

Song 3

Song 3 🎶 Bring Me To Fight

The mailman put a yellow envelop in our mailbox exactly a week a er that, that contained the results from the Holy Trinity High School interview.

Of course, I didn't even think to check the mail as I le the gringo's house that day and walked over to my best friend Leti's across the street. I walked into the living room from the front door and gave her Nana a kiss on the cheek. Nana was so old that no one knew exactly what her age was. Even though she had trouble making her way around by herself, she was the sweetest person I'd ever met in my 17 years of life and she never failed to make me feel like I was her own great granddaughter.

"Bendición?" I asked her, the traditional way to greet an elder that was never in use in my house.

"Dios te bendiga," she told me in a trembling and raspy voice.

Nana's daughter was Leti's grandma. She barreled out of the kitchen to see who it was. Contrary to Nana, Grammie Socorro didn't like me that much, as seen by the sudden downturn of her mouth. "Oh, it's you." I repeated my greeting to her and she spat out the blessing sorely by the sheer power of politeness, but I could tell it tasted sour on her tongue. "Leti's in her room, getting ready for who knows which party this time, bleh."

I racked my brain trying to remember which party there was tonight but came out blank. Socorro gave me one more nasty look before going back into the kitchen, as though I was the reason why her granddaughter spent most of her time party-hopping, when in reality I barely went to a third of the parties. I liked to dance only a bit less than I liked singing because, hey, Latina al fin When the rhythm found me, it found me. But I wasn't a huge fan of the local party scene. One thing was a wedding or a quinceañera, but a teenage party was filled with many more hormones than I knew what to do with. And it hadn't gone well for me in the past.

Nana's chuckle brought my focus back to her. She squeezed my hand. "Cuídame a Leti, sí?"

"I'll try," I said, seeing as she focused on the TV again.

Leti's parents were probably at work at this time, so I didn't find anybody else in the house until I reached my best friend's room and found her in the middle of her version of getting ready. Half dressed and half made up but fully dancing to Jerry Rivera in the middle of her room. I ignored all of this by virtue of having seen it so much already, and flopped on her bed.

"What's the party this time?" I asked her as I hugged her pillow.

She whirled around and clasped her hands in front of her. "You're kidding, right? It's only the best party before the start of the school year. No one's going to remember any other party we had this summer, except for this one. It's-"

I raised my palm up to silence her. "Let me guess, it's DeAndre's party."

She squealed and bounced on her heels. Okay, so DeAndre was the hottest guy, not just in our class, but in the whole school. He'd even been recruited to do modeling. I'd even seen rich white ladies double take at him. I'd be lying if I said that I was immune to him, because I certainly wasn't, but my favorite part about him was that he was like, a genuinely nice guy. He didn't do any of those boasting macho shenanigans that were so common in these parts and got a lot of boys in trouble. No, DeAndre was clean and did well in school.

And besides, despite his god-like status, he treated me well. Like I mattered, too. So I developed a bit of a crush on him since sophomore year. No one knew about this, especially not Leti, whose crush on him was legendary.

"Well, have fun."

Her head did this thing where it pulled back a little just as her expression morphed into a perfect Latina resting bitch face. "That almost sounds as if you're not coming."

"Five points for Gryndor," I said.

Leti rolled her eyes at me. "Don't tell me you're still moping about that interview, chica."

"I'm not." At her look I deflated. "Fine, I am. I can't believe I botched that up so badly."

She turned to her mirror and gasped as she realized that she hadn't even finished her contouring. As she set out to do just that, she spared me no slack as she said, "Frankly I can't believe it either. You're the responsible out of the two of us, and you really wanted that."

"Gee, thanks." I hugged her pillow harder.

She glanced at me through her mirror as she evened out the different colors on her face. She'd learned everything she knew from Youtube, but I couldn't be convinced that a pro makeup artist could possibly be better than her. Leti was a pretty girl, but a er she was done she was stunning.

"Things happen for a reason. Maybe we're supposed to be together during our senior year, a er all." She sucked her cheeks like a fish so she could blend the sides of her face. When she was satisfied with the look, she continued, "I mean, do you really think it'd be a walk in the park to be surrounded with stupid rich kids who have no clue how hard life really is?"

I rolled my eyes. "I didn't apply for that. I don't care about the rich kids, but I'd really like to become one, by myself."

"And Trinity is going to get you there?" She turned to me with a tilt to her head.

Now irritated for sure, I threw her pillow away and got up from her bed. "Maybe not, but it'll definitely give me more tools to get there than staying in the barrio."

Oh, I knew I'd done it. Her entire face flared in fury and even the thick makeup couldn't hide her angry flush. We'd had this discussion since the moment I told her I wanted to apply to Trinity, and I kinda got it. We'd spent our entire lives spitting curses at that school and all the people associated with it for thinking they were so much better than us. It was easy to think that you were better when you were born ahead by a merit not your own.

"Do you not get it or do you refuse to get it?" I didn't want to bother Nana or bring Grammie Socorro running over, so I didn't yell like I'd have loved to. "What I think about the Trinity kids hasn't changed and it also doesn't matter, because if I can take advantage of their privilege I will. But I guess that doesn't matter now, and instead of making me feel better you're just picking a fight."

Leti sni ed. "Okay, I love you and I support you. It's just that sometimes I wish you were prouder of who you are instead of trying to become who you're not."

Her phone pinged then, and I was glad for it because I felt hot all over and my eyes were prickling again. I'd already done too much crying over this entire fiasco for the entire past week, and I just wanted to forget about the whole thing. Leti was probably right. I didn't know what I'd got in my head, thinking that somehow I could better myself around a bunch of people whose interest was to step on me to raise themselves. Going to Trinity wasn't going to get rid of everything I didn't like that made me me It was probably only going to make it stick out like a sore thumb instead.

Maybe I'd screwed up, yes, but maybe one last year with Leti, parties in the barrio and then heading out to a nice community college wouldn't be so bad.

She finished texting and I didn't even have to ask who had been on the other side because it was written all over her face. "DeAndre's actually going to come pick me up on his way back from the liquor store. So as I finish my makeup, please do us the favor of finding something nicer in my closet for you to wear than that t-shirt and mom jeans."

I folded my arms. "Now I know you're just being rude. You know your clothes don't fit me."

"I have some cool stu from our chubby days that you can try."

Our chubby days had been three years ago and I doubted any of that was in fashion anymore. We'd both decided to go on an intense diet and Leti had emerged drop dead gorgeous and curvaceous. Meanwhile I'd emerged one size bigger.

"No, thanks. Besides, I'm not going."

She stopped in the mid of eye lining. "Don't make me force you."

"Please, as if you could," as I said this I grinned and saluted. "Don't do anything I wouldn't do, adiós!"

Then I ran out the door, giggling as she shrieked. I knew she wouldn't follow me because precious seconds were ticking between getting ready and seeing her crush, and while I could appreciate that she wanted me to have fun too, it was just too bad that our ideas of what fun was had dried apart a while ago. I said goodbye to the older ladies as I le out the front door and almost smacked right into DeAndre's chest.

"Whoa," he said, all deep and manly. I realized a beat later that his hands held me steady by my arms. "You okay, V?"

I looked up and only saw a mass of my hair, so I pushed it away and his perfect smile was revealed to me. To my utter horror I sighed aloud. And then I stammered.

"Uh, um, hi."

His eyes twinkled. "You should be thanking me. If I hadn't been in the right spot your face would have met the floor intimately."

It was about to do that even though he was still holding me. I stepped back with as much grace as I could manage. "Thanks, but to be honest I wouldn't have stumbled at all if you hadn't suddenly appeared in front of me."

He laughed, not at all bothered by the fact that my temper chose the worse possible moments to come out. I wished I'd said something cute like he was my savior or something, anything that made me seem more like a sweet girl.

I had two modes only, shy and angry. Shy when faced with someone else. Angry at myself. There didn't seem to be any in between.

"You're probably right," he said, easily putting my hackles to rest. "By the way, are you coming to my party?"

I patted my hair firmly out of the way and looked down at my shoes. They were white back in the day and were now full of scribbles and drawings and stains of who knew what.

"I don't think so, no."

"Aw, why? It'll be so much fun." For other people, I thought. He gave me another smile of the kind that got him a modeling contract signed. "I was hoping you could even sing, like in the old days."

The old days, when I thought I could attract attention for my singing talent instead of my frame. Before I realized that nobody really saw past the latter.

"Sorry, I don't do that anymore." Then I shi ed topic, because I'd had enough of feeling inadequate at least for today. "Anyway, Leti's not ready yet so you'll have to keep Nana some company."

"I can do that," he said with a nod.

"And DeAndre?" I debated whether to say this, but I decided that it was okay. If Leti got pissed at me later, so be it. We fought as much as we had fun together, anyway. "Could you please just ask Leti out once and for all? You've been making her wait for too long."

His dark eyes were wide as saucers. "I, uh." I gave him my own version of the resting bitch face, which usually didn't carry a lot of power but worked this time. "Okay, I will."

I saluted and le . My job was done here.

I returned home, ready to face another night of the gringo getting drunk and ma fussing about baby Victor, but instead I walked into silence. I found ma and her husband sitting together in the kitchen, reading from a paper. They looked up as I walked in.

"Vera Maria," my ma said, and I knew by the tone and the use of my two names that I was in deep shit. My mind scrambled to find the possible cause, but the truth was that I was a goodie two shoes. I couldn't think of a single reason. "We need to talk."

"Okay." I sat in front of them. I had a peeling, fed maybe by the air, that sombre looks on their faces, or by the peculiar charge in the air, that something had changed and it had something to do with me. And that whatever it was, they didn't like it. "What's going on?"

Ma looked down at the paper. "You have a letter here from Holy Trinity High School." I broke into a sweat in the course of a single second. I didn't even know such a feat was possible. "It says that you've been accepted to the program."

SONG OF THE DAY: Evanescence - Bring Me To Life