We were taken to the helipad by ambulance under high security with motorcycle outriders and flashing blue lights.The helicopter flight was one hour and fifteen minutes. Dr Fiona hardly sat down; she was so busy the whole way with all the different equipment that it looked to my father as if she was fighting with it. She was doing what she had been doing for years. Half her work in the UK was moving critically ill children, the other half was treating them in intensive care. But she had never been in a situation quite like this. Not only was Peshawar dangerous for Westerners but after googling me she realised this was no ordinary case. 'If anything had happened to her it would have been blamed on the white woman,' she said afterwards. 'If she'd died I would have killed Pakistan's Mother Teresa.'

As soon as we landed in Rawalpindi we were taken by ambulance with another military escort to a hospital called the Armed Forces Institute of Cardiology. My father was alarmed – how would they know how to deal with head wounds? But Dr Fiona assured him it had the best intensive care in Pakistan with state-of-the-art equipment and British-trained doctors. Her own nurses from Birmingham were there waiting and had explained to the cardiology nurses the specific procedures for dealing with head injuries.They spent the next three hours with me, swapping my antibiotics and my blood lines as I seemed to be reacting badly to the blood transfusions. Finally they said I was stable.

The hospital had been put on complete lockdown. There was an entire battalion of soldiers guarding it and even snipers on the rooftops. No one was allowed in; doctors had to wear uniforms; patients could only be visited by close relatives, all of whom underwent strict security checks. An army major was assigned to my parents and followed them everywhere.

My father was scared and my uncle kept saying, 'Be very careful – some of these people might be secret agents.' My family was given three rooms in the officers' hostel. Everyone's mobile phone was confiscated, which they said was for security reasons but may have also been to stop my father talking to the media. Any time my parents wanted to take the short walk from the hostel to the hospital they first had to be cleared via walkie-talkie, which took at least half an hour. They were even guarded as they crossed the hostel lawn to the dining hall. No visitors could get in – even when the Prime Minister came to see me he was not allowed inside. The security seemed astonishing, but over the last three years the Taliban had managed to infiltrate and attack even the most highly guarded military installations – the naval base at Mehran, the air force base in Kamra and the army headquarters just down the road.

We were all at risk from a Taliban attack. My father was told that even my brothers would not be spared. He was very concerned because at that time Khushal was still in Mingora, although later he was brought down to Rawalpindi to join them. There were no computers or Internet in the hostel but a friendly cook, Yaseem Mama, used to bring my family the newspapers and whatever they needed. Yaseem told them he felt proud to prepare my family's food. They were so touched by his kindness that they shared our story with him. He wanted to nourish them with food and ease their suffering. They had no appetite so he would try to tempt them with ever more delicious dishes, custards and sweets. One mealtime Khushal said that the dining table felt empty with only the four of them. They felt incomplete without me.

It was in one of Yaseem's newspapers that my father read for the first time some of the incredible international reaction to my shooting. It seemed like the whole world was outraged. Ban Ki-moon, the UN Secretary General, called it 'a heinous and cowardly act'. President Obama described the