

Alex: Zoe's letter, April 10th

Um, hey Zoe. I know this is late, and, uh, I'm sorry. I just . . . I wasn't sure what I wanted to say, and since I *still* haven't put the time into figuring out how to edit . . . Which is ridiculous by the way, I'm an invalid, I have nothing better to do with my time. I guess . . . I mean . . . I kind of like doing it like a conversation. I mean, you're not *saying* your bits, I'm reading them from something you wrote forever ago, but . . .

Sorry, stalling, I know.

[Pause]

Anyways, this is so late because the part that I don't know what— I don't know how to— it's right at the beginning, and it works best if I do this in order, but . . . without knowing what to say . . . how to start . . . You really don't beat around the bush do you?

[Pause]

As . . . crazy as it sounded at first, I've been trying to think about what you said about Emma logically. I mean, it's not something I ever thought . . . The thing is, when you want something for so long, sometimes it gets . . .

[Pause]

Anyway, I *am* thinking about what you said, and . . . I don't know. Not that I'm doubting you at all, but just . . . I don't know what I want to do about it.

[Pauses, then takes a deep breath]

Sorry. You don't need to hear-- you don't want-- I think I'll leave it there.

[Pause]

Hey, if you're allowed to long-distance mother me over my arm, I'm allowed to long-distance mother *you* over your homework. The last thing we need on top of everything else this year is you failing one of your classes, all because you nee— *wanted* to write to me. And yes, I *am* talking about French. Speaking of which, didn't you mention sometime along in here that you wanted to do a tour of *Europe* one day? Guess what country is *in* Europe? And guess what language they speak there? Gee, maybe speaking French will come in handy!

[Pause]

[his voice becomes hesitant again] It's not that I didn't expect enthusiastic support, it's just . . . *I'm* not that sure about this, and at the mere mention of the idea you were all for it. I don't know, it's like you think *of course* I'm going to be a counselor, and I'm going to be fantastic at it, and . . . I don't even *know* yet if that's really what I want to do. It's just something I want to try. It was . . . a little overwhelming that you have so much more faith in me than, well, me.

[Pause]

Oh Zoe, you can barely snark at me, when you *know* I'm not going to take you seriously. We both know you're not going to be able to snark at strangers. But . . . yeah, let's people watch sometime. That sounds like fun.

[Pause]

Just let me know once you get your work schedule, okay Zo? Where and when, and I'll be there. Wouldn't want to miss my own birthday celebration!

[Pause]

Hey now, you used to tell me you were blushing all the time! Why is it so embarrassing now? I mean, yeah, okay, I'm gonna tease you about it, but I don't mean to be mean.

[Pause. He takes a deep breath, then stops himself and pauses again.]

Hey Zoe? Remember when I said I liked your questions best? Is there a reason you haven't been coming up with many lately? I mean, I know you did the majority of questions early on, and you're entitled to a break, but . . . if you don't like the questions, we can stop, I promise. I just . . . I miss them, you know? Sure, mine are hard, but yours were more fun, more silly, more... I don't even know. But, maybe, you know, some silly questions might help you find bubbly Zoe again? Anyway, I'm gonna answer mine, but I'm not going to give you more, just in case you really *do* want a break.

[Pause]

One. Hardest question is probably one of mine too. I have a tendency to see a question and decide that I really wanted to know your answer without thinking about the fact that you'd turn it right around on me.

Two. Um . . . if it's all right, I'd rather not talk about my biggest surprise, okay? Or . . . well, we could go with my Mom I guess, and her whole story. It may not be the— Well, okay, yeah, that one works.

And three, I would like to complete high school. Only one more year to go!

[Pause]

All right, well, I— um. I hope you're okay -- you seemed really... and I hope you know that if you need a . . . a friend to help you

get through your . . . your “stuff” . . . I’m here for you. Like always.

Feel better *chica*. I’ll talk to you soon.