

Once Evie knew your mother had bought her lie, she continued looking for the phone.

“You know, I think it’s really great you are making new friends.”

“Yeah, me too.” She continued to frantically search for the cordless.

“Not that I have any problem with Raquel,” her mother. “And you know I just adore Alex.

Yeah, me too mom. Now help me find the phone so I can adore him some more!

“Do you know where my cordless is?” Evie asked.

“How would I know where your phone is?” Her put the jar back in the bag and looked around. “How would you know where anything is in this room?”

“Mom, *Please*. Help me find the phone. I have to make an important call,” Evie called out.

“Make a call? You’ve been with all your girlfriends all night. You could you possibly need to call so urgently?”

“Mom,” Evie was on the verge of a panic attack. She could not find the landline and Alex was waiting. “Where is my cordless?” Evie went into the bathroom and looked around. She yanked up her vintage Senor Lopez from the floor, making P. Kitty shriek with fright and run from under it.

“Ooh,” Evie looked after him.. “Sorry, P.”

“You know,” Her mother started. “It’s Lindsay’s birthday tomorrow. Did you know that?”

“Nuh uh.” She came out of the bathroom. *Where* was her phone?

“Your dad and I want to take her dinner tonight,” her mother continued. “You

need to come.”

“Okay,” Evie rummaged through her clothes strewn about her bedroom floor. “I’ll be there.”

Evie looked under her pillows and blankets..

Her mother finally lifted some school notebooks. The cordless phone receiver was under them.

“Of course,” her mother held the phone out to her.”It would be here. You never touch these.”

Evie grabbed the phone. “Okay, mom. I have to make a call.”

“Okay, okay, Evie. I just want you to know to make no plans tonight. Lindsay’s husband and sister are coming also.”

“Okay, okay.” She held the phone to her side and walked her mother out. As soon as she was out of her bedroom, she shut the door behind her.

Evie kicked off her flojos and grabbed her pillows off the floor. She propped them against her headboard and fell back onto them. She wanted everything to be perfect when she returned Alex’s call. It was going to be their first conversation since their **midnight exchange of sexy texty, their confessions of feelings. Or was it their, confsns of feelings?**

She sped dial his number. But now his line was busy. *Busy?* On a cell? Maybe he was calling her?

When she clicked off, she saw he had just left her a message. She immediately called him back, but she got his voice mail. Grrrrr! ~~And cell phones were supposed to assist with communication?~~ Now, normally, not reaching Alex wouldn’t be such a big

both

gawk

we

*but it wouldn't be busy in
It'd just go straight to voice mail, right?*

deal. They would just catch up at school on Monday, but now Alex had planted a seed, and oh God, Evie wanted to dig his seed out and find out exactly what was gonna sprout from it. It was driving her crazy.

She listened to his voice message.

Hey, Eves, I thought you were gonna call me right back. Anyway, but I have to leave with my dad. So...I guess I'll try you later.

Later? Evie cringed. As in *that* night? But she had to go to dinner with her family. She would miss his call!. Maybe he meant, later that weekend? Or way later? As in Monday, at school?

She tossed her cell phone on her bed and turned to her side. Evie felt dizzy with agony. She desperately wanted to talk with Alex. But she didn't want to call him *again*. She refused to appear so needy. So, she would have to wait, and wait until he called back.

But all day Saturday, Evie could do nothing but think Alex.

HIS QUALITIES (EARLIER DRAFT)

She wondered? Could he be her boyfriend. Her first boyfriend? What would he be like? How would he kiss? She hadn't kissed, well, *really* kissed a anyone. There was so and so at the party, but it was a quick pat on the lips. Not much of an inner tingle there. Nothing that sent excitement across her chest that Alex's mere texting had done. Sigh. Now she knew what Raquel must feel, and Dee Dee must do through, missing Rocio so much. It was agonizing. She looked at her cell. Maybe "later" meant like five minutes later? No messages. She guessed not.

a couple
more
details
be
would
great

That night her parents took Lindsay and her family to the Elephant Bar. It was hard to concentrate. Seeing the couples, hands intertwined, sharing slices of chocolate mud pie and romantic glances with each other. Lindsay was happy. Her husband, Jack, had his arm around often and even brushed cake crumbs off her sweater.

The waiters came to sing happy birthday.

Evie,” Her mother said. “Put your phone away. You are being rude.”

Evie reluctantly put her phone back in her bag. But she didn’t turn it off.

She simply put it on vibrate and simply placed it between her legs.

STET!
is this too
much? not sure...
Actually, learn

* * *

The next afternoon, Sunday, Evie went over to Dee Dee to lay out near the pool.

The weather on Saturday had been disapointingly and surprisingly overcast. Ojai was ^{id all} twenty miles inland, away from the coast, and usually hot and sunny. So, they decided to meet at Dee Dee’s on Sunday to make up for lost tanning time.

Alex was
all she could
think
about

“What did you do last night?” Dee Dee asked Evie.

“It was Lindsay’s birthday,” Evie was trying to relax on the lounge, but she kept ^{she kept} thinking about Alex. “We all went to the Elephant Bar.”

“Who’s Lindsay?” Charlene asked

“She’s our housekeeper,” Evie said.

“You went out with her maid?” Alejandra was wearing her BRAND NAME sunglasses, but Evie could sense judgement. “On a Saturday night?”

“Yeah, why not?”

Alejandra lifted her glasses and looked at Charlene.

"I would not be caught dead with my *criada* in public," Alejandra said. "Maybe if she had to pick me up, like from shopping or something.

"Or if you needed her to pick up up from the free health clinic (SPANISH) to sign off papers," Fabby smirked. "Again."

"Lindsay's not a maid," Evie said. "She doesn't live with us. Besides, you don't even have a maid, Alejandra. You live in the dorms."

"Yeah, I do," Alejandra said. "Back home in Mexico. But my mother is always having to fire them and then get new ones. They always fuck up her clothes. When I go home for vacation, I never know which two new Indians I'm gonna meet."

"Ally," Dee Dee said. "You don't have to be so harsh."

"Well, it's true," Alejandra said. "Am I lying Fabby?"

"No, your mom is totally **finicky** (SPANISH) about her clothes."

"That's because she has nice ones." Alejandra sat up and checked her tan line.

"Oh, you should see what she's sending me for the Dia de los Muertos dance."

"The Dia de los Muertos dance?" Evie had forgotten about it.

"Yeah, it better be good," she said. "Last year? Que **boring** (SPANISH) My mother's having my costume flown in from Mexico."

"Really?" Dee Dee asked. Evie could sense a competitive tone in her voice.

"What are you going as?"

"Maria Felix."

"Ooh, que sexy!" Denise said. "You are gonna look **hot**." (SPANISH)

"Yeah," Dee Dee agreed reluctantly.

Despite the larger than life announcement on Villanova's main marquee, Eve hadn't given much thought about the dance. Ever since the night Alex texted her, nothing else had been on her mind. The dance was now just a week away, the first Saturday of November.

"But isn't that Fabby's birthday party?" Evie asked.

"Nuh uh," Charlene said. "That's the night before, on Friday."

"Yeah, and don't be all *coda* and not bring a present," Fabby held her right elbow up and hit it with her left hand a couple of times. The Sangros laughed.

Evie didn't get it.

"Hey," Denise frowned. "My family's from Monterrey and we are *not* cheap!"

After the Sangros left Dee Dee's to back to their dorms at Villanova, Evie confessed to Dee Dee that she still didn't have a costume for the dance.

"No worries," Dee Dee said. "I already have our outfits for the dance."

"Our outfits?" Evie asked.

"Mmm, Hmm," Dee Dee said. "Ally's not the only one with connections. Graciela has all this great stuff from Mexico, all these fancy embroidered clothes, crinolines, hats and jewelry. She used to be an actress in the Mexican soaps."

"Really?" Evie wondered if Lindsay would know *who she was*. "Which one?"

"Oh, just about all them," Dee Dee said. "But you know how the stories just run for a limited time and they were just a minor roles. She was always the *amante* (SPANISH, MISTRESS) and I guess she was good at it, because she was given a lot of the left over costumes and that doesn't always happen."

awk
to
But he didn't texted her 2 days ago ... so this isn't why she didn't think about the dance

awk ... Show this?

Graciela, a seductress? Imagine that! What until Evie told her mother.

"Anyway," Dee Dee continued. "You, Alejandro and I *have* to go together."

"Alex? When did you talk to Alex about this?" He hadn't mentioned anything to Evie.

"I haven't talked to him...yet," Dee Dee said. "But he'll do it."

Oh, like you got him twisted around your little finger.

"I got it all figured out," Dee Dee went on. "You'll dress as Frida Kahlo, Alex can be Diego Rivera and I'll be Cristina, Frida's sister. Que cute, no?"

"Uh, *no*," Evie said. "Dela, I don't want to be Frida." She caught her reflection in the car window and tousled her blonde bangs. Truth was, she didn't want to look all ugly in front of Alex, unibrow, moustache and all.

"Evie, *yes*," Dee Dee said. "~~But~~ you have to, to make it work."

"Dela," Evie tried to explain. "Frida is so played out. Everyone goes as Frida."

"Yeah, but I bet nobody here knows how to do her right," Dee Dee insisted. "You should see the stuff that Gracie has. You won't believe it. We'll be different than anyone at the dance. Even Alejandra."

"No, *you*'ll be different. Nobody ever dresses at Cristina. What does she even look like?"

"Oh, she was very beautiful," Dee Dee said, knowingly. "Evie, look, you *have* to go as Frida. Nobody will know I'm Cristina unless there's a Frida and a Diego."

"Dela, nobody is gonna know anyway. It's not that kind of dance, or school for that matter. Why don't you dress as Frida and I'll go as Cristina?"

There, a compromise.

good sentiment
rephrase? maybe
she's physical
manifestation
of her
jealousy?

Dee Dee got quiet

“Dee Dee,” Evie suddenly felt badly. She hated making Dee Dee upset. “I’ll at least think about it.”

“Well, I hope you do,” Dee Dee said softly. “I already have the outfit for Cristina to fit me and the dance is a week away and I still have to tell Alejandro.”

Why, Evie wondered, was Dee Dee ^{always} so eager to have ~~Alex~~ ^{always} in the picture? He had been her personal escort at school, her private swim instructor and now her date for the Dia de los Muertos Dance? Why *even* have Evie along? Then she remembered, didn’t Diego have an affair with Fridas’s ^{rom} sister, Cristina? Hmmm.

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ShaggyMA: Plans tonight?

RioChica: Party, again.

ShaggyMA: You are the butterfly!

It was Friday night, Fabby’s birthday party. The whole week at school had been a blur. She finally got to speak with Alex, she felt tension, but nothing was ever said of the text messages they shared. Maybe she imagined it? She didn’t want to be the one to bring it up. But, she could see Alex’s neck turn pink. MORE

He text messaged her that evening.

Hve fun 2 nite

Evie: Thx

She closed her phone. That was it? Have fun tonight? Although she conveyed a confident Honey Blonde chica on the outside, she still had the deep roots of insecurity to deal with on the inside. Where they losing what they never had? Why didn't they just talk about it? What was up with all the earlier sweet blissful texting?

What impact all their sweet blissful texting...?

That night she just tried to get Alex out of her mind and focus 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.) show? what does this look like

"Either," Dee Dee said, not even looking over at her.

Evie held up two different ones barrettes. "Green or grey?"

"Neither."

"You're a lot of help." She sarcastically complained. "I thought short hair was easier."

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

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 sandals that Dee Dee suggested she wear. They were already clenching into the sides of her feet. MORE- THIS IS A BIG STEP FOR HER, GIVING UP HER FLOJOS.

*↑
but great
impact will have more
more about this
earlier*

She had thought that she and Dee wore the same size, but it didn't appear so. Does size 7 Mexican narrow translate to size 7 American wide? Yes, *wide*. That's the problem with wearing flojos all the time. The feet, they expand mucho.

"I still don't about these," Evie referring 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 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."

"The problem is I think they *are* my sister's heels." Evie crossed one foot over her thigh and inspected the spike heel. "You don't think they're little dated?"

"*What?*" Dee Dee was surprised. "Evie, they're retro. You of all people should know that." Dee Dee held a cord up to the front of her neck and turned her back toward Evie. "Here, can you help me with this?"

Evie stood up and clasped the black silk cord around Dee Dee's neck.

Dee Dee then turned around to show the pendant off to Evie. "Cute, huh?"

But when Evie looked, she saw that it was no mere pendant. It was a piece of shell. A small iridescent abalone shell, just like the one Alex had found at Bard Beach.

Did Alex give Dee Dee the shell he found back at Bard Beach? How could he have done that? Evie's heart dropped. What *was* going on between them?

"What's wrong?" Dee Dee frowned. "You don't like it?"

"Oh, no," Evie looked away. She wasn't about to admit jealously and she definitely couldn't go into feelings she hadn't even sorted out yet. "It's just these sandals," She brought her foot up. "They really hurt. I think I'm gonna change back into

They're gonna give me blisters ... (to explain the band-aids)

is it a shell or a piece?

tied?

said looking down at me