

Golden Deer's New Dummy

(Girl to a training dummy TF)

(Fire Emblem: Three Houses)

"This is blackmail!" A loud sigh of displeasure could be heard throughout the halls of Garreg Mach as the girl to whom it belonged entered the school's training grounds, others following closely behind.

"Is it though? It's just some mandatory practice..." Another teen remarked.

"Of course it is!" Hilda responded almost instantaneously as if she expected that exact response out of Lysithea's mouth, "In what world is it not? 'If you don't practice, you're gonna get expelled' my ass! I was halfway done with painting my nails, but now they're gonna be ruined..." The twin-tailed girl sobbed, her arms instinctively wrapping themselves around Marianne's shoulders.

"...I think that's a you problem... I mean, my grades suck and all, but don't think I was ever threatened with an expulsion... Maybe you should... you know, just attend Miss Byleth's classes like everyone else here?" Leonie chimed in with the slightest of grins. While she did feel for her classmate's situation, she couldn't help but think that the girl had it coming.

"Mari, I'm being bullied, help!" Hilda wailed some more before looking up at her best friend, hoping she'd take her side in this conflict. Unfortunately...

"Sorry... they're kinda right..."

"Betrayed..." The axe wielder made an exaggerated, almost theatrical motion of her heart being stabbed by an arrow.

"Seriously, you're such a brat sometimes... Let's just train for an hour, report to the professor and be done with it..."

"You guys won't cover for me if I leave now, right?" Hilda asked with a glint of hope but was met with a harsh and unanimous 'No' from both the prodigy mage and the redhead hunter.

"Meanies." She pouted.

"Wait... am I seeing things or are there no dummies here?" Leonie inquired. They were all so focused on their conversation, it only took her until now to realize that seemingly obvious truth.

"Um... I heard Dimitri destroyed some yesterday, but I didn't realize they meant all of them..." A meek response was heard from Marianne who was finally out of her more vocal friend's grasp.

“Seriously? I really need to duel him someday...”

“You’d die.”

“Come on Lysithea, don’t sell me so short!”

“You know, dummies have it so much easier... No work or responsibilities, they just get to laze around all day...” Hilda fantasized as she made her way towards the center of the empty arena.

“Yeah, and they get hit all the time... Doesn’t seem that fun to me...” Leonie snarked.

“Objects don’t have pain receptors, they’d be fine!”

“Well, you’d certainly be more useful as a dummy, in my opinion... Better than lying in your room all day while your servants do all the work.”

“Um, I know Hilda’s not the most... hard-working, but that was pretty mean, Lysithea...”

“Gah, you guys are seriously so mean! I wish I didn’t have to talk with you... Wait, what are we even doing here then? No dummies mean no practice, right?!”

Leonie sighed. “Well... it is a bit of a pain, but we can at least train our stances, right? Maybe even spar a bit if you’re feeling up to it, my lance skills are getting a bit rusty... Plus Marianne, you wanted to try out swords, yeah?”

The girl in question nodded gingerly. “...According to the professor, I apparently have some potential... so I wanted to at least give it a try. That’s the least I can do to repay her unending kindness.”

“See Hilda? You really wanna make Marianne sad? At least let her stab the air for a few minutes!”

“Since when am I the bully here?!”

The girl pouted once more and went to grab an axe as Marianne and Leonie went inside the weapons closet. “Guess someone forgot to clean up... well, less walking for me!” Weapon in hand, Hilda turned to the place where the dummies would normally be (or at least she assumed so, not like she remembered the layout of this damned place), deciding that Leonie wasn’t *completely* wrong. Who knew, maybe slashing at the empty space a few times would let her let out some of this pent-up frustration. But she tried to take a single step, she quickly realized, it was as if her feet were glued to the ground!

“What the—?!” Unable to reposition her legs, the girl did the best next thing - look around. Was anyone else seeing this?!”

Wait... Leonie and Marianne not being here made sense, she just saw them leave, after all, but where was Lysithea?! The twin-tailed student tried to call out her friend's name, but the moment her mouth opened, it was as if some sort of invisible force put something inside of it - something that... tasted scarily like straw.

"Shh... don't make any noise~" Despite the axe wielder's inability to speak, it was as Lysithea heard her plea, as the girl stood behind her unable-to-move classmate, her words drenched in... mischief? Malice? Hilda couldn't quite tell.

"Hmpf! Hmmff!" *What are you doing?! Why can't I talk?!* The freeloader once again attempted to communicate, yet failed all the same.

"You said that dummies have it so much easier, right? Well, while you were skipping class, some of us actually studied what we were supposed to. I can't stand people like you. So it's a nice coincidence that the other day I learned a transformation spell. Soon, the lazy Hilda everybody knows will be gone, replaced by a simple dummy~"

What are you— Lysithea, are you hearing yourself?! Sure, I... maybe wasn't the best classmate, but you sound like some kinda villain! Look, I'm sorry I ate your sweets that one time, really!

Yet, of course, Lysithea heard none of these things. How could she when Hilda's mouth was full of hay? Although, that was about to become the least of the girl's worries, as the pink-haired student's mouth disappeared completely, sewing itself closed. Her eyes teared up slightly.

While the axe-wielding slacker was known for... well, slacking, her senses were actually quite sharp, and she worked rather well under pressure, definitely better than an average girl her age would. So, realizing words were useless, her limbs were the next logical step. If she could somehow stop Lysithea physically, maybe the changes would stop as well? That plan was, however, stopped before it could even begin as Hilda felt her legs and arms become thinner and thinner, slowly ceasing all motion as they did so. Before long, all of the girl's limbs had become thin logs of wood, hardy and dry on the outside.

Was this really her fate? To be sealed into the form of a simple dummy?! She had so much to live for! Was Lysithea truly this malicious?! Maybe... maybe it was all a prank? A joke? The white-haired brat was not exactly known for her sense of humor however so... what gave?

Hilda's skin detached itself from the rest of the soon-to-not-be girl's body, a sight that normally would be so bloody and gory that it'd make even the worst criminal quiver... but not this time. There was no blood. Far from it, the organs that used to make up the inside of the Goneril heir's body became something much more suitable for a dummy... as this was all the lazy student would soon be. Guts soundlessly turned to straw as the girl's pink, soft skin turned coarse, becoming linen, the same fabric all the other dummies were made out of, the only visible difference being that Hilda's was the shade of light pink.

Is... Is it over? It feels like the changes have stopped for now... wait, does that mean that I've become a full dummy?! But... No! How do I deserve this?! Lysithea, turn me back right now! Please, I'm sorry! I really am for whatever I did to you!

As the former woman's voice rants continued on, Lysithea just kept on giggling until their classmates came back - Marianne wielding a wooden training sword while Leonie brought along an iron bow.

"...Lysithea? What's with the evil laugh? Are you bullying that dummy or something?" Leonie snickered as she took a few arrows out of her quiver.

"Ha ha, very funny. For your information, that dummy is Hilda! I decided to transform her as punishment for her laziness!" The prodigy mage explained, puffing her chest upwards.

Why do you sound so proud about this you bully?! I still want to be back to normal!! Her silent companion complained.

While Lysithea didn't exactly expect praise or anything of that sort (her plan did sound pretty evil after all, but that was the point!) she definitely didn't expect her classmates to go completely silent. Well, she did kinda expect that from Marianne considering her general sheepishness, but Leonie should've said something by now, right? Yet all the girl got in return was a much too long and awkward pause alongside a very dumbfounded look from her redhead friend.

After a good dozen or so seconds of dead silence, Leonie's mouth finally opened. "So... wait. You turned something into a dummy and named it Hilda?"

Lysithea and Hilda's eyes went wide - the white-haired mage's literally and her dummified friend's figuratively. What did their classmate mean by that?!

"W-what? I mean Hilda as in our classmate!" The prodigy asked in a very panicked manner but was once again met with a puzzled expression. "You know... Hilda? Lazy, fights with an axe, Claude's right-hand girl? Pink hair, big boobs? *That* Hilda?"

"...Marianne, you know any Hildas that go to our class?"

"N-No... Lysithea, are you feeling unwell? I'm not that great, but I could cast a simple healing spell if it'll help..."

"What?! I- Did I mess up the spell?! I couldn't have deleted Hilda out of existence, could I?!" Lysithea panicked and so did her now inanimate classmate.

You did what?! You stupid girl, turn me back! I wanna be back! I wanna exist again!!

Despite being unable to hear Hilda's words, the prodigy knew exactly what the girl was thinking and replied instantly, "Okay, okay, I'm sorry! I just... I just wanted to give you a scare for being such a slouch! I was never going to actually attack you, I promise, I-"

swoosh

Lysithea's rant stopped midway through as a single arrow flew right before her eyes, hitting her dummified friend right between where her own would normally be.

"Bullseye!" Lonie cheered as she held up her bow, a smirk present on her face.

"WHY DID YOU DO THAT?!"

"To test out my new toy, and to stop you from talking to that dummy like a madwoman?"

"Now I can't change her back!"

Ow, gods, it hurts so much, it... wait, you can't do what now?! You're joking, right?! Lysithea?! Both girls' minds entered a state of emotional overdrive caused by so much information being unloaded at once. First, everyone forgets about Hilda's existence, now this?! And all that because she wanted to pull a prank on her friend?! The mage prayed that whatever Hilda was feeling from that attack was bearable, but she knew deep down... it wasn't.

Hilda wasn't going to die, of course, she was still mostly intact, but she would feel the human equivalent of... well, having an arrow shot directly into your head.

And while Lysithea was more or less correct, she didn't realize that... as long as the projectile was wedged inside of the dummy's head, her friend would be forced to relive this inhuman pain over and over again until it was taken out... Thankfully, the mage removed it anyway - Wouldn't want Hilda to become human again in this state, after all.

"That's... not good, but no worries! The wound is small, I'm sure I can still fix it!" The white-haired teen then looked over to Leonie and Marianne. "Um... I'll go first, okay? I wanna try a new spell out, but if you guys damage it too much, it'll be hard to..." Reluctantly, the redhead agreed, and both she and Marianne stood to the side as Lysithea moved a few meters back and started casting the spell.

Wait, Lysithea?! Why are you... you're not gonna attack me, are you?! The arrow was bad enough, I can't imagine being hit by a fire spell or one of these weird, black magics...

Fortunately, that was the exact opposite of what the girl was trying to do. She couldn't risk anyone else coming in and randomly attacking Hilda, so she pretended to train on the new dummy instead, and technically she was. Except, the spell she was gonna cast wasn't that of destruction, instead, it was a reversal one. This was the only way to fix her friend, and Lysithea knew that all too well. On the battlefield, she had no qualms about fighting others, but this was her friend! Even if she was a bit... mean, with her prank, she truly cared for that lazy girl!

So it was no surprise that for the first time in a long while, her hands were *shaking*. *If she messed this up, who knew what was going to happen?* There was no guarantee that she'd

be able to redo, so the girl put everything she had in that one incantation, scaring her uninformed friend all the more as Hilda said her prayers.

“Please, everything, go back to normal!” She cried out as a beam of light erupted from her chest, hitting the dummy right in its torso. She truly gave it her all, as after the light faded, the girl was left gasping.

“Probably overdid it a bit, but see? It worked just fine! Not even a hint of an arrow hole in there!” The girl looked expectantly at her classmates.

“So, does that mean that we can use this one as much as we want and you’ll just fix it right up?” Leonie inquired.

“As long as I have mana, yeah.”

Huh?! The wound is gone, but I’m still a dummy! Lysithea, stop playing around and turn me back! Ly– wait, why are you casting another spell?! Is... is that fire?! Hilda panicked as her short friend’s behavior changed completely in a matter of seconds. Just moments ago, she seemed so focused on turning her back, but now, it was as if she didn’t even care! Wait, what if... oh no!

These words... ‘go back to normal’... did Lysithea mess this reality up even more? It was as if the girl completely forgot... as if this new situation had become the new normal! Did that know-it-all erase her existence?! Well, she already did that before, but it seemed like now she had forgotten about everything as well!

So lost in that train of thought, Hilda forgot about the fact her now-unaware friend was charging up another spell as she spoke, this one, however, was as destructive as they came, and before she knew it, a ball of scorching fire was flying straight at her!

The dummy’s torso took the brunt of the attack and in a matter of milliseconds, her entire body was set ablaze, and she couldn’t do a single thing to make it go out! Instead, she was forced to just stand there and let the flames eat away at her... wait, she was made out of straw and linen and stuff, wasn’t it all very flammable?!

So... why wasn’t she burning down then?

Was it because the fire was magical in nature instead of natural...? Either way, Hilda certainly appreciated the fact she didn’t seem to turn into cinders, but the pain was so unbearable anyway, that knowledge was rather hard to appreciate...

As a frontline fighter, the girl was more used to injuries and pain than one might expect considering how much she disliked any and all physical tasks, hell, she did get hit with a spell once or twice since her studentry at Garreg Mach started, but normally she was either able to put it out herself, or Marianne was right there to heal her up, but now? Her arms and legs were nothing more than easily breakable twigs, as the flame did almost no visible damage, yet hurt as much if not more than it should...

Yet instead of disappearing, the fire only burned brighter as Lysithea hit the dummy with one more fireball. And one more. And more... It wasn't until the prodigy ran out of mana that she stopped.

"Okay, okay, you had your fun!" Leonie shouted at her panting classmate. "I wanna train my shooting too!"

"I'm out of juice anyways... but wow, this dummy sure is tough... twenty whole fireballs and it looks brand new! Well, if you ignore the burn marks I guess..."

Marianne suddenly perked up. "The professor said... this pink one is made out of special linen, that might be it..."

"Hmm, for someone so quiet, you're quite perceptive, aren't you Marianne?" The healer only blushed slightly in response.

The girls exchanged a few more words, but Hilda didn't care. The pain was too unbearable to do anything else. *How does someone so small have so much mana inside of her?!* The former human questioned as the sensation of fire started to slowly fade away. Admittedly, it didn't fade away *completely*, but the girl was going to take whatever relief she could find. And right when things were just starting to look just the tiniest bit better, the dummy felt something being stapled to her torso - not sure what exactly, but to everyone around, it was painfully obvious. Leonie put a big, red, circular target for her to shoot at.

And shoot she did, as a barrage after barrage of arrows penetrated the once-human girl's torso, a few hitting to the sides while most hit their target perfectly - hell, the redhead decided to show off her skills with a bow by hitting a few straight headshots.

And it was as painful as one could imagine.

Granted, it came as no surprise that a wooden arrow didn't exactly match up with a fireball, but what the projectiles lacked in firepower, they made up for by sheer consistency. While Lysithea shot around twenty of the damned things... Well, Hilda didn't really count how many times she was hit by Leonie, but the number was definitely in the hundreds at the very least.

The same painful routine continued for quite some time, never hurting any less than it originally did. Leonie would fire a dozen or so shots, then she'd make her way towards the pink practice target that cried at her to stop, utterly aware of the boundary that divided the world of a human and an object, yet trying all the same... and just when the dummified girl thought the pain was at an all-time high, each and every single arrow would be forcefully ripped out of her straw-made insides by the uncaring hand of the once equal human girl...

"Okay, I feel like the warmup is about done, now I can really—" Leonie grinned as she plucked out the last bolt.

"Warmup?! You've been firing your dumb arrows for the last thirty minutes, now is Marianne's turn!" Lysithea berated her classmate.

"It's fine, I can..."

“No, the know-it-all is right. All you’ve been doing is swinging this wooden thing around, you need to practice with an actual target, not just air” Leonie sat beside the white-haired mage and let the healer take center stage.

...And for that, Hilda was elated. Well... maybe ‘elated’ wasn’t the right word, she was still hung up on the whole ‘being an immovable dummy’ thing, but... as much as she considered Marianne her best friend, there was a reason the girl mostly stuck to healing arts. Compared to having literal balls of flames and arrows shot her way, a wooden sword should be a nice, well-deserved break from all this pain and suffering she’s been unjustly receiving...

...Except, it seemed like this really wasn’t her day...

As Marianne readied to strike the pink dummy, something... weird happened. Something that not many people would be able to explain, but for better or worse, Hilda was one of the very few that were. The usually timid girl’s muscles tensed up, and her eyes flashed red for just a single second.

Oh no, it activated...

The crest of the Beast.

It was one of Marianne’s best-kept secrets, and while most of the Golden Deer knew the very vague basics, people who Marianne trusted most - namely Hilda and Byleth, were privy to the exact nature of this curse. Every single crest that existed gave their bearer some sort of advantage - be it simply higher physical or magic prowess, increased endurance, the works. Well, Marianne’s wasn’t too different in that regard. It activated seemingly at random, but the advantage it gave... It wasn’t too hard to guess from the name alone - it made the user much stronger, more feral, more... *beastly* for the duration of a single attack.

What would normally be a dull side slash powered up to a maximum.

The wooden sword, despite its lack of power, cut cleanly through the girl that Marianne would have considered her best friend, were she to have her memories back.

The upper half of Hilda flew a few meters up and landed next to the dummy’s lower end, laying on the floor lifelessly, straw spewing to the side. Except, the girl trapped within was still in one piece. It hurt like hell, and she’d definitely bleed out if she wasn’t a simple object, but yet, it seemed like as long as the dummy existed, so was Hilda doomed to exist inside.

The girl cried out in pain, her view now turned sideways as she looked over Marianne, the blue-haired girl now back to normal and seemingly devastated by what she’d done.

“No, I let... I let it happen again, and I destroyed the dummy too... Miss Byleth is gonna punish me for breaking school equipment...” She wailed silently as her classmates ran over to cheer her up, to tell her it was no big deal. That the dummy she broke will get sewn back together again and will be as good as new, be it using Lysithea’s spell or the school staff’s work.

Hilda could only cry as she realized her torture was gonna continue, possibly forevermore.