

SAMUEL was beginning to regret encouraging his grandson to follow in his footsteps.

It wasn't that working with Pokémon would be a challenge for him; he was a strong-willed, fearless boy, already desperate to embark on his trainer's journey. Ten years old was too young for many, but Blue would certainly be a worthy challenger by the time he reached that age.

No, it wasn't that – it was the way all this had affected Blue's relationship with the other boy. The quiet, determined kid who lived next door: he and Blue had initially bonded as a result of their love of Pokémon, but now that connection was changing into a fierce rivalry. And Samuel knew both were too headstrong for it to end well – he'd seen the same thing too many times before – and he feared what each child would become without the stabilising influence of the other.