**Bedroom**

Unable to study because of my racing heart, I mulled around until dinner, after which I read manga until I decided to go to sleep. Unable to sleep as well, however, I laid awake in bed for several hours, tossing and turning until I finally dozed off due to exhaustion.

The first thing I do when I start awake is check my phone, scared that I’ve slept in too much and missed tutoring.

9:48. Lots of time to spare.

Relieved, I lie back down, my eyes starting to droop again. How much did I sleep last night? Probably not much.

I’ll have to complain to Mara later.

**Playground**

Even though I know I should probably study a bit before heading to the station, I instead take a walk to clear my head. It’s another beautiful day, with clear skies and plenty of sun, but it’s also deceptively chilly, although not unbearably so.

Eventually I meander my way to an all-too-familiar location. Mara and I used to play here all the time as kids, and recently I chased Prim all the way from her house to here.

I smile, remembering the moment fondly, only to startle the girl sitting on a swing…

Prim (shy embarrassed): …

Prim: Um, what are you smiling about?

Pro: Huh? Prim?

Prim (shy shy):

She nods shyly, affirming her presence with a small noise.

Prim (waving smiling\_eyes\_closed): Hey.

Pro: Hey.

Prim (shy curious): What were you smiling about?

Pro: Oh, uh, it’s nothing. What’s up?

Prim (shy neutral): I was taking a walk.

Pro: Oh, same.

Prim (shy shy): Um…

Prim (shy embarrassed): Do you want one?

She holds out a small white package, probably a red bean bun from the convenience store.

Pro: Are you sure? Didn’t you buy both for yourself?

Prim (shy shy): Well…

Prim (shy down): You can have one. As your payment, remember?

She pushes it into my hands before I can respond. It actually makes me a tiny bit sad, the promise of future interaction with Prim being fulfilled so quickly…

Prim (shy smiling):

Pro: Oh, right. Thanks.

Prim (munching embarrassed):

She nods before sinking her teeth into her own bun.

Pro: It’s a Sunday, huh? It’s a little strange, not having to accompany you anymore…

Prim (shy neutral): Yeah.

Pro: What are you gonna do with all the extra time? You don’t have to go all the way down anymore, and I’m guessing you have less to practice.

Prim: I’ll be working on expanding my repertoire.

Prim (shy curious):

Pro: Repertoire? What’s that?

Prim (shy neutral): It’s like…

Prim (shy thinking): …

Prim (shy neutral): …a list of the pieces I can play.

Pro: Oh, I see.

Prim (shy thinking): And I’ll also look to enter competitions. Most of them have a set piece, so I’ll probably have to spend a lot of time practicing those as well.

Pro: That sounds pretty intense.

Prim (shy smiling\_eyes\_closed): I guess so.

Prim (shy neutral):

Pro: Iris is gonna help you out, right?

Prim (shy smiling\_nervous): Yeah. She said that she’ll have a lot of spare time until the next school year starts, so she’ll drill everything I need to know into my head before then…

I laugh at Prim’s obvious dread, suddenly finding the dynamic between her and her sister funny but also cute.

Prim (shy neutral):

Pro: That sounds like something she’d say.

Pro: You sound like you’ll be pretty busy though, huh?

Prim (shy shy): Yeah. Probably.

My heart starts to sink at her words. I’m happy that she can continue doing what she loves, but at the same time it sounds like we’ll be seeing a lot less of each other…

Prim (shy down): But…

Prim (shy shy): But I’ll still set aside time for, um, for friends, and stuff…

Prim (shy earnest): I still want to be a normal high school girl. So I’d like to get closer to my friends and spend time with them…

Prim (shy eek):

Pro: Most normal high schoolers don’t play piano at a professional level, though.

Prim (arms\_behind embarrased\_blushing): Huh? I’m not quite there yet…

Prim (arms\_behind shy): And that’s something I’ll deal with later…

Pro: I’m just kidding. It’s really not a problem.

Prim (arms\_behind curious): Oh. I see.

Prim (arms\_behind down): Um…

Prim (arms\_behind shy\_blushing): The point is, I’m not gonna be practicing all the time, so…

Prim (fidget down\_blushing): …

Prim (shy shy\_blushing): So d-do you want to hang out sometimes?

Prim (shy embarrassed\_blushing): I’ll buy you another red bean bun one day, if you’d like.

I take a few seconds to process what she says before a smile inevitably makes its way onto my dumbfounded face.

Prim (shy curious\_blushing):

Pro: I’ll take you up on that offer, then.

Prim (shy happy\_blushing): Alright.