

**SOMETHING'S**

**ABOUT TO**

**WHEN CHEMISTRY**

**BLOW**

**GETS EXPLOSIVE ...**

**UP**

**SAM BLAKE**

**GILL BOOKS**

12:12 Vodafone



Monday, November 4

11:20



Unknown

now

1

If you breathe a word I'll kill you

**MONDAY**



THE SCIENCE BLOCK  
RAVEN'S HILL SCHOOL

11.20 a.m.

*Frankie*

**A**s Frankie hurried into the Raven's Hill School science building, she had many things on her mind, but getting caught up in the explosive events that were about to unfold wasn't among them. Not even close.

She would have had to have been psychic for that.

And if she *had* been psychic and had had any idea of what might happen in the next 24 hours, she could have saved herself, her friends, her family, her teachers and the Guards a whole lot of drama. To say nothing of public humiliation, life-changing injuries, death threats and prison.

But Frankie *wasn't* psychic, so right now, getting Becky's iPad back to her before Chemistry began was her priority number one. And that was looking increasingly unlikely unless she moved super fast.

Priority number two was making sure everyone had reviewed their group video English project, so she could submit it before the lunchtime deadline. The internet

cutting out at home last night had been a major crisis, for her *and* all the guests at the Berwick Castle Hotel, if the irate American at the front desk was to be believed. Her parents, who ran the hotel, had tried to keep everyone, including Frankie, calm. But they couldn't work magic.

Living in a hotel had definite advantages, but some big disadvantages too. At least Frankie had saved the last video edits before the Wi-Fi went down. Becky's ideas for the presentation had been so creative and clever, *everyone* would have killed her if she'd lost them.

Frankie mentally kicked herself as she hitched her backpack higher onto her shoulder with her free hand, holding on tight to the iPad in the other, and pounded up the last flight of stairs.

*She was such an idiot for not setting her alarm this morning. And why had she put on her school jumper?* Now, the winter sun was streaming through the glass walls that surrounded the architect-designed staircase. It was like a fishbowl. A hot fishbowl, and Frankie was starting to understand how a boiled fish might feel.

*If she could just get the iPad back to Becky and get straight on to History she'd only be a few minutes late, and then at least only one of them would be in trouble.*

She was just glad she'd pulled her dark hair up in a high ponytail today so at least some air could circulate around her neck. She could feel the sweat running down

her back already. And her face had to be at least as bright red as the wool of her jumper.

But she didn't have time to worry about that now.

Getting to the top landing, Frankie paused for a split second and tried to catch her breath. The sprint up just proved her cousin Sorcha was right: she needed to get fit. *Why was the Fifth Year Chemistry lab on the third floor? And who built classrooms six flights up anyway?*

Becky would have full justification to never speak to her again if she didn't get the iPad back before class started. She was having enough problems with Chemistry as it was. And if Frankie landed her in it, after Becky had worked so hard on the project *and* lent her the iPad over the weekend, she knew she'd feel horrible forever.

Becky had only moved to Raven's Hill in third year, and they'd been in different forms lower down the school. When Frankie had first met her, she seemed nervous of everything and just wanted to please everyone. Once she let down her defences enough to trust you, she was an absolute mine of fascinating, random information, and really creative, but it took a long time for her to trust. Ages, actually.

Frankie pushed open the glass doors at the top of the stairs into the bright white tiled hallway and power-walked through them, trying not to run. Teachers had a way of materialising when you were running in the corridor, and she *really* didn't need a detention.

If her little brother Max hadn't dropped Frankie's own iPad none of this would have happened. But then if she hadn't left the group project to the last minute and been up all Sunday night working on it, she wouldn't have overslept and been late this morning in the first place. Maybe her mum was right, and she was spending too much time with Danny. Or 'mooning over Danny', as her mum said. Today was already proving to be the worst Monday on record.

Speed-walking past the Applied Maths room, then the Biology and Physics labs, Frankie glanced in through the glazed panels in the doors. Applied Maths was already underway, and she could see a crowd of girls in white lab coats in Physics, but the other room looked empty. Could she risk running?

Chemistry was in S12 at the very end of what felt like the longest corridor in the school. But the teacher, Mr Murray, always took a few minutes to get everyone settled, so if she stuck her head in the door, Frankie was sure she could hand the iPad to Sorcha to pass back to Becky. If Mr Murray had started already he'd be mad, but at least Sorcha was always at the front. Frankie could just whiz in and whiz out again. And pray he didn't give her a detention for interrupting.

She was almost there. And the door was open, so it looked like the class hadn't started yet.

That was one good thing ...



Frankie heard the sound before she felt the impact.  
Like a punch to her stomach.

There were probably only microseconds between them, but one moment she was heading for the Chemistry lab door and the next she was falling backwards and hitting the floor. Hard. And the ceiling was coming down on top of her.

And then it all went black.