The rain had started just as the sun dipped below the horizon, soft and steady, like a soundtrack she hadn’t planned for but suddenly felt right. Her room glowed in warm, golden light, a single candle flickering on her desk. She ran her hands over the smooth fabric of her blanket, trying to calm the fluttering in her chest. He was here, sitting just a few feet away, his gaze bouncing nervously between her and the walls adorned with photos and sketches pinned haphazardly.

“Your room is cool,” he said, his voice soft but edged with awkwardness, like he wasn’t sure what else to say.

“Thanks,” she replied, crossing her legs beneath her. “I mean, it’s just… my room.” She let out a nervous laugh, her fingers toying with the edge of the blanket.

He smiled, leaning back against the headboard but still fidgeting with the hem of his sleeve. She could tell he was trying not to overthink this, just as she was. They had talked about this moment endlessly in texts, whispered phone calls, and those rare, stolen moments away from watchful eyes. Now, with no screens or distance between them, the reality felt heavier but not in a bad way—more like standing on a threshold and knowing once you crossed, everything would feel different.

“You don’t have to,” he said softly, his voice breaking through her thoughts. He didn’t meet her eyes, but the honesty in his tone filled the space between them. “I mean, we don’t. Not if you’re—”

“I want to,” she interrupted, surprising herself with the steadiness in her voice. Then she hesitated, glancing down at her lap. “I’m just… nervous, I guess. What if—what if I mess it up?”

He finally looked at her, a flicker of surprise softening into something warmer. “You can’t mess this up. I mean, unless I mess it up first,” he added with a grin, and she laughed, tension easing just a little more.

They sat there for a moment, the silence filling with the rhythm of rain on glass. Then she reached for his hand. His fingers were warm, calloused from playing guitar, and as they intertwined with hers, she felt her nerves begin to settle.

“I want this to be with you,” she said, her voice quieter now but no less certain. “Even if it’s not perfect.”

“It won’t be,” he admitted, smiling. “But maybe that’s okay?”

She nodded, leaning toward him. When their lips met, it was gentle at first, exploratory, like the first note of a song they were learning to play together. He cupped her face, his thumb brushing her cheek, and she felt her heart slow—not from hesitation but from the strange, unexpected calm of realizing she was exactly where she wanted to be.

As the moments stretched, they navigated the unfamiliar territory together, their movements tentative but growing in confidence. It wasn’t flawless or like the movies, but it wasn’t awkward, either. It was real—messy and tender and filled with quiet laughter when they fumbled. They communicated without words, checking in with every glance and touch, and the trust between them made every uncertain step feel safe.

Afterward, they lay tangled beneath her blanket, her head resting on his chest as he traced circles on her shoulder. The candle had burned low, the room filled with its faint, smoky scent. Outside, the rain had softened into a whisper, and the world felt quieter, as if it had paused to hold this moment for them.

“So,” he said, breaking the silence, “do you think we were, like… okay at that?”

She giggled, tilting her head to look at him. “I think so.” Her voice softened, the weight of the moment settling in. “It felt right.”

“Yeah,” he murmured, brushing his lips lightly against her forehead. “It really did.”

In the stillness that followed, she felt a quiet, unspoken understanding between them: this was only the beginning, and they had all the time in the world.