



## CHAPTER 2

# BREAKING POINT

Mum

Getting offered an extra shift tonight means Sam and I won't be going to the cinema for our usual Friday treat. Hopefully we can still go next week.

I plonk the laundry basket down on Sam's bed and push his laptop to one side. I'm tempted to open it to see if I can find out what he's so obsessed with lately, but no. That's how trust gets broken.

Sam's dad, Richard, has let Sam down twice in a row now by cancelling plans at the last minute. I've avoided calling him until now, but I can't let

this go on much longer. He might know what's bothering Sam. Maybe they've had a man-to-man chat, or even a row, and Sam just hasn't told me. Sam's probably worried about girls or his athletics trials, or exams.

I sit on the edge of Sam's bed and call Richard.

"Hello?" A woman's voice.

I cough. "Um, sorry, can I speak to Richard?"

His new wife sighs loudly. "Janet?"

"Yes."

"RICHARD!" she yells, and then the line goes quiet. Has she hung up? How dare—

"What?" Richard says gruffly.

"When did you last speak to Sam?"

"Why?" After a long pause he grunts, "Might have missed a few calls."