

December 14, 2023

Dear John Green,

Your novel, "The Fault in Our Stars" was a book I never even fathomed reading. I am not typically into sappy books that make people cry. However, your book spoke to me in so many ways. Your book taught me that deep down everyone wants to believe that children do not get sick or die. We all want to believe that childhood is something everyone gets to experience, but that just is not the truth. You taught me that sickness is a merciless power that strikes hard and it can strike children too.. Many people believe your book is just a mushy teen love story about cancer. However, it is so much more than that.

My sister is twelve years old. She loves soccer, cheering, and used to want to be just like me, but life is not fair to her. Your book tells the story of a young girl who is slowly being defeated by cancer. I know that you worked in a hospital with sick children, so you understand the pain and struggles that ill children have. Although my sister does not have cancer she has juvenile arthritis, deformities in her feet, ADHD, and is currently taking an immunosuppressant that is meant for cancer patients and could make her lose hair. She has struggled with all of this since the age of seven. We recently just discovered that juvenile arthritis was the root of her problems. Currently, her proteins are high in her kidneys. I used to think about how unfair it is to her and how she could never achieve the goals she had set for herself.

Your story teaches us that although sickness can restrict children from being, well, children, it also teaches that they can achieve so much even while being sick. In your book the main character Hazel has been sick ever since she was a child. My sister has done everything right in life and I often wondered what made her have to suffer more than other kids. I was jealous of her. What makes your kid deserve to run and play without pain and my sister must? Meanwhile my sister gets bruises out of nowhere and her knees swell up just from the slightest physical contact. Your book taught me that life is unfair and that I need to stop feeling bad for my sister and instead inspire her. I need to teach her that she is not just a "cripple" or "sped" that other kids call her. My sister gets bullied so badly that she wants to do school online.

However, ironically after reading your book my sister decided to be a cheerleader which, to be honest, scared me. She was going to be around mean girls all day and risk hurting herself. She has been a cheerleader for about a month now and is even a flyer. She loves it and some days her body hurts everywhere but she manages it like a champion. The main character of your story is strong, inspirational, and determined. Hazel often reminds me of my sister because of their similar struggles.

In your story Hazel loves a book called "An Imperial Affliction," I believe you added this into your story because it shows that as much as Hazel yearned to know what happened in the end, she was never able to. You added this to prove that we never know what is going to happen in the end and hungering for that knowledge will only hurt us. You showed me that no matter what the situation we need to make the best out of what we have.

I want to thank you for teaching me that although my sister is limited in what she wants to do physically she is strong mentally. My sister wants to become a neurosurgeon. I used to worry that was another dream she would never be able to achieve due to her conditions. Your book allowed me to open my eyes and see that my sister is not some poor sick girl, but rather, one of the strongest individuals that I know. She never complains about her circumstances and

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tackles each day like it's another opportunity to prove to the world and its evil diseases that she cannot be stopped. For that, I will forever be grateful to you.

With gratitude,

Emma Gavellas