

Johnston Middle School
Johnston, Iowa

Dear Patricia McCormick,

As my friend showed me the cuts on her arms I slowly began to realize what a horrific act it was, self-mutilation. She painfully explained to me why she had done this horrible thing to herself, while tears began falling from her face. Then heaving sobs come from her and she could speak no more.

As I held my friend close to my chest one million thoughts run through my mind. What would make her treat herself this way? What benefits did she think she got from this? And worst of all...Could this lead to suicide? As I returned home that evening, the thought of that last question lingering in my mind.

As I lay awake that night I could not stop thinking about it. I didn't want to lose her. I had already lost one of my best friends that year from suicide, the thought of Chad returned. He had given me signs that he would take his life. "Cutting" was one of them. I couldn't let this happen again.

The next day when I went to school she was absent, I was very scared, and trembled at the thought of her being dead. I was so shaken up by this thought that I walked out of my 1st period class and went to the library. I had wanted to be alone to think, but even more scenes ran wildly through my mind.

My eyes became a blur, tears; I didn't expect them, but yes, they were tears. I got up from my spot to retrieve a tissue. As I looked at the stack of books waiting to be returned to the dusty shelves, one name, actually one word, caught my eye. It was your book Cut.

I picked up the book gingerly and started to read. I kept reading and reading until I heard the bell for 1st period to be over. I made my way to the desk where the librarian was, checked out the book and made my way to 2nd period.

I next day before school I took your book with me to her locker, opened her locker, and placed it inside with a sticky note attached. It said this... "Please read this book, it may make you think differently, I love you, it will all be okay. Love Kelsey." I shut her locker and was on my way to class.

About lunch time she showed up to confront me with the book in hand. "So you think I'm some crazy person?" She stated. "No," I replied, "I just thought it might change your thoughts and attitude about it." "Well guess what Kelsey," She snapped. "It doesn't!" "Just read the book!" I yelled back and with that I walked away with frustration.

About a week later she came to my locker with your book. "Kelsey, I read it." She said. She began to cry and fell into my arms like a rag doll. "I will never do it again!" She sobbed, "I don't want to be that kind of person..."

That day I realized how hard it is to overcome obstacles, to be depressed and alone. It finally became clear. I saw things differently in my eyes; it taught me how to overcome such great heights. Thank you Patricia McCormick for writing this book, Cut made a difference and a big impact on my emotions.

Sincerely,

Kelsey Mitchell