

READING EXERCISE

The Adventures of Lola Badiola

CHAPTER 19: THE BATHROOM

Lola took another sip of red wine as she listened to her blind date telling a funny anecdote about his travels. He worked as an engineer for the Red Bull Formula 1 racing team and spent nine months of the year travelling from one major city to another. His favorite places were Montreal, Adelaide and Vienna. He was intelligent, charming and he loved the music of Leonard Cohen. As Concha had said earlier that evening, he was perfect for Lola.

But Lola's mind was distracted. It fluctuated between the conversation at the dinner table about the skyscrapers in Melbourne and the Ferris wheel in Osaka, to the conversations in her head about JBlock, Ruiz de Velasco and the cyberattack.

By the time they ordered dessert Lola was feeling a little too drunk for a Wednesday evening. She excused herself from the table and headed to the ladies toilets. Concha followed her.

"So, what do you think?"

"About what?" Lola replied, as she touched up her make up in front of the bathroom mirror.

"About your blind date!"

"Oh, he's lovely."

Lola paused and then turned to Concha and said, "What's his name again?"

"Come on!" Concha shook her head in genuine frustration. She had made a lot of effort to get these two together and she wanted it to work. "What's wrong with you this evening?"

Lola stopped retouching her make up, put down her mascara brush and then burst into tears - big, loud, uncontrollable sobs.

Concha opened her arms and Lola fell into them like a tall, gangly teenager in need of some motherly love. For a moment, they didn't say anything, they just rocked from side to side in the middle of the bathroom. A couple of other women came and went, smiling sympathetically as they passed.

"He wants to ruin me, Concha!"

"What?"

"He wants to end my career!"

"Who?"

"Ruiz de Velasco! That posh bastard!"

"How?"

"He's lying about me! Saying I was fired! Saying I'm a criminal!"

"That posh bastard!"

"I've made the worst decision of my life!"

"Ok, ok, calm down. Let it all out."

Lola took a few deep breaths and gradually regained her composure. She caught sight of her face in the bathroom mirror.

"Oh god, look at me now. What a disaster! I feel so sorry for my blind date."

She washed her hands and face and took a fresh paper towel from the dispenser. Then she turned to Concha with a smile and said.

"What was his name again?"

The two women burst into laughter. And when they had calmed down Lola dried her face, retouched her mascara and straightened her hair.

"Thanks for listening, Concha, I needed that."

"That's what friends are for."

"Come on, we should get back to our men."

"Are you sure you're ok?"

"Yep. Let's go!"

They had one last hug and then Lola picked up her handbag, took a final look at herself in the mirror and opened the bathroom door. The two women walked confidently back to their table.

Lola sat down, leaned forward and in a quiet voice said to her blind date.

"Listen, I haven't really been myself tonight."

"Oh?"

"It's a long story."

"Ok"

"Would you mind if we started this blind date from the beginning again?" She smiled at him playfully.

"Sure." he replied.

She stretched out her hand and said: "Hi, my name's Lola Badiola. What's your name?"

READING COMPREHENSION

1. What does Lola's blind date do for a living?
2. What cities has he travelled to and what are his favorite?
3. What is Lola thinking about during the dinner?
4. How much alcohol do you think Lola has drunk that evening?
5. Where do Concha and Lola go to have a private conversation?
6. Why is Concha annoyed with Lola at first?
7. Why does Lola burst into tears?
8. How does Concha handle the situation?
9. Why do the two women end up laughing?
10. What does Lola suggest to her blind date when she returns to the table?