**The Last Buzz**

I pushed open the cold glass door of the Chinese restaurant. The walls were dark wood, and the lighting was dim. Smells of soy sauce drifted in the air. I took off my wool scarf and unzipped my olive green jacket. I pulled my curls out from my jacket and rested them on my right shoulder. Goosebumps covered my arms and hands and I felt chills on my tan cheeks. I then heard a familiar sound.

“Yeah, so I’ll see you in an hour? We can go over everything then. Oh, I’ll talk to you about it later! Yup! Sounds good. Bye.” The familiar voice came from a middle-aged man in a booth towards the far back left of the restaurant. He set the phone down on the table.

I walked toward him, approaching the two-person booth in the shadows of the corner. He had short black hair and tan skin. You could assume from his smooth face, that he shaved that morning. He was wearing a button down shirt and a tie, a little fancy for Ritz Asia. He had wrinkles around his forehead and mouth. I sat down across from him.

“Hello, Dad.”

He smiled at me, but his Blackberry remained lit up in front of him. It was all I saw.

“You look great. I’m so happy to see you. How long has it been? A month?” he asked.

The phone buzzed and lit up. He watched my eyes gaze over to the little black object off to his right.

“Three, actually,” I said.

“What?”

“It’s been three months since I’ve seen you, Dad.” His phone buzzed again and my eyes peered over to the black rectangle sitting next to the sugar packets and spare chopsticks.

“Don’t worry. It’ll stop buzzing in a second.”

“Will it, Dad?” I sneered. He ignored this comment.

“So, I already ordered. I’ll get the waiter's attention for you.” He nodded at a man behind the sushi bar as if they were friends. He came right over.

“Hi. I’ll just have a water, miso soup, and a California roll. Thank you.” The tall waiter nodded at me and took my menu.

“So how have you been?” my dad asked, watching the waiter walk away.

“Pretty normal. I just finished moving in. Actually there is something I wanted to talk to you about.”

I watched his head nod, but his eyes slowly peer down as his phone buzzed from a text again. What was annoying at first was now just obnoxious. I kept talking, but inched my hand closer to the phone. One. Two. Three. I snatched it and snuck my hand under the table, wrapping my fingers around the cold black phone. I felt chills rush up my arm.

“That’s not funny. Give it back.” He stared at me with his brown eyes.

“No,” I said trying not to smirk.

“Give it to me.” He saw no humor in the situation. Not one part of him was going along with my joke.

“No. You haven’t listened to one word I’ve said since I’ve sat down."

“That isn’t true. You are over reacting.”

“Chill, Dad.” I handed back the phone. “So as I was saying, there is something I wanted to talk to you about.” With the phone back in his hands, it was as if I wasn’t saying anything at all. He didn’t nod or show any signs of listening.

No words were exchanged until our food came. He finally placed his phone down when he saw the food.

“Well, that looks good,” he said as the waiter put my sushi and soup in front of me. He had chicken and broccoli placed in front of him. With our heads down, we began to eat. I would have asked him to pass the soy sauce, but I could feel the tension between my lips. It was better not to say anything. He then broke the silence.

“So how’s your mom? Don’t tell her I asked, but I’m curious how she’s doing,” he said in a soft voice.

“She’s hanging in there.” Somehow my mom always made it into my conversations with my dad. “Why don’t you ask her yourself?”

“You and I both know that’s a bad idea,” he said and then grinned. “Anyways, I don’t care *that* much.”

Right when my dad was about to ask another question about her, his phone buzzed, and buzzed, and kept buzzing. Another phone call – no surprise there.

“I am so sorry,” he said checking the caller ID. “I have to take this.” He nodded even though the person he was talking to couldn’t see him. Something about the nodding and gestures annoyed me. He talked for about five minutes before seeing me watching him. “I have to go. I’ll call you back later.”

He continued to fiddle with his phone, texting and checking emails. Nothing had changed from the last time I saw him. I had no interest sitting at this table anymore, talking and eating with myself. I decided it was time to wrap this dinner up and just tell him what I had to say.

“Dad, I’m getting married.”

“You’re what? Getting married? Congratulations!” His eyes widened and he threw his hands towards me, finally placing his phone on the table. My mother was against me inviting him, but he *was* my father. I had to have him there.

“Yes, I’m getting married, Dad. I would love it if you came.”

“Great! Oh, that’s wonderful. Let me check my work schedule-”

“Your work schedule?” I said and then laughed. This had to be a joke.

“Yeah, it’ll just take a second,” he answered. Wouldn’t your father *clear* his schedule to come to his daughter's wedding? He fiddled with the always buzzing phone, answered texts while he checked his calendar.

“Okay so the second week in June looks free – potential business trip the next morning, though,” he said.

“But, Dad.”

“Or maybe the third week of June. That might be better.”

“Dad, I already picked a date.”

“Oh, July 7th looks decent actually. Eh, you might just want to push it off a few months to be safe. Let me just call my assistant to see when I have an opening.” He dialed a number and shifted his body, with his head facing the window and his back angled toward me. What was once a two-person booth just turned into two separate tables.

I rolled my eyes and got up. He didn’t notice. I put on my jacket. He didn’t notice. I walked away from the corner booth and paid the waiter.

I turned around one last time to see if he realized I was gone. His face was planted in his phone; his eyes were sealed on his screen, mouthing the words he was typing. He didn’t notice. Smells of fried rice and lo mein noodles continued to fill the air. It became nauseating. The last thing I needed was that dumb phone buzzing at my wedding. I placed my hands on the cold glass door, pushed it open, and shut it behind me.

If he still to talk he could always text me.