**Front of Music School**

I arrive at the music school an hour before I was supposed to, finding that the auditorium hasn’t even been opened for the audience yet. Prim’s been rubbing off on me, huh.

With nothing to do I mull around outside, nonchalantly counting the number of cars that pass by. It’s actually a surprisingly pleasant way to pass the time, albeit a little redundant.

However, around the 100th or so car I feel a tap on my shoulder, causing me to jump.

?Iris (neutral curious): Um…

I blink twice at the person standing behind me. A college student, with a hand wrapped in a cast…

Pro: Um…

Pro: Prim’s sister, uh…

Iris (neutral worried\_slightly): Iris.

Pro: Right. Sorry.

Iris (neutral neutral): Don’t worry about it.

Iris: Um…

She stares at me as if scrutinizing my entire being, her eyes glancing over the casual t-shirt and jeans I threw on before I left. Now that I think about it, aren’t concerts supposed to be formal events? And isn’t Iris a professional pianist, so maybe she disapproves…?

But to my surprise, instead of saying anything she stands up straight and bows.

Iris (neutral sincere): Thank you so much for everything you’ve done for my sister. Thank you for taking her to practice, for staying with her all the time, and for protecting her when she was in trouble…

Iris: Our entire family is in your debt.

Pro: That sounds like too much of a responsibility…

Iris (neutral neutral): …

Iris (neutral thinking): I guess it would be, wouldn’t it?

She walks over the wall and leans on it, gesturing to me to do the same.

Iris (neutral skeptical) :So…

Iris (neutral curious): What exactly are your intentions with my sister?

Pro: …

Pro: Huh?!?

Iris (neutral skeptical): It seems a little suspicious, you know? A kid like you spending all his time chaperoning a junior from his school, with basically nothing in it for you. No pay, nothing for you to do…

Iris: Smells like an ulterior motive, don’t you think?

Pro: I can’t really argue with that…

Pro: But it’s really not like that. I just had too much spare time, so I decided to help her out.

Iris (neutral thinking): Huh…

Iris (arms\_crossed neutral): That’s a pretty weak excuse.

Pro: It’s the truth, though…

Iris: Alright, alright. If you say so.

Iris (neutral neutral): It’s a shame though. Prim’s room is full of romance manga, and all she really does during what free time she has is read them, so I thought she finally found her prince.

Iris (neutral thinking): She’s really cute, you know. And I’m sure she wouldn’t be opposed...

Pro: …

Iris (neutral smiling): I’m joking, don’t worry. Your face is incredible.

Iris (neutral happy): Although, if you change your mind one day, you have my full support.

Pro: Thanks, I guess…

Iris (neutral laughing):

Iris starts to laugh, causing me to look away, embarrassed and flustered. Prim *is* really cute, but…

Iris (neutral smiling): Oh, I think they’re opening up the seating area now. Let’s head inside.

Pro: You aren’t waiting for anyone?

Iris (neutral neutral): My parents are already inside, and they’ll be sitting in the reserved section for the families of the performers.

Pro: Um, but shouldn’t that also include you…?

Iris: Prim doesn’t know I’ll be here, so she didn’t reserve a spot for me.

Pro: I see.

Iris (neutral curious): It’s a perfect opportunity, anyways. I was hoping for a chance to chat with you.

Iris: So let’s get going.

Iris (exit):

Iris heads inside, and after a moment of hesitation I follow after her, a tiny bit wary about what she wants to talk about but knowing that I’ll have to talk to her nonetheless.

**Music School Auditorium**

Even though we were just allowed in, the auditorium is already busy and full of life. The seats in the front are packed with all sorts of people, from students to parents to people in strangely formal suits…

Iris (neutral neutral): Those are scouts, probably from music colleges.

Pro: Really? That sounds like a lotta pressure…

Iris: It is. A lot of the students probably have a lot riding on this performance. For some of them, this may be their last chance to land a music scholarship to their dream school, or even just a recommendation…

Iris (neutral worried\_slightly): So there’s a lot of stress and competition involved, typically. Rash acts done out of jealousy, well…

Iris (neutral sigh): I can’t really say it surprises me.

I blink twice, realizing that Iris seems to know what happened yesterday.

Iris (neutral neutral):

Pro: Did Prim tell you what happened?

Pro: Actually, come to think of it, you thanked me for protecting her earlier…

Iris: Yeah, she told me. Or more accurately, I wrestled it out of her.

Yikes…

Iris (neutral wishful): I don’t think that by any means what that girl did was right, but at the same time I can understand why she did it. It’s hard, having someone you view as a junior get something that you can’t have, and Prim’s not even an actual student at this school.

Iris (neutral curious):

Pro: Is it like that for you as well?

The words escape my mouth before I can reconsider them. Scared that she’ll be mad, I tentatively glance at Iris, but her expression is unreadable.

Iris (neutral neutral): It looks like they’re starting.

Pro: Oh, right.

Taking that as a sign that she doesn’t really want to share, I turn my attention to the front. The crowd suddenly goes silent, and the performers start to play...

**Cutscene - Prim’s Concert**

...including Prim, the centerpiece.

She’s wearing a white one-piece dress, gently contrasting the smooth, dark ebony piano that her hands move gracefully across. She seems so alive, and shortly after they start I find that I can’t take my eyes off of her…

Iris: Yesterday…

To my surprise, Iris continues our conversation throughout the performance, keeping her voice low not to disturb anyone.

Iris: Yesterday Prim apologized to me. She apologized for deciding to continue playing even though I couldn’t, as if she were the one who broke my arm…

Iris: But it was probably my fault she felt that she needed to.

Iris: When we were kids, Prim always followed me around and copied whatever I did. She’d want to eat the same food, wear the same clothes, have the same hobbies…

Iris: So of course, when I started to practice piano seriously she also did so. She might’ve practiced even harder than I did, which bothered me because I didn’t see her goal as her own. I saw it as mine, but I didn’t have the heart to confront her about it.

Iris: But once I was told that I wouldn’t be able to play professionally anymore, I snapped and said a bunch of things I shouldn’t have...

I instinctively freeze up, deciding not to tell her that I was there eavesdropping.

Iris: I’m a horrible sister, don’t you think? Older siblings are meant to encourage and support their younger siblings, but I could only tear her down…

Iris: But regardless of that, she got back on her feet and started to play again. Partially thanks to you, I guess.

She pauses to appreciate a particularly complicated segment, flawlessly played by both Prim and the other instrumentalists.

Iris: She’s really gotten good, huh? Forget about following after me, she might be better than I am in a couple years.

Pro: Would you be okay with that?

Iris: Maybe. But do you think that should matter?

Pro: No, I don’t.

Iris: I don’t either. I’ve already been selfish enough.

Iris: From now on I’ll do everything I can to make sure that Prim becomes the best pianist that she can be.

Iris: I’ve decided that I’ll work towards becoming a conductor, and in the meantime I’ll be her personal instructor. I’ll get back on my feet as well, and make sure that she achieves her goal no matter what.

Iris: So thank you, Pro. For helping both of us find our way.

She returns her attention back to the performance, leaving me to speechlessly process everything she just said. Talk about a change of heart, but at the same time I guess that people who truly care for each other can’t stay at odds forever…

I refocus on Prim, a feeling of satisfaction starting to well up in my chest. It’s been quite a ride, a world-class rollercoaster ride, but strangely I have absolutely no regrets about getting on.

I wonder who Prim plays for. Herself? Her sister? Or someone else? Maybe a mix?

But I guess it doesn’t matter. As long as she can play I think she’ll be happy.

And that’s everything.