

# Chapter Twenty-One

In Chapter Twenty-One of "If These Wings Could Fly," the narrative centers on a young girl getting ready to visit a friend, Liam, who is helping her with art homework. The protagonist's mother informs her that Liam has called, and though she is amused by the idea of a "boyfriend," she focuses on preparing for the visit. In the bathroom, her younger sister, Juniper, shows signs of jealousy, applying lip gloss and questioning the nature of the protagonist's relationship with Liam. The playful banter reveals a sibling dynamic, highlighting Juniper's childlike innocence contrasted with a slightly more mature understanding from the protagonist.

As the protagonist prepares, Campbell, another sister, enters and adds to the conversation, questioning whether Liam is just a friend. The protagonist reassures Campbell that Liam is nice, evidently easing some of Campbell's concerns. The conversation touches on the complexities of sibling relationships, underscoring Campbell's protectiveness and concern for her sister's well-being.

The narrative captures a moment of bonding among the sisters as the protagonist makes a "pinkie promise" to Campbell to be careful while out with Liam. Campbell's introspection about the fairness of life, after feeling guilty about being mean to Juniper, reveals her depth and worry about familial dynamics and perceived consequences for behaviors. This dialogue emphasizes the innocence of youth while also exploring deeper emotional themes.

Ultimately, the protagonist reassures Campbell regarding their situation at home and delves into the idea of karma, challenging Campbell's belief about a tangible system of rewards and punishments. The chapter conveys themes of trust, support, and the complicated journey of navigating relationships, particularly during adolescence. The interplay of humor and seriousness provides a rich texture to the chapter as it explores family dynamics and the essence of growing up, ultimately leaving the reader with questions about morality and the nature of justice in their lives.