

Monica Sinaloa

What we talk about when we talk about being Mexican

I was stepping on the pebble sized blocks of snow on the ground outside of the library as I heard Catalina go on about spending her winter break in Mexico. Of course, Leo and Daniel, actually of Leo were fawning over her and all the “cool” things she was able to do there. Just because her family drove to Mexico every winter and summer, she thinks it gave her the right to ramble about it for hours.

“Oh you’re Paisa for that one,” said Leo

“I know unlike this one over here, she didn’t even know what a jaripeo was bro,”

Catalina replied, looking at me.

Daniel rolled his eyes, “Oye does it really matter? Ustedes se van a Mexico una vez y se crea mucho right huh”

Catalina stared at Daniel for a minute. She thinks that if she stares at someone for a long time after they piss her off, they’ll apologize.

“What?! It’s true. You and Leo always go on about being ‘so Mexican,’but when someone isn’t ‘Mexican,’you guys think it’s okay to shit on them about it.”

Catalina angrily said, “Oh my, okay well tell me the definition of being Mexican since you KNOW everything.”

Catalina took out a joint and lighter. She held it up in the air like the picture of the Jesus on the cross that sits in my room and stares at me during the witching hours.

“Fucking finally, all people do in Mexico is drink and no one, not one cute boy was able to smoke me out.”

Catalina always smoked with Leo before school started and Leo always said, “Weed to my lungs gives me the same feeling that vapor rub gives to my chest during a rough time.” Catalina lights up the joint.

Daniel shook his head, “Being Mexican is just having one or both parents who are also Mexican or from-”

Leo stopped Daniel and snatched the joint out of Catalina’s hand.

Inhaling the smoke, Leo yells, “Ay Daniel stop defending the gavacha, we know you like her. Just ask her out on a date already. And being Mexican isn’t just having one parent who was born in Mexico or whatever menso shit you’re saying. It’s appreciating the culture. Being Mexican is knowing Spanish, listening to Mexican music, and flipping tortillas with your bare hands and not a fork.”

Leo turned Daniel’s body towards me, “Daniel, take a look at our little white Mexicananita over there. Mirala, and when I mean by look at her, I mean think about her personality don’t drool over her or anything nah that’s not what we’re trying to look at right now. No wait, let’s look at her that way. Remember when she told us about the time she burned the Arroz? Do you really want to date someone that’s going to burn the Arroz? The MOST essential part of a Mexican plate. I know for me that mi novia necesitar a saber a cocinar porque wey nosotros somos hombres.”

Catalina smacked Daniel, “You’ve had the joint in your hand for minutes, pass it wey.” Daniel passed the joint. Catalina took a hit from the half finished joint. “He’s right, you know. We’re going to have to learn how to cook Arroz, Frijoles, tamales y los tortilas harina for our future husbands. It’s just how life is. You know this ‘American lifestyle’ you live by, it’s never going to

pass with other people like us and it's definitely never going to pass with white people. You remember that scene in the Selena movie, where Selena and her friend go into the mall into this nice ass store and the white lady asks them if they can afford it? Shit like that proves that we're never going to fit in with them. Just give it up already. Embrace your heritage more. Learn how to speak Spanish better. Learn how to cook. Stop eating so much Asian food and being Vegetarian will not cut it."

Leo jumped in with his small minded mentality that at times is equivalent to the size of a shoe box. "WE get it, you like movies and weird ass music, but would it kill you to like things that are Mexican more? Let's go to the jaripeos and no Daniel I'm not trying to take your girl. Let's get tacos and tortas then sing to Banda MS in the car."

"Woah woah woah, she does eat Mexican food. I've never seen a girl devour 3 tacos in the span of 10 minutes and she deals with your sad ass Mexican music in the car. BRO who got you in the feels? Just because Catalina is only willing to hook up with you, but not date you doesn't mean that you can hit us with that sad shit. You guys take stuff like this way too far. Let her be herself. Clearly you both are fake for that because you judge her for not being the way you want her to be yet you guys still hang out with her. Wow."

I looked down at my phone at the time, "Uh it's time to go... We can't be late"

Catalina said, "Whatever Daniel. I guess you're right. Well, time to go I guess. Taking a detour, so I'll see you guys at school bye." Catalina and Leo leave. It was just me and Daniel.

"So-"

"Yeah yeah it's whatever. They get annoying in the morning sometimes"

"I can see that"

“Do you want to grab a small bite after school?”

I smiled, “Yeah, sounds good.”