

## **Episode 36: Acaimie rescued her husband**

Acaimie and her husband, Clay, have been through a pretty bizarre experience. When I heard this story, I knew I needed to talk to this young lady.

She and Clay were doing a volcano hike. Yeah, that in itself might seem story-worthy. But this was not actually an “active” volcano so it wasn’t spewing lava. They hiked the 2 ½ miles up to the rim, hung out for a while, took some pictures. Then Clay decided he wanted to climb down into the crater. Acaimie didn’t feel safe because of the steep incline, so Clay ventured down on his own. Things didn’t go as planned.

This happened on an island, and they were all alone, and Acaimie had no phone signal to call for help.

And, they were on their honeymoon.

Acaimie and Clay are back home in Indiana now. What you’re about to hear is an experience they would not have chosen to go through, but they do have quite a story to tell their grandchildren some day.

And did you know we have a private Facebook group for listeners of this podcast? We’d love to see you there. And if you’d like to join the others who support this show for as little as \$1 per month, you can do that at [WhatWasThatLike.com/support](https://www.WhatWasThatLike.com/support).

And now, let’s hear this story from Acaimie.

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**Scott**

Are you guys pretty avid hikers?

**Acaimie**

I would not say that. I've done some hiking on the Appalachian Trail in the Pennsylvania area before, but it has been probably seven years since I did that. I would like to hike on vacations - but Clay, not so much. We both enjoy hiking, but it's not something that we make it a point to do extremely frequently. If the opportunity presents itself when we're on a trip or on a vacation or anything like that, then we will. We enjoy it, but it's nothing that we have special gear for or anything like that.

**Scott**

All right. You got married on July 13 - that was your wedding day...

**Acaimie**

Yup.

**Scott**

Was it that day that you flew to St. Kitts?

**Acaimie**

It was the following afternoon.

**Scott**

The next day you flew to Saint Kitts, an island down the Caribbean. This was your honeymoon. You were planning to be there for a week. Did you have anything scheduled - hiking, swimming, or stuff like that?

**Acaimie**

We did have planned activities to do on different days - not every day. We were, kind of, flexible with our schedules, so we didn't schedule with tour guides or anything like that ahead of time because we still wanted to have that flexibility. If the weather wasn't very good to do a certain activity, we would just change days. At that point in time, we have done some other activities like watersports, spending some time on the beach, checking out different restaurants and, like, historical places on the island. Thursday was when we decided to have the 'Volcano hike day'. We planned to go to the neighboring island of Nevis the following day - on Friday - and do some other things there before we headed out on Saturday.

**Scott**

So, you had been there for, like, four days. It was a Thursday - the plan was to hike Mount Liamuiga, which is a dormant volcano. What happened that day?

**Acaimie**

We decided to hike the volcano. We've done a fair amount of research regarding the volcano hike. There were several different tour guides who offer tours that you can pay for - either an agency or somebody who lives on the island, has hiked the volcano a lot, knows a lot about it, and offer individual tours. Once we arrive at the volcano, which was about an hour away from our resort on the island, we planned to just go to, like, the visitor center of the volcano and see if we could talk to a tour guide there and negotiate a lower price - most of the costs we saw for these tours were about \$100 a person. We were, like, "Well, if we can get by without doing it, it's just going to be a hike." They do have, like, interesting information, history, and things like that, that they'll typically share with you on these kinds of tours - which is why I always like having tour guides.

When we arrived at the bottom of the volcano, there was not really even, like, a parking lot. There were no buildings, no visitors, and no other cars parked down there - nothing. It's covered with vegetation - it reminded me almost of the Jurassic Park movies - with ferns, gigantic trees with their roots coming out of the ground, lots of flowers, and unique-looking tropical plants. So, it was beautiful. It pretty much started right at the base of the volcano without vegetation. There was just a little trail that started there, so we were like, "Okay, sure. We'll just go ahead, jump on the trail, and start hiking!"

**Scott**

It sounds like you were, kind of, expecting a more touristy type of place.

**Acaimie**

Yes. If you searched on any search engine, "Top attractions at Saint Kitts" or "Best things to do as a visitor", that was one of, like, the top three things to do. So, it was highly recommended, except for people who said that it was, like, too intense for them. They said, "Yeah, don't do this if you're not into hiking, rugged terrain, getting a workout, and getting a lot of exercises, because it's not for somebody who just likes walking trails - like, leisurely type things."

**Scott**

Yeah. You guys are young and fit, so you're thinking, "We're up for it." Right?

**Acaimie**

Yeah. I enjoy hiking. I like being out in nature a lot, being physically fit, and playing sports. So, we both thought, "Sure, let's go for it." We knew how long it was - it's about a 2.5 - 3.0 mile trail from the very base of it up to the summit, and then back down. So, it's pretty short, I guess, but it takes a while because of the elevation increases. So, it's not just, kind of, a 3-mile long hike that's only going to take you an hour. The hike up to the top took us about 2 hours and 45 minutes. We saw that most people were taking anywhere from 2.5 - 3.0 hours to summit the volcano because the elevation increases a lot. So, there are a lot of, like, switchbacks to try and get you there. Oftentimes, there are a lot of, like, rocks and boulders that you're, kind of, crawling up onto in order to continue on the path.

**Scott**

Yeah. I checked the elevation, and it gets up to about 3,800 feet.

**Acaimie**

Yes, yeah. I think it's about two and a half miles to get up to the top.

**Scott**

It's enough to get your heart rate elevated anyway as you're hiking. That's good.

**Acaimie**

We took some scenery breaks a little bit on the way up to drink some water and everything because it's always pretty humid in the Caribbean. Most of the time, though, when you're on an island, you don't notice it as much because you have the breeze that, kind of, keeps you pretty cool. It was a very moist and humid environment where you have the canopy of trees overhead - it was even sprinkling lightly while we were making the hike up. Then, once we got to the top, we were kind of in the clouds. We got to the summit or the crater at about 11.45 AM. Then, we stopped to eat lunch at the top of the summit. We ate up there. We took some pictures and walked around on some shorter trails up there that, kind of, led to either side of the summit. Once we got to the top, there was a gentleman that we ran into who was just about to make his way down. We chatted with him for a bit and he was like, "Hey, did you find another trail?" We just said, "Well, all we've seen is the one that we came up on and the ones just to the side here." So he was just well for the rest of our hike and then headed back down by himself.

**Scott**

And he was the only person you saw.

**Acaimie**

Right. He was the only person that we saw the whole day. I even mentioned that to Clay as we were climbing. I was like, "I'm surprised that we're not running into anybody because I expected to see some other people on the trail and, maybe, even some other tour guides. I still think it was odd that there were no cars parked down there."

**Scott**

So, were you sure you started at the right place?

**Acaimie**

Yes, there were 2 separate - you could go on either - trails on either side. Apparently, there was a trail on the other side, but it wasn't one that we've seen on some of these, like, trail guide

tourism sites that they would meet on - like, the address and location that they would go to. This was called the Mount Liamuiga trail. So, I guess it's, like, the standard one or the most popular one to hike.

**Scott**

"You just pick the day when there was nobody else there..."

**Acaimie**

Yeah, conveniently, which was one of the few days that week that was a little bit overcast. That was one of the reasons why we were like "We'll go ahead and do it this day" because we won't want to be out on the beach or doing any other outdoor activities if it's a little cooler and more overcast today. Once we had gotten to the summit, Clay kind of climbed around on some rocks to get some better pictures - he was trying to get above the canopy of trees, so that you could see across the crater. Then, once he came down from that, we kind of discovered another trail that led down into the crater of the volcano, which - we can even look into it from the summit - obviously doesn't have any lava or anything like that. There was, kind of, what looked like a little marshy area over on one side of it and the rest of it just looked like a grassy plain, with some ferns and other smaller vegetation in there - there were no trees were growing on the inside of the crater. It looked like someplace where you could go down and take some really great pictures of the rest of the summit of the volcano. Clay really wanted to go down into it. So, we kind of went back a little bit more into the woods. We both started down the trail. I say 'trail' kind of lightly here because it wasn't so much walking down - it was almost like you're going down a ladder from, like, a 2nd story or something. When we turned around, we were facing, like, the inside as we were, kind of, climbing down.

**Scott**

Yeah. I remember that you had described this in some places - it was an 80-degree incline. Is that right? Obviously, 90 degrees is just straight up and down. If it is 80 degrees, I mean, it seems like you'd almost have to do, kind of, a butt slide to go down.

**Acaimie**

Yeah. I don't know if 80 degrees would be 100% accurate, but I think it would definitely be 60 or 70 degrees.

**Scott**

That's still very steep...

**Acaimie**

Yes. It was extremely steep. As we were going down - we saw this before we even started down - there were, like, paracord ropes that had been, like, secured around trees and drilled into rocks. So, obviously, it was intended to be a trail for some people would go down. I already have a fear of heights, so I wasn't, like, super thrilled to be climbing down this. It was still a little bit slick because it had been raining earlier. There were lots of rocks on this because there wasn't as much vegetation growing down this steep slant.

**Scott**

So, it was kind of slippery...

**Acaimie**

Yes, exactly. We came to, like, a few rocks where I could, kind of, step off to the side of the trail and stand on them - it was more level. I just looked down and said, "I don't want to go down much farther. Do you really want to keep going?" He said, "I really just want to go to the bottom and get some pictures." He told me that he'll be right back up really quick. We could see down into the crater. So, knowing how far down the climb it was going to be. I was just, like, groaning early because I knew that I was going to be standing there waiting for him for, maybe, 30 or 40 minutes depending on how long he wanted to stay down there and take some pictures once he got to the bottom up. So, I was just like, "Oh my goodness." I really do not want to keep going because I felt like I was gonna slip. It was probably about two minutes later when he got out of view. I had heard him continue to descend and climb down further and, then, he got out of sight. So, I didn't really know what was going on anymore. Then, I heard what sounded like a big branch snapping. Then, something rolled down the hill - I don't know. I felt like a rock rolled and fell, but it was still quiet. I didn't hear Clay shout or something that really alarmed me at that point in time. Then, as a couple more minutes went by, I had this feeling of paranoia that I can't really explain but it was partially probably caused by me also just thinking "Oh my goodness, I'm gonna be standing here for a lot longer. I don't really have anything else to climb around on." We took our pictures already while we ate lunch and everything.

**Scott**

So, what do you think the of noise that you heard? What do you think it was?

**Acaimie**

I don't know. Clay thinks that it was the rope that he was holding on to at that point in time - while he was climbing down - snapping. Then, he fell.

**Scott**

So, maybe, the rope itself broke or the tree that it was tied to snapped off?

**Acaimie**

We don't know. We still haven't found out what caused the fall - Clay still cannot remember. The reason we think he probably can't remember is that he probably hit his head when he fell and lost consciousness. Obviously, at that point in time, I was still up there and I couldn't hear anything. I was just annoyed and wanted him to come back because I didn't want to have to wait that long, so I started yelling his name really loudly, "HEY, CLAY! WHERE ARE YOU?" I figured that he was, maybe, out of earshot. Then, I called him straight down on the side of the mountain and hopefully thought that he could hear me. Then, I heard back, like, a really, really faint 'Help...' Then, I called again after that because I wasn't sure if that was what I heard or not. Then, I heard it again. Then, at that point in time, I turned around, faced the mountain, and started climbing down as quickly as I could. At that point in time, I was pretty certain that he actually called out for help, but it sounded extremely desperate and weak - like, he was gasping for air.

**Scott**

Could you tell that it was his voice?

**Acaimie**

Yes. I could tell that it was his voice too.

**Scott**

Who else would be down there, right?

**Acaimie**

Yeah. I climbed down for, probably, five minutes. I was climbing very rapidly until I found him. On my climb down - probably after about 2-3 minutes of climbing - I found his cell phone and the orange bandana that he had tied around his head that morning, kind of, cast to the side of the trail. I grabbed both of those really quickly and I just kept climbing down. I was just screaming his name at that point in time because I had no idea what had happened. I knew he had fallen, obviously, as I saw some of his belongings up there. Then, as I started to get closer to him, I was just panicking and extremely concerned about what I was going to find. I screamed down to him. I kind of came within eyesight of him and I said, "Are you okay?! What's wrong?" He kept saying, "I don't know." I said, "You need to tell me what's wrong with you so that I can prepare for what I'm going to see" because I didn't know how severe his injuries were or what was going on.

**Scott**

So, you kind of knew where he was at that point, but you couldn't really see him clearly?

**Acaimie**

Yes, I was still climbing down. There were still some trees in the way but I could see-- he was wearing a white T-shirt and his back was facing me. I kept getting closer to him and saw that the back of his head was bleeding and he was, like, leaning forward with his legs kind of pulled up. So, he was just, like, sitting and leaning forward towards his knees with his head in his hands. I said, "You have any broken bones? What's what is going on?" He just kept saying "I don't know" in, kind of, like, a gasping voice. I got closer to him and said, "You're gonna be okay said." I just looked at his face. He was bleeding profusely out of his nose and had been vomiting. Then, I knew, "Okay, he has a concussion." I know that this is a sign that he has a head injury because he was vomiting and bleeding from his face. Obviously, I could see spots where he hits his head - right behind the ear and the top of his head. He was bleeding from both of those areas. Aside from that, the rest of his body was pretty much uninjured, which was shocking to me. I mean, he had some minor, like, little scrapes and cuts, but all of his bones were fine.

**Scott**

In your previous experience, do you have any medical training at all?

**Acaimie**

My sister's a nurse. I personally don't have any medical training aside from being certified in first aid and CPR, I think, when I was in eighth grade. I'm pretty sure that CPR only lasts for, like, 1-2 years and first aid lasts for 3 years.

**Scott**

Because not many people that vomiting is a sign of a concussion, so I was wondering...

**Acaimie**

I've had a lot of friends who played sports and they've had concussions in the past. They said that extreme headache, dizziness, blurred vision, and vomiting after you fall and hit your head are signs of that, so that's how I knew that. That was what was going on. At that point in time, what went through my head is, "It took us almost three hours to get to the top of the volcano. We fell, probably, at least halfway down into the crater and we're gonna have to get out of that. There's nobody here to help me." I got out my phone at that point in time. My hands were

shaking. I was trying to dial 911 but it just told me “No network.” There was absolutely no network on either of our phones that I'm trying to call from.

At that point in time, I knew that we were going to have to get out ourselves. At least, he didn't have any broken bones. He wasn't in extreme pain when I helped him stand up for the most part. He was just extremely disoriented, dizzy, and resistant to even moving. He still didn't understand what was going on. I asked him his name, I asked him my name, and he knew who we both were. He kept gasping and asking where we were and asking me to get help. I said, “I'm trying, but there's nobody here.” He was like, “Well, what about that guy we saw earlier?” I said, “Well, I've been screaming, and he's not responding. So, we're gonna have to get out of here ourselves.” He said, “Well, why can't you call 911?” Like, he just did not understand what was going on. He kept asking where we were and I kept telling him, “We're on our honeymoon. We're in Saint Kitts. We've been climbing a volcano and you fell.” Then, 2 minutes later, he asked me where we were again. I just told him, “You're just gonna have to listen to everything that I have to say. We're gonna have to climb out of here. Then, we're gonna have to climb down the side of the volcano until we can get a signal.”

**Scott**

During this time, obviously, you were panicking on the inside, like, “How are we gonna get out? How bad is his head injury?” Were you able to stay calm outwardly?

**Acaimie**

Yeah, for the most part. I just started praying out loud - so that both of us could hear - for strength to get out, peace to have clear heads, and to be able to physically climb out of the crater and, then, down the side for the next 3 hours because I knew it was gonna take about that long, and it did. It took us about three hours - until almost 4 PM - to get down to the bottom.

**Scott**

Obviously, before you could get you had to get back up to the room? How did you do that?

**Acaimie**

Clay was still able to, pretty much, crawl. While he was crawling and grabbing onto the ropes or onto the rocks, I was climbing up behind him and pushing him up. I pushed his legs up, got beneath his feet, and put his feet up for him. He had the ability to move. He obviously had almost zero balance because his vision was blurred. He was conscious, but still had no idea what was going on - incredibly disoriented - so I pretty much just told him what to do. I said, “Grab this. Climb here. Great job. Keep going. You're doing great.” It probably took us 30 minutes, maybe, to climb back to the top of the summit. Then, after that, I was like, “Alright, it's going to be easier now because we're just going to climb down.” But even if he was just standing there, he would almost fall over. So, parts of it - when it wasn't an extra incredibly steep part - as we were making our descent, I would just have his arm over my shoulders and he would lean on me and just, kind of, stumble along.

**Scott**

How do your body sizes compare?

**Acaimie**

Clay is 5'10” and 160 pounds. I'm 5'2” and I'm 110 pounds. So, we're both smaller, I guess, for our ages.

**Scott**

Being able to guide him-- I mean, that was a real workout for you though.

**Acaimie**

Yeah. Honestly, a lot of it was probably from adrenaline and, kind of, being in shock and being able to make it down because - by the end of that day, and the next day, and the next day after that - I was so incredibly sore and hurt to move. It was hard to sit down and to stand up. Wish granted, I might have been a little sore after doing the hike anyway, but it was nothing compared to what the hike turned out to be at the end.

**Scott**

You weren't expecting this kind of workout?

**Acaimie**

No, definitely not.

**Scott**

Was he showing any other signs of injuries as you continue to make progress?

**Acaimie**

As we continue down the side of the volcano, we did have to stop almost, probably, every 10 or 12 minutes - that's what my estimate was. Again, this seemed like it was taking forever because we were, kind of, going so slowly. It seemed that he was just vomiting again and again and again every 10 or 12 minutes - his reaction to his severe head trauma. Basically, at that point in time, he was only vomiting blood, which made me panic because, then, I was wondering if he had internal injuries to his organs that I had no idea how to diagnose. I kept thinking, "Well, am I hurting them even more by making him climb down the side of the volcano for the next 3 hours? Is this damaging his body even worse? Am I causing irreversible damage?" I just had all these questions going through my head.

Then, I just kept weighing my options, "What's the better decision to make? Should I leave him and try to go down by myself? Or do I make sure that we just keep going together as far as he possibly can?" Ultimately, I thought, "No, I'm not going to leave him because I don't know if he would be there when I got back, and that would incredibly, drastically, increase the amount of time before he would get help because it takes me, probably, 2 hours to the bottom. Then, once I reach the bottom, I have to get somebody to come back up. Then, it takes us another two hours. He's disoriented. He might try and climb in some random direction, so I decided that I was just going to keep going with him as far and as long as we could go. If he couldn't go any longer, then I was going to have to go for help, but he kept going the rest of the way, which was amazing to me - just the strength that he had to keep going.

There were, like, white paint on rocks that marked one mile and two miles. I don't think there was one for three, because it's not actually three miles to the top. I saw a one-mile marker. At that point in time, I tried calling 911, probably, 2-3 times right after the one-mile marker, saying, "Okay, we've gone about halfway." It was discouraging too because we had still another mile to go. I tried calling 911. They did answer finally and I told them our location. They said they were sending an ambulance. At that point in time, it was so relieving just to have made contact with another person, just to have had that assurance that somebody who knew how to help was coming to help. I told Clay that and we just continue to make our descent.

This whole time, I had not stopped screaming for help just as I did down the mountain, so I was losing my voice just from screaming like that. Eventually, we almost got to the bottom. I could tell because it was getting much less steep, but I didn't still know how much farther. I was still screaming for help at that point in time, and we actually heard somebody call back - they were the 2 paramedics and one of those security officers from the nearest resort that had been sent over as well. I saw them come into sight. Then, they grabbed Clay and the stretcher they brought, then the two of them just carried him out. Then, I walked back with one of the other paramedics who had all the medical bags. I was so exhausted, but I felt so relieved at that point in time because we had finally made it to the bottom and I had finally gotten him back to get the medical treatment and care that he needed.

It was still incredibly scary because we were in another country - it's not the United States. If you have anybody or friends who traveled there and they had some, kind of, emergency experience, it sounds scary sometimes because it's not a familiar setting. He received the care that he needed. We were in the hospital from Thursday night until Wednesday after Clay was airlifted by an air ambulance airplane back to Fort Lauderdale, Florida. We did follow-ups with him and found out that not only did he just have the fracture to his skull - where the air had been able to get inside - and a severe concussion, but he also had a spinal fluid leak that was coming through his nose, which they weren't able to diagnose in Saint Kitts with the level of technology that they had. So, it was scary to know that he could have gotten meningitis or a severe infection if he had not been diagnosed and treated.

**Scott**

What treatment did they actually give him in Saint Kitts? Did he just stay there to get stabilized for the trip back to the US? What did they do?

**Acaimie**

He was given, like, an IV bag in the emergency room. They did 2 CAT scans of his head and his neck. What they thought they were seeing were his second vertebrae that had been fractured, which shocked them because he was able to move and he wasn't paralyzed. Typically, the C2 vertebra is, like, incredibly important - like, if you fracture that, you would usually be paralyzed or dead. It ended up being that their first CAT scan was not very accurate, so they did a 2nd one. They thought it was just some air bubbles that had traveled down into, like, his spine area from the fracture. They diagnosed him with fractures and severe trauma, so they kept him on bed rest, for the most part. They gave him an antibiotic, I think, just because that's kind of standard in the hospital. He didn't really have pain - just the dizziness and, like, instability. Basically, he was very unstable when he stand up, but he had regained his orientation, so he knew where he was. He didn't have memory loss, aside from the fact that he didn't remember how the accident had happened.

**Scott**

How long did it take him to be oriented again to know where he was and what was going on?

**Acaimie**

When we were in the emergency room and I was talking to him, he at least knew what was going on, but he still seemed incredibly, like, exhausted and disoriented. It didn't seem like he was his normal self and really understanding what was going on until the next day on Friday morning when I came in.

**Scott**

He was probably dehydrated to some degree.

**Acaimie**

Oh, absolutely. Because we drank most of our water just coming up the side of the volcano and I had probably a 16-ounce water bottle left as we were coming back down to the base of the volcano, but I wasn't going to give him water because, obviously, he was having a lot of trauma. I didn't really drink any because I was not even thinking about it. I guarantee that definitely was a contributing factor to his disorientation.

**Scott**

So you guys were happy to be back in the US?

**Acaimie**

Yes. It was such a relieving feeling to be on that airplane heading back, arriving in Fort Lauderdale, being in the hospital in America, and being with people who speak better English - English that's easier to understand. In Saint Kitts, they speak English, but it's almost like a British Islander accent. It's not super hard to understand them but, if they would say something, it didn't make very much sense - you would try and understand what they were saying or they would try to understand what we were saying but they wouldn't understand. So, just being back, knowing that we're closer to our family, knowing that we're in the United States, and having insurance to cover things was an incredibly reassuring feeling at that point in time.

**Scott**

You were back in Florida, but you actually live in Indiana...

**Acaimie**

We were in Fort Lauderdale, Florida at the hospital from Wednesday - I believe it was the 25th of July - until the following Friday, August 3. We were there for over a week still following him being in the hospital in Saint Kitts for 7 days. So yeah, it was a very long time to be in a hospital - I'm sure for clay too. He was in the hospital for 15 days straight. So, it was a very long honeymoon for us - not the most enjoyable one, but definitely an extremely memorable one.

**Scott**

I guess. Everybody wants an extended honeymoon, right? Just not this kind, though.

**Acaimie**

Yeah, not this type.

**Scott**

How has his recovery been since then? Are there any injuries that are still hanging on?

**Acaimie**

The one injury that Clay has and is permanent is he is completely deaf in his right ear. That was caused by the fracture of his skull going through his hearing organ or his cochlea in his inner ear. That could potentially be part of where the spinal fluid leak occurred as well because your ear, nose, and throat are all connected. Your head would have been filled with fluid. Initially, the doctors in Saint Kitts thought that was what was causing the hearing loss and that he would just have to wait until the fluid drained back or was absorbed by his body so that his hearing would come back. We did not do any official hearing tests in Fort Lauderdale because they were very focused on keeping him, basically, just lying in bed all day. He had to have a spinal drain put in

to drain spinal fluid from his lower back so that it would relieve the pressure in his skull and the spinal fluid leak in his sinuses would heal. They weren't really focused on trying to figure out what was going on with this hearing because they wanted that fluid to be absorbed, so we did not officially get that diagnosed until, probably, another 2 weeks after we had gotten back from Fort Lauderdale.

When he went to an audiologist or an ENT (Ear, Nose, and Throat) doctor in Indianapolis - which is where we're from - they did a hearing test and found out that he is profoundly deaf in his right ear. Clay was disappointed because he's always the optimist and always thinking, "I'm gonna get out soon." They're saying "Maybe three days. Maybe five. It'll definitely be three." and it never was the case, but he never lost hope. He was, like, "Great! I was hoping it wasn't that and hoping that it was correctable." Since that point in time, the audiologist that he met with said that it is, in fact, permanent, but it could potentially be something that could be resolved by a cochlear implant if the fracture to his skull went through the cochlea and not the cochlear nerve. If it went through the cochlear nerve, then it is not repairable. He could potentially qualify for that cochlear implant, but they'd have to conduct an MRI. Initially, we wanted to know if his insurance will cover it. Currently, we're in the process of getting some ENT surgeons here in the Indianapolis area and seeing if that could potentially be an option for Clay - to conduct the MRI and find out if they do think is repairable. If not, he's still incredibly optimistic about his whole life situation now even though he can't hear out of his right ear. If that isn't an option, then there are different hearing aid type options that can, kind of, receive sound in his right ear and, then, Bluetooth it over to his left ear so that, at least, he doesn't seem deaf to people when they're talking to him - he doesn't have to turn his head all the way around to try and hear them.

**Scott**

In the meantime, you've gotten used to just walking with him on his left side...

**Acaimie**

Yes, sitting on his left side and all of that. If he tries to ignore me, he can always just roll over on his left side or turn around and have his right ears see me. Ultimately, to me, it's crazy that with all his injuries, that's the only thing that he has lasting - I'm glad it's that and not something that is physically painful to him like migraines or something of that nature. It doesn't really affect his day-to-day too much.

**Scott**

Yeah, if he would have injured his back or broken his knee or something like that, that stuff is with you for the rest of your life.

**Acaimie**

Yeah.

**Scott**

How often do you think about how things could have gone differently at any point in the story?

**Acaimie**

I definitely thought about it multiple times a day while we were in the hospital in Saint Kitts. Clay and I talked about what could have happened. We joked about it, like, "This would be a great premise for, like, a movie to be based upon it. In order to make it more dramatic, there have to be animals involved and the tackiness too." We kind of joked about it once we knew that he was going to be okay, but I do think about it every so often now. I just think about the accident,

probably, every day. Whenever you go through something that did have some permanent lasting effects on your new spouse like that, it does change your life and the way you think about life a little bit. That, kind of, mentally impacted when you go through that as well. It's hard to completely put that in the past - I don't think Clay and I ever really could - because it did alter our lives a little bit. Having that does change you. It makes you more grateful for what you've been given, that we were able to get out of it, that it had the outcome that it did, and that we're given the life we have. Clay and I are both believers in God. We believe that He's the One who ultimately brought us through this and He had this in His plan for us, for our marriage, and for our life together going forward. We're grateful that He allowed that outcome to happen - it's pretty incredible. Now, we have a story that we can share with our friends, family, people that we meet through the rest of our lives, and, eventually, our kids if we have them someday. It is still something that I don't always love to think or talk about because it is emotional at points, but it's something that has, kind of, changed our lives and it's important that we share the story with other people.

**Scott**

Definitely. Talk about testing those wedding vows pretty quickly, right?

**Acaimie**

Yes.

**Scott**

Usually, you don't think of the "In sickness and in health" thing until your later years, but a week later? Oh boy...

**Acaimie**

Yeah, that happened real quick.

**Scott**

Do you think you'll ever go volcano hiking again?

**Acaimie**

Maybe not. If we ever did, we would make sure it was with a group or a tour guide who actually knows what's going on and knows the volcano or mountain, and would probably say, "Actually, that's not a very safe trail to go down." Clay is unfazed by the accident. He still enjoys climbing, playing sports, and being very active, which I'm glad about because that experience hasn't altered him or scared him away from that. I think we'll be a lot smarter in the decisions that we make and any kind of risk that may be involved going forward, having had this experience.

**Scott**

And don't go off by himself.

**Acaimie**

Exactly.

**Scott**

Well, that's great, I'm glad it turned out the way it did. Hopefully, someday, the technology will allow him to have stereo hearing again - that's always a nice thing.

**Acaimie**

Yes.

**Scott**

Thanks for listening.

Pretty crazy story, huh? I'll tell you, if I ever fall into a volcano, I hope someone like Acaimie is nearby.

I wanted to mention something here, and I'm putting this at the end of the podcast because if you've listened all the way to the end, then I have to assume you really like the show and I appreciate that.

You've probably heard on some other podcasts, where the host is always asking the audience "don't forget to leave us a rating and a 5-star review, because that's what helps us get found by more people". Unfortunately, that's just completely untrue. Ratings and reviews do nothing to help a show get discovered, and it's too bad a lot of podcast hosts don't know that.

So that's why on this show, you don't hear me asking you to do that. I don't mind if you do, and if you want to, that's fine. But if you really want to help this podcast get found by more people, what I would LOVE for you to do is to tell your friends about it. For example, if you're in any Facebook groups that are about podcasts, like where people recommend podcasts to each other, just create a post that says "Hey, have you guys heard about this podcast called What Was That Like" and put a link to the website, [whatwasthatlike.com](http://whatwasthatlike.com). Or maybe talk about a particular episode you really liked. And not just on Facebook, but if you're on Reddit that's another great place for sharing shows.

And speaking of sharing your favorite shows, I've started a Facebook group called I Found a Podcast. And the whole purpose of that group is for people to share their favorite podcasts, or share a new one you've just discovered. So if you want to learn about some new podcasts you might not have heard of, or you want to share some of your favorites, check it out – you can get there by going to [WhatWasThatLike.com/found](http://WhatWasThatLike.com/found).

So if you've shared this podcast with your Facebook friends, or even your real life friends, thank you! See you in two weeks.