

The mystery of a hospital visitor is solved

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A 12-year-old mystery has been solved, and in its place a new story is beginning.

On Dec. 12, the Reporter-News published a story about a man with Abilene ties, James Wallace, who has written a spiritual book with a mystery included. The mystery concerned a woman who showed up at Hendrick Medical Center in 2004 when James and Nancy Wallace's son, Josh, was in critical condition.

The mystery woman came to assure Nancy Wallace, who had questioned whether God was listening to her prayers, that he was indeed paying attention. She knew because God had moved her to go to the hospital with that message.

"We've always wondered who that was," Wallace said in an interview for the Dec. 12 story.

Now he knows. Her name is Cara Naizer, choir director at Cooper High School. On Sunday, Dec. 13, someone mentioned to Naizer that he had read the story and thought she was the mystery woman. Turns out she was and contacted the Wallace family, who lives in Starkville, Mississippi.

"This has just been a great reunion," Naizer said. "It's just been awesome."

The Wallaces couldn't agree more. Not only has the mystery been solved, the new story promises to be even better because of its potential to help people who are struggling, James Wallace said in an email.

"I think this continuing story can help a lot of people restore and rebuild their faith," he wrote.

Wallace's book is titled "Walking With God — How a Simple, Daily Habit Can

Change Your Life." A chapter titled, "God Is In Control," tells the story of the Wallace's son and the mystery visit to the hospital.

In 2004, Josh Wallace was a student at Hardin-Simmons University. Incidentally, Naizer is a Hardin-Simmons graduate. Josh played football for the Cowboys and was injured in a game. He was hospitalized and developed an infection which threatened his life.

As Josh's condition worsened, his mother began to question whether God was listening to her prayers. Out of the blue, a woman approached in the hospital and said she was the wife of one of Josh's male nurses, who had told her about Josh.

The woman, now identified as Naizer, explained to Nancy Wallace that she was sitting in Sunday school at her church that morning when God urged her to visit Nancy and give her a message: "God hears your prayers. He is listening."

Nancy regained her faith and Josh regained his health. He is fully recovered now, his father said, and lives in Lafayette, La., with his wife and child.

Naizer has since read the book and is amazed. Her husband, Ronnie, is still a nurse on the same floor at Hendrick. In 2004, the Naizers were members of First Baptist Church in Clyde. Cara was sitting in her Sunday school class that morning when she started singing a Ricky Skaggs' gospel song, "Somebody's Prayin'."

"That's when the Holy Spirit moved me," Naizer said. "I can't explain it. It was an overwhelming experience."

She quickly arranged for her in-laws to take care of the children, who at the time were ages 8 and 6. She took off for the hospital. She remembers what she told everyone as she hastily left church.

"I don't know why I'm going," she said. "I'm just going."

She went to the intensive care unit and found Nancy Wallace sitting alone, worrying about whether God was listening to her prayers about her son. The women didn't know each other or why this strange occurrence was taking place. But they knew

something more powerful.

"We both knew the Holy Spirit had moved both of our hearts," Naizer said.

Somehow, names were never exchanged, Josh recuperated, and the families lost touch. But now they have reconnected and most likely will remain close the rest of their lives. The Wallaces have two daughters and two grandchildren living in Abilene, so they visit often and plan to get together with Ronnie and Cara Naizer on the next trip.

Whenever that reunion occurs, Cara said, will be the right time, even if it takes longer than she would like.

"God's timing is perfect," she said.

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