**Riverside**

I get outside and find Mara waiting for me, and after I apologize and explain what happened we head on our way. Since both of us are tired, we don’t talk much, but we’ve hung out with each other enough to view being able to hang out in silence as a sign of our friendship.

Mara (neutral worried\_slightly):

We pass by the bridge again, and I notice Mara worriedly glancing at me, having not forgotten my incident earlier. I would tell her not to worry about me, but truthfully I’m also troubled about what happened.

Mara (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed):

I give her a smile to show her that I’m alright and, satisfied, she smiles back, knowing exactly what’s on my mind.

**Diner**

After what feels like forever, we finally reach the restaurant and take our seats.

Mara (neutral sigh): Ah, my legs are killing me…

Pro: Same.

Mara (neutral satisfaction): I guess it wasn’t too bad. It was kinda cold outside, though.

Pro: Yeah, it was.

We happily bask in the restaurant’s warmth as a waiter gives us our menus.

Mara (holding\_something excited): Let’s see, what do I want?

Mara (holding\_something neutral): …

Mara (neutral neutral): What are you gonna get?

I skim through the menu, looking at all my options. Someone once told me that people spend more time thinking about what they want to eat than what they want to do with their lives, and I think I agree.

Pro: I’m not sure. How about you?

Mara (neutral pensive): Well you see…

Mara (neutral hehe): I can’t decide between spaghetti and chicken.

Mara: So could I get one and you get the other?

Pro: That’s fine, yeah. I’ll take the chicken then.

Mara (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): Yay!

Mara (neutral excited):

We place our orders, and as we wait Mara cheerfully drums her fingers on the table in anticipation. While I’m not too particular about what I eat, Mara will often want to try several dishes, and so when we go out to eat I usually order one of the things that she wants.

Mara’s always been a little childish like that around me, and while some may find it a little annoying, I don’t mind it. After all, I’m the only one who’s willing to indulge her at all, so it doesn’t really matter if I have to give up small things here and there to make her happier.

**Nostalgia - Pro and Mara Kids 1**

Mara and I grew up as neighbours, so naturally we spent a lot of time together as children. We’d often go to each other’s houses and would even sleep over sometimes, even though we lived literally a few steps away from each other.

**Nostalgia - Pro and Mara Kids 2**

When we started school, we’d walk there together every morning, and when the day finished we would always meet up to chat and play. Most of my childhood memories include Mara in some way, and I’m sure that it’s the same for her.

**Nostalgia - Pro and Mara Kids 3**

However, our bond runs much deeper than those of most childhood friends. Mara and I are both the only child of failing marriages, and with nobody else to turn to with our problems, we bonded together, becoming closer to each other than with anyone else.

**Nostalgia - Pro and Mara Middle**

Even though we had other friends, we’d always prefer to hang out with each other, which led to many rumours about us being spread as we got older. We didn’t mind, though, since we couldn’t expect others to understand why we were so close without explaining it to them.

**Diner**

Mara (neutral curious):

Now, Mara goes to a different high school and doesn’t live beside us anymore, so we’ve been spending less time together. I guess that makes the time we do spend with each other more important. Although I did skip out on going shopping with her yesterday.

Mara examines my face as I guiltily take a sip of water.

Mara: Something on your mind?

I put my water down and stretch.

Pro: Not really. Just thinking about how nice this is.

Mara (neutral surprise): …

Mara (neutral smiling\_blushing): Yeah, it is.

Mara (excited excited): Oh, our food!

Mara (eating happy):

The waiter brings us our dinner, and Mara eyes her dish with glee before digging in. I can’t help but smile at her enjoyment as I start to eat my own meal as well.

**Neighbourhood Road 2**

We finish pretty quickly, and after paying the bill we start to go home.

Mara (stretching satisfaction): That was good. I’m really full now.

Mara (stretching neutral): By the way, did you let your mom know that you won’t need dinner?

Pro: …

Pro: I totally forgot.

Mara (arms\_crossed lecturing): That’s no good. You should probably call her or something.

Pro: Yeah…

Mara (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): It’s okay. You’re a growing boy, so you should be able to eat twice as much!

Pro: It really doesn’t work like that…

**Intersection 2**

We make small talk for the rest of the way home, and eventually we reach the intersection where we usually part at.

Mara (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): Thanks for today. It was fun!

Pro: Am I forgiven for not going shopping with you yesterday?

Mara (neutral thinking): Hmm…

Mara (neutral happy): I guess you are.

Mara (waving smiling):

With a wave, Mara trots off to the right and I continue forwards by myself. Remembering Mara’s words, I grab my phone and call my mom to let her know that I won’t be eating, but she doesn’t pick up.

Mara (exit):

Guess she’ll find out when I get back.