

Why didn't you tell me?

Sam knows I can't swim but that didn't stop him nudging me into the deep end as we walked round the pool. A lifeguard had to haul me to the side kicking and spluttering. Sam said he'd slipped on the wet floor but that sly look of his gave him away.

It started about a month ago just after he'd turned sixteen. Until then we were good mates. We don't look alike. I'm tall and skinny and Sam is short and muscly. I've lost count of the number of times recently my older brother has done things to me by 'accident.' There was the time he locked me in the garden shed. He knows I get pretty stressed in confined spaces but he claimed he didn't know I was in there and as he had his earphones on he didn't hear me shouting and banging on the door. I can't be sure it was him but one day when I was bombing down Long Hill on my bike the back brake cable snapped and applying the front brake too hard catapulted me into a Hawthorne hedge which scratched me to bits. That may not have been him but dosing my hot chocolate with laxative certainly was. I missed football practice as I had to stay close to the loo all that day.

What worries me is that these nasty stunts are getting more serious. He had a bread knife in his hand yesterday in the kitchen when he fell onto me and sliced my arm. He said he'd slipped on a piece of fruit on the floor. Sure enough there was a smear of banana or something on the tiles which I'm positive he'd put there to provide an alibi. I spent a few hours in A&E getting the nasty gash stitched up. At least he didn't break any bones that time. Two weeks ago he managed to slam the car door on my hand breaking a couple of fingers. I'm still wearing a splint.

I tried to tell Mum about all this but she said Sam was just clumsy and didn't mean any harm. Since Dad left, Mum has been very low and I don't want to add to her worries by moaning about Sam. I hear Mum sobbing in her room at night and it upsets me a lot to see her so unhappy.

But I discovered something today which explains everything. I got home from school and heard shouting and screaming coming from the living room. It was Sam and Mum having a row. I heard Sam shout, "Why didn't you tell me I was adopted. It did my head in to find out from that file in the bureau a few weeks ago... no wonder you like Jack more than me. I know he's your own kid." Mum tried to tell him she loved him just as much as me but he wouldn't listen. He packed his rucksack and left.

It's just me and Mum now.