

In February 2012 we received a phone call from an orphanage. They told us about a new baby girl whose medical needs could not be treated in any of the local hospitals. They asked for our help.

Alea was suffering from biliary atresia, and because her liver was so damaged she was not a candidate for the Kasai procedure that would have postponed her need for a liver transplant. When Alea arrived at NDFH, the first thing we noticed about her was how jaundiced she was. Her skin was orange and her eyes glowed yellow-green. Alea's abdomen was also very distended, yet another sign of how damaged her liver was.

In China, organ donations aren't a culturally accepted practice, so when Alea was put on "the list" we didn't give the possibility of a liver being found in China for her much thought.

We explored surgery in the US; we talked about a super-quick adoption; and we prayed every day that God would give Alea a new liver. Each of the life-saving options were impossible in their own way, and we wondered just how Alea's precious life would be saved.

Then, May 11, 2012, she vomited a mouthful of blood.

Terrified that Alea could be experiencing acute liver failure, we admitted her to a hospital that does liver transplants. Alea went through many evaluations and tests, and then the doctors told us to "be emotionally and financially prepared for a liver to come available this month." We were shocked. Maybe Alea's miracle would come from the place we least expected it?

For weeks Alea waited. She was sleeping poorly, malnourished and even required a blood transfusion. She seemed to be deteriorating, and there was nothing that could be done but wait and pray that the right liver would become available.

June 9th we received a phone call late in the afternoon. A suitable liver had been found! Things fell quickly into place and we raced to the hospital to meet with the doctor. A liver was indeed ready and waiting for Alea, but this surgery was not going to be easy.

She was malnourished, which would make recovery risky. Alea was running a low fever, and the immune-suppressant medications she would be on after surgery would increase her risk of infection. Alea's bile ducts would need to be attached to her new liver, and this part of the surgery was complex. The surgery would take at least ten hours and though statistics for adults were good, children often did not survive. There was a chance that Alea wouldn't make it out of the surgery room. However, we knew that this was Alea's only chance at survival, and so we signed the surgery papers.

The hours ticked by after we handed our precious little girl over to the surgeons. The surgery stretched through the night and into the next morning. Finally, at 10:00 am Sunday morning, eleven and a half hours after Alea had gone into surgery, they were closing her up. The head surgeon came out to talk with us. "It went well," he said. He also explained to us that Alea's liver had come from a two year-old child who died of brain damage. This child's parents wanted their child's organs to be donated, to save another child's life. A selfless choice in a time of unspeakable grief made by any family, made even more miraculous by the fact that this is China, a place where organ donation is rarely considered.

The surgery was done. She had survived. For another month Alea recovered in the hospital as her little body learned to accept its new liver. Her color changed daily and became rosy and pink.

A miracle had happened. We texted the director of Alea's orphanage, telling her that Alea had just survived the desperately needed liver transplant. In reply, we received this message, "Thank you, thank you, thank you for saving her life."



The phone rang on a Friday. There was a baby boy, three months old, abandoned at birth. His orphanage begged us to help him. None of the hospitals in their area could help, and six organizations they asked for help were unwilling to try. We agreed to give him a chance.

The top surgeon of FuWai hospital was gracious enough to review **Isaac's** file, and gravely told us that if Isaac was cyanotic – if his skin was blue – he would need surgery right away. The orphanage sent us a picture; Isaac was very cyanotic.

Chinese New Year was fast approaching but the orphanage managed to get train tickets and we met Isaac at the station where oxygen was immediately administered. Then, Isaac was rushed to the hospital to do preliminary tests before things shut down for Chinese New Year.

At the hospital it was determined that he had an extremely complex heart disease, but was a candidate for heart surgery. Isaac's condition was too unstable for him to remain at New Day during the holiday, his oxygen saturation was in the 50's and 60's and he struggled with each breath. Isaac was admitted into PICU where he was kept on oxygen and placed on life-sustaining medications.

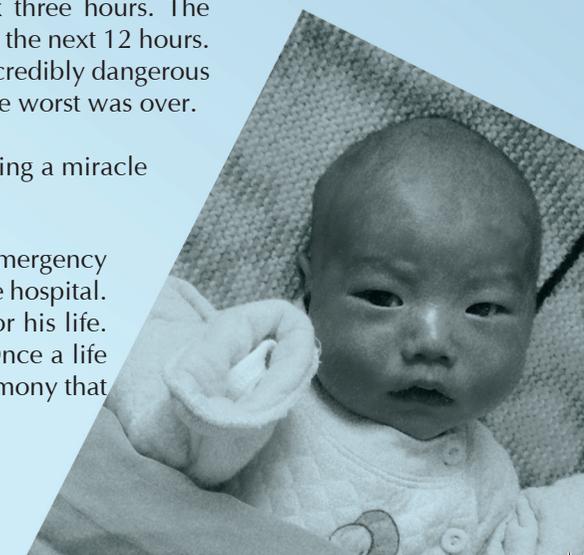
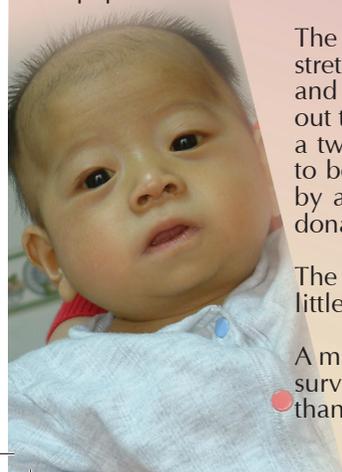
After Chinese New Year was over, we transferred Isaac to the heart hospital. He was accompanied by one of our skilled nannies. Because of how unstable Isaac was, his nanny had to hold him constantly and was often calling for the doctors... We prayed that his surgery would be scheduled soon.

On Friday, February 3rd, we got a call first thing in the morning that Isaac needed to have emergency surgery right away. He had been crying and struggling to breathe so much that for the past 24 hours he had been on medication to keep him calm. We rushed to the hospital to sign the papers and meet with the surgeon. It was risky, because of Isaac's weak state. They were concerned that he would not survive the surgery.

But miracles never cease to happen. The complex surgery only took three hours. The surgeon was very happy with how it went, but all were concerned about the next 12 hours. Isaac was taken off of the ventilator Saturday night, just a day after his incredibly dangerous surgery. His oxygen stats were running in the 80's and it seemed that the worst was over.

A few days later Isaac was released to the regular floor. We were watching a miracle unfold, and could not wait to welcome our little fighter home.

Friday, exactly one week after Isaac went into the operating room for emergency surgery – a desperate attempt to save his life – Isaac was released from the hospital. For the first time in his life, Isaac was not living in a hospital fighting for his life. Instead of beeping monitors, he was surrounded by laughter and joy. Once a life that seemed impossible to save, Michael is now a living, breathing, testimony that miracles still happen.





November 11, 2011 a little girl was born in China. But all was not as her family might have pictured those early days with a new baby... she was born with anal atresia. Sadly she was abandoned three days later, a gravely sick baby girl.

On December 8th,

Lydia

had emergency surgery. In the rush to save her life, the doctors failed to do certain tests that would have led to the discovery of another congenital disease. One day after Lydia was transferred to New Day Foster Home she was admitted into the hospital with pneumonia. It was there that Lydia was diagnosed with a serious heart defect.

In the following months Lydia fell victim to the vicious cycle of an unrepaired heart defect. She was too tiny for heart surgery so the doctors said to wait. But waiting with a poorly functioning heart left Lydia susceptible to illness, and she was admitted to the hospital again and again.

Even when Lydia's lungs were clear, she struggled with fevers. During a hospital stay in May we asked a doctor who specialized in anal atresia to take a look at Lydia. The doctor examined her and suggested that he do the final repair on her anus.

May 22, 2012 Lydia went in for surgery. After the operation the surgeon's report was astounding. Lydia's surgery in December was not done well and had been leaking. Excrement had been slowly trickling back into her abdomen, creating the perfect conditions for many deadly infections. No wonder she had always been running a low fever... it was a miracle that Lydia was alive at all.

Lydia had the final repairs made to her intestine and made it through the surgeries well. However, she remained weak because of her heart condition. In August Lydia experienced two episodes of cardiac arrest and underwent emergency open-heart surgery August 18th.

For Lydia to survive with the kind of damage she had in her intestine is medically impossible, and all of that on top of a serious heart condition is mind-blowing. But she is alive, nothing short of a beautiful miracle.



The hospital in Wayne's home province that had been treating him for pneumonia and meningitis sent him home to die. They said that his case was hopeless. No one had ever been trained to feed Wayne, who was born with a bilateral cleft lip and palate, and aspiration must have led to infection.

Wayne

's orphanage knew that he wouldn't last long, but they chose not to give up so quickly.

We were at full capacity when we heard about Wayne's situation, but we couldn't ignore the orphanage's plea. This little baby had been given up on. His special need was not too serious, but because of his situation and circumstances, he had no hope. He was going to die unless we helped. Saying a desperate prayer for the little one's safety, we called the orphanage and said, "If he'll make it, send him."

Early Sunday morning, November 4, 2012, Wayne was admitted into a hospital in Beijing. Later when we called to ask about his condition, we were told that he was no longer running a fever and that his pneumonia had improved drastically. Wayne had previously been diagnosed with meningitis, but the doctors ruled it out. Two days later Wayne was released from the hospital, totally healthy.

When we prayed that short prayer Friday afternoon, we hoped only for survival. In His abundant grace, God gave us a miracle. Wayne's Chinese name means "victory." The Father to the fatherless has already won a great and marvelous victory in little Wayne's life. He has reminded us to believe in miracles.

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Children's Amazing Stories



Her story began with life June 2, 2012, the day she was born, but in less than a week it was a tragedy. Left in a bundle at the local hospital,

Annabel

's tiny, frail body struggled to survive. But Annabel was found, and then admitted immediately into the hospital where she was diagnosed with a very complicated tracheal

esophageal fistula – a disorder of the digestive system in which the esophagus does not develop properly. Annabel survived on IV nutrition for nearly two months, until she came into our care.

Annabel arrived July 26, 2012 and was admitted immediately into the hospital. As Annabel's condition was examined, the doctors were very concerned. Half of one lung had collapsed and was bleeding. She was in serious condition. As the days went by and Annabel didn't gain strength, the chances of her surviving the impending surgery grew slimmer... and then Annabel began to deteriorate. For Annabel to have a chance at survival, her doctors were going to have to leap at the fast-narrowing window of opportunity and operate.

August 13th the doctors scheduled her for surgery – a last-ditch effort to save her life. The 4 hour surgery on our only five-pound treasure was successful, but Annabel was not out of the woods yet. Her lung was still collapsed and she was very, very weak.

Annabel's life continued to be a miracle, however, and her lung slowly recovered and she began receiving nutrition through a feeding tube. Within a few weeks, she was drinking formula, for the first time in her life.

September 28, 2012, two months after she had arrived into our care, Annabel was released from the hospital. When her story began, it looked like a tragedy. But today? Annabel is very much a miracle and her story is full of overwhelming hope.

