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Cantaloupe.

My brother Alex is my Michigan hero. I'll be honest; I despised my brother for much of childhood because of one specific moment. Alex and I are fourteen years apart, so when I was just old enough to start remembering, he was moving out. The only memory I had of him was when I was about six; he yelled at me and took my Uno cards. From then on, I based our relationship on that moment. I took Alex's presence in my life for granted all because of one silly moment. You may wonder why my brother is my hero. The reason is that Alex is the strongest person I know. A little over three years ago, we found out he had a brain tumor the size of a cantaloupe. The doctors said he would have died a week later if we hadn't gotten him into the hospital. As a result, sixth grade was the worst year of my life; I was depressed, knowing my brother could die at any moment. He was all I thought about. Alex might have been annoying, but nobody wants their brother to die of a tumor he'd unknowingly had for nine years.

After a long time of treatment and hospital visits, Alex survived. I cherish the video I have of him ringing the, "cancer free," bell. That was the moment I realized I needed to build a relationship with him because who knows what could happen? Alex

still goes in every three months to check if the tumor has come back. It worries all of us; we can't escape it. Despite everything, he always made an effort to be there for his sisters. Every time Alex goes to a rave, he makes me a bracelet. He buys me tacos and lets me vent when I'm sad. Alex always calls himself a "jerk" or a "bad person," but I don't believe that and never will. If I found out I had cancer for nine years of my childhood, I would curse the world with anger. Alex doesn't; he lives his life to the fullest and takes me with him despite physical set-backs.

In the end, I realize my brother is my best friend. He's my better and worse half, and I thank God every day that he's still here. He may not think his tumor was a big deal, but I do; it was the day I realized I could have lost my best friend. Alex is my hero for overcoming those grueling years of his life and still not giving up. He's the reason I haven't given up yet. I love you, Alex.