**Kitchen**

We start studying after I appease Mara’s wrath with a promise to treat her to a café, but shortly after we begin she dozes off, perhaps tired from being on her feet for the past few hours. Familiar with this scenario, I trot upstairs and grab a blanket, wrapping it around her shoulders so she won’t catch a cold.

I’m a little put out that she isn’t studying alongside me, but at the end of the day I’m the one who needs to put in the work, not her.

It’s easy for me to forget since I see her slack off so often, but she really is amazing. I have no doubt in my mind that if she decided to do something, she could do it.

On the other hand, I’m not particularly good at anything, nor am I popular or social. To most people (and myself sometimes as well) it seems strange how the two of us are friends, given how charming, good-looking, and smart she is.

I’m pretty sure I’m a bad influence on her, too. If I were smarter or more diligent, maybe she’d also have more motivation to do well, and then maybe her future would be brighter…

To me, she’s always been such a blessing, but to her maybe I’m actually a curse…

Mara (neutral tired): Pro…?

Mara opens her eyes, slowly regaining her bearings.

Mara (stretching yawn): What are you looking at?

Pro: Oh, it’s nothing.

Mara (neutral expressionless): It’s not nothing…

Mara (neutral worried\_slightly)

She reaches out and pokes my cheek.

Mara: It’s pretty obvious when you’re worried, you know. At least to me.

Mara (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): What do you have to be worried about, though? Lilith’s going to be fine now, and your cute childhood friend is peacefully snoozing in front of you.

Mara (neutral neutral):

Pro: I dunno about cute…

Mara (neutral skeptical): Oi.

Pro: Apologies.

Mara (neutral yawn):

She starts to chuckle, but her laugh quickly turns into a yawn.

Mara (neutral tired): Well whatever it is, I’ll always be here, okay? No matter what you go through.

Mara (exit):

She closes her eyes again, leaving to return back to whatever happy dream she was having. But now it doesn’t bother me as nearly much, and as I continue to grind out formulas I notice that a small smile has made its way onto my face.

**Kitchen**

I wake up Mara when I finish the last of the math worksheets that were given out this week, rousing her by tenderly shaking her shoulder.

Pro: Hey, Mara. It’s time to get up.

Mara (neutral tired): Mmrph…

Mara: What time is it?

Pro: It’s almost 8:00.

Mara: Yeah, I should probably get going soon…

Mara (stretching satisfaction):

She stretches her arms in the air with a satisfaction that makes me a little jealous, partially because I just watched her sleep tranquilly for several hours.

Mara (neutral smiling): Well, thanks for having me over. It was fun.

Pro: You slept for most of it, though.

Mara (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): Hehe. Sleeping is fun too.

Mara (neutral smiling):

She gets up and packs up all of her stuff before moving towards the door, her movements still a little sluggish.

Mara (neutral neutral): I have something to do tomorrow, so you’ll have to walk by yourself. Sorry.

Pro: Oh, no problem. I guess I won’t wait for you then.

Mara (neutral expressionless): I mean, I never make you wait anyways, so…

Pro: Right.

Mara (neutral neutral):

I open the door for her as she slips on her shoes, enjoying the gentle breeze blowing inside.

Mara (neutral smiling): Well, I’m off.

Pro: You want me to walk you?

Mara (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): It’s okay, it’s not too late. Thank you, though.

Mara (waving smiling): Have a good night!

Pro: Yeah, you too.