

NewYork-Presbyterian Kids

Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital

wavelength

TEEN ART & LITERARY MAGAZINE

Fall 2017



Wavelength

Fall 2017 · Number 2

Table of Contents

- 2 Letter from the Guest Teen Editor
- 3 The Balloon by Penelope
- 4 Hope by Madeline | Art by Leah
- 5 A Day at the Amusement Park by Tiffany
- 7 Sanitary by Michael
- 8 The Restless Nights I Suffer by Echo
- 9 Poem by Richerlin
- 10 Art by Areyliah
- 11 Finding Me by Alyson
- 12 I Am by Victoria | Art by Briana
- 13 Feelings by Chelsea | The Great But Small by Jaylin
- 14 Time Flies by Sharay
- 15 Just Get Better by Jaymee
- 16 M&M'S Pretzels and Funnel Cake by Marisa
- 17 Art by Areyliah
- 18 Looking Out the Window by Areyliah
- 19 Genetics by Brandon
- 20 Poem by Essence
- 21 My Hair by Cassandra
- 23 Art by Lola
- 24 Sickle Cell Battle by Lola
- 25 Butterflies by John
- 26 Why Did It Happen by Shelina
- 27 The Blur by Yeicol
- 29 Dreams Vs. Reality by Briana | Art by Samantha
- 30 The Underneath by Melissa
- 31 Flames to Shine by Alize | Art by Leah
- 32 Coming From the Dark to the Light by Aaliyah
- 33 The Unknown by Ashley
- 34 The Heart by Johendy

Wavelength is a publication of The New York and Presbyterian Hospital. The contents are the expressions of our patients and are reprinted with their permission.

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Children's Helping Advisory Team (C.H.A.T.) is a group of teen patients who advocate for other patients and advise the hospital on how to improve the medical experience. Adolescents age 12 and older who have been hospitalized are invited to join C.H.A.T. and participate in monthly meetings facilitated by child life staff.



If you are a teen who wishes to submit art and writing, contact us at chat@nyp.org

Hello, readers!

We'd like to welcome you to the second annual issue of *Wavelength*. We would like to start off by saying thank you to all the patients, staff, doctors, nurses, families, and the community of NewYork-Presbyterian Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital for making our very first issue such a glorious success. Give yourselves a round of applause and a pat on the back; you guys are awesome. If you're not familiar with *Wavelength*, Thomas Dooley first introduced this wonderful idea of a magazine for the hospital just a little over a year ago. With Thomas' persistent work and with the nonstop help of Child Life Specialists Hilary Woodward and Sonia Lugo, along with the teens of the Children's Helping Advisory Team (C.H.A.T.), we started an annual magazine. *Wavelength* is a magazine by teens and for teens that brings out and promotes the dynamic and diverse voices at NewYork-Presbyterian Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital. As you look through *Wavelength* you will read lots of enjoyable, unique, and detailed poems and stories and vivid imagery written by brilliant and talented young minds.

"Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass. It's about learning to dance in the rain." When I think of *Wavelength* this quote always comes to mind. This quote talks about not just merely waiting for a bad moment in life to pass, but to take that bad moment on and learn to live with and even enjoy the inevitable storm of life. How does this relate to *Wavelength*? Well, these young teens have experienced life-changing events that most people would not be able to handle. These teens still manage to see the beauty in their own personal storms. Their writing and visual art have depicted that and every single one of these teens has experienced or are still experiencing a storm. They put all of that emotion, wisdom, and talent into this amazing magazine called *Wavelength*. Thank you reader for all your love and support. Enjoy!

Raymond, age 20, Guest Teen Editor

THANK
YOU!

We wish to thank **David & Jennifer Stone** of the **Smart Family Foundation** for their generous support of creative writing services for the teens of NewYork-Presbyterian Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital. Thank you to Bob Hughes from Tremont Offset, Inc. for the printing of this magazine.

THE BALLOON

by Penelope, age 16

The balloon is pretty big,
hot red blowing up with fire.
My personal thoughts fill the balloon like helium,
my feelings, what people say to me,
they rumble around for a while
like clouds when they fill up with a lot of water.
Motivation fills me the same way a car gets filled with gas.
When I have downfalls, I get flat like a tire.
Too much steam, my train runs off the tracks.
Sometimes I'm like a volcano
when it's about to erupt with lava,
similar to a balloon
when it's ready to pop.

HOPE

By Madeline, age 18

Hope would feel like a really warm sweater
when you're out in the cold,
it brings security and warmth
to undesirable situations.

And hope holds your hand
when you walk into a big crowd of people
and the one who encourages you
to get up and read that presentation
in front of the class.

Hope's biggest enemy is fear
although they are both codependent.

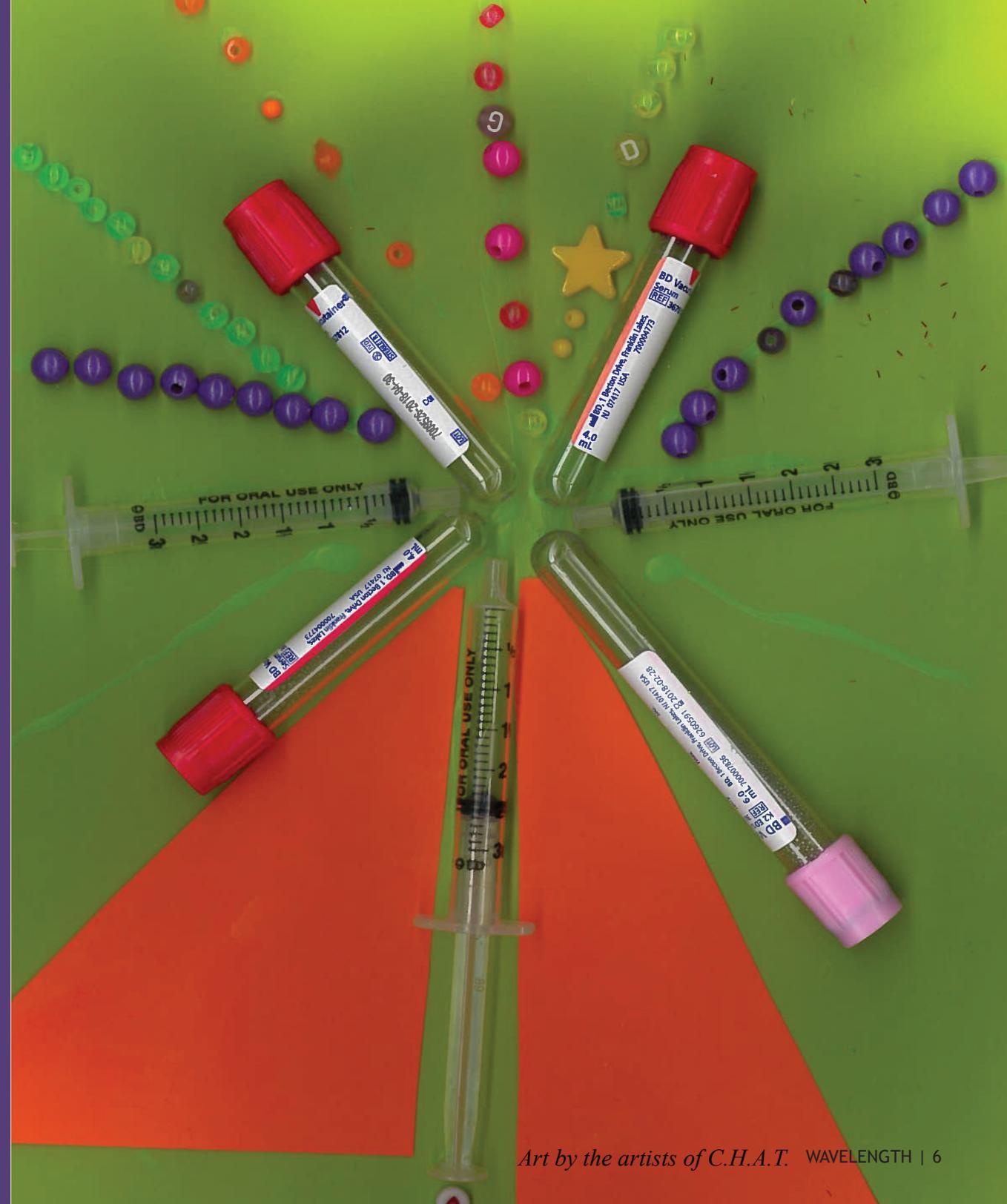
Without the darkness of fear
you will never discover the light of hope.

When we think we are falling into the unknown,
hope is the one
to catch us at the bottom.

A DAY AT THE AMUSEMENT PARK

by Tiffany, age 18

You're walking through the house of horrors,
you go to the fun house,
some days you're spinning in the teacups,
or getting on the highest roller coaster
and you're scared, you're going down
and your stomach hits the ground,
your heart is pumping
you know it's the end—
you're a teenager, you think
everything is the end—
once you hit the bottom, the flat surface on the ground,
you realize it's not that bad,
everyone goes through the ups and downs,
the spins and turns, but we all end up
on ground level and still
we continue to go on the next ride.



SANITARY

by Michael, age 18

Bathing with tears wanting to scrub away the pain

Scrub away the unclean body and mind

The mind that traveled the stars and back wanting to explore and learn

Hides in an empty dark solace

Never did I image that I would see myself back here in this place

Filled with anguish verging the point past agony

Aside from physical pain not being able to feel the human touch tender and warm

Feeling someone else existing there with you

I guess that's what hospitalization is just another point before

Happiness

Or at least that's what I tell myself

Empty lies in the ear of a hopeless fool or an idiotic dreamer

THE RESTLESS NIGHTS I SUFFER

by Echo, age 15

The restless nights I suffer

My parents are asleep downstairs

My sister is up late doing homework

She couldn't be less aware

to what's going on directly above her head

There's no end in sight

But still I fight

Why?

Why do I waste my time?

When I know I'll never be fine

The endless fights

That cause the restless nights

That send me into fits of tears

That slap me in the face with years

Years of fighting

Years of slowly, slowly dying

Years of the restless nights I suffer

POEM

by Richerlin, age 18

Here I feel like I'm stuck in a jail
you can't get out
you can't get away from it
the harder you try,
the farther you see yourself from coming out
the harder you try to get to the door
the door seems farther away
it feels like it's moving
and you can't do nothing about it
and sometimes you wish
you could be a baby again
because you feel freedom
without no responsibilities
you feel relief





FINDING ME

By Alyson, age 18

Been in a dark hole
not really knowing
where to go
is this really it
my little escape
a chance to find
me see what I
can truly be
bettering myself
cause I really need
the help truly
inner peace is what
I seek happiness and
tranquility finding
out what I can be

I AM

by Victoria, age 17

I am the city
I am funny videos
I am books in a pile together
I am an arm flexing
I am stars falling down around my room
I am someone who's always alone
I am a mix of yellow, pink, and orange
I am comedy and tragedy masks
I am roses and dandelions



FEELINGS

by Chelsea, age 12

I am a cartoon from Loony Tunes
I am a bunny hopping
I am a professor
I am a roller coaster
I am the color pink
I am sensitive people
I am Courage the Cowardly Dog

THE GREAT BUT SMALL

by Jaylin, age 18

When I cry
he comes up to me
he licks my tears away
when I'm in pain
he lays next to me
he comforts me
he calms me
whenever I'm up for a workout
he's ready to run with me
when I'm joyful
he definitely senses that
he hops around the house
he'll run back and forth
to give people high fives
he is happy to see everybody
and he is well behaved, so he sits
but if anyone acknowledges him
he jumps up all of a sudden
he's very active
he has the body of a pit bull
and the legs of a Jack Russell
so he's big, but stout
he's great but small.

TIME FLIES

by Sharay, age 20

Time flies fast during Saturday morning cartoons
It flies past playgrounds and episodes of Blue's Clues
Way past SpongeBob and as told by Ginger
These are the thoughts that are destined to linger
Past when Sister Sister was a thing
Saved by the Bell would be the only time we were excited to hear a bell ring
When Stitch was our only friend and we never wanted summer nights to end
Fly past once more
Age five hypnotized by the Powerpuff girls not knowing what's in store
Past when you learned real monsters don't live under your bed
Are you afraid of the dark said with blankets over our heads.
Never needed to call mom because Ghostbusters were faster
Begging them not to go after Casper
It may be hard for us to realize but we're catching up with time
But Ohana means Family and family means nobody gets left behind
Switch over like Pinocchio for a minute it gets real
Stay true to yourself and you'll never fail
Close your eyes and continue to dream on Dragons Tails

JUST GET BETTER

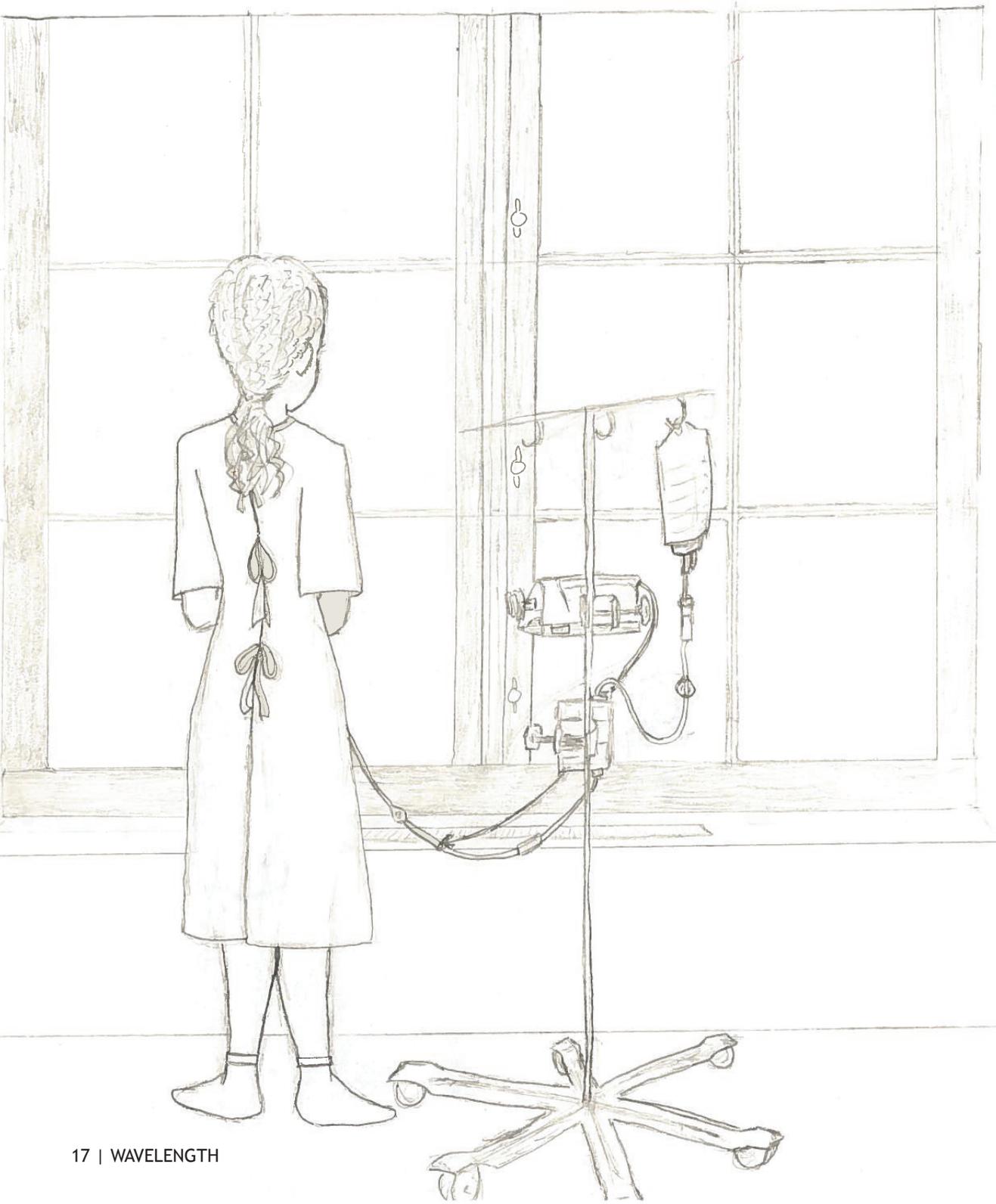
by Jaymee, age 12

Each and every day I would wait
for her to come back
and make me a cup of tea in the morning,
I would wake extra early
just so we had time to talk.
It feels lonely without her.
Her hands were always soft.
I know that she is still around,
she might have died,
but her spirit did not.
I know each and every night
she's right next to me.
I believe everyone's spirit
goes back to their family,
they assist your guardian angel.
She whispers in my ear,
"Just get better
so we can make our meatballs."

M&M'S PRETZELS AND FUNNEL CAKE

by Marisa, age 13

We park by the beach and go to the gift shop. We get our little handmade candy snacks and seashell collection inside. They even have adorable stuffed animals. I got a cute seal stuffed animal with this very unique seashell that looked like sea glass. Then I got a chocolate and M&M'S covered pretzel. Then we went to the arcade next door. My favorite game is Deal or No Deal so I played that first. Then I played PINKO where you have to spell out the words by dropping quarters into the slots. Once you fill in all the letters you get a big jackpot. I love the claw games like this puppy one with a cute plush beagle that looks like my real one, but I've never won him for four years. I also love Skee-Ball. It's so fun! I decide to cash in all my tickets for prizes... more stuffed animals. Before we leave, mom and I split a funnel cake. SO GOOD! My mouth is DROOLING! Awesome beach day.



LOOKING OUT THE WINDOW

by Areyliah, age 14

Tell me there is more to life
Then this continuous line of grief and strife.
I just keep trying and pushing, and
Oh, what's the use?
I wish I could simply call a truce.
But I can't.
And watching everybody else's lives
Go on quite well without me
Can sometimes make my current situation seem quite dreary.
However, I have to remind myself to think
Glass half full, my life can never again to me
Seem boring and dull. I mean, seriously! Not everyone
Gets to walk around with a giant pole,
Or be forced into a tiny hole (an MRI).
Though, I do know that at some point
I will be walking a normal life,
Just like I watch those people go by at the street's joint.
It may or may not be much longer,
But maybe to others I can be an inspiration
To be stronger than what they feel they are able.
Since giving up isn't an option, all I can do is keep on going,
And that's what I intend to do.

GENETICS

by Brandon, age 19

“Treasure your exceptions.” That’s a quote by geneticist William Bateson. He was talking to scientists, telling them to be appreciative of and curious about unexpected results. That’s the way genetics works, the way each person is born, the way humanity changes and evolves. My biology professor mentioned the quote in passing, but it affected me profoundly, reminded me of just how much my DNA defines my identity. It’s who I am. My essence lies in my genetic code and in the little mutation that changed my life. I’m an individualist; I think we all have something entirely unique to offer, an original contribution the world. I’m not sure if I believe in fate. I suppose I can’t really follow some deterministic, teleological view of life. But I don’t think we have complete free-will. Because there are instructions in almost every one of our cells saying exactly what to do and precisely how to do it. I don’t believe that we can do everything.

But I believe we can all do things that we could never possibly imagine. We’re terribly complex with about 3 billion base-pairs in our genomes. And those base-pairs are the source of human existence, the bridge of evolution, the blocks that build every one of us. I don’t think it’s bad to give credit to our genes. They surely deserve it, with everything they accomplish. And I don’t think it’s bad to take pride in your origins, not in a nationalistic sense, but on a more personal level: in your history, your creation, your talents, your purpose. I don’t think it impedes our future to think about the past, don’t think it impedes potential to think about the source. I know I’ve been affected by a mutation in my DNA, and while I certainly don’t enjoy the trouble it added to my life, I can respect its power, its impact on my weakness and my strength.

I sometimes wonder whether my children will inherit the mutation. I suppose there could be difficult moral dilemmas implied. I mean I’d hate to populate the world with people like me. That’s probably somebody’s nightmare. Maybe my own. It kind of sounds like a mad scientist’s plot, an army of mutants, spawned of course with the sole purpose of world domination. But I’m no supervillain. I’m an X-man, a mutant, a maverick, a wildcard. And maybe someday I’ll figure out why. But for the moment I just need to treasure it, the good and the bad. Not the disease you see, but the source, my source. Because when I say treasure your exceptions, I don’t mean to love your troubles. I just mean to love yourself, to treasure everything essential to your identity.

POEM

by Essence, 18

My doctors say I can, but my friends say I can’t
They think I’m too sick to enjoy my life again
You can’t do this, you shouldn’t do that
They think they know what’s best for me
In all reality they’re holding me back
Holding me back from my blessings
Holding me back from life
In everyone’s eyes I will always be the sick girl
Am I cancer or is cancer me?

MY HAIR

by Cassandra, age 14

It was dark brown,
I would always part it on the D side part.
When I was at school

I would always have it in a ponytail
and at home I would have it down
so I could run my fingers through it.

I had very thick hair, I liked having it long
it took hairstyles very well, if I French braided it,
it would take the curls really well.

One day I was brushing my hair
and a clump came out—
I thought, I need mom.

It made me realize
this is actually real,
I actually have to go through with this.

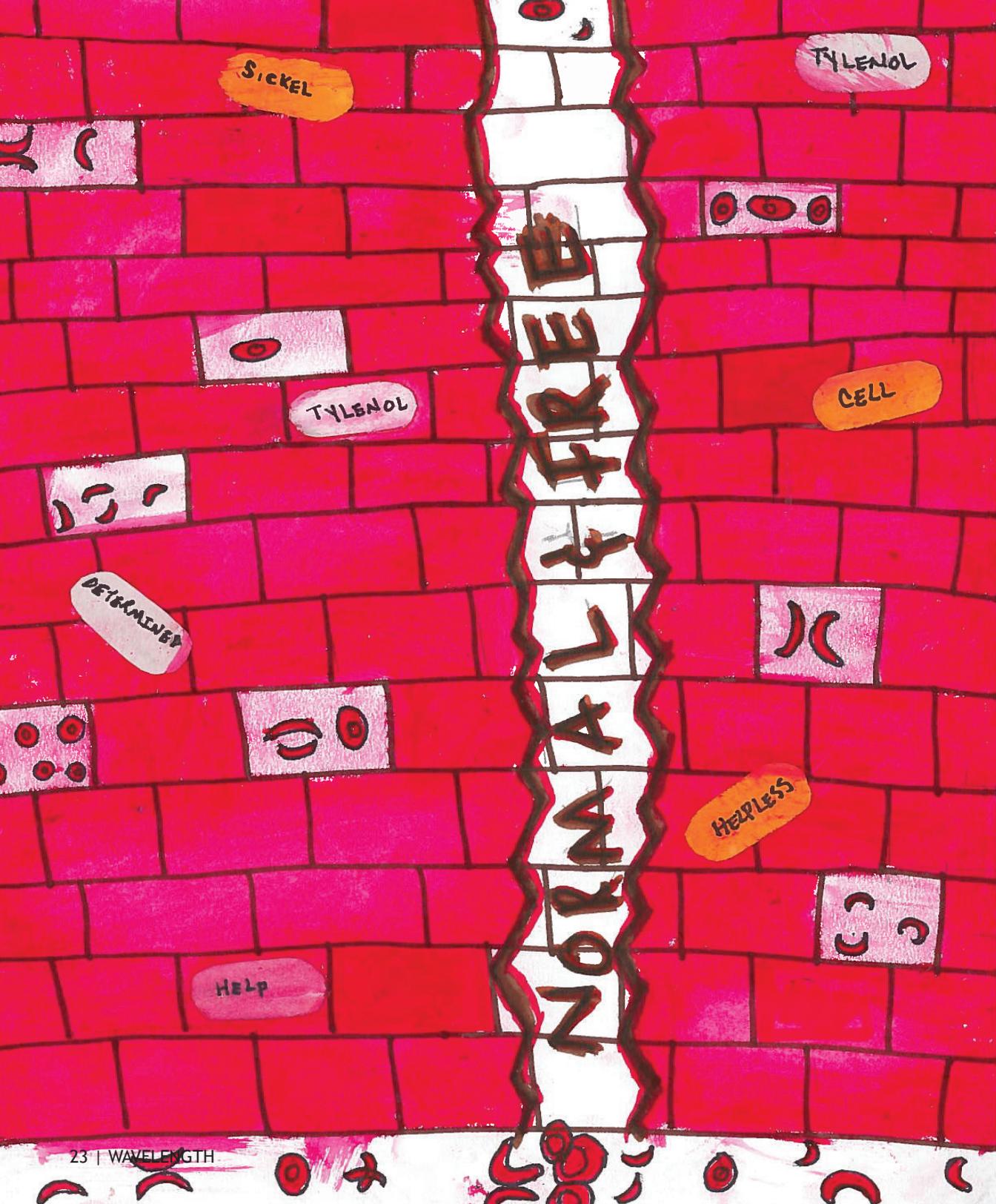
I didn't want to tell anyone,
I put on a hat. Every night we would take out
the braids, clean out the brush.

After a while it was too torturous, I just cut it off.
Then it was very itchy, looked like the trimmings
like when you would go for a haircut.

I imagine my hair will come in
thicker, softer, it will grow faster.
As soon as it gets long enough,

I want to French braid it, I want
to dye the ends blue, but because it's new hair
it might not be good to bleach and dye it.

Growing back makes me realize
I beat this,
I'll never have to go through this again.



SICKLE CELL BATTLE

by Lola, 18

A wise person once told me, “Lola, always fight your battles to your fullest potential.” As a child, I didn’t understand what she meant. I always thought why should a kid fight? Now I’m nineteen years old and I have begun to realize she meant, never give up in hard situations. Never let any circumstance of life confine you and limit your ability to become what you want or what you need to do. With me having sickle cell, every day feels like a battle that I have to fight and face to my fullest potential. This is a battle between my body and my mind. Before I always allowed my sickle cell body to confine me, thinking I couldn’t be or do things like others. Little by little I’m allowing my mind to take over, enabling me to move forward and break free from my confined body. Now at nineteen, I stopped limiting myself and began to empower myself. I stopped allowing my sickle cell to determine who I was and slowly I began to allow myself to do the things I thought I could never do. Now every day I think to myself, “Lola, always fight your battles to your fullest potential and never let your sickle cell confine you or limit your ability to become what you want to become or do.”

BUTTERFLIES

by John, age 17

When waiting in the room before going into the OR, I always think about the little things I'm nervous about, whether it's before or after the surgery. Things like getting the I.V. put in or the feeling of drifting to sleep from the anesthesia, the feeling of waking up after surgery with all these wires in me and feeling groggy and managing the pain. I worry about the discomfort from all the tubes going inside me whether it's the breathing tube or the catheter and the discomfort from lying on my back. I worry about feeling weak after surgery. My stomach feels weak from the anesthesia so I don't feel like eating.

They try to do physical therapy and the combo of the pain and not feeling energized enough to walk or do the exercises. Still waiting in that room I think about the paranoid thought of what could happen in the surgery, bad things that I wouldn't even mention. When the I.V. is put in, receiving the anesthesia, I always hold on to my mom's hand and look into her eyes as I fall asleep. The next thing I know, I'll be awake in recovery squinting at the light and realizing where I am. I take some deep breaths and know that it doesn't last forever, now that in a matter of days I could be home and back in the environment of my own home with the freedom to live a healthy life.

WHY DID IT HAPPEN

by Shelina, age 14

These past days I've felt like my life was going to end. The minute I found out I had to do surgery, I didn't know what to do or what to think but be brave and fearful. People's body changes and it feels a little weird to me, because I really haven't had this before. Well, all the attention going on. But it doesn't even matter because later in my grown up world there is going to be things different and scary. So why don't I just get it over with now. I knew something was gonna happen but I didn't push it any deeper so I would have to worry!

THE BLUR

by Yeicol, age 12

Have you ever thought of what it would be like if you could think things at an incredible rate? If you do, take a gander at what happens to normal fifteen-year-old Sam Green who lives in Arizona and goes to Richmond Hill High School. Sam is a very skeptical teen which means that he overthinks things a little and for that same reason he has no friends and the only person who gives him any attention is his greedy cheerleader sister, Amber.

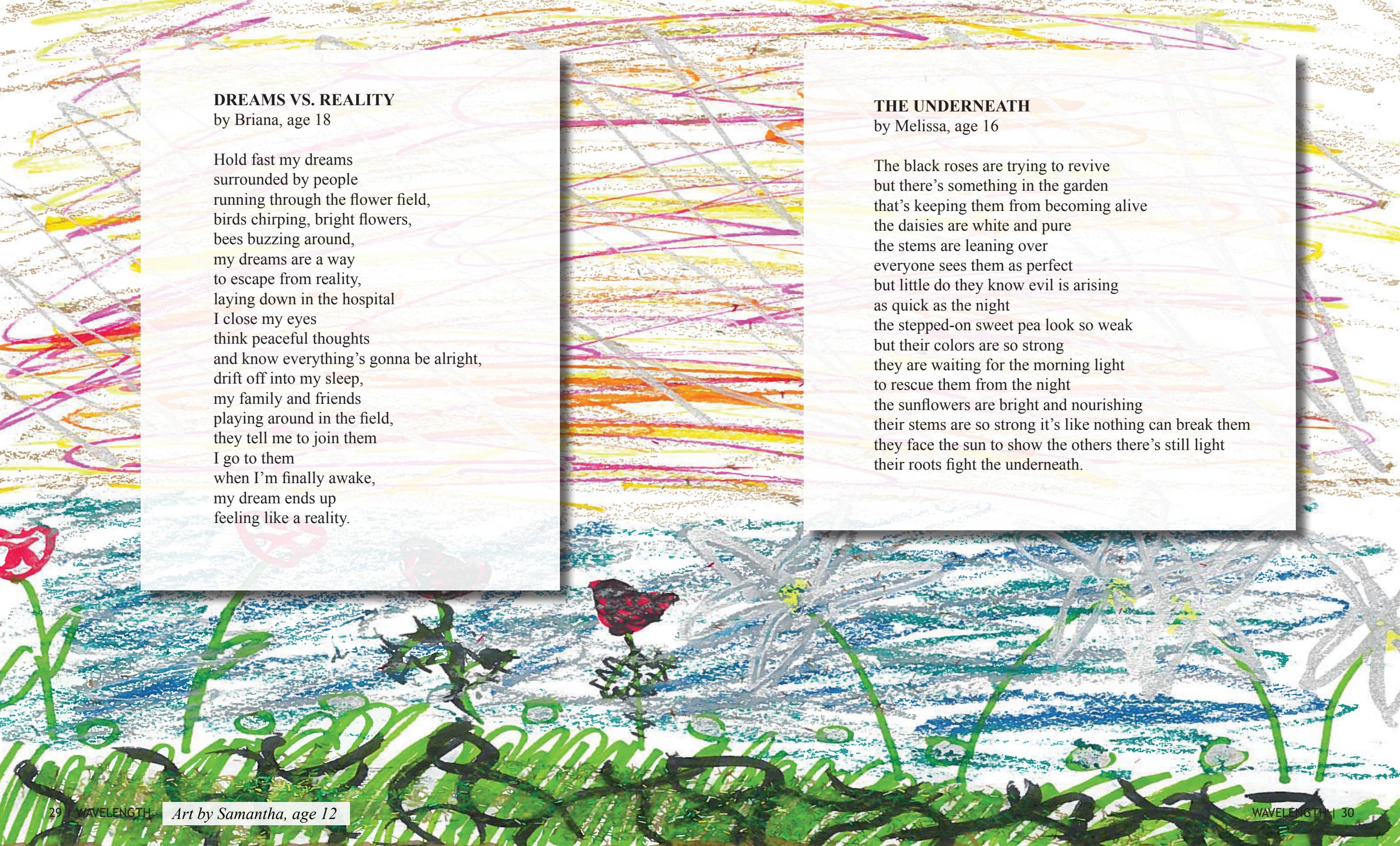
Normally Sam would go to lunch and sit by himself or with the tech nerds who barely seem to know he's there. And on that day at lunch it was his favorite day of the week. It was Chocolate Pudding Monday. But little did he know that one of the lunch ladies was a CSI agent undercover. The purpose of her being undercover was to test what radiation can do to the human body. So she poured a dose of radiation into one of the pudding cups and then all she had to do was wait and capture the lab rat to see the results. But nothing happened. The scientist forgot to say, "The radiation takes one day to take effect." That means double the work for Maria Calderon, a trained international Colombian CSI agent, ugly but brutal, which made her a perfect match for the shape-shifting serum that would turn her into a radiant Colombian exchange student. In that form she can seduce the subject into a relationship, convincing them to get captured.

The next morning, Sam overslept and as he looked at his alarm clock, it was 8:45 and his classes started at 9:00. So Sam had to rush out of the house without a shower and without breakfast. So as he sprinted out the door, one second later he was at the end of the block. Surprised by his actions, Sam sprinted once more in the direction of his school and got there in three seconds, just in time for the bell to ring with the same amount of time he got out of his house with fifteen minutes of free time and it's not

like he would do anything in the free time anyway.

So he started to ponder on his new abilities of super speed. Wondering what he can do in the blink of an eye, but his thoughts were interrupted by the teacher when he said that there was a new student in the class and her name was Maria Calderon. As you can recall, it's the CSI agent with the shape-shifting serum that made her look young and when Sam saw her, it was love at first sight. As the desperate speed star he is, he wanted to ask her out but he was too socially awkward to talk to her.

Later that day, Sam finally found the courage to talk to Maria and he overheard her talking on her hi-tech wrist watch with the scientist, arguing that the plan got more complicated than what she thought it would be and saying that she put the radiation in the pudding like she was told but she still does not know who the lab rat is and if it worked or not. Incredibly dumb for a trained CSI agent, Sam heard the whole plan and decided to get some answers by trapping her. So he made his trap, all he needed was to lure Maria into it so he asked her out and she said yes, only because she wondered if he was the one she was looking for and the date went just as planned. Then when it was over and she walked him home, he caught her. Very dizzy, she woke up in his garage and out of the dark came out not Sam Green fifteen year old. It was THE BLUR!!!



DREAMS VS. REALITY

by Briana, age 18

Hold fast my dreams
surrounded by people
running through the flower field,
birds chirping, bright flowers,
bees buzzing around,
my dreams are a way
to escape from reality,
laying down in the hospital
I close my eyes
think peaceful thoughts
and know everything's gonna be alright,
drift off into my sleep,
my family and friends
playing around in the field,
they tell me to join them
I go to them
when I'm finally awake,
my dream ends up
feeling like a reality.

THE UNDERNEATH

by Melissa, age 16

The black roses are trying to revive
but there's something in the garden
that's keeping them from becoming alive
the daisies are white and pure
the stems are leaning over
everyone sees them as perfect
but little do they know evil is arising
as quick as the night
the stepped-on sweet pea look so weak
but their colors are so strong
they are waiting for the morning light
to rescue them from the night
the sunflowers are bright and nourishing
their stems are so strong it's like nothing can break them
they face the sun to show the others there's still light
their roots fight the underneath.

FLAMES TO SHINE

by Alize, age 18

It all started with an infection,
from there it was a swelling sensation, a running flame
no water on this planet can set the fire at ease, finally
they got the best of the best,
the fire started to ease little by little, flames as bright
as the sun but cooling
like the moon and the stars at night
and just like a thunderstorm passes by,
rainbows come out
and the sun starts to shine.

COMING FROM THE DARK TO THE LIGHT

by Aaliyah, age 16

It was dark, it was scary
I couldn't understand it
and I didn't know if I could
come out of it—
it was extremely big,
it was black,
it was deep,
I felt I was lost in my self,
I wasn't my true self,
I started to come back
to the girl I knew I was
the smart, beautiful girl.
Now she's growing
everyone is extremely happy for her,
now there's light
it feels like God is good
the dark road has come to an end
and the light road has started.

UNKNOWN

by Ashley, age 14

There is a door that I see everyday
in my mind it's just there
and every day I wonder what's inside
or what will happen if I cross over

I wonder all these things while
I think about the door. When I don't
know what will happen it bothers
me, I need to know the truth.
Sometimes I think about
stepping into the unknown door
just to see what's there.

THE HEART

by Johendy, age 18

I have a heart with a lot of experiences
and a Band-Aid right in the middle,
it's holding the heart together.
The heart is very, very, very red
and the Band-Aid is brown
and then on top of the heart
there is a crown
of blue and white sparkles
with pink circles on top,
it means that I made it through,
that I'm still alive.
The heart loves a lot of people
but it is injured,
the crown represents
the goals I have in my life:
I'm almost graduating
I'm at home with my mom
and not at rehab
I can walk and before I couldn't
and that I'm staying out of the hospital.
My quote is:
"the sun of your night."
Even when there is dark
there is hope.

 **NewYork-Presbyterian** **KIDS**
Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital