

"Excuse me?" Evie tried to sound as fearless as Alejandra seemed.

"Doesn't your dad sell doughnuts or something?" Alejandra pulled out a carton of cigarettes from her suede bag.

"No, my dad *owns* a company," Evie said, surprised that she was actually bragging about her father's business. "His chain, all four stores, sell *pan dulce*, not doughnuts."

"*Pan dulce*?" Alejandra laughed as she lit her cigarette. "You gotta be kidding."

"No," Evie said. "Why would I be?"

"Well, I wouldn't know anything about fast food," Alejandra took her first pull off her cigarette. "My family's more scholarly, I guess. My father's V.P. at U.N.A.M. in Mexico," Alejandra smiled smugly. "La Universidad Nacional —"

"I know what U.N.A.M. means," Evie's pride abruptly cut her off.

"O-kay," Alejandra pursed her lips. "So, as I was *saying*, I'm going to be doing an internship at Cal State Channel Islands this semester."

"Good for you, Alejandra," Evie answered, looking up at the outhouse. What was taking Raquel so long?

"Yeah," Alejandra blew smoke upward. "They're getting a new Chancellor soon, Dr. Frank de LaFuente."

"*Frank* de LaFuente?" Evie asked.

"*Claro*. I might be working with him directly. Then I'm gonna apply for a internship at Yale next summer and—"

But Evie wasn't listening anymore. When she heard the name Frank de LaFuente, she felt her stomach drop *hard*. Frank de LaFuente was Dee Dee's father. Dee Dee had

Shouldn't  
Ale know  
this?

Most girls know  
what ~~that~~  
Frank de LaFuente  
is. What's the  
point of this?

NOT CHARY MONT  
& PHOEBE CANTRELL  
with would she  
know Frank  
Dee Dee?

"Yeah," Evie smiled. "I'm sure she was crying cramps." She knew Raquel's gym excuses all too well.

"Exactly," Dee Dee nodded. "All whining of crampas y mas and then when I come in, she suddenly feels better. Enough to tell me, in front of everyone, that I look like a prostitute in my bathing suit!"

"A prostitute? She actually called you a prostitute?"

"Well, she said, 'So where's your pole and plastic heels?' In front of *everyone*."

Evie couldn't help but laugh, but immediately stopped when Dee Dee threw her a look.

"It wasn't funny, Evie," Dee Dee said. "Everyone laughed at me. Then I told her that she could only dream of wearing a bikini like mine and then —"

"Wait, you wore a *bikini* to swim class?"

"Well, it was more of just a two piece. Why? Miss Riley said our suits only had to be a solid color. She didn't say one piece or two."

"Nothing," Evie looked out the window so Dee Dee wouldn't see her smirking.

"Go on,"

"So, I told her, 'Poor Pansita, Americans have such a problem with their weight. Maybe that's why your man is always eyeing me.'"

"You said that?" She clicked her iPod wheel till she found *Mistress*. She cranked up the volume. *Nice*.

"Yeah, 'cause it's true, Evie. That Jose *es un fiero*, Mondo too." Dee Dee pulled out onto Ventura Road and talked louder, over the music. "Did you know that they are *both* always hitting on me?"

5 HOWS THAT  
BE ON  
H3E R1GHT?  
IS THAT  
HEAVY M3SH?

been in, like, forever."

"Evie," Dee Dee insisted. "You can go to the beach anytime. This is my first slumber party in my new house and now you are just going to just leave?"

"Slumber party?" Evie asked. "You didn't say you were having a slumber party."

"Yes, I did. All the girls are staying. Right Alejandra?"

"Claro," Alejandra agreed. She took a drink from her cup.

"Oh," Alex grinned suggestively. "Maybe I should stay too."

Dee Dee smirked. "No. Sorry Alejandro. Girls only. You're already being bad enough, trying to lure away my best friend."

Dee Dee was sure laying the best friend angle on thick. But Evie had to admit, it sorta made her feel, how would you say, *muy especial*?

Evie took a large gulp of her Patron. "Yeah, okay." she said slowly, "I guess there will be plenty of other times to get to Sea Street."

"Good!" Dee Dee smiled. "It will be just like the old days."

"So, you're not coming?" Alex asked.

"No," Evie said reluctantly. "I guess not."

As they all said good<sup>?</sup>bye to Alex, Evie realized that Dee Dee was right. It was Dee Dee's first slumber party in her new home and she should be there. Unlike the Diazes welcome back party, this was a party for Dee Dee and Evie needed to position herself as Dee Dee's "very werry" best friend and to make sure the Sangros didn't try to bite "the old days" away from her.

\* \* \*

"Por," Denise answered off the top of her head, no pause, no guessing, no nada. Okay, so Dee Dee was a best friend who had good connections with someone who had even better Spanish skills.

### NEED A BETTER EXAMPLE

While Dee Dee conjugated verbs, Evie was looking over all the single framed photos of Dee Dee and Rocio on the bedroom dresser. One photo, in particular, caught Evie's interest. It showed Dee Dee in a black knee length skirt. She was wearing pointed heels. Rocio was in a sport coat and had binoculars and a program in his hands. Both were posing on the steps of a fancy building, with the blur of other people rushing about behind them. Evie picked up the framed photo and studied it.

"Where was this picture taken?" she asked Dee Dee.

"Which one?" Dee Dee looked up.

Evie held the picture up to show Dee Dee.

"Oh, that was at Bellas Artes," Dee Dee said. "We had just seen a ballet. I can't remember the name of it."

"If it was Bellas Artes, it was probably El Flor de Xochimilco," Alejandra was going through Dee Dee's lipstick supply. "That's *always* there."

"So," Evie put the photo back on the dresser. "How did you and Rocio hook up?"

It was still on Evie's mind, all the topics that had been brought up from the day and night before, not having a boyfriend., she was feeling a bit out of the loop.

"What do you mean by hook up?" Dee Dee didn't look up from Evie's homework. She kept conjugating.

*Best friend and yes, a diligent cheater, too!*

Nice Ref. BUT  
I DON'T KNOW  
EVEN PALACIO DE BOMAS  
ARTES.

I am NOT  
buying this  
that doesn't  
DEE-DEE KNOW  
WHAT I KNOW  
MENUS. SHE'S  
BEEN TRYING  
THE U.S. PR  
4 YES 87

Wah  
Meah  
stuck

"A taco de *what*?"

"Ay," Graciela clicked her tongue and looked over Evie's blue scrappy mop.

"Porque, no?"

"See," Dee Dee chimed. "Gracie knows. She used to work in television and knew all the top stylists and hair dressers, right, Gracie?"

"Graciela," she corrected Dee Dee as if she's had to a million times before.

"You are *not* coloring my hair," Evie said as if *she* had to correct Dee Dee a million times.

"Yeah," Dee Dee said. "I guess Raquel wouldn't like it."

"It has nothing to do with Raquel," Evie insisted. "This is *my* hair."

"Okay, okay," Dee Dee didn't sound convinced. "I'll drop it. Never mind *ama*," she told Graciela. "We don't need anything."

As Graciela left the room, Dee Dee looked Evie over one more time. "I really wish you'd rethink it, Evie."

"Well, I won't, thank you," Evie was adamant. She joined Charlene on the carpet and started to go through Dee Dee's supply of nail polish. The least she could do is cover up her tacky toes. Dee Dee had dozens of bottles, at least eight of them were a different shade of pink. Evie finally decided on the lightest shade, cleverly labeled, Lightest Pink.

Dee Dee walked over Evie and Charlene and reached down under her bed. "Hey, I have something for you."

"For me?" Evie looked up.

"Yeah."

"Dela, you ain't gonna bribe me."

THIS SCENE  
FROM BOTTOM OF PAGE  
131 -  
I GOT  
LST  
IN ALL  
OF THIS  
TO SCENE  
NO PROW  
HAD TO  
GO BACK  
TO REW  
OUT WITH  
WAS  
HAPPENING



"If blondes have more fun?"

"Jose, stop it!" She pushed his arm away. "Quit being stupid." She wanted to sound tough, but deep down she felt awkward. What had she told Dee Dee? To just ignore him? "So," Evie looked down the hall. "Where's Raquel?" What she meant to convey was: where is your *girlfriend*?

"Dunno," Jose arm dropped and he shrugged his shoulders casually. "My hip ain't tied to hers."

"No, but your dick is," Mondo quipped.

Evie let out an unexpected chuckle.

COULD BE  
ROR A Y.A.  
NOVEL?

"Hey," Jose looked at Evie. "At least I'm not the one dumping my best friend for some Sangro slut."

"Dee Dee's not a slut." Evie snapped. "Is that what you think or is that what Raquel programmed you to think?"

But before he could answer, Raquel was already coming towards all three of them.

"Hey, Jose!" she called out. "I've been *waiting* at the tree. Where have—" She didn't recognize Evie at first, Raquel's mouth was wide open in disbelief.

"You have *got* to be kidding!" She came up to Jose and nudged him in the ribs. "Can you believe this?" She looked over Evie's hair. "What are you? Some Pseudo Sangro now?"

"Yeah," Jose half smiled. "We were just saying that."

*Actually, Evie thought, you were not "just saying" that.*

"Oh, *my* God, Evie," Raquel went on. "You have *totally* lost it. Totally."

I WAS  
EXPECTING  
A MORE  
DEMOIC  
RESPONSE FROM  
RAQ - A BIT  
OF A LET-DOWN

She actually circled Evie. "Who do you think you are trying to be?"

"I'm not trying to be anyone," Evie brushed back the sides of her hair. "I just changed the color. It's no big deal, Raquel." Evie tried to stand up to her but it was something she definitely needed more practice with.

"What, was this Dee Dee's idea?" Raquel asked.

"No, not at all," Evie answered.

"Yeah, I'm sure it was. She's always had you wrapped around her little finger. Even when we were kids." > DONT WE ALL HAVE THIS?

Evie was getting pissed off. Raquel was having a field day in front of Mondo and Jose, again, at her expense.

"I think she looks hot," Mondo squinted his eyes and caressed his chin. He continued looking at Evie. "I definitely approve."

"Hot?" Raquel questioned.

"What, you jealous, Rocky?" Mondo asked. "Maybe you should think about lightening up. In more ways than one."

"Oh, shut up." Raquel pushed her hands into Mondo's chest. "Come on, Jose." She put her arm around his waist. "There ain't nothing to see here."

And with her hand tucked in the back pocket of Jose's cords Raquel led Jose from Evie and Mondo followed. But as they walked away, Jose looked back and over his shoulder he winked at Evie. This caught her off guard. Was it just more flirtation? Morse code to signal that he was still her friend? Either way, Evie couldn't help but feel a bit triumphant. She finally had a little something over Raquel.

Good Flow.

Olivia - at front desk -  
stronger appreciation

Silver Patron

reggae train

popocate

Snapple fast

Max 2 the Max

Tygo

Popocatepetl

Sam

Fernando  
1971

#168

One brown triangle

is the result  
of 200,000 fronds



## MENTION HOW THE WEEK AT SCHOOL WENT

By Friday night, Evie had her Weekender bag packed and all ready for, as Alejandra had said, “fun.” Dee Dee, of course, was running late as always and, of course, it bothered Evie. It was now *Evie’s* big night and here, Dee Dee was late again.

Evie paced around her room, stopping only to brush and re-brush her hair in front of closet mirrors. She was relieved that her hair had grown, quite a bit, actually, since that fateful night with the Ginghar scissors. Her hair now partially covered her ears.

Her cell rang and she went over to pull it out from her purse.

*Yeah, yeah, Dee Dee, I know. You are running late.*

But it was Alex.

“Hey, you wanna head out to Sea Street tomorrow?” He asked. “It would just be you and me.”

“Oh, *tomorrow*?” Evie looked over at her Max board in the corner of her room. She had owned it a full four months and had yet to even take it out of the house. “I can’t.”

“We don’t have to do DP,” Alex suggested. “We can go later in the day. I actually gotta help me dad in the afternoon.”

Evie hesitated. Alejandra had said to keep Friday night and most of Saturday afternoon free. She didn’t want to bail early and let all the girls down. She was the guest of honor. Besides, she was very intrigued to meet this Basilio. Maybe he was a surfer, too?

“Mmm,” Evie clicked her tongue. “I really can’t, Alex. I’m all tied up. Sorry.”

“So,” Alex started. “I thought you wanted to surf.”

RAW?

“Oh, you know how ol’ Charlie Diaz is.” Raquel yawned. “*With his money on his mind and his mind on...nothing else.* He isn’t concerned with long-lost family friends. In fact, he’s actually known for weeks—he got an e-mail from Dee Dee’s dad. And now my mom wants to have a little welcome-back party for them. She says it’s the proper thing to do, especially to introduce Dee Dee’s new mom to everybody.”

“*New mom?*” Evie repeated. The Gomezes had received an announcement of Mr. De la Fuente’s sudden second marriage but knew nothing about his second wife.

“*New madre?*” Raquel asked. “Does that sound better?”

“I’m really not in the mood for semantics right now.” Evie turned to her other side and hugged her Hawaiian-print Mugu.

“So,” Raquel said. “How are you feeling?”

“Totally dissed,” Evie said.

“No, I mean after last night, with Mondo and Jose.”

“Oh. Uh, okay, I guess,” Evie told her. “I’m just really tired. Like exhausted, and my head is killing me.”

“That’ll wear off,” Raquel said. “Just drink lots of water. You want me to bring you some menudo?”

“No.”

“But *ay, mi’ja*,” Raquel exaggerated her voice to sound slow and rickety, like a Mexican *vieja*, complete with a heavy Spanish accent and all. “*Pero, you need menudo. Mira, I bring you a steaming hot bowl of menudo now, si? I make it myself for you, fresh tripas and all.*”

Evie laughed. “No thank you, *tia* Raquel.”

“No, but seriously,” Raquel changed her voice back. “You don’t need anything? More of the *perro* that bit you?”

“Ugh, no way.” Evie moaned. “I just wanna sleep more but my mom was like a Room Raider at the crack of dawn and now she’s preparing to invade. I’m gonna have to take a nap in the friggin’ pool house.”

“Oh, yeah, that reminds me. My mom’s gonna be calling your mom about the welcome-back gig,” Raquel said.

“When’s it gonna be?” Evie asked.

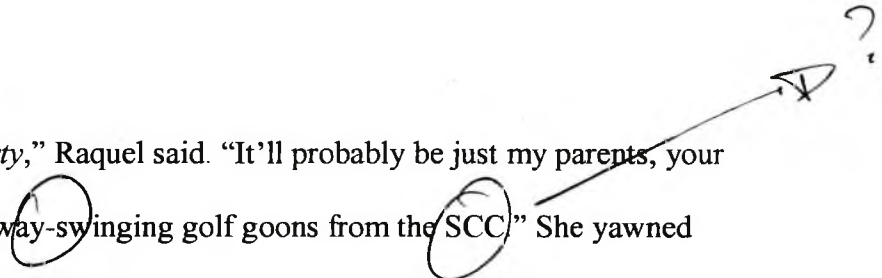
“Next Saturday,” she said.

“You mean *this* Saturday?” Evie asked.

“I thought it was too early for semantics,” Raquel said. “But yeah, this coming Saturday.”

“What kind of party?”

“Not really a party *party*,” Raquel said. “It’ll probably be just my parents, your parents, and some other Callaway-swinging golf goons from the SCC.” She yawned again. “Just a little something.”



When Evie finally hung up, she actually began to feel a bit anxious. Dee Dee was coming back. They were going to be neighbors, most likely classmates but maybe friends again. All three of them, she, Raquel, and Dee Dee. But who knows? It’s been over four years since she’s heard from Dee Dee and, she looked at herself in the closet mirrors, people do change.

"Uh, I'm Evie," Evie started awkwardly. "And this is—"

"Evie?" Graciela asked. "What kind of name is that?"

"Well, my real name is—"

"Where's Dee Dee?" Raquel interrupted, looking around Graciela.

"You know how you girls are," Frank de LaFuente said as he reached over and took his wife's black sequined wrap. "We couldn't get her off her cell phone—she has been on that thing since we arrived. She's going to drive over herself in a little while."

"Oh?" Evie's mother looked over at Kitty Diaz disapprovingly. "Well, I do hope she arrives soon. Kitty ordered a *tres leches* especially for—"

"We're just excited to see our little Dee Dee," Evie's father said quickly.

"Especially Evie."

"Dee Dee has her own car?" Evie directed the question to Mr. de LaFuente, but looked at her mother.

"Of course." Frank de LaFuente put his arm around her. "We got it for her the first week here. *Pero*, no worries, *mi'ja*. She'll be here soon."

Evie felt confused. Why hadn't Dee Dee just come with her parents? Why didn't Graciela know who she or Raquel was? But most importantly, she wondered as she discreetly sniffed to the left and then to the right, why hadn't she put on more deodorant?

\* \* \*

By 9:30 p.m., Dee Dee still hadn't arrived and the party was already dying down. The singer of the band from *un trio* that Charlie Diaz hired, had shaken her *maraca* one

But as soon as Evie watched Alex go out the front door to meet Dee Dee, she didn't feel quite so tough and dismissive. She felt horribly betrayed. She felt like...nothing

"Would you like a slice?" It was the same server that Evie had seen earlier with Dee Dee. She had a piece of *tres leches* on her platter and was now offering it to her.

"Uh, no. No, thank you," Evie said. "I shouldn't."

"Your friend." The server smiled playfully. "*Qué mala, no?*"

"Uh, which one?" Evie asked.

"La sangrona." She laughed lightly as she looked after Dee Dee and Alex.

"The sangrona?" Evie repeated. "No, she's not *that* bad." But who am I kidding? Evie thought. Dee Dee seemed to have become a Sangro which, according to Evie, was *mala. Muy, muy mala.*

"You know what?" Evie told the server. "I will take that piece."

After Evie took the slice, she took a deep bite. The sweet, milky moistness flooded her mouth, but she still couldn't shake off the bitterness that seared her whole body. What had happened to Dee Dee? **MORE**. She took another bite and tallied up the score. Sangros: one, Flojos: zero. And Evie? More than anything, she didn't want to be in the game.

5

For as long as Evie could remember, shake and bakes (Ca-lingo for earthquakes erupting during hotter weather) have always happened early in the morning. So the next

PS. THAT THE  
ONE CHILL  
WAS?  
Sangro  
Flojo  
Muy

DI Like sb  
cool  
def.



"Nuh, uh," Evie admitted. "I called her twice and sent her a text message, but I haven't heard back from her...yet."

"Yet?"

### NEED MORE

Evie looked out towards the lemon groves that lined Highway 33. She definitely was not ready to make a grand entrance at Villanueva with Dee Dee. Maybe she could suddenly claim sick and ask Dee Dee to drive her back home? Suggest they both ditch and head out for a day at Sea Street? Hmmm. That was something Raquel would be down with, but with Dee Dee? She wasn't so sure. Could she ask Dee Dee to drop her off on the edge of Ventura Road so she could walk up Villanueva Road by herself?

Highway 33 soon turned into Ventura Road, a two lane highway lined with homemade painted signs that bragged of local produce and apple cider for sale by Oakview residents. "Wow," Dee Dee observed as they drove though Ventura Road. "Nothing here has changed. It's like the same when we came up here as little kids."

"Yeah, I think Whole Foods comes here just to buy their supplies."

"Remember, when my mom brought us horseback riding?" Dee Dee asked.

"Oh yeah," Evie said. "That was always so fun. Oh, my God, remember that horse, the white one you always got? What was his name?"

"Her name was Blanca."

"Oh, right. Duh. She was so sweet," Evie said. "Ooh, except when she bucked Raquel off? Ew, remember that?"

"Ooh," Dee Dee scrunched her face in agreement. "Yeah, that was bad. But she was *my* horse. Raquel should have known that, but she insisted on riding her that day."

Is there any way to make local references clear to everybody who has to file it a long description explanation.

party and, in a way, she wanted him to know that was *not* cool. Fighting with Raquel was bad enough, but now, Alex too? Saturday night's fight was the first official argument they ever had and she wondered if it had bothered him as much as it did her.

Does she  
like him  
No hint b  
this before  
Or did I  
miss something

Evie got out of Dee Dee's car and noticed Raquel. She was stretched out in the front seat of Mondo's car, casually twirling her hair with her fingers and reading something, possibly *Kerrang!*, just about the favorite magazine of the Flojos. But for all Evie knew, it could have been a DIY manual on how to snuff out a former friend.

Evie kept her head down as she grabbed her backpack from the back seat. She'd have to pull Dee Dee the opposite way, around the other row of cars, to avoid meeting up with Raquel and the other Flojos. But as soon Dee Dee got out of her Beetle, she excitedly started to in the direction towards campus, *right* towards Mondo's car.

"Hey," Evie quickly tugged at her arm. "Let me take you the scenic route."

But it was too late. Dee Dee had already seen Alex.

"Alejandro!" She called out and started to walk over to his truck. "Hey!"

What could Evie do, but follow? Alex looked over and seemed genuinely confused to see Evie so chummy with Dee Dee. *Yeah, I know, Evie felt sheepish. I gave you hell at the welcome back party and now look who called the tortilla flat.*

huh?

"Hey, Alex." Evie said, apprehensively.

"Hey, Blues" Alex smiled. So maybe Saturday night's **war of the words** had not been on his mind.

"Heeey," Mondo gave Dee Dee the once over. "Who's the new **crème fresa**?"

sp?  
or  
she is?

Seven Patrick  
Morrissey

abreviated  
abreviated

Mo

Mo 2

last name:

They walked down Del Norte Hall, the main hall of Villanueva, among all the other students. It was already October, the second month of a new school year, but everyone's clothing still exuded that freshly cut tag smell. **Describe clothes. A few boys looked over at Dee Dee.**

The first bell rang and suddenly everyone scattered like mice. Soon it was just Dee Dee and Evie walking down the empty hall. The tap, tap, tap of Dee Dee's high heel boots and the flip flopping flop of Evie's flojos, reverberated off the walls. Neither of them said anything to each other.

Evie glanced over at Dee Dee as saw how uncharacterically wounded she looked, a bit frightened and exhausted.

Maybe it would be good if Villanueva had a dress code, Evie thought. Something like a two set of steel armor. That would be suitable, because it was obvious that Raquel had already declared war. (WORK ON ENDING)

8

Dee Dee was right. Villanueva was a nice looking campus. If anything, it looked more like a Spanish style five star resort hotel than a mere high school. Small classes were held in charming stucco bungalows with red brick tile roofs and just about every window had a panoramic view of the Topa Topa mountain range. Villanueva also boasted an Olympic sized swimming pool (a three million dollar renovation since the big earthquake of 1972) and beautiful, beautiful guests (er, students) checked in from all over the world. Headmaster Covarrubias took pride in a school that reflected, "a well rounded and

I love this description  
Maybe save my like his to help to clarity the references of local places.

"Exchange student?" Evie frowned. "No, she's from Mexico. I mean, she's from here. She used to be my neighbor, but she's been living in Mexico City for the last four years. We used to be best friends."

"Oh, she's really pretty."

"Uh huh," Evie said. "That's what *everyone* thinks."

Everyone, Evie thought, especially Mondo. Evie would have to put him in his place before things got out of hand. She kept an eye on Mr. Galvan as she pulled out her cell to text Mondo.

U r a perv. B Nce!

But Mondo didn't text back once during the whole rest of the morning.

By lunch time Evie **didn't have any big ideas or well thought out plans on how to keep harmony between the** (O). She slowly trudged down to Veranda Hall where the majority of lockers were assigned to sophomores. This fall semester, Evie didn't have any classes with Raquel, but they always met Alex, Jose and Mondo for lunch under Juniper's Tree. Juniper's Tree was a humongous oak with a commemorative plaque that claimed that Father Juniper Serra himself, along with local Chumash Indians, had actually planted the tree back in 1782, right around the time he was building Mission San Buenaventura. It was same plaque that Jose put out his cigarette butts on and what Mondo used to crack open a Snapple, even though it was a twist off. So much for historical preservation and *respeto*.

Need more  
of these  
explanations  
to clarify  
local  
history etc.

But after the morning's parking lot incident, Evie was sure she wouldn't be so welcome at Juniper's Tree. Besides, would she even want to go?

"Everything is going great!" Dee Dee held her spiral notebook to her chest. Evie could see the names and numbers of a few students already scrawled across the back. When Evie first started Villanueva she felt incredibly lucky enough when Raquel teamed up with Jose. It gave her three more names to add to her cell directory – Jose, Mondo and Alex, an instant double number of social contacts.

"I have Alejandro in two of my classes," Dee Dee continued. "He is *so* sweet, really helpful and one of my teachers," she looked over her course sheet, "A Mr. Guereca, actually lived in the Polenco District, my old neighborhood. *Que chido*, no?"

"Yeah, cool," But Evie couldn't really pay attention. Physical manifestation of anxiety. She was more concerned how lunch was going to pan out. "Since it's so nice out," she started. "I was thinking we could grab some grub and head out to the Art Den." It was the only secluded area of campus she could think of, occupied only with horrible student renditions of Che Guevara and the Ventura coastline.

"The Art Den?" Dee Dee asked. "We're not going to meet Alex at the tree?"

"Nah, the tree is so played out." Evie crammed her books in her locker.

**It was only the second month of school**, but already it was cluttered with issues of SG, **Kerrang!** and useless accessories from her former long hair days. "It'll be basically him and Mondo gabbing gears."

"Gabbing *what*?"

"Talking cars," Evie said. "The Art Den's our student art garden. It's really peaceful. You'll love it."

*too little ref*

*Need earlier description of T. Hernandez no?*

*Kinda like that*



"Why should I?" Raquel clenched her bag strap tighter, her fingers revealing more tension/strain. "Evie, people don't change But you know what? I don't know why I even care if you prefer Dee Dee over me."

"Who said I prefer Dee Dee over you?" Evie asked. "Who? Jose?"

But Raquel wasn't listening. She turned her body sharply away from Evie, and stormed off. She almost shoulder slamming Alex who coming up to both of them.

~~Should add~~  
sounds odd  
Rewrite.

"Man, " Alex looked after Raquel as she pushed by him to leave. "Looks like you're up to your elbows in suds."

→ emphasize?  
now.

"It seems that way," Evie sadly agreed. It was all becoming a soap opera. She was tempted to call out after Raquel, but what was the use? Everyone was calling out to one another, but nobody was stopping to listen.

"You know how Raquel can be," Alex tried to make Evie feel better. He then noticed that she hadn't gotten any lunch yet. "You want me to wait for you?" He already had a tray filled with ()

"Nah," Evie half smiled. "I'm not that hungry." She looked around, nervously scratching the side of her neck. "I gotta study for a test anyway. I'm gonna hit the library."

"The library?" Alex looked out the cafeteria's windows. "On a day like this?

Evie looked up at him. "Alex, I have my whole life to work, even on my tan."

> huh?

"Huh?"

"Nothing." Evie patted him on his shoulder. "Just go out to the tree. I'll meet up with you later." Of course, she had no intention of doing so.

"Are you sure?" he asked.

"Who, Jose?"

"Yes, *Jose*. Eyeew, with that ugly spike in his chin. *Que cochino*."

"Oh, he's just stupid," Evie said. "You just gotta just ignore him."

"Well, Pansita's gonna find out sooner or later," Dee Dee predicted. "So anyway, before I know it, she just starts slamming water at me. I mean, not just squirting it, like when we were kids playing Marco Polo or something, she was totally out of control."

Thank God Miss Riley came over and made her get out of the pool. That Pansita esta

(loca.)

"Slamming water into you? Are you sure you aren't exaggerating?"

"No, ask anyone. She totally freaked out."

"I dunno, Dee Dee. Even for Raquel that sounds a little bit crazy."

It was all Evie wanted to say. She didn't want to get into it with Dee Dee.

"I am not exaggerating," Dee Dee insisted. "And I cannot bear another day sharing the kiddie end with that bitch. SPANISH. I *have* to learn how to swim." She checked her side mirror and sped up on Highway 33. "What are we listening to? It's sound like the Marilyn Manson on crack."

"Dee Dee," Evie looked over at her. "How would you even know what someone on crack is like?"

"Well, who is this?"

"It's Priestess," Evie said. "They're from *el otro lado*."

"Oh," Dee Dee suddenly looked interested. "De DF?"

"No," Evie smiled. "Canada, the *other* otro lado."

Dee Dee shook her head and rolled her eyes. "So, anyway, I asked Alejandro over

PS SUB BACK TO  
CAVING HER  
DOES?

(2) sound

“Oh, to Dean?” Dee Dee teased.

But as Friday evening came around, Evie couldn't help but feel how the single diners at the Boston Market counter looked to her – detached, desperate, resigned to a life of loneliness.

She logged on to her computer to check her MySpace account just to reassure herself that is did have people in her life. “Rio Chica has 120 friends.” Yeah, right. As she looked over the **overtly artsy photos of all her overtly artsy “friends”** network, what did it really matter? She was, after all, home on a Friday night and she wasn't even on restriction. Not very artsy.

But Evie mood was lifted once she went into to her favorite chat NAME. Shaggy was in the same chat. So she didn't have a man in her life, but a little male attention never hurt anyone. Shaggy was innocent enough. He lived far away and seemed only interested in early morning surf reports.

ShaggyMA: Hey chica, long time no hear. Sup?

RioChica: School, drama, the usual. How's surf in Norcal?

“Evie?” It was her mother, bringing in folded clothes. P. Kitty was at her heels.

“You're not going out tonight?”

“Nuh-uh,” Evie didn't look up from her screen. “Dee Dee asked me to sleep over, but I'm just gonna stay in.” She anxiously waited for ShaggyMA's response.

ShaggyMA: 4 ft. Cold as balls.

regarding home insurance." She turned down the volume with the remote.

"Nah," Evie dangled a sock in front of P. Kitty. "Raquel's mad at me."

✂ — Imagite? Lindsay clicked her tongue sarcastically. "That's nothing new."

"Yeah, she's in hater mode"

Mande?

"She's all mad 'cause I'm friends with Dee Dee. She's a playa hater."

"Playa? Why does she hate the beach?"

"No," Evie laughed. "Playa, like player, like... a popular person."

"Oh." Lindsay still seemed not to understand. "Y<sup>2</sup> Dee Dee?"

"She's hanging out with Alex," Evie said as she finally clued in on P. Kitty. He was not interested in exerting energy over some average gym sock.

"Oh, on a date?"

"No," Evie said. "They're just hanging out."

"But it's a Friday evening," Lindsay pressed.

Maybe it was better to leave her alone, engrossed in her soap?

"Lindsay," Evie was getting irritated. "Just because a guy and girl spend time together, doesn't mean they're on a date. It's not like that here. Nowadays."

"Hmmpfh." Lindsay said before turning the volume up. *La Tormenta* was back on "Oh-kay."

But Evie suddenly felt it wasn't simply okay. Even Lindsay saw how it was so seemingly important to have a man. Was Evie such the loser? Was there something she didn't see and Lindsay did? **And** what did she care if Alex and Dee Dee were becoming more than friends? She should be happy for them. She was happy for Raquel when she

That  
saw  
Evie  
like

"She means," Charlene said, flipping through a magazine. "When did you first fuck him."

"Oh, *that*," Dee Dee looked up and smiled coyly. "It was right away and then, after that, all the time. I think we even did it that night, at Bellas Artes."

"If I know you," Denise smiled. "You ~~did~~ with him in the bathroom, right in the men's stall."

*If I know you?* How well did Denise *think* she knew Dee Dee? Evie was the established long time friend and this was all news to her – Dee Dee's supposed sexual prowess. *?? a question??*

"Yeah," Fabby added. "You did it with him right on the toilet, all *de perrito y mas*."

"Fabby!" Dee Dee wrinkled her nose again. "Gross! I did not!" Dee Dee sat up from her bed and stretched her shoulders. She looked at the photo. "No, but really, it was love, right away with me and Rocio. That's how you know it's real. We practically finish each other's sentences. Also, he comes from a great family."

"That seems really important, huh? In Mexico, I mean," Evie asked. "Family."

"It is to me." Fabby interrupted. "I don't want to be dating someone from a (DEROGATORY SPANISH WORD)."

"You know," Evie thought outloud. "I don't even think Raquel's even met Jose's parents and they've been going out for over a year."

"Well, I'd keep her hidden." Alejandra smirked. She had just applied color to her lips and was ~~smacking smacking~~ them together in front of Dee Dee's mirror. "Jose's too good for her. I don't know why he's so into her."



“So,” Evie tried slowly. “Were you and dad friends before you started dating?”

*Please, just the facts. No details.*

“Oh, yeah,” her mother replied. Evie watched her measure out the plastic daises, making sure each one was a similar distance from the others around the rim of the planter

“We were very good friends.”

“Yeah,” Evie started. “It seems like all my so-called good friends are mad at me or vice-versa.”

“Why?” Her mother asked. “What happened?”

Before she knew it, Evie was telling her mother all that had been going on for the past month. Her own version, of course. She left out all the references of liquor, pot, the OjaiOhi Valley Inn, the four letter words, and topless Sangros.

“And then, last night,” Evie continued, not taking a breath, “I was just with Alex last night. I mean, at first I was with Dee Dee. Remember we were going to the birthday party? But then Dee Dee really did something uncool, and then I saw Jose at the birthday party with another girl, and he’s supposed to be all loyal to Raquel and everything, and then he tries to be cute with me and then I got all mad at Alex and . . . I dunno. You know what I mean?”

“I think so.” Evie’s mother looked like her head was spinning. TMI? “So why did you get upset with Alex?”

“He made a promise to me and he broke it.”

“Did he have a good reason for breaking it?”

“I dunno,” Evie said.

“He didn’t explain?” Her mother seemed confused.



Deigo  
Calderon

Friends & Lovers

The Secret

Los Secretos

- Daddy  
Yankee  
Dominican

Amigos y amantes

El Corazon

Don Omar

The Heart <sup>+ eyes</sup> of The Snake  
Friends, lovers + <sup>Abogados</sup> Lawyers

- The Secret Love  
of Espanza ~~husband~~

- My ~~new~~ new husband  
~~my~~ my wife

~~She~~  
Ella tiene  
ojos de  
Culebra

Serpiente, El amor secreto  
de Espanza.

same actors made ~~the~~ bad

"I do."

"But every time I ask you, you can never go, or you don't wanna go. What's going on?"

"Nothing." Evie looked at herself in her closet mirrors. "Nothing's going on and I do wanna surf. It's just, it's not a priority right now"

"Oh," Alex enthusiasm dropped a notch. "Not a priority. O-kay."

"What is that supposed to mean?" Evie asked.

"Nothing." Alex said. "I'm just agreeing with you, Evie."

Evie could tell he was annoyed. What was he not understanding? She continued to look at herself in her closet mirrors. She *did* look good. "You know what, Alex?"

"What?" he asked.

"Can you call me by my proper name? From now on?"

"Your *proper* name?" Evie could sense a smirk forming on Alex's face.

"Yes," Evie said curtly. "Evelina."

Alex got quiet on the other end.

"Alex," she asked. "You still there?"

"Yeah," he let out an exasperated sigh. "I'm still here. O-kay, Evelina. I'll talk to you *later*."

And he hung up before Evie could even say goodbye.

What the hell was that about? Evie actually looked at her phone. He hung up on her. She flipped her phone shut and looked at herself again in the mirrors. Why was he PMSing all of a sudden? God, didn't he know that sand and sea water were a lethal combo for chemically treated hair?

too quick of  
a turn  
around

WTF  
EVIE  
DROPPED  
TO THINK?  
THAT WAY?



he  
leading into sleepy town of Ojai, but as they got near Villanueva, Dee drove right by it.

Evie looked over her shoulder as they passed by their school. The adobe styled buildings, usually usually a symbol of a torturous seven hour work shift, looked out of context. In the evening, the campus looked calm, almost desirable, with the sun setting behind it

"Wait, where are we going?" Evie asked. "I thought we were staying at Alejandra's and that we had to be in the dorm 9 pm?"

"Evie... Dee Dee looked over at her as she turned off the highway and drove onto a residential road. "You are naïve as your mother."

The road was lined with Eucalyptus trees, and large painted stones to mark the addresses of the single story ranch style homes. Evie knew the road. It led right to the Ojai Valley Inn, her mother's favorite place to get, as she says, her "skin and soul" rejuvenated. Before Evie knew it, Dee Dee stopped her Beetle in front of the Inn.

"We're staying here?" Evie looked up toward the Inn's main entrance.

"Yup," Dee Dee smiled as she got her purse from the back seat.

The Ojai Valley Inn was one of the ritziest hotels and spas in the whole county, maybe the whole state. Presidents, dignitaries from all over the world have stayed at the Inn. It was supposedly the hideaway for the infamous secret rendezvous between (), killed their careers and her marriage.

A bona fide Ken doll came up to Dee Dee's car. "Good evening, ladies," he greeted on key. "Welcome to the Ojai Valley Inn. " He gave Dee Dee a ticket and took the keys to her Beetle. "Will you be needing any help with your luggage?"

"Oh, no," Dee Dee said. "We're still waiting for more from our party."

"No," Evie said. "Really."

"You really wanna know?" Alejandra asked.

"Yeah," Evie said. "I think. We're not doing anything illegal, are we?"

"Illegal?" Alejandra looked at Dee Dee. "Not *really*. Basilio's been working here for years. He's the head building and maintenance supervisor. He can, at anytime, say that a room is being worked on and it's off limits for a while. No ones' gonna check up on him, really."

"But that's not all," Denise started, "Alejandra has just led poor Basilio to believe that she is the one and only favorite niece of the one and only favorite sister of the one and only *Vicente*."

"And" Charlene continued, "If dear Basilio ever, ever, needed anything, anything all all, Alejandra would do everything she possibly could to get it for him."

"Vicente?" Evie was floored. "As in Fox? The *President* of Mexico? What, you gonna get dual citizenship for him and his whole family?"

"No, tonta." Alejandra laughed. "Vicente *Fernandez*, the president of rancheras.

"Ally! You told him you were related to Vicente Fernandez!" Dee Dee cried  
"Your horrible!"

"Yeah," Alejandra fell back into a love seat, pleased with herself. "At Vicente's, or should I say, *Uncle* Vicente's, next concierto at El Estadio Azteca, Front row, center tickets and back stage passes are Basilio's.

"That's if," Dee Dee reminded Alejandra. "You actually *knew* Vicente Fernandez."

"Hey, what can I say?" Alejandra took an apple from the overfilled fruit bowl and



"Hang out?" Evie asked. What exactly did that mean? "Hang out?" Pre-sexy texty meant it as simply to "hang out," but now, post sexy texty, did hanging out mean a date?

DI HATE THAT  
12, 12, 12  
hate

"Yeah, I can hang out," Evie said. She suddenly remembered. "Oh, it's Fabby's birthday. I can't." She gripped her backpack tightly. "Uh, do you wanna come? It's gonna be at La Pantera Negra. I sorta have to go to it."

"Nah," Alex said. "I mean, no offense, she's nice and everything, but those girls, I don't know, they ain't my tribe. You know what I mean."

"Yeah, I guess." *Tribe?* And the boring Flojos were?

"Besides, I'm gonna do DP tomorrow. I gotta get to bed early."

Evie's heart sank.

Later that evening, Alex text messaged her.

Hve fun 2 nite

Evie: Thx.

Whre r u?

She waited and waited for him to text something back. But he didn't. She finally closed her phone. That was it? Have fun tonight? No 'sleep sweet?' No 'I wish I could see you tomorrow?' What had happened between her and Alex?

Although she may have conveyed a confident Honey Blonde chica on the outside, Evie still had the deep roots of insecurity to deal with on the inside.

That deep  
slurp  
on the back  
cone of the  
brooks

Evie decided the best thing she could do was just try to get Alex out of her mind and just concentrate on Fabby's birthday party. She went over Dee Dee's to get ready.

"Clip or no clips?" she asked Dee Dee, as they elbowed each other for mirror space in Dee Dee's bathroom.

"Either," Dee Dee didn't even look over at her.

Evie held up two different barrettes. "Velvet or rhinestone?"

"Neither."

"You're a lot of help." Evie sarcastically complained as she tossed the barrettes back in Dee Dee's make up plastic bin. "I thought short hair was easier."

"Beauty is never easy," Dee Dee sighed as she looked over her profile and sucked in her stomach. She had removed her navel ring for the evening and clasped a thin gold belly belt around her waist. She had also put on her blue contacts. Something, Evie noticed, that Dee Dee did only for special occasions. She didn't seem to care how Evie wore her hair. She was absorbed with her own appearance.

As soon as Evie figured out what to do with her hair, (more volumizer, no clips) she had a new problem to tackle. She sat on top of the toilet seat and looked down at the silver two inch sandals that Dee Dee strongly suggested she wear. They were already clenching into the sides of her feet.

"I still don't know about these," Evie referred to the slinky slinks. "Don't you think they're a bit too much?"

"Of course they are!" Dee Dee agreed as she sprayed more perfume in the air and walked through it. "Remember when we were kids? You always talked about wanting to wear your sister's heels all the time. I don't understand what the problem is now."

NOTE:  
I GOT THIS  
FEELING  
VIBES THAT  
DEE DEE IS UP TO  
NO GOOD

Coincidentally, flojo (correct Spanish pronunciation: *Flow-ho*) means lazy in English, but it's also what you call flip-flops (correct South Cali pronunciation: *flow-joe*) and as everybody knows, flip flops are a pretty lazy excuse for a shoe and usually assigned for Summer only, even in Southern California. But the Flojos were hard core when it came to their flip flops and wore them 365/12. From high-end Havaianas (\$118) to low end plastic bin specials from Save-On (true flojos, Alex claimed), nothing came between a Flojo and their flojos.

But it wasn't attitude or sandal sense that had brought the Flojos together. Evie and Raquel had been friends since growing up in Rio Estates and last year when they were freshman, Raquel hooked up with Jose (). He was then a tall lanky sophomore with the Mars Volta 'fro and black titanium chin Labret that gave him the devious look that Raquel fell for hard. Once they started dating, his sidekicks Mondo Corral and Alex Caballero were automatically included in the package. Of course, it was pure prestig for Evie and Raquel to hang with upperclassmen. Besides, few students at Villanueva Preparatory High School were like them—rich kids whose family's crest, that is, if they had a crest, contained the letters *x, y, or z* (read: *Latino*). ?

Evie's family had a crest, sorta. If you counted, the small, peach tinted seashell logo for her father's successful business, Conchita's Bread, as one. Years ago her father started Conchita's and thanks to his hard work (along with Evie's great-grandma Conchita's *pan dulce* recipes) the Gomezs are where they were now: in a big ol' Spanish-style house with a swimming pool in the back and her father's Escalade in the front. Not quite ransom-worthy rich, but the Gomezs, like a lot of the families in Rio Estates, were pretty well off.

That's why  
Dependable  
hasn't worn  
on her cellphone

Save-On?



"Oh my God!" Vicki Gomez covered her hand over her mouth. "Evie! What the hell did you do to your hair?. You've got to be out of your mind! Did you forget that school photos are next week? Do you expect your father and me to fork over four hundred dollars to document *this*?" She towered over Evie and picked over her hair, like a grade school nurse searching for head lice

That much?  
Hahaha  
Good one!

Evie shamefully looked over at Lindsay. *Yes, Lindsay, we also drop a few hundred for some measly school photos. Oh, but that does include wallet size!*

"What the *hell* were you thinking?" Vicki Gomez was furious. "I have a good mind to ground you for a month for this stunt!"

"*What?*" Evie pulled away from her mother. "Why? Just because *I* wanted to do something different to *my* hair?"

"No, because you don't think. That's the problem, Evie. You don't think about how your actions affect other people." She looked at Evie's bed and pulled the pillow out from under her. "Great. You stained the pillow, too. Did you even think to rinse out your hair or put down a towel?" Vicki Gomez looked around. "Oh God . . . look at this."

Evie looked beside her bed. Sure enough, a trail of small blue blotches stretched across the cream-colored carpet from her bathroom to her pillow. There was even dye on her precious Dean Miller plastic grass bed skirt she had begged her mother to buy her for her last birthday.

"Don't worry, *Senora* Vicki," Lindsay said, wiping the spots on the sheet as if they would magically go away. "I can get the stains out."

"Your father is going to be *pissed*!" Vicki Gomez continued to rant. "Do *not* make any plans this evening until he gets home and we can discuss this."

# TS VS. Tee

sure her father, Ruben Gomez, had left hours ago for one of his several *panaderías* and her mother, Vicki, was probably in the pool doing her obligatory fifty laps.

Evie pulled her Dean Miller sheets up to her chin and looked up at the ceiling blankly. From her sister, Sabrina, who carried eighteen units a semester while maintaining presidency of the most prestigious Latina sorority at Stanford University to big ol' dopey Molesto (real name: Ernesto), the Gomez's black labrador, who demanded his pre-poop walk around the perimeter of the block every morning at 6 am, the Gomezes were a very focused, ambitious family. They accentuated the "go" in Gomez, all of them, that is for except for Evie, who felt more of a personal connection to the lagging z as in Gomezzzzzzzzz. . . . She yawned, lifted her Roxy Tee, and scratched her belly. It was now 10:45 a.m. Yeah, she could sleep a little bit more and deal with *las* dilemmas later.

Just then the buddy alert on her computer beeped, signaling to Evie that one of her online buddies was available to chat. Raquel?

Evie pushed off her blankets and went over to her desk. It wasn't Raquel, but rather Shaggy who had already instant messengered her.

ShaggyMA: Hey, U up?

RioChica: Yup. U just wake up, too?

ShaggyMA: No. Just got in from surfing. Did Dawn Patrol this morning.

Evie felt jealous. Did everyone have a more exciting life than her? During her period of home internment, she had met Shaggy via a chat room for MASA. *No*, not *masa*, as in dough, *silly*, but MASA as in the Mexican American Surfing Association. Evie didn't even know such a thing existed, but ever since she caught *Blue Crush* on

THE LAST  
PUB BOOK?

Real?



*Uh oh. Here it comes.*

“How is your volunteer work coming along? Is your GPA going to be up before the next quality check? Your father asked me about it the other day, and I’m feeling a lot of pressure Evie.”

*She’s feeling pressure?*

“Mom, I’ve got it under control,” Her mother was getting under her skin.

“I hope so Evie,” Vicki Gomez said. “It would be a shame if we didn’t get to have your party. But if we do have it,” she raised her eyebrow, “I just *hope* I don’t forget to send Frank and Graciela an invite.”

## Chapter 17

“You look really nice,” Evie told Alex as they drove to the de la Fuentes house. She was into the brown cords, <sup>x</sup> the cream colored dress shirt that he was wearing. And she loved that he had surrendered his standard ‘bin special’ flojos for the evening. He had on *actual* shoes, black canvas Winos. *Too* cute.

Yes, the dinner party at the de LaFuentes was perfect for mending the friction between her and Alex. Granted, it wasn’t a night out at a super swanky Japanese restaurant, or a super romantic poetry reading at the beach, but still it was dinner, a dinner date, and he had dressed up. He had *planned* to look nice for her.

“Thanks,” Alex looked over at her and smiled. “And ~~good~~ job yourself, Gomez. You ~~look cute~~ *clean up* *nicely* cute, too. I like you in dresses.”

clean up  
well?  
Comp:

She wasn't wearing a dress, but rather a (), but she could let it slide. Evie put the arm rest up and snuggled as close to Alex as she could. So far, so smooth.

"You know what," Alex lowered the volume on his iTrip. "I haven't been to Dee Dee's since last semester. Remember? When I went over to give her swimming lessons last semester and Alejandra de los Santos and her little pack of *fresitas* were there?"

Evie grimaced. "Ugh. How could I forget that? I showed up thinking it would be just you, me, and Dee Dee and you're, like, in the swimming pool, drooling all over Xiamor-a."

"I *really* don't remember that," Alex smiled jokingly.

"Well, I do."

"But I *do* remember," Alex started. "That the de LaFuentes had a pretty tight pad. They're probably gonna have some **good grub** tonight."

"Totally," Evie agreed. "But I can tell you one thing they aren't going to have."

"What?" Alex asked.

"They aren't going to have *sushi*." Evie playfully pinched his side.

"Evie," Alex frowned over at her. "Let it go, will you?"

"I was just messin'." Evie cuddled up closer to him.

"No, you weren't," he shrugged a little. "You keep making these little jabs, like you're trying to make me feel guilty or something."

"No, I'm not." Evie could feel his arm tense up. She looked up at him. "Seriously, I was just joking."

Alex sighed. "You *keep* blaming me for that night. You know, maybe you were just expecting too much."

“Expecting too much?” Evie leaned over and **turned down** O. “What, that I wanted to go out, alone, with my own boyfriend once in a while?”

“I dunno,” Alex said. “It’s like I feel like all this pressure that you want me to act a certain way.”

Evie let go of Alex’s arm and sat up in the seat.

“Alex,” she started. “If I’m supposed to be your girlfriend, sometimes I wanna be treated like it.”

“So, what, I treat you like crap or something?” <sup>he</sup> Alex asked. He was now turning onto Camino Pacifico and was a few blocks from Camino Cortez, Dee Dee’s street.

“I didn’t say that,” Evie said. “It’s just seems that you treated me with more chivalry when I was just a friend.”

“What is that supposed to mean?” he asked.

“I mean, you were more of gentleman –”

“I know what chivalry means,” Alex snapped.

“Look,” Evie started. “All I’m saying is when you were trying to get my attention, you were all nice and everything, but now that I’m your girlfriend you, like, totally take me for granted.”

“For granted?” Alex asked. “Like what? When?”

“Jeez, where do I begin?” Evie shook her head in bewilderment. How could he possibly be so **clueless**? “Like you flake on me, *a lot*, and –”

“I don’t flake,” Alex interrupted. He turned up his <sup>Monte Carlo</sup> iTip. “Maybe I change my mind or my plans change, but I never just not just show up. I never just leave you hanging.”