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Dear Lori Wick,

Drip. Drip. Drip. I watched as the liquid fell from bag into my IV. As I watched, I wondered why in the world this was happening to me. After all, I had been through so much in the past while. I had experienced changing schools, from a class of 27 to a class of about 350. I knew no one, and as the faces started to become familiar, some became enemies, making fun of me day in and day out for a while. Then I became sick. I had already missed several weeks of school, and I was sure to miss many more. As the tears fell down my face, I gasped for breath. Each breath had become so much more difficult. It seemed like I was fighting for my life. How I continued to go on, I do not know, but it could only have come from God, and some pieces of paper fitted together to form a book.

I had read *Sophie's Heart* earlier in the year, and it had given me the courage to not give up, even if people didn't like me. I felt like Sophie many times, alone in this vast world, with no human to count on for strength and encouragement. Her character had reminded me to persevere through every situation because the grass is greener on the other side. Just as she was able to keep going despite not being able to speak fluent English, I was able to stand up to those who tried to make me compromise my beliefs.

A few months after I had read the book, I found myself lying in a hospital bed. Even though the book had encouraged me to keep persevering months before, I had forgotten its many lessons as I watched the medicine drip some more into my IV. A moment later I found myself looking at my grandma as she came into the room. In her hands was the book *Sophie's Heart*. With a smile pasted on my face, I took the book from her, not sure if I wanted to read it again. Next, with all the energy that I had for the day, I uttered, "Thanks."

I don't know what made my fingers touch the smooth pages of the book and begin to read it again, but a few days later I found the book in my hands. I could not read it for long, because the pain was too intense, but I felt a sense of urgency to fight off the pain and read the book. Somehow, Sophie's character reminded me to have the same perseverance that took me through previous difficult days. Even if I had a bad day like Sophie when she dropped the Jello, I found myself thinking the way Sophie would and I would take a deep breath and push forward. I was not going to let my sickness dictate who I was.

As Sophie chose to be happy in all circumstances, I found myself looking for the good in my current situation. As I struggled to walk up and down the hall of the hospital a few times, I began to be thankful that I could walk. As Sophie put comments of people not wanting her to help Alec out in his house, I had to put comments away of people telling me to repeat classes at school, and study as hard as I could.

I don't know the reason for the inspiration of the character of Sophie, but I do know that her gentle spirit and hard determination affected my life and helped me overcome many battles of my own. Who knows what kinds of trials and tribulations I will face in the future, but I have learned that with some patience and perseverance, I can overcome many obstacles.

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