**Kitchen**

When we arrive I get Lilith and Petra to wait outside while I head inside, hoping that my mom’s asleep or something so I can say that I don’t wanna wake her. I guess it’d be alright if she went shopping, but then I’d have to try to cut things short.

Just please, please don’t let her be awake and in the kitchen…

Mom: Oh, you’re back.

…

Of course.

Mom: I thought you were studying with some friends?

Pro: Huh?!? Uh…

I instinctively glance back towards the door, a mistake that costs me everything.

Mom: Oho? Are they by any chance outside?

Pro: Um…

The single gear in my head whirls desperately, trying to find a way to prevent a calamity from occurring…

Pro: Maybe.

Yup. That’s the best I could do.

Mom: So they are.

Mom: Why are they here, though? I would’ve thought that this would be the last place you’d wanna study…

Pro: Yeah, but…

Pro: Well, stuff happened and they’re here now.

Pro: Um, can they come in…?

Mom: Of course. Our doors are always open for your friends.

Pro: And you won’t embarrass them or anything, or imply anything that shouldn’t be implied, right…?

Mom: …

Mom: What type of monster do you think I am…?

Mom: Of course I wouldn’t. Going out of my way to tease you is one thing, but I wouldn’t dream of making your friends uncomfortable.

I guess it’ll be fine, then. Although it’s a little annoying how everyone seems to be okay with disregarding my feelings alone.

Pro: Alright. I’ll let them in now.

I move towards the door to open it, and in come Lilith and Petra.

Petra: Pardon the intrusion!!

Petra quickly takes off her shoes and hyperactively starts to look around, while Lilith is a little more civilized and greets my mom.

Lilith: Thank you for having us. I’m Lilith.

Mom: You’re welcome. Please make yourself at home.

Petra: Hey, where’s Pro’s room???

Petra: Oh, um…

Petra: Thank you for having us.

Mom: You’re very welcome.

Petra: I’m Petra.

Mom: Nice to meet you.

Mom: Pro’s room is up the stairs, the first door on the left.

Petra: Thanks! I’ll be right back, need to use the washroom or something.

Without further ado she dashes up the stairs, undoubtedly to inspect my belongings. It’s not like I really have anything to hide, though.

Lilith: Um…

Lilith: I’m sorry about her.

Mom: It’s alright, don’t worry. It’s refreshing to see someone with such a youthful character.

Mom: I’d assume that she’s your junior? I was surprised.

Pro: Huh? Why?

Mom: Well, I thought you were studying with Prim. After all, from what I’ve heard you two have been joined at the hip recently…

I scramble to prevent my mom from saying anything else, but it’s too late.

Lilith: Joined at the hip, huh…

Mom: Do you know Prim as well?

Lilith: I’ve met her a few times, but Petra’s really fond of her.

Mom: I see.

Mom: Next time you should all come over together, then.

There’s gonna be a next time…?

Lilith: Oh, um…

Lilith: …

Lilith: That’d be nice.

Lilith looks to the side, but before I can really process it Petra barges back into the room.

Mom: So? Did you find anything interesting?

Petra: …

Petra: Nothing at all. It was filled with manga, and that was about it.

Petra: We read a lot of the same type of stuff, though. I was surprised.

Lilith: Hm? What do you guys read?

Petra: Huh?!? Uh…

Thankfully, Petra seems too embarrassed to answer as well. While being an avid fan of rom-com manga isn’t necessarily wrong, it’s certainly not something you wanna tell everyone about.

Petra: Like dramas, and stuff. Yeah.

I glance at my mom, the last possible person to rat us out, but thankfully she just smiles innocently.

Lilith: I see…

Lilith: Well, I guess we should get started.

Lilith turns to my mom apologetically.

Lilith: Sorry, um…

Mom: Oh, don’t worry. Please don’t mind me, I’ll be upstairs.

She smiles one last time before shuffling away, obviously interested in what we’ll be doing but knowing better than to stick around and watch.

Lilith: Your mom’s pretty great, huh?

Pro: Hm? Yeah, I guess. Although sometimes I wish she’d be a little less nosy…

Lilith: I think it’s a good thing. It’s endearing.

Pro: Yeah, maybe.

Lilith moves towards the kitchen table and places her bag down, her eyes a little softer than they normally are.

But why? Is she happy? Or…

Lilith: Let’s get started.