

DEAR READER

LITTLE BEE is the story of what happens when a successful Western magazine editor meets a young refugee from Africa. The refugee is funnier, a little crazier, and a little more ingenious than we might expect a girl like her to be. The Western woman, mother to a boy who will only answer to the name of "Batman", has a life that seems fabulous on the surface - but she has her own secrets from which she is fleeing.

I hoped that if I brought these two women together in their own voices then the result could be surprising - maybe even beautiful. Over to you to decide whether it is those things. All I can say is that researching LITTLE BEE changed me and made me grateful for the most basic gifts, like safety and peace and the simple right to work. If you read LITTLE BEE, I hope above all that you will simply enjoy it!

With thanks and best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized loop at the top, followed by a series of horizontal strokes that form the letters 'C.C.'.

CHRIS
CLEAVE