**Local Shrine**

Mara leads me to a small local shrine we used to visit occasionally as kids. It’s not exactly run-down, but at the same time it doesn’t exactly attract a lot of visitors.

Which makes it a perfect place for a pair of kids to hang out, I guess.

Mara: It’s been a while, huh? When was the last time we were here?

Pro: Dunno. Before middle school for sure though.

Mara: Huh.

She looks around at the place fondly, maybe remembering the hours we spent here as children.

Mara: Well, I’m glad to see it hasn’t changed much. I wonder if that old lady is still around.

Pro: The caretaker?

Mara: Yeah. The one that gave us snacks from time to time.

Pro: Ah, yeah. You usually ate most of mine, though.

Mara: Huh?!?! Did I...?

Mara: ...

Mara: Hehe.

Mara: Anyways, what time is it?

Pro: A little bit past 6:00.

Mara: Oh, it’s almost here.

Before I can ask her what she’s talking about, Mara takes a seat on one of the steps leading up to the shrine, beckoning me over to do the same.

Mara: Ah, I’m a little cold now...

Pro: Here, take this back then.

Mara: Mmm...

Mara: Alright.

A little reluctant but willing nonetheless, I take off the scarf Mara previously wrapped around my neck and place it in Mara’s hands.

Mara: Close your eyes.

Pro: Again? Why?

Mara: Just do it.

Pro: Alright, fine...

*Direction: Screen blacks out*

Mara shuffles around beside me, and after a few moments I feel something warm wrap around me yet again...

Mara: Alright, done.

**Cutscene – Sharing a Scarf**

Mara: Ta-da.

Mara: This way we can both be warm, right?

Pro: I-I guess...

Mara: Huh? Why do you look so unsatisfied?

Pro: I’m not.

Mara: Just kidding, just kidding.

Mara: Oh, look, it’s starting.

Mara: The sunrise.

We stop to appreciate the scene, both of us entranced. Pink clouds decorate the lightening sky, providing a stark but gentle contrast to the deep-blue backdrop as the sun slowly climbs above the horizon, casting everything in gold.

Mara: It’s beautiful, huh?

Pro: Yeah.

Mara: We should watch the sunrise every morning from now on.

Pro: Huh? I dunno if I’d be able to wake up...

Mara: Boo.

Mara: To be fair I don’t think they’d all be this pretty, though.

Pro: Probably not.

Mara: But doesn’t spending time like this every day sound nice?

Mara: It feels like we’re the only people in the world.

Pro: Mara...

Pro: ...that’s from a manga, isn’t it.

Mara: ...

Mara: Hehe, you got me...

Mara: I kinda meant it though. Moments like these aren’t bad at all.

Pro: They aren’t, but...

Mara: ...

Mara: Alright, I get it, I get it...

**Local Shrine**

Mara stands up, forgetting that we’re attached at the neck and yanks me upwards. Realizing her mistake, she quickly detaches her end and looks at me apologetically.

Mara: Uh...

Mara: Sorry.

Pro: It’s fine, don’t worry about it.

Pro: We still have some time left, what do you wanna do?

Mara: Um...

Mara: ...

Mara: Oh, let’s do that!!

I turn around to see what’s gotten Mara so excited, finding a small sign advertising an off-season tanzaku.

Pro: Are they allowed to do that? That seems kinda wrong...

Mara: Who cares? It’s been months since Tanabata, and I want my wishes to come true.

Pro: Huh...

Mara: ...

Mara: Well, even if you don’t wanna write one, come with me.

Pro: Yup, yup. When?

Mara: Tomorrow.

Pro: I, uh, can’t...

Mara: ...

Mara: You just said you’d go with me.

Pro: I did, but tomorrow I have something...

Mara: “Something,” huh?

Mara: So? Prim? Or Lilith?

Pro: Um...

Pro: We’ll be celebrating Prim’s birthday.

Mara: I see...

Mara gazes at me with disappointment written all over her face, clearly trying to make me feel guilty. It works to some extent, and I open my mouth to compromise...

...but before I can say anything she breaks out in laughter.

Mara: I’m just kidding, don’t worry. You should go and have fun.

Mara: The event’s happening over the weekend, so we can come back on Sunday.

Mara: But you’d better be there, no matter what.

Mara: Even if the world is about to end, I better find you here waiting for me.

Pro: That’s from a manga too, huh.

Mara: ...

Pro: Wait, is it actually?

She doesn’t answer, and instead she spins around and starts heading back down the stairs. I follow after her closely, but she doesn’t respond to me at all.

Guess I’ll buy her a red bean bun or something on the way to school...