



THE SACRED AERIE

FREE SPIRIT
MESSAGES



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... An Uplifting Wind Beneath Your Wings To Carry You Through These Challenging Times!

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"GRACE IN ADVERSITY"

Page 1 (of 5)

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN





GRACE IN ADVERSITY

There's an old saying "*If it doesn't kill you, it makes you stronger.*" Here's more than enough living proof...

Diagnosed with acute rheumatoid arthritis at the tender age of thirteen, young athlete, dancer, equestrian, and cheerleader Mikaela Farasyn didn't have time to throw herself a "pity party."

Mysterious pain in her shoulders and arms, soon spreading into her hands, sent her to the doctor. "Sure, I was shocked, really sad when I first heard the news," pretty, perky Mikaela admits. But as soon as medications brought some welcome relief, she simply decided "... to keep doing what I love to do."



With her body no longer fully cooperating, Mikaela realized she probably couldn't expect to be "the best" anymore, but maybe competition with others wasn't really the point. She would *dance with her heart* for the sheer joy of it now, "...happy I could still do it at all."



These powerful lessons in resiliency, strength, and determination would serve Mikaela well four years later when the next even bigger challenge came.

Just a few days before Christmas 2012, Mikaela and her boyfriend went sledding with friends in Oregon's Ochoco Mountains. Riding tandem, she and Derek were gleefully speeding down a steep hill. But when they hit the packed snow "jump" at the bottom, her head snapped back violently. As they landed, she rolled limply off the sled.

"At first it didn't hurt at all," Mikaela remembers, "but I knew something was terribly, terribly wrong."

Mikaela just sat there for five or ten minutes, collecting herself. When she finally stood up, she heard her neck *crack*. She was crying uncontrollably as Derek helped her walk slowly to his truck. That's when the excruciating pain really hit.

By the time Mikaela got to the Redmond hospital ER many hours later, "... my head felt like a bowling ball, I couldn't hold it up." No wonder. The CT scan revealed a C-2 fracture with severe subluxation—in layman's terms, *a broken neck!*

She was quickly transported to St. Charles Hospital in Bend, where she underwent her first emergency surgery on Christmas Eve.

Unfortunately, initial treatment was unsuccessful, so less than a month later (January 22, 2013) Mikaela was surgically fitted with a dreaded "halo" brace, four long, stabilizing screws penetrating her skull.



THREE GENERATIONS OF "GRIT"
(Left to right: Mom, Mikaela, Grandmother)

Of course, on February 23, 2013 Mikaela attended her Winter Formal!



Invincible Mikaela has since attended her prom, graduated with her high school class, and after three very long, challenging months, traded in her “halo” for a simple neck brace (which she still wears occasionally).

The next time something goes seriously crosswise in your own life, try to remember young Mikaela Farasyn’s favorite quote:

***“The robbed that smiles,
Steals something from the thief.”***

— William Shakespeare

May this humble offering inspire
The Extraordinary Being
You *already are...*

Many Blessings,
Teryl "T" Johansson

Page 5 (of 5) ↑
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