**Shopping District**

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

Petra (neutral neutral): It’s pretty busy today, huh?

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

Petra: Oh, true.

Petra (neutral curious): So, do you have any ideas?

Petra (neutral skeptical):

Pro: Ideas?

Petra (neutral sigh): For Prim’s gift.

Petra (neutral neutral):

Pro: Oh, right. No, I don’t.

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

Petra (neutral curious):

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

Petra (neutral thinking): I think so. But they only sell instruments, no?

Petra (neutral curious):

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

Petra: I guess. Where is it?

Pro: It should be around there…

Petra (neutral skeptical):

Pro: …maybe.

Petra: Maybe…?

Pro: I don’t remember, sorry.

Petra (neutral expressionless): Well…

Petra (neutral curious): 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 (arms\_crossed neutral): See? I told you they really only have instruments here. So unless you’re willing to spend hundreds on a single birthday…

Petra (arms\_crossed curious):

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

Petra (arms\_crossed sigh):

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

Petra (arms\_crossed skeptical): Prim doesn’t even play guitar.

Pro: …right.

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

Petra: …

Petra (neutral worried\_slightly): 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 (neutral thinking): Maybe, but it’s pretty clear that she misses it…

Petra (neutral confused):

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

Prim (surprise surprise):

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

Petra (surprise panic):

Prim (fidget embarrassed\_blushing): I-I didn’t know you guys were that close…

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

Petra (embarrassed nervous): We were just-

Petra (embarrassed embarrassed):

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

Petra (neutral confused):

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.

Prim (shy curious\_blushing):

Petra (neutral smiling\_nervous): That’s right. Pro’s like a self-help guru, or something…

Prim (shy sigh): I see.

Prim (shy neutral):

Petra (neutral grinning): It’s actually Pro and Lil-

Petra (neutral happy):

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

Petra (neutral curious):

Prim (shy curious): 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 fun.

Prim (shy smiling): Yeah.

Petra (neutral geh):

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

Petra (neutral smiling\_nervous):

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

Prim (shy shy): I see…

Petra (neutral curious):

Prim (arms\_behind down\_blushing):

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.

Petra (neutral hehe):

Prim (surprise eek\_blushing):

Pro: Are you hungry?

Prim (surprise embarrassed\_blushing): …

Petra (neutral fufu):

Prim (shy down\_blushing): Yeah. We were gonna go for dinner after this, so…

Prim (shy embarrassed\_blushing): I have to go now. See you later.

Prim (exit):

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

Petra (neutral drooling): Hehe…

Petra: She really is cute, huh?

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

Petra: Hehe…

Petra (neutral curious):

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

Petra (neutral smiling): Yeah.

Petra (neutral curious):

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

Prim: Wait…!

Prim (shy shy):

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

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

Petra (excited excited):

Prim (shy bambi): You could join us for dinner. Only if you want to.

Petra (neutral grinning): I’ll go, I’ll go! How about you, Pro?

Pro: Uh…

Petra (neutral smiling):

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

Prim (shy shy): No problem.

Prim (exit):

Petra (exit):

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.