

All I Want

Margaret Johnson

Before reading

1. Look at the front cover and the back cover blurb. What sort of story do you think this is?
2. Read the contents page. Can you imagine what is going to happen in this story?
3. Match the chapter titles with the sentences from each chapter.

Chapter 1 A bad start to my birthday
 Chapter 2 A bit about my peculiar family
 Chapter 3 Life should be like a colourful vase
 Chapter 4 Talking isn't always easy
 Chapter 5 The wrong pictures

- a I try to speak. I'm only able to whisper very very quietly. 'Thank you,' I say. 'Thank you very much.'
 - b Well, a lot of it's blue, but it's also red and green. With yellow spots.
 - c 'Yes, fakes . . . You know, painted by someone who isn't Ralph Blackman but signed with Ralph Blackman's name.'
 - d In fact, they're both a bit crazy — crazy and unusual. They don't live their lives the way other people live their lives.
 - e After a while I carefully open my eyes and look at the clock. Five past ten. *Five past ten!* I'm an hour late!
4. If you have the cassette, listen to Chapter 1.

Check your reading

CHAPTER 1

1. Match the beginnings and endings.
- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1 Alex was in love with Brad, her new boss, | a decided not to show his paintings. |
| 2 Alex had been late for work | b for keeping Alex waiting. |
| 3 The driver and passengers on the bus | c four times in only three weeks. |
| 4 Alex hoped that in a year's time | d but he wasn't in love with her. |
| 5 When Brad arrived, he apologised | e she would be married to Brad. |
| 6 Brad was upset when Arthur Grant | f smiled at the way Alex was dressed. |

CHAPTER 2

1. These are Diana's suggestions and advice. What does Alex agree with? Write yes or no in the boxes.
- 1 You could go shopping. ☐
 - 2 You could visit your mother. ☐
 - 3 Men are weak compared to women. ☐
 - 4 Your feeling for Brad might change. ☐
 - 5 You should start writing your story. ☐
 - 6 You should ask your mother for advice. ☐

CHAPTER 3

1. Complete the paragraph.
- Alex's mother thought Barry was , and she wanted to Brad. Alex received an unusual birthday present from her mother — a huge Later, Alex went to the

restaurant to meet Barry and was only minutes late. But Brad walked in with his girlfriend , who made an unpleasant comment about Alex's Eventually, Barry arrived, carrying a huge bunch of for Alex.

CHAPTER 4

1. Look at the words in italics. Who is *I*, *he*, *they*, *someone*?
- a I now feel old, fat, foolish, jealous and embarrassed.
 - b *He* thinks — he *actually* thinks — he's done something special for me.
 - c 'It's not my fault ... Tania. *I* had no idea.'
 - d '*They* don't seem very happy, do they?'
 - e I rush around the corner and ... bang straight into *someone*.
 - f *They* all seem to be holding cameras.
 - g '*I* wish you'd tell me what's happening.'

Brad journalists Brad and Tania Barry Alex

CHAPTER 5

1. Match the beginnings and endings.
- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 In the gallery, Alex moved closer to Brad, | a of the bad publicity about the gallery. |
| 2 The newspaper article said that | b hoping that he would kiss her. |
| 3 Brad had made a lot of money | c to avoid the journalists. |
| 4 Tania was worried what her father would think | d Alex said 'No comment'. |
| 5 Brad and Alex left through the back entrance | e the Blackman paintings were fakes. |
| 6 In answer to the journalists' questions, | f when he had sold the Blackman paintings. |

CHAPTER 6

1. True or false?
- a Brad felt excited to be out with Alex.
 - b Alex was wearing unsuitable shoes.
 - c Brad invited Alex to stay at Hill View House.
 - d Brad's grandmother was a famous artist.
 - e Brad painted landscapes.
 - f Alex named three paintings by Van Gogh.
 - g Alex felt hurt when Brad wanted to be alone.

CHAPTER 7

1. Match the conversations.
- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 'What have you been <i>doing</i> , Alex?' | a 'Come here, you silly thing.' |
| 2 'Perhaps you ought to write to the television company to ask if you can appear on the quiz show.' | b 'Well, ... perhaps not <i>quite</i> so pretty as usual with your mouth open the way it is at the moment.' |
| 3 'You mean ... you don't want me to work for you any more?' | c 'I'll probably have to do just that with the trouble the gallery's in at the moment.' |
| 4 'You ... you really think I'm pretty?' | d 'The job was only temporary.' |
| 5 'No, ... I'm not ... going to ... cry.' | e 'Just a bit of cooking ... Cooking and ... sleeping.' |

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CHAPTER 8

1. Match the descriptions. Who or what is ...

- a old, fat, foolish, jealous and useless?
- b insensitive?
- c frightened and alone?
- d good with children?
- e embarrassed?
- f stupid and boring?

Brad Alex Christopher Tania's story

2. Put the events in the right order.

- a Christopher was delighted that Alex was going to stay.
- b Christopher asked Alex if she was Brad's girlfriend.
- c Brad's sister left her son, Christopher, with Brad.
- d Brad seemed more worried about the gallery than the boy.
- e Alex told Christopher a story, which he loved.
- f Alex thought Christopher was Brad's son.
- g Brad asked Alex to look after Christopher.

CHAPTER 9

1. Complete the summary.

Before going downstairs, Alex made wishes about her evening with Brad, but the atmosphere in the room was not She was that she couldn't sit next to him. Brad said he wished he hadn't opened the When Alex told Brad that she wanted to write a book, he , but then he realised he had her. Finally, Brad had to go out, leaving Alex alone with Sadly, of her wishes had come true.

CHAPTER 10

1. Who said what?

- a 'Let's face it, you haven't really been happy since you met him, have you?'
- b 'If he liked it so much, other children will. You could be a children's writer.'
- c 'Fantastic idea! ... Really fantastic.'
- d 'Forest.'
- e 'You could remove your untidy annoying self from Brad's house, Brad's gallery and Brad's life!'
- f 'I'm surprised he hasn't been in touch with you.'

Alex Diana Barry Christopher Tania

2. At the end of Chapter 10, Alex asks herself 'Where is Brad?' What do you think?

CHAPTER 11

1. Put the events in the right order.

- a Alex stayed up to rewrite her story.
- b Brad arrived home with a black eye.
- c On the way to the farm shop, Alex met Barry.
- d Christopher was pleased that Barry was Alex's boyfriend.
- e Alex and Christopher decided to get a Christmas tree.
- f Brad said the man who sold him the fake paintings had hit him.
- g Christopher didn't like the way Alex had written the story.

CHAPTER 12

1. Match the beginnings and endings.

- 1 Alex told Barry she was tired a he wasn't pleased about the Christmas tree.

2 Barry said he would like

3 When Brad came down,

4 Alex's mother persuaded Brad

5 Brad was interested in

6 When Brad stared into Diana's eyes,

b Alex realised he looked at all women in the same way.

c to read Alex's story.

d the stories about Alex's childhood.

e because she had been writing all night.

f to have a party.

CHAPTER 13

1. Who said what?

- a 'She's a children's writer, did you know?'
- b 'Perhaps we should make them jealous.'
- c 'My white painting! Christopher! What have you done?'
- d 'You see, the white picture looks so much better with a little bit of colour on it.'
- e 'Brad, ... who are all these horrible people?'
- f 'For a moment there, I thought you were attracted to Brad.'

Alex Barry Brad Diana Tania

CHAPTER 14

1. Complete the summary.

Alex was pessimistic about Brad's future as Tania was and Alex decided to type her after Christmas. She gave Barry a painting of a , and Barry gave Alex some and two plane tickets to Alex was delighted and she realised Barry could be really Later, on the seafront, Alex asked Barry if they could have a quiet birthday celebration. Barry told Alex how he was about her. Finally, Barry and Alex played running from the

After reading

Choose some of these activities.

- 1. Which character did you like best or least?
- 2. Do you think *All I Want* is a good title? Make up an alternative.
- 3. Look at List One on page 5.
What has Alex already done?
What do you think she is going to do in her future life?
- 4. What happens to Alex and Barry, and Brad and Tania after the end of the story? Write another chapter.
- 5. Think of some adjectives to describe Alex or Brad's personality.
- 6. You are either Alex or Barry. Write a postcard home to your family from Austria.
- 7. Write the conversation between Brad and Tania after everybody else had left Hill View House (page 90).
- 8. Diana often gives Alex advice. Write a letter from Diana advising Alex about Brad.
- 9. Imagine a film is going to be made of *All I Want*. Which actors would you choose to play the characters?
- 10. Make your own activities for other students to do. e.g. Write some 'Who said what?' questions.