

Alex: Zoe's letter, March 6th.

Could you hear me groaning all the way across the city Zoe? Cause that joke was just- ugh. But, at least you gave me the punchline.

Nah, don't come up with the tote bag. I actually...I have an idea for something for my birthday, but... well, we'll see, okay?

[Pause]

Zoe, I find it incredibly hard to believe that I have never, and will never make you mad. Maybe I haven't done anything yet, but someday, somehow, I *am* going to make you mad about something. And it's like... like the longer it goes that you don't get mad at me, the worse it will be when you do. Which is *ridiculous* because I know that's not how it works. But, telling myself that doesn't exactly help.

That said, you are— you are one of a kind, *chica*. *Nobody* likes being told the truth when it's not what they believe. *Nobody*. You can tell me you don't mind all you want, but one day I'm going to find a truth you don't want to hear. I'm going to say it, because you've never gotten mad before, and that will-- you'll— Well, let's just hope that's a long ways off, okay?

But, for now, I'm glad you're willing to at least consider what the people around you are saying. We say it because we lo- ... care about you, and we want you to be happy.

Your questions about Thom may not be rhetorical, but I can't answer them. Only you can, and it sucks, but you will. Eventually.

[Pause. He sounds incredibly uncomfortable.]

Sorry, I'm trying to speed through this because... This is awkward. **[Takes a deep breath, rushes through, embarrassed]** Emma's taking me out to dinner. I know you crossed it out, but I could read it, and... you don't have anything to be jealous of, okay? I'll talk to her at dinner, and I promise, I *promise* I will give you more time in the very next letter. I'll even send her home early tonight, and sit and record my entire evening for you, or at least as much of it will fit on a CD.

As for why she's taking me to dinner— I have big news - I *won!* I can't believe it, after four whole years of trying to find something I could win at, I finally won something. We were playing poker. I was doing good, and the stakes kept getting higher and I *kept* winning. And it was... it was weird but I think I liked it. Anyway, by the end we were up to some pretty big stakes for us - if I lost, I had to go shoe shopping with her, and if *she* lost, she had to take me out to a meal somewhere, because even though I can't quite feed myself yet — well okay, I can but it makes a mess that is totally unacceptable in public — I'm having some serious In 'n' Out cravings. I told her she didn't have to go through with it, but she seems actually kind of excited. She says since it's the first time I've ever won something we need to celebrate, so we're not just going to some "dumb old fast food chain, even if it is In 'n' Out." It's apparently a surprise, but something nice.

I'm actually not sure what to think about it. I mean, it's great that she's being so attentive, but this isn't *Emma*, you know? What happens when I can do things for myself again? Sure, I'd like some space, but being able to keep some of this would be nice. Once she doesn't feel guilty anymore...

Right, sorry, I still haven't finished responding to your letter, and I need to get a move on.

[Pause]

Um, Zoe? What's a Tee Eh Ar Dee Eye Ess? Are you *sure* you're okay after all that stress?

[Pause]

No Charming, eh? Cause you're a strong woman who don't need no man? Ah, *chica*, how very you.

[Pause]

Dios, you asked some hard questions. Uh, listen, Emma's getting antsy. As part of my next letter, which I will start *as soon as* I get home, I will answer your questions, in extreme detail, okay?

Talk to you soon, *chica*.