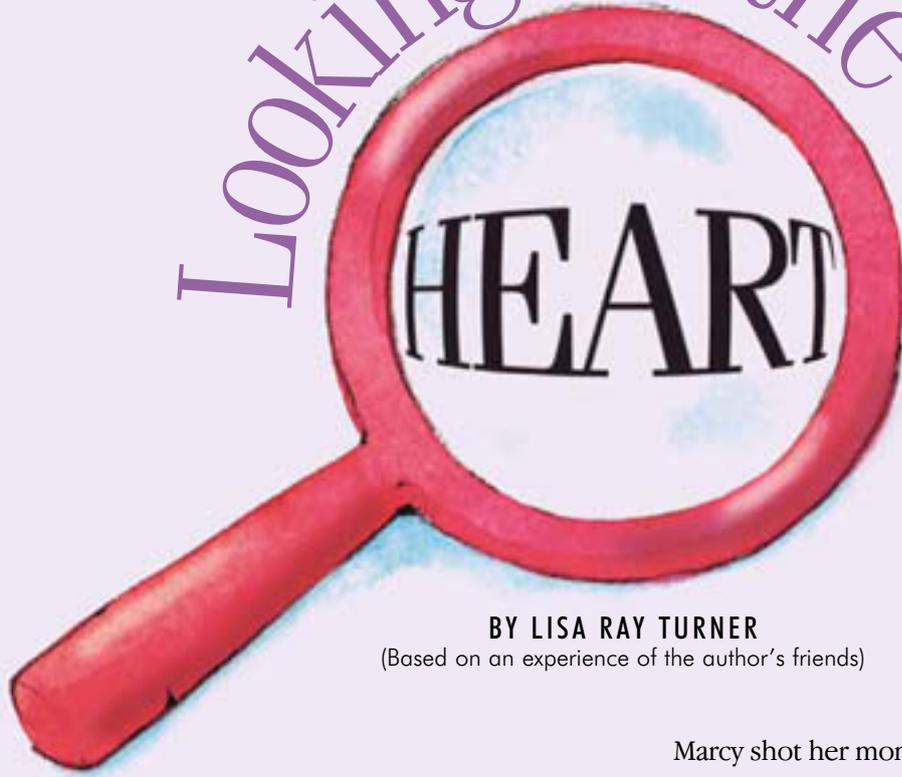




# Looking On the HEART



BY LISA RAY TURNER

(Based on an experience of the author's friends)

*Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart* (1 Samuel 16:7).

**M**arcy hated her eye patch. She'd had to wear it every day for two weeks while her eye healed from surgery, and it made her feel like a scary, one-eyed pirate.

It wasn't so bad wearing the patch at the hospital or at home because nobody but Marcy's family saw it. But today was different. Marcy had to face other people for the first time since her surgery. "Mom, please don't make me go to Primary," she begged. "The kids will make fun of me."

"No, they won't," Mom said as she braided Marcy's hair.

"They will," Marcy insisted. "Nine-year-olds don't think eye patches are neat, Mom."

"Sweetie, you might be surprised. I bet they'll be interested in your surgery. You may be the star of the class."

Marcy shot her mom a look of disbelief. "Cammy will make fun of me. She always wears the prettiest clothes—she wouldn't be caught dead in an eye patch. And Dean will probably call me names." Mom listened while she twisted shiny lavender ribbons around Marcy's smooth braid.

"Your teacher won't make fun of you," Mom said, tying the ribbons into Marcy's hair.

"Mom," Marcy sighed, "teachers aren't allowed to tease."

"You're beautiful," Mom said. "Don't worry about the patch."

Marcy frowned. "I don't look beautiful."

"Marcy," Mom said, "to me you look beautiful, and to Heavenly Father you do, too. It says in the scriptures that Heavenly Father doesn't look on outward appearances, but on the heart. He doesn't care about fashionable clothes or stylish hair. Or, for that matter, crutches or wheelchairs—or eye patches."

Marcy sighed again. "Tell that to Cammy and Dean."

Soon it was time for church, and Marcy's family drove

away in their red van. They slipped into the chapel and sat on the last row. Marcy kept her head down, hoping nobody would notice her.

After sacrament meeting, Marcy trudged down the hall toward her classroom, keeping her head toward the wall to hide the patch. As she got closer to her classroom, tears began welling up in her eyes. Her face flushed hot, and her heart felt like it would pound out of her chest.

She stood outside the classroom door, hoping everyone would notice her lovely hair and pale purple ribbons instead of the ugly black patch. She took a deep breath, but couldn't go in. The sound of squeaky chairs and gentle laughter inside the room sounded so normal. She didn't feel like she fit in with those happy sounds.

She glanced around and noticed the hallways were strangely empty. It seemed everybody but her was already in class. She gripped the doorknob. It felt cold on her clammy hands. Turning the knob, she vowed not to cry, no matter how badly the children teased her. She slid through the door and into the nearest seat, keeping her uncovered eye focused on her feet.

Then she heard it. A giggle. She thought it was Dean, but she



“See beyond the outward appearance and recognize the true worth of a human soul.”

**President Thomas S. Monson, First Counselor in the First Presidency, “With Hand and Heart,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1995, 4.**

couldn't be sure. Then there was another snicker, and another. Then her teacher's deep voice. “Welcome back, Marcy.”

Marcy looked up at him, knowing he wouldn't tease her. She gasped when she saw his face. He was wearing an eye patch! A black eye patch, exactly like Marcy's.

Marcy giggled. Then she looked at the other children in the class. They were all wearing eye patches! Even Cammy. She had painted a yellow tulip on hers, to match the yellow tulips on her blouse. Dean had scrawled his initials on his patch in bright blue puff paint. The rest of the class wore variously decorated patches, with gold stars, smiling suns, or plain black. “Basic black,” her teacher said. “It goes with everything.”

Marcy laughed again to see the variety of eye patches. And suddenly, she didn't dislike her eye patch quite so much. For the first time all day, she knew that Heavenly Father really did look on her heart. And she knew He could see that hers was full of gratitude and happiness. ●

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