

L.I.L.I.T.H.

Written by

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INT. JULIA'S APARTMENT - SUMMER - MIDDAY

Standing by the window, a tall man in his late 20s, ALBERT, gazes silently into the courtyard. We see him through the windowpane.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD: "L.I.L.I.T.H."

FADE IN:

INT. MEDICAL UNIVERSITY - BRIGHT LECTURE HALL - DAY

A psychology lecture is in progress. LILITH, 23, an attractive young woman, listens intently as the LECTURER, a woman in her 40s, speaks.

LECTURER

The triad of depressive syndrome includes: low mood, decreased mental activity, and slowed movement

The door creaks open. LEON, 24, bright eyes, steps in.

LEON

Excuse me, may I come in?

LECTURER

Why are you late?

LEON

Got stuck in traffic.

LECTURER

Take a seat.

Leon heads to an empty seat beside Lilith. She stiffens, clearly uncomfortable. The Lecturer continues.

LECTURER (cont'd)

Now, let's discuss ideomotor retardation...

Leon leans toward Lilith, whispering.

LEON

Lil, are you mad at me?

Lilith doesn't respond.

LEON (cont'd)  
Look, I said I was sorry. It won't  
happen again. Does that change  
anything?

LILITH  
(loudly)  
No!

The Lecturer stops mid-sentence, turning to Leon.

LECTURER  
First you're late. Now you're  
disrupting my class. Leave.

LEON  
(standing up)  
No, I just-

LECTURER  
Leave.

Leon exhales sharply, shaking his head, and storms out.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE LECTURE HALL — MOMENTS LATER

Leon leans against the windowsill, lost in thought. The bell rings. Lilith steps into the hallway. Leon catches her wrist.

LEON  
Lil, just give me a minute.

LILITH  
I have no words.

She pulls away.

LEON  
Wait. I'm sorry.

LILITH  
I'm late for my internship.

LEON  
Seriously? After everything? Your  
internship's more important?

LILITH  
Yes, it is.

She walks away, leaving Leon standing there, jaw clenched.

EXT. STREET NEAR THE HOSPITAL — SUMMER — DAY — MOMENTS LATER

Lilith hurries down the street, breathless. An ambulance pulls up. Inside: MAX (50s, bald, gruff), and HANK (60s, wiry, driver). Lilith taps on the window.

LILITH

You won't believe why I'm late...

MAX

Get in, kid. We're behind.

She opens the door and hops into the back.

INT. AMBULANCE — CONTINUOUS

Inside: VALERIE (30s, plump, lively), SAM (40s, burly), and BEN (30s, dark-skinned, quiet). Lilith slides in beside Valerie.

LILITH

Hey, everyone.

ALL

Hey.

Lilith leans in to Valerie.

LILITH

(whispers)

He didn't yell at me today. Lucky, huh?

VALERIE

Yeah, well... he's not in the mood. We're heading to Julia's. She's not doing great.

LILITH

Julia?

VALERIE

You don't know her? The twins—she's the one with epilepsy.

LILITH

Oh.

No, I'm still new.

VALERIE

You'll meet her soon. Trust me, you won't forget them.

(MORE)

VALERIE (cont'd)

Julia was an opera singer. Got a son, too, just like her and her sister.

(gestures to her head)

Not in the right mind, if you know what I mean.

Hank turns up the radio, Whitney Houston fills the air.

HANK

Damn, she could sing.

Max sighs, pulls out a greasy potato pie, takes a bite, and stuffs it back in his pocket. Ben bobs his head to the music. Sam stares ahead, silent.

EXT. APARTMENT COURTYARD — MOMENTS LATER

The battered ambulance screeches to a stop in front of an old apartment building. The sudden halt jolts everyone inside. They all climb out, except for Hank, and head for the elevator.

CLOSE-UP: A greasy stain on Max's lab coat pocket from his potato pie.

INT. BUILDING STAIRWELL — CONTINUOUS

Max presses the elevator button, wipes his nose with his sleeve, and smooths down his thinning hair. Valerie stands beside him, frowning, her medical bag in hand.

VALERIE

Ughhh... This elevator won't hold me.

MAX

Quit complaining, Valerie. You're still young and light as a bird.

Lilith smirks. Valerie raises an eyebrow at Max, unimpressed.

LILITH

Maybe I should take the stairs?

(takes a step toward the stairwell)

It's kinda cramped in here.

VALERIE

Nah, get back here. We'll make it work.

BEN

Yeah, you're so small you could fit  
through a needle's eye.

They squeeze into the elevator, crammed together, as it  
creaks its way up to the correct floor.

INT. JULIA'S APARTMENT - STAIRWELL

Neighbors stand in the stairwell, pointing at the door,  
murmuring about the commotion from earlier.

Lilith steps forward to knock.

MAX

Wait a second, dear. Looks like we're  
going to be here for a while. Let's  
eat something first, who knows when  
we'll get another chance.

He pulls a half-eaten pastry from his robe pocket, takes a  
few bites, then stuffs it back in.

MAX (cont'd)

Alright, let's go.

Lilith knocks. Inside, a woman's dramatic shouting erupts.  
Slippers shuffle. A metal lock rattles. The door creaks  
open.

Albert stands there, staring at the floor. Striped T-shirt,  
worn out slippers, unevenly cut hair. Freshly shaven, hands  
held close to his body like a T-Rex.

They greet him. He says nothing, just stares until the last  
guest steps inside. Then, like waking up, he shuffles  
backward, closing the door.

INT. JULIA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM

JULIA, 50s, lounges on a worn out couch, fanning herself  
furiously. Black hair piled up, a stray lock falling over  
her face. Over the top rings on plump fingers. The coffee  
table in front of her is a cluttered mess: meds, newspapers,  
a stained cup.

At the dining table, her twin GRETA smokes, exhaling through  
her nose. Tight leggings, stout legs, wide hips. She barely  
looks up as they enter.

Albert slips to a small art table by the window. He picks up a pencil, flips it in his fingers, sniffs it, then starts sketching.

Max drags a chair over and sits beside Julia.

MAX

Sam, bring over a couple more chairs for the ladies.

Sam grabs two chairs and places them beside Max. Valerie sits down.

VALERIE

Lilith, honey, sit.

Lilith shakes her head. Valerie sets her bag on the chair instead. Lilith stays by the upright piano, keeping an eye on everyone.

MAX

(gently)

Alright, my dear, tell me, what happened today?

Julia flares up, her fanning intensifying.

JULIA

She disrespects me!

(waving dramatically  
at her sister)

I am an AR-TIST. I am Julieta  
Sarkisyan!

A strand of hair falls onto her face. She blows it away dramatically.

JULIA (cont'd)

I will die under the grand Opera House before I spend another day here!

GRETA

Oh, please, doctor, don't believe her. Same nonsense my whole life.

Greta exhales smoke, unimpressed.

JULIA

Gretaaaa!

GRETA

Enough already.

(MORE)

GRETA (cont'd)  
(muttering as she  
smokes)

Give it a rest, both for me and for  
Albert.

JULIA

Don't bring Albert into this! He's a  
good boy! Unlike you: always  
disappearing for days, dragging in  
all sorts of filthy creatures...

Greta winks at Max, subtly signaling she's never actually  
been gone or brought home strays.

GRETA

If I don't cook for her one day,  
she'd probably eat me alive.

(mimicking Julia)

"What do you mean 'gone for a few  
days'?"

Julia's agitation builds. Max leans toward Valerie.

MAX

Make her a little cocktail.

JULIA

(outraged)

What?! A cocktail? You think I can't  
hear you? I don't need any cocktail!

She fans herself even faster, her voice cracking. Her breath  
catches, eyes welling up. She starts sobbing dramatically.

Unfazed, Valerie opens her case. Gloves on. Ampoules  
snapped. Syringe ready. Tourniquet prepped.

Julia, still crying, keeps complaining between sobs.

JULIA (cont'd)

She's the problem!

(points at Greta)

A few days ago, I returned from my  
concert in Milan, and everything was  
a disaster. A complete disaster!

Her fan flutters wildly.

JULIA (cont'd)

That was just yesterday... Such a  
magnificent performance... The  
applause, the flowers...

Meanwhile, Greta seizes the moment and approaches Sam, chewing her gum obnoxiously. She eyes him up and down, clearly impressed.

GRETA  
My, my... such a handsome man...

Sam's eyebrows rise, but he remains still, looking away.

GRETA (cont'd)  
Such a strong, handsome man...

She chews her gum harder, her admiration intensifying. Sam's eyebrows climb even higher. He stays motionless, staring at the window.

GRETA (cont'd)  
Such a young, strong, handsome man...

Sweat forms on Sam's forehead. Greta, seeing no reaction, presses further.

GRETA (cont'd)  
And such intelligent eyes...

Sam's eyebrows nearly touch his hairline.

Lilith, who had been watching this unfold with amusement, shifts her attention to Albert. She notices him scribbling intensely with both hands. When she looks back, she sees Max subtly nodding at Sam and Ben, signaling them to intervene.

Before they can move, Lilith steps forward, blocking their path. She sits beside Julia on the couch and, without hesitation, takes the fan from her hand. Julia freezes in shock. Ben steps back. Sam finds himself trapped once more in Greta's clutches.

LILITH  
Give it to me, Miss Sarkisyan.  
(she mimics Julia's  
pronunciation)  
I'll do it for you. You've had a  
long, exhausting day.

She waves the fan slowly, gently cooling Julia. Julia, still stunned, wipes the sweat from her upper lip with her palm.

JULIA  
Yes... It was such a difficult  
aria... But I received so many  
flowers...

Her face brightens.

JULIA (cont'd)  
My entire dressing room was filled  
with them...

Lilith glances at Max, who smiles approvingly. She continues fanning Julia calmly.

LILITH  
You should've brought some flowers  
back. They'd look nice over there...

She turns to gesture toward the table, but stops. Albert is staring at her. As soon as she catches his gaze, he quickly looks away and returns to his sketching.

LILITH (cont'd)  
...It would have looked nice.

JULIA  
Yes... Next time.

Lilith slows her fanning.

LILITH  
Let's do this first—

Julia looks at her questioningly. Lilith takes her hands.

LILITH (cont'd)  
Let's straighten this blanket.

As they fix the rumpled blanket together, Julia's initial hesitation fades, and she starts helping, occasionally fixing her hair.

LILITH (cont'd)  
You need to rest, Miss Sarkisyan. You  
can't keep pushing yourself like  
this.

JULIA  
But I can't sleep... My sister...

Her anger starts rising again. Lilith, unfazed, picks up the fan and resumes fanning her.

LILITH  
Let's do the injection. It'll help—at  
least with those 'animals.'

Seeing that Julia does not object and keeps her eyes on her sister and Sam, Lilith quickly ties the tourniquet. Valerie cleans the wound with cotton and administers the injection.

At that moment, Julia, in her same theatrical voice, shouts to her sister.

JULIA  
Tell him he is an imposing man!

GRETA  
What?

JULIA  
Imposing! Tell him he is imposing!

Greta, making her way with her graceful figure, moves even closer to Sam.

GRETA  
...you're a veeeery imposing man...

Sam's eyebrows shift from straight to sharply angled, his fists clench, his cheeks turn red, and he starts sweating even more. Seeing Sam's condition and barely holding back his laughter, Max turns to Greta.

MAX  
Madam, would you come here for a moment?

Disappointed that she is being called away, Greta approaches Max. He pats his head and searches his pockets before turning to Lilith.

MAX (cont'd)  
Lilith dear, have you seen my glasses?

Lilith looks around.

LILITH  
No, Doctor, I don't see them.

MAX  
Alright, dear, no problem.

Max seats Greta at the table and begins giving her instructions and making notes for Julia.

Lilith approaches the only free chair at a small table, which is across from Albert. She sits down quietly, careful not to invade his space or disrupt his work.

A warm breeze stirs the faded curtain, dust floating in the light.

From the other side of the room, the murmuring of conversations is faintly audible. Lilith watches Albert's work from the corner of her eye. Suddenly, without pausing his task, Albert speaks.

ALBERT  
The box can't command me anymore.

Lilith, internally surprised that he is addressing her but showing no outward reaction, asks:

LILITH  
What helped you?

ALBERT  
You.

The voices from the other side of the room gradually quiet down and then completely fade. Only Lilith and Albert's conversation remains.

ALBERT (cont'd)  
You know, I've seen you before.

LILITH  
(surprised, barely  
able to form the  
words)  
Where?

For the first time, Albert lifts his eyes from his work and looks at Lilith with curiosity.

ALBERT  
I don't know. I don't remember well.

They stare at each other for a few moments in silence.

Noticing that something unusual is happening at the table, Sam and Ben shift their attention towards Lilith. Max also catches on. The voices in the room slowly rise again.

MAX  
It's time for us to go! We have  
another call. Valerie, gather  
everything. Lilith, get up!

As if snapping out of a trance, Lilith quickly stands up. Everyone heads for the exit.

Albert hurriedly gathers some papers, shuffles them together, and rushes after them. He catches up at the door and places a stack of papers in Lilith's hands.

She looks at Max in confusion, who gives her a barely noticeable nod. Lilith takes the stack. They all exit.

INT. SAME AMBULANCE, BACK SEAT – LATER

The ambulance drives through the city. Everyone sits in the same places as before, except for Lilith, who now sits apart, holding the stack of papers in her hands, staring silently out the window, deep in thought.

MAX

(turning to the back)

Hey, Sam, I didn't know you were such a ladies' man!

Everyone bursts into laughter. Sam, making sure Max doesn't see, clicks his tongue and tilts his head. Ben smirks to himself.

SAM

Huh? What?

BEN

Nothing, brother, it's just that you're very...

(purposely mispronouncing)

...radiant? No... vibrant? What was it...?  
Oh, imposing, yeah!

SAM

Oh, come on!

Sam clicks his tongue again and turns his head away.

Lilith smiles and, as if coming back to reality, begins sorting through the stack in her hands, organizing the scattered sketches into a neat pile. They are masterfully drawn images, mostly landscapes and various portraits of women, rendered in different pencils and inks. Reaching one particular piece of paper, Lilith freezes. It is an acrostic poem written in two different ink colors, each stanza's first words, written in red, spell out L.I.L.I.T, while the rest of the poem is penned in blue.

"Lost in the silence where your shadow lingers,  
In every fleeting glance, I find my way,  
Lines of fate entwine like restless fingers,  
In your presence, night dissolves to day.  
Time bends, yet I remain unspoken,  
Holding onto words my hands betray."

Outside, it starts to rain.

EXT. STREET NEAR LILITH'S HOUSE — MOMENTS LATER

Leon, completely drenched, stands alone under a tree, sheltering from the rain, waiting for Lilith. A few moments later, the ambulance pulls up, and Lilith steps out, still clutching the stack of papers. Leon approaches her and notices the emotion in her face.

LEON

Lilith, what's wrong?

Lilith looks at Leon's soaking figure, then clutches the stack with one hand and wraps her arms around him, beginning to cry.