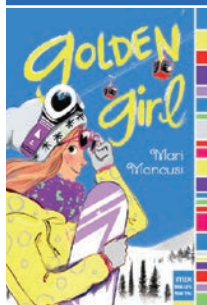


"MOM, DON'T!" I RACE
AFTER HER INTO THE
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Karma Cooper is a seventh grader who happens to be a social media celebrity. She wasn't always part of the in-crowd, but thanks to one serendipitous photo, Karma has become a very popular poster on *SnappyPic*. Her smartphone is like a body part she could never live without. But Karma's world comes to a screeching halt when her parents confiscate her phone after Karma breaks the rules. Can Karma learn to go cold turkey and live her life fully unplugged?

Visit us at simonandschuster.com/kids



If you liked
Queen of Likes,
then you'll
love *Golden
Girl*.

ALADDIN MIX Simon & Schuster, New York
Cover designed by Jessica Handelman

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SATURDAY, MARCH 3

I Love Likes

I stare at my phone, waiting.

One second, 3 LIKES.

Five seconds, 9 LIKES.

Ten seconds, 12 LIKES. All for a photo of the sunrise I posted on Snappypic. On my screen, the sun glows like a pale egg as it rises over the mountains.

Actually, I don't love my outdoorsy shots. They're a little boring, but it's the kind of thing my followers think is cool.

So I'm okay with the setting sun if it gets me lots of LIKES.

Right now I'm hiding in the bathroom stall at my temple. And the place is packed because it's Milton P. Daniels's bar mitzvah. The bathroom is the only spot where I can have some privacy. Over in the pews, there are probably three hundred people.

Fifteen seconds, 15 LIKES! A smile tugs all the way to my ears. I want to dance.

I glance back at the phone. It's been two minutes, and I'm up to 45 LIKES. Yes! This calls for a celebration with Floyd. (That's my phone's name.)

I peer back down at my phone. But . . . wait. I'm holding steady at forty-five. Where are all my LIKES? I refresh the page. And . . .

Nothing.

I shake my phone as if that might help.

Still nothing.

This doesn't make sense. I used the filter that everyone else on Snappypic is really into. It makes everything seem dreamy. But with only 45 LIKES, the sun is losing its brilliance and looks lonely and unloved.

Maybe I need to turn it off and on?

I turn off my phone and restart it. I text Ella Fuentes: Did you see my photo? I add a smiling emoji.

No response.

QUEEN OF LIKES

I know Ella's up. It's late morning. She's my best friend. Maybe she's reading or drawing, but she's definitely up.

If she wasn't doing something else, I'm sure she'd LIKE my photo. I try a couple other girls I know. Nothing. It's late Saturday morning and all my followers have to be up by now.

As of 11:07 a.m. today, I have 12,032 followers on Snappypic. My followers are pretty much all the kids at Merton Middle School and a bunch of other middle schools around Portland. But I have two middle schools in Mission Viejo. That's all the way down in Southern California. I didn't know where it was until I checked it out in Google Maps. Usually between four hundred and nine hundred followers give me a thumbs-up on anything I post. So yeah, I get more LIKES than anyone I know at school.

Sometimes I have to pinch myself that this is happening to me. Last year in sixth grade, I didn't even have an account. People pretty much ignored me. Back then, I was too awkward. Too tall. Too loud. And generally uncool.

Taking a deep breath, I swipe through Snappypic and start LIKING everything my followers have posted. This is a way to get LIKES coming back.

You've got to give to get.

My thumbs rifle through close-up selfies, the self-portrait shots that are so close-up you can almost see nose hair, and photos of ugly jeggings and food shots, including one of mini chocolate cupcakes with buttercream icing.

I LIKE it all, even though most of it looks like a thousand other shots.

More LIKES roll in for my sunrise photo.

Thirteen more.

Seventeen more.

Phew, the numbers are going up. A happy, bubbly feeling percolates inside me.

Time flies by as I continue LIKING more photos.

Heels clack into the bathroom. A nearby stall door clicks shut.

My phone pings. I glance down and see that Bailey Jenners has LIKED my sunrise photo. And she has messaged me!

Bailey Jenners, Queen Bee of the seventh grade.

Bailey has written: There's something I want to ask you. It's superimportant. My heart thuds in my chest as I picture Bailey, head down, birdlike and small, typing.

I want to cry with joy. Bailey LIKES my photo and

has messaged me! I know it's silly. But now, even with all my followers, sometimes I'm still surprised that people like me. Especially in real life.

I type: *What?* oh-so-casually, like my heart isn't a bass drum. What could she want? Bailey, who is the center of everything in seventh grade, has never messaged me before, although she has *LIKED* plenty of my photos. Well, everyone at Merton Middle School pretty much has by now.

My phone pings again. That's got to be Bailey responding, letting me know what she needs to tell me.

Someone bangs open the restroom door. A familiar jasmine-y scene wafts into my stall. "Karma? Are you in here? You've been in here for thirty minutes!" That's my mother's voice. She sounds out of breath. And she sounds very, *very* annoyed. "Karma, you missed it!" she yells.

Oh no! Missed what?

I stuff my phone back into my purse and slowly step out of the stall.

"Right before the service ended, they called your name. To go up to the front." Mom folds her hands in front of her dress. The sequins glimmer under the light. Then she wildly points to the door, like maybe I've forgotten how to get out of a bathroom.

UGGGH! I did totally forget about the *thing*. All the boys and girls who are having upcoming bar and bat mitzvahs were being called to help Milton P. lead a song. I blew it big-time. A bar mitzvah is a mega celebration for Jewish kids when they turn thirteen. It's almost like a wedding. But not. It's the day you officially become an adult. You do this by learning how to read Hebrew and getting up in front of everyone at temple. You have to write a speech and do a community service project. Afterward, there's a big party. I know all about it since my big day is coming up soon.

Mom glares at me, her lips pursed, her hands on her hips. "What were you doing in the bathroom for so long?"

My stomach twists into a knot. A lot of kids went up and I didn't think they'd be calling us by name. Argh.

I step to the sink and wash my hands, trying for a normal bathroom-y activity. "Sorry. I don't feel that great." I dry my hands on a towel.

Mom lets out a long sigh. "Honey, you should have told me." She puts her palm on my forehead to check for a temperature.

The door to another stall flings open. Neda Grubner, temple president, clicks toward the sink in her high heels. She pouts her bright orange-y trout lips. “I see you’re finally off your phone.”

“Off the phone?” Mom looks at me with her very disappointed face. Her lips sag down, her forehead furrows.

Neda squirts an extra dollop of lotion onto her hands. Then she pats down her shellacked gray hair. “Oh, I heard the pings, all right.”

How can she be such a tattletale? And how does she know about what the pings mean?!

Mom motions me toward her. “Karma, were you on your phone?”

“Just for a second,” I mumble.

Mom motions me toward her. “Let me see it.”

What? No! She can’t. I think now I’m actually going to be sick.

“Karma. Now!” Mom’s eyes look determined. Uh-oh. That look means business.

Moving as slowly as possibly, I pull my phone out of my purse.

I don’t think I like what’s about to happen.

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FLIP OPEN TO
THE INSIDE
BACK COVER
FOR MORE OF
THE STORY.

Meet Karma Cooper: a seventh grader whose life is pretty normal. She has a cool best friend, Ella Fuentes, and like most kids at Merton Middle School, her smartphone (a bejeweled pink number Karma nicknamed Floyd) is almost another body part. And after posting

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My stats:

133 notifications

12,032 followers

3,456 people I'm following

99 LIKES on my posting known as "Sunrise Photo"

Mood: Very extra worried