

Let's read this excerpt from the book "Wonder", by R.J. Palacio

Weird Kids

Some kids have actually come out and asked me why I hang out with "the freak" so much. These are kids that don't even know him well. If they knew him, they wouldn't call him that.

"Because he's a nice kid!" I always answer. "And don't call him that."

"You're a saint, Summer," Ximena Chin said to me the other day. "I couldn't do what you're doing."

"It's not a big deal," I answered her truthfully.

"Did Mr. Tushman ask you to be friends with him?" Charlotte Cody asked.

"No. I'm friends with him because I want to be friends with him," I answered.

Who knew that my sitting with August Pullman at lunch would be such a big deal? People acted like it was the strangest thing in the world. It's weird how weird kids can be.

I sat with him that first day because I felt sorry for him. That's all. Here he was. This strange-looking kid in a brand-new school. No one was talking to him. Everyone was staring at him. All the girls at my table were whispering about him. He wasn't the only new kid at Beecher Prep, but he was the only one everyone was talking about. Julian had nicknamed him the Zombie Kid, and that's what everyone was calling him. "Did you see the Zombie Kid yet?" Stuff like that gets around fast. And August knew it. It's hard enough being the new kid even when you have a normal face. Imagine having his face?

So I just went over and sat with him. Not a biggie. I wish people would stop trying to turn it into something major.

He's just a kid. The weirdest-looking kid I've ever seen, yes. But just a kid.

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