

LETTERS ABOUT LITERATURE

Dear Ann Martin,

Your book *A Dogs Life: The Autobiography of a Stray* has really impacted my life. I have always been a huge animal lover, so when I read about Squirrel, it really hit me that this was real-there are thousands of strays everywhere that go through the same hard lives and challenges. It showed me that even though real dogs and cats can't speak, they hurt on the inside. They need advocates to speak for them and I hope I can do that for a career when I grow up. Every time I look at my two dogs and two cats that live in the house and have food, love and walks, I am happy for them and sad for the animals that do not have those things. This book reminded me that like Susan, one small person can completely change or even save the life of animals.

After reading your book, I decided to reach out. My mom suggested I do a petition trying to stop my local animal shelter from using a gas box to euthanize animals, a slow and painful death. I simply typed up some papers on my computer, got some people in my neighborhood to sign, and took it to school the next day. The next thing I knew, all my friends wanted to help out! At lunch everyday we sat at a table in the back of the cafeteria, while people stood in a line to sign. Every morning on the school announcements there was a reminder of where and why to sign. By the end of the month, I had over 350 signatures!

I turned it in to Linda Lugo, the director of our local animal shelter. She was very pleased. She called me telling me how proud she was- and she has a section on the news, and mentioned me and my petition, and even named a kitten after me! It was sent to Annapolis for the senate to vote on. I haven't gotten the results, but my desire to help animals hasn't stopped. I volunteer at a cat sanctuary in Petsmart, and any time there is an animal in need, I'm willing to help. Your book showed me that one voice, no matter how small can speak for thousands...for those who don't have a voice. Thank you for your book. It meant a lot to me and the animals.

Kaley Booth
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