

A GIRL WHO NEVER ASKS FOR ANYTHING

by Jim Chevallier

I'm sorry I was late, Ms. Hollis. I had to help my sister get ready. My parents are taking her to the Precious Pretty contest. Because she's so beautiful... She has long long hair and great big sugar eyes. That's what Daddy calls them - sugar eyes. My parents want her to be in the movies. Because she's so pretty.

That's why it was so important today, for her to look just perfect, so she can be in the contest, and then maybe someone will see her and she'll be discovered. My parents would really be happy then. And I would too, of course. So I had to brush her hair and tie it back in two pony tails with ribbons - blue and yellow ribbons, I wish I had some, maybe they'd make my hair look nice - and help her put on eye shadow - I'm not allowed to wear make-up, but it's different for her, because she's so pretty, she has to be perfect, you know? - and then someone had to polish her shoes, because she can't get her hands dirty, the hands are important, they look at them too, did you know that? And then, I had to be really really sure not to say anything mean to her because if she cries, it'll be my fault.

So all of this took a really really long time, and I got worried about the time, but my parents said, "Will you stop being so selfish, this is IMPORTANT!" and I'm sorry, really really sorry I was so selfish, and I'm sorry that I was late and - and anyway, if you want me to stay after, it doesn't matter if I don't go right home, I don't think anyone will mind, it really doesn't matter, it really doesn't matter if I'm there at all.