**Home Station**

Mara doesn’t feel like walking all the way back, so we decide to take the bus to the station instead. She doesn’t say much during the ride, and I realize that she hasn’t brought up Prim once today.

Mara (neutral thinking):

As we get off the bus, she takes a deep breath and notices a certain scent in the air.

Mara: Hmm…

Mara (neutral curious): Coffee?

Mara looks around and eventually spots a small coffee shop hidden by its much larger neighbours. Strangely, I don’t think I’ve ever noticed it before.

Mara: Has that always been there?

Pro: I’m not sure.

Mara (neutral smiling): Wanna check it out?

Guess a drink would be nice.

Pro: Sure, let’s go.

**Coffee Shop**

The first thing I notice as we enter the shop is its warmth, which permeates my body as we look at the menu. Mara orders a coffee with whipped cream, while I, wanting to be able to sleep tonight, I order an herbal tea.

I look around the shop as our drinks are made. It’s small and has a homely atmosphere, but right now it’s empty except for a lone student sitting at a table in the corner…

Mara (neutral neutral): Hey, isn’t that…

Mara (neutral fufu):

Lilith (neutral neutral): …

Mara (exit):

The barista hands me my drink, and I stand there, unsure on what I should do. Mara, on the other hand, dashes out of the shop before I can stop her.

I turn back to Lilith. After a moment, she gestures at me to join her, so I do.

Lilith (neutral curious): It’s you, huh?

Pro: That’s right. What are you doing here?

Lilith (drinking\_coffee satisfied):

Lilith takes a sip of her drink.

Lilith (neutral curious): I come here a lot. How about you?

Pro: Just wanted a drink, I guess.

Lilith (neutral neutral): I see.

She looks out the window, watching as people pass by.

Lilith (neutral wishful): Everyone’s so busy with their own lives, huh?

Pro: That’s something I wouldn’t have expected you to say.

Lilith (neutral confused): Why’s that?

Pro: Oh, um…

Pro: I dunno.

Lilith (neutral sigh):

Lilith sighs.

Lilith (neutral neutral): It’s not good to judge people by their looks, you know.

Pro: Sorry…

Lilith: It’s fine, I guess.

We sit in silence, and I find my thoughts drifting to Prim. This seems like a place she’d like…

Lilith (neutral curious): Something on your mind?

Pro: Oh, nothing.

I momentarily forgot that I was with Lilith.

Pro: So, um…

Pro: How’s baseball?

Lilith (neutral neutral): I think it’s going well. The new players are improving pretty quickly.

Lilith (neutral thinking):

Lilith pauses.

Lilith: Especially Petra.

Lilith (neutral neutral):

Pro: Petra, huh?

Pro: The really bubbly one, right?

Lilith: Yeah.

Pro: What’s she like?

Lilith (neutral thinking): Well…

Lilith (neutral annoyed): She’s hyper and energetic, and she unrelentingly pesters people until she gets what she wants.

Pro: Oh.

Lilith (neutral annoyed\_really): When she first joined the team, she wouldn’t stop following me around until I agreed to be her friend…

Huh…?

Pro: I guess it kind of makes sense. It would be best if you were all on friendly terms if you’re all on the same team, right?

Lilith (neutral sigh): Yeah, I guess.

Lilith (neutral annoyed): Still, though.

Lilith (neutral curious):

I let out a small laugh in spite of myself.

Pro: Yeah, I know what you mean. She can be a bit much.

Lilith (neutral smiling\_slightly): Yeah.

We continue to talk about Lilith teammates and their quirks, and as the minutes pass by I find that I’m able to push thoughts of Prim to the back of my mind.

**Home Station**

Eventually we leave the coffee shop, finding that the sun has already disappeared below the horizon.

Lilith (neutral neutral):

Pro: You know, I never knew that place existed until today.

Lilith (neutral curious): Really?

Lilith: I’ve known about it for a while. It’s usually pretty empty, so it’s a really good place to study.

Pro: Oh yeah, that makes sense.

Lilith (neutral neutral):

Lilith stops to look at an advertisement for a second before turning to face me.

Lilith (neutral embarrassed\_slightly): Um…

Lilith (neutral embarrassed): …

Lilith: If you’d like, we can hang out again.

Huh?

“Sure, I’d like that.”

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Lilith (neutral relief):

Pro: Sure, I’d like that.

Lilith (neutral embarrassed\_slightly): Could I get your number, then?

Lilith and I exchange phone numbers. Mara would be proud.

Lilith: Well, I should probably get going now.

Lilith (waving embarrassed\_slightly): See you later.

Pro: Yeah. See you.

Lilith (exit):

I watch as Lilith walks away, thinking about the first time I met her. At the time, I thought that she would be unsociable and aggressive, but after getting to know her a bit more, I realize how wrong I was.

**Kitchen**

I can’t find Mara anywhere afterward, so I assume she went home. On the way back I text her about everything that happened, and after around ten minutes I arrive back home, where I find my mom in the kitchen.

Mom (neutral frown): You didn’t call me.

Ah.

Pro: I forgot, sorry.

Mom (neutral sigh):

My mom sighs and moves to the fridge, pulling out a plate.

Mom (neutral neutral): Here, your breakfast from this morning.

Pro: Oh, thanks.

Mom (neutral smiling):

I sit down and start eating, and after a few moments I realize that my mom is seated across from me, watching with a small smile on her face.

Pro: Um, can I help you?

Mom: Don’t mind me.

A few minutes later I finish up, and my mom takes my dishes.

Pro: Thanks, Mom.

Mom (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): You’re welcome.

Mom (neutral smiling): Don’t stay up too late, okay?

**Bedroom**

I head upstairs, realizing on the way how tired I am. I lay down on my bed, checking for a reply from Mara. Nothing yet, though.

My eyelids start to droop as a full day’s worth of activities starts to take its toll. I put down my phone and close my eyes, giving in to my exhaustion.

Ah well. I guess I’ll answer all of Mara’s questions tomorrow.

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“Sorry, I think I’ll pass.”

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Pro: I’m really sorry, but I think I’ll pass.

Lilith (neutral disappointed):

Pro: To be honest, I’ve been doing really badly in school recently, and I think for now I should focus on my studies.

While that’s partially true, the real reason that I denied Lilith’s offer is because yesterday I rejected Prim’s invitation as well. After turning her down her like that, I don’t think that I could hang out with Lilith without it weighing on my conscience

Lilith: Oh, I see. I understand.

We stand there in silence for a few seconds.

Lilith: Well, I should probably get going now.

Pro: Yeah. Thanks for talking with me today. I enjoyed it.

Lilith: No problem.

Lilith: See you around, I guess.

Pro: Yeah.

Lilith (exit):

I watch as Lilith walks away, wondering if I’ll regret turning her down as well.

**Intersection 2**

Soon after Lilith leaves, I find Mara waiting for me. We walk home in silence, with Mara seemingly deep in thought the entire way.

Mara (neutral worried):

Before we part ways, she stops me, a worried look in her eyes.

Mara (neutral nervous): I guess you really messed up with those two, huh.

Pro: Yeah…

Pro: Sorry. After all your efforts…

Mara (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): It’s fine, don’t worry about it.

Mara (neutral neutral): Seems like we’ll be hanging out a lot more, huh?

Pro: Yeah, seems so.

Mara (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): If that’s the case, then I don’t mind so much.

Mara (neutral smiling):

Mara takes a few steps forward before turning to face me.

Mara (waving smiling): Well, I’ll see you tomorrow then!

Mara (exit):

And she dashes off.

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