**Front of Lilith’s House**

The hour between the time I leave school and the time I reach Lilith’s place is a rushed one, with each little thing I did during that period somehow taking twice the amount of time it normally does.

Thankfully I manage to get there on time, knocking on the door with a few minutes to spare.

However, it’s not Lilith that answers it.

?Lilith’s Aunt: …

?Lilith’s Aunt: Whatever you're selling, we don’t want it.

Lilith: Auntie! That’s him.

Lilith’s Aunt: …

Lilith’s Aunt: I told you not to call me “Auntie,” it makes me sound old.

Lilith: But you’re my aunt. And you *are* old.

Lilith’s Aunt: Stop it…

Lilith’s aunt starts pouting like a young child, leaving me to wonder which one of them is actually the caretaker.

Lilith: Sorry about her. This is my aunt.

Pro: Oh, yeah…

Lilith: Um…

Lilith: …

Lilith: You can come inside now, if you want.

Pro: Oh, right. I’ll come in, then.

**Lilith’s House**

The first thing I notice when I step inside is how different the place seems from the last time I was here. Before it was rather derelict and had a hopeless feeling about it, but now it’s warm and welcoming.

Lilith notices my amazement and gives a brief explanation.

Lilith: We spend a whole day cleaning and moving in my aunt’s furniture. We even got new lighting installed.

Pro: I see.

Lilith: Um, we’ll be studying at that table, so you can go ahead and get yourself settled in.

Pro: Oh, alright. Thanks.

Lilith: I’ll be right back.

I sit down as Lilith goes into her room, and, sensing an opportunity, her aunt shuffles into the room and takes the seat across from me.

Lilith’s Aunt: So you’re the infamous Pro, huh?

Pro: Infamous?

Lilith’s Aunt: That’s right. Lilith talks about you pretty frequently, you know. And it seems like she’s been paying attention, you’re exactly like she described.

Lilith’s Aunt: So, what are your intentions with my little princess? Are you planning on mar-

Lilith: Don’t you have work to do?

Lilith reappears, saving me from her guardian.

Lilith: Weren’t you complaining about how you’d have to stay up all night to hit your deadline?

Lilith’s Aunt: Huh? But I’ve been working all day, and I’m exhausted…

Lilith: Then get to work so you can go to bed earlier.

Lilith’s Aunt: Alright, alright…

She gets up and stretches, her body making clearly audible cracking sounds as it extends.

Lilith’s Aunt: Well, I guess we’ll talk later, Pro. See you!

She flashes Lilith a wink before leaving, chuckling to herself as she heads into her room.

Lilith: Sorry about that…

Pro: It’s alright. My mom’s like that too.

We share a small laugh, suddenly finding our guardians’ unusual thirst for gossip amusing.

Lilith: Well, despite how she is she’s really kind. So I hope you won’t think of her badly.

Pro: Of course not.

Lilith: Thanks.

Lilith: Well, I guess we should get started. Let me see your homework.

Pro: Huh? Oh, right…

I dig through my bag and tentatively hand over a messy stack of papers, a little apprehensive. She skims through them intently, her expression unchanging, betraying none of her thoughts.

At times like these, I wish she were a little less unreadable…

Lilith: So…

Pro: Oh, you’re done already?

Lilith: Yeah.

Pro: So, uh…

Pro: How bad is it?

She stops to think, probably trying to come up with a way to break the news without hurting my feelings.

Lilith: It’s actually not as bad as I thought, but it still needs quite a bit of work.

Well, that wasn’t too bad. Actually, how low were her expectations, exactly…?

Lilith: We’ll briefly go through everything today, I guess.

Lilith: Um, do you want something to drink?

Pro: Oh, um, I think I’ll be fine.

Lilith: Alright. Let’s get started, then.

**Lilith’s House**

Lilith guides me through all the major material for this week’s upcoming test, explaining everything in detail and giving me tips to make solving problems easier. She’s a really good tutor, and by the time we decide to take a break I find myself feeling significantly more confident than before.

Lilith: At this point you should be able to at least pass the test. Probably.

Lilith: After dinner we can work on giving you more of a buffer, though.

Pro: Dinner?

Lilith: Oh, I forgot to tell you. I’m, um…

Lilith: …

Lilith: I’m gonna make dinner.

Pro: Oh, okay. Do you need any help with anything?

Lilith: I’ll be okay. I prepped everything beforehand, so I just need to cook everything and then we can eat.

Lilith: Could you get my aunt, though?

Pro: Oh, alright.

Lilith gets up and starts pulling things out of the fridge to presumably stir fry while I make my way over to her aunt’s room, knocking on her door tentatively. To my surprise, the door opens immediately, as if she were standing there listening in the entire time.

Lilith’s Aunt: Are we eating?

Pro: Uh, yeah.

Lilith: Set the table, please.

Lilith’s Aunt: Oh, alright.

I suppress a laugh, noting how Lilith seems like the actual guardian.

Lilith’s Aunt: What do you wanna drink?

Pro: Me? Uh…

Pro: I’m fine with anything.

Lilith’s Aunt: Now, don’t be like that. When someone asks what you want to drink, don’t leave it up to them to guess.

Pro: Oh, uh, sorry. What do you have?

Lilith’s Aunt: We have water, barley tea, and energy drinks.

Energy drinks…?

Pro: I’ll take tea, then.

Lilith’s Aunt: Alright. Tea it is.

Lilith’s Aunt: Are you sure you don’t want an energy drink, though? I highly recommend it.

Pro: Aren’t they really bad for you though…?

Lilith’s Aunt: That’s just a rumour. They’re pretty much a staple in my profession. And you’ll likely have to start drinking them later in your life, so why not start now?

Lilith: Stop pushing your bad habits onto others.

Lilith’s Aunt: Ah, looks like I was caught…

She lets out a sigh and turns to me to clear up the misunderstanding.

Lilith: Don’t listen to her. The only reason why she drinks so many energy drinks is because she always procrastinates and leaves her work to the last minute. Her editor told me.

Lilith’s Aunt: It’s not procrastination since my work is creative. You can’t rush art.

Lilith’s Aunt: In order to come up with something that will move my readers, I have to have the proper inspiration.

Lilith: Which is…?

Lilith’s Aunt: …

Lilith’s Aunt: Terror.

Pro: Terror?

Lilith’s Aunt: My editor’s scary when she gets mad…

Lilith’s Aunt: And she hates nothing more than when things are late.

Lilith: …

Lilith’s Aunt: A-Anyways, now that I have you to help out around the house I’ll be able to get my work done sooner.

Lilith’s Aunt: Speaking of which, what did you make today?

Lilith: See for yourself. Everything’s done, so let’s eat.

**Cutscene - Dinner at Lilith’s**

We all sit down around the table, appreciating the gorgeous meal Lilith’s prepared.

Lilith’s Aunt: A beef stir fry and a stewed vegetable side dish…

Lilith’s Aunt: Chinese?

Lilith: Yeah.

Lilith’s Aunt: Nice, nice. Everything’s glistening, too.

Lilith’s Aunt: Let’s eat!

Pro: Thanks for the meal.

We start to dig in, going through the food at an alarming rate. It tastes just as good as it looks, and I find myself going for seconds, and then thirds, and then fourths…

Lilith’s Aunt: You’re the best, Lilith. If you were a bit less assertive, you’d be perfect…

Lilith’s Aunt: But then again, it’s the usual, tough exterior that makes the moments when you’re soft and embarrassed all the more cuter…

Lilith’s Aunt: Mmm…

Lilith’s Aunt: Yup, I think the contrast wins over all. Don’t you think, Pro?

Pro: Huh? I guess…

Lilith: …!

Lilith’s Aunt: You hear that? Ah, to be young again…

Lilith and I spend the rest of dinner fending off her aunt, her relentless teasing made even worse by her disturbing caffeine intake. It’s quite the struggle, but despite the high level of discomfort she puts us through both of us still have a lot of fun, the room where so much hurt happened filled with laughter.

It looks like Lilith finally has a real home.