



## Breaking Point

By Alex Flinn

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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**

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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.

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#### 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:**

#### **Lawrence Rowe:**

The reserve untitled Breaking Point is the book that recommended to you to see. You can see the quality of the reserve content that will be shown to you actually. The language that author use to explained their ideas are easily to understand. The article author was did a lot of study when write the book, so the information that they share to you is absolutely accurate. You also can get the e-book of Breaking Point from the publisher to make you far more enjoy free time.

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