

I sit in my room, clothes thrown all over the floor, my Lana Del Rey posters peeling from the corners, my bed far from made. My phone goes off with its signature ding. I shut my laptop mid-scroll on tumblr and reach for my phone.

Up for FaceTime? The text reads.

It was Noah. "Crap," I curse under my breath as I scramble to get up. I quickly pull off my stained, over sized t-shirt and run to my closet to get one of my new tops. I violently yank the hairband out from the messy nest atop my head. Spraying some dry shampoo into the frizzy mane, I throw handfuls of clothes to the chair across the room. After making my bed and turning on my fairy lights, I breathe a breath of relief. Crawling onto the bed I open my laptop and click on the FaceTime button.

After ten slow rings, Noah's bright face finally appears on the screen. He is wearing his Dr. Who t-shirt and his hair is wet and flat -- a new look compared to his usual perfect Quiff.

"Talk about my hair, Alexa, and I'll murder you," he greets me with, along with a strict, serious face.

I laugh loudly and smile at how easy it was for him to put me in a good mood. He can no longer keep a straight face, breaking into a goofy grin that makes my stomach do acrobatics.

"How was your day?" he asks, leaning his chin on his hands.

"The usual -- my mom gave me her famous 'you-need-to-get-a-life-outside-of-the-internet' speech, and I slammed the door in her face and blogged for three hours straight. I also had a tuna sandwich..." I ramble on.

"Well I, on the other hand, had a spectacular day," he interrupted, excitement obvious on his features. I furrow my eyebrows as I wait for him to continue.

"I reached 1 thousand YouTube subscribers!" he exclaims, shooting his long arms into the air.

"No! Noah, that's amazing! I'm so proud of you," I say honestly. Noah and I had met through his YouTube channel, his obsession with the internet and adorably awkward personality catching my eye. I immediately wrote a cheesy comment on one of his videos and then we became fast friends. After some FaceTime calls and text messages, we became more.

"God, I wish I could you hug you right now," he says with a sigh, his wide smile becoming more of a frown.

I try not to think about it often. The fact that I can't hug him, or kiss him, or just have him near me. In the beginning it was okay, but we've been together for 5 months now and it's getting almost unbearable.

"Hey Lex," Noah interrupts me from my thoughts. "Um I was thinking recently, and like, I mean we don't have to -" he mutters nervously.

"Spit it out Noah," I giggle, my heart fluttering at his adorable shy side.

"What if we met... I mean I only live a couple hours away, and I'm getting my license this week. I could drive up there and we could meet at a cafe or something..." he trails off.

As he talks I imagine it in my head. I would jump out of my mom's car onto the concrete. Noah would be standing there, his tall slim body leaned against the cafe wall. He would be wearing his favorite pair of light blue jeans, and a blue t-shirt, with his hair styled perfectly. I would run up to him, wearing a skirt that matches the bow in my casually braided hair. He would catch me in his arms, holding me tightly to his chest. We ignore my mom hiding behind the sun visor.

"And we could get ice cream, and I could show you around town, and we could watch a movie," I add on, excitement buzzing through my veins.

"So you want to?" Noah says, the corners of his mouth curling into a smile.

"Yes, you idiot, of course I want to," I rolled my eyes, but it was obvious how happy I was with the giant grin on my face. We settled on details and then started talking about some twitter post that made us laugh, until I heard the familiar voice of Noah's mom, calling him to feed their cat.

I wake up to the beautiful sound of my alarm beeping like a madman. I slam my hand down on the snooze button, and am about to flop back down to my cocoon of warmth when I realize what day it is. Today is the day. Today is the day that I meet Noah for the first time. I set my alarm for 10 even though we're meeting at 1:00, with the intention of straightening my hair and looking less like a zombie.

I drag my feet into the bathroom and reach for my hair straightener. When I don't find it in my usual drawer, I begin to panic.

"Mooom where is my hair straightener!??", I shout at the top of my lungs.

"Oh I gave it to Tessa's friend for her ballet recital," my mom says loudly from the kitchen.

Oh no. Nononononono. I stare at myself in the mirror. My hair looks especially frizzy today. I begin to try to flatten it with some product. When I finally manage to get it flatter, I start to imitate a braid I saw in a YouTube tutorial. It takes me about ten minutes to realize that I am not going to accomplish the complicated braid.

Sighing, I decide to do a boring side braid. When I'm finally semi-pleased with my hair I begin to put on my mask of makeup. I attempt to cover my freckles, realizing that Noah doesn't even know I have freckles.

An hour later I'm finally ready, not completely pleased with how I look, but I know it's the best that I can do.

"Alexa, come here and eat some breakfast," my mom shouts from the kitchen. I get up from my bed and walk into our small eating chamber. I jump onto the white marble counter and turn to face my mother.

"So what time are you two meeting today?" she asks, pouring black coffee into a mug.

"One," I reply.

"Are you nervous?" she asks, looking deep into my eyes. We had always had this close relationship, ever since my dad left us. It was always my mom, my sister, and me against the world.

"I don't know. I mean we've been talking for months, so it's not like i'm meeting a stranger."

She replies with something but I don't hear her, too engulfed in my thoughts about Noah. I do this a lot ; zone out because I'm so focused on him. I can't believe that I am finally going to see the birthmark on his cheek, and the way his eyes crinkle when he smiles. I will actually be able to see his feet today and not just the waist-up.

"Alexa!" my mom interrupts my thoughts.

"Huh what?" I say coming back into reality.

"We have to go, I need to pick up Tessa from Lucy's house, and her mom said she has some gossip about some of the moms in the PTA. I can't miss that." I roll my eyes at her ridiculousness. I watch her stand up and grab her prescription sunglasses and place them on her head. We walk in silence to the car, and I open the door and tuck my feet under my legs. My mom switches on some mainstream song that I've heard a million times. As she starts the car I register the weather and curse myself for not bringing a cardigan. The Portland sky is full of dark grey clouds.

The annoying pop song ends, and instead, an acoustic alternative song vibrates through the car. As we get closer to the cafe I start to zone back into my thoughts. This time though, it's not my day dream world; you know that little voice in the back of your head? Suddenly it's screaming at me. I'm meeting Noah in real life. Real life where there are no filters, or screen brightness, or editing apps.

I feel my hands start to sweat. I'm not ready to step out of my computer screen. What if he's been lying to me this whole time? I feel a knot in my stomach. Not the cute butterflies you get before your first kiss, but more like I have a boulder in my stomach. What if this relationship doesn't mean as much to him as it means to me? I don't know the first thing about relationships. I have no clue what I'm doing!

"Pull over."

"Lex, you ok-

"Pull over!" I yell. The car swerves off the road onto the side of the highway. I throw open the car door and lean forward, placing my hands on the highway railing. I don't even have enough time to move the small pieces of hair from my face before I throw up on the road. I can hear my mom come to my side and say something but I can't understand her. I continue to vomit and tears start to well in my eyes. When I have released all the content from my stomach, I turn to throw myself into my mom's arms. Now I'm sobbing, my breaths coming out short and panicked.

"Alexa, honey it's okay. I'm here. You're okay. Oh, my baby," my mom comforts.

"I can't do this. I can't do this. I can't do this," I sob, breaths still short.

"Come on honey, let's get back into the car." We clamber into the car. My phone buzzes in my pocket. I unlock it to find three new text messages:

I'm here :)

Are you on your way?

The last text is a selfie of him in the cafe. My heart aches at the excitement evident in his face

"It's okay not to be ready Alexa," my mom says sweetly, reaching over to squeeze my hand, "he will understand."

"This is not how I imagined today."

"Love is never how you imagine it to be," she says, laughing quietly. Knowing what I have to do, I unlock my phone again and type quickly.

I can't do this.

I'm so sorry.

I'm not ready.

I love you.

I'm sorry.

I send the texts quickly, knowing that I will back out if I think about it too much. I panic at how long he takes to text back. It's probably only a couple minutes but it feels like centuries. When my phone finally buzzes again, I nearly drop it in my panicked state.

It's okay lex I want you to be comfortable.

I'm not having the greatest hair day anyway;) I love you more.

I smile at how understanding he is. I don't know what I did to deserve him, but I decide not to dwell on it too much. My mom reads the texts over my shoulder, and nods in understanding as she starts up the car to go home.

A couple hours later I'm back in my room, my eyes almost shut by how exhausted I am after such an emotional day. A little box appears on my computer screen, signaling me

that Noah wants to FaceTime. I don't even bother to take down my hair as I accept the call.

"Hi!" Noah says smiling.

"Hi babe, I'm so sorry about today, I guess I got scared."

"It's okay Alexa, I can wait until your ready," he says sweetly.

"I love you so much."

"I love you more then that one llama GIF on tumblr," he chuckles.

I place my hand over my heart dramatically, "what an honor." We both laugh loudly. I lean forward to get some dust off my computer screen.

"Hey, I never noticed you had freckles," he says, examining the small dots on my face. I cover my face with my pillow insecurely.

"Don't cover them, they're cute."