

**WILL:** We're going back down.

Okay, Dan?

That's what we're going to do.

**DAN:** You wouldn't really.

You wouldn't.

*(WILL tilts the flask at a more extreme angle. Water gushes out)*

You've actually gone crazy.

**WILL:** Not much left now, Dan.

So are we going down or what?

**DAN:** I –

*(WILL turns the flask completely upside down)*

Okay!

Okay.

Whatever you say.

Whatever you think is best, Will

I'm listening.

**WILL:** Good.

*By Elinor Cook*

## **The Beauty Manifesto**

*SILAS and CHLOE live in a world where they celebrate their 16th birthday by having cosmetic surgery – a right given to them by the Beauty Manifesto. However, Silas thinks the Beauty Manifesto makes teenagers unhappy about their bodies and does not want the surgery. He tries to convince Chloe of the same.*

**SILAS:** *(SILAS wakes, stands, looks around him. He taps CHLOE, who wakes. They move away from the sleeping people)*  
Chloe. I want to talk to you.

**CHLOE:** Shhh. You'll wake them.

**SILAS:** I don't care.

**CHLOE:** You need to get up early. You need some sleep.

**SILAS:** I don't want to sleep.

**CHLOE:** I do.

**SILAS:** You don't.

**CHLOE:** Please stop talking.

**SILAS:** Why do you keep trying to stop me talking?

**CHLOE:** You know why.

**SILAS:** Because you're scared you'll listen.

**CHLOE:** Listen to what? You saying you don't want to sleep?

**SILAS:** No. You're scared I'll say something you agree with.

**CHLOE:** I don't know what you're talking about.

**SILAS:** You do.

Chloe.

I don't want the surgery.

**CHLOE:** You can't say that.

**SILAS:** I can. Chloe. I don't want the surgery.

**CHLOE:** Shhhh

**SILAS:** I can say it as loud as I like. I don't want the surgery.

I don't want the surgery.

**CHLOE:** Stop it. It's for your own good. It'll make you successful.

**SILAS:** I don't want to be successful. I want to be happy.

**CHLOE:** Happy?

**SILAS:** Yes. You think you have no choice, don't you? You do. We are free to say no.

**CHLOE:** But I don't want to be different.

**SILAS:** Your dad did the operation on your sister.

**CHLOE:** Of course he did.

**SILAS:** And he'll do yours.

**CHLOE:** Yes.

**SILAS:** And he did your mum?

**CHLOE:** She's really beautiful.

**SILAS:** In which way?

**CHLOE:** She's perfect. Her face. She doesn't look like me.

**SILAS:** What do you think you look like?

**CHLOE:** I'm ugly.

**SILAS:** Who told you?

**CHLOE:** Everyone. Look at this fat here.

**SILAS:** You don't have fat there.

**CHLOE:** My nose is too big.

**SILAS:** You can still breathe through it.

**CHLOE:** Don't be stupid.

**SILAS:** My mum hasn't had surgery.

**CHLOE:** Really?

**SILAS:** She hasn't had anything.

**CHLOE:** Do people stare at her?

**SILAS:** Of course.

**CHLOE:** She's brave.

**SILAS:** She's happy.

**CHLOE:** I don't know how she can be.

**SILAS:** Because she did what she wanted.

**CHLOE:** I haven't heard of anyone doing that.

**SILAS:** Only because of how your family live. There was a time when no one had it.

**CHLOE:** When they were all ugly.

**SILAS:** I don't think they were.

**CHLOE:** But everyone says they were.

**SILAS:** That doesn't mean they were.

Chloe.

**CHLOE:** What?

**SILAS:** Tell me something about you.

**CHLOE:** There's nothing to say. Stop it. Stop talking. Stop trying to get me to talk.

*(They are silent for a moment)*

**SILAS:** Tell me a secret.

**CHLOE:** You know we can't have secrets.

**SILAS:** I have them. Have small secrets. Have things I think and do.

*(Silent again, then...)*

I have this one.

I was young and in the garden and I found a caterpillar. I put it in my bedroom in a box with netting over it. One night I heard a noise. I turned on the light and the sound was the beating of wings against the net. I woke my mum and we took it outside and let it go, and its wings were white in the dark. We waited until it had gone. She said I had to always remember that the moth had done that all by itself, with no help. It had done what it was supposed to do. What was intended.

Chloe.

**CHLOE:** Stop.

*(She moves quickly. SILAS grabs her)*