**Euphemisms, Dysphemisms and Other Terms**

by **wildeisms**

**Summary**

euphemism (n.) a mild or indirect word or expression substituted for one considered to be too harsh or blunt when referring to something unpleasant or embarrassing.
dysphemism (n.) a derogatory or unpleasant term used instead of a pleasant or neutral one.

Newt Scamander has been called a lot of things in his life

**Notes**

See the end of the work for notes

When Newt was a child, his mother had called him special. At the time, he had taken this as a compliment. Only when he grew older did he learn about the coded ways people talk, and about how special can mean different, and different can mean bad. But when he was small, he was just an overexcitable child who liked to bounce around and recite everything he knew about magical creatures, and who cried when the world became too much or too wrong. She had always called Newt a wonderful, special daughter, and it took too long for him to ever articulate to her why that made him feel like a stranger in his own skin.

His brother Theseus had been less subtle. He called Newt strange when he behaved too differently, and strange when he copied him. There was a bizarre set of rules Newt knew he was supposed to follow, but no one had ever told him what they were. Stealing his brother’s old clothes and playing with his toys was wrong, but so was sitting in his own room and telling himself stories. Yet somehow, he could never find it in himself to give up either of those pastimes. They made him too happy. And when he found the right name and the right spells, the ones that let him feel happiest of
all, Theseus had called him strange but he had also called him Newt, and that single sentence filled him more joy than he had ever before experienced. Perhaps he was strange, but even with his brother’s teasing, he didn’t mind that. And he didn’t think Theseus did either.

Many at Hogwarts were not so kind. The group who seemed to hate him the most, for reasons Newt never quite understood, called him a freak from the moment he walked into the Great Hall about to be Sorted, bouncing on the balls of his feet with excitement. They mocked the way he moved, the way he spoke, the way he looked. His interests, his clothing, even his name were all fair game to them, and Newt had to put conscious effort into ignoring what they thought of him. Even those who were not quite as cruel as his tormentors never seemed to like him, exactly. They called him annoying, rolling their eyes when he started to speak and finding any reason to avoid sitting with him or spending time with him. They might cheer for him when he played Quidditch or ask to copy off his homework, but they weren’t his friends. It was as if he was inside a glass box, looking out at their world but never quite a part of it, no matter how hard he tried.

Leta Lestrange was the exception. She teased him, yes, but it felt like the way Theseus teased him, with no ill intent. She called him ridiculous, and strange too sometimes, but she would still seek him out to spend time with him, still listened - albeit begrudgingly - to him sharing every thought no one else wanted to hear. She was his friend and, almost, something more. But given the choice between being more than a friend to Leta Lestrange and being Newt Scamander, he would have taken the latter any day.

The ever-growing menagerie within Newt’s suitcase consisted entirely of creatures without the power of human speech. True, he could communicate with them, and so often did, but they would not call him anything. It was with his creatures that he felt most at ease, most able to be himself without annoyance, judgement or ridicule. Study them enough, learn their needs and behaviours, and they’ll love you, even if yours are different. They wouldn’t make him feel small or wrong for being himself. If only people were so simple to care for.

Jacob Kowalski called Newt a number of things. He was crazy, ridiculous, weird, and all those other terms which Newt had adjusted to hearing all his life in relation to his eccentricities. But he was also amazing, brilliant, incredible. The wonder and affection which Jacob showed to him were like nothing Newt had ever experienced before. Being with Jacob felt like a second home, a second sanctuary in which he didn’t have to feel that he was wrong in any way. Jacob didn’t like him despite his obsessions with his creatures or his unusual behaviour, he liked him because of those things. Because those things - along with a potion or two and a few tricky little spells - made him the man he was, and Jacob wouldn’t want to change a thing about him.

End Notes

I definitely headcanon that Newt is trans and Leta is a lesbian and that is why things didn’t work out between them.

Also, this was a fun exercise in trans and autistic coding in a society where neither of those words really existed. Let me know if you'd like more of an exploration of being trans and/or autistic in early 20th century wizarding society because I am so down to write that.

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