

## LETTERS ABOUT LITERATURE

Dear Pam Munoz Ryan,

Your book, *Esperanza Rising*, has deeply affected me. This is the first book in a long time that has made me cry. It is very sad when bandits kill Esperanza's dad the night before her birthday. Esperanza and her father are very close, so it must be a horrible shock to find out he has been killed. Esperanza and her dad have a bond similar to the one my dad and I share. When Esperanza went through many other horrible disasters and is able to start over again, I wondered if I could start over again if the horrible disasters were to happen to me. This book made me think, "What if that happened to me? Would I have Esperanza's courage?"

Even though we come from different worlds, with Esperanza being Mexican and me being American, we still share many common qualities. We are both strong-determined girls. When Esperanza works in the shed, she works her hardest! Even when it is freezing cold, she just bundles up and uses hot bricks to warm her legs and her hands. However, a flaw we both have in common is our impatience. We dislike waiting for long periods of time. Neither Esperanza nor I is accustomed to manual labor. I have not done any manual labor, and before the tragedy, neither has Esperanza. When the situation became desperate, Esperanza had no choice but to work in the shed. If it were necessary, I could help and perform manual labor, but it would be extremely hard for me.

Your book has made me realize how lucky I am! It has shown me what real courage is. Esperanza's father dying and having to go from being a rich daughter to a manual worker is real courage. Up to this point, I have taken my life for granted because I never had to start my life "over" again. Actually, I cannot even ride a roller coaster, let alone think of starting my life "over" again! I am a little angry that Esperanza has forced me to ask myself hard questions for which I have no answers to! Nevertheless, I am also grateful that her experiences taught me to always be prepared for unexpected changes.

Best Regards,

Karina B. Sharma  
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