**Front of Library**

We make a silent agreement to leave all of our awkwardness inside the library, and when we leave Mara perks right up.

Mara (neutral curious): You wanna get something to eat? For dinner.

Pro: Sure, alright. Lemme text my mom, though.

Mara (neutral smiling): Okay, okay. What do you wanna eat?

Pro: I don’t really have a preference. You can pick something.

Mara (neutral skeptical): Huh…? Pushing the responsibility on me again?

Mara (neutral curious):

Pro: Responsibility? Isn’t it a privilege?

Mara (neutral expressionless): Choosing all the time makes me feel guilty…

That’s fair. I guess I could try to pick something that she’d like to eat, allowing her the best of both worlds, but what if I pick incorrectly?

Actually, it’d be pretty hard to find a food that Mara doesn’t like.

Mara (neutral curious):

Pro: Uh…

Pro: You wanna go to the family restaurant, then?

Mara (neutral smiling): Oh, a solid choice.

Mara (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): Okay, let’s go there. I’ve been craving hamburg steak all day.

Mara (neutral curious):

Pro: You could’ve just said that…

Mara (neutral skeptical): Huh? Part of your job is knowing what I want while still freeing up my conscience.

Mara (neutral hehe):

Pro: Right, right.

So she was aware.

Mara (neutral smiling): Well, we skipped over lunch so let’s hustle.

Mara (neutral smiling\_nervous): I’m really hungry…

Pro: Yeah, same. Let’s go eat.

**Diner**

We pass by countless food stalls and cafes on the way to our local family restaurant, exercising self-control but also growing exponentially hungrier with each step.

We eventually arrive tired, weary, and positively starved, startling the waiter that greets us at the door.

Mara (neutral sigh): Ah, we’re finally here.

Mara (neutral neutral):

Pro: That guy looked really concerned, huh…

Mara (neutral hehe): Of course. It looks like we just fought a battle, after all.

Mara (neutral thinking): Now, what to eat…

She browses through the menu, carefully considering each selection.

Mara (neutral curious): Hey, Pro.

Pro: What’s up?

Mara: You wanna share three dishes?

Pro: Three? Isn’t that a bit much?

Mara (neutral thinking): I mean, we’re both really hungry. I could probably eat two myself.

Mara (neutral curious):

Pro: Then why don’t you get two for yourself?

Mara: Mmm…

Mara (neutral thinking): I could eat two, but I’d probably feel sick afterwards. But I also don’t think that one would be enough.

Mara (neutral neutral):

Pro: I see.

One and a half dishes doesn’t sound so bad. I haven’t eaten anything since breakfast, and recently my appetite has been increasing.

Mara (neutral smiling):

Pro: Alright, we can get three then. I guess one of them would be your hamburg steak, and then…

Mara (excited excited): Can we get a pizza, as well?

Pro: Yeah, that works. And I’ll get a chicken and egg bowl.

Mara (neutral hehe): Wow, a native dish in a family restaurant. How bold.

Pro: Felt like being a bit of a thrill-seeker today.

Mara (neutral smiling): I see, I see.

Mara (neutral curious): Speaking of which, when was the last time we’ve been to an amusement park?

Pro: Huh? Maybe a couple years ago, why?

Mara (neutral thinking): Has it really been that long?

Pro: It’s been a while.

Mara: Hmm…

Mara (neutral neutral): I wanna go to one. Today.

Pro: Huh? You know that’s not happening.

Mara (neutral pout): Boo.

Mara starts to pout, and even though I know she’s probably at least half-joking I decide to indulge her whims a little.

Mara (neutral neutral):

Pro: Why don’t we go around Christmas time? When they put up all the lights and everything.

Mara: …

Mara (neutral curious): Oh, I wanna see that.

Mara (neutral smiling): I’ll let you off the hook today, but promise me we’ll go once it starts to snow, okay?

Pro: Alright, I promise.

Mara: Pinky promise?

Pro: Yup, yup.

Mara (neutral hehe):

We link pinkies, much to her delight.

Mara: Yay.

Mara (neutral curious):

Pro: You’d better not forget, though, or we’ll both have to lose a finger.

Mara (neutral surprise): Huh?!? Is that what pinky promises are for?!?

Mara (neutral frowning): That sounds like a yakuza thing.

Mara (surprise geh):

Pro: That’s right. When a mobster doesn’t fulfill a commitment, he cuts off his finger and…

Mara (surprise fearful): And…?

Pro: …his boss eats it.

Mara: Eats them?

Pro: That’s right. Usually grounded up in a hamburg steak, or something similar.

As if on cue, the waiter decides to place a hamburg steak in front of Mara at that very moment. Of course it’s perfectly fine and non-cannibalistic, but I’m gonna enjoy watching her second-guess every bite.