

Kwok Man Lai, Tina

The relationship between August "Auggie" Pullman and his sister Olivia, "Via", is very conflicting and complicated. Their relationship is far from a normal sibling relationship due to August's rare condition. Throughout this book, they definitely have shared a lot of different memories, from arguments to some loving moments between them.

At the beginning of the book, Auggie and Via's relationship is very loving, and they are just like best friends. Auggie rests his head on Via's lap while sleeping during the car ride as written by R.J. Palacio. If they didn't love each other, I doubt that Via would've willingly lent Auggie her lap as a pillow for him to sleep on. However, Via then compares the Pullman family to the universe: Auggie as the Sun, Mom, Dad and herself as planets orbiting the Sun. This is due to the fact that Auggie has a rare condition and needs special attention. Via also mentions how her parents cannot help her with her homework or go to her soccer games due to their busy schedule of taking care of August. I think at some point she understands the care that her brother needs and accepts the fact that nobody pays much attention to her. At the same time, I think she also wants someone to actually pay more attention to her. In the book, when Auggie and Via's grandmother told Via that she was her favourite, she was a little glad that someone is there to look out for her. Via also mentions that she saw her mom standing in front of Auggie's door and wonders whether her mom does that in front of her door too. Olivia loves her brother, but at the same time, she cannot get rid of the twinge of jealousy in her heart. She cannot ignore the fact that she sometimes wants a little more attention from her parents, who are busy caring for Auggie.

Then, the story develops into how August goes to a school. His schoolmates bullied him. August was very upset and didn't want to go trick-or-treating. Olivia comes to August's help and consoles him, telling him to ignore the hater and bullies. Olivia can actually choose to ignore her brother completely and not care for him, but she didn't. Instead, she gives him advice and comforts him, which shows that she actually loves her brother deep down. However, things take a turn when Olivia plays a part in the school show. She likes how nobody at high school knows that she has a deformed brother and doesn't want Auggie to attend the show. She then proceeds to feel very guilty about it. In this case, we see that Olivia, as all teenagers do, care about her reputation at school, and hence, affects her relationship with Auggie. The feeling of wanting a normal life without her brother slowly appears and develops, which then leads to a heated argument between Auggie and her.

After the heated argument, their dog, Daisy feels unwell and was taken to the vet. Daisy later died peacefully in the arms of Auggie's dad. Through the incident of Daisy's passing, Auggie and Via's relationship bonded and fixed up, with them comforting each other and apologizing. The author mentioned how Via was very proud to be Auggie's brother, and we see that Via's love for Auggie reignites again. In the end, Auggie attended Via's show along with their parents and even went to the after-show dinner.

Auggie and Via's relationship is definitely a close one. They are just like best friends, confessing to each other some of their deepest secrets. Through the pleasurable memories and arguments, their love for each other has strengthened. Instead of being "ashamed" of Auggie and also jealous of him, Via is proud of him and loves him even more. As for Auggie, he develops an understanding for his sister. Their relationship has grown stronger than ever through their hardships, and they love each other even more dearly.