

Accepted

By Sam DeMuth, February- March 2014

Chapter One, A Long Wait

“ I sent in my application to go to Orchard Hall three weeks ago, and they STILL haven’t gotten back to me yet!” “They will, Sydney, trust me, it just may be taking them a long time.” “Yeah, but they REALLY need to hurry up here”. “Sydney, why do you want to know if you got in or not? Because, if you do, then you have to leave our school....”

“Yeah, don’t remind me Stephanie, it makes me feel bad”.

“Why does it make you feel bad? Sydney, this is YOUR DREAM SCHOOL!”. “It may be, but then I have to leave you Steph, and I don’t want to...”Well,, its just going to be a very long wait, thats all I can say, maybe it will be here tomorrow!

“Sure Steph,and I have 25 boyfriends,” she said sarcastically, “It’s not coming tomorrow,”

“ I guess we shall wait and see I hope you got accepted bestie.
“Thanks, I hope so to....

Chapter 2 That’s the fun of summer!

“My pool water is FREEZING again. Steph, maybe we should go play cards or something.” “ Oh, come on Sydney, that’s the fun of summer; cold pools, fireworks, cookouts, and late night movies!” “Late night movies? Really?” “Yeah, maybe not so much.... but don’t worry Sydney, you will

know if you got accepted soon. But for now, let's go have some fun!

"Fine, but I get to splash you first, hahaha!" "Wait no, that's not fair, you did it first LAST time!" "Like anyone is keeping track Steph haha."

"Girls, dinner!"

"Coming, Mom! looks like it's time for my Dad's best food! Ok, let's get dried off and dressed! Bet I can beat you!" "No, you won't!"

"That was a really good dinner Mr. Towers." "Ah, Stephanie, it was nothing - it's just really fun to make."

"So, Sydney, what should we do next - watch 5 movies?"

"Sure Seph, why not. You pick out the movies, I will get the popcorn."
"Alright!"

"Mom? Do you think I got accepted?"

"I think my daughter did the best that she could, and all she can do is wait, but I am sure you got accepted"

"Thanks Mom, I hope I did too....."

Chapter 3 The Last Breath

"Well, it looks like the mail is here... I guess I will go and get it to see what is NOT in the mail today".

"Honey, why don't I get the mail today, you seem a little stressed out right now".

"No, Dad, I can get the mail... I already know that it's not there. I mean, this school is SO lazy, they can't even send me a quick reply!"

"Now, Sydney, they said 2-5 weeks, and it's only been 3 and a half weeks. It will come".

"Well, whatever, I am going to go get the mail. And when I get the mail, I am going to flip through all the bills, and then shut the mailbox."

"Ok hon, you go do that"

Lets see here, nope, Dad's NFL report, Mom's shopping magazine... And some stupid bill for the internet, and last, some envelope addressed to me from ORCHARD HALL!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

OMG, I am taking my last breath before I open the letter...

Orchard Hall Boarding School
5327 Tree LN
Madison, WI 53713

To: Sydney Towers
5725 Chapel Hill Road
San Francisco, CA

Dear Ms Towers,

August 15th, 2015

As you may know, Orchard Hall Boarding School takes great pride in their students, and being one of the most applied school in Wisconsin. After reviewing all of the applications sent to us, and after carefully looking over your application, we have decided to offer you a spot this fall.

Congratulations on getting in Please come August 25th for move-in day, and classes start September 2nd. Your room number is 25, in the

Orchard Hall building, on the 1st floor.
We Look Forward To Seeing You Soon,

Orchard Hall Boarding School

Chapter Four The Arrival

“Are we almost there?” Sydney excitedly asked her parents on the way to boarding school. It was late August, and it was nice and sunny, 75 degrees and light winds. “Not yet! but we will be there soon” her mom said. Sydney was going to Orchard Hall College in Madison, WI. 25 hours later, her mom, Katie, said “ Sydney honey, we’re here!!”

When they all arrived at Orchard Hall, they met the dorm monitor, Sarah, and they also got Sydney’s key to her dorm room (number fifteen on the 1st floor). Fifteen minutes later, Sydney’s parents said through tears, “Bye hon, well see you during Thanksgiving break” to which Sydney replied sadly, “Ok, see you later. Love you! Text me later”. They exchanged hugs, and then her parents left. Twenty minutes later, Sydney’s roommate, Lauren, who she had e-mailed over the summer, and who had already been at Orchard Hall, (this is her 2nd year) unlocked the door, and when the girls saw each other, they screamed “SYDNEY!!!!!!!!!!” “LAUREN!!!!!!!!!!”

“OMG, summer was so much fun! Lauren said happily.” Sydney responded, “YEAH, IT WAS AWESOME!” Lauren had seen just how Sydney looked from a picture she saw of her over the summer that Sydney had e-mailed her. Sydney had shoulder length brown hair, was not quite as tall as her (but very close), and skinny (but not too skinny). Sydney is also a straight A student, yet she can be easily distracted, and finds herself all over the place.

Sydney then said, “So, which side of the room do you want?” Lauren replied, “ Does not matter! But, I guess the left side?”

“Works for me !” Sydney exclaimed. So, as the girls were unpacking

and getting ready for an official dorm meeting with all the other girls in the building, they talked about their families. Soon, however, it was time for the meeting. When they were ready, Sydney and Lauren left for the “Meeting Room” down the hall.

When they could FINALLY find a spot to sit down, as there were SO many other girls there, the dorm monitor, Sarah , started the meeting: “Welcome girls, to Orchard Hall.....”

Chapter 5, 1st Morning

Early the next morning, with the early September sun shining through the girls dorm room, at 7:55 a.m., Sydneys alarm went off with pop music streaming out like a waterfall filling the room. Sydney said”
Nooooooooooooo, the first day of classes!!!!!”

Lauren said, “Yeah, today is going to be pretty chaotic, like a stampede of wildebeest in the Serengeti, haha.”

“Yeah, I am not looking forward to this.” Sydney responded, “I’m having trouble choosing my outfit for the 1st day of school”

Lauren said, “Sydney, what did you decide?”

“I am not sure yet... I think I will go with a yellow skirt and a purple top, they are the school colors anyway”

Lauren said “Sydney, that’s a cute skirt!”

“Thanks!, Yeah, I got it for my birthday last year! I can’t believe it still fits! Lauren, what are you going with?”

“ I think I am going to go with leggings and a top haha.”

“ Not a bad idea!”

“Thanks!”

“Well, we had better get over to the cafeteria”

“Where is that?” “

It’s right across the courtyard. We have 4 of them total on campus; 2 for the boys, and 2 for the girls”.

“Oh, I did not know that”

“Yeah, its a big place at first.” Later, when they got to the cafeteria,

Sydney and Lauren got in the line, and picked up what they wanted for breakfast. Lauren got a blueberry muffin, and sausage and eggs. Sydney got blueberry pancakes and eggs and OJ. They swiped their student ID cards, found a spot to sit and ate their breakfast together. Then, it came to the most hard part of the day for Sydney; classes.

“So, Sydney, what are your classes?”, Lauren asked.

“ I have Math, Science, Language Arts, History, Gym, and German. What about you?”

“Oh, I have Math, Chemistry, Language Arts, World History (ugh), Gym, and French”

“You hate gym I am guessing... haha”

“Yeah, gym sucks”

“Well, it looks like we have mostly the same schedule. Should we go to math now?” “Lets go!”

The teacher stood in the front of the class looking at her students coming in. She said, “ Now calm down class, I am going to believe that you all had a great summer! Now, lets get down to math.....”

After class, Sydney exclaimed, “Boy, we have SO much homework for math, and it’s only the 1st class!!!!!!!!”

“Well, Sydney, you had better get used to it, haha. We have a lot of homework in every class. Well, its now time for me to go to chemistry.” Lauren said.

Sydney was about to leave and said, “Wait, where is the Science building, and room 112 with Ms. Peterson? Oh yeah, the science building is right across the Orchard lawn, right across the math building, and room 112, is on the second floor, 2nd door. Ok Lauren! see you later!”

“Bye!” So, when Sydney got to class, Ms. Peterson gave them a quiz to see how much they knew about science. “Uh... Ms Peterson? I am done, so what should I do next?”

“Wait, you’re already done?” Ms. Peterson said, as it had taken Sydney 15 minutes to finish 50 questions. “

Yeah, I am done so, what should I do next?”

“Well, let me take a look at this and we’ll go on from there ok?” Ms Peterson said.

As Ms. Peterson was grading her quiz, she looked astonished, and said, "WOW, Sydney, I am very surprised on how well you did! Good job! you got 50/50!"

"Thanks, Ms Peterson! Science is my favorite subject!" The rest of Sydney's day went by in a vivid blur, as she was excited about every class, yet, frowning upon the amount of homework she had.

Chapter 6, Sydney's Second Wind

Later that evening, at 3:59, Sydney got back to her room, and just fell on her newly made bed, and said to no one, "Sigh, so much homework.... I had better get started now..."

Meanwhile, 45 minutes later, Lauren came to her room for the night, and said happily, "French Club is awesome! How are you Sydney? how was your 1st day of classes?"

"They where good, I just have SO much homework. I have been doing it for the last 45 minutes, and just barely made a dent!"

"Well, Sydney, how about we go get dinner at the caf, and maybe you will have a great second wind!"

" Oh, fine, what is for dinner?"

"I think it is Chicken and salad or something, haha"

"Ok, lets go"

After dinner they went back to their room, and Sydney did get her second wind later in the night. She said, "Thanks to you, Lauren! I am now done with my homework!"

"Thats great! Do you want to do something in a sec? I have to finish this History paper"

"Sure, let me go shower first, and then we can watch TV or something if you want".

"Alright!" A few hours later, it was 9:55, and 10:00 is lights out, so the girls went to bed, and Sydney set her alarm again for 7:55. (Hey, its only the second day of school)

Chapter 7, Lauren, you have a secret crush?

“Good morning Lauren!!!”

“ Oh, did I oversleep??? Oh no, what am I going to...”

“No silly, haha, I just wanted to wake you up!” “ Oh, thank god.... that would not have been good if I had overslept.”

“So, Sydney, you ready for your second day?” “ Bring it!”

“First, I have to decide what I am going to wear today, AND figure out what I am going to eat for breakfast.”

“ Woah, woah, Sydney, you forgot the most important thing of all!”

“Wait, what is that?”

“Make-up silly!”

“Oh, haha, yeah sure, thanks for reminding me.”

“So, what did you settle on wearing”

“Well, I think jean shorts and a cute summery top.”

“Nice pick, I think I am going to go with short leggings, and a pink shirt, just because its a tough tuesday.”

“Tough Tuesday?”

“Yeah, I try to label every day of the week” “Oh, thats a great idea!”

Later in the day, during passing time, Lauren saw Caleb - her best friend who always plays Call of Duty, and Madden. They have been friends for a while. Lauren has a crush on him, but she is not sure if he likes her.

“Hey Caleb, how are you doing?”

“Hey Laur, (Caleb’s nickname for her) how are you doing?”

“I am really good so far - school is going really well!”

“That’s good to hear!”

“Do you have a lot of homework too?”

“Yeah”, he replied, “but I am getting it done”

They talked for a little while then they went to finish their classes. Later, she met up with Sydney, and they went back to their dorm room, and

finished their homework in silence. Sydney finally said, “Is something wrong, Lauren? You have not said anything all evening...is everything okay?”

“I am fine”, yet she somewhat struggled to give Sydney a smile, and changed the subject by saying “Lets go eat dinner. I am really tired, so I am going to bed soon.”

“Ok, that sounds fine”, Sydney said. Later, when they both where in bed, Lauren thought; I can’t possibly be in love with Caleb, can I?

Chapter 8 Ranking

“I don’t understand why this school has problems with other grades. I mean we have the 9th and 10th grade girls doing their thing, but it’s like we are not allowed to even TALK to them!” Sydney said to Lauren.

“A few years ago, some 9th graders got into a huge fight with the 10th graders, and the school took a huge downfall in the amount of students. Supposedly, it was a big thing, and that’s why we are the ‘Lowest Rank’ of kids here because other students tease us and are mean to us.”

“I know! This guy in 11th grade said to me ‘Stay on the right side of campus’,or something like that, and I didn’t know what he meant by that comment. He didn’t sound very nice.”

“Yeah, well the reason of that is that 9th graders (boys and girls) have the right side of campus, and the 10th, 11th, 12th graders have the left side. So next year we are going to have to move.”

“Ok, I did not know that...so, Lauren, does that mean that our “Rank” will be better next year?”

“Lets hope so!”

Chapter 9 Drama

“I know I failed, I just failed there is no way that I could have done well.”

“Now, Sydney, why do you say that?”

“Well, I failed the math quiz today. I bet Ms. Snow is going to fail me for the year! I bet she is!!!!!! She is mean anyway, and I don’t like the way she teaches math!”

“I am so sorry Sydney, I have not had Ms. Snow for a teacher, so I can’t really help you with that, but I AM good at math, so, maybe next time if you want, you can get my help if you would like it.”

“That would be great! Thanks! I find math pretty boring and completely unusable anyway!”

“Now, Sydney, you know that’s not true, right?”

“I just wish that there was a way to learn this math stuff easier. I think the problem is that students, (like me) don’t understand what is going on and...”

“Sydney, why don’t you just ASK for help if you need it!!!!!!!!!!”

“You know what Lauren? If you like to start “Drama” then, why don’t you take Drama class!”

“Hey, I am not the one who came in here complaining about HER math class!”

“You know what Lauren, I am OUT of here!!!!”

“Hey, where are you going to go??? Sydney!”

“Away from YOU that’s where! Good-Bye!”

Chapter 10 The Call

“Hey Mom, how are you?”

“Hi, honey, what’s going on?”

“Not too much... I am doing well in classes, and I am enjoying school.”

“That’s great! I am so proud of you, you're doing great!”

“But, I am having some trouble with Lauren...”

“What’s going on? Something wrong?”

“Well, math class is getting a little hard, and I came back to the room, and I told Lauren how it was going, and she offered to help me with what she could do”

“What did you say back to her”?

“I said thanks, and then I started to talk about how I wish the class was taught by someone else because no one can understand Ms. Snow, and then she cut me off and just somewhat yelled, why don't you ask for help? Then I yelled at her and left!”

“Well, hon, I would ask you the same question, why don't you ask for help? I know you are not lazy or anything.”

“It's because I don't like asking the teacher or anyone for help, because I don't want to look dumb or anything. None of the other students raise their hands!”

“Honey, you know you should apologize to Lauren, and you know yourself! If you need help honey, don't just blow it off, who cares what other kids do - just be my favorite daughter, (well my ONLY daughter) Sydney Towers. I know you can do it hon, I know you can.”

“Thanks Mom”

“Now its 6:15, and your father is taking me out to dinner, but If you need to talk, just call me or your dad ok?”

“Of course Mom, see you later. Tell dad I said 'hi'”

“I will honey, just remember - be who YOU think you are, and do your best! I love you!”

“I love you too Mom, see you later”

“Bye honey”

“Bye”

I had to think to myself, for a few minutes, but then I knew what I needed to do.

Chapter 11, Its your choice

I heard Lauren on the phone when I got back to my room she was in the middle of a conversation (with who I am not sure), but I had a feeling it was her mom.

“Mom, I can't FAKE like Sydney anymore! She is driving me nuts and she is weird and doesn't even know how to do BASIC MATH! She sucks at

reading mostly, and I hate her! I am coming home, OR YOU call the school and tell them I need a room transfer, and you can make an excuse to why I need to switch rooms without Sydney ever knowing that I think she is a complete *#&#\$! It's your choice mom! It's YOUR choice!!!! I don't care what you do, but it's your choice!

Chapter 12, Sadness, and Disbelief

I just stood there in sadness and disbelief listening to the person who I thought was my best friend talk badly about me. I then took out my phone, and hit the record button as Lauren was still ranting. When she was done, I gathered the courage to go into the room. When I had opened the door, with tears streaming down my face, Lauren said,

“Hey, are you ok? you don't seem happy...” She gave me a happy smile, but all I did was hit the playback button on my phone. Lauren's voice filled up the room. I looked at Lauren, and she just had a blank expression on her face, as if she knew I was out there the whole time.

“Why Lauren, WHY did you do this? I can't believe you did this to me! What kind of person are you?”

“I am sorry Sydney, but its the sad truth about you.” She smirked at me and continued, “Sydney, you are a very sad person with absolutely no talent whatsoever. You may be pretty, but you're not even going to last a month here. You're absolutely stupid, and I hate you! Congrats! You're the first girl that I have ever hated! And yes, I knew that you were out there the whole time!”

“How did you know that?” I was sobbing, and my voice was barely audible.

“I somewhat set you up Sydney, see, that's one of the reasons you're stupid - because if you were smart enough, you would have figured it out! I knew you were coming back to the room mad about math, because, well, let's face it, everyone knows you suck at it. So, what I did is I started the

argument with you, knowing that you would leave and call your MOMMY, HAHahaha, so, then I fake called my mom, and now I need a new roommate, so I have to go find Sarah so I can get a new smart roommate! BYE!”

I, Sydney Towers, just stood there, dumbfounded. First, I stopped recording on my phone. I realized I had just recorded Lauren saying all of that about me, and decided I should send it to the Headmistress, and my Mom and Dad. Then, I just stood there, not knowing, what just had happened.

Chapter 13, The Meeting of two Families, and one Headmistress

“Miss Towers, can you please explain what happened in your room last night?”

I was in the conference room, with Lauren’s parents, mine, and the Headmistress of the school. They were called in as soon as the headmistress had heard the recording that I sent to her.

“Yes of course. I went to my room last night, and me and Lauren had an argument about math, and how it was hard and con-”

“Miss Lauren, is that true?”

“Yes M’am, it is, me and Sydney did have an argument about math...”

“Continue Miss Towers”

“Anyway, I left to call my mother, and we talked for a while.”, my mom nodded her head in approval. I continued, “I then went back to my room, thinking I was going to apologize to Lauren to make it right so we would have a good night. Yet, when I got there, she was apparently fake-calling her mom, and saying mean things about me. And, when I went into the room, she said more stuff about me and that’s the recording I sent to you.”

“Thank you Miss Towers, I have already come to my decision on what is going to happen.”

“Lauren, you, as of now, are officially expelled from Orchard, and you may get your stuff from your room, turn in your key, and leave immediately. As you are not allowed back on to our property.”

“WAIT, WHAT!!!!!! That’s not fair! you can’t d-”

“Miss Lauren, I do not care, nor do I have time to deal with this type of situation. You may now leave with your parents, and not another word.” Lauren’s parents apologized to mine and me about Lauren, and then they left immediately. The Headmistress addressed me and said, “Sydney, you can leave once I have confirmation that Lauren has left.”

Chapter 14, A New Start, a New Life

“Sydney, I am so sorry that that happened to you. I know you thought Lauren was one of your best friends”

“It’s ok Dad, it’s fine, and at least now I have a new start, and a new life here at Orchard”.

“Are you sure you want to stay here?”

“Yes Mom, I am fine now, and I am assuming that I will get a new roommate soon”.

“But hon, you don’t know who this person is, I mean, you did email Lauren for a few weeks before coming here”.

“True, but we will see. anything is possible”.

“Miss Towers, Lauren has officially left campus, and you are now free to go back to your room. Thank-you all for coming”, said the Headmistress as she stuck her head out of her office door.

“Ok honey, call us again if you need anything. Love you”, my parents said as they left me by my door.

“Love you, too”

Chapter 15, The True Truth Is Revealed

When I got back to my room, I unlocked my door, and noticed that one side of the room was completely bare; nothing was left. I sighed and sat down on my bed. I heard a crunching noise. It was a letter. It read:

Sydney,

I am so so sorry, its not my fault though. Two of the 11th grade boys forced me to do this. I was at lunch, and two 11th grade boys came over, and they apparently have an extreme crush on you. They told me if that I did not get out of our dorm that they would hurt me. They also wanted to get us alone in a room and it didn't sound like they wanted this for a good reason.

I wasn't sure what to do, but. I had no choice. If you don't believe me, I texted you the recording of them saying it to me. Please Sydney, listen to it please. I know that you don't trust me, but if you could, from the bottom of your heart, please please do.

Your BFF for ever,

Lauren.

So, I checked my phone, and there was a text message from Lauren. I hit play, and I heard it all. Lauren WAS telling the truth. I had to get her back. I called the Headmistress, and I called my parents. I told them everything, and I read the letter to them. When my parents came back (apparently, they went out to dinner with Lauren and her parents) they came back with Lauren's parents and I showed them the letter, and played the recording for them.

"Miss Towers, I can't believe this... I am so sorry about this".

"Lauren, do you know the boys who did this to you?"

"Yes, Chris and Max did. I am so sorry Sydney, I did not mean any of it. I love you as a friend, and I would never do anything to hurt you. I am really sorry." Lauren said as tears were streaming down her face.

"Its fine Lauren, I believe you, you are my best friend !"

"Ok girls, I have taken care of the problem, Max and Chris will be expelled, and you two are free to go. Remember, its 10:31, way past your bedtime. I will call Sarah and tell her where you two are, and that you are to be back at your dorm room in 15 minutes, and that you both are excused to be back late.", the Headmistress said as we were leaving.

We said goodbye to our parents, and then went back to our dorm room.

Chapter 16, A New Start

"I am so, so, so, sorry Sydney, I truly did not mean any of that stuff I a-"

"Lauren, it's fine, haha, I know you did not mean it"

"I mean, it was scary, and I was really sad that I had to say stuff

about you that I really did not want to say...”

“It’s fine, I know that you had a ‘plan’ to get yourself out of it I’ll bet.”

“Yes, Sydney, I did”

“Well, its time to go to bed. Tomorrow is Ash Wednesday.”

“ Yeah, about that... does Orchard have a Catholic Church around here?”

“Yes Sydney, they do, but I do have to tell you something”.

“What”? I said with no clue to what she was going to say.

“I am an Atheist”.

Chapter 17, Again We Keep This Solemn Fast

The organ started, and I stood up. It was Ash Wednesday. We started to sing **Again We Keep This Solemn Fast**. I thought to myself -I can’t believe that my roommate is an Atheist! I am such a follower of Christ, it’s going to be really hard to be cool with her...

“In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we open up our hearts to prepare us for the Lenten season, and ask Christ for forgiveness, as we are sinners.”

After that, of course, came the first reading.

Some person, who I did not know, started the first reading:

“Even now, says the LORD, return to me with your whole heart, with fasting, and weeping, and mourning;

Rend your hearts, not your garments, and return to the LORD, your God. For gracious and merciful is he, slow to anger, rich in kindness, and relenting in punishment. Perhaps he will again relent and leave behind him a blessing, Offerings and libations for the LORD, your God. Blow the trumpet in Zion! proclaim a fast, call an assembly;

Gather the people, notify the congregation; Assemble the elders, gather the children and the infants at the breast;

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