

# LETTERS ABOUT LITERATURE

## 2004 MASSACHUSETTS LEVEL II- HONORABLE MENTION

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Dear Nicholas Sparks,

If I had the desire to sound wonderfully wholesome then I would announce that I have read your brilliant novel, *A Walk to Remember*, before viewing the Hollywood movie. I would then proceed to tell you that after watching the movie, I thought it was terrible compared to your written work, as is every film adapted from a book. I'm not entirely wholesome. I admit that I watched Mandy Moore and Shane West portray your characters in July 2002 before I read the originator. Four months afterwards, I had a craving to read the novel that so many of my friends and relatives raved about, so I grabbed the copy that was patiently waiting in the basement. It had been there for months and was by then gathering dust. I am not hesitant to say that I am an efficient reader, and have a collection of books ranging from my Roald Dahl years to the more recent favorites: *Death Be Not Proud*, *Pride and Prejudice*, and *If I Die Before I Wake*. I am absorbed in books within the first ten minutes of reading them thoroughly, and can usually tell if it doesn't "suit me." Your books suited me at the first page. I've never experienced the feeling of so many mixed emotions when reading a piece of literature. I laughed, scoffed, cheered, and cried. Crying took place a lot. Books with the ability to draw tears of pain, sorrow, and happiness have an admirable skill that I appreciate greatly.

What did I gain from your work? That is an unbelievably broad question for such a book as this. Many, many things are to be taken into the heart and mind after the reader has completed the book, but I imagine I can sum it up in one word. Jamie. She represents what the rest of this community, union, and world should strive to be. Every virtue that she possesses is wonderful, and a particular one stands out fresh in my mind every day- don't take your life for granted and make the most of it. Make the most of it! How I wish I had the willpower to make every solitary hour something I will cherish and reminisce later in life when I am too feeble or weak to journey from the comforting haven of my home or bedroom. And yet I find myself, as the rest of the world does I'm sure, picking out the negative things that keep me from the utmost amount of bliss and contentment that I could be experiencing while at the moment it is bitter and cold. I have, however, learned that I should love the people that love me back and that I should try to make a difference in someone's life even if the difference is as small as making that person smile or feel good about themselves. My family and friends drive me crazy at times, but I think of Jamie at the back of my mind, telling me to love them regardless of the fact that they are acting ferociously, irritable, or annoying. I listen.

I now realize the persons we have given up faith upon have potential, and that small words have colossal impacts. I already knew that before, but it seems as though they now have a larger meaning. Those are the things that I have taken from your novel. I reflected thoughts and lessons from the white pages, collected them in a somewhat unorganized fashion and tucked them carefully in my pocket, ready to be taken out and studied when needed. Words cannot describe what this book has done for me, but I can safely say that you have opened my heart, and so many others.

So thank you, Mr. Spark and all the Jamie's out there for everything that you have given me. Although we may never meet, I promise that I will have many walks to remember.

Best wishes,

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