

January 14

Zoe? Dios, Zoe, I'm sorry. If you're reading this, then you probably decided to write me back despite all the horrible things I've said. If you didn't, I... I totally get it. Soy idioto tonto. I shouldn't have said those things. I just, I don't know how to talk to you about this. The only frame of reference I have is you, you're the only one I actually care about in this situation, and the only way I know how to be a part of this and support you is to worry about you. It made me so upset that you didn't even want that, and I just, I lost it. I didn't even finish reading your letter, I'm sorry, I swear I'm so sorry. I just thought, what else can I do? I can't take it away from you, Michelle is going to die, sooner rather than later, and I can't stop it, and I can't make it easier for you. You have to tell me what you need me to be for you, and I'll try, I swear I'll try. I take it all back, I didn't mean any of it. ~~Just don't~~

I have read the rest of your letter now, and... Dios, this is hard. It's like I'm waiting for the blast from an explosion that I can see, but can't yet feel. I can't stand waiting to see if you'll still write. I want to sit in Cuppa Joe's, and just wait. As if that will make you want to write to me after I was a colossal asshat. At the same time, I can't do it - if I'm there, I jump every time the bells on the door jingle, terrified and yet hopeful that it might be you. I can't stand it for more than five minutes, and then I have to leave.

As I said, I have now read your letter, and I am going to do all the replying I skipped because I was angry. Maybe it will mend some fences. Maybe you'll never get it. But it gives me something to do. Mom and I are getting better at talking. I even told her about you during the last phone call. She says to say "hola" from her. She's even helping me with my Spanish homework a little, and I'm trying to have a few

minutes of conversation in Spanish in each phone call. It's coming back faster now that I'm not so opposed to the idea. Mexican culture and history is actually very important to her, so I'm trying. It's surprising what a difference that makes.

Hmmm... while Gabe is a very attractive individual, and I could probably do with the make-over, we probably can't be friends anymore. I'm not sure we have anything besides you in common, and basing a friendship on just one thing isn't necessarily healthy. Besides, I wouldn't want to deprive you of your personal stylist!

Zoe, you blush far too easily. Is it that you don't believe the compliments people pay you? Or that you feel you shouldn't be accepting them because it would mean you're "vain" or at least "not modest enough"?

Well, I haven't seen your hair, but how about "the color of sunlight on freshly mown grass"? I can't be sure if that's right, of course, but it's lighter and slightly yellower than forest green.

Uchale, if only I had read this before I sent my letter earlier. I don't want to lose the letters either, I swear. I was just so hurt that you could think I don't trust you, when the truth is I trust you more than every other person in my life. And before you say you're blushing, or you're going to cry, don't. Please don't. It is entirely true. You made me trust you, with your kind and trusting letters. You made me see that I can trust people, and that they don't all leave, or distance themselves, ~~or take their ujule out on you when it was never your fault in the first place.~~
I need ~~Hijole, no puede~~ Please don't

At least you've gotten your first conversation with Thom out of the way now, right? It was going to happen, and this way you were in control, and you got to say what you needed to. ~~I wouldn't say it makes me feel better, because~~ That's good.

Right, ridiculous questions.

1) I guess a doctor? I'm pretty good in a crisis, and if I could get the training, I expect I could keep people alive for a little while.

2) I miss the way that life was so much easier when we were kids. Somebody pisses you off, you bop them on the nose, you both cry about it for a little while and then ten minutes later you're best friends again. When you grow up, it gets complicated.

3) Hm, good question. I like pretzels, definitely. Hard pretzels dipped in nacho cheese sauce.

Answer your own questions, and then these two:

4) What is your favorite restaurant?

5) What is your most embarrassing possession?

I am so, so sorry,
Alex