

Girl[®]Story

Created for girls ages 10-14 to encourage and inspire each other as they write the feature articles.

A Girl's
Diagnosis

Standing Up for
Yourself
and Others

I Am Wonderful

Marie Curie



giving voice to authentic girl stories that matter >>>> May 2021





Tell Your Story

“

Stories connect us, brain
to brain and heart to heart.

”



Letter from the Editor



Cortney Donelson, co-founder
 Cortney owns vocem, LLC, a writing services business that offers editing, ghostwriting, and retreat facilitation to writers and storytellers of all levels.

Girls, do you know why this magazine is for you? Do you know why we chose ages 10-14 as our target group? It's simple.

In our opinion, this season of your lives is perhaps when girls are in the most need of acceptance while simultaneously exploring ideas, values, and information that lie outside of their normal comfort zones. It's the age when girls are growing into their older, individual selves while fighting the temptation to conform into what others hope they become. It's the time when friendships thrive or fail yet also the time when friendships mean everything.

When I was eleven years old, the summer between elementary school and middle school, I jumped on my bicycle to ride the loop around my neighborhood that would take me past my best friend's home. As I sped down the hill toward her blue house, I saw her standing and talking with her next-door neighbor—a girl perhaps a year older than us—at this girl's mailbox. As I pedaled closer, my BFF turned her back to me, and I heard her say these words: "Don't look at her, and maybe she won't stop."

Don't look at her, and maybe she won't stop.

My cheeks burned. My insides swirled. My heartbeat ticked up a notch. And my little legs pedaled faster to fly past them and take me back to my house. I didn't stop. I felt so ashamed, so devalued, that I couldn't even go inside my own house and face anyone. I parked my bike and snuck over to my own neighbor's back yard, crawled into a bush, and wept.

I had no idea what I had done wrong. There had been no "red flags" to warn me that my best friend could be so mean.

An hour later, still feeling rejected and confused, I slipped into my house and never told a soul what happened. That "friend" and me? We never spoke again. That broken relationship, for which there was no closure, haunted me until well into my thirties.

Girls, the middle school years are hard. We know. We've been there, so we wanted to create a space for you to write from the heart, to read others' stories, to feel validated for your feelings, and to know you are not alone.

*Cortney Donelson
 Co-Founder and Editor-in-Chief*

She is passionate about providing platforms for everyone to give voice to stories that matter, especially girls with big ideas and compassionate hearts! She is surrounded by the best husband ever, two incredible children, and a golden retriever named Lucas who doesn't know how to retrieve!

Kerrie Boys, co-founder



Kerrie co-owner of idesign2, inc has partnered alongside her husband, Jason, for 21 years, providing graphic design services to magazine publishers and businesses throughout the Charlotte area. With two amazing daughters of her own and a love of visual communication, she is thrilled to provide this space to empower girls to speak their minds and express their creativity. Bring on the GirlStories!

Check us out: www.girlstorymag.com
Get social: @girlstorymag

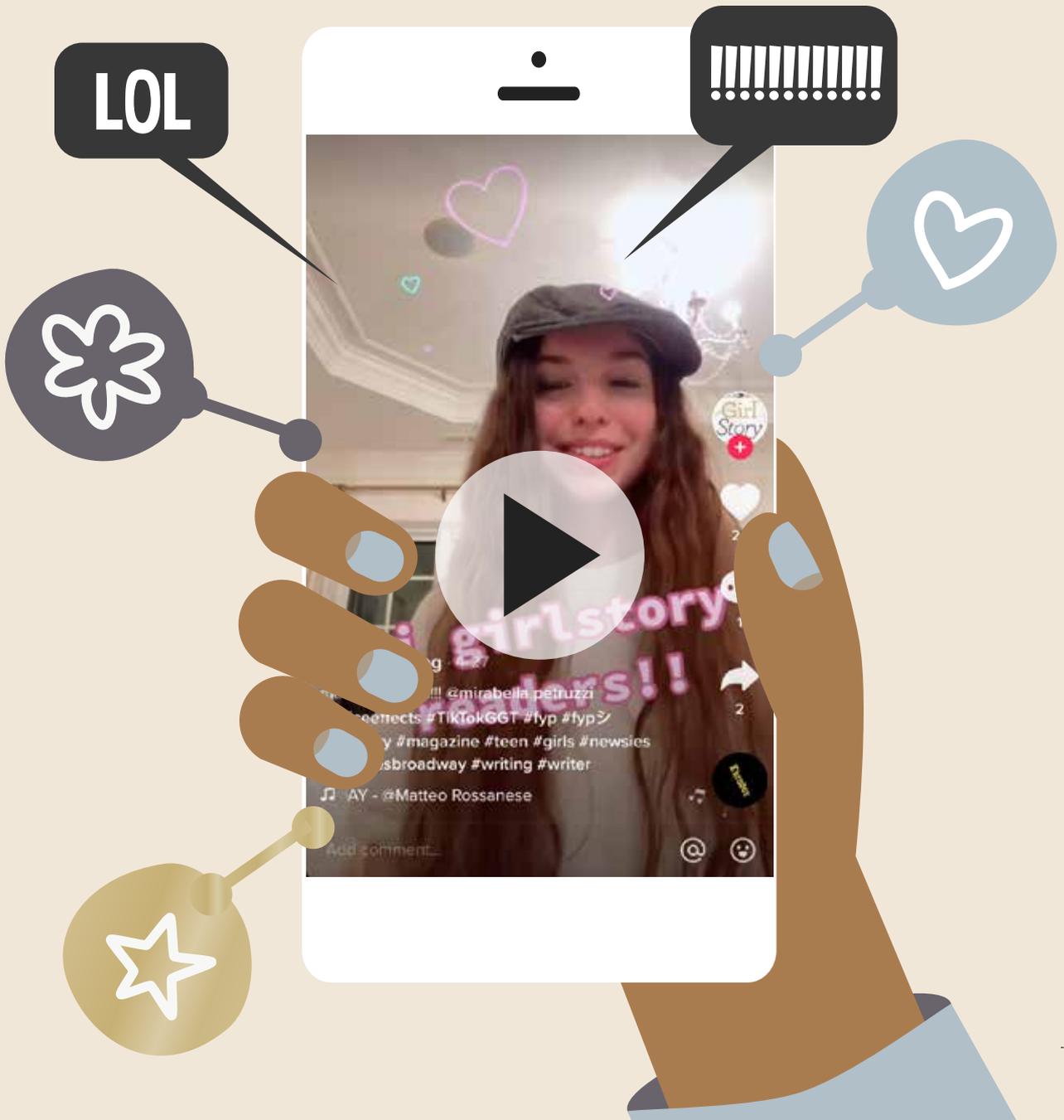
Advertising Inquiries

If you would like to learn more about sponsorships or advertising your business in GirlStory Magazine, please send us an inquiry email at contact@girlstorymag.com.

GirlStory is published seasonally, four times a year. The views, thoughts, and opinions expressed in the articles, quotes, and poems belong solely to the authors and not necessarily to GirlStory, LLC, its members, or other groups/sponsors.



Check us out: www.girlstorymag.com
Get social: @girlstorymag



contents

May 2021

Created for girls ages 10-14 to encourage and inspire each other as they write the feature articles.



GirlStory is a magazine that gives voice to authentic girl stories that matter. Broken into the categories of BRAIN, BODY, and HEART, the majority of *GirlStory* articles will be written by and for girls ages 10 to 14. Stories will be fiction or non-fiction and will serve one of three purposes—to encourage and inspire, to help girls feel a little less alone, or to express a passion, idea, or just cause, which other girls may want to join or act upon. All voices, all girls, are welcome to read (and write for) *GirlStory*!



brain

education/learning • school • science • space • research • environment • politics • careers • languages • medicine • mental health • truth/lies • books



body

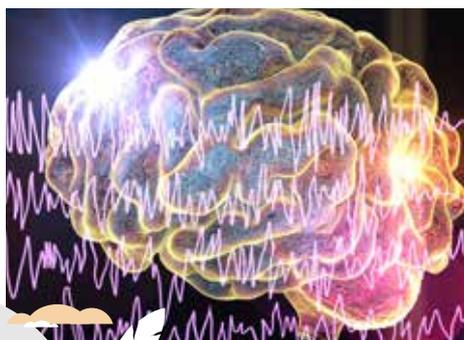
nutrition • healthcare • growth • beauty • fitness • sports • personal hygiene • disabilities/special needs • sleep/rest • food/cooking



heart

relationships/friendships • faith/religion • passions/causes • self-esteem • community/belonging • teamwork • feelings/emotions • communication • identity

A Word from *GirlStory*: “As a country, we are walking through change. With change comes big emotions, varying opinions, and many degrees of understanding. As we share these stories, quotes, and poems, we will not tolerate disrespectful comments or cyber bullying of any kind. The goal of *GirlStory* is to provide encouragement and grace for tween and teen authors, always remembering we are ALL learning. Let’s celebrate the courage of these authors who are giving voice to what matters to them. This generation can change the world!”



8 » Feature:
When I got Diagnosed

13 » Brain:
Marie Curie's Life

16 » Body:
Standing Up for Yourself
and Others

22 » Heart:
I Am wonderful, beautiful,
amazing, courageous,
strong, smart

24 » Heart:
Then Suddenly

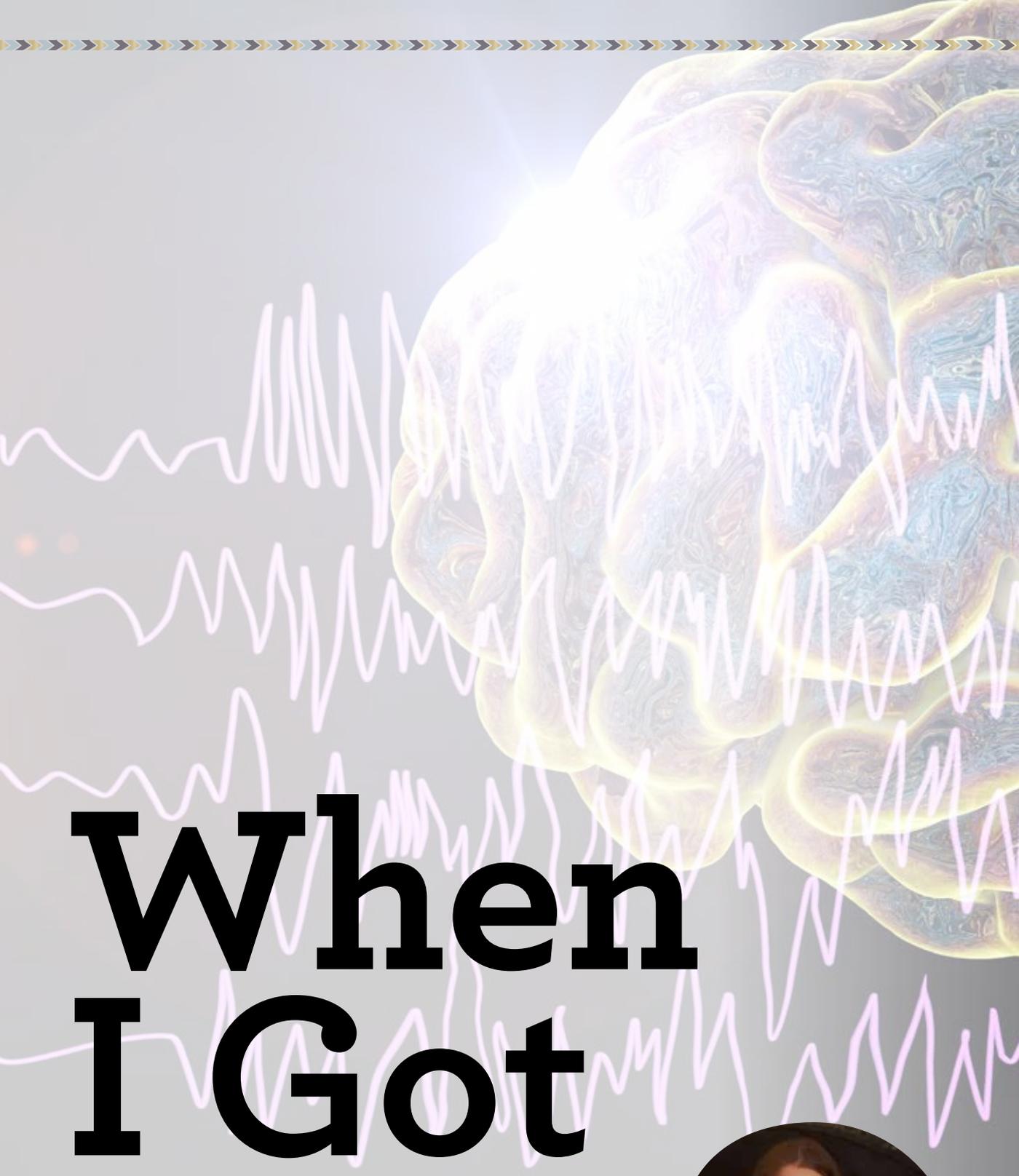
26 » Heart:
Families

28 » Heart:
Hole After Hole



30 » COMIC!
The Adventures of Kate





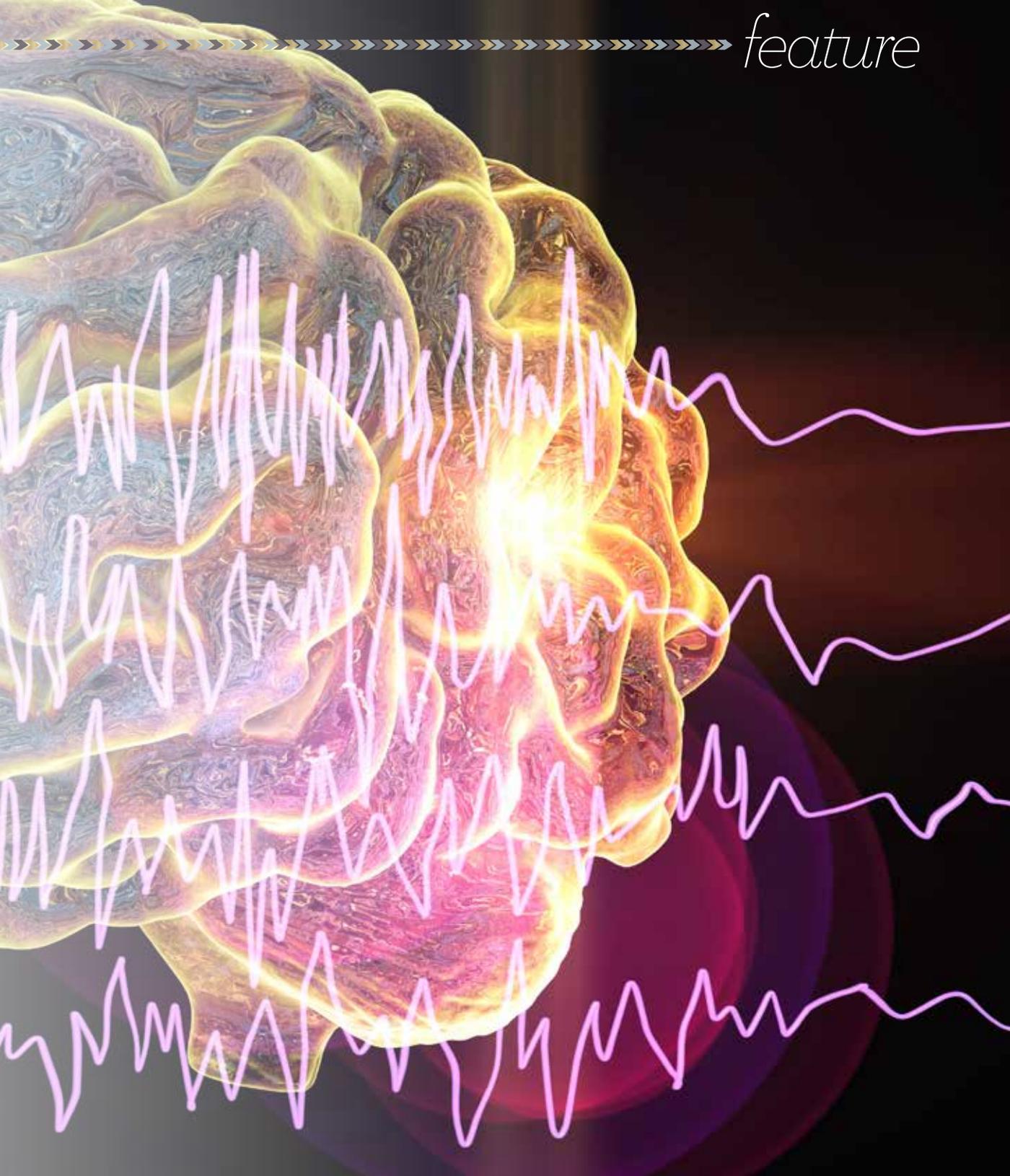
When I Got

DIAGNOSED



JOHNALYN

age 13, from WV



I got my diagnosis when I was seven years old in Myrtle Beach with my grandparents and uncle. The day started out with all of us eating breakfast together talking about what we wanted to do that day. Then, after we were done eating, we all decided to just relax some, so my grandmother and me decided to sit on the couch and watch some television. Suddenly, she asked me if I was okay. I was confused because I thought I was fine, but she said that

my face started shaking really badly. To be honest, I didn't know what she was talking about. The shaking happened a few more times so my grandparents rushed me to the hospital. While the doctors started working on me, my grandparents called my mom and dad to tell them what was going on. They said that they would be one their way.

It takes about six hours to get from my house to Myrtle Beach. I remember getting poked with a bunch of needles because they couldn't find a vein.

They ran so many tests I can't remember them all. I had been at the hospital for almost the whole day, and the shaking happened a few times while we were at the hospital. Every time they had to get blood, I would shake, and I passed out. Then, after a while, my parents and sister got there. It had been a long, hard day for my family and me.

There was always someone by my bedside, no matter if I was sleeping, awake, eating, or watching TV—someone was always there sitting with me. The doctors would come in and then leave and did that often. The doctors had realized after my labs and tests came back that I had seizures. This was surprising to my family but not shocking because my mom had seizures before, too.

The doctors wrote me a prescription for some medication, and we decided since it had been a hard day, we would rent some movies to watch together and went back to the place we were staying. It was 7 pm when we got back. We had been at the hospital for 8 hours. I was so exhausted, but my dad had to go get my medicine so I could start taking it. My parents started looking for a seizure doctor. The reason they were looking for a doctor is because the hospital said that I would need to find a doctor to watch out for my health.

After time spent looking, they found a doctor in Morgantown who was willing to help me. She said the first thing to do was a sleep study. A sleep study is where you go to a doctor's office and they put you

in a room that looks exactly like a bedroom. There are a bunch of machines in the room, and someone comes in and attaches cords to your head so the machines can monitor your brain. Then, you sleep all night and leave early the next morning.

Then, she scheduled an appointment to see me a few weeks after that. My family and I drove to Morgantown, West Virginia for my appointment. This was the first time I would meet her. She said I needed to get blood work and come back in 3 months. So we got blood work and went back. She told us that luckily my seizures were not grand mal seizures and that mine would eventually end right around the time I become a teenager.

For a while, we went every three months and got new medications. I was getting better so the appointments were moved back to every 6 months, and I only took 7 pills a day. Slowly, she started to back me off certain medications.

Finally, after a few years of care, she finally said that that there would only be a few more visits. This was sad because I liked her but good because that meant I was getting better. The next time I went back, she wanted to take me off my last pill and then ask me to come back six months later to make sure I was fine.

When we went back for the last time, she said at the next appointment that I didn't need to come back anymore. I was really excited and happy—but a little sad, too, that I don't get to see her anymore. ○

Thank you Johnalyn for sharing your story. It sounds like you went through a difficult time, and I am so pleased you are now seizure-free. Your story is an inspiration to other teenagers with health problems. Six in every thousand children and teens have seizures, and nearly one in every four teens have a chronic health problem (one that lasts more than a few months). While no one can ever fully understand what you are going through, it helps to know you are not alone and that other people have been through similar issues and learned to live and thrive with their diagnosis.

It can be very scary and confusing when health issues begin. Having lots of tests done can be unpleasant, uncomfortable and a worrying, but it is worth pushing through so the medical team can give you an accurate diagnosis and find a treatment that works for you. It sounds like you got really good medical care and eventually found a doctor who you could trust and confide in—that's so important. You have to be able to talk to your doctor and feel that they are listening and really understanding what you tell them. You know your body better than anyone else so your honesty about how you are feeling can really help your doctor get your treatment perfected.

I hope your story will encourage other girls to see a doctor if they are worried about new or strange symptoms because no matter what is wrong, getting help earlier will mean the doctors can get you on the right treatment quickly. And if there's nothing wrong (which is often the case), you can stop worrying.



~Dr Leonaura Rhodes, Life Coach and Retired Pediatrician. MB, ChB, MPH



brain

education/learning • school • science • space • research • environment • politics
careers • languages • medicine • mental health • truth/lies • books



Allah

Allah is my god
Lailahaillallah is the meaning of there is no god but Allah
Love for Allah
Allah is the most merciful
Hana is my name

MARIE CURIE'S LIFE



ALTHEA

age 10, from VT

M

arie Curie is one of the most famous women scientists. She made so many discoveries, such as periodic elements radium and polonium—all while working in a shed as her laboratory in Paris, France because she wasn't allowed in the other laboratories because she was a woman. She really changed the world!



Marie was the first person to win a Nobel Prize in two different fields of science.

When in her twenties, Marie enrolled at Sorbonne University and was accepted in 1891. Marie inherited Pierre's (her husband's) teaching chair at Sorbonne University in Paris when he died in a wagon accident in 1906 becoming their first female Professor. When Pierre was killed by a wagon, he was Marie Curie's scientific partner and husband. In all his lifetime, he never realized that radioactivity weakens you.

Marie won her first Nobel Prize in 1903 becoming the first woman to earn one. Marie and Pierre ground up and filtered other radioactive materials to find out which had radium. Marie won a second Nobel Prize in 1911 for her work with polonium and radium. When Marie won the first Nobel Prize in 1903, it was for physics. Marie was the first person to win a Nobel Prize in two different fields of science. Marie Curie worked with radioactivity, and even she coined the word. She did amazing scientific work.

In 1914, when France was invaded by Germany, Marie made cars with x-rays in them to find wounds in soldiers. It is estimated that over one million x-rays were done in World War One using Marie Curie's x-rays cars with her daughter Irene. Women volunteered to drive and use the x-ray cars.

The first woman to be honored for her achievements with her burial at the pantheon in Paris was Marie. Irene grew up to be a scientist like her parents and was the second woman to win a Nobel Prize; her second daughter, Eve, was a writer and lived to be 102.

Do you realize that Marie did all of that with people against her because she was a woman? But she pushed through anyway. She changed the world and is a role model for many. That is why I love Marie Curie. ○

Sources:

Demi. *Marie Curie*. Henry Holt and Company, 2018.
 Ignatofsky Rachel. *Women in Science*. Crown Publishing Group, 2016.
 "Marie Curie Timeline." Softschool.com.
 Jorgensen J. Timothy. "Marie Curie and her X-ray Vehicles' Contribution to the World War I Battlefield." *The Conversation*, 2017, <https://theconversation.com/marie-curie-and-her-x-ray-vehicles-contribution-to-worldwar-i-battlefield-medicine-83941>.

Dear Althea,

Although I have known of Marie Curie all my life, you have just taught me much more. Your excellent writing gives me a vivid picture of Marie and quite an emotional response.

So many firsts she accomplished! Marie Curie must have been compelled by her curiosity and a strong passion for problem-solving in order to work through those barriers. Can you imagine having to do your school work in a shed because you weren't accepted by your peers? Can you imagine being the only girl in your future work place? Fortunately, we don't have to and I'm grateful to have many female scientists and engineers as colleagues. Of course, we face barriers and rejection but we can remember how Marie Curie pushed through and so can we. In fact we can use those negative feelings to fuel our determination to succeed and make a difference.

I expect that Marie Curie was shaped both by her God given thirst for knowledge as well as by experiences in early years. I know seeds were planted in my young life that led to me becoming a scientist. For example, I spent loads of time every week in nature and with animals as a girl, when I wasn't in school. My sixth-grade science teacher introduced me to the field of Geology, which amazed me. A high school teacher got me really excited about the applicability of physics and chemistry in our everyday lives. My mother's profession in natural resources and land use conservation may not have fascinated me when I was young, but it planted seeds. These seeds were watered later in college, which definitely directed me to my career in environmental science. Even though my mum passed away from illness when I was 15, her influence and direction lasted.

Althea, I hope that you always pay attention to what intrigues and inspires you. Thanks to your writing about Marie Curie, I am encouraged today to be more flexible, curious, and determined.

~Helen Corley, Principal Environmental Hydrogeologist, North Carolina





“Play”

with what makes you unique when you are writing. Your personal experience brings authenticity to your stories, poems or essays.



body

nutrition • healthcare • growth • beauty • fitness • sports • personal hygiene
disabilities/special needs • sleep/rest • food/cooking

This is my Somalia Life

I'm an American Somali. I'm 11 in San Diego, California.
My life is different, like really different. I'm a Somali.
I live life a little different. I have to wear a scarf outdoors and on Zoom.
The rest of my life is normal.
Some things I have to do are:
I have to pray 5 times a day.
I read the Quran
I eat different foods like sambuusa, xalwada, mufa, bur, and others.
That sounds cool right? Yeah, it's cool. That is most of my life



STANDING UP

for Yourself and Others

By: Cindy,
college student, NC



I am blind. I've learned I have to stand up for myself, so I have had to put together an advocacy plan.

ADVOCACY PLAN

The first issue I've decided to focus on is technology. I decided to focus on that first because there is not enough accessibility in this world for blind people, or people with autism, or people who are deaf and can't hear. The problem I ran into this year is they put down Covid spots on the floor for people to stay 6 feet apart, and that is not accessible for me to know when I am getting too close to someone. I also can't tell which way to go on the signs that have been put up on campus and around towns to keep people away from others. In the stores, some aisles are one way only now and that is very different than before COVID-19. The other reason technology is important is so that I can write my papers to turn into my teachers for grades. This is the very first accessibility issue I had to address to participate in my college classes. At first, I had to figure out what I needed for class. I needed to talk to the accessibility office about if they had an audio format of the textbook, but they did not have the audio book. I had a typer read it to me or read it into a recording that I could listen to. When I wrote my papers, I would dictate to my typer and she would type what I said so that I could turn them in.

After a while, I started working with some interns to help with typing my dictation. I also started using my AIRA service to dictate my papers to. There are a lot of solutions we can come up with if you brainstorm.

One of the things that I have done is to contact the National Federation of the Blind to figure out who I should talk to join an advocacy group for college aged blind students to make sure campuses are accessible during the pandemic. They put me in touch with John Pare, the Director of Advocacy at NFB and I left him a message on his work and his cell phone. I want to get involved with their group to work with them on advocacy work to make colleges safer for blind students during the pandemic. Specifically, I signed up to attend the NFB December Dare to Be Remarkable training conference for blind people and the vocational rehab workers who support them. I will be able to advocate and be in discussions and talk to other vocational rehab workers and users and share my experiences and search for a solution. I would also like to attend the NFB Convention again this spring. I have attended in the past for several years, and the last two years I went to several events focused on advocacy. They have a blind student division which would be a great place for me to talk to other students and find out what is hard for them on their campuses, and what changes their campus has made to make it more accessible.



One of the things I can do later in my college career is to do an internship with the NFB. This is a summer internship opportunity and could keep me busy during the summer months. I want to learn more about it and whether it would be a great opportunity for me to do. I also would like to know will it count for my school internship? I will need to get a form for my supervisor to sign to see if my hours could be counted. I would like to do this because it would help me learn more about advocacy by working with a national advocacy group.

Thinking about 10 years after I graduate is hard to do for me. I don't usually think 10 years ahead. I think I might be a mom with a lot of kids, and if so, I will have to figure out how to take care of them as a blind mom. I think I will probably have to convince other people that I am capable of taking care of my children and this is not fair. I know other young moms who are blind and have done well taking care of their baby and child. I think I will be working as a DJ, and would like to work from home. I will need to advocate for myself to have access to what I need for work including a computer with voice over, my Polaris Mini, my iPhone with voice over, and my Aira service. I will need a driver to help me get to work and other places I need to go to like the grocery store, the library, shopping, out to meet friends, get coffee. Things like that.

I have advocated for myself many times, and I know how to help others advocate for themselves. I think I will be advocating for myself and others for the rest of my life. ○

Dear Cindy

I understand your worry in finding quality job opportunities so that you can see a bright future for yourself and your family. This should be a fundamental right but it's not today. I've been in the recruitment technology space for over a decade and also see how hard it is for blind, low vision, deaf, and hard of hearing people to find work.

I'm part of a team of 30 people who are starting an initiative called Jobs for Humanity (www.jobsforhumanity.com) to create a global movement of job creation for overlooked communities: the blind and visually impaired, the neurodivergent, single mothers, black leaders, refugees, and returning citizens from incarceration. We launched this in March with individual job sites for each cause we support. We'll have thousands of jobs from employers who have agreed to get trained and interview the most qualified candidates.

We've partnered with Lighthouse for the Blind, Be My Eyes, and Spectrum's center for accessibility to produce a training program for the blind and low vision that companies will take in order to make their jobs fully accessible to you. I recommend that you check out the website when it's live (URL will be www.blind.jobs), and apply to jobs you're a fit for. We will be right here to constantly offer quality job opportunities and training for anyone with blindness or low vision.

Feel free to contact me with any questions, at any time. You can always reach us at contact@jobsforhumanity.com.

All the best,
Roy Baladi, founder of Jobs for Humanity, Illinois



PROUD BLACK





Muslim Girl

IQRAA

age 12, CA

I am a proud Black Muslim girl
 I wonder when everyone will be treated equally
 I hear people calling for help in China
 I see that Muslim and Black people are treated wrong
 I want to be treated just like everyone else
 I am a proud Black Muslim girl

I pretend like I fit in
 I feel good that I'm not abused
 I touch my beautiful hijab
 I worry that I might be killed
 I cry that my people are being killed
 I am a proud Black Muslim girl

I understand I'm not treated well
 I say I'm happy
 I dream that everyone will be equal
 I try to fit in
 I hope I'm not murdered like the others
 I am a proud Black Muslim girl



Your poem is absolutely amazing! You are giving a powerful, much needed voice to everyone who has ever had an ambivalent thought about who they are in comparison to others. Whether Black or white, male or female, Muslim or Christian, young or old—EVERYONE has wondered whether they fit in. And it hurts to feel like we could be hurt or abused because of the thing that makes us a little different.

But I say to you dear Iqraa, to remember that our differences are a gift. The beautiful hijab you wear is adorning your greatest gift: that brave and beautiful mind. Your mind and the amazing thoughts you have shared have set you apart and will resonate in the hearts of anyone who has ever felt like the minority. You are not alone. I stand with you as a proud Black girl, who has grown into a proud Black woman, with 5 Black daughters to be proud, brave, and beautiful with you. We are better and stronger together! May the sense of pride you have for your Black skin and Muslim culture far outweigh any fears or thoughts that you should be otherwise. You don't have to fit in because you're already in. With this poem, you have sealed your position in a strong, elite group of intelligent thinkers who use their voice for the voiceless. You are in. I am with you, and I am proud of you.

*With Love,
 Dr. Melissa, advocate, author, and filmmaker in North Carolina*



heart

relationships/friendships • faith/religion • passions/causes • self-esteem
community/belonging • teamwork • feelings/emotions • communication • identity

ZEYNAB
age 11, CA

Everyone Matters

No one should be excluded
Diversity is unique

Respectful
Adore
Creative
Inspirational
Successful
Incredible
Magnificent



I am

WONDERFUL, BEAUTIFUL, AMAZING, COURAGEOUS, STRONG, SMART



MARLEE

age 12, from NC



M

any people struggle with looks and the latest trends and what they don't have. But that is not how God wants it to work. It always amazes me that our minds can tell us what we don't like about ourselves but what we do like about others.

I heard a story once about a woman who went to a doctor because she didn't like her appearance. The woman asked, "How can I lose weight?"

The doctor asked, "Well what do you want to look like? A model or something like that?"

She replied with "yes." The doctor took measurements of the woman's body and then told her to pick a model that she wanted to look like out of a magazine. The woman chose one and the doctor got the exact measurements of the lady on the magazine; his patient had almost the exact measurements as the lady in the magazine. The woman was so amazed at that fact.

This goes to show that we usually only look at our features that we don't like, and we only look at the good and perfect features of people in magazines. We

should all love ourselves just the way that we are. In life, being skinny is not going to take you anywhere; it is your personality and your true self that should determine who you really are. Don't try to impress someone and change your looks or personality. Let your true self always shine, and don't let ANYONE take it from you because you are the boss of that light, and you get to tell it when to shine brightest. And you can tell it when to dial back a bit.

God always wants us to know that he loves us, and it isn't always about looks. As he says, we are his masterpiece, and he made us in his image, and that is all that matters because that's all the proof we need to know that we are beautiful. God also says, "Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes. Rather, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight." (1 Peter 3:3-4)

I have one more thing to say, but you can't tell anyone else: **YOU'RE AMAZING! YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL! AND YOU ARE WONDERFULLY MADE!** ○

Marlee,

You are absolutely right! Beauty is so much more than physical looks. Every person is created by God in his image, and there is no image of God that isn't beautiful.

God does not make mistakes. He creates everything with and for a purpose, and that truth applies to each of our lives. Although we live in a world that likes to tell us everything we don't have, God will never call us to do anything without giving us everything we need to succeed because God does not and cannot fail.

God creates all of us just the way we are for a reason. However, the world we live in doesn't see things the way God sees them and likes to try to convince us that we aren't good enough. Anything telling you that you aren't good enough, pretty enough, etc. is not the truth. We are all enough in God's eyes and there is nothing we can ever do to separate us from God's love for us.

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:38-39 NIV

Keep shining your light! You are amazing, beautiful and wonderfully made, and nothing in this world has the power to say otherwise. You were made by God, and God is the only one who determines your value. God thinks you're valuable enough to sacrifice his Son's life for you and your value to him will never change. The darkness in this world will never change God's view of you because darkness has no power over God.

If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me be night," even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you. For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. Psalm 139:11-14 ESV

Thank you so much for sharing this powerful and very important message!

God bless,

Emily Bernath, author of the "Broken Lenses" series, speaker, and advocate for sexual assault survivors, Utah

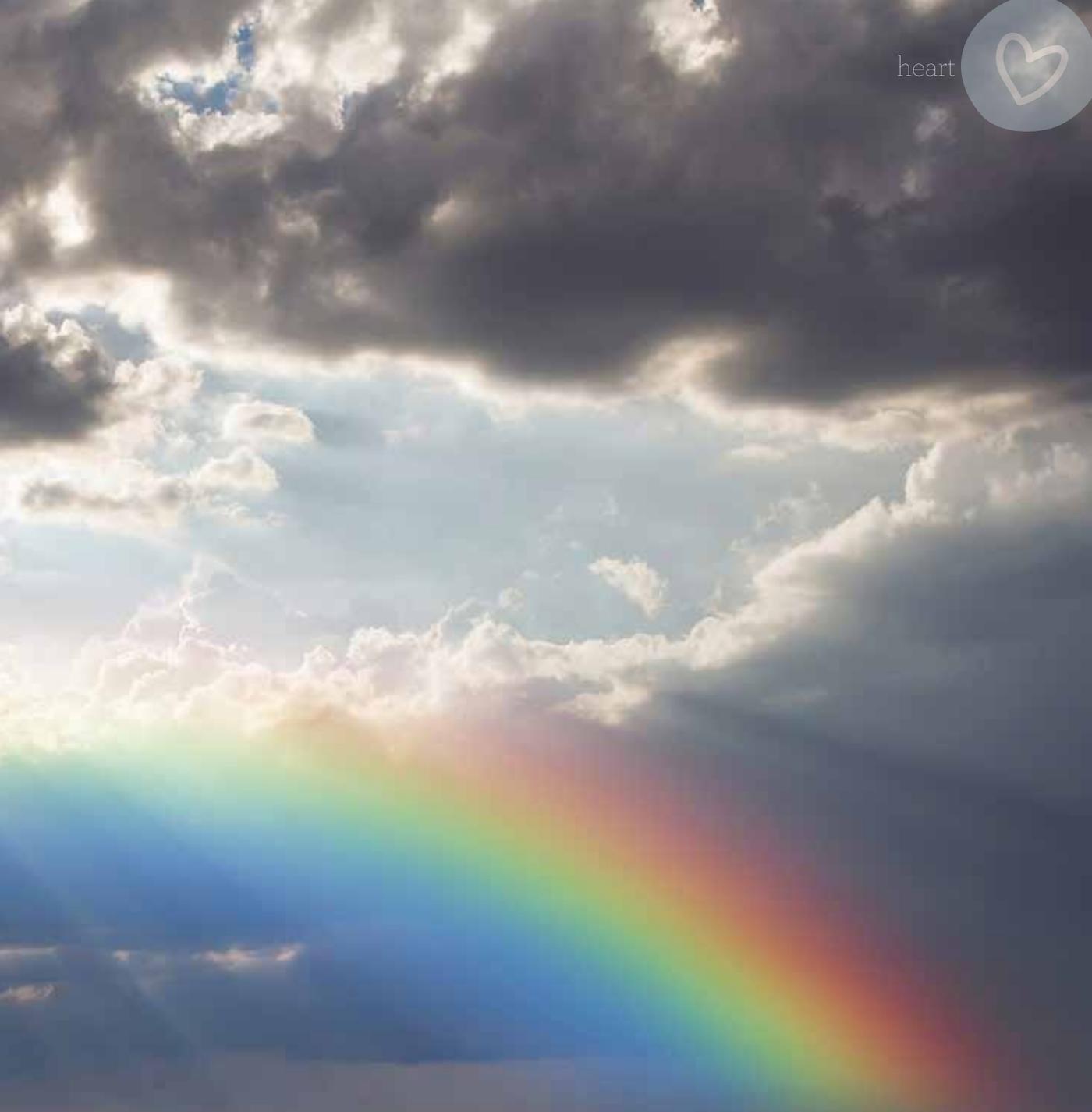


Then Suddenly

RAMIA

age 12, CA

Outside the rain pours
Inside my heart
The clouds are black
My feelings are grey
I want to cry
I let my tears fall
I may never stop
Then suddenly
The sun shines beautifully
Through the sun
A rainbow light sun
I manage to smile
Blink back my tears
Life must go on.
Nothing can ever change



Ramia,

Wow, thank you for giving me and all the other girl/women writers permission to own our raw emotions and express it in such a honest way. I love how simple your poem is, yet it's beyond powerful. There will always be parts of our story throughout life that make us feel grey and want to cry. Sometimes we can blink back our tears, other times we can't and they just flow like a river. You gently reminded us it's okay to admit that and feel the emotions connected to it. If only I were as brave as you when I was 12 years-old! My words to you are to keep doing what you're doing. You are a "freedom writer," a beautiful young lady showing us how to freely express ourselves using a pen and paper so we can share stories that will inspire the next person.

Ramia, I appreciate you for sharing your poem with me!

—Nikki Gillis, writer, North Carolina



Families



families

NASREN

age 11, CA

Families are big
And families are small
Families are different, and we love them all.

Some have mothers;
Some have fathers.
Some have brothers,
and some have sisters.

Family stays and friends come and go.
We are thankful we will always be
For all the memories we have
throughout the years
Full of laughter full of tears,
We love family!!!

Dear Nasren,

When I was told that I will receive a poem from an 11-year-old, not for the shortest moment did I envision something this profound! How much wisdom is in this beautiful poem of yours! In the time of en masse stereotypes about everything (including families), your poem reminds us that family is so much more than just a construct. Family is about love, caring, creating a state of deep connection that weathers the ups and downs of life, and it can come in many different sizes, colors and shapes. Being able to see, feel and speak this truth is a gift. You certainly are a gift to your family and your poem is a gift to anyone who reads it!

Our society is lucky to have an inspiring, brave, love-spreading young woman such as you. In a world that changes with a remarkable speed, we need more reminders of what really matters in life. You have the awareness and you have the writing skills to effectively deliver those important messages. Keep writing, nurture that wonderful talent you've got, you have the power to be a change for good!

With all my heart,
Senka Holzer, family lover, immigrant, heart researcher, Gratz, Austria





SKYE
age 11, NJ

HOLE

AFTER HOLE



**Imagine you're falling down a hole.
It never stops.
Some people feel like they are falling down a hole.
And it never stops.
Because they don't believe in themselves.
Everyone sometimes doesn't believe in themselves.
Including me.**

**People try to help you but you don't listen.
So you keep on falling down a hole.
But you know you need to listen.
So one day you start listening.
And you start believing yourself.
You start climbing up the hole.
Then, you see a mountain.
You climb up the mountain.
So now you are on top of the world.**

Moral of the story: Always believe in yourself!

Hello, Skye,

Right away, I love that you invite the reader to imagine and then alert them to what is happening. It puts them right in the place of thought that you want them to experience and brings empathy to the table.

By putting the reader in the shoes of the subject in your poem, you're directly allowing them the perspective to try to relate to others. This connection is aimed at the heart, thought by the mind, and sensed by the body. I believe it allows the perspective of what the power of belief can do. The lesson of knowing that you need to listen. You get their attention with your direction. This is strong work, my lady.

Well done, Skye.

—Paula Goodman (#PaulaG), columnist, author, word jedi poetess, Ontario, Canada



comic!



MAEVE
age 12, from NJ

ADVENTURES OF



Kate

Meet Kate! Kate is a smart, funny, brave, and sometimes mischievous young pup. Follow Kate on her many adventures and meet her friends and family along the way!



Maeve

H O P E

*“When you do nothing you feel overwhelmed and powerless.
But when you get involved you feel the sense of hope and
accomplishment that comes from knowing you are working
to make things better.”*

- Maya Angelou



Girl[@]Story

*Created for girls
ages 10-14 to
encourage and
inspire each other
as they write the
feature articles.*



Check us out: www.girlstorymag.com

» » »

Get social: [@girlstorymag](https://www.instagram.com/girlstorymag)

