**Grocery Store**

I head to the grocery store after a few hours of studying, wanting to give my mind a break. Math is hard, and even going through the material over and over again I still have trouble understanding some of the concepts.

I probably shouldn’t sleep in class from now on. I shouldn’t but…

Well, you know.

Once I step inside the store, I check my shopping list that my mom sent me. It’s neither long nor short, but thankfully I know generally where everything is.

Pro: Um, a pineapple…

?Prim: A pineapple?

Prim (arms\_behind curious):

Prim appears out of nowhere, peering curiously into me eyes.

Pro: Prim?

She nods, confirming that she is indeed here in the flesh.

Prim (shy curious): What are you shopping for?

Pro: Hm? Getting some stuff for my mom.

Pro: How about you?

Prim (shy smiling): Same.

Prim (shy curious):

Pro: Um…

Pro: Do you wanna shop together again? You can teach me how to pick out fruits this time.

Prim (shy eek): Huh?!? Um…

Prim (shy shy): Sure.

I let out an internal sigh of relief, a little shocked that I put myself out there like that.

Prim (shy neutral):

Prim shows me around the produce section, showing me how to pick out apples and pears, how to tell roughly how old a bag of vegetables is, and a variety of other small but helpful tricks. She does it all so easily, as if it’s something she’s been doing for years.

Prim (shy down): Um…

Prim (shy worried\_slightly): My family doesn’t really eat pineapple, though. So I don’t know how to choose.

Pro: Oh, that’s okay. It’s a pretty novelty item.

Prim (shy thinking): Maybe you could pick the largest one? Or maybe the one that looks the most golden.

Pro: That’d probably be the best course of action, huh.

Prim (shy neutral):

After we both get all of the fruits and vegetables we need, we make our way to where dairy, eggs, and other packaged goods are sold. Prim turns out to be a godsend here as well, making sure that I keep in mind expiry dates and sales.

In return for all of her help, I keep her company and, per her request, help her to exercise self-control by reminding her that she’s not here to buy snacks.

Yup. That’s all I’m good for. Although, given the number of times I’ve been shopping with Mara over the years, I’d say I’m pretty good at it.

Prim (shy curious):

Pro: Actually, come to think about it, we seem to run into each other here often, huh?

Prim (shy thinking): Yeah, I guess so.

Prim (shy curious): Do you usually run errands for your family?

Pro: Um, not really, no. But you do, right?

She nods.

Prim (shy disappointed): Especially now, since my sister…

Prim (shy down): …

Prim (shy disbelief):

Pro: Her arm?

Prim (shy down): Yeah…

Pro: Um…

Prim (shy worried\_slightly):

Pro: This probably isn’t any of my business, but…

I hesitate, remembering my conversation with Iris yesterday. Should I really be asking about their relationship?

However, Prim’s disheartened expression pops into my mind, prompting me to go on.

Pro: Did something happen between you and your sister?

Prim (shy disappointed): Um…

Prim (fidget down):

She looks away and fidgets with her hands, obviously uncomfortable.

Prim: Sort of, I guess.

Prim (arms\_behind down): Some things happened, and then…

Prim: …

Pro: Oh, um…

Prim (arms\_behind shy):

Pro: You don’t have to tell me.

Pro: It’s just that, um, things seem a little cold between you two. I ran into her yesterday, and-

Prim (shy confused): Yesterday? But she was home all day…

Prim: Where did you meet her?

Pro: Uh, on my way to school or something…

Prim (shy thinking): I see. She usually sleeps in, though…

Prim (shy curious):

Pro: I see.

Not really wanting to disclose my illegal trip yesterday, I desperately think of a way to change the subject naturally.

Pro: What does your sister do, by the way?

Prim (shy neutral): Oh, um…

Prim (shy worried\_slightly): She’s a college student, I guess.

You guess?

I wait for Prim to elaborate, but a further explanation doesn’t come. After a few seconds I decide to break the silence, awkward though it may be.

Prim (shy curious):

Pro: Well, we still have quite a few items left to get, so we should probably get moving.

Prim (shy down): Yeah.

Pro: Please continue to teach me well.

Prim (shy disbelief): …

Prim (shy smiling): Alright.

**Shopping District**

I eventually get everything I need, splitting all of my items into five different bags at checkout. Prim, on the other hand, places all of her purchases in a single reusable bag, which she holds rather effortlessly.

Prim (shy curious):

Pro: Are you gonna be okay getting home? Isn’t that bag heavy?

Prim (shy shy): Um…

Prim (shy smiling): I’m used to it, so I’ll be fine.

Pro: Oh, okay.

Just thought I’d ask.

Prim (shy curious): How about you?

Pro: This is nothing, don’t worry.

Prim (shy shy): I see.

Prim (shy curious):

Pro: Um…

I pause, suddenly remembering the gift that I left on my bedroom desk. There’s no way I could have possibly predicted that I’d run into Prim here, but it still feels like I missed a golden opportunity to hand it over.

Pro: It was your birthday yesterday, right?

Prim: …

Prim (shy embarrassed): Um, yeah…

Prim (shy shy): How did you know?

Prim (shy confused):

Pro: Ah, a little bird told me or something…

A rather large and hyperactive bird.

Prim (shy curious):

Pro: But anyways, I was gonna find you yesterday but some stuff happened and then I couldn’t…

Pro: So, um, I guess I’ll say it now.

Pro: Happy birthday. Or belated birthday, I guess.

Prim: …

Prim (shy smiling\_eyes\_closed): Thanks.

I’m rewarded with a genuine smile, one that makes my heart melt.

Prim (shy shy): Um, I need to go home now, or else my parents will get worried…

Prim (shy smiling): I’ll see you later.

Pro: Oh, okay. See you.

Prim (exit):

I head home after Prim leaves, quite pleased with Prim’s reaction.

However, at the back of my mind a seed of worry starts to take root. She definitely didn’t want to talk about her sister, a sure sign that something is wrong…

But I know I shouldn’t meddle…

…

Suddenly frustrated, I decide to leave it be for now and see what happens. Outsides should stay outside, but there aren’t any rules about peering into windows.

Actually, there definitely are.