

# chapter

# 1

It was Monday morning. Emma was on her way to school. She went to Trenton High.

Her mom was driving her to school.

Emma said, "I can hardly wait to get to school. I hope Jordyn is already there."

"Why?" her mom asked.

"I'm in a hurry to talk to Jordyn," Emma said.

Jordyn was her best friend.

Emma and her family had been out of town all weekend. And she had not

talked to any of her friends since Friday.

Emma said, "I want to ask Jordyn who won the debate. We got home too late last night for me to call her."

The debate team had a big debate over the weekend. And four teams were in the debate.

Jordyn was on the debate team. So Emma knew she would know which team won.

Emma hoped it was Trenton High.

Her mom stopped the car in front of the school. And Emma quickly got out of the car.

Emma said, "Bye, Mom. Thanks for the ride."

"Have a good day," her mom said.

"You too, Mom," Emma said.

Emma closed the car door. Then she looked for Jordyn. But she didn't see her.

Emma hoped Jordyn was already at school. And she had gone to her first class.

Emma hurried up the walkway to the school. She started to walk to her first class.

Emma had the same first class that Jordyn did. And she also had a class with Jordyn right before lunch.

Emma got to her classroom. And she hurried into the room. She saw Jordyn.

Emma walked over to her desk. And she sat down. She and Jordyn sat next to each other.

Jordyn said, "Did you have a good time this weekend, Emma?"

"I guess. But I wanted to be here. I wanted to call you last night. But I got home too late to call or text," Emma said.

"I thought that was why you didn't call," Jordyn said.

Emma said, "So who won the debate? Did we win?"

But Jordyn didn't look excited. So Emma didn't think Trenton High won.

"We did a great job. I guess I shouldn't brag about my own team like that," Jordyn said. "But we did do a great job. And Mrs. Chen said we did a great job too."

Mrs. Chen was the debate coach.

"But we didn't win. We came in second. And I'm sure you can guess which team won. Camden High. We never can beat them. But I guess you're sort of glad they won," Jordyn said.

Emma knew why Jordyn said that.

"You know I always want our team to win, Jordyn. But our team didn't win. So, yes, I'm glad Camden beat us," said Emma. "And not some other team. Did Darius do a great job?"

Darius was Emma's boyfriend. And he was on the debate team at Camden High.

"Darius always does great. That's one reason why Camden always beats us," Jordyn said.

"But you said we came in second. That's still good news," Emma said.

"I know. Camden gets to go to the state finals. And we get to go too," Jordyn said.

"So maybe we'll win then," Emma said.

Jordyn laughed. But it wasn't a happy laugh.

"No way. We have one little problem," Jordyn said.

"What?" Emma asked.

"The little problem is Camden High. Their team is too good. And there's no way we can beat them," Jordyn said.

"Don't think that way, Jordyn. Or our team will lose for sure," Emma said.

"You know we'll all do the best we

can. But it just won't be good enough. But there's one thing for you to be happy about," Jordyn said.

"What?" Emma asked. But she thought she knew why Jordyn said that.

"Your boyfriend's team will win. So it won't be all bad for you," Jordyn said.

"I like Darius a lot. And I want him to do well. But I go to Trenton High. Not Camden High. And I want our team to win," Emma said.