



March 2018

Serving with Mercy Ships

Douala, Cameroon

Many patients leave the Africa Mercy with a happy ending, and 33-year-old Jacqueline was no different.



Unlike many Obstetric Fistula patients who come to Mercy Ships for surgery, Jacqueline's daughter survived the prolonged, complicated birth that caused her permanent incontinence eight years ago. But sadly, Jacqueline was abandoned by her

husband and shunned by her community—common realities for many women who live with Obstetric Fistulas.

Before she even came to the ship, however, Jacqueline found a new reason to smile: Jean, a man who lovingly stayed by her side, despite her condition. Their romance was often questioned by people who tried to discourage him from staying with her, but their love was powerful.

“There are two types of people in this world: those who have treated me cruelly and have left me, and those who have stayed and supported me.

(Jean) has stood by me when no one else did, and I am so grateful to him,” said Jacqueline.

Jacqueline was passed around to different hospitals and doctors with no results, and she had given up hope of ever receiving treatment so she could start her life over with



Jean. But a simple procedure from professional volunteer surgeons on the Africa Mercy means she now has a new chance at life!

“When I get home, I want to move out of my village with Jean and start a new life—a better life! I'm tired of living how I've been living, but now I am stronger and will have more opportunities,” said Jacqueline.

Greetings family and friends,

Unfortunately Jacqueline's story of rejection is not the exception, but a reality for many women who live with Obstetric Fistulas. Obstetric Fistulas is a leaking bladder - an injury picked up during a difficult or prolonged birth. This is treatable in most cases, but many women living in countries with under developed healthcare systems do not have access to the procedure to fix the problem. The result being that many of them have to live with this problem for the rest of their lives.

Mercy Ships has the tradition to celebrate successful surgeries by holding a dress ceremony for these women. This is a joyous occasion where patients, crew, doctors and nurses all celebrate the healing and the start of a new life for these ladies. The second photo is the photo that was taken of Jacqueline at her dress ceremony. We bring all honor and glory to God for Jacqueline's healing and I invite you to celebrate with her for a new beginning.

Many blessings

Walter

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