

Darian Bovd  
510 Preta Ct  
Creedmoor, NC 27522

Dear Margaret Peterson Haddix,

I have a bone to pick with you. I don't like to be sad. That's why I don't watch sad movies or read sad stories too often. When I do indulge, at least I know what I'm getting myself into, and I can "prepare." Being blindsided by sadness is the worst because you have no idea how to handle it; you're just shocked. You did that to me Mrs. Haddix—you shocked me.

I've been a fan of yours since the fourth grade when *Running Out of Time* was a part of our Battle of the Books reading list. *Running Out of Time* helped usher me into an all-new style of books. Before then I had been sucked into the worlds of Harry Potter and Junie B. Jones. You taught me to enjoy history, which is no easy feat, so you can imagine my glee when I discovered *Found* nestled in the young adult section. Your style of displaying historical events in a relatable fashion has always appealed to me, and has even proven to be an asset to me academically over the years. I have especially come to seek out your novels for an exciting, enjoyable trip through history; so, imagine my surprise when I was met with the story of *Uprising*.

Now I have no idea how the school systems work anywhere else, but I had never heard of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire before I ventured into the realm of *Uprising*. As I stood there in the library, holding a new-to-me book by an author I trusted would both entertain and inform me. I had stars in my eyes. Yes, from you, an emotional rollercoaster is expected, but I have always been pleased with the outcome. I was completely oblivious to the calamity that was to bring up the rear of the novel.

Once you pass middle school, it gets difficult to find the time to read for pleasure. That's when the bus becomes your best friend. I found that snuggling closely next to the window, arm resting on my backpack, was the best time to delve into the lives of Bella, Yetta and Jane. The book began and went about as I expected it to, with your flare for comedy in times of drama and suspense. I even had my usual mental outbursts at the actions of certain characters (like that family Bella was staying with)—everything was going swimmingly. Then, I reached the end.

There I was riding the bus back home after a day racked with anticipation. I had reached that last part of the book that everyone loves to hate because it marks a near end to an Extraordinary journey, but vow just can't wait to find out what happens. Throughout the entire

ordeal of the fire I still wholeheartedly held out hope for all three girls. I even thought Yetta and that guy would miraculously survive that jump. As I read the part about them going straight through to the concrete below, I choked up a little, which was not ideal for my image. After all, I am male in the back of a high school bus tearing up at the fictional lives of three girls—I would never live that down. Thanks a lot Mrs. Haddix.

The following year, in my American History course, we went over the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire. Once again. I was reminded of Bella, Yetta and Jane and what had happened to them. I couldn't help but apply their life stories onto the faces of the real victims shown in the video we watched. Even though I knew of the outcome beforehand thanks to the background information you provided in the back, as weird as it seems, I feel that the documentary of the real event had more of an impact on me due to those three fictional girls. Much like your other books, such as those of *The Missing* series, *Uprising* did more than emotionally traumatize me—it educated me, and ultimately, helped get me an “A.” so thanks a lot Mrs. Haddix!

As a writer, you have inspired me to think beyond the expected, and to take common knowledge ideas and make them my own. As an author, you have provided me with a dependable, go-to section in the library whenever I find the time to enjoy a good read. As a teacher, you have enlightened me on a number of historical occurrences, and have stimulated my interest in a subject that has a tendency to not be all that interesting. As a reader, I have come to appreciate your novels as not just a source of surefire entertainment, but as informal textbooks that I actually want to read despite how they may affect my emotional stability. For me, you have really served as that “cool teacher” throughout the years, and though it was a bit unnerving, *Uprising* only added to your reputation. So thanks a lot Mrs. Haddix—I shall be on lookout for more of your adventures...this time with a box of tissues in tow!

Sincerely your fan,

Darian