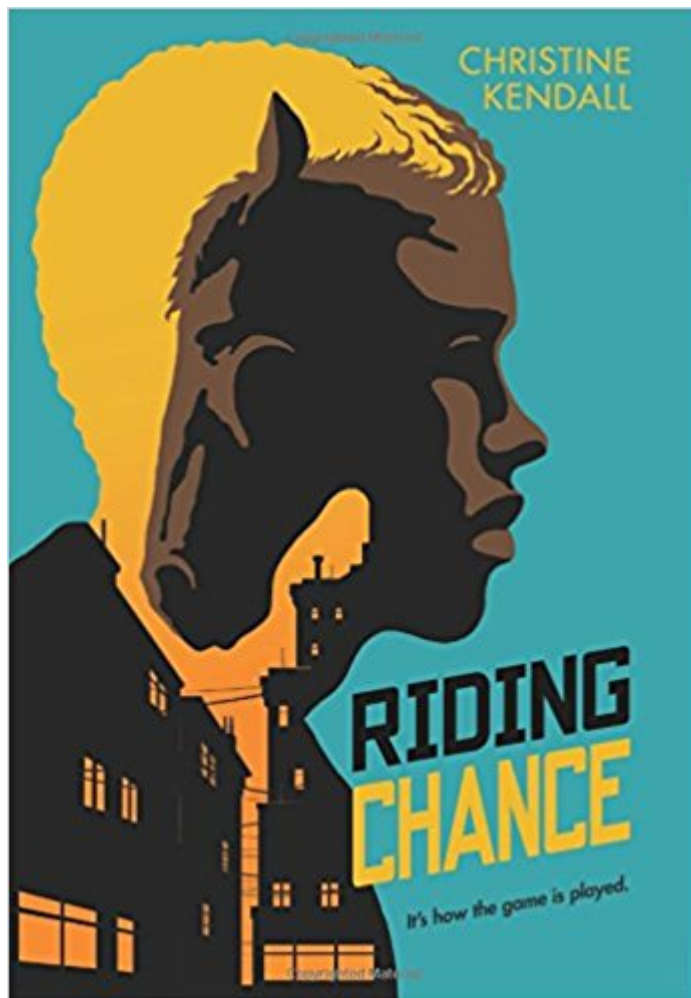


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# Riding Chance



## Synopsis

Troy is a kid with a passion. And dreams. And wanting to do the right thing. But after taking a wrong turn, he's forced to endure something that's worse than any juvenile detention he can imagine-he's "sentenced" to the local city stables where he's made to take care of horses. The greatest punishment has been trying to make sense of things since his mom died but, through his work with the horses, he discovers a sport totally unknown to him-polo. Troy has to figure out which friends have his back, which kids to cut loose, and whether he and Alisha have a true connection. Laced with humor and beating with heartache, this novel will grip readers, pull them in quickly, and take them on an unforgettable ride. Set in present day Christine Kendall's stunning debut lets us come face-to-face with the challenges of a loving family that turn hardships into triumphs.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 224 pages

Publisher: Scholastic Press (October 11, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0545924049

ISBN-13: 978-0545924047

Product Dimensions: 5.7 x 1 x 8.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 10.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 8 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #170,191 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #16 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Sports > Equestrian #137 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Family > Parents #590 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Friendship

## Customer Reviews

Christine Kendall has been published in Niche Literary magazine. She studied children's literature at the Southampton Writers' Conference, and was named a semi-finalist in the 2014 River Styx Micro-Fiction Contest. Before becoming an author, Christine worked in the field of law firm talent management, where she coordinated the NAACP 50th anniversary commemoration of the historic Brown v. Board of Education decision. *Riding Chance* is her first novel. She lives in Philadelphia, PA.

I've lived in Philadelphia for many years and in the section of the city where the main characters live for half of them. I learned about the Work to Ride program about 20 years ago and their polo team about the same time that the author did. The author has written a story about 2 teenagers who are sent to the Work to Ride program as a kind of community service sentence for some trouble at school. The way that the author presents the various characters and places in the book ring so authentically to life in Philadelphia for the 2 boys. They each mature in different ways, but learn that their long time friendship doesn't have to end because of their new interests. I highly recommend this book for the age group that it was written for and to the adults, too. It is well written and enjoyable.

Riding Chance is a poignant tale about growing up, learning responsibility, being a true friend, and living ethically. Troy, age 13, is a charming, bright teen who is also troubled: In the year since his mom died, he's been cutting school, hanging out with the wrong kids and getting into trouble. After a social worker sends him and his friend Foster to work with the horses in Philadelphia's Fairmount Park, Troy connects with the horse Chance and begins to learn valuable lessons. He still has stuff to work out, and the novel takes us through twists and turns that don't let up until the last page. Once I began reading this novel, I couldn't stop. It's a beautiful story.

Humane, funny, empathetic view of different ages and social strata. I would read anything from this highly talented and perceptive author. The cover deserves equal kudos.

Wonderful, moving story. I will share this book with all the young people in my life.

This story is deeply engaging in some parts and I wish the entire book could have been that way. The first part of the book is slow and bland. That time should have at least been used to flesh out the characters earlier. At about 50-60% the story was wonderful, but then fell into that rut where the explanation of an activity, in this case polo, was a bit too technical and took up too much of the story. You have to consider the audience. They are reading about the lives of kids in a polo program, not reading to learn about the about how to play the game. When polo was being played the descriptions should have been more visual and less instructional. Then came the contrived climax. I almost wanted to bang my head on something because it totally sunk the story for me. The parts of the book that were about neighborhood dynamics, family relationships, bonding with animals, dealing with anger, and racism were stellar, but they developed too slowly and were not given enough of the story. It could have used a good editor. I think because of the slow start many teens

will put the book down before they get to the meaningful content.

Riding Chance is a big gulp of a story, all heart and all horse. Troy, an inner-city teen set adrift by his mother's death, has the heart. And it's his serendipitous introduction to the sport of polo and the pony Chance that helps him claim it. You'll feel its every beat as Troy faces the physical and emotional challenges of new, and sometimes rocky, terrain. But, as he learns, "the flow's the thing." And you'll be very happy to go along for the ride.

The dialect takes a chapter or so to get comfortable with, but after that, the story becomes a seamless and engrossing read. I finished it in less than two hours. Both adults and teens/tweens will really identify with the way Troy feels, how he fights his own worst enemy and the way he comes through a better person. A great book for inner city schools and libraries, but a really good one for any library where diversity in the collection is important.

Amazing

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