

Cambridge Experience Readers

Level 2

Series editor: Nicholas Tims

As Others See Us

Nicola Prentis



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107699199

© Cambridge University Press 2014

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2014

Reprinted 2016

Nicola Prentis has asserted her right to be identified as the Author of the Work in accordance with the Copyright, Design and Patents Act 1988.

Printed in Italy by Rotolito Lombarda S.p.A.

ISBN 978-1107-699-19-9 Paperback

No character in this work is based on any person living or dead.
Any resemblance to an actual person or situation is purely accidental.

Illustrations by Lance Took

Audio recording by BraveArts

Cover image by Getty Images/Mark Mawson

Typeset by Óscar Latorre

Contents

Chapter 1	It's not fair!	5
Chapter 2	It's amazing!	10
Chapter 3	That's strange!	16
Chapter 4	What happened to the teacher?	21
Chapter 5	I've lost it!	30
Chapter 6	We'll be famous	34
Chapter 7	What's wrong with Amy?	39
Chapter 8	This isn't fun any more	44
Chapter 9	Who wants normal?	48
Chapter 10	Can we win?	56

People in the story

Gemma: a fifteen-year-old schoolgirl

Mum: Gemma's mother

Shop assistant: an old man who works in a phone shop

Amy: Gemma's best friend

Robert: the best-looking boy in school

Mrs Hawkins: Gemma and Amy's music teacher at school

BEFORE YOU READ



1 Look at the pictures in Chapter 1. Answer the questions.

1 What do Gemma and her mum want to buy?

.....

2 What is special about Gemma's new phone?

.....

Chapter 1

It's not fair!



‘But Mum, I need *this* one!’ Gemma said. She pulled her mother’s arm and pointed at the phone.

‘You *need* new shoes and a winter coat, Gemma. You don’t *need* the most expensive phone in the shop,’ her mother said. She was tired of having the same conversation for ten minutes.

‘You don’t understand!’ said Gemma. Everyone at school has this one. I want a cool phone too! If I wear last year’s winter coat, can I have it?’

‘How many times do I have to say “no”? It’s good to be different sometimes.’

‘I don’t want to be different!’ argued Gemma. ‘I’ve seen your photos from when you were fifteen. Your clothes were the same as your friends’. They looked stupid, but they were cool then, weren’t they?’ Now her mother had to agree.

‘First, none of my clothes were as expensive as this phone. Second, you’re right, they did look stupid. People can sometimes look very stupid when they’re trying to be cool.’

‘But *please* Mum! I never get anything I want.’

‘No, Gemma. You can have any of the phones on this side of the shop or we go home right now. I’ll find someone to help you.’ She went to find the shop assistant.

Gemma pretended¹ to look at the phones. She wasn’t really looking, she was too angry. She didn’t want one of those phones. They weren’t much better than her old phone. Her mother was so unfair!

‘Do you see what you’re looking for?’ asked a voice in her ear.

She turned round to find a strange-looking old man behind her. He was quite short, only as tall as Gemma, and he had light green eyes and a friendly, smiling face.

‘I ...’ Gemma started. She didn’t know what to say. She *could* see what she wanted, but she couldn’t have it. ‘Do you work here?’ she asked.

‘Yes, I do and maybe we have something you’ll like,’ he said. ‘Your friends all have those phones, don’t they?’ He pointed to the phones on the other side of the shop.

‘Yes,’ said Gemma. ‘But it’s not fair. Mum says I can’t have one of those.’

‘Mums don’t always understand these things,’ the old man said. ‘Let’s show your mum something special.’

Gemma went with him to the back of the shop. Gemma’s mother followed them. The man took out a box. ‘Now this is the new—’ he started to say.

‘I’m sorry,’ said Gemma’s mother. ‘I’ve told Gemma we can’t buy this kind of phone. It’s too expensive.’

‘But this one is free,’ the old man said quickly.

Gemma’s mouth opened, but she couldn’t speak. Her mother looked very surprised², too.



‘Free?’ Gemma asked.

‘What?’ asked her mother.

‘Well, it’s almost free,’ the shop assistant said. ‘There is something—’

‘I knew it was too good to be true, Gemma,’ said her mum quickly.

‘Oh,’ said Gemma. The smile left her face.

‘Do we have to pay every month?’ her mother asked. ‘But that won’t make it cheaper. I’m sure it’s still too expensive.’

‘As I was saying,’ the old man said, ‘this is new, so there are only a few in the country. It is very special, but it hasn’t been tested yet. The phone makers want to know what people think about it. Gemma can have it for free, but she has to come back in two weeks and tell me about it. Then I can write a report³ for the phone makers.’

‘What special things can it do?’ asked Gemma.

‘Oh, you’ll see,’ the old man said.

‘Can I have it, Mum? Please!’

‘I can’t say “no” now, can I?’ her mother answered, but she didn’t look as excited as Gemma. ‘But I’m not very happy about it. What if you lose it? I’m sure it’s an expensive phone and maybe we’ll have to pay for it.’

‘Don’t worry,’ said the shop assistant to Gemma’s mother. ‘If she loses it, I can find it again.’

Gemma was only half listening.

‘Everyone at school will be jealous⁴ of me. They’ll all want one too,’ she said.

‘They’ll probably all want to try it, Gemma,’ the old man told her. ‘But you mustn’t lend it to anyone. It’s only for you.’

‘OK.’ Gemma didn’t care about that. ‘Can I have it, Mum? Please?’

Gemma's mother couldn't think how to say 'no' again, so she agreed. The man took the phone out of its box and showed it to Gemma. It was made out of something strange that changed colour when it moved. It was as light as air and very thin. Gemma loved it.

She didn't stop looking at it all the way to the car. She turned it on and it changed from grey to red. That was cool, but the next thing it did was a bigger surprise⁵.

On the screen was some text.



'How does it know my name?' she thought. 'The man in the shop didn't put my name in it. I was watching him.'

The screen changed again. 'Gemma? Ready?'

She pushed 'OK'.