

Interchange Conference Transcript

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[Message #1 02:17:43 PM, Tuesday, April 26, 2011]

karen wong:

Lola (51-75): After Lola's mother tells her that she has cancer, Lola remarks that it's "...in that bathroom...where you begin" (54). What does she mean? Does her life improve or worsen after that point? How does her running away compare with her experiences when she's sent to live in the Dominican Republic? Consider issues related to her gender, her family relationships, and her cultural identity, and include in your response a supporting quote using the MLA format.

[Message #2 11:33:21 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Russell Hanssen:

"Where you begin" (54) is an incredibly powerful statement, especially when used in relation to something like Lola's story. This is where she chooses to start her description of her own life, the point of reference she uses for all other events. It is not her first memory, she mentions things that happened before, but anything else seems almost inconsequential to her like the rest of her life a function of that moment in the bathroom realizing that everything is about to change.

Lola leaves her home twice but under almost polar opposite circumstances. The first time she leaves of her own volition and against her mother's will and the second time as a punishment from her mother to teach her a lesson, but not the ones that she learned. Lola's first escape was made out of desperation. she ran to the first place she could because she thought that she couldn't stand to go back and she ended up relying on someone else and not really changing her circumstances for the better. she called Oscar out of desperation but had to know that her mother would find out and bring her back, so as much as she fought it she had surrendered as soon as she told Oscar where to meet her. Her second, this time enforced, escape was her trip to the D.R. When she arrived she was given the support and space she needed to grow and finally achieved the coming of age that she had run away to look for in the first place. She found her place on the track team and a partner she could treat as an equal, she found her roots and had time to find herself. This is why she ends the chapter with the same words, "I was waiting to begin." (75) She equates going to the Dominican Republic with the earlier starting point for her narrative, a reference that she uses to measure out the rest of her life.

[Message #3 11:35:00 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Katie Rivette:

To start off Lola and her mother, Beli, never really had a good relationship, because Beli was extremely controlling over Lola. Lola's finding out of her mother's cancer definitely sparked the desire to change her life. She now felt that she could rebel against her mother and her rules, "I was Fourteen and

desperate for my own patch of the world that had nothing to do with her" (Diaz 55). Lola began to stay out late, skip school, and cut off all her hair, which really angered her mother. And then the cherry on top, she ran away to live with a 19 year old boy in New Jersey and didn't contact her family for months. At first Lola thought everything was great with her boyfriend, Aldo, but she later realizes that she may have made a mistake being with him, "By November I was so finished....So a couple days later... I called home" (66-67). This is the call that would again cause change to her life. Beli found and snatched Lola back and sent her to live in the Dominican Republic with her grandmother. This was the change that Lola really needed. In the Dominican Republic Lola was going to school and joined the track team which made her begin to truly feel good about herself, "So much had changed these last months, in my head, my heart" (71).

[Message #4 11:36:31 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Russell Hanssen:

That's a nice recap Katie but does Lola's life change for the better or for the worse when she runs away?

[Message #5 11:37:23 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Nayeli Molina:

By saying it's in the bathroom where you begin, I think she means that that's where a drastic thing took place. That is where her life changes. From then on, her life was different and it was as though that is where her life begins. Lola's life got worse from then on. Lola and her mother would argue with each other all the time and Lola became rebellious. She shaved her head and ran away to live with her boyfriend. She was unhappy while she was living with her boyfriend because she lived in a room full of kitty litter and she had to get a job. Once her mom found her and sent her to the Dominican Republic, her life changed again, but this time I think it was for the better. She enjoyed living with her grandmother. They got along and she would go to school. She made friends and began to dress like a normal "Dominican girl". She even got a new boyfriend. She was fitting in more than before. When she was in the U.S, she didn't really fit in. she stood out because she didn't fit the norms. She mentioned how she cut her hair because she liked how people would stare. She wanted to stand out. The relationships she had, such as her mothers, weren't great either. They didn't get along and in the D.R she got along very well with her grandmother.

[Message #6 11:40:47 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

karen wong:

In forging their identities, inevitably some teens go to opposite extremes, unfortunately to the point of self destruction. Arguably that's the case with Lola, who becomes a goth punk rocker, as if to reject all Dominican expectations of what's proper for her as a female, which isn't so problematic, but her running away eventually is. She cuts short her hair and not only does her mom insult her as "Fea" (54)- Ugly, but she deals with her peers and even extended family members hurling insults her way because she has dared to be different from other feminine oriented Latinos. Her choices are motivated in large

part because she wants to distance herself from her mother. Lola admits, "Things had been bad between us all year. How could they not have been? She was my Old World Dominican mother and I was her only daughter, the one she had raised up herself with the help of nobody, which meant it was her duty to keep me crushed under heel. I was fourteen and desperate for my own patch of world that had nothing to do with her" (55). If she associates Dominican traditions with her mother, then of course she'd reject them. Yet also her mother is abusive, to the point that Lola has little self esteem, "For a long time I let her say what she wanted about me, and what was worse, for a long time I believed her" (56). She needed to get out, if only to begin to recognize her own talents and qualities. What's sad is that she seemed to only have one option for escape, and that was with a boy who seemed to love her at first, but daily life became a grind. She seems to believe that she didn't have much to offer beyond her sexuality, with her first sexual encounter with him a major disappointment. She also feels she lost whatever leverage she once had with him, "I started to think that maybe it was like in the books; as soon as I lost my virginity I lost my power" (65). That's a sad statement about their relationship. She also gives up her education to work at a fast food establishment on the boardwalk. Interestingly enough, however, deep inside the entire time she wants her family to come after her, as if to acknowledge that they do care. That's ultimately what she wanted, and why even though she was getting away, she went back to her mom. Going to the DR was the exact opposite, an escape but a positive one...

[Message #7 11:40:54 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Russell Hanssen:

Nayeli, Why do you think that Lola Adapted so much better in the D.R.

[Message #8 11:43:06 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Katie Rivette:

Well Russell, I think that when she runs away she hits her rock bottom, because toward the end she has no money, no job, and an asshole for a boyfriend. I think she needed to run away and hit rock bottom (to realize that she needed to change) in order for her life to really begin to change which is what happens when she goes to the DR.

[Message #9 11:43:12 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Nayeli Molina:

i think she adapted better because her grandmother wasn't strict like how her mother was. her grandmother gave her the space that her mother never gave her. like you mentioned, she needed space to grow.

[Message #10 11:44:36 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Katie Rivette:

Yeah! Definitely Nayeli!! She was able to experience moer things in life and learn life lesson unlike in the US which is why she ran awy in the first place.

[Message #11 11:44:40 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Russell Hanssen:

Karen, I think that the idea that Lola called home because she wanted to go back is dead on. And I like the Idea that she associated dominican traditions with her mother until she found something else to associate them to. maybe that's why she addapted so well, because she finaly had something else to attach all those traditions to.

[Message #12 11:46:07 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Nayeli Molina:

yea i think she needed that freedom to make her own decisions and learn from her own mistakes.

[Message #13 11:46:47 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Russell Hanssen:

Katie, I think it was more to realise that she needed a different change, she was trying to change as hard as she could but she needed to be disapointed with what she found to set her back on the right track

[Message #14 11:46:53 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Katie Rivette:

yup... don't we all...haha

[Message #15 11:47:07 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

karen wong:

Interesting comment in #11, Russell-- she no longer associates dominican traditions just with her mother, but with lots of other people whom she comes to value.

[Message #16 11:47:11 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Nayeli Molina:

very true

[Message #17 11:47:13 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Katie Rivette:

@ nayeli*

[Message #18 11:48:11 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

karen wong:

What else was happening in the DR that helped Lola forge a positive self? Consider issues related to body image, for instance.

[Message #19 11:48:59 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Katie Rivette:

yeah usually people need to hit rock bottom ("realize need a differnt change") in order to grow and move on....

[Message #20 11:49:58 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Katie Rivette:

Oh her boyfriend in the DR helped to give her the self confidence she never had before in the us.

[Message #21 11:50:29 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Russell Hanssen:

When she started running and people started to notice her she got some input from people who besides her mother. The only input she had previously was her mother calling her ugly but with her body starting to turn heads and her boyfriend calling her a treasure she started to regain her self confidence and therefore her self value

[Message #22 11:51:43 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Nayeli Molina:

i agree the boyfriend helped with her confidence and also the track team. in track she found something she was good at and i think that gave her that self esteem that she needed in order to move on in the positive direction

[Message #23 11:51:51 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Katie Rivette:

"I stood in front of the mirror naked and looked at my culo for the first time, A tesoro, i repeated. A treasure." -Lola feeling good about her body image because of what her BF said.

[Message #24 11:52:06 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Russell Hanssen:

exactly

[Message #25 11:53:05 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Katie Rivette:

im really intrested inwhats to come next for her though....

[Message #26 11:53:24 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Katie Rivette:

The end of the chapter is kind of a cliff hanger...

[Message #27 11:53:46 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Russell Hanssen:

she felt more comfortable than she ever had at home, and was able to figure out who she was. that's why her trip was a "beginning"

[Message #28 11:53:58 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Katie Rivette:

What do you guys think her grand mother is going to tell her?? Maybe about her mothers life

??

[Message #29 11:55:25 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Russell Hanssen:

I think that's likely. the reasons that her mother is the way she is.

[Message #30 11:55:28 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Nayeli Molina:

i think lolas mom went through the exact same thing

[Message #31 11:56:02 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Nayeli Molina:

like i think she probably ran away from home aswell and hit rock bottom then realized she needed to change

[Message #32 11:56:03 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Katie Rivette:

Yeah there definatly seems to be alot of simalities between the two when reading on in the next chapter.....

[Message #33 11:56:23 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Russell Hanssen:

it would really take something to make her mother the piece of work that she is

[Message #34 11:56:42 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Katie Rivette:

The ganster..... Aldo?? seems like the did the same things both a young ages.

[Message #35 11:56:46 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

karen wong:

Are there other affirmations for her while in the DR? Even with Max, how does her relationship with Aldo differ?

[Message #36 11:59:23 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Russell Hanssen:

With max she has all the power while with aldo she had none. Max viewed her as a gift while aldo saw her as a burden.

[Message #37 12:00:22 PM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Russell Hanssen:

this gives her an idea of the power she can weild over men using her body

Interchange Conference Transcript

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[Message #1 02:18:21 PM, Tuesday, April 26, 2011]

karen wong:

Lola (51-75): After Lola's mother tells her that she has cancer, Lola remarks that it's "...in that bathroom...where you begin" (54). What does she mean? Does her life improve or worsen after that point? How does her running away compare with her experiences when she's sent to live in the Dominican Republic? Consider issues related to her gender, her family relationships, and her cultural identity, and include in your response a supporting quote using the MLA format.

[Message #2 11:36:32 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Shelby Molini:

Activity One: Take until 11:35 to write a response to this prompt:

Prompt about Lola: (51-75) After Lola's mother tells her that she has cancer, Lola remarks that it's "...in that bathroom...where you begin" (54). What does she mean? Does her life improve or worsen after that point? How does her running away compare with her experiences when she's sent to live in the Dominican Republic? Consider issues related to her gender, her family relationships, and her cultural identity, and include in your response a supporting quote using the MLA format.

From this quote, I think that it reflects on what is going on within their home life with the mother having cancer. After this part of the story, the relationship between Beli and Lola gets worse. The fighting and bickering only gets worse and it is never ending. Beli literally runs her daughter out of their house as Lola cannot take it anymore. You don't blame Lola for her actions and feelings of being frustrated as her mother asks so much from her, however her mother does have cancer. Cancer is something that affects the whole family, not only the person who is fighting the battle. And I think that this was shown in Lola's chapter as her mother is wearing wigs and going through a lot, cancer, raising two kids on her own and working two jobs. Once she runs away and her brother sets her up with their aunt, uncle and mom catching Lola, it becomes a huge turning point in Lola's life. Her mother can no longer be in control of her so she sends her off to the Dominican Republic where she is to live with her grandmother. Not knowing anyone and being on an island doesn't leave Lola many choices to run away to. Her grandmother takes her in and couldn't be happier that she has come to live with her. However her grandmother see's the resemblance of her with her mother, as she was raising her own kids. Living in the Dominican Republic is a much different lifestyle for Lola as she goes off into a private high school and tries to fit in being the goth girl, while being there she joins the track team. Her family lifestyle at home in the states compared to being in the Dominican Republic was much different since her mother was diagnosed with cancer, she was the one who was ordered around by her mother to do all the

cooking, cleaning and etc. She was taking care of the family as her mother was sick. When she went off to the Dominican Republic she didn't have nearly the same responsibilities as she did in the states. Yet she always wondered how her brother was surviving without her there because he never did much of anything for himself. For her age, her only role was to be going to school. When she was in the Dominican Republic it was almost like she was more free and didn't have the tension between her and her mom. Therefore she didn't have the feeling of revenge or getting back at her for the conflicts between them, and she went to school and joined the track team and was a completely different girl. She was able to find something that she enjoyed doing without constantly being put down upon an being called a bad daughter.

[Message #3 11:40:42 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

karen wong:

In forging their identities, inevitably some teens go to opposite extremes, unfortunately to the point of self destruction. Arguably that's the case with Lola, who becomes a goth punk rocker, as if to reject all Dominican expectations of what's proper for her as a female, which isn't so problematic, but her running away eventually is. She cuts short her hair and not only does her mom insult her as "Fea" (54)- Ugly, but she deals with her peers and even extended family members hurling insults her way because she has dared to be different from other feminine oriented Latinos. Her choices are motivated in large part because she wants to distance herself from her mother. Lola admits, "Things had been bad between us all year. How could they not have been? She was my Old World Dominican mother and I was her only daughter, the one she had raised up herself with the help of nobody, which meant it was her duty to keep me crushed under heel. I was fourteen and desperate for my own patch of world that had nothing to do with her" (55). If she associates Dominican traditions with her mother, then of course she'd reject them. Yet also her mother is abusive, to the point that Lola has little self esteem, "For a long time I let her say what she wanted about me, and what was worse, for a long time I believed her" (56). She needed to get out, if only to begin to recognize her own talents and qualities. What's sad is that she seemed to only have one option for escape, and that was with a boy who seemed to love her at first, but daily life became a grind. She seems to believe that she didn't have much to offer beyond her sexuality, with her first sexual encounter with him a major disappointment. She also feels she lost whatever leverage she once had with him, "I started to think that maybe it was like in the books; as soon as I lost my virginity I lost my power" (65). That's a sad statement about their relationship. She also gives up her education to work at a fast food establishment on the boardwalk. Interestingly enough, however, deep inside the entire time she wants her family to come after her, as if to acknowledge that they do care. That's ultimately what she wanted, and why even though she was getting away, she went back to her mom. Going to the DR was the exact opposite, an escape but a positive one...

[Message #4 11:41:06 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Allicia Bailey:

After Lola's mother tells her that she has cancer, Lola remarks that it's "...in that bathroom...where you begin" (54). Lola wanted a change her life so as soon as she found out that her mom had cancer she

decided that now it's time to take action. She was always at home doing chores and taking care of her little brother, she never had time to enjoy her life. She spent time reading running away books like "Watership Down and My side of the Mountain" (57) which influenced her to runaway from home, so in the end she had her chance because her mom doesn't has the strength to deal with her. I think her life worsen for a while because her mom would get mad at her whenever she sees her and Lola got tired of everything and ran way. When Lola ran away she lived with Aldo and got a job selling fries on the boardwalk. At first she enjoyed everything, but later wanted to go home because Aldo would get mad at her and she lost her job. W hen Lola sent to live in Dominican Republic it was like the best decision for her. Her aunt dressed he up like the "Real Dominican Girl" (71) which is one of the qualities that Lola wanted to be sexy. Also Lola seem to have a closed relationship with her aunt, She said "every time I saw my abuela, the feeling got stronger so I knew This was something different"(72). Finally Lola saw the difference in her life when she

[Message #5 11:41:42 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Dayna Hernandez:

Lola is trying to put us as the readers, into her shoes. She's trying to put us in her situation so it becomes more realistic to us I guess. And this is where her life really begins, too. Before this point, she knew she wanted something more, but when the mother found out she had cancer, maybe in a way Lola took advantage of it because her mother was now a little weaker. For Lola, her life gets worse and improves. On one hand, her mother has cancer and that in itself puts pressure on her, but in the way that it improves, she finally has the guts to run away one day and makes a life for herself for a while.

When Lola runs away her experiences when she's with Max somewhat starts to be like her experiences at home. Especially when her boyfriend looks straight at her one day in front of his friends and says, "Do you know what Pontiac stands for? Poor Old Nigger Thinks It's A Cadillac." That's what led her to call home for the first time in a long time. Being a black Dominican girl, she didn't have much say in anything and her mother would be constantly on her ass, hitting her and yelling at her etc. Even with Max she didn't have much of a say after a while I guess but in the beginning she was happy and he treated her well.

[Message #6 11:45:45 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Kayla Aung:

Lola was young and ignorance at the time. I am not even sure if she knew the seriousness of cancer at the time. All she sees were the physical changes that her mother was going thorough. It must have been tough for her. After all she is just a kid. She was not happy even before this. She was just a submissive little girl back then. She must have felt the need to change. The need to change into something her mother would pay more attention to.

[Message #7 11:45:54 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Allicia Bailey:

Lola wanted someone to love her for who she is, although her mom tells her "your ugly and you are nothing " she still has her self confidence which lead her to explore new things

[Message #8 11:46:47 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Shelby Molini:

Even though that Lola ran away with her boyfriend and is working at the diner. She wonders why her family isnt out looking for her and there isnt posters up, but she makes a remark that if it was a white family about a missing animal they would be on it. I think that deep inside Lola does love her mom and she is also dealing with the fact that her mom is battling cancer. I believe that her mom is a stickler about how things go within in house and asks alot of Lola as to her roles of cooking and cleaning and Lola looks for an escape from that. However, she misses them and she is the one who does go back to them in the end. But when she goe and runs after her mom when she see's her on the side of the sidewalk crying with her wig cut off she cant not go back, she cant live with the fact that she left her mom their suffering because of her. and even though this became a lie that her mom was crying for the act,....being sent off to the Dominican Republic must have been the best thing for Lola overall.

[Message #9 11:47:45 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Allicia Bailey:

Lola also uses her sexulaity has a form of power .

[Message #10 11:47:52 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Shelby Molini:

Allicia- I completely agree and I think by going to the Domincan republic and having her grandmother love her and relate to her in a different way then her mother it helped her alot.

[Message #11 11:48:50 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Allicia Bailey:

Yes, we can see the difference

[Message #12 11:49:27 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Dayna Hernandez:

Yeah, it was a good change for her. And it showed her that at least someone in her family besides her brother loved her and respected her, too. I can see why or how she could look at her grandma as her mother.

[Message #13 11:50:17 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Crystal Lam:

Lola means that is where and when her life begins to change. Her life worsens after that point. "For a long time I let her she wanted about me, and what was worse, for a long time I believed her. I was fea, I was worthless, I was an idiota." (Page 56) Lola's mother always made her feel bad and made her do the entire house work. When she runs away with Aldo to Jersey Shore her experiences with him were not great. "It was the stupidest thing I ever did. I was miserable. And bored. But of course I wouldn't admit. I had run away, so I was happy! Happy!"(Page 64) She was just lying to herself saying that she was happy but in reality she wasn't happy at all. She argues with Aldo, "I got really mad at Aldo after that. You're drunk, I told him. And an idiot. So what, he shot back. Your pussy smells. Then stay out of it! I will! But of course I was happy! Happy!" (Page 65) So she ends up calling Oscar one day and he ends up betraying her and she gets sent back to Santa Domingo. Her life starts to change for the better because she finds a new boyfriend, goes to school, and ends up joining the track team. So it ends on a positive note.

[Message #14 11:50:23 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

karen wong:

Good point about her relationship with La Inca. Note, too, that with the distance her mother is able to open up to her, too, if only fleetingly, "Just know that I would die for you" (72). Then her mother quickly hung up. So even her mother loves her even more than she'd admit. As someone pointed out on Monday, perhaps her mother wants to make sure she can avoid the same problems that she encountered.

[Message #15 11:51:17 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Shelby Molini:

I think that her mother does love her in a way but she just isn't able to handle raising two teenagers on her own at the same time. She clearly had enough on her plate. The grandmother guides her in a different way...and when you finish the reading that due on Friday you see how her mother was raised and the difficulties she had on her own...

[Message #16 11:51:20 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

karen wong:

What truths come to light for Lola when she lives with Aldo?

[Message #17 11:51:29 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Kayla Aung:

The change in location was definitely a big turn for Lola too. In U.S., her mother has numerous jobs and was always busy so Lola became the one responsible for everything around the house. She was the one with the big shoulders carrying everything. She never had time to do anything of her own. When she was sent back to live in Santo Domingo, it was all different. She was now the kid like she was supposed to be. La Inca took care of her. Lola finally had a chance to be a kid.

[Message #18 11:51:40 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Shelby Molini:

Because in a way Lola and her mother are very alike and that may be the reason why they but heads so oftenly

[Message #19 11:52:14 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Kayla Aung:

In fact, she has so much more free time that she joined the track team at school and even found herself an interest that she absolute loved.

[Message #20 11:52:22 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Dayna Hernandez:

That could definitely be the reason for them butting heads so much. I agree, Shelby.

[Message #21 11:52:42 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Allicia Bailey:

We all know mothers, they dont want their child to make the same mistake they made while growing up, maybe that is why she is so strict on Lola.

[Message #22 11:54:46 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Crystal Lam:

Yeah Lola's mother doesn't want her to do the same mistakes she did when she was her age. So in reality her mother is actually just trying to protect Lola but, Lola sees it as mother getting in her way of doing the things she wants.

[Message #23 11:54:59 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Dayna Hernandez:

I don't really think their mother is even "cut out" to be a mother. She's a terrible one. She treats both her kids like crap. She doesn't show them any love or affection. She just hits them and yells at them- maybe you could call THAT affection...

[Message #24 11:55:08 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Shelby Molini:

Maybe that is why her mother is so strict on her, but from what I read I just dont see how it was soo harsh all the time....dont you think there should have been more love or sympathy between the two? Maybe Im wrong.....but thank god she got to the DR and was able to live a completely different life and learn more about her self rather than trying to be a mother role over her mother and brother... which i believe is what your instinct would be if your mother or father was sick you would take over. I completely understand that..but things were so hard on Lola and she just didnt know what to do and escaping for a while was her way out

[Message #25 11:55:16 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

karen wong:

Interesting point in comment #18 about why Lola and her mother butt heads so much-- is there any supporting evidence that they are very similar? In what ways are they similar?

[Message #26 11:58:15 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Shelby Molini:

to Ms. Wong... in reading further head into the next chapter you can see how Beli was raised and how she grew up and giving her mother problems. She was very independent and liked to do whatever she wanted. Lola does the same when she is in the states as she goes off and works at the restaurant, moving in with her boyfriend, cutting school. etc.. Lola has somewhat of the same attitude that her mother had when she was a kid, but Beli's mother doesnt know how to control her ... and when Beli is raising Lola, which i think she isnt doing much raising at all since Lola seems to be raising herself.. she doesnt have any guidance, whereas Beli didnt want the guidance when she was growing up.

[Message #27 11:59:47 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Dayna Hernandez:

From what i remember reading... they're similar in how the mother was when she was young and wanted to escape and lola wants to do the exact thing... they're both rebellious.

[Message #28 12:00:18 PM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Kayla Aung:

Beli may not be a good mother but she loved her kids. She definitely is not the typical nice motherly figure we used to but this may be caused by her not having a husband around. Traditionally, the father takes on the role of being the tough one with disciplin and earning money for the family and the mother takes on the role of nurturing and making extra income, not the main source. Since, there is no father in the family, Beli became the head of household. She had to make money. On top of that, she has to make sure her kids are on the right path. So, she became the tough bad guy who was always hitting the kids and so.

[Message #29 12:01:07 PM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Allicia Bailey:

the love between both is strong, but her mom seem to show it by getting angry most of the time

[Message #30 12:01:15 PM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Crystal Lam:

Yeah I read further on the book about Lola' mother and I remember reading that Lola's mother also wanted to run away to go and do the things she really wanted to do. So they are similar in the ones that they both want freedom.

Interchange Conference Transcript

I:\DIWE5NET\CLASSES\kwong01\CHAT\Iris

[Message #1 02:17:32 PM, Tuesday, April 26, 2011]

karen wong:

Lola (51-75): After Lola's mother tells her that she has cancer, Lola remarks that it's "...in that bathroom...where you begin" (54). What does she mean? Does her life improve or worsen after that point? How does her running away compare with her experiences when she's sent to live in the Dominican Republic? Consider issues related to her gender, her family relationships, and her cultural identity, and include in your response a supporting quote using the MLA format.

[Message #2 11:34:33 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Luis DePaz:

When Lola says that in the bathroom is where you begin I think she's trying to say how that moment changed her life and influenced the way she currently is. I think that after that point her life improves. Yeah it takes a while, and she has to suffer a lot but at the end of the chapter Lola seems to be happy to a certain point. She is happier and better than Oscar.

When Lola ran away it was miserable, not only the living conditions, but her partner changed completely. At the same time she was happy because she was free from the lifestyle she had with her mom. In comparison to the lifestyle she has in the Dominican Republic, Lola is better with her grandmother in the Dominican Republic than when she ran away. Not only does she have a boyfriend, but she's more relaxed. Here she does have a lot of conflicts with other girls but she's free, and happy.

I think that Lola's change hasn't begun yet, I think that this is just leading up to the real change, and she says it at the end of the chapter. Lola says, "She was about to say something and I was waiting for whatever she was going to tell me. I was waiting to begin." (Diaz 75) I think that whatever she is told is the main thing why Lola changes and is who she is. I think that what she said in the bathroom was just the introduction to her life changing event.

[Message #3 11:37:38 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

She probably means this is where all of her troubles started or this is where she realized that "fuku" was already upon her from the beginning. She also means according to her speech to the readers she wants everyone who is reading know how feels like to have a mother that hates you and always picks fights with you.

Her life just worsens because Lola and her mother begin to feel bitter towards each other. For Lola because she did say this; "We jumped at each other and the table fell and the snocho spilled all over the floor..." (63). She is saying that she and her mother were like two different armies on the battlefield. "For a couple of days the house was a warzone..." (62) Again she felt like that her mom and herself were soldiers but on different sides.

She wanted to runaway because she hated her mother so much that she even wished that her current disease will just kill her. But at the same time when she went to DR her whole life got turned around. She somehow had this tingling feeling within herself as if she had a child inside of her. This affected her real badly she began to lose a few races. Her whole track team noticed the change and did not take it well. Even her coach stopped making eye contact with her. Lola was one of the superb runners in here track team. She had the best times in the miles. She made a new boyfriend also they got along really well while she was in DR.

[Message #4 11:38:40 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Mabel Ye:

I think once she found out about the cancer, her life totally changed... which is what she meant by "where you begin". She means she is beginning a new life as a new person. She knows she will never be the same Lola again. Which is why the next paragraph starts with her saying, "A punk chick" (54). The old Lola is gone because something dramatic has happened in her life that she will never be the same again. At this point, her life worsens. She has to take care of the family and endure the mental abuse from her mother. She can't even really do anything about in the beginning esp since her mother has cancer. Then I think it got to the point where she couldn't handle it. I think when she ran away, her life was kind of full of worries. She wasn't as happy. I think when she got sent away, she was happier. When she ran away, she had to fend for herself. I think she thought that was what she wanted but in the end, she wasn't happy and was only fooling herself. When she was in the DR she went to school and actually had a life. She didn't have to worry about what was going on at home. She even joined the track team and was able to do something she enjoyed.

[Message #5 11:39:07 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

I agree with you on that.

[Message #6 11:39:51 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Crystal Plascencia:

By this quote I think she means that at that point her life began to change. At first when Lola ran away with her boyfriend her life worsened. She was not happy with him but had to pretend that she was. Lola says " I was miserable. And so bored. But of course I wouldn't admit it" (64) Lola was miserable with her boyfriend and she missed Oscar. " I guess I must have missed him real bad" (67) When Lola left her boyfriend and went to the Dominican republic everything seemed to improve. She lived happier with her abuela and met Max. Lola was always a good daughter and did everything around the house, her mother would always put her down and tell her she was worthless and ugly. When she moved to the Dominican Republic she had a better relationship with her grandma and they got along. Lola restrained from running away again because of her grandma. " Happiness , when it comes, is stronger than all the jerk girls in Santo Domingo" (73). We see Lola is happier than she was before she came to the Dominican republic.

[Message #7 11:40:22 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

She is one of the fastest runners in her Track class.

[Message #8 11:40:35 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

karen wong:

In forging their identities, inevitably some teens go to opposite extremes, unfortunately to the point of self destruction. Arguably that's the case with Lola, who becomes a goth punk rocker, as if to reject all Dominican expectations of what's proper for her as a female, which isn't so problematic, but her running away eventually is. She cuts short her hair and not only does her mom insult her as "Fea" (54)- Ugly, but she deals with her peers and even extended family members hurling insults her way because she has dared to be different from other feminine oriented Latinos. Her choices are motivated in large part because she wants to distance herself from her mother. Lola admits, "Things had been bad between us all year. How could they not have been? She was my Old World Dominican mother and I was her only daughter, the one she had raised up herself with the help of nobody, which meant it was her duty to keep me crushed under heel. I was fourteen and desperate for my own patch of world that had nothing to do with her" (55). If she associates Dominican traditions with her mother, then of course she'd reject them. Yet also her mother is abusive, to the point that Lola has little self esteem, "For a long time I let her say what she wanted about me, and what was worse, for a long time I believed her" (56). She needed to get out, if only to begin to recognize her own talents and qualities. What's sad is that she seemed to only have one option for escape, and that was with a boy who seemed to love her at first, but daily life became a grind. She seems to believe that she didn't have much to offer beyond her sexuality, with her first sexual encounter with him a major disappointment. She also feels she lost whatever leverage she once had with him, "I started to think that maybe it was like in the books; as soon as I lost my virginity I lost my power" (65). That's a sad statement about their relationship. She also gives up her education to work at a fast food establishment on the boardwalk. Interestingly enough, however, deep inside the entire time she wants her family to come after her, as if to acknowledge that they do care. That's ultimately what she wanted, and why even though she was getting away, she went back to her mom. Going to the DR was the exact opposite, an escape but a positive one...

[Message #9 11:41:23 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

Her mom shipped her to DR because her mom knows that she cannot runaway if you are in a place where no one knows you.

[Message #10 11:41:41 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Luis DePaz:

I agree with all three of you guys, but Thomas, do you really think is the fuku that's affecting Lola?

[Message #11 11:42:03 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

Well sorta in my opinion

[Message #12 11:42:46 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Joe Tecson:

ok ready?

[Message #13 11:42:52 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Joe Tecson:

IMPROVE OR WORSEN? Well it depends on how you look at it. On the perspective of a teenager, yes it does get worsen. The fact that she finds out that her mother has cancer and is on the way of losing her, Lola will become emotionally stressed. It's the turning point of her life where she needs to grow up and change every part of her behavior and life because her mother will not be there as long as she expected. She will need to become mature and use what she learned from her mother, to apply it to her everyday life. However, if you're looking at a different perspective, her life will improve from this point. She will become a more mature grown person and independent. She will be able to make her own choices without having anyone criticize her.

Lola has increased her confidence on herself: "They whisper about me to death.... I don't let it get to me... I could win a spot on the [track] team on the length of my legs alone" (Diaz p71). Lola's experiences in Jersey Shore had given her the chance to grow up and mature a little. She's able to gain confidence

about herself. As she goes back to a new school, she still experiences the same social bitches she had when she was at her old school. The difference is that she doesn't care anymore. She won't those bitches get to them. She says: "So much has changed these last months, in my head, my heart" (71). She knows that she has grown up. She learned things like sex, and getting a job that pays, etc. Her mother even treats her better: "my mom has told me I can stay if I want to but that I would be welcome at home too" (72). She receives better treatment because her family knows that if she doesn't Lola has the guts to leave home and Belicia doesn't want that. Lola also gets acknowledgement knowing the fact that her family actually does care for her and will miss her if she leaves again.

[Message #14 11:42:58 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Luis DePaz:

Yeah , well I don't think it's fuku, il actually think it just happen, and that because of those insidents she's goin to become a stronger girl

[Message #15 11:43:14 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

Lola wanted to runaway already.

[Message #16 11:43:59 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

But i am surprised that when she returned to DR she actually had a life.

[Message #17 11:44:05 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Mabel Ye:

yeah I don't think it's really fuku.. i think this the chapter was basicallly trying just explain and show lolas character

[Message #18 11:44:18 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Luis DePaz:

Well although Lola was miserable when she ran away she does say she was happy to be free, so i don't think that when she ran away she was completely miserable

[Message #19 11:44:41 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Mabel Ye:

and i agree with you luis, i think this isn't the change exactly, the author is just trying to set things up by giving us background. -- I'm sure there's more to come

[Message #20 11:45:17 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

But did you notice that she started to lose some races because of a tingling senction go ththrough her body? She felt like a child inside somehow.

[Message #21 11:45:19 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Joe Tecson:

She got a better life in DR coz people had to treat her better because you know the saying "you dont realize how you feel about a person until theyre gone" and thats how her family felt.. it had to take her of running away for them to reveal that they really love her

[Message #22 11:45:52 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Mabel Ye:

I think she already understood and accepted that her life was going to have to her taking care of the fmaily in the beginning. but then it got too much for her when her mother starting mentally abusing her..

[Message #23 11:46:13 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Mabel Ye:

I kind of feel like if her mother was supportive and nice to her, she wouldnd't mind having to take care of the whole family

[Message #24 11:46:15 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

Eventually she had to return to the states because of her new boyfriend.

[Message #25 11:46:19 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Joe Tecson:

u know, i think her sexual experience made her a woman too.

[Message #26 11:46:36 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

she found while in DR.

[Message #27 11:46:52 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Joe Tecson:

i wanna go to Jersey Shore... GTL! GTL!

[Message #28 11:47:01 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Joe Tecson:

lol

[Message #29 11:47:04 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Crystal Plascencia:

I agree with What karen said at the end.. Going to the DR was also an escape but it was a positive one. she escaped a part of her life that was miserable.

[Message #30 11:47:18 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

True

[Message #31 11:47:40 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

I did pick up on that when she went to DR.

[Message #32 11:47:50 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Joe Tecson:

so anyways, i see an opposition.. like she may have felt miserable in the Shore, but her experiences there gave her a better life in DR

[Message #33 11:48:11 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

She made many friends back in her home country

[Message #34 11:48:32 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Luis DePaz:

well if you guys notice, theres a part where she is in the Dominican Republic, and she actually calls her mom "Mami" and ususally she refers to her by her name not mami, so I think that by giving each other that distance, it will bring them closer

[Message #35 11:48:33 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Joe Tecson:

she even had a better sexual experience in DR with max

[Message #36 11:48:44 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

I guess it best for you to stay in your hometwon or country instead of moving to another one.

[Message #37 11:48:56 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

Yes, she sure did.

[Message #38 11:48:57 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Joe Tecson:

LUIS: i agrree.. they needed that space

[Message #39 11:49:13 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

Yeah

[Message #40 11:50:13 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Crystal Plascencia:

I think her mother was protective of her. she just wanted the best for her. In a traditional latino family thats how mothers are. They are over protective, and oviosly Lola didnt want that, just like any other teenager.

[Message #41 11:50:23 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

Doesn't just fell like you are being reborn again in your hometwon or country? For Lola it was exactly that.

[Message #42 11:50:42 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

True. Minus the fights they had.

[Message #43 11:50:56 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Mabel Ye:

yeah in DR she had less responsibilities

[Message #44 11:51:07 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Mabel Ye:

she was able to be young and carefree

[Message #45 11:51:09 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

That is a funny way to love someone don't you think?

[Message #46 11:51:16 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Mabel Ye:

not like how things were back at home

[Message #47 11:51:17 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Crystal Plascencia:

Yes i agree with you luis. the distance made them closer.

[Message #48 11:51:51 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

They started out in a catfight and now look at her she is having a wonderful time in DR.

[Message #49 11:52:06 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Luis DePaz:

Yeah,she had more freedom, and thomas i don't think it has to do with your home country, because that is just a place, but by feeling accepted and supported by her grandma and Max

[Message #50 11:52:24 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

karen wong:

Good observation in comment #34 about how Lola addresses her mother. Is there other evidence that he being in the DR enables her and her mother to grow closer? Why do you suppose that's the case?

[Message #51 11:52:31 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

Yeah

[Message #52 11:52:55 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

karen wong:

What else about the DR enabled Lola to develop a positive self concept?

[Message #53 11:53:04 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Joe Tecson:

she says that she feels more welcomed in poage 72...

[Message #54 11:53:04 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Luis DePaz:

Ofcourse you would agree with me Crystal, but yeah I think that the relationship with her mom was just too much

[Message #55 11:53:45 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

Maybe they just needed a break from each other. Even family members need a holiday far away from each other.

[Message #56 11:54:58 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Crystal Plascencia:

Lola got along with her grandma.. she had a women role model in her life that was actually there for her unlike her mother.

[Message #57 11:55:02 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Joe Tecson:

Her abuela states that the relationship Lola has with Belicia is the same as Belicia and her mother... so I think that's why her mother was so strict, is because Belicia saw herself in Lola.. and she wanted to avoid all that... as Abuela says, it turned out for the best

[Message #58 11:55:38 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

"Even lovers need holidays far away from each other." Chicago "hard to say I am sorry"

[Message #59 11:55:55 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Crystal Plascencia:

lola says she felt like running away again but her abuela held her back from doing it. she didnt want to leave her

[Message #60 11:55:57 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Luis DePaz:

Yeah but would you say that the Abuela is now trying to fix her mistakes with Lola, like she treats Lola better because she treated her mom bad?

[Message #61 11:56:03 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Joe Tecson:

OMG

[Message #62 11:56:40 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Crystal Plascencia:

yes luis

[Message #63 11:56:53 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Joe Tecson:

Yeah, she's trying to treat Lola better so that Lola doesn't go through what Belicia did

[Message #64 11:57:13 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

Weird. It is like Abulia is trying to make up for what happened between her mom and her before she left for DR.

[Message #65 11:57:20 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Crystal Plascencia:

Maybe the abuela treated lolas mom bad, then lolas mom treats lola the same way.. and its just tradition. it goes on...

[Message #66 11:57:22 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Mabel Ye:

or maybe she just doesn't feel the need to try as hard because she knows Lola is a good girl

[Message #67 11:57:42 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

I agree with that comment also.

[Message #68 11:58:02 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Luis DePaz:

I agree with you Mabel

[Message #69 11:58:29 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Mabel Ye:

Yeah she had to grow up and mature earlier than people due to her mothers cancer

[Message #70 11:58:47 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

BY the looks of it. It seems liek her mom is preparing her for the real world.

[Message #71 11:59:13 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Luis DePaz:

Would yo say that's a reason why Oscar hasn't really grown up???

[Message #72 11:59:14 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

But in an agressive matter.

[Message #73 11:59:34 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Joe Tecson:

OMG this is like a Gossip Girl episode when Serena runs away from her mother and her Gramma tries to fix everything because Serena's mom was exactly the same way??

[Message #74 11:59:35 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Mabel Ye:

yeah

[Message #75 11:59:40 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Mabel Ye:

Oscar is kind babied

[Message #76 11:59:50 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

Yeah.

[Message #77 11:59:52 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Mabel Ye:

HAHAH JOE .. YOU WOULD

[Message #78 12:00:00 PM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Joe Tecson:

HAHAHAH

[Message #79 12:00:06 PM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Crystal Plascencia:

hahaha

[Message #80 12:00:14 PM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Luis DePaz:

yeah he is the one that needs a reality check

[Message #81 12:00:26 PM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

He not that aggressive either. When lola and her mom Oscar did very little to stop it.

[Message #82 12:00:27 PM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Joe Tecson:

AND ERIC, her brother, is OSCAR! omg.. HAHAHAHHA

[Message #83 12:00:43 PM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Joe Tecson:

next time on gossip girl.. LMAO.. gnite

[Message #84 12:00:44 PM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

LOL

[Message #85 12:01:31 PM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Thomas Pham:

see ya'll Friday.

Interchange Conference Transcript

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[Message #1 02:17:54 PM, Tuesday, April 26, 2011]

karen wong:

Lola (51-75): After Lola's mother tells her that she has cancer, Lola remarks that it's "...in that bathroom...where you begin" (54). What does she mean? Does her life improve or worsen after that point? How does her running away compare with her experiences when she's sent to live in the Dominican Republic? Consider issues related to her gender, her family relationships, and her cultural identity, and include in your response a supporting quote using the MLA format.

[Message #2 11:36:16 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Collette Yee:

Lola is saying that at that moment everything is about the way they live is about to change. After that moment Lola's life begins to change as she decides that she needs to stand up to her mother and do what she wants compared to what her mother wants. I think that her life improved after this point because once she was away from her mother she was no longer her slave. Lola was in charge of taking care of herself and Oscar and making sure that the house was well kept. At home she was all alone. Her only friend was leaving and she didn't interact with Oscar and the mother too much. Lola thought running away from her mother would fix all of her problems but it didn't. It ended up being horrible living with Aldo: "It was like the stupidest thing I ever did. I was miserable. And so bored" (64). She wanted to be happy so badly, but she couldn't living in that awful relationship. When it came to living in Santo Domingo, although her social life was tough, she finally found the loving family she wanted. Her grandma treated her much better than her own mother. At the airport Lola said that after realizing that they were going to get along she said, "And then she hugged me and kissed me and said, I'm your abuela, but you can call me La Inca' (74). It is really difficult for Lola to find acceptance it seems like. She does not obey the expectations of a Dominican daughter, therefore being out casted as a rebel.

What I do not understand about Lola's chapter is what happens at the end when she is talking to La Inca. How it ends, "She was about to say something and I was waiting for whatever she was going to tell me. I was waiting to begin" (75). I'm really not sure what they are talking about if anyone has the answer.

[Message #3 11:36:58 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Evelyn Ibanez:

Before she knew her mother had cancer Lola was trying so hard to please her. She was being the perfect daughter, fitting into the stereotype of what she believed a Dominican daughter should be. At some point I think she realized that no matter what she did her mother would never voice her approval,

she was never going to be satisfied with anything she did. After her mother tries to hit her and Lola struck her hand and "she snatched it back, like I was the fire"(p.59) she was sending out a powerful message to her mother which was that she wasn't going to take abuse from her anymore, whether physical or mental. She was taking control, standing up for herself which was unheard of for a Dominican girl who was supposed to do everything her mother told her and be quiet and not complain. Her rebellion was looked upon by her family who thought she "was the worst daughter ever" (p.59)

By running away Lola thought she would have a better life. What she found out was that the life she had with Aldo was not at all what she would have imagined. She was miserable living with him. Aldo's father did not like her and she had to live in a small room that smelled bad and had to take on a crappy job. Aldo took out his frustrations at her and went so far as to make a racial joke in which he mentions the N word while looking straight at her. Her life in the Dominican Republic changed for the better. There she had the loving care of her grandmother who unlike her mother expressed her love for her physically and verbally. She got involved in her school running team and she found a boy she could hang out with.

[Message #4 11:38:01 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Regina Solleza:

After Lola finds out that her mother has cancer, she responds by saying "...in that bathroom...where you being" (54). She means that that is where everything begins to change, from her changing her image and her relationship with her mother changes as well. From that point on, things seem to go downhill. Her mother told her to practically do everything around the house since she could not do much because of chemo. She thinks that if she does what she is told, she would portray "the perfect Dominican daughter, which is just a nice way of saying a perfect Dominican slave" (56). She starts to rebel against her mother, by shaving her hair off and she did not care what her mother thought about it, she just did it. People started thinking she was a horrible daughter for the way she was treating her mother, but she did not care. She just went with she wanted to do with her life. She wanted to get away from her mother and home, so she ran away to the Jersey Shore with a boy she started dating that she met at Limelight. After running away, her mother sent her to the Dominican Republic, where her life was better than when she ran away. "I guess my mother thought it would be harder for me to run away from an island where I knew no one, and in a way she was right" (70). This time around, she won't be able to run away from anything. She has to deal with everything and "it keeps me busy and out of mischief and around people my own age" (70). Her mother just thought it would be best for her if she sent her away to have a better influence on herself.

[Message #5 11:38:57 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Jose Sanchez:

The bathroom was the place where Lola found out that her mom was not invincible. Her mom had cancer, before that her mom was this all knowing and all powerful, but now she had been knocked off her pedestal. Her mom was no longer the meanest authority figure, she had lost her powers of intimidation "I (Lola) even started dreaming about my mother, except in my dreams she was a little girl" (Pg 66)

Lola's life I would have to say was at a turning point, she could actually live her life now, before then she just stared at life and watched it pass by. Now her decisions are for her to make and like a child who is ignorant of life, she made decisions that were not the best when you think back at them, but at the time they made perfect sense (you live and you learn).

Running away gave her freedom from the oppression that she had lived under for many years, but that freedom was something she did not know what to do with. It was wild and there was no one for her to guide her through the tuff spots which came often. When she was sent to the DR she had her grandma who helped her and gave her the much needed advice and support.

[Message #6 11:39:32 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

vincent ho:

It's not really complete, but here goes:

"...in that bathroom...where you begin" (54). I'm not sure what that means, but I can assume that it could mean where it all begins in the bathroom when a cancer patient looks at herself in the mirror, trouble will ensue. She may be panicking, stressing out, and if you get close to her, she'll be mad at you for privacy reasons or no reasons at all. Where you begin after looking at her mother in the bathroom, chaos is a guarantee; the mother will make a living hell out of you starting from looking at her in the bathroom.

Another theory on what that phrase about beginning in the bathroom could mean that when the mother is taking a pregnancy test, you were discovered there by then. That's my theory though.

Both Lola and her mother never got a better life; it got worse every moment. They fight with each other all day long to the point the mother neglects her children's well-being; only caring for herself in getting 2-3 jobs for the house only buy food and yell at the kids.

Both experience of running away and living in Santo Domingo have their goods and flaws. In running away, she meets a boy who she had sex with and shared information with each other. His place was crappy and she became miserable after agreeing to have sex, but happy as she gets to know that she's not the only one living with one parent and hating them. I would say that her experience in Santo Domingo was better. She didn't have to deal with her boyfriend and his father's drunkenness, but she had to deal with girls in her new school from spreading rumors and gossip about her and losing in the track team. She lives with her Abuelo and hangs out with her new boyfriend. She always get to know more about her family history over there.

[Message #7 11:40:27 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

karen wong:

In forging their identities, inevitably some teens go to opposite extremes, unfortunately to the point of self destruction. Arguably that's the case with Lola, who becomes a goth punk rocker, as if to reject all Dominican expectations of what's proper for her as a female, which isn't so problematic, but her running away eventually is. She cuts short her hair and not only does her mom insult her as "Fea" (54)-

Ugly, but she deals with her peers and even extended family members hurling insults her way because she has dared to be different from other feminine oriented Latinos. Her choices are motivated in large part because she wants to distance herself from her mother. Lola admits, "Things had been bad between us all year. How could they not have been? She was my Old World Dominican mother and I was her only daughter, the one she had raised up herself with the help of nobody, which meant it was her duty to keep me crushed under heel. I was fourteen and desperate for my own patch of world that had nothing to do with her" (55). If she associates Dominican traditions with her mother, then of course she'd reject them. Yet also her mother is abusive, to the point that Lola has little self esteem, "For a long time I let her say what she wanted about me, and what was worse, for a long time I believed her" (56). She needed to get out, if only to begin to recognize her own talents and qualities. What's sad is that she seemed to only have one option for escape, and that was with a boy who seemed to love her at first, but daily life became a grind. She seems to believe that she didn't have much to offer beyond her sexuality, with her first sexual encounter with him a major disappointment. She also feels she lost whatever leverage she once had with him, "I started to think that maybe it was like in the books; as soon as I lost my virginity I lost my power" (65). That's a sad statement about their relationship. She also gives up her education to work at a fast food establishment on the boardwalk. Interestingly enough, however, deep inside the entire time she wants her family to come after her, as if to acknowledge that they do care. That's ultimately what she wanted, and why even though she was getting away, she went back to her mom. Going to the DR was the exact opposite, an escape but a positive one...

[Message #8 11:43:20 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Evelyn Ibanez:

@Jose:

I really like the way you wrote your response, very well written Jose! You are right that was a turning point in her life.

[Message #9 11:43:47 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Jose Sanchez:

Thanks evelyn

[Message #10 11:44:42 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Jose Sanchez:

What do you guys think about the differences between the men in her life?

[Message #11 11:46:39 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

vincent ho:

Her first boyfriend and the DR boyfriend? The first one was poverty stricken. The next one is somewhat better as he takes her out to the movies.

[Message #12 11:47:20 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Jose Sanchez:

She said that she felt as she had lost power after having sex with the first one and with the second one she felt sexy and empowered specially because of her assets

[Message #13 11:48:25 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

vincent ho:

a little bit selfish on his goals and in his habits, but much better than hanging with drunkenness. When she sees herself naked in DR, she looked at herself as a "treasure" (73)

[Message #14 11:48:28 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Regina Solleza:

It seemed like it was best for her to go to the DR because she was surrounded by better people

[Message #15 11:48:41 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

vincent ho:

cultured people

[Message #16 11:50:19 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

vincent ho:

where people are too mixed in races that there's no need for ethnic tensions. She didn't have to deal with not accustomed Dominican tradition or being too white. Plus her grandmother cares for her very much, much more than the mother.

[Message #17 11:50:28 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Collette Yee:

not everyone was better, her peers outcasted her for her looks when she first got there

[Message #18 11:50:34 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Jose Sanchez:

I totally agree with you Regina, people who soround you are people who influence your life.

[Message #19 11:50:42 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Evelyn Ibanez:

I think that it's sad that the only way she can feel empowered is sexually, but she is just reflecting the cultrue that she is growing up in and that places so much emphasis on physical appearance. She found out that she had other things that she could be good at such as running, her self esteem must have greatly improved and living in a loving environment would have made her feel safe.

[Message #20 11:51:11 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Collette Yee:

she may have been the same race but she was the only goth and americanized unlike the other girls

[Message #21 11:52:09 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Jose Sanchez:

I think she was just trying to show everyone how she felt inside, which was dark and lonely

[Message #22 11:52:52 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

vincent ho:

She was happy, "happiness, when it comes, is stronger than all the jerk girls in Santo Domingo combined (73)."

[Message #23 11:52:54 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Evelyn Ibanez:

@ Vincent:

I think that even though she was not in the states people in the DR still were concerned about how "white" you looked and the whiter you were the better.

[Message #24 11:54:09 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Collette Yee:

I think Lola was really able to open up to how she truly is. The dark clothes were just to rebel more against her mother but she became happy when she started to blend in like a "real Dominican girl"

[Message #25 11:54:45 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Evelyn Ibanez:

It's sad that even in our own cultures the notion that white equals superiority exists. Seems like it doesn't matter where you go, this will always be so.

[Message #26 11:55:30 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Jose Sanchez:

@ Evelyn

It is a sad reality, but reality non the less

[Message #27 11:56:01 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

vincent ho:

not for me, well backed then when i was in grade school. cuz i'm the one whos crazy enough to attempt murder from ages 10-13.

[Message #28 11:56:56 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Collette Yee:

what are you talking about?

[Message #29 11:57:03 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Evelyn Ibanez:

@vincent

WHAT?!?!?

[Message #30 11:57:13 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Jose Sanchez:

@ Vincent

???

[Message #31 11:57:25 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

vincent ho:

that is, i got into public school where racial diversity is dominant. So racial tensions can be kind of tough in life, but you'll get over with it once you know that racism is immature and a thing of the past.

[Message #32 11:58:04 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

vincent ho:

and yes, i was that insane, i'm not like that anymore. Please don't judge me as a sociopath.

[Message #33 11:58:12 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Jose Sanchez:

but while it's happening, it seems to engulf your life

[Message #34 11:58:33 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Evelyn Ibanez:

what did you guys think about the way Lola treated her mother after she found out she had cancer?

[Message #35 11:58:55 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Jose Sanchez:

@ Vincent

Stuff happens, don't dwell on it

[Message #36 11:59:37 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Regina Solleza:

@evelyn I thought it was pretty harsh. when her mom said that they would have to run more tests she just said "can you pass the salt"

[Message #37 11:59:43 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Collette Yee:

It didnt matter cancer or not her mom was still a crazy bitch so she didn't pity her until she saw her crying on the floor (which again was fake)

[Message #38 11:59:50 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

vincent ho:

@ Evelyn

She tries to empower over her mother. At the same time, she feels sorry that she had cancer.

[Message #39 12:00:14 PM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

karen wong:

How do you know that below her actions that she has mixed feelings?

[Message #40 12:00:22 PM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

vincent ho:

@ Jose

When will we have our group meeting with Kenya and Katie

[Message #41 12:00:22 PM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Jose Sanchez:

Her mother was not all powerful, she was finally seen as a person not an intimidating superior

[Message #42 12:02:12 PM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Evelyn Ibanez:

I think that it appears that she is so cruel but then how her mother expect her to be loving towards her if she treats her that way. @Collete:

@ collette

I think that later on when we read about her mother;'s past we can see a little bit of why she was the way she was and while it doesn't excuse it, it can give you some insight

Interchange Conference Transcript

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[Message #1 02:18:05 PM, Tuesday, April 26, 2011]

karen wong:

Lola (51-75): After Lola's mother tells her that she has cancer, Lola remarks that it's "...in that bathroom...where you begin" (54). What does she mean? Does her life improve or worsen after that point? How does her running away compare with her experiences when she's sent to live in the Dominican Republic? Consider issues related to her gender, her family relationships, and her cultural identity, and include in your response a supporting quote using the MLA format.

[Message #2 11:30:46 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

nhi to:

By meaning "in that bathroom...where you begin" (54) Lola tells us that this event is the turning points of her life where she transforms herself from an obedient daughter to almost an overnight nightmarish teen sensation. Her "inextinguishable longing for elsewhere" (770) begins to see an escape route where the possibility of existing from her way of life was once has been impossible because of her controlling mother.

[Message #3 11:39:06 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

nhi to:

Lola states "things had ben bad between us all year. How could they not have been? She was my Old World Dominican mother and I was her only daughter." (55) reveals not only that mother and daughter belongs in different times, because Lola sees her mother as someone that not only belong in the the past but also carry a legacy that beyond her understanding "Old World Dominican." For better or worst being the only daughter has make her a more conspicuous target of her mother abusive behavior and unlikely to be able to free herself from this environment.

[Message #4 11:39:14 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Erika Medina:

What this quotes reveals is that Lola's mother has cancer. Her life worsens after this moment. I say this because her life as she described was already bad. And finding this out only made things worse. She wanted to pretend she never heard the news but she did and she could only accept it. This quote reveals that her mother always wanted her to be beautiful and look more like her. It reveals the mother was proud of her breast but the cancer ruined something she was so proud of. She wants Lola to be able to

have big breast but Lola is flat by nature. When she sent to live in the Dominican Republic by her mother she lives with her grandmother and doesn't and live car free. She doesn't have to take care of her mother, cook, or clean. With her grandmother she can relax. She goes out with her friends and enjoys herself. The grandmother is okay with it. When she runs away she goes to be with her boy friend. Her mother does not approve of this. She meets with her brother at a café only to find out he told his mother. His mother shows up with her uncle and they scold her.

[Message #5 11:39:41 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

MaryJane Patdu:

After Lola's mother tells her that she has cancer, Lola remarks that it's "...in that bathroom...where you begin" (54). She means that her life changes drastically to becoming worse. Her relationship with her mother has gotten worse even more. Her mother became more intense to her, she treats her badly and disrespects her. Therefore, Lola became rebellious because the way her mother treats her, she starting to disobey her, as when she asks Karen to cut her hair, she did not care what her mother will do to her. She doesn't want to be the girl that she is right now, as she proclaims, "All I knew was that I didn't want to see her ever again" (59). Her running away and with her experiences had made her interact with different people...

[Message #6 11:40:24 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

karen wong:

In forging their identities, inevitably some teens go to opposite extremes, unfortunately to the point of self destruction. Arguably that's the case with Lola, who becomes a goth punk rocker, as if to reject all Dominican expectations of what's proper for her as a female, which isn't so problematic, but her running away eventually is. She cuts short her hair and not only does her mom insult her as "Fea" (54)- Ugly, but she deals with her peers and even extended family members hurling insults her way because she has dared to be different from other feminine oriented Latinos. Her choices are motivated in large part because she wants to distance herself from her mother. Lola admits, "Things had been bad between us all year. How could they not have been? She was my Old World Dominican mother and I was her only daughter, the one she had raised up herself with the help of nobody, which meant it was her duty to keep me crushed under heel. I was fourteen and desperate for my own patch of world that had nothing to do with her" (55). If she associates Dominican traditions with her mother, then of course she'd reject them. Yet also her mother is abusive, to the point that Lola has little self esteem, "For a long time I let her say what she wanted about me, and what was worse, for a long time I believed her" (56). She needed to get out, if only to begin to recognize her own talents and qualities. What's sad is that she seemed to only have one option for escape, and that was with a boy who seemed to love her at first, but daily life became a grind. She seems to believe that she didn't have much to offer beyond her sexuality, with her first sexual encounter with him a major disappointment. She also feels she lost whatever leverage she once had with him, "I started to think that maybe it was like in the books; as soon as I lost my virginity I lost my power" (65). That's a sad statement about their relationship. She also gives up her education to work at a fast food establishment on the boardwalk. Interestingly enough, however, deep inside the entire time she wants her family to come after her, as if to acknowledge that they do

care. That's ultimately what she wanted, and why even though she was getting away, she went back to her mom. Going to the DR was the exact opposite, an escape but a positive one...

[Message #7 11:41:51 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Marvin Lampa:

When Lola responds to her mother by saying "... in that bathroom... where you begin" what is trying to be said that once they step out of that bathroom, a new perception, relationship, and view on life will change between Lola and her mother. Sadly, when someone is going through life threatening moments, you would think that they would stay close and value the time that had because they do not know when that person will take their last breath. As for Lola, it comes off as if she doesn't even care. For example, When the mother says that the doctors have to run more test, you would figure Lola or anyone would be concerned or worried. Oscar obviously was when he began to cry, but the only comment from Lola was "could you please pass the salt?"(63) That sounds almost bizarre, but is she doing that to avoid the problem? As much as she is being so negative, is it because she doesn't want to face the fact that her mother is dying? When Lola runs away, especially at that age, whether the mother hates her or not, that's her own flesh and blood, so her daughter running away just tops off the stress of her having cancer. However, maybe deep down inside Lola ran away because she could not deal with the fact that her mother has cancer.

[Message #8 11:43:42 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Marvin Lampa:

you would figure there would be a little sympathy after finding out your mother has been diagnosed with cancer

[Message #9 11:44:06 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

gabriela gerson:

In the DR Lola is away from home but with her family. In wildwood she was alone. Perhaps she had Aldo but he was busy paralleling her situation with her mother with his father. In Wildwood she was unhappy. "I was miserable. And so bored."(64)In the DR Lola is surrounded by people she doesn't know, people who don't know her. Her mother isn't there, she has no one to rebel against. She is in a different place , which is something she has longed for, but she is safe with La Inca and Oscar.

[Message #10 11:45:01 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

karen wong:

What's funny about Lola's trip to the DR is that she becomes not only a scholar (her natural prolicivity), but also runs on the track team. So she's no longer the flat chested Dominican girl in America, but she's

actually valued for the way she looks: her long legs for the track team and her "big ass" a "tesoro"-- a treasure (73).

[Message #11 11:46:14 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

karen wong:

How does her relationship with her mom changes while she's in the DR? How do her family in the DR treat her, and how is she impacted?

[Message #12 11:46:48 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

nhi to:

Running away and being sent away to DR are experiences that literally changes Lola's life. Running away helps her discover her deep desire to have a family, good or bad, it's her own. Being in DR helps her discover her root, understand her mother behavior in which she needs to repair and go on with her life.

[Message #13 11:47:14 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Erika Medina:

Wong: I think it's very important to realize what you stated saying, "Yet also her mother is abusive, to the point that Lola has little self esteem." Is very important because a mother is supposed to love you and care for you and nurture you and accept you for who you are and how you look but all she did was tell her what she wanted her to look and put her down. This shows us what type of mother daughter relationship they had.

[Message #14 11:48:43 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

gabriela gerson:

in the DR she is valued.

[Message #15 11:49:08 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Erika Medina:

Wong: I feel that in the DR she was treated more like a child not an adult. In DR she was able to be on the track team like you said and have outside activities but when not in the DR she had to care for her mother.

[Message #16 11:50:33 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

gabriela gerson:

I agree. She doesn't have the same adult responsibilities she had in the US. Such as raising herself and Oscar while her mother was out working.

[Message #17 11:51:32 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Marvin Lampa:

Exactly. When being away from home from sometime, you end up realizing that no matter what terms you are with your family, they somehow are always there for you because that is her flesh and blood. Her going away might have made her realize how things were with her mother and family, and might have even made her miss them. For example, when she ran away and called home. When Oscar answered, you can tell she missed him when she said "I'm OK, I said, and that was the only point in the conversation where I almost cried" (68) She then realizes that her brother is still there and cares despite how she was talking to him before hand

[Message #18 11:51:56 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

MaryJane Patdu:

her relationship with her mother has changed when her Inca revealed about her. They appreciate and accept her...

[Message #19 11:53:11 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

MaryJane Patdu:

She gains self-esteem about herself...

[Message #20 11:57:54 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

karen wong:

Marvin, good observation in #17-- Lola craved positive attention from her family, which her response to his words shows.

[Message #21 11:58:38 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

karen wong:

Good point in comment #15, too-- for once Lola could be a teenager enjoying teenager activities.

[Message #22 11:58:54 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

Marvin Lampa:

exactly, he was concerned about her well-being where she is at and everything. Eventhough he snitched her out, he did it because he cared and wanted her safe

[Message #23 11:59:21 AM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

karen wong:

Nhi and company, what information does she find out about her mother from her relatives in the DR?

[Message #24 12:03:03 PM, Wednesday, April 27, 2011]

nhi to:

Her mother was once a goddess who subjected to horrible events that lead her from her mother's womb straight to an orphanage life. Addition, her skin color is a subject of negative conotation-curse- to her family.