



November 20, 2023

Dear Friend,

On Sunday morning, November 5, I was walking through the screening area of the Baptist Christian Hospital in Tezpur, India. It was a chaotic place with babies crying, the Love Without Reason volunteers ushering cleft patients from station to station, and four different languages being spoken and translated.

I noticed a mother and daughter sitting outside the surgeon's station. The daughter was crying and angrily gesturing at the surgeons and her mother was trying to calm her down. With the help of the translator, I learned that Nya was nineteen years old. She and her mother had traveled from a neighboring state of Assam, a distance nearly 300 miles away. Nya had her cleft lip repaired as a child, but her palate remained wide and open all these years. Her mother wanted her palate to be repaired and had told the surgeons this. However, Nya wanted her lip to be revised and did not care about her palate. After another evaluation, the medical team cleared her for both surgeries at the same time.



I noticed that during our entire conversation, Nya would not look at me in the eyes. The day before her surgery, I went to visit her in the hospital ward. Again, she would not make eye contact. I asked her about her childhood and how the community treated her. She did not speak. She just cried with all her heart. Finally, she shared about the years of humiliation and torment. She has tried to push through in her academics. She currently is in her second year of college majoring in political science. But the old memories of the names people called her ring in her mind.

I started sharing our Philip's story with her. She identified with Philip's struggles with school, with friendships, with bullying. I did not spend more than an hour talking to her. For Nya, this time was transformative because no one had ever told her that she could overcome the ***spiritual and emotional clefts***, while dealing with the physical clefts on her face. She began to smile as she repeated the words I shared with her. ***"I am a child of God. I was made with a purpose."*** Finally, she looked at me in the eyes and confirmed her identity. For the first time she understood that her value went beyond her cleft.



I am so proud of Nya and I am looking forward to the great things she is going to do in this life. Thank you to all our friends and supporters who gave so generously to change the lives of young people like Nya. In this season of giving, I ask that you consider becoming a PHILIPian and give a monthly gift. Partner with Love Without Reason to find more of the young Nya's around the globe who are looking for that affirmation and self-confidence. We will not stop, Because Every Child Matters!

With gratitude,

Santhosh Mathews
President & CEO
Love Without Reason

P.S. If you are looking for a perfect gift for someone who has everything, consider giving a gift to Love Without Reason in their honor. For every gift over \$25, with the address you provide, we will mail a Christmas card to them. Give your gift today!

P.S.S. For all our Chattanooga friends, be sure to save the date for our **Smile with Santa** event on Saturday, December 9, 2023 at the Eastgate Town Center from 12 – 2 pm. Bring your children or grandchildren to take your special photo with our very own Santa Miles. Learn more at www.love-withoutreason.org/events