**Bedroom**

My nap ends up extending a little further than I thought it would, and I wake up confused, wondering where exactly the sun went. I feel around for my phone, eventually finding it underneath my pillow.

5:24. In the morning.

A twelve-hour nap. Nice…

I close my eyes, ready to go back to sleep even though I’ve already gotten more than enough. I guess oversleeping really does make you more tired…

However, as I doze off I’m startled by a loud banging sound, and, now fully awake, I pull myself out of bed to investigate.

**Kitchen**

I head downstairs and quickly find the source of the noise. It turns out that my mom dropped a pot.

Mom (frown): Oh, sorry about that…

Mom (frown): Did I wake you up?

I shake my head.

Pro: I was already awake.

Mom (worried\_smile): I see. That’s good to hear.

Mom (smile): You went to bed pretty early yesterday, huh? You were already asleep by the time I got home.

Pro: Oh, uh, yeah…

Pro: What time did you end up getting back?

Mom (worried\_smile): Um…

Mom (worried\_smile): Around 9:00.

She left at around 7:00 yesterday and came home at 9:00…

Over twelve hours of work...?

Mom (worried\_smile): Don’t worry, don’t worry. It’s just for this week.

She’s not very convincing, and apparently she knows it.

Mom (smile): Really, I’ll be fine. I promise.

Mom (worried\_smile): Well, I guess my promises don’t hold a lot of weight…

The air suddenly becomes a lot colder.

Pro: Don’t say that, please.

Mom (worried\_smile): …

Mom (worried\_smile): Sorry. It just kinda slipped out.

I bite my lip, unsure of how to feel. Is it really alright for her to work this hard?

No it’s not.

Pro: Let me get a job. I’m not doing well in school, so I might as well help out somewhere.

Mom (frown): No. You’re not allowed.

Mom (worried\_smile): And besides, money’s not really an issue right now. We’ll be fine for a while.

Pro: But-

Mom (frown): No buts.

Mom (frown): I don’t want you to have that kind of responsibility.

Pro: I’d rather have that responsibility than see you get up at 5:00 to go to work...

Unexpectedly, she smiles and ruffles my hair.

Mom (worried\_smile): It’ll only be for a while longer. And then I’ll start going to work after you leave for school again.

Pro: Alright…

Mom (worried\_smile): Now…

Mom (worried\_smile): You look tired. Go get a bit more sleep.

Pro: Are you sure?

Mom (worried\_smile): Of course. Breakfast will be ready when you get up.

Pro: Alright.

Pro: Thanks, Mom.

Mom (smile): You’re welcome.

She turns back to her work, and after pausing for a moment I head back upstairs, suddenly drained.

Promises, huh?

I guess she’s right...

**Nostalgia - Young Pro and mom**

...her promises don’t hold a lot of weight.

**Front of House**

Around an hour and a half later I wake up, and after eating and getting ready for school I head outside where Mara, as always, already awaits.

Mara (neutral neutral): Hey there.

Pro: Hey.

Mara: You sleep well?

Pro: A little too well…

Mara (neutral smiling\_forced): No such thing.

Mara (neutral worried\_slightly):

She pauses for a moment before opting not to continue on.

Mara (neutral smiling\_forced): Well, let’s go.

**Road**

Possibly because of yesterday’s sunshine, today’s cloudiness seems especially gloomy. We don’t talk much on the way to school either, which normally would be fine, but for some reason something feels a little off…

Mara (neutral worried\_slightly):

She hides it well, but I’m pretty sure something’s troubling her. There’s no bounce in her step, and things she would normally notice and sometimes even point out are left ignored. A vibrant flower bed, a stray cat crossing the road…

It’s like she sees none of it.

Pro: Um, Mara…

Mara (neutral neutral): Hm? What’s up?

Pro: Did something happen?

Mara (neutral curious):

She stares at me curiously.

Mara: What are you talking about? I’m fine.

Pro: Really? You seem kinda down…

Mara (neutral thinking): Do I? Well…

Mara (neutral curious): A manga character I really liked died in the latest chapter. Maybe that’s why?

I pause, sure that she’s lying but unsure if I should press on any further. After a moment of inner conflict, I decide to let it be.

Pro: Maybe.

Mara (neutral smiling\_forced): Thanks, though.

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

Mara (neutral curious): Today you’re going with Prim to practice, right?

Pro: Oh, yeah. Why?

Mara: No reason in particular. You ended up watching the entire thing last time, right?

Pro: Yeah.

Mara (neutral thinking): I see.

Mara (stretching yawn):

Mara lets out a yawn, stretching her arms out as she exhales.

Mara (neutral satisfaction): It’s almost the weekend, huh? Just one more day.

Pro: One more day.

Mara (neutral curious): Do you wanna do something tomorrow?

Pro: Like what?

Mara (neutral neutral): Dunno.

Pro: Sure, I guess.

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

Mara (neutral smiling):

Seeming a little happier, Mara prances in front of me and turns around.

Mara: Well, I’m gonna leave you here.

Pro: Hm? Why?

Mara (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): Just cause.

Mara (waving smiling): I’ll see you later!

Pro: See you then.

Mara (exit):

And after one last wave she disappears off to the right, leaving me a little confused as to why I’ve been ditched yet again. First Prim, and now Mara…

With a sigh, I continue on my way to school. I guess I’ll see them both pretty soon anyways.