



Chosen: Super Special (Canterwood Crest)

By Jessica Burkhart


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Lauren Towers has always had one dream: to be a professional equestrian, competing with the best of the best. Natch, she's applied for a highly coveted spot at Canterwood Crest Academy.

But while she waits to see if she gets in, Lauren is left contemplating her life in Union, Connecticut and the horrible accident that brought her there. Suddenly, Lauren is left wondering: even if she does get into Canterwood, will her past make her stronger or will it stand in the way of her future as an equestrian for good?

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Jessica Burkhart (a.k.a. Jessica Ashley) is the author of the Unicorn Magic and Canterwood Crest series, which you can learn more about at CanterwoodCrest.com. She is a former equestrian who writes from her apartment in Tennessee. (It's not the size of Crystal Castle, but Jess tries to decorate like a princess!) Jess's aura would be hot pink and she loves glittery things. If she had a unicorn, it would be named Sparkle. Visit Jess at JessicaBurkhart.com.

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Chosen



SCHOOL DAZE

ON SUNNY MONDAY MORNING, DAD DROVE ME the half hour it took to get to school like he did every morning. He always ended the ride with a funny, “hip” saying. This May morning hadn't been any different.

“G2G, Laur,” Dad said. I could see him focus on the acronyms. “Holler back if you need a ride.”

Grinning, I got out of the car. “Don't talk to anyone. Please.”

Dad headed for work and I went into the school's main building.

I walked down the hallway of Yates Preparatory School to my locker. I dropped my heavy backpack on the floor and spun the combination into my lock until it clicked open. Yates was my fave school so far of all the schools I'd attended. I'd moved around a lot to compete on the show circuit and Yates was my third school.

Doing well academically had always been important to me, and I'd worked hard to keep up my grades while riding. I'd even taken extra courses online last summer. It had paid off when I'd been accepted to Yates.

“Hey, LT.”

I peered around the metal door and saw Taylor grinning at me.

“Hi,” I said, hugging him. He was a few inches taller than me and his cropped blond hair had been bleached by the sun from spending so many hours practicing in the pool. His tanned skin contrasted with my own pale coloring. I took in the sprinkle of freckles across his nose that I loved.

“Missed you this weekend,” I said.

“Me too.” Taylor held my hand, leaning up against the lockers. “I hate it when things get so crazy. But Dad insisted that I shadow him at his office, even though it was a weekend.”

I rolled my eyes. Taylor and I had been together for five months, and his dad, an investment banker, seemed to want Taylor to decide to follow in the family footsteps and take over the business. Like, yesterday.

“I’m sorry he’s pressuring you so much,” I said. “We’re *twelve*. Aren’t we supposed to be able to change whatever we want to be every day if we want?”

Taylor squeezed my hand, letting it go so he could shove his hands into his pockets. “I’m used to it.” He smiled. “Anyway, Mondays are gross enough. Let’s talk about something waaay better.”

“Like?” The enthusiasm in his hazel eyes was infectious.

“Want to go out on Saturday night? We can do something fun—whatever you want.”

“Whatever *I* want? I like the sound of that.” We smiled at each other. “I’d love to.”

The warning bell rang, startling us both. I hadn’t even gathered my books for class. Yates had a zero-tolerance policy for lateness and I didn’t want to spend my afternoon in detention.

“Perfect,” Taylor said. “Text you later.”

“Bye.”

My excitement about going out with Taylor on Friday made me grab my math book instead of the one I needed for history class. I realized it just before I closed my locker. I switched out the books then hurried to the class I shared with Brielle and Ana.

Yates was so small I got to share a lot of classes with my two best friends. Everyone knew everyone here. At first, I’d been worried about fitting in. The size of the school made it seem cliquey. But Brielle and Ana had become instant besties.

I snagged a seat in the center of the classroom.

“Hey, Lauren,” Amber said, walking inside with her group of friends.

I said hi to her and a few other people as they sat down, furiously opening their textbooks and notebooks. We all wanted to look as if we’d been in class way early to win points with Mr. Newton—one of the toughest teachers at Yates.

“Laur, omigodwehavetotalkrightnow!”

I laughed, looking up at Brielle as she plopped down next to me. Ana sat on my other side, a smile turning up her lips. They were both fun friends to hang out with at school *and* at the stable.

“What’s up?” I asked.

Brielle’s cool black hair was pulled into a high, shiny ponytail. The gloss treatment we’d all gotten at the salon a couple of weeks ago made her hair look extra gorge. Her fair, freckle-free, never-left-the-house-without-SPF-fifty complexion showed just enough makeup to not get her in trouble with her parents. She had a light coat of mascara, blush, and pale pink-tinted gloss. Brielle was the epitome of a girly-girl.

She looked seasonably adorable today in a Marc Jacobs light pink dress with capped sleeves and a cream-colored cardigan. She had strappy, white wedges to match that I noted (since we were the same shoe size) I'd probably be asking to borrow next week.

"I heard from Kendra, who heard from Madison, who heard from Portia, that Will is going to ask me to the end-of-the-year dance!" Brielle's tone had reached a near shriek.

"That's awesome!" I said, beaming for her.

Ana leaned over toward my desk. "Now we just have to get Will to ask Brielle already, so she can start dress shopping. Even though the dance isn't for a couple of weeks, she's already freaking out about her dress *and* shoes *and* accessories."

"We'll get all of that," I said, glancing between both of my friends. "Taylor's taking me and I haven't picked out anything yet either."

I grinned at Ana in a teasing way. "And are we getting *you* into a dress?"

"No!" Ana groaned. "Isn't it enough that I'm going? I'm happy you both have dates, and I'm going to be there from the hair blow-out to the fastening of your strappy shoes, but I'm going solo. You know I'm only focused on two things—"

Brielle and I finished the sentence along with her. "Writing and illustrating."

Ana pulled out her notebook that she'd covered in gorgeous pen sketches of people, animals, buildings, and anything else that had caught her attention.

"I'm an *artiste*," Ana said, her tone playful. "I refuse to be distracted by boys. Or anything else."

Brielle and I didn't argue with her. Ana was one of the most talented artists at our entire school. She dressed the part, too. Today, she was *très* (French for "very") chic in an ivory beret that was slightly back behind her hairline, black leggings, and ballet flats. She'd curled her light brown hair into waves and the highlights made her skin tone glow.

She pushed the makeup rule a little more than Brielle. She'd been doing it for months and had never gotten in trouble. This morning she had a thin line of black liquid eyeliner with the slightest cat-eye curve that looked amazing and brought out her wide, brown eyes.

"Speaking of which, is your creative writing group today?" I asked Ana.

"Yeah, I'm meeting up with art class friends to critique one another's sketches. It's one of our last meetings before school's out for summer. You guys?"

"I'm doing nothing for finals," Brielle said. "Boring."

"I've got glee club," I said. "Then homework for me."

"Glee will be distracting," Ana said. "Hopefully it'll keep you from thinking about Canterwood."

Canterwood Crest Academy—those three words made my skin prickle. Canterwood was one of the best, most prestigious boarding schools in the country with an extremely well-known riding program. From what I'd heard, the extracurriculars there—in particular the equestrian team—were as tough as the academics.

Ever since I'd heard about it, I'd been obsessed with Canterwood. I loved everything about the school—from its green and gold school colors to the photos on the Web site to the descriptions of the student dorms.

I'd applied months ago and once I started thinking about it, I couldn't stop. I was already close to camping out in front of my mailbox.

“Definitely,” I said, smiling. “I'm just ready to get through classes and go to glee.”

Glee club was one of the only things that made me look forward to Mondays. I wasn't even close to being the best singer in the club, but I loved singing and performing. Last week our club had performed a new song from Sierra, a hot new hip-hop artist, and it had been so much fun. Our club just formed this year and we were already prepping to start competing next year.

Next year.

Next year I'd likely be at Yates competing in glee. Or maybe, just maybe, I'd be competing somewhere different altogether. Somewhere like Canterwood Crest Academy.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Dorothy Whisler:

Have you spare time for a day? What do you do when you have a lot more or little spare time? Sure, you can choose the suitable activity intended for spend your time. Any person spent their spare time to take a walk, shopping, or went to often the Mall. How about open or perhaps read a book eligible Chosen: Super Special (Canterwood Crest)? Maybe it is being best activity for you. You realize beside you can spend your time together with your favorite's book, you can more intelligent than before. Do you agree with its opinion or you have additional opinion?

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