

When I hear the word grace, I think about the way the God influences and strengthens me. As children of God, we all have special gifts and talents, but the way we choose to use those gifts in our daily lives is how we truly honor God. I have a hard time naming a specific special talent I have. I know I try my very best each day to be a loving daughter, a loyal friend and a good student. I practice and train so I may excel in the sports I play, and I work hard and study to keep my grades high. I am extremely grateful for my academic and athletic achievements but that's not all I am about.

I am an only child and sometimes that can be lonely. It doesn't make me sad or angry, but I do sometimes wonder what it would be like to live in the noise and chaos of a big family. I guess that's why I started babysitting a few years ago. My very first time I was a little nervous, scared even. Kids have always liked me, but I still had my doubts. While I was there, I was overthinking it so much that I didn't even realize that it was going perfectly. Of course I don't know how it feels to have a big brother or a little sister, but I do have cousins who are the next best thing because we are so close. I try very hard to connect with and understand every child I watch whether they are 9 years or 9 weeks old. A bond between siblings is a bond I will never experience, but it is one I can feel at least slightly with the children I care for, and it's the best feeling in the world. Babysitting has been something I've known I've wanted to do forever. I've always been good with kids, no matter their age. It makes me truly happy to hear that a child wants me to come back or that I'm their favorite babysitter. Watching children has made me

realize that I'm alright with being an only child, because even though it may not be a biological relation, I still have little siblings whom I love very much and they love me right back.

I'm going to be honest, when I first read the topic for this essay, I was extremely baffled. I read the essays of the previous winners and thought to myself that I've never done anything like that. But then I thought about why this scholarship even existed, and that's when I knew. I love my grade, the class of 2019, but I can't help but wonder how different it would be if Sophie was still here today. She could've been my very best friend for all I know. I feel very blessed to be in this grade knowing that we have something no other class will ever have: Sophie as our own personal guardian angel. I know sadly that she is not here in the flesh, however she is here in spirit. I never got the privilege to meet her before she passed away, but the way her family talks about her makes her sound amazing, and I'm sure she was. I just wish I had the chance to experience it for myself.

As for my topic, I picked it because I thought about Sophie and how she was so young when she passed away. She was around the age of some of the children I watch. Now I don't know this for sure, but she may have had a babysitter she really liked. When someone dies, the brain has seven minutes to replay memories from its lifetime. One or more of Sophie's memories may have been about a babysitter she loved caring for her. Sophie's life was unfortunately very short, but still very good. If she did have a babysitter like that, she may have changed Sophie's life in a way. While I most likely haven't changed any lives so far, I know I have still made a positive impact. I love babysitting so much, with all my heart. I will continue to do it, so maybe one day, I may change a child's life.