**Classroom**

Lunch comes around, but I have no appetite despite not eating since yesterday. My stomach hurts, but eating just doesn’t seem attractive.

Instead, I put my head down on my desk and start to close my eyes…

Asher (waving concern): Hey, Pro.

Asher (neutral concern): What happened yesterday?

Pro: Oh, um…

I sit up straight, thinking of what I should say. Lilith told me not to tell Petra and the others, so that probably includes Asher, right?

And not knowing would harm them less than if they knew the truth.

Pro: I talked to Lilith, but I wasn’t able to find out why she was acting differently.

Asher (neutral skeptical): …

Asher: That’s a lie.

Asher (neutral serious): You’ve never been good at hiding your expressions, you know.

Asher (neutral concern): What actually happened?

Pro: I…

Pro: I can’t tell you.

Asher (neutral sigh):

Asher studies my face for a moment before sighing.

Asher (neutral worried): Alright.

Asher (neutral surprise):

Petra (neutral yelling): PRO!!!!

Petra rushes into the room, startling everyone loitering around.

Petra (neutral indignant): Why didn’t you respond to any of my texts?!? Do you know how worried I was?!?

Asher (neutral worried): Petra, calm down…

Disregarding him, she grabs my shirt and shakes me.

Petra (neutral worried): What happened yesterday? Lilith didn’t show up to practice or class today, and she didn’t tell anyone…

I feel a sharp pain in my chest, as if a pin were stabbed through my heart. I knew this was gonna happen, but it still hurts nonetheless…

Asher (neutral sincere): Petra, let him be. He’s been through a lot.

Petra (neutral disbelief): Been through a lot…?

She backs off, stunned.

Petra: Lilith…

Petra: …

Petra (neutral worried): That’s it. I’m done. I’m going to her house to check.

I start, knowing that’s the last thing that I should let happen. If Petra were to meet Lilith’s dad…

Asher (neutral thoughtful): I think that’s a little too hasty, especially because we don’t know exactly what’s going on. For all we know she could’ve been sick or something.

Petra (neutral worried\_really): But Pro…

Asher (neutral thoughtful): He said he couldn’t find out why Lilith was acting strangely, so he wouldn’t know either.

Petra (neutral worried): …

Petra (neutral sigh): Alright.

Petra (neutral worried): But if you do find out, make sure you let me know, okay?

Asher (neutral neutral): He will.

Petra (exit):

Asher (neutral sigh):

Crestfallen, Petra leaves. Once he’s sure she’s gone, Asher turns back to me.

Asher (neutral neutral):

Pro: Um…

Pro: Thanks.

Asher (neutral thoughtful): No problem. I just did what I thought was best.

Asher (neutral serious): But one day, when this is all over, you’re gonna explain to me everything that happened, alright?

Pro: Yeah. I will.

Asher (neutral smiling): Thanks.

Asher: Well, you seem tired so I’ll let you take your nap. If you need anything let me know.

Pro: Alright, thanks.

Asher (exit):

I lean forward onto my desk again, feeling thankful that Asher covered for me but also guilty, knowing full well that I probably won’t ever be able to tell him what happened. How can I?

Hopefully he’ll forgive me.