

Zoe,

It's going to rain tomorrow. Go sit at the gazebo and listen to the rain as it falls. Once the pavement is thoroughly soaked, follow the arrows (You might want to take an umbrella).

January 18

Zoe,

~~Can I~~ ~~Now that I~~ I'm sorry you had to deal with that. I am sufficiently embarrassed, needless to say.

I see your points, and I accept them. We both over-reacted. Unfortunately in these kinds of situations, it's bound to happen. Nobody really knows how to deal with something like this until they have to. There are going to be tense moments, and we just have to accept that, and try and remember not to take it out on each other.

You say you won't leave, Zoe, but the truth is, everyone does eventually. It's part of life, and we can't help it. Even Emma has basically disappeared from my life, now that she has a real boyfriend that she's not always mad at - I see her at lunch sometimes, but we barely even talk, and we never hang out on the weekends anymore. I'm not mad at her, of course, I'm happy that she's happy. I just miss her, and wish it didn't have to be this way.

After what happened with Mom I spent a lot of my life thinking someone left because of me. That story Will told you, about me breaking Mom's favorite vase? That was the same year Mom left. I screwed up a lot that year, and when she left, I thought it was because I screwed up so much. I only just found out it wasn't my fault a month ago, and it is going to take a while for me to get rid of the mental reflex linking me screwing up with someone leaving me, okay?

And don't worry, I won't write to you entirely in Spanish. Mom speaks this weird mixture of Spanish and English, so I've kind of picked it up. But I'll try and keep a lid on it. Prometo! ;P

I suppose Gabe and I could meet and see if we have anything else in common. We've been pretty busy talking about you so far, but if we made a real effort we could maybe find a thing or two to discuss. Besides, I could always use more friends, right?

Ah, so I have the magic power of making Zoe blush! (Sorry, you're gonna have to cross things out better than that if you don't want me to read them.) In all seriousness, though, I believe that nice things should be said. For some reason our society has this thing about saying something nice to someone. There's no reason for it! The person you say it to will be happy, you'll feel better because you've made someone's day - where is the bad part in this? I don't understand how this prejudice started, but I am going to be a one-man army against it.

I am glad that you found someone else who is going through something similar to talk to. It probably helps that he is your age - you still feel like you have to protect Lissa, because she's so young, so you can't be entirely honest and open about how you're feeling. I am also sort of glad I've been a good influence (bad influence?) on you. It is not entirely smart to share your life story with a complete stranger (although sitting in a hospice waiting area, pretending to have good reason to be there, just to pick up girls does seem a little far fetched). I hope he can be of some help to you.

If you're not that passionate about being a teacher then maybe you shouldn't go into that. I mean, I know the question forces you to pick between three things, but if you're not that excited about teaching then don't do it. You care passionately about so many things - shouldn't you care passionately about what you're going to do for the rest of your life?

That's part of why I don't know what I want to do yet. I don't have anything that I care so much about that I can see myself doing it forever. Except poetry, but I can do that anyway, and it doesn't pay the bills.

Anyway, I have to wonder, if you were told you could do anything but teach, what would you do? You don't have to answer if you don't want, or if I'm misreading your enthusiasm. But, you know, if you didn't care about what anyone else thought, or about what you "should" do or what you're already good at, or anything, what would you do?

You sure like your sweet stuff, don't you? First the white chocolate mocha, now honey roasted almonds? I wouldn't be surprised if your teeth all rot and fall out by the time you're forty!* :)

And for my answers to my own questions:

4) Anything seafood. I love fish and shellfish when they're done right, and I believe that only true chefs know how to do them right.

5) I may or may not have a pair of tap shoes from a misguided attempt at dance lessons.

You come up with some questions this time! I like yours better than the ones I come up with.

Alex