

LETTERS ABOUT LITERATURE

MASSACHUSETTS LEVEL II HONORABLE MENTION 2009

Dear Karin Evans,

When my aunt and uncle announced they were going to China to adopt a girl, the first thought in my mind was “What will she look like?” I started to wonder if I would still be able to visit them or if all their attention would be on this face I could not imagine. My biggest fear was that my new cousin would not fit into our family. Looking back now, I realize none of my fears were valid.

One night as I was browsing through my aunt’s shelves, I came across your book *The Lost Daughters of China*. Thinking it might solve some of my questions about my cousin’s origins, I picked it up. It did much more than that. I was completely transformed.

I began to realize how little I knew about the world outside my own. I saw the crude reality of how women are treated in other countries. How they are forced to give up their girl child in hopes of having a boy. This book opened my eyes, and for one of the first times in my life, I was truly grateful for being me. Back then, my biggest problem was if I would get what I wanted for Christmas. Your book changed me. One line of yours stuck in my head: “Have you noticed that our children don’t look Asian anymore? They just look like themselves; they just look like our kids.” I found this was true of my cousin also. I look at her now and no longer see a stranger. I see my loving, caring, girly cousin. I am so accustomed to her face I cannot remember a time I have not known her, even in spirit. I love her just as much as any other member of my family.

After reading your book, I am a completely different person. I am no longer the selfish 10-year-old I once was. Your book opened up a new window into the world for me. I have now started to think about world news and what I want to do with my life. When I am older I would like to go to China and adopt a girl, but I hope by that time there will be no need for it, that these mothers will get to keep their babies. Thank you so much for this opportunity. I can’t explain what a life changing experience this has been for me.

Sincerely,

Ashley

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