

Katie Cosman  
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Dear Ms. Kadohata,

I must tell you it has been quite some time since I've written a letter, but after reading your book, Kira-Kira, I felt compelled to. It stirred up emotion and memories within me that I had buried for quite some time. I actually read the book twice.

First, I should introduce myself. My name is Katie Cosman and I am a junior high student at St. Patrick's in North Platte, Nebraska. My brother Kevin read Kira-Kira when he was thirteen years old and recommended I read it too. I know he admires you as an author. He was able to meet you when we lived in Arizona and was so happy to have you autograph copies of Kira-Kira and Weedflower.

When I was younger, Ms. Kadohata, my brother Kevin became very ill. So when I was reading about Katie and how her sister Lynn became so ill, I could relate. Your story took me back to that time, a time I'd almost forgotten about. Lynn seemed to have her good days and bad days just as Kevin did. The hardest time for us, and I'm sure for Kevin, were the four months straight that he spent in the hospital. When he first became ill, I didn't think it would be four months before he would come home again. He was in and out of the hospital for a year. For that entire year, I felt a bit like a foster child. My brother Kyle and I were bounced from home to home so we could be cared for while my parents either worked or stayed with Kevin. Our world became very small. It revolved all around Kevin. It seems that Katie in your story, Ms. Kadohata, felt that way too. Someone always had to be with Kevin, just as someone always had to be with Lynn.

Kevin's illness put our family through a real test just as it did the Takeshima family. I'm sure my parents were stressed more than I realized at the time. I never thought about how much of a toll it took on them emotionally, physically or financially until I was reading your story. I think I was too young to understand all that was going on.

The part of Kira-Kira that stirred the most emotion in me was the chapter in which Lynn dies. When I read about Katie just crying and crying over the loss of her sister, I just wanted to cry. I got so choked up. I remember when my Grandma died. I was just five years old. My mom cried like Katie did. She was so very sad that she said she didn't even want to get up in the morning. My dad was very sweet and did his best to comfort her. It was one of the saddest times for my family. We got through it though, just like the Takeshima family.

I'm glad my brother recommended your book to me, Ms. Kadohata. It was easy for me to relate to the struggles the characters in your story went through. The love and hope that the Takeshima family had reminded me of the love and hope that binds my family together. I'm looking forward to reading your book Weedflower now. Kevin says he's sure I'll like it. Well I'd better get going or I'll miss dinner. Have a great day!

Katie Cosman 4/18/09

Sincerely,

*Katie Cosman*  
Katie Cosman

*Katie Cosman*

*Katie Cosman* 4/8/09