



The next day, when Nell was coming home, she saw the car again. This time it stopped outside the warehouse gates. Nell watched as Alex got a key out of his pocket, unlocked the gates and opened them. Then he got back into the car and drove through the gates.

The next three weeks were very active at the warehouse. Alex was there every day shouting orders, but Nell didn't see his mysterious passenger again. Lorries came in and out, and there was the sound of hammering coming from the warehouse.

Leroy and his friends spent a lot of time in the scrapyard looking through the fence. They saw boxes of electrical equipment, microphones and coloured light bulbs. There was a box full of metal pieces and another had sheets of glass. Nobody knew what Alex was planning, but they had fun guessing. 'Maybe it's going to be a paintball park,' said Selim. 'Or a music studio!'

Then one morning Alex stopped at the scrapyard. 'We've just about finished,' he said. 'Do you kids want to see inside?' 'Sure!' they all answered.

'It's for an art exhibition,' Alex told them while he was pulling up the shutter. He explained that a world-famous artist was going to show her new work in the warehouse. Leroy and his friends didn't look very interested, but Nell pulled at his arm and asked, 'What's her name?' 'Malena,' he answered.



## Activities

### 4 Underline possible answers.

a) How do you think Alex got the key to the warehouse?

He bought the warehouse.

He's renting it.

Nell's dad gave him the key.

b) What type of art do you think is inside?

photographs

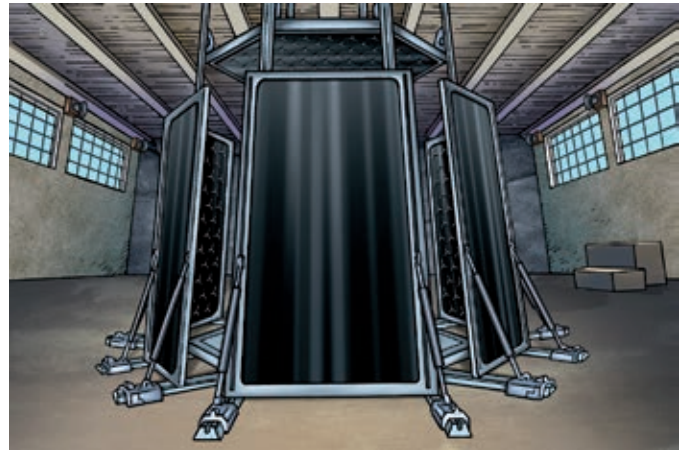
a light installation

metal sculptures

### 5 What do we know about Malena? Discuss with a classmate.

Inside the warehouse, there was a room made of black glass. It had metal propellers fixed on the walls and ceiling. The walls and ceiling were on runners and could move up and down or backwards and forwards. 'It looks more like machinery than art to me,' Nell whispered to Selim.

It looked better with the lights on. The propellers had three arms, and on the end of each arm there was a coloured light. The lights reflected on to the walls, making patterns of coloured dots. 'It's not bad,' said Babs.



'It gets more interesting when you push one of these buttons,' Alex said, pointing to the control panel. He pushed a button and a propeller on each wall and on the ceiling started turning. The propellers nearest to it started turning as well. This started a chain of movement. Soon all the propellers were turning and the lights spiralled around the walls and ceiling. Alex pressed another button and the walls and ceiling started to move. As they came together and moved apart, the moving dots of light got smaller and bigger. 'It's amazing!' exclaimed Selim.



## Activities

- 6** Underline the words that express these opinions:
  - a) Nell doesn't like the installation.
  - b) Leroy, Selim and Babs like the installation.
- 7** Why does Nell think the art installation is dangerous?  
.....
- 8** Can machinery be beautiful? Discuss with a classmate and give examples.

# Story focus

## 1 In groups, answer the questions.

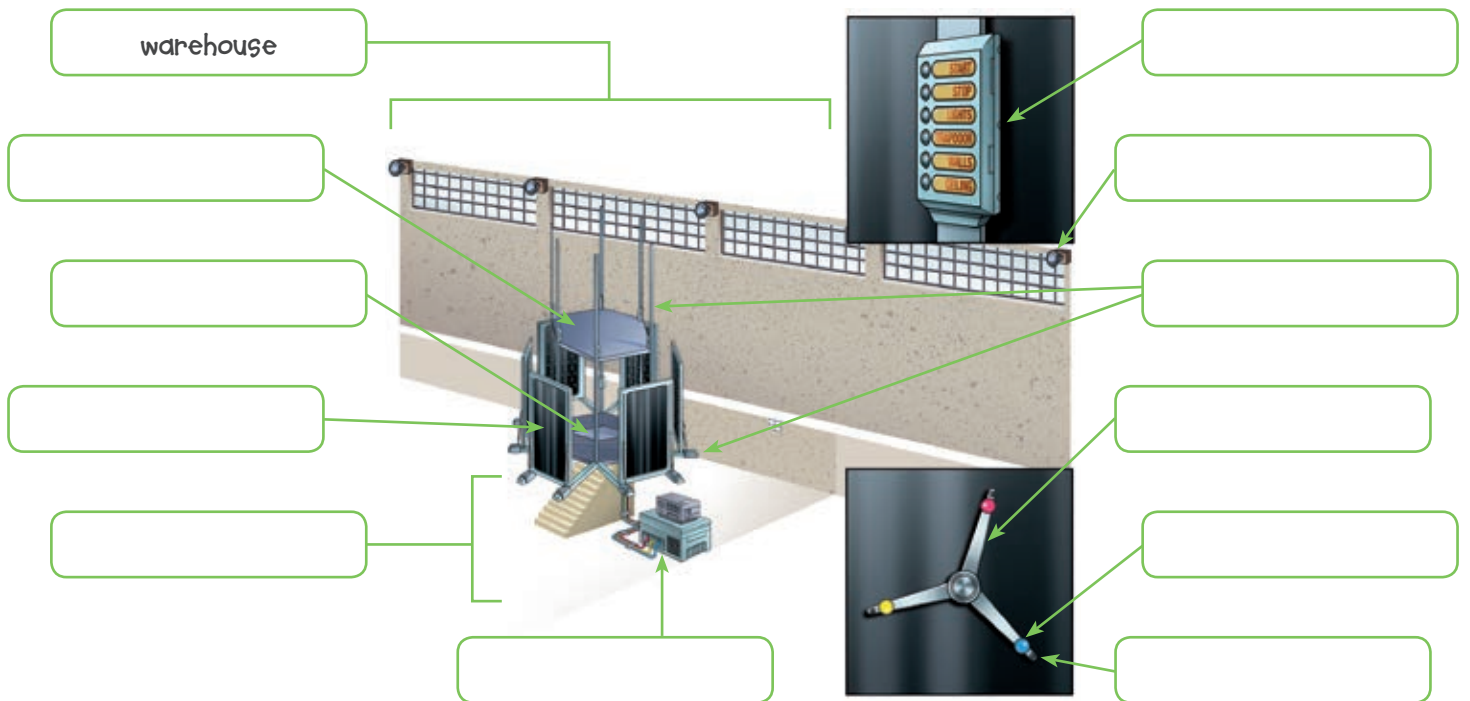
- a) Which characters trust Alex until the end of the story?
- b) Does he betray their trust? Give reasons.
- c) What do Leroy and his friends think of Nell at the beginning of the story?
- d) How and why does their opinion change?
- e) What lessons do you think Leroy and his friends learn?
- f) Do the kids and the guests at the inauguration come from the same social background? Give reasons.

## 2 Answer the questions about the kids' social background. Find evidence in the story.

- a) What kind of place do they live in?
- b) What clothes do they wear?
- c) What do they spend their days doing?
- d) How do they react when they meet Alex?
- e) What do they say about their surroundings?

## 3 Label the diagram and draw lines of movement for the propellers.

propeller   magnet   glass wall   runners   control panel   coloured light  
 loudspeaker   machinery   trapdoor   glass ceiling   warehouse   cellar



## 4 How does the art installation work? Explain to a classmate.

## WITNESS STATEMENT

**Date:** 15 August 2018

**Incident:** robbery

**Witness/Suspect:** Nell Finch

**Age:** 12

The witness first saw the suspect, Alex Flashman, on 23 July 2018. He drove a black car. The witness didn't get a clear view of the passenger in the back seat, but she appeared to be a white female.

Flashman returned the next day and rented an empty warehouse on Branston Road. Over the following three weeks, several large vehicles visited the warehouse and delivered a variety of equipment.

On 13 August 2018, Flashman invited some young people to look inside the warehouse. Inside there was a large art installation. He offered to pay the children to help at the inauguration. Nell Finch declined his offer but the others agreed.

On 15 August 2018, at approximately 20:00 hours, 20 wealthy guests entered the warehouse. The witness hid inside the warehouse and saw the walls and ceiling of the art installation close in and trap the guests. She then heard a female voice coming from the loudspeakers.

The speaker identified herself as Malena, the artist. Malena told the guests to place their valuables in boxes. At this point the witness realised it was a robbery.

The witness believed the suspects were in the cellar. She locked the cellar and trapped the suspects inside.

**Signature:** *Nell Finch*

### 1 Tick the questions the police officer asked at the start of the interview.

a) What's your name?

d) Where do you live?

b) What school do you go to?

e) What type of crime did you see?

c) How old are you?

f) Was anybody hurt?

### 2 Underline the sentences in the witness statement that answer the questions.

a) Did you see who was in the back of the car?

b) What did you see inside the warehouse on 13 August?

c) Where did the voice come from?

d) How did you trap the suspects?

### 3 Imagine you are a police officer. You want Nell to give you a good description of Malena. Write five questions.