

Dear Eric Suben,

To me, the world was always some huge place and I never really understood why everything couldn't just shrink down to my size. When I was a little girl, I had a Teddy Bear. I named him Teddy. I remember the day I got him; it was love at first sight. My older brother used to laugh at me all the time for being in love with an inanimate object. It always seemed that whenever my brother had better things to do than hang out with little old me, I would go to Teddy.

It wasn't long after I got Teddy that my mom gave me your book *The Velveteen Rabbit*. It changed my life forever. Your book reminded me that I'm not alone; that there were other people in the world whose best friend was a stuffed animal. Teddy almost made me feel like I was the big one. For once, there was someone to look up to me; someone who would never leave me. He used to go wherever I went. Then I forgot about him, much like the boy in your book who had forgotten about the velveteen rabbit.

Then one night my mother read me a bedtime story and the book she read to me was *The Velveteen Rabbit*. I remember all the memories rushing back to my mind. Once my mother left the room, I got out of bed and found just what I was looking for, my forgotten teddy bear. I hugged him and talked to him and ever since then he's been with me. Whether it's in my heart, head, or sleeping with me, he's there. When I was really little I thought, "What would Teddy do?" Sometimes I still do. In your book, this boy was truly in love with his velveteen rabbit. They had memories--a history--together. Just like me and Teddy. Right now, as I'm reminiscing, I remember telling him all my problems. He was listening. I knew he would always be there for me.

Although I loved your book, I also had a fear of it. I used to think about dreading the day when I would get sick and my old teddy bear would be thrown in a pile of trash ready to be burnt. Thankfully, that hasn't happened--yet. On the other hand, I loved the idea of a fairy coming to Teddy's rescue and making him real. I used to imagine all of the real bears asking him to play and mocking him for not being real. I told him he was. Little did my brother and those bears know, he was real, is real, to me. Does anything else matter?

To this day I believe anything is possible and there is power in love. I think there are words in your book that are not exactly written in the text and they say love is magical. This boy loved his rabbit that was going to die. He was real, real to him, and that fairy made him real to everyone. Love is all that mattered in the end. Love made the velveteen rabbit cry and love made him real. My hope is that my teddy bear will live on, not exactly crying and coming to life, but in my heart. I hope my love for him now will never fade away.

Gratefully yours,

Katherine

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