**Udon Shop**

Prim’s dad gives the three of a short ride to the station, where we get off and head to the same udon restaurant Lilith took me to when we first started to hang out.

Petra: Oh, you knew about this restaurant too, Prim?

Prim: Yeah, we come here sometimes.

Petra glances at me briefly, a self-satisfied smile starting to manifest on her face.

Petra: Here’s a fun fact, Pro-

Pro: Yes, this is one of Lilith’s favourite restaurants. She took me here too.

Petra: …

Petra: Huh?

Petra: Just the two of you?

Pro: Yup.

Petra: …

Petra: I’ve only been here once before, and that was in a large group…

Prim: Are you okay?

A rather befuddled waiter comes to find us a table, placing the three of us in a small booth near the front of the shop. Prim’s dad takes a spot at the bar, probably wanting to give us some space.

Pro: Is your dad gonna be okay by himself?

Prim: I think he’s friends with one of the chefs, so he’ll probably talk to him…

Prim: Probably.

Pro: I see.

Pro: What are you gonna get?

Prim: Um, I usually get a bowl of seafood udon. They cook the seafood with sake, which makes everything taste really good.

Pro: That does sound good. Maybe I’ll get that as well.

Petra: I’ll also take one.

Pro: So three bowls of seafood udon.

I get a waiter’s attention and place the order before turning back to a defeated Petra. With a sigh, I grab Asher’s writing from my bag and dangle it in front of her face, hoping that it’ll help her regain some energy.

Pro: Cheer up. Here, while we’re here I’ll even let you read this.

Prim: Is that…?

Pro: Yeah, it’s from the literature club. Asher wrote it.

Prim: Um…

Prim: Were you allowed to take it?

Pro: I asked one of the upper-years, so I’m sure it’ll be fine. As long as we return it.

Pro: You wanna take a read?

Prim: Me? I guess…

I hand it over to Prim, who reads it carefully and intently. Her expressions change ever so slightly as she goes through the manuscript, and when she finishes she quietly realigns the papers together and returns it.

Pro: So? What do you think?

Prim: Well…

Prim: It’s a short story. About love.

Petra: About love?!?!?

Prim: Yeah.

Prim: At the end though, I don’t understand why he says that “the moon is beautiful.”

Petra: You weren’t paying attention in class again, huh.

Prim: Huh?

Pro: Again?

Petra: We went over it a couple weeks ago. It’s basically another way of saying “I love you.”

Prim: In which class?

Petra: In Japanese class, of course.

Petra: It’s a rather refined way to confess. It sounds like something that a person like Asher would use.

Petra: Although it’d be wasted on another certain boy I know.

Pro: Right…

Petra: Anyways, I wanna read it, so give it here.

She takes the story from my hands and starts reading excitedly, no doubt curious about Asher’s romantic fantasies. While she goes through it, I turn to Prim, curious about Petra’s earlier comment.

Pro: You find it hard to pay attention in class as well, huh?

Prim: Huh? Well…

Prim: Yeah. I’m not the best student.

Pro: That’s pretty surprising. I thought you’d be really disciplined and studious.

Prim: I find it hard to stay motivated when it comes to school. Although I know that I should probably try to do better, especially now…

Pro: Especially now?

Before I get a response, however, Petra sighs emphatically.

Pro: You seem troubled.

Petra: Well…

Petra: The heroine in the story is an older girl.

Pro: So?

Petra: So…

Petra: …

Petra: Ah, forget it. You can really be dumb sometimes, you know.

She returns to Asher’s story with a newfound determination. What exactly she’s determined about, though, is anybody’s guess.

Prim: Um…

Prim glances at Petra before leaning in. Her voice drops down to a whisper, and her breath tickles my ears as she speaks.

Prim: Does Petra like Asher?

Pro: I think so. Although I’m not exactly sure.

Pro: It might be more similar to admiration than to love, actually.

Prim: I see. He does seem very kind.

Pro: Yeah, and he’s also smart, athletic, and popular…

Prim: So she might have competition.

Prim: Do you know who he likes?

Pro: I don’t. He refuses to tell me.

Prim: I see.

Prim: I guess Petra and I don’t talk about things like that much either.

Yeah, I can’t really see them discussing love. I could see Petra teasing Prim about it, but that’s about it.

Pro: Well, it’s not something most people talk about on a regular basis, I guess. A lot of people find the topic uncomfortable.

Prim: …

Prim: …

Prim: Yeah, I guess so…

Realizing that our side conversation has indeed become very uncomfortable, I back away, noting that the room’s temperature seems to have risen by several degrees.

Thankfully, our food arrives, and instead of continuing to talk Prim and I silently agree to start eating, watching as an anguished Petra continues to read.