

# SOMETIMES IT HURTS

## Appearance v reality

### Appearance

## TED

I couldn't pick a fight with Kyle, so I started picking fights with the younger kids at school, kids that would give in easily and tell me I'd won.

### Reality

Seeing the counsellor actually really helped in the end, and it taught me a lot about why I was feeling angry all the time. I know now that none of this was my fault or my Mum's, no matter what anyone else thinks. The anger that was like a burning fire inside me is only embers now, like a huge bonfire that has nearly been put out.

## CHELSEA

They raced each other to the school gates to try and pick us up first. Mum started buying us really expensive toys that we hadn't even asked for. My little sister Lily loved being pampered and basically felt like a princess the whole time.

When Dad finally moved out, I don't know how but things managed to get worse, not better. It was as if my parents started treating us like toys they wanted to fight over.

I was the opposite. Every time Mum and Dad insulted each other, it felt like two monsters were scratching either side of me with their claws, deciding who got to take the first bite.

## JAMIE

I used to spend so much time getting people to understand how 'normal' my dad is.

When the two of them had a fight, I'd just turn the TV up really loud or take our dog Lola for a walk. That was really helpful, actually. Lola's a Border Collie, and we'd go out for walks across the huge, green fields round the back of the house. Sometimes we'd be gone for hours. I felt safer when I could get away and pretend that none of this was happening.

## Appearance v reality

## Appearance

AMY

To be honest, I have never been the type of girl to put up with things like this.

## Reality

I know you're only supposed to be with people who treat you right, who have respect for you and never cause you any pain or suffering. I suppose I'm just scared of annoying Dean and having to go and live back home with Malcolm.

AVESHA

The most important thing you need to know about me is how much I love art. I am desperate to be an artist when I grow up, to have my paintings put up in art galleries and have my own studio.

When things feel like they are building up inside my head, drawing and painting takes all of my worries and lays them down onto a page. When I'm concentrating really hard on my art, I can't think about anything else.

ALFIE

My name is Alfie, I'm 9 years old and everyone would say I have a pretty normal life. In my last school report, my teachers wrote that I was a 'happy, confident young lad'. I have lots of friends, I do well in most subjects, and I don't get wronged half as much as some of the other kids do.

I know I act confident and chatty.

But the thing is, those teachers would never guess how I really feel inside. It's funny how you never know what's going on inside a person's head.

I walk home slowly, dragging my feet and taking the longest route that I can think of.

When I get in, the house is normally empty and dark. It's so freezing that sometimes I don't even take off my coat.

But I definitely think some of my teachers know that things aren't okay at home. When I don't turn in my homework, because we needed to use a computer to finish it, or the light outside was too dim to work, they don't ever ask why, they just shake their heads or tell me to bring it tomorrow. It's as if they're scared to ask about it because they wouldn't want to have to deal with my answer.