

‘God’s Purposes Working’ as Tada’s Oscar Nod Revoked

The Oscars are just a few days away and many were excited at the possibility of seeing Christian author Joni Eareckson Tada perform her Oscar-nominated song “Alone Yet Not Alone” at the awards.

However, the Academy withdrew the nomination in January over what some call a technicality.

The song is named after the title of the movie, a true life story of two women and their journey of faith and survival during the French and Indian War.

Tada’s rendition of the song was so good it received a nomination for best original song. A diving accident in 1967 left Tada a quadriplegic and in a wheelchair, something that made recording the song a big challenge.

“My lungs don’t work very well. I don’t have a lot of strength physically but you do Lord Jesus. Let me borrow your lungs Jesus and he certainly gave me his strength,” Tada said in the YouTube recording of the song.

But a huge backlash resulted in an investigation into why the little-known film would receive such recognition.

The Academy later pulled the nomination, accusing composer Bruce Broughton of using his influence in an email as a former Academy governor to get the nomination.

The Academy president said the email crossed the line because it gave the appearance of receiving an unfair advantage.

Broughton said that’s ridiculous. He said all he did was ask others to consider the song.

"If you actually read the rules, you can go on the website and read the rules, I didn't really break any rules," he said. "What I admit to doing was sending some emails to people who I thought would overlook the song.

"They don't agree with me on what I did and that's basically what it is. As far as the rule breaking, you know all of the songs that are nominated and all the songs that weren't nominated have tens of thousands, maybe hundreds of thousands of dollars of promotion," he added.

"Our assignment when we were doing it was to write a song that's inspirational as 'Amazing Grace' before 'Amazing Grace' ever existed. We tried to make it simple, universal, and just timeless and memorable," Dennis Spiegel, the song's lyricist, said.

Many see the Academy's move as bigotry against the song and message. Other members of the Academy, including famous film composer Hans Zimmer, said the ruling is unfair.

But Tada is taking it all in stride. She said she is hopeful that good will come from the controversy surrounding the song.

"Well when I heard the nomination was rescinded my first thought was, 'Oh, come on. Really?' " she said. "But God's purposes are working out because some of this controversy I think might be drawing more attention to the song and even to the film than had it just sailed through to the Oscars."