

## Excerpt from Chapter 2

When we got to radiology, they called us in almost immediately. Since Karla was claustrophobic, they had to sedate her before the MRI. But even after taking the pill, she still didn't think she could go through with it. I recall a nurse rudely warning us that if she didn't calm down, she might have to come back in the morning when an anesthesiologist would be available. But I couldn't imagine having to worry all night about what was wrong with my baby.

As I sat there trying to calm her, another nurse approached Karla and shared that she, too, was claustrophobic. "I'm going to share a secret with you, but you can't tell anyone," she whispered to us. "I can't even go to the bathroom with the door closed!" We all laughed. The nurse suggested that Karla cover her eyes before going into the tube. "I've done this before, and if I can do it, anybody can do it!" She was the first of the many medical professionals we encountered in the months that followed who would make our journey more bearable. Karla calmed down and agreed to do it.

"All I remember about the MRI was having a towel put over my eyes, having earphones playing KIIS-FM, and zoning out lol. I got off the table and was like, 'That was it?'"

I sat alone outside the MRI room, while Michael was in the waiting area. About 10 minutes later, they walked Karla out. She was still groggy from the sedative and needed help walking to the bathroom. We laughed hysterically as I tried holding her up while turning my head, at her insistence, so that I wouldn't see her going to the bathroom. In fact, she made me sing. I'll always treasure those moments of laughter because they made me believe, at least momentarily, that everything would be okay.

When we walked out of the restroom, I asked the nurse, "What do we do now?" For a few minutes I had forgotten the seriousness of why we were there, until I heard the solemn way she said, "Dr. Ambrose is on his way." I helped Karla get dressed and we joined Michael in the waiting room. There were just two other people there, and it was eerily quiet when Dr. Ambrose arrived. He sat down next to me and across from Karla.