**Home Station**

Pro: It’s closed for today.

Petra: Yes, we can see that.

The three of us stare at the notice on the coffee shop door, unsure of what to do next. A tiny, insignificant wrench has been thrown into our plans, but for some reason it feels like an enormous obstacle instead…

Pro: So, I guess we’ll come back tomorrow?

Lilith: Um…

Lilith: We can just study somewhere else, you know.

Pro: Oh, right.

Petra: But where? The public library’s pretty far away, and we can’t go to my place today…

Petra: Maybe we could go back to school?

Lilith: Since we came all the way out here already, I’d rather not.

Pro: Huh? Why not?

Lilith: It seems a little…

Lilith: …wasteful, I guess.

Petra: Yeah, I totally get that. We’ve already left for the day, so it’d feel bad to go back…

Lilith: But if we have to, then I guess it’s fine.

Petra: We could also…

Petra looks at me oddly, her expression mysteriously chilling.

Petra: You live around here, don’t you?

Pro: Me? I mean, yeah, but why?

Petra: Well…

Pro: Hold on. If you’re gonna suggest that we go to my place…

Petra: Why not?

Pro: Because…

I glance at Lilith, who seems interested as well.

This isn’t good. My mom’s home, and if I were to show up unexpectedly with Lilith and Petra then she’d never let me hear the end of it…

Petra: C’mon, it’ll be fun. Right, Lilith?

Lilith: Well…

Lilith: I guess I’m a little curious. I kinda want to see what your place’s like.

Huh…

I stop to think, an internal debate brewing in my mind. Disappointing Petra is one thing, but letting Lilith down is another…

Pro: Um…

“Alright, fine.” **OR** “My mom’s home.”

{

Pro: Alright, fine.

Pro: My mom’s home, though, so if she’s not up to it then we’ll have to go somewhere else, though.

There’s absolutely no chance of that happening, though.

Petra: Of course, of course. Inconveniencing you is one thing, but inconveniencing your family is another.

Pro: Right, right…

I almost let out a sigh, but, remembering that Lilith’s here as well, I restrain myself.

Pro: Well, I guess we shouldn’t wait around.

Pro: Give me a moment to prepare myself and then we’ll go.

}

{

Pro: …my mom’s home.

Petra: That’s a pretty weak excuse.

Pro: Huh? What do you mean? She has a day off today, and I dunno if she’d like having people over when she’s supposed to be resting…

A half-truth. My mom’s definitely at home resting, but she’d probably be ecstatic to have Lilith and Petra over…

A scenario that I can never let happen.

Petra: Oh wait, didn’t she collapse recently or something…?

Lilith: I guess there’s nothing we can do, then.

Lilith: Let’s go back to school.

}