

Dear RJ. Palacio,

When I was little, I would notice people judging everything, books, food and sometimes people, just by looking at them. I had become a shy girl because of it, because of the scary and abnormal faces and looks. I would only eat normal looking foods, read normal looking books, and only became friends with, well, normal looking people. I was such a scared girl back then. Then I read your book, *Wonder*, and everything changed.

I read your book in third grade, just when I started reading "bigger" books. After I read your book, people started looking the same, and my really good friends would say I became kinder and I started hanging out with more people. Then one day, I met someone at the hospital (I was there for a concussion), and she had a disease that affected her legs. At first I was scared because she was in a wheelchair, but then I remembered your book and I went over to her and made a new friend. I still remember that day very well because of how kind she was to me. I still get teary-eyed from that memory, but what makes me sad is I can't remember her name or what disease she had.

Even though Auggie is the main character, I felt like Summer was the one who showed me everything I am writing to you about. She was probably the only person in the school who was friends with Auggie without being asked to become friends, even before the trip when Auggie was kicked around and everyone came to save him. Summer was not afraid of his looks. She was the one who taught me to not be afraid.

Your book has changed the way I look at people now. I try not to judge anyone or anything new. Sometimes I might slip and I won't eat some kind of food because of the way it looks. Now I make more friends at school. I sincerely want to thank you for giving me the opportunity of making new friends and the way your book affected my life so greatly. I am now friends with almost everyone I meet, and I don't judge too much anymore. Everyone I see does not look weird or scary, but more beautiful, as if I am seeing their inner beauty. Nothing is going to be the same ever again because I'm not the same shy girl anymore.

Sincerely,  
Rhiana Boutot  
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