

"What? Is that true?" Dee Dee looked at Alejandra. "How could you be after someone else boyfriend? Don't you have enough attention?"

"Dela, I do not *chase* men," Alejandra sniffed. "I don't *need* to. Come on, Dee Dee. This stupid dance is so over. We're all going to Charlene's dorm."

"Not me." Dee Dee crossed her arms.

"What? You gonna go looking for *La Llorona*?" Alejandra laughed uncomfortably.

But Dee Dee held her ground, which infuriated Alejandra even more.

Alejandra made it very clear to Dee Dee that she would no longer be welcome to her friends and stormed off to find Jose.

"I guess you were right about her and Jose." Dee Dee told Evie. "I just thought they were just talking."

"In a dark hall? Plus I had seen them last night."

"Last night?" Dee Dee asked. "Donde?"

"At Fabby's party. In the photo booth," Evie said.

"At La Pantera. Are you serious? Why didn't you say something last night?"

"I was just too upset. And actually," Evie thought it was probably just the best time to bring it up. "Can I ask you something?"

"What?"

"Your shell necklace, the one you wore last night. Who gave it to you?"

"Gave to me? Nobody. I got it in Veracruz."

"In Veracruz? Are you serious?"

"Yeah, why would I lie?"

"It's just that it looks exactly like the abalone shell Alex had found for me at Bard Beach. We are at a party there a while ago."

"At Bard Beach?" Dee Dee raised her eyebrows. "Well, no, Alex didn't give me any necklace. I got mine in Veracruz. They sell them all over the street. But, I'll have you know," she feigned snobbery. "It's *not* abalone. It's mother of pearl and I chose the necklace over the mother of pearl paperweight with the wiggly eyes glued on."

Evie smirked. laughed.

"So Dee Dee looked around. "Where do you think Raquel went?"

. She looked around and they both

"I don't know," Evie said. She saw Kitty Diazes car still parked in the lot.. "But I sure go look for her."

"Do you want me to go with you?" Dee Dee asked.

"Actually, yeah." Evie said. "I think I know where she is."

She started to cross the parking lot and headed toward the quad area. "By the way, that was pretty ballsy of you," she told Dee Dee. "With Jose and all."

"Ballsy of me?" Dee Dee said. "What about you going to parties out on Bard Beach? Now *that* takes huevos!"

* * *

Sure enough, ~~Evie was right where she thought they'd find Raquel~~, at Juniper's Tree.

Raquel was sitting at the foot of the trunk. Her legs were bent at the knees and her

face was buried in between them and she was crying. ~~Evie had never seen her like this.~~

Even Dee Dee seemed horribly uncomfortable by it.

Raquel couldn't understand how Jose could do something like this to her. Sure, she admitted, she could be tough on him, but she really loved him.

Evie tried her best to comfort her old friend. "Oh, Raquel I am so sorry. Honest. I didn't want to tell you, but I thought if it had been me, I'd wanna know."

"Yeah, I figured something was going on."

"Really, since when?"

"Oh, for a while," Raquel sobbed. "And not just with Alejandra."

"It's gonna suck now," Dee Dee said. "But it's really for the better. Really. You know Raquel." Dee Dee continued. "This is the second time I've ever seen you cry."

"So?" Even through her tears, Raquel had her guard up.

"The first time was at my mother's funeral."

"It was?" Raquel asked, ^{her} guard coming down.

"Yeah," Dee Dee smiled softly. "I remember, at Santa Clara cemetery. I was sitting with my family. I tried so hard not to cry. I really wanted to be strong for my dad, but when I looked over and saw you, all crying and everything, I almost lost it. I was incredibly touched. I had never seen you cry before. It's like you never get sad."

"Oh, I get sad." Raquel started. "But, I dunno..."

Evie bit her lip. She didn't know quite what to say. She remembered Margaret de LaFuente's funeral. The crowded mass at Santa Clara church, followed by a car procession to the cemetery. She herself cried, as much as her mother and sister did, but she now remembered how much Raquel just balled.

"Dee Dee," Raquel said. "I really, really liked your mother. I mean, loved her. I really thought that she was so cool and she was always the nicest of all the moms. Like, I never felt judged, you know what I mean."

"Yeah," Dee Dee said. "I don't like talking about it. I'd rather not think about my mother. You know, I just wanna think happy thoughts."

"But you can think happy thoughts...about your mother," Evie said.

"I guess..."

"You can guess all you want, but I *know*," Evie said. "Have you ever thought, I don't know, about using Dia de los Muertos to honor your mother?"

"No,," Dee Dee said. "I really don't want to think about it."

"Yeah?" Evie asked.

"I actually went back to the altar. I bought a sugar skull and put her name on it. I put her paintbrush on the altar. Remember she used to paint?"

"Yeah," Raquel laughed, wiping away her tears. "My mom was so jealous! She can't draw worth shit!"

"My mom too!" Evie said. "You should see these planters she's been painting. It's so embarrassing."

They all laughed.

"Hey, let's go. I have an idea," Raquel said. "But you totally have to trust me. It'll be good."

"We can go in my mother's car," Raquel said.

* * *

THE GIRLS GO TO THE SANTA CLARA CEMETARY, WHERE DEE DEE'S MOTHER IS BURIED. THEY DISCUSS MORE THINGS: DEE DEE'S MOM, THEIR FRIENDSHIP, HOW DIA DE LOS MUERTOS IS DIFFERENT IN MEXICO...

The Santa Clara Cemetery is located on the north east end of Rio Estates. Surrounded by condos, and and a Home Depot. It's one of the oldest cemeteries in the county that still has grave stones, that have been outlawed for some time.

Raquel pulled up.

"When's the last time you've here?"

"I dunno. I came once, after the funeral, but then we moved away. I really didn't didn't get a chance to come back, to say goodbye. I guess I really didn't want to."

DIALOGUE NEEDS WORK

"We don't have to go in."

"Yeah, it's already closed."

No, I want to," Dee Dee said.

"But the gate," Evie said. "It's locked."

Raquel got a flashlight from her mom's car.

They climbed over the wrought iron fence.

"In Mexico, on Dia de los Muertos the cemetery is just filled with people, families."

"That's what I've heard," Evie said.

"Look at the children's side.

Nuestra nino por vida.

↑ This will be great looking forward to reading this part

↑ they have?

"I couldn't imagine losing my baby."

"Yeah..."

"Where, where is your mom?"

"I think over there, by the first tree. Right about where the mausoleum is."

The three girls walked on the paved road that circled the inner part of the grounds.

Pinwheels, jack o lanterns, flowers, musical cards.

"I think right around here."

But she was wrong.

The incscription read: Daughter, sister, mother, wife, friend.

Dee Dee lay down beside it. She placed her head on the marker. "I remember picking out the inscription. It's so weird. I remembered..."

They sit and talk.

"In Mexico, the cemeteries are flooded with families during Day of the Dead.

The continue to discuss their mothers, their friendship and boys, Graciela, identity, appearances.

"So, can I ask you something?" Raquel asked.

"Yeah," Dee Dee said.

"Did you ever hook up with Alex?" Raquel asked. "That night after my parent's party?"

Did Evie really wanna hear this?

"Me? No." Dee Dee said. "Honestly. All we did was drive to the Coffee Tea and Bean Leaf."

This scene needs some cleaning up... but overall it's ~~good~~ really going to be great.

phase expanded

“You mean, Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf?” Evie corrected.

“Yeah, the one on Rose Avenue,” Dee Dee said. “Anyway, Alex just had a blended while I talked on the phone to Rocio. Okay,” she admitted. “I may have used Alex as a way to piss you guys off at the party. But,” Dee Dee looked at Evie. “It’s so obvious that he’s into you.”

“Why do you say that?” Evie was jumping with curiosity and excitement.

“He was so worried he really hurt you. After I hung up with Rocio, he kept going on and on that you were so angry with him and he didn’t know what to do. To be honest,” she laughed. “It got sorta annoying after awhile.”

“I don’t even know if he wants to talk to me.” Evie said. “He didn’t even come to the dance. He won’t even return my calls.” She tugged at her blonde striped hair under her braided Frida wig and realized it was time to talk to Alex.

It may be Dia de los Muertos, Evie thought, but it was definitely a night of new life for the three friends.

↑
Snet

15

RioChica:Tomorrow I’m doing DP

ShaggyMA: I just looked at Surfline. Should be a nice south swell
in your neck of the wood. Have fun!

RioChica: I will!

THIS SCENE NEEDS WORK

It seemed like ages since Evie had been to Sea Street. The early morning marine layer was thick. It was, after all, 5:30 in the morning. Dawn Patrol and it would be awhile before the haze would burn off. Though it was Southern California, it was still early in November and there was a chill in the air. Evie had on her favorite Neighborhoodie, the black one with Rio Estates area code, 805, spelled out across it in white felt letters.

She had taken Alex's advice and put on a full wetsuit, long sleeved with a snug like girdle feel across her belly. She felt like an awkward walrus, but Alex assured her she'd appreciate the blubber warmth once she was out in the ocean. She had only half of the suit pulled on, up to her waist. The top part was unzipped, hanging down like farmer's overalls.

"Raquel," Evie asked. "Can you help me with this?"

She walked over to where Raquel and Dee Dee were huddled in beach chair.. They were both bundled up, head to toe, in multi layers of clothing.

Raquel got up, rubbing the sides of her arms for warmth. "You need to take off your hoodie first."

"But I'm freezing!" Evie made her teeth chatter to emphasize. She reluctantly unzipped her hoodie and slowly peeled it off, revealing a metallic gold swim top.

What's this?"

Hey, watch it.

Okay, so maybe she picked a little bit from the Sangros. Is that so wrong?

And her hair? Metallic Gold, also. No, not really. It was brown, dark brown, just like it used to be.

She quickly pulled up the rest of her wetsuit and Raquel zipped the back of it.

"I don't know *why* you want to do this," Raquel complained. "It's so friggin' early in the morning."

"Yeah," Dee Dee looked out towards the ocean. "And those waves look hairy."

"You're right, I don't *have* to do this." Evie looked out toward the Pacific. The water was choppy, full of white caps. The waves were supposed to be so called beginner waves, baby three footers; as Alex had earlier that morning on the phone after listening to the surf report, but to her they looked threatening and powerful.

"Good!" Raquel zipped her own hoodie all the way up to her chin. "Let's go home. I got a nice warm comforter with my name on it."

"No," Evie said. "I mean, I *want* to do this. All the times we went to the beach as kids and rarely didn't I go in ~~passed~~ my waist."

"Yeah," Raquel said. "What's so wrong with that?"

"Hey," Dee Dee looked over toward the parking lot above them. "Alex is here."

Evie looked up and saw him coming down the rocks with his board. Evie got more nervous. Yes, she did have her talk with him. Well, sorta. She didn't go into details or ask as many questions as she thought she would. He laughed at her awkward phone message and merely wanted to start fresh. "I value our friendship, Evie," he had said.

Friendship? Evie sighed to herself ~~when he said that~~

"So you *did* come early," he said when he got to the three girls. "I'm impressed. You've walked your talk."

"Uh, yeah," Evie smirked. "We've been here for, like, an hour".

"Yeah right," He looked at Evie. "Hey, your hair."

"Oh, yeah," she tried to be nonchalant. Who knows how he would react this time?

"It looks good," He tilted his head and smiled slowly. "It reminds me of.."

"What?"

"Nothing.

"No, don't do that!"

I was gonna say, it reminds me of when I first met you. Last year"

"Is that a good thing?"

"Yeah..

"Really?" She ran her hand across it. "It's still growing out."

~~But nothing else was said about it.~~

"Come on," he started walking closer to the water.

This is good stuff

"So, how's Raquel?" Alex asked. looked over at her from the distance

"She's sad," Evie said. "But at least she knows the truth." Hep.

"Yeah, that goes for the two of us," Alex said. "Jose never said anything to me. I had no idea. I'm sure Mondo knew. So not cool. Now I know why you were all upset that night I picked you up at La Pantera."

Is it too much of a jump for Alex to have assumed this?

They both got up from doing their stretches and she followed him toward the water. There was already a line up of short boarders and Evie immediately felt intimidated. He own board started to slip from under her left arm. It was heavier than she remembered.

Alex stopped when they got to the water. The white foam hit Evie's feet.

He opened his wetsuit's key pocket on the sleeve. "Hey, I got a little something for you.

For your first DP."

“Huh?”

He pulled out rubber cord. Bits of abalone shell dangled from it.

Evie couldn't believe it. “Is this the shell, from that night at Bard?” she asked.

“Yeah,” Alex held up the necklace. “Cool, right?”

Her heart was beating fast. “I thought you'd given it to Dee Dee.”

Alex frowned. “Why would I give it to Dee Dee? I told you I was gonna polish it up for you, but then I was such an idiot and dropped it. That's why it's all in these little pieces. I didn't know what to do with it and I had promised...”

“To give it to someone extremely cool?” She finished his sentence.

“Exactly,” he laughed. “That's *exactly* what I was going to say.”

Alex leaned over and clasped the cord around Evie's neck. The pieces of broken shell dug into her skin. Not the most comfortable, in fact in hurt. but the Evie suddenly felt flip-flops but they were not on her feet, but rather in her stomach.

“Yeah, to be honest I wasn't into the blue hair or that blonde thing, I mean, I think you look good anyway, but you look best now. Really happy. don't get a big head...” He seemed embarrassed.

Evie can't help smiling so much it seems like her whole face is going to crack. She paddled, making sure to keep her hand cupped and her legs close together on the board, which rocked from side to side. She tried to keep her balance, but she was already getting tired. Alex had said to expect that with a new board.

Alex looked over and saw her struggling against the white water. He slowed his paddle down and placed the top of foot on the nose of her board. He then sped up his paddle harder, pulling her and her board behind him. Evie was about to protest. This was

her day to prove something, but she thought his gesture was all too sweet to refuse.

“How are you doing,” he called out to her. “Blue Crush?”

“*Hello?*” Evie yelled back. “I am *not* blue, literally and figuratively.”

And she was right. She was neither blue or blonde. She had dyed her hair back to its natural color of dark brown, Born Brown, the package has said. That’s exactly what she was and that’s who she wanted to be, for this particular school year any way.

ending
could use
a little work