

Dear Mrs. Walls,

My name is Ava McBride and I am a 17 year old student at Jasper High School. I live with my mom and step-dad on the south side of Jasper. My real dad lives in a small town called Cuzco. I have visited him less and less as I have grown up. Both my real father and step-dad suffer from alcoholism. Reading *The Glass Castle* made me realize how much you really admire your parents when you are young even though their ideas are sometimes questionable. This book also made me admire the mother and children for not abandoning the father at some of his worst moments. Most of all it made me rethink how I should view my fathers.

Growing up I loved visiting my dad on the weekends when he remembered to pick me up. It was always an adventure, him telling stories of crazy inventions or new discoveries. He lives on my grandfathers land in a house he had built. In an area in the woods he would take me walking and show me where he had discovered cave. This cave was quite a find considering that the opening of it was no larger than two and a half square feet. The relationship between Rex Walls and his children really reminds me of the relationship between my father and me. Rex's ideas were always so crazy but still creative. Any young child would love to go try hunt demons in the desert or free animals from a zoo with their father. As in *The Glass Castle* and my own life, our father's ideas and inventions became more annoying than interesting.

It is amazing to me how the mother dealt with Rex's behavior. It is so admirable how she dealt with his addictions and lack to keep a steady pay check without spending all of it on alcohol. It would be so hard not to leave some one like that, I do not know how the mother did not think to herself life would be so much easier without Rex in it. I know the kids really had no choice to where they were going to live, but when they did move which was very frequently they always kept their complaints to

themselves and never put up a fight to stay where they were currently. I have only had one serious move in my life personally and when we did I let my parents know I was unhappy. Moving is really tough on kids and Rex Walls' children seem as tough as they get.

In elementary school as a kid I wanted everyone to know about my fathers discoveries and great inventions but as I grew up his addictions were something I noticed more than his accomplishments. I became ashamed of him and would not tell him when I had school events so he would not be able to show up. In the very beginning of *The Glass Castle* I felt her pain when she was hiding from her own mother because of the fear of someone knowing who her parents were. It is really difficult to introduce who you are when you have a fear of some one recognizing the last name you have given by your father.

This story brought back many feelings of how I admired my dad for his silly actions when I was younger but despised them as I aged. It also brought me back to the reality of having parents with addictions and how some one always has to bear with that burden. Family is also something that is sad to be embarrassed by, but sometimes it is for the right reasons. *The Glass Castle* is by far one of my most favorite books. I encourage you to please keep righting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ava McBride".

Ava McBride