**Classroom**

Morning classes go by slowly at usual, and an eternity later they finally end. Already exhausted, I stretch and let out a yawn, debating on whether or not I should take a nap during lunch. However, my choice is made for me by Asher, who turns towards me.

Asher (neutral smiling): Hey.

I look at him sluggishly.

Asher (neutral playful): A little sleepy, are we?

Pro: Just a little.

He reaches for his bag and pulls out his lunch.

Asher (neutral curious): You should eat something, and you’ll wake right up. What do you have?

Pro: Dunno.

Back in middle school, Mara would always make sure that I’d eat my lunch as well. She’d usually do it under the pretext of wanting to trade food or something like that, but I always knew that she was actually looking out for me. Speaking of Mara…

I wonder how she’ll react when I tell her about my failed attempt at talking to someone this morning. I hope she doesn’t burst out laughing…

Asher (neutral concern): Something on your mind?

Pro: …

Pro: I ran into this girl on the way to school.

Asher (eating curious): And…?

Pro: And nothing. I tried to talk to her, but she wouldn’t even look at me…

Asher (neutral nervous): Ouch…

Asher (neutral smiling\_nervous): Well, it can’t be helped I guess. Some people are just shy.

Pro: Still though…

Asher: Yeah...

Asher (neutral curious): Wait, did you just, like, randomly start talking to her? Do you even know her name?

Pro: Ah, about that…

Asher (laughing holding\_back):

I tell him what happened at the library yesterday, and he has to hold back his laughter.

Asher (laughing recovering): That explains why yesterday you were so depressed, huh.

I nod.

Asher (neutral cheerful): Well, don’t worry about it too much. Seems like she’s especially introverted. Was she by herself?

Pro: Actually, there was someone with her. A guy.

Asher (neutral thinking): Yeah, that might be it. They could be together, so she might not want to get too friendly around other guys especially in front of him.

Pro: I see. I guess that makes sense.

Asher (neutral smiling): At least you had better luck with Lilith yesterday. That’s pretty impressive already.

A student from another class appears at the doorway to our classroom, calling for Asher.

Asher (neutral neutral): Oh, sorry, I should probably go now. I’ll be right back.

Pro: Don’t worry about it. Take your time.

Asher (waving smiling): Okay. Enjoy your nap.

Asher (exit):

I watch Asher as he leaves. On days like today, I can appreciate his social understanding, especially because I’m often clueless when it comes to other people.

I put my head down on my desk and close my eyes, and the sounds of my classmates talking slowly fade away…