**Front of Music School**

They end up running into the same problem we did though, and we find ourselves all locked outside.

Prim (shy shy):

?Roxy (neutral smiling):

I glance at Prim’s peers, noting that they seem to be around the same age as us. The boy seems more on the stoic side and doesn’t say much, but the girl is much more sociable and talks to Prim, who, predictably, doesn’t seem that comfortable.

?Roxy (neutral smiling\_nervous): You guys got locked out too, huh...?

?Roxy (neutral curious): Was practice cancelled? Did you hear anything?

Prim (shy down): I don’t think so…

?Roxy (neutral sigh):

The sociable girl lets out a sigh.

?Roxy (neutral neutral): Well, that’s too bad then. Maybe the instructor forgot to unlock the door when he came.

Prim: Maybe.

I look forlornly at the door, feeling a little defeated.

Prim (shy shy):

Pro: Well, hopefully someone will come soon.

?Roxy (neutral curious):

Right on cue, we’re interrupted by a rather harassed looking adult, who after greeting the other three proceeds to unlock the door for us.

?Roxy (neutral smiling): Oh, just on time.

?Roxy (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): Let’s go then.

Prim (shy down):

?Roxy (exit):

She and her friend head inside, but Prim turns to face me instead of following them.

Prim: Um…

Prim (shy shy): If you’d like you can come inside.

Pro: Oh, really?

She nods.

Prim (shy down): A lot of people come to watch sometimes, like friends or parents, so if you want to you could watch too…

Pro: Oh, uh…

Guess I’ll go see what it’s like.

Prim (shy surprise):

Pro: Yeah, that sounds good.

Prim (shy shy): ...

Prim: Let’s go inside then.

**Music School Auditorium**

The inside of the building is a lot bigger than I thought it’d be, and I soon find myself sitting in the seating area of a small auditorium, listening to Prim warm up. Other students start trickling in as well, but the pair we ran into earlier are nowhere to be seen.

It’s pretty obvious that Prim’s really good at piano. I’m no expert, but even I can see that the way she plays is several miles above every other kid I’ve seen play, and she’s only doing drills…

I wonder what she’ll be like during the performance.

After another fifteen minutes or so, the stage is fully populated with students and their instruments, many of which I probably couldn’t name. A tall, somewhat lanky instructor enters the room, and as soon as he gets up on stage the orchestra falls silent.

?Roxy (waving smiling): Hey there.

I start, having not realized Prim’s friend sneaking up beside me.

?Roxy (neutral curious): Are you Prim’s boyfriend?

Pro: Uh…

Pro: I’m not her boyfriend. I’m more of a…

“Friend”

{

Pro: ...friend.

?Roxy (neutral smiling): I see. So you came to watch her play, huh?

}

“Chaperone”

{

Pro: ...chaperone.

?Roxy (neutral confused): Chaperone? How did that happen?

Pro: It’s a long story…

She looks at me curiously.

?Roxy (neutral neutral): I see.

}

?Roxy (neutral smiling\_wishful):

Suddenly the girl stops and listens to the quiet twinkling of the piano, looking towards Prim a little wistfully.

?Roxy: She’s really good. I wish I could play like that…

Roxy (neutral smiling): Oh, I’m Roxy by the way. I play the piano too.

Pro: I’m Pro.

Roxy (neutral curious): Pro? That’s an interesting name…

Pro: I get that a lot…

Roxy (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): Makes sense.

Roxy (neutral smiling): You’re in high school right? What year?

Pro: Second year.

Roxy (neutral curious): Me too. You go to the same school as Prim?

Pro: Yeah…

Do people normally ask this many questions…?

Roxy: I see.

Roxy (neutral smiling): Well, it’s nice to meet you. Do you play anything?

Pro: Uh, no I don’t.

Roxy (neutral curious): That’s too bad. It really is fun.

Pro: Is it?

Roxy (neutral thinking): I mean…

Roxy (neutral grinning): It’s a lotta work, but yeah it’s fun. Especially when you get to play in a large group like this. There’s a performance coming up in a couple weeks too, so things are getting busier.

Pro: Um…

Roxy (neutral curious):

Pro: If there’s a performance coming up, then why are you watching from here? Shouldn’t you be practicing with them?

Roxy (neutral neutral): Ah…

Roxy (neutral smiling\_nervous): Usually if there’s only one piano in an orchestra, if there’s any piano at all.

Oh. Now that I think about it, I think Prim said something about that earlier too…

Roxy (neutral thinking): And they decided that it’ll be Prim who plays in this one, so I won’t be able to. I still practice all the pieces though, just in case she gets sick the day of or something.

Pro: Oh, I see.

Roxy (neutral smiling\_eyes\_closed): It’s alright, though. She’s really good, so she deserves to play.

Roxy (neutral curious): Look, they’re starting.

Roxy (exit):

I turn my attention back to the orchestra. The conductor says something I don’t catch, but then he moves his hand, prompting all of the students to lift up their instruments in a single, unified motion. And then, in a single, unified exhale they begin playing all at once.

Long, soft notes fill the room, and despite the number of students and instruments that fill the stage, everything sounds perfectly in balance. Nothing stands out, but nothing feels overpowering, either.

Wow...

I never thought an orchestra could be so... mesmerizing.

Prim starts to play midway through the song, adding her gentle but distinctive sound into the mix. Her hands move across the keys swiftly and gracefully, making it clear that she’s the person we should all have our eyes on.

There’s no trace of the shy, timid girl that I ran a week ago. Instead, she plays confidently, looking as if she didn’t have a care in the world…

This is where she belongs

They end up going through five different pieces several times, stopping and playing through certain sections over and over again, apparently fixing mistakes that I can’t find. I listen to it all, especially enjoying the more contemporary pieces they play.

It’s only until the conductor thanks everyone and all the students begin packing up their equipment when I realize that I ended up sitting through the entire thing.