

Episode 24: Marina was stalked

What if you kind of knew someone in high school, then you became friends with that person when you both ended up at the same college?

What if you started hanging out with that person, and talking with him most days before or after classes?

What if you confided in this person, and came to really appreciate the friendship that was growing?

Then, what if you started to realize that this person was not at all the person you thought they were?

That's what happened to Marina, and it was a pretty scary time – not just for her, but for her unborn baby. She's just now starting to be able to tell this whole story out loud.

As you listen to Marina, ask yourself a question – is this podcast worth supporting? If you get any value from this episode, or any of the other incredible stories that my guests tell on this show, I would really appreciate it if you'd consider supporting the show through my Patreon. You can do that at [WhatWasThatLike.com/support](https://www.patreon.com/WhatWasThatLike).

And now, here's Marina.

Scott

When this happened, can you describe how scared you were?

Marina

Yeah. I think the scariest part, for me, was definitely when I first realized that he was in my house - it was not a welcome sight for anybody. He had been over before, but the unexpectancy of it and it happening so quickly was definitely the most heart-pounding, I think.

Scott

I want to learn about this guy. Now, his name is Brian, right?

Marina

Yes, his name is Brian.

Scott

And you first met him in high school?

Marina

Yeah, I went to a high school that was pretty big. In my class alone, there were 3 Brian's - so, we just differentiated them by the last initials. He was definitely one of the 3 Brian's. He was the quietest of them and the one who I probably interacted with the least. He did sit behind me at some point in, like, AP government or something like that. Again, there were very little interactions with him in high school. I hardly remember anything about him, to be honest, in high school. Most of the interaction came when I ran into him in college.

Scott

That seems, kind of, like, a coincidence. Was this a local college that you both went to?

Marina

Yeah, it's a college in my hometown. So it's not that unusual because, I think, a lot of people ended up there. He was just like one of those people who I knew was really bright and really smart. So, it was kind of weird just running into him there. I thought he would be on to bigger and better and things like that. I ran into him, actually - he was coming out of a hallway as I was going into it. I think I literally ran into him because I was so buried on my phone. So, I guess, he had a class there right before I did. I would see him pretty much every day going into that hallway. I'm not sure whether he was there every day for that same class or if he just started showing up there, but I did see him almost every day in that hallway.

Scott

That's part of what I was wondering about. After you know what happened later and look back on how you happen to run into him sometimes, do you think if that was maybe a coincidence or if that was planned on?

Marina

I want to hope that it was just a coincidence - I really do. I lived on campus at that time. I was always running late to my classes, so I want to hope that it was a coincidence. Whether or not if it was actually planned or not is a little bit terrifying to think about. Actually, I haven't even thought about that until right now. So, that's a little bit scary.

Scott

So you knew him before and met him again - but you didn't really know him that well. How did that develop from that point?

Marina

Like, we would stand outside and talk because I was already late, so what's an extra 5 minutes? I would just stand up there and start talking to him. As time went by, I eventually gave him my phone number. Then, we started hanging out after class, getting a coffee on campus, meeting in the library, studying, and things like that. It kind of developed from there to the point where we were actually hanging out most days just outside of school.

Scott

But during this time, you were actually dating someone else, right?

Marina

Yeah, I was working as a waitress and I was actually dating one of my customers, which everybody knew about it. So, I didn't think much of it. I didn't think that I'd need to constantly remind him that I was dating someone or anything like that. I just went through the motions with that and kept the two separate.

Scott

Did you get any kind of impression that he wanted more than just being friends and hanging out?

Marina

Not from, like, his actions or anything, but he definitely had told me on a few occasions that he remembered me from high school and all these feelings he had for me in high school, etc. So,

he had told me, but the way he was telling me was almost, like, "Oh, well, I used to. You were my high school crush." It's wasn't so much like, "Oh, this is what I want now. This is how I feel about you now." There was more past tense, like, "This is how I felt." Then, eventually, after maybe six months or so, it came, "Now, I still have these feelings for you, etc." And I was like, "Pump the brakes, please."

Scott

What did you do about that when he told you?

Marina

I just, kind of, kept him at bay for a little bit. I wasn't really sure what to do at first. I had kind of been in that situation before, but that was someone who I had been so close with, who knew so much about me at that point, who I would go to with the problems that I was having in my relationship to get advice and things like that. So, I definitely had to sit him down and just tell him explicitly, like, "I see you as a friend and as a brother. I don't think I could ever see you in that way. But I don't want us to not be friends." So, I kept him at bay. I tried not to get his hopes too high that it would go anywhere farther than that. But, maybe, I just didn't do a great job. I definitely tried to make it clear that I was already dating someone at that time, that I was invested in that relationship, and that I valued his friendship.

Scott

You were invested in the other relationship because you got pregnant, right?

Marina

Yeah, I actually got pregnant fairly quickly into that relationship. We had decided together that we were going to keep the baby, raised the baby, and just try to work on it. Whether our relationship would end up lasting or not, we wanted to do it for our child in one way or the other. So, I knew I was always gonna have a relationship with that person. Then, that's kind of what started it all.

Scott

Right. When you became pregnant - obviously, you were involved with that relationship - Brian knew that it wasn't going to go anywhere. Was that when things started to get kind of weird?

Marina

Yeah, definitely. I think he thought that I was hiding it from him, which was not my intention and not what I was doing. I never intentionally meant to make him feel that way or make him feel like he was in the dark about it. In my mind, I was so young, but it wasn't any of his business, to be blatantly honest. He didn't need to know anything about it - it wasn't his kid. If he was the father, then it would have been a completely different story, but he wasn't. He didn't know who my boyfriend was at that time. He didn't know who the father was. He didn't know how involved he was or how involved he want to be. He got upset because I told some of my really close friends from, like, when I was in kindergarten before I told him. So, I think, when I did that, in his mind, it just felt like, maybe, I was pushing him completely out. I was going to tell him, obviously, eventually, but I just had other priorities and other people to think of first - my family, my very close friends and, obviously, the baby's father. I had to think about those people first before him. I mean, he was a fairly new friend. I didn't go screaming it to the world before I told him but he wasn't very happy that he wasn't the first on the list to find out, I think.

Scott

How did it come out? How did you figure out that he wasn't too happy?

Marina

He definitely got more moody and snippy with me. If I had to go to doctor's appointments and we couldn't be able to hang out, he would just, kind of, text me some nasty things - I just kind of remember it - general things like how I don't care about him anymore and how can I put this other guy above him when we've been such good friends. I was, like, "But it's not about that. It's about the baby at the end of the day." As I said, he wasn't involved in the baby's life - he's not the father. "You don't need to be at my doctor's appointments. I don't need you to take me to doctor's appointments. I'm capable of getting there on my own."

Scott

He wanted to take you to those appointments?

Marina

Yeah. That was, like, the first kind of red flag. We wanted to go with me to those appointments. He wanted to buy me things for the baby and for the nursery, and I was like, "I'm only a couple of months pregnant at this point." I remember that being so overwhelming because I wasn't even ready to think about any of those things yet. I was still wrapping my head around the fact that I was pregnant in the first place, what I was going to do about that, and how I was going to manage that. But yeah, he definitely tried to interject himself into situations where he didn't necessarily need to be.

Scott

And how old were you at that time?

Marina

I think I was 22 because I turned 23 just after I had my son. I was fairly young.

Scott

How else did he start annoying you? "Annoying" might be a mild word.

Marina

It started with him just, kind of, popping up at the house, which was okay for a little bit at the beginning. He had been hanging out at my house before - usually by invite. He would just pop up if he knew I was there. Then, it started getting really weird. He would start showing up in my house very late at night. He drove a motorcycle.

Scott

Did you live by yourself at that time?

Marina

I actually didn't. I had actually just moved back in with my parents to, kind of, get my head around everything. Everything was so overwhelming at that point where it was, like, "I don't think I can handle being out on my own right now, dealing with roommates, and dealing with X, Y, and Z bills. I just need to get somewhere where I know I'm safe, where I know my child is safe, where my pregnancy can go smoothly, and then I'll just commute back and forth to school." So, that was what I did. So, he would show up right in front of my parents' house. I would hear the motorcycle engine sitting outside my house. I would look out the window and I could see his helmet - I remember vividly that his helmet had a black visor that the streetlights would reflect

off of - and I could see him sitting out there. I would get text messages saying, "Well, I know you're home. I can see your light. I can see the light from your phone. I know you're there. Why aren't you answering? Why aren't you coming outside? Etc." which is really, really creepy, especially when it was coming from someone who, at that time, I didn't have any reason to feel like I needed to worry about.

Scott

That started to, kind of, let you know that something is up...

Marina

Yeah, I definitely started to think that something was up at that point. Then, after some of the motorcycle incidences, I started getting phone calls from unknown numbers, blocked numbers, and no-name phone numbers every day, all day, and I could not understand what was happening. At first, it wasn't that bad. At first, it was maybe, like, once an hour for the whole day. Then, it started to escalate more and more and more until one day I had to turn off my phone because it was ringing so much. I turned it back up the next morning and I could vividly remember that there were 410 missed calls from the same unknown number. 410 was, like, the most unnerving sight to see - it was just burned in my mind.

Scott

So he literally just stayed up all night dialing your number...

Marina

Yeah. I found out later that it actually wasn't even him. He had gotten one of his friends to stay up all night dialing my number. Yeah, it was literally the most unnerving thing I've ever seen. I'll never pick up a phone number that I don't know, ever again. Any blocked calls, I'd ignore.

Scott

When those calls first started coming in, did you answer them in the beginning?

Marina

In the beginning, I would answer them and I can remember the silence on the other side. It wasn't ever like a dial tone - there was never any buzzing - just silence.

Scott

So you could tell that the call got completed and you were connected with someone?

Marina

Yeah, they just weren't saying anything. I remember hearing a click every time I picked it up. So, eventually, I just started ignoring it. Sometimes, I would say, like, "Hello? Hello?? Who is this?" and I would get nothing back in return - not even breathing. I don't know how but whoever was on the other line didn't even sound like they were breathing. Then, I was out with a friend one day and I had him pick up the phone and yelled in the phone, "You better stop calling!!" That seemed to ebb it for a little bit for, maybe, an hour or so. Then, it started again. It was definitely unnerving.

Scott

That's got to be the creepiest thing to know that somebody is out there calling you over and over again.

Marina

Yeah, it gives me chills as I'm thinking about it now. No matter what I did, no matter how many times I told them to stop calling and to leave me alone, it just kept going. That night, I had the 410 calls after I had my phone on for a while before I've gone to sleep.

Scott

Right. So there was even more than that.

Marina

Yeah. But that was just the number that appeared on the notification when I turned on my phone, and I can remember it so vividly. It still gives me chills when I think about it.

Scott

Can you talk about the day that he actually showed up in your house?

Marina

Yeah. On the day that he showed up at my house, I had woken up pretty late. I was supposed to go to school that day. I had woken up at 9.30 AM for my 9.00 AM class, but I hadn't really been feeling well. Anyways, when I've gone to bed the night before and when I woke up, I was still feeling kind of queasy and had a little bit of a headache - I chalked it up to my pregnancy. I just wasn't gonna push myself that day. So, I got up, went to my restroom which is located outside of my bedroom, did my regular morning routine, took a shower, brushed my teeth, went to the restroom, went downstairs, got a glass of water, and came back upstairs. When I came back and turned the corner into my room, I saw him standing there.

Scott

He was in your room?

Marina

He was in my room, which was really, really scary, to say the least. My heart was pounding out of my chest. Luckily, I had not grabbed a glass cup because when I dropped it, it would have shattered. By pure chance, I had grabbed, like, a plastic cup, but I can hear it hitting the floor still - I don't know. I like to think that, maybe, somehow, he got in when I was taking a shower. Part of me was terrified to think that, maybe, he was in my room the whole night because I had not been home the night before - I had been at school.

Scott

How could he have been in your room without you knowing?

Marina

I don't know. I don't know if he was in my closet. I don't know if he was under my bed. There's were a lot of nooks and crannies in that room and a lot of places to not make noise where I hid from my parents when I was younger - or if I was mad or just needed to get away.

Scott

So you came around the corner and made eye contact with him standing there. What did you do? Did any of you say anything?

Marina

Neither of us said anything. I couldn't remember how heavy the room felt when I walked in. I can remember the eerie silence when I walked in and he was just staring at me with a look on his face that I had never seen before. The look in his eyes...

Scott

What did that look tell you? What was it like?

Marina

It told me to run. I felt like I had been punched with a ton of bricks when I came around that corner and saw him standing there. I felt so betrayed. I felt so vulnerable. When I think about it right now, it hurts my heart to know that it came from someone who was such a good friend at the beginning. My feet just took over and I turned really, really fast. I was a dancer at that point in my life. So, I turned extremely quickly and started to run, but he was just that much quicker than me. He grabbed me, dragged me back into my room, slammed me against the bookcase - there was a bookcase right beside the door - and told me that there was only one way to make it stop, and that was to call everybody and declare on my Facebook that he is the father of my child, that it is his kid, and that he is the one who is going to be there. I mustered up every saliva I had in my mouth and spit it in his face and told him, "NO."

The way the room was set up was the door and bookcase were there, and my bed was right up against this wall. He threw me across the room onto the bed, jumped on me, and pinned me down. He had both his fist on my wrists and his knees pressed into my legs. My phone had been right on my bed stand and I heard I hit the ground - my first instinct was, "Reach for it. Go for it. You have to get help. You have to get out of here." So, as I was reaching for it, I felt him tugging at the shirt that I was wearing - he was trying to rip it off and pull everything down so that he could violate me, embarrass me, and do whatever his intentions were at that moment. I don't know how I managed to wriggle free from him, which is very hard to do in a bed that suppresses down. Somehow, I managed to run away from him. I grabbed my phone and flipped onto my feet. As I was raising my phone, I remember his hand hitting my hand and the phone flying across the room. Then it was a race for the phone. So, I turned and ran for it - he ran for it too. He got there first and slammed his foot down on top of it. As he did so, I pushed him off, pulled the phone out from under his foot, and he stepped on it again. So, I figured that wasn't gonna be an option at that point.

Then, I heard him say, "If you want to stop, you know how." Again, I said, "No." I pushed my way past him towards the door and just ran. My bedroom is at the top of a 1-story flight of stairs but it has 2 landings on it, so it curves around the corner. So I got down to the first landing and to the second one. That's when I felt his hand grabbing my ponytail and pulling me back. He turned me around, put his hands on my neck, and held me over the staircase. Again, he said, "The only way it's gonna stop is if you do what I say." I told him, "No, I'm not gonna do it."

(Sobbing)

The next thing I remember was the grip letting go and I heard myself screaming - I don't remember doing it. I just went limp. I don't remember feeling every one of those steps in the back of my head when I was going down. I remember being at the bottom of the stairs. I remember seeing his feet going past and everything sounded like an echo - hearing every one of his footsteps going back through the house out the front door. Then, it's kind of a blur after that. I know the police didn't come. I don't know if an ambulance came - I don't think they did. I think one of my neighbors heard me scream and came running. Then, I was at the doctor's and

they were checking me out. I just remember being so afraid not just for myself - because I know I could go through and take whatever physical or mental injuries that came to me - but for my child, for my baby. I had put them in a situation that they might not have survived and that's how I remember feeling. Like, I had put him - the most innocent thing in the world - in the most dangerous situation. I remember being so afraid and worried if that situation had done something or killed my child, to be quite frank. I was really, really afraid that what I was finally starting to get excited for was going to get ripped away from me in that split second because of that monster, that man who I had never seen before from that look.

Scott

How far along in the pregnancy were you at that time?

Marina

I was just out of my first trimester - like, at the end of my first trimester and the beginning of the second - so, 3-4 months. I want to say that I think I got pregnant in January, and this occurred either at the very end of March or the very beginning of April - I don't remember the exact date. I was fairly early on in my pregnancy, but I do remember being out of the clear of just having a miscarriage. Usually, they always warned me about something that can cause a miscarriage, and the natural miscarriage was pretty much out of the question at that point. So I was really scared that falling down the stairs had done that. I don't remember if I had gone down solely on my back or if I had flipped over onto my stomach - I don't think I did. I don't remember hitting my stomach or any front part of me. In the back of my head, it's my shoulders and arms.

Scott

What were your injuries when the doctor looked at you?

Marina

I ended up with just a mild concussion. Thank God! Other than that, there were just a lot of bumps and bruises. I was worried about my shoulders. I have notoriously bad shoulders - those had come out, but they were just strains and sprains. Basically, they told me that if I had not just gone limp at that moment, then it would have been worse. If I had tried to brace myself or tried to be more rigid, then it would have been worse. I don't know why my body went limp

Scott

It was just instinctive, maybe?

Marina

It was instinct, yeah. I remember my mom was telling me, like, the reason drunk drivers don't get injured is that they're so limp in the car when they get into an accident. I don't know if that came into my mind when I was going down or if it was just pure instinct that let my body go because, normally, I'm very rigid, very uptight, and I want to brace myself. So, the fact that my body had instinctively gone limp was amazing. I had bumps, bruises, cuts, and a mild concussion.

Scott

It could have been a lot worse. Were your parents home at that time?

Marina

They weren't. My dad was already at work. My dad always leaves for work really early in the morning and my mom just happened to be out at a couple of meetings and running a couple of

errands before she came home. So, by happenstance, I was there by myself. Usually, in the morning, when I get up and get ready for school, my mom would still be there hustling and bustling.

Scott

So someone - your neighbor or whoever - took you to the hospital. How did your parents find out about what happened?

Marina

My neighbors told them that they had taken me to the hospital, but I was the one who told them what happened. I just remember apologizing to them for letting that happen in their house. I felt like I said sorry more than I should have after the fact, but it was my first instinct to say, "I'm sorry that I let this person come into our house before. I'm sorry that he was able to remember ways to get into your house. I'm sorry that this happened in your house. I'm sorry that I let myself get into the situation. Etc." I just remember apologizing a lot. I only told my dad.

Scott

You told him all that when you didn't have any reason to believe you couldn't trust him though?

Marina

Yeah, exactly. So, it's the pre-creep mode.

Scott

How did you proceed from there? What happened after that? I mean, he just ran off, right?

Marina

He ran off and I didn't hear from him or speak to him again. When I was trying to figure out what I wanted to do, I decided that the best thing to do, going forward, was definitely to get a restraining order not only for myself, but for my child, the father of my child, and my family that was in the town that lives in the same city as me. I felt like that was the only way I was going to be able to get away. At that time, I didn't really think about pressing charges because I wanted to, kind of, keep it under wraps. The town that I grew up in is a big city but a small town - that's what they always say. So, words get out really quickly around people there. A lot of people who I went high school with are still here or were still here at that time - people that I've known since kindergarten and families of people whom we all knew for so long were all here. I think my pride in letting people know that I was attacked got the better of me, so I didn't press formal charges of the attack, but I did get a restraining order against him. I remember going in front of the judge and getting the order, and my friends served the order to him. I don't even remember how we tracked him down. I think a mutual friend, kind of, did a setup for us - she told him, "Let's meet here" and "You got served." He tried to punch the window out of my friend's car who served him the papers. Luckily, I had a guy friend serve him the papers as opposed to a girl. So, he just drove off - he didn't even think anything of it. I guess he tried to punch out his car window and that happened. Shortly after that, shortly before the actual court date, I got a text message from a number that I didn't know. With every weary instinct in me, I opened it and all it said was, "This is Brian's friend." I don't remember his name. He wanted me to message you and ask you to drop the restraining order because it will 'Hurt his chances of getting a good job.' I just remember replying in all caps, "HE CAN GO FUCK HIMSELF! HE SHOULD HAVE FUCKING THOUGHT OF THAT BEFORE HE PUT HIS HANDS ON ME! YOU BOTH CAN GO FUCKING HELL!" and I blocked the number. I'm not going to show you pity because you didn't show it to me. I'm not going to show you kindness because you didn't show kindness to me, which sounds

awful and petty. At the same time, at that point, I just didn't care. I just wanted it to stop. I wanted it to be over.

Scott

Well, it's not so much of showing kindness. Dropping the restraining order means that he can come near you and your family without any repercussions. That's, again, putting yourself back in danger again.

Marina

Yes. I remember being at the court date and he did not show up, which I felt spoke volumes. He knew what he did was wrong. He knew that there was no chance

Scott

This was the court date to get the restraining order?

Marina

Yes, he 'no show' to the court date. It was a female judge. I remember her looking at me and saying, "This is the easiest restraining order I've ever given" and that was it. I remember feeling a weight lifted off my shoulders, but still sitting in the back of my mind was, "Can he come back? Is he still gonna try?" I believe the sheriff served him the actual restraining order, so my friends and I didn't have any contact with him. They took care of it from there.

Scott

In terms of recovery, how have you done since then?

Marina

The rest of my pregnancy went really, really well. I was really lucky with that. I had no lasting side effects or symptoms that affected my pregnancy. My son was born in October of 2014, which was about 6-7 months after the attack happened. He was born in October that same year as a beautiful and healthy baby boy.

Scott

And what's his name?

Marina

His name is Tyler. He is now 4.5 years old. He'll be 5 years old in October. He is the absolute light in mine and my family's life. He is the reason that I push on every day. I definitely still have some PTSD types of symptoms. My anxiety is at an all-time high. I've had anxiety my whole life, but it's definitely been a little more on edge in the last couple of years - the PTSD symptoms are the worst. My neighbor drives a motorcycle, my current boyfriend drives a motorcycle, and that sound of the engine idling still pulls back some pretty dark memories. But when those things happen, I just tell myself that it's not real anymore, that those are not the same, and that these people who drive these motorcycles are not the same person as the person who did that to me - they're not doing it ill intent, they're not doing it out of hatred or spite, they're just living their life, and that's what I need to do as well - I can't let every sound or motorcycle scare me anymore, and I definitely did for about, maybe, a 1 - 1.5 year. Every sound of a motorcycle would make me jump and would make me cringe. I could be out in the middle of the day, walking out of Target, and hearing a motorcycle, and that would scare me. That seems to be the worst. Luckily, I don't have a fear of stairs. The motorcycle sounds were definitely the worst. Every

once in a while, they'll still bring me back. Every day, I just need to fight to remember what I'm fighting for and who I'm fighting for.

Scott

It sounds like you've got a deliberate plan to handle that when it happens - to have a positive self-talk and get through it.

Marina

Definitely. As I said, I've had anxiety for most of my life. So, I've found ways to deal with it. I've kind of applied those ways to deal with it to this as well. PTSD is, like, so crazy because... think of, like, people coming back from war. My current boyfriend is an ex-marine, so he has - I feel strange, sometimes, putting that label on it, but the honest truth is, like, that's what it is - posttraumatic stress because it was the worst day of my life. I hope to never ever live through something like that again. I hope to never be in that situation again.

Scott

Have you heard from him at all since then?

Marina

Every once in a while, I will get a weird Facebook request, I'll get a weird Instagram request, and I'll get a weird Snapchat request that has his name on it. Whether it's him or not, I don't know. I always block everything. All my profiles are all set to private so that he can't even see anything on them - especially my son. I don't want him to even know what my son looks like - he doesn't deserve that. At one point, he might have been my consideration as his Godfather, but he doesn't deserve it anymore. Every once in a while, I do get a weird friend request that I will immediately block, delete, and get it out.

Scott

How long is the restraining order in effect?

Marina

Mine is in effect for 5 years. So, actually, it's about to end. I believe it will end in a couple of weeks.

Scott

So can you just go to renew that?

Marina

Yeah. I can just go back to the court and just, basically, re-up it if I need to, which I probably will do just because I don't know exactly where he is right now. I don't know the status of his life and what he's doing. I don't really care to know. The only reason I wouldn't want to know is to make sure that he's not trying to find me again. I think, at this point, if he really want to find me, he would have shown up at the house again or he would have found a way, I think. I probably am just going to wrap it just for my own peace of mind to keep everybody covered and safe, because it's just not worth it. If you can come back.

Scott

I can tell you that would give some peace of mind to me and everyone hearing this story too. I hope you do.

Marina

Yeah, definitely. It's just too big of a risk, I think, to let it be.

Scott

Yeah. You credit your unborn son with saving your life that day. How did he do that?

Marina

As much as it's easy to sit here and be like, "Well, this only happened because I got pregnant in the first place." At the same time, he gave me a reason to fight for my life that day. If it hadn't been for him, I'm sure I would have fought anyway, but I don't think I would have fought with the voracity that I fought with that day, I don't think I would have been brave enough to get physical back with him. I've kind of been in a dark place before I got pregnant - my own life was, kind of, spiraling out of control. So, I gave him credit for saving me because he gave me something worth fighting for, something I could believe in, something I wanted to fight for, and something that I wanted so badly that I wasn't gonna let somebody take it from me. I had been pregnant before that, but I had a miscarriage pretty early on - I remember that feeling. I didn't ever want to feel that feeling and let it happen again. I wasn't going to let him be the reason that it happened. I wasn't going to allow him the pleasure of creating my misery. I wasn't going to give him that chance. I knew that I had to fight for my son. I looked at him every day, I hugged him every day, I told him "Thank you" every day, and he didn't understand why.

Scott

Someday, he'll know the story... Not for a while.

Marina

Yeah.

Scott

Marina, I'm so proud of you for taking control of this situation. I'm really glad that it turned out the way it did. Congratulations on being a mother! I appreciate you sharing your story with us!

Marina

Thank you so much for having me. I really appreciate it. It's the first time I really told this story out loud. I just wanted people to know, "It's okay to fight, it's okay to do what you have to do to survive. You always have a reason."

Scott

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