**Intersection 1**

Still stunned by Lilith’s sudden invitation, I almost forget about my arrangement with Mara. Thankfully, when I reach the intersection she’s already there.

Mara (neutral smiling): Hey.

Mara (neutral neutral): …

Mara: Pro?

Pro: Oh, hi Mara.

Mara (neutral skeptical):

Mara eyes me with suspicion.

Mara: Hmm…

Mara (neutral fufu): Which one was it? The blonde? Or the quiet one?

Pro: Blonde.

Mara (neutral pensive): Oh, I see.

Mara: …

Mara (surprise surprise): HUH!?!?

Mara: Actually!?!? What happened!?!?

Mara (excited earnest):

I tell her about how Petra told me to go to the roof after class, and how Lilith invited me to hang out with her with all of her friends watching.

Mara (neutral surprise): Wow…

Mara: I’m surprised. From what you’ve told me, she doesn’t seem like she’d do something like that.

Pro: Yeah.

Mara (neutral thinking): Hmm…

Mara (neutral happy): Well anyways, congratulations!

Pro: I turned her down, though.

Mara (neutral satisfaction): Of course you did.

Mara (neutral neutral): …

Mara (surprise surprise): YOU DID WHAT!?!?

Pro: Um, I turned her down.

Mara: …

Mara (neutral pensive): Wait, just give me a second.

Mara (arms\_crossed lecturing): So this stunning beauty invited you onto the roof and asked you if you wanted to hang out in front of all of her friends, and you said *no*?

Pro: Yeah…

Mara: …

Mara (neutral sigh): This is why you weren’t popular in middle school.

Mara (neutral disappointed): I’ve never once heard of a girl who was remotely interested in you, and when one is you turn her down…

Mara: Why?

Pro: I’m not really sure.

Mara: I see.

Mara (neutral sigh): I don’t personally mind, but if you’re okay with it then it’s fine.

Mara (neutral disappointed): …

Mara (neutral expressionless): Well, that’s that. Let’s go, then.

Pro: Where?

Mara: I was thinking we could go to a café, but now I don’t really feel like it…

Mara (neutral neutral): Let’s go to your place.

Pro: Huh? Why?

Mara (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): I miss it.

Pro: ...

Pro: That’s fine, I guess.

Mara (neutral happy): Yay! Let’s go, then.

Mara (neutral smiling): We can have instant noodles for lunch.

**Kitchen**

After eating a quick lunch, Mara decided that she wanted to play video games, since we haven’t played them together since middle school. We picked a fighting game that she used to really enjoy, and after a few warm-up rounds our competitive sides started to come out.

However, Mara doesn’t play video games at home, and even though she was surprisingly good for someone who hadn’t played in over a year I still win every round.

Mara (neutral sigh): I give up…

Mara (neutral disappointed): How much do you play nowadays? You used to never beat me.

Pro: Huh? I’m pretty sure I’ve always been better than you.

Mara (neutral skeptical): Is that so?

Pro: Yep, that’s right.

Mara (laughing laughing):

Mara and I glare at each other before bursting into laughter.

Mara (laughing recovering): Ah, that was fun though. I haven’t played video games in so long.

Pro: If you want, you can take the console home with you. I don’t really use it anymore.

Mara (neutral skeptical): Lies.

Pro: I’m serious…

Mara (neutral hehe): I know.

Mara (neutral smiling): Thanks, but I think I’ll pass. I’d feel kinda guilty.

Mara (neutral wishful): And also…

Mara (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): I don’t think I’d enjoy it nearly as much if I played at home, you know?

Pro: Ah.

Oh, that’s right. Unlike mine, Mara’s parents are still together, but barely so.

Pro: Sorry.

Mara: It’s fine, don’t worry, don’t worry.

Mara (neutral earnest): Besides, if I don’t take it home, I can come over again to play, right?

Pro: Yeah, I guess.

Mara (neutral skeptical): You guess…?

Mara (neutral expressionless): Ah well.

Mara (excited excited): Well then, since you’re free, how about tomorrow?

Pro: Tomorrow? I don’t know about that.

Mara (neutral pout): Aw, c’mon.

Pro: I mean, we both just had remedial classes. I dunno if we should be wasting our entire weekend playing games. Don’t wanna fail any more tests, right?

Mara (surprise geh): Geh…

Mara (neutral nervous): We can always wait till later to start studying, yeah?

Pro: Um…

Mara (neutral sigh): Yeah, yeah, you’re right.

Mara (neutral thinking): Hmm…

Mara (neutral neutral): How about we go to the library tomorrow and study? Like last time?

Pro: Sure, I’m down.

Mara (excited excited): It’s decided then! Now…

Mara (neutral surprise):

Mara picks up her controller, ready to start another match. However, as the game loads she checks her phone and freezes.

Mara: It’s this late already?

Mara (neutral nervous): Shoot. I told my parents I’d be home for dinner.

Mara: Um, sorry but I have to go now.

Pro: Oh, okay.

Mara (neutral ouch):

Mara gets up and hurriedly shuffles towards the front, and I follow. I unlock and open the door as she puts on her shoes, shivering as a gust of cold wind flows inside.

Pro: It’s a little chilly. You gonna be alright?

Mara (neutral smiling): Yeah, I’ll be fine.

Pro: Alright. Don’t catch a cold.

Mara (neutral satisfaction): I won’t. I’m as healthy as can be!

Pro: After seeing you eat all those instant noodles, I’m not too sure about that.

Mara (neutral hehe): Hehe.

Mara (neutral neutral): Well, gotta hustle. I’ll see you at the library tomorrow, okay?

Pro: Yeah, see you.

Mara (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): Don’t feel too bad about Lilith, okay?

Mara (exit):

Mara trots through the door, and I watch as she jogs through my front yard and onto the sidewalk before closing the door.