



Breaking Point

By Alex Flinn

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How far would you go to fit in?

Paul is new to Gate, a school whose rich students make life miserable for anyone not like them. And Paul is definitely not like them. Then, something incredible happens. Charlie Good, a star student and athlete, invites Paul to join his elite inner circle. All Charlie wants is a few things in return—small things that Paul does willingly. Until one day Charlie wants something big—really big.

Now Paul has to decide how far he'll go to be one of the gang.

The electrifying follow-up to Alex Flinn's critically acclaimed debut novel, *Breathing Underwater*, *Breaking Point* is a tale of school violence that explores why and how a good kid can go 'bad'.

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Breaking Point By Alex Flinn Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #950919 in Books
- Brand: Harper Teen
- Published on: 2003-06-03
- Released on: 2003-06-03
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 7.13" h x .51" w x 5.00" l, .35 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 256 pages

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Tripped in class, mooned in the hall, cola poured through the slats in his locker, spitballs stuck in his hair--how much more can Paul Richmond take at his super-snobby private school, expensive Gate-Bicknell Christian? Paul is there free because his mom works in the guidance office, but that fact makes him an instant outcast, his only friend a funny-looking, independent girl named Binky. Even worse off is David Blanco, whose mom is a cafeteria lady and whose father is the janitor. The jocks hound him unmercifully, even killing his dog. When Paul goes to David's house to offer sympathy, David rejects him angrily, saying "You'll be next." Binky, too, tries to explain the cruelty of the rich kids who surround them, but Paul yearns to be accepted anyway. So when cool, elegant, and charismatic Charlie Good asks for his help in computer lab, Paul is eager to comply, and later, when Charlie and his henchmen, Meat and St. John, come for him in the night for a game of mailbox baseball, Paul willingly does the bashing. Gradually he is accepted at school as part of Charlie's group, but for a price: having to hack into the school computers to change Charlie's D in biology. When David Blanco kills himself and the school simply ignores it, Paul is momentarily taken aback, especially when he learns that David had been Charlie's ally *last* year. But then Charlie reveals his *real* plan, for which everything else has been preliminary, and Paul has his last chance to say no.

Alex Flinn, whose *Breathing Underwater* earned high praise, does tribute to the great Robert Cormier in this dark and brilliant novel about the high price of acquiescence to evil. (Ages 14 and older) --*Patty Campbell*

From Publishers Weekly

Heavy-handed writing undermines Flinn's (*Breathing Underwater*) stated goal for her second novel, namely, to "stimulate discussion" among teens about why kids commit violent acts. When geeky ex-homeschooler Paul Richmond enrolls as a sophomore at an exclusive Miami private school, he is immediately targeted for harassment. Living in a shabby apartment with his needy, newly divorced mother (her job in the school office lowers Paul's tuition), Paul would feel miserable even if the jocks weren't calling him "faggot" and trashing his locker. Then popular Charlie Good suddenly befriends him outside of school, that is and Paul seems willing to do anything to stay in favor. First Paul vandalizes mailboxes, then he hacks into the school computer system to change Charlie's transcript. Charlie's hold on Paul intensifies until he persuades Paul to plant a bomb in the school. Characterizations are stock, and no one, particularly not the all-powerful Charlie, seems convincing. The boys' reasons for wanting to blow up the school remain murky, and many of Flinn's devices, like the school sermons that parallel the plot, are contrived. For a more developed treatment of similar themes, readers may appreciate Gail Giles's *Shattering Glass*, reviewed Feb. 11. Ages 13-up. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

From School Library Journal

Grade 7 Up--Being the new kid in school is always difficult, but it is especially hard for a scholarship student now in an exclusive Christian school where his divorced mother is the secretary. From the first day, Paul Richmond has problems with the charismatic leader of the in crowd, Charlie Goode. As the year progresses, he is tormented and verbally abused, but finds himself caught up in Charlie's group, which "courts" him in the evenings. A couple of other students try to warn him about his new friends, but outsider Paul is much too happy about being included to heed their warnings. The plot intensifies when Paul helps Charlie change grades on the school computers and set a bomb in one of the classrooms. No one is hurt, but Paul discovers that he has been set up as the scapegoat, and he recounts the events that lead to his arrest and imprisonment. In this intense story of peer pressure and the need to be accepted, the characters are realistically drawn and reflect the nature of high school relationships. Flinn states in her author's note that she wrote about one

young man who reached his breaking point and that she has tried to understand what makes teens feel so angry, fearful, and isolated that they commit acts of violence. She has succeeded in her goal. Despite his actions, Paul comes across as a likable, although misguided, teen in a book that is well worth reading.

Janet Hilbun, formerly at Sam Houston Middle School, Garland, TX

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Peter Barba:

The guide with title Breaking Point possesses a lot of information that you can learn it. You can get a lot of benefit after read this book. This book exist new information the information that exist in this book represented the condition of the world now. That is important to yo7u to understand how the improvement of the world. That book will bring you in new era of the internationalization. You can read the e-book on the smart phone, so you can read the item anywhere you want.

Susan Hare:

Breaking Point can be one of your beginner books that are good idea. We all recommend that straight away because this reserve has good vocabulary that will increase your knowledge in words, easy to understand, bit entertaining but nonetheless delivering the information. The copy writer giving his/her effort to place every word into satisfaction arrangement in writing Breaking Point although doesn't forget the main stage, giving the reader the hottest and based confirm resource information that maybe you can be certainly one of it. This great information could drawn you into completely new stage of crucial pondering.

Andrew Thompson:

In this age globalization it is important to someone to find information. The information will make you to definitely understand the condition of the world. The healthiness of the world makes the information simpler to share. You can find a lot of referrals to get information example: internet, paper, book, and soon. You will observe that now, a lot of publisher that print many kinds of book. The actual book that recommended for you is Breaking Point this book consist a lot of the information of the condition of this world now. This specific book was represented how do the world has grown up. The terminology styles that writer make usage of to explain it is easy to understand. The actual writer made some study when he makes this book. That is why this book ideal all of you.

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