**Park**

I spot Lilith sitting on a bench almost immediately after arriving at the park she directed me to. It’s gotten pretty cold, and as a result the place is empty save for a few people passing by.

Lilith (worried worried):

Pro: Hey.

I take a seat beside her, suddenly aware of how nervous I am.

Lilith (worried worried\_slightly): You came after all.

Pro: Yeah.

Lilith (worried worried):

We sit in silence, awkwardly looking around the area.

Lilith: Um…

Lilith (worried worried\_slightly): Are you…

Lilith (worried worried):

She pauses for a moment, having trouble getting out what she wants to say.

Lilith (worried apologetic): Are you mad?

Pro: Mad?

She nods.

Lilith (worried relief):

Pro: I’m not mad, don’t worry. It was a little unexpected, though.

As I say these words, the stress from the past few hours starts to melt away. It looks like I was worried for nothing, and I start to feel a little dumb for panicking.

Pro: Actually, I’m really relieved. I thought you might’ve hated me.

Lilith (worried smiling\_worried): I thought you might’ve hated me as well.

Lilith (worried disappointed): You scared me, you know. Asking if it could wait till tomorrow…

I feel a pang of guilt.

Pro: I’m really sorry about that…

Pro: I don’t think I could ever hate you, though.

Lilith (worried surprise):

Lilith (worried embarrassed\_blushing): …

Lilith: I don’t think I could hate you either…

Pro: Oh, I see.

We sit for a few moments in quiet embarrassment, slowly processing what we just said. I can feel my cheeks starting to turn red, and even though it’s cold outside I start to worry that I’ll start sweating.

Lilith (worried worried\_slightly): In the past…

Lilith pauses, staring into the distance.

Lilith: In the past some things happened, and now…

Lilith (worried worried):

Pro: You don’t have to tell me if you don’t want to.

Lilith: No, I feel like I should…

Lilith (worried breath):

She takes a deep breath and continues.

Lilith (worried worried): Now I’m…apprehensive around most guys. It’s not like I hate them, but when they’re aggressive…

She stops, considering her words.

Lilith (worried smiling\_worried): …I don’t like that.

Pro: Oh.

Lilith (worried worried\_slightly):

Pro: Um, this may be a little insensitive to ask, but…

Pro: Are you apprehensive around me?

Lilith (worried relief): No. You seem really passive.

Lilith (worried smiling\_worried): It’s not a bad thing, though.

Pro: I see.

Well, I guess that would explain a lot of things.

Lilith (worried worried\_slightly): So when that guy grabbed my hand, I kind of…

Lilith (worried worried): You know.

Pro: Yeah.

Lilith: Um…

Lilith (worried apologetic): I’m really sorry.

Pro: It’s fine, it’s fine, don’t worry.

Lilith: I ruined the mixer, though.

Pro: I don’t think we were really into it, anyways.

Lilith (worried worried): But the others were enjoying it…

Pro: Ah, I think…

I pause, choosing my words carefully.

Lilith (worried surprise):

Pro: I think they’ll be fine. At this point, they’ll be happy enough just knowing that you’re alright.

Lilith (worried confused):

She looks at me strangely.

Pro: I guess you could still apologize to them, maybe? Actually, I dunno…

Lilith (worried worried\_slightly):

Pro: You probably shouldn’t trust me on this. I’m not exactly an interpersonal relations expert…

I reflect back upon my past.

Pro: Yeah, when I was little I really only hung out with this one girl, and we rarely fought since I’d pretty much listen to whatever she said.

Lilith (worried worried\_slightly): That sounds…a little sad.

Pro: Oh, it wasn’t bad. She’s really kind, but…

Pro: Actually, I guess we did get in a lotta trouble. But even if we got scolded for doing something dumb, the next day I’d go and follow her all over again…

Pro: I guess I am really passive. Probably too passive.

Lilith: …

Lilith (worried smiling\_worried): Probably.

I continue to tell Lilith random stories about me and Mara, ironically forgetting that I was supposed to meet her at the station. Eventually I remember, and panickedly I stand up, startling Lilith.

Lilith (worried worried): What’s wrong?

Pro: Oh, uh…

Pro: Actually, I forgot that I have to meet someone…

Lilith (worried disappointed): I see.

Lilith (stretching stretching):

She gets up as well, stretching as she stands.

Lilith (neutral worried\_slightly): Well, you better get going then.

Pro: Yeah, sorry.

Lilith (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): It’s alright. I should probably do some things too.

Lilith (neutral smiling\_slightly): See you tomorrow, then.

Pro: Yeah, see you.

Lilith (exit):

After a wave Lilith and I part ways, with me heading to the station and her heading in the opposite direction. Honestly, I definitely wouldn’t have minded talking with her a little more, but I guess we still have plenty of time to do that. Another two years, at least.