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Dear Sharon,

Where do I belong? Why was I put here? I was just writing this letter to let you know that your book, *Bloomability*, has inspired me. I guess you could say, in some way that this book mirrors a part of my life. Dinnie was moved across the United States very regularly, my experience was very smaller scale. When I was in seventh grade, I was plucked from my school that I had went to since Kindergarten, and I was taken from my only friends I had ever known. Just so, at the time, my sister could have more opportunities. Even though I was only moving thirty miles away and it was only for nine months, it might as well been a lifetime for me.

Looking back on this experience of mine and reflecting to Dinnie's imaginary life, makes me ponder on what it is really like for the real families out there that are moving around often, struggling with money, food, and for those kids who have to make new friends every three months. Or even for those kids, who aren't as fortunate to have a home to go to, or food to eat at night.

Bloomability made me ask myself a question many times. Where do I belong? Obviously, Dinnie didn't belong moving about the country with her parents, but did she really belong in Switzerland with her aunt and uncle she hardly knows? I don't think anyone truly knows where they belong necessarily or what they are really aiming for, until they find it. All of these little things in life, in Dinnie's case, learning to ski, making new friends and climbing mountains, lead you to what you belong in.

In *Bloomability*, you also provoked me on a thought journey and I came to the realization that someone out there will do anything for you, so your life is better. It probably wasn't the easiest thing for Dinnie's mom to not be with her for one year, but Dinnie's aunt and uncle probably didn't have the easiest position either as for it take's a lot to care for a kid...time, money, headaches, grey hairs, just as I've been told.

Bloomability has also inspired me to a better friend and to be more open to new students. What if the new girl you stub in the hallway, is actually more exciting and more fun than your best friend? Or the new kid, that hasn't quite caught up with the trend of new jeans or the cool shoes, you should be nice to them because usually you have no idea what they are going through.

Your book not only inspired me, but it also forced me to become involved. I am an active member in my 4-H club and we just recently did a project to help the needy. Also, I am a part of my church's youth group, every year; we try to better the community. This year I suggested that we go work at a homeless shelter in Des Moines. After working in an environment like that, it is almost impossible to walk away and not be thankful for the car you're leaving in, the bed that you will get to sleep in and for food and water. For

some people that will be the only meal they have had in months, and it will be there only meal for some time to come.

Thank you for your time and letting me share how your book affected me!

Thank you,
Ali Wood

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