

Dear Christopher Paolini,

Last year I had a huge bullying problem. Kids would make fun of my name and call me Catie and cupcake and annoying things like that, but I could handle it. Then the play came around, and because I love acting, I tried out and got a part. I'm not sure if it was a good idea or not because the bullying just got worse. Almost every day at school kids would say really nasty things to me, like calling me gay and even worse names I won't write. There were also kids who did the play who would slam me against the wall and push me down on the ground. They would even punch me and walk away laughing. I couldn't stand it, and I almost decided to quit the play. Even through all the bullying I was still able to do something I enjoyed; reading. The book I chose was *Eragon*.

When I read the book it's not like reading about Eragon and what he does, it's like you are him. I would think of how he was doing all the magic and the fighting, conquering fears and things he didn't think he could do. I thought I should be able to do that, I should be able to stand up to the bully and get him to stop, get them all to stop. I tried standing up to the main bully. I went up to him, told him to stop, and got pushed down on the ground, hard.

I searched your book to see what I did wrong. I stood up to him, I wasn't afraid, yet he still continued to bully me. First I found violence; he was able to win by fighting, although I knew I couldn't do that. As Gandhi said "an eye for an eye will make the whole world blind." I reread everything, continued to read the book, and then I finally figured it out. Eragon had a mentor, someone to help him, so I did just that, and I asked my mom what to do. My mother told me to go to the guidance office.

The guidance officer asked me lots of questions about them, who were the bullies and what were they doing. He spoke to the bullies and that helped a lot, but not completely. All the other bullies stopped bothering me, but not the main one, the one pushing me around at the play. I was confused; I didn't know what to do about him! So once again I searched your book, *Eragon*, for answers. That's where I finally found the answer. Through everything he did, his dragon helped him. His dragon was his friend, stronger than him and looked out for him. I needed someone like that.

Almost as luck would have it we were rehearsing for the play, and once again the bully was bullying me. The bully left just as the lead of the play came in. The lead saw me and knew the bully was bullying me again. The lead of the play was a nice guy, very strong and friends with almost everyone. He came up to me and said "I don't like that he's doing that to you. It has to stop. I'm going to go talk to him." The lead did talk to the bully and he asked him to stop. Every time the lead of the play was around, he wouldn't bully me, but every time the lead wasn't around, the bully was back to pushing me around again. Eragon always had his dragon, but my friend, the lead, couldn't follow me everywhere and act like a body guard.

I stood up to him, asked an adult for help, and then got one of my friends to get him to stop and nothing seemed to work. I didn't know what to do! It was the first premier of the show, and I was backstage. One of the songs was being sung, and I was back stage lip syncing it, where no one could see me besides two other people in the play. There's always a teacher there to make sure we are quiet, and the bully was coming towards me. I'm not sure if it's luck, or he got what was coming to him, but he punched me. Normally that would be bad, but he didn't see the teacher, or my friend behind him. The teacher was extremely mad, and after the show he was severely punished. He never bullied me again!

To me *Eragon* will never be just a book. I will remember that because of reading *Eragon*, I had the strength to keep fighting the bullies, even when it seemed like I would never win. I will remember because of the words you wrote, I was able to stand up and not get pushed around, or get made fun of. Because of your book, I got more confidence and I never had a problem the rest of the school year. I would like to thank you, Christopher Paolini, for writing *Eragon* and for giving me the strength to stand up against all the bullies. I hope that you know not only I, but everyone else your book has touched, are extremely grateful.

Sincerely,

*Cade Devlin*