

# My Gift

**BULLYING** was the dark cloud over my head. The voices of the kids who bullied me were the raindrops that flooded my day. And their hateful glares were the lightning bolts that I tried my best to dodge.

I didn't realize how much bullying had taken over my life until my family and I moved across the country at the end of 8th grade.

I realized how much I had been suffering, but I also realized how strong I was. I started writing poems, screenplays, and stories. I put all of my pain into my work. I had finally found this incredible outlet. And through this outlet, I found my first mission in life.

I knew that there were millions of kids all over the world suffering in silence from bullying. In my sleep, I could feel their fear, their helplessness, and their pain. I dreamed of a way that I could help them and show them that they weren't alone in their battle.

**One day, I realized that I had to create a little yet powerful survival guide that any kid could use when he or she was being bullied in the gym, the cafeteria, the locker room, the classroom, the hallways—anywhere. A guide that could help any kid dry their tears and put a smile on their face. A guide that could convince a kid**

to come out of that bathroom stall that they had locked themselves into and see the flickering light at the end of the tunnel. A guide that could be a road map, a flashlight, or a friend.

So here it is. This book is my gift to you. The advice is based on all of my experiences throughout the many years I was bullied and conversations with parents, teachers, and other victims of bullying. I also collaborated with mental health professionals.

Welcome to my book  
and your new beginning!



## My Story

Eight years old I arrived  
In front of this cluster of stone buildings  
Ready to thrive  
Feeling so alive  
Not knowing that this place would be my  
fight to survive

At nine I tried to be myself  
To dress to impress only myself  
To write to feel alive  
But I was beaten down  
For just trying to be me

At ten I tried to fit in  
Knowing that it had been hell  
I felt like I was trapped in a cell  
So I dressed the same  
To fit into their game  
But my soul had a name  
And it wasn't the same  
As the other players in the game

M  
Y  
S  
T  
E  
R  
Y



# ELEVEN

At eleven  
I kept quiet  
I couldn't take my internal riot  
I needed an escape  
But I was trapped in this game  
Of words and pain  
And my writing had taken flight  
It even got away from the game  
But I had to stay  
It wasn't my turn to run away

At twelve  
I craved friends and fame  
I dreamed of being in movies  
Where you could escape  
Shift shape  
Into different lives  
And never need to arrive back into your  
first life  
But I was told I would never be  
Anything more than debris  
I was bullied for my desire to act  
And retreated out to sea  
But I was holding a pirate key  
In dreams or in reality  
I needed one thing to hold on to  
And that was me

Twelve

