

UP BUT BACK

Written by  
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EXT. HILLSIDE - DAY

Wind whips wheat: back and forth and back and forth and back.

DAININ (28) hikes up a steep hill alongside HAYATO (26). As kids, they used to come up here every week after church.

DAININ  
(squinting into the wind)  
Bit of a breeze, huh?

HAYATO  
Some things haven't changed!

When wind WHIPS and WHOOSHES, they walk in silence a while.

HAYATO (CONT'D)  
How's Amy doing?

DAININ  
Oh, she's good! Yeah, she's  
really good. Things are good with us.

HAYATO (CONT'D)  
Good. Good.

WHIP. WHIP. WHOOOSH.

DAININ (CONT'D)  
How's your mom holding up? I heard--

DEFAULT APPLE RINGTONE punctures the air. Dainin pulls out his phone--

DAININ (CONT'D)  
One minute, I got to take this.

He wanders away, thinking himself out of earshot.

DAININ (CONT'D)  
Hey Akeeva!! Good to hear from  
you!... Yes! That's me.

Hayato watches Dainin's back.

DAININ (CONT'D)  
Oh man! That's such great news.  
Thank you, God! ... I'll reply to  
that email soon.... Okay, I gotta  
go...yes, sounds good...see you  
this week to sign the lease! Bye!

Dainin wanders back to Hayato; they both keep on up.

HAYATO  
Everything okay?

DAININ  
Yeah, yeah. Things are good.

DAININ (CONT'D) HAYATO  
You were saying about your mom? I'm glad.

HAYATO (CONT'D)  
Oh, yeah, things aren't, yeah, not great, but she's moving in with me now so that should make, you know, things more convenient and stuff

DAININ HAYATO (CONT'D)  
Oh, cool, cool. Yeah

HAYATO (CONT'D)  
But she's still, fun to be around, you know? We started playing chess again. She still beats me most of the time. Actually, I beat her for the first time last week. I think I'm getting better... probably still no match for you though.

DAININ  
We should play sometime soon!

DAININ (CONT'D) HAYATO  
Yeah, soon. Yeah, soon probably!

WHIP. WHOOSH. They reach the top of the hill in heavy breath.

HAYATO (CONT'D)  
Isn't it beautiful here?

DAININ  
Yes.

They look out over the hills. Below their town sits in fog, but some spots break through to glisten in morning sun: broken merry-go-round at the playground, an open chain link gate to the backyard, steeple of St. Cabrini's church.

Dainin turns around, but town sprawls everywhere. He turns back.

DAININ (CONT'D)  
We should go.

HAYATO  
Don't you want to stay a bit longer?

DAININ

Yes.

He looks out again: fog.

DAININ (CONT'D)

...But we should go. People will  
worry.

HAYATO

That's true.

He stands.

HAYATO (CONT'D)

Can we go back then?

DAININ

Of course.