

PRIVATE CHAT

By J. Gordon

INT. LAPTOP SCREENS - DAY

Harper and Kim are talking on zoom:

HARPER

Don't say anything. If she doesn't know then you don't have to feel bad.

KIM

I mean, I'm gonna feel bad no matter what.

Eliza signs into the meeting, her screen pops up.

KIM (CONT'D)

There she is.

ELIZA

(talking silently)

KIM / HARPER

You're muted. / You're on mute.

ELIZA

My bad. I always do that.

HARPER

We thought you'd be gone by now.

ELIZA

We were supposed leave two days ago but now everything's shut down again.

HARPER

This virus sucks. I mean, obviously.

KIM

Remember when I was feeling bad for you 'cause your birthday happened during quarantine? I just realized... literally everyone is going to have a birthday during quarantine.

Eliza puts on a homemade mask

ELIZA

So... I learned to sew. You like?

KIM

Cute.

ELIZA

If you choose a fabric, I'll make you one.

HARPER

I don't know. I go back and forth on the whole mask thing.

KIM

You're so ridiculous.

HARPER

I'm serious. I heard that for some people, wearing a mask actually makes you more likely to catch it.

ELIZA

That couldn't be more wrong. I swear the amount of misinformation.

KIM

Did you see those kids who rented out a warehouse to throw a 'Rona Party?

HARPER

I'd go.

KIM

Shut up.

HARPER

I would.

ELIZA

I wanna try to get one more hike in before I leave. That's like, the thing I'm most sad about. I'm gonna miss our hikes.

Silent BEAT. Harper eyes peak at the corner of her screen, she smiles.

ELIZA (CONT'D)

What?

KIM

What?

HARPER

What do you mean "what"?

ELIZA
What are you chatting?

HARPER
We're not. We're just sitting here.
Normal conversation.

ELIZA
You're not sending private chats
back and forth? Like you both stop
talking then I see you typing and
laughing.

KIM
We're not chatting.

HARPER
Wow. You're like the definition of
paranoid.

ELIZA
Whatever.
(then)
How 'bout Thursday?

KIM
What's on Thursday?

ELIZA
I'm asking if you guys wanna hike.

KIM
Yes. Count me in.

Eliza looks at her screen closely.

HARPER
Shit.

ELIZA
Nice. You forgot to send that one
privately huh?

HARPER
That's literally the first message
I sent.

ELIZA
Is that true Kim?

KIM
I don't wanna get in the middle of
it.

ELIZA
(scoffs)
So fucked up. You know what...?

Eliza types a private chat to Kim.

KIM
Wait. Are you serious?

HARPER
What? What did you type?

ELIZA
I'm leaving anyway so, you two...
have a nice life.

Eliza signs off.

HARPER
What did she type? Kim? Whatever
she said... it's not true!

*Choose one of the following endings:

-Kim is fuming mad, looking at Harper with the disgust of betrayal.

-Kim is laughing hysterically. We can tell it's at Harper's expense.

-Kim is looking at Harper with a growing sense of fear. Discovering how dangerous she is.