**Yi’s Pizzaria**

Pro: So…

Mara (neutral neutral):

Pro: Pizza…?

Mara (arms\_crossed lecturing): Not just any pizza. It’s *high-end* pizza.

Pro: I mean, sure, but it’s still pizza.

Mara (arms\_crossed expressionless): It’s better than normal pizza, though.

Pro: I guess I’ll take your word for it…

Mara (neutral neutral):

We enter the store and claim an empty table near the back away from the other customers.

Mara: Wait here, alright? I’ll go order something.

Pro: Oh, alright.

Mara (exit):

Mara goes up to the counter, and after watching her deliberate over the various possible topics for five minutes or so she finally places an order and heads back.

Mara (neutral smiling):

Pro: What did you get?

Mara: Spinach.

Pro: Spinach.

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

Pro: Actually…?

Mara (neutral neutral): Actually.

Mara (neutral earnest): Even though we’re eating out, you still need to eat your vegetables.

Pro: You didn’t make any vegetables yesterday, though.

Mara (surprise geh): That’s because…

Mara (neutral bashful): Because...

Mara (neutral pensive): …

Mara (neutral smiling\_nervous): Anyways, do you think we’ll be able to finish a whole pizza?

She definitely just changed the subject…

Mara (neutral neutral):

Pro: Probably, right? I’m pretty hungry, and we have you as well…

Mara (neutral skeptical): For some reason I’m not too happy about you saying that…

I pat her head gently.

Pro: It’s fine, it’s fine. It’s just me, and it’d be weird if you weren’t able to cheerfully eat copious amounts.

Mara: Huh…

Mara (neutral expressionless): Alright, I guess I will then. Don’t cry if there’s none left for you.

Pro: Wait a second…

Mara (eating happy):

Our pizza arrives, and after taking a second to appreciate how it looks Mara starts to dig in, eating at an astounding speed.

Pro: You’re actually gonna eat it all, huh…?

Mara (neutral tongue): If I do, it’ll be your fault.

Pro: Alright, alright…

Mara (eating happy):

With a somewhat exasperated smile I start to eat as well, finding that spinach on pizza is actually really good. I listen to Mara telling me about her day while eating, allowing my worries to slowly wash away in a stream of jokes, laughter, and pizza.

Mara (neutral worried\_slightly):

However, once we start to finish up Mara’s expression turns a bit more sober.

Mara: So, what happened? I can’t imagine you’d be upset about your mom coming home.

Pro: Yeah, I’m not. What happened was…

I explain what happened after I left my mom’s room, how I saw Prim and accidentally overheard her conversation with her sister, and how broken Prim seemed afterwards…

Pro: So I’m worried about her. Having something like that said to her by the person she admires so much…

Mara (neutral worried): Yeah, I can’t imagine she’d feel great…

She trails off, deep in thought.

Pro: What do you think I should do?

Mara (neutral worried\_slightly): To be honest…

Mara: I have no idea.

Mara (neutral smiling\_nervous): I don’t think you should’ve heard all that in the first place…

Pro: Yeah, I know…

Mara (neutral thinking): Mmm…

Mara (neutral smiling\_gentle): Just be gentle with her from now on, I guess.

Pro: I guess.

Mara (exit):

We spend the rest of our time there contemplating Prim’s situation, and after a while Mara suggests we get home before it gets too dark.

**Road**

A short bus ride later we find ourselves walking the streets we’ve walked so many times, occasionally pointing out small differences that have appeared over the years.

It’s peaceful and nostalgic, and by the time we arrive at our usual parting place I find myself wishing that we could’ve walked for a little longer.

Mara (neutral neutral): We’re here again, huh?

Pro: Yup.

Mara (neutral wishful): It’s always a little sad when we leave each other here, huh…?

Pro: Yeah…

Mara (neutral worried\_slightly): Are you gonna be okay tonight?

Pro: What do you mean?

Mara (neutral embarrassed): Well, you’ll be home alone again, right?

Pro: Yeah, but I think I’ll be fine…

Mara (neutral worried\_slightly): Hmm…

Mara: You’ve been seeming a bit more lonely these days, though.

Mara (neutral smiling): Maybe I should come over more often.

Pro: It sounds like you’re the lonely one…

Mara (neutral hehe): Hehe.

Mara: Maybe.

Mara (stretching yawn):

She stretches her arms above her head, yawning with a satisfaction that makes me a little envious.

Mara (neutral satisfied): It’s getting late, huh?

Pro: Yeah, I guess.

Mara (neutral neutral): Want me to come over for a bit? Keep you company?

Pro: I’ll be fine, don’t worry. You should go home and sleep, you seem pretty tired.

Mara (neutral thinking): Well, I did eat a lot…

Mara (neutral neutral): I guess you’re right though.

Mara (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): Alright, I’ll see you later I guess.

Mara (waving smiling\_eyes\_closed): Night!!

Pro: Yeah, have a good night.

Mara (exit):

After a little wave we head our separate ways, both of us ready to go to bed.

However, a small part of me wishes that I accepted Mara’s offer, that I were able to be with her a little while longer.