

Colorado Shooting Victim Makes Miracle Recovery

The Anderson family knows what tragedy is. Petra Anderson, 22, is a victim of the Aurora, Colo., shootings, and her mother, Kim, is facing terminal cancer. Though Petra had planned to help her mother through her illness this summer, it is Kim who sits by Petra's side as she recovers in a Denver hospital from nearly fatal gunshots.

Petra was with friends Thursday night in the Century 16 movie theater when a gunman fired shots during the midnight showing of *The Dark Knight Rises*. Petra's arm was hit with three pieces of buckshot from a shotgun blast. Another hit her face, traveling through her nose and into her brain. It stopped just short of the back of her head.

She went through multiple surgeries on Friday, and doctors told her family they expected Petra to make a full recovery.

According to her pastor, Brad Strait, Petra's survival is due to divine medical intervention. He explained in a blog post on Sunday that Petra was unknowingly born with a small brain defect, which seems to have saved her life.

The small channel of fluid runs through her skull, "like a tiny vein through a marble," he wrote. Miraculously, the bullet entered her brain at the exact point of her defect. "Like a marble through a small tube, the defect channels the bullet from Petra's nose through her brain," Strait explains. "It turns slightly several times, and comes to rest at the rear of her brain. And in the process, the bullet misses all the vital areas of the brain."

Kim Anderson said her daughter moved from her bed to a chair on Saturday, and is able to speak mostly one-syllable words.

“She could have lost all kinds of function (if) the bullet traversed her brain,” Anderson said Saturday. “I believe that she was not only protected by God, but that she was actually prepared for it.”

Kim Anderson has been facing her own medical problems. She was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2009 and went into remission in 2011. But 18 months later, she was diagnosed with terminal cancer and given six to 18 months to live. Kim was scheduled to undergo treatment soon in Houston, but she said that may change depending on her daughter’s condition.

In addition to Petra and Kim’s health struggles, the family is facing astronomical medical costs.

“The medical bills are very large, and my family is working very hard to be financially responsible,” Petra’s sister, Chloe Anderson, said. “You don’t skimp on costs to care for a loved one. We are taking it one step at a time and with a lot of gratitude for people who are helping her.”

Friends of the family have set up a campaign to raise money for Petra and Kim’s medical costs, and at press time had brought in nearly \$165,000 of the \$250,000 goal. The website explains that the first \$100,000 will go toward Petra’s surgery, medical and recovery costs, and the next \$150,000 will be “divided evenly between Kim’s year-long cancer treatment (about \$150k) and the Colorado Organization for Victim Assistance (COVA), a nonprofit tasked by the Aurora Police Department to gather and distribute aid in response to the Aurora shooting.” Any additional money will go to COVA.

The tagline of the campaign is “Ready to Believe,” which Andrew Roblyer, one of the organizers, says came from *The Dark Knight*. In one scene near the end of the film, Batman tells the Joker, “This city just showed you that it’s full of people ready to believe in good.”

Roblyer told ABC News: “This story started being written by

one person and is being finished by a community who have rallied behind Petra. They don't have to accept the beginning. They can rewrite the ending."

Kim Anderson said her family has been drawn closer as a result of the tragedy, and she's thankful for all the prayer and support they have received.

"God won't let the suffering or the setbacks have the last word," she was quoting as saying in *The Sacramento Bee*.

"Our family has been shaken by the events of last Friday but we have not been broken," Chloe said in a video she created for the fundraising campaign.

Click below to watch the video, and click here to visit the "Ready to Believe: Anderson Relief Fund" website.