



## ‘Her Story’

*(As told by Jeanette K. Regnier)*

Installment Four (November 10, 2005)

Life would never be the same, that much we already knew. Emily's two older brothers and younger sister had NO idea how to digest this madness. Neither did we! We got a call from Children's Hospital saying that the tumor review board was unable to be certain of the diagnosis. It was one day, yes, another not so sure. With all of this uncertainty, Emily was getting on with life waiting for what was to come and trusting her parents to make the best choices for her. This was a difficult task as Emily was tested at the age of five and deemed "gifted" which just make things more complicated as she understood so much more than she let on.

Finally, Jim had enough of the ping-pong diagnosis game and called the Pediatric Oncology Department at the University of Michigan Hospital. Somehow, he ended up talking right to the big dog in pediatric cancer. Dr. Boxer was understanding and kind and agreed to see Emily by that Friday if we could get all the slides, files and any remaining lymph node tissue that was untested so their hospital and pathology department could test for themselves. Jim moved mountains and we took the first of thousands of drives out to Ann Arbor to this monster of a place. Overwhelmingly huge, bigger now than all those years ago. We got lost finding the clinic that day, but through the years, there is no place that I had not been. I was directing new interns after a year or two when they had that frightened look of confusion and lateness that they wore like masks.

After a week of review, the diagnosis came back as an indolent (very slow growing) Nodular Lymphocyte Predominant Hodgkin's Disease. We were told at the time that this was very rare and totally uncommon in a girl, much less a teenage one. There was hope though! "Should be fairly easy to treat with 8 rounds of ABVD", or Adriamycin, Bleomycin, Vinblastine and Dacarbazine. Yeah sure! That was the drug protocol for chemotherapy, then when that was complete, 10 weeks of radiation therapy to the neck and clavicle area alone. Sounded easy enough and Emily says she was up to the challenge.

[< Back](#)

[Next >](#)