

Friday, November 12, 2021

Dear Ms. Messenger,

I love your book series, *Keeper of the Lost Cities*. It is truly amazing. I love how creative they are. How they take you away from all the stress and anything that you're worried about. I first read them in third grade when covid had just started to hit, but I've read them again since then.

Your books challenged me and took me away. I imagined things that I would have never before. The characters faced challenges and more than life events. I know covid was really hard for everybody, but it was especially hard for me. I've always had a little anxiety. But it was under control. When covid hit it grew and grew and grew. I always had to look my best, I also had a really hard time going to sleepovers or just away from my house. My anxiety got so bad that I started breaking rules, and being mean. I didn't know what to do with myself anymore, or know who I wanted to be. My anxiety spiraled into depression, but nobody understood.

Nobody knew what it was like to be nine and ten and have depression. I got so tired every day and couldn't pay attention in some of my classes. My family and I had to quarantine for 21 days. I know a lot of people had to do that and longer but it was still hard. I couldn't see any of my friends and I felt like my entire body had sunken down into my feet. It felt like that was the only part of me that was alive.

But then I read your books, and I also got a counselor. Your books brought me out of my world and into a new one. I have a good imagination and your books helped me use that. This new world had its own problems and challenges. It had magical places that made me think about things in new ways. I started getting myself together. Instead of binge watching, I read your books. I spent all my time plowing through them. They really helped me. They felt like a home away from home. When I read and get into the book, the entire world fades away. I am in the book, I'm part of it. I can feel what they're feeling. The awkwardness, the nerves, the pain, the cold, the wind, the goosebumps. The way everything works is so different but still the same. It's a beautiful place to feel like you're a part of.

Thank you for writing the books even though you didn't know who would read them. Thank you, for helping me, and saving me from the nightmare I was living in.

Your grateful reader,
Jenna Thompson