**Bedroom**

It’s morning, and strangely enough, I wake up feeling refreshed. I sit up and stretch luxuriously before getting out of bed, finding that for the first time in a while, I’ve woken up on time.

After grabbing all the stuff I’ll need for school today and shoving it in my bag, I pull on my clothes and head downstairs.

**Kitchen**

Mom (neutral neutral): Well.

Mom (neutral smiling): Look who got up early for a change.

Mom (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): Good morning.

Pro: Morning.

Mom (neutral smiling): I just finished making your breakfast. Eat it before it gets cold.

Pro: Okay, thanks.

Mom (exit):

I sit down and start to eat my breakfast, which is good as usual. Despite being busy enough already, my mom has always done her best to make me warm meals whenever she can.

I glance over at her as she washes the dishes, wondering how she manages to work this hard every single day. What drives her on, keeps her going? Even though I hate to admit it, I don’t think I’m exactly the best child.

Her job doesn’t pay well and sometimes requires her to work early mornings or late nights, but even though she comes home exhausted every day she won’t allow me to get a job, saying that I should instead try to do well in school, but more importantly enjoy myself while I’m still young.

Mom (neutral frown): What are you looking at? Is there something in my hair?

Pro: Oh, no there isn’t.

Pro: It’s nothing.

Mom (neutral neutral):

I finish up my food and bring her my plate and cup.

Pro: Thanks, Mom.

Mom (neutral smiling): You’re welcome. Now, go brush your teeth and go to school.

Mom (neutral neutral): Also…

Mom (neutral smiling): You have time today, so do something about your hair as well.

And after making my job harder by ruffling my hair, she turns back to her work.

**Front of House**

After I finally manage to arrange my hair in a presentable manner, I trot outside, hoping that for once I’ll leave the house before Mara arrives.

However, that dream quickly dies.

Mara (neutral neutral): Oh, you’re actually kinda on time today.

Mara (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): Good for you!

Mara (patting\_head smiling\_eyes\_closed):

She starts to pat my head, and even though I’m a little annoyed, I have to desperately hold back a smile.

Pro: Stop that…

Mara: No.

Pro: I even brushed it today. You’re messing it up.

Mara (patting\_head neutral):

Suddenly she stops.

Mara (surprise fearful): …

Mara: You’re not Pro, are you…

Mara: Who are you? And where’s the real Pro?

Pro: I’m the real Pro.

Mara (neutral skeptical): That’s something an imposter would say.

Mara (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): Well, real or not, I don’t wanna be late for school, so even if you are fake you’ll do for today.

Mara: Let’s go!

**Neighbourhood Road 1**

Mara (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed):

As energetic as ever, Mara playfully frolics ahead of me as we head to school. I smile instinctively, happy to see that she’s in such a good mood. However, Mara notices and inspects my face curiously.

Mara (neutral curious): Whatcha smiling about?

Pro: Oh, nothing.

Mara (neutral thinking): Hm…

She slows down to my pace and walks beside me. After a bit more inspection, she smiles as well, seemingly satisfied.

Mara (neutral smiling): Yesterday was pretty fun, huh? Let’s do it again one day.

Pro: You want to go again…?

Mara (neutral neutral):

Pro: Didn’t you spend enough money yesterday? You sure you won’t go hungry later this week?

Mara (neutral geh): Geh…

Mara (neutral smiling\_nervous): Money isn’t everything, Pro. There are a lotta things that are much more important.

Pro: But if you don’t have money, you can’t go shopping. Or out to eat.

Mara: …

Mara: We can use your money for that, right?

Pro: “We” huh…

Mara (neutral smiling): Yup.

I sigh, knowing that the next time we go out I’ll likely be paying for everything. Not that I mind, though. Mara could use a bit more spoiling anyways.

They say money can’t buy happiness, but that’s not true – Mara’s happiness costs as much as a parfait. Pretty cheap, if you ask me.

Mara (neutral neutral): Oh yeah, by the way.

Mara (neutral fufu): Did you find out anything about that girl? What was her name?

Pro: Uh, I think it was Prim? I don’t know anything else about her though.

That’s the truth, although not the whole of it. Last night, I searched her up on social media but was unable to find anything. If I included that, there would be no end to Mara’s teasing.

Mara (neutral neutral): Oh, that’s too bad. She was really cute.

Mara (neutral fufu): Don’t you think?

Here it is.

Pro: Uh…

Pro: Maybe a bit.

Mara: Just a bit?

Pro: …

Mara (laughing laughing):

Mara bursts out laughing, leaving me heavily embarrassed. However, she suddenly stops after noticing something.

Mara (neutral neutral): Hold on…

Prim (shy shy):

She points ahead of us, and to my horror, the object of Mara’s attention turns out to be none other than the girl she was just teasing me about.

Prim (exit):

Mara (excited excited): That’s her, right?

Mara: Go talk to her! Go, go!

Mara starts shoving me towards her, despite my panicked but also muted protest.

Pro: Wait, wait, wait. Why?

Mara: Because she’s cute!

Mara (excited earnest): And besides, you should really try to make more friends at school. She already knows who you are, so go and say hi!

Mara (exit):

And after one last shove, Mara slips away down a side road, giving me a thumbs-up before she disappears. I try to vanish as well before I’m noticed, but it’s too late.

Prim (surprise eek): Oh…

Prim (shy shy): …

Prim: Pro… right?

Pro: Ah, yeah, that’s right. Hi there. You’re Prim, right?

Prim (shy down):

Prim nods, and for a few seconds we walk in awkward silence, both of us unsure if we should try to make conversation or not. Eventually, I decide to take the plunge.

Prim (shy eek):

Pro: Do you usually walk to school this way? I don’t think I’ve seen you before.

Prim (shy down): I do.

Pro: Oh, I see.

More silence. Well, I tried. However, to my surprise, Prim speaks up.

Prim (shy shy): I think…

Prim (shy embarrassed): I think I’ve seen you before.

Prim (fidget down): Maybe.

Pro: Oh, really?

Prim: Yeah.

Prim: Although you’re not too notable…

Yikes.

Prim (fidget shy):

Pro: Yeah, I get that a lot.

Prim (shy smiling): I’m the same.

Prim (shy down): …

Prim (shy curious): Why were you downtown yesterday?

Pro: I was shopping with a friend. How about you?

Prim (shy shy): Coming back from practice.

Pro: Practice?

Prim nods and I wait for an explanation that never comes.

Pro: Oh, I see.

Unlike Mara, who’s usually cheerful and bubbly, Prim is shy and reserved. Her voice is timid, and it’s evident that she puts a lot of thought into what she says, which makes me more conscious about my own speech as well.

For the rest of the walk to school, we awkwardly make small talk. Despite her shyness, Prim does her best to keep the conversation going, and as we continue to interact she starts to open up, bit by bit.

**Front of School**

Eventually, we reach our destination, and even though it was really uncomfortable, I can’t help but feel a little sad that our talk is ending.

Prim (shy shy): Well, we’re here. Bye for now, I guess.

Pro: Yeah, I’ll see you around.

Prim (shy smiling\_eyes\_closed):

And with that, Prim gives me one last shy smile and darts away.