**Home Station**

We eventually finish up, and after paying the bill we head out. The sun has already set, but the streets are still bustling with all kinds of people – parents with their children, salarymen getting off work, and students like us.

Lilith (neutral neutral):

Pro: Wow, it’s already pretty dark out.

Lilith: Yeah.

Pro: You want me to walk you home?

Lilith (neutral confused):

Lilith looks at me oddly, as if I just said something strange.

Lilith: Why?

Pro: Oh, um…

Pro: It might be dangerous.

Lilith (neutral smiling\_slightly): I’ll be fine.

Pro: Oh, alright.

Lilith (neutral neutral):

We pause for a moment, and I feel my cheeks starting to warm up in embarrassment.

Lilith: I think I’m gonna go home. What are you gonna do?

Pro: I think I’ll go home too.

Lilith: Alright.

Lilith (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): Well then, I’ll see you later.

Lilith (neutral embarassed\_slightly): This Thursday, okay?

Pro: Yeah. See you.

Lilith (exit):

And with that Lilith and I go our separate ways. Surprisingly, instead of tired I feel refreshed, as the hours of idle conversation were actually quite revitalizing.

**Kitchen**

I get back home to find it empty, which means that my mom probably had to work late again. I feel a little guilty that while she was out working long hours I was having fun trying out local eateries.

Well, it’s not like she’d let me get a job, anyways.

I go to the kitchen to grab a drink, but when I get there I notice that the fridge is slightly open. Which is strange because my mom is always careful about things like that.

Ah well.

Not thinking much of it, I pour myself a cup of water and head to my room.

**Bedroom**

Mara (neutral neutral): …

Pro: …

Mara (neutral smiling\_nervous)

Pro: It seems like you’ve recently developed this habit of sneaking in whenever you feel like it.

Mara: It does, doesn’t it.

I sigh and take a seat on the bed. Littered on the floor are several manga volumes, all already read and discarded.

Mara (neutral curious): So? How was it?

Pro: It was good. Relaxing.

Mara: Oh, I see. That’s good.

Mara (neutral expressionless): Although I’m not sure you need the relaxation…

Pro: Yeah, you’re probably right…

Mara (neutral curious):

I tell her everything about our outing, from the types of food we ate to the stuff we talked about.

Mara (excited earnest): You’ll take me to that udon place one day, right?

Pro: Yeah, for sure.

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

Mara (neutral smiling): Well, I’m glad you enjoyed yourself. Did you make any future plans?

Pro: Yeah, this Thursday. We’re going to a batting cage.

Mara (neutral neutral): Oh.

Mara (neutral worried\_slightly): …

Mara: I was gonna ask you if you wanted to do something on Thursday, but I guess not.

Mara (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): Guess it’ll have to be Friday.

Pro: I don’t get a say in this…?

Mara: Nope.

Mara (neutral neutral): Well, it’s getting late so I probably should get back home.

Mara (neutral curious): Oh wow, it’s already really dark out.

Pro: I’ll walk you home.

Mara (neutral hehe): It’s alright, I’ll be fine. Thanks, though.

Pro: Are you sure?

Mara (neutral smiling): I’m sure.

**Kitchen**

I walk Mara to the door and wave her goodbye as she leaves.

Mara (waving smiling): I’ll see you tomorrow, okay?

Pro: Yeah. See you.

Mara (exit):

I lock the door behind her and head back upstairs, a little put out that Mara declined my company home as well. It’s something so small, so insignificant, and yet for some reason it makes me a little sad.

A couple years ago she’d force me to walk her home every day, but now she’s outgrown that. What else will she outgrow in the future?

Or rather, who?