

Foreword

It's still a little weird to think of myself as a hero. After losing my left arm to a tiger shark on Halloween morning of 2003, I just kept living my life the best way I knew how. Sure, I tried to be brave, and sure, it was hard to get back in the water, but what choice did I have — it wasn't like I was never gonna surf again!

And as I read this book, I see 30 other young heroes who did the same thing. They're not crazy comic book characters born on some alien superhero planet or anything. These are kids, just like you and just like me, who faced a challenge head-on and chose to do something amazing — something we can all look at and be proud of.

In this book, you'll find kids who went looking for their challenges and others whose challenges found them (mine was a tiger shark — yikes!). And you'll see that not all heroes are six-foot-four muscle men in capes and funny suits. Heroes come in all sizes and all colors, and they live in every corner of the globe. I guess it doesn't matter who you are or even what your test is — it's what you do that matters. Do you let your challenge stop you, or do you use your courage, your creativity, your mind, and your heart to rise above?

So, am I a hero? Are any of the young people in this book heroes? Well, that's for you to decide! But I think we are all heroes — me, the other kids you'll read about, and *even you* — only, you might not know it yet!

— BETHANY HAMILTON