

— July 5th, 1934. Frieda and Hilda's Apartment, 9:20 P.M. —

Hilda sat across from Dieter Jr. in the apartment. The young boy had been silent most of the time there. He would look at his shoes, then look out the window, then at Hilda, then repeat the cycle. She got the feeling she needed to say something to comfort the poor boy. Then she debated if he needed some time alone, given his father just died. The 16-year-old just rolled her eyes and decided to say whatever came to her mind first.

“Hey.” She waved at him, attempting to smile.

“Hi.” Dieter Jr. sheepishly.

The two were sitting across from each other, staring at each other in silence.

“You know,” She continued, playing with her blouse, not meeting the boy in the eye. She was going to go somewhere with this. “I lost my parents when I was real young too.”

Dieter Jr.'s eyes widened a bit. “Really.”

“Mhm.”

“Did it hurt? Like, really bad?”

“Well actually, I was a baby when they died, so *technically*, I didn't realize they were dead until much later in my life—”

She cut herself off. That probably wasn't the most appropriate thing to say in this situation. Hilda quickly tried to recover. Judging by the 8-year-old's face, she didn't hurt him *too* badly. Then she remembered something better to say.

“I was actually around your age when I lost someone else in my life. Oma.”

“Oma?” Dieter Jr. asked. “Your grandmother?”

“Not my actual grandmother, I just called her that. She died in a fire while I was at a friend's house. Last conversation I had with her was when she came to my bed to kiss me

goodbye before she left for work that morning. It's like, it bugs me that our last convo was so normal, but it's because I didn't expect her to *die*, you know?"

One look at the boy told Hilda she was NOT helping the situation. She sucked when it came to serious conversations like these. One of the most common jokes she heard blamed her resting bitch face and abrasive personality. She moved way too many times, so she never got to get very comfortable around too many people in her life. In that moment, she gained a wonderful idea.

"I have an idea to help you get past this."

Dieter Jr. jumped high on the queen-sized bed, letting himself gain more and more air as he shot up higher and higher. He was having the time of his life! When he reached the top, he bounced back down. Hilda was right next to him, jumping on the bed as well. They both were giggling hysterically. The bed had enough room for the two of them to jump on without worry. Dieter Jr. fell onto the mattress and bounced up a few inches, landing right back down. His hair was a mess, and he was gasping for breath. He had never had this much fun ever!

"What are you two doing?!"

Hilda and Dieter Jr. paused their bouncing. Frieda had her hands on her hips, looking annoyed at the two. Hilda landed on her knees as the mattress jiggled under her.

"I'm helping DJ overcome his grief."

"That's nice, but why on MY bed?"

"Mine's too small."

Frieda raised an eyebrow, but shrugged it off.

“I’ll allow it. Just don’t tear up my mattress.” Frieda surrendered. The duo continued their hop frenzy while Frieda just decided to sleep in Hilda’s bed for the time being.