**Music School**

Thankfully, unlike last time the door is unlocked when we arrive. I walk Prim to the auditorium, where she turns to me before going off to practice.

Prim (shy shy): I’ll be going now. To practice.

Prim: It’ll probably be a few hours long again. I think.

Pro: Oh, yeah. No problem.

Prim (shy down): Um…

Prim (fidget down):

She fidgets uncomfortably for a moment, not meeting my gaze.

Prim (shy bambi): Are you gonna watch?

Pro: Huh? Oh, probably.

Prim (shy down): I see.

Prim (shy shy): Well, I’ll see you then.

Pro: Yeah, see you.

Prim: And, um…

Prim (fidget smiling\_worried): Thanks again.

Prim (exit):

She timidly dashes off towards the piano, and I find a seat somewhere on the side, not wanting to attract too much attention.

I watch as she warms up, a little surprised that I find myself wanting to watch their practice again. Normally I’d find things like this a bit tedious and boring, but I can’t forget how captivating it was last time.

It seems like we arrived before almost everyone else again, but as time passes people slowly start trickling in, each person with their own instrument. Now that I think about it, Prim doesn’t really bring anything apart from herself to practices, but then again I guess she can’t exactly bring a piano back and forth on the subway.

Roxy: Hey, you’re here again.

Roxy: Remember me?

Pro: Um, yeah. Roxy…

Pro: ...right?

I pause, desperately hoping that I didn’t get her name wrong.

Roxy: Not quite…

Pro: Ah, sorry…

Unexpectedly, she lets out a laugh.

Roxy: I’m just kidding. I’m glad you remembered who I am.

Roxy: You came here with Prim again?

Pro: Yeah.

Roxy: I see.

She laughs again, but this time it sounds more uneasy.

Roxy: Today we’re doing the final audition for the performance next week. I mean, Prim’s pretty much guaranteed to get the piano part, but I’m still a little nervous.

Pro: Oh. Good luck, then.

Roxy: You sure you should be saying that?

Pro: Hm? Why not?

Roxy: Really…?

Roxy: I kinda feel bad for Prim.

Huh…?

Roxy: Well anyways, I should probably go get some practice in before we start.

Roxy: I’ll see you later, Pro.

Pro: See you.

She leaves the auditorium, stopping to talk with her friend for a bit. What was his name, again? I think it was Kento, or something.

I turn my attention back to Prim, who has momentarily stopped playing and is instead staring at the keys. She didn’t tell me about the audition, but then again I guess we really didn’t talk at all today.

I wonder what’s going through her mind.

However, before I can think about it any further I’m startled by a light tap on my shoulder.

Mara (neutral curious): Looks like I made it before they started.

I slowly turn around to face her.

Mara (waving smiling\_eyes\_closed): Hey there.

Pro: …

Mara (neutral neutral):

Pro: What exactly are you doing here?

Mara (neutral skeptical): Huh…?

Mara (arms\_crossed hmph): How rude. That’s not how you greet people.

Mara (arms\_crossed lecturing): A simple “hey” would suffice. None of this “what are you doing here” stuff.

I stare at her incredulously.

Mara (arms\_crossed neutral):

Pro: I never told you where Prim’s school is, though…

Mara (neutral smiling\_nervous):

Pro: So you followed us…?

Mara (neutral hehe): Hehe.

After a moment I decide to accept the reality in front of me, letting out a sigh.

Mara (neutral neutral):

Pro: So? What did you wanna do?

Mara (neutral pensive): Well, I was gonna come watch…

Mara (excited earnest): ...but on the way here I passed by a bunch of interesting stores.

Mara (excited excited): Wanna check them out?

I glance at Prim, who seems to be intensely focused. On one hand, I told her that I’d probably watch her practice, but on the other hand this would be a good way to find out what was on Mara’s mind this morning and cheer her up.

Pro: Sure. Let’s go.

Mara (yay yay): Yay!

And with that she grabs my arm and starts pulling me away.