**Front of Lilith’s House**

Immediately after every scrap had been eating and every dish had been cleaned, Lilith’s aunt headed straight to her room, presumably to finish her manuscript. Lilith made a pot of tea, and we spent the rest of the evening reviewing the concepts that I had trouble with.

Lilith: Um, are you gonna be alright walking home?

Pro: Yeah, I’ll be fine.

Lilith: Alright.

Lilith: Sorry that my aunt couldn’t come see you off.

Pro: Oh, don’t worry about it. I’m sure I’ll run into her again sometime, anyways.

Lilith: …

Lilith: Yeah.

Lilith: Um…

Lilith: Earlier today you and Prim, well, you seemed pretty cold towards each other.

Lilith: Did something happen? If you need someone to talk to, I’m here.

Surprised, I pause to think of a way to answer her honestly but without divulging too much about Prim’s personal life.

Pro: That day when I came over to see you…

Pro: Do you think that was selfish of me? Going to you, even though you told me not to?

Lilith: Selfish…?

Lilith: …

Lilith: I think that everything we do is selfish to some extent, even when we do good things. People that donate to charity receive self-gratification. Children behave so that they don’t get scolded by their parents.

Lilith: When I first saw my father holding you, a part of me thought you were selfish as well. That you were charging into things by yourself to soothe your own conscience, without any regard for how others felt. That you didn’t care about my resolve, or my family…

Lilith: But that wasn’t the only reason why you came, right? You wanted me to be happy, and couldn’t bear to see in me in pain…

Lilith: And now, because of you, I have a real family. I have someone who’ll show up to my parent-teacher interviews, someone who’ll attend my games to obnoxiously cheer me on, or call my cell to make sure I don’t stay out too late…

Lilith: Because of you, I have a future to look forward to. Because of you and your selfish actions.

Pro: Lilith…

Lilith: With Prim, I’m sure your reasoning is similar. I’m sure you have your own personal, selfish reasons, but at the same time I’m sure you want the best for her as well.

Lilith: So I think it’ll be fine. As long as you can honestly say you want to see her smile, then I think it’ll be fine. Do what you think you should do, and if it works out then it works out, and if not then it doesn’t.

Her words bring Mara to mind, and the conversation we had when Lilith was the one I was agonizing over. They’re actually somewhat similar in this regard – they’re both honest and don’t sugarcoat things, but at the same time they’re both encouraging and kind.

Lilith: Um…

Lilith: Does that help?

Pro: Yeah. Thanks so much.

Lilith: You’re welcome.

Lilith: Um, it’s getting dark, so you should probably go home…

Pro: Oh, right. Sorry for keeping you.

Lilith: Oh, no, it’s not like that…

Lilith: …

Lilith: You’re welcome to come any time.

Pro: Oh, alright.

Pro: Thanks for everything.

Lilith: You’re welcome.

Lilith: I’ll see you tomorrow.

Pro: Yeah. See you tomorrow.

**Neighbourhood Road 3**

A lone silhouette ominously appears around the corner during my walk home, blocking my path. Upon further inspection I discover that, perhaps unsurprisingly, it’s Mara, and after a small sigh of relief I go over to talk to her.

Mara: Hey.

Pro: Hey, um…

Pro: How did you know? That Lilith would approach me today, and that she’d tell me what I needed to hear.

Mara: I’m psychic.

Pro: …

Mara: Just kidding, just kidding. I didn’t know exactly what would happen, but I had a feeling that *something* would.

Mara: Maybe it’s a woman’s intuition.

Intuition? That’s more like a premonition.

Mara: Anyways, I think what she says is right. Wanting to be a knight in shining armour is at least a little selfish and egocentric, not to mention lame and out of fashion…

Mara: But I also think that it’s very sweet. And that it suits you.

She reaches out to gently pat my head, making me smile naturally.

Mara: So do your best.

Mara: And since you’re a knight-in-training, why don’t you walk me home?

Pro: …

Mara: It’s all about being chivalrous, you know.

Pro: Never mind that, what exactly are you doing here?

Mara: Hm? Coming to see you.

Pro: I mean, yeah, but did you follow me after school? And have you been waiting here for all this time?

Mara: Um…

Mara: No comment.

Pro: Don’t you have anything better to do…?

Mara: No comment.

Pro: …

Pro: Don’t blame me if you fail your classes.

Mara: I won’t fail, don’t worry.

Mara: Probably…

Pro: Probably, huh…

Pro: Well, that’s that. Let’s get going, then.

Mara: Can we get something on the way home?

Pro: Fine, fine. What do you want?

Having not expected me to agree to readily, she takes a moment to process everything and make her decision.

Mara: Um…

Mara: Ice cream!