**Classroom**

After neatly stacking the papers back into the box, I quickly buy Asher’s drink and head back to class. He looks at me curiously when I come in, an unreadable expression on his face.

Asher (neutral expressionless): What took you so long?

Pro: Oh, uh…

Pro: Ran into some people on the way.

Asher (neutral grinning): Like Prim?

Pro: Yeah, how’d you know?

He lets out a chuckle.

Asher (excited grinning): Everyone knows how you two are going steady.

Pro: Going...steady?

Asher (neutral grinning): Yup.

Asher (neutral playful): Heard from a trusted source that things are *blossoming* between the two of you.

Pro: Trusted source? Who?

Asher (neutral playful): I dunno…

He holds out for a few more seconds before breaking out in laughter, attracting the attention of all of our classmates. Between fits of chuckles he hands be his phone, and upon closer inspection I realize that a certain hyperactive first year recently sent out a few irresponsibly false messages.

Pro: That girl…

A few of Asher’s friends take interest in the conversation and join in to interrogate me, which is a little uncomfortable since I’m not used to all the attention. Fortunately, they eventually lose interest and leave me be.

Pro: I can’t believe you turned on me…

Asher (laughing recovering): Sorry, sorry. It was too funny to resist though.

Asher (neutral smiling): More importantly, Prim’s warmed up to you quite a bit, huh?

Asher (neutral happy): You spend a lotta time together, greet each other in the halls, walk to school together…

Asher (neutral smiling): And you tutor her.

Pro: I guess, but I don’t think that means much.

Asher (neutral thinking): Doesn’t it? How else would you measure if you’ve gotten closer to someone?

Pro: I mean…

I think about it for a second, and after a few moments I realize that Asher’s as right as ever.

Pro: Fine, fine…

Pro: But it’s still not like that.

Asher (neutral grinning): You sure?

Asher starts laughing again, causing me to lean back into my chair and laugh.

Then, out of the corner of my eye I notice a flash of movement. I turn my head towards the open doorway, and I’m just barely able to make out the figure before it disappears.

Was that…

Mick?

Asher (laughing recovering): Well, sorry about making fun of you so much. I won’t do it again.

Pro: I don’t believe you. Your apologies sound cheap.

Asher (laughing holding\_back): Really…?

Asher continues to poke fun at me until lunch ends regardless. But despite that, in the back of my mind I can’t help but wonder why Mick would peer into our classroom like that.