**Kitchen**

I’m surprised that the door is unlocked when I get home, and when I step inside I’m greeted by a sight I haven’t seen in many, many years. For the first time since I started going to school by myself, my mom’s home to greet me.

Mom (wave smile): Welcome home. How was school?

Pro: It was alright. Could’ve been worse.

Mom (wave smile): Well, at least you got through. Do you want something to eat?

Pro: Hm? Oh, uh…

My brain freezes, having encountered a choice that I haven’t before.

Mom (wave smile): An apple, maybe?

Pro: Oh, sure. Thanks.

Mom (wave smile): Wait here for a second, okay?

She starts cutting an apple into small pieces, fashioning them into little bunnies. As a child I always felt a little guilty about eating them, but I never said anything because I knew it wasn’t that big of a deal.

Mom (wave smile): Here you go.

Pro: Oh, thanks.

Regardless, having an apple like this again is rather nostalgic.

Mom (wave smile): It’s nice for both of us to be home early, huh?

Pro: Yeah, it is.

To my slight surprise, she lets out a small sigh.

Mom (wave smile): But it’s back to work for me tomorrow.

Pro: Huh? Isn’t that a bit too soon?

Mom (wave worried\_smile): Don’t worry, I’ve gotten plenty of rest. And they’re already treating me well.

Mom (wave smile): I’ll be working from the afternoon till later tomorrow, so you’ll have to work out dinner by yourself.

Pro: Alright…

A small lump starts to form in my throat but I force it down, knowing that things will probably be better this time.

Mom (wave smile): Now, you have things you wanna do, right? Go on, don’t worry about me. I’ll call you when dinner’s ready.

Pro: Oh, okay.

I start to head towards my room, but I turn back before I disappear up the stairs.

Pro: Thanks, Mom.

Mom (wave smile): You’re welcome.

**Bedroom**

Once I get upstairs I place my snacks on the table and take out all of my books, resolving to study for the rest of the evening. Prim’s performance is on Saturday, and if I don’t pass the test on Friday…

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It’s a little amazing how important Prim’s become in such a short amount of time. I find it difficult to believe that just a few weeks ago we were complete strangers, but now she might be one of the people closest to me.

And because of that, I’ll need to pass that test.

I take a look at my first homework set, finding with relief that I still remember some of the concepts on it from yesterday’s class…

...and after a deep breath and one last glance outside, I get to work.