**Shopping District**

Petra eventually settles down and let’s me catch up to her, and we spend our walk to the shopping district theorizing what Asher could possibly have written about.

Petra: It’s pretty busy today, huh?

Pro: Yeah, I guess. Everyone’s off work.

Petra: Oh, true.

Petra: So, do you have any ideas?

Pro: Ideas?

Petra: For Prim’s gift.

Pro: Oh, right. No, I don’t.

I take a good look around, searching for something, anything.

Pro: Actually, doesn’t she really like music? Isn’t there a music store around here?

Petra: I think so. But they only sell instruments, no?

Pro: It might be a good place to start, though.

Petra: I guess. Where is it?

Pro: It should be around there…

Pro: …maybe.

Petra: Maybe…?

Pro: I don’t remember, sorry.

Petra: Well…

Petra: I guess we’ll find it eventually. Let’s walk around.

**Music Store**

We eventually do find it, and after wading through an unusually dense crowd we make it inside. In contrast, the store is almost completely devoid of customers save for a single middle-aged man looking at keyboards in the back.

Petra: See? I told you they really only have instruments here. So unless you’re willing to spend hundreds on a single birthday…

Pro: Not everything’s that expensive. See, look.

I point out a new set of guitar strings, and Petra sighs.

Petra: Prim doesn’t even play guitar.

Pro: …right.

Petra: I mean, a couple of weeks ago I might’ve considered a piano accessory or something, but…

Petra: …

Petra: I wonder why she quit. She seemed to enjoy it so much, but now whenever I bring it up she seems detached from it all…

Pro: Change of interest, maybe?

Petra: Maybe, but it’s pretty clear that she misses it…

?Prim: P-P-Petra?!?!? And P-Pro?!?!?

Prim materializes out of nowhere, causing Petra and I to start rather spectacularly.

Prim: I-I didn’t know you guys were that close…

Petra: I-It’s definitely not like that!!!

Petra: We were just-

She cuts herself off, unsure whether she should ruin the surprise or risk a huge misunderstanding.

Pro: Petra came to me for advice. About a friend.

Petra gawks at me incredulously, knowing full well that nobody in their right mind would come to me for advice. Thankfully, though, she plays along.

Petra: That’s right. Pro’s like a self-help guru, or something…

Prim: I see.

Petra: It’s actually Pro and Lil-

Pro: Anyways, Prim, what are you doing here?

Prim: Oh, I came here with my dad. To look around.

She gestures to the middle-aged man I noticed earlier, and he waves back.

Pro: Oh, that’s nice. Family trips are always nice.

Prim: Yeah.

Prim: Why would *you* come here, though? It’s a strange place to ask for advice…

Pro: Oh, uh, we were just looking around. As well.

Prim: I see…

Prim opens her mouth to say something else, but she’s interrupted by a low gurgling sound, a sound I’m pretty sure I’ve heard before. Embarrassed, she quickly bites her lip and looks away, her face tinted red.

Pro: Are you hungry?

Prim: …

Prim: Yeah. We were gonna go for dinner after this, so…

Prim: I have to go now. See you later.

Once again, Prim turns around and runs away, her movements almost robotic this time.

Petra: Hehe…

Petra: She really is cute, huh?

Pro: I’m starting think that you’re the creepy one…

Petra: Hehe…

Pro: Well, I don’t really think we’ll find anything here, so let’s get going I guess.

Petra: Yeah.

Before we can leave, however, a loud but timid voice calls out to us.

Prim: Wait…!

Prim shuffles her way back over, with her parent approvingly watching from a distance.

Prim: I talked to my dad, and he said that if you’d like…

Prim: You could join us for dinner. Only if you want to.

Petra: I’ll go, I’ll go! How about you, Pro?

Pro: Uh…

Pro: I’ll have to ask my mom first. Could you give me a second?

Prim: No problem.

I walk over to the corner to call home, but my mom doesn’t pick up. I call her cell as well, but she doesn’t respond to that either.

Ah well. I’m sure it’ll be fine.