**Bedroom**

I manage to wake up on time without any external assistance, and, feeling moderately refreshed, get up after a few minutes to get ready for school.

When I open the door to go downstairs, I notice a faint, sweet smell. Another indication that things are starting to go back to normal, and with an equally faint smile I head down.

**Kitchen**

When I arrive in the kitchen, I’m greeted by a sight that I’ve been taking for granted.

Mom (neutral smiling): Good morning.

Pro: Morning.

Mom (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): Here’s your breakfast.

She places a plate of food on the table, and after thanking her I dig in. It’s as good as always, if not better.

Mom (neutral thinking): After school today…

Mom (neutral curious): Will you be coming straight home?

I think for a moment, recalling no obligations that I’ve made for today.

Pro: Yeah, probably.

Mom (neutral smiling): Alright then.

Mom (exit):

I finish up and give her my dishes, and after ruffling my hair I trot to the washroom to brush my teeth and hair.

**Front of House**

As per usual, Mara’s already there when I get out of the house, smiling with her usual cheerfulness.

Mara (waving smiling): Morning!

Pro: Morning.

Mara (neutral thinking): Hmm…

Mara (neutral pensive): Not bad today. Not bad.

Pro: Huh? What do you mean?

Mara: Your timing, your hair, your complexion…

Pro: What does complexion even mean…?

Mara (neutral neutral): It’s like, um…

Mara (neutral pensive): …

Mara (neutral confused): ...how you look?

Mara (neutral neutral): Generally.

Pro: I see.

Mara (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): Well, I guess your mom did just come back. Of course you’d be properly fed and rested.

Pro: Yeah, I guess.

Mara (neutral thinking):

Mara studies my face a bit more before she’s content.

Mara (neutral smiling): Well, let’s get going then. Don’t wanna be late.

**Neighbourhood Road 1**

Compared to yesterday’s beautiful weather, today is a gloomy and dreary day. Grey clouds hang overhead, foreshadowing a downpour of rain to come.

Mara (neutral neutral):

Pro: Maybe I should’ve brought an umbrella…

Mara (neutral curious): Hm?

Mara: I have one in my bag, you want it?

Pro: Then what would you do?

Mara (neutral neutral): Dunno.

Mara (neutral fufu): You could pick me up from school for once.

Pro: I mean, logically that wouldn’t really make sense since your school ends before mine.

Mara (neutral sigh): Logically, huh…?

Mara (neutral expressionless): Well, in that case I guess it’d be my responsibility to pick you up if it rains.

Pro: You don’t have to. I’m sure I could solicit an umbrella from someone.

Mara (neutral skeptical): Like…?

Pro: Um…

Yikes. Called out.

Pro: Alright, alright…

Mara (neutral neutral):

Pro: I’ll accept your offer, then.

Mara (neutral hehe): Really have no reason to refuse it.

Pro: I suppose so.

Mara (neutral neutral): Oh yeah…

Mara (neutral fufu):

Mara reaches out and pokes my cheek.

Mara: How did your thing with Prim go yesterday?

Pro: Oh, actually…

Mara (neutral curious):

I tell her about everything that happened yesterday, everything we talked about and said. Mara listens carefully, a mixture of interest and surprise written on her face.

Mara (neutral pensive): …

Mara (neutral skeptical): Are you sure that’s what happened?

Pro: Huh? Of course.

Mara: …

Mara (neutral pensive): I don’t recognize the Pro you described.

Pro: …

Pro: Huh?

Mara: It’s just that…

Mara: Mmm…

Mara (neutral skeptical): Are you sure you didn’t embellish yourself or something?

Pro: I mean, I don’t think so…

Mara stares at me in a way that makes me feel oddly uncomfortable.

Mara (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed):

However, after a while she starts to smile, poking my face again.

Mara: I’m impressed. Who knew you could be so dependable?

Mara (neutral hehe):

Pro: For some reason, that comment didn’t exactly make me happy…

Mara (neutral skeptical):

All of a sudden, Mara’s poke turns into a pinch.

Pro: Ow, ow, ow…

Pro: What was that for?

Mara (arms\_crossed put\_out): How come you’re never that dependable with me?

Pro: Huh? I’m pretty sure I act the same around you.

Mara: Do you?

Pro: Um…

Pro: Actually, probably not.

Mara (neutral frustrated):

Her grip turns even tighter.

Mara: That’s what I mean.

Pro: Alright, alright, I get it. I’m sorry…

Mara: And how will you apologize?

Pro: Tomorrow we can do whatever you want.

Mara (neutral skeptical): Anything?

Pro: Anything.

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

Mara (neutral smiling):

She releases me and happily skips ahead before turning back to face me.

Mara (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): It’s a date.

Pro: I mean, sure…

Mara: It’s a date.

Pro: Alright, alright, it’s a date…

Mara (neutral smiling):

Satisfied, Mara returns back to my side, and I listen to her as she lists all the things that she wants to try doing.

After hearing some of them are, I can’t help but think that I’ve made a mistake...