son cautiously approach the check-in area beside the hospital ship. The son, Isaac, was arriving for cataract surgery.

When he was nine months old, Isaac's eyes began clouding with cataracts. For eight years his father Nathaniel sought a cure from local doctors, but none of the medicines or herbs worked. Isaac's vision worsened. Cuts, gashes, and scars on Isaac's legs told stories of running into objects and falling. Lack of vision didn't keep him from playing with friends, but it kept him from starting school with them. Without corrective surgery Isaac's situation would only worsen until he was completely blind.

In 2000 Nathaniel's eyes started blurring like his son's. Today, at 43 years old Nathaniel's dim vision impeded his ability to provide for his son as a contract worker. Yet when Nathaniel heard about the eye screening for Mercy Ships, he knew the doctors onboard could help. On the screening day Nathaniel didn't mention his own situation because his concern was for Isaac's healing.

On 7 February father and son arrived for Isaac's check-in appointment, and Donna, a nurse, observed Nathaniel's shuffling steps. Before looking at the son, Dr. Louis Caravella, an eye surgeon from the United States, confirmed her diagnosis and found that Nathaniel's cataracts were operable. The father and son were both scheduled for surgery the following day. The two checked into the ship's hospital ward together for their last night of blurred vision.

The next day father and son left the ship as they came – together – but now with clear vision.