**Front of School**

The afternoon passes by quickly, and before I know it I’m bidding Asher goodbye and heading home. I take a deep breath as I leave, appreciating the fresh air. It stopped raining sometime after lunch, and now there isn’t a cloud in the sky.

Basking in the sun’s warmth, I start to head home when I’m stopped by a shout.

?Petra: PROOOOOOOOOO!!!

Petra (waving yelling):

I turn around, seeing who called. It turns out to be Petra, who looks like she’s been running around. When she reaches me she stops for a moment to catch her breath.

Petra (neutral groan): Ah, I found you…

Petra: I went to your classroom right after classes ended, but you already left…

Pro: What’s up?

Petra (neutral nervous): Um…

All of a sudden Petra becomes uncharacteristically bashful.

Petra (neutral embarrassed): Could we talk somewhere more private?

Huh…?

Pro: Um, could I ask why?

Petra: I can’t say it here…

Petra (neutral pout): And aren’t you being a little cold? Especially after what happened yesterday…

Petra (neutral embarrassed):

Pro: Don’t say it like that, people will get the wrong idea…

I glance around a little nervously, noting that people indeed seem to be getting the wrong idea.

Pro: Alright, alright, I’ll hear you out.

Pro: Let’s go then.

**Cafe 2**

Ten minutes or so later we find ourselves back in the café we were in last night, deciding what to order.

Petra (neutral smiling): Get anything you want. I’ll pay for it.

Pro: Wait, really?

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

Pro: In that case…

I find the most expensive thing on the menu and point it out to her.

Petra (neutral curious):

Pro: I’ll take one of these.

Petra (neutral indignant): Hey! Wouldn’t you feel bad about making your junior buy you a twenty-dollar drink?!?

Pro: You said you’d pay for anything I wanted, no?

Petra (neutral expressionless): I-I did…

Petra: Well, if you insist…

Pro: I’m just joking. Don’t worry I’ll pay for myself.

Petra (neutral pout): No, it’s okay. Just maybe pick something a little cheaper, alright?

I eye Petra suspiciously, wondering what exactly she’s playing at.

Pro: Alright…

Petra (neutral nervous):

After placing our order, I lean back in my chair and decide to cut to the chase.

Pro: So? What did you wanna talk about?

Petra (neutral smiling\_nervous): Ahaha…

She avoids my gaze again, but I press on.

Pro: Nothing? Alright then…

Petra (neutral surprise):

I get up, pretending to leave.

Petra: Ah, wait…

Petra (neutral smiling\_nervous): Have something to drink first, okay? They say things taste better when you don’t have to work for them…

With a sigh, I sit back down.

Pro: I’m pretty sure that’s not how the saying goes…

Petra (neutral sigh):

We make awkward small talk until our drinks come, and after a few minutes of silence Petra finishes hers and sits up, taking a deep breath.

Petra (neutral nervous): So…

Petra (neutral embarrassed): Are you free tomorrow after school?

Ah.

Pro: Nope.

Petra (neutral disappointed): Oh, I see…

Petra stares dejectedly at her cup, and I do my utmost to keep my amusement from showing on my face.

Petra (neutral smiling\_nervous): May I ask what you’re doing?

Petra (neutral surprise):

Pro: I’m going to a mixer.

I almost lose it at the surprise on her face, but I somehow manage to keep it in.

Petra (neutral smiling\_nervous): Wow, what a coincidence…

Petra: I’m going to a mixer too.

Pro: Is that so.

Petra: Yeah…

Petra: Um…

Petra: Would it be possible for you to cancel yours…?

Petra (neutral surprise):

Not able to hold it back any longer, I burst out in laughter.

Petra (neutral indignant): Huh?!? Why are you laughing?!?

Pro: I’m pretty sure we’re going to the same one…

Petra (neutral surprise): Huh?!?

Petra (neutral indignant): Did Asher…?

Petra (neutral sigh):

Petra slumps back in her chair as I continue to wheeze.

Petra (arms\_crossed annoyed): …

Petra (arms\_crossed yelling): Ah, stop laughing!!! I get it, I get it!!!

Petra (arms\_crossed sigh):

Eventually I’m able to calm down, and once I do I sip on my hard-earned tea as if nothing happened.

Petra (neutral drained): He asked you at lunch then? He didn’t tell me…

Pro: Yeah. I was wondering why his friend asked for me specifically, but it all makes sense now.

Pro: Why me, though?

Petra (neutral expressionless): Well you see…

Petra (neutral drained): Initially I was the only girl, so I went around asking a bunch of people if they wanted to come, but most of them turned me down.

Petra: But then I found a few that were willing to go, but then we had more girls than boys…

Pro: I see.

Pro: But why me in particular?

Petra (neutral neutral): Well…

Petra: …

Petra (neutral curious): Lilith’s going too.

Pro: Wait, Lilith’s going to a mixer?

Petra (neutral neutral): Yeah.

Pro: How’d you manage that?

Petra (neutral confused):

Petra stares at me oddly, perhaps wondering if she should tell me the truth.

Petra (neutral smiling): I used a bunch of different techniques to coerce her into going.

Petra (neutral neutral): Wait, that sounds kinda sinister. Let me rephrase that.

Petra (neutral grinning): I pointed out several benefits of going and got some other people to encourage her to go, and eventually she finally relented.

Yikes…

Petra (neutral neutral): I’d feel bad if Lilith went without telling you, so I felt obligated to get you to come as well.

Petra (neutral expressionless): Actually, if I just told Lilith that she didn’t need to go then we wouldn’t be in this mess…

Petra (neutral sigh): Ah…

I have to quell my laughter again as Petra sighs.

Petra (neutral groan): I want my money back. I bought you a drink so you’d owe me a favour, but it turns out I didn’t need to.

Pro: Well, it’s too late now…

Petra (neutral pout): Oi. Don’t you feel bad about robbing your junior?

Pro: Not this time, no.

Petra: …

Petra: I’ll tell Lilith.

Pro: I’m sure Lilith would take my side on this one.

Petra: …

Petra (neutral drained): Ah, whatever. I just got my allowance for the week anyways.

She watches as I finish my tea, a little irritated at what is probably a smug look on my face. To be fair, I’d be annoyed too, but I think she deserves this one.

Pro: Ah, that was good. Thank you very much.

Petra (neutral pout): Yup, yup, you’re welcome…

Petra (exit):

Soon after, the waiter arrives with the bill, and I feel a tiny bit of guilt as he glances at me questioningly while Petra pays. Not enough guilt to cause me to take out my wallet, though.