

OLYMPIADS SCHOOL/GRADE 8 ENGLISH/HANDOUT 21

NAME (FIRST AND LAST): _____ GRADE: _____

Uglies: from “Bravery” to the end of Part Two

“Suspicion”

Tally adapts well to her new living conditions in the Smoke. David gives her some gloves as a present to protect her hands from all the hard labor.

Wondering why Tally has so much SpagBol left after being out so long in the wilderness, Croy become suspicious of her. Tally then makes up some lie about not eating all her recommended daily SpagBol meals, but his suspicion makes her nervous.

Shay is upset, and Tally thinks it is because of Croy’s suspicions about her. In reality, Shay is upset because David gave his gloves to Tally instead of her.

“Bravery”

Tally was getting a homey feeling from the Smoke, but now she feels a little exposed, as if everyone knows about her treachery. She feels like the destructive weed that ruins everything.

However, David wants to talk to her about how special he thinks she is. This makes Tally feel even guiltier.

Tally feels something for David that she never felt for an ugly before.

“The Secret”

David takes Tally to his parents' cabin, which is outside of the Smoke.

Tally finds it weird that David looks like his parents. In the city, distinctive family traits get removed because of the surgery.

David's parents, Maddy and Az, are doctors who have a secret.

“Pretty Minds”

Maddy and Az were cosmetic surgeons on the Committee for Morphological Standards (the Pretty Committee). This committee decides for all the cities what sort of surgery is acceptable for the pretties. They were doing research on pretty surgery and found that people had tiny lesions all over their brains. It turns out that lots of pretties are brain damaged—and brain damaged in the exact same way. The only pretties who do not have lesions have jobs that require quick thinking: firefighters, wardens, doctors, Special Circumstances, etc.

“Burning Bridges”

Maddy and Az go on to explain how they left the city and deliberately made themselves a little ugly. They can reverse the physical process, but they haven't found out how to reverse the brain lesions.

Tally thinks back to her parents and the new pretties she's seen. She is very disturbed by the new knowledge.

On the way back into the Smoke, David also tells Tally he thinks she's beautiful. Even the wounds she had from her rough hoverboarding in the city were attractive to him, since they meant she had a story to tell. He even thinks she's more beautiful than Shay. They kiss.

Tally decides not to betray the Smoke by calling Dr. Cable. She runs to the centre of the town and throws the heart pendant on a fire.

David then goes for a walk and Tally goes to the dorm to sleep.

When she wakes up, Special Circumstances has arrived.

Questions

1. What is another name for the Pretty Committee?

2. Who are Az and Maddy?

3. What does Tally do with her pendant?

4. Is the operation to turn one pretty reversible?

5. What happens the morning after Tally kisses David?

6. What is Tally surprised to see about David and his father?

8. What do the lesions do to people?

9. What is the primary purpose of the Pretty Committee?

10. How do Maddy and Az know the lesions are reversible?

Excerpt, from “The Secret” in *Uglies*

They descended the ridge on the far side, down a steep, narrow path. David led her quickly in the darkness, finding footing on the almost invisible trail without hesitation. It was all Tally could do to keep up.

The whole day had been one shock after another, and now to top it all off she was going to meet David's parents. That was the last thing she'd expected after showing him her pendant and telling him she hadn't kept the Smoke a secret. His reactions were different from those of anyone she'd ever met before. Maybe it was because he'd grown up out here, away from the customs of the city. Or maybe he was just . . . different.

They left the familiar ridge line far behind, and the mountain rose steeply to one side.

“Your parents don't live in the Smoke?”

“No. It's too dangerous.”

“Dangerous how?”

“It's part of what I was telling you your first day here, in the railroad cave.”

“About your secret? How you were raised in the wild?”

David stopped for a moment, turning back to face her in the darkness. “There's more to it than that.”

“What?”

“I'll let them tell you. Come on.”

A few minutes later, a small square filled with faint light appeared, hovering in

the darkness of the mountainside. Tally saw that it was a window, a light inside glowing deep red through a closed curtain. The house seemed half buried, as if it had been wedged into the mountain.

When they were still a stone's throw away, David stopped. "Don't want to surprise them. They can be jumpy," he said, then shouted, "Hello!"

A moment later a doorway opened, letting out a shaft of light.

"David?" a woman's voice called. The door opened wider until the light spilled across them. "Az, it's David."

As they drew closer, Tally saw that she was an old ugly. Tally couldn't tell if she was younger or older than the Boss, but she certainly wasn't as terrifying to look at. Her eyes flashed liked a pretty's, and the lines of her face disappeared into a welcoming smile as she gathered her son into a hug.

"Hi, Mom."

"And you must be Tally."

"Nice to meet you." She wondered if she should shake hands or something. In the city, you never spent much time with other uglies' parents, except when you hung out at friends' houses during school breaks.

The house was much warmer than the bunkhouse, and the timber floors weren't nearly as rough, as if David's parents had lived there so long, their feet had worn them smooth. The house somehow felt more solid than any building in the Smoke. It was really cut into the mountain, she saw now. One of the walls was exposed stone, glistening with some kind of transparent sealant.

"Nice to meet you, too, Tally," David's mother said. Tally wondered what her name was. David always referred to them as "Mom" and "Dad," words Tally hadn't used for Sol and Ellie since she was a little.

A man appeared, shaking David's hand before turning to her. "Good to meet you, Tally."

She blinked, her breath catching, for a moment unable to speak. David and his father somehow looked . . . alike.

It didn't make any sense. There had to be more than thirty years between them, if his father really had been a doctor when David was born. But their jaws, foreheads, even their slightly lopsided smiles were all so similar.

"Tally?" David said.

"Sorry. You just . . . you look the same!"

David's parents burst into laughter, and Tally felt her face turning red.

"We get that a lot," his father said. "You city kids always find it a shock. But you know about genetics, don't you?"

"Sure. I know all about genes. I knew two sisters, uglies, who looked almost the same. But parents and children? That's just weird."

David's mother forced a serious expression onto her face, but the smile stayed in her eyes. "The features that we take from our parents are the things that make us different. A big nose, thin lips, high forehead—all the things that the operation takes away."

"The preference toward the mean," his dad said.

Tally nodded, remembering school lessons. The overall average of human facial characteristics was the primary template for the operation. "Sure. Average-looking features are one of the things people look for in a face."

"But families pass on nonaverage looks. Like our big noses." The man tweaked his son's nose, and David rolled his eyes. Tally realized that David's nose was much

bigger than any pretty's. Why hadn't she noticed that before now?

"That's one of the things you give up, when you become pretty. The family nose," his mother said. "Az? Why don't you turn up the heat."

Tally realized that she was still shivering, but not from the cold outside. This was all so weird. She couldn't get over the similarity between David and his father. "That's okay. It's lovely in here, uh . . ."

"Maddy," the woman said. "Shall we all sit down?"

What do you think David's father means by "the preference toward the mean"?

Excerpt, from "Pretty Minds"

"We were doctors," Az began.

"Cosmetic surgeons, to be precise," Maddy said. "We've both performed the operation hundreds of times. And when we met, I had just been named to the Committee for Morphological Standards."

Tally's eyes widened. "The Pretty Committee?"

Maddy smiled at the nickname. "We were preparing for a Morphological Congress. That's when all the cities share data on the operation."

Tally nodded. Cities worked very hard to stay independent of one another, but the Pretty Committee was a global institution that made sure pretties were all more or less the same. It would ruin the whole point of the operation if the people from one city wound up prettier than everyone else.

Like most uglies, Tally had often indulged the fantasy that one day she might be on the Committee, and help decide what the next generation would look like. In school, of course, they always managed to make it sound really boring, all graphs and averages and measuring people's pupils when they looked at different faces.

"At the same time, I was doing some independent research on anesthesia," Az said. "Trying to make the operation safer."

"Safer?" Tally asked.

"A few people still die each year, as with any surgery," he said. "From being unconscious so

long, more than anything else."

Tally bit her lip. She'd never heard that. "Oh."

"I found that there were complications from the anesthetic used in the operation. Tiny lesions in the brain. Barely visible, even with the best machines."

Tally decided to risk sounding stupid. "What's a lesion?"

"Basically it's a bunch of cells that don't look right," Az said. "Like a wound, or a cancer, or just something that doesn't belong there."

"But you couldn't just *say* that," David said. He rolled his eyes toward Tally. "Doctors."

Maddy ignored her son. "When Az showed me his results, I started investigating. The local committee had millions of scans in its database. Not the stuff they put in medical textbooks, but raw data from pretties all over the world. The lesions turned up everywhere."

Tally frowned. "You mean, people were sick?"

"They didn't seem to be. And the lesions weren't cancerous, because they didn't spread. Almost everyone had them, and they were always in exactly the same place." She pointed to a spot on the top of her head.

"A bit to the left, dear," Az said, dropping a white cube into his tea.

Maddy obliged him, then continued. "Most importantly, almost everyone all over the world had these lesions. If they were a health hazard, ninety-nine percent of the population would show some kind of symptoms."

"But they weren't natural?" Tally asked.

"No. Only post-ops—pretties, I mean—had them," Az said. "No uglies did. They were definitely a result of the operation."

Tally shifted in her chair. The thought of a weird little mystery in everyone's brain made her queasy. "Did you find out what caused them?"

Maddy sighed. "In one sense, we did. Az and I looked very closely at all the negatives—that is, the few pretties who didn't have the lesions—and tried to figure out why they were different. What made them immune to the lesions? We ruled out blood type, gender, physical size, intelligence factors, genetic markers—nothing seemed to account for the negatives. They weren't any different from everyone else."

"Until we discovered an odd coincidence," Az said.

"Their jobs," Maddy said.

"Jobs?"

"Every negative worked in the same sort of profession," Az said. "Firefighters, wardens, doctors, politicians, and anyone who worked for Special Circumstances. Everyone with those jobs didn't have the lesions; all the other pretties did."

"So you guys were okay?"

Az nodded. "We tested ourselves, and we were negative."

"Otherwise, we wouldn't be sitting here," Maddy said quietly.

"What do you mean?"

David spoke up. "The lesions aren't an accident, Tally. They're part of the operation, just like all the bone sculpting and skin scraping. It's part of the way being pretty changes you."

"But you said not everyone has them."

Maddy nodded. "In some pretties, they disappear, or are intentionally cured—in those whose professions require them to react quickly, like working in an emergency room, or putting out a fire. Those who deal with conflict and danger."

"People who face challenges," David said.

What causes the lesions? Is there something dystopian about the situation? Explain.
