

# ON THE BOOKSHELF

## "Wonder"

Lionsgate

Starring Julia Roberts, Owen Wilson & Jacob Tremblay

A PG rated film in a Blu-Ray Combo Pack, 4K Ultra HD Combo Pack, and single DVD. ()

This is a remarkable movie: never simple, with multi-dimensional characters. It's a family and their close circle, dealing with life.

Auggie has the toughest time, or so it seems at first. He has facial deformities due to a rare genetic condition. Because of that, Auggie has been home-schooled by his mom, until this year. When he goes to a regular school, making friends is very difficult. He feels very remote from everyone else; in fact, he refuses to attend classes except while wearing an astronaut helmet that hides his head and face. The private school had asked several other students to help Auggie get acclimated, but the other children are cruel. Especially mean is one preppy kid who is unrelenting in his bullying. However, slowly, Auggie wins some of them over and he makes real friends.

Auggie helmet was a Christmas gift from his older sister's best friend, Miranda; she and his sister Via have become estranged this year. Via is a fierce advocate, leaving her little time with her parents or anyone else. When Miranda ignores her, Via feels alone, and always forced to take second place behind Auggie's trials and needs. She decides to try out for the Drama Club's production of "Our Town" and is cast as the understudy to her estranged friend. However, Via attracts the attention of a kind and sweet young man who becomes her first boyfriend.

Miranda, meanwhile, has seen her family torn apart by divorce. When she went to summer camp, she essentially stole the family story of her best friend, and when she returns to school she's ashamed. That's why she ignores Via. But when the curtain is about to go up, and the boyfriend tells her that Via's family will cheer for her, Miranda fakes nausea so that Via will get to play the role on-stage.

Auggie and Via's parents are sweet and funny and love both their kids very much. As they are about to leave for the theater, Dad admits he hid the astronaut helmet when Auggie quit wearing it every day. "I wanted to see your face", he tells his son. "I love your face."

A kind's headmaster discovers how Auggie had been terrorized by the preppy kid and shows the parents dozens of hand-scrawled notes and a class photo with Auggie photo-shopped out. The real kicker is that the boy is repentant, but his mother is the one with the cruelest attitude!

But Auggie and his family persevere, sustained by their determined bond of love. His intelligence and unflinching good cheer inspire others and make the school a better place.