

AM I WEIRD?

by JENNIFER LICATE

A book about finding your place
when you feel like you don't fit in



BOYS TOWN®
Press

Illustrated by SUZANNE DEAKY

Am I Weird?

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Chapter 1

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

I'M EVA. I'VE ALWAYS LOVED ANYTHING ARTSY, ESPECIALLY DRAWING AND PAINTING. I GET A LOT OF COMPLIMENTS ON MY ARTWORK, WHICH MAKES ME PROUD. When I was younger, I remember wanting to feel like a true artist. So, I would make school art projects and crafts that were a little different from everyone else's. It seems silly now, but art was one of the few opportunities I had to shine. I'd rather draw or paint than play outside or play sports.

I've tried almost every sport but none of them clicked.

In fact, I **WAS TERRIBLE!**

Maybe I just didn't try hard enough. Or maybe it's just not my thing. Either way, it's okay with me. I'm happiest creating art.

I usually like going to school. I try to do well in all my classes. I'm definitely not a straight-A student, but I like to do my best.

All the kids in school are nice to me, but I don't really fit into any group. It's been so long since I've been invited over to any of the other girls' houses. I'm included when there's a whole-class birthday party, but that's pretty much it. I usually hang out with my friend, Isaiah. He's artsy, like me.

I admit it; I look different from most of the other girls. They always wear sporty clothes, usually sweatshirts with sneakers. And

then there's me. I love expressing my personality through my outfits. I'm always wearing something creative – overalls, patterned tights with a dress, anything that looks funky and artsy. I used to dress like the other girls, but it didn't feel like me. I felt like I was trying too hard to fit in.

I've gotten used to being friendly with the other girls and being best friends with Isaiah.



But lately I've felt like the other girls don't want to talk to me at all. Their conversations move so fast. They jump from topic to topic – clothes, jewelry, boys they like and don't like, girls they like and don't like – and the list goes on and on. I can't keep up. Usually it seems like they're talking about things they've talked about among themselves before because the stories don't make sense to me. And I

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