**Bedroom**

I’m woken up by a pair of birds chirping spiritedly outside my window, and, a little annoyed, I groggily sit up and grab my phone.

7:17.

After a brief internal debate, I decide to not go back to sleep and instead get ready for school. It takes me longer than usual to get changed and pack my bag, but eventually I manage to finish up and head downstairs.

**Kitchen**

Mom (neutral smiling): Morning. Breakfast is on the table.

Pro: Oh, thanks.

Mom (neutral yawn):

My mom lets out a yawn, and I feel another pang of guilt for going out yesterday. She came back home closer to 9:00 last night, exhausted from a long day’s worth of work. Thankfully I already ate, and about half an hour later she went straight to bed.

Mom (neutral neutral):

I finish up quickly and bring her my dishes.

Mom (neutral curious):

Pro: Thanks, Mom.

Mom (neutral smiling):

She smiles and ruffles my hair.

Mom: You’re welcome. Now go and get ready for school.

**Front of House**

After brushing my teeth, I grab my lunch and head outside where, sure enough, Mara is waiting.

Mara (waving smiling\_eyes\_closed): Good morning!

Mara (waving smiling):

Pro: Morning. Still as energetic in the morning as ever, I see.

Mara (neutral smiling): Yup, that’s right.

Mara (stretching satisfaction):

Mara stretches and turns around, ready to leave.

Mara (neutral neutral):

Pro: How long did you wait?

Mara (neutral curious): Hm?

Mara (neutral smiling): Oh, not too long. Don’t worry.

Mara (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): Let’s go now, or we’ll be late.

**Neighbourhood Road 1**

We don’t talk much on the way to school, and instead Mara hums happily as we walk, apparently not put out at all by yesterday’s declined invitation.

I glance over at her, but her face betrays no sign of disappointment. Well, I guess I did agree to do something with her on Friday.

Mara (neutral curious): Hm? What are you looking at?

I start as Mara’s face suddenly appears in front of me, peering at me curiously.

Pro: You.

Mara (surprise embarrassed\_blushing): Huh?

Pro: I’m just kidding. Actually not really. I was thinking.

Mara: …

Mara (neutral bashful\_blushing): Thinking about what?

Pro: Nothing important.

Mara (neutral disappointed): I see.

Mara (neutral neutral): Oh yeah, about Friday…

Mara (neutral thinking): …

Mara (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): Never mind.

Mara (neutral curious): Whatcha gonna do today?

Pro: Huh…?

Pro: You can’t just bring something up and then change the topic.

Mara (neutral expressionless): No spoilers.

Pro: What do you mean…?

Mara (neutral tongue):

Mara sticks out her tongue at me.

Mara (arms\_crossed put\_out): That’s what you get for pushing it back a day.

Pro: I’m not sure if I like your attitude, young lady.

Mara (arms\_crossed hmph): Hmph.

Mara (laughing laughing):

After a few moments we burst out laughing.

Mara (laughing recovering): Ah…

Mara (neutral smiling): What we’re doing on Friday is a surprise.

Pro: I see. Well, I’m looking forward to it.

Mara (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): Alright.

**Intersection 1**

After a few more minutes of walking, we reach our usual parting place. However, instead of dashing off like she usually does, Mara stops to intently inspect my face.

Mara (neutral curious):

Pro: What are you looking at…?

Mara (neutral smiling\_blushing\_eyes): You.

Mara (exit):

And with a laugh, Mara runs off and disappears. I watch her as she goes, a little surprised that she pulled something like that.

?Kari: Oh, is that Pro?

Lilith (holding\_bat neutral):

Kari (waving smiling):

I turn around and find Kari waving at me, accompanied by Lilith, who looks as stoic as usual.

Kari: Hey, there.

Pro: Oh, hi.

Kari (neutral smiling):

Lilith (holding\_bat curious):

Lilith looks down the road Mara just dashed off through.

Kari (neutral curious):

Lilith: What were you looking at?

Pro: Oh, nothing.

Lilith (holding\_bat surprise):

Kari (neutral amused): You going to school? How about you walk with Lilith? I have someone I wanna meet up with, so I’ll see you guys later.

Lilith (holding\_bat embarrassed\_slightly):

Kari (exit):

Kari walks off, leaving me and Lilith standing awkwardly together.

Pro: We’ve been running into each other a lot in the mornings, huh?

Lilith (holding\_bat neutral): Yeah, I guess.

Lilith: …

Lilith (holding\_bat embarrassed\_slightly): Um…

Lilith: Let’s get going, then?

Pro: Oh, right.

Lilith (holding\_bat neutral):

We start walking again, and I realize that Lilith has her bat again.

Pro: You guys have practice?

Lilith: Yeah. Today and Friday.

Pro: I see. After school for both?

Lilith: Yeah. Our coach likes to have them in the mornings, but the rest of us prefer to have them after school.

Lilith: Last year they were all really early, but this year some of the third years refused to attend so we now have them in the afternoons.

Pro: A coup d’état, huh?

Lilith (holding\_bat smiling\_slightly): I guess.

Pro: Oh yeah, I noticed that Kari doesn’t have any equipment or anything with her. Is she not gonna play today?

Lilith (holding\_bat neutral): She said that she has something to do today.

Pro: Is it alright for her to skip like that?

Lilith shrugs.

Lilith: A bunch of people on the team see it more as a social thing, and a way to get out of class.

Pro: Does that apply to you?

Lilith (holding\_bat thinking):

She pauses for a moment, thinking.

Lilith (holding\_bat neutral): Partially, I guess. I like baseball too, though.

That makes sense. She certainly does seem to enjoy talking about baseball quite a bit, so it would follow that she enjoys playing it as well. I wonder what she’s like when she plays…

**Front of School**

When we arrive at school, we spot Asher and Petra, who, like us, apparently ran into each other on the way. We decide to leave them alone, though, and instead head inside.

Lilith (holding\_bat neutral): Well, we’re here.

Pro: Yes, we are.

Lilith (holding\_bat embarrassed\_slightly): Um…

I can’t help but notice how we seem to be the subject of everyone in the vicinity’s attention.

Lilith (holding\_bat neutral): I guess I’ll see you tomorrow.

Pro: Um, yeah. See you.

Lilith (exit):

Lilith leaves for her class, and I follow suit shortly after, trying to ignore the gazes of my peers.