

‘Why don’t you tell them?’ Anika suggested with a smile.

‘No point,’ said Zaphira.

Anika wondered if Zaphira could speak English. The two girls had only met a few days before. Anika had recently moved up to the under-18s basketball team, and quite a few of the team-members were new to her.

Zaphira was tall. She played basketball aggressively and well, but she never seemed to smile. Anika, who always wanted everyone to be happy, had offered Zaphira a lift home. It was the day that Anika’s youngest brother, Gamal, usually came for her in his car. On other days Anika’s father sent his driver, which she found embarrassing.

She said, ‘Hey, lighten up, Zaphira! I thought you’d like sitting here, near the castle, by the sea.’

‘Your brother will never see us here.’ Zaphira threw her arm out towards where the cars had to stop. ‘We’re a long way from where he can park.’

The few parked cars they could see were in front of a line of buildings which looked away from the open sea, onto Alexandria’s East Harbour. Between the buildings Anika could see small boats and a few yachts in the harbour.

‘I’ve met him here before,’ said Anika. ‘And he’s not blind.’ She took her cell phone out of her sports bag.

‘Hmm!’ Zaphira said, and drank some more orange juice.

Anika sent a text to Gamal. It said, ‘Anything wrong? I’m at the usual table. Don’t be long!’

Zaphira banged her glass down hard on the table and looked across the road, towards the buildings.

Anika thought, ‘Maybe this was a mistake.’